

PHD TRAINING FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Veterinary Public Health (VPH)-BIOTECH GLOBAL CONSORTIUM was established in 2008 to build sustainable capacity in the area of veterinary public health and livestock biotechnology. One of the formats for this capacity building program is to promote interaction and collaboration among Eastern African academic institutes, The Ohio State University (OSU, USA) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). Three eastern African Academic institutions are involved as targets for capacity building in this new program: The University of Nairobi (Kenya), Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia) and Sokoine University of Agriculture (Tanzania). The consortium utilizes the “One Health” model to build strong collaborative partnerships among agricultural, veterinary and human medical and social scientists (Faculty members and students) at OSU and in Eastern Africa; and promote innovation, awareness and infrastructure development for institutional capacity building.

The VPH-BIOTECH GLOBAL is supported by a research training grant (titled: Molecular Epidemiology and Key Issues of Foodborne Pathogens in Eastern Africa) awarded by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH)-John E Fogarty International Center Global Infectious Diseases (GID) program. Ongoing activities of the consortium include research, predoctoral training of both PhD and MSC students, and short-term certification training focusing on foodborne pathogens, molecular epidemiology, bioinformatics and research ethics. In the first cycle (2010-2011) solicitation, this program has awarded three PhD fellowships to candidates from Tanzania (1) and Ethiopia (2) to undertake a sandwich-training program between OSU and home institutions in East Africa. There is one final slot left for a qualified candidate from the targeted Kenyan partner institute(s).

The fellowship: Qualified applicants from the University of Nairobi and the Kenyan Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) are invited to apply for the VPH-BIOTECH EASTERN AFRICA CONSORTIUM FOGARTY predoctoral PhD training fellowships to begin in January 2012.

Eligibility: The competition is open to PhD candidates registered at the University of Nairobi with its partnership agreement to the Kenyan Medical Research Institute (KEMRI). In addition, the applicant must be a faculty/staff member and documentation is required from the relevant institutional administrator supporting the graduate training and guaranteeing that the trainee will be retained as an employee of the University of Nairobi upon graduation. Priority will be given to equally qualified female candidates as stipulated by the funding agency.

Selection: The fellowship is highly competitive, and the selection will be based on scientific competence and merit. The application materials will be reviewed by a panel of eminent scientists that are part of the VPH-BIOTECH GLOBAL.

Application materials: Interested applicants must submit the following materials:

1. Proof of registration for PhD studies at the University of Nairobi or other recognized University in Kenya.
2. A detailed Curriculum Vitae
3. A 2-page letter of intent describing background and experience, research interests, and future plans



4. Applicants are required to have proven commitment to work on eastern African regional priority issues and expected to be flexible for placement in partner program laboratories. At this stage no detailed proposal for dissertation is expected from applicants.
5. Documentation is required from the relevant institutional administrator supporting the graduate training and guaranteeing that the trainee will be retained as an employee of the institute upon graduation
6. Three letters of reference from current or past University lecturers
7. Official transcripts of prior course work
8. Optional but a competitive advantage: Official report from Educational Testing Services for GRE

Financial support: The successful fellow will receive full stipend support commensurate to the Fogarty award for the first year and half (for PhD fellows). The fellow will continue to receive additional stipend support from the NIH Fogarty fellowship while relocated at the home institution at a regional pay rate as defined in the Fogarty program during the last two and half years (Phase II) of activities in East Africa. In addition, tuition for courses at OSU will be covered through a collaborative student exchange program between OSU, KEMRI and the University of Nairobi. Partial dissertation research costs, supplementary stipend and other benefits will be covered by the home country as well as other extramural funding jointly developed by the candidate and co-mentors. Additionally a round trip airfare will also be covered from the NIH Fogarty fellowship award.

Application deadline: Applications should be submitted no later than December 15, 2011 by email only (as a single PDF document) to the Chair of Selection and Oversight committee:

Dr. Appolinaire Djikeng at the following address: a.djikeng@cgiar.org; Senior Scientist and Technology Manager BecA-ILRI Hub; Tel: + 254 020 422 3000/3802. Incomplete applications will be rejected and only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed (via a telephone/teleconference or skype) by members of the selection and oversight committee soon after the deadline. So, applicants are encouraged to provide a reliable communication means and be available.

Dr. Wondwossen A. Gebreyes (Program Director)
Dr. John Gunn (OSUMC -Program Co-Director)
Dr. Samuel Kariuki (KEMRI-Eastern Africa Program Co-Director)

