

Joint Experimental Molecular Unit



JEMU



## **Joint Experimental Molecular Unit**

**Call for proposals – 2015**

**Proposal submission guidelines**

**March 2015**

## ***Context and mission***

In 2007, the Joint Experimental Molecular Unit (JEMU) was established as an integrative project between the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS) and the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA). JEMU is conducting and supporting research activities related to molecular systematics and the experimental use, maintenance and scientific exploitation of the natural history collections of both institutes. For more information, consult the JEMU website (<http://jemu.myspecies.info>).

## ***Research priorities***

Current priorities of JEMU projects are:

- Collecting genetic data from taxonomic groups and/or geographic areas that are well represented in the collections of RBINS or RMCA and conduct research in the fields of taxonomy, phylogeny, phylogeography, biogeography and biodiversity assessment
- Evaluate and develop DNA protocols for archival specimens (including "traditional" molecular tools and next-generation sequencing)
- Collecting and using genetic data to help solving applied problems (e.g., in the fields of agriculture, public health, conservation)

## ***Objective of the call for proposals***

Molecular genetic tools help addressing questions related to evolutionary, taxonomic or biogeographic issues and can provide effective support to the activities of scientists working in or with natural history collections. The goal of this call is to make a range of tools, including traditional and new generation molecular genetic techniques, available to scientists of RBINS and RMCA. This call is directed to researchers that need support to complement already ongoing research activities or to initiate a novel research project.

## ***Profile of the proposal***

Due to re-assurance of longer term commitment by BELSPO for funding JEMU, we are able to launch again a call for research projects. In 2015, JEMU will support two research projects, with a financial contribution of max. 5000 EUR each. Research projects that can be co-funded by the applicant are preferred. In the same sense, applicants who can contribute with manpower are welcomed. Projects will start in May 2015 and will be finished within 12 months of the starting date. In order to ensure a timely progress, all research material related to the proposed project (i.e., specimens, tissue samples) must be readily available by end of April 2015. The results of the selected projects must be published in joint paper(s).

All proposals must be submitted in English. Please only use the provided proposal submission form.

## ***Eligibility***

Individual researchers or research teams led by individuals working at the RBINS or RMCA can apply for JEMU projects. Collaboration between these both institutes as well as between RMCA/RBINS and Belgian universities or other research institutes will be considered as an added value.

## ***Evaluation and selection***

The proposals will be internally evaluated by the JEMU scientific panel. Only complete submissions will be evaluated. Evaluation criteria will be:

- Quality of science
- Demonstrated use of the collections at one or both of the federal research institutes (RBINS and RMCA)
- Clarity of objectives and tasks, relevance of the methods, contribution to the state of the art research in the proposed area
- Added value of the molecular approach to the project
- Technical and financial feasibility of the proposal
- Compliance with the objectives of the JEMU mission
- Joint proposal between RBINS & RMCA are encouraged

## ***Contractual obligations & funding***

The budget is managed by JEMU and no money will be transferred to either internal or external projects, or to third parties (like universities). The allocated budget can only be used to support molecular work (e.g., consumables), there will not be any support to personnel costs, field work etc. At the start of the project, the partners will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

## ***Reports***

At the end of the project, obtained results will be reported to the JEMU steering committee.

## ***Contact information***

For further information, please contact:

Zoltán T. Nagy (RBINS): [ztnagy@naturalsciences.be](mailto:ztnagy@naturalsciences.be)

Massimiliano Virgilio (RMCA): [massimiliano.virgilio@africamuseum.be](mailto:massimiliano.virgilio@africamuseum.be)

Proposals must be submitted via e-mail on **15 April 2015** at latest to:

Zoltán T. Nagy ([ztnagy@naturalsciences.be](mailto:ztnagy@naturalsciences.be)) – JEMU - RBINS

Massimiliano Virgilio ([massimiliano.virgilio@africamuseum.be](mailto:massimiliano.virgilio@africamuseum.be)) – JEMU - RMCA