Procedural manual

Horizon 2020 Programme

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Integrating Activities for Starting Communities

SmartCow: an integrated infrastructure for increased research capability and innovation in the European cattle sector

Project ID: 730924

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1 Aims of the SmartCow Procedural Manual for Transnational Access Calls

Transnational access (TA) calls will provide the academic and industry communities with an efficient and easy way to access a wide range of first-class cattle research facilities across Europe. The facilities cover a range of cattle types (dairy, beef), different breeds and genotypes and diverse husbandry and feeding systems (indoor and outdoor, grass or maize-based diets, use of by-products and alternative feeds). They include the most advanced animal science technologies applied to cattle in the fields of nutrition, physiology, ethology and animal husbandry. The aim of the Procedural Manual is to set out the rules governing financial support for TA, as well as the procedures to be adopted in selecting projects to be funded from the SmartCow budget.

2 Support offered for transnational access

The Transnational Access programme offers external users **free** access to the research infrastructures of SmartCow partners. Potential support from the SmartCow budget covers the operating costs of facilities, but not the external users' own costs - other than a contribution to travel and subsistence costs for a visit to the research infrastructure during the planning phase of a project that has been accepted for support. TA will cover cost of animal care, feeding, monitoring, sampling and sample preparation, but not additional cost for data and lab analysis. It is possible to ask for a study that exceeds the available cow.weeks at a particular installation if (1) it remains feasible for the installation and 2) the applicant pays for the extra cows.weeks.

SmartCow created an Access Management Team, they are the main contact point and supporting body for potential TA users. It aims to provide advice on the most suitable RIs and services to potential users who ask for support about TA project building.

This team is composed of Richard Dewhurst (Richard.Dewhurst@sruc.ac.uk – SRUC – Responsible person for TAs), René Baumont (rene.baumont@inra.fr – INRA – coordinator of SmartCow) and Lene Munksgaard (Lene.Munksgaard@anis.au.dk – AU). Potential TA users have the possibility to contact this team via their email address or via the public website through the specific section presenting the SmartCow RIs and Calls.

The maximum rates of reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs have been set by the individual research infrastructures as follows (table 1):

Access provider short name	Short name of infrastructure	Installation		Estimated number of user projects	Travel and subsistence budget available for each installation (including overheads)	Travel and subsistence budget available **PER PROJECT**	Estimated amount for 1 trip	Estimated amount per diem for subsistence
		Nr	Short name					
INRA	PEB	1	Le Pin	2	5 500 €	2 750 €	300 €	100 €
INRA	PEB	2	Laqueuille-Marcenat	2	5 500 €	2 750 €	300 €	100 €
INRA	PEB	3	Theix	1	4 800 €	4 800 €	300 €	100 €
SRUC	Dairy centre	1	Dairy centre	2	4 800 €	2 400 €	300 €	100 €
SRUC	Beef centre	1	Beef centre 1	2	4 800 €	2 400 €	300 €	100 €
SRUC	Beef centre	2	Beef centre 2	2	4 800 €	2 400 €	300 €	100 €
WU	Carus	1	Carus	1	2 125 €	2 125 €	500 €	120 €
WUR-DLO	Dairy Campus	1	Dairy Campus	1	6 000 €	6 000 €	300 €	100 €
UREAD	CEDAR	1	CEDAR	4	9 600 €	2 400 €	300 €	100 €
FBN	EFC	1	Barn	1	3 000 €	3 000 €	300 €	100 €
FBN	EFC	2	RespCham	4	3 200 €	800 €	300 €	100 €
FBN	EFC	3	ExpPhysRoom	1	3 400 €	3 400 €	300 €	100 €
FBN	EFC	4	BehavArena	3	3 900 €	1 300 €	300 €	100 €
Teagasc	Moorepark	1	Moorepark	2	6 500 €	3 250 €	300 €	100 €
Teagasc	Grange	1	Grange	1	6 000 €	6 000 €	300 €	100 €
AU	DKC	1	AU1	1	4 000 €	4 000 €	300 €	100 €
AU	DKC	2	AU2	1	7 800 €	7 800 €	300 €	100 €
IRTA	EVAM	1	EVAM	2	4 625 €	2 312,5 €	300 €	100 €

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3 Condition of eligibility

The Transnational Access (TA) programme is open to researchers working in [EU Member States](#) and Associated countries.

The two main criteria to be met are:

1. An individual TA applicant (or the majority of the applicants within a group) must be employed by an organisation **established in an an EU Member State or Associated country** (these are listed on page 3 of the following guidelines (which are likely to change): http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/wp/2018-2020/annexes/h2020-wp1820-annex-ga_en.pdf). It is the country in which the applicant is working that is considered, rather than the nationality of applicants/group members.

2. The TA applicant (or the majority of the applicants within a group) should be established in an EU Member State or Associated country **different from that of the legal entity operating the infrastructure**.

Whilst access from **non-associated third countries** is possible, it will require a strong justification and will be monitored closely because user groups in which all (or most) users work in non-associated third countries may only have access for up to 20 % of the total cow-months funded under the grant.

4 Obligation to publish results from the Transnational Access programme

Users are expected to publish their results as soon as practicable (pending protection of intellectual property) in open access publications. Details of the publication plans should be included in the Stage 2 (Full) Application. Acknowledgement of the access provided to users must be included in the publication, specifying that the project leading to the publication received research funding from the European Community's Horizon 2020 Programme. An example of acknowledgment is: *"Financial support provided by the Transnational Access to Research Infrastructures activity in the Horizon 2020 Programme of the EC (Project 'SmartCow'; no. 730924) is gratefully acknowledged."* The host organization and, if applicable, research funding supporting the specific infrastructure must also be acknowledged.

5 Application procedure

A two-stage application process will be adopted with three submission deadlines envisaged over the course of the SmartCow project.

The first call is now closed.

The deadlines for the second call are as follows:

1st stage application deadline**: 30th June 2019**

2nd stage application deadline**: 30th September 2019**

The deadline for the third and last call is as follow:

3rd call will be launched in April 2020

5.1 1st stage application (eligibility phase)

Applicants are requested to submit a short pre-proposal using the online submission page available at: https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/1162/submission

Guidance for applicants is available within the form (e.g. specification and word limits for each section) and through this manual.

Proposals will be evaluated by the Executive Committee and we aim to inform applicants within 3 weeks of the outcome of the eligibility phase. If the outcome is positive, candidates will be asked to get in touch with the manager of the relevant SmartCow facility in order to discuss practicalities of the proposed work before completing the full application.

5.2 2nd stage application (full proposal)

Full applications will be made by providing additional information using the same online submission page: https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/1162/submission

Guidance for applicants is available within the form (e.g. specification and word limits for each section) and through this manual.

Proposals will be evaluated by two independent referees drawn from within the SmartCow Selection Panel; this will involve one person who is external to the SmartCow project and generally another from a different organisation within the SmartCow consortium. Comments on the feasibility of the proposed work will also be sought from the manager of the SmartCow facility concerned and project will also be evaluated by the SmartCow Ethics Committee.

Following this review, proposal will be sent to the Executive Committee (decision implementing body) of SmartCow for final funding decisions. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation within 8 weeks from the date of submission of the 2nd Stage Application. For unsuccessful applications, feedback, suggestions for improvement and options for resubmission will be available on request.

6 Selection / Review process

The TA selection process will give priority to research projects most closely addressing the overall aims of the SmartCow project, as well as specific research areas identified in annexes prepared for individual Calls. Priority will be given to users that can demonstrate their capacity to support the initiation, analysis, publication and dissemination of findings from their own resources since the project mainly supports costs at the research facilities. Priority will also be given to a) first-time users, b) young scientists and c) users who would normally not have access to the infrastructure in their own country. All work must comply with European Union legislation on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes (Directive 2010/63/EU), as well as any national requirements in the country where the work will be conducted. Projects will be reviewed by the Ethical Board of SmartCow and final approval for funding will depend on satisfactory responses to any comments.

6.1   Evaluation criteria

In addition to the priorities mentioned above, the criteria to be assessed by the reviewers and used by the Executive Committee in making decisions about funding for projects include:

- the scientific quality, innovative nature and expected impact of the proposed work.
- the availability of the requested site at the time the proposal is made.
- the expertise of the user group in the research field.
- the networking value and training potential based on: the experience to be gained by the scientist(s), and the number of scientists and students involved in the applicant's research group.
- Conformity with ethical requirements.

7   Post-access requirements

In order for the EC and SmartCow Executive Committee to monitor and adapt the operation of the Transnational Access programme, a follow-up questionnaire (see section 9) will be required from the leader of each project. This is still under development and will include questions that emerge during the development of Calls and evaluation of proposals. The questionnaire must be submitted as soon as the experiments at the infrastructure come to an end.

8   Reimbursement procedure

8.1   Travel and subsistence reimbursement

SmartCow will subsidise the costs of travel and subsistence costs for one planning visit to the research infrastructure, within the funding limits identified in the table 1 above. It is expected that participants will seek out the most cost-effective form(s) of travel. These costs will only be reimbursed once the follow-up questionnaire (see section 9) has been completed and submitted along with a reimbursement claim form (see section 9).

For reimbursement of travel expenses incurred in a currency other than Euro, conversion will be made using the official ECB exchange rate on the date of the expense.

Travel costs may include the following:

Plane travel: All flight tickets should be booked by the applicant(s). Receipts required: boarding pass + travel agency invoice, original tickets/e-tickets.

OR

Train/Bus travel: All train/bus tickets should be booked by the applicant(s). Receipts required: original tickets + travel agency invoice (if any).

OR

Travel by car: The cost of a journey by private car (user's personal or company car) is calculated at a rate per km in accordance with the internal rules of the organisation concerned. Fuel is included in the kilometre rate. Road tolls may be paid extra. When two or more participants travel together by car, travel costs will be reimbursed to only one person. The total cost of travel by car cannot exceed the maximum cost of an equivalent flight. Car rental costs cannot be covered unless it is the more convenient way to travel. Car insurance costs cannot be covered

9 Forms

TA application process

The application forms are now available through the online submission page at:

https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/1162/submission

Post-access forms

These will be provided once the projects have been selected

- FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE
- REIMBURSEMENT CLAIM FORM