

# **Terms of reference for the ESMI TransNational Access programme**

(in accordance with the decisions taken on the final ESMI meeting in November 2015)

The ESMI TransNational Access programme was one of the three major parts of the ESMI project. The TNA activities will be continued with a reduced range of accessible infrastructure and very limited financial support for successful applications. This activity will continue until the follow up initiative EUSMI, will either start operation, or until that application will be finally turned down by the REA

This service to users, especially financial support, becomes possible due to a generous donation of the SoftComp consortium.

## **1. Definition**

Different from the original ESMI TransNational Access programme, the reduced activity consists only of :

- Access: when a user visits an ESMI laboratory to learn how to prepare new materials or to perform an experiment

Service and remote access will not be provided anymore.

The accessible infrastructure consists of an experimental and a synthesis platform, to which access can be granted

## **2. Related costs**

The ESMI infrastructure is available free of charge to the users who have their proposal positively assessed. Moreover, for each successful proposal a contribution to travel costs up to a maximum of 350 €/per visit will be granted after the users report is submitted to the ESMI database.

## **3. Conditions for formal eligibility of proposals**

Different from ESMI TransNational Access there are no strict formal eligibility rules for proposals. However, if a shortage of resources should occur, applications adhering to the following criteria will be privileged:

- the main proposer and the majority of the proposer team work in an institution established in a Member or in an Associate State

- the main proposer and the majority of the proposer team must work in a country other than that one where the legal entity operating the infrastructure is established
- Users must disseminate the foreground generated with the ESMI support

#### **4. Review Panel**

The ESMI Access Review Panel is formed by 9 members, which are all scientific representatives of former ESMI members. To respect their anonymity and to avoid tortious interference with their assessment of proposals, their names are not listed in the version of these ToR, which are available to the public.

#### **5. Authorization**

The ESMI Access Review Panel is authorized to work on behalf of the community of access providing institutions and can take decision for them.

#### **6. Deadlines**

No deadlines are established for the applications, which will be evaluated upon arrival.

#### **7. Application form**

The application form is available under the ESMI web portal by using the On-line Proposal System (<https://portal.esmi-fp7.net/scproposals/?MPATH=scproposals>).

#### **8. Review process**

Each proposal undergoes the following steps:

- i) the Chairperson of the ESMI Access Review Panel assigns it to the local contact or scientist in charge of the requested installation and to a member of the Review Panel. They shall assess the proposal according to its scientific merit and technical feasibility by using the following scale:

Grade 10	Outstanding
Grade 9	Excellent
Grade 8	Very good
Grade 7	Good
Grade 6	Satisfactory

Grade 5	Acceptable
Grade 4	Fairly weak
Grade 3	Weak
Grade 2	Unsatisfactory
Grade 1	Unacceptable

- ii) The reviewers shall assess the proposal according to the following criteria:
- the proposal should address aspects of soft matter science
  - the scientific approach of the proposal should be of high-quality and relevance
  - the overall scientific goals of the proposal should be ambitious in terms of aiming at fundamental understanding or address questions of high industrial relevance
- iii) access shall be provided according to the following scale of average grades
- 8-10 the proposal shall get Access
  - 5-7 the proposal shall get Access only if resources are available
  - 1-4 the proposal shall not get Access
- iv) the scientist in charge/ local contact shall decide on the access units to allocate
- v) the proposers shall be notified about the outcome of the review process within 4 weeks from the submission.

## **9. Access modalities**

After the acceptance is notified, the applicant shall contact the scientist in charge of the requested installation in order to agree together on the schedule and to discuss any other details.

## **10. Applicant reimbursement procedure**

Travel costs up to the maximum contribution will be reimbursed via the travel application and cost claim procedure of Forschungszentrum Jülich. For details the successful applicants shall refer to the ESMI project management office (p.lang@fz-juelich.de).

## **11. Reporting**

After the Access, the applicant and must prepare a short report on the event; the report forms are available under the ESMI web portal.

## **12. Acknowledgement**

It is understood that publications emerging from work related to a proposal under these ToR shall include at least one representative of the hosting institution as a co-author.

Further, the financial support provided shall be acknowledged by including the following sentence in any publication related to work performed under these ToR:  
*“The authors acknowledge financial support from SoftComp through the European Soft Matter Infrastructure (ESMI).”*

Jülich, 24 Juni 2016

# Guidance Notes for ESMI-Proposal Writing

A clearly written proposal will increase the chances that the ESMI review panel will select your application for access. Please read carefully the following guidelines for proposal writing:

An ESMI Transnational Access proposal consists of three distinct parts:

- A concise abstract
- A scientific background file
- Technical information

## General

Before you write your proposal, we advise you to contact the scientist in charge of the requested facility to decide on the feasibility of the proposed research, technical requirements and the necessary amount of access.

## The abstract:

Here you should concisely identify the scientific question you intend to address, the required instrumentation and the expected results.

## Scientific background file

The scientific background file is the core of your proposal. It has to be written in English and must not be longer than two pages. Here should address the following subjects:

- **Scientific context**  
Please give a clear description of the aims of the proposed research as well as the expected outcome and set these within their scientific context.
- **Results of previous work**  
Where possible, give results of previous and preparatory preliminary work carried out, (for example, NMR or light scattering experiments) in support of your proposed experiment and to demonstrate sample quality.
- **Feasibility of the requested facility**  
Explain why the requested facility is most feasible for the proposed research

## Technical information

In step 3 of 4 of the ESMI online proposal system you will have to provide all technical information necessary to execute the proposed research successfully.

Here you have to give a detailed description of the planned work:

For *physical experiments* this has to include sample properties, the parameters which shall be changed and the range of these variations.

For *synthesis proposals*, please provide information on the number of different target systems and desired amounts

Use this information to give a detailed justification for the requested amount of access.