



Funded by the Intra-Africa
Academic Mobility Scheme of
the European Union

Applications invited for MSc and PhD in Orphan Crops breeding

Enhancing training and research mobility for novel crops breeding in Africa

MoBreed (Mobility for Breeders in Africa) is an initiative of five public universities from three African regions and one university in Europe to advance knowledge on useful crops of Africa and increase scholars' capacity in addressing food security. Partners include the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin and Ebonyi State University in Nigeria (West Africa), the Jimma University of Ethiopia (Eastern Africa), the University of Namibia and the University of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa (Southern Africa) and the Montpellier SupAgro in France.

MoBreed is funded by the Intra-Africa Program of the **Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission**. The consortium mainly intends to:

- produce 10 high profile plant breeders (PhD holders) that will address current and future challenges related to climate change and agriculture with focus on at least 10 promising underutilized plant species of Africa,
- train a new generation of 38 scientists (M.Sc. holders) and 6 academic staff with strong capacity to increase knowledge and prospects on the selected orphan crops used in Africa for food and nutrition security and the crop production and seed industry.
- harmonize seven MSc and six PhD training programmes and research agenda on the use of neglected and underutilized crops to increase resilience of food production systems

MoBreed, as part of the curriculum and professional mobility of academic staff and students of Master and PhD levels in plant breeding and seed biotechnology, offers a new approach that frontally addresses the lack of



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human resources to advance knowledge on orphan crops, also known as underutilized species of Africa.

Our research aims at increasing quality information on the use and conservation of neglected and underutilized species (NUS) and crop wild relatives (CWR) in Africa, specifically food crops such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, root and tubers, and cereals. Of paramount importance is the use of genetic diversity and the development of cultivars for improved yield in African agriculture. Our investigation and expertise revolve around all key areas of germplasm collections and uses, modern plant genetics and breeding, plant genomics and biotechnology. We focus our research on useful resources of tropical Africa, recognized by the African Orphan Crop Consortium (AOCC) as priority crops. Other potential food crops not listed by AOCC are also included in our investigation. We value collaboration with seed companies and private enterprises involved in cultivar development and share the hope that the seed industry in Africa will expand as new cultivars are developed from indigenous genetic resources adapted to local ecological conditions.

Programs and courses of the consortium are available at <http://www.mobreed.com/course.php>

MoBreed fosters diversity and gender equity at the work place. Therefore, women and persons from underprivileged groups are especially encouraged to apply.

Scholarship

The scholarship includes subsistence and settling-in allowances, participation costs, contribution to research costs, insurance and travel in line with Agreement with EACEA. It will cover:

- ▶ roundtrip flight ticket and visa costs (using a preferred travel agent and calculated against direct linear distance);
- ▶ direct participation costs such as tuition fees, registration fees and service fees where applicable;
- ▶ comprehensive travel insurance (Health, Accident and Travel)
- ▶ a monthly subsistence allowance for the mobility period.



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Financial Support available via the MoBreed scholarship:

Type of mobility	Duration (No. of Months)	Monthly Stipend	Settling-in allowance	Participation costs (per academic year only for mobility equal or longer than 10 months)	Research cost (per academic year only for mobility equal or longer than 10 months)	Insurance (per month)
Master	12 max	€ 600	1-time payment of € 600	€ 3.500	€ 600	€ 75
PhD	48 max	€ 900	1-time payment of € 900	€ 4.000	€ 2.000	€ 75
Academic/ Administrative Staff	1	€ 1,200	-	-	-	€ 75
		Paid in full to scholarship holder	Paid in full to the scholarship holder	Managed by the partnership	Managed by the partnership	Managed by the partnership

NB: Female scholarship holders will receive additional allowances according to the Intra-Africa Mobility Scheme. Women moving with their children to the host country will receive an allocation for childcare on a per capita basis. In case of breaks for family reasons, mechanisms allowing women to pursue their mobility experience will be discussed.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a scholarship (i.e. financial support to third parties), master students as well as doctoral candidates referred to as “students” must comply with the below criteria at the time of the application for a scholarship:

- a) be a national and resident in any of the eligible countries covered by the Intra-Africa Mobility programme of the EACEA

and

- b) be registered/admitted in or having obtained a HEI degree (or equivalent) from

- a. one of the HEIs included in the MoBreed consortium (Target group 1)
- b. a HEI not included in the MoBreed consortium but established in an eligible country (Target group 2)

and



- c) have sufficient knowledge of the language of the courses in the host countries.

The consortium involves Francophone and Anglophone countries and will promote bilingual aptitude in students throughout the implementation of the programme. Language will not be an obstacle in access to study. However, expansion of foreign language study will be reinforced.

Students can only benefit from one scholarship under the Intra-Africa or Intra-ACP academic mobility scheme (regardless the type of mobility or the funding project).

Students having benefited from scholarship(s) under the previous intra-ACP Academic Mobility Scheme cannot receive scholarship under the Intra-Africa academic mobility.

Application process

The MoBreed mobility grant is open to all students from any of the partner universities (Target Group 1) and secondly to students from other African universities (Target Group 2). Currently, **10 PhD and 15 MSc scholarships** are available.

Target Group 1:

This category includes students from all partner universities as follows:

- University of Abomey-Calavi; Benin
- University of Kwazulu-Natal; South Africa
- University of Namibia; Namibia
- Jimma University; Ethiopia
- Ebonyi State University; Nigeria

Target Group 2:

Students from all other eligible African countries for the Intra-Africa Mobility Scheme with focus on countries such as: Kenya, Ghana, Togo, Cameroon, Zambia, Malawi, Rwanda, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali, Zimbabwe.



Admission

Admission regulations for Doctoral and MSc Studies are to be found from prospective HEIs website. This application is for MoBreed Project scholarships only. The Scholarship application form together with other required documents should be sent as a unique PDF attachment to: emails indicated below. You may download the MS Word version of the application form, and complete it before sending. Important also is the student proposal that should be sent together within the application as ONE SINGLE DOCUMENT, preferably PDF. Other required documents are listed in the application form and include:

1. Cover letter
2. Scholarship Application form (download from MoBreed website)
3. Student proposal (guidelines available from MoBreed website)
4. National ID or Copy of Passport Data page
5. Certificate of degree
6. Transcript records
7. Support letter from sending HEIs
8. Recommendation letter of home supervisor (mandatory for all applicants)
9. Enrollment proof in degree course from home institution (for MSc applicants)
10. Curriculum Vitae.
11. Employment certificate (only for staff)
12. Certificate of English or French language skills
13. Proof of socio-economic vulnerability (if available)

In order to meet the general selection requirements for MSc Mobility Grant, the applicant must have completed the first two semesters of a Master of Science course in Agronomy, Biology or any related fields in his home country. Students with Genetics, Biotechnology, and plant breeding background are highly encouraged to apply.



For PhD degree, applicants should hold a MSc degree in Genetics, Biotechnology, Plant breeding, Agronomy, Biology or any related fields. Students with Genetics, Biotechnology, and plant breeding background are highly encouraged to apply.

Selection

The selection among the eligible candidates will be based on their capacity to benefit from the training. The criteria used to assess these prospects are:

- quality of earlier writings by the candidate(s) and quality of other merits;
- originality, feasibility and potential contribution of the planned research to the field of interest;
- integration with a product-focused cultivar or breed development program that serves smallholder farmers;
- practical and realistic time-line;
- ability of plan to include a realistic and feasible molecular breeding techniques;
- importance and relevance of the trait(s) and germplasm to the region;
- enthusiasm of the applicant, and support of home institution;
- possibilities for the Host and Home HEIs to offer adequate supervision with respect to the planned research;
- Gender considerations.

Notifications of application outcome to students

All applicants are notified by email. All NOT selected applicants are notified immediately after selection decision. The notification includes:

- the results of the selection;
- the procedure to follow for an appeal to the selection decision.

For the **selected candidates**, the notification includes:

- instructions for further steps (e.g. visa guidelines)
- a model of the Student Agreement
- Student guidelines/handbook with practical information.



Contact

Due to difference in the partners higher education system, specific academic arrangements will be performed to assure that scholars are admitted in the right program and can make benefit of the mobility programme. These arrangements will be fixed on a case-by-case basis between the host HEI and Coordinating Institution.

For more information, please contact Mrs. Lydia Sognon, lydia.sognon@gmail.com, International Cooperation Office, University of Abomey-Calavi, Republic of Benin. Contacts of HEIs representative are available on www.mobreed.com

Applicants should submit completed application and all supporting documents by email to lydia.sognon@gmail.com with copy to mobreed.uac@gmail.com by June 10, 2017. They should indicate in the subject line (if submitting by email) or super scribe the envelope (if submitting by post) 'Application for MoBreed MSc/PhD programme'. Incomplete applications will be rejected.

Applications should be sent to:

Mrs. Lydia Sognon, lydia.sognon@gmail.com with copy to mobreed.uac@gmail.com

Contact information

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