

BUSITEMA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUND (BURIF)

2026/27 ACADEMIC YEAR CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Advancing Research Excellence, Innovation, Commercialization, and Human Capital Development

1.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Busitema University (BU) continues to strengthen its research, innovation and enterprise development mandate through the Directorate of Graduate Studies, Research and Innovations (DGSRI). The Busitema University Research and Innovation Fund (BURIF) remain a strategic mechanism for building research capacity, increasing high quality research outputs, supporting translation of knowledge into practical solutions and promoting innovation led development.

The Fund was operationalized in the 2018/19 academic year and has since supported competitive research, innovation and publication grants. The **2026/2027 BURIF Call for Proposals** builds on the achievements of previous funding cycles while strengthening BU's position as a research-intensive and innovation-driven institution. The Call places greater emphasis on research dissemination, the improvement of Centres of Excellence, development of shared research infrastructure, support for basic research, and accelerating the translation of proven research outputs into manufacturing, commercialization, and societal impact. Through competitive BURIF grant, the Call aims to generate high-quality knowledge, strengthen multidisciplinary research, and enhance the University's capacity through modern shared laboratories, equipment, and research facilities.

The 2026/27 BURIF Call also prioritizes investment in human capital by supporting **PhD studies** and **Postdoctoral Fellowships** to develop the next generation of researchers and research leaders. The PhD support is intended to strengthen doctoral training, improve research quality, and increase the number of highly qualified researchers, while the Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme will nurture early-career scientists through advanced research, publication, mentorship, grant acquisition, and international collaboration. Collectively, these funding windows are designed to enhance research excellence, promote innovation, strengthen institutional capacity, and increase the contribution of BU to Uganda's science, technology, innovation, and socio-economic development agenda.

The 2026/27 call is aligned with Uganda Vision 2040, the applicable National Development Plan priorities, the national science, technology and innovation agenda. The funding will particularly prioritize proposals that demonstrate relevance to society, value for money, measurable outputs, equity and inclusion, interdisciplinary collaboration and a clear pathway to adoption, manufacturing and commercialization.

To advance these national priorities, the Government of Uganda has allocated UGX 4,600,000,000 to BU under BURIF for the 2026/2027 academic year, to be competitively awarded through the funding windows outlined in this Call.

1.1 EXPECTED OUTPUTS OF THE 2026/27 BURIF CALL

- i. **Enhanced Research Excellence and Knowledge Generation:** At least **150 quality peer-reviewed publications**, 2 books, and other research dissemination products arising from competitive multidisciplinary basic and applied research that generates new knowledge, addresses national development priorities, and informs evidence-based policy and practice. These outputs will be supported through functional faculty-led publication clinics and responsible publication practices.
- ii. **Strengthened Research Capacity:** Improved doctoral and postdoctoral research capacity, strengthened Centers of Excellence and thematic research groups, and expanded national and international research collaborations.
- iii. **Improved Research Infrastructure:** Enhanced access to shared research infrastructure, including modern laboratories, scientific equipment, digital research platforms, calibration, maintenance, and technical support services.
- iv. **Innovation Commercialization:** Proven innovations advanced from prototype to market through standards testing, certification, pilot production, intellectual property protection, manufacturing readiness, and commercialization.
- v. **Institutional and Societal Impact:** Increased external research funding, stronger university-industry partnerships, technology transfer, and wider adoption of research and innovation outputs that contribute to Uganda's socio-economic transformation.

2.0 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

2.1 Objectives

The overall objective of the 2026/2027 BURIF Call is to strengthen the University's research and innovation ecosystem by supporting high-quality research, human capital development, shared research infrastructure, and innovation commercialization that contribute to national development and sustainable socio-economic transformation.

Specifically, the Call aims to:

- i. Support competitive basic, applied, multidisciplinary, and interdisciplinary research that addresses national and regional development priorities.
- ii. Strengthen research capacity through support for PhD training, postdoctoral fellowships, publication enhancement, and the establishment of Centres of Excellence and thematic research groups.
- iii. Develop and strengthen shared research infrastructure, including laboratories, scientific equipment, digital research platforms, and research support services.
- iv. Promote research excellence through increased high-quality publications, knowledge dissemination, research visibility, and evidence-informed policy and practice.
- v. Accelerate the translation of research outputs and proven innovations into prototypes, technologies, manufacturing, commercialization, and societal impact.

2.2 The Scope

The 2026/2027 BURIF Call will provide competitive funding under the following windows:

- i. Research Grants
- ii. Research Infrastructure Grants
- iii. PhD Support Grants
- iv. Postdoctoral Fellowship Grants
- v. Publication Support and Faculty Publication Clinics
- vi. Centres of Excellence and Thematic Research Groups
- vii. Innovation Translation and Commercialization Grants

2.3 Funding Windows and Allocation

The 2026/27 BURIF Call shall be implemented under the five programmatic funding windows below. The five windows account for 95% of the total Fund. The remaining 5% shall support grant management, monitoring, evaluation, audit and administrative requirements as approved by Management.

S/N	Funding window approved by Management	Proposed allocation percentage	Amount (UGX)
1	Research Dissemination: Organizing publication clinics by faculties and BU Annual STI Conference	6%	276,000,000
2	Centers of Excellence	10%	460,000,000
3	Critical Research Infrastructure	22%	1,012,000,000
4	Basic Research	22%	1,012,000,000
5	Manufacturing and Prototyping for innovations ready for manufacturing.-& Innovation Translation and Commercialization Grants	35%	1,610,000,000
	Subtotal for the five programmatic windows	95%	4,370,000,000
	Grant management, monitoring, audit and administrative expenses	5%	230,000,000
	TOTAL BURIF FUND	100%	4,600,000,000

2.3 University Research Agenda Priority Areas

Applicants should align proposals with one or more of the BU research agenda priority areas, including:

- Transformative education for sustainable development, entrepreneurship and job creation.
- One Health.
- Wealth creation through agriculture and animal production.

- Appropriate technologies and clean energy.
- Environmental sustainability and climate risk management.
- Public and private sector development and enterprise management.
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).
- Cross-cutting issues including gender, youth, disability inclusion, digital transformation and community engagement.

Each applicant or team shall submit only one application as Principal Investigator or lead applicant under this call. Applications will be assessed competitively to optimize the contribution of Government investment toward research, innovation, manufacturing readiness and societal impact.

3.0 CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

3.1 Research Dissemination: Faculty Publication Clinics

This window shall support faculties to organize structured publication clinics and research dissemination activities. The focus is to convert completed research, theses, datasets, project reports and ongoing manuscripts into high quality publishable outputs and dissemination products.

Eligible activities may include:

- Publication clinics
- Writing retreats
- Faculty journal's editorial support
- Policy brief preparation
- Patent/Utility model application support
- Faculty Dissemination seminars/workshops

Faculties shall submit clinic plans showing target participants, expected manuscripts, mentorship teams, timelines and measurable outputs.

Expected outputs per grant shall be a minimum of 10 manuscripts submitted to reputable impact factor journals resulting in 10 accepted papers, utmost 2 patents/utility models filed at URSB under the financial year.

The amount requested for organizing the publication clinic shall not exceed UGX 25 million. A total of nine (9) grants shall be awarded under this call.

3.2 Centers of Excellence/ Research Groups

This window shall support the strengthening of the approved multi-disciplinary centers of excellence, thematic research groups or multidisciplinary hubs with a demonstrated track record or strong potential to deliver high impact cutting edge patentable research and innovation. Applications should show the center's focus area, leadership, team composition, postgraduate students training plan, partnership strategy, outputs and sustainability pathway.

Eligible activities may include:

- Cutting edge patentable research
- Targeted research activities aligned with proposal writing for external funding
- PhD student mentorship
- Research visibility and strategic partnerships

Four (4) grants, each not exceeding UGX 115 million, shall be awarded. The centres shall commit to delivering measurable annual outputs, including 10 new high impact publications produced, 2 external grant proposals submitted, utmost 2 innovations or patents filed, 2 PhD students graduated.

3.3 Critical Research Infrastructure

This window shall support acquisition, maintenance, calibration, repair, installation or upgrading of critical research infrastructure. Priority shall be given to shared equipment or facilities that serve multiple users, departments, faculties or research groups and that demonstrably remove bottlenecks to high quality research.

Applications should be submitted through the relevant Head of Department, Head of Research Group/Center or Dean, and must include a justification of need, user access plan, maintenance plan, equipment specifications, quotations or cost estimates, location of the equipment, safety considerations and expected research outputs enabled by the infrastructure in addition to the following: Each funded infrastructure project shall deliver the following measurable outputs (Please include these):

- (i) **Operational Shared Research Infrastructure:** Installation, commissioning, calibration, upgrading or maintenance of functional shared research facilities accessible to multiple departments, faculties and research groups.
- (ii) **Enhanced Research Capacity:** Increased utilization of the infrastructure to support multidisciplinary research, postgraduate training and technical capacity development.
- (iii) **Increased Research Productivity:** Generation of high-quality research outputs, including peer-reviewed publications, postgraduate theses and externally funded research proposals enabled by the infrastructure.
- (iv) **Sustainable Infrastructure Management:** Establishment of documented user-access systems, standard operating procedures (SOPs), preventive maintenance plans and equipment management systems to ensure long-term functionality.
- (v) **Strengthened Research Partnerships and Impact:** Increased collaboration with industry, government and research institutions, leading to improved technology development, knowledge generation and national socio-economic

3.4 Basic Research

This window shall support competitive investigator led basic novel research that advances knowledge through the University Research Agenda priority areas and contributes to the national development. Proposals should demonstrate scientific merit, originality, sound methodology, feasibility, ethical compliance where applicable and a clear output plan. Eligible outputs include at least one (1) peer-reviewed impact factor publication or 1 patents and utility models.

Twenty (20) grants, each not exceeding UGX 50.6 million, shall be awarded to university staff under this call. The grants shall be distributed as follows: five (5) grants for junior staff (Graduate Fellows, Teaching Assistants and Assistant Lecturers); ten (10) grants for senior staff (Lecturers and Senior Lecturers), and five (5) grants for professors. All project awarded under this call shall operate for the period of 10 months within the said period of funding On or before 30th June 2027

3.5 Manufacturing and Prototyping

This window shall support innovations that are already available, technically demonstrated and ready for manufacturing-oriented development. It is not intended for idea stage concepts. Applicants must provide evidence of the existing innovation, prototype, design, laboratory validation, field validation, user testing or proof-of-concept.

Eligible activities may include design refinement for manufacturability, material sourcing, fabrication, pilot production, product testing, standards compliance, certification processes, user trials, packaging, cost optimization, business model development, market validation, intellectual property support and preparation for incubation or commercialization including business plan.

Applications under this window should include a technology readiness statement, photos or evidence of the existing innovation, manufacturing plan, standards or certification requirements, target users, market or community need, IP status, commercialization pathway, risks and mitigation measures.

4.0 APPLICATION AND ELIGIBILITY

4.1 Application Process

Applications shall be submitted electronically through the official BURIF 2026/27 submission platform to be communicated by the Directorate of Graduate Studies, Research and Innovations (DGSRI). The Research Grants Management Committee shall not consider applications submitted outside the approved process.

Applicants should prepare and submit a complete proposal, budget, work plan, supporting letters and any category-specific evidence required under this call. If an applicant experiences challenges during submission, they should contact the DGSRI through the official university communication channels.

4.2 General Eligibility

- The Principal Investigator or lead applicant must be a full-time BU staff member with a valid and current appointment.
- A researcher may be Principal Investigator or lead applicant on only one application under this call, but may participate as a team member on other applications subject to the committee's guidance.
- Applications must have a letter of support from the Head of Department, Dean or relevant academic unit where the lead applicant is domiciled.
- Collaborations with government agencies, industry, civil society, independent research institutions and other universities are encouraged; however, external collaborators shall not serve as Principal Investigators.
- Previous BURIF beneficiaries who have not fully accounted for or closed earlier awards shall not be eligible until clearance and project closure documentation are provided.
- Applicants must demonstrate how the proposed work contributes to University's priorities, national development priorities, measurable outputs and responsible use of public funds.
 - Proposals without clear involvement of students will not be accepted

5.0 ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Budgets shall be prepared using the approved BURIF budget template and should be realistic, output-driven and aligned with the category applied for. Eligible costs may include:

- I. Research activities, data collection and analysis, small equipment, laboratory supplies, prototyping materials, dissemination costs, publication clinic costs, standards testing, certification-related costs, maintenance or calibration of approved equipment, research assistants and other approved project costs.
- II. Staff salaries for personnel on the Government payroll shall not be budgeted because this would constitute double payment.
- III. Reasonable support for graduate fellows, research assistants, technicians, project coordinators or

other critical project personnel not on the Government payroll may be considered where justified and approved and these shall be appointed by the University Secretary.

All applicants must submit a clear work plan with deliverables, timelines, responsible persons and budget milestones. Procurement-related items must be accompanied by specifications, quotations or cost estimates where applicable.

6.0 SELECTION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The selection process shall involve an eligibility check, technical review and final assessment by the Research Grants Management Committee (RGMC). Where necessary, shortlisted applicants may be invited to make presentations to clarify the proposal, budget, outputs, readiness level, value for money and implementation plan.

The RGMC reserves the right to determine the number and size of awards within each funding window based on availability of funds, quality of applications, strategic priorities, value for money and the level of utilization of funds by grantees.

6.1 Assessment Criteria

Merit criterion	Marks	Indicative assessment focus
Contribution to national and university development priorities	20	Alignment with Uganda's development priorities, University Research Agenda, SDGs, community or industry relevance, and anticipated economic, social, environmental or policy benefits.
Research, innovation or infrastructure problem	20	Clarity and significance of the problem; evidence of need; alignment with the selected funding window; readiness level

		for manufacturing/prototyping applications.
Objectives and expected outputs	10	Clear, measurable and realistic objectives linked to outputs such as publications, publication clinics, infrastructure access, center strengthening, prototypes, certifications or manufacturing readiness.
Methodology and implementation plan	20	Sound technical approach, feasibility, work plan, team capacity, ethics and risk management.
Budget justification and value for money	20	Detailed budget, procurement realism, co-contribution where applicable, shared use of resources and sustainability.
Dissemination, uptake and impact pathway	10	Clear plan for publication, knowledge sharing, technology uptake, IP management, commercialization, policy engagement or community use.
TOTAL	100	

7.0 CONTRACTING, DISBURSEMENT AND AUDIT

Successful applicants shall enter into a Research and Innovation grant agreement with the University and shall be subject to technical and financial monitoring, audit and accountability requirements. Funds shall

be released in phases subject to approved work plans, procurement procedures, satisfactory accountability and achievement of agreed milestones.

8.0 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Awardees shall submit quarterly technical and financial reports to the Grants Management Unit. Reports should include progress against the work plan, outputs achieved, challenges, expenditure accountability, evidence of deliverables and any publications, prototypes, datasets, infrastructure use records, clinic outputs, certifications or commercialization milestones arising from the project.

9.0 DISSEMINATION, DATA SHARING AND VISIBILITY

Information about research and innovation funded by BURIF shall be made available through appropriate University platforms. Grant holders shall promote responsible dissemination of results through publications, policy briefs, technical reports, stakeholder engagements, exhibitions, research seminars, websites and other approved channels. Publicly funded research data should be managed responsibly and shared in accordance with ethics approvals, institutional policies, intellectual property considerations and applicable laws.

10.0 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COMMERCIALIZATION

The BU Intellectual Property Management Policy shall apply. Intellectual Property (IP) arising from BURIF-supported work shall be handled in accordance with institutional policy, grant agreements and applicable laws. For innovations with commercial value, the relevant University structures shall guide protection, ownership, licensing, revenue sharing and commercialization arrangements.

For Manufacturing and Prototyping awards, applicants must disclose prior IP status, ownership, contributors, external funders, existing partners and any encumbrances. Support under BURIF shall be tied to a clear pathway for standards compliance, manufacturing readiness, market or community uptake and benefit to the University and the public.

11.0 POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

- Mandatory induction on grant management, financial accountability, procurement and reporting.

- Submission of a refined implementation plan, procurement plan and milestone-based disbursement schedule.
- Creation of a project profile or weblink through the Directorate responsible for ICT or University communication channels.
- Quarterly monitoring by the Grants Management Unit and technical monitoring teams.
- Final technical and financial report, closure documentation and evidence of outputs before issuance of a project closure letter.

12.0 IMPORTANT DATES

The approved dates for the 2026/27 BURIF Call shall be communicated by DGSRI. The proposed schedule below may be adjusted by Management depending on approval timelines and operational requirements.

S/N	Activity	Date
1	Call Open	04 th August 2026
2	Call Close	21 th August 2026
3	Eligibility and Stage 1 Review	25 th August 2026
4	Technical/Stage 2 Review and Presentations	09 th September 2026
5	Research Grants Management Committee	14 th September 2026
6	Award Letters and Contracting	16 th September 2026

13.0 APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Completed BURIF 2026/27 proposal form.
- Budget using the approved template.
- Detailed work plan with outputs and milestones.
- Letter of support from the Head of Department, Dean or relevant academic unit.

- CVs or short profiles of key team members.
- Evidence required for the selected window, especially prototype evidence and readiness documentation for Manufacturing and Prototyping applications.
- Ethics approval or ethics submission plan where applicable.
- Previous BURIF closure letter or accountability clearance where applicable

How to apply

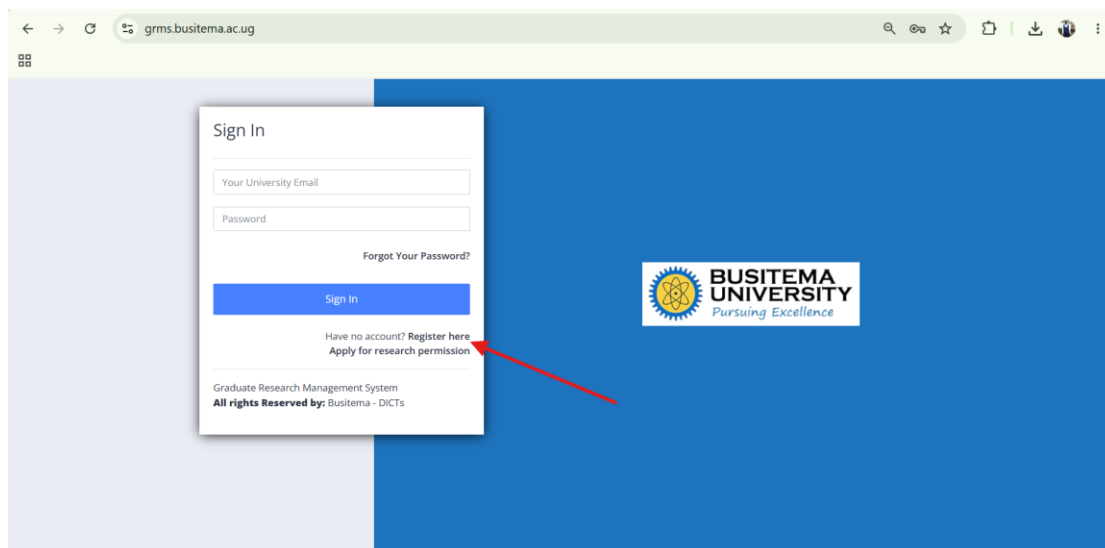
All applications have to go through the system for and submitted online before or on 21st August 2026. To access the application please follow the link below:

1. *Follow link provided below to access the application portal*

<https://grms.busitema.ac.ug/>

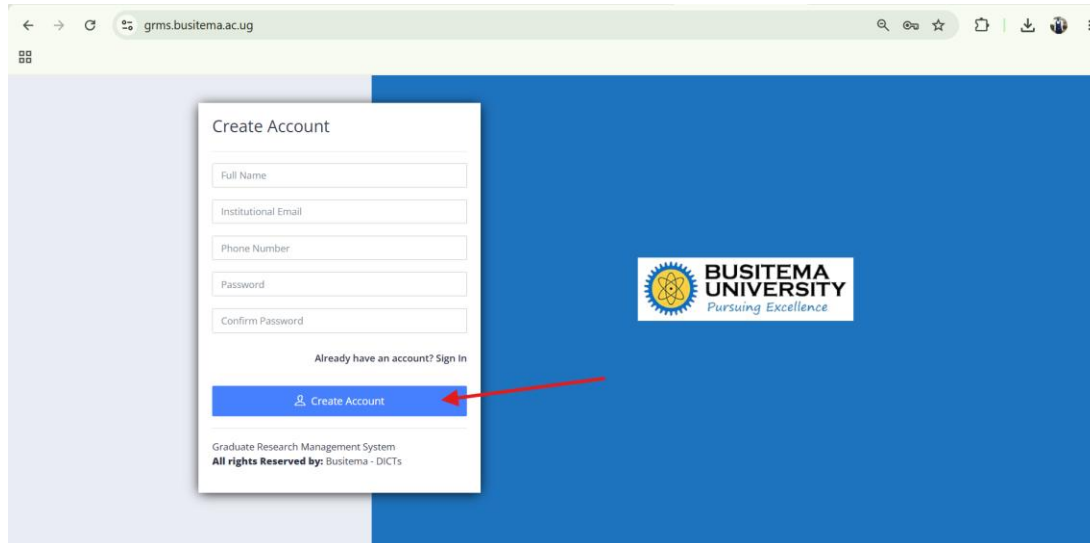
2. *Login in using your university email and password*

Note (If you don't have an account create but if you have one login)



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "grms.busitema.ac.ug". The page has a blue background with the Busitema University logo and name. A white "Sign In" form is overlaid on the left side. The form contains fields for "Your University Email" and "Password", a "Forgot Your Password?" link, a blue "Sign In" button, and a link for "Have no account? Register here. Apply for research permission". A red arrow points to the "Register here" link. At the bottom of the form, it says "Graduate Research Management System" and "All rights Reserved by: Busitema - DICTS".

3. *Create account*



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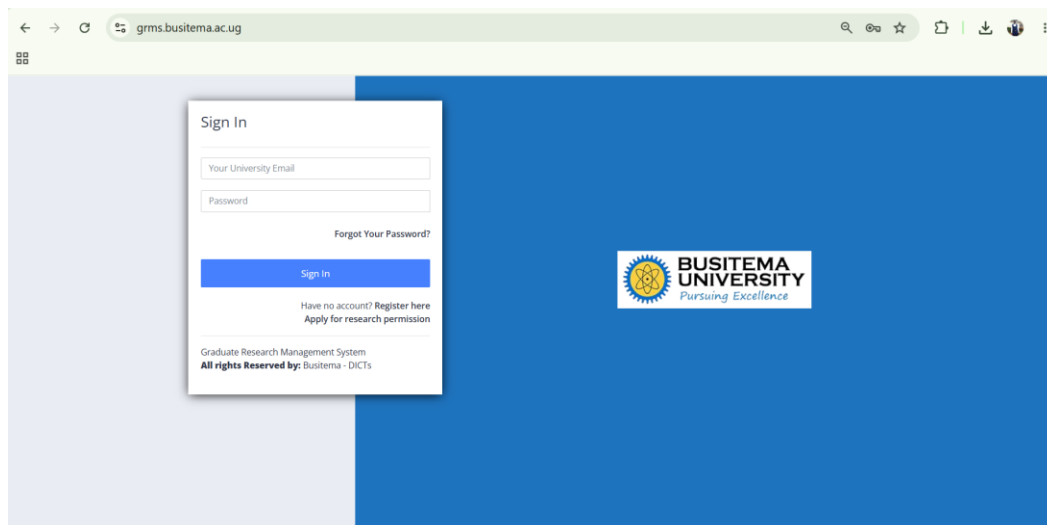
Create Account

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4. *After creating account, you can therefore login to the application portal*



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Sign In

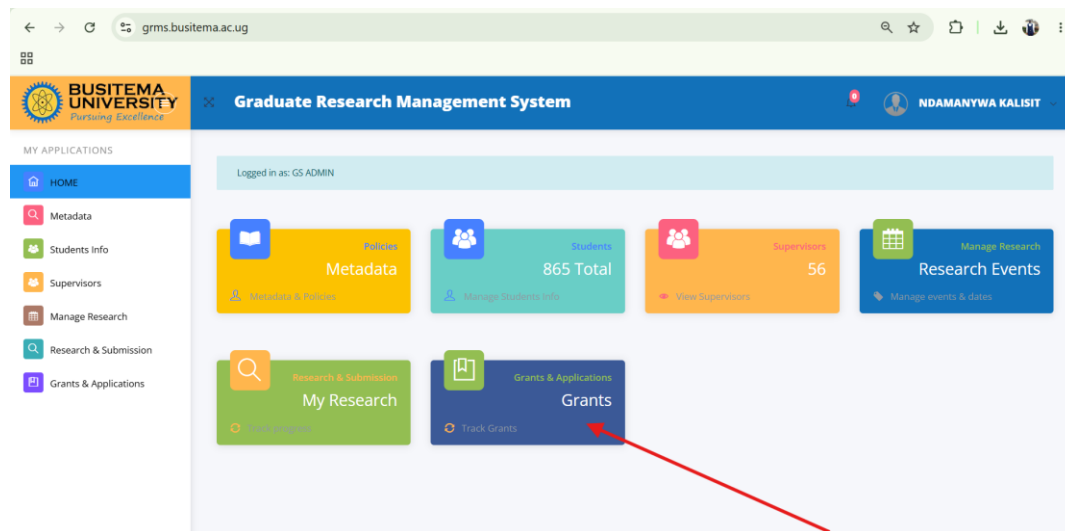
[Forgot Your Password?](#)

[Sign In](#)

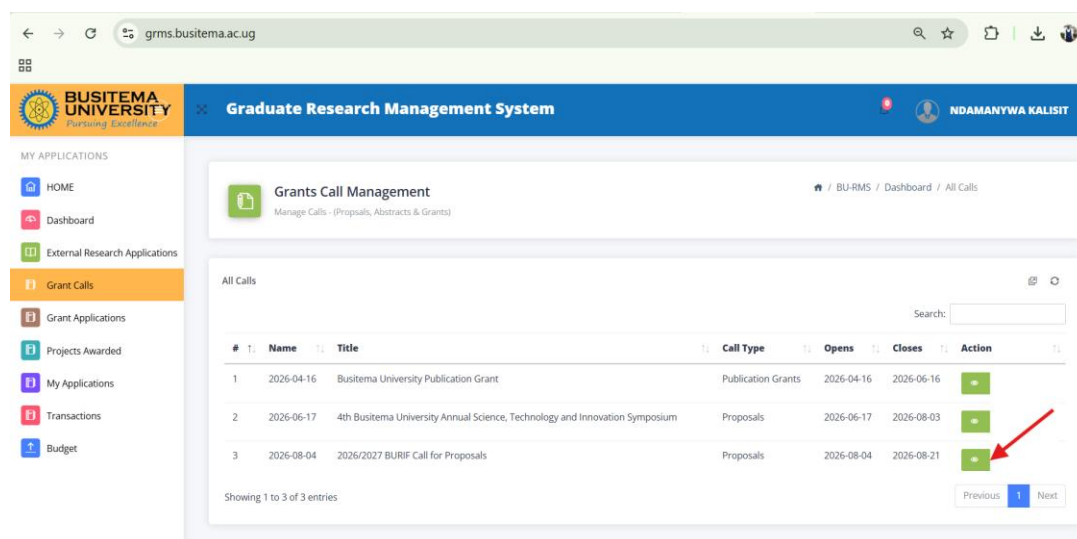
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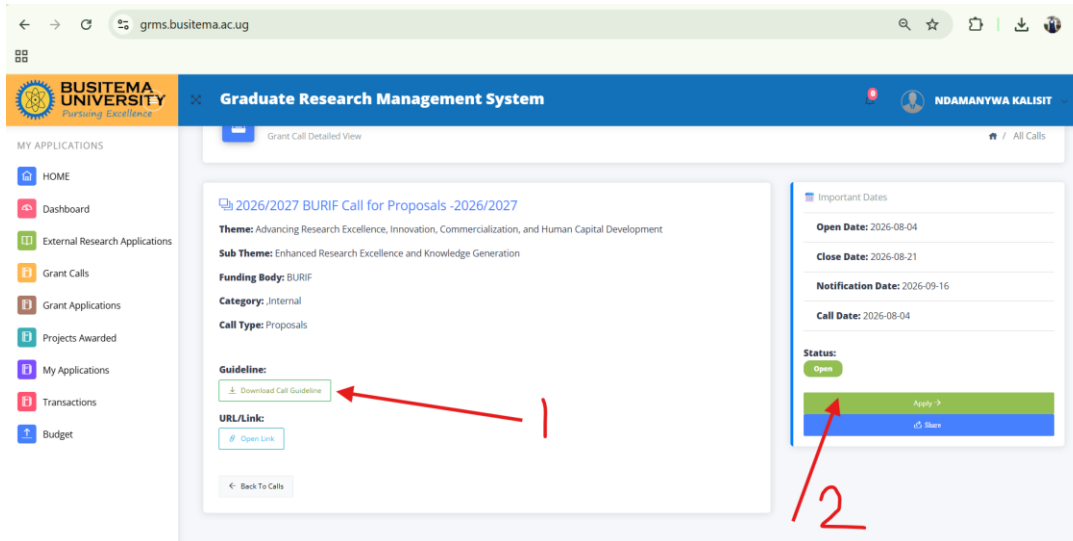
5. *After logging in you should select the grants card by clicking on it*



6. After clicking or selecting the grants card you will the interfaces that shows all the calls *Note* Select **2026/2027 BURIF Call for proposals** as shown below



7. Option 1 has the link for downloading the guideline while option 2 button to the application form



2026/2027 BURIF Call for Proposals - 2026/2027

Theme: Advancing Research Excellence, Innovation, Commercialization, and Human Capital Development

Sub Theme: Enhanced Research Excellence and Knowledge Generation

Funding Body: BURIF

Category: Internal

Call Type: Proposals

Guideline:

[Download Call Guideline](#) (1)

URL/Link:

[Open Link](#)

[Back To Calls](#)

Important Dates

Open Date: 2026-08-04

Close Date: 2026-08-21

Notification Date: 2026-09-16

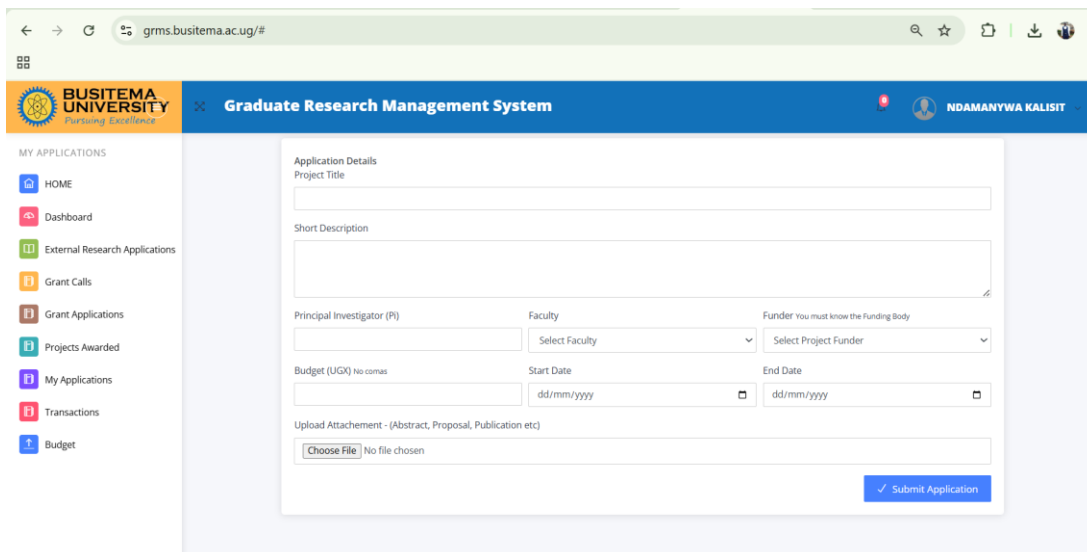
Call Date: 2026-08-04

Status: Open

[Apply](#) (2)

[i5 Docs](#)

8. Fill in all the required fields and after make the submission



Application Details

Project Title

Short Description

Principal Investigator (PI)

Faculty

Funder: You must know the Funding Body

Budget (UGX) no commas

Start Date

End Date

Upload Attachment - (Abstract, Proposal, Publication etc)

[Choose File](#) No file chosen

[Submit Application](#)