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Laurier professor's leadership builds African-led HIV and AIDS research capacity

WATERLOO – Laurier professor **Alan Whiteside** is providing his extensive expertise in HIV and AIDS research to lead a training and mobilization project advocating for African-led scholarship. Whiteside will be the lead researcher on a grant to Laurier from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to build research and publication capacity among African researchers. The grant will support Whiteside's training and mobilization project advocating for African-led scholarship in support of *the African Journal of AIDS Research*.

"This financial support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will enable Laurier to play an important and strategic role in enhancing the ability of African researchers to be more effectively engaged in the scientific, clinical, social and organizational research-related solutions to HIV and AIDS," said **Robert Gordon**, vice-president: research at Laurier.

Under Whiteside's direction, the project will allow African scholars to increase their research capacity and share their knowledge and perspectives on HIV and AIDS with the global academic community. The project will bring together Laurier and the *African Journal of AIDS Research*, of which Whiteside is the editor-in-chief.

African-based scholars are significantly underrepresented in academic research literature on HIV and AIDS. The problem is particularly acute among emerging African scholars, who have few resources to support academic skills development and share their research results. Without these skills, innovative African academic perspectives may be lost. Not only do emerging scholars suffer directly from these gaps, but scholarly enquiry as a whole also suffers when African perspectives on the HIV and AIDS crisis and response are not heard.

"African-led researchers who are on the frontlines of HIV and AIDS research must bring their extensive knowledge and deep experience to academic discussions around the world," said Whiteside, Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) chair in Global Health Policy at the Balsillie School of International Affairs and professor at Laurier's School of International Policy and Governance. "The solutions to the substantial health, social and economic impacts of HIV and AIDS will not be found without their participation and input into the global scientific dialogue."

Whiteside brings to the project more than 30 years of experience in sharing knowledge about HIV and AIDS. In 1990, he started the AIDS Analysis Africa newsletter and served as the editor until 2002. He is the co-author of numerous articles and books, including *AIDS: The Challenge for South Africa*; *AIDS in the Twenty-First Century: Disease and Globalisation*. His book [*HIV and AIDS: A Very Short Introduction*](#), part of the best selling *Very Short Introductions* series, has been updated and will be reissued in November 2016.