

Call for Proposals

EDCTP-TDR Clinical Research and Development Fellowships

Open for applications: 31 October 2014
Deadline for applications: 30 January 2015, 16:00 (GMT)

Background

Researchers from LMICs who are involved in clinical research projects have limited opportunities to acquire experience and develop skills for conducting clinical trials outside of an academic or public sector setting. EDCTP and TDR have decided to jointly implement a fellowship scheme that will support researchers to obtain these skills, while ensuring synergies between researchers and clinical staff, pharmaceutical companies, product development partnerships (PDPs) and research institutions. This partnership will have a leverage effect on the number of individuals trained, resulting in an increased impact on research and development capacity in LMICs.

Scope

The purpose of this Joint Call for Proposals is to support researchers and key members of clinical trial research teams from LMICs to acquire specialist skills in clinical research and development through placements in pharmaceutical companies and PDPs. The scheme targets junior to mid-career researchers or clinical staff (clinicians, pharmacists, medical statisticians, data managers, other health researchers) who are employed by a legal entity in LMICs where they are currently working on activities in the scope of EDCTP or TDR.

The EDCTP-TDR partnership includes a joint evaluation and selection process of applications submitted to this Call. However, grant awarding and budget management are managed separately by each organisation¹. TDR will fund fellows employed by a research institution in any LMIC to be placed in pharmaceutical companies and PDPs either in or outside Europe to train and develop new research skills on infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, Ebola and NIDs². EDCTP will fund fellows employed by a sub-Saharan African legal entity to be placed in European-based pharmaceutical companies to train and develop new research skills of relevance to PRDs³.

Fellows can only be funded once under this grant scheme. Grants awarded are not transferrable from one individual to another. Placements are for a minimum period of 6 months up to a maximum period of 24 months. Fellows must be committed to return to their home organisation for a **minimum of two years** after completion of the fellowship. Fellows should be able to demonstrate how the experience gained during the training programme will be applied upon return to their home organisation.

¹ Disclaimer: Grant awarding by EDCTP will depend on the successful conclusion of a delegation agreement between the European Commission and the EDCTP Association for implementation of the EDCTP2 programme.

² For TDR, Neglected Infectious Diseases (NIDs) include: dengue/severe dengue; rabies; chagas disease; Human African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness); leishmaniasis; cysticercosis/taeniasis; dracunculiasis (guinea-worm disease); echinococcosis; foodborne trematodiasis; lymphatic filariasis; onchocerciasis (river blindness); schistosomiasis; soil-transmitted helminthiasis; buruli ulcer; leprosy (Hansen disease); trachoma; yaws.

³ In EDCTP2, poverty-related diseases (PRDs) include HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and the following neglected infectious diseases (NIDs): dengue/severe dengue; rabies; human African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness); Leishmaniasis; cysticercosis/taeniasis; dracunculiasis (guinea-worm disease); echinococcosis; foodborne trematodiasis; lymphatic filariasis; onchocerciasis (river blindness); schistosomiasis; soil-transmitted helminthiasis; Buruli ulcer; leprosy (Hansen disease); trachoma; yaws; diarrhoeal infections; lower respiratory infections; as well as emerging infectious diseases of particular relevance for Africa, such as Ebola.

Expected impact

This Joint Call for Proposals will develop human resources to promote high quality research and development in LMICs. Fellowships are expected to add significantly to the development of the best and most promising researchers from LMICs, in order to enhance and maximise their contribution to research institutions in LMICs, including training of peers. The scheme will strengthen collaboration between institutions, researchers and clinical staff in LMICs, pharmaceutical companies and PDPs.

Placements

Host organisations that have agreed to participate in this scheme are listed below.

Companies/organisations	City, country	Number of places	Topic/disease area
Aeras	Cape Town, South Africa	2	TB
Astellas	Deerfield, USA	1	CMV
Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals	Berlin, Germany	4	Cross-cutting: regulatory affairs, clinical development, clinical operations, epidemiology / design and conduct of clinical and/or observational studies
Centre de Recherche Santé (CRP-Santé)	Luxembourg, Luxembourg	2	Data management
Drugs for Neglected Diseases (DNDi) and WorldWide Antimalarial Resistance Network (WWARN)/Centre of Global Health Oxford	Geneva, Switzerland	1	Malaria/Ebola
European Vaccine Initiative (EVI)	Heidelberg, Germany	3	Malaria
Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND)	Geneva, Switzerland	2	TB/NID/Malaria
GSK	Uxbridge, Middlesex, UK	1	Malaria
GSK Biologicals	Wavre, Belgium	2	Malaria/TB
International Vaccine Institute (IVI)	Seoul, South Korea	2	Dengue/Diarrheal diseases
Merck Serono	Darmstadt, Germany	2	Cross-cutting: all aspects of clinical operations practices and clinical trial executions across all phases (I-IV)
Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV)	Geneva, Switzerland	2	Malaria
Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research (NIBR)	Basel, Switzerland	1	Malaria/Cross-cutting: operational aspects of clinical trials, clinical pharmacology and regulatory affairs

Novartis Pharma	Basel, Switzerland	1	TB
Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics	Sienna, Italy	3	Influenza/Malaria
Novartis	USA	1	Cross cutting: medical affairs/infectious diseases
Sanofi	Lyon, France	3	Malaria/TB/NIDs/Cross-cutting: Clinical input to discovery (pharmacology), translational medicine, assessment of compounds proposed for entry into development, design of clinical development plan, design phase I and II clinical trials
Sanofi Pasteur	Singapore	1	Dengue
PATH Malaria Vaccine Initiative (MVI)	Washington DC, USA	1	Malaria
WorldWide Antimalarial Resistance Network (WWARN)/Centre of Global Health Oxford	Oxford, United Kingdom	1	Malaria/Ebola

Eligibility

For EDCTP and TDR:

- At the deadline for the submission of proposals, the fellow should 1) hold a post-graduate degree 2) have clinical and/or research experience in infectious diseases and 3) be working for the last 12 months in a legal entity registered in a LMIC
- The fellow must have graduated up to 15 years prior to the submission of the application.

For EDCTP:

- The applicant must be the legal entity registered in a sub-Saharan African country employing the fellow.

For TDR:

- The fellow must be a national or citizen, and resident in a LMIC.

Selection process

The process includes the following steps:

- Eligible applications will be reviewed by a Selection Committee of independent external experts
- The Selection Committee evaluates eligible applications against the three predefined award criteria (see below) in the presence of EDCTP and TDR as Observers
- The Selection Committee gives evaluation scores to each criterion. Each criterion will be scored between 0 and 5. The overall threshold applying to the sum of the three individual scores will be 10
- A shortlist of candidates is drawn up

- Information about shortlisted candidates is sent by EDCTP and TDR to all host organisations
- Host organisations select up to five shortlisted candidates for interview
- Interviews are held between the home organisation, the candidate and the host organisation in the presence of EDCTP and TDR (as Observers)
- Host organisations rank candidates based on the interview
- The final matching process of candidates and host organisations is conducted by EDCTP and TDR
- When the matching process is complete, home organisations, fellows and host organisations are informed of the final match, following which contractual arrangements begin.

Award criteria

The Selection Committee will evaluate and score proposals against three criteria: 'excellence', 'impact' and 'quality and efficiency of the implementation'. The following elements will be considered under the evaluation criteria:

Excellence

- Suitability of the candidate, considering their track record, degree of independence and/or potential, and how the fellowship will further the individual's career
- Quality of the project plan, where applicable, and fit with the fellow's expertise, competencies and career development plan.

Impact

- How the fellowship will contribute to the fellow's career development
- Contribution to strengthening clinical research capacity at the home or host organisation
- Effectiveness of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), to communicate the project, and to manage research data, where relevant
- Sustainability and retention of capacity post-award.

Quality and efficiency of the implementation

- Suitability of the fellow's home organisation to support the fellowship project
- Intention of the fellow's home organisation to develop and commit to a career post-fellowship or re-integration plan.

Financial provisions⁴

The grant covers one economy class return ticket (home – host organisation – home); a monthly stipend of approximately € 3,100 (\$ 4,000); a one-time allowance of € 1,200 (\$ 1,500) for educational support materials; health insurance and support to attend relevant meetings during the course of the fellowship up to a maximum amount of € 2,300 (\$3,000). The grant also includes provisional funds for re-integration conditional upon the approval of a progress report and re-integration plan.

Grant agreement

The legal entity employing the successful fellow ('home organisation') will be requested to sign the grant agreement with either EDCTP or TDR. In addition, the prospective host organisation, fellow and his/her home organisation will be required to develop and deliver a training plan.

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Application process

- The application must be submitted online via **EDCTPgrants** (<http://www.edctpgrants.org>). Supporting documents must be attached electronically to the online application form in PDF format. Please note that only registered users of the EDCTPgrants system can apply for grants
- Please read the **Guide for Applicants** carefully before submitting an application
- The outcome of the evaluation is expected to be available by 30 June 2015.

For further information

For questions related to this funding scheme, please contact:

- TDR: Dr Pascal Launois at launoisp@who.int
- EDCTP: Ms Michelle Nderu at nderu@edctp.org

For issues regarding the online submission please contact EDCTP by emailing grantshelpdesk@edctp.org or calling +31 (0) 70 344 08 80.