



Makerere University / UVRI Centre of Excellence
in Infection and Immunity
Research and Training

Information for Fellows, Mentors and Supervisors



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1 Introduction

The Makerere University-Uganda Virus Research Institute Centre of Excellence in Infection and Immunity Research and Training (MUII-Plus) is a DELTAS¹ Programme funded by the Wellcome Trust and Department for International Development (DfID). MUII-Plus now aims to evolve into a Centre of Excellence - supporting Infection and Immunity science in Uganda, focussing on young, emerging leaders and encompassing a world-class training programme. MUII-Plus is a collaboration between Makerere University, the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI), the MRC/UVRI Uganda Research Unit, the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and the University of Cambridge.

The Centre undertakes a number of activities aimed at attracting bright young people to a research career and supporting their career development. These include:

- Open Days for schools and undergraduates
- Support for internships for school leavers and undergraduates at UVRI
- Collaborative Makerere-UVRI scientific meetings
- Fast-track Masters Training Fellowships
- PhD fellowships
- Post-doctoral fellowships
- Short courses

The Wellcome Trust Uganda Masters, PhD and post-doctoral fellowships in Infection and Immunity are a key component, and the commitment of fellows and their supervisors to research training, for themselves and for others, is critical for the overall success of the programme.

2 Fellows

Fellows are selected from among the brightest young Ugandan scientists. They are people who, in the opinion of the selection committee, have the potential to become leading, internationally competitive researchers for the region. They are expected to work full-time on their research career. Masters and PhD students are expected to complete their studies in a timely fashion.

The fellows will contribute to the scientific life of the institutions and groups where they work through their ideas, their studies, their interactions with peers, colleagues and supervisors, and their support to junior staff. They will carry out research projects that are of international significance, but relevant to the region. They will publish their work and present it at national and international fora. They will ensure appropriate dissemination of results that are of relevance to public health.

During the course of their fellowships, particularly during the last year to 18 months, fellows are expected to develop and submit further, internationally competitive funding applications, which will support them in their future careers.

They will be supported in these endeavours by their supervisors and mentors, and by the coordinators of the Makerere-UVRI research training programme.

¹ **DELTA**S: Developing Excellence in Leadership, Training and Science
<https://wellcome.ac.uk/what-we-do/directories/developing-excellence-leadership-training-and-science-initiative>

3 Management and support

The programme is managed through the Uganda Virus Research Institute and the School of Graduate Studies at Makerere University.

Key contacts are as follows:

Professor Buyinza Mukadasi:	Director of Graduate Studies buyinza@caes.mak.ac.ug
Professor Alison Elliott:	Centre Director alison.tom@infocom.co.ug ; 0752 720609
Ms Allen Mukhwana	Centre Manager amukhwana@uvri.go.ug 0772437746
Dr Rebecca Nsubuga	Statistician, MRC Unit rebecca.nsubuga@mrcuganda.org ;
Dr Stephen Cose	Immunologist stephen.cose@mrcuganda.org ; 0792925686
Mr Joshua Mandre:	Accountant jmandre@uvri.go.ug 0772999861
Mr Moses Kizza:	Centre Administrator moses.kizza@mrcuganda.org ; 0752626628

4 Practicalities

- 4.1 Stipends and research funds in Uganda are administered at UVRI by Mr Joshua Mandre. Fellows should contact him before, or as soon as possible after, the start of their fellowship to arrange for their stipends to be paid. Mr Mandre and Mr Kizza will assist fellows in arranging the purchase of supplies and equipment.
- 4.2 Fellowship appointments fall under the auspices of the Uganda Government and fellows are, therefore, to be governed in all aspects of their fellowship appointment, by the Uganda Virus Research Institute Training Policy, by the Makerere University regulations for Masters or PhD students and by the code of conduct and the regulations of the Uganda Standing Order, unless amended by law.
- 4.3 Fellows will have 22 working days of leave per year, plus public holidays. Leave days should be agreed upon with the supervisor.
- 4.4 If required, pregnancy/maternity leave will be 60 days.
- 4.5 It is a condition of these fellowship awards that fellows should work full-time on their research projects. Fellows are not expected to undertake any paid or unpaid employment that may in any way conflict with their fellowship.
- 4.6 Post-doctoral fellows may undertake non-research activities such as teaching, clinical work, advisory committee and external consultancies, but these should not occupy more than, on average, eight hours per week.
- 4.7 Other than at the end of the fellowship, in case of intention to terminate the fellowship, each party must give the other 30 days notice in writing.
- 4.8 Grant funds are available for attending conferences. Often registration fees and hotel costs, as well as flights, can be paid for directly by Mr Mandre. For incidental expenses during travel, an advance can be provided. The aim is that the costs of attending the conference should be covered (i.e. the person attending the conference should not end up having to spend their own money). On the other hand the aim is not for the person attending the conference to make a profit. Therefore we are happy to provide an advance sufficient to ensure that the individual does not run out of funds on the journey, but this must be accounted for on return, and the balance returned. Acceptable costs include essential expenses such as visas, meals, transport to and from the conference venue, internet costs when these are not covered by the conference, but not luxury expenses such as alcoholic beverages or laundry. Accounts should be returned within one month of return from the trip. Funds unaccounted for will be deducted from the fellow's salary.

5 PhD fellows

- 5.1 Registration and degree requirements are the requirements of Makerere University.
- 5.2 Students are expected to complete their thesis and submit it within 1 year (for Masters students) and 3 years (for PhD students) to ensure completion of the degree (i.e. undertaking and passing a viva) within 2 or 3 years, respectively, as well as writing up and submission of papers based on the research conducted.
- 5.3 Due to budget limitations you should not expect any extension of funding beyond the duration stipulated in the award letter.
- 5.4 Tuition fees will be paid to Makerere University (or other Universities, if applicable) by the Centre

6 Facilities

- 6.1 Office facilities, including internet, will usually be provided by the group or department with whom the fellow is working. Some IT support can be provided through the MRC Unit at UVRI if required.
- 6.2 A resource centre and library are available at UVRI which includes desk top computers, internet access and printing/ photocopying facilities. The resource centre will be accessible to fellows, although stationery, printing and photocopying costs must be covered from the fellowship budget.

7 Statistical support

Statistical support is available to all fellows through the MRC Unit. Fellows requiring this support should contact Dr Rebecca Nsubuga (Rebecca.Nsubuga@mrcuganda.org) for an appointment. Fellows should note the following:

- The first consultation with the statistics team should take place before data collection begins. At this meeting, they should discuss with the advisor the statistical implications of study design, the data collection instruments, the creation of their database.
- It is important to have agreement between fellow, supervisors and statistician – a joint meeting may be useful and, for PhD students, it may be appropriate for the statistician to be a member of the Doctoral committee (see below).
- Supervisors need to advise on how much help with data analysis is acceptable. In general it is expected that fellows will do a large proportion of the analysis, with guidance from the statistician, so that they genuinely understand their data.

8 Ethics Approval

Ethical clearance must be obtained for all research proposals involving observation, questioning, examination, specimen collection or intervention with human subjects/participants. All fellows undertaking research involving human subjects, including primary research and secondary analysis of existing data, are required to obtain ethical approval before embarking on data collection.

For Masters and PhD fellows, Ethics Approval must be obtained from the Faculty/ School/ Institute of Makerere University within which you will undertake your studies. Approval must also be obtained from the Uganda National Council for Science & Technology.

Post-doctoral fellows may obtain institutional ethical approval either through Makerere University, or through UVRI. In either case, approval must also be obtained from the Uganda National Council for Science & Technology.

Some overseas institutions require that proposals also be submitted to their institutional ethics committee if a member of their staff is to be involved. Fellows should consult their supervisors as to whether this is necessary. This can be done concurrently with the submission to Makerere University or UVRI, in order to save time. Fellows with co-supervisors or collaborators at other overseas institutions should consult them about the need for additional approvals.

9 Training opportunities and short courses

A number of training opportunities and short courses are available through Makerere University and UVRI. There are some that PhD fellows are expected to take, as part of their PhD programme. Such core courses include:

- 9.1 Research methodology
- 9.2 Information competence and management
- 9.3 Statistics/ computer applications in research
- 9.4 Philosophy of method
- 9.5 Research management
- 9.6 Communication and scholarly writing

Others are optional. Courses of particular interest may include:

- 9.7 Uganda Intensive Course in Statistical Methods and Epidemiology, offered by MRC/UVRI.
- 9.8 Immunology in the Tropics (MUII-plus)
- 9.9 Bioinformatics in the Tropics (MUII-plus)

9.10 Clinical epidemiology (Makerere University)

9.11 Qualitative data analysis (Makerere University)

Fellows will be informed of these and other opportunities as they arise. They will be expected to maintain a log of all such courses attended.

10 Meetings

- 10.1 Meetings will be held once per month for peer support, and workshops, alternating between Makerere University and UVRI. Fellows are expected to attend these meetings unless they are overseas.
- 10.2 Annual meetings will be held at which all fellows will be expected to give presentations of their work thus far. These may be held in collaboration with other related initiatives.
- 10.3 Transport is often provided between UVRI and Makerere University for these meetings. If this is the case then fellows are expected to make use of it and those who choose to travel independently must do so at their own cost. If transport has not been arranged, fellows will be reimbursed at the rate of Ush 30,000 for a round trip between Makerere University and UVRI. Fellows are encouraged to share transport on such occasions.
- 10.4 Fellowships include funds for attendance at international meetings. Fellows are expected to plan with their supervisors so that they present their work at appropriate meetings.

11 Supervision

The Centre is keen that fellows should be well supervised and supported. In the case of post-doctoral fellows, who work fairly independently, this may be relatively informal. In the case of PhD students, and Masters students undertaking their projects, formal arrangements for regular supervision and documentation of meetings with supervisors are expected.

Each PhD and post-doctoral fellow has supervisors/ mentors from at least three institutions. It is suggested that one supervisor should be identified as the lead supervisor for each fellow. This is the one that will take the principal responsibility for frequent contact with the fellow and advising on day-to-day problems.

It is suggested that a joint (progress review) meeting between the fellow and all supervisors should be held every three months, according to needs of the fellow. Often, this may need to be a "virtual" meeting with some members attending by skype. Fellows are encouraged to prepare an agenda and documents/ presentations that can be reviewed by all members of the committee, wherever they are, before and during these meetings.

Masters students may have a supervisor only at Makerere University, or at Makerere and the institution at which they undertake their project.

The Centre's expectations of fellows and supervisors, particularly in relation to PhD fellows, are as follows:

Fellows' responsibilities:

- 11.1 Taking responsibility for their own personal and professional development
- 11.2 Maintaining contact with supervisors/mentors, taking the initiative to arrange meetings
- 11.3 Preparing adequately for meetings with supervisors
- 11.4 Setting and keeping to timetables and deadlines, including planning and submitting work as and when required and generally maintaining satisfactory progress with the programme of research
- 11.5 Making supervisors aware of any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect their work
- 11.6 Attending any development opportunities (research-related and other) that have been identified when agreeing their development needs with their supervisors.
- 11.7 Being familiar with institutional regulations and policies that affect them, including regulations for their qualification, health and safety, intellectual property and ethical research guidelines.

Supervisors' responsibilities:

- 11.8 Providing satisfactory guidance and advice
- 11.9 Being responsible for monitoring the progress of the student's research programme
- 11.10 Establishing and maintaining regular contact with the student,
- 11.11 Ensuring his or her accessibility to the fellow when he or she needs advice, by whatever means is most suitable given the fellow's location and mode of study
- 11.12 Having input into the assessment of the fellow's development needs
- 11.13 Providing timely, constructive and effective feedback on the fellow's work, including his or her overall progress within the programme
- 11.14 Ensuring that the fellow is aware of the need to exercise probity and conduct his or her research according to ethical principles; and the implications of research misconduct
- 11.15 Ensuring that the fellow is aware of institutional-level sources of advice
- 11.16 Providing effective pastoral support
- 11.17 Helping the fellow to interact with others working in the field of research, for example encouraging fellow to attend relevant conferences, supporting him or her to seek funds to attend such events, and to submit conference papers and articles to refereed journals
- 11.18 Making arrangements for alternative support if the supervisor is to be away for more than four weeks. The alternative support person does not replace the supervisor, but can offer support and guidance while the supervisor is away

- 11.19 Maintaining necessary supervisory expertise, supported by relevant continuing professional development opportunities
- 11.20 Ensuring that fellows have read and understood the relevant safety documents before they are allowed to start work on their projects.

Supervisory meetings

Meetings between supervisors and fellows should be held regularly. The timing and frequency of meetings will vary according to the nature of the research and the needs of the students. Regular contact should be maintained, particularly with the lead supervisor, even when the fellow is overseas.

Reviewing written work

Written work should be reviewed according to an agreed time frame. It is recommended that components of written work be reviewed from an early stage in the project. Supervisors are expected to give timely feedback in writing, and through discussion meetings.

12 Open Access

All publications that have been supported in whole or in part from MUII-plus funds MUST be published in accordance with the Wellcome Trust's Open Access guidelines. The Wellcome Trust makes funds available for this provided that the MUII-plus grant is acknowledged. Fellows must submit publications to journals that are compliant with Wellcome's Open Access policy:

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/funding/managing-grant/open-access-policy>.

Key elements of the policy are that the Wellcome Trust:

- “require[s] electronic copies of any research papers that have been accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, and are supported in whole or in part by Wellcome Trust funding, to be made available through PubMed Central (PMC) and Europe PMC as soon as possible and in any event within six months of the journal publisher's official date of final publication (similarly, monographs and book chapters must be made available through PMC Bookshelf and Europe PMC with a maximum embargo of six months)”
- “encourage[s] – and where it pays an open access fee, require[s] – authors and publishers to licence research papers using the Creative Commons Attribution licence (CC-BY) so they may be freely copied and re-used (for example, for text- and data-mining purposes or creating a translation), provided that such uses are fully attributed (CC-BY is also the preferred licence for monographs and book chapters)”

Fellows should work with the Centre secretariat for support in arranging that the necessary payments are made. This is a valuable opportunity which will increase the visibility of fellows' work and likely citation rates.

13 ORCID

All fellows MUST register with ORCID (<http://orcid.org/>) and maintain an up-to-date ORCID account. This is also a Wellcome Trust requirement. It is also an increasingly-recognised tool used, for example during grant applications, to provide a link between you and your research outputs.

“ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from every other researcher and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between you and your professional activities ensuring that your work is recognized”

14 Monitoring progress

MUII-Plus requires to monitor the progress of its fellows

- ☆ to ensure that progress is good and to identify any areas in which the fellows need additional support
- ☆ to identify ways in which the training programme can develop and improve
- ☆ to provide feedback to the Wellcome Trust, and to support applications for further funding.

For these reasons the following are required:

- 14.1 A log of research, supervision and training activities should be kept, and this will be reviewed annually at a meeting with the training programme coordinator.
- 14.2 For PhD fellows, a formal review of progress will be held at the end of the first year (for three-year fellowships), at the end of 6 months for fast-track PhD fellowships. Further funding will be contingent upon adequate progress. The following will be required:
 - 14.2.1 Full registration at Makerere University
 - 14.2.2 Full research proposal, as submitted to Makerere University
 - 14.2.3 Written report of research and progress during the first year
 - 14.2.4 Oral presentation of work undertaken during the first year
- 14.3 All fellows will be expected to provide a written report of research and progress each year, on a form which will be provided for the purpose.
- 14.4 Masters fellows must provide documentation of their progress and grades achieved in year one, and an acceptable project proposal and budget, with budget justification, by the end of year one. A final report will be required at the end of year two.

Notes
