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NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION



NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR REGISTRATION, LICENSING, AND REGULATION OF RESEARCHERS IN KENYA

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CUE	:	Commission for University Education
CV	:	Curriculum Vitae
ERP	:	Enterprise Resource Planning
ISERC	:	Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee
KENRIS	:	Kenya National Research Information System
KES	:	Kenya Shillings
KNQA	:	Kenya National Qualification Authority
NACOSTI	:	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
PI	:	Principal Investigator
RIMS	:	Research Information Management System
RSTI	:	Research, Science, Technology and Innovation
STI	:	Science, Technology and Innovation
STIRN	:	Science, Technology, Innovation and Research Network

FOREWORD

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) is established under the Science Technology and Innovation Act (ST&I), 2013 (Rev 2017). The mandate of NACOSTI is to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

To contribute to the realization of NACOSTI's mandate and adherence to the ST&I Act, the Commission seeks to recognize researchers through registration. Section 15 of STI (Registration and Accreditation of Research Institutions) Regulations, 2014 mandates the Commission to register, license and regulate researchers in the Scheduled Science areas as per the Second Schedule to the STI Act.

The National Guidelines for Registration of Researchers is a key document for registration and licensing of researchers in Kenya. It is also a reference document for stakeholders and the general public who want to obtain more information on registration of researchers with a step-to-step guide on how to register as a researcher through the Kenya National Research Information System (KENRIS) portal.

I take this opportunity to most sincerely thank the stakeholders for their invaluable input in the development of these Guidelines. I am also grateful to those researchers who were involved in the piloting of KENRIS whose feedback went a long way in the development of this system.

NACOSTI

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Interpretation.

In these Guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires-

"Commission" means the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation established under section 3 of the STI Act;

"Eligible" means meeting the stipulated requirements;

"Foreign researcher" means a foreign scientist who is registered to undertake research in the country.

"Institution of Affiliation" means a research institution registered under the STI Act or Accredited University in Kenya;

"Local researcher" means local scientist who is registered to undertake research in the country

"Principal Investigator" means the main researcher overseeing or leading or conducting the research process or project;

"Research" means any investigation or inquiry which aims to collect and collate data or information, academic or non-academic, in areas of humanities or pure sciences or technology that will lead to new knowledge or information. It includes any systematic, critical or scientific study of, or inquiry into, any subject or matter for the extension of knowledge

"Researcher" is a person who holds a masters degree and above and engages in the methodical and systematic investigation of societal challenges and aspirations, propositions, and hypotheses with the goal of contributing to new knowledge, or a person whose job involves discovering or verifying information for use in a book, programme, etc.

"Research Associate" means a person who holds a good academic qualification with at least a bachelor degree.

“Research institution” means any organization, centre or place whether public or private in which research of any kind is conducted or undertaken by any person, consortium or institute, and which is registered under this Act;

“Research system” means research, science, technology or innovation

"Scientific research" refers to any investigation or research or inquiry or interview that aims to collect data or information, academic or non-academic, in areas of humanities or pure sciences or engineering or technology or for purpose of marketing survey or opinion polls that will lead to new knowledge or information;

"Scheduled science" means any of the groups of sciences listed in the Second Schedule to the STI Act; and

"STI Act" means the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Revised 2017).

“University” has the meaning assigned it under the Universities Act, 2012 (No. 42 of 2012).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) is established by the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Act, 2013 (Rev. 2017) as a State Corporation. The mandate of NACOSTI is to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto. To achieve its mandate, the STI Act stipulates seventeen functions of NACOSTI, which may be categorized into: Regulating, Advising, Coordinating, and Promoting matters related to STI and the STI Sector.

The Legal Notice No. 106 of the STI Act 2013 on the STI (Registration and Accreditation of Research Institutions) Regulations 2014, under section 15 provides for recognition of researchers. Section 15. (1) states that “the Commission shall register, license and regulate researchers in the Scheduled science areas in the Second Schedule to the STI Act”.

The STI Act under the Second Schedule provides for six science areas/fields which may also be benchmarked and integrated with international classifications such as the Canadian Research and Development Classification, or the Fields of Research and Development (FORD) classification specified in the Frascati Manual. The classification is used to classify R&D units and resources by fields of enquiry, namely, Natural Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Medical and Health Sciences, Agricultural and Veterinary Sciences, Social Sciences, and Humanities and the arts.

1.2 The Objective of the Guidelines for Registration of Researchers

In line with Legal Notice No. 106 of the STI Act 2013, section 15(1) the objective of these Guidelines is to facilitate all researchers and potential researchers to effectively register and be licensed as researchers through the Kenya National Research Information System (KENRIS), and hence assure quality in the national research systems in the country and secure public confidence on the same. This system will be integrated with other systems including Research Information Management System (RIMS) and the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).

The guidelines promote the quality of research and research outputs aimed at delivering socio-economic benefits to the public, including enhancing social integration. Researchers that attain licensing or accreditation agree to adhere to set research standards and obligation, and hence offer assurances to the Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (RSTI) sector, as well as the general public.

The guidelines are benchmarked with global best practice;

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-economy-act-2017-part-5-codes-of-practice/research-code-of-practice-and-accreditation-criteria>
- <https://www.aahrpp.org/learn/for-research-participants/role-of-accreditation>

2. REGISTRATION/LICENSING OF RESEARCHERS

2.1 Who is a Researcher.

(1) A researcher is a person who engages in the methodical and systematic investigation of societal challenges and aspirations, propositions, and hypotheses with the goal of contributing to new knowledge, or a person whose job involves discovering or verifying information for use in a book, programme, etc.

Regardless of the methodology used, all forms of research have one aspect in common, which is to pursue or seek knowledge for the public good.

2.2 Classification of Research and Development Fields

2.2.1 Natural Sciences

- i. Mathematics
- ii. Computing and Information Sciences
- iii. Physical Sciences
- iv. Chemical Sciences
- v. Earth and related Environmental Sciences
- vi. Biological Sciences
- vii. Other Natural Sciences

2.2.2 Engineering and Technology

- i. Civil Engineering
- ii. Electrical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Information Engineering
- iii. Mechanical Engineering
- iv. Mechatronic Engineering
- v. Chemical Engineering
- vi. Material Engineering
- vii. Medical Engineering
- viii. Environmental Engineering
- ix. Agricultural/Biosystems Engineering
- x. Geomatic Engineering
- xi. Environmental Biotechnology
- xii. Industrial Biotechnology
- xiii. Nanotechnology
- xiv. Other Engineering and technologies

2.2.3 Medical and Health Sciences

- i. Basic Medicine
- ii. Clinical Medicine
- iii. Health Sciences
- iv. Medical Biotechnology
- v. Other Medical Sciences

2.2.4 Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences

- i. Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- ii. Animal and Dairy Sciences
- iii. Veterinary Science
- iv. Agricultural Biotechnology
- v. Other Agricultural Sciences

2.2.5 Social Sciences

- i. Psychology and Cognitive Sciences
- ii. Economics and Business
- iii. Educational Sciences
- iv. Sociology
- v. Law
- vi. Political Science
- vii. Social and Economic Geography
- viii. Media and Communications
- ix. Other Social Sciences

2.2.6 Humanities

- i. History and Archaeology
- ii. Language and Literature
- iii. Philosophy, Ethics and Religion
- iv. Arts (Arts, history of Arts, Performing Arts, Music)
- v. Other Humanities

2.3 Recognition of Researchers

The STI Act under section 6 (1) provides for specific functions of NACOSTI which include:

- (i) accredit research institutes and approve all Scientific research in Kenya;
- (ii) assure relevance and quality of science, technology and innovation programmes in research institutes;
- (iii) develop and enforce codes, guidelines and regulations in accordance with the policy determined under this Act for the governance, management and maintenance of standards and quality in research systems; and
- (iv) undertake, or cause to be undertaken, regular inspections, monitoring and evaluation of research institutions to ensure compliance with set standards and guidelines.

In all these quality assurance functions the role of a researcher is imperative and hence the need to ensure researchers recognitions as per legal Notice 106 section 15(1). The registration of researchers is therefore aimed at “upholding the standard of research in the country and secure public confidence in the national research systems” as stipulated in section 3 of Legal Notice No. 106

2.4 Benefits of being Registered/Licensed as a Researcher

The registration/licensing/regulation of researchers will serve to uphold the standard of research in the country and secure public confidence in the national research systems, and hence contribute to global/regional recognition of researchers in Kenya. The registration/licensing/regulation of researchers will also provide a level playing field for researchers through the enforcement of research standards, including research ethics, as stipulated in the STI Act and other relevant legislation.

Further, registration as a researcher provides opportunities for a researcher to apply for international research grants or projects that are coordinated by NACOSTI, participation of a researcher in national committees or panels or think tanks that are coordinated by NACOSTI and pairing up of a researcher with peers for the furtherance of STI sector. A registered/licensed researcher will also have ready access to activities of the Science, Technology, Innovation and Research Network (STIRN) through nominating institutions who are members of STIRN. Given that the registration is undertaken on-line it will further, provide an opportunity for researchers to create and update their profile for a global audience with minimum efforts through a one-stop individual webpage listing that includes all publications and achievements from multiple sources. The Research ID will allow researchers to claim and showcase publications to collaborators while minimizing the manual updates.

Other benefits associated with registration and licensing of researchers include: enhanced visibility; tracking of research and development activities in the country which is important for identification of gaps and areas where efforts are needed to intensify and invest resources for improved R&D performance; provision of data and information to develop annual status reports on Research, Science, Technology, and Innovation; provision of data for human resources planning; forecasting and facilitation of effective utilization of skills.

2.5 Quality Assurance of Research

Quality is multi-dimensional or multi-faceted and may hence be regarded as; free from defects, or meets certain predetermined standard, or satisfies stakeholder/customer needs, or fit for purpose/use. As part of quality assurance of research and infusion of a quality/ethical culture among researchers, NACOSTI is required by law to ensure that minimum research standards are adhered to as per the

STI Act and STI (Accreditation and Quality Assurance) Regulation 2014. Quality assurance of the national research system provides assurance that the facilities, equipment, other relevant infrastructure, personnel, methods, practices, cost effectiveness, records, reports, and dissemination methods meet the quality standard. Assurance mechanisms guarantee veracity, trust, integrity, repeatability and relevance of research findings/outcomes throughout the Research Life Cycle, and prohibits unethical practices, as well as unnecessary duplication and costs.



Thus, registration and licensing of a researcher is a mark of quality, professionalism, reliability, and competence, and further commits the researcher to adhere to standards of integrity and professional development.

2.6 Delegation by the Commission

The Commission may accredit or designate a competent organization or societies or committee or panel to carry out this function on its behalf, as may be determined from time to time. Nothing delegated shall be deemed to have been withdrawn from or restrict the powers or responsibilities of the Commission. As such, the Commission shall have the power to exercise any of the delegated functions.

3. LEGIBILITY, AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE

3.1 Legibility for Registration/licensing

There will be two levels of Researcher registration/licensing, namely, **Researcher**, and **Graduate/Junior Researcher**, requirements of which are listed below.

3.1.1 Researcher

The minimum qualifications for registration as a researcher are:

- (i) Academic/Research qualifications and experience
 - A relevant Master's or a PhD degree. The Master's or PhD degree should have been acquired either through research only or through research and coursework at a recognized university. A one-year executive master's degree is not a qualification for a researcher.
 - Have undertaken research for at least five (5) years since attaining master's or PhD degree as is evidenced by:
 - ✓ a PhD thesis after Master's degree, or
 - ✓ three (3) publications in recognized/reputable journals after master's degree, or
 - ✓ six (6) conference papers in recognized international conferences in /reputable journals after master's degree.
- (ii) All applications should be accompanied by certificates (PhD, Masters, Bachelors, or Diploma, where applicable), and current CV of the applicant
- (iii) All the application shall be made online via KENRIS using the link: <https://kenris.nacosti.go.ke> The details to be submitted should be as per the prescribed format as shown in Annex I, II, III, IV, & V.
- (iv) The Applicant shall state their institution of affiliation (which should be a recognized institution), and provide a recognition letter from the Head of the Institution, or from the Chairperson of the said institution's Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee (ISERC). Recognized institutions of affiliation shall include registered research institutions as per the STI Act, Kenya, universities chartered (or with a letter of interim authority) as per provisions of the Universities Act, Kenya, and University Colleges established as per provisions of the Universities Act, Kenya.
- (v) An applicant affiliated to other institutions may apply to an accredited ISERC established within a registered research institution established as per the STI Act, or a chartered university established as per the Universities Act, for a recognition certificate upon meeting the requirements of recognition of his/her research activities.

- (vi) An applicant will provide at least one current topic of research or research interest and include a brief description of each research topic (of not more than 250 words) that concisely explains the justification, main objective, methods, and expected impact of the research in relation to the country's sustainable socio-economic development goals and international commitments.
- (vii) All applicants will sign a letter of commitment (see website for template);
 - a. To adhere to requirements of scientific research, research ethics global best practice, and relevant laws.
 - b. To submit annual report of research activities undertaken to the Director General, NACOSTI).
 - c. To acknowledge that NACOSTI will deregister the applicant in case of contravention of the requirements for registration/licensing as determined by relevant organs of NACOSTI.
- (viii) The Registration status is valid for a period of three years after which a request for renewal shall be made for consideration.

3.1.2 Graduate/Junior Researcher

The minimum qualifications for registration as a graduate/junior researcher are:

- (i) Academic/Research qualifications and experience:
 - Undertaking a relevant Master's degree or Bachelor's degree or a Diploma in a recognized institution
 - or
 - A relevant or Bachelor's degree, or a Diploma from a recognized institution
- (ii) All applications should be accompanied by certified certificates (Masters, Bachelors, or Diploma, where applicable), and current CV of the applicant
- (iii) All the application shall be made online via KENRIS using the link: <https://kenris.nacosti.go.ke> The details to be submitted should be as per the prescribed format as shown in Annex I, II, III, IV, & V.
- (iv) The Applicant shall state their institution of affiliation (which should be a recognized institution) and provide a recognition letter from the Head of the Institution, or from the Chairperson of the said institution's Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (ISERC). Recognized institutions of affiliation shall include registered research institutions as per the STI Act, Kenya, universities chartered (or with a letter of interim authority) as per provisions of the Universities Act, Kenya, and University Colleges established as per provisions of the Universities Act, Kenya.

An applicant affiliated to other institutions may apply to an accredited ISERC established within a registered research institution established as per

the STI Act, Kenya, or a chartered university established as per the Universities Act, Kenya, for a recognition certificate upon meeting the requirements of recognition of his/her research activities.

- (v) An applicant will provide at least one current topic of research or research interest, and include a brief description of each research topic (of not more than 250 words) that concisely explains the justification, main objective, methods, and expected impact of the research in relation to the country's socio-economic development goals and international commitments.
- (vi) All applicants will sign a letter of commitment (see website for template);
 - a. To adhere to requirements of scientific research, research ethics global best practice, and relevant laws;
 - b. To submit annual report of research activities undertaken to the Director General, NACOSTI
 - c. To acknowledge that NACOSTI will deregister the applicant in case of contravention of the requirements for registration/licensing as determined by relevant organs of NACOSTI.
- (vii) The Registration status is valid for a period of three years after which a request for renewal shall be made for consideration.

3.2 Application Procedure

(1) A researcher who intends to carry out research in Kenya shall be required to submit a letter of application to the Chairperson of an Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee (ISERC) which has been accredited by NACOSTI, accompanied by the following;

- (a) a completed application Form in a prescribed form
- (b) a completed and signed declaration of compliance by the researcher to NACOSTI's Form on ethical research
- (c) a research proposal, or a write-up on potential areas of research
- (d) updated and duly signed Curriculum Vitae that includes at least two referees, and their email/telephone contacts
- (e) recent electronic passport size photograph
- (f) a reference support letter from that applicants Head of Department/Unit/Section/Faculty, or a registered researcher
- (g) a support letter from a Kenyan affiliated institution, where applicable i.e. the case of a foreign researcher.

(2) A foreign researcher shall, in addition to the requirements above, be required to submit name and letter of local collaborator, and be in compliance with relevant laws

(3) A researcher affiliated to an institution may lodge his application in person or through the host institution

3.3 Steps to be followed During Online Application Process

- i. All applications will be launched using the KENRIS portal and applicants are advised before making the application to carefully read the instructions provided in the system.
- ii. Using email verification, the applicant will be required to create his/her account in the Kenya National Information Research System using the link: <https://kenris.nacosti.go.ke>
- iii. Upon successful login, the applicant will be re-directed to a dashboard, where the applicant should click on Researcher Registration, then click on new application.
- iv. Before the applicant uploads his/her the Profile Details as shown in **Annex I**, he/she must agree to the terms and condition in order to proceed with the application. One must fill all the mandatory fields (marked with asterisks).
- v. The applicant is required to upload a passport photo which will appear on his/her Certificate for Registration. See **Annex II** for Profile Photo Details.
- vi. Upon uploading the profile photo, the applicant is expected to write a summary of his/her CV in the prescribed format **See Annex III** textbox field.
- vii. Afterwards the applicant is required to input area of specialization. **See Annex IV** for the form for the Area of Specialization. The applicant should pick area of research from the drop-down list. Select his/her discipline from the list. Key in research interest. Select the highest academic qualification. Key in year of qualification and enter the awarding institution. Select the country where the institution located. Upload the certificate.
- viii. Applicants with degrees obtained from a foreign university are expected to upload the Commission for University Education (CUE) recognition certificate/letter, or the Kenya National Qualification's Authority (KNQA) letter for Diploma related training.
- ix. To input the publications, applicants should enter information on the publication title; the year of publication; journal where the publication was

done and provide the link to the publication; and submit the information. **See Annex V** for the form for adding publications.

- x. One can add Institution of affiliation by clicking on the institution button. A pop-up with the list of institutions of Affiliation will appear, select institution of affiliation, and submit.
- xi. The applicant is required to select whether he/she falls under the special interest groups from the drop-down list.
- xii. All the information that was provided in the previous forms can be previewed for validation. When done, Click on Submit Application. Note that once you submit you will not be able to edit.

3.4 Compliance

- (1) A researcher shall be required to comply with the laws, regulations and to respect the cultural, social and political norms of the study areas and communities
- (2) A research which involves human subjects shall not be carried out unless the researcher applies and obtains relevant ethical clearances
- (3) A prospective foreign researcher shall not be allowed to arrive in Kenya unless he has been issued with a research permit.

ANNEX 1: APPLICATION FORM

PROFILE DETAILS

Applicants will be expected to provide the following information

- i. Title:
- ii. First Name; Middle Name; Last Name.
- iii. ID/Passport Number
- iv. Permanent Address
- v. Physical Address
- vi. Institutional of affiliation Address
- vii. Postal Address
- viii. Telephone
- ix. E-Mail
- x. Nationality
- xi. Country of Residence
- xii. County for Kenyans

ANNEX II: SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE PHOTO

This is where the researcher uploads his /her passport size photograph. The photograph will appear in the Certificate of Registration.

The Photo must be:

- i. JPG, GIF, or PNG format;
- ii. A maximum size of 2MB
- iii. Ideal size: at least 200 x 200 pixels
- iv. Clear and be a truthful representation of oneself.

Please note that the system will reject photos that are not in the above format.

ANNEX III: ABRIDGED CV

The abridged CV should be a summary of the following:

- i. Research Interests
- ii. Teaching/training/consultancy Interests (where applicable)
- iii. Outreach
- iv. Non-Academic Work
- v. Related Professional Skills
- vi. References

ANNEX IV: ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

(Fill as appropriate)

Academic degree/diploma	Year of qualification	Name of the awarding institution	Country of awarding institution	Remarks (if any)

Note:

- **Upload** the Certificate of **Highest** academic qualification.
- Upload CUE recognition certificate (this is only for applicants with degrees obtained from a foreign university)
- Upload KNQA recognition certificate for Diploma related training

ANNEX V: R&D CLASSIFICATION, AND AREA OF SPECIALIZATION

(tick or underline as appropriate)

Natural Sciences	Engineering and Technology	Medical and Health Sciences	Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences	Social Sciences	Humanities	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics • Computing and Information Sciences • Physical Sciences • Chemical Sciences • Earth and related Environmental Sciences • Biological Sciences • Other Natural Sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Engineering • Electrical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Information Engineering • Mechanical Engineering • Mechatronic Engineering • Chemical Engineering • Material Engineering • Medical Engineering • Environmental Engineering • Agricultural/Biosystems Engineering • Geomatic Engineering • Environmental Biotechnology • Industrial Biotechnology • Nanotechnology • Other Engineering and technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Medicine • Clinical Medicine • Health Sciences • Medical Biotechnology • Other Medical Sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries • Animal and Dairy Sciences • Veterinary Science • Agricultural Biotechnology • Other Agricultural Sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychology and Cognitive Sciences • Economics and Business • Educational Sciences • Sociology • Law • Political Science • Social and Economic Geography • Media and Communications • Other Social Sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and Archaeology • Language and Literature • Philosophy, Ethics and Religion • Arts (Arts, history of Arts, Performing Arts, Music) • Other Humanities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

ANNEX VI: PUBLICATIONS

These are publications that a researcher has done before. The applicants should fill a maximum of five (5) latest publications, which should be in peer refereed journals or book chapter or book or reviewed conference.

- i. List of Authors (place an Asterix on the name of the main author)
- ii. Title of publication.
- iii. Year of publishing
- iv. Name of Journal or book or conference where the publication was done; and
- v. The link to the publication.