



# HORIZON EUROPE

## THE EU RESEARCH & INNOVATION PROGRAMME

2021 – 2027

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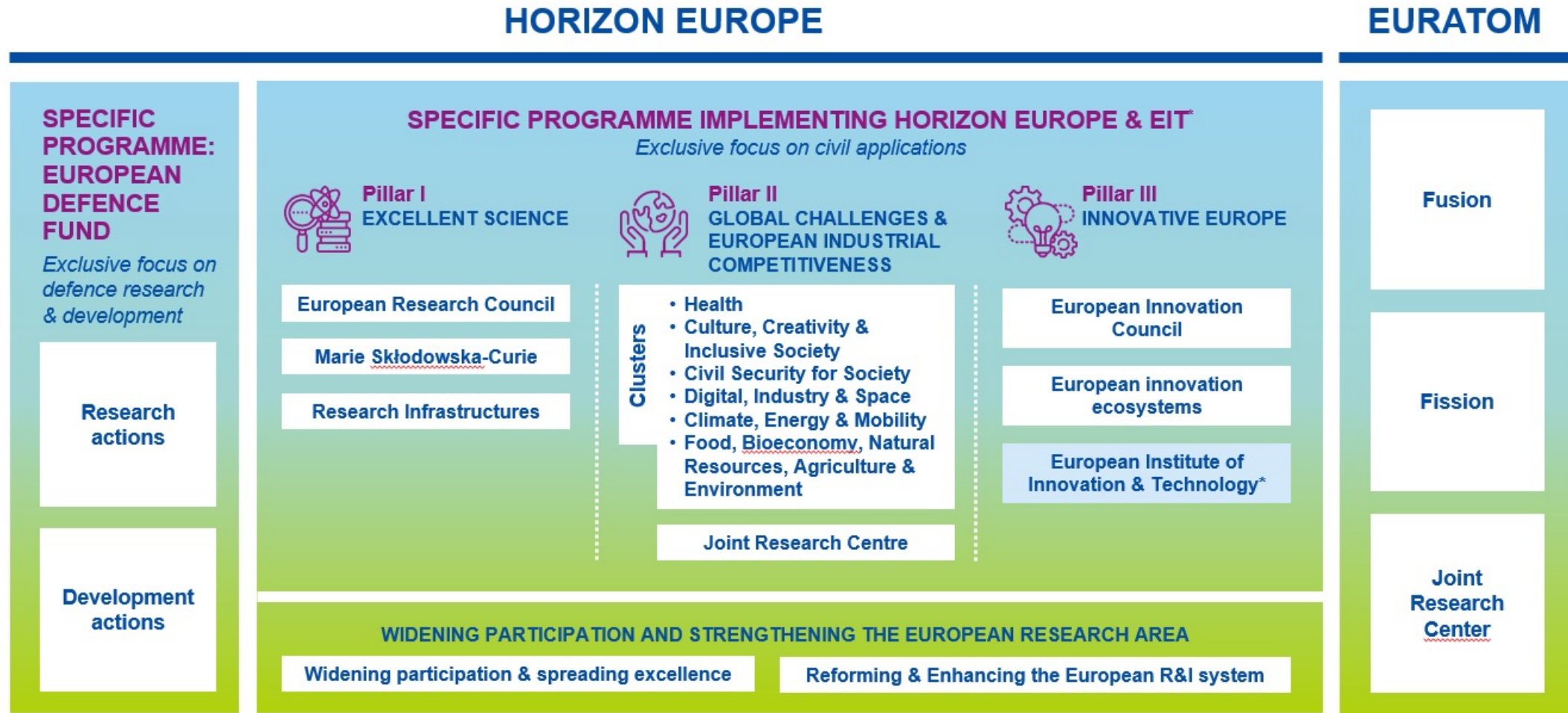
How to prepare a successful proposal in  
Horizon Europe

24 March 2021



# About Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe supports research and innovation through Work Programmes, which set out funding opportunities for research and innovation activities.



\* The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme

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# What is new in the submission process?





# Admissibility

## Same general admissibility conditions

- Applications must be submitted before the call deadline, **electronically** via the Funding & Tenders Portal
- Applications must be **complete, readable, accessible and printable**, and include a **plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results**, unless provided otherwise in the specific call conditions.

## Proposal page limit

Substantial reduction in maximum length:

- RIAs and IAs type of actions: limit for a full application is **45 pages**
- CSAs: limit is **30 pages**
- First stage proposals: limit is **10 pages**
- EIC Pathfinder: limit is **17 pages**
- Exceptions, if any, would be specified in the call text.



# Eligibility

## Consortium composition (collaborative projects)

- at least one independent legal entity established in a Member State, and
- at least two other independent legal entities each established either in a different Member State or an Associated Country.

## Gender Equality Plan (applicable only from 2022 on)

Participants that are public bodies, research organisations or higher education establishments from Members States and Associated countries **must have a gender equality plan**, covering minimum process-related requirements.

- A self-declaration will be requested at proposal stage (for all types of participants).
- Included in the entity validation process (based on self-declaration)

# Who is eligible for funding?



## EU COUNTRIES

- Member States (MS) including their outermost regions
- The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) linked to the MS.



## NON-EU COUNTRIES

- Countries associated to Horizon Europe (AC)
- Low and middle income countries: See [HE Programme Guide](#).
- Other countries when announced in the call or exceptionally if their participation is essential



## SPECIFIC CASES

- Affiliated entities established in countries eligible for funding.
- EU bodies
- International organisations (IO):
  - International European research organisations are eligible for funding.
  - Other IO are not eligible (only exceptionally if participation is essential)
  - IO in a MS or AC are eligible for funding for Training and mobility actions and when announced in the call conditions

# Associated Countries



For the purposes of the eligibility conditions, applicants established in Horizon 2020 Associated Countries or in other third countries negotiating association to Horizon Europe will be treated as entities established in an Associated Country, if the Horizon Europe association agreement with the third country concerned applies at the time of signature of the grant agreement.

## Specific situation of UK

- The UK is expected to soon become an associated country to Horizon Europe. UK entities can take part in the first calls for proposals of Horizon Europe
- The UK is associating to the full Horizon Europe programme with the only exception of the EIC Fund (which is the loan/equity instrument of the EIC).



# Activities eligible for funding

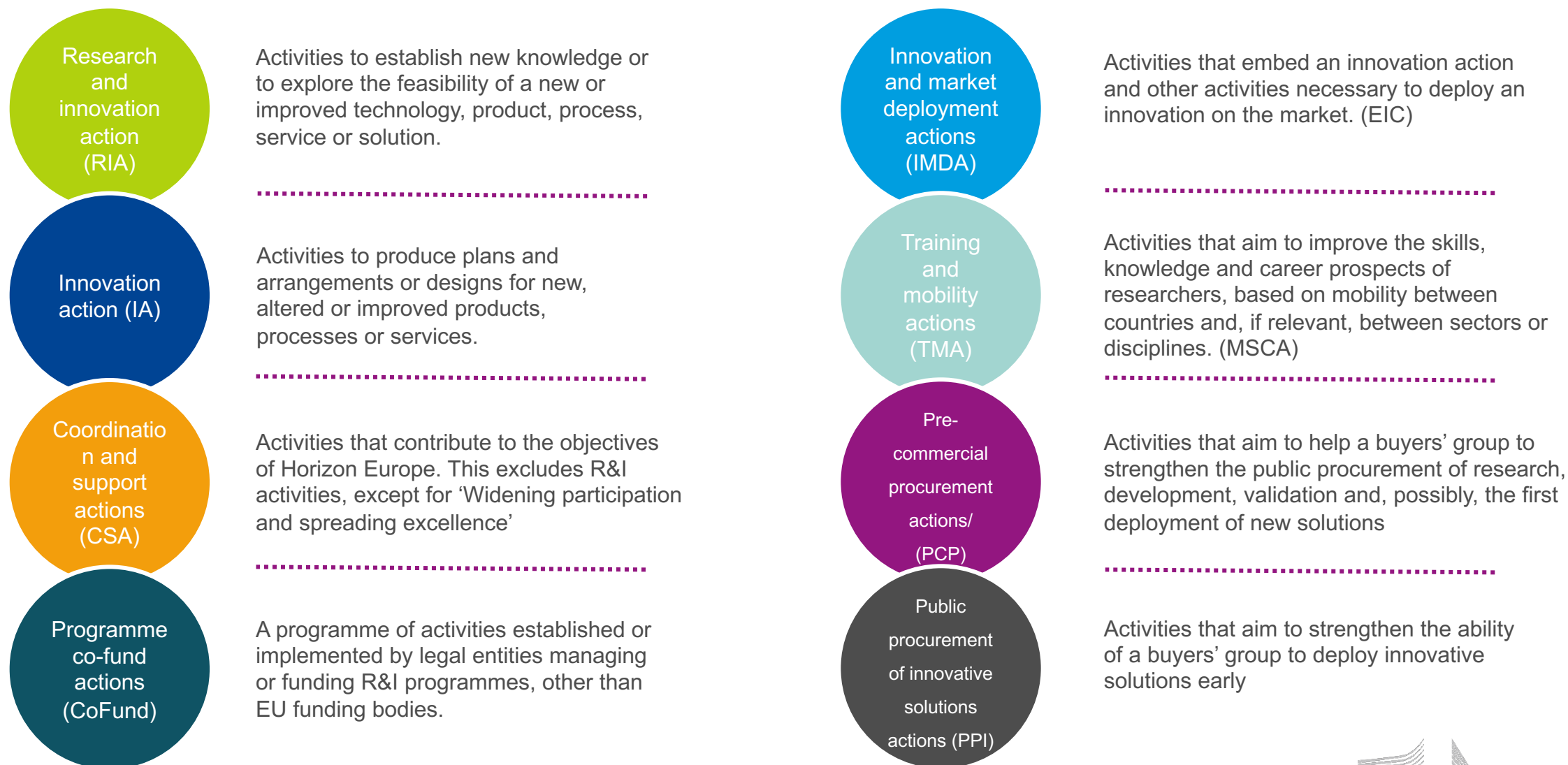
**Eligible activities are the ones described in the call conditions**

Activities must **focus exclusively on civil applications** and **must not**:

- aim at human cloning for reproductive purposes;
- intend to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (except for research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed);
- intend to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research, or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer;
- lead to the destruction of human embryos.



## Activities eligible for funding – Type of actions





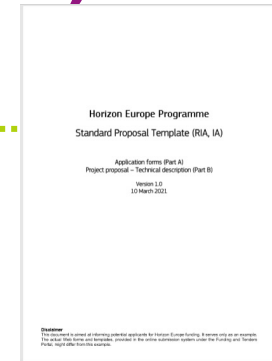
# Maximum funding rates

| 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



# Application form (proposal template)



## Same structure

The proposal contains two parts:

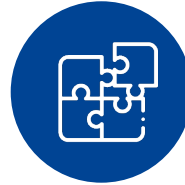
- **Part A** (web-based forms) is generated by the IT system. It is based on the information entered by the participants through the submission system in the Funding & Tenders Portal.
- **Part B** is the narrative part that includes three sections that each correspond to an evaluation criterion. Part 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.

# New features in the Horizon Europe proposal



## NEW FIELDS IN PART A

- Researchers table – needed to follow up researchers careers (HE indicator)
- Role of participating organisation
- Self-declaration on gender equality plan



## FIELDS MOVED FROM PART B TO PART A

- Ethics self-assessment
- Security questionnaire (**NEW!** in all HE proposals)
- Information on participants' previous activities related to the call



## NEW IN PART B

- Glossary of terms.
- Consistency on the use of terminology is ensured in all project phases (from WP to proposal and reporting)
- Extensive explanations on what exactly should be included in each section.

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# What is new in the evaluation process?





# Evaluation (award) criteria

## Same criteria as in H2020

Same three award criteria: '**Excellence**', '**Impact**' and '**Quality and efficiency of the implementation**'. Excellence only for ERC.

## Adapted following lessons learnt

- The number of '**aspects to be taken into account**' have been **reduced**, ensuring that the same aspect is not assessed twice
- **Open Science** practices assessed as part of the scientific methodology in the excellence criterion
- **New approach to impact**: Key Impacts Pathways (KIPs)
- The assessment of the **quality of applicants** is assessed under 'implementation', rather than as a separate binary assessment of operational capacity
- Assessment of **management structures** has been removed.



# Evaluation criteria (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*



# Standard evaluation process

## Individual evaluation

Experts assess proposals **individually**. Minimum of three experts per proposal (but often more than three).

## Consensus group

All individual experts discuss together to agree on a **common position**, including comments and scores for each proposal.

## Panel review

The panel of experts reach an **agreement** on the scores and comments for all proposals within a call, checking **consistency across the evaluations**.

if necessary, resolve cases where evaluators were unable to agree.

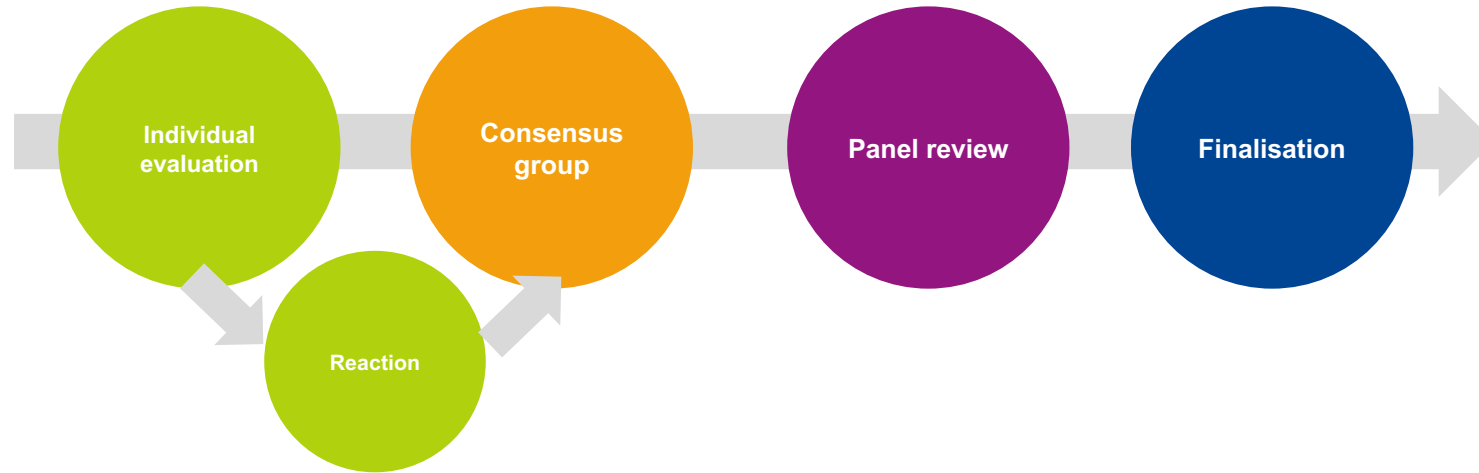
Rank the proposals with the same score

## Finalisation

The Commission/Agency reviews the results of the experts' evaluation and puts together the **final ranking list**.



## Piloting new processes based on lessons learnt



### Right-to-react (Rebuttal)

- Objective is to increase transparency, to correct any factual or major misunderstandings by experts at an early stage, and provide more detailed feedback to applicants.
- Applicants will send their reactions to draft experts comments
- Experts will take applicants' reaction into account before finalising their final assessment.

## Piloting new processes based on lessons learnt



### Blind evaluation (in 1<sup>st</sup> stage)

- There is no evidence that the current proposal evaluation system is systematically biased.
- There are understandable concerns that evaluation experts may be swayed – perhaps unconsciously – in favour of proposals from well-known organisations in countries with better performing R&I systems.
- ‘Blind’ evaluation is a way to remove any real or perceived effect of such reputational bias.
- Experts evaluate without knowing the identity of participants.
- The work programme will include an additional admissibility criterion: applicants can not be disclosed in the narrative part of the proposal.



# Ethics review

## Same criteria as in H2020

For all activities funded, ethics is an **integral part** of research from beginning to end, and **ethical compliance** is essential to achieve real research excellence. An ethics review process is carried out systematically in all Horizon Europe proposals, based on a **self-assessment** included in the proposal.

Ethical research conduct implies the application of fundamental ethical principles and legislation in all possible domains of research. This includes the adherence to the highest standards of **research integrity** as described in the **European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity**.

## Adapted following lessons learnt

- Focus mainly on complex/serious cases
- Reduce number of ethics requirements in funded projects.



# Security scrutiny

## New in Horizon Europe

Security issues will be checked **systematically** in all Horizon Europe proposals (in H2020 only proposals submitted to topics flagged as 'security-sensitive' were checked). The checks are based on a **self-assessment** included in the proposal. The focus is on:

- Whether the proposal uses or generates **EU classified information**
- Potential of **misuse** of results (that could be channeled into crime or terrorism)
- Whether activities involve information or materials subject to **national security restrictions**

The checks based on the self-assessment may trigger an in-depth security scrutiny.

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# Points to consider when writing a proposal in HE



# Key principles



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. It must not significantly harm the environment



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



Do no significant harm principle (DNSH)



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.

**Future webinars focused on these specific aspects will come soon.**



# Open Science across the programme

## Open Science

Open science is an approach based on open cooperative work and systematic sharing of knowledge and tools as early and widely as possible in the process. Including active engagement of society

**Mandatory immediate Open Access to publications:** beneficiaries must retain sufficient IPRs to comply with open access requirements;

**Data sharing as 'open as possible, as closed as necessary':** mandatory Data Management Plan for FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) research data

- Work Programmes may incentivize or oblige to adhere to **open science practices** such as involvement of citizens, or to use the **European Open Science Cloud**
- Assessment of open science practices through the **excellence award criteria** for proposal evaluation. Under **quality of participants** previous experience on open sciences practices will be evaluated positively.
- Dedicated support to **open science policy actions**
- **Open Research Europe** publishing platform





# Gender dimension in R&I content

## Gender Dimension

Addressing the gender dimension in research and innovation entails taking into account sex and gender in the whole research & innovation process.

The **integration of the gender dimension** into R&I content is **mandatory**, unless it is explicitly mentioned in the topic description

## Why is gender dimension important?

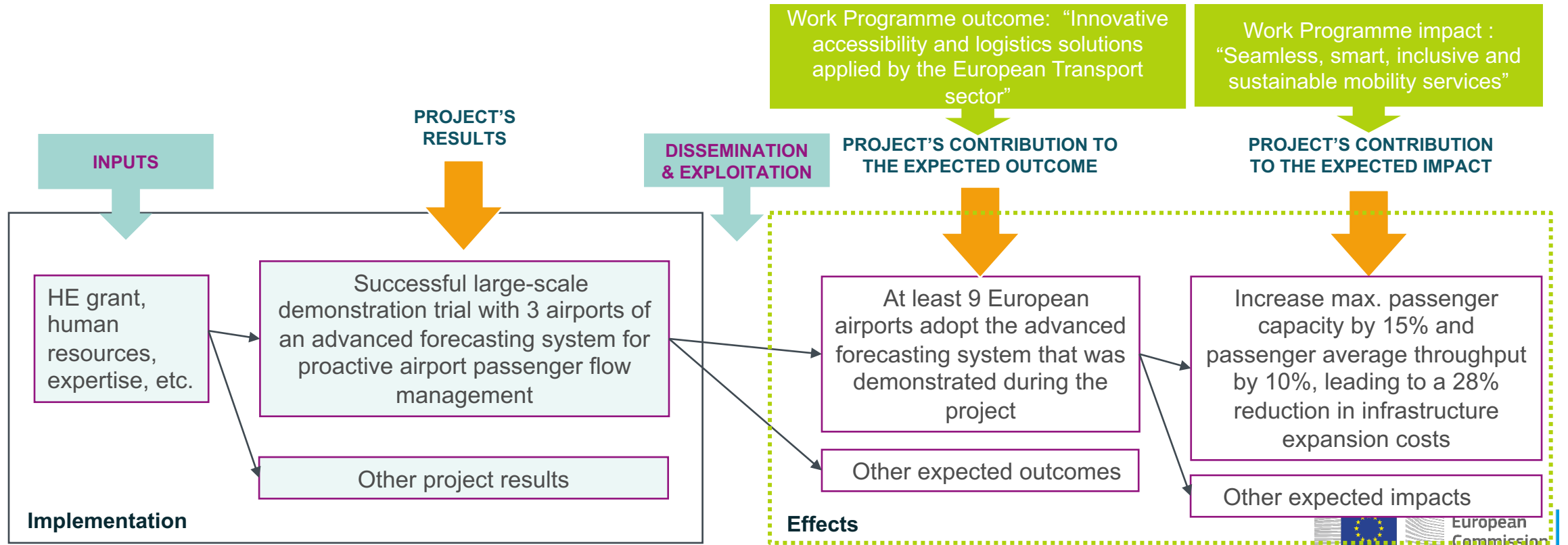
- Why do we observe differences between women and men in infection levels and mortality rates in the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Does it make sense to study cardiovascular diseases only on male animals and on men, or osteoporosis only on women?
- Does it make sense to design car safety equipment only on the basis of male body standards?
- Is it responsible to develop AI products that spread gender and racial biases due to a lack of diversity in the data used in training AI applications?
- Is it normal that household travel surveys, and thus mobility analysis and transport planning, underrate trips performed as part of caring work?
- Did you know that pheromones given off by men experimenters, but not women, induce a stress response in laboratory mice sufficient to trigger pain relief?
- And did you know that climate change is affecting sex determination in a number of marine species and that certain populations are now at risk of extinction?



# 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.



# Link between policy priorities and project results

Strategic Planning and Programming  
(EC)

STRATEGIC PLAN

WORK PROGRAMME

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>EU POLICY PRIORITIES</b>            | Overall priorities of the European Union (Green Deal, Fit for the Digital Age,...)   |
| <b>KEY STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS</b>      | Set of strategic objectives within the EC policy priorities where R&I investments are expected to make a difference  |
| <b>IMPACT AREAS</b>                    | Group of expected impacts highlighting the most important transformation to be fostered through R&I  |
| <b>EXPECTED IMPACTS = DESTINATIONS</b> | Wider long term effects on society (including the environment), the economy and science, enabled by the outcomes of R&I investments (long term). It refers to the specific contribution of the project to the work programme expected impacts described in the destination. Impacts generally occur some time after the end of the project.  |
| <b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES = TOPICS</b>      | The expected effects, over the medium term, of projects supported under a given topic. The results of a project should contribute to these outcomes, fostered in particular by the dissemination and exploitation measures. This may include the uptake, diffusion, deployment, and/or use of the project's results by direct target groups. Outcomes generally occur during or shortly after the end of the project.  |
| <b>PROJECT RESULTS</b>                 | What is generated during the project implementation. This may include, for example, know-how, innovative solutions, algorithms, proof of feasibility, new business models, policy recommendations, guidelines, prototypes, demonstrators, databases and datasets, trained researchers, new infrastructures, networks, etc. Most project results (inventions, scientific works, etc.) are 'Intellectual Property', which may, if appropriate, be protected by formal 'Intellectual Property Rights' |

PROJECT PROPOSALS

Application process (researchers)





# Measures to maximise impact

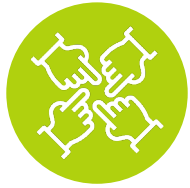
## Dissemination, exploitation and communication

To include a draft plan in proposal is an admissibility condition, unless the work programme topic explicitly states otherwise.

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

## Elements of the D&E&C plan

- **Planned measures** to maximise the impact of projects
- **Target groups** (e.g. scientific community, end users, financial actors, public at large) and **proposed channels** to interact
- **Communication measures** for promoting the project and its findings throughout the full lifespan of the project
- **Policy feedback** measures to contribute to policy shaping and supporting the implementation of new policy initiatives and decisions
- Follow-up plan to foster **exploitation/uptake** of the results
  - Comprehensive and feasible strategy for the **management of the intellectual property** (the provision of a results ownership list is mandatory at the end of the project)
  - If exploitation is expected primarily in non-associated third countries, give a convincing justification that this is still in the Union's interest.



# Do no significant harm principle (DNSH)

European  
Green Deal

In line with the European Green Deal objectives, the research and innovation activities should not make a significant harm to any of the six environmental objectives (EU Taxonomy Regulation)

The **DNSH principle** needs to be taken into consideration in the **scientific methodology** and **impact** of the project. However, compliance is not mandatory unless explicitly stated.

The six environmental objectives to which no significant harm should be done:



Climate change mitigation



Sustainable use & protection of water & marine resources



Pollution prevention & control



Climate change adaptation



Transition to a circular economy



Protection and restoration of biodiversity & ecosystems



# Artificial intelligence

## Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence

Due diligence is required regarding the trustworthiness of all AI-based systems/ techniques used or developed in projects funded under Horizon Europe.

Under Horizon Europe, the **technical robustness\*** of the proposed AI based systems must be evaluated under the **excellence** criterion.

(\*) Technical robustness refers to technical aspects of AI systems and development, including resilience to attack and security, fullback plan and general safety, accuracy, reliability and reproducibility.

AI-based systems or techniques should be, or be developed to become:

- **Technically robust, accurate and reproducible**, and able to deal with and inform about possible failures, inaccuracies and errors, proportionate to the assessed risk posed by the AI-based system or technique.
- **Socially robust**, in that they duly consider the context and environment in which they operate.
- **Reliable and function as intended**, minimizing unintentional and unexpected harm, preventing unacceptable harm and safeguarding the physical and mental integrity of humans.
- Able to provide a suitable explanation of its **decision-making process**, whenever an AI-based system can have a significant impact on people's lives.



# ... one final point

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

English **EN** Register Login

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

Horizon 2020 Framework Programme (H2020) clear filter

There is currently an issue with the contact form preventing you from submitting your request. We are doing our best to resolve the issue as soon as possible. We apologize for any inconvenience caused.

Legal Entity and Bank Account validations tasks will experience issues in the Grant Management Services Services on Wednesday, 02.12.2020, between 07:30 and 08:10.

Need help?

### 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...

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

News

21 Apr, 2020  
**Call for experts to assist the European Commission and other EU bodies with tasks in connection with pilot projects and preparatory actions**

The European Commission is launching a call for experts for the Funding & Tenders Portal expert database, for assignments in connection with EU pilot projec...

05 Feb, 2020  
**INEA looking for experts to assess CEF Energy calls**

The Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) is looking for experienced experts in energy to assess project proposals submitted under the 2020 Connecting...

All news >

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home

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

Click [here](#) to register!

Any questions?

Please enter your  
questions in slido

<https://app.sli.do/event/h8eseiw4>







# Thank you!

## # HorizonEU

<http://ec.europa.eu/horizon-europe>



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