



Call for Proposals for
**"European Research Projects on
Mental Disorders"**

Submission deadline for pre-proposals: March 11, 2013

[weblink to
Proposal template](#)

[weblink to
Electronic proposal submission](#)

For further information, please visit us on the web

<http://www.neuron-eranet.eu>

or contact

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1. Purpose

The maintenance, improvement and restoration of human health are of fundamental importance and priority in all countries. Biomedical and health research provide an important basis for the improvement of healthy living. Among the many diseases affecting human health, disorders of the brain are major causes of morbidity, mortality and impaired quality of life. According to estimates, more than one billion people suffer from disorders of the central nervous system. In Europe, disorders of the brain account for approximately one-third of the total burden of all diseases. Thus, neuroscience research and its translation into diagnostic and therapeutic measures are of high priority.

In this context, the 'Network of European Funding for Neuroscience Research' (NEURON) has been established under the ERA-Net scheme of the European Commission (<http://www.neuron-eranet.eu>). The goal of the ERA-Net NEURON is to coordinate the research efforts and funding programmes of European countries in the field of disease related neuroscience.

Under the umbrella of NEURON, five transnational joint calls have been launched on different topics from 2008 to 2012. The sixth joint transnational call (JTC-6) is now launched in the field of mental disorders. The following funding organisations have agreed to fund the joint call for multinational research projects in this scientific area. The call will be conducted simultaneously by the funding organisations in their respective countries and coordinated centrally by the Joint Call Secretariat.

- Austrian Science Fund (FWF), Austria
- Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO), Belgium
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Canada
- Fonds de recherche du Québec-Santé (FRQS), Québec (Canada)¹
- Academy of Finland (AKA), Finland
- French National Research Agency (ANR), France
- Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Germany
- The Icelandic Centre for Research (RANNIS), Iceland
- Chief Scientist Office, Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH), Israel
- Ministry of Health (MOH), Italy
- Latvian Academy of Sciences (LAS), Latvia
- National Research Fund (FNR), Luxembourg
- National Centre for Research and Development (NCBiR), Poland
- Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), Portugal
- Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development & Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI), Romania
- **Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS), Slovakia – new participant as of Feb-04, 2013**
- Swedish Research Council (SRC), Sweden

¹ Subject to availability of funds voted annually to FRQS by the National Assembly of Québec

2. Aim of the call

The aim of the call is to enable multi-national, collaborative research projects that will address important questions relating to mental disorders. The call may receive proposals within the breadth of research from understanding basic mechanisms of disease through proof-of-concept clinical studies in humans. These may include research on affective disorders, stress-related and anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and delusional disorders, substance use disorders, and other mental disorders. **Research on dementia is not included in the present call.**

The ERA-Net NEURON funding organisations particularly wish to promote **multi-disciplinary work** and to encourage **translational research proposals** that combine basic and clinical approaches.

Research proposals should cover at least one of the following areas:

- a) Fundamental research on the pathogenesis and/or aetiology of mental disorders. This may include the development of innovative or shared resources and technologies. The relevance of the research to disease must be clearly indicated.
- b) Research to develop new strategies for (early) diagnosis, therapy, and rehabilitation procedures for mental disorders.

One of the aims of NEURON is to provide support to young researchers, and to facilitate their integration as independent PIs into the consortia, an experience that would be a valuable step forward in their research careers.

The individual components of joint applications should be complementary and contain novel, ambitious ideas. There should be clear added value in funding the collaboration over the individual projects.

Clinical studies are eligible up to the point of proof of concept.²

3. Application

3.1 Eligibility

Joint transnational research proposals may be submitted by research groups working in universities (or other higher education institutions), non-university public research institutes, hospitals, as well as in commercial companies, in particular small and medium-size enterprises. The eligibility of the afore-mentioned institutions, together with details of eligible costs (e.g. personnel, material, consumables, travel money, investments), are subject to the individual administrative requirements of individual funding organisations and may therefore vary. Please

² Eligibility and funding requirements for clinical trials vary between the partner countries. Clarification may be obtained from the individual funding agencies.

note particularly that, for some funding organisations, commercial companies are not eligible or are only eligible under certain conditions (e.g., only in partnership with academic institutions in the consortium). Clarification may be obtained from the individual funding agencies (see contact details below).

Only transnational projects will be funded. Each consortium submitting a proposal must involve a minimum of three research groups eligible to be funded by organisations listed in this call text (see above), and these three groups must be from three different countries. The total number of research groups in a consortium must not exceed five. Therefore, the maximum number of countries involved in one consortium is five. Not more than two research groups should be from the same country.

Research groups from countries whose funding organisations are not partners in the ERA-Net NEURON may participate in projects if they are able to secure their own funding and clearly provide an added value to the consortium. They must state clearly in the proposal if these funds are already secured or, if not, how they plan to obtain funding in advance of the project start. In any case, the total number of research groups in one consortium must not exceed five.

It is obligatory that the coordinator of a consortium is eligible to be funded by one of the organisations listed in this call text.

Each consortium should have the critical mass to achieve ambitious scientific goals and **should clearly demonstrate added value** from working together. One project co-ordinator among the project partners who represents the consortium externally will be responsible for its internal scientific management.

Although applications must be submitted jointly by groups from several countries, the individual research groups will be funded by the individual NEURON funding organisation(s) of their respective countries. Eligibility criteria are the matter of individual partner funding organisations.

Therefore, applicants are strongly advised to follow the instructions contained in the country-specific eligibility tables which are published on the NEURON webpage and to contact their national/regional funding organization to confirm eligibility matters before submitting an application.

3.2 Financial and legal modalities

Projects can be funded for a period of up to three years and according to funding organisations' regulations. Eligible costs may vary according to the corresponding funding agency's regulations. Each group is subject to the rules and regulations of its respective national/regional funding agency.

3.3 Submission of joint transnational proposals

There will be a **two-stage procedure** for joint applications: **pre-proposals** and **full proposals**. In both cases, one joint **proposal document** (in English) shall be prepared by the partners of a joint transnational proposal, and must be submitted to the Joint Call Secretariat by one spokesperson, the co-ordinator.

Pre-proposals must be submitted in electronic format no later than **March 11, 2013** (23:59:59 CET) via the **electronic submission** system.

NOTE: Full proposals will be accepted only from those applicants **explicitly invited** by the Joint Call Secretariat to submit them.

3.4 Further information

For further details, please refer to the respective submission forms available through the NEURON website. If you need additional information, please contact the Joint Call Secretariat, or your funding agency representative (see Annex for contact data).

4. Evaluation and decision

In accordance with the two-stage application procedure for joint proposals (pre-proposals and full proposals), there will also be a two-stage review procedure.

4.1 Formal check of proposals

The Joint Call Secretariat will assess proposals to ensure that they meet the call's formal criteria (date of submission; number of participating countries; inclusion of all necessary information in English). In parallel, the Joint Call Secretariat will forward the proposals to the national/regional funding organizations, which will perform a formal check of compliance with their respective regulations. Proposals not meeting the formal criteria will be rejected.

The Call Steering Committee may reject proposals if they are clearly outside the scope of the call.

Proposals passing these check points will be forwarded to the joint Peer Review Panel for evaluation.

4.2 Peer-review of proposals

The reviewers will carry out the evaluation according to specific evaluation criteria:

1. Relevance to the aim(s) of the call
2. Scientific quality of the proposal (innovation potential, methodology)

3. Feasibility of the project (adequacy of project work plan, budgetary and other resources, time schedule)
4. International competitiveness of participating research groups in the field(s) of the proposal (previous work in the field, expertise of the research groups)
5. Quality of collaborative interaction between the groups, and added value, from both scientific and transnational perspectives, of the research consortium. Consortia not meeting these criteria will be downgraded.
6. Potential of the expected results for future clinical and other health relevant applications.

4.3 Decision

4.3.1 Pre-proposals

The eligible pre-proposals will be reviewed via a written (remote) peer review process. Based on the scores in the written reviews a ranking list will be set up. By mid May 2013, the coordinators of the top proposals will be invited by the Joint Call Secretariat to submit a full proposal **no later than June 25, 2013**.

4.3.2 Full proposals

The international Joint Peer Review Panel will establish a ranking list of the fundable proposals based on scientific assessment. Based on this ranking list the Call Steering Committee will determine the projects to be funded, taking into account the national budgets available. Based on these recommendations, final decisions will be made by the funding agencies and will be subject to budgetary considerations.

5. Funding procedure / Responsibilities / Reporting requirements

5.1 Funding procedure

Projects can be funded for a period of up to three years and according to funding organisations' regulations. Funding is expected to start early in 2014.

The research groups of successful collaborative projects will be funded directly by the respective funding organisations.

Funding will be administered according to the terms and conditions of the responsible funding organisations, taking into account all other applicable regulations and legal frameworks.

5.2 Responsibilities

Each project must nominate a project coordinator, who represents the consortium externally and is responsible for its internal management (e.g., controlling, reporting, intellectual property rights issues, etc.) to the ERA-Net NEURON Joint Call Secretariat. Within a joint proposal, each group leader will be the contact person for the relevant national/regional funding organization.

The coordinators of funded projects together with the respective funding agencies shall make every effort to seek a common start date for all research groups in the consortium.

5.3 Reporting Requirements

On behalf of the research consortium, the project coordinator will be required to submit a brief annual scientific progress report on the project and one final report in the end, to the Joint Call Secretariat. Group leaders may be required to submit reports individually to their national funding organization; information regarding such reporting will be forwarded by the relevant funding organization, as applicable.

Annual reports shall be submitted within four months after the end of the respective calendar year. Annual reports do not need to be submitted if the project ends within three months of the following year (i.e., between January and March). In this case, submitting a final report suffices. However, instead of submitting the final report within the regular period of six months after the end of the project (see below), the final report has to be submitted within four months after the end of the project.

The deadline for submitting final reports is six months after the end of the project. It is the task of the coordinators to define a date on which the projects “officially” end. This step is necessary, as partners might be granted extensions of different duration. Coordinators will be informed about this procedure by the Joint Call Secretariat and will receive the report template in due time.

The coordinator will be asked to present the progress under the funded research project during one intermediate and one final status symposium. Group leaders will be asked to participate in the latter. Travel budgets should be planned and managed accordingly.

Funding recipients must ensure that all outcomes (publications, etc.) of transnational NEURON projects include a proper acknowledgement of ERA-Net NEURON and the respective funding partner organisations.

Annex

Please note that country specific requirements might apply to this call. We strongly advise you to contact your national/regional representative prior to submitting a pre-proposal:

Country (Region)	Contact person(s)	Links to national/regional calls mentioning particular requirements
Austria	Dr. Herbert Mayer	Austrian Science Fund (FWF) herbert.mayer@fwf.ac.at www.fwf.ac.at
Belgium (Flanders)	Dr. Olivier Boehme	Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) Egmontstraat 5 1000 Brussel www.fwo.be olivier.boehme@fwo.be
Canada	Dr. Elizabeth Theriault Jeff Warren	Canadian Institutes of Health Research - Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction (CIHR-INMHA) Elizabeth.Theriault@ubc.ca 604 827-4744 http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/8602.html Strategic Program Design and Analytics Research and Knowledge Translation Portfolio, CIHR Jeff.warren@cihr-irsc.gc.ca 613-948-2813
Canada (Québec)	New contact person: Dr. Anne-Cécile Desfaits	Fonds de recherche du Québec-Santé (FRQS) AnneCecile.Desfaits@frq.gouv.qc.ca 514-873-0463 www.frqs.gouv.qc.ca
Finland	Dr. Hannele Lahtinen	Academy of Finland (AKA) hannele.lahtinen@aka.fi www.aka.fi
France	Dr. Natalia Martin Dr. Deborah Zyss	French National Research Agency (ANR) Health & Biology Department Deborah.ZYSS@agencerecherche.fr +33 1 78 09 80 88 natalia.martin@agencerecherche.fr +33 1 73 54 81 33 www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr
Germany	Dr. Petra Lüers	Programme Management Agency (PT-DLR) – Health Research, on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) petra.lueers@dlr.de +49 228 3821 1194 www.gesundheitsforschung-bmbf.de
Iceland	Dr. Katrin Valgeirsdottir	RANNIS – The Icelandic Centre for Research katrin@rannis.is +354 515 5800
Israel	Dr. Nava Levine	Chief Scientist Office - Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH) nl@013.net.il www.health.gov.il/
Italy	Dr. Gaetano Guglielmi	Ministero della Salute g.guglielmi@sanita.it www.ministerosalute.it/
Latvia	Dr. Uldis Berkis	Latvian Academy of Sciences www.lza.lv uberkis@latnet.lv

Luxembourg	Dr. Frank Glod	Fonds National de la Recherche (FNR) frank.glod@fnr.lu www.fnr.lu/
Poland	Marcin Chmielewski	National Centre for Research and Development (NCBiR) Section for Research Projects BIOMED marcin.chmielewski@ncbr.gov.pl phone: + 48 22 39 07 109 fax.: +48 22 20 13 408 www.ncbir.pl
Portugal	Dr. Anabela Isidro	Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT) Departamento das Relações Europeias, Bilaterais e Multilaterais Anabela.Isidro@fct.pt phone: Tel:+351 21 391 15 52 www.fct.pt
Romania	Prof. Leon Zagrean	Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development & Innovation Funding (EAHERDIF) , leon.zagrean@uefiscdi.ro phone/fax +40213120880
Slovakia	Dr. Jan Barancik	Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS) Department for International Cooperation barancik@up.upsav.sk +421 2 5751 0137 www.sav.sk
Sweden	Prof. Mats Ulfendahl	Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) Box 1035 SE-101 38 Stockholm, Sweden mats.ulfendahl@vr.se www.vr.se