

Role Title: Senior Program Officer, Reproductive Health Technologies

Division: Global Health

Group: Discovery & Translational Sciences

Location: Seattle, WA

Foundation Summary

Guided by the belief that all lives have equal value, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation staff work hard to reduce inequity. Our vision is to ensure a world where every person has an opportunity to live a healthy, productive life, therefore we strive to:

- Ensure more children and young people survive and thrive;
- Empower the poorest, especially women and girls, to transform their lives;
- Combat infectious diseases that particularly affect the poorest; and
- Inspire people to take action to change the world.

We approach these goals by applying science, innovation, collaboration, rigor, optimism, and risk-taking. Based in Seattle, the foundation has a worldwide staff of 1,500 people and is led by CEO Mark Suzman under the direction of Bill Gates, Melinda French Gates, and our board of trustees. We have offices in the United States, Europe, India, China and Africa.

Group Summary

Our Global Health program focuses on health conditions that commonly impact those in low and middle income. Where proven tools exist, we support sustainable ways to improve their delivery. Where they don't, we invest in research and development of new interventions, such as vaccines, drugs, biologics, and diagnostics. Our work in infectious diseases, maternal, neonatal and child health, and gender equality are supported by cross-cutting functional teams working across the R&D spectrum, including Discovery & Translational Sciences (the team this role is housed in), Vaccine Development & Surveillance, and Integrated Development.

Team Summary

The mission of Discovery & Translational Sciences (D&TS) is to catalyze innovation for transformative solutions to global health and development inequity. As such, the primary role of D&TS is to support the disease-specific strategy teams by building more practical (affordable, scalable, deliverable) versions of existing tools, developing new tools where none exist, and speeding the translation of scientific discovery into implementable solutions. We are uniquely positioned to invest in high-risk initiatives with potential for truly transformative advancements. Key functions include identifying and filling gaps in scientific knowledge, creating or implementing new technology, fostering of an effective ecosystem of global health innovation, and partnership to advance the foundation's mission. Our areas of focus include vaccines, biologics, drugs, microbiome interventions, and reproductive and sexual health.

Position Summary

Our strategy of putting women and girls at the center of development underscores our equity goals. Improved reproductive health is closely linked to other critical global health equity outcomes and is a bedrock for gender equality and women's empowerment.

We are currently recruiting a Senior Program Officer (SPO) to join our Reproductive Health Technologies (RHT) team within D&TS. This team currently focuses on the critical need for innovation in sexual and reproductive health with five core priorities:

- Vaginal microbiome interventions for treatment of bacterial vaginosis and risks associated with chronic vaginal dysbiosis, including HIV/STI acquisition and adverse birth outcomes
- Prevention of cervical cancer through development of a therapeutic vaccine to clear HPV infection and/or regress HPV-induced dysplasia
- Epitope discovery aimed at development of a preventative syphilis vaccine
- Discovery and pre-clinical design of novel non-hormonal contraceptives
- Understanding and improving menstrual health and hygiene including innovations in material science to develop menstrual health products that better meet the needs of people in low and middle income countries

In addition to playing a role in strategy development, you will be responsible for driving and contributing to the development of a portfolio of innovative product candidates across the breadth of the portfolio. Your passion for solving problems and addressing questions relevant to our mission will contribute to our productive and collaborative culture of innovation driving the translation of basic research into practical health solutions. You will report to the Deputy Director, Reproductive Health Technologies, Discovery & Translational Sciences. The position is based out of Seattle, Washington.

Core Responsibilities

Shape RHT priorities in a collaborative, creative, rigorous, data-driven, and analytical manner by:

- Monitoring science and technology relevant to reproductive health discovery to catalyze new opportunities
- Contributing and articulating deep technical expertise
- Identifying key external partners to enhance implementation of program strategy and tactics
- Developing and managing grant and contract portfolios including identification, assessment, and mitigation of portfolio risks
- Evaluating milestone-based performance objectives to inform go/no-go decisions
- Serving as a partner and resource to grantees to facilitate accomplishment of objectives
- Contribute to foundation knowledge capture, evaluation, learning, and dissemination by:
- Keeping manager and colleagues informed of progress of grant portfolio
- Developing reviews, summaries and informative reports for team, program, and foundation leadership that summarize key activities and synthesize learnings across grant portfolio
- Collaborating with teams across the foundation by sharing expertise
- Representing the foundation externally and leveraging opportunities to disseminate knowledge by participating in public events, forums, and meetings
- Building internal and external networks of experts and collaborators

Leadership and Culture

We believe that energized people, working well together, fueled by great leadership in an inclusive environment in which they thrive, will do phenomenal things.

Core Knowledge and Skills

- Deep technical research experience in microbial pathogenesis and human immunology with a focus on reproductive biology/physiology

- Ability to ask critical questions and forge new directions to design research initiatives that are scientifically rigorous and catalytic to advancing reproductive health
- Willingness to explore data that question the prevailing wisdom and ability to identify priority areas that shape strategies, ideas and proposals into successful programs
- Strong research, analytical, critical thinking skills as well as the ability to organize and synthesize information
- Proactive and flexible nature with reliable follow-through and great attention to detail
- Proven ability to partner with others, including experience in a role requiring collaboration as well as a demonstrated ability to work with flexibility, efficiency and diplomacy both individually and as part of a complex team effort
- Experience working on teams with diverse cultural and professional backgrounds; Experience working in global settings and in networking and collaborating with global partners
- Ability to organize/prioritize work, solve problems, and meet deadlines with a positive attitude within a fast-paced environment with multiple and competing demands
- Demonstrated ability to build relationships to gain the respect and trust of others
- Ability and willingness to travel up to 30% domestically and internationally
- Demonstrated passion for the foundation's values with a commitment to deliver results against the foundation's mission and the RHT team goals

Education and Experience

The ideal candidate should have an M.D., PhD, or other relevant terminal degree with deep knowledge, expertise and professional experience in microbial pathogenesis and human immunology with a focus on reproductive biology or physiology.

- Minimum 10 years of basic/translational research experience in this field
- Exceptionally strong record of scientific achievement as evidenced by publications in peer-reviewed journals, product development, and/or project management
- Experience and evidence of innovation in the conception, design, review and management of strategies, initiatives and programs
- Experience in establishing and leading collaborative programs of fundamental scientific research linked to microbial pathogenesis and/or human immunology in the academic, Pharma/Biotech, or non-profit sector
- Experience in product development is a plus
- Global health experience is highly desired