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Healthcare and Life Sciences Focus Team

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A new IMI2 call (JU Call 21) for the development of therapeutics and diagnostics to combat coronavirus infections

Healthcare and Life Sciences Focus Team



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1. Introduction

The rapid spread of the novel coronavirus ("**SARS-CoV-2**") in the EU and the devastating consequences of the disease this virus can cause ("**COVID-19**") have led the WHO to declare the outbreak a pandemic.

Consequently, European institutions consider it essential to acquire a greater understanding of this virus, especially concerning potential clinical and public health measures that can be put to immediate use to improve patients' health and contain the spread of COVID-19.

2. Background

The Innovative Medicines Initiative ("**IMI**") is a public-private partnership established as a joint undertaking by the European Commission and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations ("**EFPIA**").

Through the Horizon 2020 programme, the European Commission has decided to fund up to EUR 45 million of the IMI's fast-track call for research proposals in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. A similar commitment is expected from the pharmaceutical industry, bringing the total to approx. EUR 90 million.

The IMI call invites proposals to expand the scientific community's knowledge of SARS-CoV-2 and, more generally, of the coronavirus family. The aim is to contribute to effective patient management and strengthen public resources to counter current and future coronavirus outbreaks.

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3. The call

The call's scope is broad, and submitted proposals must address one or more of the following objectives:

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a) development of antivirals and other types of therapeutics to address a rapid response to the current COVID-19 outbreak;

b) development of therapeutics to address the current and/or future coronavirus outbreaks;

c) development of diagnostics, ensuring a rapid evaluation of candidates based on existing technologies; and

d) development of fast and reliable tools that go beyond the state of the art for detection of COVID-19 carriers and symptomatic individuals suspected of COVID-19 infection.

Each proposal must include at least one of the following key deliverables:

a) antivirals and other types of therapeutics to be used in the current outbreak, including preventive and symptomatic treatments;

b) new therapeutics, including combination therapy, to ensure adequate treatment for the current and/or future outbreaks and/or to prevent resistance; and

c) diagnostics.

The Horizon 2020 rules for participation require that each proposal be submitted by a consortium of at least three independent legal entities, each established in a different member state or associated country.

Proposals must be submitted by **31 March** through the European Commission's Funding & Tenders portal, where the call documentation is also available. Each proposal must not exceed 70 pages. For more information, please visit Submit a proposal - H2020 Online Manual.

If you would like more information on the call and its eligibility criteria, you can read the call here.

4. Conclusion

The IMI's call is the first significant initiative at European level to fund an R&D project to identify diagnostic and therapeutic solutions to treat COVID-19.

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Healthcare and Life Sciences Focus Team

The focus team is a constellation of skills in different practice areas with a focus on healthcare and life sciences

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