



Intra-Africa Mobility Scheme

**Mobility for Plant Genomics Scholars to accelerate climate-smart adaptation options and food security in Africa
(GENESII)**

SCHOLARSHIP HOLDER'S GUIDE (2024-2027)



(September 2024)

Congratulations on your selection!

Dear Scholarship holder,

Congratulations on being awarded a scholarship through the Intra-Africa Mobility GENESII Project! We have prepared this guide to help you understand what to expect and the steps you need to take before, during, and after your mobility period. The Management Team of the coordinating institution, the Ebonyi State University, wishes you an enriching academic and personal experience!

Welcoming words

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The preparation of your mobility period in the framework of the GENESII Project is **a process that should be conducted carefully and always in strict cooperation with the persons responsible for your mobility and ~~for your~~ activities.**

Through this Scholarship holder Guide, we seek to provide you with the most relevant information about all aspects to be considered during the whole implementation of your mobility period, including the period before you reach your host country and also the period after your mobility.

This Guide is structured in a simple way, so that you may easily find the information regarding each of the essential topics for the correct preparation of your mobility and focus on each of the stages you are in:

- ✓ **Preparation of the mobility period**
- ✓ **Upon arrival at the host institution and during the mobility period**
- ✓ **Finishing the mobility period**
- ✓ **Scholarship Holder Section**
- ✓ **Contact details**
- ✓ **Check list**

However, we urge **you to read the entire Guide immediately after selection notification and keep it close**, so that you are perfectly **aware**, since the first moment, of all the forthcoming procedures.

The project's coordinating team will be delighted to answer any further questions, which should be addressed to the email: h.oselebe@gmail.com and copy_genes2intra@gmail.com. A close connection between scholarship holders, host institutions, and the project's coordinator allows for more efficient preparation of the mobility process, contributing significantly to the successful implementation of your mobility period.

Therefore, please feel free to contact us whenever you need support at any stage of your mobility period. We are confident this will be a life-changing experience for you, and we are committed to making it as smooth as possible.

The GENESII project coordination wishes you a wonderful mobility experience, both academically and personally.

A. Preparation of the mobility period

Important: Rights and obligations of the scholarship holder:

It is crucial that you are aware, from the very beginning of the mobility preparation period, of your rights and obligations within the framework of the GENESII Project. These are clearly mentioned in the **Scholarship Acceptance Statement**, which you are required to sign, and in the **Student/Staff Agreement**, which you will sign either before or upon arrival at your host university.

You are strongly advised to review these documents at this stage. If you have any doubts, please feel free to contact the GENESII Management Team at any time through the designated contact person at the Ebonyi State University (see the section D, **Contacts at Partner Institutions**)

A1. Visa

The next step regarding the preparation of your mobility is obtaining a **visa**. This should be considered a high priority, as the process can sometimes take several months to complete.

Therefore, immediately after receiving the selection confirmation from the GENESII Project through the **nomination letter**, and letter of admission from host institution (for PhD candidates), you should contact the Consulate or Embassy of the host country which is closest to your residence. Request information about all documents you need to provide and the procedures you must follow. This is extremely important, as the requirements vary depending on your home and host country.

It is also extremely important to contact directly the person responsible for organizing your mobility in the host institution (**contact person**), as a way to confirm the necessary procedures for obtaining a visa. The contact details are available in the **section E** of this Guide.

In order to obtain the visa, one of the documents that you will need is the **formal Acceptance Letter** issued by **the host university** which will be sent by e-mail (if requested). It is crucial that you submit your visa request as soon as you receive the copy of your letter by e-mail. Please explain to the Embassy/Consulate staff the urgent need to start the visa procedures and **inform the coordinating institution and also the host university in case you experience some problems or difficulties in communicating with the Embassy/Consulate.**

A **Formal Acceptance Letter** issued by your **host institution** may also be requested by the Consulate/Embassy. This document is to be issued by **your host university after receiving your nomination letter**. In case this does not happen, please request your host institution to issue this document as soon as possible. The requesting e-mail should be sent to the contact person of your host institution, indicating the Consulate/Embassy deadline for presenting the original document. Please send the

email with copy to the coordinating institution so that we can ask our partners to be more diligent in the process.

It is important to note that, in some cases the Consulate/Embassy may require a flight ticket in order to issue the visa.

Important » Scholarship holders are responsible for ensuring that they obtain the correct visa to undertake the planned activities in the host country and that it allows them to travel on the specified date.

A2. Starting date and duration of the mobility period

The mobility period which you will undertake in the host institution has a specific duration, according to the type of mobility:

- ❖ **Master students:** 12 months maximum
- ❖ **Doctorate students:** 36 months maximum
- ❖ **Academic staff:** 2 months maximum
- ❖ **Trainees:** 3 months maximum

The consortium sets the start date for mobility activities based on the host institution's academic calendar. The exact dates for the program of activities must be agreed upon by the scholarship holder, the host institution, and the home institution, and may therefore be subject to slight changes.

These start and end dates will serve as references for booking travel, subscribing to insurance, and setting the scholarship payment schedule by the host institution. For Master's, Doctorate, and Academic Staff mobility, the dates must be agreed upon between the scholarship holder and both the home and host institutions. These dates will then become the reference for insurance and scholarship payments.

It is crucial that the scholarship holder confirms the exact mobility dates with the institutions since these are determinant to every aspect related to the mobility.

Important: In case of error in indicating the exact mobility dates (that may have serious implications in the organization of the mobility period), the host institution reserves the right to demand the reimbursement of any expenses overpaid to the scholarship holders based on wrong information.

The entire mobility period must be **uninterruptedly** spent at the host institution. Some exceptions may be allowed by the coordinating institution as long as they receive the former and written approval from the host institution. These very few exceptions are clearly indicated in the Student/Staff Agreement (please read it again so that you have all information).

A3. Learning Agreement/Mobility Agreement

The activities foreseen to be developed during the mobility period at the host institution must be agreed between the scholarship holder and the host university. Depending on your type of mobility, you will need to fill in and sign one of the following documents:

a. Learning and student Agreements for credit-seeking and degree mobility students (Master and Doctorate)

b. Mobility Agreement for Academic staff.

a. Learning Agreement for credit-seeking and degree-seeking mobility students (Master and Doctorate):

The academic recognition of the subjects and research activities undertaken in the host institution during your mobility period, and assured by your home institution, is one of the most important aspects of this project and is foreseen in the guidelines of the Intra Africa Mobility Scheme. **The full academic recognition** means that the period during which you undertake your studies in the host institution will formally be recognized by your home institution as an integral part of your course in your home country.

By signing the Learning Agreement for credit-seeking mobility students, provided by the coordinating institution, your home institution formally agrees to fully recognize the studies and research conducted at the host institution. All activities with a passing grade at the host institution will be recognized upon your return and submission of a request for recognition.

To correctly complete the Learning Agreement, you should first discuss with the relevant persons at both your home and host institutions which activities will be developed and how they will be recognized.

The standard reference number of ECTS credits per semester is 30¹, so you should keep this in mind when preparing your activity plan. All activities must be recognized by the home institution. Once the document is duly completed, it must be saved, printed, and signed. The fully signed version should be sent to the coordinating institution, copying your home institution.

The original document must be sent by post to the coordinating institution after it has been signed by you, your home institution, and the host institution.

If there are no direct equivalent subjects, the document must include an explicit reference to the assurance of academic recognition for the subjects undertaken at the

¹ The minimum number accepted will be 25 ECTS per semester.

host institution as part of your course at the home institution. It is extremely important to remember that whenever a change is made to the initially signed document (e.g., a change of subject at the host institution), **a new Learning Agreement for credit-seeking mobility students must be completed and signed**. Failure to do so may result in serious consequences regarding the completion of your mobility. The new document will replace the old one.

b. Mobility Agreement for academic staff:

In order to formally establish the agreement between the scholarship holder, the home and the host institutions regarding the work plan, the document [Mobility Agreement for Staff](#) must be signed.

After discussing the programme with the responsible person at the home and host institutions, the document must be integrally filled in, printed, signed and sent to the host institution and the coordinating institution. **The original document must be sent to your host institution.**

It is extremely important to remember that whenever a change is made to the initially signed document, **a new [Mobility Agreement for Staff](#)** must be completed, signed, and sent to all involved institutions. The new document will replace the old one. Please note that no further changes should be made after one week from the start of the mobility to ensure that all mobility requirements are fulfilled within the established deadlines. Failure to comply may result in serious consequences regarding the completion of your mobility. This is a crucial procedure that all scholarship holders must remember once they arrive at the host institution.

4. Accommodation

All matters regarding accommodation must be directly addressed to the host institution, which will provide you with relevant information about available accommodation, costs, and conditions.

You should therefore contact the mobility coordinator or designated contact person at your host institution, who will assist you in finding appropriate accommodation. Keep in mind that it may not always be possible to guarantee accommodation on the institution's campus, so you are encouraged to inquire about all types of available accommodation and select the most suitable option.

To ensure full support for our scholarship holders, the consortium has made it mandatory for all scholarship holders to have accommodation booked before departing for the host institution. Consequently, all partner institutions are required to ensure that scholarship holders have secured accommodation in the host city before their departure.

Once the accommodation is booked, all scholarship holders must comply with the minimum stay at the booked accommodation. Any violation of this policy will result in the scholarship holder being responsible for paying any fees incurred due to booking cancellation.

If your host institution is not providing adequate support with accommodation, please contact the coordinating institution for further assistance. In some cases, you may need to present an address in the host country for visa purposes. If this applies to you, we recommend informing the host institution of this requirement so they can assist you as soon as possible.

If you have some difficulties in contacting the host institution in this or any other matter, please contact the coordinating institution immediately, explaining the difficulties encountered.

5. Language courses

For short-term mobility scholarship holders (less than 10 months), the enrolment in one language course is optional and host institution may not have the possibility of covering the associated costs. You can obtain the specific and most updated information regarding the language courses available at the host institution directly with the host institution's contact person. In case you are interested in attending a language course at the host institution, please contact the person responsible for your mobility (contact person) at the host institution as soon as possible and preferably before the beginning of your mobility flow. Nevertheless, the scholarship holders must always inform the host institution and have his agreement before registering **in a language course, indicating the institution providing the course and the duration of the course. All the supporting documents related to this matter must also be submitted to the host institution.**

6. Travel and beginning of the mobility

The current mobility scholarship does not include the payment of the travel expenses with a return ticket. The payment of the travel ticket should be covered by the scholarship holder.

Important » The mobility will start once the scholarship holder has the following documents: Statement of Scholarship Acceptance and confirmation that they are not under any other scholarship coverage, which confirms your interest in benefiting from the mobility scholarship awarded;

A copy of the **visa** to the host country **or** information of the host institution, Embassy or Consulate stating that the visa is not necessary **or** copy of the passport which proves the local nationality;

- ❖ **Mobility Dates** (starting and ending) agreed with your host and home (if applicable) institutions; **Learning Agreement / Mobility Agreement for Staff**

Fully approved and duly signed by the scholarship holder, the home and host institutions.

The difference between the start date in the learning agreement and the travel date of the candidate must not exceed seven days.

8. Insurance

The host institution will provide a collective insurance to all the scholarship holders, following the requirements of the European Commission: health, accident and travel. This is mentioned in the nomination letter in order to give answer to all requests regarding the visa procedure.

The local project management team may contact you to request information needed to establish your insurance. Since travel expenses are the responsibility of the scholarship holder, travel insurance for your journey to the host country must be covered by you.

Insurance for the mobility period will be arranged directly by your host institution once you provide the required information and confirm your departure date to the host country

9. Questionnaire

The home institution could organize a preparatory meeting with the selected scholarship holders in order to clarify all doubts and give the necessary support at this stage.

Following this meeting, you may be asked to fill in the questionnaire regarding the preparatory meeting that will be provided to you.

B. Upon arrival at the host institution and during the mobility period

B1. Meeting with the contact person at the host institution

Immediately after arrival at the host institution, you should:

- ❖ **Meet the contact person of your host institution** to have the first meeting. In this welcoming meeting, you will receive information on several important aspects for the smooth implementation of your mobility flow:
 - **opening of a bank account in the host country (if applicable);**
 - **registration procedures at the local authorities;**
 - **student facilities and registration at the host institution;**
 - **any other necessary procedures at this stage.**
- ❖ **Hand out the original boarding passes of your travel to the contact person and send the scan copy to the coordinating institution.** Later on, all the documents will be sent to the coordinating institution by the host institution. *In*

case you have lost your boarding passes, you must be sure that you are able to provide a statement issued by the flights company confirming your travel or a copy of the passport with a stamp of the authorities confirming you entered the host country.

- ❖ **In case you travel by road, make sure you receive at the border stamp in your passport as a proof that you have travelled.** Hand out these receipts to the contact person at the host institution and send the scan copy to the coordinating institution.
- ❖ Hand out the receipt of the visa obtention to the contact person at the host institution for reimbursement.
- ❖ If you open a **bank account** at the host country **to** receive your stipend, you have to provide the details of the bank account to the host institution. In case of direct payment or any other mean of payment you have to follow the instruction of the accountant to allow the traceability of your payments.
- ❖ Fill in, print, sign the **Student/Staff Agreement** and send the scan copy to the host and coordinating institutions.

B2. Scholarship

The monthly amount of the mobility scholarships was previously defined by the EACEA (Executive Agency) and is different according to the type of mobility:

- **Master** students - **EUR 890**;
- **Doctorate** students – **EUR 1230**;
- **Academic** staff – **EUR 2370**.

This monthly allowance is designed to be used for covering the payment of your accommodation, your subsistence and all the costs regarding your stay in the host country.

The payment of the scholarship will be done on a monthly basis, according to the information in the **Student/Staff Agreement**.

Scholarship Schedule:

1. The scholarship payment will be organized as follows:

- a. The 1st scholarship corresponding to the first month of mobility will be paid directly by the host institution after the arrival of the scholarship holder.
- b. All other payments will be done uninterruptedly throughout the duration of the mobility and on a monthly basis.

c. As from the 2nd monthly scholarship on, all scholarships will be paid during the **first week** of each given month by the host institution.

2. The total number of scholarships awarded is directly related to the exact period of the mobility in the host institution.

3. To calculate the exact mobility period, the informatics' system uses the activities dates or, in case the scholarship holder arrives to the host institution after the beginning of activities, the travel dates. **The scholarship holders will only be granted a scholarship for their exact period of stay at the host institution and not the initially foreseen period of stay.**

4. The studying duration in months is equal to duration in days divided by 30 (which is the average number of calendar days between start and end). The result (2 decimals) is rounded to the nearest integer. If the decimals are < 49, thus the number of months is rounded down. If the decimals are > 50, then the number of months is rounded up.

5. In all cases, the project will pay the global amount of the monthly scholarship, and no fractions.

6. **The Project cannot provide the scholarship holders or their relatives with any additional funds for instalment.**

7. The first scholarship can only be paid after the scholarship holder's arrival to the host institution and once the signed Student/Staff Agreement and bank account details are sent to the host institution.

B3. Requests for reimbursement of expenses in the framework of the starting of the mobility

The coordinating institution will consider the possibility of reimbursing other expenses which deserved to be reimbursed following a reception of the scanned copy by the coordinating institution.

The **reimbursement request** must be done within the limit of 30 days upon the start of the mobility period.

For academic staff only » in case the scholarship holder wants to request the reimbursement of expenses, he may indicate his bank account in home country. All expenses will be reimbursed at once and the transfer expenses will be covered only once by the coordinating institution.

Eligible expenses:

- Payment of visa costs or residence permit

Non-eligible expenses:

- Taxi expenses: when referring to great distances, namely between two cities, these expenses have to be properly justified. In case there is an alternative transport, namely bus or train, there will be no reimbursement.
- Accommodation expenses
- Food expenses
- Expenses with post/mail for sending documents without valid destination reference
- Fuel costs
- Costs with extra luggage etc,

Important » The coordinating institution will only consider the receipts of expenses issued in a **stamped official paper of the responsible entity**, due to our financial management rules. Without this and the reimbursement request, any eligible expense will not be considered as so.

Reimbursements of expenses with authentications and recognition of signatures may only be considered when the receipts are properly identified with your name and when accompanied with a document which clearly states the demand of the Embassy/Consulate for these acts. In case the Embassy/Consulate demands the visa payment by bank transfer, we may only consider the receipts which clearly state the name of the recipient.

B4. Monitoring

The host institution will organize, on the first days after your arrival, a welcoming meeting with the incoming scholarship holders in order to clarify all doubts and give the necessary support at this stage. Furthermore, for all students and researchers, the host university will organize regular monitoring meetings, which are mandatory, in order to check the status of the mobility.

Host institutions are responsible for monitoring the scholarship holders also at an academic level. **In case you feel any difficulty (e.g. integration, communication with professors, etc.) you must inform the contact person of your host institution.** For all long-term mobility flows, the coordinating institution will request a formal midterm assessment either in the form of Transcript of Records or a formal report by the supervisor (depending on the type of activities to be developed).

B5. Questionnaires

Progress Questionnaire

It is mandatory to fill in a progress questionnaire about the implementation of the mobility period. This questionnaire will be provided to the scholarship holder by project consortium and will help to improve the services offered.

B6. Promotional activities

The communication office of the host institution may request some information intended to the promotion and the visibility activities of the project.

C. Finishing the mobility period

C1. Boarding passes

If you are a **scholarship holder coming from a partner institution**, you must hand in (the scanned and the hard copies) of the boarding passes of the return flight to the home institution's contact person and copy the coordinating institution while sending the scanned copies.

If you are a **scholarship holder coming from a non-partner institution**, you must send the boarding passes of the return flight to the project coordination [to the address](#) indicated in the contact details (**section E**).

Important » Regardless of the case, you must always send a copy of the boarding passes within one week after the return to the home country.

In case you have lost your boarding passes, you must be sure that you are able to provide us with a statement issued by the flights company confirming your travel or a copy of the passport with a stamp of the authorities confirming you left the host country. These documents must also be uploaded online.

C2. Transcript of Records / Report of Activities

In case you have **attended courses** at the host institution, you must ensure that the host institution provides you or directly to your home institution the **transcript of records** with your grades and uploads this document directly online.

If you have **NOT attended courses** at the host institution, you must ensure that the host institution have to provide you a certificate for the undertaken activities.

C3. Comments about the experience

It is extremely important for the consortium's coordination to share with all the participants the experiences of the GENESII scholarship holders. Being so, we would like to receive, just after the end of the mobility, a short text about your experience and some photos. We will be delighted to publish them in our website and social media as well. You may access the project's Newsletters in our website: <https://GENESII-intrafrica.org/>

C4. Final Questionnaire

You will be requested to fill in the final questionnaire related to your mobility implementation at the end of your mobility. This questionnaire will be provided to you by the host institution. The document must be filled **at the latest 30 days upon completion/ending of your mobility**.

Filling in the Student/Staff Agreement:

This document should be filled in by the scholarship holders before arrival to the host institution. The document will be automatically validated after signature of the host institution.

If you experience some difficulties in filling in or finding any information, please inform the coordinating institution immediately so that specific support may be provided to you.

D. Contact details

Contacts at Partner Institutions

Universities	Countries	Names	Emails
Ebonyi State University	Nigeria	Prof. Happiness O. Oselebe	h.oselebe@gmail.com
Ebonyi State University	Nigeria	Prof. Celestine A. Afiukwa	afiukwa@yahoo.com
University of Abomey-Calavi (UAC)	Republic of Benin	Prof. Dr. Enoch G. Achigan-Dako	e.adako@gmail.com
University of Abomey-Calavi (UAC)	Republic of Benin	Prof. V.Nicodeme Fassinou Hotegni	nicodemef@gmail.com
Jimma University	Ethiopia	Prof. Wosene G. Abtew	wosish@yahoo.com
Egerton University	Kenya	Dr. Pascal O. Ojwang	poojwang@gmail.com
North West University	South Africa	Prof Sydney Mavengahama	sydney.Mavengahama@nwu.ac.za
University of Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Prof. Edmore Gasura (joined online)	gasurae@yahoo.com
University of Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Dr. Rose Tafadzwa Masekesa	rosetaffy1@gmail.com

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Phone: (+234) 708 188 1320

Prof. Happiness O. Oselebe - Coordinator GENESII Project
Ebonyi State University of Nigeria

F. Check List

Before leaving to the host institution:

- Carefully read the Scholarship Holder's Guide
- Assure the necessary documents are gathered to facilitate your trip
- Sign Learning Agreement/Mobility Agreement for Staff in contact with the contact person or the responsible person at (home and) host institution
- Attend the preparatory meeting with all partners– for scholarship holders coming from partner universities
- Define starting and ending dates of the mobility period with the contact/responsible person at host institution
- Ensure your accommodation is booked (request support of the host institution if needed)

Receive the accordance of the host institution before traveling

After arriving to the host institution and during mobility period

- Attend the welcoming meeting at the host institution
- Open a bank account if applicable
- Handout boarding passes and reimbursement requests to the contact person/responsible person at the host institution
- Update the Learning Agreement/Mobility Agreement for Staff if there are any changes to the initial one
- Attend the monitoring meeting(s) with responsible staff at the host institution – *students and researchers only*

Upon return to the home country:

- Assure that the host institution send the Transcript of Records/Report of Activities
- Send to the coordinator the boarding passes of the return travel
- Send to the coordinator the comments on the experience lived
- Fill in the final mobility questionnaire

I confirm that I have read this guide and agree to adhere to the instructions

Signature:

Name:

Date: