

MHIRT INTERNATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH INTERNSHIP

SUMMER 2019

Supplemental Program Information

for use with MHIRT Internship Application Form

Due November 16, 2018 at 4:00 pm

www.cph.uiowa.edu/mhirt/

Rationale

The University of Iowa's College of Public Health invites applications for the Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training (MHIRT) awards, funded by The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The FY 2009-2013 NIH Strategic Plan for Health Disparities lists expanding and enhancing international research capacity to create a culturally sensitive and culturally competent workforce as one of three major goals each NIH Institute must strive to achieve. The NIH recognizes a unique and compelling need to promote diversity in the biomedical, behavioral, clinical and social sciences research workforce. The NIH expects efforts to diversify the workforce to lead to the recruitment of talented researchers from underrepresented groups; improve the quality of the educational and training environment; balance and broaden the perspective in setting research priorities; and improve the Nation's capacity to address and eliminate health disparities.

In a number of health areas that disproportionately affect minority and underserved populations, there is a critical need for trained researchers in biomedical, behavioral, clinical and social sciences. Especially in the life, physical, and social sciences, where small numbers are insufficient to meet the increasing needs in these areas (<http://www.nap.edu>), published reports from AAMC, NSF, National Academy of Sciences, American Federation For Medical Research (<http://www.afmr.org>), and others (J. National Medical Association 97, 1063 (2005)) indicate that there is a need to replenish and diversify the U.S. workforce. The situation is especially grave for minorities underrepresented in biomedical, behavioral, clinical and social sciences. The MHIRT Program recognizes that through the development of training programs directed at these underrepresented groups, the knowledge and skills needed to conduct research and to prepare trainees for successful careers as biomedical and behavioral scientists to eliminate disparities in health and disease experienced by members of minority communities are greatly enhanced.

Eligibility Criteria

These awards will support international research training opportunities at a foreign site to qualified undergraduate, postbaccalaureate or graduate students; or students in other health-professional programs who have not yet received terminal degrees.

Trainees for this program must be individuals from a group underrepresented in biomedical, behavioral, clinical and social sciences. This includes rural and low socio-economic groups, and members of racial and ethnic groups that have been identified by the National Science Foundation to be underrepresented in biomedical research (including Blacks and African Americans, Hispanic Americans or Latinos, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders).

Trainees must be citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States, or have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence (i.e., possess a currently valid Alien Registration Receipt Card I-551, or other legal verification of such status). Non-citizen nationals are generally persons born in outlying possessions of the United States (e.g., American Samoa). Individuals on temporary or student visas are not eligible to participate in the MHIRT Program.

For individuals from low income backgrounds, the applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have received any of the financial assistance listed below:

- (a) have qualified for Federal disadvantaged assistance; or
- (b) have received any of the following student loans: Health Professional Student Loans (HPSL),

Loans for Disadvantaged Student Program; or have received scholarships from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Scholarship for Individuals with Exceptional Financial Need. Please attach copies of documentation which shows receipt of this financial assistance to your application.

Individuals from rural backgrounds are defined as those who come from a family residing in an area designated by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as non-metropolitan (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/metro-micro.html>). The home address of prospective trainees can be entered into the Rural Assistance Center's 'Am I Rural' website (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/am-i-rural>) to obtain a Core Based Statistical Areas designation of Metropolitan, Micropolitan, or Rural.

Prospective trainees from areas with Micropolitan or Rural designations meet MHIRT eligibility requirements. Please use your "home" address (where you grew up or lived prior to starting College or University. If you lived in several different areas, you may try several different addresses. You must attach a print-out of the search results to the application as proof of your "rural" eligibility.

MHIRT Internship Site Descriptions

The MHIRT Program Selection Committee will look at your interests and match you to an ongoing research project at a site that can support your academic and research interests as well as your geographic preferences. It is not expected that undergraduate students will design their own original research projects, as that requires advance planning of up to one year with possible IRB approval to work with human subjects.

Some graduate students may already have an idea for their own research or practicum project and are actively working to attain approval from the IRB or their practicum advisor. The MHIRT Program staff can help students make the necessary contacts at the site during the fall of 2018.

All students must choose to do an internship at one of the following sites:

Cluj School of Public Health (C-SPH), Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The C-SPH is a degree-granting public health program (BA, MPH, PhD) taught in English as well as a research center within the College of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences at Babes-Bolyai University, the largest university in Romania with 45,000 students and 1,700 faculty and staff.

The C-SPH was founded in 2005 with concentrations in Health Policy and Management, Social and Behavioral Health, Epidemiology, Statistics and Environmental Health. It is dedicated to developing and supporting interdisciplinary collaboration of public health research and practice in Romania and internationally. The C-SPH is the only entity in the region that is focusing on population-based studies, prevention strategies and public health interventions.

The C-SPH initiates a wide range of numerous projects in the areas of chronic diseases, rural health, maternal & child health, mental health, violence and injury prevention, Roma populations, physical activity, tobacco cessation, health policy and environmental health. Examples of ongoing research projects include:

- Increasing Capacity in Research in Eastern Europe
- Parents' experience in using child safety restraints in Cluj, Romania
- An mHealth intervention to prevent smoking relapse after birth
- Non-formal education to address health illiteracy in rural Romania
- Transfer of organizational innovations for resilient, effective, equitable, accessible, sustainable & comprehensive health services & systems
- Assessment of human exposure to heavy metals from a historically contaminated gold mine

For more information, please visit the [Cluj School of Public Health's website](http://www.publichealth.ro/): <http://www.publichealth.ro/>

Department of Public Health and Health Care, Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU), Yerevan, Armenia. Founded in 1920, YSMU is the oldest, largest and sole institution for medical and public health education and research in Armenia and provides bachelor to PhD degrees, professional training and continuing medical education in clinical and preventive medicine, dentistry and pharmacy. Over 3,000 faculty and staff are involved in teaching and research with about 5,500 students from Armenia and other countries where training is conducted in Armenian, Russian and/or English.

YSMU has six departments (General Medicine, Public Health, Stomatology, Pharmacy, Military Medicine, and Postgraduate and Continuing Education) in five academic buildings along with two general hospitals and clinics in tertiary care hospitals and outpatient health care centers in Yerevan.

The Department of Public Health offers MPH programs in Healthcare Management and Organization, Epidemiology, Environmental Health and Public Health. The Department conducts research in collaboration with other departments and institutes in Armenia and internationally in the areas environmental health, injury prevention, respiratory health, reproductive health and maternal and child health. Examples of ongoing research projects include:

- Assessment of current Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) data collection practices and capacity in Armenia
- Assessment of current Domestic Violence against Women and Children data collection practices and capacity in Armenia
- Observational study of pedestrian safety
- Assessment of Armenian Under-5 Child Growth Stunting Rates
- Cement dust pollution and prevalence of respiratory diseases among children living in the neighborhood of cement factories
- Impact of traditional Lavash (bread) baking on women's and children's health
- Impact of pesticides on cancer incidence and reproductive health of rural populations
- Prevalence of certain mutations associated with contamination by persistent organochlorine compounds

For more information, please visit the [YSMU Department of Public Health's website](#).

What costs does the MHIRT Internship cover?

MHIRT pays:

Round-trip airfare

Housing

Stipend: \$1200 per month

International Health Insurance for duration of the summer internship program. Includes coverage for necessary medical services, as well as emergency medical evacuation or repatriation of remains.

Please check the policy for more details at <https://international.uiowa.edu/study-abroad/prepare/health/insurance>.

Tuition and fees: The MHIRT Program pays for the cost of registering for a zero-credit internship course; this will appear on your transcript as an internship experience. You may enroll in an independent study course to receive academic credit for the MHIRT internship (up to 3 semester hours); the MHIRT Program pays for the tuition costs. A UI faculty member will serve as the course instructor.

Post-internship benefits include fully funded travel expenses to a domestic conference if an abstract based on your MHIRT research is accepted as well as research poster printing fees for local events.

It is your responsibility to pay for:

Passport, if you need to get a new one, or renew an existing passport

Co-pays for immunizations and medications (depending on what country you are traveling to) and any follow-up care upon return. MHIRT can pay for your summer insurance premiums, but not for the co-pays for medical services or prescriptions.

Transportation to and from the airport of departure in the USA. Your in-country hosts will pick you up when you arrive at your foreign destination.

Expenses above and beyond normal living costs in your host country (generally food and local transportation costs). For example, you may need to bring extra money if you plan to do any personal travel or buy souvenirs.

Participant Obligations to MHIRT International Research Internship Program

An online training course in human subjects research (an NIH requirement)

Comply with mandatory pre-departure activities (orientations in February, April, May)

Human Subjects Research Determination Form submission & IRB application if necessary

Complete a 10 page paper describing your research project or internship experiences

Complete program evaluations

Present research results in a public forum on campus or at a national conference (optional but encouraged). If an abstract is accepted for a poster or oral presentation, MHIRT will pay all conference and travel-related costs, including printing a poster.

Send all information via e-mail, fax or snail mail to:

Dr. Marek Mikulski
MHIRT Coordinator
2213 Westlawn
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Phone: 319-384-4296
Fax: 319-353-5649
marek-mikulski@uiowa.edu

Please submit all documents as ONE PDF FILE, if possible (except the letters of recommendation, which should come separately, and before the deadline!)

**No applications will be accepted after 4:00 pm
on November 16, 2018 (No exceptions!)**

If you have any questions at any time about the application procedure, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time. Contact information is as follows:

Dr. Marek Mikulski, MHIRT Coordinator
(see information above)

Dr. Rema Afifi
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