

FIRST “ERAvsCORONA” ACTION PLAN



short-term coordinated Research & Innovation actions



7 April 2020 / WORKING DOCUMENT

EU leaders committed to do everything possible to support research, to coordinate efforts and seek synergies within the European scientific and research community. They also underlined that there is an urgent need to share scientific information and to collaborate both within the EU and worldwide. They committed to increase and accelerate support to European research teams and companies in this respect. On 26 March 2020, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen and the President of the European Council, Charles Michel stated that “Europe stands ready to set up an international online pledging event to ensure adequate funding to develop and deploy a vaccine against COVID-19.”

During an informal videoconference of 7 April 2020, Ministers responsible for research and innovation supported the first 10 priority actions of the first ERAvsCorona Action Plan which resulted from dialogues between the Commission services and the national ministries.¹ It covers first short-term coordinated actions only. It sets out key measures the Commission services and the Member States are activating now to coordinate, share and jointly increase support for research & innovation, in line with the objectives and tools of the European Research Area. Coordination is also an important prerequisite for stepping up global cooperation, essential to tackle corona related issues.

This first ERAvsCorona Action Plan will be updated regularly by the Commission services and national administrations with other R&I coordinated actions that can be taken in the short, medium and longer term.

10 priority actions for coordinated research and innovation actions:

1 Coordination of R&I funding against the Coronavirus

This action aims at giving national authorities a possibility to work closer and align activities through Programme level cooperation.

2 Extending and supporting large EU wide clinical trials for clinical management of Coronavirus patients

This actions aims at gathering additional funding to extend and support the implementation of large-scale, multi-centric clinical trials across Europe.

¹ This document has been prepared by DG Research and Innovation for communication purposes. The “ERAvsCorona” Action Plan is a services document and does not bind the Commission or Member States. It is without prejudice to any future action of the Commission in this area.



3 New funding for innovative and rapid health-related approaches to respond to coronavirus and deliver quick results relevant to society and a higher level of preparedness of health systems

This action aims at funding innovative approaches for researchers and innovators to deliver quick results relevant to society focussing on (1) Social and economic impacts of the outbreak response; (2) Medical technologies and ICT-applications; (3) Health systems preparedness (including manufacturing).

4 Increasing support to innovative companies

This action aims at increasing support to the recently closed Horizon 2020 European Innovation Council pilot Accelerator using the opportunity of the bottom-up call where more than 1,000 coronavirus related applications have been received (out of a global number of around 4,000) to support the best applications relating to the coronavirus.

It also aims at increasing support to research & innovation financial instruments addressing coronavirus related issues. This would assist with the increasing demand of financial support notably for rapid vaccines development and deployment / upscaling of good manufacturing practice production facilities of EU enterprises.

It also includes establishing a Coronavirus European Innovation Council Platform for matchmaking services with dedicated groups and matchmaking services for start-ups and SMEs to exchange ideas on coronavirus innovations and connect with investors, public procurers, corporations and others.

5 Creating opportunities for other funding sources to contribute to R&I actions on Coronavirus

This action aims at awarding Seals of Excellence for coronavirus relevant innovations by SMEs/startups evaluated as excellent, but not selected for funding under the European Innovation Council calls. It would also request consent of SMEs/startups to provide their contact details to Structural Fund managing authorities. Under this action, a favourable treatment of state aid to COVID19 Seals of Excellence applies. Additional funding sources, e.g. national / regional funding, private foundations, InvestEU etc will be explored.

6 Establish a one-stop shop for Coronavirus R&I funding

An “ERA Corona platform” will provide complete overview of all ongoing R&I funding initiatives on the Coronavirus. See <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/covid-19>

7 Establish an ad-hoc High Level R&I Task Force on the Coronavirus

Without duplicating existing structures, such a new ad-hoc High Level R&I Task Force could advise on possible R&I actions of EU relevance on identified medium and long-term priorities and communicate about coordinated R&I actions to the general public.

8 Access to Research Infrastructures

The availability of the services provided by Research Infrastructures (analytical facilities, biological samples, reagents, pathogen labs, regulatory support, social science Research Infrastructures etc.) and of the data they hold (e.g. for the re-testing of raw data and assessing the societal effects and effectiveness of pandemic responses) is vital for researchers working on the coronavirus. New services (including High Performance Computing and Artificial Intelligence) and datasets are being brought on stream and it is important to match supply and demand across borders.





9 Research data sharing platform

This action aims to establish European data exchange platform for SARS-CoV-2 and coronavirus-related information exchange, connected to the European Open Science Cloud. This will allow quick sharing of research data and results to accelerate discovery. Researchers should be required to provide immediate and full open access and to share research outcomes (data, models, workflows, results) that are as FAIR as possible in real time.

10 Pan-EU Hackathon to mobilise European innovators and civil society

The Commission have given patronage to a pan-European Hackathon (#EUvsVirus) which will be organised through a coalition with the organisers of the hackathons held in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden. This Hackathon is expected to shorten the time to deployment of innovative solutions developed by start-ups and policy makers since innovators will be able to leverage the work already done by other innovators in Europe instead of starting from scratch or redoing the work done already by other innovators. It is also expected to provide information to hospitals and public administrations on the existing innovative solutions in other Member States. The planned date for the Hackathon is 24-26 April 2020.

