

BVGH Partnership Hub Snapshot



March 2020

Dear WIPO Re:Search Members and Friends,

Snakebite envenoming kills approximately 11,000 people a month. An additional 450,000 people a year suffer life-altering injuries from snakebite such as amputation and permanent disability. BVGH is excited to announce WIPO Re:Search's first snakebite collaboration between researchers at **Johnson & Johnson** and Professor Nicholas Casewell at the Centre for Snakebite Research & Interventions (CSRI), **Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine**. This cross-sector collaboration aligns with the Wellcome Trust's prioritization of snakebite treatments and its announcement of an ambitious [£80 million program](#) to increase research efforts and improve treatment delivery.

WIPO Re:Search Members are answering the call to action as COVID-19 emerges onto the infectious disease landscape. **GSK**, one of the world's largest vaccine manufacturers, is in the preclinical stages of vaccine development in a technology-sharing partnership with Clover Pharmaceuticals. **Johnson & Johnson**, which historically responded to both the Ebola and Zika virus outbreaks, is taking a multipronged approach by working on a vaccine and a potential treatment for patients who are already infected. We are proud to work with WIPO Re:Search Members conducting crucial research for drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics addressing COVID-19.

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

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dent, President & CEO

BIO Ventures for Global Health



Special Announcement

Opportunity to Participate in the WIPO Re:Search Fellowship Program

Background

The [WIPO Re:Search Fellowship Program](#), supported by the Government of Australia through the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Funds-in-Trust, organizes training sabbaticals in advanced laboratories to increase the capacity of laboratory scientists from low- and middle-income countries to engage in neglected tropical disease (NTD), malaria, and tuberculosis research and development (R&D) for vaccines, drugs, and diagnostics. BVGH matches fellows and hosts with complementary research interests and capabilities. The research sabbaticals will range from three to six months in duration, and must begin by **September 1, 2020**. Funding will cover fellows' visa applications, flights, and a monthly stipend for living expenses.

Eligibility Criteria

The WIPO Re:Search Fellowship Program is open to late-early- to mid-career scientists with laboratory research experience located in the Indo-Pacific region (not all countries within this region will be eligible) who:

- Are currently conducting or leading research programs focused on product-oriented (vaccine, diagnostic, drug) NTD, malaria, or tuberculosis research.
- Currently hold, and will maintain after the fellowship period, an independent research position at an Indo-Pacific research organization.
- Are proficient in English (spoken and written).

Interested candidates should submit their CV's to Joseph Hargan (jhargan@bvgh.org) in order to receive a full application. **Deadline to submit the full application is March 20, 2020.**

WIPO Re:Search Statistics



Click [here](#) for a list of WIPO Re:Search Members.
Click [here](#) for a list of WIPO Re:Search collaborations.
Click [here](#) to view the WIPO Re:Search Collaboration Pipeline.

Cornerstones of Collaboration

Johnson & Johnson and CSRI Collaborate on Snakebite Treatment Discovery



Professor Nicholas Casewell, a Wellcome Trust research fellow at the Centre for Snakebite Research & Interventions (CSRI), **Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine**, is working on innovative approaches to discover and develop the next generation of treatments for snakebites. To support these efforts, **Johnson & Johnson** will be sharing its diverse compound library and a targeted set of compounds to potentially identify novel inhibitors of the toxic components of snake venom.

University of Ibadan and UBC Collaborate on Development of a New Diagnostic



a place of mind



Dr. Chiaka Anumudu at **University of Ibadan** previously identified 54 human proteins as potential biomarkers for schistosomiasis and bladder pathologies. Through WIPO Re:Search, Dr. Anumudu shared 60 samples with Dr. Horacio Bach at the **University of British Columbia (UBC)** to support her to conduct the proteomic confirmations and biomarker optimization. Upon identification of the biomarker(s), recombinant antibodies will be generated at Dr. Bach's laboratory to develop a serological test for fast diagnosis.

Partnership Hub Central

WIPO Re:Search Collaboration Studies Schistosome Infection in Snails

Professor Michael Hsieh, former Stirewalt Endowed Director and Principal Investigator of the Schistosomiasis Resource Center at the **Biomedical Research Institute (BRI)**, shared positive controls (genomic DNA) for *Schistosoma mansoni* and the intermediate host, the snail *Biomphalaria pfeifferi*, with Professor Olaoluwa Pheabian Akinwale, Director of Research (Neglected Tropical Diseases) and Principal Investigator of the Molecular Parasitology Research Laboratory at the **Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR)**. These positive controls were used as part of a study to screen and characterize the snails from this region to determine the level of infection with *Schistosoma mansoni*. This collaboration recently resulted in a publication in *Acta Tropica* titled, "Report of high prevalence of schistosome infection in *Biomphalaria* snails from a geographic area with no previous prevalence of human schistosomiasis in Nigeria." The results demonstrate that some of the *Biomphalaria pfeifferi* snails were indeed infected with *Schistosoma mansoni*. This suggests that there may be cases of intestinal schistosomiasis in this region of Nigeria. [Read the paper in Acta Tropica.](#)

COVID-19: Tackling the Novel Coronavirus: Free Online Course

With the outbreak of a novel coronavirus declared a public health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organization, people worldwide are working to address it. This online course offered by the **London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)**; a WIPO Re:Search Member) will cover how COVID-19 emerged and was identified, the public health measures being taken worldwide, and what is needed to address COVID-19 going forward. [Join the course today.](#)

BVGH FundFinder Featured Awards

Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV): 18th Call for Proposals



MMV has opened their [18th call for drug discovery proposals](#). Are you a researcher working on compounds with antimalarial potential or novel screening approaches? If yes, MMV welcomes proposals for drug discovery projects, compounds for target identification, and proposals specifically from endemic-region African scientists. The proposal deadline is March 27, 2020 at 12:00 noon CET.

Additional Funding Opportunities

- [ASTMH Annual Meeting Travel Award](#) – Deadline: March 26, 2020
- [TWAS Research Grants Programme in Basic Sciences \(Groups\)](#) – Deadline: March 31, 2020
- [NIH Technology Accelerator Challenge: Non-invasive Diagnostics for Global Health](#) – Deadline: June 2, 2020

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



Upcoming Global Health Events

Dates	Event Name	Location
Apr. 18-21, 2020	30th European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases	Paris, France
Apr. 27-28, 2020	World Health Summit Regional Meeting	Kampala, Uganda
June 1-12, 2020	6th McGill Summer Institute in Infectious Diseases and Global Health (Now accepting applications)	Montreal, QC, Canada



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