U.S. Department of State

# INTERAGENCY POST EMPLOYEE POSITION DESCRIPTION

Prepare according to instructions given in Foreign Service National Handbook, Chapter 4 (3 FAH-2)

| 1. POST | 2. AGENCY | 3a. POSITION NO. |
|---|---|---|
| Abuja, Nigeria | HHS/CDC Nigeria | A96036 |

3b. SUBJECT TO IDENTICAL POSITIONS? AGENCIES MAY SHOW THE NUMBER OF SUCH POSITIONS AUTHORIZED AND/OR ESTABLISHED AFTER THE "YES" BLOCK. ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. REASON FOR SUBMISSION

☐ a. Re-description of duties: This position replaces

Positions No. _____ / _____ (Title) _____ (Series) _____ (Grade)

✓ b. New Position

☐ c. Other (Explain)

| 5. CLASSIFICATION ACTION | Position Title and Series Code | Grade | Initials | Date (mm-dd-yyyy) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Post Classification Authority | Science Program Specialist | FSN- 10 | su | 3/18/2016 |
| b. Other | | | | |
| c. Proposed by Initiating Office | Science Program Specialist | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| 6. POST TITLE POSITION (if different from official title)<br>Science Program Specialist | 7. NAME OF EMPLOYEE |
| 8. OFFICE/SECTION<br>American Embassy Abuja | a. First Subdivision |
| b. Second Subdivision<br>Department of Health and Human Services<br>US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)<br>Nigeria | c. Third Subdivision |
| 9. This is a complete and accurate description of the duties and responsibilities of my position.<br>Typed Name and Signature of Employee — Date (mm-dd-yyy) | 10. This is a complete and accurate description of the duties and responsibilities of this position.<br>Typed Name and Signature of Supervisor — Date (mm-dd-yyyy) |
| 11. **This is a complete and accurate description of the duties and responsibilities of this position. There is a valid management need for this position.**<br>Typed Name and Signature of Section Chief or Agency Head — Date (mm-dd-yyyy) | 12. I have satisfied myself that is an accurate description of this position, and I certify that it has been classified in accordance with appropriate 3 FAH-2 standards.<br>Typed Name and Signature of Admin or HR Officer — Date (mm-dd-yyyy) |

## 13. BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION

The Science Program Specialist reports to the Senior Science Advisor, CDC/ Nigeria, and serves as a focal point to support the coordination and clearance of all CDC supported research projects, manuscripts and abstracts. S/he will actively supports and facilitates the development, review and clearance process for all research projects, public health evaluations, surveys, and special study protocols as well as the ethical review and institutional review board (IRB) process for all research activities funded by HHS/CDC and carried out by implementing partners in Nigeria. The incumbent advises CDC technical staff and staff of collaborating partners on clearance requirements and the clearance process for any proposed activities funded by HHS/CDC which require clearance. Maintains and updates all files and documentation associated with the clearance process and research agenda in CDC Nigeria.

## 14. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Ethical Review and Clearance & Development of Research Projects (30%)

With technical assistance from the Activity Managers and Team Leads, job holder facilitates CDC Nigeria and PEPFAR partner organizations' compliance with USG and CDC requirements for ethical review and clearance of all proposed research projects, special studies, surveys, and public health evaluation projects funded by HHS/CDC. Duties require close coordination with PEPFAR senior technical staff (Activity Managers), subject matter experts (SME), and technical project staff of the Nigerian Government and other implementing partner organizations to ensure that all necessary documentations for required ethical clearances for specialized projects are complete and received in a timely manner. S/he will participate in the development and review of research or study protocols, questionnaires and survey documents. Ensures that the protocol objectives are clear and in-line with cooperative agreement (CoAg) activities and that protocol budget and justification are in-line with CDC budget guidelines and are deemed appropriate and in-line with the Partner's CoAg. Communicates directly with partners and CDC Atlanta staff to track the status of clearances, obtain clarification on related issues and resolve routine problems associated with clearance. Participate with the CDC Senior Science Advisor to review current PEPFAR programs and data to assess the effectiveness of the current CDC/Nigeria research agenda in addressing gaps in program efforts and program strategies. The incumbent will facilitate training sessions for research and manuscript clearance procedures.

### Submission, Review and Compliance (20%)

Job holder reviews all scientific information products submissions from CDC community and follows up to ensure that all submitted forms are consistent with the protocol, e.g., the number of participants, version dates, timelines, and consent(s); that the protocol is complete with all relevant study materials and documents (consent, CVs, questionnaires, etc); that all protocol checklists are provided and are complete (submission, protocol, and consent); and that all study related materials have version control measures in place. Incumbent returns any submissions for clearance which are incomplete or not in compliance with established submission guidelines. In collaboration with technical staff and Team Leads, the incumbent sets up internal committees to review proposed research projects and protocols. Attends and participates in review committee meetings and documents and disseminates results and recommendations of the committees. In collaboration with technical staff the job holder follows up to obtain additional information or clarifications, as needed. Attend standing bi-weekly calls with CDC Atlanta to discuss status of pending protocol submissions. Documents and disseminates comments to appropriate staff.

### Guidelines and Standard Operation Procedures formulation (20%)

In collaboration with the Senior Science Advisor, writes guidelines and recommendations for collaborating partners participating in CDC-funded research activities regarding clearance procedures and requirements. Disseminates guidelines for protocol submission; guidelines for abstract and manuscripts clearance (e.g., deadlines, format, and content requirements) and recommends improvements and changes to the internal review and approval process. Job holder liaises with investigators and or implementing partners, technical staff and program officers to ensure that appropriate answers to questions associated with the review and clearance process and funding restrictions for research activities are documented, shared, and followed by investigators. Incumbent supports technical staff and program officers to assure that partners understand and comply with these guidelines, procedures or requirements.

**IRB coordination with implementing partner** **(20%)**

Serves as a key in-country point of contact with the USG/CDC funded implementing partners on the clearance process requirements and the status of individual project clearances. In this position, the incumbent serves in a liaising capacity with the relevant coordinating units of the Government's Ministries; receiving their queries and either responding directly based upon knowledge and previously issued guidance or, if there are challenging ethical considerations or technical concerns within the protocol, triaging their requests for appropriate response and action to the relevant staff member or SME as necessary. Coordinates the IRB review process and ensures that IRB approval letters contain the required information as described in the submission checklist.

**Tracking of Research Projects and Approvals** **(10%)**

The job holder tracks the status of the clearance process for all research projects and the expiration of any IRB approvals for research activities. Notifies Activity Managers and investigators that projects IRB approvals are approaching expiration (provides notification 90-120 days in advance of expiration). Support the Senior Science Advisor to ensure that CDC Atlanta is advised of any adverse events associated with the implementation of any approved protocol activities. Maintains and updates files associated with the CDC Nigeria research agenda and the clearance process for research activities, manuscripts publications and abstracts.

## 15. QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

**a. Education:**
Master's degree or higher in one of the following disciplines: Medicine, Public Health, Epidemiology, Applied Sciences, Behavioral Sciences or a strongly related discipline is required.

**b. Prior Work Experience:**
Minimum of five (5) years' experience working as a researcher/research officer with research institute(s) or health institutional review board(s). Incumbent must have clear perspective of the management of research protocols. S/He must have a thorough knowledge about research with human subjects in order to provide a detailed guidance on human use regulatory and procedural issues to Investigators or any other person when required.

**c. Post Entry Training:**
Ongoing continuing education, professional seminars and agency-specific workshops to expand knowledge, skills and abilities in coordinating research projects and the clearance process for research activities. Specific CDC-sponsored post entry courses required include: CDC Project Officer's Training, Scientific Ethics and IT Security Training.

**b. Language Proficiency:**
Fluency in Level IV English, both written and oral is required.

**d. Job Knowledge:**
The incumbent serves as a key in-country resource for internal and external staff on CDC policies and procedures for the clearing of research activities, manuscripts and abstracts funded through CDC cooperative agreements and the process for lifting funding restrictions for research activities. The job holder must have a good working knowledge of the research process as well as documentation and procedures required for the ethical review and clearance of projects and funding restriction mechanisms for these activities.
Knowledge of the structure of the public and private health sector of Nigeria, priorities, strategies and players. Must be knowledgeable about Nigerian health research policies and National Code of Health Research Ethics as well as local Institutional Review Boards processes.

**e. Skills and Abilities:**
The incumbent must have excellent organizational skills with attention to details. Excellent inter-personal skills in order to persuade collaborating partners to meet documentation requirements and to coordinate with USG and cooperating partners to ensure mutual cooperation are required. Ability to plan and establish effective schedules for meeting deadlines for submission of clearance documentation is required. Ability to coordinate and negotiate effectively with host government, implementing partners and inter-agency partners is required. Intermediate user level of word processing, spreadsheets and PowerPoint is required. S/he should have standard knowledge of statistical software packages and Institutional Review Board Protocol Management System.

**16. POSITION ELEMENTS:**

**a. Supervision Received:**
The incumbent works independently under the general supervision of the Senior Science Advisor, CDC Nigeria, who establishes outcome strategies and goals for the position. As a technical specialist, the incumbent works within a broad framework and with a minimum supervision to determine approaches to be taken and methodologies to be used in planning and implementing activities and independently resolving problems to accomplish desired program outcomes.

**b. Supervision Exercised:**
This position does not have supervisory responsibilities

**c. Available Guidelines:**
Written CDC and USG policies and guidelines for IRB review, manuscript clearance, and clearance of research activities; the FAR and policies as stated in CFR 45; PEPFAR guidelines; and the Country Operational Plan (COP).

**d. Exercise of Judgment:**
The position requires the incumbent to use excellent judgment in carrying out the full range of responsibilities with a minimum of oversight, and he/she will independently resolve the great majority of routine and many complex problems encountered. Sound judgment is also required in developing and maintaining mid-level host country contacts.

**e. Authority to Make Commitments:**
The incumbent has no signatory authority to commit USG funds.

**f. Nature, Level, and Purpose of Contacts:**
The incumbent will have regular contact with all levels of CDC Nigeria staff to carry out administrative and technical responsibilities and duties and will be required to establish and maintain close working relationships with mid-level staff of the FMOH and cooperating partner agencies for coordination of activities and to coordinate and provide guidance, direction related to clearance policies and procedures and documentation requirements and deadlines for clearances.

**g. Time Expected to Reach Full Performance Level:**

One year