

BIO-ASIA

The regional program Bio-Asia is a French initiative directed at Asia in order to strengthen high-level scientific collaboration, as well as to develop a research network for French and regional academic communities in the fields of biodiversity and biotechnologies studies, ranging from the study of natural substances to their applications in agronomy, cosmetics, forestry, health, etc.

The program is implemented by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MAEDI), in partnership with:

- French research bodies and higher education institutions, including the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), the Institute for Research and Development (IRD), the Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), the National Institute for Health and Medical Research (INSERM), Pasteur Institute, the French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea (IFREMER), the National Museum of Natural History (MNHN) and the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA).
- The French Ministry for National Education Higher Education and Research (MENESR).

BIO-Asia is directed at public or private research units and laboratories attached to higher education institutions, research units or private companies. **It supports projects involving France and the member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam), as well as East Timor, China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.**

Bio-Asia contributes, through an annual call for proposals, to the funding of research projects involving France and at least two partner countries in Asia, of which at least one is an ASEAN member state. The overall purpose is to foster the building of multilateral research teams for future participation in other regional and multilateral programs.

The subvention, granted for two years, partially funds the budget linked to the internationalization of the projects, i.e. **researcher, post-doctoral or doctoral student mobility** (travel and mission expenses) or **organization of international workshops** (mobility and logistics). Other costs are not eligible to funding.

1. CALL FOR PROPOSALS

- **Timetable**

- ▶ Publication: 10 June 2015
- ▶ Deadline for submitting applications: 13 September 2015
- ▶ Evaluation period: September - October 2015
- ▶ Selection: November 2015
- ▶ Notification to project leaders: November 2015
- ▶ Project Start Date: January 2016

Projects should be submitted on line through CampusFrance, the French national agency for the promotion of higher education, international student services, and international mobility, at:

http://www.campusfrance.org/fr/bio-asie_stic-asie

- **Projects topics, nature and duration**

All topics in the areas of research and innovation related to the study of biodiversity, natural substances and biotechnologies are eligible. Priority topics for 2015 are as follows: Biodiversity; Biotechnologies and Health; Green Chemistry and Biotransformation; Biomass Energy.

Projects must include at least one research unit from France (public or private sector) and at least two research units from partner countries in Asia (of which at least one is an ASEAN member state). Projects may include research units from EU member states, with mandatory co-financing from their national institution.

Each project must have a research component, either applied or fundamental, and may include innovation and/or doctoral or post-doctoral education components. The duration of the project is two years.

- **Budget**

The total indicative amount of financing for one project for this call for proposals is EUR 40 000 for two years (ie: EUR 20 000 per project per year). No minimum grant amounts are being fixed. Funding is allocated on an annual basis at the beginning of each year. The second payment is dependent on the approval of an interim report submitted by the project leader to the MAEDI.

BIO-ASIA budget heading allows support to be given only as a **contribution to the extra project costs arising from the international components of the projects, i.e. for the mobility of researchers, doctoral or post-doctoral students** (travelling and living expenses, up to 6-month stays for PhD students) or the organization of international workshops and seminars (mobility and logistics). The estimated budget will indicate average cost of assignment allowances and travelling expenses as well as expected income (sources and amounts) and expenditures for each year of the project.

Co-financing of the mobility costs from the French project leader partner institution is mandatory for eligibility. **Contributions from other partners** (funding, staffing or resources), **whether Asian or French**, as indicated in the application, are decisive criteria for selection.

- **Selection criteria**

In addition to scientific excellence, projects will be awarded according to the following criteria:

- ▶ Academic skills and competences of the teams involved;
- ▶ The quality of the partnership, including its pioneering aspect, the degree of involvement and commitment at the application stage of each of the research units involved;
- ▶ The extent to which the action has a genuine transnational dimension implying mutual skills transfer, and the genuine benefit of the partnership for the project;
- ▶ The attention given to integration of countries with different levels of development of their R&D capabilities within the project;
- ▶ Participation of post-doctoral students or young researchers;
- ▶ Innovative nature of the project;
- ▶ Expected scientific, societal or industrial spin-off;
- ▶ The quality and effectiveness of co-financing from France and other countries;
- ▶ Co-financing by one of BIO-Asia partner research institutions.

2. SELECTION PROCEDURE

1- Evaluation

French MAEDI and MENESR will assess the eligibility of all received applications. Eligible projects will be evaluated by the International Expertise Mission (MEI).

2- Selection

The **selection committee** will award projects based on their scientific evaluation, the extent to which they meet the objective and priorities of the call for proposal, and the availability of budgeted funds. **Members of the selection committee** are representatives from MAEDI, MENESR and from each co-financing partner institution. Representatives (International Relations Office, Head of Laboratory, etc.) from the cofinancing partner institution or enterprise should contact MAEDI (*see 3 below for contact information*) to be registered as a member of the selection committee.

Projects leaders will receive an online notification by early December.

3- Starting the projects

The French Development Agency (AFD), mandated by the MAEDI for actual provision of its support, will proceed to the first payment in January/February 2016. For administrative and legal reasons, if the project leader is an Asian institution, the French partner institution will be identified as the coordinator and its institution will receive the grant in Euros.

Projects start in January 2016. The project leader should submit an interim report online through the team account as created for the application at the end of the first year. The second payment is made upon validation of this report. The final report should be submitted on the same account.

3. CONTACT AND INFORMATION

BIO-Asia is initiated and funded **by the Division of Scientific Exchanges and Research (French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development)**.

It is monitored by the French Embassy to Indonesia, Timor Leste and the ASEAN (Jakarta, Indonesia) in cooperation with UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science in Asia and the Pacific (Jakarta, Indonesia).

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