



Network Newsletter, 16 December 2005

Dear Network Participant,

This Christmas 2005 issue of the ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology holds the following news items for you:

- [1] **ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology website updates**
- [2] **2006 ASP & ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology annual conference**

Grants, awards and prizes

- [3] **Professor Leann Tilley receives an ARC LIEF grant**
- [4] **Dr Tina Skinner-Adams receives a grant from the Clive and Vera Ramaciotti Foundation**
- [5] **Grant success from the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi)**

PhD scholarship and other funding opportunities

- [6] **Postdoctoral position to work on ultrastructural biology in a new ARC Centre of Excellence for Coherent X-ray Science**
- [7] **2006 PhD Scholarship Opportunity Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Diseases**

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Supported by the Australian Research Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Society for Parasitology.

[1] ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology website updates

The Network website <http://www.parasite.org.au/arcnet> has undergone some small cosmetic changes; I would appreciate your feedback and suggestions for developing the site as I want to make it useful for you. **If you have some photos of your work under the microscope or in the lab please send them to me (lisa.jones@uts.edu.au)**. As you can see from the *Site Highlights* box the latest newsletter can also be downloaded http://www.parasite.org.au/arcnet/Newsletter/Newsletter_161205.pdf

[2] 2006 ASP & ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology annual conference

The 2006 ASP & ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology annual conference will be held from 2 – 5 July, 2006, at the Legends Hotel, Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia.

This conference will be an opportunity for parasitologists from Australia, and around the world, to discuss the latest research and state-of-the-art technologies in parasitology. The meeting will follow two major themes: The International Symposium on Therapies for Parasitic Diseases; and Biodiversity, Ecology and Evolution, the latter with an emphasis on marine parasitology. Other symposia will include: New Technologies for Parasitology; Vector Biology, and the meeting will open with the session “Ten Things You Didn't Know About Parasites”. There will also be plenty of opportunities for contributed talks and posters on any and every topic parasitological. The conference will run over four days, starting with a reception on the evening of Sunday 2 July and the scientific programme beginning Monday morning (3 July), and concluding with a Keynote Address just prior to the Conference Banquet on the evening of 5 July.

We have already secured some superb speakers including:

Keynote Address:

- Professor Bob Sinden (Imperial College London)

The International Symposium on Therapies for Parasitic Diseases:

- Professor Simon Croft (Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative)
- Professor Fred Opperdoes (President of COST ACTION B22 - Drug Development for Parasitic Disease)
- Professor Sornchai Looareesuwan (Secretary General, SEAMEO TROPED Network)
- Professor Peter Hotez (George Washington University)
- Dr Michelle Wykes (QIMR)
- Dr Stuart Ralph (WEHI)
- Professor Georg von Samson Himmelstjerna (Hannover)

State-of-the-Art Technologies:

- A/Professor Malcolm McConville (University of Melbourne)
- Dr Brendan Crabb (WEHI)
- Professor Paul Brindley (Tulane University)

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Biodiversity, Ecology and Evolution:

- Dr Barbara Nowak (University of Tasmania)
- Dr John Hooper (Queensland Museum).

Vector Biology:

- Professor Scott O'Neill (University of QLD)
- Professor Elena Levashina (University of Strasbourg)

Other themes of this conference include:

- Ten things you didn't know about parasites

Registration fees have not been finalised for this not-to-be-missed conference but will be very low - around \$100-\$150 for ASP Student Members and around \$150-\$200 for regular ASP Members (i.e. much lower than fees for the last several years). Registration will include morning and afternoon teas, lunches, poster session drinks and dinners at the conference.

We are making a deliberate attempt to encourage as many Network Participants as possible to join the ASP, as this will help ensure the extension of Network activities beyond the lifetime of ARC and NHMRC funding for the Network. Thus, there will be a surcharge of around \$100 for registration for non-ASP delegates (versus an annual fee for ASP Membership of \$20 for students and \$80 for regular members). You can download a membership application form from <http://www.parasite.org.au/member.htm> Student ASP members are eligible for generous financial assistance to attend the conference from the ASP provided they have been members for a minimum period of about 6 months before the conference - so sign up now!

Registration and Abstract Submission are expected to open in mid-late January 06 (Abstract Submission will close towards the end of March, 2006, with exact dates to be advised).

More details about the conference will be available in January through the ASP Newsletter and the ASP and Network websites.

Grants, awards and prizes**[3] Professor Leann Tilley receives an ARC LIEF grant**

Prof. Leann Tilley, La Trobe University, is part of a successful ARC LIEF grant with Frances Separovic (Melb Uni) and Mibel Aguilar (Monash Uni) and Andrew Clayton (Ludwig Institute). The La Trobe component will enable the purchase of a Fluorescence Correlation Spectroscopy Microscope to measure the dynamics of cellular proteins.

[4] Dr Tina Skinner-Adams receives a grant from the Clive and Vera Ramaciotti Foundation

Congratulations to Dr Tina Skinner-Adams of the Malaria Biology Laboratory at QIMR who was awarded a grant from the Clive and Vera Ramaciotti Foundation for "Antiretroviral Protease Inhibitors: Investigating a novel group of antimalarial agents."

[5] Grant success from the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi)

Congratulations to Andy Thompson, Wayne Best, John Horton and Collette Sims (Murdoch University) and Bill Charman (Monash University) and Reto Brun (Swiss Tropical Institute) on the award of a grant from the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi) for a project entitled, "Novel, Orally Available Drug Candidates for Trypanosome Infections.

PhD scholarship and other funding opportunities

[6] Postdoctoral opportunity to work on ultrastructural biology in a new ARC Centre of Excellence for Coherent X-ray Science.

Applications are invited for a Postdoctoral position to work on ultrastructural biology in a new ARC Centre of Excellence for Coherent X-ray Science (<http://www.coecxs.org/>). This position is funded by the Australian Research Council as part of the Centre of Excellence for Coherent X-ray Science for research into the use of novel X-ray diffraction techniques to study the cellular architecture of malaria parasite-infected erythrocytes. The project involves adapting sample preparation methods developed for electron microscopy to generate samples suitable for X-ray microscopy and other X-ray imaging techniques. The successful applicant will work with colleagues from the Departments of Biochemistry and Physics at La Trobe University and other Centre members to image the ultrastructure of malaria parasites and other samples. The applicant will also prepare samples for cryo-electron microscopy and single particle image reconstruction techniques. Molecular biological manipulation of cells and proteins will also be used in enhancing sample preparation. Further information, contact: Prof. Leann Tilley, Department of Biochemistry, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Vic. Tel: +61(0)3 9479 1375. Email: L.Tilley@latrobe.edu.au

[7] 2006 PhD Scholarship Opportunity Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Diseases

Applications are invited for a PhD scholarship funded by the Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Diseases. The scholarship is available for work on the project: Australian *Leishmania* Lifecycle Investigation.

Locally acquired *Leishmania* species infections have recently been identified in red kangaroos (*Macropus rufus*) in Australia's Northern Territory. Red kangaroos are most likely incidental hosts for this *Leishmania* species. We are seeking a PhD candidate to identify the lifecycle, ecology and pathogenicity of *Leishmania* in Australia.

This project will begin with the enhancement and critical evaluation of diagnostic tests for *Leishmania* so that the best possible tests can be used in the surveillance phase of the study. During the surveillance phase of the study attempts will be made to identify the vector for *Leishmania* in Australia.

Although extensive studies have been conducted in Australia to identify Culicoides sandflies, due to their ability to transmit arboviruses, scant work has been undertaken to specifically trap phlebotomine sandflies. Trapping of sandflies will be conducted in the locality where several cases of leishmaniasis have been confirmed. These

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sandflies will be sorted by species and tested for the presence of *Leishmania* species. If infected sandflies are identified, they will be evaluated as potential vectors for other pathogenic species of *Leishmania*.

If possible, a second stage of the project will involve the sampling of a broad range of mammals and reptiles in the Northern Territory to attempt to determine the host range, geographic range, and pathogenicity of the parasite.

Please visit the Australian Biosecurity CRC website for application forms and instructions on how to apply:

<http://www1.abcrc.org.au/pages/Education.aspx?MenuID=20>

Please contact Dr. Shelly Walton by Email shelley.walton@menzies.edu.au, or by telephone +61(0)8 89228928 for any enquiries.

Please note Dr Walton will be on annual leave until **4 January 2006** for enquiries **prior to this date** please contact Dr Karrie Rose at Taronga Zoo, Australian Registry of Wildlife Health, NSW by Email: krose@zoo.nsw.gov.au or by telephone: +61-(0)2-9978-4749 .

Please send me items for the next newsletter by Wednesday 11 January 2006.

The first newsletter for 2006 will have details about Registration and Abstract Submission for the 2006 ASP & ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology annual conference.

Best wishes for a very Happy Christmas and New Year,

Lisa.