

## EORTC, SPO and AICIB establish a partnership to promote cancer clinical research in Portugal



**Brussels/Porto/ Lisbon, 2nd December 2022** - The European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC), based in Brussels, Belgium, the Portuguese Agency for Clinical Research and Biomedical Innovation (AICIB) and the Portuguese Society of Oncology (SPO) announce today the launch of a partnership to further improve the development, conduct, and promotion of translational and clinical cancer research in Portugal. Together AICIB and SPO will act as a central hub to help disseminate and facilitate the setup of EORTC cancer clinical trials in Portugal. This is the first collaboration that EORTC sets up with a national oncology society and a national agency for clinical research in Europe. The partnership will be instrumental to support structural processes which will facilitate an agenda of independent clinical research in the country, increasing opportunities for investigators and patients to take part in internationally peer reviewed clinical trials.

Welcoming the partnership, Miguel Abreu, President of SPO, said: “The newly set up partnership will not only facilitate access for patients in Portugal to high quality independent clinical trials, but it will also support clinical investigators in Portugal to bring and challenge their ideas at the international level. Taking leadership of international clinical trials will not only ensure the visibility of Portuguese oncology internationally but will also benefit directly to patients”

Catarina Resende Oliveira, President of the Board of Director at AICIB adds: “Improved access to clinical cancer research means a step forward to closing the gap in cancer patient treatment and care. However, many challenges do exist to activate and conduct clinical trials at the European, national and local levels. Our agency will work within the context of this partnership to smoothen the procedures for efficient access to important clinical research programs for our patients”

Currently, EORTC membership in Portugal represent a network of 85 investigators across all oncology disciplines in 19 institutions. EORTC, SPO and AICIB will work together to enable the further development of joint activities with collaborators, in Portugal and internationally such as but not limited to specific communication exercises and bringing the expertise available in Portugal to the international level.

Denis Lacombe, EORTC Chief Executive Officer, said: “We are delighted that this collaboration will allow us not only to expand the contribution of Portuguese oncology in our activities but also to setup master procedures applicable throughout the country optimising the necessary but sometimes cumbersome administrative processes. This is a unique model of improved collaboration between an

international Non-Governmental Organisation and country specific institutions. This will hopefully serve as a model for other countries. We are grateful to AICIB and SPO for this partnership. Both organisations send with it an admirable sign of support to clinical researchers and specially to encourage the younger generation of doctors in Portugal and beyond to embrace clinical research to best serve patients and push forward to standards of care”.

### **About the EORTC**

The European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation, which unites clinical cancer research experts, throughout Europe, to define better treatments for cancer patients to prolong survival and improve quality of life. Spanning from translational to large, prospective, multi-centre, phase III clinical trials that evaluate new therapies and treatment strategies as well as patient quality of life, its activities are coordinated from EORTC Headquarters, a unique international clinical research infrastructure, based in Brussels, Belgium.

For further information, please visit the EORTC website: [www.eortc.org](http://www.eortc.org)

### **About SPO**

The Portuguese Society of Oncology (SPO) is a Scientific Society created in 1982, that has now more than 850 associates that cover all the areas (clinical or not) that deal with cancer patients. Its mission is related to guarantee good clinical standards around the country, trying to spar heterogeneity between centres and to promote research in oncology.

It organises many technical courses, scientific events, and investigation programs for all professionals in Oncology, annually. These activities allow improvement in very important skills that enhances a better clinic practice. Every year, in the National Oncology Congress of SPO, professionals have the opportunity to discuss the most recent evidence in this field. Showing its vitality, the 2022 edition had more than 1100 participants. The SPO has also 10 working groups, that are: Geriatric Oncology, Young Adults, Hereditary Cancers, Patients’ Advocate, Quality of life, Screening and early diagnosis, Supportive and palliative care, Data in Oncology, Survivors and the Residents and Young Oncologists’ Group.

During 2022, SPO also created the structure to have inside its organization the Portuguese Research Collaborative Groups, to clear demonstrate its commitment in improve the high-quality Oncology Research in Portugal.

For further information, please visit its website: [www.sponcologia.pt](http://www.sponcologia.pt).

### **About AICIB**

The Agency for Clinical Research and Biomedical Innovation (AICIB) is a public-private non-profit organization created by a Resolution of the Portuguese Council of Ministers, in 2018, to be the link between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Science and Technology. Its main mission is to promote, coordinate and support activities in the areas of clinical and translational research and biomedical innovation, contributing to the optimization of Portugal's clinical, scientific and technological potential. AICIB’s mission is also to coordinate research to be priority-oriented based on several political instruments such as the National Health Plan, the Priority Health Programs, the Integrated Strategy for Rare Diseases or European Framework Programs for R&D in Health. To this end, AICIB is also involved in several National and European initiatives that may particularly leverage the partnership with EORTC and SPO, such as co-coordinating the Cancer Hub for the implementation of the Mission on Cancer activities in Portugal and participating in the ERA4Health Partnership for the development of a framework to fund and promote Investigator Initiated Clinical Trials (IICT).

For further information, please visit the AICIB website: [www.aicib.pt/en](http://www.aicib.pt/en)