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$10,000 challenge launches to fight infectious diseases affecting 30 million people

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Infectious diseases that affect 30 million people worldwide are the focus of a new Challenge posted today on the nature.com Open Innovation Pavilion (**www.nature.com/openinnovation**).

The Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DND*i*) is looking for potential targets for drugs against African Sleeping Sickness, Visceral Leishmaniasis, Cutaneous Leishmaniasis, and Chagas Disease. These diseases are caused by parasites, most of which are transmitted by insects. Together these diseases affect the lives of 30 million people in more than 88 countries. Many are endemic in some of the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South America and South-East Asia.

"At DND*i* we are delighted to partner with InnoCentive and Nature Publishing Group," says Rob Don, Senior Project Manager at DND*i*. "By submitting this Challenge to the scientific community worldwide, we not only hope to swiftly obtain potential solutions to the problem, but also to draw its attention to the need to do more to find and develop treatments for these deadly diseases."

The Challenge requires a written proposal to be submitted by 16 April 2010, including a list of potential anti-kinetoplastid drug targets, together with a list of small molecule compounds that can be used to inactivate these targets in a chemical validation experiment. DND*i* has posted the Challenge on the nature.com Open Innovation Pavilion with the financial support of Nature Publishing Group (NPG) and InnoCentive. NPG will provide the $10,000 award for a successful solution, and InnoCentive are providing their Challenge development and screening services pro-bono.

"The power of crowd sourced innovation is truly inspiring when directed at the non-profit sector," offered Dwayne Spradlin, CEO of InnoCentive. "This model enables the the world's brightest minds to be able to help solve some of the greatest challenges and impact the lives of millions."

"The nature.com Open Innovation Pavilion makes it possible to put a question in front of a large body of scientists with a wide range of expertise," says Veronique Kiermer, Publisher, Methods, Protocols and Products at Nature Publishing Group. "We think this is particularly important in the area of so-called neglected diseases, where research resources are sometimes limited. We are happy to challenge the nature.com audience with such an important question from DND*i*."

Launched in June 2009, the nature.com Open Innovation Pavilion is jointly hosted on **Innocentive.com** and nature.com, and provides a hub for scientific collaboration and open innovation. Companies and not-for-profit organizations (known as 'Seekers') can post 'Challenges' in life sciences, physical sciences and clinical medicine on the nature.com Open Innovation Pavilion. These 'Challenges' are briefs allowing Seekers to tap into external expertise to solve research problems or drive development of new products and technologies. Successful Solvers receive financial rewards. Seekers can call on the expertise from nature.com's five million monthly visitors and InnoCentive's community of more than 200,000 Solvers. To date, 25 Challenges have been posted in the nature.com Open Innovation Pavilion. Six of these Challenges have already been solved, with more than $75,000 awarded for satisfactory solutions.

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Links:
Nature.com Open Innovation Pavilion
InnoCentive and Nature Publishing Group launch nature.com Open Innovation Pavilion) (press release, 2 June 2009)
Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative (DNDi)*: **www.dndi.org**
InnoCentive: **www.innocentive.com**

About Nature Publishing Group (NPG)

Nature Publishing Group (NPG) is a publisher of high impact scientific and medical information in print and online. NPG publishes journals, online databases and services across the life, physical, chemical and applied sciences and clinical medicine.

NPG Nature Asia-Pacific is the Asia-Pacific wing of NPG, set up to serve the growing needs of the scientific and medical communities in the region, and has offices in Tokyo, Hong Kong, Seoul, Delhi and Melbourne. For more information, please visit **www.natureasia.com**.

Focusing on the needs of scientists, ***Nature*** (founded in 1869) is the leading weekly, international scientific journal. In addition, for this audience, NPG publishes a range of *Nature* research journals and *Nature Reviews* journals, plus a range of prestigious academic journals including society-owned publications. Online, nature.com provides over 5 million visitors per month with access to NPG publications and online databases and services, including *Nature News* and *Nature Jobs* plus access to *Nature Network* and Nature Education's **Scitable.com.**

Scientific American is at the heart of NPG's newly-formed consumer media division, meeting the needs of the general public. Founded in 1845, ***Scientific American*** is the oldest continuously published magazine in the US and the leading authoritative publication for science in the general media. Together with scientificamerican.com and 16 local language editions around the

world it reaches over 3 million consumers and scientists. Other titles include *Scientific American Mind* and *Spektrum der Wissenschaft* in Germany.

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About InnoCentive

Founded in 2001, InnoCentive built the first global web community for open innovation, enabling scientists, engineers, professionals and entrepreneurs to collaborate to deliver breakthrough solutions for R&D-driven organizations. InnoCentive Seekers, who collectively spend billions of dollars on R&D, submit complex problems to the InnoCentive Marketplace where more than 200,000 engineers, scientists, inventors, business people, and research organizations in more than 200 countries are invited to solve them. Solvers who deliver the most innovative solutions receive financial awards ranging up to US$1,000,000. InnoCentive's Seekers include commercial, government and non-profit organizations such as Avery Dennison, SAP, Procter & Gamble, Pendulum, Eli Lilly and Company, Janssen, Solvay and The Rockefeller Foundation. For more information on InnoCentive, go to: **www.innocentive.com**.
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About DND*i*

The Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative* (DND*i*) is a not-for-profit product development partnership working to research and develop new and improved treatments for neglected disease, in particular human African trypanosomiasis, leishmaniasis, Chagas disease, and malaria. With the objective to address unmet patient needs for these diseases, (DND*i* was established in 2003 by the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation from Brazil, the Indian Council for Medical Research, the Kenya Medical Research Institute, the Ministry of Health of Malaysia, the Pasteur Institute, and Médecins sans Frontiéres (MSF). WHO/TDR acts as a permanent observer. Working in partnership with industry and academia, (DND*i* has the largest ever R&D portfolio for kinetoplastid diseases. Since 2007, (DND*i* has delivered three products, fixed-dose anti-malarials "ASAQ" and "ASMQ", and a combination treatment for the advanced stage of sleeping sickness NECT (nifurtimox-eflornithine combination therapy). For more information: **www.dndi.org**.

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