**FAQs**

**How much can we apply for?**

The total funding available for allocation for the ARUA-U21 Early Career Researcher Collaborative Awards in 2023 is US$75,000. You are eligible to apply for up to $15,000 for each project. If your application is for more than US$15,000 you may only receive part of the funding for which you asked.

**Can we apply for more than one award?**

An individual may make multiple applications in any annual award round, but no person can
participate in more than one ARUA-U21 Early Career Researcher Collaborative Awards project in any annual round.

**What is meant by a ‘U21 member’ and ‘ARUA member’?**

A U21/ARUA member is a university that is a member of the U21 or ARUA network. The [U21 website](https://universitas21.com/network/members) and [ARUA website](https://arua.org.za/member-universities/) have details on all current member universities. To meet the requirements for these awards, at least one ECR from each of the two networks (from a minimum of 2 countries) must be named in the proposed project.

**Why does each project have to span at least two countries?**

The aim of these awards is to facilitate international collaboration between ARUA and the U21 network, rather than just support regional bi-lateral research relationships. Working with ECRs from other countries and cultures can bring new dimensions and questions to your research. These awards are designed to support collaborative projects that draw on complementary strengths in the participating universities, not just mobility or exchange projects.

**What is meant by ‘Early Career Researchers’?**

This opportunity is for researchers who are within 8 years of completing their PhD with a competitive track record in their research area and experience of international collaborations.

**What sort of research projects will be funded?**

U21 and ARUA institutions are comprehensive universities with research strengths in many different subject areas. To help focus this funding round, only projects focusing on the following research areas will be considered:

* Food Security
* Climate and Development
* Water

We welcome the submission of subject-specific projects as well as inter/multi-disciplinary projects as long as they relate to the themes above. The selection committee will judge each project on its own merits.

**What can the funding be used for?**

These awards can be used to fund operational expenses associated with a particular research project. This may include but are not limited to:

* costs of virtual meetings and digital collaboration tools
* laboratory consumables
* field costs
* IT services etc.

Funding may not be used to:

* buy equipment.
* pay for fractional staff salaries.
* cover overheads/research office administration fees

Each application must include a budget outlining how the requested sum will be spent. If the application is for partial funding of a project, the budget must indicate how the ECR Collaborative Awards component of the funding will be spent, and the application should provide evidence that other sources of funding have already been secured or are likely or forthcoming.

**What happens if we don’t spend our entire award within 18 months?**

Ensure your deliverables are clear and achievable within the 18-month timeframe. At the end of the 18-month period a report will be required covering both research outputs and budget spend. If all funds have not been used at this point, U21 and ARUA will consult with the lead institution to determine if remaining funding can be accessed after the 18-month deadline or should be returned**.**

**What currency do I use in the budget?**

Please ensure that you use US$ for your budget, as that is the currency that funds for successful projects will be transferred in.

**Where will the project researchers be stationed?**
Researchers taking part in this award are expected to be stationed where best for them to conduct their research. This may be at their home institution (working with their partner remotely) or at the partner university. While some funding of travel may be permitted if justified, note that it would not be acceptable to use all the funding on subsistence and travel expenses.