

Call for proposals

of the Austrian Science and Research Liaison Offices Ljubljana and Sofia
for projects in

Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria and South-Eastern Europe

Invitation for presentation of project outlines

The Austrian Science and Research Liaison Offices Ljubljana/Slovenia and Sofia/Bulgaria (ASOs) announce a programme for **scientific networking and project cooperation between institutions in Austria, the ASO countries¹ and in South-Eastern Europe²**. Funding is provided by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture (bm:bwk) in the framework of its South-Eastern European science cooperation initiative.

Cooperation in Science and Research with Central European countries has been a main priority for Austria for a long time and still is very important. But since most of these countries have become members of the EU a new Austrian initiative aims at joint activities with the remaining candidate countries and the "not-yet"-candidate countries in Southeast Europe. In close thematic cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, the Austrian Science Offices in Sofia and Ljubljana will serve as focal points in this region.

The Centre for Social Innovation in Vienna (CSI) runs the co-ordination of the ASO network / ASO Ljubljana and the ASO Sofia (more information: <http://www.aso.zsi.at>) on behalf of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture.

The funding available for this call for proposals is **122.000 Euro**. Around **10 projects** will be supported following this call. The allowable funding per project depends on the content, duration and number of teams involved.

The funded activities shall enable scientists from Austria, Slovenia, Bulgaria and other South-Eastern European countries to work together on mutually beneficial projects. The main goal is to promote networking, getting in contact with partners and the exchange of research results and know-how. The activities should therefore build on already existing scientific results.

The contractor has to be a research institution³ either from Austria or from one of the ASO-countries Slovenia & Bulgaria.

The consortium composition must include one partner from Austria, one partner either from Slovenia or Bulgaria and at least one partner from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro.

Proposals have to involve significant regional cooperation in South-Eastern Europe. The extent and quality of regional collaboration will be an important criteria for evaluation. The programme wants to intensify the short-term cooperation with organisations in South-Eastern Europe **in the scientific field of "Governance – Civil Society"** with the aim to support the development of long-term scientific collaboration.

The project activities must be implemented after signing the contract and before May 2006⁴.

¹ Slovenia and Bulgaria.

² Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro.

³ See "Eligibility for participation". Eligible contractors are universities, non-university research institutions, tertiary education organisations.

Objectives of the Programme

The primary programme objectives of this Call for Proposals “Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria and South-Eastern Europe” are:

- promoting international scientific cooperation and networking between Austrian researchers, of the ASO countries Slovenia and Bulgaria and researchers from South-Eastern European countries in the specified areas⁵;
- strengthening the participation of researchers from South-Eastern European countries in existing research networks of relevance;
- developing future collaborative research projects (e.g. for joint participation in EU Framework Programmes);
- adapting, exploiting and disseminating scientific methods and/or research results between Austria, the ASO countries Slovenia and Bulgaria and South-Eastern Europe.

These objectives could be met by carrying out activities such as scientific training measures, joint workshops, seminars and conferences, joint publications, joint efforts to adapt and use methods and/or the conduct of scientific studies of limited scope relevant for the target countries (case studies, comparative analysis, etc.).

Topics of the Programme

Aiming to promote networking, exchange and dissemination of know-how, this call does not want to define rigid thematic demands. Project proposals made in response to this call shall primarily address the following area of interest: “**Governance – Civil Society**”

Civil Society

Projects could deal with civil society, citizens’ involvement and forms of participation such as the role of civil society for the development of democracy at national and European level; empowerment of citizens, institutions and communities; citizenship and identity; involvement of NGOs, social actors and necessary organisational capacities; involvement of young people, etc.

Governance

Projects could centre around the analysis of different forms of governance such as nation and state building; political culture; public spaces; governance of social, political and economic processes; governance and its reform; participation in Europe and intergovernmental and supranational organisations; participation at local level; governance in the gender perspective; corporate governance, etc.

Societies in Transition

Projects may be carried out on the implications of transition on different socio-cultural spheres, such as political, social and economic transformations; institution building; challenges for women; challenges for youth; prospects for growth and employment; environmental impacts; changing nature of work; science in transition; dynamics of change; social cohesion; conflict resolution; role of the media; role of foreign donors; macroeconomics of transition; impact of the Stability Pact, etc.

⁴ See „Indicative Timetable“. Reporting and a joint presentation of results is foreseen in May 2006.

⁵ See „Topics“. The following broad field of interest are defined: Civil Society, Governance, Societies in Transition, Migration, Inequality and Minorities.

Migration

Activities could deal with topics of migration-research such as migration and citizenship; migration and the labour market; transition and emigration; identities in transformation; laws and institutional capacities to deal with illegal migration; trafficking; refugee return; forced displacement, etc.

Inequality and Minorities

Projects could also address the topics of ethnic, religious and cultural diversity in the view of models of political integration and democratic participation; social inclusion; forms of marginalisation and discrimination; relations between a political centre and minorities; political, social and economic inequalities; democratic and territorial ethnicity; measures to protect minorities, to fight discrimination and to reduce inequalities on all levels; suitability and effectiveness of measures, etc.

Submission of proposals

Application form

The application form for the proposals can be downloaded from
<http://www.aso.zsi.at/ausschreibung/list>
<http://www.aso.zsi.at/ausschreibung/list?lang=en> (in English)

A form “Power of Attorney”⁶ has to be duly signed by all project partners, certifying that all partners agree with the contents of the proposal as well as that the information is true and complete and the team available to execute the tasks assigned. This letter authorises the coordinator to negotiate and conclude the contract on behalf of the consortium.

General requirements

- The proposal has to be written in English.
- It must be within the scope of the call, meet the minimum partnership requirements and respect the eligibility criteria and allowable duration.
- It has to be submitted within the stated deadline (post mark), complete and in compliance with the given structure.
- The proposal must bear the original signature of the applicant authorised to sign and include letters “Power of Attorney” of all project partners duly signed (fax copies are eligible).
- The proposal shall be submitted in a sealed envelope bearing the words “Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria and South-Eastern Europe”. Submission by e-mail or fax is not accepted.

Submission to

Austrian Science and Research Liaison Offices
c/o Zentrum für Soziale Innovation
“Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria and South-Eastern Europe”

Linke Wienzeile 246
1150 Vienna
Austria

⁶ An example-letter for such a „Power of Attorney“ is provided with the application form. Fax copies are eligible.

Indicative Timetable

Call for proposals	1. December 2004
Deadline for submission	31. March 2005
Date of post mark (it is recommended to send the proposal as registered mail and to keep the receipt)	
The principal applicant will receive an acknowledgement of receipt electronically (to the e-mail-address indicated in the proposal) within 2 weeks of the deadline for applications.	
Evaluation of proposals	April/May 2005
Awarding of project contracts	June 2005
Earliest start of projects	July 2005
Latest end of projects	31. May 2006
Interim Report	30. November 2005
Final Report	30. June 2006
Reporting and joint presentation of results	May 2006

Eligibility for participation

Eligible for application as contractor are institutions from Austria and ASO-countries Slovenia and Bulgaria - universities (departments, institutes, research teams), non-university research institutions and other tertiary education organisations. Not eligible are individual researchers, SMEs and industry research centres.

Eligible as project partners are university-based or non-university-based research institutions and other tertiary education organisations respecting the following consortium composition (overall minimum three institutions):

Minimum one partner, Eligible as contractor	Austria
Minimum one partner from one of the ASO-countries ⁷ Eligible as contractor	Slovenia, Bulgaria
Minimum one partner from one of the SEE-countries ⁸	Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro

Also in a consortium of more than 3 partners these minimum requirements have to be respected.

Criteria for evaluating proposals

<p>The general criteria to be applied in evaluating projects are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the nature of the proposed activity (clear objectives, scientific relevance and quality, feasibility, potential benefit, impact); - extent and quality of regional collaboration; - qualification and expertise of the coordinator and the project partners;

⁷ Austrian Science and Research Liaison Offices (ASOs) located in Sofia and Ljubljana, see contact details below.

⁸ South-Eastern Europe

- appropriate time schedule and workflow;
- cost and value for money, transparent budget, budget justifications.

Proposals shall involve significant regional cooperation in the so-called “West Balkan countries” (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro). Proposers are also encouraged to plan interdisciplinary activities and inter-institutional collaboration. A balanced ratio of projects from women and men applicants and the participation of female scientists and young scientists⁹ is aimed at.

Process of review

The proposal will be checked for completeness and appropriateness. Proposers will be given an acknowledgement of receipt electronically (via e-mail). An independent evaluation panel (regional and topical experts under the chair of the bm:bwk) will judge the proposals against the “Criteria for evaluating proposals” stated in this call. The decision will be made under exclusion of the course of law. Authors of rejected proposals will be given feedback as to why the project was not funded.

Further administrative processes

For successful proposals, collaboration will be laid down in a contract which specifies the mutual rights and obligations. This contract is to be signed by the persons authorised to sign for the successful proposer and for the CSI.

The contractor will be responsible for carrying out the project in a timely and accountable manner. The contractor is also responsible for administering the funding.

An initial rate of 60% of the costs will be paid after signing the contract, 30% after the submission of the interim report (and after the payment of the second rate from the bm:bwk to the Austrian Science and Research Liaison Offices Ljubljana and Sofia) and the last 10% after the approval of the final report.

Interim report: a short status report of about 2 pages summarising the project progress and a simple balance list of the expenses occurred so far. The interim report has to be submitted by the 30.11.2005.

Final report: consisting of a financial report and a technical report. These reports have to be submitted by the 30.6.2006.

Financial report: a balance list (stating income and expenditure), with a degree of differentiation which indicates payments for travel and accommodation, meals, administration expenses, personnel costs, etc. Original bills are not normally required but have to be recorded in the bookkeeping system for 10 years from the conclusion of the project. An audit has to be possible at any time.

Technical report: The technical report, as basis for the assessment of the activities, shall contain an executive summary, an overview of the activities indicating results, problems and a self-assessment of the results (approx. 4 pages). A list of participants in the main activities (including title, address, e-mail) shall also be provided. The contractor shall present the project in May 2006 in Vienna. A budget for this presentation (travel and accommodation) may be allocated in the budget planning.

Publications shall be included in the Final Report.

⁹ Scientists less than 35 years old.

Eligibility of costs

As a basic principle, we encourage project participants to use existing resources, such as employed staff, office space and equipment to the maximum extent possible.

The funding must be justified in terms of the resources needed to achieve the aims and objectives of the proposed project. A balanced budget between the partners is encouraged.

Double funding of the same project activities is not permitted. Similar activities funded by other donors have to be stated.

Allowable costs are defined as follows:

Personnel Costs

The requested amount of remuneration should be reasonable in consideration of the standards of the country and subject to compliance with relevant laws of the country in which the position is located.

Travel and Subsistence

The most economical means of transport consistent with effective pursuit of the project should be used. Upgrades to business class are to be done at one's own expense. For transportation between the airport and hotel, the most economical means available should be used. In certain cases, travel by private automobile may be authorised, in which case a reimbursement of the value of a second class train ticket will be provided.

The cost of necessary visas and insurance required for these visa will be covered. Expenses incurred from side trips or other items unnecessary to the project and telephone calls during travel will not be covered.

Travel and subsistence costs must be justified for each team. Actual travel costs should be reported after the end of the funded activity¹⁰. A budget for the joint presentation in May 2006 in Vienna (travel and accommodation) may be allocated for the contractor (1 person).

Equipment

Not eligible

Subcontracting

Not eligible

Consumables

For each team requesting costs for consumables of more than 500 Euro, all items shall be listed with approximate prices and justification.

Other costs

Costs for publication, printing, copying, communications, rental of meeting rooms, materials and supplies, banking fees etc. which cannot be classified under the previous items but are required for the implementation of the project must be identified and justified individually.

Overheads

A lump sum for overheads of max. of 10% of the personnel costs may be charged. Overheads are intended to cover indirect costs necessary to run the project.

In general, the funding will be provided in Euro. Calculations of currency exchange shall be based on the international exchange rate in effect on the date of the transaction or on the project member's own exchange receipt or similar evidence.

¹⁰ See: Financial Report

For further information on this Call for Proposals, please contact:

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