

## EDCTP and Africa CDC collaborate to develop capacity for outbreak and epidemic response in sub-Saharan Africa

Reliable epidemiological data is often unavailable or severely limited in resource-limited settings in Africa. This knowledge gap is further aggravated by a shortage of skilled personnel in epidemiology and biostatistics to efficiently monitor, analyse and interpret epidemiological data to inform policy and decision-making. Training programmes are urgently needed to develop a cohort of epidemiologists across Africa and beyond, who can work in collaboration with their Ministries of Health or the National Public Health Institutes (NPHIs), as well as with relevant regional and international organisations, to collectively conduct routine surveillance and public health research and respond timely to disease outbreaks.

On 10 April 2020, the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) is launching a call for proposals with a total call budget of EUR 5,000,000. The aim is to establish an African cohort of epidemiologists by supporting institutions in sub-Saharan Africa and Europe that provide Master's degree training in epidemiology and biostatistics, as part of Africa CDC's framework for public health workforce development.

*"Partnerships lie at the heart of our work as a critical enabler to address some of the greatest areas of unmet medical need in sub-Saharan Africa. We are invigorated to partner with Africa CDC in a joint effort to bridge the gap of shortage of epidemiologists and biostatisticians in the field,"*  
said Dr Michael Makanga, Executive Director of EDCTP.

*"The EDCTP-Africa CDC Fellowship will serve as a key milestone in supporting the efforts of Africa CDC to strengthen the public health workforce in Africa, and we at Africa CDC are delighted to be leading the initiative,"* said Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC.

- Proposals can be submitted by a single institution or consortium of institutions which provide Master's training in epidemiology for 10 to 15 excellent, early- to mid-career researchers ("EPI Fellows") based in **sub-Saharan Africa** and working in a relevant field.
- The total call budget is EUR 5,000,000 with up to EUR 50,000 per student (*see call text for full details*).
- Proposals should include institutions with a proven track record in the provision of high-quality master's training with clear local and regional collaborations with NPHIs (or similar agencies), Ministries of Health and other academic institutions
- The EPI fellows selected by the successful institutions must commit to remain in Africa after completing their studies.

This collaboration is expected to ultimately boost institutional research capacity and contribute to the creation of a critical mass of epidemiologists and biostatisticians who can collectively conduct routine surveillance, public health research, and support timely response to disease outbreaks in Africa, such as the current global pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

**The deadline for submission of applications is 30 July 2020** and proposed studies must start by 1 October 2021 and end by 2024.

Go to the [Call for proposals](#)

#### **AFRICA CDC**

Africa CDC is a specialised technical institution of the African Union which supports Member States in their efforts to strengthen health systems and improve surveillance, emergency response, prevention and control of diseases. For more information, [visit the Africa CDC website](#).

#### **EDCTP**

The mission of the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) is to reduce the social and economic burden of poverty-related diseases in developing countries, in particular sub-Saharan Africa, by accelerating the clinical development of effective, safe, accessible, suitable, and affordable medical interventions for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected infectious diseases. EDCTP is supported by the European Union under Horizon 2020, its Framework programme for Research and Innovation. For more information [visit the EDCTP website](#).