

## Terms of Reference for a Validation Study Coordinator for the CUIDA Chagas project

The *Fundação Oswaldo Cruz* (Fiocruz), through the *Instituto Nacional de Infectologia Evandro Chagas* (INI), is looking for a Validation Study Coordinator for the CUIDA Chagas Project.

### About Chagas disease

Chagas disease (CD) is a potentially life-threatening neglected tropical disease that is caused by the protozoan parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi* (*T. cruzi*). *T. cruzi* parasites are mainly transmitted through contact with feces/urine of infected blood-sucking triatomine ('kissing') bugs. Other forms of transmission include: consumption of contaminated food; transmission from an infected mother to her newborn during pregnancy or childbirth; blood or blood product transfusion from infected donors; organ transplants using organs from infected donors; and laboratory accidents. CD has two phases, acute and chronic, and an estimated 30-40 % of infected people will develop severe and sometimes life-threatening medical problems over the course of their lives, including cardiac alterations, digestive manifestations, and neurological or mixed alterations, which may require specific treatment. If untreated, infection is lifelong.

CD is mainly found in endemic areas of 21 continental Latin American countries, with approximately 65 million people at risk of contracting the disease. An estimated 6 to 7 million people worldwide are infected with the *T. cruzi* parasite, of which the large majority resides in Latin America. Every year, over 10,000 CD-related deaths are reported. Despite the high morbidity and mortality of CD and the significant associated economic burden, only 7% of people with CD have been diagnosed and only about 1% receive etiological treatment. An estimated 1.12 million women of childbearing age are infected with the *T. cruzi* parasite, and the congenital transmission rate approaches 5% with an estimated 8,000 to 15,000 infected babies being born each year. As maternal and child health services do not routinely screen mothers or newborns for CD in most endemic areas, prevalence in pregnant women and newborns may be underestimated. Congenital infection could perpetuate CD indefinitely, even in countries without vector transmission, which is why the CUIDA Chagas project was brought into existence.

### About the project

The CUIDA Chagas project (Comunidades Unidas para Inovação, Desenvolvimento e Atenção para a doença de Chagas) is an international initiative that aims to contribute to the elimination of congenital transmission of Chagas disease by scaling up and enhancing access to diagnosis, treatment and comprehensive care, through innovative and sustainable approaches in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Paraguay. The project is implemented through a consortium of key players in the public health landscape, and includes Brazil's *Fundação para o Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico em Saúde* (Fiotec) and Fiocruz, Bolivia's *Instituto Nacional de Laboratorios de Salud "Néstor Morales Villazón"* (INLASA), Colombia's *Instituto Nacional de Salud* (INS), Paraguay's *Servicio Nacional de Erradicación del Paludismo* (SENEPA), and the international non-governmental organization *Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics* (FIND).

Through a combination of implementation and innovation research, the project will be implemented in a total of 34 municipalities in Bolivia (10), Brazil (6), Colombia (13) and Paraguay (5). In addition to a number of initiatives related to equitable market access, civil society engagement and advocacy, the project includes the following three studies:

- I. Implementation research;
- II. The validation of a diagnostic algorithm based on rapid diagnostic tests;**
- III. A double-blind, phase III clinical trial to evaluate a shorter benznidazole treatment regimen.

Primary health care (PHC) will be the central focus of interventions, integrating the project's interventions with existing initiatives most relevant to each country context.

### **The position**

The CUIDA Chagas project is looking for a coordinator for the validation study, preferably based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, who will be tasked with overseeing the implementation of the study in three countries. Your responsibilities will include, but not be limited to:

- Lead the implementation of the study protocol for the laboratory and clinical studies in Bolivia, Brazil and Colombia;
- Manage lab-based and clinical studies in compliance with good clinical practices (GCP) and ensure progress towards predetermined goals;
- Set-up and maintain study and trial related documents;
- Perform training activities, site assessments and monitoring visits when required;
- Coordinate the supply of investigational product to study sites;
- Coordinate the collection of data, analyze study results and provide written reports.

### **Your profile**

- You have a master's degree in a related discipline (i.e. epidemiology, parasitology, microbiology, immunology), with publications in some of these fields;
- You have at least 5 years of demonstrated experience in clinical trial planning, execution and monitoring;
- You have knowledge of GCP and the ethical/regulatory framework of clinical trials;
- You have a demonstrated attention to detail, ability to follow procedures, and are able to meet deadlines;
- Good knowledge of basic computer applications like Word, Excel and Power Point;
- You are a Brazilian national, or have the required documents to be able to work in Brazil;
- You are fluent in Portuguese, and have a working knowledge of English and preferably Spanish;
- You have a hands-on attitude and do not shy away from challenges;
- Cultural sensitivity comes as a second nature to you.

### **What we offer**

- The opportunity to work within a highly motivated, international team, on a project that has the potential to make a significant impact on the lives of people that are affected by Chagas disease;
- A position of 20 hours/week;
- A monthly remuneration of up to R\$ 5,500 (net), depending on experience;

### **How to Apply**

Please send your curriculum vitae, together with a motivation letter to Larissa de Paula at [larissa.depaula@fiocruz.br](mailto:larissa.depaula@fiocruz.br). Please include the following phrase in the subject of your email: 'CUIDA Chagas – Application for the position of Validation Study Coordinator'. The deadline for receiving applications is 12 November 2021.