



**ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI  
PRESS OFFICE**

ph. (+30)2310 997158 e-mail: [press@auth.gr](mailto:press@auth.gr)  
Administration Building «K. Karatheodori» AUTH, P.C. 541 24, Thessaloniki

[f @Aristoteleio](https://www.facebook.com/Aristoteleio) [i @authuniversity](https://www.instagram.com/authuniversity) [X @Auth\\_University](https://twitter.com/Auth_University)

**PRESS RELEASE**

**The Aristotle Innovation Forum Officially Opens with Global Leaders in  
Science and Innovation**

Thessaloniki, 11/5/2026

Thessaloniki is preparing to host one of the most important events for innovation and scientific dialogue in Southeastern Europe. The Aristotle Innovation Forum (AIF), which will take place from 17 to 23 May 2026, will officially open with a high-level public session of the Senate of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, dedicated to the future of biotechnology, financial technology, and Artificial Intelligence.

The opening event, entitled “Bridging AMF with AIF,” will take place **on Sunday, 17 May 2026, at 12:00**, in the “Alexandros Papanastasiou” Ceremonial Hall of the Old Building of the Faculty of Philosophy, in the presence of leading figures from the international scientific, academic, and business communities.

The public session of the Senate will be chaired by the Rector of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Professor Kyriakos Anastasiadis, who will also moderate the discussion on the topic: “Biotechnology, Financial Technology and AI: What does the Future Hold?”

Four internationally distinguished personalities, with decisive contributions to science, innovation, and the shaping of health and technology policy, will participate in the panel discussion:

**George D. Yancopoulos, M.D., Ph.D.**, is Co-Founder and President of Regeneron Pharmaceuticals. He is recognized as **one of the most successful entrepreneurs, scientists, and inventors in the history of biotechnology**. He has ranked **among the 10 most highly cited scientists worldwide and has contributed to the development of two of the world’s top-selling medicines**.

George D. Yancopoulos is the principal inventor behind many of Regeneron's approved medicines and breakthrough technologies, including VelocImmune®, the world's first humanized mouse model with a human immune system capable of producing antibodies.

Under his leadership, Regeneron has consistently been recognized as a **"Top Employer" by Science magazine** and has been included among **"America's Best Companies" by Forbes**. He has also been named one of *Forbes'* **"100 Most Innovative Leaders in America,"** alongside Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk. He is an elected member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences.

- **Stelios Papadopoulos**, an iconic figure in global biotechnology entrepreneurship and Chairman of **Biogen, Exelixis, and Regulus Therapeutics**, has maintained a long-standing presence on Wall Street and played a pivotal role in the financing and development of leading biotechnology companies.

In the non-profit sector, he is Co-Founder and Chairman of Fondation Santé, an organization that provides research support and mentorship to biomedical scientists in Greece and Cyprus. Before moving to Wall Street, Dr. Papadopoulos served as a faculty member in the Department of Cell Biology at the New York University School of Medicine. He holds an M.S. in Physics, a Ph.D. in Biophysics, and an MBA in Finance, all from New York University.

Dr. Papadopoulos was born in Thessaloniki and graduated from the 5th Boys' High School in 1966. He initially enrolled in the School of Electrical Engineering at the National Technical University of Athens but moved to the United States during his first year to continue his studies in mathematics and physics.

- **Elias Zerhouni**, former Director of the U.S. **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**, is internationally recognized for his work in medical research policy and the management of major research organizations. He is Professor Emeritus of Radiology and Biomedical Engineering at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, USA. He currently serves as Vice Chairman and President of OPKO Health. From January 2011 to July 2018, he served as President of Global Research & Development and member of the Executive Committee of Sanofi.

In 2002, he was appointed **Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH)**. In this role (2002–2008), he oversaw 27 institutes and centers with more than 18,000 employees and a budget of \$29.5 billion (2008). In 2003, he launched the NIH Roadmap for Medical Research, which led to the reform of the NIH in 2006.

In November 2009, **President Obama appointed him as one of the first three U.S. Science Envoys**. He also served as Senior Fellow at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (2009–2010) and as senior advisor to the CEO of Sanofi.

- **Elias Mossialos**, Professor of Health Policy at the London School of Economics and Political Science, has a significant international presence in health policy design and in the analysis of European innovation ecosystems.

The discussion is expected to focus on the rapid advances in biotechnology in the era of Artificial Intelligence, new forms of collaboration between universities, research centers, and the business sector, as well as the prospects for developing a strong and outward-looking innovation ecosystem in Greece.

The event is open to the public.

The AIF is held under the auspices of His Excellency the President of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Konstantinos An. Tasoulas, with the support of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education, Religious Affairs & Sports, the Municipality of Thessaloniki, and the Region of Central Macedonia, while the Thessaloniki International Fair serves as a strategic partner. Major sponsors include PPC and Piraeus Bank.

More information: [Aristotle Innovation Forum](#)

---

*We kindly request that this event be published, broadcast, and covered by the media.*