

For Immediate Release



AUB selected to host special scholarship program to boost skills needed for implementation of health interventions

Nearly \$1 million in scholarships will be made available to 11 graduate students in the first year

Beirut, Lebanon- 08/06/2015 - The American University of Beirut was selected, along with six other universities globally, for a scholarship program that will support the training of graduate students on how to boost the effective implementation of interventions targeting the prevention of poverty-related infectious diseases.

The universities were selected on a competitive basis from among 49 institutions that applied.

The program was created by TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, a global program of scientific collaboration that helps facilitate, support and influence efforts to combat diseases of poverty. TDR is hosted at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, and is sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and WHO.

The TDR programme will provide nearly a million dollars to FHS/AUB, allowing it to offer scholarships to 11 graduate students to follow a two-year graduate program in public health. Up to 30 additional students may also benefit from the TDR programme at AUB in the following three years, pending funding availability.

The degree programs that are included in this scholarship scheme all fall under the Faculty of Health Sciences and include the Master of Public Health with concentrations in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Health Management and Policy and Health Promotion and Community Health; as well as the Master of Science in Epidemiology. For more information about these degrees, please [go here](#).

Dr. Iman Nuwayhid, dean of the AUB Faculty of Health Sciences, said, "We at the Faculty of Health Sciences are simply thrilled to be selected to be part of this global initiative by the TDR program. The impact of this program on health, and particularly on the infectious diseases of poverty, will be huge. It will provide an opportunity for our institution to support more students from countries of the region, particularly those where conflict and impoverishment have overwhelmed public health systems and undermined their capacity to respond to these challenges."

Currently, many valuable health interventions face multiple hurdles in the implementation phase, preventing target populations from reaping much-needed health benefits. For

example, a health intervention might call for the use of bed nets to prevent malaria; but the target population might face hurdles in actually using these bed nets. The result: Malaria cannot be prevented. Hence, a new field called implementation research has emerged. The aim of implementation research is to explore the barriers to the implementation of interventions in order to overcome them and improve the health of target populations.

The overall scholarship scheme will provide up to US\$13 million to support over 200 PhD and master's degree students in the seven universities over the next four years. The grants are available to students originating from and residing in low- and middle-income countries. The goal is to enhance graduate training capacity and boost the number of researchers in these countries.

TDR Director John Reeder said, "This is a sea change for us. We are moving from managing individual training grants from Geneva to strengthening ongoing programs at major universities in disease-endemic countries, where the work needs to take place."

The first round of grants will be awarded for the 2015 - 2016 academic year, with each university announcing its own application process that will also be advertised in the TDR network. In each region, successful applicants will be enrolled as graduate students in these universities, and their careers tracked with the new TDR Global alumni and stakeholder platform that will be launched in the next year, providing ongoing monitoring of the impact of the program.

The universities selected

Of the 49 applications submitted, seven universities were selected for site visits and approved for funding. Each university is expected to manage around 5-11 postgraduate fellowships supported by TDR each year. The universities are: James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, Bangladesh; Universidad de Antioquia, National School of Public Health, Colombia; University of Ghana, School of Public Health, Ghana; Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia; American University of Beirut, Faculty of Health Sciences, Lebanon; University of Witwatersrand, School of Public Health, South Africa; and University of Zambia, Department of Public Health, Zambia.

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Note to Editors

About TDR

TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, is a global programme of scientific collaboration that helps facilitate, support and influence efforts to combat diseases of poverty. TDR is hosted at the World Health Organization (WHO), and is co-sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and WHO.

TDR website: www.who.int/tdr

TDR research capacity strengthening programmes: <http://www.who.int/tdr/capacity/en/>
More on TDR Global: <http://www.who.int/tdr/news/2015/networking-opport-develpd/en/>

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full service 420-bed hospital.

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