



Innovative Medicines Initiative

## PRESS RELEASE

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### INNOVATIVE MEDICINES INITIATIVE LAUNCHES 4<sup>th</sup> CALL FOR PROPOSALS

#### European Commission and Pharmaceutical Industry invest in major health research topics

**BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, 18 July 2011** – Today, the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) is launching its **4<sup>th</sup> Call for proposals, revolutionising collaborative research** in seven new areas of public health.

The Call focuses on important areas including:

- **linking patients' data** for the discovery of better and more targeted therapies;
- **knowledge management** of experimental data for translation into drugs for patients;
- complications of **obesity**;
- predicting **Alzheimer's disease** and **other dementias**;
- **drug delivery by nanocarriers**;
- **sustainability of chemical drug production**;
- **stem cells** for drug discovery and
- understanding the **behaviour of drugs** in the human body.

The **European Union** will contribute up to **€ 105 million** to the IMI 4<sup>th</sup> Call projects. This funding will be **matched with 'in kind' contributions from the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)**.

**Michel Goldman, Executive Director of IMI** said: *'IMI is changing the way pharmaceutical research is performed, by linking academic teams, small and medium-sized enterprises, patients' organisations and regulators with large pharmaceutical companies in collaborative IMI projects. This innovative approach is proving its success in the 23 IMI projects that are already producing impressive results. This makes us confident that the 4<sup>th</sup> Call will lead to a new set of game-changing projects in key areas of health research.'*

IMI projects focus on **new methods and tools** that will enable the entire sector to **accelerate the development of safer and more effective treatments for patients**, rather than on the development of new drugs as such.

Michel Goldman added: *'There is a clear need for open collaboration in pre-competitive research, in order to boost innovation in healthcare, to increase the competitiveness of pharmaceutical research in Europe, and to develop better, safer and more effective medicines for patients. By increasing the understanding of the mechanisms of disease and the individual differences between patients, a more **personalised medicine** is coming within reach.'*

Examples of how the new IMI projects will aim to achieve this are described in the attached Memo.

**More information** about the 4<sup>th</sup> **Call for proposals** is also available on [www.imi.europa.eu](http://www.imi.europa.eu).

#### Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI)

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**Expressions of Interest** in the Call topics must be submitted using the electronic submission tool found on the website. The **deadline** for submission of Expressions of Interest is **18 October 2011**. This is the first of a two-part stage to select the successful project consortia, including an evaluation process by internationally-recognised experts to identify the successful consortia.

**IMI Intellectual Property Guidelines**, designed to clarify IP issues which specifically relate to these innovative private-public projects, have also 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.

#### **ABOUT THE INNOVATIVE MEDICINES INITIATIVE (IMI):**

IMI is the **world's largest public-private partnership in health research and development**. Through the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research, the **European Union** contributes €1 billion to the IMI research programme, which is matched by in kind contributions worth at least another €1 billion euro from the member companies of the **European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)**.

IMI is **improving the environment for pharmaceutical innovation** in Europe, by engaging and supporting **networks of industrial and academic experts** in collaborative research projects.

The Innovative Medicines Initiative is currently funding **23 projects**, many of which are already producing **impressive results**. A comprehensive overview of **ongoing projects** is available at [www.imi.europa.eu](http://www.imi.europa.eu).

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**Addendum: Memo**

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## MEMO

### IMI'S 4<sup>TH</sup> CALL WILL LEAD TO BETTER TREATMENTS FOR PATIENTS – EXAMPLES

The **complications of obesity** are the focus of one of the 4<sup>th</sup> Call topics. An increasing number of people are overweight and in some cases, this leads to **complications** such as cancer, osteoarthritis, depression or diabetes, even in **children**. Behavioural therapies or pills are often insufficient to help patients. The IMI project will explore why some people develop complications while others don't. This knowledge will enable **targeted treatments** that can be provided to the patients that are most likely benefit – so called **personalised medicine**.

The 4th Call also focuses on **Alzheimer disease (AD) and other dementias**. The goal of this research topic is to gain understanding in the mechanisms that make some people more susceptible to AD and other dementias than others and to unravel the influence of **physical and environmental factors** on the progression of the disease. Ultimately, the goal is to identify clues in the human body that can foretell if a person will develop or is already developing the disease, so that high-risk individuals can receive timely and targeted treatment.

The two topics above will require extensive analysis and management of data from patients. An overarching topic on **knowledge management** is foreseen in the 4<sup>th</sup> Call in order to provide information frameworks that will support these and other future topics.

IMI also launches a Call topic exploring better ways to **transport** innovative but bulky biological **medicines into the human body**, for instance with the help of minuscule particles – **nanocarriers** - that will act as transporters delivering the drug through the barrier of the skin, the intestine of the blood vessels.

Another high-tech topic describes the application of **stem cells** that are derived from patients with **autism, Parkinson's disease, schizophrenia, depression, Alzheimer's disease and diabetes**. The disease-related stem cells will be collected in a bio-bank and used in a central facility to test the beneficial or adverse effect of potential new drugs against those diseases. This approach could profoundly change the way drugs are developed and tested in the future.

Predicting the **efficiency of taking drugs via the mouth** is the focus of another topic on **drug delivery**, in which innovative computer and laboratory models will be developed that will help determine the optimal dosage and formulation of candidate-drugs.

In order to improve the **sustainability** of the **production of drugs**, one of the 4<sup>th</sup> Call topics will explore **new manufacturing methods**, including synthetic biology and catalysis. **Reducing the amount of chemicals** needed to produce drugs, will **reduce the ecological foot print of drug manufacturing** as well as the production cost.

**More information** about the 4<sup>th</sup> **Call for proposals** is available on the IMI website at [www.imi.europa.eu](http://www.imi.europa.eu).

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