


# The Open Doors Fellowship Program

For women researchers in Africa




**Belgium**  
partner in development





**Have you ever heard that female researchers  
'leak' from the scientific pipeline?**



Only **29%** of the graduated women become employed researchers.

The global retention rates of women in academia **are 20% lower** than for men.



This scientific 'leakage' is leading to a **loss of competitiveness, talent, creativity and financial resources** in research institutions worldwide.





**At IPBO, we believe  
in keeping women  
in their scientific  
trajectories by  
empowering them  
with new skills,  
expanding  
networks and  
increasing scientific  
visibility.**

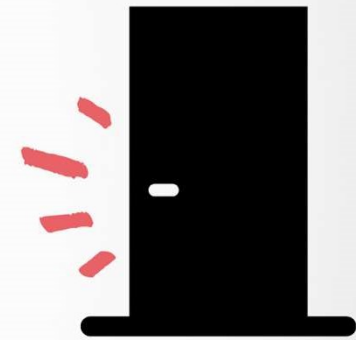


International Plant  
Biotechnology Outreach



# The Open Doors Fellowship Program

For women researchers  
in Africa





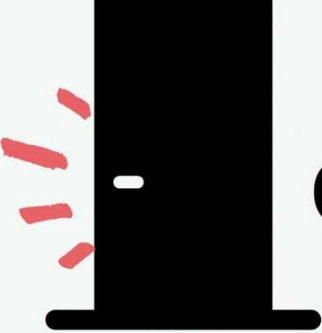


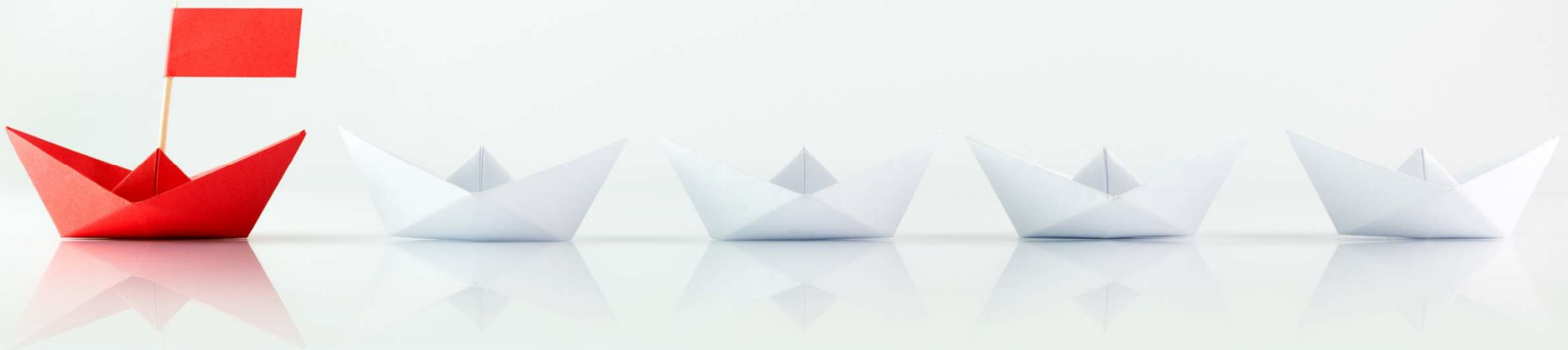
## Objectives of the Open Doors Fellowship Program

**Enhance the scientific outputs of our fellows** in fields of research that are relevant to the African and EU agricultural sectors.

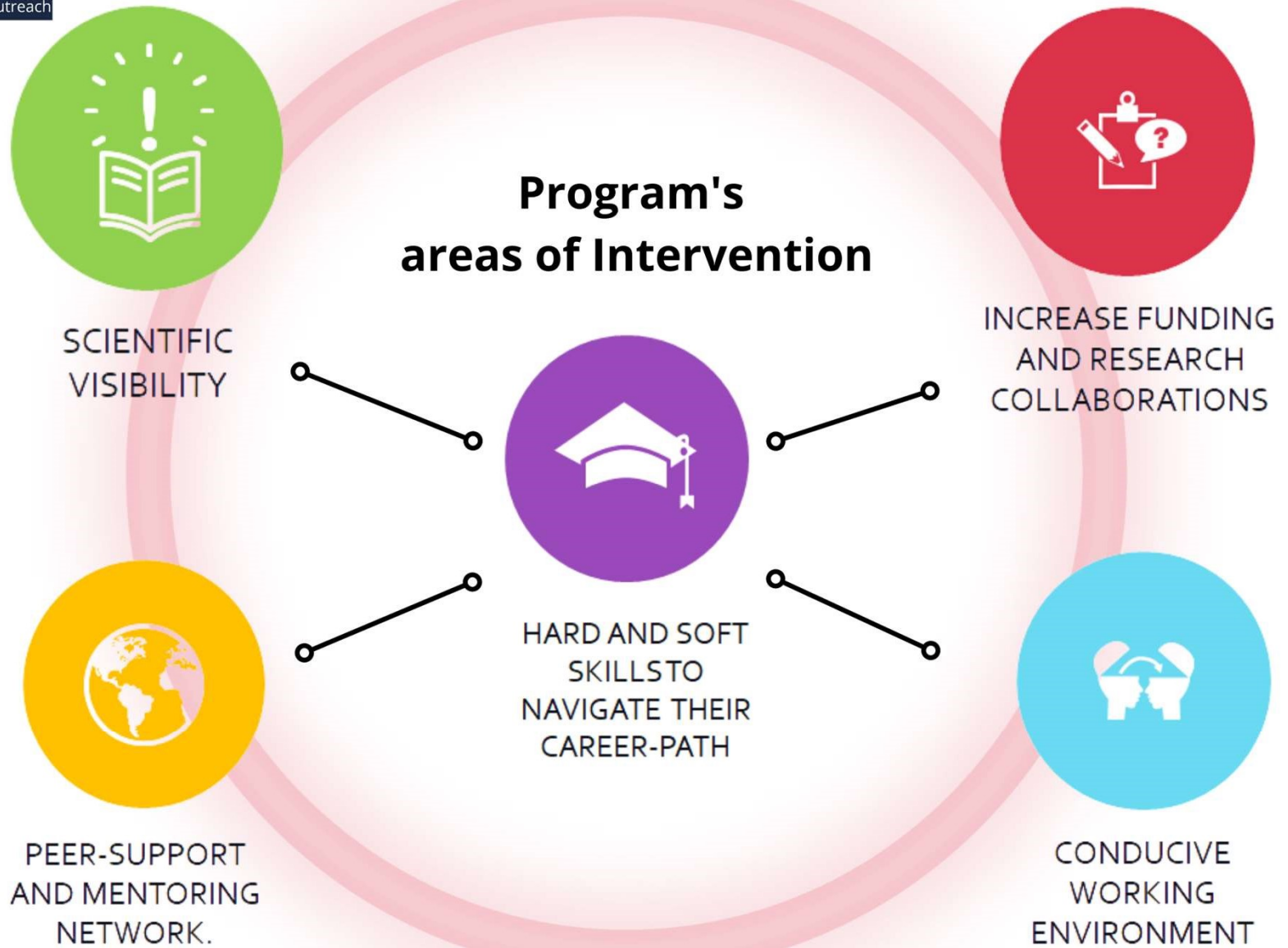
**Expand and consolidate the Belgium-Africa scientific actions.**

Contribute to **reducing the dropout from early & mid-career women scientists** in African research and academic institutions.

How is the  organized?







**This is a 20-month training and mentoring program split into two phases:**

**Phase 1** is a 3-months research stage in Belgium (3rd May to 15th July)- 8 to 12 weeks.

**Phase 2** lasts 17 months when fellows receive training and research incentives back in their duty stations through the program.





Cross-cultural communication

Present with Power

Speaking Science

Writing EU-Horizon competitive proposals

Negotiate with success

Self-Leadership

Project Management

Exclusive access to VIB online training portfolio

Incentives for international visibility

Learn & Share Talks

## **VLIR-UOS Scholarship Countries**



**Benin**  
**Burkina Faso**  
**DR Congo**  
**Ethiopia**  
**Kenya**  
**Rwanda**  
**Senegal**  
**South Africa**  
**Tanzania**  
**Uganda**

---

**Nigeria\***

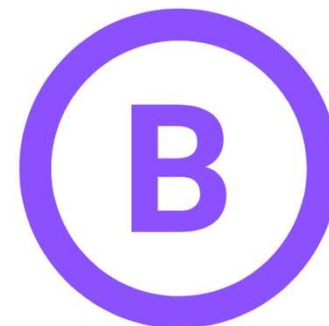


**How can the ODFP  
applicant connect with  
the research  
institutions in  
Belgium?**



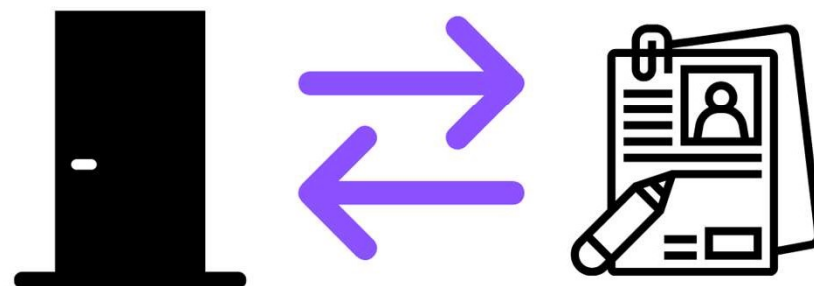


Applicants can link with Flemish groups through two different paths



Alignment with the scope and the requirements **of open slots offered by the Belgian research laboratories** and published on the ODFP web page.

Applicants to the ODFP create a **joint project with a counterpart in a Belgian research laboratory of their choice** for opening a specific slot.





The impact,  
so far...







## Impact on Adeola's career

- IITA extended the contract for 2 years.
- *'Before I came we had only a 30% success of African Yam bean to produce shooting under in vitro culture. With the protocol I developed during my short research stay in Ghent, **we have now 100% success rate at the IITA lab**'.*
- *'Increasing my visibility and helping me to find my voice'.*



# ILVO

Instituut voor Landbouw-,  
Visserij- en Voedingsonderzoek



## Impact on Madina's career

- *'I feel more confident, I have increased my assertiveness and scientific visibility. I also have a better ability to communicate my science'.*
- Expanded network: 3 project proposals were submitted with Flemish partners; 2 at the final stages with ILVO + VIB.
- Scientific paper in preparation: access to servers for processing BIG Data at ILVO.
- She is putting ICRISAT's drones at use.
- Negotiation skills into practice: new job increased her salary star-offer to **an extra 400 euros/month and more seniority.**



## Reach us at

 IPBO@vib-ugent.be

  @VIB\_IPBO

 #OpenDoorsFellowship



**Belgium**  
partner in development



International Plant  
Biotechnology Outreach

Thank You

