

## **One Health research programme awards first £1m to fight infectious diseases**

### **For Immediate Release**

The Bloomsbury SET, a £5 million translational research programme led by the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) and funded by Research England, has awarded its first tranche of grants to the total value of £1 million.

The programme adopts a 'one health' approach to the development of new vaccines, diagnostic tools and mathematical models to combat infectious diseases and antimicrobial resistance. (One Health is the method of collaboration between different disciplines to achieve the best health outcomes for animals and humans.)

Projects conducted by RVC academics were among two of the three recipients of this first tranche of grants. One is a project led by Professor Joanne Webster to examine the treatment of zoonotic hybrid and livestock schistosomiasis, also known as snail fever, in sub-Saharan Africa, which has been awarded £280,274. Meanwhile, the second is a study led by Professor Dirk Werling, in collaboration with Professor Brendan Wren from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), on the development and testing of a vaccine for *Streptococcus suis*, a disease capable of transmission from pigs to humans, which has been awarded £333,604.

The third and final grant, valued at £350,776, was given to Professor Tim Allen of the London School of Economics & Political Science (LSE), and Professor Melissa Parker, of LSHTM, to help fund research into localised evidence and decision-making in the control and elimination of schistosomiasis in East Africa.

As well as the RVC, Bloomsbury Science, Economics & Technology is also made up of the LSE, the LSHTM, the London International Development Centre (LIDC), and SOAS University of London.

Welcoming the announcement of the awards, Professor Claire Heffernan, Professor of International Development and Director at LIDC, commented:

"The Bloomsbury SET capitalises on our colleges' world-leading expertise in infectious disease and supports our ability to transform research into tangible health outcomes for some of the most marginalised and vulnerable populations globally. By supporting early and mid-career researchers, The Bloomsbury SET also offers a pathway for the best ideas to merge into sustainable solutions."

Dr Ray Kent, Director of Research Administration at the RVC, added:

"These prestigious awards are the first in a series that is designed to demonstrate the benefits of connecting together the translational research capabilities of the four partner Colleges in The Bloomsbury SET. The projects funded in the first call for proposals have been selected on the basis of rigorous expert review. We anticipate they will make a significant contribution to the UK's efforts in the fight against endemic and emerging infectious diseases."

A call for applications for the second tranche of grants, with an individual value of up to £360,000 each will open later this month with a closing date in January 2019. The Bloomsbury SET is also currently advertising a call for applicants for its two-year Innovation Fellowships in diagnostics.

## ENDS

### Notes to Editors

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### About the Royal Veterinary College

- The Royal Veterinary College (RVC) is the UK's largest and longest established independent veterinary school and is a constituent College of the University of London.
- The RVC offers undergraduate, postgraduate and CPD programmes in veterinary medicine, veterinary nursing and biological sciences.
- It is currently the only veterinary school in the world to hold full accreditation from AVMA, EAEVE, RCVS and AVBC.
- In 2017, the RVC received a Gold award from the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) – the highest rating a university can receive.
- RVC is a research led institution with 79% of its research rated as internationally excellent or world class in the Research Excellence Framework 2014.
- The College also provides animal owners and the veterinary profession with access to expert veterinary care and advice through its teaching hospitals; the Beaumont Sainsbury Animal Hospital in central London, the Queen Mother Hospital for Animals (Europe's largest small animal referral centre), the Equine Referral Hospital, and the Farm Animal Clinical Centre located at the Hertfordshire campus.
- <http://www.rvc.ac.uk>



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