



The Aga Khan University - Pakistan Initiative for Non-Communicable Diseases (AKUPI-NCDs) Research Training Program

Funded by National Institute of Health, USA

Primary Investigator:

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Co-Primary Investigators:

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Project Summary:

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) represent an extraordinary global crisis. Over three quarters of all NCD related deaths and 82% of premature NCD-related deaths occur in low-middle income countries (LMIC). Locally relevant, high-quality data regarding NCDs are scarce and most low-middle income countries (LMICs) like Pakistan, are not equipped to manage this epidemic. A critical gap in the response of LMICs to the NCD epidemic is a dearth of trained researchers who can contribute to the understanding of prevalence, risk factors, and development and testing of safe, effective, and low-cost solutions.

With the aim to address this dearth and directly increase Pakistan's research capacity, the AKUPI-NCDs Research Training Program is a collaboration of the Department of Medicine, Institute for Global Health at the Aga Khan University and Duke University, USA.

AKUPI-NCDs is funded by the Fogarty International Center, National Institutes of Health, USA.

The Early Career Research Accelerator (ECRA)-C in NCDs:

The Early Career Research Accelerator (ECRA)-C in NCDs is a long-term career research training pathway offered by the AKUPI-NCDs research training program. With the goal of launching independent NCDs research career, a pool of candidates will be identified based on the commitment to research who have attained master's level quantitative methods research training.

Selected candidates will join the Department of Medicine as Instructors and have 100% time protected for research for 2 years. They will also develop individualized career development plans, receive close mentoring from the AKU and Duke mentors and PDs, and complete independent funded research projects. They will be expected to compete for independent funding.

The research projects will be based on surveillance or implementation focusing on cardiovascular disease, stroke, or their risk factors. Projects that leverage/utilize digital information technology – m-health will be prioritized. In addition, these research investigators will also receive didactic training through Fogarty-AKUPI research certification course.

We expect to induct four candidates into this program over the next five years.

Table 1. The Early Career Research Accelerator (ECRA)-C	
Number of trainees	1 / year (2022-2025)
Training Objective	The objective of this program is to produce experts in cardiovascular/ risk factor research who have thorough understanding of NCDs.
Training Institution	AKU
Eligibility	Graduates of masters in epidemiology and biostatistics, public health, or health policy management or clinical research track from AKU and outside universities
Selection Process	Interested candidates will be assessed for their commitment to research and learning in NCDs. The assessment will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal statement • One-page research objective on the NCD area they wish to work on • Interview
Didactic Training	Selective courses in The Fogarty–AKUPI NCD Research Certification Course
Mentoring Structure	Mentoring committee: 1 primary mentor from AKU, 1 primary mentor from Duke
Duration	2 years
Research Practicum	Develop and execute a surveillance or implementation research project focusing on cardiovascular disease, stroke, or their risk factors. Projects that leverage/utilize digital information technology – m-health will be prioritized
Research Grant	\$20,000/candidate subject to project approval by Training Management Committee
Deliverable	1 original manuscript, 1 national presentation, 1 local/international grant submission
Program Director	Professor Ayeesha Kamran Kamal

To Apply	Instructor (Research), Department of Medicine https://www.aku.edu/vacancies/pages/job-detail.aspx?JobID=8097&Title=Instructor%20(Research),%20Department%20of%20Medicine
Deadline	17 th July 2022