PROTEIN ALTERNATIVES S.L. RECEIVES HORIZON 2020 SME INSTRUMENT FUNDING TO DEVELOP ITS PROJECT FOR COLORECTAL CANCER DIAGNOSTIC.

- **PROTEIN ALTERNATIVES S.L.** (PROALT) is the only successful applicant from Spain under the Phase 2 SME Instrument topic “Clinical research for the validation of biomarkers and/or diagnostic medical devices” with its proposal entitled “Colodetect- Development of a novel blood-based diagnostic test for colorectal cancer”.

- **SME Instrument** is a new funding research programme managed by the European Commission’s Executive agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). SME Instrument is designed to help European enterprises commercialize their innovative solutions.

Madrid, October 1st 2015. COLODETECT, a proposal submitted by the Spanish biotechnology company PROALT, has been selected to receive EU funding from H2020 SME Instrument.

In total, the Commission received 580 project proposals from European SMEs by the first cut-off date of the so-called Horizon 2020’s SME Instrument Phase 2. PROALT is the only Spanish company that will receive the grant for funding a project filed under the Commission’s topic “Clinical research for the validation of biomarkers and/or diagnostic medical devices” with its proposal entitled “Colodetect- Development of a novel blood-based diagnostic test for colorectal cancer”. Phase 2 SME Instrument is a business innovation grant for innovation development and demonstration purposes prior to commercialization.

A recent epidemiology of colorectal cancer (CRC) report demonstrated a significant CRC burden in European countries, which is still associated with very high mortality rates. COLODETECT’s objective is the development and commercialization of a diagnostic kit for screening and early diagnosis of CCR in population at risk.

The outlined test is based on detecting in blood the auto-antibodies generated by human body against proteins related to the colorectal cancer tumor. The advantage of auto-antibodies as biomarkers is that they appear at detectable levels in patient’s blood early, allowing earlier diagnosis before symptoms are present and even before other types of biomarkers can be measured.

Colodetect test is non-invasive, low cost and easy to use for screening of large populations at risk, compared with high complexity tools (colonoscopy/sigmoidoscopy), and will achieve good detection capacity at early stages, which involve better treatment options to improve patient’s survival.
According to Dr. Juan Ignacio Imbaud, Laboratory Director of PROALT, “The main objective of this project is to obtain a colorectal cancer diagnostic kit clinically validated and regulatory approved as an in vitro diagnostic product (IVD), and to penetrate in the CRC diagnostic market allowing PROALT to reach a competitive position by improving its competitiveness”.

The results obtained in this project will have extensive impact and benefits for European population at risk, since early detection programs are essential to decrease mortality around 30-35% and drastically reduce the treatment costs of people affected by the pathology, assuring the sustainability of the European healthcare systems and others in the world.

**About SME Instrument del Programa Horizonte 2020:** The SME Instrument is a brand new funding scheme intended to support the SMEs' innovation activities. Highly innovative SMEs with a clear commercial ambition and a potential for high growth and internationalisation are the prime target. The scheme builds on three phases by means of grants and is aimed at SMEs that have the ambition to grow and internationalize through an innovation project with European added value. Phase 2 of SME Instrument is focused on innovation and demonstration actions (prototyping, miniaturisation, scaling-up, design, performance verification, testing, development of pilot lines, etc.) and market replication. [http://eshorizonte2020.es/](http://eshorizonte2020.es/)

**About PROALT:** Protein Alternatives (PROALT) is a biotechnology company founded in 2006 and located in the city of Tres Cantos, Madrid. PROALT is a focused on the development and commercialization of biomarker-based assays for cancer diagnosis and clinical management. The company also offers its own manufactured innovative recombinant proteins and antibodies, and different custom-tailored integral services in protein design and expression. Service offer is performed under individual customer contracts (CRO) to meet biotechnology industry needs. [http://www.proteinalternatives.com/](http://www.proteinalternatives.com/)

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