

## 1<sup>st</sup> External Call

„Towards Healthy, Resilient and Sustainable Agricultural Soils“

# Questions asked during the Webinars

Date and Time of the Webinars:

25<sup>th</sup> May 2021, 11:00-13:00 CEST (Berlin time)

27<sup>th</sup> May 2021, 11:00-12:00 CET (Berlin time)

Online submission tool: <https://ejp-soil.ptj.de/>

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## 1 General aspects

Is it possible, to write everything in English? This would make it more easy to combine partner communication and application.

- The call announcement as well as the National/Regional regulations in Annex A are written in English. However, some National/Regional Funding Parties have placed links where additional information regarding national/regional regulations can be found and should be considered. Those links guide the applicants to national websites, which are in their language, e.g. in Germany the link refers to the corresponding German call announcement and is written in English.
- If you have problems with interpretation or translation of the national/regional regulations, please contact the National Contact Points as outlined in Annex A of the call announcement

How many proposals are you expected to fund? Do you have a number in mind?

- This strongly depends on the size of the projects and the funds, which will be requested. The overall budget and budget per country is outlined in Annex A of the call announcement. An overview on number of pre-registered proposals will be published on the submission website after the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2021.

Can we have an "acceptable" range of funding for a given project ?

- This strongly depends on the funding party. Please check your national/regional regulations. Here you can find the indicative budget as well as the maximum funding per project of each Funding Party. You can also contact your national contact point (Annex A) and ask if such range of funding exists.

Will you share the presentation after the event?

- Yes, the presentation will be available on our submission website.

Will the pre-registered proposals be posted so that requests to join can be initiated (for those who are not eligible to be PIs or coordinators)?

- No, the proposal summary, which is a mandatory part of a successfully pre-registration, will not be published before selection of proposals (most likely in Dec 2021). The project summary shall be publishable as we will use it to announce the proposals selected for funding on our website. Then we would like to use the summaries of your proposals. Please use our [Partnering tool](#) on our submission website in order to search for partnerships.

Will you record?

- Yes, the Webinar will be recorded and available by end of this week.

Can you please put the link for partners searching webpage?

- [Link](#) to Partnering tool

How do we know these national contact points? Are they placed in some government ministries in each country?

- They are outlined in Annex A and Annex H of the call announcement

Where can we find Annexes?

- The Annexes can be found within the call announcement. The call announcement is available as pdf file on our submission website.



How much is the whole budget?

- The overall budget is 12.12 Mio € for this call.

Will it be published how many pre-proposals will register?

- Yes, This will be published on the Welcome page of the submission tool.

## 2 Topics

If a proposal catches 2 of the topics, should this be mentioned?

- This can be mentioned.

The major focus of our idea is on one topic, but inevitably covers a second topic. Will this proposal still be eligible for funding?

- You have to assign your proposal to one of the topics. However the experts will notice according to your description that the proposal touches also other topics of this call
- Please check national/regional regulations if the Funding Party you apply for funding will fund the topic you apply for!
- If your proposal addresses two topics and one of those topics is not eligible for funding by one of the Funding Party you apply for funding, please contact the National contact point of this Funding Party.

Considering that we need to include partners from different countries, does the proposal need to have a global perspective or it can be designed to be a country or regional level study?

- The perspective shall meet the evaluation criteria as outlined in section 7.2.1. This means that the perspective of the proposal has to be in line with the overall objective of EJP SOIL.

I have a question about this Topic C: are you funding also the development of new technologies, or are you expecting to fund the use of existing technologies only?

- This question cannot be answered in general as topic c comprises a wide variety of topics and scientific issues. It also depends strongly on the Funding party you are requesting funds from. Please contact your National Contact Point in that special case.

Please can you confirm the geographic scope of projects. are they restricted to Europe, or can they be based outside Europe (e.g. in South America or Africa)?

- The geographic scope is the same as outlined for the EJP SOIL programme most likely a European orientation. However the topics comprise many projects ideas which are independent from a geographic scope.

## 3 Procedure and Funding of the call

Can you add additional partners AFTER the 25th June deadline if they aren't included in the pre-registration?

- Yes, you can add and replace partners after pre-registration. However this shall be done in exceptional cases. We will keep an eye on it, that not too many partners will be added and replaced after pre-registration.
- The coordinator shall not change.



Is there any national proposal to be submitted after the selection for funding?

- This is up to the national/regional regulations. This call has a one-step procedure with a pre-registration beforehand. Please contact your National Contact point, if you have to submit also documents on national level.

Its not clear to me where the project should be based. Can it be based outside Europe? (e.g. in an African country)

- The project can be based also outside Europe but the objectives and targets of the project have to address the general objectives and targets of the EJP SOIL program (see section 7.2.1). Furthermore, in some cases the regulations outlined in the national/regional regulations have to be considered as well.

Can you please clarify the funding situation: if there is a UK, NO and PT consortium lead by UK, does the entire cost have to be covered by the UK funds, or do each of the UK, NO and PT funds come from each country respectively?

- The funds come from each country. This is also described in section 5 of the call announcement. The grant will be paid directly from their national/regional Funding party.

Is the call reserved ONLY to NON partner of the EJP SOIL?

- This strongly depends on the national/regional regulations. Some Funding parties allow EJP SOIL partners to apply for the external call and some Funding Parties do not allow EJP SOIL partner to apply for the external call.

About GRA it's not clear the total financed amount (600.000 euros) if it is specifically addressed to some of the GRA country list or to all of them

- Please contact the National contact point of the GRA in order to get further information on how the indicative budget will be distributed.

But a project may have several GRA funded participants if already participate 3 other funders?

- The GRA is one Funding Party and so to say counts as one "Funding country". The eligibility criteria clearly addresses that three different EXCBF member countries shall give funds to the consortia. Even if the GRA give funds to three different researcher from 3 different funders, this does not meet the criterion as the countries listed for GRA funding are actually not EXCBF member countries of this call.

Is it possible that some partners secure the funding from their country but others don't?

- Yes this is possible. This would mean that e.g. 2 partner from France are part of a consortia and only one French partner applies for funding and the other one would secure its own funding. But be aware that this partner has to submit an Financial commitment (see Call Announcement Annex E and section 5.1)

Then, each partner applies for its own funding and the coordinator applies for the extra funding for coordinating activities?

- The coordinator prepares and submit the proposal including the financial part of the proposal (see call announcement section 5.3). However each partner has to provide their financial overview on requested funding and own contribution, if applicable. An example for such a financial overview is given in Annex C of the call announcement and an example of a proposal incl. the financial part can be downloaded on our submission website.



Thirs country is eligible to funding (Iran)?

- No, Iran is not eligible for funding. Researchers from Iran can be partner in a consortia if they can secure their own funding (see Call Announcement Annex E and section 5.1). However those partners are additional to the minimum number of partners within a consortia.

Is Australia also confirmed as funding country? Like Canada?

- No, Australia is not a partner of this call.

what is maximum budget per partner?

- There is no maximum budget per partner. However the budget is limited to the indicative budget per country and some countries also have a maximum funding limit per project. Please carefully read Annex A and the Annex H of the call announcement and contact your national contact point if something is unclear.

My question is whether Canada has been confirmed yet as a funding country? Ac-cording to your website it is not clear at this point.

- Please contact the National contact point of Canada as outlined in Annex A to receive more information.

Is each national funder going to fund activities by the national partners only?

- Yes, each national funder will fund activities of their national partners. However in exceptional cases cross border funding.

What if a project is rated very good but the national budget of one partner is used up by some higher rated project?

- The EXCBF member will follow the ranking list and have to consider also available budget. In rare cases the ranking list can be blocked due to depleted budget of one Funding Party. In this case the EXCBF members will go into discussion about possible options.

Does "Own Contribution" only include cash, or does it include access to facilities, study sites?

- This depends on your National regulations. Please check Annex H of our call announcement and contact your national contact point in order to gain more information.

Is the Own Contribution based on the salary of researchers participating with man/months? (i.e. co-funding)?

- This depends on your National regulations. Please check Annex H of our call announcement and contact your national contact point in order to gain more information.

Would organizations like CATIE or CGIAR, which are GRA partners, be eligible for funding?

- Please contact the National Contact Point of the GRA to get more information on that case.

Who is the responsible person for GRA to ask?

- Hayden Montgomery as outlined in Annex A and H of the call announcement: phone +59 891457755; mail: [research.calls@globalresearchalliance.org](mailto:research.calls@globalresearchalliance.org)

Is it possible to include partner from third countries via subcontracting?



- This has to be addressed on National level as each country has different funding modalities. Please check your National regulation and contact your National Contact Point to discuss this issue

Seems a shame the eligibility is not sorted with a pre-proposal sift. Sifting after full proposals are submitted seems very inefficient.

- Yes we know about that problem but it is rather difficult to only check on parts on eligibility based on the information we receive during pre-registration. Therefore, we highly recommend to contact your National contact point in order to clarify issues regarding eligibility.

Do the national funding agencies of the project partners communicate with each other (with respect to funding decision)?

- Yes there will be 2 meetings between Funding agencies, moderated by the call office. One eligibility meeting where EXCBF members decide on eligibility of the proposals and one selection meeting where EXCBF members will decide which projects will be funded based on the ranking list and available budget.

The financing does not consider a cofund? The project activities are 100% funded? The type of activities that are funded depend on the national rules?

- This depends on the national funding regulations. Please check on Annex H and contact the national contact points if you need more information

What can the financial commitment from funded partners to additional partners with letter of commitment? Travel costs? Chemicals for special analyses?

- The financial commitment letter is a letter where a partner commits that he is able to perform its task(s) within the project at its own contribution. A template is provided in Annex E of the call announcement and also available as word file on the submission website

Structure of the consortia? Is it possible to have a consortium of company and universities?

- Yes, this is possible as long as this is in line with the national regulations this partner applies for, e.g. a company is eligible for funding in Germany and can be partner of a consortia.

Which are the maximum budget per project? this depend from the countries of the participants or is equal for everyone...

- There is no maximum budget defined in the general eligibility criteria. However most Funding Parties have defined a maximum limit of funding per project. If e.g. two German partners are within a consortia, than the maximum limit of funding of 400,000 € per project has to be divided between both partners.

How much can be the own contribution in %

- This strongly depends on the national regulations which are outlined in Annex H of the call announcement.

Number of financed proposals depend on the country?

- Yes, this depends on the budget of each Funding party and the outlined limit of funding per proposal. E.g. Germany has a budget of 2 Mio. € for funding and a limit of funding per proposal of 400,000 €. In result Germany is able to fund at least 5 projects, depending on the requesting funding per project.



## 4 Eligibility criteria

What requirements must the project coordinator meet, in addition to not belonging to the GRA?

- The coordinator must apply for funding from one of the Funding Parties (except GRA) and must be eligible for funding and hence actually receive funding.

Can the same entity (association, university, research council,...) join 2 different projects as operational unit?

- Sure this is possible the eligibility criteria that one coordinator cannot be coordinator to another projects only refers to the person who is actually the coordinator.

Are GRA applicants included in the 3 minimum eligible partners?

- Yes GRA applicants are included. However only one GRA applicant is included as the eligibility criterion says: 3 eligible partners requesting funding from at least three different EXCBF member countries. The GRA counts as "EXCBF member country" as the GRA is a Funding party who gives funding to applicants from countries mentioned in the National/regional regulations.

Is the quote that one can only lead one consortia per institution or per investigator? ie can multiple different investigators from the same organisation lead different consortia?

- Per investigator.

Are international organizations with headquarters on the funding countries, eligible partners?

- Please contact the National contact point of the respective country.

In a consortium if the coordinator is from the funding parties is it possible that the other two members are from GRA parties?

- No, only one partner receiving funding from GRA will be considered for the minimum of 3 partners as the GRA counts as "EXCBF member country".
- You may also check with the contact point from the GRA if it is possible to fund to partners with GRA funds within one project

Did you say that US partners are also eligible for funding? Maybe I did not hear correctly, as they are not mentioned in the list of funding partners in the call announcement.

- No US partners are not eligible for funding. They can participate if they can bring in their own funding. Please do not forget to provide an appropriate Letter of Commitment from these partners as outlined on Annex E of the call announcement.

Would be accepted partner from eligible country that are not financially supported from a given topic, that means without a financial support from EJP SOIL?

- No, the consortia must include at least three eligible partners requesting and receiving funding from one of the Funding Parties. All other partners can be part of the consortia but does not count to this criteria. Furthermore, partners who do not apply for funding but would be eligible for funds have to provide a Letter of Commitment as outlined on Annex E of the call announcement.



Please clarify - the 3 partners have to be from 3 different FUNDING countries? And they all have to apply for funding or just the coordinator applies?

- Correct, a consortium must consist of a minimum of 3 partners (i) from three different countries who contributes funds to the call and (ii) all 3 partners have to apply for funding. Please note that the GRA counts as "Funding country".

If two partners come from Colombia and Ecuador, they both need to use GRA - we would need an-other party? So is it important to have three countries or three funding entities

- As GRA counts as one Funding Party an additional partner would be needed to fulfill the general eligibility criteria about the partner constitution in one consortia.

How about US as partner?

- There is no Funding Party from USA involved in this call. Hence researchers from the US are invited to be partner within a consortia if they can secure their own funding (see Call Announcement Annex E and section 5.1)

To secure a proposal, is it possible that all partners write a letter of commitments in case they would be non-eligible without knowing it?

- This does not makes sense as in this case the Funding Parties will not fund those partners who can secure their own funding. If you are unsure if you are eligible for funding, please contact your National Contact Point and make sure which of your calculated costs are fundable and which may not be eligible for funding.

Can the same entitiy (association, university, research council,...) join2 different projects as opera-tional unit?

- Yes, this is possible.

In national regulations written max duration of project 48 months, which rules we have to follow? 36 months or 48 mnth?

- 36 month

We are a company with an invention for soil organic carbon sequestration in wastewater treatment plants from Turkey. We will apply with 3 universities in 3 different European countries. Can we make the coordinator from company? Or should he or she be from university?

- No, this is not possible as Turkey is not an EXCBF member state of this call. Turkey is partner of the EJP SOIL programme but for this call is extracted from the program and not all Funders from the EJP SOIL programm participate in this external call. However you a Turkish company can participate in this call on your own expensive and one of your partners have to be the coordinator. Please also check the list of Funding Parties outlined in Annex A of the Call announcement to check which countries will give funding to this call



## 5 Evaluation

Is there one panel for all themes or different panels for each of 3 themes?

- No there is one International Expert panel for all proposals. However the experts will be assigned to the proposals they have expertise in.

How is composed the evaluation panel? Is it possible to select the discipline/topic as in H2020?

- The IEP is composed of experts from all over the world. The experts will be assigned to proposals or the experts will chose proposals which they like to evaluate based on their expertise.

Are the national funding agencies obliged to accept the Ranking List from EJP Soil?

- The ranking list is not provided from EJP SOIL but from an International Expert Panel (IEP) which will consist of experts from all over the world. The Funding Parties accept the Ranking list provided by the IEP.

So there is an internal evaluation and an evaluation by external evaluator if I well understood

- Yes, an international evaluation panel will be established and out of this pool experts will be assigned to the proposals. Thereby each proposal will be evaluated by at least 3 experts.

Does the fact that partners have different skills is taken into consideration for evaluation?

- Yes, one criteria within the evaluation considers the multi-actor approach.

## 6 Submission of proposals and submission system

How should we submit the pre-registration documents? Only in the submission tool?

- The pre-registration comprises the project summary, assignment the project to one of the topics and entering contact data of all partners of the consortia. All this data will be entered directly into the submission tool by the coordinator. It is also possible that the partners can enter their contact data themselves.

So do all the Partners have to submit the proposal?

- Only the coordinator will and is actually able submit the proposal on behalf of the consortia (see call announcement section 5.3). Partners have access to only the section "partner data" within the submission system and are able to download a pdf file of the current state of the proposal.

So the proposal will include three budgets?

- No the proposal will have an overall indicated budget which is separated by partner and type of the tasks. Please also check Annex C of the call announcement and the example proposal on our submission website.

Is the lenght of text for summary and the other parts of the project stated somewhere?

- Yes, this is described in the Annex C of the call announcement and outlined at each section within the submission system.

In the Submission Platform - Is it possible to upload figures for each section?

- You can upload figures for each section where a free text is required by the submission system. In all other cases a pdf file needs to be uploaded which will than have the figures implemented in the appropriate pdf upload.



You have spoken about length of the CV

- The CV is limited to a pdf file of 2 pages. An upload of more than 2 pages will be rejected by the submission system. Please check also Annex C of the call announcement for further instructions.

I have another question the non partners (the partners the will not get budget) have to be also registered before the 25th of June?

- Yes, all partners which will be part of the consortia have to enter their contact data within the submission system.

Each partner have to register before 25 of June or is the coordinator that will register?

- Only the coordinator can register within the submission tool and than invites the partners of his consortia. For the pre-registration the coordinator has to fill out the contact da for him/herself and can fill out the contact data of all partners or the partner fill in their contact data themselves.

The length of the abstract????

- 4,000 characters incl. spaces

Is the contact name of the researcher required or the research support office/admin from our institu-tions?

- The name of the researcher is required.

