

Proposal number:	159735-EM-1-2009-1-FR-ERA MUNDUS-EMJD
Proposal title:	International Relativistic Astrophysics Doctorate Program
Coordinator:	Mr Pierre COULLET
Applicant organisation:	UNIVERSITE DE NICE - SOPHIA ANTIPOLIS

Award Criteria	
B.1	Academic and research quality (20% of the max. score)
<p>Based on and continuing the successful international PhD programme, created in 2002 by the majority of the participating institutions, the proposed very well documented EMJD does meet all the requirements, provides a precise needs analysis and points out clear and convincing objectives. The project gathers complementary expertise of very high value as well as extra-European contributions and competence. The active role of outstanding European institutions, in particular the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Southern Observatory (ESO) and the CERN should contribute to the European added value of the programme. Compared with the existing national programmes, the proposed training is innovative and very well integrated. An example of good practice is the one-month internship at the Observatoire de la Côte d'Azur, where the PhD candidates will develop competence in leadership and project management.</p>	
B.2	Partnership experience and composition (20% of the max. score)
<p>The consortium gathers very good expertise, capacity and infrastructure in the field. There is no doubt about the possibilities in terms of diversity, complementarity and cooperation (between academia and industry) to achieve the objectives of an outstanding EMJD. The associated third country partners are well chosen given their important development potential in the field. The main strength is that the proposal integrates in a well balanced and innovative manner the new dimensions and opportunities of a European degree; in particular, several events (attended by the entire promotion) there "<i>to create a spirit of school inside the PhD</i>" are foreseen.</p>	
B.3.	European integration and functioning of the programme (20% of the max. score)
<p>As the present proposal is built on seven years expertise of an international PhD, all the criteria for implementation are well addressed. The proposal does demonstrate a clearly integrated structure in terms of training. Institutional agreements between the partners and a Charter of theses are in operation. A joint PhD degree should be delivered. However, despite the already on-going programme, this degree is at present not recognised. In case of acceptance, this point should be given further scrutiny.</p>	
B.4	Provisions for EMJD candidates and fellowship holders (20% of the max. score)
<p>The information and promotion strategy as well as the services provided to host and the candidates are firmly addressed and are mainly based on the existing successfully running structures. The financial aspects, contracts and monitoring have been given particular attention. The language policy is convincing; all candidates are expected to be fluent in a</p>	

second European language

B.5 Programme Management and Quality Assurance (20% of the max. score)

There is very good provision and experience for a solid management of the EMJD. Nevertheless, the provided financial information is rather elaborated for a non-accountant evaluator. The proposal presents specific actions for complementary funding and gives concrete objectives of the sustainability plan. The internal and, more importantly, external evaluation schemes are efficient and convincing. Several examples of support to the candidates with special needs are cited.