



#HorizonEU



THE EU RESEARCH & INNOVATION PROGRAMME

2021 - 2027

Excellence Hubs
HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07

IFIGENEIA

Kick off meeting, 3rd April 2025
Raquel Fernandez Horcajada

Research Executive Agency (REA) – Unit C3

Research and Innovation

Outline





- Policy context & Excellence Hubs
- REA Grant Management
 - Roles distribution
 - Project Lifecycle
 - How to Manage Your Project
- Project Reporting
 - Continuous and periodic reporting
 - o Reviews
- Financial aspects & Amendments
- Open access
- Communication
- Other aspects



POLICY CONTEXT – EXCELLENCE HUBS







HORIZON EUROPE

EURATOM

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME: EUROPEAN DEFENCE FUND

Exclusive focus on defence research & development

Research actions

Development actions

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE & EIT*

Exclusive focus on civil applications



European Research Council

Marie Skłodowska-Curie

Research Infrastructures



Clusters

Pillar II

GLOBAL CHALLENGES & EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

- Health
- Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry & Space
- Climate, Energy & Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment

Joint Research Centre



European Innovation Council

European innovation ecosystems

European Institute of Innovation & Technology*

Fusion

Fission

Joint Research Center

WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

Widening participation & spreading excellence

Reforming & Enhancing the European R&I system



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

Widening Programme Objectives

The main objectives of Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence Programme (Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe) are to support less advanced R&I countries to strengthen their R&I intensity and performance, to increase their participation in transnational networks and, overall, to obtain greater research outcomes in low performing EU Member States & Associated countries:



Widening Member States:

 Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg (H2020), Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Greece (HE)

Widening Associated Countries:

 Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, North Macedonia, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Morocco (pending), Montenegro, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine

Outermost Regions eligible in HE:

 France (Guadeloupe, French Guyana, Martinique, Mayotte, Saint-Martin, La Réunion), Spain (Canary Islands), Portugal (Azores Islands, Madeira)



THE WIDENING PACKAGE UNDER 2023-2024 HE

- ERA Chairs → Bringing excellence to institutions
- Twinning -> Building institutional networking
- Teaming Creating and modernizing centres of excellence
- COST → Stimulating cross border science networks
- NCPs → Information, communication, support
- Policy Support Facility → Support for R&I Policy design



- ERA Talents → Brain circulation
- **NEW!** Excellence initiatives → Empowering universities
 - Excellence Hubs → Strengthening innovation ecosystems
 - "Hop-On" Facility -> Joining on-going research and innovation actions
 - Pathways to Synergies → Bridging different funding systems
 - Dissemination and Exploitation Support Facility





EXCELLENCE HUBS - EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Excellence hubs focus on innovation by allowing innovation ecosystems in widening countries and beyond, to team up and create better linkages between academia, business, government and society (Quadruple Helix)

- > Strong and sustainable research and innovation ecosystems in Widening countries and other regions, focusing on advanced science and innovation.
- Long-term joint research and innovation (R&I) strategies with clear, concrete plans that are relevant to Europe.
- Shared investment plans including infrastructure, combining national, regional, European, and private funding in a coordinated way.
- ➤ R&I pilot projects aligned with joint strategies and regional or national goals, especially the smart specialization strategies (RIS3) and the new European Innovation Agenda.
- ➤ New skills and competencies for researchers, entrepreneurs, and professionals working in high-tech and R&I-intensive areas.





EXCELLENCE HUBS - EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- > Stronger connections between science and business to drive innovation.
- ➤ Improved knowledge transfer and development of entrepreneurial skills to support innovation.
- ➤ New business opportunities, particularly for SMEs, university spin-offs, and start-ups, especially in deep tech.
- ➤ Inclusion of emerging innovation ecosystems from rural areas, the EU Outermost Regions, the Western Balkans, Eastern Partnership countries, and Ukraine, supported by optional mentoring programs.



Excellence Hubs
HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07
Call Overview and evaluation results (budget: 60 M EUR)

Call deadline:

07 March 2024

Evaluation:

26 March to 03 June 2024 205 submitted proposals (11 inadm./inelig.)



Results communicated to applicants:

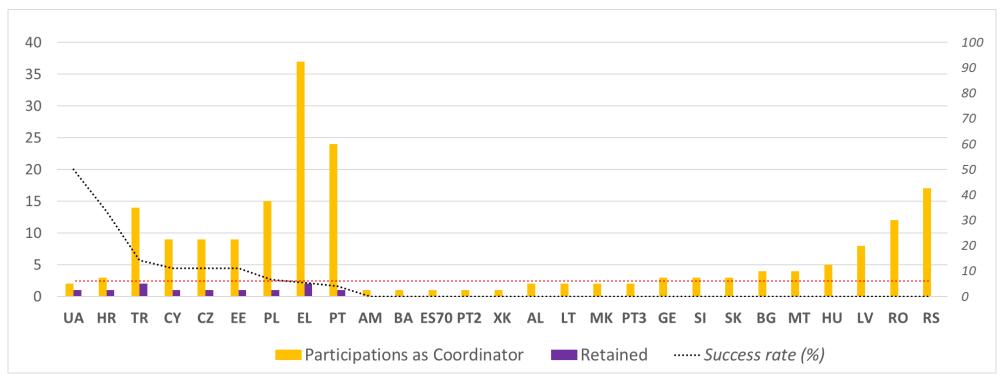
18 June 2024

- 11 main listed
- 5 reserve listed



Coordinators' Success Rate

Excellence Hubs: HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07



ES70 = Canary Islands (Outermost Region) FRY4 = Reunion (Outermost Region) PT2 = Azores (Outermost Region) PT3 = Madeira (Outermost Region)

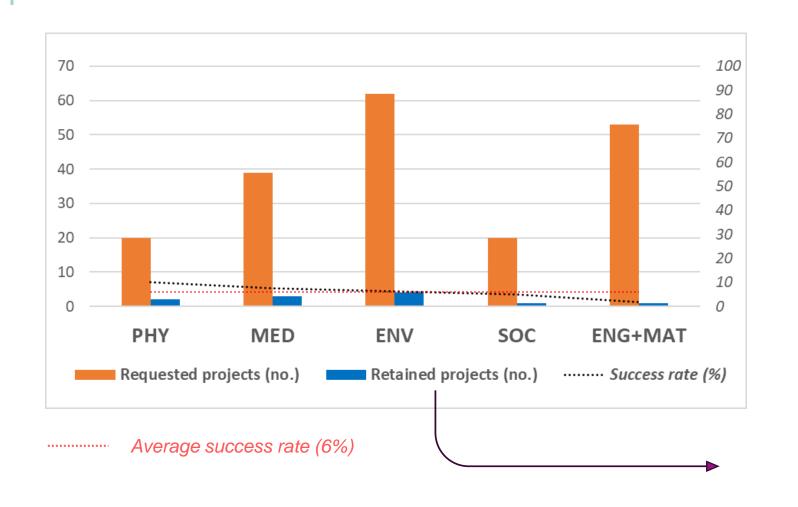
Average success rate: 6%

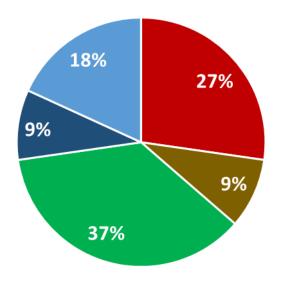
Total number of eligible proposals: 194

Total number of retained: 11

R&I Domain' Success Rate

Excellence Hubs: HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07





- MED: Oncology, Medtech, Epidemiology, Molecular, Neuro, Clinical, Advanced therapies, Public health
- ENG+MAT: Electronics, Manufacturing, Materials, Automation, Space, Data, AI, Communication, Quatum
- ENV: Agrifood, Water, Biotech, Climate
- SOC: Culture, Politics, Education, Economics
- PHY: Energy, Chemistry, Physics

REA - GRANT MANAGEMENT







Distribution of Roles



DG Research and Innovation

- Definition of Policies
- Drafting the Work Programme



Research Executive Agency (REA)

- Implementation of calls for proposals
- Grant Management
- Policy feedback

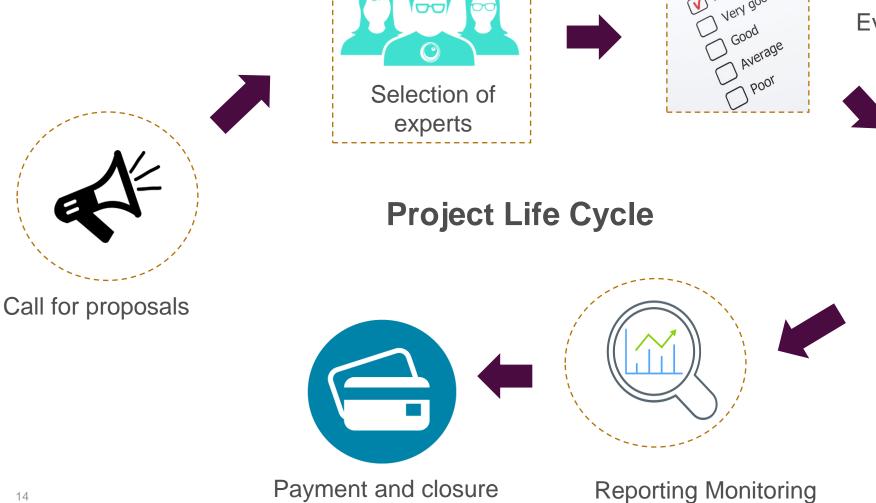


Coordinator

- Central contact point for REA
- Represents the consortium towards the REA



Project Life Cycle





Grant Agreement Preparation (GAP)

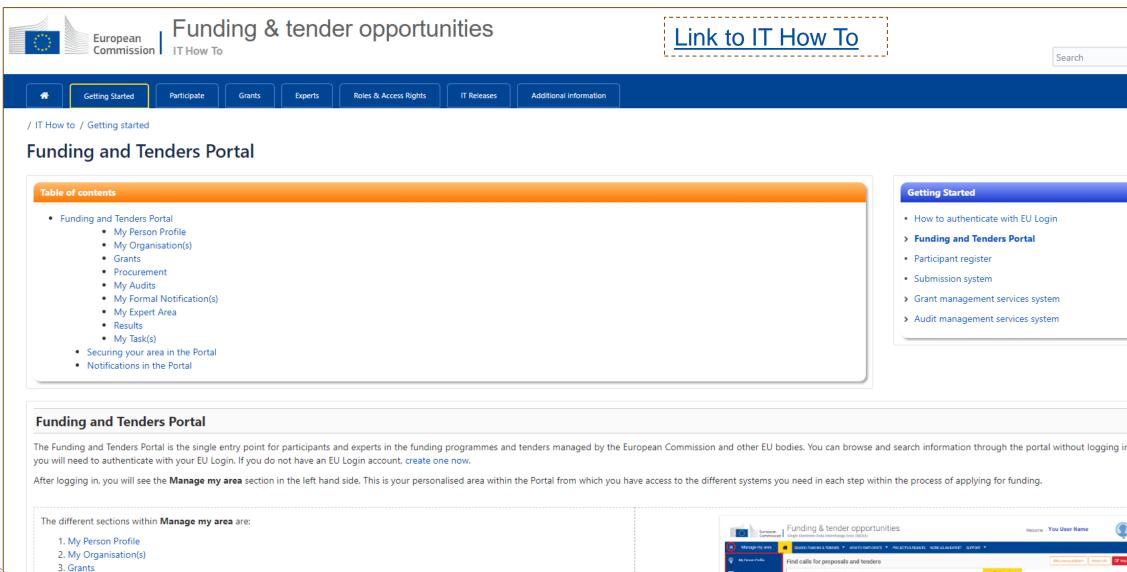
Signature

Funding and Tenders Portal – Guides and Participants Manual

Online Manual - Online Manual - Funding Tenders Opportunities (europa.eu)

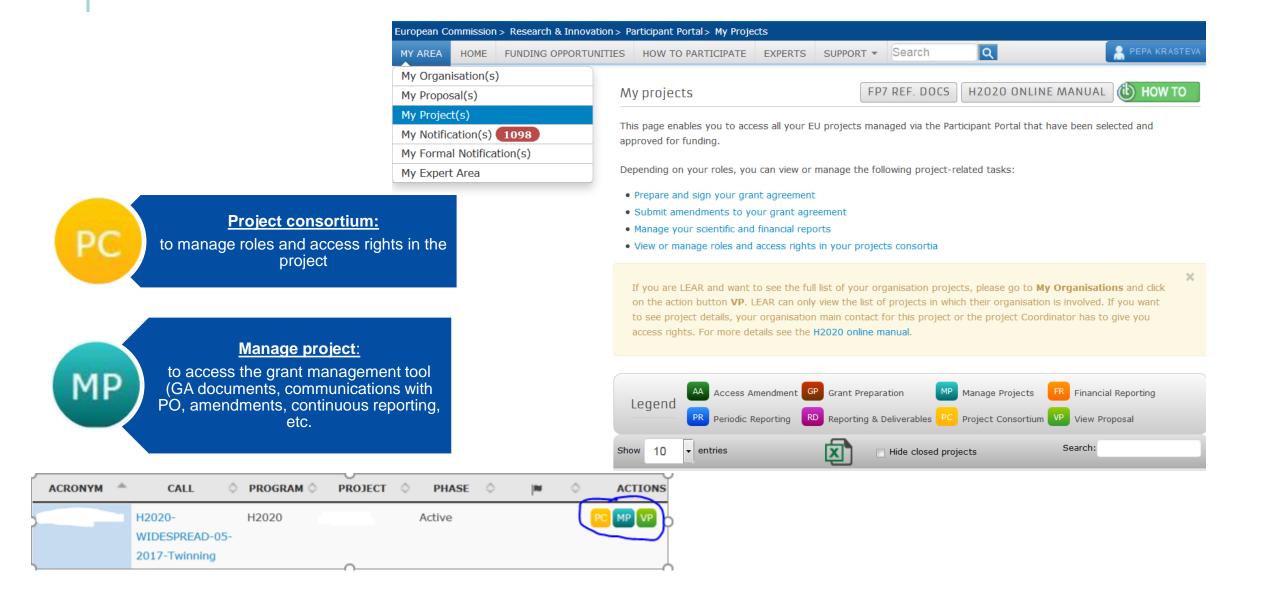


IT - HOW TO



a. My Proposal(s)

Funding and Tenders Portal - Manage Your Project



How to navigate in the Portal Process description and reference **RESEARCH & INNOVATION** Help European Commission **Grant Management Services** MY PROJECT Launch new interaction with the EU Proposal Management & 04 Jan 2023 15 Mar 2022 (3/30 days) ı⊳ŏ-O 41 Informed Prepared Paid Submitted Invited Signed Call: HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-**Process documents** Type of Action: HORIZON-CSA **Process communications** Current Phase: Grant Process history GA based on the: HE MGA -Key project data Multi & Mono - 1.null Start Date: 01 Jan 2023 **Estimated Project Cost:** Contact: **Project Tools Latest Legal Data** Process time line **Active Processes** Horizon Europe Document Library **Business Information** nunication Centre ONLINE MANUAL How to use the IT European system Commission **HOW TO**

Electronic only grant management

The minimum configuration is:

- ✓ 1 Participant Contact per beneficiary



- Amendments (only with PLSIGN)
- Financial statements (only with FSIGN)
- Nominate backups
- Revoke access rights (departures, change of roles)



PROJECT REPORTING







Project Reporting - CONTINUOUS REPORTING



Opens at start of project (remains open!)

Regular updating in the system:

- Progress in achieving milestones
- Submitting deliverables on time
- Updates to the publishable summary
- Response to critical risks, publications, communications activities, IPRs

Creates Part A of the periodic Technical Report, at the moment this report is prepared (Locked for review)

Contact PO for any important changes or updates

✓ Use the communication tool



Project Reporting - PERIODIC REPORTING

Reporting period and reviews

Total duration	RP1	Review Meeting	RP2	Review Meeting	RP3	Review
48M (10)	M1-M15	M18	M16-M30	M33	M31-M48	M51
36M (1)	M1-M15	M18	M16-M36	M39	NA	NA

A periodic payment following each reporting period - Payment of the balance in final period



- Template provided in the portal
- Technical report (Part A & B) and Financial reports
- On-site/Remote review meetings (TBC)
- Prompted by email notification at the end of the RP

TIP:

- 1) Clear, informative, straight to the point, concise!
- 2) Achievements, problems, corrective actions, deviations

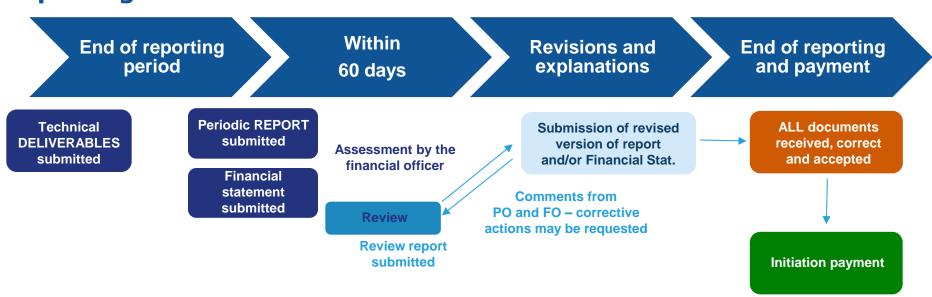


Project Reporting - PERIODIC REPORTING

Project lifetime: reporting periods – Example for a project duration of 48 months



Reporting exercise workflow:



TECHNICAL REVIEW



Reviews are planned at the end of each reporting period (2-3 months after) and ad hoc
Usually, the review takes place after the submission of the report and deliverables

ARTICLE 25 — CHECKS, REVIEWS, AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS





Present the work carried out, the main achievements and the use of resources

Participation of the coordinator and WP leaders



REA can be **assisted by** external **reviewers/monitors**



Excellence Hubs: KEY ELEMENTS

- Focus on Innovation and Ecosystems: Foster innovation in Widening countries by linking academia, business, government, and society
- > Cross-border joint R&I strategy: Aligns with regional smart specialization strategies and/or European policy priorities (e.g., green and digital transition).
- > **R&I project consolidating academia-business linkages:** The research component should be developed by joint pilot research projects to close knowledge gaps, foster long-term collaboration, and drive technological advancements.
- Action and investment plans: Creates sustainable business models and attracts funding to support innovation beyond the project.
- Conceptual design and pre-planning for pilots and demonstrators (if applicable): Plans pilot projects based on research outcomes, with co-funding from other sources.
- > Accompanying measures: Promotes knowledge transfer, mutual learning, skills development, and long-term collaborative links through secondments and exchanges.
- > Optional mentoring of an emerging innovation ecosystem: Supports innovation ecosystems in rural, EU Outermost regions, Western Balkans or Eastern Partnership Countries including Ukraine, offering mentoring and training even if ecosystems are not fully developed to a full quadruple helix structure.



Tips

Communication with the Project Officer:

- ✓ Always keep your PO informed of your project progress
- ✓ Discuss any problems/changes well in advance
- ✓ When in doubt, ask questions, we are here to support!

Quality of deliverables:

- ✓ Always include an executive summary
- ✓ Keep them concise & to the point
- ✓ Do not overload them with information not requested (if you want to provide additional information, put it in an annex)
- ✓ Regarding deviations, a clear explanation should be provided in the progress/periodic reports

Reviews & Audits:

- ✓ Prepare carefully and respect timing for your review and/or audit
- ✓ Arrange in good time for audit certification

FINANCIAL ASPECTS & AMENDMENTS









Eligible vs. ineligible costs

Eligible direct costs must:

- be incurred by the beneficiary during the project (except for costs related to the final periodic report) and necessary for the project implementation
- be identifiable and verifiable, recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the national accounting standards and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices
- □ comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security
- □ be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, regarding economy and efficiency

Ineligible costs:

- costs related to return on capital, debt and debt service charges
- provisions for future losses or debts
- ☐ interest owed, doubtful debts
- currency exchange losses, bank costs/charges
- □ excessive or reckless expenditure
- ☐ deductible VAT
- costs incurred during a suspension of the grant agreement
- costs not related to or needed for the project



For the complete list, see Articles 6.1 and 6.3 of the Annotated Grant Agreement

Cost categories





Personnel costs (Article 6.2.A):

- ✓ Costs for employees or equivalent who have an employment contract with the beneficiary.
- ✓ Costs for natural persons working under a direct contract (not employment contract).
- ✓ Seconded persons by a third party against payment.
- √The work of SME owners for the action, natural person beneficiaries or volunteers.



Purchase costs (Article 6.2.C): separate sub-categories

- ✓ Travel, accommodation and subsistence all travels linked to the project
- ✓ Equipment by default depreciation
- ✓ Other goods, works and services e.g. consumables, dissemination materials, publications Must be declared as actual costs
 - Always ensure best value for money







Subcontracting (Article 6.2.B)

- □ Subcontracted action tasks (implementation of a part of the project).
- Eligible conditions: (i) Best value for money/lowest price, (ii) no conflict of interest, (iii) contracting authorities/entities need to comply with the national law on public procurement, (iv) during the action.



Indirect costs (Article 6.2.E)

- Costs for the action that are not directly linked to it (i.e., overheads).
- 25% of the eligible direct costs, except subcontracting costs, financial support to third parties and specific cost categories

NB: if direct costs are rejected, the corresponding indirect costs are also rejected!



Cost declarations are submitted as part of the periodic report including:

- financial statements and
- a detailed description in the **Use of Resources**, mandatory for:
 - Subcontracting
 - Purchase costs if they are above **15%** of the declared personnel costs
 - Any cost not originally planned in the Description of Action should be reported in the Technical report and in the specific dedicated part of the 'Use of Resources'

At the **final reporting**, if the EU contribution threshold is reached, a Certificate on Financial statements (CFS) is also part of the financial reporting.

➤ HORIZON EUROPE: novelty - higher threshold of EUR 430,000 (all costs)



We will send you guidance on financial reporting at the end of the reporting period.

Please help speed up payments by strictly observing all deadlines!

Amendments

Type of amendments:

- Change of coordinator
- Change of the coordinator's bank account for payments
- Addition / removal of a beneficiary or affiliated entity
- Change of Annex1 (description of the action)
- Change of duration and reporting periods

Requested by either Consortium or REA

Prepared electronically in the Participant Portal

Coordinator submits and signs amendments on behalf of the beneficiaries

Amendment requests **cannot be modified** (if modifications are needed, the requesting party has to withdraw and submit a new one)

Requests containing several changes to the GA will be considered as a package, **partial approval is not possible**. Requests will be agreed or rejected by the REA as a whole. There is no tacit approval of amendments

Contact REA PO Project Officer before initiating an amendment!

OPEN ACCES







MANDATORY OPEN SCIENCE: OPEN ACCESS (OA)

- Immediate OA to peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to Action's results
 MAIN REQUIREMENT in HORIZON EUROPE is IMMEDIATE OA in a TRUSTED REPOSITORY under the latest available version of the Creative Commons Attribution International Public License (CC BY) or a license with equivalent rights.
- Publication in a venue of choice, reimbursement ONLY if full OA is granted
 - Attention! = Publication in "hybrid journals" is allowed (provided the HORIZON OA requirements are met, as per the GA), but the costs are **not eligible** and have to be borne from alternative sources (university budget,



 Beneficiaries have the possibility to publish at no cost in Open <u>Research Europe (ORE)</u>, the European Commission open access publishing platform



MANDATORY OPEN SCIENCE: DATA MANAGEMENT

- □ Responsible research data management (RDM) in line with the **FAIR principles**
- ☐ Data management plan (DMP) compulsory deliverable
- ☐ Deposit data in a TRUSTED repository
- Provide information via the repository about any research output/tools/instruments needed to re-use or validate the data



For Exceptions (see <u>Horizon Europe Annotated Model Grant</u> Agreement):

- Against the beneficiary's legitimate interests, commercial exploitation;
- ☐ Other constraints (e.g., trade secret, data protection)

✓ As open as possible as closed as necessary'!



COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOTATION







COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION & EXPLOITATION WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE AND WHY THEY ALL MATTER

Communication

Inform, promote and communicate activities and results

For whom

Citizens, stakeholders and the media



- √ Having a well-designed strategy
- √ Conveying clear messages
- ✓ Using the right channels

When

From the start until the end of the action



- √ Engage with stakeholders
- √ Attract the best experts
- √ Raise awareness of how public money is spent
- √ Show the success of European collaboration

It is a legal obligation!

Article 17 of Horizon Europe

Grant Agreement



Dissemination

Make knowledge and results publicly available free-of-charge

For whom

For those who can learn and benefit from the results, such as: scientists, industry, public authorities, policymakers, civil society

How

Publishing results in:

- √ Scientific magazines
- √ Scientific and/or targeted conferences
- √ Databases

When

- ✓ Anytime, as soon as results become available
- √ Up to four years after the end of the project

Why

- √ Maximise the impact of the action
- √ Allow other researchers to go a step forward
- Contribute to the advancement of world class knowledge
- √ Make scientific results a common good

It is a legal obligation!

Article 17 of Horizon Europe

Grant Agreement

Exploitation

Make concrete use of results for commercial, societal and political purposes

For whom

For those who can take the results forward or invest in them, such as: researchers, stakeholders, industry (also SMEs), public authorities, policymakers, civil society

How

- √ Creating roadmaps, prototypes, software
- √ Sharing knowledge, skills, data

When

- Towards the end of the action and beyond, as soon as exploitable results are available
- Up to four years after the end of the project

Why

- √ Lead to new legislation or recommendations
- For the benefit of innovation, the economy and society
- Help to tackle a problem and respond to an existing demand

It is a legal obligation!

Annex 5: Specific Rules and Article 16
of Horizon Europe Grant Agreement



Article 17 of the Horizon Europe grant agreement: Obligation to promote the action and its results

Beneficiaries must promote the action and its

results by providing targeted information

to multiple audiences in a strategic

and effective manner (including to the public).



A comprehensive communication strategy is crucial to promote your project and its results. Your plan should define clear objectives adapted to a range of target audiences. It should be proportionate to the scale of your project.

Go digital:

- Website, videos
- Social media (your account and your institution's)
- Newsletters
- Factsheets

Build networks:

- Events (i.e. conferences, symposia)
- Project & experts meetings
- · Reach out to the media

Acknowledge EU funding

Article 17.2 of the Horizon Europe grant agreement: Visibility - European flag and funding statement



Funded by the European Union

<u>eu-emblem-</u> <u>rules_en.pdf</u> (<u>europa.eu</u>)

Multilingual EU funding statement

EU funding on social media example

Why use social media to communicate about your EU-funded project?

Social media allows you to:

- √ Instantly communicate from the outset of your project at low-cost
- √ Make connections, build networks, and find like-minded partners
- √ Speak directly with citizens to inform and engage them
- √ React directly to what is happening in research and beyond
- √ Manage your reputation on a daily basis
- √ Disseminate your research widely to enable the take-up and use of results
- Meet your Horizon Europe grant agreement communication and dissemination obligations

Mention the below to stay involved in the conversation!

#HorizonEU #ResearchImpactEU #EUInnovation

- in @European Research Executive Agency
 - @EU Science, Research and Innovation
- @EU Science and Innovation
- @EU Science
- @EC_REA
- European Research Executive Agency

EUROPEAN COMMISSION TOOLS

TO SUPPORT COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION



An intuitive and interactive knowledge platform where you can extract statistics and data on EU research and innovation programmes sorted by topics, countries, organisations, sectors, as well as individual projects and beneficiaries.

Funding & tenders (europa.eu)



COMMUNICATION

DISSEMINATION

EXPLOITATION



A free-of-charge platform to benefit from one of these services:

- 1. Portfolio dissemination & exploitation strategy
- 2. Business plan development
- 3. Go-to-market support.



A public platform that hosts and promotes research results, thereby widening exploitation opportunities. It helps to bridge the gap between research results and generating value for economy and society. You can create your own page to showcase your results, find collaboration opportunities and get inspired by the results of others.

Horizon Results Platform (europa.eu)

Horizon Results Booster



EUROPEAN COMMISSION TOOLS TO SUPPORT COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION

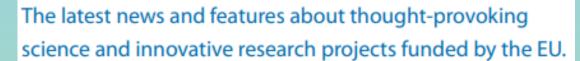
CORDIS • • •



Multilingual articles and publications that highlight research results, based on an open repository of EU project information.

https://cordis.europa.eu/

Horizon Magazine |



https://horizon-magazine.eu/



Research and Innovation success stories



A collection of the most recent success stories from EU-funded research & innovation.

Success stories | Research and Innovation (europa.eu)

- COMMUNICATION
- DISSEMINATION
- EXPLOITATION





WiderAdvance Facility

Dissemination and Exploitation Support Facility

in 2025, a new instrument supporting the dissemination and exploitation of Starting results January will be available - the widerAdvance Facility - .

The goal of the widerAdvance Facility is to empower research organizations to:

- effectively disseminate and exploit research outcomes and maximise their impact;
- reach a wider audiences;
- elevate their contribution at a regional and European level.

The widerAdvance Facility also aims at increasing the visibility and recognition of the Widening and Outermost Regions by:

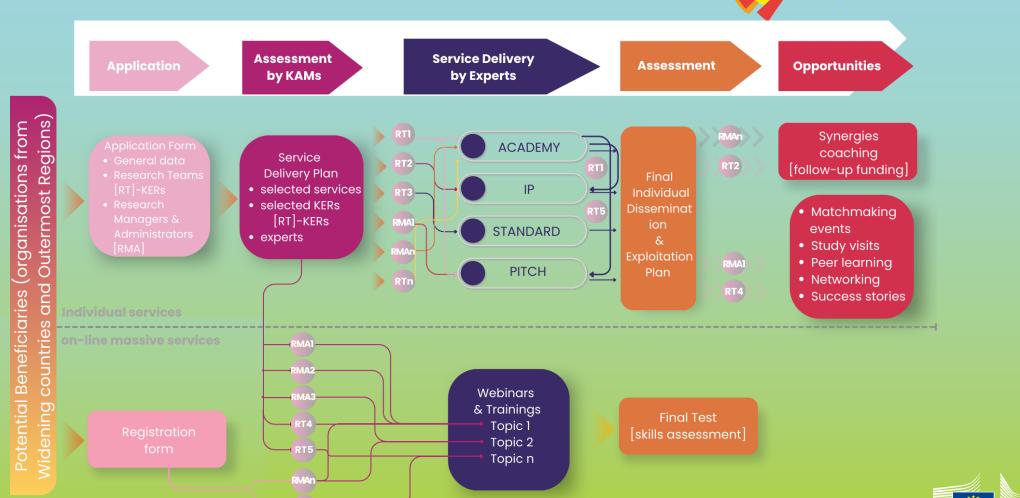
- showcasing success stories;
- sharing best practices;
- and highlighting the unique contributions these regions make.





widerAdvance Facility

Dissemination and Exploitation Support Facility





WiderAdvance Facility

Dissemination and Exploitation Support Facility

WHAT AN ORGANISATION WILL GET AT THE END OF THE SERVICE?



Individual plan

how to effectively disseminate and exploit our research results





Indication which follow-up funding

(e.g.: ERDF, RRF, ESF) to use and with whom to deal (regional/ national authorities)







Staff trained on D&E





Links with industry, VCs, investors etc.





Promotion of our achievements



OTHER ASPECTS





GENDER EQUALITY PLANS

Mandatory

- Public bodies (including e.g. ministries, research funding organisations, municipalities, as well as public-for-profit organisations such as certain museums)
- Research organisations (both public and private)
- Higher education establishments (both public and private).

Not concerned



- SMEs
- Non governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Civil society organisations (CSOs)

Who?

Entities receiving EU funding - COO, beneficiaries, affiliated entities from:

- EU member states
- Associated countries







USEFUL LINKS

- Horizon Europe Online Manual
- Horizon Europe Annotated Model Grant Agreement
- <u>Lump sum funding in Horizon Europe Guidance</u>
- Horizon Europe WIDERA Work Programme 2023-2024
- Periodic Report template
- Horizon Europe Template for the data management plan, available in the Reference Documents (Reference Documents (europa.eu)) on the Portal.



- https://open-research-europe.ec.europa.eu
- Communicating about your EU-funded project
- https://horizon-magazine.eu
- https://cordis.europa.eu/



Keep in touch



ec.europa.eu/
rea.ec.europa.eu/



europeancommission



<u>European Commission</u>

@European Research Executive Agency



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EU SPOTIFY



Thank you!

European Commission Research Executive Agency

http://ec.europa.eu/research/rea



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