



In Search of Better Health

Call for application for a PhD position under KEMRI-CLEAN-AIR (Africa) Project grant.

1. Background

In collaboration with the University of Liverpool through the NIHR CLEAN-Air (Africa) Global Health Research Unit (www.cleanairafrica.com), the Kenyan Medical Research institute (KEMRI) is launching a call for one PhD application to be held at KEMRI Graduate School.

CLEAN-Air (Africa) is a multi-national collaboration among seven research institutions from the UK and sub-Saharan Africa: University of Liverpool (UoL, UK), Kenyan Medical Research Institute (KEMRI, Kenya), Moi University (Kenya), Douala General Hospital (Cameroon), University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Makerere University Lung Institute (Uganda) and RBC (Rwanda). Through this project, the Unit plans to implement a rigorous and diverse program of research and capacity building to tackle the global burden of disease from household air pollution (HAP) and accelerate adoption of clean cooking to address this burden under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) time horizon of 2030, focusing on developing and supporting strategies under SDG7 namely: *“Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”* in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

2. Research Area

CLEAN-Air (Africa) aims to positively impact health, environment, climate and gender equality in Kenya and sub-Saharan Africa by investigating technological and digital innovations to support rapid, scaled transition to clean modern household energy and through strengthening health systems in primary and secondary prevention of air pollution related non-communicable disease.

Specifically in Kenya, research objectives to be addressed under CLEAN-Air (Africa) program include:

- 1) To evaluate the positive impacts on air pollution, health, school performance, and environment (deforestation) from transition of Kenyan schools to clean cooking (displacing reliance on wood and charcoal fuel). Working within a national program of transitioning schools and precisely using the Equity Bank Foundation Clean Cooking model, CLEAN-Air (Africa) will measure the positive impacts of switching to clean cooking on health, environment and climate to provide supporting evidence for scale of clean cooking in Kenyan schools.
- 2) To empower community health workforces (CHW) through education on HAP, health, and prevention to decrease air pollution related disease burden. This will entail development of a Ministry of Health HAP training manual (Module 14) and job aids for CHWs, evaluating its impact and piloting a digital training data collection platform, Teach Box, for training and active surveillance.
- 3) To Develop the first African Air Pollution Centre of Excellence through development of an air pollution monitoring hub (including state-of-the-art equipment and technological expertise) and health professional training.

3. Call for application: PhD topic and structure.

The NIHR-KEMRI, CLEAN-Air (Africa) project is calling for applicants for a one full-time, fully funded PhD scholarship. The PhD program will be associated with the CLEAN-Air (Africa) Unit's wider research program that will begin by May 2023. The doctorate will fall under any of the two following disciplines:

- (1) PhD by Coursework and Research in Public Health
- (2) PhD by Coursework and Research in Epidemiology and Biostatistics

The topic for the one PhD will fall within the remit and objectives of the CLEAN-Air (Africa) Unit's wider research program and will focus on:

- (1) Policy analysis linked to the LPG scale up announced goal / health and environmental impacts / cost-benefits.

The PhD will be registered with KEMRI Graduate School (KGS), under the department of Public and Community Health. Interested candidates are invited to apply through KEMRI application [procedures](#).

4. Funding

The PhD program is funded by KEMRI CLEAN-Air (Africa) project through CLEAN-Air (Africa) Global Health Research Unit sponsored by the National Institute of Health and Care Research (NIHR) in the UK.

Successful candidate will be funded for tuition fees, monthly living allowances, field allowances and any other research expenses, for the 3 years of the full-time program.

5. Requirements

Requirements for applications for the PhD scholarship include:

1. Having a Master of Science Degree in Public Health, Community Health, Epidemiology, Environmental Health, Biostatistics, Medicine or any other Health/ Biological Science for a PhD in Public Health or Epidemiology and Biostatistics.
2. Able to submit a copy of the abstract of their master's thesis as well as copies of their scientific publications, if any.
3. Able to submit a research concept note in English relevant to the PhD degree sought and the topic areas described, to demonstrate applied thinking. The proposed topic and research questions may not necessarily be the final PhD project topic. The concept note should not exceed 2000 words. The concept note should clearly define the research problem, relevant research conducted so far to address the problem with annotated references, gaps in the current evidence base and research work to be done (methods) with justification. We expect clear articulation of objectives, methods, and indicate expected outcomes linked to the priority research areas (set out in section 2).

6. Documents required for application/Application file

- A cover letter indicating the motivation to join the PhD program.
- An up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV).
- Certified copies of master's and bachelor's degrees and transcripts.
- Recommendation letters from at least two academic referees who are knowledgeable about the applicant.
- Copies of valid identification card and/or passport.
- Applicants with qualifications from universities located outside Kenya should have their qualifications aligned by the Kenya National Qualifications Authority. All applications must be done on the QAV Portal: qa.knqa.go.ke.

- Research Concept note relevant to the PhD degree sought.
- Master's thesis abstract.
- List of any peer reviewed publications.

7. Selection Criteria

The selection of candidates will be carried out based on the submitted documentation by applicants. Only candidates who meet the entry requirements mentioned above and who will have submitted all the required documents will be shortlisted and invited to interview. Candidates who successfully pass the interview process will be recommended for admission.

8. Important dates and notes

Applicants are requested to submit the required documentation with their application by 14th April 2023. Successful candidates are expected to complete registration and commence their studies by May 2023. Candidates are expected to complete the full-time PhD within the timeframe of the CLEAN-Air (Africa) program and in line with KGS standards, by June 2026.

How to Apply

Interested applicants are required to submit via email, **by 14th April 2023**, a complete application file in pdf format to KEMRI Graduate School Admissions (admissions@kemri.go.ke) and copied to the Principal Investigator Dr James Mwitari to the following addresses, using the email subject "KEMRI-CAA PhD Application": jmwitari@kemri.go.ke AND jmwitari@gmail.com.