



ELIXIR Staff Exchange Programme

December 2020

ELIXIRHON/2020/24

Note to Heads of Nodes: The main change proposed for 2021 is a change in eligible costs. The proposed changes are high-lighted in yellow on page 4, no other changes are proposed.



The ELIXIR Staff Exchange Programme Call for Applications

Opening Date: 1 January 2021

Closing Date: 31 October 2021

Introduction

The call for applications in the ELIXIR Staff Exchange Programme is now open. The purpose of the ELIXIR Staff Exchange Programme is to support the exchange of staff between ELIXIR Nodes for short periods of time, around 3-6 months, or for a series of shorter trips over a similar timeframe. Staff exchange helps to strengthen the links between ELIXIR Nodes, facilitates capacity building across the infrastructure, enhances the interactions within or between Communities and supports the interoperability and sustainability of ELIXIR Nodes, services and data resources. Staff exchange should also expand and diversify the talent pool across the ELIXIR infrastructure and support staff to operate at a European level.

Applications that seek to interact with organisations beyond Europe¹, in support of implementing ELIXIR's International Strategy, may also be considered. If interested in submitting such a proposal, in the first instance, you must contact Corinne Martin at the ELIXIR Hub (corinne.martin@elixir-europe.org).

ELIXIR has allocated 100,000 Euro to this call, with the intention of supporting applications of up to 15,000 Euro. This is a rolling call, open during the time period stated above. The decision for each application will be provided within 6 weeks of submission. The call may be closed sooner than 31 October 2021, if the allocated budget has been used.

Travel grants to cover one-off ELIXIR-related travel can be applied via the Travel Grant Scheme.

Scope

Applications for staff exchange should describe the expected benefits in at least one of the following four areas:

1. Improved sustainability and interoperability of ELIXIR Services.
2. Building capacity in and collaboration between ELIXIR Nodes. We particularly, but not exclusively, welcome proposals associated with training, data management or our Strategic

¹ 'Europe' is defined here as the countries of the European Research Area (ERA). See <https://elixir-europe.org/about-us/collaborations/international-strategy>



Implementation Studies (Federated human data, Containers and workflows and Bioschemas).

3. Enhanced interactions within or between Node experts contributing to ELIXIR Communities.
4. Strategic development, strengthening of the operations and innovation capacity of ELIXIR Nodes.

Additionally, the application must describe benefits to the following three areas:

1. Support the professional development of Node personnel.
2. Build European level leadership skills.
3. Attract and develop a diverse pool of talent across ELIXIR.

Conditions and Eligibility

- Projects must involve a minimum of two ELIXIR Nodes and Hub participation may be considered. However, Hub staff cannot be funded via this call.
- All Nodes in ELIXIR Member States (including those that have not yet concluded the Collaboration Agreement) are invited to participate.
- Projects involving non-technical staff are welcomed as long as the proposed project is within the scope of the call.
- Agreement from the HoNs of the participating Nodes must be secured before submission.

Details of the application

- The [application template](#) must be used and all sections must be completed.
- The maximum length for a project is six months, i.e. the proposed outcomes must be achieved within six months from the start date.
- The length of the visit(s) is defined by the project partners and must be included in the application.
- The application may involve staff exchange in any direction that best supports the objectives of the application e.g. exchange in both directions, from just one Node to another, or between several Nodes.
- The maximum budget for a project is 15,000 Euro.
- The application must describe how it aims to achieve the scope of the call and how the project contributes to an improvement in the area.



- The specific staff and training required to deliver the desired outcomes should be included as part of the application.
- The funds may be used to cover travel costs, accommodation and *per diem*, and to cover possible costs for outreach and community building activities within the Node (e.g. a workshop). A single workshop alone is unlikely to be sufficient to meet the call objectives. Non-eligible costs are listed in the [General Guidelines for the Implementation of ELIXIR Commissioned Services](#).
- Exceptionally in 2021, the funding can also be used to cover salary costs up to a maximum of 1 PM per project. This exception is considered in light of the global pandemic and will be reconsidered for future calls. It is expected that if salary costs are included, they are allocated towards the more junior members of the proposal, while it is unlikely that salary costs will be covered for senior members of the application team.
- Exceptionally in 2021, administrative costs up to 25% may be covered if justified by the administration of the applicant's institute, however, the total amount per project cannot go over 15,000 Euro.
- The applicable rules and regulations of the home institutions/Node must be used as a basis for the cost estimation.
- The application must describe which Node leads the project and how the funds are divided between the project partners, for example between the receiving or sending organisation. It is possible that only the leader of the project receives all funds, if that has been agreed within the project.

Submission instructions

- The [application template](#) must be used.
- The completed application must be submitted to proposals@elixir-europe.org during the time period of 1 January 2021 - 31 October 2021.
- Heads of Nodes from participating Nodes must be copied into the submission email.

Evaluation

- The Hub will check each application for eligibility. In case of an ineligible submission, the respective Head of Node(s) will be notified and the project will be excluded from evaluation.
- The applications will undergo review by the relevant Hub teams and will be rated based on the following criteria:
 1. Benefit to ELIXIR Nodes, ELIXIR Communities and ELIXIR Services;



2. Opportunity for long-term collaboration(s);
 3. Alignment with the aims of the Equal Opportunities Strategy to increase equality, diversity and inclusion within ELIXIR;
 4. Alignment with ongoing ELIXIR activities.
- The final decision on projects to be funded will be made by the ELIXIR Director.
 - Decision on the application will be provided within 6 weeks of submission.
 - Resubmission of ineligible/rejected applications are welcomed if the feedback from the reviewers is addressed. Resubmission must take place before the call end date 31 October 2021.

Implementation

- Upon approval, the ELIXIR Hub will conclude a funding contract with the participating Nodes.
- After successfully completing the project, the project lead must submit an end report describing the outcomes and impact of the project, within two months of the end of the project.
- The [end report template](#) must be used.
- The end report will be approved by the ELIXIR Director, after which the Node(s) is invited to invoice the Hub on costs incurred in the project, based on the contract.

Contact person at ELIXIR Hub

Susanna Repo, Head of Operations

Email: proposals@elixir-europe.org