

CORE Organic Cofund - Call 2016

Additional information for the submission of a

Full Proposal

Closing date for submission of full proposals: **3 July 2017 at 10.00 a.m. CEST**

Amended version from 2 June 2017: Part B4, „Description of the project“, may now contain max. 42,000 characters in total. (It was originally only 24,000 characters.)

Amended version from 5 May 2017: Page limits are now expressed as character limits (1 page is set to 3000 characters, see pages 6 – 8).

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1 GENERAL

This document gives additional information for the submission of a full proposal in the framework of the CORE Organic Cofund call. It is a supplement to the information provided in the Call Announcement (published on the CORE Organic Cofund website: www.coreorganic.org). The Call Announcement and this document together provide the complete information to submit a full proposal.

Note that the application parts of all research project consortium participants must also be in line with the respective national regulations. Applicants are obliged to contact their National Contact Points well before submitting the full proposal.

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The National Contact Points can be found in Annex C of the Call Announcement.

2 INVITATION LETTER

Invitation letters to submit a full proposal have been sent to 33 project consortia, which represent about 2 times the available funding. The letter might contain conditions and/or recommendations. The conditions are obligatory and must be met in the full proposal. Recommendations can be regarded as an advice from the funding bodies to improve the proposal. The conditions and recommendations will be taken into consideration by the independent experts during their evaluation of the proposals. In addition, some of the letters encourage the consortia to consider the addition of a partner from certain countries.

3 SUBMISSION OF FULL PROPOSALS

3.1 General

The full proposal should be submitted by the project coordinator on behalf of the project consortium.

Submission is via the call submission website <http://eracall.eu> with the deadline
3 July 2017 at 10.00 a.m. CEST

Technical instructions regarding format and online tool can be found in the annex to this guideline. Applications who do not meet the formal requirements will not be considered in the evaluation process. Too long applications (e.g. too long summaries or DoWs) will be cut off where the maximum number of characters is reached.

3.2 Recommendations and conditions for a competitive application

To submit a full proposal successfully, the following actions should be taken by the Coordinator and the Consortium Partners:

- i. Ensure that all partners contact their National/Regional Contact Point (funding organisation) again to obtain information on any additional national/regional obligations related to the proposal.
- ii. Ensure that the proposal is adjusted to meet any specific requirements (conditions and recommendations) mentioned in the invitation letter. This may include adjusting the consortia in cases where partners from certain countries have to be replaced with partner(s) from other countries due to the too high number of applications with partners from certain countries (too high oversubscription rate).
- iii. For countries not participating in the call or in case applicants are not eligible for funding by their national funding body: the respective project partner must provide a written confirmation of the financial commitment signed by authorized staff (to be uploaded in the online system).
- iv. Check the contact details of all partners participating in the consortium.
- v. Check whether the application form in the online system has been filled out completely and accurately and to best knowledge and belief.

The CORE Organic consortium further recommends:

- a) Deliverables should be aligned with the reporting and dissemination requirement described in the Guideline for Applicants
- b) Feasibility of the project in terms of time should be carefully considered, since any no-cost extension of the project can be granted for a maximum of very few months
- c) The set-up of coordination efforts and the budget for this should be well argued compared with the complexity of the project.
- d) The project summary should be well written and contain:
 - d.1 Background / problem to be solved / research question (brief)
 - d.2 Methods (should be as detailed as possible)
 - d.3 Expected results (should be as detailed as possible)
 - d.4 Expected impact / potential to solve problems or support opportunities

3.3 Changes compared to the pre-proposal

The full proposal should not differ significantly from the pre-proposal with regard to consortium composition, project objectives and budget, unless such changes have been requested (condition) or recommended in the invitation letter.

Even if budget corrections have been permitted, the new budget per partner may not be higher than in the pre-proposal. And the maximum budget requested from CORE Organic may not exceed 1.5 million per full proposal, including the coordination costs.

Any further significant changes have to be approved by the Call Secretariat. In any case, changes shall be mentioned with detailed justification in the full proposal application.

3.4 Feedback from the Call Secretariat

Successful submission of a full proposal will be confirmed automatically via the online tool. Submitted proposals can be edited and resubmitted until the submission deadline.

4 EVALUATION OF FULL PROPOSALS

4.1 General

Each full proposal will be evaluated by at least three external, independent scientific experts, appointed by the CORE Organic Cofund consortium. The experts will have to sign a (No) Conflict of Interest Declaration and an Impartiality and Confidentiality Agreement before they get access to the proposals. National interests must not influence the evaluation process.

4.2 Evaluation criteria

Each proposal will be evaluated based on the following three main evaluation criteria:

1. Scientific and/or technological excellence (Threshold 3/5)

- Sound concept, and quality of objectives
- Progress beyond the state-of-the-art
- Quality and effectiveness of the scientific and technological methodology and associated work plan

2. Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management (Threshold 3/5)

- Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures
- Quality and relevant experience of the individual participants
- Quality of the consortium as a whole (including complementarity, balance)
- Appropriate allocation and justification of the resources to be committed (budget, including coordination budget, time, staff, equipment, etc.)

3. Potential impact (Threshold 3/5)

- Contribution to the challenges of organic agriculture and food production, in relation to the call text and in a trans-European perspective
- Appropriateness of measures for the dissemination and/or exploitation of transnational projects results, and management of intellectual property, including, among others
 - o Dissemination in all partner countries to end-users in the national languages
 - o Taking into account the EC organic regulation (Reg (EC) 834/2007, and if relevant Reg (EC) 889/2008). If any aspects of the research planned are not allowed according to the current organic rules, it has to be justified in the proposal.

4.3 Scoring system

The scientific experts will give a score between 0 and 5 for each main evaluation criterion. The interpretation of the scores is the following:

0	The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
1	Poor. The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair. While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.
3	Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.
4	Very good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
5	Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

To be considered for selection, the scores agreed on by the expert panel must be equal to or above the threshold for each criterion (score 3 or above, see chpt. „Evaluation criteria“).

The overall score for a proposal is the sum of the scores, with one score per main criterion, and can thus range from 0 to 15.

4.4 Evaluation procedure

The evaluation procedure comprises three steps:

In a first step, the scientific experts will evaluate the assigned proposals independently and submit their evaluation (scores and comments) in CORE Organic Cofund’s online tool.

In a second step, the three scientific experts who evaluated a proposal will make an effort to agree on a joint draft evaluation report.

The third step is a physical Expert Panel meeting covering all topics. The Expert Panel will agree on a ranking list per topic as well as on a way to merge the four ranking lists into one ranking list at a certain point of the selection.

5 FUNDING DECISION

The CORE Organic Cofund Consortium will make the final funding decision based on the ranking list from the Expert Panel. First, proposals will be selected independently by topic, following the ranking lists per topic, until the funds allocated per topic are spent. Thereafter, both, the remaining proposals and the remaining funds from all topics will be merged and treated as one single ranking list.

The Call Secretariat will send notification letters to all project coordinators to inform them of the result of the funding decision. Each National Contact Point will enter the contracting process directly with the national researchers of selected project consortia, but not before the notification letters have been sent.

ANNEX: FULL PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

The maximum amount of characters (chars) indicated for parts A to C below must not be exceeded. Character limits include spaces and punctuation. The following format must be used: Arial, 10 pt, single space, 2.5 cm left/right margins, 3.5 cm top margin, 2 cm bottom margin.

The proposal has to be in English, and the Part B form has to be submitted as an unprotected Adobe PDF file (within the pdf file: Edit / Properties / Security: Security Method: “No Security”).

The application form consists of three parts:

- (1) **Part A** is web-based and has to be filled in directly on the call submission website; data from the pre-proposal are stored in the system;
- (2) **Part B**, a project description form, submitted to the call submission website;
- (3) **Part C** is the financial plan to be filled in via the call submission website.

The data from Part A that have already been submitted with the pre-proposals were kept and will appear after log-in at the call submission website. These parts are listed in *Italics* below. The already submitted text can still be edited.

Part A: Predefined boxes on the call submission website

Proposal identification number

- A1. *Project title (max. 200 chars)*
- A2. *Project acronym (the pre-proposal acronym must not be changed)*
- A3. *Thematic research area: 1) Plant, 2) Feed, 3) Livestock, and 4) Food*
- A4. *Keywords (project specific - max. 100 chars)*
- A5. *Duration of the proposed research project (max. 36 months - a harmonization of start and end dates of the project consortium is required)*
- A6. *Contact details for each project partner*
- A7. *Description of all project partners, their role in the project and related ongoing projects:*
 - a) *The role of each project partner in the project (max. 1,500 chars)*
 - b) *A description of the partner (max. 1,500 chars)*
 - c) *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 (max. 1500 chars)
 - d) *A brief CV (max. 3,000 chars) containing at minimum: present employment, graduation including PhD, research experience; recent publications relevant to the topic experience in national and international projects*
- A8. *Any supplementary information relevant to the submission of the proposal (max. 1,500 chars)*

Part B: Template to be downloaded from the call submission website (> Call documents)

- B1 Project id-number_acronym
- B2 Project summary (max. 2,000 chars) suitable for web publishing (see also section 3.2).
- B3 Background and „State of the Art“ in the field (approx. 4,500 chars).
- B4 Description of the project: (max. 42,000 chars in total)
- a) Aim, objectives and hypotheses
 - b) Scientific description of methods & work plan, including work packages, description of deliverables, milestones and timetable (with responsible work package/partner and deliverables, optionally in a Gantt chart) Milestones are control points where decisions are taken with regard to the next stage of the project. For example, a milestone may be reached when a major result, which is the basis for the next project phase, has been achieved. Another example would be a point when the consortium must decide which of several technologies to adopt for further development.
 - c) Expected results and their impact/application
 - d) Description of novelty in methods or development opportunities
 - e) Justification of any planned research which is not allowed according to the current organic rules (if relevant)
 - f) Dissemination plan and/or exploitation of results across all participating countries. The dissemination plan should specify the planned national and international dissemination activities, and the plan should include at least 3 articles in English written for consumers / farmers / end users. Dissemination of project results is requested in the form of various communication routes. A collection of tools and methods for result dissemination used by earlier CORE Organic projects can be found at <http://www.coreorganic.org/> and <http://coreorganic2.org/> to inspire applicants in planning their project result dissemination for their proposal.
 - g) Description and definition of potential risk to the implementation and success of the project (e.g. in research methods, farm studies, stakeholders involvement), describing how the chances for success are maximised, and including a contingency plan.
- B5 Statement describing how the proposal fits the call topic (max. 3,000 chars) including identification of the added value/complementarity of the proposed research to previous or ongoing projects
- B6 Statement describing how/why the proposal has a clear added value of being carried out on a transnational basis (European added value, transnational impact of the proposed project, including added value for participating countries and cross border problems, description of the specific integration of participants in the transnational consortium structure), max. 2,000 chars
- B7 If applicable, statement describing training opportunities (description of training/exchange activities foreseen within the project, if applicable), max. 2,000 chars

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- B8 Statement describing the societal and ethical aspects that could cause societal or ethical concerns or contribute to progress in these areas (aspects of the project such as environmental, human or animal welfare, intellectual or cultural development), max. 2,000 chars
- B9 References used for the project description; please use a format containing the following information: Surname, A., Surname, B., Surname, C. (Year): Title of paper, Journal, Volume, Pages; max. 30 references
- B10 If applicable, statement describing amendments with regard to the pre-proposal.

Part C: Predefined boxes on the call submission website

- C1 Financial plan with research budget for each project partner plus the coordination budget (as requested in the pre-proposal), taking into account the conditions indicated in the invitation for the full proposal; each partner can contact the National Contact Point for specific questions on the eligibility costs and the correspondance between cost declared in the online form and national rules.
- C2 Comments to the requested resources (person months, salaries, consumables, equipment, subcontracting, travel, overhead and other additional costs to be specified), approx. 3,000 chars

Partners participating in kind must provide a written confirmation of the financial commitment (to be uploaded in the online tool)