



AQUAEXCEL

1st Call for proposals for Transnational Access

Background and objectives

The AQUAEXCEL project unites major aquaculture experimental facilities with capacity to undertake experimental trials on a selection of commercially important fish aquaculture species and system types. These facilities are made available to the research community for Transnational Access (TNA) with the support of the European Union's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (Infrastructures).

The facilities available cover the entire range of aquaculture production systems (recirculation, flow-through, cage, hatchery and pond systems); environments (freshwater and marine, cold, temperate and warm water); scales (small, medium and industrial scale); fish species (salmon, trout, sea bass, sea bream, cod, carp etc.); and fields of expertise (nutrition, physiology, health¹ and welfare, genetics, engineering, monitoring and management technologies).

The overall objective of the project is to promote the coordinated use and development of these experimental facilities and encourage problem-based research and knowledge transfer to more effectively support the development of a sustainable European production of high quality seafood with reduced environmental impact.

Proposal requirements

Expected projects can involve research on any of the available fish species at the selected research infrastructure. The participating facilities are summarised below and full details are available via the project website (www.aquaexcel.eu) or through direct contact with the selected research infrastructure. Proposals can only be approved if feasible and do not exceed a total duration of 3 months.

Proposals may be submitted by a single researcher or by research groups where the group leader and a majority of group members are affiliated to institutions or laboratories (public or private) from European member or Associated States², which are different from the State where the selected Research Infrastructure is located. It is required that the facility users communicate the results acquired in an AQUAEXCEL Research Infrastructure to the scientific community at large through classical means, i.e. project reports, congress communications and scientific publications. All group leaders are required to submit their metadata sets and summary report to the Research Infrastructure provider, for further publication via the project dissemination channels (technical leaflets, website pages and newsletters).

¹ Note that for challenge trials on zoonoses, emerging diseases and other aquatic animal infectious diseases requiring bio-containment at level 3 (L3), researchers are directed to the NADIR project which is specialised in providing research infrastructure for such pathogens (http://www.nadir-project.eu/nadir_project/call_for_access)

² Associated states: Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, Israel, Turkey, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia, Albania and Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina



Proposal review

Each submitted proposal that is eligible, and considered to be feasible at the chosen Research Infrastructure, will be appraised by a selection panel involving independent aquaculture experts and project nominated technical experts.

Following an initial screening for practical and financial feasibility, the criteria for selection will be scientific quality, degree of innovation, relevance and ethical soundness of the study³. Secondary selection criteria will be the expertise of the applicants, the cost efficiency of the work, and whether group members are first time users of the facility. Attention will also be given to how the work contributes to meeting the objectives of the European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform, as defined in the thematic Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas (www.eatip.eu).

Projects approved for access will enter a negotiation phase in which the project design and costs will be agreed and the project will be subjected to an ethical review. All work must be completed by 01-02-2015 to fall within the funding period of the AQUAEXCEL project by the European Commission.

Resources

There are 27 different Research Infrastructures available for access within the AQUAEXCEL project, provided by 15 different partner organisations. Access is measured in the most appropriate way for each facility. Applicants must indicate the number of units of access they wish to apply for. The attached table summarises the facilities available and the units of access used by each. The table focuses mainly on fish culture facilities although most also have supporting analytical laboratories.

The AQUAEXCEL project will cover both facility costs and the research group(s) travel and subsistence expenses according to the submitted workplan. Some facilities assume one person per project whilst others assume that up to two will be involved. As costs and reimbursement arrangements may vary between facilities, full details will be provided on request to the specific Research Infrastructure. Where flat rates are used the maximum allowances will be calculated with reference to EC FP7 funding regulations⁴.

Application procedure

Information on the facilities offering Transnational access is available at the project website (<http://www.aquaexcel.eu/>) and in the document "AQUAEXCEL Guide for Transnational Access" which is available on the website alongside the application form and CV template. Applicants are required to contact their preferred partner facility to discuss the project design and costs for the proposed project, before the submission of an application.

Requests must be submitted via e-mail using the PDF form available on the website. Full instructions for submission are included on the form. Submissions must be made before the announced Call deadline – 16th September 2011.

Opportunities for access will be offered as long as transnational funding for the particular facilities is remaining. An updated list of available Research Infrastructures will be published as part of the periodic Call for Proposals.

³ See guidance at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html

⁴ See guidance at ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/flat-rates-subsistence_en.pdf

Engagement conditions

After the completion of an AQUAEXCEL Transnational Access, each appointed group leader should:

1. Submit a summary report to AQUAEXCEL using the supplied template
2. Fill a questionnaire available on-line at:
http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/capacities/questionnaire_en.html
3. **All group members** are expected to publish the results of their work at the infrastructure in the open literature. All publications resulting from the project should acknowledge the EC-support by mentioning: "The access to [name of selected facility] was funded by the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n° 262336"
4. Proprietary research (research where results are not generally available to the public or only made available under confidentiality arrangements) cannot be supported.
5. Travel and subsistence expenses linked to the access will be reimbursed upon approval of the report. Reimbursements will be done according to administrative rules of each hosting organisation.
6. For more information about transnational access conditions, see the ANNEX III to the Grant Agreement – Infrastructures: ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/fp7-ga-annex3-infra-v2_en.pdf and for the purpose and legal background of the Research Capacities Programme see <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:400:0299:0367:EN:PDF>

Further information: If further guidance on the call and application procedure is required please contact John Bostock <j.c.bostock@stir.ac.uk>

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Summary of Research Infrastructure Facilities

Category	System	Water	Further details	Country	Organisation	Facility	Units of access	Web link
Cages	Seawater cages	Temperate SW	3 x 3 x 3 m or 1 x 1 x 1.5 m cages	Greece	HCMR	Souda	Week	www.hcmr.gr
		Cold SW	12 x 12 m cages with full monitoring	Norway	IMR Matre	CEL	Cage/Week	www.imr.no
		Cold SW	5 x 5 x 5 m cages with computer feed control and waste collection	Norway	NOFIMA	Averøy	Cage/Week	http://www.nofima.no/marin/en/about-nofima-marin/facilities/averoy-research-station
		Cold SW	2 highly monitored commercial scale sea cage facilities	Norway	SINTEF	ACE/SSO	Week	www.sintef.no/fish & http://www.aceaquaculture.com/english/
Ponds	Freshwater ponds	Temperate FW	20 x 25 ha ponds and 50 x 0.1 -0.2 ha ponds	Czech Republic	VURH	PEU	Pond/Week	http://www.frov.jcu.cz/en/servisni-pracoviste/experimental-fish-culture-facility-2
		Temperate FW	Around 60 ponds of different sizes with individual water supplies and power for aerators	Hungary	HAKI	OEPS	M2/Week	www.haki.hu
Tank systems	Freshwater only systems	Temperate FW	Indoor tanks totalling 43 m ³ , flow-through or RAS	Czech Republic	VURH	REU	Tank/Week	http://www.frov.jcu.cz/en/servisni-pracoviste/experimental-fish-culture-facility-2
		Temperate FW	Hatchery unit of around 400 m ² with 5 internal and 8 external tanks plus incubator systems	Czech Republic	VURH	HEU	Week	http://www.frov.jcu.cz/en/servisni-pracoviste/genetic-fisheries-center-2
		Temperate-Warm FW	100 m ³ RAS with range of tank sizes , + 80 m ³ flow-through tank system	Hungary	HAKI	RECIRK	M3/Week	www.haki.hu
		Cold FW	Salmonid hatchery for 3 million eggs, wide range of tanks and facilities including RAS for experimental work	France	INRA	INRA-Peima	Tank/Week	http://www.rennes.inra.fr
		Cold FW	Two full scale experimental salmonid farms and a dedicated facility for fish nutrition using RAS	France	INRA	INRA-St-Pée	Tank/Week	http://www.st-pee.inra.fr
	Fresh and/or seawater systems	Cold-temperate, FW-SW	80 tanks which can be configured for a wide range of conditions and types of research	Norway	IMR Matre	Cell	Tank/Week	www.imr.no
		Cold-Warm, FW & SW + hatchery	Several separate aquarium facilities and associated analytical laboratories for nutrition, genetics and disease trials	UK	UoS	IoA	Person/Week	www.aqua.stir.ac.uk

Category	System	Water	Further details	Country	Organisation	Facility	Units of access	Web link
	Seawater only systems	Warm, cold, SW or FW -	Specialist facilities for metabolic research using 12 chambers linked to RAS	Netherlands	WU	WU-MRU	Week	www.afi.wur.nl
		Warm, cold, SW or FW	3 RAS systems of different scale with facilities for replicate trials	Netherlands	DLO-IMARES	RECIRC	1 system per week	http://www.imares.nl
		Cold SW or FW	4 separate RAS systems for work on fish requirements, and system management	Norway	NOFIMA	NCRA	Tank/Week	http://www.nofima.no/marin/en/about-nofima-marin/facilities/nofima-centre-for-recirculation-in-aquaculture
		SW - Feed Ingredients testing	Wide range of tanks up to 1 m ³ for feed and digestibility trials with on-site feed production	Spain	ULPGC	FITU	Tank/Week	www.grupoinvestigacionacuicultura.org
		Warm SW- Selection Unit	Around 150 tanks configured for family based breeding	Spain	ULPGC	WWSSU	Tank/Week	www.grupoinvestigacionacuicultura.org
		Temperate SW (+ Hatchery)	Range of systems including two rooms for experimental work on marine fish larvae with controlled environments	France	IFREMER	MFL	Tank/Week	www.ifremer.fr
		Temperate SW	Marine eco-tolerance section provides highly controlled environment for experimental work on sea bass	France	IFREMER	MES	Tank/Week	www.ifremer.fr
		Cold SW	18 tanks of 160 l each with controlled environment for work on pelagic fish larvae	Norway	NTNU	CodTech	Week	www.ntnu.edu/marine/sealab
		Cold SW	National Cod Breeding Centre provides family-based selection facilities with around 550 tanks and a cage farm	Norway	NOFIMA	NCBC	Tank/Week	http://www.nofima.no/marin/en/about-nofima-marin/facilities/norwegian-cod-breeding-centre
		Temperate SW	Marine finfish hatchery, broodstock and research facilities	Greece	HCMR	Aqualabs	Week	www.hcmr.gr
		SW, Temperate to warm	4 aquariums with over 250 tanks. 2 aquariums with RAS, suitable for a wide range of studies	Spain	CSIC-IATS	EXP	Person/Week	www.iats.csic.es
		SW - Biosecure	3 main RAS units with facilities for pathogen challenge experiments	Spain	ULPGC	MBS	Tank/Week	www.grupoinvestigacionacuicultura.org
Other	Gnotobiotic system	SW	System for work on axenically cultured feed for artemia and sea bass larvae	Belgium	UGent	GART	50 axenic recipients/Wk	http://www.aquaculture.ugent.be
	Analytical laboratories		9 Analytical laboratories with wide range of facilities	Spain	CSIC-IATS	ANA	Person/Week	www.iats.csic.es