2020 AVAC Advocacy Fellows Program

Information Packet

Deadline 20 September 2019
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ABOUT THE ADVOCACY FELLOWS PROGRAM

1. What is the Advocacy Fellows Program?

The Advocacy Fellows Program is a project of AVAC. It is designed to support emerging and mid-career advocates to design and implement advocacy projects focused on HIV prevention research and implementation in their countries and communities. Advocacy Fellows carry out their projects while based at “Host Organisations” that are active partners in the Fellows Program process. AVAC provides technical and financial support to Fellows—both salary and project budget—for the duration of the Fellow year (April 2020 – March 2021).

This round of applications will recruit the tenth cadre of Advocacy Fellows. Seventy (70) Fellows were awarded between 2010 and 2019. The 2019 Fellows are currently implementing their advocacy projects. To learn more about alumni and current Fellows and their projects, please visit www.avac.org/fellows.

2. What is the goal of the Advocacy Fellows Program?

The overall goal of Advocacy Fellows is to expand and strengthen the capacity of civil society advocates and organisations to monitor, support and help shape HIV prevention research and rapid rollout of new effective interventions in low- and middle-income countries with high HIV burdens. The program is guided by the belief that effective, sustainable advocacy grows out of work that reflects country level organisational and individual interests and priorities and is led by passionate advocates who are motivated to bring change. The Fellows program is implemented through a close collaboration among the Advocacy Fellow, the Host Organisation and AVAC.

3. What is biomedical HIV prevention research and implementation?

Biomedical HIV prevention is the term used for strategies that aim to reduce the risk of HIV infection using a medical product or intervention. The term “biomedical” distinguishes these strategies from behavioral and structural interventions. In the past two decades, a number of new biomedical tools have been researched, with some currently at various stages of implementation while others are still in development. None of these biomedical interventions can act or work in a vacuum. AVAC believes they need to be part of a comprehensive approach. For details on the interventions and other issues AVAC engages with, please see bottom of this document (Question 26) or visit www.avac.org/our-focus.
4. What does advocacy for HIV prevention research and implementation look like?

Advocacy refers to a process that seeks to create change: to transform values, attitudes, policies and/or behaviours at a community, national or global level. Advocacy Fellows are expected to develop projects that identify a change that is needed, and lay out a set of activities that aim to affect that change. For examples of previous Advocacy Fellows’ projects, please visit www.avac.org/fellows.

Advocacy also refers to the work by civil society groups and concerned individuals to transform public health programs, national policies and laws, and international guidelines with the goal of increasing benefits for trial participants, trial host communities and all people who stand to benefit from the implementation of new and expanded HIV prevention methods.

AVAC works to accelerate the ethical development and global delivery of HIV prevention tools as part of a comprehensive and integrated response to the epidemic. Through education, policy analysis, advocacy and a network of global collaborations, we mobilize and support efforts to:

- DELIVER proven HIV prevention tools for immediate impact
- DEMONSTRATE and roll out new HIV prevention options
- DEVELOP long-term solutions needed to end the epidemic.

In HIV prevention research and implementation, advocacy refers to the use of various strategies and activities to improve the research process, facilitate rapid research to rollout, and ensure that new strategies being developed or introduced, alongside existing prevention strategies, match the needs of users and local contexts.

See details on examples of activities that could be considered in Question 11 below.

5. How long is the 2020 Advocacy Fellows Program?

The Advocacy Fellows Program will run for one year, from April 2020 to March 2021. Selected Advocacy Fellows should also plan to spend a few days working closely with AVAC and their hosts to develop their work plans before the Fellows Program year begins.

6. How are work plans and budgets developed?

Once Fellows are selected and have accepted the offer, each Fellow, the Host Supervisor and AVAC mentors are involved in an intensive work plan process to develop the Fellows’ one-year work plan and budget. Fellows’ participation in this work plan development process is
mandatory and involves a time commitment that must be balanced with competing commitments on current projects and positions. Fellows should plan at least three days during the first quarter of 2020 to develop their work plans and budgets – this often involves research, several phone calls and revising work plans. A small stipend will be offered to the Fellow for this work plan development process, ahead of the Fellowship year beginning.

7. What does the Fellows Program provide?

The Fellows Program provides:

- **Mentoring and capacity building** in HIV prevention research and implementation advocacy from AVAC for both Advocacy Fellows and Host Organisations.

- **Connection to a global network** of HIV advocates including current and former Advocacy Fellows, researchers, civil society leaders and other individuals and/or organisations working in similar fields.

- **Opportunities for networking and information sharing** with other Advocacy Fellows and a broader community of advocates including activists, scientists, clinical trial staff and other stakeholders working in the HIV movement.

- **A small stipend and technical assistance** for the selected Advocacy Fellow for the initial development of a detailed work plan (up to three days over a maximum of two months). This phase takes place before the official Fellows Program year begins.

- **Financial support and technical assistance** from AVAC for project implementation over 12 months. Through a grant to the Host organisation, the Fellow will receive full-time salary support, a budget for project execution and access to a discretionary fund for specific travel, infrastructure or and information technology (IT) needs. *(Please note that in some very specific circumstances, Fellows can be permitted to commit less than 100 percent to the Fellows Programs. These arrangements must be raised early on in the process. Please see Question 20 below)*

- **Overhead administration** funding to the Host Organisation to cover costs associated with hosting a Fellow will also be included in the grant. Overhead costs are those that are incurred by the organisation to administer the grant that cannot be directly attributed to the Fellows Program activity (for example, proportion of rent, phone, some personnel costs such as executive director, accounting and administrative staff time) and calculated as a percentage of the overall grant.

8. What support does AVAC provide?

AVAC Fellows’ Program staff will work closely with both the Fellow and the Fellow’s Supervisor at the Host Organisation to provide technical assistance, guidance and mentorship. The AVAC staff will be in regular contact with the Advocacy Fellow to support progress in her/his work
plan and its implementation. AVAC offers technical guidance and helps link the Fellow to other projects/activities/contacts that will help the Fellow and/or her/his project.

The Host Supervisor provides supervision and also monitors and supports the Advocacy Fellow's activities, with a focus on integrating them into the broader goals of the Host Organisation. AVAC staff and supervisors have regular phone calls to coordinate and discuss emerging issues.

For smaller community/civil society organisations, AVAC staff can provide some support to their finance/administration staff to establish/maintain good financial management systems/practices.

9. Who can apply to be an Advocacy Fellow?

The Advocacy Fellows Program seeks the following:

- Emerging or mid-career community leaders and advocates involved or interested in advocacy around HIV prevention research and implementation, particularly the areas described in Question 3 above.

- Individuals with some experience or education in the areas of HIV and AIDS, public health, medicine, international development, women’s rights, communications, or advocacy with key populations, such as sex workers, LGBTQ individuals and drug users.

- Individuals based in low- and middle-income countries with high HIV burdens and where biomedical HIV prevention clinical research is planned and or ongoing and/or where there is current work on implementation of newer biomedical prevention strategies (such as pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP, treatment, VMMC and multi-intervention programs such as the DREAMS Initiative for adolescent girls and young women or AGYW.) Advocates can also develop proposals that seek to catalyze plans and policies in countries where little activity on these issues has happened to date.

Please visit the Prevention & Research database and www.avac.org/trial-map and specific resources noted in Question 25 below to identify countries where research and implementation is ongoing or planned.

- Those people proficient in the English language. Applications are encouraged from all countries where biomedical prevention research or rollout is ongoing, however the Advocacy Fellow and key staff at her/his organisation must be able to communicate with AVAC staff in English.

- Demonstrated awareness of and willingness to learn about ongoing prevention research and implementation in their respective countries, although extensive knowledge in biomedical HIV prevention is not required. They must also be able to demonstrate strategic analysis of how Fellows Program activities will relate to local prevention landscapes.
10. **Who is NOT eligible to be an Advocacy Fellow?**

Those who are **not** eligible for the Fellows Program include:

- Founders or leaders of proposed Host Organisations.
- Students who intend to use the Fellows Program to support work toward a thesis, dissertation or academic degree.
- Seasoned HIV prevention advocates who have been leading campaigns or related projects for five years or more. (We’d like to work with such individuals but the Fellows Program is not the vehicle for this.)
- Individuals who plan to work on the Advocacy Fellows Program along with another job or add consultancies to their Fellows Program work.
- Applicants based in developed/high income countries particularly those in Europe and the Americas).
- Applicants who are senior researchers, senior staff members (e.g., leaders of AIDS service or community Organisations), funders or government employees will only be considered under special circumstances.

11. **What kinds of projects can Advocacy Fellows pursue?**

Advocacy Fellows design and execute activities to affect specific changes along the HIV prevention research to rollout continuum in their chosen contexts at the community, national or regional level. Visit [www.avac.org/fellows](http://www.avac.org/fellows) to learn more about current and alumni Fellows’ projects.

*What is AVAC looking for in a project proposal?* An effective project proposal is one that identifies a gap or need that can be filled by civil society engagement, maps the steps to fill that gap, defines ways to measure progress and adjust strategy as needed, and considers how to ultimately evaluate whether the change has occurred.

The Advocacy Fellows program is not intended to develop research capacities, but rather enhance advocacy skills. Although many advocacy projects have an evidence-gathering component often designed as community dialogues, they are distinct from qualitative or quantitative research that require regulatory approval. **Please note that Fellows Program projects are not research driven, but rather focus on advocacy goals.**

Priority will be given to projects in countries where biomedical HIV prevention clinical research is planned or ongoing – for example, in microbicides, multi-purpose prevention technologies, long-acting injectables, antibodies, vaccines and cure research - and/or where there is a need for plans for the delivery or scale-up of proven biomedical interventions. Advocates can also
develop proposals that seek to catalyze plans and policies where more activity on these issues needs to happen—such proposals must have a clear situational analysis and strategic vision.

Please visit www.avac.org/pxrd (and specific resources noted in Question 25) to identify countries where research and implementation is ongoing or planned and to learn more about activities going on there.

Below, you will find a description of some examples of advocacy goals for research (developing new products), product introduction (demonstrating new products can work in a certain context) and implementation (delivering existing prevention).

Applicants interested in projects that seek to affect the research process (developing new options) are encouraged to consider the research process as it encompasses trial design, conduct and results dissemination, as well as planning for access to eventual products. Examples of biomedical interventions in development include HIV vaccines, multi-purpose prevention products, long-acting injectable PrEP, rings, implants, rectal microbicides, antibody mediated prevention and cure.

Please look at the Prevention & Research database, Summary Research Tables and www.avac.org/trial-map for information about where and what research is happening. You can refer to the resources on AVAC and other sites for more information about this research.

Research Advocacy: Below are examples of activities/objectives. Please note these are selected examples. Other innovative ideas are encouraged.

**EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH ADVOCACY**

- Building civil society capacity to engage and influence research – building coalitions, knowledge, skills and relevant relationships; holding government accountable to commitments (e.g. signatory to the 2008 Bamako Agreement which asks each country to commit 2% of the national health budget to health research and development).

- Mapping and monitoring in-country regulatory and ethics approval of clinical trials as they are proposed; advocating for speedy trial approval; advocating for better engagement with regulatory authorities

- Good Participatory Practice (GPP): advocacy for deeper community engagement (e.g. is there a vaccine or microbicide trial in your country? How do research teams share information and elicit input?) What kinds of activities would help civil society understand better and engage more in research?

- Sustained financial support for ongoing research (e.g. What can advocates in your country do to support research globally and domestically?)

- Manage expectations about current and future efficacy trials: there are a number of efficacy trials currently underway or planned – what role can advocates play in preparation/anticipation of results and ensure appropriate messaging?
**NOT APPROPRIATE AS RESEARCH ADVOCACY GOALS**

- Trial recruitment, retention, community engagement or other activities related to a specific trial or trial site
- GPP implementation for a research site or for an ongoing or planned study
- Initiating research of any kind, such as science or social behavioural (advocacy is not data collection)

Applicants interested in projects that seek to accelerate the process from a positive trial finding to product development and introduction (demonstrating how a new product can work and be rolled out) can consider the process for product introduction and what civil society’s role is in that process. Click here for information on the product introduction process. They can consider policies that need to be developed and/or adapted to support rollout, the information needed by stakeholders, and what eventual users perceive of this new option. Examples of biomedical interventions in this category include the dapivirine vaginal ring and PrEP, in some countries.

**Demonstration Advocacy:** Below are examples of activities/objectives under advocacy for newly developed products. Please note that these are selected examples. Other innovative ideas are encouraged.

**EXAMPLES OF DEMONSTRATION ADVOCACY:**

- Advocacy for country level policy and plans to introduce a new product (for example the dapivirine ring). Advocacy to ensure the right individuals/groups have the right information and position to influence timely decisions
- Amplifying voices of individuals and communities at highest risk of HIV are included and prioritized in planning rollout processes.
- Targeting researchers, regulators, funders, policy makers and other key stakeholders to ensure minimum delays to rollout of proven interventions

**NOT APPROPRIATE AS DEMONSTRATION ADVOCACY:**

- Awareness-raising about a new product such as PrEP or the dapivirine ring, without a larger advocacy goal.
- Delivering services (such as self-testing or PrEP)

Applicants interested in advocating for more effective implementation of existing biomedical interventions (such as VMMC, PrEP and treatment on demand) can consider the uneven levels of access to available options, especially to key populations, limited data availability, limited civil society capacity to engage with scale-up processes, shrinking funding and lack of urgency among competing priorities.
Delivery Advocacy: Below are examples of activities/objectives under advocacy for existing products. Please note that these are selected examples. Other innovative ideas are encouraged.

**EXAMPLES OF DELIVERY ADVOCACY**

- Advocacy for development or change of specific policy or guideline that affects access to existing products (e.g. are there specific guidelines for differentiated service delivery or self-testing in your country? Are their targets ambitious enough?)
- Translation of policy into programs and access for key populations: Monitoring commitments, funding and action to HIV scale-up
- Advocacy for domestic and global financing of prevention products, programs and infrastructure (e.g. influencing national strategic plans and budgets, influencing the Global Fund and PEPFAR country operating plans)

**NOT APPROPRIATE AS DELIVERY ADVOCACY**

- Awareness-raising about existing interventions (e.g. viral load testing) without a broader purpose and advocacy goal
- Delivering prevention services

Projects exploring structural issues and/or advocacy related to existing longstanding interventions such as the male and female condom with lubricant will also be considered, provided there is a clear linkage between the proposed focus and the broader landscape of HIV prevention.

Please visit [www.avac.org/pxrd](http://www.avac.org/pxrd) (and specific resources noted in Question 25 below and here) to identify countries where research and implementation is ongoing or planned and to learn more about activities going on there.

**12. What kinds of projects are NOT eligible?**

This Fellows Program is **not** designed to support:

- Academic projects such as thesis research, formal research protocols or other research that requires regulatory approval.
- Activities undertaken by a research site in support of a specific trial or trial-related goal such as a specific sub-study.
- Projects submitted by employees of trial sites that aim to implement specific aspects of a clinical trial or site-specific activity such as community advisory board development, formative research or implementation of site-initiated community engagement/Good Participatory Practices.
- Projects around trial results dissemination only.
• Projects focusing only on research literacy.
• Projects focusing only on awareness raising.
• Projects that aim to do research itself
• Actual service delivery of prevention services.
• Projects that would be implemented/hosted by a government ministry or similar government institution

13. What are reasons candidates are NOT selected to become a Fellow?

• Candidate comes from ineligible country (see Question 10 for details)
• Candidate has a weak or incoherent or incomplete application
• Candidate and/or host is not able to work with English-speaking mentors
• Candidate may have a strong application but one that is not aligned with priorities in his/her country
• A lack of alignment between candidate’s proposed project and proposed host organisation’s focus/mission
• Candidate’s proposed host organisation is not fiscally sound or cannot provide key documents to determine its standing, e.g., recent audited financial statements, proof of registration etc.

14. Do I have to know exactly what my project will be before I apply?

It is important to note that applicants are not expected to have fully formed project proposals to include in their application. However, the application components are designed to help AVAC to learn more about applicants’ strategic thinking and familiarity with broad areas of biomedical prevention research and implementation. Successful applicants will take the time to consult www.avac.org, trial websites, and media resources such as searchable databases of national and local newspapers to learn more about what is happening in their respective contexts.

Applicants should use their answers to application questions to share what they’ve learned, the questions they’ve developed, and initial thoughts about their projects.

Selected Fellows will work closely with AVAC team to shape the project during an intensive work plan development phase to help each successful Advocacy Fellow to develop his or her proposed ideas into a detailed work plan.

15. Who reviews the applications?

The AVAC Fellows’ team reviews all applications and interviews short-listed applicants. An independent external review committee made up of advocates, researchers, past Fellows and Host Supervisors then reviews applications of short-listed applicants and make recommendations to the AVAC team on the Fellows’ selection.
16. What is the role of the Host Organisation?

The Host Organisation provides a physical space for the Advocacy Fellow to work from, on-site supervision of and support for Fellows Program activities, and the financial infrastructure for administering the Advocacy Fellow’s grant. The Host Organisation is an integral partner in each Advocacy Fellow’s Program.

A proposed Host Organisation may be the organisation where the applicant already works or has a relationship, or a new organisation where the proposed project is well suited to be implemented from. It is critical that the applicant have discussions with potential Host Organizations prior to the application process.

Although the applicant may already be employed by their proposed Host Organisation at the time of application, however, there should be clarity in the planning phase about how he/she would transition her/his activities if he/she were selected as a Fellow - so that Fellows Program activities are the primary focus of full-time work.

Please see below for special considerations for applicants proposing a project to affect research in their country.

The Host Organisation’s executive director or leader, the prospective supervisor and the relevant finance and/or grants administration staff should all review the document, Questions and Answers for Host Organisations downloadable at www.avac.org/fellows.

As part of the application process, the primary Host Organisation will be expected to submit information and background documents as listed below. (Please see Process & Dates later in this document for more information.)

With initial application:

- Host Organisation Information form
- Letter of Support from Host Organisation

If the applicant is shortlisted, then they will also have to provide the Host Organisation’s:

- Proof of Organisational registration
- Two most recent audited financial statement
- Mission statement or charter
- Annual budget
- Organisational or staffing chart
- Commitment form

Host Organisation staff are also encouraged to contact the Advocacy Fellows Program at fellows@avac.org directly to ask specific questions at any stage in the process.

Special note for Applicants proposing a research-related advocacy project
Advocacy related to research requires special consideration to ensure the Fellow can understand the research and how and what to influence, and then how to link it to advocacy pertinent to civil society. It is therefore important for the Fellow to have guidance from and linkages to both research and civil society perspectives.

Like all applicants, a prospective Fellow who wants to focus on influencing relevant research processes will be required to secure a Host Organisation, who will host the Fellow and administer the grant (recommended to be a civil society organization). We also encourage such an applicant to have preliminary discussions with a research organization in her/his country that can provide further guidance and technical support, should s/he be awarded the Fellowship. We may ask her/him about this if s/he advances to the next stage and is interviewed.

Please write to fellows@avac.org for more questions on this.

17. What types of groups can be Host Organisations?

Host Organisations must:

- Be established non-governmental, civil society, faith-based or community-based organisations or research/academic institutions with documented experience in HIV and AIDS, preferably HIV prevention research and/or HIV advocacy.
- Be open to working in HIV prevention research and implementation advocacy and consider ways to integrate this into their current work portfolio, if not already doing so.
- Be open to working with key populations such as sex workers, LGBTQ and drug users.
- Meet all financial eligibility criteria. Host Organisations are required to submit relevant documentation including proof of organisation’s legal designation, a copy of the most recent audited financial statements, annual budget, an organisational chart, a copy of the organisation’s human resources’ policies and procedures, and any other relevant information on finance and accounting systems.
- Be committed to working with Advocacy Fellows to develop and share joint goals, roles and responsibilities.
- Assign a supervisor (see below) to the Advocacy Fellow and clearly define expectations of the Fellow in the work plan.

* Please note that only under specific circumstances will we consider current AVAC grantees (hosting a 2019 Fellow or receiving another project grant) as Host to a 2020 Advocacy Fellow. Please contact AVAC first (fellows@avac.org) before proposing a Host Organisation that is currently an AVAC grantee.
18. What is the role of the Host Organisation Supervisor?

- The Host Supervisor is expected to use a small percentage of her/his time to oversee the Fellow, guide her/his work, ensure that the project is or will be integrated into the Host Organisation’s activities and structure ways to ensure that others in the organisation are kept abreast of the Fellow’s project progress.

- The Host Supervisor is the primary supervisor for the Fellow. As well as reviewing reports, advising on strategy and overseeing implementation, they are also expected to link the Fellow/project to other relevant organisational partners and ensure that proposed plans are appropriate to the context and protocol of the community/country.

- The Host Supervisor will also be expected to review the Fellow’s reports and other materials and requested to join quarterly teleconferences with the AVAC team.

- The Host Supervisor may be invited to meetings organized by AVAC, including a required 4-day Fellows’ Orientation workshop around the start of the Fellowship year.

19. How are Advocacy Fellows and Host Organisations paid?

The Fellows Program grant includes a year of salary for the Advocacy Fellow, an activity budget for the Advocacy Fellow’s project and overhead costs for the Host Organisation. All funding for the Advocacy Fellows Program goes to the Host Organisation as a grant. The Host Organisation is responsible for administering the Advocacy Fellow’s payroll, paying vendors, advancing cash and other financial matters.

Each Advocacy Fellows Program grant includes overhead—15 percent of the overall grant— to cover the Host Organisation’s costs associated with administering the grant. (Overhead costs or administrative costs are those costs that are incurred by the organisation to support all activities and cannot be directly attributed to the Fellows Program activity — for example, rent, phone, some personnel costs such as executive director, accounting and administrative staff time.) Please note that the grant does not include any direct funding to support other personnel costs at the Host organisation, apart from the Fellow.

The Host Organisation, with assistance from the Advocacy Fellow, is expected to submit mid-year and final programmatic and financial reports.
20. Can I work on my current job alongside my Fellows Program or take on other consultancies?

No. The Advocacy Fellow cannot have two jobs or take on extra consultancies. The Fellowship is meant to be the primary focus of the Fellow’s year. Most Fellows devote 100 per cent of their time on the Fellowship.

However – in cases of when the Fellow’s current employer is the Host Organization – if the organisation requires a small portion of the Fellow’s time towards existing responsibilities and/or related projects, AVAC will consider a work plan that devotes up to a maximum of 25 percent of the Fellow’s time to (non-Fellowship) organisational responsibilities. The Host Organisation is responsible for the Fellow’s salary for any non-Fellowship work responsibilities. These arrangements must be discussed with the AVAC Fellows team prior to signing of the grant agreement, and are agreed upon on a case-by-case basis.

21. How is the Advocacy Fellow’s Financial Compensation calculated?

Compensation (or salary) is established on the basis of comparable 100 percent/full-time salaries at the Host Organisation and in related NGOs in the country where the Fellows Program is taking place. Compensation levels are set after Advocacy Fellows are selected and during the planning process with input from the Host Organisation and the Advocacy Fellow.

As noted above, in most cases, a Fellow will commit 100 percent of her/his time to the Fellows Program. The only cases where less than full-time Advocacy Fellow will be supported (minimum 75 percent time) is where the remaining time (e.g., 25 percent) will be committed to other work with and compensated accordingly by the Host Organisation. This must be mutually agreed upon by AVAC, the Advocacy Fellow and the Host Organisation.

To determine the Advocacy Fellows’ compensation, the Host Organisations and Fellows must provide information that confirms the candidate’s salary history and individuals within the Host Organisation at comparable positions/experience levels. Such information may include pay stubs/slips, Host Organisation salary structure, a copy of the host Organisation’s human resources manual that provides details on employee benefits, etc.

It is important to emphasise the Fellow’s compensation will only be set after they have accepted the Fellows Program award. Every effort will be made to ensure that Fellows receive adequate and fair remuneration at equitable levels across the cadre of Fellows. However, from past experience, some Fellows may receive increased amounts and others may have to take a cut compared to previous salaries.

*Please note that AVAC cannot commit to a specific amount when the Fellows Program is offered and the Fellow will have to take this into account when accepting the Fellows year-long Program.*
22. What if an applicant has not found a Host Organisation when s/he is applying?

Applicants who have tried but have not identified a potential Host Organisation are welcome to apply. However, please note that priority will be given to applicants who have secured support from a proposed Host Organisation. Strong candidates who do not have a Host Organisation will be considered on a case-by-case basis. When applying, the applicant should describe efforts to secure a Host organisation and list the organisations approached.

23. Can Organisations apply to host an Advocacy Fellow?

At this time, we are accepting applications only from individuals. If your organisation is interested in hosting an Advocacy Fellow, please contact us at fellows@avac.org to explore this possibility as we may be looking to pair strong applicants with Host Organisations.

Note: Applications from existing AVAC grantees (currently hosting a Fellow or receiving other grants) will only be considered in specific circumstances. Applicants must first discuss this with AVAC before submitting a proposal to Host a Fellow for 2020.

24. Application Process & Key Dates

The table below provides an outline of the Fellows Program application process and structure; details on each step are provided in the text that follows the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>STEPS IN THE ADVOCACY FELLOWS PROGRAM PROCESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 August 2019</td>
<td>Call for 2020 Fellows Applications open</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 August 2019</td>
<td>Informational teleconference for potential applicants</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 September 2019</td>
<td>Deadline – Applications Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early October 2019</td>
<td>Shortlisted applicants notified regarding advancement to next stage. Additional Financial information from the Host Organization is due 2 weeks after notification.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2019</td>
<td>Interviews with short-listed candidates and Host Organisation representatives</td>
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<td>October – November 2019</td>
<td>External independent review process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2019</td>
<td>Selected Advocacy Fellows notified</td>
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Work plan and budget development; preparation and signing of grant agreement. A total of three days over two months is required for the process. This may be undertaken while the Advocacy Fellow is still employed, if applicable, in her/his current position. Please also note that full participation in work plan development activities including conference calls and timely submission of documents is required.

April 2020 – March 2021  Advocacy Fellows Program (full-time)

Fellows Orientation Workshop: The workshop introduces and orients new Advocacy Fellows and Host Organisation Supervisors into the program, and provides an opportunity for networking and building peer/mentor relationships among new Advocacy Fellows, alumni and Host Organisations.

The Fellows application process follows these steps:

i. **Application**: Applicants must submit the individual and Host Organisation information forms, the essay/short answer questions, the Host Organisation letter of support by 20 September 2019. This includes these five components as described in the *Advocacy Fellows Program Application Instructions and Forms*:

   1. Applicant information form
   2. Host Organisation information form
   3. Essay questions
   4. Letter of support from Host Organisation
   5. Applicant CV/resume

ii. AVAC staff review all application materials and select applications to advance to the short-list round of consideration. Applications eliminated at this stage are generally those that do not meet basic criteria as listed in the application package and those whose ideas are not sufficiently developed to be considered for the program. Please review these carefully to make sure you and your proposal are a fit for this program.

iii. Applicants are notified if they have advanced to next round; at this time, they have two weeks to compile and submit required financial documentation from the Host Organisation as well as the Host Organisation commitment form. We recognize this is a relatively short time period to complete this and therefore encourage all applicants to discuss this process and these deadlines with their proposed Host Organisation well in advance. Materials to be submitted include these six components as described in the Advocacy Fellows Program Application Instructions and Forms. These include the Host Organisations’:
iv. Short-listed candidates and proposed Host Organisations are contacted for interviews that aim to get to know each applicant a little better. There is no need to prepare for these interviews—our goal is to start a conversation and find out more about the applicant.

v. Short-listed candidates’ applications are reviewed and assessed by an external independent review committee who make recommendations to the AVAC team.

vi. Successful applicants and Host Organisations are notified and asked to confirm their acceptance.

vii. Work plan development: Prior to the initiation of the Advocacy Fellows Program activities in April 2020, accepted Advocacy Fellows work with their Host Organisations, and AVAC mentors to develop a detailed one-year work plan and Advocacy Fellows Program grant agreement. The award of the Advocacy Fellows Program grant is contingent on timely and thorough completion of this phase.

(For more information, see the 2020 Advocacy Fellows application materials at www.avac.org/fellows-application-materials.)

25. How to apply

Please download and complete the “Application Form” at www.avac.org/fellows-application-materials, and submit to Fellows@avac.org by September 20, 2019.

26. Resources & Recommended Reading

- The AVAC website (www.avac.org) is highly recommended for its resources on prevention science, policy and advocacy.
Another key resource to help inform your application is the 2018 AVAC Report: No Prevention, No End.

Our Focus: Interventions to End the Epidemic (see list of interventions in right column).

Interventions and other issues AVAC engages with:

- **HIV Vaccines** are experimental strategies aiming to teach the body’s immune system to fight HIV. Read about the current research on HIV Vaccines and AVAC’s advocacy strategy around it at: [http://www.avac.org/prevention-option/hiv-vaccine](http://www.avac.org/prevention-option/hiv-vaccine).

- **Microbicides** are substances in development that could be inserted in the vagina and/or rectum to reduce the risk of HIV transmission during sex. Read about the current research and regulatory progress on microbicides and AVAC’s advocacy strategy around it at: [www.avac.org/prevention-option/microbicides](http://www.avac.org/prevention-option/microbicides).

- **Multi-Purpose Technologies (MPTs)** are methods now in development to simultaneously prevent unintended pregnancy and protect against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Read about the current research on multi-purpose technologies and AVAC’s advocacy strategy around it at: [www.avac.org/prevention-option/multipurpose-prevention-technologies](http://www.avac.org/prevention-option/multipurpose-prevention-technologies).

- **Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)** is a strategy that involves use of antiretroviral medications (ARVs) to reduce the risk of HIV infection in people who are HIV-negative. Read about the current implementation efforts around PrEP and AVAC’s advocacy strategy around it at: [www.avac.org/prevention-option/prep and PrEPWatch](http://www.avac.org/prevention-option/prep and PrEPWatch).

- **Treatment** describes the offer to initiate and use combination antiretroviral therapy (ART) in HIV-positive individuals to preserve their health and reduce the risk of transmitting the virus. Read about the current treatment implementation efforts and AVAC’s advocacy strategy around it at: [www.avac.org/prevention-option/treatment-prevention](http://www.avac.org/prevention-option/treatment-prevention).

- **Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC)** is the removal of the foreskin of the penis, facilitated by a trained health professional. VMMC reduces men’s risk of acquiring HIV from their female partners by roughly two thirds. Read about the current implementation efforts around VMMC and AVAC’s advocacy strategy around it at: [www.avac.org/prevention-option/voluntary-medical-male-circumcision](http://www.avac.org/prevention-option/voluntary-medical-male-circumcision).

- **Cure** refers to a strategy or strategies that would eliminate HIV from a person’s body, or permanently control the virus and render it unable to cause disease. A range of types of cures is being discussed today. Read about the current cure research and AVAC’s strategy around it at: [www.avac.org/prevention-option/cure](http://www.avac.org/prevention-option/cure).

- **Hormonal contraception and HIV.** Many women at risk for HIV are equally, if not more, concerned about avoiding or postponing pregnancy. Women urgently need access to information about contraceptives and HIV prevention, and they need expanded access to the full range of proven options for both. In June 2019, results from the ECHO Study
found no substantial difference in HIV risk among women using three methods of contraception—see details at: www.avac.org/prevention-option/hormonal-contraceptives-and-hiv.

- These and additional resources are also available on the Advocacy Fellows page at http://www.avac.org/resource/fellows-recommended-reading

27. About AVAC

The Advocacy Fellows Program is administered by AVAC.

About AVAC: Founded in 1995, AVAC is a non-profit organisation that works to accelerate the ethical development and global delivery of HIV prevention tools as part of a comprehensive and integrated response to the epidemic. Through education, policy analysis, advocacy and a network of global collaborations, we mobilize and support efforts to: DELIVER proven HIV prevention tools for immediate impact; DEMONSTRATE and roll out new HIV prevention options; and DEVELOP long-term solutions needed to end the epidemic. While most AVAC’s staff is based in New York City, we also have team members in Kenya, Malawi and South Africa. Our programs, projects and partnerships operate globally, focusing particularly on countries where HIV prevention research is conducted.

AVAC’s ongoing policy, advocacy and outreach work are made possible through the dedicated labor of AVAC advocates and support from amfAR, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UNAIDS, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and many generous individuals who have become AVAC members and contributors through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). AVAC does not accept funding from the pharmaceutical industry. Please see https://www.avac.org/our-story for more information about AVAC.

28. Who do I contact if I have more questions?

For more information about the Fellows Program, please visit our website www.avac.org/fellows or email at fellows@avac.org.

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To stay updated on the state of the HIV prevention field and on AVAC programs, sign up for our e-mail newsletters.