

## **Analytical report to show the alignment of results from JPco-fuND-funded projects to JPND's overall goals and objectives**

### **Executive Summary**

*In 2017, JPND evaluated projects supported under the 2015 JPco-fuND call in order to determine the extent to which these ongoing projects contribute to the overall goals and objectives of JPND and address the scientific priorities of its Research Strategy. A summary of the report is provided below.*

On January 8, 2015, JPND and the European Commission together launched a call for research projects on neurodegenerative diseases in three priority research areas: risk and protective factors, longitudinal cohorts and advanced experimental models. Following an evaluation procedure based on scientific excellence and budget availability, 21 projects were selected for funding (38% of submitted full proposals and 12% of all initially submitted pre-proposals).

As outlined in the JPco-fuND initiative, all projects supported under the call will be evaluated to assess their contribution to the goals set out in the JPND Research Strategy. To this end, JPND is monitoring each project during its lifetime to determine if scientific results are in line with the initial proposal and how major project outcomes are contributing to JPND's strategic goals.

In the first half of 2017, each project submitted an annual report for 2016 that provided details of the work carried out to date and the achieved results. To perform the monitoring described here, each of these annual reports was reviewed together with the full proposals submitted by the projects during the application procedure. The assessment focused on three main aspects, each of which is described below in further detail: evaluation of project activities; evaluation of major project achievements; and alignment with JPND's scientific priorities.

#### *Evaluation of project activities*

This monitoring exercise aimed to investigate whether projects are proceeding in line with their initial project plan, if challenges have arisen and the reason for any amendments. Eighteen projects reported work in line with the initial project plan or only slight delays in activities. Eleven projects reported some problems, most of which have already been solved or are on the way to being overcome. In about half of the projects, some amendments to the original plan have been made, and these changes have generally improved project quality.

Moreover, the monitoring exercise examined the extent to which project partners have been interacting within consortia. Twelve groups have already exchanged researchers and students for planning, training, and working purposes. In general, the assessment found efficient interaction between partners in terms of exchange of technologies, knowledge, methods and researchers in most projects.

#### *Evaluation of major project achievements*

The monitoring exercise also took into account the main scientific results achieved by JPco-fuND-supported projects during the first year. Most groups presented output in line with project plans and resources. A total of 16 scientific publications, all in the basic research area, were already released from seven projects.

Meetings (including kick-off meetings), symposia, and web-based communications on project topics were organized in the first year of activity and reported in the annual report of most of the projects.

*Alignment with JPND's scientific priorities*

Finally, the monitoring exercise investigated how the priorities outlined in the JPND Research Strategy are addressed by the funded projects. The priorities of the 21 projects include: *The origins of neurodegenerative diseases; Disease mechanisms and models; Disease definitions and diagnosis; and Treatments and prevention.*

Among these priorities, the projects explored a range of new research areas and trajectories, such as the development of innovative approaches for studying specific pathogenic pathways and the novel identification of basic molecular underpinnings of different diseases.