“ACTION PLAN” FOSTERING KNOWLEDGE BY FUNDING EMERGING TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH PROJECTS WITH THE POTENTIAL TO YIELD MAJOR INNOVATIVE APPLICATIONS

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH ON ADVANCED MATERIALS

BACKGROUND

The profound reflection that has recently animated the scientific community on research topics now faces two kinds of problems: the endemic lack of funds allocated to research and the increasingly widespread need for a better definition of the roles and concrete commitments to be undertaken by the players in this field in their capacities as financers or scientific production centres.

To underline the recent scientific and technological progress made, people talk increasingly often of knowledge society; nevertheless, if this knowledge is not produced today, in the future it will have to be acquired from the outside and the socioecono-mic systems that have not laid the bases for their growth will find themselves having to chase not those who have "spent" but those who have "invested" in research. The difference between the two approaches is substantial: some economic systems will be able to act on the basis of development plans and can count on a significant number of strategic options, while others will be forced to react by chasing after their competitors. The differences created by this competition will determine tomorrow’s social and work conditions, the economic structures and the attractiveness of each individual country.

In other words, research and technological development are not to be considered as problems to be solved, but as opportunities to be taken: in fact, research work, whether conducted at universities, public and private research centres or at companies, constitutes the strength and drive of tomorrow’s companies.

GOALS

With a view to reaching or maintaining levels of excellence in terms of competitiveness of the Lombardy system, the Foundation will concentrate its efforts on a limited number of multiannual applied research projects in the field of material science. This domain is strategic and crucial to develop Lombardy’s economical system considering the possibility of applications cross-industrial sectors and the opportunity to develop multidisciplinary research approaches. More specifically the proposals will be selected in the following areas of technology:

- Biological and biomimetic materials
- Polymers and polymer science
- Electronic, optical and magnetic materials and devices
- Materials for medicine and health-care
- Materials and devices for environmental and energy applications
- Structural and functional materials
- Nanotechnology, nanodevices and nanomaterials
- Solid state physics and computational materials science.

The projects must be characterized by an exclusively pre-competitive approach that permits the creation of the premises on a system level for directing the research conducted at scientific production centres towards qualifying technologies, key factors for competitiveness in the medium term, which will play a decisive role in the economic and general development of our country. For this reason, Cariplo Foundation will fund innovative and dynamic research projects made in universities or eligible research centres.

GUIDELINES

Eligible organizations

In agreement with the “Guidelines for the submission of proposals”, this call for proposals is addressed to organizations engaged in scientific research in the subject area set out in the call for proposals. These organizations will have human resources, equipments and infrastructures directly at their disposal.

To be eligible for funding the lead organization shall have project operational facilities within Fondazione Cariplo’s reference area (provinces of Lombardy and the Piedmont provinces of Novara and Verbano-Cusio-Ossola). This requirement does not apply to partners.

The following projects shall be judged ineligible:

- projects submitted by the PIs of a project already funded by Fondazione Cariplo, unless the progress of previously funded projects is properly documented;
- projects submitted by the PIs of a project funded by Fondazione Cariplo in the previous edition of this call for proposals.

Eligible projects

Cariplo Foundation, with the advisory of an International Scientific Committee which ensures transparency and the application of objective scientific criteria in the assessment pro-
CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2012

Assessment criteria

In addition to the overall scientific quality of the research project, the proposals will be judged on the following criteria:

• the state of the art knowledge;
• the presence of preliminary data;
• the clarity with which the objectives are formulated, the effectiveness and detail of the strategies adopted;
• the originality and innovativeness of the research project proposed;
• the adoption of multidisciplinary approaches;
• the forecast results on scientific and technical domain;
• the impact on economical system;
• the authoritativeness of the scientific leadership and competence of the research team;
• the ability to attract young talent in the team and/or as project leaders and thus invest in the human capital of scientific research;
• the experience gained in the specific field of research and the consistency of the project with the organization’s development strategies;
• the structuring of the project partnerships and the collaboration between research centres on national or international level;
• the adequacy of the project’s duration and budget;
• the added value of the present application, in the case of the continuation of previously funded project.

Ineligible projects

Projects with the following characteristics will be considered ineligible for assessment:

• Financing requests for the set up of new research centres or for the fit out of laboratories
• Basic research projects without impact on the economic-industrial environment
• Technological transfer projects
• Projects involving profit organizations.

Applicants are invited to read carefully the following papers at the website www.fondazionecariplo.it:

• Guidelines;
• Grant management and reporting Guide;

Applicants agree that the grant will be subjected to the irrevocable acceptance of the policy.

Moreover, applicants are invited to:

• fill out entirely the on line forms, as follows:
  – Organization form [main applicant];
  – Project form [Italian language];
  – Complementary data;
  – Budget form.
• upload the required documents, as stated in the Guidelines:
  – Project\(^1\);
  – Budget\(^1\);
  – Official submission letter;
  – Partnership agreement and partner’s official submission letter, where applicable;
  – Organization related documents.

**BUDGET**

The Budget at disposal is 3 million euros.

---

\(^1\) A dedicated template has been provided. It is downloadable at the Complementary data Section.