

# 2014

## African Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowships

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

The ADDRDF will award about 20 fellowships in 2014. 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 contributing significantly to efforts to strengthen health systems (governance, equity, health or population-related issues) in the region will be given priority. In this phase of funding and in consideration of IDRC's health programming priorities, candidates whose dissertation topics address health policy or health systems issues will be given special consideration. The Program has also reserved a small number of fellowships specifically for doctoral students conducting research on health inequities in urban areas or the reproductive health of marginalized urban communities. These fellowships are funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

### Expected outcomes

The fellowship program is expected to result in several high-quality doctoral dissertations from sub-Saharan African universities. **Successful applicants will be required to publish at least one peer-reviewed article from their dissertation within two years of completing their thesis.**

### 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 or 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

- ❖ Candidates whose dissertation topics address health policy or health systems issues and show great promise of making substantive contribution to strengthening health systems in Africa will be given priority.
- ❖ The fellowship will support original qualitative and quantitative research that addresses a clear research question, employs appropriate and rigorous design, and has unambiguous national or regional 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.

### Evaluation criteria

The applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- ❖ Candidate's scientific background and potential to develop 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.

### Eligible fields of study include:

- ❖ Health Sector Analysis
- ❖ Health Management and Organization
- ❖ Health Care Financing (including health insurance)
- ❖ Quality of Care
- ❖ Human Resources for Health

- ❖ Health Program Evaluation
- ❖ Health Equity
- ❖ Cost- effectiveness of Health Care Programs
- ❖ Community Participation in Health Care or Health Issues
- ❖ Research to Practice and Health Policy
- ❖ Health Information, Education and Communication
- ❖ Pharmaceutical Policy
- ❖ Economic Policy and Health
- ❖ Health Information Systems
- ❖ Health Services Utilization and Accessibility
- ❖ Health Inequities in Urban Areas
- ❖ Reproductive Health of Marginalized Urban Communities

**Note that lab-based studies whose immediate relevance to health systems strengthening is not evident will not be considered.**

### Cost

Each award will be up to a maximum of **US\$10,000**. This amount will include a completion award of \$ 1,000; allowances for a laptop computer and analytical software (e.g. STATA, SPSS, Nudist, Atlas/ti) (US\$ 1,500); research/data collection (US\$ 5,500); and participation in one regional or international conference or workshop (US\$ 2,000). Successful candidates will attend at least one week-long training workshop (Attending the workshop(s) is mandatory). **All 2014 awardees are expected to attend a research methodology workshop tentatively scheduled for May 26-30, 2014.** During the workshops, 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 working language for these workshops is English.** The students' home institutions may receive an institutional overhead to support the department and dissertation committee in ensuring timely review of dissertation chapters. Supervisors, whose students complete their PhD within 2 years and who, during the fellowship duration, publish at least one research paper in a peer-reviewed international journal or book with the ADDRDF fellow under their supervision, will be eligible to apply for travel awards amounting to \$2,500. Three travel grants will be awarded each year (2015-2017). Awards will be subject to the supervisor having a paper accepted for oral presentation in a health systems-focused conference. Africa-based supervisors of fellows studying at Francophone universities will be given special considerations for travel grants. Travel awards will be made directly to the supervisors.

### How to apply

All application materials (applications in French will also be considered) must be received by **March 20, 2014** in order to be reviewed. Applications must include the following documents to be considered (**Applications not meeting these requirements will not be reviewed**):

1. A completed application form (can be downloaded from <https://www.aphrc.org/>). **This form must be submitted electronically 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 ongoing research programs in the department). Referees' contact information must be provided in the application form.
4. Evidence that the research protocol has undergone review and received approval from an approved ethical review board and the dissertation committee or is under review for the same.

The application form and supporting documents should be submitted in a single email to