



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE
Directorate A – Strategy and Work Programme Coordination
Scientific Development

Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships

Pilot Project

Call for Expression of Interest in the thematic fields of

- Energy and transport modelling
- Soil and land use change
- Bio-economy and forests
- Machine learning
- Genomics and bioinformatics
- Nuclear decommissioning and waste management

1. ORGANISATION LAUNCHING THE CALL

European Commission, Directorate-General Joint Research Centre (hereof referred to as the "JRC"), E-mail: jrc-cdp@ec.europa.eu

The JRC is the science and knowledge service of the European Commission and supports EU policies with independent evidence. Strategically placed between the scientific and policy spheres, the JRC has a specific mission in reinforcing evidence-based approaches in policymaking. Education and training activities are an integral part of the JRC work that builds on the organisation's robust research capacity.

2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE CALL

The JRC is calling for Expression of Interest from higher education institutions from Member States and countries associated to Horizon 2020 to participate in a **new initiative of Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships** (hereof referred to as CDP).

The importance of science-based evidence for policy making is increasingly recognised by decision makers and finds resonance in academia. In order to enhance the science-policy link, the JRC is offering a new collaborative CDP scheme to higher education institutions to benefit from a strategic, win-win collaboration with the JRC. The scheme will allow the institutions to gain a better understanding of research needs throughout the policy cycle while at the same time providing the JRC with innovative research input and exchange of information with leading institutions in the field.

Objective:

To establish strategic collaborations in selected thematic fields with higher education institutions characterised by research excellence and international reputation in the field in order to

- train a new generation of doctoral graduates in science and technology with a focus on the science-policy interface, able to understand the research needs at different stages of the policy cycle, capable of providing scientific support to policy and of using transferable skills in science communication and knowledge management.
- co-develop, co-host and co-supervise doctoral studies between higher education institutions and the JRC
- strengthen collaboration between the JRC and higher education institutions by promoting mutual enhancement of related skills and competences, combining existing knowledge and capacities, and enhancing networking in key scientific areas.

Scope:

- CDP will lead to the award of doctoral degree by the higher education institution, based on doctoral studies co-designed, co-hosted and co-supervised by the JRC. The CDP will be recognised in the diploma or a supplement to the diploma as well as a specific reference to JRC in the thesis.
- CDP will raise excellence and extend the traditional academic research training by incorporating a science-policy interface dimension into doctoral studies and by equipping young researchers with a balanced combination of research-related competencies transferable to policy making.

Collaborative Scheme:

- CDP does not involve exchange of money between the JRC and the selected institution. Costs are shared according to the stay of the doctoral student in the respective institution. While students stay in the JRC, the JRC will cover their costs including the salary, necessary training and work-related travel costs.
- The time for doctoral students to stay in the JRC can range between one and three years. The time of stay of the candidates shared between the relevant higher education institution and the JRC will be subject of individual agreements between the Parties.¹

3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Higher education institutions with departments or institutes interested in the scheme must apply before **15 March 2017** by electronic means only using the standard application form which can be found at the following web addresses: <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/working-with-us/collaborative-doctoral-partnerships>

Applications for each thematic area will be assessed separately.

Incomplete forms will be rejected.

All requests for additional information may be sent to jrc-cdp@ec.europa.eu

Following the submission of applications from the interested institutions, the institutions will be selected by the JRC.

After the selection of the institutions, separate collaboration agreements will be signed between the JRC and each of the selected institutions. These are envisaged to have an initial duration of 5 years.

The progress of the work will be regularly reviewed by both Parties.

After conclusion of the collaboration agreement, a detailed work plan shall be co-developed and established with each selected partner. The work plan that should be finalised and agreed between the JRC and each selected institutions separately will include, inter alia, the following steps:

- co-selection of doctoral thesis topics
- decision of the names of the co-supervisors (from the selected institution and the JRC)
- definition of the criteria of selection for doctoral candidates. The criteria will be co-developed between the selected institution and the JRC.
- development of a research plan outlining the time that the PhD candidate will be hosted in JRC and the higher education institute respectively and the expected outcomes.

4. ENVISAGED TIMING

Deadline for submission of applications: 15 March 2017

Announcement of selected institutions: 30 April 2017

Signature of collaboration agreements: within 6 months of start of negotiations on 30 April 2017

5. ELIGIBILITY

The call is open to higher education institutions and faculties which are legally established in an EU Member State or a country associated to Horizon 2020. Applicants must be entitled to award doctoral degrees and have administrative autonomy including signing agreements with external partners.

6. EVALUATION

Partners will be selected by JRC on the basis of evaluation of applications. The candidate institutions will be ranked according to their performance on the evaluation criteria described below. Up to five education institutions which will have scored best in the ranking will be selected.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- **Research Reputation**– Academic assessment criteria on the department/institute’s research, knowledge transfer and international outlook over the past 10 years. Research excellence in the field will be described and demonstrated by the average number of publications per academic staff in reputable journals in the thematic area over the past 10 years. 10 selected recent original publications will be provided for the assessment of the research quality.
- **Research Profile**– Profile of the department/institute’s research activities (within the selected thematic area and) in relation to the JRC research profile. The research profile as well the complementarity of research themes to those of the JRC will be described. Description of the contribution of the research activities to civil society and to national/European policies are provided.
- **Supervision capacity** – this will be evaluated based on the number of doctoral students hosted and the ratio of doctoral students to academic staff in the field. The scientific impact of the eligible doctoral supervisors will be demonstrated.
- **European and International Collaboration**– Engagement of the higher education institution in international collaborations. This will be proven by the number of established European and international collaborations for research and open access policy on dissemination of research output.