Longitude Prize launches new seed funding to drive innovation in rapid tests to help reduce antibiotic resistance

Submitted by: Nesta
Friday, 20 January 2017

Longitude Prize launches new seed funding to drive innovation in rapid tests to help reduce antibiotic resistance

-Discovery Awards programme offers up to £25,000 to help teams overcome barriers to develop game-changing rapid tests and to win the £10m Longitude Prize
-Grant funding comes from MSD, known as Merck in the United States and Canada, at a time when current trends project antimicrobial resistance will cause 10 million deaths annually by 2050

Davos-Klosters, Switzerland - 20 January: At a panel event about diagnostics and global antimicrobial resistance (AMR), taking place at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos today, the UK's Chief Medical Officer Professor Dame Sally Davies announces £250,000 of Discovery Award seed funding for diagnostic tests that could win the Longitude Prize.

Now in its third year of five, the Longitude Prize is a £10 million prize challenge to create a cost-effective, accurate, rapid, and easy-to-use test to diagnose bacterial infections so that the right antibiotics can be administered at the right time. It is being run by innovation foundation Nesta and supported by Innovate UK as funding partner.

The second round of Discovery Awards will provide grants of up to £25,000 to teams that are registered to win the Longitude Prize. The grants are aimed at innovators around the world who need access to additional or startup capital in order to further develop and progress their ideas to win the challenge.
At a time when antimicrobial resistance is forecasted (https://amr-review.org/sites/default/files/AMR%20Review%20Paper%20-%20Tackling%20a%20crisis%20for%20the%20heal to cause 10 million deaths annually by 2050, the seed funding programme aims to drive much-needed innovation in the development of a new point-of-care diagnostic.

In November 2016, 12 teams from the US, UK and India received funding from the first round of Discovery Awards. More information about the winners can be found here (https://longitudeprize.org/blog-post/winners-discovery-awards).

Professor Davies - also member of The Longitude Prize Committee - said: "Rapid point-of-care diagnostics are critical to the fight against antimicrobial resistant infections as they will enable more targeted prescribing and lead to a reduction in overall antibiotic use. I am delighted to see this issue being addressed through the industry commitment at the World Economic Forum. To ensure we get the best minds from every corner of the globe working on this growing public health threat, robust seed funding initiatives for innovators are essential. As such, I am delighted to launch the Discovery Awards once more."

The funding for these Discovery Awards has been provided by MSD, known as Merck in the United States and Canada, a global healthcare company. "As a global healthcare leader, we are investing resources and expertise to combat the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance. We are delighted to provide funding

towards this important cause," said Louise Houson, Managing Director, MSD UK.

At the Davos panel event AdvaMedDx, with support from the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), also issued a global stakeholder commitment to optimise the use of diagnostic tests on a global scale and further investment in health systems through public-private partnerships.

Welcoming the news, Daniel Berman, Nesta's Longitude Prize lead said: "People around the world are missing out on access to existing tools to diagnose life-threatening diseases. But scaling up existing tests will not be sufficient. In HIV and malaria care rapid diagnostic tests have revolutionised medical practice. We need to advocate for this change in diagnosing bacterial infections too - creating next generation, point-of-care tests that are practical to use in primary care and in hospital settings, whether in wealthy or resource poor countries."

There are currently more than 200 teams, from almost 40 countries, taking part in the Longitude Prize. To learn more about the Longitude Prize, visit https://longitudeprize.org/ (https://longitudeprize.org/)

The Discovery Awards open for applications on Monday, 23 January 2017. For more information visit longitudeprize.org/discoveryawards (https://longitudeprize.org/discoveryawards).

-Ends

Notes to Editors

The closing date for applicants to the Discovery Awards is 21 April 2017. Shortlisted applications will then be reviewed by the Discovery Awards Panel, and winners will be chosen. Winners will be announced publicly in summer 2017.

In order to be eligible to apply, teams must already be registered as a competitor in the Longitude Prize. If not already registered, teams will be asked to do so before they submit their application to the Discovery Awards.

About Longitude Prize: The Longitude Prize £10m prize fund aims to conserve antibiotics for future generations and revolutionise global healthcare. It will reward a competitor that can develop a transformative, point-of-care diagnostic test that can either rule out antibiotic use or help identify an effective antibiotic to treat a patient.

The Longitude Prize being delivered by innovation foundation Nesta was announced by the Prime Minister at G8 in 2013, and is supported by Innovate UK as funding partner. The Prize commemorates the 300th anniversary of the Longitude Act (1714) when the British government threw down the gauntlet to solve one of the great scientific challenges of that century: how to pinpoint a ship's location at sea. www.longitudeprize.org

For further information on the Longitude Prize contact, Kasia Murphy, Press Officer at Nesta on +44 (0) 20 7438 2610 or kasia.murphy@nesta.org.uk

Spokespeople available on request

About MSD: For over a century, MSD has been a global health care leader working to help the world be well. MSD is known as Merck in the United States and Canada. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies, and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn.

Distributed via Press Release Wire (https://pressreleases.responsesource.com/) on behalf of Nesta

Copyright © 1999-2024 ResponseSource, The Johnson Building, 79 Hatton Garden, London, EC1N 8AW, UK

e: info@responsesource.com t: 020 3426 4051 f: 0345 370 7776 w: https://www.responsesource.com