

Eastern Africa Hub for Behavioural and Social Science Research and Capacity Strengthening for Vaccine Uptake (EAR_VU) – Project No: 110829-001

Call for Applications: Small Research Grants – EAR-VU Project

Deadline for Applications: June 15th, 2026

Grant Duration: 12 months

About the EAR-VU Project

The *Eastern Africa Hub for Behavioral and Social Science Research and Capacity Strengthening for Vaccine Uptake (EAR-VU)* aims to strengthen research and research capacity to understand social and behavioral factors affecting vaccine uptake in the region. The Hub seeks to generate high-quality evidence to inform policy and practice, while building a sustainable network of early-career researchers in social and behavioral sciences for health in the Eastern Africa region. The project is a collaboration between the University of Rwanda (lead), Makerere University in Uganda, University of Nairobi in Kenya, Addis Ababa University, in Ethiopia, and the University of Dar es Salaam, in Tanzania.

The Hub seeks to address the following **thematic areas**:

1. Social and behavioral determinants of vaccine uptake.
2. Innovative strategies to improve vaccine acceptance and reduce hesitancy.
3. Health communication, community engagement, and dissemination approaches.
4. Research with clear potential to inform policy and practice.

Grant Objectives

The EAR-VU Small Research Grant aims to:

1. Support early-career researchers to conduct innovative, policy-relevant research aligned with EAR-VU thematic areas.
2. Build regional capacity in behavioral and social sciences through mentorship, peer support, and skills development.
3. Promote research dissemination to stakeholders, including policy-makers, health sector actors, and civil society.

Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Be early-career researchers with publications (holders of a master's degree, or PhD)
- Be affiliated with, or able to secure an affiliation at the EAR-VU partner institutions.
- Demonstrate interest in behavioral/social science research related to vaccine uptake.
- Commit to conduct research in respect of ethical principles and contributing to addressing societal health challenges.

***Female applicants are encouraged to apply**



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Grant Structure

- *Principal Investigator (PI):* The lead applicant.
- *Partnerships:* Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with civil society, health sector institutions, or multidisciplinary teams.
- *Funding:* (i) *Research grant of 15,000,000 Rwandan Francs to cover research activities*
(ii) *Quarterly stipend of 750,000 Rwandan Francs*
(iii) *Facilitation to attend a project-organized training and conference*
(iv) *Facilitation for mentorship*

Application Requirements

Applications should include:

1. **A cover letter** addressed to the Project PI at earvuhub@gmail.com with a copy to d.uwizeye@ur.ac.rw and a.muleefu@ur.ac.rw
2. **Expression of interest** letter of not more than 500 words describing why your application should be considered. Describe your academic background and how it defines your potential in producing the required outputs, including community engagement.
3. **Research Proposal:** Maximum five pages, including Abstract (150 words); Brief background (400 words); Research gap (300 words); Aim and objectives (150 words); Research question(s) (150); Conceptual framework (300); Methodology/Research Design (500); Ethical Considerations (150); Scope (150); Limitations and mitigation strategies (150); References; Timetable/Schedule; Budget (include research activities and assistants if needed not exceeding 15 Million Rwandan Francs); Appendices (Include supplementary materials such as a glossary of acronyms/abbreviations, brief explanation of technical terms, essential tables, maps).
4. **Curriculum Vitae (CV):** Including a list of publications (with full citation) and previous research experience, including experience in research grants.
5. **Mentorship Plan:** A brief description of how mentorship will happen during the fellowship.
6. **Letter of Support:**
 - Reference letter from an academic or professional supervisor;
 - A reference letter from a potential mentor/supervisor
7. **Copy of National Identity Card** and/or passport
8. A copy of the Master's or PhD certificates

Note: *Incomplete application files will not be assessed.*



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Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on:

- Clarity and relevance of the research problem to EAR-VU thematic areas.
- Originality and responsible use of digital technologies (Plagiarism and the use of AI)
- Potential contribution to vaccine uptake research.
- Strength of methodological approach, especially in behavioral/social sciences.
- Inclusion of mentorship or peer-support mechanisms.
- Gender and geographic balance, prioritizing underrepresented institutions/regions.
- Commitment to research dissemination in policy and community formats.

Selection Process

- Applications must be submitted online through the provided emails.
- The review process will include:
 - Blind scoring of proposals.
 - Interviews/presentations for shortlisted applicants.
 - Final selection by the Grant Review Committee (GRC)

Expected Outcomes

- Produce high-quality research outputs, including at least 1 publication, policy briefs, one regional conference presentation, and a community engagement and dissemination flyer.
- Integrate a regional network of early-career researchers in behavioral and social sciences working to enhance vaccine uptake in the region.

Contact and Enquiries

S/N	Country	Names	Email
1	University of Rwanda	Assoc. Prof Dieudonne Uwizeye	d.uwizeye@ur.ac.rw
2	Makerere University, Uganda	Dr. Allen Kabagenyi	allenka79@yahoo.com
3	Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia	Prof. Getnet Tedebe	getnett2001@yahoo.com
4	University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	Dr. Shumbusho Damian	shumbusho35@gmail.com
5	University of Nairobi, Kenya	Dr. Anne W. Kamau	Anne.kamau@uonbi.ac.ke kamau.anne@gmail.com

Done at Kigali on 04th May 2026

Dr. Alphonse Muleefu

Project Principal Investigator