

Launch of the H2020 LeiSHield-MATI consortium

The LeiSHield-MATI consortium represents a multi-disciplinary international effort to identify clinical, molecular and social factors impacting cutaneous leishmaniasis across Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Iran (MATI region). The project is conducted in partnership with MATI IPIN member institutes and is funded by the Horizon 2020 research and innovation program.

We are happy to announce the start of the project on the first of April 2018. The kick-off meeting was organised in Tunis (Tunisia) from the 6th to the 10th of May. The project is coordinated by Dr. Gérald SPAETH, head of the Molecular parasitology and Signaling Unit, and managed by the Grants Office of Institut Pasteur. It is financed under the funding line “excellent science” of the Horizon 2020 research and innovation program of the European Commission and the specific action Marie Skłodowska-Curie: Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE).

The major goal of the LeiSHield-MATI project is to establish a novel collaborative platform across the EU and CL-endemic countries in Africa and Asia. The consortium applies a systems-level, integrative approach to gain novel insight into parasite-vector-host interactions and local transmission cycles through research and innovation staff exchange and knowledge sharing, bringing together unique expertise and infrastructures of its partners from EU and disease-endemic areas in Africa and Asia. The project is expected to deliver candidate biomarkers with prognostic value for disease outcome and parasite drug susceptibility, and to stimulate future development of new therapeutic and preventive measures.

LeiSHield-MATI will run for 48 months and will capitalise from the International Network of Institut Pasteur and European partners. The partners of the project have an outstanding expertise in all aspects of *Leishmania* research and deliver important national public health services for surveillance of infectious diseases, vector control, and vaccination.

Members of the interdisciplinary and intersectorial network of the project are:

- Institut Pasteur (France), Coordination
- Institut Pasteur d’Iran (Iran)
- Institut Pasteur du Maroc (Maroc)
- Institut Pasteur de Tunis (Tunisia)
- Institut Pasteur d’Algérie (Algeria)
- Goeteborgs Universitet (Sweden)
- ACOBIOM (France)
- Univerzita Karlova (Czechia)
- Institute of Tropical Medicine (Belgium)

Details on the previously funded LeiSHield pilot project can be found at <http://www.leishield.org/>. The website of the LeiSHield-MATI project will be available soon.

For any further information please contact the scientific coordinator (gerald.spaeth@pasteur.fr) or the project manager Maëlle Pichard (maelle.pichard@pasteur.fr).

- On behalf of all LeiSHield-MATI partners –



Attendants of the LeiSHield-MATI kick off meeting held in Tunis from the 6th to the 10th of May 2016.

