

NEWS

WINTER 2024



STAR IDAZ

International
Research
Consortium on
Animal Health



Message from Chair

In October I was delighted to participate in my first Executive Committee meeting as Chairperson of the STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC). The world is continuing to face emerging and re-emerging health challenges and zoonoses, alongside the challenges posed by climate change, so these meetings with other research funders and stakeholders are more important than ever.

In many parts of the world there are increasing problems with transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses, and most of these problems that are occurring around the world key directly into the STAR IDAZ priorities, including bovine tuberculosis, African swine fever, foot-and-mouth disease, brucellosis, influenza, mycoplasmas and zoonoses. These remain priorities for us. The Executive Committee meetings provide a platform for members to explore opportunities for sharing research resources and information

on funding mechanisms, to grow our global network of experts and researchers and institutions working together to combat these infectious diseases, and improve animal welfare and ensure food security for a growing population.

As 2024 comes to a close we have 36 STAR IDAZ IRC Partners. I am looking forward to growing not only our IRC Partnerships in 2025, but also our Regional Networks whose collaborations are invaluable. Together

we can further strengthen our common objectives, utilizing a One Health approach among others to bring about animal disease control.

I wish everyone a peaceful end to 2024 and my very best wishes for a collaborative and inspiring 2025.

**Maryam
Muhammad**
Chair, Executive
Committee, IRC



www.STAR IDAZ.net

Executive Committee

The STAR IDAZ IRC Executive Committee is made up of representatives from each of the partners of the IRC. They oversee the direction of the consortium and agree its activities to facilitate the coordination of research on animal health. The Executive Committee have agreed to coordinate research funding strategies, promote support for STAR IDAZ IRC objectives, and share information between the members.

STAR IDAZ IRC is delighted to welcome the Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed) as a new partner organisation, bringing the number of Partners to 36. GALVmed will be represented by Steve Wilson.

The last IRC Executive Committee meeting was held on 31 October 2024 by webinar. Dr Maryam Muhammad Director and Chief Executive of the National Veterinary Research Institute, Vom and STAR IDAZ IRC Chairperson welcomed all participants and opened the meeting. On behalf of STAR IDAZ IRC, she thanked Dr Hong Yin, Director General of the Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute and former STAR IDAZ IRC Chairperson, for

the leadership and strategic direction he provided to STAR IDAZ throughout his term. Gareth Dicks, member of the STAR IDAZ Secretariat, provided an update on the actions raised at the Executive Committee World Café workshop, held 18 June 2024 in São Paulo, Brazil where members discussed 'Maximising SIRCAH Support for Executive Committee Members: Envisioning the Future of STAR IDAZ IRC'. Professor Wim van der Poel, STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee Chair, reported on the previous Scientific Committee meeting held by webinar on 16 October 2024. The recent activities of the STAR IDAZ Network were also presented and progress discussed,

including the four Regional Networks: Africa and the Middle East; Americas; Asia and Australia; and Europe (which operates through: SCAR Collaborative Working Group on Animal Health and Welfare Research (CWG-AHW)). Other topics covered included election of a new deputy chairperson, admission of new partners, opportunities for collaboration, the UN General Assembly Political Declaration of the High-Level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance, long-term sustainability of STAR IDAZ IRC, and an upcoming review of the priority topics.

The next STAR IDAZ Executive Committee meeting will be held in-person in 2025.



The Executive Committee and Scientific Committee last met in-person in Sao Paulo in June 2024.

Scientific Committee

The Scientific Committee met by webinar on 16 October 2024. The meeting was chaired by Professor Wim van der Poel, Chair of the STAR IDAZ IRC Scientific Committee. The Committee was updated on the previous meeting of the Executive Committee and activities of the Regional Networks, before reviewing and discussing recent

activities of the Working Groups for Mastitis, Brucellosis, Bovine Tuberculosis Coronaviruses, Aquatic Diseases, and One Health.

The next meeting of the STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee will be held in spring 2025, as a webinar.

Regional Networks

Americas; Africa and the Middle East; Asia and Australasia; European Network

The STAR IDAZ Regional Networks (for Africa & the Middle East, the Americas, Asia & Australasia, and Europe) facilitate regional cooperation and coordination by identifying common research priorities in the Region, opportunities for sharing resources including access to samples, specialised facilities and expertise, and international or regional funding opportunities.

Americas Regional Network

This network last met by webinar on 19 July 2024. More details are available in the Summer Newsletter.

Africa and the Middle East Regional Network

The Africa and Middle East Regional Network met on 21 August 2024 by webinar, with participation from Ghana, Israel, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Zambia, and representatives from AU-IBAR, IDRC, GALVmed, WOA Regional Offices, and World Bank Group. There were presentations from the World Association for Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology African Network (WAAVP-AN), and an update on PROVNA, a vector-borne disease surveillance programme in North Africa. Regional Network members presented their country reports, with a particular focus on vector-borne disease, as this had previously been identified as a priority for the region.

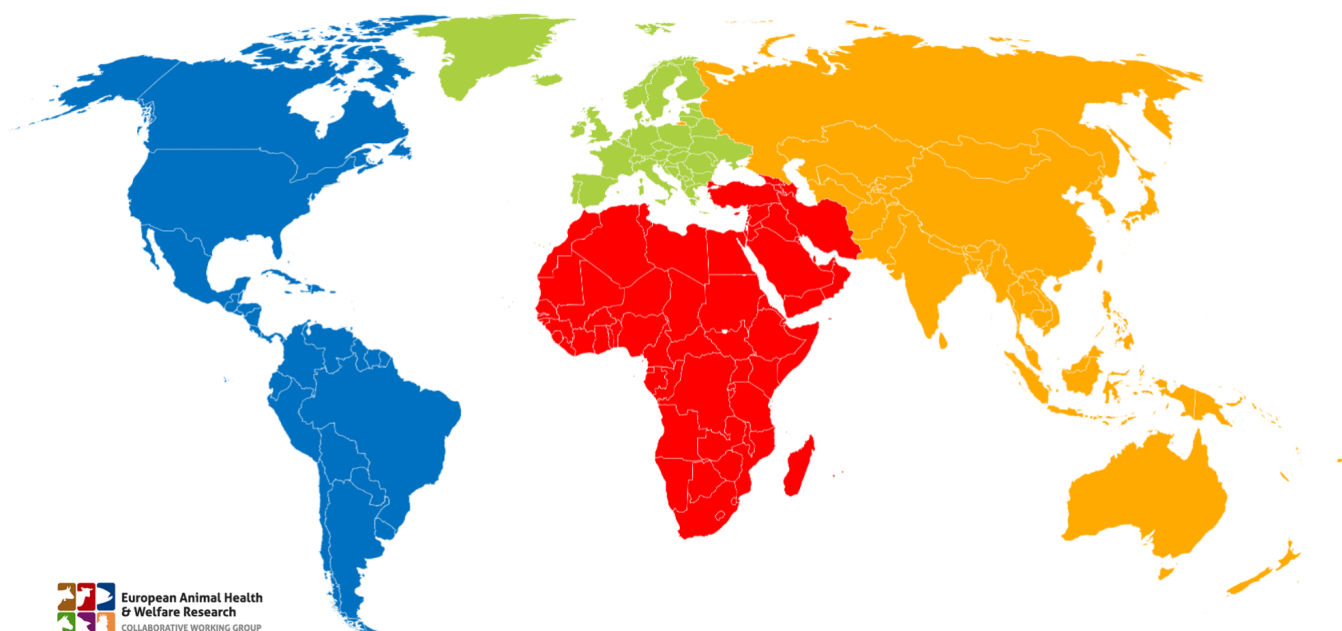
Asia and Australasia Regional Network

This network last met by webinar on 16 July 2024. More details are available in the Summer Newsletter.

Europe Network: SCAR Collaborative Working Group on Animal Health and Welfare Research (CWG-AHW)

The AH&W CWG, which acts as the European regional consortium of STAR IDAZ, continues to organise meetings with relevant national authorities, funders, experts, industry associations and representatives from the European Commission. Indeed, not all CWG members are partners of the Horizon Europe AH&W Partnership, which was launched in early 2024. During the last plenary meeting on 23 May 2024 members were updated on the activities of the AH&W Partnership, ICRAD ERA-Net, STAR IDAZ and DISCONTTOOLS, as well as the subgroups on Animal Welfare, and the Strategy and Foresight Unit. The meeting also allowed countries to share their research priorities and challenges in AH&W, which is an important recurrent activity. In addition, two scientific presentations were made, on highly pathogenic avian influenza in cattle by Prof. Wim van der Poel (WUR, NL) and on burden of disease by Brecht Devleesschauwer (Sciensano, BE). The most recent CWG subgroup meetings and plenary were held in Rome on 9 and 10 December.

Regional Networks



Americas

Europe

Africa & Middle East

Asia & Australasia

Aquatic diseases

STAR IDAZ IRC is organizing a workshop with WOAH Headquarters to identify key research areas for aquatic animal diseases in Paris on 20-21 February 2025, aligned with the WOAH Aquatic Animal Health Strategy (Activity 4.5). This event will convene global experts, researchers, funders, and industry representatives to address crucial gaps in finfish disease research. Through interactive sessions, including World Café discussions, participants will emphasize diagnostics, control strategies, vaccines, and therapeutic needs. The workshop aims to produce a comprehensive document outlining priority research areas and potential projects, promoting international collaboration and enhancing aquatic animal health standards. This effort highlights STAR IDAZ IRC's commitment to driving impactful, coordinated animal health research.

One Health

STAR IDAZ IRC's One Health working group is continuing to progress with its focus on how to improve the current funding mechanisms available for funding animal health research that takes an integrated, holistic and whole-of society (One Health) approach. Through a survey and two workshops, the working group developed an initial report "[Mapping One Health: An Exploration of the Global Funding Landscape for One Health Research](#)". A brief overview of the STAR IDAZ network and a short summary of the report findings were presented by Madeline Newman (STAR IDAZ Secretariat) at the World One Health Congress in Cape Town in September. The presentation was well-attended and led to a number of useful follow-up conversations and potential future collaborations. The conference was also a great opportunity to catch up with some of the One Health working group members in-person. As a next step, the One Health working group is organizing an in-person workshop to bring together researchers and funders, resource partners and investors who are interested in supporting One Health approaches to tackling complex animal health issues. The workshop will use participatory processes to listen to reflections and suggestions on the recommendations made in the initial report, collectively refining them to ensure any suggested solutions to current barriers are feasible, realistic and helpful. The workshop is likely to be held in Nairobi, Kenya in March 2025, before or after the CABI One Health Hub horizon scanning workshop, to encourage knowledge exchange and enhanced collaboration. A follow-up to the mapping report is also in progress and will incorporate feedback from stakeholders at the upcoming workshop, as well as from the STAR IDAZ scientific committee.



Madeline Newman (STAR IDAZ IRC Secretariat) highlighted challenges and possible solutions for coordinating One Health research funding globally at the World One Health Congress in Cape Town in September.

Mycoplasmas

Mycoplasmas are a STAR IDAZ IRC priority disease and cause a number of diseases that represent a major global threat to animal welfare and food security; this is most keenly felt by small producers in low-resource settings, who have a real and immediate sense of economic loss and food (in) security on the onset of illness within their herd. Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) is caused by infection with *Mycoplasma mycoides* subsp. *mycoides* and represents a real and immediate threat to livestock keepers in sub-Saharan Africa, alongside the risk of the disease spreading to other countries. A Mycoplasmas Working Group, led by STAR IDAZ IRC Scientific Committee member Vish Nene, has started looking at the research gaps in the development of CBPP vaccines with the aim to produce a research roadmap in 2025.

The [2023 Veterinary Mycoplasmas Research Report](#) and the [Report of the Gap Analysis Meeting for CBPP](#) will be used to inform the contents of the roadmaps.

A report of the CBPP workshop held in Frankfurt in April 2024 is in progress and it is hoped that the proceedings and recommendations from this meeting, with a particular focus on the Hudson & Turner scoring method and its use in vaccine efficacy trials, will be published soon.

FMD

FAST Disease Risks in a Changing World: From Megatrends to Microlearning

29-31 October 2024, Alcalá de Henares, Spain

The EuFMD Open Session 2024 (OS24) commenced with an inspiring address by Stéphan Zientara, Chair of the Standing Committee and member of the Scientific Committee of STAR IDAZ IRC. The session focused on the challenges posed by FAST diseases amidst global megatrends, examining their impact on disease management practices. An emphasis was placed on microlearning strategies designed to better equip veterinary professionals — both public and private — in effectively managing risks within this swiftly evolving landscape.

Key discussions included a worldwide update on foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), along with innovations in diagnostics, modelling, risk-mapping, vaccine development, and socioeconomics. The third day spotlighted collaborative initiatives between EuFMD and the Global FMD Research Alliance (GFRA), aimed at advancing FMD control through research collaboration and regulatory cohesion.

OS24 exemplified the strength of integrating large-scale insights with actionable tools, thus enabling the veterinary community to swiftly adapt to emerging challenges.

ASF

The **Global African Swine Fever Research Alliance** (GARA) operates as the STAR IDAZ working group for African swine fever (ASF). For more information, please visit the GARA website.

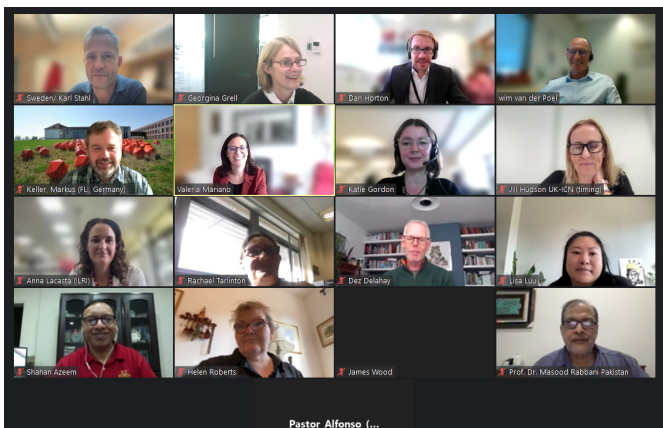
New GARA Executive Committee

Following elections conducted during September GARA has a new Executive Committee. Jeremy Salt, a member of the STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee, will take on the role of Finance Director. STAR IDAZ looks forward to working with GARA in the future.

Coronaviruses

In October STAR IDAZ held a series of three virtual workshops aimed at finalizing research roadmaps for animal coronaviruses. The workshop held on 2 October, facilitated by Dr Dalan Bailey from the UK-ICN network and Dr Elma Tchilian, focused on coronavirus vaccine development; the workshop held on 8 October, facilitated by STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee member Dr Linfa Wang and Dr Alessio Larusso focused on coronavirus diagnostic tool development; and the workshop held on 10 October, facilitated by STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee Chair Prof. Wim van der Poel and Dr Karl Ståhl, focused on coronavirus control strategy development. The complete list of research needs identified in the three workshops will be reported in the research roadmaps that, after validation by the STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee, will be published on the STAR IDAZ website.

These efforts are a continuation of our ongoing activities and build on the insights gained from the gap analysis workshop held in collaboration with UK-ICN in May 2023, published in the **Report of the workshops on Coronavirus gap analysis, 26 May Belfast**.



On 10 October a group of coronavirus experts met online to complete the roadmap on coronavirus control strategies

VBD

Alongside the Executive and Scientific Committee meetings in São Paulo in June 2024, a workshop was organized to support discussions on standardizing tick vaccine trials and the development of a scientific target product profile. The STAR IDAZ roadmap on vector transmission control was presented at this meeting – the generic **Roadmap for Vector Transmission Control**, which is now available on the STAR IDAZ website, considers the control of transmission through three routes: control of the host; control through the vector; looking at the vector ecology or biotope. The generic roadmap can be used in conjunction with STAR IDAZ roadmaps for specific vector-transmitted diseases.

A poster on the STAR IDAZ Vector Transmission Control Roadmap was presented by Scientific Committee member Bruno Goddeeris at the meeting on Vector-Borne Diseases (VBD) in Liverpool on 3-4 December 2024.

Mastitis



STAR IDAZ IRC held a workshop alongside the National Mastitis Council (NMC) Regional Meeting, which took place on 12-14 August 2024, in Ghent, Belgium. This focused event addressed critical research gaps in bovine mastitis, exploring advancements in diagnostics, alternatives to antibiotics, and vaccine development. Experts highlighted the potential of phage therapy, probiotics, and cutting-edge vaccine strategies while emphasizing region-specific needs and practical applications. The workshop's insights will guide the development of strategic roadmaps to align global research efforts with the evolving challenges in mastitis management.

Brucellosis

STAR IDAZ has developed a survey on brucellosis in collaboration with the Scientific Committee and are planning to share it with experts from the International Brucellosis Society prior to a planned workshop. The survey aims to identify research gaps and evaluate the need to update the brucellosis vaccine roadmap or create new ones for diagnostics, therapeutics, and control tools. Details of the workshop will be shared as soon as they are confirmed.

This workshop will aim to refine the roadmaps, guided by insights from the DISCONTTOOLS report, while engaging volunteers for ongoing contributions.

SIRCAH News

The EU and UKRI-funded Secretariat (SIRCAH2, Support for the International Consortium on Animal Health), which provides support for all STAR IDAZ IRC activities, has been busy during the latter half of 2024. The activities of the active Working Groups described above, the publication of the annual State-of-the-Art Report, and attendance at a number of events have enabled SIRCAH members to take forward the STAR IDAZ mission – to strengthen the linkages between and reduce the duplication of global research effort on high priority infectious diseases of animals (including zoonoses), maximise the efficient use of expertise and resources, and accelerate coordinated development of control methods.

In September SIRCAH members Valeria Mariano (WOAH), Georgina Grell (CABI) and Monse Roman Lara (BBSRC) attended the FAO Global Conference on Animal Health Innovation, Reference Centres and Vaccines in Rome. This event aimed to advance global efforts to enhance animal health, prevent disease outbreaks, and promote sustainable livestock production and One Health implementation, while protecting human health and food security. The STAR IDAZ stand provided the perfect base for engaging with potential new partners and discussing the numerous activities of the IRC with interested individuals.

As highlighted above in the section on One Health, Madeline Newman (Defra, project manager for SIRCAH) gave a presentation at the World One Health Congress held in September in Cape Town, in which she highlighted the challenges and possible solutions for coordinating One Health research funding globally. It provided the perfect opportunity for STAR IDAZ to connect with others in the One Health field – STAR IDAZ is committed to collaborating to enable coordination of research.

Also in September, SIRCAH member Latifa El Hachimi (Kreavet) represented STAR IDAZ IRC at the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Regional Workshop on Zoonotic Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Control in the Asia Pacific Region, in Qingdao, China. The workshop provided an invaluable opportunity to share knowledge and connect with experts from across the region. Latifa presented on “STAR IDAZ IRC and its activities on Bovine TB and brucellosis globally, with a specific focus on the Asia Pacific region,” sparking engaging discussions on innovative strategies in disease control, diagnostics, and epidemiology



It was great to catch up with STAR IDAZ Chairperson Maryam Muhammad at the FAO Global Conference on Animal Health Innovation, Reference Centres and Vaccines.



Participants at the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Regional Workshop on Zoonotic Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Control in the Asia Pacific Region.

Annual State-of-the-Art Report

The State-of-the-Art Report is produced annually by SIRCAH on behalf of the STAR IDAZ IRC. This comprehensive report provides valuable insights into the latest developments and trends within animal health research. It offers an overview of opportunities to accelerate research, foster collaboration, and presents the latest discoveries related to priority animal health

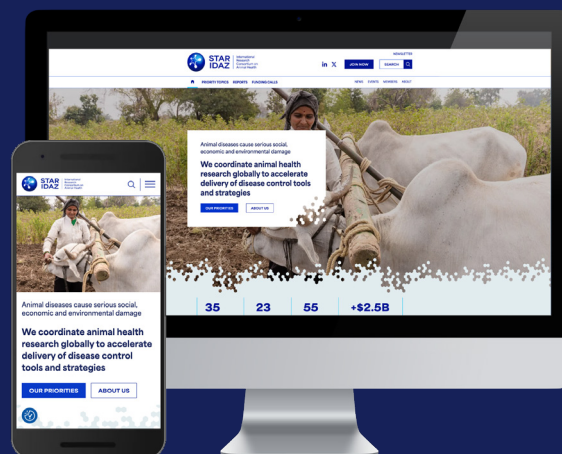
diseases. The **2024 Annual state-of-the-art report** on animal health research on IRC priorities had a particular focus on Animal genomics/genetics, Fish diseases, Brucellosis, Emerging issues, Foot-and-mouth disease, Helminths, Mastitis, Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) and porcine respiratory disease complex (PRDC), and Poxviruses.

Update on the new STAR IDAZ website

We're excited to share progress on the new **STAR IDAZ website!** The WordPress framework has been completed for some time, providing a solid foundation for the site. Nearly all roadmap pages have been developed on a staging server and are currently undergoing thorough testing to ensure a seamless experience.

Looking ahead, we're gearing up to launch several key features in January, including the sign-up process members' area, and regional network pages. The sign-up feature is particularly exciting as it will enable personalised notifications and foster greater engagement with STAR IDAZ content. Keep an eye out for our sign-up campaign in the coming months!

We appreciate your patience as we work to make the website fully operational and look forward to sharing these improvements with you soon.



SIRCAH2 is coordinated by Kreavet, with Defra, WOA, CABI, and UKRI-BBSRC as partners. We are delighted that Nicki Mackie has re-joined as the representative for BBSRC. The Secretariat would like to thank all member and participants for their support and commitment to STAR IDAZ IRC during 2024, and looks forward to working with you over the coming years.

News From our members

In the latter part of 2024 STAR IDAZ IRC welcomed Galvmed as its new Partner, bringing the total number of partners to 36. GALVmed will be represented by Steve Wilson.

DISCONTTOOLS news

DISCONTTOOLS continues to advance animal health research by identifying and disseminating critical research gaps. Recent updates have focused on diseases such as bovine respiratory syncytial virus, brucellosis, Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever and mammalian tuberculosis. A research article on diagnostic gap analysis in animal health, was submitted for publication, and in collaboration with the EU Biosecure project a book on advancements in biosecurity measures and livestock disease modeling, is in the pipeline.



DISCONTTOOLS is updating its contact page on the website to enhance new funders to join the support of our open-access database. Future planned dissemination activities include (virtual) meetings at Saint Nicholas University Veterinary School, engaging Caribbean and South-American students, and discussion with the International Veterinary Student Association (IVSA) and EAEVE veterinary faculties. These initiatives aim to accelerate innovation and improve disease control strategies worldwide.

IRC Partners

The complete list of partners is:

1. Danish National Veterinary Institute (DTU Vet), Denmark
2. National Institute of Agricultural Research (INRA), France
3. French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES), France
4. Ministry of Health, Italy
5. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food security and Nature (LVVN), The Netherlands
6. National Institute for Agriculture and Food Research and Technology (INIA), Spain
7. Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK
8. Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council (BBSRC), UK
9. Regional Consortium Belgium (STAR IDAZ.be): Ghent University; University of Liège; Contractual Research Unit at the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment; Sciensano; ARSIA (Regional Association for Animal Health and Identification), Public Service of Wallonia - Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (SPW ARNE), Staff Direction for Risk Assessment from FASFC (Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain), Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO) and DGZ (Animal Health Care Flanders)
10. Kimron Veterinary Institute, Israel
11. International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Kenya
12. Tanzania Veterinary Laboratory Agency (TVLA), Tanzania
13. National Institute of Animal Health, National Agriculture and Food Research Organisation (NIAH), Japan
14. Agriculture Research Services, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA ARS), USA
15. National Institute of Agriculture Technology (INTA), Argentina
16. Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation (MINCYT), Argentina
17. Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Canada
18. Zoetis
19. WOA (World Organisation for Animal Health)
20. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)
21. HealthforAnimals (Global Animal Medicines Association)
22. Diagnostics for Animals (Manufacturers of Animal Health Diagnostics)
23. European Commission
24. Regional Consortium; Nigerian Animal Health Research Network led by National Veterinary Research Institute Vom
25. National Advisory Council on Animal Health (CONASA) and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Zootechnics (FVMZ)
26. Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness, CSIRO, Australia
27. Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute (LVRI), China
28. Swedish Veterinary Agency (SVA)
29. National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), USA
30. Norwegian Veterinary Institute (NVI), Norway
31. Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO)
32. The National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), Uganda
33. The Office National for the Sanitary Safety of Food Products (ONSSA), Morocco
34. Regional Consortium; Swiss Regional Consortium (Swiss Federal Office for Food Safety and Veterinary Affairs and the Institute of Virology and Immunology)
35. International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada
36. Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed), UK

SIRCAH2

Support to the International Research Consortium on Animal Health (SIRCAH2) is funded by the European Union Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101082377 and by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee [grant numbers 10055666 and 10058793]. SIRCAH2 is run by a partnership including Defra (UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), CAB International (CABI), BBSRC (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council), and Kreavet. It provides organisational and communication support to the IRC, facilitates research gap analysis including the provision of literature reviews for working groups, maps funding activities against identified research needs, and helps mobilise resources to address them. The Secretariat also plays an important role in advocacy for the consortium and bringing in new members.

Further Information

For further information about the IRC please visit www.STAR_IDAZ.net. Research funding organisations and programme owners interested in joining the IRC or researchers interested in joining the working groups should contact the STAR IDAZ IRC Project Office:

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