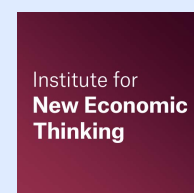




British Academy Conference



Resolving Global Vaccine Inequity: Innovation, Capabilities & Governance



SOAS University of London
11-12 April 2024



The development of Covid-19 vaccines within a year of the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 was an unprecedented triumph of scientific research that saved millions of lives. In contrast, the lack of global coordination to manage intellectual property, technology transfer, production, financing, and distribution of vaccines led to excess deaths and losses in economic output. There is urgent need for greater understanding of how to organise society on a global scale to speed up both the transfer of knowledge and technology, and the production and distribution of vaccines. This conference brings together academics, practitioners, and policymakers to explore the factors that supported or inhibited vaccine distribution and technology transfer. Our purpose is to learn the lessons of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic so that national and international society will be better organised to respond to future pandemics and public health crises.

Conference Registration

2-day rate: £20 (£10 for students) - includes lunch and refreshments

1-day rate: £12 (£6 for students) - includes lunch and refreshments



Conference Convenor

Professor Christine Oughton, SOAS University of London

Conference Programme Committee

Professor Bill Lazonick, Professor Christine Oughton and Dr Oner Tulum



Resolving Global Vaccine Inequity: Innovation, Capabilities and Governance
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Conference Programme and Themes

The scientific development of vaccines to protect against Covid-19 in less than a year was a remarkable achievement. The speed of development rested on scientific collaboration, funding and knowledge sharing between key players - scientists, government, and business. From the team of Chinese researchers that sequenced and shared the genetic code of SARS-CoV-2, to international trials spanning Brazil, the UK, South Africa, and Kenya, to government funding of R&D and the fast-tracking of approvals, there was an impressive collective effort. In contrast, the manufacturing roll-out and distribution of the vaccines was problematic, characterised by bottlenecks, hoarding and vaccine inequity.

While the first vaccines were approved for use in December 2020, global vaccine diffusion was slow and uneven. Initially, COVAX in partnership with WHO and GAVI, set a target of 20% coverage by the end of 2021, that was subsequently increased to 40% with an additional target of 70% of the adult population in all countries by mid-2022. However, even the most modest targets for vaccine rollout were not met, with consequent negative effects on public health and economic output. It has been estimated that had the COVAX 20% and 40% targets been achieved, around 680,000 deaths would have been avoided in low- and middle-income countries.

The success of science was not matched by the same degree of success on the socio-economic side, but the science and social science of vaccines and public health are intrinsically linked. Equitable distribution of vaccines is important not just on humanitarian grounds, but also on grounds of vaccine efficacy. Without uniformly high levels of coverage, the virus was free to mutate in the unvaccinated population, thus undermining vaccine effectiveness and prolonging the pandemic.

This conference is focused on improving our socio-economic understanding of the pandemic so that science and social science can develop solutions in tandem. We need greater understanding of why, in the presence of scientifically proven solutions to the Covid-19 pandemic, it remained difficult to implement them in a timely manner. Understanding the process of scientific knowledge transfer and adaptation of vaccines for local use is crucial.

This conference brings together scientists, social scientists, practitioners, and policy makers to generate new, interdisciplinary, understanding to meet the global challenges that were posed by Covid-19 and that future pandemics will have to confront. The conference will explore the scientific, organisational, management, economic and governance factors that supported or inhibited knowledge and technology transfer as well as production and equitable distribution of Covid-19 vaccines. Our purpose is to enable us to learn the lessons of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic so that, within and among nations, society will be better organised to respond to future pandemics and public health crises.

The conference is organised around 4 interrelated themes:

- 1. R&D, Vaccine Invention, and Innovation**
- 2. Vaccine Nationalism, Vaccine Inequity, Production and IPR**
- 3. Building Capabilities and Strengthening Innovation Systems, Technology Transfer and Manufacturing in Low and Middle-Income Countries**
- 4. Strengthening Global Governance of the Commons**

Why is the topic appropriate and timely?

The impacts of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic continue to pose potential threats for global public health and economies which must restructure to make up for the reduction in growth and lost income experienced during the pandemic. Public finances remain under pressure and health systems have been compromised. We need to learn how to improve our strategic preparedness and response for future pandemics.

There are also urgent issues around vaccine inequity that disproportionately affected national response efforts in the Global South and hindered the ability of low-income countries to improve living standards. Insufficient knowledge transfer and capability-building slowed the adaptation of vaccines to meet local conditions. No consensus has yet emerged on how these inequities should have been addressed (e.g., container-factories versus strengthening regional innovation systems and capabilities in the Global South). New generation mRNA-based vaccines are rapidly emerging, but it is still uncertain whether, in the event of a new viral pandemic, vaccines can be manufactured, stored, and distributed at the scale and with the right geographic spread to address global vaccine needs, including those of middle and low-income countries.

Conference Programme
11-12 April 2024
SOAS University of London

Day 1: April 11, 2024

8.30 - 9.00 Registration Tea, Coffee, and Biscuits

9.00 Welcome Address

9.15 - 12.30 SESSION I: R&D, VACCINE INVENTION AND INNOVATION

[Refreshment Break – 10.45-11.00]

Session Theme

The main purpose of this session is to discuss the financing of the research and development of vaccines. It will cover public and business funding of R&D, links between the science base and industry (for the development and manufacture of vaccines) and the implications of different forms of financing for vaccine equity. The participants in this section are drawn from science, medical and social science backgrounds.

Chair: *Christine Oughton, SOAS University of London*

Speaker	Job Title, Organisation	Subject Area
<i>Jerome H. Kim</i>	<i>Director General, International Vaccine Institute, South Korea</i>	<i>Vaccine Research and Development</i>
<i>William (Bill) Lazonick</i>	<i>Emeritus Professor University of Massachusetts and President of AIRnet</i>	<i>Business and economics of innovation including vaccine innovation</i>
<i>Margareth Ndomondo-Sigonda</i>	<i>Head of Health Programmes, Africa Union Development Agency-NEPAD</i>	<i>Public health, pharmaceutical manufacturing, medical products regulation</i>
<i>Maria Bottazzi</i>	<i>Professor, Co-Director & Associate Dean, Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development; National School of Tropical Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine</i>	<i>Vaccine research; physician of infectious diseases</i>
<i>Padmashree Gehl Sampath</i>	<i>Chief Executive Officer of the African Pharmaceutical Technology Foundation, Special Adviser to African Development Bank, Chair on Industrial Development, University of Johannesburg, Research Fellow Harvard University.</i>	<i>Global Health Studies, Technology Development, Trade, Innovation, Industrial Performance and Transformations.</i>

12.30 - 13.30 Lunch and Networking, The Cloisters, Senate House, SOAS University of London

13.30 - 17.00 SESSION II: VACCINE NATIONALISM, VACCINE INEQUITY, PRODUCTION AND IPR

[Refreshment Break 15.00 - 15.15]

Session Theme

This session will explore financing of research and development, intellectual property rights, prices for, and access to new drugs, vaccines, and other medical technologies. The central question is to explore the role of intellectual property rights in shaping R&D, knowledge and technology transfer and the pricing and distribution of vaccines, including the adequacy of the June 2022 WTO patent waiver, voluntary patent waivers and the use of compulsory licensing.

Chair: *Öner Tulum, Executive Director of Research, AIRnet; Research Affiliate, SOAS University of London and Watson Institute, Brown University*

Speaker	Job Title, Organisation	Subject Area
<i>Julia Barnes-Weise</i>	<i>Executive Director, Global Healthcare Innovation Alliances Accelerator (GHIAA)</i>	<i>Intellectual Property Rights, Pharma product licensing, global public health security</i>
<i>Phil Alvelda</i>	<i>CEO and Chairman of Brainworks Foundry, Inc</i>	<i>AI enhanced healthcare technologies and services</i>
<i>Duncan Matthews</i>	<i>Professor of IP Law, Queen Mary University of London</i>	<i>Intellectual Property Rights</i>
<i>Christine Oughton</i>	<i>Professor of Management Economics, SOAS University of London</i>	<i>Innovation Diffusion, Patents and Social Welfare</i>
<i>Jayati Ghosh</i>	<i>Professor of Economics, University of Massachusetts Amherst and Member of the UN Secretary General's High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism</i>	<i>Political economy of vaccine production</i>

Rooms available for media interviews 12.30 - 13.30 and 17.00 - 18.00

Day 2
April 12, 2014

9.15 - 12.30 SESSION III: BUILDING CAPABILITIES AND CATALYSING INNOVATION SYSTEMS, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND VACCINE MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES

[Refreshment Break – 10.45 - 11.00]

Theme of Session

The main purpose of this session is how to build capabilities to strengthen national and regional innovation systems around the world. It will explore the factors shaping knowledge and technology transfer, with a focus on transfer from high to middle and low-income economies, as well as the geographic spread of manufacturing capabilities. It will also assess the merits of different strategies, for example, container factories versus strengthening regional innovation systems in the global south, and mechanisms to foster greater international cooperation.

Chair: *Margareth Ndomondo-Sigonda, Head of Health Programmes, Africa Union Development Agency-NEPAD*

Speaker	Job Title, Organisation	Subject Area
<i>Rohit Malpani</i>	<i>Independent consultant, Former Director of Policy and Analysis, Médecins Sans Frontières and UNITAID Board Member</i>	<i>IP Law related to medicines and Public Policy</i>
<i>Suerie Moon</i>	<i>Co-Director and Professor of Practice, Global Health Centre, Geneva Graduate Institute</i>	<i>Knowledge Networks, Innovation and Access to Medicines</i>
<i>Öner Tulum</i>	<i>Executive Director of Research, AIRnet and Research Affiliate, Brown University</i>	<i>Business and Economics of Vaccine Innovation</i>
<i>Petro Terblanche</i>	<i>Managing Director, Afrigen Biologics and Vaccines</i>	<i>Environmental disease, epidemiology, technology transfer and innovation, mRNA vaccines</i>

12.30 - 13.30 Lunch and Networking, The Cloisters, Senate House, SOAS University of London

Rooms available for media interviews 12.30 - 13.30 and 17.00 - 18.00

Session IV: STRENGTHENING GLOBAL GOVERNANCE OF THE COMMONS

[Refreshment Break – 15.00 - 15.15]

Session Theme:

The session will explore the global governance of public health, research and knowledge transfer, including the role of global institutions such as the WHO, WTO and the UN. A central theme will be how we can manage the global governance of public health and vaccines efficiently and fairly. It will also draw conclusions on how we can monitor progress and what is needed to improve preparedness for future public health crises.

Chair: *Bill Lazonick, Emeritus Professor University of Massachusetts and President of AIRnet*

Speaker	Job Title, Organisation	Subject Area
<i>Andres Cardenas</i>	<i>Research Associate, AIRnet</i>	<i>Economics of Vaccine Innovation, perspectives from Cuba</i>
<i>Hsu Huang</i>	<i>Brown University</i>	<i>Social Foundations of Non-Western Science: Making COVID Vaccines in China and Russia</i>
<i>Damian Tobin</i>	<i>Lecturer in Internal Business, University of Cork</i>	<i>Patents, innovation and Governance, history of innovation and business</i>
<i>Thomas Ferguson</i>	<i>Director of Research, Institute for New Economic Thinking</i>	<i>Political economy of vaccine innovation, competition & governance</i>
<i>Patricia J. García</i>	<i>Affiliate Professor of Global Health, University of Washington; Former Minister of Health of Peru, Chief of the Peruvian National Institute of Health, Dean of the School of Public Health at Cayetano Heredia University in Peru</i>	<i>Public health, epidemiology, medical informatics, HIV and SDI. Leadership and development in global health.</i>

17.00 Close of Conference

Rooms available for media interviews 12.30-13.30 and 17.00-18.00