



Guideline for applicants

2nd call for applications (pre-proposals) for transnational
research in organic food and farming systems

launched by CORE Organic II

Closing date for pre-proposals: 16 January 2012, 13.00 CET



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1 BACKGROUND TO THE CALL

CORE Organic is the acronym for "Coordination of European Transnational Research in Organic Food and Farming Systems". As an ERA-NET action, it intends to increase cooperation between national research activities.

CORE Organic II succeeded CORE Organic I with an extended partnership of 26 partners in 21 countries. The first CORE Organic II call for research proposals, which was launched on 1 September 2010 has successfully been conducted. Eleven projects were selected for funding, two of them already started in September 2011.

The overall objective of CORE Organic II is to enhance quality, relevance and utilization of resources in European research in organic food and farming and to establish a joint pool for financing transnational research in organic food and farming.

The specific objectives of the CORE Organic II network are

- to increase exchange of information and expertise
- to coordinate existing research.

The background for these objectives is that the public European research and development effort in organic food and farming is characterized by small research communities, often scattered and fragmented both geographically and institutionally. This generates a need for gathering the dispersed expertise into a critical mass, to maintain and increase the competitive quality and relevance of research.

CORE Organic II is launching a second transnational joint call for research project proposals based on funds from participating countries. Thanks to the agreement of the partners on common prioritized research areas, the CORE Organic II network will enable a better use of research funding whereas the human resources as well as research facilities will be complementary and more effectively utilized.

2 THEMATIC RESEARCH AREAS – CALL TEXT

Research project consortia should apply to one of the two thematic research areas specified in the CORE Organic II Call Text (Plant breeding or Organic markets), which will be funded according to the funding table given in Annex B. The pre-proposals should be structured around (one or more) topics listed under each of the thematic research areas (q.v. Call Text!).

3 PARTICIPATION AND FUNDING OF RESEARCH PROJECTS

The funding for the transnational projects will be based on a 'virtual common pot' instrument. This means that each national funding body funds its national researchers in the transnational project consortium.

Indicative funds from participating countries per thematic research area are listed in Annex B. These amounts may be allocated to one or more projects.

The rules of eligibility of applicants differ from country to country. Companies are welcome to participate with own funding, and can apply for funding if the National rules allow it.

Applicants in projects that have been selected for funding will receive the grant directly from their national funding body according to their terms and conditions.

Applicants from countries which are not partners in the CORE Organic II or from countries which do not provide funding for a specific thematic area of the call are welcome to participate in the call. However, their costs need to be covered from their own resources or by other sources (e.g. with support from industry or other non-CORE funding bodies). They are not taken into account in the minimum requirement of eligible partners and countries in the CORE Organic II eligibility criteria.

4 CALL SCHEDULE

The call involves a 2-stage procedure with submission and selection of pre-proposals and, subsequently, invitation of shortlisted consortia to submit full-proposals. The respective time schedule and activities required are listed in the table below.

Table 1. Time schedule of the call – 2-Stage Call process

Action	Scheduled
STAGE 1	
Closing date for pre-proposals	16 January 2012; 13.00 CET
Eligibility meeting (review and evaluation of pre-proposals)	28 February 2012
Invitation letters for submission of full-proposal	09 March 2012
STAGE 2	
Closing date for full-proposals	10 May 2012
Evaluation by an Expert Panel	21 June 2012
Prioritisation and selection of projects	07 September 2012
Notification letters	October 2012
Contract negotiations	October ongoing
Start of projects	From January 2013

5 CALL SECRETARIAT

The Call Secretariat will provide administrative support to applicants regarding the call, call documents and procedures. It is the primary point of contact between the Research Project Consortium and the CORE Organic II Governing Board for all general matters in relation to the call.

CORE Organic II Call Secretariat:

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The National Contact Points are supporting the Call Secretariat and should be contacted for all matters regarding national regulations and funding. Please see Annex A for contact information of National Contact Points.

6 SUBMISSION OF PRE-PROPOSALS

The call announcement including this guidance is available at the CORE Organic II website: www.coreorganic2.org. The pre-proposal application has to be filled in and submitted via the call submission website <http://eracall.eu/coreorganic>. **Pre-proposals must be submitted by 16 January 2012, 13.00 CET.**

For each application, two pre-proposal forms have to be filled in:

- 1) Part A is web-based and has to be filled in directly on the call submission website, and
- 2) Part B, a project description form, has to be downloaded from- and uploaded to the call submission website.

Only one application is required covering all the project partners of the consortium. It is mandatory to submit the Part B form as an **unprotected** Adobe PDF file. Pre-proposals must be written in English and they should be precise and concise.

Application submission will only be accepted via the CORE Organic II call submission website:

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<http://eracall.eu/coreorganic>.

The application should be submitted by the project coordinator on behalf of the consortium (chapter 6.1).

For further information contact the Call Secretariat (chapter 5).

6.1 THE PROJECT COORDINATOR

Each Project Consortium needs to appoint a project coordinator, who, in any commissioned project, has the following role and responsibilities:

- Be the primary point of contact between the CORE Organic II Consortium and the researchers on behalf of the Project Consortium from the submission of the pre-proposal until the publication of the final report.
- Submit the application on behalf of the Project Consortium.
- Compile and submit reports and other deliverables to the CORE Organic II Consortium on behalf of the Project Consortium.
- Secure that all project milestones and deliverables are met and take action according to the project management plan if one or more partners fail to deliver.
- Inform the CORE Organic II Consortium about any event that might affect the implementation of the project.

The project coordinator will NOT be responsible for the financial management of CORE Organic II project funding, which will be handled directly between the national research institutions and their national funding bodies in each participating country.

6.2 PRE-PROPOSAL APPLICATION

Applicants will be required to submit a pre-proposal consisting of the following information:

Part A, predefined boxes on the call website:

1. Title of Project (max. 200 characters).
2. Project Acronym (max. 20 characters).
3. Thematic research area: 1) Plant breeding or 2) Organic markets.
4. Project Summary (2000 characters).
5. Keywords (max 5 and 100 characters).
6. Duration of the proposed research project (max 36 months).

7. References of ten selected publications (per consortium) by the partners and relevant to the proposal, including links to the articles or abstracts.

Information about the coordinator and the project partners including financial plan

8. Contact details for each project partner.
9. Description of project partners, their role in the project and related projects:
 - The role of each project partner in the project.
 - A short description of the partner.

For coordinator and work package leaders:

- A short description of ongoing projects related to the present topic indicating project name, funding source and amounts, and potential overlap or link with the current proposal.
 - A brief CV.
10. A financial plan for each project partner.

Part B, word form from the call website to be submitted as PDF (maximum 4 pages in total):

1. Proposal identification number (will be shown when you log-in)
2. Project title.
3. Project acronym.
4. Project objectives and main hypotheses.
5. Description of:
 - Relevance of the proposal compared with the call text.
 - Degree to which the project will overcome barriers and support important development opportunities for the organic sector.
 - Main results for the sector that can be expected.
 - Main target groups and how these will be involved and/or targeted in the project.
 - European added value of the project being carried out transnationally.
6. Description of the scientific methods and work plan (may be divided into work packages).

The maximum text indicated in each part should be respected and the following format should be used: Arial, 10 pt, single space, 2.5 cm left/right margins, 3.5 cm top margin, 2 cm bottom margin.

Part A can be saved at all steps and revisions of Part B can be submitted until the deadline. The latest version will be shown at the next log-in. On 16 January 2012 at 13.00 CET the latest version is considered to be the final pre-proposal.

The information given in the pre-proposal is binding. Subsequent amendments require a permission of the CORE Organic II Governing Board members of the involved countries and have to be communicated during the submission of the full-proposal.

Pre-proposals, which do not include all the compulsory information and formal requirements will not be considered for evaluation.

7 ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

The pre-proposal should meet the following eligibility criteria:

7.1 ETHICS

Work involving the use of animals or humans should be carried out under the appropriate authorisation taking into account local ethical requirements. Any proposal, which seems to contravene fundamental ethical principles, shall not be selected, and may be excluded from the evaluation and selection procedure at any time by the CORE Organic II Governing Board. Judgement of the significance of ethical issues will be made by the Governing Board using the criteria published by the Commission in its guidelines for the Seventh Framework Programme (http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html#ethics_sd).

7.2 CORE ORGANIC II ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Each project pre-proposal must:

- ✓ Consist of a transnational consortium of at least three independent eligible legal entities from at least three of the Partner countries listed in Annex A and B.
- ✓ Be written in English.
- ✓ Use the application forms provided via the call website: <http://eracall.eu/coreorganic> .
- ✓ Fulfil the formal requirements for pre-proposal submission.
- ✓ Be submitted correctly and completely via the call website before the call deadline (16 January 2012, 13.00 CET).
- ✓ The total requested funding for a project partner (or partners from the same country) cannot exceed the indicative amount allocated by their respective national funding body (Annex B).

7.3 NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

All project partners involved in an application have to assure that eligible costs, sub-contracting, etc. are in line with the respective national regulations. Some countries have published their national eligibility criteria, these can be found on the website: www.coreorganic2.org under "Calls". In case of uncertainties regarding the national regulations, please contact your National Contact Point (Annex A).

8 SELECTION OF PRE-PROPOSALS

All pre-proposals submitted will be treated strictly confidential by the CORE Organic II Consortium. In the selection process at the pre-proposal stage the transnational research proposals which are eligible in terms of the "Eligibility criteria for Funding" mentioned in chapter 7 will be identified. Meeting these criteria is mandatory and pre-proposals that do not meet them will not be considered for funding.

Further, the pre-proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Relevance of the proposal compared to the call text and current state of knowledge (Innovative and problem solving potential of the project and complementarity with already existing results).
- Soundness of concept and work plan.
- Impact (Specific barriers and development potentials in the organic sector to be overcome/supported by the project).
- Quality of consortium in consideration to the European added value (Clear description of the transnational collaboration in the individual WPs and the European added value of the project being carried out transnationally. A preliminary assessment of the quality of the consortium and geographical coverage of the partnerships compared with the topic).
- Management and budget (Reasonability of the budget in regard to the work plan).

Project Consortium whose pre-proposals meet the eligibility criteria and are assessed to be of high quality on the above mentioned criteria will be invited to submit a full-proposal. Unsuccessful pre-proposals will be informed thereof by the Call Secretariat.

9 FURTHER INFORMATION

9.1 SUBMISSION OF FULL-PROPOSALS

Additional information for the submission of full-proposals will be available with the invitations for full-proposals and published on the CORE Organic II website www.coreorganic2.org.

9.2 CONTRACT CONDITIONS

9.2.1 TERMS OF PARTICIPATION

The national funding of the CORE Organic II Calls are offered under the coordination of the FP7 ERA-NET CORE Organic II. Partners of the research project consortium are required to recognize the coordinating role of CORE Organic II throughout the duration of the funded research projects until the publication of the final report. Each Project Consortium will be asked for a feedback on the processes in order to help to refine them for the future use.

9.2.2 CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIPS

CORE Organic II is a collaboration between national funding bodies with the aim of establishing transnational research collaboration. The contracts with researchers and funding procedures and regulations remain the full responsibility of the national funding bodies.

Because of the fragmented nature of the funding care will be taken to ensure that the individual contracts are synchronised both in time and content, so that the Project Consortium can deliver transnational outputs as described in the project proposal. The national funding bodies have to ensure that common CORE Organic II conditions are met (e.g. common start date of a given project, reporting requirements etc.).

9.2.3 FUNDING CONTRACTS

For the whole duration of the contract it is the responsibility of the Project Coordinator to inform the CORE Organic II Consortium of any changes which may affect the implementation of the project (e.g. work plan, consortium modifications) and other changes such as changes in the contract details.

Any financial issue is under the responsibility of each national funding body involved in the approved project.

If a change to the Project Consortium occurs which poses a risk to the project, the issue has to be solved by the consortium (in line with the Consortium Agreement). The CORE Organic II Consortium must be kept informed of such events.

Any changes in the work plan should be only minor, but will need to be authorised by the CORE Organic II Consortium.

9.2.4 CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT

The consortia selected for funding must enter into a Consortium Agreement, in order to manage the project activities, finances, intellectual property rights (IPR) and to avoid disputes which might be detrimental to the completion of the project.

It will be the responsibility of the project coordinators to draw up a Consortium Agreement suitable to their own

group. The Consortium Agreement will normally be under the law and legal system of the country of the project coordinator. The purpose of this document is:

- To underpin the project partners' collaboration and provide the project partners with mutual assurance on project management structures and procedures, and their rights and obligations towards one another.
- To assure the funding bodies involved that the Project Consortium has a satisfactory decision making capacity and is able to work together in a synergistic and positive manner.

The Consortium Agreement must be finalized and signed by all partners of the Project Consortium before the official start of the project.

The CORE Organic II Call Secretariat will provide the applicants with an example of a Consortium Agreement after the selection process.

9.2.5 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS, USE AND ACCESS TO RESULTS

Results and new Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) resulting from projects funded through the CORE Organic II Call will be owned by the Project Partners according to the conditions stated in their Consortium Agreement and shall not be in conflict with the respective national regulation.

Researchers are encouraged to actively exploit the results of the research project and make them available for use, whether for commercial gain or not, in order for public benefit to be obtained from the knowledge created.

9.2.6 START DATE OF PROJECTS

A project can start when all national contracts have been concluded and all partners have signed the Consortium Agreement. Once the national contracts come into force, eligible national costs may be claimed as per national procedures.

9.2.7 PROJECT REPORTING

A mid-term and a final scientific report including deliverables have to be sent to the CORE Organic II Consortium by the project coordinator. Project reports and the progress will be assessed against the expected output and timeline as described in the final project description (milestones and deliverables). Action may be taken by funding bodies in case of shortcomings or non-compliance.

In addition, brief project updates suitable for immediate publication have to be provided to the CORE Organic II Consortium annually, and a minimum of 3 stakeholder-oriented articles.

Project reports and articles must be written in English, whereas supplementary versions may also be written in other languages at the Project Partners' discretion and own expenses.

If required by national obligations, each project partner has to report progress of their work package to the

national funding bodies. This also applies to financial reports.

9.2.8 DISSEMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Dissemination of project results is requested in the form of various communication routes such as scientific papers, posters, stakeholder involvement, course or training material, web based tools, workshops or direct intervention towards end users. A dissemination plan should be included in the full-proposal and specify the planned dissemination activities.

All publications, which originate from the CORE Organic II projects, have to be published via the electronic archive, Organic Eprints (www.orgprints.org).

Further, the Project Partners have to acknowledge the transnational funding of the CORE Organic II ERA-NET and the individual national funding bodies in any document that is published (in written, oral or electronic form) within the research project.

ANNEX A: CORE ORGANIC II NATIONAL CONTACT POINTS

Country	Name & Organisation	Telephone	E-mail
Austria	Gottfried Führer, BMLFUW (contract),	+43-71100-6776	Gottfried.fuehrer@lebensministerium.at
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ANNEX B: FUNDING CONTRIBUTION TABLE

Country	Plant breeding	Organic markets
Austria	200 €	100 €
Belgium (Flanders)	200 €	75 € ¹
Denmark	~600 € ²	~300 € ²
Finland	100 €	100 €
France	75 €	75 €
Germany	350 €	150 €
Italy	300 €	0
Latvia	0	~21 € ³
Lithuania	0	~50 € ⁴
Luxembourg	200 €	0
Netherlands	100 €	0
Norway	~200 € ⁵	~300 € ⁵
Slovenia	100 €	100 €
Sweden	~300€ ⁶	~300 € ⁶
Turkey	150 €	50 €
United Kingdom	~230 € ⁷	0
Total	3,105 €	1,621 €

¹ PhD scholarship

² 4,500,000 DKK and 2,200,000 DKK, for Plant breeding and Organic markets respectively

³ 15,000 LVL

⁴ 173,000 Lt

⁵ 1,600,000 NOK and 2,300,000 NOK, for Plant breeding and Organic markets respectively

⁶ 6,000,000 SEK in total for both thematic areas

⁷ £200,000