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# Newsletter

## September 2019



## FOREWORD

Dear readers,

It's a pleasure to share with you the news from Alliance4Life about the progress achieved during the first half of this year. We are also sharing information and photos from the 4th Alliance4Life meeting held in Jūrmala, Latvia, in June. This meeting, hosted by the [Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis](#), clearly showed that we succeeded in forming a true community of colleagues and friends. In my opinion, this is

the most important achievement, among the other and maybe more tangible ones, that gives a great basis for all of our work, also for the future.

The Jūrmala meeting was attended by nearly one hundred colleagues from our member institutions, who not only enjoyed the beautiful seaside views, but also tackled a tough agenda full of presentations, lectures, trainings, and discussions within our Focus Group and Strategy Board meetings. Currently, the alliance is planning, among other tasks, the strategy and activities for the next period that will start after the current project is completed. Therefore, time was prioritized for the project management to discuss the conditions for institutionally solidifying the Alliance4Life project via a document to be signed in Vilnius in October 2019.

You are invited to have a look not only at the newsletter, but also at our website [www.alliance4life.eu](http://www.alliance4life.eu), which contains public deliverables completed up to now, including the Assessment Report, the Inventory of Best Practice, and several reports from the first National Round Tables organized in our Central and Eastern European region.

A series of podcasts from Alliance4Life is coming soon and will be shared via social media!

Wishing you a successful start of the fall semester!

*Zlataše Novotná*  
*Alliance4Life Coordinator*

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## 4th Alliance4Life Meeting in Jūrmala, 10-12 June 2019

### Focus Group (FG) Meetings

One of the main tasks of our FGs was to go through the main priorities set during the Kick-off Meeting last year, check the status of their completion, and possibly close these tasks or proceed to their completion by the end of this year. Another objective was to evaluate the FGs' work up to now and to suggest the agenda and strategies for future.



Grants and Research Funding Focus Group Meeting



Science Communication Focus Group Meeting



Science Evaluation Focus Group Meeting



Core Facilities Focus Group Meeting

## Trainings

Excellent progress was made with the “train the trainers” task. Several distinguished lecturers shared expertise in their fields with our community. The following trainings took place during both plenary sessions and FG meetings:

- Knowledge Transfer as Part of University Strategy, *Laura MacDonald, General Manager, ASTP Proton*
- Improving Collaboration Among Scientists and Journalists – Examples from the Practice, *Tea Vukušić Rukavina, Assistant Director for Public Health and Public Relations of the School of Public Health “A. Štampar,” UZSM*
- Project Coordinators – Preferred Skills and Personalities, *Smiljka Vikić-Topić, Head of Research and Technology Transfer Office, UZSM*
- Common Evaluation of Scientific Excellence at CEITEC, *Zdeňka Pavlačková, Analyst, CEITEC (Science Evaluation FG)*
- Training as a Means to Scientific Excellence: How to Build Professional Development in Academia, *Ester Jarour, Research and Development Manager, CEITEC MU (HR and Mobility FG)*
- ELIXIR Services and Data Resources, *Jerry Lanfear, Chief Technical Officer, ELIXIR Hub (Core Facilities & Big Data FG)*
- How to Attract Journalists to Write About Science, *Boris Urbančík, PR and Communication Manager, BMC SAS (Science Communication FG)*
- Core Facilities Internal Review and Research Infrastructures Evaluation, *Kateřina Vágnerová, Core Facilities Manager, CEITEC MU (Science Evaluation & Core Facilities FGs)*
- Ethical Review of Social Science Research Using Biomedical Methods, *Renata Veselská, Professor at the Department of Experimental Biology, Faculty of Science, Masaryk University (Research Ethics & Integrity FG)*

## Speeches and Presentations at Plenary Sessions

In Jūrmala, we progressed with expanding contacts and collaborations with the established European networks and institutions relevant for Life Sciences, as well as for research & innovation policy, and

presented results of our benchmarking study to them. We were also updated about the Horizon Europe being prepared in Brussels:

- Excellence AND Widening Participation? Collaboration on Core Challenges for Horizon Europe, *Jan Palmowski, Secretary-General of The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities*
- Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) and Open Science, *Michela Bertero, Head of International and Scientific Affairs, Coordinator of the ORION project, CRG*
- Core Facilities & Big Data: SciLifeLab Experience, *Annika Jenmalm Jensen, Infrastructure Director, SciLifeLab*
- Exemplifying Excellence – Results of Alliance4Life Benchmarking, *Zlatushe Novotná, Head of Strategic Partnerships & International Relations, Alliance4Life Coordinator, CEITEC MU*
- Preparation of Horizon Europe, *Ferenc Marofka, Scientific Officer, DG Research & Innovation*



Ferenc Marofka



Annika Jenmalm Jensen



Jan Palmowski



Zlatushe Novotná

## National Round Tables Organized in the Czech Republic and Latvia



Two separate national round tables were recently organized by Alliance4Life members. CEITEC Masaryk University organized a round table in Prague, Czech Republic in May 2019. The topic of the round table was "National Round Table on Science Policy - How to Support a Positive Change?" You can read more about the round table [here](#).



The Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis organized a round table in Jūrmala, Latvia in June 2019. The Latvian policymakers and stakeholders discussed the topic of "Better Science in Latvia" with the Alliance4Life. You can read more about the round table [here](#).

## Invitation to Leadership Training in Ljubljana from 22-23 October 2019



We are very pleased to announce the training that University of Ljubljana, in cooperation with CEITEC Masaryk University, is offering to scientists in leadership positions and administrative managers at Alliance4Life partner institutions. The training will take place from 22-23 October 2019 in Ljubljana, Slovenia and is entitled "**Strengthening Leadership Competencies – Emotional Intelligence, Motivation, Time Management, Recruitment.**" Interested scientific leaders are welcome to apply for travel grants provided to participants from Alliance4Life member institutions.

Please register for this training by 15 September 2019 [here](#).

## Travel Grants

The member institutions of Alliance4Life offer their researchers the opportunity to participate in selected scientific events with a free or reduced registration fee and fully covered travel costs. Information and a list of events can be found on the Alliance4Life website [here](#).

Upcoming events:

- [9th Croatian Congress on Pharmacology](#) **25-28 September 2019**
- [Strengthening Leadership Competencies](#) **22-23 October 2019** (see also the information above)
- [EAA WINTER SCHOOL: "Testis histology and pathology for clinical andrologists and embryologists"](#) **3-6 December 2019**

## Recording Alliance4Life Podcasts

During the meeting in Jūrmala, we also recorded podcasts that are expected to be disseminated in autumn 2019. Representatives from the ten partner institutes shared best practices in the areas in which their institutes excel, as well as the benefits of being members of the Alliance4Life community, and how they deal with the institutional and national challenges they face. It was a new and educational experience

for our moderators from the Alliance4Life coordinating institute, CEITEC Masaryk University, and for our interviewees!



Moderating and organizing podcast interviews by Jill Batdorf, Ester Jarour and Zlataše Novotná

## Next Alliance4Life Community & Project Meeting

The next project meeting will be kindly hosted by [Vilnius University – Faculty of Medicine](#) in [Vilnius, Lithuania](#) from **2-4 October 2019**. The key event will be the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in the Aula Parva.



## Photogallery



Main organizers of the Jūrmala meeting, Maija Dambrova and Dace Tirzite from LIOS



Opening speech by Jiří Nantl, Director of CEITEC MU and Strategy Board Chair



Opening speech by Osvalds Pugovičs, Director of LIOS



Meeting of the Strategy Board, Steering Committee, and main project contacts



Networking in a beautiful location



Mingling

To see additional information about the Jūrmala meeting, please visit our [website](#).

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## Follow us!

Twitter: [@Alliance4lifeEU](#)

Website: [www.alliance4life.eu](http://www.alliance4life.eu)



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