

Call for Proposals

EDCTP-TDR Clinical Research and Development Fellowships

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| Type of Action: | Training & Mobility Action (TMA) |
| Call budget: | €3,000,000 |
| Funding level: | 100% eligible costs |
| Expected number of grants: | Up to 25 grants (maximum of 10 grants funded by EDCTP and 15 funded by WHO/TDR) |
| Open date: | 22 October 2015 00:00 |
| Deadline: | 28 January 2016 17:00 (CET); 16:00 (GMT) |
| Status: | Open |

Background

Researchers from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)¹ who are involved in clinical research projects have limited opportunities to acquire experience and develop skills for conducting and implementing clinical trials outside an academic or public sector setting. As a result, there are fewer than the required researchers and clinical staff from LMICs assuming leadership roles in clinical research for poverty-related diseases (PRDs). EDCTP and WHO/TDR are jointly implementing this fellowship scheme to support researchers to obtain these essential skills and ensure synergies between researchers and clinical staff, pharmaceutical companies, product development partnerships (PDPs) and research institutions. This partnership is aimed at increasing the number of individuals trained, resulting in an increased impact on clinical research outputs and development of additional capacity in LMICs.

Scope

The purpose of this Joint Call for Proposals is to provide funding to actions that aim to support researchers and key members of clinical trial research teams from LMICs to acquire specific essential skills in clinical research and development through placements in pharmaceutical companies and PDPs.

The scheme targets early to mid-career clinical researchers or 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 the EDCTP2 programme² and the WHO/TDR CDF programme³.

The Joint Call will include a joint evaluation and selection process in compliance with the provisions set in the Rules for Participation of Horizon 2020 of the European Union and the EDCTP2. However, grant awarding and budget management will remain separate under the

¹ Countries as defined by the World Bank: low-income economies are defined as those with a GNI per capita, calculated using the World Bank Atlas method, of \$1,045 or less in 2013; middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of more than \$1,045 but less than \$12,746 in 2013; high-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of \$12,746 or more in 2013.

² In the EDCTP2 programme, "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.

³ For WHO/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.

management of each of the two organisations. WHO/TDR will fund fellows employed by a research institution (home organisation) in any LMICs for placements in pharmaceutical companies and PDPs (host organisations) either in or outside Europe. EDCTP will fund fellows employed by a sub-Saharan African home organisation for placements in European-based pharmaceutical hosting organisations to train and develop specific clinical research skills of relevance to developing interventions against PRDs.

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, following which there will be a re-integration period of 6 months within their home organisation.

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.

Expected impact

This Joint Call for Proposals will result in the development of additional human resources that will increase high quality research and development of required interventions against PRDs in LMICs. Fellowships are expected to add significantly to the development of the best and most promising researchers from LMICs and also maximise their contribution to improved function of research institutions in LMICs, including training of peers of the successful fellows. The action will strengthen collaboration between research institutions, clinical researchers and staff in LMICs, pharmaceutical companies and PDPs.

Placements

Host organisations that have agreed to participate in this scheme are listed in the attached call document. The list will be updated regularly to include new, available placements.

Eligibility

For EDCTP and WHO/TDR:

At the deadline for the submission of proposals, the fellow must

- Be a post-graduate (MSc or PhD) or medical graduate with clinical and/or research experience in infectious diseases
- Have obtained their first degree within 15 years of submission of the application
- Have been a researcher or clinical staff member employed for the last 12 months in an organisation with a registered legal entity in an LMIC (TDR) or in sub-Saharan Africa (EDCTP), conducting clinical research activities in the scope of the EDCTP2 and WHO/TDR programme.

For EDCTP:

- The applicant must be a legal entity established in sub-Saharan Africa and must be the home organisation employing the fellow
- Placements sought shall be for a minimum period of 12 months up to a maximum period of 24 months, following which there will be a re-integration period of six months

For WHO/TDR:

- The fellow must be a national or citizen, and resident in a LMIC
- Placements sought shall be for a minimum period of 6 months and a maximum period of 12 months

Application and Selection process

The submission and evaluation procedure will be a two-stage application procedure for EDCTP2 and a single stage application procedure for WHO/TDR.

First stage application process (applicable to both EDCTP and WHO/TDR):

- The application must be submitted by the applicant legal entity via EDCTPgrants by 28 January 2016, 17:00 Central European Time (CET). The evaluation results for the first stage will be available by 14 June 2016.
- Applications will be reviewed by an independent evaluation committee comprising experts jointly identified by EDCTP and WHO/TDR in compliance with the provisions set in the Rules for Participation of Horizon 2020 of the European Union and the EDCTP2.
- The evaluation committee evaluates eligible applications against the three predefined award criteria (see below)
- Candidate fellows scored above the first stage threshold will be shortlisted for consideration by prospective host organisations
- Prospective host organisations will invite up to 3 preferred candidate fellows for an interview from the shortlist
- The identification of preferred candidate fellows by the prospective host organisation will be based on a match to their candidate profile and interview
- Host organisations rank candidates based on the interview and offer placements to their first ranked candidate
- For WHO/TDR a **training plan** will need to be submitted following which contractual arrangements begin.

Second stage application process (applicable to EDCTP only):

- Candidate fellows with a provisional offer of a placement by host organisations at the completion of the first stage will be invited to submit a full application, including a **training plan**, via EDCTPgrants by 14 June 2016. The evaluation results of the second stage will be available by 7 October 2016.
- The candidate fellow and his/her home organisation (applicant) must submit a full application which includes a comprehensive training plan. The training plan is completed in consultation with the prospective host organisation.
- The full application will be evaluated by independent experts against the three predefined award criteria (see below)
- Applications ranked above the funding threshold will be invited to the grant preparation stage

Award criteria

The evaluation 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

- Fit with the scope and objectives of the EDCTP2 programme and the call topic description.
- Importance, relevance and clarity of the objectives.
- Credibility of the proposed approach.
- 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 and its fit with the fellow's expertise and career development plan, including acquired competencies and skills to be developed further.

Impact

- The expected impacts listed in the work plan under the relevant topic.
- Likelihood to result in major advances for the field.
- Contribution of the fellowship to the fellow's clinical research skills and career development.
- Contribution to strengthening clinical research capacity at the home or host institution.
- 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

- Coherence and effectiveness of the proposed work, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources.
- Feasibility and appropriateness of the methods and project management to achieve the objectives within the timeframe of the grant.
- Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management, and how responsibilities for research data quality and sharing, and security will be met.
- Compliance with national and international standards of research, Good Clinical Practice, ethics and safety related issues.
- Complementarity of the participants within the consortium and gender balance among consortium members (when relevant).
- Participants have the operational capacity, to carry out the proposed work, based on the competence and experience of the individual participant(s).
- 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.

The evaluation 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.

For full applications involving re-integration plan projects with human participants, and/or human tissues, cells or personal data, the evaluation process will include an assessment of ethical issues.

Financial provisions

The grant covers one economy class return ticket (home – host organisation – home); a monthly stipend; health insurance; an allowance to cover essential educational support materials; support to attend relevant meetings during the course of the fellowship; and funds to support the six month reintegration period.

Grant agreement

The legal entity employing the successful fellow ('home organisation') is required to sign a grant agreement with EDCTP ([EDCTP2 mono-beneficiary grant agreement with options for fellowships](#)) within three months of receipt of the conditional award letter. EDCTP will only sign grant agreements with organisations (legal entities) that are registered in the

[Beneficiary Register for Horizon 2020](#) and that have a validated Participant Identification Code (PIC). For more information, see the [H2020 participant portal](#).

Application process

- The application must be submitted online via [EDCTPgrants](#)
- Only registered users of the EDCTPgrants system can apply for grants and therefore you are advised to register on the system as soon as possible
- Please read the guidance in the online application form before submitting an application.

More information

For questions related to this call for proposals, please contact:

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

For questions and issues about EDCTPgrants and the online application submission please contact EDCTP via EDCTPgrants@edctp.org or +27 (0) 21 938 0690.

For more information about EDCTP2 procedures, please refer to the [EDCTP2 Grants Manual](#).