

New INDIGO: Networking Pilot Program (NPP)

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General

1. What is an ERA-NET scheme?

ERA-NET is an instrument that was introduced under the EU's Sixth Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP6). Its main purpose is to support transnational activities between EU Members States and Associated countries in order to coordinate national research policies.

2. What is New Indigo and what does it stand for?

New INDIGO is a consortium of European and Indian S&T organisations involved in promoting research cooperation between Europe and India. It is intended to strengthen the international dimension of the European Research Area (ERA) and to provide a gateway to European S&T for networking with Indian S&T platform.

The name New INDIGO refers to the full title of the program: Initiative for the Development and Integration of Indian and European Research. It is new because it is the continuation of earlier initiatives leading up to this program.

3. What are New INDIGO's aim and main activities?

The aim of New INDIGO is to help provide **the most relevant framework to allow the scientific community and institutions** of India to access the European Research Area, and the Euro-Indian S&T cooperation to fully benefit from the new networking tools which have been set up, notably the FP7.

There are **three main activities** by which New INDIGO will attain this goal:

1. The **identification of research hotspots** in Europe and in India from the point of view of common scientific interest and complementary expertise.
2. A **call for research projects** and their evaluation and follow-up by a committee of highly qualified scientists will pave the way to the structuralisation of high quality collaborative research.
3. **Sharing experience** with other geographic Era-Nets and comparing their respective outputs

4. The aim of the Networking Pilot Program

Under the umbrella of the ERA-NET New INDIGO, partners from the following countries have joined forces to launch the Networking Pilot Program:

- Austria (BMWF)
- France (MESR, MAEE, CNRS, INSERM)
- Germany (BMBF)
- India (DBT)
- Portugal (FCT)
- The Netherlands (NWO)
- Spain (MICINN)
- Turkey (TUBITAK)

Goal of the NPP is to bring together Indian and European researchers to collaborate on a joint topic of mutual interest, and thereby pave the way for long-lasting cooperation between research institutions from the European Research Area (ERA) and Indian partner organisations. This goal is achieved by enhancing bi-regional communication and cooperation, knowledge exchange, and networking leading to new partnerships and stronger existing ones.

The program aims both at European and Indian scholars experienced in collaborating together and at those with little or no previous experience of working together in India and/or Europe.

5. What is the scope of the NPP?

The programme offers opportunities in the field of **Biotechnology and health**. More specifically the NPP targets:

- 1- Biomarkers and diagnostic
- 2- Bioinformatics for health
- 3- Structural Biology for health

The maximum amount available per project depends on the number of participating partners. Each European funding country contributes up to €50.000 per project, while this is matched by an Indian contribution. It is expected to fund approx.10 projects within this Call.

Research projects will be funded for a maximum period of two years.

6. Is a NPP proposal similar to an FP7 application?

No. New INDIGO is a different programme that follows separate rules and regulations for application, submission and evaluation of research proposals.

Research team

7. Who can apply?

In general applications can be submitted by legal RTD entities located in the NPP-funding countries. In general academics, higher education institutions and/or non-university research establishments located in the countries of the partners participating in the call are eligible. Since **eligibility** criteria are subject to national regulation, all applicants are strongly advised to take a close look at the details given in the *country specific requirements* and contact the respective National Contact Points in their home countries prior to submitting a proposal.

8. What does a New INDIGO research team look like?

Each team group must involve a minimum of two researchers/research groups from two different participating European New INDIGO member states as well as a minimum of one researcher/research group from India.

There is no maximum number of project partners nor a maximum of partners per country. Keep in mind that the composition of the consortium is one of the criteria for assessment in the second phase.

9. Can non New INDIGO partners join?

Eligible research groups from non New INDIGO countries may participate in projects if they secure their own funding (confirmed by binding Letter of Commitment in the full application stage).

10. Can enterprises join?

No. Under this Call Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's) and industries are excluded.

11. Where can I find Indian partners?

On the New INDIGO website you can find relevant information on both Indian and European organisations and scientists. To find an Indian partner, you can check:

- the Indian S&T Landscape document (<http://www.newindigo.eu/info/india.html>)
- the Partner Search Tool

Also you can contact your NCP or the Indian NCP. They might be able to help with further contacts or more information.

12. Where can I find European partners?

On the New INDIGO website you can find relevant information on both Indian and European organisations and scientists. To find a (additional) European partner, you could check:

- Information on European Union (<http://www.newindigo.eu/info/eu.html>)
- The Partner Search Tool

13. Is a Consortium Agreement required?

No, such an agreement is not required. However, New INDIGO recommends to sign a consortium agreement if you feel this is necessary, for example in case there are specific or additional IPR issues you need to agree upon.

Application

14. What can be applied for?

Funding can be applied for the following activities within the thematic scope of the NPP :

Mobility

- Research visits by scientists for up to two months per visit
- Covering: travel costs, living expenses and visa.

Please note that in case of inter-European travel these costs are paid for by partner in the sending country. In case of Indo-European exchange the travel costs are paid for by the partner in the sending country while the living expenses are paid for by the partner in the hosting country.

Workshops

- Costs directly related to the preparation and implementation of a workshop
- Also covering: travel and accommodation of external experts

Costs for the event should be requested for by the partner in the hosting country.

Other costs

- small equipment and consumables in accordance with national regulations
- project related miscellaneous expenses in accordance with national regulations

The total amount of these other costs will not exceed 7-10% of the project budget for European partners.

Indian applicants

Indian applicants can apply for the abovementioned funding modes, while taking into account two additional remarks:

- equipment and consumables can take up a flexible part of the budget, as long as the funding for internationalization of research is not diminished.
- personnel costs for research can be applied for up to 5 % of the Indian budget.

15. How can I apply?

Application is done in two stages – pre-registration and full proposal submission – both to be inserted directly into the designated webtool. This tool can be found on the New INDIGO website (www.newindigo.eu/npp/).

- Pre-registration: consisting of basic information in order to have a pre-check on eligibility. The pre-registration module will be open from 11 January until 8 March 2010.
- Full proposal: the principal coordinator submits a full proposal in the name of the joint trans-national research group. Only pre-registered proposals are eligible. The full proposal module will be open from 22 March until 19 April 2010.

For full proposal submission, information inserted for pre-registration can be re-used and, if necessary, altered when submitting the full proposal. The process of inserting data for pre-registration and full proposal submission can be completed in several sessions. The inserted data can be saved (please make sure to always press the *save* button!) and be re-used or altered in the next session.

All information must be inserted in English.

16. What is the difference between a project coordinator and a principal coordinator?

Each research team submitting a project proposal has two project coordinators, one Indian and one European. These project coordinators represent the project externally and they are jointly responsible for the management of the project internally.

For technical reasons there is only one project coordinator that can submit the proposal and thus gets access to the webtool. This project coordinator is called principal coordinator for his purpose only.

17. In addition to the online submission procedure, should I submit a paper copy of the proposal?

- For European partners there is no need to have paper copies of the project proposal signed.
- For Indian partners it is required that the head of the applying research institution sends the (signed) full project proposal to the Indian National Contact Point.

Advanced copies of the proposal are accepted.

18. When can I apply?

Deadline for pre-registration: 8 March 2010 12:00 CET; 16.30 IST

Deadline for full proposal submission: 19 April 2010 12:00 CET; 15.30 IST

Submission periods:

Pre-registration: 11 January – 8 March 2010

Full project proposal: 22 March – 19 April 2010

Pre-registration

19. What does Pre-registration mean?

Pre-registration of application means that the research group wanting to apply provides information about the composition of the consortium, the basic project idea and an estimate of the costs. These data will be checked for eligibility and adherence to the formal requirements.

This means that while the pre-registration of the consortium is not yet a full proposal, it still is a key part of your application. It forms the basis for the decision to keep your application in the competition by inviting you to submit a full project proposal.

20. What partners can be included in the Pre-registration?

The whole consortium should be identified and included at this initial stage of the project. It is very important to ensure that the minimum participation requirements are met (please check the call text) and that all consortium partners are eligible for funding based on the national rules and regulations of each partner.

Please be advised to contact your National Contact Point for further assistance and advise on eligibility of the project partners.

21. What happens if one of the partners is ineligible?

After pre-registration of the proposal the eligibility of the partners is assessed on the basis of national regulations. This is an administrative step which does not contain a judgement on the merit of the proposal.

In case one of the partners is not eligible, the principal coordinator of the project will receive a notification by the NPP Secretariat, with the choice either to step out of the competition and refrain from submitting a full project proposal, or to stay in the competition and submit an adapted full project proposal.

Please keep in mind that eligibility of all partners will be assessed again after submission of the full project proposal. By then all partners must be eligible.

22. What happens when more than one of the partners, or the Project Coordinators, are ineligible?

In case more than one of the project partners or one of the project coordinators are ineligible, the abovementioned remarks under 21. are applicable also.

23. Do I have to specify and justify the budget estimate in the pre-registration phase?

No. In this early phase only a rough estimate per budget mode and per partner is requested. This gives an idea of the planned activities as well as of the overall distribution of budget.

24. What is the minimum threshold to be invited to submit a full project proposal?

There is no threshold based on scoring in the pre-registration stage as the quality of the consortium or the research idea is not yet evaluated. Only eligibility is checked. Consortia that are eligible are invited to submit a full project proposal.

Full project proposal

25. What is the evaluation procedure for the full project proposals?

Each full project proposal will be checked for eligibility again. If eligible the proposal will be evaluated by two evaluators, who can be from any country in the world. Based on the Evaluation Criteria set out for them in the Guideline for Evaluators, they will score the proposal and give written comments to substantiate their scoring.

26. What happens if the two evaluators do not agree?

If the two review reports are very different, the Scientific Council consisting of experts in the thematic field of the Call, will look at the application and the review reports while considering the ranking list.

27. Are thresholds applied in the evaluation of full project proposals?

Yes. During the ranking process a threshold of minimum 10 points will be upheld while ranking.

28. Do the partners in a full project proposal need to be the same as those pre-registered?

No. A change in the consortium is acceptable even if all pre-registered partners are eligible. After submission of the full project proposal the application will be checked for eligibility again, which means by then all partners and the thematic topic of the proposal must comply to the relevant national rules and regulations as well as to the New INDIGO requirements (e.g. minimum of two eligible partners from different European funding partners and one Indian eligible partner).

PT Outline webtool

29. How does the electronic system for submission work?

Please look at the manual for the PT Outline webtool at www.newindigo.eu/npp/, where the webtool can be accessed as well.