

CALL FOR MENTEES: PUBLICATION MENTORSHIP FOR THE FIRST-TIME WOMEN AUTHORS IN THE FIELD OF HPSR

Health Systems Global (HSG) and the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research (the Alliance) are committed to supporting individual capacity for the conduct and uptake of health policy and systems research (HPSR)¹. Peer-reviewed publications are important for communicating scientific work, recognition within the research community and career progression². However, women lag behind their male colleagues in publications³. A 2019 Lancet review argued that the division in knowledge between genders exists in all countries, with less than 30% of the world's researchers being women⁴. They further argue that while the proportion of women is increasing, these women still publish less than their male counterparts⁵.

THIS CALL

HSG and the Alliance, in collaboration with Health Policy and Planning (HPP), invite early-career women researchers based in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and working on health policy and systems research (HPSR) issues to participate in this call. This call invites those who are interested in publishing their HPSR research for the first time in a global peer-reviewed journal but require guidance and support to submit a publishable manuscript. We strongly encourage submissions from Afro-descent and Indigenous early-career women researchers based in Latin America & the Caribbean.

ELIGIBILITY

Prospective mentees must:

- Be early-career women researchers seeking to publish a paper of original research relevant to the field of HPSR;
- Be resident and working in an LMIC setting;
- Already have a paper idea, outline, or draft manuscript in preparation;
- Be able to develop the abstract and scientific paper in English;
- Have no previous publications in a peer-reviewed journal with global reach as a lead author;
- Require guidance through a one-to-one mentorship to prepare a high-quality publishable manuscript for a peer-reviewed journal.

*** Afro-descent and Indigenous women researchers based in Latin America & the Caribbean are strongly encouraged to apply.**

¹ Kwamie, A. and N. Jalaghoonia, *Supporting early-career mentorship for women in Health Policy and Systems Research: a vital input to building the field*. Health Policy and Planning, 2020. **35**: p. 4-6.

² Nygaard, L.P. and K. Bahgat, *What's in a number? How (and why) measuring research productivity in different ways changes the gender gap*. Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 2018. **32**: p. 67-79.

³ Aiston, S.J. and J. Jung, *Women academics and research productivity: an international comparison*. Gender and Education, 2015. **27**(3): p. 205-220.

⁴ Shannon, G., et al., *Gender equality in science, medicine, and global health: where are we at and why does it matter?* The Lancet, 2019. **393**(10171): p. 560-569.

⁵ Howe-Walsh, L. and S. Turnbull, *Barriers to women leaders in academia: tales from science and technology*. Studies in Higher Education, 2014. **41**(3): p. 415-428

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Successful candidates will be paired with experienced mentors who will provide guidance during the paper preparation process.

Please note, the mentees will be ultimately responsible for the development of their paper and submission to the journal in the form and content required by the journal in the [Instructions for Authors](#) and according to the mentorship program timelines. The assigned mentors will be there to work on a one-to-one basis with the mentees and guide and support them, where necessary, but are definitely not responsible for developing the paper on behalf of the mentee. You can read more about mentee roles & responsibilities [here](#).

Papers that are accepted by HPP will be published in a special supplement in November 2023.

Successful mentor-mentee pairs will be invited to the 7th Global Symposium on Health Systems Research, taking place in Bogota, Colombia between 31 October and 4 November 2022, and participate in an organised session highlighting their experiences. HSG and the Alliance will fully cover costs for in-person and/or virtual presence of mentors and mentees at the symposium.

Mentees will be required to submit their manuscript to HPP only. Mentees whose papers are not accepted by HPP will have the right to submit the rejected papers to other journals, and HSG does not assume any responsibility for publishing these papers, or any other costs.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested applicants are requested to complete [this form](#) and submit:

1. An abstract of their completed research work (no more than 400 words), which they intend to convert into a fully developed scientific paper for publishing in the journal. Only studies that can be used for what HPP calls '[original research](#)' will be accepted;
2. A short motivation letter (no more than 400 words) explaining:
 - a. the challenges the applicant is experiencing with publishing her paper/work in peer-reviewed journal, which she is planning to resolve with the help of this mentorship program;
 - b. a detailed explanation of the support she would require from a mentor while advancing the development of the paper; and
 - c. any other expectations she may have from the mentorship program.

Submissions must be completed online by the **deadline of March 11, 2022**. Please closely follow the instructions provided in the submission form.

SELECTION & PAPER DEVELOPMENT

At this stage, successful candidates will work with the mentors to advance the paper development, meeting all timeline targets set for the program. Mentees will be invited to submit a fully developed paper to the journal before the **deadline of January 20, 2023**.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Candidate submissions will be reviewed by an independent panel of experts. Applications will be judged based on the following criteria:

- Research project to have [ethical approval](#);
- Potential technical merit of the research, its relevance for the field of HPSR and potential for being converted into a publication; and
- Strength of arguments and clarity of statements in the motivation letter.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINES

- Call for application for mentorship: 10-Jan-2022
- Deadline for application for mentorship: 11-Mar-2022
- Notification of successful applicants: 3-May-2022
- Linking of mentees with mentors: 20-May-2022
- Mentors & mentees start working together: Jun-2022
- Organised session at HSR2022: Nov-2022
- Paper submission to HPP: 20-Jan-2023
- Publication of supplement: Nov-2023

NOTE FOR APPLICANTS

- HSG may, at any time before the closing date, for any reason, whether on its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a (prospective) applicant, modify the call by written amendment. Amendments could, inter alia, include modification of the project scope or requirements, the project timeline expectations and/or extension of the closing date for submission;
- All prospective applicants that have submitted an application will be notified in writing of all amendments to the call and will, where applicable, be invited to amend their submission accordingly.