



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

International AIDS Society Announces Inaugural Recipients of Innovative HIV Research Awards

14 July 2010 (Geneva, Switzerland) – The International AIDS Society (IAS) today announced the recipients of its first joint research grant programme, *Creative and Novel Ideas in HIV Research* (CNIHR). CNIHR grants, funded in partnership with the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the NIH-supported Centers for AIDS Research (CFARs) are designed to promote innovative research and new ideas from early stage investigators whose primary focus has previously been in fields of scientific inquiry other than HIV/ AIDS.

The CNIHR grants, which total \$3.4 million (U.S. \$) will fund research projects for up to two years. They are intended to advance the scientific understanding of HIV and to support new approaches to answer pressing scientific questions on issues such as the long-term survival of individuals with HIV infection and new approaches to the prevention of HIV transmission.

The 10 outstanding early stage researchers who have been selected for the initial grants come from a wide range of scientific disciplines and locations, including Australia, India, Mexico, South Africa, the United Kingdom, 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 IAS is committed to supporting early stage investigators to bring much needed creative ideas to the HIV field,” noted IAS President Dr Julio Montaner. “This innovative grant programme, which builds on the outcomes of the IAS-NIH 2009 scholarship programme introducing investigators to HIV research, has encouraged a number of exceptional early investigators to start a career in HIV research. In fact, 4 out of 10 CNIHR grantees received their first HIV training at the IAS-NIH 2009 scholarship programme.”

“We are pleased to partner in this effort and are impressed by the diversity and the quality of candidates and research projects selected by the CNIHR grant programme,” said NIH Office of AIDS Research Director, Dr. Jack Whittescarver. “In addition to the quality of research awarded, the breadth of these grants, which cover behavioral science, operations research, clinical science and basic science, along with projects on co-infections and AIDS-related illnesses, illustrates the importance of this grant programme, both for these research efforts and for future responses to HIV and AIDS.”

“CFAR support for CNIHR is a true research collaboration,” said Dr Michael Saag, Director of CFAR at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. “Funding is essential to supporting new scientific research, but so is collaboration and mentorship in the lab. By pairing grantees with a CFAR institution that specializes in their area of work, this programme takes a hands-on approach to ensuring that each research project funded is supported to produce the maximum benefit for HIV and AIDS research.”

The grantees will be awarded scholarships to attend the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna on 18-23 July 2010. A pre-conference seminar with leading scientists in the HIV field is

designed to give grantees an overview on HIV science and to present their projects. It will be followed by daily training and networking sessions at the conference. Grantees will also attend outreach trips to clinics, HIV research institutions, and community organizations in Vienna. The award ceremony will take place on 23 July 2010 at AIDS 2010 at the XVIII International AIDS Conference at the Wien Messe Center in Vienna, Austria, at 8:45 a.m., immediately before that day's plenary session.

The CNIHR grants are awarded to:

Joseph Brown, Lecturer at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, for the project: ***Environmental health and HIV/AIDS in rural South Africa***; who will be working with Charles van der Horst, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Denise Evans, Medical Doctor at the Clinical HIV Research Unit Medicine, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, for the project: ***Low-cost monitoring of HIV in resource-limited settings***; who will be working with Christopher Mathews, UCSD CFAR Clinical Core/Director of UCSD Owen Clinic.

Kelly Lee, Assistant Professor at the University of Washington, for the project: ***Resolving the core protein skeleton of the HIV Env glycoprotein spike***; who will be working with Shiu-Lok Hu, University of Washington, Washington National Primate Research Center.

Justine Mintern, Career Development Award Fellow at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Melbourne, for the project: ***Combating Virus Infection with BST-2***; who will be working with Bali Pulendran at Emory University.

Bradley Nilsson, Assistant Professor of Chemistry at the University of Rochester, for the project: ***Probing the Structure and Function of Semen Enhancer of HIV Infection***; who will be working with Stephen Dewhurst, University of Rochester.

Clovis Palmer, Post Doctoral Fellow at Burnet Institute, Melbourne, Australia for the project: ***Novel approaches to study T cell metabolic dysfunction and immune response during HIV infection***; who will be working with Joseph Mike McCune, UCSF.

Manu Platt, Assistant Professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology, for the project: ***Cardiovascular Disease & HIV-1: Vascular Biomechanics and Remodeling***; who will be working with Roy Sutliff, Emory University.

Isabel Sada-Ovalle, Medical Researcher at the Instituto Nacional de Enfermedades Respiratorias, Mexico City, for the project: ***A novel pathway to induce killing of Mycobacterium tuberculosis in HIV+ patients***; who will be working with Marylyn Martina Addo from Ragon Institute of MGH, MIT and Harvard.

Amit Singh, DBT/Wellcome Trust intermediate fellow from the International Center For Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, New Delhi, for the project: ***Measuring intracellular redox potential of HIV-1 infected macrophages***; who will be working with Dr. Rafi Ahmed, Emory Vaccine Ctr, Emory/ICGEB joint vaccine center, New Delhi.

Kim Woodrow, Assistant Professor at the University of Washington, for the project: ***Multifunctional nanoparticles as a combination microbicide to prevent mucosal***

transmission of HIV; who will be working with M. J. McElrath, Florian Hladik and Patrick Stayto, University of Washington/ Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center CFAR.

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About the IAS:

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with 14,000 members from 190 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 Vienna, Austria from 18 to 23 July 2010.

About NIH:

The U.S. National Institutes of Health (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. It is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical, behavioral and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.

About CFAR:

The Centers for AIDS Research (CFAR) program at the National Institutes of Health 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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