

European Malaria Vaccine Initiative

Call for Proposals

Deadline for submission is Friday 17 October 2003, 17:00 hours

EMVI's mission is

To contribute to the global efforts to control malaria by

1. Providing a mechanism for accelerated development of malaria vaccines in Europe and Developing Countries.
2. Promoting affordability and accessibility of malaria vaccines in Developing Countries.

EMVI shall contribute to the post validation phase of nationally and internationally funded malaria vaccine research and development, and facilitate the process that takes experimental malaria vaccines through to limited GMP production and clinical trials.

EMVI's earlier call for Letters of Interest (LoI) provided an important insight into current European research strategies in this field. Elements of these strategies are reflected in the current call.

European and Developing country research groups are invited to submit full proposals for the continued development and clinical testing of candidate molecules towards experimental *P. falciparum* malaria vaccines.

EMVI may support work, which will move potential candidates into the clinical trials phase, including late stage pre-clinical studies in non-human primates, formulation, GMP production, toxicology and clinical trials. EMVI will not support antigen discovery studies.

While any proposals will be considered those addressing the potential for immediate or future combinations of two or more components will take preference. For definition of combination vaccines and reflection on the many challenges facing development of combination vaccines, please refer to EMVI's web site www.emvi.org/meetings.

EMVI's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) of independent scientists, - please refer to www.emvi.org/organisation - assisted by other experts as the need arises, will review the proposals.

EMVI Actively collaborates with among others the international malaria vaccine funders mentioned on the website www.emvi.org, and is a partner in the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP).

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In elaborating a proposal you are advised to address the following key issues systematically.

- 1) Epidemiology:
 - What is known and what information is lacking?
 - Are epidemiological studies needed for the development of the vaccine?
 - If known, what is (are) the correlate(s) of protection or immunity in target populations?

- 2) Scientific rationale:
 - a) Background:
 - Target populations: Age, geographical zones, special risk groups. Are there genetic (haplotype) differences in populations that do better than others, immunologically and clinically?
 - b) Antigen choice; stage specific or multistage, pros and cons
 - Single or multiple antigens
 - What is the response to this (these) antigen(s) in naturally exposed populations?
 - Are certain immune responses correlated to better clinical outcomes?
 - What are the theoretical/hypothetical reasons why an immune-response to this (these) antigen(s) would be detrimental to the parasite?
 - Are there *in-vivo* or *in-vitro* tests to support this?
 - Expected performance of the vaccine. What would the investigator consider the best proof of concept test that could be designed?
 - c) Choice of vector/formulation/antigen-presentation
 - Does the investigator know what type of immune-response needs to be induced?
 - Has an antigen delivery system that achieves the required response been identified?
 - Is this system validated in humans? in animals? as a viable option for wide spread/scale-up and use? Discuss advantages and limitations
 - Competing products: Other vaccines, other available products
 - d) Preclinical development:
 - Correlates of protection; development of immunological tests for the assessment of the quality of the immune response. Animal models
 - e) Route of administration:
 - Is there any data to support alternative routes of administration of interest for the antigen?
 - f) Summary of clinical development to date

- 3) Vaccine production:
 - How will the vaccine be produced?
 - Is an adjuvant needed?
 - What reagents will have to be developed to control product and its immunogenicity?
 - What assays need to be developed or validated prior to initiating clinical trials?
 - Animal studies including pharmaco-toxicological studies Stability studies
 - Quality control studies: Are the tests already developed? Are there already any product characteristics available?

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4) Clinical development strategy:

Describe the intended clinical development strategy, which will result in a clear decision to proceed to development with a well-defined product and with reasonable probability of success.

Define the rationale for phase 1 - 2a studies.

Are there pivotal studies that would form the basis for GO/NO-GO decisions?

Define hypothesis, objectives, main outcome measurement, study design and time-lines.

The proposal-text should not exceed 12 (twelve) pages. The tasks should be explained in work packages. The number of work packages should not exceed 6 (six). Elaboration of ethical aspects and the benefits for target populations is also required.

The proposal need **not** be anonymous, and relevant literature should be referred to in the text, and a list of references should be provided as the ultimate page in the application.

Manuscripts submitted, but not yet published, can be attached, and essential research results not yet ready for submission can be submitted together with the proposal in a format, which describes and discusses the results, strictly to substantiate the proposal. Relevant reprints can be annexed.

The penultimate page of the proposal should be a budget outline relating to each work package.

Proposals will be dealt with in confidence. They should be e-mailed to:

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Additional information is available from Dr. Soren Jepsen. or Dr. Odile Leroy.

A decision will be communicated to proposers by mid December 2003.