



THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY
Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation)

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH

Call for 2026 Research Seed Grant Applications

The Directorate of Research (DoR) is pleased to announce its 2026 Annual Call for Proposals for Research Seed Grants. Seed Grants of up to One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Kwacha (K150,000.00) will be awarded to ten (10) successful applicants whose research projects demonstrate strong innovation potential, address pressing societal challenges, and show potential for attracting additional funding. This initiative is part of DoR's ongoing commitment to fostering impactful research and strengthening the University's contribution to national development. Researchers are encouraged to submit proposals that align with institutional priorities and reflect originality, relevance, and scalability.

Important Dates

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| Release Date: | 9 th January 2026 |
| Application Deadline: | 11 th March 2026 |
| Proposal Presentation: | 27 th March 2026 |
| Award Announced: | 1 st April 2026 |
| Funds Available: | 13 th April 2026 |

Award Information:

The Directorate of Research encourages applicants to design projects with long-term impact and sustainability. As such, proposals should include clear plans for securing follow-up funding beyond the initial seed grant. The funding period is twelve (12) months. In exceptional cases, a one-time extension of up to six (6) months may be granted, subject to valid justification and formal approval by DoR.

During implementation, grant holders will be required to submit progress reports every six months, with a comprehensive final report due at the end of the project period. Each funded researcher is expected to publish at least one article in a DoR-managed CBU online journal. Additionally, grant holders must actively participate in at least one DoR-organized event as a presenter, exhibitor, or contributor and are required to acknowledge DoR support in all related publications, presentations and future funding applications.

All grant recipients will be expected to deliver a presentation at a DoR-hosted symposium, media briefing, or other designated platform. Intellectual Property (IP) generated during the project shall remain the property of the Copperbelt University, unless otherwise agreed in writing with DoR.

Eligibility Criteria for the 2026 DoR Research Seed Grant

The 2026 Research Seed Grant is exclusively open to members of staff at the Copperbelt University. Priority will be given to projects that foster inter- and multidisciplinary collaboration across different Schools, Directorates, and Units within the University. The following are the eligibility criteria.

- (i) Employees of the Copperbelt University are eligible to apply.
- (ii) Early-career researchers are eligible to apply.
- (iii) Students are **not** eligible and are not eligible to be Co-PIs.
- (iv) Staff members who have received a DoR Seed Grant or Grants within the past 3 years are **not** eligible.
- (v) Applicants with five years or less remaining before retirement are **not** eligible.
- (vi) Staff currently on study leave or studying outside Zambia are **not** eligible.
- (vii) Projects that involve staff from across disciplines/schools (interdisciplinary collaborations) in the university stand a high chance of being funded
- (viii) Female researchers are highly encouraged to apply.

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit a concise yet comprehensive research proposal that includes the following components:

- (i) **Relevance:** Proposals must demonstrate a clear focus on addressing societal challenges, show strong potential for innovation, and present a realistic pathway for attracting future funding
- (ii) **Research Goals and Significance:** Clearly state the objectives of the proposed research, its relevance, and its potential societal impact, particularly in alignment with Zambia's Eighth National Development Plan (8th NDP), the African Agenda and the SDGs.
- (iii) **Research Team Composition:** Provide a brief overview of the research team, including collaborators and the schools or directorates represented and their respective roles.
- (iv) **Interdisciplinary Scope:** For individual applicants, describe how the project integrates perspectives or methodologies from multiple disciplines.
- (v) **Expected Outputs:** Outline the anticipated outputs from the research (research products).
- (vi) **Expected Outcomes:** Outline the potential impact or contributions of the research to development.
- (vii) **Sustainability Plan:** Include a strategy for securing follow-on funding beyond the seed grant period.
- (viii) **Project Timeline:** Present a realistic timeline covering key phases and milestones of the project.
- (ix) **Curriculum Vitae:** Attach a CV (maximum two pages) for both the Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), if applicable.
- (x) **Budget:** Provide a detailed budget with justification for each line item.
- (xi) **Gant Chart:** Provide a detailed timeline with a defined period for each research activity.

Utilization of Funds

Approved Use

Research seed grant funds must be used strictly within the approved project period and in accordance with the contract, submitted proposal, and any supporting documentation requested by DoR. All expenditures must align with the agreed scope and objectives of the project.

Project Duration

The funded research project must be completed within twelve (12) months from the date of grant award.

Deviations from the Approved Plan

Any proposed changes to the original or approved project plan must be submitted in advance for approval by DoR. No activities outside the agreed scope may commence without written consent.

Revised Plans and Budgets

If changes are approved, the Grant Holder must submit a revised project plan and budget. Where applicable, quotations from service providers must be included, especially if part of the work will be outsourced.

Ineligible Expenditures

The Copperbelt University does not cover the following items and activities under the DoR Research Seed Grant and must not be included in the project budget:

- (i) Personal expenses of any kind
- (ii) Salaries, wages, or consultancy fees for the researchers,
- (iii) Intellectual Property protection costs
- (iv) Expenditure on laptops, computing devices or software applications.
- (v) All forms of indirect costs (e.g. overheads and Administration Fees).
- (vi) Any other expenditure not directly related to the approved research activities.

Additional Proposal Evaluation Criteria

To be considered for funding, proposals must demonstrate the following:

- (i) **Innovation and Cost-Effectiveness:** The project should present novel ideas, creative approaches, and offer good value for the resources requested.
- (ii) **Sustainability:** Proposals should outline a clear pathway for continuity beyond the seed grant period, including plans for future funding or scale-up.
- (iii) **Completeness:** All required components of the proposal must be thoroughly addressed and clearly presented.
- (iv) **Overall Quality:** The proposal should reflect clarity, coherence, and academic rigour in its design, methodology, and presentation.

To Apply: Send all application material as one PDF document to dor.sec@cbu.ac.zm and copy to the Research Development Officer, (mwale.mumba@cbu.ac.zm and mwale.chisha@gmail.com)

Inquiries:

Please direct any questions to the Research Development Officer: mwale.mumba@cbu.ac.zm and mwale.chisha@gmail.com or call +260 96 648 6398.