



## SAIS NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019

Dear SAIS members,

Below, please find this week's newsletter.

---

### FUNDING CALLS, CONFERENCES, WEBINARS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### **VII-th Conference of the South African Immunology Society - abstract submission deadline extended**

Please see more details below.

**sais**  
SOUTH AFRICAN IMMUNOLOGY SOCIETY

**VIIth Conference of the South African Immunology Society**  
**Abstract Submission Deadline Extended**  
[www.sais-bookings.co.za](http://www.sais-bookings.co.za)

# Synergy in Immunology

18 – 20 June 2019

**aha Gateway hotel, Umhlanga, Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa**  
Please join us at one of the most beautiful coastal villages in the world

**IMPORTANT DATES**  
22 March 2019 - Abstract submission closes  
10 May 2019 - Early bird registration closes

To register or submit an abstract please visit: [www.sais-bookings.co.za](http://www.sais-bookings.co.za)

Enquiries: Bridget de Beer [conference1@onscreenav.co.za](mailto:conference1@onscreenav.co.za) / +27 21 486 9111

#### **BactiVac opened their third round of catalyst funding for pump priming projects - applications close on Sunday 5 May 2019, 12 midnight (GMT)**

Catalyst funding for pump-priming projects is available to support academics in bacterial vaccinology to explore new approaches and strategies to advance their vaccines in partnership with LMICs and industry, and acquire the data to support substantive funding applications. Please find more details here: [https://lnkd.in/dnz\\_MjU](https://lnkd.in/dnz_MjU).

#### **OneBio invites you to apply to its BIOTECH STARTUP INCUBATOR programme - deadline 10th of March**

Applications are open for biotech entrepreneurs that are late in the research cycle and early in the product cycle, typically scientists with a great concept but needing the business acumen and support to fully get the concept off the ground. Areas of interest include entrepreneurs solving problems in consumer biology, future food and agriculture, bio-materials, industrial biology, biological tools, animal health, therapeutics and regenerative medicines, to name a few areas. Solutions that arise at the convergence of laboratory work and computational science are encouraged. Startups need to be based in either South Africa or Zimbabwe. Teams of at least 2 co-founders are preferred. To apply, please follow <https://www.onebio.africa/apply>.



### **Strategies to normalize miRNA expression in serum and plasma - Webinar - March 05, 2019 - 10:00 AM PST**

Learning Objectives: How to identify stably expressed/endogenous miRNAs in serum and plasma How to use spike-in controls to normalize miRNA expression in difficult samples. Workflow to identify normalizers in serum and plasma using TaqMan® Array Cards, Plates and OpenArray™. To sign up, please follow <https://lnkd.in/gHkTn-u>.

### **Immunity (Cell Press) - 25th Anniversary!**

April 2019 marks the 25th anniversary of Immunity! The journal depends on the support of the immunology community, and we are taking this opportunity to celebrate our authors, reviewers, and readers. We are planning a special anniversary cover for our April issue that will feature a mosaic of photos of immunology labs from around the world. We are also building a website that will feature each photo along with searchable information on each lab. We hope that this will be a fun resource that will foster connections within the immunology community. We'd love it if you would contribute a photo and information on your lab for this special anniversary feature! All immunology labs are welcome to submit their information. Please submit your photo and information by **March 1, 2019**, here: <https://lnkd.in/dcy7pMu>.

### **Metabolomics Symposium and the official launch of Metabolomics South Africa (MSA) - The Innovation Hub, Pretoria, South Africa - 11-12 March 2019 (registration deadline - 01 March, 2019)**

The symposium will be an opportunity for principal investigators, post-doctorates and postgraduate students currently working in the metabolomics field, to participate in industry relevant discussions. The event is also intended to foster further collaboration amongst metabolomics researchers within SA and across Europe by providing a platform for researchers to network and to identify synergies. There will be no registration fees for the delegates and light refreshments will be provided. You will however be responsible for your own travel and accommodation during those two days. Please register to attend the Metabolomics Symposium using the link <https://lnkd.in/dZqXWcN>.

### **Advanced Metabolomics Workshop - The University of Pretoria, Hatfield, South Africa - 13-15th March 2019**

The African Centre for Gene Technologies (ACGT), the University of Johannesburg and the University of Pretoria has organized an Advanced Metabolomics Workshop to provide a platform to address key issues and challenges in the field of metabolomics. The workshop will cover more advanced metabolomics topics using a combination of lectures, interactive round table discussions and computer-based practical sessions. There are no registration fees for delegates and light refreshments will be provided. Should you be interested in attending this workshop, please provide your details and your reasons for attending the course before end of business Friday, **01 March 2019**. Please apply to attend the Advanced Metabolomics Workshop using the link <https://lnkd.in/dCDNsJ8>.

---

### **PUBLICATIONS and INTERESTING READS:**

#### **New TB treatment: protect the host cell death with immunotherapy (open access)**

Corticosteroids inhibit Mycobacterium tuberculosis-induced necrotic host cell death by abrogating mitochondrial membrane permeability transition - [https://lnkd.in/dD8yz\\_6](https://lnkd.in/dD8yz_6).

#### **How sleep can fight infection (open access)**

Gas-coupled receptor signaling and sleep regulate integrin activation of human antigen-specific T cells - <https://lnkd.in/dE46E84>.

#### **MDR-TB treatment achievable in post-conflict DRC**

[https://lnkd.in/d\\_Pqn22](https://lnkd.in/d_Pqn22).

#### **New study uses small chip to immediately detect Zika, stage of infection**

<https://lnkd.in/dKranMB>.

**A Macrophage-Pericyte Axis Directs Tissue Restoration via Amphiregulin-Induced Transforming Growth Factor Beta Activation (open access)**

• Macrophages express Amphiregulin upon tissue damage • Amphiregulin activates integrin- $\alpha$ V complexes on pericytes • Integrin- $\alpha$ V-activated TGF- $\beta$  induces pericyte into myofibroblast differentiation • Myofibroblast-derived collagen contributes to wound healing. <https://lnkd.in/dKBFVrw>.

**Engineered resistance to Zika virus in transgenic Aedes aegypti expressing a polycistronic cluster of synthetic small RNAs**

<https://lnkd.in/drySH3F>.

**Composition and Variation of the Human Milk Microbiota Are Influenced by Maternal and Early-Life Factors (open access)**

The effect of breastfeeding versus pumping on human milk microbiome: <https://lnkd.in/dHekzXR>.

**Faster, better, cheaper: the rise of CRISPR in disease detection - interesting read**

<https://lnkd.in/dDCKy4f>.

**Classify viruses - the gain is worth the pain - interesting read**

<https://lnkd.in/dniCR62>.

**Measles Cases Rise in Outbreaks in Ukraine, Philippines**

The World Health Organization reports that a number of countries are experiencing “sizeable” numbers of the infection due to a failure to vaccinate. <https://lnkd.in/dsCUeTJ>.

**"More than any vaccine, measles needs highest level of coverage to prevent outbreaks", says Heidi Larson, Director of the "Vaccine Confidence Project"**

The measles virus is sparking grave concern worldwide, as the highly contagious airborne disease makes a resurgence. In recent months, it has been spreading in countries including the United States, the Philippines and Madagascar. <https://lnkd.in/dCWWhX7>.

---

**JOBS and POSITIONS**

**Post-doctoral position available - the Precision Vaccines Laboratory, the Precision Vaccines Program at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School (Boston, USA)**

The *Precision Vaccines* Laboratory, directed by Ofer Levy MD, PhD, is the focal point of the *Precision Vaccines Program* at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School (Boston, MA;; USA). Due to distinct immunity, life-threatening infections most often occur at the extremes of life motivating development of improved vaccines that are safe and effective in the young and old. The *Precision Vaccines Program* is a platform for international collaboration employing cutting edge technologies to understand age- and sex-specific features of immune responses to inform development of vaccines tailored for optimal safety and immunogenicity towards distinct populations. **We seek a skilled and motivated post-doctoral scientist with background in Immunology (experience in T and B lymphocyte studies a plus), Vaccinology, and/or Systems Biology to lead a project on development of novel adjuvanted vaccines.** We are funded by NIH/NIAID via an Adjuvant Discovery and Development Program contracts, a UO1 grant on adjuvant synergy and a U19 Human Immunology Project Consortium (HIPC) award to study systems vaccinology. Studies will employ *in vitro* modelling of human new-born, adult and elderly antigen-presenting cells, T and B lymphocytes, small molecule screens, medicinal chemistry, adjuvant formulation as well as *in vivo* animal and human studies and big data “OMIC” technologies, to identify and develop adjuvants that enhance immune responses of those at the extremes of age. Our laboratory is dynamic, international, supportive and productive. We offer excellent opportunities for publication, attendance at scientific meetings, and career advancement with graduates of the lab holding prominent positions in academia and industry. The candidate should have obtained their PhD within the last 1-3 years. Interested applicants



should e-mail their CV and arrange to have 3 statements of reference **e-mailed to: ofer.levy@childrens.harvard.edu**. International candidates are encouraged to apply.

**Site Liaison Associate vacancy - HCRISA**

Interested candidates should send their full Curriculum Vitae to Bongzi Vilakazi at [svilakaz@hcrisa.org.za](mailto:svilakaz@hcrisa.org.za). Closing date: 08 March, 2019. Please find more details below.



<b>Position Title:</b>	<b>Site Liaison Associate</b>
<b>Position Purpose:</b>	The purpose of the position is to assist in the development of sites in the start-up phase, and upon trial implementation, oversee the execution of Good Clinical Practice (GCP) practice of HIV vaccine trials at various Clinical Research Sites (CRSs) in Southern Africa. This position is a trial management resource for CRS staff and other HVTN Leadership Operations Center (LOC) staff based in South Africa, and is a liaison between Southern Africa-based clinical CRS staff and Seattle-based staff.
<b>KEY RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
<b><u>Project Management, coordination, support and implementation</u></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Manage expectations for LOC, HVTN Leadership, and CRSs related to study implementation, including the start-up timeline, enrollment, and site performance.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepares and presents study material at meetings and communicates outcomes to project team.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other duties and assignments as requested for the overall performance of the department and company.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Serve as the primary contact for site knowledge and site-related queries</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Operational Management, develop, maintain and implement clinical research protocol processes</u></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Work to carry out the operational strategy of the Network.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Represent and advocate for CRSs in strategic &amp; operational discussions. Serve as the primary “go-to person” for CRS knowledge and CRS-related queries.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drawing on knowledge and relationships with sites’ operations, provide input to clinical research teams on site expertise and potential obstacles and challenges.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Upon trial start, provide primary trial management support to the GCP standard to a portfolio of CRSs, including frequent travel for on-site training and assessment, ensuring effective implementation of HIV vaccine research protocols.</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Clinical Research Support, quality assurance, protocol adherence</u></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interact with the CRS PIs to address issues related to site management, enrollment and performance.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In the startup phase, develop a portfolio of CRSs in Southern Africa to conduct rigorous clinical trials to US NIH/National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) and HVTN standards.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other duties, as required</li> </ul>	



**Doctoral bursary in the Experimental Tuberculosis and Immunology Research group - IDM, UCT - deadline 1st March**

Please find more details here: <https://lnkd.in/dia-5ef>.

**Scientific Officer vacancy - Cape Town HVTN - Immunology laboratory (deadline 11 March)**

Please see more details below. Bongzi Vilakazi



<b>Position Title:</b>	Scientific Officer
<b>Position Purpose:</b>	The Scientific Officer will conduct laboratory research to profile immune responses induced by vaccination in human clinical trials in a Good Clinical Laboratory Practice (GCLP) environment. S/he will write standard operating procedures, reports, grant proposals, manuscripts and present research at scientific meetings.
<b>Reporting To:</b>	Laboratory Director
<b>KEY RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
<p><b>Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and implement cutting edge immunological techniques in the laboratory to investigate immune responses to vaccination.</li> <li>Perform advanced data analysis and troubleshooting of experiments, providing guidance to the team.</li> <li>Train and supervise research technologists.</li> <li>Write lab protocols, standard operating procedures, study plans and other related documents/reports.</li> <li>Write grants and manuscripts, and present research at scientific meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>General Laboratory Operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct all work according to Good Clinical Laboratory Practice (GCLP) guidelines and auditable-standards, ensuring accurate and timely reporting and record keeping.</li> <li>Develop and manage relevant components of quality systems (documentation, training, deviation reporting, etc.).</li> <li>Attend and participate in appropriate laboratory meetings.</li> <li>Contribute to the development of the laboratory environment (e.g. laboratory safety).</li> </ul>	
<b>EDUCATION, CERTIFICATION, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE NEEDED</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PhD with experience in immunology, virology, or related field</li> <li>Track record of productive research demonstrated with first author publications and presentations at prominent scientific meetings</li> <li>Experience working with clinical trials preferred</li> </ul>	
<b>COMPETENCIES /SKILLS/ KNOWLEDGE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced data analysis, experience with statistics, data interpretation and scientific writing skills</li> <li>Expertise in HIV and/or TB</li> <li>Ability to take initiative and work independently but also to work with a team</li> <li>Highly flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of a fast-paced and dynamic environment with a desire to learn</li> <li>Excellent attention to detail and scientific rigor</li> <li>Advanced problem-solving skills</li> <li>Advanced project management skills; excellent time management skills and ability to work within set deadlines</li> <li>Understanding of importance, implementation and maintenance of GCLP principles</li> <li>Effective communication (oral, written and presentation) and interpersonal skills</li> </ul>	

Interested candidates should send their full Curriculum Vitae to Bongzi Vilakazi @ [svilakaz@hcrisa.org.za](mailto:svilakaz@hcrisa.org.za)

Closing date: **11 March 2019**



Thank you to our sponsors for the VII-th Conference of the South African Immunology Society in June 2019.



Thank you to the prize sponsor of the November 2018 Lucky Draw for Paid Up members.



Please don't forget to send me any info you may have on funding opportunities, meetings, workshops and/or conferences, so I can post it on the SAIS LinkedIn page. Additionally, if you are recruiting/hiring, I am more than happy to advertise it on LinkedIn and in the newsletter. Thank you.

Kind regards

Dana Savulescu (PhD), Pr.Sci.Nat.

Mobile: +27 74 6800082

Email: [danams79@gmail.com](mailto:danams79@gmail.com)