



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**International AIDS Society Announces Recipients of Innovative HIV Research Awards**

**Monday, 21 July 2014 (Geneva, Switzerland)** — The International AIDS Society (IAS) has today announced the recipients for the fourth 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 (CFAR) and the IAS. The aim is to promote innovative research and novel ideas from early stage scientists whose primary focus has previously been in fields of scientific inquiry other than HIV.

The CNIHR initiative, which totals US\$5.2 million, will fund 11 research projects for up to two years. These projects are designed to address new questions related to the emerging issues of long-term survival with HIV infection, the prevention of HIV transmission and the search for an HIV cure. Attracting new investigators with innovative ideas to the field of HIV research has the potential to build better understanding of some of the key obstacles related to HIV treatment, prevention and care.

Dr. Jack Whitescarver, Director of the Office of AIDS Research at the National Institutes of Health stated, "NIH is delighted to continue our support for this highly successful program to engage young investigators from outside of AIDS research to apply their expertise toward the new and emerging challenges in the field."

The 11 outstanding early-stage researchers selected for the grants come from a range of scientific disciplines. 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 under the mentorship of experts in the field.

"The 2014 grantees continue the rich tradition of scientific excellence and diversity, with a wide range of projects and geographic locations that is becoming synonymous with the CNIHR programme" highlights Michael Saag, director of the Center for AIDS Research of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, one of three CFARs involved in the programme.

Grantees from 2014, along with grantees from 2012 and 2013, will be awarded scholarships to attend the 20th International AIDS conference (AIDS 2014 in Melbourne, Australia) on 20-25 July 2014. A pre-conference workshop and training and networking activities during the conference with leading scientists in the HIV field are designed to give grantees an overview of recent developments in HIV research and to encourage collaborations. At the pre-conference workshop, the 2014 awardees will present overviews of their projects and the 2013 awardees will report on their progress on their CNIHR research projects. 2012 awardees will give presentations of the outcome of their projects at a designated Satellite Session on Monday, 21 July, 18.30-20.30.

"The IAS is proud to be part of this programme that supports talented early-stage investigators. There is no doubt that the innovative projects they are conducting will greatly

contribute to the novel achievements in HIV/AIDS biomedical research” said IAS President, Françoise Barré Sinoussi.

The ceremony for the 2014 awardees will take place on Monday, 21 July 2014 in conjunction with the plenary session at AIDS 2014, at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre at 8.20.

The CNIHR grants are awarded to:

Dr Aravind Asokan, USA, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; *Combating HIV infection by fusion inhibitor gene therapy*, working with Dr Ron Swanstrom and Dr Victor Garcia- Martinez, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr Qin Feng, USA, Baylor College of Medicine; *Targeting host factors for modulation of HIV transcription*, working with Dr Andrew P Rice, Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr Jonathan Fogle, USA, North Carolina State University, College of Veterinary Medicine; *Epigenetic modulation rescues virus-specific CD8+ T cells from T regulatory cell suppression*, working with Dr Kristina Abel, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr Donald Fox, USA, Duke University Medical Center; *Impact of polyploidy on establishing an HIV-1 reservoir in the kidney*, working with Dr Mary Klotman, Duke University.

Dr Joseph Hyser, USA, Baylor College of Medicine; *Calcium-induced autophagy by HIV-1 Vpu viroporin activity*, working with Dr Jason Kimata, Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr Anna Lunemann, Switzerland, University of Zurich; *Harnessing lymphoid tissue-based antiviral natural killer cell subsets for HIV eradication*, working with Dr Michael M Lederman, Case Western Reserve University.

Dr Kilian Pohl, USA, SRI International Stanford University; *Creating maps of 4D brain images to unravel dementia heterogeneity of aging HIV population*, working with Dr Victor Valcour, University of California, San Francisco.

Daniel Popkin, USA, Case Western Reserve University; *Two-pronged Natural Killer Cells (NK) harness to seek and destroy the HIV reservoir*, working with Dr Jonathan Karn, Case Western Reserve University.

Dr Jie Sun, USA, Indiana University; *Targeting T follicular helper (Tfh) transcription factors to enhance anti-HIV innate immunity*, working with Dr Luis Montaner, Wistar Institute/University of Pennsylvania.

Dr Minjie Wu, USA, University of Illinois at Chicago; *Brain aging in HIV-infected women: the role of reproductive aging and cardiovascular risk factors*, working with Dr Pauline M Maki, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Dr Benjamin Yellen, USA, Duke University; *Magnetic single cell assay for epigenetic examination of latent HIV-1 infection*, working with Dr David Margolis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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**About the IAS**

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with over 13,000 members from more than 170 countries working at all levels of the global response to AIDS. The IAS 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 custodian of the biennial International AIDS Conference, which will be held in Melbourne, Australia, 20-25 July 2014 and lead organizer of the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, which will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 19-22 July 2015

[www.iasociety.org](http://www.iasociety.org) | [www.aids2014.org](http://www.aids2014.org) | [www.ias2015.org](http://www.ias2015.org)

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