



WSAVA
FOUNDATION

Improving
Animal Care
Through Science
And Education



Initiative supported by:



AFSCAN Announces 2018 Research and Studentship Awards

The African Small Companion Animal Network ([AFSCAN](#)), a project supported by the [World Small Animal Veterinary Association's \(WSAVA\) Charitable Foundation](#), has announced the recipients of the 2018 AFSCAN Research and Studentship Awards. Now in their third year, the Awards promote small animal clinical research relevant to the African continent and facilitate the training and development of veterinary students and academics working in Africa.

AFSCAN Research Awards

AFSCAN Research Awards offer academics working at a veterinary school in Africa the opportunity to secure a grant to fund a locally relevant clinical research project of their devising in partnership with a research laboratory overseas. From six applications this year, two projects have been selected for funding following review by the WSAVA Scientific Advisory Committee and the AFSCAN Management Board.

- Dr Willy Mwangi from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, has been awarded \$9,945 for an 18- month project entitled 'Spatial and molecular epidemiology of *Giardia duodenalis* in shelter and client-owned dogs in Nairobi County, Kenya.'
- Dr Adekunle Bamidele Ayinmode from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, has been awarded \$8,170 for a two-year project entitled 'Prevalence and genetic characteristics of

Cryptosporidium and *Giardia duodenalis* in clinical samples from cats and dogs in south west Nigeria.'

AFSCAN Studentship Awards

These Awards enable a fourth or fifth year African undergraduate veterinary student to spend six to eight weeks participating in research related to disease or the welfare of companion animals of relevance to African society. Three Awards have been made this year:

- Ms Caroline Mphaka from Sokoine University, Tanzania, has been awarded \$1,000 to enable her to work on a project entitled 'Prevalence of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in dogs and dog owners from Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania.'
- Mr Freddy Samuntu from the University of Namibia has been awarded \$1,000 to work on a project entitled 'Developing and investigating the feasibility of introducing a companion animal electronic vaccination records database.'
- Mr Wasswa Auther Tamale, who attends Makerere University in Uganda has been awarded \$1,000 to work on a project entitled 'Prevalence of canine gastrointestinal helminths and risk perception of zoonotic infection by dog owners in the Kampala District, Uganda.'

AFSCAN advances standards of veterinary care across Africa through education and through facilitating the creation of a sustainable network of companion animal veterinarians, associations and specialist groups in Sub-Saharan Africa. Countries currently participating include Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Ghana. Zoetis is AFSCAN's major supporter but it is also supported by organisations, which, together, form the AFSCAN Consortium. The research awards are supported by Zoetis, the UK Petplan Charitable Trust and the Swiss Small Animal Veterinary Association.

Commenting, Emeritus Professor Michael Day, member of the AFSCAN Board and the [WSAVA](#) Executive Board, said: " We launched these Awards in 2016 to increase the knowledge base of diseases and welfare issues affecting companion animals in Africa and to build links between African veterinary researchers and laboratories in the USA and Europe."

"The experience of previous recipients confirms the value of enabling African veterinary academics to undertake substantial research into disease conditions relevant to their continent and in encouraging students to spend time in research laboratories and to develop

collaborative relationships with colleagues abroad. We're delighted to announce the 2018 award recipients and wish them good luck with their projects."

Dr Willy Mwangi, Tutorial Fellow at the Department of Clinical Studies, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Nairobi, said: "The funding I'm receiving will enable will me to examine canine giardiosis, an emerging protozoal disease posing a significant threat to the health and welfare of dogs in Kenya. Current epidemiological reports indicate an increasing trend in its occurrence, especially in dogs exhibiting chronic gastroenteritis and which are unresponsive to standard treatment. Giardiosis is also an important zoonotic disease affecting children and those suffering from immunosuppressive diseases, such as HIV/AIDS."

"I hope to confirm the existence and extent of giardiosis in the dog population and help us understand the underlying factors that predispose dogs to the disease. I hope also to identify the *Giardia duodenalis* assemblages circulating in the dog population in Kenya."

Dr Gabriel Varga, Chairman of the AFSCAN Board and Regional Director, Sub-Saharan Africa, at Zoetis, added: "The AFSCAN Awards are a key tool as we work to drive advances in veterinary care for all species in Africa. Our grateful thanks go to all of our Consortium members for their unstinting commitment to the AFSCAN project. It is now in its fourth year and is rapidly transforming the veterinary landscape in Africa, improving the health and welfare of both animals and people."

Notes to editors:

About AFSCAN

The AFSCAN project was developed by the WSAVA Foundation with the backing of the global animal health company Zoetis, global veterinary equipment company KRUUSE and a Consortium of other supporters. Its Project Board is chaired by Dr Gabriel Varga, President of the WSAVA Foundation and Director at Zoetis and includes Emeritus Professor Michael Day (WSAVA); Dr Theo Kanellos (Zoetis); Dr Remo Lobetti (referral practitioner, South Africa) and Dr Alex Thiermann (OIE).

Other supporters and sponsors of AFSCAN include the OIE, the North American Veterinary Community (NAVCA), veterinary digital content provider Vetstream; veterinary charity Worldwide Veterinary Service and its Mission Rabies Project; healthcare advertising agency Circa Health; the University of Veterinary Medicine in Kosice; BSAVA; The Petplan Charitable Trust and the WSAVA Foundation.

About Zoetis

Zoetis (zô-EH-tis) is the leading animal health company, dedicated to supporting its customers and their businesses. Building on more than 60 years of experience in animal health, Zoetis discovers, develops, manufactures and markets veterinary vaccines and medicines, complemented by diagnostic products and genetic tests and supported by a range of services. Zoetis serves veterinarians, livestock producers and people who raise and care for farm and companion animals with sales of its products in more than 100 countries. In 2015, the company generated annual revenue of \$4.8 billion with approximately 9,000 employees. For more information, visit www.zoetis.com.

Issued: 9 May 2018

For further information:

Rebecca George, George PR, Tel: 01449 737281/07974 161108