



## **Funding Opportunity: Belmont Forum Announces Funding Calls for Africa Environmental Research and Tropical Forest Research**

*Lewis-Burke Associates LLC – June 25, 2024*

The [Belmont Forum](#), an international partnership of 39 science organizations and funding institutions, recently released its 2024 collaborative research actions (CRAs) to support the work of international research consortiums around selected themes. The first 2024 CRA, the Africa Regional Call (ARC), aims to address climate change vulnerability and risks across the African continent. The second CRA, Tropical Forests: Global Implications and Pressing Actions (FORESTS 2024), seeks to support innovative solutions to environmental challenges in tropical forest regions. Each CRA focuses on a thematic topic selected by Forum members, with support provided by participating funding agencies. For both funding calls, U.S. participants will be supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF) as the U.S.-based funding agency. International consortium partners will bring their funding through terms specified by other participating funding agencies. More details on these open calls, including specific research areas, deadlines, funding amounts, and information on the terms for support of each participating country are provided for each funding opportunity below.

### **Africa Regional Call 2024 (ARC 2024)**

The [Africa Regional Call](#) seeks research proposals intended to support the African Union's climate, environment, and sustainable goals, outlined in the Africa Union's ten year [Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan](#), and supported through several international efforts including the [Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) and the United Nations [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development goals](#). Proposals should address at least one of the three following crossing-cutting areas outlined in the solicitation:

1. **The Water, Energy, Food, Health Nexus:** Supports research exploring how climate change affects African water, energy, and food systems. It also aims to develop innovative approaches that can enhance health outcomes across the African continent. Research outcomes should focus on generating innovative solutions to eradicate extreme poverty, improve education, ensure access to clean and potable water, and provide affordable, reliable, and clean energy sources. Proposals addressing the green and blue economy are strongly encouraged.
2. **Pollution:** Supports research on pollution and its impact on land, air, and oceans in Africa. The goal is to enhance the sustainability of land and marine resources, thereby supporting ecosystems. It seeks to deepen our understanding of pollution's effects on ocean biodiversity and the blue economy. Additionally, it aims to develop strategies for sustainable ocean management.
3. **Disaster Preparedness, Responsiveness, and Recovery:** Supports research that drives innovation in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts in disaster-prone regions of Africa. This includes research on disaster and multi-hazard risk assessment, mapping, response, and relief operations. It also encompasses the development of early warning and alert systems for disasters, as well as the design and implementation of medium and long-term strategies for disaster recovery and reconstruction.

The NSF plans to support 10 to 15 awards under this funding call, each up to \$400,000 over a three-year period of performance, though international partners participating in the consortium will bring additional resources to support the proposed work in accordance with the terms outlined in each



country annex, available on the CRA page [here](#). The annex corresponding to the National Science Foundation Participation in this opportunity, which will guide support for U.S. participants, is available [here](#). For this call, the consortium must include at least two participants from the African continent and must have an African-based consortium lead. The registration for the Africa Regional Call is mandatory and due on **September 2, 2024**, with full proposals due on **December 31, 2024**.

### **Tropical Forests: Global Implications and Pressing Actions (FORESTS 2024)**

The [FORESTS 2024 Call](#) aims to support “innovative solutions to the changes faced in tropical forest regions,” with attention to a diverse set of ecosystem threats including deforestation, land degradation and land-use change, illegal logging and other activities, pollution, and emerging zoonotic disease. While the call itself is focused on tropical forest regions, the greatest emphasis is on Amazonia due to strong participation from Brazilian funding agencies. Research supported through this CRA must support at least two of three focus areas:

1. **Promote sustainable development and locally driven economies while reducing deforestation:** Supports research into new information systems aimed at preventing deforestation, promoting the bioeconomy, establishing accessible carbon and chain markets, and implementing practices for sustainable rural and urban territorial management.
2. **Ecosystem Function, Connectivity, and Climate Change Science:** Supports research on environmental cycles, ecological connectivity, wildlife behavior, biodiversity loss and ecosystem functions, disaster risk reduction and resilience, and related topics.
3. **Environmental Justice and Governance:** Supports the advancement of knowledge and expertise in sustainable natural resource utilization, clearer mapping of environmental injustices, improved relationships between local communities and indigenous peoples, and the recognition and protection of indigenous territories and communal lands.

Like most opportunities supported through the Belmont Forum, this CRA is heavily focused on supporting research that will translate research into tool development and policy action and that have an impact on communities. The CRA also outlines best practice guidelines for implementing community engaged research, including participation of indigenous peoples. The NSF plans to support 10 to 15 awards under this funding call, each up to \$400,000, though international partners participating in the consortium will bring additional resources to support the proposed work in accordance with the terms outlined in each country annex, available on the CRA page [here](#). The annex corresponding to the National Science Foundation Participation in this opportunity, which will guide support for U.S. participants, is available [here](#). For this call, consortiums are encouraged to include at least one participant from a tropical forest region. Pre-proposals for the Tropical Forests Call are mandatory and due on **November 12, 2024**. Full proposals must be submitted by **May 30, 2025**.

**Important Eligibility Information for Belmont Forum CRAs:** Belmont’s CRAs explicitly solicit transdisciplinary and convergent research to include natural scientists, social scientists, and relevant stakeholders from across at least three participating Belmont Forum partner countries, with terms specified for each country’s participation in the annexes corresponding to each funding opportunity. Consortiums may include participation from additional countries; however, additional partners must bring their own funding and do not count towards the requirement for three Belmont Forum partners. Applicants are encouraged to review the full CRA in addition to the terms outlined in each of the relevant annexes prior to formalizing their consortium partners and proposed activities to verify that activities will be compliant with CRA requirements and within the scope of eligible activities supported by each participating country and respective funding agency. Participants are only able to participate in

LEWIS-BURKE  
  
ASSOCIATES LLC

one proposal per CRA, regardless of their role in the consortium (eg: Consortium lead/PI, Co-PI, participant).

*Sources and Additional Information:*

- More about the Belmont Forum can be found here: <https://www.belmontforum.org/>
- Additional information on the Africa Regional Call can be accessed here: <https://belmontforum.org/cras#arc>
- Additional information on the Tropical Forests Call can be accessed here: <https://belmontforum.org/cras#forests>