



Dear Candidate,

**Chief Executive of the Africa Research Excellence Fund**

Thank you for your interest in this great opportunity to lead the Africa Research Excellence Fund charity. I hope that you find the information in this recruitment pack interesting and that you decide to apply for the role. The following pages describe the role and provide the information that you need to apply.

To apply, please:

- provide an up-to-date CV which includes your contact details, education and vocational qualifications, memberships of professional bodies, career history and explanation of any breaks in your employment history.
- provide a brief supporting statement setting out why you are the right candidate for this role making reference to the job description and the person specification. **The case that you make and the way that it is presented will form a key part of the shortlisting process.**
- complete our equal opportunities monitoring and declaration form.
- let us know if you are not able to make any of the assessment or interview dates (the pre-arranged dates can be found in the application pack).

We acknowledge all applications within two working dates of receipt. If you have not heard from us within two days of your email submission, please call me on 01425 567708 or 07939 269612 to confirm that your application has been safely received. You should use a secure email address for submitting your application as our system will filter out emails that it believes have the potential to be spam.

Please send your completed application to my colleague Heather Taylor ([talent@foresthr.co.uk](mailto:talent@foresthr.co.uk)), by 12:00 on Thursday, 28 January 2021.

We look forward to receiving an application from you.

Kind regards

Sue Manning

Director, Forest HR Ltd



email: [sue@foresthr.co.uk](mailto:sue@foresthr.co.uk) mobile: 07939 269612

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Strengthening health research capacity in Africa



# Recruitment Pack

## Chief Executive

## Dear Applicant

I am delighted that you are interested in joining the Africa Research Excellence Fund (AREF). If you work for us, you will play a key role in saving lives and improving global health by contributing to the development and growth of the next generation of African health researchers in Africa, for Africa and the rest of the World.

Many of the diseases and conditions that affect human health have been cured or overcome as a result of medical research. But there will always be more to do and the current Covid 19 pandemic serves as a timely reminder about the threats we face living in our global community. With continued deforestation, climate change and frequent flights, pandemics can take off from any corner of our Earth. In recent times Ebola and Zika from Africa threatened the lives and economies not only in Africa but the world over.

Significant sums of money have been spent by governments and donors to train MScs and PhDs in the African continent but proportionately less has been spent on postdoctoral researchers – the foundation for developing the next generation of leading researchers from the continent. Coupled with the fact that African governments spend very little on postdocs, a significant number of promising African scientists leave the shores for greener pastures in the North never to return or abandon science to join lucrative international positions in Africa. The few who work hard to remain in science need to compete for international funding with significant competition from their counterparts in the North. That is where AREF steps in.

AREF is a charity that funds and nurtures the most promising young African health researchers by providing them with stepping-stones to compete and win international funding. We use our donations responsibly and ensure we create the greatest impact where it is most needed. We meet the highest governance standards through our unique connection with the Medical Research Foundation.

Our work is underpinned by the following core values:

### Daring & Smart

We dare to be different. We invest in promising and talented young African health researchers in Africa receiving little or no support and will rise to any challenge to do so.

### Diligent

We spend every penny wisely. We ensure all donations are directly invested in research capacity development.

We have a talented and committed team who care deeply about and who all contribute to fulfilling our mission.

I hope you will be as inspired by our vision to improve human health as we are. If you are successful in securing the CEO role, you will be playing an important part by contributing to the development of the next generation of African health researchers in Africa for Africa and for global health.

**Professor Nicholas Lemoine**  
**Chair of the Board of Trustees**  
**Africa Research Excellence Fund**

# The Africa Research Excellence Fund

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## Introduction

The Africa Research Excellence Fund (AREF) charity works to improve the quality and impact of health research in Sub-Saharan Africa by nurturing African-led research in and for the region. Launched in 2015, our focus is on enabling talented young health researchers to access the skills necessary to become leading scientists in Africa. Most researchers in Sub-Saharan Africa lack the mentors, collaborators and key skills that are essential to winning funding for their own research ideas and becoming research leaders. AREF is addressing a critical career stage for these researchers by providing stepping-stones to competitive international funding.

## Challenges

More and more African health researchers are achieving PhDs, putting them on the starting block of a research career. The problem remains that, few can access the postdoctoral mentorship, skills training and advanced research networks they need to unlock research funding that will lead eventually to the building of their own teams and earn them a place with the continent's and global scientific leaders. We need to develop a new generation of leading African researchers – working in Africa on Africa's health challenges – and we need to do this urgently given the scale of Africa's health challenges including emerging infections and the rapid increase of non-communicable diseases.

## AREF's Programmes

AREF's programmes are open to individuals from all Sub-Saharan countries. Our fellowship placements are in Europe and South Africa. We currently run two programmes:

Our competitive **Awards Programme** enables emerging African researchers to undertake a 3-9-month placement at a centre of research excellence in Europe (including the UK) or Africa in order to develop and explore their own ideas, develop specialist & transferable skills, extend their research relationships and successfully gain further research funding. Each Fellow undertakes a personal development programme during the placement in which they access short courses and hands-on training in advanced research skills; winning funding, managing research projects and get new opportunities for collaboration and mentorship.

Our **Academy Programme** provides training and development programmes, such as our Grant-writing workshops and the leadership development programmes. The leadership development programme aims to enable our partner Institutions in Africa and the researchers they nominate to develop and practice key skills for managing and leading research. This programme aims to build the confidence of emergent researchers in determining their own career intentions and have more influence within their institutions.

## Achievements to date

The Africa Research Excellence Fund has achieved in less than five years the following **outputs**:

- **31** health researchers have or will benefit from our *Researcher Development Fellowship*
- **142** health researchers from across sub-Saharan Africa have been trained through our *Essential Grant Writing Skills Workshops*, and many are winning research grants.
- **20** emergent researchers from six African universities and research institutions have just completed the *Researcher & Leadership Development Programme*. They are reporting outcomes in terms of increased confidence, collaboration, productivity and impact.
- **10** scientists have similarly completed our first *Towards Leadership* programme.
- Our beneficiaries have won over £4.7 millions of research funds

## Where we work



# THE ROLE AND OUR REQUIREMENTS

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## Chief Executive of the Africa Research Excellence Fund

### ROLE PURPOSE

You will lead the Africa Research Excellence Fund (AREF). You will be responsible for implementing the strategic direction, set by the Board of Trustees, for day-to-day operations and you will be the charity's spokesperson.

## What you will do

### Strategic direction

- Lead on the development and implementation of AREF's strategic plan by monitoring international developments in health research capacity building in Africa and working with the Strategy Board and other expert advisors.
- Develop programmes to build health research capacity in Africa.
- Evaluate the implementation, outputs and impact of the strategy.

### Governance and control

- Review, develop and manage the supporting structures needed to ensure good governance (e.g. Board and committee membership, implementation of decisions)
- Support the Board of Trustees and its committees ensuring that they are well positioned to manage the affairs of AREF, achieving the highest standards of governance and in accordance with best practice and the Trust Deed
- Be responsible for risk management.

### Research capacity and researcher development

- Develop, monitor and have oversight of innovative Awards and Academy programmes designed to build health research capacity in Africa
- Lead on the development of cases for support for researcher development programmes
- Oversee the management of programmes and other structures to support researcher development.

### Financial control

- Develop five-year organisational plan
- Develop annual business plans and budgets
- Ensure financial control and cost-effective use of resources
- Make the case to the Board for additional resources, as appropriate.

## Operational control

- Take executive responsibility for all operations, ensuring compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements and in accordance with the directives of the Board of Trustees and its committees.
- Set and maintain culture, behaviours and standards.
- Lead, develop and support a high performing, motivated team.
- Be responsible for health and safety in the office and during events.
- Ensure the delivery of high-quality services and ensure that all activities are carried out to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.

## Communications

- Oversee the development and implementation of a communications strategy to support the strategic plan.
- Oversee all communications activities through all channels, being responsible for tone and content.
- Be the spokesperson for AREF and, more generally, for African health scientists.

## Representation, fundraising and providing services/trading

- Represent AREF with international funders of research and research capacity building, and research organisations in Africa and elsewhere
- Build strong and effective relationships and partnerships with public and private stakeholders
- Personally persuade individuals and organisations to donate significant funds to support AREF's activities
- Oversee fundraising activities ensuring due diligence and compliance with relevant legislation and best practice.
- Oversee the provision of services, including assessing the need for and establishing a trading vehicle, establishing and maintaining quality standards and accreditation.

## In addition, you will also

- Carry out any other reasonable duties.
- Identify opportunities to continually improve AREF.
- Be required to undertake significant travel domestically and internationally.

## Who you will work with

You will report to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. You will have the support of, and will work closely with, the Executive Chair and the whole of the Strategy Board. The Executive Chair is also the President and Founder of AREF. You will have oversight of the whole AREF team and will directly manage the Head of Programmes, Head of New Business and Resources and Head of Fundraising. The AREF team has a base in Africa and Europe (one in Fajara, The Gambia and one office in London, UK). You will work predominantly from the London office.

## ABOUT YOU

### Who you are

You are inspired to tackle the chronic lack of opportunities for African scientists to set the agenda for and lead health research in Africa.

### What you will bring to the role

#### You will have:

- a proven and strong track record of success at a senior level in an organisation, preferably a not-for-profit
- senior experience of health research funding
- senior experience of research capacity development or researcher development
- exceptional networking and relationship-building skills, preferably with international partners
- experience of service delivery and/or trading of services
- experience of raising funds.

#### You will be able to:

- inspire others of the importance of creating opportunities for Africans to undertake health research in Africa
- network and develop strong relationships with stakeholders
- communicate clearly and confidently at the highest level
- represent AREF

### Personal attributes

#### You will be:

- a strong leader
- strong public speaker and inspirational communicator at all levels
- have an extensive network of relevant contacts
- a relationship builder.

#### Attractive Extras:

You may also have:

- health research funding or research capacity building experience in Africa
- experience of working with international funding agencies.

# OUR OFFER

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(For information purposes, only)

<b>Salary</b>	Ca. £65,000 depending on experience
<b>Pension</b>	We offer an auto-enrolment scheme with Standard Life. On employment, we will double-match your contributions up to a maximum 10% (employer contributions). There is no qualifying period.
<b>Working hours</b>	36 hours per week, usually worked over 5 days (negotiable)  Flex-time system and core working hours of 10 am to 4 pm. Some opportunities to work from home.  This role will require the post holder to work additional hours to cover meetings and travel. No additional salary is paid
<b>Annual leave</b>	30 days plus public holidays (pro rata)  April to March holiday year
<b>Other benefits</b>	Employee assistance benefits  Other health-related benefits  An opportunity to make a difference to human health in Africa  Fantastic colleagues
<b>Employer</b>	You will be employed by the Medical Research Foundation (a long-standing charity to which we are formally linked) and you will be seconded to AREF
<b>Location</b>	Remote working during Covid-19 pandemic.  Otherwise you will be based in our London office in a shared office building: 49-51 East Road, London N1 6AH. We will consider requests to work remotely for part of the working week.  You will be required to undertake significant travel domestically and internationally, including to our Africa office in The Gambia.
<b>Probation period</b>	Six months
<b>Notice period</b>	Five months, after successful completion of a six-month probation period

## KEY DATES

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<b>Closing date</b>	28 January 2021 at 12:00 noon
<b>Shortlisted candidates notified</b>	By 8 February 2021
<b>Interview dates</b>	Friday 12 February 2021 (pm) Wednesday 17 February 2021 (pm) Friday 19 February 2021 (pm)