



The Crick Africa Network (CAN) supported by LifeArc is offering African Career Acceleration fellowships for early-career biomedical scientists to develop translational scientific programmes which will enable them to establish scientific independence.

The programme seeks ambitious early-career African scientists with postdoctoral experience who can demonstrate strong scientific and leadership potential, a keen interest in translational science, and a commitment to establishing their own groups and continuing their careers on the African continent.

LifeArc-sponsored African Career Acceleration Fellowships will provide four years of funding and be hosted primarily in one of five African CAN partner institutions:

- [WACCBIP, University of Ghana](#)
- [Stellenbosch University, South Africa](#)
- [University of Cape Town, South Africa](#)
- [MRC Unit The Gambia at LSHTM](#)
- [MRC/UVRI and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit](#)

The fellows will also be expected to spend some time in the United Kingdom, to utilise the world-class research and laboratory facilities at the Francis Crick Institute, and at LifeArc. Fellows will have the opportunity to be supported by one or more of the Crick's 21 [Science Technology Platforms](#) (STP). In addition, LifeArc will deliver translational development courses and host fellows from 3 to 12 months (depending on project need) at one of their UK laboratories. Mentorship from the chosen African partner institution, the Crick, and LifeArc will be provided with support in grant writing, publications, research ethics and translation. There is a strong ethos of collaboration and interaction across the network and fellows will be encouraged to learn from one another, as well as their mentors. The fellowships will cover salary, research costs, research assistant salary, and travel & subsistence costs.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the African Career Acceleration Fellowship you must have the following:

- Citizenship from an African country or permanent residency status.



- PhD in a relevant field with a minimum of 2 years* but no more than 5 years of postdoctoral experience, or
- Clinician (MBChB) with a PhD or a minimum of 3 years of research experience in a relevant field.
- A strong track record indicating potential as a scientific leader on the African continent.
- A strong proposal of translational science in one of the themes/priority areas below.
- Applicants **MUST** have approached and reached an agreement regarding their proposed science with the mentor in their chosen African partner institution and their chosen mentor at the Crick before submitting their scientific proposal. Contact details for the African partner institutes can be found in the [application notes here](#).

*In exceptional circumstances we may accept a candidate with less than 2 years of post-doctoral experience. If this is the case, please contact the CAN Programme Manager, Jennifer Brown at can-fellowships@crick.ac.uk to discuss before submitting your application.

Themes

All projects should have translational potential. Our definition of translational science is that it serves clinical, commercial, or environmental benefit. It should address a clear unmet medical need and bridge the gap between basic discovery science and product development and can include:

human genetics, disease pathogenesis & immunogenetics, pathogen genomics/bioinformatics, host-pathogen interactions, diagnostics & biomarkers, pandemic preparedness, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and drug or vaccine discovery for development.

Priority areas include:

diseases caused by viruses such as HIV, HPV and SARS-CoV-2, bacteria such as *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and *Mycobacterium ulcerans*, other bacterial pathogens including AMR priority pathogens, fungal pathogens, protozoal pathogens that cause diseases such as trypanosomiasis, malaria & cryptosporidiosis, helminths, and other neglected tropical diseases.

How to apply

Before submitting your application, you are strongly advised to read the [application notes here](#).

If you have questions regarding the translational potential of your proposed research idea and how LifeArc could support development, please contact Andy Merritt, LifeArc project lead and Head of Academic Engagement at Andy.Merritt@lifearc.org.

Applicants must have identified a mentor at their chosen African Partner Institution and the Crick before making an application. A full list of the laboratories at the Crick can be [found](#)



[here](#). For assistance and advice on potential mentors, please email the Crick Africa Network Programme Manager Jennifer Brown at can-fellowships@crick.ac.uk.

Applicants should apply through the [Francis Crick Institute website here](#). Only fully completed applications will be considered through the following selection process:

- 1: Applications will be checked for eligibility including the nationality of the applicant, number of years post-doc and the translational elements of the proposal.
- 2: Proposals will then be assessed by the chosen African Partner Institution, the chosen Crick mentor, as well as an external peer reviewer.
- 3: Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by the chosen African Partner Institution.
- 4: A expert panel will convene to assess all interviewed applicants and agree on the successful fellows. Applicants will then be informed of the outcome.

The deadline for applications is: 12th November 2023.

Interviews will be held in the week beginning: 15th January 2024.

Fellowships are expected to commence between March-May 2024.