

**RESEARCH POTENTIAL
REGPOT-2011-1
Frequently Asked Questions**

I. General aspects

I.1 What's the definition of the convergence regions?

Convergence regions are defined as those regions having per capita gross domestic product (GDP) less than 75% of the average GDP of the EU-25 (Commission Decision C(2006)3475 of 4th August 2006 and Commission Decision C(2007) 1283 of 26 March 2007 amending Decision 2006/595/EC as concerns Bulgaria and Romania). In the above mentioned Commission Decisions you can find the list of regions eligible for funding from the Structural Funds under the Convergence objective for the period 2007-2013. 'Phasing out' regions are considered as convergence regions but not those classified as 'Phasing in'.

I.2 Which are the outermost regions?

Outermost regions are defined according to the article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Réunion, Saint-Barthélemy and Saint-Martin (France), the Canaries (Spain), and the Azores and Madeira (Portugal).

I.3 What does it mean that the topic can be "any research topic covered by the EC FP7"?

Applications may be made in any thematic S&T field of competence of the applicant. Any research topic covered by the EC 7th Framework Programme is eligible. However, applications in S&T fields of competence of the applicant within the scope of Annex I of the 7th FP EURATOM, namely those applications directed towards nuclear energy applications, are not in scope of this call.

I.4 Where can I find the "Topic code(s) most relevant to your proposal" (stated in GfA)?

There are no multiple topics in this call. In the EPSS system, in the corresponding drop-down menu, you have only one topic listed – you have to select it in order to finalize your submission.

However, in the part B of the proposal you should mention the topic relevant to your proposal (not necessarily topic codes) from EC FP7 programme. This may be any topic under Cooperation, Capacities, Ideas or People Specific Programmes but not from EURATOM FP7.

I.5 Are projects on fellowships eligible under Research Potential?

Research fellowships can not be supported under "Research Potential" activity.

I.6 Are activities on education issues eligible under Research Potential?

No, Research Potential addresses only *research related capacity building*.

I.7 In the "Research Potential" Guide for Applicants, in "Describe how the totality of the necessary resources will be mobilised, including any resources that will complement the EC contribution", do the resources already available to the research entity include already existing equipment and manpower?

In this context you should present any personnel resources (man-months) used for realisation of the project's tasks and financed by the applicant. Any other material resources made available by the applicant and used for the purpose of the project can be added here (e.g. conference rooms, etc).

I.8 What is the meaning of "appropriateness of measures for spreading excellence; exploiting results, and disseminating knowledge, through engagement with stakeholders, and the public at large"? What kind of activities does it involve?

The visibility of the excellence and improved research potential of the applicant should be targeted under "Research Potential" activity. This self tailored measure might apply to creation of a project specific web page, organisation of awareness events dedicated to targeted or large public, specific publications and any other appropriate means towards this end.

I.9 What kind of activities I should suggest to potential applicants which will enable them to achieve the expected impact: "Improved research capacity for increased contribution to regional economic and social development" - what is the Commission's point of view / expectations?

The expectations are to receive information on the way the improved research potential of the applicants will contribute to the socioeconomic sustainable development locally/regionally/nationally and/or at the European level (the Lisbon policy agenda). This is very much dependent upon the S&T themes of research of each applicant as well as of the needs of each region/country. For example, if the applicant is specialised in ICT, new knowledge production for the benefit of stakeholders (regional or national, etc) might be envisaged. In all cases, a strong research entity in a given region or country increases per se the visibility of the latter and might be at the origin of direct or indirect benefits. This has to be developed in the proposal and will be evaluated under the 'Impact' evaluation criterion.

As a general rule, if the applicant proposes to set up an Advisory Group to tackle the options for further development of its research agenda/programme, representatives from the

local/regional authorities (selected according to the applicants needs and appreciation), regional stakeholders (e.g. SMEs, industry, etc) and from the Ministry or services in charge of the S&T policy might participate there. This is to ensure the most sustainable increase of the research potential of the applicant notably after the end of the contract.

I.10 How important are our links with the local industry? A related question is any mention of our spin-off companies. Is this a plus for the proposal?

If these links are beneficial for the proposal (for the Action Plan and/or for the activities driven from it) then it may be an advantage.

I.11 Is a pre-proposal check on eligibility foreseen for FP7-REGPOT-2011-1 call?

No pre-proposal eligibility check is offered.

I.12 How do I submit my application?

Proposals for Research Potential are submitted only as an electronic proposal via the web-based Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS), which is reached via the CORDIS call page: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm>

In exceptional cases, when a proposal coordinator has absolutely no means of accessing the EPSS, and when it is impossible to arrange for another member of the consortium to do so, an applicant may request permission from the Commission to submit on paper.

Further information on this exceptional facility can be found at: ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/calls/fp7-evrules_en_pdf.zip.

I.13 What should proposals for "Research Potential" consist of?

A proposal has two parts:

Part A will contain the administrative information about the proposal and the participants. The information requested includes a brief description of the work, contact details and characteristics of the participants, and information related to the funding requested. The information in part A is entered through a set of online forms.

Part B is a "template", or list of headings, rather than an administrative form. You should follow this structure when presenting the scientific and technical content of your proposal. The template is designed to highlight those aspects that will be assessed against the **evaluation criteria**. It covers, among other things, the nature of the proposed work, the participants and their roles in the proposed project, and the impacts that might be expected to arise from the proposed work including the contribution on the regional capacity building. Detailed information and justification of the budget categories should also be included in this part of the proposal. In this respect tables summarising budget distribution per activity, cost category and work package is recommended to be provided.

Any additional material sent with the proposal (company brochures, supporting documents and reports, videos etc.) will be disregarded. In proposals submitted electronically, other embedded material (audio, video multimedia etc.), attached files or hyperlinks to other

documents will be disregarded. Only black and white copies are used for evaluation and you are strongly recommended, therefore, not to use colour in your document.

The Guide for Applicants provides all necessary information on these issues (<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm>).

I.14 Do we need supporting documents for a "Research Potential" proposal submission?

Other than the proposal itself (parts A and B), no further supporting documentation is required.

I.15 Are photos (that represent a facility which is described in the application and can sometimes allow better understanding) allowed in the Part B, section Impact?

It is allowed to include photos, as long as you stay within the maximum page limit for the section.

Please don't use large coloured photos since the proposal "will be printed in Black and White at 300dpi for evaluation." (EPSS Guide, pg 21) <https://www.epss-fp7.org/epss/EPSS-Userguide.pdf>.

I.16 Where can I find information and assistance on the calls under the "Research Potential"?

The Commission services publish all relevant information on the "Research Potential" calls on CORDIS web site <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm>.

More information under "Research Potential" could be also found on: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/capacities/convergence-regions_en.html

The "**Participant Portal**" will become the single entry point of interaction with the DG RTD, European Commission. It will host a full range of services that facilitate the monitoring and the management of the proposals and projects throughout their lifecycle:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/appmanager/participants/portal>

Assistance on the content

FP7 Enquiry Desk: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=enquiries>.

Assistance on **EPSS** (online submission)

For technical questions on the use of the electronic proposal submission system (EPSS):

[EPSS Helpdesk](#)

Phone: +32 2 233 37 60

EPSS user guide is available at

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7SubmitProposalPage>.

Assistance in identifying partners

The Commission's CORDIS server offers a number of services and information sources which may be useful in partner search for participation in Research Potential calls

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/partners_en.html .

General Assistance

Applicants can find assistance in the Member States and in the Associated Countries through the National Contact Points (NCPs). Their contact details, including their e-mail addresses can be found at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ncp_en.html.

II. Applicants

II.1 What is meant exactly by referring to "highest quality and/or most promising research entities"?

The applicants should provide evidence of the *'excellence'* of their research entity in terms of e.g. main research activities, organisation of the entity (who is doing what and short description of available research facilities in terms of staff and durable equipment), short CVs of the most important researchers of their entity, list of more recent and significant publications, number of PhD's and/or post-PhD students/fellows followed by the entity, collaborations with private or public RTD entities in the country or elsewhere, possible participation in research programmes or activities funded by the EC, other national or international organisations or the private sector, etc.

II.2 May a research entity established in a Country Associated to the EU 7th Framework Programme apply in REGPOT-2011-1 call?

In Associated Countries, regions equivalent to the EU's convergence regions may have been identified in the international instruments associating them to the 7th Framework Programme. A public or a private research entity (as a single proposer) which is established as a legal entity in such a region can apply to the call. All regions of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey are eligible for participation as well as Galilee region of Israel.

II.3 Is a research entity established in a Third Country eligible in REGPOT-2011-1 call?

Research entities established in Third Countries which are not associated to the EU 7th Framework Programme are not eligible for participation under REGPOT 2011-1 call.

II.4 What means the requirement for a 'legal entity established in a convergence region'? In this case the proposed participant is located in Cornwall, a convergence region; but the department is part of the University of Exeter, whose legal seat is in Devon, not a convergence region. Does that disqualify them? Put another way, does 'established' mean 'operating in' or does it mean 'the address of whose head office is in' a convergence region?

The term 'established' means 'operating in' provided the applicant research Department/Faculty/etc. is indeed located in a convergence (or outermost) region. The 'host'

legal entity might be located in another (non convergence) region. These research entities must not be a subsidiary or branch of another legal entity established in a different country.

III. Partnering organisations

III.1 Should the 3 or more partnering institutions with which exchanges will take place be identified at the stage of the proposal submission?

Three or more *knowledgeable* and *experienced* partnering organisations in other different EU Member States or Associated Countries should be associated in the proposal's Action Plan. Therefore, it is necessary that they are identified in the proposal. A detailed description of the S&T competencies and excellence of these institutions should also be included in the proposal. Moreover, the type of activities proposed with each partnering organisation as well as their objective, duration, expected impact and timing should also be described in the proposal.

III.2 Can the partnering organisations, which will collaborate with the centre presenting the proposal, be from outside the EU and Associated Countries? For example from Canada?

The 3 experienced partnering organisations should be established in the European Union or in the countries associated to the 7th Framework Programme. More partnering institutions can be included in the proposal from the applicant's country or from the EU and Associated Countries, but not from other countries.

III.3 Do the collaborating centres of excellence in the FP7-REGPOT-2011-1 scheme fill in the form A2?

No. This is a mono-applicant call.

III.4 The work programme states that a proposal should be submitted by a single proposer and no consortium agreement is necessary, but also includes " Exchange of know-how and experience through trans-national two-way secondments of research staff between the applicant and three or more knowledgeable and experienced 'partnering organisations' established in at least 3 other different EU Member States or Associated Countries, other than that of the applicant". Should these research entities and experienced partnering organisations be stated in the proposal (names, and role in the project)? If yes, should a part of the total budget be allocated to these partners?

Should the proposer and the other organisations form a consortium that must be stated in the proposal?

Three or more knowledgeable and experienced partnering organisations in other Member States or Associated Countries should be associated in the proposal's Action Plan. Therefore, it is necessary that they are identified in the proposal. A detailed description of the

S&T competencies and excellence of these institutions should also be included in the proposal. Moreover, the type of activities proposed with each partnering organisation as well as their objective, duration, expected impact and timing should also be described in the proposal.

Neither salaries nor complements of salaries for seconded staff will be covered by the Commission under this activity. However, as a general rule, costs related to travel, accommodation and any other expenses related to the seconded staff stay abroad, excluding funding of joint research, could be eligible costs. It should be also stressed that every reimbursement as regards staff and living costs will be according to the practice in each country and individual organisation. Appropriate justification for these activities should be provided under the relevant Work Package of part B of the proposal.

As it is mentioned in the call fiche, "the projects must be proposed by a single public or private research entity of significant size". As a result no consortium will be stated in the proposal and the other organisations will be mentioned only as partnering organisations.

III.5 We are preparing a FP7-REGPOT-2011-1 proposal which will include development of partnership with a local SME. Can we allocate some funds to SME? If yes, please, tell us for what tasks (person months, material, travel,...)? Should we explain how intellectual property right with SME will be addressed?

Development of partnership with an SME in a proposal under the FP7-REGPOT-2011-1 call can be foreseen provided that the SME fulfil the conditions related to the partnering organisations as stipulated in the Work Programme and that this partnership would really contribute to the increase of the research capacity of the applicant. As for all other partnering organisations part of the budget can be foreseen for secondments, participation to common meetings for specific purposes, participation in workshops and conferences organized by the applicant or in other dissemination activities.

This scheme does not fund research as such so there are not direct IPR issues. However, a brief description of your institution's IPR policy is welcome. Measures consisting of strengthening or further developing this policy are eligible under this call.

III.6 Do the partnering organisations have to endorse our proposal by means of a support letter? If so, is there any template for this letter? With regard to the signature of the letter, is it essential the signature of the legal representative or it would be enough with the signature of the responsible directly involved in the proposal? Must these support letters be attached to the PART B of the proposal?

These support letters are not mandatory; you can include them in the part B of the proposal, signed by your scientific partner in the partnering organisation. We do not provide a template for this.

However, it is necessary to add a detailed description of actions to be undertaken with partnering organisations in part B including expected impact and added value to the project.

IV. SWOT and Action Plan

IV.1 What is meant exactly by "this Activity will support the implementation of an Action Plan defined by the applicant, derived from its SWOT analysis"?

The applicants should present a clear and detailed analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the applicant research entity. This SWOT analysis should be the basis of the preparation of the *Action Plan* composed by a *coherent set of measures* indicated in the Work Programme.

IV.2 Do the applicant's SWOT and Action Plan have to be attached to the project proposal or do they have to be included directly in the part B of the proposal? If the latter is the case, in which section of part B should be included? Furthermore, do the documents have to be submitted in English or can they be in the original language (an EU official language)?

The applicant's SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and Action Plan should be included in the part B of the proposal and should be written in the same language as the rest of the proposal.

The SWOT of the applicant's legal entity is mandatory information within the proposal. We do not require a special format but information to be given here should be concrete and detailed. Without the SWOT the experts would be unable to assess if the proposed Action Plan will indeed increase the research potential of the applicant.

Based on such analysis an Action Plan providing the policy structure of research potential increase of the applicant and the coherent set of measures to be implemented (as indicated in the Work Programme) should be also clearly described in the proposal. The Action Plan includes measures which strongly involve the partnering organisations (exchange of know-how and experience, organisation of workshops and conferences, etc) therefore this Action Plan should be discussed with and agreed by the representatives of the partnering organisations.

IV.3 Is the Action Plan set by all participants in the project and not only by the beneficiary?

The Action Plan includes several measures which strongly involve the partnering organisations (exchange of know-how and experience, organisation of workshops and conferences, etc) therefore this Action Plan should be discussed with and agreed by the representatives of the partnering organisations.

It is highly required that the applicant explains the activities to be undertaken with each one of the partnering organisation including duration, impact, costs.

IV.4 In the Work Programme, it says "Research entities ... should explain the synergies between the measures set out in their Action Plan and related actions supported or to be supported through the cohesion policy programmes..." How do we find the "synergies"?

The proposers should clearly explain if they received in the past or if they will receive in the near future funds from the regional policy of the EU to improve their research capacity and how this will complement the "Research Potential" funding requested.

V. Exchange of know-how and experience

V.1 Do I have to describe the objectives and content of the work to be undertaken during secondments?

Yes, as well as the duration, expected results and timing of each secondment.

V.2 The work plan includes the development of strategic partnerships with other European research entities. What type of costs will be covered for the secondment of staff? Travels for scientists FROM the experienced partner TO the funded entity to facilitate training in research can be funded (as well as the other way around)? Under which cost category of the budget should we include these costs: "other direct cost" or "subcontracting"?

Neither salaries nor complements of salaries for seconded staff will be covered by the Commission under this activity. However, as a general rule, costs related to travel, accommodation and any other expenses related to the seconded staff stay abroad, excluding funding of joint research, could be eligible costs. It should be also stressed that every reimbursement as regards staff and living costs will be according to the practice in each country and individual organisation or, if the applicant chooses so, using the applicable flat rates available at the following website: <ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/flat-rates-subsistence_en.pdf>.

Appropriate justification for these activities should be provided under the relevant Work Package of part B of the proposal.

As this measure - Exchange of know-how and experience - is not about services provided by another entity, there is no reason to include subcontracting here.

V.3 Which visits are preferred: short (weekly) or long (monthly) visits?

The duration of the visits should be correlated with the Action Plan and the applicant's needs. Appropriate justification for these activities should be provided under the relevant Work Package of part B of the proposal.

V.4 What means "return mechanism" in the context of "Exchange of know-how and experience"? Is this the preservation of the working post in the organisation from convergence region for the duration of the visit to the organisation in other regions of the EU?

It is not only the preservation of the working post in the organisation but also a career development plan which should be presented in the proposal (at least for non-permanent staff). Please note that this is necessary in order to capitalise on the acquired competences and knowledge and it is valid especially for medium- and long-term visits.

V.5 Can the exchange of know-how include management issues as well?

Yes, if this applies to research management (management intended as exchanging know-how and experience about management in science, organisation of work, gathering of resources for science projects etc). In all cases, this should be duly justified.

V.6 Could you please clarify whether we are allowed to reimburse travel costs to those coming from our partnering institutions abroad according to THEIR per diem rates?

As mentioned in the Financial Guide, the costs should be "according to the usual accounting and management principles and practices of the beneficiary." In this case the beneficiary would be the applicant institution and not the "partnering organisation".

ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/financialguide_en.pdf

However, in accordance with Annex 3 of the Work Programme, this call provides for the possibility to use flat rates to cover subsistence costs incurred by beneficiaries during travel carried out within grants for indirect actions. For further information, see the relevant "Guide for Applicants" for this call. The applicable flat rates are available at the following website: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/find-doc_en.html under 'Guidance documents/Flat rates for daily allowances'.

VI. Recruitment by the applicant of experienced researchers

VI.1 Do I have to describe the research work to be undertaken by the experienced researchers to be hired?

Yes, and also to clearly explain how the experienced researchers will contribute to the applicant's research potential increase. Keep in mind that funding of research work is not eligible under this call.

VI.2 With respect to the activity "Recruitment of experienced researchers" I would like to know if there are some more details required.

As regard with the experienced researchers - their number, type of experience and type of contract should be adapted to the proposer's needs. However, detailed description of their

profile should be given in the proposal. Additionally, information should be provided about their type of contract, duration, tasks and impact on increase of the institution's research capacity and capability. The costs eligible for this action are related to the recruited experienced researchers' salaries. The expenses related to the hiring procedure may be taken into account provided that the appropriate explanation is given.

VI.3 For calculating the personnel costs, does the applicant have to use the rate of their own centre or otherwise the national rate?

All expenses including personnel costs and salaries should be calculated according to the applicant's usual rules and rates.

VI.4 Could postdoc personnel be recruited?

Only experienced researchers can be recruited. Detailed description of their profile should be given in the proposal. If postdocs are experienced in research, they can be considered for recruitment.

VI.5 Is there any age limitation for young researchers?

Only experienced researchers can be recruited. Detailed description of their profile should be given in the proposal. If "young researchers" are experienced in research, they can be considered for recruitment. There is no age limit.

VI.6 Concerning the recruitment of researchers, are those costs calculated as person months? Can these researchers be considered as working on the project 12 months/per year?

The salaries of the incoming experienced researchers for the whole period of the project are eligible expenses under this call.

All expenses should be calculated according to the applicant's rules and rates.

VII. Upgrading, development or acquisition of research equipment

VII.1 In my country there are very strict accounting rules. University is obliged to pay VAT and even in this case the depreciation for most of equipment relevant to our action is strictly 20% per year. Is there any possibility to recover the net purchase price of equipment from "Research Potential" action in such a situation?

No, the VAT is not eligible.

VII.2 I would like to know if the research equipment is refunded only to the proposer or to the partnering organisations too.

Only to the proposer (= coordinator, mono-applicant). The targeted objective is to reinforce the research potential of high quality research entities established in the eligible regions.

VII.3 Maximum for equipment cost is 30% or exceptionally 45% of the total cost of the project. What are the exceptions (duly justified case)?

The targeted objective is to reinforce the research potential of high quality research entities established in the eligible regions. Therefore, one can expect that durable equipment items needs are limited. However, from experience, the cost of some particular durable equipment might be very expensive. To avoid artificial inflation of the total cost of the proposal, such a case might be considered as "exceptional", provided that justification is given on the real added value of such equipment.

VII.4 Are the costs of consumables (necessary for the use of the equipment cited in the budget) eligible direct costs? Can they be reported as "Other direct costs"?

On a case-by-case basis, consumables related to activities funded by the project, except those used in research projects, may be eligible.

VII.5 Is acquisition of software eligible cost?

Yes, but only if it evidently increases the research potential of the applicant and it is for the benefit of the project.

VII.6 Do we need to state in the proposal of FP7-REGPOT-2011-1 the concrete items of equipment that we plan to purchase?

Based on the information provided in the proposal, the evaluators should be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the related measure in improving the applicant's research capacity and potential.

VII.7 Is it possible for the applicant legal entity to purchase equipment and install it in the premises of another organisation if the site is more appropriate for e.g. measurements?

The equipment should be installed and entirely used in the premises of the applicant legal entity. If such equipment is to be partially used for any other purpose that the applicant's potential increase in RTD this should be clearly indicated in the proposal, the corresponding costs being supported by the applicant or a third party.

VIII. Workshops and conferences

VIII.1 Can only researchers of partnering organisations participate in workshops and conferences?

Additional researchers can be involved in the conferences and workshops if this is for the benefit of the project. Appropriate justification should be given in the proposal.

VIII.2 Can the budget for the organisation of events cover travel costs for guest speakers as well as for participants (ex. those from USA, Japan especially)?

The costs should be reasonable, realistic and duly justified by the interest of the project.

VIII.3 Are the personnel costs of the third party (salaries for partners running a workshop) eligible costs?

No.

VIII.4 Is it true that all the costs for organisation of the conference/workshop belong to the group "other costs" except the person-months spent on organisation of the event?

Yes. The latter belong to the "personnel costs".

IX. Evaluation facility

IX.1 Is it mandatory to have an independent evaluation in a REGPOT-2011-1 project?

No, this is an additional and non obligatory measure. If the applicants wish so, an independent evaluation of their overall research quality and capability can be included in the proposal as a dedicated Work Package to be done at the end of the project. In this case, 6 additional months can be foreseen for an additional funding up to 100.000 €. The applicants are invited to justify the added value of such an evaluation to their research potential increase as well as to describe the evaluation's methodology and the use of its results.

IX.2 Can you please explain me in very practical way what kinds of activities typically take place in an "Evaluation Facility" Work Package?

The evaluation facility is foreseen to take place after the end of the implementation for 6 months or less in order to evaluate the applicant's overall research quality and capability (including management and infrastructure).

It is preferably to include a Steering Committee (SC) with top class EU scientists in their field (can be representatives of the partnering organisation), users if appropriate (SMEs, industry, etc), regional actors, representatives of the national/regional research ministry. The SC should work on a permanent way on how to strengthen the agenda beyond the project end and to ensure the sustainability of the Action Plan.

3-6 experts appointed by the Commission will visit the applicant institution to discuss with the researchers and the research management in order to evaluate the capacity of the applicant to handle its objectives with the means available in situ and the perspectives to maintain or to increase the applicant's research capacity and the means necessary for this purpose. A discussion with the SC and independent experts will be crucial to finalise final recommendations.

For the experts a fee of 450 EUR/day should be calculated, covering both the on site visits and reporting work done remotely, as well as the accommodation and travel costs.

As this Work Package is not a mandatory activity the added value of the evaluation should be explained. If the applicant doesn't wish to include this measure, it has not to be justified.

IX.3 If an organisation decides to go for the evaluation facility and the duration of the project is extended to 3 years and 6 months, will the management / dissemination activities be also extended to 3.5 years?

If an organisation will apply for the evaluation facility the duration of the project is extended with 6 months (e.g. to 3.5 years if the project is foreseen for 3 years). In this context, the management activities will be extended to the total duration of the project. It is possible to extend with up to 6 months also the dissemination Work Package but only with activities related to the evaluation facility.

IX.4 Can we involve External Experts at an early stage of the project or only after the end of the implementation of the Action Plan, over a period of up to 6 months?

The experts can be involved from an earlier stage if this is justified by the Action Plan and it is in the interest of the project.

X. Financial and legal aspects

X.1 If an organisation decides to subcontract a part of the management, is there a problem if the subcontractor is not established in a convergence region?

For this type of projects the management is considered core activity and can not be subcontracted.

X.2 What are the eligible costs under the call FP7-REGPOT-2011-1? Salaries, grants, extra living cost (for seconded staff and people from the group going abroad to conferences and the expert partners), research equipments (in full or just the depreciated value), conferences and workshops (rental of place to hold the event, travel and accommodation expenses of participants, invited speakers, managers, conference fees) etc...

The costs you are mentioning may be eligible according to the planned activities. If by "grants" you mean fellowships this is not an eligible cost.

X.3 What kinds of cost are eligible for the members of Advisory Board, Steering Board, Management Board in a FP7-REGPOT-2011-1 project? Cost of accommodation, travel cost, per diem expenses, advising fee, etc.?

Only travel and accommodation related costs (hotel, daily allowance) are eligible.

X.4 Do "Research Potential" calls support research activities?

"Research Potential" call will not support the funding of research and technological joint projects.

X.5 Should the budget of the project be of 4 million Euros and if it's less, will the evaluation be less favourable?

The budget depends on the size, the needs and the activities proposed in the Action Plan by each applicant legal entity as well as of the proposal's duration. The budget should be realistic and feasible. This will be analysed during the scientific evaluation. The budget should be designed according to the actual activities and not vice-versa.

X.6 In what way the applicant reports on costs of partners and proves these costs? How is the financial reporting between participants organised?

Please note that the projects financed under FP7-REGPOT-2011-1 are mono-contractor type. In other words, the applicant is the coordinator and has the entire responsibility on the budget, undertaking the activities and reporting to the European Commission (EC) on the whole Action Plan's activities.

X.7 Within a Work Package containing a workshop for the instrument training, human biological specimens formerly collected for another study with the informed consent of the patients will be used. In the ethics issues part of the project proposal we will declare that the specimens will be used. Is that sufficient?

In the project you should demonstrate that any ethical issues that may arise have been approached in a responsible manner. It is recommended to present a coherent plan for obtaining all the necessary approvals.

More information can be found at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/find-doc_en.html#ethics.

X.8 Which percentage of EC contribution a proposal could receive under "Research Potential"?

The EC contribution for all calls under "Research Potential" may reach a maximum of 100% of the total eligible costs for all types of partners (private, public, non-profit).

X.9 What is the percentage of reimbursement of indirect costs in the case of Coordination and Support Actions?

Indirect costs may be based on a flat rate or actual costs. A detailed explanation of the applicability of these methods of calculation of indirect costs can be found in Annex 3 of the Guide for Applicants. The transitional flat rate of 60% for indirect costs applies only to funding schemes that include research and technological development and demonstration activities, which is not the case for Coordination and Support Actions.

In the case of Coordination and Support Actions, the reimbursement of indirect eligible costs for every beneficiary may reach a maximum of 7% of the direct eligible costs, excluding the direct eligible costs for subcontracting and the costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the beneficiary.

More detailed information you can find in the Financial Guide:
ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/financialguide_en.pdf.

X.10 Are we able to allocate funding also for the existent staff in the University department who has permanent contracts in order to re-enforce the manpower working on the "Research Potential" project?

Payment of salaries for the existing permanent staff of the applicant cannot be considered as "recruitment of experienced researchers". However, part of the salaries for current staff involved in the project (e.g. for organisation of workshops, networking with partnering organisation, management, etc) can be covered according to their time spent performing the project tasks. No research costs are eligible under this call.

X.11 Is it possible to devote some funding for the production of demonstrators? Is it possible to share some funding via internal project calls, exclusively for project partners?

No. These are not eligible activities under this call.

X.12 Can tasks be sub-contracted?

As a general rule contractors must have the capacity to carry out the work themselves. Subcontracting is derogation to this general rule and is limited to specific cases. Beneficiaries may subcontract other minor services and supplies, which do not represent core elements of the project work, which cannot be directly assumed by them and where this proves necessary for the performance of their work under the project.

Conditions related to activities subcontracted:

- Subcontracts may only cover the execution of a limited part of the project (Article II.7 of Annex II of the FP7 model grant agreement). Therefore, generally core elements of the project can not be subcontracted. Coordination tasks of the coordinator such as the distribution of funds, the review of reports and other tasks mentioned under Article II.2.3 to GA cannot be subcontracted;
- Article II.7 of the FP7 model contract stipulates that: "recourse to the award of subcontracts must be duly justified in Annex I having regard to the nature of the project and what is necessary for its implementation";
- Even though certain services may be performed by a subcontractor, the beneficiary maintains full responsibility for carrying out the project, retains the intellectual property generated, if any, and must ensure that certain of provisions of the model contract are reflected in the agreement with the subcontractor. (Article II.7 of the FP7 model contract).

For more information on subcontracting please consult:

Model Grant Agreement, Annex II: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/calls-grant-agreement_en.html.

X.13 Is there any upper funding limit for the management activities under Coordination and Support Actions?

No, there is no limit as such.

X.14 Does the EC reimburse the costs only upon receiving reports on eligible costs (ex post) or are there payments done by the EC ex ante (=advance payments)? And if costs are reimbursed after sending the report (ex post), what is the procedure of reimbursements - does an organisation has to have financial means itself for one year in advance and only hope to have this costs reimbursed after one year?

The EC contribution is reimbursed as follows:

- a) A single pre-financing payment paid at the start of the project
- b) Interim payments following each reporting period
- c) The final payment at the end of the project for the last reporting period plus any adjustment needed.

More detailed information you can find in the Financial Guide:

ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/financialguide_en.pdf.

X.15 Assistance on IPR Issues

The IPR-Helpdesk has as its main objective to provide first line IP related assistance to current and potential EC-RTD contractors, and in particular on Community diffusion and protection rules and issues relating to IPR in international projects. Another objective is to raise awareness of the importance of protecting and exploiting Europe's IPR assets.

It operates a free helpline offering first line assistance on IPR related issues:

e-mail: ipr-helpdesk@ua.es

tel.: +32 0 213 41 63

fax: +32 0 213 41 69

URL: <http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org>