

ANNOUNCEMENT



Call for Transnational Research Proposals

Coordination of European Research within ICT and Robotics
in Agriculture and related Environmental Issues



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DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PRE-PROPOSALS
31 MAY 2010

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WHAT IS ICT-AGRI era-net

ICT-AGRI (Coordination of European Research within ICT and Robotics in Agriculture and related Environmental Issues) addresses some of the major challenges that the agricultural sector is currently facing: to produce more food of high quality, ensure good working conditions, adhere to animal welfare standards and ensure competitive growth - all the while reducing agriculture's environmental footprint.

ICT, automation and robotics can help address these issues, yet European research and development in the use of ICT in agriculture is fragmented.

The strategic objective of the ICT-AGRI ERA-NET is to coordinate European research to ensure that the massive potential of ICT and robotics in the agricultural sector is fully implemented.

By working together transnationally the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of national research programmes will improve and by developing a common strategic research agenda within ICT and Robotics we together can ensure a healthy, competitive, sustainable and environmentally friend agriculture.

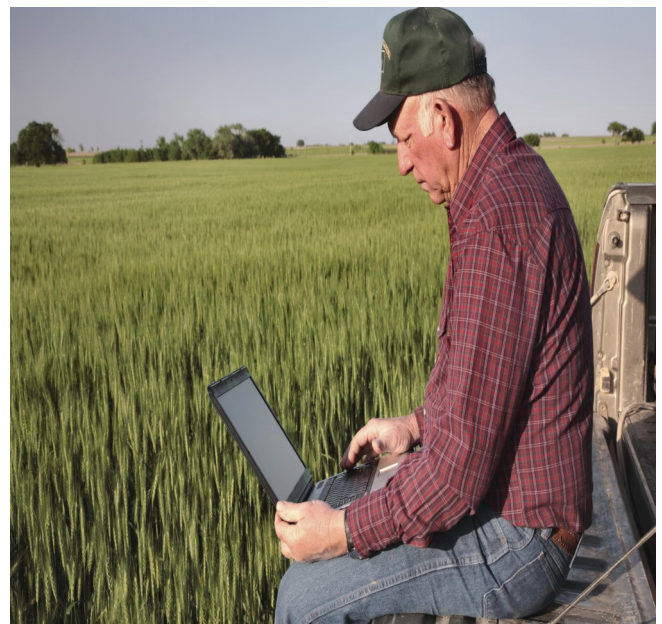
For more information about ICT-AGRI: www.ict-agri.eu

JOINT TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH CALL

ICT-AGRI is launching transnational research calls based on funds from participating countries.

Launching a joint transnational research call will enable collaborative projects based on complementarities and sharing of expertise within ICT and Robotics in Agriculture.

The aim is to pool fragmented human and financial resources in order to improve both the efficiency and the effectiveness of Europe's research efforts.





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CALL TOPICS

Projects are expected to apply a systems approach addressing farm level integration of information technology, communication technology, automation and robotics. Projects must have a clear European added value by being carried out on a transnational level.

Projects may be in one of two categories:

- A broad approach by combining existing or new software and hardware products to demonstrate a system meeting important challenges within a specific application area.
- A narrow approach by focusing on specific elements of vital importance for the functioning of integrated systems.

ICT applications may include farm management systems, information systems, monitoring systems, decision support systems, data and knowledge sharing systems, communication protocols, wireless communication, and human-machine coordination and standardisation activities.

Automation and robotics may include autonomous robots, bio-sensors, positional navigation, vision-based navigation, variable rate application, sensor-based process control, human-machine relations, and safety.

APPLICATION AREAS

Arable farming:

Environmental protection, food safety and quality, sustainable bio-energy production, CO₂ emissions, labour demands, chemicals reduction

Livestock farming:

Emissions of gas, dust and germs, environmental protection, animal welfare, disease monitoring, epidemics control, food safety and quality, labour demands

Water and soil management:

Irrigation optimisation, water saving, soil fertility maintenance, optimal fertilisation, environmental protection, drinking water protection, labour demands

Greenhouses:

Energy use, CO₂ emissions, labour demands, pesticide reduction

Orchards:

Irrigation and fertilisation optimisation, labour demands, food safety and quality

Post harvest:

Transport, storage, quality control, sorting, packing

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WHO CAN APPLY

Funding opportunities will be offered to excellent and innovative transnational R&D projects. Funds available are listed in the list of participating countries/regions.

Project proposals must meet the following requirements:

- Project consortia must involve researchers from at least three countries/regions providing funds for this call.
- Researchers from non-funding countries can participate in project consortia by funding their own involvement.
- Industry can participate in project consortia depending on the national regulations of their country/region. Proposals supported (financially or in kind) by industry are encouraged.
- Projects should be of a duration between 12-24 months.
- Projects and researchers must comply with national/regional/institutional regulations for funding programmes.

Applicants are encouraged to contact their National Contact Points, if they have questions in relation to national aspects. National Contact Points are listed on page 6.

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES/REGIONS & APPROXIMATE FUNDS

 Belgium € 100.000	 Israel € 200.000
 Denmark € 500.000	 Italy € 500.000
 Finland € 200.000	 Latvia € 150.000
 France € 100.000	 Spain (Region of Nurcia only) € 150.000
 Germany € 200.000	 Switzerland € 200.000
 Greece € 200.000	 The Netherlands (TNO only) € 100.000
 Ireland (TEAGASC only) € 30.000	 Turkey € 500.000

IMPORTANT DATES

Application Procedure Step 1

- Launch of call:
Online submission open on 15 April 2010
- Deadline for submission of pre-proposals:
31 May 2010
- Invitation for submitting full proposals:
June 2010

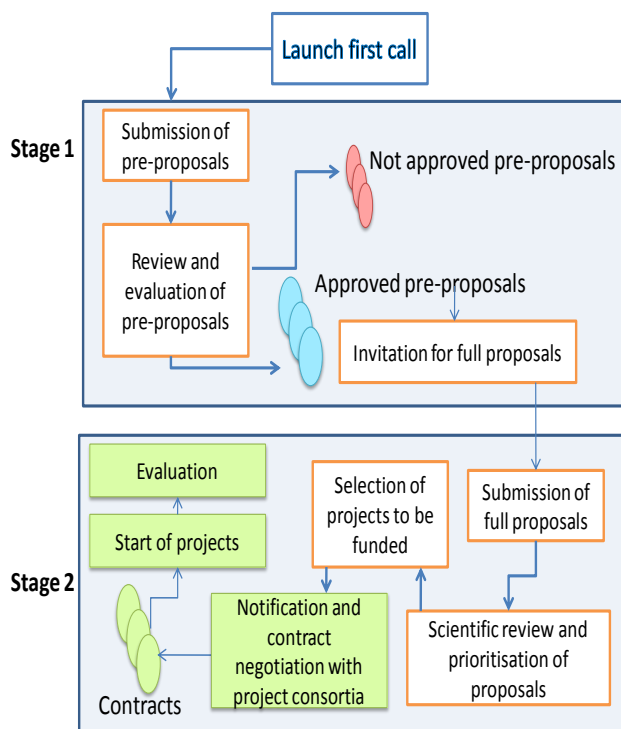
Application Procedure Step 2

- Deadline for submission of full proposals:
17 September 2010
- Notification letter will be sent out:
November 2010

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The call is launched on 15 April 2010 and on-line submission of pre-proposals is opened. Application guidelines and forms will be available from the ICT-AGRI website www.ict-agri.eu

The call is using a two-step selection process, the flow of which is illustrated below.



EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Pre-proposals will be reviewed by funding ICT-AGRI Partners for eligibility, relevance according to policy needs and national priorities as well as the added benefit of transnational collaborations.

A number of successful candidates at the pre-proposal stage will be invited to submit a full proposal, which will go through a peer-review for the final selection.

The scientific review will take into account the following aspects:

- Scientific and technological quality of proposal, including novelty and methodology
- Potential impact of the research on the application of ICT in the agricultural sector, its impact for the benefit of the environment and the European added value
- Quality of the project consortium and management, including the added value of transnational collaboration
- Feasibility of the projects and probability of success of the proposed research, including time period from research to application

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