



EURO-XPRAG: SECOND CALL FOR PROPOSALS

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH IN EXPERIMENTAL PRAGMATICS TRAVEL GRANTS FOR SHORT VISITS

Research in experimental pragmatics generates data as it tests between theories of pragmatics. After having seen accelerated growth over the last ten years, experimental pragmatics is now in a better position to resolve theoretical disputes, to advance beyond armchair theory-making and to make pragmatic theories more accessible to the cognitive science community at large. As part of an effort to provide a more permanent platform, a Research Network Program known as EURO-XPRAG supported by the ESF is presenting a second call for proposals that will support collaborative research.

Proposals that are accepted will bring together teams of at least two researchers to conduct collaborative research in experimental pragmatics. Accepted projects will be reimbursed for travel expenses up to EUR 4000 distributed over a two year period starting March 1, 2010. The travel expenses must be distributed over two or three short trips (see note a in “Further details” below). **Note that proposals that include a single collaborator from a non-member country (e.g. U.S.A., Japan, Canada) will also be considered (such collaborations are required to respect the same expense-limits as those taking place within Europe and, by ESF rules, can only be a small number of all accepted proposals).**

In addition, successful applicants will be invited to present their projects at a workshop to be held at the University of Leuven, Belgium, on June 10-12, 2010. The workshop’s objectives will be to provide feedback on the experimental paradigms and their testing of semantic and pragmatic theory.

Given that the goal of Experimental Pragmatics is to bring together opposing theories around the investigation of specific phenomena, EURO-XPRAG will privilege proposals built around *Adversarial Collaborations*. Ideally, these consist of a group containing two researchers with opposing points of view on a specific topic and an arbiter. The members of the collaboration would aim to work out in detail specific opposing predictions within an experimental paradigm and ultimately to test those predictions. This has been practiced among cognitive scientists in the past (see Mellers, Hertwig and Kahneman, 2001 for a detailed illustration) and requires a strong arbiter to mount a mutually agreed experiment. See Mellers, Hertwig & Kahnemann, (2001)¹, and especially Table 1 (which will be on the home website, www.euro-xprag.org) on creating an Adversarial Collaboration.

The potential themes to be covered include, but are not limited to, presupposition, referential terms, metaphor and figurative uses, implicatures, acquisition and development of pragmatics, and lexical pragmatics. Proposals will be evaluated for their overall quality and for the added value they bring to Experimental Pragmatics. Funds are limited to travel

¹ Mellers, B.A., Hertwig, R. & Kahneman, D. (2001). Do frequency representations eliminate conjunction effects? An exercise in adversarial collaboration. *Psychological Science*, 12, 269-275.

expenses linked to the collaboration (i.e. they are not designed for costs related to experimental procedures, which can be covered by other sources or by the host institutions).

Further details

Projects should be between 2 and 4 pages (in PDF, 12 pt font, 2.5 cm margins, A4) and include the following sections.

1. Researchers involved, their affiliations and email addresses (indicate primary contact)
 2. Background of the topic
 3. Planned method and goals of the study
 4. Project plan including dates of travel, budget^a, and host institutions
- Appendix. Short CVs of the researchers involved^b

Applications should be submitted by email to info@euro-xprag.org

Deadline: February 18th, 2010

Decisions will be announced by March 10th.

Successful projects are expected to contribute design details to a public database after the initial publication of results.

^a In order to plan the budget (maximum 4000 euros per project), please consult the following webpage: <http://www.esf.org/activities/research-networking-programmes/guidelines-for-management-of-esf-research-networking-programmes/appendix-3.html> Reimbursement of travel expenses will be administered through the ESF as *Short visits* following the guidelines in the webpage. After each visit a one-page report must be submitted to the ESF.

^b If one is in need of advice concerning partners (networking), send an email to info@euro-xprag.org

Selection Committee:

Ira Noveck (L2C2, Lyon)
Richard Breheny (UCL London)
Walter Schaeken (Leuven)
Peter Pagine (Stockholm)
Jacques Moeschler (Geneva)
Bart Geurts (Nijmegen)
Uli Sauerland (ZAS Berlin)
Louis McNally (UPF Barcelona)
Katarzyna Bromberek-Dyzman (Poznan)
Bergljot Behrens (Oslo)

Mellers, B.A., Hertwig, R. & Kahneman, D. (2001). Do frequency representations eliminate conjunction effects? An exercise in adversarial collaboration. *Psychological Science*, 12, 269-275.

Table 1 from Mellers, Hertwig & Kahneman (2001):

Table 1. *Suggestions for adversarial collaboration*

1. When tempted to write a critique or to run an experimental refutation of a recent publication, consider the possibility of proposing joint research under an agreed protocol. We call the scholars engaged in such an effort participants. If theoretical differences are deep or if there are large differences in experimental routines between the laboratories, consider the possibility of asking a trusted colleague to coordinate the effort, referee disagreements, and collect the data. We call that person an arbiter.
2. Agree on the details of an initial study, designed to subject the opposing claims to an informative empirical test. The participants should seek to identify results that would change their mind, at least to some extent, and should explicitly anticipate their interpretations of outcomes that would be inconsistent with their theoretical expectations. These predictions should be recorded by the arbiter to prevent future disagreements about remembered interpretations.
3. If there are disagreements about unpublished data, a replication that is agreed to by both participants should be included in the initial study.
4. Accept in advance that the initial study will be inconclusive. Allow each side to propose an additional experiment to exploit the fount of hindsight wisdom that commonly becomes available when disliked results are obtained. Additional studies should be planned jointly, with the arbiter resolving disagreements as they occur.
5. Agree in advance to produce an article with all participants as authors. The arbiter can take responsibility for several parts of the article: an introduction to the debate, the report of experimental results, and a statement of agreed-upon conclusions. If significant disagreements remain, the participants should write individual discussions. The length of these discussions should be determined in advance and monitored by the arbiter. An author who has more to say than the arbiter allows should indicate this fact in a footnote and provide readers with a way to obtain the added material.
6. The data should be under the control of the arbiter, who should be free to publish with only one of the original participants if the other refuses to cooperate. Naturally, the circumstances of such an event should be part of the report.
7. All experimentation and writing should be done quickly, within deadlines agreed to in advance. Delay is likely to breed discord.
8. The arbiter should have the casting vote in selecting a venue for publication, and editors should be informed that requests for major revisions are likely to create impossible problems for the participants in the exercise.