



Research Topic for Summer Internship 2016

1. HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Behavioral Issues

CIF conducted several rounds of **Bio-Behavioral Surveillance (BBS) surveys among key populations such as people who inject drugs (PWID), female sex workers (FSW), men who have sex with men (MSM) and prisoners** in various cities of Georgia. The objective of the BBS is to measure prevalence of HIV and other diseases such as Hepatitis C among various risk groups, provide measurements of key HIV risk behaviors, evaluate outcomes of national response – preventive interventions and generate evidence for advocacy and policy-making.

Latest BBS of 2015 investigated 1800 PWID and 400 MSM in major cities of Georgia.

The datasets, study tools and study reports of the previous studies are available in English. Based on the available data CIF intends to produce papers in high impact peer reviewed journals.

Suggested research / publication topics include:

- 1) Evaluation of preventive intervention effectiveness among high risk groups using Propensity Score Matching (PSM) or Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) methods.
- 2) HIV epidemic change and factors associated with HIV infection among MSM
- 3) HIV risk, testing and prevention behaviors among MSM

Interns will be expected to contribute to any of the following activities, depending on their interest:

- a. **Literature review**, specifically: Thorough desk research of published literature. The review should cover peer reviewed publication as well as Grey Literature (study reports, manuals, conference proceedings, etc.)
- b. **Quantitative statistical data analysis.**

Interns could contribute to the specific sections of the paper (depending on their interest and capabilities) that will be published in peer-reviewed journal. Interns will be named as co-authors on these papers when prepared and depending on the quality of their output.

Therefore, students interested in HIV and behavioral issues with good literature review OR quantitative analysis skills OR scientific paper writing skills will strongly benefit from participating in this program.

Interns are expected to have one or several **following capabilities/experience**:

- **Literature review skills/experience.** Ability to undertake a comprehensive, systematic search, critical evaluation of publications, thorough analytical and summative literature review skills, covering methodological issues and topic related, ability to develop a clear and coherent structure with accurate citations.
- **Quantitative analytical skills/experience.** Theoretical and practical skills in regression analyses are required.
- **Scientific paper writing skills/experience**

Applicants interested in this research topic, however, not having proficiency in the skills, **are strongly encouraged** to upgrade their theoretical knowledge and practical skills prior to the internship term by enrolling in respective courses in their schools. Applicants will be expected to adequately reflect this weakness in their application/motivation letter and describe how they intend to advance their knowledge and skills prior to undertaking internship. Failure to do so will have negative impact on internship evaluation, if accepted in our program.