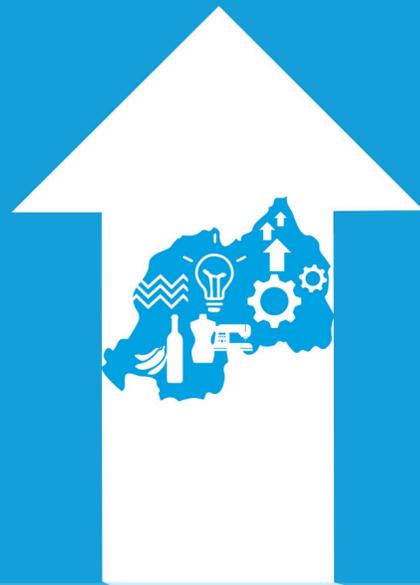


NIRDA

National Industrial
Research and Development
Agency

NIRDA OPEN CALLS: CONCEPT NOTE



1. BACKGROUND

Rwanda's Vision 2050, Pillar 3 namely "The Economic Transformation Pillar" aims to accelerate private-sector-led economic growth and increased productivity. Accordingly, the 7-year Government Program (2017-2024) aims to establish Rwanda as a globally competitive knowledge-based economy which will in turn create 214,000 decent and productive jobs annually. The 7 YGP also accentuates the importance of industrialization to attain a structural shift in the export base to high-value goods and services with the aim of growing exports by 17% annually.

Strategic interventions identified in the 7 year Government Program focus on (i) developing priority sub-sectors and priority value chains with high potential for growth and employment, (ii) creating new businesses through entrepreneurship and access to finance, (iii) developing strategic partnerships with private sector companies to boost industrial based skills acquisition, (iv) Supporting the establishment and operationalization of new and existing Centers of Excellence with a focus on science, technology and innovation and (v) promoting Research and Development as a key to fast-tracking Rwanda's economic transformation especially in the area of technology for industrial development.

Following the adoption of its new strategy (2018-2024), the National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NIRDA) has been mandated with a mission of enabling a generation of industrial innovators to become competitive through technology monitoring, acquisition, development and transfer & applied research.

This will be achieved by (i) improving the competitiveness of existing industries in order to increase their export potential or their potential to undertake import substitution and (ii) identifying new sub-sectors or value chains where investment by the private sector would lead to export growth or import substitution.

It is in this framework that NIRDA is launching its inaugural Open Calls program, aimed at supporting industries/enterprises to address their technological and technical barriers to their growth and competitiveness.

2. NIRDA OPEN CALLS

The main objective of the NIRDA Open calls is to introduce firm-level innovations, which improve the ability and capacity of Rwandan enterprises to compete in strategic national and international markets, leading to increased profits, exports and the creation of decent and productive employment.

In line with the Government of Rwanda's industrial policy objectives of increasing domestic production for local consumption and improving Rwanda's export competitiveness, NIRDA aims to support enterprises in specific priority industrial value chains. NIRDA will implement a targeted value chain approach that focuses on the full range of activities that are required to bring a product or service from conception, through the different phases of production (i.e., involving a combination of physical transformation and the input of various producer services), delivery to final consumers and final disposal after use. Activities that comprise the value chain can be contained within a single firm or divided among different firms, as well as within a single geographical location or spread over wider areas.

NIRDA will select priority value chains that offer the best prospects of achieving its objectives, considering the potential for:

- **Upgrading:** actions to help Rwanda enterprises move to a higher value-added component of a value chain;
- **Extending:** actions to broaden an existing value chain to increase its full potential job creation and value-added impact;
- **Optimizing:** actions to improve operation of certain links of the value chain to achieve greater value added;
- **Targeting:** identification of new value chains or sectors that Rwanda has the required endowments for, but that has not been developed, or adequately developed.

All NIRDA projects will place strong attention on **lesson learning and replication**. This is to ensure the longer-term outcomes of projects have a larger and more significant impact across the value chain and throughout the national economy.

3. THE 2018 OPEN CALL: BANANA WINE AND GARMENTS



Following various consultations and NIRDA's assessment of priority value chains, as well as thorough audits of the use of technology by firms within these value chains, NIRDA has chosen to support the upgrading and improved competitiveness of firms in two value chains: **Garments and Banana Wine**.

NIRDA is hereby issuing an open calls campaign to all industries in Rwanda, engaged in the Banana Wine and Garments value chains, to apply for support geared towards increasing their competitiveness and increase in domestic production and exports.

Support by NIRDA for selected enterprises/industries will include:

- Acquisition and adaptation of specific technologies needed to improve their competitiveness (in the form of equipment, software, or related investments);
- Acquisition and or provision of technical support and expertise necessary to maximize the use of equipment, processes or systems for technologies to improve their competitiveness;
- Training of staff to maximize productivity through the use of new or the adaptation of existing technologies to improve their competitiveness.

Note: NIRDA will not provide any form of direct financial/cash support to selected industries.

