

***FEDERAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON DRUGS***

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2018**

*INFORMATION FILE*

*for RESPONDENTS*

*This file contains the necessary information for applying to the call for proposals*

*Closing date*: 29 June 2018 - 3PM

*Marks of Interest to be sent no later than*

*4 June 2018 - 3 PM*

*Proposals and Marks of Interest are to be sent per email in word and PDF* to:

[drugs\_call@belspo.be](mailto:drugs_call@belspo.be)

1. THE FEDERAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON DRUGS

On 19 January 2001, the Council of Ministers adopted the « *Federal Policy note on the problematic of drugs* ». This note contained a list of measures for federal authorities and a budget of 12.395.000BEF was made available. The ventilation of this budget per authority was finally adopted in the Council of Ministers of 5 July 2001. The Minister in charge of the federal Science Policy received an annual budget of 940.000€ to organise and manage a research programme in support of the decision making in the field of illegal drugs.

One of the most important measures of the Note was a Cooperation Agreement between the Federal, Regional and Community level for implementing a global and integrated approach on drugs. This Cooperation Agreement was finally signed by the last authority in September 2008. A few months later, the *Policy Cell Drugs* (PCD) was put in place whose first mission was to elaborate a Common Declaration on a Global and Integrated approach on Drugs for Belgium. The Inter-Ministerial Conference (including 21 ministers of all levels) adopted the text on 25 January 2010. Research is one of the priorities of the Common Declaration.

The Policy Cell Drugs (PCD) is the organ in charge of overall management of the global approach on drugs. It is composed of representatives of the ministers competent in the field at Federal, Regional and Community level. It is in charge of discussing new research themes and preparing the annual working programme that is used for the call of proposals organised by BELSPO.

The Research programme supports the global and integrated approach, including topics on the demand side (health, prevention...) and the supply side (trafficking, repression, criminality...), considering illegal drugs but also alcohol, tobacco, psychotropic medication and gambling.

The themes that can be funded in the programme should comply with the following principles:

* *Scientific excellence and international integration;*
* *Concentration around key questions covering multiple competences and offering a coherent framework in which fragmentation is minimized. The themes should support the strategic orientations of the Belgian drug policy as adopted by the Inter ministerial Conferences on Drugs ;*
* *Collaboration with other entities should be fostered (authorities at the federal, regional, community, international level) and flexible funding mechanisms involving these levels should be sought;*

2. THEMATIC PRIORITIES 2018

This call for proposal contains a mix of topics; the first topic (see below) is requesting urgent, fast and targeted responses in support of policy issues (it will be referred as the "fast track project"), others, suggested with less topical constraints, are requiring a longer term perspective to provide policy relevant evidence and new scientific insights into the drug problem. And finally a last topic is open to new ideas from the research community, within the remits of this programme (blue sky projects).

The total budget of this call for proposal is 1.34 million EUR. For some topics, indicative budgets are suggested indicatively. However, this does not imply that for each topic, the best proposal will automatically be selected. Instead, we are looking at funding the best proposals irrespective of the topics suggested in this call for proposals, at the exception of the fast track project which will be matched with the best application.

1. **Fast Track to decision making support – Steroids and anabolics and other performance enhancing drugs - state of the art and lessons for a preventive and curative policy in Belgium**

Context

Our country is confronted - just as others - to the worrying development of the use of this kind of products by what seems to be a growing fraction of the population that goes beyond professional sport (ex: amateur sports, gyms,...). In order to support a well-founded policy, it is important to gather existing knowledge, in Belgium and elsewhere, to produce a state of play and policy recommendations.

Scope

Interested researchers are invited to examine the state of the art in this field and provide, in as much as possible and not precluding other dimensions of interest, the following questions:

1. What is the prevalence of the non-medical[[1]](#footnote-1) and/or illegal use of steroids, anabolics and growth enhancing drugs? The issue here is not to run a large scale prevalence study, but to approach this reality through the collection of existing knowledge which could be complemented with targeted surveys in specific groups;
2. What are the effects of such products on the physical and mental health of users? The collection of existing evidence should allow synthesising the evidence;
3. What are the motivations for using these products? Targeted surveys to specific well-chosen groups can shed light on this question;
4. What is the origin of the products found on the Belgian market? Data from public authorities (law enforcement agencies...) will be made available to examine this question;
5. What is the existing care provision in Belgium and are there any noticeable deficiencies?
6. How these deficiencies should be tackled ?
7. In full consideration of the competences of the concerned public authorities, what are efficient means to sensitise users, prevention workers and care providers to this problematic with a view to enable better health measures?
8. ...

Expected impact

This fast track exercise is policy driven; it should be steered by a comprehensive follow-up committee that will help in sourcing available data, key stakeholders and useful information and provide assistance and set priorities in the project alongside the research team. Preliminary results should best be presented before May 2019.

BELSPO considers that projects requesting a maximum indicative contribution of 100.000€ would allow this topic to be addressed appropriately. The project should start no later than in the fall 2018 and deliver results in the course of the project until the foreseen end (to be determined by the team according to manpower and other resources requested).

The project is based on a co-funding with the following authorities:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **authority** | **budget** |
| Federal - BELSPO | 66.900€ |
| Flanders - Minister Muyters (Work, economy, innovation and sports) | 8.800€ |
| Flanders - Minister Vandeurzen (Well-being, Health and Family) | 8.800€ |
| Walloon Region - Minister Greoli (social action, health, equal opportunities, administrative simplification) | 7.200€ |
| Commission communautaire française (COCOF) - Minister Jodogne (Health) | 4.200€ |
| Commission communautaire commune - Minister Gosuin (Health) | 3.300€ |
| German Community - Minister Antoniadis (Health, social and family affairs) | 800€ |
|  |  |
| **total** | **100.000€** |

**2. Evaluation of the Belgian Drugs policy since the cooperation agreement of 2002**

Context

On 2nd of September2002 all governments of the federal, regional and community level signed the Cooperation Agreement for a *Global and Integrated Drugs Policy* in Belgium. This Agreement underlines the multidisciplinarity of the drug phenomenon and the necessity to communicate and align policies at all levels and strive to consensus in setting up an efficient policy. Parties agree to jointly debate and seek joint solutions to 1) prevent drug use, 2) offer care and treatment to drug users, 3) control production and marketing of products. This requires gaining a global insight in all aspects of the drug problem, continuous prevention and harm reduction , diversifying and optimising the treatment offer, supply reduction, and setting up and preparing coordinated policy responses at national and in European/international fora.

In 2008, the Federal minister of public health was appointed - as foreseen in the Cooperation Agreement - to operationalize the Agreement. She put in place the General Drugs Policy Cell (GDPC) and the Interministerial Conference on Drugs (ICD). In this Conference all governments, and Ministers involved in drug policy, are taking part. One of the first tasks of the GDPC, was to draft a Joint Declaration for an integral and integrated Drugs policy, which was approved by the ICD in 2010.

This Joint Declaration has almost 10 years of existence now and the GDPC wishes to benefit from scientific insights in evaluating the Belgian drugs policy since then. As a reminder, Belgian drugs policy includes illicit substances, alcohol, tobacco, psychoactive medication and gambling.

Scope

Whilst most European countries have conducted evaluations of their national strategies (e.g. see on the [relevant section](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/topic-overviews/policy-evaluation_en) of the EMCDDA website), time is ripe to conduct such an evaluation exercise in Belgium.

Interested researchers might seek advice in the EMCDDA document "[*Evaluating drug policy: a seven-step guide to support to support the commissioning and managing of evaluations*](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/system/files/publications/4680/td0417390enn1.pdf)" to support their views on the matter. However, there are many ways to conduct a drug policy evaluation and applicants remain free to develop their own views on the subject.

Notwithstanding the approach that applicants wish to develop, they might address the following considerations:

*The policy itself* *and its translation on the field* - we are seeking evidence-based views on the effectiveness (achievement of objectives, as these are set out in 2002 and recalled on [p.10 of the Joint Declaration](https://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/Call/forms/drug2011/IMC%20drugs-d%C3%A9claration%20conjointe%2025%20janvier%202010.pdf)), the efficiency (relating resources to outcomes), the coherence (internal and in relation to external policy interventions), the relevance (to both needs and policy objectives) the added value (has the existence of the policy improved the outcomes over what might have been achieved anyway?) and the equity (the capacity to fairly distribute the effect of the policy across stakeholders and incorporate their views in the implementation of the policy)? What factors acted as barriers or facilitators to the implementation? What lessons can policy-makers draw? Such an evaluation can hardly be realised without referral what is done in other countries and/or at European/International level, both in terms of the policy conducted and the evaluation thereof.

*Existing data and research* - identifying causal relationships between actions and outcomes heavily rests on existing data and previous research. Applicants are asked to seriously consider existing literature on evaluation (see EMCDDA portal and others), previous research projects [funded by BELSPO](http://www.belspo.be/belspo/drugs/index_en.stm) (DODONBEL, PROSPER, SOCPREV, SOCOST, ALCOLAW etc.), data on evaluation or analysis of pilot-projects or regional policies, public expenditure data, existing research infrastructures (ESPAD, public expenditure data, data available at EMCDDA and BMCDDA (Sciensano)...).

Expected impact

This research should generate good insights and solid evidence on the way the drugs policy is framed, conducted and implemented at different levels, and how this can be approved. A set of policy recommendations are expected. Applicants should consider delivering some form of valuable information to the relevant governmental authorities that will be appointed after the May 2019 elections. This project might be closely linked to the next project (see below).

BELSPO considers that projects requesting a maximum indicative contribution of €300.000 to 400.000€ would allow this topic to be addressed appropriately. Applicants are free to determine the length and manpower needed to run this project within the maximum available indicative budget.

**3. The role of perceptions, social representations and new communications technologies in understanding the drug problem**

Context

This research priority opens a large spectrum of research revolving around the importance of perceptions and social representations in the drugs field. The transversal importance of communication technologies as a mediator, facilitator or barrier could usefully be included in the analysis suggested by applicants.

Scope

Proposals can be submitted in the whole range of approaches to the drug situation: 1) prevalence, incidence and pattern of use, 2) responses to the drug situation, 3) determinants of drug use, 4) consequences of drug use, 5) mechanisms of use, 6) supply and markets and 7) methodological issues and scientific advancements in the study of the drug situation. They can cover all aspects of drugs: illicit drugs, tobacco, alcohol, gambling and psychoactive medication.

For illustration purposes, we provide some hints at how perceptions and new media can generate a body of complementary knowledge in the study of the drug situation.

For example, hard epidemiological evidence or tangible outcomes of policy that have been gathered elsewhere can usefully be complemented in collecting "soft" data on lay knowledge and social representation(self-perceptions, perceptions of users by society, professionals and policy makers, perceptions on substances and their harms and risks by people who use drugs and non-users...). Furthermore, self-representation of users for instance can positively or negatively affect substance use. Images formed by the population (and the role of media herein) or segments of it (such as social workers, judicial system...) on the substances, the users and the associated drug risks and harms (including changes: from young progressives in the 60's group to stigmatised group nowadays) are subjects that can enter this research topic. Lifestyles and peer dynamics are also important subjective factors in this respect. The inclusion in research of perception of benefits and risks and harms associated by (potential) users to a given substance and, more importantly, to a mix of substances would enable to generate more effective prevention actions.

Responses to the drug situation, from the overall drugs policy to specific interventions are also mediated through the way these are perceived, positively or negatively. New (social) media contribute to the social representations on drugs, its risks and harms and on people who use drugs. These representations are an important starting point for prevention. Research also can focus on how prevention actions can impact on these representations and reduce stigmatization. At a more global level, the way the policy (or sections of it) is perceived can be studied, in which case applicants should usefully find appropriate ways to cooperate with the team(s) that is (are) selected in priority 2 (see above).

Within this topic, reflections on the role of new communication technologies are encouraged. The inclusion (or exclusion) of ICT in proposals does not however give a bonus (malus) in the evaluation. It could be seen by applicants as a transversal element to consider in the study or perceptions and representations as these technologies can amplify them.

As an example, new communications technologies change the way gambling is accessible to a wider audience, allow new opportunities in treatment, prevention, in trafficking and police enforcement, and provide a body of hard and soft information (in blogs and other social media) that researchers could use in their research...

Expected impact

The open nature of this topic enables short and long term proposals, ranging from fast track projects aimed at collecting existing evidence to support a range of stakeholders, to longer term projects generating new knowledge via new techniques (e.g. big data analysis), focused (on a substance, a sub-group etc.) or more embracing (e.g. public perception of the drug policy in Belgium) to coexist. Therefore, neither budget nor timing limits are set indicatively, with due consideration that the overall budget limit of this call cannot be exceeded.

**4. Open scientific contributions to the drug situation in Belgium**

Context

Applicants can submit proposals without any predetermined thematic constraints and are free to submit a "blue sky" project on the topic of their choice. We wish to encourage research teams to develop their own views, ideas, test new methods, liaise with international projects via their undertaking, propose in relatively short timescale evidence on what is known and what is not yet know on a given topic to inform a wider community of stakeholders, policymakers and researchers, or engage in a long term research that would develop novel multidisciplinary insights on the drugs policy or the drugs phenomenon in Belgium and elsewhere. As a reminder, the General Drugs Policy Cell and the Interministerial Conference on Drugs are competent for the policy on *tobacco*, *alcohol*, *illicit drugs*, *psychoactive medication* and gambling, both for demand and supply reduction.

Applicants should however:

* Consider the topic of their choice as a clear support to the int*egrated and integral drugs policy* of this country[[2]](#footnote-2);
* Where relevant, mobilise a variety of scientific disciplines in which Social sciences and Humanities (SSH) play a predominant role. Projects focused on clinical trials or biological research for example are out of the remits of this research programme;
* clearly engage with a wide range of stakeholders and policymakers to maximise the societal impact of their research;
* depart from the other topics of this call (see above);
* Avoid overlaps with projects that have been funded in the past in this research programme (the full list of projects can be consulted on ) and topics that are the object of this call for proposal;
* projects should clearly have impact both in terms of raising the overall scientific debate as to generate useful knowledge to a wide range of stakeholders and policy-makers;

Expected impact

The open nature of this topic, enabling a range of projects from focused and short lived to long term and more embracing projects to coexist implies that neither indicative budget nor timing limits are set. Applicants will nevertheless bear in mind that the overall budget limit of this call cannot be exceeded.

3. TRANSVERSAL DIMENSIONS OF THIS CALL

In writing a proposal, applicants will take great care in taking the following transversal dimensions into account in their proposal:

* International dimension of the research: the drug situation in Belgium and the policy that is put in place cannot be studied as an isolated phenomenon. Taking the wider context into account is a necessity which can take different forms ranging from considerations for similar scientific developments abroad to, if possible, enabling comparisons and best practices elsewhere via links with similar running projects. The international dimension should also be present in the output of the researcher, at the stage of recommendations and results;
* The gender dimension must be addressed properly to improve the societal impact of the project. If possible, a gender balance should also be sought in composing the research network;
* Multidisciplinarity: drug issues are of such nature that their understanding requests a multitude of disciplinary approaches to properly deal with the situation;
* Engagement with policy-makers and society: BELSPO promotes a dialogue between science and society that goes beyond a mere diffusion of results in scientific journals. Expertise rests in many hands and researchers are invited to embark stakeholders at all stages of their project;
* Open access and open data: BELSPO has adopted an Open Access Policy that imposes researchers benefiting from a grant from BELSPO to either publish in Open Access publication (green open access) or by archiving publications in an open Access Repository (gold Open Access with embargo period of max. 1 year for Social Sciences and Humanities and 6 months for STEM).
* ethical issues - this issue must be carefully tackled, especially when dealing with vulnerable groups - to ensure quality and integrity of the research (e.g. by adopting existing codes of ethical conduct adopted by the university of affiliation of the research team...);

4. GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

This section provides a step by step guidance in order to complete the APPLICATION FORM.

For the sake of simplification, the word 'he' will be used to designate both man and woman in the remainder of the text.

PART 1 - ADMINISTRATIVE AND SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION

Proposals can be submitted by a **single promoter** or by a **network of promoters**.

An **eligible promoter**

* Belongs to a not-for-profit organisation legally registered in Belgium and having the pursuit of scientific research clearly stated in the statutes of this organisation (e.g. university, high school, public research centre[[3]](#footnote-3)...);
* Furthermore, he must be entitled to commit his/her organisation in contractual obligations (e.g. full professor...).

A promoter can be a physical person or the appointed leader of a group of researchers from the same organisation.

A **network of promoters** is composed of two or more promoters belonging to at least two different eligible organisations.

The **coordinator** of a proposal - or Principle Investigator - must be an eligible promoter and shall be appointed by the network to coordinate activities throughout the project. He shall also coordinate the relations with BELSPO for administrative and scientific deliverables foreseen in the research contract.

An **international partner**

* Belongs to an organisation enrolled outside Belgium which regularly performs scientific research;
* He must be in charge of a substantial part of the project (e.g. a work package);
* He will participate on the basis of a co-funding: at least 50% of his costs in the BELSPO project shall be covered by national funding sources, the remainder can be covered by the budget made available by BELSPO;
* this co-funding can be based on an in-kind contribution (e.g. data made available to the BELSPO-project...);

A **subcontractor** is a person or an organisation (national or foreign) which is performing either non-scientific tasks (e.g. a translation company) or which may possess specific scientific expertise punctually required by the project. The budget of the subcontractor shall not exceed 25% of the overall budget of the project. Subcontractors cannot be considered partners are shall therefore not fill out this part of the application.

In PART 1 of the SUBMISSION FORMS, the promoter(s) of a proposal shall provide a CV detailing information on their expertise in the field of the project: recently conducted projects in the same domain, affiliation to international networks in the field, recent published articles. It is useful for the reviewers of the proposal that web links are provided when possible.

PART 2 - DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

In this part of the Submission Form, the research project will be described with great care, ensuring that the following dimensions are properly addressed:

* the requirements of the call;
* the international dimension of the project, by considering, at least, similar scientific developments abroad and, if possible, enabling comparisons and best practices elsewhere;
* the whole Belgian territory. Unjustified discrepancies between regions/communities will not be accepted;
* the advancement of scientific knowledge and the support to policy and society

To this respect, applicants shall in particular insist on:

* Providing the state of the current scientific knowledge and develop their research objectives against this state of the art. Applicants shall clearly explain how other researchers (in Belgium or elsewhere) have contributed to the issue at hand and how the current proposal departs or builds on previous knowledge. In this respect, applicants will estimate the relative importance (in %) in terms of science, policy and society (e.g. a project whose aim is to implement existing knowledge in the Belgian context using well-proven methodologies will assign a relatively low importance to "impact on science"). This information will be used by reviewers in assessing the project ;
* developing these objectives through a methodology;
* Detailing with great care the data (qualitative and/or quantitative) that will be used and/or to be collected. Provide information on population, sample, variables, access conditions.. to ensure that external reviewers are sufficiently informed to make an assessment. Access to existing data must be ensured and explained in the proposal. If it appears that the data envisaged cannot be disclosed or made available in due time, BELSPO shall see a reason to cancel the research contract;
* With respect to the objectives of the project, the chosen methodology and data to implement it, applicants will describe the tasks involved in each work package along a timetable. For each task and WP, the division of labour will be provided (effort estimated in Person/Month).

PART 3 - IMPACT OF THE PROJECT AND ENGAGEMENT IN RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (RRI)

In this part, applicants will provide information on 1) the potential impact of the project for science and society and 2) how the project engages in Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI). Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) implies that societal actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers, business, third sector organisations, etc.) work together during the whole research and innovation process in order to better align both the process and its outcomes with the values, needs and expectations of society[[4]](#footnote-4).

**Potential impact**

Taking into account the relative importance (in %) attributed to the impact on science/policy/society in PART 2 of the proposal, applicants will explain how the outcomes of the project can contribute to the current state of the art in research and to providing relevant information for policy-making and society.

**RRI**

In the proposal, applicants will take great care in describing how they

* Engage with societal actors during the research process, in the follow-up committee that is compulsory to any BELSPO-funded project and possibly through other means;
* develop outreach and valorisation activities at the end of the project to ensure the widest transfer and embededness of the produced knowledge outside academic circles;
* Address the gender dimension by fostering gender balance in research teams, and integrating the gender dimension in research content to improve quality and societal relevance of expected results.
* Tackle ethical issues - especially when dealing with vulnerable groups - to ensure quality and integrity of the research (e.g. by adopting existing codes of ethical conduct adopted by the university of affiliation of the research team...);

PART 4 - RESOURCES

The resources allocated in the call by BELSPO and, when relevant, by other authorities, will be described and justified. The following rules will be respected:

* resources can only be allocated to the activities of the project;
* the distribution of resources between promoters ensures that each receives between 15 and 60% of the total budget of the project;
* each partner shall dedicate at least 60% of his budget to personnel costs;
* eligible costs are:
  + **Staff**:
    - the promoters of a proposal are generally appointed staff on the payroll of their institution and cannot receive funding. Personnel costs eligible for reimbursement by BELSPO only concerns researchers recruited under a regular labour contract or through tax-free scholarships.
    - BELSPO endorses a full cost model: all personnel costs are eligible for funding ((gross indexed wages including taxes, social security charges...)
    - if the researcher can be identified by name in the proposal, his/her real personnel costs will be provided.
    - if the researcher has not yet been identified (e.g. would be recruited once the project is granted), the following maximum amounts shall not be exceeded in the proposal:
      * 66.000€/year for a Master degree, regardless of experience;
      * 90.000€ for a PhD, regardless of experience;
      * 50.000€ for technical staff, regardless of experience.
  + **General operating costs**: the amount of GOC is fixed at a maximum of 10% (15% for the coordinator of the project) of the Personnel Costs. It is a lump sum for which no invoices will be required. This amount covers the usual expenses of any research project, including travel to meetings, usual supplies (books, data...), organising or attending conferences, software...
  + **Specific Operation Costs**: costs that are specific to the project that do not fall under the usual GOCs. These SOCs include for example the organisation of a survey, access to expensive research infrastructure, organisation of large consultations (series of focus groups, consensus meetings with the field...). Such costs will be reimbursed upon presentation of invoices;
  + **Equipment**: hardware, laboratory material and other apparatus and instruments... Reimbursement by BELSPO will be based on invoices presented in the first half of the project;
  + **Subcontracting**: the expenses incurred by a third party performing either non-scientific tasks (organising a large conference, a survey...) or well-limited scientific tasks requiring competences outside the network (e.g. specific statistical calculations...). The institution of the Coordinator will make a bilateral contract with the subcontractor, pre-finance his/her activity and be reimbursed by BELSPO upon presentation of a global invoice. The total budget for subcontracting shall not exceed 25% of the total budget of the Coordinator.
  + **Overheads**: lump sum (no invoices required) of max 5% of (Personnel Costs + GOC + SOC) covering telephone, administration, maintenance, heating, electricity...

**International partners** are eligible to a maximum of 20% of the total budget of the proposal. This budget can only cover staff and operation costs of the foreign partner. The participation of such partners is conditional on existing national funding to 50% or more. In such a co-funding model, BELSPO can cover up to 50% of the costs of the foreign partner. The prerequisite of an existing national funding source can be replaced by an equivalent in-kind contribution of the foreign partner to the project.

An Excel table is provided in the Submission Form in which lump sums (GOCs, Overheads) are automatically generated.

5. SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

The process to evaluate and select proposals is organised as follows:

**Eligibility check**

Proposals are examined by BELSPO on administrative eligibility criteria (proposal submitted in due time and form, consortium composed of eligible partners, budgets comply with requirements of the programme...). Applicants can self-check the eligibility of their proposals by using the document in annex to this document.

Eligible proposals are then send to reviewers for evaluation.

**Evaluation of proposals by external reviewers**

Each proposal submitted in this call will be reviewed by a minimum of three external experts in a three-step procedure.

In a first step, reviewers will work remotely on the proposal(s). To this end, they will read the call text, this Information Guide, the proposal(s). They will complete an Evaluation Form. This form is provided in annex.

In a second step, evaluation forms for a given proposal will be bundled and communicated to the experts who evaluated this proposal. One rapporteur will be designated and will be in charge of drafting a consensus report with the assistance of the other evaluators. Only consensus reports will be communicated to the Programme Committee members and provided as feedback to the applicants.

In a third step, a panel of reviewers will rank proposals according to their merits and against the requirement of the call (available budget, complementarity between proposals etc.). This ranking is made irrespective of the topic in which proposals are submitted. The only exception is the applications for the "fast track" project which will be matched with the application with the best score.

**Selection of proposals**

The ranking list and the consensus reports will be discussed with the members of the Programme Committee. This committee, composed of the members of the Working group "Research and Scientific information" of the General Cell Drug Policy (representatives of the Ministers in charge of the Belgian Integrated and integral Drug policy), provides a motivated strategic advice.

In case of equal overall scores between two or more proposals, preference will be given by default to consortiums in which Federal Scientific Institutions[[5]](#footnote-5) and/or teams from the North and the South of the country are represented.

The selection of proposals to be funded is made by the Minister in charge of the Federal Science Policy, based on the scientific evaluation by reviewers and the strategic advice of the Programme Committee.

Selected projects will start in the beginning of 2019. The team selected for the fast track project will start as soon as possible (fall 2018).

6. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

**Mark of interest**

***For topics 3*** (*role of perceptions, social representations and new communications technologies in understanding the drug problem*) ***and 4*** (*open scientific contributions to the drug situation in Belgium*), a ***Mark of Interest MUST be submitted prior to submitting a Full Proposal***.

For these topics, Full Proposals that were NOT preceded by a Mark of Interest will be discarded from the evaluation procedure.

The objective of this Mark of Interest is to allow BELSPO to source the proper expertise for the evaluation process during the call. In doing so, the evaluation step can start right after the call is closed.

Applications that are submitted under topic 1 (fast track) and 2 (evaluation of the Belgian Drugs Policy) are not requested to submit a Mark of Interest prior to submitting a Full Proposal.

The Mark of Interest is a short document containing:

* The coordinates of the Coordinator of the proposal and his/her potential network,
* A short outline of the project
* And a list of 5 foreign experts that are qualified in properly evaluating the project.

Full Proposals MUST be submitted by the **same Coordinator** and the project CANNOT depart from the project outline in the Mark of Interest in such a way that the suggested expertise becomes irrelevant. Adaptations and fine tuning in the composition of the network and in the content of the project are evidently admissible.

The Mark of Interest **MUST be submitted no later than 4 June 2018 at 3PM at** [drugs\_call@belspo.be](mailto:drugs_call@belspo.be)

**Full Proposals**

Applicants shall use the Submission Form that can be downloaded from the website of BELSPO.

Submission Forms shall be introduced in English in electronic form: Word or Open Office Format **AND** in PDF. Submission Forms will respect the eligibility criteria listed in the annexe.

**Deadline for submission:** **29 JUNE 2018 3PM**

Applications are to be sent to: [drugs\_call@belspo.be](mailto:drugs_call@belspo.be)

A receipt will be sent by email after reception of your proposals.

**More Information on this call for proposals**

Information on this call can be obtained at:

Aziz Naji - programme manager – [Aziz.Naji@Belspo.be](mailto:Aziz.Naji@Belspo.be) - 02/238.36.46

7. COMPLAINTS

BELSPO places great importance on the quality of its service and on improving the way it operates. A special form to handle complaints has been created.

The **complaint form** is available at the following address: <http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/complaints_en.stm>

Complaints submitted anonymously or which are offensive or not related to our organisation will not be processed.

A complaint is handled as follows:

* Once your complaint has been filed, a notification of receipt will be sent.
* The complaint will be forwarded to the relevant departments and individuals and will be processed within one month.
* An answer will be sent by e-mail or letter;
* The complaint will be treated with strict confidentiality.

If you are dissatisfied by the initial response to a complaint, you can always contact the Médiateur Fédéral/Federaal Ombudsman, rue Ducale 43, 1000 Brussels. (email [contact@mediateurfederal.be](mailto:contact@mediateurfederal.be)).

8. ANNEXE - ELIGIBILITY SELF CHECK

*This annex enables potential applicants to check the eligibility of their proposal. BELSPO will fill out this form for each proposal and send it to the promoter/coordinator after receipt of the proposal.*

The Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO) ensures that proposals meet all the eligibility criteria listed below. Proposals that do not meet one or more eligibility criteria will not be evaluated. Coordinators of ineligible proposals will be informed by BELSPO.  
The eligibility of each proposal is verified on the basis of information provided by the submitters in the submission file. For all proposals submitted, the following criteria are examined. Only those that meet ALL these criteria are used for evaluation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * The submission form is complete |  |
| * For topics 3 and 4, the Submission Form was preceeded by a Mark of Interest submitted in due time |  |
| * For topics 3 and 4 : the same coordinator has submitted the Mark of Interest and the Submission Form |  |
| * for topics 3 and 4: the subject of the proposal in the submission form does not depart from the subject outline in the Mark of Interest in such a way that the expertise sought becomes irrelevant |  |
| * The submission form was submitted in electronic format (in Word/Open Office and pdf) |  |
| * The submission file was submitted no later than 29 June 2018, 15:00 |  |
| * The promoter (s) is (are) employed by an eligible institution (not-for-profit organisation legally enrolled in Belgium and having the pursuit of scientific research clearly stated in the statutes of this organisation (e.g. university, high school, public research centre[[6]](#footnote-6)...) |  |
| * In case of a network, at least two participants are from 2 different eligible institutions |  |
| * Budgetary aspects: |  |
| * the budget of each funded Belgian institution is between 15% and 60% of the project budget * at least 60% of the project budget is spent on personnel * the budget for subcontracting does not exceed 25% of the total budget allocated to the concerned partner * the budget of the foreign partners does not exceed 20% of the total budget requested by the network |  |

1. Non –medical is referring to (a) not obtained through medical prescription or (b) not used following medical guidelines (as communicated by the prescribing doctor). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Extract from the 2010 Joint Declaration for an integrated and integral Drugs policy: "(...) *the General Drugs Policy Cell and the interministerial conference on Drugs are competent for the policy on tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs and psychoactive medication. These substances will be called "drugs". The cell and the Conference consider the consumption of these substances primarily as a problem of public health. A deep comprehension of this use should be seen in its global context, including essential life domains such as education, well-being, social inclusion, economy, security and justice. The inclusion of all pertinent domains in a policy, including convergence of all actions, is called an "integral and integrated policy". This concept constitutes the basis of the Belgian policy on drugs. This global policy requires prevention (1), detection and early intervention, a supply of health care (2), including harm reduction, detection and repression. Repression (4) shall be seen as the ultimum remedium of the policy. This policy must be based as much as possible on objective data and scientific results(4). The policy also complies with international conventions and policy plans (5)".* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. access the full list of not-for profit research centres recognised by the federal government on: <http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fisc/wi_list_fr.stm> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. More information on RRI can be obtained on: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/responsible-research-innovation> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. the list of Federal Institutions can be found on [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. access the full list of not-for profit research centres recognised by the federal government on: <http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fisc/wi_list_fr.stm> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)