

“Futuro in ricerca 2012”

Call for proposals

Scope

“Futuro in ricerca” is a funding initiative sponsored by the Ministry of Education, University and Research with the goal of supporting young researchers in carrying out scientific research projects of excellence.

The initiative has a bottom-up approach and applications may be made in any research subject matter selected by the European Research Council.

In fact, “Futuro in ricerca” initiative aims to fund projects that, in consideration of their complexity and nature, require the collaboration of many researchers and research organizations. Projects related to the objectives of the Horizon 2020 will be given priority (meaning as such those within the following areas of research): health, demographic and well-being, food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research and bio-economy, safe clean energy, smart green efficient and integrated transport, climate, resources and efficiency in raw materials, safe, innovative and inclusive societies.

Who may apply:

1) **Line 1:** any Italian or EU citizen with a PhD who, at the time of the deadline of this call for proposals, is under 33 years old and not permanently employed by any Italian public or private university or public research institution supervised by the Ministry of Education, University and Research, and who must have been awarded his first PhD at least 2 years prior to the deadline of this call for proposals. Such applicant must have published at least 5 publications with an International Standard Book Number (ISBN) or International Standard Serial Number (ISSN);

2) **Line 2:** any Italian or EU citizen with a PhD who, at the time of the deadline of this call for proposals, is under 36 years old and not permanently employed by any Italian public or private university or public research institution supervised by the Ministry of Education, University and Research, and who must have been awarded his first PhD at least 4 years prior to the deadline of this call for proposals. Such applicant must have published at least 10 publications with an International Standard Book Number (ISBN) or International Standard Serial Number (ISSN);

3) **Line 3:** any professor or researcher who holds a permanent position at an Italian public or private university or public research institution supervised by the Ministry of Education, University and Research and is under 40 years old at the time of the deadline of this call for proposals. Such applicant must have published at least 15 publications with an International Standard Book Number (ISBN) or International Standard Serial Number (ISSN).

For line 1 or 2 PhD applicant who has achieved specialization from University Postgraduate School, prior to the doctoral degree, the age limits are increased by a number of years equal to the duration of the specialization.

For line 1 or 2 PhD applicant, the age limits are increased by one year in the case in which the sum of legal duration of degree and PhD course is more than 9 years, or in the case of nation service, or in the case of maternity/paternity prior to the date of getting doctoral degree.

In any case, the maximum limit age, both for line 1 and line 2, is set up under 40 years at the time of the deadline of this call.

How the funding is structured

The Ministry of Education, University and Research funds up to a maximum amount of € 58.834.677,00, before 1% for the evaluation and monitoring, for basic research projects of at least three years.

The funding scheme is split up over different lines as it follows:

1. 12.000.000 - 16.000.000 euros for Line 1;
2. 16.000.000 - 20.000.000 euros for Line 2;
3. 24.000.000 – 28.000.000 euros for Line 3.

General features of submitted proposals

- Every research project shall provide for a number of research units between 3 and 5;
- Each P.I. must be an eligible applicant for line 1 or line 2 or line 3 (age, qualification, etc.); each other coordinator of research unit may be permanently or not permanently employed in any Italian public or private university or public research institution supervised by the Ministry of Education, University and Research, or in an interuniversity consortium;
- Mixed projects are allowed (for example P.I. can belong to Line 1 and research unit – 2 and 3 - can belong to Line 2 or Line 3 and);
- P.I. and coordinators of research unit shall certify an excellent written and spoken English ability and commit to complete project activities at the institutions mentioned in the submitted project;
- Participating in more than one proposal is not allowed;
- P.I. is responsible under a scientific standpoint and manages the submitted project;
- Should the P.I. relocate abroad before the publication of the decree of funding, the project shall be ruled out from funding. Should the P.I. relocate abroad after the publication of decree of funding, the project shall be deemed as ended in advance, with a possible recovery or balance with respect to funds already delivered.
- Who is currently involved in a project funded by Programme “Futuro in Ricerca 2010” can not participate to this call;
- Cost of each project must be between € 500.000 and € 1.200.000
- The Ministry grants and covers 70% of the full cost, and 100% of junior researchers contracts cost.

Submission Procedure:

1. Proposals must be electronically submitted February 22, 2012, 5 pm (Rome time), for coordinator of research units and by and within February 29 , 2012 5 pm (Rome time), for P.I. through the website <http://futuroinricerca.miur.it/>.

Within five days after this deadline, copy of the project must be submitted by each project coordinator, to the Rector or to the President of the Inter-University Consortium or Research Institution.

2. Projects must indicate the following information:

- a) project title, ERC field, scientific field (SSD);
- b) name of P.I. and heads of research units involved;
- c) list of participants in the research project organized by units;
- d) abstract of the research project;
- e) keywords proposed;
- f) the goals of the project
- g) state of the art;

- h) structure of the project and times;
- i) the role of each unit according to the objectives and modalities of integration and cooperation;
- l) the total project cost;
- m) outcomes of the research, their interest in the advancement of knowledge and any potential applications;
- n) elements and criteria proposed for the check of results.

Evaluation Procedure: step 1

In the first phase, each project shall be evaluated by the respective public or private university of the P.I. or public research institution of the P.I.

Each project shall be electronically evaluated (through the dedicated website) according to the following criteria:

- a. novelty and originality of proposed research and its methodology: up to 30 points;
- b. coordinator and research units scientific qualifications, with regard also to the proposed project with reference to the scientific evaluation of their activities - over the past five years - and expertise in the area of proposal: up to 25 points;
- c. potential impact of the proposed research and potential development of a significant implementation of knowledge, with particular reference to the topics covered in the program Horizon 2020: up to 25 points;
- d. significant interactions between several institutions, particularly between universities and public research institutions supervised by MIUR, but also between universities and other research organizations, public or private, national and international: up to 15 points;
- e. Coherence between economic demands and proposed research: up to 5 points.

By and within June 15, 2012, each university or research institution identifies projects that qualify for admission to the second phase. Each university or research institution may select in advance a number of projects up to 0.5% of the number of teachers and researchers within their institutional organization at the time of expiration of the call.

Each university or research institution must comply with the above ratio, for each line of intervention, with a maximum deviation of 33% more or less.

Evaluation Procedure: step 2

Three Selection Committees (CdS), one for each ERC sector, each composed of six experts in research and evaluation of research projects, shall comparatively evaluate short-listed projects, according to the above criteria.

Only projects that have obtained a score higher than 80/100 may be admitted to the third phase (interviews). For such projects, CdS, point out the proposed contribution for each of them. For each line of intervention is admitted to the interview phase, according to the descending order of scores obtained by the CdS, a number of projects to achieve an amount of resources equal to at least double of the amount established for each line.

Evaluation Procedure: step 3 - Conclusion of procedure

Panels of experts (one or more panels for each of the ERC areas), are responsible for the interview phase

Interviews, which are reserved to the coordinators of the project, are meant to verify real attitude of the P.I. to the scientific management of the project, and also to verify coordination capacity of all research units.

For each project admitted to the interview phase, panel shall give an analytical judgment, to be summarized in a final numerical evaluation ranging from 0 to 20 points.

Only projects that have obtained a score at least 20/30 shall be included in the final ranking for possible funding, which is done by adding the scores of the second and third phase.

In the event of ex-aequo priority shall be given to the projects that have received the highest score in the potential impact of the proposed research and potential development of a significant implementation of knowledge (with particular reference to the topics covered in the program Horizon 2020) by the CdS.