

Vacancies for 4 PhD Positions

As part of the NUFFIC-funded NICHE program, Ifakara Health Institute (IHI, Tanzania) in collaboration with the Royal Tropical Institute, VU University Amsterdam and University of Groningen (all in the Netherlands) offers 4 PhD positions.

INTRODUCTION

Ifakara Health Institute's mission is to develop and sustain a district-based health research and resource institute capable of generating new knowledge and relevant information for public health policy and action in Tanzania and the East African Region. Research at IHI is organized in 4 thematic groups that aim to 1) understand determinants of leading public health problems, 2) evaluate efficacy and effectiveness of interventions against diseases of public health importance, 3) study the health system and develop and evaluate health system interventions and 4) evaluate the impact of national and global initiatives in improving population health. The above chain of research components clearly shows the complex nature of addressing health problems and necessitates an interdisciplinary approach.

PhD POSITIONS

The 4 PhD positions are aimed at synthesising knowledge from different disciplines to come to new insights into the process that is required for the successful implementation of interventions through the health system. Each of the following broad research topics will be addressed in one PhD trajectory, applied to Tanzania and the East African region and together focused on a specific health problem, such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, mother and child care. The focus areas will be further determined in an iterative process with the stakeholders involved. The four topics are:

1. How is **health policy** developed, on what basis (evidence), how is it operationalized? This PhD will a.o. look at sources of information that are used by policy makers at different levels, and at decision-making processes at the policy level;
2. What is the **evidence** from both quantitative and qualitative research for interventions for a certain health problem? Methods of research for this PhD could be systematic and realist reviews, meta-analysis, and studies of cost-effectiveness;
3. What are underlying behavioural patterns that influence health at the **community** level? Studying this requires insight into existing knowledge, attitudes and practices (incl. practices of health services use) using a community participatory approach to health research.
4. What is required of the **health system** to assure effective and efficient implementation of a health intervention? This PhD will use a system-wide approach across the building blocks of the health system.

The four PhD candidates will be selected from different disciplines and develop a joint understanding of both epistemology and methodology across these disciplines. Their work will have a strong foundation in existing scientific theories, will contribute to the scientific body of knowledge and understanding across disciplines and ultimately lead to improvement of population health .

QUALIFICATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE

- Masters degree in one of the following social or medical sciences: sociology, demography, anthropology, health economics, political sciences, public health, epidemiology or human nutrition.
- At least 2 years work experience as a research scientist
- A good command of MS Office Programs is required
- Having worked with international partners is an advantage

PERSONAL PROFILE

- Strong communication skills, with good command (spoken, written) of English and Kiswahili
- Pro-active, independent, creative and with proven analytical skills
- Able to collaborate across disciplines
- Capable of identifying priorities and adjust work plan as required
- Good personal time-management skills
- Eager to work in a fast-paced, performance-managed international environment

MODE OF TRAINING

An attractive and competitive IHI training contract will be offered to the right candidate. The PhD positions will be for a period of 4 years, starting a.s.a.p but not later than 1 July 2011. A sandwich construction will apply, with approximately 75% of time spent in Tanzania and 25% in the Netherlands, depending on requirements. Doctorate degrees will be awarded by the Dutch universities. After one year, the student's performance will be assessed using a go/ no-go evaluation.

MODE OF APPLICATION

Candidates should send their application letters with detailed curriculum vitae (CV) showing contact address, e-mail, telephone numbers, and should attach photocopies of academic and professional certificates and two names of referees.

In addition, candidates are required to submit a short proposal (2 pages A4 maximum, Times New Roman 11 pt, 1.15 line spacing), focusing on one of the four research topics above.

All applications should be addressed to:

Ms Amina Chande, Human Resource Officer – Training
Ifakara Health Institute, Kiko Street, Mikocheni, P.O.Box 78373, Dar es Salaam, Fax +255 (0)222 771714, or email all requirements to achande@ihi.or.tz

For additional technical enquiries, please email to Dr Eveline Geubbels, egeubbels@ihi.or.tz.

The deadline for receiving applications with proposals is **March 29, 2011**. Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted for interviews. These will be held in Dar es Salaam in the week of 11-15 April 2011.

IHI is an equal opportunity employer. Women are especially encouraged to apply.