

Medical Research Infrastructures sign long-term collaboration agreement

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The Biobanking and BioMolecular resources Research Infrastructure (BBMRI), the European Research Infrastructure for Translational Medicine (EATRIS) and the European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network (ECRIN) signed an agreement last week in Brussels to build a long-term sustainable collaboration strategy. The agreement lays the ground for facilitating user access to pan-European medical research infrastructures and supporting the development of tools, joint services and common approaches on quality, standards and advocacy. As a result, the agreement will empower BBMRI, EATRIS and ECRIN to provide even better services to the biomedical community and to support a more cost-effective research and development process.

The agreement brings together the three research infrastructures working closer to patients within the personalised medicine research continuum: sample and data collections (biobanking, BBMRI), clinical trials (ECRIN) and translational medicine (EATRIS).

“It is very exciting to work more closely with these other infrastructures to jointly tackle pressing issues in medicines development for the benefit of patients, particularly in the field of personalised medicine”, said Toni Andreu, scientific director of EATRIS. “Increasing our collaboration will also decrease isolation and fragmentation of efforts. Most importantly, such an alliance will significantly increase the impact of activities and minimise waste of precious resources”, added Erik Steinfeldt, director general of BBMRI-ERIC.

By signing a long-term collaboration agreement, BBMRI, EATRIS and ECRIN aim to facilitate the use of scientific services, expertise and tools by academia and industry for the seamless translation of their scientific discoveries into new treatments and solutions for patients. In addition, the three infrastructures share the same commitment to increasing knowledge and awareness about good research practice and ensuring greater access to common resources (e.g. quality guidelines, training courses). The end goal is to make it easier for the broader research community to achieve the highest possible standards and to deliver high-quality and reproducible science.

“The digital revolution and the new regulatory framework of patient-centred research results in complex and multidisciplinary research programmes, requiring tight cooperation between infrastructures supporting translational research, biobanking and clinical research to provide joint services for cross-border transfer of data and biosamples, cohort integration, multimodal data management, machine learning, and multinational trials”, said Jacques Demotes, director general of ECRIN.

BBMRI, EATRIS and ECRIN will lay out an implementation plan for the agreement in 2019.

Who are we?

BBMRI-ERIC (Biobanking and BioMolecular resources Research Infrastructure - European Research Infrastructure Consortium)

BBMRI-ERIC is the world largest biorepository of human samples (such as blood, tissues, cells or DNA, and associated clinical and research data), connecting more than 500 biobanks from 19 EU countries. Its mission is to facilitate research on human samples for personalised medicine, while keeping the highest scientific standards and, most importantly, preserving patients' and citizens' privacy. BBMRI-ERIC provides services to academia and industry to develop better treatments, test diagnostic tools and advance biomedical research. It has been a part of 42 Horizon 2020 calls with an overall success rate of 26%. BBMRI-ERIC is composed of 19 national nodes, that support biobanking at the local level, and a European headquarters, based in Graz, Austria. <http://www.bbmri-eric.eu>; @BBMRIERIC

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EATRIS (European Research Infrastructure for Translational Medicine)

EATRIS aims to improve productivity of the translational R&D process by providing access to high quality research services to public and private research entities. Via a hub in Amsterdam, users can access the vast array of clinical expertise and high-end facilities that are available within the 90 top-tier academic centres across 13 countries in Europe. Solutions are provided in the fields of advanced therapy medicinal products, biomarkers, imaging and tracing, small molecules and vaccines. By bringing together multi-disciplinary expertise, facilities and patient resources to support the development of promising drugs and diagnostics, EATRIS accelerates the path to clinical proof of concept and partners with key stakeholders for the validation and introduction of novel tools to support R&D. <https://eatris.eu/>; @EatrisEric

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ECRIN (European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network)

The European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network (ECRIN) is a sustainable, non-profit, distributed infrastructure with the legal status of a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). ECRIN supports multinational clinical trials in Europe, providing increased access to patients, resources and expertise. Multinational trials generate potentially more robust trial results and may have greater public health impact. In particular, ECRIN supports investigators and sponsors in the preparation of trial protocols and funding applications, and can subsequently provide services for the management of multinational trials. ECRIN is also involved in activities to enhance the ability of European institutions to successfully conduct multi-country clinical research (e.g. tools/database development, data centre certification). Moreover, ECRIN is involved in capacity building projects that aim to further develop the European clinical research community and facilitate multinational trials. www.ecrin.org; @ECRIN_ERIC
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