

Press statement.

As representatives of communities affected by tuberculosis (TB) – including survivors, researchers and civil society organizations – we demand long overdue global investments in TB vaccine research and development commensurate with the disease’s devastating impact.

The [6th Global Forum on TB Vaccines](#) will be virtually hosted by Toulouse, France this February 22–25 under the high patronage of President Emmanuel Macron and as part of the official agenda of the French European Union Presidency. This Forum is the world’s largest gathering of stakeholders aspiring toward new TB vaccines, providing critical opportunities for participants to collaborate, expand knowledge and forge connections that maximize the potential for scientific breakthroughs in a woefully underserved space. But making our shared vision of ending the centuries-long global TB epidemic with effective vaccines a reality necessitates significantly more resources. We call on Europe to increase and sustain investments in TB research by €320 million annually, with €90 million specifically dedicated to vaccine R&D.

As the COVID-19 pandemic so powerfully showed, a robust mobilization of resources can achieve impressive feats of scientific progress. But despite the fact that TB remains the second deadliest infectious disease on Earth – with a death toll even eclipsing that of COVID-19 in some regions – it received less than one percent of the R&D funding allocated to COVID-19. The effect of this disparity is eye-popping: while some two dozen effective vaccine candidates against COVID-19 have emerged in only two years, the sole existing vaccine against TB is only minimally effective and hasn’t been improved upon for over a century. Meanwhile, only a few new TB drugs have become available during the past several decades, relegating people living with TB to toxic and inconvenient courses of treatment that are difficult to complete, which makes the disease tougher to eradicate, and drives some 500,000 cases of drug-resistant TB each year, posing an even more dire threat to global health security and the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance. The advent of new effective TB vaccines could finally stem the tide of history’s deadliest global epidemic, keeping people safe from new infections and sparing individuals, families and communities and countries from the huge human and economic devastation of TB.

On behalf of communities who bear the brunt of society’s failure to prioritize the fight against this devastating and neglected disease, we urge European funders to commit to rectifying the longstanding neglect of TB research. Vaccines are our best hope for a world without TB – it’s time to step up and finally make them a reality.

Read our letter to President Emmanuel Macron of France, [here](#).

Read our letter to the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Ministers of Health, [here](#).

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On the TB Vaccines Advocacy Roadmap.

The TB Vaccine Advocacy Roadmap (TB Vax ARM) is a global coalition of TB vaccine advocates created following the Virtual Global Forum on TB Vaccines in 2021 with the ultimate objective of ensuring a fully funded and resourced TB vaccine pipeline by 2023.

The TB Vax ARM is led by IAVI, the Treatment Action Group, Results UK, and the Global TB Caucus, with the support of dozens of individuals and organisations from across the TB Field. The key major milestone for the coalition is the High Level Meeting on TB in September 2023, where progress on TB control and funding targets pledged in the HLM on TB in 2018 will be reviewed.

The TB Vax ARM launched its first public campaign in October 2021 with an open letter to the G20 Finance and Health Ministers where we called upon them to fulfil their political and funding commitments for new TB vaccines to end TB. TB survivors from all the G20 countries signed the letter, that was endorsed by over 60 TB advocacy, global health, and research organisations. The group is now soliciting support around the French Presidency of the European Union, an important advocacy opportunity ahead of the 6th Global Forum on TB Vaccines (22-25 February). The Forum is held under the High Patronage of President Macron and, moreover, has been designated an official event of the French Presidency' agenda. In light of these opportunities, the TB Vax ARM coalition is addressing President Macron as well as the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Ministers of Health requesting political leadership and effective action from French and EU decision makers to help deliver a fully funded and resourced TB vaccine pipeline by 2023.

In parallel to the letters, the TB Vax ARM will also be sharing a social media toolkit– all of which will be hosted, and regularly updated, on a dedicated space in the website of the of the [Working Group for New TB Vaccines](#).

