

# EBiSC2 Press Release – Project Launch

## 1. PRESS RELEASE

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**EBiSC2 – The European Bank for induced pluripotent Stem Cells launches a second project phase to become a self-sustainable repository for human induced pluripotent stem cells (hiPSC), extend the existing cell catalogue, and offer additional hiPSC-related services.**

EBiSC2 will secure long-term access to well characterised and quality-controlled hiPSCs for academic and commercial researchers worldwide, continuing to support R&D activities such as disease modelling and drug discovery.

*Brussels, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 (12:00 CET)*

EBiSC2 builds on the achievements of the European Bank for hiPSCs (EBiSC, [www.ebisc.eu](http://www.ebisc.eu)), giving academic and commercial researchers access to high quality hiPSCs from diverse disease and genetic backgrounds ([cells.ebisc.org](http://cells.ebisc.org)). Supported by the Innovative Medicines Initiative 2 (IMI2 JU), a joint undertaking between the European Union and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA), key partners of the initial EBiSC project are joining forces to build on EBiSC's existing assets and establish EBiSC2 as a self-sustainable central bank for hiPSC lines, focused on satisfying user requirements.

Launched on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and focussed on the needs of the research community and scientific excellence, EBiSC2 will continue to distribute disease-relevant and high quality hiPSCs with freedom to operate for research, along with comprehensive datasets. Additional services such as bulk production of hiPSCs and delivery of pre-differentiated cell populations will be established to facilitate the use of hiPSC in research.

EBiSC2 aims to collaborate with other ongoing or future iPSC programmes in an effort to continue serving as a central hub for collection, banking, quality control and distribution of hiPSC lines, resulting in secured access for the research community to assets generated with public funds within these projects. Building on EBiSC's established clinical network, EBiSC2 will also progress clinical engagement to support collection and appropriate management of disease-relevant patient data to support disease modelling and drug discovery activities.

Prof. Dr. Heiko Zimmermann, head of the Fraunhofer Institute for Biomedical Engineering IBMT (Germany), the EBiSC2 Project Coordinator, states: *“Requirements from hiPSC users in academia and industry are ever evolving. To meet this demand, the EBiSC2 cell catalogue will be constantly enriched through on-demand generation of new hiPSC lines, including gene-edited lines and isogenic controls, hiPSC-derived progenitor cells and continued deposition of hiPSC cohorts generated in external research projects. We will distribute cell lines and develop a range of additional cell services, for*

*instance through the supply of screening panels of disease-relevant and control hiPSC lines in ready-to-use-formats, to maximise the value of these resources, whilst reducing operational costs through state-of-the-art upscaling and automation.”*

Dr. Andreas Ebneith, Scientific Director of Janssen Pharmaceutica NV’s Neuroscience Therapeutic Area (Belgium), the EBiSC2 Project Leader, comments: *“Proof-of-concept studies will be performed jointly by academic and pharmaceutical partners to demonstrate the reliability and robustness of the EBiSC lines for disease modelling and screening. The extensive data generated within those studies will further enrich the EBiSC2 catalogue. Long-term sustainability of the EBiSC2 bank will guarantee continuous access to an important high-quality, disease-relevant hiPSC resource for academic and commercial researchers worldwide. EBiSC2 may thus support future advances in the field of hiPSC-based disease research with the ultimate goal to discover and develop new drugs for improving the health and lives of people internationally.”*

#### **Partner organisations involved in EBiSC2:**

- Research organisations, universities, public bodies:
  - Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Angewandten Forschung e.V. - Institut für Biomedizinische Technik (IBMT), Germany
  - Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Angewandten Forschung e.V. - Fraunhofer UK Research Ltd, United Kingdom
  - Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Germany
  - Department of Health and Social Care, European Collection of Authenticated Cell Cultures, United Kingdom
  - Bioneer A/S, Denmark
  - Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Stem Cell Institute Leuven, Belgium
- SMEs:
  - ARTTIC SAS, France
- Pharmaceutical companies (EFPIA members):
  - Janssen Pharmaceutica NV, Belgium
  - Bayer AG, Germany
  - Eli Lilly & Co. Ltd., United Kingdom
  - Lundbeck A/S, Denmark
  - Novo Nordisk A/S, Denmark
  - UCB Biopharma SPRL, Belgium
  - Pfizer Ltd, United Kingdom
  - Takeda Development Centre Europe Ltd., United Kingdom
  - FUJIFILM Cellular Dynamics, Inc., United States
  - Institut de Recherches Servier, France

EBiSC2 is supported by the IMI2 JU with 4.6 million Euro and further by the EFPIA members with 4.3 million Euro. The project runs over three and a half years and will end on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

**Access to the public EBiSC Catalogue:** <https://cells.ebisc.org>

**Initial EBiSC(1) project video for background information:** <https://youtu.be/OAXcTAT2i80>

#### **About the Innovative Medicines Initiative 2 JU**

The Innovative Medicines Initiative 2 JU (IMI2 JU) is working to improve health by speeding up the development of, and patient access to, the next generation of medicines, particularly in areas where there is an unmet medical or social need. It does this by facilitating collaboration between the key players involved in healthcare research, including universities, pharmaceutical companies, other companies active in healthcare research, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), patient

organisations, and medicines regulators. This approach has proven highly successful, and IMI projects are delivering exciting results that are helping to advance the development of urgently-needed new treatments in diverse areas.

The IMI2 JU is a partnership between the European Union and the European pharmaceutical industry, represented by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). Through the IMI2 programme, the IMI2 JU has a budget of €3.3 billion for the period 2014-2024. Half of this comes from the EU's research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020. The other half comes from large companies, mostly from the pharmaceutical sector; these do not receive any EU funding, but contribute to the projects 'in kind', for example by donating their researchers' time or providing access to research facilities or resources.

## 2. PROJECT CONTACTS

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## 3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT (MANDATORY)

The EBiSC2 project has received funding from the Innovative Medicines Initiative 2 Joint Undertaking (IMI2 JU) under grant agreement No 821362. The JU receives support from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and EFPIA.

## 4. LOGOS TO INCLUDE

- EBiSC2 logo
- IMI JU logo
- EFPIA logo
- EU flag
- Partner's organisation logo, *if applicable*



innovative  
medicines  
initiative



European Federation of Pharmaceutical  
Industries and Associations



## 5. KEYWORDS

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- stem cell biology
- biobanks
- human induced pluripotent stem cells
- hiPSCs
- stem cells
- research-grade iPSC lines
- disease-specific iPSCs
- neurodegeneration
- hiPSC-derived cells
- freedom to operate
- gene-edited iPSCs
- hiPSC differentiation
- hiPSC access