

# BVGH Partnership Hub Snapshot



December 2021

Dear WIPO Re:Search Members and Friends,

As 2021 draws to a close, we look back with great pride at WIPO Re:Search's accomplishments this year — including identification of [small molecules with anthelmintic activity](#) and [natural products with antitubercular activity](#), as well as peer-reviewed publications reporting progress on WIPO Re:Search collaborations. We also welcomed organizations from Latin America, Africa, and the United States to the Consortium—including **Anchor University Lagos (AUL)**, profiled below—and facilitated new cross-sector collaborations, including the compound screening projects described in this issue.

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, BVGH and WIPO transitioned the third round of the [WIPO Re:Search Fellowship Program](#) (supported by the Government of Australia through WIPO Funds-in-Trust) into a four-month virtual training seminar series focused on R&D and intellectual property (IP) management topics identified as high priorities by fellows. Industry, academic, and non-profit leaders—including former fellowship hosts—volunteered their time as expert trainers. BVGH and WIPO also conducted a first-of-its-kind virtual IP capacity building workshop for scientists and IP management professionals in Africa, the Asia-Pacific region, and Latin America. In alignment with WIPO Re:Search's strategic objectives, the four-day workshop provided critical training to empower low- and middle-income countries to strategically manage their IP assets.

Additionally, WIPO Re:Search celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a [virtual event](#) showcasing how IP and innovation are driving improved health and economic development in Africa—home to 40+ WIPO Re:Search Member organizations across 20 countries, as well as 50+ WIPO Re:Search collaborations. The event featured a distinguished line-up of African scientists participating in WIPO Re:Search collaborations, additional regional partners, and WIPO Re:Search Member companies committed to advancing research and improving global health.

Looking ahead to 2022, the work of our WIPO Re:Search investigators to combat malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases remains as important as ever as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. For example, the World Health Organization's new [World Malaria Report 2021](#) describes how the pandemic has [disrupted malaria services, leading to marked increases in cases and deaths](#). We celebrate all of our WIPO Re:Search Members who are battling malaria and antimalarial resistance in a variety of ways, including [leveraging of pharmaceutical industry assets](#) to develop [new drugs with novel modes of action](#).

Congratulations to **Novartis** on the new, BVGH-facilitated collaboration with the [LOEWE Center DRUID](#) to screen Novartis' proprietary compounds in DRUID-developed malaria and leishmaniasis assays. Screening will occur through the [Novartis FAST Lab Program](#).

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



---

## 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

### Advancing Drug Discovery for Human African Trypanosomiasis



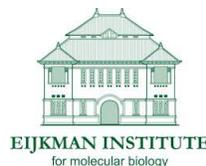
Dr. Michael Pollastri, an organic and medicinal chemistry expert at **Northeastern University**, is developing drugs to treat neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) including human African trypanosomiasis (HAT). HAT, or sleeping sickness, is a parasitic disease endemic in 36 African countries, and 65 million people across the continent are at risk of being infected. Through WIPO Re:Search, BVGH [connected](#) Dr. Pollastri to AstraZeneca to further characterize promising anti-HAT compounds designed in his lab. To date, the company has provided critical data on absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion (ADME) properties for nearly 1,700 compounds (representing 8,500 data points). Dr. Pollastri will use these data to select the compounds with the best “drug-like” profiles for continued development. According to Dr. Pollastri, “Our WIPO Re:Search collaboration with AstraZeneca has been an absolute game-changer for us, as we drive our multi-parameter optimization work for NTDs—and we owe it very much to BVGH for making the connection!”

### Leveraging Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany Open Global Health Library to Identify New Approaches to Treat Neglected Diseases

As part of its commitment to Open Innovation, **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany** is making its [Open Global Health Library](#) available free of charge to scientists worldwide—including the WIPO Re:Search investigators below—to catalyze drug discovery research for a broad array of infectious diseases.



The only effective treatments for snakebite envenoming are antivenoms, medications made from antibodies against the components of venom. However, antivenoms are expensive to manufacture, and different antivenoms are required to treat the bites of different snake species. Prof. Nicholas Casewell at the **Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine** (UK) aims to develop less costly, small-molecule therapies that inhibit toxins in venom. He will screen the Open Global Health Library to identify compounds that block the activity of such toxic enzymes.



Severe dengue, known as dengue hemorrhagic fever or dengue shock syndrome, is a leading cause of hospitalization and death in Asia and Latin America. There is no specific treatment for the disease. Dr. Tedjo Sasmono at the **Eijkman Institute for Molecular Biology** (Indonesia) will screen the Open Global Health Library to identify compounds that target pathways that are disrupted in severe dengue.

\*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.

---

## New Member Announcement

### Anchor University Lagos (AUL)



**Anchor University Lagos (AUL)** is a private, non-profit institution in Ayobo-Ipaja, Lagos, Nigeria. AUL's mandate is to develop academically sound and spiritually vibrant individuals for national and global transformation. Founded in 2014, AUL comprises numerous departments across fields including biological science, chemical science, and global health. AUL and its ambitious interdisciplinary group of scholars utilize workshops and open lectures to engage with local and international government agencies, private organizations, NGOs, and more to explore and identify solutions to complex global health challenges. Research focuses of the university include cellular parasitology, biochemistry, and modelling conducted at several established laboratories accessible to students and faculty.

---

## Member News



**AiBST**

### Prof. Collen Masimirembwa Receives Fellowship from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Prof. Collen Masimirembwa, Founding President and Chief Scientific Officer of the **African Institute of Biomedical Science and Technology (AiBST)**, has [received](#) a Calestous Juma Science Leadership Fellowship from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Prof. Masimirembwa will use the award to build a research and innovation ecosystem in Africa for drug and diagnostic discovery, using his work on precision medicine as a flagship. He will also forge strong partnerships with pharmaceutical companies to foster development of Africa's biotechnology industry.



## Prof. Fabrice Boyom Receives Funding for Schistosomiasis Screening

Congratulations to Prof. Fabrice Boyom at **University of Yaoundé I**, who received a **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany** Schistosomiasis Research Grant. He will use the funds to establish schistosomiasis screening activities in Cameroon.



## Prof. Peter Cheuka Awarded Grant for Antischistosomal Drug Discovery

Congratulations to Prof. Peter Cheuka at **University of Zambia**, who received a **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany** Schistosomiasis Research Grant. He will use the funds to identify synthetic compounds with antischistosomal activity.

---

## Special Announcements

### Professional Development Videos from Seeding Labs

Seeding Labs has a library of professional development videos that can be explored by category or discipline. Access them [here](#).

### NIH: Revised Progress Report Validations

If you are conducting a clinical trial that is funded by an NIH grant or cooperative agreement, [check here](#) to learn about updating your clinical trial registration and results reporting.

### Monthly Seminars from Hospital for Tropical Diseases

The Hospital for Tropical Diseases (HTD) is celebrating 100 years with monthly seminars that are free to healthcare professionals and students. The series launches on January 27, 2022; learn more [here](#).

---

## BVGH FundFinder Featured Awards

### Increasing Effectiveness of Delivery of Preventive Chemotherapy against NTDs

The Neglected Tropical Diseases Support Center (NTD-SC), a program of The Task Force for Global Health, with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Coalition for Operational Research on Neglected Tropical Diseases (COR-NTD) grant, is soliciting proposals to improve the delivery of preventive chemotherapy for the elimination of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).

Research proposed for this call will investigate and develop solutions to persistent challenges associated with the implementation of NTD programs, focusing on scalable solutions that can be incorporated into program implementation plans. With this call, the NTD-SC – which serves as Secretariat of the COR-NTD – seeks proposals that are nested within national programs and target lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, or trachoma. Projects will be funded with support from USAID through the NTD-SC. The maximum award is \$75,000 and the maximum project duration is twelve months. Submission Deadline: January 31, 2022. Learn more [here](#).

### Additional Funding Opportunities

- [NIH Systems Biology for Infectious Diseases \(U19 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#) – Letter of Intent Deadline: December 15, 2021; Application Deadline: January 14, 2022.
- [NIAID Research Education Program Advancing the Careers of a Diverse Research Workforce \(R25 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#) – Next Letter of Intent Deadline: December 26, 2021; Next Application Deadline: January 25, 2022.
- [RUFORUM GTA Doctoral Research Grants 2022/2023](#) – Application Deadline: January 15, 2022.
- [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.
- [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.
- [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
March 6-9, 2022	<a href="#">11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases 2022</a>	Atlanta, Georgia, USA and Virtual
June 17, 2022	<a href="#">RSTMH 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Topics in Infection</a>	London and Virtual
August 1-6, 2022	<a href="#">WorldLeish 7</a>	Cartagena, Colombia



\*\*



\*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.

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





*Copyright © 2021 BVGH, All rights reserved.*

**Mailing Address:**

2101 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1950, Seattle, WA 98121