

# Joint Statement in support of the Proposed Joint Technology Initiative (JTI) on Innovative Medicines

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European Society  
for Medical Oncology

European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology ([EAACI](#))

European Association for the Study of Diabetes ([EASD](#))

European Brain Council ([EBC](#))

European Cancer Organisation ([ECCO](#))

European League Against Rheumatism ([EULAR](#))

European Respiratory Society ([ERS](#))

European Society of Cardiology ([ESC](#))

European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases ([ESCMID](#))

European Society of Intensive Care Medicine ([ESICM](#))

European Society for Medical Oncology ([ESMO](#))

*The above listed organisations represent professional medical, scientific societies and umbrella organisations in the field of allergology and clinical immunology, diabetes, brain research, cancer, rheumatic disease, respiratory medicine, cardiology, clinical microbiology and infectious diseases, intensive care medicine and medical oncology, whose mission it is to promote research, education and knowledge exchange in their respective fields.*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

We urge Members of the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers to support the proposed Joint Technology Initiative on Innovative Medicines. This important pan-European Research & Development Initiative has the objective of ultimately bringing novel therapies to citizens by tackling major knowledge gaps that exist across major disease areas.

This crucial aim can only be achieved by supporting research, by ensuring that scientific excellence will be paramount, and by bringing together the best scientists in Europe (public and private) into unique collaborative partnerships where there are urgent and unmet medical needs.

Health is a major public concern in Europe. However, to achieve crucial and timely advancements in the field of biomedical research, a coherent approach aimed at strengthening the European research and training infrastructure is critical. We believe that at a European level the Innovative Medicines Initiative will be decisive in providing the means to overcome the existing fragmentation, bringing benefits for all stakeholders.

The IMI Strategic Research Agenda identifies the following disease areas: cancer, brain disorders, inflammatory diseases, metabolic diseases and infectious diseases. We would strongly recommend that future consultations on research priorities should also consider the inclusion of other priority disease areas, which are not sufficiently addressed in the current strategic research agenda.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) addresses important common pre-competitive challenges in the biomedical field that require a collaborative effort between clusters of excellent European researchers from academia and the pharmaceutical industry that would optimise translational research and help deliver novel innovative therapies.

## **BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES NEED A CONCERTED APPROACH**

The Innovative Medicines Initiative addresses processes such as biomarker identification, validation of biomarkers, and understanding of disease mechanisms. By contrast, the Innovative Medicines Initiative does not address products and does not deal with specific drug development projects. This distinction is a crucial one. Significant fragmentation characterises the research environment in Europe, and there is a need to work towards more uniform and systematic approaches since the biomedical sciences have become considerably more complex (multifactorial and multigenetic). Thus, to achieve new breakthroughs, efforts will need to be pooled.

The Innovative Medicines Initiative targets translational medicine, which is the important area of research between basic and clinical research (bench to bedside) and, where better feedback and feed-forward pathways urgently need to be established.

We believe that the Innovative Medicines Initiative could facilitate the creation of synergies and foster an improved cross-sectional knowledge exchange that would not be possible otherwise. There are important horizontal research gaps which require a unified approach and which therefore need to include the expertise and knowledge of all stakeholders.

## CONCLUSION

The European Commission and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) are spearheading the Innovative Medicines Initiative – a totally new initiative with no precedent in Europe. As professional bodies we believe that the Innovative Medicines Initiative may provide a unique opportunity of collaboration between public and private research groups. Such an opportunity, if seized now, will drive research towards new and improved therapeutic approaches.

In the first instance we would recommend:

- The Council of Ministers support the JTI on Innovative Medicines
- The European Parliament to submit a favourable opinion on the same.

Furthermore, considering that professional European and international medical scientific societies represent key stakeholders in the framework of this initiative, we strongly suggest that they should be explicitly included within the Stakeholder Forum of the Innovative Medicines Initiative.

Professional scientific bodies represent organisations that are independent and unbiased. They could act as facilitators and be ideal candidates to provide the scientific platform for the continuous process of identifying and defining the strategic Research & Development needs in translational medicine for the various disease areas. They could facilitate the provision of this information into the Annual Implementation Plan of the Strategic Research Agenda.