



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

משרד החדשנות,
המדע והטכנולוגיה
Ministry of Innovation, Science & Technology



**Eleventh Call for Proposals on Scientific and Technological Cooperation
(Scientific Track 2022)
Submission by Thursday, May 12th, 2022**

A. AREAS OF COOPERATION

Within the framework of the Agreement on Industrial, Scientific and Technological Research and Development Cooperation between Italy and Israel (hereinafter called the “Agreement”) and in particular under the Subcommittee for Scientific Cooperation, the Directorate General for Cultural and Economic Promotion and Innovation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (referred to hereafter as “MAECI”), and the Israeli Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology (referred to hereafter as “MOST”) – referred to hereafter as “the Parties” – are providing financial support for joint Italian-Israeli research projects carried out by scientists from the two countries. Italian-Israeli research teams are hereby invited to submit joint research proposals in the following areas:

1. Hydrogen based renewable clean energy;

Hydrogen as a promising energy carrier is a perfect candidate to meet the world's energy demand and concomitantly reduce toxic emissions.

2. Smart materials for soft and bio-robotics;

Soft robots represent a novel category of robotics. Characterized by high flexibility, high environmental adaptability, high compatibility and multi-functionality, soft robots are quite promising in research and practical applications. The performances of soft robots are largely enhanced by the unique properties of smart materials, which play a crucial role in the design and application of soft robots.

B. MODE OF COOPERATION

Cooperation may take the form of:

- Joint research activities conducted in the Italian and Israeli laboratories with complementary methodological approaches;

- Joint use of research facilities, materials, equipment and/or services by cooperating scientists.

Submission of joint research projects by scientists from both countries is requested with the aim of encouraging scientific and technological cooperation between Italy and Israel.

C. LEVEL OF FUNDING AND PROJECT DURATION

Planned research activities must cover a period of two years (24 months).

The total maximum funding for each individual project is **€ 100.000 for the Italian side and € 100.000 (380,000 NIS) for the Israeli side for the entire two-year project period.**

For the present call, each Party is willing to contribute a total amount of **€ 800.000 for the Italian side and € 800.000 (3.040,000 NIS) for the Israeli side to support a maximum of 8 joint projects.** However, the final number of projects to be funded, as well as the final budget approved for each project, will be determined on the basis of budgetary and scientific considerations.

Contracts between the institutions issuing the contribution and the beneficiaries will be signed as follows:

In Italy: The financial contribution by MAECI will cover up to 50% of the eligible costs incurred by the applying Italian institution and, as mentioned above, cannot exceed 100.000 euros.

Funding will be granted on the basis of the final financial report and following positive evaluation of the final scientific report by the MAECI scientific evaluation committee.

In Israel: MOST will cover 100% of the documented and eligible costs of the research up to the amount of the approved budget, in accordance with the project proposal, subject to the terms and conditions as specified below and the terms of the standard MOST Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects Funded by MOST” and the “MOST Standard Contract for Scientific Projects”.

Funding of approved projects is subject to the approval of the State Budget for 2022 for both participating Ministries and to the availability of funds in the relevant line of the State Budget for both countries.

Furthermore, MAECI and/or MOST reserve the right to cancel this call or not to fund the second year of research for scientific-professional, administrative, budgetary or policy reasons.

D. ELIGIBILITY

1. Project activities must be jointly conducted by the collaborating Israeli and Italian research teams;
2. Research teams must be led by a Principal Investigator from the applying institutions in each country;
3. In both countries, the PI must be a member of an Academic or Research Institution.

In particular:

In Italy, a research institution must be a public or private university, or a public or private (no-profit) Research Institute/Centre acting under Italian law.

For the purpose of this call, a "Research Institution" is an institution whose primary activity aims at the advancement of cutting-edge scientific knowledge, provided with appropriate infrastructure and equipment, and employing scientists who publish their research results in leading, peer-reviewed, international scientific journals and present them at international symposia.

In Israel, a "Research Institution" must be an accredited institution of Higher Learning in Israel, according to the Council for Higher Education Law, 1958; or, a public Research Institute with experience in the relevant field of research which is a nonprofit organization; or, a Research Institute which is a government company or a governmental unit. (For the purpose of this Call, a "Research Institute" is a research institute that is active in the advancement of cutting-edge scientific knowledge, retaining the appropriate infrastructure and equipment for such activity and employing researchers who publish articles related to their research in leading scientific journals and present their research at international symposia).

4. In Italy, the Principal Investigator (PI) must hold Italian or any other EU nationality and must be legally resident in Italy.

In Israel, the PI will meet the requirements for Principle Investigators outlined in the MOST Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects Funded by MOST.

5. Principal Investigators from both countries cannot submit more than one project proposal under the present call. Additionally, In Israel, the PI may not submit a proposal under this Call if they have another research project that will be receiving funding under the international cooperation track during the duration of the proposed research project under this Call.

6. Both PIs and their corresponding Research Institutions are accountable to MAECI and MOST, respectively, for the execution of the project and for the correct final financial report.
7. In Italy: Submitted proposals are considered eligible only if they include all documents described in the Annex “Norme integrative per la partecipazione italiana ai Bandi per la raccolta di progetti congiunti di ricerca e per la rendicontazione” which are to be taken as part and parcel of the present Call.
8. Experiments Approval
In Italy, for projects involving experiments with animals, the status of ethics approval by the competent Ethics Committee must be provided when submitting the proposal. Please note that formal authorization by the competent Ministry of Health is mandatory to start the activities (D.Lgs 26_04/03/2014 and Directive 2010/63 EU). The authorization must therefore be provided before initiating the experiments. Proof of submission to the institutional OPBA (Organismo Preposto al Benessere degli Animali) is acceptable at the proposal submission stage. Projects involving experiments with human beings must be performed in accordance with the Directive 536/2014/EC. The Italian coordinator should provide a self-declaration of adherence to above-cited rules in the Methodology section of the proposal.
In Israel, the procedure and requirements for submitting approvals regarding experiments by the relevant Ethics Committee are outlined in the attached instructions for submission.
9. The project may include the use of sub-contractors from the private sector, if necessary.

E. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

The approved Israeli and Italian research teams and their respective Research Institutions shall enter into a “Cooperation Agreement” regarding Intellectual Property rights on the output of the funded project (template attached as Annex B).

Israeli PI that has or will have an active grant from any bilateral program of the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology, that is parallel to the support of this program, is not eligible to apply. No parallel funding is allowed in the bilateral program

In Italy, the project will not be eligible for funding if the signed “Cooperation Agreement” has not been received within the requested term.

F. SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The submitted proposals, in Italy and in Israel, must be identical in wording, and the budget requests should be adapted to the rules and requirements of the corresponding Ministry in each country.

Each of the two PIs shall fill out all Forms required by the respective procedures of the two Parties, as detailed below. Both forms shall be signed by both Principal Investigators as well as by the legal representatives of both applying Research Institutions. Project proposals that are submitted to only one of the two parties will not be accepted.

Joint deadline for applications: **by Thursday, May 12th, 2022**

For Italian research teams:

Italian Principal Investigators must submit their completed applications to MAECI by certified electronic mail to the following address: **dgsp09.accordoisraele@cert.esteri.it**. The PEC object must be: "Italy-Israel joint proposal – 2022 scientific track" followed by the Acronym of the project and by the last name of the Italian PI. The application must be sent by **Thursday, May 12th, 2022 at 17:00 hr (Italian time)** exclusively and mandatorily, on penalty of exclusion from the evaluation process. Italian applicants must send exclusively the documents as laid down in the

Norme integrative per la partecipazione italiana ai Bandi per la raccolta di progetti congiunti di ricerca e per la rendicontazione, according to the "Check List" provided as Annex A.

In addition to the duly signed application in "pdf" format, PIs are requested to submit a working copy in "doc" format without signatures.

For Israeli research teams:

- i. The Principal Investigator must submit the proposals in **English** to the relevant official in the Institute's research authority, via the online submission system (as detailed below) a week before the final Joint Deadline, by **Monday, May 2th, 2022 at 15:00**. The online system will be closed for submissions by the specified date and hour and no submissions will be accepted under any circumstances after the due date. **It should be emphasized that an Israeli researcher who will not submit his proposal on Monday, May 2th, 2022 at 15:00 local time will not be able to do so at a later date.** A researcher who submitted his/her application may edit his/her proposal with an approval by the relevant official in the research authority in his institute, until the final submission date of the Institution.

- ii. The **institute** must submit the final proposal **Thursday, May 12th, 2022 at 15:00 (Israeli local time)**. This is the final formal submission date. Proposals not submitted by the institute by this time, through the online system, will be disqualified.

Please pay attention, as technical problems are possible and the submission process may take a significant amount of time, **it is strongly recommended to submit the application well in advance of the application deadline.**

The application must be submitted through the "Science Forefront" site at: <https://kf.most.gov.il> .

In order to apply for the first time, the applicant needs to fill an "account request" in the Science Forefront site. The request will be approved by the research authority of the Institute. Once approved, the applicant will be notified by email that the account is active.

G. ELIGIBLE COSTS

All budget items and expenditures must conform to the national rules relevant for each applicant. Funding will therefore be provided mainly in support of the collaboration between the two partners and of the local research that is necessary for the collaboration.

For Italian research Teams:

- The financial contribution for successful Italian applicants will be paid at the end of the project, upon presentation of a financial report of eligible expenses.
- After completion of the administrative procedure, the Italian beneficiary can file a motivated request for advance payment of up to 30% of the contribution awarded. Requests aimed at covering personnel costs for recruitment of research fellows with temporary contracts will be given special consideration.
- Funding provided within this Call is intended to enhance the collaborative capacity of the applicants. For Italian research teams please refer to "*Norme integrative per la partecipazione italiana ai Bandi per la raccolta di progetti congiunti di ricerca e per la rendicontazione*" which are to be taken as part and parcel of the present Call.

The Italian Principal Investigator will provide budget details as outlined in Annex 1.

For Israeli research teams.

Funding provided by MOST can be used for the following types of expenses:

1. Stipend or salary for PhD students, post-doctoral fellows, technicians and/or laboratory workers (i.e. a temporary position up to 2 years) retained specifically for the purpose of the project;
2. Consumables;

3. Small Scale Equipment;
4. Travel and visiting costs;
5. Joint seminars and workshops;
6. Overhead expenses up to 15% of the total amount of the research project.

The proposal must include a fully detailed budget plan.

H. MUTUAL VISITS FOR STUDY PURPOSES

Participating scientists are encouraged to spend an extended period of time visiting their counterparts' institutions. As long as the visits are an integral part of the research collaboration, international travel and in-country living expenses of visiting scientists should be included in the project's budget. The visits must take place only in Italy or in Israel or in third countries that participate in the project.

I. PROPOSAL REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Project proposals will undergo a 2-step selection process: in the first step, the proposals will be separately evaluated by each Party. In step 2, the assessment will be carried out by the Sub Joint Committee including representatives of the two national Ministries to jointly select the projects admitted for funding. **Both parties commit not to release any information on the evaluation process until the agreed minutes of the Sub Joint Committee are officially signed by the Head of Delegation of both Parties.**

The projects will be assessed according to the following evaluation criteria:

1. Competence and expertise of the research teams;
2. The level of involvement of young researchers;
3. Significance of the problem being addressed, and the potential impact of the proposed approach on solving it. (Proposals should address these issues explicitly and provide as much evidence as possible.);
4. Scientific quality; originality and novelty of the proposed research;
5. Clarity and quality of the research proposal itself – presentation of the topic, definition of research objectives, presentation of research methodology and detailed program of work;
6. Feasibility of the proposed research and access to relevant resources;
7. Added value of the bilateral scientific cooperation; extent of genuine collaboration between the Italian and Israeli research teams;

8. Potential applications of the proposed research;
9. Justification of the requested project budget

J. NOTIFICATION OF THE RESULTS

Principal Investigators whose projects have been selected by the Sub Joint Committee will be informed of the results in Italy and in Israel by means of official letters.

In Italy, the list of selected projects will also be published in the MAECI website at the following URL:

https://www.esteri.it/it/diplomazia-culturale-e-diplomazia-scientifica/cooperscientificatecnologica/accordi_coop_indscietec/

AWARDING PROCEDURES AND PAYMENTS

In Italy, once the selection process has been completed, the MAECI will inform the Institution of the PI on the amount and conditions of the grant awarded. The Ministry will finalize the administrative procedures for the allocation of the grant upon receipt of formal acceptance by the beneficiary.

In Israel, an application for the continuation of research funding for the second year must be submitted to MOST by the Research Institution of Israeli Principal Investigator on the appropriate forms, at least two months prior to the end of the first year of the project together with the annual scientific report.

Interim and final report

Reporting requirements for each national research team are set out in the research agreements between each team's Research Institution and the relevant Party to this call.

For the Israeli Party: In accordance with the terms of the “standard MOST Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects Funded by MOST” and to “MOST Standard Contract for Scientific Projects”.

For the Italian Party: the Italian Principal Investigator has to submit the following documents to MAECI:

1. An interim scientific and financial report, according to the above described correspondence with the Ministry.
2. A final scientific and financial report, covering the work carried out during the two-year project, within 30 days after the conclusion of project activities

Payments

Payments will be made by MAECI and MOST, respectively, to the Research Institution of each Principal Investigator, in keeping with the provisions of the agreements referred to above, according to the regulations and practices in force in each country.

K. SPECIAL PROVISIONS REGARDING THE ISRAELI APPLICANT

All procedures and activities under this call or the projects approved hereunder, including the eligibility of Institutions via which applications must be filed, are subject to the “standard MOST Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects Funded by MOST” and to “MOST Standard Contract for Scientific Projects” (both documents referred to hereinafter as “the standard terms”).

Israeli applicants are required to familiarize themselves with the standard terms before filing an application under this call; filing an application constitutes a declaration that the applicant has done so and agrees to be bound by the provisions thereof.

Sabbatical Leave: Israeli researchers who intend a sabbatical leave in the first year of the project cannot be approved as a PI of the research proposal.

L. INFORMATION

Additional information can be obtained from the following:

<p>ISRAEL</p> <p>On administrative matters:</p> <p>Mrs. Meira Benyamin Head of Scientific Assistance for Planning & Control Department Tel : 02-5411170/173/829 E-mail : meirab@most.gov.il</p> <p>Mrs. Claire Levaton Division for International Relations E-mail: claire@most.gov.il</p> <p>On scientific matters:</p> <p>Dr. Avi Raveh Director for Chemistry, Materials, Nanotechnology and Energy, Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology Email: AviR@most.gov.il</p> <p>MOST website: www.most.gov.il</p>	<p>ITALY</p> <p>On administrative and scientific matters:</p> <p>Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale D.G.S.P. - Direzione Generale per la Promozione del Sistema Paese – Ufficio IX P.le della Farnesina, 1 00135 Roma</p> <p>accordo.italiaisraele@esteri.it (for general information)</p> <p>Certified electronic mail: dqsp09.accordoisraele@cert.esteri.it (for official submission)</p>
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