



Innovative Medicines Initiative

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PRESS RELEASE

€3.3 billion IMI 2 programme to pave the way for next generation treatments, starting with diabetes & eye diseases

- **€3.3 billion IMI 2 programme builds on successes of IMI so far**
- **New Strategic Research Agenda is based on World Health Organization priorities and places strong emphasis on the needs of patients and society, and speeding up patient access to new treatments**
- **Diabetes and eye diseases (diabetic retinopathy and dry age-related macular degeneration / AMD) topics of €49 million first IMI 2 Call for proposals**

BRUSSELS, 9 July 2014 – Today, the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) enters its second phase with a €3.3 billion budget and the ambitious goal of fast-tracking the development of the next generation of medicines, especially in areas where there is an unmet medical or societal need. The IMI 2 Strategic Research Agenda, which draws heavily on the World Health Organization (WHO) report 'Priority Medicines for Europe and the World', will also place a greater emphasis on speeding up patient access to new medicines. IMI is a public-private partnership (PPP) between the European Commission and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). The IMI 2 programme will build on the successes of IMI's first phase (2008-2013), which has delivered breakthroughs in areas as diverse as diabetes, autism, and medicines safety, and will expand the partnership to all players in the health ecosystem.

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, said: 'One of the biggest challenges we face is to provide Europeans with better medicines and treatments, and at the same time ease the burden on our healthcare systems. Close cooperation between public and private actors in the life science sectors can help us towards this goal.'

Roch Doliveux, Chair of the IMI Governing Board and CEO of pharmaceutical company UCB, reiterated EFPIA's commitment to IMI: 'Health will be a major economic challenge for Europe in the coming decades, and smart investment in healthcare is essential, for the benefit of both EU citizens and EU economies. IMI is a smart investment. Not only does IMI support a thriving life sciences sector – a key driver of future prosperity for the EU – it also gives us the collaborative platform we need to harness the potential power of new science in medicines research. By bringing together industry and academia, IMI can help us tackle existing healthcare challenges and improve lives for the patients that we are all striving to help.'

Today also marks the launch of the first IMI 2 Call for proposals, featuring topics on type 1 diabetes and retinal diseases, both areas where there is an urgent need for new treatments.

Type 1 diabetes affects 17 million people globally and there is no cure; instead, patients must inject themselves with insulin daily and continually check their blood sugar levels to control their condition. The goal of this project will be to advance our understanding of type 1 diabetes and address the lack of tools and technologies to detect people's risk of developing this condition. For patients, this would mean the ability to predict the rate at which their disease will progress. The knowledge and tools generated by the project will help researchers to

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optimise the design of clinical trials of treatments for preventing and curing this debilitating disease. The project will set up a patient advisory committee to ensure the work is in line with patients' needs.

The project has a total budget of just over €35 million, of which €17.6 million comes from Horizon 2020 and €12.6 million comes from the large pharmaceutical companies participating in the project. In addition, leading diabetes charity and patient organisation JDRF is contributing €2.8 million to the project and will co-ordinate it, while the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust will contribute a further €2.2 million. The involvement of these organisations reflects the more open nature of the IMI 2 programme, which allows other organisations to contribute to IMI as associate partners.

Michel Goldman, IMI Executive Director commented: 'I am delighted to welcome JDRF and the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust as associate partners of IMI. I am convinced that their expertise, combined with that of the other partners, will help to ensure this project delivers results that will make a real difference to patients.'

Richard Insel MD, JDRF Chief Scientific Officer, said: 'JDRF is pleased to partner with IMI and EFPIA in addressing these critical research gaps in type 1 diabetes, whose incidence and prevalence have been increasing considerably in Europe over the last three to four decades. Pooling resources of industry, academia, government, and non-profits in the precompetitive arena has the potential to accelerate research advances in type 1 diabetes with near-term impact on optimising the design of type 1 diabetes clinical trials.'

Retinal diseases, the subject of the second topic in the first Call, are a leading cause of blindness worldwide. Dry age-related macular degeneration is a progressive disease in which patients gradually lose their central vision, while diabetic retinopathy is a common complication of diabetes. There are currently no effective medicines for either condition, nor are there adequate outcome measures relevant to patients' daily lives that could be used when testing new drugs. The goal of this €14 million project is to develop new methods and tools that accurately reflect the impact of these diseases on patients' ability to engage in everyday activities. These breakthroughs could be used in clinical studies to assess the effectiveness of potential treatments. The project will therefore address an unmet medical need that is also recognised by European medicines regulators. The European Commission and EFPIA will each contribute €7 million to this project.

#ENDS#

Notes to Editors

IMI 2

- For more information on the goals of the IMI 2 programme, read the [IMI 2 factsheet](#)
- Download the [IMI 2 Strategic Research Agenda](#)
- Download the WHO report [Priority Medicines for Europe and the World](#)
- For information on IMI's successes so far, download the [IMI Highlights brochure](#) (published May 2014)





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IMI 2 – Call 1

- For **more information** on the 1st Call for proposals under IMI 2, including the full Call text and details of how to apply, visit <http://www.imi.europa.eu/content/stage-1-13> (NB this link will go live at midday on Wednesday 9 July.)
- Deadline for submitting proposals: **12 November 2014**

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About IMI

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) is working to improve health by speeding up the development of, and patient access to, innovative medicines, particularly in areas where there is an unmet medical or social need. It does this by facilitating collaboration between the key players involved in healthcare research, including universities, the pharmaceutical and other industries, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), patient organisations, and medicines regulators.

IMI is a partnership between the European Union and the European pharmaceutical industry, represented by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). IMI has a budget of €3.3 billion for the period 2014-2024. Half of this comes from the EU. The other half comes from large companies, mostly from the pharmaceutical sector; these do not receive any EU funding, but contribute to the projects 'in kind', for example by donating their researchers' time or providing access to research facilities or resources.

More info on IMI: www.imi.europa.eu

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