2026 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: HIV IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE PILOT GRANTS

INTRODUCTION

The Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHeS) was established in 2021 through a merger between the College of Medicine and the Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN) which were constituent colleges of the University of Malawi. The mission of the KUHeS is "***to advance knowledge, professional competencies, skills, and innovations in health sciences through high-quality student-centred and innovative education and research that responds to and influences global and national policy, health, and development needs in an efficient, sustainable, and result-oriented manner***". Since 2015, the National Institutes of Health-Fogarty International Centre in the USA has been funding the KUHeS and the University of North Carolina to implement the Malawi HIV Implementation Science Research Training (M-HIRST) Program whose mission is ***"to sustain Malawi-led HIV control through innovation, data, and leadership"***. Specifically, the program aims to build and strengthen local capacity for designing and conducting implementation research studies to generate evidence that accelerates the scale up of evidence-based HIV interventions.

The M-HIRST program is seeking applications from postgraduate students, academics or research scientists from institutions that conduct health-related research or implement HIV programs in Malawi. The applicants are expected to conduct pilot HIV implementation science-related research projects that *identify facilitators or barriers for implementation of evidence-based HIV interventions* or *those that evaluate novel strategies to promote scale up of evidence-based HIV interventions*. The Implementation Science program is in keeping with the Revised Malawi National HIV Strategic Plan 2023-2027 (NSP 2023-2027) to which applicants must demonstrate familiarity with, as it outlines the Malawi government's key HIV strategies and interventions for achieving zero new HIV-infections and the 95-95-95[1] treatment targets by the year 2030. Therefore, proposals need to focus on a specific areas of HIV prevention or the 95-95-95 targets and must be implemented within a period of 12 months. For this cycle, we have a special interest in proposals focused on the following thematic areas:

1. Prevention and management of Advanced HIV Diseases or HIV co-morbidities;
2. Integrated HIV services delivery;
3. Application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to promote targeted HIV interventions;
4. Application of data science or mathematical modelling to evaluate the impact of HIV interventions;
5. Application of mobile health technologies to promote client-centered HIV care; and
6. Strategies for mitigating the negative impact of extreme weather on HIV service delivery.

[1] This entails 95% of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) know their status; 95% PLHIV who know their status receive Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) and 95% of people on ART are retained in HIV care and have suppressed HIV viral load

ELIGIBILITY

You can apply for this small grant if you fulfill all of the following criteria:

1. Currently enrolled in or completed a health-related postgraduate training program;
2. Employed in an academic or research institution or non-governmental organization implementing HIV-related programs in Malawi or have strong linkages with public institutions or non-governmental institutions which have a track history of delivering HIV services.
3. Have a supervisor or mentor with strong background in HIV research or service delivery;

Applicants with a history of prior HIV-related publications will have an added advantage. Also, applicants who were not successful on previous M-HIRST grant applications but have addressed issues raised by reviewers are strongly encouraged to apply.

Applicants who do not propose an implementation science project or have no supervisor or mentor with proven expertise in HIV-related research will not be shortlisted. For examples of appropriate implementation science projects, please visit **here**.

BUDGET

The maximum budget for each application is US$10,000 which may include the following expenses: personnel, equipment, supplies, transport/travel, mandatory institutional overhead fees and ethics submission fees. We aim to award the small grants to 3 - 6 successful applicants dependent on the budget.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested applicants are required to do the following;

- Submit a three-page pilot grant research proposal. You can download and carefully follow the instructions and guidelines for a pilot grant proposal **here**.
- Fill-out the summary applicant information form **here**.
- Seek a letter of support and biosketch from a senior academic or public health/clinical health practitioner with a track history in HIV-related research who will provide oversight in research implementation
- Submit their *updated bio sketch* and all documents as a single PDF document to the mhirstcoordinator@kuhes.ac.mw

Note: All biosketches are to be in line with the NIH template found here: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm

Incomplete and unmerged applications will not be reviewed. Please do not submit your single pdf document without filling the application form and vice versa.

The deadline for receiving applications will be on **Monday, 23rd November 2026 at 23:59 hrs**.