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Newsletter

December 2019



FOREWORD

Dear readers,

It's a pleasure to share the fourth newsletter of the Alliance4Life with you, which we are issuing on the occasion of a successful completion of the second year of the alliance's existence, and of our Horizon 2020 project. It provides an overview of the fifth community meeting that was hosted by Vilnius University from the 2-4th October 2019, as well as news about several recently organized national round tables on research policy, our successful series of podcasts, and further outreach activities.

In Vilnius, the agenda was busy as usual, with presentations, lectures, trainings, and Focus Group meetings. However, this meeting also covered a very special agenda. First on the agenda was an official signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding by representatives of all founding member institutions, which formalized Alliance4Life as a permanent structure. This milestone showed a serious commitment of members to continue and implement good practices and strategies that were jointly created during these two years. Second on the agenda was a strategic pre-meeting of the Strategy Board and the project management, which established the strategy and planned the activities for the alliance's next time period. This meeting materialised the commitment of Alliance4Life members into concrete objectives, activities, and pilot actions that created the basis for the next work plan.

By closing our current project, we can be proud that the work planned for the current project was fulfilled, and many additional activities were also completed, due to the interest and willingness of members to

dedicate extra time and effort towards a common goal. Please allow me to express my sincere thanks to all colleagues who contributed to this success.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year in 2020!

Zlatuše Novotná
Alliance4Life Coordinator

5th Alliance4Life Meeting in Vilnius, 2-4 October 2019

Focus Group (FG) Meetings

Our FGs were tasked with finalizing their agendas for 2018-2019, suggesting the agenda and strategies for the future, and sharing good practices through internal trainings.



Grants and Research Funding Focus Group Meeting



HR & Mobility Focus Group Meeting



Knowledge & Technology Transfer Focus Group Meeting



Focus Group Chairs Wrap-up

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:

- **Organization of ERC Grant Training at University of Ljubljana**, *Tjasa Nabergoj*, Head of Research Support Unit, University of Ljubljana (Science Evaluation, HR and Mobility, & Grants and Funding FGs)

- **How Could You Teach Them All? Professional Development Support System at the University of Tartu**, *Marek Sammul, Acting Director, University of Tartu* (HR and Mobility FG)
- **Big Data**, *Tomas Rebok, IT Infrastructure Division, Masaryk University* (Core Facilities & Big Data FG)
- **Implementation of Core Facility Concept at FNUSA-ICRC**, *Michal Janota, Chief Operation Officer, FNUSA-ICRC*
- **Experience with Proof of Concept**, *Radoslav Trautmann, TTO, Masaryk University* (Knowledge and Technology Transfer FG)
- **Using Social Media for Science Communication**, *Joanna Orłowska, Director of Rector's Office, Medical University of Lodz* (Science Communication FG)
- **Peer Learning Activity: Research Integrity**, *Ana Borovecki, UZSM* (Meeting of Strategy Board, Steering Committee, and main project contacts)

Speeches and Presentations at Plenary Sessions

In Vilnius, we continued to expand our contacts and collaborations with the established European networks and institutions relevant for Life Sciences, as well as for research & innovation policy:

- **Collaboration with Companies: How to Understand Their Needs? How Scientists Should Talk to Industry Partners?** *Markus Henrich, CEO, HENRICH Life Science R&D Consulting*
- **Tips for Preparing a Successful ERC Proposal**, *Philippe Cupers, Head of Unit ERCEA.B.3 - Life Sciences, European Research Council Executive Agency*
- **Collaboration with the Core Technologies for Life Sciences European Association**, *Patrick England, CTLS President, Institut Pasteur*
- **Mastering Teamwork in Science and Technology Careers**, *Eva Bat'a, Head of Human Resources, FNZ Brno, Founder of Live Your Life Project, Czech Republic*
- **Public Engagement and Citizen Science**, *Marta Solis, Coordinator of Public Engagement & Science Education, CRG, Barcelona, Spain*
- **eLife's Support for a Culture Change in Academia that Helps Scientists Thrive** (video), *Kornelia Korzec, Community Manager, eLife, United Kingdom*
- **Principles of Science Evaluation on International and National Levels**, *Erik Arnold, Co-founder and Chairman of the Technopolis Group, Adjunct Professor in Research Policy at KTH Stockholm, Honorary Professor at the University of Manchester*



Full Aula Parva



Erik Arnold



Philippe Cupers



Markus Henrich

Memorandum of Understanding

On the **4th of October 2019**, the founding members of the Alliance4Life gathered at Vilnius University and signed the Memorandum of Understanding, which **formalized the alliance as a permanent structure**. The memorandum signing was the crown jewel of Alliance4Life's achievements during the past two years of its existence. It symbolized the **members' commitment** to make this alliance a long lasting one, for the benefit of its members and the whole region.

The formal existence of the Alliance4Life is in line with the current shift of the EU research policy towards a more sensitive approach to research and innovation needs of Central and Eastern European countries. The Alliance4Life's voice was also heard during the **new Horizon Europe negotiations**, and will surely be listened to in the future. Alliance4Life intends to become **a role model for institutions in less performing regions** and to **serve as a hub of excellence**, inspiring others.

During the meeting that was hosted by Vilnius University, all members confirmed that **progress was made and a solid strategy was developed** that will be implemented in the years to come!



Signing the Memorandum of Understanding



Signing is complete!

Strengthening Leadership Competencies



On the **22nd and 23rd of October 2019**, a leadership training with the aim of "Strengthening Leadership Competencies in Science" took place at the **Medical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia**. This two-day training was open not only to science leaders from the University of Ljubljana, but also to researchers from the [Alliance4Life](#) member institutions. CEITEC and [CRG](#) - both [EU-LIFE](#) members - joined forces to make this training for Alliance4Life members possible. "This training was extremely successful, and there is no better way to practically prove the impact of the Alliance4Life project," added Tomaz Mars, after receiving the positive feedback of the participants. [Read more...](#)

Alliance4Life Podcast Series



The Alliance4Life Podcast Series was released weekly on SoundCloud from 24 September-5 November 2019 and had 157 plays in total. You can listen to all 7 podcasts on Soundcloud [here](#) and watch the podcast series teasers [here](#) on Twitter.

National Round Tables Organized in Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia

The following Alliance4Life members recently organized national round tables:

- **Croatia:** University of Zagreb School of Medicine, 28 November 2019, *Careers in Biomedical Science – How to Drive Positive Change*. Read more [here](#).
- **Czech Republic:** CEITEC MU and FNUSA – ICRC, 4 December 2019, Round table on the occasion of the regional R&I stakeholders meeting “REGON” hosted by South Moravian Innovation Centre, in Brno.
- **Estonia:** University of Tartu, 2 December 2019, *Free from Catching Up - How to Support a Shift in EU Research Funding?* Read more [here](#).
- **Hungary:** Semmelweis University, 11 December 2019, *Science Communication at Universities*. Read more [here](#).
- **Lithuania:** Vilnius University, 26 November 2019, *Is It Worth Participating in International Science Programmes?* Read more [here](#).
- **Lithuania:** Vilnius University, 4 December 2019, *In-service Training through Mobility Schemes*. Read more [here](#).
- **Poland:** Medical University of Lodz, 15 November 2019, *Excellence in Research and Its Impact on the Recognition of Research Centers*. Read more [here](#).
- **Slovakia:** Biomedical Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, 6 November 2019, *National Round Table on Science Policy, Together for Improving the Conditions and Quality of Science and Research in Slovakia*. Read more [here](#).
- **Slovenia:** University of Ljubljana Faculty of Medicine, 6 November 2019, *Health Research in Slovenia – Roadmap to Excellence*. Read more [here](#).

Photogallery



Opening speech by Jiří Nantl, Director of



Core Facilities & Big Data Focus Group

CEITEC MU and Strategy Board Chair

training, Tomas Rebok, Masaryk University



Zlatuše Novotná, CEITEC MU, and Artūras Žukauskas, & Vida Lapinskaitė, Vilnius University



Nikola Kostlánová, CEITEC MU and Osvalds Pugovičs, LIOS



CEITEC MU project team



Plenary Session speech, Rimantas Jankauskas, Vilnius University

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

Follow us!

Twitter: [@Alliance4lifeEU](#)

Website: www.alliance4life.eu

Podcasts: <https://soundcloud.com/alliance4lifeeu>



This project has received funding from the *European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme* under grant agreement No 779303. This Newsletter reflects only the author's view and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

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