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DRI&D News

PZ Cussons Donates Multi-Million Naira Research Instruments to UDUS

PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc has recently shown its goodwill to Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto (UDUS), by donating three advanced research instruments and a 10 KVA UPS system worth N100m. The donation was facilitated by the National Office for Technological Acquisition Programme (NOTAP), through its Industry Research Laboratory Upgrade Project (IRLUP).

A team of PZ Cussons and NOTAP, which visited the University to inspect the instruments, paid a courtesy call on the Vice-Chancellor Professor Lawal Suleman Bilbis. The Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic (DVC Academic), Prof. M. G. Mahuta, who represented the Vice Chancellor, received the delegation. The DVC Academic, on behalf of the University Council, The Vice-Chancellor and the entire University community welcomed the delegation to the most peaceful University in Nigeria. He expressed gratitude to PZ Cussons for the donation and NOTAP for bridging the gap between the country's academic institutions and its industries. DVC Academic assured the delegation of best use of the instruments. He reaffirmed the University's dedication to research and development, and its culture of sustainability and maintenance. He disclosed that the University was not only open to such partnerships but had and would continue to actively pursue them, noting that linkages and collaborations were part of the core strategies of the University in increasing its impact on society. The University had earlier signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NOTAP and expressed the University's readiness for more collaboration. He highlighted the

University's commitment to research excellence and the high level of research capacity among the staff of UDUS.

Mr. Richard Odafi, the leader of the delegation and the Research and Development lead of PZ Cussons in Nigeria, expressed his satisfaction with the expected impact of the instruments on the University's research and development activities.

He stated that the donation was part of his company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which aimed to bridge the gap between academia and industry in Nigeria. He said that the support was to ensure University's research output go beyond journal publication to create products and services that would benefit the economy. "I am confident that this initiative will foster innovation and economic growth in Nigeria's industrial sector". He stressed. Mr Odafi revealed that the company planned to continue that path collaboration between academic scholarship and industrialisation as well as CSR for the good of Nigeria.

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Funding Opportunities

Fellowships

TWAS-TUBITAK Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme

The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) and TWAS have established a fellowship programme for foreign scholars from developing countries who wish to pursue postdoctoral research in a field of the natural and related applied sciences in the departments and laboratories of public and private universities of Turkey and TUBITAK Research Centres and Institute. The Fellowships are tenable at the departments and laboratories of public and private universities in Turkey for a minimum period of 6 months to a maximum period of 36 months. The call for applications deadline is **25th December, 2023**. For more information and how to apply, visit

<https://twas.org/opportunity/twas-tubitak-postdoctoral-fellowship-programme>

Apply to PhD Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University (OIST)

The basic requirement for the OIST Graduate Programme is the completion of a Bachelor, Master's or equivalent degree prior to the admission date. Students may submit an application at any time. Your application will be considered at the next admissions committee meeting. The deadline for application is **15th November, 2023**. For more information and how to apply, visit

<https://admissions.oist.jp/apply-phd>

NOTAP, under its IRLUP, had earlier requested the University to select instruments worth N100 million to be procured by PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc. The University carefully selected the BET surface area, viscometer, and cloud point/pour point tester. These state-of-the-art instruments are needed for cutting-edge research in

numerous fields of study, most notably chemistry, biochemistry, pharmacy, petroleum, and geology. The instruments arrived at UDUS on Monday, 16th October, 2023, and were installed in CASRAS laboratory at the main campus of the University.

DRI&D Honours Dr. Mustapha Umar Imam and Prof. Abdulkadir A. Rafindadi for Global Scientific Impact

In a momentous event that reflects the outstanding achievements of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Dr. Mustapha Umar Imam and Prof. Abdulkadir A. Rafindadi, two esteemed faculty members, have been recognised among the world's top 2% most cited scientists. This recognition highlights their significant contributions to the world of science. Dr. Mustapha Umar Imam, an Associate Professor in Nutrigenomics and Epigenetics, has made remarkable strides in the fields of Nutrition and Dietetics and Clinical Medicine, impacting both the scientific community and communities worldwide. Prof. Abdulkadir A. Rafindadi, a distinguished Professor of Finance and Energy Economics, has pushed the boundaries of knowledge in the field of Energy and Economics, driving substantial advancements.



To celebrate their remarkable accomplishments, the DRI&D team hosted a special dinner and certificates of recognition were presented to Dr. Mustapha Umar Imam and Prof. Abdulkadir A. Rafindadi by the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor expressed the university's profound appreciation for their outstanding contributions to academia and their significant impact on the global scientific community. The certificates serve as a symbol of the University's recognition of their exceptional achievements. Additionally, the Vice-Chancellor pledged to issue commendation letters and present them to the Governing Board once reconstituted by the Federal Government, signifying the highest form of recognition and appreciation from the Institution.

This recognition serves as a source of inspiration for aspiring scholars and emphasises the importance of investing in research and innovation in Nigeria and across Africa.



Funding Opportunities

Research grants

Robotics: Autonomous or Semi-Autonomous UGV Systems to Supplement Skills for Use in Hazardous Environments

This topic requires the effective contribution of SSH disciplines and the involvement of SSH experts, and institutions as well as the inclusion of relevant SSH expertise, in order to produce meaningful and significant effects enhancing the societal impact of the related research/innovation activities. The total budget of EUR 6 000 000 is available for funding. The application deadline is on 23rd November, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl3-2023-drs-01-04;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=:matchWholeText=true:typeCodes=1,2,8;statusCodes=31094501;programmePeriod=null;programCcm2Id=n>.

Beyond the State-of-the-Art Biometrics on the Move for Border Checks

Research should assess and develop the fit-for-purpose border management of biometric identification modalities beyond fingerprints and facial images, and/or innovative modalities of acquisition of those and other biometrics. Proposed projects should particularly investigate biometrics modalities that currently do not offer satisfactory performance (in terms of accuracy, reliability, usability, minimisation data protection risk, and risk of bias, etc.) but potentially offer significant advantages over existing solutions in the short or medium-term for applications in a border checks context. The total budget of EUR 6 000 000 is available for funding. The application deadline is on 23rd November, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl3-2023-bm-01-03;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=:matchWholeText=true:typeCodes=1,2,8;statusCodes=31094501;programmePeriod=null;programCcm2Id=nu>.

Security of Robust AI Systems

Proposals received under this topic will address the security of AI systems, in the line with the following considerations. The availability of very large amounts of data, together with advances in computing capacity, has allowed the development of powerful Artificial Intelligence applications (in particular Machine Learning and Deep Learning). The total budget is EUR 12 000 000 to be shared among 2 researchers at around EUR 4000000 to 6000000. The application deadline is on 23rd November, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl3-2023-cs-01-03;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=:matchWholeText=true:typeCodes=1,2,8;statusCodes=31094501;programmePeriod=null;programCcm2Id=43>.

International Call for Projects 2024

The Biocodex Microbiota Foundation funds research projects focused on human gut microbiota related to health and disease. The maximum duration of the project will be 3 years. This year, the International Scientific Committee has chosen the following topic: "New metabolites and small molecules, or novel functions of previously described metabolites, from gut microbiota that have an impact on gut mucosal pathways relevant to human health and disease". The annual grant is set at €200,000 VAT included. The application deadline is on 30th November, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://www.biocodexmicrobiotafoundation.com/international-grant/call-for-projects-2024>.

International Call for Projects 2024

Food grants help research-based efforts to improve food and nutrition security and improve natural resources and ecosystems. Areas of interest include projects that: promote or develop specific sustainable agriculture practices with the potential to advance science and practice in other countries; test and refine innovative education and training interventions for small scale farmers, and advance new approaches to control pests and diseases affecting important food crops in low-income countries. The average grant is approximately \$20,000. The application deadline is on 1st January, 2024. For more information on how to apply, visit <https://cfhfoundation.grantsmanagement08.com/>

Training and Research in Italian Laboratories (TRIL)

The Training and Research in Italian Laboratories (TRIL) Programme offers scientists from developing countries the opportunity to undertake training and research in an Italian laboratory in different branches of the physical sciences. Fellows receive a monthly grant in Euro to cover their living costs, such as lodging, meals, local travel and incidentals while on the fellowship, as follows: Euro 1,300 for students pursuing a Ph.D (or its equivalent), Euro 1,500 for scientists with a Ph.D degree less than 5 years, and Euro 1,600 for scientists with a Ph.D degree more than 5 years. The deadline for application is 31st December, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://www.ictp.it/opportunity/training-and-research-italian-laboratories-tril>

The Abdul Aziz Al-Mutawa Visiting Fellowship

This stipendiary Visiting Fellowship is awarded annually to support an extended period of independent study and research at Oxford. Applicants will normally be academics with an established record in their disciplines. However, scholars or writers at the postdoctoral or equivalent level are encouraged to apply. Each Visiting Fellow is provided with a stipend of £ 5,000 (with a waiver of any Bench fees), shared office accommodation, membership of the Common Room, access to the facilities at the Centre, and introduction to the libraries in the University. The closing date for applications is 9th January, 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://www.oxcis.ac.uk/visiting-fellowships>.

Call for Applications

The IMPRS NeuroCom aims to recruit and educate motivated, independent, self-organised and highly talented scientists who wish to extend their knowledge and research experience in a structured 3-year PhD programme in order to pursue a successful career in cognitive neuroscience, clinical neuroscience, neurophysics, or other methods in cognitive neuroscience. The deadline for applications is 15th November, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://imprs-coni.mpg.de/90532/call-for-applications>.

Awards and Prizes

Teaching Excellence Award Biochemical Society

Teaching Excellence Awards recognise individual excellence, commitment to continuing professional development, commitment to students and colleagues, and sustained and continued impact. Teaching Excellence Awards are presented annually to an employee in Higher Education. The initial nominations will be submitted via an online form by 1st November, 2023 and the full nominations for shortlisted candidates by 31st January, 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://www.biochemistry.org/grants-and-awards/awards/awards-listing/teaching-excellence-awards/>.

Health Grants

The foundation supports public health programmes that focus on populations rather than individuals. It funds programmes that emphasise disease prevention and health promotion over those that emphasise disease diagnosis, treatment, and care. It supports research, technical assistance, and training projects that: Improve public health through community-based efforts that address health promotion, disease prevention, family planning, and reproductive health; and increase the understanding and treatment of neglected tropical diseases. The average grant is approximately \$20,000. The application deadline is on 1st January, 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://cfhfoundation.grantsmanagement08.com/>.

Global Seed Funds in Africa

The MIT-Africa Seed Fund supports innovative projects that will help lay the foundations for new research and education initiatives between MIT and African collaborators. This fund is offered annually by the Office of the Associate Provost for International Activities in association with the MIT-Africa Distinguished Visitors Programme. Funding of up to US\$50,000 is awarded. The deadline for application is 12th December, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://misti.mit.edu/faculty-funds/available-funds/gsf-africa>.

Bilateral Exchange of Academics

The purpose of the Bilateral Exchange of Academics is to improve international relations and bilateral research cooperation between German and foreign universities; the DAAD supports exchanges of scientists and academics from partner countries. The basis of these exchanges is cultural exchange programmes and bilateral agreements with international partner organizations. The deadline for application is 15th November, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://www2.daad.de/deutschland/stipendium/datenbank/en/21148-scholarship-database/?origin=79&status=2&subjectGrps=&daad=&q=&page=1&detail=50015508#prozess>.

Development of carbon fixation technologies for biogenic flue gases

Development of biological and chemical solutions to use the effluent gases from bioenergy combustion systems and upgrade biogenic carbon emissions for the production of renewable energy carriers with renewable hydrogen for later reuse as feedstock for energy needs and achieving carbon circularity. The total budget is EUR 8 000 000 to be shared among 2 researchers at around EUR 4000000. The application deadline is 16th January, 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d3-01-05;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=:matchWholeText=true:typeCodes=1,2,8;statusCodes=31094501;programmePeriod=null;programCcm2Id=nu>.

Demonstration of Improved Intermediate Renewable Energy Carrier Technologies for Transport Fuels

Demonstration of technologies for the production of advanced intermediate bioenergy and synthetic renewable energy carriers from biogenic residues and wastes, microalgae, biogenic CO₂ or nitrogen, and renewable hydrogen and all forms of renewable energy with reduced cost and GHG emissions above the state of the art. The total budget is EUR 20 000 000 to be shared among 2 researchers at around EUR 10000000. The application deadline is 16 January 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d3-01-03;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=:matchWholeText=true:typeCodes=1,2,8;statusCodes=31094501;programmePeriod=null;programCcm2Id=nu>.

Africa-EU CO-FUND Action

Following the EU commitments under the Paris Agreement, Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, and the Post-Cotonou Agreement, the renewed objective to evolve current forms of cooperation into equal footing partnerships between Africa and Europe, the current research and innovation cooperation between Europe and Africa in the field of renewable energy needs to be further strengthened and developed. The total budget is EUR 10 000 000. The application deadline is on 16th January, 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d3-01-09;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=:matchWholeText=true:typeCodes=0,1,2,8;statusCodes=31094501;programm>

Improvement of Light Harvesting and Carbon Fixation with Synthetic Biology and/or Bio-Inspired/Biomimetic Pathways for Renewable Direct Solar Fuels Production

Development of novel in-vivo or in-vitro biochemical and/or bio-inspired/biomimetic pathways for solar fuel production with increased efficiency in comparison to light and dark reactions of natural photosynthesis by synthetic biological and/or bio-inspired/biomimetic approaches. The total budget is EUR 8 000 000 to be shared among 2 researchers at around EUR 4000000. The application deadline is on 16th January, 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl5-2024-d3-01-04;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=:matchWholeText=true:typeCodes=1,2,8;statusCodes=31094501;programmePeriod=null;programCcm2Id=43>.

Biodegradable Polymers for Sustainable Packaging Materials (IA)

Proposals should address at least four of the following activities: Develop new, demonstrate, and scale-up novel advanced bio-degradable polymer materials and innovative processes that will allow the bio-degradable polymers to be produced at a large scale with a similar economy of scale to replace present production with PE, PP, and PET. The total budget is EUR 31 000 000 to be shared among 4 researchers at around EUR 6000000 to 8000000. The application deadline is 7th February, 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl4-2024-resilience-01-35;callCode=null;freeTextSearchKeyword=:matchWholeText=true:typeCodes=1,2,8;statusCodes=31094501;programmePeriod=null;programC>.

Instrumental Access: Apply for Equipment

Seeding Labs seeks applications from universities and research institutes in low- and middle-income countries for Instrumental Access, a programme that provides high-quality scientific equipment for research and education at an affordable price. The instrumental Access programme removes a key barrier to research and science teaching by making laboratory equipment available to universities in low-and middle-income countries. Upcoming deadlines for Phase I review are 17th February, 2024 and May 17th, 2024. For more information and how to apply, visit https://seedinglabs.org/programs-and-impact/instrumental-access/about_ia/rfa/.

Welcome Discovery Awards

Welcome Trust invites applications for Welcome Discovery Awards. This scheme provides funding for established researchers and teams from any discipline who want to pursue bold and creative research ideas to deliver significant shifts in understanding what could improve human life, health and wellbeing. The closing date for applications is 21st November, 2023. For more information and how to apply, visit <https://wellcome.org/grant-funding/schemes/discovery-awards>.