

## CIF Winter Internship Program 2017

The winter internship program is now open! Master and PhD students from around the world are invited to apply and use the possibility to develop advanced research skills, meet leading experts in the field and become a co-author of a scientific paper. We offer four different research directions:

1. HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Behavioural Issues
2. Size estimation among Key Population
3. Health Equity Analysis
4. Mental Health

If you are interested in any of the research topics and would like to find out more about working with our research team please submit your CV (the template is available below), cover letter indicating the selected research topic and supporting letter from the university or the working place.

Deadline for application is October 10, 2016. Notification about selection will be sent within 10 days after the deadline.

Since 2002 CIF attracts interns from around the world, who are interested to have the first-hand experience in the real-life setting and to contribute to the research projects implemented by the organization.

For any further queries, please contact Internship Program Coordinator Maia Uchaneishvili or send us E-mail at [internship@curatio.com](mailto:internship@curatio.com)

For more information please visit: <http://curatiofoundation.org/internship-announcement/>

## Research Topics for Winter Internship 2017

For 2016 Winter Internship Program Curatio International Foundation (CIF) offers the following research topics:

### 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.

## 2. Size estimation among Key Population

CIF conducted **Population Size Estimation (PSE)** study among **men who have sex with men (MSM)** in 2014 using novel methods, including Network Based Capture-Recapture (proposed by Dombrowski et al. Among methamphetamine users in New-York city in 2012). In 2015 Bio-Behavioral Surveillance (BBS) study recruited 400 MSM in two major cities of Georgia using respondent driven sampling. Data from the Network Based Capture-Recapture study was also obtained during the BBS survey.

The dataset, study tools of the current study and report of the previous study are available in English. CIF intends to analyse PSE data, update MSM size estimations and produce a paper for high impact peer reviewed journal.

**The intern will be expected** to contribute a quantitative analysis of PSE data. The work requires specific knowledge, such as use of Lincoln-Peterson method to find matches, use of marginal and joint probability of attributes, developing a range of estimates.

**The intern could contribute to the specific sections of the paper** (depending on their interest and capabilities) and will be named as co-author depending on the quality of their output.

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 a negative impact on internship evaluation, if accepted in our program.

## 3. Health Equity Analysis

The National Statistics office of Georgia carries out an Integrated Household Survey, including Household Expenditure component among a representative sample of the population on a quarterly basis. The survey includes health expenditure module allowing trend analysis of out-of-pocket spending on health by different categories. Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program offers free or subsidized outpatient and inpatient services to the population, however drugs for outpatients are not included in the benefit package that create a financial burden to chronic patients. The UHC program was introduced in 2013, in Georgia.

CIF team has been working on a health equity analysis using five-year (2010-2015) data from the Integrated Household Survey. The research questions include: what happened with out-of-pocket expenditure on health after introduction of UHC program, what is the trend of catastrophic out-of-pocket health spending, how these measures are distributed across income quantiles (from poorest to richest group of population), how much did out-of-pocket health spending contribute to increasing poverty, what is the impact of out-of-pocket spending – how far below the poverty line people are pushed? The analysis is done using ADePT software.

Interns interested in the issues of health equity and financial health protection with good literature review, paper writing and policy analysis skills will strongly benefit from participating in this internship. **Interns will be expected** to contribute to the **Literature Review**.

Interns are expected to have **Literature review skills/experience**, specifically 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.

The interns are expected to primarily contribute to the scientific paper development, which will be submitted to international peer reviewed journal for publication. Interns will be named as co-authors on these papers when prepared and depending on the quality of their output.

#### 4. Mental Health

Mental health is integral to population health and well-being and contributes to the social and economic prosperity of society. Promotion of mental well-being and prevention interventions, can reduce risk factors for mental disorders, enhance protective factors for good mental and physical health and lead to lasting positive effects on a range of educational, social and economic outcomes for young people.

Interns are expected to undertake thorough **Literature Review** of latest evidences on resilience factors and on effective interventions promoting mental well-being of adolescents and young people. Specific focus will be on the community and household interventions and evidences of interventions among migrant population.

Interns are expected to have **Literature review skills/experience**, specifically 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. The review should cover peer reviewed publication as well as Grey Literature (study reports, manuals, conference proceedings, etc.)

For more information please visit our Internship page: <http://curatiofoundation.org/about-internship/> or contact Internship Program Coordinator [Maia Uchaneishvili](mailto:Maia.Uchaneishvili@curatio.com), [internship@curatio.com](mailto:internship@curatio.com)