

FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO RESEARCH FUNDING IN AFRICA

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Objectives: Research funding is a challenging process in which several actors play a role in facilitating or hindering success. We aimed to explore the facilitators & barriers to research funding in Africa.

Methods: This work is a preliminary analysis of the results of the ASFI research funding in Africa survey. Descriptive analysis was performed using SPSS V. 26.

Results: We received 170 responses (63 % >40 years old, 59% males, 24% won a research grant), 19, 10%, 36%, & 10% were aware of the availability of research funding opportunities in Africa, in their country, in their institutions, & in their field of research respectively. The main facilitators for research funding reported were: research networking (57.1%), access to funding opportunities (50%), research institutions support (38.8%), government funding support (23.5%), & private sector funding support (19%). The main barriers to research funding reported were limited access to funding opportunities (43%), insufficient training (39%), too strict funding requirements (38%), lack of networking opportunities (36%), lack of clarity on the application process (32%), too much workload (31%), administrative process/policies (29%), insufficient funding available (28%), age limit of opportunities (24%), poor infrastructure (19%), & language barrier (4%).

Conclusion: African researchers have limited knowledge about funding sources in Africa. Access to funding opportunities & lack of it is both the main facilitator and barrier to research funding in Africa. Other facilitators are access to networking opportunities and institutional support, while poor networking opportunities & lack of training are the other major barriers reported. Enhancing these facilitators & curtailing the reported barriers will ensure better access to funding opportunities & thereby increase the chances of success among Africans.

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