



Together,  
let's beat  
cancer.

# **Tips for ending up with a successful H2020 proposal**

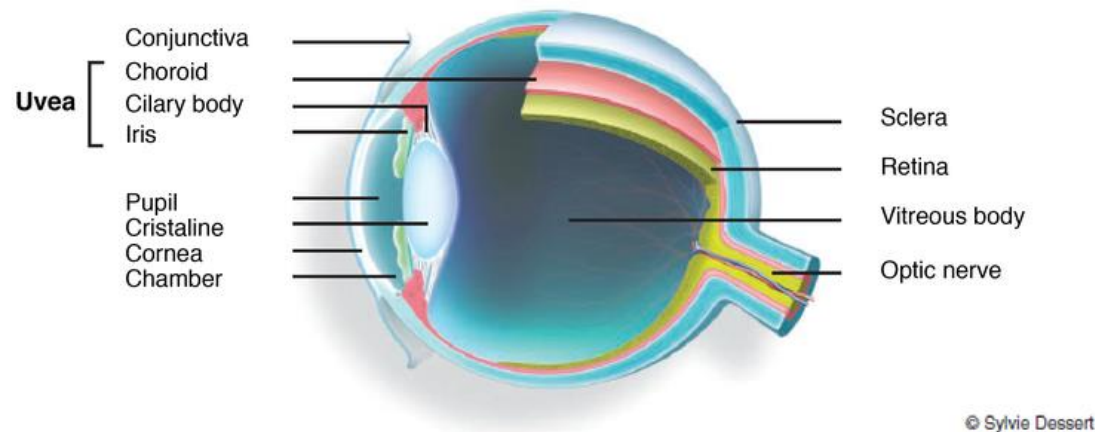
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## **Experience sharing from the UM Cure 2020 project**

**Emilie Vinolo**, CEO, seeding science – Project manager of UM Cure 2020

**H2020 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' OPEN INFO DAY  
Brussels, July 8, 2016**

## New Therapies for Uveal Melanoma



- Rare intraocular tumour, with **5 cases per million individuals/year**
- Most frequent eye cancer in adults
- Current treatments for primary UM are effective, however **up to 30% of patients develop metastases most often in the liver.**
- Despite recent significant insights into the genetic molecular background of primary UM (driver mutations and alterations responsible for oncogenesis and progression), **very little is known about the metastases of UM, which are invariably fatal.**



**Overall goal of the project = develop new therapeutic approaches to treat metastatic UM**

# The application process

## Two-stage

### **Call PHC-14-2015 “New Therapies for rare diseases”**

- Deadline Stage 1 application: October 14, 2014
- Information on positive evaluation: January 27, 2014
- Deadline Stage 2 application: April 21, 2015
- Information on funding: August 26, 2015
- September > December 2015: Grant Agreement negotiation
- January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016: Official project start

# Statistics for PHC-14-2015 Stage 2

- **121 proposals received**
- **Above threshold = 52 (43%)**
- **Short-listed (success rate) = 10 (8%)**
- **Reserve = 3**
- **Coverage of the topic = YES**

# Three major keys of success

- 1. Insure your project fits to the topic description 100%  
& keep EU “buzzwords/keywords” in mind**
- 2. Carefully build your consortium of partners**
- 3. Get help from someone knowledgeable and able to devote  
the necessary time to the proposal preparation (and beyond)**

# 1. Fitness to the topic description

Specific challenge: (...) Specific problems posed in therapy development for rare diseases include **the small and dispersed patient populations** (...).

Scope: **Proposals may address one or more of the following: development of new or improved therapeutic approaches, for repurposing of existing therapies, as well as for preclinical research, animal model development and good manufacturing practice (GMP) production.**

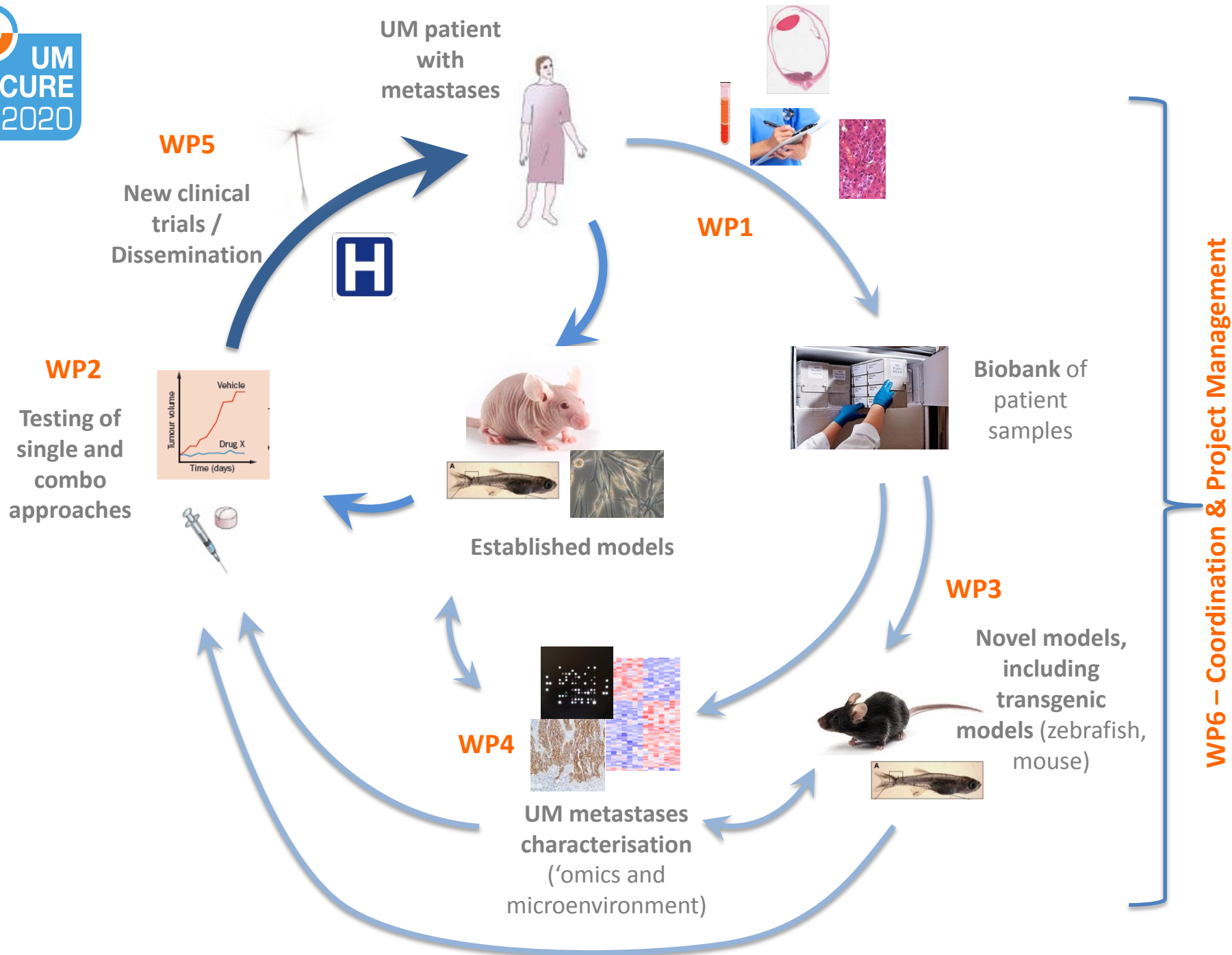
Proposed treatments to be developed **may range from small molecule to gene or cell therapy.** (...)

Selected proposals should **contribute to the objectives of, and follow the guidelines and policies of the International Rare Diseases Research Consortium, IRDiRC.**

# 1. Fitness to the topic description

Impact: This should provide:

- **Advancing the development of new therapeutic options** for patients living with rare diseases.
- In line with the Union's strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation, **proposals should contribute towards IRDiRC objectives.**
  - overarching IRDiRC objective = develop 200 new therapies for rare diseases by 2020
  - guidelines and policies of IRDiRC = includes the involvement of patients/patients representatives, sharing of data and resources, dissemination to all relevant stakeholders ...





Jan. 2016

Jan. 2019

Dec. 2020

WP6 – Coordination &amp; Project Management

**WP1 – European UM Biobank Network**

Homogenising UM referral centres biobanks SOPs &amp; Prospective collection of UM patients samples

**WP3 – Development of next generation preclinical models**Mouse PDX/CDX and GEMs, *in vitro*, and zebrafish ZF and GEM models**WP4 – Characterisation of UM metastases**

Generating better knowledge on metastatic UM and new target hypotheses for WP2

**WP2 – Preclinical evaluation of biology-driven therapeutic approaches**

First phase based on current disease knowledge and models

Second phase with new hypotheses (WP4) &amp; new models (WP3)

Innovative peptidic approach: Peptides in development &amp; Design of new peptides based on WP4

**WP5 – Dissemination & Implementation through clinical trials initiation**

Communication tools, UM patient network, Dissemination to Pharma for initiation of clinical trials

UM patient network &amp; Clinical trials

# EU buzzwords/keywords

Use these words wherever relevant in your proposal:

- The ones identified in the topic text.
- Others such as Innovation, Gender balance, Gendered Innovation, Dissemination, Open access, Data management, Stakeholder, End user, **\*\*Ethics\*\***, Exploitation...

## 2. Your Consortium

Equilibrium to find between:

- Institutions from different regions of Europe
- Academic vs. SMEs
- Patient associations/representatives
- Any additional requirement in the text of the call (e.g. regulatory, economic aspects)
- Track record in the field (and networked partners) vs. “outsiders”
- Innovative partners
- Complementary expertise / Trans-disciplinarity to meet the call’s needs
- Test their reliability during proposal preparation



**Build a dream team**

# Consortium of EU experts in UM

- **4 UM referral centres** across Europe, Comprehensive Cancer Centre or University Hospitals: IC, UoL, LUMC, JU
- **3 Research Institutes:** CRUKMI, LU, UNITN
- **2 biotech or diagnostics companies:** PT and PG
- **1 Foundation:** CF
- **1 patient network:** MPNE
- **1 project management company:** SSC



### 3. Get help from someone who knows and has time

Why?

- Applications to Horizon 2020 are very specific and you will benefit from someone having experience in writing such proposals, in particular for Sections “Excellence” and “Impact”.
- It takes much time to write and fine-tune + obtain the necessary information from all partners, in particular for Sections 4 (Members of the Consortium) and 5 (Ethics and Security issues)!!
  - Nber of days (8h/day) spent on **Stage 1** application = **8.5 days**
  - Nber of days spent on **Stage 2** application = **31 days**
  - 2 F2F meetings (1<sup>st</sup> before Stage 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> upon starting Stage 2 prep)
  - Stage 2: Weekly TCs during 2 months to finalise the work plan
  - Nber of days spent on **negotiation of the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement** = **20 days**

### 3. Get help from someone who knows and has time

- It is even more important now that there is no “real” negotiation with the Commission anymore, projects are funded as they are.
- If possible, also ask someone “external” to the Consortium to review the proposal and proofread the English.
- Write simple.

# Good luck, and thank you!



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## New Therapies for Uveal Melanoma

- **Specific objectives:**
  - **Better characterise UM mets** by collecting patients' samples and establishing a European UM virtual biobank registry (WP1);
  - Evaluate single drugs or combinations in preclinical models to **identify novel therapeutic options for treatment of metastatic UM** (WP2);
  - **Further develop relevant *in vitro* and *in vivo* models** to better understand the mechanisms of UM oncogenesis and progression and evaluate promising therapies (WP3);
  - Decipher genetic alterations and dysregulated signalling pathways in metastatic UM, and the characteristics of UM immune landscape, to **identify novel targets and biomarkers** (WP4);
  - Ensure **wide-spread dissemination and maximal exploitation of the results**, in particular through the initiation of UM-dedicated clinical trials, and through the networking and empowerment of UM patients across Europe (WP5).