

Second multilateral call for research projects within the ERA-NET Infect-ERA

“Coordination of European funding for infectious diseases research”

This document announces the second transnational joint call for research projects on human infectious diseases within the framework of the ERA-NET Infect-ERA, which aims to **coordinate European funding for human infectious diseases research**. Infect-ERA builds on the experience and success of the former ERA-NET PathoGenoMics. Joint collaborative projects should favorably include researchers from the academic and the clinical and/or the industrial sector. A portion of the funding will be reserved to support projects of young scientists' consortia. Funding will be granted for a maximum of three years according to national regulations. Submissions of proposals will be in two steps: a pre-proposal step with submission deadline by **April 02, 2014**, and a full proposal step for invited consortia with submission deadline by **August 04, 2014**. Projects are expected to start at the **end of 2014 / beginning of 2015**.

The following funding organizations are participating in the call:

- the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), Austria
- the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO), Belgium
- the Agency for Innovation by Science and Technology (IWT- Flanders), Belgium
- the National Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS – French speaking community), Belgium
- the French National Research Agency (ANR), France
- the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) represented by Project Management Jülich (PtJ), Germany
- the Hungarian Academy of Science (HAS) and the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA), Hungary
- the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology (DBT), India
- the Chief Scientist Office, Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH), Israel
- the National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR), Poland
- the National Science Centre (NCN), Poland
- the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), Portugal
- the Ministry of National Education (MEN), Romania
- the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (MINECO), Spain
- the Swedish Research Council (SRC), Sweden

These funding organizations are opening the call simultaneously in their respective countries.

The call is centrally coordinated by the Infect-ERA Joint Call Secretariat, led by MINECO, Spain which will be the central contact point for all project coordinators.

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The general regulations given in this Call Text and in the Guidelines for Applicants apply to all applicants. In addition, there are specific regulations of the funding organizations in each partner country. **Applicants must refer and adhere to the specific regulations of the national funding organizations.**

1. Aim of the call

In this call, Infect-ERA aims to fund transnational and translational research, bringing together basic, applied, technology-driven and clinical research approaches of a broad variety of research topics regarding human infectious diseases. The call will enable multinational, collaborative research projects addressing specific topics of human infectious diseases caused by bacteria, virus, fungi or protozoa.

Transnational research consortia are invited to submit proposals related with at least one of the following themes, which are equal in relevance for this call:

- A. Assess the role of commensal flora in homeostasis and microbe's pathogenicity, and elucidate how commensal organisms or probiotics can be used to prevent or treat infections.**
- B. Development and application of new techniques to investigate the initial steps of the infection process.**

To address these themes, the proposals should integrate one of the following approaches:

- (i) Application of novel approaches and technologies such as metagenomics, transcriptomics, and metabolomics.
- (ii) Integration of new approaches to understand the effect of the pathogen upon infection and to develop biomarkers, preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic tools.

Proposals focused on HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B/C, malaria and tuberculosis are not in the scope of the call.

Examples of potential topics for the proposals related to theme A are:

- Mechanisms of host colonization by commensals and host derived factors that allow colonization by the microbiota.
- Factors expressed by pathogens to outcompete the microbiota.
- Animal models to assess the contribution of microbiota to prevent infection by pathogens.
- Development of new tools for the isolation and culture of commensal pathogens. Insight into commensal flora using novel approaches.
- Effects of antibiotics, immune response and diet, including probiotics, on the

homeostasis of commensal flora and its breakdown during disease.

- Manipulation of commensal flora to contain infection. Immunomodulation by the commensal flora. Exploitation of commensal flora to support novel therapeutic and preventive interventions
- ...and for theme B are:
- Tracking of pathogens in animal tissues and organs. Development of new animal models, bioluminescent assays, and imaging techniques for monitoring infections.
- New techniques to dissect the heterogeneity of pathogen populations upon infection. Research on the establishment of the infectious process by highly successful epidemic clones vs. low virulence isolates.
- Deciphering the initial cascades of infection in vivo: penetration, colonization and invasion
- Development of new single cell-based technologies to analyze infection.
- Exploring pathogen interaction with host cell signaling, and its correlation with subversion or induction of protective innate responses.

The proposals should favorably show a close collaboration between academic and clinical and/or industrial participants, convincingly present the application (exploitation) of the project results, and demonstrate a clear benefit to the public.

2. Application

2.1 Eligibility

Each consortium submitting a proposal must involve:

- a maximum of six partners,
- a maximum of two partners per country,
- a minimum of three partners, which must be eligible for the funding organizations of three different countries participating in this call (see the list of funding organizations above).

Non-funded project partners may also be part of the consortia if they are able to clearly demonstrate an added value to the consortium and secure their own funding. However, the coordinator and the majority of partners in a consortium must be eligible for the funding organizations participating in this call, and the maximum number of six participants may not be exceeded in any case. If one of the partners is not eligible the proposal will be rejected without further review.

To ensure an impartial evaluation procedure, any person who participates in the call document preparation and/or the evaluation procedure is not allowed to apply for project funding in this call.

Please refer to the Guidelines for Applicants for further details, and to the specific regulations of national funding organizations.

2.2 Consortia of Young Scientists

Part of the available funding is dedicated especially to consortia of young scientists. Each project leader of such consortia must be a “young scientist”, which is defined as having been awarded a PhD or equivalent at least two and a maximum of nine years before the deadline for submission of pre-proposals (periods of maternity/paternity leave or military service shall be taken into account).

2.3 Submission of joint transnational proposals

Submission of proposals will be carried out in two steps. For both the pre- and the full proposal step, one joint document (in English) shall be prepared by the project partners of a transnational consortium, and submitted to the Joint Call Secretariat by the project coordinator. A submission tool will be implemented in the Infect-ERA website (www.submission-infect-era.eu).

The call will have the following timetable:

December, 2013	Pre-announcement of the publication
January 17, 2014 (17:00, CET)	Publication of the joint transnational call
April 02, 2014	Deadline for pre-proposal submission
Early June, 2014	Communication of results of the pre-proposal assessment / Invitation for full proposals
August 04, 2014 (17:00, CET)	Deadline for full proposal submission
Mid-October, 2014	Communication of funding decisions to the applicants
End 2014/early 2015	Expected project start

2.4 Financial modalities and funding prerequisites

Funding is granted for a maximum of three years in accordance with national regulations. Applicants must refer and adhere to their own specific National Regulations as detailed in the Guidelines for Applicants. Applicants must contact their national funding agencies (see contact details below) to check their compliance with the national rules.

The funds provided by each funding organization are listed in the table below. The “virtual common pot model” shall apply for this transnational call. As such, each country will fund its own approved project partners. The list of the funded projects titles and partners will be published on the website of Infect-ERA (www.infect-era.eu).

All project participants selected for funding will be required to sign a Consortium Agreement (CA) before the start of the project, which must address the points given in the Guidelines for Applicants. The CA, together with any other information required by national regulations, should be made available to the national funding agencies upon request.

Anticipated funding provided by each party:

Name of Organisation	Country	Contribution
Austrian Science Fund (FWF)	Austria	1.2 M€
Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO)	Belgium	0.2 M€
Agency for Innovation by Science and Technology-Flanders (IWT)	Belgium	1.0 M€
National Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS)	Belgium	0.2 M€
French National Research Agency (ANR)	France	1.0 M€
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) represented by Project Management Jülich (PtJ)	Germany	3.0 M€
Hungarian Academy of Science (HAS) and the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA)	Hungary	0.13 M€
Department of Biotechnology. Ministry of Science and Technology (DBT)	India	0.5 M€
Chief Scientist Office, Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH)	Israel	0.24 M€
National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR)	Poland	0.5 M€
National Science Centre (NCN)	Poland	0.5 M€
Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT)	Portugal	0.325 M€
Ministry of National Education (MEN)	Romania	0.2 M€
Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (MINECO)	Spain	0.8 M€
Swedish Research Council (SRC)	Sweden	2.0 M€

2.5 Partnering web tool

A Partnering tool is available in the Infect-ERA website (<http://www.infect-era.eu/collaborations>) in order to facilitate the exchange of research ideas and the effective planning of collaborative projects, as well as to foster the assembly of eligible

consortia and the integration of project partners who have not been involved in multilateral consortia so far. All potential project partners are invited to register in this electronic tool. Registration will allow them to submit a short description of their research.

2.6 Contact persons

The only official communication line of the proposal is between the Infect-ERA Joint Call Secretariat and the project coordinator. The project coordinator will be the person contacted by the Infect-ERA Joint Call Secretariat during the application procedure, so he/she must forward this information to the other participants. Each funding organization has national contact persons who can be contacted for information about the specific national requirements (see table below).

Country	Funding org.	Contact person	Contact details
Austria	FWF	Milojka Gindl	milojka.gindl@fwf.ac.at
Belgium	FWO	Olivier Boehme Geertrui Poelaert	erantet@fwo.be +3225501545 +3225501555
Belgium	IWT	Hendrik De Bondt	hdb@iwt.be +32 2 432 42 12
Belgium	FNRS	Arnaud Goolaerts Freia Van Hee	arnaud.goolaerts@frs-fnrs.be +32 2 504 93 28 freia.vanhee@frs-fnrs.be
France	ANR	Serawit Bruck	serawit.bruck@agencerecherche.fr
Germany	BMBF/PtJ	Henrike Knizia	h.knizia@fz-juelich.de
Hungary	HAS / OTKA	Levente Emődy	levente.emody@aok.pte.hu
India	DBT	Shailja V. Gupta	shailja@dbt.nic.in
Israel	CSO-MOH	Benny Leshem Irit Allon	benny.leshem@moh.health.gov.il allonirit1@gmail.com
Poland	NCN	Marcin Liana	marcin.liana@ncn.gov.pl +48 12 341 9161
Poland	NCBR	Marcin Chmielewski	marcin.chmielewski@ncbr.gov.pl
Portugal	FCT	Anabela Isidro Ricardo Pereira	anabela.isidro@fct.pt; +351213911552 ricardo.pereira@fct.pt +351213911596
Romania	MEN	Ioana Ispas	ioana.ispas@ancs.ro +4021 212 77 91
Spain	MINECO	Julio Barbas	julio.barbas@mineco.es
Sweden	SRC	Pontus Holm	pontus.holm@vr.se
Joint Call Secretariat		Irene Sánchez	infect-era@mineco.es

Annex: Summary of funding and restriction (I)

Funding Body/ Country	FWF (AT)	FWO (BE)	IWT (BE)	FNRS (BE)	ANR (FR)	BMBF (DE)	OTKA, HAS (HU)
Funding of industrial partners eligible?	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Participation of industry required?	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Maximum funding per partner/ per project	300 Keuro	200 Keuro /1 project/ max. 4 years	250 Keuro 250 Keuro	200 Keuro	No; the requested depends on the scientific need and justification for the budget. Minimum amount per partner: 15 Keuro	No	75 Keuro 75 Keuro
Eligible costs	Only project-specific costs (see rules for FWF stand alone project) and only 5 % general costs are allowed (but no others overheads).	ref. National Regulations	Personnel cost and consumables	ref. National Regulations	Personnel, Consumables, Animals, Subcontracts (if costs<50% eligible costs), Equipment, Travel See French Annex for details	See national guidelines	Consumables, mobility and overheads
Additional documents required	http://www.fwf.ac.at/de/applications/internationale_kooperationsprojekte.html	No	IWT eligibility supporting documents as described in the national regulations chapter of the	No	No	No	OTKA application forms will be required to be filled out after funding recommendation

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			Guidelines for Applicants				
Other national restrictions	http://www.fwf.ac.at/de/applications/internationale_kooperationsprojekte.html	ref. National Regulations		Multiple applications are not allowed	<p>Please note that in the context of this call, ANR will not fund projects related to chronic diseases.</p> <p>For projects selected for funding: 1-National budget request forms 2-A copy of the signed consortium agreement established between the consortium partners must be provided to ANR before the first payment to the French researchers involved in the project.</p>	See national guidelines	<p>No double funding (including national funding from OTKA or HAS) No salaries for applicants No equipment</p>

Annex: Summary of funding and restriction (II)

Funding Body/ Country	CSO-MOH (IL)	DBT (IN)	NCBR (PL)	NCN (PL)	FCT (PT)	MINECO (ES)	SRC (SE)
Funding of industrial partners eligible?	No	See Guidelines for Applicants	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Participation of industry required?	No		No	No	No	No	No
Maximum funding per partner/ per project	60 Keuro	See Guidelines for Applicants	No	No	200 Keuro for a project coordinator 125 Keuro if NOT the project coordinator	150 Keuro per project (200 Keuro if one Spanish eligible institution coordinates the project)	No
Eligible costs	Personnel (not for applicants), animals, consumables, animals, travel (see limits), 10% overhead	See Guidelines for Applicants	Personnel, Instruments and equipment, Contractual research, Technical knowledge and patents, Other operating costs, Additional overheads (with restrictions - contact national contact point for details)	See national guidelines	Equipment, consumables, human resources, networks & consortium funding, mobility and overheads	Personnel costs (fellowships are not eligible). Direct costs (consumables, small equipment, travel) Overheads are not eligible Clinical assays are not eligible	Eligible costs are the same as for applications for Swedish Research Council project grants

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Additional documents required	A copy of the application should be Emailed to CSO-MOH	See Guidelines for Applicants	No	See national guidelines	statement of commitment to the FCT National Contact Point duly signed, dated and stamped by the Head of the Portuguese applicant organization and by the PI	No	No
Other national restrictions	Applicants with pending or funded CSO-MOH projects are ineligible	See Guidelines for Applicants	http://www.ncbir.pl/programy-miedzynarodowe/era-net/infect-era/aktualnosci/	No double financing is permitted	http://www.fct.pt/apoios/projectos/regulamento.phtml.en	* See more details in http://www.idi.mineco.gob.es/stfls/MICIN/Internacional/FICHEROS/Instrumentos_ERA/National_annex_MINECO_Infect-ERA2014.pdf	Same rules and restrictions as for applications for Swedish Research Council project grants