

Agropolis Fondation FUNDING FRAMEWORK

A. General principles for funding support by Agropolis Fondation

1. Financial support by the Foundation shall be based on three types of procedures:
 - a. Call for proposals (see Section C)
 - b. Commissioned procedure (See Section D)
 - c. Urgent funds (See Section E)
2. Eligibility of proposals shall be restricted to projects led by one research unit belonging to the Foundation's scientific network, unless otherwise specified in the Terms of Reference of the support action.
3. Selected proposals shall meet the following requirements:
 - a. Consistency with the goals of the Foundation, i.e., to promote scientific excellence, innovation, structuring effect, interdisciplinarity, reinforcement of international partnerships, relevance to socio-economic and sustainable development issues;
 - b. Value addition with respect to the Foundation's charter members and other existing funding agencies.
4. The Foundation will particularly take into account proposals that (a) involve several of the Foundation's research units and external partners, and/or (b) focus on a strategic issue or topic that enhances the network's international visibility, and/or (c) are exploratory, "risky" and innovative.

B. Categories of funding support

1. The Foundation's various funding categories are as follows:
 - Category 1: Senior Fellowship
 - Category 2: Junior Fellowship
 - Category 3: Post-doctoral Fellowship
 - Category 4: Doctoral Fellowship
 - Category 5: Visiting Fellowship for short period of stay
 - Category 6: Grants for structuring scientific platforms
 - Category 7: Support for education- and training-oriented initiatives (e.g., international thematic schools, etc.)
 - Category 8: Small grants (should not include any type of support under Categories 1 to 7 above)
 - 8a. Support for the organization of high-level scientific events (conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.)
 - 8b. Support for the preparation of application to international calls for Proposals
 - 8c. Overseas travel grants for Doctoral students, Post-docs and scientists of the network
 - 8d. "Release from teaching duties" with a view to contributing to the attainment of the Foundation's objectives
 - 8e. Support for publication and dissemination of research results
 - 8f. Support for small exploratory, risky and innovative projects (proof-of-concept studies, new frontier research) including training by research projects
 - 8g. Support to hosting pre-doctoral students

2. Proponents can submit their application for funding which combines several support categories. Such **"Packages"** are expected to create a strong leverage effect on the promotion or strengthening of strategic or educational scientific themes and international visibility.
3. Applications from scientists from or having worked in developing, emerging, Southern or Mediterranean countries will be encouraged.
4. Candidates should not have resided or carried out their main activities¹ in France for longer than 12 months within a three-year period prior to the date of submission of the proposal. This may not apply in the case of:
 - Impossibility of finding a candidate with the suitable scientific background; this derogation will be granted by the Foundation's Director on an exceptional basis upon presentation of supporting documents provided by the project leader.
 - Projects co-funded by the Foundation's partners.

C. Call for Proposals

1. The launching of Calls for Proposals is decided by the Foundation's Board.
2. The Terms of Reference of each Call for Proposals are approved by the Foundation's Bureau. The TORs describe the implementation modalities (number of stages of proposal review, timetable, objectives, eligibility and evaluation criteria, etc.).
3. The general evaluation guidelines are described in Section F.
4. Final selection for funding is carried out by the Foundation's Bureau. The Board shall be informed in its succeeding meeting of the result of the selection process taken by the Bureau.

D. Commissioned Procedure

1. A Commissioned Procedure is initiated to support a federative or a flagship project. The Foundation's funding ranges from €500K to €3M.
2. The launching of a Commissioned Procedure is decided by the Foundation's Bureau, following a preliminary analysis by the Foundation's Director, and should be included in the multiannual programming approved by the Board. The Board shall be informed in its succeeding meeting should the Bureau decide (or not) to launch a Commissioned Procedure.
3. The general evaluation guidelines are described in Section F.
4. The Terms of Reference of the Commissioned Procedure are approved by the Foundation Bureau. They describe the implementation modalities (number of stages of proposal review, timetable, objectives, eligibility and evaluation criteria, etc.)
5. After evaluation, the decision to fund a project is taken by the Permanent Bureau. The Board shall be informed in its succeeding meeting of the Bureau's decision.

E. Urgent funds

1. Urgent funds are granted by the Foundation's Permanent Bureau, upon preliminary analysis by the Director of the Foundation. These are meant to provide support to initiatives that need to be treated urgently. It may grant up to a maximum of €50K per action. The Foundation's annual budget for this type of funding is limited to €200K per calendar year.
2. The Board shall be informed in its succeeding meeting of the actions taken by the Bureau with regards to the granting of Urgent Funds.

¹ Short stays such as holidays do not count.

F. General guidelines for the evaluation of proposals submitted in the framework of a Call or a Commissioned Procedure

The Terms of Reference shall indicate whether the evaluation of proposals under a given Call entails a one-stage or two-stage review process. For a two-stage process, a Concept Note (CN) is to be submitted. Applicants whose Concept Note has been accepted shall submit a Full Proposal for further evaluation.

F.1 Evaluation criteria

Quality of proposals shall be assessed according to the criteria listed below:

- a. Scientific quality
 - i. Originality
 - ii. Innovativeness
 - iii. Feasibility
- b. Fostering strong linkages
 - i. Interactions between the scientific axes defined by the Foundation
 - ii. Interactions between disciplines, and in particular interactions between social and bio-technical sciences
 - iii. Interactions between temperate, Mediterranean and tropical issues to be tackled by the proposed project
 - iv. Partnership strengthening, in particular with Southern and Mediterranean areas
- c. Contribution to international attractiveness and visibility
- d. Relevance to socio-economic and sustainable development issues
- e. Value addition (What is the added value of the Foundation's financial support as compared to other sources of funding? Is the Foundation the most appropriate funding source for the proposed initiative? What is the leverage effect of the Foundation's funding to the proposed initiative?)

F.2 Evaluation process

1. All the proposals submitted for funding shall be evaluated under the guidance of the SC.
2. Evaluation of proposals can be carried out by one or several SC members and/or external evaluators, i.e., those external to SC and the research units of the Foundation. Any conflict of interest will be avoided.
3. Each evaluator will submit an evaluation report for each of the proposal reviewed, according to a standard evaluation sheet elaborated by the Foundation. The evaluation report should include an over-all rating following the "ABC rating system" below:

A = Recommended for funding

B = For further discussion

C = Not recommended for funding

4. During SC meetings, the members will discuss the evaluation results in order to have a final recommendation (i.e., whether A, B, or C) for each proposal.
5. After the final selection by the Permanent Bureau and upon recommendation by the SC, a feedback shall be sent to applicants. For each project, general comments (which will include an over-all observation with respect to the Call) and comments specific to the concerned proposal will be sent to the proponents.