

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The United States National Institutes of Health, the Centers for AIDS Research and the International AIDS Society announce a new round of innovative HIV research awards

21 July 2012 (Geneva, Switzerland) – The International AIDS Society (IAS), in partnership with the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the NIH-supported Centers for AIDS Research (CFAR), today announced the launch of the special round *Toward an HIV Cure* of the joint research grant programme, *Creative and Novel Ideas in HIV Research* (CNIHR).

The special round of the CNIHR programme supports innovative proposals to accelerate the search toward an HIV cure from early-stage scientists new to this research field. “This international partnership is designed to promote innovative research from early-stage investigators who will bring novel ideas and new technologies to research toward a cure for HIV/AIDS,” Dr Jack Whitescarver, NIH Associate Director for AIDS Research and Director of the Office of AIDS Research, said. “AIDS researchers are making strides, and we need to stimulate creative ideas and build multi-disciplinary international collaborations.” “As in other scientific fields, we often see the most exciting ideas from our newest investigators. They also come with new networks of collaborators, further adding value to this crucial investment in the future of HIV science”, adds Prof Paul Volberding, co-director with Warner Greene of the UCSF-GIVI CFAR in San Francisco California.

Given the limited resources available to pursue the rollout of antiretroviral therapy (ART) to all who need it, as well as the fact that in certain regions, new infections continue to outpace the number of people on treatment, there is a strong need for continued investments to find new strategies with the potential to contribute to an HIV Cure. “In the current economic climate of treatment funding shortages and with a scale of unmet need that can only increase, the IAS is highly concerned by the long-term sustainability of antiretroviral therapy rollout,” Ely Katabira, IAS President, said. “Along with our partners, the IAS is committed to investing in finding better and more cost-effective options to curb the epidemic. One of the ways we can pursue this is through the Special HIV Cure Round of the CNIHR research grant programme.”

The first round of grants was announced in 2010. The joint programme awarded a total of US\$3.4 million to fund the research projects of ten outstanding early-stage researchers. In 2012, CNIHR grants which total US\$5 million will be awarded to 12 researchers at the XIX International AIDS Conference. Each awardee is funded for up to two years with up to \$150,000 (direct costs) per year plus applicable indirect costs.

“The truly international nature of this programme – it is open to candidates globally – enables it to select the best research projects from all over the world,” Prof Michael Saag, Director of CFAR at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, commented. “CNIHR awardees come from a wide range of scientific disciplines and locations, including Argentina, Australia, India, Mexico, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States.”

The first step of the competitive application process is now open on the CNIHR website (www.cnihr.org) and will close on 5 October 2012. Applicants will be asked to complete a two-step process to assess the quality of their research projects. Awardees will be selected by mid-April 2013 and will be able to start

their research projects in June 2013. The research projects will be supported in collaboration with a CFAR institution with expertise in each candidate's area of proposed research.

"Through this programme, promising young researchers have access to CFAR's solid expertise and infrastructure, which is extremely important for the success of their projects," Prof King Holmes, Director of the CFAR at the University of Washington, said. Awardees will also receive a scholarship to attend a networking and training programme in conjunction with the 7th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention ([IAS 2013](#)), which will be held from 30 June – 3 July 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where the results of the selection process will be announced.

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About the IAS:

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with over 16,000 members from more than 196 countries working at all levels of the global response to AIDS. Our members include researchers from all disciplines, clinicians, public health and community practitioners on the frontlines of the epidemic, as well as policy and programme planners. The IAS is the custodian of the biennial International AIDS Conference, which will be held in Washington, D.C., in July 2012, and lead organizer of the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention.

www.iasociety.org | www.aids2012.org

About the National Institutes of Health (NIH):

NIH, the nation's medical research agency, includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIH is the primary federal agency conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and is investigating the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov. *NIH...Turning Discovery Into Health*.

About CFAR:

The Centers for AIDS Research (CFAR) program at the NIH provides administrative and shared research support to synergistically enhance and coordinate high quality AIDS research projects. CFARs accomplish this through core facilities that provide expertise, resources, and services not otherwise readily obtained through more traditional funding mechanisms. The CFAR program emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, especially between basic and clinical investigators, translational research in which findings from the laboratory are brought to the clinic and vice versa, and an emphasis upon inclusion of minorities and inclusion of prevention and behavioral change research.

For more information:

Siân Bowen (Geneva, Switzerland)

Senior Manager, Communications

Email: Sian.Bowen@iasociety.org

Tel: +41 22 710 0864

US Mob (July 16-28): +1 202 997 6935

Francesca Da Ros (Geneva, Switzerland)

Communications and Media Officer

Email: Francesca.Daros@iasociety.org

Tel: +41 22 710 0822

Mob: +41 796 109679

US Mob (July 16-28): +1 202 997 6917