

These guidelines are to be used for the organization of proposals. Model forms are provided as separate files to help in the preparation of the pre-proposals (Model pre-proposals) and proposals (Model proposals), but the final application form will have to fit the Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS) of the FRB. Submissions are only valid if submitted through the EPSS, which will be available at least one month prior to the deadline for applications (information will be available on the CESAB web site in due time). Any application not submitted through the EPSS will not be considered for evaluation.

Deadline for submission of pre-proposals:	November 20, 2015
Notification of selection for final proposal:	December 18, 2015
Deadline for submission of complete proposals:	February 1, 2016
Completion of project selection:	March 31, 2016

The selection of proposals is conducted in two steps.

In the **first step**, short pre-proposals will be evaluated by the CESAB Scientific Committee (CS) on the basis of four criteria: (i) originality of the project, (ii) alignment with the terms of the call, (iii) consistency of the pre-proposal to CESAB objectives, and (iv) identification of data sets to be used, for projects involving data compilation and analyses.

In the **second step**, involving both the CS and independent external reviewers commissioned by the CS, short-listed proposals will be evaluated based on the submission of a complete proposal. Criteria for this second step will include: (i) the innovation and scientific excellence of the proposal, (ii) the relevance to the CESAB objectives, (iii) the quality of the working group assembled (i.e. expertise and relevance of skills assembled), (iv) the feasibility of the work program (including budget), (v) the importance of the proposed activities for the dissemination of knowledge and data, and (vi) links with national (and international) initiatives.

1. PRE-PROPOSALS

Pre-proposals should include the following items.

A cover sheet

- Date of submission
- Descriptive title
- Short title: an acronym for use as a project name
- Principal Investigator's name and contact information
- Project summary: a brief scientific abstract of your project (**200 words max**: a clear and concise problem statement of what is to be done, importance and relevance of the subject, and how it will be accomplished)

Body of the pre-proposal

In less than **1500 words** tell us about the question being addresses, the proposed activities, geographic scope and availability of data to be used (where relevant).

Context and objectives:

- problem statement, importance and relevance of the subject, and outline of the working hypotheses

Proposed activities:

- brief description of methods and of their relevance to the issue, and
- description and availability of data sets (when relevant)

Literature cited

Composition of the working group:

- list of participants, relevant expertise and expected contribution in the context of the proposal.

Important note: new participants cannot be added to the working group between the pre-proposal and complete proposal phases.

2. COMPLETE PROPOSALS

Complete proposals should be relatively short (less than **3000 words** for the body of the proposal), and should include the following.

A cover sheet containing

- Date of submission
- Descriptive title
- Short title: an acronym for use as a project name
- Principal Investigator's name and contact information
- Project summary: a brief scientific abstract of your project (200 words max: a clear and concise problem statement of what is to be done, importance and relevance of the subject, and how it will be accomplished)
- Proposed beginning and end dates
- Proposed data release date: date you expect to submit data set(s) to the CESAB

Body of the proposal

In less than **3000 words** tell us about the question being addressed, the proposed activities, type of data analyses and dissemination activities.

Context and objectives:

- problem statement, importance and relevance of the subject and outline of the working hypotheses

Proposed activities:

- brief description of methods and why they are appropriate

Anticipated results and benefits

A **precise data management plan** is required for projects involving data compilation and analyses. This should involve at least:

- (i) information about the origin and types of data compiled and used in the project,
- (ii) intended standards used to document the data,
- (iii) policy for further access and use of data after the end of the project,
- (iv) storage and management solutions, and
- (v) information about who will be involved in and responsible for the implementation of the data management plan.

List of participants

- Names and short affiliation of participants, including Identification of a participant with relevant information technology expertise to serve as a link with the CESAB technical staff.

Anticipated results and benefits

- include a description of the data to be produced and proposed public release date.

Capacity building

- working groups are encouraged to include training and dissemination activities through national initiatives and participation in lectures and/or training, as part of their projects. Allowance for this should be made in the budget proposal.

In addition (not included in the 3000 word limit), please provide:

- a clear timetable of activities including proposed schedule of meetings;
- list of literature cited;
- a project budget summary;
- CVs for the leader (and co-leader if there is one) of the working group, stating
 - main skills and experience, positions, complete updated information for contact, bibliographic indicators for peer reviewed articles, books and book chapters, and a list of 5 selected publications in relation to the proposal; and
- Information about how you first heard about the CESAB Call for proposals.

3. ONLINE SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Pre-proposals and proposals should be submitted on line. The internet address for submission will be posted on the FRB (www.fondationbiodiversite.fr) and the CESAB (www.cesab.org) websites at least one month prior to the deadline for applications (both for pre-proposals and complete proposals). The format of the submitted pre-proposals and complete proposals will follow the organization described above. An email will confirm receipt. Please contact the CESAB staff if you have difficulty submitting your proposal (cesab@fondationbiodiversite.fr).

4. PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals are evaluated for their scientific merit, novel approaches, and rationale for involving the CESAB. The Centre's Scientific Committee (CS, <http://www.cesab.org/fr/organisation>) will review proposals and make recommendations to the Director and the FRB.

As explained above, pre-proposals will be evaluated by the CESAB Scientific Committee, while the evaluation of the complete proposals involves both the CS and independent external reviewers commissioned by the CS.

Committee Members are given a list of proposals under consideration and are asked to nominate those they prefer to review. Review assignments are made considering these preferences. Reviewers are asked to decline reviewing a proposal if there is a conflict of interest, according to the terms of the CESAB review process and conflict of interest statement.

The CS will provide the PI(s) with a summary of the reasons for the decision, but not the actual scores given by reviewers, their names, or details of the discussions on the project. Proposals clearly inappropriate for the CESAB (e.g. those requesting equipment, funds to be spent at the investigator's home institution, or funds for new data collection, etc.) will be returned without review.

Tips from the Scientific and Organization Committee

Proposals are evaluated primarily on the significance and novelty of the idea(s) under consideration and should be question-driven (i.e. not purely descriptive). To prepare your proposal, please:

- provide a clear rationale for why this should be, or can only be done at CESAB;
- give a precise description of the datasets to be used, their origin and availability (when relevant), and provide a detailed management plan for the data;
- give information as to whether a general database for the project will have to be created and how it will be created;
- include enough methodological details so that methodological soundness and feasibility can be assessed;
- be clear and concise: give brief examples of the major points you are making or approaches you are using- for each participant, specify the expertise brought to the project and whether he/she has agreed to participate;
- if the results may be useful to resource managers, justify this convincingly; and
- provide details concerning any possible co-funding (other synthesis centre, funding agency, private company, etc) if relevant. Although this will not alter assessment of the quality and suitability of the project, supplementary funding sources might improve its feasibility.

5. CONTACT

Information

For any further information on the CESAB initiative, the Centre facilities, the French Foundation of Research on Biodiversity, or the preparation of proposals, please contact the CESAB staff: cesab@fondationbiodiversite.fr

See also: www.cesab.org or www.fondationbiodiversite.fr