



*Ministry of Education, Universities and Research*

***Universities, Higher Art, Music and Dance Education and Research Department***

Research Coordination and Development Office

**THE GENERAL MANAGER**

- HAVING EXAMINED** Art. 19, Italian Law no. 59 of 15 March 1997, and its subsequent amendments and supplements, on the reform of public administration and administrative simplification;
- HAVING EXAMINED** Italian Legislative Decree no. 300 of 30 July 1999, and its subsequent amendments and supplements, on the reform of government organisation, pursuant to Art. 11, Italian Law no. 59 of 15 March 1997, and in particular Art. 4, paragraph 4;
- HAVING EXAMINED** Italian Legislative Decree no. 165 of 30 March 2001, and its subsequent amendments and supplements, on the law relating to public administration employees
- HAVING EXAMINED** Italian Decree Law no. 85 of 16 May 2008, “*Urgent provisions on the modernisation of government departments in application of Art. 1, paragraphs 376 and 377, Finance Law no. 244 of 24 December 2007*”, and in particular Art. 1 which merges the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Universities and Research (MIUR);
- HAVING EXAMINED** Italian Law no. 121 of 14 July 2008, converted with amendments from Decree Law no. 85 of 16 May 2008 on “*Urgent provisions on the modernisation of government departments in application of Art. 1, paragraphs 376 and 377, Finance Law no. 244 of 24 December 2007*”, which envisaged *inter alia* that the functions of the Ministry of Universities and Research, with related financial, instrumental and human resources, were to be transferred to the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research;
- HAVING EXAMINED** Italian Prime Minister’s Office Decree of 6 August 2008, “*Administrative recognition of the departments transferred to the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, pursuant to Art. 1, paragraph 8, Italian Decree Law no. 85 of 16 May 2008, converted with amendments to Italian Law no. 121 of 14 July 2008*”;



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- HAVING EXAMINED** Italian Presidential Decree no. 16 of 14 January 2009, “*Regulation on the reorganisation of Offices cooperating directly with the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research*”;
- HAVING EXAMINED** Italian Presidential Decree no. 17 of 20 January 2009, “*Regulation on provisions for the reorganisation of the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research*”;
- HAVING EXAMINED** EU Regulations in force for the planning period 2007-2013;
- HAVING EXAMINED** the National Strategic Framework (NSF) for the 2007-2013 regional development policy approved by CIPE (Italian Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning) Resolution no. 174 of 22 December 2006 and subsequent European Commission Decision no. 3329 of 13 July 2007;
- HAVING EXAMINED** the Multiregional Operational Programme 2007-2013: “Research and Competitiveness” (hereinafter “MOPRC”) for Convergence Regions, envisaged in the NSF and adopted by European Commission Decision EC(2007) 6882 of 21/12/2007 (CCI: 2007IT161PO006), later amended by European Commission Decision EC(2012) 7629 of 31 October 2012, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Rotation Fund (RF) for implementation of the European Community Policies pursuant to Art. 5, Italian Law no. 183 of 16 April 1987;
- HAVING EXAMINED** European Commission Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: “*Towards a European Research Area*” [COM(2000) 6 final], which aims to strengthen the cohesion of European research;
- HAVING EXAMINED** the conclusions of the European Council (EUCO 13/10) of 17 June 2010, by which the Member States adopted “Europe2020”, the new strategy for employment and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;
- HAVING EXAMINED** the European Commission Communication on the Flagship Initiative “Innovation Union” COM(2010) 546 of 6 October 2010, paragraph 2.2 of which includes the commitment: “By 2015, Member States together with the Commission should have completed or launched the construction of 60% of the priority European research infrastructures currently identified by the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI). The potential for innovation of these (and ICT and other) infrastructures should be increased”;



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- HAVING EXAMINED** the European Parliament and Council Decision no. 1982/2006/EC of 18 December 2006 concerning the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013) (FP7) and Council Decision no. 969/2006/EC of 18 December 2006 concerning the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community on nuclear research and training activities 2007-2013 (EURATOM);
- HAVING CONSIDERED** the study “*Synergies between FP7 and Structural Funds for Research Infrastructure*” conducted by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Research of 29 September 2010, and the “*Scenarios for complementary financing*”;
- HAVING EXAMINED** the second update of the Cohesion & Action Plan (CAP) approved by the Council of Ministers on 15 December 2011;
- HAVING EXAMINED** the CIPE decision made at the meeting of 3 August 2012 on the allocation of financial resources originating from the decrease in national co-financing (Rotation Fund, Italian Law 183/87) under National and Regional Operational Plans of the single planning, also envisaged in relation to the CAP;
- HAVING EXAMINED** memorandum no. 908 of 24 January 2013 by which the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research represented the need to promote specific structural enhancement of the Universities and Public Research Authorities, as better indicated in the memorandum, and in cohesion with the contents and objectives of other action under the responsibility of the MIUR as part of the aforementioned CAP;
- HAVING EXAMINED** protocol no. 0001990-U of 13 February 2013, by which the Economic Development and Cohesion Department of the Italian Ministry for Economic Development approved the remodelling proposed by the MIUR in reference to the Cohesion & Action Plan;
- HAVING DECIDED** to adopt and publish a specific Notice for the implementation of the aforementioned action;



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**HEREBY DECREES**

**Article 1**

*Purpose and objectives of the action*

1. As part of the action under the responsibility of the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, as detailed in the introduction to this decree, the Cohesion & Action Plan envisages the definition and implementation of structural modernisation and reinforcement action for centres qualifying as highly active in areas and disciplines of particular strategic importance in order to develop the production system in the “Convergence” regions and which are of proven excellence and capacity in terms of national and international perspective, such as research centres integrated into the European Research Area.
2. Specifically - and in accordance with the Ministry’s strategic intention to encourage development of the Digital Agenda, which receives a strong contribution from action taken in the realm of Smart Cities and Communities as well as from the construction of National Technology Clusters - this Notice aims to support action that is capable of providing the necessary infrastructural support to public research services; this will be linked to the process of defining skills and technology solutions and which has already commenced on such issues.
3. Lastly, the action envisaged under this Notice is envisaged to focus on the following: its supra-regional nature; links to the European Union’s infrastructural initiatives; the capacity for economic and business enhancement (in terms of real implementation of relations with the business sector, creating opportunities for economic returns and generating new innovative business); growth prospects in terms of competitiveness and appeal for the public research system in Southern Italy; and the capacity to guarantee proven economic and financial self-sustainability in the medium/long term.



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**Article 2**

*Structural and infrastructural reinforcement of the public research system*

1. Given the aims described above, the MIUR - by means of this Notice - invites entities referred to in Article 3 below to submit specific Structural Enhancement Projects (hereinafter referred to as “Projects”) in the following areas of action:
  - a) Coordinated actions for the structural modernisation and reinforcement of ICT networks and digital infrastructures by developing and adopting strongly innovative, technologically advanced solutions with the joint aim of providing support to Education at all levels as well as interdisciplinary research in the Convergence Regions while, at the same time, promoting the advanced use of digital technologies by the general public, businesses and administrations located in the regions;
  - b) Actions to upgrade and consolidate environmental monitoring infrastructures and which are capable of encouraging the Convergence Regions to develop cooperative, multi-discipline research in the areas of interest, with positive effects at international level;
  - c) Structural implementation of a long-term digital preservation system in the Convergence Regions for research products/results by using standard open solutions (open government and open access logics) in a cooperation framework with other Italian institutions and consistent with Horizon 2020 recommendations.

**Article 3**

*Eligible entities*

1. The following entities (hereinafter “Entities”) are eligible to submit Projects referred to in Article 2 above:
  - a) State Universities and University Institutions;
  - b) Italian Public Research Authorities and Institutions, supervised by Central Public Administration;



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- c) other non-profit research organisations, regardless of their legal status or funding source, and whose primary statutory purpose is conducting scientific and/or technology research activities as well as disclosing the results through teaching, publication or technology transfers – with profits fully reinvested in research activities or in the disclosure of results or teaching - and in which no companies whatsoever have a direct or indirect shareholding.
2. The Entities referred to in point a) of paragraph 1 above must submit Projects solely in reference to their operational headquarters which are located and already operational in the 4 Convergence Regions (Campania, Puglia, Calabria and Sicily).
3. The Entities referred to in points b) and c) of paragraph 1 above which do not have offices operating in the Convergence Regions can submit Projects in consideration of their national importance by attaching a formal statement of commitment in establishing and rendering operative a registered office in the aforementioned Regions as at the date of acceptance of the Procedural Guidelines referred to in Article 8, paragraph 3 of this Notice. In this case, the effectiveness of the ministerial approval of the Project is subject to the positive outcome of controls relating to fulfilment of the assumed commitment.
4. Projects may be submitted by one Entity (“Individual Projects”) or more than one Entity (“Joint Projects”) referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

**Article 4**

*Project characteristics*

1. The Project must be all-inclusive and systematic in nature and must highlight the enhancement requirements of the research centres and laboratories of the Entities in terms of major scientific and technological equipment and instruments, together with any construction, modernisation, building and system upgrading works that are necessary.
2. The Project must also point out its specific nature with respect to structural enhancement initiatives already in progress and already presented or financed at regional, national or EU level.



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3. In order to ensure that the Cohesion & Action Plan resources have the capacity to encourage structural investments that are capable of generating development opportunities and are self-sustaining in the medium/long term, the Project must also cover:
  - a) market studies designed to explore sales opportunities for scientific and technology services, with determination of the target market, the expected demand volumes, key customers, expanded competition status and the pricing level;
  - b) business plans demonstrating the capacity of the infrastructures to be at least partially self-financing when fully operative, through the marketing of scientific and technology services and/or the promotion of intellectual property;
  - c) new, innovative business development and/or enhancement plans with the aim of marketing the scientific and technology services that are achievable through use of the infrastructures or through the promotion of intellectual property;
  - d) the promotion and mission of international plans, with the aim of establishing alliances and cooperation with public and private entities in other countries, particularly the Mediterranean area, for the purposes indicated in previous points.
4. The Project must envisage completion of the activities by 30 March 2015 and submission to the MIUR of final expense accounts by 30 June 2015.
5. The total costs of the Project must not be:
  - lower than 35 million euro or higher than 46.5 million euro for the projects referred to in point a) of Article 2 above;
  - lower than 10 million euro or higher than 20 million euro for the projects referred to in point b) of Article 2 above;
  - lower than 6 million euro or higher than 10 million euro for the projects referred to in point c) of Article 2 above.



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6. The Project must highlight its capacity to contribute to facilitating and accelerating processes relative to structural changes in the economy of the Convergence Regions, specifying an association with regional and national production needs, its suitability in responding to emerging needs in the reference sectors and areas, and the capacity to facilitate inclusion in wide-ranging national and international initiatives (for example the Flagship Initiatives of the 2011-2013 National Research Programme or the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures - ESFRI).
7. In order to guarantee a more efficient use and promotion of the equipment and infrastructures envisaged in the initiative, the Project must include and describe specific training activities that are functional to the Project, as specified below, for a cost of no more than 10% of the total other costs of the Project indicated in Article 5, paragraph 1 below.
8. The training activities referred to in paragraph 7 of this Article - with priority given to English as the training language - must relate to one or more of the following human resource categories:
  - a) executive personnel, with the aim of creating research management roles and with particular reference to internationalisation of the skill profiles;
  - b) technical and marketing personnel, with the aim of creating roles trained in handling complex trade negotiations on highly technical matters;
  - c) graduates, Ph.D. graduates and young researchers, with the aim of creating research roles particularly expert in using the equipment and infrastructures envisaged in the Project.
9. For the purposes described above, the Project - to be prepared in Italian and in English - must be identified in terms of the following elements, to be described in a maximum 6 thousand characters (excluding spaces):
  - a. a description of how the project contributes to and increases the characteristics of excellence of the structures involved in the Project, in terms of effective cooperation with national and international production sectors in research initiatives financed at national, EU and international level, and the quality and numbers of human resources involved;





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- b. specification of the functional nature of the Project with respect to the following: the local needs of the Convergence Regions and reference sectors; regional and national production sector needs; and the prospects of changes in the social and economic situations of the affected geographic areas;
- c. a description of the Project's capacity to facilitate the Entity's internationalisation processes, improving its ability to attract investments and talent, creating the conditions for the set-up and initial start-up of research and eventual spin-offs, all with the aim of achieving a higher degree of competitiveness at international level and a stronger capacity to achieve synergies between different business sectors by using the same types of technology;
- d. a description of the Project's capacity to encourage a clear strategy to promote the research laboratories and centres which, through network services, will facilitate supranational and transnational relations;
- e. the potential contextual placement of the project within the European Research Area framework, and in particular of the Research Infrastructures open to international users (for example those identified by the ESFRI and the Italian Roadmap of research infrastructures of pan-European interest), as well as a description of the options for building a hub to a European infrastructure or a regional satellite of a European infrastructure;
- f. identification of research activities which the Entity could implement through the Project, highlighting links to strategic research, technology and innovation development programmes, consistent with the strategic reference agendas at European and global level and in line with national and international development and innovation programmes;
- g. a detailed description of the Project's operations, with specific reference to building works, equipment, instruments, infrastructures and network links envisaged, related acquisition costs (accompanied by specific market surveys) and/or construction costs, operating times and the purchase procedures involved, consistent with current regulations on such matters;
- h. a description of planned training activities in terms of objectives, content, methodologies, selection methods, costs, and their functional association with the promotion of the contents of the Project and with the attainment of the objectives of this Notice;
- i. a description in economic and financial terms of the medium/long-term sustainability of the action envisaged in the Project.



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**Article 5**

*Determination and approval of costs*

1. The following cost items are approved:
  - a. technical expenses (e.g. planning, works management, testing) for up to a maximum 10% of the cost of the Enhancement Project;
  - b. building construction, upgrading and renovation strictly for the purpose of the project and technology systems, for up to a maximum 30% of the cost of the Enhancement Project;
  - c. purchases of scientific and technology equipment and instruments, including accessory charges (e.g. duties, transport, packaging, installation, etc.) and excluding all mark-up for commercial brokerage;
  - d. construction of network links between laboratory equipment and/or network links between the various scientific and/or higher education establishments;
  - e. third party provision of scientific and technology application advisory services;
  - f. project-specific costs (e.g. expense relating to the publication of calls for tender, expense for information and advertising campaigns, etc.);
2. Approved expenses relating to training activities include:
  - a. teaching personnel costs;
  - b. travel expenses of teaching personnel and course participants;
  - c. other overheads (materials, supplies, etc.);
  - d. new purchases of instruments and equipment for the percentage to be dedicated solely to the training plan;
  - e. advisory service costs;
  - f. course participant costs, up to a maximum equal to the total costs from a) to e);
  - g. information and advertising expense, and expense relating to the dissemination of results.



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3. Costs to produce the documents referred to in points a) to d) of Article 4, paragraph 3 of this Notice are also allowed (up to a maximum of 0.25% of the total of other costs).
4. Costs relating to the various expense types are net of VAT if such tax can be transferred at the time of presentation of period returns; however, the costs shall include VAT if such tax is not transferable.
5. Costs are considered approved as of the date of acceptance of the Procedural Guidelines referred to in Article 8, paragraph 3 of this Notice, with the exception of costs indicated in paragraph 3 for which approval is effective as of the date of publication of this Notice in the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic.
6. The Project costs must not be, or ever been, subject to other public financing. In this respect the Project must be accompanied by specific self-certification pursuant to Italian Presidential Decree 445/2000 on “Legal provisions on administrative documents”.

**Article 6**

*Financial resources*

1. To implement the operations pursuant to this Notice, the MIUR makes funds available from the Cohesion Action Plan for a total of 76.5 million euro, with the following breakdown by line of action:
  - a total of 46.50 million euro for action referred to in Article 2, point a) above;
  - a total of 20.00 million euro for action referred to in Article 2, point b) above;
  - a total of 10.00 million euro for action referred to in Article 2, point c) above.
2. The funds will be utilized in accordance with the final classification of results pursuant to the provisions of Article 7, paragraph 5 of this Notice.



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**Article 7**

*Methods and criteria for the eligibility and assessment of Projects*

1. The selection of Projects admitted to the preliminary phase will be performed by a special Commission appointed by Decree of the General Manager of the MIUR's Research Coordination and Development Office, composed of 5 (five) independent experts, Italian or otherwise, and identified by the Ministry.
2. The Commission will evaluate the Projects in compliance with the criteria indicated in paragraph 3 below, ensuring balanced judgement and application; this will also be implemented by pre-defining methods that are suitable for guaranteeing a standard, accurate allocation of scores.
3. For Project selection purposes, the Commission will submit a summary report to the Ministry by and no later than 60 (sixty) days of the closing date for the submission of projects specified in Article 9, paragraph 1 below. The report will summarise the following elements and assign the related scores:
  - a. (max 10 points) Project quality in terms of:
    - the project's contribution to reinforcing the pool of scientific and technology equipment and infrastructures in a manner that allows alignment of the public research system with international operating standards as well as its contribution to enhancing its international appeal and competitive capacity;
    - the project's capacity to offer a response to the needs of multiple regions and the impact of results on multiple economic and business sectors;
    - the project's strategic value in reference to possible links to the production and research system, also by envisaging joint initiatives within the area of reference;
    - the project's technical and financial feasibility with respect to the envisaged timing, with particular regard to the financial plan, the fairness and relevance of the costs stated, and the project's economic and financial sustainability in the medium/long term;
    - the quality and reliability of the documents indicated in Article 4, paragraph 3 of this Notice;
  - b. (max 10 points) the quality and significance of the planned training activities and related integration with other Project action;
  - c. (max 10 points) the impact of the expected results with reference to their potential in contributing to the development of repositioning strategies for the economies of the Convergence Regions;



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- d. (max 10 points) the complementary nature and consistency of the Project with EU strategies, with particular reference to guidance on Digital Agenda issues.
4. Only Projects achieving a total score of at least 30 points (of which at least 8 points in criteria a) and c)) will be approved.
5. Following the evaluation procedure referred to in paragraph 4 above, the Ministry will arrange access to financing for the best project for each line of action indicated in Article 2, paragraph 1 of this Notice, and will transfer the funds to the approved Projects, within the limits of available financial resources and in accordance with Article 6 above and by the methods indicated in Article 8.

**Article 8**

*Determination and disbursement method of the financing*

1. Project costs which are approved shall be 100% recognised and the relative transfer of funds shall be arranged as follows:
  - a. an initial disbursement equal to 80% of the approved and allowable cost following adoption of the project approval decree, paid at the latest within 20 days of acceptance of the Procedural Guidelines indicated in paragraph 3 of this article;
  - b. a second disbursement equal to 10% of the approved and allowable costs; if necessary, this amount will be recalculated following audits conducted by the competent bodies and the submission of expense accounts totalling at least 50% of the approved and allowable cost, in accordance with the methods and timing indicated in the Procedural Guidelines referred to in paragraph 3 of this article;
  - c. disbursement of the balance, equal to the maximum residual amount of the financing due, on closing of the activities and after approval of the technical and financial accounts in compliance with the methods and timing indicated in the Procedural Guidelines and reference regulations.
2. The Entity shall, in any event, be obliged to submit reports of the costs incurred on a half-yearly basis in accordance with the methods indicated in the Procedural Guidelines. Monitoring of the technical progress of the project activities will be assigned to special inspection and testing authorities by the MIUR.



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3. The Procedural Guidelines referred to in paragraph 1 of this article will contain specific provisions on reporting, control and monitoring methods for the financed action.
4. In the event of total or partial cancellation of the Project, the MIUR will claim recovery of the amounts disbursed, even with regard to resources that are, in any event, payable by the MIUR and/or other Administrations by way of contributions to projects.

**Article 9**

*Application submission method*

1. The Projects must be submitted via the electronic SIRIO service (<http://roma.cilea.it/Sirio>) within and no later than 12 noon on 3 April 2013.
2. User registration and consultation of guides relative to use of the online services are possible at the same address (<http://roma.cilea.it/Sirio>).
3. All submitted material will be used by the MIUR solely for completing the formalities associated with the assignments referred to in this decree.
4. At any time, on request from the MIUR, the Entities must provide any clarifications, additional information and documents that the Ministry deems necessary.

**Article 10**

*Obligations of bidding entities*

1. The obligations of bidding entities - which, with reference to current regulations, can be found at <http://roma.cilea.it/Sirio> - are governed by specific procedural guidelines.
2. In the event of failure to comply with the obligations referred to in paragraph 1 above, the MIUR reserves the right to arrange cancellation of the financing.



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**Article 11**

*Information*

1. The Procedure Manager for this Notice is: Fabrizio Cobis. Research Coordination and Development Office - Section VII, Ministry of Education, Universities and Research.
2. This Notice is published in the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic and, together with all documentation referred to herein, is available on the web sites [www.ponrec.it](http://www.ponrec.it) and [www.miur.it](http://www.miur.it).
3. Any request for information can be sent via e-mail to the MIUR at the following address: [sespar.upoc@miur.it](mailto:sespar.upoc@miur.it).

Rome,

GENERAL MANAGER  
(*Emanuele FIDORA*)  
[signature]