

## **35 million EUR from EU and Czech Republic to establishment of research centre focused on the development of advanced cell and gene therapies**

**Thanks to €35 million funding from the European Union and the Czech Republic, Central European Advanced Therapy and Immunotherapy Centre (CREATIC) will start its activities from 1 September 2023.** CREATIC focuses on undiagnosed untreatable rare diseases, paediatric patients with high-risk tumours, and adult cancer patients suitable for Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMP) treatment. The overall aim of CREATIC is to translate research and innovation (R&I) in cell and gene therapies into clinical practice for the benefit of patients. CREATIC is based on a multidisciplinary approach, which will enable the centre to navigate and be an leading actor in the paradigm shift from drug development for larger patient groups to individualized treatment strategies - an approach which falls outside the scope and interests of the traditional pharmaceutical industry.

### **CREATIC - the flagship institution in the Central Europe**

Progress in biomedical science enables scientists to use a whole new toolbox to treat a significant group of diseases, such as inherited rare diseases or diverse rare cancers. About 30 million EU citizens are affected by one of over 6000 rare diseases currently recognised. Significant costs to public health stem in large part from the lack of transparency on R&D expenditures and access and reimbursement concerns in respective EU countries. Advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs), often called “living drugs”, apply recent advances in genomics, cell biology, and gene editing to deliver truly personalised curative options such as somatic-cell and gene therapies. Central European Advanced Therapy and Immunotherapy Centre (CREATIC) will be established at Masaryk University in Brno. Apart from Masaryk University, the centre also includes core partners from Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology IZI, Leipzig University and University of Copenhagen. Together, they will ensure that CREATIC becomes a role model and flagship institution in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region, providing excellent gene and somatic cell research to create personalised ATMP Fair Medicine for the treatment of life-threatening or chronically debilitating diseases that are currently considered incurable.

### **CREATIC – changing paradigms towards patients, society, and Fair Medicine**

CREATIC will use the existing expertise at Masaryk University Advanced Cell Immunotherapy Unit (ACIU) in the research and innovation (R&I) of somatic cell therapies, formally established in 2010. By including the expertise of CZECRIN a national node of European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network (ECRIN-ERIC) and university hospitals, CREATIC will fulfil its vision of not only delivering ambitious research, but also of delivering research results that directly benefits patients. CREATIC will become the regional centre introducing the one-site medical services where clinical and scientific institutions work closely together to reduce costs and geographical distances in the triangle patient–hospital–R&D institution. By detailing the costs and processes associated with the development and treatment of ATMPs, regional and European policymakers will be able to benefit from CREATIC to make evidence based regulatory and reimbursement decisions. As a whole, CREATIC will be able to offer patients and society safer, individualized, unique, and financially sustainable treatments under the concept of Fair Medicine.

### **CREATIC – EU funding for teaming up with leading European scientific institutions**

**CREATIC is funded by a grant from the European Commission under the Horizon Europe Teaming for Excellence programme. The funding scheme supports ambitious projects building European centres of excellence to strengthen EU R&I system where best practice is disseminated faster across Europe. The total Teaming grant of almost €15 million will fundamentally upgrade and extend ATMPs innovative breakthrough research beyond somatic cell therapies to gene therapies. Newly established 7 multidisciplinary research programmes will cover the whole ATMP life cycle – from research to treatment. To achieve this vision over the 6 years of the project implementation, Masaryk University has teamed up with leading European research institutions **Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology IZI, Leipzig University and University of Copenhagen.** To accelerate the translation of R&D results into patient-specific treatments, CREATIC will develop an ecosystem of collaborating institutions covering national/European policy actors, healthcare payers, regulators, and patient organisations. Collaboration between key actors will result in proposals for adjustments to legislative and regulatory conditions at national and European level. **The complementary national grant of €20 million provided by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports enables the building of a CREATIC facility within the campus of Masaryk University in Brno and equipping it with state-of-the-art technology.****

For more information about the CREATIC: <https://creatic.muni.cz>

For further information please contact: Tomas Chladek, [tomas.chladek@med.muni.cz](mailto:tomas.chladek@med.muni.cz) and PR specialist Mgr. Andrea Holomková, [andrea.holomkova@med.muni.cz](mailto:andrea.holomkova@med.muni.cz)