

Research and Technology Development in Transnational Projects

Guide for Proposers 2009, 2nd Call

Submission deadlines:

<u>1st stage</u> - Deadline for Pre-proposals	06 May 2009, 12:00 noon
<u>2nd stage</u> - Deadline for Full Proposals	10 July 2009, 12:00 noon

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Attention eCall!
Proposal submission electronically only, via
<https://ecall.ffg.at/> !

Download area: <http://www.nanoinitiative.at/transnational>

Programme Management: Austrian Research Promotion Agency, FFG

Programme Owner: Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology, BMVIT

Austrian NANO Initiative

Guide for Proposers for 2nd Call 2009 "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects", page 1 of 46

Thank you for your interest in the 2009 Call.

This Guide for Proposers contains information concerning the 2nd Call within the framework of the Programme Action Line "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects".

The following organisations have kindly contributed to this document in the context of the Austrian NANO Steering Committee meetings:

- o Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT)
- o Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BWF)
- o Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth
- o Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)
- o Austrian Science Fund (FWF)
- o Austria Business Service (aws)
- o Office of the Austrian Council for Research and Technology Development
- o the Federal provinces of Styria, Tyrol, Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Carinthia, Vorarlberg, Salzburg, and Vienna

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1 MOST IMPORTANT FACTS

The Austrian NANO Initiative was set up in 2004 as a multi-annual funding programme. Its objectives from 2009 onward are the following: Broadening the cooperation basis between science and industry; strengthening the research competence in fields of application relevant to industry; accelerating technology transfer and increasing the economic utilisation of nanotechnology; as well as improving access to know-how and to cooperation partners abroad.

The Call on hand under the programme action line "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects" provides a framework for cooperation projects between innovative Austrian enterprises and international partners. Furthermore, the possibility for Austrian partners to participate in the MNT ERA-Net Call 2009 is ensured. Thus both internationalisation and competitiveness are strengthened by exchanging know-how and building up the competence of the Austrian players. Proposals from all fields of nanosciences and nanotechnologies can be submitted, but there may be a thematic restriction in case a project is embedded in a European Research Area Network (ERA-NET), or the MNT ERA-NET respectively.

This 2nd Call 2009 has a total budget of euro 1 million and is open to all kinds of Transnational Projects fulfilling the requirements of the present Call.

The most important key points are the following:

- The projects are always cooperative activities in which at **least one Austrian enterprise cooperates with at least one partner from abroad**. None of the partners bears more than 70% of the project costs.
- Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects in **Industrial Research** (*Industrielle Forschung*): The maximum funding rate amounts to 80%. Research institutions carry a minimum of 30% and a maximum of 80% of the total project costs.
Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects in **Experimental Development** (*Experimentelle Entwicklung*): The maximum funding rate amounts to 60%.
- Foreign partners carry a minimum of 10% of the total project costs.
- The call allows independent organisations only to act as partners at the submission and contract stage. The organisation is the contracting party. For universities, §27 Type Projects apply only.
- The framework conditions for funding Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects are laid down in the "Directives on Funding Business-Oriented Technical Research and Technology Development" (RTD Directives, for short).
- The Call for this programme action line is organised along the principle of a two-step open call with defined submission deadlines. These deadlines apply to all Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects and to MNT ERA-Net Projects:

Pre-proposal deadline: 6 May 2009, 12:00 noon

Full Proposal deadline: 10 July 2009, 12:00 noon

- The **Pre-proposal and the Full Proposal** have to be submitted online by means of the FFG's **eCall** - the electronic submission system for project applications (see chapter 4.1.2). Pre-proposals and Full Proposals for MNT ERA-Net have to be submitted online in addition, if applicable.
- In addition, when submitting the Full Proposal, the original signed print view of the eCall document has to be sent to the FFG in a sealed envelope.
- The Call closes on: 10 July 2009, 12:00 noon.
- The obligatory Pre-proposal facilitates the identification of expert evaluators and an eligibility check. Proposers are invited to submit a Full Proposal after a positive eligibility check of their Pre-proposal.
- On the basis of the expert opinions, the Management Team of the NANO Initiative makes a funding recommendation to the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology, BMVIT. Responsibility for the funding decision lies with the ministry.
- For a list of relevant documents for all types of Transnational Projects see chapter 4.1.1.

2 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES and CONTENT of the CALL

2.1 Background

Nanosciences and nanotechnologies are regarded as being among the key technologies of the 21st century. They constitute a new field for science, research and development, with an enormous potential for technological progress, as well as for opening up new markets and increasing turnover. This can also be seen from the increase in research expenditure worldwide: In 1998, governments all over the world spent around 600 million dollars on research and development in nanotechnologies; in 2002, this expenditure already amounted to 2.1 billion dollars, and in 2006, investments of nearly 6 billion dollars were expected. Europe is spending similarly large amounts as the US and Japan in this context (TA-SWISS 2006¹).

In order to promote nanosciences and nanotechnologies in Austria specifically, the Austrian Council for Research and Technology Development (RFTE) recommended setting up an Austrian NANO Initiative as early as in 2002, guided amongst other things by the international development. In 2004, this initiative was established as a multi-annual funding programme – aiming at increased networking, creating critical masses, making nanosciences and nanotechnologies utilisable for the economy and for society, and providing sufficient quantities of qualified technical staff. Following the new strategic goals from 2009 onward, the NANO Initiative aims at broadening the cooperation basis between science and industry, at strengthening the research competence in fields of application relevant to Austrian enterprises, and at accelerating technology transfer and increasing the economic utilisation of nanotechnology. It also aims at improving access to know-how and to cooperation partners abroad.

Nanosciences and nanotechnologies are generic and therefore cover many different scientific disciplines and fields of research. The Austrian NANO Initiative as a thematic programme uses the strength of this variety, and by intensive networking of science and industry facilitates the development of highly innovative state-of-the-art products with new physical or chemical properties.

The Austrian NANO Initiative makes it possible to build up NANO competence in Austria in a targeted and strategic manner by funding research and development projects; in addition, it sets new highlights through emphasis on education and training measures, as well as through targeted funding of small and medium-sized enterprises.

The programme action line "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects" provides a framework for cooperation projects between innovative Austrian enterprises, research organisations and international partners. This programme action line also ensures the possibility for Austrian partners to participate in the MNT ERA-Net Call 2009.

¹ TA-SWISS (2006): Nano! Nanu? publifocus «Nanotechnologien und ihre Bedeutung für Gesundheit und Umwelt, Bern (Nano! What's this? publifocus Nanotechnologies and their Importance for Health and Environment, Berne).

2.2 Strategic Objectives of the Austrian NANO Initiative

The NANO Initiative stands for a series of promising future technologies with enormous development and application potential in many sectors of the economy and areas of life. For Austrian research and the Austrian economy, NANO constitutes a focus of strategic importance.

With its structural programme action lines, the NANO Initiative pursues the following objectives.

Programme Objectives
Broadening the cooperation basis between science and industry
Strengthening research competence in fields of application relevant to Austrian enterprises
Accelerating technology transfer and increasing the economic utilisation of nanotechnology
Improving access to know-how and to cooperation partners abroad
Decreasing insecurities and information deficits with regard to health risks and environmental risks
Establishing nanotechnology in the context of public perception of Austria as a research location, of science communication and of promoting young researchers

2.3 Objectives of the Programme Action Line “Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects”

The programme action line "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects" is consistent with the overall objectives of the NANO Initiative. It strengthens internationalisation and competitiveness through exchange of know-how, and builds up the competence of the Austrian players. In particular, the following objectives are pursued.

Broadening the cooperation basis between science and industry
Strengthening research competence in fields of application relevant to Austrian enterprises
Accelerating technology transfer and the economic utilisation of nanotechnology
Improving access to know-how and to cooperation partners abroad

2.4 Subject of the Call

2.4.1 Applicable Definition of NANO

The Austrian NANO Initiative is based on the following **understanding**:

The **NANO** concept comprises both the nanoscale sciences and the nanotechnologies resulting from them. NANO concerns itself mainly with systems whose new functions and qualities are causally connected with the nanoscale effects of their components. The

characteristic scales of these components lie **between some 0.1 nm and a few 100 nm**, with delimitations being mostly blurred and topic-related. The definition of the nanometre as the selection criterion for NANO projects often gives rise to discussions. A comprehensive explanation is also available in the following Info Box.

NANO is a collective term used for research and work on structures at a scale of several 0.1 nm to several 100 nm. One nanometre corresponds to 10^{-9} metres. By manipulating matter and processes at this scale, specific chemical, biological, electrical, mechanical or optical properties of these materials and systems are created, which enable novel applications in the macroscopic world. Many special fields concern themselves with NANO, above all: biology, biotechnology, chemistry, electronics, energy technology, engineering, material sciences, modelling, medicine, micro-technology, optics and physics.

Interdisciplinary cooperation between these fields is a fundamental challenge. It is therefore all the more important to build up responsible accompanying research on the "Opportunities, Risks, Regulations, Governance and the Public" complex of issues,² which is additionally supported by the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology within the framework of the NANO Initiative, and beyond that in consultation with regional activities.

2.4.2. Subject Area of the Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects

Within the framework of the transnational programme action line, the Austrian NANO Initiative funds innovative high-technology and application-oriented research.

Under this call, proposals from all fields of nanosciences and nanotechnologies can be submitted. A thematic restriction could occur in case the project is embedded in a European Research Area Network (ERA-NET), due to the specific conditions of an ERA-NET.

A Transnational Project supported under this programme action line is therefore either integrated into a European Research Area Network (ERA-NET) or it is a transnational project without being specifically embedded in an ERA-NET, see Figure 1, below.

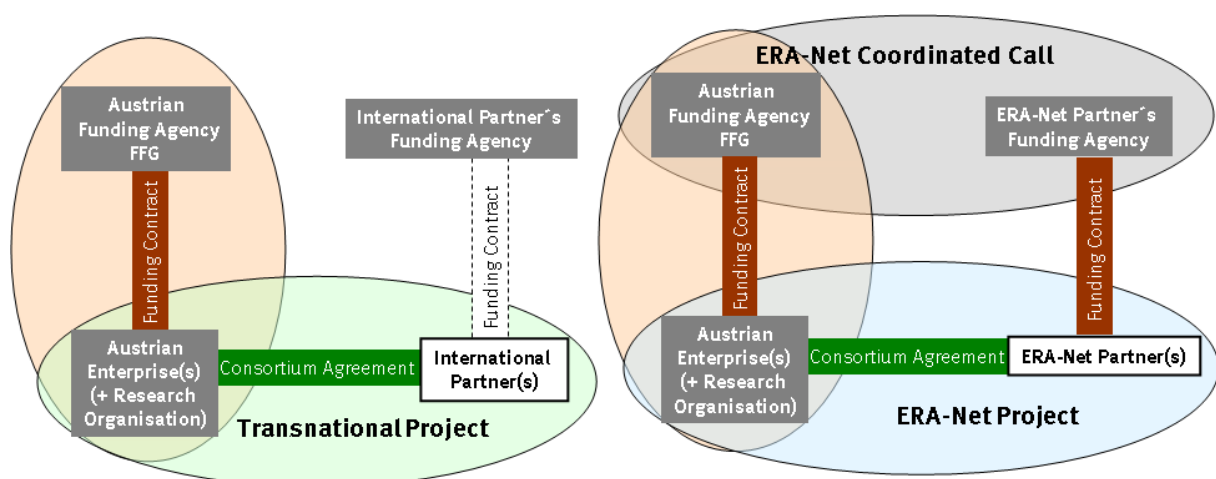


Figure 1: left: Transnational Project outside ERA-NET; right: Transnational Project within ERA-Net

² ITA (2006): Nanotechnologie-Begleitmaßnahmen: Stand und Implikationen für Österreich, im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Verkehr, Innovation und Technologie, Wien (Nanotechnology – Accompanying Measures: Status and Implications for Austria, published on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology).

Due to the cooperation and the coordinated procedure of the funding agencies, integrating a project into an ERA-NET has certain advantages. The Austrian NANO Initiative, for instance, supports project ideas within the MNT ERA-Net Call 2009 (From Micro- and Nanoscale Science to New Technologies for Europe) only.

An ERA-NET project has to fulfil both the conditions of the respective ERA-NET and the national conditions described in detail below.

A project outside an ERA-NET bears the risk that the procedures of the funding agencies are not coordinated. In this case each project partner is called upon to inform himself / herself about the framework conditions that apply. In any case, it is a precondition for national funding that the international partner receives funding from this partner's funding agency. In exceptional cases, 100% financing from the international partner's own resources are also accepted. In such a case, however, the FFG has to be given the possibility to check the quality of the cooperation by means of the interim reports and the final reports of the Austrian partner.

The 2nd Call 2009 is open to all kinds of Transnational Projects fulfilling the requirements of the present Call.

Transnational Project within the MNT ERA-Net Call 2009:

An ERA-NET is a network of regional and / or national funding programmes with the aim to reduce fragmentation of R&D funding in Europe. ERA-NETs make these funding programmes accessible to transnational consortia and open calls for proposals for transnational R&D projects in the relevant scientific and technological area of the specific ERA-NET.

It is the goal of MNT ERA-Net to make national support programmes in Micro and Nano Technologies (MNT) accessible to transnational consortia. The Call will focus on proposals for R&D projects that can be commercialised, and 24 funding organisations from 20 countries will participate in this joint effort. As a minimum requirement, project consortia consisting of at least two parties from two different participating countries/regions will be invited. Proposals with partners from more than two countries will be strongly encouraged.

For the MNT ERA-Net Consortium, the Project Coordinator can be from one of the eligible countries. In this case, the national Austrian consortium (more than one Austrian partner) is asked to define a national consortium leader in addition.

The MNT ERA-Net Consortium must demonstrate how to commercialise the expected results.

In this MNT Transnational Call 2009, particular emphasis is put on the following applications:

- **Energy efficiency: buildings, photovoltaics, low-power LEDs**
- **Processing of materials: surface functionalisation, surface structuring**
- **Photonics and electronics: optical devices, MEMS and NEMS, sensors**
- **Medical devices: lab-on-chip, DNA and protein-chip, drug delivery, molecular markers**

The added value of the projects with regard to the transnational cooperation and the benefits for each partner from transnational cooperation has to be described. The complementarity of the partners is a prerequisite.

Projects with a duration of up to three years will be considered.

IMPORTANT:

The funding rules of the Austrian NANO Initiative apply. Therefore only projects in the field of NANO can be submitted.

Furthermore the NANO Initiative funds projects with high risk (see also chapter 3.3).

In addition, safety and risk aspects have to be taken into consideration (for more information see Annex)

It is important that these national priorities are understood by applicants. Please do not hesitate to contact the Programme Management of the Austrian NANO Initiative for support.

Projects which do not fulfil the NANO Initiative's requirements can also be submitted under the FFG's General Programmes which also take part in the MNT Call 2009.

3 ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION ON THE CALL and LEGAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Eligible Participants and Target Groups

The NANO Initiative addresses all Austrian NANO players from industry, universities, universities of applied sciences and non-university research organisations which carry out cooperative research and technology development in the field of nanosciences and nanotechnologies.

The Fact Box below provides comprehensive information on the eligible participants and their national legal designation, and is therefore in German only.

Fact Box

Folgende Juristische Personen und Personengesellschaften sind im Rahmen der vorliegenden Ausschreibung antrags- und förderberechtigt.

Mögliche FördernehmerInnen sind (in Übereinstimmung mit der FTE-Richtlinie¹):

- Juristische Personen
 - Vereine
 - Kapitalgesellschaften (wie GmbH, AG)
 - Universitäten gemäß § 6 Universitätsorganisationsgesetz 2002; (Ad personam Einreichungen und Förderungen gemäß § 26 UOG sind dabei nicht zulässig)
 - Fachhochschulen
 - Öffentliche Bedarfsträger und Gebietskörperschaften
- Personengesellschaften des bürgerlichen Rechts und des Unternehmensrechts (UGB) wie insbesondere:
 - Gesellschaften bürgerlichen Rechts (GesbR);
 - offene Gesellschaften (OG);
 - Kommanditgesellschaften (KG);

mit Unternehmens- oder Forschungsstandort in Österreich sowie

- Einzelpersonen (nur im Rahmen der Konzeptinitiative).

Konsortien haben vor Unterzeichnung des Förderübereinkommens einen unterzeichneten Konsortialvertrag vorzuweisen, durch den sichergestellt wird, dass im Sinne von Absatz 3.2.2 des EU-Gemeinschaftsrahmens keine mittelbare staatliche Beihilfe über die Forschungseinrichtung vorliegt.

Von der Einreichung von Forschungsvorhaben ausgeschlossen sind Personen und Institutionen (Abteilungen bzw. Bereiche von Unternehmen), die mit der Abwicklung des Programms betraut sind.

The consortium of a Transnational Project has to include **at least one Austrian enterprise**. Furthermore, participation of at least one cooperation partner from abroad is a fundamental condition under this programme action line.

IMPORTANT:

For a transnational project submitted within the framework of an ERA-NET, the minimum requirements of the partner countries have to be taken into consideration.

This might concern the required minimum number of project partners, or the structure of the partner organisations (companies and RTD organisations), or the balance of the cost structure between the partners.

In case a partner drops out after the funding commitment has been received, or after the project has started, the consortium has to prove that the competences required for carrying out the project are sufficiently covered by the remaining partners; otherwise a new adequate partner has to be integrated into the consortium. In any case, any change in the partner structure has to be approved in advance by the FFG.

If the national consortium consists of several Austrian partners, a national consortium leader always has to be designated as responsible for the project. The national leadership can be taken over by a research institution or by an enterprise.

Beyond the designated national consortium leader, who acts as a contact person and contractor vis-à-vis the FFG, the international consortium defines a coordinator of the project as a whole. This international project coordinator does not have to be from an Austrian organisation.

3.2 Budget

The programme action line has a total budget of euro 1,000,000 for this Second Call 2009.

3.3 Funding of Individual Types of Projects

The Call for Proposals looks for cooperative projects of high (technical) quality of significant size in Industrial Research or Experimental Development. The Austrian project part has to be driven by industry; thus the minimum requirement is one Austrian enterprise within such a Transnational Project. The project, if technically successful, should result in a technology with exploitation potential within about 3 to 5 years from completion of the work.

The subsidies provided by the Austrian NANO Initiative are not intended to give incremental support to on-going work programmes in the institution submitting the proposal.

Furthermore, the subsidies are not intended to support non-risk or very low-risk technical projects. For these projects, funding should be more appropriately sought from another source (e.g. FFG BP - General Programmes).

The NANO Initiative supports collaborations in which the experience and expertise of two or more institutions will bring significant added value through obtaining an output from the project that would not otherwise be possible. The partners should see a long-term added value in their cooperation.

The projects may come from any thematic field of nanoscience and nanotechnology, as long as there are no restraining conditions of an ERA-NET that apply.

The strategic orientation of project proposals eligible for funding has to reflect the objectives of the Austrian NANO Initiative and of the programme action line. Only project proposals which demonstrably correspond to the criteria listed in chapter 2 are eligible for funding. The requirements refer to projects which

- lead to substantial technology and know-how;

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- are a substantial strategic step towards improving competitiveness and positioning on the market;
- have a medium term orientation;
- have a positive effect on the further activities of the project partners and the consortium.

The maximum duration of the projects is 36 months.

Funding Rates and Amount of Funding

The maximum funding rate is based on the requirements of the RTD Directive for different constellations of funding applicants (small, medium-sized, large enterprises or research institutions respectively).

Funding Category	Small Enterprises (Kleine Unternehmen)	Medium-sized Enterprises (Mittlere Unternehmen)	Large Enterprises (Große Unternehmen)	Research Organisations (Forschungseinrichtungen)
Industrial Research (Industrielle Forschung)	80 %	75 %	65 %	80%
Experimental Development (Experimentelle Entwicklung)	60 %	50 %	40 %	60%

With regard to the size of an enterprise, the SME definition according to EU competition law applies as amended respectively (from 1 Jan. 2005: SME definition according to Recommendation 2003/361/EC of the Commission of 6 May 2003, (OJ L 124 of 20 May 2003, pp 36-41), see:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/index_en.htm).

A prerequisite for receiving national funding is that the international partner receives funds from the funding institution in the partner's own country. In exceptional cases, 100% financing from the partner's own resources is also accepted. This financing of the foreign partner has to be described in the proposal and in the Consortium Agreement supported by all partners (also the international partners). A possibility for checking the quality of the cooperation has to be provided. Partners from abroad do not receive any funding from the Austrian NANO Initiative.

The funding is allocated to the project partners according to the proportionate project costs and the maximum aid intensity of the respective organisation category.

The remaining financing has to be clearly described in the financing plan of the project proposal (see Form B). The remaining financing contribution can be made in the form of cash funds and in kind by the project partners.

The following fact boxes provide comprehensive legal information on the project types and the funding category.

Industrial Research

In case of developments with a strong basic-research orientation and a high development risk, there is the possibility of granting funding for a maximum of 65% to 80% of the eligible project costs under the funding type "Industrial Research Projects".

Industrial research: systematic research or critical investigation in order to gain new insights or skills, with the objective of developing new products, processes or services, or of being able to use them for implementing considerable improvements in existing products, processes or services. Creating parts of complex systems that are necessary for industrial research, and in particular for the validation of technological foundations, also falls under this category, with the exception of prototypes, which would fall under the "Experimental Development" research category.

"Industrial Research" differs from "Experimental Development" also with regard to:

- its particularly high innovation content
- its increased development risk
- its basic research character
- its remoteness from the market.

These projects are funded with a maximum of **65 - 80 % of the eligible project costs**.

Conditions:

- Cooperation between enterprises and research institutions (cooperative projects, minimum of 2 partners).
- None of the partners bears more than 70% of the project costs.
- Research institutions carry a minimum of 30% and a maximum of 80% of the project costs.
- Foreign partners carry a minimum of 10% of the project costs.
- Cooperative project: Only the cooperation of independent enterprises³ is classified as cooperation.
- The funding rate for research institutions is oriented on the composition of the industrial partners (or their small enterprise / medium-sized enterprise status respectively).

Basic rule: The funding rate for research organisations corresponds to the average weighted over the proportionate project costs of the funding rates of the industrial partners.

Exceptions for research organisations:

- If a minimum of 50% of the number of industrial partners are small enterprises → funding rate 80%
- If a minimum of 50% of the number of industrial partners are medium-sized enterprises or small enterprises → funding rate min. 75%

³ With regard to the size of the enterprise, the respective SME definition according to EU competition law applies as amended (definition of small and medium-sized enterprises according to Recommendation 2003/361/EC of the Austrian NANO Initiative

Experimental Development

The project type “**Experimental Development**“ aims at **the development of technologies and components for a concrete application**, or the **testing of developments during a pilot phase** respectively.

From a technological point of view, this development has a novelty aspect and is connected with challenges (development risk). As a rule, this development leads up to a fully functional prototype.

Experimental Development: acquiring, combining, creating and using existing scientific, technical, economic or other pertinent knowledge and skills for drawing up plans and provisions or concepts for new, modified or improved products, processes or services. Amongst others, Experimental Development also comprises other activities for defining, planning and documenting new products, processes and services, as well as making drafts, drawings, plans and preparing other documentation material, insofar as they are not intended for commercial use.

The experimental production and testing of products, processes and services are also eligible for funding, insofar as they are not used in industrial applications or commercially, or could be modified to be used for such purposes.

These projects are funded with a maximum of **40 - 60 % of the eligible project costs**.

Conditions:

- Cooperation between enterprises, or between enterprises and research organisations (cooperative projects, minimum of 2 partners).
- None of the partners bears more than 70% of the project costs.
- Foreign partners carry a minimum of 10% of the project costs.
- Cooperative project: Only the cooperation between independent enterprises⁴ is classified as cooperation.
- The funding rate for research institutions is oriented on the composition of the industrial partners (or their small enterprise / medium-sized enterprise status respectively).
- Basic rule: The funding rate for research organisations corresponds to the average weighted over the proportionate project costs of the funding rates of the industrial partners.
- Exceptions for research organisations:
 - If a minimum of 50% of the number of the industrial partners are small enterprises → funding rate 60%
 - If a minimum of 50% of the number of the industrial partners are medium-sized enterprises or small enterprises → funding rate min. 50%

3.4 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are costs which are necessary for carrying out the approved project proposed, insofar as their amount is appropriate. In addition, all expenses or costs attributable to the project which are incurred directly, actually and in addition (to the established operating expenses) for the duration of the funded research activity, are eligible costs.

- **Personnel costs:** Personnel costs of research staff members of the project (i.e. staff of the consortium partners; gross wage costs including ancillary wage costs). The personnel costs are eligible for funding up to the guiding rate defined respectively under subparagraph 8 of the *“Verordnung des Bundesministers für Finanzen betreffend Richtlinien für die Ermittlung und Darstellung der finanziellen Auswirkungen neuer rechtssetzender Maßnahmen”* (Decree of the Federal Minister of Finance Concerning Guidelines for Determining and Describing the Financial Effects of New Legislative Measures, Federal Law Gazette II no. 50/1999, Annex 3, as amended).⁵ Examples of the maximum salary schemes are listed in the Annex. These guiding rates also have to be applied to managing directors and sole traders working in the project (see Annex).
- **Costs of Hardware and Equipment (RTD Investments),** in so far as they are explicitly required for the project proposed. Their use / depreciation can be funded for the part which is exclusively and constantly used for the research activity.
- **Other Costs (Material Costs, Travel Costs):** Consumables for R&D activities, travel costs, purchase of literature etc. which are incurred in direct connection with the research activity.
- Consultancy costs and costs of similar services which are exclusively dedicated to the research activity (**services rendered by third parties**), including externally procured research, technical know-how, drawing-up of patents, etc. In principle, costs of services rendered by third parties (contracts for services) within the framework of projects must not exceed 20% of the total costs. Consortium partners must not act as partners in contracts for services at the same time. In well-justified exceptional cases, higher

(definition of small and medium-sized enterprises according to Recommendation 2003/361/EC of the Commission of 6 May 2003 (OJ L 124 of 20.5.2003, pp 36-41) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/index_en.htm

⁵ Acting partners/Shareholders and managing directors working in the project are to be accounted for under the overheads in principle. For small enterprises (threshold values according to EU definition: max. 50 employees, turnover and annual balance max. EUR 10 million respectively) there is the possibility of accounting for the acting partners/shareholders and managing directors at an hourly rate of EUR 30.-/h. When using this possibility of a detailed statement of account, a maximum of EUR 50,000.- per person per year can be claimed. Minority acting partners/shareholders (max. 25% share) are exempted from this rule, if they are not managing directors at the same time. They are to be treated like employees and can be accounted for at the actual rate. The upper limit is the actual hourly rate of the most expensive staff member with a corresponding qualification.

percentages of services rendered by third parties are possible, provided the predominant share of the work within the project is carried out by the project partners in any case.

- Overhead costs arising directly through the research activity (overheads): In principle, overheads are eligible up to a rate of 20% of the total personnel costs. Overhead costs comprise amongst others costs for office rental, office equipment and supplies and secretarial support. Higher rates of overheads can be accounted for by providing corresponding pertinent evidence; which overheads are eligible in this context can be seen from the FFG's (Research Promotion Agency's) auditing standards (see Annex). For universities, overhead rates are eligible up to a rate of 20% only.

Non-eligible costs:

- Costs that are not directly connected with the funded project
- Costs of projects that are not carried out in Austria
- Costs that are not considered as eligible costs due to EU competition law regulations.

Recognition of Costs

Only eligible costs which have arisen after the funding application was received by the FFG can be recognised for funding.

3.5 IPR - Exploitation

The intellectual property rights of the project results are owned by the consortium submitting the proposal.

In case a funding commitment is given, a Consortium Agreement with the authorised signatures of all partners participating in the Transnational Project has to be submitted, which regulates the cooperation, and in particular also the intellectual property rights (IPR) in the funded project results.

In case enterprises and research institutions (universities, non-university research institutions, ...) cooperate, the intellectual property rights are owned by all project partners in principle; this means that the research institutions also have a claim to the intellectual property rights (use, licence fees, ...).

In case the industrial partners exploit the results commercially on their own, the enterprises have to pay a consideration customary in this particular market, in terms of an award to inventors, to the research institutions. In any case, a research institution has to be granted the right to publish the work carried out by the institution itself.

3.6 Evaluation Criteria

For the evaluation criteria of an MNT ERA-Net project see the Guide for Proposers for MNT ERA-Net projects at: www.nanoinitiative.at/transnational or www.mnt-era.net.

Generally, Transnational Projects submitted are evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Quality of the Project

- Technical and scientific quality
 - Innovation content; comparison to state-of-the-art
 - Additionality and development risk from a financial and a technical point of view
 - Quality and suitability of the methods planned
 - Interdisciplinarity
- Quality of planning, in particular:
 - Objectives and work plan
 - Integration of the project participants with a view to competences and capacities
 - Adequacy and comprehensibility of costs and of the funding plan

2. Relevance of the Project with Regard to (Specific) Programme Objectives

- Contribution of the project to achieving the programme objectives
- Added value from the work carried out at an international level
- Contribution to further aspects, in particular ecological, social, ethical, gender-related aspects

3. Suitability of the Funding Applicant / the Project Participants

- Scientific and technical qualification and capacity
- Ability to realise market potential, in particular market knowledge, production and distribution possibilities
- Management skills and capacities

4. Economic Potential and Exploitation

- Customer use and Unique Selling Point (USP) / leader in this field
- Target markets and market potential
- Presentation of the exploitation strategy
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).

Explanations:

Quality of the Project

Technical and Scientific Quality

Innovation Content

The Austrian NANO Initiative funds cooperative research, ambitious innovation, and technology development in the nanosciences and nanotechnologies, with the focus being on ambitious and multi-disciplinary projects that lead to significant technological innovations. Projects exclusively aiming at the development and marketing of products are not funded. The best grade in this context is given to state-of-the-art as opposed to innovation of the project submitted, both in the field of industrial research and experimental development. Is it real innovation with a certain development risk? Does the project go beyond that? Is the work plan adequate for dealing with risks?

Scientific and Technical Excellence and Methodology

The proposals submitted have to be characterised by scientific and technical excellence in their respective discipline (special field). Furthermore, the methodology described for carrying out the project should be characterised by clarity, adequacy and consistency with regard to implementation. Under this item, research competence in the project field is also assessed (amongst others by scientific publications, patents etc ...). Interdisciplinarity used for problem-solving is assessed positively too, since it can strengthen the desired networking character of cooperative projects and can provide an added value for outcome-oriented research.

Quality of planning

Project management and resources

Are the coordination, internal coherence, cooperation structure and integration of all project partners carried out professionally and in a target-oriented manner? Does the research project proposed represent a compact unit on a solid common basis?

Methods: Is the quality of the work plan sufficient, and is the chosen distribution of tasks suitable and appropriate?

Under this item, the quality of the project management proposed is assessed with regard to its clarity, adequacy, and the instruments used.

Furthermore the adequacy of the estimated resources (personnel and other resources) is assessed. Comprehensible, adequate and cost-efficient planning of the project budget is as important as is the solidity of the residual financing.

2. Relevance of the Project with Regard to (Specific) Programme Objectives

Austrian NANO Initiative

Guide for Proposers for 2nd Call 2009 "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects", page 19 of 46

The evaluators are requested to examine the following objectives:

Broadening the cooperation basis between science and industry

The NANO Initiative funds RTD projects focussing on the cooperation between industry and research. Under this item, the cooperation, but also the complementarity of the organisations participating in the project, are assessed.

To which extent are new cooperations entered into? Are multidisciplinary and synergies between the individual disciplines within the overall consortium sufficiently represented and supported? Is the added value of the cooperation between science and industry represented in a plausible manner? Is there national or regional added value due to the work carried out at an international level?

Improving access to know-how and to cooperation partners abroad.

Are the composition of the consortium and the project structure as a whole designed in an optimal manner in order to achieve the short and medium-term objectives of the project? This applies above all to the relation between participants from science and from industry. Is the role of the non-Austrian partner described unambiguously, and is its usefulness for the project evident?

Strengthening research competence in fields of application relevant to Austrian enterprises, accelerating technology transfer and increasing the economic utilisation of nanotechnology,

Is the content of the project suitable for providing new insights in order to generate new product and technology developments, based on basic research oriented towards scientific findings, in the medium and long term?

Is the integration of industry increasing continuously, and is there a clear time limit to the duration of the project? Are the implementation and exploitation strategies as well as the instruments proposed suitable in order to ensure the best possible (technical or industrial) exploitation of the results (within and outside the consortium)?

3. Suitability of the Funding Applicant / the Project Participants

Quality of Partners from Industry

The quality of the enterprises, their qualification for carrying out the project, their reputation, any potential effects, the integration of the project in the portfolio of activities of these enterprises, their company strategies and the quality of their management, as well as the importance of RTD for these enterprises are assessed.

Quality of Research Partners

With regard to the research institutes, their technical and scientific performance up to the present is measured, amongst others by means of their publications. Their personnel and the quality of their management are assessed.

4. Economic Potential and Exploitation

Market Opportunities

This criterion focuses on the benefit for the user. The evaluators also assess the applicant's knowledge of market segments, barriers to market entry, and the competitive environment. The following questions can be asked: Have new insights been provided into already existing technologies? How relevant is the scientific contribution to the partners from industry (exploitation of industrial and technological developments in enterprises, economic use) and vice versa? What is the use of the project for the relevant target groups outside the consortium?

Exploitation

A comprehensible representation of the medium-term strategy for the duration of the project and beyond is expected. This strategy should lead to substantial economic effects in the interest of the participating partners from industry, on the basis of the project results that are expected. The following questions can be asked: Are IPR and exploitation strategies sufficiently represented and justified? Is there a clear description of the patent situation? Is the representation of technological relevance and market relevance (entry into new markets, competitive advantages on existing markets) realistic? Is the representation of the prospects of success comprehensible, expedient and sufficient? Does the project contribute to an increase in national competitiveness? Are positive economic structural effects to be expected?

Weighting of Evaluation Criteria

The following weighting schedule is applied:

Evaluation Criteria - Weighting			Funding / Research Category
Criterion			Industrial Research/ Experimental Development
1	Quality of the project	Technical and scientific quality	20
		Quality of planning	10
2	Relevance of the project with regard to the programme		20
3	Suitability of funding applicants / project participants		30
4	Economic potential and exploitation		20
Total			100

3.7 Legal Basis

The RTD Directives of the Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology pursuant to § 11 sub-paragraph 1 to 5 of the Research and Technology Funding Act (*Forschungs- und Technologieförderungsgesetz (FTFG)*) as amended on 19 November 2007 (GZ BMVIT-609.986/0011-III/2/2007) apply.

With regard to the size of the enterprise, the SME definition according to EU competition law applies as amended respectively (from 1 Jan. 2005: SME definition according to Recommendation 2003/361/EC of the Commission of 6 May 2003, (OJ L 124 of 20 May 2003 pp 36-41).

All EU regulations are to be applied as amended respectively.

3.8 Supplementary Requirements and Formal Check Information

3.8.1 Information on Other Funded Projects

In the course of the application, information on any existing similar projects has to be provided. In case multiple funding is suspected, there will be coordination with the respective other funding institution in order to determine the relation of the projects to each other and the admissible amount of funding. If a project has been funded by several funding institutions, the calculation of the cash value has to be carried out on the basis of the costs actually recognised by the respective funding institution – in the course of checking a final report on expenditure of funds. The funding institution with the largest share of cash value has to check whether the admissible upper limits are observed. In case these upper limits are exceeded, the funds have to be cut proportionately in coordination with the respective funding institution.

Information on further funded projects has to be provided in Form B of the application form.

3.8.2 Information on Exclusion of Evaluators

If evaluators are to be excluded from the evaluation process, this information has to be provided in the online form used for submitting the Pre-proposal already.

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 Support and Submission

4.1.1 Support, Programme Web Site, Proposal Submission Forms

The BMVIT has commissioned the FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency to carry out consultancy and information provision activities for the NANO Initiative. The FFG's services comprise consultancy and support for potential proposers.

FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency GmbH
Sensengasse 1, A-1090 Vienna

Support and consultancy for submitting a proposal under the programme action line "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects"

Mag. Katharina Gugler

tel.: +43/5755-5081

fax: +43/157755-95081

e-Mail: katharina.gugler@ffg.at

All information on the 2nd Call under the programme action line "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects" of the NANO Initiative (Guide for Proposers, Forms, etc.) are available for downloading on the programme's web site at www.nanoinitiative.at/transnational.

Programme web site

www.nanoinitiative.at/transnational

IMPORTANT:

Relevant proposal submission forms

- 1. Guide for Proposers
- 2.a National **Pre-proposal** form Part A (Text Form)
- 2.b National **Pre-proposal** form Part B (Table Form)
- 3.a National **Full Proposal** form Part A (Text Form))
- 3.b National **Full Proposal** form Part B (Table Form)

Please download the relevant proposal submission documents and the Guide for Proposers from www.nanoinitiative.at/transnational or in the course of the eCall submission procedure (see chapter 4.1.3).

Please be aware that the Pre-proposal and Full Proposal documents (Form A and Form B) have to be uploaded via eCall on <https://ecall.ffg.at/> to be eligible!!!

Additional MNT ERA-Net documents:

- MNT Guide for Proposers
- MNT Pre-proposal Form
- MNT Full Proposal Form

Please download and upload the MNT ERA-Net documents at www.mnt-era.net.

The submission documents for a transnational project within the MNT ERA-Net Call 2009 have to be submitted in addition to the national documents!

The Guide for Proposers on hand - and the MNT Guide for Proposers in addition, if applicable – is/are the basis for submitting project proposals.

Applicants must exclusively use the forms provided for submitting their project proposals.

4.1.2 Submission and Submission Deadlines

The submission of a transnational project **is a two-step process** consisting of a Pre-proposal and a Full Proposal submission procedure. Both have to be carried out via eCall – the FFG's electronic submission system (see chapter 4.1.3).

Pre-proposal submission

For all kinds of transnational projects a **national Pre-proposal** has to be submitted via eCall. The obligatory pre-proposal facilitates the identification of expert evaluators and ensures that potential project applications are eligible under the relevant national funding rules. All pre-proposals received before the advertised Pre-proposal deadline (see below) will be assessed for eligibility.

In case the project is embedded in the **MNT ERA-Net Call 2009**, all project partners must **contact** their respective **regional/national programme agency before submitting an online MNT Pre-proposal (in addition to the national Pre-proposal)** in order to discuss the project line-up and the funding conditions. The mandatory MNT online Pre-proposal has to be submitted by the international project coordinator of the MNT ERA-net project. Feedback to proposers concerning the Pre-proposal check result is provided by the MNT ERA-Net Transnational Coordination Team (TCT).

Submission deadline for the national Pre-proposal and the MNT ERA-Net Pre-proposal:

06 May 2009, 12:00 noon

Full Proposal submission

Proposers are invited to submit a **national Full Proposal** after a positive eligibility check of their Pre-proposal. Proposers of a Pre-proposal that is not recommended should refrain from submitting a Full Proposal.

The Full Proposal also has to be **submitted via eCall**.

Furthermore, the Project Summary also has to be provided on paper, including an authorised company signature (name and signature of an authorised signatory as well as stamp). For this purpose, the national consortium leader and each further Austrian project partner print out the respective Project Summary "print view" for themselves and sign it with their authorised company signature. The **national consortium leader sends the original versions of the collected signed print views on paper to the FFG** in a sealed and labelled envelope, within 2 weeks after the expiry of the call – i.e. by 24 July 2009 at the latest. In this context, the relevant date is the date as postmark (or the date when the envelope is received by the FFG, in case it is handed over personally).

For transnational projects which are **not MNT ERA-Net Projects**: a "Letter of Intent" has to be signed with a legally valid signature by each foreign partner and its original has to be sent in a sealed envelope to the FFG (see Full Proposal application form Part A).

In case of an **MNT ERA-Net Project**, an **MNT Full Proposal** has to be submitted **in addition to the national Full Proposal** by the international project coordinator through an online application form at www.mnt-era.net.

Submission deadline for the national Full Proposal and the MNT ERA-Net Full Proposal:

10 July 2009, 12:00 noon

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Please be aware that after submission of the Pre-proposal, the abstract in the proposal must be identically quoted in the Full Proposal and must not be changed.

Any changes could lead to ineligibility of the Full Proposal.

In exceptional and well justified cases, the partner structure can change after the submission of the Pre-proposal.

Proposers of a Pre-proposal that is not recommended should refrain from submission of a Full Proposal.

Applications have to be received before the expiry of the submission deadline in order to be eligible!

For MNT ERA-Net projects:

The national Pre-proposal and Full Proposal have to refer largely to the MNT ERA-Net Pre-proposal and Full Proposal, also because the funding recommendation of the MNT ERA-Net Transnational Coordination Team is based on the results of the national evaluation procedure. Please observe the remarks in the national proposal documents whether chapters or sections have to be identical to those in the MNT ERA-net proposal documents (simply copy/paste).

For more details concerning an MNT ERA-Net project submission, e.g. proposal requirements, forms, evaluation procedure, etc., please see also the MNT ERA-Net documents at: www.nanoinitiative.at/transnational or at www.mnt-era.net.

Please be aware that, with the exception of projects embedded into the MNT ERA-Net call, there is no specific coordinated action (ERA-NET) supported by the programme action line Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects.

In the Full Proposal, the Austrian partner(s) describe the financing of the project in detail, including the part of the project conducted abroad. Financing has to be fixed in the Consortium Agreement before signing the Funding Contract.

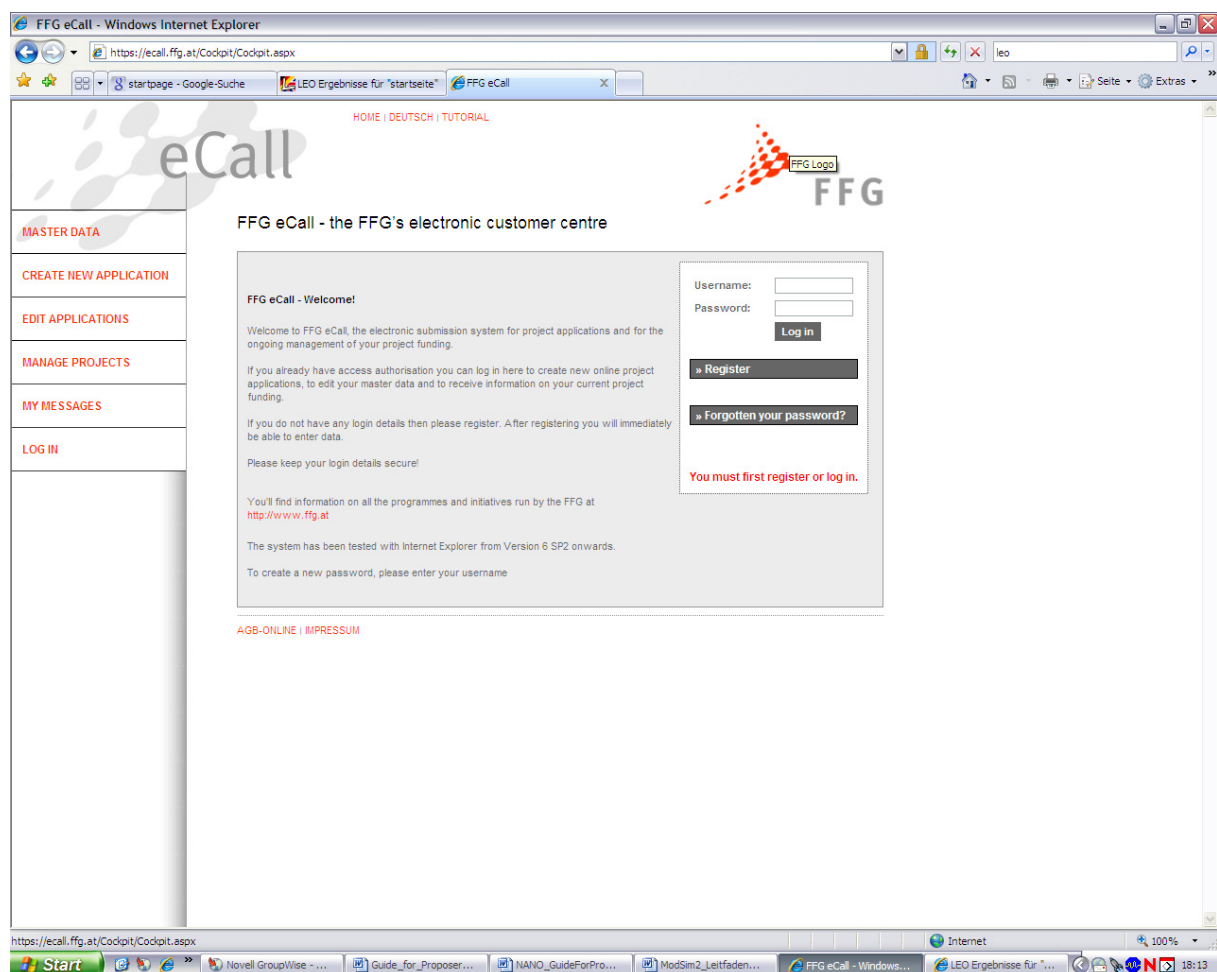
The terms and conditions relevant to the international partner have to be clarified by the consortium itself. Of course the Programme Management of the Austrian NANO Initiative will support the submission of such a project on a case by case basis by contacting the funding agency of the partner abroad, in case this could be of help.

4.1.3 eCall - Electronic Submission System

The national Pre-proposal and Full Proposal have to be submitted through the FFG's electronic submission system "eCall".

You can access eCall at <https://ecall.ffg.at>

A screenshot of the eCall welcome page is shown below:



Please consult our comprehensive User's Guide at <https://ecall.ffg.at/Cockpit/Help.aspx>

The submission procedure comprises the following steps:

- 1) The national consortium leader registers on the eCall system (if this has not already been done earlier).
- 2) The national consortium leader creates or updates the master data of his/her organisation.
- 3) The proposer creates a new proposal under the Call "NANO – 2.Call - Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects"
- 4) The national consortium leader fills in the project data in the parts of forms provided for this purpose.
- 5) The national consortium leader selects a type of project in the sub-form "Project Data" (Industrial Research or Experimental Development). After this, the two parts of forms (Part A + Part B) are available for downloading in the sub-form "File Attachments".
- 6) The national consortium leader draws up the information on the two parts of forms (Part A + Part B) together with the project partners, and uploads the completed forms onto eCall.

For submission of the Full Proposal, some additional steps have to be carried out:

- 7) The national consortium leader sends "invitations" to further partners of the project via the eCall system as soon as possible. These partners receive an e-mail with a link to their respective "Partner Proposal" for the proposal in question.
- 8) Each further project partner registers on the eCall system (if this has not already been done earlier), and creates or updates the master data of their organisation.
- 9) Each further project partner draws up the information on their respective partner proposal.
- 10) Each further project partner fills in their complete information in the partner proposal and submits their partner proposal (This submission by the partner is a prerequisite for the submission of the Full Proposal by the national consortium leader).
- 11) Subsequently, the proposer submits the complete proposal electronically before the expiry of the submission deadline.
- 12) The proposer and each further project partner print out the respective project summary "Print View" in English for themselves and sign them with their authorised

company signature. The proposer sends the original versions of the collected signed print views to the FFG on paper.

The submission deadline for Pre-proposals is 6 May 2009, 12:00 noon.

The submission deadline for Full Proposals is 10 July 2009, 12:00 noon.

The completed application documents have to be submitted electronically (eCall) by this date.

For a complete submission of the Full Proposal, the proposer has to collect the signed English project summaries of all partners in addition, and send them to the FFG in a sealed and labelled envelope within two weeks after the deadline of the Call, with the relevant date being the date as postmark (or the date of receipt by the FFG, in case the envelope is handed over personally). The envelope has to be labelled as follows:

**2nd Call under the
Programme Action Line "Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects"
Project Proposal – Do not open!
Austrian Research Promotion Agency GmbH (FFG)
NANO Programme Management
Sensengasse 1, A-1090 Vienna**

The two parts of the submission of the Full Proposal therefore have to include the following:

- Submission via eCall: Master data (including annual accounts of the last three years, and Certificate of Registration of the participating Austrian enterprises) and project information of all Austrian partners, completed application form (Parts A, B).
- Submission of originals of the collected and duly signed English project summaries / print view of all partners on paper.

Proposals received after the expiry of the submission deadline or outside the eCall system will not be considered.

Should you have any queries concerning the submission of proposals, please contact the Programme Management at the FFG.

4.1.4 Formal Criteria

In case a project is embedded into an ERA-NET, the ERA-NET requirements of how and in which form to submit a proposal apply in addition to the national criteria described below.

The following general national eligibility criteria have to be observed unconditionally when submitting a project proposal:

- **completeness** of the national proposal submission documents (Pre-proposal and Full Proposal forms part A and part B);
 - Form A: funding application - content (Word document)
 - Form B: tables part of the funding application (Excel document)
 - any supporting documents, if required

- **form of handing in the applications and signatures**
Pre-proposal and Full Proposal are submitted via eCall **in due time** (respective deadlines 6 May 2009 and 10 July 2009, 12:00 noon).
Project proposals received later will also be registered but will definitely be rejected.

In addition, the following applies to the Full Proposal:

The respective eCall print view (summary document) is printed and signed with a legally binding signature by the respective authorised person of the national consortium leader and each Austrian partner. These original documents are submitted by the national consortium leader to the FFG, Sensengasse 1, 1090 Vienna⁶ by 24th July 2009 at the latest, in a sealed and correctly addressed envelope:

- by mail (the relevant date is the date as postmark)
- handed in personally (the relevant date is the date of receipt at the FFG – the submission office is the reception on the 4th floor of the FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency, Sensengasse 1.)

If applicable, the MNT Pre-proposals and Full Proposals have to be uploaded on the MNT web site by the overall project coordinator, or an Austrian coordinator respectively, in due time too (the same deadlines apply as for the submission of the national proposal).

- Language of application: **English**

- For transnational projects which are **not MNT ERA-Net Projects**: a “Letter of Intent” has to be signed with a legally valid signature by each foreign partner and its original has to be sent in a sealed envelope to the FFG (see Full Proposal application form Part A).

⁶ The FFG's reception is open on working days from Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Fridays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- A funding application that has only been partly submitted via eCall by the end of the submission deadline is deemed to be incomplete; it is not possible to hand in any documents (or individual parts of the proposal) later!
- eCall printouts that have only been partly signed and submitted by 24th July 2009 are deemed to be incomplete; it is not possible to supply any signatures later!
- eCall printouts without an original signature (which means copied or scanned signatures) are deemed to be incomplete; it is not possible to supply any original signatures after 24 July 2009!
- The "Funding Application – Content" (Form A) has a limited number of pages. For the respective admissible maximum number of pages, please refer to the application form; Arial, 11 pt, 1.3 spacing. After completing "Funding Application – Content", the table of contents has to be updated. For this purpose, please click on the table of contents with the right mouse button, then first click on "update content only", then on "update page numbers only"

In addition, the applications are checked according to the following formal criteria:

- The content of the Full Proposal abstract is identical with the Pre-proposal abstract.
- The amount of Federal funding applied for is in accordance with the Guide for Proposers.
- The maximum duration of a project is observed.
- The maximum amounts of funding / financing are observed.
- There is proof of the participation of the required number of obligatory partners.
- There is proof of the participation of one Austrian enterprise as a project partner.

The FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency carries out the economic check (credit investigation) and checks the proposal for remediable and unrecoverable formal defects. This results in a decision on the general eligibility of the consortium or the individual project partners respectively.

There is no legal claim to receiving funding or financing for a project.

4.2 Evaluation

4.2.1 Experts and Bodies Participating in the Evaluation Process

Expert opinions by at least three international experts are used for assessing the projects (peer review). The formal check, the eligibility check and the examination of economic capacity are carried out by the FFG's internal pool of experts. The risk & safety evaluation is carried out by two additional international experts. These expert opinions serve as a basis for the independent Jury Board and for their final recommendation to the BMVIT – Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology. The Jury consists of 5-7 international

experts. These are not the same persons carrying out the technical appraisal during the first step of evaluation which is handed in in writing.

In case of an MNT ERA-Net project, the MNT ERA-Net Transnational Coordination Team (TCT) takes all national evaluation results into consideration, and agrees on a common ranking list containing all proposals recommended for funding. The MNT ERA-Net TCT recommends the funding of projects to the respective funding agencies.

All persons involved in the selection procedure or present as observers are bound to secrecy concerning information they have received while executing their function. In addition, the participants of the selection procedure have to provide information on any possible partiality at their own initiative as early as possible, and to refrain from performing their function in the evaluation procedure if necessary. If external persons, i.e. persons who are not FFG experts or members of the Management Team, are called in during to the procedure, these persons have to sign a declaration of confidentiality.

4.2.2 Selection Procedure

The proposals submitted for funding are selected in competition with the other applications for funding submitted respectively.

The selection and application procedure for MNT ERA-Net projects and for all types of transnational projects is shown in figures 2 and 3 (pages 35, 36).

National Evaluation Process

The national evaluation process for the Full Proposal consists of several steps: eligibility check, technical appraisal and risk and safety evaluation by international experts, and appraisal by the Jury.

1. Formal Check / Eligibility Check

The funding institution checks the formal requirements for each application for funding internally. The FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency carries out the check of remediable and unrecoverable formal deficiencies as well as the economic check (credit investigation); the FFG also checks the proposal's general eligibility for funding as well as its eligible costs internally.

Economic Capacity

The funding institution examines the economic capacity of the participating enterprises. The economic capacity of the industrial partners is highly important with a view to the expedient use of the funding provided. Enterprises in immediate danger of insolvency cannot be funded.

Gender aspects

It is generally foreseen to collect gender-specific data within the framework of the programme action lines.

2. Technical Evaluation

The proposals submitted for funding are selected in competition with the other submitted applications respectively.

An equal gender balance is aimed at when constituting the expert panels or other relevant bodies.

Evaluation in Writing – Peer Review

Under the **Programme Action Line Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects**, it is necessary to combine the evaluation with an external appraisal (peer review), due to the greater complexity of these research-intensive projects (under consideration of international research standards and also considering their practical and application-related relevance).

The expert panel is selected on the basis of their scientific and application-specific qualifications.

Each project is evaluated in writing by at least three international evaluators, by means of specific evaluation forms based on the “General Catalogue of Criteria”.

Before taking up their work as evaluators, the evaluators have to sign a Declaration of Confidentiality. The preparation of the Jury decision is based on the individual opinions of the evaluators.

3. Risk and Safety Evaluation

The applicants are called upon to proactively describe their safety and risk strategy for the project with regard to the state-of-the-art and the scientific and technical quality.

Based on the risk and safety concept submitted, two additional safety and risk experts provide an *ex-ante* safety and risk assessment, including toxic (health) risks, environmental risks as well as social and economic risks; this risk assessment will also be part of the evaluation. The results of the *ex-ante* safety and risk assessment will predominantly be on a recommendation level. They will be considered in the contract negotiations and will be part of the recommendations or obligations for the consortia defined in the contract. More information on safety and risk is provided in Annex 6.3

4. Jury Board Meeting

Within the framework conditions determined by the BMVIT – Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology, the Jury is free in its decisions and independent in drawing up its recommendation, including any obligations. The Jury decides on the basis of the written assessments and the rules for evaluation which

are laid down in the Evaluation Manual. The following points are discussed in this process:

- ⇒ Which are the most important points of criticism according to the Expert Panel?
- ⇒ What are the most important differences between the individual projects?
- ⇒ Which questions or aspects are not sufficiently answered or clarified respectively?

During the discussions at the Jury Board meeting, the Jury members can modify the results of the experts' evaluation in writing, provided they give reasons in writing, in order to arrive at a joint Jury recommendation.

The result of the selection process is a funding recommendation to the respective Minister in charge, including any obligations and conditions.

All applicants will be informed in writing about the outcome and will receive a temporary funding offer (probably in November 2009).

MNT ERA-Net Evaluation Process

The national agencies carry out evaluations of the proposals and the national applications for funding. The MNT ERA-Net Transnational Coordination Team takes all national results into consideration and agrees on a common ranking list containing all proposals recommended for funding. Through this coordinated approach, coherent funding decisions will be achieved.

The MNT ERA-Net Transnational Coordination Team recommends the funding of projects to the respective agencies.

The FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency makes a funding recommendation to the respective Minister in charge, including any obligations and conditions.

For illustration of the various steps and the relevant dates in the application and evaluation process of a transnational project, see figures 2 and 3 below:

Fig 2.: Application and Selection Procedure for MNT ERA-Net Projects

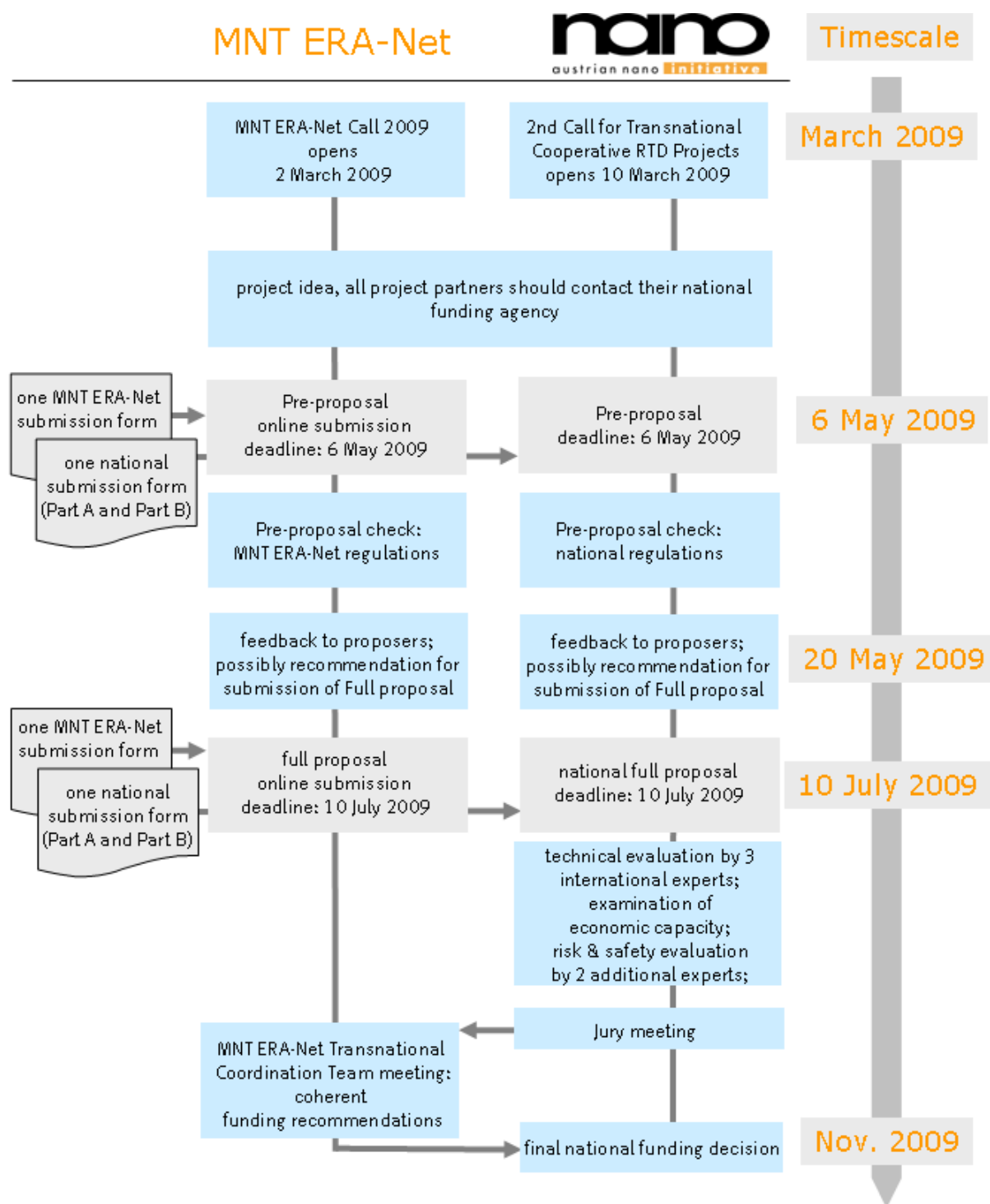
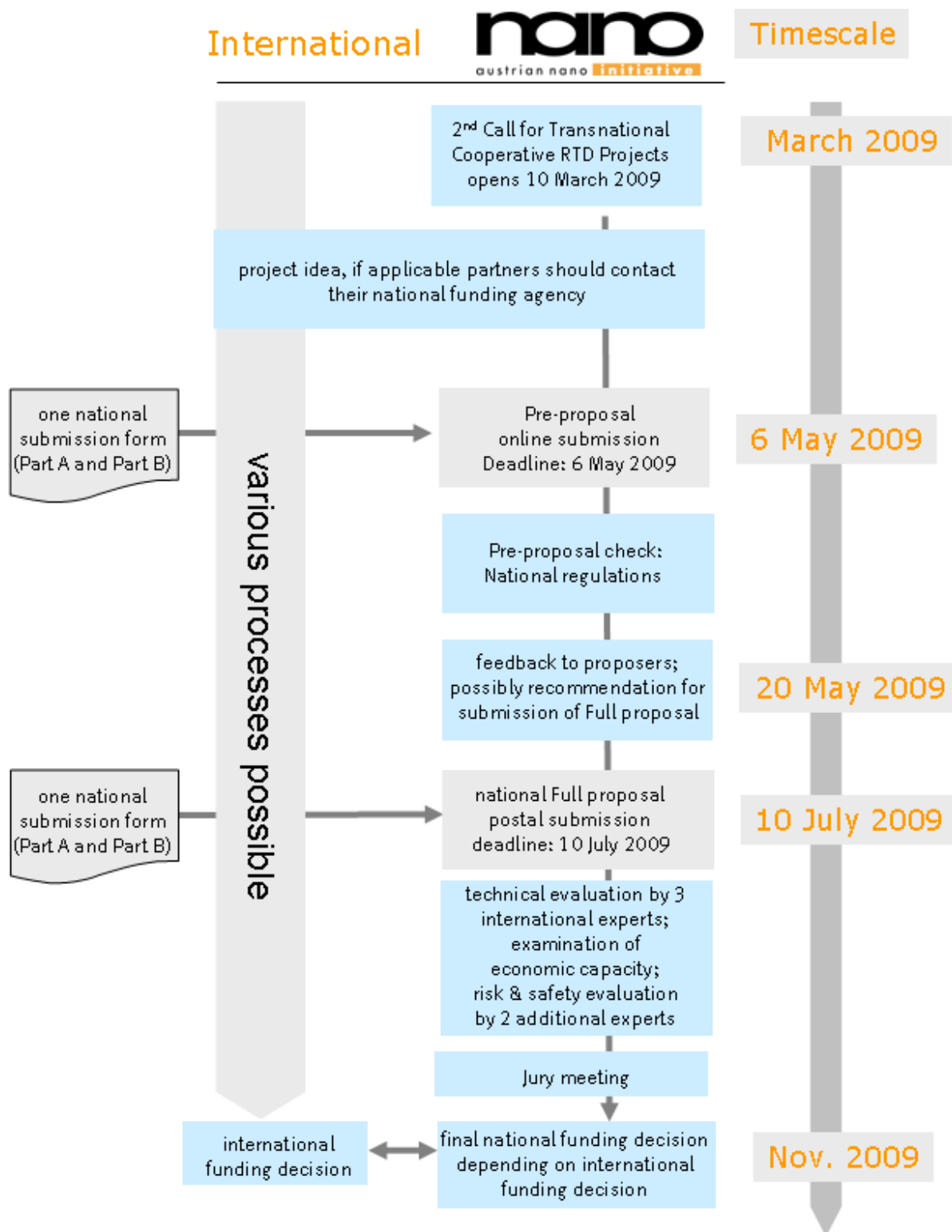


Fig. 3.: Application and Selection Procedure of all Types of Transnational Projects



4.3 Contract Negotiations

The projects recommended for funding or financing by the Jury will receive a temporary funding offer by the FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency, which they have to agree to in writing within one month. After this deadline, the contract will be finalised (probably in December 2009 / January 2010). The contracts are finalised by the FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency, by order of the BMVIT – Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology. Any obligations resulting from the evaluation process are taken into consideration in the contract.

The contract is signed by the national proposer - or in the case of a national consortium by the coordinator of this consortium - as the contracting party and funding recipient, and by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency as grantor of the funding and as programme manager of the Austrian NANO Initiative. The Funding Contract regulates the duties of the coordinator and their partners as well as the remuneration they receive. It also regulates the principles of cooperation within the project, the type of financing, the reporting, and provides an overview of the overall project. The details of this cooperation have to be regulated in the Consortium Agreement, which is to be concluded parallel to the Funding Contract.

The project start for the selected consortia is scheduled for November 2009. The projects recommended for funding respectively will be presented at a public event and on the web sites of the Ministry and of the FFG

4.4 Disbursement Modalities and Reporting

In Cooperative Projects, the Consortium Agreement has to be sent to the Funding Agency in addition when returning the signed contract between the Funding Agency and the Proposer and fulfilling all obligations. The next step is the disbursement of the 1st funding rate (starting rate). The disbursement modality depends on the duration of the project, with a maximum of annual technical and financial reports, or technical and financial reports corresponding to the project's milestones, being required. These reports are followed by a further funding rate.

The final parameters of reporting obligations are laid down during the contract negotiations. At the end of the project, a comprehensive Final Report (both technical and financial) is required. The final rate is disbursed only after formal approval by the FFG's Auditing Unit, on the basis of a positive evaluation of the Final Report.

5 CONTACTS

5.1 Programme Owner



BMVIT Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology
Unit III/I5
Renngasse 5, A-1010 Vienna
www.bmvit.gv.at
fax +43 (0) 1 71162 65 2230

Responsible for the programme:

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6 ANNEXES

6.1 Design of the Austrian NANO Initiative

6.1.1 Project Types and Programme Action Lines

Since 2004, the NANO Initiative has been funding nanosciences and nanotechnologies and as a generic programme has been offering structural framework conditions, using the concept of programme action lines for types of projects in its programme terminology.

Under these programme action lines, certain objectives such as networking, creating critical masses, cooperation between enterprises and scientists, internationalisation, exploitation of critical ideas, or building up qualified human resources, are pursued.

The programme action lines are defined via types of projects with clearly differentiated characteristics. They are dealt with in separate calls, following the defined programme objectives with their structure and their specific characteristics.

The Austrian NANO Initiative comprises the following programme action lines, subdivided according to types of projects:

Project type RTD in Cooperation

Programme action line: **National RTD Projects**

1. Cooperative RTD Projects
2. Add-on Projects to Existing RTD Project Clusters

Project type RTD in Cooperation

Programme action line: **Transnational Cooperative RTD-Projects**

Funding of transnational cooperation

Programme Action Line National RTD Projects

The objective of the national RTD and innovation projects is to develop new procedures and applications within the framework of Project Clusters, building on findings from the nanosciences. In these Project Clusters, several research institutions and enterprises cooperate in multiannual projects, ranging from basic research to industrial research and technology development (cluster characteristic).

Project proposals can be submitted during calls for proposals. Only consortia in which enterprises and research institutions cooperate are eligible for participation. An international Jury of experts evaluates the project ideas and selects the best projects for funding.

Programme Action Line Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects

Transnational cooperations are funded mostly within the framework of the European Research Area Networks (ERA-NETs). National funding programmes of the partner countries represented in the respective ERA-NET are accessible to transnational consortia. Proposals are submitted during calls.

Programme Partners

The Austrian NANO Initiative is implemented and coordinated by the FFG, the Austrian Research Promotion Agency, by order of the BMVIT (Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology). The FFG cooperates with several implementation partners in the individual programme action lines.

6.2 Salary Schemes, Overheads, VAT

6.2.1 Further Information Concerning Personnel Costs

Acting Partners / Managing Directors / Shareholders Working in the Project

Acting partners/shareholders and managing directors working in the project are to be accounted for under the overhead costs in principle.

For **small enterprises** [threshold values according to EU definition: max. 50 employees, max. €10 million turnover, max. €10 million annual balance] there is the possibility of accounting for the acting partners / managing directors / shareholders working in the project at an hourly rate of € 30.--/h. When using this possibility of a detailed statement of account, a maximum amount of € 42,000.-- per person per year can be claimed. The amount of hours planned has to be justified.

Minority partners/shareholders (max. 25% share) are exempted from this rule if they are not managing directors at the same time. They are to be treated like employees and can be accounted for at the actual hourly rate. The upper limit is the actual hourly rate of the most expensive staff member with a corresponding qualification.

For **smallest businesses** (less than 10 employees) which carry out R&D exclusively / predominantly, acting partners / managing directors / shareholders can also be accounted for like employees. The upper limit is the actual hourly rate of the most expensive employee with a corresponding qualification.

Universities / Research Institutions

Universities' personnel costs eligible for funding are accounted for on a full cost basis. Personnel costs of the scientific staff working in the project (university professors, associate professors, university assistants, contract professors, contract associate professors, contract

assistants), and additionally employed scientific staff as well as assistants / secretaries can be accounted for, provided a detailed and comprehensible record of working hours is provided.

Explanation of the maximum rates for personnel costs

With regard to the question of the maximum amount of eligible personnel costs, there are regulations in the "RTD Directives", item 3.3., as well as regulations in the "General Framework Directives" ("*Allgemeinen Rahmenrichtlinien*" (ARR 2004)), § 21 (2), sub-paragraph 9 that are to be applied as regulations subsidiary to the RTD Directives in this context.

The personnel costs are eligible for funding up to the guiding rate laid down respectively according to sub-paragraph 8 of the "*Verordnung des Bundesministers für Finanzen betreffend Richtlinien für die Ermittlung und Darstellung der finanziellen Auswirkungen neuer rechtssetzender Maßnahmen*" (Decree of the Federal Minister of Finance Concerning Guidelines for Determining and Describing the Financial Effects of New Legislative Measures, Federal Law Gazette II No. 50/1999, Annex 3).

In connection with the funding of internationally excellent research, it may be required to exceed the maximum personnel costs provided in principle. If there is a justifiable exceptional case – such justifications would be in particular internationally customary payments of special research expertise – it is permissible to deviate from the maximum personnel costs provided in principle.

The table below lists the current maximum rates for personnel costs and is intended to facilitate the classification of personnel by means of examples:

Current maximum rates for personnel costs

			lt. BGBl. II Nr. 50/1999, Anhang 3	Valorisierte Werte (in € pro Jahr)		
Beschäftigte nach Funktion	Beispiele für Funktionszuordnung	Zuordnung zu Gruppe lt. Verordnung	2005 Jahrespersonal-kosten (Brutto inkl. LNK)	2008 Jahrespersonal-kosten (Brutto inkl. LNK)	Jahres-std.	2008 valorisierter Stundensatz
Wissenschaftliche Beschäftigte						
1. Führungsebene (I)	Wissenschaftliche Leitung	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 1	104.277	112.569	1680	67,01
2. Führungsebene (H)	stv. Wissenschaftliche Leitung, Area Leitung etc.	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 2	90.235	97.410	1680	57,98
Key Scientist (G)	Key Researcher	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 1	104.277	112.569	1680	67,01
Senior Scientist (F)	Senior Researcher	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 2	90.235	97.410	1680	57,98
Junior Scientist (E)	Junior Researcher	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 3	76.192	82.250	1680	48,96
Diplomanden & Dissertanden	Junior Researcher	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 3	76.192	82.250	1680	48,96

Beschäftigte in der Administration						
1. Führungsebene (I)	Geschäftsführung (GF)	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 1	104.277	112.569	1680	67,01
2. Führungsebene (H)	Assistenz der GF	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 2	90.235	97.410	1680	57,98
Key Administration (G)	Controlling	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 1	104.277	112.569	1680	67,01
Senior Administration (F)	AssistenInnen	VB-VD-Gehob. Dienst 1	40.207	43.404	1680	25,84
Junior Administration (E)	Sekretariat	VB-VD-Gehob. Dienst 2	40.207	43.404	1680	25,84
TeschnerInnen/ Fachkräfte	Technician	VB-VD-Gehob. Dienst 1	40.207	43.404	1680	25,84

*) die Buchstaben (E, F, G, H, I) entsprechen der Zuordnung laut Gender-Booklet (http://www.femtech.at/fileadmin/femtech/be_images/Publikationen/Gender_booklet_2006.pdf).

For planning purposes, the hourly rates can be adapted annually as follows: The hourly rates are based on the 2005 figures (in accordance with Federal Law Gazette 2006). For the following years, an increase to the amount of the valorisation of public sector salaries has been implemented. In 2006, this increase amounted to 2.7 %, in 2007 to 2.35%, and in 2008 to 2.7%. For the following years, a cautiously estimated valorisation can be used.

When assessing personnel costs, proposers can either add a 20% lump-sum overheads supplement rate, or indicate a higher rate by disclosing their calculation of overhead costs.

Please note that in case of funding, the personnel costs are accounted for as actual costs that can be proved. Proof has to be supplied either by pay slip or by means of records of hours worked.

Personnel Costs – Calculation of Hourly Rates

Please note that hourly rates are based on full-time employment with 1,680 hours per year and 14 monthly salaries. In case of part-time employment, or in case salaries are paid out more frequently, the gross monthly salary has to be converted to the prescribed basis (1,680 hours or 14 monthly salaries).

The hourly rate is calculated as follows:

$(\text{gross monthly salary} * 1.32 (= \text{average employer's contributions}) * 14) / 1,680 (= \text{annual hours in case of full-time employment with 40h week})$

Example – full-time employment – gross monthly salary EUR 1,000:

$(1,000 * 1.32 * 14) / 1.680 = \text{EUR 11 hourly rate}$

Example – part-time employment 20h/week – gross monthly salary EUR 500:

$(500 * 1.32 * 14) / 840 = \text{EUR 11 hourly rate}$

Alternatively, the hourly rates derived from the respective partner's accounting system can be indicated.

6.2.2 Further Information Concerning Overheads

In principle, overheads are only eligible for funding if they are based on actual costs relating to the implementation of the project for which evidence is provided, and if they are comprehensible.

Personnel overheads are estimated via the overheads as a rule.

The following costs are not eligible for funding under overhead costs:

- Marketing costs
- Advertising costs
- General administration and distribution costs
- Financing costs
- Calculatory costs (risks, interest, depreciation, entrepreneurial profit)
- Profit tangents
- Costs with itemised billing
- Depreciation for costs with itemised billing
- Financing costs (debit interest, fees for financial transactions, fees for money exchange, foreign exchange losses, other financing costs)
- Legal costs, administration fines, penalties
- Expenses outside the funding period
- Charge levied (*Umlage*)
- Insurances
- Overheads resulting from current business activity (e.g. operating costs of sales premises etc.)
- Entertainment costs, representation costs.

6.2.3 Further Information Concerning Value-Added Tax (VAT)

In principle, the value-added tax attributed to the costs of the services eligible for funding is not eligible for funding within the framework of research projects; however, if this value-added tax has to be borne actually and eventually by the funding recipient, and if therefore the funding recipient is not entitled to input tax deduction, this value-added tax can be considered as part of the costs eligible for funding.

6.3 Safety and Risk Evaluation

IMPORTANT:

Safety and Risk Evaluation

The *ex-ante* evaluation of the projects by a **safety and risk assessment** including toxic (health) risks, environmental risks as well as social and economic risks, will also be part of the evaluation. The results of the *ex-ante* safety and risk assessment will be considered in the contract negotiations and will be part of the recommendations or obligations for the consortia defined in the contract.

Furthermore the applicants are called upon to **proactively describe their safety and risk strategy** for the project with regard to the state-of-the-art and the scientific and technical quality.

Background Information

The Austrian NANO Initiative is a scientific and technology-driven programme, and its activities are ambitious in following the aim to develop new materials and new processes for industrial applications, e.g. for the development of high-tech novel and smart products utilising nanoparticles and nanotechnology products. Therefore there is a new and greater requirement for this programme to address socio-economic, environmental and health risks, also including financial aspects, compared to many other programmes in operation today.

Considering the ambitious nature of the projects that will be proposed for funding, international experts highly recommend including safety and risk aspects as integrative parts of the proposal definition in order to encourage the applicants to consider the risks of the projects and clusters seriously from a financial point of view, i.e. that the project might fail financially, on the one hand, and to consider socio-economic issues on the other. This will lead to a greater added value and warrant more emphasis, especially due to the sometimes vast economic significance forecast for several of the investigated areas.

The evaluation of human health and environmental risks may be difficult and demanding, as these risks have not usually been seriously considered in most technology-driven research activities up to now. The situation with nanoparticles and nanotechnologies may also be different because of their potentially vast economic importance, and their importance for the end user. This could mean large-scale production and a large number of exposed individuals, both workers and consumers. Nanoparticles and nanotechnologies have received marked attention in the media because of their potential to promote economic growth and prosperity. This public attention makes this whole field highly sensitive.

One important issue is that not much is as yet known about the potential effects these particles and the products derived from these technologies have on human health and on the environment.

For example ...

Nanoparticles differ in quality from other types of particles due to their small size that enables truly small nanoparticles to enter cells and tissues relatively freely. Literature on most types of nanoparticles is scarce. Lack of information does not mean, though, that the effects of these particles and of the products derived from these technologies should not be studied. On the contrary, existing knowledge of many of the nanoparticles suggests that they have the potential of harming living organisms and cells, and thus are potentially harmful to human health and to the environment.

For the time being, the European attitude toward nanoparticles and nanotechnologies, for instance, is at least neutral. These attitudes may easily change, though, as can be seen e.g. from genetically modified organisms (GMOs). It would be desirable to be prepared for surprises and unexpected findings regarding the features of nanoparticles, since their features are of interest not only to industry and the media, but also to various consumer interest groups, and both academia and governmental research institutions have directed increasing efforts towards exploring the possible effects of these particles. Thus, controlling risks associated with the development of these particles and technologies is a well justified safeguard to prevent undesirable events from happening.

Safety and risk research is therefore seen as an integral part of research and development of new nanomaterials and nanotechnologies. Large research and development projects should include risk control and prevention strategies as a matter of course. In many cases this would be too demanding a requirement on a single - even a large single - project. However, in order to start off this process, each project has to reflect on a safety and risk strategy and has to define it in the proposal. Furthermore all project managers are highly encouraged to cooperate, participate or proactively join pertinent future initiatives on the national level initiated by the FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency or the BMVIT – Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology.

Possible Measures

Such activities could include: 1) continuously keeping track of new and existing literature on the topic; 2) continuously keeping track of new and emerging risks associated with nanotechnologies; and 3) joint risk controlling strategies for the projects. These activities could be supported by other safety research initiatives on the national and international level to discover the potential risks of the products through research, and to support Austrian competitiveness in the respective field.

Recent studies

The BMVIT - Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology supports accompanying measures and has commissioned a study on existing measures in the national and international context. The results are published on the web site of the Austrian NANO Initiative (www.nanoinitiative.at) and also serve as a basis of information for any coordinated activities or measures on the national level.
























The Institute of Technology Assessment carried out the study "Nanotechnology Accompanying Measures – State-of-the-Art and Implications for Austria" on behalf of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology.

The complete study is available in German only, but the chapter "Summary and Recommendations" is also provided in English.

It is complemented by the project report of "NANOgesund - Health risks in Nanotechnology" (also in German) by the Karl Franzens University of Graz, Joanneum Research and the BioNanoNet Forschungsgesellschaft m.b.H.

This publication is also available on the web site of the NANO Initiative.

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