

2015 ADDRFP Fellowships for Doctoral Research on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Vaccine Trials in West Africa (CALL EXTENDED)

The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), in partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), is pleased to announce a call for applications for doctoral fellowships in HIV/AIDS prevention and vaccine trials in West Africa. These fellowships are expected to contribute to the creation of sustainable capacity and leadership to conduct HIV/AIDS prevention trials with special focus on innovations in HIV/AIDS prevention technologies, particularly HIV vaccines.

The ADDRFP Program will award up to seven (7) fellowships in 2015 to doctoral students who are citizens or residents of a West African (ECOWAS) country AND who are who are affiliated to a research/academic institution in an ECOWAS country. Research themes for these awards are open to a range of disciplines, such as biomedical research, epidemiology, or social and behavioral sciences, as long as their focus remains HIV/AIDS prevention and vaccine trials. These fellowships will be awarded to doctoral students who are within two years of completing their thesis and whose research shows great promise of making cutting-edge contributions to HIV prevention and policy issues in the region.

Expected outcomes

The fellowships are expected to support the production of several high-quality doctoral dissertations from West African universities. Successful applicants will be required to publish at least one peer-reviewed article within 3 years of receiving the award.

Eligibility

The fellowship will primarily support research (including data collection and/or analysis). Funds will not be used to support coursework or tuition fees.

Applicants must:

- Be citizens or permanent residents of a West African (ECOWAS) country
- Be affiliated with a research/academic institution in an ECOWAS country.
- Be undertaking doctoral training at a recognized sub-Saharan African university
- Submit proof of approval of the research protocol (or a waiver, if applicable) by a research ethics body recognized in the country in which the research will be conducted
- Provide a detailed time-frame for completing their dissertation which should be endorsed by the head of department or the chair of the dissertation committee,
- Have a research topic that has been approved by their doctoral dissertation committee, and
- Be able to complete their dissertation within 24 months of the start of the fellowship.

Selection criteria

Successful candidates will be those whose dissertation topics focus on innovations in HIV/AIDS prevention technologies, particularly HIV vaccines; have a clear research question(s), and employ an appropriate and rigorous research design. The dissertation research should ideally be related to other work going on in the department or should have received strong endorsement and support from the department. Successful candidates must also demonstrate interest in pursuing a research career and their dissertations must be sufficiently linked to their future research interests.

Evaluation criteria

The applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Candidate's scientific background and potential to develop a strong research career (20%)
- Well-elaborated statement on the policy relevance of the research; scientific merit of the proposed research project including originality of research question(s), clarity and adequacy of the study design, demonstrated knowledge of relevant/current literature, detailed analysis plan, ethical considerations; budget summary and justification; and a clear plan for completing the dissertation within 24 months (60%)
- Research environment including commitment of main supervisor(s) and department to facilitate timely completion of the dissertation (20%)

Cost

Each award will be up to a maximum of US\$10,000. This amount will include a completion award of US\$ 1,000; allowances for a laptop computer and analytical software (e.g. STATA, SPSS, Nudist, Atlas/ti) (US\$ 1,500); research/data collection (US\$ 5,500); and participation in one regional or international conference or workshop (US\$ 2,000). A facilitation grant of US\$ 1,000 per fellowship will be awarded to cover supervision costs and facilitate internal and external reviews of the dissertation. Successful applicants will participate in two methodology and scientific writing training workshops (attending the workshops is mandatory). The 5-day workshops are intended to introduce students to research methods and ethics, literature retrieval, reference management, scientific writing, proposal development, and communication of research. The research training workshops will be facilitated by an international team of researchers with expertise in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The research methodology workshop will be held within two months of selection into the fellowship program and is intended to equip fellows with adequate methodological skills to conduct quality research. The workshop will also provide a platform for fellows to present their research projects to peers and senior researchers and receive critical feedback. The scientific writing workshop will be held about a year later and is expected to equip fellows with critical scientific writing skills as well as provide them with an opportunity to interact with editors of international journals in the broad areas of health. Fellows will be expected to come to the workshop with a draft of a manuscript that they expect to publish in a peer-reviewed journal and will receive feedback from facilitators and peers on the manuscript. The working language for these workshops is English.

How to apply

All application materials (applications in French are also welcome) must be received by **11:59pm (Nairobi time) on October 4, 2015**. Applications received after this date will not be reviewed. . Applications must include the following documents to be considered. A completed application form (can be downloaded from <https://www.aphrc.org/>). This form must be submitted electronically in MS Word format.

1. Proof of citizenship or permanent residence in a West African (ECOWAS) country (copy of passport or other national identification);
2. Proof of affiliation to a research/academic institution in an ECOWAS country
3. Two letters of reference (at least one must come from a faculty member with extensive knowledge of applicant's academic history and performance and must document how the candidate's dissertation research fits into ongoing research programs in the department). Referees' contact information must be provided in the application form;
4. Evidence that the research protocol has undergone review and received approval from an approved ethical review board and the dissertation committee or is under review for the same.

The application form and supporting documents (except the reference letters) should be submitted in a single email to 2015addrf@aphrc.org. Applicants who have previously applied to the same call can submit a revised application but will be considered nonetheless.

For questions, please contact:

The ADDRf Manager, E-mail: 2015addrf@aphrc.org

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