

BACKGROUND

The **Equity in Parasitology (EQUIP) Scholarship** is a new strategic award designed to support women scientists from low and middle-income countries (LMICs) to attend international parasitology conferences. The selected conference for the inaugural year is the **29th International Conference for the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology (WAAVP)** to be held in **Chennai, India from 20-24th August 2023**.

Persistent gender disparity continues to exclude women and girls in STEM from achieving their full potential and effectively contributing to global challenges. The number of women in STEM in most LMICs is less than 25% due to barriers such as lack of funding, discrimination, cultural biases and parenting responsibilities¹. To promote and support women scientists from LMICs in STEM, the EQUIP Scholarship aims to encourage their participation in international conferences.

Historically, men have dominated parasitology-specific awards, making up 70% of all past award winners and 58% of the early-mid career stage award recipients². The EQUIP Scholarship aims to shift this imbalance and hopes to increase the visibility and representation of women in the field. This will not only benefit the individuals receiving the scholarships, but also the field as a whole by bringing new perspectives and ideas to the table.

SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS

Each scholarship provides **\$1000** towards travel and accommodation costs. **Conference registration is covered by the WAAVP**. **Four scholarships** will be awarded to women parasitologists from LMICs. Two scholarships are dedicated to **women from East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan)**. The other two scholarships are open to **women from other LMICs outside of East Africa**. To be eligible, applicants must have an abstract selected to present a talk at the conference and must demonstrate a commitment to promote women empowerment through their participation in relevant activities. Conference abstracts must be submitted to the WAAVP by **February 28th, 2023 (23:59 IST)**.

Applicants are asked to submit a summary (**maximum one page**, size 12 font) of their academic achievements to date, including information about any contributions they have made to gender equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). The scholarships are open to women at all career stages, but their achievements will be considered 'relative to opportunity' to not disadvantage early and middle career stage researchers.

Scholarship recipients are required to provide a profile for the "*Herminthology*" social media initiative, which aims to promote and support the development of women in parasitology. The profiles will be published either in the lead up to, or during the conference to highlight the work and achievements of the recipient and attract attention to their conference presentation. Women who have already been profiled on *Herminthology* remain eligible to apply for the scholarship but must recommend another woman to profile during their application, including a brief paragraph (**≤150 words**) summarising their contribution to the field and why they admire them.

¹UNESCO Data for the Sustainable Development Goals (www.uis.unesco.org), ²Calvani et al. (2023), *Herminthology: Promoting gender equity in science and parasitology. Trends in Parasitology* vol. 39 (2).

SELECTION CRITERIA

1. **Eligibility:** The scholarship is open to women scientists from LMICs who have an abstract accepted to present a talk at the selected conference. In 2023, the selected conference is the 29th International Conference for the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology (WAAVP) to be held in Chennai, India from 20-24th August 2023. Applicants will be required to demonstrate proof of conference attendance via the provision of abstract acceptance letters and travel arrangements.
2. **Career stage:** Women at all career stages are welcome to apply for the scholarship, however achievements will be considered 'relative to opportunity' to ensure that early and mid-career stage women are not disadvantaged.
3. **Commitment to female empowerment:** Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to promoting women empowerment through their participation in relevant activities or initiatives including but not limited to:
 - Mentoring female students or colleagues
 - Creating programs to support young women in science
 - Organizing or participating in workshops or events to promote gender diversity and inclusion in the field of parasitology or in STEM fields more broadly
 - Serving as a role model or spokesperson for women in science through public speaking or media engagements
 - Developing or participating in initiatives to increase the representation and visibility of women in science, such as networking groups or advocacy campaigns
 - Serving as a leader or member of a female empowerment organization or group, either within their institution or community
 - Providing training or resources for women to develop the skills they need to succeed
 - Publishing research or articles on the topic of women's empowerment, diversity and inclusion in the field of parasitology
 - Participating in community service activities that aim to promote education and empowerment for girls and women

It is important to note that these are examples, and that other activities or initiatives that shows the applicant's dedication to promoting female empowerment will also be considered.

4. **Career growth:** The applicant should provide a clear explanation of how attending the conference will help them to grow their career and advance their research in parasitology.
5. **Herminthology profile:** The scholarship recipient will be required to provide a profile for the "Herminthology" social media initiative, which aims to promote and support the development of women in parasitology. If the applicant has previously provided a profile, they will be required to write a brief paragraph (**≤150 words**) nominating another woman in parasitology, summarising their contribution to the field, and outlining why they admire them.

The selection of the scholarship recipient will be made by a committee of experts in the field of parasitology. Applications must be submitted to herminthology@gmail.com by **31st March 2023**. Awardees will be announced on **31st May 2023**.