



TREAT-NMD Partner Newsletter No. 2

16 March 2007

Welcome to the 2nd weekly newsletter for all TREAT-NMD partners!

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1. About this newsletter and the mailing list

You are a "key contact" for your partner organisation and you have been subscribed to a mailing list called "treatnmd-partners", which is intended to be a simple way for partners to keep in touch with one another. If you ever want to write a message to reach the key contacts in every partner organisation, write to treatnmd-partners@newcastle.ac.uk and your message will automatically be distributed to everyone. An UPDATED list of the key contacts for all partners is attached to this message.

2. Latest News / Research

MRC LAUNCHES SIX TRANSLATIONAL MEDICINE CENTRES

The UK Medical Research Council is to invest £15.5 million over the next five years in six new translational medicine research centres based at UK universities, it announced on 3 March. The centres are aimed at translating discoveries into new drugs, therapies, diagnostic tools or methods of prevention, or using clinical knowledge to inform research priorities. Research carried out at the centres will include transplant medicine, obesity, neuromuscular diseases, genomics and global health.

MUSCLE FIRST IN NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE?

Researchers hunting for the molecular malfunction behind the paralyzing disease spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) might have been looking on the wrong side of the neuromuscular junction. New work suggests that reduced levels of SMA's signature protein, SMN, disrupt the junction from the muscle side. For the full article please click on the link below.

<http://www.jcb.org/cgi/content/full/176/6/731a>

NATURE CELL BIOLOGY NEWS AND VIEWS

Review of 'Mural Cells Paint a New Picture of Muscle Stem Cells'

<http://www.nature.com/ncb/journal/v9/n3/abs/ncbo307-249.html;jsessionid=09A66407E0B597B70AF516951023DCE9>

Nature Cell Biology - 9, 249 - 251 (2007)

doi:10.1038/ncbo307-249

Jennifer Morgan & Francesco Muntoni

For full paper please click on the link:

<http://www.nature.com/ncb/journal/v9/n3/full/ncbo307-249.html>

3. Calls for Proposals

EXPLORATORY WORKSHOPS: ALL DOMAINS

The [European Science Foundation](#) invites applications from prospective organisers of exploratory workshops across all scientific domains for 2008. The workshops are discussion meetings with an aim to develop new strategic directions for research, and as such are intended to be small, interactive and output-oriented gatherings. Eligible domains include: biomedical sciences; life, environmental and earth sciences; physical and engineering sciences; humanities; social sciences; science driven issues of research infrastructures in any of the above fields. Awards will normally be for up to 30 participants for one to three days and be worth up to 15,000 euros, normally covering the costs of workshop activities and travel, accommodation and subsistence for European participants. Applicants should be scientists and scholars from European universities or research institutes in countries having agencies which are member organisations of the ESF. Proposals may include co-applicants from other non-ESF countries.

Deadline: 4pm, 27 April 2007

Contact Details

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BRITISH COUNCIL: UK-RUSSIA: BRIDGE RESEARCH CO-OPERATION

The [British Council](#) is pleased to announce a call for bids under the BRIDGE research co-operation 2.

In this next phase of the BRIDGE project, the British Council wishes to extend its community of Russia-UK partnerships to include research cooperation.

From the British Council's experience of working with BRIDGE HEIs on collaborative programme delivery partnerships, it is apparent that a key motivation to forming these bilateral links is the desire to develop long-term research links across the partnership.

The British Council's aim is to foster science and technology links between UK and Russia through bringing together scientists working within HEIs. With this strand of the BRIDGE project, it wants to provide networking opportunities for academics and researchers so that they can go on to develop enduring partnerships between UK and Russian HEIs.

FURTHER DETAILS

The deadline for applications is 2 November 2007. For further details on eligibility criteria and guidance for applicants, please see: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-bridge-project>

MARIE CURIE INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIPS

1] INTRA-EUROPEAN FELLOWSHIPS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Summary: This action will allow Experienced Researchers, who are nationals of a Member or Associated State, to move to an institution in a different European country for a period of 1-2 years and undertake advanced training. Proposals are submitted jointly by the researcher and the new host institution on a research topic of their choice. Third country nationals who have resided in Europe for more than 3 years out of the previous 4 years are regarded, for Marie Curie purposes, as a national of the country where they have resided the longest. Nationals of Member/Associated States who have resided outside Europe for more than 3 years out of the previous 4 years can benefit from this action, including in their country of origin.

Deadline: 14th August 2007

Further information:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7DetailsCallPage&call_id=44

2] INTERNATIONAL OUTGOING FELLOWSHIP FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Summary: This action will allow Experienced Researchers, who are nationals of a Member or Associated State, to be trained and acquire new knowledge in a high-level organisation in a third country (i.e. anywhere outside Europe). The researchers must then undertake a mandatory return phase of at least one year in an institution (the "return host") in a Member or Associated State. This can be the same institution they originated from, but does not have to be. Proposals are submitted jointly by the researcher and the return host institution on a research topic of their choice.

Deadline: 14th August 2007

Further information:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7DetailsCallPage&call_id=45

3] INTERNATIONAL INCOMING FELLOWSHIP

Summary: Top class Experienced Researchers from third countries (i.e. anywhere outside Europe) can come to an institution in a Member or Associated State for a period of one to two years with a view to knowledge sharing and developing mutually beneficial research cooperation between Europe and third countries. If the researchers come from a developing or emerging economy, they can apply for an optional grant to return to their country of origin. Proposals are submitted jointly by the researcher and the host institution on a research topic of their choice.

Deadline: 14th August 2007

Further information:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7DetailsCallPage&call_id=46

Eligibility

Experienced Researchers = must have at least 4 years' full-time research experience or a PhD at the time of the deadline. It does not exclude first post-docs but applicants should be aware that the call addresses researchers with a more senior profile in terms of experience.

Researchers must not have worked or resided in the country they intend to move to for more than 12 months in the preceding 36 months at the time of the deadline (short stays such as holidays are not taken into account).

MARIE CURIE INDUSTRY-ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS AND PATHWAYS (IAPP)

Summary: The purpose of the action is to encourage dynamic and enduring relationships between public research organisations and private commercial enterprises. One or more university/research centres and one or more commercial enterprises from at least two different Member or Associated States (of which at least one must be a Member States) propose a project based on a joint cooperation programme. Participants can: exchange know-how and experience through inter-sectoral two-way exchanges of staff, with built in return mechanisms; recruit experienced researchers from outside the partnership; and hold workshops and conferences to involve participants from a wider setting in the knowledge-sharing experience. Projects typically last from 3 to 4 years.

Deadline: 31st May 2007

Further information:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7DetailsCallPage&call_id=43

THE NEW CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR ERASMUS MUNDUS ACTIONS

The Erasmus Mundus programme is a co-operation and mobility programme in the field of higher education which promotes the European Union as a centre of excellence in learning around the world.

ACTION 1 relates to the establishment of high-quality integrated courses at masters level offered by a consortium of at least three universities in at least three different European countries. The courses must be "integrated" to be selected under Erasmus Mundus, which means that they must foresee a study period in at least two of the three universities and that it must lead to the award of a recognised double, multiple or joint diploma.

ACTION 2 - a scholarship scheme for third-country graduate students and scholars from the whole world is linked to the Erasmus Mundus Masters outlined above.

ACTION 3 - Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses selected under Action 1 have the possibility of establishing partnerships with third-country higher education institutions. These partnerships allow for outgoing mobility of graduate EU students and scholars involved in the Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses.

ACTION 4 - Erasmus Mundus also supports projects aimed at enhancing the attractiveness of and the interest in the European higher education.

DEADLINES

Action 1 - 30 April 2007

Action 2 - 28 February 2008

Action 3 - 30 November 2007

Action 4 - 31 May 2007

All documents relating to the Call including the application form and the Administrative and Financial Handbooks can be downloaded from this site:

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/static/en/mundus/call2007/index.htm>

and

http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html

http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus/faq/index_en.html

EMBO APPLICATIONS TO THE YOUNG INVESTIGATOR PROGRAMME

The EMBO Young Investigator Programme (YIP) was established to support young scientists within the first four years of having set-up their independent laboratories. The objective of the EMBO Young Investigator Programme is to give selected young scientists an advantage through recognition by EMBO.

http://www.embo.org/yip/yip_info.html

EMBO INSTALLATION GRANTS

The aim of this new scheme is to strengthen science in participating EMBC member states. At present applications are accepted from Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Portugal, Poland and Turkey. Additional member states have expressed an interest to join in the near future. The grants will help scientists to relocate, set up their labs and rapidly establish a reputation in the European scientific community. The scheme is entirely funded by the participating EMBC member states and successful applicants receive an annual support of EUR50,000 for three to five years. Each participating country sets an upper limit to the number of grants available per year. Annual application deadline: 15 April

<http://www.embo.org/sdig/index.html>

HUMAN FRONTIER SCIENCE PROGRAM

Research grants are provided for teams of scientists from different countries who wish to combine their expertise to approach questions that could not be answered by individual laboratories.

Emphasis is placed on novel collaborations that bring together scientist from different disciplines (e.g. from chemistry, physics, computer science, engineering) to focus on problems in the life sciences.

The research teams must be international. The principal applicant must be from one of the eligible countries. However, other participating scientists and laboratories may be situated anywhere in the world.

Applicants must submit a letter of intent to apply for a research grant via the HFSP web site with a deadline at the end of March, and after review, selected teams will be invited to submit a full application.

Two types of Research Grant are available:

- Young Investigators' Grants
- Program Grants

Fellowships available include:

- Long-term Fellowships
- Cross-Disciplinary Fellowships
- Short-term Fellowships
- Career Development Awards

<http://www.hfsp.org/about/AboutProg.php>

4. Calls for Papers / Posters

RNAi EUROPE SYMPOSIUM

- Pre-conference symposium - microRNA
19 September 2007
- Conference and exhibition
20-21 September 2007
Barcelona, Spain

The deadline to submit your abstract for RNAi Europe and the microRNA Symposium is fast approaching. Submit online now to avoid missing the deadline- 19th March

http://www.selectbiosciences.com/conferences/RNAiEurope07/Abstract_Submission.aspx

They are also accepting poster submissions. Deadline: 22 July

http://www.selectbiosciences.com/conferences/RNAiEurope07/Abstract_Submission.aspx

Possible Topics Include:

- Target Discovery and Validation
 - Transfection
 - RNAi Therapeutics
 - Latest Trends in RNAi Technology
 - High-Throughput and High-Content RNAi Genomic Screens
 - microRNAs in
 - Disease Biology
 - Stem Cell Biology
 - Diagnostics
 - Virology
 - Biogenesis
 - Development
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5. Publicising TREAT-NMD at conferences

As part of efforts to raise the awareness of and publicise TREAT-NMD at conferences, workshops or other meetings we have produced a general double-sided colour flyer introducing TREAT-NMD and detailing the TREAT-NMD partner organisations. This flyer will be available to download from the website within the next week but if you would like a copy e-mailed to you please contact emma.heslop@newcastle.ac.uk

If you are planning to attend any workshops, conferences or meetings please let us know and please take our promotional material along to help promote TREAT-NMD.

6. Resources

* The TREAT-NMD website will expand substantially over the coming months and will provide useful resources for partners – for reporting on activities, for creating email forums, uploading presentations and conference /workshop notifications. Please let us know what you would like to see on YOUR website!

* It was decided that the second, more general newsletter will be distributed to our wider audience on at least a quarterly basis. If you make any new contact in the neuromuscular world over the coming months and years please promote TREAT-NMD and provide us with their e-mail address so that we can add them to our distribution list.

7. Progress update on active work packages

Over the last week you should all have been contacted individually by our project manager Stephen Lynn, requesting a progress update on your work-packages. Can we please remind people who have not yet replied that your update can be e-mailed to stephen.lynn@newcastle.ac.uk Thank you to those of you who have already replied. The 'highlights' of the results will be included in future newsletters.

8. Questions to be included in 'Fact finding Questionnaire'

Emma Heslop and Rachel Thompson contacted you recently to ask partners who need to gather information from other partners, as part of their work-package responsibilities, if they would like to do this via our general Fact Finding Questionnaire. An example of a question might be 'what NMD workshops and conferences are currently available in your institution / country'. As everyone is so busy we have unfortunately not received many responses so far and would therefore like to encourage partners to think about the information they are required to collect as part of their work-packages and formulate questions to e-mail to r.h.thompson@newcastle.ac.uk. The questions will then be included in the Fact Finding Questionnaire and distributed to all partners. Results will be made available to all partners upon completion. This will ultimately speed up and streamline the data collection, helping us all to achieve our deliverable deadlines.

9. Send us your news and views!

We encourage all partners to send their own news and updates, either directly to all partners by writing to this list at treatnmd-partners@newcastle.ac.uk or to emma.heslop@newcastle.ac.uk for inclusion in the next newsletter. In future we'd like to include other sections in the newsletter, such as one on newly published research that is of interest to the network. What else would you like us to include? Write to emma.heslop@newcastle.ac.uk with your feedback.

Please e-mail us with any information you have on upcoming education and training opportunities including workshops, conferences, funding, exchange programmes, clinical placements, visiting professorships and lectureships.