

ECNP Networks

Guideline to apply for a Thematic Working Group

Background

Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) serve to flexibly support novel and more targeted collaborations across existing ECNP Networks. A TWG could for example be established in response to an ERC call or to establish a certain technology (e.g., apps for monitoring patients).

A TWG is based on the initiative of a core group composed of up to six persons, who have specific expertise on the novel transnosological, timely and overarching theme. A core group may be formed by people who are not ECNP Networks members.

This group prepares the initial proposal and subsequently invites additional representatives with relevant and supplementary expertise from (other) existing ECNP Networks and, whenever relevant, partners from industry or other experts.

Formation of a TWG follows a two-stage application process: in stage 1, the core group prepares the initial proposal, followed by an assessment by the Networks Board; in stage 2, after the initial proposal is approved, the core group invites additional representatives with relevant expertise from existing ECNP Networks and possibly, partners from industry or other experts needed to fulfil the aim of the TWG.

During the evaluation process and before the final approval, the main proposer must present the initiative at one of the ECNP Networks Taskforce meetings, to promote the TWG and facilitate the interactions with existing Networks.

The final proposal (including the scope, the action plan, the timeline, the budget, and the final composition of the team) must be approved by the Networks Board. Once approved, the TWG can obtain funding from ECNP.

Objectives of ECNP TWGs

1. The creation of multiple transnosological themed working groups in neuropsychopharmacology.
2. To initiate collaborations to compete successfully for European funding or help shape policies and future calls.
3. To disseminate the output of the working groups on identified ECNP platforms, including the annual ECNP Congress.

Requirements of TWG and its members

1. Members of a TWG must be or need to become ECNP members once the proposal is accepted. Within 4 weeks after the approval, all the members of the TWG must be an ECNP member. For information regarding ECNP membership, click [here](#).
2. Must be recognised as current or upcoming European leaders in the relevant domain of basic or clinical neuroscience.
3. Must be based in successful European research or clinical centres with a considerable track-record in research and external funding within basic or clinical neuroscience.
4. Must have already launched or be involved in successful collaborations with other centres.
5. All the TWG members must agree on a single Chair, who is the main responsible to represent the TWG, to present the application and to communicate with ECNP.

When evaluating the proposal, the Networks Board will take the composition of the TWG into account (geographical distribution, gender balance, career stages and scientific complementarity).

Requirements of the initial application for the creation of a Thematic Working Group

1. A short (max 3 pages) document that describes the main goals and aims of the TWG. This document should clearly address how the proposed TWG is complementary and synergistic with existing ECNP Networks or TWG. If an ECNP network already exists in the same domain, it should be clearly stated how the proposed TWG is complementary, meets unmet needs, and can strengthen the goals of the already existing ECNP Networks and TWGs.
2. A list of the 6 people forming the core group including their affiliation and the reason for their inclusion. At this stage non-ECNP members can be included, but once the proposal is accepted, they must become ECNP members.
3. A list of the main roles and responsibilities of each partner.
4. A clear time schedule of the actions to be taken by the TWG.
5. A provisional budget (see below).
6. If applicable, the name of the research call to which the TWG will respond with a proposal.
7. Agreement to include both the name of the ECNP TWG and the representatives of the collaborative centres as authors in any manuscript related to the work accomplished by the TWG.

Requirements of the final application for the creation of a Thematic Working Group (stage 2)

1. Any update on the original application requested by the Networks Board.
2. The names of additional representatives with relevant expertise (and role and responsibilities in the TWG) from:
 - **Existing ECNP Networks:** coherence between Networks and TWG is assured by attempting to have at least one member from a minimum of three ECNP Networks in the TWG.
 - **Industries:** 1 representative per industry
 - **Other additional experts from other centres:** 1 representative per centre indicating their relevant and supplementary expertise. These experts do not have to be part of an existing ECNP Network. Centres might be other academies or institutions and they should provide expertise which is fundamental for the TWG aim and that cannot be found in the existing ECNP Networks.

Applicant(s) must make sure to balance the members in terms of gender, career stage and geography (i.e. the number of countries, geographical spread and the numbers of centres per country (usually two per country))

Post approval, duration, end, renewal or change of a TWG

1. Upon discussion between the TWG core group and the Network Board, the TWG can organise a *TWG stand-alone meeting* during which the TWG will present aims and deliverables for an interim evaluation of its progresses (see below for other details about the budget and activities).
2. A TWG exists:
 - a. for a maximum of 1 year. At the end of the year, the Networks Board will proceed with a final assessment to decide on the next step of the TWG: end, renewal (for another year) or eventual transition into an ECNP Network.
or (if applicable)
 - b. for the period of applying for a research call. The TWG must inform the ECNP Office and Networks Board of progress and outcomes of its proposal to the call.

ECNP support aspects

(The proposer of a TWG must agree with the following statements)

1. The maximum total budget for all the activities of the TWG is EUR 15,000.
2. Funds will not be available for the implementation of a research protocol, for recruiting patients, for generating or analysing data, for recruiting new centres, etc.
3. The TWG can organise TWG stand-alone meetings (against the TWG budget). Upon the evaluation of the outcomes by the Networks Board, new additional activities may be accepted to be included in the TWG budget (besides meetings organisation). This may include special projects like limited dedicated data entry or secretarial support. The maximum budget remains EUR 15,000. ECNP also offers to support with up to € 5,000, to engage an agency to help put together a proposal for EU-funded project. If the application is successful, this amount must be returned to ECNP.
4. During the application process, ECNP can provide funds to organise a preliminary meeting (if requested by the core group). This preliminary meeting (exclusively for the core group) must aim to finalise the stage 2 of the application (e.g. defining the action plan, the timeline, the links with existing ECNP Networks). The costs for this meeting are against the TWG budget.
5. The costs for the initial formal presentation of the TWG at the Networks Taskforce meeting are against the TWG budget.
6. All TWG members must agree and follow the ECNP reimbursement and support policy (see below).
7. TWG Chair has full responsibility to administer the costs of the TWG according to the ECNP reimbursement policy. ECNP Office will provide support for this.
8. If the TWG ends at any time, the budget amount not spent remains with ECNP.

Order of the application

First stage:

1. The initial proposal is sent to ecnp-networks@ecnp.eu to the attention of the ECNP Networks Board.
2. The ECNP Networks Board will discuss the proposal and, if deemed necessary, consult the ECNP Executive Committee.
3. The ECNP Networks Board will decide for or against funding.
4. ECNP Office will send the decision of the ECNP Networks Board to the proposer.

Second stage:

1. The full proposal including the additional representatives (see above) is sent to ecnp-networks@ecnp.eu to the attention of the ECNP Networks Board.
2. The ECNP Networks Board will discuss the proposal and will decide for or against funding, given the overall budgetary position.
3. ECNP Office will send the decision of the ECNP Networks Board to the proposer.
4. Failed applications can be reconsidered after two years.

Other

The ECNP Office is the main initial contact point of ECNP TWG. You can contact us and send any question to: ecnp-networks@ecnp.eu

Reimbursements

The budget for a TWG stand-alone meeting includes travel reimbursements (according to the below mentioned policy), room rental, catering and AV equipment at the lower cost possible.

Travel reimbursement policy for TWG stand-alone meetings

Only TWG members being an ECNP member can request reimbursement for the travel.

All travel reimbursements need to be claimed within two weeks after the meeting. The ECNP Network secretariat can provide the correct reimbursement form to be used for travel costs and it should be sent to the appropriate participants before the meeting. Agenda and minutes of the meeting must be provided to ECNP before the reimbursement can be finalised.

Travel reimbursement include:

- Reimbursement of one night hotel with a maximum of EUR 160.
- Reimbursement of travel costs from city of origin to meeting city and back:
 - flight ticket at a maximum of an airfare round trip economy class ticket (APEX airfare) under the conditions that the ticket cannot be cancelled, is non-flexible and the booking is done as early as possible (statistically proven 8 weeks prior to the meeting)
or
 - train ticket return journey based on second class
or
 - driving by car with petrol reimbursement (max. EUR 0.25 per km), tolls, and parking costs (at the congress/meeting location only)

Additional travel costs (such as taxi costs to/from the airport or to hotel) will not be reimbursed

Support for other special projects

Costs for special projects within the stated budget such as limited dedicated data entry or secretarial support must be approved by the ECNP Networks Board. The board also needs to approve the additional funding of an agency to put together a proposal for EU-funded project

TWG creation workflow

Application, core group

- Application of the initial proposal by the core group as explained
- Core group of 6 people (Non-ECNP members allowed at this stage).

First assessment and approval of TWG proposal by ECNP Networks Board

Internal promotion of the initiative

- ECNP Office formally announces the approval of the initiative to the Network Taskforce
- A *formal initial presentation of the TWG* at the Network Taskforce is due before to obtain the second final approval
- The core group can organise a *preliminary meeting* to prepare the final proposal

STAGE 1

STAGE 2

Link with existing ECNP Networks

- The core group invites additional representatives with relevant expertise from existing ECNP Networks and, possibly, partners from industry or other additional experts from other centres.
- The TWG should have links with at least one member from a minimum of three ECNP's existing Networks in the TWG.
- ECNP Office will support the core group to contact the Networks members

Final proposal

- Application of the final proposal by the core group indicating scope, timeline, action plan, composition of the team (including links with existing ECNP networks) and budget.

Second assessment and approval of TWG proposal by ECNP Networks Board

TWG final approval