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Context of the Joint Call

The European Commission finances the "ERA-NET actions" in order to develop and strengthen the coordination & sharing of public research programmes conducted at the national or regional level. The scheme is expected to reduce the fragmentation of the ERA by improving the coherence and coordination of national and regional research programmes carried out in the EU Member States and associated countries. It will also allow national and regional programmes to address fields which they would otherwise not have been able to address independently.

ERNEST is an ERA-NET initiative established and funded under the ERA-Net scheme of the European Commission for the period September 2008 – August 2012.

ERNEST addresses the issue of sustainable development of the tourism sector through the coordination and collaboration among regional research programmes.



WHAT IS A JOINT CALL?

Joint call = Call for Transnational Collaborative Research Projects

By means of the ERNEST Joint Call, the funding partners create collaborative, transnational research opportunities in the research area "sustainable tourism" in order to address the Europe major challenges related to tourism sustainability and competitiveness.

ERNEST is an opportunity for the European tourism industry (especially SMEs operating in the tourist sector), for the local public administrations and for the academic communities to benefit from the flexible coordination of several existing regional/national funding programmes to enlarge their possibilities for fruitful cross-border partnerships.

A multidisciplinary and international approach similar to the one developed in the ERNEST Joint Call does not yet exist. This initiative will bring together academic and tourism industry research teams, to enable them to develop innovative, more sustainable tourist products, capable of enhancing the competitiveness of the European tourism sector.

Who are the joint call partners?

The ERNEST Network has launched a Joint Call for Proposals to fund interregional Collaborative Research Projects in the field of sustainable tourism through the participating regions and their respective funding bodies. The organisations involved in the Joint Call for Proposals are:

- ✚ Regione Toscana/Tuscany Region - Italy;
- ✚ Basque Government - Department of Industry, Innovation, Trade and Tourism/Basque Country - Spain
- ✚ Generalitat de Catalunya/Catalunya Region - Spain;
- ✚ Regione Emilia Romagna/ Emilia Romagna Region - Italy

Who is eligible for funding?

Beneficiaries¹

- tourism SMEs including those belonging to other sectors whose products/services find application in the tourist sector; large companies;
- tourist consortia (public and/or private consortia of tourist SMEs);
- local public administrations;
- Research and Technology Organisations, universities or other organisations.
- non-profit organisations

Important notice: not all the funding agencies support all kinds of beneficiaries – pls check with your local agency before applying.

Each proposal must involve a minimum of 2 partners from at least two different ERNEST participating regions/countries.

ERNEST web site will publish information on subjects that are preparing a proposal and look for partners. In order to send a request to be published pls contact the e-mail jc.secretariat@ernestproject.eu

The requests will be published on:

www.ernestproject.eu

What are the financial resources?

The ERNEST Joint Call Partners have agreed to fund the joint call using the “virtual common pot” funding mode. This means that regional funding will be made available through regional funding agencies according to regional funding regulations. Each country funds only its regional component of the transnational research project. The funding rate within the call – will be variable up to a maximum of 100% of the funds requested according to regional rules.



¹ There are some differences in the list of beneficiaries eligible for single regional calls – for this reason the potential applicants have to verify to be eligible with their regional contact before applying for the ERNEST Joint Call for Proposals.

Funding body	TUSCANY REGION
Funding Programmes	2007-2013 ERDF Regional Operational Programme (ROP) Axis I Measure 1.5.c. research and innovation for cooperative projects (industrial research and experimental development)
Funding commitment	400.000,00 €
Funding rates	Max contribution of 80%

Funding body	EMILIA-ROMAGNA REGION
Funding Programmes	REGIONAL LAW N.40/2002
Funding commitment	180.000,00 €
Funding rates	MAX 50%

Funding body	Direcció General de Turisme – Generalitat de Catalunya
Funding Programmes	PLADETUR Tourist Development Plan
Funding commitment	200.000,00 €
Maximum amount of funding for Italian research group(s) in a proposal	Max. 80.000,00
Funding rates	Max. 75% of eligible expenses

Funding body	Basque Government (Department of Industry, Innovation, Trade and Tourism)
Funding Programmes	GAITEK Programme
Funding commitment	About 200.000,00 €
Maximum amount of funding for Italian research group(s) in a proposal	150.000,00 € per eligible institution per year
Funding rates	Maximum 50% for small enterprises, 50% for medium enterprises, and 40% for large companies

What are the research topics?

Themes of the Joint Call

The projects will be in the form of **interregional research projects** or **actions on sustainable tourism** and they will address to the **ERNEST research topics**:

10 strategic research area which fully highlight the horizontal nature of research into sustainable tourism:

- Impact of transport
- Residents' quality of life
- Quality of work
- Widening the relations between demand/offer (geographical and seasonal concentration of tourism)
- Active conservation of cultural heritage
- Active conservation of environmental heritage
- Active conservation of distinctive identities of destinations
- Reduction and optimization of natural resources use with particular reference to water
- Reduction and optimization of energy consumption
- Reduction of waste and better waste management

The projects will be particularly concentrated on the **joint pillar topics** of social dialogue and measurement. However, the financing of joint projects will not be limited to these themes.

The Joint Call for Proposals will fund interregional Collaborative Research Projects undertaken by tourism enterprises and/or by local public administrations and their strategic partnerships. The research projects will be transnational, innovative, application-oriented R&D projects, related to the theme "sustainability and competitiveness of tourism".

The projects are encouraged to have one or more of the following approaches, which will also imply priority points in the evaluation process:

- ✓ Integration & Interdisciplinarity: Projects are encouraged to be interdisciplinary (i.e. to address multiple research themes)
- ✓ Innovation in practice/Modelling: Development of operative models for the implementation of sustainable tourism in the tourist SMEs in the destinations
- ✓ Tourist product/clustering & Replicability: Development of projects aimed at specific tourist products or types of destinations (art & culture destinations, seaside resorts, mountain resorts, countryside, Spas, meeting & incentives destinations, cultural itineraries, etc.);
- ✓ Research beyond academia: It is important that the applicant demonstrate the potential impact of the research, in environmental, economic, social or cultural terms.

When is the deadline?

Deadline for submission is 20th of December 2010, 18:00 CET (Brussels, Belgium time).

Submission Procedure

The submission procedure is „one step“. The Interregional Project Proposals must be submitted via mail to jc.secretariat@ernestproject.eu and must strictly follow the “JCP Call & Guidelines for Applicants”.

All the documents related to the joint call including the application form are available at www.ernestproject.eu.

For more information on this Joint Call or the ERNEST Project, please visit our website at www.ernestproject.eu.

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