

Tulane disease-fighting effort named a 'Best Bet' for donor support

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WATCH: Tulane's proposal for the MacArthur Foundation's 100&Change grant was named a "Best Bet" by one of the nation's leading philanthropic research centers.

A Tulane University proposal to establish a comprehensive system of infectious disease response, from early detection to the development of new treatments, has been named a “Best Bet” by one of the nation’s leading philanthropic research centers.

The Center for High Impact Philanthropy (CHIP), which is widely recognized as a trusted source of knowledge and education to help donors do more good, sees great potential in a Tulane plan to combat infectious diseases, like Ebola and Zika, before they burst onto the world stage in the form of epidemics. The recognition by the University of Pennsylvania-based CHIP shines a light on deserving proposals that the MacArthur Foundation, a leading supporter of nonprofits, cannot fund but hopes others will.

Tulane was one of 1,904 institutions and groups that submitted proposals for the MacArthur Foundation’s *100&Change* grant, which awards \$100 million to a single project that can make measurable progress toward solving a significant problem. CHIP analyzed MacArthur’s top applications and identified 11 “Best Bets” that didn’t get the big prize but have the greatest potential for impact.

Tulane’s proposal centered on developing processes to quickly respond to emerging disease threats by creating a seamless “detection to production” system.

“Our solution is to establish an efficient and adaptable system able to identify potential infectious disease threats and quickly develop novel diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines, which are critical to stopping the spread of diseases in a timely fashion,” John Clements, professor of microbiology and immunology at Tulane School of Medicine, wrote in the grant proposal.

CHIP noted that Tulane's proposal was a particularly bold idea worth funding given the combined resources of its schools of Medicine, Public Health and Tropical Medicine and Science and Engineering, as well as its National Primate Research Center, Biodiversity Research Center and affiliated clinical trials units. CHIP's recommendation also highlighted Tulane's long history of infectious disease research and prevention.

"[Tulane's] team of scientists from across the university's multiple schools, and its past involvement in infectious disease prevention represent unique competencies that the team brings," says [CHIP's Bold Ideas](#) guide. "In addition, Tulane suggests that the processes it develops will be shared and could eventually be replicated at other institutions."

"If Tulane is successful in streamlining the process of diagnosing and developing treatment and vaccines for infectious disease and minimizing the response time to an outbreak, loss of life could be dramatically reduced."

If you would like more information about supporting this project, contact Melissa Ereckson at merekson@tulane.edu.