



## AQUACOSM-plus Transnational Access (TA) Application Guidelines

### Guidelines for filling in the TA-Application Form and information on additional documents

#### General information

Mesocosm-based projects generally depend on collaboration between a number of people.

TA-applicants can contribute to a **planned experiment** at a facility as a group or individually. Alternatively, TA-applicants can establish a group before applying for an **open time slot** for own ideas and experiments at an AQUACOSM-plus partner facility.

Please review the following information on our website before applying for TA, <https://www.aquacosm.eu>

1. AQUACOSM-plus partner facilities for selecting the ideal location for your work and potential collaborators (<https://www.aquacosm.eu/mesocosms/>)
2. **TA-Calendar** showing the time schedule of **planned experiments** and **open time slots** <https://www.aquacosm.eu/transnational-access/aquacosm-plus/>.

Once you have selected a suitable location, **contact the respective facility provider and/or the respective project leader at the facility of interest.**

**Contact details can be found in the “General Facility Information” section e.g.:**

**Mesocosm Facilities / France / National Experimental Platform in Aquatic Ecology (PLANAQUA)** (<https://www.aquacosm.eu/mesocosm/national-experimental-platform-in-aquatic-ecology-planaqua/>).

If you do not find sufficient information on the partner description pages and/or by contacting them, you may also **contact the TA-Office** ([ta-plus@aquacosm.eu](mailto:ta-plus@aquacosm.eu)) for further assistance.

Mandatory documents are **CV(s)** and a **Confirmation Letter** from the facility provider. TA-applicants may optionally submit a **Support Letter(s)** if deemed necessary. The description of required documents is given at the end of these guidelines.

If you are applying as a **GROUP**, the **Group Leader** is responsible for collecting all necessary documentation for her/him and for all **Group Members**.

If you are applying **INDIVIDUALLY** you can fill in your application as **Trainee** or as **Expert**. PhD, MSc and Bachelor students can apply as trainees, those with completed PhDs or coming from SMEs/ Industry background have to apply as individual experts.

All documentation should be **submitted online** before the **deadline** announced on the AQUACOSM website. See below for further instructions.

A draft of your application can be saved during the application process. You can also re-submit your application if you make amendments to it. The latest submission **before the deadline** will be considered.

***Failure to submit within the deadline may result in rejection of the TA application.***



## Step-by-step information to fill in the Online TA-Application Form

### 1. Basic Information (MANDATORY FIELD)

Please indicate if you are applying as a **Group** (more than one person, the appointed **Group Leader** files the application) or as an **Individual** (one person, trainee or expert).

### 2. Personal information (MANDATORY FIELD)

Please fill in your personal information including first and last name(s), phone number, e-mail, citizenship, birth date, gender, and highest education/research status (PGR = PostGRaduate, PDOC = PostDOC, EXP = EXPert, TEC = TEChnician, OTH = OTHer).

### 3. Affiliation (MANDATORY FIELD)

Please fill in the full name and address of your home institution/ employer.

Indicate the type of your institution: UNI = University, RES = research institution, SME = small and medium-sized enterprise, PRV = private, OTH = other (please explain).

### 4. Application as a Group leader

*Note: If you are applying as an Individual proceed to point 5 (Application as an Individual)*

Excluding yourself, indicate how many group members are included in your application

**Training:** Please indicate whether you are willing to include one or more person(s) in your application for training purposes (yes or no).

Then, skip to point 6 Activity type

### 5. Application as an Individual

Please indicate whether you want to join an experiment as an **expert** or as a **trainee**.

NB: PhD, MSc and Bachelor students can apply as trainees, those with completed PhDs or coming from SMEs/ Industry background have to apply as individual experts.

Please select the themes that most closely describe your project or specify your research focus.

### 6. Activity type (for individual and group applications)

Please indicate whether you wish to join a planned mesocosm experiment or conduct your own research project in an open time slot at a facility (if other, please briefly describe).

### 7. Project information (for individual and group applications)

For the purpose of this application, *project* is the tasks, including experiments that you are planning to carry out at a mesocosm facility.

#### 7.1 Themes (for group applications)

Select the themes that most closely describe your project or specify your research focus.

#### 7.2 Project title (MANDATORY FIELD)

Please insert a short title to describe your project (max. 150 characters incl. spaces).

#### 7.3 Project ACRONYM (MANDATORY FIELD)

Please create a project ACRONYM based on your TA project title. This will be used to



administer and identify your project. Using the facility name not acceptable. If you use the project acronym provided by the facility please add your initials to it at the end.

#### **7.4 TA Project description (MANDATORY FIELD)**

Please fill in the following information connected to your application.

Note: If you are applying as a **trainee** please only fill in the special point in section 7.4.7. Trainees should not fill in fields 7.4.1-7.4.6

**7.4.1 What are the aims and main objectives of your proposed TA project? (100 words max)**

Note: This information will be displayed optionally on the TA Project Tracker, once the TA application is approved. Please see point 18 for more details

**7.4.2 What is the scientific background and rationale of your TA project? (250 words max)**

**7.4.3 Describe the proposed experimental method and work plan for the TA project. (500 words max)**

**7.4.4 Describe the expertise Individual or Group Leader and members relevant to the TA application and their roles in the proposed TA project. (350 words max)**

**7.4.5 Does the proposal have a potential for seeding links with Industry? If so, how? (100 words)**

**7.4.6 References connected to the TA project description. (10 references max)**

**7.4.7 Only for trainees: What is your motivation for applying to the TA program and what will your tasks at the facility consist of? (250 words max)**

The project description should clearly summarize all of the above points. Read more about evaluation and selection criteria at <https://www.aquacosm.eu/transnational-access/aquacosm-plus/>

For a competitive application, it is important that the TA project description is explanatory enough to allow evaluation by scientists that may not be familiar with the specific field and methods applied. The suggested project should demonstrate a high probability of successful conclusion both for the whole group as well as for each individual member.

A list of equipment and other resources the applicant(s) plan to use, specifically defining what is requested from the host and what may be brought to the site by the participants, should be given under Point 8-Additional information.



**AQUACOSM-plus's mission is to share expertise among researchers and to train young scientists in the use of mesocosms. Engagement with one or both of these goals will enhance the chance of a project being approved.**

## **8. Additional information**

Please give the following additional information about the materials you will bring and/or your requirements (for details see below).

### **8.1 Specific requirements: (MANDATORY FIELD)**

In order to evaluate the feasibility of the project, this section should contain:

- a list of major equipment brought by the applicants to the facility
- a detailed list of instrumentation, equipment, consumables and/or support, for example: lab space, experimental units (type, size, numbers, time), experimental organisms (type, size, numbers) that the applicant wishes the facility to provide
- any other requirements necessary to successfully perform the project

***Proposals not providing this information may fail to be evaluated!***

A limited amount of consumables may be provided by AQUACOSM-plus. The type and amount varies with facility. **The availability of this support must therefore be confirmed with the facility provider in the submitted application.** Applicants are advised to contact the facility provider as early as possible to ensure enough time to complete the application before the deadline. To help this process, it is advised to provide an estimate of consumable costs (in EURO) before contacting the facility provider.

### **8.2 Isotopes**

Please list any isotopes you plan to use in the proposed work including concentration in Mbq or MCi.

### **8.3 Hazardous materials**

Please list any hazardous materials you will be using in your work.

## **9. Location (MANDATORY FIELD)**

### **9.1. Select location of the mesocosm facility**

Please select a specific mesocosm facility within the AQUACOSM-plus project that you think applies best for your activity, i.e. conducting or participating in a mesocosm experiment (<https://www.aquacosm.eu/mesocosms/>).

To increase the chances of a successful application it is advisable to include a second choice, if one fits your requirements.

### **9.2. Rationale**

Please indicate the reasons you are applying for Transnational Access to the specific mesocosm facility(ies), e.g. indicate why the conditions at the specific environment are suitable for what you plan to study (max. length 200 words)

## **10. Dates (MANDATORY FIELD)**

Please indicate suggested start and end dates for your stay at the facility according to the code: Day (DD). Month (MM). Year (YYYY).

Also indicate, to what extent you or your group is flexible in duration and/or start time.



Make sure your suggested dates fall within the time slots of the **TA-Calendar**.

**11. Please tick if any of the applicants is coming from the private sector, an industry or a small medium-sized enterprise.**

**12. Data policy agreement (MANDATORY FIELD)**

By accepting TA funding, you are consenting to comply with the open data policy (see below). Details on open data policy within AQUACOSM-plus can be found in the [Data Management Plan \(DMP\)](#).

As part of the TA requirements, data should be made openly accessible after completion of the experiment. Data should be openly accessible 6 months after completion of the publishable dataset. For reasons of competitive advantages, a data embargo may apply, e.g. for the completion of a PhD thesis, an embargo of three years may be upheld.

Data should be deposited in an open repository of choice of the AQUACOSM-plus institutions. Metadata should be made available in the centralized portal embedded in the AQUACOSM-plus website (<http://aquacosc.eu/>). AQUACOSM-plus strives to use standard metadata vocabulary, which builds on the Ecological Metadata Language (EML) and will be appended if required with other existing ISO90155 conform metadata libraries.

Data and associated metadata will be linked. Each dataset (depending on institutional policy) will be findable through the AQUACOSM-plus metadata portal and later through [mesocosc.eu](http://mesocosc.eu). The data is accessible through the AQUACOSM website via one link without password protection. Within the lifecycle of AQUACOSM-plus the data made openly available will be licenced following the service and licence commitment of Copernicus (<http://marine.copernicus.eu/services-portfolio/service-commitments-and-licence/>). Data collected under AQUACOSM-plus, will be made available for re-use upon completion of the experiment.

In order to be in line with the European Charter for Access to research infrastructures ([https://ec.europa.eu/research/infrastructures/pdf/2016\\_charterforaccessto-ris.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/infrastructures/pdf/2016_charterforaccessto-ris.pdf)), and to ensure that the applicants are eligible to receive TA support please also indicate the following:

NB: It is recommended that you are inclusive in answering questions 13-15 as this will help to quickly resolve any issues that may later arise. Answering “yes” to questions 13-15 by no means excludes you from receiving TA.

**13. Are you or any of the group members affiliated with the facility you are applying to? (MANDATORY FIELD)**

In case of a group application, the group leader is responsible for collecting this information. If yes please briefly describe the nature of the affiliation. The TA office will get in touch if more details are needed.

**14. Have you or members of your group received TA support before? (MANDATORY FIELD)**

In case of a group application, the group leader is responsible for collecting this information. This includes Transnational Access provided by AQUACOSM-plus mesocosc facilities. If yes, please indicate which members received TA and in what year. The TA office will get in touch if more details are required.

**15. Do you, or members of your group, have an on-going collaboration with the facility provider(s). Have you, or members of your group, collaborated with the facility**



### provider(s) in the past? (MANDATORY FIELD)

In case of a group application, the group leader is responsible for collecting this information. This includes collaboration in ongoing and previous projects and co-supervision of students.

### 16. Group members (for group application only)

If you apply as a **Group Leader**, please list all **Group Members** including the information in all the provided fields. This must include:

- First and last name(s)
- Phone number
- E-mail
- Citizenship
- Birth date
- Gender
- Highest education/research status (PGR = PostGRaduate, PDOC = PostDOC, EXP = EXPert, TEC = TEChnician, OTH = OTHer)
- Full name and address of home institution/ employer
- Type of institution (UNI = University, RES = research institution, SME = small and medium-sized enterprise, PRV = private, OTH = other (please explain))

Please briefly indicate their role in the project (e.g. “primary production measurements” or “zooplankton taxonomy”). More information about the **Group Members** is requested in the respective CVs.

Note that anyone NOT planning to travel to the facility in person CANNOT apply for TA as a **Group Leader** and cannot be listed as a **Group Member**. Nevertheless, you may mention the relationship to experts/collaborators under point 7.4 Project description.

If you have established cooperation with colleagues at one of the AQUACOSM mesocosm facilities, do not include their names as group members because they are not eligible for support under this activity. This cooperation should be mentioned under the appropriate field in point 15.

### 17. File upload

To complete the TA-application, your application and additional documents should be submitted before the **deadline listed on the AQUACOSM webpage**. Detailed information and a list of documents needed can be found below.

#### Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Applying as a **Group Leader**: Please use the CV template provided: [ACplus\\_TA\\_CV.doc](#). The **Group Leader** is responsible for collecting **CVs of all Group Members** listed in the TA-Application Form (under point 12) using the same CV template. Please compile all CVs into one pdf file labelled as follows: ProjectAcronym\_CV\_group\_TA.pdf

Applying as an **Individual expert/trainee** please use the CV template: [ACplus\\_TA\\_CV.doc](#) and save the file in pdf format labelled as follows: ProjectAcronym\_CV\_individual\_expert\_TA.pdf

#### Scientific Contact

**Confirmation Letter:** In order to ensure that your TA application is feasible at the specific AQUACOSM-plus partner facility, the group leader or individual applicant



(expert and trainees) must contact the respective facility provider in good time before application submission. The applicant must obtain a signed letter from the facility provider that confirms your project/participation is realistic/practical and fits to the potential planned activities. Please attach the signed confirmation letter in pdf format labelled as follows: ProjectAcronym\_CL\_TA.pdf.

*TA Applications that do not have such a letter will not be considered.*

## Support Reference

**Support Letter(s):** AQUACOSM-plus strongly encourages PhD students and early career scientists to apply for TA funding. To strengthen applications, we suggest PhD students and early career scientists (up to 5 years since PhD completion) applying as Group Leaders attach a support letter from your former supervisor or other senior peers willing to be contacted for scientific references.

The letter of support must include: Name of supporter; position; organization; address; phone and e-mail. Compile support letters (if more than one) and save in pdf format labelled as follows: [ProjectAcronym\\_SL\\_TA.pdf](#).

## Templates

All templates can be downloaded from the AQUACOSM-plus Transnational Access web page: <https://www.aquacosm.eu/transnational-access/aquacosm-plus/>

## File upload overview

NOT all files are mandatory (see information in brackets in the list below). Also remember to label documents with your project ACRONYM.

For **group application:**

- [ACRONYM\\_CV\\_group\\_TA.pdf](#) (**mandatory**, CVs of group leader & members)
- [ACRONYM\\_CL\\_TA.pdf](#) (**mandatory**, Confirmation Letter from facility)
- [ACRONYM\\_SL\\_TA.pdf](#) (optional, Support Letter/s)

For an **individual applicant:**

- [ACRONYM\\_CV\\_individual\\_expert\\_TA.pdf](#) (**mandatory**) *or*
- [ACRONYM\\_CV\\_individual\\_trainee\\_TA.pdf](#) (**mandatory**)
- [ACRONYM\\_CL\\_TA.pdf](#) (**mandatory**, Confirmation Letter from facility)
- [ACRONYM\\_SL\\_TA.pdf](#) (optional, Support Letter/s)

## 18. Submit

Finally, press: **Save draft** if you have not filled in all the relevant information, or need to make further inquiries before you continue, or **Submit** application when you are ready.

In submitting this application, you agree that you have read and understood the TA-Application Guidelines and that you are authorised by your employer to submit and act on this proposal. If you wish to amend your applications, you can resubmit at any time before the **deadline**. The latest submission will be considered.

You are also requested to confirm that you understand how the personal data you submit will be used, this confirmation is mandatory, please read the relevant text in this section.

