

BVGH Partnership Hub Snapshot



October 2018

Dear WIPO Re:Search Members and Friends,

We are excited to announce that the WIPO Re:Search consortium is turning seven this month! In honor of this anniversary, we are pleased to share the updated [partnership pipeline](#), which showcases how WIPO Re:Search is accelerating R&D for neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), malaria, and tuberculosis.

It was lovely to see some familiar faces at the WIPO General Assembly last month. WIPO Director General Francis Gurry welcomed Members and the Geneva community as he opened the [WIPO Re:Search side event](#), which I had the pleasure of moderating. Promising WIPO Re:Search collaborations were featured by Members representing **Merck & Co. (MSD)**, the **Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI)**, **National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)**, and one of our newest members from Indonesia – Rintis Noviyanti of the **Eijkman Institute for Molecular Biology**. Amy Dieterich of WIPO concluded the program with the launch of the [WIPO Re:Search Resource Platform](#).

BVGH and WIPO will be in Japan during the week of October 22 to introduce WIPO Re:Search to members of the [Japan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association \(JPMA\)](#). If you would like to meet with our team in Japan, please reach out to [Cathy Manner](#).

The [2018 American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene \(ASTMH\) Annual Meeting](#) is coming up on October 28. Please [email](#) Joseph Hargan-Calvopiña if you would like to meet to discuss your WIPO Re:Search partnering interests.

BVGH would like to hear your thoughts and opinions on the WIPO Re:Search quarterly teleconferences, to help us improve participation in, and the quality of, the teleconferences. Please fill out our short survey [here](#).

Professor Katherine Andrews, Deputy Director of the **Griffith Institute for Drug Discovery (GRIDD)** and participant in the WIPO Re:Search [Funds in Trust \(FIT\) fellowship program](#) supported by the Government of Australia, authored an [article](#) in *WIPO Magazine* describing her experiences as a FIT host and the importance of international research collaborations.

I am pleased to welcome our newest WIPO Re:Search Member, **Ahmadu Bello University**.

As always, please forward this Snapshot to your colleagues and reach out to us with any partnering requests or ideas.

*Sincerely,
Jennifer Dent
President, BVGH*



Special Announcements

BVGH Authors Chapter in New Book on Public-Private Partnerships, IP

The **Cambridge Handbook of Public-Private Partnerships, Intellectual Property Governance, and Sustainable Development** was published in September and launched at the Global Congress for Intellectual Property and the Public Interest. BVGH wrote Chapter 4, “Creating, Managing, and Advancing Collaborations: The Road to Successful Partnerships.” The online version is now available for institutional purchase/access [here](#).

WIPO Re:Search Statistics



Click [here](#) for a list of WIPO Re:Search Members.
Click [here](#) for a list of WIPO Re:Search collaborations.

Cornerstones of Collaboration

Novartis Shares Compounds to Aid in Drug Discovery for Non-Tuberculous Mycobacteria



Found in environmental substrates such as water and soil, *Mycobacterium abscessus* (Mab), a distant relative of *M. tuberculosis*, is a rapidly-growing member of the non-tuberculous mycobacteria (NTM) group. Mab infections can cause lung disease similar to tuberculosis, as well as infections of the skin, soft tissue, and central nervous system, among others. Due to its intrinsic drug resistance – including resistance to drugs used to treat tuberculosis – Mab infections are difficult to treat and result in high mortality. To support the search for new drugs against Mab, **Novartis** will share a targeted collection of compounds with Professor Thomas Dick, Director of Antimicrobial Drug Discovery, **Public Health Research Institute**, to screen against the bacterium.

MIT Contributes to Schistosomiasis Diagnostic Development



Currently, the drug praziquantel is the primary method of both prevention and treatment of schistosomiasis through mass drug administration campaigns. As diagnosis methods are limited to microscopy, which requires electricity and is therefore not applicable for in-field testing, or POC-CCA, which has been found to only have 60% sensitivity in its detection of *S. haematobium*, praziquantel is administered to entire communities without first identifying those actually infected with the parasite. To improve this, Dr. Chiaka Anumudu at the **University of Ibadan** has identified 54 human proteins as potential biomarkers for schistosomiasis and bladder pathologies with the goal to develop an on-site diagnostic device to detect *S. haematobium*. She is currently engaged in a WIPO Re:Search collaboration to provide support conducting proteomic work in order to repeat the studies and validate the results with a larger sample set. To further support her diagnostic development, Dr. Jose Gomez-Marquez and Dr. Kimberly Hamad-Schifferli at the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** have shared [Ampli Blocks](#), a set of 40 different building blocks that enable lab workers around the world to assemble them in different ways to produce diagnostic devices. By supplementing the engineering of diagnostic development, Ampli Blocks allow researchers to focus on the biochemistry of detection and promote independent development of site-specific diagnostic devices. Dr. Anumudu will use these blocks as a platform to develop her diagnostic device.

New Member Announcement



AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY
Zaria-Nigeria.

Ahmadu Bello University, established in 1962, is a federal university in Zaria, Nigeria whose mission is to advance the frontiers of learning and break new grounds, through teaching, research, and the dissemination of knowledge of the highest quality; to establish and foster national and international integration, development, and the promotion of African traditions and cultures; and to produce high-level human power and enhance capacity building through retraining, in order to meet the needs and challenges of the catchment area, Nigeria, and the rest of the world. The largest university in Nigeria, Ahmadu Bello University encompasses 96 academic departments, 12 faculties, and 12 research institutes and specialized centers, including the Africa Center of Excellence (ACE) for Neglected Tropical Diseases and Forensic Biotechnology.

IP in Focus

[WIPO Re:Search Resource Platform Launched](#)

The new [WIPO Re:Search Resource Platform](#) is a way for Members to showcase their research, assets, and additional pertinent information on their individual profiles. Members can also explore collaboration opportunities by viewing other Member profiles and interacting via the Platform's features.

[WIPO and IFPMA Launch New Online Patent-Search Resource to Help Health Agencies Procure Medicines](#)

The [Patent Information Initiative for Medicines \(Pat-INFORMED\)](#) is a unique resource in which patent holders provide information about patents covering approved medicines through a free, open access database.

Pat-INFORMED is a partnership between WIPO and the [International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations](#) (IFPMA), the global trade association representing the research-based pharmaceutical industry. Pat-INFORMED originated in the industry's efforts to add clarity to patent information about medicines. WIPO's globally recognized expertise in the organization and public dissemination of patent data will make an important contribution to the accessibility of patent information.

Learn more about Pat-INFORMED by watching [a short video introduction](#).

BVGH FundFinder Featured Awards

[Wellcome Trust: Collaborative Awards in Science](#)

Collaborative Awards promote the development of new ideas and speed the pace of discovery. The awards fund teams of researchers, consisting of independent research groups, to work together on the most important scientific problems that can only be solved through collaborative efforts.

- **Funding Amount:** Up to £4 million for up to 5 years
- **Funder:** Wellcome Trust
- **Deadline:** November 19, 2018
- **Eligibility:** Each applicant must be essential to the proposed collaborative research and have:
 - Proven research expertise and experience in their field
 - An academic or research post (or equivalent)
 - A salary for the duration of the award period

[Wellcome Trust: International Intermediate Fellowships \(formerly Intermediate Fellowships in Public Health and Tropical Medicine\)](#)

This scheme offers nationals of low- and middle-income countries the opportunity to lead their own research programs.

- **Funding Amount:** Unspecified; salary and research expenses covered
- **Funder:** Wellcome Trust
- **Deadline:** November 22, 2018
- **Eligibility:** Candidates should be driving their own research and be ready to lead an independent research program. Additionally each applicant must:
 - Be a national of a [low- or middle-income country](#)
 - Have research focusing on a health priority of a low- or middle- income country
 - Have a Ph.D. or be a clinically qualified doctor (and qualified to enter higher specialist training), vet, dentist, or psychologist
 - Have significant research experience
 - Have made important contributions to his or her area of research, including publications, patents, software development, or an impact on health policy or practice

For more information about BVGH FundFinder, please email [Cathy Manner](#).



Member Spotlight

[New Asset – Open Diagnostics and FairTrade Bio Platform](#)

The MIT [Little Devices Lab](#) has developed an [Open Diagnostics](#) and FairTrade Bio Platform to enable diagnostic innovation in all corners of the world. Driven by the belief that everyone deserves rapid and affordable diagnostics, researchers from LMICs are invited to submit project proposals to receive individually tailored diagnostic construction kits. The Open Diagnostics construction sets allow scientists, laboratory technicians and healthcare workers to make and design their own paper-based diagnostics in their own facility. The goal of an architecture for open diagnostics is to provide some starter tools and reagents that enable scientists to develop diagnostics through their own scientific ingenuity and homegrown bioresources and create a 21st social contract between researchers and patient volunteers.

New Asset – Ampli Blocks

A team of MIT investigators are transforming the standard approach to diagnostic development through their development of [Ampli Blocks](#), a set of 40 different building blocks that lab workers around the world can easily assemble on their own in different ways to produce diagnostic devices. By supplementing the engineering of diagnostic development, Ampli Blocks allow researchers to focus on the biochemistry of detection and promote independent development of site-specific diagnostic devices. The blocks are inexpensive, costing about 6 cents for four blocks, do not require refrigeration or special handling, and can be sterilized and reused. The MIT Investigators are interested in partnering and sharing this technology to enable diagnostic development in LMICs. Learn more about MIT's contribution by watching their video [here](#).

Highlighted Contributions

Chagas Disease

Approximately 6 to 7 million people worldwide are estimated to be infected with *Trypanosoma cruzi*, the parasite that causes Chagas disease. Currently, Chagas disease is treated with benznidazole or nifurtimox which are almost 100% effective in curing the disease if given soon after infection at the onset of the acute phase. However, the efficacy of both diminishes the longer a person has been infected. Both benznidazole and nifurtimox are contraindicated for pregnant women, people with kidney or liver failure, and people with a background of neurological or psychiatric disorders. Additionally, up to 30% of chronically infected people develop cardiac alterations and up to 10% develop digestive, neurological or mixed alterations which may require specific treatment. Once the disease reaches the chronic stage it can result in significant disability with great social and economic impact due to unemployment and decreased earning ability. With approximately 70 million people at risk of contracting Chagas disease, it is imperative that new drugs are developed that are affordable, age-adapted, safe and efficacious. To support these drug discovery efforts, this Snapshot highlights compounds that have demonstrated repurposing potential against *T. cruzi* parasites:

- [Topoisomerase II inhibitors](#)
- [Tyrosine kinase inhibitors](#)
- [Cysteine protease inhibitors](#)
- [Farnesyltransferase inhibitors](#)

For more information or to discuss potential collaborations involving these inhibitors, please contact [Cathy Manner](#).

Upcoming Global Health Events

Dates	Event Name	Location
Oct. 28 - Nov. 1, 2018	American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) 2018 Annual Meeting	New Orleans, USA
Jan. 17 - 21, 2019	Keystone Symposium: Tuberculosis: Mechanisms, Pathogenesis and Treatment (A3)	Banff, Canada
April 14-17, 2019	World Vaccine Congress Washington	Washington, DC, USA
May 12 - 15, 2019	Wellcome Centre for Anti-Infectives Research (WCAIR) Conference on Innovative Drug Discovery and Development	Dundee, UK



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*Known as EMD in the US and Canada | **Known as Merck in the US and Canada

