

2010 African Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship

The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) in partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) are pleased to announce the third call for applications for the African Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowships (ADDRF). The 2010 ADDRf seeks to facilitate more rigorous engagement of doctoral students in research, strengthen their research skills, and provide the fellows an opportunity for timely completion of their doctoral training. The fellowship targets doctoral students with strong commitment to a career in training and/or research. ADDRf's overall goal is to support the training and retention of highly-skilled, locally-trained scholars in research and academic positions across the region.

The ADDRf will award about 15 fellowships in 2010. These fellowships will be awarded to doctoral students who are within two years of completing their thesis at an African university. Dissertation topics showing great promise of making significant contributions to efforts to strengthen health systems (governance, equity, health or population-related issues) in the region will be given priority.

Expected outcomes

The fellowship program is expected to result in several high-quality doctoral dissertations from sub-Saharan African universities. Successful applicants are expected to publish at least one peer-reviewed article from their dissertation within two years of completing their thesis. The program is expected to contribute to the production and retention of skilled capacity at various academic and research institutions in sub-Saharan Africa.

Eligibility

The fellowship will primarily support research (including data collection and/or analysis). Funds will **not** be used to support coursework. Applicants must:

- Be citizens or permanent residents of a sub-Saharan African country,
- Be undertaking doctoral training at a recognized African university,
- Have completed all pre-dissertation requirements,
- Provide a detailed time-frame for completing their dissertation which should be endorsed by the head of department and the chair of the dissertation committee,
- Have a research topic that has been approved by their doctoral dissertation committee, as well as the official body overseeing ethical review of the research protocol, and
- Be able to complete their dissertation within 24 months of the start of the fellowship.

Selection criteria

- The fellowship will target individuals whose dissertation research has great promise of making substantive contribution to strengthening health systems in Africa.
- Studies with clear linkages to relevant national or regional policies will be preferred.
- The fellowship will support original research that addresses a clear research question, employs appropriate and rigorous design, and has unambiguous policy implication(s).
- Candidates must demonstrate interest in pursuing a research career and dissertations must be sufficiently linked to future research interests.
- The dissertation should ideally be related to other work going on in the department or should have received strong endorsement and support from the department.

Female applicants and those from Francophone and Lusophone countries are especially encouraged to apply.

Eligible fields of study

The dissertation research may address any of the following issues: Health Sector Analysis; Health Management and Organization; Disease Burden; Health Care Financing (including health insurance); Quality of Care; Human Resources for Health; Health Program Evaluation; Health Equity; Costing and Cost-effectiveness; Policy Process (e.g., Decentralization); Community Participation; Research to Practice; Accessibility to Healthcare; Health Information, Education and Communication; Pharmaceutical Policy; Economic Policy and Health; Health Information Systems; Illness Behavior; Sexual and Reproductive Health; etc. **Lab-based studies whose immediate relevance to health systems strengthening is not evident will not be considered.**

Evaluation criteria

The applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Candidate's scientific background and potential for development of a strong research career,
- Scientific merit of the proposed research project including originality of research question(s); clarity and adequacy of the study design; demonstrated knowledge of relevant/current literature; detailed analysis plan; ethical considerations, etc.,
- Research environment including commitment of main supervisors and department to facilitate timely completion of the dissertation,
- Well-elaborated statement on the policy relevance of the research, and
- Budget summary and justification, including clear plan to complete the dissertation within 24 months.

Cost

Each individual award will be up to a maximum of **US\$15,000**. Specific items may include field research, a monthly stipend for up to 12 months, and other research materials (e.g., laptop computer, specialized software or books, etc). Applicants may also include the cost of one local or regional conference where the results of the dissertation may be disseminated. Successful candidates will attend at least one week-long training workshop (**Attending the workshop(s) is mandatory**). During the workshop, grantees will receive training and mentorship on various aspects of research (design and methods, ethics, data analyses, scientific writing, proposal development and communication of research results, etc). The students' home institutions may receive an institutional overhead to support the department and dissertation committee in ensuring timely review of dissertation chapters.

How to apply

All application materials (applications in French will be considered) must be received by **January 15, 2010** in order to be reviewed. Applications **must** include the following documents to be considered:

1. A completed application form (can be downloaded from www.aphrc.org) (electronic submissions must be sent in MS Word format)
2. Proof of citizenship or permanent residence in a sub-Saharan African country (e.g. copy of passport or other national identification);
3. Two letters of reference (at least one must come from a faculty member with extensive knowledge of applicant's academic history and performance and must document how the candidate's dissertation research fits into on-going research programs in the department). Referees' contact information must be provided in the application form.
4. Evidence that the research protocol has undergone ethical review and received approval from an approved ethical review board and the dissertation committee or is under review for the same.

Applications not meeting these requirements will not be reviewed.

Applications should be sent to:

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