

In this issue:

- Introducing AMBITION colleagues at the following two European partner institutions:
- St. George's University, London
- Institut Pasteur, Paris

Reminder: LSHTM team email address:
ambition@lshtm.ac.uk

Welcome to our European partners

Since the last issue of our newsletter, we have continued to push forward with obtaining the necessary regulatory approvals for each recruiting site.

Philippa paid a visit to the EDCTP in The Hague, and we look forward to welcoming our allocated Project Officer, Christy Comeaux, to the May Investigators' Meeting.

Plans for the meeting are almost in place; you should all have received your flight e-tickets. Accommodation has been booked at the Avani Hotel, who will also provide airport transfers. A full schedule and agenda will be provided shortly. Don't hesitate to contact Philippa at ambition@lshtm.ac.uk with any queries.

In this newsletter, we introduce colleagues based at two of our European collaborating institutions, and look forward to welcoming more partners in the next issues. **Happy Reading!**

Issue 2: May 2017



St. George's University, London (SGUL)

Founded in 1733 and based in South London, SGUL is the only UK university dedicated solely to medical and health research, education and training. Research is divided into three broad areas: Molecular and Clinical sciences, Population Health, and Infection & Immunity. Within the latter there is a substantial focus upon cryptococcal and pneumococcal infections, alongside research into malaria, TB and HIV. **Here is the SGUL AMBITION team:**



Professor Tom Harrison, Professor of Infectious Diseases and Medicine (Co-Chief Investigator)

My research group seeks to address the pathophysiology, immunology, management and prevention of cryptococcal meningitis. I was Chief Investigator for the Phase III ACTA (Advancing Cryptococcal Meningitis Treatment for Africa) study, which completed in February 2017, and have led related trials in Thailand, Cape Town, Uganda and Malawi which have significantly shaped international treatment guidelines. I am also Deputy Academic Lead for the SGUL Clinical Infection Unit, which treats adult patients with suspected infections. Additionally, I am Deputy Director of the Institute of Infection & Immunity and a clinician at the Clinical Infection Unit at St. George's Hospital.

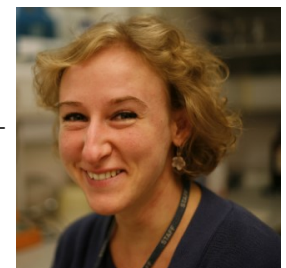
I join Joe as Co-Chief Investigator for the AMBITION study, working closely with all collaborators and with the study management team to ensure effective trial delivery.



Dr. Angela Loyse, Academic Clinical Lecturer in Infection and Immunity (Co-Investigator)

I will be a familiar face to some as a Lead Investigator for the ACTA study, where I worked closely with Síle (below). As a Co-Investigator for AMBITION I will lead aspects of the in-country training and capacity building activities with our African collaborators, focussing in particular upon the clinical management of cryptococcal meningitis with L-AmB. I will also support Tom in providing scientific oversight of the study.

I have a particular interest in the links between clinical research and capacity building, implementation and research, and am the Chief Investigator of the EDCTP-funded DREAMM (Driving Reduced AIDS-associated meningo-encephalitis mortality) study which aims to reduce the HIV-associated meningo-encephalitis mortality in routine care. I currently chair an advocacy group (CryptoMAG in collaboration with Centres for Disease Prevention and Control) to improve access to essential antifungal treatments and diagnostic tests, working with partners from WHO, MSF, CHAI and other international organisations.



Dr. Síle Molloy, Co-Investigator and Epidemiologist

Some of you will know me as the Trial Manager for the ACTA study. As a Co-Investigator for AMBITION I will be working with Angela to lead training and capacity building with our African collaborators. I will also play a significant role in supporting Nabila at LSHTM with the management and monitoring of the study, and will assist with data analysis and manuscript writing. I hold a PhD in Parasitology from Trinity College Dublin, and previously worked as an Epidemiologist at Oxford University before joining SGUL. In addition, I am currently studying for an MSc in Medical Statistics at LSHTM.



Institut Pasteur, Paris (IP)

Founded in 1887, the Institut Pasteur is a world-leading biomedical research institution. It was here, in 1983, that the isolation of HIV-1 first took place, and scientists at IP have led seminal advances in other major diseases including diphtheria, tetanus, TB and yellow fever. Since 1908, ten IP scientists have received Nobel Prizes for medicine and physiology. The IP International Network (Réseau International des Instituts Pasteur) links 33 institutions across 26 countries to address the most pressing public health challenges within a framework of sustainable development. IP also offers over 40 courses at a variety of levels, including the course on medical mycology <https://www.pasteur.fr/en/education/medical-mycology>. **Here is the IP AMBITION team:**



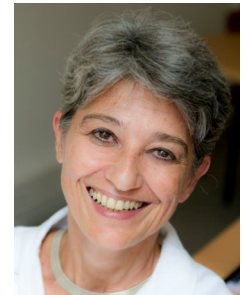
Professor Olivier Lortholary (MD, PhD, Senior Investigator)

I hold several posts here in Paris, including Deputy Director of the French National Reference Centre for Invasive Mycoses and Antifungals, Co-director of the Medical Mycology course, Professor of Medicine at Paris-Descartes University and Head of the Necker-Pasteur Centre for Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine (Necker side). My principal research interests centre around translational research in medical mycology, in particular *Cryptococcus neoformans* and cryptococcal meningitis, and developing diagnostic and therapeutic innovations in invasive fungal infections. As a Senior Investigator for AMBITION, I will participate in the TMG and lead on-site short-course training in medical mycology along with Françoise and Timothée. I will also provide mentorship and support to our African colleagues undertaking sub-studies from patient samples, and will help supervise our PhD student here at IP.



Professor Françoise Dromer (MD, PhD, Senior Investigator)

I lead the Molecular Mycology Unit at IP, am Head of the French National Reference Centre for Invasive Mycoses and Antifungals, and am Co-Director of IP's Medical Mycology course. I have been an elected Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology since 2006. My research combines the study of *Cryptococcus neoformans*/host interactions and translational research based on our long-term (>31 years) surveillance programme/clinical studies on cryptococcosis in France with one objective: to improve the prognosis of cryptococcosis. I recently collaborated with BioSynex regarding the development of a new LFA test that will be evaluated in AMBITION. As a Senior Investigator for AMBITION, I will take an active role in supporting colleagues working on the scientific sub-studies and in the laboratory supervision of our PhD student, whom we hope will begin in 2018.



Dr. Timothée Boyer Chammard, MD, Clinical Advisor

I am a clinical specialist, and studied Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine in Paris, where I undertook my medical residency. For the past two years, I have held a senior clinical position in the Department of Infectious Diseases and Internal Medicine in Guadeloupe, French West Indies. My research interests include arboviruses, tropical medicine, and, in particular, HIV. I will join the AMBITION study in June 2017 as a clinical advisor, and will assist Olivier with training in clinical mycology. I will be based in Paris, but will aim to visit our African collaborators, especially the University of Zimbabwe, as much as needed. I look forward to attending the Investigators' Meeting in May.



Dr. Alexandre Alanio (MD, PhD, Investigator)

I hold an MD and a PhD, and specialise in medical mycology and parasitology. I am currently an Associate Professor at Paris VII University and at Saint Louis Hospital, Paris, a permanent researcher in the Molecular Mycology Unit and a collaborator of the French National Reference Centre for Invasive Mycoses and Antifungals here at IP. My research interests focus on dormancy and metabolism in Fungi, in particular in *Cryptococcus neoformans* and in the pathophysiology of invasive fungal infections. My research aims to bridge medical mycology and basic research on the pathophysiology of invasive fungal infections, and to translate new biological tools into diagnostic tests for fungal and parasitic infections ("bench to bedside"). In terms of the "bedside", I am working actively on the development of new molecular diagnostic tools for pneumocystis, histoplasmosis, mucormycosis, cryptococcosis, aspergillosis, and other mould infections. As an investigator for AMBITION, I will help supervise the laboratory work of our PhD student, who will work on our microbiology project to develop new diagnostic tools to quantify the fungal load of *Cryptococcus* in CSF and blood using quantitative real-time PCR.

