

## Coordination of European funding for infectious diseases research

Infectious diseases constitute a major burden to public health systems worldwide. Despite vast measures undertaken to address infectious disease, many challenges remain. Emerging diseases, the transmission of disease through increasingly mobile populations, the misuse of antibiotics and co-infection are just a few of the threats confronting public health organizations. Continuous global efforts to develop novel avenues of research are required to effectively address the dynamic challenges encountered in the prevention, control and treatment of infectious diseases.

Infect-ERA is an ERA-NET (2013 – 2016) on infectious diseases funded under the EU Seventh Research Framework Programme. It aims at facilitating the cooperation and coordination of research activities carried out at national or regional level. To date, 14 funding agencies from 11 countries are partners in this consortium, which is a continuation of the highly successful ERA-NET PathoGenoMics (2004-2012) initiative.

Infect-ERA supports research projects addressing the biological and clinical aspects of human infections caused by bacteria, fungi, viruses and unicellular protozoa. Four annual Joint Transnational Calls designed to fund high quality, cutting edge research pertaining to infectious diseases will be launched. The first call was published in the beginning of 2013 and is currently under evaluation.

### Activities of Infect-ERA

- Mapping and strategy
- Joint funding
- Support for young scientists
- Monitoring and impact measurement
- Dissemination and communication
- Design of a long-term, sustainable cooperative research framework
- Establishing collaboration with other European and international initiatives involved in Infectious diseases related activities



## Infect-ERA first workshop with the External Advisory Board - June 26th 2013, Lisbon, Portugal

As an important organ of the Infect-ERA management structure, **the External Advisory Board (EAB)** contributes and counsels in the planning of strategic research agenda and the optimization of Infect-ERA activities. The EAB plays a particularly crucial role in the identification of Joint Transnational Call topics.

The 12-member EAB is comprised of scientists, representatives from clinical medicine, representatives from industry, technology transfer and a representative from the field of public health.

The following EAB members were appointed by the Infect-ERA partners.

| Name                     | Affiliation                                      | Country  |
|--------------------------|--|----------|
| Prof. Hubertus Haas      | Innsbruck Medical University                     | Austria  |
| Dr. Lieven Stuyver       | Janssen Diagnostics BVBA                         | Belgium  |
| Dr. Luca Guardabassi     | University of Copenhagen                         | Denmark  |
| Prof. Dr. Herald Seifert | University of Cologne                            | Germany  |
| Dr. Arnaud Fontanet      | Institut Pasteur                                 | France   |
| Prof. Erzsebet Nagy      | University of Szeged                             | Hungary  |
| Prof. Itamar Shalit      | Tel-Aviv university,<br>Schneider medical center | Israel   |
| Prof. Waleria Hryniewicz | National Medicine Institute<br>Warsaw            | Poland   |
| Mr. Andre faustino       | Gene PreDiT, SA                                  | Portugal |
| Prof. Antonio Parada     | FairJourney Biologics                            | Portugal |
| Dr. Fernando Baquero     | Ramon y Cajal University hospital                | Spain    |
| Dr. Simona Maria Ruta    | Carol Davila university<br>of Medicine           | Romania  |

Dr. Arnaud Fontanet and Prof. Erzsebet Nagy were elected to co-chair the EAB.

The first of four scheduled EAB workshops took place on June 26, 2013 in Lisbon, Portugal, with the aim of identifying infectious disease research priorities. These research priorities will eventually be translated into a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) - and be reflected in the topics selected for the Second Joint call.

Subsequent EAB meetings are scheduled to take place in March 2014 in Austria, March 2015 (Belgium) and October 2015 (Hungary).



*Members of Infect-ERA  
and EAB, Lisbon*

## First Infect-ERA Conference Hosts Sister Initiatives, June 27, 2013 Lisbon, Portugal

Since one of the primary objectives of Infect-ERA is to develop a long-term sustainable partnership in the field of infectious disease research, it hosted the first joint conference in conjunction with various “sister” initiatives, active in areas tangential to Infect-ERA’s field of interest. For the first time, representatives of networks sharing mutual interests with Infect-ERA were seated at one table to learn what each other is doing and devise ways to create synergy by avoiding unnecessary duplication of efforts. The objectives of the meeting were to initiate communication, identify common and complementary activities and discuss potential cooperation, including pooled research funding and support, the sharing of infrastructures and possible collaboration in training activities. Following a brief introduction of Infect-ERA, the European Commission Scientific Officer, Arjon van Hengel, presented an overview of the FP7 2007-2013 program on anti-microbial drug resistance.

Representatives of the networks which interface with Infect-ERA were invited to present their initiatives and to discuss possible avenues of future collaboration. The principle of collaboration between sister initiatives in the field of infectious diseases was warmly received by the audience. This first joint conference will be followed by a workshop in Belgium on March 2015. Further information regarding the initiatives and organizations attending the meeting is available on the Infect-ERA website:

<http://www.infect-era.eu/initiatives/international>

Please visit our facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Infect-ERA/429544013792924>

LinkedIn:

[http://www.linkedin.com/groups/InfectERA-4995046?trk=my\\_groups-b-grp-v](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/InfectERA-4995046?trk=my_groups-b-grp-v)

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The initiatives taking part in the conference include:



**ESCMID - European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases**

[www.escmid.org](http://www.escmid.org)



**JPI AMR - Joint Programming Initiative on Antimicrobial Resistance**

<http://www.jpiamr.eu/>



**Emperie - European Management Platform for Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Disease Entities**

<http://www.emperie.eu/emp/>



**ENIVD - European Network for Diagnostics of "Imported" Viral Diseases**

<http://www.enivd.de>

<http://www.enivd.org>



**ESWI - European Scientific Working group on Influenza**

<http://www.eswi.org/>



**Seqnet.org - European Network of Laboratories for Sequence Based Typing of Microbial Pathogens**

<http://www.seqnet.org/>



**ERASynBio - ERA-NET on Synthetic Biology Research in Europe**

<http://www.erasynbio.eu/>



**ETB: EuroTransBio initiative**

<http://www.eurotransbio.eu/>



**INBIONET - Infection Biology Training Network**

<http://www.inbionet.eu>



**NewIndigo - Initiative for the Development and Integration of Indian and European Research**

<http://www.newindigo.eu/>



**IMI - Innovative Medicines Initiative**

<http://www.imi.europa.eu/>



**ECRIN - European Clinical Research Infrastructures Network**

<http://www.ecrin.org/>



**ELIXIR - European Life Sciences Infrastructure for Biological Information**

[www.elixir-europe.org](http://www.elixir-europe.org)



**ERINHA - European Research Infrastructure on Highly Pathogenic Agents**

[www.erinha.eu](http://www.erinha.eu)



**MIRRI - Microbial Resource Research Infrastructure**

<http://www.mirri.org/home.html>

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