Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on International Cooperation in Research Funding within the Framework of the ERA-Net NEURON

Commitment for: Joint Transnational Call 2024

July 2023

Established between the following partners, referred to hereafter as “funding organisations” and their home countries referred to as “partner countries”:

Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique-FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS)	Belgium
Ministry of Science and Education (MSE)	Croatia
French National Research Agency (ANR)	France
Federal ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)	Germany
German Research Foundation (DFG)	Germany
National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH)	Hungary
Chief Scientist Office, Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH)	Israel
Ministry of Health (MOH)	Italy
Latvian Council of Science (LZP)	Latvia
Research Council of Lithuania (LMT)	Lithuania
Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development & Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)	Romania
Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS)	Slovakia
Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI)	Spain
National Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII)	Spain
Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)	Switzerland
National Science and Technology Council (NSTC)	Taiwan
The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK)	Turkey

INTRODUCTION

Maintenance, improvement, and restoration of human brain health are of fundamental importance and a worldwide priority. It has become increasingly evident that bidirectional communication between the central nervous system and the body has significant implications for maintaining both homeostatic and brain

function. Abnormalities in brain-body interaction linked to genetic, environmental of lifestyle factors encompass a wide range of conditions affecting millions worldwide. Dysregulation of the brain-body axis can potentially contribute to or exacerbate various neurological and psychiatric disorders. The estimated prevalence can vary significantly depending on factors such as geographic location, population demographics, and advancements in medical diagnosis.

The study of bidirectional interactions between the central nervous system and the body is an emerging field of research that holds the potential to enhance our understanding of often overlooked pathophysiological processes involved in common neurological and psychiatric disorders. Expanding our current knowledge in this area is crucial as it serves as the initial step towards the development of therapeutic and preventive approaches aimed at preserving and improving brain health on a global scale.

The 'Network of European Funding for Neuroscience Research' (NEURON) has been established under the ERA-NET scheme of the European Commission (www.neuron-eranet.eu). The ERA-NET NEURON aims to coordinate and optimize research efforts and funding programmes of its partner countries/regions in the field of mental, neurological, and sensory disorders. Under the umbrella of NEURON, a joint transnational call (**JTC 2024**) in the field of **bidirectional brain-body interactions** is now launched. The current call will cover multiple areas in which brain-body interaction appears to be centrally implicated in the genesis or progression of common neurological and psychiatric disorders. The call will be conducted simultaneously by the respective national and regional funding organisations and coordinated centrally by the Joint Call Secretariat.

1. CONTENT OF THE JOINT TRANSNATIONAL CALL

It is hereby decided that the funding organisations will launch a transnational programme **"BIDIRECTIONAL BRAIN-BODY INTERACTIONS"** which will be jointly managed and financed by the participating funding organisations, which are members (except DFG) of the ERA-NET for brain related diseases and disorders of the nervous system (NEURON Cofund2) and in compliance with their respective legal frameworks and regulations. The programme will be implemented by a call for proposals to be launched and processed in 2024. The call will be opened simultaneously by the funding organisations in the respective countries that may need it.

2. AIM AND SCOPE OF THE CALL

The aim of the call is to facilitate multinational, collaborative research projects that will address critical translational and clinical questions to improve our knowledge concerning **the role of bidirectional central nervous system-body interactions on the genesis and progression of neurological and psychiatric diseases.** A better understanding of these interactions has the potential to uncover solutions to prevent and treat those disorders.

The central nervous system and other body compartments are highly interconnected. The central nervous system affects physiological functions through signals transmitted from the brain to the body and vice versa. Signals from peripheral organs to the brain could be derived from the immune system, metabolic processes, gut-brain axis and microbiome, among others. Dysregulation of the brain-body communication may cause severe brain disorders. The roles of the signals and their pathways for regulating brain functions are poorly understood. Consequently, the associated pathophysiological mechanisms leading to central nervous system disorders and their related co-morbidities are largely unknown.

The ERA-NET NEURON funding organisations particularly wish to promote multi-disciplinary work and translational research proposals that combine basic and clinical approaches. The consortia should submit novel, ambitious ideas that can only be achieved by the complementary collaboration between partners.

Research proposals should cover at least one of the following areas:

a) Fundamental research on the role of the bidirectional brain-body interaction on the pathogenesis and/or aetiology of neurological and psychiatric diseases. This may include the development of innovative or shared resources and technologies considered of relevance in the context of this call.

b) Pre-clinical and clinical research to develop new strategies for prevention, diagnosis, therapy, and rehabilitation procedures for diseases in which alterations in brain-body communication constitutes a relevant process of the pathology.

The following research areas are excluded from this call:

- Neurodegenerative disorders that are addressed by the EU Joint Programme – Neurodegenerative Disease Research (JPND) [1].
- Proposals focusing on neuro-oncology.
- Proposals dealing primarily with periphery organ functions (e.g. lung, sensory organs, liver, cardiovascular, etc.) without specifically focusing on the brain-body interaction aspect.
- Proposals focusing solely on technological developments in disregard of neurobiological mechanisms.

Applicants should demonstrate that they have the expertise and skills required to conduct the study, including already established external collaborations.

[1] Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative dementias, Parkinson's disease (PD) and PD-related disorders, Prion disease, Motor neuron diseases, Huntington's disease, Spinocerebellar ataxia, Spinal muscular atrophy

The translational value for human disease must be addressed explicitly in the proposals. If used, the choice of the animal model must be justified in the context of human pathology. The development of new transgenic animal models is outside the scope of the current call. The use of existing transgenic models and the usage of infrastructures offering access to existing models is encouraged. The consideration of sex differences in the studies is mandatory.

Clinical studies are eligible up to the point of proof of concept[2]. Multimodal and multicenter clinical studies are highly encouraged. The proposals should consider the cultural, societal background and general individual diversity of patients if relevant. ERA-NET NEURON will not fund the establishment of large cohorts, but the use of existing cohorts, biobanks/brain banks and exploitation of existing datasets is encouraged. Appropriate access to relevant, well-characterized patient populations or suitable biomaterial collections must be demonstrated. The proposal should describe plans to make data available for the research and clinical communities. It is recommended that the appropriate European infrastructures are contacted early in the planning of the projects; the following are potentially of interest for the applicants to this call: EBRAINS (focused on data and tools for brain-related research), INFRAFRONTIER (focused on modelling of human diseases) with the European Mouse Mutant Archive (EMMA), ECRIN (focused in clinical research), EATRIS-ERIC (focused on translational medicine), BBMRI-ERIC (focused on biobanking), and ELIXIR (focused on data sharing).

The ERA-NET NEURON seeks to strengthen patient engagement in research. All applications should include a description of expected outcomes with potential relevance for patients. Applicants are expected to engage patients, their care givers or patient organisations as appropriate in the research. Meaningful patient engagement can occur at the level of research planning, conducting research or disseminating research results. Patient representatives will assess patient engagement aspects, the feasibility, and the relevance of the full proposals from a patient perspective.

3. PROCEDURES FOR THE JOINT TRANSNATIONAL CALL AND THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The procedures of the joint transnational call, its funding organisations and the evaluation procedures are detailed in the document “Procedures for the Joint Transnational Call 2024 and the evaluation process of the ERA-NET NEURON”, see Annex C. All decisions concerning the procedures of the joint transnational call and the evaluation will be taken by the Call Steering Committee (Annex B- Call Steering Committee composition).

4. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICATIONS

[2] Eligibility and funding requirements for clinical trials vary between the partner countries. Clarification may be obtained from the individual funding organisations.

Joint transnational research proposals may be submitted by research teams working in universities (or other higher education institutions), non-university public or private research organisations, hospitals or foundations, and commercial companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises. The eligibility of the afore-mentioned institutions, together with details of eligible costs (e.g. personnel, material, consumables, travel money, investments), are subject to the administrative requirements of individual funding organisations and will therefore differ. Please note that, for some funding organisations, commercial companies are not eligible or are only eligible under certain conditions (e.g. only in partnership with academic institutions in the consortium). Clarification should be obtained from the individual funding organisations (see contact details below). It is strongly recommended to carefully read the funder-specific regulations regarding eligibility and funding and to contact the respective funding organisations, since additional national/regional procedures might be mandatory.

Only transnational projects will be funded. Each consortium submitting a proposal must comprise a minimum of three research partners eligible for funding by organisations listed in this call text (see above). Involvement of promising early career researchers (ECRs)[3] as consortium partners is highly encouraged and will be part of the evaluation criteria (see section D). The eligible research partners must be from at least three different participating countries. The total number of research partners in a consortium is limited to five, including partners participating with their own expenses. No more than two consortium partners can be from the same country. Attention should be paid to respect gender balance among the partners of a consortium.

The ERA-NET NEURON strives to strengthen a global Brain Research Area by including as many partner countries as possible in its funding scheme. Therefore, consortia including at least one partner from countries that are to date underrepresented in this funding scheme (Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Taiwan, and Turkey) may increase the total number of partners to six.

Applicant partners who are not eligible for funding from their national/regional funding organisations or from countries that are not involved in this call, may participate in consortia only if a) their participation clearly provides an added value to the consortium, and b) they have secured a budget for their part in the project. Such potential partners are not considered in the minimum number of three research partners mentioned above. In any case, the total number of research partners in one consortium must not exceed five, or six, if partners from the underrepresented countries (listed above) are included.

Each consortium should have the critical mass to achieve ambitious scientific goals and **should clearly demonstrate added value** from working together. Each consortium must nominate a coordinator who represents the consortium externally and is responsible for its internal management (e.g.

[3] **2-7 years of experience since completion of PhD** or medical specialization diploma **at the date of the launch of this call** and a scientific track record showing great promise. Allowed extensions 18 months maternity leave for each child born, duration of paternity leave for each child born, duration of long-term illness or national service, duration of clinical training with a maximum of 4 years). *Please check the country specific regulations for the national eligibility criteria that apply.*

the application procedure, coordination of consortium agreement drafting, Data Management Plan, reporting). The consortium coordinator must be eligible for funding from one of the organisations listed in this call text.

A single proposal must be submitted by the consortium coordinator to the NEURON Joint Call Secretariat. The individual research partners in a consortium will be funded by the respective national/regional NEURON funding organisation(s). Eligibility criteria are the matter of individual partner funding organisations and additional national/regional regulations and requirements may apply.

The inclusion of a research partner that is not eligible for funding according to the specific regulations of its respective funding organisation may result in the rejection of the entire proposal without further review. Therefore, applicants are strongly advised to follow the instructions in the funder-specific eligibility section, published on the NEURON website and to contact their national/regional funding organisation to confirm eligibility rules before submitting a proposal.

Only projects that fulfil the legal and ethical international/EU regulations (including ethical standards and guidelines in Horizon EUROPE) as well as national and institutional standards will be funded. All proposed activities including those undertaken in countries outside the EU must comply with EU regulations (see Annex I of the full proposal template). Ethical approval and/or a positive vote must be obtained from the relevant national or local ethics committee(s) prior to the start of respective studies[4]. The obtainment of ethical clearance will be queried by ERA-NET NEURON. All procedures involving human beings must conform to the Helsinki Declaration.

5. FUNDING

The funds provided by the funding organisation to this MoU under Annex A will be used for research carried out by beneficiaries of funds and pursuant to the respective partner countries' funding organisation rules and their legal frameworks and regulations.

The funding organisations have decided to launch a joint call using the "virtual common pot" funding model. Specifically, the "jointly funded national projects" model is used, where each funding organisation funds its own approved and selected applicants with the envisioned amount of money, and there is no allocation to a real common pot.

The proposed projects will be funded in accordance with the ranking order determined as a result of the peer review meeting, starting with the top-scoring proposals. In order to avoid funding gaps, each funding organisation will match as accurately and realistically as possible the financial demand from the proposals with the budget earmarked for the call.

The final decision on funding will be taken by the respective partner countries' funding organisations.

[4] Requirements for ethical approvals may vary between the partner countries. Please refer to the funder-specific information or contact the individual funding organisations.

Selected projects will receive funding directly from the corresponding national/regional funding organisations subject to their respective legal frameworks and regulations. Funding will be given and administered according to the terms and conditions of the national/regional funding organisations implicated taking into account all other applicable national regulations and legal frameworks.

6. DATA PROTECTION

The funding organisations jointly determine the purposes and means of the processing activities. As provided for in Art 26 GDPR, their mutual roles and relationships are stated in the Referring to NEURON Cofund2 – 964215 – Data Controlling Agreement. In any case, all funding organisations commit to guarantee a level of data protection at least equivalent to the EU GDPR.

The funding organisations accept to comply with the general data protection regulations[5] and they will take any measures to protect the data of all persons involved in the process. The Funding organisations will not share personal data with third parties other than external confidential advisers and parties required by national laws. The processing of proposers' data only takes place in order to conduct a reviewing process and to select eligible projects in cooperation with the respective funding ministries. All reviewers will sign confidentiality agreements.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

The MoU will become effective on the date of its signature by the funding organisations and will remain valid for the entire funding period of the call (expected to start early in 2025 and to last three years). The funding organisations have thus to be aware that the agreement to their participation in the joint call, including their financial commitment for the whole funding period of the research projects which might be longer than the duration of the ERA-Net NEURON Cofund 2. This will concern the termination of the last national project, all possible run time extensions, reporting duties and national financial matters.

The funding organisations may amend this MoU upon their mutual written consent. A funding organisation may terminate its participation in this MoU. The termination does not release the terminating party from meeting the obligations set forth in Article 5 of this MoU whereby it has to ensure the confidentiality of collected and processed personal data.

In case of conflict between funding organisations concerning the MoU's dispositions, the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement Neuron Cofund2 shall prevail respectively. Nothing in this MoU shall be deemed to require a Party to breach any mandatory statutory law under which the Party is operating its national grants.

[5] The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679

This MoU will not be deemed to create a legal relationship or any other form of partnership franchise or agency relationship between the funding organisations. Furthermore, each funding organisations remains solely responsible for its acts, assertions, commitments, services, products and personnel. The funding organisations mutually agree that any tolerance of a situation by one funding organisations shall not grant the other funding organisations any rights in that respect. Moreover, such a tolerance shall not be construed as a waiver of the rights in question.

For the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia

Signature and stamp:

NAME: prof. RNDr. Pavol Šajgalík, DrSc.

POSITION: President SAS

Date: 13 October 2023

For the National Centre for Research and Development, Partner Country

Signature and stamp:

NAME:

POSITION:

Date:

Annex A – Anticipated indicative amount of funding provided by each funding organisation

All funding organisations should attempt to secure an adequate amount of money to finance highly ranked transnational proposals.

The minimum intended contribution by each participating funding body to fund recommended research consortia submitting at the joint transnational call on *Bidirectional brain-body interactions* is specified below.

Partner Country	Funding organisation	Anticipated amount of funding (for 3 years)	Anticipated number of fundable research groups
Belgium	Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique-FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS)	200.000€	1
Croatia	Ministry of Science and Education (MSE)	200.000€	1
France	French National Research Agency (ANR)	1.800.000€	6-7
Germany	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)	3.000.000€	8-9
Germany	German Research Foundation (DFG)	1.000.000€	3
Hungary	National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH)	300.000€	2-3
Israel	Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH)	320.000€	2
Italy	Ministry of Health (MOH)	1.500.000€	4
Latvia	Latvian Council of Science (LZP)	600.000€	2
Lithuania	Research Council of Lithuania (LMT)	200.000€	2
Romania	Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development & Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)	500.000€	1-2
Slovakia	Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS)	120.000€	1
Spain	Spanish State Research Agency (AEI)	800.000€	4
Spain	National Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII)	750.000€	3-4
Switzerland	Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)	~950.000€ (CHF 1.000.000)	3-4
Taiwan	National Science and Technology Council (NSTC)	810.000€	2-3
Turkey	The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK)	300.000€	2-3

The total intended contribution is 13.4 M €.

Annex B – Call Steering Committee composition

- **Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique – FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS), Belgium**

Representative
Name: Florence Quist
Position: Scientific Officer
Proxy
Name: Jöel Groeneveld
Position: Senior Policy Officer

- **Ministry of Science and Education (MSE), Croatia**

Representative
Name: Mr. Hrvoje Meštrić, Ph.D.
Position: Director of the Directorate for Science and Technology
Proxy
Name: Mr. Mateo Ante Bosnić
Position: Senior Expert Advisor at MSE

- **French National Research Agency (ANR), France**

Representative
Name: Sheyla Mejia-Gervacio
Position: Scientific Coordinator
Proxy
Name:
Position: Scientific Officer

- **Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Germany**

Representative
Name: Dr. Renate Loskill
Position: Head of the Division of Health Research

- **German Research Foundation (DFG), Germany**

Representative
Name: Dr. Anke Ley
Position: Programme Officer

- **National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH), Hungary**

Representative
Name: Klára Horváth
Position: Scientific Officer
Proxy
Name:
Position:

- **Chief Scientist Office, Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH), Israel**

Representative
Name: Dr. Irit Allon
Position: Director of medical research department

Proxy
Name: Dr. Liron Even-Faitelson
Position: ERA-NET and EU Joint Programmes National Coordinator

- **Ministry of Health (MOH), Italy**

Representative
Name: Dr. Gaetano Guglielmi
Position: Head Office 3 – Health Research
Proxy
Name: Chiara Ciccarelli
Position: International Relations Officer

- **Latvian Council of Science (LZP), Latvia**

Representative
Name: Dr. Uldis Berkis
Position: ERA-NET Project Manager
Proxy
Name: Dr Maija Bundule
Position: Head of Division

- **Research Council of Lithuania (LMT), Lithuania**

Representative
Name: Dr. Živilė Ruželė
Position: Advisor
Proxy
Name: Dr Viktoras Mongirdas
Position: Head of International Cooperation Unit

- **Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development & Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI), Romania**

Representative
Name: Mihaela Manole
Position: International projects coordinator
Proxy
Name: Nicoleta Dumitrache
Position: International projects coordinator

- **Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS), Slovakia**

Representative
Name: Katarina Bibova
Position: Programme Officer
Proxy
Name: Silvia Kecerova
Position: Programme Officer

- **Spanish State Research Agency (AEI), Spain**

Representative
Name: Esther Chacón
Position: Head of Environment and Health Unit
Proxy
Name: Estrella Fernández

Position: Deputy Head of Subdivision

- **National Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII), Spain**

Representative
Name:
Position: Programme Manager
Proxy
Name: Cristina Nieto
Position: Project Officer

- **Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), Switzerland**

Representative
Name: Dr Christoph Meier
Position: Head of Unit Projects Life Sciences
Proxy
Name: Dr Francis Parlange
Position: Scientific Officer

- **National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), Taiwan**

Representative
Name: Chih-Cheng YEH
Position: Director General
Proxy
Name: Ching-Mei TANG
Position: Program Director

- **The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK), Turkey**

Representative
Name: Dr. Recep Emrah ÇEVİK
Position: Scientific Programs Expert, Heath Sciences Research Funding Group, Directorate for Research Funding Programmes
Proxy
Name:
Position:

Annex C – Call procedures

Procedures for the Joint Transnational Call 2024 and the Evaluation Process of the ERA-NET NEURON

July 2023

This working document is a mutual statement of intention among all partners organizing the Joint Transnational Call who agree to make every reasonable effort to fulfil the intents expressed in the Joint Transnational Call as well as its implementation as described below.

A. Call Steering Committee (CSC)

The Call Steering Committee (CSC) is equal to or is a subset of the Network Steering Committee (NSC), comprising the NEURON Cofund2 partners which participate in the Joint Transnational Call. Funding organisations that are not NEURON Cofund2 partners but participate in the respective Joint Transnational Call are also members of the CSC. **Each member of the CSC has one vote.** Potential applicants are not allowed on the CSC.

The CSC will decide on the text of the Joint Transnational Call and the composition of the Peer Review Panel (PRP) including patient and ethic experts. The members of the review panel will be proposed by the partners, the applicants (via electronic submission tool), and the Joint Call Secretariat (JCS) the final list of reviewers will be approved by the CSC. In addition, at least one expert from the DFG Review Board (renowned scientists in neuroscience) has to be included in the PRP. Based on the recommendations of the review panel, the CSC will decide on the proposals to be funded. The CSC members are entitled to join the review panel meeting as observers. Each participating funding organisation will make the final funding decision according to their respective regulations and availability of funds.

Potential applicants participating in NEURON activities (such as NEURON NSC members or members of the SAB), may contribute to Joint Transnational Calls (JTCs) by suggesting and discussing call topics. However, they are not allowed to participate in the final discussions and decision of the call topic. Potential applicants do not participate in drafting the call text. NEURON Cofund2 partners who have participated in decisions concerning the call or in drafting the call text are not eligible to submit proposals in the respective call.

B. Funding recipients

Joint transnational research proposals may be submitted by research teams working in universities (or other higher education institutions), non-university public or private research organisations, hospitals or foundations, and commercial companies, particularly small and medium-size enterprises. The eligibility of the afore-mentioned institutions, together with details of eligible costs (e.g. personnel, material, consumables, travel money, investments), are subject to the administrative requirements of individual funding organisations and will therefore differ. Please note that, for some funding organisations, commercial companies are not eligible or are only eligible under certain conditions (e.g. only in partnership with academic institutions in the consortium). Clarification should be obtained from the individual funding organisations (see contact details below). It is strongly recommended to carefully read the funder-specific regulations regarding eligibility and funding and to contact the respective funding organisations, since additional national/regional procedures might be mandatory.

Only transnational projects will be funded. Each consortium submitting a proposal must comprise a minimum of three research partners eligible for funding by organisations listed in this call text (see above). Involvement of promising early career researchers (ECRs)[6] as consortium partners is highly encouraged and will be part of the evaluation criteria (see section D). The eligible research partners must be from at least three different participating countries. The total number of research partners in a consortium is limited to five, including partners participating with their own expenses. No more than two consortium partners can be from the same country. Attention should be paid to respect gender balance among the partners of a consortium.

The ERA-NET NEURON strives to strengthen a global Brain Research Area by including as many partner countries as possible in its funding scheme. Therefore, consortia including at least one partner from countries that are to date underrepresented in this funding scheme (Croatia, Hungary Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Taiwan, and Turkey) may increase the total number of partners to six.

Applicant partners who are not eligible for funding from their national/regional funding organisations or from countries that are not involved in this call, may participate in consortia only if a) their participation clearly provides an added value to the consortium, and b) they have secured budget for their part in the project. Such potential partners are not considered in the minimum number of three research partners mentioned above. In any case, the total number of research partners in one consortium must not exceed five, or six, if partners from the underrepresented countries (listed above) are included.

[6] **2-7 years of experience since completion of PhD** or medical specialization diploma **at the date of the launch of this call** and a scientific track record showing great promise. Allowed extensions 18 months maternity leave for each child born, duration of paternity leave for each child born, duration of long-term illness or national service, duration of clinical training with a maximum of 4 years). *Please check the country specific regulations for the national eligibility criteria that apply.*

Each consortium should have the critical mass to achieve ambitious scientific goals and **should clearly demonstrate added value** from working together. Each consortium must nominate a coordinator who represents the consortium externally and is responsible for its internal management (e.g. the application procedure, coordination of consortium agreement drafting, Data Management Plan, reporting). The consortium coordinator must be eligible for funding by one of the organisations listed in this call text.

A single proposal must be submitted by the consortium coordinator to the NEURON Joint Call Secretariat. The individual research partners in a consortium will be funded by the respective national/regional NEURON funding organisation(s). Eligibility criteria are the matter of individual partner funding organisations and additional national/regional regulations and requirements may apply.

The inclusion of a research partner that is not eligible for funding according to the specific regulations of its respective funding organisation may result in the rejection of the entire proposal without further review. Therefore, applicants are strongly advised to follow the instructions in the funder-specific eligibility section, published on the NEURON website and to contact their national/regional funding organisation to confirm eligibility rules before submitting a proposal.

Only projects that fulfil the legal and ethical international/EU regulations (including ethical standards and guidelines in Horizon EUROPE) as well as national and institutional standards will be funded. All proposed activities including those undertaken in countries outside the EU must comply with EU regulations (see Annex I of the full proposal template). Ethical approval and/or a positive vote must be obtained from the relevant national or local ethics committee(s) prior to the start of respective studies[7]. The obtainment of ethical clearance will be queried by ERA-NET NEURON. All procedures involving human beings must conform to the Helsinki Declaration.

C. Contents and submission of joint proposals

There will be a **two-stage procedure** for the submission of joint applications: **pre-proposals** and **full proposals**. In both cases, one joint **proposal document** (in English) shall be prepared by the partners of a joint transnational proposal and must be submitted to the Joint Call Secretariat by the coordinator. The information given in the pre-proposal is binding. Thus, any fundamental changes between the pre- and full proposals stages concerning the composition of the consortia, objectives of the project or requested budget must be communicated to the Joint Call Secretariat and approved by the respective funding organisations **with detailed justifications** and will only be allowed **in exceptional cases*** before passing to the evaluation stage.

***In case of:**

- withdrawal of an eligible partner, the proposal will be eligible provided that there is still a minimum of 3 eligible research partners from 3 different countries applying for funding, and the work plan

[7] Requirements for ethical approvals may vary between the partner countries. Please refer to the funder-specific information or contact the individual funding organisations.

aims of the consortium are not changed substantially. However, in that case work packages may be re-distributed among the consortium and/or a new eligible partner could be added as a replacement without substantial change in the scientific aims.

- a research partner considered non-eligible by its respective agency, the research partner can be replaced, provided the national eligibility and approval of this exchange by the CSC. Alternatively, the non-eligible partner can continue participating by engaging other sources of funding available. This rule can only be applied to one single partner, excluding the coordinator of the consortium.
- changes in the work plan introduced in order to address reviewers' criticisms or advice.
- an increase of the requested budget will only be allowed upon revision of detailed justifications.

Other justifications may be accepted on a case-by-case basis after examination by JCS and the CSC's approval.

C1. Pre-proposal contents:

Pre-proposals must contain the following information, provided on the respective forms available through the NEURON website.

- Acronym and project title.
- Names and full affiliations of the project coordinator and the participating consortium partners leaders. Total requested funding.
- A description of the working programme including the objectives, the rationale and the methodology highlighting the novelty, originality and feasibility as well as the added value of the collaboration (complementary of expertise and methodology) (six pages maximum, including references and diagrams).
- A brief CV for each partner, coordinator and consortium partners leaders, with a list of up to five relevant publications within the last five years demonstrating the competence to carry out the project, description of patents and ongoing projects of each participating consortium partner related to the present topic, indicating funding sources and possible overlaps with pre-proposal (one page maximum, each).
- A budget plan indicating the requested funding and the total cost of the project for each project partner (total budget). In case a research partner participates on own expenses they should indicate the total budget allocated to the project in the respective budget table.

Additional documents or parallel submissions may be requested by some national funding agencies. Please refer to the national annexes for further details.

Pre-proposals have to be submitted in electronic format latest by **8th March 2024** (14:00 CET), via the electronic submission system.

C2. Full proposal contents:

Full proposals must contain the following information, according to the respective forms available through the NEURON website. Only those applicants explicitly invited by the Call Secretariat to submit a full proposal will be authorised to do so.

- Acronym and project title
- Names and full affiliations of the project coordinator.
- Names and full affiliations of the consortium per leader.
- Scientific abstract (max. ½ page).
- Lay abstract (max ½ page).
- Background and present state of the art in the research field, and rationale (max. 2 pages).
- Work plan as required in the full proposal template detailing objectives, relevance, methodological approach, statistical analyses, ethical considerations, work package structure of the project and references (max. 16 pages).
- Data Management Plan synopsis (max ½ page)
- Justification of requested budget (also specifying co-funding from other sources and/or own contribution necessary for the project, if applicable; max. 1 page).
- Added value of the proposed collaboration, including the value for early career researchers (max. 1 page).
- Possible exploitation of expected project results in the context of potential health and clinical impact (max. 1 page).
- Brief CVs for each participating group leader with a list of up to five relevant publications within the last five years demonstrating the competence to carry out the project, description of patents and ongoing projects of each participating group related to the present topic, indicating funding sources and possible overlaps with the proposal (only one CV per group, max. 1 page each).
- A budget plan indicating the requested funding for each project partner, as well as a summary of the overall funding requested.
- Annex 1: Ethical considerations to be filled
- Additional documents may be requested by some funding agencies. Please refer to the national annexes for further details.
- Partners partaking on own funds can upload a Letter of Commitment assuring the necessary resources.
- List of references is to be included within the page limits (as stated in the note of the template)

Full proposals have to be submitted in electronic format by **28th of June 2024 at 14:00 CEST**, via the electronic submission system.

D. Evaluation procedure

The review process will be in two stages.

D1. Eligibility check and evaluation procedure: pre-proposal stage

D1.1. Formal criteria check of proposals

The JCS will check the proposals to ensure that they meet the call's formal criteria (e.g. date of submission; the number of participating partners and countries/regions; inclusion of all necessary information according to the respective templates in English). In case certain formal criteria are not met (like page limits, font size, missing budget table or checklist), the project coordinators will be contacted and given the opportunity to resubmit a revised proposal **within 24-48h**. In parallel, the JCS will provide online access to the proposals to the national/regional funding organisations, which will perform a formal eligibility check for compliance with their respective regulations.

Inclusion of a partner non-eligible for funding according to the specific regulations of their respective funding organisation may result in the rejection of the entire proposal without further review. Applicants are strongly advised to contact their respective funding organisation to enquire about their eligibility before submitting an application.

Compliance with the scope / topic of the call will be assessed by the reviewers. However, if the JCS and the subgroup of the CSC members involved in the reviewer allocation procedure consider that a proposal is clearly a mistaken submission then it will be forwarded to the CSC. The CSC members are given the opportunity to contribute their comments within three days. This is a consensus vote (veto right), and not a majority vote. If one of the CSC members is assured that the proposal is not out of scope, then this opinion has to be supported by a reasonable scientific explanation. If this is the case, the proposal will be sent out to the reviewers in the same way as any other "regular" proposal and they will judge the relevance to the aim of the call. If not, JCS will inform the project coordinator of the potential mistake and the latter will be given the opportunity to withdraw the pre-proposal.

The JCS and national/regional funding organisations will perform cross-checks in parallel submissions to other joint transnational calls (e.g. EJP RD, JPND, ERA PerMed, and others) and national calls. **Double funding is not allowed**. Applicants will be required to disclose parallel submissions in the electronic submission tool.

Proposals finally not meeting the formal criteria will be rejected. A list of accepted and rejected projects will be sent to the national funding organisations by the JCS.

Proposals complying with all formal eligibility criteria will be forwarded to the national funding bodies to check if the proposals are in accordance with the national eligibility regulations. All eligible proposals will be forwarded to the reviewers for evaluation.

D1.2. Peer Review

a. Scientific Reviewers. Preferably, each proposal submitted in response to this joint transnational call will be reviewed by at least three reviewers but a minimum of two independent evaluation is ensured. The number of reviewers needed will be about one third as compared to the number of pre-

proposals. The reviewers are to be internationally recognized scientists chosen for their expertise in the field of the call topic, their thematic orientation, their overall expertise in brain research and neurological diseases, and their complementarities with regard to this field. Reviewers should be recruited from as many countries as possible regardless of whether they are members of ERA-NET NEURON or participating in this call**.** Preferably, proposals will be assigned to reviewers from different countries than the project coordinator. The reviewers are suggested by NEURON partners, the JCS, the applicants and nominated by the CSC. In addition, at least one expert from the DFG Review Board (renowned scientists in neuroscience) will act as a reviewer. The selection of the panel will consider scientific expertise, as well as homogenous distribution across countries and gender. The JCS will contact the reviewers to request their participation. In order to avoid any conflict of interest, any potential reviewer who applied to the Joint Transnational Call will inform the JCS immediately (prior to their decision whether or not to participate) that they cannot serve as a reviewer. Each reviewer is requested to disclose any potential conflict of interest.

b. Written evaluation. Scientific reviewers will be asked for written statements and scoring of the proposals according to specific evaluation criteria and a scoring system. At least three scientific reviewers will be assigned to each pre-proposal. The experts will be explicitly asked for their consent that the JCS will forward their anonymous written statements to the applicants (both, in case of approval and rejection).

The JCS assigns the proposals to the reviewers matching their specific expertise. A small working group comprising CSC members may support the task. The proposals will be made available to the respective reviewers via the electronic submission system by the JCS. The final allocation table will be sent to the CSC, this table includes suitable replacements to be contacted in case a review is not sent within one week before the deadline or a problem is foreseen. An updated allocation table will be sent to the CSC at the end each evaluation step if changes to the original allocation were necessary. Reviewers will be asked to assess if the projects are within the scope of the call, to comment on the main strengths and weaknesses of the proposal as well as to give an overall comment including an overall assessment of each proposal (“excellent” – “very good” - “good” – “fair” – “poor”), based on the criteria:

1. Excellence
    - Scientific quality of the approach and methodology
    - Quality of the experimental design and data analysis
    - Novelty of the scientific concept/hypotheses
    - Competence and experience of participating research partners in the field(s) of the proposal (previous work in the field, specific technical expertise)
2. Impact
    - Potential impact of the expected results on clinical and other health-related applications
    - Added value of transnational collaboration

- Inclusion of early career researchers (ECRs)
- Potential impact for patients; patient involvement and ethical aspects

3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation
    - Feasibility of the project
    - Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks, resources, time frame, and related risk analysis
    - Quality and added value of collaborative and multi-disciplinary interactions within the consortium
    - Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures.

ERA-NET NEURON strives to fund reproducible and solid scientific outputs, our evaluation criteria value the methodological rigor of the experimental approaches proposed.

Reviewers will be trusted to weigh for themselves the importance of each criterion. Nevertheless, the reviewers will be explicitly asked to question and analyse the added value of the collaboration which is the central component of transnational projects. The evaluation will be made via the electronic submission system using a common evaluation form.

Score definition pre-proposal:

- Excellent (5): clear recommendation for submitting a full proposal
- Very good (4): just below excellent but room for feasible improvement of certain aspects
- Good (3): the proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present
- Fair (2): major components should be reconsidered or at least adjusted
- Poor (1): clear recommendation for rejection, as at least one of the major aspects is missing or strongly underdeveloped

Score definition full proposal:

- Excellent (5): Well-structured and competitive proposal with a clear recommendation for funding with high priority
- Very good (4): High quality and competitive proposal with recommendation for funding
- Good (3): Competitive proposal that could be funded, but there is room for feasible improvement in specific aspects
- Average (2): The proposal is sound but contains relevant shortcomings that would need adjustment
- Fair (1): Major components should be reconsidered or adjusted

Reviewers will be asked to comment on each criterion and one written overall comment summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. The written reports shall be returned to the JCS by

the deadline indicated in the call text and will be provided to the members of the CSC prior to the following CSC meeting.

Should a proposal be rated “out of scope”, a written evaluation including a score will still be asked. If a single reviewer rates “out of scope” the assessment shall be forwarded to the other assigned reviewers for consideration and reflection. A pre-proposal is rejected as “out of scope” in case of a unanimous vote of all three assigned reviewers. All other cases are subject to discussion among the CSC. Only the written evaluation (without a score), including an argumentation of the reasons for considering the proposal out of scope, will be communicated to the applicants. Full proposals cannot be considered ‘out of scope’

c. Decision on pre-proposals. The JCS will translate the “excellent” to “poor” assessments into a numeric system, as indicated above. In case a proposal has received scores by less than three reviewers, the missing score(s) will be assumed as “excellent” (5). The scores will be averaged and used to produce a project’s ranking list. According to this ranking list the CSC will aim to finally divide the proposals into two categories as follows:

- To be explicitly allowed to submit a full proposal
- To be rejected

The CSC will thus define the cut-off of pre-proposals selected for the full proposal stage based on the following selection criteria:

1. Pre-proposals assessed with an average score of 4 and higher.
2. Pre-proposals with highly divergent scores and at least one a score 5.

Additional rules may be consented in the CSC meeting considering the specifics of the respective call. The oversubscription rate regarding the total earmarked budget should not exceed a factor of 3-4. National earmarked budgets should not be oversubscribed more than 3-fold. In cases of higher oversubscription of single countries, mitigation strategies will be discussed and consented at the CSC meeting. For example, if a funder cannot increase the earmarked budget to react to a high oversubscription it may introduce budget cuts of the respective projects. The detailed negotiations will be done by the respective funder’s representatives. In all the cases the quality of the proposed work and the feasibility of the proposed tasks should be preserved.

Written evaluations on the joint proposals, whether accepted or rejected, will be sent by the JCS to the respective coordinators.

d. In-between Widening

The CSC may offer the opportunity for additional resources and expertise by using the in-between widening instrument to increase participation of research partners from underrepresented countries, e.g. which are considered undersubscribed in the pre-proposal step. Respective countries participating in the in-between widening will be referred to as “widening countries”.

For this, researchers will be invited to include new research partners from the widening countries to their consortium. The inclusion of a research partners from one or more of the widening countries is optional and its national eligibility with the respective funding organisations has to be confirmed. The maximum number of partners per consortium is not allowed to exceed six. Inclusion of partners from widening countries shall be justified on a scientific basis and it has to be explained in the full proposal how the addition will bring added value to the consortium and which new additions will be possible to the original work plan as a consequence.

The JCS can ask the coordinators, whether the consortia agree to share abstracts and contact information with potential teams from the widening countries to mediate contact and increase the success. Additionally, a list of teams interested in the respective proposals may be provided by the respective funders under respect of General Data Protection Regulations. This list of potential partners is not exclusive, and the researchers are free to approach other eligible researchers. An eligible partner added in the widening process needs to have secured funds authorized by the corresponding national representative.

D2. Evaluation procedure at the full proposal stage

D2.1. Formal criteria check of proposals

See above (D1.).

D2.2. Review Panel

a. Scientific Reviewers. *See above (D1.) for written comments*.

A fraction of the group of reviewers involved in the pre-proposal step, about 14 to 18 reviewers, will constitute the Peer Review Panel (PRP) and will be invited to a (face-to-face) review meeting. A scientific reviewer designated by the DFG will be part of the PRP. It will be gender and geographically balanced as much as possible (e.g. the number of PRP members from each of the countries participating in the call should not exceed 2). **A chair and a vice-chair** will be identified among the reviewers to chair the **review meeting**. If possible, they should be from countries that do not participate in the joint call.

b. Written scientific reviews. *Criteria and scoring see above (D1.)*.

At least three reviewers will be assigned for the review of each proposal. If feasible, a full proposal will be assigned to at least one reviewer who assessed the corresponding pre-proposal, and one newly assigned reviewer. Reviewers will receive all written comments on the respective pre-proposal for their information. Reviewers will be asked to provide written reviews and scores via the electronic submission system prior to the meeting. All written reviews will be compiled and provided to the members of the PRP and the CSC prior to the PRP meeting.

With the exception of specific expertise needed for some proposals a minimum of three full proposals should be assigned to each reviewer to allow the comparability.

The complete set of full proposals will be made available to all PRP and CSC members by the JCS. The reviewers will be encouraged to read also the proposals they were not assigned for review in preparation of the review meeting.

c. Patient Reviewers.

Three to six patient (representative) reviewers will constitute the patient expert panel and part of the group will be invited to the face-to-face review meeting. If possible, the panel will be gender and geographically balanced.

d. Written patient reviews.

The proposals including patients or human samples have to address patient-related questions in a specific form in layman's terms. The answers to the questionnaire (and not the full proposal) will be the basis for the evaluation of the patients/patient representatives, while they also have access to the full proposal including a lay summary. If necessary, the JCS will consent with the CSC the subset of the proposal to enter patient review.

The patient expert panel will evaluate the proposals according to their relevance for patients and their feasibility, and not to the scientific quality. For patient review, a given proposal will be assigned to one or two patients. The patient reviewers will be asked to provide written reviews according to the questionnaire for patients. All written patient reviews will be compiled, and together with the scientific reviews provided to the members of the review panel and the CSC prior to the panel meeting.

At the panel meeting each proposal will be assigned to one patient representative among the patient expert panel. They will briefly state the assessment and recommendations from the patient perspective. The patients are invited to take part in the discussion. If it is not possible for patient reviewers to attend the meeting, a neutral person (e.g. a patient organisation or JCS representative) may be asked to read out the patients' recommendations and represent their position.

e. Ethics review.

An Ethics board will be assembled consisting of external experts. CSC members are invited to propose suitable experts to the ERA-NET NEURON ethics taskforce partners. A final panel consisting of 3 to 5 experts and including all the relevant expertise shall then be proposed consented by the CSC.

The Ethics board will assess the ethical aspects of the full proposals under Annex I ("ethical considerations"). The Ethics reviewers will give written recommendations (1/2 page max.) on the ethical and methodological aspects of the full proposals and comment during the discussion at the panel meeting (either represented by a member of the ERA-NET NEURON ethics taskforce, or by an ethics reviewer). The written recommendations of the Ethics reviewers will be sent to the applicants along with the funding decision notification letters.

Prior to the evaluation at both preproposal and full proposal stages all the reviewers will be invited to fill up an online test to detect biases in a voluntary basis. The reviewers do not have to communicate the outcome or such test.

f. Review panel meeting.

Based on the written reviews collated prior to the meeting, the review panel will discuss each proposal to identify the top-quality proposals recommended for funding and establish a ranking list. In addition to the scientific evaluations, the patients' views on relevance and feasibility will be considered. CSC members can participate in the PRP meetings as observers.

A rapporteur/reporter/reader will be assigned to each proposal among the three scientific reviewers. The rapporteur will introduce the proposal briefly to the panel, and provide evaluation comments followed by additions of the other two scientific reviewers. Next, the patient experts will contribute their perspective, and the Ethics reviewers will comment if ethical concerns need to be raised. Then the discussion among the panel is opened to all the panel members. Upon discussion of a given proposal, the previous scores may be modified.

The rapporteur/reporter/reader will be responsible for preparing a joint statement (consensus rapport), a brief written summary of the discussion in agreement with the other two reviewers and under consideration of the patient views and ethics perspective (see D2.3.). The consensus rapports will be collated by the JCS for the minutes of the review panel meeting, to be subsequently approved by review panel and CSC. The consensus rapports, along with the anonymous written reviews, will be forwarded to the coordinators of the transnational consortia.

The reviewers will consent on the final ranking list based only on the evaluation criteria. They will not adopt national considerations. Projects to be funded will be chosen by the CSC according to the ranking produced by the review panel.

D3. Evaluation fees

Scientific reviewers will not be remunerated for their efforts during the evaluation procedure.

Patient reviewers will be remunerated as follows:

- Written assessments only: 250€
- Written assessments + panel meeting: 750€

All reviewers will be reimbursed for the travel and accommodation expenses incurred for their attendance at the panel meeting.

D4. Anonymity and confidentiality, conflict of interest

Each reviewer will sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest (CoI) declaration prior to the evaluation process, and disclosure agreement on the publication of their name. Only upon given consent the

reviewers' names may be published on the NEURON website without disclosing which proposal the individual reviewers assessed.

All reviewers including the patient and ethics reviewers will sign a declaration of absence CoI and must refrain from reviewing an application or from discussing a proposal if they stand to profit professionally, financially or personally from approval or rejection of the application. They should also refrain from reviewing if they have published together with the applicant or any project participant within the last three years, if they are currently cooperating, or if professional dependencies exist (details provided via guidelines for reviewers) along with personal, family relationships.

The reviewers will not participate in the discussion of respective proposals where potential CoIs were declared.

E. Project approval and decision communication

The CSC will identify the projects to be funded in accordance with the reviewers' ranking list and taking into account the available budget. The selection of projects for funding will follow the ranking list as much as possible. Proposals of the same rank will be clustered with the help of the panel of reviewers. If the number of high-priority proposals as recommended by the review panel is smaller than what the budget can support, only part of the funds will be used for this call. If the number of high-priority proposals as recommended by the review panel is higher for certain partners than what the national budget can support, the CSC will seek solutions that will allow funding of the respective proposals.

The funding organisations will be informed of the final funding recommendations by the respective funding organisation's representative in the CSC. Each funding organisation will make the final decision according to its legal framework and respective regulations.

Upon confirmation of budget availability by the CSC members, the coordinators of consortia selected for funding will be informed by e-mail about the evaluation results by the JCS. Coordinators will be instructed to inform immediately their project partners and ask them to contact their respective funding body.

The project coordinators of non-selected proposals will be informed by e-mail about the evaluation results by the JCS. The e-mail will include comments from the PRP discussion and the written reports of all the reviewers (anonymized) to provide the reasons for rejection to the applicants. The coordinators will be instructed to communicate the decisions to their project partners.

E1. Post evaluation widening

The CSC may offer the opportunity for the projects to gain additional resources and expertise by using the post-evaluation widening instrument to increase the participation of research partners underrepresented in the list of selected projects.

Researchers will be invited to search for new partners from the widening countries to add to the consortium after the funding decision. The maximum number of partners per consortium is not allowed to

exceed six. The inclusion of a research partner from one of the widening countries is optional and its national eligibility with the respective funding organisation has to be confirmed. Financial support for the participation of the additional research partner will be provided by the respective national funding organisation of the investigator included. Where widening partners were added after evaluation they can only contribute additional work packages while the original work plan and resources, as reviewed, have to remain unchanged.

F. Funding procedure / Responsibilities / Reporting requirements / Project prolongations

F1. Funding procedure

Projects are expected to be funded for a period of up to three years. Funding is expected to start early-mid 2025.

The research partners of successful collaborative projects will be funded directly by the respective national/regional funding organisations in accordance with their terms and conditions, taking into account all other applicable national regulations and legal frameworks.

In order to minimize the variability in the project starting dates between the partners of one consortium, the coordinators are requested to seek a common starting date for all research partners in a consortium and to communicate this date to the involved funding organisations. The goal should be to start individual national contracts of a given consortium as harmonized as possible.

F2. Responsibilities

Each project must nominate a project coordinator, who represents the consortium externally and is in charge of its internal management to the ERA-NET NEURON (e.g., controlling, reporting, intellectual property rights issues, consortium agreement and data management plan). Within a joint proposal, each consortium partner will be the main contact person for its own group with the relevant national/regional funding organisation.

F3. Reporting requirements

On behalf of the research consortium, the project coordinator will be required to submit to the JCS a brief annual scientific progress report on the project, as well as a more extensive final report at the end of the project. Additionally, PIs may be required to submit reports separately to their national/regional funding organisation. In that case, reporting guidance will be communicated by the relevant funding organisation.

Annual reports must be submitted by 30^{h} April, the following year. Annual reports do not need to be submitted if the project ends in the first three months of the following year (e.g. between January and March). In this case, the submission of a final report will suffice (see below).

Ethics approval and/or a positive vote must be obtained from the relevant national or local ethics committee(s) prior to the start of respective studies. This will be enquired within the first annual report.

Together with the first annual report, the Data Management Plan (DMP) and the Consortium Agreement (CA) have to be submitted by the coordinator to the JCS. The documents will be made available to the funders on the NEURON share-point. Some funding organisations may require the submission of a Data Management Plan (DMP), Consortium Agreement (CA), and/or ethical approval at an earlier time point. Please read carefully the funder-specific information section.

The deadline for submitting final reports is six months after the end of the project. The formal end date of the project is the latest run-time in the consortium unless the consortium decides otherwise. It is the task of the coordinators and the JCS to monitor the formal end date for project completion. This is required because research groups in the consortium may have different start times. Coordinators will receive the report template in due course by the JCS.

The coordinators will be asked to present a progress report during a midterm symposium. Attendance is mandatory for all coordinators and PIs. Students and postdoctoral researchers working on the projects are welcomed to join the status symposium together with their PIs. Accordingly, travel expenses to attend the symposium should be encumbered in the proposed budget plans.

Funding recipients must ensure that all outcomes (publications, etc.) of transnational NEURON projects include a proper acknowledgement of ERA-NET NEURON and the respective funding partner organisations, and are in line with the relevant publication requirements.

F4. Project runtime extensions

Project runtime extensions should be requested to national funding bodies in close interaction with the JCS and the respective CSC representatives.

Proposed Time Schedule

Proposed timeline Pre-Proposal stage

December 05, 2023	Preliminary Announcement of the Joint Transnational Call
January 08, 2024	Launch of the Joint Transnational Call
March 08, 2024	Deadline (submission of pre-proposals) 14:00 CET (~ 60 days open)
March 11-12, 2024	Formal check of pre-proposals by JCS (changes within 24h possible)
March 12-25, 2024	Eligibility check of pre-proposals by national funding bodies
March 25-27, 2024	Allocation of reviewers via teleconference
March 29, 2024	Send pre-proposals to reviewers

May 7, 2024	Deadline written votes on pre-proposals (~6 weeks time for review)
May 14, 2024	Ranking list and CSC decision on pre-proposals
May 24, 2024	Formal invitation to submit a full proposal

Proposed timeline Full Proposal stage

June 28, 2024	**Deadline (submission of full proposals) 14:00 CET** (~ 36 days open)
July 1-4, 2024	Formal/Eligibility check by JCS
July 5-11, 2024	National eligibility by funders and allocation of reviewers
July 8-11, 2024	Allocation of reviewers via teleconference
July 12, 2024	Send proposals to reviewers
August 30, 2024	Deadline written votes on full proposals
September 10-12, 2024	PRP meeting, final ranking, and CSC meeting
October, 2024	Final funding decision by the CSC
October, 2024	Start of national administrative procedures
Early 2025	Start of funding