



In Search Of Better Health

KENYA MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Project description: KEMRI - Turkana Health and Genomics Project

The Turkana Health and Genomics Project (THGP) is a collaborative, international, and interdisciplinary study of the genetics, biology, and health of the Turkana people. The study involves investigators and staff at Turkana Basin Institute, Mpala Research Centre, KEMRI, Vanderbilt University, and Princeton University. We are broadly interested in how rapid lifestyle change is impacting health, and we therefore work with communities spanning a gradient from subsistence pastoralism practiced in remote Turkana to urban centers in Kenya. Communities that participate in the study are provided with medical consultations, and research data are collected in the form of biospecimens, interview data, and health measurements. The current protocol that we are hiring for is funded by the National Institutes of Health, and expands previous work by the THGP to include assessments of child health. We are seeking to recruit the following personnel to support the THGP and the NIH child health-focused protocol as follows:

1. Laboratory Technician KMR8 (1 position) Ref. KEMRI-THGP 01

Location: Field work throughout Kenya, including remote areas in Turkana

Reporting to: Principal Investigators

Job Description:

The Laboratory Technician will provide assistance to the overall project and will work with the existing THGP team. The candidate will be in charge of processing bio specimens during field clinics using established protocols. Specifically, the candidate will work to isolate peripheral blood mononuclear cells from whole blood, manage and organize samples, and run point of care devices to collect health measurements from blood. When not in the field, the candidate will assist with sample and data management as well as DNA extractions or other desired sample processing.

Essential Requirements:

- Minimum Diploma in any of the following fields: Biomedical Sciences, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Applied Sciences or any other equivalent qualification from a recognized institution
- Registration Certificate issued by the Kenya Medical Laboratory Technicians and Technologists Board (KMLTTB) where applicable, or any other recognized regulatory body will be an advantage but not mandatory
- Valid practicing license from Kenya Medical Laboratory Technicians and Technologists where applicable, but not mandatory
- Experience in basic molecular biology and aseptic techniques
- Experience working in a molecular biology or genetics research
- Good English and Swahili, both spoken and written (Turkana language skills are an added benefit, but not required)
- Experience with DNA and RNA extractions is desired
- Must be computer literate
- Must be a team player
- Must be comfortable in remote field work conditions

Specific Tasks and Responsibilities.

- Participate in field work and support field data collection;
- During field work, use established protocols to isolate peripheral blood mononuclear cells and perform any other biospecimen processing;
- During field work, carefully handle, label, and track biospecimens;
- Assist with supply and sample management;
- Assist with equipment management including verifying equipment function;
- Assist with sample and data management, for example organizing samples in freezers;
- Assist with DNA/RNA extractions and other sample processing as directed;
- Perform any other duties assigned or delegated by the project leadership.

2. Field Assistant, KMR9 (1 position) Ref. KEMRI-THGP 02

Location: Field work throughout Kenya, including remote areas in Turkana

Reporting to: Principal Investigators

Job Description:

The Field Assistant will provide assistance to the overall project and will work with the existing THGP team. The candidate will be in charge of explaining the study to potential participants, obtaining informed consent, and then conducting a survey/interview with children and their guardians about lifestyle, environment, and experiences. When not in the field, the candidate will assist with data entry, data management, and any other tasks to support the overall project.

Essential Requirements:

- Minimum of a Certificate in Community Health Work, Social Sciences or any Biomedical Sciences
- Basic understanding of biology and genetics
- Fieldwork experience working in a busy research project
- Must be computer literate
- Must be a team player
- Must be comfortable in remote field work conditions

Specific Tasks and Responsibilities.

The position responsibilities shall specifically include but not be limited to the following:

- Participate in field work and support field data collection;
- Explain research study to participants and obtain informed consent;
- Perform detailed questionnaire about lifestyle and experiences;
- Perform basic anthropometric measurements, for example waist and height measurements;
- Properly store and track data sheets and consent forms, including scanning and organizing digital copies;
- Be ready to help with other tasks as requested such as charging batteries or maintaining generators and other equipment;
- Perform any other duties assigned or delegated by the project leadership.

Terms of Employment

- Employment is on contract basis for a period of 1 year renewable subject to availability of funds. There will be a probation period for the first 3 months. Salary is commensurate with KEMRI's appropriate grade depending on education, experience and demonstrated competency.

How to Apply

- i. All applicants must meet each selection criteria detailed in the minimum requirements
- ii. Must include a cover application letter clearly indicating the position title and reference number and a current CV with names of at least 2 referees with their telephone and Email Contacts (must be current contacts and working).
- iii. Must include copies of academic and professional certificates

Interested candidates who meet the above criteria are encouraged to send in their applications sent via email to: projectpositions@kemri.go.ke not later than 19th March, 2024.

KEMRI IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER COMMITTED TO DIVERSITY; PERSONS WHO ARE ABLED DIFFERENTLY, WOMEN, YOUTH AND THOSE FROM MARGINALIZED AREAS ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY. KEMRI DOES NOT CHARGE A FEE AT ANY STAGE OF ITS RECRUITMENT PROCESS INCLUDING APPLICATION, INTERVIEW AND PROCESSING OF OFFER LETTER. IF ASKED FOR A FEE, REPORT SUCH REQUEST IMMEDIATELY.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.