

# **Settlement of the second WIB call. Expanding the area of scientific research supported by the WIB from the Polish Science Fund.**

**The second call for proposals under the Virtual Research Institute has ended. The expert panel did not refer any of the applications submitted in the call for funding. By the decision of the Minister of Education and Science, the area of research supported by the Polish Science Fund is extended to include all medical biotechnology. Lukasiewicz - PORT launched arrangements for the announcement of the third WIB call.**

## **Second WIB call**

The second Call for Proposals to select Research Teams conducting scientific activities in the form of the Virtual Research Institute in the field of medical biotechnology - oncology has ended. Following scientific and socio-economic evaluations completed by an international panel of experts, none of the proposals was recommended for funding.

The call included eight applications, prepared by consortiums gathering a total number of twenty scientific units from all over Poland. In their reviews, the experts entrusted with evaluating the applications stressed the very high scientific level of the proposed projects. However, none of the applications met the socio-economic criteria to the extent that funding could be granted. The experts unanimously stressed that the business side, which is crucial in this competition, needed to be refined in the submitted projects. The goal of research teams receiving funding under the WIB program is to develop a new technology or group of technologies with high commercialization potential, which can be implemented within a maximum of five years from the start of work.

In the first two WIB calls, the research area in which scientific teams could apply for funding was defined as medical biotechnology - oncology. In connection with the amendment of the [\*\*Announcement on the area of scientific activity funded by the Polish Science Fund and the amount and period of this funding of the area\*\*](#) in the planned third competition, the area of research will be expanded, so that scientists from all fields of medical biotechnology will have the opportunity to submit their applications.

Lukasiewicz - PORT works intensively on both preparation and announcement of the next WIB call, with a total pool of PLN 380 million. The call for applications will be preceded by information meetings and advisory activities aimed at potential leaders and institutions interested in participating in the program, which offers attractive funding for scientific research with high commercialization potential in Poland.

## **What is the Virtual Research Institute?**

The Virtual Research Institute is a program that funds research with high commercialization potential. The WIB was established on the basis of the Act of April 4, 2019, on Supporting Scientific Activity from the Polish Science Fund. The Ministry of Education and Science has allocated a record amount of PLN 450 million for this purpose. The program is directed to the most outstanding and talented Polish scientists conducting activities at the highest world level - representatives of

universities and scientific and research institutes. The Managing Entity of the program is Łukasiewicz – PORT Polish Center for Technology Development based in Wrocław.

Funds awarded under the call are intended to finance teams conducting scientific activities in the field of medical biotechnology and the commercialization of the results of their work or related know-how. The program provides the opportunity to finance up to 100% of the costs of research tasks, and offers team members and their institutions significant shares of future revenues from the commercialization of research results. Łukasiewicz – PORT, as the Managing Entity of the WIB Program, coordinates activities aimed at protecting the intellectual property developed and is responsible for its subsequent commercialization, taking over the conduct of costly, time-consuming and complicated procedures.

### **First WIB call**

In the first WIB call, a project called “Horizon for Excellence in messenger RNA applications in immunoOncology [HERO],” led by Prof. Andrzej Dziembowski of the International Institute of Molecular and Cellular Research in Warsaw, was designated for funding by experts. The aim of the HERO Research Team is to develop a highly effective therapeutic mRNA technology and its application in cancer immunotherapy. The agreement on funding the HERO team was signed in January 2022. Research is ongoing.

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