



## Call for Applications for the TAGENDI PhD and MPhil fellowship program

### 1. Background

Trials of Excellence in Southern Africa (TESA) Addressing Gender and Diversity Regional Gaps in Clinical Research Capacity (TAGENDI) is inviting applications for Doctoral and MPhil Fellowships funded by the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP). The purpose of this fellowship programme is to contribute to the reduction of the gender and diversity gaps by training female PhD and MPhil candidates from participating TESA member African countries or institutions, which include South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Eswatini, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe in collaboration with European country partner institutions from the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and France. Participating institutions in the different African countries are listed on the TESA website <https://tesanetwork.org>.

### 2. Training Program

The training program is designed to address existing gender imbalance within clinical research in Africa. Using established internal and external TESA partnerships, the TAGENDI Fellowship program will award up to five PhD and two MPhil fellowships to female applicants based on merit following an established and transparent selection process.

Successful female candidates will carry out their studies after registering with any of the following universities within the network or any other university if justified:

1. University of Cape Town
2. University of Zimbabwe
3. Stellenbosch University
4. Amsterdam Institute of Global Health Development
5. University of Barcelona and ISGlobal
6. University of Namibia
7. University of Malawi
8. University of Botswana and
9. University of Zambia



The training will focus on under-served health research disciplines, including:

- a. Epidemic preparedness
- b. Health Economics (Impact)
- c. Biostatistics
- d. Computational research
- e. Bioinformatics
- f. Infectious diseases
- g. Neglected Tropical Diseases
- h. Non-Communicable Diseases
- i. Research on COVID -19

**Priority consideration may be given to:**

- Potential PhD students from the pool of Master's students who have successfully completed their training on projects awarded through the DHSC-funded 2020 call for Capacity Development for Disease Outbreak and Epidemic Response in Sub-Saharan Africa, in collaboration with the Africa CDC.
- **The final scholarship award to selected candidates will be subject to successful university registration for the PhD.** Therefore, applicants who have already registered for a PhD or MPhil program with an academic institution and received institutional ethics approval for their proposed research are strongly encouraged to apply.

Female MSc or MPhil candidates from countries with limited capacity are also encouraged to apply. In particular, TESA beneficiaries from Angola, Eswatini and Namibia may be considered and, where appropriate, assessed and validated by the network.

**General Considerations**

The TAGENDI PhD fellow sponsored by this grant shall mentor a master's student under her research project and shall collaborate with a team of experts across the TESA consortium in



several activities, which also include attending networking meetings in the region and networking with other postgraduate fellows from other EDCTP networks of excellence.

The Consortium will support each successful fellow with a TAGENDI grant covering a monthly stipend, travel allowance, research costs and essential equipment.

The PhD fellowship will be for 48 months with a possibility of a six-month extension. The MPhil fellowship will cover a period of one year.

### 3. Selection of Candidates

3.1 The PhD Candidates will go through a rigorous and transparent selection process to ensure that the themes and research areas for selected students are consistent with the scope of the call. As a selection criteria for the PhD fellow, the following aspects will be considered:

- a. Be a female scientist
- b. Must have at least one published manuscript
- c. Be in possession of an MSc or MPhil degree in a relevant field from any recognised university
- d. The candidate should have an employment contract with a TESA member institution or have an employment guarantee by the Legal Entity in which they express the intention to continue working at least for the next 3 years after training
- e. Candidates from less developed TESA institutions are encouraged
- f. The content of the proposed area of study must be aligned with the disciplines listed above. **It is highly recommended that proposed research projects focus on emerging diseases.**

3.2 Applicants for the MPhil Fellowship should be registered with an institution of higher learning or provide evidence that they are at an advanced stage of the registration process.

The first selection stage will be at each TESA site within each participating country. In each site, a harmonised document will be used to guide the candidate selection process. The second selection stage will be at the consortium level, led by the TESA Coordinating Centre and supported by the appointed TAGENDI selection committee comprised of independent experts from participating sites who will evaluate the candidate's applications.



The two-stage selection process is designed to maintain an objective, open and transparent process of assessing and selecting candidates based on merit. The process will remain competitive to ensure fellowships are awarded to the best candidates.

Interested female PhD candidates will be required to submit a written application with details of their academic background and track record in research verifiable through certificates, letters of support, documentation of the candidate's experience in research, evidence of at least one research publication, etc. In the first stage, a local selection committee will review the applications and shortlist eligible candidates. Each site will select and submit one candidate to the Regional TESA Coordinator for compilation and submission to the Coordinating Centre with all relevant application documents, where the TAGENDI Selection Committee will perform the final selection.

The TAGENDI Selection Committee will review all the applications from the different sites and conduct a final assessment of the applications. Candidates will be invited for a virtual or face-to-face selection interview if conditions allow. After the selection, candidates will receive a formal letter from the Coordinating Centre detailing the expected support from TESA. Selected candidates will register at the assigned universities and must sign a TAGENDI fellowship agreement expressing commitment to undertake and complete the training.

#### 4. Application requirements - How to apply

The Application package should contain the following:

1. A fully completed application form
2. A comprehensive recent CV including relevant research and work experience (max 2 pages)
3. Certified copies of academic transcripts and post-high school qualifications submitted as **ONE PDF** file.
4. Certified Copy of National ID or Passport
5. Supporting letters from the institution where the applicant is affiliated.
6. Supporting letters from two professional referees (one must be an academic referee), together with their telephone numbers, institutional addresses and e-mail addresses.
7. Proof of registration (if available)
8. Ethical and /or regulatory approval for your project/study (if applicable or available)



**TESA**

**TRIALS OF EXCELLENCE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**Submit completed application packages to** Rodrigues Matcheve:

[rodrigues.matcheve@manhica.net](mailto:rodrigues.matcheve@manhica.net) and copy Dr Francisco Saúte: [francisco.saute@manhica.net](mailto:francisco.saute@manhica.net)  
and Dr Junior Mutsvangwa: [jnr.mutsvangwa@gmail.com](mailto:jnr.mutsvangwa@gmail.com)

For program-related enquiries and application forms, please contact the TAGENDI Coordinator, Dr Farirai Mutenherwa ([fmutenherwa@brti.co.zw](mailto:fmutenherwa@brti.co.zw)) and Dr Mwansa Ketty Lubeya ([mwansaketty@gmail.com](mailto:mwansaketty@gmail.com)). Application forms can also be downloaded from the TESA website.

### **Application deadlines**

**Open Date: 17 July 2024 CAT**

**Closing Date: 18 August 2024 at 17:00, CAT.**

Incomplete Application forms without the required support documents will not be considered.



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