
AFRICAN DOCTORAL DISSERTATION RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), in partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Ford Foundation are pleased to announce a new fellowship to support doctoral students at African universities. The African Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship (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. This first call focuses on students whose theses address issues relating to health systems strengthening in Africa. 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.

Dissertation Awards

The ADDRf will award a maximum of 16 fellowships^[1] in the first year. These fellowships will be awarded to advanced doctoral students who are within two years of completing their doctoral thesis at an African university. Dissertation topics addressing health systems-related issues or sexuality from any disciplinary perspective are eligible for consideration.

Eligibility

The fellowship will primarily support research (including data collection and or analyses). Funds may **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; Program Evaluation; Health Equity; Costing and Cost-effectiveness; Policy Process (e.g., Decentralization); Community Participation; Research to Practice; Accessibility; Information, Education and Communication; Pharmaceutical Policy; Economic Policy and Health; Health Information Systems; etc. The fellowship for sexuality dissertation research may focus on any of the following issues; sexual orientation, pleasure, sensuality, intimacy, identity, sexual health and practices, the erotic, etc.

Evaluation criteria

The applications will be evaluated on the following criteria (maximum score in parentheses):

- Candidate's scientific background and potential for development of a strong research career (20%),
- 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. (40%),
- Research environment including commitment of main supervisors and department to facilitate timely completion of the dissertation (20%),
- Well elaborated statement on the policy relevance of the research (10%), and
- Budget summary and justification, including clear plan to complete the dissertation within 24 months (10%).

Cost

Each individual award will be approximately **\$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 two one-week training workshops. During these 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 first workshop will focus on research methods and will assist fellows in finalizing the design of their research. The second workshop will focus largely on data management and analyses and writing skills. The students' home institutions will receive an institutional overhead to support the department and dissertation committee in ensuring timely review of dissertation chapters.

Successful applicants will be expected to publish at least one peer-reviewed article from their dissertation within 36 months of receiving the award.

How to apply

All application materials must be received by **March 29, 2008** in order to be reviewed.

Each applicant must submit

- Proof of citizenship or permanent residence in a sub-Saharan African country;
- A curriculum vitae that includes names of academic institutions attended, years of attendance, degrees obtained, employment history, publications and presentations, as well as awards, honors, and grants received;
- 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 other on-going research programs in the department). Referees' contact information must be provided;
- A 10 page (maximum, double spaced with font size of at least 10) scientific proposal detailing the research question(s), study design, relevance of the study to national or regional health policy or challenge, and a detailed plan for completing the dissertation within a period not longer than 24 months after the award;
- Evidence that the research protocol has undergone ethical review and received approval from an approved ethical review board and the dissertation committee; and
- A statement of future research interest and career plans.

Applications not meeting these requirements will not be reviewed.

Applications should be sent to: The ADDRf Manager, African Population & Health Research Center, P.O Box 10787-00100 GPO, Nairobi, Kenya; or electronically to addrf@aphrc.org.

[1] One of these fellowships will be funded through a grant from Ford Foundation and will focus on the broad field of sexuality research