

## **ERA-NET: Aligning national/regional translational cancer research programmes and activities**

### **TRANSCAN-2**

#### **Preliminary Announcement\***

**Joint Transnational Call for Proposals (JTC 2014)  
co-funded by the European Commission/DG Research and  
Innovation**

**will be launched in January 2015**

The ERA-NET: Aligning national/regional translational cancer research programmes and activities (TRANSCAN-2) is the continuation of the ERA-NET on Translational Cancer Research (TRANSCAN) and has the goal of coordinating national and regional funding programmes for research in the area of translational cancer research. The specific challenge is to promote a transnational collaborative approach between scientific teams in demanding areas of translational cancer research while avoiding the duplication of efforts and ensuring a more efficient use of available resources, to produce significant results of higher quality and impact, and share data and infrastructures. Along this line TRANSCAN-2 will launch the first Joint Transnational Call for research proposals (JTC 2014) in January 2015. The European Commission (EC) will contribute to TRANSCAN-2 JTC 2014 funding in accordance with the ERA-NET Co-fund scheme. The topic of the call will be:

**"Translational research on human tumour heterogeneity to overcome  
recurrence and resistance to therapy"**

The following funding organizations have agreed to participate in the EC co-funded call of TRANSCAN-2 (JTC 2014):

Austrian Science Fund (FWF), Austria

Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS), Belgium

Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO), Belgium

Estonian Research Council (ETAg), Estonia

National Cancer Institute (INCa), France

ARC French Foundation for Cancer Research (ARC Foundation), France

Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Germany

General Secretariat for Research and Technology, Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (GSRT), Greece

The Chief Scientist Office of the Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH), Israel

Alliance Against Cancer (ACC), Italy

Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR), Italy  
Ministry of Health (MoH), Italy  
Latvian Academy of Sciences (LAS), Latvia  
Dutch Cancer Society (DCS), Netherlands  
Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development (ZonMw), Netherlands  
The Research Council of Norway (RCN), Norway  
Norwegian Cancer Society (NCS), Norway  
National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR), Poland  
Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), Portugal  
Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS), Slovakia  
Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (MIZS), Slovenia  
The Foundation for the support of the Applied Scientific Research and Technology in Asturias (FICYT), Spain  
Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII), Spain  
Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Taiwan  
The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK), Turkey

The call will be published simultaneously by the funding organisations in their respective countries and on the TRANSCAN website: <http://www.transcanfp7.eu>.

Interested researchers and/or research teams are advised to prepare and make the necessary contacts and arrangements towards preparing applications. Please see below the details of the call topics and an outline of the eligibility criteria. They will be further detailed when the JTC is published.

## 1. AIMS OF THE CALL

The EC co-funded call of TRANSCAN-2 (JTC 2014) will focus on:

### **"Translational research on human tumour heterogeneity to overcome recurrence and resistance to therapy"**

"Human tumour heterogeneity" is defined in this call as heterogeneity within the tumour or between the primary tumour and metastatic sites within a same patient. In the context of translational research, this topic will comprise three specific aims according to the possible clinical applications. Proposals will have to cover at least one of the specific areas listed under each aim below. Projects should be built from a solid and established hypothesis and should be relevant with regards to the possible improvements in clinical practices.

**Aim 1: Development and validation of methods to investigate human tumour heterogeneity** (including heterogeneity between the primary tumour and the metastatic sites)

- Sampling methods alternative to single biopsy (liquid biopsy, single cell analyses, imaging, etc.) for overcoming tumour sampling bias;

- Methods for assessing tumour heterogeneity, within either the primary tumour or the metastases;
- Methods for tracking tumour evolution along the disease course using minimally- or non-invasive techniques.

**Aim 2: Studies on human tumour heterogeneity in order to guide therapeutic intervention and identify new therapeutic targets**

- Evaluation of the impact of tumour heterogeneity on treatment efficacy and patient outcome (clinical utility of driver/passengers mutations detection, clinical utility of the minor sub-clones identification, clinical utility of the differences in molecular alterations between primary tumour and metastases);
- Development of assays measuring the level of tumour heterogeneity that predicts treatment inefficacy and tumour recurrence;
- Development of assays that define the contribution of tumour heterogeneity in resistance mechanisms and identify new therapeutic targets.

**Aim 3: Development of new precision therapeutic strategies that may prevent human tumour recurrence or resistance to therapy by counteracting tumour heterogeneity**

- Evaluation of treatments (combinations, new strategies, administration scheme) targeting multiple sub-clonal somatic events or preventing resistant sub-clones to emerge.

Applicants will have the opportunity to add an additional part for **capacity building activities** (with an associated separate budget, in compliance with the rules of the respective national/regional funding organisations). These activities have to be coherent with the objectives of the research project, and aimed to strengthening the ability of participating team(s) to perform the work detailed in the project plan as well as to improve, in the long term, the quality and potential of the translational research performed by the team(s).

## 2. MAIN ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Only transnational projects will be funded. Each research consortium must involve a minimum of four (4) eligible research groups and a maximum of seven (7) eligible research groups from at least four (4) different countries participating in the call. In addition, a research consortium must not involve more than two (2) research groups from one country. All research groups including the coordinator must be from a JTC 2014 funding partners' country/region (see above).

In order to strengthen the European translational cancer research area, a wide inclusion of research teams from all the countries/regions participating in the call is encouraged, including, but not limited to research teams from Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia and Turkey.

Research consortia must involve at least one basic or pre-clinical research team and one clinical team. It is also recommended to include expert teams in methodology, biostatistics or bioinformatics, depending on the type of work planned. A consortium may also involve other teams with specialised skills and know-how that will make the project feasible (biobanks, model systems, technological platforms, biostatistics, bio-informatics, data management, epidemiology and molecular epidemiology, early phase clinical trials, public health, ELSI etc.). Consortia should have sufficient critical mass to achieve ambitious scientific, technological and medical goals and, along with the particular contribution of each research team, should clearly demonstrate their transnational added value. The translational nature of the research results is the key goal of TRANSCAN-2 and, therefore, the consortium should also clearly demonstrate effective transfer of knowledge towards clinical, public health and/or industrial applications.

While applications will be submitted by the coordinator under TRANSCAN-2, the individual research groups will be funded by the funding organisation from their country/region participating in the JTC 2014. The applications are therefore subject to eligibility criteria of national/regional funding organisations.

Upon the call publication, applicants will have to refer to the annexes of the document "Guidelines for Applicants" containing all the specific national/regional eligibility criteria and will have to contact their respective national/regional funding organisation contact points for additional clarification.

For further information, please visit the TRANSCAN website:  
<http://www.transcanfp7.eu>

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