



CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE UGANDA COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (UCC) RESEARCH SUPPORT TO ACADEMIA

1. INTRODUCTION

The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) invites applications for academic research support in line with its mandate under the Uganda Communications Act, 2013, particularly Section 5(1)(l), which empowers the Commission to promote research into the development and utilization of new communications techniques and technologies.

The research support initiative also aims to enhance access to communication services for all members of society, including persons with disabilities and other underserved communities, in accordance with the [UCC Collaboration Framework \(2022–2025\)](#).

Through this call, UCC seeks to support high-quality academic research that advances knowledge and contributes to policy and regulatory development in the communications sector.

2. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This call is aligned with the strategic priorities of the Uganda Communications Commission as outlined in the UCC Strategic Plan (2025/26–2029/30), whose vision is “An Inclusive Digital Economy.” The strategic goal of the plan is to ensure accessible, affordable, and secure digital services by 2030.

The research programme also contributes to the realization of Uganda’s broader national development agenda, including Uganda Vision 2040, the Fourth National Development Plan, Digital Uganda Vision, and the Uganda Digital Transformation Roadmap.

UCC seeks to strengthen collaboration between academia, industry, and policymakers to address emerging challenges and opportunities in the communications sector through evidence-based research.

3. PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS

Proposals should address one or more of the following thematic areas:

A. Sustainability and Green Transition in the Communications Sector

Focus on environmentally sustainable communications infrastructure and operations.

Illustrative Research Directions (non-exhaustive):

- Incentives and frameworks for renewable energy adoption
- Barriers and opportunities for green transition
- Sustainable infrastructure development approaches

B. Next-Generation Telecommunications Infrastructure and Spectrum Management

Focus on the deployment and management of advanced communication technologies.

Illustrative Research Directions (non-exhaustive):

- Policy and regulatory considerations for 5G, 6G and beyond
- Adoption, use cases, and challenges of advanced technologies
- Spectrum management and backhaul evolution

C. Digital Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Emerging Technologies

Focus on ICT-driven innovation and digital transformation.

Illustrative Research Directions (non-exhaustive):

- Innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship
- Emerging technologies (AI, IoT, data-driven systems)
- Barriers to digital enterprise development

D. Consumer Protection, Digital Rights, and Online Safety

Focus on consumer protection and safety in digital environments.

Illustrative Research Directions (non-exhaustive):

- Consumer protection challenges in digital ecosystems
- Online safety, including risks to vulnerable groups
- Approaches to harmful online content

E. Access, Affordability, and User Experience of Communication Services

Focus on inclusivity, accessibility, and service quality.

Illustrative Research Directions (non-exhaustive):

- Access and affordability of communication services
- User experience and quality of service
- Barriers affecting underserved populations

F. Consumer Awareness, Participation, and Institutional Effectiveness

Focus on consumer awareness and institutional performance.

Illustrative Research Directions (non-exhaustive):

- Consumer awareness and education initiatives
- Stakeholder participation in consumer protection
- Institutional and coordination challenges

Applicants are encouraged to define focused and well-scoped research problems within these thematic areas.

4. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applications are invited from the following categories of researchers/students:

- a) **Undergraduate students** whose projects must be supervised by a faculty member, who will provide academic guidance throughout the research process. Undergraduate participation is intended to strengthen research capacity while generating context-specific insights relevant to Uganda's communications sector.
- b) **Graduate students (master's and PhD)** whose research aligns with the highlighted UCC priority areas.
- c) **Post-doctoral researchers** conducting advanced research in communications-related fields, with potential to contribute to academic and policy development.
- d) **Inter-university research teams**, comprising academic staff and/or students from at least two tertiary institutions.

5. RESEARCH SUPPORT CATEGORIES

The research programme will support projects under the following four funding categories:

I. Lot 1 – Undergraduate Research Support

Support for undergraduate research aligned with UCC priority areas. This category is designed to build foundational research capacity while encouraging applied, context-specific studies addressing real sector challenges.

II. Lot 2 – Postgraduate Research Support

Support for Master's and PhD research projects that demonstrate rigorous analysis and contribute to academic knowledge and policy-relevant insights in the communications sector.

III. Lot 3 – Inter-University Research Collaboration

Support for collaborative research involving at least two tertiary institutions, with the lead institution based in Uganda, aimed at addressing complex and multi-disciplinary challenges in the communications sector.

IV. Lot 4 – Academia-for-Industry Research

Support for research teams working with communications sector licensees or operators to address industry-specific challenges through applied research and innovation.

6. MAXIMUM FUNDING SUPPORT:

No.	Project Type	Lot 1	Lot 2	Lot 3	Lot 4
1.	Discipline Specific	UGX 10,000,000	UGX 30,000,000	UGX 80,000,000	UGX 55,200,000
2.	Interdisciplinary	UGX 20,000,000	UGX 50,000,000	UGX 100,000,000	UGX 55,200,000

7. PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposals must:

- Be written in **Microsoft Word**
- Use **Times New Roman, Font Size 12**
- Use **single line spacing**
- Not exceed **20 pages**

8. REQUIRED SECTIONS

- I. Title Page
- II. Project Summary (Maximum 300 words)
- III. Introduction and Background
- IV. Problem Statement
- V. Research Objectives
- VI. Research Questions or Hypotheses
- VII. Justification of the Study
- VIII. Methodology
- IX. Implementation Plan
- X. Contribution to Cross-Cutting Issues (gender, disability, climate change)
- XI. Literature Review (APA 7th Edition)
- XII. Budget and Budget Justification
- XIII. Curriculum Vitae of the research team

Note for Undergraduate Applicants

Undergraduate proposals should be clearly scoped and appropriate to the level of study, with well-defined and manageable research questions.

8. SUBMISSION DETAILS

Proposals should be submitted electronically to the Link:

<https://www.ucc.co.ug/call-for-research-proposals/>

Submission Deadline: Monday, 8th May 2026 at 5:00 PM.

Addressed to:

Executive Director,
Uganda Communications Commission,
UCC House, Plot 42–44 Spring Road, Bugolobi
P.O. Box 7376, Kampala, Uganda.

For inquiries, send an email to Registry at registry@ucc.co.ug

9. SELECTION PROCESS

Please note that any late submissions **will be rejected**. The proposal should consist of the following sections: -

- a) **Title Page:** Include a precise research study title of not more than 20 words, name(s), Department, Faculty/School of the applicant(s), and names of the investigator.
- b) **Project Summary:** Maximum of 300 words.
- c) **Introduction and Background:** Describe the need for the project, how the proposal was developed, why the project is being proposed, how it relates to indicator achievement, and its innovative aspects. This section should also introduce the project and its objectives. Maximum of two pages.
- d) **Problem Statement:** Provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken, including research questions and objectives. Maximum of one page.
- e) **Objectives/Major Research Questions:** Maximum of one page
- f) **Research Questions/Hypotheses:** Where applicable, a maximum of one page.
- g) **Justification:** Maximum of one page.
- h) **Methodology:** Include a research plan specifying how the students will spend their time on the proposed project. Elaborate on what you want to do, how you plan to do it, your research timeline, and why you want to do it

(importance to your field/discipline, importance to your professional development, etc.). Maximum of four pages. Attach separate quantitative and/or qualitative data collection tools.

- i) **Implementation Plan:** Maximum of one page.
- j) **Contribution to Cross-Cutting Issues:** For example, gender, disability, marginalised groups, and climate change, maximum of one page.
- k) **Literature Review:** Use APA 7th edition, a maximum of two pages.
- l) **Budget and Budget Justification:** Provide a detailed budget. If funds for materials or equipment are requested, ensure that the costs are reasonable and credible. Maximum of three pages.
- m) **Applicant's Curriculum Vitae** (Maximum one page for Principal Investigator and one page for each Co-Principal Investigator).

10. RESTRICTIONS

The support schemes are subject to the following conditions:

1. The UCC research support to academia (undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral) will be limited to the following: -
 - a) Reimbursement of expenses (i.e., retroactive support) for completed activity is not possible.
 - b) The support cannot be used for infrastructure costs normally covered by your school or department.
 - c) Costs such as fees, stipends/salaries and other remuneration will not be eligible.
 - d) An applicant has priority if he/she has not received prior funding from the undergraduate research program, within the same academic year.
 - e) Support to more than one student delivering the same presentation abroad.
2. The funding under the inter-university research collaborations (academic staff and graduate/ postgraduate or post-doctorate students) shall be restricted to the following: -
 - a. Reimbursement of expenses (i.e., retroactive support) for completed activity is not possible.
 - b. The support cannot be used for infrastructure costs normally covered by the Universities.

- c. Costs such as fees, stipends/salaries and other remuneration will not be eligible.
- d. Funding shall be only for collaborating universities/ institutions of higher learning.

A project or research proposal is required for all applicants. We encourage students to collaborate on ideas with their research supervisors, but the proposal must be developed and submitted by the students.

11. NOTIFICATION

The Calls for Proposals for Research Support will be uploaded on the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) website and will also be disseminated by email and UCC Social Media Platforms.

12. ADMINISTRATION OF THE RESEARCH SUPPORT TO ACADEMIA

- a) At the end of the selection process, the UCC will announce the successful applicants, who will be required to sign a Bonding Agreement with the UCC.
- b) The UCC will then issue the support as per the terms of the bonding agreement.
- c) Monthly progress reports shall be submitted by the recipients to the UCC Project Implementation team.
- d) A final report shall be submitted as per the approved project time frame.

13. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

On completion of the research project, recipients are expected to produce scholarly and/or policy-relevant outputs appropriate to their level of study, with higher-level research (Master's, PhD, and postdoctoral) expected to demonstrate stronger contributions to academic and policy discourse. Outputs may include:

- (1) Research papers or journal publications
- (2) Conference or dissemination presentations
- (3) Policy-relevant insights for the communications sector
- (4) Submission to the UCC Research Repository
- (5) Final project report

Please note that the research project must be completed by 30th November 2026.

14. SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Proposals will be subjected to the following process:

- a) Administrative review for eligibility
- b) Shortlisting of qualifying applicants
- c) Evaluation and final selection by the Selection Committee

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the shortlisting process, and shortlisted applicants will receive further instructions.

Final results will be communicated to shortlisted applicants upon completion of the evaluation process and will also be published on the UCC website and official communication channels.