



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

AFRICA CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF HUMANS AND ANIMALS (ACEIDHA)

Call for Applications to Masters and Doctoral Studies 2020

1. Introduction

African Countries have continued to face growing challenges related to infectious diseases in both human and animal populations. As a way of increasing capacity to tackle these challenges on the continent, the Zambian Government obtained a loan from the World Bank for the creation of the Africa Centre of Excellence in Infectious Diseases of Humans and Animals (ACEIDHA) at the University of Zambia (UNZA), School of Veterinary Medicine. The mandate of the Centre is the delivery of high quality research and training at MSc and PhD levels to smart, highly motivated and ambitious scientists in Africa, so as to reduce the identified critical shortage of skilled human resource in the prevention and control of infectious diseases on the continent.

The School of Veterinary Medicine boasts of the finest biomedical research facilities on the continent ranging from Biosafety Level (BSL) 2 to BSL 3 laboratories. The school also has a BSL 2 cell culture and an Animals Biosafety Level (ABSL) 2 laboratory. UNZA also boasts having highly qualified researchers and scientists who are able to offer quality student supervision and mentorship in a range of research areas. Additionally, student supervision will be done in collaboration with other internationally recognized scientists from within the continent and beyond.

ACEIDHA is looking for highly qualified and motivated young African scientists interested in research in infectious diseases under the themes given below, that will culminate in obtaining MSc or PhD qualifications from the University of Zambia. This training programme will empower graduates with knowledge and skills to improve the quality of livelihoods of people, including animals and the environment, and ultimately contributing to the attainment of some of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In line with UNZA strategic plan, ACEIDHA is committed to the principle of gender equality and equal opportunities for all including individuals with physical disabilities and disadvantaged backgrounds (We believe in equal opportunities for all).

Through the funding received from the World Bank, ACEIDHA will offer scholarships (full or partial depending on circumstances) for the period of study at the University of Zambia, to deserving applicants meeting the selection criteria and whose proposed research areas will be in line with its mission and vision. Students with other sources of funding or those who can sponsor themselves are also encouraged to apply.

2. Research Themes

1. Emerging and zoonotic viral diseases
2. Emerging and zoonotic bacterial diseases including antimicrobial resistance
3. Neglected tropical diseases
4. Vector-borne zoonotic diseases

The focus of the proposed area of study for each of the above themes should be in epidemiology (including disease modelling and disease surveillance), socio-economics, socio-anthropology, pathogen or host genomics, host-pathogen interactions, diagnostics, biodiversity, disease risk analysis, and habitat fragmentation/ Urban Sprawl and their effect on disease spread. Proposals on climate change as it relates to the above themes are also encouraged.

3. Programmes on Offer

ACEIDHA will also offer a limited number of scholarships to students who want to pursue the following One Health MSc programmes:

MSc by Research

Applicants for an MSc scholarship by research must possess a bachelor's degree in relevant fields from a recognised University. Their envisaged area of study must be in line with the above themes.

Taught MSc

- I. **Msc One Health Analytical Epidemiology**
- II. **MSc Food Safety and Risk Analysis**
- III. **MSc One Health Laboratory Sciences**
- IV. **MSc Ecological Public Health**
- V. **MSc Tropical Infectious Diseases and Zoonosis**

The above five programmes are undertaken over a period of two years in two parts. Part I comprises a taught component over a period of one year and part II is comprised of supervised research work culminating in the submission of a dissertation.

VI. MSc One Health Food Safety

It is undertaken over a period of two years in two parts. Part I comprises of the taught component over a period of one and a half (1½) years and part II is comprised of supervised research work culminating in the submission of a research paper.

Candidates who meet the following criteria are encouraged to apply for these programmes:

- Graduates from any recognized University in the field of biological sciences, Medicine, Public health, Veterinary Medicine, Environmental Health, Nursing, Food Science, Agricultural Sciences, Social Sciences and any other related field of study.

- Graduates in health-related field of studies such as statistics, demography, food science and public health may apply, provided they are graduates from a recognised University.
- The minimum requirement for candidates wishing to study for One Health Analytical Epidemiology is the first degree with at least a credit in Epidemiology, Statistics or Community Medicine. Applicants must also have obtained a minimum of a credit in A-level mathematics.
- Medical and veterinary graduates with at least one (1) year of related medical or veterinary experience will have an added advantage.
- Graduates from Biological Sciences must have at least a credit grade and those with at least two (2) years of post-qualifying experience will have an added advantage
- Minimum of a credit or two years working experience will be an added advantage.

4. Scholarship Modalities and Sponsorship

Scholarship opportunities are available on a competitive basis for eligible candidates. Female candidates are especially encouraged to apply. Applicants with disabilities or disadvantaged backgrounds are also encouraged to apply. Please indicate in the cover letter if you would like to be considered for the ACEIDHA Scholarship. Students in employment must provide a letter of full commitment from their employers that they will be granted study leave.

Scholarships available are as follows:

1. Tuition fees, registration fees, examination fees only
2. Tuition fees, registration fees, examination fees and some limited assistance towards research costs
3. Research costs only

5. Duration of Financial and Material Support

Financial support will be provided for the entire duration of the study period to selected best candidates (minimum of 2 years). The support will initially be granted for one-year, renewable upon a successful completion of the first year. Renewal of financial support for the subsequent scholarship years will be dependent upon successful completion of the previous year with written evidence of satisfactory progress received from immediate supervisors of the candidates. Candidates on the scholarship must endeavor to complete their studies in the stipulated timeframes, as **extension of funding will not be possible**.

6. Application Process

Interested candidates must submit completed **ONLINE** applications, which must include a completed application form for admission, two academic references forms, one professional reference form certified copies of academic certificates and transcripts of results and a concept note for MSc by research candidates (not exceeding 1000 words).

Applications are strictly online at <https://myvet.unza.zm/register>

Enquiries about the research areas or any further information about this advert can be sent to The Deputy Centre Leader/ Research and Training Coordinator, Email: martin.simuunza@unza.zm and phone +260968808511.

The Project Manager, Email: marjorieequamo.phiri@unza.zm and phone +260977799481

The Senior Administrative Officer, Email: majoriemaselechi@unza.zm and phone +260977610519

The closing date for receiving applications is 30th October 2020

Notification of Selection:

Applicants will be notified by email two (2) weeks after the application deadline and are expected to start their studies by 1st February 2021.