

FAQs

Call for new partner specialised in hosting of large scale semantic infrastructure

We have an EU-base but our operations may be carried out by US personell at our US office. Can we claim back these costs?

US companies can join the project but are not eligible for funding unless the work is carried out in a EU Member State or country associated to the Seventh Framework Programme. So if they participate but the work is based for instance in US they have to support their own costs. An US based company may be subcontractor under exceptional circumstances, where a technical or scientific justification need to be priorly approved by IMI JU.

Can the solution be hardware as well as software based?

i.e. the applicant has some terrific hardware. Yes, absolutely.

Can we have an in-depth technical discussion with you prior to application?

We are happy to have a teleconference to go over technical aspects of the project with any partner. This will be with the full agreement that anything we say can be written in the OPS hosting FAQs and provided to any other applicant (masking any information about the applicant name of course).

Would it be possible to host specific hardware within a consortium partners premises?

Some potential applicants may wish to physically locate hardware on the premises of a consoritum partner. This will need to be worked out but would not be a reason to reject a potential application and we would definitely consider it but can not guarentee that it is possible. If an applicant suggests this and it later turns out not to be possible, we can ask them to revise a proposal with a new hosting location if they can.

Ontotext is mentioned in the SOW, what is the relationship?

We want to clarify that we are an open call and really looking for all potential suppliers. This was an artifact of the proposal process and in fact we implemented the open call process to ensure that we had the best possible partner for infrastructure.

How 24/7 is our uptime requirement?

There is a difference between 99% uptime and 99.9% uptime. We don't have an exact figure but this was a traditional web application (it's not "critical"), so uptime in-line with that is what is expected.

What does open source mean for the provider?

Open PHACTS would release all its own software as Open Source and we expected to have some sort of open source option on the storage end when people download the software. We completely understand that more scalable options may require the use of proprietary technology and such approaches are welcome within the call and would be fully considered. Note that many of the potential applicants will want to provide us with a proprietary solution.

Does the provider have to have domain knowledge?

That is only one factor in the broad range of factors considered when doing the evaluation. There was a lot of domain knowledge already on the project including knowledge that bridges the semantic web / pharmacology space. One can still be competitive without necessarily having that background.

Is Open PHACTS Project looking for a single “total provider”, meaning a provider of hardware, base software, RDF Store, ...?

Ideally the provider would provide everything required to host the system, including the hardware. Knowledge of how to effectively store RDF for performant queries are a must, so the provider should have a solution in mind for this (along with performance data as requested in the requirements document). Of course, we are happy to provide advice on specific potential strategies as to their suitability for the partnership

Is Open PHACTS expecting the developer of the RDF store solution as a partner, or is acceptable a partner that can provide a scalable solution based in a RDF store from other developer (proprietary or open source)?

As long as the provider can demonstrate that the chosen RDF store can work well at the scale of data we are using (detailed in requirements document) then the choice of RDF store is purely in the hands of the provider.

Can a proposal include more than one institution (partner)? If that is the case, how should be?

Yes this is possible. Both institutions have to become partner in the Open PHACTS Consortium and have to split the budget among them. There has to be a clear description what exactly each institution will contribute to the project.

The proposal forms don't ask for economic information. Should we include economic data? How? Will you take into account economic reductions?

We need a rough cost plan of each applicant, including all costs.

Do you have any preference about the condition of the service provider institution, whether public or private?

No, there is no preference.

I am still unclear about the commercials. Is the structure such that we should bid the best service possible against the € 300.000,- target price, should we detail costs including margin, is a contribution expected from the additional partner?

The IMI funding scheme is pretty analogous to the FP7 one, although there is more flexibility. Basically, we have a budget of around 300.000 (IMI contribution) foreseen for this call. The financial rules are as follows:

If you have real costs of 300.000 (mostly composed of personell and traveling to meetings), you can choose if you accept the flat rate of 20% for the overhead or you claim the real overhead (but need to prove that). If you go with the flat rate, the overhead is added, and from this amount you get 75% funding ($300.000 * 1,2 * 0,75 = 270.000$). However, when joining the consortium we expect you to

also participate in WPs 7 and 8 (community engagement and sustainability), which have a reimbursement rate of 100%. So the funding gap might be less than 10%.

Although the project runs to end March 2014 I am still unclear as to when the hosting requirement commences?

With respect to the starting date, we would like to see the system in place in August 2012, so its around 1 1/2 years in total. We can choose the official starting date of your participation according to the start of our negotiations once the decision has been made, so could be June 2012. From that moment on you can charge costs to the project.

We own the Large Scale Semantic Infrastructure that Open PHACTS may need, but we are not sure if the cost of the infrastructure (in proportion of its use for the project) can be an eligible cost.

We confirm that the depreciation of the equipment can be charged on a prorata temporis basis (ie according to the percentage used and time) - provided that this depreciation is recorded in its accounts.

We refer to page 28 of IMI Financial guidelines:

Depreciation costs for equipment used for the project bought before the start of the project are eligible under the conditions mentioned in Article II.13.1. Only the portion of the equipment used on the project may be charged. The amount of use (percentage used and time) must be auditable.

We also refer to section 2.6.8. „Internally invoiced costs of IMI Financial guidelines“ (page 30):

Sometimes the use of certain equipment or facilities is shared between the different units of the same legal entity, and the costs of their use are charged through internal invoices. This type of costs may be eligible if their use for the project and the usage is properly recorded. In such cases, the costs claimed must represent a fair apportionment and be based on objective, measurable and auditable criteria.