



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation



सत्यमेव जयते
Department of Science & Technology
Government of India

ITALY-INDIA JOINT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION CALL FOR JOINT PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR THE YEARS 2025-2027

CLOSING DATE: [31st July 2024]

For Italy: [14:00 hrs] CET; For India: [17.00 hrs]

Within the framework of the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Republic of Italy and the Republic of India, signed in New Delhi on 28th November 2003 and entered into force on 3rd November 2009, the Directorate General for Country Promotion – Office IX of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST) of the Indian Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India (hereafter referred to as “the Parties”) are opening a call for joint proposals toward the renewal of the Executive Program for Scientific and Technological Cooperation for the three-year period 2025–2027 (hereafter referred to as E.P.).

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 FUNDING SCHEMES

With regard to the present call two funding schemes are available:

- **“Exchange of Researchers** This funding scheme aims at supporting the exchange of researchers between collaborating laboratories in both countries. Only the expenses for travel and subsistence are funded by both Parties. Preference will be given to projects involving early career scientists.
- **“Joint Research Projects”**: joint research projects where research activities are co-funded by both Parties.

Each Principal Investigator (PI) must submit **only one proposal and can apply to only one of the two funding schemes (either (1) Exchange of Researchers, OR (2) Joint Research Projects)**, under penalty of exclusion from the Call for multiple submissions. Further details on each funding scheme are given in Section X of the present Call.

1.2 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Project proposals:

- must be written in English;
- the project plan and title must be identical in the applications to both Parties;

- must refer to activities to be completed within the period of validity of the Executive Programme (E.P.), i.e. 3 years (2025-2027);
- must be submitted to both Parties. Proposals submitted in only one Country will not be considered for evaluation.

Each Principal Investigator (PI):

- must submit only one proposal and apply to only one of the two funding schemes, under penalty of exclusion for multiple submissions.

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 must be declared in the CV).

Indian Party

- The PIs should be scientists/faculty members working in a regular capacity in universities, academic institutes and national research and development laboratories/institutes. The Indian Principal Investigator (PI) should not be retiring or leaving the parent institute during the proposed duration of the project.
- The Indian applicants who are in any way involved in the implementation of two or more projects that were previously supported by the DST (International Group) and that are not expected to be completed by 31st December 2024 are not eligible to be a member of the research team.

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:

Exchange of Researchers

- Information and communication technologies and Artificial Intelligence
- Biotechnology & sustainable agrifood
- Astrophysics and Space Science
- Chemical sciences
- Climate change and Geohazards
- Advanced Manufacturing

Joint Research Projects

- Infectious Diseases
- Physics of matter and new materials
- Quantum technologies
- **Renewable Energies and Green Hydrogen**
- Technologies applied to preserve cultural and heritage sites
- Sustainable Blue Economy: Ecological and environmental modeling of terrestrial and marine ecosystems

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

Depending on the scientific quality of submitted proposals, one or more of the above listed research areas may not be funded.

Research proposals involving technologies designed either for military, or for both civil and military applications (so called “dual use” technologies), will not be accepted under the present call due to their inherent risks and ethical implications.

3. SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Joint proposals must be submitted to both Parties. The proposals must be written in English and have the same duration as the E.P. (3 years: 2025-2027).

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) within 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 adherence to the above cited rules in the Methods section of the proposal.
- **Applications for the “Exchange of Researchers” funding scheme:**
 - An endorsement letter is not required when submitting the application, but will be requested in the shortlisting-phase;
 - Should the PI cease to serve in his/her position before the end of the project (e.g. termination of a temporary position), the parent institution must ensure their seamless replacement, and immediately notify the name of the new PI via certified mail to dgsp09.pec@cert.esteri.it. Without this fulfilment, no further secondments will be funded.
- **Applications for the Joint Research Projects funding scheme:**
 - Must be accompanied by an endorsement letter signed by the legal representative of the applying Institution or by his/her delegate duly authorized by formal provision. The letter, which must be written in Italian using the template available for download at the same URL of the present call, should acknowledge the submission and provide official

acceptance of all conditions listed in the call text, including the institutional co-funding listed in the provisional budget section of the proposal. Moreover, if the PI holds a temporary position, the endorsement letter must also certify that, should the contract 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. The endorsement letter must be digitally signed and uploaded using the dedicated tab of the submission form.

- Should the PI cease to serve in his/her position before the end of the project (e.g. termination of a temporary position), the parent institution must ensure his/her seamless replacement, and immediately notify the name of the new PI via certified mail to dgsp09.pec@cert.esteri.it. Without this fulfilment, no further project activity will be funded.
- Any changes in the composition of the two research teams during the period of validity of the E.P. must be notified in advance to MAECI by the Italian PI via certified e-mail to dgsp09.pec@cert.esteri.it.

Indian Party

Indian applicants seeking for funding can download the proposal formats from websites <https://onlinedst.gov.in> and should submit completed application form and all relevant information through e-PMS portal. Proposal must be submitted to DST through the e-application system provided at www.onlinedst.gov.in by 31st July 2024 (17.00 hrs IST). Additionally, Indian Applicants also requested to send two hard copies to DST (Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Scientist F, DST) by 7th August 2024 through proper channel. It should be ensured that application with identical title has been submitted by his / her Italian counterpart by due date. Proposal not submitted through ePMS portal by due date will not be considered.

4 EVALUATION PROCEDURES

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 evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Scientific relevance of the proposed research
- Methodology and documentation
- Qualification and expertise of the research teams
- Added value of the proposed researchers exchange for project activities (***Research Staff Exchange projects only***)
 - Added value of the bilateral cooperation
 - Involvement of early career scientists
 - Exploitation and dissemination of the results

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.

Researchers Exchange funding scheme

- Only the costs for travel and subsistence 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, 1 short-term stay (up to 10 days) and 1 long-term stay (up to 30 days) in each of both countries will be funded. Such secondments might also be carried on in one solution not exceeding 40 days per year.
- The sending Party will pay travel expenses whereas the hosting Party will fund subsistence costs.

The Italian Party will pay international travel expenses to scientists of the Italian team visiting India, will provide scientists of the Indian team visiting Italy with medical insurance and will cover their subsistence costs with the following contribution:

- Short stays 99 €/day, from day 1 to day 10
- Long stays 99 €/day, from day 1 to day 10; 38 €/day, from day 11 to day 30

The Indian Party will pay the international travel expenses including visa fee to the Indian scientists visiting their Italian partner under the jointly funded projects. Indian party will also provide local hospitality and medical insurance for the visiting Italian scientists (fully furnished accommodation and per diem @ Rs. 4000 per day for 1st 14 days i.e day 1 to day 14; Rs. 3000 per day for subsequent days i.e day 15 to day 30) under the jointly selected projects.

Joint Research Projects funding scheme

Expenses by project members in their own country can be eligible for funding only in that same country, i.e., DST will consider supporting expenses incurred in India by the Indian project team while the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation will consider meeting expenses by the Italian team in Italy.

Funding for projects selected and listed in the Executive Programme will be provided on a yearly basis. Each annual instalment will be paid after receipt of financial documents and upon positive evaluation of intermediate scientific reports, which will be submitted by the Indian and Italian PIs to their corresponding Country's funding Ministry.

Given the bilateral nature of joint research projects, applicants are advised to budget sufficient provision for exchange visits. The sending side will pay the international travel expenses including visa fee under the jointly funded projects. The receiving host institute will provide local hospitality for the visiting researchers (fully furnished accommodation including food/perdiem) under the jointly selected projects.

Italian Party

Funding for projects selected and listed in the E.P. will be provided on a yearly basis. In particular, according to Italian law Nr. 401/90, and in accordance with the specific call issued by Office IX of the Directorate General for Cultural and Economic Promotion and Innovation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the PIs of the projects listed in the Executive Programme will be invited to submit a request for funding at the beginning of each year of project activity.

The coordinating Institution is expected to anticipate all project expenses and will be reimbursed on a yearly basis, upon submission of the financial documents and positive evaluation of the corresponding scientific report.

The contribution granted by MAECI to "Joint Research Projects" is intended as co-funding support for the project, and therefore co-funding by the coordinating Italian Institution of approximately 50% of the total costs of the project is mandatory. Co-funding can include salaries of the involved personnel and indirect costs. Any other financial contribution from public or private Italian or Indian Institutions will be positively evaluated.

The funding contribution by MAECI to each project is approximately 30 K€/year, excluding 50% co-funding by the coordinating institution.

Indian Party:

- Participating Indian institutions are responsible for expenses regarding equipment.
- A maximum of 40 % of the Indian side's budget may be allowed for consumables.
- Participation of Research students would be encouraged. On the Indian side Fellowship to one student (JRF/SRF/RA) can be supported.

6. PUBLICATION OF THE OUTCOMES

Italian Party: The official text of the Executive Programme, including the list of selected projects, will be published on the MAECI website at the following link:

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

Only the PIs of the selected projects will be notified by e-mail of the outcomes of the selection process.

Indian Party: the list of selected projects will be uploaded on the DST website: <https://dst.gov.in>

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

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

In India

*Dr. Rajiv Kumar
Scientist `F`, International Division
Department of Science & Technology,
Ministry of Science & Technology,
Technology Bhavan, New Mehrauli Road,
New Delhi – 110 016., India*

E-mail: rajivarc@nic.in

URL: <https://dst.gov.in> / <https://onlinedst.gov.in>

In Italy

*Office IX Directorate General for Cultural and
Economic Promotion and Innovation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International
Cooperation*

E-mail: dgsp-09bandi3@esteri.it

GENERAL GUIDELINES ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

The IPR agreement shall include the following:

- (i) The Italian and Indian project partner/s (each the "Party" and collectively the "Parties") will ensure appropriate protection of Intellectual Property Rights generated from their cooperation, consistent with their respective laws, rules and regulations and multilateral agreements to which both Parties are party to.
- (ii) Each Party is and shall remain owner of its Background IP. For the purpose of these guidelines "Background IP" shall mean (a) the intellectual property rights of a Party that is owned or controlled by that Party prior to the execution of the cooperation agreement, or (b) created by a Party outside the scope of cooperation agreement or without use or reliance on the confidential information or intellectual property rights of the other Party, as evidenced by written records.
- (iii) Access rights to background IP of one Party may be granted to the other Party only to the extent necessary for the execution and during term of the joint project.
- (iv) Ownership and rights to Foreground IP will be agreed upon by the Parties mutually. For the purpose of these guidelines, "Foreground IP" shall mean any invention conceived and reduced to practice, or know-how generated, solely by employees, agents, or independent contractors of a Party as a result of performing the activities under the cooperation agreement.
- (v) The IPR agreement should expressly reflect the contribution of each Party in the creation of the Foreground IP.
- (vi) Joint IP rights will be applicable only when both Parties have an inventive contribution to Foreground IP. The Parties shall not assign any rights and obligations arising out of the joint IPR generated to inventions/activities carried out under the cooperation project to any third Party without consent of the other Party, unless such joint IPR is in a different field than the field of the other Party and as further elaborated in the relevant cooperation agreement.

Confidential Information:

The IPR agreement shall include the following:

- (i) All information and documents to be exchanged pursuant to the cooperation agreement will be kept confidential by the Parties and will be used subject to such terms as each Party may specify. The Parties will not use the information for purposes other than that specified without the prior written consent of the other Party. The Parties shall

set forth the exact terms and conditions for the protection of confidential Information under the cooperation agreement.

(ii) All Confidential Information shall remain the exclusive property of the disclosing Party. The Parties agree that this agreement and the disclosure of the Confidential Information do not grant or imply any license, interest or right to the Recipient in respect to any intellectual property right of the other Party.

(iii) Unpublished information, whether oral, in writing or otherwise, discovered or conceived by the scientists or technicians and exchanged under the provisions of this MOU will not be transmitted to a third party, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Parties.