



# Africa Centre of Excellence Centre for Public Health and Toxicological Research University of Port Harcourt



## ACE-PUTOR INSTITUTIONAL POLICY DOCUMENT ON SEED GRANTS

***PUTOR...redefining the art of high impact public health/toxicological research and education in Africa***

## **Table of Contents**

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
TRAINING PHILOSOPHY .....	3
VISION OF THE CENTRE .....	3
MISSION OF THE CENTRE .....	3
OBJECTIVES OF THE CENTRE .....	3
<b>ACE-PUTOR SEED GRANTS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
OBJECTIVES .....	4
1. <i>To provide financial support to students conducting groundbreaking research in public health, nursing and toxicology.....</i>	<i>4</i>
2. <i>To encourage innovative solutions to public health challenges through research .....</i>	<i>4</i>
3. <i>To strengthen partnerships between the institution, industry, and policymakers.....</i>	<i>5</i>
4. <i>To promote sustainable development through applied research .....</i>	<i>5</i>
GRANT CATEGORIES .....	5
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA .....	6
APPLICATION PROCESS .....	6
ASSESSMENT OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST .....	6
AWARD DISBURSEMENT .....	6
MONITORING AND EVALUATION .....	7
<b>STAKEHOLDERS, MEMBERS, AND PARTNER REPRESENTATIVES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
INTERNAL .....	7
EXTERNAL .....	7
MEMBERS OF THE SEED GRANT ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (SGAC) .....	7
MEMBERS OF THE SEED GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE (SGRC) .....	8
<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR SEED GRANT .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>10</b>
ACE-PUTOR FACILITIES TO SUPPORT RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION .....	10

## **Introduction**

The African Higher Education Centres of Excellence Project called ACE IMPACT Project (<https://ace.aau.org/about-ace-impact/>) aims to build regional capacity to deliver high quality postgraduate courses, conduct and disseminate high impact applied research focused on addressing challenges in sub-Saharan Africa. To this end, the African Centre of Excellence for Public health and Toxicological Research ACE-PUTOR ([www.aceputoruniport.edu.ng](http://www.aceputoruniport.edu.ng)) of the University of Port Harcourt, serves as a platform for providing inter-disciplinary academic stream of postgraduate programmes and rapidly bridge the current paucity of adequately trained personnel with terminal degrees in public health, toxicology, nutrition, and nursing and midwifery in sub-Saharan Africa. PUTOR has broad-based partnership with academic institutions, public sector and the industries who contribute to the curriculum development and training programmes under the Centre.

## **Training Philosophy**

The philosophy of the programme is to promote equity, excellence, and integrity. This is premised on developing the knowledge, skills, and competences of students from diverse academic backgrounds but with creative minds who are desirous to acquire more skills and experiences that would prepare them for leadership roles in public health.

## **Vision of the Centre**

To be a centre for innovative research and academic training, recognised for local relevance, international excellence and global impacts in public health, toxicology and nursing sciences

## **Mission of the Centre**

To provide an enabling environment for students and faculties to discover and nurture their full potentials in delivering innovative research and human capacity development.

## **Objectives of the Centre**

- i. To develop and effectively manage relevant postgraduate programmes in public health, toxicology and nursing science.
- ii. To deliver relevant short courses in public health, toxicology and nursing science to mid-career professionals.
- iii. To enhance participation of students and faculties in internships & exchange experiences.
- iv. To develop local, regional and international partnerships and linkages with industries, public sectors and academic institutions.
- v. To implement priority interventions focused on remediation of developmental challenges related to public health, toxicology, and nursing.

## **ACE-PUTOR SEED GRANTS**

The Africa Centre of Excellence in Public Health & Toxicological Research (ACE-PUTOR), University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria, recognizes the importance of fostering research and innovation among its students. To this end, the Centre, alongside its stakeholders, offers "Seed Grants" to deserving students in three categories: **Gold**, **Silver**, and **Bronze**. These grants aim to support cutting-edge research, promote academic excellence, and contribute to solving critical public health challenges in Africa.

### **Objectives**

- To provide financial support to students and faculty conducting groundbreaking research in public health, nursing and toxicology.
- To encourage innovative solutions to public health challenges through research.
- To strengthen partnerships between the institution, industry, and policymakers.
- To promote sustainable development through applied research.

#### **1. To provide financial support to students conducting groundbreaking research in public health, nursing and toxicology**

This objective seeks to empower students by providing the necessary financial resources to conduct innovative research in public health, nursing and toxicology. The goal is to enable students to undertake research that may otherwise be unfeasible due to financial constraints. By offering funding for equipment, fieldwork, and other essential research needs, ACE-PUTOR encourages students to explore new avenues in health science, aiming for breakthroughs that can improve healthcare systems and public health outcomes, especially in Africa where such research is critically needed to address various health challenges.

#### **2. To encourage innovative solutions to public health challenges through research**

This objective focuses on fostering creativity and innovation among students to address public health issues in Africa. ACE-PUTOR encourages research projects that not only study existing health problems but also propose novel solutions, interventions, or strategies that can make a

tangible difference in communities. Through this grant, students are motivated to think beyond traditional methods, pushing boundaries in toxicology, nursing and public health research, which can lead to new policies, technologies, or practices that combat diseases, improve environmental health, or enhance overall public health resilience in Africa.

### **3. To strengthen partnerships between the institution, industry, and policymakers**

Collaboration between academia, industry, and policymakers is vital for translating research into real-world impact. This objective aims to bridge the gap between research findings and their application by fostering relationships between ACE-PUTOR, healthcare industries, government agencies, and public health organizations. By building these partnerships, the institution ensures that the research supported by its grants contributes to evidence-based policymaking, product development, and practical interventions. The ultimate aim is to ensure that innovations from students' research are effectively implemented to address pressing health issues across Africa.

### **4. To promote sustainable development through applied research**

Sustainability is key to long-term public health improvements. This objective promotes research that not only provides immediate solutions to public health problems but also considers their long-term impact. ACE-PUTOR encourages projects that align with sustainable development goals (SDGs), focusing on health issues that intersect with environmental, economic, and social sustainability. By funding applied research, the institution supports initiatives that can be scaled, adapted, and sustained within communities, ensuring that the benefits of the research extend far beyond the grant period, contributing to ongoing public health advancements across Africa.

## **Grant Categories**

1. **Gold Grant:** The highest level of funding for large-scale, high-impact research projects. This will attract One Million Five Hundred Thousand Naira Only (N1,500,000) and an award letter/medal
2. **Silver Grant:** For mid-sized projects with significant potential for public health impact. This will attract One Million Naira Only (N1,000,000) and an award letter/medal

3. **Bronze Grant:** For pilot or preliminary research projects that show promise for future growth. This will attract Five Hundred Thousand Naira Only (N500,000) and an award letter/medal

## **Eligibility Criteria**

- Applicants must be students of ACE-PUTOR enrolled in a master's or Ph.D. program.
- Research proposals must align with ACE-PUTOR's core areas: public health, toxicology, nursing, environmental health, or related fields.
- Applicants must demonstrate strong academic records and research potential.

## **Application Process**

1. Applicants must submit a detailed research proposal outlining the objectives, methodology, expected outcomes, and budget.
2. Applications will be reviewed by a Grant Review Committee (GRC), which includes members from ACE-PUTOR, stakeholders, and partner representatives.
3. Award decisions will be based on the quality of the proposal, potential impact, and feasibility.

## **Assessment of Expression of Interest**

All submission will be blinded to ensure no personal identifiable information of the applicant is in the document. Assessment 5 independent assessors will be double blinded and average of all scores by the five assessors will be collated and ranked to get the winners of the Seed Grant.

## **Award Disbursement**

- Grants will be disbursed in tranches, with subsequent payments based on satisfactory progress reports.
- Progress reports must be submitted quarterly to the GRC, detailing milestones achieved and financial expenditures.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Awardees will be assigned a mentor from the faculty or stakeholder community who will guide the project.
  - A final report and presentation are required upon completion of the research.
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## **Stakeholders, Members, and Partner Representatives**

### **Internal and External Stakeholders**

#### **Internal**

1. **University of Port Harcourt, Africa Centre of Excellence in Public Health & Toxicological Research, Entrepreneurship Centre, Technology Park, Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Office**
  - **Role:** Provides strategic guidance and oversight on research priorities and grant allocation. They ensure that the research aligns with institutional and national public health goals.
  - **Representatives:** DVC (R&D), Centre Leader of ACE-PUTOR, Director UPEC, Director IPTTO

#### **External**

2. **External Collaborators (EC)**
  - **Role:** Industry partners, international research institutions, and health organizations that offer technical and financial support. They also facilitate knowledge exchange and provide resources for fieldwork.
  - **Representative:** Partner agencies.

### **Members of the Seed Grant Administrative Committee (SGAC)**

1. **Chair:** VC, University of Port Harcourt
2. **Vice Chair:** DVC R&D, University of Port Harcourt.

3. **Member:** Centre Leader of ACE-PUTOR.
4. **Member:** Director, Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Office (IPPTO).
5. **Member:** Director of the Entrepreneurship Centre (EC).
6. **Member:** Chairman of the Technology Park (TP).
7. **Student Representative:** non-faculty student representative in the ACE-PUTOR Management.
8. **Co-Chairman** of the ACE-PUTOR Consults and Investment Limited

### Members of the Seed Grant Review Committee (SGRC)

1. Prof Peter.J. Kpolovie
2. Prof Alice Nte
3. Prof Iheanyi Okonko
4. Prof Emmanuel Okonta
5. Prof Chinedu Echem

### Assessment Criteria For Seed Grant

Criteria	Weighting	Description	Actual Score
<b>Originality &amp; Innovation</b>	30%	Is the idea novel and unique? Does it have potential for significant innovation?	
<b>Feasibility</b>	25%	Are the methods, timeline, and resources realistic for achieving the research objectives?	
<b>Potential Impact</b>	30%	What is the expected contribution to the field? Can it be commercialized or patented?	
<b>Clarity of Proposal</b>	15%	Is the proposal clear, well-structured, and effectively communicates the research objectives?	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>		



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## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this policy framework for seed grant ensures transparency, accountability, and support for innovative postgraduate research, driving positive outcomes for both the institution and the broader society. The process was done fairly and transparently, and winners were given the awards and other recognition

## Appendices

### ACE-PUTOR facilities to support research, innovation and commercialization



ACE-PUTOR Main Building hosting offices, lecture halls and laboratories



ACE-PUTOR Multipurpose Building hosting Testing Laboratory, Seed Grants & Mentorship Hubs

# ARCHITECTURAL WORKING DRAWING

## PROPOSED FACTORY DEVELOPMENT FOR AFRICAN CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND TOXICOLOGY RESEARCH



**LOCATION:**  
UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT  
(ALONG EAST-WEST ROAD),  
OBIO/AKPOR LOCAL GOVT. AREA,  
RIVERS STATE



### CONSULTANTS:



ECHO - FUSION WORKS

ARCHITECTURAL  
DESIGN AND BUILDING  
CONSTRUCTION

ADDRESS:  
NO 26 OQUOTO STREET,  
TRANS-EKPLU,  
ENUGU STATE.

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### CLIENT:

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT,  
RIVERS STATE

**DATE:**  
NOVEMBER, 2024

Proposed ACE-PUTOR Factory Building with 3 Production Suites