

Press Release

## canSERV

### Providing Cutting Edge Cancer Research Services Across Europe

European wide research infrastructures, oncology experts, and patient associations team up to battle cancer

*Brussels, 15 September 2022:* The European canSERV project, aiming to defragment the landscape of European cancer research, kicks off in Brussels today. Over the next three years, canSERV will enable academia and industry access to cross-cutting services and support from basic science up to clinical translation to foster personalised medicine for cancer patients.

All services of the participating infrastructures will be bundled on a common platform which will go online within the next few months. canSERV will connect, coordinate, and align existing oncology and complementary Research Infrastructures (RIs) alongside providing services in a synergistic, transnational way. This will capitalise on the critical mass of experts and cutting-edge services offered by canSERV RIs and their extended networks.

#### canSERV key points

- The EU-funded canSERV consortium will make innovative services available to cancer researchers, therefore supporting the goals of the [EU Cancer Mission](#).
- Funded services can be requested through canSERV's single, unified transnational access platform, which will be built to integrate unique cancer research services from all consortium partners.
- The consortium is committed to sustaining long-term, continuously offered access to current and future oncology services for Europe and beyond.

#### canSERV key objectives

- To offer at least 200 different unique Personalized Oncology (PO) relevant and valuable cutting-edge services for life science research in Europe over the next three years.
- To establish a single, unified, transnational access platform to request services and training.
- To ensure oncology-related data provided will be fully compliant with the [FAIR principles](#), and complement and synergise with other relevant EU initiatives (e.g., [EOSC](#), [UNCAN.eu](#)).
- To sustain the network and unified resources of oncology-related service provision beyond the duration of the project.

Overall, canSERV will accelerate the process of translating theoretical knowledge into personalised oncology clinical practice, that will give cancer patients faster and easier access to solutions and products.

### Further project details

canSERV is aligned to and supports the EU Cancer Mission. When this mission was declared by the European Commission last year, they suggested that taking interdisciplinary approaches could be the key to accelerating cancer research and finding new treatment options. The canSERV project responds directly to this by providing new interdisciplinary and customised oncology services across the entire cancer continuum. This will provide a comprehensive portfolio of oncology-related Research Infrastructure services available to all EU member countries, and beyond.

Prof. Jens K. Habermann, canSERV Coordinator and Director General of BBMRI-ERIC in Graz:

*“The canSERV consortium will meet the needs of EU academic and industry users and create a more effective, streamlined and defragmented European oncology RI landscape.”*


Key to canSERV is the offer of world-class services valuable for all major stakeholders e.g., researchers, universities, institutes, high-profile SMEs, and European research consortia. The mission is to make inventive and customised research services available to the cancer research community, enable innovative R&D projects, and accelerate the development and implementation of solutions for cancer patients across Europe.






The cross-cutting canSERV consortium comprises 19 partners from leading EU Research Infrastructure Consortia (ERICs), Research Infrastructures (RIs), scientific societies, and patient associations. Each partner contributes unique services and developments to canSERV.

Thanks to the transnational collaboration and complementarity of the consortium, canSERV will provide the widest and most comprehensive portfolio in cancer research, taking the scientific excellence in Europe, and beyond, a major step forward. Open calls to the worldwide cancer community for the provision of funded services will be announced over the common platform and will be advertised widely across the cancer community.



### canSERV Partners

The RIs demonstrate their complementarity, the coverage of the whole research pipeline from basic research to applied clinical research and their extended network.



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|  | <p>Biobanking and biomolecular resources will be provided by <b>BBMRI</b>, which aims at improving the accessibility and interoperability of the existing comprehensive collections, either population-based or clinical-oriented, of biological samples from different (sub-) populations of Europe or rare diseases. <b>BBMRI</b> consists of 23 countries with strong links to more than 100 Cancer Centres and three affiliated Expert Centres. BBMRI-ERIC with its National Nodes and affiliated communities will further provide expertise and services in ELSI, IT, Quality Management, Training, Outreach and Public Affairs.</p> |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Dr. Eleanor Shember<br/>communications@bbmri-eric.eu</p>     |   |





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|       | <p><b>EATRIS</b> will bring translational medicine expertise to the consortium. <b>EATRIS</b> provides a unique one-stop shop access to the combined expertise and high-end technologies, required to develop new products for translational medicine, from target validation to early clinical trials. <b>EATRIS</b> comprises 114 leading institutes in 14 countries.</p>  |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Dr Jake Fairnie<br/>jakefairnie@eatris.eu</p>                   |  |
|       | <p>canSERV will also count on the support of <b>ECRIN</b> providing top-level clinical research. <b>ECRIN</b> is a 'distributed RI' – a distinct organisation that connects research facilities at multiple sites in countries across Europe. <b>ECRIN</b> supports the conduct of multinational, high-quality, transparent clinical trials by overcoming the obstacles caused by fragmentation and poor interoperability of the national, clinical research environment in Europe.</p>  |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Martina Esdaile<br/>Martina.Esdaile@ecrin.org</p>               |  |
|      | <p><b>ELIXIR</b> is an expert in biomolecular data services including genomics. It is a unique initiative that consolidates national centres, services, and core bioinformatics resources into a single, coordinated infrastructure. <b>ELIXIR</b> coordinates and develops life science resources across Europe so that researchers can more easily find, analyse and share data, exchange expertise, and implement best practices, and gain greater insights into how living organisms work. <b>ELIXIR</b> includes 20 countries and an inter-governmental organisation (EMBL).</p>                  |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Elaine Westwick<br/>elaine.westwick@elixir-europe.org</p>       |  |
|     | <p><b>EURO-BIOIMAGING ERIC</b> is the European Research Infrastructure for biological and biomedical imaging, providing open access to 50+ cutting-edge imaging technologies for life scientists, as well as training and image data services. <b>EURO-BIOIMAGING</b> consists of a set of 33 complementary, strongly interlinked and geographically distributed Nodes – made up of 149 specialised imaging facilities – providing open access to imaging technologies and expertise to all scientists.</p>  |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Marianna Childress Poli<br/>marianna.poli@eurobioimaging.eu</p> |  |
|     | <p>Compound screening proficiency will be offered by <b>EU-OPENSSCREEN</b>, a distributed RI that develops novel small chemical compounds which elicit specific biological responses on organisms, cells or cellular components. As a large-scale RI with an “open” pre-competitive character, <b>EU-OPENSSCREEN</b> is a cost-effective solution to the need of the broad scientific community providing access to Europe’s leading screening platforms and chemistry groups, constructing a jointly used compound collection and operating an open-access database accessible on a global basis.</p> |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Maren Kappe<br/>Maren.kappe@eu-openscreen.eu</p>                |  |

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|   | <p>Patient-derived tumour xenografts (PDX) have been increasingly recognised as clinically relevant preclinical models. Thus, the <b>EurOPDX</b> RI will ensure access to oncology xenografts in this consortium. The <b>EurOPDX Consortium</b> counts with 18 not-for-profit Clinical Cancer Centres (CCCs) and universities as members across Europe and in the US, 6 of them being nodes/installations of the EurOPDX RI (4 participating in canSERV, in 4 different Member States). The main objectives are to join forces and build large collections of models and data to cover cancer heterogeneity, and to raise standards in the preclinical setting (e.g., SOPs, ethics).</p> |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>contact@europdx.eu</p>  |  |
|   | <p><b>EMBRC</b> is a distributed RI providing a strategic delivery mechanism for excellent and large-scale marine science in Europe. The <b>EMBRC</b> investigation capacity and capability covers the whole range of marine biodiversity, using approaches ranging from molecular biology to ecology, chemistry, bioinformatics and mathematics, and to integrative biology. The RI is at a pivotal position between biological sciences, biomedical sciences and agronomical, ecological and environmental science, bringing added value to canSERV.</p>   |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/><a href="mailto:secretariat@embrc.eu">secretariat@embrc.eu</a><br/>Anabelle Chaumon<br/>anabelle.chaumon@embrc.eu</p> |  |
|   | <p>Research in industrial biotechnology will be supported by <b>EU-IBISBA</b> by supplying access to first class facilities for all industrial biotechnology professionals, including academic researchers, SMEs and large companies. <b>EU-IBISBA</b> operates in a multidisciplinary environment developing translational research in industrial biotechnology and developing the synthetic biology discipline. <b>EU-IBISBA</b> provides a research nexus for biology researchers and chemical engineers, favouring the connection of different knowledge domains, and providing a hub for public-private collaboration.</p>  |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Mauro Di Fenza<br/>communication@ibisba.eu</p>  |  |
|   | <p>Having successfully supported more than 400 international academic research projects using EC funding, <b>INFRAFRONTIER</b>, the European Research Infrastructure for disease models, offers various services for cancer researchers and leads the efforts concerning in vivo models in canSERV. This is in line with the main goal of INFRAFRONTIER which is to study the systemic effects of genetic alterations and unravel the role of gene function in human health and disease using appropriate disease models</p>   |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Info@infrafrontier.eu</p>   |  |
|   | <p><b>Instruct-ERIC</b> capabilities in structural biology will help canSERV with the provision of peer-reviewed access to a broad palette of advanced technology and expertise as well as training and technique development in the area of integrated structural and cell biology, with the major goal of underpinning fundamental research and promoting innovation in the biological and medical sciences.</p>   |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>John Dolan<br/>john@instruct-eric.org</p>   |  |

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|  | <p><b>MIRRI</b> is the pan-European distributed RI for microbial resources. MIRRI serves public and private bioscience users by facilitating access to a broad range of high quality bioresources and data in a legal compliant way. <b>MIRRI</b> will help canSERV in alleviating the fragmentation of bioresource holdings and expertise, to deliver fit-for-purpose microbial material, to add value to microbial diversity, and to discover and preserve the yet unknown or uncultivated microorganisms.</p>   |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Luis Soares<br/>luis.soares@ceb.uminho.pt</p>              |  |
|  | <p>The Analytical Research Infrastructures in Europe (<b>ARIE</b>) represents centres of scientific and technological excellence, delivering services, data and know-how to a growing and a diverse user community of more than 40,000 researchers in academia and industry, across a range of domains: the physical sciences, energy, engineering, the environment and the earth sciences, as well as medicine, health, food and cultural heritage. <b>ARIE</b> provide free access to the scientific user community based upon scientific excellence and open data. Specifically, they include powerful sources of photon, neutrons, ions and other particle beams; and facilities dedicated to advanced electron-microscopy and high magnetic fields.</p> |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>info@arie-eu.org.</p>                                      |  |

In addition to the RIs, canSERV includes other key organisations in the field of oncology. In particular, ECPC, EORTC, IARC, and Cancer Core Europe will seal the success of the project.

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|  <p><b>European Cancer Patient Coalition</b></p>  | <p>A key contribution will be made by <b>ECPC</b>, the largest European cancer patients' association. Covering all 27 European Union Member States, and many other European and non-European countries, <b>ECPC</b> represents those affected by all types of cancers, from the rarest to the most common.</p>   |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Evi Palaiologou<br/>paraskevi.palaiologou@ecpc.org</p>  |  |
|  <p><b>EORTC</b><br/>European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer<br/><i>The future of cancer therapy</i></p> | <p>Through the participation of <b>EORTC</b>, the project will facilitate translation of research results into clinical practice. <b>EORTC</b>, as an independent, non-governmental, non-profit cancer research organisation, coordinates and conducts international translational and clinical research to improve the standard of cancer treatment for patients. <b>EORTC</b> is also recognised for scientific and methodological rigor bringing robust datasets to doctors and patients for therapeutic improvement, covering all disciplines to fight against cancer and addressing all patients, including those with rare tumours and specific patient populations.</p> |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Stephane Lejeune<br/>stephane.lejeune@eortc.org</p>   |  |

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| <p><b>International Agency<br/>Research on Cancer</b></p>  <p><b>World Health<br/>Organization</b></p> | <p><b>IARC</b>, the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization, will also join <b>canSERV</b> consortium. The Agency is inter-disciplinary, bringing together skills in epidemiology, laboratory sciences and biostatistics to identify the causes of cancer so that preventive measures may be adopted, and the burden of disease and associated suffering reduced. A significant feature of the <b>IARC</b> is its expertise in coordinating research across countries and organisations; its independent role as an international organization facilitates this activity. The classification of human tumours as reported in the WHO “Blue Book” series is an additional resource of value to cancer researchers and clinicians worldwide. One of the products of <b>IARC’s</b> coordinating role is an increasingly important biobank with approximately 6 million samples from 600 000 subjects in total.</p> |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Véronique Terrasse<br/>terrassev@iarc.who.int</p>  |  |
|    | <p><b>Cancer Core Europe</b> builds upon the efforts of previous larger European consortia such as the Eurocan Platform, a project bringing together 28 European cancer institutions and organizations that was funded by the European Commission under the seventh framework program. <b>Cancer Core Europe</b> aims to reshape the cancer research model to ultimately increase the European Union’s competitiveness as a place to conduct cutting-edge research that is translated to the clinic to deliver more personalized medicine. <b>Cancer Core Europe</b> brings together the expertise and critical mass required to effectively move translational research into the clinic where patients have a direct benefit.</p>   |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>info@cancercoreeurope.eu</p>   |  |
|    | <p><b>ARTTIC</b> will support research and technology developments from the first ideas to the exploitation of project results. <b>ARTTIC</b> offers a unique and complete range of services and tools and makes available its proven expertise in setting up, organising, and managing large collaborative R&amp;I projects.</p>  |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Verena von Scharfenberg<br/>press@arttic-innovation.de</p>   |  |
|    | <p><b>TTOPSTART</b> is a science and business consulting company that serves leading researchers and innovative companies in the fields of life sciences. <b>TTOP</b> has ample experience in effectively managing large multidisciplinary consortia and innovative EU-funded projects while contributing towards their sustainability.</p>  |
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