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Press Release

New International Digital Health & Artificial Intelligence Research Collaborative (I-DAIR) to begin incubation in Geneva

13 October 2020, Geneva, Switzerland – Today, the new **International Digital Health & Artificial Intelligence Research Collaborative (I-DAIR)**, has launched its incubation phase at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva with the support of Fondation Botnar, a Swiss-based foundation that champions the use of AI and digital technology to improve the wellbeing of young people.

I-DAIR presents an opportunity to reinvent and reinvigorate the delivery of health services across the world. Its aim is to promote responsible and inclusive artificial intelligence (AI) research and digital technology development for health by establishing a neutral, trusted platform for global research collaborations.

“Initiatives such as I-DAIR provide a crucial role of allowing us to leverage the potential of AI to enhance the future wellbeing of children, young people, and other vulnerable populations”, said Stefan Germann, CEO at Fondation Botnar.

“Fondation Botnar is pleased to support the incubation of such an innovative project like I-DAIR at such a crucial time in the global health space, where there is a significant potential and need for large datasets to help identify public health threats. We look forward to bringing together global organizations in this landmark research collaboration to ensure the deployment of AI in a responsible way that upholds human rights.”

“By hosting one of the world’s newest, and most urgent, collaboration efforts in multi-stakeholder cooperation, the Graduate Institute stays true to its identity as a pioneering centre of academic excellence in international relations and development studies”, added Professor Marie-Laure Salles, Director of the Graduate Institute.

For his part, Ambassador Amandeep Gill, CEO of I-DAIR, called it “an opportunity to reach universal health coverage (UHC) innovatively and shape future investments to enable inclusive, equitable, and responsible deployment of data and AI.” “I am grateful for the commitments and conviction of I-DAIR’s funders and partners, and very excited about the work that lies ahead.”

I-DAIR seeks inspiration from the recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation co-chaired by Melinda Gates and Jack Ma for new models of collaboration to harness data and digital for the public good and for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A set of initial partnerships have been forged with global partners such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, the Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers (IEEE), PATH, the Foundation for Innovative & New Diagnostics (FIND), Wadhvani AI and CSIR-Institute of Genomics & Integrative Biology (IGIB).

PathFinder projects are also being rolled out over the coming months for the development of digital tools and enablers for health. These include real-time epidemiology models & dashboards which are especially relevant in the current Covid-19 pandemic.

I-DAIR will pursue these projects and the development of a global science agenda through a hubs and spokes architecture. This will help bring emerging geographies of innovation into cutting edge R&D, democratize AI and contextualize the use of data in health.

The project aims for distributed use of data underpinned by common problem definition and research design without the hoarding of digital assets and with full respect for data protection and governance. The first hubs are planned in Geneva, Nairobi, New Delhi, Singapore and Tunis.

Support from partners across governments, international organizations, philanthropy, private sector, civil society and academia will enable the launch of I-DAIR in 2022 as an established multi-stakeholder platform that mobilizes global expertise and resources through an international science and diplomacy-driven consortium on digital health.

www.i-dair.org

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#IDAIR_IncubationLaunch

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