



Austrian NANO Initiative

Programme Action Line

Transnational Cooperative RTD Projects

Research and Technology Development in Transnational Projects

Guide for Proposers 2010, 3rd Call

Submission deadlines:

<u>1st stage</u> - Deadline for Pre-proposals	12 April 2010, 12:00 noon
<u>2nd stage</u> - Deadline for Full Proposals	05 July 2010, 12:00 noon

Version 1, *English*

Date: 13.01.2010

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

Thank you for your interest in the Call 2010.

This Guide for Proposers contains information concerning the 3rd 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 (BMWFi)
- o Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth (BMWFJ)
- 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 2010** 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 an European Research Area Network (ERA-NET), or the MNT-ERA.NET respectively.

This 3rd Call 2010 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: 12 April 2010, 12:00 noon

Full Proposal deadline: 05 July 2010, 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 and 4.1.3). **Pre-proposals and Full Proposals for MNT-ERA.NET have to be submitted online in addition, if applicable.**
- The Call closes on: 05 July 2010, 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 2010.

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 an 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.

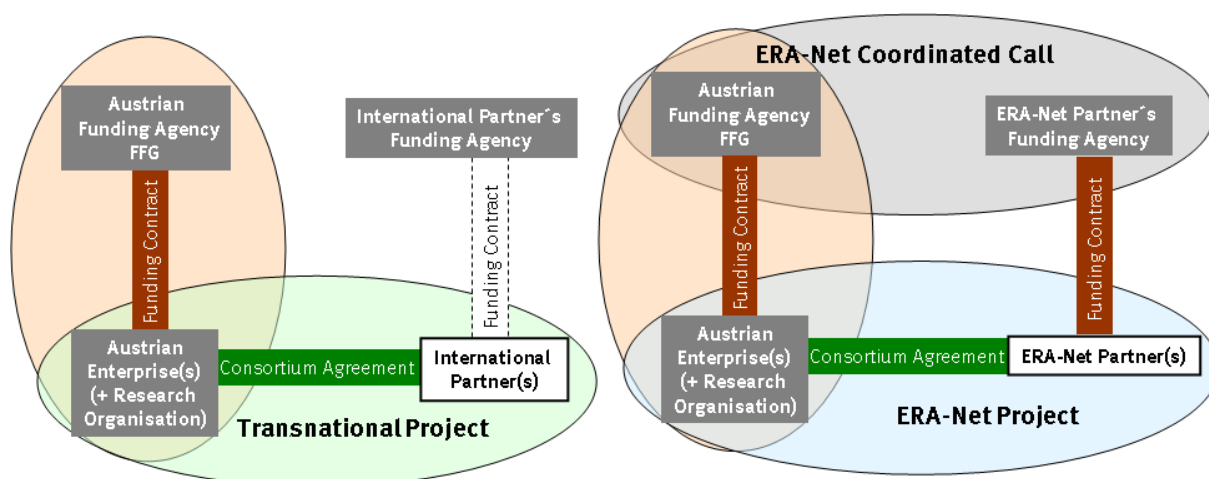


Figure 1: left: Transnational Project outside ERA-NET; right: Transnational Project within ERA-Net

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 2010 (From Micro- and Nanoscale Science to New Technologies for Europe).

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 3rd Call 2010 is open to all kinds of Transnational Projects fulfilling the requirements of the present Call.

Transnational Project within the MNT-ERA.NET Call 2010:

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 20 funding organisations from 17 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 2010**, MNT-ERA.NET encourages the submission of **market oriented proposals addressing micro and nano technologies including production processes and technologies**. Particular emphasis is put on the following application fields:

- Smart sensor systems for Security, Environment and Entertainment (sensor networks, cognitive systems, spintronics, optical systems)
- Medical and health devices (networked monitoring of health parameters, bio sensors and actuators, bio interfaces, lab on chip)
- Functionalised interfaces and structures (micro/nano layers and surfaces, micro/nano structured materials, nano particles and powders)
- Energy for a mobile life (lightweight and energy efficient components, power generation, storage of energy medium, organic photovoltaics)

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 6.3)

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-ERA.NET Call 2010.

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.

Konsortien haben im Falle eines Förderübereinkommens vor Auszahlung der 1. Rate einen unterzeichneten **Konsortialvertrag** vorzuweisen.

Privatuniversitäten, die gemäß dem Bundesgesetz über die Akkreditierung von Bildungseinrichtungen als Privatuniversitäten (Universitäts-Akkreditierungsgesetz - UniAkkG), akkreditiert wurden, dürfen gemäß §8 UniAkkG keine geldwerten Leistungen des Bundes erhalten. Dementsprechend sind diese Privatuniversitäten **nicht teilnahmeberechtigt**.

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 third Call 2010.

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;
- 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 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%**

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**.

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 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

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 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 60%**
- If a **minimum of 50%** of the number of industrial partners are **medium-sized enterprises or small enterprises** → **funding rate min. 50%**

3.4 Eligible Costs

The content of this chapter 3.4 is an excerpt from the “Leitfaden zu Projektabrechnungen und zur Kostenerfassung; Version 1.0” translated into English to inform English speaking project participants. The “Leitfaden zu Projektabrechnungen und zur Kostenerfassung; Version 1.0” in German is available at www.nanoinitiative.at/transnational and www.ffg.at and represents an integral part of this Guide for Proposers.

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. Proof has to be supplied by means of complete and comprehensible records of actual costs.

- **Personnel costs:** The personnel costs are eligible for funding up to the guiding rate defined respectively under 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

⁴ 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 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)

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). 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).

- **Overhead costs** arising directly through the research activity (overheads): Overhead costs comprise amongst others costs for office rental, office equipment and supplies and secretarial support.

For further information regarding personnel costs and overhead costs please see Annex.

- **Costs of Hardware and Equipment (RTD Investments):** This cost category comprises depreciation, leasing costs, as well as other costs relating to the use of infrastructure that are periodically charged against, and can be attributed to, the research project.

Depreciation

The depreciation has to be calculated on the basis of the ordinary useful life. In the course of the calculation of project-related depreciation the pro rata use of RTD infrastructure has to be considered. If the fixed asset has been partly or totally funded the resultant pro rata depreciation is not eligible for funding.

The cost of low-value assets can be budgeted for to the amount of the total of the purchasing cost.

Full depreciation can only be accounted for if evidence is provided for the fact that the facilities / appliances are exclusively used for the funded project, and if these costs have been explicitly approved.

Machine Hours

The costs of the use of RTD infrastructure can be calculated over the periods of machine / facility utilisation times the corresponding machine hour rates. Recording of the project-related machine hours has to be kept by using a machine hour book. The machine-hour rate as a rule consists of depreciation, energy costs and space costs, tool costs, maintenance costs, as well as costs of auxiliary material and operating supplies. It is not possible to claim funding for imputed interest, or for depreciation on the basis of replacement values.

Leasing Costs

Any leasing instalments less financing costs paid by the funding recipient to the lessor during the funding period are eligible for funding. Leasing instalments can be funded up to a maximum of the amount of the pro rata depreciation in case of purchase.

Other R&D Infrastructure Costs

These costs include for instance licence costs or maintenance costs for software and appliances. Funding can only be claimed if these costs can be attributed exclusively to the project, and if they are restricted to the funding period.

- 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.

Funding recipients fulfilling the criteria of being "contract-placing public authorities" according to the *BVergG* (Federal Tendering Act) have to comply with the provisions of the legal regulations for awarding contracts when they award contracts to third parties.

Non-eligible costs:

- Costs that are not eligible for funding due to EU competition law regulations (e.g. for the R&D area: marketing and distribution costs, investment costs);
- Costs that are not eligible for funding due to RTD Directives;
- Costs that are not immediately connected with the project funded respectively costs that cannot be clearly attributed to the project;
- Costs that were incurred before the funding application was received by the FFG (= cut-off date for admission);
- Costs that are excluded from funding according to the funding contract (conditions);
- Costs that are charged to third parties and are therefore not carried by the funding recipient;
- Costs that have already been funded in line with other funding (expenses charged twice or several times)
- Partial amounts of invoices that have not been paid (e.g. discounts, rebates, claims for damages, warranty payments, etc.);
- Financing costs, interest
- Imputed costs, such as e.g. imputed risks, cost-accounting depreciation, imputed interest, etc.
- Costs of acquiring real estate and immovable property
- Reserves and accruals;
- Representation costs;

Recognition of Costs

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

For more information regarding eligible costs please see Annex.

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. More information in connection with the Consortium Agreement is available at www.ffg.at/konsortialvertrag.

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:

1. 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

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 3rd 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 2010 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 2010**, 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:

12 April 2010, 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 electronically by eCall** to the FFG.

Funding applicants are **not required** to send later in a **duly signed official copy** of the **funding application** that has been submitted online.

Independent of whether funding applications are submitted in the name of joint ownership enterprises or partnerships, natural or legal persons, the application has to be submitted exclusively by the funding applicant himself / herself, or by persons sufficiently authorised to represent. This power of representation has to be proved to the FFG on request at any time. If proof of the existence of a sufficient power of representation cannot be provided on application, the FFG reserves the right to reject the funding applications concerned on formal grounds.

For transnational projects which are **not MNT-ERA.NET Projects**: a “**Letter of Intent**” (see Full Proposal application form Part A) has to be signed with a legally valid signature by each foreign partner and it has to be attached to the Full-Proposal submission via eCall upload.

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:

05 July 2010, 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.

Please be aware that the information regarding **costs and funding** have to be **identically** quoted **in the proposal and** in the online **eCall** “Costs and Funding” information.

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 submitted via eCall tool 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.

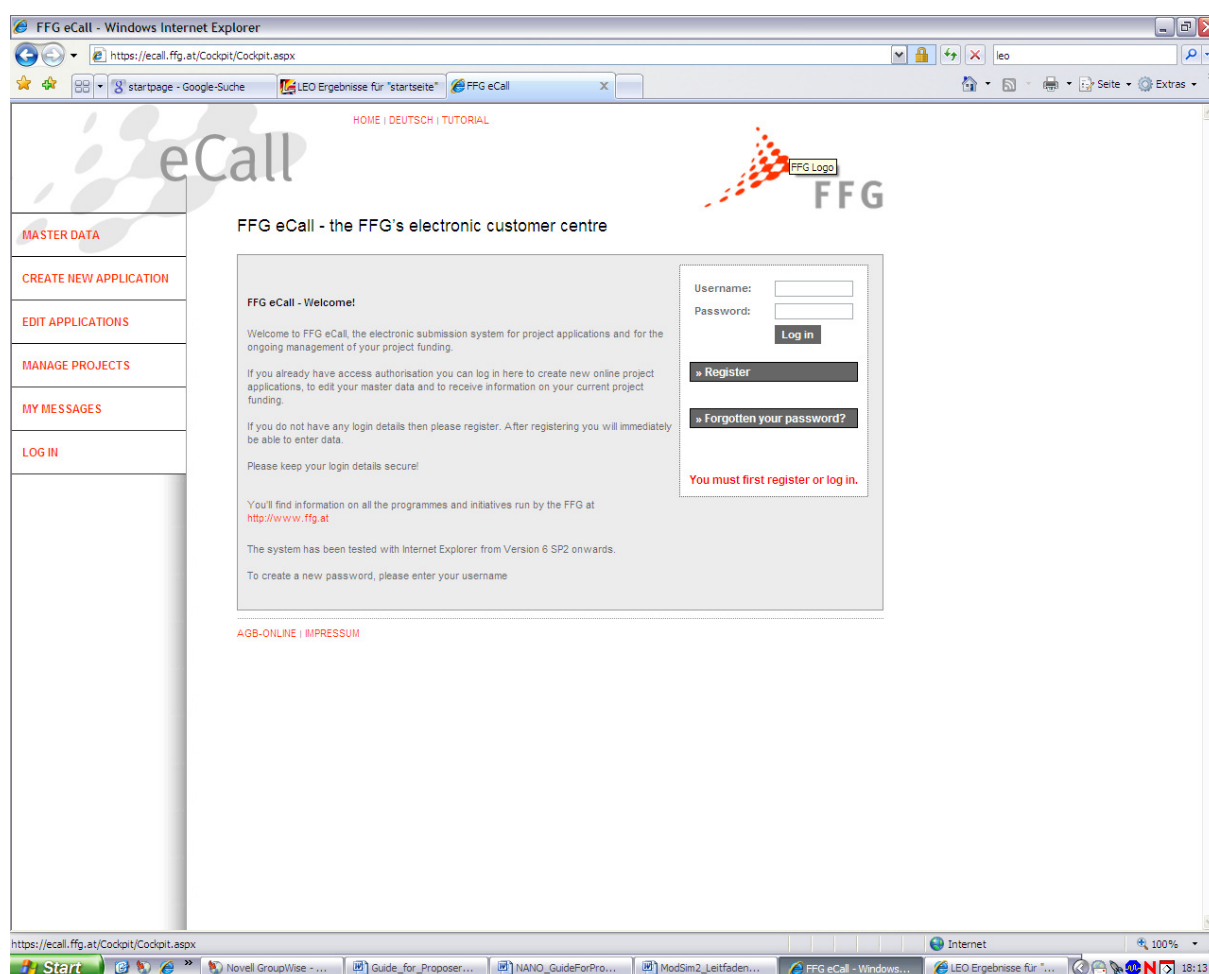
The terms and conditions relevant to the international partner have to be clarified by the consortium itself. Of course the Programme Management of the Austrian NANO Initiative will support the submission of such a project on a case by case basis by contacting the funding agency of the partner abroad, 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 (including annual accounts of the last three years, and Certificate of Registration of the participating Austrian enterprises) of his/her organisation.
- 3) The proposer creates a new proposal under the Call “NANO – 3.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”. For transnational projects which are **not MNT-ERA.NET Projects**: a “**Letter of Intent**” (see Full Proposal application form Part A) has to be signed with a legally valid signature by each foreign partner and it has to be attached to the Full-Proposal submission via eCall upload.
- 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 (including annual accounts of the last three years, and Certificate of Registration of the participating Austrian enterprises) of their organisation.
- 9) 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).
- 10) Subsequently, the proposer submits the complete proposal electronically before the expiry of the submission deadline.

The submission deadline for Pre-proposals is 12 April 2010, 12:00 noon.

The submission deadline for Full Proposals is 5 July 2010, 12:00 noon.

The completed application documents have to be submitted electronically (eCall) by this date. It is not requested to send signed proposals or ecall print views on paper to the FFG.

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 12 April 2010 and 5 July 2010, 12:00 noon).
Project proposals received later will also be registered but will definitely be rejected.

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**” (see Full Proposal application form Part A) has to be signed with a legally valid signature by each foreign partner and it has to be attached to the Full-Proposal submission via eCall upload.

- 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!
- 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 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 36, 37).

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 2010).

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

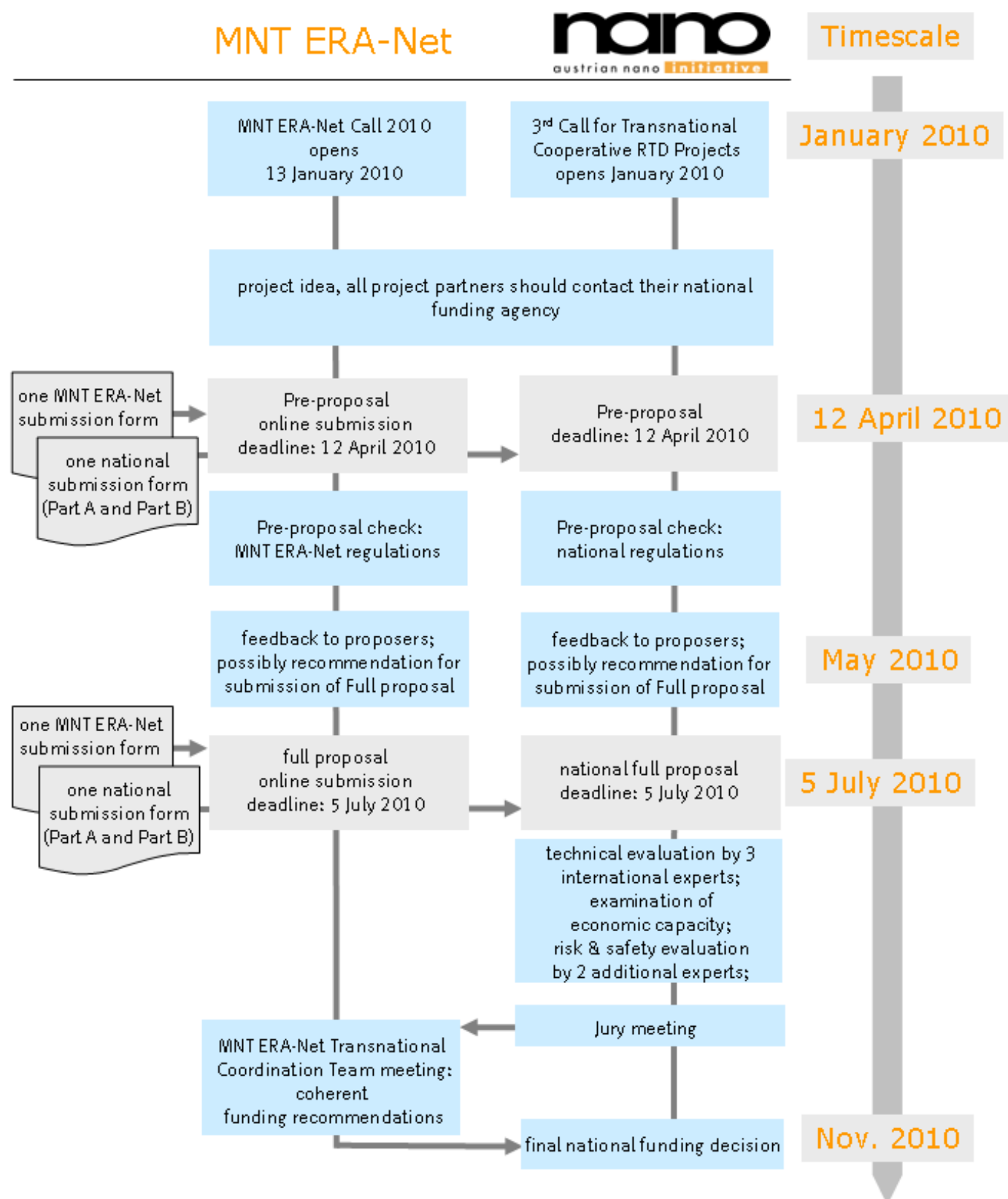
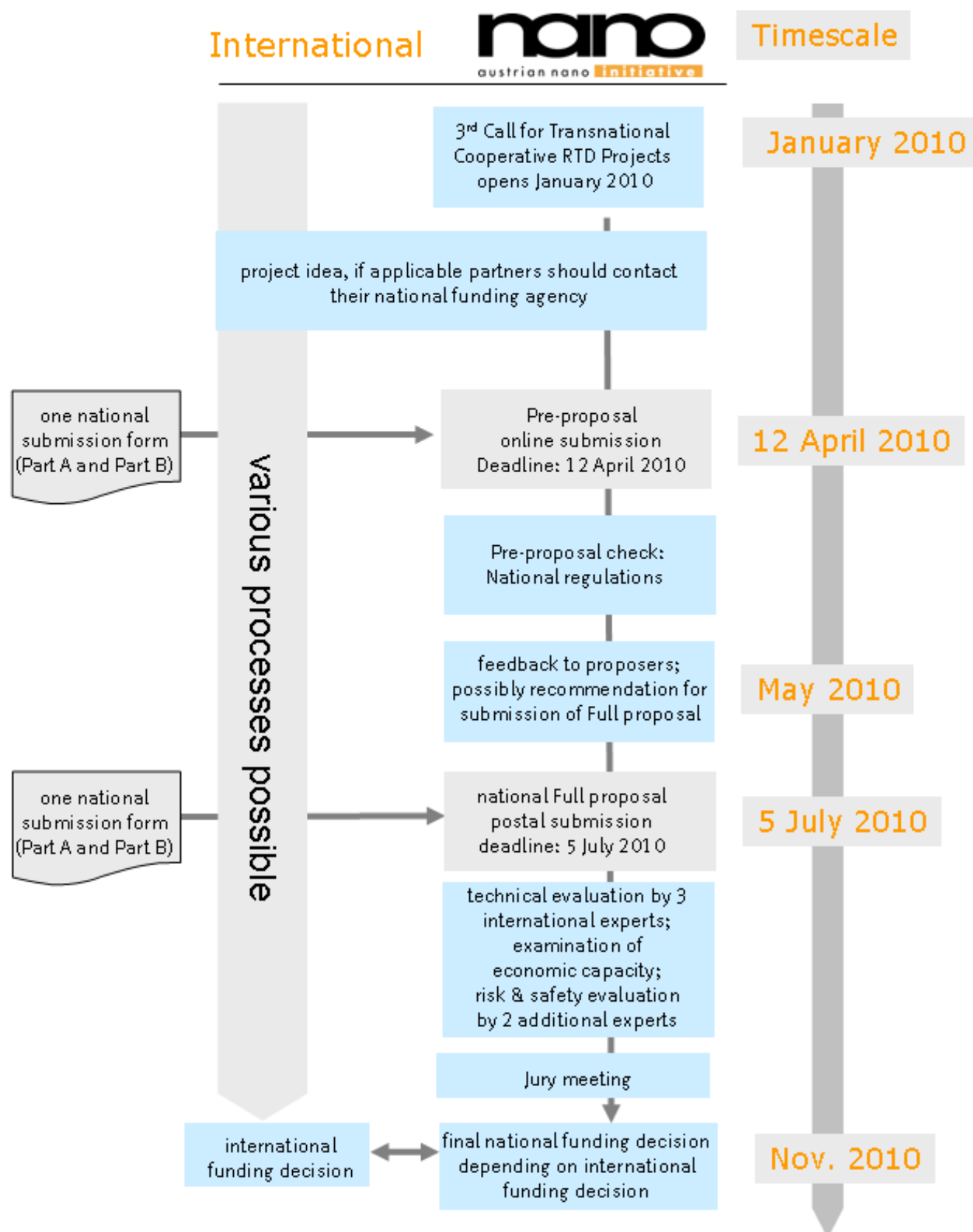


Fig. 3.: Application and Selection Procedure of all Types of Transnational Projects



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 2010/ January 2011). 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. For more information regarding the Consortium Agreement please see www.ffg.at/konsortialvertrag.

The project start for the selected consortia is scheduled for December 2010. 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

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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

The content of this chapter 6.2 is an excerpt from the “Leitfaden zu Projektabrechnungen und zur Kostenerfassung; Version 1.0” translated into English to inform English speaking project participants. The “Leitfaden zu Projektabrechnungen und zur Kostenerfassung; Version 1.0” in German is available at www.nanoinitiative.at/transnational and www.ffg.at and represents an integral part of this Guide for Proposers.

6.2.1 Further Information Concerning Personnel Costs

Acting Partners / Managing Directors / Shareholders Working in the Project

Shareholders working in the project are to be accounted for under the cost/overhead rate in principle.

For Shareholders working in the project (individual enterprises, partnerships and shareholdings up to a share of 25%) that cannot account for personnel costs, a flat hourly rate of max. € 35.-/h (inkl. overhead) can be applied. In case this possibility of a detailed statement of account is used, a maximum of € 58,800.- can be accounted for per person per year.

For small enterprises [threshold values according to EU definition: max. 50 employees, max. € 10 million turnover, max. € 10 million annual balance] shareholders working in the project can be accounted for with the actual hourly rate of the most expensive employee with a corresponding qualification alternatively. Otherwise, in case it is not possible to compare the qualifications (e.g. in very small enterprises), the personnel categories and limits of the “*Verordnung des Bundesministers für Finanzen BGBl. II Nr. 50/1999, Anhang 3, in der jeweils geltenden Fassung*” (Decree of the Federal Minister of Finance, Federal Law Gazette II no. 50/1999, Annex 3, as amended) can be used alternatively as the upper limit – proof of the payment flow has to be provided in any case.

Employed minority partners / shareholders (up to a share of 25%) can be accounted for as employees (see "Calculation of Personnel Costs").

Public Service Employees

In case public service employees (employees of the Federal state, the Federal provinces or the municipalities) render services to a funded project, the respective costs are only eligible for funding in principle if double counting at the expense of public budgets can be excluded. This means that the personnel costs of persons already paid for by public funds cannot be accounted for again by way of a funded project. In case the personnel costs of public service employees arise, or are accounted for, within the framework of a contract (services rendered by third parties), the above restrictions do not apply.

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": 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).

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		
Beschäftigte nach Funktion	Beispiele für Funktionszuordnung	Zuordnung zu Gruppe lt. Verordnung	2005 Jahrespersonealkosten (Brutto inkl. LNK)	2010 Jahrespersonealkosten (Brutto inkl. LNK)	Jahresstunden	2010 valorisierter Stundensatz
Wissenschaftliche Beschäftigte						
1. Führungsebene	Wissenschaftliche Leitung	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 1	104.277	117.614	1680	70,01
2. Führungsebene	stv. wissenschaftliche Leitung, Area Leitung etc.	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 2	90.235	101.776	1680	60,58
Key Scientist	Key Researcher	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 1	104.277	117.614	1680	70,01
Senior Scientist	Senior Researcher	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 2	90.235	101.776	1680	60,58
Junior Scientist	Junior Researcher	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 3	76.192	85.937	1680	51,15
DiplomandInnen & DissertantInnen	Junior Researcher	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 3	76.192	85.937	1680	51,15
Beschäftigte in der Administration						
1. Führungsebene	Geschäftsführung (GF)	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 1	104.277	117.614	1680	70,01
2. Führungsebene	Assistenz der GF	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 2	90.235	101.776	1680	60,58
Key Administration	Controlling	VB-HL-Höh. Dienst 1	104.277	117.614	1680	70,01
Senior Administration	AssistentInnen	VB-VD-Gehob. Dienst 1	40.207	45.349	1680	26,99
Junior Administration	Sekretariat	VB-VD-Gehob. Dienst 2	40.207	45.349	1680	26,99
TechnikerInnen/Fachkräfte	Technician	VB-VD-Gehob. Dienst 1	40.207	45.349	1680	26,99

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%, in 2008 to 2.7%, in 2009 to 3.55%, and in 2010 0.9%. For the following years, a cautiously estimated valorisation can be used.

Please note that the respective maximum rates do not include overhead costs.

Calculation of Personnel Costs

Personnel costs are to be budgeted for on the basis of gross salaries and wages, as well as any taxes, duties and social security contributions relating to these for those employees of the funding recipient who are actually deployed within the funded project. Other payments or benefits in money's worth for staff can only be accounted for if they are provided generally and with legally binding effect by law, by collective bargaining agreements, or in a labour-management contract. Other payments or benefits in money's worth granted to employees without any general legal basis (e.g. voluntary bonuses, company cars, individual gratuities) are not eligible for funding.

In principle, project-related **working-hours records** have to be kept by all project staff.

Personnel providing services for the project to the extent of 100% can be accounted for with the full gross salaries or wages that accrue within the funding period, including the taxes, duties and social security contributions relating to these wages or salaries.

In those cases where personnel is only partly deployed in a particular project, evidence of the project-specific services and the personnel costs relating to them has to be provided by transparent working-hours records of the overall working hours of all persons participating in the project.

The working-hours records have to include a meaningful description of the funded activities that are attributed to the individual projects. The total volume of the working hours has to be credible, and needs to be plausibly justified above all if it is considerably higher than the normal volume of working hours.

The **hourly rate** for each of the persons participating in the project is calculated by dividing the total respective personnel costs (salary, including direct salary related costs) by the total working hours including overtime (working hours divisor), i.e. any overtime pay must only be attributed to a project on a pro-rata basis, not totally or disproportionately.

For reasons of practicality, a working hours divisor of 1680 hours can be used in principle in case staff members have corresponding full-time employment (40-hour week). In case employees work overtime within the framework of labour regulations, the working hours divisor is to be increased by the extent of the amount of overtime worked. For project staff that is not full-time employed, the working hours divisor has to be reduced according to the extent of the employment (e.g. 38,5-hour week 1617 hours).

For **research institutions** according to EU definition 1500 hours per year can be used as a minimum working hours divisor for a full-time equivalent (40-hour week) for the year-based calculation of the hourly rate for the project. It is a precondition that the difference to the working hours divisor of 1680 hours that is usually used otherwise within the FFG results from tasks for supporting the institution's research activities (e.g. for industry sector-specific dissemination of research know-how, further scientific training, etc.). For part-time employment as regulated in the employment contract or lump-sum overtime payments the minimum working hours divisor is to be applied as decreased or increased on a pro-rata basis.

6.2.2 Further Information Concerning Overheads

Overhead costs that arise directly through the (research) project can be claimed in the project statement of account as overheads to the personnel costs. Overheads must not include costs that are directly charged against the project.

Overhead costs can be either applied as a flat rate of 20% or a higher rate can be accounted for by means of disclosing the overhead calculation. If proof of the calculation of the overhead rate is not furnished accordingly, a cost/overhead rate of 20% can be budgeted for instead.

The overhead costs (e.g. for rent, electricity, cleaning, office supplies, secretarial staff) attributed to the funded project must not include any costs that are excluded from funding in principle. These are e.g.

- Additional costs of application to the FFG, face-to-face meetings at the FFG
- Depreciation of funded investments of the current project
- Entertainment expenses
- Advertising and marketing costs
- PR costs
- Distribution costs (mostly also vehicles fleet costs)
- Research expenditure entered in the books
- Reserves
- Accruals
- Bad debt losses
- Exchange differences
- Accounting values of retired assets
- Cases of damage
- Expenses not relating to the period under review
- Financing costs, interest

Evidence of the additional cost/overhead rate is to be provided transparent and plausible by means of disclosing the calculation. The overhead costs have to be attributed e.g. according to working hours, salary costs, office space to all cost centres that are to be considered overall for the enterprise (undertaking, office) as regards the subject matter. If required, the underlying calculation documents will be audited in the course of an audit on site.

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.

6.4 Countries Participating in the MNT-ERA.NET Call 2010

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