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PRESS RELEASE

Novel solutions for the detection of infectious diseases: New excellence hub at FORTH in collaboration with Oeiras - Portugal

The IMBB-FORTH, a pioneer in the research of infectious diseases and biomedical technologies, will coordinate the creation of a new Center of Excellence (**DxHub**) to promote **innovative solutions for the detection of infectious diseases**. The competitive grant from the EU, totaling 4.7M€, was secured in partnership with the University of Crete, the Prefecture of Crete, the Public Health Organization Crete (EOPY) and the private sector, and in collaboration with respective partners in the Oeiras region of Portugal. The program is coordinated by **Prof. Electra Gizeli**, member of the Department of Biology of the University of Crete and Deputy Director of IMBB-FORTH.

Emerging and re-emerging animal diseases increase challenges for animal and human health on a global scale due to viral zoonoses and vector-borne diseases. Southern Europe is particularly vulnerable to the emergence and transmission of infectious diseases dependent on climate change and serves as a gateway to Northern Europe. Today, the effective and timely monitoring of disease vectors and the diagnosing of the diseases in humans and animals is a global challenge. The main aim of the program is to promote scientifically and technologically mature solutions from the laboratory to the society, for the on-site and real-time monitoring of human threats that could potentially develop into a pandemic or endemic disease. Other goals are the creation of new competitive products on a global scale, the creation of new jobs for highly skilled personnel, the training of researchers on health and innovation issues, and the creation of dialogue with the local community on the importance of effective disease-diagnosis for citizens and the economy. The collaboration between Crete and Oeiras will help strengthen the visibility and competitiveness of the two regions based on a coordinated plan to promote innovative high-value products and create start-up companies.

