



PF 2025

*May Your New Year
Be Full of Discoveries*



Opening words



Dear colleagues, dear friends,

Let me thank you from the bottom of my heart for your cooperation this year – such a special year for our Agency. I am delighted that on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Czech Health Research Council of the Czech Republic (AZV ČR) we were able to organize a festive conference, which was attended by more than 160 guests at the Congress Centre of the Czech National Bank in Prague, where, among other things, we gave special awards to nine scientists whose projects were selected as the most successful in the entire history of the AZV ČR. Congratulations to all the award-winning colleagues and their research teams, and I am confident that we will have the opportunity to contribute to further inspiring discoveries and innovations in the coming ten years, together with other outstanding research teams.

In other positive news, our Agency's nine expert review panels were enriched by more than two dozen top experts, selected on the basis of more stringent requirements for their professional quality. Personally, I am pleased that we are succeeding in increasing the representation of women in the various evaluation panels and that our efforts to achieve gender balance in their composition are succeeding.

A major milestone in the life of our Agency was the approval in May this year of an amendment to the Programme for the Support of Applied Health Research 2024–2030, which led to its extension to include Sub-programme 3: European Partnerships in Health. In this context, four co-funded transnational calls have already been launched with a contribution from the European Commission for each European Partnership. I am convinced that this initiative represents an important tool to promote scientific excellence in the Czech Republic and an opportunity for Czech scientists to join major European consortia addressing priority issues in contemporary biomedical research.

I wish you all a peaceful Christmas holidays and good health, well-being and success in the coming year!

*I look forward to continued cooperation,
Ondřej Slabý*

We celebrated our 10th birthday!

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the AZV ČR, a festive conference was held on 12 September 2024 at the Congress Centre of the Czech National Bank in Prague. The expert programme included presentations by 17 researchers of the best evaluated projects completed in 2023, ten of which were nominated for awards by the Minister of Health. The participants of the conference had the opportunity to get acquainted with all the winners of the Minister of Health Award for Health Research and Development at a poster exhibition.

During the gala evening, the book *Pathological Microscopic Findings in Skeletal Remains of Important Personalities of Czech History*, authored by Professor Ctibor Povýšil, a long-time collaborator of the Agency, was launched. The imaginary highlight of the evening programme was the presentation of the Awards of the President of the AZV ČR, which are awarded on the occasion of significant events in the history of the Agency – this time

on the occasion of its 10th anniversary. Nine scientists whose supported projects were selected as the most successful in the entire history of the Agency received special awards: Běla Bendlová (Institute of Endocrinology, Prague), Pavel Osmančík (Third Faculty of Medicine, Charles University; University Hospital Královské Vinohrady), Pavel Klener (First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University; General University Hospital in Prague), Karel Šonka (First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University; General University Hospital in Prague), Tomáš Kalina (Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University; Motol University Hospital), Pavel Krejčí (Faculty of Medicine, Masaryk University), Jan Lebl (Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University; Motol University Hospital), Aleš Hampl (Faculty of Medicine, Masaryk University) and Radka Bužgová (Faculty of Medicine, University of Ostrava).

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Awards of the Minister of Health for Medical Research and Development



Last year, 103 projects supported by our Agency were completed, with expert panels finally selecting the seventeen top-ranked ones as candidates for the Minister of Health Award for Health Research and Development in 2024. All these projects were presented by their researchers at a gala conference organized by the AZV ČR in September. It should be highlighted that each of these projects has produced outstanding results, many of which have a direct impact on healthcare. The members of the Board and the Scientific Board of our Agency were therefore faced with a difficult task in selecting the ten

best projects by secret ballot, whose researchers were then recommended to the Minister of Health for awards. The Minister of Health Award for Medical Research and Development was finally presented on 10 December at the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague to Daniel Fischerová (First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University), Marek Mráz (University Hospital Brno), David Jahoda (Motol University Hospital), Martin Balík (General University Hospital in Prague) and Robert Jech (First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University). Honorary recognition from the hands of the Minister was received by Radim Nencka (Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry of the CAS), Martin Repko (Faculty of Medicine, Masaryk University), Tomáš Kalina (Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University), Michaela Reiterová (Second Faculty of Medicine, Charles University) and Pavla Brennan Kearns (National Institute of Mental Health). Congratulations!

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Already 4 calls in European Partnerships have been announced!



During November and December, four co-funded transnational calls with a contribution from the European Commission for each European Partnership have already been launched under Sub-programme 3: European Partnerships in Health. These are:

- the ERA4Health (ERA for Health Research) partnership call „Fostering Pragmatic Comparative-Effectiveness Trials in Non-communicable Diseases“ (EffecTrial);
- THCS (Transforming Health and Care Systems) partnership call: Better care closer to home: Enhancing primary and community care;
- ERDERA (European Rare Diseases Research Alliance) partnership call: Pre-clinical therapy studies for rare diseases

using small molecules and biologicals – development and validation;

- PerMed (European Partnership for Personalised Medicine) call: Pharmacogenomic strategies for personalised medicine approaches (PGxPM2025).

For more information on the conditions for Czech applicants to participate in the call, mandatory annexes and other documents, please visit our website or contact Monika Kocmanová, European Partnerships in Health Coordinator.

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Don't forget the interim and final reports in January

We would like to remind project developers that the deadline for the submission of partial reports for ongoing projects is 21 January 2025 and for the submission of final reports for completed projects is 31 January 2025. Thank you for your timely cooperation.

Memorandum of Cooperation with BBMRI.cz

Our Agency and the large research infrastructure BBMRI.cz (Biobanking and BioMolecular Resources Research Infrastructure) have concluded a Memorandum of Cooperation in November 2024. The two institutions intend to work together to address the challenges associated with the collection, processing, quality control and archiving of biological material, along with the management of data associated with biological material.

The announcement of „VES 2026“ is approaching!

Don't forget that the announcement of the next „VES 2026“ call will take place in the first half of February 2025, with the deadline for submission of project proposals falling in the second half of March. The supported projects will thus be available as early as 1 January 2026, i.e. for a project duration of 48 months.