



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

## Applications invited for MSc and Academic / Administrative Staff exchange in Orphan Crops breeding

### **Enhancing training and research mobility for novel crops breeding in Africa**

MoBreed (Mobility for Breeders in Africa) Scholarship Program 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. This Program is coordinated by the University of Abomey-Calavi. Partners include 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 Montpellier SupAgro in France (Technical partner).

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. students) and 10 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 human resources to advance knowledge on orphan crops, also known as underutilized species of Africa.



UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI



**Ebonyi State University**  
Abakaliki, Nigeria



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 particularly encouraged to apply.**

### Scholarship

**For MSc students: maximum twelve-months credits seeking mobility.**

**For academic staff: maximum two-months staff exchange mobility available only for partner universities except the University of Abomey-Calavi.**

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.



## 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	1-2	€ 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

## Eligibility

To be eligible for a scholarship (i.e. financial support to third parties), master students 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.

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, **13 MSc scholarships and 7 Academic / Administrative staff exchange** 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.

Regions of Africa	Countries
North	Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Tunisia
West	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo
Central	Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé-and-Príncipe
East	Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda
South	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, eSwatini, Zambia, Zimbabwe

### Target crops:

*Musa spp., Vigna subterranea, Macrotyloma geocarpum, Sphenostylis stenocarpa, Colocasia esculenta, Synsepalum dulcificum, Gynandropsis gynandra, Digitaria exilis, Digitaria iburua, Hibiscus sabdariffa, Annona senegalensis.*



## 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. Enrolment proof in degree course from home institution (for MSc applicants); obligatory for all applicants
10. Curriculum Vitae.
11. Employment certificate (only for staff)
12. Certificate of English or French language skills
13. Proof of socio-economic vulnerability obligatory.

In order to meet the general selection requirements for MSc Mobility Grant (maximum 12 months' scholarship mainly for research), 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. It is obligatory that the students have their first year MSc Academic transcripts.





Students considering to study in South Africa should also send their qualifications to SAQA for evaluation. UKZN will only accept the students if their qualification is rated as equivalent to a South African honours degree by SAQA. Access the SAQA website at [www.SAQA.org.za](http://www.SAQA.org.za). The form is also uploaded on Mobreed website.

For Academic/ Administrative staff, applicants should hold a MSc or PhD degree in Genetics, Biotechnology, Plant breeding, Agronomy, Biology or any related fields. Applicants 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.

### **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](mailto:lydia.sognon@gmail.com), International Cooperation Office, University of Abomey-Calavi, Republic of Benin. Contacts of HEIs representative are available on [www.mobreed.com](http://www.mobreed.com)



Applicants should submit completed application and all supporting documents in unique PDF file by email to [lydia.sognon@gmail.com](mailto:lydia.sognon@gmail.com) with copy to [mobreed.uac@gmail.com](mailto:mobreed.uac@gmail.com) by **November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019**. They should indicate in the subject line '*Application for MoBreed MSc/Staff exchange programme*'. Incomplete applications will be systematically rejected.

Applications should be sent to:

Mrs. Lydia Sognon, [lydia.sognon@gmail.com](mailto:lydia.sognon@gmail.com) with copy to [mobreed.uac@gmail.com](mailto:mobreed.uac@gmail.com)

### Contact information

Laboratory of Genetics, Horticulture and Seed Sciences (GBioS)

Faculty of Agronomic Sciences,

University of Abomey-Calavi

Address: PO Box: 01 BP 526 Cotonou, Benin

Phones : +229 21 36 11 19

Email : [mobreed.uac@gmail.com](mailto:mobreed.uac@gmail.com)



UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI



Ebonyi State University  
Abakaliki, Nigeria

