



New RV Belgica

Specific call for research proposals 2021

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PARTNER COMPOSITION – INSTITUTION/UNIVERSITY/RESEARCHER

01 Is there a restriction to the number of project proposals a given institution/university/researcher may participate in as partner and/or coordinator?

No, there is no limitation to the number of proposals a given Institution / university / researcher may participate in as partner and/or coordinator.

02 Will the fact that a given researcher acts as coordinator of several proposals be taken into account in the evaluation?

The fact that a given researcher acts as coordinator of several proposals may be taken into account in the final strategic selection of projects to be financed - cfr institutional coverage criterion described within the Information document including submission and evaluation guidelines and budget rules.

03 Can a coordinator/promoter introduce a co-coordinator/co-promoter from the same institution and under the same budget?

No. It is not possible to have a co-coordinator or co-promoter.

04 Can someone who is hired as subcontractor also appear as staff?

No. Someone engaged as a subcontractor cannot appear as staff.

05 Is it necessary to identify the subcontractor in the proposal?

No. BELSPO only requires a description of the subcontracted task(s). The specification of the particular company/institute is not mandatory. It is recommended not to mention the name unless it is certain.

06 May a researcher that will obtain the status of PI after the submission deadline be the promoter of a proposal?

Yes. It is possible if the researcher achieves said status before or at the time of the elaboration of the research contract. This should be clearly explained in the proposal.

07 Is it possible to link a PhD student from a given university to the proposal?

Yes, this is possible. If the PhD student is to be financed by the university, then you must include the candidate's tasks in the Gantt chart and Work Plan (under Other sources). If the PhD student is to be financed by BELSPO via the project, then you must include the candidate within the budget as staff and include his/her tasks in the Gantt chart and Work Plan.

ELIGIBLE PARTNERS

01 The non-for-profit institution to be included in the proposal does not appear in the list of non-for-profit research centres of the BELGICA online submission platform. What can I do?

If the non-for-profit research centre does not appear in said list, you may send an email to belgica_call@belspo.be, so BELSPO can check whether it can be included.

01 Is it possible to hire staff with a given degree for more than the stipulated maximum (4 200€/month technician, 6 075€/month master, 7 500€/month PhD)?

Yes. It can be done, provided the person to be hired is identified by name in the proposal. Then, the platform will accept a higher salary.

02 Is it possible to hire a doctoral student or a post-doc via a grant instead of a contract?

BELSPO prefers staff to be hired under a labour contract. However tax-free doctoral or post-doctoral scholarships can be exceptionally accepted under the following restricted conditions. The total number of tax-free scholarships per project is limited to max. 50% of the number of staff financed by BRAIN-be 2.0 within said project. In any case, there shall not be more than 2 tax-free scholarships/project. Tax-free scholarships refer to a grant subject to tax exemption under the tax laws. The costs for scholarships are limited to a maximum amount of:

- 4 050 €/month FTE for a tax-free doctoral scholarship (regardless of years of experience)
- 5 250 €/month FTE for a tax-free postdoctoral scholarship (regardless of years of experience)

03 Can a PhD student hired under the project be 'shared' between two institutions in terms of time and budget?

Yes. The time and cost of a PhD student can be shared by two institutions, but it must be explained within the proposal. Should the proposal be funded, the institutions are responsible for how they apply this arrangement; including the correct inscription of the PhD student to the corresponding university.

04 What rules apply if there are staff changes along the way during the execution of the project? Is it possible to affect part of the staff budget to other partners/budget category?

Once the contract of the project has been signed, changes can be made via an amendment to the contract. Amendments can include shifts in budget categories and also - in case of a network project - budget shifts between partners.

05 Within which budget category should Follow-up Committee members be included?

Follow-up Committee members cannot be funded for their work, but their travel and accommodation expenses can be covered by the 'General Operating costs'.

06 Can international partners be financed by a project Partner in the category of 'Specific operating Budget' instead of including them as official international partner?

Yes. It is possible to cover the international partners' expenses (travel costs, per-diem) using the 'specific operating budget', if it is justified in the project proposal. Note however that this cannot cover salary costs. International partners financed via the 'specific operating budget' cannot be considered as 'official International Research Partners'.

07 Is it possible to include salary, operating and / or equipment costs under 'Subcontracting budget'?

It is possible to include salary and operating costs under 'Subcontracting budget', including the budget for equipment use/hiring. The purchase of equipment is not allowed.

08 If project involves only one partner, is it possible to allocate 25% of the project's total budget for subcontracting?

Yes. The rule states that subcontracting may not exceed 25% of the total budget allocated to the Belgian partner concerned. If there is one single partner, then the 25% of the partner equals the 25% of the total budget of the proposal.

ANNEXES TO THE PROPOSAL

01 Is it possible to annex the Follow-up Committee member's CVs to the proposal?

No, annexed CVs of the Follow-up Committee members are not accepted. However, you may join a Follow-up Committee Letter of intent using the form provided within the "full proposal description" template.

02 Is it possible to annex the CVs of the partners to the proposal?

No, CVs in annex are not accepted. Space is provided within the "full proposal description" template for this purpose.

03 Is it possible to include annexes to the proposal description?

No, annexes are not accepted; it is not possible. However note that aside from the proposal description template, the GANTT chart (mandatory) other needs to be provided as annex to the proposal.

04 Is it possible to annex support letters to the proposal?

No, letters of support are not accepted.

EVALUATORS

01 Is it possible to include a member of the project's Follow-up Committee within the list of proposed experts for the evaluation of the proposal?

No. Members of a project's Follow-up Committee cannot be proposed as experts to evaluate the proposal.

02 Do proposed evaluators have to be European?

By preference evaluators are European. It facilitates the reimbursement of their services.

03 Do I need to have the agreement of the 'proposed experts' in order to include them in the Expression of Interest?

No. You do NOT need the agreement of the researchers that you want to include in the Expression of Interest as 'proposed experts'. In fact you must NOT contact the foreseen experts at all:

- *You must NOT tell them that you are preparing/sending the proposal*

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- *You must NOT ask them to be 'proposed experts'*

It is the task of BELSPO to contact the experts.

PLATFORM

01 Why can't the partners of the proposal Log In to the platform?

Only the proposal coordinator has access to the platform.

02 Is it possible to have access to the "full proposal template" without logging in to the platform?

Yes. The full proposal template as well as the Gantt chart template are also available on the call website.

04 How can I delete my proposal?

In order to delete the proposal you must follow the instructions provided within the Platform Submission Guidelines document.

05 Is it possible to edit my proposal, once submitted?

If your proposal is submitted before the deadline, exceptionally, BELSPO will be able to un-submit your proposal, and you may continue to edit it. After the deadline, there will be no possibilities of editing submitted proposals.

DURATION OF THE PROJECT

01 Is it possible to submit a 3-year project?

Yes, projects can have a duration of 2, 3 or 4 years.

LENGTH OF THE PROPOSAL

01 Will the proposal be deemed ineligible for evaluation if the 'Proposal description' exceeds the established length limits?

Yes.

PERMISSION TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL

01 Do I require the signature of my director/rector in order to submit the project proposal?

No, the signature of the director/rector is not required. However, you must have the agreement of your hierarchical authority for the submission of the proposal. You must confirm this by crossing the box:

I assure that my hierarchical authority agrees with the submission of this proposal

RESEARCH AREA OF RV BELGICA

01 Will the RV Belgica sail to the Arctic area in 2022?

No, sailing to the Arctic area will only be possible from 2023 onwards. Therefore this should be taken into account in the proposal in the proposed research activities and additionally useful tasks to do in 2022 should be foreseen.

02 Is Greenland included in the Arctic area covered by the RV Belgica?

Yes.