

Dr Henning G  deke  
C/o Dr Michael Makanga  
Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking  
56 – 60 Avenue de la Toison d’Or  
1060 Brussels  
Belgium

Amsterdam  
17 Sept 2025

*Subject:* Letter of endorsement

Dear Dr Henning G  deke,

On behalf of the Leprosy Research Initiative (LRI), located at Wibautstraat 137k, 1097 DN Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and registered as a foundation under Dutch law at the Chamber of Commerce no 63431874, and in accordance with Council Regulation (EU) No 2085/2021 of 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021 establishing the joint undertakings under Horizon Europe and specifically Article 9 therein, I hereby submit an application to become a contributing partner to the Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking (Global Health EDCTP3 ).

Established in 2013, the **Leprosy Research Initiative (LRI)** is a partnership of international NGOs committed to advancing leprosy and related research. The LRI prioritizes promoting high-quality studies, strengthening research capacity in endemic regions, and translating findings into actionable policies. These efforts address critical challenges in controlling leprosy, (skin) neglected infectious diseases (NIDs), and other related infectious diseases. The partners contribute to a joint LRI fund.

The LRI focuses its research efforts on five key areas: diagnostic tests, disability, operational research, stigma and discrimination, and transmission. Guided by a Steering Committee, the initiative ensures research quality and relevance through a rigorous, independent scientific review process.

The goals of the LRI align closely with those of Global Health EDCTP3 , which fosters global health research in poverty-related diseases. Our shared objectives include:

1. Advancing research and innovation in diagnostics, treatments, and transmission control.
2. Strengthening research capacity in endemic regions.
3. Translating research into impactful health policies.
4. Building partnerships to amplify impact and efficiency.

In 2017, the LRI and the EDCTP Association also collaborated on a joint EDCTP2 call to leverage resources and pool funds for clinical and implementation research in sub-Saharan Africa. This joint effort resulted in the successful funding of two major leprosy-related research projects: PEOPLE and PEP4LEP.



The LRI proposes a collaborative contribution to Global Health EDCTP3 through a joint call for research proposals targeting leprosy and related infectious diseases. This contribution aligns with Global Health EDCTP3's strategic objectives to advance research and innovation addressing poverty-related infectious diseases in low- and middle-income countries.

**LRI's primary contribution would be financial, providing funding for successful applications focused on research on NIDs, including leprosy. Additionally, LRI will provide in-kind operational support, offering expertise and monitoring capabilities to strengthen project execution.** Successful applicants will be invited to participate in the annual LRI Spring Meeting, where they can present research progress, receive expert feedback, and engage with peers. This collaborative environment fosters the exchange of lessons learned, promotes collective learning, strengthens capacities and stimulates working towards significant impact.

The Global Health EDCTP3 (draft) topic most relevant for a joint call, which has already been briefly discussed with Lara Pandya (Global Health EDCTP3 Team Leader, Strategic Partnerships and Communications) and Agustin Martin (Global Health EDCTP3 Strategic Partnerships Officer) and other relevant colleagues, is: ***Topic 1: Development of TB drugs for therapy and chemoprophylaxis in adults and children in sub-Saharan Africa (draft work programme 2026)***

A joint call aligned with this topic could be highly impactful if it combines both TB and leprosy post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). The rationale for such an approach lies in the significant similarities between these diseases (both caused by Mycobacteria infections) and the overlapping endemic regions in many sub-Saharan African countries. PEP has emerged as a promising strategy to prevent disease progression in individuals at risk due to potential infection, particularly in close contacts.

By including leprosy, a neglected tropical disease with significant health and social burden, the joint call would address critical research gaps aligned with the Global Health EDCTP3 priorities. It would leverage the established expertise and networks of both LRI and Global Health EDCTP3, strengthening research capacity in endemic regions and fostering innovation in prevention, diagnostics, treatment, and thus disease control. The selected project will contribute to advancing knowledge and strategies for PEP in the context of TB and leprosy, aligning with broader institutional goals in infectious disease control. For instance, through integrated implementation of PEP or by validating a uniform PEP regimen for both TB and leprosy diseases in a clinical trial. This collaboration will enhance efficiency and impact by pooling resources, expertise, and operational capacities, thereby accelerating the translation of research outcomes into policy and practice.

We estimate the total value of the LRI contribution to be EUR 400,000 (EUR 200,000 in 2026 and EUR 200,000 in 2027) to support successful applications from the Call, that includes leprosy as one of its focus areas. This co-funding would contribute to the overall budget of the selected topic call in 2026 and would be implemented by Global Health EDCTP3 .

We look forward to your response and our renewed collaboration. We are available for further discussion to refine this proposal and develop the call text.

We confirm the following:

1. We will comply with the Horizon Europe Regulation (EU) No 2021/695; Council Regulation (EU) No 2085/2021 establishing the joint undertakings under Horizon Europe; the Model Grant Agreement for Horizon Europe and applicable Global Health EDCTP3 rules, including the relevant work programmes and in particular the call conditions therein.
2. We will keep all information received in the context of our involvement as contributing partner to Global Health EDCTP3 confidential. This confidentiality obligation applies in particular but is not limited to the areas of Global Health EDCTP3 call topic preparation and publication, proposal submission and evaluation, and consortium formation. We further understand that this obligation strictly prohibits the release of confidential information to any legal entities save where specifically authorised by Global Health EDCTP3. Internal dissemination of information within our organisation will be done on the basis of the “need-to-know” principle.
3. We are confident of our ability to fulfil the above commitments and further confirm our understanding that Global Health EDCTP3 will allocate resources to the above topic based on these commitments.
4. The value of our contribution will be based on costs calculated in accordance with Article 6 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.
5. We accept that additional modalities regarding the provision of our contribution may be defined in subsequent agreements or documents, such as a funding agreement and topic text.

Yours faithfully,



Linda Hummel, Director LRI

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