



International Severe Acute
Respiratory and emerging
Infection Consortium

CAREER DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

ISARIC, Centre for Tropical Medicine and Global Health,
Nuffield Department of Medicine

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Introduction

The International Severe Acute Respiratory and emerging Infection Consortium (ISARIC) is a global federation of clinical research networks whose aim is to prevent illness and deaths during infectious disease outbreaks.

This aim is supported by two key objectives:

1. To generate and disseminate clinical research evidence for outbreak-prone infectious diseases, whenever and wherever they occur;
2. To build a global federation of clinical research networks, providing a proficient, coordinated, and agile research response to outbreak-prone infectious diseases.

ISARIC is part way through its five-year programme around specific capacity development activities, including the ISARIC Career Development Fellowship Scheme, which will support emerging clinical researchers in exchanging knowledge, gaining confidence in their research and leadership skills, developing local and regional research agendas, and ultimately increasing the international footprint of their institution both within the federation and further afield.

The objective of the Career Development Fellowship Scheme is to support promising researchers from ISARIC partner networks in becoming leaders who will:

- (i) Build outstanding research ecosystems,
- (ii) Inspire the next generation of researchers,
- (iii) Influence policy in their home countries and beyond.

Scheme structure

There are two schemes on offer:

Track 1: MSc in International Health and Tropical Medicine

The MSc in International Health and Tropical Medicine is a full-time one-year multi and interdisciplinary programme examining major challenges to the health of populations in resource-limited contexts. The course is embedded within the International Severe Acute Respiratory and emerging Infection Consortium based at the Oxford Centre for Tropical Medicine and Global Health, Nuffield Department of Medicine.

The course aims to develop:

- Knowledge and understanding of the major global health problems in resource-limited settings and their potential solutions;
- Knowledge and skills in research techniques applied in the analysis of global health problems (including quantitative and qualitative research methods, with opportunities for training in additional specialist fields);
- Capacity to critically appraise evidence in global health;
- Skills and practical experience in researching specific health problems in resource-limited contexts.

The first term will consist of core topics on research methods, an overview of some major global health challenges, and topics related to the research and practice of global health. Core modules include:

- Paradigms and Tools for Global Health (including epidemiology, statistics, health economics, and social sciences for health)
- Challenges and Change in International Health
- Global Health Research and Practice.

During the second term, in addition to some continued core content and a compulsory module in Clinical Research during Infectious Disease Outbreaks [^], fellows can select **two** of the following module options for further study:

- Case Studies in Field Epidemiology
- Development, Environment and Health
- International Development and Health
- Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases
- Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
- Vaccinology

A 3,000 to 4,000- word essay will assess all options, except Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases.

Assessment for the Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases module will require submission of a computer program or a piece of mathematical analysis (both of which are the equivalent of 1,000 words) accompanied by a short report of 2,000 to 3,000 words.

[^]Clinical Research during Outbreaks can be either taken as an auditor with no formal assessment, or more formally - assessed by a 3,000- 4,000-word essay.

The third term involves a funded eight-week placement with a research capacity project in a resource-limited setting. The Fellow will design their project around the Global Federation, in the context of their institute (current employer), whilst drawing on the guidance of their mentor and incorporating the range of subjects covered in the MSc course.

Partners in various geographic regions within the Global Federation (international travel permitting) will host the fellow.

The research project will form the basis of a 10,000-word dissertation to be submitted eight weeks after return from placement.

Providing that candidates meet the entry requirements, potential Fellows will be invited to a brief discussion with the ISARIC Fellowship Committee.

Successful candidates for application will then apply for the MSc via the University of Oxford's Admissions Portal, where the applicant will be invited to attend an interview with the MSc Course Committee - a separate, independent panel to the ISARIC Fellowship Committee.

Successful candidates will be offered a place to read on the MSc of International Health and Tropical Medicine, studying at the University of Oxford.

Track 2: Short-term Fellowship

We have developed a series of short-term fellowships; these bite-sized fellowships are designed for intense periods of up to 8 weeks in duration, and applicants can customise their own pathway.

Pathways include placements with an ISARIC Training Site, or within the World Health Organization (WHO), resources / international travel permitting. There are also opportunities to study alongside the Track 1 MSc ISARIC Fellows at The University of Oxford – please refer to the table below for more information:

Track 2: Pathways

Pathway	Overview of activity	Learning outcomes
Pathway 1:	Placement at the World Health Organization (WHO)/the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN), which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exposure to key departments within WHO/GOARN to gain insights regarding research as it is applicable to outbreaks; - Gaining an understanding of the Incident Management System Team (IMST); - An opportunity to network with the innovation hub team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate a clear understanding of the need for integrating clinical research into response - Recognise, or critically assess, the factors influencing the UN System in response to health emergencies, in particular integrated research, and analyse how these factors shape their research
Pathway 2:	Secondment to an ISARIC International Training Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a clear plan on how to build a clinical research network linked to the sponsoring institution - Learn a new skill, or build on a pre-existing skill base, through a secondment to an ISARIC International Training Site
Pathway 3:	A study period at the University of Oxford, with suggested modules in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case Studies in Field Epidemiology - Clinical research in outbreaks - Development, Environment and Health - International Development and Health - Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases - Organisational leadership, communication and innovation - Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health - Vaccinology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity to critically appraise evidence in global health - Skills and practical experience in researching specific health problems in resource-limited - Demonstrate a clear understanding of the need for integrating clinical research into response.

Applications for Track 2 consist of an application form, which is completed and submitted to the ISARIC Global Support Centre.

Applicants will be screened, and will be invited to a Skype interview if they meet the entry requirements.

Successful applicants will receive a provisional offer subject to receipt of satisfactory supporting documents.

Benefits of the ISARIC Career Development Fellowship Scheme for Fellows

- Develop local and regional research agendas
- Gain confidence in their research and leadership skills and abilities
- Enhance ability to communicate effectively with varied audiences
- Expand networks internationally and across disciplines.

Eligibility

The Institution

- Is part of an ISARIC Member Network, or
- Is an ISARIC Associate.

The Fellow

The focus has been given to resource-poor settings to reflect the propensity for outbreak-prone infectious diseases in these areas. Therefore, preference will be given to LMIC¹ nationals.

The candidate will either be nominated by an ISARIC Member Network or an Associate – for a current list of members please visit our website. If you are not part of these Member Networks or an Associate Organisation, please **do not apply** – your application **will not be processed**, as it does not meet our requirements.

In all instances candidates:

1. Are expected to return to an LMIC for a minimum of 8 months after completion of their fellowship.
2. Will have sought permission from their current line manager, with full support from their institute, to apply to the scheme. Applicants must have a contractual relationship with the sponsoring institution.

¹For low- and middle-income countries please refer to the World Bank list, found at the following URL:

<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519>

Expectations

The Fellow

The fellow will:

- Hold an award for a generous stipend over a certain time period; In return, we expect that fellows are responsible for managing these monies. The mismanagement of finances is taken very seriously.
- For those undertaking Track 1, or Track 2, Pathway 3; Have a 100% attendance rate in the MSc in International Health and Tropical Medicine classes
- Partake in monthly Skype calls with their mentor prior to, during and after their fellowship
- Prepare a short end of secondment report, identifying areas for the mentor to focus on in the follow-up year, including a strategy to build a clinical research network on return to their Institution, and identifying which ISARIC Projects to participate in
- Identify a problem/formulate a research idea
- Define their research question and develop a research protocol
- Organise a research project
- Identify and plan a capacity development project
- Conduct at least one seminar, to a minimum of 13 people

- Write a final report on the scheme, along with a summary
- Publish on the scheme and / or project
- Contribute to publications during the fellowship, ideally as first author for one of those publications
- Contribute to testimonials, news articles, blogs etc. about their experiences of the scheme
- Provide resources (e.g. tools, templates, guidance documents, and case studies), relevant to their projects, wherever possible
- Produce a poster/abstract around capacity building and training
- Participate in, and encourage and assist colleagues to partake in, impact assessment initiatives around capacity building e.g. questionnaires, Professional Development Schemes etc., which will help measure impact of the work
- Become a member of the ISARIC Alumni.

Endorsement Institute

- Agrees to continue to pay the fellow's salary as a sign of commitment to the scheme, and
- Keeps the fellow's position available for them upon their return.

ISARIC

The Global Federation agrees to provide:

- A stipend to pay for accommodation and travel related to any placements e.g. Oxford, Geneva and ISARIC International Training Site (Host Institution)
- Administrative support e.g. the booking of flights and accommodation for the fellow and their mentor
- Update/inform the fellow/mentor of any ISARIC regional training opportunities or scientific seminars.

Application Process

Candidate applications will be screened in accordance with the 'evaluation criteria' and candidates **MUST** be part of a Member Network, or be nominated by an Associate, otherwise their application will **not** be considered. A list of the current membership can be found at our website.

In your Application, or Expression of Interest Form (if you are applying to Track 1), you should describe:

1. Why you are applying to this scheme;
2. How your past studies and work are relevant to the fellowship;
3. What specific aspects of the fellowship interest you;
4. How this will be important for your future career.

You should demonstrate experience working both in the field of global health in a resource-limited context and in multidisciplinary and multicultural teams, and show how you fulfil the evaluation criteria.

Applications will be screened for eligibility in the first instance, and then evaluated by internal and external experts in the field.

Fellows are selected without regard to gender, marital or civil partnership status, disability, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or social background.

Successful applicants will be invited to attend a Skype interview. Any offers to the schemes will be subject to the provision of the following set of documents, as detailed overleaf.

Shortly after you have submitted your application/expression of interest form, you will be contacted by the Global Support Centre about your interview, and provided with a secure link to upload the documentation outlined below:

Official transcript(s) (where applicable)

Your transcripts should give detailed information of the individual grades received as part of your university-level qualifications to date.

You should only upload official documents issued by your institution; any transcript **not** in English should be accompanied by a certified translation.

Any candidates applying to Track 1 require either a standard or higher competency level in English with the test being taken less than two years before the date of this application. Under certain circumstances, additional support in mastering the English language may be provided.

CV/résumé

A CV/résumé is compulsory for all applications. Most applicants choose to submit a document of one to two pages highlighting their academic achievements and any relevant professional experience.

References/letters of recommendation

We require two references, which would preferably be professional, although academic references are also acceptable.

Your references will support your intellectual ability, motivation to work in a resource-limited context, and the ability to work with a wide range of stakeholders. You should refer your referees to the 'evaluation criteria' for further guidance.

Letter of endorsement from institute/current line manager

The letter must acknowledge that the applicant, if selected, will be required to work 40 hours per week (at a minimum) on their project for 8 months. The letter must also describe how the applicant's current workload will be reduced to provide this protected time.

The Global Health Trials/TDR Professional Development Scheme Competency Wheel

We require you to complete the 'Professional Development Scheme (PDS)' survey, which is hosted on 'The Global Health Network': <https://globalhealthtrainingcentre.tghn.org/pds/about/> and upload the competency wheel as part of your application.

This survey is designed to capture your core competencies, qualifications and training - completion of the PDS can take up to 2 hours.

We will also use this information to understand your current skills and development needs. Together with the other supporting documentation, it will help us place you within the scheme.

As part of our capacity development activities, we will use this qualitative approach to assess your skills and competencies both before the scheme and after completion. All data will be anonymised.

If you have not been contacted within 21 days of the advertised closing date, please consider your application unsuccessful on this occasion. Due to the high volume of applications we regret that we are not able to correspond with all of the candidates.

Any candidate who is **not** part of a Member Network, or has **not** been nominated by an Associate, will **not** be considered. A current list of membership can be found at our website.

Interview Process

Successful candidates will be invited to a Skype interview, where the ISARIC Fellowship Committee will ask questions around the fellow's application/expression of interest form.

Provisional offers will **only** be made subject to an **interview** and **receipt of all supporting documents** (as previously listed), otherwise the offer will be withdrawn.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by internal and external experts in the field in accordance with the criteria outlined below:

Essential

- Medical, pharmacy, or nursing degree from a reputable university
- 3 – 10 years of clinical experience; experience of the management of infectious diseases for both inpatients and outpatients, and/or ward based infection work
- Ability to provide complete details of employment history, including evidence of current contract of employment
- An understanding of the role of research preparedness to facilitate a rapid clinical response.

Desirable

- Clinical research involving emerging pathogens with epidemic potential - preferably in LMICs
- Mastered the English language (level 7, pre-advanced – 9, very advanced)*
- Experience of setting up an audit project
- Experience in facilitation and training skills

*Important for those participating in Track 1. Under certain circumstances, additional support in mastering the English language may be provided.

Attributes/key characteristics

We have compiled a short list (by no means extensive), of attributes/key characteristics, which are important when considering whether to accept an applicant to the fellowship scheme. They are:

- Good interpersonal skills
- Good problem solving skills
- Good organisational skills and ability to prioritise tasks and workload
- Sufficient leadership and professional skills
- Shows dedication and is keen to improve practice e.g. Evidence of active participation in quality improvement projects, and/or evidence of contributing to the teaching and learning of others
- The ability to handle professional responsibilities and tasks in an ethical, safe, and sensitive manner

Your referee should make reference to these in their letter of recommendation.

With thanks to our Funders:

