

**27 January 2022**

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

We invite interested and suitably qualified applicants to apply for a Postdoctoral research fellowship (one year with the possibility of renewal) with the Vaccines for Africa Initiative (VACFA) in the School of Public Health & Family Medicine (SPH&FM), at the University of Cape Town (UCT).

**CONTEXT**

The School of Public Health and Family Medicine (SPH FM), in the Faculty of Health Sciences at UCT provides a range of under- and postgraduate teaching in population-based public health sciences to students training to be health professionals. The School is looking for a Postdoctoral fellow on a full-time basis to conduct Evidence-Based Vaccinology (EBV) research within a 5-year Wellcome funded project. The project aims to set up a Regional Scientific Hub (RSH) to provide Evidence-Informed Decision-Making (EIDM) support on vaccines and immunization to all the countries in the WHO Africa Region. The main users of RSH services will be National Immunisation Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs). The project is managed by VACFA (www.vacfa.uct.ac.za), a unit within the SPH&FM (http://www.publichealth.uct.ac.za/).

**PURPOSE**

The VACFA unit has embarked on a project to establish a RSH based at the SPH&FM. The core activities of the RSH are: EIDM support; health economics support; mathematical modelling support; vaccinology training; health systems support; and design thinking support. The broader responsibility for the fellowship is to design and conduct EBV research that addresses the key evidence gaps for the NITAGs in the WHO Africa region.

**RESEARCH**

The objective of the fellowship is to enhance the generation of high quality local and regional immunisation data to support EIDM for vaccines and immunisation. Following the generation of the research data, the fellow, with support from the RSH will facilitate access and sharing of the data through the engagements and collaborations with NITAGs and WHO. The generated local and regional data will enrich the available evidence in the region for use by NITAGs. It is envisaged the fellow will also support the RSH in delivering core services, including capacity development. The fellowship will utilize diverse fields that includes EIDM, vaccinology, behavioral sciences, and life sciences. Therefore, the successful candidate will gain exposure to all these areas during the fellowship. The fellow will also support the implementation of the RSH project, in general.

**REQUIREMENTS**

• A PhD in public health or a related discipline, including a focus on Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM), obtained within a 5-year period prior to the start of the fellowship

• As per the university’s definition, applicants may not have held a full-time permanent professional or academic post

• A strong interest in vaccinology and specifically, EIDM as demonstrated by experience

• Demonstrable knowledge of skills to conduct EBV

• Familiarity with research on vaccines and immunization is desirable

• Knowledge in the process of developing national, regional and global immunization policies that are evidence-based

• Knowledge and skills in data analysis (quantitative and qualitative) relevant to EBV are essential

* Prior experience with conducting systematic reviews and meta-analyses is essential

• Excellent communication skills reflecting the ability to engage and collaborate

• Excellent conversational and writing language skills in English

• A publication track record of EBM

• Independence, teamwork skills, accuracy, analytical skills, outcome-oriented approach, flexibility, and scientific integrity

**CONDITIONS OF FELLOWSHIP**

The fellowship will be on a full-time basis for a period of one year with a possibility of renewal based on performance. The role is located at the University of Cape Town and the candidate will need to be physically present for most of the working time – sometimes remote working may be required based on the COVID-19 regulations implemented by the University. The work will require some flexibility with working hours and travelling (local and international) may be required. The successful candidate may be asked to participate in departmental activities such as limited teaching, co-supervision, and associated duties, in the interests of professional development. Our research unit aims to foster personal and career development and to support a positive work-leisure balance.

The value of the fellowship is a tax-free stipend between R220 000 and R300 000, dependent on the relevant experience of the successful candidate, and with no fringe benefits or allowances. The successful applicant will be required to comply with the University’s approved policies, procedures and practises for the postdoctoral sector. For more information, see: https://www.uct.ac.za/main/research/postdoc-research-fellowships

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

The University of Cape Town is the top-ranked university in Africa. It is a research-intensive institution that is situated in the beautiful ‘Mother City’ of South Africa, providing outstanding access to personal and career development alongside opportunities to explore nature and enjoy an active, outdoor lifestyle. UCT has about 30 000 students and almost 5 000 staff in 7 faculties. The Faculty of Health Sciences hosts approximately 150 postdoctoral fellows, with a good mix of fellows from South Africa and fellows from abroad.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The fellowship is to be taken up on or as soon as possible, depending on applicant circumstances and study requirements. Interviews will be held on a rolling basis until a suitable candidate is identified. For further information, please contact Dr Benjamin Kagina: benjamin.kagina@uct.ac.za (telephone calls may be arranged in advance, via email).

**TO APPLY, PLEASE SUBMIT:**

* A letter of application (stating reasons for interest in the fellowship, research interests, research experience, personal circumstances such as the need to relocate or settle family members, and other information that may be relevant).

• Full CV including list of publications and scholarly outputs

• Copies of academic transcripts (certified copies may be requested)

• Names and contact details of 2-3 references who have taught, supervised, or worked alongside the applicant, to Dr Benjamin Kagina (email address above).

Eligible and complete applications will be reviewed by RSH project team and selected applicants will be invited for an interview.

The University of Cape Town reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications, and to change the conditions of award or to make no award.