



*SUSFOOD - An FP7 ERA-NET on Sustainable Food Production and Consumption*

# Guidelines for applicants for the 1<sup>st</sup> Transnational Call for Proposals (pre-proposal phase)

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*Closing date for pre-proposals: 03 May 2013, 3.00 p.m. CET*

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## 1. Background of the Call

SUSFOOD is the acronym for “SUStainable FOOD production and consumption”.

The European transnational research cooperation project consists of a network of 25 partners from 16 European countries.

As an ERA-Net, SUSFOOD intends to increase collaboration and coordination between national research activities on sustainable food production and consumption.

The strategic goal of SUSFOOD is to reinforce the scientific cooperation between EU members and associated states in order to maximize the contribution of research to the development of more sustainable food systems from production to consumption.

The scope of SUSFOOD includes the entire food supply chain with main focus on food chain sustainability beyond the farm gate. The farm level will just be considered if it has direct impact on the sustainability of the other chain steps.

SUSFOOD promotes a multi-disciplinary approach from biology to food engineering and social sciences and tends towards the following socio-economic and environmental goals:

- To develop sustainable food systems from production to consumption, to increase food production sustainability while reducing waste in food supply chain and limiting environmental impacts ;
- To improve the quality of life by improving food quality in a sustainable way and to ensure the resilience of the food supply chain;
- To encourage sustainable consumer behaviours and food choices;
- To improve competitiveness and economic growth in the European food industry with special attention to SMEs.

The ERA-Net SUSFOOD is launching a first transnational joint Call for project proposals based on funds from participating countries.

The call is divided into two sections:

### 1) Section “Research”:

Project consortia are expected to be formed by research organisations

### 2) Section “Research and Innovation”:

Project consortia are expected to be formed by research organisations and industry (enterprises)

Respecting the topics of the call, the projects may be furthermore considered in the context of the following **cross-cutting issues**:

- a) A whole food systems approach (system governance)
- b) Equity and ethics in food production and consumption and access for consumers to a variety of food products

- c) Localisation of activities and internalizing external costs of food to optimize environmental, health and social impact and economic efficiency
- d) Role of knowledge exchange, translation of research into use; information management and sharing ; the need for harmonised EU databases, accessibility by SMEs to new innovation and solutions
- a) Integral role of food safety

## 2. Thematic call topics – Call text

Research project consortia should apply to one of the three thematic call topics (see a detailed description of the topics in the Call Announcement):

- Improving input, waste and side flow strategies to increase resource efficiency and provide added value in food products and food processing, manufacture, reducing input (energy, water etc.) in the food chain
- Innovation in food processing technologies and food products to support a sustainable food chain
- Understanding consumer behaviour to encourage a (more) sustainable food choice

The pre-proposals should be structured around one of these topics. An overview of the funding commitment can be found in the Call Announcement.

## 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 partner funds its national researchers in the transnational project consortium.

The national eligibility criteria for research institutions and industry differ from country to country. Applicants have to consider the National Regulations published on the SUSFOOD website <http://www.susfood-era.net/index.php?index=16>.

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

Applicants from countries which are not funding partners in SUSFOOD 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. They are not taken into account

in the minimum requirement of eligible partners and countries in the SUSFOOD eligibility criteria.

## 4. Timeline

The Call involves a 2-phase procedure with submission and selection of pre-proposals and, subsequently, invitation of shortlisted consortia to submit full proposals. The respective time schedule in the table below.

**Table 1. Timeline of the Call**

Event	Date
Open Call for pre-proposals	15/02/2013
Closing date for pre-proposals	03/05/2013 – 3 p.m. CET
Evaluation/Selection (internal review)	04/06/2013
Selection Meeting	12/06/2013
Invitation for submission of full proposals	15/07/2013
Closing date for full proposals	01/10/2013 – 3 p.m. CET
Evaluation/Selection (peer review)	08/12/2013
Selection Meeting	Mid December
Negotiation and start of the projects	February-June 2014

## 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 SUSFOOD Governing Board for all general matters in relation to the call.

### SUSFOOD Call Secretariat:

**Germany; Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE)**

**Annika Fuchs**

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Questions concerning the **submission tool**:

**Germany; Forschungszentrum Juelich GmbH (Juelich)**

**Veronika Deppe**

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The National Contacts are supporting the Call Secretariat and should be contacted for all matters regarding national regulations and funding. Please see an overview of the National Contacts in the Call Announcement.

## 6. Submission of pre-proposals

The Call Announcement including this guidance is available at the SUSFOOD website: <http://www.susfood-era.net/index.php?index=16>. The pre-proposal application has to be filled in and submitted via the Call Submission website <http://www.susfood-era.net/submission/>. Please follow the instructions on the website to submit your project pre-proposal. The application should be submitted by the project coordinator on behalf of the project consortium (see below).

Pre-proposals must be submitted by 03 May 2013, 15.00 CET.

If any questions concerning the Call Submission website occur please contact [Veronika Deppe](#).

### 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 SUSFOOD 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 SUSFOOD 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 SUSFOOD consortium about any event that might affect the implementation of the project.

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

## 7. Pre-proposal application

Detailed information about the application and requested information are available at the SUSFOOD Website <http://www.susfood-era.net/index.php?index=16>.

## 8. Eligibility for Funding

The pre-proposal should meet the following eligibility criteria:

### 8.1 Formal SUSFOOD Eligibility Criteria

Each project pre-proposal has to:

- Consist of a transnational consortium of at least three independent eligible legal entities from at the minimum three of those SUSFOOD countries, who provide funding for the 1<sup>st</sup> Call (q.v. Call Announcement). Applicants from countries which are not funding partners in SUSFOOD 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. They are not taken into account in the minimum requirement of eligible partners and countries in the SUSFOOD eligibility criteria,
- Be written in English,
- Fulfil the formal requirements for pre-proposal submission,
- Be submitted correctly and completely via the Call website <http://www.susfood-era.net/index.php?index=16> before the Call deadline (03 May 2013, 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 partner.

### 8.2 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 criteria published in the national regulations (see SUSFOOD website <http://www.susfood-era.net/index.php?index=16>). In case of uncertainties regarding the national criteria and regulations, please contact your National Contact.

All pre-proposals submitted will be treated strictly confidential by the SUSFOOD consortium. In the selection process at the pre-proposal stage the transnational research proposals which are eligible in terms of the formal and national

eligibility criteria (8.1/8.2) will be identified. Meeting these criteria is mandatory and pre-proposals that do not meet them will not be considered for funding.

### 8.3 Content Evaluation Criteria

Further, the pre-proposals will be assessed according to the following (equally weighted) content 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 food sector to be overcome/supported by the project),
- Quality of project 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 project consortium and geographical coverage of the partnerships compared with the topic),
- Management and budget (Adequacy of the budget in regard to the work plan).

Project Consortia 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

Information about the submission process and evaluation criteria of full proposals will be available and published on the SUSFOOD website <http://www.susfood-era.net/submission/> at the same time as the invitations for full proposals will be sent out.

### 9.2 Contract Conditions

#### Terms of participation

The national funding of the SUSFOOD Calls is offered under the coordination of the FP7 ERA-NET SUSFOOD. Partners of the research project consortium are



required to recognize the coordinating role of SUSFOOD 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.

### **Contractual Relationships**

SUSFOOD is a collaboration between national funding partners with the aim of establishing transnational research collaboration. The contracts with researchers and industries are in the responsibility of the national funding partners as well as the funding procedures.

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

### **Funding Contracts**

For the whole duration of the contract it is the responsibility of the Project Coordinator to inform the SUSFOOD consortium and the national contacts about any changes of the project, i.e. modifications of the work plan, the project consortium or the contract.

Any financial issue is under the responsibility of each national funding partner 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 SUSFOOD 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 SUSFOOD consortium.

## **9.3 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) (see below) 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 partners 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.

#### 9.4 Intellectual Property Rights, use and access to results

Results and new Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) resulting from projects funded through the SUSFOOD Call will be owned by the project partners according to the conditions stated in their consortium agreement. At the project level IPR will be considered according to national rules. Applicants should consult the individual funding agency, should any queries arise.

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 to public benefit to be obtained from the knowledge created.

#### Ethics

Work involving the use of animals or humans should be carried out under the appropriate authorization 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. Judgment of the significance of ethical issues will be made by using the criteria published by the Commission in its guidelines for the 7th Framework Programme ([http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics\\_en.html#ethics\\_sd](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html#ethics_sd)).

#### 9.5 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 according to the national procedures.

#### 9.6 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.

Further, the project partners have to acknowledge the transnational funding of the SUSFOOD ERA-Net and the individual national funding partners in any document that is published (in written, oral or electronic form) within the research project.