



Designing an **ethical complement** to the patent regime for pharmaceutical innovation

INNOVA **P2**
Pharma-Innovation Patent-2

Innova-P2 Project Background

Innova-P2 is a 3-year Collaborative Project funded by the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme under grant agreement 217665. 1 June 2008 - 31 May 2011

Currently, one-third of all human deaths (18 million every year) are from diseases that could have been prevented, treated or cured. Hundreds of millions of people suffer from these diseases, while the lives of their families are shattered by severe illness and premature deaths. Most of these cases occur among poor people in poor countries, creating a disease burden which perpetuates their poverty. Often these same diseases have been almost eliminated in the developed world.

Many poor countries have an inadequate health infrastructure and a severe shortage of trained medical staff. As a result, 2 billion people lack access to essential

medicines, even when these are off-patent and therefore available in cheap generic versions. Moreover, under the global Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement, inventors of new drugs can obtain 20-year monopoly patents in most countries. This regime facilitates high prices for new medicines, well beyond the reach of the global poor. In addition, because pharmaceutical innovators are rewarded through these patent-protected high prices, they have little incentive to carry out research on diseases concentrated among the global poor. Under the present system, it is far more profitable to develop a "me-too" product to treat a minor ailment common

in affluent countries, for which remedies already exist, than it is to invent the first ever treatment for a neglected tropical disease. As a result, so-called "neglected diseases", which account for a majority of the global disease burden, receive only a small fraction of medical research funding worldwide. Of 1556 new drugs approved between 1975 and 2004, only 18 were for tropical diseases that affect hundreds of millions of people.



Innova-P2 was launched 26-27 August 2008, hosted by the Centre for the Study of Mind in Nature, University of Oslo.



Innova-P2 - the Research Project

Innova-P2 has established an international, interdisciplinary team with expertise in social philosophy, economics, statistics, intellectual property rights (IPR), policy making and advice, gender, medicine and development, in order to:

- Advance knowledge and ethical insight into reform plans for the current intellectual property rights system
- Finalise the existing plan to amend the current IPR system in the area of pharmaceutical innovation
- Provide a reality check and obtain support for the proposed system from the world's two most powerful developing/emerging country actors - India and China
- Promote urgent policy developments on IPR by forging a consensus for the proposed system and providing a policy action plan.

The team is undertaking the development of strong ethical and policy arguments in support of an IPR reform plan based



on the Health Impact Fund proposal. These claims will be supported by the detailed specification of a suitable measure of the global disease burden and ways of assessing the contributions that various treatments make to its reduction, in order to develop a transparent model for the proposed reform plan to adopt when collecting data and determining monetary rewards. The team will investigate the attitudes of policy groups and industry representatives towards the scheme

in order to identify barriers and solutions, and produce a road-map to ensure the final proposals for international policy action are realistic and appropriate.

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Partners



Professor Thomas Pogge, Dr Miltos Ladikas, Julie Cook Lucas, (Project Co-ordinators) Centre for Professional Ethics, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK
jmlucas@uclan.ac.uk



Professor Arjun Sengupta, Dr Nagesh Kumar, Dr Sachin Chaturvedi, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, India
Sachin@ris.org.in



Professor Gao Zhiqian, Dr Guo Lifeng, Dr Li Zhe, Chinese Academy of Science and Technology for Development (CASTED), Beijing, China
guolf@CASTED.org.cn



Professor Peter Singer, Professor Doris Schroeder, Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics (CAPPE), University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia
doriss@unimelb.edu.au



Professor Fatima Alvarez Castillo, University of the Philippines Manila, The Philippines
Fatima.castillo@up.edu.ph



Professor Lynn Frewer, Dr David Coles, Wageningen University, Wageningen, The Netherlands
Lynn.Frewer@wur.nl

External Advisors

Professor Joseph Stiglitz, Professor of Economics, Columbia University, USA, Nobel Laureate for Economics, 2001, Senior Vice-President and Chief Economist World Bank, 1997-2000

Dr Tikki Pang, WHO Director for Research Policy & Cooperation

Dr Klaus Leisinger, President and CEO of the Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development, Professor of Development Sociology, University of Basel, Switzerland

Roger Chennells, Legal Consultant, Stellenbosch, South Africa

Dr Matthew Rimmer, Specialist in Intellectual Property Law, Australian National University, College of Law

Dr James Orbinski, Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto, Canada, Ex-President, Médecins Sans Frontières, Co-founder of Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative and Dignitas International

Dr Gorik Ooms, Researcher, Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Former Director, Médecins Sans Frontières, Belgium





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Ensuring access to health care for populations everywhere is crucial to the fulfilment of human rights and sustainable development worldwide.

Innova-P2 aims to develop a complement to the patent regime to stimulate pharmaceutical innovations that would be immediately accessible to all.



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For more information contact:

Julie Cook Lucas

Project Manager

jmlucas@uclan.ac.uk

+44(0)1772 892549

Centre for Professional Ethics, Brook 317

School of Nursing and Caring Sciences

University of Central Lancashire

Preston, PR1 2HE, UK

www.uclan.ac.uk/innova


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Nursing and
Caring Sciences**