



**ANNEX 1 TO THE IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT**

**Second Joint Call on  
Environmental challenges and solutions for vulnerable communities**

Terms of reference of the Joint Call

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## **1. Introduction and background information**

The ERA-NET scheme is an instrument of the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme providing funding to improve the cooperation and coordination of national research activities and thus strengthen the European Research Area (ERA) with other regions of the world.

ERANETMED is a EU FP7 initiative that aims at co-ordinating research activities of the different national research programmes from EU Members States, Associated Countries to the EU Research Framework Programmes and Mediterranean Partner Countries. In particular, the ERANETMED objective is to strengthen the collaboration and common capacity of research programme owners from above countries to address some of the major challenges that the Mediterranean is facing and strengthen Euro-Mediterranean research co-operation. ERANETMED has already launched its first joint call on: Renewable Energies, Water Resources and their connections for the Mediterranean Region

Building on the previous experience and on joint interest of Research Programme Owners, the second joint Call is launched and is co-funded by the following Euro-Mediterranean entities, grouped together in the Executive Committee of Funding Agencies (ECFP):

- CIHEAM – IAMB - Centre International Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes de Bari, International Organization
- TUBITAK - The Scientific and Technological Research Council, Turkey
- DGRSDT - Direction la Recherche Scientifique et du Développement Technologique, Algeria
- RPF - Research Promotion Foundation, Cyprus
- STDF – Science, Technology Development Fund, Egypt
- ANR - Agence Nationale de la Recherche , France
- CNRS-F - Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France
- HCST - Higher Council Science and Technology, Jordan
- CNRS-L – Conseil National de la Recherche Scientifique, Lebanon
- MENESFCRS – Ministry of Higher Education, and Scientific Research, Morocco
- MESRST - Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Tunisia
- BMBF - Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany
- MCST - Malta Council for Science and Technology, Malta
- MINECO - Ministry of Economy and Competiveness, Spain
- MIUR - Ministry of Instruction, Universities and Research, Italy

- GRST - General Secretariat for Research and Technology, Greece.

With this Call interested project consortia composed of partners from the countries represented within the ECFP are invited to submit proposals for funding.

Four separate evaluation and ranking lists will be made for each of the four Research Questions addressed by the call. Each Research question is coded by its own identifier (call identifier). The Members of the ECFP are responsible for defining the principles of the Call as well as for the steering, decision making and monitoring of its implementation.

They will provide funds and administrative services for supporting national beneficiaries in collaborative projects to be jointly selected. Details of the implementation of the Call have been agreed upon by all members of the ECFP in an Implementation Agreement with these Terms of Reference being an integral part of it.

The ECFP is assisted by a Call Secretariat (CS) in charge of the Common Call Management (CCM) hosted at the German Aerospace Center (DLR). The modus operandi and the mandate of the CS are defined by the Funding Parties in the Implementation Agreement and in the “Terms of Reference for the Common Call Management”, which are annexed to the Implementation Agreement.

The Joint Call is implemented through a coordinated funding action based on a Virtual Common Pot scheme where each Funding Party funds its own national research organization within a multilateral project selected through a peer review process.

The indicative total financial contribution to the Joint Call will be **11,450,000 Euro**.

## **2. Scope of the call**

The aim of this call is to propose sustainable solutions for the environmental challenges of “Euro-Mediterranean vulnerable communities” intended as those communities living in areas –coastal zones or inland - in which local resources like biodiversity, land and water, energy or food are under serious threat by factors such as migration, environmental, socio-economic factors etc.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance – for the preservation and protection of local resources and ecosystems – to address the main environmental challenges of the region, contributing to a comprehensive and holistic approach. Communities and their resources and ecosystems in the Mediterranean region suffer common threats due to unstable or severe environmental conditions, global climate change pressure and demographic change, particularly in coastal zones and inland arid areas where the access to and supply of resources is limited and under pressure.

### **2.1 Themes and scientific scope**

Considering the need of an holistic, multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach for the preservation and protection of local resources in vulnerable communities, projects will address one of the following research questions (**RQ**):

#### **1. “Land & Water/ Food” and Environment (Call identifier RQ1-2016)**

Land and soil management, climate and drought, erosion and desertification, including socio-

economic and governance aspects as well as human induced hazard and risk, and their impact on water and food resources availability. As main results projects will provide: an ecosystem-based water management, deep understanding and modelling of different natural and non-natural hazards processes in relation to impact on local resources (i.e. water and/or food), unravel critical relationships among different variables and factors and simulate combined impacts on local resources as well as providing sustainable impact mitigation measures.

## **2. Energy and Environment (Call identifier RQ2-2016)**

Environmentally sound renewable and sustainable energy systems and production at community level with a view to support sustainable use of water resources, food production and ecosystems protection, particularly the management, recovery and recycling of waste. As main results projects will provide a deep insight and modelling as well as simulation of sustainable and socially innovative energy-use related options to reduce environmental pressure, protect ecosystems and optimize use and cost of water and food production.

## **3. “Climate/demographic change” and Environment (Call identifier RQ3-2016)**

Reducing climate and demographic change pressure on environment and ecosystems through the efficient use of resources. As main results, projects will provide models and adaptable innovative schemes for the efficient use of local resources, with particular regard to water use efficiency and water saving, sustainable management and planning and conservation of ecosystems, providing modelling and quantification of potentially increased resources yields and quality of ecosystems after adoption of measures.

## **4. “Societies/Ecosystems” and Environment (Call identifier RQ4-2016)**

Relationships and complex interactions among societal dynamics, ecosystem variables and the transformations of resources (i.e.: water or food) and related supply systems. As main results, projects will provide understanding and modelling of relevant multi-factor relationships, simulation of trajectories and impact of combined social dynamic and ecosystem processes on the use of resources while providing innovative and socially driven solutions for a sound management of resources transformation and their supply and empowering marginal groups providing driven trainings, collaborative management of ecosystems, etc.

### **2.2 Expected impacts**

Projects will have to demonstrate tangible impacts on:

- Sustainability and quality of life of targeted communities.
- Communities’ awareness and capacity to protect own local resources, environment and ecosystems.
- Improving methods, innovative approaches and governance for the mitigation of impacts on local resources and ecosystems due to natural and non-natural hazards.

### **2.3 Actions addressed**

Three types of collaborative activities – “actions” – can be funded by this call: Collaborative research, Innovation, Mobility.

**All projects will have to include collaborative research.** Collaborative research is compulsory and undertaken by a partnership of institutions (“consortium”) designed to produce new knowledge through scientific research, whereby each team within the partnership actively pursues specific task objectives with a view to pooling the results to

contribute to the achievement of a set of common, well-defined project objectives. Collaborative research should have high impact and contribute to demand and policy driven research.

When explicitly mentioned in the National Rules of Funding Agencies, actions related to Innovation and Mobility<sup>1</sup> are strongly encouraged and their inclusion in the project work plan will be carefully considered and positively evaluated.

More specifically, as for Innovation, projects will deliver tangible outputs and/or align projects towards enhancing innovation or social innovation, depending on the research question addressed. When explicitly allowed by the National Rules of Funding Agencies, Innovation actions should involve the private sector in the project Consortium, and particularly relevant SMEs. However, this will not result into a penalization of applicants whose national Funding Agencies do not allow private sector funding in their National Rules.

As for Mobility, projects are encouraged to integrate in their work plan schemes for the mobility of young researchers / post graduates, in accordance with the modalities set out in National Rules of Funding Agencies. To this regard, CIHEAM Bari – acting as Intergovernmental Organization – will fund the inclusion of mobility schemes involving nationals from the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Jordan<sup>2</sup>.

## **2.4 Cross-cutting issues**

Applicants are encouraged to take into account for their research important cross-cutting issues, particularly: governance, ICT and gender. The inclusion of cross-cutting issues will be carefully considered and positively evaluated.

## **2.5 Participation rules**

### **2.5.1 Applicants**

Applicants must be eligible for funding according to the regulations of their respective national Funding Agencies. They can represent research and higher education entities, companies, and other legal entities such as NGOs, once again subject to institutional restrictions set by individual Funding Agencies. Details on eligible institutions for each of the Funding Agency can be found in the Annex 2 of the Guide for Applicants, and should be consulted prior to proposal preparation.

Applicants from ERANETMED countries having no contribution in this Call can participate in project consortia with their own institution, as additional partners to the minimum number of participants, by funding their own involvement.

Research organizations or industry not belonging to countries participating in ERANETMED may participate in selected projects (as additional partners to the minimum number of participants) as co-funders, which means that they can contribute to a specific project either financially with “own contribution” or “in kind”. Their commitment must be presented at the time of proposal submission according to the specific text template, which can be found in the Guidelines for Applicants.

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed description of “Mobility” activities and related eligible costs please refer to the National Rules of single Funding Parties (Annex 2 of the Guide for Applicants).

<sup>2</sup> For more detailed information please refer to the National Rules of CIHEAM Bari in Annex 2 to the Guide for Applicants).

### 2.5.2 Consortia

The **project consortium** must comprise project partners from at least 3 different countries whose Funding Agencies contribute to the present call, of which at least one from an EU Member State/Associated Country to European Research Framework Programme and one from a Mediterranean Partner Country.

The Project Consortium designates a **Project Coordinator** which must belong to an entity legally established in one of the countries funding this Call. The project Co-ordinator will have the following role:

- Be the single point of contact and entry point for information provided by the Call Secretariat (CS) before, during and after submission.
- To submit the Application Form on behalf of the consortium
- In any awarded project, compile and submit reports/deliverables to the Call Secretariat on behalf of the project consortium

The Co-ordinator will not be responsible for the financial management of research funding, which will be handled directly between research partners of the consortium and their national funding agencies.

The applicants are advised to contact their National Contact Point for ERANETMED call in their own country as listed in Annex 1 to the Guide for Applicants.

The project Co-ordinator shall inform the CS and each of the national funding agencies of any event that might affect the implementation of the project.

The consortium of applicants will need to draw up a consortium agreement (template in Annex 3 to the Guidelines for Applicants), which should include the fair handling of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and it must be signed before the conclusion of the grant agreement.

### 2.6 Duration

The duration of a project can range between 24 and 36 months.

The projects are expected to start not later than three months after the conclusion of the Grant Agreement.

## 2.7 Funding

The total committed financial contribution to the present Call will be of € 11,450,000. The total amount of funding by each Funding Party available for the call is given in table below.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
CIHEAM-Bari, International	300,000 €
TUBITAK, Turkey	700,000 €
DGRSDT, Algeria	600,000 €
RPF, Cyprus	600,000 €
STDF, Egypt	750,000 €
ASRT, Egypt	500,000 €
ANR, France	2,000,000 €
CNRS - F, France	100,000 €
HCST, Jordan	300,000 €
CNRS - L, Lebanon	400,000 €
MESRSFC, Morocco	300,000 €
MESRST , Tunisia	700,000 €
BMBF, Germany	850,000 €
MCST, Malta	150,000 €
MINECO, Spain	500,000 €
MIUR, Italy	2,000,000 €
GRST, Greece	700,000 €

The funding of an individual proposal will depend on the nature and duration of the proposed activities and must be justified in terms of the resources needed to achieve the objectives of the project. The funding requested should therefore be realistically adjusted to the actual needs of the proposal, taking into account any other funds available.

Researchers participating in projects selected for funding will receive the grant directly from their national funding agencies after meeting their national regulations. Funding agencies whose national researcher organisations have been selected for proposals in different Research Questions reserve the right to decide, based on their national priorities and financial availabilities, which proposals will be funded. Funding will be administered according to the terms and conditions of the responsible national funding agency taking into account all other applicable national regulations and legal framework. Private organisations may also bid for funding as members of consortia, but should first check the national rules for funding eligibility of SMEs or large industries.

Eligible costs will be determined by the regulations and conditions of each national funding organisation/agencies (Annex 2 to the Guidelines for Applicants). Sub-contracting will be allowed according to the regulations of the national funding organisation involved.

### 3. Submission of Proposals

This call is a **one-step call**, which implies the direct submission of a full proposal.

Proposals will be submitted, evaluated and decided upon according to the procedures described in section 4 of these Terms of Reference. Only submissions through the online submission system will be accepted. All members of ECFP will have access to reading proposals online.

#### 3.1. How to use the Online Submission System

##### 3.1.1 Registration for the Online Submission System

In order to submit a proposal the Project Coordinator has to gain access to the online submission system through the web site.

When accessing the submission system for the first time, the Project Coordinator will be asked to enter her/his e-mail address. In return s/he will receive by e-mail a *user ID* and a *password*. Her/his account will be activated after receiving an email containing the password.

##### 3.1.2 Access to the Submission System

The *password* grants all partners in the consortium access to the project proposal submission page, where it is possible to complete parts of the project proposal or to place or replace the proposal in part or in full. The exact mode of writing the proposal is at the discretion of the project consortium, which may choose to share the workload, or not, in whatever way they wish.

Submission just before the deadline should be avoided. High Internet traffic during the last days before the submission deadline of the Call may make access difficult. Differences in time zone should also be taken into account in this regard.

##### 3.1.3 Acknowledgement of receipt and registration number

After final submission of the Proposal, the Project Coordinator will automatically receive by e-mail an acknowledgement of receipt with the Proposal's registration number.

##### 3.1.4 Deadline

All Proposals must be finally submitted by the Project Coordinators before the deadline: **31 May 2016 (at 5 PM CET)**. Delayed proposals will be considered non-eligible!

#### 3.2. Structure of the Proposal

Proposals must be submitted in Arial font, size 12, single spacing, in accordance with the following template:

##### SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

###### A1. Proposal Details

- **Call Identifier**
- **Title**. Give the title of your project (less than 200 characters).
- **Short Title or Acronym** (max. 10 letters).
- **Key-words**: Supply key-words to specify your scientific subject.

- Intended starting date: (Not earlier than... Not later than....)
- Duration: In between 24 and 36 months.
- Total cost: Estimated overall budget of the project with breakdown per partner, including costs not covered by ERANETMED such as 'in kind' payments/contributions and other costs, which should be specified.
- Requested funding: The total amount of funding requested from ERANETMED.
- Participation of any research team involved in this Proposal in any other Proposal submitted within the framework of this Call.

## **A2. Summary (max. 500 words)**

Summarise the main questions and/or approach and objectives; give a short description of the activities and expected results of the project. This summary must be manually input into the relevant on-line section and cannot be uploaded as a Word document or PDF.

## **A3. Background, Questions and Objectives (max. 1500 words)**

Give a detailed justification of the objectives of the project within the context of the state-of-the-art of the scientific area related to the project:

- Present the research issues and, if applicable, also the main questions related to other actions addressed by the project (innovation, mobility).
- Precisely describe the scientific novelty of the project and, when applicable, innovation, and/or mobility objectives.
- Give the scientific basis of the project and related state-of-art and – where applicable - the basis for innovation and the need for mobility.
- Highlight the interdisciplinary character of the project and explain how its added value is to be exploited. Explain how these disciplines, and the combination thereof, are best suited to address the interface of the societal challenges identified.
- Explain the scientific added value and contribution of European-Mediterranean research networks and related transnational collaboration on the Research Question addressed.
- Explain the relevance and importance of the research and – when applicable - innovation, and mobility proposed, in terms of shared knowledge, applications (new products, services, processes, social innovations) and/or in terms of economic and societal impact.
- If the proposal is part of a larger national or international project, explain its precise role and how it fits into this wider context.
- Explain the role and contribution of stakeholders in the project at all stages.

## **A4. Project Description (max. 2500 words)**

Give an overall description of the project and justify the methodology chosen to reach the objectives.

- Give an overall description and the general approach and methodology chosen to achieve the project objectives. Highlight the particular advantages of the methodology chosen; specify the expected project results (in quantitative terms where appropriate).
- Explain where there might exist a potential for synergy between different tasks of the project and how this is going to be exploited.
- Give references of relevant scientific publications.

## **SECTION B: TEAM INFORMATION (max. 500 words per partner)**

- Identify the participating teams and the institutions to which they belong.
- Identify the Project Coordinator

For each team, the following information should be given:

- Team Details:
  - Give the total number of team members. The size of each team should be limited to those people actually needed for performing the tasks.
  - Describe the background and particular expertise of the team in relation to the tasks to be performed. Describe how the teams complement each other in the execution of the project.
  - If relevant, provide a maximum of five references of relevant, recent scientific publications or patents which best show the capability of the team to perform the work proposed. Indicate for each the name of the authors, the title of the article, the journal or other publication, the date and place of issue. If a publication exists on a website, give its address.
  - Describe the relevant instrumentation and infrastructure available in view of the tasks assigned to the team.
  - Describe the specific contribution of each project partner.
  - Describe prospects for establishing efficient and sustainable partnerships within the network, including transfer of know-how and experience.
- Contact details of the Proposal Coordinator

## **SECTION C: PROJECT MANAGEMENT (max. 1000 words)**

- Describe how the overall coordination and monitoring of the project will be implemented. Provide if possible a project organisational chart. Indicate the decision-making bodies and processes foreseen as part of the project execution (decision boards, coordination meetings).
- If appropriate, set up a Gantt chart or detailed diagram giving the time schedule of the tasks and mark their interrelations; add milestones where important goals will be reached and/or decisions on further approach will have to be made; indicate a critical path marking those events which directly influence the overall time schedule in case of delays.
- Explain how information flow and communication will be enhanced within the project (e.g. via the use of communication software, through consortium- and task meetings, by the temporary placement of project participants at other partner institutions). Provide detail of specific planned meetings and exchanges, and highlight factors likely to lend additional value to these, such as the involvement of young researchers.
- Risk management: Indicate where there are risks of not achieving the objectives and fallback positions, if applicable.

## **SECTION D: BREAKDOWN OF COSTS**

- For each team, give the cost breakdown and a brief justification for all allowable costs. All costs should be given in Euros. The cost breakdown should follow the template provided in the Guide for Applicants.

## SECTION E: IMPACT OF PROJECT RESULTS (max. 1000 words)

- Describe the expected results of the project and their utilisation potential.
- Describe the expected impact of the project on the societal challenges addressed in the project as well as on cross-cutting issues.
- Describe the expected impact of the project on the scientific disciplines involved in the project.
- Describe the expected impact of the project results in terms of economic and societal needs of the Euro-Mediterranean Region.
- Sketch out a result exploitation plan which explains:
  - i. How the new knowledge generated through the project and other deliverables of the project will be exploited (apart from publications and other information-sharing activities, also including databases, problem solving concepts, computer codes, technical solutions, etc.);
  - ii. The appropriateness of measures for the dissemination and/or exploitation of transnational projects results;
  - iii. If relevant: how innovative results will be further exploited through an implementation plan for the project results;
  - iv. How intellectual property, including foreground knowledge, patents, copyrights, license agreements and any other arrangements will be managed.

## SECTION F: ETHICS, GENDER, YOUNG RESEARCHERS (max. 500 words)

- If applicable: Clearly explain the way(s) in which the project intends to deal with ethical issues that may be associated with the project.
- If applicable: Explain how gender is taken into account in the project.
- If applicable: Explain how young researchers are supported through the project activities

### 3.3 Double Submission

A given proposal may only be submitted for one of the Research Questions supported within the framework of ERANETMED call (*i.e.* RQ1 or RQ2 or RQ3 or RQ4) and a given Consortium can be granted only one proposal.

## 4. Evaluation and selection

### 4.1 Eligibility check of proposals

The eligibility check phase is divided in two steps, each of them aimed at verifying the compliance with two sets of criteria: i) **ERANETMED criteria**, ii) **National criteria**.

#### 4.1.1 ERANETMED criteria for eligibility check

Each project proposal must:

- Involve researchers from at least **three countries** members of ERANETMED (at least one from the EU/Associated Countries and one from the Mediterranean Partner Countries)

providing funds for this Joint Call. Additional researchers from other countries are welcome in a project consortium, but will have to fund their own contribution to the research project

- Be of a duration comprised between 24 and 36 months.
- Be written in English, using the Application Forms provided on the submission website
- Be uploaded completed and correctly (including all required documents) via the submission website before the call deadline (31 May 2016, 5 PM CET).
- Fit the formal requirements for proposal submission.

The pre-check of ERANETMED criteria is made by the CS.

The CS will inform the ECFP about the result providing the rationale for non-eligibility of individual proposals (if relevant).

#### **4.1.2 National eligibility criteria**

As a second step, the CS asks the members of the ECFP to check and confirm the eligibility of applicants participating in a proposal consortium according to their national regulations (see Annex 2 of the Guide for Applicants).

To receive funding, applicants must be eligible for funding by the national funding organisations participating in the call. All participants in a bidding consortium should check their eligibility in the guide provided by their potential national funding organisations/agencies at the earliest possible stage.

Finally, the ECPF will approve the list of eligible proposals.

### **4.2 Scientific evaluation**

#### **4.2.1 Organisation**

The scientific evaluation phase is carried out through collaboration among four bodies:

- **Executive Committee of Funding Parties (ECFP)**, gathering the nominated representatives of the funding parties participating in the Joint Call and responsible for steering and monitoring the preparation and implementation of the call.
- **Call Secretariat (CS)**, entrusted by the ECFP with the operational management of the Joint Call and hosted by the German Aerospace Center (DLR).
- **External Evaluators**, external experts nominated by the ECFP for the peer-review of proposals (see also Section 4.2.2 and 4.2.3)
- **Evaluation Panel**, group of experts set-up by the ECFP for providing competent advice during the project evaluation and selection process to ensure coherence with project evaluation and selection criteria.

#### **4.2.2 Appointment of evaluators**

The evaluators of the External Evaluator groups are selected on the basis of their competence, irrespective of their nationality, age and affiliation.

Evaluators need to have skills and knowledge appropriate to the relevant expertise required to assess a given proposal.

Knowledge of and experience in Euro-Mediterranean research collaboration will be considered an advantage toward selection as evaluator.

All evaluators should have proven experience in one or more of the following areas or activities:

- Management or evaluation of S&T projects;
- International cooperation in science and technology; development of human resources;
- Use of the results of research and technological development projects;
- Technology transfer and innovation.

Evaluators must also have appropriate skill in usage of the English language. Detailed guidelines for evaluators will be provided.

Funding Parties are encouraged to review the present contingent of national experts whose names are contained within the Expert Database of the CS. In order to enrich the expert database, accounting for region and themes addressed by the call, the Funding Parties will further be invited to suggest additional evaluators to register themselves in the database. There will also be a “call for experts” to be published on the websites of ERANETMED by the CS and disseminated by all Funding Parties. Keywords specified in the proposal will help CS to pre-select the most suitable evaluators in the field related to the Proposals to be submitted.

For each Proposal, at least three independent evaluators, of which at least one from MPCs and one from an EU-MS/AC will be selected by the CS from the pool of evaluators, with a view to achieving maximum competence for the evaluation.

#### **4.2.3 Evaluation procedure**

The scientific evaluation procedure is divided into two steps:

- Peer-review: In this phase, proposals are reviewed by four groups of External Evaluators (one group per each Research Question of the Joint Call). Each group of External Evaluators will evaluate the proposal under their expertise – in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 4.2.4 – and will prepare an evaluation report.
- Ranking phase: In this phase, the Evaluation Panel meets to discuss all reviewed applications and ranks them with the help of the CS, in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 4.2.4. The CS will draft a report on the results and four recommended rankings of projects divided per Research Question. In each ranking, projects will be grouped into three categories: A (to be funded), B (funded if possible) and C (not to be funded). Provisional rankings and report are then submitted to the ECFP for final funding decision (See Section 4.2.5).

#### **4.2.4 Evaluation criteria and their rating**

The following criteria will be at the base of the whole Scientific Evaluation process:

##### **Criterion 1: - Scientific and/or technological excellence (Threshold 3/5)**

- Quality, innovation and competitiveness of the transnational project.
- Sound concept, quality of objectives, progress beyond the state-of-the-art
- Quality and effectiveness of the scientific and technological methodology and associated work plan
- Relevance to the concept of the call: contribution to the objective and the specific challenge of the call.

##### **Criterion 2: Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management (Threshold 3/5)**

- Quality and efficiency of the management structure and procedures, its organization and

- coordination, including the management and sharing of data.
- Quality and relevant experience of the individual participants, including inter-disciplinarity and integration potential within partnership.
- Quality of the consortium as a whole (including complementarity, balance between North and South) and added value of the transnational collaboration.
- Appropriate allocation and justification of the resources to be committed (budget, staff, equipment), project feasibility and work-plan
- Support of young researchers

### **Criterion 3: Potential impact (Threshold 4/5)**

- Contribution to: the advancement of knowledge, sustainability and quality of life of targeted communities, governance of local resources and ecosystems, socio-economic growth of the Mediterranean countries.
- (Where applicable): Added value of social/technical Innovation and/or Mobility actions
- Capacity to uptake research results.
- Appropriateness of measures for the dissemination and/or exploitation of transnational projects results, and management of intellectual property.

Proposals recommended for funding will need to score above the threshold for each criteria and get a minimum aggregated whole score at least 10 out of 15 points. Half marks are permitted. The Evaluation Panel will aggregate the single evaluation reports and define the final score for each proposal, based on average.

#### **4.2.5 Selection and final funding decision**

The members of the ECFP will take the final decision regarding the Proposals on a consensus base, accounting the recommendations of the CS and the Evaluation Panel. For the purposes of final selection, a meeting of the ECFP will be convened and supported by the CS. Where necessary, the chair of the group of three external evaluators will be invited to attend the ECFP meeting.

Before the meeting, the four ranking lists prepared by the CS will be submitted to the Funding Parties, which will check the eligibility of requested funds and will return to the CS an estimated national budget for each project. During the meeting, the final proposal ranking will be prepared taking into account both the results of the scientific evaluation AND the availability of funds. To that end, in addition to the funds made available by each Funding Party individually, account shall be taken of the combination of available funds of all the Funding Parties whose national applicants are involved in a specific proposal. Therefore, following the ECFP meeting, it may well be the case that some proposals with a lower score assigned by the scientific evaluation are retained for funding whereas some others scored higher are not eventually retained. ECFP will carefully consider whether, due to the unavailability of funds by one or more Funding Parties, the proposal still meets the ERANETMED eligibility criteria (with special reference to the minimum number of EU/AC and Mediterranean Partner Countries participants).

Together, the ECFP will create two lists of projects considered for funding: one short list of projects to be funded according to the committed budget of the Funding Parties and a reserve list of those projects which cannot be funded by one or more Funding Parties as a result of their committed budget having been exhausted.

A core criterion for the first short list will be that at least one project per Funding Party will be funded, assuming that this project has passed the threshold.

The minutes of the meeting will be prepared by the CS and finally adopted by the ECFP within 2 weeks. When adopted, the minutes are binding for the members of the ECFP, adoption by each serving as confirmation of its funding commitment.

With respect to the reserve list, three options will be considered by the Funding Parties:

- A Funding Party might decide to increase its committed budget or request budget cut to successfully retained projects in order to allow for projects from the reserve list to be funded.
- Best projects in the reserve list might be funded in case one or more contracts with short-listed projects are not concluded.
- In line with the principle of solidarity, some projects in the reserve list might be funded in case one Funding Party agrees to fund one or more research teams which another Funding Party was not able to fund.

These options will be explored by the respective Funding Parties within 4 weeks after the concluding meeting of the ECFP, within which time each Funding Party will inform the CS as to its proposed course of action. The CS will then inform the ECFP about the funding options for the reserve list based on the information received from the individual Funding Parties, for a final decision and approval by written procedure within 6 weeks after the concluding meeting of the ECFP.

The CS will inform the applicants about the results of the evaluation process. Successful applicants will be informed by their respective Funding Parties regarding the next steps for concluding the individual project grant agreements at a national level.

#### **4.2.6 Conflict of interest and Confidentiality**

The ECFP relies on the integrity of External Evaluators and Evaluation Panel members to base their opinion with strict impartiality exclusively on the basis of the information given in the proposal and against the established evaluation criteria.

When choosing an evaluator, the CS will take all reasonable steps to ensure that s/he is not faced with a conflict of interest in relation to the proposals s/he is requested to assess. The evaluators will commit themselves to inform the CS whenever a conflict of interest arises in the course of their duties. To facilitate this, the online evaluation mechanism will contain a section specifically requiring the evaluator to indicate possible conflict of interest, for each proposal evaluated. When informed of such conflict, the CS will take all necessary steps to remove it.

The evaluators are committed to maintaining the confidentiality of the information contained within the proposals they evaluate and of the outcome of the evaluation process.

The CS is committed to maintaining the anonymity of the evaluators. However, members of the ECFP will have access to all information relating to the evaluation process and may provide such information to applicants upon request, provided the written consent of the relevant evaluator(s) is obtained beforehand. Under no circumstances will the identity of an evaluator be made available to anyone without the evaluator's express, written consent.

The CS will also take all reasonable steps to avoid conflict of interest in the Evaluation Panel. Evaluation Panel members who have timely declared a conflict of interest with one or more of the proposals will be replaced. When a conflict of interest is declared at a very late stage, ad hoc measures will be taken to avoid bias in the results of the meeting of the Evaluation Panel.

## 5. Contract and monitoring

Following the final decision taken by the ECFP, the CS will present all necessary documents to the Funding Parties in order to start in-parallel contract negotiations with members of those consortia the Proposals of which have been selected for funding (i.e. the funding beneficiaries). Funding to the consortium members will be conditionally awarded, pending the submission of a consortium agreement, which should include rules for fair management of Intellectual Property Rights. Some funding parties will grant only after they have approved of the Consortium Agreement (see Annex 2 of the Guide for Applicants). The final consortium agreement must be signed before the conclusion of the Grant Agreements.

For each collaborative project approved for funding, individual **Grant Agreements** will be signed between each participating institution in a consortium (beneficiary) and its corresponding Funding Party (in cases where these organisations are two separate legal entities). Grant Agreements or one-sided administrative acts (e.g.: subsidy awards) will regulate the transfer of funds to national beneficiaries based on national regulations. They will establish the legal ground for project funding according to the rules and regulations of the respective Funding Parties.

Overall consistency between all contracts/agreements will be ensured by the Members of ECFP.

The CS will be responsible for the overall monitoring of the projects according to the terms set out in the CS ToR.

The outcome will contribute to the overall evaluation of the ERANETMED Joint Call.

## 6. Call plan

The call process is shown in table below:

Call action	Scheduled
Pre-announcement of the Call	29 February 2016
Invitation to registration of potential reviewers by the funding organisation	Beginning of January 2016
Presentation pt-outline to the funding parties, Updating Expert Database	March 2016
Launching of the call	30 March 2016
Deadline for submission of proposals	31 May 2016
Eligibility Check by Funding Parties	10 June 2016
Results of Eligibility Check	10 July 2016
Assignment of evaluators to the project – and in case of changes nomination by funding parties	Mid July 2016
Scientific evaluation by external experts	15 July – 15 September 2016
Meeting of the Evaluation Panel for funding recommendation	15 October 2016
Meeting of the Executive Committee of Funding Parties for funding decision	31 October 2016
Informing applicants on call results	15 November 2016
Start contract negotiation	1 December 2016
End contract negotiation	15 March 2017
Estimated starting date of projects	End of May 2017