



Call for proposals 2018

“Cancer Biology and Basic Sciences”



Action 13.1

Please note that the proposals are selected in two phases:

- 1. Letter of intent, deadline : October 26th 2017*
- 2. Full application, deadline : March 29th 2018*

Online submission:

<http://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Appels-a-projets/Appels-a-projets-en-cours/PLBIO-2018-Biologie-et-Sciences-du-Cancer>

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Cancer Plan 2014-2019

Action 13.1: Ensure the independence and the creativity of research by providing a funding rate dedicated to basic cancer research above 50% of the credits of the calls for proposals launched by INCa and ITMO Cancer/Aviesan

1 Context and objectives of the call for proposals

One of the priorities of the French National Cancer Institute (INCa) is to provide support for fundamental cancer research through the funding of original projects in order to generate new knowledge and increase the competitiveness of French research teams at the international level.

The objectives of the call for research proposals “Cancer Biology and Basic Sciences” are hence to:

- Support projects that are original in their subject and approaches, ambitious and feasible in their objectives;
- Foster cross-disciplinary research associating partner teams from other scientific fields to biomedical teams;
- Stimulate research on emerging and innovative topics to open new perspectives in oncology.

This call is part of the Cancer Plan 2014-2019 which is in line with the national and INCa research strategy.

2 Scope of the call

The “Cancer Biology and Basic Sciences” call for research proposals is opened to all areas of cognitive research and scientific fields involved in the fight against cancer aimed at acquiring new knowledge, and developing new tools and opening new therapeutic perspectives.

Multi-disciplinary projects, which have contributions from fields other than biology, are encouraged. The biology part of the project must be significant and relevant.

Note:

- Are considered out of scope of this call for proposals:
 - Fundamental research projects which are not related to cancer;
 - Projects focusing on translational research (call for proposals “Translational research in cancerology, PRT-K 2018”);
 - Clinical trials (call for proposals “Programme for Hospital Clinical Cancer Research”, PHRC 2018);
 - Projects on human and social sciences, and epidemiology (call for proposals “Human and Social Sciences, Epidemiology and Public Health”, SHSESP 2018);
 - Projects which are eligible for the calls for proposals launched by the ITMO Cancer (Multi-Organism Thematic Institute) and managed by Inserm.

- A same project cannot be submitted simultaneously to several INCa calls for proposals or to several calls for proposals launched in the frame of the French Cancer Plan.
- A single letter of intent/finalised project cannot be re-submitted to INCa until the result of the pre-selection/selection of the same letter of intent/project has been notified by INCa to the coordinator.
- Recommendations : This call for proposals is highly competitive, it is strongly recommended to principal investigators to propose applications taking account of the call for proposals scope and which respect the following criteria :
 - Projects with scientific relevance to cancer;
 - Projects which are original in their study subject and approaches;
 - Projects relying on a strong methodological strategy, including alternatives approaches and mechanistic studies;
 - Projects relying on a proof of concept (preliminary data).

3 Participation terms and conditions

3.1 Projects duration

The project duration is of between 36 to 48 months.

3.2 Project coordination

- The project coordination is carried out by **one PI only**. The project coordinator can be different from the leader of the team 1. Applications from young PI are highly encouraged. The PI should belong to public institutes and work in France. He/She might be a civil servant or employed on a contract. Young researchers with no permanent position are eligible if their institution allows it.
- In addition to his/her scientific and technical roles, the principal investigator is also responsible for the coordination of the project and for implementing the collaboration between the partners in the project, the production of the required documents (scientific reports), the meetings, progresses and results communication.
- The coordinator undertakes to commit at least 30% of his/her time to the project. As a result, he/she will not be able to coordinate more than 3 projects funded by INCa simultaneously. The devoted time of each personnel involved in the project should be indicated in the application.

3.3 Eligible teams

The projects must involve at least two teams belonging to **different research units and/or institutions**.

Origin of the teams:

The teams must belong to the following institutions:

- Public research organisations (universities, EPSTs, EPICs, etc.);
- Non-profit organisations (associations, foundations, etc.);
- Healthcare institutes (hospital, etc).

For-profit organisations, industrial partners and/or foreign teams can participate as long as they secure their own funding for the project.

Please note that in accordance with the MoU signed between INCa and the MOST of Taiwan, research teams from Taiwan are encouraged to collaborate with teams from France to participate in this call as long as they secure their own funding, which may be achieved by submitting the proposal to the MOST of Taiwan following the relevant requirements.

3.4 Grantee

Participating teams must appoint an institution that will receive and manage the grant (“grantee”).

- The grantee will have to distribute the funding allocated to the research teams involved in the project through their respective institutions, and therefore must have a public accountant.
- The grantee is contractually responsible towards INCa for the completion of the project and the transmission of all scientific and financial reports required.
- The grantee is also responsible for the transfer of the funds to the participating teams. This transfer must be completed within a reasonable time.

Note: For projects whose coordinator is based in Paris region, the grantee will be the Ile-de-France Cancer Centre Public Interest Group (GIP Cancéropôle Ile-de-France) which will be responsible for distributing the funds to beneficiary teams.

4 Proposal evaluation and selection procedures

The evaluation will be conducted by an international & independent evaluation panel whose members are recognised for their scientific and medical expertise and who will review the letters of intent and the full proposals. The reviewers undertake to comply with the INCa ethics charter and to declare any conflict of interest.

The list of the evaluation panel members will be published at the end of the evaluation procedure.

4.1 Selection procedure

- First step: Preselection of proposals based on a **letter of intent** (cf. timeline, chapter 6 and submission procedures, chapter 7) by the members of the evaluation panel. The INCa will inform all coordinators whether or not their LoI has been preselected.
- Second step: Evaluation of the **full applications**. Only the proposals preselected during first step will be invited to submit a full proposal (cf. timeline, chapter 6 and submission procedures, chapter 7).

4.2 Evaluation process

The principal phases of the evaluation procedure are the following:

- First step: letters of intent selection
 - **Eligibility criteria:** INCa confirms that the proposals submitted meet the eligibility criteria;
 - **Evaluation of the letters of intent:** evaluation panel evaluate the letters of intent (two reviewers assigned per letter of intent);
 - **Selection of the letters of intent:** evaluation panel discusses the quality of the proposals and ranks the letters of intent;
 - **Information of the coordinators.**
- Second step: evaluation of the full applications. Applicants whose letters of intent have been preselected are invited to submit their full proposal;
 - Full proposal evaluation :
 - External experts: external referees (international), will be asked to review and write an evaluation report on the full projects. Two external referees will be assigned per project;
 - Evaluation by the evaluation panel:
 - ⇒ The evaluation panel evaluates the projects (2 members/project), while taking into account the external evaluations;
 - ⇒ The evaluation panel discuss the quality of the projects;
 - ⇒ The evaluation panel proposes a list of projects for funding;
 - Results: decision and publication of the results by INCa.

4.3 Admissibility and eligibility criteria

4.3.1 Admissibility

- The application files must be submitted before the indicated deadline (cf. timeline, chapter 6 and submission procedures, chapter 7) and must respect the requested format.
- All the documents asked (including signatures) must be provided into the application files.

4.3.2 Eligibility

- The project must answer the objectives and the scope of this call for proposals;
- The project duration must be of between 36 or 48 months;
- A same project cannot be submitted simultaneously to several INCa calls for proposals or to several calls for proposals launched in the frame of the French Cancer Plan;
- A single letter of intent/finalised project cannot be re-submitted to INCa until the result of the pre-selection/selection of the same letter of intent/project has been notified by INCa to the coordinator;
- The project coordinator cannot be a member of the evaluation panel;
- The coordinator is not allowed to coordinate more than 3 projects funded by INCa simultaneously;

- The coordinator undertakes to commit at least 30% of his/her time to the project. More generally, any person participating in projects funded by INCa cannot be committed to more than 100% of his/her time in these different projects;
- The projects must involve at least two teams belonging to different research units and/or institutions;
- The letter of intent and the full application must be clearly structured and prepared, and comply with the submission procedures described in Chapter 7. As the evaluation will be international, the letter of intent and the project in English are mandatory, the French version is optional;
- The forms (letters of intent and full applications) must include all the necessary information for the overall evaluation of the quality of the project, including statistical analysis, logistical aspects when they are important for the proper completion of analysis and the accurate justification of the requested budget.

4.4 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation panel will review and assess the scientific quality, synergy of the partnership, the technical and financial feasibility, and the potential impact of the results.

4.4.1 Letter of intent

During the 1st step of the selection process, letters of intent are evaluated according to the following criteria:

- The relevance of the project regarding the call for proposals;
- The scientific quality of the proposal (relevance, originality and national/international positioning);
- Scientific impact of the project;
- Methodological quality and technological relevance;
- Quality and experience of the research teams;
- Feasibility of the project, appropriateness of the project schedule and the requested funding.

4.4.2 Full application

The evaluation criteria reviewed by the experts (external experts and evaluation committee members) are the following:

Scientific quality of the project:

- Excellence regarding the state of the science/the art;
- Positioning of the project at the national and international level;
- Relevance and originality of the project;
- Clarity of the objectives.

Coordinator and participating teams:

- Qualities and experience of the coordinator regarding the project objectives. Young coordinators are encouraged to take responsibility in the submitted project;
- Excellence of the associated teams participating in the project and their heads;
- Quality of the partnership: complimentary and/or multidisciplinary of the teams collaborating in the project.

Methodology and feasibility:

- Quality of the methodology and technological relevance;
- Human resources allocated to the project;
- Technical resources: technological platforms, data processing centres, biological resource centres associated with clinical data, etc.;
- Compliance with ethical rules and regulations;
- Quality of the coordination between the partners (meetings plan, preparation of monitoring reports, communication, etc.);
- Appropriateness and justification of requested funding according to the proposed work plan;
- Appropriateness and justification of the time schedule proposed regarding the project objectives.

Impact of the project:

- Scientific, technical and medical impact;
- Potential impact of the project results on the scientific, industrial and company communities (intellectual property, economic and company potential, etc.).

5 General provisions

5.1 INCa funding

5.1.1 Funding regulations

INCa funding will be awarded under the regulations on funding granted by INCa in force at the time of the grant allocation.

The grantee, the institutions of the applicant teams and the coordinator will undertake to comply with these rules (part named “commitments” on the application documentation).

These commitments involved:

- The legal representative of the grantee;
- The project coordinator;
- The legal representative of each institution which will receive fund from the grantee;
- The participating teams managers.

5.1.2 Eligible expenditure

The INCa grant may fund:

- Staff costs (permanent staff may be allocated to the budget, with the exception of state, hospital or territorial civil servants). Funding for postdoctoral fellows may be requested but PhD students funding is not eligible;
- Operating expenses and various consumables;
- Equipment expenses under €150,000 including taxes. The global budget dedicated to equipment expenses may not exceed 30% of the whole grant;
- Management costs (up to a maximum of 4% of the grant awarded by INCa).

The INCa grant must be used by the beneficiary organisation for the sole realisation of the project identified in the grant document.

5.2 Publication and communication

The INCa will follow the projects implementation and assess their scientific impact. For each of the funded projects, an abstract will be published. Each coordinator will be contacted to check its content or draft a publishable version.

Any written or oral communication concerning the work of funded projects must mention the INCa grant reference, which will include a code that will be provided once the project has been selected for funding.

In this respect it is also requested that the application must reference all the publications and intellectual property (patent, licence, etc.) related to previous projects of the coordinator funded by INCa (with the corresponding code).

5.3 Potential for exploitation of the projects outcomes

INCa will identify projects which could have an impact in terms of economic development and innovation. In partnership with the coordinators and technology transfer offices, a follow-up and monitoring procedure will be set up.

This identification will in no way influence the selection process.

6 Timetable of the call for proposals

Launching date of the call for proposals:	September 2017	
Step 1: Letter of intent	Online submission deadline of the letter of intent	October 26th 2017
	1 st meeting of the evaluation committee: selection of the letters of intent	February 2018
	Results sent (by email) to the coordinators	February 2018
Step 2: Full project	Deadline for online submission and the sending of a paper version (including the original signatures) of the full project: -Postal address : INCa - AAP Plbio 52 avenue André Morizet 92513 Boulogne-Billancourt-FRANCE (submission date based on the postmark) - on-site delivery during office hours to the INCa address ;	March 29th 2018
	Estimated date of the 2 nd meeting of the evaluation committee	End of June 2018
	Estimated date for results publication	July 2018

7 Submission terms and conditions

The submission of documents for each of the 2 phases of the call for proposals will be completed **online** using the unique address for the call for proposals: <http://www.e-cancer.fr/Institut-national-du-cancer/Appels-a-projets/Appels-a-projets-en-cours/PLBIO-2018-Biologie-et-Sciences-du-Cancer>.

This **submission procedure** to be carried out at the INCa website includes:

- Identification of the coordinator (last name, first name and email);
- Proposal details (affiliated Canceropole , title, duration, amount, keywords and abstract (in the case of full project submission));
- Uploading of the document(s) requested (only in Word97-2003 format and/or Excel97-2003 format).

7.1 Letter of intent

The letter of intent must be written using the template and must only be submitted online, in compliance with the deadline mentioned (cf.chapter 6).

7.2 Full project

The full application (cf. budget table and form template) must include all elements that are required and necessary for scientific and technical evaluation of the proposal.

The completed files must be submitted in electronic form (online submission) and in paper format. The two format must be identical but the signatures are only required for the original printed version.

➤ Electronic format:

The full application should be composed of two files:

- ✓ A Word97-2003 file (see form template). The size of the completed Word file may not exceed 4 MB.
- ✓ An Excel97-2003 file (financial appendix).

These elements should be submitted by uploading them online using the access codes assigned for submission of the letter of intent.

➤ Printed format:

One original copy of the proposals duly signed by the authorised people and sent, in compliance with the deadline mentioned (chapter 6).

8 Publication of results

The results will be communicated to the project coordinators, legal representatives of the granting institutions and the Canceropoles. The list of the funded projects will be published on INCa's website.

9 Contacts

- For any scientific concern, please contact:

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