



Call for MSc Research Fellowship

Introduction

Research on traditional medicine that intends to produce safe, effective, and quality herbal-based medicines and commercialization has a long history. Yet, innovations in translating research outcomes into health products for public use and commercialization have not been smoother. Challenges are vivid commencing from translating the research outcome to innovate a new health product to commercialization. The health innovation ecosystem including policy and strategic opportunities, product registration, and commercialization landscape (policies, legislations, regulations, standards, and Intellectual Property Rights protection as well as directives and guidelines) are critical affecting the success of innovations. However, the actual facilitators and bottlenecks that hampered the commercialization of innovative health products have not been clearly understood.

Cognizant of the challenges and the need for seeking a smother health innovation pathway in Ethiopia, Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI) in collaboration with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has initiated a project entitled “Strengthening Health Innovation Ecosystem in Ethiopia (SHINE). The project strives to develop and possibly commercialize innovative health products, one of which is herbal-based medicine, through which innovators and key stakeholders can learn through the process for improved performance in the future.

The Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI) seeks a master’s student to participate in the project so as to deeply understand the facilitators and barriers associated with herbal-based medicine development and use/commercialization. This research will specifically identify, assess, analyze, and synthesize experiences related to the innovation and commercialization of herbal-based medicines in Ethiopia, aiming to outline the facilitators and barriers to successful and sustainable commercialization and use.

Overarching research questions

Evidence synthesis

- What experiences, challenges, and interventions from low- and middle-income countries can inform the innovation and commercialization of herbal-based medicines in Ethiopia?

Opportunities, gaps, and challenges to innovate and commercialize

- Do innovators have the required educational background; and obtain training for their continuous professional development?
- Are existing policies, legal frameworks, standards, IPR, and implementation directives and guidelines in place to support health innovation products to commercialization?
- Do key stakeholders (involved in innovation, standardization, regulatory process, IPR protection, and commercialization) engage; in collaboration, networking, and effective communication systems and channels in place to facilitate health innovation products to commercialization?
- Do the key stakeholders have the belief, attitude, and culture to embrace the innovation product and commit to commercialization of health innovation products?



- Are the required physical and sustainable financial resources available for innovation and commercialization of health innovation products?

Barriers and enablers to innovate and commercialize diagnostics and health products

- Are demand, purchase capacity, accessibility, and culture of the end user considered during the process of innovating herbal-based medicines and *in vitro* diagnostic devices?
- Is cost and benefit of the innovation product supported with evidence-based data?
- Are affiliated institutions, regulatory authorities, and industries working in tandem along the different stages of innovation pathway to avail the product for marketing?
- Are the key stakeholders properly executing their respective tasks in driving innovation product to large scale production and commercialization?

Develop intervention and implementation model

- Will the product be used to tackle one or more of the major health problems in the country?
- Does the model consider political climate; sociodemographic, sociocultural, and economical contexts of the population/end user; and environment where the product is to be used?
- What incentive and motivation mechanisms (for inventors, innovators, and manufacturers in particular) are included in the model to encourage commercialization of health innovation products?
- Does the model to be developed and implemented consider the potential facilitators and barriers to innovation and commercialization of health innovation products in the country?

Who is eligible to apply?

Master's students in Social Pharmacy, Social Sciences, Behavioral Health, and related fields who have completed coursework and are ready to undertake thesis work. The selected student will focus on the aforementioned key questions, which are related to herbal-based medicine.

How to apply?

Interested candidates should submit the following documents to email:

rresearch.training@ahri.gov.et

1. Prepare a concept note that addresses the problem statement and justification; elaborate research questions that the research aims to answer; methodology to be followed in the research; implementation plan; budget etc.
2. Cover Letter: A one-page letter that introduces the applicant, explains her/his interest in the position, and highlights relevant skills and experiences.
3. Curriculum Vitae (CV): A tailored CV, not exceeding two pages, that outlines academic background, research experience, and any relevant skills or achievements.
4. References: Two references who can attest academic performance of the candidate and suitability for the position.



Application deadline

Full Application documents should be received on 15th October 2024.

(research.training@ahri.gov.et).