

# BVGH Partnership Hub Snapshot



May 2018

Dear WIPO Re:Search Members and Friends,

“Health is a human right. No one should get sick or die just because they are poor, or because they cannot access the services they need,” said World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros in his World Health Day message. Despite this, in the recent [SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2017](#), Bertelsmann Stiftung and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network reported a mere 11 out of 157 countries have achieved Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #3: good health and wellbeing.

In advance of the World Health Assembly, the WHO’s [Draft Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019-2023](#) underscores its strategic priorities towards its primary objective of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. This objective is supported by three major goals to ensuring an additional 1 billion people are: (1) benefitting from universal health coverage, (2) protected from health emergencies, and (3) enjoying better health and well-being.

At the Malaria Summit London 2018 last month, the **Malaria Consortium** and Professor Alister Craig from the **Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine** answered the question, “How close are we to defeating malaria?” Listen to their response [here](#).

I am excited to announce that the Wellcome Trust has recognized the **Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI)** and **MSD\*** with a Seeding Drug Discovery Award of nearly \$3.6 million USD to support their malaria drug discovery collaboration. Congratulations!

*Sincerely,  
Jennifer Dent  
President, BVGH*

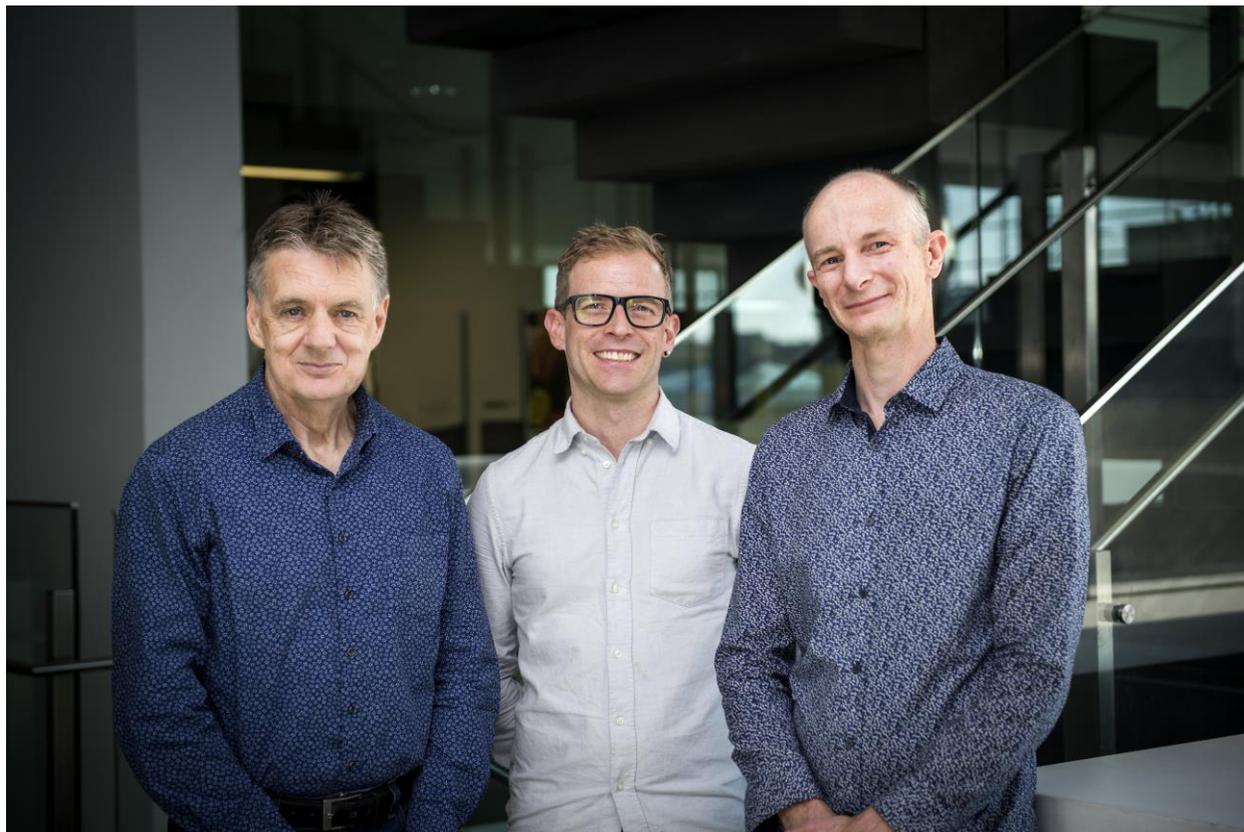
*\*known as Merck & Co., Inc. in the US and Canada*



## Special Announcement



### Wellcome Trust Recognizes Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research and MSD Antimalarial Collaboration Team with Seeding Drug Discovery Award



WEHI investigators from left to right: Drs. Alan Cowman, Justin Boddey, and Brad Sleebs.

With over 216 million cases in 2016, leading to an estimated 445,000 deaths worldwide, malaria is one of the world's most devastating diseases. Novel therapies are urgently required to populate the antimalarial clinical portfolio, as current therapeutics are becoming less effective due to emerging resistance.

Malaria is an infectious disease caused by parasitic protozoa of the genus *Plasmodium*, and transmitted by *Anopheles* mosquitoes. A collaboration – established through WIPO Re:Search – between **MSD\*** and the **Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research** has demonstrated that parasite aspartyl protease enzymes are attractive drug targets, since they perform essential functions at different stages of the parasite life cycle.

Through screening aspartyl protease inhibitor libraries, the collaboration has identified novel drug-like hit compounds that are active against the malaria parasite. With the encouragement and support of BVGH, the organization responsible for catalyzing research collaborations through WIPO Re:Search, the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute/MSD team applied and successfully competed for Seeding Drug Discovery (SDD) Early Stage Award funding from the Wellcome Trust (WT) to accelerate its collaborative research program. For the duration of the two year SDD Award, the joint team will use the funding from the WT toward increasing potency and selectivity against the parasite, with the aim of progressing to a lead optimization stage discovery program.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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# WIPO Re:Search Statistics



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

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## Cornerstones of Collaboration



**MONASH**  
University

Onchocerciasis affects 18 million people in tropical countries. Current treatments kill the first-stage larvae (microfilariae), but are ineffective against the adult larvae (macrofilariae). Ivermectin, the standard medicine for onchocerciasis, causes severe side effects in patients co-infected with *Loa loa* worms. As the second leading cause of infectious blindness, there is a vital need for effective and selective treatments against onchocerciasis. The teams of Robin Gasser, Professor of Parasitology, **University of Melbourne** and Jonathan Baell, Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, **Monash University** have identified compounds that inhibit the barber's pole worm, and were interested in screening them against other infectious worms. BVGH connected Robin Gasser with Fidelis Cho-Ngwa, Professor of Biochemistry and Biotechnology at the **University of Buea**, who is developing inhibitors that are selective for *O. volvulus*. Fidelis will screen Robin and Jonathan's compounds against *O. volvulus* to identify potential drug candidates.

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## New Member Announcement

# LifeArc

Founded in 1992, **LifeArc** (formally MRC Technology) evolved from the United Kingdom's Medical Research Council (MRC). LifeArc is dedicated to improving product development by pioneering new ways to progress great science into greater patient impact. With the fitting role as the arc between academic researchers and market distribution, LifeArc has united a team of researchers with a diversified set of expertise in assay development, compound screening, medicinal chemistry, ADME, and pharmacology for translational progress of product development. From funding opportunities for early stage research to providing intellectual property management and protection, LifeArc supports products across the diagnostic, antibody engineering, and drug discovery pipelines.

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# IP in Focus



In support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Ridha Bouabid, WIPO's Special Representative of the Director General on the SDGs was [interviewed on Swiss TV](#) (Radio Télévision Suisse, RTS). Ridha emphasized the important role WIPO Re:Search is playing towards achieving the SDGs: "The objectives of sustainable development require innovative technologies and the aim is to make all people benefit from this innovation. The (WIPO) Re:Search program builds research partnerships and research exchanges between North and South."

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## BVGH FundFinder Featured Awards

### [CARB-X 2018 Funding Round 2](#)

CARB-X was established in response to the US government's Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria (CARB) initiative and the UK government's 2016 call for a concerted global effort to tackle antibiotic resistance. CARB-X is accelerating antibacterial products, leveraging \$455 million in BARDA funds with matching funds from the Wellcome Trust. CARB-X supports early development of products within the following categories in descending priority: direct-acting therapeutics for Gram-negative infections, diagnostics, prevention (e.g. vaccines, microbiome, and devices), indirect acting therapeutics, and direct-acting therapeutics for Gram-positive infections. Applications for Round 2 must be submitted online June 1 through June 8, 2018, 5 pm EST. Click [here](#) for more information on the scope of the 2018 Funding Round 2, and [here](#) for more information on the application process.

- **Funding amount:** Applicants must be in a financial position to contribute at least 30% of the cost of the project. Applicants from larger or better-resourced organizations are encouraged to propose higher amounts of cost share.
- **Funder:** CARB-X
- **Deadline:** June 8, 2018
- **Eligibility:** Applicants must have a legal entity with drug development capabilities, financial ability to cover cost share of at least 30% of the total cost of the project, and capabilities in business development and technology transfer. Click [here](#) for more information on eligibility.

### [3rd Annual Advancing Healthcare in Africa Workshop in Johannesburg](#)

**Emory University** invites innovative scientists focused on developing healthcare solutions to apply to attend the third annual [Advancing Healthcare Innovation in Africa](#) (AHIA) summer conference and commercialization program, a partnership with the [African Network for Drugs and Diagnostics Innovation](#) (ANDi). The conference take place **July 9-11, 2018 in Johannesburg**, South Africa. Select scientists from the conference will be invited to receive training from Emory University professors, industry professionals from companies such as Pfizer, entrepreneurs who have sold multiple businesses, and world-class researchers. AHIA will cover flight, hotel, and workshop expenses, and any additional commercialization support. The conference will cover topics such as business development, intellectual property, seeking funding, investor outreach, and business plan creation. To learn more, click [here](#).

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



# Highlighted Contributions

## [Webinar: Searching and Analyzing 3D Protein-Ligand Structures Using PDBe Web Services](#)

Abhik Mukhopadhyay, Scientific Database Curator at the European Bioinformatics Institute (EBI) will instruct webinar participants on searching and analyzing 3D protein-ligand structures using [Protein Data bank in Europe](#) (PDBe). Abhik will also demonstrate some PDBe web services that medicinal and computational chemists will find useful in understanding how small molecules interact with proteins. The webinar will be held **Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>** from **4:00 - 5:00 pm CEST**. For more information, click [here](#).

## [Lifelong Learning in the Biomedical Sciences from EMBL: Science, Technology, and Innovation for Upskilling Knowledge-Based Economies in Africa](#)

The Africa Union's shared vision for 'the Africa we want' envisions a future grounded on knowledge-based economies. Such economies require accelerated development of career structures in the science, technology, and innovation sectors. Changes are afoot in supporting new approaches in these fields. Professor Kevin Marsh of the University of Oxford will map out these changes and their implications for career development for African researchers. Professor Marsh will be joined by Professor Trudie Lang (University of Oxford) and Dr. Allan Pamba (**GlaxoSmithKline**). The webinar will be held **Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>** from **7:00 - 8:00 am EDT**. For more information, click [here](#).

# Upcoming Global Health Events

Dates	Event Name	Location
July 1 - 5	<a href="#">1<sup>st</sup> Malaria World Congress</a>	Melbourne, Australia
July 28 - 29	<a href="#">Gordon Research Conference: Frontiers in Natural Products: Synthesis, Biosynthesis, and Drug Discovery</a>	Andover, New Hampshire
October 14 - 18	<a href="#">Keystone Symposium: Framing the Response to Emerging Virus Infections (S2)</a>	Hong Kong, China



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