

The APOLLO Centre of Excellence Brings Augmented Reality to the Education of Healthcare Professionals

A new Centre of Excellence, aiming to radically transform the way healthcare professionals are trained in Greece and across Europe, is being established in Athens.

The **APOLLO Centre of Excellence (CoE)** has been approved under **Horizon Europe – Teaming for Excellence Programme** and represents an internationally recognized, interdisciplinary initiative focused on research, innovation, and education in augmented reality technologies for the healthcare sector. The APOLLO CoE **leverages cutting-edge technologies, including augmented and virtual reality combined with artificial intelligence**, to create realistic simulation environments that enhance experiential learning for healthcare professionals. Through these innovative approaches, the Centre aims to train **more than 5,000 healthcare professionals and students** and to develop **over 20 next-generation educational programmes** during its first six years of operation, addressing the evolving needs of medical education and clinical practice.

Based in Athens, APOLLO will serve **as a hub for collaboration** among leading Greek and European universities, research institutions, and healthcare organizations. At the same time, it is expected to contribute to the growth **of the start-up and spin-off** ecosystem and to strengthen the broader innovation landscape. In parallel, the Centre places particular emphasis on addressing the brain drain phenomenon by creating competitive, highly specialized positions in research and technology, while also contributing to economic growth and development.

The project is coordinated by the **Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens**, with the participation **of leading** research and academic institutions from Greece and abroad, including **Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas(FORTH)**, **National Technical University of Athens**, as well as internationally recognized centres of excellence such as **CAMES(Denmark)**, **CSCM**, and **UNINOVA(Portugal)**.

The project's total budget amounts **to €30 million**, of which **€15 million** is funded by the European Union through Horizon Europe and an additional **€15 million** through national co-funding provided by the **Greek Ministry of Health** under the **National Development Programme**. The project is further strengthened through significant in-kind contributions and collaborations with institutions, companies, and organizations providing infrastructure, equipment, and technical support. A key contribution to the preparation of the proposal was made by the PRAXI Network of Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas, which serves as the National Contact Point for the WIDERA Programme.