

EDCTP Update

March 2021



Highlights

- **EDCTP and Africa CDC partner to train epidemiologists and biostatisticians**
- **Videos on the work of fellows Dr Francis Ndungu and Dr Grace McHugh** - see under EDCTP fellows
- **Global TB Vaccine R&D Roadmap** - see under Events

Contents

- World TB Day 2021: the promise of ending the TB epidemic
- International Women's Day 2021: a challenge to inequality
- EDCTP and Africa CDC partner to train highly skilled epidemiologists and biostatisticians in Africa
- Recent events
- Project news
- EDCTP Fellows in times of COVID
- Resources
- Funding opportunities
- Upcoming events

World TB Day 2021: the promise of ending the TB epidemic

Chronic global underfunding of TB research means that cheap, accessible point-of-care tests, better vaccines and simple, short treatment regimens are lacking. Ending TB depends on the

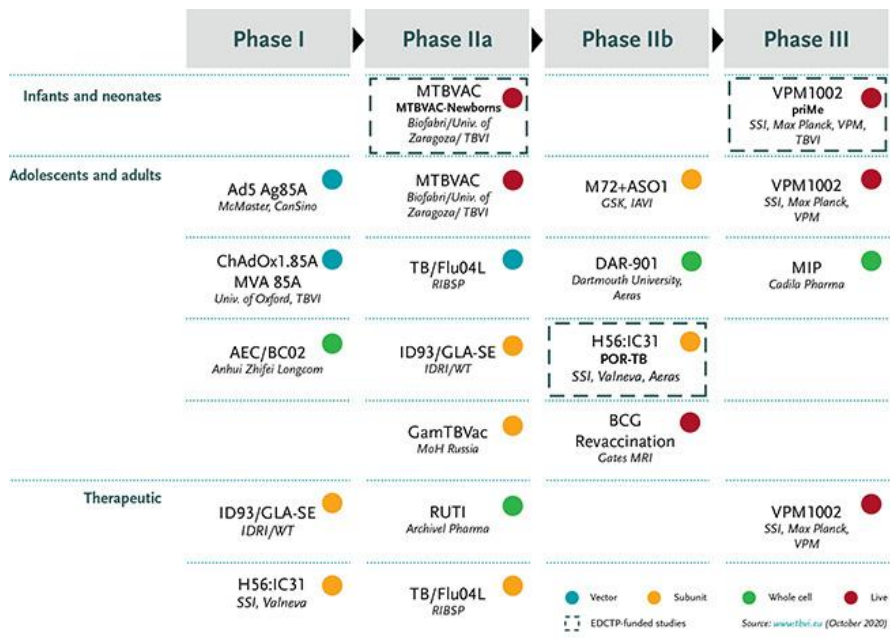
development and rapid uptake of new tools and innovation.

Dr Michael Makanga, EDCTP Executive Director:

"Our steady commitment to fight TB has led to a growing R&D portfolio of grants. [...] Moreover, we have invested in international coordination of TB vaccine R&D, and preparation of the ground for a new global TB vaccine roadmap. EDCTP is convinced a concerted global R&D effort will end TB."

Read more in the [EDCTP World TB Day 2021 message](#).

Below: TB Vaccine pipeline; EDCTP-funded trials indicated

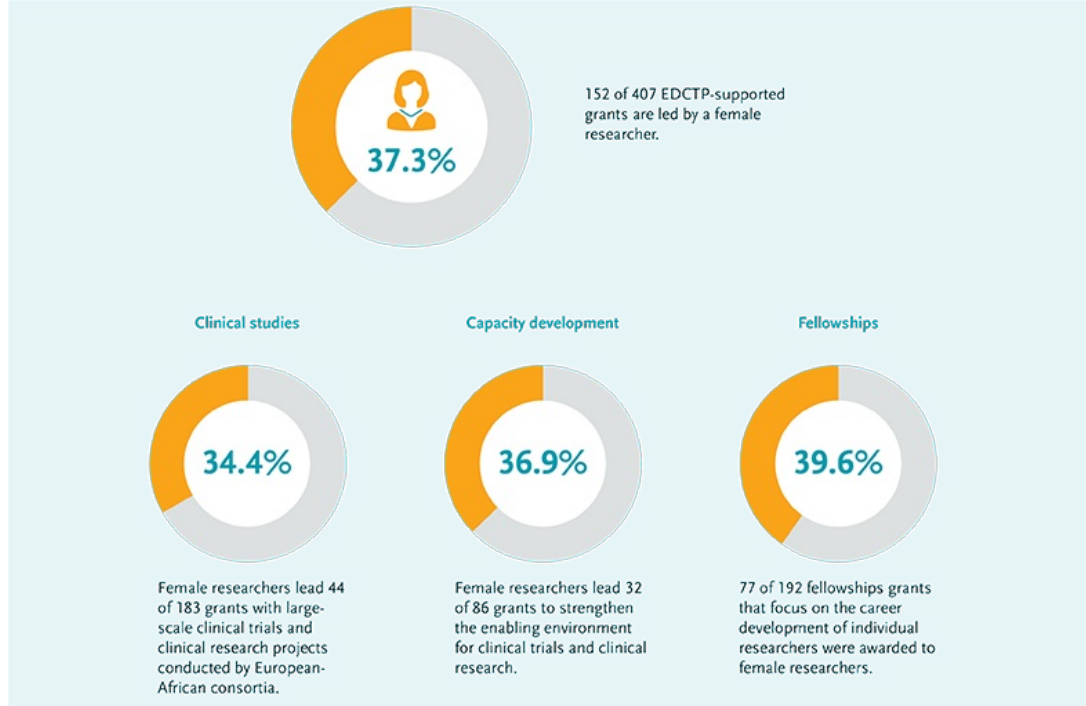


International Women's Day 2021: a challenge to inequality

The theme for International Women's Day 2021 stresses the need for action, for challenging the roots of the current inequalities: "A world challenged is an alert world and from challenge comes change. So let's all choose to challenge."

"EDCTP is fully committed to - and already implementing through tangible actions - policies that promote equality and fairness from a gender perspective. We celebrate the rising number of female researchers across the board and especially in our individual fellowship grants that are aimed at developing scientific leadership and world-class competitiveness."

Dr Michael Makanga, EDCTP Executive Director in the [EDCTP message for International Women's Day 2021](#).



EDCTP and Africa CDC partner to train highly skilled epidemiologists and biostatisticians in Africa

A new training programme funded by the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) is set to support the training of 150 highly skilled epidemiologists and biostatisticians in sub-Saharan Africa over a period of three years.

Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC: *"To strengthen healthcare systems in Africa, we must pay attention to our healthcare workforce and find ways to strengthen their capacity. A highly skilled workforce that can implement multi-disease surveillance and effectively respond to disease outbreaks is necessary for our collective health security in the continent, and this is what this programme is about."*

Read more in [the EDCTP news item](#).

Recent events



CUGH 2021 Satellite: Equitably harnessing the power of health data: Time for Action & Collaboration

CUGH 2021 | Satellite Session on Equitable use of health data | 01/03 2021

The [Consortium of Universities for Global Health held its 2021 conference](#). 'Addressing critical gaps in global health and development' from 12-14 March 2021. It was preceded by a series of pre-conference satellite sessions (1-11 March), including one on [Equitably harnessing the power of health data: time for action and collaboration](#) on 01 March 2021.

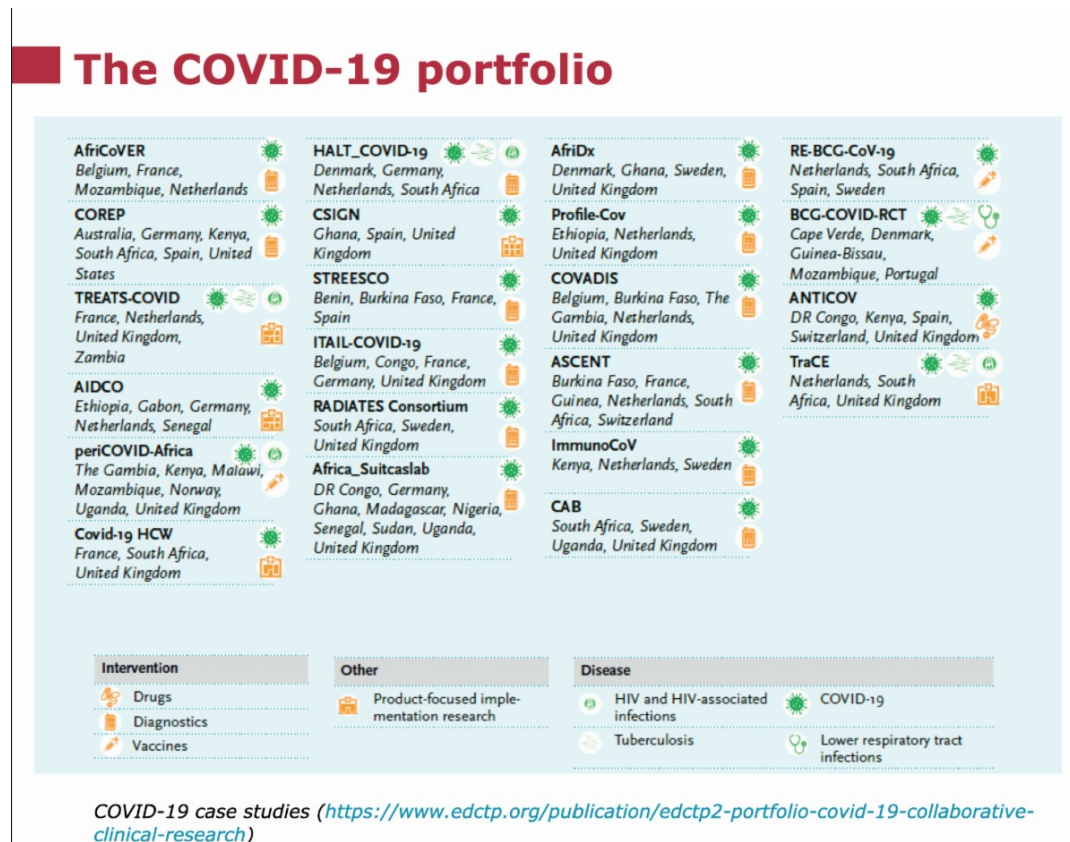
From the introduction: "The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of generating rigorous evidence for decision-making. To bring equity the global health research community needs to find ways to equitably unite and generate actionable insights from data. This session will explore how collaborations and strategic partnerships can harness the power of data to tackle the most devastating health issues".

This satellite session was chaired by Dr Michael Makanga, EDCTP Executive Director. The [recording of the session view is available here](#).

EDCTP | Webinar on the EDCTP COVID-19 projects | 18-19/03 2021

In this webinar, representatives of all EDCTP-supported COVID-19 consortia shared experiences and study findings, discussed emerging questions and current public health priorities in sub-Saharan Africa and thus also informed the global research community and stakeholders about EDCTP-funded COVID-19 research in sub-Saharan Africa. [Programme information here](#)

The webinar attracted many participants and could also be followed via live-stream on YouTube. The video recordings can be accessed here: [Day 1](#) and [Day 2](#)



GloPID-R, UKCDR and COVID-19 Clinical Research Coalition | COVID19 Research in LMICs | 29-30/03 2021

The Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness ([GloPID-R](#)), the United Kingdom Collaborative on Development Research ([UKCDR](#)) and the [COVID-19 Clinical Research Coalition](#) organised a virtual conference on COVID-19 research in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

The meeting brought together global research funders, including those who are funding research on COVID-19 within LMICs and with the community of researchers who are actively undertaking this research across LMICs. Topics of discussion included clinical research; health systems & indirect impacts of COVID-19; transmission; and One Health.

Dr Michael Makanga (EDCTP Executive Director) participated in the meeting and shared the EDCTP experience regarding COVID-19 research in LMICs.

Recently signed grants

Strategic actions on product-related implementation research – 2019

- **ADOPT** | Coordinator Dr Remco de Vruh | Adoption of levi-praziquantel 150mg for schistosomiasis by endemic countries.
- **EAPoC-VL** | Coordinator: Prof. Pontiano Kaleebu | Use of point-of-care HIV viral load monitoring to improve viral load suppression among children and adolescents living with HIV in East Africa testing for TB among contacts.

Senior Fellowships Plus - 2019

- **REMIND-KID** | Fellow: Dr Marion Sumari-de Boer | Effect of a customised digital adherence tool on retention in care and adherence to antiretroviral treatment for children and adolescents living with HIV in Tanzania and Rwanda. Trainee Fellow: Dr Brenda Asimwe-Kateera, National University of Rwanda, Rwanda.
- **TB-Lung-FACT2** | Fellow: Dr Marieke van der Zalm | The long-term consequences of pulmonary tuberculosis and respiratory viruses on lung health in young South African children. Trainee Fellow: Dr Justina Magalhães Bramugy, Fundação Manhiça, Mozambique.

Career Development Fellowships – 2019

- **AIDR-HiDAVARTI** | Fellow: Dr Joseph Bukulu Sempa | Analysis and interpretation of a dynamic range of HIV diagnostic assays for viral load monitoring after antiretroviral therapy initiation.

AREF/EDCTP Preparatory Fellowships - 2019

- **SABIO** | Fellow: Dr Debora Ch. Kajeguka | Use of an *Aedes* salivary biomarker to assess arboviral disease transmission risk in northern Tanzania.

Project news

SEARCH | Kick-off meeting | 18/02 2021

The EDCTP-funded project titled 'Southern Africa regulatory for clinical research' (SEARCH) was launched on 18 February 2021. The project is coordinated by Dr Eusebio Macete, Director of the Manhiça Health Research Centre in Mozambique. EDCTP was represented by Project Officer, Ms Nuraan Fakier. Dr Dario Scaramuzzi (Communication manager) and Eng. Rodrigues Matcheve (Project manager) presented an overview of the project in terms of scope, objectives, milestones and deliverables.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- To strengthen and organise internal collaboration
- To promote the strategic collaborations with the key stakeholders, such as [AVAREF](#), [AUDA-NEPAD AMRH](#), [Regional Centres of Regulatory Excellence](#) (RCOREs), national regulatory authorities and national ethics committees, as well as EDCTP-funded projects ongoing in the region such as [PAVIA](#) and SPaRCS.
- To introduce the consortium, project background and objectives to a wider audience of stakeholders, understand what success looks like and review the timelines.

More information on [the project website](#)

TRiAD study | Launch meeting | 18/02 2021

The TRiAD study was officially launched on 18 February 2021. The study is led by Prof Kogieleum Naidoo of the Centre for the Aids Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA) and brings together eleven partners from Africa, Europe and the United States. [EDCTP funded the study with a grant of €4.9 million under the 2019 call for product-related implementation research](#). The TRiAD consortium seeks to determine how new diagnostic tests can be used to improve tuberculosis treatment, especially for drug-resistant TB, in low- and middle-income countries.

ETEC Vaccine Efficacy | Annual meeting | 24/02 2021

The annual meeting of the ETEC Vaccine Efficacy consortium was conducted online on the 24th of February 2021. The project comprises field studies of an oral whole-cell ETEC vaccine candidate in African toddlers and children to assess the efficacy and set parameters for pivotal phase III trials-ETEC vaccine efficacy (RIA2017S-2024). EDCTP funded €7.4 million of a total of €14.9 million in project funding.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, major progress has been made in 2020 with regard to field studies and capacity building in both Zambia and The Gambia.

The Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia presented an update on the phase I age descending placebo-controlled clinical trial to examine the safety, tolerability, and immunogenicity of ETVAX® in healthy adults and children in Zambia which was completed in February 2021.

Representatives from the MRC Unit The Gambia at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine reported that the first participant had been enrolled in the phase IIb study on 22 February 2021. The trial examines the efficacy of the oral inactivated ETVAX® vaccine to prevent enterotoxigenic *E. coli*-associated diarrhoea in Gambian children ages 6-18 months.

Representatives from the University of Gothenburg (Sweden) and the company Synlab (Germany) presented results in capacity building, i.e. strengthening clinical trial and laboratory capabilities in Zambia and The Gambia.
Read more in [the EDCTP project profile](#).

PEDVAC-iNTS | Project launch | 01/03 2021

Invasive non-typhoidal salmonellosis (iNTS) is a poverty-related infectious disease in sub-Saharan Africa, associated with increasing antibiotic resistance and classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a high-priority pathogen for developing new antibiotics.

The PEDVAC-iNTS project started on 01 March 2021. It aims to advance the clinical development of an urgently needed vaccine against invasive non-typhoidal salmonellosis (iNTS). EDCTP2 funds this paediatric phase I/II study in Ghana with a grant of €5.7 million under its 2019 call for [New drugs and vaccines for priority pathogens in antimicrobial resistance](#).

PEDVAC-iNTS is a public-private consortium involving experts from academic institutions, research institutes, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and non-profit organisations. The PEDVAC-iNTS consortium consists of 7 institutions from Europe and Ghana. The project will advance the clinical development of the iNTS-GMMA vaccine, based on the highly cost-effective GMMA-technology developed by GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals SA (GSK) and GSK Vaccines Institute for Global Health.
See also the [press release of the University of Siena](#) (Italy) and the [website of the related project VAC-iNT](#).

ACOZI-KIDS | Kick-off meeting | 17/03 2021

The management committee of the ACOZI-KIDS Project (2020-2025) had its first meeting on 17 March 2021. The project aims to develop a paediatric indication for children between 1 and 14 years of age for a safe, effective, all-oral single-dose treatment formulation of acoziborole for first and second stage gambiense human African trypanosomiasis (g-HAT). The project received a grant of almost EUR 3 million under its 2019 call for [Paediatric drug formulations for poverty-related diseases](#).

The WHO 2030 Roadmap on Neglected Tropical Diseases targets the sustained elimination of g-HAT. Acoziborole (a single-dose oral treatment) is a game-changing drug allowing for easy, integrated treatment in rural and remote settings.

A clinical trial is conducted in DRC and Guinea with planned recruitment of 35 paediatric patients. The National Control Programs for HAT will also ensure access to acoziborole in parallel to policy change and community sensitisation to help increase the visibility of this new treatment option for children.

The consortium is a partnership between Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi; Switzerland), the National Control Programs for Human African Trypanosomiasis of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Guinea, the Instituto de Higiene e Medicina Tropical (IHTM), the Universidade Nova de Lisboa, (Portugal), and the Association Epicentre (Epicentre; France).
For more background, see also the [DNDi press release](#).

ADOPT | Upcoming project launch webinar | 21/04 2021

The [Paediatric Praziquantel Consortium](#) will organise a webinar to celebrate the official launch of the Pediatric Praziquantel Consortium ADOPT program – an implementation research program that paves the way for the introduction of a child-friendly formulation to treat schistosomiasis in preschool-aged children.
[Register for the webinar here](#).



GHIT – the Japanese-based Global Health Innovative Technology Fund – and EDCTP co-invested an additional €7.8 million in the Pediatric Praziquantel Consortium’s treatment access programme for schistosomiasis in preschool-aged children. This ADOPT programme prepares for the large-scale access and delivery of the Consortium’s novel paediatric medication. The additional investment of €2.1 million by GHIT will run for two years (2021-2023), while the investment of €5.7 million by EDCTP will run for five years (2021-2025). More information in the [EDCTP news item](#).

MTBVAC-Newborns | Enrolment completed

TBVI news item: [MTBVAC in new-borns Phase 2a trial completed its enrolment](#).
For a picture, see the [press release by Zenda](#).

TriageTB | Recruitment across all three sites

TriageTB news item: [TriageTB kicks off patient recruitment across all three sites, South Africa, the Gambia, and Uganda](#).

"The findings from recruitment phase one should form the basis for developing the signature that will be used in the point-of-care test that the TriageTB consortium aims to validate in the second recruitment phase. The signature will be developed by scientists at Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC) in the Netherlands."

WANETAM2 | NIMR achieved ISO 15189:2012 laboratory accreditation

The West Africa Network of Excellence for clinical trials in TB, AIDS and malaria (WANETAM2) [tweeted](#) that its partner institution the Nigerian Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) in Lagos has received ISO 15189:2012 accreditation.

[This standard](#) "specifies requirements for quality and competence in medical laboratories and can be used by medical laboratories in developing their quality management systems and assessing their own competence". Achieving this accreditation was part of the work done through WANETAM, funded by EDCTP under its [2015 Regional Networks call](#).

TB-CAPT | Website published | March 2021

The TB-CAPT consortium published [its new project website](#). The project will provide evidence for the implementation of TB and TB/HIV co-infection diagnostic strategies including drug-susceptibility testing through a series of trials in Tanzania, Mozambique, and South Africa.

BERC-Luso | Monthly electronic newsletters

BERC-Luso is an EDCTP-funded project on 'Biomedical Ethics and Regulatory Capacity Building Partnership for Portuguese Speaking African Countries'. Check out [its monthly electronic newsletter](#) (both in English and Portuguese) and subscribe.

EDCTP Fellows in times of COVID

We are proud to present to you the first video of a series of four 'Follow the Fellow in times of COVID'. The first video features **Dr Francis Ndungu**, EDCTP Senior Fellow from Kenya.



Dr Grace McHugh

Dr Grace McHugh completed her Career Development Fellowship study (2018-2020). The FAST project 'Feasibility and acceptability of HIV self-testing in adolescents and young people' - was done in Zimbabwe and primarily investigated the use of oral mucosal transudate (OMT) self-tests as a feasible solution. The video below gives an overview of the completed project and its results.



Dr Yunia Mayanja

Career Development Fellow Dr Yunia Myanja is working on 'A prospective cohort study to assess the feasibility of enrolling and retaining adolescents at risk of HIV infection from hotspots in Kampala Uganda'. Check out the [project website](#).

PUBLICATIONS

- Beatrice Achan (TMA2018CDF-2371): [The simple direct slide method is comparable to indirect Lowenstein Jensen proportion culture for detecting rifampicin-resistant tuberculosis](#) (*J. of Medical Microbiology*, 23/02 2021)
- Jean Nachega (EDCTP1 Fellow): [Addressing challenges to rolling out COVID-19 vaccines in African countries](#) (*The Lancet*, Comment 10/03 2021).

Resources



[Collaborative clinical R&D](#)
online



[Clinical research capacity](#)
PDF



[Fellowships](#)
online

EDCTP | Guidelines for grantees - Progress report

EDCTP Guidelines for grantees on how to best use the online progress reporting facility in EDCTPgrants, EDCTP's grant management system. Go to the publication [Online Progress Report in EDCTPgrants – Guidelines for beneficiaries](#).

EDCTP | Template for Grant Agreement Annex 5 | March 2021

EDCTP published a [Model for the certificate on the financial statements](#) to support grantees in their reporting.

UKCDR & ESSENCE | New resource hub on equity in research partnerships

The [United Kingdom Collaborative on Development Research](#) (UKCDR) and [ESSENCE on Health Research](#) (ESSENCE) launched a [new resource hub to support equity in research partnerships](#).

This hub brings together guidance, tools and principles on equitable partnerships from across the world, including the [TRUST consortium](#) and [COHRED](#). To view the tools please visit: [Equitable Partnerships Resource Hub](#)

TAG | TAG 2020 Tuberculosis Treatment Pipeline Report

The Treatment Action Group (TAG) [2020 Tuberculosis Treatment Pipeline report](#) offers summaries of influential treatment studies and data sets, and updates on new drugs and regimens in clinical development for TB. Among other studies, the report features the EDCTP-funded [Simplici-TB](#) and [PanACEA](#) consortia.

BCG World Atlas | New update - Third edition | March 2021

The [BCG World Atlas](#) provides an interactive map with detailed information on current and past BCG vaccination policies and practices for over 200 countries.

Global Coronavirus COVID-19 Clinical Trial Tracker

The [trial tracker is an interactive map offering an overview of COVID-19 clinical trials globally](#). Check out the About and Partners sections: "The COVID-19 Clinical Trial Tracker is headed by Kristian Thorlund, Edward Mills, and Cyrus Mehta with the goal of consolidating COVID-19 trial information. They aim to make vital information easily and widely available to the public, as well as further scientific efforts by helping fellow researchers work efficiently

Funding opportunities

Africa Oxford initiative | AfOx Travel Grants, 2019+ | Ongoing call

AfOx Travel Grants support the establishment of new collaborations between researchers in African countries and their collaborators at the University of Oxford. Travel Grants are open to all disciplines and open all year round. So far 100 travel grants have been rewarded to researchers from the African continent and the University of Oxford.

[More information](#)

MRC UK | Improving health in LMIC countries | Deadline: 14/04 2021

This call will open on 01 February 2021. Apply for funding for research that will benefit the health of people living in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

Particularly welcome are proposals that combine expertise from more than one sector to meet a global health challenge. There is no limit to the amount of funding one can apply for. Proposals can be of any size, from a small seed-funding proposal to a large-scale programme grant.

You can apply if you are an LMIC-based principal investigator or a UK-based principal investigator working in partnership with LMIC investigators.

[More information](#)

RSTHM | Small grants Tropical medicine and global health | Deadline 15/04 2021

The Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene's small grants programme offers early career researchers and global health professionals based anywhere in the world the opportunity to apply for funding in a topic related to tropical medicine and global health.

The programme funds projects across the research spectrum, including lab-based, clinical, implementation and policy-related research. The aim of the programme is to develop the next generation of global health researchers by providing seed funding to enable them to generate preliminary data to secure follow-on grants and further their careers.

Applications focused on the thematic areas listed in RSTMH's five-year strategy will be prioritised. Anyone in their early career from any nationality based anywhere in the world can apply. Only RSTMH members can receive funding. If successful, applicants who are not already members will be asked to join the Society.

[More information](#)

BMBF | Call African-German Research Networks for Health Innovations | Deadline 15/04 2021

Under this call of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, funding will be provided for the elaboration of schemes for the establishment or development of health research networks. Consortia will be given the opportunity to develop their ideas in thematic, structural and administrative terms and draw up a full proposal as part of a six-month preparatory phase (starting around October 2021).

Funding will be provided in two successive phases: - a preparatory phase (of six months, as set out in the present call) and - the main phase (of an envisaged five years).

[More information](#)

Harvard | Harvard South Africa Fellowship Program | Deadline 30/04/2021

The Harvard South Africa Fellowship Program serves as an intellectual resource for talented South Africans, with the goal of providing a "transformational experience" at Harvard University during the fellowship year.

Fellowships are for up to one year of study in one of Harvard's Professional Schools or Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. The recruitment and selection interviews for the HSAFP fellows take place annually with the support of the Center for African Studies' Africa Office in Johannesburg.

[More information](#)

TDR | Call for 2nd phase of Post-Graduate Training Scheme | 10/05 2021

TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, supports low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to strengthen capacity for health research through a range of activities, including its Postgraduate Training Scheme. As the Scheme's first phase

(2015-2021) comes to an end, the process of selection of universities to participate in the second phase (2022-2026) now starts with this call.

[More information](#)

CEPI | Complementary clinical trials on COVID-19 | Deadline 28/05/2021

CEPI is pleased to announce a new funding opportunity of up to USD140 million, contingent upon the availability of funds. The focus is on clinical trials with the aim to rapidly expand access to and confidence in COVID-19 vaccines by i) generating clinical evidence in special/sub-populations/age groups or ii) addressing clinical development gaps. Clinical trials which expand access and capacity in low- and middle-income countries are particularly encouraged.

[More information](#)

Upcoming events

AFRICA CDC | Vaccine manufacturing in Africa| 19/04 2021

Africa CDC will organise a virtual conference on vaccine manufacturing in Africa. The conference will inform the AU in charting a vision and roadmap to accelerating African vaccine manufacturing. Registration [here](#)

PAVIA | Webinar on COVID-19 vaccine safety | 19/04 2021

[Pharmacovigilance Africa](#) (PAVIA) is a project funded by EDCTP aimed at improving pharmacovigilance for poverty-related diseases in four African countries through strengthening links between regulatory authorities and public health programmes.

PAVIA will organise a webinar on COVID-19 vaccines safety surveillance in Africa. It will take place on 19 April 2021 at 2 PM (CET). Registration [here](#)

GLOBVAC | 11th Conference | 20-21/04 2021

The 11th Globvac Conference will be held from 20-21 April 2021. The theme of this digital conference will be "the changing landscape of Global Health in the 21st century." The conference will be hosted virtually, free of charge and will be open to everyone.

The conference intends to offer a platform for presenting and celebrating results and achievements in global health research in the last decades while looking into the next decade. What will be the main challenges in the years to come? How can the future research agenda

- build upon what has been done and achieved
- focus on the unfinished agenda and the unmet needs of the LMICs
- see the opportunities of new technologies, and
- seek a greater understanding of the necessity of working across sectors, boundaries and research disciplines?

Visit [the Globvac website](#) for more information and registration.

Virtual Global Forum on TB Vaccines | 20-22/04 2021

The Virtual 6th Global Forum on TB Vaccines will take place from 20-22 April 2021. EDCTP is one of the sponsors. It provides an important and unique opportunity to review the state of the field, share the latest research findings, and identify new and innovative approaches to TB vaccine R&D, with the end goal of developing and deploying new TB vaccines as quickly as possible.

The Virtual Global Forum program will include presentations and panel discussions focused on progress and key issues in TB vaccine R&D against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sessions will be made available on demand for registered participants following the Global Forum so that you can view sessions that you were unable to join at the scheduled time.

[More information on the Forum website](#)

A special session will be dedicated to the presentation of the final TB Vaccine Roadmap as commissioned by EDCTP to the Amsterdam Institute for Global Health and Development (AIGHD). The Roadmap aims to provide global stakeholders such as researchers, funders, industry, regulatory and policy decision-makers with key actionable priorities that could help guide their actions. It lists both the short- and long-term objectives and focuses on developing and delivering affordable and effective vaccines for use in low- and middle-income countries where the vast majority of people affected by TB are concentrated.

More information on the Global TB Vaccine R&D Roadmap:

- AIGHD web page on the public consultation: [Global Roadmap for Research and Development for Tuberculosis \(TB\) Vaccines](#)
- EDCTP news item: [Public consultation: Global Roadmap for research and development for TB vaccines](#) (13 January 2021)
- EDCTP news item: [Developing a Global TB Vaccine R&D Roadmap](#) (02 March 2020).

IAS | 11th Conference on HIV Science | 18-21/07 2021

The International AIDS Society organises its biennial scientific conference on 18-21 July 2021. The conference presents the basic, clinical and operational research that moves science into policy and practice.

From the website: "Through its open and inclusive programme development, the meeting sets the gold standard of HIV research featuring highly diverse and cutting-edge studies. IAS 2021 participants can expect a full conference experience via an easy-to-use digital platform that connects researchers, health care providers, advocates and policymakers. Additionally, a local partner hub will convene locally-based experts in the original host city of Berlin, in accordance with local health advice and regulations."

- [Sign up for updates](#)
- [Registration now open](#)

EDCTP Communications thanks the colleagues who provided information for this Update.

