

EERA Bioenergy

Corona Recovery Programme

RESEARCHERS' EXCHANGE PROGRAMME PROCEDURE

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Terminologies

Activity Report	This report is prepared by the researcher granted at the end of the exchange period and it will contain the description of the activities performed, results and discussion, and a financial report.
Applicant	<p>The researcher who submits the exchange research proposal.</p> <p>Only EERA Bioenergy members can be eligible applicants and benefit from the funding.</p>
Exchange Researcher	The person who is participating in the researcher exchange experience hosted at some JP Bioenergy member organisation.
Exchange Coordinator	The person responsible for ensuring the general organisation of the whole mobility call and who acts as Secretary of the EPC.
Exchange Programme Committee	The committee of JP Bioenergy responsible for managing the administration and selection of researcher exchange proposals.
JP EERA Bioenergy	Coordination body for Researcher Exchange Programme.
Home Organisation	The institute (member of the JP Bioenergy) at which the Exchange Researcher normally operates as a staff member or PhD student.
Host Organisation	<p>The organisation (member or not of the JP Bioenergy) at which a researcher exchange experience takes place, responsible for looking after the Exchange Researcher.</p> <p>The applicant can be hosted by either EERA Bioenergy members or external organisations. However, in the latter case, a justification (added value contributed) must be provided, and the funding will be halved unless the host organisation will apply for joining EERA Bioenergy before the request evaluation by the MB.</p>

Abbreviations

EPC	Exchange Programme Committee
JP Bioenergy	EERA Bioenergy Joint Programme
EERA	European Energy Research Alliance
JPC	Joint Programme Coordinator
SPC	Sub-Programme Coordinator
MB	EERA Bioenergy Management Board

Research Exchange Procedure

Call for Proposals

The JP Bioenergy will open a call for proposals for Research Exchanges every 4 months (3 times a year). The call will be launched as long as the JP Bioenergy Management Board will agree to do it, and funds in the annual JP Bioenergy budget will be available for this purpose.

The call will be published on the JP Bioenergy website and an e-mail to advertise the announcement of the call will be sent to all the JP Bioenergy Members.

The organisations member of the JP Bioenergy must be up-to-date with the payment of their annual fees to be able to submit proposals and to host researchers.

Submission of Research Exchange Proposals

Once the call is published, applicants shall:

- Get the availability of a member (or non-member) of the JP Bioenergy to host them and agree on a Research Exchange project to be implemented during their period of stay.
- Submit their proposal to the EERA Bioenergy secretariat using a homogeneous and simple template (digital form) that will be electronically submitted. Proposals submitted in other ways or after the call deadline will be rejected.

After the call has expired, all project proposals are examined by the EERA Bioenergy Management Board to make an eligibility check according to the following criteria:

- Proposals must be led by the home organisation that must be an EERA Bioenergy member.
- Only an EERA Bioenergy member can be considered eligible and benefit from the funding.
- Proposals must be consistent with the latest version of the EERA Bioenergy SRIA.
- The host organisation must be located outside the country where the Exchange Researcher currently works.
- The applicant can be hosted by either EERA Bioenergy members or non-EERA organisations; in the latter case, a justification of the specific need to cooperate with such organisations must be provided.

- Funding will be halved in the case the host organisation will be a non-EERA Bioenergy member unless the host organisation will apply for joining EERA Bioenergy before the application assessment by the MB.
- The duration of the exchange period can vary from a minimum of 1 up to a maximum of 2 months.

The call for mobility actions will be launched based on the cash surplus available in the annual EERA Bioenergy budget.

The exchange period must start within the next three months from the written notification of approval by the EERA Secretariat to the applicant. An illustration of the schedule is provided in the following table.

Timing

MONTH	1	2	3	7	8	9	10	11
Call for proposals								
Proposals evaluation and notification								
Research exchange period				Flexible period (maximum 2 months period to be started by the latest 3 months after notification)				

Evaluation of Researcher Exchange Proposals

The evaluation of the proposal will be undertaken by the EERA Bioenergy Management Board composed of the JPC and SPC. In case a member of the MB conflicts with interest, he/she will not be participating in the evaluation procedure in that call.

The entire evaluation process is expected to be completed within two (2) months after the call deadline.

I. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals should be aligned with the latest version of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) of EERA Bioenergy, and make clear the interest of EERA Bioenergy in funding it.

Proposals will be evaluated independently, assigning a score to:

CV of the applicant, highlighting his/her scientific excellence (max. score: 5)

Quality of the research proposal (max. score: 5)

Relevance of the exchange for the JP Bioenergy (max. score: 5)

Evaluation marks from 1 to 5 are awarded for the three categories. Each member of the MB will assign a score based on a five-level scale to each of the three selection criteria above indicated:

- **5** Excellent
- **4** Very Good
- **3** Good
- **2** Fair
- **1** Poor

Proposals must reach the minimum threshold of 10 to be funded. In case of parity of two or more proposals, the MB will decide the most deserving to be funded.

Selection and notifications

The MB meets virtually or in-person within the following month from the deadline for submission, for the selection of the winning proposals.

The proposals are ranked based on the average of the scores assigned by each member of the MB. Depending on the quality of applicants and availability of funds the first applicant/applicants in the ranking list will be granted.

The result of the evaluation process is notified to the proposing researcher and host by the JPC through email communication. The notification will be accompanied by a short review report with comments and, possibly, suggestions for improvement. The amount of the grant to be assigned to the winner researchers will be communicated together with the notification.

The JP Bioenergy secretariat also notifies the selected host organisation for the planning of the exchange.

In all cases, the notification will not be later than the end of the second month after the call deadline.

Reimbursement of Travel and Subsistence of Exchange Researchers

The exchange offered in the project will cover the expenses for travel, accommodation and subsistence of researchers.

The amount of the grant to be assigned to the winning researchers is established by the Management Board of EERA Bioenergy, according to the duration of the exchange period.

Final activity report

At the end of the stay, the researcher is asked to deliver a summary report describing the main activities performed and at least two pictures. Moreover, a short article on the cooperation activities must be published in the EERA Bioenergy newsletter **eebionews**. In this report, they must furthermore declare the total number of research days and the total number of days of stay at the host organisation. Once finalised, the activity report needs to be signed

by both the exchanged researcher and the responsible host. An electronic signature is considered valid in both cases.

A questionnaire will be administered to the exchange researcher to collect the researcher's feedback and to the responsible person at the host organisation regarding the host experience, in order to improve the Research Exchange programme.

Grant

Applications are open for researcher exchanges of different duration ranging from one to two months. The grant covers travel, accommodation and subsistence costs.

Eligible Support

The funds made available under this programme can be used for:

- Travel of the researchers to and from their home organisation to the host organisation.
- Accommodation for the duration of the stay.
- Support for subsistence for the duration of the grant period, including meals, and travel from their accommodation to the host institute.

Funding Levels

The maximum funding levels for subsistence support and accommodation are:

- 300 € maximum weekly support and
- 2400 € maximum for a period of two months.

Subsistence support will not be granted in days of inactivity (except in case of disease).

The maximum funding levels for traveling from the home organisation to the host organisation and back are:

- 500 € maximum for each travel.
- 1000 € maximum for all travels (return ticket).

Travel to/from the host should be on the most economical transport available. Only economy class flights will be reimbursed.

The subsistence, accommodation, and travel support will be reimbursed by the JP Bioenergy treasurer after the presentation of the invoice and/or related receipt(s).

Numbers of grants

The number of assigned grants per year will vary depending on the quality of applications and the availability of funds.