

BVGH Partnership Hub Snapshot



May 2022

Dear WIPO Re:Search Members and Friends,

In April we observed [World Chagas Disease Day](#), an opportunity to commemorate the international community's progress in the fight against this devastating disease and reaffirm commitments to eliminate it once and for all. As readers of this newsletter know, Latin America has a high burden of Chagas disease, so in this issue we are proud to spotlight the work of Brazil-based researcher Prof. Adriano D. Andricopulo to develop new treatments. You may also enjoy reading about another local researcher, Dr. Artur Cordeiro, whom we [profiled](#) in our most recent partnering storybook.

Last month also marked [World Malaria Day](#). In alignment with this year's theme, "Harness innovation to reduce the malaria disease burden and save lives," we are pleased to feature below the latest updates from a highly successful public-private [antimalarial drug discovery collaboration coordinated](#) through the Consortium.

As always, please share this Snapshot with your colleagues.

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

Catalyzing Natural Product Drug Discovery for Schistosomiasis



Swiss TPH



More than 236 million people annually require preventive chemotherapy for schistosomiasis, which relies on a single drug, praziquantel. Mr. Deryl Nii Okantey Kuevi at the **Council for Scientific and Industrial Research-Water Research Institute** (Ghana) aims to identify novel antischistosomal compounds from Ghanaian plants in an effort to diversify the treatment options available. With support from **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany***—as part of the company's commitment to Open Innovation—Prof. Jennifer Keiser at the **Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute** will screen Mr. Kuevi's plant extracts for antischistosomal activity.

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany* Shares Open Global Health Library to Catalyze Kinetoplastid Disease Drug Discovery



Chagas disease and visceral leishmaniasis affect millions of people around the world, especially those living in poverty. Only a very limited set of drugs is available to treat these diseases. Prof. Adriano D. Andricopulo at **University of São Paulo** (Brazil) will screen the [Open Global Health Library](#) of **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany***—a set of compounds shared with infectious disease researchers worldwide as part of the company's commitment to Open Innovation—to identify novel compounds with bioactivity against these diseases' causative agents.

Fighting Antimalarial Resistance through New Drugs Targeting Essential Parasite Pathways



L-R: Dr. Tony Hodder and Prof. Alan Cowman. (Photo credit: WEHI. 1G Royal Pde Parkville 3052 VIC Australia. <https://www.wehi.edu.au/> Copyright: © The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research.)

Increasing resistance to current antimalarial drugs presents a major threat to malaria treatment and control. As of 2020, nearly half of the world's population was at risk of malaria, which highlights the urgent need for novel drugs that can be used in place of or in combination with existing medicines. BVGH [coordinated](#) a [collaboration](#) between **MSD**** (led by Dr.

David Olsen) and the **Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI)** (led by Prof. Alan Cowman), focused on identifying drug candidates targeting *Plasmodium* aspartyl proteases, a family of essential enzymes. In a [previous peer-reviewed publication](#), the collaborators [reported](#) the discovery of WM382, a dual inhibitor of the *Plasmodium* proteases plasmepsin (PM) IX and X that blocks growth of *P. falciparum* and *P. knowlesi* in vitro and suppresses infection and transmission to mosquitoes in mouse models. In a new peer-reviewed publication in the journal *Structure* ([Basis for drug selectivity of plasmepsin IX and X inhibition for *Plasmodium falciparum* and *vivax*](#)), the researchers further elucidate the molecular mechanisms of WM382 as well as WM4, inhibitors of PMX and PMIX. The authors identified novel PMIX protein substrates in *P. falciparum* and obtained crystal structures of PMX and PMX-drug complexes. Through these findings, the collaborators gained new insights into specific binding interactions that can be harnessed to design better and more potent inhibitors to effectively disrupt the *Plasmodium* lifecycle. This work was supported by The Wellcome Trust (109662/Z/15/Z, 202749/Z/16/Z). In addition to Dr. Olsen and Prof. Cowman, other authors on the publication include Dr. Tony Hodder and Dr. Janni Boding Christensen.

*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.

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BVGH FundFinder Featured Awards

Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund Fellowship

The Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF) is the only global program that arranges, funds, and supports fellowships for threatened and displaced scholars at partnering higher education institutions worldwide. These year-long fellowships of \$25,000 USD support temporary academic positions at institutions of higher learning anywhere in the world where IIE-SRF fellows can continue their work in safety. In most cases, IIE-SRF fellows are eligible to apply for a second and final year of fellowship support. Applications are considered quarterly. Learn more [here](#).

Additional Funding Opportunities

- [ASTMH Committee on Global Health Award for Research Support](#) – Application Deadline: May 16, 2022.
- [NIH Technology Development for Single-Molecule Protein Sequencing](#) – Next Letter of Intent Deadline: May 16, 2022; Next Application Deadline: June 15, 2022.
- [RGHI Annual Fellowship Program](#) – Application Deadline: June 6, 2022.
- [NIH Improved Drug Susceptibility Testing for Tuberculosis](#) – Letter of Intent Deadline: June 8, 2022; Application Deadline: July 8, 2022.
- [NIAID Career Transition Award](#) – Next Application Deadline: June 12, 2022.
- [NIH Science Education Partnership Award \(SEPA\)](#) – Next Letter of Intent Deadline: June 13, 2022; Next Application Deadline: July 13, 2022.
- [NIH Lasker Clinical Research Scholars Program](#) – Application Deadline: June 24, 2022.
- [NIH Global Infectious Disease Research Training Program](#) – Next Letter of Intent Deadline: July 4, 2022; Next Application Deadline: August 3, 2022.
- [NIAID Contract Opportunity to Develop a Novel Vaccine Adjuvant](#) – Application Deadline: October 14, 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
June 15-17, 2022	World Health Summit Regional Meeting	Rome, Italy and Virtual
June 20-25, 2022	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting	Kigali, Rwanda
June 23, 2022	Kigali Summit on Malaria and NTDs	Kigali, Rwanda and Virtual
August 1-6, 2022	WorldLeish 7	Cartagena, Colombia
August 7-10, 2022	11th International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases 2022	Atlanta, Georgia, USA
October 4-5, 2022	COR-NTD Annual Meeting 2022	Virtual
October 11-12, 2022	RSTMH Annual Meeting 2022	Liverpool, UK



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