Fellowship FAQs (https://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Winners of the 2018 AWARD Fellowship will be selected and informed in November 2017, and the program will begin in February 2018.

We hope you find this section on frequently asked questions helpful. If you have questions that have not been covered here, please email awardinfo@cgiar.org;

[What does an AWARD Fellowship include?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

AWARD delivers a well-tested, coordinated career-development program for women in agricultural research. For details, [Program Description.](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/overview/)

[How has AWARD helped participants to advance in their research careers?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

AWARD is fostering a cadre of women scientists ready to play an influential role in African agriculture, research, and development. For example, from the preliminary evaluation results of the first 180 AWARD Fellows to complete our two-year program, there is concrete evidence that 69 percent of our fellows have strengthened their science skills, and 64 percent have strengthened the gender-responsiveness of their work. A total of 74 percent of AWARD Fellows demonstrate increased confidence and assertiveness, and a greater desire to lead and guide others. . To learn more on the impact of the AWARD Fellowship [please watch our three-minute infographic](https://youtu.be/_kTnZVXgk8M).

[Who is eligible for an AWARD Fellowship?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Women agricultural scientists who are citizens of: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, and Togo, and who have completed a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree in one of the disciplines listed below, or other agriculture-related fields, are eligible to apply. Applicants must be resident in Africa.

Agricultural economics

Agricultural engineering

Agronomy

Animal and livestock sciences

Aquatic resources/fisheries

Biodiversity conservation

Crop science

Ecology

Entomology

Food science and nutrition

Extension education

Forestry and agroforestry

Horticulture

Molecular biology (plant/animal breeding)

Natural resources management

Plant/animal virology

Soil science

Veterinary sciences

Water/irrigation management

seed systems

agroecological transitions.

Other

Francophone women scientists working on sorghum and millet are particularly encouraged to apply.

[Is there an age restriction for applicants?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

No. However, those close to retirement age are less likely to be selected.

[I am not from Africa, can I apply?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Sorry, no. This program is specifically for women scientists and professionals from the African countries listed above. 

[I am African, but not from any of the countries listed. Am I eligible to apply?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Sorry, no. Only citizens of the listed countries are eligible.

[There are only a limited number of Anglophone countries listed. Is AWARD only working with a select Anglophone countries?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Unfortunately, other Anglophone countries that are not listed are not included in the scope of AWARD’s current grant funding.

[I am a citizen of an eligible country, but I work in another country. Do I qualify to apply?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes, you qualify if you will be available in Africa throughout the fellowship period, should you be chosen.

[I am a BSc student and expect to complete my studies soon. Do I qualify for a fellowship?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

No. You must have completed and been awarded a minimum of a bachelor’s degree by the start of the fellowship to qualify.

[I am an MSc student and expect to complete my studies soon. Do I qualify for a fellowship?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes, you qualify for a post-bachelor’s fellowship. If you will graduate with your master’s by the start of the fellowship, please indicate that on the application.

[I am currently studying for my PhD. Do I qualify?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes, you qualify for the post-master’s fellowship.

[I graduated, but I am not yet employed. May I apply without institutional support?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes, you are eligible to apply.

[I am an African woman working for the International Agricultural Research Centers. May I apply for an AWARD Fellowship?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes. Researchers from international agricultural research centers, including CGIAR centers, who are citizens of the eligible countries can apply.

[I am working in agricultural research and development, but my specified subject area is not listed. May I apply?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

We include a wide range of agricultural research disciplines. If in doubt, please apply and your case will be considered. Those disciplines most relevant to AWARD’s overall goal of improving the livelihoods of smallholders, especially women farmers, will be given priority.

[I am not a scientist, but I have a degree. I work for an export company that deals with agricultural products. I think I could learn a lot from your fellowship. May I apply?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

No, the fellowship is designed for women scientists working in the listed disciplines.

[I am employed in the private sector. May I apply?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes, you are eligible to apply if you are working in agricultural research in a private institution.

[A colleague of mine is an AWARD Fellow. Is it possible to have two fellows in the same organization?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes, it is possible to have several fellows from the same organization or institution as AWARD Fellows.

[I was an AWARD Mentor in an earlier round. May I apply as a fellow?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

No. AWARD Mentors are no longer eligible for AWARD Fellowship.

[Do I need to have permission or support from my employer to participate in AWARD?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

If you win an AWARD Fellowship, you will be required to provide a letter of support from your institution and two references. However, this letter is not required at the application phase.

[Are applicants required to submit university transcripts?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes. If you are shortlisted as a finalist, you will be required to submit transcripts, as well as a scan of your passport identification page.

[I told my boss I wanted to apply, but he says that it will take me away from my job too much. How much time does the fellowship require?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

The fellowship does not require a large amount of time in general. You will attend one or two week-long training courses semi-annually. You will also meet with your mentor for about an hour once a month for a year. However, you may decide to apply for AWARD-supported advanced science training, which is available to AWARD Fellows with master’s or doctoral degrees. If you are chosen, you will have to negotiate with your institution to be absent for three to nine months. This advanced science training benefits both you and your home institution.

[I am not currently employed. May I apply for a fellowship?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes, you may apply if you meet the other eligibility criteria.

[I do not have email or internet access. Can I still participate in the AWARD Fellowship?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Internet access is essential for many AWARD activities. You must have a valid email address to participate effectively.

[Who selects the winners?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

The [AWARD Steering Committee](http://awardfellowships.org/about-us/steering-committee/) selects the winners based on intellectual merit, leadership capacity, and the potential of the scientist’s research to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, especially women.

[How many winners will be chosen?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Up to 22 women will be chosen to receive an AWARD Fellowship this year.

[When do you inform the winners?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

The AWARD Steering Committee will select the shortlisted finalists in November 2017. Winners will be notified immediately by email after the selection process, and will be asked to provide transcripts/copies of their academic records. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in January 2018. Please note that AWARD is not able to respond to individual inquiries as to why a particular application was not successful.

[When will the winners be publicly announced?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

The winners will be notified in November 2017 and publicly announced in February 2018 at a news conference held during the first AWARD Mentoring Orientation Workshop. Their names will be published on the AWARD website.

[If I am selected as an AWARD Fellow, when does the program begin?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

AWARD begins with a week-long Mentoring Orientation Workshop for new fellows and their mentors in Nairobi, Kenya. The workshop will be offered in February 18-23, 2018, and fellows and their mentors must attend the session.

[AWARD offers training courses and meetings throughout the two-year fellowship. When and where do these take place?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Fellows participate in several AWARD training courses, which are tailored according to academic level. A schedule of events will be provided to new AWARD Fellows to help themselves plan accordingly.

[I understand that AWARD Fellows stay in their jobs and workplaces during the fellowship. Why don’t you bring them all to one place for two years?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

The AWARD Fellowship is a career development program. Its goal is to strengthen the capacity of African female agricultural scientists so they can contribute to the prosperity and well-being of African smallholder farmers. We also want to help strengthen the capacity of their home institutions by building the fellows’ research skills and leadership abilities.

[I have a family and I’m worried about being able to attend the training sessions. Is it necessary to attend all?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Yes, it is necessary to attend all trainings offered. All courses are one week-long.

[Does AWARD support academic work?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

No, AWARD does not provide funds for academic study. However, AWARD Fellows receive regular information about available scholarships and research funding opportunities on the website and social media pages.

[How much do I get paid as a fellow?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

AWARD Fellows do not receive any cash payments except token amounts to cover direct expenses for participation in events. AWARD does not pay sitting fees. When attending an AWARD workshop, expenses are fully covered. Depending on your level, AWARD covers expenses for training programs, travel, and more.

[What distinguished the winning AWARD Fellows from the other applicants? What did they get right in their applications?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

What sets winning AWARD applicants apart from many other high-quality competitors is that they convincingly demonstrated alignment between their career and personal goals and AWARD’s mission. In particular, they showed great potential and genuine interest in pro-poor research and development to improve the lives of smallholder farmers, particularly women. They gave tangible evidence about this in their résumés/CVs, providing real evidence that they have what it takes to help change the agricultural landscape in Africa.

[What did those who didn’t win a fellowship do wrong?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

About 10 percent of the applications AWARD has received in previous years are incomplete. Another 25 percent of applications are complete, but contain only minimal information (e.g., where we asked for half a page for a certain answer, some responses were only one short sentence).

About 65 percent of applications were fully complete—and so began the difficult task of selecting the best and most promising women scientists for an AWARD Fellowship. As is often the case with job applications, a common mistake that applicants make is to focus exclusively on why the fellowship is important to them. Although that is certainly part of the AWARD selection focus, we also need to see that applicants understand that ultimately the AWARD Fellowship is designed to assist the rural poor. The “me-focus”—looking only at one’s own short-term personal and professional needs—disqualifies a large number of otherwise eligible applicants.

[What is expected from the fellows during the fellowship?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

Fellows are expected to set three attainable career goals during the initial Mentoring Orientation Workshop with their mentors, and to work toward achieving those during the fellowship period. They are expected to participate fully in the AWARD courses and to concretely apply the knowledge and skills gained.

[Who funds AWARD?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

AWARD is generously supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the United States Agency for International Development, and the Agropolis Fondation. AWARD is a preferred service provider of CGIAR, and is hosted by the CGIAR’s World Agroforestry Centre.  
  
We are also grateful for the many national, regional, and international research institutions, private corporations, and other organizations that have provided in-kind support.

[When is the deadline for applications for the 2017 AWARD Fellowship?](http://awardfellowships.org/fellowship/faq/)

The electronic application for the 2017 AWARD Fellowship will be posted on the AWARD website on September 13, 2017. The deadline is October 7, 2017. Applications that are late or incomplete will not be considered.