

- Coordinating and maintaining strong relationships with U.S. national authorities and the EC, as well as stakeholders in the S&T agreements, including other European networks and the scientific communities in both regions. Meetings, workshops and events will be employed to reach out to these communities and networks.

3. Expected impact

The Link2US activities will directly contribute to the improvement of the awareness by European researchers and organisations of, and enhance their access to, U.S. programmes, by establishing a centralised information platform about the funding programmes and their rules for participation. The proposed analysis of existing and potential obstacles to participation will further lower barriers for European researchers and organisations interested in pursuing research with American partners. Recognizing that effective S&T cooperation requires the active engagement of all parties, Link2US will also strengthen the reciprocity on the U.S.-side of U.S.-European S&T agreements, directly through the survey and analysis of the S&T agreements, and indirectly through enabling European researchers and organisations to more easily identify opportunities for participation in U.S. programmes.

List of Partners

- **American Association for the Advancement of Science – AAAS – USA**
- **Osterreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft (Austrian Research Promotion Agency) – FFG – Austria**
- **Tudományos és Technológiai Alapítvány (Hungarian Science and Technology Foundation) – TETALAP – Hungary**
- **Agenzia per la Promozione della Ricerca Europea (Agency for the Promotion of European Research) – APRE – Italy**



USA

European Union – United States Research Cooperation Network: Link to the United States – Link2US

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

1. Background and objectives

The United States and European cooperation on science has been underpinned by historical ties and extensive relationships between individual European and American scientists and research organizations. To continue to advance science and address global challenges, an increasing degree of cooperation and coordination is required. The European Union and the United States first signed an S&T cooperation agreement that entered into force in 1998 and was renewed in 2004 and again in 2008 for additional periods of five years. While cooperative research has been primarily funded according to where each participating research institution is based, to further enhance cooperation the United States and the European Commission (EC) are opening up funding opportunities to scientists and research organizations based on foreign soil. For example, in 2008, the then director of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), Dr. Elias Zerhouni, signed an agreement with EC Commissioner for Research, Dr. Janez Potocnik, reaffirming that biomedical research funding from NIH and the Framework Programme are open to scientists whether based in the Europe



Union or United States. However, advancing the Trans-Atlantic partnership in science and technology has been limited in part by the challenges in understanding a highly decentralised funding infrastructure in the United States. Therefore, in order for third countries and regions like the EU and their S&T communities to best take advantage of the cooperation agreement with the United States, the nature of U.S. cooperation programmes among all the major governmental S&T organisations should be elucidated and presented.

The overall objective for this project is to improve the awareness by European scientists and research organisations of U.S. collaborative funding schemes and their success in participating in the programmes and actions to enhance cooperative research with American counterparts and therefore take fuller advantage of the bilateral S&T agreements. Link2US strives to identify opportunities for participation by European researchers in U.S. federal government research collaboration programmes, provide a central access point and network through which to provide such information, assist these researchers and organisations in finding funding opportunities to support collaborative activities, and analyse barriers to cooperation and the reciprocity conditions in S&T agreements to support the EC.

Link2US is also developed in a complementary way with the BILAT-USA project. Between the Link2US and BILAT-USA projects, a systematic and comprehensive approach will be ensured to cover the research communities in the United States as well as the EU with the perspective of fostering cooperation in national U.S. programmes as well as the EU Framework Programme.

We are delighted to work with our European partners in making Link2US a strong contributor to strengthening US-EU scientific collaborations.

2. Implementation and dissemination activities

Link2US will pursue the following three major areas of activity:

- Elucidating the U.S. national funding programmes by mapping opportunities for collaborative funding schemes, surveying bilateral agreements between the United States and the EU and Member States and analysing their reciprocity conditions, analysing barriers to cooperation through surveys of European and U.S. participants, and monitoring the participation of European researchers in U.S. funding schemes. Analyses of the funding scheme data, cooperation agreements, and European researcher participation experience will provide the most valuable recommendations to the EC.
- Raising awareness and providing assistance to European researchers on the U.S. cooperative funding programmes and the intricacies of these programmes through online resource networks. A website, funding programmes catalogue, brochure, electronic communications and a virtual help desk will be developed and utilized to stimulate, encourage and facilitate the participation of European researchers and organizations in U.S. cooperative funding schemes. These mechanisms will serve as a single source of information about U.S. funding schemes in the United States that facilitate EU-U.S. cooperation.