

2021

IN A NUTSHELL

January 2022



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EU-LIFE 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



European Science Policy

11 **Statements**, open letters & papers (Horizon Europe, Brexit, ERC, Health research & European Research Area) 

Participation in **6** **EC policy processes**:

- Research careers
- Research assessment
- ERC
- ERA Pact
- Gender & equality
- Health research



2 Webinars & launch of EU-LIFE Policy webinar series

39 Meetings, consultation workshops & events with **key policy leaders & stakeholders** 

Institutional Practice & Expertise

8 **Reports**, hands-on guides & articles:

- Research data management
- Core tech facilities
- Research careers
- H2020
- Citizen science
- Benchmarking
- Research assessment



3 **Capacity building** sessions:

- Research assessment
- LifeTime

11 **Workshops & courses**:

- Anti-bullying
- Tech Transfer
- Science Comms
- Grant applications



5 Exploratory meetings for joint **projects**

3 **Benchmarking** sets:

- General indicators
- Publications
- Grants



62 **Working group** meetings & internal sessions


EU-LIFE Strategy

 Full membership of **IMBB-FORTH (Greece)**

Active **communications** supporting policy 

 Election of **Co-Chair of EU-LIFE 2022-2023**

Recruitment of Comms officer + Office internship 

 **Renewal of EU-LIFE consortium agreement**

2021 in a nutshell

René Medema, Chair of EU-LIFE

Marta Agostinho, EU-LIFE Executive Director

2021 was definitely an eventful year. While continuing to deal with the evolving challenges of a complex pandemic, we were simultaneously shown the immense value of science as the best way out of the pandemic.

During this year, [EU-LIFE member institutes](#) continued their core research activities while [contributing to mitigate the effects of the pandemics](#), including critical research to understand COVID-19, vaccine effectiveness studies, drug development and repurposing, novel diagnostics and engagement in broad public debate about COVID-19.



Simultaneously, our alliance continued its activities to improve and stimulate excellent research through the development of policies to strengthen Research & Innovation in Europe. This year the new European Research Area (ERA) was at the forefront of our policy activities, as it will have a great influence on the organization, focus and direction of European research programs for the next decades. This included intense EU processes where we provided our views on the new [ERA PACT for research](#) and its ERA Forum for Transition, as well as our input on key policies on research careers, research assessment, citizen science and gender equality & inclusivity. Importantly, we added a new initiative for contribution by launching the [EU-LIFE policy webinar series](#), a forum to connect policy making with the scientific community. The first webinars, held in 2021, were on [research careers](#) and [research assessment](#).

In this first year of Horizon Europe implementation, important decisions were taken regarding European health research and key programmes of Horizon Europe such as the EU Missions, in which EU-LIFE has been an attentive observer and if opportune gave its opinion. We also warmly welcomed the new ERC President Maria Leptin, after she was nominated with full support from the EU-LIFE community. Unfortunately, in many topics, progress fell short of our expectations such as in the so much needed association of third countries to Horizon Europe ([including the UK](#) and Switzerland) or a confirmation of the already allocated budget to the European Research Council (ERC).

With the new capacity at the EU-LIFE office in full operational mode, we were also able to boost the achievements of EU-LIFE working groups (our bottom-up approach) and task forces (our top-down approach to implement specific initiatives) to strengthen the sharing of practices and involvement of member institutes in joint projects. This resulted in several reports, hands-on guides, articles and policy briefs on a variety of topics such as [research data management](#), [support to postdoctoral careers](#), [management models for research infrastructures](#) (core facilities) and [citizen science](#).

Most notably, we engaged hundreds of EU-LIFE institutes' members of staff in capacity building workshops to promote a vibrant, fair and open research culture in our institutes. Ranging from developing novel narratives of fundamental research, tech transfer pitching and [ERC Masterclasses](#) to trainings on the role of active by-standers and institutional anti-bullying and harassment policies. These activities allowed us to engage our institutes' leadership, researchers and professionals at the interface of science in important mind-set changing experiences.

Excitingly, in 2021 we added another star to the EU-LIFE constellation of joint European projects: [EMERALD](#), the innovative and first European-wide PhD programme for medical



doctors; and we concluded [ORION Open Science](#), featured by the EC among the [H2020 successful projects](#) dedicated to implementing responsible research & innovation in research funding and performing organizations.

In 2021, we finalized the full membership of our member [IMBB-FORTH](#), thus completing the first round of expansion of the alliance. In preparation of the future, we also reviewed and renewed the alliance consortium agreement, welcomed the new communications officer and continued key strategic discussions regarding our mission and future goals. Finally, during the EU-LIFE Community meeting, the Board of Directors elected a new EU-LIFE Co-Chair. As of 1st January 2022, together with the new EU-LIFE Chair, Monica Bettencourt-Dias (IGC), we welcomed the new Co-Chair Giulio Superti-Furga (CeMM).

We are ready to navigate another year in support of excellence in science, for the benefit of our fellow citizens. Wave by wave, no matter their nature!



René Medema
Chair of EU-LIFE



Marta Agostinho
EU-LIFE Executive Director



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EU-LIFE is an alliance of research centres whose mission is to support and strengthen European research excellence (www.eu-life.eu). EU-LIFE members are leading research institutes in their countries and internationally renowned for producing excellent research, widely transferring knowledge and nurturing talent.

EU-LIFE Partners

Center for Genomic Regulation (CRG, Spain) | Central European Institute of Technology (CEITEC, Czech Republic) | European Institute of Oncology (IEO, Italy) | Flanders Institute For Biotechnology (VIB, Belgium) | Friedrich Miescher Institute for Biomedical Research (FMI, Switzerland) | Institut Curie (France) | Institute for Molecular Medicine Finland (FIMM, Finland) | Institute of Molecular Biology & Biotechnology (IMBB FORTH, Greece) | Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência (IGC, Portugal) | International Institute of Molecular and Cell biology in Warsaw (IIMCB, Poland) | Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine in the Helmholtz Association (MDC, Germany) | Research Center for Molecular Medicine of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (CeMM, Austria) | The Babraham Institute (Babraham, United Kingdom) | The Netherlands Cancer Institute (NKI, The Netherlands) | The University of Copenhagen Biotech Research & Innovation Centre (BRIC, Denmark)