

Fellowship Opportunity in Planetary Health, Climate Change and Global Health

Executive Summary

The Medical Research Council Unit The Gambia (MRCG) at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) are pleased to announce an interdisciplinary two-year Fellowship in Planetary Health. The Fellowship is supported by The Peter Piot fellowship programme through funding for the Centre on Climate Change and Planetary Health (CCCPH) at the LSHTM. The Fellowship funding will be awarded for research that can improve understanding and capacity to prepare for and respond to environmental change and its health impacts in Africa, including climate change, land use change and urbanization. The Planetary Health program will seek to foster the professional development of a new generation of specialists to understand the health impacts of environmental change.

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

Founded in 1899, LSHTM is a globally renowned public health institution, whose mission is to improve health and health equity worldwide, through cutting edge research and postgraduate education. With over 3,000 staff conducting research in over 130 countries around the world, including at the MRC Units in The Gambia and Uganda, LSHTM is known for diverse and multidisciplinary research.

The [Centre on Climate Change and Planetary Health](#) was established to respond to the challenge of environmental changes that threaten human health. The Centre has three areas of focus: research to improve understanding on planetary health; fostering connections globally to bring about change; and co-creating imaginative, scalable solutions. In March 2021 the Centre became a [WHO Collaborating Centre on Climate Change, Health and Sustainable Development](#). The Planetary Health Postdoctoral Fellowship seeks to foster the professional development of a new generation of environment and health researchers and ambassadors committed to protecting health on a changing planet – and developing solutions for a healthier future.

THE MRC UNITS

In 2018, the MRC Units in The Gambia and Uganda formally joined LSHTM, enlarging the school's research capacity into current and emerging health issues in Africa and throughout the world.

With over 1,200 staff, the MRC Unit The Gambia at LSHTM is a centre of excellence for research and training that has contributed significantly, over the last 75 years, to produce world-class research that has informed health policies in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond. The Unit delivers innovative research that includes disease control, nutrition and planetary health, and vaccines and immunity to save lives and improve health across the world. The MRC Unit The Gambia boasts of strong research collaborations with several research institutions in West Africa.

In the 30 years since its establishment, the MRC/ & LSHTM Uganda Research Unit has become an internationally recognized centre for research on HIV/ AIDS, non-communicable diseases, and endemic, neglected, emerging and re-emerging infections. With 390 staff across four sites in Uganda, the Unit addresses current and future health priorities of the East Africa region as well as providing clinical care for local people

Format of the Fellowship

The two-year Fellowship will give early career researchers the freedom to pursue novel research in the field of planetary health, including climate change and the implications of land use change, environmental destruction and degradation, and the evaluation of policies and measures to address these risks. Fellows will be able to work with world-class LSHTM faculty, including at MRC Units, from a broad range of disciplines including epidemiology, health systems, mathematical modelling, data science, diagnostics, social science, anthropology, clinical research and more. Based on their research interests, applicants are asked to submit a research proposal as part of the application. Applicants should identify a location for the research, and, if relevant, a collaborating African institution.

The Fellow must be a national from sub-Saharan Africa*. The successful applicant will be based primarily at either the MRC Unit in the Gambia (Key contact Dr Kris Murray kris.murray@lshtm.ac.uk) or the MRC Unit in Uganda, and will be expected to move to either location, if not already based there.

**Sub-Saharan Africa*, as defined by United Nations Development Programme, includes the following countries: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leona, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Requirements of the Fellowship

Fellows will spend substantial time during the period to focus on their proposed project. They will be receiving mentorship from combinations of mentors from LSHTM CCCPH, local collaborating institutions and MRC Units. They will be expected to present their work both internally and at international meetings. Fellows will be expected to be active participants in the Fellowship scheme by contributing internally and externally to relevant CCCPH meetings and activities, and to engage with the two other Planetary Health Fellows. They will be expected to participate in the wider activities of research groups or themes they are involved with at the Units in either Gambia or Uganda

Compensation

Fellows will receive a competitive research fellowship stipend of £25,000 per annum at either Gambia or Uganda. In addition, the fellowship will pay for fellows' accommodation, annual holiday

airfares and contribution to children's school fees. They will also receive a modest research budget. Relocation and visa support will also be available for international applicants.

Eligibility Criteria

Applications from individuals based at LMICs research institutions are strongly encouraged. Proficiency in the English language is a requirement for the Fellowship. Applications will be assessed on submitted documents and scored against the following criteria:

- Completed PhD degree within the last 3 years. We will accept applications from candidates who are confident that they will complete their PhD by 1 September 2022. Fellowships will only be awarded to people who have completed their PhDs
- Demonstrated interest and experience in research on the links between health and environmental change.
- Ability to conduct a research project relating to environmental change and health that is of high scientific quality and has potential to make a clear impact on human health and that is deliverable within the duration of the Fellowship programme.
- Clear route for Fellowship work to benefit communities disproportionately affected by environmental change and/or traditionally under-served or under-resourced in adaptation or mitigation response measures
- Potential for the project to generate novel interdisciplinary insights or methodology.
- Clear plan for the Fellowship to contribute to career development.
- Potential for the project to deliver a positive impact that lasts beyond the end of the Fellowship.

Timeline

This is a two-stage application process with the following timelines

Stage 1: Interested applicants are invited to submit

- a CV including summary of key outputs and publications (maximum 3 pages)
- Personal statement (maximum 1 page) outlining career goals and reasons for applying
- An outline of a proposed research project to be conducted during the Fellowship (maximum 1 page)

Applications at Stage 1 will be shortlisted by a multi-disciplinary search committee and a shortlist of applicants will be invited to submit full applications in Stage 2.

Stage 2: Shortlisted applicants must submit:

- Preference for location to conduct the study

- List of two Faculty at LSHTM (either in London or at the MRC Units in Gambia and Uganda) they would be working with.
- Two letters of recommendation preferably from previous academic supervisors.
- An update of the outline proposal presented in stage one (details will be provided after stage 1 selections)

Applications with required documentation should be sent to fadinding.darboe@lshtm.ac.uk with a copy to musa.faal@lshtm.ac.uk

- The Stage 1 application deadline is 31st May 2022.
- Stage 1 applicants will be notified if they are invited to proceed to Stage 2 by 30th June 2022.
- Stage 2 applications will be interviewed either face-to-face or “virtual” in July/August 2022.
- Fellowship offers will be made to successful candidates in September 2022.
- The Fellowship start-date will be flexible, but all fellows should be in post by 1st January 2023

An information session for potential applicants will be held on 4th May 2022 at 14.30 GMT on the following link

<https://lshtm.zoom.us/j/96489440178?pwd=YmV5c1RFR0xtelpucWllcTd5MFZLdz09>