



PhD Description

Post: PhD scholarship

Responsible to: Prof. Collins Ouma, African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), Nairobi, Kenya.

Summary of role: **Complete a PhD thesis examining barriers and enablers to health research uptake in an African context.**

Background: The DELTAS Learning Research Programme (LRP) is a four-year project, which aims to produce research-based learning from the DELTAS research capacity building initiative. One of the three key objectives of the project, to be achieved through this PhD programme, is to generate and share robust evidence about how to promote effective research uptake. In Africa, research uptake for decision-making is weak due to supply- and demand-side bottlenecks. Much research is untimely, not pro-poor and irrelevant to knowledge needs of decision-makers and the public because of limited interaction between producers and users of research when conceptualizing research questions. Supply-side research is fragmented across many scientific journals and researchers lack skills to synthesise and package it appropriately for decision-makers. Research competes with values, politics and personal interests to inform policy decisions and policymakers may lack motivation and skills to access, appraise and apply research findings. There is limited evidence about the most effective strategies (e.g. social media, private sector partnerships) to close the gap between research generation, policies and programmes.

Potential questions to be addressed include:

- How are pro-poor priorities incorporated (or not) into DELTAS health research programmes?
- What mechanisms work best or do not work best for research uptake and what is the strength of the evidence generated?
- What are the contextual and individual factors that have enabled some researchers to be highly successful in influencing policy and research uptake?

Main duties: To work under the supervision of LSTM and AFIDEP researchers to design, conduct and write-up a mixed methods PhD study examining barriers and enablers to health research uptake in an African context. Specific tasks to be conducted with the support of supervisors include:

- Design and conduct literature searches, collect and analyse literature and write literature reviews on research uptake internationally and in Africa specifically
- Design a study guided by the literature review to explore the issue of research uptake in African research institutions participating in the DELTAS programme
- Design instruments appropriate to the study
- Draft ethics protocols for the study for the LSTM Research Ethics Committee and appropriate local ethics review boards and respond to queries
- Collect data and/or constitute a small research team as per study requirements and conduct training and supervision of data collection activities
- Conduct analysis of all data and use this as a basis for writing PhD thesis
- Draft a minimum of 2 papers based on PhD literature reviews and data

- Contribute to the development of other research outputs such as web-pages and blogs
- Participate in annual training and other related activities as part of PhD requirements
- Attend LRP meetings (usually on virtual basis – e.g. through Skype) wherever required
- Attend and present findings (as they emerge) to annual DELTAS meetings and other appropriate forums.

Duration: The PhD scholarship will be for a duration of three years, commencing in the second half of 2016.

Eligibility: Only citizens of African nations will be considered for this role.

Location: This is an 'off-site' LSTM PhD scholarship. The successful candidate will be based at AFIDEP, Nairobi, Kenya. However, consideration may be given to an alternative host institution located elsewhere in Africa depending on the country of residence and affiliation of the successful candidate.

Award: The scholarship includes course fees, living stipend and a training allowance.

Application: If you are interested in applying, please submit: 1) a completed application form (template attached); 2) two academic references (template attached); 3) an 'expression of interest' letter detailing how you meet the listed 'person specification' criteria; 4) a curriculum vitae; and 5) copies of tertiary level educational certificates.

All documents should be submitted by email to: capacityphd@lstmed.ac.uk

Closing date: All applications must be received by Friday 27th May 2016, 12 midnight GMT

Person Specification:
PhD in health research uptake in an African context

Criteria	Competencies	Essential Desirable	Assessment
Education & Training	Masters in a relevant discipline (e.g. sociology, anthropology, communication, development studies, geography, public administration or management)	E	Application Form/CV
Experience	Health or development research experience in an African country.	D	Application Form, Assessment and Interview
	Experience in academic paper writing/ evidence of published paper authorship	D	
Skills & Abilities	Applied qualitative research skills.	E	Assessment and Interview
	Good communication skills.	E	
	Excellent academic writing skills in English.	E	
	Windows-based computing skills (spreadsheets, word processing).	E	
	Demonstrable analytic skills.	E	
	Attention to detail.	E	
	Institutional analysis	D	
	Research-grant proposal writing.	D	
	Basic quantitative analysis skills.	D	
	Skills in using qualitative data analysis software.	D	
Knowledge	Communication or knowledge transfer skills and processes.	D	Assessment and Interview
	Human resources and/or institutional development in low and middle income countries	D	
Special Aptitude	Diplomacy - able to work with a range of people in a multicultural environment.	E	Assessment and Interview
	Adaptable.	E	
	Ability to work independently.	E	
	Enthusiastic approach to work.	E	
Circumstances	Must be willing to travel overseas occasionally	E	