

Postdoctoral Fellow, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University

Background:

The Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy is seeking a full-time Postdoctoral Fellow to work on a project relating to the assessment of the quality and programmatic uses of fortified food products used in U.S. Title II food aid programs. The project, called the Food Aid Quality Review, (www.foodaidquality.pbworks.com) is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Office of Food for Peace (FFP).

FAQR Phase I, conducted from 2009 to 2011, examined the nutritional needs of beneficiary populations across the developing world and the nutritional quality of commodities currently available to meet those needs, with the objective of improving the quality of Title II food aid commodities and programming. The findings of FAQR Phase I were published as a report, *Delivering Improved Nutrition: Recommendations for Changes to U.S. Food Aid Products and Programs* (USAID, April 2011), which is available at <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/food-assistance/resources/research-and-policy-papers>.

The project completed Phase II of research in February 2016, which involved presenting findings and recommendations, implementing many of the recommendations, and testing recommendations through follow-on studies. The current phase, FAQR Phase III, will conclude activities initiated in earlier phases, and will respond to new priorities. Focus areas include: research on the acceptability and cost effectiveness of new food products; testing new formulations of products (compared with existing foods); studying improved packaging and delivery approaches to enhance logistics; organizing consultative and expert meetings to draw on the widest possible expertise and take account of the multiple perspectives on food aid programming; synthesizing state-of-the-art evidence on food-based delivery of micronutrients in environments where food aid is required; and defining and disseminating improved field tools for calculating the cost effectiveness of products and interventions, including specialized foods.

Job Summary:

The post-doctoral fellow will work closely with the Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, and the Senior Research Specialist of the Food Aid Quality Review to coordinate two sub-studies: 1) Body Composition: product effectiveness in terms of total body mass versus lean body mass accretion; 2) Environmental Enteropathy (EE): the differential effect of environmental enteropathy on the recovery from MAM in each of the four supplementary foods. The two sub-studies are within a larger study to assess the effectiveness, cost, and cost-effectiveness of four alternative supplementary foods in the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) in children in normal program settings.

The results of the main study and sub-studies will guide decisions about what commodities to use in supplementary feeding programs in particular contexts and populations, and what factors need to be addressed to ensure maximum effectiveness and

cost effectiveness in the treatment of moderate malnutrition.

The post-doctoral fellow's responsibilities will include:

1. Contribute to the design of the sub-studies and protocol development
2. Work closely with the FAQR PI, co-PI, Senior Research Specialist, Field Research Manager and with the Washington University (Wash U) PI to ensure satisfactory compliance with the institutional review board (IRB) process (Tufts University and in-country IRB)
3. Coordinate with Wash U and Project Peanut Butter (PPB) on start-up activities
4. Take overall responsibility for completing all tasks related to the body composition and EE sub-studies
5. Preparation of solutions to be administered to the subjects, the collection of urine and stool samples from study subjects, ensure safe storage and transportation of the samples to laboratories in country and in the US.
6. Coordinate and conduct the following activities:
 - a. Develop training materials for the clinic team
 - b. Hold daily debriefings on the progress of the clinic team
 - c. Assist in ensuring proper sub-study implementation: training the clinic team sub-study procedures and sample collection, supervising sub-study procedures, sample collection, storage and shipment
7. Work with other local stakeholders to ensure sub-study implementation success
8. Work with the Tufts team to analyze data
9. Maintain regular coordination and submit regular (monthly) progress reports to the PI and Project Manager
10. Work with the Tufts team to write reports on the results of the sub-studies
11. Track financial expenditures of the project to maintain accurate and timely (no less than monthly) accounting.

Qualifications:

Years of related experience: Minimum of 3 years' experience. Preferably some prior experience working within Africa is a plus.

Required education: PhD in nutrition, nutritional biochemistry and metabolism, public health, food policy or related field

Required computer/technical skills: Familiarity with Microsoft Office Suite. Familiarity with data analysis programs (such as SPSS, STATA or Nvivo)

Other relevant skills (preferred)

- Experience conducting research in less developed countries in nutrition, health, or related programs at the community level.
- Experience in the assessment of EE and/or body composition, including administration of prepared solutions, collection of urine/stool samples, safe storage and transportation of biological samples for laboratory analysis.
- Experience with WFP feeding programs and coordinating nutrition efforts with local governments.
- Experience with IRB approval process.
- Excellent organizational and managerial ability, attention to detail, and ability to

multitask; excellent research skills including document search (published and unpublished; excellent writing and editing skills.

- This position requires a high level of interaction with scholars, scientists, industry representatives, policymakers, and international agency officials as well as with local staff in country, and with project beneficiaries who are subject of the study
- Cultural sensitivity, patience and respect, and a helpful attitude toward resolving problems and answering questions are essential.

Additional Information:

This is a full-time position, to start early fall of 2016. The position will be located in Boston, MA for 1-2 months, with transition to full-time location in Sierra Leone, for approximately 8 months to one year, or until data collection has been completed, and return to Boston, MA at the end of the sub-study data collection for approximately 1 year.

Contact Information:

Please send CV and cover letter to FAQR Project Administrator, Jocelyn Boiteau (Jocelyn.boiteau@tufts.edu)