



The project leading to this application has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 952376



Reducing networking gaps between Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) and internationally- leading counterparts in viral infection–induced autoimmunity research” (*VirA*)

Grant agreement No. 952376

On 1 December 2020 RSU launches the implementation of EU Horizon2020 Framework programme Project „Reducing networking gaps between Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) and internationally - leading counterparts in viral infection –induced autoimmunity research” (*VirA*).

Project aims to promote autoimmune disease research capacity and fill networking gaps in the institution (RSU) of the low-performing Member State – Latvia, by establishing a consortium with leading research institutions from Germany - Ulm University, Italy - University of Ferrara, and Israel - Tel-Aviv University. The partner universities are the excellence centres (world leaders) that are forerunners in immunology, virology, morphology and clinical data management and modelling, and are capable of inspiring positive change in the research field and significantly influence future developments at RSU via joint activities.

Project activities include:

- Raising experience of the staff with short term exchanges;
- Bringing new knowledge to the university from expert visits and short-term on-site or virtual training;
- Organization of training workshops and joint summer schools to increase the networking ability of staff and foster knowledge transfer, including technical approaches and molecular methods;
- Conference participation and attendance to help with project dissemination and gathering of new information and global knowledge exchange.

The total costs of project are 899,992 EUR funded by the European Commission. The duration of the project is till 30 November 2023. It is the second project of the programme EU Horizon2020 Twinning action in the field of medicine implemented in RSU. The support from the European Commission will foster the development of the infectious disease research in Latvia and in the region. The implementation of VirA project will contribute to the integration of the Institute of Microbiology and Virology in a single European research field.

Project coordinator: Assoc. Professor Modra Murovska, director of Institute of Microbiology and Virology.

The kick-off meeting of Project will take place in Zoom platform on **17 December 2020 , at 10:00, in the Senate hall of Rīga Stradiņš University**, Dzirciema Street 16, Riga.

Heads of RSU structural units, researchers, university staff and anyone interested in research projects of the European level are welcome to participate in the meeting.

The meeting will be opened by RSU Rector, Professor Aigars Pētersons. Afterwards, Associate Professor Modra Murovska, coordinator of the project, will give a short insight into work directions and achievements of Institute of Microbiology and Virology in the field of science – a cornerstone of success of the project proposal as well as on project management structures and procedures. Project Leaders (Professor Marion Schneider, Germany; Professor Dario Di Luca, Italy; Professor Yehuda Shoenfeld, Israel) from the partnering countries will give short information on the interests and opportunities of the institution represented which will contribute to the realisation of the project.

Then Project work package leaders will present project Work Groups goals and activities.

External Advisory Board experts and Steering Committee – will also be present in the meeting.

Structural units involved in project implementation: Institute of Microbiology and Virology, Department of Infectology and Joint Laboratory of Electron Microscopy of Institute of Anatomy and Anthropology

Partnering organisations of the project: University of ULM, Germany, University of Ferrara, Italy, Medical Research Infrastructure Development and Health Services Fund by the Sheba Medical Center, Israel