CALL FOR PROPOSALS

CATALYSING CURRICULUM CHANGE AT UNIVERSITIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS 1 NOVEMBER 2022

Do you want to be part of developing new, online postgraduate courses, modules, and educational resources in areas related to urban transport and mobility at universities in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)? The Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (VREF) welcomes applications for grants to catalyze curriculum change in these areas.

The Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (VREF) is an independent foundation that inspires, initiates and supports research and educational activities that can contribute to new knowledge on broad issues related to urban mobility and access. VREF's mission is to support the development of research on ideas, approaches and solutions that can contribute to equitable access and sustainable urban mobility in ways that can radically reduce transportation's negative local and global environmental impacts.

An important goal is also to support educational programmes in these areas, as well as facilitate dissemination and implementation of research findings among both university researchers, practitioners, decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders, see Volvo Research and Education Foundations - Research Projects (www.vref.se).

Through this call VREF invites applications for grants to support the development of new, online postgraduate courses, modules, and educational resources specifically in areas related to urban transport and mobility at universities in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

The call is an opportunity for scholars and teachers in sub-Saharan Africa to contribute to renewing university-based education, while also strengthening knowledge and capacity among the next generation of SSA researchers and practitioners.

The call is a pilot initiative within the MAC programme and, if the initiative is successful, VREF foresees issuing a series of similar calls on an annual basis over the next few years.

1. BACKGROUND

In 2018 VREF launched an initiative for funding research and education on Mobility and Access in African Cities (MAC). The programme is geographically focused on Sub-Saharan Africa.

The purpose of the MAC programme is:

> to increase the knowledge and capacity base on issues related to equitable access and sustainable mobility at Sub-Saharan African (SSA) universities;

> to strengthen academic capacity and skills among university researchers and students within the broad area of urban transport and mobility at SSA universities;

> to disseminate knowledge and stimulate dialogues among researchers and other stakeholders in urban transport and mobility in SSA.

For more information on the MAC programme, see:

http://www.vref.se ccess/themacprogramme.4.45182a5f16a84e95fac14f2e.html

Catalyzing curriculum change at universities in sub-Saharan Africa

One of the goals of the MAC programme is to contribute to strengthening SSA university-based education within sustainable urban transport, mobility, access and related areas.

Toward this aim, in 2020-21 VREF carried out a study of existing educational courses and programs in urban transport and mobility at SSA universities, as well as possible needs for strengthening these educational offerings from African perspectives.

The study included a scoping survey of almost 50 current SSA university courses, as well as interviews and round table dialogues with senior scholars at SSA universities concerning concrete needs for renewing these courses. The current Call has been initiated and formulated in respond to the results of this preparatory work.

Framework for current Call

The purpose of the current Call is to support the planning and implementation of new, research-based courses, modules and other educational resources at SSA universities in areas related to urban transport, mobility and access.

The Call presents an opportunity for SSA university scholars to develop, implement and evaluate new, state-of-the-art based online courses or course modules, as well as online educational resources, that focus on issues related to urban transport, mobility and access.

The Call is directed at senior teachers and other scholars with relevant pedagogic experience, who are interested in contributing to developing and renewing university education that can strengthen research-based knowledge among "next generation" African scholars in the area of urban transport, mobility and access.

More specifically, the work should be guided by the following dimensions:

> By courses (and course modules) is meant university-based courses that are embedded in existing university programs and that qualify for credits as part of a university degree.

> The proposed courses, modules and other educational resources must be based on state-of-the-art, research-based knowledge that is relevant for understanding issues, challenges and approaches for stimulating change toward increased sustainability in urban transport.

> The target groups for the courses/course modules are students on a postgraduate level (i.e. master, Mphill or Ph.D. education) at SSA-universities in broad areas related to urban transport, mobility and access.

> While the proposed online courses or modules are expected to be administratively embedded within a specific university, they should **be made widely accessible to students at other universities (e.g. nationally or regionally in SSA) on a no-cost, "open access" basis.**

> VREF recognizes that there may be institutional restrictions that limit free, universal access to all students on a pan-SSA basis, due for example to existing systems for access, accreditation and specific course credits at different universities. The ambition is nevertheless to strive for broad accessibility of the funded courses, as far as institutional rule structures and circumstances allow, for students at universities throughout SSA.

> The accepted courses/course modules must be organized, carried out and administered by universities in SSA; no courses be organized under the auspices of VREF. However, VREF will spread information about these courses within the VREF MAC community.

> VREF foresees that successful proposals will reflect multidisciplinary approaches that link perspectives and approaches from different disciplines or academic areas in ways that contribute to renewing existing courses or other educational offerings in areas related to urban transport, mobility and access in SSA.

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2. CALL FOR PROPOSALS

GRANTS FOR DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING NEW, STATE-OF-THE-ART BASED ONLINE COURSES OR COURSE MODULES, AS WELL AS ONLINE EDUCATIONAL RE-SOURCES, IN AREAS RELATED TO URBAN TRANSPORT, MOBILITY AND ACCESS

The current call invites teachers and other scholars based at SSA universities who have state-of-the-art knowledge and pedagogic expertise in areas that are relevant to understanding and stimulating sustainable and equitable transport, mobility and access in sub-Saharan African cities, to apply for grants to support the development of one or more of the following:

1. **New courses and course modules that are freely accessible online to <u>students</u>:**

> <u>New online courses</u> that are accessible to students in postgraduate (master, Mphill and Ph.D.) programs, for example on an elective basis, in areas related to urban transport, mobility and access in SSA. The courses must be widely accessible to students at the home university, as well as to students at other universities in SSA, as far as institutionally possible.

> <u>New online course modules</u> that are integrated modules that are integrated in existing postgraduate courses in areas related to transport, mobility and access in SSA and that are accessible to students at the home university, as well as students at other universities in SSA, as far as institutionally possible.

2. **New online educational resources that are widely accessible to <u>teachers</u>:**

> <u>Free-standing, high-quality educational resources</u> that are freely accessible online and can be used as pedagogical resources by SSA scholars/lecturers who would like to incorporate such material in their own teaching on urban transport, mobility and access.

  + By online educational resources is meant <u>free-standing, high-quality educational resources</u> (such as online lectures, fieldwork video materials, documentaries, case study-based materials, game-based materials) that are freely accessible online and can be used as pedagogical resources by SSA scholars/lecturers who would like to incorporate such material in their own teaching on urban transport, mobility and access.

  + These educational resources must reflect high standards for online production and be <u>made available on an open access basis through a portal</u>, i.e. an "educational resource repository" that VREF will initiate, operate and fund through the MAC programme.

Criteria for course proposals

Successful proposals must fulfil the following criteria

> The lead applicant must be based at a university in SSA.

> The proposed course/module/educational resource must be embedded in state-of-the-art, research-based knowledge on issues related to transport, mobility and access that are based on SSA conditions, experiences and perspectives.

> The proposed course/module/educational resource must consist of new course content in relation to existing educational offerings at the applicant's home university. The proposal may focus on renewal of existing courses, e.g. in the form of new modules, but the proposed course or module cannot duplicate any existing courses or modules.

> The proposed course or module must be made available on a no-cost, "open access" basis to all students at the applicant's home university who wish to take the course. Where possible in accordance with existing institutional frameworks, the proposed course or module must also be made available to students at other universities, nationally or on a pan-African basis. The course or module must also be freely available to students who are interested in taking a course without official university credit.

> The applicant and her/his department and faculty must commit to implement/offer a new course or module at least twice over a period of two years (contingent on scheduled review processes).

> The applicant's home university (department, faculty and/or other relevant administrative level) must certify its intention to institutionally embed, fully accredit and assign/approve degree credits for the new course (or course module) within an existing department, program, or center. Proof of full institutional support must also include a commitment to allocate sufficient staff resources to develop, implement and fully evaluate the course/module.

> The applicant must present a concrete plan/strategy for embedding and implementing the course/module as part of a specific educational department, program or center at her/his home university.

> The applicant must present a plan for how the course/module will be evaluated by students.

In addition, VREF encourages proposals that include the following:

> Courses that are multidisciplinary in their orientation and knowledge base, i.e. drawing on knowledge and perspectives from different disciplines or fields;

> Courses that engage scholars from different universities and regions; courses that engage scholars who are part of the MAC community;

> Courses, modules or educational resources that encompass knowledge and experience of cross-cutting, "pan-African" issues related to urban transport, mobility and access in different African regions (for example, issues related to user groups, specific transport modes, governance approaches), as well as comparative course content in such areas;

> Courses that utilize professional online learning specialists in developing courses, modules and educational resources;

> Courses that engage young scholars (within five years after Ph.D.) and reflect gender balance in the teaching team;

> Courses that include relevant international expertise to complement the competence of the teaching team(s).

Call budget and cost framework for applications

The total budget for this first (pilot) Call is 600,000 SEK (approx. 57,000 Euros). VREF envisages supporting up to three proposals for developing new online courses/modules/teaching materials, each with a grant up to a maximum of 200,000 SEK (including all overheads), depending on the scope of the proposal. VREF will support a maximum of two grants/year to departments (or other research units) at the same university.

The VREF grant is intended to support the course development fully or partly, depending on the total scope of the proposed course/module/educational resource and the possibilities for co-funding. The VREF thus welcomes co-funding from other sources.

The VREF grant can be used for the following types of activities and costs:

> Pedagogic collaboration or cooperative teaching among scholars at different SSA departments/faculties/universities (particularly within different SSA regions) for the purpose of planning, developing and implementing new courses, modules or educational resources;

> Engaging guest lecturers from beyond the applicant's own department or university who e.g. provide specific lectures, talks, supervision or other pedagogical skills in implementing the new course/module/educational resource. The grant can be used to cover costs for honorariums and travel for guest lecturers;

> Implementing, conducting examinations, and evaluating new, state-of-the-art courses, modules or educational resources;

> Professional preparation and production of freestanding online educational resource materials. The project grant can be used for costs for online learning or production specialists, documentary/film teams, other specialized resource persons, and other costs directly linked to the preparation and production of the proposed educational resource materials;

> Engaging young or emergent scholars in course planning, curriculum development and teaching.

The VREF grant cannot be used to cover salary costs for staff at the host department or center.

VREF's review and decision-making process – timeframe
VREF will make its decision about what proposals that will be accepted for funding and will inform all applicants on the outcome of the application process by 1 September 2022. The courses supported under this Call are expected to start at latest 12 months after the receipt of the grant (i.e. course start by latest mid-2023) and be implemented at least two times during 2023- 24.

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3. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

An application for a project grant must be submitted by e-mail to secretariat@vref.se and received no later than 1 November 2022. VREF will confirm receipt of each application by e-mail to the main applicant.

How to apply?
Please see the next section "Application guidelines and instructions" for detailed instructions. Applicants are welcome to contact VREF by e-mail: secretariat@vref.se for further information or for clarification regarding the requirements for applications. To ensure maximum transparency in the recruitment process, all questions and VREF's answers to them will be published in a Q& A page on the VREF web site.

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4. APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS

All applications for research funding within this Call must

> be structured and delineated in accordance with the guidelines stated below;

> be written in English;

> be delivered according to the following technical specifications:

+ consist of a maximum of eight (8) single pages, excluding short cv's for key scholars in the teaching team/development team

+ be saved in PDF file format (of ready-to-print quality)

+ be laid out in European A4 paper format, with a minimum font size of 12 pt and margins of at

least 25 mm;

Applications exceeding the specified maximum number of pages will be rejected.
Detailed instructions on the content and format of the application are provided below.

4.1 Information to be given on the front page
(NB that the front page and annexes are not included in the 8 pages' limit)

> **Name and contact details of main applicant**
The main applicant (responsible teacher) must be an individual, not an organization. Please note that only one person shall be the main applicant. State name, title and function, affiliation and all contact information.

> **Preliminary course/module/educational resource title**
The title should be concise and informative, preferably including keywords characterizing the content and direction of the proposed course/module/educational resource.

> **Names and addresses of teachers/teaching team/core resource persons**
List the names and affiliations of all teaching team members (including online specialists and other resource persons) plus contact information; indications about preliminary guest lecturers are optional.

> **Executive Summary** (max 300 words)
The summary should consist of a brief outline of the proposed course/module/educational resource; the objective(s) and teaching goals, indicating the factors that gives an innovative and added value in relation to existing teaching/programmes/educational material; proposed student target group(s) and levels; institutional embedding; plan for online access; proposed timeframe for (and frequency of) implementation.

4.2 Structure of the Application
The application should be structured around the following elements:

> **Background and motivation to the proposed new course/module/educational resource (including the state-of-the-art research that informs the work)**
Provide a clear statement concerning the innovativeness and relevance of the proposed material, including an indication of the central issues in the area of transport/mobility/access to be addressed in the material, as well as its relevance in relation to target groups of students (for example, within specific disciplines or programmes).

❯ **Objectives**

Identify the overall goals of the proposed course/module/educational resource, including indicating ways in which the proposed materials will contribute to renewal of existing specific educational courses, programmes or materials.

Describe briefly the specific learning goals for the proposed course/module/educational resource (i.e. "upon completion students will have gained an understanding of/skills in…"); contributions to new knowledge/impacts among students (i.e. within a specific discipline or other educational context), as well as other expected outcomes.

❯ **Teaching approach and overall course context; plan for on-line design and implementation**

Describe the overall approach and content of the proposed course/module/educational resource, preliminary teaching methods and activities (e.g. lectures, seminars, individual study), including a plan for how and when the proposed material will be integrated and used within specific a university programme/discipline/department. A preliminary general syllabus/parts of the proposed course/module/educational resource is optional; VREF recognizes that full course development will be carried out during the grant period, thus there is no expectation of a detailed syllabus in the application.

Describe the plan for designing and delivering the proposed course/course material/educational resource for no-cost, online accessibility, including preliminary plans for engaging e.g. online learning resource persons or specialists.

This part of the application should also include a preliminary plan for how examination and evaluation of the proposed course or course module will be carried out, as well as an indication of plans for carrying out the course at least twice in 2023-2024.contact information.

❯ **Teachers/resource materials and organization**

The application should provide overall, preliminary information on how the course/module/educational resource will be organized, who will be preliminarily responsible for teaching or delivering different parts of the course/module/educational resources (including engagement of young scholars), how relevant parts will be interlinked, and how the proposed course/module/educational will be managed and coordinated.

Note: VREF accepts that there may be further considerations and recruiting of teachers, particularly guest lecturers, who are needed after the funding decision by VREF; however, all main teachers should be identified in the application, including information about their relevant pedagogic experience (including online pedagogic experience).

❯ **Institutional support and commitment)**

Provide evidence of the home department/faculty/university's commitment to allocate sufficient home staff resources to develop, implement and fully evaluate the course/module/educational resource; to institutionally embed, fully accredit and assign/approve degree credits for the new course or course module within an existing programme or other educational unit in the university, and – as far as possible in accordance with existing institutional frameworks/restrictions -to make the material available online to other (SSA or national) university teachers and students on an open access, no cost basis at VREFs platform/repository (or other proposed online platform).

❯ **Budget**

The application should include a detailed budget for the proposed work, including distribution of costs (see table below). Please indicate in the budget if the project will be partly funded (co-funded) by other sources than VREF.

❯ NB The VREF grant cannot be used to cover salary costs for staff at the host department or center. All overheads, VAT and similar costs must be included in the budget.

VREF advises applicants to present the proposed budget according to the template below:

Please, state all costs and funding information in SEK(1SEK=approx.0,10 Euros)	
Funding	
Requested VREF funding	
Other expected funding (if any)	
Total funding	
Costs	
Honorariums/fee for guest lecturers, staff from other organization than the host department/center, and specialized resoure persons	
Cost for engaging young or emerging scholars	
Cost for production of online educational resources	
Travel, and other costs	
Overheads	
Total costs	

› **Appendixes**

In addition to the application's main document (max 8 pages), the following two appendices should be added:

++ Bibliography/References

++ Short cv's (maximum 3 pages) for core teachers/specialists in the proposed course/module/ educational resource