



Call for Pre-Proposals

European Partnership in Polar Climate Science (PolarCLIMATE)

What is EUROPOLAR ERA-NET?

The EUROPOLAR ERA-NET⁽¹⁾ is a consortium of 25 Ministries, Funding Agencies and National Polar RTD Authorities from 19 European countries and of the ESF/European Polar Board. With a combined critical mass of over 300 Million Euros per annum it is the most significant initiative to coordinate European Polar RTD Programmes ever attempted. EUROPOLAR ERA-NET will exert a massive and positive impact on this domain and lead to long-term durable partnerships within Europe and internationally. EUROPOLAR ERA-NET will also encourage and support the closer relationship of National Polar RTD Programme managers in Europe fostering cooperation and leading to joint Programme activities.

www.europolar.org

PolarCLIMATE Research Call:

The PolarCLIMATE Call is the first transnational programme to be launched under the European Polar Consortium. Funding decisions on the projects and the research funding remain with the national research funding organisations, based on international peer review and call management operated by ESF.

For further information on the PolarCLIMATE Call see:

www.esf.org/polarclimate

⁽¹⁾ Currently supported through a contract with the European Commission under the Sixth Framework Programme.

The EUROPOLAR ERA-NET Consortium is launching the first Pilot Call for Pre-Proposals leading to potential Joint Projects to be undertaken within the PolarCLIMATE Programme. Following agreement with 20 ministries and funding organisations from 18 European Countries in *Austria, France, Belgium, Bulgaria*, Czech Republic, Denmark*, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom**, the PolarCLIMATE Programme is expected to run for 3-4 years supported by national research funding. The Programme aims to support high quality transnational research at the European level in the Arctic and Antarctic. The Total commitment to the Call by the agencies is estimated to be 10 Million Euros (total includes direct financial commitment and estimated in-kind logistical and infrastructure support*) *denotes countries with only in-kind support-subject to scientific assessment results).

Pre-Proposals are to be submitted by a deadline of Friday **24th October 2008 12.00hrs central European Time**. It is expected that Full Proposals will be invited at the **beginning of December 2008** with **early March 2009** as the expected deadline for submission of Full Proposals.

A Programme-specific website can be consulted for the latest updates at www.esf.org/polarclimate.

Participating Funding Agencies in the PolarCLIMATE Call:



Background and objectives

The assemblage of Joint research projects will form an integrated European strategic Programme of Climate change research in the Polar Regions and will be an important contribution to the development of policies and strategies at the European Level. The Programme is the first of its kind to open a call for polar Climate research and aims to fully utilise the infrastructure and logistical capabilities of the participating national agencies. Further calls under the umbrella PolarCLIMATE programme will be envisaged following this first pilot. The research as part of this European Programme takes place after the International Polar Year (www.ipy.org) and therefore will be an important continuity of efforts to investigate the processes of climate change and its impacts and to maintain momentum of the integrated groups of scientists that have formed during the IPY process.

The PolarCLIMATE programme contributes to the development of a strategic common vision for Polar Climate research and is the first step towards joint implementation of programmes and fully utilising research stations and climate observatories in the Arctic and Antarctic. The joint research theme and sub-themes have been identified through consultation of an Expert European Science Advisory Council defined to be authoritative experts in the field and nominated by the participating European funding agencies. Ongoing scientific planning processes and assessments in the Polar Regions such as ICARP II, ACIA and IPCC and IASC-SCAR (www.arcticportal.org/iasc and www.scar.org) science priorities have been taken into account in the selection of the topics for the first Call. The Research Themes should therefore represent the state of the art subjects of high-importance to scientists, the public and governments. Joint programming* has recently been identified by the European Commission as of strategic importance to the European Union as a whole. The PolarCLIMATE programme is a test of identifying common research priorities and financing areas research in the Polar Regions which are of strategic importance. The PolarCLIMATE programme will also form the first steps towards a European contribution to the implementation an Arctic and Antarctic observing network through supporting research within research stations and observatories with broad spatial coverage and linking with ongoing coordination & planning efforts such as SAON (Sustained Arctic Observing Networks), www.arcticobserving.org and the European Polar Board's INFRAPOLAR initiative.

By enhancing cooperation among those agencies that develop and manage research programmes in the Polar Regions, the PolarCLIMATE programme aims to increase the efficiency and impact of national public research funding in strategic areas of Polar climate research. The Joint Programming in a Virtual Common Pot funding model (see below) in this Call targets areas of strategic importance such as Climate change research in the Polar Regions for the whole or a large part of Europe, the fragmentation of public research programming leads to sub-optimal returns. This programme aims to address wide issues of scientific importance at the European and global scale and to fully utilise and facilitate access to the Arctic and Antarctic research facilities that are operated by national polar organisations. How Europe responds to a number of major societal challenges will shape its future in the decades to come. These challenges include dealing with the threats poised to populations in the context of climate change. PolarCLIMATE will be the first dedicated polar programme of its kind to engage over 18 nations in a joint research funding programme in the Polar Regions addressing interhemispheric comparisons and the drivers and impacts of Climate variability in the Arctic and Antarctic.

*Ref: COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS TOWARDS JOINT PROGRAMMING IN RESEARCH : Working together to tackle common challenges more effectively (SEC(2008) 2281) & (SEC(2008) 2282) COM(2008) 468

Research themes

Pre-Proposals from the research community in the following broad research themes and associated sub-themes are invited:

1

Climate variability-Northern and Southern Hemisphere Oscillations, the scales and indicators of change and the forecasting of future threats and possibilities. The Joint projects in this priority area should address major regional scale indicators with data obtained from a variety of European/International data collection platforms (oceanographic vessels/Research stations/satellites etc).

Subthemes are:

- Temperature trends
- Key area hot spots
- Aerosol contents /composition/energy balance atmosphere interactions/clouds
- Field observations/ trend monitoring
- Proxies marine/lacustrine
- Thermo-haline circulation, Southern Ocean
- Combination modelling/construction Pan-arctic/Antarctic variability
- Interactions high-mid latitude
- Ice balance
- Ocean Front/atmospheric front positioning/circulation, Modification/ across cutting impact
- Coupled models (biophysical)
- Inter-hemispheric comparisons
- Shallow ice coring-arrays, local-regional glacier retreat
- Sea-ice thickness variations and temporal
- Understanding the variability and change of snow and ice conditions in the Arctic and the impact of the change on the Arctic transport infrastructure

2

The current status of snow and ice in the Polar Regions, the spatial distribution and magnitude of cryospheric stability. Projects which have an integrated approach using ground based and space based assets are particularly encouraged.

Subthemes are:

- Broader issue temporal and space scales/anthropogenic forcing driving mechanism
- Radiation balance issues & Albedo
- Influence on CO2
- Modelling interaction Sea-Ice/ atmosphere/ocean-process studies
- Snow chemistry-sensor distribution pollutants
- Technologies to separate stratospheric signals from tropospheric signals in snow pack
- Behaviour/long term transportation/interaction with climate
- Shallow ice coring-arrays
- Mass balance/glaciological approach/modelling /technological
- Surface melt water – Sub glacial water flow
- Instability/reaction climatic signal sub glacial processes-determination climatic signal drivers
- Sea ice dynamics and their assessment

3

Impacts of climate modification on ecosystems, bio-systems and human communities in extreme environments (Arctic and Antarctic). Joint research projects should address the rates and magnitude of the impact and the adaptation and modification of the systems. Joint projects which encompass a regional or Bi-polar perspective are particularly encouraged.

Subthemes are:

- Winter time processes
- Carbon stocks in soil and sediments
- Biochemical dynamics of trace gases
- Biodiversity terrestrial ecosystems Antarctic Peninsula Biotas in Oasis
- Regional scale variations in vegetation cover Arctic
- Biota in Extreme environments Coastal-marine and interior
- Impacts and modification on bio-systems
- Indirect non linear effects in biologic processes
- Biological indicators of climatic change
- Competitions species/impacts
- Sensitivity to climate change Mismatch predators and prey
- Biophysical modelling
- Biological adaptation in extreme environments
- Ecosystem changes and marine resources
- Ice break up related to climate events
- Permafrost and the effects of Climate Change in Arctic and Antarctic regions
- Understanding and responses to the impact of climate change on Arctic communities and societies

PolarCLIMATE Funding Commitment*

Funding Organisation	Country	Initial Amount Available*
FWF- Fonds Zur Förderung der Wissenschaftlichen Forschung	Austria	200 000 €
BELSP0-Belgian Federal Science Policy Office	Belgium	200 000 € and in-kind infrastructure support
FNRS-Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique	Belgium	200 000 € over 4 years and in-kind infrastructure support
FWO- Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek	Belgium	200 000 €
BAI-Bulgarian Antarctic Institute	Bulgaria	In-kind infrastructure support
MSMT-Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy České republiky	Czech Republic	250 686 € over 3 years (2009-2011)
DASTI- Forsknings- og Innovationsstyrelsen ¹	Denmark	In-kind logistical support ¹ Support in Cooperation with The Commission for Scientific Research in Greenland
ETF- Eesti Teadusfondi koduleheküljele	Estonia	200 000 €
MiTOC- Liikenne- Ja Viestintäministeriö	Finland	200 000 €
IPEV- L'Institut Polaire Français Paul-Emile Victor	France	400 000 € and 3 000 000 € in-kind logistical support
BMBF- Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung	Germany	2 000 000 € in the period 2009-2012 and in-kind infrastructure support
PNRA- Programma Nazionale di Ricerche in Antartide	Italy	300 000 € and in-kind logistical and infrastructure support
NWO- Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek	The Netherlands	200 000 € in the period 2009-2012
RCN- Norges forskningsråd	Norway	400 000 € over 3 year period
NCBiR- Narodowe Centrum Badań i Rozwoju National	Poland	150 000 €
FCT- Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia	Portugal	200 000 €
MedC- Ministerul Educației, Cercetării și Tineretului	Romania	500 000 € **TBC
MICINN- Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación	Spain	300 000 €
VR- Vetenskapsrådet	Sweden	200 000 €
NERC-Natural Environment Research Council	United Kingdom	In-kind logistical and infrastructure support

*Dependent upon evaluation of scientific proposals

For national special conditions and/or requirements and regulations relating to organisations providing in-kind contributions only, please consult the PolarCLIMATE website (www.esf.org/polarclimate).

Description of Funding Method: Virtual Common Pot

The funding in the PolarCLIMATE call will be national. After a joint call and common evaluation, all organisations will fund their own nationals. There is complete control by the agencies over national funds. PolarCLIMATE is aiming at funding the highest ranked proposals. The initial available budget per country is explicitly stated in the Call for Proposals. It provides realistic expectations to the applicants on the maximum number of projects to be funded in each country. An agency does not have to spend all the money that has been provisionally reserved, e.g. when there are no (more) projects of excellent scientific quality for that country. Some agencies may be able to generate extra money to fund good proposals.

Cooperation with Scientists and agencies from Outside of Europe:

The PolarCLIMATE programme encourages the establishment of partnerships with scientists and programmes outside of Europe (Eg; United States, Canada, China, India, Australia etc.) as Associated Partners. Pre-Proposals should indicate the potential countries and organisations that wish to participate as Associated Partners bringing their own research funding (self-supporting) and facilities into the project. A number of External European Polar funding Agency managers will be invited to liaise with the PolarCLIMATE Programme Board to enable the assessment of feasibility of international partnerships and the potential for funding and access to non-European polar research stations and polar logistics.



Scientists at U.S. institutions seeking National Science Foundation (NSF) funding to partner with European colleagues on PolarCLIMATE projects should contact the relevant Program Officer in the Office of Polar Programs (OPP) at the National Science Foundation. The next Arctic Sciences call for proposals closes 18th November (see <http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=ARC>) while the next Antarctic call for proposals will close in June 2009 (see http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5519&org=ANT&from=home).

Guidelines for applications

(Pre and Full Proposals)

Eligibility

Joint Research Project (JRP) proposals from a group of individual scientists or research organisations eligible for funding by the organisations participating in the PolarCLIMATE Call will be accepted for consideration. Please note that research organisations will require a lead and named Principal Investigator (PI) to apply.

Associated Partners

Individual scientists or research organisations not applying for or not eligible to apply for funding from the PolarCLIMATE Funding Organisations can be associated with a proposal where their added scientific value is demonstrated. (See note on collaboration outside of Europe on page 4.) Their participation as Associated Partners in a project must be fully self-supporting and will not be financially supported by the participating funding organisations. Please note that in the case of research organisations, there has to be a lead and named Principal Investigator (PI) indicated in the application. Some confirmation of funding for the Associated Partner (approved or applied for) will have to be submitted with the Full Proposals.

Proposals are only eligible, if they fulfil the following criteria:

- Proposals must involve, as a minimum, three eligible Principle Investigators (PIs) from **three different countries**.

Applications should normally be for three years although applications for shorter or longer time periods may be considered depending on the rules of the participating Funding Organisations.

Taking into account the selection and approval processes, the successful projects are expected to begin their activities at the earliest in **Autumn 2009**.

Online submission of applications

Pre and Full Proposals will be submitted online. Applicants should follow the proposal structure as indicated in the application template for Pre-Proposals available on the Programme website at: <http://www.esf.org/polarclimate>.

On this Programme website, links to information on national funding eligibility and requirements as well as to a PolarCLIMATE Glossary are available.

Prior to submitting Pre-Proposals, all applicants have to contact their national funding organisation in order to verify eligibility and to ensure compliance with their relevant organisations' granting rules and regulations (see contact persons listed on pages 9-11).

At the time of online submission of the Pre-Proposals, the Project Coordinator is asked to confirm this on behalf of all the participants in the JRP.

Pre-Proposals

Pre-Proposals are invited by a deadline of Friday 24th October 2008 12.00hrs Central European time.

Pre-Proposals will be examined by the participating funding organisations for formal eligibility. Therefore, it is crucial that all applicants contact their national funding organisations prior to submitting their proposals.

In compliance with the rules and regulations of the participating national funding organisation, the requested funds under the PolarCLIMATE Call can include salaries for scientific and technical staff, equipment as well as travel costs and consumables within the project, specifying the amount requested from each Funding Organisation. National policies may also require the proposal to contain additional specific information. Applicants should be aware that the participating funding organisation can make significant adjustments to the requested funds in order to bring these in line with their rules and regulations.

Applications will be assessed according to a set of criteria in a two-stage procedure, as to ensure a thorough selection of scientifically excellent proposals. At the Pre-Proposal stage, the Review Panel will sift proposals with potential for scientific excellence, by applying the following criteria:

- Scientific Quality (including novelty, originality and feasibility)
- Relevance to the Call for Proposals
- Logistical feasibility in the Polar Regions
- Adequate use of resources and finances requested
- Added value of the collaboration
- Qualification of the applicants

Subsequently, the Programme Board will take the final decision on the invitation of Full Proposals considering strategic criteria and recommendations by the EPICOM concerning Infrastructure needs of the proposals.

A Pre-Proposal submitted must comprise:

- A short description of the JRP (max. 2000 words, including objectives, milestones, links to the research themes of the PolarCLIMATE Call, methodologies (for example experiments and fieldwork);
- Description of how (and why) the partners contributing to the JRP will work together;
- Added value of the collaboration;
- Plan for coordinating and networking project partners;
- Short CVs of Project Coordinator (PC), all PIs and Associate Partners (max. one page each);
- Publication list (only peer-reviewed) of Project Coordinator (PC), all PIs and Associated Partners of the last 5 years (including the five most relevant publications);
- Letter of Interest from the National Infrastructure Manager;
- Estimated budget (consistent with the rules of relevant national funding organisation) tabulated according to a provided template.

Associated Partners (APs) are also considered part of a JRP and will be assessed as such at both the Pre and Full Proposal stage.

It will be assumed that arrangements for the handling of IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) will be in place within projects, following the applicable national legislation and National Funding Organisation rules. Applicants are strongly urged to have such arrangements in place, covering all research groups (including any associated groups) before the start of the projects. It is expected that the results obtained by the projects supported under this PolarCLIMATE Call will be placed in the public domain.

It is also expected that all relevant clearance of other national or international committees has been obtained before funding is granted. It is the responsibility of applicants to clarify any such matters (if applicable) with their national contact points.

Full Proposals

Full Proposals will be invited by the Programme Board following discussions of the recommendations of the Review Panel. The deadline for Full Proposals will be announced later, but is expected to be around early March 2009.

Please note that only applicants who submitted a Pre-Proposal can submit a Full Proposal.

For the Full Joint Research Project (JRP) proposals, the most important selection criterion is:

- Scientific quality.
- Other criteria include:
- Relevance to the Call
 - Logistical feasibility in the Polar Regions
 - Qualifications of the applicants
 - Innovation and level of integration and collaboration
 - Appropriateness of methodologies
 - Transnational added value (scientific)
 - Relation/overlap with other projects
 - Potential applicability and suitability of budget requirements.

The Full Proposals will be assessed by at least three independent external expert referees who are selected by the ESF from a pool of scientists suggested by the participating funding organisations and the Review Panel. A list of all referee names used for the international peer review will be published once the selection process is complete.

After receiving all referee reports, there is a rebuttal process in which the reports by the referees will be made available (anonymous) to the applicants for their information and for commenting (optional). The Review Panel will rank all Full Proposals based on the assessment of the Full Proposal, the anonymous referee reports and the applicant's responses to these.

The Review Panel will create a ranked list consisting of the best Full Proposals and will subsequently make recommendations to the Programme Board for the funding of these proposals. Subsequently, the European Polar Infrastructure Committee (EPICOM) will be asked to assess the feasibility of the implementation of the ranked proposals.

The actual granting of the funds to the Individual Projects on the ranked list will depend on the decision by the Programme Board and the total amount of funds available in each country by the participating Funding Organisation. The use of funds in a project will be subject to the rules and regulations of each participating Funding Organisation as well as to the national laws of those countries.

Full proposals must include a well-argued scientific case (both for the collaboration envisaged and for the individual contributions), a list of participants, a detailed tabulated budget and other supporting information. A single, common scientific case must be made throughout the proposal to demonstrate an aim for scientific synergy and integration of multinational expertise. In addition, the amount requested from each National Funding Organisation has to be clearly and separately specified. Detailed instructions on

requirements and how to complete the application forms will be made available once Full Proposals are being invited.

The **Project Coordinator** will be the main JRP proposal contact point for ESF for the duration of the project. He/she will be responsible for representing the Joint Research Project.

All **Principal Investigators** will be responsible for dealing with the requirements attached to the contributions of their own funding organisation.

Programme Structure and Management

Programme Structure

Programme Board

The overall responsibility for the governance of the programme lies with the PolarCLIMATE Programme Board, which is a subset of the Strategic Management Board of the Polar Consortium (SMB).

The membership is formed by one representative from each participating funding organisation together with an ESF representative.

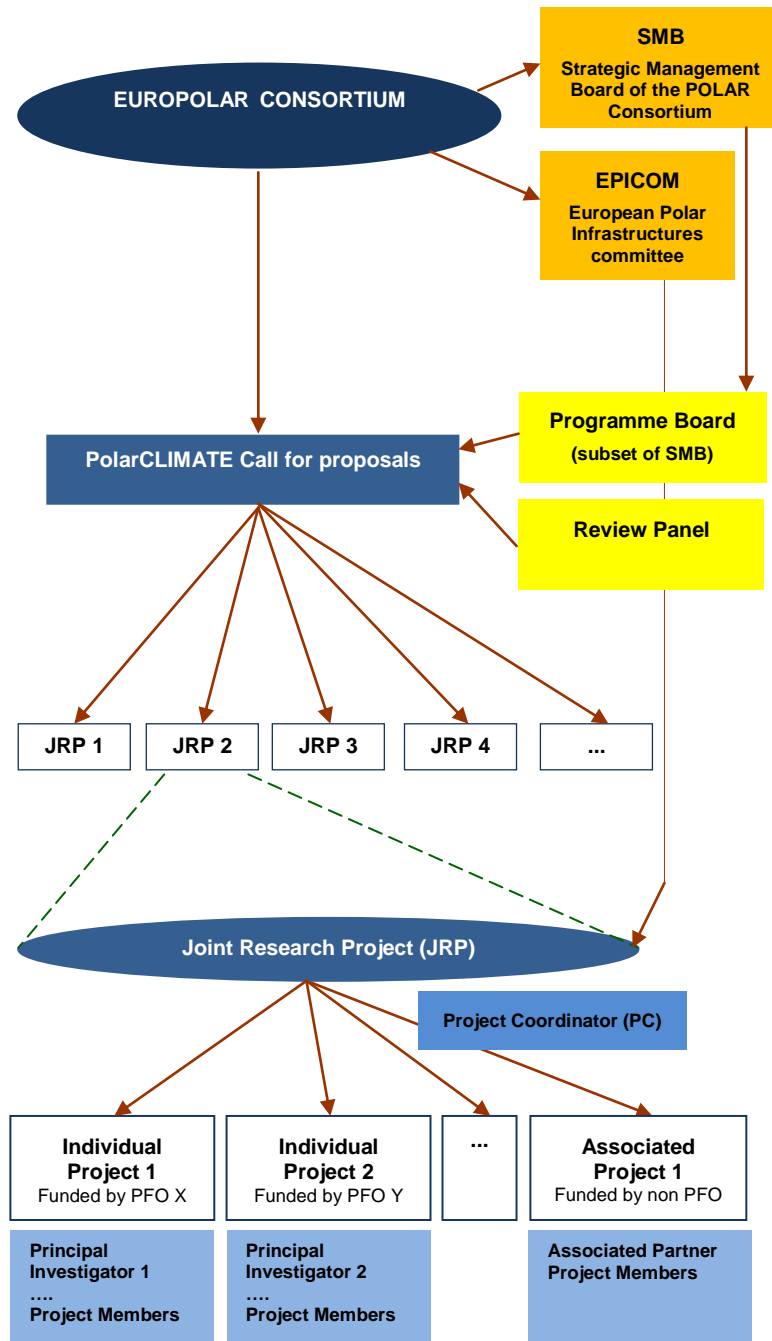
Review Panel

Proposal assessment and recommendation are the responsibility of an international, independent *Review Panel*. The members of this panel are leading scientists nominated by participating Funding Organisations (Programme Board) and appointed by the ESF Office. The membership of the Review Panel will be available on the Programme website for information.

European Polar infrastructures Committee (EPICOM)

EPICOM was established by the EUROPOLAR Consortium to provide a framework of all of the main partners and observers to plan and utilise European Polar Research infrastructures in the Arctic and Antarctic and in relation to advice on the feasibility and implementation of transnational research programmes.

PolarCLIMATE Programme Structure:



- Programme Bodies
- EUROPOLAR Bodies
- Programme participants

PFO PolarCLIMATE Funding Organisation

Contacts in the participating organisations

To be contacted for national regulations or specifications

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