

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. How do I apply?

Applicants must apply through the **African Union recruitment portal** or by scanning the **QR code provided in the prospectus**. Applications submitted through any other channel will not be accepted.

2. Who is eligible to apply?

All **African nationals** (holding an African passport) who are **currently working in Africa** in the **public health or health-related sector** are eligible to be considered, subject to meeting all other program requirements.

3. Can I apply if I am still pursuing a master's degree?

No. Applicants must have **completed their postgraduate degree** at the time of application.

4. Can I apply if I do not have 10 years of professional experience after my postgraduate degree?

No. The fellowship requires a **minimum of 10 years of professional experience post-postgraduate degree**.

- **Does having a PhD waive the experience requirement?**

No. The minimum experience requirement is not waived for PhD holders. Time spent in PhD training may be counted toward post-postgraduate experience, provided that the cumulative total of PhD duration and relevant professional experience equals or exceeds 10 years.

- This fellowship targets **mid- to senior-career professionals**. Africa CDC implements other programs aimed at **early-career and youth professionals**, which may be more appropriate for applicants at earlier stages of their careers.

5. Can I apply if I am not currently employed?

No. Only applicants who are **currently employed** and can provide a **formal letter of support from their employer**—confirming that sufficient time will be allocated for fellowship participation—will be considered.

- Applicants who are **heads of organizations** must submit either:
 - A letter of support from their governing board, or

- A signed declaration confirming their role and commitment to dedicate the required time to the fellowship.

6. Do I need a degree specifically in public health to apply?

No. Applicants must hold a **relevant postgraduate degree** aligned with public health practice. Some of the backgrounds of former fellows include, but are not limited to:

Public Health, Medicine, Mental Health, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Health Economics, Environmental Health, Animal Health, Nutrition, Health Law, and related fields.

7. What does “demonstrated leadership potential or track record” mean?

Applicants are expected to demonstrate **career progression, leadership responsibility, and impact** in their professional journey. In the personal statement, applicants should clearly explain:

- How the fellowship will support their leadership growth, **or**
- How it will enhance their effectiveness in their current leadership role.

8. What does the 8-week residential programme entail?

- Fellows will participate in **residential learning blocks** across **3–4 African countries** during the fellowship year.
- Residential typically occur in **1–2-week blocks**.
- Fellows engage with **national health systems, public health institutions, faculty, and leading experts**.
- Host countries are selected by the **Programme Steering Committee**, composed of leading public health experts from Africa and the diaspora.
- **All residential-related costs** are covered by Africa CDC.
- Residential dates are communicated **well in advance** to facilitate employer approvals.
- Fellows must attend **at least 75% of the residential programme** to be eligible for graduation.

9. What is the Leadership Challenge Project (LCP)?

- The LCP is **not a research project**. Fellows are expected to identify a **real public health leadership challenge** within their context and apply fellowship learnings to address it.
- Fellows are expected to **mobilize resources independently**; the fellowship does **not provide direct project funding**.

Examples of previous Leadership challenge projects include

- Designing and securing funding for a national health insurance expansion for vulnerable populations.
- Establishing a think tank on sustainable HIV responses beyond donor funding.
- Drafting policy briefs that informed legislation.
- Supporting the establishment or strengthening of National Public Health Institutes.

Fellows receive **ongoing support from faculty, mentors, and coaches** throughout project implementation.

For the current cohort, LCPs must align with the following thematic areas aligned with Africa CDC's Strategic Plan and the **Africa Health Security and Sovereignty Agenda**:

- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)
- Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and Mental Health
- Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (PPPR)
- Domestic, Innovative, and Blended Financing for Health
- One Health
- Digital Health
- African Manufacturing of Health Products
- Human Resources for Health
- Primary Health Care
- Reformed and Inclusive Health Systems

10. Does the programme award an academic degree?

No. The fellowship awards a **professional certificate issued by Africa CDC**. It is **not a degree-granting programme**.

11. Should referees submit recommendation letters directly?

No. Reference letters must be **signed, stamped, and uploaded by the applicant** through the application platform.

12. Does pursuing a PhD or another fellowship strengthen my application?

No. Applicants who are **currently pursuing a PhD or another fellowship** are advised to apply in a future cycle. The KAF-GHLP is an **intensive programme**, and experience has shown that concurrent commitments often prevent successful completion.

13. I am not an English speaker. Will my application be reviewed, and can I follow the programme?

Yes. Applications are accepted in **all African Union languages**, including English, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Swahili, and Spanish.

- Interviews will be conducted in the applicant's **preferred language**, where feasible.
- Where panel members fluent in the language are unavailable, **AU-certified interpreters** will be provided.
- During the fellowship, interpretation support will be available to ensure full participation.

14. Is there a risk of bias in the selection process?

No. The selection process follows a **rigorous, transparent, and multi-layered review system**, including:

- Automated eligibility screening via the application portal
- Manual verification of submitted documents
- Independent scoring by **two reviewers** per application
- A third reviewer in cases of scoring discrepancies
- Interviews conducted by a **five-member panel** (three technical experts, one HR representative, and one independent observer)

- Final endorsement by the **Programme Steering Committee**
- Approval by **Africa CDC leadership**

Independent observers ensure fairness and guard against bias throughout the process.

15. Will I be notified of my application status?

Yes. **All applicants** will be formally notified once the selection process is complete.

16. When should I expect feedback?

- Shortlisted applicants will be contacted **by March** to schedule interviews.
- Successful applicants will be notified **by May** and begin onboarding shortly thereafter.
- All other applicants will receive final communication **by May**.

17. If I am unsuccessful, can I reapply in future cycles?

Yes. All eligible candidates are encouraged to **reapply**.

18. Can I submit my application by email?

No. Only applications submitted through the **official application system** will be considered.

19. Will incomplete applications be reviewed?

No. **Incomplete applications are automatically screened out**.

20. Are accommodations available for applicants with disabilities?

Yes. Africa CDC is an **equal opportunity organization**. Reasonable accommodations will be provided in line with **African Union rules and regulations**, subject to certification through AU medical services.