

Theme Coordinators

Responsibilities & Appointment Procedure



Introduction

The GeoERA governance structure includes the role of Theme Coordinator (1 for each Theme of the GeoERA joint call), who are responsible for both coordination of projects within their Theme as well as for seeking and exploiting synergies with other Themes.

According to the GeoERA proposal, Theme Coordinators are formally elected only after the end of the Joint Call phase, and at that point become members of the GeoERA Executive Board. However, both within the GeoERA Call Secretariat (GES) and in the wider GeoERA consortium, it has been realized that the role is crucial for the success of GeoERA already in the Joint Call Phase, and even in the period running up to the start of the project (i.e. now).

The purpose of this document is:

- To describe the role the Theme Coordinator role in more detail, with a clear distinction between the Joint Call phase and the Project Implementation phase;
- To describe the procedure for election of the Theme Coordinators.

Theme Coordinators' role and mandate

The GeoERA Proposal / Description of Action says the following about Theme Coordinators:

After transnational projects have been selected for funding, the General Assembly will elect a TC for each of the call themes (Geo-Energy, Groundwater, Raw Materials, Information Platform). Candidates will normally be proposed through the EGS Expert Groups on Geo-Energy, Water Resources, Mineral Resources and Spatial Information, respectively. The Theme Coordinators will be responsible for:

- *Overall coordination (avoiding overlaps, optimising synergies) of transnational projects funded within their Theme, in collaboration with the Project Leaders of these projects;*
- *Seeking and exploiting synergies with the other themes.*

The role is therefore only formally defined during the Project Implementation phase. The rationale for this during the preparation of the Proposal was that Theme Coordinators would normally be key researchers within particular Participant organizations, who may themselves have a key role in the development of particular Project Ideas and Project Proposals. Therefore they have a potential conflict of interest when it comes to a (pre-)selection of ideas and proposals.

For the success of GeoERA however it is crucial that the process of developing project ideas within each Theme, as well as finding optimum synergies between such ideas, is facilitated. In addition, during the evaluation phase of call stage 1 and the preparation of the call stage 2 call text, expert input will be needed. To this end, it is proposed to formally define and introduce the roles of Theme Coordinators at the start of the Geo-ERA project, thereby taking care that any conflict of interest is precluded.

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Below is a description of the role and mandate of Theme Coordinators in each phase of the project.

Project Phase		Role of Theme Coordinators
Joint Call Phase	Preparation of Call Stage 1 for Project Ideas (M -6 to M4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate the generation of Project Ideas and coordinate participation between GeoERA partners; • Facilitate involvement of relevant experts from all GeoERA participants • Align and explore possible synergies, with other Themes, in particular with the Information Platform theme (e.g. through regular contacts with other TCs). • Review the Theme call text for the Call Stage 1 for Project Ideas, based on input received; • Interact with the GeoERA Call Secretariat (through participation in GES meetings);
	Call Stage 1 (M4-M7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate awareness of relevant experts from GeoERA participants on the Call Process; • Continued stimulation of the development of Project Ideas, with a focus on optimizing synergies, both within their own Theme and with other Themes;
	Evaluation of Project Ideas and preparation of Call Stage 2 for Full Proposals (M7-M9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicitly no role in the evaluation of ideas and the selection of the call topics. • On specific request from the GeoERA Secretariat, assist in the appropriate technical formulation of the selected call topics.
	Call Stage 2 (M9-M12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate awareness of relevant experts from GeoERA participants on the Call Process; • Continued coordination, where necessary, of the development of full proposals, with a focus on optimizing synergies, both within their own Theme and with other Themes;
	Evaluation of Call Stage 2 and proposal selection (M12-M16)	NO ROLE
Project Implementation Phase		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate Transnational Projects within their Theme, e.g. by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - facilitating regular meetings between Project Coordinators - facilitating Theme seminars where Projects can present their progress and discuss possible synergies and best practices • Seek and exploit synergies with other themes, e.g. by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regular meetings between Theme Coordinators; - facilitating direct exchanges between particular projects across themes; - facilitating exchange of Projects' progress and results between themes, in particular during major GeoERA meetings. • Continue regular interaction with GES. • During this phase, the TC's formally become member of the GeoERA Executive Board.

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Additional responsibilities of the Information Platform Theme Coordinator

In addition to the above, the GeoERA proposals/DoA states the following about the Information Platform Theme Coordinator:

Projects funded under the Information Platform theme will take over responsibility, coordinated by the Information Platform Theme Coordinator, for the further development of the Data Management Plan during GeoERA Phase 2 (Project Implementation).

The Information Platform theme coordinator will be responsible to address, together with the projects funded in the Information Platform theme, the longer term sustainability of the infrastructure, as well as the databases and web-applications generated in the project. This will also be an important element of the Foresight activities of WP1.

These are roles that are carried out during the Project Implementation Phase.

Election of the Theme Coordinators

The GeoERA Proposal/DoA states that TCs are formally elected after transnational projects are selected for funding. The draft Consortium Agreement states only that TCs are elected by the General Assembly, but does not state specifically when (or how) this election should take place. The Executive Board proposes to diverge from what was stated in the proposal, and formally elect TCs during the GeoERA Kick-off meeting.

Both during the preparation of the proposal and during the preparation of the Grant Agreement, the Theme Coordinator role has been effectively fulfilled by the chairs or specific co-chairs of the most relevant EuroGeoSurveys Expert Groups. The persons that are currently effectively coordinating the four themes are:

Energy:	Serge van Gessel (TNO; chair of the GeoEnergy Expert Group)
Groundwater:	Klaus Hinsby (GEUS; chair of the Water Resources Expert Group)
Raw Materials:	Gerry Stanley (GSI, deputy co-chair of the Mineral Resources Expert Group)
Information Platform:	Jorgen Tulstrup (GEUS; co-chair of the Spatial Information Expert Group)

These people have also (informally and implicitly) been given a mandate to continue in this role, both by the GeoERA Executive Board and the EuroGeoSurveys General Meeting. As a result, they are:

- Already recognized by GeoERA participants as fulfilling the role of coordinator;
- Well informed on the background and the procedures of GeoERA.

Therefore the GES proposes to nominate these people as Theme Coordinators. This proposal should be announced before the kick-off meeting takes place. Only if there is serious objection to the process, should a more formal process (opening the position for application, obliging candidates to support their candidature, etc.) be initiated.