

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

International AIDS Society Announces Recipients of Innovative HIV Research Awards

18 July 2012 (Geneva, Switzerland) – The International AIDS Society (IAS) today announced the recipients for the second round of the research grant programme, *Creative and Novel Ideas in HIV Research* (CNIHR). The CNIHR programme is jointly sponsored by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), the NIH-supported Centers for AIDS Research (CFARs) and the International AIDS Society (IAS) with the aim to promote innovative research and novel ideas from early stage investigators whose primary focus has previously been in fields of scientific inquiry other than HIV.

The CNIHR initiative, which totals US\$5 million, will fund 12 research projects for up to two years. These projects are designed to advance the scientific understanding of HIV and to support new approaches to answer emerging scientific questions affecting HIV-infected populations.

The 12 outstanding early-stage researchers selected for the grants come from a range of scientific disciplines and locations, including Argentina, India, and the United States. Their research projects will be supported in collaboration with a CFAR institution with expertise in the grantee's area of research. The CNIHR programme will allow the grantees the opportunity to conduct cutting-edge research on HIV and AIDS.

"The IAS remains deeply committed to supporting a new generation of HIV researchers and encouraging those from a variety of disciplines to focus their energy and expertise on the many perplexing challenges facing the HIV field," noted IAS President Dr. Elly Katabira. "We are excited by the caliber of this exceptional new group of young researchers and grateful to be working with our partners on this initiative to encourage and nurture the interest of these young scientists in HIV research."

"The studies supported in this grant programme span from basic to clinical science on HIV and its associated comorbidities and co-infections," said Dr. Jack Whitescarver, Director of the NIH Office of AIDS Research. "This research has the potential to produce an immediate impact, as well as to lead to future advances in AIDS research."

"The concept of attracting young, talented scientists from other fields into HIV research for the first time, bringing skills, technologies and ideas from other disciplines is very innovative and intriguing," said Dr. King Holmes, Director of CFAR at the University of Washington. "Scientists from all of the 21 NIH Centers for AIDS Research at U.S. institutions are committed to supporting the CNIHR programme, and to providing mentorship to CNIHR applicants and grantees."

Grantees from 2012 along with grantees from 2010 will be awarded scholarships to attend the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) in Washington, D.C. on 22–27 July 2012. A pre-conference seminar with leading scientists in the HIV field is designed to give grantees an overview of the field. At this seminar, the 2012 awardees will present overviews of their projects and the 2010 awardees will report on their progress on their CNIHR research projects. The pre-conference seminar will be followed by training and networking sessions during the conference.

The ceremony for the 2012 awardees will take place on Tuesday, 24 July 2012 at AIDS 2012 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center at 8:35, immediately before that day's plenary session.

The CNIHR grants are awarded to:

Jesse Bloom, USA, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle; project: ***The biophysical underpinnings of gp120 evolvability***, working with Julie Overbaugh, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Michael Elliot, USA, University of Rochester, New York; project: ***Apoptotic cell clearance signaling and HIV-associated inflammation***, working with Stephen Dewhurst, University of Rochester.

Dhiraj Kumar, India, International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, New Delhi; project: ***Cellular Autophagy response on HIV infections and implications on opportunistic Mtb infections***, working with Murali-Krishna Kaja, Emory University, Atlanta.

Wilson Liao, USA, University of California, San Francisco; project: ***Psoriasis and HIV-1 Control***, working with Douglas Nixon, University of California, San Francisco.

Robert Lowe, USA, The University of Alabama at Birmingham; project: ***Role of FoxP3 in blocking transcriptional activation of the HIV-LTR in regulatory T cells***, working with Randy Cron, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Adam Murphy, USA, Northwestern University, Chicago; project: ***Impact of HIV status and race on disparities in prostate cancer treatment and incidence***, working with Mike Saag, University of Alabama at Birmingham, and William Catalona, Northwestern University.

Gretchen Neigh, USA, Emory University, Atlanta; project: ***Effects of adolescent stress and HIV on the stress response and neuroinflammation***, working with Guido Silvestri and Andrew Miller, Emory University.

Matias Ostrowski, Argentina, University of Buenos Aires; project: ***Characterization of Gag trafficking pathways in HIV-1 infected macrophages and CD4+ T cells***, working with Christopher Aiken, Vanderbilt University, Nashville.

Takayuki Ota, USA, The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, California; project: ***Rapid characterization of NAb in vivo using HoxA10 expanded HSC***, working with Dennis Burton and David Nemazee, The Scripps Research Institute.

Thomas Rice, USA, University of Pittsburgh; project: ***Obstructive sleep apnea, cardiovascular disease and HIV infection***, working with Robert Kaplan, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University, New York, and Alison Morris, University of Pittsburgh.

Shomyseh Sanjabi, USA, Gladstone Institute/University of California, San Francisco; project: ***Developing small animal models of HIV elite controller and rapid progressor immunity***, working with Warner Greene, University of California, San Francisco.

Eroboghene Ubogu, USA, Baylor College of Medicine; Houston, Texas; project: ***CCR5 mediated trafficking of HIV-infected mononuclear leukocytes at the human blood-nerve barrier in vitro***, working with Jason Kimata, Baylor College of Medicine.

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. Both the University of Alabama at Birmingham CFAR and the University of Washington CFAR in Seattle participate in the CNIHR grant programme.

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