

Terms of reference for the EUSMI Transnational Access programme

In this document the general conditions are outlined, under which users can apply for and can be granted access to EUSMI installations. These conditions are based on the regulations of Article 16 of the EUSMI Grant Agreement. The terms of reference are completed by a brief guideline for proposal writing, which authors should read carefully and consider before drafting an application.

The EUSMI Transnational Access programme is one of the four major parts of the EUSMI project.

1. Definition

The EUSMI Transnational Access consists of the following different approaches:

- Service: when a user requests a material or a measurement.
- Access: when a user visits a EUSMI installation to learn how to prepare new materials or to perform an experiment
- Remote access: when a user uses a EUSMI infrastructure remotely

The EUSMI infrastructure consists of three different platforms:

- Experimental, which offers both Service and/or Access
- Synthesis, which offers both Service and/or Access
- Supercomputing, which offers only remote access

2. Related costs

The EUSMI infrastructure is available free of charge to the users who have their proposal positively assessed. Moreover, for each successful proposal regarding Access (not Service and remote Access), the EUSMI project covers accommodation and subsistence costs for up to 2 persons which incur due to the implementation of the proposed work. Further EUSMI contributes to travel costs up to a limit of 500€ per person and proposal. The refund is managed by the hosting EUSMI partner group according to its internal rules. According to the EU financial rules, some limitations have to be considered (convenient flight fares, non-luxury hotels).

3. Conditions for formal eligibility of proposals

The EUSMI Transnational Access is regulated by the Article 16 of the Terms and Conditions section of the EUSMI Grant Agreement. The eligibility criteria can be summarized as follows:

- The main proposer and the majority of the proposer team must work in a country other than that one where the legal entity operating the infrastructure is established. This also applies for remote access to the supercomputing facility JURECA.
- Users must disseminate the results generated with EUSMI transnational access support. This rule does not apply to users working for an SME.
- If publications emerge from work performed with EUSMI transnational access support, which mainly deal with the results obtained from the EUSMI TA proposal, these should include the local contact / instrument responsible as co-author. This condition can be waived by the leader of the hosting partner group.
- For a stay longer than 3 months, the access provider must request written approval of EU.
- Access for user groups with a majority of users not working in an EU or associated country is limited to 20% of the total amount of units provided by the hosting installation.
- The maximum amount of access, which can be granted to a single super-computing proposal is limited to 1.5×10^6 core hours (by decision of the ESMI-PEC of November 12th 2012).

4. Review Panel

The EUSMI Access Review Panel is formed by a group of internationally renowned experts in the field of soft matter. At least half of them are external to EUSMI. To respect their anonymity and to avoid tortious interference with their assessment of proposals, their names are not listed in the version of these ToR, which are available to the public.

5. Deadlines

No deadlines are, for the time being, established for the applications, which will be evaluated upon arrival.

6. Application form

Until the new EUSMI web-portal will be online, all proposals will be processed through the old ESMI on-line proposal system. The application form is available registered users under:

<https://esmi-fp7.net/proposals/transnational-access/create/step/1>

Once the new portal is online, all applications, their reviewing, notifications and reporting will be handled only through the EUSMI online proposal system (OPS), which is available under: www.eusmi-h2020.eu

for registered users.

7. Review process

Each proposal undergoes the following steps:

- i) check for eligibility
- ii) the Chairperson of the EUSMI Access Review Panel assigns it to two members of the EUSMI Access Review Panel and to the local contact of the requested infrastructure
- iii) the two members of the review panel have to rank the proposal according to its scientific merit by using the following scale:

Grade 10	Outstanding
Grade 9	Excellent
Grade 8	Very good
Grade 7	Good
Grade 6	Satisfactory
Grade 5	Acceptable
Grade 4	Fairly weak
Grade 3	Weak
Grade 2	Unsatisfactory
Grade 1	Unacceptable

and they have to support their ranking with a short justification.

- iv) Similarly, the local contact has to assess the feasibility of the proposed experiments and provide a short written justification. Further, the local contact is requested to report any severe scientific conflict of interest to the chair of the review panel.
- v) the grades shall be assigned to the proposal according to the following description
 - 8-10 the proposal shall get Access
 - 5-7 the proposal shall get Access only if available

- 1-4 the proposal shall not get Access
- vi) the two reviewers are kindly asked to assess the proposal according to the following criteria:
- the proposal should address aspects of soft matter science
 - the scientific approach of the proposal should be of high-quality and relevance
 - the overall scientific goals of the proposal should be ambitious in terms of aiming at fundamental understanding or address questions of high industrial relevance
- Further, priority should be given to user groups composed of users who:
- have not previously used the installation and
 - are working in countries where no equivalent research infrastructure exist.
- vii) if the proposal received an average score from the two reviewers below 5, it will be rejected. The other proposals will be accepted in the order of their average grade according to the availability of the requested infrastructure
- viii) the two reviewers and the scientist in charge / local contact are kindly asked to advice on the access units to allocate
- ix) the final decision on the access units allocated to the proposal is a mere responsibility of the Chairman of the Review Panel
- x) if required and beneficial for the experiment the local contact/scientist in charge can decide to increase the number of access units.
- xi) if deadlines for submission will be used: successful proposals that are not run in a certain round will be automatically reconsidered for the next round. If during the next round the proposal will not be run again, there will be no automatic resubmission for the future: the proposer shall resubmit the proposal again
- xii) In case of rejection (including unfeasibility), the statements of the two reviewers and of the scientist in charge / local contact will be sent to the applicant to give them a guideline to improve the proposal.
- xiii) the outcome of the review process will be notified to the applicant likely within 4 weeks from the submission.

8. Access modalities

After the acceptance is notified, the applicant shall contact the scientist in charge of the requested installation in order to agree together on the schedule and to discuss any other details, including logistic help for the organization of the travel and stay.

9. Applicant reimbursement procedure

Before the visits takes place the local contact shall inform the applicant on the procedure for the reimbursement of the travel, accommodation and subsistence costs. The applicants costs shall not be reimbursed, before their access report was submitted (see item 11).

10. Reporting

After the Access, Service or Remote Access, the applicant and the scientist in charge / local contact must prepare a short report of the event, among others confirming the exact number of access units used. The report forms are available under the EUSMI web portal.

11. Acknowledgement

Unless the European Commission requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any dissemination of results must:

(a) display the EU emblem and

(b) include the following text:

“This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 731019 (EUSMI)”.

When displayed together with another logo, the EU emblem must have appropriate prominence.

Jülich, September 2017

Guidance Notes for EUSMI-Proposal Writing

A clearly written proposal is increasing the chances that the EUSMI review panel will select your application for access. Please read carefully the following guidelines for proposal writing:

A EUSMI Transnational Access proposal consists of three distinct parts:

- A concise abstract
- A scientific background file
- Technical information

General

Before you write your proposal, we advise you to contact the scientist in charge of the requested facility to decide on the feasibility of the proposed research, technical requirements and the necessary amount of access. Specifically, if you intend to use more than a single instrument at an installation, please discuss this with the local contact and address it in the proposal if appropriate.

The abstract:

Here you should concisely identify the scientific question you intend to address, the required instrumentation and the expected results.

Scientific background file

The scientific background file is the core of your proposal. It has to be written in English and must not be longer than two pages. Here should address the following subjects:

- **Scientific context**
Please give a clear description of the aims of the proposed research as well as the expected outcome and set these within their scientific context.
- **Results of previous work**
Where possible, give results of previous and preparatory preliminary work carried out, (for example, NMR or light scattering experiments) in support of your proposed experiment and to demonstrate sample quality.
- **Feasibility of the requested facility**
Explain why the requested facility is most feasible for the proposed research

Technical information

In step 3 of 4 of the EUSMI online proposal system you will have to provide all technical information necessary to execute the proposed research successfully.

Here you have to give a detailed description of the planned work:

For *physical experiments* this has to include sample properties, the parameters which shall be changed and the range of these variations.

For *synthesis proposals*, please provide information on the number of different target systems and desired amounts

Supercomputing proposals need to provide information about system size and parallelization capacities

Use this information to give a detailed justification for the requested amount of access.

