

TBVI announces the appointment of its new Executive Director

The Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (TBVI) Governance Board is pleased to announce the appointment of a new Executive Director of the organisation.

March 2024

Tuberculosis (TB) stands as one of the most persistent and formidable infectious diseases, exerting a substantial burden on global health. Despite progress in healthcare, TB remains a leading cause of morbidity and mortality, particularly in resource-limited regions. **The quest for a better vaccine against TB is hugely important for its potential to save countless lives and improve public health.**

TBVI is a research, innovation and development partnership based in Europe that facilitates the discovery and development of new, safe, and effective TB vaccines that are accessible and affordable globally. The Governing Board of TBVI is pleased to announce that Dr. Ole F. Olesen will lead TBVI, effective March 1st, 2024.



Ole has studied at the universities of Aarhus, Denmark and Cambridge, UK, as well as at Copenhagen Business School. Having previously worked in the pharmaceutical industry, he has gained considerable experience in pharmaceutical product development, and for the last 20 years he has dedicated his career to global health. Ole has worked as Director of International Cooperation at the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and Principal

Scientific Officer for Infectious Diseases at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research & Innovation. Since 2019, Ole has been the Executive Director of the European Vaccine Initiative (EVI), a non-profit product development partnership that strives to develop safe, effective and affordable vaccines for global health.

The Governing Boards of EVI and TBVI have agreed that Ole serves as Executive Director of both organisations that share the common goal of developing new life-saving vaccines for the world.

The Board of TBVI expresses its gratitude to Dr. Gerald Voss who had assumed the role of interim Executive Director and facilitated the transition to a new Executive Director.

“There is an urgent need for new tuberculosis vaccines to reduce TB transmission and mortality. The science is making significant progress with several candidates now in clinical trials across the world. Ole Olesen’s experience will be a fantastic asset for TBVI to further accelerate progress in this field and help build a strong European force to fight infectious threats.” said Prof. Michel Kazatchkine, Chair of the Governing Board of TBVI.

“This is a very exciting time for TB vaccines. After more than 100 years with little progress, new effective vaccines are now within sight. TBVI has made an important contribution to this success by assembling a critical mass of expertise, stakeholders, and funders around a common goal. I am therefore thrilled to join TBVI at this important point in time and help mobilize an impactful European response to the global fight against tuberculosis”, said Ole Olesen.

As a non-profit foundation, TBVI creates an enabling environment for TB vaccine research, innovation and product development. TBVI supports its partners to develop and move the most promising TB vaccine and biomarker candidates through the product development pipeline. To continue to innovate and diversify the pipeline and TB vaccine platforms, TBVI supports collaborative research and innovation by its partners. TBVI adds value by providing technical advice for product and clinical development; project identification, development and management; and resource mobilisation. TBVI works with the Global TB Vaccine Partnership to strengthen global and European cooperation and coordination and identify research gaps to move the field forward. TBVI works to strengthen European leadership and scientific excellence in TB vaccine research, innovation and development. TBVI is seeking to consolidate its strong links with the European Union, while also forging closer alliances with like-minded organisations across TB and across vaccines.

The development of a TB vaccine stands as a pivotal step towards a healthier and more resilient world. An effective vaccine is crucial for preventing the disease burden caused by TB as well as alleviating the socioeconomic burden it imposes on communities and healthcare systems globally. As of today, with Dr. Ole F. Olesen as the Executive Director of both organisations, EVI and TBVI, a joint European effort can be made towards a better future, where vaccines deliver health and equity for all people.