

ANR-BBSRC Call for Collaborative Proposals in Systems Biology (ANR-BBSRC SysBio)

Status: OPEN
Closing Date: 12 April 2007

Dedicated Websites :

ANR France : [ANR-BBSRC-SysBio](#)

BSRC UK : [ANR-BBSRC Call for Collaborative Proposals in Systems Biology.](#)

Scientific Queries:

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BBSRC UK: Gabriela Pastori [gabriela.pastori@bbsrc.ac.uk] ;

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Summary

The UK Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR) in France are pleased to announce a joint call for collaborative proposals to encourage the development of cross-national research projects in the systems biology of animals, plants and micro-organisms.

This call for collaborative proposals will require applicants based in France and the UK to work in partnership on research projects that will have the France-based component funded by ANR and the UK-based component funded by BBSRC. Eligibility to apply will be determined by national eligibility rules and the resources requested will have to fit with national guidelines. The aim is to finance approximately 10 projects of high quality collaborative research.

The deadline for receipt of full proposals is **12 April 2007**.

All collaborative proposals submitted will be subject to peer review involving external referees. Applications will be ranked by an international panel of experts at the beginning of July and a final decision on funding will be made in late July. Successful collaborative proposals are expected to be announced at the end of 2007.

Background

ANR and BBSRC aim to fund high quality scientific research within their own countries and are convinced that the best research can often be delivered by working with, and benchmarking against, the best researchers internationally. ANR and BBSRC agree to foster French-British cooperation in scientific research and to launch a common call for proposals funding the best research projects in systems biology conducted by teams from both countries. This call is a continuation of BBSRC's investment in this area ([First Call for Systems Biology Centres](#); [Second Call for Systems Biology Centres](#)) and is a continuation of 2006 ANR's ([BIOSYS](#)) call.

Specific objectives

- To support high quality scientific research in systems biology between France and the UK.
- To use resources from the British and French national funding agencies in a co-ordinated manner to provide access to skills and expertise that are not always available at a national level, for mutual benefit.
- To facilitate the development of systems biology research both nationally and in Europe by encouraging a wider community to become involved in this activity.

Scope of the initiative

Systems biology research involves the quantitative and integrative understanding of dynamic biological processes, such as the behaviour of interacting biomolecules. This requires the use of mathematical and statistical analysis of biological data to develop predictive models of biological behaviour. The subject of the collaborative initiative will cover the systems biology of animals, plants and micro-organisms across the hierarchy levels of molecules to organs. Examples (for illustrative purposes only) include metabolic pathways, signalling pathways, intracellular events, developmental biology of particular cell types and interactions between different cell types in tissues, eg neurobiology. The initiative will not support proposals (led by either French or British partners) to investigate human disease, though post-project potential biomedical applications are welcome. The initiative will involve cross-disciplinary studies that will use mathematical and/or statistical analysis and integrate biological data to create appropriate models which can be further refined and tested within the same project. The sponsors will support projects that generate new biological data but the focus of this initiative is on the creation and development of biological models.

Application procedure

Eligibility

All applicants must fulfil national eligibility rules for research proposals as set by the relevant parties.

For BBSRC applicants, standard BBSRC rules for eligibility will apply; please refer to the guidelines in the [Grants Guide](#), and specific BBSRC requirements on [JeS](#).

For ANR applicants, please refer to “*annexe 1*” on ANR website ([ANR-BBSRC-SysBio](#)). Each applicant must have the official approval to submit from the person authorised to legally commit the applicant’s institution or from the director of the laboratory for French academic partners.

On the UK side, the ANR/BBSRC collaborative call for proposals is a responsive mode initiative open to eligible institutions. Please refer to BBSRC’s [Grants Guide](#). On the French side, this collaborative programme is open to public and private organisations as defined in “*annexe 2*” on ANR website ([ANR-BBSRC-SysBio](#)).

Collaborating partners from other countries can be included but they will not receive any funds from ANR or BBSRC (these should be included as partners (not co-investigators) in the BBSRC application form).

Requirements for collaborative proposals

In addition to the assessment criteria outlined under peer review of proposals (LINK to paragraph below), applicants should be able to clearly demonstrate that their projects represent true collaborative partnerships between transnational teams and highlight the added value of such collaborations. Parallel national subprojects with little interaction between transnational partners will not be supported. Only proposals aiming to support standard research projects will be considered: this initiative will not support proposals for networks.

Projects are expected to be of 3 years’ duration.

Structure of proposals

Each collaborative proposal must involve applicants based in France and the UK for their research with a minimum of one applicant per country. Applicants will nominate one national project leader per country (principal investigator, for BBSRC applicants) and a coordinator for the overall project.

How to apply / Format of proposals

Proposals must be written in English.

Applicants from France will be required to submit their completed ANR application forms (“dossier administratif et financier”) to ANR, including the costs associated to the French partners. Applicants from the UK should submit their completed BBSRC application forms (Proforma) to BBSRC, including the full economic costs attributed to the British partners.

For all applicants (BBSRC and ANR),

proposals must contain the application form (proforma for BBSRC applicants and “dossier administratif et financier” for ANR applicants) and the scientific case (case for support, for BBSRC applicants and “dossier scientifique et technique” for ANR applicants).

For applications to BBSRC,

proposals (proforma and case for support) must be **submitted electronically** through the [Je-S system](#) by 4pm on **12 April 2007**. In Section E. Type of Proposal, applicants should enter “Standard” under Scheme, and “ANR-BBSRC SysBio” under Mode.

For applications to ANR,

(“dossier administratif et financier” et “dossier scientifique et technique”) can be found on [ANR-BBSRC-SysBio](#)

proposals (“dossier administratif et financier” et “dossier scientifique et technique”) must be

submitted electronically to anr-bbsrc-sysbio@agencerecherche.fr

by 4pm on **12 April 2007**

and

postal mailed as a signed paper copy

by 24pm on **13 April 2007** to

Veronique Briquet-Laugier

ANR

212 rue de Bercy

Paris 75012

France

A covering letter from the coordinator should be attached to the electronic and paper copy submission. The letter will include a presentation of the project in one side A4.

The scientific case (**case for support**, for BBSRC applicants and “**dossier scientifique et technique**” for ANR applicants) should be identical for the BBSRC and ANR applicants and presented as below:

A. General presentation (max. 2 pages):

- Names and full affiliations of the coordinator (nominated by the consortium to act as its representative), national project leaders (one for UK and one for France), each group leader, co-investigators and other personnel participating in the project.
- Project title up to 150 characters.
- Short title up to 12 characters.
- Research subject and keywords.
- A summary of no more than 4,000 characters.

- Project aim(s), up to 4,000 characters.
- Project duration.
- Overall cost of project and cost for each collaborating partner (in Euros).
- List of proposed expert reviewers. Up to five experts can be proposed, with names, postal and e-mail addresses. Up to 5 experts can be disqualified in case of conflict of interest or ongoing or recent collaboration.

B. Detailed scientific information (max 12 pages):

- Background and present state of the art in the field (max. 2 pages).
- Description of scientific ideas, highlighting the originality and novelty.
- Proposed work plan, including involvement of participants in different workpackages, together with milestones and deliverables (max. 6 pages).
- Added value of the proposed collaboration, including description of management of the project, communication between partners as well as data management and data sharing (max. 2 pages).
- Information about possible exploitation and communication of project results (max. ½ page)
- Description of any training activities foreseen within the project, if applicable (max. ½ page).
- A Gantt chart of the project

C. Description of British and French scientific teams:

- Brief CVs of applicants, together with the five most significant recent publications (max 1 page per applicant).
- Description of ongoing projects of each participating group related to the present topic, indicating funding sources and possible overlaps with proposal (max. ½ page per group).
- Description of significant facilities and large equipment available to the consortium (max. ½ page).
- Financial plan for each partner (on form provided according to partners' financial regulations).

In addition to the above, applicants should also give due consideration to the following:

Data management

Applications to this call should consider the practical requirements for data sharing both within consortia and with the wider community and describe how this will be undertaken. Applicants should request appropriate resources for data management and sharing in their proposals.

Workshops

Successful applicants will be required to disseminate the outcomes of their projects and attend a mid-term and a final dissemination event. **Applicants should therefore include travel and accommodation costs in their application forms for a meeting in France and a meeting in the UK**

Funding period

Projects will be funded for up to three years. Extension for one additional year with no additional funding will be considered upon request.

Eligible budget items and financial rules

All budget items must conform to the national rules relevant for each applicant. For French applicants refer to “Annexe 3” on ANR website ([ANR-BBSRC-SysBio](#)).

Peer review of applications

A common set of peer review criteria and referees’ form will be used in the assessment of collaborative proposals. The following criteria will be taken into consideration in the peer review and selection process:

- Scientific excellence.
- Mutual advancement of research.
- Transnational added value, including data sharing, data management.
- Contribution to societal issues (ethics, environment) and/or intellectual and cultural development.
- Contribution to fostering young researchers.
- Project organisation.
- Feasibility.
- Impact, future possibility of development, and expected outcomes.

A common peer review panel comprising internationally recognised experts, proposed by ANR and BBSRC, will be constituted. The panel will consider, rank and recommend a list of proposals for funding, based on the referees’ reports and the Panel’s discussions. Applications will be assessed in competition with each other.

The peer review panel will comprise typically 20 members, including experts from France, the UK and other European countries. Members will be selected on the basis of their scientific excellence and their thematic orientation to ensure the best coverage of scientific areas.

External referees, including those nominated by the applicants, by the panel members and by the ANR and BBSRC, will be approached to provide comments on the proposals received and assist the panel in the assessment of applications. Referees’ comments will be communicated to the project coordinator who will be given the opportunity to respond to the comments made within 7 days. Both referees’ comments and coordinators’ responses will be made available to the panel members.

Project administration

The financial administration and contracting of successful applications will be done at the national level, where contracting and funding will be issued according to national rules.

Reporting

Each project coordinator, on behalf of their participating teams, accepts the commitment to submit to ANR and BBSRC a brief mid-term scientific progress report on the overall project complemented by a brief report from each team. At the end of each project a formal final report should be submitted to ANR and BBSRC. Further details will be provided at a later stage. In addition, French partners will have to submit every semester to ANR a short progress report according to a form provided at a later stage.

Collaboration Agreement

The Project participants must enter into a Collaboration Agreement to specify how Intellectual Property Rights will be handled. A Collaboration Agreement will need to be in place before any grant announcement will be made. ANR and BBSRC will have no claims on the Intellectual Property Rights arising from the projects. Applicants may wish to consult the European Research and Project Office guidelines for drafting collaboration agreements. For information, please visit the [IPR Helpdesk website](#).

Timetable

The deadline for submission of full proposals is **12 april 2007**.

For applications to BBSRC,

proposals must be **submitted electronically** through the [Je-S system](#) by 4pm on **12 April 2007**.

For applications to ANR,

proposals (“dossier administratif et financier” et “dossier scientifique et technique”) must be

submitted electronically to anr-bbsrc-sysbio@agencerecherche.fr
by 4pm on **12 April 2007**

and

postal mailed as a signed paper copy

by 24pm on **13 April 2007** to

Veronique Briquet-Laugier

ANR

212 rue de Bercy

Paris 75012

France

Applications will be assessed, ranked and recommended for funding in July 2007. It is anticipated that grant announcements will be made by December 2007.

Contacts

General scientific enquiries should be addressed to:

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