CALL TEXT

for ERA-MarineBiotech (ERA-MBT)
Third Joint Transnational Call

Read also the Guidelines for Applicants

For further information contact the Joint Call Secretariat:

Victoria Sanz
Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness
Spain
era-mbt@mineco.es
Tel.: +34 91 6037723

Third transnational call for research projects within ERA-MarineBiotech

"Metagenomic approaches for valorization

from the marine environment"

1. Motivation

ERA-MarineBiotech (ERA-MBT) recognises that Europe's marine ecosystems and organisms are largely underexplored, understudied and underutilized, in spite of Europe's access to an extensive and diverse set of marine ecosystems, supporting enormous marine biodiversity. This resource, through the coordinated application of biotechnology, has the potential to provide a **major contribution** towards addressing some of the most pressing **societal challenges** including environmental degradation, human health and delivering sustainable supplies of food, energy and other commodities amongst others, regarded as the Grand Challenges for our future.

The main objectives of ERA-MBT are to:

- stimulate trans-European development of marine biotechnology research, innovation and enterprise activity
- build communities and capacity considering the maritime regions' different perspectives and potential
- deliver a lasting network to fund and support marine biotechnology

ERA-MBT is a four-year programme funded under the European Commission ERA-NET scheme's 7th Framework Programme (Grant Agreement Number 604814, December 2013 - November 2017). The partnership consists of 19 funding organisations and representatives from 14 countries. The ERA-NET intends to launch at least three calls during the programme period. The first call was launched in October 2014 under the topic "The development of biorefinery processes for marine biomaterials" and the second one was launched in December 2015 under the topic "Biodiscovery - Bioactive molecules from the marine environment".

The present document announces the third ERA-MBT Joint Transnational Call which aims to coordinate European funding for marine biotechnology research, development and innovation. The main purpose of the call is to stimulate joint European research and development activities in marine biotechnology. Transnational research consortia from academia, research institutes and industry are invited to submit proposals in a one-step procedure with the submission deadline by March 7, 2017.

Funding will be granted for a maximum of three years according to national regulations. Projects are expected to start by the end of 2017.

2. Aim of the call

2.1. Background

Previous ERA-MBT calls for research proposals presented the research community with considerable scope for innovative research designed to extract value from marine bioresources firstly by the development of biorefinery processes and more recently by promoting research on the discovery of bioactive materials from the marine environment.

2.2. General scope

This call broadly targets the development and utilization of culture independent methods to study genetic material of marine, non-cultivable microbes (the microbiome). This is estimated to account for 90 percent of the total marine biomass. Even though the enormous potential of marine microorganisms as a source of novel enzymes and metabolites has been demonstrated, many challenges exist when aiming to explore and exploit this biomass. The greatest challenge facing the research community targeting the microbiome, concerns limitations associated with culturing marine microbes. However, recent advances in culture independent approaches resulting in the increased availability of metagenomic data have helped overcome these limitations, leading to the identification of novel biocatalysts and metabolites with biotechnological potential. Developments in "-omics" technologies have expanded the utility of sequence-based metagenomic analysis, making possible the comprehensive analysis of all genes in all organisms present in the most complex sample. It is expected that further successes will follow with ongoing technological developments that are set to enhance both the identification of novel biochemical entities within metagenomics datasets, and their expression in heterologous systems.

The focus of this call is to target research towards marine metagenomes and their microbes, with a view to identifying new enzymes, metabolites, and metabolic pathways with biotechnological potential. The uniqueness of marine environments in which marine microbes live, offers researchers with opportunities to explore their habitat and exploit the genetic properties in a wide range of product and process applications. The complexity of marine environments is reflected in the genetic diversity of the microbes that inhabit these ecosystems. Studying this diverse microbial resource relies heavily on multi- and inter-disciplinary research teams and access to a range of tools and methodologies that are generally described as "-omics" technologies or "-omics" based approaches. The use of these tools to study and exploit the biotechnological potential of marine environments is not new; several EU funded projects including MicroB3, Pharmasea and MaCuMBA made extensive use of them. ERA-MBT's mission is to help develop these tools within projects willing to pursue both a scientific goal and an ambition to expand the toolbox, making it possible to gain new knowledge with potential for new innovations.

The demand for products to support environmental surveillance, the control of pathogens - in food, animals, aquaculture, humans, etc., - and new enzymes for use in a variety of industrial

bioprocessing applications is rising, as it is the need for new sources of pharmaceutical, medical and food products. The attention of the enterprise and commercial sector has already turned to marine microbial communities as a potential novel source in their search for new market opportunities.

2.3. Focus of the call

With reference to the "ERA-MBT Research and innovation Roadmap", this transversal topic is mentioned under theme 4: “Enabling technologies and infrastructures” and specifically in sub-theme 2: “Development of the marine biotech toolbox” where “-**omics based technologies**” "**bioinformatics**" & “**model organisms**” are included.

The suggested topic also includes the roadmap themes 1, 2 and 3 which lead to a large number of possible project configurations. By introducing the term “*metagenomics*” we focus the call to a yet uncovered area in the ERA-MBT calls, while at the same time, directing the applicants towards the future developments and integrative RTDI (Research, Technological Development and Innovation) landscape.

The goal of this call is to encourage researchers and enterprises to make use of and develop new approaches and tools (integrated, functional- and/or sequenced-based metagenomics) to explore the marine microbiomes in any part of the marine environment, being the free water column, specific habitats, host associated, etc. Typically, the starting point for such research will employ both functional-based and/or sequence-based approaches involving metagenomic DNA. The potential to detect very low abundance footprints of the microbial community and obtain high sequence coverage per sample, means that metagenomes will expand the source of potential novel materials.

Even though, in recent years, considerable progress has been made in the use of “-omics” technologies, efforts are needed to overcome key bottlenecks, and to promote further development of the marine biotech toolbox and the use of these approaches to make value from marine biological resources.

Projects submitted to this call are expected to:

- Maximise and develop the use of available technologies to generate new knowledge and innovation. In doing so, technological gaps or other barriers in exploring marine microbial communities of all types will be highlighted and will inform future developments of new research tools.
- Utilize all the relevant and necessary scientific disciplines and expertise, including knowledge of marine species being hosts to marine microbes.The metagenomics field is large and diverse. The call is therefore open and applicants are free to define which area to explore within the marine related microbiome, where metagenomics can be applied and developed.

- Develop and use culture independent methods to generate value from the unknown, non-cultivable footprint of the microbiome.
- Promote transdisciplinary and have one or more groundbreaking biotechnology component(s).
- Applications are required to focus on activities that fit within one or more of the Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 1 to 4 (see definition below), and enterprises are invited to participate and even apply, as long as the correspondent national/regional funder allows. Please check national regulations (ANNEX II), as not all funders allow for this.

2.4. Exclusions

The call **excludes** the following activities:

- Projects cultivating microorganisms for further analysis
- Projects working with metagenomes from non-salt water habitats
- Projects in contravention with the Cartagena Protocol/Nagoya Protocol

The call **excludes** the costs associated with:

- The collection of materials from the high-seas, from the seabed or within seabed sediments or underlying geological features
- The collection or the access to any other material that is generally freely available, with the exception of samples purchased from biobanks or culture collections

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Technology readiness levels (TRL) *Annex G European Commission Decision C (2014)4995 of 22 July 2014 (https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/doc/call/h2020/common/1617621-part_19_general_annexes_v.2.0_en.pdf)*

Where a topic description refers to a TRL, the following definitions apply, unless otherwise specified:
TRL 1 – basic principles observed
TRL 2 – technology concept formulated
TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept
TRL 4 – technology validated in lab
TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key bling technologies)
TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment
TRL 8 – system complete and qualified
TRL 9 – actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space)

The applications should follow:

1. Specific **national/regional eligibility criteria** (see ANNEX II for specific funding organisations regulations). In order to comply with the eligibility criteria in the respective country/region it **is strongly recommended to contact the respective funding agency** (see contacts in the ANNEX I) before submitting a proposal.

Note: some topics may not be fundable by some funding organizations. Consult the specific national regulations in ANNEX II carefully.

2. Additionally, all applications should follow **ERA-MBT eligibility criteria**, as described in the Guidelines for Applicants.

Proposals not meeting national regulations and/or ERA-MBT eligibility criteria might be rejected before the evaluation phase.

3. Call documents

The terms of reference of the call are established in four main documents. Two of them (*Call text* and *Guidelines for Applicants*) are accessible to the applicants via the Electronic Submission System. The other two are internal documents (*Memorandum of Understanding* and *Internal Call Procedures*).

4. Funding organizations

The following funding organizations will participate in the call:

- Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO), Flanders-Belgium
- Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Flanders-Belgium
- Fonds de Recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies (FRQNT), Canada
- Genome British Columbia (Genome BC), Canada
- Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) represented by Project Management Jülich (PtJ), Germany
- Innovation Norway (IN), Norway
- Research Council of Norway (RCN), Norway
- Regional Fund for Science and Technology - Secretariat for Sea, Science and Technology - Azores Regional Government (FRCT-SRMCT-GRA), Azores - Portugal

- Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI), Romania
- Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (MIZS), Slovenia
- Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness, Spain

These funding organizations will open the call simultaneously in their respective countries.

5. Application

5.1. Eligibility

The following criteria must be taken into account:

- Each consortium submitting a proposal must involve:
  - a maximum of five partners, however, applicants are encouraged to include partners funded by the following funding organisations: UEFISCDI (Romania) and MIZS (Slovenia). If such partners are included into the consortium, the maximum number of partners can be increased up to six
  - a maximum of two partners per country
  - a minimum of three partners from three different countries participating in the call which must be eligible for the funding organizations and must request funds (see the list of funding organizations in section 4)
- The majority (2/3) of partners and the funding volume in a proposal must belong to funding agencies participating in the call.
- The coordinator of the proposal must be based in a country/region participating in the call and must be funded by a funding agency participating in the call.
- Partners from countries which do not take part in this call (in Europe and outside) may be partners in a project at their own cost if their contribution is relevant to achieve the project goals.
- Industrial partners are welcomed to collaborate in the consortium but their participation is not mandatory. Industrial partners that cannot be funded by their national/regional funding organisation may participate in a consortium at their own cost, if they demonstrate their added value for the project and translate this into detailed activities and budget. They should provide a letter of commitment to the JCS with details on this collaboration.
- Subcontractors may be included following national or regional financing regulations of the eligible participant.
- The duration of the project is maximum 36 months.
- The project must fit the scope of the call.

Proposals considered not eligible might be rejected and may not be further evaluated.

Please refer to the Guidelines for Applicants for further details, and to the specific national regulations in the present document (ANNEX II).

5.2. Submission timeline

DEADLINE: Proposals must be submitted via the Electronic Submission System (ESS) **by March 7, 2017 (15:00 CET).** Each project coordinator should register the proposal on time, as a strict call deadline is applied. After this deadline, the ESS will be closed.

March 7, 2017 (15:00 CET)	Deadline for submitting the proposals
June 2017	Peer Review Panel meeting - Recommendation of projects to be funded
July 2017	Communication of the funding recommendation
November 2017	Start of projects

6. Evaluation of proposals

Each proposal passing the eligibility phase will be allocated to **three remote reviewers** who fit the profile of the application. The reviewers are internationally recognized scientists chosen for their expertise and particular thematic orientations related to the topic addressed in the proposal.

Reviewers will be asked to evaluate the scientific relevance to the call - Scope check - which will be a "yes or no" answer. Independently of the answer the reviewer will be asked to evaluate the proposal with respect to three evaluation criteria (detailed below) using a 1-10 scale (poor to excellent).

Criterion 1: Scientific and technological excellence

- Clarity and relevance of the objectives
- Soundness of the concept and credibility of the proposed methodology
- Progress beyond the current state of the art (innovative potential, novelty, originality) with specific emphasis on the novelty of the biotech component

Criterion 2: Potential Impact

- How well does the proposal contribute to the aims of the call
- What are the economic advantages and potential for commercialization
- What is the societal impact
- Transnational benefit and added value of joint collaboration
- Output of research results: Exploitation and communication activities

Criterion 3: Implementation and Management

- Quality and relevant experience of individual participants
- Quality of the consortium as a whole (including complementarity and balance)

- Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures including risk and innovation management

7. Funding procedures

Funding is granted according to national regulations as given in the ANNEX II. A virtual common pot model shall be used for the ERA-MBT calls, in which countries pay for their own national teams.

For proposals recommended for funding, each partner of the consortium will contact the respective funding agency for further instructions regarding national procedures. The negotiation phase and finally the provision of funds will be handled following the usual national regulations rules.

Considering that the funding agencies have different timelines to contract and deliver funding, the research consortia need to agree on a common date for the start of the transnational project, taking into the recommendations of each funding organisation involved and the recommendation given by the JCS.

Each consortium should prepare and agree on a Consortium Agreement (CA) for cooperation, signed by all participants (see Guidelines for Applicants, section 9).

Anticipated funding provided by each organisation:

Organisation	**Country**	**Contribution**
Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO)	Belgium - Flanders	0.2 M€
Flanders Innovation and Entrepeneurhip	Belgium - Flanders	1 M€
Fonds de Recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies (FRQNT)	Canada	0.65 M€
Genome British Columbia (Genome BC)	Canada	0.4 M€
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) represented by Project Management Jülich (PtJ)	Germany	1 M€
Innovation Norway (IN)	Norway	See national annex
Research Council of Norway (RCN)	Norway	1.32 M€
Regional Fund for Science and Technology - Secretariat for Sea, Science and Technology - Azores Regional Government (FRCT-SRMCT-GRA)	Azores - Portugal	0.1 M€
Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)	Romania	0.5 M€
Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (MIZS)	Slovenia	0.36 M€
Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness	Spain	0.5 M€

8. Joint Call Secretariat and National Contact Persons

The call is centrally coordinated by the ERA-MBT Joint Call Secretariat, led by the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness, Spain, which will be the central contact point for all project coordinators.

Joint Call Secretariat contact information:

Victoria Sanz

Tel.: +34 91 6037723
Email: era-mbt@mineco.es

Postal adress:
Victoria Sanz
Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad
Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI)
Paseo de la Castellana 162, Planta 18, Impares
28046 Madrid

For any **technical support related to the Electronic Submission System** contact:

Dr. Jens Schiffers
Project Management Juelich (JUELICH)
Tel.: +49 2461 61-3972
Email: j.schiffers@fz-juelich.de

The only official communication line is between the ERA-MBT Joint Call Secretariat and the project coordinator. The project coordinator will be the person contacted by the Joint Call Secretariat during the application procedure, so he/she must forward all received information to the other participants in the consortium. Each funding organization has **National Contact Persons** who can be contacted for information about specific national requirements (see ANNEX I).

ANNEX I

National Contact Persons

Country	Funding Organization	Contact Person	Contact Details
Belgium (Flanders)	FWO	Olivier Boehme Toon Monbaliu	eranet@fwo.be
Belgium (Flanders)	Flanders Innovation and Entrepeneurhip	Kirezi Kanobana	Kirezi.kanobana@vlaio.be
Canada	FRQNT	Véronique Baril	Veronique.baril@frq.gouv.ca
Canada	Genome BC	Rachael Ritchie	rritchie@genomebc.ca
Germany	BMBF /PtJ	Jens Schiffers	j.schiffers@fz-juelich.de
Norway	IN	Ole Jørgen Marvik	Ole.Jorgen.Marvik@innovasjonnorge.no
Norway	RCN	Steinar Bergseth	stb@forskningsradet.no
Portugal (Azores)	Regional Fund for Science and Technology - Secretariat for Sea, Science and Technology - Azores Regional Government (FRCT-SRMCT-GRA)	Célia Amaral	Celia.jp.amaral@azores.gov.pt
Romania	UEFISCDI	Simona Stoian	simona.stoian@uefiscdi.ro
Slovenia	MIZS	Kim Turk	kim.turk @gov.si
Spain	Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness	Victoria Sanz	era-mbt@mineco.es

ANNEX II

National Regulations: Summary of national funding, eligibility rules and restrictions

Funding Body (Country)	**FWO (Flanders-Belgium)**	**Flanders Innovation and Entrepeneurhip (Flanders-Belgium)**	**FRQNT (Canada)**	**Genome BC (Canada)**	**BMBF (Germany)**	**IN (Norway)**
Funding of academic partners /industrial partners eligible?	Only academic partners	Industrial partners are eligible, academic partners as subcontractor of industrial partner	Only academic partners	Only academic partners	Yes	Industrial partners only. Funding schemes according to the Guidelines for state aid
Total committed budget	200.000 €	1.000.000 €	650.000 €	400.000 €	1.000.000 €	Funding is available through Innovation Norway's relevant grant programs. Applications will be assessed according to our normal policy and routines, i.e. applications are submitted to the appropriate regional office
Maximum funding per partner/ per project	200.000 €	in order to be able to fund min. 2 à 3 projects, the total funding per industrial partner can be blocked at 330kEUR	200.000 €	200.000 €	1.000.000 €	

Eligible costs	Staff, consumables (incl. travel) and infrastructure	Personnel costs, indirect costs, direct costs, subcontracting, exceptional large cost (http://www.iwt.be/sites/default/files/subsidies/documenten/IWT_kostenmodel_januari2014.pdf)	As per FRQNT Guidelines for Applicants.	As per Genome BC Guidelines for Applicants. Please email ERA@genomebc.ca to request a copy.	https://foerderportal.bund.de/easy/easy_index.php?auswahl=easy_formulare&formularschrank=bmbf&menue=block	http://www.innovasjonnorge.no/no/finansiering/bioraffineringsprogrammet/#.VD4-wvmSyao
Elegible topics	All	All, except military applications	All	All	All	http://www.innovasjonnorge.no/no/finansiering/
Other national restrictions	See for the detailed regulation on eligibility: http://www.fwo.be/en/fellowships-funding/research-projects/research-project/regulations-for-research-projects/, art. 9.	Check Guidelines (http://www.iwt.be/subsidies/extrasteun/era-mbt)	As per FRQNT Guidelines for Applicants.	As per Genome BC Guidelines for Applicants. Please email ERA@genomebc.ca to request a copy.	Higher education institutions, that are eligible for an "overall project overhead" (Ger. Projektpauschale) of 20%, should calculate their project budget without the "overall project overhead" at first!	

Funding Body (Country)	RCN (Norway)	FRCT-SRMCT-GRA - Regional Fund for Science and Technology - Secretariat for Sea, Science and Technology - Azores Regional Government (Azores - Portugal)	UEFISCDI (Romania)	MIZS* (Slovenia)	Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness (Spain)
Funding of academic partners /industrial partners eligible?	Academic partners 100% Industrial partners up to 50%	Only academic partners	Yes - according to the state aid scheme	100 % for research organization (such as universities, public and private research institutes) who's financed activity is non-economic in accordance with the provisions of Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation (OJ EU C 198, 27. 6. 2014). Wide dissemination of research results on a non-exclusive and non-discriminatory basis is required. 80% for small enterprises, 75% for medium sized enterprises and 65% for large enterprises in accordance with the provisions of the Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation (OJ EU C 198, 27. 6. 2014).	The **eligible entities** for the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness funding are: Non-profit research organizations according to the APCIN call 2017 or equivalent *(Acciones de Programación Conjunta Internacional 2017 o equivalente).* Although private enterprises are not be funded through the APCIN call, the Spanish industrial sector is welcome to participate in the transnational consortia using their own funds or funds from other national funding agencies (CDTI) or regional funding agencies. Mandatory: Spanish Principal Investigators **must be** eligible according to the APCIN 2017 call or equivalent and must have experience as investigators in projects funded by the *Plan Nacional I+D+i 2008-2011,* the *Plan Estatal I+D+i 2013-2016*, ERC Grants, European Framework Programmes or other relevant international programmes. Not allowed: - Principal Investigators are not allowed to apply for funding in more than one proposal of this ERA-MBT call. - Principal Investigators are not allowed to apply for funding in more

					than one proposal in the APCIN 2017 call or equivalent. This must be taken into account when participating in different ERA-Nets or other international initiatives, specially the CoBioTech call. - Principal Investigators have to remain unchanged between the proposal and the National APCIN 2017 call or equivalent. - Important: Principal Investigators who obtained funding in the APCIN 2016 call are not allowed to apply neither in APCIN 2017 or equivalent nor in this transnational ERA-MBT call. The Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness will avoid double funding (overlapping with other EU or National funding), and will not grant projects or parts of projects already funded. Final rules on eligibility will be defined in the APCIN 2017 call (or equivalent), to be published here.
Total committed budget	12.000.000 NOK (≈1,32 M€)	100.000 €	500.000 €	360.000 €	500.000 €
Maximum funding per partner/ per project	Maximum **per project**: Follows Norwegian guidelines for costs approximated to: -300.000 € as a project partner - 600.000 € with Norwegian coordination	100.000 €	Up to 200.000 €/project, up to 250.000 € in case of Ro coordination	180.000 € per project (max. 60.000 € per year)	- 150 K€ per Spanish legal entity / 200 K€ per project coordinator - 200 K€ per Spanish legal entities / 250 K€ if one Spanish legal entity coordinates the project (in the case of the centres formed by more than one Spanish legal entities, the maximum funding should not exceed 150 K€ per project (for example, 'centros mixtos CSIC')

Eligible costs	Forskerprosjekt: http://www.forskningsradet.no/no/Forskerprosjekt/1186753746501 Innovasjonsprosjekt i næringslivet: http://www.forskningsradet.no/no/Innovasjonsprosjekt_i_neringslivet/1253963327687	Check document (http://www.azores.gov.pt/NR/rdonlyres/024467F3-5F03-4C7C-91B6-54220EE59804/0/ERANET_3rdCall_EligibleExpenses_FRCTSRMCTGRA.pdf)	According to the National Plan for Research, Development and Innovation III 2015-2020	MIZS will fund all eligible costs of Slovenian researchers participating in successful transnational projects, recommended for funding in accordance with the Decree on criteria and standards. Eligible costs are defined based on the FTE value according to the Slovenian Research Agency's research project categorization (A, B, C or D based on the research conducted). Eligible costs must be directly related to the research conducted and should include personnel (according to article 16,18, 22 and 23 of the Decree), material (including travel, consumables and services) and equipment (amortization) costs as elements of the FTE. Indirect costs are eligible. The value is calculated based on the FTE value of category A, B,C, or D research projects, under the condition that costs under each of the specific FTE elements are appropriately decreased (by a max. of 20% for indirect costs).	- Personnel costs for temporary employment contracts (scholarships are not eligible). - Current costs, small scientific equipment, disposable materials, travelling expenses and other costs that can be justified as necessary to carry out the proposed activities. - Indirect costs (overheads) or clinical trials (proofs of concept, proofs of principle) are not eligible for funding in the APCIN call.

Elegible topics	All within the conditions as described in the call documents	All	All	All	All
Other national restrictions/ requirements		The Azores Regional Government - Secretariat for Sea, Science and Technology (Azores, Portugal) only funds regional teams. Check link for eligible partners/institutions (https://dre.pt/application/file/67040156).		***Please consult pg.18 for further information**	The English version of this document is a broad guideline to ease international partners to understand Spanish national rules. Spanish researchers applying for funding must consult the Spanish call document on the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness website and follow all participation and funding rules. In any case the National regulations in Spanish will prevail over the English version.

*MZIS: Further information for the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (Masarykova 16, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Eligibility of a partner as a beneficiary institution: research organizations as defined in the national *Research and Development Act (Zakon o raziskovalni in razvojni dejavnosti - ZRRD, Uradni list RS, št. 22/06 – uradno prečiščeno besedilo, 61/06-ZDru-1, 112/07, 9/11 in 57/12-ZPOP-1A*. All participating institutions have to be registered in the Slovenian Research Agency register of research institutions (Informacijski sistem o raziskovalni dejavnosti v Sloveniji - Sicris).

Eligibility of principal investigator and other research team members: The project activities of the Slovenian partner have to be under the supervision of the primary investigator/primary researcher who fulfills the requirements for project leader as defined in Art. 29 of the national *Decree on criteria and standards for allocating resources for the implementation of the research activity, financed from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia (Uredba o normativih in standardih za določanje sredstev za izvajanje raziskovalne dejavnosti, financirane iz Proračuna Republike Slovenije, Uradni list RS, št. 103/11, 56/12, 15/14 in 103/15*, from now on: *Decree on criteria and standards*). The criteria are further determined in the *Rules on Determining the Fulfillment of Conditions for a Research Project Leader (Pravilnik o kriterijih za ugotavljanje izpolnjevanja pogojev za vodjo raziskovalnega projekta, Uradni list RS št. 41/09 in 72/11)*. All participating researchers have to be registered in the Slovenian Research Agency register of researchers (Sicris) and must have available research hours.

Eligibility of costs: MIZS will fund all eligible costs of Slovenian researchers participating in successful transnational projects, recommended for funding in accordance with the *Decree on criteria and standards*. Eligible costs are defined based on the FTE value according to the Slovenian Research Agency's research project categorization (A, B, C or D based on the research conducted). Eligible costs must be directly related to the research conducted and should include personnel (according to article 16,18, 22 and 23 of the Decree), material (including travel, consumables and services) and equipment (amortization) costs as elements of the FTE. Indirect costs are eligible. The value is calculated based on the FTE value of category A, B,C, or D research projects, under the condition that costs under each of the specific FTE elements are appropriately decreased (by a max. of 20% for indirect costs).

Period of eligibility of public expenditures: as of budgetary year 2018 until the end of the budgetary year 2021.

Period of eligibility of expenditures on the project: from the starting date of the transnational project stipulated in the consortium agreement for a period of 36 months, with a prescribed additional 30 day period for the payment of invoices related to the project costs. The exact duration of the project will be defined in the contract between MIZS and the selected Slovenian partner, after the consortium agreement between the selected consortium partners enters into force.

National funding: max. 360.000 EUR with a possibility of additional EC funding depending on EC contribution (in the form of top up funding)

Total requested funding per project: for all Slovenian partners within one consortium must not exceed 70.000 € per year (210.000 € for the total project duration of 36 months).

Funding: A) 100 % for research organization (such as universities, public and private research institutes) who's financed activity is non-economic in accordance with the provisions of Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation (OJ EU C 198, 27. 6. 2014). Wide dissemination of research results on a non-exclusive and non-discriminatory basis is required. B) For research organizations, under the provision of Companies Act (Zakon o gospodarskih družbah, Uradni list RS, št. 65/09 - uradno prečiščeno besedilo, 33/11, 91/11, 100/11 - skl. US, 32/12, 57/12, 44/13 - odl. US, 82/13 in 55/15): 80% for small enterprises, 75% for medium sized enterprises and 65% for large enterprises in accordance with the provisions of the Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation (OJ EU C 198, 27. 6. 2014).

National contracting negotiations will commence after the projects are selected for funding on the level of the transnational call. National documentation with a statement regarding the agreed starting date of the transnational project signed by the transnational project coordinator will be a prerequisite for signing the contract on national level.

All Slovenian applicants are strongly advised to contact the Slovenian National Contact Person, Ms. Kim Turk before preparing proposals for application (kim.turk@gov.si; +386(1)4784705)

Name:	Dr. Maja Makovec Brenčič	Signature:	
Position:	Minister	Place, Date: Ljubljana,	