



Hideyo Noguchi

Africa Prize

Government of Japan

What is the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize?

1. Ideal and Objectives

The Government of Japan established the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize in July 2006 in memory of Dr. Hideyo Noguchi whose contribution to medical advancement and self-sacrificing activities in Africa remain a paragon of professionalism. Mindful of the ominous human suffering persisting in Africa, the region facing the most serious health challenge on the globe, the Prize aims to honour individuals with outstanding achievements in the fields of medical research and medical services to combat infectious and other diseases in Africa, thus contributing to the health and welfare of the African people and of all humankind.

2. Scope

- (1) Medical Research Category: Basic medical research / clinical medical research / research in all fields of the life science closely related to medicine
- (2) Medical Services Category: Field-level medical / public health activities to combat diseases and advance public health

3. Eligibility

- No distinction will be made based on the nationality, age or gender of the nominees, who are still living. In the case of nominating an organization, it must be currently active.
- Medical Research Category: Nominations are in principle to be for one individual. In the case of joint research, however, a maximum of three individuals will be considered.
- Medical Services Category: Nominations are in principle to be one individual or one organization per activity. Under exceptional circumstances, however, when more than one individual or organization work as a team, a maximum of three individuals or organizations will be considered.

4. Frequency

The Prize is awarded to coincide with the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). The first award ceremony was held in May 2008 (TICAD IV), the second, in Yokohama in June 2013 (TICAD V), and the third, in Tokyo in August 2019 (TICAD7). For the fourth Prize, the laureates will be known on the occasion of TICAD 8, which is scheduled to be held in Tunisia in 2022.



What is TICAD?

TICAD stands for the Tokyo International Conference on African Development. It is an international conference on subjects related to African development. It began in 1993 on the initiative of Japan, and today is co-organized with the United Nations, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the African Union Commission (AUC), and the World Bank. The 7th TICAD was held in Yokohama on August 28-30, 2019.

5. Value of the Prize

- (1) At the award ceremony, the Prize is awarded in both the medical research and medical services categories, with a citation, medal and the sum of 100 million yen.
- (2) For the prize honorarium, in addition to the government fund, donations from both inside and outside Japan are invited.

6. Selection Process

In the selection process, a selection sub-committee for each field, consisting of experts, will narrow down the candidates to a field of three from among those who have received nominations in Japan and overseas. From among these candidates, the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Committee will nominate the final candidates to the Prime Minister of Japan, and the Prime Minister will decide the laureates.



Dr. Hideyo Noguchi

Hideyo Noguchi (1876–1928) was a prominent Japanese bacteriologist in the early twentieth century. In spite of a physical handicap, burn on his left hand during his early childhood, he managed to obtain, through extraordinarily hard work, a license to practice medicine in Japan. He moved to the United States in 1900 to work with Prof. Simon Flexner at the University of Pennsylvania and in 1904 joined the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research (now Rockefeller University). He made important studies of snake venoms, of smallpox and yellow-fever vaccines, and of the laboratory diagnosis of trachoma. One of his most important achievements of this period was the successful cultivation of pure Syphilis Spirochaeta in 1911 which brought him to world prominence.

After extensive travel throughout Central and South America researching on vaccines for such diseases as yellow fever, Oroya fever and poliomyelitis which threatened the lives of millions of people in those days, he eventually ventured into Africa to confirm his findings. He tried to demonstrate the hypothesis that yellow fever was caused by spirochete bacteria but in vain, because at that time the electron microscope to observe viruses had not been invented yet. While working in Accra, Ghana, he was struck down by the yellow fever virus, his last words being “I don’t understand.” The grave of Dr. Hideyo Noguchi in Woodlawn Cemetery in New York, the United States, is inscribed with the following epitaph: “Through devotion to science, he lived and died for humanity.” In 2004, Dr. Noguchi became the first Japanese scientist to have his portrait printed on a Japanese banknote (1000-yen note).



Dr. Hideyo Noguchi in his lab at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research (Photo: Hideyo Noguchi Memorial Foundation)



The grave of Dr. Hideyo Noguchi in Woodlawn Cemetery (Photo: New York Hideyo Noguchi Memorial Society, Inc. (HNMS))

Laureates for the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize

The First Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize (2008)

Titles are as of the time of Prize awarding.

Medical Research Category

Dr. Brian Greenwood (United Kingdom)

Professor,
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine



Dr. Greenwood was awarded the Prize in recognition of his more than 30 years of multidisciplinary research and practical measures for combating infectious diseases including malaria in Africa.

After receiving the prize, he helped establish the Africa London Nagasaki (ALN) scholarship in cooperation with Nagasaki University.

Through the fund, he has supported the education of outstanding young African scientists in the fields of infectious diseases, public health, and tropical medicine. Dr. Greenwood was presented with the Canada Gairdner Global Health Award in 2012.

Medical Services Category

Prof. Miriam K. Were (Kenya)

Chairperson,
National AIDS Control Council (NACC), Kenya



Prof. Were was awarded the Prize in recognition of her dedicated work to improve the health and welfare of people living in Africa, focused on community-based practical health care services.

After receiving the prize, she has engaged in training community

health workers, promoting care for AIDS orphans, and providing training to young people. Recently, she has made efforts to promote the Maternal and Child Health Handbook (originated in Japan) in Africa.

The Second Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize (2013)

Titles are as of the time of Prize awarding.

Medical Research Category

Dr. Peter Piot (Belgium)

Director and Professor,
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine



Dr. Piot was awarded the Prize in recognition of his pivotal research on infectious diseases that affect people in numerous regions of Africa, particularly HIV/AIDS and Ebola.

After receiving the prize, he has used his sum obtained to provide financial support to

students and researchers from Africa, and has also been involved in the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT Fund) established in Japan. In 2018, he was awarded the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun.

Medical Services Category

Dr. Alex G. Coutinho (Uganda)

Executive Director,
Infectious Disease Institute, Makerere University



Dr. Coutinho was awarded the Prize in recognition of his pioneering work in Africa to increase opportunities to access treatment for people with HIV.

After receiving the prize, he has promoted efforts to provide better medical care to the people of Rwanda. He occupies

several global health leadership roles and is a mentor to future global health leaders around the world.

Titles are as of the time of the Prize awarding.

The Third Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize (2019)

Medical Research Category

Dr. Jean-Jacques Muyembe-Tamfum (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

General Director,
National Institute of Biomedical Research (INRB)



Dr. Muyembe-Tamfum was awarded the Prize in recognition of his research to confront Ebola and other deadly viruses and efforts to train legions of disease-fighters. Dr. Muyembe-Tamfum has been on the front lines of Ebola research, identifying nosocomial and burial transmission as two of the

major causes of disease transmission, contributing to vaccine research, developing antisera therapy and training a new generation of disease responders and Congolese laboratory scientists.

Medical Services Category

Dr. Francis Gervase Omaswa (Uganda)

Executive Director, African Center
for Global Health and Social Transformation (ACHEST)



Dr. Omaswa was awarded the Prize in recognition of his dedication to addressing the global health workforce (HWF) crisis including education, training, retention and migration of healthcare workers and for building pro-people health and medical systems not only across Africa, but

worldwide. He led the drafting and convening of the First Global Forum on HWF, paving the way for the adoption of the WHO Kampala Declaration on human resources and the Agenda for Global Action.

The Third Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Award Ceremony and Commemorative Banquet



In August 2019, the Third Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Award Ceremony and Commemorative Banquet hosted by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was held.

At the award ceremony, Prime Minister Abe delivered an address to the laureates, lauded the achievements of both laureates and presented the medals, the citations, and the honorarium to the laureates.

In his address, he announced that the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize would be awarded every three years from the next Prize.

At the commemorative banquet following the award ceremony, both laureates gave speeches. Dr. Muyembe-Tamfum spoke of his great honor in receiving the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize, and expressed his commitment, together with Dr. Francis Omaswa, to perpetuate Dr. Hideyo Noguchi's spirit of scientific discovery and social justice among the current and future generations of African researchers.

Dr. Omaswa said that in pursuit of the spirit of Dr. Noguchi and to advance his mission, he had decided to commit a portion of the sum of the Prize to a public cause in memory of his daughter, a physician specialized in infectious diseases who passed away three years ago.

Invitation for Donations for the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Fund

As part of the sum to be awarded for this prize, we are inviting donations widely from those who support the idea of this prize. Your goodwill donations will be used to support the work of people who are playing active roles in improving medical research and medical services in Africa.

About inquiries for donations, please contact:

Citizen Participation Promotion Division, Domestic Strategy and Partnership Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

E-mail: jicata-kiful@jica.go.jp



Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize website

▶ <https://www.cao.go.jp/noguchisho/english/index.html>

Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize on Facebook

▶ <https://www.facebook.com/hnapen/>



Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Newsletter

▶ <https://www.cao.go.jp/noguchisho/english/newsletter/index.html>



Photos of Dr. Hideyo Noguchi: Hideyo Noguchi Memorial Foundation

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