Information for Applicants, INTERACT TA/RA Call

Transnational Access (TA) means free of charge, trans-national access to research infrastructures or installations for selected user groups. The access includes the logistical, technological and scientific support and the specific training that is usually provided to external researchers using the infrastructure. **Remote Access** (RA) is a form of Transnational Access in which the user(s) do not visit the infrastructure/installation physically themselves; instead the staff of the infrastructure/installation is conducting the study/collecting the samples/doing the monitoring for the user(s) according to their research plan. It is also possible to combine Transnational Access and Remote Access in a manner, where users both visit physically the station and set up the required field experiments/monitoring, after which study continues by using Remote Access.

You can find detailed information about INTERACT Transnational Access from the interact website at www.eu-interact.org

INFRASTRUCTURES

There are 53 research stations offering TA in INTERACT. You can find a listing of these infrastructures from here. Detailed information about the station facilities can be found from the Field Sites descriptions on the INTERACT website.

ELIGIBILITY for Transnational Access

A user group (=research group that applies for access to one or more research stations) eligible for **Trans-national Access** must satisfy the following conditions:

1. The user group leader and the majority of the users must work in a country other than the country(ies) where the installation is located; ***trans-national*** access cannot be granted to an infrastructure/installation that is located in the same country where the user works. In other words, applicants are not eligible for TA to their national infrastructures, i.e. stations that are located in the same country or operated by institutions located in the same country in which the applicant is working/residing.

   For example: Scientists working in Finland are not eligible for TA to Finnish research stations; Scientists working in Denmark are not eligible to Greenlandic research stations operated by Danish institutions, and so on.

2. There should not be a similar infrastructure in the country hosting the institution employing the user group's leader. If such an infrastructure exists, the applicant should show how the specific conditions of the requested research cannot be done at the national infrastructure.
3. Only user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under the action may benefit from the access, unless the users are working for SME's.
4. Access can only be granted to user groups to conduct research, not for arranging or attending courses, conferences, seminars or workshops.

The selection of user groups is based on a scientific merit and novelty of the research, but taking into account that priority should be given to user groups composed of users who:

- have not previously used the installation
- are working in countries where no equivalent research infrastructure exists
- apply working at more than one location for generating comparative studies
- are early career scientists (≤ 5 yrs from a PhD degree) **

**Applicants must hold a position at an institution of advanced research and/or education. PhD students and Master or Bachelor level students as main applicants (TA User Group leaders) are required to attach 1-2 signed recommendation letters by their academic supervisor and/or other relevant person to application.

The maximum amount of access granted to one user group is 90 days (3 months) in the INTERACT III funding period of 2020-2023, including both Transnational and Remote Access. Access for user groups with a majority of users not working in EU or associated countries is limited to 20% of the total amount of units of access provided under the grant. This is monitored and possible restrictions are set if the limit is close to be exceeded.

INTERACCESS ON-LINE APPLICATION SYSTEM

- Fill in the application form carefully. An example how to fill in the application is provided in the Application Manual. Read also the budgeting instructions (provided later in this document) and Research Plan instructions carefully.
- You can work on the application in several sessions and store the application in-between the sessions.
- The following attachments are compulsory in the application: Research plan, CV of the main applicant (user group leader). PhD students and Master or Bachelor level students *as main applicants* are required to attach 1-2 signed recommendation letters by their academic supervisor and/or other relevant person to application.

Research plan

Research plan is a compulsory attachment to the application, and must follow the structure provided in the Research Plan Instructions. Research plans failing to follow the instructed structure and length will be rejected from the evaluation for Transnational Access. Pay special attention to providing

information on research permits and specific logistic needs that are required by some stations (visa, import and export permits etc.), and what has been studied at the station previously. Consult [relevant station manager](#) or the [INTERACT Station Catalogue](#) about the required permits, if needed.

BUDGETING

Eligible costs: Provide the tentative budget of your access visit in the section "Travel and logistics costs" of the on-line application form, by specifying the travel costs from your home institution to the station and back, accommodation en-route and possible freight and logistic costs according to Table 1 below. In most cases it is realistic to apply access for 1-3 group members. In some cases, 4-5 group members can be granted access, but this is rare and most often restricted to few, labor-intensive studies (coring etc).

Accommodation and meals during the stay at station should not be included into the budget in most cases (see Table 1), except for **Cairngorms** and **FINI** that do not provide accommodation at the station premises. Other exceptions are: **Sermilik** and **M&M Klapa**, where meals have to be cooked by the visitors themselves and food purchases will be reimbursed after the trip in the travel claims up to a reasonable amount (see details from the table below). **Arctic Station, Abisko, Finse, Kolari, Cairngorms, FINI, QAANAAQ, Sudurnes** and **CHARS** do not reimburse food costs at all, and meals costs are thus on the responsibility of the TA users themselves.

Non-eligible costs: The following costs are not eligible, and are NOT REIMBURSED by INTERACT Transnational Access. Therefore, do NOT include these in the budget: Insurance costs and personnel costs of any kind. Daily allowances (per diems), km allowances, telephone and internet costs, purchase of equipment or chemicals, customs costs, meals and food purchases during journey to station and back, bar bills and other extra services at place of accommodation.

Remote Access: Include only logistics costs (freight) into the budget, as in remote access the applicants will not be visiting the stations themselves and the station staff will do the sampling/monitoring and send the samples/data to the TA users.

Table 1. Costs to be included to the "Travel and logistic costs" section of the on-line application form, specified here for each station offering Transnational Access. Symbols: **+** Add to the "Travel and logistics costs" section of the application form; **-** Do NOT include into the "Travel and logistics costs" section of the application form (automatically included to the granted access); 0 Not reimbursed by INTERACT TA, do NOT include into the travel and logistics costs section of the application form.

Station	Accommodation during stay at station	Meals during stay at station	Travel costs	Logistic/Freight costs	Other
Arctic Station	-	0	+	+	
Sermilik Research Station	-	+	+	+	Budget 30 EUR/person/day for food purchases
Oulanka Research Station	-	-	+	+	

Station	Accommodation during stay at station	Meals during stay at station	Travel costs	Logistic/Freight costs	Other
Zackenberg Research Station	-	-	+	+	Check ZAC price list for the cost chartered flights or any extra services (boat rental etc.)
Villum Research Station	-		+	+	
Research Station Samoylov Island	-	-	+	+	
Sverdrup Research Station	-	-	+	+	Always include safety training and renting of weapon. If applicable, add lab facilities (Vaskeriet Lab, Marinlab), snowmobiles, boats, etc. Prices on www.kingsbay.no. Questions to stasjonsleder@npolar.no
UK (NERC) Arctic Station	-	-	+	+	
Cairngorms	+	0	+	+	
Aktru Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Khanymei Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Kajbasovo Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Czech Arctic Research Station of Josef Svoboda (Petuniabukta)	-	-	+	+	
Abisko Scientific Research Station	-	0	+	+	
Bioforsk Svanhovd Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Tarfala Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Kilpisjärvi Biological Station	-	-	+	+	
Hyytiälä Forest Research Station (SMEAR II)	-	-	+	+	
Värriö Subarctic Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Greenland Institute of Natural Resources (GINR)	-	+ / 0	+	+	* Budget 30 EUR/person/day when staying at

Station	Accommodation during stay at station	Meals during stay at station	Travel costs	Logistic/Freight costs	Other
		*			GINR/Kobbefjord as only lunch on weekdays is provided at GINR
Polish Polar Station, Hornsund	-	-	+	+	
Kevo Subarctic Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Finse Alpine Research Station	-	0	+	+	
Kolari Research Unit	0	0	0	+	Offers only Remote Access. Budget only for logistic/freight costs.
Kainuu Fisheries Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Chokurdakh Scientific Tundra Station	-	-	+	+	
Spasskaya Pad Scientific Forest Station	-	-	+	+	
Elgeeii Scientific Forest Station	-	-	+	+	
Khibiny Educational-Scientific Base MSU	-	-	+	+	
Svartberget Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Sonnblick Observatory	-	-	+	+	
Station Hintereis	-	-	+	+	
Mukhrino Field Station –Nymto Park	-	-	+	+	
FINI, Faroe Islands Nature Investigation	+	0	+	+	Budget 30 EUR/person/day for food purchases.
Rif Field Station	-	-	+	+	
CEN Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik Research Station	-	-	+	+	
M&M Kłapa Research Station	-	+	+	+	Budget 25 EUR/person/day for food purchases.
CNR Arctic Station "Dirigibile Italia"	-	-	+	+	
Toolik Field Station	-	-	+	+	

Station	Accommodation during stay at station	Meals during stay at station	Travel costs	Logistic/Freight costs	Other
Sudurnes Science and Learning Center	-	0	+	+	
Pallas-Sodankylä Research Station	-	-	+	+	
Western Arctic Research Station (WARC)	-	-	+	+	
Kluane Lake Research Station	-	-	+	+	
International ecological educational center "Istomino" (ISTOMINO)	-	-	+	+	
Barrow Arctic Research Center (BARC)	-	-	+	+	
Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS)	0	0	+	+	
The Arctic Research Station (ARS)	-	-	+	+	
Lammin-Suo Peatland Station (LAMMIN-SUO)	-	-	+	+	
The DMI Geophysical Observatory Qaanaaq (QAANAAQ)	-	0	+	+	
North-East Science Station (NESS)	-	-	+	+	
Uapishka Research Station (UAPISHKA)	-	-	+	+	
Churchill Northern Studies Centre (CNSC)	-	-	+	+	
Adam Mickiewicz University Polar Station "Petuniabukta" (AMUPS)	-	-	+	+	

DISCLAIMER

Travel arrangements to INTERACT Transnational Access sites are the responsibility of the applicant. Should technical or logistical problems arise, the user groups should first contact the relevant Station Manager/Logistics Manager. Only in exceptional situations where the local personnel cannot help, should the INTERACT co-ordination be contacted. In these exceptional circumstances, the first contact will be Dr Hannele Savela, head of the Transnational Access Workpackage.

INTERACT shall not be responsible for any injuries, damages, or losses caused to any user group member in connection with any Transnational Access given at the INTERACT Transnational Access sites. Transnational Access users shall be responsible for their own travel arrangements, have appropriate travel and health insurance and assume complete and full responsibility for any and all passport, visa, vaccination, currency exchange or other entry requirements of each destination, and all safety or security conditions at the Transnational Access sites during the length of their travel and stay.

All user group members must have an appropriate travel and health insurance, and be clear about the legal responsibilities of their employers. INTERACT has no liability to cover the insurance costs, or any extra costs of unforeseen circumstances related to travel (e.g. delays or cancellations), customs, shipment and logistics, nor has it legal responsibility for the health and welfare, including emergency and accident situations, of those who are awarded INTERACT Transnational Access.

By accepting this Term of Service, you are indicating that you have read and accept our TA/RA Data Protection Policy and agree with the Disclaimer.

APPLICATIONS TO STATIONS LOCATED IN COUNTRIES REQUIRING VISA

Assistance and support are available to the accepted user groups for application of visas and required permits to stations. Please contact INTERACT TA Coordinator and relevant station managers for additional information.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The incoming applications are first checked for eligibility by the WP5 coordination. After that, the selection of user groups for Transnational Access (both physical Transnational Access and Remote Access) is a two-step process. First, the applications undergo scientific evaluation by the TA Selection Board that consists of external experts and representatives of INTERACT stations representing different geographical regions. Each application is graded for several evaluation criteria: Scientific quality of the planned research, scientific merits of the user group leader, relevance of the planned research for INTERACT goals, value for money. Each criteria is scored from 1-5, where 1=poor, 2=satisfactory, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent. Ranking of applications is made based on the total scores (max. 20) received from the criteria, and the TA Selection Board recommends user groups that they decide merit access to the research stations. The decisions are then finalized by the research stations, based on the TA Board's recommendations, feasibility of the projects at the

station, station strategy etc. The recommendations to the stations, and access decisions to the applicants are communicated via the INTERACCESS system by the INTERACT Transnational Access Coordination, that does not take part in the evaluation and selection process of individual applications.

INFORMATION TO SELECTED USER GROUPS

After receiving a positive access decision, the user groups can start preparing for their Transnational Access visit or Remote Access by contacting the relevant station manager. Detailed information about travel reimbursements and other practical matters related to the granted access can be found from the Information for User Groups.

DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS

INTERACT staff have worked hard to gain funding from the EU H2020 that will support access for hundreds of researchers to 53 Arctic, forest and northern alpine area research stations. They also work hard, together with external expert reviewers, to evaluate numerous applications for access while station managers offering Transnational Access are committed to providing a service and procedure to facilitate successful TA visits with minimal administration. Although the ethos of INTERACT is to facilitate research and build capacity, occasionally complaints about procedures and decisions may arise. INTERACT therefore has a specific Complaints Policy concerning Transnational Access funding policy and procedures.

EU GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies to 'personal data' meaning any information relating to an identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified in particular by reference to an identifier. The GDPR applies to all handling of personal data such as how to collect, handle, store and delete the data. The whole INTERACT Transnational and Remote access application, evaluation and reporting process follows the EU GDPR. The TA/RA related issues and procedures concerning the EU GDPR are provided in our TA/RA Data Protection Policy.