

“PALEOECOLOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE (R3)” Joint Research Program
Call for Proposals

BACKGROUND

Within the Strategic Alliance between **ICAC**, **ICRPC** and **IPHES** (Acronym R3), as part of the current SUMA program funded by CERCA, several actions have planned to foster research collaborations in 2015-2016 across the researchers of these research centres in Humanities.

One of the main objectives of R3 is to boost the competitiveness of the research lines of the three centres and to open new and integrated research fields to improve the conditions to participate in H2020 framework program. In this sense, R3 will fund collaborative pilot projects to develop a joint-research strategy.

OBJECTIVE

The goal of funding pilot projects is to promote collaborative research and enable investigators to seek external funding to pursue larger-scale H2020 projects in research areas of current or potential strategic relevance to R3. The Alliance considers that proposals requesting a contribution to up to a maximum of EUR 28,600 would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of more than one proposal if the available budget guarantee their feasibility.

The inclusion of a postdoc hired by the funds of the application is strongly encouraged. Projects are required to have clear aims and a scope that could reasonably be accomplished within the proposed budget and timeline of **11 months**. Applicants whose projects are selected for funding will have max. 11 months to spend their award. There will be no carry-over of funds.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications must be joint research proposals of at least two centres of the Alliance (**ICAC**, **ICRPC** and **IPHES**). At least two centres must be represented in the proposals with a **PI** and a **Co-PI**, respectively. Others may join as co-investigators with a reasonable distribution of the co-investigators between centres. Co-investigators from external centres may be part of the team of investigators if their expertise cannot be covered by any R3 member. A researcher can be PI or Co-PI in only one pilot project proposal, and investigator of no more than two proposals, in total. Senior and junior researchers are encouraged to apply.

Pilots may be new projects or supplementary research activity of ongoing projects aligned with R3 research strategy. Proposals should not just cover expenses of ongoing and/or under-funded projects and should not repackage ongoing activities to get more funds for what is already done.

PREPARATION OF PROPOSAL

Support can be provided to researchers potentially interested in organizing joint small-scale meetings to further explore interests and opportunities among research groups in the different institutions.

APPLICATION (maximum length up to 7 pages)

Applicants should submit their proposals **by Friday 13th January 2017 the latest**. Please submit one single pdf to SUMA coordinator manager Laura Pérez (lperez@iphes.cat). Applications must adhere to the format and length described below, else proposals will not be considered.

Applications should include the following, in this order, in one single PDF, in ARIAL font 11, single space, with normal border of at least 2.5cm:

1. FRONT PAGE (1 page max.): with TITLE of proposal; Research Team (PI, Co-PI, other co-investigators, with full name, title, affiliation and abstract of the proposal (max 250 words)
2. RATIONALE (1 page max.): formal description about the research topic and the reasons for choosing it, and its significance as a worth-while study issue.
3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION (2 pages max.): background, hypotheses and aims proposed, methodology, possible outcome/impact (relevance, possible output, potential for submission of a competitive grant application, **potential for promotion of joint work between centres**) and references (max. 5 key references)
4. BUDGET AND WORKPLAN (1 page max.): Budget (no overheads), budget justification, and time lines. The inclusion of a postdoc hired by the funds of the application is strongly encouraged.
5. CV of both the PI and the Co-PI (2 pages in total)

REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

All applications will go through the following procedures:

Procedure	Comment	Responsibles
Screen for Eligibility	Check whether application fulfils all formal requirements outlined above	Jordi Peiret (ICAC), Xavier Isern (ICRPC), Maria Targa (IPHES)
Assignment to reviewers	All proposals will be reviewed by up to 2 external scientists	Joan Gómez (ICAC), Joaquim Nadal (ICRPC), Robert Sala (IPHES)
Scoring and Decision	Scores and comments of external reviewers will be evaluated and final decisions will be made	Joan Gómez (ICAC), Joaquim Nadal (ICRPC), Robert Sala (IPHES)
Funding and Start	Start date is February 1st 2017	Joan Gómez (ICAC), Joaquim Nadal (ICRPC), Robert Sala (IPHES)

CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Novelty of the idea, in line with or beyond the state of the art
2. The scientific merit and quality of the proposal;
3. The relevance and potential to identify problems and solutions
4. The relevance of the proposal to strengthen new collaborations at R3
5. The potential for further development and external grant support (i.e. H2020)
6. The appropriateness of the budget / budget justification
7. Feasibility: realistic work plan in terms of objectives, time required and budget
8. The experience of the PIs (given that the call is open to scientists of different stages in their career, this factor will be taken into account in the evaluation)

EVALUATION

The review process will evaluate the proposals on the basis of the criteria:

Evaluation criteria	Weighting
Scientific quality of the proposal (criteria 1 & 2)	40%
Relevance and potential of the proposal (criteria 3, 4 & 5)	25%
Coherence and efficiency of the implementation (criteria 6 & 7)	15%
Implementation capacity of the PIs (criteria 8)	20%

Scores must be in the range 0-5. Half marks may be given. Evaluators will be asked to score proposals as they were submitted, rather than on their potential if certain changes were to be made. When an evaluator identifies significant shortcomings, he or she must reflect this by awarding a lower score for the criterion concerned.

Interpretation of the scores:

- 0 — The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
- 1 — Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- 2 — Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
- 3 — Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
- 4 — Very Good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
- 5 — Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The date to inform applicants about the evaluation will be the **27th January 2017** the latest.

EXECUTION PERIOD

The execution period will be **from 1st of February 2017 to 31th of December 2017**. Only costs incurred during this period and until termination takes effect are eligible. Costs relating to activities due for execution only after termination are not eligible.

ELEGIBLE COSTS

'**Eligible costs**' are costs must be actually incurred by the beneficiary in the execution period and they must be indicated in the estimated budget. They must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular recorded in accordance with the accounting standards applicable and the applicable law on taxes, labour and social security. They must be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency. The administrative procedure for project and financial management will be in line with the usual practices of SUMA administrative coordinator.

Costs are eligible for each of the following budget categories: direct personnel costs (postdoc) and other direct costs. Indirect costs are *not applicable*. 'Direct costs' are costs that are directly linked to the project implementation and can therefore be attributed to it directly. 'Other direct costs' are costs related to:

1. **Travel costs and related subsistence allowances**, in line with the SUMA administrative coordinator usual practices on travel.
2. **The costs of renting or leasing equipment, infrastructure or other.**
3. **Costs of other goods and services:** consumables and supplies, dissemination (including open access), protection of results, translations and publications, and outreach directly related to the project results.

REPORTING REQUERIMENT

All project grantees are required to submit -within 60 days from when termination takes effect- a **1-page scientific report** including the following information:

- Progress reporting (short narrative of progress, findings, etc.).
- Positive outcomes, if any.
- Publications directly related to the achievements of the project.
- Grants directly associated with project results, including funding period and grant amount.

A Final Report is due within 3 months after finalization. Publications must acknowledge funds from the R3 *pilot project program*. Pilot program coordinators will be encouraged to organize joint scientific sessions for R3 and present progress or results of the project.