



Innovative Medicines Initiative

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Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI): the Commission and the pharmaceutical industry launch second call for research proposal towards more efficient drug development methods

Today, the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) officially launched its 2nd Call for proposals. The public-private partnership between the European Commission (EC) and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) is inviting research consortia to submit proposals for 9 scientific topics. The aim of the Call is to speed up the discovery and development of new medicines for diseases such as cancer and inflammatory and infectious diseases. IMI will also fund projects to improve data exchange between industry and the scientific community, an important aspect of knowledge management. The Commission's contribution to this 2nd Call of €76.8 million is expected to be at least matched by in-kind contributions from the member companies of EFPIA.

Dr. Michel Goldman, Executive Director of IMI said: *"This 2nd Call for proposals will help build the IMI's potential for providing support for the kind of innovation we need and open up the current bottlenecks in drug development."*

EU Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potočnik, added: *"Back in 2004, we came up with a way to make Europe the place for biomedical research while unblocking the bottlenecks in drug research: this is what the IMI is all about. It sits at the centre of the knowledge triangle, building better cooperation between the public and private sectors and helping us deal with the biggest challenges we face, in an economically competitive and sustainable way. It also shows that this new partnership between the Commission and the industry delivers"*.

Mr. Arthur J Higgins, CEO of Bayer HealthCare and President of EFPIA stated: *"The IMI is a clear statement that Europe intends to be at the forefront of biopharmaceutical innovation. This initiative has successfully brought together normally competing pharmaceutical companies with academic stakeholders in an unparalleled effort to accelerate discovery."*

On 16 November 2009, IMI officially became autonomous. It gained financial and operational independence from its two founding members, the European Commission and EFPIA. A new team, led by the new executive director Michel Goldman, will run the Brussels-based IMI's Executive Office and will be responsible for the awards of grants under IMI's 2nd Call for Proposals.

Out of the nine Call topics, three are related to improving knowledge management which is key to future progress in the development of efficient medicines. They notably aim to improve data standards for the industry, academia and regulatory authorities to better evaluate efficacy and safety of new medicines. They also seek to allow easier sharing of information that will accelerate drug development.

The six other topics aim at working on the efficacy of drugs against cancer, inflammatory and infectious diseases. For example, one topic focuses on understanding the composition of cancer

tumours and their response to treatment. Another aims to speed up the development of better, cheaper and quicker diagnostics for infectious diseases.

The topics of the Call, which were disclosed in September to allow research consortia to better prepare their applications, arouse strong interest. On 17 November 2009, more than 420 representatives of academic teams, SMEs and other organisations gathered in Brussels Expo for the IMI Open Information Day where they received first-hand information on the Call.

Further steps

The application deadline for the new Call for proposals is 8 February 2010 and the results will be announced in Summer 2010.

Background

Launched in 2007, the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) is a public-private partnership between the European Commission and the European pharmaceutical industry represented by EFPIA. IMI aims to put Europe at the forefront of biopharmaceutical innovation and to support more efficient discovery and development of better medicines for patients.

The total IMI budget for the period 2008-2017 is €2 billion (€1 billion from the European Community and €1 billion from industry).

The 1st Call for proposals for IMI was launched in April 2008. 134 proposals were submitted of which 15 have been selected to receive € 246 million.

More information on IMI and the 2nd Call: www.imi.europa.eu

See also [IP/09/1310](#), [IP/09/802](#) and [IP/08/662](#)

List of the topics of IMI's 2nd Call for proposals:

1. Imaging biomarkers for anticancer drug development.
2. New tools for target validation to improve drug efficacy.
3. Molecular biomarkers: accelerating cancer therapy development and refining patient care.
4. Identification and development of rapid point-of-care diagnostic tests for bacterial diagnosis to facilitate conduct of clinical trials and clinical practice.
5. Understanding aberrant adaptive immunity mechanisms.
6. Translational research in chronic immune-mediated disease: bridging between animal models and humans.
7. Drug/disease modelling: library & framework.
8. Open pharmacological space.
9. Electronic Health Records (EHR).

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