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Professor Bart De Spiegeleer
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8 June 2021

Dear Professor De Spiegeleer,

On behalf of the World Health Organization (WHO), it is my pleasure to provide this letter of support for your application to the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Sustainable Drug Discovery (S-DISCO).

Access to medicines play a crucially beneficial role in society and are an essential part of WHO's push towards Universal Health Coverage. Their discovery at the early start of their lifecycle is an intriguing process of multidisciplinary innovativeness. Finding safe and effective treatments against unmet disease conditions, accessible for those who need them at affordable prices that are sustainable for health systems, while maximally respecting the environment and eco-systems, is an impressive challenge, which aligns well with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) centred around SDG3 (health).

Currently the education regarding sustainable drug discovery is dispersed, often compartmentalized into different academic subjects. In reality, this should be a broad, integrated health discipline encompassing green synthesis and analytics, bioinformatics, computational and molecular modelling, data handling, biology and biochemistry, (patho) physiology, omics and environmental sciences, pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic principles, governance and regulations, and translational knowledge and skills.

We believe that the academic content proposed by the S-DISCO International Master in Sustainable Drug Discovery provides an excellent opportunity for students to gain a better understanding of the sustainable drug discovery process, which could greatly contribute to the better global health of our planet.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mariângela Simão
Assistant Director-General
Access to Medicines and Health Products