



# A4L\_ACTIONS

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

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

### D2.3 Call for Seed Fund

Work Package: WP2  
Task: T2.3  
Deliverable due date: 31/10/2023  
Responsible partner: MUL  
Editors: Aneta Andrzejczyk  
Deliverable number: D2.3  
Deliverable type: R  
Dissemination level: PU  
Version: 3.0



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 964997. This document reflects the view of Alliance4Life's consortium and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>SEED FUND CONCEPT.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>CALL FOR SEED FUND.....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	AIM OF THE CALL FOR SEED FUND PROPOSALS.....	7
3.2	APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY.....	7
3.3	FINANCIAL CONDITIONS.....	7
3.4	PROCESS OF SUBMISSION.....	8
<b>4</b>	<b>RESULTS OF THE FIRST SEED FUND CALL.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>RESULTS OF THE SECOND SEED FUND CALL.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>ANNEX 1: 1<sup>ST</sup> CALL FOR PROPOSALS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>ANNEX 2: 2<sup>ND</sup> CALL FOR PROPOSALS.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>ANNEX 3: APPLICATION FORM.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>ANNEX 4: FINAL REPORT.....</b>	<b>14</b>

## 1 SUMMARY

WP2 of the A4L\_ACTIONS project is dedicated to reinforcing collaboration in health research and innovation, with incentives and opportunities for excellent researchers to initiate and intensify their collaboration with a view to create project consortia with the Central and Eastern European participant core and intellectual origin. This objective is achieved with the combination of the three thematic Mini-Conferences with Matchmaking, and the seed fund supporting small collaborative projects - announced and opened for all researchers from the A4L\_Actions Partnership.

The present report will summarize the process and results of the three Seed Fund calls, which accompanied the three Mini-Conferences of A4L\_Actions:

- **The first Seed Fund call**, which corresponded with the Mini-Conference on Cancer and Metabolic Disorders organized by the Biomedical Research Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Smolenice, **resulting in 4 Seed Fund projects;**
- **The second Seed Fund call**, which corresponded with the Mini-Conference on Health and the Environment organized by the Medical University of Lodz in Lodz, Poland on 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> April 2023, **which resulted in 2 Seed Fund projects;**
- **The third Seed Fund call**, corresponding with the Mini-Conference on Personalized Medicine organized by the University of Medicine and Pharmacy "*Carol Davila*" of Bucharest, Romania on 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023, **at which the call was opened.**

## 2 SEED FUND CONCEPT

**A4L Seed Fund** is a specific mechanism supporting small, short-term collaborative projects of researchers representing at least 3 A4L\_Actions partner institutions in line with the topics of the three thematic Mini-Conferences with matchmaking sessions, during which the Seed Fund calls were opened:

- **the Mini-Conference on Cancer and Metabolic Disorders** organized by the Biomedical Research Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Smolenice, Slovakia, on 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> October, 2022;
- **the Mini-Conference on Health and the Environment** organized by the Medical University of Lodz in Lodz, Poland on 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> April 2023;
- **the Mini-Conference on Personalized Medicine** organized by the University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Carol Davila" of Bucharest, Romania on 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

The Seed Fund fostered scientific collaboration among Alliance4Life's member institutions and partner companies. It was used to develop scientific ideas originating from the CEE region and initiate consortia and project proposals to be submitted later to Horizon Europe or other international grant schemes.

**The A4L Seed Fund managed the limited budget of 100,000 EUR**, which indicates the initial plan to support 6-10 small projects in total, with the funding per project within the range from 10,000 EUR to 15,000 EUR.

The first call resulted in **4 projects funded**,

The second call – **2 projects funded**,

And the third call was announced at the Mini-Conference on Personalized Medicine **on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2023**.

Due to the fact, that the Seed Fund constitutes an integral part of the A4L\_Actions project, the resulting Seed Fund projects need to be finalized by February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and reported within the A4LActions project lifetime, i.e. by March 1, 2024. This resulted in diverse duration of each batch of projects:

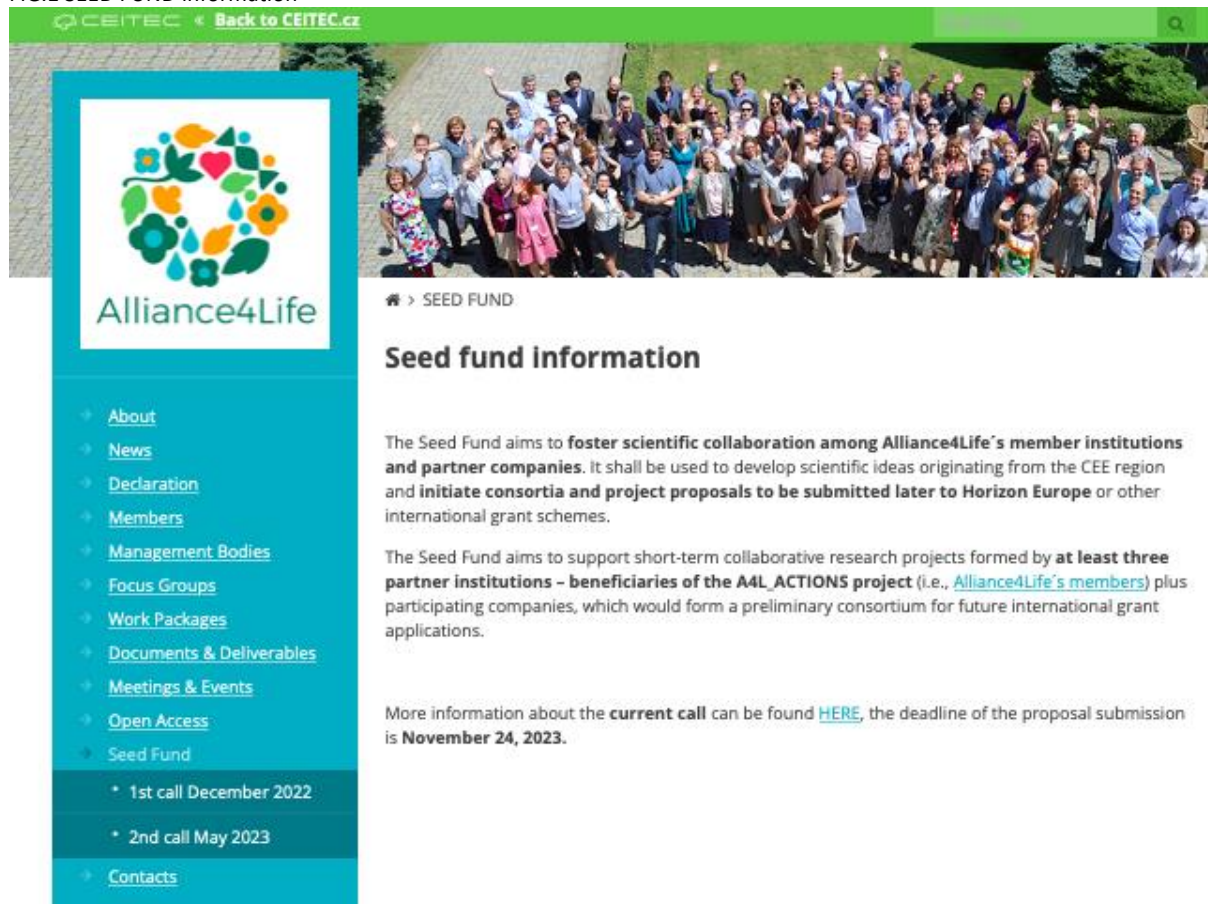
**Call 1 projects: 12 months maximum**

**Call 2 projects: 7 months maximum**


**Call 3 projects: 3 months maximum**

**To alleviate the difference, the third, shortest call, introduced the option for the applicants to start the submitted projects at their own risk, after the submission deadline, November 24, 2023. As the projects would not be approved and granted, in the case of the project refusal, the applicants are responsible for any financial or other consequences of starting the project without prior approval.**

FIG.1 SEED FUND information



CEITEC [Back to CEITEC.cz](#)



[Home](#) > SEED FUND

## Seed fund information

The Seed Fund aims to **foster scientific collaboration among Alliance4Life's member institutions and partner companies**. It shall be used to develop scientific ideas originating from the CEE region and **initiate consortia and project proposals to be submitted later to Horizon Europe** or other international grant schemes.

The Seed Fund aims to support short-term collaborative research projects formed by **at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project** (i.e., [Alliance4Life's members](#)) plus participating companies, which would form a preliminary consortium for future international grant applications.

More information about the **current call** can be found [HERE](#), the deadline of the proposal submission is **November 24, 2023**.

- [About](#)
- [News](#)
- [Declaration](#)
- [Members](#)
- [Management Bodies](#)
- [Focus Groups](#)
- [Work Packages](#)
- [Documents & Deliverables](#)
- [Meetings & Events](#)
- [Open Access](#)
- [Seed Fund](#)
  - 1st call December 2022
  - 2nd call May 2023
- [Contacts](#)

### 3 CALL FOR SEED FUND

The call for Seed Fund proposals was published on the A4L\_ACTIONS website under the following link for the first call: <https://alliance4life.ceitec.cz/news/seed-fund/> and for the second call: <https://alliance4life.ceitec.cz/news/seed-fund-2nd-call/>. The Seed Fund call opening accompanies each of the Mini-Conferences, where it is officially announced. It is estimated that with the financial limit of **10,000 - 15,000 EUR** per individual Seed Fund project, the call will enable the support of **maximum 10 diverse projects**.

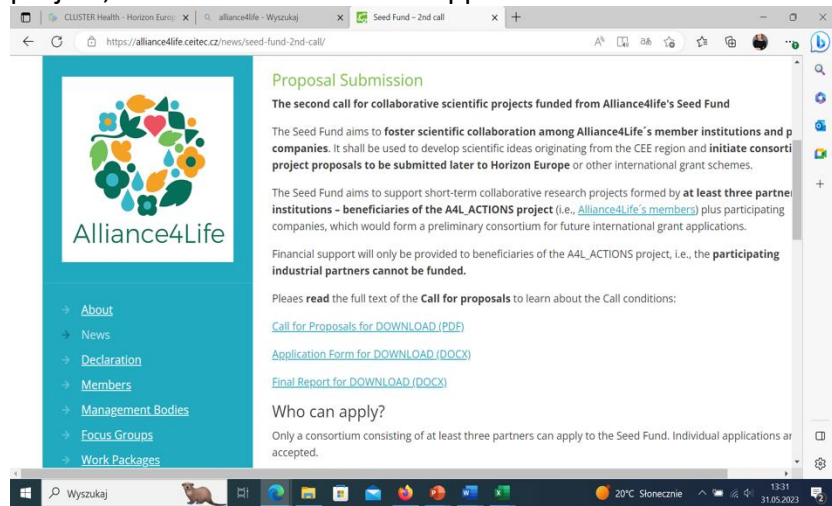


FIG.2 CALL 1 FOR SEED FUND announcement

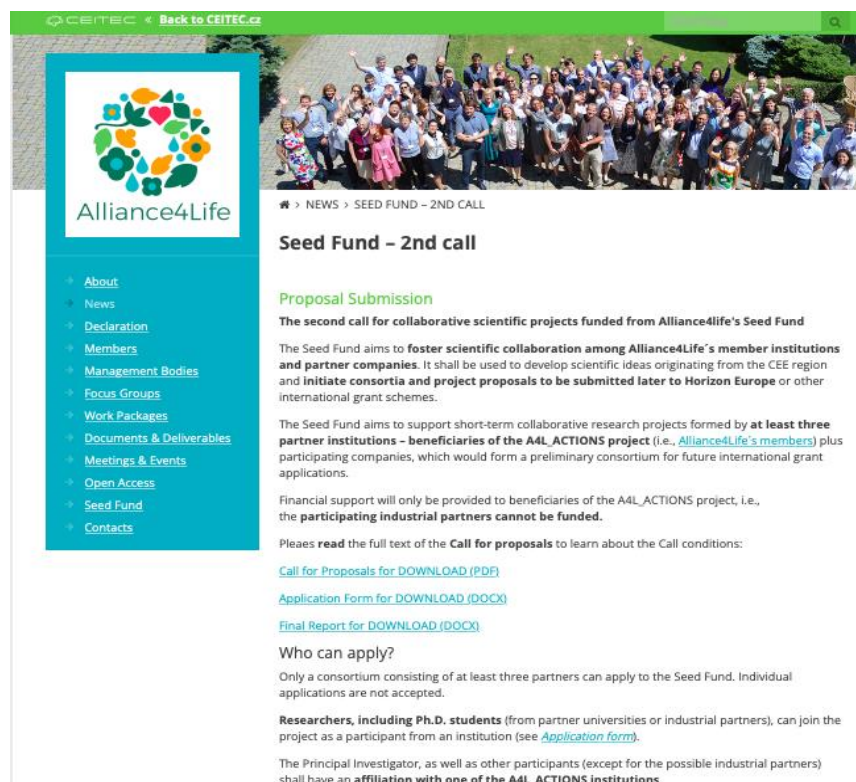
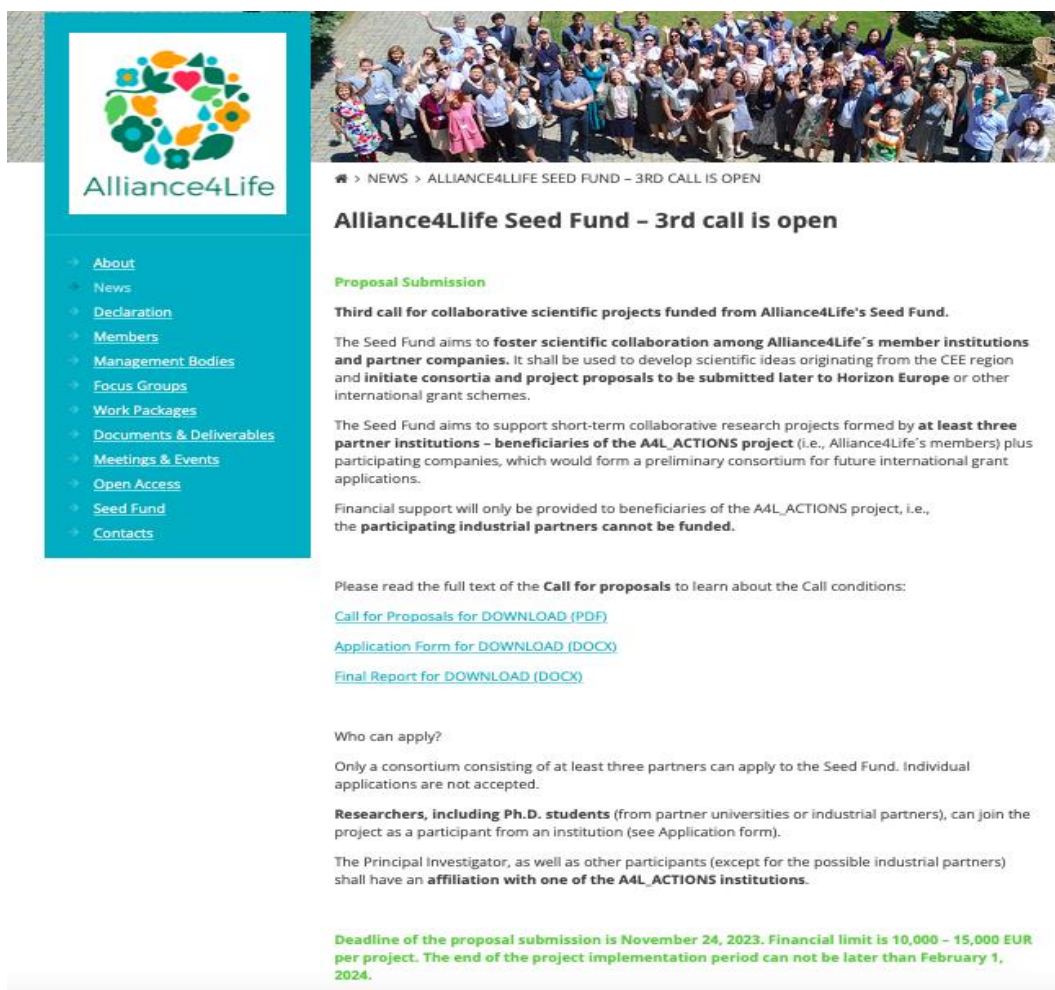


FIG.3 CALL 2 FOR SEED FUND announcement





NEWS > ALLIANCE4LIFE SEED FUND – 3RD CALL IS OPEN

## Alliance4Life Seed Fund – 3rd call is open

### Proposal Submission

**Third call for collaborative scientific projects funded from Alliance4Life's Seed Fund.**

The Seed Fund aims to **foster scientific collaboration among Alliance4Life's member institutions and partner companies**. It shall be used to develop scientific ideas originating from the CEE region and **initiate consortia and project proposals to be submitted later to Horizon Europe** or other international grant schemes.

The Seed Fund aims to support short-term collaborative research projects formed by **at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project** (i.e., Alliance4Life's members) plus participating companies, which would form a preliminary consortium for future international grant applications.

Financial support will only be provided to beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project, i.e., **the participating industrial partners cannot be funded.**

Please read the full text of the **Call for proposals** to learn about the Call conditions:

[Call for Proposals for DOWNLOAD \(PDF\)](#)  
[Application Form for DOWNLOAD \(DOCX\)](#)  
[Final Report for DOWNLOAD \(DOCX\)](#)

Who can apply?

Only a consortium consisting of at least three partners can apply to the Seed Fund. Individual applications are not accepted.

**Researchers, including Ph.D. students** (from partner universities or industrial partners), can join the project as a participant from an institution (see Application form).

The Principal Investigator, as well as other participants (except for the possible industrial partners) shall have an **affiliation with one of the A4L\_ACTIONS institutions.**

**Deadline of the proposal submission is November 24, 2023. Financial limit is 10,000 – 15,000 EUR per project. The end of the project implementation period can not be later than February 1, 2024.**

FIG.4 CALL 3 FOR SEED FUND announcement

### 3.1 AIM OF THE CALL FOR SEED FUND PROPOSALS

The aim of the Seed Fund calls for proposals is to **foster scientific collaboration among Alliance4Life's member institutions and partner companies**. It shall be used to develop scientific ideas originating from the CEE region and **initiate consortia and project proposals to be submitted later to Horizon Europe** or other international grant schemes.

The Seed Fund aimed to support short-term collaborative research projects formed by **at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project** plus participating companies (non-A4L member organisations could not claim costs within the funding), which would form a preliminary consortium for future international grant applications. This is reflected in the list of selection criteria, which include: originality, feasibility, composition of the consortium partnership and the potential for submission to Horizon Europe or other international calls.

### 3.2 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Only a consortium consisting of at least three partners was eligible to apply to the Seed Fund. Individual applications were not accepted. **Researchers, including Ph.D. students** (from partner universities or industrial partners), could join the project as a participant from an institution (see [Application form](#)). The Principal Investigator, as well as other participants (except for the possible industrial partners) should have an **affiliation with one of the A4L\_ACTIONS institutions**.

### 3.3 FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

**The financial limit was 10,000 - 15,000 EUR per each individual Seed Fund project.** The categories of eligible expenditures included:

- Travel and accommodation costs (at least 50% of the whole budget)
- Subcontracting costs
- Equipment, other assets
- Other goods and services.

**The grant did not cover personnel costs. The call reimbursed 100% of the eligible costs for each beneficiary individually, ex-post within one final payment.**

The submission of proposals was opened 3 times, after each Mini-Conference and match-making session. After the Mini Conference in Smolenice, Slovakia (October 3-5, 2022) the schedule of the first call period can be found in Table 1:

Publication of the 1 <sup>st</sup> call	October, 2022
Deadline for submission	November 30, 2022 (extended till December 20, 2022)
Evaluation and notification	January 31, 2023
Start of the project	March 1, 2023
Completion of implemented projects	February 1, 2024
Final report	March 1, 2024

*Table 1: Schedule for the first Seed Fund 2022 call*

Publication of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> call	May 1, 2023
Deadline for submission	June 1, 2023
Evaluation and notification	July 3, 2023
Start of the project	August 1, 2023
Completion of implemented projects	February 1, 2024
Final report	March 1, 2024

*Table 2: Schedule for the second Seed Fund 2023 May call*



Publication of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> call	October 26, 2023
Submission deadline	November 24, 2023
Evaluation and notification	December 23, 2023
Earliest start of the projects	November 25, 2023
Completion of implemented projects	February 1, 2024
Final report	March 1, 2024

*Table 3: Schedule for the third Seed Fund 2023 October call*

### 3.4 PROCESS OF SUBMISSION

For the submission of a proposal, a **complete and signed Application Form** shall be sent to the following e-mail address not later than the submission deadline: [project@semmelweis-univ.hu](mailto:project@semmelweis-univ.hu).

The Application Form shall include **the abstract** of the proposed work, **a short bio** of the participants and **the budget plan** for the action. Only complete and signed Application Forms will be evaluated.

## 4 RESULTS OF THE FIRST SEED FUND CALL

The first submission period of the Seed fund became open at the end of 2022. After the evaluation process, the following four research projects received positive evaluations and can be funded by Alliance4Life:

### 1. Bacteriocins as Alternative Antibiotic Strategy and Their Interaction with the Host Immune System (BAStrIS)

The goals of the project are to discuss the impact of bacteriocins on the host immune system and to suggest the fundamental mechanisms for the hypothesis for the future international project. The project is implemented by the following partners:

- ICRC-FNUSA – International Clinical Research Center, St. Anne's University Hospital, Czech Republic
- Masaryk University, Czech Republic
- UL – University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

### 2. Interorganellar Communication Malfunction in Rare Diseases – Implication for Heart Contractility (HeartWolf)

The aim is to understand the disease progress in the later stages to reveal disturbances in inter-organelle communication and to explain the perturbations in calcium metabolism to analyse the co-localization of the key proteins involved. The beneficiaries are as follows:

- BMC SAV – Biomedical Research Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia
- UT – Faculty of Medicine of the University of Tartu, Estonia
- LIOS – Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis, Latvia
- ICRC-FNUSA – International Clinical Research Center, St. Anne's University Hospital, Czech Republic
- Faculty of Medicine of Masaryk University, Czech Republic

### **3. Intelligent Monitoring of Heart Failure Improving Disease Management (My AI Heart)**

The project goal is heart failure patients' management to achieve stability through the holistic approach, including management of comorbidities, treatment of cardiac insufficiency, lifestyle adjustment, and frequent doctor follow-ups. The implementing research centres are:

- UMFCD – Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Romania
- UZSM – University of Zagreb – Medical School, Croatia
- MUS – Medical University Sofia, Bulgaria

### **4. POst-Transcriptional Oncogenic Modifications And their Consequences (POTOMAC)**

The project investigates post-translational modifications in cancer cell lines, which so far have not been studied using new methods and the project focuses on two types of cancer. The members of the project consortium are:

- VU – Vilnius University Life Sciences Center, Lithuania
- BMC SAV – Biomedical Research Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia
- CEITEC MU – Central European Institute of Technology at Masaryk University, Czech Republic

## **5 RESULTS OF THE SECOND SEED FUND CALL**

The [second submission period](#) of the Alliance4Life Seed Fund was available for new project ideas since May 2023, and after the application and the evaluation process, the following two research projects can be implemented with the support of Alliance4Life.

### **1. Evaluation of respiratory allergies burden in particular urban areas and identification of best practices to improve their management and prevention (ERAllergies)**

The goal of the project is to establish the consortium with partners from four different countries and to create joint actions based on the expertise of the participants in the field of respiratory allergies and to collect relevant data from different regions in terms of disease burden, environmental exposure and health policies. The project is implemented by the following partner institutions:

- UMFCD – Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Romania
- ICRC – International Clinical Research Center, St. Anne's University Hospital, Czech Republic
- MUL – Medical University of Lodz, Poland
- MUS – Medical University Sofia, Bulgaria

## **2. Manual of regional pollution-disease associations as a tool for improving health-environment behaviour (MaRePoDi)**

The proposed research project will strengthen the knowledge regarding pollution-NCN-disease associations in different European regions to plan more expanded future research and international public health interventions. The members of the project consortium are:

- MUL – Medical University of Lodz, Poland
- MUS – Medical University Sofia, Bulgaria
- UT – Faculty of Medicine of the University of Tartu, Estonia

# 6 ANNEX 1: 1<sup>st</sup> CALL FOR PROPOSALS



## Seed Fund call Alliance4Life\_ACTIONS

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

### Content

1. What is the Alliance4Life Seed Fund Call?
2. Who can apply?
3. What kind of proposals are eligible?
4. How much funding can be received?
5. Selection process
6. How to apply for the grant?
7. Deadlines
8. Final Report
9. Publications and Acknowledgements
10. Contact

### 1. What is the Alliance4Life Seed Fund Call?

Alliance4Life is a cooperation of 12 life science institutions and universities located in 11 Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. The following Alliance4Life member institutions are at the same time beneficiaries of the AAL\_ACTIONS project, from which the funding will be provided:

- Masaryk University (MU) Czechia
- St. Anne's University Hospital Brno International Clinical Research Center (ICRC) Czechia
- Biomedical Research Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (BMC SAV) Slovakia
- Medical University of Lodz (MUL) Poland
- School of Medicine - University of Zagreb (UCSBM) Croatia
- University of Tuzla (UT) Bosnia
- Vilnius University (VU) Lithuania
- Lajos Kossuth Organic Synthesis (LUGOS) Latvia
- University of Ljubljana (UL) Slovenia
- Semmelweis University (SZU) Hungary
- Medical University Sofia (MUS) Bulgaria
- Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest (UMFCD) Romania

The Seed Fund aims to foster scientific collaboration among Alliance4Life's member institutions and partner companies. It provides an opportunity to form consortia with fellow researchers and professionals from partner universities and companies. The Seed Fund shall be used to develop scientific ideas from the CEE region and initiate project proposals to be submitted later to Horizon Europe or other international grant schemes.

The Seed Fund aims to support short-term collaborative research projects formed by at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the AAL\_ACTIONS project plus participating companies – a preliminary consortium for future international grant applications. Financial support will only be provided to beneficiaries of the AAL\_ACTIONS project, i.e. the participating industrial partners cannot be funded.

### 2. Who can apply?

Only consortium consisting of at least three partners – beneficiaries of the AAL\_ACTIONS project can apply to the Seed Fund. Individual applications are not accepted. Researchers, including Ph.D. students from partner universities or industrial partners can join the project as a participant from an institution (see Application form).

The Principal Investigator, as well as other participants (except for the possible industrial partners) shall have an affiliation with one of the AAL\_ACTIONS institutions.

### 3. What kind of proposals are eligible?

#### Idea

The proposal can be submitted in various life science fields / health research (oncancer, AI in life sciences/ health areas, non-communicable diseases, metabolic disorders, etc.). The main criterion regarding the proposal is the originality of the scientific idea, interdisciplinarity, and the potential to form a competitive consortium, which would then apply to Horizon Europe (see also the selection process described below).

#### Collaboration

A consortium shall be formed by at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the AAL\_ACTIONS project (plus by one or more industrial partners, if relevant). The partners have to select one coordinating organisation. The number of participants is not restricted; however, it should be in harmony with the budget/planned costs.

The Seed Fund will be used within the framework of the AAL\_ACTIONS project (a maximum of three calls for proposals). The proposal of a collaboration that will be granted from the first call will be eliminated from the second and third calls.

### 4. How much funding can be received?

The total amount of available funding for the whole Seed Fund is 100,000 EUR. Maximum of 7 projects will be funded within the first round of submission and 3 projects during the second and third rounds together.

The Seed Fund may be awarded up to 15,000 EUR, ideally between 10,000-15,000 EUR per project for a period of a maximum 1 year.

The budget should be planned by Horizon Europe cost eligibility criteria defined by Annotated Grant Agreement for the 2021-2023 Work Programme.

Eligible costs of the Seed Fund include:

- A. subcontracting costs
- B. travel costs and allowances
- C. equipment and other assets
- D. other goods and services

Travel costs and allowances should cover at least 50% of the project's total cost. This Seed Fund Call aims to create and reinforce a well-functioning consortium. Therefore, the central part of the allocated budget should be used for meetings, conferences, and travels between the partners.

Personnel costs are not eligible and should be covered entirely by the partner institution.

### 5. Selection process

Upon eligibility, the proposals will be evaluated based on the following aspects:

#### Originality

The proposal shall clearly outline the novelty and originality of the initial concept. Innovative ideas that go beyond the state of the art are encouraged.

#### Feasibility

The soundness of the scientific methodology and feasibility of the work plan shall be described in the proposal. The budget of the project shall be briefly explained.

The focus of the Seed Fund is to support short-term "seed" projects. Therefore, a feasible work plan should consider that the project's duration is 12 months or less by planning achievable goals for such a time range.

#### Composition of the consortium

During the proposal evaluation, it is advantageous if an industrial partner joins the forming consortium, although it is not a criterion for the application. Please, note that these industrial partners cannot receive payment from the Seed Fund.

#### Partnership

The role of the participating institutions needs to be specified individually, outlining how the synergy and complementary primary partners can create a well-functioning consortium that provides the necessary background for a successful project.

### Potential for submission to Horizon Europe or other international calls

Although the Seed Fund aims to support short-term projects for potential submission to Horizon Europe or other international calls, the project's sustainability and partnership are essential. Therefore, the long-term goals of the consortium should be briefly introduced as well as potential further partners (i.e. institutions or companies outside the AAL\_ACTIONS project) that would be relevant for joining the Horizon Europe proposal.

Despite that the main objective of the Seed Fund is to support a consortium that can later foster a successful Horizon Europe project, other international funding schemes that suit the purpose and composition of the consortium can be introduced in the section as a future submission goal. However, planning for a Horizon Europe application is an advantage during the evaluation process.

Based on these criteria, external reviewers will evaluate the proposals.

Each proposal will undergo two evaluation steps:

1. Administrative check – formal check of the application
2. Peer review – at least one evaluator will evaluate each application. The evaluators will be selected based on the Database of Experts created by Focus Group 1.

### 6. How to apply for the grant?

For the submission of a proposal, a complete and signed Application form shall be sent to the following e-mail address not later than the closure of the call: [aaal@semmelweis.hu](mailto:aaal@semmelweis.hu).

The Application form shall include the abstract of the proposed work, a short bio of the participants, and the budget plan for the action. Only complete and signed Application forms will be evaluated.

### 7. Deadlines

The submission of proposals will be open a maximum 3 times in the next 18 months after each mini-conference and match-making session.

Schedule of the first call period:	
Publication of the call	October 6, 2022
Deadline	November 30, 2022
Evaluation and notification	January 31, 2023
Start of the projects	March 1, 2023
Completion of implemented projects	February 1, 2024
Final report	March 1, 2024

### 8. Final Report

All funded projects have to be completed by February 1, 2024. The supported consortia are obliged to provide the Final Report about the project implementation and completion no later than by March 1, 2024.

### 9. Publications and Acknowledgements

Publications resulting from work undertaken on Alliance4Life's Seed Fund have to include an acknowledgement according to the following pattern:

The AAL\_ACTIONS project funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 964997 is gratefully acknowledged for the financial support of the publication [link of the publication].

Or in a short version: For the publication [link of the publication] we acknowledge AAL\_ACTIONS supported by European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No. 964997.

### 10. Contact

For general information regarding the Seed Fund call or in case of any queries, please contact [aaal@semmelweis.hu](mailto:aaal@semmelweis.hu) by using "AAL\_seed fund" identifier in the subject line.

# 7 ANNEX 2: 2<sup>nd</sup> CALL FOR PROPOSALS



## Seed Fund 2nd call Alliance4Life\_ACTIONS

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.

### Content

1. What is the Alliance4Life Seed Fund Call?	3
2. Who can apply?	3
3. What kind of proposals are eligible?	3
4. How much funding can be received?	4
5. Selection process	4
6. How to apply for the grant?	5
7. Deadlines	5
8. Final Report	5
9. Publications and Acknowledgements	6
10. Contact	6

### 1. What is the Alliance4Life Seed Fund Call?

Alliance4Life is a cooperation of 12 life science institutions and universities located in 11 Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. The following Alliance4Life's member institutions are at the same time beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project, from which the funding will be provided:

- Masaryk University (MU) Czechia
- St. Anne's University Hospital Brno International Clinical Research Center (ICRC) Czechia
- Biomedical Research Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (BMC SAV) Slovakia
- Medical University of Lodz (MUL) Poland
- School of Medicine - University of Zagreb (UZSM) Croatia
- University of Tartu (UT) Estonia
- Vilnius University (VU) Lithuania
- Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis (LIOS) Latvia
- University of Ljubljana (UL) Slovenia
- Semmelweis University (SU) Hungary
- Medical University Sofia (MUS) Bulgaria
- Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest (UMFCD) Romania

The Seed Fund aims to foster scientific collaboration among Alliance4Life's member institutions and partner companies. It provides an opportunity to form consortia with fellow researchers and professionals from partner universities and companies. The Seed Fund shall be used to develop scientific ideas from the CEE region and initiate project proposals to be submitted later to Horizon Europe or other international grant schemes.

The Seed Fund aims to support short-term collaborative research projects formed by at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project plus participating companies – a preliminary consortium for future international grant applications.

Financial support will only be provided to beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project, i.e., the participating industrial partners cannot be funded.

### 2. Who can apply?

Only consortium consisting of at least three partners – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project can apply to the Seed Fund. Individual applications are not accepted.

Researchers, including Ph.D. students (from partner universities or industrial partners) can join the project as a participant from an institution (see Application form).

The Principal Investigator, as well as other participants (except for the possible industrial partners) shall have an affiliation with one of the A4L\_ACTIONS institutions.

### 3. What kind of proposals are eligible?

#### Area

The proposal can be submitted in various life science fields / health research (cancer, AI in life sciences/ health areas, non-communicable diseases, metabolic disorders, etc.). The main criterion regarding the proposal is the originality of the scientific idea, interdisciplinary, and the potential to form a competitive consortium, which would then apply to Horizon Europe (see also the selection process described below).

#### Collaboration

A consortium shall be formed by at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project (plus by one or more industrial partner(s) if relevant). The partners have to select one coordinating organisation. The number of participants is not restricted; however, it should be in harmony with the budgeted planned costs.

3

### 9. Publications and Acknowledgements

Publication resulting from work undertaken in Alliance4Life's Seed Fund has to include an acknowledgment according to the following pattern:

The A4L\_ACTIONS project funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 964997 is gratefully acknowledged for the financial support of the publication (see Acknowledgements).

Or in a short version: For the publication [title of the publication] we acknowledge A4L\_ACTIONS supported by European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No. 964997.

### 10. Contact

For general information regarding the Seed Fund call or in case of any questions, please contact [project@semmelweis.orfi.hu](mailto:project@semmelweis.orfi.hu) using "A4L\_seedfund" identifier in the subject line.

6

The Seed Fund will be used within the framework of the A4L\_ACTIONS project via maximum of three calls for proposals. The proposal of a collaboration that will be granted from the first call will be eliminated from the second and third calls.

### 4. How much funding can be received?

The total amount of available funding for the whole Seed Fund is 150,000 EUR. Maximum of 7 projects will be funded within the first round of submission and 3 projects during the second and third rounds altogether.

The Seed Fund may be awarded up to 15,000 EUR, ideally between 10,000-15,000 EUR per project for a period of a maximum 1 year.

The budget should be planned by Horizon Europe cost eligibility criteria defined by Annotated Grant Agreement for the 2021-2022 Work Programme.

Eligible costs of the Seed Fund include:

- A. subcontracting costs
- B. travel costs and allowances
- C. equipment and other assets
- D. other goods and services

Travel costs and allowances should cover at least 50% of the project's total cost. This Seed Fund Call aims to create and reinforce a well-functioning consortium. Therefore, the central part of the allocated budget should be used for meetings, conferences, and travels between the partners.

Personnel costs are not eligible and should be covered entirely by the participating institution.

The call reimburses 100% of the eligible costs for each beneficiary individually, ex-post within one final payment.

### 5. Selection process

Upon eligibility, the proposals will be evaluated based on the following aspects:

#### Originality

The proposal shall clearly outline the novelty and originality of the initial concept. Innovative ideas that go beyond the state of the art are encouraged.

#### Feasibility

The soundness of the scientific methodology and feasibility of the work plan shall be described in the proposal. The budget of the project shall be briefly explained.

The focus of the Seed Fund is to support short-term "seed" projects. Therefore, a feasible work plan should consider that the project's duration is 7 months or less by planning achievable goals for such a time range, but the completion of project implementation cannot be later than February 1, 2024.

#### Composition of the consortium

During the proposal evaluation, it is advantageous if an industrial partner joins the forming consortium, although it is not a criterion for the application. Please, note that these industrial partners cannot receive payment from the Seed Fund.

#### Partnership

The role of the participating institutions needs to be specified individually, outlining how the synergy and complementarity among partners can create a well-functioning consortium that provides the necessary background for a successful project.

4

### Potential for submission to Horizon Europe or other international calls

Although the Seed Fund aims to support short-term projects for potential submission to Horizon Europe or other international calls, the project's sustainability and partnership are essential. Therefore, the long-term goals of the consortium should be briefly introduced as well as potential further partners (i.e. institutions or companies outside the A4L\_ACTIONS project) that would be relevant for joining the Horizon Europe proposal.

Despite that, the main objective of the Seed Fund is to support a consortium that can later foster a successful Horizon Europe project, other international funding schemes (that suit the purpose and composition of the consortium) can be introduced in this section as a future submission goal. However, planning for a Horizon Europe application is an advantage during the evaluation process.

Based on these criteria, external reviewers will evaluate the proposals.

Each proposal will undergo two evaluation steps:

1. Administrative check – formal check of the application
2. Peer review – at least one evaluator will evaluate each application. The evaluators will be selected based on the Database of Experts created by Focus Group 1.

### 6. How to apply for the grant?

For the submission of a proposal, a complete and signed Application form shall be sent to the following e-mail address not later than the closure of the call: [project@semmelweis.orfi.hu](mailto:project@semmelweis.orfi.hu)

The Application form shall include the abstract of the proposed work, a short list of the participants, and the budget plan for the action. Only complete and signed Application forms will be evaluated.

### 7. Deadlines

The submission of proposals will be open a maximum 3 times after each mini-conference and matchmaking session.

Schedule of the second call period:

Publication of the call	May 1, 2023
Deadline	June 1, 2023
Submission and notification	July 3, 2023
Start of the projects	August 1, 2023
Completion of implemented projects	February 1, 2024
Final report	March 1, 2024

### 8. Final Report

All funded projects must be completed by February 1, 2024. The supported consortia are obliged to provide the Final Report about the project implementation and completion no later than March 1, 2024.

5

# 8 ANNEX 3: 3<sup>rd</sup> CALL FOR PROPOSALS



## Seed Fund 3rd call Alliance4Life\_ACTIONS

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.

### Content

- 1. What is the Alliance4Life Seed Fund Call?..... 3
- 2. Who can apply?..... 3
- 3. What kind of proposals are eligible?..... 3
- 4. How much funding can be received?..... 4
- 5. Selection process..... 4
- 6. How to apply for the grant?..... 5
- 7. Deadlines..... 5
- 8. Final Report..... 6
- 9. Publications and Acknowledgements..... 6
- 10. Contact..... 6

### 1. What is the Alliance4Life Seed Fund Call?

Alliance4Life is a cooperation of 12 life science institutions and universities located in 11 Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. The following Alliance4Life member institutions are at the same time beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project, from which the funding will be provided:

- ☐ Masaryk University (MU) Czechia
- ☐ St. Anne's University Hospital Brno/ International Clinical Research Center (ICRC) Czechia
- ☐ Biomedical Research Center of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (BMC SAV) Slovakia
- ☐ Medical University of Lodz (MUL) Poland
- ☐ School of Medicine - University of Zagreb (UZMB) Croatia
- ☐ University of Turku (UT) Estonia
- ☐ Vilnius University (VU) Lithuania
- ☐ Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis (LIOS) Latvia
- ☐ University of Ljubljana (UL) Slovenia
- ☐ Semmelweis University (SU) Hungary
- ☐ Medical University Sofia (MUS) Bulgaria
- ☐ Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest (UMFCD) Romania

The Seed Fund aims to foster scientific collaboration among Alliance4Life's member institutions and partner companies. It provides an opportunity to form consortia with fellow researchers and professionals from partner universities and companies. The Seed Fund shall be used to develop scientific ideas from the CEE region and initiate project proposals to be submitted later to Horizon Europe or other international grant schemes.

The Seed Fund aims to support short-term collaborative research projects formed by at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project plus participating companies – a preliminary consortium for future international grant applications.

Financial support will only be provided to beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project, i.e. the participating industrial partners cannot be funded.

### 2. Who can apply?

Only consortium consisting of at least three partners – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project can apply to the Seed Fund. Individual applications are not accepted.

Researchers, including PhD students from partner universities or industrial partners, can join the project as a participant from an institution (see Application form).

The Principal Investigator, as well as other participants (except for the possible industrial partners) shall have an affiliation with one of the A4L\_ACTIONS institutions.

### 3. What kind of proposals are eligible?

**Area**  
The proposal can be submitted in various life science fields / health research (cancer, AI in life sciences/ health care, non-communicable diseases, metabolic disorders, etc.). The main criterion regarding the proposal is the originality of the scientific idea, interdisciplinaryity and the potential to form a competitive consortium, which would then apply to Horizon Europe (see also the selection process described below).

**Collaboration**  
A consortium shall be formed by at least three partner institutions – beneficiaries of the A4L\_ACTIONS project (plus by one or more industrial partners) if relevant. The partners have to select one coordinating organisation. The number of participants is not restricted; however, it should be in harmony with the budget/planned costs.

The Seed Fund will be used within the framework of the A4L\_ACTIONS project via maximum of three calls for proposals. The proposal of a collaboration that will be granted from the first call will be eliminated from the second and third calls.

### 4. How much funding can be received?

The total amount of available funding for the whole Seed Fund is 150,000 EUR. Maximum of 7 projects will be funded within the first round of submission and 3 projects during the second and third rounds altogether.

The list of the previously funded projects can be downloaded from the A4L\_ACTIONS project website: <https://alliance4life.europa.eu/seed-fund-information/>

The Seed Fund may be awarded up to 15,000 EUR, ideally between 10,000-15,000 EUR per project. The budget should be planned by Horizon Europe cost eligibility criteria defined by Joint-Action Grant Agreement for the 2021-2022 Work Programme.

Eligible costs of the Seed Fund include:

- A. subsidising costs
- B. travel costs and allowances
- C. equipment and other assets
- D. other goods and services

Travel costs and allowances should cover at least 50% of the project's total cost. This Seed Fund Call aims to create and reinforce a self-functioning consortium. Therefore, the central part of the allocated budget should be used for meetings, conferences, and travels between the partners.

Personnel costs are not eligible and should be covered entirely by the participant institution.

The call reimburses 100% of the eligible costs for each beneficiary individually, ex-post within one final payment.

### 5. Selection process

Upon eligibility, the proposals will be evaluated based on the following aspects:

**Originality**  
The proposal shall clearly outline the novelty and originality of the initial concept. Innovative ideas that go beyond the state of the art are encouraged.

**Feasibility**  
The scientific merit, methodology and feasibility of the work plan shall be described in the proposal. The budget of the project shall be briefly explained.

The focus of the Seed Fund is to support short-term "seed" projects. Therefore, a feasible work plan should consider that the project's duration is 7 months or less by achieving actionable goals for each a time range, but the completion of project implementation cannot be later than February 1, 2024.

**Composition of the consortium**  
During the proposal evaluation, it is advantageous if an industrial partner joins the forming consortium, although it is not a criterion for the application. Please, note that these industrial partners cannot receive payment from the Seed Fund.

### Partnership

The role of the participating institutions needs to be specified individually, outlining how the synergy and complementarity among partners can create a well-functioning consortium that provides the necessary background for a successful project.

### Potential for submission to Horizon Europe or other international calls

Although the Seed Fund aims to support short-term projects for potential submission to Horizon Europe or other international calls, the project's sustainability and partnership are essential. Therefore, the long-term goals of the consortium should be briefly mentioned as well as potential further partners (i.e. institutions or companies outside the A4L\_ACTIONS project) that would be relevant for joining the Horizon Europe proposal.

Despite that, the main objective of the Seed Fund is to support a consortium that can later foster a successful Horizon Europe project, other international funding schemes that suit the purpose and composition of the consortium can be introduced in this section as a future secondary goal. However, planning for a Horizon Europe application is an advantage during the evaluation process.

Based on these criteria, external reviewers will evaluate the proposals.

Each proposal will undergo the evaluation steps:

- 1. Administrative check – formal check of the application
- 2. Peer review – at least one evaluator will evaluate each application. The evaluators will be selected based on the Database of Experts created by Focus Group 1.

### 6. How to apply for the grant?

For the submission of a proposal, a complete and signed Application form shall be sent to the following email address not later than the closure of the call: [seedcall@alliance4life.eu](mailto:seedcall@alliance4life.eu).

The Application form shall include the abstract of the proposed work, a short bio of the participants, and the budget plan for the action. Only complete and signed Application forms will be evaluated.

### 7. Deadlines

The submission of proposals will be open a maximum 3 times after each mid-conference and match-making session.

After November 25, 2023, without the approval of the projects the applicants can start the submitted projects at their own risk. The submission of the project does not mean the approval of the project. In case the final decision leads to the refusal of the project, the applicant is responsible for any financial or other consequences of starting the project without prior approval.

### Schedule of the third call period:

Publication of the call	October 26, 2023
Deadline	November 24, 2023
Evaluation and notification	December 20, 2023
Earliest start of the projects	November 25, 2023
Completion of implemented projects	February 1, 2024
Final report	March 1, 2024

### 8. Final Report

All funded projects must be completed by February 1, 2024. The supported consortia are obliged to provide the Final Report about the project implementation and completion no later than by March 1, 2024.

### 9. Publications and Acknowledgements

Publications resulting from work undertaken on Alliance4Life's Seed Fund have to include an acknowledgement according to the following pattern:

The A4L\_ACTIONS project funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 964997 is gratefully acknowledged for the financial support of the publication.

Or in a short version: For the publication [title of the publication] we acknowledge A4L\_ACTIONS supported by European Union's Horizon 2020 under grant agreement No. 964997.

### 10. Contact

For general information regarding the Seed Fund call or in case of any questions, please contact [seedcall@alliance4life.eu](mailto:seedcall@alliance4life.eu) using "A4L\_seed\_fund" identifier in the subject line.



## 9 APPLICATION FORM

The Application form has remained the same throughout all three calls.



**A4L\_ACTIONS Seed Fund Call**  
**Application form**

Project name:	
Acronym:	
Duration of the project:	
Starting date:	

Key words: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicants**

Role (Coordinator/beneficiary)	Institution	Participant name	Position of the participant (Researcher, PhD student, Master's student, etc...)	Participant contact
Beneficiary <sup>1</sup>		1.		1.
		2.		2.
Beneficiary		1.		1.
		2.		2.
Beneficiary		1.		2.
		2.		3.

<sup>1</sup> Please indicate which beneficiary will be the coordinating organisation.

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.

**Project proposal (max 2 A4 pages)**

**Abstract**  
Describe the scientific idea behind the project. The originality and ambition of the project is an award criterion, therefore highlight the novelty behind the proposed idea. Introduce the work plan and the duration of the project and the goals to be achieved. Clearly describe the scientific methodology and strategy that will be utilized. Describe shortly the potential risk and how to overcome them. Describe the main tasks and how the institutions contribute to these tasks and the synergy and complementarity among partners.

**Long-term plans**  
Please describe the sustainability of the consortium: propose actions that can contribute to the continuation of the consortium for further applications. What type of Horizon Europe or international grant would you consider in the future? Describe the potential of the project and the consortium to receive further international funding such as Horizon Europe, ERC or other international calls.

**Personnel**  
Write a short bio of the personnel who will take part in the project including only relevant publications, skills, expertise and collaborative research background. The research expertise of the applicant regarding the proposed topic will be taken into consideration during the evaluation.



**Budget**

Institution	Type of cost (Travel/Equipment/Other goods/etc)	Short explanation

**Summary Table of the Budget**

	A. Subcontracting cost	B. Travel and allowances	C. Equipment and other assets	D. Other goods	Total cost
Beneficiary					

# 10 ANNEX 4: FINAL REPORT

The structure of the Final Report remained the same throughout all three calls.



**A4L\_ACTIONS Seed Fund Call**  
**Final report**

<b>Project name:</b>	
<b>Acronym:</b>	
<b>Duration of the project:</b>	
<b>Starting date – ending date:</b>	

**Grant receivers**

Role (Coordinator/beneficiary)	Institution	Participant name	Position of the participant (Researcher, PhD student, Master's student, etc...)	Participant contact
Beneficiary*		1.		1.
		2.		2.
Beneficiary		1.		1.
		2.		2.
Beneficiary		1.		2.
		2.		3.

**Project report (max 2 pages)**

<p><b>Description of the scientific results</b></p> <p><i>Describe the scientific progress and results of the project</i> <i>Describe the progress in building the consortium: travels, conferences, workshops that served to create the consortium and develop the proposed scientific idea.</i></p>
---

<p><b>Actions for the sustainability of the consortium</b></p> <p><i>Please indicate the actions that the consortium implemented for a future international grant application and continuation of the consortium</i> <i>Indicate what type of Horizon Europe or international grants are considered</i></p>
---

<p><b>Publication</b></p> <p><i>List of the publications based on the project results</i></p>
---

\* Please indicate which beneficiary will be the coordinating organisation.

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.



Eligible cost elements

Institution	Type of cost (Travel/Equipment/Other goods/ks)	Short description of the eligible cost

Total eligible cost for the whole project

	A. Subcontracting cost	B. Travel and allowances	C. Equipment and other assets	D. Other goods	Total cost
Beneficiary					

Beneficiary					
Beneficiary					
...					
Total consortium					