

EURON Fourth Call for Proposals

Open deadline

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1 Introduction

The European Research Network *EURON*¹ issues a call for proposals, stimulating short-term innovative robotics research via funding of *Prospective Research Projects* (PRP), and encouraging community-based initiatives by providing financial support for *Special Interest Groups* (SIG). This Call is open from *February, 1st, 2007*, and proposals *must* be sent in via the EURON website, <http://www.euron.org>. This call explains how to apply for funding for PRPs and SIGs.

2 Prospective Research Projects

A *PRP* is meant to test rapidly the credibility of new research ideas and concepts in robotics. Hence it has the following characteristics:

- It investigates *any topic* in robotics in general, with a high level of *innovation and risk*.
- It involves EURON partners of *at least two EU member states* (or associated states).
- It runs over *at most* one full year, so it must be *very focused*.
- Its maximum budget is 100 K Euro. This budget should not be used to invest in *durable equipment*, but in personel, travel and consumables.
- Its expected output must be clearly identified. Typically, this output will be an evaluation of the viability of the investigated novel idea.
- The project partners should indicate why they are capable of bringing the project to a successful end.
- The EURON Board encourages young, unexperienced researchers to participate to this Call, as long as they have creative and challenging ideas.

3 Special Interest Groups

A SIG is an ad hoc collection of EURON members that come together to form a micro community to address a specific topic in robotics that is of common interest to all SIG members, and to the robotics community in general. A SIG should have the following characteristics:

- It involves *at least five EURON partners* from *at least two EU member states* (or associated states). Participants from non-EURON member institutions can be partner in a SIG, but without funding.
- It must have clearly identifiable goals, whose relevance to the robotics community must be motivated.

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- It must meet at least twice a year, with a minimum participation of ten people.
- It must publish its results on the web. (EURON provides a webpage for every SIG, if desired.)
- The maximum budget is 15 K Euro, which can be used for travel costs (under the normal EURON travel grant conditions, as documented on the EURON website), meeting logistics, and/or the invitation of non-EURON specialists in the SIG's domain. The expected costs should be motivated in the budget planning of the SIG proposal.

A SIG should run for more than a year, i.e. till the expected end of the EURON contract in Autumn 2008.

- EURON wants to stimulate explicitly the creation of a SIG on *benchmarking in robotics*. This SIG can receive an extra budget of 15k Euro, but must meet at least four times a year, and have a clear plan about publication of the benchmark ideas, and about wide community involvement.
- One of the yearly SIG meetings must be held at the EURON Annual Meeting, and should be open to all EURON participants.

Interested members are encouraged to use the *euron-dist* mailinglist (euron-dist@lists2.ais.fraunhofer.de) for the preparation of a SIG, in order to reach the maximum number of interested and motivated participants, and to avoid duplication of efforts and overlap between proposals.

4 Applying for funding

The open submission scheme implies that a proposal can be submitted anytime of the year, and that evaluation of proposals will be made periodically (roughly with a monthly periodicity) through a peer-review process, supervised by the *EURON Board*.

Proposal *must* be sent in via <http://www.euron.org>. They will be evaluated for their originality, team excellence, and feasibility; the proposers are required to provide one or more evaluation criteria with which they want the success of their project to be evaluated. Please, keep your proposals short: (i) we want to create a very lightweight instrument, both for you and for the reviewers, and (ii) the reviewers will (anonymously) contact you if they need clarifications or more details.

The financial support to a *Prospective Research Project* is in the form of a fixed contribution (“lump sum”). The payments for an activity will always follow the plan outlined here:

1. A 40% advance of the budget will be paid at contract signature.
2. The last 60% is paid once the deliverables have been approved by the EURON Network Board (within one to three months of completion of the project).

In their final report the project must show that the cost incurred by the participants (at least the part that is eligible for funding) has been at least as high as the financial contribution received from EURON.

The financial support to a *Special Interest Group* is in the form of normal EURON travel reimbursements for participation to the SIG meetings. All other costs (approved in advance by the EURON Board) will be paid via invoices to the EURON administration.