

## a Research Programme for Skin-related Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

### CFP-NTD2021

DIORAPHTE - [www.dioraphte.nl](http://www.dioraphte.nl) - a private charitable Foundation established in the Netherlands, has established a fully funded research programme for Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) with a specific focus on Skin NTDs.

### Background - NTDs and Skin diseases

Skin diseases are among the most common of all human health afflictions and affect almost 900 million people in the world with five common conditions accounting for over 80% of these. WHO has recently given a higher profile to skin diseases and, importantly, with an emphasis on the skin-related NTDs (<http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/83/12/news41205>), including buruli ulcer, cutaneous leishmaniasis, post kala-azar dermal leishmaniasis, leprosy, lymphatic filariasis, mycetoma, onchocerciasis, scabies and yaws (see [http://www.who.int/neglected\\_diseases/news/Skin\\_diseases\\_integrated\\_treatment](http://www.who.int/neglected_diseases/news/Skin_diseases_integrated_treatment) and Hay et al.(2014) and Mitja et al (2017)). Skin diseases rarely cause mortality, rather they disfigure, stigmatise and disable patients, resulting in serious social and economic cost and psychological damage. Despite this, Skin NTDs have attracted significantly less research funding than other NTDs. Most skin NTDs lack drugs, treatments, diagnostics, or vaccines because their discovery and development requires new and improved tools. In turn progress has been limited by a poor understanding of skin immunology, disease pathogenesis, vaccine interactions, and drug pharmacokinetics and pharmaceuticals. The broader implications of more basic, as well as discovery research, on neglected skin diseases include potential for translation into other global infections of concern, such as nosocomial and both multidrug resistance (MDR) bacterial and MDR fungal infections.

### References

- 1: Hay RJ, Johns NE, Williams HC, Bolliger IW, Dellavalle RP, Margolis DJ, Marks R et al. The global burden of skin disease in 2010: an analysis of the prevalence and impact of skin conditions. *J Invest Dermatol.* 2014; 134:1527-34. doi:10.1038/jid.2013.446.
- 2: Mitjà O, Marks M, Bertran L, Kollie K, Argaw D, Fahal AH, et al. (2017) Integrated Control and Management of Neglected Tropical Skin Diseases. *PLoS Negl Trop Dis* 11(1): e0005136. doi: 10.1371/journal.pntd.0005136

### Priority areas for funding

The Dioraphte Foundation has decided to continue its support for translational and clinical experimental research that underpins the understanding of pathophysiology and pathogenesis of Skin-related NTDs. The scope includes clinically driven basic research questions that **precede** clinical trials for improved drugs, treatments, diagnostics or vaccines. Transdisciplinary approaches to research studies designed to be embedded in endemic clinical settings are encouraged.

In this 2nd call for research proposals on the Foundation will give priority to five areas:

- (i) Immunology, pathophysiology, pathogenesis, or metabolic processes during infection that could lead to improved drugs, treatments, diagnostics or vaccines.
- (ii) Improved experimental or population models of skin infection to support research into improved drugs, treatments, diagnostics or vaccines.
- (iii) Innovative approaches to the discovery and development of drugs, diagnostics or vaccines.
- (iv) Underlying pathology in diverse endemic populations that determines variation in response to diagnostics, drugs or vaccines.
- (v) Role of skin commensals and co-infections in disease.

Proposals linking groups that have expertise in NTDs to those with expertise in skin research, in academic, public or private sectors, are encouraged.

In this 2<sup>nd</sup> call for 2021 1.7 million euros will be available to fund 2-4 proposals. Proposals should be for 2 to 4 years with a maximum budget of 850,000 Euros.

## Outline of Call Proposal Process and Evaluation

This will be a two-stage call, with:

- (a) **A first request** for a short application (max 5 pages) outlining - importance of the research question in relation to specified skin NTD(s), objectives, research plan, experience of partners, potential impact and outcomes, budget and timelines.
- (b) From the initial submissions up to 5 proposals will be selected and invited to submit **a full application** with the aim of funding two to four projects. This will also require details of project management, risk management, other funding supporting the team's work, and the next steps to be taken if the research is successful.
- (c) Each group selected for the full application will be awarded up to 5K euros (depending on number of partners) to support a workshop to frame and detail the full application.

Application information is available on the Dioraphte website at the following page; <https://www.dioraphte.nl/en/science-and-research/>

The initial review and evaluation of the short applications will be undertaken by a panel of three scientists with the relevant background, experience and reputation. The full application will be submitted for external review to a further three scientists with the appropriate specialist expertise. The recommendation of the panel will be submitted to the Dioraphte Board for approval.

## Timetable

The 1<sup>st</sup> stage brief application should be submitted to [CFP-NTD2021@dioraphte.nl](mailto:CFP-NTD2021@dioraphte.nl) by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

The 1<sup>st</sup> stage review process will be completed and successful applicants informed by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> stage full application should be submitted to [CFP-NTD2021@dioraphte.nl](mailto:CFP-NTD2021@dioraphte.nl) by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

Successful applicants will be informed by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

Further enquiries about the call should be addressed to [CFP-NTD2021@dioraphte.nl](mailto:CFP-NTD2021@dioraphte.nl)