



# Press release

London, 15 November 2023

## AXA to partner with London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine on dengue outbreak forecasting project

- AXA UK and the AXA Research Fund are collaborating with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine to develop a Global observatory for vector-borne disease outbreaks focusing on the impact of climate on dengue outbreaks.
- Using data and climate information, the Lab will develop new forecasting systems to predict outbreaks up to three months in advance helping better plan response.

AXA UK and the AXA Research Fund (AXA's global philanthropic initiative) have joined forces with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) on a project to develop a global observatory for vector-borne disease outbreaks. This includes an outbreak forecasting system that will give a direct and immediate measurement of climate and climate change's impact on the risk of dengue outbreaks and a wide range of other diseases.

Vector-borne diseases – human illnesses caused by parasites, viruses and bacteria transmitted by living organisms such as mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas – account for more than 17% of infectious diseases and around 700,000 deaths every year. Climate change is worsening the transmission dynamics and geographic spread of these diseases. Dengue is the most prevalent and fastest growing vector-borne disease, with urbanisation and climate change driving its expansion to over 120 countries and putting around 2.25 billion people at risk.

The observatory will develop a new real-time database of dengue cases from more than 50 countries, collating information to help the development of flexible forecasting models. These will provide early warning of potential outbreaks by sharing forecasts with governments, scientists, and members of the public. The new forecasting systems will focus first on outbreaks in countries where dengue is most prevalent, then issue warnings to others including in Europe and North America, where dengue is currently expanding. At present, there is no global database that tracks the current dengue situation or current outbreaks.

The project will be coordinated by Dr Oliver Brady from LSHTM, who has over a decade of experience in modelling mosquito-transmitted diseases. AXA's network of infectious disease and modelling experts will contribute, together with collaborators from the World Health Organisation.

*“Accelerating science on emerging risks and making it available to help handle key societal challenges is the core of the AXA Research Fund mission. This innovative partnership with the LSHTM will bring a significant contribution*



to our ability to tackle the increasing concern about dengue, one of the many impacts of climate change on human health.” **Julia d’Astorg, Head of the AXA Research Fund.**

“As an insurer, we understand the importance of protecting people’s health and what matters most to them. This project emphasises our commitment to risk prevention, not just via our products and services but also through our support for global causes that make a real difference to people around the world.” **Tara Foley, CEO, AXA UK and Ireland.**

“Climate sensitive emerging infectious diseases present some of the biggest future threats to humans. By building the data infrastructure to track and predict outbreaks in real-time we can change how countries respond, enabling a shift from reacting to epidemics to preventing them.” **Dr. Oliver Brady, Associate Professor, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.**

## ENDS

### Notes to Editors:

#### About the AXA Research Fund

The AXA Research Fund is AXA’s global philanthropic initiative aimed at addressing major societal risks through science. Its mission is to support transformative scientific research and inform science-based decision-making. Since 2008, AXA has allocated €250M to support over 700 research projects in health, climate and environment, and socioeconomics.

Find more at [www.axa-research.org](http://www.axa-research.org) and on LinkedIn & X: @AXAResearchFund

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#### ABOUT AXA UK

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AXA UK is part of the AXA Group, a worldwide leader in insurance and asset management, with 145,000 employees serving 93 million clients in 51 countries. In 2022, IFRS revenues amounted to Euro 102.3 billion and underlying earnings to Euro 7.3 billion. AXA had Euro 845 billion in assets under management as of December 31, 2022.

In the UK & Ireland, AXA operates through a number of business units including AXA Insurance, AXA Health and AXA Ireland. AXA UK & Ireland employs around 10,000 staff.

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