EuroNanoMed II

Joint Transnational Call for Proposals (2016)

for

"European Innovative Research & Technological Development Projects in Nanomedicine"

Call Text

Submission deadline: 11-February-2016 at 17:00 (CET)

Link to electronic proposal submission
(The submission system will be open by January 7, 2016)

EuroNanoMed II Joint Call Secretariat

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INTRODUCTION & MOTIVATION

Nanotechnology is a strategic priority for Europe. Technologies related to this sector have a vast potential for developing public welfare and economic growth, as well as for changing the way of life of citizens in many fields of application: healthcare, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), environment, etc.

Nanomedicine *is the application of nanotechnology to achieve breakthroughs in healthcare. It exploits the improved and often novel physical, chemical and biological properties of materials at the nanometer scale (from one nanometer to hundreds of nanometers). Nanomedicine has the potential to enable early detection and prevention of diseases, and to essentially improve diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of diseases. It was perceived as embracing five main sub-disciplines that in many ways are overlapping and underpinned by the following common technical issues: analytical tools, nanoimaging, nanomaterials and nanodevices, novel therapeutics and drug delivery systems, clinical, regulatory and toxicological issues.*

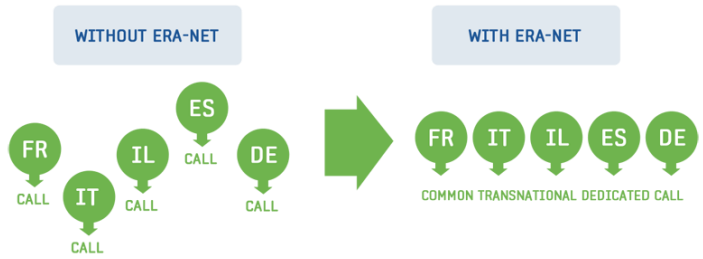
Over the last few years, Europe has successfully contributed to many of the achievements of the basic research dedicated to nanotechnologies. However, regarding the nanomedicine field in Europe, a critical issue concerns the capability of the research and technology development players to move effectively innovation from basic knowledge into either industrial or clinical applications, i.e. translational research*. In order to bridge this gap between research and clinical/commercial applications in nanomedicine it is essential that the efforts are made at the European level, so that a critical size in terms of R&D projects portfolio and scientific excellence is reached, and a sufficient level of competitiveness is achieved.

In this context, the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme supports **EuroNanoMed II,** an **ERA-NET in the field of nanomedicine (2012-2016)**, which is based on the foundations of EuroNanoMed I (2009-2011). Please visit our website for more information about this initiative: www.euronanomed.net

This ERA-NET serves as a platform for funding agencies and ministries to develop joint activities and programmes in order to coordinate high quality research in nanomedicine

*__Translational research__ *transforms discoveries arising from "the bench" to the patients "bedside",* i.e. *from basic research – in which scientists study disease at a molecular or cellular level – to the clinical and/or industrial level. Its purpose is to improve and strengthen collaboration spanning various research fields.*

across national borders. EuroNanoMed II funding organisations, listed below, have decided to launch the 7th EuroNanoMed transnational call to fund multinational innovative research projects in nanomedicine. The present Call for proposals will be conducted simultaneously by the participating funding organizations in their respective country/region and coordinated centrally by the Joint Call Secretariat (JCS).



EuroNanoMed joint transnational call: the European Commission supports the coordination costs among the funding agencies and ministries through the **ERA-NET scheme**, so that the management of a joint call is possible. However, each ERA-NET partner participating in this call will fund the research carried out in its own country for the selected projects.

Under the umbrella of EuroNanoMed II, a 7th Joint Transnational Call is launched with the participation of the following funding organisations:

- **Agentschap voor Innovatie door Wetenschap en Technologie (IWT)**
- **Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (FWO)**
- **Service public de Wallonie (SPW-DGO6)**
- **Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique (FNRS)**
- **Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR)**
- **Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (GSRT)**
- **Chief Scientist Office, Ministry Of Health (CSO-MOH)**
- **Ministero Della Salute (IMH)**
- **Latvijas Zinatnu Akademija (LAS)**
- **Lietuvos mokslo taryba (RCL)**
- **Norges Forskningsrad (RCN)**
- **Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT)**
- **Unitatea Executiva pentru Finantarea Invatamantului Superior, a Cercetarii, Dezvoltarii si Inovarii (UEFISCDI)**
- **Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS)**
- **Instituto de Salud Carlos III (ISCIII)**
- **Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (MINECO)**

1. AIM OF THE CALL

The aims of the call are:

- To support **translational research projects** that combine innovative approaches (basic, clinical, industrial) in the field of nanomedicine and;
- To encourage and enable **transnational collaboration between public and private research groups** from academia (research teams from universities, higher education institutions, public research institutions) and clinical/public health research (research teams from hospital/ public health, healthcare settings and other healthcare organisations) or research teams from industrial enterprises (all size). The participation of Medical Doctors and SMEs is strongly encouraged.

Project proposals will address multidisciplinary and translational[1] research. The project proposals must cover at least one of the following areas that are equal in relevance for this call:

a) Regenerative medicine
b) Diagnostics
c) Targeted delivery systems

Proposals may include, but are not limited to: identification, characterisation and validation of biomarkers, early diagnosis, convergence of nanotechnology and stem cell technology, cell biology applied to nanomedicine, multimodal imaging agents or techniques, point of care diagnostics (on site sensors), standardised procedures for preparation & characterisation of drug delivery systems, regenerative, gene or cell therapies using nanotechnology and development and use of nanomaterials for medical purposes. Clinical studies are eligible up to the point of proof of concept.

Proposals **must clearly demonstrate the potential health impact** and economic impact as well as the added-value of transnational collaboration: sharing of resources (models, registries, diagnosis, etc.), harmonisation of data, sharing of specific know-how and/or innovative technologies.

The individual project partners of the joint applications should be complementary and the proposed work should contain novel, innovative, ambitious ideas and their potential application to the end users.

[1] See definitions for *nanomedicine* and *Translational research* under the "Introduction & Motivation" section

Active participation of junior researchers in project proposals is encouraged. The junior investigator must have been awarded his/her first PhD/MD or equivalent doctoral degree, at least 2 and up to 10 years prior the proposal submission deadline[2].

2. APPLICATION

2.1 FUNDING RECIPIENTS

Joint research proposals may be submitted by applicants belonging to one of the following categories (according to national/regional regulations, please see "Guidelines for applicants"):

- **Academia (research teams working in universities, other higher education institutions or research institutes);**
- **Clinical/public health sector (research teams working in hospitals/public health and/or other health care settings and health organisations). Participation of Medical Doctors is encouraged;**
- **Enterprise (all sizes of private companies). Participation of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) is encouraged.**

Only transnational projects will be funded. Each proposal must involve a **minimum of three research groups eligible for the funding organisations** participating in the EuroNanoMed II 7th Joint Transnational Call. Moreover, **these eligible research groups must come from at least three different countries**. No more than two eligible research groups from the same country participating in the call will be accepted. Research groups not eligible to be funded (e.g. from non-funding countries or not fundable according to national/regional regulations of the participating funding countries) may participate in transnational projects if they are able to secure their own funding. Such partners should state in advance the source of funding for their part in the project and are considered as full project partners. However, their country will **not** be taken into account to meet the above-mentioned criterion (i.e. each proposal must involve a minimum of three research groups eligible for the funding organisations participating in the call and from at least three different countries). In addition, the majority of research groups in a consortium and the coordinator must be eligible to be funded by EuroNanoMed II participating countries/regions (see Annex I). In any case, **the maximum number of participants in a project consortium is seven** (including eligible for funding and non-eligible for funding research groups).

Each application should include partners from at least two of the following categories: academia, clinical/public health, private sector (industry/SME). The number of participants

[2] Extensions to this period may be allowed in case of eligible career breaks (see annex II)

and their research contribution should be appropriate for the aims of the transnational research project and reasonably balanced in terms of international participation. Each transnational collaborative project should represent the critical mass to achieve ambitious scientific goals and should clearly demonstrate an added value from working together.

Each consortium must nominate a **project coordinator** among the project's principal investigators. The coordinator must be an eligible project partner for the national/regional funding organisation participating in the call. The project coordinator will represent the consortium externally and towards the JCS and Call Steering Committee[3] (CSC), and will be responsible for its internal scientific management (such as controlling, reporting, intellectual property rights (IPR) issues and contact with the JCS). Each project partner will be represented **by one (and only one) principal investigator**. Within a joint proposal, each project partner's principal investigator will be the contact person for the relevant national/regional funding organisation.

Each principal investigator can submit only one proposal as project coordinator or up to two research proposals as partner (e.g. the coordinator of a proposal cannot be partner in another proposal). Please note that this rule is subject to national/regional regulations, therefore applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their national/regional contact points to check their national/regional eligibility rules before submission (see also "Guidelines for applicants").

Whilst proposals will be submitted jointly by research groups from several countries/regions, research groups will be funded by the individual funding organisation of the respective country/region from which applicants have applied. The applicants are therefore subject to eligibility criteria of relevant funding organisations of the respective country/region. It is highly recommended to read carefully the funding rules and eligibility criteria of the relevant funding organisation. **Applicants are strongly advised to contact their relevant funding organisation contact person before submitting an application; please note that for some countries/regions it might be mandatory.**

Please note that if a **partner** is found to be non-eligible by one of the funding organisations after the formal check, the entire proposal could be rejected without further review. For a definition of eligible partners see "Guidelines for applicants", the national/regional regulations, and contact your national/regional contact person.

[3] Call Steering Committee: funding organisations' representatives.

The duration of the projects can be up to 3 years. Nevertheless, a partner can receive funding for less than 3 years according to funding organisations eligibility criteria and regulations.

2.2 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL MODALITIES

Funding is awarded as a grant for a maximum of three years according to EuroNanoMed II funding organisation regulations. **Eligible costs and funding provisions may vary according to the respective funding organisation's regulations**. Each project partner is subject to the rules and regulations of their respective funding organisation.

2.3 SUBMISSION OF JOINT PROPOSALS

Joint proposals (in English), must be submitted to the online submission website (https://www.pt-it.de/ptoutline/application/euronanomed2016) no later than **11-February-2016 at 17:00 CET** (Brussels local time). The server will not accept proposals after this time. The system will be opened by January 7, 2016. Information on how to submit proposals electronically is available in "Guidelines for applicants" and "Proposal template" on the EuroNanoMed II website (www.euronanomed.net).

For applicants from some countries/regions it might be mandatory to submit the proposal and/or other information, in some cases before the deadline of this call, directly to the national/regional funding organisations. Therefore, applicants are strongly advised to check their funding organisations specific regulations. See "Guidelines for applicants" for more details.

Ethical issues must be addressed in each application, and according to the concerned country's/region's regulations.

Applicants may ask not to refer their proposals to certain reviewers, giving a reasonable ground for this.

2.4 FURTHER INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact the JCS, or your national/regional EuroNanoMed II funding organisation Contact Person (see "Guidelines for applicants" or www.euronanomed.net).

3. EVALUATION

The evaluation of the joint transnational project proposals will be organised as follows:

3.1 Formal check of proposals

The JCS will check all proposals to ensure that they meet the call's formal criteria (date of submission; number and category of participating countries; inclusion of all necessary information in English; appropriate limits on length). In parallel, the JCS will forward the proposals to the national/regional funding organisations which will perform a check for compliance to national/regional rules. Proposals passing both checks (JCS and national/regional) will be forwarded to the Peer Review Panel[4] (PRP) members for evaluation. Proposals not meeting the formal criteria will be declined without further review. Please note that if a proposal includes one non-eligible partner, the whole proposal could be rejected (for a definition of eligible partners see "Guidelines for applicants" and national/regional regulations and contact your national/regional representative).

3.2 Peer-review of proposals

The reviewers of the Peer Review Panel will carry out the evaluation according to specific evaluation criteria (see below), using a common evaluation form. A scoring system from 0 to 5 will be used to evaluate the proposal's performance with respect to the different evaluation criteria. Scoring system: 0: fails or missing/incomplete information; 1: poor; 2: fair; 3: good; 4: very good; 5: excellent.

- **Scientific & technological quality of the proposal (novelty; innovation potential; methodology; degree of technological maturity)**
- **Quality of the project consortium (international competitiveness of participants in the field(s), previous work and expertise of the participants, previous level of collaborative interaction between the participants, added value of the transnational collaboration, participation of junior researchers)**
- **Quality of project plan [adequateness of the work package structure and work plan (tasks, matching events, time schedule), balanced participation of project partners and integration of workload in the different work packages, quality and efficiency of the coordination and management, scientific justification and adequateness of the requested budget, risk assessment, safety issues should be addressed (when necessary); assessment of the disease target appropriate to nanomedicine, when applicable]**
- **Potential impact: response to actual needs, translational research (from bench to bedside patients), expected time for market/transfer to patient towards clinical/public health applications, pharmaceutical/health device applications, other industrial applications including market and end-users scenario, dissemination plan and business plan**

Each proposal will be evaluated by at least three PRP members, who will make first a written evaluation.

[4] Peer Review Panel: international reviewers that will review the applications according to their expertise.

Rebuttal stage: before the PRP members meet to discuss each proposal in a PRP meeting, each proposal coordinator is provided with the opportunity of studying the assessments and commenting on the arguments and evaluations of the reviewers, which remain anonymous. This stage allows applicants to comment on factual errors or misunderstandings that may have been committed by the referees while assessing their proposal and to reply to reviewers' questions. However, issues which are not related with reviewers' comments or questions cannot be addressed and the work plan cannot be modified at this stage.

The applicants will have up to one week (between last week of **May and first week of June**) for this optional response to the reviewers' comments

Answers sent after the notified deadline, or not related with reviewers' comments or questions will be disregarded.

After the rebuttal stage, PRP members will meet to discuss the proposals in a PRP meeting, which will allow them to establish a ranking list proposals selected for funding.

3.3 Final decision on funding

Based on the ranking list established by the PRP, the CSC will recommend the projects to be funded. Based on this list, final decisions will be made by EuroNanoMed II national/regional funding organisations and will be subject to budgetary considerations and their administrative calendar. The national/regional funding organisations commit to follow the ranking list established by the PRP.

The funding decision is final and no complaint will be accepted or treated by the ENM II consortium.

3.4 Project start and Consortium Agreement

Consortium members of projects selected for funding must fix a common project start date, which would be the reference date for yearly and final reports and potential extensions. This common project start date must appear in the Consortium Agreement (CA).

It will be the responsibility of the project coordinators to draw up a Consortium Agreement suitable to their own group in order to manage the delivery of the project activities, finances, intellectual right properties (IPR) and to avoid disputes which might be detrimental to the completion of the project.

All the project partners must sign the CA and send it to the JCS. This consortium agreement will be made available to the concerned funding organisations. The project consortium is strongly encouraged to sign this CA before the official project start date, and in any case the

CA has to be signed no later than six months after the official project start date. Please note that national regulations may apply concerning the requirement for a CA. Further instructions will be provided by the JCS to the coordinators of the projects selected for funding.

4. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Each project coordinator, on behalf of all participating partners, should submit to the JCS a brief annual and final scientific progress report of the transnational project (in English) by filling out a template provided by JCS stating the scientific progress, the goals that have been met, and corrective measures set in case that the annual project plan has not been fulfilled. It may also be necessary for project partner leaders to submit reports individually to their national funding agency/body in accordance with the respective national/regional regulations. In addition, project coordinators could be asked to present the project results during EuroNanoMed II meetings (Review Seminars).

In case of ANY significant changes in the work program or the consortium composition, the coordinator must inform the JCS, who will inform the relevant funding organisations, who will decide upon the proper action to be taken.

5. ANNEX I. SUMMARY OF THE EURONANOMED II JTC 2016 PARTICIPANTS INDICATIVE FUNDING COMMITMENTS AND ELIGIBILITY

Participant organisation name	Country / Region	Funding academic or clinical/academic or clinical partners only	Funding academic or clinical partners with private partners (please specify if is private for profit or non for profit)	Funding private partners only (please specify if is private for profit or non for profit)	Tentative initial funding commitment (Euros)	Envisaged number of teams potentially funded with the tentative initial funding commitment
Agentschap voor Innovatie door Wetenschap en Technologie (IWT)	BELGIUM / FLANDERS	Only Flemish companies can be supported. Academic and clinical partners as subcontractor of Flemish company	Only Flemish companies can be supported. Academic and clinical partners as subcontractor of Flemish company	Only Flemish companies can be supported. Academic and clinical partners as subcontractor of Flemish company	500.000	2
Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (FWO)	BELGIUM/FLANDERS	Flemish Universities Flemish Research Institutions Dutch speaking members of Federal Research Institutions Please check the National Guidelines for further specifications	Flemish Universities Flemish Research Institutions Dutch speaking members of Federal Research Institutions Please check the National Guidelines for further specifications	Flemish Universities Flemish Research Institutions Dutch speaking members of Federal Research Institutions Please check the National Guidelines for further specifications	200.000	1
Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique (FNRS)	BELGIUM / French-speaking Community of Belgium	Research institutions from the Wallonia-Brussels federation (French speaking members of Federal Research Institutions) Refer to the FRS-FNRS Guidelines for further information	Research institutions from the Wallonia-Brussels federation (French speaking members of Federal Research Institutions) Refer to the FRS-FNRS Guidelines for further information	Research institutions from the Wallonia-Brussels federation (French speaking members of Federal Research Institutions) Refer to the FRS-FNRS Guidelines for further information	200.000	1
Service public de Wallonie (SPW-DGO6)	BELGIUM / WALLONIA	No	Yes (profit, companies)	Yes (profit, companies)	1.000.000	3-4
Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR)	FRANCE	Yes	Yes	Yes	1.500.000	~8

Ministry of Education, research and Religious Affairs (GSRT)	GREECE	Yes	Yes	Yes	300.000	3
Chief Scientist Office, Ministry Of Health (CSO-MOH)	ISRAEL	Yes	No	No	200.000	2
Ministero Della Salute (IMH)	ITALY	Yes (1)	Yes (1)	No	1.000.000	3-4
Latvijas Zinatnu Akademija (LAS)	LATVIA	Yes	Yes	Yes	300.000	2-3
Lietuvos mokslo taryba (RCL)	LITHUANIA	YES : Lithuanian research and education institutions	YES : Public health care institutions	YES : SME (in collaboration with Lithuanian research and education institutions, health care institutions) meeting special criteria	100.000	1
Norges Forskningsrad – The Research Council of Norway (RCN)	NORWAY	Yes: Norwegian Universities, University colleges, Institutes, Industry, and Public Sector	Yes	Yes	1.500.000	2-3
Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT)	PORTUGAL	Yes	Yes	Yes	500.000	2-3
Unitatea Executiva pentru Finantarea Invatamantului Superior, a Cercetarii, Dezvoltarii si Inovarii (UEFISCDI)	ROMANIA	Yes	Yes	No	500.000	2
Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS)	SLOVAKIA	Only research Institutes of Slovak Academy of Sciences are eligible organisations for funding (up to 100%). Applicants from other Slovak R&D centers have to cover the project costs from their own sources (Letter of Commitment). The teams outside of SAS can be consortium members but not	No	No	120.000	1

		the coordinator of the consortium				
Instituto de Salud Carlos III (ISCIII)	SPAIN	Yes	No	No	250.000	2-3
Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (MINECO)	SPAIN	Yes (2)	Yes, non-profit (2)	No	500.000	4-6
				TOTAL	**8.670.000**	**39-47**

(1): only IRCCS are eligible institutions according the information reported in the Annex I of the "Guidelines for applicants".

(2): subject to National Eligibility Criteria (see Guidelines for Applicants)

6. ANNEX II. DEFINITION OF JUNIOR RESEARCHERS

The junior researcher must have been awarded his/her first PhD/MD or equivalent doctoral degree, at least 2 and up to 10 years prior the proposal submission deadline of the EuroNanoNed II JTC 2016. Extensions to this period may be allowed in case of eligible career breaks, which must be properly documented. However, there is **no need** to attach additional documentation when submitting the project proposal. Eligible career breaks are:

- For maternity: the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD/MD will be considered reduced by 18 months for each child born before or after the PhD/MD award
- For paternity: the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD/MD will be considered reduced by the actual amount of paternity leave taken for each child born before or after the PhD/MD award
- For long term illness (over ninety days), clinical qualification or national service the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD/MD will be considered reduced by the documented amount of leave taken for each event which occurred after the PhD/MD award

Eligible events that take place within the extension of the eligibility window may lead to further extensions. The cumulative eligibility period should not in any case surpass 14 years and 6 months following the award of the first PhD/MD. No allowance will be made for principal investigators working part-time.

Please note that in some countries MD may not be equivalent to PhD but equivalent to Bachelor of Medicine or Bachelor of Surgery. Doctoral or equivalent level, are designed primarily to lead to an **advanced research qualification**. For more details you can see the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) of the UNESCO (page 59)

http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/isced-2011-en.pdf