

Gates Foundation gives \$220 mln for TB research

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The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is donating the money to Aeras which from its bases in the United States and South Africa has developed six possible TB vaccines that are being tested across Africa, Asia, Europe and America.

"This infusion of funding must be seen as a global call to action in

response to one of the world's deadliest diseases," said Jim Connolly, Aeras's president and chief executive, expressing gratitude for the massive grant.

"It will allow Aeras to expand upon existing partnerships in Europe, Africa, China, and around the world."

A total of 8.8 million people globally fell ill with the contagious [lung disease](#) in 2010 and around 1.4 million died, according to the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO).

Trevor Mundel, president of the global health program at the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#), said the development of successful vaccines "would be the single greatest advance in the global fight against TB."

Once known as "consumption" for the slow wasting away of the people who died of it, one out of every three people is thought to be infected by the airborne TB organism, though only a fraction go on to develop the disease.

The WHO estimates the global [economic burden](#) of TB is \$12 billion a year, with India and China together accounting for more than half that cost.

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