

# European Funding Approved for Centre of Excellence for Healthy Ageing in Lithuania

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**2015 June 4–5 the kick-off meeting of the project HEALTH-TECH is taking place at Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) Santaka Valley. The project is aimed at founding a centre of excellence for healthy ageing. The scientists from KTU (the project coordinator), Lithuanian University of Health Sciences and Vilnius University together with two Scandinavian institutions – Lund University and VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland – collaborate on the project together. During the first stage the business plan of the centre and the plan for its sustainable activities will be created.**



HEALTH-TECH acquired funding for the first stage of the project through Horizon2020 Research and Innovation programme, and was one of 26 institutions (out of 169) selected to proceed further. It is the only project from Lithuania who gained approval from European Commission in this competition.

Science & Technology Centre of Excellence for Healthy Ageing will aim not only at diagnosing and preventing age related diseases, but also at offering the means for ensuring active and pain-free life for the mature society.

“If we will pass through to the second stage of the project, which is the actual establishment of the Centre, 35 million Euros will be invested into Lithuanian science and research. This will not only make significant impact to the development of science and higher education, but will also change the quality of life of the people”, says Prof Petras Baršauskas, KTU Rector.

## **A Chance to Be Noticed**

KTU Vice-Rector for Research Prof Asta Pundzienė maintains that the Centre will bring wider international recognition for Lithuanian researchers.

“This is a real opportunity to say loudly and clearly that we are developing advanced health technologies. Diagnostic and rehabilitation technologies which we are planning to develop at the Centre, will allow to early diagnose neurodegenerative diseases and cancer, and will also improve the mature people’s quality of life”, says Pundzienė.

According to her, the project is unique in Lithuania also for its partnerships: it is the first time in history when three leading science and study institutions of the country will develop a joint Centre of Excellence.

### **Collaboration Brings Out Best Solutions**

The project will also provide a narrative for research communication, by stressing science as creating value for the society. World-class research undertaken at the Centre will not only bring recognition to the researchers, but will significantly improve everyday life.

“We have been walking towards this project for several years now: researching global experience and practice. It is obvious that geriatricians and other medical professionals together with engineers and biotechnology experts can make major discoveries”, Vaiva Leskauskaitė, Vice-Rector for Research at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU) is convinced.

Collaboration between KTU and LSMU researchers has already resulted in ultrasound technologies for diagnosing skin tumours and imaging blood coagulation system, in developing a synthetic bone for jaw regeneration, in research of geomagnetic field on human body and other projects and products.

The representatives of different universities are convinced that contemporary society needs complex solutions which can only be developed when the researchers from various fields are working together. The project for ensuring healthy ageing for the society is a good example of such collaboration.