



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH ADVERT FOR PHD TRAINING POSITION

Background

Annually, 1.2 million adolescents die prematurely due to preventable or treatable causes, while many more suffer from poor health and disability. A high share of the global mortality and morbidity burden in adolescence occurs in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Adolescence is also a critical stage of life when important physical, cognitive and social developments take place, and critical behaviors related to diet, exercise, alcohol and tobacco use, violence and sexual behavior are developed. These developments and behaviors determine and shape behaviors well into adulthood and, with it, long-term health outcomes. Improving adolescent health, therefore, is paramount for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and creating healthy societies.

Under the DASH Project, Makerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH) is collaborating with other institutions in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to evaluate interventions aimed at addressing key health challenges among adolescents and young adults in SSA. DASH in full is: “Research network for **design and evaluation of adolescent health interventions and policies in Sub-Saharan Africa**”. The overarching and long-term goal of the DASH project is to boost adolescent health in SAA through rigorous population-based intervention and policy research. In pursuit of this goal, the project has 5 research objectives:

- 1) To determine the key health risk factors and intervention needs among adolescents in SSA,
- 2) To develop a methodological framework for researching adolescent health interventions in SSA comprising (i) collaborative design research, (ii) impact and process evaluation, (iii) transportability and adaptation studies for transfer of research results and interventions across communities and countries;
- 3) To locally design and pilot test adolescent health literacy and nudge interventions in **the three domains of (i) nutrition & physical activity, (ii) sexual & reproductive health), and (iii) mental health & violence**, using ideation and implementation methods from design research;
- 4) To establish the effects, impacts and mechanisms of adolescent health literacy and nudge interventions on health knowledge and understanding, health behaviors and outcomes in SSA, targeting the three key adolescent health domains using randomized controlled trials nested within HDSS and mixed-methods performance evaluations. These home-based interventions will be delivered by community health workers;
- 5) To establish the effects, impacts and mechanisms of key national and regional adolescent health policies in SSA in the three domains using policy mapping, quasi-experimental study designs and mixed-methods performance evaluations

Position Description

As part of capacity building in the area of adolescent health research, two doctoral (PhD) training positions are available for suitably qualified individuals with interest in advancing their knowledge and research skills in any of the domains described above. The PhD candidates will have to be registered at Makerere University to receive full tuition fee, and research costs support from the project. Additional support may be made available to the candidate from the project to undertake a few relevant short courses. The PhD fellowship support is for a maximum of up to four years only, with annual review for acceptable performance and progress.

Eligibility

- i) A master's degree in Public Health, or Biostatistics, or Health Services Research, or any other closely related master's degree.
- ii) A Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of at least 3.6 at bachelor's degree, and at master's degree training from an accredited university
- iii) Submission of a no longer than a 4-page research concept (font type Arial 11, single spacing), describing the possible PhD research idea in one of the project domains described above; including: i) Brief background, ii) research problem, ii) research hypotheses/ theoretical underpinning for the research, iii) specific aims, iv) research design, and, v) analysis plan.
- iv) Preference will be given to proposed research idea(s) that are integrated in a relevant theoretical framework. The following article by Grant and Osanloo (2016) might offer some guidance on integrating research ideas in theoretical a framework: *Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: Developing a 'blueprint' for your "house"*. doi:10.5929/2014.4.2.9
- v) Must be Ugandan citizens, thus a copy of their national ID card is required
- vi) Must be no older than 40 years

How to apply:

Suitably qualified persons should email their application that must include the following:

- i) A 1-page type written application letter addressed to the Dean, Makerere University School of Public Health, with a subject line "Application for a PhD Position on the DASH Project."
- ii) Up-to-date curriculum vitae
- iii) Copies of the relevant academic certificates and transcripts
- iv) A copy of their national identification card
- v) The PhD concept as described above
- vi) Two letters of recommendation, with at least one from an academic supervisor at masters training, including their functioning email address and daytime phone number

The above application documents must be submitted **AS ONE PDF FILE** to the following email address: recruitment@musph.ac.ug, with the email subject line "Application for PhD Position on the DASH Project." The **deadline for submission is by 11:59 pm on 23rd December 2023**.

NB: Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews. Canvassing for the position is prohibited and may lead to automatic disqualification.