Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains Call

Date: 27 May 2015

List of questions

1. What is Era-net Transport?

Era-net Transport (ENT) has evolved since 2004 into a service platform for Programme Owners and Managers, providing the required framework for initiating and implementing transnational research and innovation funding collaborations. Nowadays, the ENT network consists of 24 partners from 19 countries and regions, represented by Europe's most relevant national transport research and innovation programmes.

At Era-net Transport we work together on the basis of trust and we aim to benefit from each other´s strong points. We proactively connect different European research parties involved in transport industry. Our collaborative cross-border consortium brings together a range of knowledge and viewpoints to create a sustainable transport (r)evolution. More information can be found on the website: http://transport-era.net/

2. How is the present transnational Call Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains funded?

11 national/regional funding organisations in 10 countries are providing national/regional (n/r) research funds totaling about 10 Million € for coordinated funding or RTI projects.

3. Who are the funding countries/regions?

The following countries/regions have agreed funding:
- Austria
- Basque Country (ES)
- Belarus
- Catalonia (ES)
- Flanders (BE)
- The Netherlands
- Nord-Pas de Calais (FR)
- Norway
- Poland
- Sweden
- Turkey

For contact information of the participating countries/regions see also the call leaflet at the website: http://transport-era.net/research-calls/sustainable/

4. What are the launch date and deadlines of the Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains call?

The call is open from 1st April 2015 to 2nd October 2015 (17:00 CET). An Information & Brokerage Event was held at the Hotel Bloom in Brussels on 13 May 2015. Presentations can be downloaded from http://transport-era.net/news/upcoming-events/calendar-new-events/infoday-brokerage/.

Overview of relevant dates and deadlines:
- April 1st, 2015 Official Call Launch
- May 13th, 2015 Information & Brokerage Event (Brussels)
- October 2nd, 2015 Proposal Submission Deadline (17:00 CET)
- February 2016 Project selection and subsequently funding agreement

5. How will the Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains call liaise with the ALICE roadmap?

The Era-net Transport consortium and the technology platform on Logistics ALICE (Alliance for Logistics Innovation through Collaboration in Europe) have been collaborating in the Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains call from the very beginning. Experts from ALICE have been involved in the scoping and preparation of the call to ensure synergies with the ALICE roadmap. Whereas the ALICE roadmap has a technology and research focus regarding logistics, the Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains call focuses more on the policy needs. There is a continuous and cohesive communication flow between the Era-net Transport consortium and ALICE to ensure an effective coordination and to avoid any double funding of projects in this research area.

6. Who can apply for funding?

The Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains call will be open for transnational consortia composed of at least three independent eligible applicants from at least three different call participating countries/regions (see list of regions/countries).

Project consortia may consist of partners from universities, research organisations, institutes, stakeholder associations, city councils, SMEs and industry. Consortia have to include stakeholders or implementation partners and may consist of partners active across several positions within the research and development system (i.e. innovation, applied research, strategic research,) and across disciplines.

Organisations providing funding for the Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains call and/or involved in the coordination of the call are excluded from participation in project consortia.

7. Can applicants be involved in more than one proposal?

Yes, it is possible to participate in more than one project proposal, if this is allowed by the national/regional funding programme.

8. Can partners not asking for funding participate?

Partners not asking for funding can only participate in addition to the minimum of 3 partners from three different countries/regions. They can participate as a consortium partner or as an associated partner.

9. Can parties from non-funding countries/regions also join a consortium that applies?

That is possible. However, funding is provided from a so-called 'virtual common pot' composed of around € 10 mio from national / regional R&D funds, allowing every participating country / region to only directly fund its own resident consortium partners.

Parties from other, non-funding countries/regions can not receive direct funding from the virtual common pot but are able to participate in a consortium submitting a project proposal in two ways:

- They participate in a consortium without requesting funding from the virtual common pot and thus arrange their own financing/funding, or
- They join as a subcontractor of an eligible applicant from any of the participating countries / regions. Please note that there are restrictions to the volume of subcontracting permitted in a proposal.

Parties from non-funding countries cannot be coordinator of a project proposal. The coordinator of a project proposal should come from a funding country/region.

10. What are the call domains and research topics?

This call is open for project proposals in five call domains that have been identified and developed:

1. Cross-border freight transport corridors
2. Hub development
3. Urban / last mile logistics
4. Organisational innovations and new business models in logistics
5. Information infrastructure and services for logistics

All five domains address R&D projects that mainly deal with transport logistics. Clearly, the first three domains are oriented towards key elements of logistics networks, whereas the latter two concern overarching domains that have important implications for each sector in a supply chain network.

Exemplary research topics and questions have been outlined in the Guide for Applicants. Project proposals for this call are requested to respond to one or more call domains (especially 1-3 and 4-5 are considered to be of added value) by addressing one or more of the listed exemplary research topics and questions.

11. Can one proposal focus on more than one call domain?

Yes, it can. However, applicants must indicate one major call domain for their proposal, even if more than one call domain is addressed.

12. Is there a specific minimum or maximum budget allocated for each individual call domain?

There is no specific funding budget allocation to call domains or to individual research questions of a call domain. Thus, depending on the proposals submitted by the research community and the result of evaluation, it may happen that not all call domains will be covered in the end. Moreover, because proposals may address several call domains, a specific allocation would not be useful.

13. Is there a minimum or maximum to the requested funding and eligible costs per proposal?

There is no minimum or maximum to the requested funding per proposal. The amount of requested funding will however be determined by the duration of projects of maximum 24 months and also by the limitations to the requested funding for consortium partners in their country or region. Moreover an appropriate and realistic requested funding will be taken into account in the evaluation of the proposal.

For the share of eligible costs within a consortium a limitation does exist: no single country or region may represent more than 70% of the eligible costs in the project. If the project is related to more than one region in one country the sum of eligible costs related to all these regions must obey the 70% rule.

14. How many partners can be in a consortium?

There is a minimum of at least three independent eligible applicants from at least three different call participating countries/regions.
There is no absolute limit to the number of partners in a proposal. However, it is important to build a consortium that is – in terms of size and selection of partners – both appropriate and necessary for achieving the objectives of the project proposed.

15. What is the project duration?
The project duration should be appropriate to the objectives of the research, but should not exceed 24 months.

16. Does the size of a proposal play a role in the evaluation?
There is no preference for either larger or smaller projects. The focus is on the quality of the proposals and the expected impact of the projects.

Consortia need to be balanced between countries/regions both in terms of number of partners and distribution of budget. There is no limit to the total number of partners who may be involved in each project and there are no fixed minimum or maximum limits for the project costs. For orientation, proposals for medium-sized projects comprise on average applicants from approximately 3 to 5 countries/regions totaling between approximately 500k€ and 1M€ of eligible projects costs.

17. How to apply?
The application process is a single-step procedure. Proposals must be prepared and submitted electronically by using the Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS). The EPSS is available via the "Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains" call webpage (https://epss-SustainableLogisticsandSupplyChains.eu). Only those proposals submitted in the EPSS system before the closure of the call will be considered for evaluation.

18. Do applicants have to submit a pre-proposal?
The application is a single step procedure, BUT a pre-proposal may be required by some of the participating funding organisations. So always refer to the national/regional requirements.

19. Does every partner have to submit a proposal?
No, only the proposal coordinator must submit the proposal using EPSS. However, consortium partners will be invited by the proposal coordinator to enter their profile data in EPSS. In addition to this, each project partner has to apply for funding from their respective national/regional funding organisation

20. Is it possible to submit a proposal in national/regional languages?
No, proposals must be submitted in English only. The language of national/regional funding applications depends on the respective national/regional funding programmes.

21. Where can I find more information about the Call requirements?
A Guide for Applicants for the Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains call has been published. This document stipulates in detail the requirements for participation in the Sustainable Logistics and Supply Chains call. It is available on the Eranet-Transport website: http://transport-era.net/research-calls/sustainable/

The web-based ENT-platform will increase and ease up cooperation by providing comprehensive and accurate information on calls and funding schemes. In addition it gives researchers and industrial partners the opportunity to gain in-depth information about the constituting national/regional program architectures of cooperation actions like the Flagship Calls and provides a toolkit to compare and analyse them as a whole. You can find the platform on http://www.ent-platform.eu

To support potential applicants, there is also the Flagship Call Secretariat that you can contact at sustainablelogistics@rws.nl

22. How can I find a partner for the call?

ENT has created a partnering site to facilitate the matchmaking of partners to set up a consortium. If you are looking for a partner for your ENT project or if you are looking for a project proposal to join, visit the ENT partnering web-page (https://www.b2match.eu/ENTflagship2015call) and fill in your project description and contact details. This option will help you build a consortium.

23. What makes a good proposal stand out?

All requirements for a proposal are set out in the Guide for Applicants. The following aspects are relevant:

- Clearly address and display a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and objectives of the call (scientific).
- Involve a consortium of complementary partners capable of delivering the work proposed (implementation).
- Ultimately the work being done within the project will make a significant contribution towards achieving the objectives of the call (impact).

Good proposals will be characterised by a high degree of clarity regarding the objectives of the proposed project, relevance to the call, the work plan and expected impact. The high quality of a good proposal should immediately show from its summary.

24. Which projects are eligible?

The call is based on transnational rules and on individual legal and administration rules of the call related funding programmes, activities and organisations in the participating regions/countries, with eligibility criteria going beyond the definitions of the common call framework in the Guide for Applicants.

Proposals submitted in EPSS will be checked against transnational criteria of the call by the Flagship Call Secretariat and will subsequently be forwarded to the respective national/regional funding organisations by the Flagship Call Secretariat and formally checked for their n/r eligibility. Both transnational and national/regional eligibility criteria must be positively met. Proposals failing to comply with either of the criteria cannot be further admitted to the evaluation procedure and will therefore be rejected.

If either the project proposal coordinator (consortium coordinator) or the proposal does not meet the eligibility requirements, the proposal shall be excluded from the further evaluation procedure. In case a single applicant of a project consortium is not eligible, the proposal may still be eligible without this partner, provided that the other eligibility criteria are met by the proposal. In both cases, this will be communicated to the consortium coordinator.

Hence, there is a bilateral responsibility between applicants and their responsible n/r funding organisation. Applicants shall therefore always refer to their respective national/regional rules, conditions and definitions. Main definitions have been outlined in "N/R specific definitions and Contact Points" (Annex 1 of the Guide for Applicants) with reference to further national/regional information documents, websites and contacts. More comprehensive information about related n/r funding programs and calls can be accessed via the ENT-Platform (http://www.ent-platform.eu/).

25. What are the funding rates?

Eligible type of research and funding rates can vary depending on the respective funding organisation. The eligible type of research and funding rates will be determined by the rules of the participating national/regional funding programmes and agencies. Specific information

on the funding rates in the respective countries/regions will be provided by the appointed n/r contact points (Annex 1 of Guide for Applicants).

26. How will the proposal be evaluated?

Proposals submitted in EPSS will be checked against transnational and national/regional eligibility criteria of the call. Proposals failing to comply with either of the criteria will be rejected.

For the qualitative assessment eligible proposals will be forwarded to an International Expert Panel, which consists of recognized experts composed by the participating funding organisations. The proposals will be evaluated in an open competition.

The International Expert Panel will assess proposals according to the call evaluation criteria (Figure 6 in GfA, page 21) and provide a qualitative assessment of the proposals by scoring and giving an accompanying written report.

Based on the scores and reports provided by the International Experts Panel all proposals will be ranked (Ranking List). National/regional funding organisations will select proposals for funding according to this ranking list and by taking into account the available national/regional budgets. Funding decisions are final and cannot be appealed against.

27. What are the requirements for the Consortium Agreement and is a template available?

With the Consortium Agreement (CA) applicants officially commit their cooperation and agree on the management of their Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) in the consortium. There is no formal requirement on the format or content of the CA, bearing in mind that IPR related definitions and requirements can vary between national/regional funding organisations. In case of uncertainties please contact your national/regional contact point.

A precondition for the eligibility of the proposal is submission of a draft CA together with the project proposal. With this draft you also confirm that you have the agreement of all the members of the consortium to submit this proposal on their behalf. The Consortium should thus aim to have as many signatures as possible in the draft CA. Missing signatures can be amended during the Negotiation/Contracting Phase. During the Negotiation/Contracting Phase, the CA has to be updated/revised according to any given obligations from the project evaluation and has to be signed by authorized representatives of the partners in the consortia.