



# Call for proposals for Transnational Access

Updated 4 May 2022

## Background and objectives

The AQUAEXCEL3.0 project unites major aquaculture experimental facilities with capacity to undertake experimental trials on a selection of commercially important 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 Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (Infrastructures).

Transnational Access involves a research group in one country collaborating with one or more AQUAEXCEL3.0 Infrastructures that are located in a different country to the applicant, and which offer facilities and expertise not available in their own country. The collaboration normally takes the form of one or more scientists from the applicant organisation visiting the selected AQUAEXCEL3.0 installation to undertake research work there for up to 3 months. In some cases, remote access is also available (where the applicant is not present for some or all of the experimental period at the installation).

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); culture species (fish, shellfish and seaweeds); and fields of expertise (nutrition, physiology, health 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. The establishment of new transnational collaborations is strongly encouraged, as well as the participation by SMEs.

Applications for Transnational Access can be made at any time (continuously open call).

## Proposal requirements

Expected projects can involve research on any of the available aquatic species at the selected research infrastructure. The participating facilities are summarised below and full details are available in the AQUAEXCEL3.0 TNA Guide document, via the project website (<http://www.aquaexcel.eu>) or through direct contact with the selected research infrastructure. Proposals can only be approved if feasible and visits do not exceed a total duration of 3 months (Where necessary, experimental work can exceed this period, but not visits).

Priority will be given to proposals 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 States<sup>1</sup>, which are different from the State where the selected Research Infrastructure is located. A maximum of 20% of TNA projects may involve applicants from third countries (i.e. outside the EU or Associated States).

It is required that the facility users communicate the results acquired in an AQUAEXCEL3.0 Research Infrastructure to the scientific community at large through classical means, i.e. project reports, congress communications and scientific publications<sup>2</sup>. 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). Research proposals should also include plans for exploitation of results wherever possible.

## Proposal review

Each submitted proposal that is eligible, and considered to be feasible at the chosen Research Infrastructure, will be appraised by at least two aquaculture experts (including one who is external to the AQUAEXCEL3.0 project) and then by a selection panel appointed by the Executive Committee, which also includes external experts.

Following an initial screening for practical and financial feasibility, the criteria for selection will be scientific quality, degree of innovation, relevance, exploitation potential and ethical soundness of the study. 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. In considering the exploitation potential, attention will 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 Agenda (“The Vision”) ([www.eatip.eu](http://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 may be subjected to further ethical review and advice. All work must be completed by 31-10-2025 to fall within the funding period of the AQUAEXCEL3.0 project by the European Commission. Applications that are not approved will receive feedback and may be re-submitted.

## Resources

There are 40 research installations provided by 19 partner organisations available for access within the AQUAEXCEL3.0 project. Access is measured in the most appropriate way for each installation. Applicants must indicate the number of units of access they wish to apply for. As the units of access are used up at each installation, those facilities will no longer be available for TNA projects. More detailed Information on each facility is provided in the AQUAEXCEL3.0 TNA Guide (Separate PDF document downloadable from the AQUAEXCEL3.0 website). Web links to the individual organisation’s pages are provided through the Interactive Map on the AQUAEXCEL3.0 website and directly at <https://aquaexcel.eu/resource-infrastructures/>. Please contact the appropriate Infrastructure Manager for further details and to discuss your requirements.

The AQUAEXCEL3.0 project will cover both facility costs and the research group(s) travel and subsistence expenses for work included in the submitted application and approved by the Selection Panel. Most facilities assume one person per project whilst some assume that up to two will be involved. As costs and reimbursement arrangements may vary between facilities, full details will be

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<sup>1</sup> Associated states: Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia and Armenia. Note that the United Kingdom is treated as a Member State for the purposes of H2020.

<sup>2</sup> Exceptions may be made for Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) that expect to directly exploit the results

provided on request to the specific Research Infrastructure. Host organisations are obliged to use their standard rules for reimbursing travel and subsistence expenses although where flat rates are used they will be subject to maximum allowances set out in EC H2020 funding regulations. Experimental work requiring additional consumables, transport of equipment or samples, the use of analytical facilities, or additional training that is not included in the facility costs may need to be funded by the applicant organisation.

## Orientation Committee

If you require further advice concerning which infrastructures might best meet your needs and provide the facilities needed for your experimental work, please contact the Orientation Committee via [aquaexcel-OC@inra.fr](mailto:aquaexcel-OC@inra.fr). The Orientation Committee comprises a small group of scientific experts familiar with the research infrastructures and management of TNA projects. This service is particularly intended for SMEs and organisations who have not previously engaged with AQUAEXCEL3.0.

## Application procedure

Information on the facilities offering Transnational access is available at the project website (<http://www.aquaexcel.eu>) and in the document “AQUAEXCEL3.0 Guide for Transnational Access” which is available on the website. 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.

Applications must be prepared and submitted via the TNA online application system at <https://apply.aquaexcel.eu/submit-proposal/>. Each person involved in the application must first create an individual username to access the system. Further guidance on using the system is provided at that web site.

## Engagement conditions

1. All TNA projects will be subject to the Research Access and Research Data Management Policies of the host Infrastructure and as guided by the EU Charter for Access to Research Infrastructures ([https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/research\\_and\\_innovation/2016\\_charterforacc\\_essto-ris.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/research_and_innovation/2016_charterforacc_essto-ris.pdf))
2. Only user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under the action may benefit from the access, unless the users are working for SMEs.
3. **All group members<sup>3</sup>** 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 Horizon 2020 Programme (INFRAIA-01-2018-2019) under grant agreement n° 871108.”
4. Consent is required under GDPR for the processing of personal information and publication of project results
5. After the completion of an AQUAEXCEL3.0 Transnational Access, each appointed group leader should: Submit feedback reports as requested by the TNA Manager or other AQUAEXCEL3.0 Office holders, or as required by the European Commission.
6. 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.
7. Funding is subject to EC rules and regulations e.g. as set out in the Model Agreement - [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants\\_manual/amga/h2020-amga\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf)

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<sup>3</sup> With some exemptions for SMEs



Further information: If further guidance on the call and application procedure is required please contact Sonia Rey Planellas [sonia.reyplanellas@stir.ac.uk](mailto:sonia.reyplanellas@stir.ac.uk) and cc Kirsten Strachan [k.m.strachan1@stir.ac.uk](mailto:k.m.strachan1@stir.ac.uk)

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