



### **Progetto europeo PCP – STARS, avviata la fase di Open Market Consultation (OMC)**

L'OMC rappresenta una fase cruciale nell'ambito dei progetti Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP), durante la quale le imprese sono informate in merito alle finalità ed opportunità di finanziamento offerte dal progetto per la realizzazione di tecnologie innovative di e-Health.

Il progetto europeo “**Empowering patients by professional STress Avoidance and Recovery Services**” (**STARS**) è stato avviato nel gennaio 2017 con lo scopo di progettare, sviluppare, prototipizzare e testare un nuovo strumento tecnologico di supporto, per ridurre lo stress e l'ansia dei pazienti chirurgici e migliorare le condizioni di salute durante il percorso assistenziale, consentendo ai pazienti di svolgere un ruolo attivo nella gestione della propria salute, nelle fasi: pre-clinica, clinica e post-clinica.

STARS è un progetto PCP di durata quadriennale, finanziato dalla Comunità Europea nell'ambito del programma Horizon 2020, coordinato dall'Università di Maastricht (Olanda) con la partecipazione di altri 10 partner europei.

Il Procurer italiano del consorzio è l'INRCA, responsabile scientifico del progetto: dott.ssa Barbini Norma  
Tel 071.8004220 e-mail [n.barbini@inrca.it](mailto:n.barbini@inrca.it)

Ogni informazione in merito al progetto STARS è reperibile nel sito web: <https://stars-pcp.eu>

### **Intro to STARS**

**PCP STARS** Founded by EU (*proposal 727585*)

A consortium of five leading European academic hospitals uses the European commission's Pre-commercial Procurement (PCP) funding scheme to challenge and stimulate European industry to:

*Design and develop a resilient support tool, to be applied in the field of patients, planned for surgery, with the aim of reducing stress and anxiety as well as improving the health condition of the patient during the complete care path.*

The available budget for the development of this innovative solution is **4.7 million euro** of which 3.26 million euro (including VAT) will flow as innovation subsidies to the industry.

The Horizon 2020 project named “Empowering Patients by Professional Stress Avoidance and Recovery Services” ( STARS) started in January 2017, the project duration will be 48 months.

STARS will invite the industry to tender to develop personalised eHealth solutions in order to reduce stress related to healthcare procedures.

Reduction of the stress, experienced by patients, will lower the harmful side-effects of sedating drugs, shorten hospital stay, shorten recovery time and relieve carers and related persons from continuous assistance.

The eHealth solution will target the reduction of healthcare related stress as early as in the preclinical phase, proceeding through hospitalization until the end of the aftercare period. The solution will have to combine the experience of caregivers with the empowerment of the patients to actively influence the process by expressing their state of mind and needs.

The project is composed of a consortium of 11 entities where all members are involved at different degrees in the development and implementation of the project tasks and deliverables. Given the profile and capacities of each partner the contribution varies and has complementary purpose. The overall project management, hence the lead of the international consortium, lies with Maastricht University. The consortium will manage the project and define the need (what is important to reduce stress). The whole technical development will be performed by companies through tendering and can be divided in three sequential phases: **basic idea** (phase 1), **concept** (phase 2), and **prototype** (phase 3). During phase 3, the prototype will be submitted to a limited number of patient's studies in order to assess the compliance of the system to stress reduction.

## How to get involved

### ***What is the timeline of the STARS project?***

The project started on January 1st 2017 and will last for four years. In the first 18 months of the project the tender specifications and contractual arrangements will be elaborated and eventually 'fine-tuned' based on the technology maturity and state-of-the-art evidences emerged during the dialogue with industry in the Open Market Consultation.

### ***What is the Open Market Consultation and does the industry have to disclose their technology?***

As part of the preparation for an innovation driven procurement action, the market consultation involves the proactive analysis of technology offer and provide a pre-information to the market in order to give a congruous time for the preparation of fit-for-purpose proposals. The STARS market consultation is aimed to these following goals:

- find out whether technologies are commercially available and acquire information about the advantage and disadvantages and the level of coverage of the desired functionalities, in order to confirm the assumption for PCP.
- enable and increase the opportunities for industry to form fit-for-purpose consortia.
- identify market risks potentially able to endanger business goals and supplier performance;

The market consultation sessions are conceived and organized with due regard to the principles of openness, transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment, in line with European procurement law. Special attention must be paid to the possibility that such consultations could lead to situations that favor the companies involved, thus distorting competition. During and for the purpose of an early market consultation processes, legal assurances is put in place that suppliers' intellectual property rights (IPRs), communicated in written form, will be protected. The market consultation will be conducted in the form of open and oral consultations (bilateral, interactive and open workshops). A written contribution (e.g., in the form of a questionnaire aimed to collect market information on innovative and commercialized solution ) could be provided by the participants, to form the basis for more in-depth analysis and assure the confidentiality on the information and solutions described.

If we share our current technology development with the STARS consortium, will this remain confidential? Yes. We will not share confidential information regarding your technology with any competitors or other outside parties, if provided in written form.

In addition, the STARS team will do everything in their power to be fully transparent in sharing details about the procurement scope and objectives with all interested parties. Therefore, all interested parties will possess the equal amount of knowledge to best understand the innovation challenge and fruitfully participate to the early market engagement activities. A "Procurement Prospectus" will also be published onto the project website: this document will specifically state the objectives that will be pursued through the procurement, the solution desired and the related functional and performance requirements.

### ***We are a innovation driven company, why should we join STARS?***

You will have the opportunity to work with highly motivated and experienced professionals from European University Medical Centres and Hospitals, composing a cross-border buyers' group. We can advise you regarding the research and development and help to innovate.

Your innovative solution will be more likely to be accepted in the medical community than if you would try

to create the solution by yourself. Your prototypes will be submitted to test in extensive and bench testing and field tests in human volunteers and patients at much reduced cost.

***Are hospitals are willing to pay for stress reduction? What is the business case?***

Although we are working on the business case, we know that there is a growing trend for insurances not to pay for costly complications that are seen to be the result of sub-optimal care. If stress reduction can reduce hospital stay and prevent costly or readmissions from home to the hospital (in recently discharged patients), the business case is obvious: one day in hospital is more costly than the total cost of stress reduction.

***What about competition? Do we always have at least one competitor within this project?***

Yes. In PCP the development of the novelty solution follows a funnel-shaped competitive model. This means that several companies may enter Phase 1 to develop and propose a solution design. Phase 2 is intended for prototype development. In Phase 3 a pre-market prototype must be developed by industry, which will be tested in our hospitals.

We still need to define the minimum number of competitors in each phase and how to divide the net max budget of 2.7 million euros, which will be paid to the industry.

**Important dates:**

November 2017: publication of prior information notice (PIN)

January 2018: Open Market Consultations

June 2018: Publication of tender.

We will put the tender on the EU website 'TED' in June 2018