



Institute of Global Health Equity Research



A Report from the Director | Activities & Achievements
2nd March - 18th December, 2020

The Institute of Global Health Equity Research (IGHER) of the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE) commenced operations on 2 March 2020 with the inaugural Director and Andrew Weiss Chair of Research in Global Health, Professor Timothy Carey officially starting his appointment at UGHE. This document provides a succinct summary of activity and achievements accomplished in the first nine months of operations. Importantly, the initial activity and achievements of IGHER have occurred almost exclusively within the constraints of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The context of IGHER as a university research institute focussing on reimagining research to contribute to the eradication of global health inequities is also important to consider.

“

IGHER focusses on the development of collaborative, pioneering global health research, as well as the development and delivery of innovative research training”.

PROF. TIMOTHY CAREY

DIRECTOR & ANDREW WEISS CHAIR |
INSTITUTE OF GLOBAL HEALTH
EQUITY RESEARCH



Administration, Staffing, & Governance

Administration:



- ▶ A preliminary Strategic Plan has been developed including a vision and mission statement and core values described with consultation among the University Faculty.
- ▶ A systematic approach to organizing research according to five fundamental research questions has been established.
- ▶ A 12-month work plan and budget has been developed and approved.
- ▶ The development of policies and procedures is ongoing. Systems have been developed to record and track UGHE Faculty research activity including publications and funding applications.

Staffing:



- ▶ A proposed 10-year staffing structure was developed including approval for the establishment of an Office of Research Administration (ORA). The ORA is led by the Director and provides support to research activity across UGHE. Currently, with existing staffing, this support mostly focusses on finance and budgeting but as IGHER expands it will also include other aspects of research funding such as grant writing.
- ▶ An Administrative Assistant has been appointed.
- ▶ A Junior Research Faculty member returned from a 12-month Fellowship at the National Institutes of Health, and another was recruited (currently completing the same Fellowship), and recruitment is underway for a third Faculty member to complete the Fellowship. A Head of Research Projects & Training is currently being recruited, with a great deal of interest and some strong applications. Recruitment is expected to be finalized by March 2021.

Governance:



- ▶ An international advisory forum called Inteko (the Kinyarwanda word for "assembly") and an internal steering committee have been established.

Research Support & Outputs

Outputs:



- ▶ IGHER was formally recognized as the Center for Global Health Equity Evidence with the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI).
- ▶ A system of disseminating UGHE Faculty and Staff publications has been implemented.
- ▶ A report on the first five years of research at UGHE has commenced.
- ▶ A Memorandum of Understanding has been initiated with the Ifakara Health Institute (IHI) to support the development of a Clinical Trials Center of Excellence. A site visit to the IHI facility was completed by the IGHER Director.

Research Support:



- ▶ Regular meetings have been established between IGHER's Director and the Chair of the Institutional Review Board.
- ▶ Two research proposals are currently under development; one, a collaboration between UGHE, EarthEnable, RBC, and AIMS, and the other is a collaboration between UGHE and SolidAfrica - AIMS and RBC might become collaborators in this as well.
- ▶ IGHER and its ORA supported the submission of seven funding applications. A further two applications are still in preparation.
- ▶ IGHER supported the review of research proposals for the Dean's Research Grants.
- ▶ IGHER has represented UGHE as an active contributor to the multi-organization consortium of the National Council for Science and Technology. In particular, we are a member of the Advisory Committee and partners in an international research collaboration preparing a project about "Harnessing Data Science for Health Discovery and Innovation in Africa".

Research Funding

The table (right) summarizes the research funding activity for UGHE for 2020:

35%

Successful Applications

57%

Pending Decision

Grants	Number	Value (USD)
Total	23	5,444,920
Successful	8	1,051,308
Unsuccessful	2	545,930
Pending	13	4,393,613

Research Training & Promotion

Research Training:

- ▶ IGHER facilitated 26 UGHE Faculty and Staff completing the 5-day JBI Comprehensive Systematic Review Training Program.
- ▶ An online training program for peer-reviewing journal manuscripts has been developed and piloted, awarded 7 CPD points by the Rwanda Medical and Dental Council.
- ▶ IGHER supported the University of Rwanda Student Surgical Society in organizing a Research Competition involving undergraduate and postgraduate students from UGHE, the University of Rwanda, and Mt Kenya University.
- ▶ An Introduction to Research Methods course was developed and delivered to first year medical students. It is currently under review.
- ▶ An Introduction to Psychology course was developed and a Critical Thinking and Scientific Reasoning course was co-developed. Both were delivered to first year medical students.

Contribution To University:

- ▶ The Director chairs the Academic Standards and Program Review Committee. This Committee developed and obtained approval from the Academic Commission for a Course Approvals Process.
- ▶ The Director is a member of the Academic Commission and the Research & Publications Committee.
- ▶ The Director has contributed to the Strategic Development Planning Committee, Senate Legislation Review Working Group, and the Task Force for the Gender & Diversity Audit.

Publications & Promotion



Publications including books, peer-reviewed journal articles, editorials, & op-eds published.



An IGHER research podcast series focussing on reimagining research has been developed. 1st episode released in December.

IGHER Director interviewed by Australian national podcast series, All In the Mind.



Key publications finalized by IGHER Director for early 2021 publication: The Handbook of Rural, Remote, & very Remote Mental Health (Springer); Deconstructing Health Inequity: A Perceptual Control Theory perspective (Palgrave).



IGHER Webinars hosted uniting 500+ attendees, including a series on mental health in collaboration with Addis Ababa University & King's College London.



IGHER Director invited to be a member of the Editorial Board of the International Journal for Equity in Health.



Building Foundations For The Future

Within the highly unusual context of the COVID-19 global pandemic, strong foundations have been established for the growth of IGHER as a key UGHE facility that is already developing and disseminating important new information regarding the eradication of global health inequities.

The activity and achievements of the first nine months of operation provide an ideal platform to continue growing in a systematic and organized manner as well as consolidating the impressive accomplishments that have already been achieved.

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