



WIPO Re:Search Strategic Plan 2017–2021

Executive Summary



WIPO | Re:Search

Sharing Innovation
in the Fight Against
Neglected Tropical Diseases

Executive Summary

Vision:

Improved global health through innovation that mobilizes intellectual property and the power of private and public sector collaborations.

Mission:

Accelerate the discovery and development of technologies for neglected tropical diseases, malaria and tuberculosis by sharing intellectual property with the global health research community, catalyzing and fostering global health collaborations, and contributing to capacity-building in developing countries.

WIPO Re:Search Strategic Plan 2017–2021

This Strategic Plan is both the result of extensive internal discussions involving the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO, the Secretariat), BIO Ventures for Global Health (BVGH, the Partnership Hub Administrator) and the WIPO Re:Search Advisory Committee, and of several rounds of consultations with Members of WIPO Re:Search. The preparation of the plan also benefitted from inputs from external stakeholders, and is anchored in, and builds on, the WIPO Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2016-2021).

The creation of WIPO Re:Search was driven by two inter-related goals. The first is to demonstrate that the intellectual property (IP) system can and does work to stimulate investment in innovation. It largely explains why WIPO, as an organization with no direct responsibility for health, sponsors a global health program. The second is to catalyze more research on neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), malaria and tuberculosis (TB). There is a dearth of investment in new and better medicines for these diseases.

It is timely to prepare a strategic plan to ensure that WIPO Re:Search contributes effectively to the continuing debate on IP and health; takes account of the changing global health research and development (R&D) landscape; and contributes to the achievement of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

There is continuing debate about IP, innovation and access, with disagreement as to whether IP is a barrier or a facilitator. WIPO Re:Search contributes to the policy discussion by providing tangible evidence that the IP framework facilitates access to health technologies and thus enables more R&D, even in neglected fields. Moreover, on the issue of R&D itself, WIPO Re:Search adds to the range of investments in NTDs, malaria, and TB, precisely because its Members are reassured about sharing IP assets within a mechanism that respects IP. While important progress has been made in some NTDs, malaria and TB, major challenges remain and there is a continuing need for new vaccines, drugs and diagnostics. By contributing tangible results, WIPO Re:Search serves the direct need for more products while also sending a constructive message about IP and health.

WIPO Re:Search bases its continuing activities on a belief in the positive value of IP, the need for partnering among various actors in innovation, a long-term perspective of potential contribution to product development, the opportunity to mobilize resources, and the value of research. After five years of operation, it is timely to build on the achievements of WIPO Re:Search and devise a strategy for its continued success.

WIPO Re:Search has an outstanding record of success. As of April 2017, it has established 112 collaborations, of which 34 are ongoing. The establishment of these collaborations and the continuation of many have demonstrated that IP is not a barrier to upstream research on NTDs, malaria and TB. Furthermore, membership has grown from 31 to 126 organizations, representing 35 countries. WIPO Re:Search has carried out a comprehensive communication and advocacy program and has funded and undertaken capacity-building for developing country scientists.

Over the next five years, partnerships will continue to be central to WIPO Re:Search. BVGH will implement a more process-driven and targeted partnership development approach to link R&D programs with gaps and disease burdens. WIPO Re:Search, however, may significantly expand activities with respect to IP by working, upon request, with partners to provide input regarding appropriate IP management strategies. Contingent upon additional funding, WIPO Re:Search hopes to expand capacity-building programs and provide limited financial support to some collaborations to advance their research.

WIPO Re:Search will seek to achieve four Strategic Goals by executing the following Implementing Activities:

Strategic Goal No. 1:

Use IP assets to advance R&D for NTDs, malaria, and TB through collaborations

Implementing Activity 1.1:

Establish and maintain, in collaboration with the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) and others, as appropriate, a landscape analysis of technologies (including target product profiles [TPPs]) for each priority disease to help guide priority setting and collaboration formation.

Implementing Activity 1.2:

Establish new collaborations that address priority needs and provide assistance and support to ongoing partnerships, as required.

Implementing Activity 1.3:

Expand the number of company Providers who can offer assets and support for the operations of WIPO Re:Search and expand the number of Members, especially from developing countries, that contribute needed capabilities. New Members will be recruited to meet needs for addressing particular diseases or technologies and to increase membership from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Implementing Activity 1.4:

Provide comprehensive IP management assistance to partnerships that are moving toward downstream product development.

Strategic Goal No. 2:

Accelerate the advancement of promising compounds or leads

Implementing Activity:

Accelerate progress in a selected group of collaborations by assisting collaborators to obtain grants from donor agencies. The highest priority will be those projects with the potential for the compound or lead to move rapidly to later stages of evaluation.

Strategic Goal No. 3:

Enhance global capacity for IP management and biomedical R&D

Implementing Activity:

Support capacity development of Member organizations, from developing countries and academic institutions, by strengthening IP management capabilities. Also provide to them research fellowships for capacity-building at leading research centers.

Strategic Goal No. 4:

Communicate the beneficial role of IP in innovation for NTDs, malaria, and TB

Implementing Activity:

Increase dissemination of information about the role of IP for R&D in NTDs, malaria, and TB; the potential technologies to combat these diseases; and the specific contributions of WIPO Re:Search. Also leverage the capacity of Members to disseminate information about WIPO Re:Search.

WIPO Re:Search will set priorities according to burden of disease, need for new or improved technologies, shortfalls in resources, availability of IP, technological potential of available resources, and capabilities of potential partners. For the near-term, WIPO Re:Search intends to maintain its current disease priorities.

To achieve its Strategic Goals, WIPO Re:Search will have programs in partnering, IP management, funding of research projects, capacity-building and communications. The funding of research projects and capacity-building will be subject to raising additional resources. It will continue to collaborate with key organizations in both the public and private sectors. The programs of WIPO Re:Search are carried out through the coordinated work of WIPO and BVGH.

WIPO Re:Search will continue to be evaluated against Milestones through WIPO mechanisms, and regularly reviewed by Members, the Advisory Committee, and the Board of BVGH.

The WIPO Re:Search expenditures have grown since its launch in late 2011, with a direct program expenditure of 1.7 million Swiss Francs in 2016. These expenditures are composed of allocations from WIPO's regular budget, contributions from Member States through the Funds-in-Trust program (Governments of Australia and Japan), and substantial contributions from the funding Members of WIPO Re:Search (Eisai, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson, Merck KGaA, MSD, Novartis, Pfizer, Sanofi and Takeda) to the Partnership Hub at BVGH. To implement this Strategic Plan, WIPO Re:Search will need to substantially expand this funding base.

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