

CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS – FIRST STAGE SUBMISSIONS

For capacity building projects in partnership with an institution of higher learning in a low or middle-income country

February 1, 2023

ACADEMICS WITHOUT BORDERS

Academics Without Borders (AWB) is a Canadian nonprofit organization. Its mission is to help low and middle-income countries improve their universities so that they can train their own experts and conduct research to assist in their countries' development. AWB's projects are involved in the full range of university activities from expanding and improving existing institutions and programs to helping create new ones. AWB fulfills its mission through volunteers who collaborate on projects that originate in and are owned by developing world institutions.

DEFINITIONS

Partner institution	The institution of higher education in the low or middle-income country at which the project is located
Network member	Institutions that are members of the AWB Network of Canadian colleges and universities, including their faculty and staff

THE PROJECTS

AWB is looking to develop and support projects that enable volunteer experts to engage in capacity-building activities at institutions of higher education in low or middle-income countries.

Rather than an application for funding, this is a call for proposals for AWB projects. Applications may be submitted by a faculty or staff member at one of the universities and colleges in the [AWB Network](#) in collaboration with a partner institution of higher education in a low or middle-income country.

Sustainability of the project is key: your partner institution must have the resources to engage with the project and to ensure its sustainability once the activities of the project have ended.

If you wish to propose a concept for an AWB project, note that

1. AWB engages in all stages from project conception, volunteer selection and orientation, implementation, and evaluation.

2. Your role is as a facilitator of the development of the proposal and as a potential AWB volunteer for the implementation of the project.
3. The partner institution in the low or middle-income country is involved at all steps of project development and implementation.
4. AWB does not provide a grant in the traditional sense - it is an implementing agency, providing project management and other support, and funds basic direct project costs as delineated below.

CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

This call for project proposals is limited to the member institutions of the AWB Network of Canadian universities and colleges.

It is important to note that while the project is proposed by faculty or staff at a Network member institution, accepted projects become “AWB projects” and AWB is involved in all stages of development and implementation.

For environmental reasons, we have revised our emphasis on projects and travel as “international travel when necessary but not necessarily international travel.” Thus, we encourage submission of projects that can be implemented in whole or in part via online methods. We will also consider projects requiring on-site activity but consideration should be given to maximizing work that can be done remotely in preparation for on-site visits.

Such online work might involve, for example, the use of courses and workshops to build capacity using Zoom or other platforms, curriculum development through emails, exchange of documentation, etc.

Building on Established Relationships

This call for project proposals is designed to build on established relationships between you and your colleagues at an institution of higher education in a developing country. The existing knowledge, networks, and trust between you and the people with whom you have worked contributes to sustainable change.

Coverage of Expenses

Expenses covered include items such as economy air travel, airport transfers, medical and travel insurance, visa, necessary vaccinations and medications, in-transit costs for hotels and meals, and a stipend for the volunteer’s living expenses. Other costs may also be considered to facilitate volunteer involvement with the project, especially for projects implemented virtually.

Partner institutions are asked to make some financial or in-kind contributions to support the volunteer involvement in the project but are not expected to be able to offer support in all areas. AWB will cover any volunteer costs (as above) that the partner institution cannot cover.

The partner institution must commit the resources necessary to facilitate their faculty and staff's involvement in the project and to ensure that the outcomes of the project are implemented and sustained.

AWB does not cover the cost of equipment or books and does not provide a salary or honorarium for its volunteers or stipends for participants at the partner institution.

Volunteers

As noted, projects are carried out by AWB volunteers working with their counterparts at our partner institutions. The person submitting the project proposal under this call may apply as the volunteer for the project or may forward the names of others to act as volunteers. If a project is submitted without a proposed volunteer, AWB will find volunteers for the project. (Note that the counterparts at the partner institution are not considered volunteers but project partners.)

APPLICATION PROCESS

The process is in two stages.

1. Submission of a first stage application as outlined below and using the form linked below.
2. If the proposal meets the eligibility requirements, it moves to a second stage in which AWB contacts the partner institution and invites a more fully developed project proposal.

Project proposals will be evaluated on the basis of their potential to build and sustain capacity growth and quality enhancement. Consideration may, in rare cases, also be given to the number of proposals originating from each Network institution.

THE FIRST STAGE SUBMISSION

Partner Institution Eligibility Criteria

- AWB supports projects and institutions in the world's poorest countries - those identified as low or medium income in the United Nations Development Program's [Human Development Index](#). In exceptional cases AWB will consider projects in countries that are not in this list but are included in the UNDP's [Multidimensional Poverty Index](#). In these cases, a compelling case must be made that, although the country is not among the world's poorest, support is justified because of regional inequalities within the country.
- The partner institution in the low or middle-income country must be a public or private nonprofit institution of higher education accredited by a national agency that is willing to enter into a partnership with AWB.
- The project must be a priority for the partner institution. The institution must be willing to be an active collaborator on the project and identify a Local Project Lead(s) to work collaboratively with the AWB volunteer(s).
- The initiative must contribute to sustainable institutional development.
- The partner institutions in the low or middle-income country must cover the costs of their staff, laboratory and/or classroom space and equipment, office expenses, and publication

necessary for the project's success and have the necessary resources to sustain the results of the project.

- The partner institution is expected to make a financial or in-kind contribution to provide accommodations, local transportation, and, if possible, a stipend to cover local costs for the volunteer(s). AWB will consider waiving this requirement only in exceptional cases where the inability to cover these costs is clear.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Applications will not be considered that involve travel to a country or a region of a country for which the Government of Canada has issued a travel advisory urging "Avoid all travel" or "Avoid non-essential travel" – see <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>. This restriction does not apply to projects that can be implemented entirely online.

Project Eligibility Criteria

- The project must align with the [vision, mission, and objectives of AWB](#).
- Capacity building at the partner institution in the low or middle-income country must be central to the project and there must be a clear indication of how the project's activities and outcomes will be sustained and evaluated.
- The first stage proposal must be submitted by one or more working or retired faculty, staff, or administrators from an AWB Network member university or college.
- The initiative will build on and strengthen a relationship between the person submitting the proposal and their counterparts in the partner institution in a low or middle-income country.
- The proposal may include a component for involvement of students from the applicant's institution. However, all student involvement must be supervised by an approved AWB volunteer, self-funded, and add value to the project and will require the explicit agreement of the partner institution in the developing world.
- The proposal must be cost effective.

Volunteer Eligibility Criteria

- Required academic qualifications and experience for academics, staff and non-academic professionals are outlined on our [website](#).
- Typically, proposed volunteers will be current or retired faculty or staff of an [AWB Network](#) member institution.
- When international travel is involved, the volunteer(s) must be willing to spend the time at the partner institution in the developing world to realize the goals of the project. The minimum posting is three weeks except under exceptional circumstances, but many projects require longer time onsite and some require the volunteer to be willing to return to the partner institutions for several postings.
- Irrespective of whether travel is involved, all volunteers must be committed to a level of involvement necessary to fulfill the goals of the project.
- The volunteer(s) must be willing to be contractually engaged as an AWB volunteer and to follow all AWB policies and procedures.

DOWNLOAD THE FIRST STAGE SUBMISSION FORM [HERE](#) - we will only accept proposals that use the form.

If this first stage proposal is approved, it will move to the second stage of the process. AWB will send the AWB project proposal form to the partner institution to be completed there and signed by a senior administrator.

DEADLINES AND DECISIONS

- First Step Deadline: Friday, March 17, 2023
- First Step Decision: Friday, April 7, 2023

QUESTIONS?

Contact Corrie Young, Associate Executive Director - Projects & Network, cyoung@awb-usf.org.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Please submit project proposals by Friday, March 17, 2022 to Corrie Young at cyoung@awb-usf.org. Note that AWB will provide a copy of your proposal to the AWB Network contact person at your institution for their information.