

2014 amfAR HIV SCHOLARS PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

for gay men, other MSM, and transgender individuals

Applications Due October 1, 2013

amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research (www.amfar.org), and the Center for LGBT Health Research (www.lgbthres.pitt.edu) at the Graduate School of Public Health (“Pitt Public Health”) at the University of Pittsburgh (www.pitt.edu) are announcing the continuation of the amfAR HIV Scholars Program: a training program for junior investigators from low- and middle-income countries who are interested in conducting HIV research among gay men, other men who have sex with men, and/or transgender individuals (referred to here collectively as “GMT”). Four scholars from low- and middle-income countries will be accepted into the program for the 2014 training year. The program aims to build indigenous research capacity on GMT health in low- and middle-income countries by training young investigators to conduct ground-breaking research in HIV among GMT in resource-limited settings. The program also seeks to support emerging leaders who will help define effective responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic among GMT populations in their home countries. The training program is being conducted in collaboration with an existing training program in LGBT health research at the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh.

Eligibility to Apply

Junior investigators who are committed to studying the HIV prevention and care needs among GMT in their home countries are invited to apply to this program. Scholars from low- and middle-income countries in Africa, Asia (all regions), the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, or Oceania are welcome to apply. In order to be admitted to the program, *investigators must be fluent in English and able to read and write English at a high academic level.*

Core Training Program

The training program includes three graduate-level classes to be taken in Pittsburgh from January through May 2014, which is equivalent to a full-time graduate course load. The first of these classes is an overview in LGBT health research, the second is a research methods class, and the third is an advanced research methods class that focuses on research proposal writing. *As part of these classes, scholars will develop a research question and write a short proposal (10-15 pages) that will be submitted to amfAR for peer review and possible funding at a pilot project level.* During their time in Pittsburgh, each participating scholar will also:

- Complete on-line courses in the ethical conduct of research;
- Complete a draft questionnaire for their proposed research study;
- Create a PowerPoint presentation to be delivered by the scholar to amfAR staff during a visit to amfAR’s office in New York; and
- Develop a draft IRB application.

Scholars will also attend two additional research methods seminars each week: one that focuses on HIV/ LGBT health research being conducted by doctoral, post-doctoral and professors at the Center for LGBT Health Research, and another seminar that focuses specifically on the research being designed by the scholars themselves. Additional events sponsored by the Graduate School of Public Health and the Center for LGBT Health Research are also open to the scholars.

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Funding and Support

Expenses covered by the program will include round-trip travel between the scholars' home countries and Pittsburgh, visa fees, housing, a modest stipend to support scholars during their time in Pittsburgh, and training-related costs. Scholars should plan to bring their own laptop computers to Pittsburgh to support their training.

Research proposals will be submitted to amfAR at the conclusion of the training program in the hope that each scholar would receive a pilot research grant to implement his or her proposed study. *Please note that this funding is not guaranteed.* If research proposals are selected for funding by amfAR, scholars will begin work on their projects after returning to their home countries. *The primary goal of the program is to increase the number of investigators in low- and middle-income countries who are able to conduct research among GMT, advocate for their health needs, and so raise the levels of both HIV services and care for GMT in these settings. It is also hoped that the training program will function to help advance the careers and training horizons of the scholars who participate in the program and to increase the research being conducted in the developing world among GMT.*

Application Instructions

The procedures for applying to the program are simple. Only three documents are needed to apply:

1. A letter of intent that includes a short work history of the applicant and explains why s/he is interested in studying HIV prevention and care needs among GMT. The letter of intent should relate the applicant's relevant research and/or training experiences to their research interests, and indicate the applicant's capacity to design and run a research project.
2. A resume or CV that lists the applicant's training and job history.
3. A short outline (1-2 pages) of the research topic that the applicant would like to develop into a grant application during their time at the University of Pittsburgh. This outline should include a clear research question (or questions) and indicate the feasibility of conducting this research in the proposed setting and with the proposed population.

Applications that are designed to focus on issues relevant to the HIV treatment cascade (i.e., innovative ways to identify unknown HIV seropositives; finding new ways to help HIV-positive patients access medical care; designing new approaches to help patients stay in treatment; identifying new approaches to increase treatment adherence; creating programs to reconnect HIV-positive patients who have dropped out of medical care) are especially encouraged.

The due date for applications is October 1, 2013. Interested applicants should submit the three application documents via email to Dr. Ron Stall at rstall@pitt.edu. We plan to identify the four finalists for the training program by Nov. 1, and scholars should plan to arrive in Pittsburgh by January 1, 2014. If you have any questions or comments regarding this announcement, please send them to Dr. Stall at the same email address.

