

Call for proposals

for projects in

Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria, Kosovo and the Western Balkan Region

(In the framework of the project
"Higher KOS – Promoting Institutional Development in Higher Education and Research in Kosovo")

Invitation for submission of proposals

The Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) in Vienna launches a call for **scientific networking and project cooperation between research institutions in Austria, in Kosovo and the Western Balkan region¹ with special attention to young and early stage researchers² in Kosovo**. Funding is provided by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) in the framework of the project "Higher KOS – Promoting Institutional Development in Higher Education and Research in Kosovo". The activities in the funded projects shall enable researchers from Austria, Kosovo and the Western Balkan region to work together on mutually beneficial science driven projects and empower especially young researchers in Kosovo to cooperate within international projects.

The total funding available for this call for proposals is **180.000 Euro**. Funding is foreseen for a maximum duration of 15 months and the max. funding per project is €15.000. The allowable funding per project must be justified by the content, work load, duration and number of teams involved. For projects with higher financial costs, co-financing is expected.

Possible project activities are: comparative studies, small empirical investigations, mapping and know-how exchange on European standards and practices in the chosen research areas etc. (see page 2). The activities should therefore build on already existing scientific results.

The contractor has to be a research institution³ from Austria.

The compulsory consortium composition has to include one partner from Austria, at least one partner from Kosovo and at least one partner from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro or Serbia. Research institutions from other European countries can participate in the projects but without funding provided under this call (as so-called 'silent partners').

All ethnic groups in Kosovo are explicitly invited to participate in the call.

Proposals should contribute to significant scientific regional cooperation with (a) research institution(s) in Kosovo. The extent and quality of regional collaboration will be an important criteria for the evaluation.

Deadline for the submission of proposals is December 14, 2012. The project activities must be completed after signing the contract and before August 31, 2014.

¹ Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

² Young researcher: less than 35 years old; Early stage researcher: max. 10 years after graduation from first degree

³ See "Eligibility for participation". Eligible contractors are universities, non-university research institutions and tertiary education organisations.

Thematic areas:

Projects funded under this call should address the priority fields stipulated by the National Research Programme of Kosovo:

- Environment, Energy and Natural Resources,
- Agricultural Production and Food Safety,
- Medical Research,
- Development of a Knowledge Based Society,
- Linguistic, Historic and Cultural Studies,
- or Cross-horizontal Research in Information and Communication Technologies

Cross-cutting themes:

“Gender equality”, “peace building and conflict prevention” and “environmental protection” should be appropriately considered in all projects funded under this call or be the specific focus of the research project.

Objectives of the Programme

The primary programmatic objectives of this call for proposals “Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria, Kosovo and the Western Balkan Region” are:

- promoting international scientific cooperation and networking between Austrian researchers, researchers from Kosovo and researchers from the Western Balkan region in the thematic areas of the call;
- empowerment of young and early stage Kosovan researchers engaged at research institutions in Kosovo to work within international projects;
- strengthening the participation of researchers from the research institutions in Kosovo in bilateral and regional collaborative RTD projects;
- adapting, exploiting and disseminating scientific methods and/or research results between Austria, Kosovo and the Western Balkan region in the chosen thematic area.

Activities of the Programme

The project can implement activities such as:

- comparative studies and know-how exchange on European standards and practices in a specified thematic area;
- mapping exercises: studies providing an overview on topics and projects researched in a specific field in Kosovo, in the Western Balkan region as well as in Europe;
- joint efforts to adapt and use methods and/or the conduct of scientific studies of limited scope relevant for the target countries (case studies, comparative analysis, small empirical investigations, etc.);
- joint workshops, seminars and conferences;



- scientific training measures;
- joint publications.

Neither the development of curricula and courses nor the digitalisation of existing content can be funded under this call for proposals!

Submission of proposals

Application form

The application form for the proposals can be downloaded from:

https://www.zsi.at/attach/Higher_KOS_Submission_form_research_projects.doc

The form "Power of Attorney"⁴ has to be duly signed by ALL project partners except the coordinator, certifying that all partners agree with the contents of the proposal as well as that the information is true and complete and the team available to execute the tasks assigned. This Power of Attorney authorises the coordinator to negotiate and conclude the contract on behalf of the consortium. It has to be signed by the legally responsible person of each institution (eg. rector, dean, head of the institute if legally responsible) and by the team leaders.

The "Power of Attorney's" of all partners have to be sent duly signed by postal mail together with the proposal.

General requirements (see also "Process of review – eligibility check").

- The proposal has to be written in English.
- It must be within the scope of the call, meet the minimum partnership requirements and respect the eligibility criteria and allowable duration.
- At least 40% of the work from the Kosovan partner has to be done by (a) young researcher(s) or (a) early stage researcher(s).⁵
- The proposal has to be submitted within the stated deadline, complete and in compliance with the given structure.
- The proposal must bear the original signature of the coordinators' legally responsible person and the project manager and include "Power of Attorney" letters of all project partners duly signed.
- The proposal shall be submitted in a sealed envelope bearing the words "Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria, Kosovo and the Western Balkan Region".
- Additionally an electronic version of the proposal has to be received by the deadline (14th December 2012) at the address scheck@zsi.at.

Submission to

1. by mail:

Zentrum für Soziale Innovation

Hanna Scheck

"Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria, the Kosovo and the Western Balkan Region"

Linke Wienzeile 246

1150 Vienna

Austria

(Alternatively, it is possible to personally hand in the proposals in a sealed envelope at ZSI in Vienna until 14th December 2012, 15.00 o'clock, CET)

⁴ An example-letter for such a „Power of Attorney“ is provided with the application form.

⁵ Young researcher: less than 35 years old; Early stage researcher: max. 10 years after graduation from first degree.

Indicative Timetable

Call for proposals	10 September 2012
Deadline for submission	14 December 2012
Date of post mark (It is recommended to send the proposal as registered mail and to keep the receipt.)	14 December 2012
An electronic version has to be sent ADDITIONALLY (e-mail to: scheck@zsi.at).	14 December 2012
The principal applicant will receive an acknowledgement of receipt electronically (to the e-mail-address indicated in the proposal) within 2 weeks of the deadline for applications.	
Evaluation of proposals	December 2012/January 2013
Awarding of project contracts	February 2013
Earliest start of projects	1 March 2013
Latest end of projects	31 August 2014
Interim Report	15 November 2013
Final Report	30 September 2014

Eligibility for participation

Eligible for application *as contractor* are only institutions from Austria: universities, non-university research institutions (e.g. Academies of Science) and other tertiary education organisations (e.g. "Fachhochschulen").

Not eligible are individual researchers, SMEs not primarily engaged in research, industry research centres and consultants.

A preliminary eligibility check will be performed by the programme management if requested in written form at least 4 weeks before the deadline (see contact details, scheck@zsi.at).

Eligible *as project partners* are university-based or non-university-based research institutions and other tertiary education organisations respecting the following consortium composition (overall minimum three institutions):

Minimum one partner, Eligible as contractor	Austria
Minimum one partner	Kosovo
Minimum one partner from one of the Western Balkan countries	Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro or Serbia

Also in a consortium of more than 3 partners these minimum requirements have to be respected.

Criteria for evaluating proposals

The general criteria to be applied in evaluating projects are as follows:

- the nature of the proposed activity (clear objectives, scientific relevance and quality, feasibility, potential benefit, impact, sustainability);
- extent and quality of regional collaboration;
- qualification and expertise of the coordinator and the project partners;
- appropriate time schedule and workflow;
- cost and value for money, transparent budget, budget justifications;
- the concept and way of inclusion, capacity building and empowerment of young Kosovan researcher(s).
- the consideration of cross cutting themes (“gender equality”, “peace building and conflict prevention” and “environmental protection”)
- diversity of project teams

Proposals should contribute to scientific cooperation between (a) research institution(s) in Kosovo, Austria and the so-called “Western Balkan countries” (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia). Proposers are also encouraged to plan interdisciplinary activities and inter-institutional collaboration. A balanced ratio of projects from female and male coordinators and the participation of female scientists and young scientists⁶ is aimed at.

Process of review

1. Eligibility check: The proposal will be checked for completeness and appropriateness by the programme management. Proposals which do not fulfil the conditions of the eligibility check will be dropped out. The criteria for the eligibility check are:

- The proposal has to be submitted within the stated deadline (post mark) by mail or hand-delivered AND electronically by e-mail (e-mail to: scheck@zsi.at), must be complete (including all Power of Attorneys signed by the legally responsible persons!) and in compliance with the given structure.
- The consortium has to include at least 3 partners respecting the structure defined in “Eligibility for participation”.
- Eligibility of the participating countries and of the contractors (eligible as contractors are only institutions from Austria).
- Eligibility of all participating research institutions (see page 5).
- The project duration must be within the given project deadlines (earliest start of the project: March 2013, latest end of the project: August 2014).

2. An independent, gender-aware evaluation panel (three international experts per proposal) will judge the proposals against the “Criteria for evaluating proposals” stated in the call. The decision will be made under exclusion of the course of law.

3. The final decision about funding will be taken by the selection board. Members of the selection board will be representatives of the MEST Kosovo, ADA, ZSI and WUS Austria.

4. Authors of rejected proposals will be given feedback why the project was not selected for funding.

⁶ Minimum requirement: At least 40% of the work from the Kosovan partner(s) has to be done by (a) young researcher(s) (less than 35 years) and/or early stage researcher(s) (first academic degree is not older than 10 years).

Further administrative processes

For successful proposals, collaboration will be laid down in a contract which specifies the mutual rights and obligations. This contract is to be signed by the persons authorised to sign on behalf of the successful proposer and by ZSI representing the donor.

The contractor will be responsible for carrying out the project in a timely and accountable manner. The contractor is also responsible for administering the funding.

Subject to the funding released by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), an initial rate of 50% of the costs will be paid after signing the contract, 30% after the submission of the interim report and the last 20% after the approval of the final report.

Interim report: a short status report of about 2 pages summarising the project progress, the problems occurred so far and implemented or planned solution alternative(s) to overcome the identified problems as well as a balance list of the expenses occurred so far (a form for the balance list respecting the criteria for the financial report will be provided by the programme management). **With the interim report also the original or copies of original bills⁷ paid by the project so far and the related balancing endorsements have to be submitted.** The interim report has to be submitted no later than November 15, 2013.

Final report: consisting of a financial report and a technical report. These reports have to be submitted at the latest 30 days after the end of the project.

Financial report: a balance list (stating income and expenditure), with a degree of differentiation which indicates payments for travel and accommodation, meals, administration expenses, personnel costs, etc.. **With the financial report also the original or copies of original bills⁷ and the related balancing endorsements have to be submitted.**

Technical report: The technical report, as basis for the assessment of the project progress, shall contain an executive summary, an overview of the activities indicating results, problems and a self-assessment of the results (approx. 4-6 pages). A list of participants involved in the main activities (including e-mail) has to be provided too.

Publications and other project results have to be included in the final report too.

Eligibility of costs

As a basic principle, project participants are requested to use existing resources, such as employed staff, office space and equipment to the maximum possible extent. Costs which are already covered by other financing sources will not be reimbursed (exclusion of double financing). It is e.g. not eligible to charge additional costs for already fully employed staff at universities (professors, assistants, etc.). The funding must be justified in terms of the resources needed to achieve the objectives of the proposed project. A balanced budget between the partners is encouraged. Double funding of the same project activities is not permitted. Similar activities funded by other donors have to be stated.

⁷ All invoices have to be submitted as originals or copies of originals. Copies are accepted, if the project accounts are embedded in the accounting system of an Austrian university. In this case the universities have to confirm that (1) the copies of the invoices with the respective amount correspond to the original invoices and that (2) they are only submitted to ZSI for funding within the Higher KOS project (OEZA 8116-02/2011). Otherwise originals have to be provided. Original bills will be returned to the coordinator after the financial check.

Allowable costs are defined as follows:

Personnel Costs

Personnel costs are only eligible for Austrian partners (€ 500 for senior researchers⁸ and € 400 for junior researchers per working day) and Kosovan partners (€ 115 for senior researchers⁸ and € 90 for junior researchers and administrative personnel per working day). For partners from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia personnel costs are not eligible.

The persons have to be named, the extent of the time spent on the project has to be quantified (amount of person-months, -days or -hours).

Travel and Subsistence

The most economical means of transport consistent with effective pursuit of the project should be used. Upgrades to business class are to be done at one's own expense. For transportation between the airport and hotel, the most economical means available should be used. In certain cases, travel by private automobile is eligible up to the costs of a 2nd class train ticket.

The cost of visas and insurance required for visas will be covered. Expenses incurred from side trips or other items unnecessary to the project and telephone calls during travel will not be covered.

Travel and subsistence costs must be justified for each journey and for each team. Actual travel costs have to be reported.

Maximum daily allowances for accommodation per country

Austria	126,45 Euro
Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia	91,35 Euro

Daily allowance for subsistence per country

Austria	28,1 Euro
Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia	26,8 Euro

Equipment

Not eligible

Subcontracting

Not eligible

Consumables

Items (eligible are costs for scientific consumables and office equipment: e.g. paper, pencils, toner, blank CDs, ...) shall be listed and justification (especially if a team is requesting costs for consumables of more than 200 Euro).

Other costs

Costs for publication, printing, communications, rental of meeting rooms, materials and supplies, banking fees etc. which cannot be classified under the previous items but are required for the implementation of the project must be identified and justified individually.

Overheads

Overheads are not permitted.

⁸ Senior researcher: Minimum 10 years of experience in scientific research.



The funding will be provided in Euro. Calculations of currency exchange shall be based on the international exchange rate in effect on the date of the transaction or on justified exchange receipt or similar evidence issued by an authorised institution (e.g. bank).

For further information on this Call for Proposals, please contact:

Hanna Scheck
Zentrum für Soziale Innovation/Centre for Social Innovation
Linke Wienzeile 246
A-1150 Wien
Tel. +43 1 49 50 442-76
e-mail: scheck@zsi.at