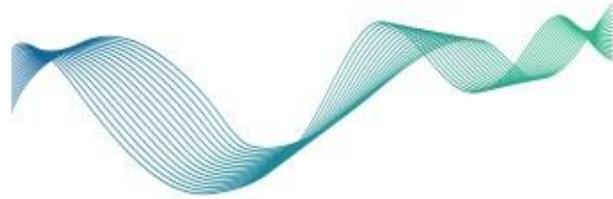


MarineBiotech



**FIRST CALL FOR TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECTS
WITHIN ERA- MarineBiotech (ERA-MBT)**

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

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1. Aim of the call (call topics)

The focus of the call reflects the fact that marine biomass is largely untapped, and many marine organisms are not well characterised. Through the application of biotechnological knowledge and principles, new and sustainable exploitation of marine biomass will be achieved, leading to the production of a large number of different products and novel processes.

The aim of this call is to bring together basic, applied, technology and market driven research approaches to enhance and develop efficient and sustainable biorefinery processes for marine bioresources. ***Transnational research consortia from academia, research institutes and industry are invited to submit proposals that develop new and/or improved biotechnological knowledge, tools and methods for the sustainable processing of marine biomass into a variety of bio-based products and/or services.*** This is best achieved through integrated biorefinery processes ideally utilising all molecular fractions present in the relevant biomass.

The challenge for a successful biorefinery, is to further develop or/and upgrade its technology and improve the integration and optimisation of the processing steps, in order to produce several products from within a coherent process, thereby improving the economic viability and environmental sustainability.

According to the IEA Biorefinery classification (T42:2009:01), a product-driven biorefinery is defined as “...*the sustainable processing of biomass into a spectrum of marketable products and energy. The products can be both intermediates and final products, and include food, feed, materials, chemicals and energy*”. This definition will be applied in the present call.

Although the biorefinery is an overarching concept for the call, the ERA-NET MarineBiotech will limit support to projects that provide a better understanding and further development of the processes and tools needed to develop biorefining, i.e. enhancing the marine biotechnology toolbox. Practically, this means that projects must address basic challenges on a laboratory scale or in small pilot plants. Industrial scale operations are not included in the present call. However, industry or industry-academia consortia are invited to respond to the call with projects studying well-defined, applied R&D challenges. EU-rules for industrial funding will be followed, and IPR will be regulated through consortium agreements. See also national appendixes for national funding specifications.

1.1. General scope

Projects should have their main focus on the processing of marine biomass from various marine bioresources, and the optimisation of biorefinery processes leading to a range of different products (technology driven). They may also have their conceptual origin from an observed market demand, where requirements can be met through the biorefining of marine biomass (market driven).

The core of the research should fulfil the following requirements:

Improve biorefinery processes by the development of biotechnological knowledge, methods and principles beyond what is common knowledge, thereby enhancing the “toolbox” for efficient and sustainable utilisation of marine biomass.

The call focuses on applied biotechnological research, innovation and development related to the optimization of biorefinery processes for marine biomass, with the aim of stimulating the development of the Knowledge Based Bio-Economy in Europe.

The projects must take into consideration relevant ethical and regulatory implications.

Thematic fields can be¹:

- *Utilizing enzymatic diversity (of different organisms and from different habitats)*
- *Identification and utilization of metabolic potentials in microorganisms*
- *Modification of microorganisms for optimal process performance*
- *New production platforms, diversifying product output*
- ...

1.2. Limitations

- Biodiscovery/bioprospecting projects will not be covered by this call.
- Projects having production of bioenergy as their primary target are not eligible for funding.
- Funding will be granted for a maximum of three years according to national regulations

Note that some topics may be not fundable by some funding organizations. Consult carefully the Guidelines for Applicants and the specific national regulations

2. Eligibility of applications

2.1. ERA-MBT eligibility criteria

Research proposals may be submitted by:

- higher education institutions,
- non-university public research organizations,
- commercial companies, in particular small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs),

¹ The thematic list gives examples and is not limited as long as they fall within the definition of marine biotechnology: “*The application of science and technology to living organisms from marine resources, as well as parts, products and models thereof, to alter living or non-living materials for the production of knowledge, goods and services*”.

Applicants must refer and adhere to their own specific national/regional regulations as detailed in section 7 (see below).

Only transnational projects will be funded. Each consortium should have the optimal critical mass to achieve ambitious scientific goals and should clearly show an added value from working together.

The following criteria must be taken into account:

- Each consortium submitting a proposal must involve:
 - a maximum of eight partners,
 - a maximum of three 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 below).

- Project partners from countries not being part of the ERA-NET consortium may also participate in projects if they are able to clearly demonstrate an added value to the consortium and secure their own funding as cash or in kind. However, the coordinator and the majority of partners in a consortium must be fundable by the funding organizations participating in this call, and the maximum number of eight participants may not be exceeded.

- Each consortium should include researchers from both the academic and the industrial sector, although this is not mandatory (please note the national regulations). The economic and societal impact of the research project will be considered in any case.

- Each consortium must nominate a project coordinator to represent the consortium, submit the pre-proposal/full proposal, and establish any further communication with the Joint Call Secretariat. Within a joint proposal, each group leader will be the contact person for the relevant national funding organization.

2.2. National eligibility criteria

Applicants must refer and adhere to the specific regulations of the national/regional funding organisations. Each project partner is responsible for checking that he/she meets

the national eligibility criteria. Therefore each project partner is strongly encouraged to get in touch with his/her national contact (see section 6). The national regulations of each partner country are described below (see section 6). **The inclusion of a non-eligible partner in a proposal will result in the rejection of the entire proposal without further review.**

2.3. Consortium Agreement

Each consortium should prepare a Consortium Agreement (CA) signed by all participants within three months after the start of the project to clarify the potential IPR matters (such as licensing in, licensing out, patent and exploitation strategy). The CA must address (as a minimum), the following points:

- common start date and duration of the research project
- organisation and management of the project
- role and responsibilities of each partner
- confidentiality, publishing and data management
- Intellectual Property Rights
- decision making within the consortium
- handling of internal disputes
- the liabilities of the research partners towards one another (including the handling of default of contract)

Any issues regarding funding are a bilateral matter between each project partner and the relevant funding organization and should be excluded from the CA. The CA, together with any other information required by national regulations, must be made available on request to the national funding agencies.

3. *Proposals submission*

3.1. Joint Call Secretariat and electronic tool

The call is centrally coordinated by the ERA-MBT Joint Call Secretariat (JCS), which is represented by the Project Management Jülich (PtJ), Germany. Proposals should be submitted using the online submission tool. Proposals can only be submitted during the period specified in the call document. Each project coordinator should make sure to

register the proposal on time, as a sharp call deadline is applied. After this deadline, the submission tool is closed.

3.2. Submission time line

The deadline for submitting pre-proposals is **December 10, 2014 (17:00, CET)**, and invited full proposals must be submitted by **April 30, 2015 (17:00, CET)**.

3.3. Application forms

Submission of proposals will be organized in two steps: a pre-proposal and an invited full proposal. Proposals must be written in English.

A pre-proposal consists of the following parts:

- Profile of all partners (contact data, tasks, Curriculum Vitae, references)
- Project data (title, acronym, duration, topic affiliation)
- Abstract (max characters 1000)
- Keywords
- Project description (max characters 10000)
- Finances (requested funding, own contribution, brief description)

A full proposal consists of the following parts:

- Summary of the project (work plan, aims and expected results -max. 6.000 characters)
- Background and state-of-the-art (max. 8.000 characters)
- Work plan (including involvement of participants in different work packages, plus lists of milestones and deliverables -max. 16.000 characters)
- GANTT chart
- Added value of the proposed international collaboration (max. 3.000 characters)
- Exploitation plan: Prospects regarding application in industry, market potential, position with regard to IPR both within and outside the consortium (e.g. barriers to sharing materials or results-max. 8.000 characters)
- Justification of requested budget (also specifying co-funding from other sources necessary for the project)
- Pertinent ethical, legal and social aspects of the proposal (max. 2000 characters)

- Brief CVs of the project leaders, including lists of up to five recent publications (one page per partner)

4. **Call governance and evaluation procedures**

Two boards, with the support of the JCS, will manage and direct the evaluation of research projects: 1) the Call Steering Committee (CSC), composed of one member from each funding organisation, will be in charge of supervising the call and recommending the proposals to be funded to the national funding bodies and 2) the Peer Review Panel (PRP), constituted by international experts, that will evaluate the proposals as detailed below.

To ensure objectivity during the evaluation procedure, the members of these two boards will not submit proposals to this call.

In order to avoid individual conflicts of interest, it is possible to request the JCS to exclude certain companies / research groups / individual evaluators (e.g. direct competitors, names of individuals) from the PRP. Please send your request, stating the reason for excluding the referees, to the JCS. Your request must reach the secretariat by the deadline for submission of pre-proposals. Your request will be treated confidentially.

4.1. **Pre-proposals evaluation**

Each funding agency will check the eligibility of their national applicants, and the JCS will check the eligibility of the applications. The PRP will assess the scientific quality of the pre-proposals and their fit into the scope of the call. **The information given in the pre-proposal is binding.** Thus, any fundamental change between pre-proposal and full proposal (composition of the consortia, objectives of the project) must be communicated to the JCS with detailed justification, and will only be allowed with the agreement of the CSC in exceptional cases.

Reviewers will be asked to use a common evaluation form and give a global assessment for each proposal (“excellent” – “good” – “fair” – “poor”), based on the criteria:

1. Relevance and contribution of the collaborative project to the aims of the call

2. Scientific and technical quality (scientific innovation potential, international competitiveness, and expertise of the applicants, and potential application of the expected results)

4.2. Full proposals evaluation

Full proposals will be accepted only from those applicants explicitly invited by the JCS. The PRP will evaluate and comment the full proposals based on the following scientific criteria:

1. **Relevance to funding priority** (*how well does the research project address the aims of the ERA-MBT call?*)
2. **Scientific and/or technological excellence** (*sound concept and quality of objectives, progress beyond state-of-the-art, quality and effectiveness of the scientific and technological methodology and workplan*)
3. **Quality and efficiency of the implementation and management** (*quality and relevant experience of individual participants, quality of the consortium as a whole including complementarity and balance, added value of the international collaboration, suitability of work schedule and feasibility of the organisation and coordination, etc.*)
4. **Potential impact and prospects for the transfer of results into industrial application** (*quality of exploitation plan, economic innovation potential, market potential and competitiveness, patent situation*)

Each full proposal will be overall scored on a A-D scale:

A (Excellent)	Outstanding full proposal that fully matches the remit and the aims of the call. Absence of negative aspects.
B (Good)	Full proposal that matches the remit and the aims of the call. Majority of positive aspects.
C (Fair)	Full proposal matching partly the remit and the aims of the call, but showing deficits that reduce its relevance. Approximately equal balance between positive and negative aspects.

D (Poor) Full proposal that does not match the remit and the aims of the call, and shows significant ambiguity and flaws. Majority of negative aspects.

Each referee will individually review the full proposals assigned to him/her and fill out a common evaluation form available through the online tool.

The PRP will meet in the presence of the CSC to discuss the evaluation of each proposal and to establish a ranking list of the reviewed proposals. Based on the PRP recommendation, the CSC will decide on the final list of projects recommended to be funded. Final decisions will be made at the national level. The participants involved in the selected projects will be funded through the national programs (see specific national regulations and contact the respective national contact person). Projects will start in late 2015 / beginning 2016.

4.3. Time schedule

10 December 2014	Deadline for submitting the pre-proposals
End of February 2015	Communication of the results of the pre-proposal evaluation to the project coordinators
30 April 2015	Deadline for submitting full proposals (only for those projects that pass the pre-proposal phase)
End of July 2015	Communication of the funding recommendation
Late 2015 / Beginning 2016	Start of projects

5. Monitoring

The coordinators of each funded project must submit **a mid-term** and **a final scientific project report** to the JCS together with summary reports from each participant. In accordance with specific national regulations, each participant should also submit periodical financial and scientific reports and a final report to its national funding agency.

The coordinators will present the results of their projects at status seminars to be organized by the JCS. Any publications resulting from the funded projects must acknowledge the national funding agencies and ERA-MBT.

6. National Regulations. Summary of national funding, eligibility rules and restrictions

Funding Body (Country)	IWT (BE-Flanders)	FWO (BE-Flanders)	IFD (DK)	RANNIS (IS)	MI (IE)	ADECAL (NC)	IN (NO)
Funding of academic partners /industrial partners eligible?	YES	Only academic partners	YES	YES	Both. Industry <u>must</u> partner with an Irish academic partner. Academic partners receive 100% funding, but Industry partners receive 75% funding maximum.	YES	Industrial partners only. Funding schemes according to the guidelines for state aid
Total committed budget	1.000.000 €	200.000 €	1.000.000 €	250.000 €	300.000 €	40.000 €	Funding is available primarily through Innovation Norway's grant program for Biorefining. 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	250.000 €	200.000 €	None	95.000 € per year per project for maximum three years	300.000 €	40.000 €	

Eligible costs	<p>Personnel costs, indirect costs, direct costs, subcontracting, exceptional large cost (http://www.iwt.be/sites/default/files/subsidi es/documenten/IWT_k ostenmodel_januari20 14.pdf)</p>	<p>Staff, consumables (incl. travel) and infrastructure</p>	<p>http://ufm.dk/forskning-og-innovation/tilskud-til-forskning-og-innovation/eu-og-internationale-programmer/internationalt-samarbejde/era-net/skemaer-og-vejledning</p>	<p>As in the guidelines for the <u>Technical Development Fund</u></p>	<p>As per Guidelines for Applicants. Please email funding@marine.ie to request a copy.</p>	<p>Funding of local teams only Personal, functioning, equipment (expect heavy equipment)</p>	<p>http://www.innovasjonorge.no/no/finansiering/bioraffineringsprogrammet/#.VD4-wvmSyao</p>
Eligible topics	<p>All, except military applications</p>	<p>All fundamental research</p>	<p>Only projects aiming at multi-stream biorefining will be funded</p>	<p>Applied</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>http://www.innovasjonorge.no/no/finansiering/bioraffineringsprogrammet/#.VD4-wvmSyao</p>
Other national restrictions	<p>Check guidelines (http://www.iwt.be/subsidies/extrasteun/era-mbt)</p>	<p>See for the detailed regulation on eligibility: http://www.fwo.be/en/fellowships-funding/research-projects/research-project/regulations-for-research-projects/, art. 9.</p>	<p>For a large enterprise, State aid may be granted for a maximum of 50 per cent of the enterprise's project costs. For an SME, State aid may fund a maximum of 60 per cent of the SME's project costs. However, it should be emphasized that these are maximum limits. In many cases there will be a requirement for higher self-financing on the part of the enterprise.</p>	<p>As in the guidelines for the <u>Technical Development Fund</u></p>	<p>As per Guidelines for Applicants. Please email funding@marine.ie to request a copy.</p>	<p>Direct funding/payment of all expenditures needed for the project</p>	

Funding Body (Country)	RCN (NO)	FCT (PT)	UEFISCDI (RO)	MIZS (SI)	MINECO (ES)	FORMAS (SE)	VGR (SE)
Funding of academic partners /industrial partners eligible?	-Academic partners up to 100% -Industrial partners up to 50%	-Academic partners up to 100% -Industrial partners up to 50%	Universities, research institutes, large enterprises, SMEs, NGOs, public service organisations established in Romania	Both, but only preindustrial research will be funded according to the rules of the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS) for basic and applied projects	Only public or private non-profit research institutions can be funded (see national annex for details). Spanish companies are encouraged to participate at their own cost.	Academic partners receive 100% funding. Industrial partners can be involved but cannot be the main applicant (please consult Formas)	Only applicants based in Västra Götaland. Universities and university colleges, research institutes, hospitals and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs under the EU definition)* http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/sme-definition/
Total committed budget	2.400.000 €	325.000 €	500.000 €	210.000 €	500.000 €	1.000.000 €	4.000.000 SEK
Maximum funding per partner/ per project	Maximum per project : -Up to 300.000 € as a project partner -Up to 600.000 € in the case of RCN coordination	Maximum per project : -Up to 125.000 € -Up to 200.000 € in the case of PT coordination	500.000 €	70.000 € per year / total 210.000 € project	150.000 € per partner (200.000 € if coordinator) 250.000 per project	No	3.000.000 SEK

<p>Eligible costs</p>	<p>Forskerprosjekt: http://www.forskning.sradet.no/no/Forskerprosjekt/1186753746501</p> <p>Innovasjonsprosjekt i næringslivet: http://www.forskning.sradet.no/no/Innovasjonsprosjekt_i_neringslivet/1253963327687</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Personnel expenses, logistics (capital expenditures, materials, subcontracting), travel expenses, overhead (indirect costs)</p>	<p>In accordance with the Decree on criteria and standards for allocating resources for the implementation of the National Research and Development Program based on research hour selected with cost elements personnel costs, material costs and amortization</p>	<p>1. Personnel costs for temporary contracts (fellowships are not eligible) 2. Direct costs (consumables, small equipment, travel) Indirect costs (overheads) are not eligible (see national annex for details).</p>	<p>Please consult Formas handbook; all costs for „research and development projects“ are eligible</p>	<p>Salaries, materials and consumables, travel (including visits to, and stays at, research facilities), publication costs, minor equipment and depreciations, etc. The grant may not be used for scholarships.</p>
<p>Elegible topics</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>See national regulations https://www.fct.pt/apoios/projectos/regulamento.phtml.en</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Other national restrictions</p>	<p>A project must be part of a multistream biorefinery concept.</p>			<p>See national regulations for ERA-MBT published in due time on: http://www.mizs.gov.si/si/javne_objave_in_razpisi/javni_razpisi/</p>	<p>See national annex at: http://www.idi.mineco.gob.es/stfis/MICINN/Internacional/FICHEROS/Instrumentos_ERA/Nacional_Annex_MINECO_ERA_MBT.pdf</p>		<p>VGR can only fund costs which relate to the company's outsourcing of research to an RTD performer (research institute, universities or other organizations with research capacity). VGR can co-fund maximum 50% of the company's cost related to the work of the RTD performer. In kind contributions from the SME, such as salary costs, travel expenses, etc are accepted.</p>

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