



4th Collaborative European Freshwater Sciences Project for Early Career Freshwater Researchers “(FreshProject)” - Call for Proposals

We invite proposals for a project to be supported by the European Federation of Freshwater Sciences (EFFS). The call has been developed as a joint effort of the EFFS board and the EFFS-Federated Societies, and the European Fresh and Young Researchers (EFYR). It has the primary goals of: a) encouraging early career freshwater researchers (ECRs) across Europe to create synergistic interactions that lead to new knowledge, b) promoting networking among early career European Limnologists and, c) offering experience in generating research ideas, acquiring funding, planning and carrying out a collaborative international scientific project.

Collaboration among scientists over a wide geographical area offers the possibility of planning innovative experiments with a relatively small budget. Such collaborative projects potentially combine outstanding research with networking, and thus can be very valuable for scientists at an early stage in their careers (ECRs). As an example, the 1st Collaborative European Freshwater Science Project for Young Researchers, “Eurorun”, assembled a core team of people from seven European countries, later developing into a programme involving 47 ECRs from 16 teams across 11 European countries, collecting data from 34 streams. In the 2nd FreshProject, “Urban Algae”, nearly 100 ECRs grouped in 30 sampling teams came together to conduct sampling in urban ponds covering 6 biogeographical regions within Europe, and developed a citizen survey to investigate citizen perception of urban ponds. In the 3rd FreshProject, “Europonds”, 68 ECRs were grouped in 33 teams from 16 countries across Europe. The project sampled insects in ponds by emerging traps during the season and analysed species diversity, abundance and its fatty acid composition. The Collaborative European Freshwater Science Projects for ECRs are an excellent opportunity to group European young researchers that share similar circumstances and concerns, them being the future of Freshwater Sciences in Europe.

(<https://www.freshwatersciences.eu/effs/index.asp?page=EFYR\BLOG&Id=7>).

Proposals submitted to the present call should specify original research on any aspect of the ecology of inland waters. We are seeking to support research relying on the original and well-designed use of inexpensive and simple methodology, and will favour multidisciplinary interactions among ECRs from European countries. Thus, the evaluation will consider not only the scientific quality of the proposal, but especially the chances for promoting collaboration among European ECRs, both by integrating them in the initial proposal as well as by offering opportunities for further integration for the project development. This is an equal opportunity call, which is open to all early career members of the limnological societies constituting EFFS. The EFFS-federated societies listed below financially support this programme and kindly encourage the participation of their early career

members, though ECRs that are affiliated to any of the EFFS-federated societies can participate in the call and the awarded project.

Who is eligible?

Only researchers at Masters, PhD, or early Post-Doc level (PhD completion later than December 31st, 2019) can submit proposals and participate in the selected project. The proposers need to be members of the limnological societies within EFFS (the list of federated societies is available at <http://www.freshwatersciences.eu/effs/index.asp?page=MEMBERS&Id=3>) at the time when the call closes (10th April, 2022). The final team, once the awarded project has been selected, has to be assembled from a public call to invite to participate the ECRs affiliated to any of the EFFS-federated societies, and must include at least one participant affiliated to each of the funding societies listed in the section “budget” of this document.

Duration of the project

The project should be completed within two years after signing the grant agreement (see details in the section “Once the proposal is selected: Team assembly”). Publication of scientific outputs is not required within this time frame although realistic plans for publication should be part of the proposal and the final report. If the team decides to publish their results in an open-access journal, the publication fee might be covered by the available budget.

Budget

The budget available for this 4th call is 9,150 euros (VAT included), which could be supplemented by funds provided by the participants or their institutions. This budget may cover consumables and travel expenses, conference fees and publication costs. Salaries and non-consumable materials cannot be paid by the funded budget. As mentioned above, the final team must include at least one participant affiliated to each of the 10 EFFS-Federated funding Societies, which are the following:

- Association Française de Limnologie (France). Contribution: 750 €.
- Association of Austrian SIL-Members: SIL-Austria (Austria). Contribution: 500 €.
- Associazione Italiana di Oceanologia e Limnologia (Italy). Contribution: 500 €.
- Asociación Ibérica de Limnología / Associação Ibérica de Limnologia (Spain and Portugal). Contribution: 2,000 €.
- České Limnologické Společnosti. Contribution: 1,000 €.
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Limnologie e.V. (Germany). Contribution: 1,500 €.
- Freshwater Biological Association (United Kingdom). Contribution: 500 € (plus other 500 € tbd)
- Hrvatsko Udruženje Slatkovodnih Ekologa (Croatia). Contribution: 500 €.
- Irish Freshwater Sciences Association (Ireland). Contribution: 500 €.
- Magyar Hidrológiai Társaság (Hungary). Contribution: 400 €.
- Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Hydrologie und Limnologie / Société Suisse d'Hydrologie et de Limnologie / Società Svizzera di Idrologia e Limnologia (Switzerland). Contribution: 1,000 €.

In the absence of any participant affiliated to each of these societies in the final project team, the budget available may be reduced by the amount contributed by that society.

Rules

Each ECR can only submit one project proposal. However, each project can have up to three proposing investigators (PIs; preferably, but not exclusively, from different countries), who will lead the project. The PIs and any number of co-investigators make up the final project team. The PIs will be in charge of managing the project funds and must report the main results and account of expenses to EFFS periodically, as well as by the end of the project. ECRs from across Europe will be invited to join the winning project once awarded, but the proposing investigators can also provide a list of potentially interested participants from different European countries in their proposal. The PIs must be members of any of the EFFS affiliated countries but, as mentioned above, in order to attract the total sum available, the final team, once assembled, must include at least one participant affiliated to each funding society. In addition, other early career scientists from these or other EFFS-federated societies can participate in the final team. The PIs should, in any case, contact the EFFS-Federated Society to which these potential participants declare to be affiliated to ensure their effective affiliation.

How to apply

Early career researchers interested in submitting a proposal, who need to be affiliated to a EFFS-federated society, should complete the Project Proposal and send it by e-mail to the contact persons listed below with "EFFS Early Career Freshwater Project" in the subject line. This proposal will be made available to the EFFS-federated society they are affiliated by the EFFS chairperson through the EFFS-Board representatives. The name of the Project Proposal file should include the first initial and last name of the proposing investigator (e.g. "FreshProject_ASilva" or "FreshProject_ASilva+WJohnson" without spaces or accents, with the 1st letter of each word in caps). The project proposal should be written in English, and submitted as a single file containing the following sections:

- Title of the project, name(s) and affiliation(s) of the PI(s), plus up to five keywords.
- Project abstract in English (maximum length 3,000 characters including spaces, minimum font size 11pt).
- Project abstract in any official language of the EFFS-Federated Society to which the IP(s) is/are affiliated (maximum length 3,000 characters including spaces, minimum font size 11pt).
- State of the art (maximum length 5,000 characters including spaces, minimum font size 11pt).
- Methods and development of the project, including project tasks and timetable (maximum length 20,000 characters including spaces, minimum font size 11pt).
- Impact of the project (maximum length 5,000 characters including spaces, minimum font size 11pt)
- Mandatory annexes are: (i) letter(s) testifying that the proposing investigator(s) has (have) the support from the host(s) institution(s) to carry out the project (ii) letter(s) of the EFFS-federated society to which they are affiliated testifying that the proposing investigator(s) are recognized as members of such society (iii) CV of the applicant(s). The annexes should be merged at the end of the project proposal.

The EFFS chairperson will acknowledge receipt of the application within three working days.

Submission deadline

The deadline for the submission of projects is 11:59 pm (GMT) of 10th April 2022, with the time of the e-mail header as proof of date. The applications must be sent simultaneously to Antonio Camacho (EFFS Chairperson) antonio.camacho@uv.es as well as to the following EFYR-representatives: Nabil Majdi nabil.majdi@uni-bielefeld.de; Zeynep Ersoy zzynepersoy@gmail.com and Fredric Windsor fredric.windsor@newcastle.ac.uk. After the submission deadline, projects will be assembled and sent to the members of the panel for evaluation.

Evaluation criteria

The panel will be constituted by five members nominated by the EFFS and EFYR boards, among renowned limnologists without any link with the presented projects.

The projects submitted will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

A. Scientific merit and innovation (up to 40 points): Relevance to wider society and originality of the project proposed. Methodology for carrying out the project, including available instrumental resources at the centres where the research will be performed. Hypotheses to be tested and contribution to scientific knowledge. Potential scientific and societal outputs.

B. The potential for interactions among young European researchers in different scientific disciplines and for enabling a balanced representation of participants from differing geographical, cultural and gender backgrounds. (up to 40 points).

C. Feasibility of the work-plan: Organization of the project in terms of the proposed objectives and resources. (up to 20 points).

Only one project will be selected. The decision of the panel will be announced not later than 10th May, 2022, by e-mail sent to all young researchers who have submitted a project, as well as by the communication in the EFFS website of the selected project, and the titles of proposals that were not funded. Applicants will also receive an evaluation report addressing the criteria mentioned above. The decision from the panel is final.

Once the proposal is selected: Team assembly

In order to reach out to early career researchers (ECRs) across Europe that may want to join the collaborative awarded project, an invitation will be sent out via existing e-mailing lists of the different EFFS-Federated societies, as well as by EFYR networks. Social media will be used to further advertise the project. ECRs wishing to participate should write a letter affirming that they are willing and able to participate in the project in the terms described in the proposal, also including the name of the EFFS-federated society to which they are affiliated, which has to be checked by the PIs. Instructions on how to proceed to participate will be given in the invitation e-mail. ECRs meeting the eligibility criteria must contact the PIs of the project, who will test if the interested researcher qualifies to join the team according to the call rules. The final project team must be assembled by 25th June, 2022. PIs of the awarded project must establish an internal procedure to ensure the active participation of all members of the teams during the whole project length, provided that non-active members might be excluded from the team upon consultation with EFFS and the EFFS-federated society to which they are affiliated.

After the project team is created, the grant agreement will be signed and the project will develop as specified in the Proposal Form, under the leadership of the PIs. The final amount to develop the project will be transferred directly from the funding societies to a specific bank account created to this purpose by the PIs. The PIs must deliver a specific funding receipt to each of the funding societies, and a financial report must be sent to EFFF each of the years of project development, plus a final financial report for the whole project once finished.

Dissemination of results

The PIs of the awarded project must deliver a short report on the project development to EFFF every 3 months during the term of the project, that will be released to the EFFF-federated societies and posted at the EFFF webpage.

A final report, sufficiently detailed to reflect all results and conclusions, should be submitted (by e-mail to the addresses listed in section "Submission deadline") by PIs within three months of the end of the project. The report should have a maximum length of 20,000 characters with spaces and minimum font size 11pt, including Figures and Tables. This should also specify expected deadlines for dissemination (publication) of scientific outputs and detailed justification of the project expenses. The report can be distributed by the EFFF-Federated Societies to their members, and will be available after distribution to the EFFF-Board of Representatives as well as at the EFFF webpage.

All participants in the research will be considered as potential co-authors in the project outputs (except theses). At least one scientific paper should be submitted to an international peer-reviewed journal not later than four years after the start of the project, covering complete or partial aspects of the research carried out. Protocols/data sheets generated in the project must be available in public repositories not later than 2 years after the end of the project.

Among the outputs of the project, an oral presentation of preliminary results must be presented at SEFS-13, to be held in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK, in 2023, as well as another with the final results at the first meeting of SEFS after the end of project (SEFS-14, to be held in 2025). The EFFF and all funding societies of this call must be acknowledged in any publication or conference presentation. Participants should also set up a blog featuring real-time updates on project progress and activities, linked to the EFFF webpage and EFYR social media. Use of other social media and alternative outreach venues to provide visibility for the project and the call and its promoters is encouraged.