

ProSafe

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Report on Funded Projects for the joint call

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1 Description of task

Task 4.3 Twinning of projects, common project calls

Task leader: FCT, responsible for common calls

Partner: TEMAS AG, responsible for twinning of projects

This task has two main objectives:

1. Twinning of projects
2. Implementation of common call

This report concerns the funded project within the joint call, which was implemented by FCT as the Secretariat of the call and leader of the task 4.3.

Transnational Joint Call

The objective of this part of the task 4.3 was to implement a Transnational Joint Call (JTC), on the basis of the lessons learned with the SIINN project (ERA-NET on Safe Implementation of Innovative Nanoscience and Nanotechnology). The procedures to implement the call involved the development of the following instruments:

- Electronic proposal submission and evaluation tool
- Documents of the call («Preliminary Announcement»; «Guidelines for Applicants»; «Guidelines for Evaluation»; «Call Text and National Funding Regulations»; «JTC Call Participation of Partners from other Countries»; «Call flyer»)
- Follow-up of the funded projects

The funding of the selected projects required:

- Involvement of the national/regional funding agencies with information on the budget available.
- Evaluation of the proposals by an international Panel of evaluators.
- Establishment of a ranking list by the Evaluation Panel, to be the basis for the final decision by the national funding agencies. The financing of the national parts of the project(s) is subject to a respective contract between the national project partner(s) and the national funding agency.

This call was also opened for global organisations and countries (the respective costs were to be covered by the global partners, similar to the national funding).

2 Description of work & main achievements

2.1 Summary

This report describes the procedures made from the launch of the ProSafe Joint Transnational Call (ProSafe JTC) until the main achievement of its results, the selection for funding of one transnational project under the concept of Safe-by-Design.

The call was launched on 29th February 2016. The submission period was opened for almost 3 months and was closed on 20th May 2016. During this period, specific actions were made to disseminate the call.

Upon reception of the proposals, and after verification of the proposals for the eligibility criteria, the proposals underwent a rigorous process of evaluation by a Panel composed of international experts. FCT, as responsible for the ProSafe JTC Secretariat, organised and supervised the whole process to be in accordance with the established guidelines.

Out of the two proposals received, only one – GoNanoBioMat - was recommended for funding by the Evaluation Panel, which was accepted by the Call Committee, composed of the national funding organisations.

2.2 Background of the task

The background of the task was described in the Deliverable D 4.6 («Report on common call procedures and implementation activities»).

2.3 Description of the work carried out

2.3.1 Call Committee and Call Secretariat

The procedures relative to the ProSafe JTC were led by FCT, as the Call Secretariat, after approval by the Call Committee, composed of the national funding organisations (Table 1). The composition of the Call Committee, as well as the provisional budget available (total of 2.270.000,00 €) was published in the «Call Text and National Funding Regulations» at the launch date of the Call.

Table 1 – Composition of the Call Committee and the provisional budget available

Institution	Country	Budget
BMVIT (Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology) / FFG (Austrian Research Promotion Agency)	Austria	370.000,00 €
FCT (Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology)	Portugal	400.000,00 €
CTI (Commission of Technology and Innovation)	Switzerland	500.000,00 €
UEFISCDI (Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding)	Romania	1.000.000,00 €

2.3.2 Procedures before the launch of the ProSafe JTC

All the procedures for the implementation of the call were described in the Deliverable D4.6 («Report on common call procedures and implementation activities»).

2.3.3 Procedures after the launch of the ProSafe JTC

Dissemination of the Call

During the submission period of the ProSafe JTC (from 29th February 2016 to 20th May 2016), each funding organisation was responsible for disseminating the call in their own countries. In addition to these activities, specific instruments were used:

a) Safe-by-Design Concept Training

TEMAS AG (leader of WP4) prepared the «Safe-by-Design Concept Training», aimed to provide an overview over NANoREG Safe-by-Design concept for members of companies and research centers interested in elaborating a proposal for the ProSafe JTC. Each funding organisation was in charge of disseminating and organising the «Safe-by-Design Concept Training» in their own countries. The training, presented by TEMAS AG, was held in the following countries:

- Portugal (11th May 2016), 16 attendees
- Switzerland (9th May 2016), 7 attendees

b) Newsletter

A Dedicated ProSafe Newsletter (organised by WP5, ISS - Italian Istituto Superiore di Sanità), to which WP4 members contributed, was published to promote the ProSafe JTC.

c) Flyers

A specific flyer to disseminate the Call and a specific flyer to disseminate the «Safe-by-Design Concept Training» were produced.

d) Website

All the call documents were published in the ProSafe website.

Eligibility procedures

Two proposals were submitted to the ProSafe JTC through the ProSafe Electronic Proposal Submission System.

FCT, as the Call secretariat, verified each proposal for the eligibility criteria indicated in the «Guidelines for Applicants». In parallel, each funding agency checked their respective proposals for their own funding regulations.

After approval by the Call Committee, the two proposals were found to be eligible and were sent to evaluation by an international Evaluation Panel.

Characterisation of the profile of potential evaluators

FCT, as the Call Secretariat, compiled a list of potential international reviewers (more than 160) based on the suggestions provided by the funding organisations, characterised their profile and analysed their suitability to the subject of the proposals submitted.

Evaluators' selection and invitation

The evaluators of the call, whose profile was characterised by FCT, were selected on the basis of the number (two) and subject of the proposals received. The WP4 leader (TEMA AG) was consulted for this selection. The final list of the evaluators composing the Evaluation Panel (three experts) was approved by the Call Committee. As a result, the Evaluation Panel was composed of three international experts originated from Denmark, German and Greece, countries other than the ones from the applicants (to avoid conflicts of interest).

The selected evaluators received an invitation by email from FCT as the Call Secretariat.

Evaluation procedures

The two proposals were evaluated by the Evaluation Panel, composed of three international experts.

Each expert signed a declaration of confidentiality and declared no conflict of interest with any of the proposals under evaluation.

One of the reviewers was assigned with the role of the Chair of the Panel. The other two reviewers were assigned with the role of proposal's rapporteur (one rapporteur per proposal).

The reviewers carried out the evaluation according to specific evaluation criteria (criterion 1: Scientific and/or technological excellence; criterion 2: Potential impact; criterion 3: Quality and efficiency of the implementation), using a scoring system from 0 to 5 to evaluate the proposal in relation to each criterion. The

evaluation reports were completed using a common evaluation form and submitted through the ProSafe Electronic Proposal Evaluation System.

The evaluation procedure comprised the following stages:

- a) From 1st July 2016 to 14th September 2016, each proposal was evaluated individually by the three Panel members, who provided three individual reports per proposal.
- b) From 15th September to 7th October 2016, the rapporteur of each proposal provided a draft consensus report, on the basis of the three individual evaluations and on discussions by email among the three experts.
- c) On 17th October 2016, an Evaluation Panel meeting was held by videoconference. The Call Committee, composed of the national funding agencies, participated in the meeting as observers. During the meeting, the Evaluation Panel discussed in detail each proposal, attributed the respective final scores and established the final ranking. A final consensus report for each proposal was produced by the Evaluation Panel.
- d) On 17th October 2016, after the Evaluation Panel meeting, the Call Committee met through call conference, accepted the recommendations of the Evaluation Panel and established that the national funding would be able to start on early 2017.

Communication of the results

On 4th November 2016, FCT, as the Call Secretariat and on behalf of the ProSafe Call Committee, sent to each proposal's coordinator an email with the communication of the decision and the respective final consensus report (without the scores) attached.

2.4 Results

2.4.1 *Response to the ProSafe Call*

Two proposals were submitted to the ProSafe JTC and both were considered eligible. Both proposals responded to Topic 2 - *Gaining and collection of knowledge for the sustainable implementation of the NANoREG Safe-by-Design (SbD) concepts in industrial innovation processes*.

In total, there was the involvement of 18 partners from 17 different organisations in 4 countries (Table 2), with the distribution per country and per type of organisation depicted in Figure 1.

Table 2 - General statistics relative to the total of proposals submitted to the ProSafe Call

Number of proposals	2
Number of countries	4
Number of partners	18
Number of organisations	17



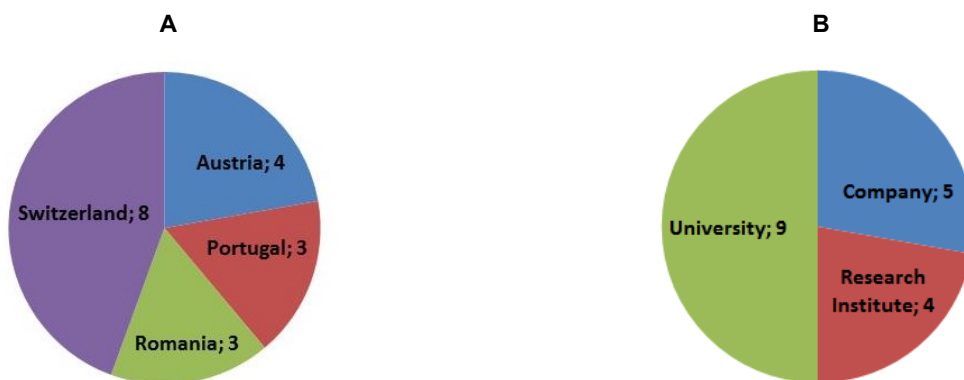


Figure 1 – Number of partners per country (A) and per type of organisation (B), considering the total of proposals submitted.

The two proposals involved a total of 2.141.413,00 €, being requested a total of 1.758.894,00 €. The distribution of the costs per country is presented in Figure 2.

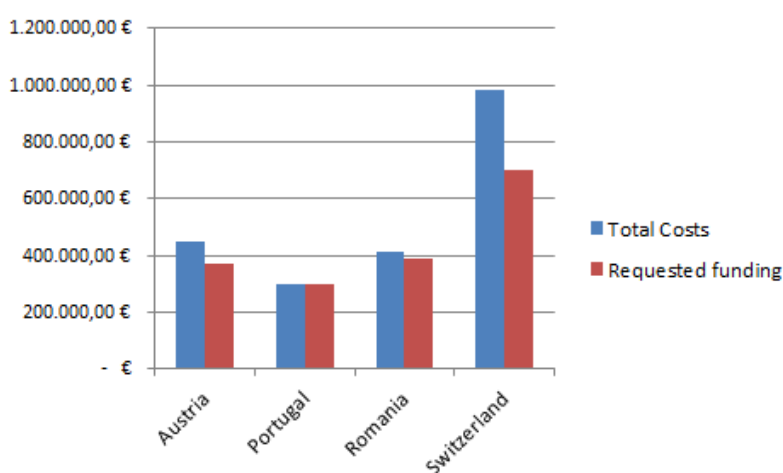


Figure 2 – Total costs and requested funding (considering the total of proposals submitted)

2.4.2 Evaluation results

Upon completion of the several stages of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Panel unanimously decided that only one proposal - GoNanoBioMat («Polymeric NanoBioMaterials for drug delivery: developing and implementation of safe-by-design concept enabling safe healthcare solutions») - met the minimum requirements to be funded (overall score at or above 10.5 and all the criterion scores at or above 3.5, according to the «Guidelines for Evaluation»).

The other proposal was scored below 3.5 in two of the criteria and had an overall score lower than 10.5 and thus was not recommended for funding by the Evaluation Panel.

The ranking list of the proposals recommended for funding established by the Evaluation Panel is thus composed of one only proposal, GoNanoBioMat (Table 3).

Table 3 – Ranking list established by the Evaluation Panel

Ranking	Acronym	Funding Recommendation
1	GoNanoBioMat	YES

Based on the recommendations by the Evaluation Panel, the Call Committee decided to fund the proposal GoNanoBioMat and not to fund the other proposal.

2.4.3 Funded project - GoNanoBioMat

The data relative to the project GoNanoBioMat, selected for funding within the ProSafe JTC, is presented in figure 3:

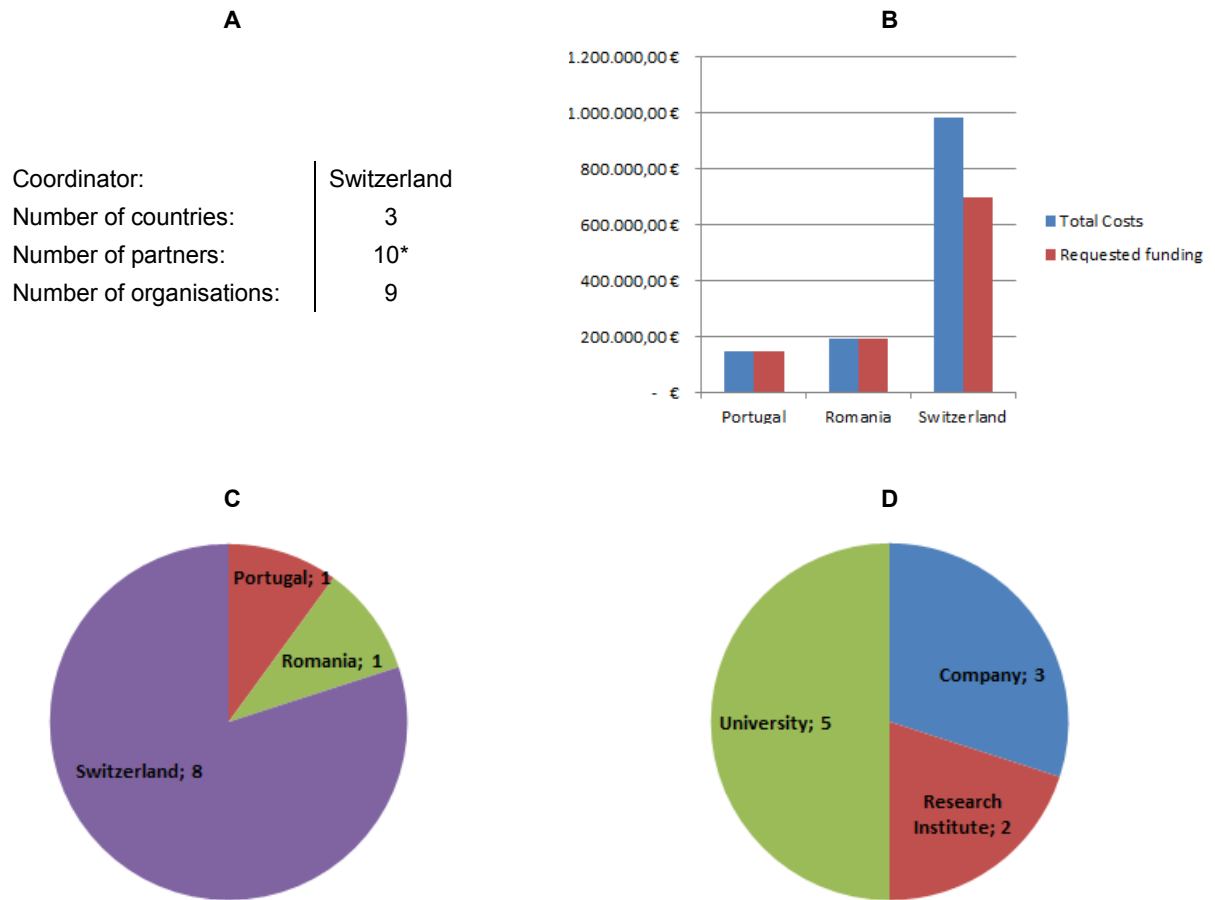


Figure 3 – Data relative to the project GoNanoBioMat, selected for funding within the ProSafe Joint Transnational Call: **A** - General statistics (*two partners belong to the same organisation); **B** - Total costs and requested funding; **C** – Number of partners per country; **D** – Number of partners per type of organisation

The common starting date of GoNanoBioMat, according to what is indicated in the respective proposal, is April 2017. The duration of the project is 24 months.

2.4.4 Monitoring process for GoNanoBioMat

The Call Secretariat will organise the monitoring process for this funded project on the basis of the follow-up process for the funded projects within the ERA-NET SIINN (the project's coordinator will produce annual and final reports, on the basis of a template that will be provided; a scientific rapporteur, to be selected, will assess those reports and write assessment reports on the progress of the project to be sent to the coordinator). All the reports (from the coordinator and from the scientific rapporteur) will also be sent to the involved funding organisations.

2.5 Evaluation and conclusions

Overall, the procedures relative to the ProSafe JTC were adequate, given that:

- Several channels (e-mail, web conferences, in-person meetings) were used to attract funding agencies to the ProSafe JTC (details in the Deliverable 4.6).
- The planned tools to implement the ProSafe JTC (Electronic proposal submission and evaluation tool; call documents) were all produced.
- Several instruments were used to disseminate the ProSafe JTC, including a specific «Safe-by-Design Concept Training» targeted to potential applicants.
- The evaluation process was robust and went efficiently, as assessed by the following indicators:
 - o Each proposal was evaluated by 3 reviewers before the Panel meeting;
 - o The evaluators were from countries other than the ones from the applicants, which is important to avoid conflicts of interest;
 - o The time for evaluation allowed a very detailed discussion of the proposals among the evaluators before the Panel meeting;
 - o Each proposal was discussed in detail during the Panel meeting, which allowed reaching an evaluation consensus for each proposal among the three Panel members.
 - o All the deadlines specified in the ProSafe JTC timeline were met.
- The funding organisations participating in the Call (Call Committee) were collaborative and approved the several stages involved in this process: eligibility, selection of the reviewers, evaluation procedures and communication of the results.

Despite the robustness of the process, it was difficult to mobilise funding organisations to participate in the call. This could be related to the fact that, for many funding organisations, the concept of «safe-by-design» is understood as an issue of regulation and not of research, although this is not entirely true, as research is needed for implementing regulation.

As a result, only two proposals were submitted, which was below the initial expectations. The experience with the ProSafe JTC should be used to promote a reflection on the interest of funding agencies relative to financing projects on the concept of «safe-by-design».

As the final result of this call, only one proposal was recommended for funding by the Evaluation Panel, and this is a consequence of the very low number of proposals under evaluation in conjunction with the high level of quality that is expected for a project to be funded (the exclusion of one of the projects is due to purely scientific reasons, according to the consensus decision made by the Panel).

3 Deviations from the work plan

Although the launch of the call had to be postponed to 29th February 2016, in order to allow for the participation of funding organisations from countries other than the four already committed, the timeline published in the call documents at the launch date of the call had no deviations. The communication of the results to the coordinators of the proposals was done at the beginning of November 2016 allowing for the initiation of the funded project from January 2017, as initially scheduled. The common starting date of GoNanoBioMat, according to what is indicated in the respective proposal, is April 2017.

4 Performance of the partners

All partners performed well.