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Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 5517700 Fax: +251 11 5517844  
Website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

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# The African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence (AUKNASE)

## RULES OF PROCEDURE

Continental & Regional Awards

2020 Edition

AU/HRST May 2020

## BACKGROUND

The African Union Commission is committed to ensure that science, technology and innovation contribute to our sustainable development efforts. The Constitutive Act, establishing the African Union, recognizes the need to advance the development of Africa by promoting research in all fields, and in science, technology and innovation in particular. The Commission, through its Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology implements a strategic science, technology and innovation development programme through the African Union continental **Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy (STISA-2024)**, aimed at contributing to the wellbeing and improved quality of life for the African citizens as articulated in the **African Union Agenda 2063**. In January 2007, the AU Heads of State and Government “*declared 2007 as the launching year for building constituencies and champions for science, technology and innovation in Africa*”.

As a holistic and deliberate measure to maintain science, technology and innovation on top of our development, cooperation and political agenda, the Commission urges the Member States the Regional Economic Communities to popularize science, technology and innovation among African citizens, empower them, celebrate their achievements and promote all efforts to transform scientific research outcome into sustainable development. With the support of its Development Partners particularly the European Commission, the African Union Commission, launched on 9 September 2008, the prestigious African Union Science Award Programme, later renamed to “**African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence**” (**AUKNASE**), in July 2010. The new name is in memory of the Great Pan-Africanist and First President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, A firm believer in African liberation and unity! A man who pursued a revolutionary pan-African policy, with a strong vision extending beyond national boundaries, for the creation of a new Africa, “a federal union of African states”, to take charge of its own destiny. He is among the key founding fathers of the then Organization of African Unity in 1963, a unique Pan-Africanist organization, which later became the African Union in 2002. Today the “dream and determination” of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah inspires Africa in all facets of development and in science, technology and innovation as summed up in his quote “We shall accumulate machinery and establish steel works, iron foundries and factories; we shall link the various States of our continent with communications; we shall astound the world with our hydroelectric power; we shall drain marshes and swamps, clear infested areas, feed the under-nourished, and rid our people of parasites and disease. It is within the possibility of science and technology to make even the Sahara bloom into a vast field with verdant vegetation for agricultural and industrial developments”.

The programme is implemented *at national level for young researchers, regional level for women scientists and continental level open to all scientists*. The Continental level is the highest level of the programme. The objective is to give out science awards to top African scientists for their achievements and valuable discoveries and findings in science, technology and innovation. AUKNASE reflects and underscores a success story and the critical role of science, technology and innovation in the development and integration of Africa. Under this programme prizes are awarded to top African scientists in each of the following two sectors (a) **Life and Earth Science and innovation; and (b) Basic Science, Technology and Innovation** at the national, regional and continental levels.

The **African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence** Programme is implemented using these rules of procedure.

The **African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence Programme (AUKNASE)** shall be organized at three levels:

- 1.Continental Level where two awards of USD 100,000 are given each to African pioneer scientists
- 2.Regional Level where two African women scientists per each of the five geographical regions of Africa are given USD 20,000 each, and
- 3.National Level dedicated to *young African researchers, where two prizes are given per country and the value of the prizes is determined by the African Union Commission.*

## 1. OBJECTIVES

The **objectives** of **AUKNASE** are to:

- 1.1 Award and honour outstanding African scientists for their achievements and discoveries in science, technology and innovation;
- 1.2 Promote scientific development in Africa through recognition of excellence among African scientists, women, and men alike and young researchers and encourage them to persevere in their research or academic careers, and nurture their ambitions;
- 1.3 Popularize and promote public understanding and participation in the implementation of the African Union Agenda 2063, through *Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy<sup>1</sup> for Africa*, the Sustainable Development Goals and the AU Assembly decisions on science, technology and innovation;
- 1.4 Raise the profile of science, technology and innovation sector in African Union Member States, Regional Economic Communities so that science, technology and innovation effectively contribute to Africa's sustainable development, poverty alleviation and integration efforts.

## 2. DEFINITION

For the purpose of this award the following definitions shall apply:

- 2.1 **Scientific awards** are one-time monetary prizes that are given to outstanding African scientists for their scientific achievements and valuable discoveries and findings. They are not lifetime achievement awards;
- 2.2 **Life and Earth Sciences and Innovation<sup>[MOI]</sup>**: embraces all sciences and innovations related to the planet earth, covering (*but not limited to*) the following disciplines, geology, geophysics and geodesy. On the other hand, we regard Life Sciences to encompass all sciences and innovations that have to do with 'organisms', like plants, animals and human and also may be Agro-technology, Animal Science, Plant Science, Biotechnology, Biology, Environmental Sciences, Food Sciences, Medicine, and Tissue Engineering to mention a few;
- 2.3 **Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation**: this category will consist of all other sciences, technologies and innovations excluding those covered within Earth and life Sciences category. These may include, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Engineering (Mechanical, Electrical, Electronics, civil etc), Artificial Intelligence, Material Sciences, Manufacturing and Production Technologies, Metallurgy, Textiles, Energy and Innovations, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> STISA-2024 is the first of the ten-year incremental phasing strategies for science, technology and innovation for Africa

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AWARDS

#### 3.1 Nominations:

- 3.1.1 Nominations will be invited from any institution in the continent, from universities, research institutions, professional bodies, academies, industrial establishments, and so on.
- 3.1.2 Nominations may be received from:
  - 3.1.2.1 individuals who may be senior staff/academic of the same or higher rank than the nominee;
  - 3.1.2.2 Heads of institutions who may have their own formalized procedure for nomination, chairpersons of committees who review the achievements of scientists in their institutions;
- 3.1.3 The nominator is required to show the importance and impact of the research of the applicant. The focus will be on the quality of the work and not necessarily the number of publications. The nominator should provide a narrative presentation (*up to five pages*) of the **importance, relevance, quality and impact of the work**. A full CV as well as 5-10 copies of best publications are to be submitted together with the Nomination Form.
- 3.1.4 All successfully completed nominations received will be acknowledged, after the opening by the Jury.

#### 3.2 Jury

- 3.2.1 For the Continental and Regional Awards, at least a five-person committee of jurors will be identified by the Commission.
- 3.2.2 The technical expertise of the jurors shall be such that there is reasonable diversity of expertise and experience to review the nominations across the spectrum of the scientific sectors;
- 3.2.3 The Jury composition shall have good regional and gender representation with no particular gender dominating beyond 70%;
- 3.2.4 Previous Jurors may be called to serve for continuity of the process.

#### 3.3 Adjudication process:

- 3.3.1 Technical review of nominations may be performed and any nomination that fail such review will be rejected and nominators notified immediately. All such cases will be meticulously documented and reported at the first meeting of the jury. Only those nominations that are received within the given deadline will be considered.
- 3.3.2 A Physical meeting of the jurors will be held to adjudicate and evaluate the nominations.
- 3.3.2 The Jury will appoint the Chair for the Session.
- 3.3.3 The jurors will hear the reports and discuss their rankings so as to determine the top three candidates for each category of Award;
- 3.3.4 The jurors will submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the Commissioner of the AU HRST;
- 3.3.5 All juridical processes will be conducted confidentially and each jury member shall sign conflict of interest and confidentiality declarations;

#### 3.4 Timing and Schedule of activities

- 3.4.1 The call for nomination will be announced continent wide and will be posted on the African Union Commission website: <https://au.int/>
- 3.4.2 The deadline for receipt of applications for the 2020 Edition will be **25 November 2020**, but *the Commission reserves the right to extend the deadline to ensure success of the programme*;
- 3.4.3 The Award conferment ceremony shall take place at an Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held the year following the launch of the awards;
- 3.4.4 Award winners are expected to participate in Africa's science, technology and innovation efforts following the conferment of the award;
- 3.4.5 The award funds may be disbursed by bank transfer or bank draft payable to the recipient after the

award ceremony has been held;

#### 4. ELIGIBILITY

- 4.1 To be eligible for the **African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence**, nominees shall be African scientists who have made remarkable achievements, demonstrated by number of publications, number of trained research graduate students, applicability of the scientific work to Africa's challenges, and its patentability. The award is intended to recognize those who demonstrate excellence in research of relevance to the developmental needs of the continent.
- 4.2 Only nationals of the African Union (AU) Member States are eligible to participate in these Awards;
- 4.3 Nominees shall be Africans residing in any of the AU Member States and can be nominated only for achievements based on work conducted in an African country.
- 4.4 For the **REGIONAL AWARD**: for Women Scientists, applicants should have nominators with a PhD degree. If she/he is an Academic in a university, she/he must at least have a rank of Associate Professor. There is no age limit for this award. The nominee should meet **at least three** of the following:
- 4.4.1 Must have published at least five articles in journals (with impact factor greater than 1.0)
  - 4.4.2 Must appear as senior/corresponding author in at least three of the five articles
  - 4.4.3 Must at least have a minimum H-index of 5
  - 4.4.4 Must have at least one international or two national patents registered
  - 4.4.5 Must have supervised or co-supervised at least 5 PhD students
  - 4.4.6 Must have won an international grant as a principal investigator
  - 4.5.7 Must have written a review article in her/his field of specialization
- 4.5 For the **CONTINENTAL AWARD**: is open to all African pioneer scientists, applicants should have nominees with a PhD degree, if the nominee is an Academic in a university, she/he must at least have a rank of Associate Professor. There is no age limit for this award. The nominee should meet **at least four** of the following:
- 4.5.1 Must have published in journals (at least 20 articles with impact factor greater than 1.0)
  - 4.5.2 Must appear as senior/corresponding author in at least 15 of the 25 articles
  - 4.5.3 Must have a minimum H-index of 25
  - 4.5.4 Must have at least two international or four national patents registered
  - 4.5.5 Must have supervised or co-supervised at least 10 PhD students
  - 4.5.6 Must have won an international grant as a principal investigator
  - 4.5.7 Must have written a review article in her/his field of specialization

**Note:** the above criteria are oriented to academics in a teaching or research institution. However, individuals or groups from non-academic establishments, such as industry, technical and vocational institutions where a patent or other trade secret may have been the basis for developing a product or service that has clearly made impact on society or have contributed in a significant way to objectives 1.3 and 1.4 may be nominated even though many of the criteria above have not been fulfilled.

## 5. EXCLUSION

Nominations may be declined due to the following:

- 5.1 Nominations which do not focus on specific contributions, but rather list lifetime achievements;
- 5.2 Self nomination will not be accepted;
- 5.3 Dossiers are not complete and/or all supporting document/s are not included or not attached;
- 5.4 If the same work has received an **AUKNASE**;
- 5.5 If their Member State is under AU sanctions in conformity with a decision taken by the AU relevant policy organ;
- 5.6 If they are employees of any AU organ or employees of the Regional Economic Communities.

## 6. APPLICATION FORMS

The Application forms are available from:

- AU Commission official website,
- Ministries in Charge of Science and Technology, National Academies and Research Councils in Member States, and
- the Regional Economic Communities

## SUBMISSION OF THE NOMINATION FORM WITH SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

- a. The 2020 Edition of the Continental and Regional Awards shall be organized under the supervision of the African Union Commission.
- b. The deadline for submission of the Nomination Form with supporting documents is **25 November 2020 at 17:00 hours Addis Ababa time**, but *the Commission reserves to extend this deadline to ensure success of the programme.*
- c. The Nomination Form with all the supporting documents should be posted via physical courier to the following address **(NOT by Fax or E-mail)**:

To:  
The Officer in Charge  
AU Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence 2020 Edition,  
Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology  
African Union Commission  
Roosevelt Street  
P. O. Box 3243  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

*NB: On the right back side of the envelope, please insert the following information:*

[From: Full Name, Contact and E-Mail Addresses of the Applicant]

Specify which Level you are applying: Continental Award  Or Regional Award

and “add the Following Note” [“AUKNASE /Not to be opened before the Opening Session”]

## 7. ENQUIRIES

For any enquiries and or clarifications, please contact the secretariat of **African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific excellence Programme**. For equal treatment answers to various questions will be posted on the AU Commission official website for this programme:

E-mail: [scientific-awards@africa-union.org](mailto:scientific-awards@africa-union.org)

Or visit the AU Commission official website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

### **Note:**

#### **African Union geographical regional distribution of Member States:**

- 1.CENTRAL AFRICA:** Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome & Principe
- 2.EASTERN AFRICA:** Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda
- 3.NORTHERN AFRICA:** Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, and The Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
- 4.West Africa:** Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo
- 5.SOUTHERN AFRICA:** Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, , Zambia and Zimbabwe