

Universidad de Antioquia selected to host international postgraduate training scheme

Universidad de Antioquia (<http://www.udea.edu.co/>) at Medellin, Colombia, has been selected to host an international postgraduate training scheme for masters' level students, providing full scholarship to up to 16 students every other year. The training will be focused on implementation research, which supports the identification of health system bottlenecks and approaches to address them.

TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, has provided the award. TDR is hosted at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland, where it is co-sponsored by UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank and WHO.

University of Antioquia is a public institution founded in 1803, providing postgraduate training to 2400 students a year, mostly Colombian nationals. The *National School of Public Health* has an epidemiology team with infectious diseases background and provides PhD and MSc training in Epidemiology, with the support of other infectious disease research groups at the university. The training programmes are conducted in Spanish to support students from different countries in Latin America. The total student enrolment is 39000 with 7% of this number registered for graduate studies.

University of Antioquia is one of seven universities from low- and middle-income countries that have been selected to manage these grants. There are three universities in Africa, 2 in Asia, and 1 each in Latin America and the Middle East. Each will serve students from their regions.

The new plan will provide up to US\$ 13 million in support for over 200 PhD and Masters degree students in the next 4 years. The grants are available to students from low- and middle-income countries. The goal is to enhance graduate training capacity and boost the number of researchers in these countries, and provide regional support through these universities and the Regional Training Centres supported by TDR.

TDR Director John Reeder says, "This is a sea change for us. We are moving from managing individual training grants from Geneva to strengthening ongoing programmes at major universities in disease-endemic countries, where the work needs to take place."

Grant applications will be released by July 13, 2015 for the coming academic year (2016-2017). Recipients will be enrolled as postgraduate students, and their careers will be tracked with the new TDR Global alumni and stakeholder platform that will be launched in the next year, providing ongoing monitoring of the impact of the programme, as well as networking and increased visibility opportunities for students.

The universities selected

Of the 49 applications submitted, 7 were selected for site visits and approved for funding. Each university is expected to manage around 5-10 postgraduate fellowships supported by TDR each year.

In addition to Universidad de Antioquia, the other 6 grantee institutions are:

- James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, Bangladesh
- University of Ghana, School of Public Health, Ghana

- Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- American University of Beirut, Faculty of Health Sciences, Lebanon
- University of Witwatersrand, School of Public Health, South Africa
- University of Zambia, Department of Public Health, Zambia

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About TDR

TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, is a global programme of scientific collaboration that helps facilitate, support and influence efforts to combat diseases of poverty. TDR is hosted at the World Health Organization (WHO), and is co-sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and WHO.

TDR website: www.who.int/tdr

TDR research capacity strengthening programmes: <http://www.who.int/tdr/capacity/en/>

More on TDR Global: <http://www.who.int/tdr/news/2015/networking-opport-develpd/en/>