Vacancy Notice: WHO R&D Blueprint Consultant

BACKGROUND

The mission of the Department of Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals (IVB) is to work towards a world in which all people are vaccinated against vaccine preventable diseases. The overall work of the department is distributed in three main areas:

1. Initiative Vaccine Research Team (IVR) that provides leadership on the research activities to develop new or improved vaccines against diseases of public health importance and to facilitate their introduction and use.
   For more information, see: http://www.who.int/immunization/research/en/.

2. Immunization policy that provides guidance and norms for vaccine roll-out.

3. The Expanded Programme on Immunization Team (EPI) whose work is aimed at developing strategies for maximizing the use of vaccines and their delivery; supporting regions and countries in acquiring the necessary skills, competence and infrastructure to implement policies and strategies and achieve disease control/elimination and eradication objectives.

The R&D Blueprint is a global strategy and preparedness plan that allows the rapid activation of R&D activities during epidemics. Its aim is to fast-track the availability of effective tests, vaccines and medicines that can be used to save lives and avert large scale crisis.

Within this framework, WHO is working with international partners, in developing tools and guidelines, notably in supporting expansion of capacity to implement adequate vaccine study designs, whilst building a research coordination framework, to promptly and effectively conduct vaccine clinical trials during epidemics. Mathematical models of infectious diseases provide new tools for evaluating different trial designs options in terms of statistical power and bias based on different epidemiological scenarios. Those models are being developed by scientific partners as part of the Blueprint, and are essential tools to help design the most appropriate clinical trial designs.

PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTANCY

Under the direct guidance of the supervisor, the consultant contributes and facilitates efforts to establish and maintain excellent interactions, communications and coordination with external stakeholders as well as internal groups, associated with all relevant activities conducted under the Blueprint Plan of Action. The incumbent collaborates with other staff members within IVB, and across the three levels of the organization. The incumbent is expected to welcome opportunities to support multi-disciplinary, cross cutting approaches to work and is required to facilitate participation in such approaches. Work is regularly reviewed in briefings and debriefings with the supervisor. Working closely with staff in WHO’s Department of Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals, Initiative for Vaccine Research team as well as in the Health Systems and Innovation (HIS) cluster and in the WHO Health Emergencies Programme (WHE); and with input from technical partners, the consultant will be responsible for:

1. Contributing to the development of vaccine trial simulators to assess vaccine clinical trial designs to inform the deliberations of the Blueprint working groups of experts.
2. Conducting literature reviews and meta-analysis of the effectiveness of a given drug/vaccine against a priority pathogen to inform the deliberations of the Blueprint working groups of experts.


4. Supporting WHO's work in the scientific coordination and interaction with working groups, collaborators and partners, in relation to vaccine and therapeutic evaluation related to WHO priority pathogens.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Qualifications and experience
1. University degree in science, public health or equivalent.
2. Experience in research, with a focus on quantitative data analysis and systematic literature reviews.
3. Experience with clinical trial designs and critical appraisal for evaluating published experimental research.
4. Experience working at WHO or other global health organizations.

Skills and knowledge
1. Capacity to interact with technical experts in public health organisations, governments, academia, and industry; with respect to R&D for vaccines and therapeutics.
2. Excellent oral and written communication skills in English, comfort presenting at technical meetings in French.
3. Good knowledge in understanding clinical trials for drug efficacy and/or infectious diseases. Proficiency in quantitative data analyses and mathematical modelling. Ability to work in a multicultural environment.

DATES AND DUTY STATION

20 September to 20 December 2018, Geneva, Switzerland.
The consultant will be expected to travel for Blueprint consultations.

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit applications by e-mail to gsellp@who.int, “Consultant: WHO R&D Blueprint ” in the subject line.

Please include:
(1) a letter of motivation and
(2) a current curriculum vitae

All applications will be acknowledged. The closing date for applications is 12 September 2018.