# CONNECTED BecA-ILRI Training Course Application Guidance

**Summary**

CONNECTED aims to build a sustainable network of international scientists and researchers to address the challenges of vector-borne plant viruses in Africa. CONNECTED creates opportunities for individuals to engage with each other, build capacity and create research consortia to respond to funding opportunities in the research area of African vector-borne plant viruses.

A key objective of CONNECTED is to enable Network Members, particularly Early Career Researchers, to enhance their knowledge and skills for career progression. This will enable capacity building within the field of plant vector-borne diseases in Africa. To contribute to this, a training course entitled 'An introduction to vector and virus diagnostics' is being held at BecA-ILRI Hub, Nairobi, Kenya - full details and course content are on our website.

Applications are open to all Network Members who are Early Career Researchers, but preference will be given to those based in DAC-list countries.

All awardees will be required to complete a series of short evaluation forms to enable the CONNECTED Network to assess and monitor change resulting from the training.

Places are limited and will be awarded following a competitive review process.

**Applicant eligibility for funding**

All Network members are eligible who are Early Career Researchers (ECRs), but preference will be given to those based in DAC list countries. ECRs are defined as those who have received their highest degree (BSc, MS or PhD) within the past 7 years.  For a list of eligible DAC countries, please visit the following link: http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC_List_ODA_Recipients2018to2020_flows_En.pdf

Applications must be supported by your organisation: please provide a letter of support from your group leader alongside your application. The funding body that the CONNECTED Network receives funding from stipulates that students are not eligible to apply. Part-time students are eligible if they also have an employment research contract with their

organisation which extends at least until the end of the course. This should be confirmed in the letter of support from your group leader.

**Activities supported:**
This award will support attendance at the BecA-IRLI Hub for the CONNECTED course 'An introduction to vector and virus diagnostics'.

Immunisation, visa, travel, and insurance costs are eligible together with course fees, which include accommodation and subsistence.

**Activities not supported:**
The funds distributed as part of this award should be used exclusively for costs relating to attendance at this course. Any additional costs claimed will not be paid.

**Value of grant and eligible costs:**
CONNECTED will cover the itemised costs to enable successful applicants to travel to and take part in this course. These can include costs such as (but not limited to) return flights to your home, visas, vaccinations, and insurance required for travel. Please detail and itemise these on the application form.

**Application process**
Network Members will be made aware of deadlines and key dates via the CONNECTED website (https://www.connectedvirus.net/), in monthly newsletters, and news items. Guidance documentation and the application form are available on the CONNECTED website.

Please enclose your CV with the application form, this should include information on your current employment, education, publications, conferences, training courses undertaken and any previous awards.

Each completed application form must be accompanied by a letter of support from your group leader. This letter should include the following:
1. Confirmation of your contract of research employment at your institution
2. Confirmation that you are recommended to attend this course.

Completed application forms, CVs, and letters of support must all be submitted to the Network Team email account (connectedvirusnetwork@gmail.com) by 4pm on the closing date. You will receive acknowledgement of your application.

**Review process**
Each application received will be checked by the Network Team to ensure it meets the application criteria and contains the required information. If there are any problems, further information will be requested from the applicant. All complete applications will be reviewed by the CONNECTED Network Executive (selected Management Board members may also take part should any member of the Network Executive have a conflict of interest with any applicants). The CONNECTED Management Board will receive a copy of the shortlisted applications, to enable final decisions for funding to be made.

**Notification**
All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application; please see the CONNECTED website for anticipated dates when results will be communicated to applicants.

**Timescales for visas and travel**
Awardees must ensure that sufficient time is allowed for visa, travel and immunisation arrangements to be completed. Awardees are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate visa(s) and immunisations are in place to enable travel. If successful applicants are unable to secure visas or other requirements necessary to enable them to attend the course, they will lose their place and CONNECTED will not be responsible for any further costs.

**Contractual Agreement**
Successful applicants will be sent an award letter that they must sign and return to the Network Team to confirm that they will use the funds in the manner set out in their application.

**Evaluation**
At the outset and upon completion of the training course, awardees will be required to complete a short evaluation form. Awardees will be requested to complete a follow up questionnaire 6 – 12 months later. The Network Team will also request that the awardee's Research Group leader complete a related questionnaire for assessing change resulting from the Training course.

**Payment of Awards**

Travel, visa and immunisations: the awardee will be responsible for booking their flights and travel needs plus any visa, immunisations and insurance needs. Awardees should claim these costs back from the Network Team by completing an expense form (to be provided by the Network Team) and submitting itemised receipts.

Accommodation and meals: Will be provided by BecA-ILRI.

**Publicity and Data Protection**

Copies of applications will be made available to the CONNECTED Management Board, Network Executive Group, and BBSRC, who will use the information provided for reviewing proposals, making awards, and post-award administration. CONNECTED may choose to publish details of awards, awardees, and information of training provided.

All funding comes from the BBSRC, so to meet the UK Research Councils' obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, non-confidential details of awards may also be made available on the Research Councils' websites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists. The BBSRC will use this information for research related activities, including but not limited to, statistical analysis in relation to the evaluation of BBSRC funding, study of trends and policy and strategy studies.