

IOSH opens call for research proposals

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) is inviting proposals for research that focus on some of the key areas facing the profession.

IOSH is calling on researchers and academics to submit their proposals as it looks to enhance its understanding of upholding workplace health and safety standards around the world. The three areas it is looking for proposals on are:

- Investigations into work-related adverse health outcomes
- Occupational health training for occupational safety and health (OSH) professionals – context, challenges, and opportunities
- Algorithmic management and OSH risks in a digital workplace

Nicole Rinaldi, Director of Professional Services at IOSH, said: *“These three areas have been selected as they play a key part in the OSH profession and the world of work currently and can have a positive impact on workers’ lives.*

“We are aiming to fund timely and original research which supports the move to establish a greater evidence base for health and safety policies and practice. This can then help us make significant strides towards achieving our vision of a safe and healthy world of work for all.”

Investigations into work-related adverse health outcomes

With 12 billion working days lost globally every year to common mental health disorders, and work-related health problems causing an economic loss of 4–6% GDP for most countries, IOSH believes that this area is still under-investigated.

Various reasons have been cited for this lack of investigation, including lack of knowledge on how to investigate them, lack of training and understanding on the health effects of workplace exposures, and the latency of disease.

IOSH is seeking proposals from experienced researchers into the barriers and facilitators of such investigations. It is also looking to develop a framework, model, or guidance for use by multidisciplinary professionals.

Occupational health training for OSH professionals

According to the World Health Organization and International Labour Organization, work-related illness and disease is far more prevalent than workplace injuries.

IOSH is looking to receive proposals which explore occupational health knowledge among OSH practitioners, their required competence, and the role of OSH practitioners in preventing occupational disease in coming years.

They should explore aspects of occupational health training for OSH practitioners in countries with a sophisticated regulatory framework to evaluate:

- Knowledge of health impacts of occupational hazards
- Competencies required to prevent work-related diseases and ill health
- The role of education and training programmes in equipping the practitioner to address occupational disease

Algorithmic management and OSH risks in a digital workplace

Algorithmic management, also known as algorithmic control or digital management, refers to the utilisation of algorithms and automated systems to monitor, evaluate, influence, and discipline worker behaviour in various workplace settings.


This emerging phenomenon has gained significant attention in recent years as organisations increasingly rely on algorithms to streamline operations, improve productivity, and optimise decision-making processes. However, the implementation of algorithmic management systems also raises concerns regarding potential OSH risks in the workplace.

IOSH is seeking research that highlights the OSH impacts of cross-industry transference of digital technologies and organisations’ adoption of algorithmic management.

Applications open

IOSH is accepting research proposals from Wednesday, 15 November until 23:59 (GMT) on Monday, 5 February 2024.

Drop-in sessions will be held online on 11 December for potential applicants to ask questions.

More information about submitting proposals can be found on the website at iosh.com/research23 

Q(h)ubeka Trust update

The Q(h)ubeka Trust, now closed (see https://www.occhealth.co.za/_assets/articles/350/2439.pdf), has recently published an extensive report on its activities: Q(h)ubeka Trust 2016 to 2023: Moving forward over seven years to distribute compensation funds for silicosis. Johannesburg: Trustees of the Q(h)ubeka Trust; 2023. Available from: <https://www.qhubekatrust.co.za/>

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All press releases and other publications by the Trust are available from: <https://www.qhubekatrust.co.za/media-research-publications/> 