An Introduction to AIMS Rwanda
About AIMS-Rwanda

AIMS-Rwanda (https://aims.ac.rw/about-us/) was established in 2016 as the sixth pan-African Centre of Excellence for postgraduate training, research and public engagement. Situated in the city of Kigali in Remera, KN 3, the centre host an international mix of students, tutors, researchers, staffs from all over the world; and attracts a diverse group of both in-country and international stakeholders from academia, industry, government. The spectacular and vibrate campus offers inspirational spaces for idea origination, knowledge exchange, research execution and for innovation.

Research at AIMS-Rwanda

The research centre strives to promote excellent ground-breaking research within the mathematical sciences that would eventually find its way into academia (new knowledge generation), policy and practice for the benefit of society. The centre shares facilities with Quantum Leap Africa (QLA; https://quantumleapafrica.org/) which is set to prepare Africa for the quantum revolution. QLA attracts students and researchers in the quantum science domain from all over the world.

A research chair in the climate sciences, a resident researcher and four staff with a management/Strategic portfolio and a research background who are contributing to research at the Centre. The research at AIMS-Rwanda focuses on fields like climate modelling, plant-interactions, human disease modelling, computational immunology quantum physics/science, applied mathematics, and Bayesian methodology. Research team members comprise of postdoctoral fellows, visiting researchers, interns, with steps underway to recruit research Masters & PhD students; and to increase the research pool and focus areas.

Research at AIMS-Rwanda

Researchers at the centre benefit from an advanced IT infrastructure, comprising of computers; high-speed internet; servers; and printing/copying machines. IT staff provide the needed technical support. The campus also has sufficient offices and space for hosting scientific events and meetings. All employees eat lunch on campus, prepared by the catering staff. Mobility for official purposes is facilitated by the logistics staff.

Student body = prospective researchers

The AIMS Structured MSc program and the recently launched Masters in Machine Intelligence program offers a direct pool of prospective researchers with diverse skill sets which research group leaders, including research chairs could recruit. This is in addition to students and alumni from across the AIMS network. This unique student and alumni body immediately eliminates the constraint of sourcing suitable research students and postdoctoral fellows.

Partner universities & institutions

AIMS-Rwanda enjoys the presence of renowned universities such as the University of Rwanda (https://ur.ac.rw/?-UR-Centres-), the Institute for Applied Sciences (https://ines.ac.rw), Carnegie Mellon University (https://www.africa.engineering.cmu.edu/), among others that deliver STEM programs.

The University of Rwanda (UR) for instance has a Mathematics Department within the College of Science and Technology. The department offers postgraduate studies, including a PhD in Mathematics. UR hosts a number of Centres of Excellence including, the Centre of Excellence for Internet of Things; Data Science; Energy for Sustainable Development; Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management; Biomedical Engineering and eHealth; GIS and Remote Sensing; among others. It is anticipated that the Chair would be appointed through UR, and the incumbent and her/his students will benefit from additional resources at the university.

Partnership is also being built and fostered with industry and government institutions, which would facilitate joint project conceptualization and implementation; and subsequently, research uptake.
Benefits as an AIMS affiliate
AIMS expatriate employees benefit from the tax-free status approved by the Government of Rwanda. However, staff and their dependents will be liable for any income tax defined by their home country, if applicable.

Insurance & Relocation expenses
Insurance for employees and their dependents is provided by Allianz Health (www.allianzworldwidecare.com), and covers medical expenses, and at times evacuation. The selected package facilitates both in-country and out-of-country (for selected countries) medical expenses. Rwanda and its capital city are host to hospitals and clinics of international standards.

Within the framework of the research chair’s budget, AIMS will provide the necessary logistic support to relocate the incumbent, their dependents and material goods, to Rwanda. Relocation expenses will also include visa fee, flight ticket(s), ground transportation, one-month accommodation in Rwanda.

About Rwanda
Rwanda is one of the countries in the East African region with a population of about 12.63 million (2019). The capital city is Kigali (where AIMS-Rwanda is based). The common languages are Kinyarwanda, English, French, and Kiswahili (used for trade and commerce). The common religions are Roman Catholic, Protestant, Adventist, Islam, Indigenous belief.

Rwanda has two rainy seasons (March to May and September to November), and two dry seasons (December to February and June to July). Normal temperatures range between 16 to 20 degrees Celsius. Known as the land of a thousand hills, Rwanda’s stunning scenery and warm, friendly people offer unique experiences in one of the most remarkable countries in the world. More information can be found at www.visitrwanda.com.

Currency
The currency is Rwandan Francs (RWF). A wide range of international currencies and bank cards are also accepted and can be converted to the local currency at the banks or forex bureau.

Safety & moving around
Rwanda is a relatively safe country. That notwithstanding, caution is always supreme. The public transportation facility is very developed with a variety of motor bikes, buses and private taxis. Most taxis use the meter, and receipts can be provided. Most of the drivers speak basic English and/or French.

Driving is on the right. Speed limits are 40km within the city and 60km out of the city. An international driving permit is required; however, an entry permit, insurance document and driving licence is needed if you are coming from abroad.

Immigration
Rwanda is visa free for holders of African passports and for many other countries (check your country’s eligibility online). For countries that qualify for visa-on-arrival, USD 30 is payable at the port of entry for a 30 days visa. Thereafter, employees are entitled to 2-year visa extensions. The following documents are needed for visa extensions for persons of age 18 and plus.

- A invitation letter
- Confirmation of employment letter (AIMS employee only)
- Current curriculum vitae
- Original, certified or notarized copies of your diploma(s) and/or professional credentials
- Original police clearance document from the countries you have resided in the last 6 months
- 1 recent passport photo (colour, white background, without glasses, cap or scarf).

Schools
There are a variety of international and local schools to choose from. They offer either the national (Rwandan), American, Cambridge, Belgian, French, etc. system of education. Average tuition could range from USD 500 to USD 20 000 and more per annum. The primary language of instruction for most schools is English, with French and Kinyarwanda as subjects, or vice versa for selected schools. The academic year for most schools is from January – December, or September – August, with intermittent holidays.