

**South Africa-Pittsburgh Public Health Genomic Epidemiology Research  
Training Program (SAPPHGenE)  
National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), Johannesburg, South Africa  
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, USA  
APPLICATIONS FOR MSC DEGREE OPPORTUNITY**

The Centre for Respiratory Diseases and Meningitis (CRDM) and Centre for Healthcare-Associated infections, Antimicrobial Resistance and Mycoses (CHARM) at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) have been awarded a five-year grant (2019-2023), funded by the United States (US) National Institutes of Health (NIH) Fogarty International Center. The program directors are Dr Anne von Gottberg, Section Lead of the laboratory of the CRDM, and Dr Lee Harrison, Professor of Epidemiology and Medicine and the head of the Microbial Genomic Epidemiology Laboratory at University of Pittsburgh.

#### **Aim of the program**

The South Africa-Pitt Public Health Genomic Epidemiology Training Program (SAPPHGenE) aims to provide South African investigators with multidisciplinary tools needed to conduct cutting-edge research in public health genomics. Due to the current severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic, allowance has been made to include a focus on the epidemiology, genomic epidemiology and evolution of this virus. The program will provide a combination of non-degree and post-graduate degree training by a multidisciplinary group of experienced mentors at University of Pittsburgh, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and NICD. Trainees will have access to research training opportunities and resources available at the training sites.

SAPPHGenE Internal Scientific Committee: Jinal Bhiman, Mignon du Plessis, Nelesh Govender, Lee Harrison, Anne von Gottberg

SAPPHGenE External Training Advisory Committee: Duncan MacCannell, Penny Moore, Alison Morris, Mark Nicol, Rob Warren

We would like to invite applications from South African citizens in possession of a BSc Hons degree and an interest in viral evolution and bioinformatics to join us to complete an MSc (full time), registered at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg with primary supervisors/mentors located at the NICD (CRDM). Co-mentors will be located in the US, and it is expected that recipients will travel to the US for part of their training.

#### **Program benefits**

This highly competitive program includes funds for:

- Non-taxable payment (not applicable if already getting a salary: ~R170,000.00 for MSc students)
- Tuition fees and university registration
- Books and other educational expenses
- Laptop computer with relevant software

For international training opportunities:

- All travel expenses (e.g., airfare, visa, incidentals)
- Non-taxable payment for living expenses and insurance
- Administrative support for visas

#### **Applications must include:**

- Details of exceptional academic performance
- Candidate's motivation letter
- Strong letters of recommendation and support (e.g., from previous tutors, supervisors or managers)
- Stated commitment to pursue SAPPHGenE research
- Highlight likely contributions to research in South Africa

Applications should be sent to Shahana Wadie ([swadie@witshealth.co.za](mailto:swadie@witshealth.co.za)) for opportunities starting as soon as possible in 2020. **Deadline for applications is 15 June 2020.**