



**European
Biotechnology
NETWORK**

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Brussels

€85 million European programme targets novel antibiotics

Over 30 European universities, research institutes and companies, led by GlaxoSmithKline and Uppsala University, are joining forces in a 6 year programme supported by the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) to develop novel antibiotics against Gram-negative pathogens in a project called ENABLE (European Gram-Negative Antibacterial Engine), including open calls for candidates outside the consortium.

The antibiotic crisis

The world faces a growing epidemic of antibiotic resistance, however only two new classes of antibiotic have been brought to the market in the last 30 years. The discovery and development of new antibiotics is essential to maintain medical advances but poses significant scientific, clinical, and financial challenges, particularly for antibiotics active against Gram-negative bacteria (such as *E. coli*). Such bacteria have effective barriers against drugs, making treatment difficult, resistance likely and development costs and risks high. In addition, any new antibiotics brought to the market would likely be used cautiously to delay the development of resistance, adding an additional financial challenge in recouping the development costs.

Public private route forward

In response to such barriers in the development of novel antibiotics, the IMI, a research partnership between the European Commission and major pharmaceutical companies (through EFPIA, the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations), has launched New Drugs for Bad Bugs (ND4BB), a series of projects to target the bottlenecks in the development and effective use of novel antibiotics.

The ENABLE project, the third within the ND4BB series, spans 13 countries and brings together 32 partners with the mission to establish a significant anti-bacterial drug discovery platform for the progression of research programmes through discovery and Phase 1 clinical trials. A preliminary portfolio of programmes will be expanded through open calls to create a full development pipeline, with the ultimate goal to complete phase 1 clinical trials of at least one novel anti-bacterial for Gram-negative infections by 2019.

This joint public and private investment through the IMI reflects the changing nature of drug development for high-risk areas such as antibiotics, and has the mission to mobilise expertise from universities, research institutes, and industry in Europe to meet global challenges. It places Europe at the forefront of collaborative research between industry and academia for health challenges.

The European Biotechnology Network will play a key role in attracting novel external candidates to the project, building on its reach into SMEs and universities across Europe. Claire Skentelbery,

Secretary General commented “we worked to bring together some of the most innovative novel anti-infective compounds in Europe together for the start of the project and are looking forward to finding additional next generation candidates from industry and academia to drive the project further still”.

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For more information on the ENABLE project please contact the communication manager:
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Additional information

Read more about the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI):

<http://www.imi.europa.eu/>

Read the EU Commission’s “Action plan against the threats from antimicrobial resistance”

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/communication_amr_2011_748_en.pdf