



Declaration on Establishing the Alliance4Life

From representatives of

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SVEUCILISTE U ZAGREBU MEDICINSKI FAKULTET (UZSM);

TARTU ULIKOOL (UT);

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETAS (VU);

LATVIJAS ORGANISKAS SINTEZES INSTITUTS (LIOS);

UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI (UL);

SEMMELWEIS EGYETEM (SU)

gathered in Brno, Czech Republic, to establish the Alliance4Life.



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We are most pleased to acknowledge that substantial inflow of investments and funding both from the European Union and national governments has allowed, over the past decade, for an overall increase in scientific developments in Central and Eastern Europe. Capacity building, change, and improvement have had an impact on both existing and newly established institutions, and in many countries of the region have triggered an evolution of their whole research landscape.

In particular, investments made in the past decade principally from European Union structural funds have provided a vital impetus for the emergence of life sciences as a strong and visible field of scientific research in this part of Europe. This happened at the time of a significant scientific and technological revolution in this field that brought about a promise of tackling some of the major challenges to human health and welfare.

Therefore, it is crucial for Europe, to be at the forefront of global development in life sciences. Partners of Alliance4Life are committed to delivering their contribution as research institutions, through improvement of research and innovation, to this progress.

We assume our responsibilities as institutions with eminent scientific performance and domestic as well as international standing to exercise leadership by example, and collectively to initiate this movement represented by the Alliance4Life.

We consider the development of institutional culture and governance to be the key to further performance improvement, primarily at the level of individual institutions but also at the systemic level. Improvements in governance and management will make our institutions stronger. It will require additional and new skills, at the level of scientific leadership positions for our principal investigators and administrators. With this in mind, we will consider developing of a common training program tailored to these needs, and will support exchange of scientific and administrative staff.

A major drawback of the research environment in Central and Eastern Europe is the underdevelopment of career system for investigators, and, in some cases, practices that are not conform to internationally accepted principles of career paths in the field of research and innovation. We will examine human resources policies and practices at our institutions, and will support each other in developing sound principles of careers systems for researchers. In particular, we recognize the importance of doctoral education and training. We also will work together towards enhancing mobility within our region, especially as part of career progression. We will collaborate towards promoting career opportunities and advantages of pursuing scientific careers in Central and Eastern Europe, and will share information on job openings at our institutions.

Life sciences are resource demanding, with respect to research infrastructure. We will examine options of coordinating the planning and usage/sharing of research infrastructure, including e-infrastructure. We will share knowledge about managerial practices in the area of research infrastructure, coordinate the development of core facilities, and promote shared understanding of performance-monitoring and reporting practices including pricing policies.

We will draw on our experience as individual research institutions to promote better concepts and indices of science policy at the national level.

We are open to collaborations with other organizations and dedicated projects in this field. We are ready to contribute actively to national and European debates on sustainability of research institutions supported previously from European Union structural funds.

We believe that the experience and expertise of our institutions represents a valuable source of knowledge and inspiration for European Union research policy as well. We aspire to become integral players at the European level. We are ready to share our experience and expertise especially with respect to preparations of the next Framework Programme, both at the conceptual, content, administrative, and technologic levels.

While we acknowledge that a single research policy within the European Union is an attainable and reasonable goal, we strongly advocate for continuing support actions within the next Framework Programme further to enhance capacity building and cultural change in research sectors of the EU13. However, most emphasis should be put on increasing success for candidates from Central and Eastern Europe in competing for all categories of European Research Council (ERC) grants. The ERC has become a generally recognized hallmark of excellence in science, and for our countries, it currently constitutes one of the few objective indices of undisputable excellence.

We endorse the principle of open science as one of the guiding principles for our institutions. In accordance with what this principle entails, although not limited to this, we will collaborate in strengthening the ability of our institutions to communicate with the public, and various stakeholders. In particular, we do recognize the importance of developing efficient mechanisms to promote education and awareness in the general population. Therefore, we will strongly support dissemination and transfer of knowledge to the society as well as enhancing entrepreneurial and innovative spirit within research institutions.

As Partners of Alliance4Life we are aware of our responsibility to promote the values and goals to which we have subscribed. We will develop a common website and other communication tools to support our goals, benchmarks, and milestones, and we are committed to promoting and protecting the brand of Alliance4Life as a trademark of excellence in life sciences in this part of Europe.

We are jointly committed to build a vibrant community of research institutions that will live up to the highest standards of institutional and scientific performance. It is our hope that the joint effort represented by the Alliance4Life will be a source of inspiration and advice to other institutions in our countries, but also to our regional and national governments and to European institutions. Alliance4Life aspires to be a joint endeavour to redefine science policy, promote innovative research, and effectuate a lasting impact on human welfare.