



Innovative Medicines Initiative

## PRESS RELEASE

### Seven major medical areas boosted through innovative European public-private partnership

Brussels, 25 November 2010 -

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) has now officially launched its 3<sup>rd</sup> Call for proposals for new methods of collaborative research in seven new areas of public health interest. For this Call, proposals will focus on making advances in a number of important areas including **autism, vaccine safety, fostering patient awareness on pharmaceutical innovation, tuberculosis, diabetes, drug-induced liver injury and immunogenicity**. This new IMI 3<sup>rd</sup> Call for proposals has a total maximum budget from the European Community of **€ 114 million with a matched 'in kind' contribution from the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)**<sup>1</sup>.

Dr. Michel Goldman, Executive Director of IMI said: *'The innovative approach now being taken by several major pharmaceutical company members who have agreed to share resources and results from new cutting-edge European-based research into some of the most complex health issues facing patients, carers and the health sector is going to produce tangible benefits for the future of patient treatment in these seven areas.'*

The launch of these unique open collaborations means that for the very first time major pharmaceutical companies are working together with the best European scientists alongside small/medium-sized enterprises active in those fields.

Dr. Goldman added: *'It is clear that there is a need for more efficient and open collaboration between pharmaceutical industries and the other key actors of research which is essential to enable these large-scale efforts to translate into better, more efficient treatments and to set new standards in research and clinical development across all seven topics.'*

One of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Call topics relates to **autism** (and related disorders) which affects an estimated 1% of all children, equalling some 5.5 million patients in the EU. Studies suggest that the incidence of autism is increasing by between 10-17% per year and despite exciting new advances on understanding the genetic basis and brain network dysfunctions, more research is needed to develop a European-wide strategy to translate this into treatments for patients.

A second topic covers additional research into **vaccine safety** to help patients develop a more personalised vaccination strategy in order to reduce the risks of adverse reactions. Another topic is dedicated to **fostering patient awareness** on innovative treatments so that stakeholders in public healthcare have a better understanding of the importance of patient-centred clinical research strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> IMI is a unique and large-scale public-private partnership between the European Union and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). IMI receives € 1 billion funding from the European Commission's Seventh Framework programme. The EFPIA member companies match this amount with at least equal in kind contributions (consisting of research related activities and resources).





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**Tuberculosis (TB)** is another of IMI's areas of specific interest where new research is needed to produce shorter, more efficient treatments for drug-resistant TB. **Diabetes**, which currently affects 8.6% of the European adult population, is a major threat for public health worldwide. The IMI project aims to help patients to be able to individualise their treatment to suit their medical needs.

**Drug-induced liver injury** has a serious impact on patient well-being and this IMI project will look at how to develop future treatments which avoid this type of damage. Finally, more research will be funded by IMI into improving patient safety against **unwanted immune responses** to biological drugs through a coordinated and cooperative approach to combine efforts in a cross-discipline European research community.

### Further Steps

All proposals for research into these latest Call topics must be submitted to IMI by 18 January 2011 through an on-line standardised process, followed by an evaluation process by internationally-recognised experts to identify the successful consortia.

More information about the Call for proposals can be found on the IMI website at <http://www.imi.europa.eu> and submissions of Expressions of Interest in these Call topics must be submitted using the electronic submission tool found on the website. Submissions of Expression of Interest in the IMI 3<sup>rd</sup> Call can be accepted between 18 December 2010 and 18 January 2011. This is the first of a two-part stage to select the successful project consortia.

**New IMI Intellectual Property Guidelines**, designed to clarify IP issues which specifically relate to these innovative private-public projects, have now been published on the IMI website in order to underline the **flexibility** provided by the IMI IP Rules and to help successful consortia to reach **clear and comprehensive IP agreements** as part of the overall Project Agreement.

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### Notes to Editors

*Proposals from European-based consortia, which should include representation from patient groups, academia and public authorities in partnership with industry and business, will compete to receive funding from IMI in a unique scheme to encourage extensive collaboration across traditional boundaries. IMI runs a €2 billion euro research programme aiming to speed up the discovery and development of safer and more effective drugs for patients, and to reinvigorate the biopharmaceutical sector in Europe.*

*The main goal of this innovative funding scheme is to focus on collaborative research efforts to improve research tools and technologies that will enable faster, more efficient development of better, safer drugs for patients and will produce new solutions to some of the most relevant health issues facing Europe today. Developing biomarkers and better*





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*imaging techniques and creating cross-clinical area knowledge management platforms are highlighted in the Call for Proposals as some of the key deliverables expected from the consortia who will receive funding.*

*The IMI 2010 3<sup>rd</sup> Call's new topics address three of the four strategic pillars identified in the IMI Research Agenda which are designed to produce better methods of predictability of efficacy and safety of treatments as well as education and training to ensure Europe is a centre of world-class scientific excellence.*

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