



ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN MARINE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES EXPANDED

## Call for Access

ASSEMBLE Plus are glad to announce their first call for access to marine infrastructure for the conduct of discrete research projects (not simply for training, workshops or outreach activities). This call will give the opportunity to gain access to a wide array of technologies and services in the fields of marine science.

### Aim

- To attract new users from different disciplines and from different sectors
- To test interoperability and complementarity among partner installations within ASSEMBLE Plus
- To develop Key Enabling Technologies
- To attract scientists who aim to increase the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of their research (e.g. proof of concept for innovations based on marine bioresources).

Call Opening: 22 December 2017

Submission Period: 5-15 January 2018

### Opportunity

Successful applicants will gain physical and remote access to at least one of 33 marine stations. Each ASSEMBLE Plus infrastructure site offers access to a wide range of installations:

- Culture collections and biobanks for microalgae, cyanobacteria, protists, bacteria, seaweeds, viruses, zooplankton, invertebrates, fish.
- Sampling facilities, which include research vessels for coastal sampling, sampling equipment, SCUBA diving, and remotely operated vehicles.
- Isolation and preservation of marine organisms, which includes strain isolation and purification, optimization of cultivation / fermentation / preservation conditions, revitalisation of cryopreserved and lyophilised material.
- Cultivation and rearing facilities, comprising aquaria, incubators, climate rooms, photo-bioreactors, tank facilities.
- Microscopy and bio-imaging services, which include fluorescence microscopy, TEM and SEM imaging, confocal microscopy, flow cytometry, micro-CT and bio-imaging.
- Taxonomic services, which include morphological and molecular identification, phylogenetic analysis, barcoding, mass spectrometry for identification MALDI-TOF.
- Molecular biology and -omics, which comprises sequencing, genotyping, qPCR, Next Generation Sequencing, bioinformatics analysis.
- Biochemical analysis, including protein structure, protein interaction, recombinant protein expression.
- Bioassays, which includes phenotypic assays, protein assays, (anti-)microbial assays, quality control of raw materials and products, verification of microorganisms associated with novel products.

- Structural and chemical analysis, which comprises HPLC, mass spectrometry, pre-metabolomic screening, metabolomics profiling, structural elucidation.

The services that each marine station can provide, and list of offers, will be made available through the ASSEMBLE Plus Access Portal from 22 December 2017.

The costs of a maximum of two persons per Project of access to labs, research services, and standard disposables, for a maximum of 30 working days per Project as well as the costs of shipping biological resources from the Access Provider to the Users' home institution (up to €400) are covered by the Access Provider's budget for TA provision.

The National or Local Liaison Officer at the Access Provider may reimburse costs of the visit (travel, accommodation and sustenance) of the User(s), up to an amount specified in the User Access Contract, from the Access Provider's ASSEMBLE Plus budget if agreed upon in the user access contract. Different reimbursement rules may apply for each Access Provider. For remote access, ASSEMBLE Plus can fund shipments up to a certain value.

### **Who can apply?**

- User groups with the user group leader and the majority of the users working in EU Member States or Associated States can apply and only to ASSEMBLE sites outside their own country.
- The user group leader (= the main applicant) is the person responsible for the project and should at least have a PhD degree. The users accessing the ASSEMBLE site to execute the project should be experienced and independent enough to accomplish this with only standard support (not training) needed from the local staff.
- Access of a single User -or a User Team- not working in the EU or an Associated Country is eligible but is limited to 20% of the total number of units of access provided under the grant.
- New users and users from outside the ASSEMBLE network are prioritized as are users moving from a non-marine area into the marine field.
- Projects using local ecosystems, species or models will have higher priority than projects bringing their own (marine only) samples.

### **How do I apply?**

To apply you need to create a user account, fill in the application form and submit your application. Go to "on-line application system" to start the process. The on-line submission system will open on the Assemble Plus portal on the 5 January 2018 (12:00 CET) and it will close on the 15 January 2018. Applicants are invited to immediately start exploring their project options and prepare their application, even before the online submission platform opens on 5 January 2018.

### **Selection process**

The Access Officer checks successfully submitted Proposals for compliance with EU regulations and ASSEMBLE PLUS TA eligibility rules. The Access Officer passes on Proposals that have passed the Eligibility check to the National or Local Liaison Officers of the indicated Access Providers. The Local Liaison Officer checks received proposals for on-site technical feasibility (timing, availability of biological resources, capacity and capability of research infrastructure, logistics).

Scientific procedures on certain organisms (e.g., vertebrates, cephalopods, genetically modified organisms) may require permits from regulatory bodies and the time between requesting and obtaining these permits will often be incompatible with the timing of the proposal review process. In

such cases the review process can be completed and if selected the Transnational Access may take place outside the time-window of the call once the permit is granted. The Applicant must signal permit issues in the Proposal.

Proposals that have passed the technical feasibility check are distributed to members of a User Selection Panel (USP) composed of the Coordinator, six Project Implementation Committee members (in turn) and six members of the Advisory Board. Each Project Proposal will be evaluated by one external and one internal USP member who will be required to agree on one final score per proposal. If agreement is not reached, a third external panel member will adjudicate on the final score.

Applicants and Access Providers will be notified about acceptance/rejection of Project proposals 5-6 weeks after the proposal submission deadline. The Applicants of successful Proposals are informed by means of a letter of acceptance.

After the Access Officer will send the Letter of Acceptance, a draft User Access Contract is established from a template, including the Project title, details of the Applicant and Employer of the Applicant, details of the institution representing the Access Provider, as well as general terms and conditions of the TA visit. The User is strongly advised to contact the legal services of their home institution as soon as the Letter of Acceptance is sent.

For more information, please visit <http://www.assembleplus.eu/access/trans-national-access> or contact the Access Officer at [access@embrc.eu](mailto:access@embrc.eu).