

The G8 Research Councils Initiative on Multilateral Research Funding

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Principles of the G8 initiative



- G8 Research Councils have met annually since the 1980's to tackle common issues
- Reflection on a method of funding multilateral cooperation
- G8 Heads of Research Councils (HORCs) meeting in Kyoto, Japan, in May 2008: Proposal for a **multilateral funding activity**:
 - ✓ Multilateral research projects can address global challenges in ways that are beyond the capacity of national or bilateral activities.
 - ✓ The G8 HORCs framework provides the unique opportunity to pilot a new modality for conducting international research.
- Goals: supporting **excellent** and **interdisciplinary** research on topics of **global relevance** best tackled through a **multinational approach**.
- A 3-year pilot initiative: 3 calls for proposals with ~ **10 M€** for each call
- Participants: 7 **Funding Agencies**
 - ✓ 3 European: ANR (France), DFG (Germany), RCUK (UK)
 - ✓ + NSF (USA), NSERC (Canada), JSPS (Japan), RFBR (Russia)

Pilot phase: 3 calls planned

- 3 calls with research **topics defined separately** for each call
- Call 1: **Application Software towards Exascale Computing for Global Scale Issues** (2010)
 - ✓ 84 pre-proposals submitted (24 full proposals) / 6 projects funded
 - ✓ Mid-term review meeting in November 2012 during an ICT conference in the USA
- Call 2: **Material Efficiency – A first step towards sustainable manufacturing** (2011)
 - ✓ 83 pre-proposals submitted (27 Full proposals) / Evaluation ongoing
- Call 3: **Association with Belmont Forum on Conservation and security of freshwater & Vulnerability of coastal systems** (2012)
 - ✓ G8 participating agencies + SIRO (Australia), FAPESP (Brazil, Sao Paulo State), SSHRC (Canada), the Ministry of Earth science in India, NRF (South Africa), NERC and ESRC (UK)
 - ✓ Launched on April 16th, 2012
 - ✓ Budget: 20 M€

Objectives

- An unprecedented opportunity to **work together across a broad range of disciplines**
- Gaining experience in the funding of multilateral research in a **flexible manner** and eventually allow to make **long-term decisions on how to further promote multilateral research**, preferably bottom-up projects
- An **inter-agency cooperation**

Modalities

- **Common submission:**
 - ✓ A common call text with selection criteria predefined together
 - ✓ Two-stage submission process: pre-proposals and full proposals
- **A joint multinational peer review process:**
 - ✓ Panel of Experts (PoE):
 - At least 14 scientific experts and one Chair/Vice-Chair for both stages
 - Each agency suggests a maximum of 2 potential Chairs/Vice-chairs (from 3rd countries)
 - Each agency nominates 4 potential PoE members: selected by Chair/Vice-Chair, 2 from each country
 - ✓ Pre-proposals stage:
 - Each pre-proposal allocated to 3 PoE members (1 Lead Reviewer)
 - PoE recommends a pool of high quality applications invited to submit a FP
 - ✓ Full proposals stage:
 - According to the national affiliation of the lead PI, the respective agency serves as lead organisation in coordinating the external review of the FP
 - External reviewers selected by the Lead Partner organisation from nominations (own staff, staff from other partner organisations and from the members of PoE assigned)
 - FP reviewed by PoE based on selection criteria and external reviews

Modalities (2)

- **Selection:** ultimately made by the group of agencies, based on scientific ranking and geographical balance to maximize the participation of all agencies
- A rotating **joint call secretariat** to handle the submission and evaluation
- **Eligibility:**
 - ✓ Consortia consisting of partners from at least 3 of the participating countries
 - ✓ National eligibility rules
- **Funding:**
 - ✓ **Balanced funding:** contribution from each agency of 1.5 M€ for each call
 - ✓ 100k€ per partner per year for 2 or 3 years
 - ✓ Funding meant for **collaborative research**, not merely for networking, mobility or communication
 - ✓ National funding according to normal terms and conditions for national project funding
- **Grant administration:**
 - ✓ National funding agency rules
 - ✓ IP rights national requirements

Positive experiences

- **Call management**
- Joint **definition of evaluation process**
- Joint nomination of an **international evaluation panel**
- Common management of projects submission / evaluation / feedback to PIs
- The 1st time that funding agencies of the G8 have **worked together** in such a way
- Existing collaborations at European level (ERA-Nets, ESF, etc.) allowed **European agencies to propose a sustainable model** that could be adapted and accepted by the NSF and other agencies

Challenges and future

- Challenges
 - ✓ **Definition of topics:** few top-down agencies
 - ✓ **Budget:**
 - Proportionality: France, UK, RU, etc. individually provide same funding than the US
 - How to propose a more balanced model?
 - Scaling up?
- Future?
 - ✓ **Continuation** of pilot action? Same format?
 - ✓ **Topic definition?**
 - ✓ **Core** group? **Opening** to other countries? (Call 3 and Belmont Forum)

Thank you for your attention!

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