

Press Release

EFPIA and Innovative Medicines Initiative Announce New Ebola+ Projects to Further Collaborative Efforts Against Ebola

(16 January 2015 – Brussels): EFPIA, the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations, and the Innovative Medicines Initiative are pleased to announce the newest collaborative consortia expected to be established as part of the Ebola+ programme. Eight new projects will address the diverse needs of the current epidemic, including development of a new vaccine, its production and distribution, and new diagnostics that can be used at the point of care. These projects will be a first step in the Ebola+ programme, which has kicked off with a budget of €215 million in its part to join the international effort against Ebola.

With the launch of the Ebola+ programme in IMI in November 2014, the pharmaceutical industry and the European Commission joined forces to contribute in a complementary way to the international effort to tackle Ebola. Today's announcement comes days before the 2015 World Economic Forum in Davos, which will include a discussion on global health security inspired by the latest battle with Ebola.

Richard Bergström, Director General EFPIA, stated: *"The discussions on Ebola set to take place in Davos demonstrate the need to find new ways to deal with such global health crises. The Innovative Medicines Initiative, with its ability to mobilise various public and private partners, offers one solution. Thanks to its collaborative spirit, IMI's Ebola+ programme allows us to work towards solutions efficiently, in a way that no single body could alone."*

IMI Acting Executive Director, Irene Norstedt said: *"The launch of these exciting new projects demonstrates the ability of the Innovative Medicines Initiative to respond rapidly to emerging healthcare emergencies with a programme that will tackle a range of challenges in Ebola research while complementing work supported by other organisations. Our hope is that these projects will help to make a difference in both the current and future outbreaks."*

European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas said: *"There is no vaccine or treatment against Ebola as yet, so we must urgently step up our efforts in Ebola research. With this funding from Horizon 2020 and our industry partners, we are speeding up the development of an Ebola vaccine as well as rapid diagnostic tests to aid heroic health workers. These are the tools we need to defeat Ebola once and for all."*

The eight projects include over 40 partners from around the world (mainly Europe, Africa, and north America) and address some of the key priorities set out by the World Health Organization in the current Ebola crisis. Further details about projects are available on the [IMI website](#):

- **Development of Ebola vaccines – 3 projects** – There are currently no licensed vaccines for Ebola. However, there are a number of vaccine candidates in development, and three projects in the new IMI Ebola+ programme will generate the data needed to assess the safety and immunogenicity of different vaccine candidates and the level and duration of protection they actually offer against the disease.
- **Scaling up vaccine manufacture – 1 project** – Ebola vaccines can only be manufactured in facilities with an appropriate biosafety rating. Relatively few manufacturers have the biosafety rating required for the manufacture of Ebola vaccines, and this is slowing down the production of vaccine candidates. This project will establish a platform capable of rapidly producing sufficient quantities of the vaccine, while adhering to stringent quality and safety requirements. In parallel, this project will create additional vaccine production capacity to allow for the rapid preparation of large quantities of vaccines.

- **Compliance with vaccine regimens – 1 project**– For a vaccine to have a real impact on an outbreak, high levels of vaccination coverage are essential. In addition, for lasting protection, two doses of the vaccine may be needed. However, the stigma surrounding Ebola, coupled with a suspicion of vaccines in general, could deter many people from getting vaccinated. This project will investigate innovative ways of promoting compliance, for example by using mobile phones. The project will also use these technologies to raise awareness and acceptance of vaccination campaigns.
- **Rapid diagnostic tests – 3 projects**– There is an urgent need for fast, reliable tests to determine if someone is infected with Ebola or not. Three projects will pave the way for rapid diagnostic tests capable of delivering reliable results at the point of care in as little as 15 minutes.

The grant agreements for some projects selected under the first call of the some Ebola+ programme are still being finalised. Final information on all selected projects, including full budget details, will be published once the Grant Agreements have been signed.

Additional calls and projects are under consideration to address future needs, and other filoviral fevers.

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About EFPIA

EFPIA represents the pharmaceutical industry operating in Europe. Through its direct membership of 33 national associations and 40 leading pharmaceutical companies, EFPIA provides the voice of 1,900 companies committed to researching, developing and bringing new medicines to improve health and quality of life around the world. The pharmaceutical industry invests €30.6 billion on research and development per year in Europe and directly employs 690,000 people including 115,000 in R&D units in Europe.

EFPIA members are committed to delivering innovative medicines to address unmet needs of patients and reducing the burden of chronic diseases for Europe's ageing population. EFPIA believes in close cooperation with its stakeholders to help create sustainable healthcare systems and to develop prompt responses to health threats in Europe.

- Website – <http://efpia.eu/>
- Twitter – <https://twitter.com/efpia>
- Blog - <http://pharmaviews.eu/>
- LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/efpia>
- YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/user/EFPIA>

About the Innovative Medicines Initiative

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's research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020. 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
- Follow us on Twitter: @IMI_JU

About Horizon 2020

On 1 January 2014 the European Union launched a new, seven year research and innovation funding programme called Horizon 2020. Over the next seven years almost €80 billion will be invested in research and innovation projects to support Europe's economic competitiveness and extend the frontiers of human knowledge. The EU research budget is focused mainly in improving everyday life in areas like health, the environment, transport, food and energy. Research partnerships with the pharmaceutical, aerospace, car and electronics industries also encourage private sector investment in support of future growth and high skill job creation. Horizon 2020 will have an even greater focus on turning excellent ideas into marketable products, processes and services.

- Horizon 2020 website: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/>
- Ebola coordination site: http://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/ebola/index_en.htm