

CALL ANNOUNCEMENT FOR BOTSWANA YOUNG SCIENTISTS AWARD (YSA)

Background

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is pleased to announce the call for the Botswana Young Scientists Award (YSA) 2025. This award seeks to recognize and promote the contributions of young, emerging scientists in Botswana's universities and research institutions. The awards will be presented during the RUFORUM Annual General Meeting, which will be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Botswana and RUFORUM Member Universities in Botswana from December 1-5, 2025.

Background on RUFORUM

Established in 2004 by ten Vice Chancellors, RUFORUM is a consortium of 175 African universities operating across 40 countries on the African continent. Coordinated by a Secretariat at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, RUFORUM supports universities in fulfilling their crucial role in contributing to the well-being of small-scale farmers and the economic development of sub-Saharan African countries. Over its 21-year history, RUFORUM has built strong partnerships with higher education networks, CGIAR, African Policy Advocacy Networks, the Private Sector, TVET Institutions, and Think Tanks to transform the continent. A key thrust of RUFORUM is to promote and recognize scientists and individuals in Africa who are advancing science to address the continent's development needs. To this end, RUFORUM administers a series of awards to promote excellence across Africa.

Award Details

There will be five awards distributed across three distinct categories. Each recipient will be honored with a citation and a token financial award.

Award Categories

The RUFORUM YSA 2025 will be presented in the following categories:

A. Agriculture, Plant & Animal Sciences and Rural Development

This award recognizes Botswana's most promising researcher working in the field of Agriculture and Rural Development. The successful candidate will have developed innovative models that improve agricultural productivity, increase income, and enhance the quality of life for people, especially in rural areas.

B. Environmentally Sound Sustainable Development

This category acknowledges Botswana's most promising researcher in the fields of Earth, Oceanographic, Environmental, and Ecological Studies, Social Sciences, and Ecosystems. The recipient will be contributing to the protection of our planet and the conservation of its natural resources.

C. Innovation in Engineering and Physical Sciences

This award is for Botswana's most promising researcher in the fields of Engineering, Mathematics, Physics & Chemistry. The candidate will be harnessing these disciplines to drive disruptive and sustainable growth with potential for industrial and/or societal impact.

Eligibility Criteria

- To be eligible for the award, applicants must meet the following criteria:
- Be an individual from a University/Research Institution in Botswana.
- Have completed at least an MPhil/PhD or an equivalent degree.
- Be below 40 years of age.
- The activity submitted for this award must have been undertaken no more than five (5) years prior to the closing date of entries.
- The work must have been published in one or more respected, externally-refereed scientific journal(s), book(s), or equivalent electronic publication(s), and the publication must be indexed in Scopus.

Nomination Guidelines

A complete nomination package is required for consideration:

- 1) **Nominator Statement:** A statement from one nominator supporting the applicant's suitability for the award. This statement should specifically address the:
 - ✧ Innovative and creative nature of the applicant's work.
 - ✧ Interdisciplinary character of the applicant's work.
 - ✧ Potential shown by the applicant as a future leader in the field of agriculture and natural sciences.
- 2) **Supporting Information and Documents:** This includes a comprehensive curriculum vitae, which should detail the first permanent position hire date and a current list of publications. Up to three (3) important papers relevant to the award contribution may also be included.

Activity entered for this award must have been:

- Undertaken no more than five (5) years prior to the closing date of entries
- Published in one or more respected, externally-refereed scientific journal(s), book(s) or equivalent electronic publication(s) and the publication must be indexed in Scopus

Nomination Guidelines

The following is required for nomination for the award:

- I. A statement by one (1) nominator supporting the applicant's suitability for the award with respect to:
 - Innovative and creative nature of the applicant's work
 - Interdisciplinary character of the applicant's work

- Potential shown by the applicant as a future leader in the field of agriculture and natural sciences
- 2. Supporting information and documents; e.g., curriculum vitae including first permanent position hire date and a current publication list. Up to three important papers relevant to the award contribution may also be included.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications complete in all respect with the supporting documents will be judged by a panel of subject experts from RUFORUM's academic community based on criteria such as:

- Quality and number of publications
- Nature and uniqueness of research
- Outcomes of research
- Impact on society
- Vision of the researcher

Deadline and Procedure for Submission of Applications and Nominations

How to apply

All interested candidates who meet the above criteria shall send their EOI (endorsed by their university) by filling out the [application form](#) and sending it to b.yamungu@ruforum.org with a copy to agm@ruforum.org; hchepete@buan.ac.bw

Deadline: 15th October 2025 at 00:00 Southern Africa Time