



LILONGWE UNIVERSITY
OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL
RESOURCES (LUANAR)

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UNIVERSITY
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CENTRE FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT (CARD)

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SUPPORT GRANT – 2026/2027



1. Introduction

The **Centre for Agricultural Research and Development (CARD)** at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) invites high-performing undergraduate students to submit applications for research support funding. This initiative is part of CARD's strategic commitment to nurturing the next generation of scientists, researchers, and analysts in agriculture and applied policy research. Established in 1994, the CARD is a public policy research institute based at LUANAR, formerly Bunda College of Agriculture, under the University of Malawi. The CARD got its initial funding from the Government of Malawi, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the World Bank Group, **as a Centre of Excellence for undertaking high quality and timely policy research in agriculture, food and nutrition security, rural development, environment, and natural resource management in the country.** The CARD has four primary functions: policy research, training, consultancy, and outreach, which are integrated within a vast network of researchers and policy decision makers across the country and region, at large.

2. Purpose of the Call

The Centre aims to identify, mentor, and support outstanding undergraduate students by funding high-quality research projects that align with CARD's research thematic areas and the University's Strategic Plan. **The Centre will support a total of 20 undergraduate research projects in the 2026/2027 Academic Year**, with equal distribution across all faculties at Bunda Campus, LUANAR, namely the Faculties of Agriculture, Development Studies, Food and Human Sciences, Natural Resources, as well as Veterinary Medicine.

3. Research Grant Support

- Each selected student will receive US\$ 250 in research grant support.
- The funding will also provide tuition support equivalent to 50% of the annual tuition fees for the 2026/2027 Academic Year.
- The funding will cover tuition (50%), data collection, data analysis, and reporting.
- Selected students will further benefit from structured technical mentorship and close research supervision under CARD.

4. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

- Be a registered undergraduate student at LUANAR – **Bunda Campus**.
- Be in second semester of the third (3rd) year of study (2025/2026).
- Have a minimum average mark of 70% and **at least a cumulative GPA of 3.5**.
- Demonstrate strong academic performance, research interest, and commitment.
- Propose a research topic that **aligns with CARD's thematic research areas**: Agriculture Productivity, Diversification, and Mechanization; Agricultural Trade, Commercialization, and Value Addition; Agri-food Systems and Partnership; Food and Nutrition Security; Climate Change, Natural Resource Management, and Environment; Irrigation and Water Resource Management; Gender, Resilience, and Social Inclusion; as well as Applied Data Analytics for

Policy Influence.

- Demonstrate how the research topic align with the **Malawi Vision 2063 Vision Pillar** on Agricultural Productivity and Commercialization.
- In addition, research topics **on plantation crops**, industrial crops, and commercial livestock production, **coupled with value addition**, will have an added advantage.

5. Application Requirements

Interested and eligible Bunda Campus' students are invited to submit a **formal cover letter**, together with the following **mandatory supporting documents**:

- A research **concept note** (maximum 3 pages), including title, research problem, rationale, objectives, research questions, conceptual framework, study area, and proposed methodology, with Arial font type, font size of 12, and single spacing.
- A proof of registration from the University Registrar
- A certified academic transcript from the University Registrar
- A recommendation letter from an academic supervisor
- A recommendation letter from the Head of Department

6. Application Deadline

Submission deadline: **March 30, 2026**, and communication of outcome by **May 30, 2026**.

7. Submission & Enquiries

All applications, with all documentations in Section 5, must be submitted electronically to card@luanar.ac.mw, using the following email subject format: **"Student ID – Full Name, Department – Research Title"**. Applicants must also submit one signed hard copy of the complete package to

The Director,

Centre for Agricultural Research & Development (CARD),

Lilongwe University of Agriculture & Natural Resources (LUANAR),

Lilongwe, Malawi.

For enquiries, contact: Dr. Innocent **PANGAPANGA-PHIRI**, CARD Director, through ipangapanga@luanar.ac.mw or Ms. Mary **NGWIRA**, CARD Secretary, through mngwira@luanar.ac.mw.