



Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION GUIDELINES

May 5, 2023

1. Introduction

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is an umbrella organization of universities in Africa. RUFORUM was founded in 2004 by the Vice Chancellors of ten (10) universities of Southern and Eastern Africa and registered in Uganda as an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO). RUFORUM Secretariat is graciously hosted by the Government of Uganda at Makerere University main Campus, in Kampala with two Regional Nodes established in Benin (covering Central and Western Africa) and Malawi (covering Southern Africa).

RUFORUM's Vision is "**vibrant, transformative universities catalyzing sustainable, inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa**". To achieve its vision, RUFORUM aims at transforming African Universities, Faculties and Colleges of Agriculture and related sciences through transformation of the mode of leadership, teaching, training, research and outreach.

RUFORUM's Mission is "**Strengthen the capacities of universities to foster innovations responsive to demands of small-holder farmers through the training of high-quality researchers, the output of impact-oriented research and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, national agricultural research institutions and governments**"

To achieve its mission, RUFORUM's interventions are designed around four main activities:

- 1) Facilitating institutionalization of improved teaching, learning, research and innovation among member universities to produce contemporary and next generation human resources;
- 2) Strengthen capacity of member universities to work with research, business and development partners to transform ideas into innovations;
- 3) Serve as a key actor in national and continental integration of higher education, research for development (R4D) and backbone for university interaction with policy; and

- 4) Serve as a convenor and voice for higher agricultural education actors and strengthen integration of agriculture in the national and global economy.

2. About RUFORUM Membership

From 10 member universities and five countries in 2004, the RUFORUM network has grown dramatically to comprise 163 universities in 40 countries across the African Continent as of December 2022. RUFORUM is a network of higher education institutions with a strong passion for agriculture (including livestock, agroforestry, etc.) and related disciplines in science, technology and innovation training and research for development. The member universities are characterized by a large diversity in terms of number of years of experience, infrastructures, human capital and financial resources among others.

3. Who can become a member of the RUFORUM Network?

Membership to RUFORUM is open to all public and private universities in the Eastern, Central, Northern, Southern, and Western African Sub–regions and other organisations interested in agriculture and related sciences including technology, innovation, training and research for development organisations.

4. Categories of Membership

Section 10 of the RUFORUM Constitution states that RUFORUM shall have two categories of members namely; Core members and Associate members.

- a) **Core members:** These include universities established in an African country as recognised by the African Union, which have been successfully admitted as such to the RUFORUM Network. Core members pay the full amount of the annual membership subscription fee of 5,000 USD determined from time to time by the Annual General Assembly (AGA). Core members are entitled to participate in all RUFORUM activities including Annual General Assembly. They are also entitled to be voted into all offices and sit in the Board of Directors or any of its committees.
- b) **Associate members:** These shall include public or private organizations registered in Africa or non-African organisations involved in training, research, technology development, innovation and extension in the field of agriculture and related disciplines, and interested in operating in Africa. Examples include universities and other training institutions, extension and advisory services

providers, sub-regional farmers' organizations, non-governmental organizations, private companies, regional agricultural research institutions, among others. Also, a newly admitted member may be associate member for one year before becoming a core member. Associate members pay an annual membership subscription fee of 2,500 USD which may be revised from time to time by the Annual General Assembly (AGA) as needed. They are entitled to participate in all RUFORUM activities including Annual General Assembly but shall not be voted into any office or as a member of the Board of Directors or any of its committees.

5. How does a university or organization become a member of the RUFORUM Network?

Procedures for becoming a member are outlined in the RUFORUM constitution section 11 which states that:

- a) RUFORUM membership shall be either by formal application or by invitation by the Board. RUFORUM will make available the following documents to potential applicants at the RUFORUM website or by email through; secretariat@ruforum.org; with a copy to communications@ruforum.org:
 - RUFORUM Constitution
 - Application guidelines
 - University profiling template
- b) Submit application for membership addressed to the Executive Secretary of RUFORUM

Executive Secretary
Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
(RUFORUM)
Plot 151/155 Garden Hill,
Makerere University Main Campus,
P.O. Box 16811 Wandegaya, Kampala, Uganda
Email: communications@ruforum.org

- c) The Executive Secretary will review the application, undertake a due-diligence exercise (physical visit/internet search/referral etc.) to ascertain the compliance of the applicant to the requirements as highlighted in the application guidelines.

The Executive Secretary will then prepare and submit a report to the RUFORUM Board three months prior to the immediate next Annual General Assembly (AGA);

- d)** The Board Executive Committee will deliberate on the applications received prior to the AGA and inform the Executive Secretary on their decision;
- e)** The Executive Secretary will communicate the Board decision to the applicant prior to the Annual General Assembly (AGA). However, in case of positive feedback, your membership becomes effective **ONLY** after approval by the Annual General Assembly (AGA);
- f)** If your application has been considered for admission, the Executive Secretary will invite your organisation to the next Annual General Assembly (AGA); to receive your membership certificate in plenary during the Annual General Assembly (AGA);
- g)** To become a member, the applicants must satisfy the criteria stipulated in these application guidelines, section 6.

6. Criteria for Admission as a member of RUFORUM

- a)** Must be legally registered in the country of operation;
- b)** Must be accredited by the higher education regulator of the host country;
- c)** Universities (core and associate members) must be offering graduate/post-graduate (Masters and Doctorate) programmes in agriculture or agriculture related sciences (agricultural economics, agribusiness, veterinary medicine, aquaculture & fisheries, forestry, environmental sciences, water management, ICT, engineering etc.);
- d)** Non-university organisations can also be associate or core members and must be involved in training, research, business and advisory services in agriculture and related disciplines (veterinary medicine, aquaculture & fisheries, forestry, environmental sciences, water management, ICT, engineering etc...);
- e)** Demonstrated commitment to contribute to and benefit from the value proposition of the RUFORUM Network to its members, and
- f)** Commitment to abide by the RUFORUM Network constitution including payment of Annual Membership Fee currently established at US \$5,000 for core members and US \$2,500 for Associate members.
- g)** Payment of one-year membership subscription fee equivalent to 5,000 USD (for core members) and 2,500 USD (for Associate Members).

7. Composition of the application package

- a)** A letter from the legal representative of the organisation (Vice Chancellor/Rector/President/Director General/Chief Executive Officer etc...) addressed to the RUFORUM Executive Secretary seeking admission to the RUFORUM Network. The letter should specify the type of membership you are applying for (core membership or associate membership) and how you will contribute to and benefit from the RUFORUM Network value proposition;
- b)** Provide a profile of your university by filling out the university profile template
- c)** Proof of legal registration of your organisation as per your legal establishment (Public / Private) such as :
 - i. Act of Parliament
 - ii. Presidential Decree
 - iii. Registration Certificate
 - iv. Articles of Association
 - v. Or any document that proves the legal existence of your organisation
- d)** Certificate of accreditation of the university with the higher education regulator of the host country (applicable to only universities). For multi-country universities, the accreditation must be from the host country of the branch/campus that is submitting application for RUFORUM membership
- e)** A letter of Recommendation from one existing member university

8. How to submit

Submit your application package by email to secretariat@ruforum.org with a copy to communications@ruforum.org.