



E-Rare Call for Proposals 2009 for "European Research Projects on Rare Diseases"

Preliminary Announcement

The ERA-Net for research programmes on rare diseases (E-Rare) has been established to coordinate the research efforts of European countries in the field of rare diseases. Under the umbrella of E-Rare, the following partners – The National Research Agency (ANR), France; The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Germany; The Chief Scientist Office of the Ministry of Health (CSO/MOH), Israel; The Fund for Health Research of the Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII), Spain; The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK), Turkey – have decided to open the second joint call for funding multilateral research projects on rare diseases.

1. Aim of the call

The aim of the call is to enable scientists in different countries to build an effective collaboration on a common interdisciplinary research project based on complementarities and sharing of expertise, which takes into account the importance of a translational research approach and the need to strengthen the European Research Area (ERA). Projects shall involve a group of rare diseases or a single rare disease following the European definition i.e. a disease affecting not more than five in 10.000 persons in the European Community. Rare infectious diseases, rare cancers and rare adverse drug events are excluded from the topics of this call.

2. Topics of the call

Transnational research proposals must cover at least one of the following areas that are equal in relevance for this call:

a) Collaborative research using or constituting cohorts/case series of patients/families and corresponding collections of biological material that would generally not be possible at a national scale. This research must have clear potential for clinical application and well defined scientific objectives e.g.:

- Definition of new nosological entities, epidemiological studies, genotype/phenotype correlations.
- Characterisation of the genetic/molecular basis of specific diseases.

b) Basic research on rare diseases including genetic and pathophysiological studies, using innovative and shared resources, technologies and expertises. The clinical relevance of this research must be clearly demonstrated.

c) Research on diagnosis and therapies for rare diseases. This may include identification and characterisation of biological targets, development of innovative screening systems and diagnostic tools, generation of relevant cellular and/or animal models and preclinical studies on gene or cell therapies.

d) Patient oriented research in the area of social and human sciences - e.g. psychological, psychosocial and behavioural research – as well as health services research and health economy research in the field of rare disorders.

Interventional clinical trials are excluded from the scope of the call.

Transnational project proposals must clearly demonstrate the potential health impact and the added-value of transnational collaboration: gathering a critical mass of patients/biological material, sharing of resources (models, registries, diagnosis, etc.), harmonization of data, sharing of specific know-how and/or innovative technologies.

3. General conditions for application

Joint research proposals may be submitted by higher education institutions, non-university public research establishments, hospitals, patient organizations as well as commercial companies, in particular small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), according to relevant national funding agencies' regulations for research funding (please check with each national representative). Please note that the inclusion of a non-eligible partner in a proposal leads to the rejection of the entire proposal without further review. Only transnational projects will be funded. Each proposal must involve a minimum of two research groups from two different participating partner countries, but must not have more than six research groups overall.

4. Timetable

The call is scheduled to open on the **3rd December 2008**. The deadline for submitting the proposals is scheduled for **5th February 2009**. An independent international Scientific Evaluation Committee will carry out a scientific evaluation according to specific evaluation criteria and suitable international scientific expertises. Based on this central evaluation, final funding decisions will be made by the national funding agencies. The funding decisions are expected to be communicated to the project coordinators in November 2009.

5. How to obtain further information

Further information can be obtained by contacting the Call Secretariat (**e-rare@DLR.de** or **+49 228 3821 775 / 233**) or by contacting the national contact person for inquiries listed below and on the E-Rare web site: **www.e-rare.eu**

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The content of the call described in this pre-announcement may be subject to changes and is not legally binding to the funding agencies.