

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE MPhil IN PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH FOR 2024

**DUE DATE: August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

The Alan J. Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health (CPMH), a joint initiative of the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University and the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health at the University of Cape Town, is an independent inter-disciplinary academic research and teaching centre for public mental health promotion and service development in Africa. CPMH is proud to invite applications from across the African continent for the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Public Mental Health in 2024. Fellowships are available for citizens or permanent residents of African countries through the African mental health Researchers Inspired and Equipped (ARISE) and African Mental health Research Initiative (AMARI) programmes.

## MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH

The MPhil in Public Mental Health is a part-time research degree that aims to develop advanced research skills, enabling participants to undertake their own research projects (such as evaluating services, policies and interventions) as well as interpret research findings for mental health policy and practice. The programme is designed to be accessible to practitioners who work full-time, and who are from a range of backgrounds including social work, psychology, psychiatry, medicine, occupational therapy, nursing, health economics, public mental health, public health, health service management, policy making and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The training aims to build the professional capacity and leadership of the participants in their work, while contributing to knowledge generation in Africa.

The degree requires:

- The completion of a 3-week residential training module in research methodology for public mental health;
- Participation in a 6-week online writing course in February/March 2024;
- Participation in monthly webinars
- The preparation of a dissertation of a minimum of 20 000 words.

### *3-week Residential Training Module in Research Methodology*

The course will start with a 3-week residential training session in Cape Town from **15 January – 2 February 2024**. Students will attend lectures, seminars and workshops at the CPMH campus (University of Cape Town) or at Stellenbosch University. The content of the training module will be focused on research methodology for public mental health. The training includes an orientation to public mental health, quantitative and qualitative research methods, statistics and epidemiology for mental health and an introduction to the responsible conduct of research. All students are required to be available for full week days during the 3-week training session.

During the 3-week training session, students are also expected to meet with their research supervisors and develop their draft research proposals, which they are required to present to a review panel on Friday 2

February 2024. Following the training session, students will be provided with ongoing support and supervision via online platforms, guiding them through the process of finalising their research proposals, gaining ethics approval for the research, gathering and analysing data for their research, and eventually completing their dissertations. During the 2 year degree programme, students attend mandatory monthly webinars from their home countries, which will be used to provide additional structured teaching and review research progress.

### ***Public Mental Health Dissertation***

The dissertation component aims to provide students with the opportunity to acquire specialised knowledge in a specific area of public mental health. It also provides a practical opportunity for the student to master the research process, which includes selection of a topic; self-driven but supervised investigation; data collection and management; assimilation, analysis, interpretation and critical discussion; understanding and coherent presentation. The dissertation will preferably be related to the ongoing work conducted by participants in their respective countries. For example, students may choose to evaluate a mental health programme in their own service organisation or region. This would serve the dual function of the development of the student's research skills and service development, with ongoing support and supervision from the CPMH. Research supervisors employed by the Centre are acknowledged experts in public mental health, with a proven publication record and experience of supervising and mentoring students at Master's level.

The dissertation is examined according to university regulations for the examination of Master's dissertations as stipulated in the relevant university handbook. Dissertations will be assessed by two external examiners based at South African institutions other than the one at which the student is registered and/or international academic institutions.

### ***Registration***

Registration is for a minimum of 1 year, and normally the dissertation takes 2-3 years to complete. For administrative purposes, students will have to register with one of the collaborating universities i.e. with UCT or Stellenbosch. Candidates should indicate their preference on their application, but as we require an equitable number of students enrolled at each university, we cannot guarantee registration at the university of the student's choice. The course content and requirements will be the same for both universities. The degree will be awarded by the university at which the student is registered.

### ***Admission Requirements***

Candidates for this programme should be in possession of an honours degree, a post-graduate diploma in public mental health or a cognate discipline, or an equivalent four-year qualification. In addition, candidates should:

- have experience of working in a mental health, health, social sciences or a development-related field for at least three years;
- be employed within a managerial or leadership role, or have the capacity for such a role;
- have experience in conducting research, with participation in one or more research projects; and
- show evidence of adequate English language and writing proficiency for postgraduate academic studies.

## Please note:

- A research programme of this nature requires dedicated time and the ability to work independently. You will require a minimum of 10 hours per week on average to complete the dissertation. Please consider this carefully before applying.
- The MPhil in Public Mental Health does not lead to a professional qualification that can be registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa or any other professional council. It is strictly an academic research degree with no clinical components.
- Students may not be registered for another PGDip/degree programme while they are registered for the MPhil (Public Mental Health).

## Fellowship Opportunities

The aim of the African mental health Researchers Inspired and Equipped (ARISE) and African Mental health Research Initiative (AMARI) programmes is to strengthen African public mental health. ARISE and AMARI are offering fellowships to candidates from African countries to begin the MPhil in Public Mental Health in 2024. Successful fellows will be registered at UCT or SU. The fellowships cover all the tuition, travel and accommodation fees related to the programme. To be considered for the fellowships, candidates must:

- be a citizen or permanent resident of an African country
- successfully gain entry to the MPhil in Public Mental Health
- undertake a research project that is aligned with the goal of ARISE.

The ARISE and the AMARI fellowships are tenable during the first and second years of registration only. Should the degree not be completed within 2 years, the candidate **will be responsible for the necessary registration fee and study costs in subsequent years of registration.**

## Other Opportunities

See the [UCT postgraduate degree funding noticeboard](#) or the [Stellenbosch University postgraduate funding support](#) webpage for other funding options.

## Fees

The **fees** for this course for 2023, at the respective universities, were as follows:

	UCT	SU
<b>Tuition Fees per year</b>	ZAR 40 772	ZAR 25 045
<b>International Students Administrative Fee</b>	ZAR 4 700	SADC* countries (which includes Namibia) and Rwanda: R45,000 AFRICA (beyond the SADC* countries and excluding Rwanda): R45,000 REST OF WORLD (Outside of Africa): R73,500
<b>Application Fee</b>	ZAR 100 (RSA and SADC) ZAR 300 (rest of world)	ZAR 100

Fees for 2024 will be finalised in October/November 2023. See information on fees for [Stellenbosch University](#) and the [University of Cape Town](#).

## Selection Process

Admission to the programme is highly competitive, and is based primarily on academic merit and the potential to contribute to mental health development in under-served areas in Africa. We will engage in a rigorous selection process to identify the candidates who are most likely to successfully complete the degree within the prescribed period. In addition to the written application, short-listed applicants may be requested to attend a teleconference interview.

The deadline for applications is **31 August 2023**. The outcome of the selection process will be communicated to all applicants by **31 October 2023**.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The application forms are detailed, so that we have as much relevant information possible to enable us to select the most suitable candidates. Instructions for completing the application form are provided in this section. Please read and follow these instructions carefully as they are not repeated on the application form itself.

- Download the application forms from the button below.
- The application forms must be completed in full and submitted with all required supporting documents as **a single PDF file, with your surname and initial as the file name**, to [Songelwa.Mobo@uct.ac.za](mailto:Songelwa.Mobo@uct.ac.za) on or before **31 August 2023**.
- Each application should consist of the following:
  - Completed application form, including:
    - Photograph
    - Signed declaration
    - Research proposal (see format in the application form)
    - Names of 2 referees. We will contact them directly.
  - Certified copies of original academic transcripts
  - An example of your **own** academic writing skills such as an article that you have authored. (Please do not submit a co-authored paper as we require an example of your writing skills.)
  - Please do not include any additional material (such as a separate CV) in your application package. Provision has been made on the application form for all information required for the selection process.

If you have any questions about the application form or process, please contact **Songelwa Mobo** ([Songelwa.Mobo@uct.ac.za](mailto:Songelwa.Mobo@uct.ac.za)). Upon selection, students will be given additional information related to their registering university (such as information related to fees, registration, accommodation for the 3 week intensive course, financial assistance, etc), as well as more detailed information about the course.