



PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF AN ICGEB REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE (ICGEB RRC) – TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF A PROPOSAL

At the 22nd session of the ICGEB Board of Governors held in Cape Town in 2016 it was decided to explore the interest of Member Countries in establishing ICGEB Regional Research Centres (RRC). An ICGEB RRC is a National Research Centre, or a part thereof, with independent governance, which is shared between the ICGEB and the Member State Government. The RRC will contribute to strengthen research skills, knowledge and capacities of the local scientific community while pursuing specific objectives for research, training and technology transfer to industry, which would benefit both the hosting country and the region where the RRC is located.

Major priorities for an RRC are:

1. Perform research at the highest international level. The topics for activity can be identified through mutual agreement.
2. Increase international cooperation and recruit scientists at the international level.
3. Provide platforms for education and training of the highest international standards.
4. Promote technology transfer to industry to foster the local biotech industry through the creation of start-ups.

An ICGEB RRC can provide the means to achieve these goals as follows:

1. Host the activity of 5-10 research groups including international scientists. Some of the PIs of these groups might be seconded from existing national Universities or Research Centres, others should be recruited internationally.
2. Through a dedicated Fellowship programme, post-doctoral and Ph.D fellows will be eligible to receive support and participate in the groups' activities.
3. Education remains a major part of ICGEB's activities. The RRC would organize and host meetings, courses and workshops on the topics of most relevance to the activities of the RRC, and would bring international experts. This program would be managed in coordination with the Meetings and Workshops programme of the ICGEB.
4. At least some of the RRC research groups should ideally be involved in translational research and, eventually, in technology transfer to the national and regional biotech industry.

An outline of a possible RRC proposal, to be submitted to the ICGEB Council of Scientific Advisors and Board of Governors through the Director-General's office is as follows.

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL

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Why an RRC in this particular country and region? Outline possible topics or focus of the proposed RRC.

BACKGROUND INFO

Supporting agencies (e.g. national governmental, regional government) that would be able to provide financial support. Potential links to local academic/research institutes and biotech industry.

PREMISES OF THE RRC

Foreseen location of the RRC and proposed infrastructure to host an indicative number of 8 research groups of 5-8 scientists each. Amount of laboratory space and core facilities which could be made available (e.g. microscopy/proteomic platforms which could be accessed or provided). Proposed available office and meeting room facilities. Services which might be accessed locally – e.g. glassware washing/sterilization, media prep, animal house, etc.

PERSONNEL

Foreseen number and composition of the research groups (see above for our suggestion for obtaining a sustainable critical mass). Procedures envisaged for PI recruitment. Numbers of support personnel who might also be made available to the RRC (e.g. secretaries/technicians/lab managers/procurement officer).

ACTIVITIES

Possible topics or priority areas for investigation, which might synergise with already ongoing activities at the RRC location.

Fellowships that might be available from other funding sources.

Meetings and Courses that might be supported from other funding sources.

Supporting Technology Transfer offices and support for protecting IP and connections with industry.

Outreach and visibility – locally with possibilities for lay education and links to schools. National and international visibility that might be obtained.

RELEVANCE OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH FOR THE COUNTRY AND THE REGION

ECONOMIC SUPPORT

Sources of funding to allow establishment of the RRC and its running costs (PI and support staff salaries; running budget/start-up package for PIs/building rental and maintenance/utilities).

Opportunities for PIs to attract external support from granting agencies (private and governmental)/local interested pharma.

Budget plan for 5 years including expenses for personnel (PI, support staff, fellowships), research (consumables and start-up package/new equipment) and support activities.

TIME SCHEDULE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION