

## Call for Proposals

### EDCTP-TDR Clinical Research and Development Fellowships

**Open for applications:** 31 October 2015  
**Deadline for applications:** 28 January 2016, 16:00 (GMT)

This joint call for proposals provides fellowships to early-to-mid-career scientists and clinical staff in low- and middle-income countries to learn how to conduct clinical trials. Selected applicants are placed in pharmaceutical companies or product development partnerships for 6-24 months.

#### Background

Researchers from Low- and Middle-Income Countries (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. As a result, few researchers and clinical staff from LMICs assume leadership roles in clinical research for Neglected Infectious Diseases (NIDs).

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 capacity in LMICS for clinical research and development.

#### Scope

The purpose of this Joint Call for Proposals is to provide funding support to researchers and key members of clinical trial research teams from LMICs to acquire essential skills in clinical research and development through placements in pharmaceutical companies and PDPs. The scheme targets early 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 joint call includes a joint evaluation and selection process of applications submitted to this Call. However, grant awarding and budget management remains separate under the management of each of the two organizations.<sup>1</sup>

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 NIDs<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> For TDR, Neglected Infectious Diseases (NIDs) include: dengue/severe denque; 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.

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 Poverty Related Diseases (PRDs)<sup>3</sup>.

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 organization. Fellows must be committed to return to their home organization 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 organization.

## 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 NIDs 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 organizations that have agreed to participate in this scheme are listed below.

| Companies/organizations                                      | City, country           | Number of places |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|
| Aeras  | Cape Town, South Africa | 2                |
| Astellas   | Deerfield, USA          | 1                |
| Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals                             | Berlin, Germany         | 3                |
| Centre for Tropical Medicine and Global health (WWARN Group) | Oxford, UK              | 2                |
| Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiativeDNDi                  | Geneva, Switzerland     | 1                |
| European vaccine Institute (EVI)                             | Heidelberg, Germany     | 1                |
| Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND)             | Geneva, Switzerland     | 2                |
| GSK Biologicals  | Wavre, Belgium          | 1                |
| GSK  | Uxbridge, UK            | 1                |

<sup>3</sup> 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); Leishmaniases; 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.

| Companies/organizations                            | City, country          | Number of places |
|--|------------------------|------------------|
| Infectious Disease Research Institute              | Seattle , USA          | 3                |
| International Vaccine Institute (IVI)              | Seoul, South Korea     | 1                |
| Janseen Global Public Health                       | Beerse, Belgium        | 1                |
| Julius Clinical                                    | Zeist, The Netherlands | 2                |
| Luxembourg Institute of Health                     | Luxembourg, Luxembourg | 2                |
| Merck Serono                                       | Genava, Switzerland    | 1                |
| Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV)                | Geneva, Switzerland    | 2                |
| Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research (NIBR) | Basel, Switzerland     | 1                |
| Novartis Pharma AG                                 | Basel, Switzerland     | 2                |
| Sanofi Pasteur                                     | Mexico City, Mexico    | 1                |

## Eligibility

For EDCTP and TDR, at the deadline for the submission of proposals, the fellow should:

- 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 institution with a registered legal entity in LMIC (TDR) and sub-Saharan Africa (EDCTP2), conducting clinical research activities in the scope of the EDCTP2<sup>4</sup> and WHO/TDR programme.

For EDCTP:

- The applicant must be the legal entity registered in a sub-Saharan African country 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 TDR:

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

<sup>4</sup> EDCTP2 aims to contribute to the reduction of the social and economic burden of poverty-related diseases (PRDs) in developing countries, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, by accelerating the clinical development of effective, safe, accessible, suitable and affordable medical interventions for PRDs in partnership with sub-Saharan Africa

## 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 for selection 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 organizations.
- Host organizations select up to five shortlisted candidates for interview.
- Interviews are held between the home organization, the candidate and the host organization in the presence of EDCTP and TDR (as Observers).
- Host organizations rank candidates based on the interview.
- The final matching process of candidates and host organizations is conducted by EDCTP and TDR.
- When the matching process is complete, home organizations, fellows and host organizations 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

- Fit with the scope and objectives of the 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.
- How the fellowship will contribute to the fellow's 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' 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 organization to support the fellowship project
- Intention of the fellow's home organization to develop and commit to a career post-fellowship or re-integration plan.

## Financial provisions<sup>5</sup>

The grant covers one economy class return ticket (home – host organization – home); a monthly stipend of approximately € 3 100 (US\$ 4 000); a one-time allowance of € 1 200 (US \$ 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 (US\$ 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 organization') will be requested to sign the grant agreement with either EDCTP or TDR. In addition, the prospective host organization, fellow and his/her home organization will be required to develop and deliver a training plan.

## Application process

- The application must be submitted online via [EDCTPgrants](http://www.edctpgrants.org) (<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 EDCTP grants 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 14 June 2016.

## For further information

For questions related to this funding scheme, please contact:

- TDR: Dr Pascal Launois at [launoisp@who.int](mailto:launoisp@who.int)
- EDCTP: Ms Michelle Nderu at [nderu@edctp.org](mailto:nderu@edctp.org)

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

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