



FRENCH-GERMAN CALL FOR PROPOSALS ON PREPAREDNESS AND RAPID RESPONSE TO BIOLOGICAL THREATS

Opened jointly by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the French National Research Agency (ANR, on behalf of Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI))

Link to the publication of the call on the ANR site:

<http://anr.fr/SEBM-2019>

Link to the publication of the call on the BMBF site:

<https://www.bmbf.de/foerderungen/bekanntmachung-2451.html>

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1. OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

Biological threats and hazards do not stop at national borders. To cope with crises that arise from such events, international cooperation is crucial. The aim of the 2019 Franco-German call for proposals is to strengthen effective cooperation between researchers, practitioners and other professionals in the field of crisis prevention and response to threats and hazards caused by epidemic or pandemic outbreaks, technical disasters or intentional malicious release of biological agents.

With the present call for proposals, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the French National Research Agency (ANR) aim to fund interdisciplinary research projects that strengthen civil security and global security in Germany and France. By doing so, BMBF and ANR want to intensify the long-standing and successful cooperation between both countries in civil security/global security matters and thus contribute to the European security architecture.

This call is based on the German Federal Government's "Research for Civil Security 2018 - 2023" framework programme (<http://www.sifo.de>) and on Chapter D.7 "Specific calls with European or international collaboration" part of the "2019 Action Plan" of ANR (in French: <http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/financer-votre-projet/plan-d-action-2019/>).

Following the initial agreement between BMBF and ANR concluded in January 2009 to cooperate in the field of civil security/global security research, BMBF and ANR signed in May 2019 a Declaration of Intent thereby further strengthening their cooperation in security research.

Proposals are expected to put forward ideas to enhance the future of the Franco-German cooperation by identifying challenging research topics in the area of civil security/global security. They shall also lead to research solutions that help to improve citizens' security, that open up international markets for security products and processes and are in full respect of fundamental freedoms and individual rights. The collaborative projects must be designed in an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional way. The natural and engineering sciences shall cooperate with the humanities and social sciences and public authorities to develop joint security solutions which meet practical and societal needs. Projects must take into account societal, ethical, cultural and legal issues.

The call addresses inter alia companies, research institutions, public authorities and organizations performing security tasks. The involvement of partners along the entire innovation chain from research to industry to end users shall support the practical relevance of the developed solutions. Users include local authorities, public authorities, emergency and

rescue services (for example, police, fire departments, Technical Relief/THW, SDIS, German and French Red Cross and other aid organizations), operators of critical infrastructures, transport services and private security service providers.

Research shall be conducted within Franco-German consortia. Such consortia are joint teams of French and German partners with complementary competencies working together in one common project creating joint output.

2. RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Funding will be provided to collaborative projects that conduct research with the aim to provide innovative solutions. For reinforcing prevention, preparedness, detection, response and recovery against biological threats, be they of natural or intentional origin, several priority research themes are recommended. Projects may address current or expected security concerns and have to create substantial added value to Franco-German civil security/global security research.

Specific risks can result from:

- natural phenomena and technical disasters (e.g. disease propagation after flooding),
- epidemic or pandemic outbreaks, especially in cases of emerging diseases, and
- intentional malicious release of biological agents (e.g. for the purpose of committing criminal/terrorist acts).

Proposals need to provide new or integrate existing solutions into targeted approaches for preparedness and response to biological threats and hazards. Proposals must address topics among the following list:

a Detection, identification and analysis of biological threats, e.g. optimization of mobile field diagnostics, microbiological forensics, operating procedures in contaminated crime scenes, management and disinfection of contaminated evidence. Integration of different diagnostic tools, databases and molecular forensics into a coherent detection and alert procedure, including for instruction and training.

b Innovative treatments targeting biological agents, anti-vector technologies and broad spectrum vaccine targeting vector-borne diseases in the context of acute outbreaks.

c Strategies and procedures for first responders and disease control agencies for the rapid provision of antivirals and vaccines to respond to existing, emerging and novel threats, e.g. procedures for collaboration and communication, cross-border exchange of biological agents.

d Pathogen propagation and outbreak modelling and simulation in the context of infectious risks. Scenarios and procedures for optimal crisis management regarding pathogen propagation and epidemics.

e Public acceptability of preventive and response measures such as quarantines or emergency vaccinations in exceptional health situations. Legal, ethical and social aspects with regard to such measures. Tools to train and inform the population.

The submitted project ideas should aim to strengthen the Franco-German cooperation in civil security/global security research in the long term. To support this goal, internal exchanges within the Franco-German consortia and networking directly related to the R&D project are eligible for funding. This includes bilateral joint workshops, exchange visits and activities especially for junior research staff. For each project, some funds should be allocated to allow for an exchange of junior researchers and students, of the master or PhD level, to improve the sustainability of the research.

Proposals should be based on a clear and reasonable civil security scenario; provide solutions geared to real-world needs for improving the security of the population; demonstrate high application potential and are expected to go beyond the current state of the art. Scientific excellence must be clearly evident, the utilization plan should be realistic and comprehensible.

A holistic, interdisciplinary approach at the core of the submitted proposals is key. Project ideas need to take into account the specificities of each country's legal aspects (for example, issues concerning privacy and liability), ethical and societal aspects as well as future-oriented approaches for education, training and continuing education.

Especially legal and ethical concerns related to the protection from biological threats and hazards need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner. Proposals should include, networking activities directly related to the R&D project, particularly for young scientists. Such activities include, but are not limited to, exchange visits, joint workshops with practitioners and research institutions.

Project ideas need to exhibit a clearly identifiable focus on civil security. Submissions that address general health matters or fundamental biological research or focus on IT security are not eligible for funding in this call.

The extent to which the proposed solutions comply with existing DIN/ISO norms and standards should be set out in the proposals. Activities resulting in the establishment of such norms and standards may be funded, if appropriate.

Furthermore, proposals are encouraged to also address means to transfer research results into education where applicable. Such means may include concepts for education and training that aim to improve decision making and communication on security issues. Prospective beneficiaries may put forward plans and modules to adapt complex research results for educational purposes and general awareness building.

End users need to be involved in the projects as to ensure that their needs, knowledge and practical experience are taken into account at an early stage and to support subsequent market take-up of research results.

Applicants should, in their own interest, familiarize themselves with the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020" and examine whether the proposal includes specific European aspects that would make it eligible for exclusive or additional EU funding (see, for example, <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/>). The result of this examination should be briefly described in the proposal. The BMBF and ANR encourage German and French partners to cooperate in conducting joint projects under the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020" (<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/>).

3. SUBMISSION OF JOINT PROPOSALS

Provided this is allowed by the national rules of both sides, German and French partners shall prepare a common proposal (joint proposal) **in English, using the provided template**¹. If the common proposal is drafted in French or German, a translation will be requested and will serve as a basis for evaluation.

The proposal shall be submitted by each coordinator, one for the German and the French side respectively, in an identical version to ANR as well as to VDI Technologiezentrum GmbH (VDI TZ) and may not exceed 25 pages (including the common annex). In addition to the national coordinators, the proposal shall name a spokesperson acting as rapporteur and point of contact for both funding agencies when matters regard the consortium as a whole. His/her main tasks will include the preparation of joint reports and a final report for the ANR and the BMBF, respectively. Furthermore, he/she will represent the consortium publicly and within the scientific community.

The joint proposal shall be structured as follows (for details, see the official template):

¹ Template for the scientific document and the annex (French part) are available to applicants on the ANR and VDI TZ websites.

- 1 Executive summary of the proposal
- 2 Objectives and context of the project
 - 2.1 Overall objective
 - 2.2 Context and relevance of the proposal to the call
 - 2.3 State of the art and patents filed (by applicants, third parties)
 - 2.4 Scientific and/or technical working objectives of the proposal, including envisioned innovations and project feasibility
- 3 Project consortium
 - 3.1 Qualification and contribution of each partner
 - 3.2 Consortium as a whole, including assignment of roles and complementarity
 - 3.3 Added value of the Franco-German cooperation for the project
- 4 Work plan
 - 4.1 Overall project structure
 - 4.2 Detailed description of work packages
 - 4.3 Milestone
 - 4.4 Network plan (Gantt diagram)
 - 4.5 Networking activities plan
- 5 Dissemination and exploitation
 - 5.1 Handling of intellectual property and know how arising in the project
 - 5.2 Scientific, technical and economic utilisation of the results achieved by the partners involved
 - 5.3 Preliminary analysis of ethical, privacy and legal issues, societal and cultural impact
 - 5.4 Added value for the Franco-German research cooperation
- 6 Calculation of estimated costs and funding requests for each partner
- 7 References
- 8 Annexes
 - 8.1 List of individuals involved in the project

3.1. SUBMISSION TO ANR

In France, the joint proposal has to be submitted online to the ANR website via: <http://anr.fr/SEBM-2019> by September 10, 2019 (same date as for VDI TZ). It has to be accompanied by the annex described below:

- A table detailing the contribution of each French partner
- Short CVs of the French coordinator and the key researchers involved
- A detailed work breakdown and milestone chart for the French partners

For further information, please see the national annex for French participants.²

3.2. SUBMISSION TO VDI TZ

In Germany, the joint proposal has to be submitted to VDI TZ via https://www.projekt-portal-vditz.de/bekanntmachung/Biologische_Gefahren_2019. To ensure the validity of the online version of the joint proposal, a signed version of the document shall be submitted to VDI TZ by September 10, 2019 (same date as for ANR).

For further information, please see the respective national call³

4. ELIGIBILITY

The project proposal must fulfil the eligibility criteria defined specifically for this call, as well as criteria specific to ANR and VDI TZ. Projects proposals that do not meet the eligibility criteria, whether common to both sides or unique to each, cannot be funded. Project proposals may be declared ineligible at any stage of the process.

4.1. Common eligibility criteria

- 4.1.1. The project proposal shall be considered complete if the online forms are filled out and the scientific document and the annex (only for the ANR submission) are uploaded to both submission websites by the specified date and time of closure.
- 4.1.2. Scope: The scope of the proposal must fit in with the topics outlined above. Proposals that address general health matters or fundamental biological research or focus on IT security are not eligible for funding.
- 4.1.3. The project's planned duration must be the same for both countries' partners. The time range is 36 months.
- 4.1.4. The French part of the consortium will consist of at least two partners, one at least being a research institute (non-university or university) that cannot be a company.

² <http://anr.fr/SEBM-2019> Link to the national annex for French partners

³ <https://www.bmbf.de/foerderungen/bekanntmachung-2451.html> Link to the national call for German partners

End users will be integrated as part of the consortium or through an ad hoc advisory board.

4.1.5. The German part of the consortium will also consist of at least two partners, one at least being a research institute (non-university or university). End users will be integrated as funded partners or as associated partners (without funding).

4.1.6. Members of the Peer Review Panels cannot be involved in any of the submitted project proposals to the call.

4.2. Specific national criteria

For specific national criteria, please see the national call text for German participants and the national Annex for French participants respectively.

5. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF JOINT PROPOSALS

The joint proposals will be evaluated separately by national evaluation committees on the French and German side in parallel, in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Relevance to the subject of the call for proposals
2. Scientific and technical quality, innovativeness and knowledge gain
3. Quality of consortium, including involvement of practitioners and SMEs
4. Methodology, efficiency and quality of project construction
5. Overall impact of the project, including scientific dissemination and economic exploitation
6. Added value of the bilateral cooperation and expected benefit for both the French and the German side
7. Balanced scientific and full cost financial contributions from respective countries' partners.
8. Promotion of the exchange of young researchers
9. Consideration of socio-economic questions and involvement of end users
10. Necessity of resources and funding requested

On the basis of the national evaluations, suitable proposals will be selected for funding in a selection process coordinated between BMBF and MESRI/ANR.

6. FUNDING PROVISIONS

ANR will fund French partners and BMBF will fund German partners in accordance with and subject to the regulations and policies applicable to each side and the available financial resources. Project partners are required to sign a consortium agreement if this is mandatory under the national rules applicable to them. ANR's funding regulations are available at: <http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/financer-votre-projet/reglement-financier/>; BMBF's

funding regulations are available at:
https://foerderportal.bund.de/easy/easy_index.php?auswahl=easy_formulare&formularschranke=bmbf.

7. REPORTING AND MONITORING

Provided this is allowed by the national rules of both sides, the mid-term and final reports shall be produced in English jointly by the French and German partners in the format provided by the ANR/VDI TZ.

The mid-term and final reports shall be submitted to ANR and VDI TZ according to their respective funding terms and other applicable national rules. However, French and German partners are encouraged to work together in order to align the content of their formal final reports to the extent possible.