

APPLICATION FORM GUIDELINES

12 October 2021_version4
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**Applications for AQUAEXCEL3.0 Transnational Access Projects
(TNA) should be made via the application system available at**

<https://apply.aquaexcel.eu/submit-proposal/>

These guidelines supplement the help already provided on the application system. If you have not already done so, you will need to register and create an account on the system to gain further access. The guidance here assumes you have successfully reached the stage of creating a new project application on the system.

STEP1: SELECT SERVICES

1. PROPOSAL DETAILS

- 1.1 The project identification code is created automatically by the system and can be used in correspondence with the TNA Manager to quickly locate your information
- 1.2 The call identification code is inserted automatically by the system
- 1.3 Please provide a short title for the application suitable for use as a link on a website (maximum 30 characters)
- 1.4 Please provide a descriptive title for your proposed project which will give an immediate indication to the reader of the type of work planned and species involved
- 1.5 Other application identification:
 - 1.5.1 Please create an acronym for your project acronym (maximum 20 upper case letters/numbers) to act as a unique identifier in the EU project database.
 - 1.5.2 If the application is a re-submission of a previous proposal, please select “yes”
 - 1.5.3 If the application is a re-submission of a previous proposal, please give the application reference number. This will help speed up processing of the application.
 - 1.5.4 If you have sought and received advice from the Orientation Committee, please select “yes”. If you would like to obtain advice from the Orientation Committee, please send an e-mail to aquaexcel-OC@inrae.fr.

2. APPLICANT DETAILS

Add the details of each person involved in the project in this section.

The *lead applicant* is the person responsible for all project communications and who will be participating directly in the work and visiting the research installation (unless the proposal is for remote access only). The lead applicant does not need to be the most senior person involved in the project.

A *co-applicant* may also apply to visit the research installation if justified by the experimental work and if budget is available. They may be a co-worker or a senior adviser/supervisor or technical assistant.

If either the lead applicant or co-applicant is a student, please ensure that supervision arrangements are fully explained in the project description.

Additional applicants can be identified as being involved in the project, but not involved in the mobility.

Help text is provided with each of the fields in the form.

Organisation details should also be completed for each person. There are two key parts to this. Firstly, the legal name of the organisation and where available the EU PIC (e.g. University or research organisation). Secondly the organisational unit, which is not a separate legal entity, but a department or division of the legal organisation – e.g. institute within a university, or laboratory within a research organisation. For smaller organisations without an organisational unit, simply repeat the organisation name as the organisational unit. To ensure consistency in organisational details, you should use the drop-down selection if your organisation and organisational unit is already entered. It automatically adds your organisation from your registration. If you cannot find your organisation or organisational unit in the drop-down lists, you need to enter them using the menu button “Add Organisations” on the right of the main window. This gives you the option to enter a new organisation, or just a new organisational unit associated with an existing organisation entry.

3. REQUESTED RESEARCH INSTALLATIONS

Most TNA projects will involve only one Research Installation. However, if the project requires the use of two or more installations, add additional installations to the application. The available installations are listed in the Call for Access at <https://aquaexcel.eu/> and available via the dropdown selector. You should contact the Research Installation(s) at an early stage via e-mail to ensure your proposals are feasible. **Once your proposal is submitted it will be reviewed and evaluated by the RI Manager and feedback will also be provided.**

Be particularly careful to correctly calculate the number of units of access that will be required for the proposed work and give planned dates. The RI Manager should be able to inform and guide you on that. Further information is available for each facility in the AQUAEXCEL3.0 TNA Guide document (Handbook link provided in the AE3 webpage). If any work needs to be conducted by the Installation outside of the period of user visits, or if use will be made of remote monitoring equipment, please tick the box to confirm that remote access is required and give further explanation in Section 5.4

Transnational Access can be provided in the following ways:

- in person (‘hands-on’), provided to selected users that visit the installation or
- remote, through the provision to selected users of remote scientific services.

Examples of remote access include the provision of reference materials or samples (e.g. shipping of a virus strain); performing a remote sample analysis or sample deposition; remote access to experimental aquaria or high-performance computing facilities.

The application should make clear the number and purpose of the visits by both the lead and co-applicants and the intended length. This will be an important element of project monitoring. Any requirements for remote access should also be clearly stated.

This section also includes questions about previous collaborations between the applicant and host organisations. This information helps the Selection Panel to determine the priority that should be accorded to the application under the EC contract guidance on promoting new collaborations and ensuring widest possible access. Incorrect information could lead to the proposal being rejected. A “research group” is the smallest organisational unit within a research organisation, usually a team working in a specialist area on common projects. A “new user” is someone who has not previously conducted any work at the proposed research installation in any capacity. “Access” means making use of the facilities at the proposed research installation.

A visit timetable should be discussed with the host infrastructure **and the start date should be at least 3 months after the submission of the application**. Add the details for each separate person and visit planned as part of the project. If you do not have specific dates in mind, fill in most likely dates. These can be changed later. The start date is either the arrival date of a person visiting the installation or the day on which experimental work commences – whichever is the earlier. Unless special provisions have been made by the Installation, TNA projects can only be funded up to 3 months in duration (90 days).

The application will be shared with the **appropriate Research Installation Manager for Technical Evaluation (read and write permissions)** so that they can fill in this section prior to submission. **We advise you contact them directly well before submitting the proposal.**

Here the list of RIM and contact details:

Organisation	Infrastructure	Installation	Contact Name	e-mail
INRAE	INRAE	PEIMA	Laurent Labbe	laurent.labbe@inrae.fr
INRAE	INRAE	STPEE	Stephane Panserat	stephane.panserat@inrae.fr
INRAE	INRAE	IERP	Dimitri Rigauddau	dimitri.rigauddau@inrae.fr
INRAE	INRAE	LPGP	Jean-Charles Gabillard	jean-charles.gabillard@inrae.fr
IMR	Matre	CELL	Ragnar Nortvedt	ragnar.nortvedt@hi.no
UoS	UoS_IoA	IoA	Amaya Albalat	amaya.albalat@stir.ac.uk
CSIC	CSIC-IATS	IATS-EXP	Josep Calduch Giner	j.calduch@csic.es
CSIC	CSIC-IATS	IATS-ANA	Josep Calduch Giner	j.calduch@csic.es
HCMR	HCMR	Aqualabs-souda	Stavros Chatzifotis	stavros@hcmr.gr
HCMR	HCMR	GB	Costas Tsigenopoulos	tsigeno@hcmr.gr
MATE HAKI	MATE HAKI	RECIRK	Uros Ljubobratovic	uros.ljubobratovic@uni-mate.hu
MATE HAKI	MATE HAKI	OEPS	Uros Ljubobratovic	uros.ljubobratovic@uni-mate.hu
IFREMER	IFREMER	IFR-PEARS	Emmanuel Rezzouk	Emmanuel.Rezzouk@ifremer.fr
IFREMER	IFREMER	IFR-PMMLT	Frederic Girardin	frederic.girardin@ifremer.fr
IFREMER	IFREMER	IFR-PMMB	Christophe Stavrakakis/ Virginie Le Razavet	christophe.stavrakakis@ifremer.fr / virginie.le.razavet@ifremer.fr
Nofima	Nofima NRSA	NRSA	Per Brunsvik	per.brunsvik@nofima.no

Organisation	Infrastructure	Installation	Contact Name	e-mail
JU	FFPW	GRC	Vojtěch Kašpar	vkaspar@frov.jcu.cz
JU	FFPW	IFA	Tomáš Polícar	policar@frov.jcu.cz
JU	FFPW	ICS	Petr Císař	cisar@frov.jcu.cz
JU	FFPW	IAPW	Jan Mráz	jmráz@frov.jcu.cz
NTNU	Sealab	Sealab	Elin Kjorsvik	elin.kjorsvik@ntnu.no
SINTEF	SINTEF	ACE	Nina Blöcher	nina.bloecher@sintef.no
SINTEF	SINTEF	NSTC	Silje Forbord	silje.forbord@sintef.no
ULPGC	PCTM	WWSSU	Rafael Ginés Ruiz	rafael.gines@ulpgc.es
ULPGC	PCTM	MBS	Daniel Montero Vítors	daniel.montero@ulpgc.es
ULPGC	PCTM	FITU	Daniel Montero Vítors	daniel.montero@ulpgc.es
WU	WU	WU-MRU	Roel M. Maas	roel.maas@wur.nl
WU	WU	WU-RAS	Roel M. Maas	roel.maas@wur.nl
WR	RAS-Fish performance	RAS-Fish Performance	Wout Abbink	Wout.Abbink@wur.nl
UL	EPA	EPA	Sylvain Milla	sylvain.milla@univ-lorraine.fr
DTU	DTU AQUA	AAH	Tine M. Iburg	timi@aquadtu.dk
DTU	DTU AQUA	DSC	Camille Saurel	csau@aquadtu.dk
CCMAR	CCMAR	Ramalhete Exp Station	Ana Amaral	amamaral@ualg.pt
CCMAR	CCMAR	Labs & Platforms	Ana Amaral	amamaral@ualg.pt
CCMAR	CCMAR-IPMA	IPMA Aquaculture Research Station (EPPO)	Pedro Pousão / Laura Ribeiro	pedro.pousao@ipma.pt and lribeiro@ipma.pt
IEO	IEO Aquaculture	PAU	Inmaculada Rasines	inma.rasines@ieo.es
IEO	IEO Aquaculture	ICAR MAP	Aurelio Ortega	aurelio.ortega@ieo.es
IEO	IEO Aquaculture	AquaCOV	Montse Pérez	montse.perez@ieo.es
UNITO	DISAFA	AQUA	Laura Gasco / Manuela Renna	laura.gasco@unito.it / manuela.renna@unito.it
UNITO	DISAFA	INSECTS	Laura Gasco / Manuela Renna	laura.gasco@unito.it / manuela.renna@unito.it

4. PREVIOUS AQUAEXCEL APPLICATIONS

Please give the details including reference numbers of any previous AQUAEXCEL applications, including AQUAEXCEL, AQUAEXCEL²⁰²⁰ and AQUAEXCEL3.0

5. SCIENTIFIC PROPOSAL

This section is the primary content upon which the project will be evaluated. You should ensure it is completed fully with a good standard of English Language.

5.1 Summary

Provide a concise summary of the planned research including its purpose and expected outcomes.



52 Justification

Provide a summary of the scientific context of the proposal study, including the current state of knowledge (including a list of up to 10 most relevant background publications). Include any commercial context for the work. Please identify the key reasons why you are applying to this particular infrastructure, e.g. with respect to facilities, species or particular expertise available or potential future collaboration plans. You should also clarify why the proposed research cannot be carried out in your own country.

53 Study objectives

Describe the objectives of the study and especially any potential commercial or quality of life benefits. Refer to official documents and other literature to show how this specific study meets the aims and objectives of broader EU research programmes.

54 Research plans

Provide details of the research to be carried out at the Research Installation(s) (give a minimum of 1 page and maximum 2 pages). Indicate if your research can only be carried out at a particular time for operational reasons, e.g., availability of material. Include experimental methods (treatments, controls etc), and schedules. Please also clarify what work will be carried out in person at the installation and what work might be done remotely.

55 Details of proposed analysis of results

Provide details of how you expect to analyse the results. This can include specific use of statistics, modelling, bioinformatics, and other analytical techniques.

56 Expected knowledge outputs from the research

Consider the type of knowledge that should be generated by the experimental work and its potential value and significance.

57 Specific requirements

Please provide as much detail as possible here about specific equipment, consumables, technical assistance, and training that will be required. Consider any materials that pose a hazard and require special procedures or disposal facilities.

58 Unfunded requirements

Use this section to identify any requirements for the work that are not covered under the standard TNA budget (which should cover routine consumables) and how these extra costs will be met.

59 Total estimated travel and subsistence costs

Travel costs are normally reimbursed by the Research Installation providing the most economic means of travel is used. Please give an estimate here to help the installation with budgeting.

Travel expenses will be paid from the user's home institution to the Research Installation and return. Economy class air fares will be reimbursed on production of tickets. Any additional travel costs incurred in travelling to and from the Research Installation (e.g., train, taxi) will also be reimbursed at economy rates. Any travel expenses involved in carrying out the research whilst at the Research Installation will also be provided.

Subsistence costs are normally reimbursed by the Research Installation according to their normal organisational rules. Please give an estimate here to help the installation with budgeting.

Accommodation will be provided in accommodation owned by the Research Infrastructure or in nearby guest houses (bed and breakfast) or hotels. Full details of accommodation provisions and expense allowances are available from the individual Research Infrastructures.

Use the space provided to provide any necessary clarifications on expected expenses and whether other funding is available to cover some or all of these.

Users of the Research Infrastructures will need to make their own travel insurance arrangements. If the visit involves more than one trip or different dates for different people, please explain this clearly alongside the cost estimates in this section.

6. DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS

Use this section to show you have thought about how the value of the research can be maximised and communicated to potential users. This is an important criterion for selection so it is expected that applicants will see possibilities that go well beyond publishing a paper in a journal or making a conference presentation.

61 Describe how you expect to disseminate the results of the research. Please consider who your communications will be targeted towards and the channels you will use.

62 Describe how you expect the results of the research to be exploited. Who do you anticipate making use of your results and how?

63 Do you expect the research to result in the creation and protection of any IP? This refers to the creation of any intellectual property that might be protected through a patent, copyright, trademark, or non-disclosure agreement. If so, the nature of the IP, ownership, means of protection and mechanisms for exploitation should be agreed with the host installation organisation prior to project commencement.

7. ETHICS SCREENING

It is AQUAEXCEL3.0 policy that all research linked to the project will be conducted according to the 3Rs (reduce, refine replace) methodology (Further explanation is given below and via web sites such as <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/>). All experimental work must also be carried out in accordance with the animal welfare regulations in force in the country concerned and according to welfare policies and procedures at the research installation where the work is conducted. Documentary evidence that procedures have been followed and permissions obtained needs to be provided to the Project Manager (INRAE Transfert).

71 **Ethics issues:** If your work involves live aquatic animals please discuss these principles in relation to your proposed work, showing how you will comply with best practice. As well as acute adverse effects, possible chronic adverse effects should be considered. Where chronic adverse effects are possible, humane end points should be defined before the experiment and criteria defined for early termination of specific experimental groups where necessary.

72 **Ethics compliance:** You should also provide details of any other fish welfare or ethics guidelines or procedures that will be followed in accordance with either the policies of your

own organisation, that of the Research Infrastructure, and with respect to national regulations under which the work will be conducted.

- 73 **Reduction** refers to methods for obtaining comparable levels of information from the use of fewer animals in scientific procedures or for obtaining more information from a given number of animals so that, in the long run, fewer animals are needed to complete a given research project or test. Reduction will be achieved through experimental planning and design, in order to avoid inconclusive experiments due to inadequate statistical power of experiments, as well as by standardisation of the animal population (genetics, health), the environment and experimental techniques. Where relevant, describe the steps you will take to reduce the number of experimental animals.
- 74 **Refinement** encompasses those methods that alleviate or minimize potential pain and distress and enhance animal well-being. Potential pain and distress can be avoided or alleviated with the proper use of anaesthetics, analgesics, and sedatives. The use of such methods is integral to the implementation of Directive 2010-63-EU which will be the baseline of the animal experimentation procedures used in AQUAEXCEL3.0. In this section describe in some detail the methods that will be used to refine any proposed aquatic animal trials.
- 75 **Replacement** alternatives encompass those methods that permit a given purpose to be achieved without conducting experiments or other scientific procedures on animals. Whenever possible, ex vivo methods will be preferred to experimentation on animals. Use this section to describe any replacement of experimental animals.

8. THEMATIC CLASSIFICATION

To help with evaluation and reporting of the project, please indicate which thematic area(s) are the subject of your study. You must select at least one, but multiple selections are also possible using the yes/no dropdown selectors. Note NGS = Next Generation Sequencing. If you consider the work is not adequately covered by the listed classifications, you can enter another classification in the “Other Description” text box.

9. SPECIES CLASSIFICATION

To help with evaluation and reporting of the project, please indicate which species group(s) are the subject of your study. You must select at least one, but multiple selections are also possible using the yes/no dropdown selectors. If you are working on a species not adequately covered by the listed classifications, you can enter another classification in the “Other aquaculture species” text box.

10. EATiP SRIA CLASSIFICATION: Addressing EATIP Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda

Use this section to describe clearly how your research is expected to contribute to the European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (See. <http://eatip.eu/>). “The Future of European Aquaculture – Our Vision: A Strategic Agenda for Research & Innovation” was published in 2012 (also available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Byu8uGbcUerAaUxHQ2R6MGZrak0/edit?usp=sharing>) which lists the 8 thematic areas in a different order to that on the form, i.e:

1. Product Quality, Consumer Safety and Health
2. Technology and Systems
3. Managing the Biological Life Cycle
4. Sustainable Feed Production
5. Integration with the Environment
6. Knowledge Management
7. Aquatic Animal Health and Welfare
8. Socio-economics, Management & Governance

Select the appropriate areas using the yes/no boxes.

For each thematic area, a key target is given and then a set of numbered goals and bullet-point sub-goals. In the text box “EATIP Justification” Please quote the specific goals and sub goals that your research will support – e.g. “Thematic Area 3, Goal 2, Sub-Goal b” (using a,b,c etc to identify the specific sub-goal) and explain these choices in the space given for further explanation. You may also wish to take account of the outcome of the SRIA review in 2017 - <http://eatip.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/EATIP-SRIA-2017.pdf>

PERSONAL DATA

Application for AQUAEXCEL3.0 TNA involves the sharing, storing and processing of personal data. The requirement for and use of personal data is kept to the minimum possible and is managed in compliance with the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The AQUAEXCEL3.0 TNA Policy on Personal Data is available separately (link [in here](#)), and it should be read by all applicants.

ATTACHMENTS

You should ensure that you add the appropriate attachments to your application. These are:

- CV ([CV TEMPLATE](#)) for the applicant and any other people involved in visits to the host installation (REQUIRED)
- Ethics documents – copies of any permissions or applications mentioned in the Ethics section (not already submitted to the Project Coordinator)
- Possibly, nominations for independent project reviewers ([EXPERT REVIEWER APPLICATION](#)) – this could help speed up processing and review of your project.
- Any other supporting documentation considered necessary.

The attachments must be in PDF format and less than 10 Mb in size.

SUBMISSION

When you have completed your application form and accepted you will see all the application to help ensure all fields have been completed with valid data. The system tells you which fields are incomplete and doesn't allow you to submit unless all is correct.

In submitting this application, you agree you have read and agreed to the terms and conditions for Transnational Access as detailed within the Call for Access and in < Model Grant Agreement – Article 16 - https://aquaexcel.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/INRAE-Data-Policy-for-the-AQUAEXCEL3_V6.pdf

AUTHORISATION: Please ensure you have any necessary authorisation from your own organisation to submit on behalf of that organisation. If a project is approved, it may be necessary to sign a contract between the applicant organisation and the host organisation requiring authorised legal signatures.

EVALUATION

Applications are checked and then sent to two expert reviewers. Especially if your application is in a highly specialised area you can suggest potential reviewers using a nomination form available from the AQUAEXCEL3.0 website ([EXPERT REVIEWER APPLICATION](#)).

Expert reviewers are asked to consider five main questions. The following notes indicate the consideration that may be given to each of these questions:

1) Scientific Excellence

Is the proposed work of high scientific quality?

- ☐ *Include original ideas?*
- ☐ *Develops new techniques?*
- ☐ *Contributes new knowledge?*

Are the proposed research methods clearly described and appropriate to meet the stated objectives?

Are the proposed means of analysing the results appropriate (e.g., use of statistics)?

Is the described work feasible in relation to the time and resources available and the expertise and experience of those involved?

2) Expected output

What outputs are envisaged from the work and what might be their impact? What steps are planned for exploitation and dissemination?

- ☐ *Publications – type and quality,*
- ☐ *Contribution to future research proposal,*
- ☐ *Transfer to commercial sector,*
- ☐ *Contribute to policy development*

Potential impacts:

- ☐ *On future research*
- ☐ *Commercially (economic benefits)*
- ☐ *On future policy/ strategy*

What evidence is provided concerning the need for the research from industry (or expected user group)? What plans are there for further technology transfer?

3) Compliance with EATIP Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda

Does the applicant show familiarity with the EATIP SRLA and explain how their work will contribute? Does the work clearly address issues from the SRLA? Documents relating to the EATIP SRLA are available from the EATIP website: http://eatip.eu/?page_id=46

4) Compliance with EC Agenda for broadening access

- ☐ *is this a new partnership and a first working visit to the infrastructure for the applicant?*
- ☐ *Is this making use of facilities that are not available in the home country of the applicant?*
- ☐ *Does this provide access opportunities to scientists that might not otherwise be able to access such facilities?*

5) Applicant/team (CVs)

CVs are mainly provided for background to help evaluate various aspects of the proposal including scientific quality and how the project might fit into the wider programmes and collaborations of the applicant. However, it may also be appropriate to comment on whether the proposed work fits in with the wider research of the applicant, motivations for the project and likelihood of success.

Where the applicant or main researcher is a student or early postdoctoral researcher, is there evidence of adequate supervisory support both from the applicant and host organisations?

6) Overall

Summary of recommendations and if appropriate, raise any questions that should be put to the applicant before the Selection Panel finalise their decision. Overall recommendation can be indicated as:

- ☐ *Excellent, top priority*
- ☐ *Very good, high priority*
- ☐ *Good, medium priority*
- ☐ *Fundable but low priority*
- ☐ *Not fundable as currently presented*
- ☐ *Un-fundable, clear rejection*



Applications that pass the initial review stage are passed to the project Ethics Adviser for consideration and comment. The results of these reviews are then passed to the project Selection Panel for final decision on funding. A period of at least 3 months should be allowed between project submission and decision on outcome of review.