



**STAR  
IDAZ**

International  
Research  
Consortium on  
Animal Health

# Summer Newsletter 2026

June 2026



Funded by  
the European Union





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## Message from the Chair

It was a pleasure to welcome members of the STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC) on Animal Health Executive Committee to our recent meeting in Ottawa, Canada, held in May. Although I was unable to attend in person, I was delighted to join colleagues remotely and to open what proved to be a productive and engaging hybrid meeting. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those who participated, whether in Ottawa or online from around the world. In particular, I am grateful to those who travelled to Canada to attend in person, and to our invited observers for joining us and contributing to the spirit of

international collaboration that is central to STAR IDAZ. I would also like to warmly thank Renee Laroque and her team at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) for so generously hosting the meeting and for their excellent work in organising such a welcoming and well-structured event. My thanks also go to the STAR IDAZ Secretariat for their continued hard work in supporting the Executive Committee and the wider Network throughout the year.

The meeting provided an important opportunity to reflect on the core purpose of STAR IDAZ: improving the coordination of animal health research programmes and strategies at the international level. By working together, we can avoid unintentional duplication of effort, increase the impact of research investments, and make the best possible use of limited funding resources. These objectives remain as relevant as ever in the face of increasingly complex global challenges, including transboundary animal diseases, emerging and re-emerging pathogens, climate change impacts, pressures on food systems, and constrained research budgets.

No single country or organisation can address these challenges alone. Effective international coordination and collaboration are essential if we are to deliver meaningful progress in animal health and contribute to global health, food security, and sustainable development. The STAR IDAZ IRC continues to provide a unique and trusted platform for this work, and the continued engagement of our partners remains critical to its success.

At the meeting in Ottawa I announced my forthcoming retirement from the National Veterinary Research Institute Vom and my departure from STAR IDAZ. It has been a great privilege to serve as Chair of the Executive Committee and to work with such a committed and knowledgeable international community. I am deeply grateful for the collaboration, support, and friendship I have experienced throughout my time with STAR IDAZ.

I would like to thank all members of the Executive Committee, the Scientific Committee, the Working Groups, the Regional Networks and the wider STAR IDAZ community for your continued commitment to advancing animal health research. The strength of STAR IDAZ lies in the dedication of its members and in our shared determination to work together across borders, sectors, and disciplines.

I wish STAR IDAZ every success as it continues this important work, and I look forward to seeing the Consortium build on its achievements and continue to support impactful, internationally coordinated research for the benefit of animal and global health.

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# Executive Committee Update



The STAR IDAZ IRC Executive Committee is made up of representatives of each of the 36 STAR IDAZ IRC partners. The STAR IDAZ IRC Partners have agreed to coordinate research funding strategies, promote support for STAR IDAZ IRC objectives, and share information between the members. The IRC Executive Committee oversee the strategic direction of the consortium, agree the STAR IDAZ activities, and utilise the outputs to align and coordinate their organisations' animal health research programmes and funding. We are delighted to welcome Anja Bregger (Regional Consortium Switzerland) and welcome back Luke Dalton (Zoetis, previously in the Secretariat) and Ariel Pereda (The National Agricultural Technology Institute, Argentina) to the Executive Committee.

The STAR IDAZ IRC Executive Committee met on 6–7 May 2026 in Ottawa, Canada, hosted by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The in-person Executive Committee meeting followed the STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee meeting held on 5 May. The first day, and part of the second, were held as Open Sessions with the Scientific Committee invited as observers, providing an important opportunity for discussion and alignment between the two committees. A closed Executive Committee session was held on the afternoon of 7 May.

The meeting began with a welcome from the Chair, Maryam Muhammad, followed by a session on Bridging the Gap from Research to Innovation, with presentations from Jean-Louis Hunault, Diagnostics For Animals; Steve Wilson, GALVmed; and Renée Larocque, IDRC. The session explored how research outputs can be translated into practical tools, products and approaches that support animal health innovation.

Dr Vish Nene, Chair of the STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee, reported on the Scientific Committee meetings held in February 2026 and on 5 May, and presented the associated scientific recommendations. Updates were also provided by Scientific Committee Working Groups on several priority areas, including aquatic animal diseases, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, poxviruses, diagnostics tools and technologies, and helminths.

Further sessions considered opportunities to strengthen global coordination and funding for animal health research. Musa Mulongo, ILRI, led a discussion on leveraging global funding for animal health research, while Nathalie Vanderheijden presented the European Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare, highlighting its objectives and relevance to STAR IDAZ priorities. Throughout the Open Sessions, Executive Committee members were invited to present high-level organisational research priorities; possible future direction; or planned research funding activities in order to identify opportunities for collaboration or alignment between IRC Partners.

During the closed session, the Executive Committee considered thematic coordination groups and discussed the future sustainability of STAR IDAZ IRC. Sustainability remains a key issue for the consortium, and members held a frank discussion on maintaining momentum and impact in the context of limited finances. The Executive Committee also reviewed, discussed and approved recommendations from the Scientific Committee.

Following Maryam Muhammad's announcement of her retirement, the Committee was invited to nominate candidates for a new Chair.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held by webinar in Q4 2026.

# Scientific Committee Update



The STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee, comprising 16 independent experts from across the globe, plays a vital role in providing scientific guidance to the STAR IDAZ Executive Committee and Working Groups. The Scientific Committee met in person in Ottawa, Canada on 5 May 2026. The meeting was opened by Pierre Kadet, Director of Climate-Resilient Food Systems at IDRC, who highlighted the importance of international collaboration in addressing animal health research priorities.

Vish Nene, Chair of the Scientific Committee, provided a recap on the Scientific Committee meeting held in February and SIRCAH lead, Maddy Newman, provided an overview of the sustainability plans for the end of the current funding to the Secretariat in March 2027.

Working Group updates were provided on Capripoxviruses (Pip Beard and Jeremy Salt), Helminths (Smaro Sotiraki), Diagnostics (Johannes Charlier) and Vaccinology (Vish Nene and Gary Entrican).

The insights from this meeting shaped recommendations presented to the Executive Committee at its meeting held in Ottawa the next day.

Vish Nene and Johannes Charlier introduced a discussion item on the potential role of improving animal health to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and the role of animal health in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Maddy Newman, introduced plans for activity on the impact of climate change on animal health in the Africa and Middle East Regional Network, including a questionnaire and workshop to be held later in 2026.

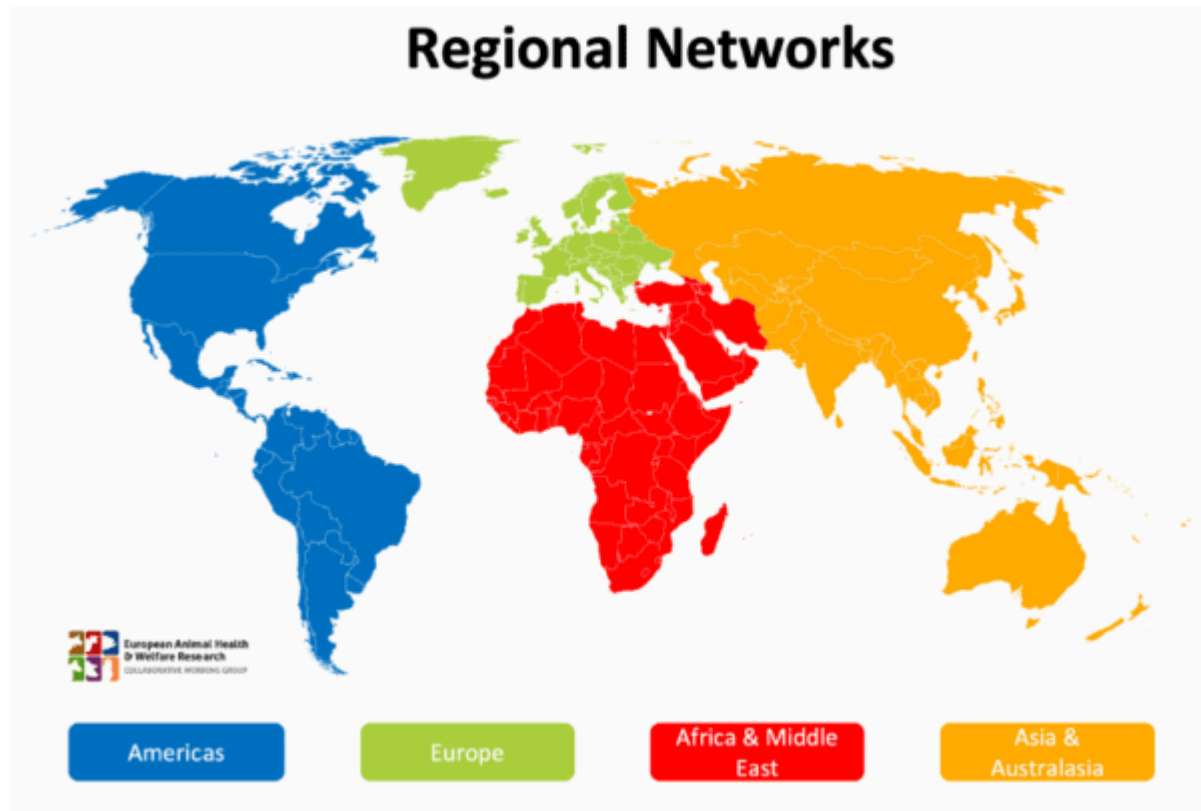
The Scientific Committee continues to play a key role in supporting the STAR IDAZ mission: coordinating global research to develop new and improved strategies against priority animal diseases and zoonoses.

The next meeting of the STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee will be held by webinar in Q4 2026.

## Regional Networks

**Americas; Africa and the Middle East; Asia and Australasia; European Network**

The STAR IDAZ Regional Networks (for Africa & the Middle East, the Americas, Asia & Australasia, and Europe) facilitate regional cooperation and coordination by identifying common research priorities in the Region, opportunities for sharing resources including access to samples, specialised facilities and expertise, and international or regional funding opportunities.



## Americas Regional Network

The Americas Regional Network met on 8 May 2025 in Ottawa, Canada following the Executive and Scientific Committee meetings. The meeting was well attended, with participation from representatives of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA); Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG), Chile; Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (INTA), Argentina; National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM); International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada; United States Department for Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS); Jamaica Broiler Group; the University of São Paulo, Brazil; and Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries, Uruguay. The meeting was also attended by observers from the Executive and Scientific Committees, as well as the chairs of the other Regional Networks of STAR IDAZ.

Country reports from meeting participants highlighted common challenges and research priorities across the region, including highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), antimicrobial resistance (AMR), bovine tuberculosis (bTB), bovine leukaemia virus (BLV), and screwworm. Members also highlighted ongoing developments in diagnostics, in vaccine development, and surveillance of endemic and emerging diseases, and considered how to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Americas Regional Network in the absence of formal funding.

The next meeting of the Americas Regional Network will be held virtually in late 2026.



## **Africa and Middle East Regional Network**

During their last meeting, the Africa and Middle East Regional Network proposed activity on the impact of climate change on animal health in region. Work is underway to run a regional survey to understand the research and knowledge gaps and priorities on this topic, before a workshop is held later in 2026. More information will be shared on the STAR IDAZ website.

## **Asia and Australasia Regional Network**

The Asia and Australasia Regional Network last met in Beijing, China on 25 September 2025 with participation from Russia, Indonesia, China, Thailand, Japan, India, Pakistan, WOAHA Regional Offices and the Asian Development Bank joining virtually.

The next meeting will be held in Q4 2026.

## **Europe Network: SCAR Collaborative Working Group on Animal Health and Welfare Research (CWG-AHW)**

The SCAR Working Group on AH&W convened its plenary meeting on 23 April in Tallinn, Estonia, organised back-to-back with the EUPAH&W scientific meeting. Updates were presented by the subgroups on Animal Welfare and the Strategy & Foresight Unit, and members received information on recent developments within the DISCONTTOOLS and STAR IDAZ networks.

The WG also informed members about ongoing studies undertaken in collaboration with [RefreSCAR](#). The Regulatory Science report, 'The science–policy interface on farm animal welfare in the EU', has been endorsed by the European Commission and will be published soon. Work is progressing on the report addressing risk-communication research in animal health and welfare. In addition, the subgroup assessing the impacts of climate change on animal health and welfare has completed an online survey and is preparing a workshop scheduled for the end of the year.

# Priority Topics



12 June 2026 - Georgina Grell

## **Bridging the One Health Funding Gap: Strategic Mechanisms for Integrated Research Coordination**

STAR IDAZ IRC has carried out activity to identify approaches to improve strategic mechanisms for funding research with an integrated One Health approach. A position paper was published on Why...

[Read more...](#)



8 June 2026 - Georgina Grell

## **New CBPP Vaccine Development Roadmap Published**

STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium has published a new roadmap for the development of vaccines against contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP), now available on the STAR IDAZ website under the Mycoplasmas...

[Read more...](#)



4 June 2026 - Georgina Grell

## **STAR IDAZ IRC Capripoxvirus Gap Analysis Workshop**

Capripoxviruses, including lumpy skin diseases virus (LSDV), sheeppox virus (SPPV), and goatpox Virus (GTPV), are a group of viruses that cause contagious diseases in animals. Characterised by skin lesions, pustules,...

[Read more...](#)



3 June 2026 - Georgina Grell

## **New Survey Reports Published on Priority Research Needs for Crustaceans, Molluscs and Amphibians**

STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC), in collaboration with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), has published three new survey reports highlighting global research priorities for aquatic animal health...

[Read more...](#)



6 February 2026 - Georgina Grell

## **STAR IDAZ Influenza Research Roadmaps Referenced in GF-TADs Avian Influenza Update**

5 February 2026 — STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC) was referenced today during the joint FAO–WOAH event “Update on the Latest Initiatives for Avian Influenza Prevention and Control” held...

[Read more...](#)



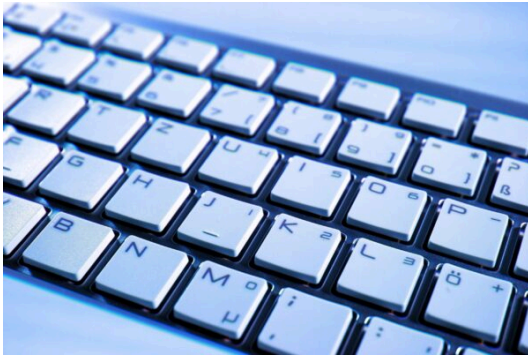
16 January 2026 - Georgina Grell

## **Diagnostics paper published in new DISCONTTOOLS & STAR IDAZ Collection**

A paper on gaps in diagnostics has been published in the new BMC Veterinary Research article Collection “DISCONTTOOLS & STAR IDAZ research gaps for infectious disease control in animals”. The...

[Read more...](#)

# STAR IDAZ and SIRCAH News



22 June 2026 - Gareth Dicks

## **Five articles published in Joint DISCONTTOOLS / STAR IDAZ retrospective collection**

STAR IDAZ IRC is delighted that five articles have now been published in the Joint DISCONTTOOLS / STAR IDAZ Retrospective Collection: DISCONTTOOLS & STAR IDAZ research gaps for infectious disease...

[Read more...](#)



22 June 2026 - Gareth Dicks

## **Maryam Muhammad steps down as Chair of the STAR IDAZ IRC Executive Committee**

SIRCAH would like to extend its sincere thanks and congratulations to Maryam Muhammad, Chair of the STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium Executive Committee, as she steps down from the role...

[Read more...](#)



9 June 2026 - Georgina Grell

## STAR IDAZ IRC at the 93rd WOAH General Session: Advancing Global Animal health Research Coordination in Support of the 8th Strategic Plan

Paris, May 2026 — STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium on Animal Health participated in the 93rd General Session of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), hosting a kiosk to...

[Read more...](#)

9 June 2026 - Georgina Grell

## STAR IDAZ Innovation Academy continues to grow...

STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium's webinar series continues to bring together experts from across the animal health innovation landscape to share insights, experiences, and practical approaches for translating research into...

[Read more...](#)



29 May 2026 - Georgina Grell

## **STAR IDAZ at DIAH 2026: Connecting Research, Innovation and Industry**

STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC) took part in the Discovery to Innovation in Animal Health (DIAH) conference in Bruges (19–21 May 2026), helping to connect early-stage researchers with investors,...

[Read more...](#)



11 March 2026 - Gareth Dicks

## **SIRCAH meets in Brussels to plan next phase of international animal health research coordination**

The Support for the International Research Consortium on Animal Health (SIRCAH) team met in person in Brussels on 5 March 2026 to discuss plans for the remainder of the SIRCAH2...

[Read more...](#)

# Stakeholder News



22 June 2026 - Georgina Grell

## Partnerships driving innovation for animal health and welfare

How can partnerships accelerate innovation for animal health and welfare? STAR IDAZ IRC is pleased to share an inspiring video from the Animals & Us series, presented by the World...

[Read more...](#)



22 June 2026 - Georgina Grell

## Save the date: Final SPARC Project Meeting to take place in Brussels

The STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC) Helminth Working Group and LiHRA are pleased to announce that the final project meeting of the Thematic Network SPARC – Sustainable Parasite Control...

[Read more...](#)

[CALL TO ACTION](#)

# IRC Partners



## The complete list of partners is:

1. Danish National Veterinary Institute (DTU Vet), Denmark
2. National Institute of Agricultural Research (INRA), France
3. French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES), France
4. Ministry of Health, Italy
5. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food security and Nature (LNVN), The Netherlands
6. National Institute for Agriculture and Food Research and Technology (INIA), Spain
7. Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK
8. Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council (BBSRC), UK
9. Regional Consortium Belgium (STAR IDAZ.be): Ghent University; University of Liège; Contractual Research Unit at the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment; Sciensano; ARSIA (Regional Association for Animal Health and Identification), Public Service of Wallonia - Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (SPW ARNE), Staff Direction for Risk Assessment from FASFC (Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain), Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO) and DGZ (Animal Health Care Flanders)
10. Kimron Veterinary Institute, Israel
11. International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Kenya
12. Tanzania Veterinary Laboratory Agency (TVLA), Tanzania
13. National Institute of Animal Health, National Agriculture and Food Research Organisation (NIAH), Japan

14. Agriculture Research Services, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA ARS), USA
15. National Institute of Agriculture Technology (INTA), Argentina
16. Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation (MINCYT), Argentina
17. Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Canada
18. Zoetis
19. WOAHA (World Organisation for Animal Health)
20. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)
21. Health For Animals (Global Animal Medicines Association)
22. Diagnostics for Animals (Manufacturers of Animal Health Diagnostics)
23. European Commission
24. Regional Consortium; Nigerian Animal Health Research Network led by National Veterinary Research Institute Vom
25. National Advisory Council on Animal Health (CONASA) and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Zootechnics (FVMZ)
26. Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness, CSIRO, Australia
27. Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute (LVRI), China
28. Swedish Veterinary Agency (SVA)
29. National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), USA
30. Norwegian Veterinary Institute (NVI), Norway
31. Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO)
32. The National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), Uganda
33. The Office National for the Sanitary Safety of Food Products (ONSSA), Morocco
34. Regional Consortium; Swiss Regional Consortium (Swiss Federal Office for Food Safety and Veterinary Affairs and the Institute of Virology and Immunology)
35. International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada
36. Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed), UK



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## **SIRCAH2**

Funded by the European Union under project 101082377 – SIRCAH 2. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the REA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

This work was supported by UKRI BBSRC [grant numbers 10055666 and 10058793].

SIRCAH2 is run by a partnership including Defra (UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), CAB International (CABI), BBSRC (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council), and Kreavet. It provides organisational and communication support to the IRC, facilitates research gap analysis including the provision of literature reviews for working groups, maps funding activities against identified research needs, and helps mobilise resources to address them. The Secretariat also plays an important role in advocacy for the consortium and bringing in new members.

### **Further Information**

For further information about the IRC please visit [www.STAR IDAZ.net](http://www.STAR IDAZ.net). Research funding organisations and programme owners interested in joining the IRC or researchers interested in joining the working groups should contact the STAR IDAZ IRC Project Office:

**Johannes Charlier** (Kreavet): [j.charlier@animalhealthurope.eu](mailto:j.charlier@animalhealthurope.eu)

**Madeline Newman** (Defra): [madeline.newman@defra.gov.uk](mailto:madeline.newman@defra.gov.uk)

**Valeria Mariano** (WOAH): [v.mariano@woah.org](mailto:v.mariano@woah.org)

**Gareth Dicks** (CABI): [g.dicks@cabi.org](mailto:g.dicks@cabi.org)

**Georgina Grell** (CABI): [g.grell@cabi.org](mailto:g.grell@cabi.org)

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**Katie Gordon** (Defra): [katie.gordon@defra.gov.uk](mailto:katie.gordon@defra.gov.uk)

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**To contribute to improving animal health and welfare.**

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Opportunities to share projects

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