

Call for Proposals for the Internationalisation Partnership Awards Scheme – 2015/2016

1.0 Introduction

The Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) is receiving proposals under the Internationalisation Partnership Awards Scheme for collaborative initiatives between local academic institutions and at least one centre of academic excellence based within the EU. Proposals should describe the nature of the joint activities that would be funded through the Award. Applicants are to demonstrate how the proposed activities contribute towards achieving the goals of the National R&I Strategy 2020, and to describe the potential of any activities to become self-sustaining or generate longer-term outcomes.

Proposed activities to be funded through this Award Scheme should promote internationalisation, for example, through:

- the development of joint teaching curricula for Masters or PhD students
- the organisation of short-term placements for Maltese students to conduct research abroad (particularly if this cannot be undertaken locally) or to host students from foreign centres of excellence in Malta. Priority will be given to postgraduate (Masters and PhD) students
- the arrangement of strategic and targeted visits by local academics/researchers to foreign institutions in order to participate in academic and research activities of an exploratory and developmental nature
- the organisation of seminars or workshops on a particular research area in Malta that would benefit from the participation of foreign experts
- the development of transnational research proposals for submission to third party-funders, e.g. H2020, etc.

Projects must be implemented over a 1-year period and shall not extend beyond 30th September, 2016.

2.0 Eligibility Criteria

Members of Staff from the University of Malta, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, as well as all other legally established and licensed Academic Institutions in Malta are eligible to apply. Private entities (not being licensed academic institutions) are not eligible to apply for this Awards Scheme. Applications should be completed by Heads or Directors of Departments/Centres/Institutes to reflect high-level commitment and support for the activities. Members from the Applicant's research team/group can benefit from the Award as long as their involvement in the project is described and shown to be necessary.

Eligible Applicants are to partner up with international institutions with a proven track record of excellence and experience in the research field that will form the basis for cooperation. Applicants already featuring on MCST's non-compliance list will not be eligible to apply for this Awards Scheme.

3.0 Financing

Each Applicant is invited to provide a breakdown of the anticipated costs to carry out the proposed internationalisation activities as part of the application form. The Malta Council for Science and Technology reserves the right to negotiate any amount quoted by the Applicant should this be considered as being over-estimated. The amount of the Award available to any one successful Applicant is capped at €5000.

Costs that are considered as being eligible for funding and that can, therefore, be included in the Applicant's cost breakdown include:

- flights for travel related to the project (the total amount for each flight should be estimated as costing no more than €500 and should cover economy class tickets);
- travel insurance;
- subsistence allowance (including accommodation) (expected to be in the region of 150€/night);
- catering and up to two hosted meals (strictly in relation to meetings, workshops and seminars hosted locally); and
- information and promotional material (as long as these are necessary to ensure the effectiveness and success of the collaboration).

Award holders will be responsible for arranging all relevant activities including, but not limited to, travel plans, accommodation, logistics planning, insurance coverage for any participant travel, etc.

The Applicant should provide an estimated breakdown of the anticipated costs to carry out the project's activities in the application form. Supplementary or match-funding from the partnering institution/s is allowed and encouraged, as long as it does not finance the same activities that will be funded through the Internationalisation Partnership Award. Proposals including such supplementary or match funding from partner institutions will be prioritised.

4.0 General Condition of Award

Only one application per Department/Institute/Centre may be submitted and will be evaluated by the selection panel.

5.0 Submission of Application Form

Interested Applicants are to submit their application form electronically to Mr. Dalton Hili at dalton.hili@gov.mt with “Internationalisation Partnership Awards Scheme Application” as a subject heading by not later than **noon on 31st August, 2015**. All submissions should be initialised/signed and dated on each page. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Submissions should include the following documents:

- the ‘Internationalisation Partnership Awards Scheme- 2015/2016 Application Form’ provided by MCST and associated with this Call
- letters of support from all partner institutions, confirming any matching or additional funding
- CVs of principal investigators from local and partner institution/s

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure the timely and correct delivery of the application form to the MCST. It should be noted that emails larger than 6MB shall be automatically rejected by the system.

6.0 Selection Process

Applications will be assessed by a selection panel set up by MCST against the following criteria:

- **Quality of Project/Activity** – Proposals will be judged on the quality of the collaboration activities with the foreign centre/s of academic excellence. Activities financed through the Award Scheme must either be, or be supportive of, high quality international research with the potential to yield mutually beneficial results and demonstrate innovation and inter-disciplinarity in the selected field of research. The involvement of early stage researchers (i.e. at Masters or PhD level) in the implementation of the internationalisation activities will be considered an advantage.
- **Strength of Partnership and Leadership** – Projects/activities must be led by recognised academics with a demonstrated track record of research excellence and good leadership ability. Evidence of past collaborative work between the partnering institutions, for example, joint research projects or publications, and any other relevant past achievements will be considered a testament to the strength of the partnership. New partnerships between academic/research institutions are also encouraged with the aim of fostering closer ties between local and international institutions. A convincing case should be made for the benefits of the partnership(s).
- **Outcomes and Sustainability** – Proposed activities must have significant potential outcomes, including, for example, joint publications, subsequent grant bids, etc., and

will build longer term international relationships based on a genuine commitment by the research partners to invest in a sustained successful partnership. Evidence of the potential to attract or generate external funding will be considered an asset.

Priority will be given to well-defined proposals which demonstrate a clear benefit to enhancing the international dimension of local research activity.

7.0 Award Duration

Upon successful completion of the evaluation stage, it may be necessary for MCST to negotiate the amount of the Award requested in the application form. MCST retains the right to provide Awards of a different volume should the amount in the ‘breakdown of costs’ appear to be over-estimated.

The deadline for completion of the projects/activities financed through the Award is **30th September, 2016**, although projects may be completed at any point within this 1-year time-frame. Upon completion of the activities/projects, the Applicant is to submit a final report within 30 days according to a standard template developed by MCST. The final report would need to be accompanied by all relevant documentation, including receipts, to demonstrate how the Award was spent. MCST retains the right to audit the financial documentation and to request further proof of expenditure of the Award. Should there be a significant discrepancy between the volume of the Award disbursed by MCST and the amount spent by the Applicant (as substantiated through receipts or other financial documentation) MCST retains the right to request a reimbursement of the unspent funds.

Any requests for an extension or change of use of the Award should be addressed in writing to Mr. Dalton Hili at MCST prior to being effected. Applicants are reminded of the importance of retaining all documents proving expenditure of the awarded funds for submission with the final report.

8.0 Correspondence

All successful Applicants will be required to inform Mr. Dalton Hili within the R&I Programmes Unit at MCST regularly of any direct or indirect outputs resulting from this Award during and beyond the lifetime of the Award.

Successful Applicants are also required to submit a detailed report on the activities undertaken to Mr. Dalton Hili within thirty days from the date of completion of the activities being funded by the Award. For those activities extending for the full duration of this Scheme (i.e. until 30th September, 2016), final reports should be submitted to MCST by no later than 31st October, 2016. MCST reserves the right to take any necessary action should such reporting not be submitted.

Reference to this Award should be made on any publication, marketing, or PR material that is generated in relation to the project or activity undertaken.

9.0 Further Information

For further information on the Internationalisation Partnership Award Scheme kindly contact Mr. Dalton Hili as per details below:

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