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NGDI Member News

Steve Morgan, member of WHO – Consultative Expert Working (CEW) Group on Research and Development

NGDI member Steve Morgan is the only North American member of the CEW group on research and development. The group has just released their report titled: **Research and Development to Meet Health Needs in Developing Countries: Strengthening Global Financing-Coordination**. Available online PDF file [226p.] at: <http://bit.ly/HiWC7y>

5 April 2012 | Geneva – “.....New sources of funding are needed to stimulate health research specifically for diseases that affect people in developing countries, according to a report published today by an international expert group convened by WHO.

The *Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Financing and Coordination (CEWG)* has called for increased global commitment to funding and coordinating health research to meet the specific needs of developing countries. The group proposes a package of changes that includes utilizing open knowledge innovation and prizes as incentives, mandatory government commitments, pooling of funding and an international binding convention on global health research.

Recommendations to improve global financing

- Research outputs that address health needs of developing countries should be in the public domain or made available through open licensing.
- Patent pools should be used to increase sharing of research results.
- Pooled funding mechanisms should coordinate financial resources and some of the funds should be used for capacity building in developing countries including direct grants to companies that can help promote technology transfer.
- WHO should play a central coordinating role in global health research.
- Increased funding is needed from governments and philanthropic sources in the light of market failures of private investments.
- All countries should commit to spend at least 0.01% of gross domestic product on research to develop health technologies for use in developing countries.

Discussion on the recommendations will take place at the 65th World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2012....”

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NGDI Graduate Student Benjamin Warren’s successful defense of PhD Dissertation



Congratulations to Ben Warren on defending his thesis entitled: **The Impact of International Trade Agreements on Health: Patent System Harmonization and Medicines in Mexico**. The full thesis available [here](#).

Abstract: Patent system harmonization obligations found within international trade agreements have been subject to intense scrutiny over the past two decades due to the potential negative implications for public health in developing countries. In 1994, NAFTA became the first trade agreement to include patent system harmonization obligations.

Mexico as a signatory to NAFTA was the first developing country to adopt the patent system of developed countries via patent system harmonization. This makes Mexico a particularly relevant case study on the subject. The central research question addressed in this dissertation is: *Does NAFTA patent system harmonization promote access to medicines in Mexico, while incentivizing pharmaceutical R&D?* This dissertation undertakes a comparative legal analysis, a scoping study, and qualitative stakeholder analysis to address the central research question. Evidence is provided that compulsory licensing as a safeguard is inadequate as a downstream measure in the promotion of access.

A key finding is that international trade agreements should be drafted with *optimal* pharmaceutical patent protection standards in mind. Further, patent system harmonization results in a net health benefit that can be maximized through the provision of feedback evidence to decision-makers in order to develop responsive laws and policy. This dissertation proposes that: *if we reform the granting of patent terms from a fixed twenty year life period to a flexible and adjustable term determined through an assessment of health and economic conditions that exist during any given time period, we will improve both global equity in access to medicines and reduce economic inefficiencies in our current model for pharmaceutical R&D, while maintaining adequate incentives to conduct pharmaceutical R&D*. The proposed reform is akin to the use of interest rates as an economic growth and stabilization tool in monetary policy. It would require government patent offices to analyze global conditions in pharmaceutical access and R&D, and accordingly adjust the number of years of patent protection awarded. This novel contribution to the academic literature informs Canadian, Mexican, and developing country decision makers on how to design appropriate policy for the benefit of public health.

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NGDI Graduate Student Lyndsay O’Hara Receives Doctoral Award Funding from CIHR

Congratulations to Lyndsay for her 3-year Frederick Banting and Charles Best Canada Graduate Scholarship for her project titled: **Reducing nosocomial transmission of tuberculosis in South Africa: A population-based molecular epidemiologic study**. Findings will inform the implementation of TB infection control measures as well as an education and training program. Consistent application of infection control principles across the healthcare spectrum is important not only in resource-strained settings such as South Africa, but in Canada as well with the emergence of pandemic influenza, SARS, and other infectious diseases. This research is necessary to ensure that we adequately promote and protect the health of our valued HCWs and all patients in the era of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.

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NGDI News

Sixth NGDI Distinguished Lectureship Seminar Series with Dr. Brett Finlay

On April 20, 2012, Dr. Finlay spoke to an audience of 40 regarding his groundbreaking work on the relatively new field of microbiota. He led us through several studies that explained the shift that antibiotics can make in our gut microbiota and how that may affect susceptibility to enteric infections and host resistance. On behalf of the NGDI we wish to thank Brett for taking the time to complete our 2011/12 Distinguished Lectureship Series. For more information visit Dr. Finlay’s lab [website](#).

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Mitacs partners with Brazil to offer Undergraduate Internships, Graduate Fellowships to Canada

Today’s announcements in São Paulo include an additional \$10.25 million investment in undergraduate internships and graduate fellowships through Mitacs. Canada’s Mitacs connects university-based researchers, including graduate students and faculty members, with Canadian companies through collaborative research projects and provides research internships to top international undergraduate students. Mitacs announced \$6.75 million – co-funded by the Brazilian government’s new Science without Borders program, the Government of Canada, Canada’s provinces and several Canadian universities – to bring 450 Brazilian undergraduate students to Canada from 2012 to 2014 through its Globalink program. Brazil’s CAPES (Federal Agency for the Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education) has signed an agreement with Mitacs to support the first 100 students. The Mitacs announcement includes another \$3.5 million to fund Globalink Graduate Fellowships – opportunities for student alumni of the Globalink program, including those from Brazil, to pursue graduate studies in Canada. For the full report <http://www.mitacs.ca/n/2012/05/brazil-mission-sees-674-million-invested-canada-brazil-university-partnerships-and-scholar>.

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Funding Opportunities

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Funding Opportunities

Grand Challenges Explorations, an initiative to encourage innovative and unconventional global health

and development solutions, is now accepting grant proposals for its latest application round. Applicants can be at any experience level; in any discipline; and from any organization, including colleges and universities, government laboratories, research institutions, non-profit organizations and for profit companies. Proposals are being accepted online **until May 15, 2012** on the following topics:

[New Approaches for the Interrogation of Anti-malarial Compounds](#) - new!

[Aid is Working. Tell the World](#) - new!

[Explore New Solutions for Global Health Priority Areas](#)

[Design New Approaches to Optimize Immunization Systems](#)

[Protect Crop Plants from Biotic Stresses From Field to Market](#)

Initial grants will be US \$100,000 each, and projects showing promise will have the opportunity to receive additional funding of up to US \$1 million. Full descriptions of the new topics and application instructions are available at: www.grandchallenges.org/explorations. If you have questions regarding this grant opportunity, please email us at GCEHelp@gatesfoundation.org.

The HIV Diagnostics team is now accepting Letters of Inquiry for the identification of novel biomarkers that can be used effectively to measure HIV incidence at the population level. We are looking for biomarkers that could be used alone or in combination, and that are at the initial development stage. Applicants can be at any experience level; in any discipline; and from any organization, including colleges and universities, government laboratories, research institutions, non-profit organizations and for profit companies.

Proposals are being accepted online until **Friday, May 18, 2012** 10:00 AM Pacific Standard Time. Individual grants will not exceed US \$1 million. A full description of the new topic and application instructions are available at <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/hiv aids/Pages/loi-biomarkers-hiv-incidence-measurement.aspx>.

If you have questions regarding this grant opportunity please email us at HIVDiagnostics@gatesfoundation.org.

Reinvent the Toilet Challenge (Round 2) The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announces the second round of its Reinvent the Toilet Challenge designed to prototype a means of dealing effectively and cost-efficiently with human waste for the 2 billion people on earth who currently lack access to safe and affordable sanitation. Proposals Due: **May 10, 2012**, [Apply here](#) with a one page LOI, by May 10th 2012 [\[top\]](#)

ISTPCanada Announces Three Calls for Proposals for Canada-Brazil R&D Projects

Deadlines for Expressions of Interest: **June 11, 2012**, Deadlines for Full Proposals: July 30, 2012, CFP Information Sessions: May 8, 2012 and May 29, 2012

[International Science and Technology Partnerships Canada](#) (ISTPCanada) and Brazilian partners, together with the [Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council](#) (NSERC), are hosting Calls for Proposals (CFP) for industry-led collaborative R&D projects between Canada and Brazil.

Objective: The Calls invite **companies from Canada and Brazil** to propose bilateral R&D projects for the joint development of innovative products or processes. Academic institutions, research hospitals, other institutes, or research associations are strongly encouraged to participate in the projects as co-investigators.

The CFPs aim to stimulate innovative R&D cooperation that address a specific market need or challenge; demonstrate high commercial potential; and deliver benefit to all participants, and more broadly, to both countries. For more information on the initiative visit http://www.istpcanada.ca/international_programs/Brazil/ActiveCFPs/index.php

Register for a CFP Information Session

All Canadian lead applicants and their Brazilian partners are strongly encouraged to participate in one of the CFP information sessions to be hosted via webcast by ISTPCanada. Sessions will be held on May 8, 2012 and May 29, 2012 at 2PM EST.

To register, please provide your name, title, organization, email address and phone number, along with the date and time of the session you would like to attend, via email to: info@canada-brazil-proposals.org. Should you have any questions or require additional information please contact Bharat Rudra, Country Manager for Brazil bharatrudra@istpcanada.ca or 613.729.3069, ext. 224

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UBC SPARC Office Provides Resources

For researchers submitting applications to the **September 15, 2012** CIHR Operating Grant and New Investigator Salary Award competitions.

1. CIHR Operating Grant Information Session

When: Thursday, May 24 from 9 A.M. to 12 P.M.

Where: UBC Point Grey campus (location TBD)

Who: UBC faculty preparing new grants, resubmissions or renewals for the September 15 competition – new faculty, new-to-CIHR faculty (e.g., SSHRC researchers considering a migration to CIHR) and faculty interested in a CIHR refresher – as well as grant facilitators, grant writers and other research support staff

To register: <http://research.ubc.ca/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=61>

Co-hosted with the Faculty of Medicine

2. CIHR New Investigator Salary Award Workshop

When: Tuesday, May 29 from 9 A.M. to 12 P.M.

Where: UBC Point Grey campus (location TBD)

Who: UBC faculty preparing new applications or resubmissions for the September 15 competition

To register: <http://research.ubc.ca/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=62>

3. SPARC Internal Review (IR)

IR Registration Deadline: Monday, July 23, 2012

- Submit IR application form (attached or you can download it at <http://research.ubc.ca/sparc/internal-review-forms>) and one-page research summary to christy.mctait@ubc.ca (or sparc.ir@ubc.ca).

IR Submission Deadline: Monday, August 13, 2012

- Summary of Research Proposal: 1 full page
- Research Proposal: 11 or 13 pages
- Summary of Progress: 1 full page
- For Resubmissions only:
 - Response to Reviews: 2 full pages
 - CIHR Reviews, plus including score and rank details

The onus is on the researcher to register and submit all of the required documents by the deadlines outlined above. Researchers who fail to meet the requirements may be ineligible to receive IR.

Why is SPARC getting strict on IR deadlines and requirements?

1. To enhance quality of service for researchers who are able to meet our requirements;
2. To focus our energies, as well as those of our generous internal reviewers, where the impact will be greatest (e.g., new faculty submissions and highly ranked resubmissions); and
3. To manage limited resources in a realistic, transparent and sustainable way.

Complementary Services

For Faculty of Medicine (FoM) Grant Development (GD), please contact:

- UBC, Point Grey: Elizabeth Cheu
Tel: 604-822-2327 Email: echeu@medd.med.ubc.ca
- SPARC IR and FoM GD deadlines are the same.

Grant Development – CFRI only

CFRI applicants should contact the Research & Technology Development Office as soon as possible to discuss proposal development/review and deadlines. Contacts include:

- Dr. Dawn McArthur, Head, Research & Technology Development; dmcarthur@cfri.ca
- Dr. Tamara English, Senior Research Development Facilitator; tenglish@cfri.ca

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The Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies



International Roundtable Discussions CALL FOR PROPOSALS

DEADLINES: **May 15, 2012 for the October 22 to 31,
2012 Roundtables**
September 15, 2012 for the May 1 to 10,

2013 Roundtables

Big Ideas. Space to explore them. The Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies will host six International Roundtable Discussions each year for scholars from the international community and Canada to come together in the pursuit of knowledge in an interdisciplinary environment. The objective of the Institute’s International Roundtable Discussions is to engage in fundamental research and idea exchange that can prompt advances in science and society, and have a significant impact on the discovery of solutions to important problems.

The broad-ranging themes for 2012-2013 are: “Life”, “Time” and “Re-imagining the University”. The Institute expects that at least three of the International Roundtable Discussions will examine some aspect of these themes.

The Institute also welcomes applications unrelated to the themes.

The Institute will fully fund the accommodation, meals and meeting venue for up to ten international and national scholars in Vancouver, Canada at the University of British Columbia (UBC) for four to ten days, and partially fund additional participants.

Objectives of the International Roundtable Discussions:

- To foster novel approaches towards engagement in fundamental research and idea exchange that may prompt advances in the sciences and humanities and have a significant impact on knowledge.
- To foster problem solving among the world's brightest scholars.
- To allow scholars, community leaders, artists and others to come together from different disciplines to explore a pressing social, health, economic or other problem or research question, creating the foundation for new innovative research.
- To encourage roundtable discussions focusing on various aspects of timely and important broad themes.
- To foster exceptional collaborative research between international scholars and UBC scholars.

For the institutes criteria, requirements and expectations, click

[http://www.pwias.ubc.ca/ files/pdf/CallforProposalsPWIASRoundtables.doc](http://www.pwias.ubc.ca/files/pdf/CallforProposalsPWIASRoundtables.doc)

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Canada Graduate Scholarships – Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement (2012-2013)

Application Deadline June 11, 2012. For more information click [here](#).

The Canada Graduate Scholarships—Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplements (CGS-MSFSS) program supports high-calibre Canadian graduate students in building global linkages and international networks through the pursuit of exceptional research experiences abroad. By accessing international scientific research and training, CGS-MSFSS recipients will contribute to strengthening the potential for collaboration between Canadian universities and affiliated research institutions and universities, or other research institutions outside of Canada.

This foreign study supplements program is available to Canadian citizens or permanent residents who hold a [Joseph-Armand Bombardier](#), Alexander Graham Bell or Frederick Banting and Charles Best Canada Graduate Scholarship (CGS) at the master's or doctoral level, or a [Vanier CGS](#) at the doctoral level.

A total of 250 awards are available each year, and are divided as follows among the three granting agencies to reflect the distribution of CGS awards across the social sciences and humanities, natural sciences and engineering, and health-related disciplines. The current distribution of supplements among the three agencies is: 125 for SSHRC, 80 for NSERC, and 45 for CIHR.

Each university is allocated a pre-determined number of supplements by each granting agency, as appropriate. The faculty (school) of graduate studies is informed of the number of supplements available to them in each of the three areas of research disciplines. The faculty (school) of graduate studies is required to set up an internal selection process to select which applications requesting CGS-MSFSS funds are to be forwarded to the respective granting agencies.

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Upcoming Conferences

Canadian Association for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases 2012

Annual Conference

May 3-5, 2012, [Canadian Association for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases 2012 Annual Conference](#): Includes plenary sessions, integrated symposia, oral presentations, poster sessions, exhibits, clinical vignettes, a trainees' day, and more. (Sheraton Wall Centre, Vancouver)
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Reports of Interest



Global Report for Research on Infectious Diseases of Poverty – WHO

World Health Organization on behalf of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases 2012

Available online at: <http://bit.ly/HPHzEH>

Each year infectious diseases kill 3.5 million people – mostly the poor and young children who live in low and middle income countries. Research can change this and bring health to many more people. The WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) has brought people and institutions together to identify and advocate for the research priorities that will bring new and innovative approaches and products.

The result is *Global Report for Research on Infectious Diseases of Poverty*, which provides a new cross-disciplinary approach and analysis

Ten compelling reasons for research

- 1. Break the vicious cycle of poverty and infectious disease.** The interrelationships between health, infectious diseases and poverty are dynamic and complex. Timely, targeted research will prevent infectious diseases from driving more people into poverty.
- 2. Forge an escape for the poor and vulnerable.** Poor people living in the areas most affected by environmental factors are least able to respond to the challenges of environmental and climate change. Interactive, interdisciplinary research can identify ways to mitigate risk factors, establish the potential impact of interventions on the environment and direct future interventions to minimize risk.
- 3. Tackle multiple problems.** Research will help understand both causes and consequences of polyparasitism, coinfection and comorbidities with non-communicable diseases on people, societies and systems. An integrated understanding of the complex relationships underpins effective integrated health system delivery and effective disease control programmes.
- 4. Commute the life sentence.** Many people must live with the long term debilitating effects of past or current infection. Research can find ways to mitigate the consequences of chronic and persistent lifelong infection and its secondary complications and associated stigma.
- 5. Be prepared – forewarned is forearmed.** Surveillance is essential at all levels to understand patterns of emergence, including the spread of drug and insecticide resistance. Mapping, monitoring and evaluation of these trends are critical. Access to such surveillance data allows us to anticipate and respond to emergent, re-emergent and drug-resistant diseases.
- 6. Reach the hardest to reach.** By identifying ways to strengthen health infrastructure and better deliver services in impoverished areas, we can reach disenfranchised populations who continue to struggle with the burden of poverty

and disease. Health systems research can create positive synergies between disease control and wider health systems in poor regions.

7. Prevent loss in translation. Progress along the route from basic research to clinical and public health practice is slow and patchy. Integrated multidisciplinary research programmes should aim to anticipate and avoid potholes along the route to the introduction of more effective interventions.

8. Identify small changes that can make a big difference. Relatively low levels of investment in evidence-based interventions can have a big impact. Small modifications in where and how we deliver treatments and care can achieve dramatic improvements. Effective research that demonstrates positive effects from small modifications should be rapidly scaled up in poor communities.

9. Stay focused on the light at the end of the tunnel. Much has been achieved to date and even the most difficult situations are not irreversible. Significant progress will continue to be made if investment in coordinated research programmes is expanded and sustained.

10. Act quickly on what we know. Policy-makers and global funders need to have access to the right information at the right time to inform decisions that draw on the evidence of what works, and feed “best buys” into health policy, health budgets and the operations of health systems. Research data must therefore be rapidly translated into effective tools for policy-makers.....”

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