

# INSTITUT D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DE RUHENGARI

*Accredited by Ministerial Order N° 005/2010/Mineduc of 16 June 2010*



***Scientia et Lux***

## RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY



February, 2025

B.P. 155  
Ruhengeri  
Rwanda

T : +250 788 90 30 30  
: +250 788 90 30 32  
E : [info@ines.ac.rw](mailto:info@ines.ac.rw)  
W : [www.ines.ac.rw](http://www.ines.ac.rw)



## **2 Table of contents**

### **3 Table of Contents**

Table of contents.....	2
I. Introduction .....	3
II. INES-Ruhengeri's commitments .....	4
III. Scope and Definitions .....	5
IV. Policy guidelines.....	6
V. Policy implementation.....	9



## **RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY**

### **I. Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles and responsibilities for ethical conduct in research by the members of INES-Ruhengeri community and in research supported by INES-Ruhengeri. As an institution striving for excellence in all its endeavors, INES-Ruhengeri values and protects academic freedom while also safeguarding ethical principles in research like:

- protecting the dignity, rights and welfare of all those involved in research (participants or third parties),
- respecting the privacy of individuals and safeguarding their personal information,
- Protecting intellectual property
- Ensuring the informed consent rules for participants
- Ensuring equal treatment
- Ensure recognized standards of integrity are met, and quality and transparency are assured
- Clarifying any conflict of interest to guarantee the independence of research.

Furthermore, this policy sets out the responsibilities and requirements for ethics review of research conducted by INES-Ruhengeri staff, students and third parties affiliated to INES-Ruhengeri. This therefore complement INES-Ruhengeri's research policy in:

- Fostering a culture that embraces the principles of ethical research and respect of the legislation to protect the rights, dignity and welfare of those involved in research;
- Providing ethics guidance that communicates regulatory requirements and best practice, and offering ongoing support and training to staff and students to maintain high ethical standards; and
- Maintaining a review process that subjects research to a level of scrutiny in proportion to the risk of harm or adverse effect.

### **4 Philosophy of INES-Ruhengeri**

INES-Ruhengeri's philosophy rests on three pillars: building hope, fostering unity and reconciliation, and contributing to sustainable development. These are grounded in Christian ethical values and constructive critical thinking. The university's mission focuses on national and regional development by providing specialized, research-enhanced education that creates competitive enterprises and well-paid employment. This emphasizes relevant, quality education and graduate employability through stakeholder collaboration, guiding the Quality Management System.

### **5 Moto of INES-Ruhengeri**

Scientia et lux / shifting from paper to people

### **6 Vision statement of INES-Ruhengeri**

The vision of INES-Ruhengeri is reflected in the following statement:



*"Universality in every individual;  
Knowing in order to better serve the world"*

INES-Ruhengeri as a private Institute for Higher Education orients its academic services towards applied sciences. In the vision of INES-Ruhengeri this means that all taught sciences are applied to the population daily problems, seeking to propose and answer to them.

## 7 Mission statement of INES-Ruhengeri

According to the statutes of INES-Ruhengeri the mission is expressed as follows:

*"To contribute through interactive junction between civil society, private sector and public sector to the national and regional development, by providing specialized university education enhanced by research, in order to create competitive enterprises and well paid employment".*

INES' mission focuses on the relevancy and quality of education and the employability of graduates through collaboration with stakeholders in the whole spectrum of academic services. The mission statement refers to the above mentioned ambitions of INES and guides the Quality Management System (QMS)

## 8 INES-Ruhengeri' Core qualities

The following core qualities lie at the basis of the current performance of INES-Ruhengeri:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quality</li><li>• Scientific excellence</li><li>• Professional consciousness</li><li>• Flexibility</li><li>• Innovation</li><li>• Entrepreneurship</li><li>• Team spirit</li><li>• Determination and perseverance</li><li>• Courage and responsibility</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaboration (among staff and with students)</li><li>• Architectural concept</li><li>• Accessibility (geographical and financial)</li><li>• Receptivity to local need</li><li>• Relation with the Catholic Church</li><li>• Culture of Transparency</li><li>• Integration of Social Sciences and Communication</li></ul>
--	---

By highlighting the core values of a Catholic School and the values of INES Students as listed above, all partners must profit to them

## II. INES-Ruhengeri's commitments

INES-Ruhengeri is committed to:



- 2.1 Ensuring that research conducted on its premises or by its staff or students is carried out to high ethical standards.
- 2.2 Ensuring that all research contributes to the public good, and that the dignity, rights and welfare of staff and students conducting research, research participants and third parties are respected.
- 2.3 Providing leadership in the area of ethical conduct of research
- 2.4 Guaranteeing academic freedom allowing researchers to participating openly in discussions on the direction of research and improvements to practice.
- 2.5 Cultivating and sustaining ethical research conduct among staff and students through the provision of training to equip them with the skills to recognize potential risks and by informing of the institution's relevant policies and procedures, and the responsibilities of researchers in helping ensure that the obligations of everyone are met under the relevant legislation.
- 2.6 Providing a competent, rigorous process of ethics review that is proportionate to the potential risk and, where a high risk is identified, assesses that risk against the benefits to the public good.

### **III. Scope and Definitions**

This policy applies to all staff and students of INES-Ruhengeri who conduct research, whether or not the research is conducted on INES-Ruhengeri's premises or using its facilities. Third parties (for example staff of other institutions working with INES-Ruhengeri students or on its premises) are expected to adhere to the ethical standards of research conduct set in this policy.

Research may be understood as 'a systematic investigation leading to the generation of new knowledge'. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes.

This definition of research would not normally include:

- routine audit and evaluation, such as the routine evaluation of teaching;
- the development of teaching and other materials that do not involve original research;
- purely documentary research on sources that are already in the public domain such as historical, literary, and theoretical research. Local laws, policies and good practice relating to archives must be followed.

Other key definitions in this policy include:

- a) Informed consent: This is a process by which a prospective participant, prior to participating in research:



- (i) Is fully informed about all aspects of the research project, which might reasonably be expected to influence willingness to participate. In addition, the researcher must explain all other aspects of the research about which the prospective participants enquire. Such aspects will include some or all of the following:
- the nature and objectives of the project
  - the methodology of the project and conditions under which it is to be conducted
  - the persons/institutions that will have access to personally identifiable information about participants
  - the form in which research results will be published/communicated
  - who is undertaking and who is sponsoring the project
  - the potential risks and inconveniences that may arise
  - the potential benefits that may result
  - what participation in the research will require
  - whether it will be possible, and if yes, until what point, to withdraw from participation
- (ii) Freely and voluntarily gives consent to participating.
- b) 'Anonymity' denotes a requirement regarding data storage, processing and publishing whereby no personally identifiable data is recorded, stored or published during and upon conclusion of research activities.
- c) 'Confidentiality' refers to a requirement concerning data storage, processing and publishing according to which the personally identifiable data is available only to research participants and the researcher(s).
- d) 'Privacy' stands for a constraint imposed on a research activity whereby some information and areas of life of participants are not open to the scrutiny and surveillance by the researcher(s).

#### **IV. Policy guidelines**

- 4.1 Research undertaken in accordance with recognized research ethical principles constitutes good research practice and these policy guidelines should be read in conjunction with INES-Ruhengeri Research Policy, the employees code of conduct and other relevant policies.
- 4.2 Upholding recognized ethical principles in research requires an acceptance of and respect for principles of integrity, honesty and openness and a commitment to intellectual honesty and personal responsibility. Research should also aim to benefit society and minimize social harm. Research involving participants must be undertaken to gain knowledge and understanding and avoid unnecessary repetition of existing knowledge.
- 4.3 Prior to, during and following the completion of research activities, researchers are expected to consider the ethical implications of their research and any of its consequences



for the participants involved. Researchers are expected to consider their research from the perspective of the participant.

- 4.4 No member of INES-Ruhengeri community should be compelled or compel others to undertake or participate in research that conflicts with either the researchers' or the participants' individual ethical principles.
- 4.5 Some researchers will face a range of potential risks to their safety and the safety of their research team when conducting certain types of research for example a researcher may be required to enter potentially dangerous environments to question certain participants. Such issues need to be considered in the design and conduct of research and procedures must be adopted to minimize any risk to researchers. In addition, researchers must consult all appropriate health and safety guidelines and procedures relevant to their area of research before commencing work.
- 4.6 Researchers have a responsibility to protect participants from any harm arising from research. Harm to participants may arise from undue stress through participation, loss of self-esteem, psychological injury as well as physical harm. As a general rule, people participating in research must not be exposed to risks that are greater than or additional to those they encounter in their normal lifestyles.
- 4.7 If it is expected that harm, unusual discomfort or other negative consequences might occur in the prospective participant's future life as a result of participating, the lead researcher must, prior to the person's participation, obtain written consent of the participants.
- 4.8 Before participating, people must be informed of procedures for contacting the Chairperson of the REC within a reasonable time, if following participation, they experience stress, harm or have related concerns.
- 4.9 In the case of interviews and questionnaires, the content and line of questioning may be highly sensitive, raise confidential, personal issues and intrude, or be perceived to intrude, upon a participant's comfort and privacy. The initial judgment on whether or not questions are sensitive and likely to cause harm rests with the Principal Investigator. Researchers are encouraged to seek advice regarding these issues.
- 4.10 Researchers should normally carry out investigations with the valid consent of participants having taken all reasonable and practicable steps to ensure that they, or their authorized representatives, have adequately understood the nature of the research and any anticipated consequences. Under no circumstances must coercion be used to obtain a person's consent to participate in research. Ideally consent should be obtained in writing but where this is not possible oral consent should be obtained.
- 4.11 Giving and obtaining consent can be a process, not always a one-off event and participants have the right to change their minds and withdraw consent at any time. However, if the withdrawal of consent occurs at the time when it affects the possibility of the finalization of the research (for instance, shortly before publication or thesis defense), the withdrawal should result only in the deletion of all personally identifiable data of the participant both in published materials and in stored and processed research data. If a researcher doubts whether a person participating in research still consents to participating s/he must clarify this with the person in question.



- 4.12 If the prospective participant is, for any reason, unable to understand the implications of participation, then the researcher is responsible for obtaining the informed consent of the parents/legal guardians of the prospective participant.
- 4.13 Where a relationship exists between the researcher and participant (e.g. employees, patients, students or anyone in a dependence relation) careful consideration as to the nature of consent is required. Willingness to volunteer may be unduly influenced by the expectation of benefits or rewards.
- 4.14 People volunteering to participate in research may be paid for their inconvenience and time (taking into account the practices of a given academic discipline). Payments made to individuals must not be so large as to induce the individuals to risk harm beyond that which they would usually undertake. Financial payments might cover reimbursement for travel expenses and / or time. Risks resulting from participation must be acceptable to participants even in the absence of inducement.
- 4.15 Parents (and others with parental responsibility) may agree to their children taking part in research, but where a child is able to understand sufficiently to give informed consent, their consent should be obtained in addition to parents'.
- 4.16 It is the researcher's responsibility to assess whether the child has sufficient understanding to consent to the research. Children's capacity to consent to research depends on their understanding of the research to be undertaken. Where information about the research and study can be given clearly and simply, it is possible for quite young children to consent to take part in research.
- 4.17 For a child to give valid consent they would need to understand the nature of the engagement with the researcher and understand that it is different to other interactions with those who may seek information from the child. Particularly, the child must be able to understand that the researcher is not able to make decisions about their life, and will use the information the child provides, but not in a way which would allow others to identify the child.
- 4.18 Where children are considered competent by a researcher to participate they should be accorded the confidentiality as would an adult. There are however two areas of concern where the same level of confidentiality cannot be promised to a child: where a child discloses that they are being seriously harmed or ill-treated, or where the researcher discovers a condition about which the parents could take action to benefit the child. In these instances, researchers could be seen to have a duty of care to disclose such information to relevant third parties.
- 4.19 The collection, storage, disclosure and use of personal data by researchers must comply with all legislation relating to data protection and arrangements must be put in place by researchers to carefully protect the confidentiality of participants and their data. Details that would allow individuals to be identified must not be published or made available to anybody not involved in the research unless explicit consent is given by the individuals concerned.
- 4.20 Before consent is obtained, researchers must inform prospective participants of:





- (i) Risks regarding the confidentiality of personal data and data revealed during research when the information is gathered in the presence of other participants (e.g. focus groups);
- (ii) Any potential risks that might mean that the confidentiality or anonymity of personal data may not be guaranteed;
- (iii) Which individuals and organizations, if any, will be permitted access to personal data, and under what circumstances such access will be granted;
- (iv) The purpose for which personal information provided is to be used (e.g. if video material might be used for teaching purposes).

4.21 If it is necessary, in undertaking research, to identify participants explicitly, then the researchers must explain why this is the case and how confidentiality will be protected. Researchers must be aware of the risks to anonymity, confidentiality and privacy posed by all kinds of personal information storage and processing which directly identify a person (e.g. audio and videotapes, electronic and paper-based files, e-mail records).

## **V. Policy implementation**

### **5.2 Responsibilities**

All members of INES-Ruhengeri are individually responsible for ensuring that their work is conducted in accordance with the research commitments set out in this policy and with all policies that form part of the terms and conditions of employment and study.

Failure to comply with this policy may lead to the failure of assessed work; the suspension of study, research projects, and/ or funding from research sponsors; or to the inability to publish. Work conducted in deliberate contravention of the decisions of an ethics review committee, or with deliberate disregard for the ethics review process, would not be covered endorsed by INES-Ruhengeri.

#### **Vice-Chancellor**

The Vice-Chancellor is the INES-Ruhengeri's chief executive administrator and, as such, has overall responsibility for ethical conduct and for the institution's compliance with government policy and legislation.

#### ***Research Committee***

The Research Committee is responsible for INES-Ruhengeri policies that promote responsible conduct of research and for meeting relevant regulatory requirements.

#### ***Research Ethics Committees***



## INSTITUT D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DE RUHENGARI

B.P. 155, Ruhengeri, Rwanda

**Mob :** +250 788 90 30 30, +250 788 90 30 32, **W :** [www.ines.ac.rw](http://www.ines.ac.rw), **E :** [info@ines.ac.rw](mailto:info@ines.ac.rw)

The Research Ethics Committee (REC) is responsible for the review of researchers' applications for ethics approval where these do not require ethics review by external committees such as, for example, the National Ethics Committee.

### *Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Research*

The Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academics and Research (DVCAR) provides leadership in all matters relating to academics and research, and as such, works closely with academics to create an environment conducive to world leading applied and curiosity-driven research. The DVCAR chairs the Research Committee and consults with the Vice-Chancellor on ethical and compliance issues of wider concern to INES-Ruhengeri.

### *Deans of Faculty and heads of specialized centers*

As senior academic leaders within INES-Ruhengeri, Deans and Heads of specialized Centres are responsible for promoting the highest ethical standards in the design, conduct and reporting of research. As one component of this, Deans and Heads of Specialized Centres are responsible to the Research Committee for ensuring their staff and students observe this policy and for the effective local oversight of departmental research activity, including endorsement of applications submitted to one of the REC for ethics review.

### *Directorate of Research*

Directorate of Research is responsible for promoting the responsible conduct of research and compliance with regulatory and research funder requirements through information and advice, training, policy development, and research governance support. It facilitates compliance, on an individual and institutional level, with all regulations governing research involving human participants, human samples, and personal data. The Directorate of Research provides advice, guidance and training in this respect, as well as research governance oversight. It also supports the work of REC. The chair of the REC possesses delegated authority to review and approve research with relatively straightforward ethical issues.

### *Staff and Students*

INES-Ruhengeri expects all those involved in research involving human participants, personal data and /or regulated material and procedures, whether as staff or students, to take personal responsibility for familiarizing themselves with the policies, professional frameworks, standards, obligations, and relevant legislation that apply to their research, and for keeping such knowledge current.





Research supervisors should assist their students in becoming familiar with this and other policies and procedures relevant to the conduct of the student's project, and provide, or direct the student to, specific advice, training, and guidance.

### **5.3 Implementation**

The following research must be reviewed through the REC and formally approved before it is conducted:

- Research involving living human participants;
- Research involving the personal data of living human participants;
- Research involving human samples;
- Research requiring approval or authority from other bodies.

Information about the REC application process is available on the INES-Ruhengeri website. If there is uncertainty as to whether activity requires research ethics review, researchers are advised to contact Directorate of Research for advice before the research is undertaken.

An activity that may raise other significant ethical issues or pose a reputational risk to researchers or the Institute and is not reviewed by another regulatory body may be referred for advice and/or review by the REC, for example if there are ethical issues other than the involvement of human participants or personal data.

Where ethics approval is required but INES-Ruhengeri is not the lead institution, the researchers from INES-Ruhengeri must provide the relevant REC with details of the ethics application, including all documents, the ethics application form that was submitted to the lead institution, and their approval notice. This will be reviewed to ensure that the approval already obtained is in accordance with the requirements of INES-Ruhengeri research ethics.

The University regards as a very serious matter any breach of this policy or any breach of the approved terms of a project. These may result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal for staff and expulsion for students. In appropriate circumstances, the Central University Research Ethics Committee subcommittees has the power under the regulations to withhold, suspend or withdraw approval of research, whether as part of disciplinary proceedings or otherwise.

### **Appeals**

A procedure is available for appealing a decision to withhold, suspend or withdraw approval of research.

### ***Complaints***

The Procedure for handling complaints received by REC explains the process for dealing with complaints made about research approved, and complaints made about a REC. Suspected misconduct in research should be considered and reported as set out in the code of conduct of employees.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

As an institution of public interest, the INES-Ruhengeri has an active duty to consider the impact on equality in all decision making.

#### ***Negative Equality impact***

An item will have a negative equality impact when it creates or contributes to a risk of discrimination, harassment, victimization or other prohibited conduct.

#### ***Positive Equality impact***

This item could have positive impact on equality by eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimization, advancing quality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not, fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Done at INES-Ruhengeri, on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Mazarati Jean Baptiste'.

**Dr. MAZARATI Jean Baptiste**

**Chairperson of INES-Ruhengeri Governing Body**



# INSTITUT D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DE RUHENGARI

B.P. 155, Ruhengeri, Rwanda

**Mob :** +250 788 90 30 30, +250 788 90 30 32, **W :** [www.ines.ac.rw](http://www.ines.ac.rw), **E :** [info@ines.ac.rw](mailto:info@ines.ac.rw)

## Annex 1: Application form for research ethical approval

### SECTION A: Project Information

<b>Project title:</b>			
<b>Investigator:</b>			
<b>Student No.</b>			
<b>Co-Investigators (if applicable):</b>			
<b>Supervisor/s: (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Contact details of Investigator:</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
<b>Degree enrolled in (if applicable):</b>			
<b>Project location:</b>			
<b>Project duration:</b>			







# INSTITUT D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DE RUHENGARI

B.P. 155, Ruhengeri, Rwanda

Mob : +250 788 90 30 30, +250 788 90 30 32, W : [www.ines.ac.rw](http://www.ines.ac.rw), E : [info@ines.ac.rw](mailto:info@ines.ac.rw)

## SECTION B: Ethical Review Application (To be filled by Applicant (s))

Please answer all of the following questions

1. Who are the research participants, and how will they be recruited?	
1.1.	
etc	
2. Provide a brief summary of the project:	
3. Outline the research plan:	
4. How will informed consent be obtained from participants?	
5. Provide details of procedures for establishing confidentiality and protecting privacy of participants.	
6. Provide details of data collection, security and storage:	
7. Give details of whether and/or how feedback will be available to participants:	
8. Does the project involve any of the following procedures?	
a) The possibility of physical or psychological injury, stress and/or discomfort? (If YES, give details	
b) Participant involvement by any "vulnerable groups." (If YES, give details)	
c) Does the project involve any other disciplines and/or Ethics Committees? (If YES, please state which and what approval has already been obtained - attach documentation.)	
d) Will payments to participants be made? (If YES, state the amount and whether payment is for out-of-pocket expenses or a fee.)	
e) Will the project receive financial support?	
(i) If YES, specify the nature and source of the support	
(ii) If YES, have any restrictions been imposed upon the conduct of the research? (If YES, specify the nature of the restrictions)	
f) Will any restrictions be placed on the publication of results? (If YES, please state the nature of the restrictions)	
g) Are there any other points you wish to make in justification of the proposed study?	
h) Please complete the items on the checklist shown below. (Write either YES or NO in the box following each item)	Yes/No
(i) Have you completed all the questions on this form that are applicable to your project?	
(ii) Have you attached an informed consent form (see below)?	
(iii) Have you attached a sample questionnaire or interview schedule (if applicable)?	

Signature of Proposer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

dd

mm

yyyy



## INSTITUT D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DE RUHENGARI

B.P. 155, Ruhengeri, Rwanda

Mob : +250 788 90 30 30, +250 788 90 30 32, W : [www.ines.ac.rw](http://www.ines.ac.rw), E : [info@ines.ac.rw](mailto:info@ines.ac.rw)

### SECTION C: Ethical Scrutiny by supervisor

To be completed by the supervisor:

[Delete A or B]

A. This research is considered ethically acceptable. It does not involve any of the following:

- research on live animals other than non-intrusive observational studies in the wild
- research involving children under the age of 16, people diagnosed as suffering from a serious physical or mental disease or handicap, people who have undergone what would generally be regarded as traumatic experiences related to the area of research now or in the past, or people who any reasonable person would judge to be especially vulnerable
- experiments or clinical trials carried out on human subjects
- a power relationship such as teacher/pupil, doctor/patient, employer/employee, etc.
- Covert methods or where informed consent cannot or will not be sought, except for research on 'public situations' such as the behaviour of crowds or groups of people in circumstances where the researcher has a right to be present.
- research where the identity of the subjects/informants/participants cannot be concealed unless they are specifically to be made aware of this and provide their signed consent
- research which might reasonably be judged at risk of causing harm, distress or discomfort to people or groups (including social stigmatization/penalty, commercial disadvantage or environmental damage or degradation)

B. This proposal should be referred to the Research Ethical Committee for review.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

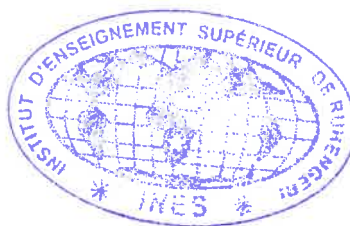
INES-Ruhengeri- Supervisor

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

dd

mm

yyyy





## INSTITUT D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR DE RUHENGARI

B.P. 155, Ruhengeri, Rwanda

T : +250 788 90 30 30, +250 788 90 30 32, W : [www.ines.ac.rw](http://www.ines.ac.rw), E : [info@ines.ac.rw](mailto:info@ines.ac.rw)

### SECTION D: Ethical Review by Research Ethical Committee

To be completed by the chairperson of INES-Ruhengeri Research Committee (whichever applies):

[Ring the identification letter of one statement]

- A. This research may proceed without further review.
- B. This research may not proceed; it clearly breaches ethical guidelines without justifying or contravening a decision already taken by the Research Committee.
- C. This research should be referred to the full research Committee.

Reasons:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of INES-Ruhengeri Research Committee (whichever applies)

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

dd

mm

yyy

To be completed after a full INES-Ruhengeri Research Committee meeting (whichever applies):

[Ring the identification letter of one]

- A. This research may proceed
- B. This research may proceed if the conditions below are implemented.
- C. This research may not proceed.

Reasons (and conditions, if appropriate):

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson

of INES-Ruhengeri research Committee (whichever applies)

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

dd

mm

yyy