

# Merck Foundation Africa Research Summit - MARS Awards 2026

## Empowering Women and Youth in STEM

### South-South Collaboration

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**  
**Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2026**

**MARS** Merck Foundation  
**AFRICA** RESEARCH SUMMIT  
 Empowering Researchers FROM AFRICA FOR AFRICA  
 Empowering Women and Youth in Research From Africa For Africa

**Merck Foundation Africa Research Summit - MARS** aims to contribute to building research capacity in the African Research Community. This year, special focus will be again on **"The Role of Scientific Research in Women Health and Reproductive Care"**.

**Merck Foundation Africa Research Summit - MARS 2026** will have scientific support from African Reproductive Care Society (ARCS), and Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE).

The Summit opens a discussion with Ministries of Health, Education, Information, Science and Technology and Gender from across Africa, to define policies with the aim to empower women and youth in STEM and to address the vital role of research in the improvement and sustainable development of healthcare system, with a specific emphasis on how to translate knowledge into action - the 'know-do gap' - to improve health and make an impact on society.

The aim of **Merck Foundation African Research Summit - MARS Awards** is to empower African young researchers & women researchers, advancing their research capacity and promote their contribution to **STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)**. The winners of MARS Awards are recognized under two categories; **"Best Young African Researcher"** and **"Best African Woman Researcher"**.

The summit will be a unique opportunity for the winners of a **MARS Research Awards** to share their research output and findings. It is also an opportunity for networking and career development.

#### Abstract Submission Details

- Abstracts are invited from final year PhD students, young investigators involved in research and Medical Doctors in Postgraduate Medical Fellowship program related to either of the following topics:

- **Women Health**
- **Infertility and Reproductive Care**

All applicants should be primarily based at African Research Institutes and Universities, although collaboration within Africa as well as outside is also welcome.

**Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2026**

Scan the QR code to apply online

OR submit your application and abstract to [mars@merck-foundation.com](mailto:mars@merck-foundation.com)



#### MARS 2026 Awards

Entries are invited under the below categories:

- **Best African Women Researchers**
- **Best Young African Researcher**
- **The Winners receive a 3 months Research Training scholarship in India**
- **Winners will be Invited to attend Merck Foundation Africa Asia Luminary**



**Stay tuned..**