

The official kick-off meeting of the METAFLUIDICS project was held in Brussels on 16 June 2016 in presence of Mr. Ioannis Vouldis, project officer of the European Commission (EC). This Horizon 2020 project includes the participation of 5 companies, 4 universities and 4 research organisations from 6 different countries, whose representatives were all present to officially start up the project. Dr. Aurelio Hidalgo (Dept. of Molecular Biology, UAM) coordinates this action with a budget of over €1.1 million, in which UAM will carry out tasks related to developing different enrichment and screening assays for metagenomic libraries in microfluidic format.

After a formal introduction by project coordinator Dr. Aurelio Hidalgo, Mr. Vouldis presented an introduction to Horizon 2020 and its best practices, followed by a discussion over the project's management and implementation. Intellectual property rights, as well as the dissemination, exploitation and communication plans were also broached before launching some preliminary scientific discussions.

Over the next 4 years, a total amount of over € 8.8 million will be funded by the European Commission in this project, with the objective of integrating a range of technologies into a platform designed to beat the odds of identifying hits in metagenomic libraries faster, more efficiently and by a wider user base. This platform will be used to identify enzymes for biosynthesis of therapeutic small molecules, for green bioenergy conversion, bioremediation, food chemistry and other industrial applications.

The next consortium meeting will be held in Madrid (Spain) in May 2017.

