



February 2026

**Subject: Toronto-Addis Ababa Academic Collaboration in Emergency Medicine – TAAAC-EM  
Post-graduate elective application process**

Dear postgraduate emergency medicine trainees:

Thank you for your interest in the TAAAC-EM elective opportunity. This elective is available for one resident to participate in each one-month faculty-supervised trip to Ethiopia. Please find below the following components of this application process:

- Program description
- Elective goals and objectives
- Selection criteria
- Procedures related to applying for the elective

We are currently accepting applications for the following months (subject to change) at Black Lion Hospital and Addis Ababa University in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

- **November 2026**
- **February 2027**
- **May 2027**

***The exact dates depend on Addis Ababa*** Each elective is one month long and typically runs from the beginning of the calendar month to the end. TAAAC-EM will provide a small stipend for travel costs, but the resident will ultimately be responsible to cover the cost of round trip airfare from Toronto to Addis Ababa, accommodation, and living expenses.

THE **DEADLINE** FOR APPLYING FOR THE ABOVE ELECTIVE OPPORTUNITY IS **March 18, 2026 AT 11:59 PM.**

CANDIDATES WILL BE INTERVIEWED THE FOLLOWING WEEK AND SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES WILL BE ANNOUNCED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. INTERVIEWS WILL TAKE PLACE BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.

**1. Program description**

TAAAC-EM is a long-term global health partnership between U of T and Addis Ababa University focusing on capacity building. Prior to its inception in 2010, there were no specialty-trained EM physicians in Ethiopia. TAAAC-EM has supported AAU in creating a sustainable cohort of Ethiopian EM physicians by establishing the first-ever EM post-graduate training program in the country. TAAAC-EM is a sub-partnership of the larger TAAAC partnership between U of T and AAU. It follows the “TAAAC” model of prioritizing in-country training

opportunities to counteract the “brain drain” of health professionals from Ethiopia. Throughout its activities, TAAAC-EM has followed the lead of our Ethiopian colleagues in the spirit of solidarity and true partnership.

This elective is an opportunity to participate in the growth of the discipline of EM in Addis Ababa. The primary purpose of the program is to support the newly established community of Ethiopian EM specialists and residents in training to help address the country's vast health care needs. This elective is an opportunity for U of T EM trainees to gain exposure to the development and practice of EM in an exceptionally different context than in Canada. In cooperation with AAU colleagues and U of T faculty supervisors there may also be opportunities for residents to be engaged in research and quality improvement initiatives.

## **2. Goals of the TAAAC-EM elective**

1. To appreciate and participate in the development of our speciality and of an EM training program in a low-resource setting.
2. To appreciate the differences in the practice of EM in a low-resource setting.
3. To appreciate the various unique determinants of health in a low-resource context.
4. To facilitate the collegial learning and teaching of EM in an international context where both local and international actors have knowledge, skills and experience to share.
5. To encourage the EM trainee to seek out additional international EM experiences as their training and career progresses.

## **Objectives of the TAAAC-EM elective**

1. To develop personalised learning objectives (after considering the CanMEDS framework) prior to departure and have them approved by the supervising faculty members also travelling.
2. To develop effective working relationships with AAU staff and residents
3. To organise and deliver in Ethiopia lectures, workshops, and procedural sessions on EM topics. There is an opportunity to focus on areas where the resident has proficiency or special interest (e.g. airway management, toxicology, trauma procedures, ultrasound, etc.) if this aligns with the curriculum and needs of our Ethiopian colleagues.
4. Where mutually agreed, co-develop and co-perform research or quality improvement initiatives with realistic goals.
5. To gain experience in medical problems related to a tropical African context. (Please note that the TAAAC-EM team does not engage in direct patient care during the elective).
6. To perform bedside teaching in cooperation with travelling faculty members.
7. To provide input to the ongoing development of the TAAAC-EM program.
8. To make a presentation in Canada upon return discussing aspects of the experience.
9. To engage in mandatory briefing and debriefing activities, and provide feedback on how to improve them for future participants.
10. To engage in a trainee rotation evaluation with faculty supervisors.

## **3. Selection criteria**

The following criteria will be applied when evaluating a trainee’s candidacy for the elective.

- **PGY-3 trainee level or above**, in either FRCP or CCFP-EM program. Stronger preference given to higher-level trainees.
- Solid emergency medicine clinical performance and evaluations. Endorsement from the current residency training program director is required.
- Strong teaching and collaborative learning skills.
- Appreciation of tropical medicine. Previous tropical medicine experience is preferred but not required.

- An appropriately cautious attitude and ability to adhere to security guidelines created to ensure personal and team safety.
- An acceptance that due to local security concerns an elective trip could be cancelled at any time and the trainee may need to use a back-up rotation. Applicants must be able to identify a back-up rotation.
- Extra consideration given to those with demonstrated interest in global health or international EM.
- **Note** that while prior and current global health involvement is valued, the selection committee acknowledges the role of including those without prior involvement who are seeking a first such opportunity.
- Ability to live and work in basic living conditions in a tropical climate. Previous travel experience to low-income countries is preferred.
- Non-medical personal qualities: flexibility, creativity, a “can-do” attitude, dedication and perseverance in the face of difficulties, ability and interest to work with other cultures, diplomacy and appreciation of hierarchical systems in other cultures.
- Appropriate ambassadors and representatives of the University of Toronto.
- Ability to work and live in close vicinity with other team members in an amicable manner.

### **5. Procedures related to applying for the elective**

- 1) Submit an endorsement in writing from your current trainee program director. Please request your program director to directly email the TAAAC-EM Program Manager, Hannah Girdler: [hgirdler@gemcentre.ca](mailto:hgirdler@gemcentre.ca) stating they feel you are “able to engage in an international EM elective at this time in your training”.
- 2) Submit a letter of motivation to [hgirdler@gemcentre.ca](mailto:hgirdler@gemcentre.ca). In one page or less, please comment upon:
  - a. Your motivation to apply for this elective.
  - b. How your experiences and interest align with the selection criteria outlined above
  - c. What you plan to contribute to the TAAAC-EM program and what you hope to gain from it.
  - d. How you will use this experience in your future career in EM.
  - e. Your back-up rotation should any issues unfortunately require the elective to be cancelled at the last moment.
- 3) Submit your curriculum vitae to [hgirdler@gemcentre.ca](mailto:hgirdler@gemcentre.ca).
- 4) Meet with members of the selection committee for a virtual interview. This will be arranged after items 1-3 above are received.

If you have any questions please email Hannah Girdler, TAAAC-EM Program Manager at [hgirdler@gemcentre.ca](mailto:hgirdler@gemcentre.ca), or Dr. Natalie Wolpert, TAAAC-EM Postgraduate Director at [nats22@gmail.com](mailto:nats22@gmail.com).

With best wishes,  
The TAAAC-EM Executive Committee