

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

CESAB (CEntre for the Synthesis and Analysis of Biodiversity) is an initiative run by the French Foundation for Research on Biodiversity (FRB) to promote high level research activities devoted to the synthesis of ideas and /or data analyses in the field of biodiversity. CESAB does not support the collection of new observational or experimental data. CESAB offers a *place and 'timeless time'* to collaborate and capitalise on existing data. Calls for proposals have been made since 2010. CESAB's premises are located in Aix-en-Provence, in the South of France.

TYPE OF RESEARCH PROJECTS FUNDED

CESAB supports national or international working groups developing a synthesis of ideas and concepts, and/or data to improve our understanding of all facets of biodiversity. The members of CESAB groups share expertise and available data to address specific questions relevant to a wide range of biodiversity issues at any spatial or temporal scale. Proposals from the natural and social sciences are welcome.

A **non-exhaustive** list of topics includes: social and governance questions of biodiversity conservation and management, land use and habitat change, values of biodiversity and ecosystem services, status and dynamics of biodiversity, components (e.g. taxonomic, phylogenetic, functional) of biodiversity, biodiversity conservation, biodiversity-ecosystem functioning and biodiversity-ecosystem services relationships, evolutionary processes related to the dynamics of biodiversity, the dynamics of and access to biological resources, and the development of standards for, and interoperability of, biodiversity data.

Interdisciplinary groups and groups including or linked to stakeholders, are welcome, but not mandatory. Criteria for selection 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.

PROJECT LEADER AND COMPOSITION OF THE WORKING GROUP

The working group leader (proponent) should be a well-recognised scientist belonging to a French organisation. Working groups are expected to be broadly international. If this is not the case, this should be thoroughly justified in the proposal.

INDICATIVE BUDGET

Projects will be funded to a maximum of 160-180k€ per project. Note that smaller projects are eligible.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES FUNDED.

Support is provided for:

- Groups of up to 14 experts to work at CESAB for a minimum of a 3 days to a maximum of around 10 (generally smaller groups and longer stays are most effective but all group members should be involved in the process throughout), concentrating on specific issues that require in-depth analysis of available data and/or the synthesis of ideas. Although there will be some flexibility, each working group is expected to meet at CESAB two times a year for periods of 5-8 days, for the duration of the project (usually 3 years).
- CESAB provides guidance and support for working group and meeting planning, and makes local arrangements (e.g. travel, accommodation, computer and technical assistance) to ensure working group members are able to focus on their work with minimal distraction. Working group proposals need to state their particular computing and technical requirements and should designate one group member with relevant expertise to serve as a link with the CESAB technical staff.
- Postdoctoral associates are allocated to each successful group and are to be incorporated in the project planning. Appointees are expected to promote scientific and personal interactions within the working group. This function implies both a strong scientific activity and also a dedication to help the group run smoothly and productively. Each postdoctoral associate is expected to be a catalyst

of his/her working groups, under the supervision of the Principal Investigator (or nominee). The availability of postdoctoral positions will be advertised widely by FRB, in agreement with the working group and selected on merit by the PI, the working group and FRB-CESAB.

- An important characteristic of CESAB emerges from the interactions that take place between the working groups and other activities at the national level. Working groups are thus encouraged to include dissemination activities at least at national level as part of their projects (such as presentations at major conferences or governmental panels).

DATA AND INFORMATION POLICY

CESAB is committed to making data available to the broader scientific community. To meet this goal CESAB:

- requires that data generated during a CESAB research project is well documented (using standardised languages) and made publicly available,
- urges that data used to generate the derived products is also well documented and made openly available, and
- requires that the intellectual property rights of all data owners are respected when their data are used in CESAB working groups. FRB cannot be considered, however, to be responsible for any misuse of research data thus deposited.

In this regard, CESAB offers a unique opportunity for scientists, with in-house skills and advice, and links to relevant organisations making data delivery easier.

PROJECT OUTPUTS

The primary objective of the initiative is to facilitate the production of new insights from existing data.

Expected project deliverables include scientific publications and other dissemination, such as tools and activities (e.g. open modelling platforms, software, a web site, database). Other deliverables such as organising an international workshop, a training session, participation in lectures and training are welcome. Working groups are required to provide short meeting reports, a mid-term (18 months) and a final report. The intermediate report in particular should include any difficulties encountered and suggestions for CESAB. These reports may be used to provide information for the public, but not without consultation with the working group involved.

MANAGEMENT DETAILS

Project support includes payment for travel, accommodation and per diem expenses. No salary support is provided except for the funded postdoctoral associates. Participant costs are paid as itemised in the approved budget. Note that for a maximum eligible budget of 160,000-180,000 Euros per project, the full cost supported by CESAB is considerably greater. When a project is approved, a global budget is allocated to the project. Working group leaders are expected to remain within the limits of this budget but will have flexibility to use it within these limits (see items noted under 'Project Output' which may be initially unexpected but valuable). The budgets need to be spent within the period specified in the proposal. Significant deviations must be approved by the CESAB Director before executed.

Working group leaders are required in the proposals to provide the names, contact details and brief curriculum vitae (1 paragraph) for each nominated participant. Any changes to participants need to be discussed with the CESAB Director, as the composition of the group is part of the selection process. This applies throughout a successful project.

IMPORTANT NOTE

The budget, number and identity of participants, and the number of meetings and their location approved at the start of successful projects should be respected by all parties throughout the life of the project. FRB-CESAB may cease funding projects that do not comply.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For any further information on the CESAB initiative, the Centre facilities, the Foundation for Research on Biodiversity, or the preparation of proposals, please contact the FRB-CESAB staff:

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