



**Foundations of Trustworthy AI – Integrating Reasoning, Learning and Optimization**  
**TAILOR**  
**Grant Agreement Number 952215**  
**Connectivity Fund**

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<b>NOTE</b>	

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**Useful links**

Hosted website for the connectivity fund:

<https://tailor-eu.github.io/connectivity-fund/>

## Summary of current status

The TAILOR network already includes many of Europe's top AI labs. However, we also want to reach out to the many other excellent labs and organizations across Europe to work together and create new breakthroughs in AI. The Connectivity Fund is a key instrument in this mission. To establish a truly vibrant network, the Connectivity Fund provides funding to AI researchers from across Europe for research visits or workshops that bring together researchers from TAILOR labs and non-TAILOR labs. It especially aims to support young researchers to gain valuable experience and nurture the next generation of AI researchers. The goals, scope, organization, scientific evaluation board, and third party funding specifications have been described in deliverable 10.1 and have remained unchanged.

This series of deliverables (D10.3) provides updates on the status of the connectivity fund every 4 months. It will detail the number of submissions, the evaluation process, and the outcomes, funded visits and workshops, and financial status of the connectivity fund will be reported in a transparent way. This report summarizes the outcome of the first cut-off of the continuous open call, which closed on the 15th of March, 2021. The next cut-off will be 15th of July, 2021

## Applications received

Because of the COVID19 pandemic, and the impossibility or uncertainty around research visits and in-person events, the response to the first call was very low. The Connectivity Fund only covers costs related to in-person visits, which are currently only possible for a few edge cases. These include within-country research visits and in-situ workshops planned later this year under the assumption that travel restrictions will be lifted. Most other candidates decided to delay their application until travel restrictions are officially lifted.

We only received 3 applications in this first cut-off. The proposal titles are:

1. 1st International Joint Conference on Learning & Reasoning - IJCLR 2021 (workshop)
2. Abstraction and Implementation: Towards a Context-Dependent Conflict Resolution Algorithm for the Ethics of AI
3. Affine-transform equivariant transformers for trustworthy and sample efficient computer vision

## Review process and outcome

Proposals were collected via the EasyChair platform. First, all applications submitted within the deadline were evaluated for formal eligibility by the call management. The eligibility criteria were specified in deliverable D10.1. All 3 proposals passed the eligibility test.

Next, each proposal was reviewed by a member of the [scientific board](#). We checked for any conflicts of interest in the assignment. The final results of the evaluation are summarized in Table 1. All proposals were evaluated according to 5 criteria (AI excellence, scientific track record of the candidate, scientific step-up, and the suitability of the host and activity duration). Further details on these can also be found in deliverable D10.1.

Proposal ID	AI Excellence	Science track record	Science step-up	Host lab	Visit length	Weighted Final Score	TAILOR lab	non-TAILOR lab (recipient)	Planned starting date	Requested funding (EUR)
1	10	10	8	9	10	9.4	KU Leuven	NCSR "Demokritos", Greece	25/10/2021	1,500 EUR
2	9	9	8	9	7	8.5	CNR	University of Luxembourg	10/9/2021	3,300 EUR
3	7	9	8	9	9	8.3	EPFL	Zurich Univ. of Applied Sciences	1/9/2021	15,000 EUR

Table 1. Overview of TAILOR Connectivity fund applications and their evaluation.

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Scores per criteria are on a scale from 0-10:

- **0-1** Application fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information
- **2-3 Poor** – criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses
- **4-5 Fair** – application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses
- **6-7 Good** – application addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present
- **8-9 Very good** – application addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present
- **10 Excellent** – application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

As per the Connectivity Fund rules, proposals must achieve a minimum of 70% of the maximal score to receive funding. All applications passed this threshold. The total requested funding is also well within the budget earmarked for the first year of the activity fund (500k EUR divided over 4 cut-offs). Based on these outcomes, all 3 applications were accepted for funding.

## Funding procedure

We are currently finalizing the subcontracts to award FSTP, closely following the H2020 regulations on FSTP, our proposal's annex K, and the VISION Vademecum on FSTP (VISION Deliverable D3.1). We've been coordinating with the VISION Coordination and Support Action to arrive at a valid subcontract. The model subcontract is currently undergoing legal and financial review, and will be sent to the PO for verification as soon as possible.

In the context of the TAILOR Connectivity Fund, we have opted for the following setup:

- FSTP is offered as a lump sum: the recipient provides a detailed estimate of expected costs, within the budget requested in the application. This needs to be approved by the fund management, which will check whether the cost estimates are adequate for the proposed research visit.
- The recipient is responsible for keeping track of expenses and providing information to the EC in case of an audit. Both actual costs (receipts) or per diems are allowed. The recipient ensures that the commission and OLAF can review and audit the Third parties with regard to impact and economy.
- The recipient must file a report on the activities and outcomes of the research visit or workshop: a summary of the performed research and findings, papers published, projects written, and any other outcomes.
- 60% of the lump sum will be paid at the start of the visit. The remaining 40% will be paid after the report has been received and approved.