

EURON Second Call for Proposals  
Deadline 15 April 2005 @ 12.00 MET  
DRAFT v 2005-01-09

## 1 Introduction

Under the European Research Network – EURON contract (FP6-NOE-507728), sponsored by the CEC-IST Future and Emerging Technologies unit, a call for proposals is hereby issued.

As part of its research coordination the network invites applications for support in terms of:

- Prospective Research Projects (PRP)
- Research Ateliers (RA) and
- Topical Research Studies (TRS)

In short the respective categories are:

- A PRP is a small research project
- A RA is well-defined work meeting to study a specific topic
- A TRS is support for studies of a particular topic

Below a more detailed explanation is provided. In addition details on the different types of projects can be found in the annex of work for EURON (the annex 1 to the contract).

Projects must have a clear value to the “Beyond Robotics” programme and, as such, address one of the focal areas of:

- Hybrid bionic systems
- Cognitive Companion
- Robot ecologies

The proposed projects can be related directly to one of the focal areas, be cross-cutting, or related to entirely new ideas – related to “Beyond Robotics”.

## 2 Prospective Research Projects

A Prospective Research Project is a focussed effort to investigate a well-defined problem. Projects are expected to provide support to research within the subject area of the *Beyond Robotics* initiative and be of an exploratory nature, or test rapidly the credibility of new research ideas and concepts. They complement the research undertaken by the integrated projects, bridge the gaps, consolidating the initiative and its position at the forefront of research. A successful project is expected to generate critical input to one of the on-going IP projects in the area of “Beyond Robotics”. Alternatively, it may be followed by a submission of a proposal for a regular EU project (STREP). In this call it is anticipated that at most 2 Prospective Research Projects can be sponsored at an average level of funding of 100 K Euro per project and with a maximum duration of one year.

### **3 Research Ateliers**

A Research Atelier is a focussed effort on a well-defined topic taking place at a single venue, with participation of researchers from a number of different institutions and/or companies over a limited period of time. The duration of an atelier can be from a few days to a month. The aim of an atelier is cross-institution and/or cross-discipline integration. The result of an atelier can be a roadmap or a focussed study of a particular topic resulting in a publication. It is in particular recommended that such studies are carried out in close cooperation with the launched integrated projects. There is, however, no requirement to have direct participation from the launched IP projects.

It is expected that at most one research atelier can be sponsored at a level of 100 KEuro as part of this call.

### **4 Topical Research Studies**

A Topical Research Study is a mini-research project to study a particular topics within Beyond Robotics. The aim is to generate in-depth knowledge of a specific area to provide input to the research roadmap or explore topical research issues of relevance to the integrated projects or the community in general. Such studies are expected to be focussed, with well-defined deliverables, in emerging disciplines, such as cooperative systems or human-robot interaction, or any area crucial for the aims of beyond robotics. A topical study has a maximum duration of one year. In the present call an anticipated volume of 1-2 such studies with a budget of 30-70 KEuro is foreseen.

### **5 Proposal structure**

A proposal must be prepared according to the recommended “proposal structure” (see separate document). Proposals that are too long will not be considered.

The structure is as follows:

- Front page with administrative data (1 page)
- General description of the proposal (max 2 pages)
- Workplan and timetable (max 1 page)
- Deliverables (max 0.5 page)
- Budget (not more than 1 page)
- Management of the project (max 0.5 page)
- Consortium (max 0.5 page/partner)

The core of the proposal is thus max 6.5 pages and then  $N \times 0.5$  pages for presentation of the consortium.

### **6 Evaluation Procedure**

All proposals will be reviewed using a peer-review process as outlined below. Details can also be found in the EURON review guidelines (separate document)

A list of received proposals with key data (proposer, institution, title of study, amount of resources requested) will be circulated to the EURON Board and the Commission. Any member of the Board having a potential conflict of interest must announce it to the co-ordinator within 1 week of the publication of the list.

Three international experts (the “Evaluators”) are selected for the evaluation of each proposal. The evaluators will be selected according to scientific qualifications to judge the proposal, but at the same time in a manner to ensure a balanced and fair evaluation. Thus evaluators will be selected such that they:

- represent at least two different nationalities.
- have no conflict of interest
- excellent qualifications in the area of the proposal

The reviews are carried out under a confidentiality agreement with EURON.

Electronic copies are forwarded to the evaluators (within two weeks of the deadline of the call). Evaluations are to be completed within two weeks. Special evaluation forms are provided – they are adapted versions of the evaluation forms used by the CEC for STREPs. The evaluators will be asked to adhere to the guidelines for evaluation normally used by the CEC for STREPs, CAs and SSAs as appropriate. Copies of the guidelines will be forwarded to the evaluators together with the proposals. All evaluators will be required to sign a non-disclosure form and a non-conflict form to insure against publication of confidential information, and to avoid conflicts of interest.

The received evaluation forms will be collected and made available to the EURON Board and the Commission. A call specific evaluation committee will provide a consolidation over the received reviews and prepare a recommendation to the board.

The Network Board is expected to meet 5 weeks after the deadline of the call to make a final decision on the received proposals. An EU officer will be invited to the meeting as an observer. In the selection of the proposals for support the Board will adhere to the guidelines for evaluation used by the CEC as applicable. For the discussion of each proposal, board members who have earlier notified a conflict of interest will be required to leave the room while the case is being discussed. Such members are *not* allowed to express any opinion about the proposal at any time during the meeting. Within one week of the board meeting, proposers receive a written decision regarding their proposal. The decision will include an evaluation decision and a summary of the evaluations received from the international evaluators. In addition, successful proposals will be advertised through the EURON WWW facility.

## **7 Contract preparation**

Funded projects will be set up as “direct contracts with third parties” (according to article 17 of the rules for participation) to execute a small project or a special study under the auspices of EURON.

The EURON co-ordinator concludes a written agreement with the project consortium. This agreement determines the conditions for implementing the project and the respective rights and obligations of EURON and the project consortium. The agreement has to be in conformity with the EURON contract. Activities are expected to start by July 1, 2005.

## **8 Submission of proposals**

To be eligible for support independent legal entities from at least two EU member states or associated states must be involved in the effort. These partners are jointly liable, technically and financially to execute the project or study and to deliver its results. The eligibility of a legal entity to participate and receive funding complies with the general principles laid down in the Articles 4 - 8 of the Rules of Participation in EU projects. Participants are expected to be/become members of EURON.

Proposals must be received in hard-copy (and electronically - PDF format - on a standard ISO9660 CDROM) by the closing date (12:00 noon (MET) 15 April 2005). An ASCII version of a proposal abstract (1/2 page) is to be included on the CDROM. Proposals received too late will be returned unopened. Inappropriately formatted or partial proposals will be disregarded. Proposals submitted by fax or email will not be considered.

Proposals are to be submitted to

EURON Call for Proposals  
C/O Centre for Autonomous Systems

Numerical Analysis and Computer Science  
Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan  
Teknikringen 14  
SE-114 28 Stockholm, Sweden

A notification of receipt will be returned to the proposers within one week of arrival (by fax)

## **9 Documents:**

- EURON Workplan (general information on EURON and scope of projects)
- Evaluation Guidelines for Projects (a draft will be made available shortly)
- Structure of a proposal
- Model Contract

General information about EURON can be obtained from the network web facility (<http://www.euron.org>)