TRANSVAC Press Release

The Transnational Access Network TRANSVAC integrates New Interested Parties

TRANSVAC, the leading European Research Infrastructure on Vaccine Development was designed in order to enhance coordination between vaccine Research & development (R&D) groups, assay developers, and vaccine producers in Europe, and to propose a European road map for vaccine R&D infrastructure.

In order to give the opportunity to other European R&D groups to join the TRANSVAC services platform, a competitive call for new Interested Parties was launched with the dead-line for application 15 March 2012. In addition to the initial panel of nine services, the TRANSVAC transnational access platform has integrated in July 2012 five additional groups which provide their services to users on a free and paid basis. Two new European Union (EU) Member States are now represented within the platform of services; France and Portugal.

The new services available on a free basis are:

- The **MultiBac Platform Service** from the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL, France). Free access has been reserved and made available for vaccine-related projects by the **BioSTRUCT-X** project/research infrastructure.

The new services available on a paid basis are:

- The **GMP Pilot Production and Vaccine Development (Product characterisation, process development and vaccine production facilities) Service** from the Vaccinology Department of the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM, The Netherlands).

- The **Vaccine Development and Production Service** from the Animal Cell Technology Unit of the Institute of Experimental and Technological Biology (IBET, Portugal).

- The **Protein and Peptide Chemistry Facility Service** from the Department of Biochemistry of the University of Lausanne (UNIL, Switzerland).

- The **Reverse Transcription Multiplex Ligation-Dependent Probe Amplification (RT-MLPA) Assay Service** from the Department of Infectious Diseases of the Leiden University Medical Centre (LUMC, The Netherlands).

Dr Odile Leroy, Executive Director of European Vaccine Initiative (EVI) and Coordinator of the TRANSVAC project, says: *"The long-term vision of TRANSVAC is to establish a European Research Infrastructure, providing a spectrum of coordinated vaccine development facilities, managed by each of the participating institutions. The integration of five new services and two EU Member States is a critical step for the future of TRANSVAC".*

Prof. Manuel Carrondo, Director of IBET, testifies: *"As a research intensive Small and Medium-sized Enterprise, IBET has been active in the development of vaccines for over 15 years. Joining the TRANSVAC network will allow IBET to*

better coordinate its activities with the other members and to be exposed to more potential collaborations and customers while, at the same time, profiting from insights into future vaccine R&D needs".

The services provided by the affiliated partners will be integrated in the advertising plan and the transnational access call in order for the potential new partners to extend their network and make their services available to the scientific community. Interested users can get more information on the **paid services** on the TRANSVAC website and can directly liaise with the service providers until new funding capacity is available within TRANSVAC. An "advisory scientific review process" is also offered to the applicants who want to get advice on their project, objectives, and the methodology used. This review process is organised in parallel to the review of the applications to the free-of-charge services. The next advisory scientific review process will take place after closing of the submission period, on 31 January 2013.

About TRANSVAC

The TRANSVAC project has emerged as the joint vaccine research infrastructure of leading European groups working in vaccine development. TRANSVAC is a four-year collaborative infrastructure project funded with €9.9 million under the European Commission's (EC) Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) and coordinated by EVI. The TRANSVAC project aims to accelerate the development of promising vaccine candidates by bridging part of the gap between academic research and clinical trials. In order to reach this objective, one of the TRANSVAC activities is to provide a vaccine development platform that may be accessed by external European groups. Through a peer-reviewed competitive process, external groups may apply to benefit from the expertise, reagents, and facilities of the TRANSVAC services. The selected external European groups will be able to access the non-exhausted TRANSVAC **services free of charge**. TRANSVAC services include access to: adjuvants, animal models, standardised reagents and assays, as well as powerful molecular analysis such as deep sequencing and microarray analysis. Since the creation of TRANSVAC, **23 projects have been awarded**. The call for free services in vaccine development is currently open, with the next cut-off date on 31 January 2013.

For further information, lists of all partners and activities, please visit the project website at: www.transvac.org or contact the TRANSVAC management team: transvacinfo@euvaccine.eu.