2ND FRENCH-GERMAN CALL FOR PROJECTS ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE 2020

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:
https://anr.fr/ANR-FRDE-AMR-2020

Link to the publication of the call on the BMBF site:
https://www.gesundheitsforschung-bmbf.de/de/zweite-Foerderrichtlinie-dt-frz-AMR-Projekte.php

Opening date:
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Closing date:
February 28th, 2020 at 1 PM (CET)

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AIM OF THE CALL

Worldwide, infectious diseases are a on the rise and endanger the health and the life of humans and animals. Concurrently, antibiotics are rapidly losing their effectiveness, as bacteria are developing resistance to them. Due to the continuous spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), the treatment of an increasing numbers of bacterial infections has become difficult and might even become impossible.

Antimicrobial resistance affects not only humans but is tightly connected to animal health and the environment. The frequent transmission between habitats accelerates the spread of AMR, evoking new challenges that can only be solved in a holistic approach. Hence, to tackle the AMR problem in a comprising and sustainable manner, it is vital to intensify the exchange of information and the cooperation between human and veterinary medicine and other areas of expertise like biology, chemistry, agricultural sciences, environmental research, food technology and social sciences.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has adopted a global action plan on AMR in 2015, emphasizing the "One Health" approach. After the UN High-Level Meeting on AMR in 2016, the Secretary-General of the United Nations convened the Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance. The European Commission has established the European "One Health" Action Plan against AMR in 2017. In 2019, the G20 leaders declared that the member states will accelerate efforts based on a "One-Health" approach to combat AMR.

To master the challenge of containing AMR, it is essential to overcome national borders and coordinate R&D activities jointly. France and Germany, who are actively involved in several international initiatives to fight AMR, have adopted this one health approach. In this joint bilateral cooperation, both countries combined their resources and expertise to tackle AMR.

With this call for project proposals and the subsequent funding of selected projects, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI) want to encourage and enable French and German scientists to collaborate intensively and effectively in multidisciplinary and synergistic research projects on AMR. The results of the projects shall support the alignment of public health policies and/or measures to fight AMR.

The topics of this call were identified and prioritized by a German-French expert committee, concentrating on knowledge gaps in the occurrence, spread, containment and reduction of AMR, as well as focusing on the scientific strengths of each of the two countries. Accordingly, the first topic addresses AMR in environmental reservoirs, and the second topic focuses on colonization of humans, farm animals, pets and food products by antibiotic resistant bacteria. Research projects on both topics can include all suitable methods of all scientific fields, for instance (but not limited to) epidemiological methods like phenotyping, genotyping, statistical modelling, and/or methods of social and economic sciences.

1. **Innovative research on AMR in environmental reservoirs (water, soil, wild animals, plants, biofilms on plastic waste, etc.)**

   a) Biologic and epidemiologic relevance (risk assessment) of environmental reservoirs for humans or animals regarding the emergence, transmission and dissemination of AMR

b) Impact of antibiotics, antibiotic residues and other pollutants related to hygienic measures in human and animal health on AMR

c) Improved or novel methods to quantify and characterize antibiotic-resistant bacteria, genes and mobile genetic elements, antibiotics and antibiotic residues in environmental sample matrices (e.g. wastewater, soil, air)

d) Innovative interventions to reduce AMR in environmental reservoirs

2. **Innovative research on antibiotic resistant bacteria colonizing humans, farm animals, pets and food products**

a) Epidemiology, biology and impact of colonizing antibiotic resistant bacteria

b) Innovative approaches for prevention or reduction of colonization with antibiotic resistant bacteria

c) Impact of disinfectants on the emergence of colonizing antibiotic resistant bacteria

Clinical research projects utilising existing biobanks and/or well-established cohorts are included, however, the recruitment of patients is beyond the scope of the call.

Projects may cost up to one million Euro and require up to **3 years**.

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, which are listed in annex 1:

- The project proposal must be submitted
  - by research consortia composed of one French coordinator[1] and one German[2] coordinator, who will each be the contact point for the respective national funding agency. Additional partners can join the consortium.
  - as one joint proposal per bilateral consortium to **VDI/VDE-IT** (https://ssl.vdivde-it.de/positrons-en/c/1929)
- In order to apply for funding, the official proposal template has to be used as provided under "Link" on the website of this call.

[1] *A legal entity that has its primary establishment in France or an entity established in the EU that has a secondary establishment in France

[2] *A legal entity that has its primary establishment in Germany or an entity established in the EU that has a secondary establishment in Germany

- The section "Project description" of the submission form (points 1a to 12) must not exceed a maximum of 20 pages (**Arial 11 pt, 1.5 line spaced, page margins 2.0 cm**).
- The CV of each consortium partner´s principal investigator (PI), including a list of at maximum five relevant publications per PI, must be integrated into the submission form.
- Web links may be provided to access more detailed CVs and/or comprehensive lists of publications. The information per PI must not exceed one page.
- The research consortium is strongly encouraged to sign a Consortium Agreement (CA) before the official project start date, and in any case, it has to be signed by all consortium partners no later than six months after the beginning of the project. The consortium coordinators are responsible for drawing up the CA in order to fix a joint project start date, to manage the delivery of project results, the finances, the intellectual property rights (IPR) and to solve conflicts which might endanger the successful completion of the project.

SELECTION

The 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

In this bilateral programme, the scientific necessity and the **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.

FOLLOW-UP

Each coordinator (PI) will have to report to his/her respective funding agency according to the provisions of the funding agreement.
A joint kick-off meeting and a joint final review meeting of all funded projects will be organized in Germany and in France, respectively. The participation of each consortium is mandatory and a budget should be foreseen accordingly in the budget proposal of the project.

SCHEDULE

- Submission of proposals on the VDI/VDE-IT web site : February 28, 2020, 1pm (CET)
- Notification of results by ANR and VDI/VDE-IT : at the end of June, 2020
- Earliest possible start date: January 1, 2021

ANNEX 1
SPECIFIC FUNDING RULES OF THE TWO FUNDING AGENCIES

Funding Organisation	**French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI)/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 Phone : +33 (0)1 78 09 80 22 E-Mail: ingrid.pfeifer@agencerecherche.fr Health & Biology Department; Agence Nationale de la Recherche –ANR; 50, avenue Daumesnil - 75012 Paris, France
Eligible institutions	The consortium must include at least one French research partner **and one German research partner and is open to partners from the "public research organisations or related-one" and/or partners from the "commercial company" type*. *** Partners that have their primary establishment in France and/or Partners established in the EU and that can prove that they have a secondary establishment in France* ** Include public law entities engaged in research activity and private law entities engaged in research and/or teaching activity.* Please refer to ANR's financial regulations regarding the rates of support for different partners ("Règlement financier ANR"): 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	Among others, eligible costs include personnel costs for temporary contracts; small equipment; consumables and animal costs; travel; and sub-contracting, if necessary to carry out the proposed activities. Please note that at ANR, the eligible overhead rates (indirect costs) vary depending on the type of partner applying for funding.

	Please refer to ANR's financial regulations ("Règlement financier ANR") for full details at: http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/RF 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 €.
Further guidance	Please see online the specific annex documents 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: https://anr.fr/ANR-FRDE-AMR-2020

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. Christiane Juhls Communication Systems, Human-Machine-Interaction, Health VDI/VDE Innovation + Technik GmbH Steinplatz 1 10623 Berlin Germany Phone: +49 (0) 30 310078-5515 Mail: christiane.juhls@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 expertise and infrastructure required for the realization of the project has to be demonstrated. 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 national regulations, 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/zweite-Foerderrichtlinie-dt-frz-AMR-Projekte.php