

ACIES, partner of SYBILLA* project (FP7)

**Systems Biology of T-cell Activation in Health and Disease*

► Objectives and features of the project

SYBILLA is an ambitious collaborative research project including innovative SMEs, major industrialists as well as private and academic European research organisations. Through a multidisciplinary approach, SYBILLA aims at fostering **the knowledge and understanding of the T-cell intracellular signalling network**, and developing innovative data collection technologies **to generate unique quantitative and mathematical stimulation tools**. Those tools will allow modelling T-cell activation and thus **directly impact drug development towards the treatment of autoimmune diseases**.

Through FP7, the European Commission (EC) has approved the funding and scope of the initiative for the implementation of this innovative and ambitious project. Launched on April 1st, 2008, SYBILLA is a 60 month large-scale integrated project, with an overall budget of **€18.5M** and a maximum community financial contribution rising **€11.1M**.

The consortium made of 17 scientific and industrial partners from Europe, North America and India is coordinated by the Max-Planck-Institute for Immunobiology (DE) which is regarded nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence in fundamental research.

► Project's impacts

Autoimmune diseases are the third largest category of illness in the industrialised world behind heart disease and cancer. Although 5% of the population suffer from these immune deficiency diseases, no efficient therapeutic treatment is currently available. A better knowledge of the T-cell intracellular signalling network as well as the development of new and reliable simulation systems will help to identify and validate new therapeutic targets.

SYBILLA aims at developing innovative and harmonised biological and simulation systems to screen, predict and assess the suitability, safety and efficiency of new therapies with unprecedented precision and reproducibility. This project will thus directly contribute to the development of therapeutic treatment against autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis, Type 1 diabetes and Rheumatoid arthritis which affect more than 5.5 million people in Europe.

The discovery of such therapeutic strategies will strikingly not only impact on the European biopharmaceutical competitiveness, but also demonstrate prominent social benefits for patients and their families.

► ACIES mission and performance

Through the setting-up of the proposal, ACIES has assisted the partners in the elaboration of the working programme towards the specific objectives of the project and EC requirements.

In its willingness to increase the likeliness of having the project funded, ACIES has activated his network of European life science players in order to involve the requested complementary expertise. As importantly, ACIES has strongly supported the consortium in emphasizing socio-economic impacts, including ethics as a core value.

The evaluation report from Community experts has given the proposal a 13.5/15 mark, including 4.5/5 for the management part, designed by ACIES and validated by partners, and 4.5/5 on the impact part. These results demonstrate the adequacy of the proposal with the strategic requirements of the European Community policies.

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The professionalism and motivation of ACIES in writing our grant application and managing the consortium impresses me a lot. Without ACIES we would not have been successful.”

Dr. Wolfgang SCHAMEL,
Group leader at the Max-Planck-Institute
for Immunobiology, coordinator of SYBILLA



ACIES has as well played a crucial role in the **completion of negotiation** by contributing actively to the redefinition of the budget, scientific and organisational aspects of the project.

Finally, ACIES, as **management partner of this European flagship research project**, implements managerial methods and tools necessary for an efficient, secure and optimised management. ACIES assists the coordinator in the day-to-day management and ensures that consortium activities are to be performed in accordance with the EC expectations in terms of content and timescale.

ACIES also contributes to the implementation of efficient operational and decision-making processes, e.g. in offering partners **training sessions customised to the project** and ensuring full compliance with FP7 rules. Building on our strong experience in the management of research projects, we will be strongly committed throughout the five years to contribute to the success of this challenging European project. ■

■ Focus on SYBILLA partners

- 1- Coordinator: Max-Planck-Institute for Immunobiology in Freiburg (DE), interdisciplinary world-class research institution that performs fundamental research in key areas of modern and innovative immunobiology and epigenetics
- 2- The Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford (UK)
- 3- Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas (SP)
- 4- Medical University of Innsbruck (AT)
- 5- ETH-Zürich (CH)
- 6- Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum in der Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft (DE)
- 7- University of Turku (FI)
- 8- Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique - CNRS (FR)
- 9- University of Basel (CH)
- 10- Otto-von-Guericke University, Magdeburg (DE)
- 11- Fondazione Humanitas Per La Ricerca (IT)
- 12- MediCel (FI)
- 13- EXBIO Praha (CZ)
- 14- ACIES (FR)
- 15- Immune Disease Institute (US)
- 16- International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology - ICGEB
- 17- Joslin Diabetes Center (US)

▶ ACIES and FP6/FP7

- ACIES has been the leader in the Health thematic within the FP6 and FP7 with a success rate three times higher than the European average.
- Two projects had perfect scores: 30/30 (NOVADUCK and SKINTHERAPY).
- ACIES manages projects with budgets ranging from €2.5 million to €50 million.
- ACIES is currently managing ten FP6 and four FP7 projects in the Health, ICT, Transport, Environment, and Energy thematics.
- Three examples of projects managed by ACIES within the Health thematic:
 - TREAT-NMD: NoE, coordinated by Newcastle University (UK), 21 contractors, 340 researchers involved, maximum grant amount of €10,000,000 for 5 years.
 - PERSIST (“Persisting Transgenesis”): IP, coordinated by Universita Vita-Salute San Raffaele (IT), 22 contractors, maximum grant amount of €11,181,411 for 4 years.
 - SPIDIA (“Standardisation and improvement of generic pre-analytical procedures and tools for in vitro diagnostics”): IP, coordinated by QIAGEN GmbH (DE), 16 contractors, maximum grant amount of €8,981,797 for 4 years.