

Europe-Africa Research & Innovation News

n°22 – May-June 2016

[Delegation of the European Union to the African Union]



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EDCTP2 - public consultation for interim evaluation

29 June 2016, Brussels: the European Commission has launched a public consultation to invite the views and opinions of stakeholders, experts active in the field and the wider public on the implementation of the 2nd European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership Programme (EDCTP2) Programme during the first three years of operation (2014-2016). These views and opinions will contribute to the interim evaluation of the EDCTP2 programme, carried out by the European Commission with the assistance of independent experts. The objective of the interim evaluation is to assess the implementation of the EDCTP2 programme up to now; to judge how recommendations from previous evaluations have been implemented; and to provide an outlook on what can be expected from EDCTP2 in the future.

All citizens and organisations are welcome to contribute. However, contributions from stakeholders and experts active in the field of clinical trials in developing countries are particularly sought after. It should take about 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Link for consultation: http://ec.europa.eu/research/consultations/edctp-2-2014-2016/consultation_en.htm

Research Fairness Initiative (RFI)

June 2016: The Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) recently launched by the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED) – a non-profit organisation based in Geneva – has opened a public consultation and is organising awareness raising events in Africa and Europe in association with the CAAST-Net Plus initiative funded by Horizon 2020. RFI was prompted by evidence of unfairness and even abuse in north-south research collaborations, particularly in Africa. This is usually caused by the reliance on external funding for research carried out in Africa, which gives considerable influence to the funding organisations or those controlling the use of those funds. RFI is intended "to create a reporting system that encourages governments, business, organisations and funders to describe how they take measures to create trusting, lasting, transparent and effective partnerships in research and innovation." Initially it will be deployed in the health research area as this is where the most pressing needs are perceived. The first African event took place in Nairobi in May, with others to follow in Dakar and Lagos. RFI will also be presented in Brussels on 28 September 2016.

See: <http://rfi.cohred.org/what-is-the-rfi/>

New Directive to facilitate entry and residence in EU for study, research, training

11 May 2016, Brussels: a newly-adopted EU directive proposes to relax some of the rules for entry and residence that apply to people from outside the EU who come to study, research, train or volunteer in Europe. EU countries now have two years to implement the new rules in their national legislation. However the directive does not apply in Denmark, Ireland and the UK.

See: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/news/20160524-eu-visa-directive-study-research-volunteer_en

African Union Research Grants 2016 Open Call for Proposals – deadline 17 August 2016

REMINDER: the 2016 call of the African Union Research Grants (AURG) programme was launched to support research and innovation in Africa and is supported by the European Union through the Pan African programme (2014-2020) with a budget of €17.5 million for two calls in 2016 and 2017.

The call addresses the priorities set out in the Research and Innovation Roadmap on Food & Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) which was determined through the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology & Innovation.

The AURG programme supports the Africa's Science Technology and Innovation Strategy-2024 which addresses the aspirations identified under Agenda 2063, as well as the Africa-EU Partnership priority on Human Development (<http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/priority-areas/human-development>).

The programme encourages "the creation of partnerships (research networks) for regional and sub-regional co-operation and of inter-institutional co-operation in Africa via setting up of consortia of scientists with minimum participation of at least three organisations out of which a majority should be from Africa with at least two different African countries. Additional partners from Europe can be included.

The AURG programme is entirely managed by the AUC. All inquiries should be addressed to the AUC. Applicants must refer to official documents for rules and procedures. The closing date for applications is 17 August 2016 at 5pm Addis Ababa time (Applications must be submitted in both paper and electronic version – see official documents for details).

All information and documents pertaining to the call are available on the AURG website: <http://au.int/aurg>

Call Application documents are also available for download via DropBox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lah5g4w3yax1827/AADT511pyqjADLhtlcKXp22qa?dl=0>.

News about the programme can be followed on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/AURResearchGrant>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/AURResearchGrant>).

Horizon 2020: Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – deadline 14 September 2016

REMINDER: the 2016 call for Individual Fellowships in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions offers *experienced researchers** from anywhere in the world the possibility to spend 1-2 years in a European research institution, while Global Fellowships allow European researchers to spend time abroad. For these fellowships it is necessary to find a host institution. Researchers must return to their countries afterwards.

[* *experienced researchers*: i.e. doctoral degree or at least four years' full-time research experience]

For full details and application process, refer to the Participant Portal – direct link:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/calls/h2020-msca-if-2016.html>

Showcasing EU-Africa Cooperation:

Here are some examples of FP7 and Horizon 2020 projects in child and maternal health research

OPTIMUNISE – Optimising the impact and cost-effectiveness of child health intervention programmes of vaccines and micronutrients in low-income countries. Led by Statens Serum Institut (Denmark) with 7 partners, including 4 African partners: Instituto Nacional de Saúde Pública (Guinea-Bissau), Centre de Recherche en Santé de Nouna (Burkina Faso), Ghana Health Service and INDEPTH network (Ghana). FP7 grant: €3 million. (details: http://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/98247_en.html)

mHealth4Afrika – Community-based ICT for Maternal Health in Africa.

Led by International Information Management Corp. (Ireland), with 2 other European partners (UK & Norway) and 5 African partners: University of Gondar (Ethiopia), Strathmore University (Kenya), University of Malawi and Baobab Health Trust (Malawi) and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (South Africa). Horizon 2020 grant: €2 million. (details: http://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/199851_en.html)

Upcoming events:

- 26-27 August, Accra, Ghana: **Stakeholder meeting for OPTIMUNISE project** on impact and effectiveness of child health intervention programmes for vaccines & micronutrients in low-income countries. Programme and registration: www.indepth-network.org/news-events/events/newsconference-optimising-impact-and-cost-effectiveness-child-health-interventi-0
- 30 Aug.-2 Sept., Ispra (Italy): **Africa-EU Evidence and Policy** seminar organised by EC Joint Research Centres (JRC) in coordination with the AUC (contact: JRC-knowledge@ec.europa.eu)
- 3-5 October 2016, Cape Town: **Int. Conference on Research Infrastructures (ICRI)** co-organised by South Africa's Dept. of Science & Technology (DST) and European Commission. (<https://icri2016.co.za/>)
- 8-9 December 2016, Pretoria: Science Forum South Africa (SFA) (www.sfsa.co.za).

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