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Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

ITALY – USA

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION

CALL FOR JOINT RESEARCH PROPOSALS FOR THE YEARS 2023-2025

CLOSING DATE: November 2, 2022 at 12:00 hr C.E.S.T.

BACKGROUND

Within the framework of the Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Italian Republic and the Government of the United States of America, signed in Rome on April 1st, 1988, as emended and extended on October 4th, 1993 and entered into force on April 15th, 1994, the Directorate General for Country Promotion - Office IX - of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) issues a call for joint project proposals toward the renewal of the Italy-USA Joint Declaration on Scientific and Technological Cooperation for the years 2023 - 2025.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 FUNDING SCHEMES

With regard to the present call, the Joint Research Projects funding scheme is available, aimed at supporting joint research activities.

For the Italian Party, eligibility to the present call is restricted to Principal Investigators of 40 years of age or younger.

1.2 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Project proposals:

- must be written in English;
- must have the same duration of the Joint Declaration (J.D.): 3 years, 2023-2025.

Each Principal Investigator (P.I.) can submit only one proposal

Italian Party:

- the call is open to both public and private (no-profit) research institutions
- the PI must have Italian or any other EU nationality, legal residence in Italy, and must be affiliated with a public or private (no-profit) Italian research institution. If the PI holds a temporary position within the Institution, the contract should cover at least the entire first year of project activities, and should be accompanied by a letter, signed by the legal representative of the Institution or by his/her official delegate, certifying that if the contract is 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 PI must be maximum 40 years of age at the date corresponding to the call deadline.

U.S. Party:

- The US coordinator must provide clear evidence of available funds (i.e. Grant Number) for carrying out the proposed research activities.

1.3 REASONS FOR EXCLUSION

- Noncompliance with any one of the eligibility requirements listed above;
- incomplete application (including additional documents where applicable - see point 3 below);
- applications written in languages other than English

2. PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS

Proposals must be submitted within one of the following priority research areas:

- Climate Change and resilience to Natural Disasters
- Health and Life Sciences
- Innovative technologies for sustainable agriculture
- IT and Industry (limited to Artificial Intelligence, Advanced Materials, Autonomous Vehicles/Systems)
- Energy transition
- Physics and astrophysics

Proposals submitted in other research areas will not be considered for evaluation.
Not all of the above listed research areas may be funded, depending on the scientific quality of submitted proposals.

3. SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Project proposals must be jontly elaborated by the Italian and the U.S. Principal Investigators and the resulting joint proposal must be submitted by the Italian PI according to the instructions detailed below. The proposals must be written English and have the same duration of the J.D. (i.e. 3 years: 2023-2025)

Italian Party:

- Proposals must be submitted exclusively online, by filling the dedicated forms at the following link: http://web.esteri.it/pgr/. For any inquiry concerning the present call, please write to the following email address: dgsp-09bandi1@esteri.it
- For projects involving experiments with lab animals, the status of ethics approval by the competent Ethics Committee must be provided when submitting the proposal. Please note that formal authorization by the competent Ministry of Health is mandatory prior to starting any experiment. (D.Lgs 26_04/03/2014 and Directive 2010/63 EU). Proof of submission to the institutional OPBA (Organismo Preposto al Benessere degli Animali) is acceptable at the proposal submission stage. Projects involving experiments with human beings must be performed in accordance with Directive 536/2014/EC. ***The Italian Principal Investigator must self-certify his/her acceptance of the above cited rules in the Methods section of the proposal.***
- Italian applications must be accompanied by an endorsement letter, written in Italian and signed by applying Institution's legal representative or by her/his officially authorized delegate, certifying the acceptance of all conditions listed in the call text, including institutional co-funding. A template is provided within the call documents. The signed letter must be uploaded in the indicated section of the submission portal (http://web.esteri.it/pgr/).

4. EVALUATION AND FINAL SELECTION

4.1 EVALUATION PROCEDURES

After the call deadline, all submitted proposals will undergo formal eligibility check before moving on to the scientific evaluation process. The two Parties will reach a consensus on the final list of projects eligible for funding during the 14th meeting of the Italy-U.S. Joint Commission, which includes representatives from both countries. The selected projects will be included in the text of the Joint Declaration, to be posted in the websites of both Parties.

Project proposals will be rated 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 bilateral cooperation
- Involvement of early career scientists in the research team
- Gender balance
- Exploitation and dissemination of the results
- Budget adequacy

4.2 PUBLICATION OF THE OUTCOMES

Italian Party

The list of selected projects will be published on the website of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation as an Annex to the official text of the Italy-U.S. Joint Declaration (JD) 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 informed by e-mail of the positive outcome of their submission.

US Party

The list of selected projects will be published in the following website:

https://it.usembassy.gov/

5. FUNDING PROCEDURES

Italian Party:

- 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 30% of the total costs of the project is mandatory. Institutional co-funding can include salaries of the involved personnel and indirect costs. Any additional financial contribution either public or private, by Italian or US Institutions, will be positively evaluated.
- The funding contribution by MAECI is approximately 50 K€/year, excluding 30% co-funding by the coordinating institution.
- Funding for the projects selected and listed in the JD 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 Country Promotion 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 advance all project expenses and will be reimbursed on a yearly basis, upon submission of the financial documents and following positive evaluation of the corresponding scientific report.
- Funding will be granted to the projects listed in the JD within the limits of the available annual resources
- Considering the strategic importance of bilateral collaboration between Italy and the USA, the Italian Ministry of Research and the Italian Ministry of Health (MoH) will contribute to funding some of the projects within this Executive Programme. In particular, the MoH can fund projects presented by IRCCS Institutions, if selected according to the procedures indicated in the present call. To accelerate the eligibility check, the MoH will grant an eligibility clearance before submission of project proposals to Italian PIs affiliated with an IRCCS institution, who must fill in and return an eligibility check form through the "Workflow della Ricerca" (WdR System), using ER communication code, before submitting their proposal to MAECI. Moreover, IRCCS applicants selected for funding will be referred to the Italian MoH for specific funding procedures.

6. CONTACT INFORMATION

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

In Italy

Directorate General for Country Promotion
Office IX - Bilateral scientific cooperation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI)

E-mail: dgsp-09bandi1@esteri.it