

European Commission Horizon 2020 programme call for vaccine development research into malaria and neglected infectious diseases, including Zika virus

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On 29 January 2016, the European Union (EU) Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos Moedas, informed that the EU would make available an additional EUR 10 million for urgent research on the Zika virus in response to the signals of an association between Zika virus infections and congenital abnormalities, including microcephaly [1]. This is in addition to EUR 40 million earmarked for research on vaccine development for malaria and neglected diseases, which includes the Zika virus, in the ‘Call - Personalised Medicine’ under the EU Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2016–2017 on health, demographic change and well-being [2]. The deadline for this call, is 13 April 2016 [2]. Its scope is to address bottlenecks in the discovery, preclinical and early clinical development of new vaccine candidates (antigens/adjuvants) for malaria and or neglected infectious diseases. Neglected infectious diseases for the scope of the call are, in addition to the 17 neglected tropical diseases prioritised by the World Health Organization [3] neglected viral emerging epidemic diseases, such as Zika virus disease, and childhood diarrhoeal diseases [2].

The expected impact of the call is:

- Proposals should deliver new vaccine candidates or move existing ones along the vaccine candidate pipeline to end by 2030 the epidemics of malaria and neglected tropical disease.
- To provide a reduction in the cost associated with late stage vaccine failure, increase the number of other vaccine candidates which can be tested with the same resources, and therefore increase the chance of discovery of an effective vaccine.
- If appropriate within the context of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership,

increase the number and quality of vaccine candidates for malaria and neglected infectious diseases available to proceed into further development and clinical testing.

The additional EUR 10 million for research infrastructures is aimed at contributing to the control of vector-borne diseases under the call ‘Integrating Activities for Advanced Communities’ [4]. The deadline for the call is 30 March 2016.

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