

Rules for access to the Metatron Service

Introduction

As part of the future investment programme named “National Biology and Healthcare Infrastructure” under the Healthcare and Biotechnology scheme initiated in 2011 by the French investment commission (CGI), the French ministry for higher education and research and the French national agency for research (ANR), the CNRS, INRA and UJF have come together to register a project identified as “Ecosystems Analysis and Experimentation - Service (AnaEE-S)”, subsequently called AnaEE-France.

These rules are aimed at defining the modalities of access to the **Metatron** service proposed by the AnaEE-France infrastructure and setting down the rights and obligations of users.

Article 1. Scope of the rules

These rules are aimed at presenting the following:

- System and service offer,
- Project submission procedure,
- Project selection procedure,
- Modalities of use of the service and consequent obligations,
- The contribution to the databases of the infrastructure,
- Modalities of exploitation of the results of the use of the service.

Article 2. Brief description of the system and services offered

The Metatron is an experimental system instrumented for studying the working of ecosystems and organisms in response to changes in the environment.

It is managed by the theoretical and experimental ecology station of the CNRS of Moulis UMR 5321 (SETE) located in Moulis in the département of Ariège.

The Metatron is installed in Caumont, about 15 km away from the facility of Moulis.

The system is dedicated to the study of experimental populations installed in semi-controlled land environments (possibility of wetland habitats). It consists of a set of 48 units

of 100 m²/200 m³ each, which are “population cages” populated with a community of partly controlled animal and plant species (species introduced into the system by users, regulation of some of the species naturally present), on which certain conditions of temperature, humidity and sunlight are imposed.

The system is accessible from 1 March to 1 November.

Basic service:

1. Allocation to users of a certain number of cages/corridors depending on the conditions accepted by the local committee and putting into service,
2. Programming of instructions and delivery of climate data,
3. Maintenance/repairs of instruments,
4. Annual mowing in cages/corridors.
5. Outdoor landscape maintenance.

Any additional service shall require the approval of the management committee with an advisory opinion of the steering committee.

Associated services:

- Accommodation: rooms are available in the Moulis facility,
- Vehicle fleet: 8 vehicles are available: 1 Dacia Duster, 1 Citroen Saxo, 1 Peugeot 306, A Renault Kangoo Pampa, 1 Citroen Berlingo saloon, family, SUV, 4x4 pick-up, minivan, trailers
- Animal houses,
- Access to laboratories,
- Offices,
- Land.

Article 3. Governance of service

The service is managed by a scientific manager and a technical manager. The managers are supported by a local committee including:

- the scientific and technical managers of the service,
- one scientist from the AnaEE France infrastructure who is not a member of the service management unit
- at least one foreign researcher with expertise in the area of the service, if possible belonging to the AnaEE-Europe network.
- An expert of the species and the project subject may be contacted where applicable.
- A representative of the local animal welfare committee where applicable.

They are responsible for selecting projects and prioritising them, with a view to optimising the load of the service.

Article 4. Project submission procedure

4.1 Users must involve the scientific and technical managers in the building of the project in order to estimate the feasibility of the project and the financial needs stated.

4.2 Eventually, the AnaEE-France website will be the only portal for the submission process via its ISIA platform.

4.3 The deadline for project submission of year y is set to 30 November of $y-1$. Any submission after that deadline will only be considered later on, after the projects already submitted are examined.

Article 5. Definition of project selection protocol

Prerequisite:

In the event of animal experimentation, the matter shall be referred to the ethics committee with oversight.

5.1 Project registration

Each project involving the use of the service of the infrastructure shall be registered on the ISIA (Information System for Infrastructure Administration) platform. The project submission protocol involves five steps:

Step 1. The project initiator signs up on the platform: the project initiator signs up and logs into the platform before entering the content of the project online.

Step 2. Project description: the initiator completes information about the project, its execution and financing online, directly on the platform using the predefined forms. The information may be saved and edited before the project is finally submitted.

Step 3: Project submission: when the project is fully completed on the platform, the initiator submits it online to the local committee.

Step 4: Review by the local committee: the local committee then reviews the project. It is then asked to complete its assessment criteria.

Step 5: Final opinion of the local committee: after a review, the local committee issues a final opinion of the project by 15 January of year y . Projects can be:

- accepted,
- accepted on certain conditions,
- accepted with modifications (which would lead to a new submission process)
- rejected.

The local committee prepares a short report explaining the reasons for its decision and may possibly suggest improvements.

5.2 Selection criteria

5.2.1 Based on the purposes and characteristics of the service, the local committee has the task of taking into account criteria relating to the technical feasibility and scientific value of the proposed projects.

The criteria are:

	Excellent	High	Medium	Low	Unsuitable
Scientific value					
Technical feasibility					
Possibility of overlap with other current or future projects					
Project ethics					
Overall assessment					

NB: project ethics will be assessed based on animal welfare considerations and also the compatibility of the focus species with communities of local species, so as to not introduce non-native species. Capture and experimentation permissions will also be taken into account.

5.2.1.1 To that end, the needs and requirements of the project will be quantified and examined.

5.2.1.2 Projects that have undergone a scientific investigation on the national and international level will be exempted from a scientific assessment by the local committee. The load applied on the service will be considered in any case. The projects presented will be built jointly with the service in any case.

When the demand from acceptable projects is greater than the service capacity, the following criteria will be applied to rank the acceptable projects:

- Projects financed by European agencies in order to promote the international use of the services.
- projects financed by French research institutions
- projects financed by agencies in collaboration, including with foreign countries
- other projects

Particular attention will be paid to projects submitted by users from the private sector with a view to transferring the results of research and mobilising additional sources of funding to ensure the sustainability of the services and their improvement.

If a project is presented with no preliminary funding, the local committee reserves the possibility to make the service accessible under a specific research collaboration convention in view of the particular value of the examined project.

5.3 Monitoring of selection

The AnaEE-France executive committee will have an overview of the projects conducted within the infrastructure and will guarantee the fairness of project selection. For its part, the local committee will ensure the scientific consistency and international scope, and the appropriateness of projects for the goals of the infrastructure.

Article 6. Project implementation: modality of use of the service and associated obligations

6.1 Modalities of use

6.1.1 User categories

The user is the designated project initiator to which the cages/corridors are assigned.

The members of their team. The initiator shall make a list and submit it to the technical manager of the service.

6.1.2 Access to premises

Access to plant rooms and common equipment is possible on request. The project initiator is given a key, to be returned imperatively at the end of the project. The project initiator has sole responsibility for sharing the key with the members of their team. The project initiator agrees to hand back the premises and equipment in their original condition. Access to the premises by members of their team is under their responsibility. Storage of their equipment in the premises requires permission from the service manager. Unless otherwise agreed in advance, the user's equipment may not be stored in the premises at the end of the project.

Access to supervision software is only allowed in part, for reference by means of a user session. The user name and password may not be disclosed to other parties.

6.1.3. Access to sites and equipment

The project initiator will be given the keys to the Metatron. They may not be given to any other party, except the members of the team, under the sole responsibility of the project initiator. The project initiator and the members of their team may only access the allocated cages and corridors.

Access to unallocated cages and corridors shall only be permitted after approval of a protocol established jointly by the requester, the person to whom the cages/corridors are allocated and department managers.

The project initiator agrees to return the premises in their original condition. They shall be responsible for the removal of waste.

6.2 Obligations associated with the use of the service

6.2.1 Compliance with the regulations of the service management unit

The user agrees to comply with the regulations of the service management unit.

6.2.2. Environment protection

6.2.2.1. The service management tool puts in place the tools required for minimising the impact of its activities on the environment and optimises recycling: waste management, energy management in buildings, use of water resources etc.

6.2.2.2. The work shall be exemplary in terms of environmental protection (controlled damage of the environment).

6.2.2.3. Impact on the environment. At the end of the stay, the users shall restore the natural environment to its original condition as far as possible, and also the experimental area. If the project lasts into the following year, a temporary degradation agreement shall be entered in a paragraph in the agreement. During the stay, they shall act carefully in respect of the natural environment, using the resources provided by SETE (e.g. waste sorting, composting etc.).

Further, any change in the structure of the Metatron (modification of the soil, for example) shall require the approval of the scientific and technical managers.

6.2.3 Rights and obligations relating to the use of the premises

Proper use of the premises. The user agrees to make their best efforts to maintain the premises in the condition in which they were provided by the service management unit.

6.2.4. Rights and obligations relating to the use of equipment.

The user may need to use the equipment of the theoretical and experimental ecology station as part of associated services (use of administrative vehicles, for instance). In that case, the user agrees to comply with the financial and administrative procedures applicable within the unit.

6.2.5. Publication

All publications as part of projects shall refer to the contribution of each member and shall indicate the aid of the ANR with the following words "This work has benefited from state aid managed by the

French national research agency under the Future Investments programme bearing the reference ANR-11-INBS-0001AnaEE-Services". The indication shall feature in the rules for services.

In the event of a service supply, in addition to the acknowledgements stated above, the User shall acknowledge the service used and the operator or operators mobilised during the use of the service.

Article 7. Agreement framework for the use of the service

Any access to the platform shall be formalised in accordance with administrative and financial procedures applicable at the theoretical and experimental ecology station of the CNRS in Moulis. Users are asked to contact the individuals stated in appendix 1, "Contacts" at least three weeks before their arrival on the site.

Any disputes that cannot be settled amicably shall be reported to the executive committee of AnaEE-France.

Article 8. Personal commitment

Failure to comply with any of these articles could lead to denial of access to the facility. All users shall comply with these rules and agree to abide by them

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Appendix 1. Contacts

Access to the Metatron and associated services shall be formalised in accordance with administrative and financial procedures applicable at the theoretical and experimental ecology station of the CNRS in Moulis.

At least three weeks before arrival, users shall contact:

SURNAME/First name	POSITION	EMAIL	TELEPHONE	SUBJECT OF CONTACT
COTE Julien	Scientific manager	Julien.cote@univ-tlse3.fr		Request for use/
GUILLAUME Olivier	Infrastructure Manager/Deputy Director	Olivier.guillaume@sete.cnrs.fr	0033(0)5 61 04 03 67	Request for use/
BOUSQUET Marion	General Secretary	Marion.bousquet@sete.cnrs.fr	0033(0)5 61 04 03 64	Administrative formalities
DERUELLES Thomas	Logistics and maintenance assistant	Thomas.deruelles@sete.cnrs.fr	0033(0)5 61 04 03 71	Logistics support
HOLLIGER Sabine	Accommodation contact	Sabine.holliger@sete.cnrs.fr	0033(0)5 61 04 03 66	Booking of accommodation on the site