

AIRID AFRICA-WISE Fund: African Women in Science Empowerment Fund

About AIRID

The African Institute for Research in Infectious Diseases (AIRID) is an independent, non-profit research institution established in 2021 to strengthen Africa's capacity to prevent and control infectious and tropical diseases through rigorous, policy-relevant science. AIRID generates high-quality evidence to inform the design, evaluation, and optimisation of interventions tailored to African epidemiological and social contexts.

Guided by a vision to advance African-led science for disease elimination and public health resilience, AIRID is anchored in the principles of excellence, integrity, innovation, collaboration, equity, and measurable impact.

Programme Overview

The **AIRID AFRICA-WISE Fund** supports young women pursuing education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) across Africa. The inaugural cohort is open to women enrolled at public universities in Benin.

The programme seeks to:

- Support academic progression in STEM disciplines
- Promote gender equity within Benin's scientific workforce
- Strengthen the pipeline of women entering research careers
- Contribute to national research capacity and innovation systems

Through targeted, non-repayable financial support, AIRID aims to empower promising female students and reinforce a more inclusive and resilient scientific ecosystem.

Available Awards

For the 2026 cohort, the Fund will provide:

- Six (6) undergraduate awards of **150,000 FCFA**
- Five (5) Master's-level awards of **200,000 FCFA**

All awards are non-repayable grants intended to directly support academic progression.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- Be female
- Be enrolled in a STEM programme at a recognised public university in Benin
- Provide formal evidence of active enrolment
- Demonstrate commitment to programme completion
- Be aged 18–35 years
- Be a Beninese national or permanent resident

Eligible STEM disciplines include, but are not limited to:

Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Computer Science, Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, and Health Sciences.

Required Documentation

Applicants must submit:

- Completed application form

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- **Proof of current enrolment (mandatory)**
- Recent academic transcript
- **Faculty support letter (mandatory)**
- Copy of national ID, passport, or residence permit
- A brief personal statement outlining academic and professional goals

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Selection Process

Applications will be assessed by the AIRID AFRICA-WISE Fund Committee using the following criteria:

- Academic engagement and demonstrated progress
- Motivation and long-term commitment to STEM
- Strength and credibility of faculty endorsement
- Likelihood of benefit from the award

Successful candidates will be notified by email and invited to a monitoring and mentorship session with AIRID's Executive Director, Dr Corine Ngufor.

Recipient Expectations

Awardees are expected to:

- Maintain active enrolment throughout the award period
- Inform AIRID of any significant change in academic status
- Engage, where feasible, in AFRICA-WISE mentoring or outreach activities

Application Submission

Applications must be submitted electronically to:

 <https://airid-africa.com/public/philanthropy/airid-africa-wise-fund-2026/apply>

Our Website : www.airid-africa.com/

Application deadline: 31 March 2026

Through the AIRID AFRICA-WISE Fund, AIRID reaffirms its commitment to advancing women in science and strengthening African-led research capacity by investing in the next generation of African women scientists.