

SEED FUNDING
International Research Project (IRP)
Projet de Recherche International (PRI)
2020 call for proposals

Closing date for applications

7 September 2020 at 05:00 p.m. (Paris time)

1. Context and objectives of the programme

Context

In the framework of its new strategic plan for 2021-2025, Inserm wishes to give strong impetus to its international relations by mobilising tools suited to the conditions and requirements of the collaboration of its research teams with their foreign partners.

International Research Projects (**IRPs**) or Projets de Recherche Internationaux (**PRI**) are seed funding tools used to meet the needs of researchers through a call for projects that is open both geographically and thematically. The ultimate aim is to consolidate a partnership established between an Inserm team and a foreign team (or, depending on scientific relevance, several foreign teams).

As such, the selected projects must contribute to reinforcing the European or international visibility of the scientific cooperation initiated and create the conditions for the development of larger scale research projects, for example through existing European and international funding programmes.

This instrument has been incorporated in a range of new Inserm bilateral and multilateral international cooperation tools enabling each laboratory to find the funding vector that is the most suited to its needs depending on the progress made in structuring its partnership with the foreign entity.

The Inserm international policy instruments are structured as follows within a broader international Inserm network :

- 1- Exploration: First steps / Projet Tremplin;*
- 2- Seed funding: International Research Project (IRP) / Projet de Recherche International (PRI);*
- 3- Structuring: Key International Partnerships (KIPs) / Partenariats Internationaux Clés (PIC);*
- 4- Integration: Thematic Coordination Program (TCP) / Programme de Coordination Thématique (PCT).*

Objectives

The IRPs correspond to a **seed funding tool** (*financement d'amorçage*): their aim is to support an **existing or emerging promising partnership** by giving to scientific projects of excellence and strong impact potential, between two or more countries, the means to establish their collaboration over the long term. The creation of an IRP must demonstrate **complementarity between teams and reciprocal added value for the partners involved**.

For projects having already received the International Associated Laboratory (IAL) label ('renewal'), they will need to demonstrate the added-value made by a new complementary project that maintains the continuity of the already funded project.

Duration of the projects and schedule of the call

The duration of these joint research projects between an Inserm research team and one (or more) foreign research team(s) is five (5) years.

Regarding the 2020 call for proposals, it opens in June and closes in September of year (n) for the creation of the IRP in 2021: year (n+1).

The eligibility of the applications will be appraised by the Department of National and Foreign Affairs (DPRE - European and International Affairs units). The evaluation of each application will then be entrusted to experts within the framework of a Scientific Evaluation Committee. The final decision will be made by the Inserm Management Committee, chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of Inserm.

The candidates will be informed of the results at the end of the year 2020.

2. Application procedure

Applications must be submitted electronically by Monday 7 September at 05:00 p.m. (Paris time, France) to the following address:

irp@inserm.fr

Applications must contain the following documents:

- The completed application form;
- The CV of each coordinator (French and foreign);
- A list of relevant publications from the partner laboratories;
- A letter of commitment signed by the institution(s) to which the foreign partner(s) belong.

3. Examination of proposals

3.1 Eligibility criteria

1 – The application must contain all requested information (see list in section 2);

2 – The submitted projects must be led by one coordinator from an Inserm research unit (referred to as 'French coordinator') and one (or more) coordinator(s) from the foreign research country (referred to as 'Foreign coordinator');

3 – The French coordinator has to be a researcher with a permanent position working in an Inserm laboratory.

3.2 Evaluation criteria

Evaluation of proposals will be based on :

- 1- Scientific and quality of the team (scientific excellence and/or scientific utility, innovative aspect and/or originality of the collaborative project in line with the state of the art in the field);
- 2- The relevance of the international collaboration (complementarity, quality of the existing collaboration, added value);
- 3- The expected scientific, economic, and societal impacts of the collaboration;

In the event of equal scores, a competitive advantage can be given to disruptive and/or interdisciplinary projects;

For more details please refer to the evaluation criteria table [here](#)

4. Funding of selected projects

The selected IRPs will be granted - beyond the resources directly mobilised by the participating laboratories - funding of up to:

- €60,000 for IRPs in Europe;
- €75,000 for IRPs outside of Europe.

The projects will start in 2021. The fixed funding aims to primarily contribute to mobility, organization of meetings and field missions. Depending on needs, it could also be used for equipment or other identified needs. It will be allocated to the Inserm laboratory in annual instalments (of €12K and €15K, respectively) based on the initial project and mid-term assessments-reports established by the project leader and partner. Transfer of funding in year 3 will be conditional upon receipt of the mid-term financial and scientific reports (see below).

With no obligation, joint funding of the foreign partner(s) or of a joint supervising institution of the laboratory can be mentioned.

5. Monitoring of selected projects

The funded IRPs will be monitored by the Department of National and Foreign Affairs and, in order to evaluate the activity of the project and the impact of its funding, the following will be required:

- a short mid-term report (at the end of year 2): 2 pages maximum;
- a final report at the end of the project: 5 pages maximum.

6. Contact

irp@inserm.fr

The IRP call for proposals is in line with Inserm's policy on equal opportunity and gender parity and will follow the recommendations of the strategic plan 2020. It will pay attention to gender balance.