



**ITALIAN NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL & GENOME CANADA
JOINT INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR LETTERS OF INTENT IN
LARGE-SCALE GENOMICS RESEARCH IN HUMAN HEALTH**

November 2008

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1 Italian National Research Council (CNR)

The Italian National Research Council (CNR) is a public organization. Its duty is to carry out, promote, spread, transfer and improve research activities in the main sectors of knowledge growth and of its applications for the scientific, technological, economic and social development of the Country. To this end, the activities of the organization are divided into macro areas of interdisciplinary scientific and technological research, concerning several sectors: biotechnology, medicine, materials, environment and land, information and communications, advanced systems of production, judicial and socio-economic sciences, classical studies and arts.

2 Genome Canada

Genome Canada's mandate is to develop and implement a national strategy in genomics and proteomics research for the benefit of all Canadians. It is committed to increasing Canada's position among the world leaders in genomics¹ research in key areas such as health, agriculture, environment, forestry, fisheries and technology development. It is also committed to a leadership role on the ethical, environmental, economic, legal and social issues and potential implications associated with genomics research (GE³LS), and to communicating with Canadians on these and other issues.

3 Background

The Italian National Research Council (CNR) and Genome Canada have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the Fall of 2007, to expand existing links and to establish a framework of collaboration between Canada and Italy in the area of large-scale genomics and proteomics research related to human health.

As a first step in establishing the framework, scientists and representatives of funders from Canada and Italy participated in a workshop in Rome in April 2008. The objective of the workshop was to increase awareness of current research activities in Canada and Italy in the area of large-scale genomics and proteomics research related to human health and to identify unique opportunities for future collaboration. The workshop focused on three main areas:

- i. Challenges in Health and Potential Genomics Solutions
- ii. Genomic Biology
- iii. Technologies, Tools and Strategies

The workshop participants from both countries agreed on common principles and target areas for a potential future joint competition.

¹ The term genomics research is used to cover the study of the genes and their functions, namely genomics, proteomics, genotyping, sequencing, bioinformatics and other related fields of research (as per the definition stated in Genome Canada's Funding Agreement signed March 29, 2007).

4 Call for Letters of Intent (LOI)

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this call is to solicit Letters of Intent (LOI) for joint large-scale research projects focusing on the application of genomics research in the area of human health as defined in Section 4.2 – Research Scope.

Genome Canada and the CNR are working to raise funding for this joint initiative. When funding becomes available, LOIs that fall within the areas defined will be invited to submit full proposals for peer review.

4.2 Research Scope

LOIs solicited under this joint call must address important biological questions related to human health, where large-scale genomics and proteomics research projects might provide solutions. LOIs must include a GE³LS component as well as use of and development of appropriate genomic and proteomic tools and technologies (e.g., bioinformatics, vaccine development, animal models, biobanking/population genomics, sequencing, proteomics, systems biology and genotype/phenotype correlations). Consideration should also be given to relevant gender and age-related issues. Areas that have been identified of common interest and strength include the following:

- infectious diseases;
- cardiovascular diseases;
- metabolic disorders;
- adverse drug reactions;
- cancer, and
- central nervous system (CNS) disorders.

LOIs concerning the ethical, environmental, economic, legal and social aspects of genomics research (GE³LS) in these strategic areas may also be submitted.

4.3 Other Requirements

LOIs must fall within the areas defined above and, in addition, must:

- include research partners from Canada and Italy and identify a project co-leader from each country who will have joint responsibility for the proposed research; and
- propose a new unique joint research project which has not previously been supported by other sources and that could **not** be carried out without the other country's involvement.

5 Submission and Evaluation Process

5.1 Timeline

The anticipated timeline for this initiative is as follows:

November 10, 2008

Request for LOIs

Jan 31, 2009	Receipt of LOIs
March 2009	Assessment of LOIs for eligibility & responsiveness to call
April 2009	Potential announcement of joint competition subject to availability of funds and invitations to submit full proposals

5.2 Who Can Submit

LOIs must include a Canadian and an Italian partner. Eligible submissions include those from industry, academic institutions, research institutes and government laboratories.²

5.3 How to Submit

LOIs must be forwarded to Genome Canada through a Genome Centre: <http://www.genomecanada.ca/en/centres/>. LOIs will then be shared between Genome Canada and CNR.

5.4 LOI Evaluation

LOIs will be assessed for eligibility and responsiveness to this call. LOIs that do not fall within the areas defined in section 4 above, will not be invited to submit an application to a future competition. Each LOI must be submitted on the attached form.

6 Further Information and Contacts

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² Scientists working in Industry or Federal laboratories may be co-applicants but may not receive Genome Canada funds for activities to be carried out in Industry or in a Federal laboratory, with the exception of costs that are incurred based on a reasonable fee-for-service arrangement or contract.