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Supporting, Mobilizing, and
Accelerating Research for
Tuberculosis Elimination



**SMART4TB Early Stage Investigator (ESI)
Scholar Program
Cohort 2 Phase 1 Now Open for Applications
Applications Due March 14 2024**

Supporting, Mobilizing, and Accelerating Research for Tuberculosis Elimination (SMART4TB) is an initiative made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that aims to transform TB prevention and care. SMART4TB has launched an important capacity strengthening activity, the Early Stage Investigator (ESI) Training and Mentorship Program. The program's main objective is to train and support young investigators to develop, implement, and lead their own studies aligned with their national and local TB research priorities.

Investigators within 10 years of receiving their most recent degree or who are new to TB research, based at an institution participating in SMART4TB studies, and supported by their local institutional leadership will be eligible for participation in the program. The program has 4 sequential phases, each with specific eligibility criteria and deliverables required before advancing to the next phase.

SMART4TB Scholars
Phase 1: Core Training (10 weeks)
SMART4TB Fellows
Phase 2: Research Proposal Development (6 months)
Phase 3: Study Implementation (1-2 years)
Phase 4: Analysis, Publications, Results Sharing (6-12 months)

Completion of all 4 phases will require the ESI to commit to an intensive training curriculum that includes: 1) Specific courses focused on competencies required for the design, implementation and analyses of TB research 2) Close 2:1 mentorship from both a local and a SMART4TB faculty research mentor; and 3) Access to technical support consultations from SMART4TB experts.

Progress from one Phase of training to the next Phase will be a competitive process and is not guaranteed. ESI who successfully complete all Phase 1 requirements (Scholars Program) will be eligible to apply and compete for Phase 2 (Fellowship Program). Phase 2 applicants that are approved by SMART4TB and USAID will be required to identify a local senior research mentor. ESI enrolled in Phase 2 will also be matched with a SMART4TB faculty co-mentor. The SMART4TB Training and Mentorship Committee (TMC) will monitor the ESI's progress throughout the program and also assess the quality of the training and mentorship provided to the ESI. In Phase 2, each SMART4TB Fellow will be mentored to develop a full research proposal for which they will serve as lead investigator. ESIs who receive approval and support to initiate their research project can apply for Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the program.

Phase 1 Eligibility and Application Process

ESI interested in applying for Phase 1 of this program must meet the following criteria:

- Received their most recent degree within 10 years or are new to TB research; and
- Be from a National TB Program (NTP) or institution/site participating in SMART4TB USAID-approved studies; and
- Have a letter of support from their local SMART4TB site/institutional leadership (signed on institutional letterhead).

All applications will be reviewed by the SMART4TB ESI Mentorship Advisory Committee. Final selection of Phase 1 participants will require USAID approval. Selected ESI will be notified by email.

Additional information

To apply for Phase 1 of this program, please click [here](#).

For details about the Phase 1 curriculum and the progress report from the first Cohort, please see the attachments.

For an overview of SMART4TB, please click [here](#).

For more information about SMART4TB Capacity Strengthening Activities, please click [here](#).