NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4 - JULY 2026

EUROPEAN NETWORK ON LIVESTOCK PHENOMICS

The EU-LI-PHE project aims to strengthen ethical, legal, and social frameworks for the use of phenotyping technologies in livestock farming across Europe.

Key stakeholders include researchers, policymakers, industry representatives, farmers, device manufacturers, young researchers, and civil society organizations. **The Action is currently in process of collecting stakeholder perceptions through a structured survey for the purposes of WG4 activities.** Read more in this newsletter.

Start Date:
September 27, 2023

End Date:
September 26, 2027

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EU-LI-PHE
EUROPEAN NETWORK ON LIVESTOCK PHENOMICS

Newsletter
ISSUE 4
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62 Management Committee members from 37 countries

559 Working Group members, including:
252 females
228 from ITC
299 are YRI

EU-LI-PHE Still Offers the Grants for 2026

EU-LI-PHE still has open calls for grants supporting research mobility, conference participation, and dissemination activities.

Available opportunities include:

- *Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs)*
- *ITC Conference Grants*
- *Young Researcher & Innovator (YRI) Conference Grants*
- *Dissemination Conference Grants.*

These grants support networking, training, and the dissemination of livestock phenomics research across Europe and beyond.

For full eligibility criteria, application guidelines, and required templates, please consult the official call documentation on our website at: https://eu-li-phe.eu/news/eu-li-phe-opens-grant-call-for-2026/

UPCOMING SUMMER SCHOOLS

Summer School in "Epidemiology, Genetics and Modelling for Infectious Disease Control", organised by the Roslin Institute and the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh (UK), in collaboration with EU-LI-PHE.

Edinburgh, UK 31 August - 4 September 2026

The Summer School will take place from 31 August to 4 September 2026 in Edinburgh, United Kingdom, and will provide advanced interdisciplinary training in quantitative genetics, epidemiology, disease phenomics, disease genomics, statistical and field epidemiology, and predictive modelling for infectious disease control. The programme combines lectures delivered by internationally recognised experts with practical computer exercises, data analysis sessions, group work, discussion groups and networking activities, providing participants with hands-on experience in state-of-the-art analytical approaches for animal health research and sustainable disease control. More information are available at this link.

Eligibility

Applications are open primarily to Young Researchers and Innovators (YRIs) who are members of one or more EU-LI-PHE Working Groups (WGs).

Please note that only EU-LI-PHE WG members from COST countries are eligible for this financial support.

Application procedure

Candidates should submit their application via e-mail to:
luca.fontanesi@unibo.it
tomas.norton@kuleuven.be

"Artificial Intelligence and Data-Driven Technologies for Precision Livestock Production 2026", organized from August 31st to September 5th 2026 by the Department of Agronomy, Food, Natural Resources, Animals and Environment (DAFNAE), University of Padova (Italy), in collaboration with EU-LI-PHE.

Padova, Italy 31 August - 5 September 2026

The Summer School will provide advanced training on the application of artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics, and digital technologies in precision livestock farming and animal production systems. It will bring together international experts and trainees interested in the development and application of innovative data-driven approaches for livestock research and management.

Application procedure

Candidates should submit their application via e-mail to:
luca.fontanesi@unibo.it and tomas.norton@kuleuven.be
with a copy (CC) to:
alessio.cecchinato@unipd.it

EU-LI-PHE will provide financial support to selected participants through reimbursement of eligible travel expenses and daily allowance according to COST rules and the available budget.

EU-LI-PHE IS CONDUCTING A PAN-EUROPEAN STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

Current insights:

- The survey collected 697 responses from 36 countries, providing valuable insights into stakeholder perceptions, expectations, and concerns regarding livestock phenomics.
- 79.2% of respondents reported being familiar with livestock phenomics, indicating a high level of awareness among the surveyed stakeholders.
- Respondents identified animal health and welfare improvement, optimized breeding decisions, and increased production efficiency as the main benefits of livestock phenomics.
- Data ownership, privacy, transparency, and potential misuse of information were highlighted as the main challenges for the future implementation of digital phenomics.
- More than half of respondents expressed willingness to share farm-generated data with breeders, provided that appropriate safeguards and benefits are clearly established.
- The results demonstrate a strong demand for further education, practical examples, and knowledge exchange to support the responsible adoption of livestock phenomics across Europe.

Complete the survey today and make sure that your voice is heard for the future of livestock phenomics.

EU-LI-PHE
EUROPEAN NETWORK ON LIVESTOCK PHENOMICS

EU-LI-PHE: Building the Future of Livestock Phenomics in Europe

A Policy Booklet for Decision-Makers and Stakeholders

https://eu-li-phe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/EULIPHE_Policy-compressed.pdf

01 **Introduction** Why This Matters Now

02 **Livestock Phenomics** What It Is

03 **Policy Relevance** Why It Matters

04 **About EU-LI-PHE** COST Action

05 **Key Terms** Explained

06 **Deliverables** What We Build

07 **Recommendations** Policy Actions

08 **Get Involved** Join the Network

2026 HIGHLIGHT: ANNUAL MEETING WAS HELD IN ISTANBUL WITH STRONG SUPPORT FROM THE TURKISH SCIENTIFIC ECOSYSTEM AND POLICY-MAKERS

The third annual meeting of the EU-LI-PHE COST Action (CA22111) was successfully held on 10–11 June 2026 in Istanbul, bringing together researchers, industry stakeholders, policymakers, and young innovators from across Europe.

The programme featured scientific presentations and Working Group discussions covering animal breeding, phenomics, genetics, digital technologies, and precision livestock farming, with strong contributions from both Turkish and European research communities. Key themes included the growing role of artificial intelligence, high-throughput phenotyping, and omics technologies in advancing animal health, welfare, and sustainable production systems.

The Young Researchers and Innovators session highlighted the creativity and scientific excellence of early-career scientists, showcasing innovative work across behavioural phenotyping, climate resilience, and computational approaches.

Overall, the meeting reinforced the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and international networking within the EU-LI-PHE community, setting clear directions for future research and capacity building activities.

IMPORTANT MILESTONE: ENGAGING AND PRODUCTIVE YRI COMMITTEE MEETING

We held the Young Researcher & Innovator meeting, focused on empowering early-career members of the EU-LI-PHE network.

Participants from five countries worked on deliverables from Working Groups 4 and 5, advancing key project objectives. The meeting was also attended by Dr. Wioleta Walentowska, Scientific Officer from the COST Association.

This was an important milestone event for strengthening collaboration and capacity building within the network, and we look forward to continuing to organize similar impactful meetings in the future.

SHORT-TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS

Matthias Corion from KU Leuven hosted by the Center for Proper Housing: Poultry and Rabbits (ZTHZ) research group at University of Bern from 30 April to 8 May 2026

The STSM highlighted the strength of interdisciplinary collaboration within the EU-LI-PHE network by combining the complementary expertise of KU Leuven and the University of Bern. The exchange broadened Matthias's research perspective from metabolomics to integrated livestock phenomics and behavioural phenotyping while strengthening international collaborations. It also established a solid foundation for future joint research, scientific publications, and knowledge dissemination across the EU-LI-PHE community.

Amra Džuho, member of the Young Researchers and Innovators (YRI) Committee, completed her STSM at KU Leuven between 18-22 August 2025

During her STSM, Amra finalized and refined the EU-LI-PHE stakeholder survey, ensuring its alignment with the Action's strategic objectives and methodological quality. She also developed a dissemination strategy to maximize participation across European stakeholder networks. This work strengthens the participatory approach of EU-LI-PHE by ensuring that future activities, recommendations, and innovations are informed by the needs and perspectives of key stakeholders, including farmers, breeding organizations, industry representatives, and policymakers.

In the first week of September, Dr. Adna Ašić, the Science Communication Coordinator of EU-LI-PHE, carried out a complementary STSM at KU Leuven, focusing on Deliverable D5.3: Report from the EU-LI-PHE Stakeholder Conference

During her STSM, she prepared a report summarizing the key discussions and recommendations from the Stakeholder Conference. The report captures expert insights on phenotyping, genome-to-phenome integration, computational infrastructures, and regulatory considerations, providing an official EU-LI-PHE reference for the network and its stakeholders.

Eseró Padrón Tejera, PhD candidate at the Department of Animal Production, University of Cordoba, at the Thünen Institute of Agricultural Technology in Braunschweig, Germany, from 11 August to 11 September 2025

During this STSM, Eseró worked under the supervision of Dr. Christina Umstatter, processing and analyzing GNSS tracking data to phenotype grazing behavior in different cattle genotypes. The work involved data preprocessing, addressing missing data caused by connectivity issues, analyzing spatial movement patterns, and integrating vegetation characteristics to investigate breed-specific grazing preferences and behavior.

PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS

EU-LI-PHE
EUROPEAN NETWORK ON LIVESTOCK PHENOMICS

COST Connect | Science in Action (Solutions for the SDGs)

The **COST Connect event in Brussels** brought together COST Action leaders and United Nations agencies to explore opportunities for future collaboration, strengthen communication, and expand research networks. **Samuel Agyabeng**, a PhD student and member of WG1, attended the meeting representing the European Network on Livestock Phenomics Cost Action. The event provided a valuable platform for presenting research that contributes to the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and highlighted the role of EU-LI-PHE in advancing sustainable livestock production. It also facilitated networking with international experts and fostered new connections for future collaborative initiatives between COST Actions and UN agencies.

EU-LI-PHE PRESENTED AT 9TH SEMINAR OF BREEDING ORGANIZATIONS IN SERBIA

During the seminar, **Dr. Marija Gogić** presented the objectives of the COST Action, emphasizing the **role of livestock phenomics in supporting genetic improvement and Precision Livestock Farming (PLF).** We sincerely thank the Institute for Animal Husbandry for its continued partnership and support in promoting EU-LI-PHE activities and knowledge within the livestock breeding community.

Dr. Marija Gogić

EU-LI-PHE EVENTS

EU-LI-PHE WORKSHOP HELD IN BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

An EU-LI-PHE workshop was held at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest during the international conference “Agriculture for Life, Life for Agriculture.” This event showcased the progress and objectives of Year 3 activities, promoted knowledge exchange, and highlighted advances in livestock phenomics and animal production. We sincerely thank Prof. Dr. Livia Vidu, Romanian Management Committee member, for her outstanding coordination and leadership of the activity.

EU-LI-PHE SLOVAKIA, NATIONAL HUB MEETING

The Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra hosted the “Breeders Workshop” under the EU-LI-PHE National Hub, bringing together key stakeholders from Slovakia’s livestock breeding sector. The event focused on the application of genomic tools in animal breeding, biodiversity preservation, and genetic improvement.It strengthened collaboration between academia and industry, promoted knowledge transfer in livestock genomics and phenomics, and explored opportunities to expand the EU-LI-PHE network and future research partnerships.

3RD TRAINING SCHOOL

EU-LI-PHE
EUROPEAN NETWORK ON LIVESTOCK PHENOMICS

The 3rd EU-LI-PHE Training School, titled "Creating Added Value in Precision Livestock Farming: From Sensors to Decisions" was successfully held from 4 to 8 May 2026 in Madrid, Spain. The course was organized by CIHEAM Zaragoza in collaboration with Universitat Politècnica de València, Re-Livestock, Digi4Live, CSIC, ILVO, and EU-LI-PHE. The week-long programme combined lectures, practical sessions, farm visits, and interactive discussions focused on the latest developments in Precision Livestock Farming (PLF), including sensor technologies, artificial intelligence, data management, animal welfare, and decision-support systems in livestock production.
The course provided valuable networking opportunities and strengthened collaboration across institutions and working groups.

"The course provided a comprehensive understanding of how PLF technologies are developed and applied in real farming conditions. It was particularly valuable for linking phenotypic and genomic data, which is directly relevant to my research in WG2 and WG3. The interdisciplinary exchange broadened my perspective and strengthened opportunities for future collaboration."
Samuele Bovo (University of Bologna, Italy)

"The training helped me better understand how precision livestock technologies can support animal health, welfare, and farm management. It was an important opportunity for networking and gaining insight into technologies that are still not widely used in my country."
Aleksandra Petrović (Institute for Animal Husbandry, Belgrade, Serbia)

ORGANIZED MEETINGS

EU-LI-PHE members engage at WG4 and WG5 during the 76th EAAP annual meeting

Innsbruck, Austria 25th August 2025

As part of the 76th EAAP Annual Meeting in Innsbruck, the EU-LI-PHE project held a focused summer meeting bringing together senior scientists, Young Researchers, and Innovators from Working Groups 4 and 5. The sessions focused on project planning through the lens of stakeholder engagement, dissemination, and awareness raising.

Participants collaborated on critical project deliverables, policy briefs, review papers, and book chapters on livestock phenomics while structuring outreach strategies like webinars, newsletters, and public events to maximize impact. Beyond research, the meeting prioritized the professional development of early-career scientists. By leading discussions and engaging with stakeholders, young researchers enhanced their scientific communication and networking skills, advancing EU-LI-PHE's commitment to training the next generation of experts.

Young Researchers and Innovators Meet to Shape EU-LI-PHE Future

Nitra, Slovakia 24-25 September 2025

On 24-25 September 2025, the EU-LI-PHE project held a dynamic meeting for young researchers and innovators alongside the Animal Science Days in Nitra, Slovakia. The sessions focused on skill development and collaboration, allowing early-career scientists to directly update the project's poster, website, and general presentation. Participants also advanced vital project deliverables, including upcoming webinars on data ownership and sharing, review papers, policy briefs, and chapters for a livestock phenomics book, while strengthening their professional networks within the EU-LI-PHE community.

2026 WEBINARS

EU-LI-PHE
EUROPEAN NETWORK ON LIVESTOCK PHENOMICS

EULIPHETalks
A Webinar Series

In 2026, EU-LI-PHE has successfully hosted one edition of EULIPHETalks webinars. In this online event, we explored the first results of the WG4 stakeholder survey and collected feedback on future data collections, analysis and future research and policy recommendation steps.

We are planning an intensive webinar season starting in September 2026, covering the topics such as national and regional presentations, thematic discussions, and presentations of the research performed during STSMs by our YRI members.

The recordings of past webinars are available on EU-LI-PHE YouTube channel. Stay tuned as we continue in September with new webinars led by our Young Researchers and Innovators Committee.

WATCH NOW

PUBLICATIONS

EU-LI-PHE
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life MDPI

Article

Determining the Presence of a Polymorphism in the Calpastatin (*CAST*) Gene Locus and Its Influence on Some Fattening Traits in Danube White Pigs

Katya Eneva [1,2], Radostina Stoykova-Grigorova [3], Gergana Yordanova [1,2], Mariyana Petrova [1,2], Radka Nedeva [1,2], Ivan Penchev [4] and Toncho Penev [5,*]

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New research from EU-LI-PHE WG2 member published in *Life*

We are pleased to announce the publication of a new research article by WG2 member Katya Eneva and co-authors in the journal *Life*, investigating *CAST* gene polymorphisms and their association with fattening and carcass traits in Danube White pigs.

The study identified associations between *CAST* genotypes and production characteristics, highlighting the potential of genetic markers to support improved breeding strategies and precision livestock approaches.

We warmly congratulate Dr. Eneva and all co-authors on this achievement and wish them continued success, impactful collaborations, and many more scientific contributions.

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