

Decolonising Global Health: from rhetoric to action

The United Nations University International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH) is one of 14 research and training centres that comprise the UNU system. As a UN think tank, the mission of UNU-IIGH is to build knowledge and capacity for decision-making by UN agencies, programmes, and Member States about global health issues. The aim of UNU-IIGH is to contribute to the development and strengthening of health services policy frameworks and management actions, particularly for people in developing countries, and to support implementation of promotive and preventive approaches to human health. UNU-IIGH's research and capacity building in global health relates specifically to informing the policy debates and directions that ensure that, in keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), "no one is left behind".

Project description

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an illuminating example of just how 'global' health is. Various described as 'a notion (the current state of global health), an objective (a world of healthy people, a condition of global health), [and] a mix of scholarship, research, and practice (with many questions, issues, skills, and competencies)' (Koplan et al., 2009), global health institutions and practitioners have grand and noble aims. But these are built on a colonial foundation that has resulted in a structurally inequitable system with entrenched power dynamics that both explicitly and implicitly stymie attempts to ensure good health and wellbeing for all and ensure that no-one is left behind.

Working with IIGH and international partners, the academic intern will be involved in the preparation for and running of a Decolonising Global Health Africa roundtable. Convening is a core component of UNU-IIGH's work in translating evidence into policy. Combining its position in the UN with access to the academic community, UNU-IIGH convenes a broad set of stakeholders to develop and disseminates recommendations and where appropriate, support implementation.

This roundtable will form part of a broader programme of work contributing to international efforts to progress the decolonising global health agenda beyond webinars and rhetoric to actionable change.

The key tasks of the intern will include:

- 1) Research: Conducting literature reviews (including grey literature) and relevant research
- 2) Writing: Production of briefing papers and contribution to the IIGH blog
- 3) Convening coordination: logistical support and minute taking;
- 4) Other tasks as requested by the project supervisor and the Institute's Director.

Required qualifications and competencies include:

- currently enrolled in, or recently completed, a graduate program (Masters level) in global or public health, health policy, health sciences, or other related disciplines
- a demonstrated interest in the topic of decolonising global and/or public health
- knowledge and expertise grounded in the African context
- a strong ability to establish priorities, multi-task and work within tight timelines
- excellent communication skills, with proficiency in both oral and written English
- good team player with strong interpersonal skills demonstrated by the ability to work in a multicultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity

Please see <https://iigh.unu.edu/academic-programmes/internship/academic-internship.html> for the full list of requirements

Logistics

Internships last between three (3) months and (6) months; please indicate availability in your application. UNU-IIGH provides a stipend for both in-person and remote interns.