

**TRAC**Tuberculosis Research Advancement Center  
Emory/Georgia**Newsletter****PROTECT**

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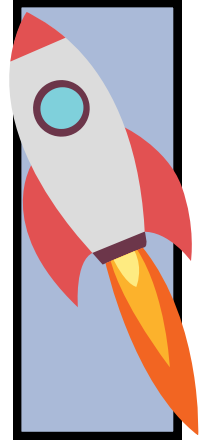
TRAC Clinical and Population Science core Co-Directors Drs. Shah (study PI) and Benkeser (consultant) recently visited partners in Uganda for a large workshop for the PROTECT study, which aims to evaluate the impact of expanding TB preventive treatment on TB cases and deaths among people living with HIV. The 3-day workshop had over 50 participants from 7 country teams in attendance, including the US, Haiti, Kenya, Nigeria, Ukraine, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The study is funded by the Gates Foundation and is implemented by CDC Foundation, CDC, and partners.

## TRAC Services Highlight:

### Accelerator Awards

The goal of accelerator awards is to efficiently provide small amounts of funding to fill key funding gaps for targeted needs, and overcome barriers for critical research. The TRAC currently offers three categories of awards

- **Opportunity Awards** up to \$4k to conduct targets and time-sensitive TB research activities, with the expected outcomes of publications and/or grant applications within 12 months
- **Travel Awards** up to \$4k to provide support for a TRAC investigator to travel between Atlanta and international partner sites, for activities directly related to the goal of submitting an NIH grant proposal within 12 months.
- **Xpert Review Awards** up to \$1k to pay for external reviews of NIH R01 proposals created by TRAC investigators



More information about Accelerator Awards as well as how to apply can be found [HERE](#)

### CPS Core Services



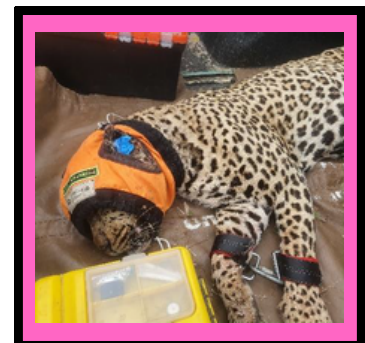
One of the goals of the Clinical & Population Science Core (Clinical Core) is to provide early stage investigators with TB-specific human subjects research support from beginning to end through structured instruction, ongoing 1:1 consultation, and hands-on training with Core faculty. Just a few of the core services available to members include

- Study planning - Recruitment strategies, IRB application, Biostats support...
- Study implementation - Sample collection and storage, Follow up procedures...
- Data management and study output - Database creation and maintenance, Data analysis...

A complete list of service descriptions can be found on the TRAC website under "Resources"

## Stellenbosch Univ. Animal TB Research

The Stellenbosch University Animal TB research program takes a multi-pronged approach to improve knowledge of the epidemiology, pathogenesis and immunology of bovine tuberculosis (BTB). This includes investigating the role of host genetics and immunology in susceptibility to BTB; the genetic diversity of mycobacterial pathogens and their impact on wildlife and livestock; and the development of diagnostic assays for numerous host species. They produce an annual newsletter which can be found on the [TRAC website](#).



## Upcoming Presentations

### Genomic evidence for adaptation to tuberculosis in the Andes before European contact



**Sophie K. Joseph**  
PhD Candidate

Sophie K. Joseph is a PhD candidate in the Lindo Ancient DNA Lab in the Department of Anthropology here at Emory University. She specializes in both the molecular and computational aspects of genomic research, with a primary research interests in elucidating the effects of different evolutionary pressures on the human genome in the context of important societal and cultural changes, such as agriculture, life at altitude, and disease. She is particularly interested in understanding how genetic risk factors and the surrounding environment may have influenced disease etiologies in past populations.

**Friday August 18, 2023 9:00am**

[Zoom Link](#)

## TRACcolades



Congratulations to TRAC international collaborator **Dr. Shaheed Vally Omar** on his appointment as the Head of the Centre for Tuberculosis at the South African National Institute for Communicable Disease (NICD). Dr. Omar has been a Medical Scientist at the Centre for Tuberculosis for the last decade, has been Acting Centre Head since 2022. His appointment as Centre Head began on June 1st 2023.

Basic and Translational Science Core Co-Director **Dr. Fred Quinn** gave a keynote address titled “Current issues and challenges relating to the transmission, surveillance and diagnosis of zoonotic tuberculosis in animal and human populations” at the Stellenbosch University Biomedical Research Institute retreat on May 25, 2023. He also served as moderator for the National TB Conference, National TB Controllers Association “Zoonotic TB: One Health” on June 15, 2023.



TRAC Co-Director **Dr. Neel Gandhi** was given the Rollins School of Public Health Award for Senior Research Excellence in May. This is the inaugural award ceremony for the school.

## Recent Publications

Adane HT, Howe RC, Wassie L, **Magee MJ**. [Diabetes mellitus is associated with an increased risk of unsuccessful treatment outcomes among drug-susceptible tuberculosis patients in Ethiopia: A prospective health facility-based study](#). J Clin Tuberc Other Mycobact Dis. 2023 Apr 11;31:100368. doi: 10.1016/j.jctube.2023.100368. PMID: 37122611; PMCID: PMC10130346.

**Graciaa DS, Schechter MC**, Fetalvero KB, **Cranmer LM, Kempker RR, Castro KG**. [Updated considerations in the diagnosis and management of tuberculosis infection and disease: integrating the latest evidence-based strategies](#). Expert Rev Anti Infect Ther. 2023 Jun;21(6):595-616. doi: 10.1080/14787210.2023.2207820. Epub 2023 May 8. PMID: 37128947; PMCID: PMC10227769.

Gunasekera KS, Marcy O, Muñoz J, Lopez-Varela E, Sekadde MP, Franke MF, Bonnet M, Ahmed S, Amanullah F, Anwar A, Augusto O, Aurilio RB, Banu S, Batool I, Brands A, Cain KP, Carratalá-Castro L, Caws M, Click ES, **Cranmer LM**, et al. [Development of treatment-decision algorithms for children evaluated for pulmonary tuberculosis: an individual participant data meta-analysis](#). Lancet Child Adolesc Health. 2023 May;7(5):336-346. doi: 10.1016/S2352-4642(23)00004-4. Epub 2023 Mar 13. PMID: 36924781; PMCID: PMC10127218.

**Sekandi J**, Shi W, Zhu R, Kaggwa P, Mwebaze E, Li S [Application of Artificial Intelligence to the Monitoring of Medication Adherence for Tuberculosis Treatment in Africa: Algorithm Development and Validation](#) JMIR AI 2023;2:e40167 <https://ai.jmir.org/2023/1/e40167> DOI: 10.2196/40167

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Have items to include in the next newsletter? Email them to [Laurel.Bristow@emory.edu](mailto:Laurel.Bristow@emory.edu)