**General Information:**

What is the purpose of this training program?

Ensuring diversity in the research workforce is a priority for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and a key intervention towards addressing health disparities affecting racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. Global health research is part of this mandate, given the commonality of disease threats around the world, the shared genetic makeup, health practices and lifestyles of groups in the U.S. and abroad, and the mobility of populations across borders. Towards this end, ICAP’s MHRT program provides: (1) exposure to landmark findings and current challenges in global health and health disparities research; (2) training in qualitative and quantitative research methods; (3) hands-on experience conducting mentored research at an ICAP domestic or international research site; and (4) career and academic counseling. The ultimate goal is to prepare the next generation of researchers and to contribute to a diverse global health research workforce. From the trainee perspective, the program provides a terrific introduction to research in global health and health disparities, as well as hands-on experience conducting research overseas.

Where is the training program located?

Trainees will spend an initial three weeks at the Mailman School of Public Health (MSPH) in New York City, followed by a minimum of eight weeks at a selected research site (domestic or international), and a final research capstone week at MSPH in New York.

Can I choose to which country I go?

You are encouraged to indicate a preference on your application (if you have one), and the selection committee will take this into account, however placement in a preferred site cannot be guaranteed. Native language proficiency is a suggested requirement for placement in countries where English is not the primary language.

What types of research training will be provided?

The MHRT program includes a robust research training curriculum. In weeks two and three, trainees will have classroom-based training at MSPH where they will receive formal aspect of interdisciplinary research education through required short courses that include a combination of readings, case studies and lectures tailored to the type of trainee enrolled. There is a focus on introducing, developing, and demonstrating research skills and the understanding of minority health, health disparities and global health research. Core short courses include: Building interdisciplinary values and core competencies; Introduction to Global Health Research; Introduction to Minority Health and Health Disparities Research; Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods (or Mixed Methods depending on the learner) and Responsible Conduct of Research. During the field practicum, trainees will work hand-in-hand with research mentors at international or domestic sites, and will also continue their core seminars via distance education. In week twelve, trainees will return to NYC to conclude the core seminars, and share their work at a poster presentation.

How much time will I spend abroad during the training program?

Eight weeks.

What types of research projects are available? What types of research activities will I be doing?

We won’t have a final list of research projects until the first quarter of 2019, but the majority of the international research sites do substantive work on HIV, maternal and child health and tuberculosis. Once accepted into the program, trainees will be matched with ongoing research projects and assigned two research mentors – one in New York and one at the international or domestic research site. The mentors will develop a detailed scope of work for each trainee, and orientation to the research project will begin in the first week of training activities. Trainee scopes of work will be somewhat tailored to prior experience; in past years, activities have included chart review/data abstraction, data quality assurance, work on monitoring and evaluation of service programs, data entry, and data analysis. Trainees have also assisted with literature reviews, translation and/or piloting of research tools (such as questionnaires), and development of research protocols.

Will I get course credit for the program? Is the program graded?

No credits will be provided There is a pre and post knowledge assessment as well as class and home work that will be assigned.

Is this a paid program?

Funding availability to support student costs is currently in development. Additional information is forthcoming

How are housing and travel logistics coordinated?

ICAP will coordinate travel logistics, including NY housing arrangements, travel to international sites and accommodations for students participating in international projects. Funding availability to support housing and logistical costs will be determined based on NIH funding availability.

Will there be any costs for trainees?

Trainees may be asked to cover certain expenses of the program. Additional information on program costs can be discussed with training coordinator.

What are the start and end dates for the program?

The program runs for 12 weeks from mid-June to mid-August.

Can I talk to program alumni to learn more about the program?

Yes. Many of the prior trainees have volunteered to speak to interested applicants, and some emails are below:

Andrea Carazas, MHIRT Alumni 2018 - alc737@nyu.edu

Samuel Castro, MHIRT Alumni 2018 - sc3970@columbia.edu

Javier Cattle, MHIRT Alumni 2018 - jdc2211@columbia.edu

**Eligibility**

What are the eligibility criteria for the training program?

1. Candidates must be U.S. Citizens or permanent residents.

2. Candidates must meet at least one of the NIH-defined criteria for membership in an “underrepresented or minority group.” Please see the NIH definitions below for underrepresented racial and/or ethnic minority,[[1]](#endnote-1) rural geographic location,[[2]](#endnote-2) and low socioeconomic group.[[3]](#endnote-3)

3. Undergraduate applicants must have successfully completed at least two years of coursework in a biomedical or behavioral health science major. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required.

4. Graduate candidates must have successfully completed at least one year of graduate coursework by the beginning of the training program.

5. Pre-doctoral applicant must be DrPH or PhD students who are entering or completed one to two years of their program.

What are the coursework requirements?

Candidates must have successfully completed coursework in biomedical or behavioral health sciences.

Is there a minimum required GPA?

The minimum GPA is 3.0. This is a NIH requirement.

Can I apply if I am not a citizen or permanent resident of the United States?

No. This is a NIH requirement.

**2019 Application Procedures**

[What is the deadline for submission of applications?](https://www.training.nih.gov/resources/faqs/summer_interns#q14)

All materials must be received by ICAP no later than Tuesday, January 15, 2019 .

[Do you have any tips for writing the personal statement?](https://www.training.nih.gov/resources/faqs/summer_interns#q14)

While we do not have specific guidelines, past successful applicants had personal statements ranging between 500 to 1000 words. The purpose of the personal statement is to provide an opportunity for the selection committee to get to know you better as an applicant. You are encouraged to discuss relevant past experience (if any); research interests; global health interest; career goals, or anything else that you think would help strengthen your application.

How are applications reviewed?

Applications are first screened to ensure that applicants meet eligibility criteria, and then ranked based on statement of interest, transcripts, GPA, letters of recommendation, experience and language skills. A short list is developed and reviewed by the MHRT program Steering Committee; applicants on the short list are then invited for an interview with MHRT staff and ICAP Columbia faculty.

1. For the purposes of this program, NIH defines underrepresented racial and/or ethnic minority to include: Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Individuals who come from an educational environment such as that found in certain rural or inner-city environments that has demonstrably and directly inhibited the individual from obtaining the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to develop and participate in a research career or (b) received any of the following student loans: Health Professional Student Loans (HPSL), Loans for Disadvantaged Student Program; or have received scholarships from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Scholarship for Individuals with Exceptional Financial Need. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, defined as: Individuals who come from a family with an annual income below established low-income thresholds. These thresholds are based on family size, published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census; adjusted annually for changes in the Consumer Price Index; and adjusted by the Secretary for use in all health professions programs. The Secretary periodically publishes these income levels at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.shtml> . [↑](#endnote-ref-3)