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1 Purpose

The present policy describes the rules to be followed for submission of project proposals to a research funding programs (herein referred to as calls) to optimally align EORTC strategy, operations and resources with the criteria, requirements and application steps of the funders.

2 Scope

Any call for proposal discussed with EORTC.

3 Policy statement

The EORTC shall focus its participation on projects fully aligned with EORTC scientific strategy justifying the use of EORTC resources.

Before submission, project proposals should be:

- Discussed well in time to allow time for preparation of a robust proposal,
- Fully endorsed by EORTC Headquarters, the EORTC group and any other partner.

All relevant EORTC processes and policies shall apply. The initiation, review and endorsement of projects at EORTC follow the policy on 'Study selection, development and approval'.

Only the EORTC Headquarters, as legal entity represented by EORTC chief executive officer or any other EORTC officer allowed to sign on behalf of the legal entity, can formally engage EORTC in projects and sign contract with the funder and the project consortium.

4 Changes since last version

NA

5 Policy

5.1 Information and communication

It is important to start discussions around eventual new project proposals as soon as possible when the call information is available even if not published officially.

The headquarters share with the Scientific Chair Council information, up to its knowledge, about future calls for proposals involving clinical studies or large translational research activities.

Depending on the call topic specificities (e.g. involving a clinical study) and eventual restrictions (e.g. type of disease or intervention, etc..) the headquarters invites all EORTC groups or only select EORTC groups to discuss a possible project proposal.

The EORTC groups are invited to share proactively with the headquarters any information or any idea for a project proposal without waiting to be contacted by the headquarters.

The headquarters shall not contact the EORTC groups regarding calls relevant only to the headquarters' activities (e.g. infrastructure, education, methodology, etc.) which are not involving a clinical study.

5.2 Resources

EORTC should engage in priority its resources in relevant and mature project proposals that have a good chance to deliver significant impact. Headquarters' resources should be available for the preparation of the proposal and for the performance of the project if funded.

The network expected to contribute to the project must ensure dedication and availability to deliver the project according to the call requirements.

5.3 Timeline

The project proposal should be discussed well in time, recommend is not less than 3 months before the deadline for to the call submission of the project.

In any other situation, contact with the Headquarters should be established at the earliest possible moment to assess the feasibility of the submission.

The project proposal concept should be submitted with the support of EORTC staff to the EORTC strategic review process not later than 2 months before submission deadline.

In the case of late presentation of the project proposal to the EORTC review process there can be exceptions, provided that:

- the proposal is unique and of critical relevance for EORTC scientific strategy,

- enough time and resources are available at the headquarters to prepare a robust research proposal,
- only limited involvement of the headquarters is required.

The decision is left to EORTC directors' appreciation.

5.4 Decision process

All project proposals should be approved by the Headquarters before submission.

The main step of the decision process are as follows:

- It should be approved by the relevant EORTC group(s) before submission.
- It should receive PRC approval before submission of the project as long as the timelines of the PRC review and the call submission deadline are aligned.

In case the submission deadline and protocol review committee (PRC) process do not coincide appropriately, following strategies apply:

Should a project be subject to PRC comments before the deadline, and

- Should these comments be easily implementable, and PRC approval is highly probable at second round, submission to the call should be possible as long as the PRC comments are taken into account.
- Should specific PRC comments be more challenging to implement, a direct and specific interaction with the PRC shall be sought to conclude before the submission deadline.

Should the primary PRC submission not be compatible with the submission deadline,

- exceptional PRC review shall be arranged, if possible, in agreement with the PRC chair for as long as the timelines do guarantee a high-quality peer review process.
- If the PRC cannot review the project before the grant review, a tailored type of review of the protocol takes place as the grant review outcome is available. The PRC review addresses selected changes compatible with the project as approved by the granting body.

Should a call application process be in 2 steps (letter of intent followed by definitive application), the above process applies to the definitive application.

5.5 Competing proposals

The EORTC can participate to several project proposals addressing the same call topic provided that following principles apply:

- There is no duplication: the competing project proposals are not addressing the same disease indication with the same approach.

- Transparency: the consortia supporting the competing research proposals are informed and agreed that EORTC is involved in multiple project proposals addressing the same call.
- Confidentiality: The Headquarters doesn't share original and competitive information from one consortium to another.
- Fairness: The Headquarters provides the same level of support to all project proposals.
- Headquarters resources are available to support the competing project proposals. In the opposite situation, the project proposals shall be selected by the EORTC chief executive officer in consultation with the EORTC Board, according to EORTC scientific strategy and priorities.
- EORTC timelines for project proposals development and approval are respected.

5.6 Sustainability

The grants are limited in time. The grant can only be used during the period specified in the contract with the funder. Therefore, the funding of a clinical study or any other research activity that is planned to continue after the termination of the grant needs to be addressed.

The Headquarters, the EORTC group(s) and the consortium, if applicable, should formally agree on an appropriate funding solution before the contract signature with the funder. Alternatively, it should be formally agreed that the Headquarters is entitled to terminate the clinical study or any research activity in the absence of appropriate funding.

The Headquarters shall not be uniquely responsible for finding any missing funds in case of grant termination or extra costs unapproved initially.

5.7 Dispute resolution

A dispute could occur when there would be disagreement between the Headquarters and EORTC group to engage or not EORTC in a project proposal.

EORTC chief executive officer shall take a decision after consultation of EORTC directors and the EORTC Board, as applicable.

6 Associated documents

Title	Identifier / location
Policy on selection, development and approval of EORTC studies	A-01-POL-01

7 Signature

This document will be electronically signed.
The signatories acknowledge that electronic signature is legally binding and equivalent to a handwritten signature.

<p>Authored, approved & authorized by</p> <p>Denis Lacombe</p> <p>Chief executive officer on behalf of the Board</p>	
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