A4L_ACTIONS

Alliance for Life Sciences: From Strategies to Actions in Central and Eastern Europe

H2020-SC1-2020-Single-Stage-RTD --964997

D2.4 Call for Open Access to Alliance4Life facilities

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1 SUMMARY

WP2 of the A4L_ACTIONS project undertakes the objective of supporting the collaboration in health research and innovation, mapping the excellence of CEE research in life sciences, and providing incentives and opportunities to exploit the research potential to its fullest advantage. Among the areas of the WP2 intervention is opening access to the Core Facilities of A4L_ACTIONS Partners, through the following:

a) Building the publicly available database of A4L_ACTIONS Core Facilities, providing the information about the facilities, equipment and contact details to persons responsible for particular areas.
b) Publishing the Call for Open Access projects, which has been opened on April the 1st 2022, with the deadline of June 15th 2022, whose concept and structure is the subject of the present report.

2 A4L_ACTIONS CORE FACILITIES DATABASE

The concept of Core Facilities understood as “shared research infrastructure / laboratories under specialised management that are separated from individual research groups” is not widely established in the CEE region. Thus, national grant providers in CEE countries tend to disregard the Core Facility services as eligible cost category, which makes it difficult to maintain their financial sustainability, notwithstanding their indisputable benefits of high-quality research services open to external users.

Providing open access and promoting the services of Core Facilities are two of the main objectives behind the comprehensive overview of Core Facilities and related services available in the A4L_ACTIONS consortium, which has become into a final, online database of technologies available at the following link:

https://a4l-facilities.fnusa-icrc.org

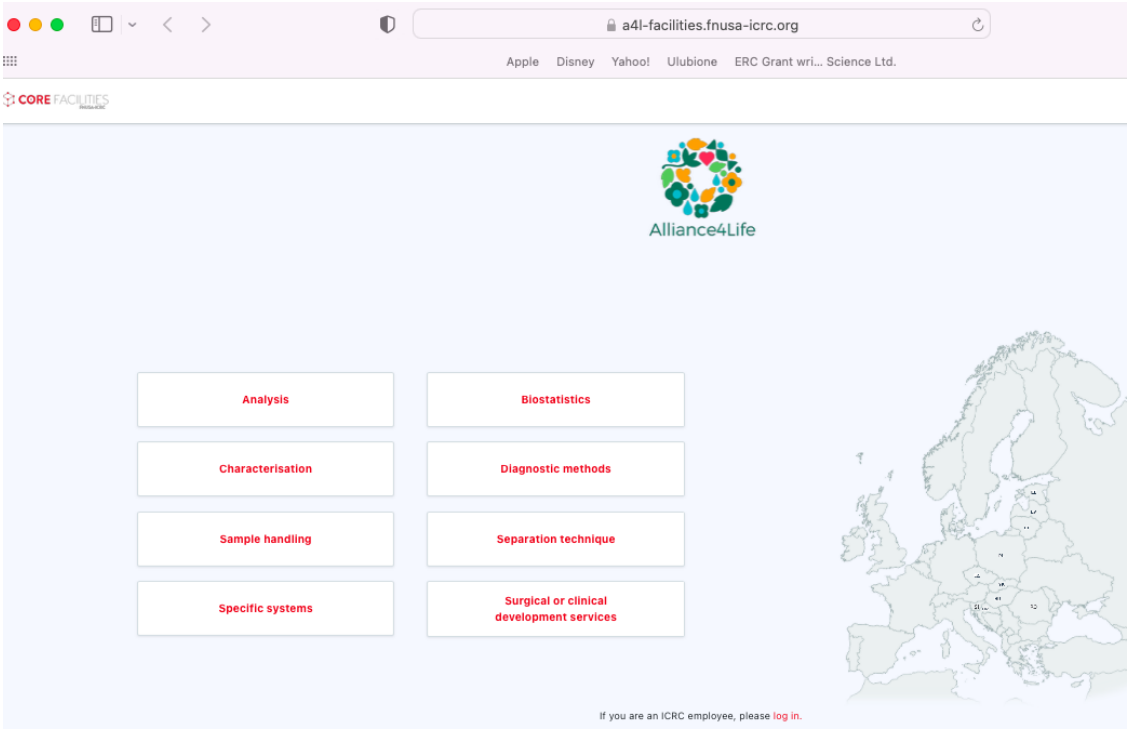

FIG.1 WEBSITE OF THE A4L CORE FACILITIES DATABASE

The Database presents the information regarding the services and equipment offered by nine A4L_ACTIONS partners:

1) St. Anne's University Hospital Brno/ICRC (CZ);

2) Masaryk University – CEITEC (CZ);

3) Medical University of Lodz (PL);

4) Biomedical Research Center SAS (SK);

5) School of Medicine - University of Zagreb (HR);

6) University of Ljubljana (SI);

7) Medical University Sofia (BG);

8) Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest (RO);

9) Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis (LV).

The expertise and equipment on offer is organized according to the following thematic areas:

1) Analysis
2) Biostatistics
3) Characterisation
4) Diagnostic methods
5) Sample handling
6) Separation technique
7) Specific systems
8) Surgical or clinical development services.

The information in each of the categories includes the description of the equipment and its properties/services offered, the location of the instrument, and the name and e-mail address of the person operating the equipment.

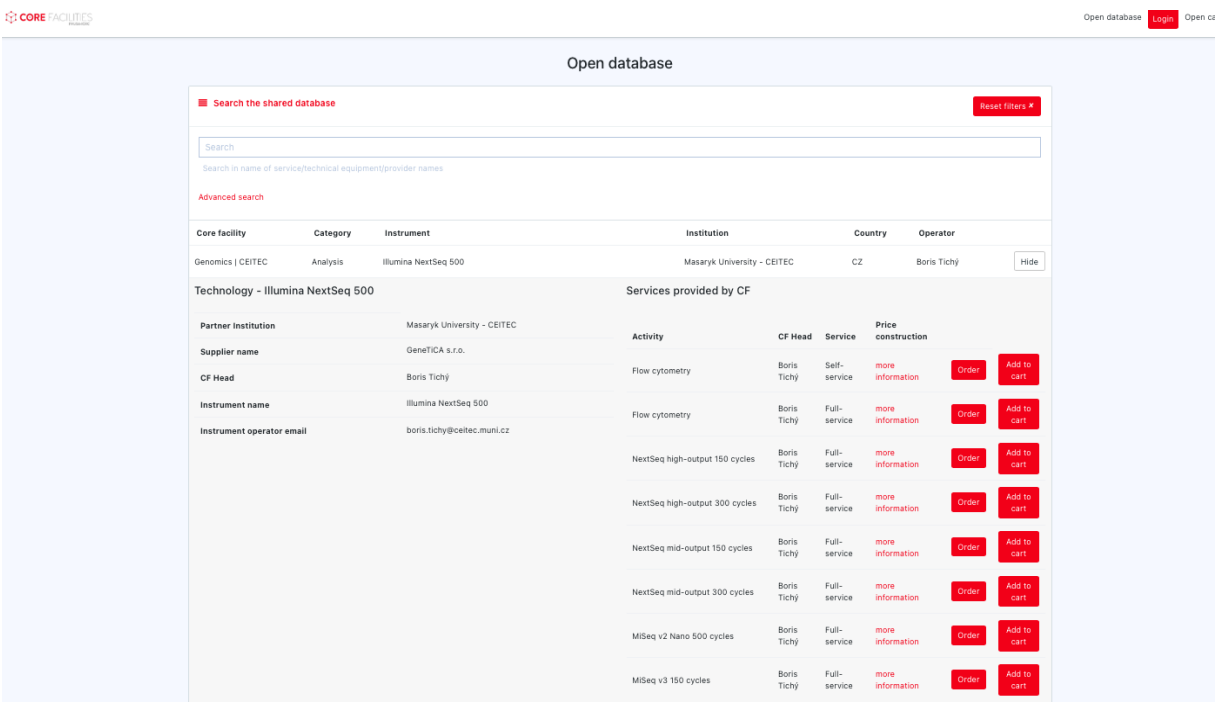

FIG.2 THE A4L CORE FACILIITIES DATABASE: DETAILED VIEW

3 CALL FOR OPEN ACCESS TO ALLIANCE4LIFE FACILITIES

The call for Open Access proposals was published on the A4L_ACTIONS website under the following link: https://alliance4life.ceitec.cz/core-facility-database-and-proposal-submission/ on the **1st of April 2022** with the first cut-off date due on the **31st of May**, extended until the **15th of June 2022**. The Open Access call will be continuous on the first come, first served basis (if evaluation criteria are fulfilled). The call will close when all funds are allocated. It is estimated that with the financial limit of **5,000 EUR** per individual Open Access project, the call will enable support of a minimum of **20 diverse projects**.

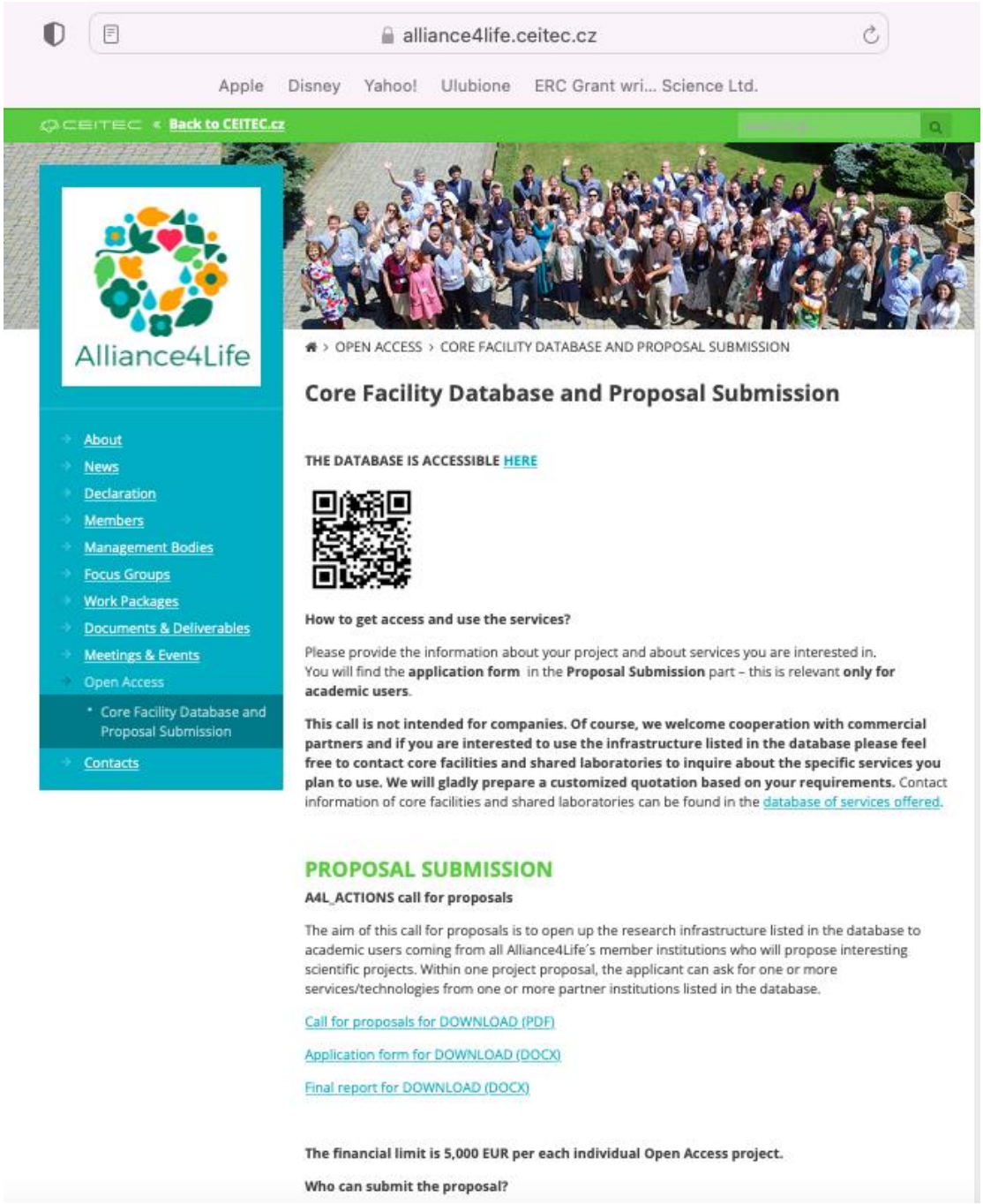

FIG.3 CALL FOR OPEN ACCESS TO ALLIANCE4LIFE FACILITIES

3.1 AIM OF THE CALL FOR OPEN ACCESS PROPOSALS

The aim of this call for proposals is to open up the **research infrastructure listed in the database** to academic users coming from all Alliance4Life´s member institutions who will **propose interesting scientific projects.** Within one project proposal, the applicant can ask for one or more services/technologies from one or more partner institutions listed in the database.

The full text of the call is published in its downloadable form under the following link: Call for proposals for DOWNLOAD (PDF).

3.2 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Academic users from all twelve A4L_ACTIONS partner institutions are eligible to submit an application to the Open Access call, namely:

Masaryk University/CEITEC
St. Anne's University Hospital Brno/ International Clinical Research Center
Biomedical Research Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences
Medical University of Lodz
School of Medicine - University of Zagreb
University of Tartu
Vilnius University - Faculty of Medicine
Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis
University of Ljubljana
Semmelweis University
Medical University Sofia
University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Carol Davila" Bucharest

Eligible academic users fall into two categories:

1) Researchers working for Alliance4Life´s member institutions
2) Ph.D. or Master students of Alliance4Life´s member institutions

For the purpose of the call, the employment/student status of each applicant will be checked with HR/student department of the respective institution.

CAVEAT: Non-academic users are encouraged to contact individual core facilities for customized quotations.

3.3 FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

The financial limit is 5,000 EUR per each individual Open Access project.

Use of the research infrastructure including training and interpretation of the obtained results is provided for free; the users are obliged to provide their own samples in a sufficient quality. The grant does not cover travel & accomodation expenses.

3.4 PROCESS OF SUBMISSION

The submission process falls into five steps, as follows:

1. **Sending the filled in Application form** to the following e-mail address: **a4lopenaccess@ceitec.muni.cz by 15 June 2022** with the annotation of "**A4L_ACTIONS open access proposal"** in the subject line.
2. **Selection procedure done in three steps:**
   a. **Administrative check** – Formal check of the application (all the compulsory fields filled); the person in charge from the **Alliance4Life´s** member institution approves the employment/student status of the applicant
   b. **Technical feasibility** – Heads of the respective core facilities and service laboratories judge the technical feasibility of the presented research project at their facilities (YES/NO decision). Head of each facility/laboratory requested in the project proposal needs to approve/reject technical feasibility. In the case of approval, a preliminary budget of the project will be specified by the head upon agreed methodology of cost claims.
   c. **Peer review** – Each application will be evaluated by at least one member of the A4L_ACTIONS Scientific Committee who can 1) recommend the project for funding, 2) recommend the project only partially (with proposed changes) or 3) reject the project from funding.
   d. At the end of this process all applicants will be informed about the outcome of the selection process.
3. Project implementation to be completed **by 31st October 2023**.
4. Submission of the Final Report (**Annex 2 to this Report)** Each user is obliged to send a final report on services used under this call including feedback related to quality of service and quality of outputs.
5. Acknowledgement of the A4L_ACTIONS project in all future publications resulting from the measurement provided.

FIG.4 PROCESS OF SUBMISSION

4 ANNEX 1: CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Call for research projects
demanding access to
Alliance4Life_ACTIONS
research infrastructure

The project "Alliance for Life Sciences: From Strategies to Actions in Central and Eastern Europe" received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 964997.

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1. Call for projects

The **Alliance for Life** offers access to technologies and services in the field of life sciences to study biologically important cellular components and macromolecules – proteins, nucleic acids, and their complexes at different resolution levels, ranging from atomic to cellular resolution. The open access is provided to Alliance4Life´s member institutions and is funded from the Horizon 2020 project **A4L_ACTIONS**.

1.1. Aim of the call

The aim of this call for proposals is to open up the research infrastructure listed in the database to academic users coming from Alliance4Life´s member institutions who will propose interesting scientific projects that can be realized thanks to usage of technologies and expertise existing in other member institutions. Within one project proposal, the applicant can ask for one or more services/technologies from one or more institutions listed in the database (see chapter 1.3).

1.2. Beneficiaries/users

- Researchers working at the Alliance4Life´s member institutions
- Ph.D. or Master students of the Alliance4Life´s member institutions

For the purpose of this call, the employment/student status of each applicant will be checked with HR/student department of the relevant institution.

1.3. Available equipment and services for this call

The following A4L_ACTIONS partner institutions participate in the call as service providers:

Institution name	Country code	Abbreviation
St. Anne's University Hospital Brno/ICRC	CZ	ICRC
Masaryk University – CEITEC	CZ	CEITEC
Medical University in Lodz	PL	MUL
Biomedical Research Center SAS	SK	SAS
School of Medicine - University of Zagreb	HR	UZSM
University of Ljubljana	SI	UNILJ
Medical University Sofia	BG	MUS
Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest	RO	UMFCD
Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis	LV	OSI

For details about the **equipment and services available** within this call, an **online database** has been created with all the necessary descriptions and filtering options for the technologies and services offered. The database is available here: CF Inquiry - FNUSA (fnusa-icrc.org)

1.4. Selection process

Selection process is composed of the following three steps:

- **Administrative check –** Formal check of the application (all the compulsory fields filled); the person in charge from the **Alliance4Life´s** member institution approves the employment/student status of the applicant
- **Technical feasibility –** Heads of the respective core facilities and service laboratories judge the technical feasibility of the presented research project at their facilities (YES/NO decision). Head of each facility/laboratory requested in the project proposal needs to approve/reject technical feasibility. In the case of approval, a preliminary budget of the project will be specified by the head upon agreed methodology of cost claims.
- **Peer review –** Each application will be evaluated by at least one member of the A4L_ACTIONS Scientific Committee who can 1) recommend the project for funding, 2) recommend the project only partially (with proposed changes) or 3) reject the project from funding.

At the end of this process all applicants will be informed about the outcome of the selection process.

1.5. Deadlines and funding

The call is open **from 1st April 2022 till 31st May 2022**. All projects must be implemented **by 31st October 2023**.

Project proposals that have successfully passed through the selection/review procedure will be supported by the A4L_ACTIONS project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 964997.

Use of the research infrastructure including training and interpretation of the obtained results is provided for free; the users are obliged to provide their own samples in a sufficient quality. The grant does not cover travel & accomodation expenses.

A4L_ACTIONS partner institution/s providing the service will get the reimbursement of the service costs from the coordinator of the A4L_ACTIONS project via a budget change. The reimbursement will be provided within the interim/final payment based on the reported Form C. Therefore, the measurement/service needs to be pre-financed by the institution providing the service.

1.6. How to apply

Fill in the application and send it by email to a4lopenaccess@ceitec.muni.cz. State "**A4L_ACTIONS open access proposal"** in the subject line.

1.7. Contacts

For general enquiries please contact the call organizers at a4lopenaccess@ceitec.muni.cz.

Questions about the available technologies and technical feasibility of your research project shall be directed to the heads of the respective A4L_ACTIONS core facilities and service laboratories, whose contact details are mentioned in the database.

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2. General Conditions of Access

2.1. Intellectual property

Intellectual property generated within the research projects belongs to the user.

2.2. Nature of research and publication of results:

This call intends to support projects of basic research conducted in academic institutions. All research results achieved under this call shall be published.

2.3. Acknowledgements

Publications resulting from work undertaken on A4L_ACTIONS core facilities and service laboratories have to contain an acknowledgement according to the following pattern:

*A4L_ACTIONS project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 964997, is gratefully acknowledged for the financial support of the measurements at the CF [name of the unit/CF].*Or in a short version*: We acknowledge [name of the unit/CF] of A4L_ACTIONS, supported by European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No. 964997.*

A similar acknowledgement should be included during conference presentations, including the proceedings, and at other public presentations.

This [infrastructure][equipment][insert type of result] is part of a project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 964997".

Users shall notify the organizers of this call of all publications that resulted from their work by using the research infrastructure listed in the A4L_ACTIONS database and supported by the A4L_ACTIONS project. Please send the PDF file and reference details of the publication as soon as it has been published to a4lopenaccess@ceitec.muni.cz. Please indicate the type of publication: Scientific Journal, Book, Patent, Proceedings, article on www, other. These publications should also carry the acknowledgement given above.

2.4. Safety requirements

Users must comply with all the relevant health and occupational safety rules.

Users who carry potentially dangerous materials and/or equipment must notify the user office and host organization in the application.

All visitors bringing material, including samples or equipment are advised that such equipment or material remains entirely in the responsibility of the visitors concerned.

2.5. Final report

Each user is obliged to send a final report on services used under this call including feedback related to quality of service and quality of outputs.

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5 ANNEX 2: APPLICATION FORM

A4L_ACTIONS open access application form

Project title:

Applicant

First name: Surname:

Working e-mail: Phone:

Position (check box):

☐ Researcher (Ph.D. title and higher) ☐ Ph.D. student ☐ MSc. student

In case of Ph.D. or MSc. student, include also name, surname and contact details of principal investigator (PI):

First name PI: *Surname PI:*

E-mail PI: *Phone PI:*

Institution: *tick the institution you are coming from*

Institution name	Country code	Abbreviation	
St. Anne's University Hospital Brno/ICRC	CZ	ICRC	☐
Masaryk University – CEITEC	CZ	CEITEC	☐
Vilnius University	LT	VU	☐
Medical University in Lodz	PL	MUL	☐
Biomedical Research Center SAS	SK	SAS	☐
School of Medicine – University of Zagreb	HR	UZSM	☐
University of Ljubljana	SI	UNILJ	☐

Medical University Sofia	BG	MUS	☐
University of Tartu	ES	UT	☐
Semmelweis University	HU	SU	☐
Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest	RO	UMFCD	☐
Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis	LV	OSI	☐

Project proposal (max 2 A4 pages)

Core facility/ies or service laboratory/ies to be used:

Abstract:

Background (scientific context of the proposed project):

Objectives:

Expected results:

Experimental plan (methods/technical requirements):

References:

Quantification of the project (e.g. number of samples, rough number of machine-hours needed):

6 ANNEX 3: FINAL REPORT

A4L_ACTIONS open access final report

Project title:

Receiver

First name: Surname:

Working e-mail: Phone:

Position (check box):

☐ Researcher (Ph.D. title and higher) ☐ Ph.D. student ☐ MSc. student

In case of Ph.D. or MSc. student, include also name, surname and contact details of principal investigator (PI):

First name PI: *Surname PI:*

E-mail PI: *Phone PI:*

Institution: *tick the institution you are coming from*

Institution name	Country code	Abbreviation	
St. Anne's University Hospital Brno/ICRC	CZ	ICRC	☐
Masaryk University – CEITEC	CZ	CEITEC	☐
Vilnius University	LT	VU	☐
Medical University in Lodz	PL	MUL	☐
Biomedical Research Center SAS	SK	SAS	☐
School of Medicine – University of Zagreb	HR	UZSM	☐
University of Ljubljana	SI	UNILJ	☐
Medical University Sofia	BG	MUS	☐
University of Tartu	ES	UT	☐
Semmelweis University	HU	SU	☐

Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest	RO	UMFCD	☐
Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis	LV	OSI	☐

Project report (max 2 A4 pages)

Used core facility/ies or service laboratory/ies:

Project results:

Potential use of the results:

In the case you have published results, please put the reference of the publication here:

Feedback:

Please indicate how satisfied you were with the service quality:

- *Expertise of laboratory staff (willingness to provide guidance and additional support): low – medium - high*
- *Professional and friendly service (I feel welcome when contacting the laboratory, I get a quick and competent answer): low – medium – high*
- *Other comments:*

Please indicate how satisfied you were with the output quality:

- *Promptness of service and results: low – medium – high*
- *Presentation and accessibility of results (data provided in clear and usable format, further guidance and explanation of results): low – medium – high*
- *Quality and reliability of results: low – medium – high*
- *Other comments:*