ERA-NET Cofund action for climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials

Risks posed to human health and the environment by pollutants and pathogens present in water resources (2019): Actions should support delivering on the priorities identified in the Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas (SRIAs) of the Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) on Water, Anti-Microbial Resistance, and Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans, in particular the thematic areas 'Developing Safe Water Systems for Citizens' of the Water JPI SRIA (specifically the subtheme 'Understanding and predicting the environmental behaviour and effects of by-products, pollutants and pathogens, including their environmental effects'), and 'Interdisciplinary Research for Good Environmental Status' of the JPI Oceans SRIA. They should also support the implementation of EU water policy.

Proposals should pool the necessary financial resources from the participating national (or regional) research programmes with a view to implementing a joint call for proposals resulting in grants to third parties with EU co-funding in this area. Proposers are requested to include additional joint calls without EU co-funding as well as other activities such as the establishment or consolidation of a pan-European network of funding agencies and other key players in Europe, building on previous experience and avoiding overlaps with other initiatives, support to mutual learning and training, exchange of good practice, researcher mobility and equal opportunities (e.g. through EURAXESS) and better careers in the field. Wherever relevant, actions should involve social sciences and humanities.

Participation of legal entities from third countries, and/or regions including those not automatically eligible for funding in accordance with General Annex A, is encouraged in the joint call as well as in other joint activities including additional joint calls without EU co-funding. Participants from countries not listed in General Annex A are eligible
for EU funding under this topic and may request a Union contribution (on the basis of the ERA-NET unit cost) only for the coordination costs of additional activities. The proposal should demonstrate that these co-funded other activities exclude any overlaps with related on-going actions co-funded by the EU under Horizon 2020.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU in the range of EUR 4.5 million would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Millions of Europeans receive high quality drinking water every day. However, the provision of safe water for drinking purposes is threatened by, amongst other factors, new and emerging pollutants. Many of them are used and released continuously in the aquatic environments (freshwaters, groundwater, marine) where they impact organisms, ecosystems and may end up in the human food chain.

Key knowledge gaps remain around the environmental behaviour of new and emerging pollutants, both in water resources and in the marine environment, and their impacts on ecosystem and human health. Moreover, most emerging pollutants are not properly regulated. Hence there is an urgent need to fill related knowledge gaps and strengthen our capacities to improve water, food and health security.

Research needs to be deployed in a number of scientific fields to improve the knowledge base on water resources availability and use and must be systematically combined with a socio-economic approach investigating the questions of adaptation strategies, participation, behaviour and commitment of stakeholders. To be more effective and increase the added value of related investments, the efforts and strategic research agendas of the many European funding networks and organisations need to be integrated to establish transnational and trans-disciplinary research and innovation actions.

The project results are expected to contribute to:

- effective trans-national, pan-European research networking, exchange of good practices, synergy, coordination and coherence among national/regional and EU research programmes in the areas addressed;
- improved evidence-based policy through the interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary science-policy interface and links with international efforts and fora on the areas addressed;
- strengthened international leadership of European research in this area making the relevant JPIs, in collaboration with the European Commission, a privileged and attractive partner for global cooperation in research and innovation;
- the implementation of the objectives of the JPIs on Water, AMR and Oceans;
• reduced risks posed by emerging pollutants to waterbodies and related ecosystems and food chain, and reduced risks to human health via these ecosystems;
• increased protection of human health through the provision of safe water;
• alleviation of water challenges within and beyond Europe, particularly in urban areas.

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