
IMI Announces 23 Unique Projects to Boost Drug Innovation



The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), currently the largest public-private partnership in the biopharmaceutical sector, launches its second wave of research projects which address key areas including cancer, immune-mediated diseases, infectious disorders and electronic health. With 23 projects now up and running, over €450 million is now committed by the European Commission and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) on a uniquely large scale. IMI is shaping the current and future research and development of innovative drugs in Europe.

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science said: "By speeding up drug development across Europe, the investments made by the IMI will ultimately save and improve lives, as well as making a major contribution to the Innovation Union and to growth and jobs."

With a budget of €172 million, 8 new IMI projects are being launched over the coming weeks. The project consortia include 21 EFPIA members represented by 65 EFPIA teams who are working together with partners from 103 academic teams, 23 SMEs and 2 patient organisations.

Roch Doliveux, CEO of UCB and member of the Board of the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Association (EFPIA) says, "The industry has reached an inflection point where public private partnerships, based on open innovation networks, will improve the efficiency of the pharmaceutical companies in bringing safe, efficacious, cost-effective treatments to patients. EFPIA considers IMI as a key instrument to implement the new business models which will ensure the sustainability of pharmaceutical industries across Europe."

The 8 new projects deal with health concerns, identified by scientific priority and industry needs, will develop new patient treatments for cancer, rheumatoid arthritis and infectious diseases.

PREDECT, ONCOTRACK, QUIC-CONCEPT all focus on developing better tools for diagnosing and treating lung, prostate, ovarian, breast and colon cancers and are covered by IMI's 'efficacy' pillar along with RAPP-ID and BTCure which aim to facilitate the development of novel diagnostic tools related to infectious diseases and rheumatoid arthritis. DDMoRe, OPEN-PHACTS and EHR4CR fall under IMI's 'Knowledge Management' pillar in developing new methods dedicated to common standards and sharing data on common platforms for more efficient drug-development and patient treatments for the future. The projects will run for between 36 – 60 months. Detailed factsheets are available in the Press Pack and on the IMI website.

Ruxandra Draghia-Akli, Director Health in the Research & Innovation DG of the European Commission says, 'It is encouraging that IMI is launching 8 new innovative projects in areas as different as cancer or diagnostic tools for infectious diseases. Results from IMI projects that have been selected from the first call already demonstrate how this novel public-private collaboration is delivering results that can make a difference in how drugs are developed, for the benefit of patients in Europe and worldwide.'

The first-wave IMI projects, now up and running for around one year, are already providing tangible benefits, delivered through the constructive engagement of industry competitors, academia, patient groups and SMEs. These first contributions are made possible by the collaborative spirit of scientists from industry and academia along with SMEs, patient organisations and regulatory agencies who form the IMI project consortia.

Michel Goldman, Executive Director of IMI says, 'The uniqueness of what IMI is doing to facilitate innovation in the biopharmaceutical sector is the scale of the collaborative research now being undertaken and it's changing how drug development happens. It is clear that IMI is performing a vital role in working towards finding better solutions for patients across Europe.'

