



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: **M-HIRST RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AND DOCTORAL PROGRAMS**

BACKGROUND

The Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHeS), formerly known as the College of Medicine and Kamuzu College of Nursing, was established in 1991 as a constituent college of the University of Malawi. Its mission is “*to be an academic centre of excellence in the training of doctors and other health professionals in clinical service and medical research, responsive to the health needs of Malawi and its neighbours within the Southern African region*”. Through postgraduate training, KUHeS expects to develop and mentor clinicians, public health practitioners and scientists who will become leaders and game-changers in their areas of speciality to transform the health sector in Malawi and globally. Since 2015, the National Institutes of Health-Fogarty International Centre in the USA has been funding the KUHeS and University of North Carolina to establish and roll-out the Malawi HIV Implementation Science Research Training (M-HIRST) Program which aims at building and strengthening local capacity for conducting Implementation research studies to generate evidence that accelerates the scale up of evidence-based HIV interventions. In 2020, the Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN) joined the M-HIRST program which will now operate until 2025.

A. **Research Fellowships**

The M-HIRST Program wishes to fund fellowships which **will enable Malawians achieve excellence and leadership in the area of HIV implementation science research**. Specifically, the fellowships will support academics/research scientists employed at the KUHeS, research institutes or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) implementing HIV programs to **develop their implementation science skills and other research-related soft skills so that they can progress towards research independence and secure implementation research grants**. The M-HIRST program will offer a 2 year fellowship which includes a modest part-time salary to support protected research time for developing a research grant application (maximum: 1 day per week); access to pilot research funding through the M-HIRST and other small grant schemes; participation in Implementation Science or other relevant short courses and mentorship from Implementation Science experts. Applicants’ research plans must focus on any high priority areas highlighted in any of the following strategic documents:

1. [Malawi National HIV Strategic Plan 2020-2025 \(NSP 2020-2025\) which outline Malawi government’s priority HIV strategies and interventions.](#)
2. [US Presidential Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief \(PEPFAR\) Country Operating Plan \(2021-2022\).](#)
3. [Global Fund-supported HIV interventions for the period 2021 to 2024.](#)

Application eligibility criteria:

- Employees of the KUHeS, Malawian-based research institutes or NGOs implementing HIV programs **and** any of the following;

- a. Completed Master of Medicine (MMED) or equivalent in relevant subject or
- b. PhD in relevant subject or
- c. Medical degree with Masters in Public Health or equivalent or
- d. MSc in Adult Nursing, Midwifery, Reproductive Health, Child Health Nursing or Community Health Nursing.

Submission requirements:

Interested candidates should submit the following documents;

1. An application cover letter,
2. An HIV implementation research concept to be developed during the fellowship.
3. Updated Curriculum Vitae,
4. Bio-sketch of supervisors and/or mentors
5. Letter of support from their supervisors and/or mentors
6. A Personal Development Plan (PDP), which outlines implementation science and other soft skills to be developed, expected outputs and timeframe (access link for the PDP is [here](#)). The PDP should be based on results of research skills needs *self-assessment* (access to the tool is [here](#)).
7. Budget which may include part-time salary for protected research time; travel and/or telephone expenses to participate in research-related short courses or conferences; any expenses which will facilitate preparation of submission of a research grant application to research-funding agencies.
8. A completed form of the applicant's summary information to be accessed [here](#).

Incomplete applications with missing documents will automatically be considered as ineligible and will not be reviewed.

The documents must be submitted as a single PDF document to the KUHeS M-HIRST Project Coordinator – (mhirstcoordinator@medcol.mw). The deadline for receiving applications will be on **Friday, 30th July 2021 at 23:59 hrs**

B. Master of Philosophy (MPhil) / Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Fellowship

The M-HIRST Program will provide tuition, stipend and research funds for applicants wishing to pursue MPhil/PhD degree program at the KUHeS focusing on HIV-related implementation science. Interested candidates must fulfil the eligibility criteria outlined below and must have research concepts focusing on high priority areas highlighted in any of the following strategic documents:

1. [Malawi National HIV Strategic Plan 2020-2025 \(NSP 2020-2025\) which outline Malawi government's priority HIV strategies and interventions.](#)
2. [US Presidential Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief \(PEPFAR\) Country Operating Plan \(2021-2022\).](#)
3. [Global Fund-supported HIV interventions for the period 2021 to 2024.](#)

Applicants are **strongly** advised to have preliminary discussions with M-HIRST Program Directors (through mhirstcoordinator@medcol.mw) to enable matching of prospective applicant with KUHeS supervisors or research groups and to develop research concepts before submitting an application.

The prospective supervisor(s) will need the following before committing his/her services;

1. A copy of your CV with details of your academic and professional background and research exposure

2. A well formatted research concept which includes key sections (see attached template [here](#))
3. Personal statement describing your career ambitions
4. If you are currently-employed, some explanation on how you will balance work and academic responsibilities.

Kindly submit them to mhirstcoordinator@medcol.mw for a further review of your proposal and you will be provided with the names and contact details of (a) potential supervisor(s) in order for you to engage them and to discuss your MPhil or PhD concept further.

Applicants without approved research concepts and/or supervisors will not be shortlisted.

The KUHeS accepts MPhil/PhD applications all year round but candidates can commence their studies on 1st January, 1st April, 1st July and 1st October each year. For more information on the application process, eligibility and submission requirements for studying an MPhil or PhD at the KUHeS, please refer to the KUHeS website <http://pgd.medcol.mw/doctorate-application-procedure/> or write the Postgraduate Dean postgraduate@medcol.mw.

NB: The MHIRST team will be available for a virtual information session on Wednesday, 14th July 2021 at 3PM CAT. You can join the session following this [link](#).