

European Joint Programme on Rare Diseases (EJP RD)

Networking Support Scheme

Small support scheme for networking initiatives to share knowledge on rare diseases

Frequently asked questions

June 2021

**The links to template and electronic proposal submission
can be found at the EJP RD website:**

www.ejprarediseases.org/index.php/networking-support/

For further questions: contact the Networking Support Scheme Secretariat
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1. GENERAL QUESTIONS**1.1. Does our networking event fit in the scope of the call?**

The focus of the workshop or conference should be (the implications of) research results and innovative solutions as well as strengthening the collaborations between different stakeholders.

The following applications are NOT eligible: Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPG) and other Clinical Decision Support Tools (CDSTs) that ERNs would like to develop, appraise and/or implement as the Directorate-General for Health and Food safety from the European Commission will provide other means for elaborating these topics (<https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/cft/cft-documents.html?cftId=3788>).

Furthermore, a family gathering without discussing research results is not eligible in this funding scheme.

1.2. Should each application be for a single event or can it be for a series of events?

Funding is meant for a single event, not for a series of events. However, the single event may take place on consecutive days.

1.3. Is there an option for co-financing?

Yes, co-financing is possible. See question 16 (part B) in the Application template.

1.4. What are the parameters for industry involvement?

Industry cannot be funded as applicant, but industry is allowed to join the Networking event with own budget and is allowed to cofund the event. However, the content of the event should be developed by the consortium that applies for funding at the Networking Support Scheme and independently of the industry.

1.5. Which date is considered with “6 -18 months”: the submission/application date or the collection date?

The application should be sent at least 6 months before the Networking event takes place: thus it is the submission/application date that counts.

1.6. When will we receive a decision from the Networking evaluation committee?

The evaluation procedure will take approximately 3-4 months after the collection date.

1.7. Can a guest for an EJP RD Networking event come from a country outside of the EJP RD?

A participant from a country outside of the EJP RD can attend the Networking event, however he/she has to secure his/her own budget for travel and lodgings as the European Commission (EC) funds this Networking Support Scheme. In case that this person from a country outside of the EJP RD is an invited speaker, travel and lodgings may be paid through the budget of the Networking Support Scheme. See point 4.7 in the Call text.

1.8. Can I apply for publication of an article and to receive funding for a talk at a congress?

No, The Networking Support Scheme funds the organisation of a Networking event (workshop or conference), but not the publication of an article or a talk at a congress.

1.9. Is there a target number or a maximum of applications that will be funded in each round?

No, there is a target budget of € 615,000 per calendar year. It is possible that at the start of the Networking Support Scheme a few proposals will be applied and that this number will increase in future.

1.10 What is ZonMw and how does this differ from NSSS and EJP RD ?

ZonMw is the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development. This organisation runs the Secretariat of the Networking Support Scheme (NSSS). The Networking Support Scheme (NSSS) is a funding scheme within the European Joint Programme on Rare Diseases (EJP RD). The EJP RD received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020, and aims to create an effective rare diseases research ecosystem for progress, innovation and for the benefit of everyone with a rare disease.

2. QUESTIONS ON ELIGIBILITY & CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

2.1. Should the consortium members be individuals or organisations?

Individuals are applying on behalf of their organisation. Individuals without an organisation cannot apply. A few individuals from the same organisation, having different experiences and/or different roles in the organisation of the Networking event may apply.

2.2. If my organisation is a European organisation, to which country will it be attributed?

The country where the European organisation is registered will be used as the country of the organisation. You still need at least organisations from two other countries involved in the EJP RD to have an eligible consortium to apply.

2.3. If more than one person from same organization would apply, would this person count as another co-applicant?

It is possible to have two or more applicants from the same institute if you clearly indicate that they have different organisational roles e.g. local organiser and involved in the scientific programme committee.

When you have more than 10 (co)applicants in the application because of the mentioning of two persons from the same institute, you may choose to put the name/role of one of those persons in the text of the application (e.g. in workplan).

2.4. Where can I find the eligible countries?

The countries involved in the EJP RD that are eligible are mentioned in Annex 1 of the Call text. Take care that Annex 1A shows information on the eligible applicants and Table 1B shows information where the location of the event may take place.

2.5. Are UK participants eligible?

UK participants are eligible in the Networking Support Scheme until any specific instruction from the EC has been given due to Brexit and indicated on the EJP RD website.

2.6. Are Canadian participants eligible?

A Canadian person cannot be an applicant in the Networking Support Scheme according to Annex 1A. The reason is that the Networking Support Scheme is funded with EC-budget and Canada is not an EC country. A Canadian person may join a Networking event on his or her own expense.

2.7. Is our PAO eligible as a principal applicant?

Please check Annex 2 of the Call text to see whether your organisation is eligible. Please provide information in your application to show that your PAO meets the criteria stated in Annex 2. The applying organisation should be formally established and registered as a not-for-profit organisation in one of the countries involved in the EJP RD. If your organisation is not eligible as a principal applicant, you may still apply together with another principal applicant.

2.8. Are private hospitals eligible as a principal applicant?

Yes, private hospitals are allowed to apply.

2.9 Can I still change partners after submitting my application?

The application cannot be altered after you have submitted the application in ProjectNet. A solution can be to mention some partners as 'possible partners'.

2.10 Is a PhD candidate considered an Early Career Scientist?

No, a PhD candidate (with or without a medical degree) is not considered an Early Career Scientist according to the definition (see 4.8 in Call text).

If the person is of added value for the applying consortium you can still invite the person to join the applying consortium and write in the application text or in the CV of the person that it is a young person at the start of his/her research career.

3. QUESTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

3.1. Should a particular disease or a group of diseases be mentioned under Question 5A in the application form?

Yes, the specific rare disease/group of rare diseases should be mentioned. Please also include the Orphanet number(s) of the disease(s) if that is available.

3.2. What is the context of the keywords under Question 6 in the application form and are they meant to be specific to the event?

The keywords are meant for the secretariat to understand what you think are the most important issues/elements of the Networking event, The secretariat uses these keywords to find the evaluators that are capable of reviewing the application. Therefore, the keywords should focus on the content of the Networking event.

3.3. Under Question 8, I can add three dates. What do I need to fill in?

The three dates are for a single meeting that lasts for 1-3 consecutive days. If you want to include dates as options for one networking event, please state clearly that the dates are options. Each event needs a separate application. You cannot for example include three meetings that are organised on three non-consecutive days in one application template.

3.4. Which group of people does the term 'knowledge-users' in Question 9i cover?

The term 'Knowledge users' may be interpreted as widely as possible. If applicable in your area of knowledge, you can for example include researchers, clinicians, policymakers, industry, patients and/or patient advocacy organisations.

3.5. Can you clarify what is expected in a 'Risk Management Plan in case objectives of the event cannot be met' under Question 9n in the application form?

The risk management plan should describe contingencies for the event taking place, for example speakers pulling out, not securing sponsors, consequences of the Covid-19 outbreak, etc.

3.6. What should a CV of a PAO representative contain and what time period should it cover?

The CV for a PAO representative is asked in relation to the Networking event and the role in the applying consortium for the Networking event. In this way evaluators can review whether the applying consortium has relevant expertise and that it is capable of organising the event; you may think of expertise in the content of the topic of the Networking event, organisational skills, role in PAO and role in the organisation of this Networking event (taking part in the scientific programme committee, taking part as local organiser, etc.), trainings from EURORDIS, etc. If a person e.g. has a financial job outside the PAO and will be the Principal applicant who will deal with the budget – then it may be good to write down what kind of job this person is doing next to the role in the PAO. Furthermore, information that the PAO is eligible (Annex 2 in the Call text) and what the PAO is doing is also important. Please take care that there is a maximum of text allowed for each CV (max. 1 PAGE DIN-A4, Century Gothic 11, single-spaced, margins of 2.54 cm).

3.7. In the CV of (co)applicants, do the publications have to be included within the 1 page?

The 5 main publications should be included within the 1 page CV of the (co)applicants. No additional page for the publications is allowed.

3.8. What should I fill in under Question 15, if our event is new and does not have a website yet?

You do not need to create a new website for question 15 in the Application template. However, if you can provide (a link to) information about programme outline within the application form while taking care of the maximum pages that are allowed, this will be helpful for the evaluation committee.

3.9 Should I sign official forms digitally or on paper?

Both ways of signing NSS forms are eligible. However, we prefer a digitally signed form as it appears to be more difficult for us to read a scanned application.

4. BUDGET RELATED QUESTIONS

4.1. Where can I find information on what costs are eligible and how much?

In Annex 3 of the Call text, issues are mentioned that are eligible for funding and the indicated costs.

4.2. Where can I put costs that are not eligible?

In Question 16A, you can provide information on all expenses related to the Networking event. The costs that will be funded by other means can be put in Question 16B and the requested budget from the Networking Support Scheme in 16 C. In Question 16D you may indicate what costs will be covered by the required budget/justify the required budget of the Networking Support Scheme.

4.3. If the Principal applicant organises the event on the premises of its own institute, are the costs for the meeting room, lunch, technical assistance invoiced by the applicants' institute eligible costs?

The EU general principles on best value for money, competition, transparency, etc. have to be followed. If the usual practice of the Principal applicant is to have an internal caterer, then he/she can stick to this and do not have to use an external provider especially for the Networking event. If the Principal applicant has additional requirements in his/her own institution such as the necessity of having three quotes for any payments between € 0 to € 30,000, then the Principal Applicant should always follow the internal rules of the institution and provide the quotes to the accountant of the institution. As the costs of the Networking event have to be justified to ZonMw, the Principal applicant will provide only the documents that ZonMw requests in the Contract that the Principal applicant and ZonMw will sign upon selection of the application. The Principal applicant has to follow both the usual accounting principles of its own institute and the ones set up in the agreement with ZonMw.

4.4. What does the term "co-funding in cash" in Question 16B of the application form mean?

Examples for co-funding in cash are: a registration fee of the participants, co-financing by the industry, own budget from an organisation.

4.5. Can the funding of the Networking Support Scheme cover the cost of registration tickets?

The costs for registration fee/tickets have to be put under Question 16B of the application template as “cofunding in cash” and will be subtracted from the total budget. The maximum budget that you can ask in the Networking Support Scheme is € 30,000.

4.6. Is it allowed to waive the registration fee/ticket for a subgroup of participants from underrepresented countries or patient advocacy organisations?

One of the aims of the Networking Support Scheme is to involve participants from normally underrepresented countries and patient advocacy organisations. Therefore, it fits within the ideas of the Networking Support Scheme to waive the registration fee for these subgroups.

4.7. Is it possible to apply for travel, hotel and catering costs for attendees from any EJP RD countries or only from underrepresented countries?

You can apply for travel, hotel and catering costs of any delegate (members of a PAO, health care professionals and researchers) from any EJP RD country with the exception of Canada. The countries are mentioned in Annex 1 in the Call text. An indication of the costs that can be funded in the Networking Support Scheme is mentioned in Annex 3 in the Call text.

4.8. Are logistic / event related costs eligible, such as transfers, delegate packages, videos and photographer service?

Travel costs to and from airport, etc. are eligible costs. In the application template under Question 16 you will see that “Materials e.g. Programme booklet” are eligible costs. When you indicate clearly in the application form the mentioned purpose for which you would like to use the photographer/videographer it might be covered by the Networking Support Scheme.

4.9. What is meant by miscellaneous budget?

In the miscellaneous line, we mean additional costs (in euro) that are specific for the event, e.g. costs for visa for invited speakers, or costs for an item that is needed for the event and that has not been stated in the lines above in the budget plan.

4.10. What are the payment conditions for approved projects?

Organisers will receive 50% prepayment after signing the contract. If the principal applicant is a PAO, 80% prepayment is possible after signing the contract and if required by the PAO.

4.11. Which party will receive funding for the event?

The institution/organisation of the Principle applicant will receive funding.

4.12. What will happen in case of underspending or overspending of the granted budget?

In case of *underspending* of the granted budget, the real costs will be reimbursed. These costs will be lower than the granted budget.

In case of *overspending* and the realised costs are higher than the granted budget, the overspending will not be reimbursed even if it is justified by you. ZonMw will not reimburse a higher budget than the budget that was asked for in the application. The maximum budget that you can apply for is €30,000,-. Therefore it is important to prepare a realistic budget plan.

4.13 What does the sentence 'Your reference for the payment' in section 'Bank account information' mean?

This reference is especially needed for big institutions to find your own budget if your application is selected. It is a reference for yourself. If you do not need it, you do not have to complete this line.

5. QUESTIONS ON PROJECTNET, THE SUBMISSION SYSTEM OF ZONMW

5.1 How can I submit my application?

You can use the following link:

<http://projectnet.zonmw.nl/projectnet/servlet/projectnet?subsidyGuide&id=200003287>

5.2 Where can I change the language of ProjectNet to English?

Go to ProjectNet (<https://projectnet.zonmw.nl/>) and select 'New User'. In the right upper corner of your screen you can press on English to change text in English. It might be possible that the language button is not visible in Microsoft Edge. In that case, we

would advise you to try another browser. If you are still having troubles, please feel free to contact us via NSSS@zonmw.nl.

5.3. Where can I find the declaration submitting full grant application?

After finalizing the application in ProjectNet, the applicant will automatically receive the declaration form via e-mail. The declaration doesn't need to be filled out in advance.

5.4. Do I have to fill all applicants in the ProjectNet system?

Yes, you have to add all applicants (max 10, including the Principal applicant) in the ProjectNet system.

5.5. I cannot add a new organisation in the ProjectNet system.

You will be able to put your organisations 1 hour after the request. This is the time needed by the system to add new organisations. If you need any help with the system, please call the helpdesk of ZonMw directly: +31 70 349 51 78.

5.6 What do I need to fill in under 'function' of the applicant in ProjectNet?

The word 'function' refers to the position or job the applicant fulfils (for example neurologist). The word does NOT refer the person's function during the organisation of the networking event (for example communication/administrative function).

5.7 Which role should I give the co-applicants in ProjectNet?

For the ProjectNet system it is enough to put the role 'Co-applicant' as text after function. The evaluators will look at the application template for the CV of each applicant and the role in the organisation of the meeting.

6. SERVICE PROVISION AGREEMENT ("CONTRACT")

The legal department of ZonMw sees the organisation of a conference/workshop as providing a service. Therefore, a service provision agreement has been written specifically for the Networking Support Scheme within the European Joint Programme on Rare Diseases (EJP RD). There will be no other agreement sent to a selected Principal applicant whose application is selected upon the evaluation procedure.

6.1. Will the legal department of ZonMw make changes in the Service Provision Agreement based on individual requests?

No, the legal department of ZonMw will not make changes on individual requests. The organisations of all Principal applicants have to sign the same contract for selected proposals.

7. QUESTION ON FORMAT OF THE NETWORKING EVENT

7.1. Is it possible to organise an online event or a hybrid event instead of a face-to-face event?

Yes, the budget may cover costs for a face-to-face event (all participants come together at one location), an online event (all participants are online) or a hybrid event (a group of participants is present at one location and another group is participating online). You have to complete the parts in the budget plan in the application template dependent on the format of the networking event that you choose. The financial department of ZonMw will analyse the budget plan.

Organisers may decide for themselves which type of event they prefer. Take care that the goal of the Networking Support Scheme is to collaborate and to network with each other. Organisers have to find solutions how to organise interactions between all participants in case of an on-line or hybrid meeting.

8. QUESTIONS ON ETHICS

8.1. Should I complete the red rows of the ethics self-assessment table?

No, you should complete only the green and blank rows in the table. The red rows are not applicable for the applications in the Networking Support Scheme.

8.2. Should I say “YES” to the question “Does it involve processing of genetic information?” if I daily work with genetic data but no genetic data are disclosed in my presentation?

The section on personal data refers only to the data processing activities performed for the purposes of the event. You should reply “NO” because genetic information should not be processed in the context of the networking event, but possibly only discussed anonymously.

8.3 What does the word 'pages' mean in the ethics section?

The word "pages" in the ethics part means the pages in the application where the evaluators can find the information for that particular part.

