

FRENCH-GERMAN CALL FOR PROJECTS ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE 2019

Opened jointly by the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI) and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

Link to the publication of the call on the ANR site:

<http://anr.fr/ANR-FRDE-AMR-2019>

Link to the publication of the call on the BMBF site:

<https://www.gesundheitsforschung-bmbf.de/de/8364.php>

**Opening date:
December 21, 2018**

**Closing date:
February 27, 2019 at 1 PM (CET)**

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AIM OF THE CALL

The aim of this call for projects is to address the serious transnational health threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and to strengthen the health care of the French and German populations. Therefore, the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI) and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) intend to enable French and German scientists to build an effective collaboration on a common research project within the field of AMR in human infections, implicating multiple research domains. Unmet needs within this field have been prioritized to gain knowledge, which could then be implemented into current public health policies or appropriate products to tackle AMR. The following priority topics were identified by a Franco-German expert committee according to the respective strengths of the two countries in the field of AMR. Three topics target resistance to antibiotics (focusing on critically resistant bacteria from the priority pathogens list published by the WHO¹) and one targets resistance to antifungals.

- Resistance to antibiotics (limited to critically resistant bacteria from the “**priority 1: critical**” of the priority pathogens list published by the WHO list: *Acinetobacter baumannii*, carbapenem-resistant; *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, carbapenem-resistant; *Enterobacteriaceae*, carbapenem-resistant, ESBL-producing)

I. Microbiota-based prevention and treatment strategies.

Projects should focus on mechanisms of emergence of drug-resistant bacteria within the microbiota, interactions between resistant bacteria and the rest of the microbiota as well as means proposed to influence or manipulate them. Projects in preclinical research and clinical research, making use of existing biobanks and/or well-established cohorts, are included. Recruitment of patients is excluded in the projects (Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 4 to 5; see guidelines for applicants for the definition of the TRLs).

II. Antibacterials with new modes of action differing from modes of action of existing antibiotics e.g. small molecules, peptides/proteins, DNA/RNA based products, natural products, bacteriophages and bacteriophage-derived products etc.

Lead compounds should already been known and the projects should focus on the early stage of characterization of the products and their mode of action as well as the mechanisms that bacteria develop to resist to them. Projects can comprise various Methods, including *in vitro*, *ex vivo* and *in vivo* testing for specificity, activity and toxicity of the products. Additionally, they can explore possibilities for large-scale production. All types of translational research will be considered, excluding the early discovery stage (screening) and clinical trials. Clinical research making use of existing biobanks and/or well-established cohorts is included. (TRL 3b to 5; see guidelines for applicants for the definition of the TRLs).

¹ <http://www.who.int/news-room/detail/27-02-2017-who-publishes-list-of-bacteria-for-which-new-antibiotics-are-urgently-needed>

III. Investigations of the emergence, dissemination and burden of resistance using epidemiology, modelling, microbiology and cellular biology.

Projects should integrate various means to address the complex question of the emergence and dissemination of resistance as well as improved methodologies to determine the burden of disease and evaluate the impact of interventions (TRL not applicable). Theoretical as well as experimental projects, or a combination of the two, are fundable.

- Resistance to antifungals

IV. Investigation of pathogenic mechanisms, investigational diagnostics and treatment strategies in relation to resistance issues.

The projects should focus on infections caused by resistant yeasts or molds, in the context of the recently identified emergence of resistant fungal pathogens. The call is restricted to invasive infections, both acute and chronic (TRL 1 to 5).

Projects should have an average cost of between 100.000 and one million euros and a duration of up to **3 years**. A maximum of one project, dealing with antifungal resistance (axis IV), will be funded.

Eligible expenses will respectively be funded by MESRI and BMBF, according to the specific national rules.

SUBMISSION and ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for this call, a project proposal must adhere to all common eligibility criteria, which are put forth jointly by the two funding agencies, as well as to specific national requirements.

- The project proposal must :
 - o Be submitted by research consortia composed of one French coordinator and one German coordinator, who will each be the contact point for the respective national funding agency. Additional members can join the consortium as research partners.
 - o Be submitted as one proposal per bilateral consortium to **ANR** (Please see the link to the submission site at LINK)
- In order to apply for funding the official proposal template has to be used. <http://anr.fr/ANR-FRDE-AMR-2019>
- The section "Project description" of the submission form (points 1a to 12) must not exceed a maximum of **20 pages (Arial 11, single spaced, margins of 1.5 cm)**.

- A CV of all consortium members (principal investigators) must be integrated into the submission form (scientific document). A joint CV must include a list of no more than **5 principal publications per partner leader**. However, it will be possible to include a link in order to access CVs that are more detailed and/or a more comprehensive list of publications (max. 1 page per partner leader).
- A Consortium Agreement (CA) has to be signed by all consortium members. It will be the responsibility of the research consortium coordinators to draw up a CA in order to fix a common project start date, manage the delivery of the project activities, finances, intellectual property rights (IPR) and to avoid disputes which might be detrimental to the completion of the project.

SELECTION

Evaluation criteria are:

- Quality and scientific ambition
 - **Clarity** of the objectives and research hypothesis
 - Novelty, originality, **expected advancement of the field**
 - Quality of the **methodology**
- Project organisation and means of implementation
 - Scientific necessity and benefit **to the project** by the effective cooperation of **French and German teams**.
 - Quality and expertise of the selected **consortium**
 - **Feasibility** of the project (work plan, feasibility of the different tasks and their interconnectedness, realism of the timetable, risk assessment). The application file must jointly present the French and the German parts of the research programme, including **details about the roles of each team** as well as the **means defining their common work**. **The use of a Gantt chart is highly recommended**.
 - Requested **human and financial resources** (adequacy of means allocated to each work programme, **clear justification** of requested means, overall balance of resources, quality of the scientific environment and specific conditions for implementation/application).
- Impact of the project
 - Capacity of the project to **respond to the research challenges** on antimicrobial resistance.
 - **Potential impact** on scientific domains , public health and economics
 - **Impact on the health of the French and German populations**. Project proposals involving other populations will be accepted if the link to the

health of the French and German populations is convincingly established.

In this bilateral programme, the scientific necessity and **added benefit** of the **French-German cooperation** to the project is of critical importance. Particular attention will be given to the integrated nature of a project, from the planning and design stages to the methods of implementation. To be considered for funding, proposals have to convincingly demonstrate the benefits of the French-German interactions, particularly as they relate to the binational project coordination and common work arrangements.

Rebuttal stage: before the peer review panel (PRP) members meet to discuss each proposal in a PRP meeting, each consortium is provided with the opportunity to respond to the arguments and evaluations of the reviewers. This stage allows applicants to comment on factual errors or misunderstandings that may have been committed by the referees while assessing their proposal and to reply to reviewers' questions. However, issues, which are not related to the reviewers' comments or questions, cannot be addressed and the work plan cannot be modified at this stage.

The applicants will have up to one week (April 30 – May 7, 2019) for this optional response to the reviewers' comments.

Answers sent after the notified deadline, or not related to the reviewers' comments or questions will be disregarded.

FOLLOW-UP

Each coordinator will have to report to his/her respective funding agency according to specific national rules.

In addition, a kick off and a final review meetings of all funded projects will be organized in France and in Germany, respectively. The participation of each consortium is mandatory and a budget should be foreseen accordingly in the budget of the project.

CALENDAR

- Submission of proposals on the ANR site : February 27, 2019, 1pm (CET)
- Notification of results by ANR and VDI/VDE-IT : in the summer of 2019
- Earliest possible start date: at the end of 2019

SPECIFIC FUNDING RULES OF THE TWO FUNDING ORGANISATIONS

Funding Organisation	Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR); http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr
Initial funding pre-commitment	Approx. 3.500.000 € (French funding) Anticipated number of funded joint projects: 6-8
National Contact Point	Dr. Ingrid Pfeifer and Dr. Ana Navarette; Phone : +33 (0)1 78 09 80 22 /+33 (0)1 73 54 81 52 E-Mail: FRDE-AMR@anr.fr; Health & Biology Department; Agence Nationale de la Recherche –ANR; 50, avenue Daumesnil - 75012 Paris, France
Eligible institutions	Eligible institutions: - Public Research Organization such as EPST, EPIC, universities, university hospitals, public research institutes (max. rate of support: 100% of marginal costs). - Enterprises: large & SMEs (max. rate of support: 45% of eligible costs for SMEs & 30% for larger companies). - Most of the foundation of Public utility, actor of the research (50% of eligible costs) - Private health establishments of public interest (ESPIC) (max. rate of support: 100% of marginal costs) Please see the financial regulation on the ANR web site for additional information Please refer to ANR's financial regulations ("Règlement financier ANR") for full details at: http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/RF
Additional eligibility criteria	- ANR will not allow double funding and will not finance projects or parts of projects that have been funded through other calls.
Eligible costs	Personnel costs for temporary contracts; Instruments, material and scientific consumable costtravel; and sub-contracting, if necessary to carry out the proposed activities (sub-contracting costs of max 50% of total eligible costs per principal investigator). Please note that at ANR, indirect costs (i.e.overheads) means « Frais généraux (additionnels et autres frais d'exploitation)”, section 3.1.1.e of the financial regulation of ANR, and 8% of the total eligible costs must be applied if the applicant belongs to a public research organisation, whereas 68% of the total

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	<p>personnel costs and 7% of other costs will be applied if the PI belongs to another category.</p> <p>ANR has a maximum funding per applicant for this call: each applicant can be funded with a maximum amount of 250 000 €. There is equally a minimum amount per applicant: 15 000 €.</p>
Further guidance	<p>Please see online the specific annexe document for research groups applying to this call for proposals for funding in France, available via a link on the site of the publication of the call on the ANR site: http://anr.fr/ANR-FRDE-AMR-2019</p>

Funding Organisation	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) https://www.bmbf.de/
Initial funding pre-commitment	Approx. 3.500.000 € (German funding) Anticipated number of funded joint projects: 6-8
National Contact Point	Dr. Karsten Rapsch Communication Systems, Human-Machine-Interaction, Health VDI/VDE Innovation + Technik GmbH Steinplatz 1 10623 Berlin Germany Phone: +49 (0) 30 310078-498 Mail: Karsten.Rapsch@vdivde-it.de
Eligible institutions	Eligible institutions: Public and private universities and universities of applied science, non-university research institutions (FhG, MPG, HGF, WGL), university hospitals and companies in the industrial sector with R & D capacity in Germany
Additional eligibility criteria	The required expertise and infrastructure for the realization of the project is required. Business enterprises can only be promoted if the financial standing of the company is guaranteed for the project duration.
Eligible costs	All costs related to the project, which are not covered by basic financing, are eligible. This includes personal costs, consumables, travel costs, in exceptional cases investments, publication costs, subcontracts and other expenses. The respective funding rates are linked to

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	national regulation, please refer to the national call text.
Further guidance	Further information and national regulations are available in the German call text. Additionally, German applicants are advised to refer to the German call text and to contact their respective national contact point. https://www.gesundheitsforschung-bmbf.de/de/8364.php