

# African Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship Program

## Population, Health and the Environment Fellowships

Between 1990 and 2010, the world halved 1990 poverty levels. Yet, today, the interrelated challenges faced by impoverished rural populations remain, an indication of the difficulties in reaching these populations and affecting their particular marginalization. Climate change is predicted to exacerbate the development challenges that face poor, rural populations who are highly dependent on natural resources and lack effective adaptive options. The adverse impacts caused by unpredictable events, such as those caused by changes in climate, will interact with existing social processes related to socioeconomic inequalities to disproportionately affect vulnerable and marginalized sub-groups such as women, elderly people, and youth. The integrated multisectoral Population-Health-Environment approach, which targets a key set of development needs and is adapted to local contexts, holds promise as an effective way to meet the multiple needs of these communities and the vulnerable sub-groups within them. The Population-Health-Environment approach addresses multiple issues that are at the root of communities' marginalization, such as challenges in access to health care, family planning and natural resources, among others. By targeting these inter-related issues in a combined fashion, Population-Health-Environment projects have a greater likelihood to succeed.

As part of efforts to increase research capacity to conduct research within the Population, Health and the Environment (PHE) field, the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), in partnership with Pathfinder International, is pleased to announce a call for applications to support 2 doctoral students interested in working within and contributing to the PHE field. The award of these fellowships is contingent on funding availability. The idea is that the fellows can contribute to the field through this research, and after graduation, continue to work within the PHE field and applying their knowledge and expertise. While we recognize that there are a number of integrated approaches within development, we are specifically interested in the field of PHE. Therefore, we will limit applicants to those studying programs/projects/topics that include a family planning component, a health component and a natural resource management/conservation component.

### 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. Priority will be given to applicants from Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Malawi, Uganda, Rwanda, Mozambique, Madagascar, Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo;
- Be undertaking doctoral training at a recognized university; doctoral students undertaking studies in the region will be given priority, but the committee will also consider applications from those studying outside of the region who indicate they would like to return to the region to make an impact;
- 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 (or a waiver of ethical committee if applicable); and
- Be able to complete their dissertation within 24 months of the start of the fellowship.

### Selection criteria

- 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 are especially encouraged to apply.

Additional selection criteria

- Topics must be focused on rural populations rather than urban
- Those interested in gender issues are encouraged to apply
- Research must have practical implications for implementation, design and policy of PHE projects
- High priority given to those interested in working directly on existing PHE projects in priority countries
- Preference given to those topics that are integrated and cross cutting, combining PHE - along with an important issue within the field. For example, issues within PHE of: gender, natural resource governance, food security, climate change and resilience, conservation, protected areas, youth and adolescents

## 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. Candidates are expected to have a supervisor or dissertation committee of persons who fully understand the depth and breadth of PHE issues,
- 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.

## Examples of eligible fields of study:

Some examples of broad research questions that we are interested in are (but not limited to):

- What is the value added of integrated PHE projects?
- How does one measure the value added of integrated projects (methodologies) in resource-poor settings?
- How can PHE projects affect gender roles in a community?
- Are integrated projects more effective than single sector approaches in reaching multi-sectoral outcomes?
- How can PHE projects be structured in order to make them more cost-effective?
- How does PHE contribute to communities' ability to become resilient, particularly in response to climate change?
- What are the impacts of PHE networks in the different regions?
- What are the best practices involving the role of civil society organizations (CSOs), Governmental institutions and extension workers, and regional institutions?

## Cost

Each fellowship award will be up to a maximum of US\$10,000. This amount comprises a completion award of \$ 1,000 that is only payable after successful thesis defense; 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). The students' home institutions may receive an institutional overhead to support the department and dissertation committee in ensuring timely review of dissertation chapters.

Successful candidates will attend two week-long training workshop on research methodology and scientific writing. Attending the workshops is mandatory. **The research methodology workshop is tentatively scheduled for May 29 – June 02, 2017 while the writing workshop will be held in 2018.** 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 cost of attending this workshop is directly covered by the program

## How to apply

All application materials (applications in French will also be considered) must be received by **11:59pm (Nairobi time) on March 31, 2017** 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 [2017addrf@aphrc.org](mailto:2017addrf@aphrc.org)**

For questions, please contact:

The ADDRf Manager, E-mail: [2017addrf@aphrc.org](mailto:2017addrf@aphrc.org)

Telephone: 254 20 400 1000; Cell: +254 722 205-933 / 720 098-388 / 733 410-102; Fax: +254 20 400 1101



**African Population and Health  
Research Center**