

The Work Programme FP7-Science-in-Society -2010-1

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Note 1: The answers to the frequently asked questions are provided for informational purposes only and are not in any way binding for the European Commission. The text of the Work Programme remains the only legally binding document.

Note 2: Please note that this page may be updated with new questions.

Note 3 related to the Guide for Applicants:

Herewith the Commission would like to inform you of information additional to the Guide for Applicants. Before submitting your proposal, please ensure that you have carefully read this additional information to the Guide for Applicants posted on the CORDIS website under the call page:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.CapacitiesDetailsCallPage&call_id=271

The additional information corrects what is written in the Guide for Applicants on the following two subjects:

1. Method of calculating indirect costs: The Commission has decided to extend the possibility of using the specific flat rate of 60% for indirect costs, (applicable under certain conditions to non-profit bodies, secondary and higher education establishments, research organisations and SMEs) for the entire duration of FP7. The cut-off date for this rate (1/1/2010), mentioned in Annex 3 to the Guide for applicants, is therefore no longer applicable.
2. Audits of ongoing projects: The following paragraph should be inserted at the end of Chapter 5 of the Guide for Applicants ("What happens next"):

Applicants are reminded that DG Research has adopted a new and reinforced audit strategy aimed at detecting and correcting errors in cost claims submitted in projects on the basis of professional auditing standards. As a result the number of audits and participants audited will increase significantly and the Commission's services will assure appropriate mutual exchange of information within its relevant internal departments in order to fully coordinate any corrective actions to be taken in a consistent way. More information can be found here:

http://cordis.europa.eu/audit-certification/home_en.html

We apologise for any inconvenience these changes may cause.

Note 4: Please note that the general FAQs for FP7 are available at:

- http://cordis.europa.eu/guidance/helpdesk/faq_en.html
- <http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=faq&lg=en>
- http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/faq_en.html

Topic SiS-2010 1.0-1 Mobilisation and Mutual Learning Actions (MMLA)

The funding scheme for this topic is Support and coordination action (Supporting – CSA-SA). The additional eligibility criterion is that the consortium must consist of at least 10 independent legal entities established in at least 10 different Member States or Associated Countries. If this condition is not respected, the proposal will be deemed **ineligible**.

What is the main objective of the topic: SiS-2010 1.0-1 Mobilisation and Mutual Learning Actions (MMLA) ?

The main objective of this topic is enable consortia, comprising different actors, to develop and implement multi-annual Mobilisation and Mutual Learning (MML) Action Plans, aimed at promoting key Science in Society (SiS) objectives into research.

What are the research fields that projects will focus on?

Applicants can choose themes of interest for society where research is at stake (for example in the fields of sustainable development, health, transport mobility, social cohesion, nutrition, etc.) and where the integration of SiS issues is useful and relevant. It is important that the partners' consortium reflects the selected themes and SiS issues by encompassing research bodies (universities, research centres, academies, funding agencies, etc) and other relevant organisations with relevant experience in the corresponding research fields and SiS issues.

How many SiS issues should the proposal address?

The proposal should address one or several SiS issues as defined in the scope/content of the topic.

Will the inclusion of SiS dimension(s) be considered as evaluation criteria?

Yes, proposals must define the types of Science in Society issue(s) that will be addressed.

The following SiS issues may be addressed or combined (non-exhaustive list):

- Public engagement in research (PER) (involvement of citizens and their organisations)
- Ethics in science (including in the social and economic sciences)
- Gender perception and stereotypes in science and technology
- Young people's participation in science and attitudes towards science
- Two-way communication between scientists and other stakeholders
- Evidence-based policy-making / Policy making based on or using science and research

Can a MMLA be focused on just one specific scientific area (i.e. elderly care) and around this area propose a set of actions under several SiS issues?

Yes. This is just one idea for a MML. The applicants may choose any scientific area and around this area propose a set of actions under one or several SiS issues.

What are the activities that projects can propose?

The MMLAP may combine the following activities, for example (non-exhaustive list):

- Capacity-building through training and exchange of best practices as well as development/upgrade of knowledge management tools such as databases and ICT tools related to SiS know-how;
- Mobilising and using scientific knowledge, including cross-fertilisation with other forms of knowledge for policy-making and to address societal concerns,
- Joint production of common communication materials making research findings available to civil society actors in forms which they can access and use;
- Sustainable forms of cooperation, consultation and dialogue between the different MMLAP actors;
- Establishment of specific services / structures/ mechanisms at the level of the partner organisations (universities, research organisations, CSOs, museums, local authorities etc) to promote engagement in SiS issues;
- Identifying and discussing topics and opportunities for future cooperative (multi-actor) research;
- Assessment of potential impact of research activities on citizens and civil society;
- Examination of barriers to the participation of civil society and its organisations in research and of possible means to overcome them.

Could you please provide us with a detailed example of a MMLA which the EC would like to fund?

The examples of projects presented in the annex of the publication "Goverscience - Civil Society Organisations Seminar. Brussels, 9-10 October 2008" (http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/goverscience-civil-society-org-seminar-090610_en.pdf) can illustrate what is expected from a MMLA from the point of view of public engagement in research (PER), although MMLAPs should be wider projects in scope and participation and may combine a set of SiS issues (Gender, PER - Public engagement in research, ...).

Other examples can be found in the annexes:

- Goverscience seminar on energy and the environment

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/gover-science-energy-environment-090617_en.pdf

- Goverscience seminar on inclusive risk governance

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/gover-science-inclusive-risk-governance-090617_en.pdf

What are the requirements concerning the applicant organisations?

The consortium of partner organisations which submit a proposal should include at least three of the following types of organisations (which are listed in the topic description):

- science academies
- research institutions
- universities
- national or regional ministries
- national and regional parliamentary offices for science and technology
- research funding agencies
- cities and local / regional authorities
- civil society organisations
- museums, science centres and science festivals
- media organisations, etc.

This requirement is not included in the eligibility criteria but is taken into account in the evaluation. This means that if a proposal does not fulfil this requirement, it will not be considered ineligible, but its score will be reduced consequently during the evaluation.

It is possible to add other types of organisations as partner / applicant organisations. They might be counted in the above-mentioned requirement if the applicants explain in Part B how these other types of organisations contribute to the relevance, quality, implementation and impact of the proposal.

I need to clarify if MML is a specific focus of action in itself or does it simply describe the overall context for the particular call and for individual Activity lines (e.g. Activity 5.1.1) identified in the rest of the document?

The MML is a specific focus of actions, i.e. a specific topic in the Work Programme.

Am I correct in my understanding that when responding to the call for MMLAPs, ‘the proposal’ that is submitted effectively is the MMLAP, since at the submission stage it sets out specific ideas for MML actions?

Yes, when responding to the call for MMLAPs, ‘the proposal’ that is submitted effectively is the MMLAP.

Does "multi-annual action plan" mean a single plan that has the duration of several years or mean a new plan for each year?

One multi-annual MML plan is a single plan for four years.

Do you have any preference concerning the type of organisation to be coordinator (research or authorities or CSO)?

The WP does not specify any preference for a type of organisation to be coordinator. Any organisation can be coordinator provided that it has an adequate capacity to coordinate wide-ranging projects in content and for administrative and financial issues.

Can I set aside a budget for beneficiaries (or tasks) to be identified in the course of the project (during the implementation)?

The general rule is that activities are sufficiently defined in Part B of the proposal to allow the evaluators to assess the proposal. If the proposal is selected, the activities will have to be fully defined in the Description of Work which will form Annex 1 to the Grant Agreement.

What does it mean "The proposal must also include the means for in-depth independent monitoring and evaluation of its activities"?

Throughout the activity and on its completion (end of funding) the project must include an element of independent monitoring and evaluation, which will assess progress and results of the project according to its agreed objectives and tasks. This could mean a separate work package, recourse to external reviewers, etc. Clearly the evaluation function must be distinct from implementation in order to have an objective view of the progress being made. It is advised to check for conflict of interest between the independent evaluation element and the proposed activities. The proposed independent evaluation method will be assessed in the evaluation of the submitted proposals.

How many projects will be financed?

A maximum of four proposals.

Topic SiS-2010 2.1.1.1.Implementing structural change in research organisations / universities

The funding scheme, for this topic is the Support and coordination action (Supporting – CSA-SA). The eligibility criteria are that the consortium must consist of at least 3 independent legal entities established in at least 3 different Member States or Associated Countries. If these conditions are not respected, the proposal will be deemed **ineligible**.

Why does the EU contribution not cover all eligible costs?

In order to obtain full commitment to the structural change, the EC asks Higher Education and Research Centres authorities to co-fund their projects.

Who do you expect to co-finance the retained proposals?

It is expected that Higher Education and Research Centres central budget will co-finance the retained proposals. The members of the consortium should to decide how to co-fund their own participation to the project.

As previous calls (2008 and 2009) are quoted in the text of the topic, does this mean that you expect the proposers to make a link with the 2009 and 2008 projects?

No, they were mentioned only to explain the process leading to this topic.

Topic SiS-2010 2.1.3.1. Women in science: Euro-Mediterranean cooperation

The funding scheme for this topic is the Collaborative Project for Specific International Cooperation Actions (CP-SICA). The eligibility criteria are that at least four legal entities must participate of which two from the Member States or associated countries and two from two ICPC Mediterranean Partner Countries. The maximum EC requested contribution can be 2 million Euros. If these conditions are not respected, the proposal will be deemed **ineligible**.

Can a MPC (Mediterranean Partner Countries) entity be the coordinator?

Yes, but it should be noted that expertise in coordinating EU projects will be evaluated by the experts.

Can the coordinator be an entity not carrying out research?

Yes, but since a SICA aims at collaborative research, a Research Organisation would - in normal circumstances - be better placed to head a consortium.

What are the International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPC) that can participate to the call?

The countries to be involved in the consortium are ICPC-Mediterranean partner countries (ICPC-MPC). Their list is defined in the call text. The Mediterranean Partner Countries are Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian-administered areas, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia. In order to be eligible, each proposal has to have at least two ICPC-MPC partners, in addition to the two MS (Member States) or AC (Associated Countries) partners.

Topic SiS-2010-2.2.1.1. Supporting and coordinating actions on innovation in science education: teacher training on inquiry based teaching methods on a large scale in Europe

The funding scheme for this topic is Coordination and support action (Supporting – CSA-SA). The additional eligibility criterion is that the consortium must consist of at least 10 independent legal entities established in at least 10 different Member States or Associated Countries. The minimum EC requested contribution is 2 million Euros and the minimum duration is 3 years. If these conditions are not respected, the proposal will be deemed **ineligible**.

Can a proposal focus exclusively on primary or on secondary schools?

According to the Work Programme "This topic will support actions to promote the more widespread use of problem and inquiry based science teaching techniques in primary and secondary schools", so the focus can be on either or **both** primary and secondary schools.

Can a proposal be based around a particular discipline or subject (biology or chemistry or physics or mathematics) or should it deal with general science?

The focus of the topic is not on subject matter, but on IBSE techniques which can be used in a number of settings. It is important that the utility of this technique is brought out in the proposal (so that teachers could use it in other settings, for example) rather than an activity which is simply aimed at raising awareness of a particular discipline focusing on learning output rather than learning processes.

Since there will be a central information provider for dissemination of best practice, with linguistic adaptation, can the project be in one language only?

The objective of the central information provider is to provide, inter alia, linguistic services for dissemination of best practices **beyond** what individual projects can substantially achieve and it is intended to complement project activities. Each proposal should however take into account where appropriate, linguistic adaptation for disseminating the project results and its identified target communities.

Projects should not however seek to dedicate substantial resources for setting up internet activities that compete directly with the services to be supplied by the central information provider.

Should special interest groups (e.g. parents' associations, teachers' networks, curricula developers, and policy-makers) be part of the consortium?

The impact of the Call clearly states "this topic will support ... actions to bridge the gap between the science education research community, science teachers and local actors". The presumption is that existing expertise is not being shared and disseminated as widely as possible. In consequence the focus of the activity is on transfer of practice and understanding. So the consortium composition must reflect knowledge and experience of IBSE, but also allow for its more widespread uptake among science teachers. The proposal should include an effective mechanism for engaging these actors in implementing this change on a large scale.

Is it possible for new teaching techniques activities to be funded?

The call focuses on inquiry and problem based science teaching techniques and this should be the focus of proposals received. Furthermore, the specific actions proposed shall already have proven their efficiency and efficacy and evidence of this should be presented in the proposal.

Should gender issues be taken into account in the proposed activities?

As the content of the Call clearly states, any actions planned for the training of teachers should pay attention to a possible need to differentiate girls' and boys' interests. If some of the requirements of the Call text are not complied with in the proposal, it may not be scored at the highest by the external evaluators. Please see also the "Gender Actions" paragraph in the Objectives of the call.

What is the "element of independent evaluation"?

Throughout the activity and on its completion (end of funding) the project must include an element of independent evaluation, which will assess progress and results of the project. This could mean a separate work package, recourse to external reviewers, etc. Clearly the evaluation function must be distinct from implementation in order to have an objective view of the progress being made. It is advised to check for conflict of interest between the independent evaluation element and the proposed activities. The degree of independence of the chosen independent evaluation method will be assessed in the evaluation of the submitted proposals.

What are the differences between this topic and the last two calls on IBSE? Could you tell us more about the progress and evolution of this call?

This and the 2 previous calls are the follow-up the Commission is giving to the report "Science education now: a renewed pedagogy for the future of Europe" (see text of the WP for details). The reiteration of similar calls is due to the major success of these and the high demand for financing as well to the priority attributed to this kind of activity within the policies of the Commission on science education. The current call is however focusing specifically on teacher training activities, while the 2 previous had a broader scope.

When it is said that the intention is to promote European teachers' networks, does this mean the existing networks or that the creation of new teacher networks will be supported?

Existing or new teachers' networks can be included in the proposals. However, the funding will target the promotion of these networks and their activities and not their "creation".

It seems that the topic is mainly focused on the design and implementation of a Training Plan for teacher training on how to use problem and inquiry based science teaching techniques. Is this correct or is there any other kind of activity to be included in the proposals?

This call is open to all kind of actions that aim at a more widespread use of IBSE, at bridging the gap between the science education research community, science teachers and local actors in order to facilitate the uptake of IBSE, with a particular focus on teacher training and the promotion of European teachers' networks. The design and implementation of a training plan for teachers on how to use inquiry based techniques falls within the scope of the call. It should however be designed taking into account all the requirements of the call.

Topic SiS-2010-2.2.3.1. – Science curricula and their objectives: balancing the needs between training for future scientists and broader societal needs

The funding scheme for this topic is Collaborative Project. The additional eligibility criterion is that the maximum EC requested contribution is 1.5 million Euros. If this condition is not respected, the proposal will be deemed **ineligible**.

What is the definition of science curricula?

All subjects related to sciences such as physical science, life science, computer science, technology and mathematics that are commonly taught at primary and secondary schools.

What schools level should be addressed?

The level must cover the range from primary to secondary schools.

What kind of organisations do you expect to take part in this call? Should policy makers join the consortium?

This is a research project. Therefore, mainly research bodies able to carry out the requested research are expected to take part in this call. Other entities (including policy makers) are however welcome if they can have a meaningful role in the project. Policy makers should also be actively addressed in the dissemination of the results.

The European Commission is promoting Inquiry-based Science Education through a different call for proposals. Why is IBSE not mentioned in the description of this topic?

This is a research topic (collaborative project) which aims to analyse the real and current content of science curricula across a representative number of European countries and the countries associated to the 7th Framework Programme. Although IBSE techniques are being taken into account in science curricula in some countries, this is not always the case and sometimes other pedagogical approaches are being followed when teaching science. The activities under this topic should compare and contrast the current content and teaching practice in science curricula in Europe.

Topic SiS-2009-3.0.3.1 – Science and the Arts: an experimental approach

The funding scheme for this topic is the Support and coordination action (Supporting – CSA-SA). The eligibility criteria are that the consortium must consist of at least 3 different legal entities established in at least 3 different Member States or Associated Countries. If this condition is not respected, the proposal will be deemed **ineligible**.

Should there be 10 partners from 10 EU and Associated countries in consortium?

The eligibility criterion imposes at least 3 legal entities as beneficiaries (see above). The Work Programme for this specific topic states that the proposed activities must take place in at least 10 Member States or Associated Countries. This involvement could be as consortium members but it may take other forms.