Guidelines for Applicants
2021

Tournesol Joint Exchange Projects
between the
Embassy of France in Belgium
and the
Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO)

This document describes the procedures to be followed by the researcher(s) from Flanders for the call 2021 of the Tournesol Joint Exchange Projects. For specific requirements, eligibility criteria and procedures at French side, please consult the website of Campus France.

Consortia that were awarded funding in the previous call (submission: 2019 - start projects: 2020) are not eligible for funding in this call.

1. Introduction

The Tournesol programme aims to establish scientific collaborations and exchanges of expertise between Flemish and French researchers in all scientific disciplines by funding joint scientific exchange projects that have a duration of two years. The programme offers support by way of travel funds with special focus on junior researchers:

- At Flemish side, the Principal Investigator can only have a postdoctoral experience of maximally 12 years. In addition, the researchers performing the exchanges towards France, can only be predoctoral researchers or researchers with a postdoctoral experience of maximally 12 years.
- At French side, priority is also given to junior researchers. As a consequence, the scientific seniority of the Principal Investigator and the researchers performing the exchanges towards Flanders, will be taken into account when evaluating the project proposals.

2. Aim

Starting from the 1st of February 2021 until the 14th of April 2021 (5PM, CET – EXTENDED DEADLINE), proposals for joint exchange projects with a duration of two years between researchers from Flanders and France are invited in all scientific disciplines as long as it covers fundamental research. The purpose of this joint exchange project should be to increase and develop relations between the scientific
communities of both Parties, fostering the conditions for research cooperation, inter alia, through the exchange of junior scientists within the framework of joint exchange projects in order to:

a) encourage bilateral fundamental research;
b) exchange knowledge;
c) promote the implementation of joint research activities.

3. Guidelines for applicants

3.1. How to apply

Consortia that were awarded funding in the previous call (submission: 2019 - start projects: 2020) are not eligible for funding in this call.

In order to be eligible, a proposal must meet the following criteria:

- Projects must be endorsed by Principal Investigators (PIs) (one French and one Flemish) duly authorized to conduct research and providing the guarantees on the operational resources. Principal Investigators (Flemish as well as French) are required to have a PhD degree.
  - **In Flanders**, the PI can only have a **postdoctoral seniority of maximally 12 years** (i.e. first PhD degree can be obtained maximally 12 years before the submission deadline (14/04/2021) of the project, to be counted from the date of obtaining the doctoral degree).
  - In addition, the Flemish PI must hold, throughout the entire period of the project, an appointment of at least 50% at:
    - a university in the Flemish Community (including the academic programmes within the corresponding association), or at
    - a federal or Flemish scientific institute as scientific staff of the Dutch-speaking community of, or at
    - a university hospital in the Flemish Community as scientific staff, or at
    - a hospital with an academic character recognized as research centre in the Flemish Community as scientific staff.
  - **In France**, the PI must be affiliated to a research laboratory itself affiliated to a higher education institution or a research institution (see website Campus France).
- Proposals **must be submitted simultaneously** at FWO by the Principal Investigator in Flanders and at the Campus France by the Principal Investigator in France respecting the submission deadline. In Flanders the proposal can only be submitted according to the regulations of the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). In France the proposal can only be submitted according to the regulations of Campus France.
- Proposals must be submitted, both in Flanders and France before the deadline of the 14th of April 2021 (at FWO: 5PM, CET), using the appropriate application forms:
  
o At Flemish side, the form ‘Application for a Tournesol grant’ (to be found on the FWO website) should be submitted to interprog@fwo.be. Visits must be indicated in the application form, duly justified, including their duration, the estimated dates and names of the involved researchers and the estimated budget.
  
o In Flanders, only predoctoral researchers or postdoctoral researchers (with maximally 12 years postdoctoral seniority, i.e. first PhD degree can be obtained maximally 12 years before the submission deadline (14/04/2021) of the project, to be counted from the date of obtaining the doctoral degree) can receive funding to cover travel and accommodation expenses abroad. In France, the active participation and mobility of junior researchers (predoctoral or postdoctoral in particular) is seen as one of the main selection criteria (For specific requirements, see website Campus France).
  
o Please be aware that all members of the French and the Flemish research teams (PIs as well as researchers who will perform the exchanges) should have or create an account on the FWO e-portal and keep their publication list up to date.
  
o In case of a granted project, at least two months before the actual exchange, the involved Flemish researcher needs to notify the FWO about his/her departure and stay abroad by using the ‘Notification for a stay abroad’ form which can be downloaded on the FWO website.

After the deadline, the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) and Campus France will check whether the proposals have been submitted both in Flanders and France and inform each other of the eligibility. Lack of submission of the application of one of the Parties will cause the application to be considered ineligible. In addition, the proposal must be written jointly and the names of the French and Flemish submitting institutions, applying principal investigators and other research team members, project title, project description, methodology, work plan of activities and outputs etc. must be identical.

3.2. Financial aspects

- On the French as well as on the Flemish side, the maximum available budget per project per year is 2.000 euro. Each Party bears the costs of its own researchers up to max. 2.000 euros per project per year. More specifically, the Embassy of France in Belgium will provide up to max. 2.000 euro/project/year for the French research team. FWO will provide up to max. 2.000 euro/project/year for the Flemish research team.
The project has a duration of two years with financing on a yearly basis. In principle, all missions must be executed within the period for which they have been approved and are not transferable to the next year of implementation. Allocated resources expire if not used within the year for which they were approved. However please be aware that within the framework of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Embassy of France in Belgium and the FWO will keep all researchers involved informed about any flexible measurements.

- In Flanders eligible costs concern **travel expenses** to and from France (to be booked through **a travel agency authorized by the FWO**) and **accommodation costs** in France, **only for predoctoral researchers or postdoctoral researchers (with maximally 12 years postdoctoral experience)**.

- During their travel and stay abroad, all researchers (from the Flemish as well as from the French research teams) involved in a Tournesol project and independent of nationality, can rely on a travel and assistance insurance (‘*reis- en bijstandsverzekering*’) and repatriation covered by FWO. This insurance is **not a health insurance**. Regardless of the aforementioned insurance, all researchers should have a valid health insurance entitling the holder to free emergency medical treatment in the host country.

- The responsibility for the provision of adequate insurance against accidents that may occur during the stay in the host country (‘*arbeidsongevallenverzekering*’) rests with the research institution to which the researcher stays affiliated during the joint scientific cooperation project. The research institution to which the researcher is travelling, shall provide the visitor with all indispensable organisational assistance in situations requiring such steps.

### 3.3. Application timeline

The timeline for the call 2021 is as follows:

- **February 1, 2021** opening of the call
- **April 14, 2021** deadline for proposals (extended)
- **April, 2021** eligibility check
- **May-October, 2021** internal evaluation separately Flanders/France
- **October/November, 2021** joint scientific committee
- **Beginning of December, 2021** announcement of results
- **January 1, 2022** start of the projects

### 4. Evaluation

In a first phase, the eligible proposals will be evaluated separately by FWO and Campus France according to their own evaluation mechanisms. Please be aware that **at Flemish side proposals will be evaluated by the Cross-Domain Panel**, an
international panel composed of members with a broad variety of scientific expertises. Therefore you are kindly advised to write your proposal for a wide scientific audience.

The evaluation criteria on Flemish side are:

- Scientific quality of the proposal
  - Impact/importance
  - Originality
  - Feasibility
  - Focus
  - Methodology
- Scientific track record, output and other impact of the applicants (Flemish and French)
- Added value of the collaboration of the research teams
- Complementarity in expertise of the research teams involved
- Balanced contribution of both research teams
- Necessity of the planned exchanges

For the evaluation criteria on French side, please consult the website of Campus France.

In a second phase, the decision on jointly funded projects will be taken in consultation with the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI), the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and FWO, during the joint scientific committee to be held in the Autumn of 2021. The proposal must have been evaluated positively on both the French and Flemish sides in order to be fundable.

Please note that in case of ex aequo priority will be given to:

- New collaborations;
- And/or projects involving junior researchers;
- And/or projects with an opening to the EU framework programme.

5. Contact

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<tr>
<th>FWO Research Foundation – Flanders/ Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek – Vlaanderen</th>
<th>French Embassy in Belgium – Ambassade de France en Belgique – Service de Coopération et d’Action Culturelle</th>
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<tr>
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