



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR PHD SCHOLARSHIPS ON HEALTH OF AQUATIC RESOURCES: TRAHESA NORHED NORAD PROJECT 2014 – 2018

Background

In Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) there is a documented knowledge gap at higher education institutions related to fish health and environmental stressors. This includes lack of understanding of aetiologies, diagnostics and prophylaxis of fish diseases. Lack of knowledge hampers the economic development of aquaculture and fisheries industries in the region, precludes evidence-based policies and decision-making from governments and also has societal implication for the development of aquatic resources-dependent communities. There is also a need to build competence in fish and environmental health to monitor and protect wild freshwater and marine fish populations which are essential for food security and food safety in the region. Furthermore the quality of fish products and the level of manmade chemical pollutants and biotoxins have implication to human health, sustainable utilization of resources and environmental conservation. Capacity building in these fields is required to ensure an expanded, qualified workforce in institutions with solid research capabilities that can educate and train competent resource persons who will meet tomorrow's development challenges related to production of quality high-value protein in the aquatic environment.

Project Goal and Intended outcome

Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), in collaboration with Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), Makerere University (MU), University of Nairobi (UoN), University of Zambia (UNZA) and the University of Dar es Salaam's Institute of Marine Sciences (IMS) in Zanzibar is undertaking a collaborative research project entitled **"Capacity Building for Training and Research in Aquatic and Environmental Health in Eastern and Southern Africa (TRAHESA)"** The project is supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) under the Norwegian Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education and Research for Development (NORHED). The goal of the project is to strengthen education and research capacity in aquatic and environmental health in Eastern and Southern Africa. The intended outcome of the project is improved livelihood of fisheries dependent communities, and food safety and security without compromising environmental conservation. The project intends to achieve the above through training of human resources at both master and PhD levels while generating the information to fill the knowledge gap.

Call for Applications

We are pleased to announce a call for applications for 10 PhD scholarships within the field of fish diseases and health of aquatic environment. The aim of the scholarships is to support higher education and training of local scholars working in research and academic positions. Selected PhD candidates will register as full time students at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) in Norway where they will undertake courses and specialized laboratory work and will undertake field studies in their respective countries.

The distribution of positions will be as follows:

COUNTRY	INSTITUTIONS	TOPICS	
Tanzania	Department of Veterinary Medicine and Public Health, Sokoine University of Agriculture	I	Epidemiology and Molecular Characterization of Lymphocystis like viruses in Fish
		II	Epidemiology and Molecular Characterization of <i>Flexibacter spp.</i> infections in Fish
	Institute of Marine Sciences, University of Dar es Salaam	I	Biotoxins associated with marine farmed seaweeds
		II	Chemical pollutants and biotoxins in aquaculture
Uganda	College of Veterinary Medicine Animal Resources and Biosecurity (COVAB), Makerere University	I	Aquatic viral metagenomics
		II	Aquatic bacterial metagenomics
Kenya	Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Parasitology, University of Nairobi	I	Epidemiology and Molecular characterization of Infectious Pancreatic Necrosis Virus (IPNV) in Rainbow trout
		II	Mycotoxin in fish and feeds (<i>Aspergillus spp.</i> ; Aflatoxicosis)
Zambia	School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zambia	I	Pathophysiology of Bacterial Fish Diseases
		II	Effects of chemical contaminants on disease susceptibility and reproductive performance in fresh water fish

Eligibility

- Holders of MVM, MSc, MPhil or other equivalent master degree in relevant fields in natural and environmental sciences.
- Highly motivated to develop a scientific career and capability to complete PhD studies within time frame (3 years).
- Intention to undertake research on health of aquatic resources.
- Not already enrolled in a sponsored PhD programme.
- Willingness to work in a team and a strong ambition to accomplish the research goals of the project.
- Good academic records /transcripts.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Good command of spoken and written English.
- Perspectives on future use of PhD skills for teaching, research and extension.
- Full time availability from July 2014 for a period of 3 years.

How to apply

Potential applicants are hereby invited to submit an application letter, curriculum vitae, academic transcripts and certificates, 3 names of academic referees whereby at least one of them being the immediate work supervisors, and a concept note on one of topics listed above against respective countries and institutions. The concept note should contain an outline of the rationale for the proposed study, objectives, methodological approach and expected outputs. Applications MUST

reach focal persons in the respective Institutions and Countries by 25th May 2014. Successful applicants will be notified by 31st May 2014. Where necessary, interviews with independent panellist will be conducted in the selection process.

Female candidates are highly encouraged to apply. The positions are only available to applicants from Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia for the respective positions in those countries.

The applications should be submitted to focal persons in respective institutions whose contact details are shown below:

1. Prof. Robinson Mdegela; E-mail: rmdegela2012@gmail.com / mdegela@suanet.ac.tz for 2 positions at Sokoine University of Agriculture
2. Prof. Denis Byarugaba; E-mail: dkb@covab.mak.ac.ug for 2 positions at Makerere University.
3. Prof. Paul Mbuthia; E-mail: pgmbuthia@uonbi.ac.ke for 2 positions at University of Nairobi.
4. Dr. Aviti Mmochi; E-mail: mmochi@ims.udsm.ac.tz / mmochi2003@yahoo.co.uk for 2 positions at the Institute of Marine Sciences.
5. Dr. Kaampwe Muzandu; E-mail: kmuzandu@unza.zm for 2 positions at University of Zambia.

All applications MUST be copied to the Project Coordinator in the South; Prof. Robinson Mdegela; E-mail: rmdegela2012@gmail.com / mdegela@suanet.ac.tz and the Coordinator in the North; Prof. Stephen Mutoloki; stephen.mutoloki@nmbu.no

Responsibilities

The PhD fellows' tasks will be to study and report on their selected research question within the context of this project by methods depending on the area of research. The interconnected sub-studies will require intensive interaction with the programme leader, research collaborators, supervisors, and other PhD and MSc students in the programme. The progress of the PhD fellows' work will be evaluated annually or as will be deemed necessary by the Supervisors and/ or project coordinators. It is expected that each of the PhD fellows will publish up to four (4) papers in international peer reviewed journals.

Financial matters

The fellowship will cover tuition fees, a monthly stipend (varying depending on whether the student is in Norway or at African Institution at a particular time) and research costs based on successful deliverables.

Further Contacts

More information on the project can be obtained from:

Professor Robinson Mdegela

TRAHESA Project Coordinator

Department of Veterinary Medicine and Public Health

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Sokoine University of Agriculture

P. O. Box 3021, Morogoro, Tanzania

Tel: +255 23 260 42 45/ +255 754 371 628/ +255 715 371 628

Email: rmdegela2012@gmail.com / rmdegela@yahoo.com / mdegela@suanet.ac.tz