Goal and content: The Research Council of the VUB wants to offer via the Interdisciplinary Research Programmes / Centres of Expertise (IRP), a stimulating and catalysing programme financing for the creation and successful continuation of discipline exceeding thematic centres of expertise. For this purpose, a substantial support is given to excellent research teams that jointly want to expand a sustainable, innovative, multidisciplinary network focused on social challenges and thematic total expertise. It is expected that the support offered in this way forms a stable substructure on top of which the teams attract external resources that co assure the maintaining of the network.

For this call proposals are awaited aimed at thematic total expertise in the five thematic clusters below, with a research identity in at least two and preferably in each of the three domains:

- Social Sciences and Humanities (HW)
- Basic, Natural- and Applied Sciences (BNTW)
- Biomedical Sciences (BMW):
  - Health
  - Inclusive and secure society
  - Digital and industry
  - Climate, energy and mobility
  - Food and natural resources

The framing in these 5 themes is a stimulant for obtaining future external funding at the highest level, in particular Horizon Europe - Framework Programme 9 (successor of Horizon 2020).

Art. 108. Duration: The financing is allocated for five years and is unlimited renewable, provided positive evaluation and sufficient budgetary context.

Financing level: Typical annual budget equivalent to two researchers on pre-doc level (100.000 EUR till 110.000 EUR per year).

Art. 116. Expectations at the allocation of an IRP: At the allocation of an IRP the resources have to be spent mainly to the appointment of one or more researchers who personify the interdisciplinary cooperation.
Application

Art. 112. Admissibility

The applications for new IRPs are admissible if they:
1° are submitted to the Vice-rector Research Policy in English and in electronic form before the call’s deadline;
2° are submitted by one or more ZAP-members as promoter-spokesperson and co-promoters;
3° contain the minimal components mentioned in Art. 113.

Art. 113. Minimal components in the applications (as completed for this call)

§1. The applications contain the following information:
1° title/theme of the IRP;
2° name and contact details of the promoter-spokesperson and of the co-promoters;
3° a list of the participating VUB-research teams with a brief indication of their expertise and elements that prove their international recognition. If also external partners participate, they are mentioned as well, accompanied by a brief explanation;
4° a strategic plan (±2 pages), including:
   a) team structure;
   b) a clear situation of the relevance of the theme;
   c) significant goals;
   d) scientific questions to be answered, with the emphasis on fundamental research;
   e) pursued technical and thereto related logistic realizations;
   f) vision on the interdisciplinarity and way of organizing the interdisciplinarity.
5° an appendix to the strategic plan (±2 pages), including:
   a) more concrete planning of the activities, with distinction between certainties and risks;
   b) concrete spending of the resources;
   c) envisaged external resources that will be attracted to co assure the maintaining of the network;
6° a list of the five most important scientific publications of the participating VUB-teams in the domain of the IRP;
7° five external experts (names and contact information) that are suggested for the screening of the application;
8° if applicable: a description of already realized interdisciplinary collaboration in het theme of the IRP.

§2. For the promoter-spokesperson and for each of the co-promoters separately the following information is included:
1° a list of the 10 most important scientific publications (regardless of the type) from the 5 years preceding the application;
2° a hard copy or (preferred) electronic version of the 5 most important scientific publications (regardless of the type) from the 5 years preceding the application (in case of books: if possible added to the submission, if not held ready by the applicants to lend upon request);
3° a list of all PhD’s awarded under the supervision of the IRP (co)supervisor concerned;

§3. Separately from the application a motivated objection can be submitted to the Vice-rector Research Policy against persons as reviewers for the screening of the application.
Art. 114. Research-CV

After receiving the application, the R&D department adds the research-CV out of PURE concerning the 5 years preceding the application, with the list of all scientific publications classified by type and an overview of all project financing.

Criteria

Art. 109. Criteria (as adapted for this call)

The criteria concerning the capacity of the research teams are:
1° The IRPs consist of one or more teams, for the majority with high performance level that has already been proven via external scientific screenings, and profiling itself as thematic platform with total expertise on social challenges;
2° The IRPs are carried by a broad interdisciplinary cooperation of various VUB research teams that unite expertise out of two or more of the three large domains HW-BNTW-BMW;
3° The level of excellence of the promoter-spokesperson of an IRP is internationally recognized within the domain, and he/she is in charge of a leading team in the field of research performances.

The criteria concerning the interdisciplinary networking are:
1° The IRPs are based on a clear multidisciplinary, innovative scientific project;
2° The IRPs cover broad themes with an important value on scientific, social, philosophic, socio-economic, legal, technical or other area;
3° The IRPs offer an added value through interdisciplinary cooperation in the form of a synergy of expertise from different disciplines, each necessary for a commonly developed result (theory / concept / tool / technique / information / data set) and resulting in innovative contributions to each of the involved disciplines;
4° The IRPs provide a total expertise in a number of domains in which the VUB is strongly represented;
5° The IRPs lead to participation in international and European networks;
6° The IRPs mean a clear added value for the network through the financing of at least one equivalent of 1 fulltime researcher per year focused on the execution of the multidisciplinary project.

More details

Centraal Werkingsreglement Onderzoeksbeleid (AR 09.11.2015), Art. 105-116, available in Dutch via: https://intranet.vub.ac.be/research/documents/OZR-reglementen-&#38;-formulieren

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