In 2014-2015, the MRL received funding from government and non-governmental sources. The NIH funded 73.2% of the MRL's projects, followed by private sponsors (23.8%) and non-profit organizations (24.3%). The MRL contracts with other federal sponsors, such as the National Institutes of Health, and with multiple non-government sources.

Diseases studied at the MRL include:
- Tuberculosis (TB) is curable, yet remains the most deadly infectious disease and one of the 10 leading causes of death in the world. Every year, more than 10 million new TB cases occur and 1.8 million people will die of the disease. 95% of whom live in low- and middle-income countries and 22% of whom are also infected with HIV.
- Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is a chronic disease affecting the skin, peripheral nerves, respiratory tract, and eyes. Leprosy is caused by leprosy bacilli and remains a serious global health threat. Surveillance and early detection are essential for interrupting transmission.
- Leprosy remains unknown. A better understanding of how children acquire the disease is needed.
- M. bovis, also known as Hansen's disease, is a chronic disease affecting the skin, peripheral nerves, respiratory tract, and eyes. Leprosy is caused by leprosy bacilli and remains a serious global health threat. Surveillance and early detection are essential for interrupting transmission.
- M. ulcerans, also known as leishmania, is a protozoan that causes leishmaniasis. The bacteria survive and persist in aquatic environments in endemic areas. The study provides the basis for future research to develop vaccines to prevent lepromatous leprosy.

Methodologies and approaches employed and developed at the MRL include molecular genetics, carbohydrate chemistry, protein chemistry, lipid chemistry, synthetic chemistry, enzymology, immunology, immunopathology, animal models of infection, and "omics" technologies (genomics, metabolomics, proteomics, and lipidomics).
The MRL at Colorado State University

WHO WE ARE

The Mycobacteria Research Laboratory (MRL) is the largest academic research group in the United States devoted to the study of mycobacterial and mycobacteriosis diseases such as tuberculosis (TB), leprosy, Buruli ulcer, and non-tuberculous mycobacteriosis. MRL scientists, who are leaders in basic, preclinical, and clinical research related to these diseases, have a global impact on the understanding and treatment of mycobacterial diseases. Though many are curable, adherence to the long-term courses of treatment required for a cure can be difficult. New diagnostics to allow earlier and more specific diagnosis, new therapeutics to enable faster and easier treatment, and new or improved vaccines to prevent infection altogether could help eradicate these diseases, prevent millions of deaths, and reduce the economic and social costs associated with their transmission and disease. Despite the significant health and economic costs of mycobacterial diseases, large biopharmaceutical companies are largely absent from this space because the diseases disproportionately affect poorer countries. This makes the work and mission of groups such as the MRL all the more essential.

MRL Vision for the Control and Elimination of Mycobacterial Diseases

The MRL is at the forefront of research and training in mycobacterial disease, currently producing high-impact work with real-world implications for understanding, diagnosing, treating, and preventing these diseases. Over the past six years, MRL scientists have published more than 420 papers and their work has been cited more than 4,000 times.