

STCU & ASM Targeted Research & Development Initiatives 2017 Competition Announcement: **Call for Proposals**

Monday, 10 April 2017

In accordance with the “Statement of Intent to Cooperate between the Science and Technology Center in Ukraine (STCU) and the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (ASM)” from March 20, 2009, with the Joint Commitment to Support Progress in Science & Technology Priorities in the Republic of Moldova from June 04, 2013, the STCU and the ASM jointly issue this **2017 call for proposals** within the framework of the **Targeted Research & Development Initiatives (TRDI)** Program in the following priority areas:

1. Materials, technologies, innovative products
2. Efficiency, energy, use of renewable energy
3. Health and biomedicine
4. Biotechnology
5. National heritage and society development

The aim is to support the sustainable development of scientific and technical potential of the Republic of Moldova, the extension of international cooperation, to deepen the role of science and innovation in society and promote them as national priorities. A key criterion for eligibility is to prove the participation in the EU Framework Program for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020.

Guidelines in English for preparing and submitting the proposals are provided below. The Romanian-language version of these guidelines may be accessed on the website of the ASM: <http://www.asm.md/>

Proposal Preparation, Selection Process and Project Implementation Guidelines

I. Principle Considerations

The STCU and the ASM issue this joint call for proposals that officially kicks-off the competition for funding under the Targeted Research & Development Initiatives Program in 2017. Of particular importance are the following requirements:

- In accordance with the STCU policy, no less than 50% of project participants should be scientists with prior experience in the development of weapons of mass destruction.
- In conformity with the new policy approved at the 42nd STCU Governing Board, the definition of Category 1 participants is expanded, with the focus not only on former weapons experts, but also specialists who have "experience in the field of dual-use technology" which, in principle, may include a younger generation of scientists. All submitted proposals must have at least one Category 1 Specialist (keeping in mind that the participants in this category of projects should be engaged in the project for at least 10% of the project's duration). However, proposals with larger amounts of Category 1 Specialists will be scored higher by the US and EU, as their funding is tied to redirection of Category 1 Specialists.

- **Project proposals should be limited to total budgets not to exceed US \$ 50,000. Half of that, which is approximately US \$ 25,000, should only be allocated by STCU for Grants (labour costs) and the Technology Transfer training, which is a part of the TI Program.**
- A strict requirement for all project submissions is the involvement of at least one scientific collaborator from any of the western funding parties: the United States or the European Union. (It is preferable to seek collaborators from a minimum of two western funding parties.) Any project proposal submitted without planned participation of a western collaborator will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. Expressions of Interest to Collaborate from potential western collaborators must be submitted to the Moldovan project managers who should submit it to ASM by the deadline date **31.05.2017** (see the schedule below) as a part of the Full Form “package”. It is very important for the potential western collaborators to be directed to and follow the instructions provided on the STCU website (at <http://www.stcu.int/west/recommendation/>) for submitting letters of collaboration.
- The STCU and the ASM will encourage the greatest possible participation of regional organizations and scientists (i.e., those located outside the Chisinau) in the proposed projects. Interdisciplinary projects as well as those which bring together several scientific institutes will have an advantage in the competition.
- Article 1.19 of the STCU Full Form proposal (Sustainability Guidelines) is a key element in improving the competitiveness of Moldovan scientists and institutions for the selection process for project financing as well as during the implementation of the project or, later, in seeking additional financing for further development of the proposed project.
- Those organizations planning to take part in the competition must provide Mrs. Alfreda Rosca (alfreda.rosca@stcu.int) by the **deadline 25 April 2017**, the following information:
 - Name of participating organization(s)
 - Project Title
 - Project Manager
 - Contact information (email, phone)
- NOTE 1: Upon receiving this information, the STCU will issue Project Number and the necessary project software and instructions for completing the "Full Form" applications. The necessary information can be found at the STCU website <http://www.stcu.int/cis/grant/>

II. Additional Guidelines

Project team has to prepare “Full Forms” proposals in English and a summary form in Romanian language. The deadline of the proposals submitting to the ASM to Mrs. Alfreda Rosca (alfreda.rosca@stcu.int) is **26 May 2017**. The applications together with the Host Government Concurrence (HGC) must be submitted to the STCU till Monday, **12 June 2017**. The Full Form package of proposals documents will then be transferred to the Western scientific experts and the experts identified by the ASM for a review of the proposals’ scientific and technical merits.

- NOTE 2: Any proposal’ part lacking will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for funding. No exceptions will be made. In order for a submission to be deemed “complete” by the STCU so that it may be sent to the West for technical review, the three components listed below *must* be part of the proposal “package”.
 - completed Full Form proposal;
 - *at least* one expression of interest to collaborate submitted by a western collaborator, although more such expressions are encouraged;
 - Host Government Concurrence (HGC) — which is the standard requirement for all STCU project proposals.

- NOTE 3: The HGC is a formal authorization coordinated by the ASM. The HGC permits the transfer of Full Form applications to the STCU for review by western technical and scientific experts, and which precludes applications from containing the following types of information:
 - (i) state secrets;
 - (ii) proprietary information defined in accordance with the relevant international norms and practices for nonproliferation of weapons technologies, and in particular radioactive materials, nuclear technologies, delivery systems (e.g., ballistic rockets), and other types of weapons of mass destruction;
 - (iii) personal - and business - confidential (proprietary) information that does not have the permission of the holders of the intellectual property in question.

- NOTE 4: The projects proposed for funding under the Targeted Initiatives Program must be implemented within a period of between 12 to 24 months.

Scientific Review of Full Form Proposals

Project proposals will be evaluated on the basis of (but not limited to) the following key criteria:

- a. Scientific justification (uniqueness and level of science presented, understandability and readability, references and citations, etc.).
- b. Scientific methodology (methodological justification: uniqueness and reasonableness).
- c. Scientific promise (ability to achieve stated goals, reasonableness of developing new or improving existing technologies from the stated results).
- d. Applicability and feasibility (ability to achieve stated results based on material and financing requests, as well as upon existing institute technical capacities and resources).
- e. Sustainability (Feasibility of further scientific development or commercial potential).
- f. External support and interest (letters of support and expressions of interest to collaborate).

Following the review process the STCU in coordination with the ASM will provide a summary of the following information on the proposed projects to each of the funding parties in order to support a joint financing decision:

- a. An analysis of the scientific merit and significance of the project
- b. An opinion as to whether the project can meet its stated goals within the proposed time frame
- c. A practical appraisal of the qualifications and experience of the scientists proposed for implementing the project and executing its tasks
- d. Recommendations for improving the proposals if they merit further development;

A definite confirmation of the list of projects chosen for grant financing for the next year will be determined by a Joint Working Group (comprising representatives from the STCU Western financing parties and the ASM) that will meet immediately prior to the 2017 STCU Governing Board Meeting. The decision will be officially announced at this meeting.

III. Post-Selection Considerations

Implementation of projects under the TRDI program in the Republic of Moldova will be administered in accordance with the standard STCU and ASM practices in general compliance with the procedures that governed former STCU Regular Projects.

The Moldovan project manager will be fully empowered and responsible for project implementation under the TRDI program, as is the standard practice of the STCU and ASM. The project manager will provide quarterly financial and technical progress reports for the given project agreement for which they are responsible to: (i) their respective STCU Senior Specialist per the standard STCU procedures and (ii) Center for International Projects of the ASM.

As is standard practice with all the STCU projects, each respective Moldovan TRDI Project Manager will permit the STCU and ASM (the funding parties) to perform technical and financial monitoring of project agreement implementation upon provision of two weeks advance written notice from each party. The parties will share the results of any monitoring within sixty (60) days of monitoring performance.

For any given year's TRDI program, the STCU and the ASM will coordinate closely during the preceding year to propose an overall TRDI budget commitment for the upcoming year. To support the success of very year's TRDI program, each Party will provide financing on a timely basis in order to meet all obligations (grants, equipment, materials, etc.). Any delay in funding the program could cause disruption in its implementation. Each Party agrees to inform the other of any material delays in committed funding for which they are responsible. If a delay in funding occurs, it is agreed that the other Party may suspend its obligations under the Statement of Intent to cooperate until such time that any financing issues are resolved. It is agreed that the time period for any delay which would trigger a suspension of the Agreement is defined as the first full working day following the first full working month from the beginning of any given year.

During the Fall of any given year, the STCU and the ASM will strive to organize a workshop or seminar to identify priorities for scientific development in the Republic of Moldova, to help focus attention onto those areas that are of particular interest to Moldova, and to provide Grant Writing and Sustainability trainings to Moldovan scientists. It is hoped these meetings will provide the opportunity and encourage Moldovan scientists to begin collaboration efforts with the goal of submitting Targeted Initiative proposals for the following year. The STCU and the ASM will work to the maximum extent possible to incorporate "lessons learned" with the goal of constantly improving the TRDI program.

IV. Proposed Schedule for Proposal Preparation and Review Process

Monday, 10 April 2017	Call for Proposals 2017 Targeted Initiatives Program
Tuesday, 25 April 2017	Deadline for the request for project registration
Friday, 05 May 2017	Deadline for the STCU (Mrs. Alfreda Rosca) to forward to the project managers by e-mail the Full Form proposal templates (with unique project proposal numbers)
Friday, 26 May 2017	Deadline for project managers to submit Full Form proposals and Western Expressions of Interest to Collaborate to the ASM
Monday, 12 June 2017	Deadline for submitting Full Form packages to the STCU following internal document status confirmation by the ASM and attaching other support documentation (e.g., HGCs)
Monday 31 July 2017	Deadline for submitting completed Full Form proposals to Western reviewers by the STCU following internal document status confirmation
Monday, 6 November 2017	Deadline for submission of the results of Western scientific reviews of Full Form proposals to the STCU
Nov 2017, Prior to Dec 2017 GBM	Deadline for Joint Working Group TIP funding decision
December 2017 GBM	STCU GBM and decision announcement