

Host organization: Medical University of Bialystok (MUB)

Country: Poland

Organization role: coordinator; beneficiary

Project Acronym: ImPRESS

Project start and end date: 01.02.2018-31.01.2023

Type of MSC action, H2020: COFUND



Project objectives and research field:

ImPRESS project was created to teach 15 Early Stage Researchers how to conduct research on various diseases, using biostatistics and bioinformatics methods necessary to process and interpret large amount of data. The purpose of the research projects is to search for new early markers of civilization diseases and biomarkers that could help monitor the effectiveness of individualized targeted therapy.

Tell us why the topic is important and/ or how it brings to advancement in your research field:

The project impacts on strengthening science on regional, national or international level in the field of personalized medicine and modern technologies. Innovative high-throughput technologies like: genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics, and modern methods of medical imaging will be used. The studies are conducted in cooperation with foreign partner institutions both from industry and academic sector from Germany, Spain, Austria, Iceland, etc. The creation of the synergy within the scientific network will promote interchange of ideas and create a critical mass of new concepts and scientific opportunities. MUB shows high scientific and clinical potential in the field of modern medicine; we perform research in Cancer/Mutagenesis, Cardiovascular Diseases, Diabetes/Obesity, Metabolic Diseases, Immunology, Neurodegenerative Diseases, Regenerative Medicine, Molecular Biology, Genomics, Protein Analysis and Proteomics, Metabolomics/Lipidomics, Population Medicine and Epidemiology.

What are the benefits of participating in a MSC action?

The project influences the potential and future career perspectives of Early Stage Researchers. The students after completion of the PhD studies will be highly-educated specialists prepared to work within a wide range of disciplines of modern medicine. The curriculum of the studies, additional elective courses, conducting research with the use of high-advanced methods, possibility of cooperation with renowned

scientists, management of research projects, and research stays at excellent partner organizations allow for increasing the researcher scientific potential and, at the same time, enhance the perspectives of the future career. MUB will also benefit from participating in COFUND.

ImPRESS will contribute to the society on regional, national or international level through discovery of biomarkers used in prevention of civilization diseases, which may influence on global health improvement. It may result in government expenses decrease for treatment of the diseases and rehabilitation.

Did you encounter any challenges during application/ implementation and did you get any help?

We received all the support we needed from the National Contact Point in Poland. We also participated in trainings and workshops organized by NCP and Regional Contact Points to share our experience and get knowledge how to apply successfully for funding in Horizon 2020 Framework Programme. We are in contact with two other institutions from Poland implementing COFUND projects which struggle with similar challenges. Fortunately, they are willing to exchange their know-how. It is very important to us.

Would you recommend others to apply? What useful advice/ tips can you give them?

We would strongly recommend others to apply and we are already doing it. First of all, we recommend to gather people willing to work on a project preparation who understand this kind of work. It is very important to have a specified idea for a project and partners who wish to join this kind of action. The next step is to write a good quality application proving the applicant is capable of achieving suggested goals. Do not give up if the proposal is rejected, improve it and resubmit. To get the best students it is important to extensively advertise the project. Then the success is almost there.

What strategies did your organization use to attract the fellow/s? Are they in line with national strategies supporting the widening EC policy?

Medical University of Bialystok promoted the project worldwide, which resulted in a big number of applications (181 registered candidates, 130 applications for 15 places available). Information about ImPRESS was publically advertised on MUB and partner organizations websites. Flyers and posters were distributed at international conferences, in different research institutes, universities and NCPs. We published articles in press, advertisement on TV, radio and the Internet. Social media was also used. MUB scientists, visiting professors, foreign students of the English Division were disseminating the information. Moreover, we contacted scientists collaborating with MUB journal, *Advances in Medical Sciences*.

PhD studies follow the seven EC Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training: excellent research standards, attractive employment and working conditions, interdisciplinary research options, exposure to industry, international networking, transferable skills training and quality assurance.