



AFAS-2024 SEED RESEARCH GRANT: CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION SELECTION CRITERIA

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 25 December 2024

1. Non-negotiable Criteria

If any of three criteria below is not met, the application will immediately be removed.

1. Proof of registration/proof of employment. Must be registered/employed by a university or research institution located in Africa.
2. Must be a PhD student or early-career researcher (having completed their PhD within the past five years of the grant application deadline).
3. Must be conducting their PhD in the field of astronomy.

2. Other Detailed Criteria

Criteria	Weighting in 2024
Quality of research proposal	45%
Motivational letter	25%
Recommendation letter	15%
Inclusion & Diversity	5%
Transcripts, CV and publications	10%

2.1. Quality of Research Proposal

Below are some of the key selection criteria which the reviewing panel will use when evaluating the proposal. Each criterion is weighted either 0, 1 or 2, where 0 is not available, 1 is stated but not clear/sufficient, and 2 is well and clearly presented. The weighting of the following rests solely at the discretion of the reviewer. The key selection criteria are as follows:

1. Title of research project.



2. Clearly stated research questions.
3. Clearly stated aim/project goal(s).
4. Justification for undertaking the project (project relevance to the domain).
5. Clearly defined methodology.
6. Clearly stated impact of the results.
7. A proposed timeline.
8. Project feasibility.
9. Is the budget aligned with the call for application?
10. Is the budget allocation and breakdown reasonable?
11. Other project outputs (paper, talk, thesis).
12. Activities and initiatives in promoting astronomy through school outreach, social media or other similar initiatives.
13. Membership to international collaborations (particularly those across Africa).

2.2 Past Performance and Academic Track Records of an Applicant.

1. Academic excellence based on transcripts.
2. Academic publication as a first/second author

2.3 Motivational Letter

The following criteria will be evaluated when reviewing the motivational letter written by the applicant. Each point can be weighed either 0, 1 and 2, where 0 is not available, 1 is stated but not clear/sufficient, and 2 is clearly stated and reasonable.

1. Name, current position and institution of the applicant.
2. Project's name.
3. Project's purpose (what the project aims to accomplish).
4. Reasons why they require funding. Justify the amount of money being requested. Provide a budget breakdown indicating how the funds will be allocated and used. The maximum amount requested is 1200 EUR for the project outlined in the research proposal.
5. The amount of funding being sought and a breakdown of expenses (budget) for the project.
6. Motivation for the support in a statement explaining how the funding will impact their project.
7. Impact of their project to their domain and interest of AfAS.

2.4 Recommendation Letter



We encourage the reviewer to evaluate the recommendation letter using the following key items/questions. Each criterion should be given either a 0, 1 or 2. Here 0 means not available, 1 stated but not clear/sufficient and 2 is clearly stated and reasonable/relevant.

1. The referee in full support of the candidate
2. The referee has explained how and when they met the Candidate and described their academic relationship
3. The referee properly highlights the candidate's academic excellence which is relevant to the application
4. The referee highlights the candidate's research potential
5. The referee briefly described the candidate's intended research focus and goals
6. The referee highlights the project's originality and the potential contributions to the broader scientific community

A minimum of two recommendation letters are required for a complete application.

2.5 Inclusion & Diversity.

The following are some of the inclusion and diversity metrics we are considering:

- Gender.
- Geographic location and institution.

Please refer to the 'Application Instructions and Guidelines' document for more information on the application submission.