

Frequent Asked Questions (FAQ)

GENERAL ISSUES

NEW Deadline for applications: 24th January 2014 (23:00 Romanian time)

For entities which have received a Participant Identification Code (PIC) in European Framework Programme, the percentage of overheads declared in FP7 projects could be considered upper ceiling for the present call.

1. What types of entities are eligible for funding?

Research organisations as defined in the Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation (2006/C 323/01) **can apply for funding as Project promoters and partners.**

Research organisation is an entity, such as university or research institute, irrespective of its legal status (public or private) or financing, whose primary goal is to conduct fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development and to disseminate its results through educational activities, publishing or technology transfer; all profits/proceeds are reinvested in these activities, the dissemination of their results or education; enterprises that can exert influence over such organizations as shareholders or members, for example, will not benefit from preferential access to the research capacities of the entities or to the research results generated by it. Financing institutions falling within the definition of research organisations do not constitute state aid and legal provisions on state aid do not apply.

Small and medium-sized enterprises as defined in the Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation (2006/C 323.01) **can participate only as partners.**
(More information about the eligibility of applicants is available in Guide for Applicants, pag. 3)

2. Are non-governmental organizations (foundations and associations) eligible under the Programme?

Yes, provided they comply with the definition of research organization.

3. Can an SME be a partner in the project?

An SME can participate in the project as a project partner only and is considered as an eligible partner in the project if it does not comply with the definition of research organization.

4. Can entities from countries other than Romania, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein be partners in the project?

Yes, they can, but will not be funded from the Romanian-EEA Research Programme.

5. How ethical issues are dealt with in the Programme?

If the project affects ethical issues you must indicate it in the on-line application form and provide a brief description of an ethical issue involved and how it will be dealt with appropriately. You have to specify any authorisation or permission you already have for the proposed work. On this basis, a proper ethical screening is possible if the proposal is considered for possible funding. If any authorisation or permission concerning ethical issues is required in order to carry out the project, it has to be delivered to the Programme Operator before the contract signature (not in the application form).

6. Is there any priority order/preference of topics concerning thematic area in the Call?

No, there is no such preference. Projects will be evaluated primarily on the basis of their scientific quality/excellence and innovativeness.

(More information about the evaluation process is available in Guide for Evaluators)

SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

1. Is there any limit as to the number of applications submitted by a single entity (Project Promoter)?

There are no formal restrictions in this regard.

2. Is there any limit as to the number of applications submitted by a single Principle Investigator (PI)?

There are no formal restrictions in this regard but, taking into consideration the project dimension, the involvement of PI must be significant and sufficient for a proper implementation of the project.

3. Is there a Romanian version of the Program Description, Guide for Applicants, Guide for Evaluators and the application form available?

No, there is not. All documents are available only in English.

4. Is it necessary to submit a paper version of the application?

No, it is not. The application is submitted only through the on-line platform: www.uefiscdi-direct.ro. After the successful submission of the application, the system will generate automatically a document called "the Statement". It has to be signed by the Project Promoter and Principle Investigator and sent to the Program Operator/Implementing Agency in paper version within 7 days from the date of submission.

EVALUATION

1. How will the experts assessing the proposals be selected?

The assessment will be carried out by independent, international experts (researchers) with a good international visibility in a specific research area. Experts will be selected from the existing national database of experts or they could be recruited from the EU Commissions Database of Experts. They must have experience in evaluating project applications at international level.

2. How will the potential of the research consortium be evaluated?

The experts will be assessing the research capacity (human resources, research infrastructure) foreseen for the project implementation of all the project partners comprising the consortium as well as experience in implementing international projects. Also, the track record and experience of the Principal Investigator will be the subject of assessment.

3. How is the final ranking decided upon?

The Programme Committee discusses the ranking list and recommends the proposals for funding to the Programme Operator. While making recommendation for funding, the Programme Committee takes into consideration the overall quality of the proposals (ranking lists), a similar success rate for each thematic area and the total earmarked budget to the call.

The PO issues the decision for each project to be funded based on PC recommendation.

(For more explanations see the Guidelines of Evaluators).

SIGNING GRANT AGREEMENT (CONTRACTS)

1. Who signs the grant agreement (contract) on the consortium's side?

The grant agreement (contract) between Programme Operator and Project Promoter is signed by a person having legal powers to represent the institution (the Project Promoter). Usually it is a rector, vice-rector or director of a research institute.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

1. What is a recommended duration of the project?

The project should last no longer than 36 months. The final date of eligibility of the project costs is 30 April 2017 and after that date expenditures are not eligible. There is no formal restriction on the minimum duration of the project.

2. How is the working time recorded in the project?

The PO/IA expects project staff to use timesheets so that their actual time is recorded against a project to form the basis of the costs charged. If a person is contracted to work 100% of their time on a single project (whether they are working full-time or part-time), timesheets are not necessary as their costs can only be charged to that activity. In all other cases, timesheets or project time records are required. This includes those who may be contracted to work on two or more projects, since it is essential when charging to have a means of recording and verifying the actual time applied to each activity.

3. How often does the progress in the project implementation have to be reported to the PO?

During the course of the project, the Project Promoter submits an annual periodic report within 60 days of the end of each reporting period set out in the project contract. At the end of the project the Project Promoter submits a final report, within 60 days after the project end.

(The contents of these reports are described in Guide of Applicants, pag. 19).

PARTNERSHIP

1. Is it possible that the Donor State partner takes part in more than one project?

Yes, there are no formal limits within this scope.

2. What is the maximum level of funding for a Donor State partner under the Programme?

It is expected that the eligible costs claimed by the Donor States entities participating in the project shall normally not exceed 40% of the total eligible costs of the project. The budgetary allocation to partners should reflect the actual contribution made by each party and should be the subject of negotiation between the Project Promoter and the project partners.

3. How many entities can the partnership consist of?

There are no formal, upper limits with respect to the number of partners. Proposals have to be submitted by consortia comprising at least one Romanian entity and one from EFTA States (Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein).

4. Will a template of the partnership agreement be available or is it a responsibility of the Project Promoter to provide the template?

Yes, the template of the partnership agreement will be available on the Programme Operator's website.

5. Is a letter of intent required?

No, it is not required.

6. Can each partner calculate indirect cost by a different method?

Each partner decides on a method of indirect cost calculation.

(Details are available in Guide for Applicants, pag. 15)

7. Is the State Aid Scheme applicable for Donor States partners as well?

Yes, the State Aid Scheme applies also for Donor States partners, including associated declarations. According to the State Aid Scheme, the Romanian and Norwegian SMEs rates for support are:

Type of research	Company Type	
	Medium	Small
Fundamental research	100%	
Industrial research	75%	80%
Experimental development	50%	60%

FINANCIAL ISSUES

1. What is the minimum and maximum grant amount in the Call?

The minimum amount of grant assistance to be applied for is EUR 500.000 and the maximum amount is EUR 1.500.000.

Grants from the Programme may be up to 100% of total eligible project costs. The remaining costs of the project shall be provided or obtained by the Project Promoter and the project partners, according to their respective shares of the project budget.

2. What are the project's eligibility dates?

The first and final dates of eligibility of a project will be set out in the grant agreement (contract) signed between the Project Promoter and the Programme Operator.

Taking into consideration the final date of eligibility of expenditures in the Programme (30 April 2017), the Programme Operator recommends that the projects start as soon as possible after issuing funding decisions.

3. Is VAT an eligible cost?

Basically, VAT is listed as ineligible cost if it is recoverable (it means in the case an entity can reclaim it from the national tax authorities in conformity with the national indirect tax regulation).

4. Is it possible to get the funding for preparatory costs of the project and if so, what kind of costs fall into this category?

Yes, it is possible the Programme foresees the possibility to apply for the reimbursement of the project proposal's preparatory costs both for the Project Promoter and project partners from the Donor States. These are the costs related to the search for partners prior to or during the preparation of a project application, the development of such partnerships and preparation of an application for a project proposal.

These costs will be reimbursed to Project Promoter in Romanian Lei (RON), as 'lump sums' up to EUR 5.000 or EUR 2.500.

The preparatory costs will include travel and accommodation expenses for participating to the info-day and brokerage events or to participate in joint meetings organised between PP and partners from Donor States.

5. How shall expenditures within the Programme be documented?

Expenditures are considered to have been incurred when the cost has been invoiced, paid, and the subject matter delivered (in case of goods) or performed (in a case of services) and received.

Exceptionally, costs in respect of which an invoice has been issued in the final month of eligibility are also deemed to be incurred within the dates of eligibility if the costs are paid within 30 days of the final date for eligibility. Overheads and depreciation of equipment are considered to have been incurred when they are recorded on the accounts of the Project Promoter and the project partner(s).

The Project Promoter and project partners' internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the expenditures and revenue declared in respect of the project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

8. Is an external audit for projects required?

A certificate by an independent and certified auditor, certifying that the claimed costs are incurred in accordance with the national law and accounting practices of the project partner's country, shall be

seen as sufficient proof of expenditure incurred by a Project Promoter or a project partner. Project Promoters and project partners may opt for a competent public officer to provide their proof of expenditure (certificate on financial statements) provided that the relevant national authorities have established the legal capacity of that competent public officer to audit that entity and that the independence of that officer, in particular regarding the preparation of the financial statements, can be ensured.

Proof of expenditure shall not be submitted by a Project Promoter or a project partner where the total grant from the programme to the respective Project Promoter or project partner is less than EUR 375,000.

(Details are available in Guide for Applicants, pag. 17)

9. Is the purchase of equipment an eligible cost?

Cost of new or second hand equipment, provided that it is depreciated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to the Project Promoter and project partners, and generally accepted for items of the same kind. Only the portion of the depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be taken into account, in compliance with applicable rules on the state aid scheme.

For Romanian partners, the rules of depreciation, according to national legislation, apply only to SMEs. For the research organizations all equipment costs are 100% eligible.

(Details are available in Guide for Applicants, pag. 13)

10. What is the currency used for the project proposal's budget and settlement of the project costs?

The currency used is the Romanian Lei (RON). The European Central Bank's exchange rate from the date of the call launch (15th of November 2013) is used for calculating all costs related to the project application and implementation: 1 EUR is equal to 4,4513 RON.