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International Atomic Energy Agency

Agence internationale de l'énergie atomique

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National Liaison Officers /

National Coordinators

2023-02-02

Subject: Regional Training Course on Verification of Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) for New Serological and Molecular Techniques, Sofia, Bulgaria, from 15 to 19 May 2023

Dear National Liaison Officer / National Coordinator,

I am pleased to inform you that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is organizing the above event under the IAEA technical cooperation project INT5157, "Supporting National and Regional Capacity in Integrated Action for Control of Zoonotic Diseases."

The purpose of the event is to train participants on how to verify SOPs for new serological and molecular techniques for adoption in Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) National Laboratories (ZNLs) and enhance national and regional capacity in the surveillance, detection, characterization and control of emerging or re-emerging zoonotic diseases.

The attached Information Sheet provides further details, including technical and administrative aspects of the event. Selection of participants will be in accordance with IAEA procedures. Member States are strongly encouraged to identify women participants.

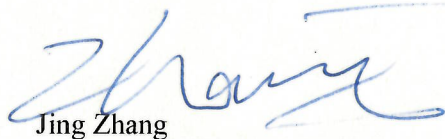
The IAEA will provide non-local participants with a round-trip air ticket based on the most direct and economical route between the airport nearest the participant's residence and Sofia or a travel allowance to purchase an air ticket. Travel details will be agreed with the participants upon receipt of their official nomination. Participants will also receive an allowance from the IAEA sufficient to cover their costs of lodging, daily subsistence and miscellaneous expenses for the duration of the event in line with IAEA rules and procedures.

We would appreciate receiving your country's nominations by **1 March 2023** through the IAEA's InTouch+ platform (<https://Intouchplus.iaea.org>). Should this not be possible, applicants may download the Nomination Form for the course from the [IAEA's webpage](#). Completed forms must be endorsed by the relevant government authority and may be sent to the IAEA, preferably by email to Official Mail - IAEA Mail address Official.Mail@iaea.org, with copy to Mr Jing Zhang J.Zhang@iaea.org. Please be advised that late nominations or replacements of participants after the closing date for nominations will

not be accepted.

We look forward to receiving your early response.

Yours sincerely,



Jing Zhang
Programme Management Officer
Division for Europe
Department of Technical Cooperation

Enclosure: Information Sheet



Regional Training Course on Verification of Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) for New Serological and Molecular Techniques

Hosted by

The Government of Bulgaria

through the

**Bulgarian Food Safety Agency
National Diagnostic and Research Veterinary Medical Institute**

Sofia, Bulgaria

15 to 19 May 2023

Ref. No.: TN-INT5157-2204003

Information Sheet

Purpose

The purpose of the event is to train participants on how to verify SOPs for new serological and molecular techniques for adoption in Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) National Laboratories (ZNLs) and enhance national and regional capacity in the surveillance, detection, characterization and control of emerging or re-emerging zoonotic diseases.

Working Language

The working language of the event will be **English**.

Deadline for Nominations

Nominations received after **1 March 2023** will not be considered.

Project Background

In the last few decades, multiple zoonotic diseases impacted public health, and the global economy. Early detection technologies are critical in the chain of disease control. They enable the rapid discovery of the source and movement of pathogens and the analysis, planning, and decision-making during the design and implementation of preventive or control measures.

The Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) Initiative was established by the IAEA to help MSs strengthen their preparedness and capabilities to rapidly detect and timely respond to outbreaks or pandemics caused by zoonotic diseases.

Under ZODIAC initiative, veterinary and public health officials from Member States can benefit from joint research and development activities and from expert guidance as well as from the technical, scientific and laboratory support of the IAEA and its partners. This includes technology transfer and capacity building, access to coordinated joint research, training, know-how, expertise and technology packages to enhance pathogen surveillance and disease diagnostics, along with prevention and response actions. Furthermore, it provides access to scientific and diagnostic data and a decision-making support system that can enable authorities to take timely science- and results-based decisions.

Scope and Nature

The scope of the training course is to upgrade knowledge of ZNLs in verification of new molecular and serological laboratory techniques:

- i. The internationally accepted practice, rules, and requirements for verification of new laboratory techniques will be reviewed by the experts in terms of Analytical sensitivity, Analytical specificity, Robustness, Repeatability, Reproducibility, Uncertainty, Proficiency testing etc.
- ii. Participants will be divided into 5 groups for laboratory sessions. During laboratory sessions participants, under the supervision of experts will do hands-on-practice with laboratory techniques for serological screening and results interpretation (ELISA), Real-Time PCR and conventional PCR for their verification. Commercial test-kits will be used as models for verification.
- iii. The achievements and issues encountered by the participants will be reviewed and discussed by the experts and recommendations for improvement will be given.

Expected Outputs

The expected outputs of the regional training course are:

- i. Dissemination of the theoretical and practical aspects/exercises on the verification of new serological and molecular techniques for diagnosis of zoonotic diseases of veterinary importance.
- ii. Dissemination of the practical aspects/exercises on “in-laboratory” verification of serological and molecular techniques.
- iii. Dissemination of practical aspects of ISO 17025 accreditation for serological and molecular techniques.

Participation

The regional training course is open to 25 participants from ZODIAC National Laboratories (ZNLs) that have been designated officially by TC-recipient Member States from European region.

Each ZNL is invited to nominate one participant who shall match the qualifications and experience described in the corresponding section.

Nomination of female candidates is encouraged.

Participants' Qualifications and Experience

ZNLs should nominate a staff member of the officially designated veterinary laboratories who is responsible for serological screening and molecular techniques application (ELISA and PCR). In addition, the nominated person should also preferably be involved in ISO 17025 accreditation of the laboratory techniques, such as ELISA and PCR and have experience in "in-laboratory" verification for ELISA and PCR. The participant shall be familiar with the most common technologies used for the above-mentioned purposes, be able to discuss problems related to their use, and should preferably be the in-laboratory staff with veterinary/biological education and be able to conduct secondary trainings of other ZNL staff upon return to the home country.

Application Procedure

Candidates wishing to apply for this event should follow the steps below:

1. Access the InTouch+ home page (<https://intouchplus.iaea.org>) using the candidate's existing Nucleus username and password. If the candidate is not a registered Nucleus user, she/he must create a Nucleus account (<https://websso.iaea.org/IM/UserRegistrationPage.aspx>) before proceeding with the event application process below.
2. On the InTouch + platform, the candidate must:
 - a. Finalize or update her/his personal details, provide sufficient information to establish the required qualifications regarding education, language skills and work experience ('Profile' tab) and upload relevant supporting documents;
 - b. Download and complete the [Designation of Beneficiary and Emergency Contact Form](#), and upload to InTouch+ ('Profile' tab under the personal section) specifying the document name. If already provided, kindly discard this step; and
 - c. Search for the relevant technical cooperation event (EVT2204003) under the 'My Eligible Events' tab, answer the mandatory questions and lastly submit the application to the required authority.

NOTE: Completed applications need to be approved by the relevant national authority, i.e. the National Liaison Office, and submitted to the IAEA through the established official channels by the provided designation deadline.

For additional support on how to apply for an event, please refer to the [InTouch+ Help page](#). Any issues or queries related to InTouch+ can be addressed to InTouchPlus.Contact-Point@iaea.org.

Should online application submission not be possible, candidates may download the nomination form for the training course from the [IAEA website](#).

NOTE: A medical certificate signed by a registered medical practitioner dated not more than four months prior to starting date of the event must be submitted by candidates when applying for a) events with a duration exceeding one month, and/or b) all candidates over the age of 65 regardless of the event duration.

Administrative and Financial Arrangements

Nominating authorities will be informed in due course of the names of the candidates who have been selected, and will at that time be informed of the procedure to be followed with regard to administrative and financial matters.

Selected participants will receive an allowance from the IAEA sufficient to cover their costs of lodging, daily subsistence and miscellaneous expenses. They will also receive either a round-trip air ticket based on the most direct and economical route between the airport nearest their residence and the airport nearest the duty station through the IAEA's travel agency AX Travel Management, or a travel allowance, or they will be reimbursed travel by car/bus/train in accordance with IAEA rules for non-staff travel.

Disclaimer of Liability

The organizers of the event do not accept liability for the payment of any cost or compensation that may arise from damage to or loss of personal property, or from illness, injury, disability or death of a participant while he/she is travelling to and from or attending the course, and it is clearly understood that each Government, in approving his/her participation, undertakes responsibility for such coverage. Governments would be well advised to take out insurance against these risks.

Note for female participants

Any woman engaged by the IAEA for work or training should notify the IAEA on becoming aware that she is pregnant.

The Board of Governors of the IAEA approved new International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources. The Standards deal specifically with the occupational exposure conditions of female workers by requiring, inter alia, that a female worker should, on becoming aware that she is pregnant, notify her employer in order that her working conditions may be modified, if necessary. This notification shall not be considered a reason to exclude her from work; however, her working conditions, with respect to occupational exposure shall be adapted with a view to ensuring that her embryo or foetus be afforded the same broad level of protection as required for members of the public.

IAEA Contacts

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