

## Call for Applications

### Pioneering Intellectual Property Programme for African Young Researchers 2022

In recognition of the role that research plays in sustaining economic growth and societal well-being in the region, many African countries have made significant investments to advance their science and technological capacity. A nation's research progress is often determined through quantifiable metrics such as the size of the tech talent pool, number of research institutions, publications and patents. The South African Young Academy of Science in partnership with the Academy of Science of South Africa, the Department of Science and Innovation, the Licensing Executives Society of South Africa, and the Thai Young Scientists Academy will host a four-part **Pioneering Intellectual Property Programme for African Young Researchers** over 4 weeks in August/September 2022.

Scientists and early career researchers play an important role in the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) landscape in Africa. Besides possessing expertise and experience, they are flexible to adapt to the rapid changing nature of STI and are at their most productive career stage. Young scientists are also future science leaders who can influence relevant policies through diplomacy and the implementation of STI to effectively address societal needs. As future leaders, being well-rounded and well-trained is vital.

Despite the significant STI progress that has been made by many African countries in the past decades, the region continues to play 'catch-up' to more established R&D-intensive nations; especially in the context of research translation into wealth creation. Unfortunately, many young researchers have limited knowledge on the fundamentals of intellectual property and many institutions in the region are ill-equipped with the ability to train these researchers. These challenges result in poor conceptualization and utilization of their research endeavours. In the developing world, Africa has the majority of her countries that are classified as Science and Technology Lagging Countries (STLCs) and most are Least Developed Countries (LDCs). This programme seeks to capacitate the least represented which will in future increase the uptake of research opportunities.

In recognition of the need to harness the talent and drive of young African researchers to better understand intellectual property in the context of their research, the Pioneering IP Programme for African Young Scientists has been established, adapted from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) programme. Through this initiative, we hope to create a pool of IP-competent African researchers who will champion the realisation of the STI potential in the region.

#### The objectives of the PIP Programme for African Young Researchers include to:

- provide opportunity for young researchers in Africa to get trained in the fundamentals of IP knowledge;
- provide a platform where young researchers can engage with IP experts, convene and network with professionals beyond their fields of expertise;
- stimulate a shift towards an academic culture that promotes interactions between scientists, industry, and business/investors.

#### Format of the Training

The PIP for African Young Researchers will be conducted virtually on an interactive platform. This is a certified training that involves robust participation in a total of four 3 hours workshops over an approximate period of 4 weeks.

#### Selection Criteria: PIP African Young Researchers Fellow

The Selection Committee seek to identify, select, and recognise young African researchers in all disciplines of sciences including engineering, natural sciences, medicine, social sciences, arts and the humanities as PIP Programme for African Young Researchers Fellows. To promote transparency, quality and equality, a maximum of **30 candidates** will be selected for this inaugural training programme.

**As of the 15 July 2022, the applicant must:**

- be an African citizen; i.e. holding citizenship in one of the African countries
- be ≤ 45 years old
- be an individual who has demonstrated excellent research track and interest in IP knowledge
- possess expertise in any field of sciences
- currently residing in one of the African countries
- Applications from women are highly encouraged

**Beyond research excellence, candidates should also be able to show an on-going commitment to service or delivering practical benefit from their work. Successful applicants are expected to demonstrate one or more of the following:**

- A continuing research/academic position at a research institute, institution of higher learning, or industry;
- A sustained record of outstanding scientific output;
- Interest in translating and communicating the results of their work to impact in society;
- Demonstrate leadership ability in research and beyond;
- Interest in collaborations across disciplines and sectors (e.g. industry, government, etc.);
- Commitment towards engaging in the activities of the fellowship; and
- Intent to share what is learned in the programme with their broader networks.

**Selection criteria and application process**

Applicants will need to display compelling evidence of their potential and interest in the program. This potential can be demonstrated in areas such as research excellence, project management, technology/invention awards, technology commercialization, consultancy, science advice, outreach etc. The selection process will not only consider these individual qualities but also focus on the possibility to further promote IP awareness (at national and/or regional), and opportunity to engage business partners. The final selection will be done by the appointed Selection Committee consisting of partner institutions' representatives.

All applicants have to provide three recommendation letters from their proposed referees (details are provided in the PIP Programme for African Young Researchers Fellowship Application Form). Please ensure that the support letters are sent from an accredited institutional email address. The referee should express their willingness towards supporting the fellow's professional development and their emerging role in promoting IP knowledge awareness.

Deadline for applications is **15 July 2022**.

Please contact: Email: [kholani@assaf.org.za](mailto:kholani@assaf.org.za) for further enquiries.