



BLACK SEA HORIZON



Bi-regional STI Dialogue

Call for proposals

*Grant Scheme to facilitate participation of Black Sea countries in
Brokerage Events*

<i>Total available budget:</i>	<i>20.000 EUR</i>
<i>Deadline for submission:</i>	<i>1st July 2016</i>
<i>Pre-selection by local partners:</i>	<i>1st July – 10th July 2016</i>
<i>Selection by RCISD:</i>	<i>until end of July 2016</i>
<i>Mobility of researchers:</i>	<i>from September 2016</i>
<i>Countries eligible for funding:</i>	<i>AR, AZ, GE, MD, RU, TR, UA</i>
<i>Latest date of the selected event:</i>	<i>31st January 2017</i>



The project BLACK SEA HORIZON has received funding from European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 645785 [H2020-INT-INCO-2014].

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACs – Associated Countries

AR - Armenia

AZ - Azerbaijan

BE – Brokerage Events

BS – Black Sea or Black Sea region

BSH – Black Sea Horizon

EC – European Commission

EU – European Union

EU MSs - European Union Member States

GE – Georgia

H2020 – Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

MD - Moldova

NCP - National Contact Point

RU – Russian Federation

TR – Turkey

UA – Ukraine

The **Black Sea Horizon** project aims at increasing collaboration of research communities of the Black Sea region (BS) and European Union Member States and Associated Countries (EU MSs and ACs). In the framework of the a grant scheme will be operated to facilitate the active participation of 20 researchers from the non-EU Black Sea countries in European brokerage events, scientific conferences and other formats which are appropriate for networking with EU consortia to build-up partnerships for subsequent joint research activities.

Such meetings provide excellent opportunities for researchers to liaise, develop synergies and be taken on board in a consortia. They also allow researchers to make their institutions and/or their research networks better known, which is an important pre-condition for their successful participation in the framework programme.

1. Introduction

The **grant scheme financially supports the participation of local researchers from academia** (research entities e.g. research institutions/organizations, higher education institutions etc.), **research performing SMEs and the representatives of businesses from BSH non-EU countries in large-scale Brokerage events and other similar activities** related to Horizon2020 in EU Member States or Associated Countries. The aim of the task is to support the participation of researchers- based on defined criteria - from the target region to take part at such events by providing a grant scheme which funds the related travel and accommodation costs.

1.1. Objectives

BSH Grant Scheme will enable researchers from non-EU Black Sea countries:

- to actively engage in European brokerage events and scientific conferences to enhance networking and cooperation opportunities for future Horizon2020 research projects;
- to facilitate the establishment of a higher number of new contacts between the EU and the BS;
- to acquire general understanding on the framework programme;
- to bring new ideas to their scientific field;
- to get involved in European research activities

1.2. Target group

Twenty selected researchers from the academia and/or representatives of business from the non-EU Black Sea countries, such as **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine** in order to facilitate the establishment of a higher number of contacts between researchers from the EU and the BS region. Black Sea Horizon has at least one project partner from all of the above mentioned countries which is regarded as a significant support for the implementation of the activity.

1.3. Events

The events that can be attended are either:

- (1) Networking events, Brokerage events, or
- (2) International scientific conferences or other type of events organized by other European networks (e.g. Enterprise Europe Network, EUREKA, etc.).

A constantly updated, indicative but not exclusive list of events will be published on the BSH project website.

Completed applications shall be submitted to local partners (via email) for first assessment and pre-selection.

1.4. Selection process

The first round of selection will be done by the Local Partners, supported and approved by the Task leader and the coordinator.

The selection criteria include scientific excellence, proper knowledge of English and as the main objective, the participation in international networks that submit applications to H2020. The eligibility and selection criteria are described in the following paragraphs (3. Guidelines for Applicants).

Support of the participants should not stop at this level. Local NCPs shall brief the selected participants about the cooperation opportunities and the expectations of the supported action. This will be a compulsory element of the preparation process in due time before attending the selected brokerage events.

Since NCPs can provide further guidance, practical information and assistance on all aspects of participation in Horizon 2020, thus a list of local BSH National Contact

Points (NCPs) shall be made available on the BSH website as well. The Task leader counts on the support of local partners to provide the necessary information on this issue.

Note that preference must be given to those applicants that are planning to prepare joint applications in H2020. Only as a second preference conference participations can be supported. Applicants that have already used the opportunity in IncoNet EaP, BILAT-UKR*AINA or the R2I (such as ener2i) projects can be excluded during the selection process if no clear demonstration of the added value for repeatedly applying for funding is given.

1.5. Participation on the events and reimbursement

Selected participants should arrange their registration, travel and accommodation to the designated event. Their **travel and accommodation** costs, as well as **visa costs** will be reimbursed by the Task leader, RCISD following the event if all the required documentation (described below at section 3.4 Funding Requirements) has been submitted to RCISD.

2. Guidelines for Applicants

2.1. Eligibility criteria

As regards the applicants, the following eligibility criteria shall apply:

- Being a member or an employee of a research institution/organization and/or that of a network of organizations and/or that of a higher education institution and/or that of an SME performing research. The aim is that the participation of the applicant will have a multiplier effect in the country and/or region.
- Conducting Research at the above mentioned organisation in one of the partner countries (AR, AZ, GE, MD, RU, TR, UA).
- Submitting a completely filled in application form along with all the required documentation.
- Have a PhD degree and/or at least three years' full time experience in research.
- Speaking fluent English, having at least intermediate language certificate or at least two publications in English in journals or edited books

- Specifying at least one call anticipated in H2020 Work Programme for 2016-17, which is in the focus of their scientific research and fit for consortium-building
- If possible, previous international experience (already existing scientific contacts in other countries, participation in previous international conferences and collaborations, etc.).
- Activities planned during the event (e.g. delivering a presentation, taking part in a poster session, submitting a partner search profile and active participation in brokerage sessions - offering a profile and idea; requesting meetings in brokerages using face to face meetings -, scheduling bilateral meetings etc.)

2.2. Evaluation criteria

- Scientific excellence/research performance (publications, patents, projects, etc.) (50% of the score)
- Previous international cooperation activities (projects and/or structured cooperation with other countries; trainings abroad; participation in international conferences, etc.) (15% of the score)
- Commitment to take full advantage of the participation in the event: expected outcome, concrete plans for cooperation should be described in more detail including also the expected number of contacts established directly in brokerage/matching sessions, visits of RTOs, planned signed letters of agreement (35% of the score)

2.3. Additional evaluation criteria

- Gender issue: Encouragement of female researchers to participate
- Encouragement of young researchers (under 40)

3. Selection Process

3.1. Formality and eligibility check

The Local BSH Partner will be responsible for the formality and eligibility check. Applications which do not comply with the eligibility criteria will not be considered within the evaluation process.

3.2. Evaluation

The evaluation, based on a specified coring matrix (see below in section 3.3) will be carried out by the Local Partners. They shall provide a ranking list of the applications based on the total score achieved in the evaluation. This list of applicants will be sent to the Task Leader and the Coordinator for approval who will also decide in controversial cases.

3.3. Scoring Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Scoring
Have a postgraduate degree and/or at least three years' full time experience in research	Yes or No
Be a member or an employee of a research institution and or of a higher education institution or of a research department of an SME in one of the partner countries	Yes or No
Sufficient knowledge of English (having at least intermediate language exam or at least two English publications in journals or edited books)	Yes or No
Upcoming call(s) from Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2016/2017 is specified	Yes or No
Research performance/scientific excellence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 most important publications, relevant to the event - total number of publications in refereed journals (or in journals from Thomson Reuters database) - total number of citations (according to the database cited by the applicant) - inventions or patents granted or licensing for your research products - participation in projects related to the topic of the Brokerage Event 	max: 10 points min: 7 points
International cooperation experiences:	max: 3 points

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - projects and/or structured cooperation with colleagues from other countries; - trainings abroad; - participation in international conferences, symposia, workshops, etc. 	
Commitment to take full advantage of the participation in the event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expected outcome, concrete plans for cooperation (become a member of a consortium, deepen already existing international contacts etc.) - Number of RTOs targeted, agreements planned - other activities planned (poster, presentation etc.) 	max: 7 points min: 5 points

In case of equal scores female and/or young researchers enjoy preference. High number of additional activities during the event is also an advantage. **Please note that the first four criteria should be met in order to be eligible for participation.**

3.4. Funding Requirements

The Grants will be paid by the Regional Centre for Information and Scientific Development (RCISD) in the form of reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs (flight ticket and accommodation only, visa, registration fee and other costs are not covered by project budget) following the events. The Grant cannot exceed 1,000 Euros. If the cost of participation exceeds this amount, the additional cost must be covered by the Grant recipient.

In order to receive the grant, the selected researchers will have **to sign a Reimbursement form with the task leader**. The reimbursement of costs will be implemented as follows:

1. The grantees buy the flight ticket and book accommodation for themselves, and send the invoice (which should be addressed to RCISD!) to the Task Leader and the amount will be transferred to their personal account.
2. if the grantees' organizations are ready to organize and pay the flight / train ticket and hotel for the grantee, then - as soon as they have the supporting documents - they issue an invoice to RCISD (a template is prepared, see

Annex 1) with these costs, attach a copy of the ticket+hotel invoice and visa document and RCISD will transfer the amount in due time.

In addition, they are asked:

- confirmation from the local NCP that selected participant contacted them to receive the necessary background information (e.g. cooperation opportunities, conditions for participation, topic-specific information etc.) on Horizon2020 (preceding the event)
- to write a Report (2 A4-pages in English, according to the template provided), which has to be delivered within 1 week after the event to the task leader
- to show the involvement in brokerage/matchmaking activities offered from the organisers or individual meetings held with participants

in case of participation at a scientific conference, a copy of their presentation and/or poster should be delivered to the task leader

- to hand in copy of the flight ticket and the accommodation
- to hand in the copy of the boarding passes of the flight
- to produce a confirmation of participation at the conference/brokerage event (certificate, attendance sheet, list of participants, etc.)
- to produce and present a signed Letter of Intent with another participant(s) of the event, in which parties agree on further cooperation

Grant holder accepts the obligation to provide the task leader and the local partner all information requested about the outcome of his/her participation to the event (proposals submitted, partnerships established).

4. Budget breakdown

Total available budget for this activity is 20,000 EUR. Two grants per non-EU Black Sea countries (AR, AZ, GE, MD, RU, TR, UA) will be allocated to selected participants. Accordingly: $7 \times 2 \times 1,000 \text{ EUR} = 14,000 \text{ EUR}$.

The remaining budget, ~ 6,000 EUR will be allocated among applicants based on excellence (merit-based competition) following the evaluation of proposals as

described above. In case of remaining funds the next shortlisted participants will be funded.

5. Impact

Expected results of the Grant Scheme:

The primary target group to be reached out is:

- 20 researchers from the non-EU Black Sea countries in order to facilitate the establishment of a higher number of contacts between researchers from the EU and the BS region

Participants of the grant scheme will obtain the following skills and capacities:

- general understanding on the framework programme Horizon 2020
- network established for H2020 consortium-building

Through the established relations and potential involvement of H2020 consortium additional beneficiaries of the activity are those institutions or enterprises in which the grantees conduct their research. This activity therefore can be considered as an important measure to raise the participation rate of BS countries in H2020 proposals.

Lastly, those institutions based in EU MSs or ACs which plan cooperation with grantees will also be beneficiaries of the activity since they will have the chance to establish relations with research institutions or businesses from BS region having relevant research profile for future joint activities.

The impact of the activity will be measured. Grant holders are required to fill-in and return a Follow-up Report, which will be used for the evaluation of the Grant Scheme activity. The deliverable of the BSH Grant Scheme activity will be elaborated by task leader RCISD.