
ENABLING TRANSLATION OF SCIENCE TO SERVICE TO ENHANCE DEPRESSION CARE (ESSENCE)

SOUTH ASIA IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP IN MENTAL
HEALTH IN INDIA, AFGHANISTAN, BANGLADESH AND NEPAL

Terms of Reference

for

Implementation Science Fellowship

Please read the terms, eligibility, review criteria and instructions carefully before submitting your application.

ESSENCE

School of Public Health (SPH), Independent University, Bangladesh (www.iub.edu.bd) is inviting applications for an Implementation Science Research Fellowship in Mental Health.

1. INTRODUCTION

The School of Public Health, Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) is committed to innovation, research, and teaching necessary to meet the global health demands for the present and the future. The world constantly faces new health challenges and calls for new levels of innovation and leadership. To find solutions to these new health challenges and advance our commitment to public health issues, the School collaborates with relevant institutions and organization and draws upon the talents, ideas, and resources of all its constituents. Global mental health disease burden is one such health challenge that the world is facing and need to come up with pragmatic solutions to combat the same. This is truer when we have substantial evidence that has not been translated to service for the population in need.

The School of Public Health, IUB is a network partner of ESSENCE (Enabling translation of Science to Service to ENhance Depression CarE) which aims to bridge the ‘science to service’ gap and strengthen an existing collaborative network of institutions in South Asia by generating knowledge on cost-effective implementation approaches for scaling up of evidence-based interventions for mental disorders, and building capacity in a range of key stakeholders to enhance the conduct of implementation research, the dissemination of its findings, and the uptake of this evidence in policy and programs, ultimately resulting in reduction of treatment gap for mental disorders.

The partner countries for this initiative are India, Afghanistan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

2. FELLOWSHIP BACKGROUND

Enabling translation of Science to Service to ENhance Depression CarE (ESSENCE) is a US National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funded, five-year-long (2017-22) implementation research project being implemented in Madhya Pradesh, India.

Its overall goal is to bridge the science to service gap and strengthen an existing collaborative network of institutions in South Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Nepal) by generating knowledge on effective and cost-effective training and implementation support methods for scaling up of evidence-based interventions for mental disorders, and building capacity in a range of key stakeholders to enhance the conduct of implementation research, the dissemination of its findings, and the uptake of this evidence in policy and programs, ultimately resulting in reduction of treatment gap for mental disorders.

The capacity building component aims to develop and offer fellowships and online courses tailored for South Asia, to build the capacity of early career global health researchers, media professionals, policy makers and program managers, and service user representatives to disseminate mental health research and

to enhance the uptake of research findings. The partner countries for this initiative are Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

For more information about ESSENCE and Sangath's work, please visit www.sangath.in/essence/

3. AIMS of the FELLOWSHIP

This fellowship aims to build implementation research capacity in four South Asian countries (India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Nepal) for knowledge generation by creating opportunities for early and mid-career global health researchers to:

1. Conduct implementation research and develop case studies which focus on increased uptake of evidence-based interventions for mental disorders in low and middle-income countries (LMICs);
2. Initiate the design and writing of implementation research proposals and successfully compete for research grants after successful completion of the fellowship; and
3. Publish implementation science-driven research papers in high-impact regional and international journals that offer new evidence and empirically based recommendations with the potential to impact policy and programmes.

Successful completion of this fellowship will equip a fellow to:

- Have the skills to critically appraise evidence-based interventions in the field of global mental health;
- Have an overview of the implementation science (IS)/research domain literature, with a specific focus on low and middle-income countries and in global mental health;
- Be able to develop and describe a scientifically sound plan for development, evaluation, and scale-up of an implementation programme; and
- Be able to develop implementation research proposals and successfully compete for research grants.

4. COMPONENTS OF FELLOWSHIP

The fellowship is of two years' duration and will require about 20% of a fellow's time, i.e., 8 hours each week. The fellowship has the following components:

- 4.1. A three-month online course on implementation science, which will require 5-8 hours/week over the course duration. Sangath will issue a certificate at the successful completion of this course;
- 4.2. Monthly reading assignments, (requiring approximately 3-4 hours each week), and a reflection of these readings in the form of a written summary of the readings posted on Sangath's online platform for peer-to-peer learning;
- 4.3. Online assignments based on the readings once each month (requiring 15-16 hours each month);
- 4.4. Developing case studies and/or new research project proposals in line with the ESSENCE project goals and contributing to implementing these in ESSENCE partner countries (ongoing);

- 4.5. In alignment with ESSENCE overall goals, conduct implementation research studies in consultation with their mentors, with a priority given to the relevant districts/sub-districts in Bangladesh (110-120 hours total); and
- 4.6. Prepare at least one (implementation science in mental health) case study as per specified format, and a full manuscript with the goal of submitting for publication to a peer-reviewed academic journal (this written product should be completed by the end of the fellowship, though successful submission/acceptance for publication will not be required but will be strongly encouraged) where possible, to enhance dissemination.

Once the fellows are selected with a fellowship start date of end-May 2019, a virtual, approximately hour-long introductory session on implementation science will be conducted by Prof Rohit Ramaswamy, followed by a three month online IS course. Towards the online IS course completion in July-August, an in-person/virtual workshop will be held where the fellow(s) will be assigned mentors, and they will develop a detailed fellowship work plan in consultation with their mentor. This will be followed by another touch point at SPH, IUB around the 12th month of the fellowship, which will focus on an interim fellowship review, progress update and way forward. The final workshop will be organized at SPH, IUB in the last month of the fellowship where the fellow will be required to present his/her work, be part of scientific discussions, and critique each other's work through a peer-review mechanism and submit his/her final fellowship reports and outputs. The fellows will be required to submit quarterly reports of their work in a given format to local mentors selected by SPH, IUB and core mentors.

In the second year of the fellowship, the existing fellow(s) could have the opportunity to serve as mentors to the new cohort of incoming fellowship recipients.

Sangath will provide a certificate of fellowship completion after evaluating the performance of a fellow in the online courses, engagement in reading and assessment, development of case studies and dissemination of their work through the preparation of their final report.

5. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applicants must:

- Be nationals of Bangladesh;
- Have completed Master's degree in healthcare, public health, behavioural and/or psychological sciences or a related field, including social work, with strong relevance to public health and with an interest in working in implementation science at a recognised institution of higher education;
- Should have at least one year of work experience in public health programmes or have been involved in research and publication (preferably in mental health) or public health implementation;
- Exposure to work in mental health will carry significant weight but is not a requirement;
- Show commitment for two years:
 - Proof of current employment status (i.e., employed), letter of support, and with 2 years of employment commitment from the employer; and Employer's commitment to release for 20% time for research work/implementation science course.
 - If not employed, show other relevant proof of commitment to continue the fellowship for two years.

6. FELLOWSHIP TENURE AND FINANCIAL AID

The fellowship will be granted for implementation science training and research (as per fellowship terms) conducted in relevant districts or sub-districts of Bangladesh. It covers a fellowship period of a maximum of 24 months, depending on the research project being implemented, and the applicant's work schedule. The fellowship is non-renewable.

The fellowship will be based at SPH, IUB, Dhaka. (Room 1000, 8th Floor, Plot 16, Aftabuddin Road, Block-B, Bashundhara R/A).

Contact Person: Miss Tania Islam (mobile no:+8801712883578;email:t.islam@iub.edu.bd)

Sangath will offer a maximum of \$ **8,500** to cover the cost of the research and/or developing case studies for two years. This financial support includes fellow's research cost, travel, food and lodging. At the end of the fellowship, the fellow must provide a detailed report on the implementation of the field study and its findings to the mentors.

7. MENTORSHIP

The lead course instructor is Prof Rohit Ramaswamy from the University of North Carolina, USA who will provide oversight of the program and be involved in overall mentoring the fellow. Along with Prof Ramaswamy, senior global mental health researchers from Sangath and/or its collaborators will also mentor the fellows during the duration of the fellowship. Local supervision of the fellow will be done by a mentor assigned by SPH, IUB. The local supervision will be in terms of research proposal development, execution, financial plan, update of execution, submission of quarterly reports and need based follow-up.

8. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The last date of application submission is **25th May 2019, by 5.00 pm**. Applications should be sent to the following email address: t.islam@iub.edu.bd; mobile no: +8801712883578

The application must include the following:

- Updated CV (including a list of publications, if applicable) covering education employment/work experience with Statement of Purpose with a focus on why they are interested to join the fellowship;
- A sample of applicant's scientific writing (provide PDFs of published papers, if available);
- A personal undertaking expressing a willingness to complete the full fellowship, and to devote adequate time towards this. If employed by an organization, then a letter of support from the organization expressing a willingness to provide necessary support for the fellowship requirements to the individual, if selected; and
- Two professional/academic references with contact details.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for a Zoom Meeting or in-person interview for final selection. Once selected, fellows would be expected to join immediately.