

# Call for applications

## Global Mental Health Postdoctoral Fellowship at Harvard Medical School and Aga Khan University

**Start date:** September 1, 2023

**Location:** Year 1: Harvard Medical School, Boston USA;  
Year 2: Aga Khan University – East Africa / South and Central Asia

**Duration:** Two years

**Salary:** Consistent with HMS and AKU guidelines.  
See: <https://postdoc.hms.harvard.edu/guidelines#Salary-Stipend>

**Primary supervisors:** [Vikram Patel](#) and [Zul Merali](#)

The goal of this Fellowship Program is to strengthen capacity for global mental health implementation science in South and Central Asia and/or East Africa. The Fellowship Program is a joint initiative of the Aga Khan University's Brain and Mind Institute and the GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard Initiative. The Program supports post-doctoral research fellows in conducting implementation science research designed to translate prevention, assessment, and treatment interventions to specific settings and vulnerable populations in low- and middle-income countries.

### Year 1: Harvard Medical School

A year-long Fellowship at the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School is a foundational activity for this program. During this year, the Post-Doctoral Fellows will work closely with a nominated Harvard faculty member to draft an implementation science research proposal, secure IRB permission, acquire the research skills for its conduct, and prepare for its implementation in Year 2.

The Post-Doctoral Fellows will draft an Individual Development Plan (IDP) following guidance from the NIH and Harvard Medical School Office for Postdoctoral Fellows (see for example [Tools & Resources | HMS/HSDM Office for Postdoctoral Fellows \(harvard.edu\)](#)). The IDPs will be developed and finalized by the Fellow during the first two months of the fellowship collaboratively with Harvard and AKU faculty mentors. The IDP will also identify a research committee including other AKU or Harvard collaborating faculty members to provide additional methods or content expertise for the Fellow's research project.

The Fellows will have access to the Harvard research and training environment, including courses, seminar series and conferences. The Fellows will participate in activities to support their integration into the implementation science and GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard communities, including presenting research proposals and at symposiums, as well as becoming

a member of other networks of thematic interest, for example the early child development or implementation science groups coordinated by the Department.

## **Year 2: Aga Khan University**

During this year, the Fellow will implement the project which was developed in a context associated with the home AKU campus in East Africa/South and Central Asia. The Fellows will retain visiting appointments in Harvard with full access to all academic and networking opportunities. The Harvard mentors will continue to offer supervision and guidance, in collaboration with the AKU mentor, with two key goals: the successful completion of the study leading to at least one peer-reviewed publication; and the planning for at least one grant application for a new research project.

## **Faculty Mentorship**

The Fellows will have regular (at least monthly) research and progress assessment meetings with their Harvard faculty mentor for the full two years of the fellowship. This mentor will either be Harvard Medical School and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health senior faculty members, or a more context-appropriate nominated mentor from the broader GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard network identified by them. Each Fellow will also have an AKU mentor, identified by the AKU program leadership, thus paving the way for a collaborative relationship between senior faculty in both Universities.

## **Minimum Qualifications**

The Fellowship Program is open to individuals who have received their PhD or completed their MD with a research thesis degree at the time of appointment. Additionally, applicants should have a record of academic achievement (for example, prior peer-reviewed publications), and have demonstrated a commitment to pursuing a career in global mental health research, particularly in service to the geographies served by Aga Khan University and the Aga Khan Development Network. The Fellowship Program is open to any qualified candidate.

## **Selection Criteria**

In addition to consideration of the candidate's potential fulfillment of all aspects of the program as outlined above, the selection process will include consideration of the following:

1. Commitment to the fields of global mental health and implementation science;
2. Commitment to the special needs of low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), especially those served by Aga Khan University (AKU) and the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN);
3. Demonstrated academic excellence and/or knowledge/experience in LMICs; and
4. Desire to establish a career in the geographies served by AKU and AKDN.

## **Application Instructions**

Interested applicants should submit the following as one PDF to Dr. Zul Merali, Director, Brain and Mind Institute, [brain&mind@aku.edu](mailto:brain&mind@aku.edu) for consideration:

- CV
- Cover letter outlining interest in the fellowship
- Personal statement of no more than 1,000 words addressing:
  - The candidate's passion for a career in impactful research on mental health in LMICs; or

- How the candidate demonstrates commitment to the issues and countries where they plan to carry out future work
- Writing samples or publication examples (no more than three total), and
- Names and contact information for three references.

Submit items as one PDF named “[your last name, first initial]\_GMH2023” by **February 15, 2023**.

### **Harvard equal opportunity employer language**

*Harvard University is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, or any other characteristic protected by law. Applications from women and underrepresented minorities are strongly encouraged.*

*Aga Khan University adheres to the same equal opportunity employment principles and practices.*