MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL UNIT THE GAMBIA AT THE LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Project Manager – Post-Award

1.   Job title: Project Manager - Post-award

2.   Accountability:

The post-holder will be accountable to the Programme Manager (Theme).

3.   Purpose of the Job:

The post-holder will work with the Unit's Research Support Office (RSO) to manage a portfolio of research projects under the supervision of a Programme Manager. The post-holder will facilitate the successful and efficient delivery of a portfolio of projects, oversee operational activities and ensure that synergies between projects are maximised. S/he will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation of project performances and lead in the coordination of collaborator relationships and project outputs. S/he will coordinate the management of project finances, human resources, other resources, logistics and administrative affairs for the assigned portfolio ensuring compliance to funder and grant conditions as well as MRCG at LSHTM policies and procedures.

The post-holder will support the Programme Manager to supervise project officers and ensures facilitation of knowledge building and sharing with the department for enhanced compliance to Unit and donor conditions related to grant implementation and output reporting.

4.   Introduction:

Established in 1947, the Medical Research Council The Gambia at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has an international reputation for ground-breaking research into some of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the tropics. Achievements include a large trial showing the efficacy of *Haemophilus influenzae* type B vaccine in The Gambia and the subsequent near elimination of the disease, pioneering studies of the impact of insecticide treated bed nets as a preventive measure against malaria leading up to their worldwide use, studies demonstrating the impact of conjugate pneumococcal vaccines on pneumonia and child mortality and the demonstration of a dramatic reduction in the carriage of Hepatitis B in The Gambia due to the effects of vaccination.

To reflect changes in national and global health priorities and new international funding opportunities a new research portfolio has been organized under three themes: Disease Control & Elimination; Vaccines & Immunity and Nutrition. These themes have been selected to target health needs of developing countries, to reinforce sub-regional and international collaborations and to address current priorities of the Millennium Global Health Goals.

In the drive to provide a well-functioning management service for projects, the Unit employs persons with profound experience in project management to work in their Research Support Office providing expert management and operations support services to its diverse research team.

The post holder has the opportunity expand his/her skills and experiences being a member of a team that

- is at the heart of a dynamic and stimulating research environment
- oversees a large research project portfolio
- operates in a highly diverse and multi-cultural setting

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- contributes meaningfully to global health research

5.   Grade: 3, 26 Points.

6.   Key Responsibilities:

6.1   Portfolio Management/Operations Support

6.1.1   In collaboration with Programme Manager - Theme, oversee a portfolio of projects ensuring that efforts and vision of portfolio is harmonised with Principal Investigator's (PI) efforts and vision.

6.1.2   Be the focal point for all internal communications relating to the portfolio and ensure timely flow of communications between the PI, the research team and other support departments.

6.1.3   Liaise closely with the Programme Manager (Theme) to ensure that portfolio activities are in sync with overall Theme activities ensuring that proposals are well aligned to the strategic   direction of the Theme, synergies are realised for existing projects, and efficiencies identified across the portfolio and Theme.

6.1.4   Liaise with Finance Analyst and prepare project financial summaries. Identify and report back anticipated project financial issues and come up with effective solutions to identified issues in compliance with both Unit and funder/grant financial conditions.

6.1.5   Review budget forecast and virement requests to ensure adherence to budget conditions ensuring that planned expenditures are aligned to budget conditions.

6.1.6   Work with the various research teams in the portfolio to prepare work plans and implementation strategies required to ensure projects achieve their objectives in a timely fashion.

6.1.7   Report to PIs regularly on performance of projects and in close collaboration find constructive solutions to issues identify providing technical advice regarding funder terms and conditions and applicable MRCG at LSHTM policies.

6.2   Planning and Implementation

6.2.1   Prepare research contract briefs for PIs and research teams which highlight research deliverables, special contract conditions that the teams need to adhere to.

6.2.2   In consultation with PIs, research teams, Programme Manager and collaborators, develop various work plans required for the implementation of the projects.

6.2.3   Work with PI, research team and other support departments to obtain all authorisations for implementation of the grant including approvals form government, health facilities, Medicines Control Agency, ethics committees etc.

6.2.4   Coordinate the implementation of grants in the portfolio and maintain mechanisms to ensure adherence to donor requirements related to budget presentation, acceptability of cost allocation and other donor and MRCG at LSHTM requirements.

6.2.5   Support timely response to donor requests relating to grant deliverables, reporting and other administrative documents as required during implementation.

6.2.6   Lead in the communications concerning grant conditions, budget and expenditure and project activities. Encourage information sharing between partners aimed at building familiarity to grant conditions and best practices in grant implementation.

6.2.7 Work closely with project teams and provide technical overview and support in the management of the grant ensuring that performance is in sync with financial expenditure and categorized budget.

6.2.8 Actively participate in project meetings as appropriate to keep teams informed and reminded about project financial performance, deliverables, timelines and general grant conditions.

6.2.9 Responsible for reviewing of financial supporting document, monthly financial expenditures, budgeting and assessing budget request for change (Cost or No-cost Extension), request for grant disbursement, compiling and filing grant documents, conducting portfolio/project financial performance assessment.

6.2.10 Provide technical support and oversight during grant audit exercises.

6.2.11 Take the lead in monitoring timely grants closure engaging both finance and project staff well in advance of closure deadlines and advise on issues related to staffing, commitments, and reporting.

6.3 Monitoring & Evaluation and Reporting

6.3.1 Ensure that a monitoring and evaluation plan is completed for all projects within the portfolio as well as for external partners with contributing roles towards the achievement of project outcome.

6.3.2 Develop a reporting and feedback schedule for partners.

6.3.3 Keep PI informed about emerging issues and trends within the networks and groups. Provide strategic advice, direction on how the issues should be resolved to ensure that project plans are not derailed.

6.3.4 Ensure programme milestones and timelines are collected for effective monitoring and evaluation of project activities.

6.3.5 Report to PI and the research team performance report and financial summaries monthly.

6.3.6 Prepare and share a quarterly performance report on milestones and deliverables considering collaborator/partner performance where they exist. Report should be shared with PI, Theme leadership and RSO.

6.3.7 Ensure that the management information system established in the department and within the Unit is utilized which allows for the efficient and effective collection, storage and analysis of data throughout the project life cycle and across programmes.

6.4 Relationship Management

6.4.1 Establish and ensure that good working relationships are maintained with government offices and health facility staff to enable continuous smooth operation of project activities.

6.4.2 Develop a communication plan which outlines how communication will be handled within a network or consortium.

6.4.3 Develop, organize and facilitate a network consortium meeting forum that enables members to share information on time and participate in discussion forums.

6.4.4   Support PI in building and maintaining strategic partnerships for present and future collaborations.

6.4.5   Be the focal point for all external communications with funders, network members and collaborators ensuring timely flow of information between partners and the Unit.

6.4.6   Engage and develop relationship with a wide range of experts including community elders, health and government officials, and key identified stakeholders.

6.5   Compliance

6.5.1   Review, communicate and monitor compliance with donor requirements related to staffing, purchasing, and asset management and reporting.

6.5.2   Identify compliance gaps and related solutions including differences between donor and MRCG at LSHTM internal policies and procedures, including cost allocation.

6.5.3   Support PI and research coordinator to ensure that all project personnel are trained on GCP/GCLP and or have valid certifications as required

6.5.4   Collaborate with other support departments to ensure compliance with Unit policies and procedures for grant implementation

6.5.5   Ensure compliance to funder grant conditions and escalate to PI and Programme Manager where there is non-compliance.

6.6 Other responsibilities

6.6.1   Prepare and implement training and technical assistance as needed to address capacity needs and reinforce grant management, e.g., financial management, budget analysis, policies and procedures.

6.6.2   Undertake further training commensurate with the needs of the post

6.6.3   Perform any other duties consistent with the remit of the post.

6.6.4   Delegated authority of up to £1000 on respective external grants they are managing.

7.   Relationships:

The post-holder will report to the Theme Programme Manager.

8.   Appraisals:

Appraisals are held at least annually.

9.   Length of appointment:

The appointment is for 15 months and will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months.

Signature:

Job Holder: **Date:**

Signature:

Line Manager: **Date**

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Title: Project Manager – Post-Ward

Essential

- A first degree in a relevant field or other professional qualification with substantial experience in project/portfolio management.
- Prince 2 certified or similar.
- Proven track record of having successfully managed multiple projects at the same time.
- Demonstrated experience in project management and demonstrated capacity in leading the effective implementation of complex projects, including the management of staff, resources, finances and project reporting.
- Excellent management skills, able to work under deadlines and under stress, result-oriented with a problem-solving mind-set.
- Able to build strong relationships with implementing partners and stakeholders focused on strengthening strategic alliances and reporting project progress.
- Must have excellent negotiation, analytical, strategic and planning skills.
- Advanced demonstrable financial management and basic accounting skills.
- Budget management experience.
- Must be able to communicate to a diverse set of people on multiple media platforms
- Demonstrates resourcefulness, takes own initiative and work under minimum supervision.
- Advance knowledge of project management software.
- A demonstrable ability to contribute effectively as a member of a team providing coordination across multiple projects.
- Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude.
- Excellent communication, coaching and facilitation skills.
- Actively work towards continuing personal learning and development;
- Promote a knowledge sharing and learning culture in the office through leadership and personality.

Desirable

- Master's degree with experience in similar field.
- Previous project management experience in a research institution or similar institution.
- Experience in managing projects in a multi-cultural setting.
- Advance experience in research management.