



HORIZON EUROPE

THE EU RESEARCH & INNOVATION PROGRAMME

2021 – 2027

HORIZON EUROPE IMPLEMENTATION DAY IN HUNGARY

How to write a good proposal – tips and
tricks

25 September 2024





Outline

- Get familiar with the call and rules for participation
- Tips & tricks to write a good proposal

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Get familiar with the call and rules for participation



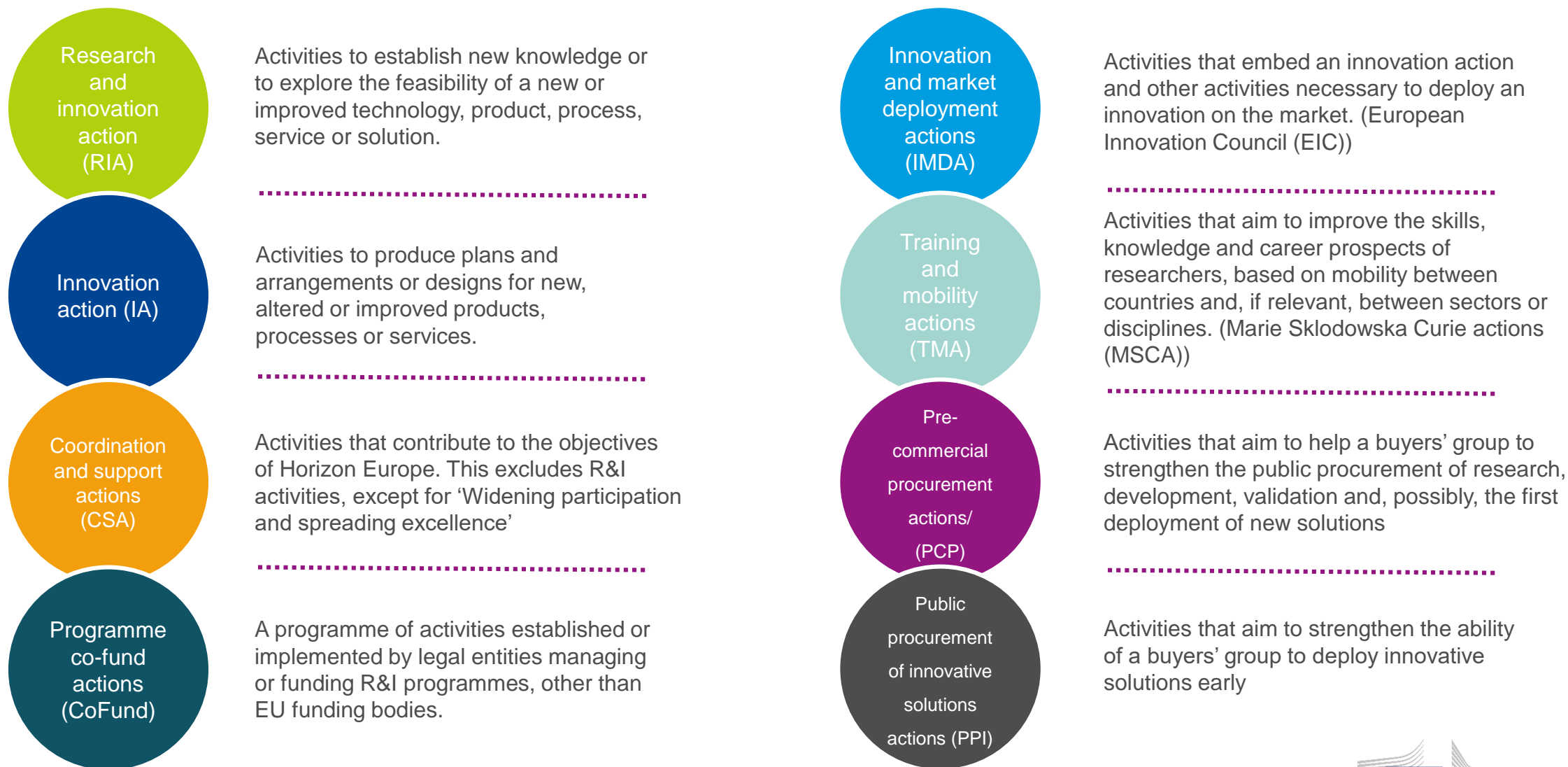


Get familiar with the topic

Same general tips

- Have you identified the call/topic you want to submit your proposal? Check the Funding & Tenders Portal
- Check carefully the Type of action since this will define the type of activity requested in the call/topic
- Check the type of funding of the call/topic. If it is a Lump sum call, you would need to provide a detailed budget table in proposal.
- Check carefully the general conditions and specific conditions of the call – these are not directly published in the Funding & Tenders Portal page; you need to open the Work Programme relevant part.
 - Expected EU contribution per project
 - Exceptions to standard rules for proposal page limit (e.g. 45 pages for Research and innovation actions (RIA) and Innovation actions (IA); 30 pages for Coordination and support actions (CSA))
 - Expected Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) at the start and end of the project
 - Additional eligibility conditions

Activities eligible for funding – Type of actions



Maximum funding rates per type of action

Type of Action	Funding rate
Research and innovation action	100%
Innovation action	70% (except for non-profit legal entities, where a rate of up to 100% applies)
Coordination and support action	100%
Programme co-fund action	Between 30% and 70%
Innovation and market deployment	70% (except for non-profit legal entities, where a rate of up to 100% applies)
Training and mobility action	100%
Pre-commercial procurement action	100%
Public procurement of innovative solutions action	50%

Other funding rates may be set out in the specific call conditions

Example of topic specific conditions

HORIZON-CL4-2024-TWIN-TRANSITION-01-05: Technologies/solutions to support circularity for manufacturing (Made in Europe Partnership) (RIA)

Specific conditions	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 4.00 and 6.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 36.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex A. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>In order to include a business case and exploitation strategy, the page limit in General Annex A of the General Annexes is exceptionally extended by 3 pages.</p>
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>If projects use satellite-based earth observation, positioning, navigation and/or related timing data and services, beneficiaries must make use of Copernicus and/or Galileo/EGNOS (other data and services may additionally be used).</p>
<i>Technology Readiness Level</i>	Activities are expected to start at TRL 4 and achieve TRL 6 by the end of the project – see General Annex B.



Get familiar with the evaluation process

Same general tips

- Check standard evaluation forms (for each type of action) in the Funding & Tenders Portal and in the Documents section of the topic page
- Some of the specific conditions in the topic may be reflected in changes to the standard evaluation criteria (unusual, but possible)
- Get familiar with the evaluation procedure and ranking – information is included in the General Annexes of the work programme (sections D and F). Standard procedure:
 - Submission: single-stage or a two-stage submission procedure.
 - Evaluation: one (standard) or several steps (e.g. interviews)
 - Evaluation committee composed solely of independent external experts
 - Scores and weighting: each criterion is scored out of 5. The threshold for individual criteria is 3. The overall threshold, applying to the sum of the three individual scores, is 10
 - Criteria to rank proposal with the same score

Check recorded webinars:

- Horizon Implementation Day: Finding opportunities and submitting a proposal in Horizon Europe (5 October 2023). [Event page](#)

Example of standard evaluation criteria (for RIAs and IAs)

EXCELLENCE

- ✓ Clarity and pertinence of the **project's objectives**, and the extent to which the proposed work is ambitious, and goes beyond the state-of-the-art.
- ✓ Soundness of the proposed **methodology**, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, interdisciplinary approaches, appropriate consideration of the **gender dimension** in research and innovation content, and the quality of **open science practices** including sharing and management of research outputs and engagement of citizens, civil society and end users where appropriate.

IMPACT

- ✓ Credibility of the **pathways** to achieve the expected **outcomes and impacts** specified in the work programme, and the likely scale and significance of the contributions due to the project.
- ✓ Suitability and quality of the **measures to maximize expected outcomes and impacts**, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.

QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ Quality and effectiveness of the **work plan**, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall.
- ✓ Capacity and role of each **participant**, and extent to which the **consortium** as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.

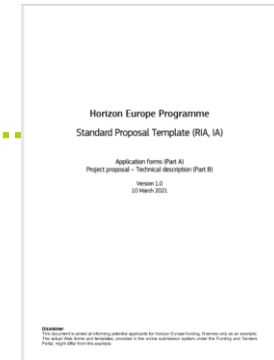
Proposals aspects are assessed to the extent that the proposed work is within the scope of the work programme topic



Get familiar with the standard proposal templates

Standard templates per type of action are published in the Funding & Tenders Portal

The actual template that applies to a call/topic is the one you download in the Submission system for that specific call/topic.



IMPORTANT: The template that you need to use for each specific topic is the one you download from the submission tool

The proposal contains two parts:

- **Part A** (web-based forms) is generated by the IT system. It is based on the information entered by the participants through the submission system in the Funding & Tenders Portal.
- **Part B** is the narrative part that includes three sections that each correspond to an evaluation criterion. Part B needs to be uploaded as a PDF document following the templates downloaded by the applicants in the submission system for the specific call or topic.



Application form – Part A (web-based forms)

- **General information on the proposal:** Title, acronym, abstract, duration, keywords
- **Participants:** organisation details are filled-in automatically from data in our participant registry. Contact persons, identity of researchers involved, role of the participant in the project, participants' previous activities related to the call, and declaration of gender equality plan.
- **Budget of the proposal**
- **Ethics and security** questionnaires and self-assessment
- **Other questions** depending on the call (e.g. clinical trials, second stage proposals, etc.)
- **Declarations** signed by project coordinator on behalf of the consortium



Application form – Part B (PDF)

- Template must be **downloaded from submission tool** (templates published in the Funding & Tenders Portal are for information purpose only)
- The template includes extensive **instructions**, and its structure follows the **evaluation criteria**
- It is normally subject to **page limits**. Actual page limit applicable are clearly announced in the topic text. Page limits are applied automatically:
 - If you attempt to upload a proposal longer than the specified limit before the deadline, you will receive an automatic warning and will be advised to shorten and re-upload the proposal. After the deadline, excess pages (in over-long proposals) will be automatically made invisible and will not be taken into consideration by the evaluators.

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Tips & tricks to write a good proposal





General recommendations

- To demonstrate the quality of **the technical and scientific aspects** is very important, but so it is to demonstrate the **impact** and the **quality of the implementation**.
- Pay sufficient attention to the relevant **policy aspects** (some must be taken into consideration in all topics in Horizon Europe)
- The proposal template includes **extensive guidance** and **examples**

Key principles to write a proposal



Your proposed work must be within the scope of a work programme topic



You need to demonstrate that your idea is ambitious and goes beyond the state of the art



Your scientific methodology must take into account interdisciplinary, gender dimension and open science practices.



You should show how your project could contribute to the outcomes and impacts described in the work programme (the pathway to impact)



You should describe the planned measures to maximise the impact of your project ('plan for the dissemination and exploitation including communication activities')



You should demonstrate the quality of your work plan, resources and participants

Policy and horizontal considerations



Open Science across the programme



Gender dimension in R&I content



Pathway to impact



Measures to maximise impact



Artificial intelligence

These aspects must normally be considered in all Horizon Europe calls (unless explicitly mentioned in the topic description).

Specific calls may include other aspects to take into account.

Check guidance and recorded webinars:

- [Horizon Europe Programme Guide](#)
- Horizon Implementation Day: Finding opportunities and submitting a proposal in Horizon Europe (5 October 2023). [Event page](#)
- Horizon Implementation Day: Grant management (24 October 2023). [Event page](#)



The excellence criterion (1/2)

Focus on the **project's objectives**:

- Are they clear and pertinent to the topic?
- Are they measurable and verifiable?
- Are they realistically achievable?
- Is the proposed work ambitious and goes beyond the state-of-the-art?
- Does the proposal include ground-breaking R&I, novel concepts and approaches, new products, services or business and organisational models?
- Is the R&I maturity of the proposed work in line with the topic description?

Please bear in mind that advances beyond the state of the art must be interpreted in the light of the positioning of the project. For example, expectations will not be the same for RIAs at lower TRL, compared with Innovation Actions at high TRLs.



The excellence criterion (2/2)

Focus on the **scientific methodology**:

- Is the scientific methodology (i.e. the concepts, models and assumptions that underpin the work) clear and sound?
- Is it clear how expertise and methods from different disciplines will be brought together and integrated in pursuit of the objectives? if applicants justify that an inter-disciplinary approach is unnecessary, is it credible?
- Has the gender dimension in research and innovation content been properly taken into account?
- Are open science practices implemented as an integral part of the proposed methodology?
- Is the research data management properly addressed?
- For topics indicating the need for the integration of social sciences and humanities, is the role of these disciplines properly addressed?



The impact criterion (1/2)

Focus on the proposed **pathways towards impact**:

- Is the contribution of the project towards the 1) expected outcomes of the topic and 2) the wider impacts, in the longer term, as specified in the respective destinations of the Horizon Europe Work Programme, credible?
- Are potential barriers to the expected outcomes and impacts identified (i.e. other R&I work within and beyond Horizon Europe; regulatory environment; targeted markets; user behavior), and mitigation measures proposed? Is any potential negative environmental outcome or impact (including when expected results are brought at scale, such as at commercial level) identified? Is the management of the potential harm properly described?
- Are the scale and significance of the project's contribution to the expected outcomes and impacts estimated and quantified (including baselines, benchmarks and assumptions used for those estimates)?
 - Scale' refers to how widespread the outcomes and impacts are likely to be. For example, in terms of the size of the target group, or the proportion of that group, that should benefit over time;
 - 'Significance' refers to the importance, or value, of those benefits. For example, number of additional healthy life years; efficiency savings in energy supply.



The impact criterion (2/2)

Focus on the **measures to maximise impact** - Dissemination, exploitation and communication :

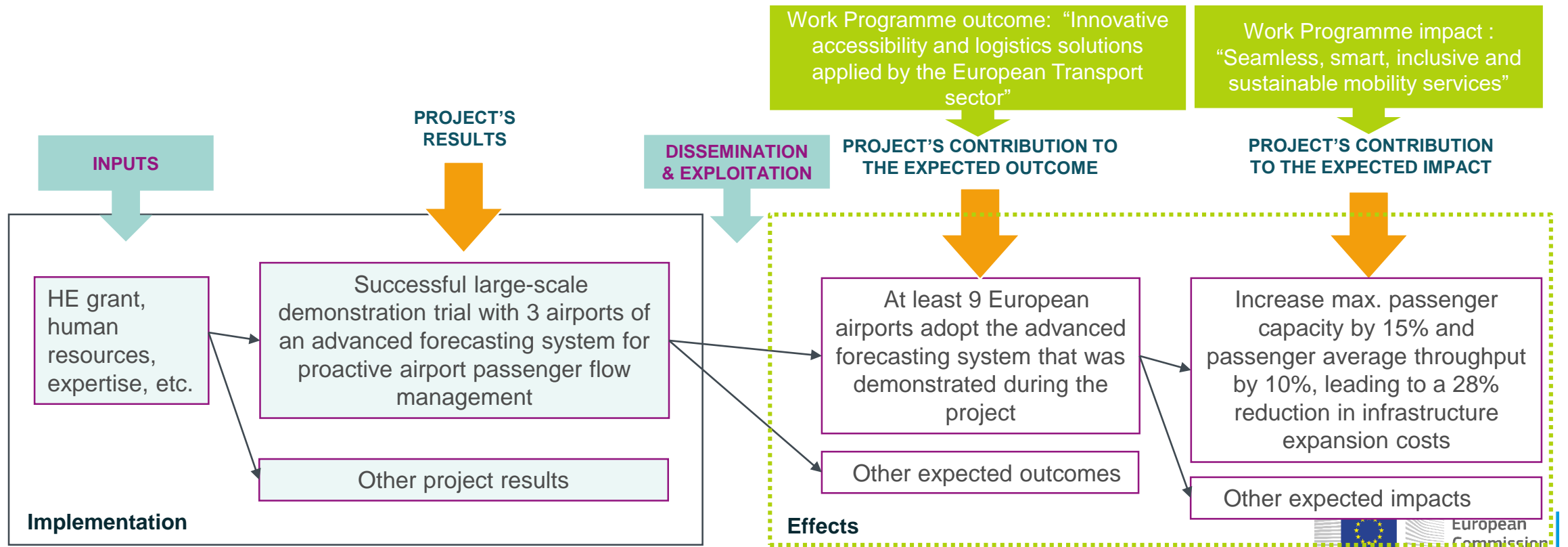
- Are the proposed dissemination, exploitation and communication measures suitable for the project and of good quality? All measures should be proportionate to the scale of the project and should contain concrete actions to be implemented both during and after the end of the project.
- Are the target groups (e.g. scientific community, end users, financial actors, public at large) for these measures identified?
- Is the strategy for the management of intellectual property properly outlined and suitable to support exploitation of results?
 - If exploitation is expected primarily in non-associated third countries, is it properly justified how that exploitation is still in the Union's interest?



Describing the impact of your proposal

Project's pathway towards impact

...by thinking about the specific contribution the project can make to the expected outcomes and impacts set out in the Work Programme.





The Quality of implementation (1/2)

Focus on the proposed **work plan**, and the **effort and resources**:

- Is the work plan of good quality and effective?
- Does it include quantified information so that progress can be monitored?
- Does it follow a logic structure (for example regarding the timing of work packages)?
- Are the resources allocated to the work packages and resources overall in line with their objectives and deliverables?
- Are critical risks, relating to project implementation, identified and proper risk mitigation measures proposed?



The Quality of implementation (2/2)

Focus on the **quality of participants and the consortium** as a whole:

- Does the consortium match the project's objectives and bring together the necessary disciplinary and inter-disciplinary knowledge.
- Does the consortium include expertise in open science practices, and gender aspects of R&I, as appropriate?
- For topics flagged as 'Social sciences and humanities' (SSH) relevant, does the consortium include expertise in social sciences and humanities?
- Do the partners have access to critical infrastructure needed to carry out the project activities?
- Are the participants complementing one another (and cover the value chain, where appropriate)?
- In what way does each of them contribute to the project? Does each of them have a valid role, and adequate resources in the project to fulfil that role (so they have sufficient operational capacity)?
- Is there industrial/commercial involvement in the project to ensure exploitation of the results?

Participants' previous publications, in particular journal articles, are expected to be open access and existing datasets FAIR and 'as open as possible, as closed as necessary'.



... one final point

European Commission | Funding & tender opportunities | Single Electronic Data Interchange Area (SEDIA)

Register Login

HOME SEARCH FUNDING & TENDERS HOW TO PARTICIPATE PROJECTS & RESULTS WORK AS AN EXPERT SUPPORT

Work as an expert

The European Union Institutions appoint external experts to assist in the evaluation of grant applications, projects and tenders, and to provide opinions and advice in specific cases.

Being an expert for the European Commission – C...
Watch on YouTube

In particular, experts assist in:

- Evaluation of proposals, prize applications and tenders
- Monitoring of actions, grant agreements, public procurement contracts

In addition, experts provide opinion and advise on:

- Preparation, implementation and evaluation of EU programmes and design of policies.

In order to select experts, the European Union Institutions publish regularly calls for expression of interest (see list below) detailing the selection criteria, the required expertise, the description of the tasks, their duration and the conditions of remuneration.

Interested? Please join the database of external experts!

Register as expert

As new expert, you will be first requested to create your EU login account and register your profile.

Registered experts can update the profile via the My Expert Area after login.

News

Sep 17, 2023
Call for applications to join the Expert group on the Economic and Societal Impact of Research and Innovation (ESIR3)

Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) has published a call for applications for experts for the Economic and Societal Impact of Research and ...

Jul 24, 2023
Short video tutorial on lump sums in Horizon Europe

The Commission has just released two short videos to explain how lump sums work in Horizon Europe. The videos were created to brief experts who evaluate lump su...

Quick Links

Contracts & remuneration

- Model contract for evaluators
- Model contract for monitors + Code of conduct + Terms of reference

Calls for expressions of interest for experts

- Call for expressions of interest for experts (2021-2027)
- Calls for expressions of interest for experts (2014-2020)

The best way to learn is by doing

You can register in the EU experts database at any time.

Click [here](#) to register!



Thank you!

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