RFP No ASLM/ACDC/12/04/23

Expression of Interest

To be Considered For

Certification

As a Biosafety and Biosecurity Expert
Through the Alternative Pathway

Of The

Regional Training and Certification Program for Biosafety and Biosecurity Professionals in Africa

December 2023

Introduction

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) Biosafety and Biosecurity Initiative was launched by the Africa CDC in April 2019 with the aim of strengthening the African Union (AU) Member States' biosafety and biosecurity systems and enabling them to comply with national and international requirements for biosafety and biosecurity including the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 and the multi-country Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). The World Health Organization (WHO) Joint External Evaluation (JEE) and the Global Health Security Index report confirmed the known capacity gaps in biosafety and biosecurity among Africa Union Member (AU).

The regional consultations by Africa CDC conducted between 2019-2021 highlighted the deficiency or limited availability of standardized and regionally recognized training programs in the continent, limiting biosafety and biosecurity capacity building efforts in the region. In response, Africa CDC working with AU Member States developed a home grown, implementable and accessible professional training and certification program that is both recognized and endorsed by AU Member States. The Regional Training and Certification Program for Biosafety and Biosecurity Professionals, for African Biosafety and Biosecurity Professionals (RTCP-BBP) has four (4) areas of specialization, namely

1. Selection, Installation, Maintenance and Certification of Biological Safety Cabinets
2. Biorisk Management
3. Design and Maintenance of Facilities Handling High Risk Pathogens (Biocontainment Engineering)
4. Biological Waste management

Certification Levels

The RTCP-BBP is based on a proficiency matrix intended for use as a guide in assessing individuals' competencies relative to the programs' four (4) areas of specialization above. There are three levels of certification, Level 1,2 and 3 as described in the Regional Training and Certification Program for Biosafety and Biosecurity Program. Please refer to the link to review the three Certification Levels: https://africacdc.org/download/the-regional-training-and-certification-program-for-biosafety-and-biosecurity-professionals/

Alternative Pathway

The RTCP-BBP is intended to complement existing and future training and certification programs rather than replace them. It seeks to bring together training and professional development programs into a singular, regionally acceptable certification framework. As such, the framework provides for recognition of other training programs that meet the agreed competencies without having to undergo the formal training and certification steps outlined in the RTCP-BBP. Upon review of one's prior

training and experience by the Examination and Certification Committee, the candidate is placed at a level that matches the competencies agreed in the RTCP-BBP (levels 1 and 2).

Recognition under the Alternative Pathway follows the following steps

- Potential candidates compile a portfolio of evidence of their training and experience in response to a call for application by Africa CDC

- The ECC at their scheduled sittings, reviews the portfolio of evidence and where the candidates qualify, is certified at the level that matches their training and experience

- The candidate is informed and issued with a formal certificate and listed under the respective African Union Register of Biosafety and Biosecurity Professionals

Table below summarizes the competencies covered for Level 1 and 2 under the RTCP-BBP

Proficiency Criteria		Proficiency Levels	
		Level 1	**Level 2**
Knowledge All Levels	**Academic Qualifications**	3-4 year degree/diploma; _or_	3-4 year degree/diploma; _or_
		3-5 years "in practice" experience	3-5 years "in practice" experience; _or_
			Post-graduate qualification (e.g. Master's degree)
	Experience	1-2 years post-qualification experience (including internship)	2-4 years post-qualification experience
			Minimum of 2 years experience working in public health
			At least 1 years experience working in one or more of the 3 regional experts' technical areas of specialisation

Selection, Installation, Maintenance and Certification of Biological Safety Cabinets BSC

	Level 1	Level 2
Level 1	_Theoretical Section - 5-Day Didactic Lectures_ • Understanding of basic laboratory practices, BSCs as engineering controls • Legal requirements and the different applicable standards • Types, operation, functions, features, selection of BSCs • Types, operation, functions, features of test equipment • Safe use, maintenance and certification of BSCs • BSC decontamination method, Power protective devices • Report writing for cabinet certification	_Practical Section: 5-Day Demonstration and Practice_ • Setting up and proper use of test equipment • Maintenance, filter replacement • Airflow measurements, volumetric measurement and calculations, airflow pattern visualisation and interpretation • HEPA filter testingApplication of BSC decontamination method • HEPA filter patching methods • Power protective devices and basic electrical troubleshooting • Airflow balance troubleshooting
Level 2	• Completion of BSC certification/validation and discussion with mentor for signoff • Candidates should test at least ten (10) BSCs during this period (i.e. >10 in 6 months). At least 50% of the BSCs tested must be from a state laboratory • Field Experience: In-country Assessment • Practical demonstration of BSC troubleshooting, repairing and HEPA filter replacement • Practical demonstration of BSC decontamination and testing	

	Biorisk Management	**Biocontainment Engineering**	**Waste Management**
Level 1	• Introduction to Biorisk Management (BRM) • Elements of a biorisk management system • International regulations, laws, frameworks, standards and guidelines that pertain to Biorisk Management • ISO 35001 standard & its precursor CWA15793	• Introduction to Biorisk Management (BRM) • Elements of a biorisk management system • Brief overview/introduction of risk assessment, risk mitigation and performance review (AMP model) • Risk Assessments; Mitigation Strategies	• Introduction to Biorisk Management (BRM) • Elements of a biorisk management system (BRMS) • Brief overview/introduction of risk assessment, risk mitigation and performance review (AMP model) • Risk Assessments. Mitigation Strategies
Level 2 for Biorisk Management, Biocontainment Engineering and Waste Management	• Level 1 Certificate from the Regional Training and Certification Program or from any other accredited certification body • Enroll into a a six (6) to twelve (12)-month twinning or mentorship program from the Regional Training and Certification Program (RTCP) or from any other recognized or accredited program • Develop and implement an "improvement project" in their home country		

Expression of Interest

Interested candidates whose training and experience matches Levels 1 or 2 above should submit a Portfolio of Evidence that include the following

- A 1 paged application letter indicating the areas of specialization among the 4 and level to be considered (Level 1 or Level 2)
- A Capability Statement. The Capability Statement is a description of the Applicant's work history and/or experience in any of the 4 areas of specialization. This should include but not limited to, a narrative description of the work done, how it was done and the results. There should be a clear connection on how this is related competencies in the RTCP-BBP
- An updated Curriculum Vitae
- Letters from at least three (3) current and contactable references with their contact information (email and mobile number)
- Certified copies of all the original relevant degrees, diploma and in-service training certificates
- Certified copies of any professional registration certifications/confirmations
- Send applications to rfpsubmission@aslm.org, by 1st March 2024 (11:59 pm East African Time).

Evaluation and Award Process

The ECC will evaluate the applications based on preset standards relevant to the specific areas of specialization and level applied for. An evaluation matrix with assigned weighted numerical scoring values will be used to rate each applicant.

The ECC reserves the right, but is under no obligation, to enter into discussions with one or more respondents in order to obtain clarifications or additional details.