

Rules of conduct for research teams

Marakuja

June 2019

Mission: Marakuja was founded in response to gender and racial biases that can arise with NGOS working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Marakuja is an equal opportunity employer committed to providing opportunities for personal and professional growth to excluded minorities (women, Congolese youth, ex-combatants) when such opportunities are typically given to individuals with privileged access to education, typically outside of the DRC.

Academic partners/clients

The PI and co-PIs of research teams are not employed by Marakuja but make scientific design decisions and suggestions prior to a project contract being negotiated and agreed with Marakuja. Marakuja can only accept research teams that have at most one clearly defined PI, who is the intermediary, unless the PI explicitly delegates tasks to other representatives.

Marakuja's employees: *positions and learning priority/development of local capacity*

Project manager: A project manager has the ultimate decision over all project operations, timelines, and submits expense requests. Budgets, timelines, and expenses submitted by the project manager must be approved by Marakuja following its internal governance rules at the time of the project. The search for project managers is typically local.

Assistant project manager/management mentor: The project manager will be accompanied by an *assistant project manager*, typically hired in a broader market. The assistant project manager responds to the project manager. Assistant project managers are expected to have significant skills in budget management, contracting, law, timeline management, and human resource management. The assistant project manager's role is to provide support as well as transfer skills and provide guidance to the project manager. The compensation of assistant project managers will be dependent on their performance, which will partly hinge on successfully improving the knowledge of project managers in management skills.

Technical advisor/technical mentor: A technical advisor conducts tasks that typically include budget preparation, developing accounting practices, programming of surveys, design of quality control, coding and data analysis. The technical advisor is initially hired in a broader market, and responds to the project manager. The compensation of technical advisors will be dependent on their performance, which will partly hinge on successfully improving the knowledge of project managers in technical skills.

Internal academic advisors: In each project one academic lead of Marakuja must be appointed as an advisor for the project. These are either Gauthier Marchais or Raul Sanchez de la Sierra, who will assist verifying that statistical procedures are appropriately respected.

Marakuja's employees: recruitment process

Marakuja determines whether a particular position shall be assigned to the local or the broader labor search (which includes candidates of all origins including Congolese).

- *The local labor market outreach.* This search focuses outreach on potential candidates with the specific regional knowledge and language skills that enables them to manage teams of surveyors. While the search is not restricted to Congolese nationals and Marakuja does not discriminate by origin, typically individuals without substantial living experience/upbringing in the DRC will not have the skills that are required to navigate rural areas of Eastern Congo. Recruitment is determined by Marakuja internal rules and based on a competitive selection process. This is the search for project managers.
- *The broad labor market outreach* includes individuals from the DRC, but also includes candidates from other African countries, and possibly broader. This search also does not discriminate by origin. Outreach targets especially individuals trained in African Universities as per the organization's mission. The organization has a good relationship with IHfRA and the African School of Economics where the recruitment committee will conduct most of the outreach. This is the search for assistant project managers and technical advisors.

The procedure for selection of individuals in the *broader search process* is:

- **Step 1:** Marakuja and the academic lead/client jointly determine the composition of a search committee. At least one member of the search committee must be a member of Marakuja. The committee conducts a search following the minimum outreach requirements determined by Marakuja (although the search parameters can be broader).
- **Step 2:** The committee proposes a *pre-selected* set of candidates for Marakuja to hire as part of their project. *For each pool of candidates proposed*, the majority need to be Africans, and at least half need to be women.
- **Step 3:** The director of operations and the academic leads (Aimable Amani Lameke, Gauthier Marchais, Raul Sanchez de la Sierra) may request additional interviews.
- **Step 4:** Marakuja decides, based on its internal governance rules active at the time of the decision, *who* among the proposed pool is amenable to work at Marakuja. Marakuja may reject the pool when none of the proposed candidates meets the criteria.

The research team (PI, co-PIs and research assistants) cannot influence the process of decision making of the organization but is welcome to share their preferences.

Marakuja's employees: rules of conduct and contract clauses for every contract

Rules of respect and inter-cultural awareness: Marakuja has no tolerance for racism or misogyny. Any employee accused of disrespecting other staff, especially targeting Africans and women, engaging in verbal abuse, or displaying explicit or implicit racist or gender discriminatory language or behavior will be immediately suspended.

The process for accusations is as follows. Witnesses communicate the issue anonymously to the academic leads and director of operations (Aimable Amani Lameke, Gauthier Marchais and Raul Sanchez de la Sierra), after which the employee is immediately suspended. Once the organization has made an investigation, a determination is made. Upon confirmation of the claims, and as per Marakuja's mission to reduce racial/gender biases, Marakuja will organize educational meetings in group with the aim to reform the employee. Once the educational phase is over, the employee will be demoted and potentially dismissed.

Probationary period: the first 90 days, any employee hired in the broader market can be dismissed if Marakuja determines that they are not a good match with the organization's mission. A determination of match is made by the director of operations (Aimable Amani Lameke, advised by the academic advisors Gauthier Marchais and Raul Sanchez de la Sierra).

Transparent remuneration: members of Marakuja have access to the contract of every other Marakuja employee and wages are transparent within the organization as organization policy.

For Congolese nationals employed by Marakuja, Marakuja retains the income tax and pays it annually to Congolese tax authorities. Foreign employees are responsible for declaring their income to their corresponding tax authority.

Rules for managing project budgets at Marakuja for PIs, co-PIs, and research assistants:

Use of overheads and project deliverables: The research team is responsible to have realistic goals based on the direct funds. Once the direct funds are exhausted, Marakuja keeps the overheads independently of the state of deliverables. It is the research team's responsibility to ensure sufficient oversight so that realistic deliverables are agreed, and that they are met. If, by the end of the project, they are not met, overheads are never to be used to that end. The allocation of the budget from overheads funds is the prerogative of Marakuja. Marakuja will, under no circumstance, use overheads to help researchers obtain deliverables.

Budget: Every project has a separate budget, and transfers are made to a project specific bank account. The ultimate authorizations for expenses are made by Marakuja's director of operations (Aimable Amani Lameke, following internal procedures active at the time). Project managers can only make authorizations requests for Aimable to release funds.

Liquidity: Research teams recognize that Marakuja is a cashless organization, and therefore must do realistic financial planning based on spending only funds that are existing in the field, not expected funds. Marakuja accepts no responsibility for deliverables that fail due to delays in the payment process to Marakuja. The research team is responsible for providing liquidity.

The below signatories, founding members of Marakuja, have approved these rules by majority voting:

Aimable Amani Lameke (*Director of operations*)
Desire Basibuhe
Christian Mastaki
Christian Polepole Bazuzi
Simeon Lukeno
Raul Sanchez de la Sierra (*Director*)

Witnesses:

Clara Brandt
Issa Kiemtore
Gauthier Marchais
Hilary Yu