

Professor Thumbi Ndung'u

Thumbi Ndung'u, B.V.M., PhD is an Investigator and Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology Research Group Leader at the KwaZulu-Natal Natal Research Institute for Tuberculosis and HIV (K-RITH). He is Professor and Victor Daitz Chair in HIV/TB Research and Director of the HIV Pathogenesis Programme (HPP) at the Doris Duke Medical Research Institute, Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal. He holds the South African Research Chair in Systems Biology of HIV/AIDS. He is a visiting professor of immunology and infectious diseases at Harvard School of Public Health. He is one of the recipients of the inaugural Howard Hughes Medical Institute International Early Career Scientist award. He is a member of the scientific advisory board of the Southern African Consortium for Research Excellence (SACORE), a research consortium of five southern African Universities and their counterparts from the United Kingdom. He serves on the external advisory committee of the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane-University of California, San Diego Medical Education Partnership.

Professor Ndung'u graduated with a degree in Veterinary Medicine from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, and obtained a PhD in Biological Sciences in Public Health from Harvard University. He then undertook postdoctoral studies in Virology at Harvard Medical School. He is a past recipient of the Edgar Haber award (Harvard University), the Vice-Chancellor's research award (University of KwaZulu-Natal) and is a recent finalist for the National Science and Technology Forum/BHP Billiton Awards for outstanding contribution to Science, Engineering, Technology and Innovation (SETI) in the category of research capacity development. Professor Ndung'u's research interests are host-virus interactions, antiviral immune responses and biomedical interventions applicable to resource-limited settings. Professor Ndung'u has published more than 120 papers in peer-reviewed journals in the fields of virology, immunology and biomedical research policy. He has supervised more than 20 postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers. He has received grant funding from diverse sources including the National Research Foundation of South Africa, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), the National Institutes of Health (United States), the Canadian Global Health Research Initiative, the Max Planck Society and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (United States). He leads a multidisciplinary team of researchers working in the fields of HIV and TB pathogenesis and vaccine development. He has special interest in capacity building for biomedical research in Africa.
