

Call for Letters-of-Intent (LOI)

Research to accelerate Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in light of population ageing in ASEAN Countries

Deadline for LOI submission: Friday, 15 September 2017, 17:00 JST

1. Background

The ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting on Universal Health Coverage and Population Ageing took place on 14-15 July, 2017, in which Health Ministers from ASEAN countries and Japan articulated their commitments to accelerate universal health coverage in light of the challenges of population ageing (<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/file/04-Houdouhappyou-10501000-Daijinkanboukokusaika-Kokusaika/0000171519.pdf>).

As a follow-up to this meeting and to accelerate the realization of these commitments, the World Health Organization (WHO) Centre for Health Development (WHO Kobe Centre) is inviting researchers in ASEAN countries¹ to submit Letters-of-Intent for descriptive or implementation research addressing issues in ensuring and sustaining Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in light of population ageing in the ASEAN region.

2. Research themes

The research should address one or more of the themes listed below, and can be descriptive research and/or implementation research. The selected theme must be of relevance to the ASEAN regional or country context.

Descriptive research

- Service delivery configurations that promote quality of life, and address coordination between health and social sectors
- Funding for UHC, and models in diversifying public funding for health services in light of population ageing

¹ Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

- Scenario planning and specifically the identification of how different policy options can impact on health in the future
- Size and scope of the private health care sector in delivering health care and social services to older populations
- Age-specific health spending (i.e., 65 years+), and how spending is allocated across the health system in order to identify efficiencies
- Country-focused studies: rapid assessment or country-specific study of key issues and emerging challenges in preparing for the “health system of the future”
- Applicability of program/social/technological innovations across different country settings

Implementation research

- Evaluation of the impact of human resource innovations on access and quality, particularly for older populations, including:
 - deployment and retention
 - “task shifting”
 - appropriate balance of specialists vs generalists and allied health workers
- Evaluation of the impact of strategies to integrate care on quality of life and functional ability
- Assessment of financial protection mechanisms and their effectiveness in reducing out of pocket (OOP) payments for older populations
- Evaluation of the impact of innovations and technologies on:
 - extending the reach of the health and social systems
 - promoting empowerment and participation among individuals, families, and communities
 - improving quality and efficiency within the health system

3. Funding types

There are two types of funding as described below.

Category A:

The Principal Investigator (PI) should be based in an ASEAN country. No other restrictions apply in terms of co-investigators. Under this category, up to five projects will be selected for one-year funding not to exceed **US\$ 60,000** per project.

Category B:

The Principal Investigator (PI) should be based in an ASEAN country **with a co-PI based in the Kansai region² of Japan**. Under this call, up to five projects will be selected for one-year funding not to exceed **US\$ 80,000** per project.

For both categories, any of the research themes can be selected for study. The focus of study can be on any ASEAN country, or countries – it is not restricted to the country in which the PI is based.

If you would like some assistance in identifying a Kansai-based researcher to collaborate with, please feel free to contact the following WHO Kobe Centre staff:

Mr Shinjiro Nozaki, TEL. +81 78 230 3142 (direct), nozakis@who.int

² The Kansai region consists of the prefectures of Hyogo, Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Shiga and Wakayama.

4. Submission of Letters-of-Intent (LOI)

The LOI should be formulated as concise text of not more than 3 A4 pages outlining the following:

- i. Project title
- ii. Proposed composition of research team, including Principal Investigator (PI), Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), Co-Investigators, and their research institutions (with website URLs)
- iii. Background and problem statement/rationale
- iv. Study goals and objectives
- v. Geographic scope of research
- vi. Methods and data sources
- vii. Timeline for project implementation
- viii. Estimated budget

The **template for the LOI** is available at:

http://www.who.int/kobe_centre/mediacentre/LoI_Proforma.docx

The CVs of the PI, Co-PI, Co-Investigators and proposed researchers should be attached as an Appendix. Supplementary (optional) information could include letters of support from other institutions. The deadline for submission of the LOI is Friday, 15 September, 2017, 17:00 JST.

5. Evaluation and selection of Letters-of-Intent

All incoming LOIs will be technically reviewed in September 2017. Initial screening will be done to ensure that all LOIs are responsive to the research theme before inclusion in the scientific evaluation. The evaluation of LOIs will be based on scientific merit and geographic balance with the following weights assigned:

- Appropriate problem statement, rationale, and relevance to public health (20%)
- Clear and well-defined research objectives (20%)
- Sound research design (30%)
- Team composition and qualifications suitable to the research task proposed (30%)

Selection of LOIs will also consider the research balance across ASEAN countries in terms of both the countries of PIs and the countries of study focus.

LOIs with strong evaluations will be invited to develop a full proposal during October-November 2017. The **format of a full proposal** can be found at:

http://www.who.int/kobe_centre/mediacentre/Full_Proposal_Form.docx

Full proposals will be reviewed by an external expert committee in December 2017 – January 2018. Proposals which demonstrate high scientific merit and relevance will be selected for funding.

5. How to apply

Letters-of-intent should be submitted in English, by e-mail (preferably as one pdf file) to:
wkc@who.int

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS AT THE WHO Kobe Centre:
Friday, 15 September 2017, 17:00 JST

For further details, please contact:

WHO Centre for Health Development (WHO Kobe Centre – WKC)

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