

India-UK scientists join hands to tackle TB

Public Health England (PHE) and the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune (IISER Pune) are organising a Newton-Bhabha Fund Researcher Links Workshop at the IISER Pune from 16 to 19 December 2019. Deadline for application is the World TB Day (Sunday 24 March 2019).

The WHO End TB Strategy has the ambitious goal of ending this global epidemic by 2035 and in September 2018 World Leaders met at the United Nations General Assembly at the first ever UN high level meeting on TB. World leaders rallied round the theme of “United to end TB: an urgent global response to a global epidemic” and endorsed a UN Political Declaration on TB. This Declaration aims to drive universal access, sufficient and sustainable financing, intensified research and innovation, and accountability across all sectors and all countries to meet the challenges facing TB control globally.

Bringing together 50 experts from across the UK and India, this four day workshop on the ‘Challenges of TB’ will focus on drug resistance in India and shared inter-disciplinary solutions. In order to eliminate TB globally, we need to understand the challenges in India, share solutions, and coordinate research efforts across clinical, epidemiological, implementation, health systems, and social sciences.

A panel of experts from All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS New Delhi), British Council, Indian Institute of Science (IISc Bengaluru), Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER Pune), Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education & Research (JIPMER Puducherry), PHE, Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Society of Chemistry, University College London, and University of York will address and mentor the delegates.

The delegates, twenty from the UK and twenty one from India, will be selected through open competition, and comprise of post-doctoral scientists, lecturers, clinicians, nurses, activists, policy makers, and researchers with a background and interest in TB. They have to be within 10 years of gaining their PhD/ MD ideally, but the selection panel will consider reasonable explanations (e.g. awaiting viva voce or final examination; career break due to maternity; equivalent experience or expertise; etc.) if this criterion is not met. Participants are expected to be working in either a University, research institute, or public sector

research/clinical establishment. Private sector can sponsor candidates but selection will be based only on merit.

This workshop will build on a previous Newton-Bhabha Fund Workshop on AMR (antimicrobial resistance) held in Bengaluru in December 2017, to develop a cadre of scientists and clinicians who have a deeper understanding of the challenges of TB, enabling them to lead this area and offering the potential for significant economic development. A maximum of 16 places will be allotted to delegates of the Bengaluru workshop, if they are able to demonstrate progress in their research idea pertaining to TB through the links they have formed with India and/or UK researchers. The workshop and subsequent mentoring will provide an impetus for academic groups to network between the UK and India and engage with policy makers.

Expressions of interest are requested, accompanied by a CV and an impact statement as to how their research field/current role can contribute to at least one of the workshop themes. Deadline for application is the World TB Day (Sunday 24 March 2019).

PHE has an international reputation in the field of TB control, surveillance and research and has strong links with relevant academic, public, and private sector bodies. In 2017, England reached its lowest recorded rate of TB, with the declines driven by the Collaborative Strategy for England which aims to control TB in the country. IISER Pune is a centre of excellence in the field of infectious diseases with modern infrastructure to host and attract the best minds across India and the UK.

The Newton-Bhabha Fund and the Royal Society of Chemistry have worked with PHE’s Dr Joanna Bacon and Professor Seshadri Vasani and IISER’s Dr Harinath Chakrapani to facilitate this event, which will strengthen existing and future collaboration between the two countries. It is one of the workshops selected for match-funding in the category “India – biological and medical sciences” from applications received in 2018

Apply by 24th March 2019:

<http://bit.do/pre-tb-workshop>

For further information TBworkshop2019@gmail.com