

Think. Fund. Build.

...develop for tomorrow

VOLUME 1

FEBRUARY 2026

EDITOR'S NOTE

WHY THIS NEWSLETTER MATTERS



SBAHS stands at a defining point. The Dean has made the expectation clear: our School must be recognised not only for teaching excellence, but for strong, visible, and fundable research. The *SBAHS Research and Grants Writing Committee* was formed to support that ambition by strengthening how we think, write, position, and present our work to the world. The reality is straightforward. Funding is tightening. Competition is fiercer. And the landscape is changing. Good ideas are essential, but they are not enough. Integrity builds trust. Strategy creates access. Visibility generates opportunity. In today's research landscape, reputation travels quickly, and funders evaluate more than data. They look at systems, partnerships, credibility, and consistency. To compete with confidence, we must be intentional. We must publish carefully. We must pursue funding strategically. We must participate actively in the networks and conversations where decisions are made. This Newsletter is a practical step forward. In this issue, we reflect on science in a political funding environment, highlight grant-writing insights, share current funding opportunities, and feature SBAHS research shaping innovation and ethical practice.

Richard Appiah, PhD, PPSych, FHEA

Chair, SBAHS Research & Grants Writing Committee

ISSUE 1



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF RESEARCH AT SBAHS



Prof Samuel S. Antwi-Baffour

From the Dean's Desk: Charting Our Path to Research Leadership

The *University of Ghana's 2024–2029 Strategic Plan* calls us to deepen our commitment to impactful research, strong partnerships, and sustainable resource mobilisation. In that spirit, the *SBAHS Research and Grants Writing Committee* was established to strengthen our research culture and complement the efforts of the Research and Innovation Directorate at the School level, reinforcing the University's broader agenda to build competitive, ethical, and visible scholarship.

I would like to sincerely thank our faculty, staff, and students for your dedication and steady engagement. Your teaching, research, supervision, and service continue to advance the mission of the School and the University. Our *Research Policy* reminds us that excellence must be grounded in integrity, quality, collaboration, and effective dissemination. These principles should guide our daily work. I encourage all faculty and graduate students to take full advantage of the skills-building opportunities being created. Strong grantsmanship, strategic collaboration, and clear research communication are now essential competencies. I also urge colleagues to explore partnerships across Departments, Schools, Colleges, and with international collaborators. Interdisciplinary and global engagement will strengthen both our impact and our competitiveness.

Finally, I extend my appreciation to the Committee for its leadership and commitment. Let us continue to build a School known for excellence, integrity, and funded impact.

ADVANCING RESEARCH & GRANTSMANSHIP AT SBAHS



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Building a Competitive Research Culture

The *SBAHS Research and Grants Writing Committee* was instituted by the Dean to complement and augment the efforts of the Research and Innovations Directorate in strengthening research and grantsmanship capacity across the School. Our mandate is clear: to support faculty members and graduate students in becoming more competitive, strategic, and confident in securing and managing research funding. The Committee pursues four core mandates. First, to build grantsmanship skills through monthly webinars and structured in-person engagements. Second, to strengthen manuscript development, authorship discipline, and research integrity. Third, to curate and share timely funding and fellowship opportunities. Fourth, to cultivate a visible and collaborative research culture within and beyond the University.

At the heart of this effort is the monthly *Research and Grants Writing Webinar*, launched on 4 February 2026 with an inaugural lecture by Dr L. E. Bain. His session challenged us to recognise that funding is not purely technical; it is shaped by trust, positioning, diplomacy, and institutional credibility. Readers are encouraged to explore this further under *This Month's Webinar*.

On **4 March 2026**, we are privileged to host **Professor Seth Adu-Afarwuah**, Professor of Nutrition at the University of Ghana, who will present "*From Research to Impact: Lessons Learned in Grantsmanship, Collaboration, and Building a Career in Health Sciences Research*." Drawing on over two decades of internationally funded work, his session will unpack practical strategies for building competitive proposals, sustaining collaborations, and evolving from modest grants to sustained programmes of research. Further details appear under *Next Month's Webinar*.

On **1 April 2026**, **Dr Marilyn Ahun** of McGill University (formerly Harvard University) will speak on "*Building a Global Research Career: Insights on Effective Communication and Collaboration Strategies*." Her presentation will offer practical guidance on identifying fellowships and scholarships, structuring funder-aligned CVs, leveraging accessible tools, and building international collaborations. Please mark your calendars.

We are also honoured that **Professor Deliwe Rene Phetlhu**, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Free State, will join us on **6 May 2026** to present "*Navigating the Research Ecosystem: Lessons in Leadership, Grantsmanship, and Capacity Building from the South African and Global Health Landscape*." Her session will draw on over two decades of academic leadership and successful grant acquisition to offer practical lessons on strategic positioning, research leadership, and building sustainable programmes.

Throughout the academic year, we will host distinguished speakers from within and beyond the University of Ghana, established researchers, experienced grant holders, and grant reviewers, who will provide candid, practical skills training in an interactive and collegial format. Sessions are held

on the first Wednesday of every month, 11:00am-12:30pm (GMT), via a recurring Microsoft Teams link. The upcoming session is 4 March 2026. We encourage all faculty members to attend, invite their graduate students, and engage actively. Competitive research is not accidental; it is built deliberately.

SBAHS Research and Grants Writing Committee
February, 2026





FEB 4, 2026

THIS MONTH'S WEBINAR

Dr Luchuo Engelbert Bain
Head of International Programmes at the African Population and Health Research Center

Science in a Political World: The Unspoken Rules of Funding, Diplomacy, and a Successful Career in Global Health.

This Month’s Webinar: Science in a Political World

Our inaugural webinar set the tone for the research culture SBAHS intends to build: rigorous, strategic, visible, and ethically grounded. Dr Luchuo Engelbert Bain, Head of International Programmes at the African Population and Health Research Center and Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences, delivered a candid and thought-provoking session titled “*Science in a Political World: The Unspoken Rules of Funding, Diplomacy, and a Successful Career in Global Health*”. Drawing from his experience across Africa-led research and international funding negotiations, he challenged us to confront how science truly operates.

The core message was simple: funding decisions are not purely technical. Strong methods matter, but so do power, positioning, diplomacy, and trust. Funders invest in people and institutions they trust. They look for integrity, credible partnerships, strong systems, and timely reporting. Evidence alone does not move resources; influence does. Dr Bain also spoke frankly about research integrity. Weak methodology, unclear authorship, predatory publishing, and poor ethical oversight are not minor oversights; they are career risks. Ethical science is competitive science. Reputation compounds slowly and collapses quickly.

Another strong theme was visibility. In today’s environment, good work does not automatically speak for itself. Scholars must communicate clearly, build networks intentionally, understand donor priorities, and position their work strategically. Sustainable funding is built, not chased. He reminded early- and mid-career researchers to think long-term. Consistency over noise. Substance over speed. Adaptability over conformity. In a tightening funding climate, clarity of purpose and professional attitude matter deeply.

Key Takeaways

1 If you are a grant holder, begin by reviewing your reporting obligations and ensuring that ongoing grants are clearly documented and communicated. If you are preparing a manuscript, revisit authorship agreements and ethical standards within your collaborations; clarity now prevents future damage.

2 If you have published an article, strengthen your visibility by updating your professional profile and ensuring your work is accessible. If you are planning to apply for a grant, keep at least one strong concept note ready, aligned with funder priorities. Initiate one new conversation beyond your immediate discipline; strong networks rarely happen by accident!

3 The session was both sobering and energising. It reminded us that excellence requires more than technical skill; it demands awareness, discipline, and strategic intent.

Missed the session? We've got you covered.

If you were unable to attend, or would like to revisit the discussion, the full webinar recording is available [here](#).

FEB 2025

FUNDING & FELLOWSHIP RADAR



Open Now: Opportunities to Watch (and Act On)

The funding landscape is busy, and unforgiving. Opportunities open and close quickly, and the difference between “almost” and “funded” is often timing, alignment, and readiness. Below are six current opportunities that speak to SBAHS disciplines (including allied health research, implementation, health systems, and capacity strengthening).

1) [LSHTM – GSK Scholarships for Future Health Leaders \(2026–27\)](#)

For graduate students (and early-career professionals) interested in health systems strengthening and applied health research, this is a strong route into advanced training and networks that funders recognise. Deadline: **4 March 2026 (16:00 GMT)**. ([LSHTM](#))

2) [Wellcome Early-Career Awards](#)

A flagship route for early-career researchers ready to lead an independent health-related project. Particularly relevant for SBAHS colleagues building a programme around clinical, public health, rehabilitation, diagnostics, or nutrition research. Next deadline: **21 July 2026 (15:00 BST)**.

([Wellcome](#))

3) [Wellcome Discovery Awards](#)

Designed for researchers pursuing ambitious, curiosity-driven work with potential health relevance. Suitable for interdisciplinary teams across SBAHS Departments (e.g., diagnostics, rehabilitation, nutrition, speech and hearing sciences). Next deadlines: **31 March 2026/22 September 2026**.

([Wellcome](#))

4) [NIHR – Global Health Research Cohort Academic Development Award \(Cohort 6\)](#)

A career-development opportunity supporting training and development for researchers working primarily in LMIC contexts. Particularly relevant for early- and mid-career SBAHS scholars seeking structured development, mentoring, and research leadership growth. Status: **Open**. Closing date: **14 April 2026 (13:00)**. ([NIHR](#))

5) [Wellcome Career Development Awards](#)

A major mid-career scheme supporting researchers ready to lead ambitious and innovative programmes that advance human health. The award provides long-term salary and research funding, enabling independence and team development. Suitable for SBAHS faculty building strong, interdisciplinary research portfolios. Status: **Open**. Closing date: **26 March 2026 (15:00 GMT)**.

([Wellcome](#))

6) [IDRC – SGCI Capacity Strengthening Hub \(Call for Proposals\)](#)

While not a typical “research grant”, this is a major capacity-strengthening opportunity focused on research governance, digital grant systems, MEL, open science, and knowledge management, all directly linked to building sustainable research ecosystems. Deadline: **30 April 2026**. ([idrc-crddi.ca](#))

7) [David E. Bell Postdoctoral Fellowship](#)

Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies

The Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies is now accepting applications for the two-year David E. Bell Postdoctoral Fellowship, an interdisciplinary programme supporting scholars in population sciences and population health. Fellows pursue self-directed research with mentorship from leading faculty while engaging in seminars, professional development, and communications training.

Key details:

- Start date: September 1, 2026
- Application deadline: **March 3, 2026 at 12:00 PM ET**
- Focus areas: Immigration and migration; geospatial and multilevel modeling; youth, families, and social mobility; aging societies
- Compensation: \$75,000 per year plus benefits and research, travel, and computer funds
- Eligibility: Open to qualified U.S. and international

For any questions, please write to lprice@hsph.harvard.edu or popcenter@hsph.harvard.edu.

[Apply here](#)

RESEARCH IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

SBAHS IN FOCUS

What's trending in SBAHS?

Conceptualisation of a culturally responsive speech and language assessment for Ghanaian-English speaking children

Can we truly assess a Ghanaian child's language skills using tools built for children in entirely different cultural worlds? That is the bold question Josephine Ohenewa Bampoe and colleagues take on in the first paper of a five-part series developing a culturally responsive speech and language assessment for Ghanaian children aged 5–10 years. This opening paper lays the foundation. Instead of importing and adapting foreign tests, the team started from scratch, asking what language ability actually looks like in Ghana's multilingual classrooms and homes. The study places Ghanaian language and culture at the centre of the assessment, creating a fairer and more reliable way to understand children's speech and language needs. Click [here](#) to explore the full study and its methods in detail.

Bampoe, J. O., Verdon, S., Hoffman, L., & Wylie, K. (2025). Conceptualisation of a culturally responsive speech and language assessment for Ghanaian-English speaking children. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 1-15.

Long-term omega-3 fatty acids modulate immune responses more effectively than ibuprofen in Mtb-infected mice: An in silico functional analysis approach

In a world still battling tuberculosis, this study asks a sharp question: could a nutrition-based add-on therapy calm harmful inflammation better than a common painkiller? Conducted by Dr Frank Hayford and colleagues at North-West University, the research used Mtb-infected mice alongside in silico immune-network modelling to compare long-term omega-3 (EPA/DHA) with ibuprofen given with standard TB treatment. The findings are striking. Omega-3s appeared to restore immune balance, reduce damaging inflammation, and were linked to lower bacterial loads and less lung injury. Ibuprofen, by contrast, was associated with heightened inflammatory signals and poorer lung outcomes. The study opens fresh thinking about how simple nutritional strategies might strengthen TB treatment without worsening immune stress. Read the full paper [here](#).

King, S., Nienaber, A., **Hayford, F. E.,** Dolman-Macleod, R. C., Smuts, C. M., Malan, L., & Zandberg, L. (2025). Long-term omega-3 fatty acids modulate immune responses more effectively than

ibuprofen in Mtb-infected mice: An in silico functional analysis approach. *International Immunopharmacology*, 161, 115047.

Bridging ethics and culture: a co-created, culturally sensitive informed consent framework for research in Bimoba and Mamprusi communities in Ghana

Can global research ethics truly reflect local values? In this timely and thought-provoking study, Dr Richard Appiah and colleagues at Harvard University and York University take us into Bimoba and Mamprusi communities in Ghana to rethink how informed consent is understood and practised. Rather than imposing a standard template, the team worked directly with community members, leaders, and ethics stakeholders to co-create a culturally sensitive informed consent framework. The study reveals that consent is not simply a signed form; it is relational, dialogic, and grounded in trust, language, hierarchy, and communal decision-making structures. The result is a practical, context-aware model that bridges formal ethics procedures with lived cultural realities. This work pushes the field forward by showing that ethical rigour and cultural responsiveness are not opposites, they strengthen one another. Click [here](#) to explore the framework and its implications in full.

Appiah, R., Weobong, B., & Raviola, G. (2025). Bridging ethics and culture: a co-created, culturally sensitive informed consent framework for research in Bimoba and Mamprusi communities in Ghana. *Ethics & Behavior*, 1-18.



Data protection with local models
with Prof. Daniel Mertens

plus roundtable on
grant writing in the era of AI

Free webinar on April 2, 2026
2-4pm CEST (GMT+2)

scientify
RESEARCH

Grant writing in the era of AI

Please mark your calendars for this annual online workshop with Prof. Daniel Mertens. This session will cover the latest AI updates for researchers, with a specific focus on data protection using local models.

Webinar on data protection with local models

Thursday, April 2, 2026

2-4pm CEST (GMT+2)

Online (Zoom)

This practical session will be followed with a roundtable discussion on grant writing in the era of AI with leading experts joining Prof. Mertens for the discussion. Please share this invitation with colleagues who would find this session interesting. All are welcome to join, registration is required.

[Register now](#)



Wednesday, 4 March 2026 | 11:00 am – 12:30 pm (GMT) | Prof Seth Adu-Afarwuah

What does it really take to move from a modest first grant to sustained international funding and global impact? On **Wednesday, 4 March 2026 (11am–12:30pm GMT)**, the SBAHS Research and Grants Writing Webinar will host **Prof Seth Adu-Afarwuah**, Professor of Nutrition, Department of Nutrition and Food Science, University of Ghana. His session, titled *“From Research to Impact: Lessons Learned in Grantsmanship, Collaboration, and Building a Career in Health Sciences Research,”* draws on over two decades of experience in nutrition research in Ghana. From pioneering work on small-quantity lipid-based nutrient supplements to leading projects funded by the US National Institutes of Health, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the European Commission, and the UK Medical Research Council, Professor Adu-Afarwuah brings both credibility and candour.

Participants can expect practical insights on how competitive grant proposals are built, how international collaborations are formed and sustained, and what distinguishes fundable applications from those that fall short. The session will also unpack the realities of managing multi-institutional partnerships, meeting reporting requirements, and maintaining research productivity across projects. We warmly invite faculty members, graduate students, and affiliates across SBAHS, and the wider University community, to attend. Please share this invitation with colleagues and students who are building their research careers or preparing grant applications.

Meeting Details

 Wednesday, 4 March 2026

 11:00 am – 12:30 pm (GMT)

 Microsoft Teams (<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/36453292484835?p=N441TGbbuV6SRJonHd>)

Join us. Bring a colleague. Come ready with questions.



SBAHS MONTHLY
RESEARCH & GRANTS
WRITING WEBINAR



Prof Seth Adu-Afarwuah
Professor of Nutrition, Department of Nutrition and Food
Science, University of Ghana

TOPIC

From research to impact: Lessons learned in
grantsmanship, collaboration, and building a career
in health sciences research

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 4, 2026

11:00am - 12:30pm GMT

MEETING ID: 364 532 924 848 35
PASSCODE: oN22BP6k

<https://teams.microsoft.com/join/36453292484835?pwd=N441TG8buV85RJonHd>





The SBAHS Research and Grants Writing Committee Members: Dr Richard Appiah (Chair); Dr Ewurama D. A. Owusu, Prof Akua Obeng Forson, Dr Noah O. Nkrumah, Dr Atta Ekow Frank Hayford (Members), and Ms. Etheldreda Theodora Fenny (Secretary)





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Do you have something to share with the School of Biomedical and Allied Health Sciences and the wider University of Ghana community? Send an email to sbahsresearchandgrants@ug.edu.gh and we will be happy to consider your submission for our next monthly newsletter.

The SBAHS Research and Grants Writing Committee was instituted by the Dean as part of a strategic effort to strengthen research capacity and grantsmanship among faculty members and graduate students across the School. In addition to the monthly webinar series, the Committee leads grant-writing support initiatives, manuscript development workshops, and a monthly research bulletin that showcases publications and shares funding and collaboration opportunities. The webinar series specifically engages experienced scholars, grantees, and grant reviewers to share practical insights drawn from their research and funding trajectories..

Views and opinions expressed in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of University of Ghana. Any postings, including jobs, events, news articles and others, are meant for informational purposes only and do not represent endorsement by SBAHS or the University of Ghana.

Activities and events managed specifically by the SBAHS Research and Grants Writing Committee are always indicated as so. If not indicated as an SBAHS event or activity please reach out to the individual hosts.

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