

The Association of Commonwealth Universities Structured Training for African Researchers (STARS) Project

The STARS project is an initiative of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) that aims to develop effective support mechanisms and professional development training to early career researchers and academics at African universities. It is intended that ACU will be able to offer a robust, high quality series of online training to universities across the developing world. The training content will be published under a creative commons license so that universities can adapt and embed the material within their own professional development offerings.

Through an open call by ACU, African universities were selected to take part in this project. Dr Gloria Omosa-Manyonyi of the Department of Medical Microbiology responded to this call, on behalf of the University of Nairobi, and was successful.

The participating universities include: Mbarara University of Science & Technology, Uganda; University of Buea, Cameroon; University of Ibadan, Nigeria; University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa; Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana; Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria; Ebonyi State University Abakaliki, Nigeria; University of Namibia; University of Pretoria, South Africa; University of Ghana; University of Nairobi, Kenya; and University of Cape Town, South Africa.

The project has two main strands of activity i.e. working with university leadership to develop an institutional approach to supporting early career researchers; and the piloting of a course of online skills training that could provide a starting point for, or an enhancement of, the institution's programme of support for its early career researchers.

The piloting of the STARS on-line skills training for early career researchers from the 12 participating universities commenced on 1st October 2014. Twelve participants from the University of Nairobi's College of Health Sciences and the College of Biological and Physical Sciences are participating in this pilot; the pilot's academic guides are Prof Walter Jaoko and Prof Jacob Midiwo. The STARS participants are Ms. Susan Odera, Dr. Moses Masika, Ms. Winnie Mutai, Dr. Hudson Alumera, Mr. Samuel Kimani, Dr. Joseph Mutahi Gakonyo, Dr. Njagi Njomo, Dr. Erick Korir, Dr. Joyce Kithure, Ms. Beth Ndunda, Mr. Patrick Tum, and Mr. Mwazighe Fredrick Mzee.

The STARS Project Coordinator is Dr Gloria Omosa-Manyonyi.

The pictures are of the STARS participants and Dr Gloria Omosa-Manyonyi during the inaugural online seminar at the College of Health Sciences E-Learning Centre.