



101005177 — COVID-RED

COVID-RED

**WP7 – Project management,
coordination, and
sustainability**

D7.15 Definition of the areas of collaboration

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Document History

Version	Date	Description
V1.1	07/05/2021	Draft
V1.2	021/03/2022	Final version

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Abstract

With the current investment in COVID-related research, it is of critical importance that information exchange and cross project learning is optimized in order to assure synergies and avoid duplication of efforts.

COVID-RED has agreed to enhance collaboration with the other projects that were awarded a grant in the area of therapeutics and diagnostics, as part of Call IMI2-2020-21-01 on the *Development of therapeutics and diagnostics combatting coronavirus infections*.

We envision that our cross-project collaboration will advance knowledge of SARS-CoV-2 and of the wider coronavirus family, with the aim of contributing to an efficient patient management and/or public health preparedness and response to current and future outbreaks of coronavirus infection. The total funding in respect to Call IMI2-2020-21-01 is €117 million which is distributed across 8 selected projects. There are 5 diagnostics projects (COVID-RED, DECISION, KRONO, RAPID-COVID, DRAGON) and 3 treatment projects (CARE, Imprentri, MAD-CoV 2).

It is expected that all 8 projects will interact with each other, with the aim of finding synergies to help maximize the impacts of each project. The ultimate aim would be to create an IMI2 COVID-19 Projects Community which not only fosters collaboration among the projects but also the field at large, both during project duration and after.

Additionally, all grants awarded are 'Complementary Grants' as specified for each project within the Grant Agreement signed by each partner for each of the 8 projects (ref. GA Articles 2, 31.6 and 41.4). As such, all 8 projects are expected to develop and sign a '*Collaboration Agreement*' as part of additional contract requisite during the initial phase of their implementation, as well as maximizing their participation to annual meetings to be organized by IMI.

The scope of the '*Collaboration Agreement*' focuses on sharing relevant information, identifying relevant results and efforts to identify points of collaboration which may be formalized via 'Further Collaboration Agreements' (between individual projects or groups). The '*Collaboration Agreement*' is not a binding document and it also does not formalize any further type of collaboration between any projects.

Methods

During the first period of COVID-RED (M1-M18), the set up and collaborative definition of a practical way of working together was prioritized to help facilitate discussions and follow-up decisions on executable collaborations. A series of actions have illustrated the work done by the multi-project approach led by DRAGON. These are:

- Signing of the collaboration agreement – nearing completion
- Identify and agree on modes of engagement, communication & dissemination – achieved in February 2021
- Continue discussions on synergies – ongoing.
- Partake in IMI recommended meetings and activities – ongoing.

To help facilitating exchanges, a working methodology was agreed amongst all collaborative partners. It consists of:

- Identifying key modes and tools to be used within the community are critical to facilitate engagement and communication, and putting in place a shared communication platform via MS Teams (achieved in February 2021).
- Creating a shared contact database – achieved, Excel sheet entitled '*IMI2 COVID-19 Community_Key Info*' uploaded to Microsoft (MS) Teams
- Housing pertinent information related to each project – ongoing, Excel sheet entitled '*IMI2 COVID-19 Community_Key Info*' uploaded to MS Teams.

- Planning a series of collaborative meeting to keep abreast with progress of the various projects, periodic engagement. The below table shows the meetings that have taken place within the COVID-19 projects by August 2021

Date	Meeting Description	Participants & Attendance
2 December 2021	IMI2 Collaboration Agreement Meeting among Call 21 projects on COVID-19	
16 July 2021	IMI COVID-19 projects - Diagnostic - 1st REGULATORY MASTERMIND	
18 June 2021	IMI COVID-19 Projects call in June	reps of 8 COVID-19 projects
16 April 2021	IMI COVID-19 Projects - Diagnostic - Design sprint call.	reps of DECISION, COVID-RED, KRONO, DRAGON and RAPID-COVID
11 Feb 2021	Signing of Collaboration Agreement	Reps of 5 projects KRONO & DECISION not in attendance
15 Jan 2021	DRAGON-Impentri to discuss proteomics testing	DRAGON & Impentri reps
1 Dec 2020	DRAGON initiated meeting with all 8 projects to discuss potential areas of collaboration	Reps of 7 projects. COVID-RED not in attendance
8 Oct 2020	IMI meeting with projects	IMI & reps of 8 COVID-19 projects

COVID-RED and DRAGON have also met together outside the above schedule as both projects use AI technologies to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. DRAGON's use of machine learning in diagnosing and predicting healthcare outcomes following a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection complement our at-home monitoring approach. Our first kick-off meeting with DRAGON took place on 28 June 2021.

Results

Cross-project pollination between all / almost all 8 projects

On April 16th, 2021, all projects were invited to join an online Design sprint session in order to further define joint activities, to develop innovative ideas for joint collaborations, and to develop a strategic action plan for the activities generated, using a mastermind method and tools.

The results of this collaborative session are shared, as an example, in appendix 1 of this report.

Bi-project pollination

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Beyond tangible collaborations in research which are either yet to be defined or require further discussion, other ideas the projects could participate in are outlined below, and could be executed in the second period of the COVID-RED project:

- Communication Activities, such as supporting other projects with social media amplification; organize science day or mini conference with open registration with sessions, networking tables and 1-1 networking or content focused around sharing key project results; organize

workshops on data standards, AI, apps or invitation to events organized by the project or project partner. Below are some examples proposed by DRAGON:

- COVID-19: State of the art – DRAGON IMI project on 29 April 2021
- 1st DRAGON Roleplay Roundtable to be scheduled end June-early July 2021
- Ethics & Regulatory Activities, such as formation of Ethics Advisory Board (including regulatory experts) for all 8 projects.
- Stakeholder engagement Activities, such as providing access to broader stakeholders by forming a community.

Development of a mutual *Collaboration Agreement*

The scope of the ‘Collaboration Agreement’ focuses on sharing relevant information, identifying relevant results and efforts to identify points of collaboration which may be formalized via ‘Further Collaboration Agreements’ (between individual projects or groups). The ‘Collaboration Agreement’ is not a binding document and it also does not formalize any further type of collaboration between any projects.

It was agreed with all 8 projects on June 18th, 2021, that, in order to fasten the review process of the “*Collaboration Agreement*”, the template will be drafted from the contents of the Grant Agreement model, which is mutually shared and approved amongst all granted projects.

The revised *Collaboration Agreement template* was shared with all projects on July 5th, 2021, and the internal, project-level review of it was achieved by the beginning of September 2021.

Conclusion

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innovative
medicines
initiative

History of change

IMI2/INT/2016-00954	Version dated 2016
IMI2/INT/2016-00954 v. 2019:	Updated version Simplification cover page Replace "publishable summary" by "summary.to avoid any confusion with the dissemination level of the deliverable.