

BVGH Partnership Hub Snapshot



January 2022

Dear WIPO Re:Search Members and Friends,

As we begin the New Year, we are gearing up to celebrate the third annual [World NTD Day](#) on January 30. This event could not come at a better time, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to [disrupt delivery of essential NTD services](#). We are heartened by recent news such as [elimination of transmission of onchocerciasis in Niger](#) and [significant decreases in schistosomiasis prevalence in sub-Saharan Africa](#). Progress is possible with coordinated efforts and support!

Join us to raise awareness of World NTD Day and engage more partners in the battle against NTDs. Be sure to follow BVGH and our [WIPO Re:Search Members](#) and friends on social media throughout the month.

WIPO Re:Search Members **MSD*** and **Pfizer** have agreed to [license](#) their innovative and lifesaving antiviral treatments (MSD's molnupiravir and Pfizer's PF-07321332) through the Medicines Patent Pool in nearly 100 low- and middle-income countries. Through WIPO Re:Search, MSD, Pfizer, and other Members have contributed valuable IP to catalyze more than 170 BVGH-facilitated R&D collaborations targeting NTDs, malaria, and tuberculosis. Read about those collaborations, and learn more about how companies are sharing IP in the fight against neglected diseases, in our most recent [partnership storybook](#).

In this issue we are excited to feature updates on two promising WIPO Re:Search antimalarial drug discovery collaborations, including a 3-month hands-on training experience for a Cameroonian early-career scientist. We are grateful for all of our Members who invest time and resources in nurturing the next generation of neglected disease researchers.

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

*MSD is a trademark of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, NJ, USA.



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 Supports Malaria Drug Discovery through WIPO Re:Search Collaboration with Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research



Each year, over 200 million people worldwide contract malaria. Prof. Alan Cowman and Dr. Brad Sleebs at the **Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI)** are [partnering](#) with **Johnson & Johnson (J&J)** through WIPO Re:Search to drive progress towards new therapies that aim to be effective against drug-resistant *Plasmodium* parasites. As part of [J&J's global public health commitment](#), the company shared the [Jump-stARter library](#), a diverse set of 80,000 drug-like small molecules, with Prof. Cowman and Dr. Sleebs. The WEHI team screened the library and identified several [hit compounds](#) with antiplasmodial activity. Together with J&J, the researchers are chemically optimizing the molecular structures of the hits to increase their potency. In a new peer-reviewed publication in the journal *Bioorganic Chemistry* ([Optimisation of 2-\(N-phenyl carboxamide\) triazolopyrimidine antimalarials with moderate to slow acting erythrocytic stage activity](#)), the collaborators describe a novel class of antimalarial compounds with activity against multidrug-resistant *P. falciparum* (prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa) and *P. knowlesi* (prevalent in Southeast Asia). This compound class could potentially be suitable as a partner drug for malaria treatment or prophylaxis in combination with a fast-acting antimalarial. The collaboration continues as additional hits are being analyzed.

Furthering Natural Product Antimalarial Drug Discoveries



Dr. Michele Stella Majoumou in Dr. Baker's lab at USF.

Prof. Fabrice Boyom at **University of Yaoundé I** and Dr. Bill Baker at **University of South Florida (USF)** are [partnering](#) through a BVGH-coordinated WIPO Re:Search collaboration to further natural product antimalarial drug discovery efforts. The investigators have identified a set of compounds with strong antiplasmodial activity. With funding from their NIH R21 grant, Cameroonian post-doc **Dr. Michele Stella Majoumou** spent three months (October-December 2021) working with Dr. Baker to acquire isolation and characterization skills using instruments such as NMR and LC-MS, as well as progress the next phases of their work to induce antiprotozoal secondary metabolites from endophytic fungi using epigenetic modifiers. These collaborative efforts are key to developing new drug candidates for malaria, a disease that claimed an estimated 627,000 lives worldwide in 2020.

Member News



* **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Announces Positive Phase III Results for Arpraziquantel**

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany and the Pediatric Praziquantel Consortium [announced](#) that the pivotal Phase III trial for arpraziquantel, a potential new treatment option for schistosomiasis, has met the primary endpoint of clinical cure in children 3 months to 6 years of age. Arpraziquantel is tailored to the needs of preschool-aged children suffering from schistosomiasis, who currently have no treatment option.

*The business sectors of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany operate as EMD Serono in healthcare, MilliporeSigma in life science, and EMD Electronics in the US and Canada.

Special Announcements

MMVSola Open Tool for Early Prediction of Pharmacokinetics, Antimalarial Dose

Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV)'s MMVSola is a free tool that predicts (i) clinical pharmacokinetics (in malaria as well as other diseases) and (ii) the dose required to clear all malaria parasites from an adult patient weighing 50 kg. MMVSola can be used to make clinical predictions as early as the discovery phase, saving both time and resources. Learn more and access the tool [here](#).

2021 G-FINDER Neglected Disease Report

Join the launch of the 2021 G-FINDER Neglected Disease Report on January 27, 2022. The event will include information on neglected disease funding during the first fiscal year of the COVID-19 pandemic and insights into trends in future funding. Learn more [here](#); register [here](#).

Invitation to Submit Expression of Interest for the Manufacture of NTD Products

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through the Promoting the Quality of Medicines Plus (PQM+) program, invites pharmaceutical manufacturers in low- and middle-income countries to submit an expression of interest (EOI) application to receive technical support towards WHO prequalification of neglected tropical disease products. The deadline for EOI submission is March 31, 2022; learn more [here](#).

University of Idaho Biology of Vector-Borne Diseases Course

The University of Idaho is offering an in-person, six-day, condensed Biology of Vector-Borne Diseases course for advanced graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty, and professionals. The course is scheduled for June 13-18, 2022, and the US\$1,500 registration fee includes housing, meals, course materials, and social activities. Learn more [here](#); apply [here](#).

IP in Focus

WIPO Launches New Global Awards Program

WIPO's Global Awards Program celebrates businesses and individuals that use IP to develop impactful, far-reaching solutions. The first awards, focusing on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), will be announced in July 2022. The deadline for nominations is March 14, 2022; learn more about the program and self-nomination process [here](#).

BVGH FundFinder Featured Awards

WE-STAR Fellowships for Early-Career Women Scientists

The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) and the **International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)** have partnered to offer early-career women scientists from the African continent mobility fellowships of 6 to 12 months at the ICGEB laboratories in Trieste (Italy), New Delhi (India), and Cape Town (South Africa), to perform research work on biotechnology and related fields, including Infectious Diseases and Non-Communicable Diseases. Applications are due January 28, 2022; learn more [here](#).

Additional Funding Opportunities

- [NIH Medical Scientist Training Program \(T32\)](#) – Next Application Deadline: January 25, 2022.
- [Leprosy Research Initiative](#) – Letter of Intent Deadline: January 28, 2022.
- [COR-NTD New Diagnostics for Schistosomiasis Monitoring and Evaluation](#) – Application Deadline: January 31, 2022.
- [COR-NTD Increasing Effectiveness of Delivery of Preventive Chemotherapy against NTDs](#) – Application Deadline: January 31, 2022.
- [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine NRC Research Associateship Programs](#) – Next Application Deadline: February 1, 2022.
- [NIH Research Project Grant \(Parent R01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#), [Notice of Special Interest](#) for Accelerating Malaria Vaccine Discovery – Next Application Deadline: February 5, 2022.
- [Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study \(STIAS\) Iso Lomso Fellowship](#) – Application Deadline: February 15, 2022.
- [NIH R21 Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Program](#), [Notice of Special Interest](#) for Secondary Analysis of Existing Datasets for Advancing Immune-mediated and Infectious Disease Research – Next Application Deadline: February 16, 2022.
- [Informa Connect Global Learning Scholarship Program](#) – Applications are due before your chosen course begins; the first course is March 7-10, 2022.
- [NIH Biological and Emerging Infections Research Resources Program \(BEI-RRP\)](#) – Application Deadline: March 18, 2022.

- [DAAD Scholarship Database](#) – Postgraduate scholarships for academic studies in Germany. Look [here](#) for important information for applicants.
- [Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds \(BIF\) Travel Grants](#) – Applications must be submitted at least six weeks, but not more than six months, before anticipated travel.

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



Upcoming Global Health Events

Dates	Event	Location
January 26, 2022	WHO World NTD Day 2022 Event	Virtual
February 2-3, 2022	Antimicrobial Chemotherapy Virtual Conference	Virtual
March 6-9, 2022	11th International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases 2022	Atlanta, Georgia, USA and Virtual
June 17, 2022	RSTMH 47th Annual Topics in Infection	London and Virtual
August 1-6, 2022	WorldLeish 7	Cartagena, Colombia



Johnson & Johnson



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