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## How to foster translational medicine to meet the global gap of drug development: Learning from the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, EIT

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Translational medicine is seen as a means to facilitate development and success rate of novel treatments and drugs for the benefit of patients, based on the unlocked discoveries and inventions of the biomedical arena. In spite of a dramatic increase in R&D spending of the leading established pharma corporations from about 20 to almost 80 billion \$ during the last 15 years, the worldwide registration of novel drugs available for the customers is rather stagnating and limited over the past two decades. Interestingly, those novel drugs are increasingly stemming from biotech firms that often have their origin in academia. Many believe that top class research and education out of academia per se lead to innovation. However, when taking a closer look at, how research, education and business create innovative chains of added value, it is clear that entrepreneurship plays a crucial role within the “knowledge triangle”. To overcome this dilemma, but also the fragmented innovation landscape in Europe, the EIT (European Institute of Innovation and Technology), was set up by the European Union in 2008. The EIT is devoted to create favorable ecosystems for entrepreneurship-driven innovation by joining the three sides of the knowledge triangle of research, higher education and business. At the heart of the EIT are the innovation factories, the so-called KICs. The EIT is providing seed money to the KICs that in turn are led and run by CEOs, on the basis of respective business plans. Each KIC works within five or six co-location centers spread across Europe and they enable people from universities, research centers, large and small businesses, and other relevant partners to work together face-to-face in integrated teams. This ensures that excellence driven “innovation factories” are real focal points of integration where innovation is facilitated. The first three KICs have been successfully implemented. Together they form 16 co-location centers across Europe and are addressing the following topics: Climate change mitigation, sustainable energy and future information and communication society. Backed up by a budget of more than 3 billion \$ for the next 6 years, the EIT will invest into a second wave of KICs which also will target health care challenges. The author will discuss how translational medicine may be able to learn from the current experience to improve the build up of innovative ecosystems that meet the global challenges.

### Biography

Alexander von Gabain obtained his PhD in Genetics at the University of Heidelberg and held a Post-doctorate position at the Stanford University. In the 1980s and 1990s, he was Associate Professor at the University of Umeå and at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. In 1998, he founded Intercell AG and led the company as CEO until it was successfully floated on the Vienna Stock Exchange in 2005. In 2011 he re-entered the Company as member of the Supervisory Board and today is continuing in this position. His research interest is in the field of biomedical research and documented by a large number of publications, book chapters, edition of books and patents. He is Chair (leave of absence) of Microbiology at the Max Perutz Laboratories of the University of Vienna and the Medical University, and foreign Adjunct Professor at the Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, member of several professional organizations and serves on the boards of biotech and venture capital enterprises. In 2008, he was appointed to the Governing Board of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), of which he is the Chairman since 2011. His achievements have been acknowledged by prestigious industrial awards, academic prizes, honourable memberships, including the Swedish Royal Academy of Engineering Science and latest the European Luminary Innovation award.

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