



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation



MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGICAL
DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

**ITALY – SERBIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION
CALL FOR JOINT PROPOSALS FOR THE YEARS 2024-2026**

CLOSING DATE: February 9th 2024 at 17:00 hr (CEST)

BACKGROUND

Within the framework of the Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Italy and the Government of the Republic of Serbia, signed in Rome, on December 21st 2009, and entered into force on February 5th 2013, the Directorate General for Country Promotion – Office IX of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Serbian Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation are opening a call for proposals to initiate herewith the procedures for the new Executive Programme of Scientific and Technological Cooperation for the years 2024 - 2026.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 FUNDING SCHEMES

With regard to the present call, one funding scheme is available:

- **“Research staff exchange”**: the expenses for this activity are co-funded by both Parties. This funding scheme aims at supporting the exchange of researchers between collaborating laboratories in both countries, whose research activities are supported by other funding entities. Preference will be given to mobility projects involving early career scientists.

Research staff exchange shall aim at supporting the development of a transnational partnership, or the strengthening of an existing collaboration, by including the added value of bilateral cooperation and fostering the interaction between the two partners.

1.2 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Project proposals:

- must be written in English;
- must have the same duration of the Executive Programme (E.P.), i.e. 3 years (2024-2026);
- must be jointly submitted.

Each Principal Investigator (P.I.):

- is allowed to submit only one proposal.

Italian Party:

- The call is open to public or private (no-profit) research institutions;
- the PI must have Italian or any other EU nationality, legal residence in Italy, and must be an affiliated staff member of a public or private (no-profit) Italian research institution, with a permanent position, or with a

temporary position covering at least the first year of activity of the proposed project (the termination date of the contract shall be declared in the CV).

Serbian Party:

- **Researchers** and research teams, employed in the scientific research organizations meeting the requirements in accordance with the Law on Science and Research („Official Gazette RS“ No 49/2019) , can apply for this call.

1.3 REASONS FOR EXCLUSION

- Lack of any one of the eligibility requirements listed above;
- incomplete application (including additional documents where relevant - see point 3 below);
- proposals submitted in different priority research areas by the collaborating PIs in the two countries;
- proposals submitted in only one of the two countries;
- applications written in languages other than English.

2. PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS

Proposals must be submitted within one of the following priority research areas:

- Agriculture and food technologies
- Information and communication technologies
- Energy transition and Hydrogen-related Research
- Basic research in Physics
- Biotechnology

Proposals submitted in other research areas will not be considered for evaluation.

Depending on the scientific quality of submitted proposals, some projects falling in one or more of the above listed research areas might not be funded.

3. SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Joint proposals must be submitted to both Parties. The proposals must be written in English and have the same duration of the E.P. (3 years: 2024-2026).

Italian Party:

- Proposals shall be submitted exclusively online, by filling in the dedicated forms at: <https://web.esteri.it/pgr/>. For any inquiry concerning the present call, please contact the email address dgsp-09bandi3@esteri.it
- **For projects involving experiments with animals**, the status of ethics approval by the competent Ethics Committee must be provided when submitting the proposal. **A declaration of submission to the institutional OPBA (Organismo Preposto al Benessere degli Animali) in the project description is acceptable at the proposal submission stage.** Please note that formal authorization by the competent Ministry of Health is mandatory to start the activities (D.Lgs 26 04/03/2014 and Directive 2010/63 EU). Projects involving experiments with human beings must be performed in accordance with the Directive 536/2014/EC. The Italian Principal Investigator should include a self-declaration of adhesion to the above cited rules in the Methods section of the proposal.
- **Proposals presented by a Principal Investigator with a temporary position must be accompanied by a letter**, signed by the legal representative of the applying Institution or her/his delegate duly authorized by formal provision, attesting that should the contract of the PI be terminated before the end of the project, the Institution will replace the PI with another member of the research team, thus ensuring that research activities are carried out without any interruption. A template in Italian is available for download at the same URL of the present call. The letter shall be digitally signed and uploaded in the indicated section of the submission portal <https://web.esteri.it/pgr/>

Serbian Party:

- Proposals shall be submitted exclusively online, by filling in the dedicated forms on the website:
bilateral-italy.nitra.gov.rs

The application process is as follows:

- First of all PI need to log on to the abovementioned website in order to receive the code for on-line filling in the project application
 - During the period when the Call is open, it is possible to upgrade and correct the project proposal on-line and send the completed project application to the e-mail address: bilateral_italy@nitra.gov.rs
 - Print out the completed project application and send it to the Ministry's address
- Serbian applications must be accompanied by an endorsement letter, written in Serbian and signed by the legal representative of the applying Institution or by her/his officially authorized delegate, providing official acceptance of all conditions listed in the call text.

4. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS AND SELECTION AT NATIONAL AND BILATERAL LEVEL

4.1 EVALUATION PROCESS

After the call closure, all submitted proposals will undergo formal eligibility checks before moving to the two-step evaluation process. The first step is performed at the national level to identify a shortlist of proposals to be considered for funding. The second step of the evaluation process is performed at the bilateral level: the two Parties will reach consensus on the final list of projects eligible for funding during the meeting of the Joint Commission, which includes representatives from both countries. The selected projects will be included in the text of the Executive Programme, to be posted on the websites of both Parties as indicated below.

Project proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Scientific relevance of the proposed research
- Methodology and documentation
- Qualifications and expertise of the research teams
- Added value of the bilateral cooperation
- Involvement of early career scientists
- Exploitation and dissemination of the results

4.2 PUBLICATION

Italian Party

The list of selected projects will be included in the official text of the Executive Programme signed by both Parties, and will be published on the MAECI website:

https://www.esteri.it/it/diplomazia-culturale-e-diplomazia-scientifica/cooperscientificatecnologica/programmiesecutivi/accordi_programmi_culturali_tecnologici/

PIs of the selected projects will be directly informed by e-mail of the positive outcome of their submission.

Serbian Party

The list of the selected projects and funding procedures will be posted exclusively on the website of the Serbian Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation at the following address:

<https://www.nitra.gov.rs/lat/medunarodna-saradnja/bilateralna-saradnja>

PIs of the selected projects will be directly informed by e-mail of the positive outcome of their submission.

Both parties commit not to release information on the selected/excluded projects (including the outcomes of the formal eligibility check) until the process has ended with the signature of the Executive Programme.

5. FUNDING PROCEDURES

Funding will be granted to the projects listed in the Executive Programme within the limits of the available annual resources of each Party.

- Only the costs for travel and stay will be supported by the Parties. No support for research expenses (consumables, manpower, equipment etc.) should be expected or proposed under this funding scheme.
- For each year of the project, 2 short-term stays (up to 7 days each) and 1 long-term stay (up to 21 days) will be funded. Such stays might be carried on in one solution not exceeding 35 days/year.
- The sending Party will pay travel expenses whereas the hosting Party will fund sustenance and accommodation expenses.
- Health insurance for traveling scientists must be provided by their research institutions.

Italian Party:

The Italian Party will pay international travel expenses to researchers of the Italian team visiting Serbia and will provide scientists of the Serbian team visiting Italy with the following contribution for sustenance and accommodation expenses:

- Short stays 99 €/day, from day 1 to day 7
- Long stays 99 €/day, from day 1 to day 10; 38 €/day, from day 11 to day 21

*The maximum amount of travel expenses per year of each project shall not exceed 4.594 Euro, which is the total amount corresponding to **2 short-term stays** (up to 7 days - 693 Euro each), **1 long-term stay** (up to 21 days - 1408 Euro) and 3 roundtrip air tickets (for a maximum amount of 1.800 Euro).*

Such stays might be carried on in one solution not exceeding 35 days/year.

Applications by Serbian scientists (accommodation expenses) and by Italian scientists (travel expenses) for each individual visit can be submitted online in the dedicated section of the MAECI website, at least 35 days before the beginning of the scheduled research visit (i.e. before the day of departure).

Any changes in the composition of the two research teams during the 3 years validity of the EP must be notified in advance by the Italian PI through certified e-mail to the address: dgsp09.pec@cert.esteri.it.

The Serbian Party

The Serbian Party will cover the expenses of the international round trip by air (does not include ground transportation) to Italy for Serbian researchers and will grant a contribution for the expenses of stay in Serbia for Italian researchers with the following contribution for sustenance and accommodation expenses:

- 90 €/day, from day 1 to day 7
- 38 €/day, from day 8 to day 21

*The maximum amount of travel expenses per year shall not exceed 4222 Euro, which is: the total amount corresponding to **2 short-term stays** (630 Euro each) and **1 long-term stay** (1.162 Euro each) and 3 air tickets (for a maximum amount of 1.800 Euro).*

Funding for the next year will not be granted if the coordinators fail to submit their progress reports.

6. CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional information on the present call, applicants can refer to the following contacts:

In Italy	In Serbia
<p>Office IX - Directorate General for Country Promotion Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) E-mail: dgsp-09bandi3@esteri.it</p>	<p>Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation Department of International Cooperation and European Integration Nemanjina 22-26 11000 Belgrade Republic of Serbia Phone: +381 11 3616 529 e-mail: svetlana.bogdanovic@nitra.gov.rs</p>