

Introduction to the Bridges in Life Sciences 7th Annual Conference

In 2006 Cedars–Sinai Medical Center (CSMC), Los Angeles, CA, USA with eleven CEE universities and academic organizations from six countries formed the Regional Cooperation for Health, Science and Technology (RECOOP HST) Consortium.

The Consortium is continuously growing and beside the 12 Founding Members additional 8 Associate Members are participating in the research and support networks from Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine and USA.

The Consortium's main goal is to enhance research collaboration and provide platforms for scientific networking in life sciences within Europe and Cross – Atlantic. The research priority of the Consortium is women's and child's health in the Visegrad Four European Macro-Region (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and the neighboring countries (Croatia, Romania, Ukraine). The Consortium paves the way toward GLOBAL Research Programs of the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization and private funds (Gates, Clinton).

Our activities compliment the U.S. Government's commitment to the Global Health Initiative "is the next chapter in the way U.S. Government agencies conduct global health activities, building on successful bipartisan leadership in global health and expanding their impact for sustainable results around the world."

"The RECOOP HST Consortium explores and enhances LOCAL scientific outputs of the partner organizations, creates critical mass of scientifically sound innovative research at REGIONAL level and exploits the research outcomes at GLOBAL level to improve the prevention of major public health problems.™"

In the RECOOP Research Networks 147 scientists are working in 12 research projects in clinical, basic and translational research studies to investigate biological pathways leading to gender differences in cardiovascular diseases, preterm birth, ovarian, breast and prostate cancer. The Mother and Child Health and the Women's Health and Cardiovascular Diseases retro and prospective clinical research studies are using web based electronic data entry forms (EDEF <http://www.flexiform.hu>).

RECOOP HST Mother and Child Health Network is one of the partners of the International *PRE*term *B*irth Collaborative (PREBIC <http://www.prebic.net>) of the World Health Organization, Department of Reproductive Health and Research (<http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/index.htm>).

Consortium also built support networks for biosafety and biosecurity, animal use in research, clinical research management, scientific communication, and research and innovation management.

Networks have several research activities that complement each other. Therefore the Consortium integrated the multidisciplinary research activities and interconnected research teams in the RECOOP Life Science Research Platform and established the RECOOP Research Cores (Genomics - Proteomics, Metagenomics, Molecular Biology and NanoBioTechnology) sponsored by the International Visegrad Fund (<http://visegradfund.org>) Strategic Grant (31110035) “Future of Visegrad Four Families Depends on Healthy Women and Children”.

In each Research Core the participating universities and research organizations implemented undergraduate and graduate research programs.

RECOOP Life Science Research Platform already realized short term (1-2 years) pilot research studies. The Networks continue the translational and clinical research studies in midterm (5 years), and the RECOOP HST Life Science Research Platform shall plan to continue the clinical research studies for minimum 20 - 30 years and follow up the women, men and newborns registered in the Electronic Data Entry Forms (EDEF) started in 2011.

The Consortium inspires young scientists and clinical researchers for creative thinking, and helps to learn how to make decisions on “publish and disclose” or “publish and protect”. The Consortium is working with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO <http://www.wipo.int>) to train faculty members, managers, young scientists, clinicians and for Ph.D. students who are taking the WIPO World Wide Academy (WWA) Distance Learning (DL) courses.

RECOOP provides training for young scientists to learn proper and scientifically sound communication of their research results in their manuscripts and presentation. The Consortium provides practical training on the presentation of data in the manuscript from the “Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion” to the “Conclusion” sections of the manuscript and guides the young scientists how to organize data in tables and graphs, presenting results of statistical analysis.

The Consortium organizes annually the Bridges in Life Sciences Conferences to review the scientific progress in the Consortium. During the Bridges in Life Sciences Annual Conference the Scientific Advisory Board selects the top ten young scientists. The winner gets the Cedars – Sinai RECOOP Scholar Grant to visit Los Angeles for two weeks with her/his supervisor. They are visiting research groups and laboratories and presenting their scientific work during research seminars.

The top ten young scientists selected during the Bridges in Life Sciences Annual Conferences have the opportunity to apply for International Visegrad Fund (IVF) Scholarship and receive the

RECOOP Young Scientists Matching Fund. The Visegrad Scholarship is the Visegrad Four European Macro-Region's Fulbright Program. Therefore it could be important to link the Visegrad Scholarship and the Fulbright Foreign Student Program.

The best young scientists get support to apply for Fulbright Foreign Student Program. The International Research and Innovation Management team organizes the host laboratories at CSMC to spend nine months to three years (Ph.D. program) and supports their research. The supervisors of the top ten young scientists get the support to submit application to the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program and lecture or conduct postdoctoral research.

In November 2011 the RECOOP HST Consortiums was transformed into a Research Association with 17 members from 8 countries. The newly formed RECOOP HST Association's Research Networks are founded on local qualities that created a critical mass at the regional level in well defined geographical regions, with lingual, cultural, historical, economic or political common ground in Central and Eastern Europe. The RECOOP Association's Research Networks could be a model for other regions worldwide in Africa, Asia, North and South America to improve women's and children's health.

In the Global Health Initiative the U.S. Department of State is already building public – private partnership that could be the frame for the regional network development and scientific competitiveness.

A strong public – private partnership would be fundamental for the research networks and for the regional young scientists' life sciences conferences. Besides industry (Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology & Life Sciences, Health Care Equipment & Services; Food and Beverage, Information Technology, and Energy), we should look for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Warren Edward Buffett, the William J. Clinton Foundation to take part in the development of the regional networks and conferences.

We should build on the "*Gates-Buffett Giving Pledge*". On December 9, 2010, Buffett, Bill Gates, and Mark Zuckerberg, signed a promise they called the "*Gates-Buffett Giving Pledge*", in which they promised to donate to charity at least half of their wealth over time, and invited others among the wealthy to donate 50% or more of their wealth to charity.

Most cordially,

DR. SANDOR G. VARI, MD

Director, International Research and
Innovation Management Program at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center &
General Manager of the RECOOP HST Consortium

6420 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 300, Los Angeles, CA 90048-5502, USA

Tel: 1 323-866-8122; 1 323-866 -6824, Mob: 1 818 398-2642

vari@cshs.org