



## **MUST-IUC Project Call for PhD Candidates**

**Project Title: Maternal, newborn, and child care from a Nursing perspective**

### **Project Background**

The MUST-IUC Partnership titled ‘University as a Facilitator for Community-Based Sustainable Solutions to Demographic Challenges in Southwestern Uganda’ hereafter referred to as UCoBS is a 10-year (2022-2032) collaborative partnership between Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium) and other Flemish Higher Education Institutions funded by the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR UOS) with a strong niche of improving the household livelihoods of the Most at Risk Populations (MARPs) in South Western Uganda. There are six sub-projects under the MUST-IUC UCoBS partnership.

### **PhD Focus and activities**

This PhD position is embedded in the context of the sub-project titled “Improved Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Women, Children and Adolescents.”. Specifically, the study will focus on nursing interventions in addressing maternal, newborn, or child health-related complications. The PhD project will be conducted under the guidance and supervision of professors from MUST and Flemish Partner Institutions.

### **The scholarship Scope**

The selected PhD candidate will benefit from 12-24 months of funding for research stays in a Flemish University and funding will be available in the stipulated training period for not more than 4 years. The full PhD funding is conditional on the successful defense of a PhD proposal and obtaining sufficient course credits at MUST and during the first months of stay in Belgium. Outside the research stays in Belgium, the candidate will have to secure her/his own funding in consultation with Mbarara University of Science and Technology. The MUST-IUC sub-project Team P4 will support the research activities and fieldwork. The selected candidate will be part of an interdisciplinary and international research project and will contribute to addressing development-relevant issues in collaboration with Ugandan stakeholders. The



scholarship funding will be

compliant with the official scholarship schemes of VLIR UOS and the existing policy guidelines of MUST and implementing institutions. The PhD candidate will be supervised and or promoted by a team of Flemish and Ugandan professors and defend his/her thesis at Mbarara University of Science and Technology or a Flemish institution where the PhD is registered. The PhD candidate will interact with other PhD students from Uganda and Belgium.



## The PhD applicant's Profile

We welcome applicants who are:

- a) Aged between 20-45 years
- b) Hold at least a Masters Degree of Nursing Sciences.
- c) Have experience in the field of Maternal and child health
- d) Highly **motivated** to undertake academic research in an international context and commit to quality research outputs;
- e) **Hard-working** and able to manage a project independently, taking initiatives and meeting deadlines and finish the PhD training within the stipulated time;
- f) Able to develop a detailed **concept note** (pre-proposal) and demonstrate his/her ability to finish it and produce a fully researchable and competitive proposal;
- g) Demonstrate creativity, uncovering hidden issues that will benefit the project, science and local livelihood in general;
- h) Frank and willing to respect agreements; believe in project confidentiality and proper data handling and processing;
- i) Demonstrate willingness to contribute to the administrative management of the project;
- j) Demonstrate academic **leadership** and willingness to **supervise Masters students**;
- k) Demonstrate good interpersonal skills to interact with other project partners and stakeholders;
- l) Willing to develop the research at Mbarara University of Science and Technology and continue to contribute to the teaching and research mission of MUST beyond the project's lifetime

Preference will be given to candidates that are already members of staff (or collaborators) of Mbarara University of Science and Technology.

**Female** candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.



## Application Procedure

The application should include:

1. A concept note of no more than 5 pages. The Concept note must include a title for the proposed study, brief background highlighting key literature, research problem, main research question(s)/objectives, methodology and list of key references.
2. A CV (2 pages)
3. Certified copies of academic degrees' documents and transcript of records.
4. A statement of motivation – why you think you are the best candidate for the PhD position (1 page).
5. A letter of recommendation from the current employer/immediate supervisor (1 page) – if applicable.
6. A letter from an academic referee supporting your application (1 page).
7. A digital copy of your master thesis;

The applications should be addressed (and submitted) to [jngonzi@must.ac.ug](mailto:jngonzi@must.ac.ug), copy [kristien.roelens@ugent.be](mailto:kristien.roelens@ugent.be) , [gnambozi@must.ac.ug](mailto:gnambozi@must.ac.ug) ,Dirk.Lafaut@vub.be & [aamwikirize@must.ac.ug](mailto:aamwikirize@must.ac.ug) . Hard copy applications should be submitted to MUST-IUC UCoBS Programme Support Unit offices at MUST Town Campus. For more information, contact (+256704975889/+775888001). **All applications should be submitted by 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024, 5pm.**

### Interviews

The selection process will involve two stages which will take place **between 29th and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024**. Pre-selected candidates will be contacted for an interview. The successful candidate should be ready to start the PhD studies by **February 2024**.

