

## Call for applications

### Joint WHO-AFRO/TDR/EDCTP Small Grants Scheme for implementation research on infectious diseases of poverty

*With additional funding support\* from:*



**Deadline for submission: 30 November 2017**

**Only applicants from the WHO African Region eligible**

This call is for applications for implementation research that can cover a range of diseases, conducted through close collaboration between researchers and national disease programmes.

#### Background

The African region has long suffered from weakness in health systems, undermining the ability to meet health goals in a comprehensive, efficient and sustainable way. The region continues to bear the highest burden of HIV/AIDs, malaria, tuberculosis, neglected tropical diseases as well as other infectious diseases. There is a concerted global effort to accelerate the development of new or improved interventions such as drugs, vaccines, microbicides and diagnostics against communicable diseases, including neglected ones. Improving coverage of currently available health interventions is just as important. Implementation research can provide the evidence base for adjustment of health interventions and processes to the local context, but has been under-used, mainly due to lack of awareness of the benefits and to inadequate capacity. Implementation research to address low coverage, inefficient delivery of existing interventions and other bottlenecks can contribute towards universal health coverage (UHC) and the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

This call is a joint initiative between TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and the World Health Organization's (WHO) Regional Office for Africa, who have a mutual interest in strengthening the capacity for health research in developing countries. The call reflects a commitment to increasing the level of implementation research in order to deliver high quality and cost-efficient health care solutions to people in resource poor settings.

\* The EDCTP contribution is jointly provided by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the UK Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

## Research priorities

The aim of this call is to strengthen capacity for implementation research conducted through close collaboration between researchers and national disease programmes. Diseases covered include malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhea, lower respiratory tract infections, yellow fever, and neglected tropical diseases. Implementation research activities supported by this call may be complementary to those supported through other stakeholders interested in these diseases.

The focus is on the following priorities, with illustrative research areas below. Note that this is not an exclusive list of submission possibilities:

- **Community case identification and management of illnesses including HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhea, lower respiratory tract infections, yellow fever, and neglected tropical diseases**

This includes strategies to ensure efficient case identification and management of one or many diseases, including solutions to overcome specific obstacles for efficient community case management. Proposals may address detection, compliance issues retention and treatment completion, or intervention to increase treatment completion rate.

- **Community involvement in the delivery of health interventions**

This covers challenges associated with community involvement and participation in the delivery of public health interventions in different populations. This may include aspects such as community ownership and sustainability of the interventions, how to improve uptake of services in the communities, and how to achieve greater involvement and participation of communities in the delivery of interventions to their populations.

## Eligibility criteria

Applicants must be based in African institutions, including national tropical/communicable disease control programmes, ministries of health, academic institutions, research institutes; and non-governmental organizations.

Applications are particularly encouraged from early career investigators, women, or are from the group of least-developed countries.

## Selection process

Proposals will be selected on a competitive basis by external reviewers and WHO staff in the WHO African Region (AFRO), EDCTP and TDR. Scoring is based on scientific excellence, the public health impact and the project implementation plan. Principal investigators will be informed of the results within three months of the application deadline.

Funding will depend on obtaining ethical approval for the proposed research from relevant research ethics committees in AFRO and the target country. Each application should be accompanied by a supporting letter from the ministry of health and from the institution indicating their interest in the project.

**Funds:** Up to US\$ 15 000 per grant. Co-funding from domestic or other sources is encouraged.

**Study duration:** One year.

**Application deadline:** 30 November 2017

**How to submit the application:** The completed application form should be signed by all investigators and submitted by e-mail to [afgorplsmallgrants@who.int](mailto:afgorplsmallgrants@who.int)

Curriculum vitae of the principal investigator (PI) must not exceed one page. It should clearly indicate the PI's affiliation and complete address (including telephone number and e-mail), as well as affiliated institution(s). The full name of the PI (with the family name underlined), gender, date of birth, nationality, qualifications and the nature of the applicant's current and previous posts must be clearly stated. The costing of the project must be included and expressed in US dollars.

Both the proposal and PI information can be submitted in English, French or Portuguese. Any applicant who does not fully complete the prescribed proposal form will not be considered for funding.

All documents (proposal, ethical approval, budget, CV) must be combined into one PDF file in the Applicant's name followed by SGS2017. For example, Dr John Smith's application should be in pdf file called: SmithJ\_SGS2017.

[Download the application form.](#)

<http://www.afro.who.int/about-us/programmes-clusters/health-systems-and-services-cluster/projects/smallgrants>

#### **Related links:**

The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR): [www.who.int/tdr](http://www.who.int/tdr)

The European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP): <http://www.edctp.org/>

#### **Useful resources**

Implementation research toolkit: <http://www.who.int/tdr/publications/topics/ir-toolkit/en/>

Reporting guidelines for implementation and operational research:  
<http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/94/1/15-167585/en/>

WHO policy on open access: <http://www.who.int/about/policy/en/>