The International Consortium on Anti-Virals (ICAV)/Consortium International sur les Thérapies Antivirales (CITAV) is a Canadian not-for-profit drug development company founded in 2004 to discover and develop novel anti-viral therapies for neglected and emerging diseases and to ensure their global accessibility to all those in need.

ICAV recognizes the need for the international community to establish a capability to detect, contain, and treat diseases and pandemics promptly in both the developed and developing worlds. ICAV supports the development of therapies for such viruses as influenza, dengue, HIV, hepatitis, Lassa, yellow fever, Chikungunya, Ebola, and Marburg, as well as other infectious viral diseases.

Its vision is to empower countries in every continent to become self-sufficient in supplying affordable anti-viral drugs to their people.
Through the international collaboration of scientists, governments, and industry, ICAV accelerates the discovery and development of novel anti-viral therapies. ICAV’s mandate is to ensure the delivery of these therapies to those most in need.

ICAV’s objective is to deliver one novel anti-viral drug to market every five years.

**Consortium History**

The SARS epidemic of 2003 shocked the world and demonstrated the potential threat that emerging viruses pose to the social and economic fabric of our planet. It also alerted scientists and policymakers alike that we are woefully unprepared for a major viral pandemic. The weapons in our public health armory remain similar to those available during the Spanish influenza outbreak of 1918.

In an effort to address this “anti-viral gap,” a group of Canadian scientists involved in the Protein Engineering Network Centre of Excellence (PENCE) met in June 2004 to determine how they could help address this potentially devastating hole in global public health preparedness. ICAV arose out of the desire for scientists to address the lack of effective, accessible, therapies against viral diseases.

The underlying strategy was to create an international network based on the same principles that made Canada’s Network Centres of Excellence (NCEs) such a resounding success. The NCEs are long-distance networks that leverage expertise from across the country in an effort to produce socially and economically relevant innovation. ICAV’s first meeting, in Toronto in 2004, attracted more than 100 scientists. ICAV has held nine international symposia (France and Canada, 2005; Australia, 2007; Nigeria, 2008; China, 2008; France, 2009; and, Germany, 2010) and plans for the 10th for India in February 2012.

Over the years ICAV’s scientific network has grown to more than 500 scientists from 36 countries on five continents. These scientists, united by a desire to bridge the anti-viral gap through innovation and research, are all leaders in their respective fields.

In 2006, a not-for-profit drug development organization was incorporated to develop promising candidates arising from the ongoing scientific symposia. ICAV put together a management team of pharmaceutical and drug development professionals to manage its growing pipeline. A Technical
Review Committee (TRC) of independent industry experts was established to evaluate and design development pathways for promising ICAV drug candidates.

However, drug development demands considerable resources, and, so far, ICAV has been unable to assemble the funds necessary to advance all the opportunities identified. ICAV continually seeks funds from governments and foundations to rectify this situation and has created the charitable Foundation on Antivirals (FAV) to seek donations from corporations. Meanwhile, ICAV harnesses the power of its global network to advance a select group of opportunities to clinical trials.

Viral diseases disproportionately affect poorer countries. It is thus essential that novel therapies be designed with the developing world in mind and be accessible to those who are the most in need. ICAV’s mission is to ensure the availability of ICAV-developed therapies in lower- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and is in dialogue with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to ensure that in any partnership with ICAV they will agree to supply LMICs at cost.

Structure & Governance

To ensure efficient, effective, and accountable administration of its drug pipeline, ICAV utilizes a private-sector management structure including an independent Board of Directors and external audits. Compounds approved for development by the TRC are assigned a professional manager who supervises the clinical development of the compound. Scientific direction emanates from the International Research Advisory Board (IRAB), composed of internationally recognized scientists. The International Steering Committee provides international governance advice.

Intellectual Property

ICAV follows standard practice in obtaining intellectual property from research institutions and out-licensing agreements with third parties. ICAV negotiates exclusive sublicenses with commercial partners for markets in the developed world while retaining rights to ensure that products will be available to LMICs at affordable prices.

Where commercial sublicenses are executed, institutions will benefit from royalties on sales by the commercial partner. Profits from royalties generated in developed-world markets will be reinvested in
ICAV to ensure the sustainability of the ICAV pipeline.

Links/Social Media Feed

Homepage  
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Sponsors & Partners

A list of participating scientists can be found on the ICAV website.

Updated: 04/15/2016