



EUROREGIO*

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Call for Expressions of Interest for participation in the Terra-Med doctoral program – Joint PhD Thesis Topics definition involving Occitanie, Balearic Islands, and Catalonia partners

1. Purpose of this note

This **Call for Expressions of Interest** is addressed to laboratories and research teams of the partners involved in the **TERRA-MED** project, funded under the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – COFUND** programme. TERRA-MED aims to identify 46–47 research challenges that will be consolidated into 33 France–Spain co-supervised PhD topics under the WEF nexus framework.

The objective of this EOI is to identify **research topics** to be integrated into an **international doctoral programme** structured around the **WEFE nexus (Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems)** and implemented through **cross-border joint supervision (cotutelle) between France and Spain**.

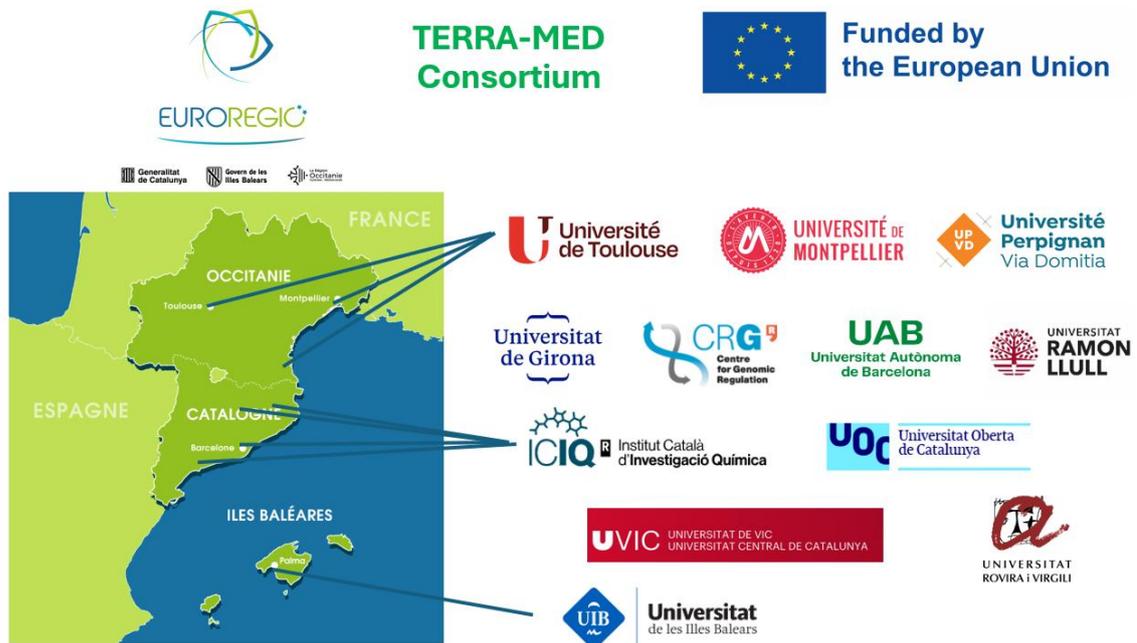
2. Overview of the TERRA-MED project

TERRA-MED is an MSCA COFUND project designed to fund and structure a doctoral programme of excellence for advancing sustainability and climate resilience in Occitanie, Balearic Islands, and Catalonia. The program is led by the **Euroregion, a cooperation body formed by the regional governments of Catalonia, Balearic Islands and Occitanie**.

TERRA-MED will fund **33 PhD thesis through an international call for candidates**, conducted under **France–Spain joint supervision**, involving:

- dual scientific supervision,
- structured mobility between the two countries,
- an enhanced, interdisciplinary and international doctoral training programme.

The program is jointly co-funded by the European Union, the Euroregion members and the academic partners. **A competitive living allowance (salary) for the doctoral candidates is covered by the program for the duration of the PhD thesis.**



3. The WEF nexus as a shared scientific framework

The scientific framework of TERRA-MED is based on the **Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems (WEFE) nexus**, understood as a systemic approach aimed at analysing and understanding:

- interdependencies between water resources, energy systems, food production and ecosystems,
- trade-offs, synergies and conflicts of use,
- implications for sustainability, resilience and territorial governance.

Proposed PhD topics may address this framework at different scales (local, regional, cross-border, Mediterranean) and through a wide range of approaches.

An **interdisciplinary approach is mandatory** with scientific relevance and coherence clearly demonstrated.

Research lines pre-identified in the project (not exhaustive):

WATER axis						
TITLE OF THE RESEARCH LINE	RECRUITMENT			HOSTING CO-SUPERVISION/ CO-THESIS		
	Occitan	Catalan	Baleares	Occitan	Catalan	Baleares
1)Eco-innovative solutions for water treatment and reuse	UPVD, UT, UM	URL, UVic UCC, URV, UdG		UPVD, UT, UM	ICIQ, URL,UVic UCC, URV, UdG	
2)Water quality and pollutant transport	UPVD, UT, UM	UAB, URL,UVic UCC; UdG	UIB	UPVD, UT, UM	UAB, URL,UVic UCC; UdG,URV	UIB
3)Water management and governance	UPVD, UM	UoC , URL, URV,UdG		UPVD, UM,UT	UoC , URL, URV,UdG	UIB
4)Climate change impacts and adaptation	UPVD, UT, UM	UAB, UoC ,URL,UVic UCC, CRG,URV,UdG	UIB	UPVD, UT, UM	UoC ,URL,UVic UCC,	UIB
5)Eco-sustainable systems	UPVD, UT, UM	URL;UVic UCC	UIB	UPVD, UT, UM	URL;UVic UCC	UIB
6)Environmental and agrarian history	UPVD, UT, UM	URL		UPVD, UT, UM	URL	
LAND axis						
TITLE OF THE RESEARCH LINE	RECRUITMENT			HOSTING CO-SUPERVISION/ CO-THESIS		
	Occitan	Catalan	Baleares	Occitan	Catalan	Baleares
1)Plant and Animal Biology	UPVD, UT, UM	UVic UCC		UPVD, UT, UM	UVic UCC,	UIB
2)Agricultural and Food Systems Sustainability	UPVD, UT, UM	URL, UdG		UPVD, UT, UM	URL, URV	UIB
3)Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change	UPVD, UT, UM	UoC, URL,UVic UCC, URV,UdG	UIB	UPVD, UT, UM	UoC, URL,UVic UCC, URV	UIB
4)Governance, Society, and Natural Resources	UPVD, UM	UoC, URL, URV,UVic UCC	UIB	UPVD, UM,UT	UoC, URL, URV,UVic UCC	UIB
5)Ecological Economics and Sustainability Transitions	UPVD, UM	UoC, URL,UVic UCC, URV		UPVD, UM	UoC, URL,UVic UCC, URV	UIB
6)Tourism and its implications for sustainability	UPVD, UM	UoC, URL, URV		UPVD, UM	UoC, URL, URV	UIB
7)Combating infectious diseases transmitted by vectors (mosquitoes, ticks, flies, etc.)	UM; UPVD, UT		UIB	UM; UPVD, UT		UIB
ENERGY axis						
TITLE OF THE RESEARCH LINE	RECRUITMENT			HOSTING CO-SUPERVISION/ CO-THESIS		
	Occitan	Catalan	Baleares	Occitan	Catalan	Baleares
1)Digital Transformation in the Energy Sector	UPVD	URL; UDG	UIB	UPVD	URL; UDG	UIB
2)Renewable Energy Technologies	UPVD,UT	ICIQ, URL	UIB	UPVD	ICIQ, URL, URV	UIB
3)Energy Collection, Conversion, and Storage	UPVD,UT	URL, URV		UPVD,UT	URL, URV	UIB
4)Decarbonization and Circular Economy	UPVD,UT	ICIQ, URL		UIB	ICIQ, URL,URV	UIB
5)Law, Regulation, and Climate Policy	UPVD	URL, URV		UPVD	URL, URV	UIB
6)Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation	UPVD	URL,UVic UCC, URV	UIB			
7)Green Digital Transition		ICIQ,URL			ICIQ, URL	UIB

4. Objective of the Call for Expressions of Interest

This Call for Expressions of Interest pursues several objectives:

- **Identify priority research themes** within partner laboratories;
- Emerge **scientifically ambitious and internationally attractive PhD topics**;
- Prefigure **France–Spain scientific collaborations** around doctoral projects;
- Build a portfolio of topics that is **balanced, coherent and aligned** with the objectives of the TERRA-MED project.

It is important to note that:

- submitting a “research challenge” **does not constitute a final commitment**,
- selected topics may **evolve and be refined** at a later stage and with the co-thesis partner and Non-academic partner.
- formal identification of joint supervisors may take place at a later stage.

5. Expectations regarding the proposed “research challenges”

Proposals must be submitted using the “**Research Challenge**” template provided.

Proposed topics should:

- fall within the **WEFE nexus framework**¹,
- present an **identifiable scientific research question or problem**,
- demonstrate **feasibility within the timeframe of a PhD project**
- remain sufficiently open to allow **co-construction with the cross-border co-thesis partner**.

A fully detailed research project is **not expected** at this stage.

Each proposal should explicitly describe the potential complementarities (approaches, fieldwork, methodologies, infrastructures). Formal identification of the foreign co-supervisor is **not mandatory** at the time of submission, but the partnership logic must be clearly articulated.

6. Role of potential supervisors

Proposals are expected to be submitted by researchers or academic staff **eligible to supervise PhD candidates** (HDR or equivalent, according to national regulations) and have the capacity to conduct the research in English.

At this stage, the expected commitment is:

- scientific and intellectual,
- limited to the topic structuring phase.

Further commitment (indicative):

- Scientific co-supervision
- Participation in the project activities and training program

Supervisors of selected topics will subsequently be involved in the final construction of the doctoral projects and the implementation of the TERRA-MED programme. **Supervisors will not take part in the evaluation process for selecting the doctoral candidates.**

¹ <https://www.medecc.org/medecc-reports/climate-wefe-nexus/> & <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC114177>

7. Process and next steps

The following steps are foreseen:

1. Dissemination of the EOI within each implementing partner institution.
2. Submission of research challenges according to each implementing partner's procedures. (feb – April 2026)
3. Selection and consolidation of proposals at the TERRA-MED consortium level of 46-47 research challenges based on these criteria:
 - a) scientific and innovative excellence; b) expected scientific, economic, and societal impact; and c) the Triple-I dimension—international/intersectoral secondments and interdisciplinary approach.
4. A structured matchmaking phase will be organised to identify and formalise France-Spain co-supervision tandems where not already defined. (march – may)
5. Selection of the **33 PhD co-thesis topics**; (may)
6. Launch of international calls for doctoral candidates – (oct/ nov 2026)
7. PhD selected candidates start in September 2027

8. Practical arrangements

Practical arrangements are defined by each implementing partner as part of the internal dissemination of the Call for Expressions of Interest.