

The current, unprecedented in modern times, global pandemic of COVID-19 which has caused humanitarian and economic crises worldwide, requires quick and efficient scientific and medical response to stop the pandemics and limit spread of the virus. Antiviral discovery, drug repurposing and vaccine development are critical at this time and even though Sars-CoV-2 is not a risk group 4 pathogen - ERINHA's main scope of research -, ERINHA with its member-facilities have provided their research capacities and expertise in the race against the clock to advance research on SARS-CoV-2.

ERINHA was created to allow academia and industry to have easier access to Europe's top high containment research facilities for the purpose of advancing research on highly infectious diseases and developing more effective diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines. This cooperative scheme, operational since 2018, allows rapid testing of new or repurposed drugs, optimized in vivo efficacy studies, and opens the door to new SME companies, industry, and public researchers, to test their innovative products against existing and emerging infectious diseases.

Currently ERINHA is working to ensure that public researchers and industry partners have access to the high-containment and complementary research facilities needed to develop medical countermeasures. We provide access to our members' large range of high-containment in vitro and in vivo capacities to facilitate a wide variety of studies.

More details on updated ERINHA services to support COVID-19 research can be found on our [website](#) and by contacting the ERINHA [Central Coordinating Unit \(CCU\)](#). The CCU helps to determine the capacities needed for your research, identify how ERINHA can assist your work, and provide overall project management throughout the duration of the project.

The speed, at which the scientific studies have launched to foster research on vaccines, antivirals, and diagnostic tools, is a huge achievement and testament to the rapid and effective collaborations among the European and global scientific community, which, we all hope, will soon bear its fruits to stop the COVID-19 spread.



NEWS

High containment facilities to advance COVID-19 research



ERINHA Members – leading European high-containment facilities and world level experts – are highly involved both in diagnostics and research activities to tackle COVID-19 by developing and testing diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines. The ERINHA's [French national node's](#) experts are involved in the Scientific Council under [REACTing](#)_(REsearch and ACTION targeting emerging infectious diseases), a French national network leading 20 scientific projects on the new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. Meanwhile, the ERINHA [Portuguese node](#) is mobilized in diagnostics activities and national research initiatives. In parallel, the ERINHA [Dutch](#) and [Swedish Nodes](#) are involved in developing animal models to advance medical countermeasures development and testing. The ERINHA [Hungarian node's](#) experts have recently isolated the SARS-CoV-2 virus at their high-containment facility enabling to provide live and non-live

samples to researchers worldwide.

ERINHA's new Member – its [Belgian Node](#), is heavily involved in drug and therapeutics testing against SARS-CoV-2 in partnership with industrial partners and Global non-profit organizations.

ERINHA has also coordinated participation of its facilities in the recent European IMI call dedicated to “Development of therapeutics and diagnostics combatting coronavirus infections”.

[Read more](#)

ERINHA welcomes its new Member: The Rega Institute for Medical Research of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven), Belgium



The Rega Institute for Medical Research of KU Leuven joined ERINHA infrastructure in February 2020. The institute has a long-standing experience and expertise in the discovery and development of antiviral drugs. Notably, in collaboration with the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry (A. Holy, Prague), the Laboratory of Virology and Experimental Chemotherapy of the Rega Institute discovered Tenofovir, now the most widely used drug for the treatment of HIV infection worldwide.

The institute's innovative research has since been extended to examine viruses such as dengue, rabies virus, respiratory syncytial virus, filoviruses (e.g. Ebola virus), enteroviruses, alphaviruses, and coronaviruses (e.g. SARS-CoV-2). The Institute's research has resulted in patents and ongoing large research funding.

Its unique [CAPS-IT research infrastructure](#) - an automated platform for multi-parameter data collection on live pathogens of higher or unknown biosafety risk, under pending BSL4 application - brings a new important capacity to ERINHA users.



Spotlight on KU Leuven research on SARS-CoV-2: advancing research on therapeutics

High-throughput testing of antiviral agents (molecules and biologicals) against SARS-CoV-2

Recently, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) commissioned KU Leuven to conduct a large Coronavirus study. The BMGF provided samples of ~13,000 therapeutic molecules (REFFRAME library) to leverage research towards a therapy to combat the SARS-CoV-2 infection.

The Rega Institute, with its ultra-bio-safe CAPS-IT research infrastructure is perhaps the only one in the world with the capacity to test thousands of candidate molecules at high-speed in phenotypic assays with infectious, highly pathogenic viruses. Fully automated, it runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

[Read more](#)

Partnering with Johnson & Johnson and BARDA for SARS-CoV-2 research

Pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson announced on 30 March, 2020, that it is partnering with the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to fund over [\\$1 billion in COVID-19 vaccine and antiviral treatment research and development](#).

BARDA's partnership with J&J encompasses also research and development of potential antiviral treatments.

The efforts of testing Janssen's libraries' of molecules as well as those of several other pharmaceutical companies will be conducted in partnership with the Rega Institute for Medical Research of KU Leuven.

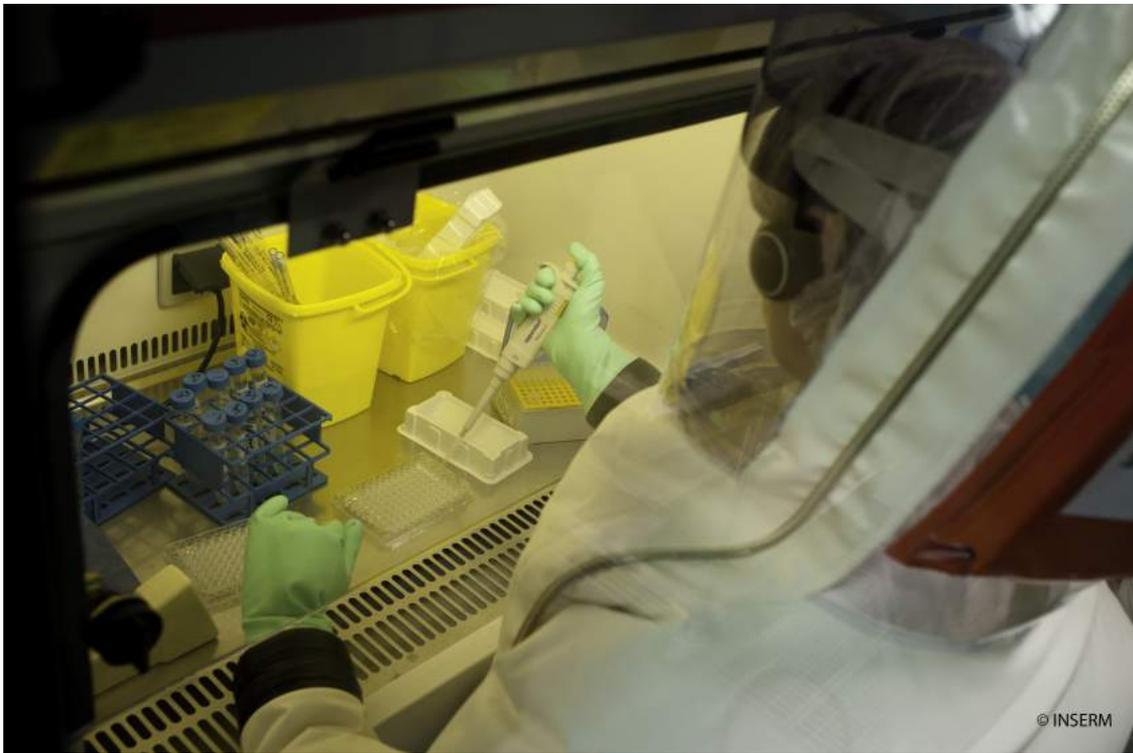
EXCALATE4COV – ExaScale smart pLatform Against paThogEns for CoronaVirus

[EXCALATE4COV](#) consortium is funded by the H2020 Emergency call and it aims to exploit the EXSCALATE Platform along with the most powerful computing resources currently based in Europe to empower smart in-silico drug design.

EXSCALATE4COV network is built to have a continuous run of in silico simulations followed by in vitro experimental validation that speed up the identification of active compounds to be tested in humans as novel treatments for COVID-19.

KU LEUVEN, member of the consortium, will be responsible for the evaluation of the antiviral effect of compounds against COVID-19 in a virus-cell-based phenotypic assay during the primary screen, biological validation (secondary screen) and will be assisting with the broad-spectrum evaluation of the potential antiviral activity against other viruses as well.

[Read more](#)



OPENCORONA - “Rapid therapy development through Open Coronavirus Vaccine Platform”:Spotlight on ERINHA Swedish node research activities



OPENCORONA consortium has been awarded €3m funding by the European Commission Horizon 2020 emergency call to support research and development against the COVID-19 outbreak, aiming to develop a vaccine for the novel virus.

The Consortium is led by **Karolinska Institute**, with high participation of **Public Health Agency of Sweden (FoHM – ERINHA Swedish node)**.

The project aim is to develop a vaccine candidate against SARS-CoV-2 and carry out a Phase I clinical study.

Matti Sällberg, Head of Department of Laboratory Medicine, Karolinska Institute, commented: “The need to find an effective vaccine is urgent and we are working as quickly as possible to find one”.

[Read more](#)



CONVAT project: Spotlight on ERINHA-Advance member, the National Institute of Infectious Diseases (INMI) of Italy



CONVAT consortium got funding from the European Commission emergency call. It is a cooperation project between Spain, Italy and France to develop a point-of-care platform, for rapid diagnosis and monitoring of coronavirus, directly from the patient's sample and without the need for testing in centralized clinical laboratories. The new device based on optical biosensor nanotechnology is expected to become massively available in less than 12 months.

INMI will support the development of the new point of care platform and validate the test both in labs and close to the patients' beds in primary care facilities.

INMI is also involved in another project from the same H2020 Emergency call: [EXSCALATE4COV](#), already mentioned above, and will participate in clinical consultation for the selection of therapeutic compounds, production of viral isolates and contribute to screening of antiviral activities of compounds.

[Read more](#)

PROJECTS NEWS

CORBEL: A new website, lifescience-ri.eu, brings together services of 13 Life Science Research Infrastructures

This website aims to be a common source of comprehensive information about the 13 European Life

sciences research infrastructures, their activities, offers, news and funding opportunities.

A dedicated page on [LS RI resources for research on COVID-19](#) is updated periodically.

[Read more](#)

EUROCOVID consortium

ERINHA is involved in EUROCOVID project consortium recently submitted to IMI call “Development of therapeutics and diagnostics combatting coronavirus infections”. EUROCOVID “EUROpean COoperation for anti-Viral Drug discovery and preparedness for current and emerging coronavirus outbreaks” creates a European, multidisciplinary world-class network for the development of pan-coronavirus antivirals that will rapidly respond to the current SARS-CoV-2 outbreak and to future related outbreaks. If the project is funded, ERINHA will lead a crucial part of the pre-clinical work and deploy the capacities of several members to test the in vivo efficacy of antiviral compounds.

EOSC-Life: EOSC-Life Featured in Article on COVID-19 and the EOSC



EOSC-Life and its coordinator Niklas Blomberg were featured in an article highlighting the need for the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) to address global health crises such as Covid-19 pandemics.

[Read more](#)

NEWS FROM PARTNER INITIATIVES



REACTing coordinating French research response to COVID-19

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, REACTing (REsearch and ACTION targeting emerging infectious diseases) is playing a key role in the coordination and information sharing regarding the outbreak in France. Notably, REACTing ensures coordination of French research stakeholders initiatives,

including funding of 20 research projects, as well as the implementation of the national randomized clinical trial (« Discovery ») built using the WHO master protocol.

REACTing is also involved in capacity-building in African countries by supporting hospital preparedness to COVID-19.

ERINHA French node experts are involved in REACTing Scientific Council.



[Read more](#)

TRANSVAC2 services for COVID-19 projects



TRANSVAC2, European Vaccine Research and Development Infrastructure project funded by H2020 and coordinated by European Vaccine Initiative (EVI), supports innovation and accelerates vaccine development by offering high-quality technical services across the R&D pipeline to academic and non-academic research groups, including SMEs.

TRANSVAC2 services for COVID-19 research projects can be found [here](#).

CEPI calls for additional funds for COVID-19 vaccine development

CEPI has already announced a diverse portfolio of [eight vaccine programmes](#) backed with up to \$29.2 million of funding.



In order to achieve the goal of delivering safe and effective vaccines that may be available for broader use within the next 12-18 months, urgent additional funds are needed. CEPI calls on the rest of the international community to join the coalition as only through a collective, unified response against this common threat we can help to end COVID-19 once and for all.

[Read more](#)

ESFRI activated COVID-19 webpage on Research infrastructures' resources



European Strategy Forum on Research infrastructures (ESFRI) has created a regularly updated webpage that lists and provides quick links to the COVID-19 resources and services offered by Research Infrastructures. It helps the scientific community to have an overview and easy access to needed information.

Check to know about other research infrastructures services on [ESFRI webpage](#).

COVID-19 Research Project tracker by GLOPID-R and UKCDR

To support a more effective and coherent global research response, Global Research Collaboration For Infectious Disease Preparedness ([GloPID-R](#)) and the UK Collaborative on Development Research ([UKCDR](#)) have developed a live database of funded research projects on COVID-19.

The Research Project Tracker provides an overview of funded research projects mapped against the priorities identified in the [WHO Coordinated Global Research Roadmap](#). It will be regularly updated as new funding decisions are announced. The aim of the joint GloPID-R – UKCDR initiative is to help funders and researchers identify gaps and opportunities and inform future research investments or coordination needs.

[Find out more about the COVID-19 Research Project Tracker](#)

Read more about the COVID-19 research funding opportunities on the [GloPID-R webpage](#)

BBMRI, ECRIN and EATRIS join forces to offer COVID-19 Services



The COVID-19 Fast Response Service is a coordinated and accelerated procedure for researchers to access the academic facilities, services and resources of the three medical research infrastructures: the European Research Infrastructure for Translational Medicine ([EATRIS](#)), the European Clinical Research Infrastructure network ([ECRIN](#)) and the European Research Infrastructure for Biobanking ([BBMRI](#)), working together under the umbrella of the Alliance of Medical Research Infrastructures (AMRI).

Fast response service catalog access is [here](#).

BBMRI-ERIC resources from biobanks across Europe available for research on COVID-19 can be found [here](#)

EATRIS-ERIC resources to advance research on COVID-19 can be found [here](#)

ECRIN-ERIC provision of COVID-19 related services can be found [here](#)

Visit our website at www.erinha.eu
Contact the ERINHA team: contact@erinha.eu

Follow us on [Twitter](#) 
View our [Research Portfolio](#)

If you would like to send news for our next issue, please contact us at contact@erinha.eu



Erinha AISBL © 2020, All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#)