

Call for Participation at the Human Rights Research Academy for Practitioners in Zimbabwe

*The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (hereinafter “RWI”), in collaboration with its academic partners under the Zimbabwe Human Rights Capacity Development Programme 2024-2026 (see enclosed **Programme summary below**), is launching a call (hereinafter “Call”) for participation at the Human Rights Research Academy for Practitioners in Zimbabwe (hereinafter the Research Academy). Individuals from state institutions, independent commissions, civil society organizations, independent research centres, the judiciary, and any other practitioner working professionally with human rights in Zimbabwe is invited to submit his or her application for this human rights research academy. The Research Academy will be divided into two sessions. The first session will take place **12-13 May 2025** and the second session will take place **20-22 October 2025** in Harare.*

The Research Academy for Practitioners forms part of RWI’s Zimbabwe Human Rights Capacity Development Programme 2024-2026 funded by the Embassy of Sweden in Zimbabwe.

The closing date for submitting applications is 22 April 2025.

Aim and Scope of the Research Academy

The overall objective of the Research Academy is to improve the knowledge and skills of Zimbabwean human rights practitioners, on human rights research in Zimbabwe. The Research Academy also aims to develop research capacities of Zimbabwean researchers, focusing on strengthening their abilities to plan, design and develop human rights related research and also provide a platform for interaction, exchange of experiences and best practices on human rights issues. During the Research Academy, particular attention will be given to applied research approaches and methodologies, strengthening the capacity of participants to propose innovative solutions to issues affecting individuals or sectors of the Zimbabwean society. To that end, each participant is required to submit a proposal of a human rights research project that he or she would like to further develop during the Research Academy. Linkages with RWI’s thematic focus areas (rule of law and access to justice, business and human rights, human rights and the environment, non-discrimination and inclusion and international humanitarian law)¹ are encouraged.

A research grant of USD\$ 300 (**up to a maximum of SEK 3000**) will be awarded to each researcher (working individually) to conduct the research. Research projects will be carried out in the period between May and October 2025.

Structure, Methodology and Pedagogy

The Research Academy for Practitioners will consist of two sessions. The first session takes place **12-13 May 2025** in Harare. During this session, participants will present and discuss their project proposals and receive feedback from international and local experts, as well as peers, and

¹ <https://rwi.lu.se/>.

participate in lectures and seminars in which human rights research planning, design and methodology will be explored and discussed. Ethical considerations in human rights research and human rights principles and values in research will also be explored. Participants will be actively engaged during the different sessions, contributing to their substantive content by sharing their own research ideas and providing feedback to their peers' project proposals.

The second session of the research academy will take place over three days **20-22 October 2025** in Harare. During this session, participants are expected to present and discuss their research papers and policy briefs focusing on the project's main conclusions and recommendations.

Pedagogy

During the Research Academy, participants will actively work on their research projects, critically discussing their main components with senior scholars, practitioners and peers in both sessions. These two sequential phases will provide participants with the opportunity to reflect on how to strengthen the different components of their projects (focusing on their project design) and to discuss and further develop their substantive content and result of their projects.

Participation costs

RWI will provide compensation for all costs relating to transportation, accommodation and a fixed daily allowance to all participants resident outside of Harare, according to RWI standard rates.

Eligibility

Individuals from state institutions, independent commissions, civil society organizations, the judiciary and any other practitioner working professionally with human rights in Zimbabwe are eligible to apply individually. Applicants must demonstrate necessary support by their immediate manager/director (or equivalent).

Expected Outputs

Peer and mentorship support will be offered to all participants throughout the research academy. Participants are expected to participate in **both** sessions of the research academy.

Participants are expected to present and discuss their preliminary research proposals at the first session of the research academy, **12-13 May 2025**. As a final output of the conducted research, each participant is required to produce and submit an advanced draft of the paper (5000 to 8000 words), together with a short policy brief (1500 words), no later than **13 October 2025**. Participants are expected present and discuss their final research papers and policy briefs at the second session of the Research Academy, **20-22 October 2025**.

Participants are expected to submit a final version of their policy brief to RWI on or before **21 November 2025**.

Application Procedure

Please attach and e-mail the following documents by **22 April 2025²** to RWI Harare on harare@rwi.lu.se.

² RWI reserves the right to extend the deadline if a sufficient number of applications has not been received. This will also entail an extension of the decision notification date. Should the just said be warranted all concerned parties will be duly notified via email and the Call updated.

1. **Up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV).** Please include your place of employment and city of residence.
2. **Research project proposal (800-1500 words)** – A short description of the research to be conducted, containing –among other elements: (1) a brief description of the research problem addressed by the research proposal; (2) a short account of the main research question(s) and method(s) that are planned to be used; (3) the practical relevance of the research for the advancement of human rights in Zimbabwe and in connection with the professional work currently undertaken by the applicant; and (4) an account of the feasibility of conducting and finalising the research and submitting an advanced draft of a paper and short policy brief for their presentation during the second session of the research academy.
3. **Motivation letter (200-600 words)** – A personal statement explaining your interest to human rights research (personally and/or professionally) and your expectations regarding your participation in this initiative.
4. **Simplified budget** - Please provide a budget outlining each cost associated with carrying out the research project and a rationale for each expenditure (e.g. travels and field research within Zimbabwe, relevant to the research project, study visits, materials, etc.).

An email confirmation that your application has been received will be sent to all applicants. If you have not received said confirmation within one or two business days please resend your application until a confirmation is received.

Evaluation of Proposals

All research project proposals will be evaluated by a Selection Committee comprised of RWI and Zimbabwean academic partner with relevant research, human rights and contextual expertise. The following factors, among others, will be taken into consideration when evaluating proposals: quality of the written proposal (i.e. clarity, organisation and design); feasibility of the research project (scope, time, qualifications of applicant etc.); relevance of the project proposal for the advancement of human rights in Zimbabwe; and potential for broader dissemination and impact to different relevant audiences in Zimbabwe. During the selection process, gender balance will be specially considered by the Committee. The decision of the Selection Committee is final.

Timeline

1. Closing date for submitting a research project proposal and simplified budget: **22 April 2025.**
2. Notification to applicants of the Selection Committee's decision: **2 May 2025.**
3. Participation at the first session of the research academy **12-13 May 2025.**
4. Submission of an advanced draft of the project report and short policy brief: **13 October 2025.**
5. Presentation and discussion of an advanced draft of the project report at the final session: **20-21 October 2025.**
6. Presentation of the short policy brief at the final session of the research academy: **22 October 2025.**
7. Submission of the final version of the research paper and policy brief: **21 November 2025.**

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ZIMBABWE

Introduction

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law is an independent academic institution, founded in 1984 and affiliated with Lund University in Sweden. In legal terms, the Institute is a trust under Swedish private law, governed by a board of trustees.

The mission of the Institute is to contribute to a wider understanding of and respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. The vision of the Institute is just and inclusive societies with effective realisation of human rights for all. In light of this, the Institute contributes to strengthening structures, systems and mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights at all levels in society through:

- Multi-disciplinary research and analysis to create new knowledge on core human rights issues to support relevant policy processes, education and the practical application of human rights law
- Implementation of and support to Human Rights in Higher Education, primarily in cooperation with academic institutions and human rights centres around the world
- Support and Advice, in the form of cooperation with organisations and institutions, including across sectors, to improve the practical application of human rights, through advice, professional training, curricula development, establishment of resource centers, exchange programmes, etc.
- Outreach, bringing together key stakeholders to share insights and information on human rights to build relationships and strengthen connections, including by means of roundtables, conferences and expert meetings.

RWI operates under four thematic and inter-connected priority areas which are: non-discrimination & inclusion, access to justice, human rights & business and human rights & environment. In addition to a special focus on these areas, anti-corruption and gender perspectives form an integrated part of all the Institute's programmes.

More general information about RWI and its activities can be found on its website: www.rwi.lu.se

International Cooperation

Since the early 1990s, RWI has been engaged in cooperation to further the promotion and protection of human rights with a wide number of institutions and organisations in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. The overall objective of these programmes is to advance the practical application of human rights and humanitarian law. By emphasising the implementation of international human rights standards as a means and goal for development, the programmes seek to contribute to an environment supportive of people living in poverty's own efforts to improve their quality of life.

The programmes, which primarily have been funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), focus on building and developing knowledge, skills, tools, resources and systems aimed at strengthening individual and institutional capacity to promote, respect, protect and

fulfil human rights. All interventions are designed based on their contextual relevance and in relation to the particular challenges existing for the development of societies based on a human rights culture. By applying a human rights-based approach to development, the programmes seek to involve and promote participation of all relevant stakeholders without discrimination, from initiation to implementation and evaluation of activities, in a transparent manner seeking to strengthen means and mechanisms for accountability. The cooperation is characterised by being based on mutual trust, long-term commitments and achievement of common objectives.

In addition to the headquarters in Lund, the Institute has offices in Harare, Jakarta, Nairobi, Phnom Penh, Stockholm and Yerevan, and maintains activities and cooperation in approximately 45 countries.

RWI maintains a presence in Zimbabwe since October 2019 and in October 2020 the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law – Harare Trust (RWI-Harare), was established to facilitate programme coordination, with backstopping from the head office in Sweden.

Zimbabwe

RWI has been supporting human rights initiatives in Zimbabwe since 1992, primarily with funding from Sweden, but since 2021 also with funding from the European Union. Cooperation in Zimbabwe has over the years included human rights capacity development for several sectors, including government departments, justice sector institutions, independent commissions, academic institutions and civil society organisations. The Institute has also with funding from Sida awarded scholarships to Zimbabweans for participation in the Master of International Human Rights Law Programme, organised by RWI in cooperation with the Faculty of Law at Lund University.

The Sida-funded Cooperation Programme

The Sida-funded RWI Zimbabwe Human Rights Capacity Development Programme 2024-2026 takes its starting point in the Sida-funded Zimbabwe programme for the period 2019-2023, building on efforts, results and partnerships under that programme, aiming to contribute to an increased enjoyment of constitutional rights in Zimbabwe. The Programme has been developed in consultation with partners³ and other stakeholders.

The overall objective of the Programme is to contribute to *a just and inclusive society in Zimbabwe*. To achieve its objective the Programme will seek to consolidate and deepen existing partnerships with a view that partner institutions will more effectively promote, protect and respect human rights in accordance with their respective mandates. This applies not only to continued institutionalisation of human rights education, research and outreach at academic institutions, but also to the institutionalisation of the practical application of human rights in the work of independent commissions and justice sector institutions; while structured dialogue and joint initiatives among and between partner institutions and other main stakeholders⁴ on human rights issues, including on human rights of women and gender equality, also would be enhanced.

To achieve its objective, the Programme has two high-level strategies of intervention, which are to:

- *Strengthen the capacities among main stakeholders to promote, respect, protect and fulfil human rights within their respective mandate*

³ The main implementing partners are, the College of Business, Peace, Leadership and Governance and the Faculty of Law at Africa University, Mutare; the Faculty of Law at Midlands State University, Gweru; Herbert Chitepo School of Law at Great Zimbabwe University, Masvingo; the Faculty of Law at University of Zimbabwe, Harare; the Faculty of Law at Ezekiel Guti University, Bindura, the Centre for Applied Legal Research, Harare; the Council for Legal Education in Zimbabwe; Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission; Zimbabwe Gender Commission; Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission and Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Service.

⁴ Other main stakeholder have broadly been defined as institutions within academia, the public sector, independent commissions and civil society organisations not being direct programme partners

- *Enhance the means and space for main stakeholders to constructively engage with each other on key human rights issues*

In pursuing these strategies, the Programme approaches human rights reform from a long-term perspective seeking to strengthen the institutional base for such change in a sustainable manner. The Programme also looks at the development and strengthening of platforms for more effective and structured collaboration on strategic human rights issues, primarily between main programme stakeholders.

To give effect to these strategies for intervention, the Programme primarily focuses on cooperation regarding:

- Development of human rights education at academic partner institutions, including on programme, course and curricula development and teaching methodologies, with a particular focus on clinical legal education.
- Scholarship opportunities for human rights studies at academic partner institutions.
- Development of human rights library resources at academic partner institutions and independent commissions.
- Support to strengthened human rights research capacity among main stakeholders
- Support to development and publication of textbooks and policy-oriented research in support of the overall Programme objective.
- Delivery of cross-sectoral thematic professional training programmes on various aspects on human rights, bringing together representatives from min stakeholders to discuss and share experiences particularly on reform relevant issues and how to apply human rights standards in practice.
- Individual professional training and capacity development programmes, primarily for Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, Zimbabwe Gender Commission, Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission and the Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Service
- Roundtables and expert meetings in support of the overall programme objective.

The Programme is underpinned by a theory of change providing also for a strong results-orientation in terms of expected change, whereby it is expected that the Programme will contribute to participating institutions being better equipped to contribute to reforms and related initiatives for the promotion and protection of human rights and to an increased structured dialogue and joint initiatives on key human rights issues in Zimbabwe.

Gender equality aspects and human rights of women is given specific attention as a cross-cutting priority issue in the Programme, reinforcing the clear human rights-based approach embraced by the Programme. The Programme moreover maintains a focus on university-going youth and is designed to inherently preclude the influence of corruption by operating within the framework of international human rights standards in terms of both processes and expected results.

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