

CEPI | New vaccines for a safer world

Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations

Newsletter 30 September 2017

Address from our CEO



CEPI's Board met on Thursday, September 21 to consider the recommendations of the Secretariat and Scientific Advisory Committee with respect to CEPI's first call for proposals. This call, issued the day CEPI was formally established at Davos (19 January 2017), will result in the development of vaccines against Lassa fever, an endemic hemorrhagic fever of West Africa; the Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome, or MERS, a disease caused by a coronavirus circulating widely in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian peninsula; and Nipah, a disease of South Asia causing encephalitis and respiratory illness that was the basis of the fictional MEV-1 in Steven Soderbergh's 2011 film *Contagion*.

I am pleased to report that the Board unanimously approved the recommendations we brought forward and that the Secretariat is now preparing to enter negotiations with the selected programs.

CEPI will not announce the names of its potential partners until negotiations have been completed and partnership agreements are signed, a process that is likely to take many months. I can say, however, that the call has resulted in a diverse set of programs, with multiple candidates that will enter development for each of CEPI's target pathogens. These candidates, in turn, reflect a variety of manufacturing platforms and approaches to vaccine development, the maturation of which will also advance CEPI's goals to develop rapid response platforms. Highly respected academic institutions, biotechnology firms, and established multinational corporations from five continents responded to the call, demonstrating the global interest in CEPI's mission.

The other major piece of business before the Board was formalizing CEPI's strategic alliance with the World Bank. Priya Basu, Manager of Development Finance at the World Bank, notified the Board that the Bank's Board of Directors had approved the establishment of a Financial Intermediary Fund, or FIF, at the World Bank to manage the funds committed by CEPI's sovereign and philanthropic investors. CEPI and the Bank will now enter into a trustee agreement under which the Bank will provide trustee services to CEPI at competitive rates, utilizing the Bank's well-established financial platform with access to a broad range of investment strategies and providing flexibility to accommodate CEPI's liquidity needs and the highest level of financial security for CEPI's assets. By cementing the partnership between CEPI and the Bank, the establishment of the FIF will foster close alignment between CEPI's efforts and those of the Bank through its Pandemic Emergency Financing facility and capacity-building instruments such as IDA18. As an important first step toward achieving such alignment, the Bank and CEPI have established a World Bank-CEPI International Task Force on Vaccines Research and Development that will begin meeting in October.

These important advances for CEPI represent thousands – maybe tens of thousands – of hours of work by CEPI's staff and advisers, the staff of the World Bank, and the employees of the firms and institutions that responded to the call for proposals, all oriented towards the goal of eliminating future epidemics. To the CEPI team, to our supporters, to the staff at the World Bank, and to all those who applied, whether successfully or not, I want to extend a word of thanks for your commitment to making the world a safer place.

Richard Hatchett, CEPI CEO

United Nations General Assembly

CEPI was featured in a number of side events occurring in conjunction with the UN General Assembly in New York City the week of September 19.

On Tuesday, September 20, Richard participated in a panel, "Preparing for the Next Epidemic", that was part of the World Economic Forum's Sustainable Development Impact Summit that included Sue Desmond-Hellman from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Tim Evans from the World Bank, and Stanley Bergman from Henry Schein, Inc. After the opening panel, there were breakout discussions – with one focussing on CEPI. This generated a number of positive ideas for how CEPI could continue to move forward, working closely with other partners and investors.

The next morning, Dr. Tore Godal, a member of CEPI's Board, spoke about CEPI at a Carnegie Foundation side event on biological threats.

Finally, on Wednesday afternoon, Dr. Peggy Hamburg, Chair of CEPI's Joint Coordination Group, spoke about CEPI to an audience of approximately 75 senior global policy leaders, government officials, security leaders, and partners from the private sector at an event sponsored by PATH and Devex entitled *From Healthy to Secure: The Power of Global Health to Drive Safety and Stability Worldwide*.

Global Virus Network Meeting

Deputy CEO Frederik Kristensen was invited to attend the 9th International meeting of the Global Virus Network in Melbourne, Australia September 25-27. The GVN is a coalition of virus experts from over 20 countries. This year's meeting presented and discussed current finding in virology and their application to existing and emerging viruses of global importance. Dr. Kristensen presented status and plans for CEPI and had the opportunity to discuss possible collaborations with GVN leadership and affiliated centres. He also updated the Australian Departments of Health and Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra regarding CEPI, based on the Australian government's kind contribution to CEPI.

Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturing Network

CEPI participated in the DCVMN annual meeting – which was a great opportunity to meet with vaccine manufacturers from around the world who are helping their countries move toward vaccine independence, including many from South Korea's growing vaccine industry, which has made rapid and impressive progress in vaccine development. At DCVMN, Richard gave a plenary presentation on CEPI and appeared in separate panels on future epidemics and regulatory convergence. While in Seoul, Richard also had time to meet with members of the local media and speak with Korean officials about CEPI's role in preparing for and responding to global public health emergencies. South Korea experienced an outbreak in 2015 of MERS – which is one of the pathogens CEPI has targeted - and the South Korean government and public are peculiarly sensitized to get threat epidemics pose. Of note, Samsung and the International Vaccine Institute are providing critical support for the development of promising MERS vaccines.



Gunnstein Norheim is Norway's Pharmacist of the Year

CEPI's acting head of vaccine science Gunnstein Norheim, is awarded the prize Norway's pharmacist of the Year 2017. He gets the prize for his contribution to clinical development of an effective Ebola vaccine. Norheim was a key member of the international team which was able to implement the clinical trial in record time during the 2014-16 Ebola epidemic in West Africa. Norheim has a PhD in pharmaceutical microbiology and vaccine development from the University of Oslo and has worked at the Oxford Vaccine Group and the Norwegian Institute of Public Health. In his doctoral thesis he demonstrated that an outer membrane vesicle vaccine protein vaccine would be likely be protective against the most outbreak prone serogroups of meningococcal disease in Africa. He is an enthusiastic presenter and public speaker and is a role model for other pharmacists.

Do you want to serve on the CEPI Board?

As mentioned in an earlier Newsletter, CEPI is now looking for visionary leaders to serve on its new permanent Board and help guide the coalition through its next phase of growth, maximising the positive impact that CEPI can make in the years ahead. To express your interest in being a member of CEPI's board, or to nominate an individual you believe to be an exceptional candidate, please email board@cepi.net by **October 1, 2017**, providing a CV where possible. The full advert can be found [here](#).

Upcoming Meetings

- 3-4 October: **13th Grand Challenges Annual Meeting**, Washington DC, USA
- 4-6 October: **UNICEF Vaccine Industry Consultation**, Copenhagen, Denmark
- 10-12 October: **18th World Vaccine Congress Europe**, Barcelona, Spain
- 15-17 October: **World Health Summit 2017**, Berlin, Germany
- 26 October: **Prix Galien Forum**, New York, USA



Follow CEPI on Twitter @CEPIvaccines



Visit the CEPI website
