

République Démocratique du Congo
UNIVERSITE DE KINSHASA



RECTORAT

CELLULE DE GESTION DE LA COOPERATION
ET DES RELATIONS INTERNATIONALES

Kinshasa, 31st July, 2025

Concern : Letter of endorsement

To the Chair of the Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking Governing Board
c/o The Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking Executive Director
Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking
56 – 60 Avenue de la Toison d'Or
1060 Brussels
Belgium

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN), and in accordance with Council Regulation (EU) No 2085/2021 of 19th November 2021 establishing the joint undertakings under Horizon Europe and specifically Article 9 therein, I hereby support an application to become a contributing partner to the Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking (Global Health EDCTP3 JU).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continues to face significant public health threats from recurrent outbreaks of filoviruses (Ebola, Marburg), orthopox viruses, and endemic diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS. These diseases cause substantial mortality and strain an already fragile health system, especially in remote and underserved communities.

The UNIKIN is a national leader in infectious diseases research, clinical trials, laboratory science, and public health workforce development. With research and clinical facilities embedded in the national health system, UNIKIN has demonstrated capabilities in conducting large-scale, multi-partner trials and capacity-building programs across its teaching hospitals and HDSS-linked sites.

Our institutional mission aligns directly with the GH-EDCTP3 JU's objectives, particularly in:

- Strengthening health-system-integrated trial platforms to improve epidemic response,
- Enhancing data systems and laboratory infrastructure to support rapid diagnostics and clinical trial readiness,

- Developing a critical mass of African researchers and health professionals,
- Supporting ethical and regulatory collaboration for fast-track review and trial activation.

Through regional partnerships and a deep understanding of local health dynamics, UNIKIN is exceptionally positioned to contribute to a resilient, coordinated clinical research platform in sub-Saharan Africa.

As part of our commitment, UNIKIN proposes a multi-dimensional contribution comprising both in-kind and financial components, focused on clinical trial implementation, capacity building, and health system strengthening. In this role, we offer institutional commitment, financial resources, access to research infrastructure, and expert personnel, aimed at supporting the achievement of GH-EDCTP3 JU's objectives across sub-Saharan Africa.

This contribution will be implemented over a five-year period, with activities designed to build long-term research capacity, support multicenter trials, and facilitate sustainable preparedness against epidemic threats. UNIKIN's unique context and experience add value by bridging academic rigor with public health impact in one of the world's highest-priority regions.

The application in which the UNIKIN is involved is strategically aligned with the GH EDCTP3 JU draft topic on "Strengthening clinical trial preparedness and epidemic response through integrated platforms and capacity building." Our engagement supports the establishment of ready-to-activate clinical trial infrastructure, backed by trained personnel, standardized protocols, AI-enabled surveillance tools, and locally adapted ethical and regulatory frameworks. These contributions respond directly to the core pillars of the call, ensuring that the DRC and the broader Central African region are equipped to lead, not just participate in, high-impact infectious disease research.

The UNIKIN involvement is anchored in five mutually reinforcing pillars:

- Trial platform readiness, through infrastructure upgrades and protocol standardization
- Workforce development, offering targeted training and mentorship for trial teams, CRAs, and biostatisticians
- AI-supported data and disease surveillance systems, integrated with academic and health institutions
- Laboratory strengthening, ensuring GCLP/ISO-compliant diagnostics and safety testing capacity
- Ethics and regulatory streamlining, to fast-track multi-country clinical trial approvals

Together, these investments will enable UNIKIN to act as a fully functional, regional hub for epidemic preparedness and clinical research excellence — delivering measurable results, knowledge transfer, and sustainable capacity long beyond the project lifecycle.

We estimate the total value of this contribution to be EUR 140,000, consisting of:

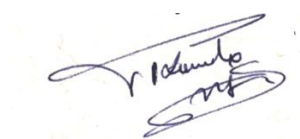
- EUR 100,000 in in-kind contributions, which include access to institutional infrastructure, research support, and data platforms;
- EUR 40,000 in financial contributions, allocated toward training activities, operational support for trial readiness, and stakeholder engagement.

This contribution is planned over a five-year period, with approximate yearly allocations of EUR 28,000 per year, ensuring consistency across implementation phases and alignment with GH EDCTP3 JU work packages.

I confirm the following:

1. We will comply with the Horizon Europe Regulation (EU) No 2021/695; Council Regulation (EU) No 2085/2021 establishing the joint undertakings under Horizon Europe; the Model Grant Agreement for Horizon Europe and applicable Global Health EDCTP3 JU rules, including the relevant work programmes and in particular the call conditions therein.
2. We will keep all information received in the context of our involvement as contributing partner to the Global Health EDCTP3 JU confidential. This confidentiality obligation applies in particular but is not limited to the areas of Global Health EDCTP3 JU call topic preparation and publication, proposal submission and evaluation, and consortium formation. We further understand that this obligation strictly prohibits the release of confidential information to any legal entities save where specifically authorised by Global Health EDCTP3 JU. Internal dissemination of information within our organisation will be done on the basis of the “need-to-know” principle.
3. We are confident of our ability to fulfil the above commitments and further confirm our understanding that the Global Health EDCTP3 JU will allocate resources to the above topic based on these commitments.
4. The value of our contribution will be based on costs calculated in accordance with Article 6 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.
5. We accept that additional modalities regarding the provision of our contribution may be defined in subsequent agreements or documents, such as a funding agreement and topic text.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Pascal Kapagama', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Professor Pascal Kapagama
LEAR of the UNIKIN
