



# WARILab Youth Spark Innovation Grants (YSiG+) Application Template

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**NOTE:** This is **NOT** the application form to submit. This is a template to guide you on how the applications questions look like. All applications are to be submitted [online using this link](#). Email or physical applications forms will **not** be accepted.

To effectively tap into the immense innovation potential of students in solution development, ResilientAfrica Network – West Africa Resilience Innovation Lab (RAN WARILab) is pleased to announce **WARILab Youth Spark Innovation Grants (YSiG+)** which will recognize and support promising and creative ideas from students at University for Development Studies, Ghana. The best ideas will receive grants ranging from \$1,000 – \$5,000 to further develop and refine their ideas.

To apply for an YSiG+ grant, clearly describe your proposed innovation/solution to the selected challenge, indicating what is innovative about the solution given the current state of knowledge, and how the implementation of the solution would be structured and positioned for success. RAN Theory of Change and eligible YSiG+ Topics are provided in the Annex for your further information.

Please fill in the form below to submit your application. Field marked with an asterix (\*) are required. (Note that if you are applying for more than one challenge, you are required to submit different application forms for each challenge.)

**Please note that the application can be saved and edited at a later date until it is submitted**

## Applicant Details:

**UDS Campus\*:**

**TTFTP Period and Location\*:**

**Topic:** [ List of topics is here: <http://grants.ranlab.org/?r=site/ran&p=ysigplus#thematicareas> ]

**Project Title:**



**Goal of YSiG+ Grant: [Concept/Prototype Development; Solution Refinement; Small Scale Pilot ]**

**Organisation/Team Name:**

**Name(s) of partnering organisations (if any):**

**Leader:**

**Team Leader Telephone Number\*:**

**Team Leader Email Address\*:**

**Alternate Email:**

**Full Physical Address:**

## **Technical Application:**

### Section A: Needs/Problem Statement

*Indicate thematic area and topic of innovation challenge that project seeks to address. Include background information of the problem your idea will address that communicates a deep understanding of the problem, what are the known causes of this problem? Make sure you build a strong case of the magnitude of the problem that supports why your project is needed. This could include research and statistics on the problem and your community of interest as well as key lessons learned from the TTFTP placement.*

### Section B: How innovative and creative is your project idea?

*How different will your project be and how will it ignite change? What would the change look like in five years' time? What are the primary goals addressed or research completed in the past to address this problem and how/where did those solutions fall short? Include a summary of your innovative project (e.g. program, service, good, etc.) how it works, its intended impact and competitive advantage over existing products or services*



### Section C: Methods of implementation

How do you envision your project achieving success? What type of support or resources does your idea need to become a reality? If you expect to encounter implementation challenges, please briefly explain how you will address those challenges. Include brief information about how you will monitor or measure the impact or success of your project in the first months of implementation.

### Attachments:

#### Work Plan

Describe the key steps for implementing your idea for at most six months only. Please note that the timeline may be impacted by the approval process and award disbursement. Use the format below.

ACTIVITY NAME	ACTIVITY/TASK DESCRIPTION	START DATE	END DATE	KEY DELIVERABLE/OUTPUT/MILESTONE
Activity 1				
...				

#### Project Budget

Provide a simple activity based budget for your project. Please note that the average grants range between \$1,000 - \$5,000 and applications should not request more than \$5,000 from RAN/WARILab. Use the format below.



Activity Name	Resources	Estimated Cost (USD)
Activity 1	Resource 1	
	Resource 2	
	....	
Activity 2	Resource 1	
	....	
<b>Total Budget</b>		
<b>Potential Funding</b>		
Source	Amount (USD)	Notes
RAN		
Additional Source 1		
Additional Source 2		
....		
<b>Total Funding</b>		

*Examples of resources required include consumable materials e.g. stationary, non-consumable materials, equipment, translation or transcription services, and travel-related expenses. It is expected that students are already registered at their respective universities, and hence this grant cannot be used to cater for tuition or other mandatory university fees and charges.*

*Sources of funding include RAN plus any additional sources, if applicable. If you already have or plan to have additional funding sources and/or expect to receive non-monetary contributions, include them in the last section of the budget template. For non-monetary or in-kind contributions, include the amount you would have had to pay for the given contribution and then within the Notes section indicate that this is a non-monetary or in-kind contribution. You can also provide any further information you would like to make about the non-monetary or in-kind contribution.*

## Team Composition



*Here, provide a brief summary of your team’s composition. In this summary, provide a short paragraph for each team member, describing their roles and responsibilities in relation to the proposed solution. Please note that you can apply as an individual or as a team.*

*Applicants should submit a letter of reference from their respective university departments. Team members from the same department need only provide one letter that lists all their names.*

Full curriculum vitae of key team members

Letter of support from university department

Any other documents to support the application (example, Gantt Chart, Graphics to aid concept explanation and others)



## Annex: RAN Theory of Change and Eligible YSiG+ Topics

### I. RAN Theory of Change

RAN's theory of change states: 'The resilience of people and systems in Africa will be strengthened by leveraging the knowledge, scholarship and creativity that exists across the ResilientAfrica Network to incubate, test, and scale innovations that target capabilities and reduce vulnerabilities identified by a scientific, data-driven, and evidence-based resilience framework for Sub-Saharan Africa'

### II. Eligible YSiG+ Topics

The West Africa RILab has identified and will fund YSiG+ projects in three priority innovation challenges for resilience building around rapid urbanization:

- *Topic 1: Transform Agricultural Practices and Markets*
- *Topic 2: Improve Water, Sanitation, Hygiene & Health*
- *Topic 3: Promote Livelihood Diversification & Financial Inclusion*

#### 1. Transform Agricultural Practices and Markets

In the face of rapid urbanization in West Africa, most of the sub region's population relies heavily on rain-fed agriculture and other natural resources directly affected by the vagaries of nature. The growing frequency and severity of extreme events such as droughts, floods, and heat waves, along with shifting rainfall patterns, threaten to overwhelm the natural resilience of West African communities, risking livelihoods and food security. Subsistence farming is the mainstay of communities that experience shocks and stressors arising from migration, drought and sometimes flooding. Overdependence on rain-fed agriculture, small farm sizes, low technology, inadequate start-up capital, and the non-existence of value addition tend to increase vulnerability to food insecurity as a result of poor knowledge about how to prepare nutritious local recipes. Thus, locally available rich foods are not optimized. Lack of direct access to buyers, poor smallholder cohesion, lack of inputs, and low price leverage all affect the farmer's income. The fallows, which traditionally restored soil fertility and reduced the buildup of pests and diseases, are disappearing from the agricultural landscape. The soil resource is being degraded, with a consequent reduction in crop yield. Presently the challenge of improving productivity without compromising sustainability is so large that farmers will need to combine gains from improved germplasm with complementary improvements in their management of soil fertility.



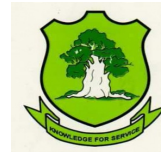
**Innovation Challenge:** This challenge seeks solutions that disrupt the status quo by substantially building agency of smallholder farmers to have more control over efficient agricultural production processes, marketing and consumption of local foods, and soil fertility management. We are seeking novel ideas or approaches that can address the following:

- Low cost environmentally friendly approaches to increase yield per acreage by improving access to markets. Initiatives can include group-based access to markets, ICT-based market platforms, women friendly market access options, etc.
- Piloting, evaluating and scaling innovations to enhance opportunities for value addition to locally available foods. Initiatives can include alternative packages of assistance to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) attempting to anticipate and take advantage of the growing markets for processed and perishable foods.
- Small-scale processing technology that is user friendly and adds value to indigenous locally produced crops, e.g., millet, fonio, groundnuts, etc.
- Indigenous technologies for food preservation.
- Models or approaches appropriate for integrated soil fertility management and maximizing the use of agricultural waste so as to improve the incomes of smallholder farmers.

## 2. Improve Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Health (WASH)

WASH is a major aspect of the health of the people across Ghana. The ever-increasing population, driven by high birth rates and in-migration, has outstripped residential and social amenities, water resources, and the capacity of sanitation and hygiene infrastructure. This has led to an overall deterioration in the quality of the environment. Over the years, significant investments by government in water, waste management, sanitation and hygiene have not translated into ensuring sustainable availability and access to sufficient water of good quality. Organizations working to promote WASH are challenged by deplorable attitudes, behaviours, and practices in the urban and peri-urban areas. Use of untreated wastewater for vegetable farming is widespread across the metropolis.

**Innovation Challenge:** We are seeking innovative solutions to develop models and approaches for improving behaviours and attitudes while creating innovative technologies to promoting WASH. These



interventions would engage the community by leveraging existing traditional platforms for community engagement. Some innovative solutions may include:

- Models and approaches or technologies for promoting sustainable water supply that would reduce vulnerability to household water shortage and promote opportunities for multiple uses of water. Initiatives can include water reuse and rainwater harvesting for homes and institutions.
- Models and approaches or technologies for promoting sustainable solid and liquid waste management to reduce vulnerability of households to communicable diseases and in a manner that also builds bridges for agricultural production.
- Models and approaches for promoting and catalyzing health and improving health-seeking behaviour.

### 3. Promote Livelihood Diversification & Financial Inclusion

Entrepreneurship is important to the economic and social development of a community. Through innovation, entrepreneurs create new, competitive markets and businesses. This leads to job creation, which has a multiplying effect on the economy. Potential entrepreneurs in West African communities (particularly Ghana) are constrained by the lack of entrepreneurial skills and the limited access to finance/start-up capital. The Government of Ghana's Microfinance and Small Loans Centre has a mission "to provide micro and small loans for start-ups and small businesses with fast, easy and accessible microcredit and small loans to grow and expand their businesses as well as to enhance job and wealth creation". But its services do not reach majority of those most in need. Other microcredit facilities also follow the line of traditional lending institutions by demanding collateral for borrowing. Existing entrepreneurship skills development programs are also few and not well focused. Upgrading skills can be a key channel to improve productivity and incomes in the informal economy and open opportunities to link with the formal economy.

**Innovation Challenge:** We are looking for innovations that can develop models and approaches or technologies for promoting life and entrepreneurship skills in target communities, Tamale, Navrongo and Ashaiman. With coordinated support, interventions on this platform can greatly benefit from existing financial services for business start-ups. Innovative ideas include:





- Models and approaches or technologies for promoting life and entrepreneurship skills that would reduce vulnerability to food insecurity and promote opportunities for diversified livelihoods taking into account specific contexts in target communities.
- Models and approaches or technologies for supporting local business ideas to grow into viable alternative livelihood enterprises.