

# European Partnership for Brain Health

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*Brain health is the state of brain functioning across cognitive, sensory, social-emotional, behavioural and motor domains, allowing a person to realize their full potential over the life course, irrespective of the presence or absence of disorder (WHO).*

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Understanding the brain in its complexity is one of the major challenges of mankind. Our brain determines humanity; its cognitive and emotional capabilities are the motor of technological innovation and societal progress. Consequently, neurological and mental disorders are a leading cause of mortality and disability in Europe and globally, putting a great burden on people living with brain disorders, their professional and informal carers, as well as healthcare systems and national economies as a whole. The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, the present geopolitical and environmental situation, notably wars and the climate crisis, as well as increasing economic pressure have further aggravated mental health problems, in particular for the most vulnerable. To take on these grand challenges, a coordinated, sustainable, and holistic research and innovation initiative, the European Partnership on Brain Health (EP BrainHealth), is envisaged as a major joint effort of the European Commission, Member States and Associated Countries. By capitalising on existing initiatives, synergies will be formed and links with all relevant stakeholders in the brain health sector and beyond will be strengthened to increase and align efforts and funding. A joint Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) and the resulting Implementation Plan will provide impetus to brain research, innovation, and health care to improve, maintain, and restore brain health in society.



The expected impact of the EP BrainHealth is an accelerated translation of research results into improved brain health protection- and care-strategies as well as new and better technology for diagnostics and treatment. The harmonization of approaches and consideration of legal, social, and ethical aspects of brain health research will improve the implementation of research results and public health policies. By focussing not only on brain disorders but also on the protection of brain health, while recognizing the neurodiversity and individual needs of the person behind the brain, the EP BrainHealth will pave the way to a healthier society.

Currently the EP BrainHealth is under preparation in the frame of the Coordination and Support Action (CSA) BrainHealth, supported by the European Commission. For this, joint efforts and collaboration among funders and all relevant stakeholders in Europe and beyond are essential.

#### **Potential partners and stakeholders**

EU-Member States, Associated, and Third Countries (policy makers and funding agencies in the area of e.g. health research, health care, social sciences and innovation)

- The EU Joint Programme – Neurodegenerative Disease Research (JPND) and the Network of European funding for Neuroscience research (NEURON).
- EBRAINS and European research infrastructures
- European societies and associations for neurological and psychiatric disorders, e.g. represented by the European Brain Council (EBC)
- Public-Private partnerships, other European Partnerships, ERA-Nets, and Missions (e.g. EIT Health, IHI, Rare Diseases, EP PerMed, Transforming Health and Care System, FLAG-ERA, Cancer Mission)
- The private sector, represented e.g. by relevant umbrella associations, such as European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)
- Patient and carer advocacy groups, citizens, and healthcare providers
- Regulators from European and national agencies
- Global Initiatives (e.g. WHO, OECD, GACD, IBRO)

#### **Planned actions along the SRIA and action plan**

- Joint support of research and innovation
- Collaboration, strategic alignment, and global dialogue
- Facilitating the use of EU infrastructures and platforms
- Bridging with healthcare providers, the private sector, regulators, and policy-makers
- Empowering citizens, people living with brain disorders and patients
- Capacities building in research and innovation

#### **Tentative duration**

7 – 10 years

#### **Expected start**

Q1 2026

#### **Lead**

Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Germany. Coordinated by the German Aerospace Center DLR.

#### **Modes of participation**

- Partner with financial commitment to overall budget (participation in work programme and funding of research proposals). The EC will request indicative financial commitments Q2 – Q3'24
- Partner without financial commitment (participation in work programme)
- Interested stakeholder (advice, information exchange)