

## **CEDAT staff gets sensitized about the operations of the Grants Administration and Management Support Unit**

The Grants Administration and Management Support Unit (GAMSU) has been asked to provide early-career support and mentorship in order to support the upcoming researchers participate actively in the search and acquisition of grants.

GAMSU was also urged to take into consideration the needs of specific colleges in order to spread out the opportunities for accessing grants more so for the already existing funding opportunities where it was realized that some units were left out.

Another issue of concern was the need for GAMSU to address co-funding, a requirement in some of the grants, which funds were not readily available leading to failure to win certain grants.

This and more were some of the deliberations in a discussion that followed presentations made during the sensitization meeting by the team from GAMSU to the staff of the College of Engineering, Design Art and Technology held in the college Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

The participants including Heads of Departments and Principal Investigators expressed their reservations about the operationalization of the GAMSU policy citing fears of increased bureaucracy and delays in project implementation.

‘I hope this will not be another layer of processing funds where we will be subjected to work through GAMSU’ said Prof. Anthony Gidudu, the Dean School of the Built Environment while emphasizing the need for efficiency and effectiveness in the course of the grant implementation.

Prof. Gidudu who represented the Principal CEDAT, Prof. Henry Alinaitwe at the meeting expressed optimism that the Grants Administration and Management Unit once fully institutionalized and operational would help in streamlining and actually improve the running of programs and grants. He noted that there were a number of Universities that had units in place specifically dedicated to raising funds and therefore the institution of GAMSU was timely.

The Head Prof. Grace Bantebya Kyomuhendo explained that GAMSU was instituted to help realize the University’s objective of being research-led. She allayed the fears of the participants and the rest of the University community by explaining that GAMSU was to offer support services but not take over the implementation of the projects in

the Colleges. ‘When the policy came in, there was apprehension that the University wanted to take the money from the researchers but this is not true, she emphasize.

She explained that as a unit, they draw their mandate from the GAMSU and other University Policies. She encouraged the participants to embrace the demands created by the policy and reiterated that all grants that would not be declared were not binding to the University.

Prof. Bantebya Kyomuhendo further explained that very few staff of the university were accessing funding for research and that there were some schools that did not have a single grant and staff were concentrated on teaching, research, and outreach. She noted that for one to be promoted, there was a need to establish the work done in terms of attracting grants and other resources as well as research output. GAMSU she said, was in place to help redress such a scenario that was inhibiting the career growth of some of the teaching staff at the University.

The sensitization at the college covered a number of subjects including the Database for Grants Administration and Management that was made by I T expert Mr. Yunus Musisi. He said the database would be useful in the proper implementation of the various programs in monitoring and evaluation by tracking the processes, ensuring compliance to set standards, as well as tracking the projects from start to end. He encouraged all grant holders to submit the needed information for inputting into the system.

Mr. George Mugabi Turyamureeba explained the financial management aspect as required by GAMSU. He mentioned that some of the demands made on the grants administrators were statutory and therefore mandatory citing the example of the quarterly reports that needed to be submitted timely to avoid undue delays in other procedures hence affecting the entire University. He also emphasized the concern on ethics as well as accountability not only for the finances but also for all other resources in program implementation.

The meeting was attended by members of the GAMSU steering committee representing the sciences, Dr. Sabrina Kitaka and Assoc. Prof. Agness R. Semwanga who took off time to react to some of the issues raised in the meeting.

Participants were encouraged to fill and submit the needs assessment survey forms, which information would help GAMSU appreciate and thereafter address the needs of the various staff of the University. They urged the staff of CEDAT to embrace GAMSU and embark on writing proposals for grants targeting various upcoming opportunities including the impending RIF IV.