

## CORE ORGANIC PILOT CALL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION

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## 1. Call Announcement

### *Objectives*

The objective of the pilot call is the generation of transnational research projects or concerted knowledge development actions related to organic food and farming. Consequently, the project proposals must clearly demonstrate added value through transnational cooperation.

### *Topics*

The topics of submitted research projects eligible for funding are restricted to those stated in the call.

#### Animal disease and parasite management, mainly focusing on preventive health and improving therapies to reduce reliance on antibiotics

- Set-up of long-term strategic research agendas. Screening of future research needs in disease and parasite prevention/management based on evaluations of the state of present knowledge.
- Management and prevention of diseases and parasites.
- Interaction between animal welfare, disease and parasite management.

#### Quality of organic food – health and safety

- Organic quality – identification and definition of critical and essential parameters useful to optimise material and immaterial organic food quality. Methodological issues.
- Nutritional benefits and safety of organic food. Relation between healthy and ecologically sustainable diets.
- Impact of the food chain on product quality, risks and consumption. Interaction between organic standards and food safety, i.e. Salmonella, Campylobacter.
- Organic farming practices and their impacts on food quality, health and safety.

#### Innovative marketing strategies – identification of successful marketing methods, local markets

- Impact of large-scale conversion to organic production – consequences for market strategies (small/large scale, local/organic, price/quality), and the supply chain.
- Public procurement of food. Provision of organic food to public institutions – best practices and constraints.
- Reconnecting consumers and farmers – innovative practices.
- Marketing and consumer behaviour – benefits in terms of environment and health, knowledge based consumer choices and branding strategies.

### *Eligible project structure*

- Only project consortia consisting of at least three partners (one main applicant and two or more co-applicants) from three or more different participating countries are invited to apply for funding (see Table 1 for eligible countries).
- National funding rules apply, i.e. proposal requirements of the respective national funding body have to be fulfilled by applicants at any time, and all applicants are responsible to their national funding body.
- Please observe that in some countries there are special conditions regarding who is eligible to apply. It is strongly recommended to contact the national funding body concerning the national rules.
- Research teams from countries other than the CORE Organic partner countries are not eligible as consortium partners.
- Project duration is limited to a maximum of three years.
- The application procedure is a single-stage process.

Table 1: Countries participating in the CORE Organic ERA-Net

<b>Country</b>	<b>National funding body</b>
Austria – AT	Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
Denmark – DK	Danish Directorate for Food, Fisheries and Agri Business /Danish Research Centre for Organic Food and Farming
Finland – FI	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
France – FR	Ministry of Agriculture/National Institute for Agronomic Research
Germany – DE	Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection / Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food
Italy – IT	Ministry of Agriculture Food and Forestry Policies
The Netherlands – NL	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
Norway – NO	The Research Council of Norway
Sweden – SE	Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Science and Spatial Planning
Switzerland – CH	Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture
United Kingdom – UK	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

### *Time schedule*

Table 2: Time schedule

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
Call published	5 September – 1 December 2006
Deadline for submission of proposals	1 December 2006
Transnational decision process	December 2006 - March 2007
Final selection of eligible	March 2007

proposals	
Start of project funding	1 May 2007

### ***Funding***

CORE Organic ERA-Net does not provide a common, centralised budget for this call. In fact, each CORE Organic project partner will provide funding only for their respective national research teams which participate in the call. Consequently, it is recommended that the budgets do not exceed the typical national limits for the respective partners.

## **2. Process overview**

1. Project consortia submit a proposal through the coordinating partner (online)
2. General criteria (A1 + A2 in Table 4) are checked by the call secretariat at Formas and at the national funding organisations.
3. Proposals are evaluated for specific criteria by an independent expert panel.
4. The panel examines the projects following the defined common criteria and thereafter proposes a *scientific* ranking of the applications, recommended for funding to the CORE Organic Governing Board.
5. The final ranking decision is taken by the CORE Organic Governing Board, which recommends projects to the national funding bodies.
6. National funding bodies will make the final funding decisions.

## **3. Application**

### ***Where and how to apply***

- For proposals to be considered the application form as well as appendices must be submitted electronically **only**; this has to be done online by filling in a template, please follow the links from CORE Organic website, [www.coreorganic.org](http://www.coreorganic.org), or find it at <http://direct.formas.se>
- Application is a single-stage process.
- All application documents must be written in English.
- Links are posted at the CORE Organic homepage ([www.coreorganic.org](http://www.coreorganic.org)) and the homepages of the individual national funding bodies (see Table 1).
- Applications submitted by mail, fax, diskette or E-mail will not be processed.
- However, in case national funding bodies require paper copies of the application documents, hardcopies also have to be sent to the CORE Organic call secretariat at Formas, Att. Sara Österman, Box 1206, S-111 82 Stockholm, Sweden.
- Deadline for submission is 1 December 2006.
- In order to register the application, you have to send in a signature to the call secretariat at Formas.

### ***Application documents***

The application must comprise the following documents:

- Application form
- Appendix A: Research programme
- Appendix B: CVs of applicants
- Appendix C: List of publications
- Appendix I (observe not D): Detailed financial plan

### Application form

The application form is digital and has to include a financial plan for the entire project period as well as a popular science description. Further instructions for application can be found in the application form.

The application form is available in the system “Formas Direct” <http://direct.formas.se>, you may also follow the link from the CORE Organic website, [www.coreorganic.org](http://www.coreorganic.org). Further instructions for filling in the application can be found in the guidelines as well as in the application form.

The application forms as well as the appendices shall be registered electronically in the system “Formas Direct” by the user. This is done by saving the application and clicking on “Register”. Read and follow the instructions that appear in the new window. In order to register the application, click on “OK”, or on “Cancel” if you wish to cancel. A form in PDF format will be created for signature at registration. **It should be printed by the user, completed, signed and sent to Formas.** This form shall have arrived to Formas **within five days** of the final date of application. To be certain that the form arrives within five days, we suggest that you also fax the form asap and within the time frame, before sending the original to Formas, fax number: 0046 8 775 4010, att Sara Österman. Please note that once the application has been registered, no changes may be made, so be certain that everything is complete before registration.

### Appendix A: Research programme

The research programme should contain a brief text, which must not exceed 6 pages (including references, Times New Roman font, smallest size 11 points or the equivalent) with a complete description of the intended research activities of the whole project, addressing the following items:

- Overview of the state of the art in the research area as well as an outline of the applicants’ previous research activities within the research area. Key references should be indicated.
- Specific objectives of the proposed research project
- Project description (individual parts of project partners) and a summary of the project’s management
- Methodology and underlying theory should be conclusive
- Analysis of ecological, social and economic relevance
- Dissemination plan for scientific papers and popular science information (e.g. extension)
- The added value of the collaboration between the three (or more) countries should be demonstrated.
- List of milestones to be reached to indicate project progress.

### Appendix B: CVs of applicants

- CVs should be provided for the main applicant (project coordinator) as well as for the co-applicants (partners), who are listed in the application form. The CV should not exceed a maximum of two A4 pages per scientist (Times New Roman font, smallest size 11 points or the equivalent). Note that the list of publications has to be presented separately in Appendix C.

### Appendix C. List of publications

The list of publications should include publications of the main and co-applicants from the last 5 years. Separate lists are required for the individual applicants. Please give links to the entry in Organic E-prints, [www.orgprints.org](http://www.orgprints.org) if available.

### Appendix I (observe not D): Detailed financial plan

A detailed financial plan is required separately for the participating countries. Among the eligible costs are personnel costs, consumable costs and travel expenses.

## **4. Further information and inquires**

Inquires will be dealt with by the respective national funding bodies (see Table 3), or by the CORE Organic call coordinator Senior Research Officer Sara Österman.

Table 3: National contacts for further information

AT: Manuela Kienegger Anita Silmbrod	Phone: +43 664 611 2842 e-mail: <a href="mailto:manuela.kienegger@gmx.at">manuela.kienegger@gmx.at</a> Phone : +43 1 71100 6567 e-mail : <a href="mailto:anita.silmbrod@lebensministerium.at">anita.silmbrod@lebensministerium.at</a>
AT: Anita Silmbrod Manuela Kienegger	Phone: +43 664 611 2842 e-mail: <a href="mailto:anita.silmbrod@lebensministerium.at">anita.silmbrod@lebensministerium.at</a> <a href="mailto:manuela.kienegger@gmx.at">manuela.kienegger@gmx.at</a>
DK: Erik Steen Kristensen	Phone: +45 89 99 1676 e-mail: <a href="mailto:ErikSteen.Kristensen@agrsci.dk">ErikSteen.Kristensen@agrsci.dk</a>
FI: Markku Järvenpää	Phone: +358 (0)405542116 e-mail: <a href="mailto:markku.jarvenpaa@mmm.fi">markku.jarvenpaa@mmm.fi</a>
FR: Philippe Vissac	Phone: + 33142759222 e-mail: <a href="mailto:philippe.vissac@paris.inra.fr">philippe.vissac@paris.inra.fr</a>
DE: Stefan Lange	Phone: +49 (0)228-6845-3930 e-mail: <a href="mailto:stefan.lange@ble.de">stefan.lange@ble.de</a>
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## 5. Evaluation

All applications are assessed according to:

### A. General criteria

#### B. Specific criteria

1. *Scientific innovation*
2. *Methodology*
3. *Consortium expertise*
4. *Project management and resource utilisation*

#### C. Relevance

1. *Sectoral relevance and societal impact*
2. *Added value through transnational research*

### A. General criteria

Proposals must fulfil formal requirements to be eligible for funding. These requirements concern the number of partners (at least 3), eligible countries (CORE Organic partner countries), language of the proposal (English) and compliance with national funding regulations.

### B. Specific criteria

#### B.1. Scientific innovation

*Aim, theory and hypothesis* as well as *novelty* are assessed. The application's originality is assessed under scientific innovation. New ideas, bold hypotheses, and cross-disciplinary approaches will be considered advantageous. The applicant's awareness of and the application's position on existing national and international literature and knowledge within the area should be included in the assessment.

#### B.2. Methodology

*Scientific methodology* is what is primarily assessed here, but *plan for scientific publication and dissemination of popular science information* are also assessed. The scientific methodology is assessed in terms of the extent to which it can be considered well chosen and correctly applied considering the objective of the project. Choice of methodology is also assessed in relation to alternative solutions.

### **B.3. Consortium expertise**

The assessment of the consortium expertise will compare the project targets provided in the project description with the applicant's documented experience and scientific excellence with regard to implementation. Each individual researcher in the consortium is assessed separately as well as the group's collected ability to handle the project's undertaking. In addition, the applicant's/coordinator's experience of project management and ability to implement the project according to the sketched-out plan will be assessed. The applicants are assessed based on previous written work and expertise that has been demonstrated in other ways in the application. Consideration is also given to the applicant's ability to inform the community of his/her research.

The applicant's publishing and documented experience is assessed in relation to his/her age. This means that frequency of publication and of activity rather than the total accumulated volume is important when making an assessment.

### **B.4. Project management and resource utilisation**

The work schedule is assessed in terms of the feasibility of the project and the quality of coordination of the different project parts. The soundness of the financial plan is also assessed. If stated costs are assessed as unreasonable, a revised cost plan will be recommended. This will be commented upon in the evaluation statement. The entire project's work schedule and cost plan should be made clear in the project description with a specification for the relevant part of the project.

## ***C. Relevance***

### **C.1. Sectoral relevance and societal impact**

The question at issue should be relevant to the areas of research that are indicated in the call. Long-term sustainable societal development comprises ecological aspects but also social and economic aspects in a complex network of connections and conflicting objectives. For CORE Organic, sectoral relevance primarily entails research that treats issues that are significant for sustainable development within organic food and farming. In the assessment of a project's relevance, consideration is also given to whether the project additionally contributes knowledge that is important for the development of society as a whole in a sustainable direction, i.e. societal relevance and impact. Ethical aspects are also included here.

### **C.2. Added value through transnational research**

One aim of CORE Organic is to enhance the quality, relevance and utilisation of resources in European research in organic food and farming through collaboration. CORE Organic projects aim to enhance European excellence through the support of transnational European research projects. These should be true collaborations among partners working closely together, and there should be clear demonstration of added value in the proposed partnerships. Special consideration will be given to research with research issues that could be better answered if research takes place in more than one European country, and to costly research that would benefit from pooled European resources. The CORE Organic strategic objectives can be applied to different types of research and knowledge development e.g. in research areas where partner countries have ongoing research but need to define gaps, overlaps and possibilities for concerted actions, in research areas that are hardly explored and



in research areas where one partner has generated further knowledge and could support knowledge development in other partner countries.

### **Evaluation procedure by an expert group**

The proposals are evaluated in a single-stage procedure. Applicants and applications of all proposals are initially checked for general criteria (A1 and A2 in Table 4), by the national funding bodies. Applications which have fulfilled general criteria are evaluated for the specific criteria and for relevance by an expert panel. The panel examines the projects following the defined common criteria and thereafter proposes a *scientific* ranking of the application, recommended for funding to the CORE Organic Governing Board members.

Although evaluators assess the individual sub-criteria comprising each block of evaluation criteria, it is only the overall block assessment on a six-point scale from 0 to 5 that is taken into account.

The scores indicate the following with respect to the block under examination:

0 - the proposal fails to address the issue under examination or cannot be judged against the criterion due to missing or incomplete information

1 - poor

2 - fair

3 - good

4 - very good

5 - excellent

All project proposals reaching a minimum score of 12 or above (minimum 3 within each specific criteria) and are relevant, will be ranked according to the results of their assessment. All proposals reaching a score under 12 are rejected.

### **6. Final decision process by CORE Organic Governing Board**

The CORE Organic Governing Board will get the *scientific* ranking from the expert panel. The final decision is taken by the members of the CORE Organic Governing Board, who are free to make their own priorities within the proposals with a score of 12 or above. The CORE Organic Governing Board recommends projects to the national funding bodies. The national funding bodies take the final funding decisions and provide funding for the individual national project partners. Decisions for the realisation of a trans-national CORE Organic project are based on a complete set of positive decisions from all funding bodies.

### **7. Contract**

Funding contracts are concluded directly between the project partners and their national funding agencies. A consortium agreement between all project partners is recommended.

## **8. Monitoring**

### ***Mid-term report***

A mid-term report of the whole project consortium has to be submitted to the CORE Organic call secretariat and/or the national funding agencies. The countries participating in the call will carry out the mid-term review of funded projects.

The progress of each individual contract will be monitored by the respective national funding agencies through the achievement of milestones.

### ***Final report***

A final report of the whole project consortium has to be submitted to the CORE Organic call secretariat and/or the respective national funding agencies.

## **9. Dissemination**

Dissemination of project results is requested in terms of both scientific papers (presentations) and more popular publications, presentations or seminars to ensure direct information transfer to farmers and other stakeholders (extension). A detailed dissemination plan should specify the intended activities.

All publications, exhibitions, lectures and press information concerning the results of the projects must show a reference to CORE Organic. Furthermore, all publications deriving from the CORE Organic project have to be uploaded to the international open access archive for papers related to research in organic agriculture (Organic Eprints, <http://orgprints.org/>).

## **10. Evaluation criteria**

**Table 4: Evaluation criteria**

<b>A General criteria (eligibility check, exclusion criteria):</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>
1. The submitted project outline includes research institutions from at least three of the PARTNER countries, is written in English and fulfils all formal requirements of this call	
2. Applicants are eligible according to the regulations of their national funding agencies.	
<b>B Specific Criteria</b>	<b>Score (0 to 5)</b>
	Threshold score 3 out of 5
<b>B1 Scientific Innovation</b>	
1. Novel, innovative research	
2. Scientific quality of the proposed project	
<b>B2 Methodology</b>	
1. Choice of scientific methodology in terms of the extent to which it can be considered well selected and correctly applied considering the objective of the project.	
2. Plan for publication in scientific papers	
3. Plan for communication and knowledge transfer	
<b>B3 Consortium expertise</b>	
1. Qualification and expertise of the coordinator and the project partners	
2. Complementarities of expertise	
3. Inter- and transdisciplinarity of the consortium	
4. Evidence of true cooperation within the partners	
5. Transnational linkage and benefit of cooperation	
6. Use of scientific networks on national and international level	
<b>B4 Project Management &amp; resource utilisation</b>	
1. Project management capacity	
2. Feasibility, efficiency and economy of the research plan	
3. Adequateness of used resources and financial requirement, especially resources dedicated to communication between disciplines	
<b>Total (minimum score 12, maximum score 20)</b>	
<b>C Relevance</b>	<b>Score (0 to 5)</b>
<b>C1 Sectoral relevance and societal impact</b>	
1. Relevance of the problem for organic food & farming	
2. Thematic relevance with regard to the objectives of the call	
3. Societal relevance, expected outcomes and impacts on ecological, social and economic aspects of sustainable development	
<b>C2 Added value through transnational research</b>	
1. Added value for the European organic food & farming research area	
2. Appropriateness of the research topic with regard to the transnational aspect	

