

PRESS RELEASE

11/12/2018 (for immediate release)

**euCanSHare:
EU-Canada joint data platform to facilitate
multi-study cardiovascular research**

Brussels, 11 December 2018

Today, the European Society of Cardiology's (ESC) office in Brussels hosted the kick-off meeting for the EU-funded project, euCanSHare. The project will create a translational research platform to facilitate cardiovascular data sharing among sixteen leading research centres in the European Union (EU) and Canada. Once established, researchers will benefit from a consolidated one-stop, data shop to perform efficient and effective research that results in tailor-made patient treatment and better cardiovascular disease outcomes.

Even with recent declines in deaths, cardiovascular disease (CVD) continues to be the number one killer in Europe, causing 3.8 million deaths per year¹ across Europe and the Mediterranean² (1.8 million deaths in the European Union alone³), with 30% premature deaths. Technology and data sharing through compiling and analysing large amounts of cardiovascular data holds the key to reducing premature deaths and increasing quality of life for those living with heart disease. There is a need for data-driven approaches that link molecular, imaging, functional and clinical data. This integration presents a formidable challenge to data storage, management and analysis, IT capacity and accessibility.⁴ The euCanSHare project is designed to fill this gap.

The project integrates the most well-established data infrastructures, namely the European Genome-Phenome Archive (EGA), Euro-BioImaging and BBMRI-ERIC⁵, to enhance and standardise data deposition, harmonisation and sharing procedures. It integrates more than 35 Canadian and European cohorts that make up over 1 million records. These cohorts include -omics (genomics, transcriptomics, metabolomics, just to name a few) cardiac imaging and clinical data.

The platform will promote the responsible exchange of data and demonstrate the potential for cardiovascular research in personalised medicine. euCanSHare is committed to reducing the cultural, behavioural and technological barriers to Open Science. This will also allow better policy making as data driven policies unlock the innovation potential and develop better prevention and treatment methods.

The project coordinator, Karim Lekadir, said, "this is an unprecedented opportunity to create a long-awaited platform for sharing cardiovascular data across the Atlantic. It can prove a model for expanding data sharing to other disease areas, and in effect, deliver personalised care to reduce premature deaths and improve quality of life."

¹ Timmis A, Townsend N, Gale C, Grobbee R, Maniadakis N, Flather M, Wilkins E, Wright L, Vos R, Bax J, Blum M, Pinto F, Vardas P; ESC Scientific Document Group. European Society of Cardiology: Cardiovascular Disease Statistics 2017. *Eur Heart J* 2018;39(7):565.

² The World Health Organization (WHO) defines this area as the WHO Europe region (<http://www.euro.who.int/en/home>)

³ Eurostat. Causes of death - standardised death rate by residence; Last update 23/07/2018.

⁴ Kirchhof P, Sipido KR, Cowie MR, Eschenhagen T, Fox KAA, Katus H, Schroeder S, Schunkert H, Priori S, Alonso A, Chezaubernard C, Doevendans P, Eschenhagen T, Fox K, Katus H, Khder Y, Kirchhof P, Kramer F, Kristensen S, Maitland-Van der Zee A-H, Oertelt-Prigione S, Pinto F, Pocock S, Priori SG, Sartorius A, Schott D, Schroeder S, Schunkert H, Schwab M, Sipido K, Svensson A, Swedberg K, Wallentin L, Weimers M, Yla Herttuala S. The continuum of personalized cardiovascular medicine: a position paper of the European Society of Cardiology. *Eur Heart J* 2014;35(46):3250-3257.

⁵ Biobanks and Biomolecular resources Research Infrastructure - European Research Infrastructure Consortium (BBMRI-ERIC)

euCanSHare is a 4-year (2018-2020), €6-million Research and Innovation Action funded by the European Union's [Horizon 2020 Programme](#) (grant agreement No 825903), under the call [SC1-BHC-05-2018](#) ("International flagship collaboration with Canada for human data storage, integration and sharing to enable personalised medicine approaches"). All Canadian partners are funded by the [Canadian Institutes of Health Research \(CIHR\)](#) and the [Fonds de recherche du Québec - Santé \(FRQS\)](#)

The euCanSHare project will actively collaborate with other joint Canada-EU projects funded as part of the same aforementioned research call ([SC1-BHC-05-2018](#)). These projects are EUCANCan, iReceptor Plus, EUCAN-Connect, CINECA and RECODID, which will cover other biomedical domains such as oncology, immunology, genetics and infectious diseases.

euCanSHare structure and participants

The Consortium consists of sixteen partners coming from academia, medical associations, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), research centres and data infrastructures:

1. [University of Pompeu Fabra](#) (UPF), Spain (Project Coordinator)
2. [Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre](#) (MUHC), Canada
3. [University Hospital of Hamburg](#) (UKE), Germany
4. [Lynkeus](#) (LYN), Italy
5. [Erasmus University Medical Centre](#) (EMC), Netherlands
6. [Queen Mary University of London](#) (QMUL), United Kingdom
7. [The Centre of Genomics and Policy, McGill University](#) (MCGILL), Canada
8. [KU Leuven](#) (KUL), Belgium
9. [Barcelona Supercomputing Centre](#) (BSC), Spain
10. [Centre for Genomic Regulation](#) (CRG), Spain
11. [European Society of Cardiology](#) (ESC), France
12. [Biobanks and Biomolecular resources Research Infrastructure - European Research Infrastructure Consortium](#) (BBMRI-ERIC), Austria
13. [Population Health Research Institute, McMaster University](#) (MCM), Canada
14. [National Institute for Health and Welfare](#) (THL), Finland
15. [University of Medicine Greifswald](#), Germany
16. [Nostrum Biodiscovery](#) (NBD), Spain

ENDS

Contact

Project Coordinator:

Karim Lekadir, PhD

Barcelona Centre for New Medical Technologies (BCN MedTech)

Department of Information & Communication Technologies (DTIC)

University of Pompeu Fabra (UPF), Barcelona

Email: karim.lekadir@upf.edu

Phone: +34 935 421 951 - Mobile: +34 622 229 535

About the Coordinating Institution: University of Pompeu Fabra (UPF)

The University of Pompeu Fabra (UPF) is a vibrant public university based in Barcelona, Spain strongly dedicated to excellence in research and teaching. It is recognised as the top Spanish university in the world top 200, according to the [Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2018](#). The Department of Information and Communication Technologies (DTIC) has a track record of active participation in EU projects, particularly focusing on digital health, with a total of over 100 projects in FP7 and H2020.