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## **Horizon Europe**

### **Work Programme 2021-2022**

#### *11. Widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area*

*(European Commission Decision C(2022)2975 of 10 May 2022)*



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## **Introduction**

### **Overall description of common policy objectives and rationale based on specific programme and strategic plan**

This part of the Work Programme will implement concrete measures in support of Widening participation and strengthening the ERA (European Research Area) and is divided in two components:

I: Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence;

II: Strengthening the European Research Area.

It will optimise the impact of Pillar 2 by contributing to the objectives of the entire framework programme. It is going to amplify geographical diversity, build the necessary capacity to allow successful participation in the R&I process and promote networking of and access to excellence. Synergies will be pursued with the programme parts on European Innovation Ecosystems and the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT). In addition, this programme part will advance the dissemination and exploitation of research results by reinforcing the interaction between education and research and strengthen collaborate links across Europe and open up European R&I networks. It will contribute to improving research management capacities in the Widening Countries and Outermost Regions, support national policy reforms as well as valorise the potential of the Union's talent pool through targeted actions. This part of the work programme is based on the results of the strategic planning process and is fully aligned with the strategic objectives of the ERA communication (COM(2020) 628 final)<sup>1</sup> published on 30/09/2020 that aims at building a common scientific and technological area for the EU.

Although the EU is a global leader in research and innovation, its performance has stagnated since 2012, and major players, from Asia in particular, are catching up and gradually occupy a more prominent position on the global R&I and technological landscape. While R&I is the engine of long-term productivity growth, Europe continues to lag behind in turning the outcomes of its excellent research into disruptive innovation. There is a growing disparity between countries and regions in terms of R&I performance, which calls for fully mobilising research, innovation and technological capacities in less developed regions.

Structural R&I policy reforms plus better national, regional and institutional cooperation in the production and diffusion of high-quality knowledge are vital. For example, more and better links between R&I actors across Europe are needed, if Europe as a whole wants to capitalise on excellence from across the continent, maximise the value of public and private investments, and their impacts on productivity, economic growth, job creation and well-being.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0628&from=EN>

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The Union now needs to raise the bar on the quality and impact of its R&I system, requiring a renewed ERA across the EU and associated countries, strongly supported by the Horizon Europe and national and regional programmes.

Article 181(2) of the TFEU specifically points out that, a well-integrated yet tailored set of Union measures is needed, combined with reforms and performance enhancements at national and regional level (through smart specialisation strategies) and along with effective institutional changes within research funding and performing organisations, including universities, will lead to outstanding knowledge production. Therefore, the enabling conditions related to the governance of smart specialisation introduced under the new generation of cohesion policy programmes is a key delivery tool of these reforms. By joining efforts at Union level, synergies can be exploited across Europe and the necessary scale can be found to make support to national policy reforms more efficient and impactful.

The activities supported under this part specifically address ERA policy priorities, notably deepening the ERA while generally underpinning all parts of Horizon Europe. In this regard, they aim at encouraging more investments, improving the access to excellence, translating R&I results into the economy and improving research management capabilities.

Activities will also foster brain circulation across the ERA through mobility of researchers and innovators, to address current imbalances, and will support the development of networks of scholars, scientists, researchers and innovators, policy makers and research managers to put all their (intangible) assets to the service of the ERA and by supporting the development of domain-specific science roadmaps.

The goal is a Union, where knowledge and a highly-skilled workforce circulate freely, research outputs are shared rapidly and efficiently, where researchers benefit from attractive careers and gender equality is ensured, where Member States and associated countries develop common strategic research agendas, aligning national plans, defining and implementing joint programmes, and where the outcomes of R&I are understood and trusted by informed citizens and benefit society as a whole.

This part will contribute *de facto* to all SDGs, but directly to the following: SDG 4 - Quality Education; SDG 5 - Gender Equality; SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; SDG 17 - Partnership for the Goals.

Moreover, it will contribute to achieving Horizon Europe expected impacts along the four key strategic orientations set in the strategic plan, and support the implementation of key policy objectives of the European Commission notably the European Green Deal and the EU's digital strategy.

Horizon Europe is the research and innovation support programme in a system of European and national funding programmes that shares policy objectives. Through the programme, special attention will be given to ensuring cooperation between universities, scientific communities and industry, including small and medium enterprises, and citizens and their representatives, in order to bridge gaps between territories, generations and regional cultures,



especially caring for the needs of the young in shaping Europe's future. Calls could be EU Synergies calls, meaning that projects that have been awarded a grant under the call could have the possibility to also receive funding under other EU programmes, including relevant shared management funds. In this context, project proposers should consider and actively seek synergies with, and where appropriate possibilities for further funding from, other R&I-relevant EU, national or regional programmes (such as ERDF, ESF+, JTF, EMFF, EAFRD, ERASMUS+ and InvestEU), where appropriate, as well as private funds or financial instruments. The ERDF focuses amongst others on the development and strengthening of regional and local research and innovation ecosystems and smart economic transformation, in line with regional/national smart specialisation strategies. It can support building research and innovation capacities and uptake of advanced technologies and roll-out of innovative solutions from the Framework Programmes for research and innovation through the ERDF.

The EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) [currently available in all Member States] aims at financing projects that directly tackle the economic and social impacts from the Coronavirus crisis and support the green and digital transition. For project ideas that directly contribute to these objectives and that have a strong focus in one member state it is advisable to check access to the RRF for a fast and targeted support.

### **Part I: Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence - Overall strategic approach**

Research and Innovation (R&I) policy can only strive towards more excellence if everyone progresses. The EU's R&I system needs to promote a more inclusive approach in which all can participate and from which all can benefit. Existing disparities between R&I leading and lagging countries can be tackled by introducing structural policy reforms. Closer links between research and innovation and institutional cooperation to produce high-quality knowledge are also paramount to help bridging these disparities. By building upon their excellence pockets and connecting them to broader networks of excellence less R&I advanced countries will be able to upgrade their R&I systems, making them stronger and allowing the EU as a whole to advance together. All possible means need to be mobilised and coordinated towards this end. According to the Horizon Europe regulation in this programme component the less advanced countries eligible for hosting the co-ordinator of widening actions are Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and all Associated Countries with equivalent characteristics in terms of R&I performance (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo<sup>2</sup>, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia, Ukraine, Faroe Islands) and the Outermost Regions (defined in Art. 349 TFEU). Hereinafter, these countries including the Outermost Regions will be named 'widening countries' in the following document.

In the field of climate science as well as clean-tech and energy&transport technologies, disparities between R&I leading and lagging countries are particularly large. Widening countries are often faced with a relatively larger challenge in terms of decarbonisation, while

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<sup>2</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

their R&I Innovation systems are not yet sufficiently developed to fully tackle the challenges, and reap the opportunities, that the transition to a climate-neutral economy brings. This Work Programme component therefore particularly encourages to improve access to excellence and reform the innovation system in these domains.

This programme part is especially responding to the second policy priority of the ERA communication i.e., improving access to excellence: towards more excellence and stronger R&I systems across the whole of the EU where best practice is disseminated faster across Europe. It will support the widening countries to increase the performance of their R&I systems towards excellence through building on dedicated Horizon Europe measures and complementarities with smart specialisation strategies under Cohesion Policy. Nevertheless, it is not made-up exclusively for participants from widening countries since it pursues a pan-European approach of collaboration and mutual knowledge sharing in the spirit of solidarity.

The key objectives of this component of the work programme are the following:

1. Encourage institutional reforms and transformation processes of the R&I system at national and regional level in widening countries in line with ERA principles
2. Mobilise national investments in R&I capacity in widening countries
3. Raise the bar for excellence of R&I actors in widening countries in partnership with outstanding European and international institutions ('win-win situation')
4. Increase number of participations and success rates of widening actors in research and innovation projects in other parts of Horizon Europe (notably in pillars 2 and 3)
5. Promote the creation of new innovation ecosystems and scale up existing ones by a set of measures, which include, among other, place based and international collaboration between academia and business in widening countries
6. Foster brain circulation, including inter-sectoral mobility for researchers and innovators and turn it into brain gain for widening countries

These objectives will be achieved by combining revamped traditional widening actions with a number of novel elements included in the advancing Europe package agreed by the legislators in March 2019.

## **Part II: Strengthening the European Research Area - Overall strategic approach**

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates more than ever the importance of R&I cooperation to deliver solutions to society's most demanding problems and needs. Delivering Europe's recovery together with the green and digital twin transitions is paramount. To match these challenges, a new level of ambition that better links R&I with the economy, as well as with education and training, and puts the EU's scientific knowledge to work is necessary.

The new ERA communication calls for deepening existing priorities and initiatives through new and stronger approaches. The green and digital transitions and the recovery call for

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cooperation between the Commission and the Member States. They require the setting of new priorities, launching ambitious joint initiatives and developing common approaches between policies.

To address these ambitious priorities and initiatives, Annex 11 of the Horizon Europe Work Programme, sets out to reform and enhance the EU R&I system in line with four of the objectives of the ERA Communication. Investments and reforms will be prioritised, access to excellence will be improved and R&I results will be translated into the economy. These actions will result in deepening the ERA. The principle of excellence, meaning that the best researchers with the best ideas obtain funding, remains the cornerstone for all investments under the ERA.

The goal is a Union where knowledge and a highly skilled workforce circulate freely, where research outputs are shared rapidly and efficiently, where researchers benefit from attractive careers, and gender equality is assured; where common strategic research agendas are aligned to national plans and where the outcomes of research and innovation are understood, trusted and increasingly used, by informed citizens to the benefit of society. Envisaged activities complement the direction of the ERA Communication.

## **DESTINATION 1: IMPROVED ACCESS TO EXCELLENCE**

### **Introduction**

The ERA Communication (COM(2020) 628 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0628&from=EN>) has established the need of improving access to excellence as one of the four main strategic goals. In particular striving towards more excellence requires a stronger R&I system where best practice is disseminated faster across Europe. The strategic plan for Horizon Europe aims at underpinning geographical diversity, building the necessary capacity to allow successful participation in the R&I process and promoting networking and access to excellence thus optimising the impact of Pillar 2 and contributing to the objectives of the entire programme.

This destination will address “improving access to excellence” through a portfolio of complementary actions that aim at building up R&I capacities in widening countries, also through national and regional R&I reforms and investments, to enable them to advance to the competitive edge at European and international level. This portfolio constitutes the widening dimension of a broader European Excellence Initiative that reaches out beyond this programme part and will be implemented together with ERASMUS+.

Each of the five proposed actions is addressing a different target group of potential beneficiaries with a customised intervention logic. The use and appropriate design of partnerships with leading institutions abroad will be a key vector for accessing excellence. The intervention logic is designed to work points at a multitude of scales ranging from individual researcher through career development, focussed networks, institutional development to a systemic impact on national R&I systems.

Capacity building will go beyond purely scientific capacities since it includes the development of management and administrative capacities for the benefit of institutions (notably in Twinning and the Strengthening Capacities for Excellence in Universities) that are eager to take over consortium leadership roles especially under Pillar 2. Teaming actions will create new or modernise existing centers of excellence by means of a very close and strategic partnership with leading institutions abroad. The impact will be amplified by the conditionality of a securing a complementary investment (especially for infrastructure, building, hardware) from the structural funds or other sources. Once established the centres will function as lighthouses with far reaching impact and role models for attracting the best talents. Further, they will demonstrate the success of modern governance and management, and, hence stimulate generalised reforms in the national R&I environment.

In a complementary manner with a focus on the transformation of the academic and higher education system the university related scheme will foster reforms in widening countries embedded in dynamic European university alliances. Scientific excellence in the more traditional sense is the aim of Twinning where focused networks with excellent partners will develop new promising R&I domains and test novel approaches in smaller joint research projects.

Innovation excellence is the focus of excellence hubs where innovation ecosystems in widening countries and beyond will team up and strive for creating better linkages between academia, business, government and society that will foster a real placed based innovation culture in widening countries on the grounds of a strategic agenda in line with regional or national smart specialisation strategies. In this context, synergies will be sought with the programme parts on European Innovation Ecosystems and the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT).

Furthermore, research and innovation performance is correlated with the efficiency of the national research and innovation system and the capacity and the effectiveness of the National Contact Points (NCPs). Special attention should be given to the less experienced entities in low R&I performing countries to bridge the knowledge gap and rapidly acquire know-how accumulated in other countries thus enabling better access to funding opportunities in the EU Framework Programmes and beyond.

A dedicated support mechanism is envisaged in this Work programme part with the specific objective to strengthen the activities of NCPs to support international networking and to improve the quality of proposals from legal entities from low R&I performing countries.

The NCP action will include the establishment of an NCP network for the ERA component of this work programme part.

In addition, particular attention will be paid to cross-cutting objectives set for Horizon Europe, such as gender equality and open science practices, through the different funded actions.

#### Expected impact

Proposals for topics under this Destination should set out a credible pathway to contributing to the following expected impacts:

- Increased science and innovation capacities for all actors in the R&I system in widening countries
- Structural changes leading to a modernised and more competitive R&I systems in eligible countries
- Reformed R&I systems and institutions leading also to increased attractiveness and retention of research talents
- Mobilisation of national and European resources for strategic investments
- Higher participation success in Horizon Europe and more consortium leadership roles
- Stronger linkages between academia and business and improved career permeability
- Strengthened role of the Higher Education sector in research and innovation

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- Greater involvement of regional actors in R&I process
- Improved outreach to international scale for all actors
- A more consistent level of NCP support services across Europe
- An improved and professionalised NCPs in the widening countries, that would help simplify access to Horizon Europe calls, lowering the entry barriers for newcomers, and raising the average quality of proposals submitted

The following call(s) in this work programme contribute to this destination:

Call	Budgets (EUR million)		Deadline(s)
	2021	2022	
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-01-two-stage		180.00	05 Oct 2021 (First Stage) 08 Sep 2022 (Second Stage)
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-02	21.00		05 Oct 2021
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-03	149.00		18 Jan 2022
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-04		50.00	15 Mar 2022
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-05	30.00		04 Nov 2021
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-06	5.00		29 Sep 2021
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-07		40.00	20 Apr 2022 10 Nov 2022
Overall indicative budget	205.00	270.00	

**Call - Teaming for Excellence**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-01-two-stage***

**Conditions for the Call**

Indicative budget(s)<sup>3</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>4</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2022		
Opening: 29 Jun 2021				
Deadline(s): 05 Oct 2021 (First Stage), 08 Sep 2022 (Second Stage)				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-01-01-two-stage	CSA	180.00	8.00 to 15.00	12
Overall indicative budget		180.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General

<sup>3</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

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	Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-01-01-two-stage: Teaming for Excellence**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 8.00 and 15.00 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 180.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>In order to achieve the expected outcomes, participation as coordinators to the call is limited to legal entities established in Widening countries, as defined in the Horizon Europe regulation.</p> <p>A Teaming project must involve at least two beneficiaries: a) the main applicant organisation (the coordinator) which will be a university or a research organisation, a national or regional authority or a research funding agency, and b) at least one leading university or research organisation established in another Member State or Associated Country as an advanced partner.</p> <p>The project must have a complementary funding (e.g. national and/or regional funding, European funding, such as from Cohesion policy programmes, or private sources). Its total amount must at least equal the total requested Horizon Europe contribution.</p>
<i>Procedure</i>	<p>The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Since funding for projects funded under this topic is coming from more than one source, this action is an EU Synergy grant and the following conditions will apply:</p>



	<p>The project proposal will undergo a joint evaluation of both project parts funded under Horizon Europe and under any chosen complementary funding source, such as from Cohesion policy programmes. The operations supported by a complementary source must comply with the scope of the supporting programme, and they must provide an effective contribution to the achievement of programme’s specific objectives. In addition, when Cohesion policy funding is mobilised, it must be consistent with the relevant smart specialisation strategy.</p> <p>A clear description of the project part supported by a complementary funding must be included in the proposal, where relevant including the eligible category of research and development, technical specifications of infrastructure, preliminary planning for building and installations, cost-benefit analysis, etc.</p> <p>In kind contributions are not considered complementary funding.</p> <p>All recruitments have to follow a transparent, merit based and open recruitment procedures</p> <p>The following rules for dealing with ex-aequo applications apply: in the first place, ex aequo proposals will be prioritised according to geographical diversity criteria, as indicated in Point 4) of General Annexes Part F (Procedure/Evaluation procedure and ranking). The method described in its 1), 2), 3) and 5) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranking proposals in the group. This rule establishing the priority order serves to better spread the impact of the action and to strengthen the efficiency of the ‘Widening participation and spreading excellence’ programme.</p> <p>Seals of Excellence will be awarded to applications exceeding all of the evaluation thresholds set out in this work programme, but cannot be funded due to lack of budget available to the call.</p>
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Expected Outcome: Disparities in R&I performance are due to, among other reasons, the insufficient critical mass of science and lack of centres of excellence having sufficient competence to engage countries and regions strategically in a path of innovative growth. Teaming is responding to this challenge establishing new centers of excellence or modernising existing ones with the help of leading European partnering institutions. This will help countries to increase their R&I intensity and to attain a competitive position in the European R&I system and globally, especially by becoming drivers of change.

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Increased scientific capabilities of the beneficiary institution and the host country enabling them to successfully apply for competitive funding in the EU and globally,

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- Improved the R&I culture of the country hosting the co-ordinator (indicators such as research intensity, innovation performance, values towards R&I) through centers of excellence as lighthouses and role models,
- Stimulus for institutional and systemic reforms and R&I investments at national level taking into account the enabling conditions on governance of smart specialisation introduced under cohesion policy programmes as far as applicable,
- Strengthened and mutually benefitting collaboration with partners from leading scientific institutions from abroad,
- Development and promotion of new research strands in relevant domains,
- Developed and enhanced research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies,
- Contribution to the achievement of the specific objectives of the supporting national/regional/EU programme as complementary funding,
- Enhanced innovation and integration of planned processes, services and products of the centre,
- Enhanced co-operation and synergies with other EU projects.

Scope:

Teaming is one of the actions that stimulates Europe exploiting its potential by maximising and spreading the benefits of research and innovation. It is vital for Europe's competitiveness and its ability to address societal challenges.

The Teaming action is designed to support the creation of new centres of excellence or upgrading the existing ones in low R&I performing countries, building on partnerships between leading scientific institutions in Europe and the main beneficiary institutions in low R&I performing countries that display the willingness to engage together for this purpose. This can help countries that are lagging behind in terms of research and innovation performance attaining a competitive position in the global value chains. Leading scientific institutions are advanced and established partners that have developed an outstanding reputation in research and innovation excellence in the chosen scientific domain. Institutions that are still in the process of development or modernisation, e.g. those that are still receiving support as coordinators from widening actions under Horizon 2020, are normally not considered leading institutions, unless a proper justification is provided for in the proposal.

In order to maximise impact of research and innovation on society, environment and economy at large and to contribute in particular to the achievement of the Union's objectives, Union funding must be coherent and work in synergy. This notion is highly relevant for Teaming action, where a complementary funding from a national (or regional or European or private source) is required. The implementation of Teaming action is expected to become an

influential and meaningful bridge particularly between smart specialisation strategies and excellence in R&I with the aim of strengthening the European Research Area and contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Whatever the source of the required complementary funding, a Teaming project, as a notable flagship in its host country, exemplifies not only the achievements in R&I, capacity building or competitiveness, but also sets and facilitates synergies in practise.

The evaluation of the complementary funding part may use additional criteria required by, where relevant, the Cohesion Policy programmes and/or legislation. The managers of the complementary funding should apply to the operations the categories, maximum amounts and methods of calculation of eligible costs established under Horizon Europe. In addition, they should be able to apply Art.25 (d) of the revised General Block Exemption Regulation.

Proposals may be evaluated by an additional panel of experts with specific knowledge on complementary funding sources.

In the first stage of evaluation the R&I excellence and the conceptual approach for the Centers of Excellence will be evaluated. Applicants have to present a strategic vision on how to develop R&I excellence beyond the state of the art in the chosen domain and on how the coordinator will benefit from the partnership with a leading institution from abroad. In addition, the conceptual approach should outline how the access to complementary funding from other sources will be ensured, in the respect of national, regional and/or European strategies or policy priorities (e.g. notably smart specialisation strategies, Green Deal, Digital transformation). Proposals also should sketch out briefly how the autonomy of the envisaged center will be ensured and the necessary human resources recruited and retained.

Proposals invited to the second stage must include an investment plan for the full project including a binding commitment for the necessary complementary funding.

At a detailed level the full proposal should:

- Present a strategy for how the centre will develop excellence in the chosen relevant R&I domain that will put it at the competitive edge beyond the state of the art enabling future success in competitive calls,
- Demonstrate the growth potential and expected socio-economic outreach of the Centre of Excellence for the benefit of the host country or region,
- Demonstrate how the project will contribute to encouraging and supporting reforms of the R&I system at regional and or/national level,
- Elaborate on the structure of the consortium and how this will create a win-win situation,
- Demonstrate how the newly established/upgraded Centre will have full autonomy in decision-making. In particular, the Centre of Excellence should have the maximum degree of autonomy in terms of taking its own decisions, being in legal, administrative,

operational, personnel and academic matters. The Centre should be able to fix and pay competitive salaries for its personnel,

- Elaborate on the steps that will be taken to ensure long-term self-sustainability after the end of the Horizon Europe grant,
- Propose a robust human resource strategy that addresses gender equality (in line with the research institutions respective gender equality plans) and international component, ensuring appropriate management capacities for the effective and efficient running of the Centre of Excellence,
- In order to assure the autonomy of the Centre of Excellence (CoE), if relevant, the project might benefit of having the CoE coordinating the project within the duration of the Grant,
- Present an investment plan including the letter(s) of commitment for complementary funding from the competent national/regional authorities or private sources to commit financial resources (e.g. resources coming from programmes co-financed by the ERDF or other sources ) for implementing the future Centre, in particular regarding investment in infrastructure and equipment. The letter(s) of commitment for complementary funding of the project will be an integral part of the evaluation of the proposal,
- The grant awarded from the Horizon Europe budget should provide substantial support for the start-up and implementation phase of the future Centre of Excellence including the recruitment of the managerial, technical and scientific personnel. It should also cover expenses related to team members of the future Centre of Excellence (e.g. their salaries, recruitment costs<sup>5</sup>, management costs, travel and subsistence costs),
- A minor research component can be accepted not exceeding 10% of the total Horizon Europe grant that may include a preparatory research project. Such small research project embedded in the Teaming action should be aligned with the objectives of the project and e.g. serve the purpose of developing and testing new methodologies and instruments and/or the integration of new scientific personnel. If preparatory research activity is planned to carry out, the outline of a respective work plan at an appropriate level of detail should be presented,
- The duration of the grant should be up to six years.

Specific attention should be paid to gender equality objectives, in line with the organisations' commitments through their adopted gender equality plans, and in line with ERA objectives.

### **Call - Twinning Western Balkans**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-02***

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This can be considered under the category of 'other direct costs'

## Conditions for the Call

### Indicative budget(s)<sup>6</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>7</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2021		
Opening: 29 Jun 2021 Deadline(s): 05 Oct 2021				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-02-01	CSA	21.00	0.80 to 1.50	14
Overall indicative budget		21.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

<sup>6</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-02-01: Twinning Western Balkans Special**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 0.80 and 1.50 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 21.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>The coordinator must be a legal entity established in one of the following countries: Republic of Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo[This designation is <i>without prejudice to positions</i> on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the <i>Kosovo</i> declaration of independence], Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, and Republic of Serbia.</p> <p>Furthermore, at least 70% of the budget for research activities must be allocated to the coordinator from the above stated eligible countries.</p>
<i>Procedure</i>	<p>The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>The following rules for dealing with ex-aequo applications apply: in the first place, ex aequo proposals will be prioritised according to geographical diversity criteria, as indicated in Point 4) of General Annexes Part F (Procedure/Evaluation procedure and ranking). The method described in 1), 2), 3) and 5) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranking proposals in the group. This rule establishing the priority order serves to better spread the impact of the action and to strengthen the efficiency of the ‘Widening participation and spreading excellence’ programme.</p>

Expected Outcome: The special Twinning call for Western Balkans will contribute to the wide policy initiative to support of Western Balkan countries. The European Commission adopted on 6th of October a comprehensive Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans (COM(2020) 641, 6/10/2020) , which aims to spur the long-term economic recovery of the region, support a green and digital transition, foster regional integration and convergence with the European Union.

Twinning aims to enhance networking activities between the research institutions of the Western Balkan Countries and top-class leading counterparts at EU level by linking it with at least two research institutions from two different Member States or Associated Countries. Therefore, building on the huge potential of networking for excellence through knowledge transfer and exchange of best practice between research institutions and partners. Twinning actions intend to help raise the research profile of the institution from the Western Balkan country as well as the research profile of its staff including a special focus on strengthening the research management and administrative skills of the coordination institution from the Western Balkan Country.

In order to support reaching the goals of the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans and to ensure the sustainability of investment in the region, the Commission will propose a dedicated Agenda for the Western Balkans on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport ('Innovation Agenda for the Western Balkans').

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Improved excellence capacity and resources in Western Balkan countries enabling to close the still apparent research and innovation gap within Europe.
- Enhanced strategic networking activities between the research institutions of the Western Balkan countries and at least two internationally-leading counterparts at EU level.
- Raised reputation, research profile and attractiveness of the coordinating institution from the Western Balkan country and the research profile of its staff.
- Strengthened research management capacities and administrative skills of the staff working in institutions from the Western Balkan country.
- Improved creativity supported by development of new approaches in R&I collaboration, increased mobility (inwards and outwards) of qualified scientists.

Scope: The purpose of the special Twinning call is to raise the bar for excellence of all R&I actors in these countries. It will be implemented as one special call for Western Balkan countries with a limited eligibility for hosting the co-ordinator for the following countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia in 2021.

This special Twinning aims to enhance networking activities between the research institutions of the Western Balkan countries and leading counterparts at EU level. It links the coordinator located in a Western Balkan country with at least two leading research institutions from two different Member States or Associated Countries in the role of the advanced partners. Therefore, it builds on the huge potential of networking for excellence through knowledge transfer and exchange of best practice between research institutions and partners.

Twinning proposals should have to clearly outline the scientific strategy for stepping up and stimulating scientific excellence and innovation capacity in a defined area of research as well

as the scientific quality of the partners involved in the twinning exercise. This scientific strategy should include arrangements for formulating new (or ongoing) joint research project(s) in the scientific area of choice and describe how Twinning will take this research to a new stage, by enlarging its scope and/or the research partnership. If relevant, any links with sustainable development objectives are to be outlined.

Such a strategy should include a comprehensive set of activities to be supported. These should include at least a number of the following: a) short-term staff exchanges; b) expert visits and short term on-site or virtual training; c) workshops; d) conference attendance; e) organisation of joint summer school type activities; f) dissemination and outreach activities. As far as appropriate these activities should take into account the gender equality plans of the participants.

Proposals should also focus on strengthening the research management and administration skills of the coordinating institution from the Western Balkan country. A dedicated work package or task should emphasise specific activities, which will help the staff of the coordinating institution to improve their proposal preparation and project management/administration skills. If not yet in place, setting up/upgrading a research management/administration unit within the coordinating institution would be beneficial. This will be achieved by fully utilising the experience and best practices of the internationally leading partners and is expected to be a concrete deliverable of the Twinning exercise.

A research component not exceeding 30% of the total Horizon Europe grant may include an exploratory research project. This will open opportunities for integrating smaller research projects and by this strengthening the commitment and the engagement of the twinning partners.

The Twinning proposals should illustrate quantitatively and qualitatively the expected potential impact of the twinning exercise within the coordinating institution (and possibly at regional/national level) based on indicators, such as expected future publications in peer reviewed journals, collaboration agreements with businesses, intellectual property, new innovative products or services, number of international students and of local students' national and international mobility, number of women scientists and their roles in the institutions.

It should be explained how the leading scientific institutions in the partnership will contribute in terms of provision of access to new research avenues, creativity and the development of new approaches, as well as acting as a source of increased mobility (inwards and outwards) of qualified scientists. The benefits for the leading scientific institutions and the way they would materialise through the partnership should be substantiated.

Specific attention should be paid to gender equality objectives, in line with the organisations' commitments through their adopted gender equality plans, and in line with ERA objectives, as far as appropriate.



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The research part of the project should be presented through a dedicated work package and plan including the scientific objectives, tasks and roles of the partners.

The duration of the Twinning project should be up to 3 years.

**Call - Twinning**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-03***

**Conditions for the Call**

Indicative budget(s)<sup>8</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>9</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2021		
Opening: 20 Jul 2021 Deadline(s): 18 Jan 2022				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-03-01	CSA	149.00	0.80 to 1.50	100
Overall indicative budget		149.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.

<sup>8</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

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<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-03-01: Twinning**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 0.80 and 1.50 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 149.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>In order to achieve the expected outcomes, participation as coordinators to the call is limited to legal entities established in Widening countries, as defined in the Horizon Europe regulation. Furthermore, at least 70% of the budget for research activities must be allocated to the coordinator from a widening country.</p> <p>Proposals also submitted under call HORIZON-WIDERA-ACCESS-02 Twinning Western Balkans are not eligible.</p>
<i>Procedure</i>	<p>The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>The following rules for dealing with ex-aequo applications apply: in the first place, ex aequo proposals will be prioritised according to geographical diversity criteria, as indicated in Point 4) of General Annexes Part F (Procedure/Evaluation procedure and ranking). The method described in 1), 2), 3) and 5) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranking proposals in the group. This rule establishing the priority order serves to better spread the impact of the action and to strengthen the efficiency of the ‘Widening participation and spreading excellence’ programme.</p>

Expected Outcome: To prevent further disparities, maximize investment in R&D and enhance economic growth, Horizon Europe is taking relevant actions under Widening participation and spreading excellence objective. Twinning actions are one of the main instruments of this objective.

Twinning aims to enhance networking activities between the research institutions of the Widening countries and top-class leading counterparts at EU level by linking it with at least two research institutions from two different Member States or Associated Countries. Therefore, building on the huge potential of networking for excellence through knowledge transfer and exchange of best practice between research institutions and partners. Twinning actions intend to help raise the research profile of the institution from the Widening country as well as the research profile of its staff including a special focus on strengthening the research management and administrative skills of the coordination institution from the Widening country.

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Improved excellence capacity and resources in Widening countries enabling to close the still apparent research and innovation gap within Europe.
- Enhanced strategic networking activities between the research institutions of the Widening countries and at least two internationally-leading counterparts at EU level.
- Raised reputation, research profile and attractiveness of the coordinating institution from the Widening country and the research profile of its staff.
- Strengthened research management capacities and administrative skills of the staff working in institutions from the Widening country.
- Improved creativity supported by development of new approaches in R&I collaboration, increased mobility (inwards and outwards) of qualified scientists.

Scope: Twinning proposals should have to clearly outline the scientific strategy for stepping up and stimulating scientific excellence and innovation capacity in a defined area of research as well as the scientific quality of the partners involved in the twinning exercise. This scientific strategy should include arrangements for formulating new (or ongoing) joint research project(s) in the scientific area of choice and describe how Twinning will take this research to a new stage, by enlarging its scope and/or the research partnership. If relevant, any links with sustainable development objectives are to be outlined.

Such a strategy should include a comprehensive set of activities to be supported. These should include at least a number of the following: short-term staff exchanges; expert visits and short term on-site or virtual training; workshops; conference attendance; organisation of joint summer school type activities; dissemination and outreach activities. As far as appropriate these activities should take into account the gender equality plans of the participants.

Proposals should also focus on strengthening the research management and administration skills of the coordinating institution from the Widening country. This should take the form of a dedicated work package or task, placing emphasis to specific activities, in view of helping the staff of the coordinating institution to improve their proposal preparation and project management/administration skills. If not yet in place, setting up/upgrading a research management/administration unit within the coordinating institution would be beneficial. This will be achieved by fully utilising the experience and best practices of the internationally leading partners and is expected to be a concrete deliverable of the Twinning exercise.

A research component not exceeding 30% of the total Horizon Europe grant may include an exploratory research project. This will open opportunities for integrating smaller research activities and by this strengthening the commitment and the engagement of the twinning partners.

The Twinning proposals should illustrate quantitatively and qualitatively the expected potential impact of the twinning exercise within the coordinating institution (and possibly at regional/national level) based on indicators such as expected future publications in peer reviewed journals, collaboration agreements with businesses, intellectual property, new innovative products or services, number of international students, number of women scientists and their roles in the research institutions.

It should be explained how the leading scientific institutions in the partnership will contribute in terms of provision of access to new research avenues, creativity and the development of new approaches, as well as acting as a source for increased mobility (inwards and outwards) of qualified scientists and young researchers including doctoral candidates. The benefits for the leading scientific institutions and the way they would materialise through the partnership should be substantiated.

Specific attention should be paid to gender equality objectives, in line with the organisations' commitments through their adopted gender equality plans, and in line with ERA objectives, as far as appropriate.

The research part of the project should be presented through a dedicated work package and plan including the scientific objectives, tasks and roles of the partners.

The duration of the Twinning project should be up to 3 years.

## **Call - Excellence Hubs**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-04***

## **Conditions for the Call**

### Indicative budget(s)<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.

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Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>11</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2022		
Opening: 03 Nov 2021 Deadline(s): 15 Mar 2022				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-04-01	CSA	50.00	3.00 to 5.00	10
Overall indicative budget		50.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

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The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.

All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.

The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-04-01: Excellence Hubs**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 5.00 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 50.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>In order to achieve the expected outcomes, participation as coordinators to the call is limited to legal entities established in Widening countries as defined in the Horizon Europe regulation.</p>
<i>Procedure</i>	<p>The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>The following rules for dealing with ex-aequo applications apply: in the first place, ex aequo proposals will be prioritised according to geographical diversity criteria, as indicated in Point 4) of General Annexes Part F (Procedure/Evaluation procedure and ranking). The method described in 1), 2), 3) and 5) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranking proposals in the group. This rule establishing the priority order serves to better spread the impact of the action and to strengthen the efficiency of the ‘Widening participation and spreading excellence’ programme.</p>
<i>Other requirement</i>	<p>Consortia must include at least two different place based R&amp;I ecosystems in at least two different countries eligible to host the co-ordinator under the widening part of Horizon Europe. Each ecosystem needs to include four different categories of actors i.e. a) academic institutions (universities and/or non-university research centers or labs), b) business entities (active established firms with relevant revenues), c) public authorities or authorised agencies and d) societal actors (civil society organisations, associations, citizens, end users, media, cultural actors etc.). This quadruple helix approach needs to be presented in the proposal either by one or more umbrella organisations (e.g. clusters) or representative individual entities representing each of the four categories. Ecosystems with a large number of members are to be preferably represented by a limited number of key players (at least two, thereof one research and one business partner) whereas proposed activities are open for participation of</p>

	other members, too. Such member need to confirm their engagement in the project by letters of endorsement (signed by the member sheet). At least one of the business entities needs to be an established firm (no start-up) with significant and proven operational income to be verifiable by balance sheets or business reports of at least two consecutive years. In addition, consultants and start-ups may participate if duly justified.
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Expected Outcome: Excellence hubs are an initiative to strengthen regional innovation excellence in placed based innovation ecosystems by cross-border collaboration on a common strategy and/or alongside value adding chains. Place based innovation ecosystems are interconnected companies, research institutions, governmental bodies and societal actors that are mutually reinforcing each other in a territorial context and together raise the level of innovation excellence in their regional fabric.

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Excellent and sustainable place based innovation ecosystems in Widening countries and beyond in relevant domains of cutting-edge science and innovation
- Long term joint R&I strategies underpinned by concrete action plans of European relevance
- Common investment plans for R&I including infrastructures leveraging national, regional and European funds as well as private capital in a synergetic manner
- R&I pilot projects alongside a joint strategy and in line with regional and national strategies, notably regional innovation strategies for smart specialisation (RIS3)
- New competencies and skills for researchers, entrepreneurs and professionals in R&I intensive domains
- Strengthened linkages between science and business
- Poles of attraction for talents in catching up regions and countries
- Improved knowledge transfer and development of entrepreneurial skills.
- Uptake of innovative technologies
- New business opportunities especially for SMEs and new employment.

Scope: Excellence hubs are part of the European excellence initiative and complement the science oriented schemes Teaming, Twinning, ERA Chairs and the European excellence initiative for universities by a dedicated innovation component. Excellence hubs will 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. This will foster a real placed based innovation culture in widening countries based on a strategic agenda

aligned with regional or national smart specialisation strategies. In this context, synergies will be sought with the programme parts on European Innovation Ecosystems and the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT).

This action is embedded into the broader European initiative on ERA hubs and will help to bridge the innovation divide in this context. It responds to the third priority in the ERA communication on translating R&I results into the economy and will especially support R&I policies aiming at boosting the resilience and competitiveness of our economies and societies. This means ensuring Europe's competitive leadership in the global race for technology based on excellence while improving the environment for business R&I investment, deployment of new technologies and enhancing the take up and visibility of research results in the economy and society as a whole. This action addresses regions as R&I actors since they are the place where the innovation and industrial ecosystems breath and develop, making the links between Europe and industry/SMEs, research centres, innovation stakeholders as well as citizens. Regionally developed innovation ecosystems connected across Europe will be the driver of new European strategic value chain.

Unlike Teaming projects that are centred around a single beneficiary Excellence hubs are networks of place based innovation ecosystems in widening countries involving larger communities of actors in a regional context based on the quadruple helix principle (see below). Individual participants and ecosystems from other EU member states, associated countries and international co-operation partners may join in duly justified cases e.g. given by a specific expertise needed or the involvement in a relevant value adding chain.

Projects should be established around the following core components:

- Cross-border joint R&I strategy aligned with regional smart specialisation strategies and/or European policy priorities such as the green and digital transition
- R&I project consolidating academia business linkages and providing evidence for strategy building and investment
- Action and investment plans for implementation of the strategy
- Conceptual design and pre-planning for pilots and demonstrators (if applicable) in line with the strategy
- Accompanying measures e.g. to raise visibility, citizen engagement, technology transfer, entrepreneurship training, staff exchange, mutual learning etc.

Excellence hubs should improve access to excellence for R&I actors in widening countries and elaborate joint R&I strategies that are aligned with national, regional (notably RIS3) and/or European strategies or policy priorities (e.g. Green Deal, Digital transition). These strategies will be underpinned by concrete actions plans and an investment strategy that reaches out beyond the project's lifetime and will leverage national, regional and European funds as well as private (venture) capital. Investment plans may include pertinent R&I infrastructures as well as demonstrators and pilots.



The research component should be developed by joint pilot research projects in a domain covered by the joint strategy that will facilitate long term cross border and inter-sectoral collaborative links between partners notably academia and business and advancement in science and technology development with market potential. In a particular R&I projects should serve the purpose to close knowledge gaps and develop evidence to underpin the development of the strategy and the investment plans. For example, in the R&I projects lab prototypes might be developed leading to the design of pilot plants or demonstrators (see above). However, the realisation of such pilots and demonstrators must be financed by other sources in particular programmes co-financed by the ERDF. The approach how to access such co-funding at a later stage should be sketched out in the proposal. Notably for the case of ERDF the proposal should demonstrate the alignment with the pertinent regional smart specialisation.

Accompanying measures are complementary activities that may promote knowledge and technology transfer, mutual learning and skills development especially in research and innovation management and entrepreneurship as well as citizen engagement. Mutual secondments and staff exchange within and between ecosystems will help to build trust and long term collaborative links.

Proposals should outline the nexus of collaborative links and if applicable competitive relations of commercial actors within each of the ecosystems in a conceptual model. Ecosystems or individual partners from outside the widening countries may participate in the consortium as long as they prove added value by facilitating access to excellence for the widening countries. Proposals should convincingly demonstrate the relevance of the chosen scientific domain by its alignment with regional (in particular RIS3), national and/or European R&I strategies and policy priorities. Applicants may choose between a more regional orientation e.g. proven by a common denominator in their regional smart specialisation strategy and/or a more global orientation towards European policy priorities such as the green or digital transition.

The description of R&I content based on this choice should include a long-term vision beyond the state of the art of the chosen R&I domain. On top of that, proposal need to demonstrate the win-win effects of the partnership established by the consortium and the benefits for employment and post crisis recovery. For the implementation, proposals should present a coherent package of actions well proportioned in terms of strategy development, research, innovation and outreach activities.

Excellence hubs as a new action under the widening component are complementary but different to initiatives such as Digital hubs or the EIT regional innovation scheme (RIS) because of their strategic orientation, broader scope and alignment with widening eligibility criteria.

The expected duration of the project is up to 4 years.

**Call - European Excellence Initiative (EEI): Strengthening capacity for excellence in higher education institutions and surrounding ecosystems**

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-05**

**Conditions for the Call**

Indicative budget(s)<sup>12</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>13</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2021		
Opening: 29 Jun 2021 Deadline(s): 04 Nov 2021				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-05-01	CSA	30.00	1.50 to 2.00	15
Overall indicative budget		30.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.

<sup>12</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

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<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-05-01: Capacity building to strengthen networks of higher education institutions and cooperation with surrounding ecosystems**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 1.50 and 2.00 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 30.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>In order to achieve the expected outcomes, participation as coordinators to the call is limited to legal entities established in Widening countries, as defined in the Horizon Europe regulation.</p> <p>Entities who already benefit from the European Universities initiative pilot funding of Horizon 2020 can participate, but are excluded from receiving funding through this action.</p>

Expected Outcome: The European Universities initiative, currently piloted under Erasmus+ and supported through Horizon 2020 has created enormous dynamism across higher education sector to jointly create critical mass and implement institutional transformation strategies towards universities of the future, involving also surrounding ecosystems. The European Universities will be drivers of a European Excellence Initiative in the future with a distinct widening module.

Through the European Excellence Initiative, Horizon Europe's support aims at the transformation of higher education sector and their surrounding ecosystems, including non-university research centres. The Excellence Initiative would thereby mobilise local and regional government's investments in higher education sector (in its broadest sense). It will also include research activities in strategically relevant domains with a centre of gravity in widening countries. The widening dimension and relevance will be closely monitored on the grounds of an overall distribution KPI.

Pending the evaluation of the European Universities pilot portfolio in 2021-2022, the European Excellence Initiative in 2021 will focus on capacity building for networks of higher education institutions and partners in the local ecosystem, with a view of preparing the networks towards the full roll-out of the European Universities initiative in the years to come as announced in the European Skills Agenda adopted by the Commission on 1 July 2020.

Further to its proposals adopted on 30 September 2020 for the new ERA for Research and Innovation and the European Education Area, supported by the Council in its Conclusions, the Commission will engage further with the sector towards developing a higher education transformation agenda.

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Integrated and longer term cooperation between the partner higher education institutions (HEI) in the network, and with actors in surrounding ecosystems, jointly creating critical mass to contribute better to major societal challenges;
- Tangible progress towards institutional transformation / modernisation of HEI (in its broadest sense), including through pilots or study cases, with a particular emphasis on the entities located in widening countries;
- Strengthened cooperation with a view to raising excellence, global competitiveness, and general attractiveness for international talents and investments, including gender equality provisions; this includes preparations to embark onto the potential future European Universities initiative;
- Contribute to a portfolio of successful cooperation models for modernisation/transformation at research and innovation level, in synergy with HEI's education dimension; identify remaining barriers at regional/national/EU level hampering cooperation between HEI and modernisation of HEI; act as a regional role model of successful transformation;
- Facilitate future synergies between the European Education Area and the European Research Area, in particular in relation to the European Universities alliances.

Scope: The capacity building towards the European Excellence Initiative aims to significantly strengthening cooperation between at least two organisations from higher education sector in a Widening country (or different Widening countries), by linking it with at least two internationally-leading institutions from two different Member States or Associated Countries.

1. Enhance the scientific and technological capacity of the linked institutions with a principal focus on the entities from the Widening Country/-ies;
2. Help raise the excellence profile of the HEI from the Widening country as well as the excellence profile of its staff;

3. Strengthen considerably the networks towards realising integrated cooperation between the participating entities in the research and innovation dimension, in synergy with the entities' education and training dimensions.

Proposals are expected to clearly outline the cooperation and strategy for stepping up and stimulating scientific excellence and innovation capacity in defined areas of research and innovation as well as the scientific quality of the partners involved in the exercise. This strategy should include arrangements for institutional transformation according to a shared agenda that could include (a) developing shared research & innovation strategies and roadmaps to create directional and interdisciplinary critical mass, in order to more effectively create impact for society; (b) sharing capacity and resources, through collaborative settings preparing the network towards the establishment of a European Universities alliance or similar long-term network, (c) strengthening attractiveness of researchers' careers, towards a pipeline of talents crucial for an effective European Research Area, including reform in career assessment; (d) co-operation with surrounding ecosystem actors for the transmission of knowledge and talents, e.g. through creation or reinforcing of technology transfer offices and cooperation platforms; (e) transition to knowledge- and digitally-driven universities, conducting Open Science; (f) creating proximity to and engaging citizens for solving societal challenges; (g) supporting institutional change through inclusive gender equality plans. Where relevant, any links with sustainable development objectives are to be outlined.

The way forward with and within the different priority areas for transformation of universities remains the choice of the beneficiaries. For all areas listed above, where appropriate, legal, regulatory, and financial barriers hampering cooperation among HEI in research and innovation as well as recommendations on the way forward should be identified. More detailed information, including examples of activities that can be supported within these different priority areas can be found in the accompanying information document <sup>14</sup>, which is published together with this work programme.

The common strategy should include a comprehensive set of activities to be supported. These should include at least a number of the following: short term staff exchanges; expert visits and short-term on-site or virtual training; workshops; conference attendance; organisation of joint summer school type activities; dissemination and outreach activities; research management and administration; capacity building for research management and technology transfer; explorative research projects (led by widening partners) to develop new research strands etc.; capacity building for the application of open science practices.

Proposals should target the higher education sector; this may include any type of university, research organisations, academies of science, polytechnic universities, universities of applied science, and specialised public laboratories. HEI partners in surrounding ecosystems, such as businesses, societal actors or other non-academic entities are encouraged to be involved as partner organisations.

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<sup>14</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021/information\\_horizon-widera-2021-access-05-01\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021/information_horizon-widera-2021-access-05-01_en.pdf)

**Call - Support for R&I policy making in the Western Balkans**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-06***

**Conditions for the Call**

Indicative budget(s)<sup>15</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>16</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2021		
Opening: 29 Jun 2021 Deadline(s): 29 Sep 2021				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-06-01	CSA	5.00	4.00 to 5.00	1
Overall indicative budget		5.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General

<sup>15</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

	Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-06-01: Support for R&I policy making in the Western Balkans**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 4.00 and 5.00 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 5.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome:

The actions funded under this topic will coordinate national and regional R&I, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport initiatives by pooling resources and contributing to the alignment of national and regional research, innovation, education, cultural youth and sport policies and thus contributing to the objectives of the Widening programme.

Project results are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Support to the Western Balkans Steering Platforms for Research and Innovation, and Education and Training as valuable instruments of policy dialogue with the region (incl. support to the annual Ministerial meeting of the Western Balkans Platforms on Education and Training, Research and Innovation and Culture);
- Facilitation of the implementation of the Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport:
  - o Highlighting the strategic importance of the Western Balkans and facilitating actions aiming to support the region's EU integration process, covering Research, Innovation, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.
  - o Aiming to promote regional economic growth and prosperity through planned investments, to be directed towards game-changing innovations and actions that create a sustainable and human centric development and digital future. Support the ongoing process of reforming education, training and research systems, and the

development of the cultural and creative sectors with more and better opportunities for capacity building.

- o Contributing to the closer integration of the Western Balkan partners with the EU's priorities, most notably the Green Deal, the Digital transformation, including the enhancement of ICT and digital skills along the lines of the Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans and the renewed Digital Education Action Plan, the European Education Area and an Economy that works for and connects people and communities.
- Providing support to the accession process and facilitate the association of Western Balkan countries to relevant European funding programmes.
- Identification of common priorities agreed among the participating national and regional R&I, education and cultural programmes as well as activities in the field of youth and sport, taking into account international developments where relevant;
- Contribution to joint initiatives, resulting in the funding of cross-border innovation actions, design/implement a portfolio of complementary actions which would enable Western Balkans stakeholders and policy makers to better internationalise and integrate in EU actions and policy making;

Implementation of and financial support to other joint activities supporting R&I, regulatory or societal uptake of results.

Scope:

The COVID-19 pandemic has stressed the important role of research and innovation to tackle the immediate crises but also to ensure a sustainable and inclusive recovery while boosting the resilience of production sectors, the competitiveness of economies, and the transformation of the socio-economic systems across Europe. The Western Balkans are trying to catch up on Research, Development and Innovation (RDI). Closer links between research and innovation and institutional cooperation to produce high-quality knowledge, underpinning economic and societal solutions are paramount to help bridging the R&I gap between the EU Member States and (potential) Candidate Countries. Actions stemming from this Call will foster the capacity building in the Western Balkans to allow successful participation in the R&I process, improve the Technology Transfer Process, promote networking of and access to excellence, thus optimising the participation in and impact of Horizon Europe across the region. Activities from this Call will strengthen and foster the development of the human capital base in the region, they will promote the establishment of open, inclusive and responsible national research and innovation systems, support an institutional change through the development of inclusive gender equality plans in line with Horizon Europe and the ERA objectives, as well as support evidence based policy making.

The expected duration of the project is up to four years.



Underpinning the Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, this action will foster a comprehensive policy approach, while seeking synergies across the entire Horizon Europe and other EU funding programmes. An action funded under this call will support the coordination and synchronised interaction among a multitude of instruments and programmes targeting the Western Balkans region. This should not only facilitate an increased participation of Western Balkan entities in relevant European funding programmes but also create economies of scale, complementarity, synergies, and avoid overlapping of actions.

An action stemming from this topic will support a platform for the various services addressing education, culture, youth, sport, research and innovation in the Western Balkans in their programming and implementation. All these areas are key for finding new solutions to the challenges we are facing across South East Europe. The actions should also aim to support the implementation of people-to-people cooperation projects with and within the Western Balkans, supporting partnerships between higher education institutions as well as creative professionals and industries and European incubation networks for creativity-driven innovation.

This action aligns with ERA and Widening objectives in that it aims to strengthen links with EU partners and opens up to EU networks, contributes to improving research and innovation management capacities in the Western Balkans, and it supports national policy reforms through targeted actions. A key element in this is the support to the development and implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies and macro-regional strategies in cooperation with the JRC and the Policy Support Facility.

Initiatives in the fields of research, innovation, education, culture, youth and sport create new opportunities, reduce the skills mismatch, help to tackle climate change, support sustainable economic growth, the competitiveness of businesses and industries and the intercultural dialogue, enables digital transformation and provides better public services for all Europeans. The challenges of today require international efforts, addressing them jointly is in of broader and direct interest.

Proposals are invited to demonstrate engagement from relevant programmes and initiatives to pool resources and to ensure complementarity between activities and policies with those of the Framework Programme and relevant initiatives.

Proposals should seek parallel synergies with national (or regional) research programmes and initiatives as well, where appropriate, facilitate access to resources from national agencies, pertinent foundations, charities and transnational initiatives.

The proposal should also demonstrate potential impact on national, regional and transnational research and innovation.

Participation of key legal entities from associated third countries, particularly from the Western Balkans, is encouraged.

**Call - Hop On Facility**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-07***

**Conditions for the Call**

Indicative budget(s)<sup>17</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>18</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2022		
Opening: 27 Jan 2022 Deadline(s): 20 Apr 2022, 10 Nov 2022				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-07-01	RIA	40.00	0.20 to 0.50	80
Overall indicative budget		40.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General

<sup>17</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

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	Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-07-01: Hop On Facility**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 0.20 and 0.50 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 40.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Legal entities established in Widening countries may join already selected actions, subject to the agreement of the respective consortium and provided that legal entities from such countries are not yet participating in it.</p> <p>The proposal must be submitted by the co-ordinator of a consortium funded under Pillar 2 or a EIC Pathfinder call of Horizon Europe with a valid grant agreement that does not have any participant from a country eligible to host the co-ordinator under the Widening component (Widening country). The proposal must include the accession of one additional partner from a widening country.</p>
<i>Procedure</i>	<p>The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>The proposal will be evaluated by independent experts focussing on the added value of the new partner and the work-package or task assigned to this institution in the context of the ongoing project. The ongoing project as such is not subject of the evaluation.</p> <p>In case of proposals receiving equal score in the ranking procedure, a preference will be given to those proposals with a particular relevance to green or digital transitions of the economy.</p>
<i>Total indicative</i>	The indicative allocation of the budget to each call deadline is EUR 20.00

<i>budget</i>	million.
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Expected Outcome: The Hop On Facility is based on Article 20 (3) of the HE Common Understanding providing that the work programme may foresee the possibility for legal entities from low R&I performing countries to join already selected collaborative R&I actions, subject to the agreement of the respective consortium and provided that legal entities from such countries are not yet participating in it. The scheme further aims at achieving the Inclusiveness ambition of the future ERA policy by involving research institutions from widening countries under Horizon Europe Pillar 2 actions.

Main selection criteria are excellence and added value of the new partner performing a relevant additional task in the project. All consortium partners need to agree on the accession of the new partner whereas the R&I relevance and complementarity needs to be demonstrated. The accepted application will trigger a GA amendment with the service in charge of the related topic.

Project results are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- At system level, it mobilises excellence in the Widening countries, increases visibility of the participants from the Widening countries, improves knowledge circulation, and reduces lack of participation of the Widening countries in specific thematic domains.
- At organisation level, it opens up silos of established closed consortia, improves research excellence of the Widening country's institutions in specific fields, enlarges outreach of the participants' R&I actions and provides access to new talent pools.
- At the level of the beneficiary, new competencies and skills for working in transnational projects including research management and dissemination and exploitation are acquired.

Scope: The Hop On Facility integrates one additional participant from a Widening country to an ongoing project under Pillar 2 or the EIC pathfinder scheme while topping up a relevant task or work package and the cost incurred by the additional participant. This will happen on a voluntary basis without affecting the freedom of choice for the consortium and the principle of excellence. The Hop On Facility is open to all topics under Pillar 2 and the EIC pathfinder. Applications with activities that contribute to the policy objective of the transition towards a green and digital economy are especially encouraged.

The action will be part of an existing project with a valid Grant Agreement. Applications must demonstrate the R&I added value of the new partner and present a visible and distinct work package for the acceding partner. Proposal should include a detailed description of the profile of the new partner and its role in the existing project. The additional partner and task should be presented in a distinct font or colour in a document based on the Description of the Action (DOA) of the ongoing action. Selected consortia will be invited to submit an amendment request for accession of a new partner, modification of the description of the action and upgrade of the budget.

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The budget increase must be exclusively account at the benefit of the new partner with the exception of a coordination fee of up to 10% of the increased budget to be allocated to the coordinator of the consortium.

## **DESTINATION 2: ATTRACTING AND MOBILISING THE BEST TALENTS**

### Introduction

In line with the strategic priority of “Deepening the ERA” this part will support further progress on the free circulation of knowledge in an upgraded, efficient and effective R&I system. The destination will be pursued both at the level of individual researchers e.g. helping to develop the skills that researchers need for excellent science and, connecting all actors across Europe and at the level of institutions and smaller research teams around future ERA Chair holders.

ERA Chairs will support universities or research organisations from eligible countries to attract and maintain high-quality human resources under the direction of an outstanding researcher and research manager (the 'ERA Chair holder'), and to implement structural changes to achieve excellence on a sustainable basis.

The institutional dimension will be complemented by opportunities for brain circulation for research and innovation talents across the ERA and across sectors, aiming at reverting the brain drain from widening countries. It will focus support to early career and experienced talents to explore unknown personal territories for professional development and training, by being mobile in the European Research Area in other sectors and in less obvious knowledge hubs across Europe, notably in widening countries. It will put emphasis on intersectoral mobility for early career researchers and innovators and foster a better exploitation of existing (and possibly jointly managed) research infrastructures in the targeted countries through mobility of researchers and innovators. Reinforcing and strengthening the interaction between education and research, such as through the research and innovation dimension of European Universities, training and mobility. Furthermore, specific attention will be paid to promoting gender balance among the supported talents.

Expected impact:

Proposals for topics under this Destination should set out a credible pathway to contributing to the following expected impact:

- Effective institutional reforms in research institutions in widening countries
- Better use of existing research infrastructures
- Excellent talents attracted in institutions and research infrastructures
- Reverted brain drain
- Improved linkages and increased mobility between academic and business, notably by overcoming sectoral barriers
- Free circulation of knowledge and expertise in line with ERA priorities

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- Improved gender balance and equal opportunities

The following call(s) in this work programme contribute to this destination:

Call	Budgets (EUR million)	Deadline(s)
	2022	
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-01	80.00	15 Mar 2022
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-02	8.00	12 Oct 2021
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-03	24.00	15 Nov 2022
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-04	8.00	14 Sep 2022
Overall indicative budget	120.00	

**Call - ERA Chairs**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-01***

**Conditions for the Call**

Indicative budget(s)<sup>19</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>20</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2022		
Opening: 29 Jun 2021 Deadline(s): 15 Mar 2022				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-01-01	CSA	80.00	1.50 to 2.50	32
Overall indicative budget		80.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.

<sup>19</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.



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<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-01-01: ERA Chairs**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 1.50 and 2.50 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 80.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  In order to achieve the expected outcomes, participation as coordinators to the call is limited to legal entities established in Widening countries, as defined in the Horizon Europe regulation.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:  The following rules for dealing with ex-aequo applications apply: in the first place, ex aequo proposals will be prioritised according to geographical diversity criteria, as indicated in Point 4) of General Annexes Part F (Procedure/Evaluation procedure and ranking). The method described in 1), 2), 3) and 5) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranking proposals in the group. This rule establishing the priority order serves to better spread the impact of the action and to strengthen the efficiency of the ‘Widening participation and spreading excellence’ programme.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:  The composition, levels of remuneration and timeline of implementation of the ERA Chair holder research team should be indicated and the appointment of team members must follow an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment process with no more than 50% of the team

	appointees having previous contractual links with the coordinator.
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Expected Outcome: Progress towards more and better links between research and innovation actors across European Research Area and beyond is a requirement if Europe as a whole is to capitalise on excellence from across the continent. To foster brain circulation for researchers and innovators the intervention point of the ERA Chairs actions is attracting in a sustainable manner outstanding scientists and innovators to universities or research organisations in catching up countries and regions. This measure of “brain gain” and creation of pockets of excellence will impact on the culture and performance of host institutions.

The leadership of the ERA Chair holder and the creation of a permanent and excellent research group in the chosen scientific field will ensure excellence, visibility and better integration in the European Research Area, as well as fostering competitiveness in research funding and promoting institutional reforms aligned with ERA priorities.

Projects are expected to contribute to some of the following outcomes:

At system level:

- Increase in number of R&I talents moving to host organisations in Widening countries
- Increase in international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility of researchers and innovators
- Encouraging institutional reforms in research institutions and in the national R&I system in widening countries
- Strengthening of Widening countries’ human capital base in R&I with more entrepreneurial and better trained researchers and innovators
- Better communication of R&I results to society
- Better quality and capacity of research and innovation contributing to Europe's competitiveness and growth
- Improved excellence capacity and resources in Widening countries and close the still apparent research and innovation gap within Europe

At organisation level:

- Research excellence of the institution in the specific fields covered by the ERA Chair holder.
- Increased attractiveness of the institution for internationally excellent and mobile researchers.
- Creation of a permanent and excellent research group in the chosen scientific field with a spill-over effect on the institution;

- Improved capability to succeed in competitive research funding in the EU and globally, at least, in the fields of choice;
- Greater contribution to the knowledge-based economy and society

Scope: Research organisations located in widening countries interested in establishing an ERA Chair shall submit a proposal with the prospective ERA Chair holder who should be an outstanding researcher and/or innovator in the chosen scientific domain. The scientific field can be any domain of research and innovation addressed under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union<sup>21</sup>.

The institution in the Widening country shall be the coordinator and can opt between a joint application with the legal entity currently employing the future ERA Chair or submitting a proposal as a single applicant. For the former, partner institutions can be located in any country (including countries outside the EU) except the country of the coordinator and ERA Chair holders can be citizens of any country in the world.

Proposals should include a CV in Europass form<sup>22</sup> of the future ERA Chair holder and detail the scientific and technical support he/she will provide to the coordinator and how the proposed activities will upgrade from the current situation. If there is a partner institution proposals should outline any additional support to be provided by it to the coordinator. Proposals should also describe any relevant investments of the coordinator in research projects, facilities and infrastructures and how those will be achieved and/or a better use of the installed research capacity (in particular of EU co-funded research infrastructures & facilities). Existing or foreseen arrangements for compliance with ERA priorities<sup>23</sup> including the European Charter for Researchers & Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers<sup>24</sup> are to be outlined in the proposal.

ERA Chair holders should be excellent researchers and/or innovators in the chosen field of research<sup>25</sup>. They should establish a research team fully integrated in the coordinator's institution to significantly improve its research performance in the scientific domain of choice and to be more successful in obtaining competitive funding. The selection of personnel to the research team is to be conducted by an international recruitment panel led by the ERA Chair and outlined in proposals. The ERA Chair holder should also have a position within the organisation/university, allowing her/him to make appropriate resource allocation decisions, supervise team members and freely apply for research funding. When this is compatible with the nature of the coordinator, he/she is expected to take on some teaching duties.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=en>

<sup>22</sup> <https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv>

<sup>23</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2012:0392:FIN>

<sup>24</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reco/2005/251/oj>

<sup>25</sup> Corresponding to profiles R3 or R4 of researchers careers as set out in the “European Framework for Research Careers” provided at [https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy\\_library/towards\\_a\\_european\\_framework\\_for\\_research\\_careers\\_final.pdf](https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf)

To allow for the determination of the commitment of the future ERA Chair holder and of the coordinator institution, proposals shall include: 1) a letter signed by the prospective ERA Chair holder expressing his/her commitment to the proposal and willingness to take on the underlying tasks and obligations; 2) a letter from the head of the coordinator institution committing to the proposal and stating that the ERA Chair holder is to receive adequate support to take on her/his tasks and duties including, for example, access to research facilities, supervision of researchers, teaching duties (if any) and capacity to apply freely to national and international funding.

The ERA Chair holders might move on a temporary or permanent basis to the coordinator's premises. To this end, secondments or any other legal arrangements (e.g., leave without pay, sabbatical licences) are possible including part-time work and multiple stays. All contractual arrangements and the timeline of ERA Chairs stays at the coordinator should be indicated in the proposal as well as the salary, travel and daily allowances and/or other perks to be offered. If, at any stage, the preferred option is an employment contract, the future contractual arrangements with the coordinator should be detailed.

To ensure the sustainability of the action, the ERA Chair research team should have conditions to thrive after the end of the Horizon Europe funding. This should be clearly demonstrated in the proposal and include the appointment of the leader of the newly created research group on a permanent basis within the coordinator organisation (to which the ERA Chair holder might apply) during the initial 3 years of the duration of the grant. This is to be conducted through an open recruitment procedure to be monitored by the European Commission.

Grants have an expected duration of up to 5 years and cover expenses related to the ERA Chair holder and a number of team members (e.g. their salaries, recruitment costs<sup>26</sup>, administrative costs, travel and subsistence costs) and research costs up to 10% of the EU contribution. Costs to be claimed by a partner institution should be mainly linked to personnel seconded to the coordinator. The grant should also provide a contribution towards measures aimed at facilitating structural changes in the institution (e.g. costs for trainings, meetings, publications and managing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)).

Specific attention should be paid to gender equality objectives, in line with the organisations' commitments through their adopted gender equality plans, and in line with ERA objectives, as far as appropriate.

### **Call - Fostering balanced brain circulation (BBC) - ERA Fellowships**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-02***

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<sup>26</sup> That can be considered under the category of "other direct costs"

## Conditions for the Call

### Indicative budget(s)<sup>27</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million)	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2022		
Opening: 29 Jun 2021 Deadline(s): 12 Oct 2021				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-02-01	TMA Postdoctoral Fellowships - European Fellowships	8.00		50
Overall indicative budget		8.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

<sup>27</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

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<i>Agreements</i>	
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Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-02-01: Fostering balanced brain circulation – ERA Fellowships**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 8.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	TMA Postdoctoral Fellowships - European Fellowships
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A. The following exceptions apply:  See these exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  See these exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part. These training and mobility actions will be mono-beneficiary grants. The legal entity acting as a coordinator (host organisation) must be established in a widening country.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D. The following exceptions apply:  For application of the general award criteria, including weighting and thresholds, see exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:  See exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:  See exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.
<i>Total indicative</i>	The expected EU contribution depends on the number of person-

<i>budget</i>	months requested. For the applicable unit contributions, see specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.
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Expected Outcome: This action builds on the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021 action (HORIZON-MSCA-PF-2021). The target group are host organisations located in Widening Countries.

Project results are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

For supported ERA Fellows:

- Increased set of research and transferable skills and competences, leading to improved employability and career prospects of fellows within academia and beyond;
- New mind-sets and approaches to R&I work forged through interdisciplinary, inter-sectoral and international experience;
- Enhanced networking and communication capacities with scientific peers, as well as with the general public, that will increase and broaden the research and innovation impact;

For participating organisations in the Widening Countries:

- Increased alignment of working conditions for researchers in accordance with the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers;
- Enhanced quality and sustainability of research training and supervision;
- Increased global attractiveness, visibility and reputation of the participating organisation(s);
- Stronger R&I capacity and output among participating organisations; better transfer of knowledge;
- Regular feedback of research results into teaching and education at participating organisations.

For Widening countries:

- Increased attractiveness for researchers to entities in widening countries, by providing competitive grants and spreading attractive working and employment practices;
- More postdoctoral researchers attracted to widening countries.

Scope: Fellowships should be provided to excellent researchers<sup>28</sup>, undertaking cross-border mobility either to or between EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries. Applications are expected to be made jointly by the researcher together with a beneficiary in the academic or non-academic sector located in a Widening Country.

ERA Fellowships should take place in a Widening Country. Fellowships are open to researchers of any nationality who wish to engage in R&I projects by either coming to Europe from any country in the world or moving within Europe to a Widening Country.

In order to apply for the ERA Fellowships call, applicants need to submit their proposal to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021<sup>29</sup>. To be eligible to this call the host organisation must be located in an eligible widening country. The application to the (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021 will be automatically resubmitted to this call in case the proposal fails to reach an adequate place in the ranking to be funded. This simplified submission procedure to the ERA Fellowships call presents applicants moving to Widening countries with an additional funding opportunity but there is the possibility to opt out during the application stage.

The proposals submitted under the ERA Fellowships must fulfil all the admissibility and eligibility conditions of the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021 and pass all the thresholds for that call.

ERA Fellowships will be implemented applying the award criteria, scoring and threshold for Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions. The ranking order for the ERA Fellowships call will follow the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021 call scores and evaluation procedure and proposals will also retain the scores and comments included in the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) of this call. The MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021 model grant agreement will be used to the ERA Fellowships.

### *Secondments*

Researchers receiving an ERA Fellowship may opt to include a secondment phase, within the overall duration of their fellowship in any country worldwide. The secondment phase can be a single period or be divided into shorter mobility periods. Secondments cannot exceed one third of the standard fellowship duration and should be in line with the project objectives, adding significant value and impact to the fellowship.

### *Placements in the non-academic sector*

ERA Fellowships can provide an additional period of up to six months to support researchers seeking a placement at the end of the project to work on R&I projects in an organisation from the non-academic sector established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country. While this possibility is also available to fellows recruited in the non-academic

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<sup>28</sup> The part of the MSCA Work Programme referring to synergies with the Euratom Research and Training Programme 2021-2025 does not apply to the ERA Fellowships.

<sup>29</sup> specifically to Topic HORIZON-MSCA-2021-PF-01-01, TMA Postdoctoral Fellowships - European Fellowships



sector, such a placement should be implemented at a different non-academic host organisation established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country. The request for such a placement should be an integral part of the proposal, explaining the added-value for the project and for the career development of the researcher, and will be subject to evaluation. It must be substantiated by a Letter of Commitment from the European non-academic organisation hosting the secondment<sup>30</sup>. This incentive aims at promoting career moves between sectors and organisations and thereby stimulate innovation and knowledge transfer while expanding career opportunities for researchers.

### *Training activities*

The training activities implemented under the ERA Fellowships should include training for key transferable skills<sup>31</sup>, foster innovation and entrepreneurship, (e.g. commercialisation of results, Intellectual Property Rights, communication, public engagement and citizen science) and promote Open Science practices (open access to publications and to research data, FAIR data management, etc.).

### *Career Development Plan*

In order to equip ERA Fellows with skills that enhance and expand their career opportunities inside and outside academia, a Career Development Plan should be established jointly by the supervisor(s) and the researcher. In addition to research objectives, this plan should comprise the researcher's training and career needs, including training on transferable skills, teaching, planning for publications and participation in conferences and events aiming at opening science and research to citizens. The Plan has to be submitted as a project deliverable at the beginning of the action and can be updated when needed.

## **Call - Fostering balanced brain circulation (BBC) - ERA Talents**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-03***

### **Conditions for the Call**

#### Indicative budget(s)<sup>32</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project	Number of projects

<sup>30</sup> In the grant agreement, the non-academic host organisations must participate as associated partners.

<sup>31</sup> As an illustration, Eurodoc published a list of such transferable skills at: <http://eurodoc.net/skills-report-2018.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.

The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.

All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.

The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

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		2022	(EUR million) <sup>33</sup>	expected to be funded
Opening: 29 Jun 2022 Deadline(s): 15 Nov 2022				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-03-01	CSA	24.00	1.00 to 3.00	12
Overall indicative budget		24.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-03-01: Fostering balanced brain circulation – ERA Talents**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 1.00 and 3.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and

<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

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	selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 24.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Other conditions</i>	<p><b>Applicable contribution</b></p> <p>The grant covers expenses related to the ERA Talents participating organisations and individual talents hosted/seconded (administrative costs, training costs, travel and subsistence costs and salaries for seconded staff, and costs associated with dissemination &amp; communication and transfer of knowledge).</p>
<i>Eligibility and admissibility conditions</i>	<p><b>Participating organisations</b></p> <p>Applications must be submitted by a consortium including at least three independent legal entities in three different EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries, at least two of which established in a different Widening Country. Participation as coordinators to the call is limited to legal entities established in Widening countries, as defined in the Horizon Europe regulation.</p> <p>Participating organisations must include partners from both academic and non-academic sectors <sup>34</sup>, and may include umbrella organisations or national/regional associations thereof.</p> <p><b>Secondments</b></p> <p>Secondments should be between different sectors (from academic to non-academic or vice versa) and they should all include a widening dimension. Secondments beyond the project duration cannot be funded. Secondments can only take place between legal entities independent from each other.</p> <p>Secondments must last between 3 and 24 months for the same staff member (independently of the number of organisations the staff is seconded to). The secondment of a staff member may be split into several stays with one or several beneficiaries.</p>

<sup>34</sup> *'Academic sector'* means public or private higher education establishments awarding academic degrees, public or private non-profit research organisations for whom one of the main objectives is to pursue research or technological development, and International European Research Organisations (IERO).  
*'Non-academic sector'* means any socio-economic actor not included in the academic sector and fulfilling the requirements of the Horizon Europe Rules for Participation. This includes all fields of future workplaces of researchers and research and innovation talents, from industry to business, independent research infrastructures (e.g. ERICs), government, civil society organisations, cultural institutions, hospitals, etc.

Expected Outcome: The ERA Talents action aims to boost interoperability of careers and employability of research and innovation talents across sectors, with a centre of gravity in widening countries. Projects are expected to contribute to several of the following outcomes:

- Strengthened human capital base in R&I of Widening countries, with more entrepreneurial and better-trained researchers, innovators and other R&I talents;
- A more balanced talent circulation, both geographical and cross-sectoral;
- Boosted R&I capacity and R&I support capacity, as well as contribution to increased excellence of the research-performing organisation in widening countries;
- A more structured and impactful collaboration between academia and businesses;
- Increased set of research, entrepreneurial and other transferable skills and competences;
- Improved employability and sustainable career prospects of diverse talents within academia, industry and beyond.

Scope: Cross-sectoral talent circulation and academia-business collaboration for knowledge transfer is requiring systematising and structuring efforts. Through ERA4You, as one of the ERA Policy Actions <sup>35</sup>, the European Commission aims to support and incentivise such transformations, towards a more balanced circulation of talents, both trans-nationally and across sectors. Within this scope, ERA Talents aims to support training and mobility of researchers, innovators, and other research and innovation talents across sectors with a particular focus on widening countries. The grant covers expenses related to the ERA Talents participating organisations and individual talents hosted/seconded (administrative costs, training costs, travel and subsistence costs and salaries for seconded staff, and costs associated with dissemination & communication and transfer of knowledge).

*Experimentation*. Complementary to ERA Chairs, Excellence Hubs, ERA Fellowships and MSCA Staff Exchanges, the ERA Talents scheme promotes innovative inter-sectoral collaboration in research and innovation through cross-sectoral exchange of staff, with a focus on widening countries. This call particularly encourages experimentation by diverse and heterogeneous consortia in order to develop best practices for intersectoral talent circulation at the benefit of widening countries. Grants awarded under this topic will be invited to collaborate with each other and participate in mutual learning exercises.

*Intersectoral mobility*. Actions are invited to develop activities in view of realising *one or more* of the following European Commission's objectives regarding intersectoral mobility. The European Commission aims at selecting a portfolio of complementary actions where possible.

- *Strengthening academia/non-academia cooperation*, and reinforcing innovation ecosystems, focussing on establishment of public-private links, private sector

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<sup>35</sup> Council recommendation on a Pact for research and innovation in Europe and Council conclusions on future governance of ERA, including [ERA Policy Agenda](#)

involvement booster, activities for the transfer of researcher know-how to businesses, as well as activities that foster closer involvement of business sector staff in training of academic staff.

- *Improving training and lifelong learning* for researchers, innovators, and other research and innovation talents, characterised by opportunities for upskilling and interdisciplinary skill development. In particular, (i) training for specific in-demand skills by industry or other non-academic sectors in specific thematic areas, such as Missions and Partnerships, greening of society, to improve employability and interoperability, and (ii) training to build R&I support capacity ('other research and innovation talents'), such as knowledge brokers, data stewards, research managers, research infrastructure operators, knowledge and technology transfer officers, etc.
- *Boosting researcher entrepreneurship*, focused on development of entrepreneurial skills (e.g. business economics, business creation, knowledge transfer, intellectual property rights and other relevant legal framework) for researchers and commercialisation or other valorisation training and support for researchers, through preparatory activities for entrepreneurship and support for researcher start-up creation.

*Participating organisations.* ERA Talents actions must involve organisations from the academic and non-academic sectors. The consortium partners contribute directly to the implementation of a joint training and mobility methodology by seconding and/or hosting eligible staff members. The collaborative approach of ERA Talents should exploit complementary competences of the participating organisations and create synergies between them. The participation of Ukrainian researchers in these activities is especially encouraged.

*Seconded staff.* Support is provided for inter-sectoral mobility of R&I staff leading to knowledge transfer and increased employability between participating organisations. Costs to be claimed by beneficiaries should be mainly linked to seconded personnel in the form of salaries, training, travel, and subsistence packages. The joint training and mobility methodology presented by the applicant consortium should include an approach *to identify a diverse audience of research and innovation talents* engaging in the action, outlined in the application. The ERA talent should have a secondment term within one (or more) of the participating organisations. Supported staff members must be actively engaged in or linked to R&I activities or R&I support activities for at least 6 months (full-time equivalent) at the sending institution before the first period of secondment.

Proposers are requested to provide an estimate of the number of 'ERA talents' the action is going to provide with a mobility opportunity. Secondments are open to researchers, innovators, and other research and innovation talents – such as administrative, managerial and technical staff supporting R&I activities in their organisations – from any career stage, excluding though doctoral candidates (PhD students). For innovators and other R&I talents, emphasis needs to be put on staff at an early career stage. The consortium needs to demonstrate clear benefit of the proposed secondment methodology for widening countries,

including the perspective to allocate at least 70% of the budget for secondments for the benefit of widening countries.

*Return and reintegration.* A mandatory return phase for every cross-border secondment from a widening country has to be included in the secondment methodology, equal to the duration of the secondment, but not more than 12 months. Support, excluding salaries, for such return phase on the grant is allowed for up to 12 months after the first secondment, within the duration of the grant. A return phase is not mandatory for mobility within the same country or secondment from a non-widening to a widening country.

*Strengthening careers and collaboration.* For participating staff members, the project should offer new skills acquisition and career development perspectives. Participating organisations must ensure that the seconded staff (ERA talents) are adequately mentored. Preference will be given to actions that propose secondment mechanisms offering improved and more sustainable career prospects to the ERA talents (e.g. with follow-up position at the sending organisation after the secondment duration), thus maximising the impact of the action for knowledge sharing and long-term collaboration. Specific attention should be paid to gender equality objectives, in line with the organisations' commitments through their adopted gender equality plans, and in line with ERA objectives, as far as appropriate.

Exchanges should mainly occur between academic and non-academic sector entities (or vice-versa) from different EU Member States and Horizon Europe Associated Countries. Same-country exchanges are also possible under the condition that they serve the specific purpose of maintaining or reinforcing regional innovation ecosystems.

Grants have an expected duration of up to 4 years.

**Call - Fostering balanced brain circulation – ERA Fellowships**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-04***

**Conditions for the Call**

Indicative budget(s)<sup>36</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million)	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2022		

<sup>36</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

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Opening: 12 May 2022 Deadline(s): 14 Sep 2022				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-04-01	TMA Postdoctoral Fellowships - European Fellowships	8.00		50
Overall indicative budget		8.00		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-04-01: Fostering balanced brain circulation – ERA Fellowships**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 8.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	TMA Postdoctoral Fellowships - European Fellowships
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A. The following exceptions apply:  See these exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme

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	part.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply: See these exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part. These training and mobility actions will be mono-beneficiary grants. The legal entity acting as a coordinator (host organisation) must be established in a widening country.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D. The following exceptions apply: For application of the general award criteria, including weighting and thresholds, see exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply: See exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: See exceptions and specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.
<i>Total indicative budget</i>	The expected EU contribution depends on the number of person-months requested. For the applicable unit contributions, see specific conditions for the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships at the end of the MSCA Work Programme part.

Expected Outcome: This action will build on the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 action (HORIZON-MSCA-PF-2022). The target group are host organisations located in Widening Countries.

Project results are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

For supported ERA Fellows:

- Increased set of research and transferable skills and competences, leading to improved employability and career prospects of fellows within academia and beyond;
- New mind-sets and approaches to R&I work forged through interdisciplinary, inter-sectoral and international experience;



- Enhanced networking and communication capacities with scientific peers, as well as with the general public, that will increase and broaden the research and innovation impact;

For participating organisations in the Widening Countries:

- Increased alignment of working conditions for researchers in accordance with the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers;
- Enhanced quality and sustainability of research training and supervision;
- Increased global attractiveness, visibility and reputation of the participating organisation(s);
- Stronger R&I capacity and output among participating organisations; better transfer of knowledge;
- Regular feedback of research results into teaching and education at participating organisations.

For Widening countries:

- Increased attractiveness for researchers to entities in widening countries, by providing competitive grants and spreading attractive working and employment practices;
- More postdoctoral researchers attracted to widening countries.

Scope: Fellowships should be provided to excellent researchers<sup>37</sup>, undertaking cross-border mobility either to or between EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries. Applications are expected to be made jointly by the researcher together with a beneficiary in the academic or non-academic sector located in a Widening Country.

ERA Fellowships should take place in a Widening Country. Fellowships are open to researchers of any nationality who wish to engage in R&I projects by either coming to Europe from any country in the world or moving within Europe to a Widening Country.

In order to apply for the ERA Fellowships call, applicants need to submit their proposal to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022. To be eligible to this call the host organisation must be located in an eligible widening country. The application to the (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 will be automatically resubmitted to this call in case the proposal fails to reach an adequate place in the ranking to be funded. This simplified submission procedure to the ERA Fellowships call presents applicants moving to Widening countries with an additional funding opportunity but there is the possibility to opt out during the application stage.

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<sup>37</sup> The part of the MSCA Work Programme referring to synergies with the Euratom Research and Training Programme 2021-2025 does not apply to the ERA Fellowships.

The proposals submitted under the ERA Fellowships must fulfil all the admissibility and eligibility conditions of the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 and pass all the thresholds for that call.

ERA Fellowships will be implemented applying the award criteria, scoring and threshold for Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions. The ranking order for the ERA Fellowships call will follow the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 call scores and evaluation procedure and proposals will also retain the scores and comments included in the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) of this call. The MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 model grant agreement will be used to the ERA Fellowships.

### *Secondments*

Researchers receiving an ERA Fellowship may opt to include a secondment phase, within the overall duration of their fellowship in any country worldwide. The secondment phase can be a single period or be divided into shorter mobility periods. Secondments cannot exceed one third of the standard fellowship duration and should be in line with the project objectives, adding significant value and impact to the fellowship.

### *Placements in the non-academic sector*

ERA Fellowships can provide an additional period of up to six months to support researchers seeking a placement at the end of the project to work on R&I projects in an organisation from the non-academic sector established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country. While this possibility is also available to fellows recruited in the non-academic sector, such a placement should be implemented at a different non-academic host organisation established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe Associated Country. The request for such a placement should be an integral part of the proposal, explaining the added-value for the project and for the career development of the researcher, and will be subject to evaluation. It must be substantiated by a Letter of Commitment from the European non-academic organisation hosting the secondment<sup>38</sup>. This incentive aims at promoting career moves between sectors and organisations and thereby stimulate innovation and knowledge transfer while expanding career opportunities for researchers.

### *Training activities*

The training activities implemented under the ERA Fellowships should include training for key transferable skills<sup>39</sup>, foster innovation and entrepreneurship, (e.g. commercialisation of results, Intellectual Property Rights, communication, public engagement and citizen science) and promote Open Science practices (open access to publications and to research data, FAIR data management, etc.).

### *Career Development Plan*

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<sup>38</sup> In the grant agreement, the non-academic host organisations must participate as associated partners.

<sup>39</sup> As an illustration, Eurodoc published a list of such transferable skills at: <http://eurodoc.net/skills-report-2018.pdf>

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In order to equip ERA Fellows with skills that enhance and expand their career opportunities inside and outside academia, a Career Development Plan should be established jointly by the supervisor(s) and the researcher. In addition to research objectives, this plan should comprise the researcher's training and career needs, including training on transferable skills, teaching, planning for publications and participation in conferences and events aiming at opening science and research to citizens. The Plan has to be submitted as a project deliverable at the beginning of the action and can be updated when needed.

## **DESTINATION 3: REFORMING AND ENHANCING THE EU RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SYSTEM**

### **Introduction**

Horizon Europe has a new level of ambition – to maximise the impact of EU research and innovation funding for European science, economy and the wider society. It marks a paradigm change in the design of the EU R&I Framework Programmes (FP) from an activity-driven to an impact-driven programme. Coupled to this ambition is the relaunching of the European Research Area (ERA) as described in the recently published Commission Communication entitled *A new ERA for Research and Innovation* (COM/2020/628 final of 30.09.2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the importance of R&I cooperation to deliver solutions to society's most demanding needs. Delivering Europe's recovery is a priority as are the green and digital twin transitions. To match these challenges, a new level of ambition that links better R&I with the economy, as well as with education and training, is necessary to put the EU's scientific knowledge to work.

The new ERA calls for deepening existing priorities and initiatives through new and stronger approaches. The green and digital transitions and the recovery call for cooperation between the Commission and the Member States. They require the setting of new priorities, launching ambitious joint initiatives and developing common approaches between policies.

To address these requirements, Destination 3 of Annex 11 of the Horizon Europe Work Programme, will support efforts to reform and enhance the EU R&I system. Destination 3 is built around four strands corresponding to the four objectives set out in the ERA Communication: 1. Prioritise investments and reforms; 2. Improve access to excellence; 3. Translate R&I results into the economy and 4. Deepen the ERA. The principle of excellence, meaning that the best researchers with the best ideas that respond best to the societal challenges obtain funding, remains the cornerstone for all investments under the ERA.

*Strand 1* recognises the importance of prioritising investments and reforms to accelerate the green and digital transformation and to increase competitiveness as well as the speed and depth of the recovery. It offers support for policy makers and addresses the need for better analysis and evidence, including simplifying and facilitating the inter-play between national and European R&I systems.

*Strand 2* addresses the need to improve access to excellence and to increase the performance of R&I systems, building on dedicated Horizon Europe measures as well as complementarities with smart specialisation strategies under the Cohesion Policy.

*Strand 3* addresses the importance of translating R&I results into the economy. R&I policies should aim to boost the resilience and competitiveness of our economies and societies.

*Strand 4* addresses the challenge of deepening the ERA and includes Open Science, Higher Education and Researchers, Citizen Science, Science Education, Gender and Ethics. It aims at

underpinning a new ERA benefiting from knowledge creation, circulation and use. This empowers higher education institutions and research organisations to embrace a transformative process; where a highly skilled workforce circulate freely; where research outputs are shared; where gender equality is assured; where the outcomes of R&I are understood, trusted and increasingly used, by educated informed scientists and citizens to the benefit of society.

Expected impact:

Proposals for topics under this Destination should set out a credible pathway to contributing to the following expected impacts:

- Reform and Enhance the EU R&I system
- Prioritisation of investments and reforms, realisation of the recovery and the twin transitions
- Improved access to excellence
- Greater quality of the scientific production and stronger translation of R&I results into the economy
- Deepen the ERA
- Coordinated national and regional R&I programmes by pooling national resources and contributing to the alignment of national research and innovation policies
- Improved knowledge for policy making about the networking patterns of research support staff and research management
- Synergies between research & innovation and higher education policies and programmes
- Modernised higher education sector, benefitting from targeted transformations in higher education, research, and innovation
- Increased number of interconnected knowledge ecosystems, strong in knowledge creation, circulation and use
- Researchers benefit from attractive careers
- Inclusive gender equality is promoted in the European research and innovation system
- A more open and inclusive research and innovation system
- Increased capacity in the EU R&I system to conduct open science and to set it as a *modus operandi* of modern science
- Increased engagement of citizens with research and innovation
- Increased alignment of strategic research with society needs, expectations and values

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- Identified synergies between second and third level education, and between education and business;
- Increased trust in science and R&I outcomes, and greater two-way communication between science and society
- Knowledge and a highly skilled workforce circulate freely
- Improved capacities within the EU R&I system to conduct open science
- A more open and inclusive research and innovation system

The following call(s) in this work programme contribute to this destination:

Call	Budgets (EUR million)		Deadline(s)
	2021	2022	
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01	61.50		23 Sep 2021
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01		59.00	20 Apr 2022
Overall indicative budget	61.50	59.00	

**Call - European Research Area**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01***

**Conditions for the Call**

Indicative budget(s)<sup>40</sup>

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>41</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2021		
Opening: 22 Jun 2021 Deadline(s): 23 Sep 2021				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-09	CSA	10.50	2.00 to 3.00	4
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-20	CSA	3.00	Around 1.50	2
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-30	RIA	1.00	Around 1.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-32	CSA	2.00	Around 2.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-33	CSA	1.00	Around 1.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-40	RIA	2.00	Around 2.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-41	CSA	2.00	Around 1.00	2
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-43	CSA	3.00	Around 3.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-44	RIA	2.00	Around 2.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-45	CSA	2.00	Around 2.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-50	RIA	2.00	Around 1.00	2
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-60	CSA	4.00	Around 4.00	1

<sup>40</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.  
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.  
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

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HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-61	CSA	5.00	Around 5.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-70	CSA	5.00	1.50 to 1.75	3
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-80	RIA	5.00	Around 5.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-81	CSA	3.00	Around 3.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-90	CSA	4.50	Around 4.50	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-91	CSA	4.50	Around 4.50	1
Overall indicative budget		61.50		

<b>General conditions relating to this call</b>	
<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

### **PRIORITIZING INVESTMENT AND REFORM**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-09: Support for policy makers – Programme level collaboration between national R&I programmes**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 2.00 and 3.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed



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<i>project</i>	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 10.50 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

The actions funded under this topic will coordinate national and regional R&I programmes by pooling national resources and contributing to the alignment of national research and innovation policies. The expected outcomes:

- Identification of common research and innovation priorities agreed among the participating national and regional R&I programmes, taking into account international developments where relevant;
- Implementation of multiannual joint calls, resulting in the funding of transnational collaborative R&I projects;
- Implementation of other joint activities supporting the market, regulatory or societal uptake of results;
- Contribution to participating states meeting Global Challenges, including relevant contribution to the SDGs.

Scope: Since the introduction of the European Research Area (ERA) and starting of FP6, Programme level collaboration among Member States and their research and innovation programmes has become a cornerstone of the ERA, with annual investment from Member States of more than EUR 800 million per year. More than 250 networks among research funders have been created over time, serving different research needs but always coordinating public research investments across borders and allowing researchers to apply for calls for transnational research projects funded by the participating states.

The new policy approach to European Partnerships limits co-funding to Member State collaboration to Union and Horizon Europe priorities. Therefore, the ERA part of the Horizon Europe provides the possibility for Member States, Associated Countries and civil society organisations such as foundations, to maintain existing and establish new collaborations on priorities of their choice.

The successful proposal should align national and regional research funding programmes (managed by national or regional programme owners / managers) on agreed common

priorities and implement joint calls for transnational R&I projects as well as other joint calls. Applicants have to demonstrate clear commitments from participating programmes to pool resources and ensure complementarity between activities and policies with those of the Framework Programme and relevant European Partnership Initiatives.

Proposals should pool the necessary resources from the participating national (or regional) research programmes as well as, where appropriate, leverage resources from pertinent foundations, charities and transnational initiatives, with a view to implementing calls for proposals resulting in grants to third parties without EU co-funding in this area.

The proposal should also demonstrate potential impact at national, regional and transnational level research and innovation. The proposal should demonstrate that activities exclude overlaps with on-going actions co-funded by the EU under Horizon 2020 or Horizon Europe.

Participation of legal entities from third countries and/or regions including those not automatically eligible for funding is encouraged.

The actions should envisage a duration which is appropriate to the ambition and complexity of the proposed topic.

### **IMPROVING ACCESS TO EXCELLENCE**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

#### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-20: Towards a Europe-wide training and networking scheme for research managers**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 1.50 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Improved knowledge for policy making about the training and networking patterns of research support staff and research management
- Measures to increase awareness amongst research management staff about existing training, networking and mobility opportunities at EU, national, and regional levels
- Ultimately, increased capacity and compatibility of cooperation and funding systems throughout the ERA for research management, and support to scientists.

- Improved awareness of the EU policy drivers and the EU research peculiarity in the Higher Education Institutions and Research organisations
- Preparation of the establishment of (a) central hub(s) to provide the EU research system with the most appropriate “fit for purpose” skills in EU research management, with active involvement of entities located in widening countries
- Provide recommendations aiming at facilitating a clear career path for research managers at national and EU levels, enhancing their role towards the achievement of the new ERA objectives, including those addressed in the related Council Conclusions on the New European Research Area (13567/20).

Scope: Research management can take many shapes: research policy advisers, research managers, financial support staff, data stewards, research infrastructure operators, knowledge transfer officers, business developers, knowledge brokers, innovation managers, etc. Entities and regions who are proven strong and excellent hubs in knowledge creation and innovation usually rely on a strong population of research managers.

This topic aims at improving training and skills development of research management staff, to develop better research and innovation management capacity and guidance for researchers across the entire ERA, as well as pave the way towards institutional acknowledgement of the research management profession.

Proposals are expected to map and analyse the EU landscape of research management and the financial framework to support it. They should address a wide scope of activities, such as trainings, study visits, staff exchange, internships, exchange of good practices, development of guidelines for new research managers and policy recommendations on how to deliver on research management under the new ERA.

It could include piloting a European network for research managers, including research infrastructures managers, through the integration of existing capabilities of Research Organisations, Higher Education Institutions and institutes, networks or umbrella organisations in research management. Projects are expected to generate a wide outreach to the European community of research managers, active across the ERA.

Proposals should explore the possibility to create new training paths dedicated to research support/management staff, or to optimise integration of existing recognised institutional training and certification programmes for research managers. Both these solutions should aim also at developing recommendations to strengthen existing schemes at EU level.

## **TRANSLATING R&I RESULTS INTO THE ECONOMY**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-30: Implementation of a new macro-economic modelling concept**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 1.00 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 1.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions

Expected Outcome: Project results are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Better integration of research and innovation activities in macro-economic models, leading to better measurement of their impact and a better understanding of the channels through which research and innovation lead to impact (direct and indirect) in Europe.
- Improved macro-economic modelling for the evaluation of R&I policy, at the different levels of policy intervention (EU, national, regional), and reinforced alignment between the development of models and policy use, for example in the context of assessing policy options.
- Reinforcement of the scientific community focused on the role of research and innovation in the EU economy based on macro-economic models and increased interactions between this community and policy makers in charge of R&I policy in Europe.

Scope: This action will operationalise the recommendations of the “Expert Group to advise on further development of the macro-economic modelling agenda” run during the period 2019-2020, which can be found in the report of the Group<sup>42</sup>. Based on these, it will implement a renovated macro-economic modelling concept to improve the treatment of R&I and R&I policies in macroeconomic models, by developing a modelling framework consistent with the most recent empirical evidence and the theoretical state of the art.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-32: Standardisation Booster for fostering exploitation of FP-funded research results**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR

<sup>42</sup> The report is available here: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/47086c5e-f249-11ea-991b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-153127582>.

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<i>contribution per project</i>	2.00 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 2.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60 000.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Increased participation of research performers in standardisation activities
- Increased development of new standards or revision of existing standards to reply to new industrial and market conditions through contribution of EU research performers
- Increased uptake of new technologies resulting from boosting standardisation activities

Scope: The Standardisation Booster will help beneficiaries, whose H2020 and Horizon Europe research results appear likely to lead to the revision or creation of a standard, to test the relevance of their results for standardisation activities. This booster will be open for on-going and closed H2020 and Horizon Europe projects. This service will help these beneficiaries to engage with standardisation bodies and contribute to the preparation and elaboration of standardisation activities, such as participating in a focus group, setting up a new technical committee, drafting a technical specification or a technical report, participating in awareness events.

The Standardisation Booster will serve as a standardisation proof of concept scheme. The consortium will manage the scheme and should be able to engage with high-level independent experts in standardization in order to assess the standardization potential of research results. The consortium will select H2020 or Horizon Europe projects with a high likelihood of leading to the preparation and elaboration of standardisation activities, while ensuring geographical and gender balance.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-33: R&I intensive IP management: Scenarios for the future**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 1.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately.

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<i>project</i>	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 1.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- A mapping of the forthcoming technology process trends and the IP framework relevant for R&I that will go with these
- An assessment of the current intellectual property methods and how fit for purpose they are taking into account the transformation of research results into markets / socio-economic benefits
- Development of scenarios with potential new protection mechanisms that will benefit both the research community and society.
- Set of guidelines to R&I actors, notably the research generators, for the protection and use of intellectual property assets.
- Set of recommendations for policy makers regarding the future needs for framework conditions relevant for R&I.
- Establishment of a communication channel with the aim of promoting an open dialogue on R&I driven intellectual property needs, bringing together various stakeholders and practitioners and providing a feedback loop between practitioners and policy makers regarding emerging needs.

Scope: Technology sovereignty requires, together with investment, an in-depth understanding of the research and innovation landscape. The current Open Innovation strategies, the ever growing Open Science practices and the artificial intelligence revolution create an ecosystem where the innovations happen faster than ever (machine learning, big data etc.). This topic will look at ways to overcome the existing gaps researchers have to face when following unconventional discovery methods (e.g. artificial intelligence, computer inventions etc.).

## **DEEPENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA**

### **OPEN SCIENCE**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-40: Modelling and quantifying the impacts of open science practice**

<b>Specific conditions</b>
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<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 2.00 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 2.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:  Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional obligations regarding open science practices: Beneficiaries must ensure early and open sharing of the strategies, methodologies, models, and raw and analysed data deriving from their activities. Beneficiaries must acknowledge and incorporate these obligations in the proposal, outlining the efforts they will make towards meeting them and in Annex I to the Grant Agreement.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Structured evidence of scientific, societal and economic impacts of open science practice, complemented by the new methods, tools and data required to measure them.
- Better knowledge on how impacts develop and how a diversity of benefits can be achieved at scientific, societal and economic levels.
- Better understanding on how the practice of open science can contribute to the increased reproducibility of research results.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Prioritisation of policy actions for open science, and improved policy making on open science.
- Maximised impact of open science.
- Increased capacity in the EU R&I system to conduct open science and to set it as a *modus operandi* of modern science.

Scope: Open science consists of sharing knowledge and data as early as possible in the research process, in open collaboration with all relevant actors, including citizens. The mainstreaming of open science practice<sup>43</sup> is driven by expected impacts: (i) on the research

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<sup>43</sup> Open science practice includes: providing open access to research outputs (such as publications, data, software, models, algorithms, and workflows); early and open sharing of research (for example through preregistration, registered reports, pre-prints, crowd-sourcing of solutions to a specific problem); participation in open peer-review; measures to ensure reproducibility of results; and involving citizens, civil society and end-users in the co-creation of R&I agendas and content, including citizen science.

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system, e.g. increased efficiency, better reliability, and better responsiveness towards societal challenges; (ii) on the innovation system, e.g. faster innovation when results are shared earlier, and innovations more directed towards societal challenges; (iii) on the interface between science and society, e.g. more productive interactions among academia and other knowledge actors, and higher trust of society in the science system when researchers and citizens are engaged. While past projects have started building an evidence base, this remains fragmented and incomplete. A broad and comprehensive evidence base would help define new policies for open science, drive further uptake and help communicate on open science.

Proposals are expected to:

- systematise and evaluate the validity and robustness of existing literature, data and evidence of impacts of open science practice, including potential legal and licensing issues;
- leverage and valorise the body of knowledge resulting from the Science and Society (FP6), Science in Society (FP7) and Science with and for Society (Horizon 2020) programmes;
- complement existing evidence and develop scientific methodologies and models to capture impacts, notably those relating to socio-economic, including gender equality related, environmental and public health aspects. It is in particular expected to develop and implement methods for measuring the contribution of open science practice to the reproducibility of research results, and the implications of involving citizens, civil society and end-users in R&I;
- perform cost/benefit analyses of open science practice and conduct research to identify by which causality/mechanisms the impacts develop.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-41: Global cooperation on FAIR data policy and practice**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 1.00 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 2.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may



	exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	<p>The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations:</p> <p>Beneficiaries must make proactive efforts to freely share, in a timely manner and as appropriate, all relevant results with the other grants awarded from the same call topic, and with the EOSC Partnership<sup>44</sup>. Beneficiaries must acknowledge and incorporate these obligations in the proposal, outlining the efforts they will make towards meeting them, and in Annex I to the Grant Agreement.</p> <p>Beneficiaries will be subject to the additional exploitation obligations: Beneficiaries must make all relevant results generated in the action available for re-use, through a well-defined mechanism, to the EOSC Partnership. Beneficiaries must acknowledge and incorporate these obligations in the proposal, outlining the efforts they will make towards meeting them and in Annex I to the Grant Agreement.</p>

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Strengthened international cooperation to increase and mainstream FAIRness<sup>45</sup> of data and digital objects.
- Connection of disconnected initiatives on data management, data stewardship and FAIR data practices, across borders and disciplines, as enablers of open science.
- Increased FAIR data sharing within and across scientific disciplines and innovation sectors.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Proliferation of interdisciplinary research that helps address societal challenges.
- More efficient research practices as a result of an increased reproducibility of research and reduced duplication of efforts.
- Better informed citizens and society about the results and value of research.
- Improved quality of R&I within the EU.
- Contributions to sustainable growth and faster innovation in Europe, and beyond, in the context of the global economy.

<sup>44</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/european-open-science-cloud-eosc\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/european-open-science-cloud-eosc_en)

<sup>45</sup> 'FAIRness' is the compliance with the requirements of FAIR data.

Scope: Technological advancements have made science more data intensive and interconnected, with researchers producing and sharing increasing volumes of research data. To produce high quality research data, researchers have to follow good data management and data stewardship practices. Beyond proper data collection, annotation and archival, good data management and stewardship include long-term care of valuable digital assets, either alone or in combination with newly generated data. To maximise the value of science, research data should be FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. The FAIR principles, introduced in 2014, are a minimal set of community-agreed guiding principles that allow both machines and humans to find, access, interoperate and re-use research data. It is recognised that FAIR data play an essential role in the objectives of Open Science to improve and accelerate scientific research, to increase the engagement of society, and to contribute significantly to economic growth. Accordingly, the EU's Open Science policy<sup>46</sup> contains the ambition to make FAIR data sharing the default for scientific research and this can be accelerated by focusing on specific scientific disciplines. Although the FAIR principles were initially applied to research data, their coverage extends to all digital objects that are essential to research practice (e.g. algorithms, models, tools, workflows), and to other public sector data. However, initiatives for good data management and stewardship practices and FAIR practice remain fragmented across borders and disciplines. In addition, interoperability remains the least developed to date. Interoperability standards, at discipline-level first, and then across disciplines, are an essential catalyst to foster interdisciplinary science to tackle the global societal challenges of our age. Finally, FAIR digital objects related to the research process are increasingly indispensable to ensure the reproducibility, integrity and re-use of data.

Proposals should support international cooperation on the FAIRness of both data & digital objects in a discipline-specific manner. Applicants should map current initiatives and best practices, globally, within a given scientific discipline, and should facilitate the exchange of best practices across disciplines. They should support case studies and pilots to implement both domain-specific and domain-independent recommendations in FAIR practice (from the Research Data Alliance –RDA-, the Committee on Data of the International Science Council - CODATA-, etc.). They should develop, pilot and possibly deploy interoperability standards and guidelines for increasing FAIRness in specific scientific disciplines, and across different disciplines. They should also develop assessment and evaluation methodologies to appraise FAIRness within disciplines and to develop domain-specific benchmarks.

To ensure complementarity of outcomes, proposals are expected to cooperate and align with activities of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) Partnership and to coordinate with relevant initiatives and projects contributing to the development of EOSC. In particular, in areas such as data interoperability, metadata and vocabularies or the use of persistent identifiers, proposals should coordinate the work and establish a feedback mechanism with the awarded proposal(s) from the topic HORIZON-INFRA-2021-EOSC-01-05 in order to ensure alignment with EOSC policies and to identify common useful tools and resources as well as relevant data repositories that comply with EOSC guidelines.

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<sup>46</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/open-science>

Proposals are also expected to engage and/or align where appropriate with projects funded under topics HORIZON-INFRA-2021-EOSC-01-03 and HORIZON-INFRA-2022-EOSC-01-04. Finally, if appropriate, proposals should further seek alignment with disciplinary use cases for FAIR as will be developed under topics HORIZON-INFRA-2021-EOSC-01-06, HORIZON-INFRA-2021-EOSC-01-07, and HORIZON-INFRA-2022-EOSC-01-03.

Any prospective alignments should be clearly acknowledged in the proposals, which should foresee dedicated activities and earmark appropriate resources for such activities.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-43: Capacity-building for institutional open access publishing across Europe**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.00 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Improved understanding of the current landscape of institutional scientific publishing activities across Europe.
- Coordination amongst institutional publishing services and initiatives across Europe at the non-technological level and improve their overall service efficiency, in particular in a multilingual environment.
- Actionable recommendations for strategies regarding institutional publishing in research performing organisations across the European Research Area.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Increased equity, diversity and inclusivity of open science practices in the European Research Area.
- Increased capacity in the EU R&I system to conduct open science and set it as a *modus operandi* of modern science.

Scope: Recent years have witnessed a sharp increase in open access publishing activities. Commercial scientific publishers and other service providers have turned their attention to open access publishing, responding to increased demand for open access by funders and research performing organisations. Research institutions have also developed their own open access publishing activities and services. These are either new and based on open access

publishing, or are existing publishing activities transitioning into the new digital and open access environment. Libraries are often involved, while new types of mission-driven open access university presses are also emerging in Europe and beyond. Such initiatives do not require article fees for publishing, and are often supported by their institutions. They enable open access publishing of journals and other types of outcomes in various languages and are important in supporting multilingualism in Europe. At the same time, they often have not gained the prestige bestowed on established publishing venues, usually produced in collaboration with well-known commercial scientific publishers. Moreover, institutional publishing in the social sciences and the humanities is often in languages other than English, which is both an asset and a limitation.

This action aims to support institutional publishing initiatives across Europe to improve the quality of their non-technological services to researchers, and to overcome fragmentation, specifically:

1. Activities that provide a comprehensive map of the current landscape of institutional publishing activities across Europe, through the collection of robust empirical evidence on service provision mechanisms, funding processes, gaps, among other things to be specified;
2. Activities that improve the coordination, quality and services of existing and substantial institutional open access publishing in EU member states and associated countries. This can be achieved, in particular, by establishing minimum shared standards and good practices for the non-technological aspects of their services, such as developing high quality journal policies and procedures to make services more efficient and more attractive for researchers (editorial scopes, peer-review policies, organisation of editorial and publishing business processes, translation, among others), developing appropriate business/funding models that support the long-term provision of services, etc.;
3. Explicit and actionable recommendations for strategies and policies to be adopted by research institutions to support the further flourishing of their mission-driven, open access publishing activities in a coordinated fashion across Europe.

Duration: The action should be no longer than 36 months.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-44: Societal trust in science, research and innovation**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 2.00 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 2.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Recommendations for policy makers, research funding and performing organisations, higher education institutions and other research and innovation actors for tackling societal mistrust in science, research and innovation;
- Recommendations for strengthening the co-creation of R&I contents by society, and for the spreading of good practices and evidence of their effects.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Increased public trust in science;
- Increased alignment of strategic research with society needs, expectations and values.

Scope: Societal trust in the research system and confidence in its outcomes is vital to ensure the EU's contribution to attain the Sustainable Development Goals and to achieve the European Green Deal targets; for the uptake of innovation in society; and for continued public support for investment in R&I.

Trust depends on scientists and engineers' capacity to demonstrate high standards of research integrity, an ethical mind-set, critical thinking and rigorous exploration of ideas in an open, transparent manner; and their desire to maximise the societal relevance, robustness and overall quality of outcomes. This, in turn, is fostered by conducive institutional governance arrangements and policy environments. In addition, citizen and civil society's involvement in co-creating R&I agendas and contents makes research more relevant and responsive to society and strengthens co-ownership and trust in scientific evidence and innovation.

However, not all research is conducted in line with these high standards. Rules and guidelines are sometimes missing or ignored, research protocols and raw data are not always published, methodological limitations may be inadequately addressed, inappropriate statistical analyses may lead to exaggeration of conclusions, papers are generally only published when significant results are obtained, and self-interest may interfere in peer-review processes. A significant part of research cannot be reproduced and therefore cannot be relied upon to build a solid base for policy or innovation, and this leads in turn to a decrease in societal trust in research and innovation. Compounding this, research often addresses issues of limited direct relevance to end-users, or comes to conclusions that are wildly out of step with societal needs and values, including gender equality related ones, because societal input to setting the research agenda and taking part in research is often treated as an afterthought – long after innovations and research trajectories have been decided.

To better understand the nature and scale of the sources and consequences of mistrust of society in science and the challenges of science-society co-creation, a series of expert workshops, small-scale studies and participatory research actions should take into account existing knowledge (including from projects funded under previous Framework Programmes) and should lead to new and robust evidence and analysis, as a basis for further policy action.

Evidence from relevant Eurobarometers, and national science barometers, should form particularly important inputs to this action.

The action should involve a broad range of potential users and stakeholders and the general public in co-creation (e.g. civil society, businesses, research/academia, public authorities and policy makers), develop policy guidance and recommendations, and implement innovative means of communicating and disseminating the findings and messages. As such, Responsible Research and Innovation could be a relevant research approach. Close co-operation should be sought with relevant projects to encourage uptake and early sharing of knowledge and evidence.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-45: Support to changes in the assessment of research and researchers to reward the practice of open science**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 2.00 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 2.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Consolidated information on initiatives for reforming the assessment of research and researchers, taking better account of open science practice<sup>47</sup>.
- Connection of existing initiatives at European level, facilitating mutual learning, and stimulating consensus building among the stakeholders.
- Pilots on new metrics, methods and institutional changes for reforming the assessment of research and researchers, which lead to better rewarding the practice of open science, as well as related issues such as gender equality, science education, and academia-industry collaboration.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Researchers incentivised to practice open science.
- Increased impact of open science.

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<sup>47</sup> Open science practices include: providing open access to research outputs (such as publications, data, software, models, algorithms, and workflows); early and open sharing of research (for example through preregistration, registered reports, pre-prints, crowd-sourcing of solutions to a specific problem); participation in open peer-review; measures to ensure reproducibility of results; and involving citizens, civil society and end-users in the co-creation of R&I agendas and content, including citizen science.

- Increased capacity in the EU R&I system to conduct open science and set it as a *modus operandi* of modern science.

Scope: The current evaluation and funding system of research and researchers is limiting open science practice, as it is still largely based on inappropriate indicators, favouring quantity of results of individual researchers rather than quality of (collaborative) open research practice and socio-economic impact of research. For the focus to shift to quality over quantity, and to more efficient and impactful research, changes are required in the institutions performing and funding research and innovation. One way of doing this is for research funding and performing organisations to develop and implement strategies and policies that reward the practice of open science in the evaluation of research and researchers.

A few institutions in Europe, including some universities, are currently taking steps to reward the practice of open science, by reforming the assessment system of their research and researchers. The proposals should build on these various institutional initiatives, on the results of projects funded under earlier Framework Programmes such as the “*Science with and for Society*” part of Horizon 2020, as well as on policy work conducted by the Open Science Policy Platform and by several umbrella organisations of research performing and research funding organisations. The proposals are expected to support the sharing of information at European level across institutions and umbrella organisations, to identify good practices, and to develop guidance and recommendations on institutional changes with respect to rewarding researchers for open science practices. The proposals should also pilot the development, implementation and monitoring of new methods, associated metrics, strategies and policies, by clusters of funders and/or research performing organisations, for research and research career assessment that integrates open science practices, in several EU member states and associated countries.

To ensure complementarity of outcomes and synergies, applicants are expected to cooperate with projects to be funded under topic HORIZON-INFRA-2022-EOSC-01-01.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND RESEARCHERS

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

#### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-50: Protection of Higher Education Institutions and research organisations against conventional and non-conventional threats**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 1.00 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 2.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Increase the awareness of Higher Education Institutions and research organisations to conventional and non-conventional threats
- Boost the capacities of Higher Education Institutions and research organisations to deter and respond to non-conventional threats
- Improve the resilience of Higher Education Institutions and research organisations

Scope: The EU Higher Education Institutions and research organisations continue to face serious threats, such as to academic freedom, freedom of research and institutional autonomy, as well as increasing distrust in science and scientific experts, next to various forms of foreign interference. In addition, acute threats increasingly take non-conventional forms, such as cyber-attacks, infiltration or disinformation campaigns. These actions seek to access research findings, destabilise and endanger our higher education and research institutions and undermine our fundamental European values. To respond to these threats, the EU Higher Education Institutions and research organisations need to boost significantly their capacities in detecting and tackling these threats and they need to be well informed and geared with simple and effective tools ensuring security while respecting the openness of research and innovation. Given the very nature of the topic, continued exchange with member states and relevant stakeholders is necessary in order to expand the knowledge of conventional and non-conventional threats to Higher Education Institutions and research organisation, and develop appropriate actions.

Proposals are expected to: (i) analyse possible threats and identify mitigation measures; (ii) increase awareness of threats within higher education institutions and research organisations; (iii) promote networking and optimising of infrastructure and resources to ensure adequate preparedness and prevention at European level.

In the framework of the new ERA, this action should also complement and reinforce EU action for academic freedom as well as the European *Pact for Research and Innovation*, which aims at deepening the implementation of the new ERA's objectives, setting out commonly agreed values and principles and indicating the areas where Member States will jointly develop priority actions.

**CITIZEN SCIENCE**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-60: A capacity-building and brokering network to make citizen science an integral part of the European Research Area**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 4.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a



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<i>project</i>	proposal requesting different amounts.
<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 4.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:  Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations:  Beneficiaries must make proactive efforts to freely share, in a timely manner and as appropriate, all relevant results with the other grants awarded from this work programme part subject to the same additional dissemination obligations. Beneficiaries must acknowledge and incorporate these obligations in the proposal, outlining the efforts they will make towards meeting them, and in Annex I to the Grant Agreement.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Strengthened links and collaboration between citizen science initiatives and other research and innovation actors;
- Increased capacity to conduct excellent research and innovation through citizen science, while maximising other potential benefits of citizen science;
- Data infrastructures better aligned to the needs of citizen science, and improved data practices employed by citizen science initiatives;
- Europe positioned as a leader in citizen science throughout the entire research and innovation system with flourishing and mutually beneficial global collaborations.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Increased engagement of citizens in research and innovation;
- Increased public trust in research and innovation;
- Increased capacity in the EU R&I system to conduct open science and to set it as a *modus operandi* of modern science;
- Increased openness of the EU R&I system.

Scope: Citizen Science is a rapidly emerging mode of research and innovation that shows huge promise in terms of collecting new qualities and quantities of data, harnessing collective intelligence, improving science-society literacy, and improving the relationship between science and society. However, it is embedded institutionally only to a limited extent, at an early stage of developing data infrastructures, and lacks the capacities and sustainable resourcing required to live up to its potentials.

This action will become a central point of exchange between citizen science in Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe, and other EU-level and sub-national programmes and initiatives. It should amplify significant outcomes of citizen science in areas such as Horizon Europe's Missions, should they be confirmed, Clusters and Partnerships, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Green Deal, across all parts of the research and innovation system. It should maintain up-to-date repositories of initiatives, good practices and tools, and become a stage for discussion and collaboration.

It should offer extensive *in situ* brokering, skills, training, and capacity building services to citizen science practitioners, civil society, public authorities, businesses/SMEs, formal and informal education establishments, and research funding and performing organisations, with a view to raising their awareness, knowledge and skills to collaborate with, support, and implement citizen science.

Co-ordination of and support for citizen science to work towards FAIR (and in many cases open) data should cut across activities. The action should become a key interlocutor between citizen science initiatives and existing thematic databases and infrastructures. It should support - and 'connect the dots' between - existing efforts to make citizen science data FAIR and open, make new efforts to liaise between citizen science and infrastructures where they are needed, identify unmet needs, and develop policy recommendations. Overall the action should move citizen science towards open science as its *modus operandi*.

Underlying these activities should be efforts to reduce disparities in awareness and actual practice of citizen science across disciplines in the ERA (e.g. at local, regional, national and EU levels). Moreover, significant efforts should be made to be inclusive in citizens' involvement in terms of geography, gender, ethnicity, disability, age, socio-economic background etc. In order to achieve the expected outcomes, international cooperation and mutual learning that promise tangible scientific, societal or policy impacts is advised.

The action should build on and valorise the results of earlier projects in the Science and Society (FP6), Science in Society (FP7) and Science with and for Society (Horizon 2020) programmes, in particular projects focused on public engagement, responsible research and innovation, and citizen science, as well as of national and regional initiatives, and should aim to provide a seamless transition between previous supporting actions and this new action.

The action should be no shorter than 3 years.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-61: Supporting and giving recognition to citizen science in the European Research Area**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 5.00 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 5.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	<p>The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations:</p> <p>Beneficiaries must make proactive efforts to freely share, in a timely manner and as appropriate, all relevant results with the other grants awarded from this work programme part subject to the same additional dissemination obligations. Beneficiaries must acknowledge and incorporate these obligations in the proposal, outlining the efforts they will make towards meeting them, and in Annex I to the Grant Agreement.</p> <p>Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants or prize. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60 000.</p> <p>The respective options of the Model Grant Agreement will be applied. Beneficiaries should refer to General Annex B of the Work Programme for further information and guidance.</p>

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Significant number of experimental citizen science initiatives kick-started;
- Significant number of citizen science initiatives supported to become sustainable;
- Significant number of newcomers to the Framework Programme and a significant number of citizens involved in co-producing scientific knowledge;
- Increased recognition of excellent citizen science initiatives throughout the European Research Area;
- Improved evidence base for making policy on citizen science.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Increased engagement of citizens with science and researchers with citizens;
- Increased public trust in science;
- Increased alignment of strategic research with society needs, expectations and values;
- Better understanding among citizens of the process of building scientific knowledge through experimentation;
- Increased capacity in the EU R&I system to conduct open science and to set it as a *modus operandi* of modern science;
- A more open and inclusive research and innovation system.

Scope: Citizen Science is a rapidly emerging mode of research and innovation that shows huge promise in terms of collecting new qualities and quantities of data, harnessing collective intelligence, improving science-society literacy, and improving the relationship between science and society. However, financial support is not well adapted to the needs of small-scale and experimental activities and many citizen science initiatives that have proven their worth fail to sustain over the longer term. In addition, citizen science is under-recognised for its role in bridging between science and society, under-utilised where it is needed such as in relation to the Green Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals, and practitioners of citizen science are insufficiently recognised within the EU research and innovation system as conducting high-quality activities that can have numerous side-benefits.

In order to help remedy these weaknesses in the European research and innovation system, this action will launch two calls for proposals through financial support to third parties:

- *Kick-starting*: This will kick-start and provide support services to *at least* 100 citizen science activities that are at the conceptual or pilot stage and which show promise in terms of innovative theme or approach, collecting and analysing data, or generating other important benefits.
- *Sustaining*: This will support *at least* 25 on-going or recent citizen science activities to find ways to sustain their activities; these will have shown their worth in terms of innovative theme or approach, collecting and analysing data, generating other important benefits, or have particular potential to scale up across member states or the ERA.

The two calls may be launched over one or more waves but it should not be necessary to be supported by the ‘kick-starting’ call to apply for ‘sustainable’ call. Efforts should be made to evaluate the response to the open calls, capture the benefits arising from the citizen science activities it kick-starts (social, economic, democratic, scientific, etc.), and develop intelligence about factors that support or hinder the sustainability of successful citizen science initiatives.

In addition, this action should launch a European Union Prize for Citizen Science (funded by the action through financial support to third parties) open to all citizen science initiatives

involving research and innovation actors, including civil society organisations, in the European Union. The action should prepare, publicise and launch the competition, organise a high-profile award ceremony and showcase the breadth and scope of excellent citizen science activities taking place across the European Union. In close liaison with the Commission throughout the process, the action should decide on the award categories, setup the panel of experts that will evaluate the contestants, and develop the conditions for participation and the award criteria that enable identification of excellent/best-in-class examples of citizen science in terms of their contribution to the scientific evidence base and/or other benefits (e.g. societal, economic, democratic). The action should also set up a comprehensive communication strategy around the prize. Prizes should be awarded to several winners (e.g. for different categories) and be funded through financial support to third parties. Each prize should be in the range of EUR 10 000 – 60 000.

Across all three of parts (kick-starting, sustaining, and the citizen science prize), the action should consider citizen science across all areas of research and innovation and take into account all of the different forms of participation that citizen science can entail without prejudice to any. Significant efforts should be made to be inclusive in terms of geography, gender, ethnicity, disability, age, socio-economic background etc. The large majority of the funding should be allocated to the activities to kick-start and sustain citizen science initiatives. The action should develop policy recommendations, policy briefs, and other research and innovation results/outputs and disseminate its experiences and learnings widely.

The action should build on and valorise the results of earlier projects in the Science and Society (FP6), Science in Society (FP7) and Science with and for Society (Horizon 2020) programmes, in particular projects focused on public engagement, responsible research and innovation, and citizen science, as well as of national and regional initiatives, and should aim to provide a seamless transition between previous supporting actions and this new action.

The project should last a minimum of 4 years.

#### SCIENCE EDUCATION

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

#### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-70: Developing a STE(A)M roadmap for Science Education in Horizon Europe**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 1.50 and 1.75 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 5.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Better knowledge on policy deficiencies and better understanding of needs;
- Identify synergies between second and third level education, and between education and business;
- Contributions to future Policy actions;
- Promoting an integrated learning continuum between second and third level education and between education and business;
- Convince students and citizens about the opportunities within policy areas such as the Green Deal, Digitisation and Health.

Scope: Europe needs more scientists and Europe needs a science literate society. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of Europe's scientists and medics in keeping our society safe and healthy. The comprehensive recovery package to help the EU rebuild highlights the importance and necessity of major EU policies on the European Green Deal, the Digital transition and Health, all of which call for more highly educated European scientists.

In order to increase the uptake in science careers, to feed the talent pipeline, a plan of action is needed to encourage more interest in STE(A)M for young and old alike, with a focus on also increasing female participation and deconstructing gender stereotypes. The use of artistic approaches to STEM involving creative thinking and applied arts (the "A" in STEAM) could prove particularly useful in this regard. Convince students and citizens of the importance of policies such as the Green Deal and Digitisation and the opportunities that exist within these areas. Science is not just about hard science; it encompasses a world of technology not always obvious to the student and undergraduate. It is important to take into account the needs of industry in education and to develop work ready students and graduates. Introduce the concept of open schooling. Support formal, informal and non-formal science education initiatives, in synergy with the European Education Area.

This action should develop and deliver a STEAM roadmap for Science Education in Horizon Europe, in synergy with Erasmus. The action should develop strategies to increase the uptake of science careers to feed the talent pipeline, demonstrate the breadth of content available for consideration, align the needs of society and industry with education to prepare students to become active citizens and ready for the world of work, develop synergies between second and third level education and promote science education mainstreaming in funded projects.

The action should consider current policy initiatives and identify gaps and overlaps or duplication of effort. Reference and consideration should be given to previously funded projects. Applicants should develop links with Scientix<sup>48</sup>, as well as with projects funded under SwafS-26-2020 (Innovators of the future: bridging the gender gap), and consider links with other policy domains.

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<sup>48</sup> <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/730009>

**GENDER EQUALITY**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-80: Centre of excellence on inclusive gender equality in Research & Innovation**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 5.00 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 5.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions

Expected Outcome:

Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Advancement of knowledge, policy and practice on inclusive gender equality in research and innovation institutions across Europe, with an intersectional, geographically inclusive, and multi-sectorial approach.
- Reduced disparities across Member States and strengthening of the European Research Area and its gender equality and inclusiveness objective.

Scope: As having a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place is becoming an eligibility criterion for legal entities applying to Horizon Europe, and, as the new European Research Area Communication of 30 September 2020 is foreseeing stronger measures to promote inclusive gender equality plans, there is a strong need for expert policy and knowledge support for inclusive GEP implementation, in research and innovation (R&I) organisations (including research funding and performing organisations, incl. companies and SMEs) across EU Member States. In order to adapt to different national and local situations, and help foster effective transformation in countries and institutions less advanced in the field of gender equality in R&I, a first European centre of excellence on inclusive gender equality in R&I will be created.

Building on projects and actions supported through Horizon 2020, including projects ACT, GE Academy, GENDERACTION, and the pilot European knowledge and support facility for fostering institutional change through gender equality plans funded under the SwafS work programme 2020, as well as on initiatives developed by existing national or regional centres of excellence and knowledge centres on gender equality in R&I in Europe, and by European R&I stakeholder umbrella organisations, proposals are expected to cover the following:

- Establish a sustainable European Centre of Excellence and think tank to advance and disseminate knowledge on inclusive gender equality policies in R&I, addressing three levels of inclusiveness, i.e.: the intersectional level, considering intersecting social categories such as ethnicity (including migration and refugees), disability, sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTIQ issues) or else social origin; the sectorial level, to better address innovation and the private sector; and geographical inclusiveness. This Centre could work as a single entity or as core centre and network of hubs in different Member States, and should involve experts from different Member States, including widening countries.
- Provide expertise and support to Member States, R&I organisations, and the European Commission, in the design, implementation and assessment of institutional change through inclusive gender equality plans, including through the design and delivery of tailored training activities on inclusive gender equality in R&I, and the development of an enhanced Community of Practice on gender equality and diversity in R&I organisations, including R&I performing and funding organisations.
- Provide expert support for the collection of pan-European data on gender equality in R&I and the development of new indicators, including on intersectionality. Collected data should cover also information on the uptake and implementation of gender equality plans in EU Member States and Associated countries, and contribute to the She Figures<sup>49</sup> publication.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-81: Policy coordination to advance the implementation of the ERA gender equality and inclusiveness objectives within Member States**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.00 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome:

Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Development of a consistent and sustainable coordination network of national representatives on gender equality and inclusiveness in support of the implementation of

<sup>49</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/she-figures-2018\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/she-figures-2018_en)



the ERA Communication policy objectives, leading to better coordination of Member States' efforts.

Scope: The new European Research Area (Communication of 30 September 2020 on “A new ERA for Research and Innovation”) is foreseeing strong measures to promote inclusive gender equality plans in Research and Innovation (R&I) organisations, in line with the European Strategy for Gender Equality for the period 2020-2025, to which R&I, and Horizon Europe, must contribute actively. As the new ERA Communication and the Council Conclusions of 1 December 2020 on the new ERA underline, there is a need for policy coordination to advance the implementation of the ERA gender equality and inclusiveness objectives within the Member States. Ensuring the active promotion of equal opportunities for all includes opening up gender equality policies in R&I to diversity, and more specifically to: social categories and grounds for discrimination intersecting with gender, such as ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or else socio-economic status; geographical inclusiveness; and opening to the innovation and private sector. This new inclusive approach to gender equality is also embedded in the new European Commission Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025.

Building on related projects and actions supported through Horizon 2020, including project GENDERACTION, the action focuses on the establishment of a sustainable network of national representatives from all EU Member States and Associated Countries, both from national bodies (e.g. ministries) and from national research funding organisations, to support the implementation of the gender equality and inclusiveness objectives of the ERA. During its lifetime, the action should:

- Develop various innovative and engagement activities, connect citizens, experts and policy makers, as well as contribute to policy making at national and European administration level.
- Provide support and advancing the knowledge of representatives of widening countries is of particular importance. The action should also develop knowledge and build capacities, competences and expertise for gender equality and mainstreaming in R&I with a variety of European and national stakeholders. Special consideration will be given to mutual learning exercises to enhance the competence of national gender equality representatives, including helping less experienced national gender representatives to acquire expertise.
- Establish a transnational Community of Practice of R&I funding organisations for the promotion of a gender-inclusive culture change in R&I institutions across Europe, linked through a Memorandum of Understanding. Specific attention should be paid to promoting the development of incentives or setting requirements at research funding level to foster institutional change in organisations, as well as establishing a zero-tolerance policy on gender-based violence including sexual harassment in R&I organisations.
- A specific focus should also be placed on promoting the integration of the gender dimension into R&I content, with an opening to intersectionality. For this, the action

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should foresee mobilising national expertise on the integration of the sex and gender analysis in R&I content to support the different Horizon Europe National Contact Points in all EU Member States.

- The work by this action should be performed in coordination with ERA-related official groups, and in collaboration with the European Commission, in line with ERA objectives.

The participation of at least 23 Member States, and in addition, of national representatives from Associated Countries, to the consortium, is strongly encouraged, and the project must engage and deploy activities with all EU Member States and, as much as possible, with all Associated Countries.

**ETHICS AND INTEGRITY**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-90: The challenges of research ethics and integrity in response to crisis: the coronavirus pandemic and beyond**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 4.50 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 4.50 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.  Due to the scope of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the General Annexes, proposals must include at least two participants from China, Korea and/or African countries non-associated to Horizon Europe. Participants from countries, which are not eligible for funding according to the General Annexes, may take part in the project as associated partners.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:  Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations:  Proposals must include structured cooperation with the e-platform

	<p>Embassy of Good Science<sup>50</sup>, and the European Networks ENERI (European Network of Research Ethics Committees and Research Integrity Offices)<sup>51</sup> and ENRIO (European Network of Research Integrity Offices)<sup>52</sup>.</p> <p>The output material of the action must be made available on the e-platform Embassy of Good Science.</p>
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Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

Crises, and in particular health related ones, have become a dramatic reality for the EU and globally since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. Scientific knowledge focuses the attention, as it is a key element to address the urgency of the situation in an effective way and improve preparedness for the future. The extremely heavy human, social, cultural and economic consequences associated with the time pressure sets exceptional conditions calling for an adaptation of the way and procedures to work, and decide and prioritise which inevitably raises associated ethical questions. Some research topics have an intrinsically complex ethics dimension, for example research on the imposing of protection measures, health care prioritization, consequences for family life, and gender impacts on health.

In this context, the activity proposed is expected to propose an operational ethics and integrity framework, which preserves the key ethics principles while supporting a rapid and effective response to a crisis and improving overall preparedness.

Scope: The first priority is to analyse what characterises, from an ethics perspective, a crisis of a global, sudden and unexpected nature of the type of the Covid-19 pandemic, and isolate what are the related ethics and integrity challenges as regards the production, sharing and use of scientific knowledge and data<sup>53</sup> in designing and implementing responses as well as in anticipating future global urgencies.

Derogations of human rights and freedoms, albeit in the interests of the public good, must be temporary, proportionate, used only as last resort, and critically there must be clear transparent criteria for their suspension e.g. in the form of sunset clauses to emergency legislation. The greatest danger – during and after the end of any formal ‘state of emergency’ – is a ‘new normal’ of eroded rights and liberties.<sup>54</sup> For example, the pressing need to collect large amounts of personal data raises important questions regarding the preservation of

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<sup>50</sup> [www.embassy.science](http://www.embassy.science)

<sup>51</sup> <http://eneri.eu/>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.enrio.eu/>

<sup>53</sup> The need for the sharing of data was emphasised in the Commission Communication on the on additional COVID-19 response measures, COM(2020) 687 final, <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication-additional-covid-19-response-measures.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> Statement on European Solidarity and the Protection of Fundamental Rights in the COVID-19 Pandemic, European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/research\\_and\\_innovation/ege/ec\\_rd\\_ege-statement-covid-19.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/research_and_innovation/ege/ec_rd_ege-statement-covid-19.pdf)

privacy<sup>55</sup>, and should be assessed carefully against the need to ensure information of data subjects and the possibility to pursue alternative means.

An important element that characterises major crises is that they go beyond the impact on the wellbeing of persons and touches the society more globally notably in terms of solidarity and social justice, as well as gender equality. Mid and long-term social, cultural and economic consequences are also more prominent in these unusual research contexts. The issues related to the role of ethics and integrity experts (as advisors, for example), informed consent, undue inducement, the right to know, and to opt out should be among the elements to tackle.

Based on this analysis, the action should draw the lessons and examine how to adapt processes followed under normal conditions (e.g. for informed consent, regulatory approvals etc.).

The scope should also cover the ethics of the scientific work on public health measures (such as behavioural studies, communication strategies, gender impacts on health<sup>56</sup>), including those aiming at an increased preparedness. The objective is to cover emerging ethics issues related to new concepts like “immunisation certification” that are at the centre of vivid debates involving fundamental values.

The action should clearly highlight what cannot be accepted or neglected in the name of coping with the urgency and the magnitude of the impact of a crisis (including the moral distress of the front line personnel, a large majority of which are women). Another important example is the need to always conduct, prior to the start of a research, an independent ethical review, which remains a necessary safeguard for the individuals involved and enhance the trust from the impacted communities and the society as a whole<sup>57</sup>. Emergency needs adaptation should not lower ethics and integrity standards.

The work should be based on existing know how and identification of preparedness need. The joint advise on “Improving Pandemic Preparedness and Management”<sup>58</sup> by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors (GCSA), the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE) and Peter Piot, special advisor to the President of the European Commission, should be considered. In a bottom-up approach, involving all relevant stakeholders (e.g. researchers, research funders, policy-makers, publishers and citizens) through the organisation of participatory events (workshops, consultations, ‘town hall’ meetings) the activities should propose ways and means to encourage changes in the research culture, and promote openness, communication and dialogue. This must be done in cooperation with ENRIO (European Network of Research Integrity Offices)<sup>59</sup> and ENERI

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<sup>55</sup> The full respect of the data protection law with regard to contact tracing technologies was reaffirmed in the Commission Communication on the on additional COVID-19 response measures.

<sup>56</sup> See European Institute for Gender Equality (2020) Covid-19 and gender equality, <https://eige.europa.eu/topics/health/covid-19-and-gender-equality>.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. The Commission Communication calls for a “robust authorisation process” to ensure safety.

<sup>58</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a1016d77-2562-11eb-9d7e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-171481573>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.enrio.eu/>

(European Network of Research Ethics Committees and Research Integrity Offices)<sup>60</sup>. The cooperation with other relevant networks can be envisaged.

The action should result in (A) the identification of policy options at EU level (including those to address possible legislation gaps) and practical ways to support the work of relevant stakeholders notably the ethics committees and integrity bodies. The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity<sup>61</sup> should be a main reference.

The work undertaken should also result in (B) operational (“how-to”) guidelines to support the work of research teams.

The need to complement the European Code<sup>62</sup> with specific guidelines should be assessed and a proposal (C) for short documents complementing the Code should be made, focusing for example on fast track processes (ethics review, publication etc.).

In addition, this action should produce (D) traditional and online training material (reflecting the guidelines) for students, early career and experienced researchers. Case studies (for example on mobile tracing apps) should be included in order to facilitate practical learning. The material, as well as all other outputs of the action, must be made available on the e-platform Embassy of Good Science<sup>63</sup>. Where relevant the EU Digital education plan<sup>64</sup> should be taken into account.

Although the main focus should be on the recent Covid-19 pandemic, it is also important to have in mind the wider objective of addressing the ethics of global crisis of the same kind (manmade or not). The action should in this regard present a generalised version of the produced recommendations and guidelines and training material.

Publicly available results from relevant EU funded research projects <sup>65</sup> (e.g. SHERPA, SIENNA, Panelfit, SOP4RI) should be taken into account. Structured cooperation with the e-platform Embassy of Good Science and the European Networks ENERI and ENRIO, with clear attribution of research ethics and research integrity responsibilities, is necessary.

In order to achieve the expected outcomes, cooperation with actors from China, Korea and/or African countries non-associated to Horizon Europe is required.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01-91: Ensuring reliability and trust in quality of Research Ethics expertise in the context of new/emerging technologies**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 4.50

<sup>60</sup> <http://eneri.eu/>

<sup>61</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics\\_code-of-conduct\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> [www.embassy.science](http://www.embassy.science)

<sup>64</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/digital-education-action-plan\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/digital-education-action-plan_en)

<sup>65</sup> Detailed information of the mentioned EU funded projects can be found on CORDIS web site (<https://cordis.europa.eu/>)

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<i>contribution per project</i>	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 4.50 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.</p> <p>Due to the scope of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the General Annexes, proposals must include at least two participants from China, Korea and/or African countries non-associated to Horizon Europe. Participants from countries, which are not eligible for funding according to the General Annexes, may take part in the project as associated partners.</p>
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	<p>The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations:</p> <p>Proposals must include structured cooperation with the e-platform Embassy of Good Science<sup>66</sup>, and the European Networks ENERI (European Network of Research Ethics Committees and Research Integrity Offices)<sup>67</sup> and ENRIO (European Network of Research Integrity Offices)<sup>68</sup>.</p> <p>The output material of the action must be made available on the e-platform Embassy of Good Science.</p>

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

Ensuring the adherence to the highest standards of research ethics is a key element of national and EU research policy. Because of its universal impact on our society and its primary role in innovation, the need for ethics rigour, the pillar of public trust in the scientific endeavour, is essential. Overall, research ethics is the foundation of high quality research and a prerequisite for achieving excellence in research and innovation in Europe and beyond.

In order to ensure that the research activities meet these expectations, they need to comply with the relevant legislations (e.g. on personal data protection, clinical trials, animal research

<sup>66</sup> [www.embassy.science](http://www.embassy.science)

<sup>67</sup> <http://eneri.eu/>

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.enrio.eu/>

etc.) and ethics principles. Assessing the compatibility with ethics principles requires the involvement of ethics experts that usually provide, as an ethics committee/panel an opinion or an approval. These experts, including early career researchers, come from all disciplines in science, from the public and private sector, as well as from citizens associations and NGOs.

Reliability and trust in the quality and expertise of the ethics experts is therefore key. This requires beyond the questions related to the independence and the possible conflicts of interest, that the experts have the necessary knowledge and understanding of the issues at stake to be able to assess the activity under review.

The recent rapid development of new technologies with high potential socio-economic impact<sup>69</sup> constitutes in this regard an important challenge: ensuring that technological transformations go hand in hand with the protection and promotion of fundamental rights thus ensuring that people can prosper, enjoy their rights and freedoms and live without discrimination.<sup>70</sup> In this context, because of the continuous globalisation of the research activities involving those new technologies, the risk of ethics dumping, the exportation of unacceptable practices outside the EU is a growing concern.

The action proposed should address these issues in mobilising the research ethics community and develop the necessary education, awareness and training actions as well as propose possible adaptation of the ethics review process.

Scope: The first objective should be to identify the main ethics challenges resulting from the most impactful new and emerging technologies, including the specific challenges arising from research activities involving those new technologies in collaboration with non-EU partners and outside the EU.

From this analysis, the action should develop education, awareness actions and trainings for research ethics experts. This should be done by involving the key stakeholders. Structured cooperation with the e-platform Embassy of Good Science<sup>71</sup> and the European networks ENERI (European Network of Research Ethics Committees and Research Integrity Offices)<sup>72</sup> and ENRIO (European Network of Research Integrity Offices) is necessary. The cooperation with other relevant networks can be envisaged. In addition, where feasible these activities should be based on the analysis of case studies, including from non-EU countries where relevant research activities take place, to facilitate the development of practice-oriented trainings as well as the identification of good practices. The material produced, as well as all other outputs of the action, must be made available in the platform Embassy of Good Science, a one stop shop for all Commission produced ethics and research integrity reference materials

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<sup>69</sup> Applicants may consult : [https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/what-are-technologies-will-reshape-our-world-independent-experts-identify-100-them-2019-jun-13\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/what-are-technologies-will-reshape-our-world-independent-experts-identify-100-them-2019-jun-13_en)

<sup>70</sup> Presidency conclusions - The Charter of Fundamental Rights in the context of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Change, Brussels, 21 October 2020 (OR. en) 11481/20 FREMP 87 JAI 776

<sup>71</sup> [www.embassy.science](http://www.embassy.science)

<sup>72</sup> <http://eneri.eu/>

and trainings, which can be readily used by all Members States and beyond. Where relevant, the EU Digital Education Action Plan<sup>73</sup> should be taken into account.

The action should be based on the results coming from projects funded by the EU<sup>74</sup> on the ethics dimension of new technologies and other relevant domains (notably SIENNA, PANELFIT, SHERPA, I-CONSENT, ENERI, and TRUST) as well as benefit from the work of the project SOP4RI, working on standard operating procedures and VIRT2UE working on a train-the-trainer programme. For the ongoing projects, cooperation and synergies should be established, via a dedicated horizontal coordination work package. This work package should also pay particular attention to the cooperation with the projects resulting from call H2020-SwafS-2020-1 TechEthos, HYBRIDA and ROSiE.<sup>75</sup> The involvement of the stakeholders such as ENERI and ENRIO should also be used to launch a debate on the impact of the new ethics challenges on the ethics review process to determine how its role and working practices could evolve to maintain effectiveness.

In addition, this cooperation with the main actors should aim at disseminating widely the material produced. The action should in this context foresee the training of the 250-300 Horizon Europe ethics appraisal scheme experts, paying close attention to gender balance, as well as to gender equality and diversity related ethical aspects, and make use of their feedback to improve the trainings. More largely, the institutions organising ethics reviews (universities, research centres, etc.) should be invited to ensure that the experts they rely on are also trained, as part of their quality process and standard operating procedures.

Finally, the action should aim at valorising the work produced beyond the community of ethics and integrity experts and in particular by promoting its use for the students and young researchers that will constitute the next generation of ethics experts and reviewers. In this perspective, cooperation should be sought with large university/research networks (such as EUA, YERUN, LERU, CESAER, EARMA etc.) in order to enrich the relevant ethics related curriculum with the material produced by the action.

In order to achieve the expected outcomes, cooperation with actors from China, Korea and/or African countries non-associated to Horizon Europe is required.

## **Call - European Research Area**

***HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01***

### **Conditions for the Call**

#### Indicative budget(s)<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/digital-education-action-plan\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/digital-education-action-plan_en)

<sup>74</sup> Detailed information of the mentioned EU funded projects can be found on CORDIS web site (<https://cordis.europa.eu/>)

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.  
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.



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Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million)	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) <sup>77</sup>	Number of projects expected to be funded
		2022		
Opening: 19 Jan 2022 Deadline(s): 20 Apr 2022				
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-10	CSA	7.50	2.00 to 3.00	3
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-30	CSA	3.00	Around 1.50	2
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-31	CSA		Around 0.00	0
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-32	CSA	3.00	Around 3.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-40	CSA	5.00	Around 5.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-41	RIA	4.00	Around 2.00	2
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-42	CSA	2.00	Around 2.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-44	CSA	3.50	Around 3.50	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-50	CSA	3.00	1.50 to 2.00	2
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-51	CSA	10.50	2.50 to 3.50	3
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-60	CSA	3.00	Around 3.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-70	CSA	5.50	1.50 to 2.00	3
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-80	RIA	3.00	Around 3.00	1
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-81	CSA	3.00	0.50 to 1.00	4
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-91	CSA	3.00	Around 3.00	1
Overall indicative budget		59.00		

**General conditions relating to this call**

<i>Admissibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General
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All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.

The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

<sup>77</sup> Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

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	Annex A.
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
<i>Financial and operational capacity and exclusion</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
<i>Award criteria</i>	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
<i>Documents</i>	The documents are described in General Annex E.
<i>Procedure</i>	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.

### **PRIORITIZING INVESTMENT AND REFORM**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

#### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-10: Support for policy makers – Programme level collaboration between national R&I programmes**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 2.00 and 3.00 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 7.50 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.

Expected Outcome: The actions funded under this topic will coordinate national and regional R&I programmes by pooling national resources and contributing to the alignment of national research and innovation policies. Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

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- Identification of common research and innovation priorities agreed among the participating national and regional R&I programmes, taking into account international developments where relevant;
- Implementation of multiannual joint calls, resulting in the funding of transnational collaborative R&I projects;
- Implementation of other joint activities supporting the market, regulatory or societal uptake of results;
- Contribution to participating states meeting Global Challenges, including relevant contribution to the SDGs.

Scope: Since the introduction of the European Research Area (ERA) and starting with FP6, Programme level collaboration among Member States and their research and innovation programmes has become a cornerstone of the ERA, with annual investment from Member States of more than € 800 million per year. More than 250 networks among research funders have been created over time, serving different research needs but always coordinating public research investments across borders and allowing researchers to apply for calls for transnational research projects funded by the participating states.

The new policy approach to European Partnerships limits co-funding to Member State collaboration to Union and Horizon Europe priorities. Therefore, the ERA part of the Horizon Europe provides the possibility for Member States, Associated Countries and civil society organisations such as foundations, to maintain existing and establish new collaborations on priorities of their choice.

The successful proposal should align national and regional research funding programmes (managed by national or regional programme owners / managers) on agreed common priorities and implement joint calls for transnational R&I projects as well as other joint calls. Proposers have to demonstrate clear commitments from participating programmes to pool resources and ensure complementarity between activities and policies with those of the Framework Programme and relevant European Partnership Initiatives.

Applicants should pool the necessary resources from the participating national (or regional) research programmes as well as, where appropriate, leverage resources from pertinent foundations, charities and transnational initiatives, with a view to implementing calls for proposals resulting in grants to third parties without EU co-funding in this area.

The proposal should also demonstrate potential impact at national, regional and transnational level research and innovation. The proposal should demonstrate that activities exclude overlaps with on-going actions co-funded by the EU under Horizon 2020 or Horizon Europe.

Participation of legal entities from third countries, and/or regions including those not automatically eligible for funding is encouraged.

The actions should envisage a duration which is appropriate to the ambition and complexity of the proposed topic.

## **TRANSLATING R&I RESULTS INTO THE ECONOMY**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-30: Testing of the ERA Hub concept – pilot phase**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 1.50 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Test the new ERA Hubs<sup>78</sup> concept across different geographies and structures in Europe, based on common compliance criteria; the process should act as an incentive for advanced ecosystems to seek recognition, and for less advanced ecosystems to reach the criteria facilitating support from European, national and regional level.
- Better coordinate relationships between the European Research Area and relevant national or regional stakeholders in order to ensure the smart directionality introduced in the new ERA.
- Develop a common platform for collaboration and best practice sharing across borders, sectors and disciplines on knowledge production, circulation and use, and facilitate cross-fertilisation and smart directionality among ecosystem actors to achieve transformative changes and advance Europe together.
- Increase both the interoperability of the European ecosystems and the intra-operability within each territorial ecosystem, aiming to improve coordination, and foster excellence.
- Facilitate a better circulation and absorption of talents in countries/regions, as well as improve knowledge circulation and uptake of research results;
- Provide a toolbox of best practices for researchers, innovators, industry and institutions across Europe to cooperate.

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<sup>78</sup> See COM(2020)628, Commission Communication, A new ERA for Research and Innovation

Scope: A vibrant ecosystem is an essential condition for growth. In order to take full advantage of possible synergies and complementarities between the EU and national and regional ecosystems for knowledge production, circulation and use, there is a need to make compatible and interoperable the policy frameworks that govern existing structures for knowledge transfer and sharing, and address common criteria for assessing work, processes and outputs. Reinforcing the networking interconnecting geographically or thematically, the ecosystem actors on the basis of smart specialisation and other strategic considerations, such as value chains, will consequently stimulate excellence and complete the coverage across Europe.

This action should build on the preparatory work of the previous Work Programme on Knowledge Ecosystems, which provides among others a mapping of existing ecosystem actors engaged in knowledge production, circulation and use across Europe, as well as designing the ERA Hubs concept as a toolbox of pre-defined common standards of work, processes and outputs, and key performance indicators on operational, programme and strategic impacts. The concept should be tested on collaborations, platforms, or other structures bringing together ecosystem actors, and increase networking between those structures in a coordinated approach, around a common agenda and compliance criteria. The rollout of the concept across Europe is expected to support and coordinate the efforts at local and regional level for the implementation of a pan-European ERA Hubs initiative.

The scope of this action is to pilot the ERA Hub concept with a limited number of ecosystems through implementation in countries and regions where knowledge ecosystem structures aligned to the ERA Hubs concept already exist, combined with countries or regions where an integrated place-based approach is missing. The main goal of the action is to fine-tune through experimentation the designed concept of ERA Hubs and its technical specifications and compliance criteria, share practices, as well as provide a toolkit of best practices and activities that ensure a strong basis for a potential scale-up in different geographies across the EU territory in the next phase.

Projects will be assigned to entities or networks of structures involved in knowledge production, circulation and use activities at European, national, regional or city level, which should take the coordination role in orchestrating the actors of an ecosystem working together to implement the ERA Hubs concept, in pursuit of intra-operability with the territorial ecosystem and a common agenda supporting the economic transitions and smart specialisation strategies, as well as job creation and skills development to better absorb talent in a country or region. These structures could be entities that have the competences and/or the willingness to become pioneers, benchmarks and ambassadors of the new concept and should include higher education institutions or their tech transfer offices, research institutes, business schools, private companies, not for profit organisations, or entities already part of pan-European networks or coming from different funding communities, in order to better connect those communities.

Support from institutional, regional, or national sources is highly encouraged (proven through e.g. letters of commitment), in order to make considerable progress in the deployment of the ERA Hubs initiative in the respective country or region.

The action should include the development of an independent monitoring mechanism to assess the progress of the ecosystem actors engaged in a common agenda and implementation of the ERA Hubs concept in a dedicated country or region. On the basis of the assessment, projects should also provide recommendations on how to deploy the ERA Hubs in different geographies and regions.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-31: Innowwide Bridging Facility**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 0.00 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 0.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:  Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60 000.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Contributing to implementing the political priorities of the new European Commission, in particular in relation to the objective of ‘A stronger Europe in the world’, and in relation to the EU communication on the comprehensive Strategy with Africa, aiming to support building knowledge economies
- Economic growth and job creation in the EU and in Africa, contributing to the AU Agenda 2030 and relevant EU policies, and enhancing the visibility of EU R&I at the international scene
- Transfer and internationalisation of demonstrated technologies and know-how, both to and from the EU and Africa

Scope: Competition has become global and so is innovation. To compete effectively in new and emerging markets, European and African SMEs need to develop partnerships with their strategic counterparts to generate joint business opportunities in new product-market combinations. Developing a new product-market combination with a strategic partner can be very challenging for SMEs on both continents in terms of technological & financial risks, and market barriers. Before starting, it is essential to assess first the technical feasibility as well as developing a deep understanding of the business environment, including the financial, legal, market and cultural aspects in the targeted markets. This instrument will allow European and African SMEs to develop a partnership beyond conventional market studies, sales channels and export aids. This Horizon Europe funded ‘INNOWIDE Bridging Facility’ precisely covers these risks, by supporting innovative European and African SMEs in conducting Viability Assessment Projects (VAPs) in Europe and Africa, creating the favourable conditions needed to increase the uptake of European and African innovative solutions in each other’s markets. An SME friendly bottom-up approach applies, with no specific technical areas to be addressed.

The VAPs will be selected following a series of open calls organised by the action. The proposal for undertaking the action should define the organisational process for selecting the VAPs for which financial support will be granted, including the process of selecting, allocating and reporting on the use of independent experts and ensuring no conflicts of interest.

At least 75% of the EU funding shall be allocated to financial support for the third parties carrying out the selected VAPs.

The calls should specify that each VAP should include a wide variety of activities to explore the practical, technological and commercial viability of an innovative solution in particular in terms of how it needs to meet local conditions and demands.

Proposals must detail the different types of activities for which a third party may receive financial support such as market studies, partner search and networking, approaches for client/user involvement including societal, behavioural and cultural aspects, and other activities aimed at overcoming barriers for market introduction and uptake.

Proposals must clearly detail the criteria for awarding financial support and simple and comprehensive criteria for calculating the exact amount of such support, which may not exceed EUR 60 000 for each VAP. The award criteria must be objective and non-discriminatory.

Each VAP shall be led by an entity established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country and shall involve at least one entity established in an African country.

The open calls must be published widely, and Horizon Europe standards with respect to transparency, equal treatment, no conflict of interest and respect of confidentiality must be adhered to. The results of the calls must be published without delay, including, for each VAP,

a description of the project, the legal name and country of the third party, the start date and duration of the project, and the amount of the award.

Proposals should specify how they will promote the calls, how they will monitor and report on call results and how they will assess the quality of the outcomes and experiences from the VAPs, as well as how they will provide regular in-depth analyses and which indicators will be used for measuring the impacts achieved. Analyses should draw up R&I policy conclusions on questions such as which additional joint R&I activities in third countries should be supported, what framework conditions for R&I cooperation need improving, and what further R&I support services should be implemented.

***The Commission does not intend to implement the action and will not fund the topic HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-31.***

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-32: An experimentation space for the uptake and use of R&I results for EU resilience and future preparedness**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.00 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:  Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60 000.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- A methodology and toolbox to design and implement testing of policy relevant findings stemming from European R&I that can contribute to EU resilience and future preparedness.
- A knowledge base of EU research findings, with high capacity to inform policy and engage citizens and research communities, that are tested, including the methodologies for testing (small scale experiments, randomised control trials etc).
- Lessons learnt to enhance the use of R&I results to enable fast response in the face of future crises and strengthen economic and social resilience, for example through



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supporting policy reforms, new regulation, social innovation, behavioural change, new technology adoption and the integration of the gender dimension.

Scope: R&I results and new scientific knowledge can inform policy making and help address societal challenges through new technological and societal solutions, as well as through providing policy recommendations and policy options with a proper (scientific) understanding of the underlying conditions. Testing policy recommendations and findings of scientific research through experiments and novel methodologies increases understanding of the implications, risks and opportunities of possible new solutions, enabling societies to respond faster and more effectively to crises and build resilience and social cohesion.

This action aims at increasing the visibility and fostering the use of R&I results with high policy relevance to contribute to the recovery and resilience of Europe, while engaging research communities and citizens in an “experimentation space” for new, science based, socially inclusive and gender responsive policy initiatives and solutions.

The action will match policy relevant findings for EU resilience stemming from research (such as from EU H2020, HE and previous programmes as well as other EU programmes, and national level publicly funded research) with national, regional and local needs, and carry out the experimentation phase in co-creation with the research communities and citizens. At the core of the action is the design of appropriate trial mechanisms that will test research findings which can be translated to policy and new societal solutions, and thereby provide policy makers and citizens with a high degree of confidence and trust in responding to new challenges.

The project consortium may consider links with related knowledge management activities by the European Commission, including the European Commission’s Knowledge Centres and the Knowledge for Policy Platform hosted by the Joint Research Centre.

## **DEEPENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA**

### **OPEN SCIENCE**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-40: Stepping-up institutional and territorial changes towards open and responsible research and innovation**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 5.00 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 5.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

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<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.</p>
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	<p>The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60.000. The respective options of the Model Grant Agreement will be applied. Beneficiaries should refer to General Annex B of the Work Programme for further information and guidance.</p> <p>Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations:</p> <p>Beneficiaries must make proactive efforts to freely share, in a timely manner and as appropriate, all relevant results with the other grants awarded from this work programme part subject to the same additional dissemination obligations. Beneficiaries must acknowledge and incorporate these obligations in the proposal, outlining the efforts they will make towards meeting them, and in Annex I to the Grant Agreement.</p>

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Consolidated evidence base on sustainable institutional and territorial changes towards open and responsible research and innovation;
- A central point of expertise providing services and support for research and innovation institutions, and territories, to open up to society;
- A significant number of institutions and territories in the European Research Area (ERA) become more porous to society, align with the needs, values and expectations of society, improve the excellence of their research and innovation, promote gender equality, and reduce instances of ethical misconduct;
- Reduction in disparities between institutions and territories in terms of their attention to open and responsible research and innovation.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Open and responsible research and innovation practices mainstreamed throughout territorial and institutional settings;

- Increased impact of EU R&I outputs and the conversion of knowledge and ideas into products and services.

Scope: Research and innovation institutions play a key role in creating an enabling environment for opening research and innovation towards society, sharing research outputs, improving research integrity and gender equality, and promoting science education, societal engagement (such as citizen science and other forms of co-design and co-creation) and two-way science communication. At territorial level, interactions between different institutions from across the quadruple helix <sup>79</sup>, and including societal actors such as civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations, are essential to ensuring that the processes and outcomes of research and innovation are aligned with the needs, values and expectations of society.

However, European research and innovation actors lack a consolidated evidence base and guidance based on EU investments in this area to date to support them, there are significant differences in attention to different aspects of responsibility and openness between institutions and territories, rewards and incentives at the workforce and institutional level are often misaligned or even disfavour openness to society, and there is no central point of reference or provider of services and expertise to turn to.

This action consists of three parts, all of which must be addressed:

The first involves consolidating the evidence base and develop innovative guidance and other materials, which can support institutions and territories to implement sustainable institutional changes and open up to society<sup>80</sup>. It should take into account and build on the learning and knowledge developed by Horizon 2020's Science with and for Society programme <sup>81</sup> and potentially other sources of knowledge.

The second part involves financial support to third parties, by launching 'cascading grant' call(s) to support institutions and territories from across the ERA to implement sustainable institutional changes towards open and responsible research and innovation. This may require consultancy or other kinds of support services to be developed and rolled out to successful institutions. A significant number of institutional changes (e.g. 70-100 individual institutional changes) should be expected in beneficiary organisations and territories. As such, a significant proportion of the funding should be allocated to the 'cascading grant' mechanism. One or more call(s) for proposals should be launched, which could focus on specific disciplines,

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<sup>79</sup> A model of cooperation between industry, academia, civil society and public authorities, with a strong emphasis on citizens and their needs.

<sup>80</sup> Institutional changes are characterised as: 1) a change to how the institution governs/structures itself, 2) expected to have meaningful impact within the institution concerned, 3) intended to last beyond the lifetime of funding (i.e. not one-off activities). See <https://op.europa.eu/s/olV2>.

<sup>81</sup> Particularly relevant projects to build upon were supported by: ISSI-5-2014, GARRI-1-2014, ISSI-5-2015, SwafS-04-2016, SwafS-05-2017, SwafS-05-2018-2019, SwafS-14-2018-2019-2020, SwafS-23-2020. Moreover, this action should build on the evidence base for benefits developed by the MoRRI and Super\_MoRRI projects. Projects focused on implementing Gender Equality Plans under SwafS (including those supported by topics GERI-4-2014, SwafS-03-2016-2017, SwafS-09-2018-2019-2020) may also be of relevance. The RRI-Tools project, from FP7's Science in Society programme, may also be relevant: <https://rri-tools.eu/>.

MoRRI country clusters<sup>82</sup>, or other pertinent criteria, but with the underlying goal of reducing disparities between institutions and territories in terms of their attention to different dimensions of openness and responsibility.

The third part involves acting as a central point of expertise and support services on open and responsible research and innovation for institutions and projects under Horizon Europe and within the European Research Area. This point of expertise should have appropriate high-level visibility, and the ability to interact and support all parts of the research and innovation system (all parts of quadruple helix, disciplines, sectors). In order to achieve the expected outcomes, international networking is advised to support co-operation on the issue at global level and provide expertise in support of institutions and projects.

The action should evaluate its impacts and develop recommendations useful to policy makers and those responsible for the governance of research and innovation institutions. The action should raise awareness of the benefits of open and responsible research and innovation to organisations across the ERA. It should develop close co-operation with other relevant projects, with a view to fostering collaboration and the early sharing of knowledge and evidence.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-41: Increasing the reproducibility of scientific results**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 2.00 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 4.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations: Beneficiaries must make proactive efforts to freely share, in a timely manner and as appropriate, all relevant results with the other grants awarded from the same call topic. Beneficiaries must acknowledge and incorporate these obligations in the proposal, outlining the efforts they will make towards meeting them, and in Annex I to the Grant Agreement.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

<sup>82</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/s/oIV4>

- Structured understanding of the underlying drivers, of concrete and effective interventions - funding, community-based, technical and policy - to increase reproducibility of the results of R&I; and of their benefits;
- Effective solutions, policy-, technical- and practice-based, to increase the reproducibility of R&I results in funding programmes, in communities and in the dissemination of scientific results;
- Greater collaboration, alignment of practices and joint action by stakeholders to increase reproducibility, including but not limited to training, specialised careers and guidelines for best practice.

These outcomes should contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Increased proportion of reproducible results from publicly funded R&I;
- Increased re-use of scientific results by research and innovation;
- Greater quality of the scientific production.

Scope: Reproducibility refers to the possibility for the scientific community to obtain the same results as the originators of a specific finding. As such, reproducibility is core to scientific progress, and there is debate on whether there is a ‘crisis of reproducibility’ in contemporary science. At a time when funding levels for R&I are under scrutiny globally, and societal trust in the outcomes of research and innovation become increasingly essential, there is a need to address inefficiencies in the research process, to avoid useless and costly repetition, to maximise return on investment in R&D&I, to prevent the propagation of mistakes, and to facilitate the translation of results into innovations.

Therefore, this topic aims to fund activities to

- a) determine how increased reproducibility generates gains and savings in the R&I process and improve overall performance - alongside the demonstrated positive effects on their quality, integrity and trust-worthiness, and
- b) find, experiment and mainstream concrete solutions and best-practices to increase the reproducibility of research funded with European taxpayers’ money, including through the more systematic integration of sex and gender as variables whenever relevant.

Consequently, actions should help understand and promote reproducibility by:

- 1) creating an open knowledge base of results, methodologies and interventions on the drivers and consequences of reproducibility for the R&I system; and to fill the main gaps in such knowledge;
- 2) develop, validate, pilot and deploy practices and practical tools for funders, publishers and scientists;

3) promote uptake, greater collaboration, and increased alignment of the activities of stakeholders - scientific and technical communities, publishers and funders among others - to increase reproducibility.

Finally, projects should assist further policy development on reproducibility, based on scoping work by the Commission<sup>83</sup>. While solutions should be applicable to Europe, attention should be paid to reproducibility in global science.

It is expected that the funded action(s) will adhere to best practices in open science and reproducibility (e.g. re-use existing results, fully document the research process), and provide a final reflection based on their own experience at the forefront of reproducibility.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-42: Supporting the development of aligned policies for open access books and monographs**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 2.00 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 2.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Improve the understanding of the current landscape of scientific book and monograph publishing in different fields of science in which it plays an important role, and in particular the bottlenecks in strategies and policies for their open access.
- Support aligned funder and institutional policies for open access monographs and books within the open science culture in the European Research Area and facilitate their coordination.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Address and increase equity, diversity and inclusivity in open science practices<sup>84</sup> inside the European Research Area.

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<sup>83</sup> i.e. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/341654>

- Increased capacity in the EU R&I system to conduct open science and to set it as a *modus operandi* of modern science.

Scope: Monographs, books and other types of long-text formats are very important outputs in some disciplines, such as in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. Whilst many disciplines rely nearly exclusively on the production of articles, professional advancement requirements, as well as the nature of the research and the writing process in some disciplines, result in the unwavering significance of long-text formats and monographs, both in the digital and in the print formats.

Open access for monographs and other long-text formats has been a slow process in multiple aspects. This is likely because of the higher costs and business models of book publishing, as well as a hesitancy on the side of researcher to trust important parts of their work in terms of volume to the new open access publishing environment. Additionally, funder policies and strategies focus a lot less on monographs than on journal articles, and they are often recommendations and not requirements.

This action aims to support the development of aligned institutional and funder policies and strategies regarding open access to books and monographs in Europe. In this context, the action should support: 1. activities that foster greater understanding of bottlenecks in the development of policies and strategies for open access to books and monographs by institutions and funders; 2. the coordination of policies amongst funders and research institutions, and the sharing of good practices in policies and strategies for open access to books and monographs; 3. actionable and evidence-based recommendations and resources for comprehensive institutional and funder policies for open access to books and monographs. The action may also envisage international cooperation with entities outside the EU Member States and associated countries.

The action should be no longer than 24 months.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-44: Developing and piloting training on the practice of open and responsible research and innovation**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

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<sup>84</sup> Open science practices may include: providing open access to research outputs (such as publications, data, software, models, algorithms, and workflows); early and open sharing of research (for example through preregistration, registered reports, pre-prints, crowd-sourcing of solutions to a specific problem); participation in open peer-review; measures to ensure reproducibility of results; and involving citizens, civil society and end-users in the co-creation of R&I agendas and content, including citizen science.

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<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 3.50 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations: Beneficiaries must make proactive efforts to disseminate policy recommendations aimed at relevant research institutions and levels of governance. Beneficiaries must acknowledge and incorporate this obligation in the proposal, outlining the efforts they will make towards meeting them, and in Annex I to the Grant Agreement.

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Consolidated evidence base on open and responsible research and innovation<sup>85</sup> training for researchers at all stages of their careers across the European Research Area.
- Development and piloting of high-quality training to a significant number of researchers on diverse aspects of open and responsible research and innovation.
- Establishment of a platform for further development of training, mutual learning, and dissemination of recommendations to authorities and institutions responsible for researcher training.

These targeted outcomes in turn contribute to medium and long-term impacts:

- Improved skills leading to greater employability and career prospects for researchers.
- Improvements in the excellence of the science conducted, improved capacity within the European Research Area to tackle societal challenges, greater interaction between science and society, improved overall effectiveness of EU research and innovation funding.
- Improved engagement and cooperation of researchers, with communicators, journalists, industry, policy maker and civil society.

Scope: In order to ensure the excellence of EU research and innovation, the research workforce needs to strengthen skills related to integrity, avoidance of various forms of bias, including gender bias, non-discrimination and inclusion, FAIR data management, data robustness and reproducibility, dissemination and exploitation of results, and interdisciplinary research. It requires skills to communicate science and research results, in the media (including social media) and to policy makers, and skills to participate in public debates. It also requires skills to engage the public to develop research and innovation agenda, the ability

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<sup>85</sup> Responsible research and innovation involves multi-actor and public engagement in research and innovation, easier access to scientific results, the take up of gender and ethics in the research and innovation content and process, and formal and informal science education.



to work in multi-actor collaborations covering all parts of the quadruple helix<sup>86</sup> where interests and motivation for engaging in research may be diverse, and actively involve citizens in research activities such as citizen science to expand the scope and the potentials of science itself. These skills are needed at all stages of researchers' careers, from undergraduate onwards (including as part of doctoral training).

This action consists of three parts, all of which must be addressed:

The first part consists of consolidating existing evidence<sup>87</sup> on researcher training on open and responsible research and innovation, at all stages of their careers, from undergraduate onwards (including as part of doctoral training), and identifying gaps in existing practices in the European Research Area. This will include mutual learning activities within and outside the European Research Area to ensure established and emergent good practices are considered. Existing initiatives, such as the European Charter and Code<sup>88</sup> and the EU Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training<sup>89</sup>, should be taken into account.

The second part consists of developing training modules, courses or other kinds of interventions on open and responsible research and innovation that will be piloted to a significant number of students and researchers in different kinds of research organisations and higher education organisations across Europe, and at all stages of their studies and careers. The learning outcomes will be evaluated, with a view to refining the training ready for more widespread deployment (e.g. at national, institutional levels, or in MSCA actions). Attention should be paid to the gender dimension of the training/learning outcomes, and to ensure that the training is adapted and piloted to researchers of all backgrounds (age, ethnicity, geography, gender, etc.).

The third part consists of establishing a platform, sustainable beyond the lifetime of project funding, to continue knowledge exchange, develop guidance, and further develop training on open and responsible research and innovation. Part of the work must include the wide dissemination of policy recommendations aimed at relevant research institutions and levels of governance.

Working closely with relevant on-going actions, quadruple helix stakeholders, and science outreach stakeholders, is advised. The action is also expected to build on and valorise results from projects already funded under the "*Science with and for Society*" part of Horizon 2020.

## HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND RESEARCHERS

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

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<sup>86</sup> A model of cooperation between industry, academia, civil society and public authorities, with a strong emphasis on citizens and their needs.

<sup>87</sup> In addition to relevant national-level initiatives, or even initiatives outside the EU, this includes Horizon 2020 projects supported through topics SEAC-2-2014 and topic SwafS-08-2019-2020 under Science with and for Society; the Horizon 2020 Innovative Training Networks supported through the MSCA-ITN topics as well as the COFUND projects for doctoral programmes under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, and the Erasmus+ European University Alliances and Horizon 2020 top-up pilot.

<sup>88</sup> <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter>

<sup>89</sup> <https://www.euraxess.be/belgium/jobs-funding/doctoral-training-principles>

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-50: Developing an effective ERA talent pipeline**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 1.50 and 2.00 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Several projects may work in parallel and contribute to several of the following expected outcomes:

- Creation of a common academic researchers' career structure, taking into account new developments and diversification of careers in academia, based on practices in Member States, linking it to the updated European Skills Competences and Occupations (ESCO) framework<sup>90</sup>
- Enabling widespread recognition of the ESCO qualifications profile, more precisely the competences that PhD trainees and postdocs in various stages of their careers have obtained, both within and outside academia regardless of sector, discipline or location
- Mainstreaming of tenure track like systems, as an attempt to improve career development and solve part of the precarity of research careers in academia
- Mainstreaming practices for higher education institutions to involve non-academic sector from the onset in training & career development of PhD students
- Mainstreaming value creation and intersectoral mobility schemes within higher education institutions to promote jobs and growth.

Scope: The European Research and Innovation system needs to optimise its support for the constant flow-through of highly skilled talents to match the demand of society and the economy. Establishing an enhanced framework for researchers' careers within the EU towards a pipeline of highly skilled, creative, and resilient talents will accelerate the achievement of a knowledge-based society and economy.

The talent pipeline's main initiator remains the curiosity-driven approach to science, delivering creative and resilient individuals that can cope with change, for the benefit of society as a whole. The autonomy of organisations that are at the basis of the talent pipeline is an additional essential success factor for the ERA to provide visible value through excellence in research and innovation.

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<sup>90</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>

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The framework aims at addressing: (i) the recognition of the research profession and PhD qualifications within and outside academia, the structuring of the researcher scientific career (i.e. to improve interoperability between academia and other employers), (ii) the diversification of the careers of talents trained as researcher, (iii) solutions to the precariousness of researchers' careers in academia including a model tenure-track system accompanied by possible standard principles, and (iv) strengthened interaction with business to facilitate access to the labour market.

The common framework for research careers is expected to be based on dynamic competence profiles of researchers in various stages of their diverse careers in order to enable widespread recognition of the competences that PhD trainees and postdocs have obtained, both within and outside academia independent of sector or discipline and geographical location. It should be translated in the new European competence framework<sup>91</sup>, which will need to be mainstreamed across Europe.

We expect projects to take measures to improve flow-through of talent within academia and to and from the non-academic sector or to other highly needed positions in academia, to (i) improve transferable skills training, involving non-academic actors in education and training of researchers from the onset, (ii) improve talent transfer to actors in the surrounding ecosystem, (iii) improve value creation practices among higher education institutions, (iv) communicate about the competences and qualifications of researchers and their talents to economic actors and society as a whole, (v) initiatives enabling the sustainable and dynamic interaction within and between the ecosystem actors for knowledge production, circulation and use, and stimulating career fluidity through inter-institutional and inter-sectoral mobility (bi-directionally), (vi) embed additional elements in the assessment schemes for both organisations and individuals at all career stages, (vii) propose methodologies on how to introduce skills requirements from the business, social and public sector to academia.

Activities should include the establishment of pilot (for instance) local talent management centres and training hubs that strengthen involvement of the non-academic sector in defining the priorities of researchers' training and lifelong learning upskilling. Attention should be paid to addressing gender equality related issues throughout the different strands of the proposed framework.

Duration: The action should be no longer than 2 years.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-51: Acceleration Services in support of the institutional transformation of Higher Education Institutions**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 2.50 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and

<sup>91</sup> COM(2020)628, Commission Communication, A new ERA for Research and Innovation

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	selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes in relation to acceleration services in support of the institutional transformation of higher education institutions (HEI):

- A methodology towards acceleration services that can help HEI or alliances/networks of HEIs in pursuing institutional transformations, including a monitoring mechanism to assess quality of the delivered services.
- A coaching service with best practice examples and guidance for individual HEIs as well as networks of HEIs, aligned with the common transformation agenda, facilitating access to finance from various sources.
- Tested acceleration services with user groups (HEI umbrella organisations, individual HEIs, or networks of HEIs, including partners from surrounding ecosystems), supporting HEI or networks of HEIs in developing a strategy to pursue institutional transformations in the field of R&I.
- An investment strategy mechanism, implemented with the user group, facilitating access to funding from national, regional, or EU resources to deliver on the Higher Education Transformation Agenda.
- Progress of the user groups of the acceleration services regarding the implementation of the chosen areas of the transformation agenda, measured through a monitoring mechanism.
- Policy feedback to the European Commission and Member States on the acceleration services, and widespread dissemination of the pilot results to other target groups

Scope: The overall aim of the Higher Education Institutions acceleration services is to help institutions to successfully implement a strategy and roadmap for transformation, by creating a shared knowledge base, coaching service and virtual meeting place for them to connect with peers and other ecosystem actors, as well as with investors and public funders. The acceleration services should consist of (i) a coaching and support mechanism for HEIs to pursue institutional transformation in various areas, (ii) a methodology for an investment strategy to facilitate access of higher education institutions and surrounding ecosystem to support to deliver on the chosen transformations, (iii) a monitoring mechanism to assess progress in the transformation efforts. Projects should address all three aspects and test them with user groups.

HEIs, including universities, are crucial drivers of knowledge ecosystems, and increasingly also of innovation ecosystems. The new ERA is expected to strengthen the R&I dimension of

HEIs through a comprehensive institutional Higher Education Transformation Agenda in synergy with the European Education Area, reinforcing their role as drivers of change, fostering their recovery, enabling shared objectives between the EU and Member States' initiatives to support higher education institutions in their efforts to transform on their education, research, innovation and service to society missions. To deliver on the transformation agenda for HEIs a large-scale concerted action in support of the institutional transformation efforts of HEIs will be required, including a standard methodology to develop roadmaps of EU, national and regional actions and investment measures for institutions or alliances.

Projects should build on the results of previous analyses that set out a framework for empowering HEIs across Europe in their research and innovation mission, facilitating ongoing transformation processes based on universities' needs (*"Towards a 2030 Vision on the Future of Universities in the field of research and innovation in Europe"*, October 2020<sup>92</sup>), and the analyses performed under the previous Work Programme (in particular the study *"Knowledge ecosystems in the new ERA: a comprehensive analysis of the state of play, the design of monitoring mechanisms, and creation of a toolbox of support measures"*, 2021). The projects should link and build on the results of the initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) on Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education launched in 2021 that has the objective to unlock the full innovation potential of higher education institutions (HEIs).

The Higher Education Transformation Agenda developed under the previous Work Programme is expected to include the most important priorities and challenges for HEIs regarding institutional transformations towards the future, including (trans)national cooperation with other HEIs, and the growing importance of engagement with a broad range of sectors and societal actors inherent to the multiple dimensions of HEI (education, research, innovation, service to society). Acceleration services should address all possible R&I areas of the Higher Education Transformation Agenda such as: (a) empower HEIs towards developing shared R&I strategies that deliver on Europe's challenges with critical mass; (b) facilitate the sharing of capacity, infrastructure and resources through collaborative settings, such as the European Universities initiative; (c) improve the attractiveness of researchers' careers, including through reform of the career assessment and incentives regimes; (d) facilitate co-operation with surrounding R&I ecosystem actors; (e) support the transition to knowledge- and digitally-driven HEIs that mainstream Open Science practices and include research and innovation outputs in teaching; (f) engage citizens in solving societal challenges; (g) support institutional change through inclusive gender equality plans.

Projects are expected to a methodology how to deploy such acceleration services including (i) access to coaches, mentors, expertise and training from academia or outside academia, with different profiles that match with the areas from the transformation agenda, which the project puts at the disposal of individual HEIs or networks of universities in need of institutional transformation in the field of R&I; these experts, coaches, mentors, etc should provide

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<sup>92</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a3cde934-12a0-11eb-9a54-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

support for (ii) strategy development, (iii) roadmap development, and (iv) mapping of required support resources, as well as provide (v) detailed advice on access to funding from EU, national, and regional sources to allow the HEIs to deliver on the transformations; this should in particular include support and access to financial instruments for excellent research and innovation capacity, and support for disruptive innovation from academic sector, incl. spin-offs from universities and public research organisations, and cooperation agreements between academic and business sector. This should lead to a standard methodology to develop specific investment agendas for individual institutions or networks of HEI that consists of different funding and financial instrument branches, aligned with the priorities and areas of the common transformation agenda, and realising concerted support to the institutional transformation efforts universities want to engage in.

The acceleration services should be piloted together with large user groups (either individual HEI, networks or alliances of universities and surrounding ecosystem actors, or umbrella organisations of HEI), and progress of the users in the implementation of the chosen areas of the transformation agenda should be measured. Actions should therefore include an evaluation mechanism that enables to assess the strategies from individual HEIs or alliances of universities, pursuing institutional transformation towards universities of the future, for instance under supervision of an ‘acceleration board’ of independent experts. The evaluation mechanism should also monitor progress of the HEIs in the implementation of the chosen areas from the transformation agenda.

Projects should disseminate widely the methodology and the results of the pilot with user groups, as well as provide policy recommendations to the Commission and Member States on the acceleration services, in view of future targeted and synergetic actions in support of Higher Education sector.

The duration of the action should not exceed 5 years.

#### SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

#### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-60: A European competence centre for science communication**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.00 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Consolidation of knowledge and development of guidelines, tools, innovative strategies, and recommendations to improve science communication for all research and innovation actors;
- Establishment of a European competence centre for science communication, sustained beyond the lifetime of funding;
- Increased networking and mutual learning, higher quality, more trustworthy, and more rapidly mobilised science communication by national authorities, businesses, civil society organisations, other stakeholders and projects.

Scope: Science communication is a scientific discipline, an activity conducted by career scientists and science outreach organisations, and a specific career pathway followed by journalists. It has the potential to improve science-society relations by increasing the transparency of science, building trust in the processes and outcomes of science, and raising scientific literacy. It can also improve the uptake of science by society and support evidence-based policy making.

Science and science communication have been undergoing radical changes over recent years, creating opportunities that may, in turn, pose new challenges. For instance, traditional media are increasingly being superseded by social media with more user-edited content; rapid diffusion of open access or pre-peer review papers gives the general public access to research that was previously locked behind paywalls; and open data enable a wider set of actors to interact with, analyse and interpret research results than in the past.

The covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of communicating scientific knowledge and recommendations to respond to a fast-moving and critical threat. It is important to learn from this and other experiences when science communication has been essential to conveying scientific knowledge and recommendations on critical issues, to explaining how hypotheses, experiments and uncertainties are also part of the scientific method, to build capacities and strengthen networks, and to ensure greater ability in the future to react rapidly and effectively to critical situations.

This action has two parts, both of which must be addressed:

The first part consists of consolidating the evidence base on science communication from ongoing and past projects and initiatives<sup>93</sup>, covering a wide range of existing and potential critical areas for research and innovation for society. Particular attention should be paid to contextual issues (geography, gender, age, socio-economic status, etc.) that affect the uptake or effectiveness of science communication. Policy reports and recommendations, guidelines, and innovative strategies should be developed for all research and innovation actor types; potential targets should include government agencies and public authorities, research funding and performing organisations, and civil society organisations. An important outcome should

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<sup>93</sup> In particular, but not limited to, projects supported by Horizon 2020's SwafS-19-2018-2019-2020 topic, but other relevant projects and initiatives within and outside the Framework Programmes should also be considered.

be the publication of one or more user-friendly handbook(s) for effective science communication, backed by an interactive and pedagogical online toolkit, for use by Horizon Europe projects. This part should involve all parts of the quadruple helix<sup>94</sup> in co-creation activities, to ensure that the outcomes are usable in different contexts, for different purposes, and by different research and innovation actors; considerable efforts to disseminate the findings across the European Research Area should be undertaken.

The second part will consist of establishing a centre of knowledge, expertise, advice, resources, and tools on science communication in the European Research Area. It should link to - and support - existing communities of knowledge and practice, with the goal of improving co-ordination and mutual learning between them. It should support potential user groups including R&I projects, public authorities, government agencies, the private sector, and civil society organisations, to improve and initiate trusted and impactful science communication. An important element will be preparing the European Research Area to react quickly to situations requiring science communication, and the ability to provide rapid advice and support, as required. The centre should work towards the sustainability of its activities beyond the lifetime of funding, including through the provision of a basket of services and other activities that have market value; a business plan should therefore be elaborated from the very earliest stages of the project.

The action should build on the knowledge, networks and capacities developed by Horizon 2020<sup>95</sup> and by national and regional initiatives and work closely with relevant projects. A minimum project duration of 4 years should be envisaged.

#### SCIENCE EDUCATION

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

#### **HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-70: Open schooling for science education and a learning continuum for all**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 1.50 and 2.00 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 5.50 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

<sup>94</sup> A model of cooperation between industry, academia, civil society and public authorities, with a strong emphasis on citizens and their needs.

<sup>95</sup> Including topic SwafS-19-2018-2019-2020.



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- Promote creation of new partnerships that foster networking, sharing and applying science and technology research findings amongst teachers, researchers and professionals across different enterprises;
- Engage learners in meaningful real-life problem-solving situations, within education, the workplace and other learning environments;
- Encourage science studies and science careers by supporting cross-community networks of stakeholders to address issues such as the Green Deal, Health and Digitalisation;
- Increase female participation in science studies and science careers and deconstruct gender stereotypes;
- Foster, share and apply science and innovation research to different genres of enterprises eg start-ups, SMEs, entrepreneurs;
- Encourage mentoring across the different groups involved in the partnerships in order to take full advantage of science, technology, research and innovation;
- Encourage industry-funded innovation to become part of lifelong learning programmes

Scope: Science education should be an essential component of compulsory education for all students. Policies should support students, teachers, parents and the wider community to improve access to and provide everyone with the opportunities to pursue excellence in learning and learning outcomes and to ensure young people and adult learners alike are motivated to learn and to be fully equipped to engage in scientific discourse and facilitate further study in science education.

The proposed action targets the creation of new partnerships in local communities to foster improved science education for all citizens and to contribute to a learning continuum for all. It seeks to promote partnerships between for example teachers, students, scientists, researchers, innovators, professionals in enterprise and other stakeholders in science related fields to work together on real-life challenges and innovations within local communities with a view to engaging them in teaching and learning processes and to promote science education as part of local community development.

This action aims to support a range of activities based on collaboration at local level between formal, non-formal and informal science education providers, enterprises and civil society in order to integrate the concept of open schooling, including all educational levels, in science education.

The action should consider current policy initiatives. Reference and consideration should be given to previously funded projects. Applicants should develop links with Scientix<sup>96</sup> and consider links with other policy domains such as projects funded under SwafS-26-2020 (Innovators of the future: bridging the gender gap).

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<sup>96</sup> <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/730009>

Currently, Europe faces a shortfall in science-knowledgeable people at all levels of society at a time when it needs ever more scientists and a science literate society. The coronavirus pandemic demonstrates the importance and necessity of having highly qualified scientists, researchers, innovators and medics to keep our society safe and healthy. To increase the uptake of science careers to feed the talent pipeline, and to improve science literacy in our adult population and support a learning continuum for all, a collaborative action on Open Schooling is proposed.

**GENDER EQUALITY**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-80: Living Lab for gender-responsive innovation**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.00 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Research and Innovation Actions

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Advancement of knowledge and practice on gender-responsive innovation in Europe
- Strengthening of the innovation and inclusiveness dimensions of the European Research Area.

Scope: Women remain disproportionately under-represented among innovators and start-up entrepreneurs and hold less than 10% of patent applications<sup>97</sup>, while the integration of the gender dimension into product design, technologies and innovations in general, remains very limited despite its potential for opening new markets and its core importance for solving global challenges and European priorities. Moreover, a positive correlation between the European Innovation Scoreboard and the Gender Equality Index has been reported, and a higher proportion of research organisations with a gender equality plan in a given country is similarly correlated with a higher Innovation Score<sup>98</sup>.

A “Living Lab” will be put in place, gathering innovators as well as social science and gender scholars to investigate and generate new and disruptive ideas to promote women innovators and develop gender-responsive innovation. This novel knowledge and collaboration scheme

<sup>97</sup> She Figures 2018, DG Research and Innovation, European Commission: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/she-figures-2018\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/she-figures-2018_en)

<sup>98</sup> <https://genderaction.eu/the-higher-a-country-scores-on-gender-equality-the-higher-its-innovation-potential/>

will build on projects and actions supported under Horizon 2020, including the EU Prize for Women Innovators and its network of awardees, project GENDERACTION, recommendations from the Horizon 2020 Expert Group to update and expand “Gendered Innovations/Innovation through Gender”<sup>99</sup> and outputs of projects funded under the SwafS-26-2020 (Innovators of the future: bridging the gender gap) topic. It will also complement initiatives led by the European Innovation Council, as well as EIT-led activities aimed at supporting women-led innovation.

Proposals are expected to address the following:

- Establish a sustainable learning and collaboration hub between various innovation ecosystem actors, including, e.g., women innovators, social innovators, education institutions, science and technology museums, foundations, start-ups and larger companies, as well as social science researchers and gender scholars from a variety of scientific disciplines.
- Develop real-life action research with above-mentioned stakeholders, based on the co-development and testing of user-centred and open and social innovation processes promoting gender equal participation, as well as integrating the gender dimension into their contents, with an opening to intersectional approaches considering social categories intersecting with gender such as ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or else social origin. A special focus should be placed on information technology and AI-related fields and Commission priorities such as the European Green Deal and the preparedness and response to future pandemics.
- Propose concrete new methods and solutions for the development of gender-responsive innovation in Europe.

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-81: Support to the implementation of inclusive gender equality plans**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 0.50 and 1.00 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  The following additional eligibility criteria apply:

<sup>99</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/gendered-innovations-2-2020-nov-24\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/gendered-innovations-2-2020-nov-24_en)

	The scheme must involve at least one leading university or research organisation in gender equality, and at least three less advanced institutions from Widening Member States or Associated Countries including countries from the Western Balkans
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Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

- Enhance the reputation, attractiveness, inclusiveness and research excellence of less advanced institutions as a result of implementing inclusive gender equality plans.
- Transform institutions to advance inclusive gender equality within the European Research Area (ERA).

Scope: The institutional change strategy implemented through gender equality plans has had very positive impacts in many research organisations and been a catalyser at national and EU level, as the latest ERA progress report has shown. However, there is a heterogeneity in the implementation of Gender Equality Plans across the EU, and persisting structural barriers in R&I institutions which must be addressed, through a renewed approach.

The inclusion scheme aims to strengthen and go beyond the minimum requirements for a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) as defined in Horizon Europe eligibility criteria, and to support the implementation of inclusive GEPs in line with the new ERA Communication and gender equality objectives<sup>100</sup>.

Actions should clearly outline the approach for boosting gender equality strategies, including new areas such as intersectionality and diversity, outreach beyond the organisation, gender budgeting, or gender and innovation among others, building on knowledge and expertise developed through related Horizon 2020 projects and tools (e.g. GEAR Tool, ACT Communities of practice). Advanced organisations will mentor on best practices, processes, monitoring and actions to undertake in the inclusive GEPs.

Proposals are expected to address the following:

- Methods for exchanging and implementing good practices and materials, tailored to individual organisations' needs for the development of inclusive GEPs;
- Support for reinforcing their networking in the area of gender equality and inclusiveness, especially with already existing Communities of Practice;
- Activities such as on-site visits, on-site or virtual training; workshops; dissemination and outreach and capacity building activities.
- Implementation of specific actions in the less advanced institutions specifically addressing the opening to intersectionality and diversity, including in the integration of intersectional sex and gender analysis into R&I content.

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<sup>100</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/era\\_fr](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/era_fr)

The partners involved in the twinning exercise are expected to revolve either around a specific thematic area or have widening partners with similar national/regional background for a better contextualization.

**ETHICS AND INTEGRITY**

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-91: The empirical and behavioural approach to research ethics and integrity**

<b>Specific conditions</b>	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.00 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 3.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:  Legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action.
<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:  Beneficiaries will be subject to the following additional dissemination obligations:  Proposals must include structured cooperation with the e-platform Embassy of Good Science <sup>101</sup> , and the European Networks ENERI (European Network of Research Ethics Committees and Research Integrity Offices) <sup>102</sup> and ENRIO (European Network of Research Integrity Offices) <sup>103</sup> .  The output material of the action must be made available on the e-platform Embassy of Good Science.  .

Expected Outcome: Projects are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:

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<sup>101</sup> [www.embassy.science](http://www.embassy.science)  
<sup>102</sup> <http://eneri.eu/>  
<sup>103</sup> <http://www.enrio.eu/>

Trust in science is key for an inclusive, open and democratic society.<sup>104</sup> To sustain that trust, it is pivotal all research is conducted in line with the highest standards on research ethics and integrity. Research misconduct, in any stage of the research process, can undermine public trust in research and may amount to severe socio-economic consequences.

Several factors may lead researchers to breach research ethics and integrity standards and engage in questionable research practices. While some of these factors are systemic and institutional, individual factors may contribute to researchers' behaviour within the institutional environments in which they operate. While researchers mostly act with integrity, they sometimes (and often unintentionally) end up engaging in questionable practices that could lead to transgressions, engulfing research teams, departments, institutions and on rare occasions, even national research systems. In order to develop a comprehensive preventive policy and support research organizations and research funders to uphold the highest standards of research ethics and integrity, there is a need to explore in depth the behavioural and organizational factors that may facilitate researchers engaging in questionable practices and misconduct and develop methodologies to address those factors.

This action aims to improve the understanding of researchers' behaviours and incorporate this knowledge in measures aiming at enhancing promotion of ethics and integrity principles through shared responsibility (individual and institutional), improved education and training processes and qualified mentoring and support. Guaranteeing a generalised and consistently high level of research ethics and integrity, could drastically improve the relevance, robustness, accessibility and dissemination of research results and enhance societal trust in the scientific process.

Scope: In order to elucidate behavioural factors that may lead researchers to breach standards of research ethics and integrity, this action should perform a literature review, map the existing knowledge on behavioural ethics and moral psychology and identify research outcomes and research needs.

Based on the results of the literature review the action should develop a casuistry-based methodology to address research misconduct. This methodology should also take into account personal and institutional responsibilities for the promotion of research integrity and relevant research and efforts on the rehabilitation and reintegration of researchers. Particular attention should be paid to issues related to the mental health and wellbeing of researchers, especially for those employed in uncertain work conditions (short-term contracts, early career researchers, students, etc.), including with respect to bullying and sexual harassment as well as other forms of gender-based violence.

Based on the results of the literature review, the action should conduct a public consultation process with all involved stakeholders and ensuring adequate representation of young students and early career researchers. The literature review and the consultation process should also incorporate real life experiences from researchers, members of ethics and misconduct

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<sup>104</sup> Bonn Declaration on Freedom of Scientific Research, adopted at the Ministerial Conference on the European Research Area on 20 October 2020 in Bonn, [https://www.bmbf.de/files/10\\_2\\_2\\_Bonn\\_Declaration\\_en\\_final.pdf](https://www.bmbf.de/files/10_2_2_Bonn_Declaration_en_final.pdf).

committees, Integrity and Ethics officers (and the local and national level). Participation of the private sector is strongly encouraged, especially as behavioural studies on ethical conduct in industry have been widely published and discussed.

Publicly available results from relevant EU funded research projects<sup>105</sup> (e.g. SOP4RI, Integrity, PRO-Ethics, TRUST, PRO-RES, Path2Integrity) should be taken into account. Structured cooperation with the e-platform Embassy of Good Science<sup>106</sup> and the European Network ENRIO, is necessary.

In order to achieve the expected outcomes, international cooperation is strongly advised, in particular with countries which have concluded an international agreement on science and technology with the European Union. Participants from countries, which are not eligible for funding according to the General Annexes, may take part in the project as associated partners.

The action should develop:

- i. An identification of current needs in improving institutional research culture, taking into account the potential unequal impacts on people of different genders;
- ii. Specific course material to enhance and supplement current efforts on research ethics and integrity that stem from (but not limited to) EU-funded projects (see <https://www.embassy.science/>);
- iii. Guidelines to facilitate adoption of the gained knowledge in host institutions - as a supplement to existing Standard Operating procedures (see SOP4RI, <https://www.sops4ri.eu/>). These guidelines should also cover responsible mentoring, supervision and role modelling;
- iv. Methodologies for measuring the short-, medium- and long-term impact of ethics and integrity trainings in the attitudes and behaviours of students and researchers and their ethical conduct in research and innovation; and
- v. A best practice manual, based on case studies of implemented measures that analyse what works and what does not work in various contexts, to enable practice-oriented learning.

All outputs of the action must be available on the e-platform Embassy of Good Science web site (<https://www.embassy.science/>)

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<sup>105</sup> Detailed information of the mentioned EU funded projects can be found on CORDIS web site (<https://cordis.europa.eu/>)

<sup>106</sup> [www.embassy.science](https://www.embassy.science)

## **OTHER ACTIONS NOT SUBJECT TO CALLS FOR PROPOSALS**

### **GRANT TO IDENTIFIED BENEFICIARIES**

#### **1. Support the Slovenian Presidency for the organization of an ERA Conference**

As part of the implementation of the renewed ERA, the Slovenian Presidency will organise a major ERA conference in the second half of 2021. This high-level conference will engage in major political debates related to ERA as well as its future governance. This grant will support the government of Slovenia, and more concretely the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, in organizing this conference.

Legal entities:

Government of Slovenia, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Masarykova 16, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: Q4 / 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 0.10 million from the 2021 budget

#### **2. Support to RESAVER Pension Fund**

RESAVER Pension Fund is the first multi-country, multi-employers pension fund that enables mobile employees of the research institutions to remain affiliated to the same supplementary pension fund (2nd pillar and 3rd pillar) when moving between different countries and changing jobs.

The pension fund is based on the IORP II directive ((2016/2341/EC) Institutions for Occupational Retirement Provision) which provides a framework for institutions providing occupational pensions in all EU countries. The pension fund complies with national social and labour law and does not interfere with Member States prerogative in the area of 1st pillar pension.

The purpose of the grant is to provide financial support towards the functioning of the RESAVER pension fund in its core activities - over a period of three years - in order to carry out a set of activities detailed in a work programme.



The beneficiary may provide financial support to third parties. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants or prizes. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60 000.

Legal entities:

'RESAVER Pension Fund OFF' (Retirement Savings Vehicle for European Research Institutions), 22, Rue de Pascale, 1040 Brussels. Belgium

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 0.85 million from the 2021 budget

### **3. ERA Talent Platform**

The new ERA Communication outlines that EURAXESS services, network and portals will be broadened into an ERA Talent Platform, an online one-stop-shop, with improved structure and governance, exploiting links to Europass, the EU platform for people to manage their learning and careers and the EURES network of European public employment services. The Council Conclusions on the Future of the ERA calls on the Commission and Member States to develop EURAXESS as the ERA pilot action to foster “inclusiveness” within the ERA into an ERA Talent Platform fit to address existing barriers to unbalanced mobility patterns by supporting researchers in their career development within the ERA, connecting researchers and institutions, and improving employability and talent absorption and mobility schemes.

The scope of the action is to further intensify the services provided by the EURAXESS network, by reforming its structure and expanding its mandate towards taking care of the career development of researchers in Europe, with particular focus on talented researchers and opening new career trajectories for them in academia, industry and business. This is expected to happen through the set-up of dedicated physical and/or virtual centres/hubs affiliated to the existing network, acting as one-stop-shops based on multidisciplinary teams and cross-country and cross-border coordinated structures on a common agenda and standards of work, processes and tools for talent management services.

The support for the career development of talented researchers needs to take into account different layers of specialization, such as a basic career orientation service or more advanced services, consisting in personalized assistance, such as organization of trainings and providing access to career advisor, mentoring and coaching sessions. The advanced services need to be

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empowered with competences drawn from or accessed through EURAXESS centres' partnerships with multiplier and enabler organizations.

The centres to be specialised in talent management services should also assist institutions and have within their portfolio the organization of networking activities to connect researchers with employers and the local/regional R&I community. Additional services for institutions should include, among others, the creation of communities of practice on the sub-processes of talent management (recruitment, selection, integration in the culture of the host country, rewards and skills, recognition and motivation of high-potential researchers, etc.). Such centres should facilitate best practice sharing and are expected to keep their R&I communities informed and engaged on new ERA policy measures in the respective areas.

The support for talented researchers should be complemented by enhanced services for the social-cultural and labour integration of researchers and their families in the host country.

The reform and expansion of the services need to be reflected on the EURAXESS portal and national portals, which should develop into a Talent Platform addressing both researchers and institutions, including newly designed sections, tools and training materials making EURAXESS a recruitment, career development and social networking website, designed for research professionals. A specific focus should be placed on fostering gender equality in talent recognition, including through targeted support for women researchers, and also addressing mobility-related dual career and work-life balance issues.

The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60.000.

Legal entities:

OEAD GMBH - AGENTUR FUR BILDUNG UND INTERNATIONALISIERUNG - FN320219K, Ebendorferstraße 7, 1010 Wien, Austria

Government of Flanders (VL O), Department of Economy, Science and Innovation (EWI), Koning Albert II-laan 35, Box 10, 1030 Brussels, Belgium

Service Public Federal de Programmation Politique Scientifique, 30 Boulevard Simon Bolivar, Brussels 1000, Belgium

UNIVERSITE DE LIEGE, 325777171, Place du 20 Aout 7, Liege 4000, Belgium, BE0325777171

SOFIISKI UNIVERSITET SVETI KLIMENT OHRIDSKI (СУ Св.Климент Охридски), 2263021177, Bul Tzar Osvoboditel 15, Sofia 1504, Bulgaria

AGENCIJA ZA MOBILNOST I PROGRAME EUROPSKE UNIJE (AGENCY FOR MOBILITY AND EU PROGRAMMES), 080631323, Frankopanska 26, Zagreb 10000, Croatia, HR25385906011

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IDRYMA EREVNAS KAI KAINOTOMIAS (RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOUNDATION), ANDREA MICHALAKOPOULOU 29 A, 1075 NICOSIA, CYPRUS

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KOBENHAVNS UNIVERSITET, 29979812, Norregrade 10, Kobenhavn 1165, Denmark, DK29979812

SIHTASUTUS EESTI TEADUSAGENTUUR, EE4, 90000759/1125175, Soola 8, Tartu 51013, Estonia

The University of Turku (UTU) FI, 20014 Turun yliopisto, Finland

CONFERENCE DES PRESIDENTS D UNIVERSITE, FR3, 504248626, Boulevard Saint Michel 103, Paris 75005, France

DEUTSCHES ZENTRUM FUER LUFT - UND RAUMFAHRT EV (DLR), Linder Hoehe, 51147 Koeln, Germany

ETHNIKO KENTRO EREVNAS KAI TECHNOLOGIKIS ANAPTYXIS (CERTH), represented by Director of Central Directorate and Chairman of the Board of Directors of CERTH, Athanasios KONSTANDOPOULOS (Party no. 1), CHARILAOU THERMI ROAD 6 KM, THERMI THESSALONIKI 57001, Greece, EL099785242

BAY ZOLTAN ALKALMAZOTT KUTATASI KOZHASZNU NONPROFIT KFT., KONDORFA UTCA 1, BUDAPEST 1116, Hungary, HU23497980

THE ICELANDIC CENTRE FOR RESEARCH, Borgartún 30. 105 Reykjavik. Iceland

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APRE AGENZIA PER LA PROMOZIONE DELLA RICERCA EUROPEA, VIA CAVOUR 71 , 00184 ROMA (IT)

VALSTS IZGLITIBAS ATTISTIBAS AGENTURA, VALNU IELA 1, RIGA 1050, Latvia

Lietuvos mokslo taryba - The Research Council of Lithuania (RCL), Lithuania, Gedimio pr.3, LT-01103, Lithuania

University of Luxembourg (UL), Maison du Savoir 2, Avenue de l'Université, L-4365 Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxemburg

MINISTRY FOR EQUALITY, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (MFER – MCST) , Villa Bighi, Kalkara KKR 1320 – Malta

STICHTING EP-NUFFIC, NL6, 41150085, Kortenaerkade 11, Den Haag 2518 AX, Netherlands, NL002877612B01

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UNITATEA EXECUTIVA PENTRU FINANTAREA INVATAMANTULUI SUPERIOR, A  
CERCETARII, DEZVOLTARII SI INOVARII, 12354176, Mendeleev Street 21-25,  
Bucharest 010362, Romania

SAIA, n. o., 31821596, Sasinkova 10, Bratislava 1 812 20, Slovakia, SAIA, n. o.

CENTER REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE ZA MOBILNOST IN EVROPSKE PROGRAME  
IZOBRAZEVANJA IN USPOSABLJANJA, 1833006000, Ob Zeleznici 30A, Ljubljana  
1000, Slovenia, SI33171629

FUNDACION ESPANOLA PARA LA CIENCIA Y LA TECNOLOGIA, ES3, 577, Calle  
Pedro Teixeira 8, Planta 2, MADRID 28020, Spain, ESG82999871

GOETEBORGS UNIVERSITET (UGOT), VASAPARKEN, GOETEBORG 405 30, Sweden,  
SE202100315301

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PAPA "GJON PALI" II NR.3, TIRANA 1001, Albania, ALL621274510

SCIENTIFIC AND INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP ASSISTANCE CENTER, 1, Sevak  
Street, 0014, Yerevan, Armenia

UNIVERZITET U BANJOJ LUCI, 151100114/161100, Bulevar Vojvode Petra Bojovica BB,  
Banja Luka 78000 , Bosnia and Herzegovina, BA0401017720006

THE FAROESE RESEARCH COUNCIL (GRANSKINGARRADID), Bryggjubakki 12,  
Torshavn FO-110, Faroe Islands, FO527920

Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation, Aleksidze Str 1, 0193 Tbilisi, Georgia

IP&D INNOVATION PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENT, A. NUTMAN STREET 35,  
REHOVOT 76656, Israel, IL513423244

DRUSHTVO ZA EDUACIJA CENTAR ZA INOVACII TRANSFER NA ZNAEENJE  
DOOEL SKOPJE AD, 6953476, Rilksi Congress 49 14, Skopje 1000, Former Yugoslav  
Republic of Macedonia, MK4058014518960

ACADEMIA DE STIINTE A MOLDOVEI, STEFAN CEL MARE 1, CHISINAU 2001

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EIDGENOESSISCHE TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE ZUERICH, GESETZSR414110, Raemistrasse 101, Zuerich 8092, Switzerland, CHE115203630MWST

UGPE (European Project Management Unit) within the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, 7ième Etage. Bur. 710, DG R&I Horizon2020 - 50 Av. Mohamed V, 1002, Tunis -TUNISIE

TURKIYE BILIMSEL VE TEKNOLOJIK ARASTIRMA KURUMU, 278, Ataturk Bulvari 221, Ankara 06100, Turkey, TR1750003600

THE BRITISH COUNCIL, GB22, RC000060/CH209131, 1 Redman Place, Stratford, London, E20 1JQ, United Kingdom

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: Q3 / 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 4.00 million from the 2022 budget

#### **4. The EuroScience Open Forum (ESOF) and European City of Science 2022 actions**

##### **Expected Outcomes:**

- Bring together more than 5000 delegates from more than 50 countries within and outside Europe;
- Showcase latest developments in research and innovation and offer open forum for lively discussion and debate on the future of European science, policy and innovation;
- Encompass three interconnected programmes: scientific research and innovation, science-to-business and scientific careers;
- Parallel Science in the City festival targets local citizens to extend and enhance dialog and exchange on science and its role in society.

##### **Scope:**

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In addition to the ESOF conference, Leiden, the host city of ESOF 2022, includes two new initiatives:

- A festival: “European Science in the City” to be organised in close collaboration with the European Commission. The goal of the new event, associated with the more general “Science in the City” festival of ESOF, will be to showcase for the general public and European citizens the results of R&I projects supported by the European Commission, including the Horizon Europe programme. The “European Science in the City” festival will be promoted together with the ESOF conference.
- A year of events: the European City of Science (ECS) - a true all-year programme with various events and activities programmed by the host city in the spirit of the European Capital of Culture or the European Green Capital. In this perspective, the yearlong programme of the European City of Science will target a wide population of European citizens beyond simple local or regional impact.

Support offered to the organisers of ESOF2022 and its associated events, notably the European City of Science (ECS) to ensure that a structured and expanded dialogue among all societal actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers, business and third sector organisations, including all social groups) will be developed. In this context, special emphasis is placed on exploring and supporting citizen science as an important dimension of open science and as a way to promote further Responsible Research and Innovation through outreach activities, science education and various forms of public engagement with science.

An inclusive and integrated combination of seminars, workshops, debates and round table discussions using new interactive and engaging formats is included and centred on Horizon Europe key societal challenges.

Legal entities:

Foundation Leiden European City of Science 2022 , Zijldijk 8, 2362 AE Warmond, Netherlands.

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: Q4/2021

Indicative budget: EUR 2.00 million from the 2021 budget

## **5. European Union Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS) 2022**

The European Union Contest for Young Scientists is a science competition for 14 to 20 year olds. It brings together first prize winners of national science contests for pre-Higher Education Institution school science projects to compete for prizes and awards. The contestants are judged by a jury of eminent scientists selected by the European Commission. The jury award 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> monetary prizes as well as other prestigious prizes donated to the contest by international research organisations and other similar bodies. The EU Contest takes place each year in a different location. This Contest provides additional stimulus to young people who have already demonstrated that they are applying science to solve problems. Many go on to become successful scientists. It attracts a considerable level of co-funding in the host country, and high levels of international media attention. The proposal could also consider a pilot scheme for other constituents such as early career researchers. The proposal could also consider a pilot scheme for other constituents such as early career researchers. The organisation of the contest is based on the General Guidelines on the organisation of the European Union Contest for Young Scientists and its Annex 1 – Rules of the contest. These are updated annually by the European Commission. [https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/eucys\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/eucys_en).

Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants or prizes. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60 000.

### Legal entities:

Foundation Leiden European City of Science 2022 , Zijldijk 8, 2362 AE Warmond, Netherlands.

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 2.00 million from the 2021 budget

## **6. Science Advice for Policy by European Academies**

Expected impact:

- Enhanced capacity for sound evidence-informed policy-making by providing reliable, state-of-the-art, policy-relevant and publicly accessible scientific evidence available to the Group in a timely, efficient and transparent manner;
- A demonstrably more open and inclusive dialogue about major societal challenges via a transparently managed, interdisciplinary approach and a wide engagement of the scientific community;
- Increased societal awareness of the role of science advice-to-policy- and to decision-making, by developing capabilities to accurately communicate science advice, including the degree of uncertainty of specific scientific knowledge;
- Improved transparency of the EU policy-making process, including through the possibility of active engagement with the wider public and involvement of the entire scientific community

Scope: Better Regulation is a priority for the European Commission ('the EC') and so is the use of scientific evidence to inform policy-making. Scientific advice is necessary and it must be excellent, independent, timely, relevant to European Union (EU) policy-making and as interdisciplinary as required to address all dimensions of the policy issue at stake.

In this regard, the Science Advice for Policy by European Academies ('the SAPEA') Consortium has a proven record of working in partnership mode to provide scientific evidence to the European Commission's Group of Chief Scientific Advisors ('the Group'), within the framework of the Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism ('SAM'). SAM consists of the Group, the external scientific evidence provider SAPEA and a dedicated secretariat established in DG RTD. As evidence-informed policy is among the priorities of the 2019-2024 European Commission One of the priorities for this College: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/political-guide-lines-next-commission\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/political-guide-lines-next-commission_en.pdf)

Building on its experience, the SAPEA consortium will:

- Provide at the request of the Commission targeted scientific evidence in a timely and transparent manner to inform the production of science advice by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors. The evidence should be of the highest scientific quality, developed by complete and independent evidence analysis and synthesis respecting timelines and policy needs;
- Strengthen the links between European science academies and ensure active participation of all academies that are associated in the networks that make up the Consortium, and include experts from other organisations. In carrying out this process, the Consortium will ensure optimal geographical and gender diversity, coverage of all relevant science fields, and interdisciplinary. An open and inclusive approach will be used involving experts who are not Academy Fellows, both early career and senior of various, relevant backgrounds. These approaches aim at increasing the range of the



available scientific evidence to be considered and the excellence of the expertise provided;

- To consider for the Evidence Review Report scientific evidence published in peer reviewed scientific journals, edited volumes, and monographs submitted by independent experts in the area under consideration. Scientific evidence submitted by other interested entities should only be considered, if relevant and meeting high quality and if these entities provide proof that they are registered in the EU Transparency Register..
- Develop novel and improve existing forms of scientific input to address short-term needs of the Group in a timely, reliable, policy-relevant and efficient manner, e.g. fast evidence-gathering tools and literature reviews, short term evidence reports, and expert consultation on high-priority, short-term policy initiatives.
- Develop further SAPEA's internal database to access an up-to-date pool of top-quality experts in various fields, in combination with other networking approaches that can be called upon at short notice.
- In coordination with the secretariat supporting the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, engage with citizens, stakeholders, scientific communities and policy-makers to disseminate and promote the work of the Group, and to monitor, assess and report on the impact and uptake thereof;
- Increase awareness of the significance of science-to-policy advice and ensure outreach to larger audiences, including in the Member States, through targeted communication actions, novel information products, media outreach, and policy monitoring processes, whilst ensuring consistent internal and external communication;
- Include an 'early alert' mechanism to signal topics and challenges that may become relevant for the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors and the Commission, identified through techniques such as horizon scanning and consultation including through through the academy networks.
- Formulate in the Evidence Review Report (ERR) clear options and conclusions (not policy recommendations) in response to the given policy question.

The project duration is up to 3 years.

Legal entities:

Acatech (Deutsche Akademie der Technikwissenschaften), Unter den Linden 14, 10117 Berlin, Germany

FEAM - Federation of European Academies of Medicine, Palais des Académies, Rue Ducale 1, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

Euro-CASE, Grand Palais des Champs-Élysées | Porte C, Avenue Franklin D. Roosevelt, 75008 Paris, France

Academia Europaea Bergen, Jekteviksbakken 31 in 5006 Bergen, Norway

Young Academy of Europe e.V., Saupfercheckweg 1, 69117 Heidelberg, Germany

Academia Europaea, Room 251, Senate House, University of London, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU

EASAC (European Academies, Science Advisory Council), c/o the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, Drammensveien 78, Oslo, Norway

ALLEA, c/o Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jägerstrasse 22/23, 10117 Berlin, Germany

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: Q2 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 2.20 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 2.20 million from the 2022 budget

## **7. Presidency event - Conference on international cooperation in research and innovation**

Expected Outcome: the project is expected to organise an international conference which will contribute to all of the following outcomes, based on the elements listed below, as a key step in the implementation of the Global Approach to Research and Innovation, as set out in the Commission Communication of 18 May 2021 and the Council Conclusions of 28 September 2021:

- Create a shared European dynamic to strengthen international R&I partnerships, while promoting reciprocity and shared values and principles;
- Strengthen concertation between Member States and with the Commission on their approaches and actions to support international cooperation, guiding the international elements of both Horizon Europe and of Member States' own programmes, in particular by focusing joint efforts on global challenges and strengthening the role of multilateral alliances in these areas;
- Launch a multilateral dialogue with international partners on the implementation of the EU's Global Approach to research and innovation to identify a pathway to achieve a

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level playing field in terms of values, principles, reciprocity and framework conditions, notably through establishing a more permanent dialogue around these issues;

- Increase the visibility of research innovation and higher education actions in the framework of external action.

Expected Impact: the proposal should set out a credible pathway to contributing to the following impact of the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan:

- Achieve a critical mass of global research efforts focused on common challenges facilitated by common approaches to research and innovation.

Scope: To meet these objectives, the conference programme is proposed as follows:

First block: Exchanges between Member States and with the Commission in the form of a meeting of European Ministers for Research and Innovation on “What are the stakes for international cooperation in R&I in a changing world” (What coordination mechanisms? What strategies are needed with the rest of the world?):

- Target audience: EU Member State Ministers for Research and Innovation, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth.

Second block: Launch of a multilateral dialogue with international partners on the theme of “a new research and innovation partnership based on shared values and principles. The discussion will also bring in the perspective of higher education:

- Target audience: EU Member State Ministers, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth; Ministers/Ambassadors of countries having concluded Science and Technology Agreements with the EU, Associated Countries; international organisations such as the OECD and UNESCO.

Legal entities:

Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD), 44 boulevard de Dunkerque, CS 90009, 13572 Marseille Cedex 02, France

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: Q1 /2022

Indicative budget: EUR 0.40 million from the 2021 budget

## **8. NCP Network including proposal pre-check**

Research and innovation performance is correlated with the efficiency of the national research and innovation system and the capacity and the effectiveness of the National Contact Points (NCPs). Special attention should be given to less experienced entities in low R&I performing countries to bridge the knowledge gap and enable better access to funding opportunities in the EU Framework Programmes and beyond.

A dedicated support mechanism under this Work programme part with specific objective to strengthen the activities of NCPs to support international networking and to improve the quality of proposals from legal entities from low R&I performing countries is envisaged.

Proposals should aim to facilitate trans-national co-operation between NCPs with a view to identifying and sharing good practices and raising the general standard of support to programme applicants, taking into account the diversity of actors that make up the constituencies of both the Widening and ERA parts. They also should show that the activities put forward will deliver tangible benefits to potential applicants.

Activities should capitalise on relevant work of the previous NCP network project in this sector. To help close the innovation divide, a substantial component of the proposed activities must be devoted to activities aimed at helping NCPs in those countries that have been participating at low levels in the FP programmes up to now. These activities should help these NCPs rapidly acquire the know-how on NCP operations accumulated in other countries including, for example, training, mentoring, and twinning. They may also include awareness raising actions aimed at increasing visibility of well-qualified potential applicant organisations in the Widening countries.

Support will be given to a consortium of identified NCPs in the area of the ‘Widening Participation and strengthening the European Research Area’ part coordinated by an organisation with a proven track record in managing an network of NCPs in the Widening domain. The members of the core consortium are identified in this call. Additional NCP organisations especially from Associated Countries may participate as linked third parties.

The implementation will include following actions: info days, training and workshops; tailored consultations and advice; support to matchmaking platform; proposal pre-screening (checks on eligibility and viability of concept) and actions dedicated to networking and matchmaking activities capitalising on the experience of the former NCP WIDENET project. For matchmaking activities the consortium will closely collaborate with NCP networks working on other parts of Horizon Europe notably pillar 2. A mutual learning process among NCPs will help building capacity by helping less experienced NCPs to enhance their competence (training, workshops). For these activities beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties in the form of grants.

The implementation will be carried out in work packages distinguished for the two programme part components (Widening and ERA). The Widening part will especially take into account the requirements of the Advancing Europe package.

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For the proposal pre-check part it ranges from seminar style training for proposal writing for larger groups to written advice on individual proposals (e.g. on clarity of objectives, consistency with work programme, balanced budget etc.) but not on scientific content and coaching of individuals. The action may include advice for applications outside the widening programme to a limited extent and based on strategic choices such as areas under Pillar 2, where application success rate from Widening countries were below average in comparable fields of Horizon 2020. As far as the matchmaking is concerned, possible synergies with existing platforms, e.g. Funding & Tenders Portal and EURAXESS should be explored, as well as dedicated events for brokerage and partner search in a physical or virtual mode.

Special attention should be given to enhancing the competence of NCPs, including helping less experienced NCPs rapidly acquire the know-how built up in other countries. The consortium should have a good representation of experienced and less experienced NCPs.

Legal entities:

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE, 2A, Aleksandar Dondukov blvd., 1000, Sofia, Bulgaria

Agencija za Mobilnost i Programe Europske Unije, Frankopanska 26, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia

Research and Innovation Foundation, 123 Strovolos Avenue, 2042 Nicosia, Cyprus

TECHNOLOGICKE CENTRUM AKADEMIE VED CESKE REPUBLIKY, Ve Struhach 1076/27, 160 00 Praha, Czechia

Estonian Research Council, Soola 8, Tartu 51004, Estonia

Academy of Finland, Hakaniemenranta 6, PO Box 131, FI-00531 Helsinki, Finland

DEUTSCHES ZENTRUM FUER LUFT- UND RAUMFAHRT EV, Linder Hohe, 51147, Koln, Germany

Foundation for Research & Technology - Hellas, Nikolaou Plastira 100, Vassilika Vouton GR - 700 13 Heraklion, Crete, Greece

Nemzeti Kutatási, Fejlesztési és Innovációs Hivatal, 1077 Budapest, Kéthly Anna tér 1., Hungary

Rannsóknamidstöð Islands (The Icelandic Centre for Research), Borgartun 30; 105 Reykjavík; Iceland

AGENZIA PER LA PROMOZIONE DELLA RICERCA EUROPEA, Via Cavour, 71, 00184 Roma, Italy

Latvia Council of Science, SMILSU IELA 8, PO box: 000, 1050, RIGA Latvia

Research Council of Lithuania, Gedimino pr. 3, LT-01103, Vilnius, Lithuania

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THE MALTA COUNCIL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, Villa Bighi, Triq il-Marina, Kalkara KKR 1320, Malta

National Centre for Research and Development, Nowogrodzka 47A, 00-695 Warszawa, Poland

FCT – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, Av. D. Carlos I, 126, 1249-074, Lisbon, Portugal

CENTRUM VEDECKO-TECHNICKÝCH INFORMÁCIÍ SR, Lamačská cesta 8-A; 811 04 Bratislava; Slovak Republic

Ministry of education, science and sport, Masarykova 16, SI - 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Serrano 117, 28006, Madrid, Spain

AGJENCIA KOMBETARE E KERKIMIT SHKENCOR DHE INOVACIONIT – NASRI, RRUGA PAPA"GJON PALI" II NR.3, TIRANA 1001 Albania

Scientific and Innovation Partnership Assistance Center, Sevak str. 1, Yerevan 0014, Armenia

THE FAROESE RESEARCH COUNCIL (GRANSKINGARRADID), Bryggjubakki 12, Torshavn FO-110, Faroe Islands

NATIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AUTHORITY, 2ND DERECH AGUDAT SPORT HAPOEL BUILDING, JERUSALEM 6812511, Israel

AGENTIA NATIONALA PENTRU CERCETARE SI DEZVOLTARE, 1001 OFF 180 STEFAN CEL MARE BVLD, CHISINAU 2004, Moldova

Ss. CYRIL AND METHODIUS UNIVERSITY IN SKOPJE, BLVD GOCE DELCEV 9, SKOPJE 1000, North Macedonia

MINISTARSTVO PROSVETE, NAUKE I TEHNOLOSKOG RAZVOJA - MPNTR, Nemanjina 22-26, BELGRADE 11000, Serbia

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, AVENUE MOHAMED V 50, TUNIS 1002 Tunisia

TURKIYE BILIMSEL VE TEKNOLOJIK ARASTIRMA KURUMU – TUBITAK, Ataturk Bulvari 221, ANKARA 06100, Turkey

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and

operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative budget: EUR 8.00 million from the 2021 budget

### **9. Framework Partnership Agreement with COST (European Co-operation in Science and Technology)**

COST (European Co-operation in Science and Technology) is an EU funded pan European programme that enables researchers to set up their interdisciplinary research networks in Europe and beyond. The programme was established in 1971 in an intergovernmental mode. It will be implemented by a member state owned organisation i.e. the COST Association under a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA). This FPA will outline an action plan for the full duration of Horizon Europe until 2027 describing the strategic objectives and key milestones for the implementation of COST. This FPA is based on Article 195 of the Financial Regulation that allows the use of a named beneficiary for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals.

While the networks are open to international partners from outside Europe, COST provides a unique low entry mechanism for researchers from countries catching up in the R&I in the EU and from its Eastern and Southern neighbours while remaining open for researchers from all European countries and international partners. For many researchers (especially at the beginning of their career) from widening countries, the participation in COST networking actions is the sole opportunity for getting in touch with European and international research initiatives and to benefitting from exposure to leading scientists in their field. The approach of COST is not funding research itself but pooling resources and research results by networking and hence upscaling.

The specific objectives of this support mechanism are to:

- Increase participation of widening countries (inclusiveness target countries (ITC) according to COST internal terminology) in European research activities and higher success rates;
- Contribute towards improving the R&I culture of the widening country (indicators such as research intensity, innovation performance, values towards R&I);
- Improve scientific capabilities of widening countries to increase their chances in participating and successfully obtaining competitive funding from the EU and other international sources;
- Trigger scientific breakthroughs and new research strands by pooling interdisciplinary resources across Europe;

- Boost the career of young and female researchers by networking and brain circulation in line with ERA principles and the development of leadership skills;
- Strengthen the research management capacities and administrative skills of participating researchers;
- Develop operational synergies with other widening actions and create links to thematic parts of Horizon Europe, notably Pillar 2.

Legal entities:

COST Association , Avenue du Boulevard - Bolwerklaan 21, 1210 Brussels

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

## **10. Implementation of COST actions - Specific Grant under Framework Partnership Agreement**

The EC funds almost the entire programme under a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPAs) with underlying Specific Grant Agreements (SGAs). In the FPA and the SGAs the beneficiary COST Association commits to a mandatory conditionality to spend at least 50% of the budget at the benefit of researchers from countries eligible from the Widening countries and to run 80% of the activities with a significant widening dimension. The primary purpose of this grant is the implementation of the COST networking actions. Other services may be implemented as far as complementary and appropriate. The personnel costs operations incurred by the COST Association as the implementing structure are eligible as direct cost up to a maximum of 20 million Euro as far as they are necessary for the implementation of the COST networking actions and related other support activities. For the same purpose cost for other goods and services and subcontracting are eligible up to a maximum of 2 million Euro. COST networking actions will be implemented by third party grant holders using financial support to third parties.

The beneficiary may provide financial support to third parties in the form of grants. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party must be necessary to meet the objectives of the SGA and will be fixed in the grant agreement in line with the COST Vademecum. It will be used for the implementation of networking tools defined in a closed list that is fixed in the description of the action.



The COST Association will organise competitive open calls and an independent evaluation and selection procedure according to its own rules in agreement with the European Commission. At proposal stage at least 50% of the participants must be located in widening countries.

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: CSA for 3 years

Indicative budget: EUR 153.00 million from the 2021 budget

## **11. Presidency conferences with a European regional dimension - WIRE**

A two-day conference (WIRE) will be organised under the EU French Presidency (Presidency Conference) in 2022. The event will gather actors active in the innovation and education ecosystem with the aim of improving science-based competitiveness.

The conference will debate knowledge based regional development and will offer potential solutions of streamlining resources aimed for this. Representatives of education organizations, research organizations, start-ups, clusters, policy makers and other related interested parties will exchange views and best practices that could lead to a higher impact of innovation across users and society at large. Best practices, trends and visions will be considered.

Legal entities:

Université Paris-Saclay, 3 rue Joliot Curie, Bâtiment Breguet, 91190 Gif-sur-Yvette, France

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e) - Coordination and support action

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: 1st Quarter 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 0.50 million from the 2022 budget

## **PRIZE**

### **1. EU Award for (Academic) Gender Equality Champions**

#### Expected Outcomes:

- Enable the creation of a European community of academic and research champions in institutional transformation towards inclusive gender equality.
- Strengthening of the inclusiveness and connectivity objectives under the new European Research Area.

Award and certification schemes implemented in different countries, in the EU and beyond, have been shown to be useful tools for advancing gender equality in academic, research and innovation organisations, with some awarding schemes effectively being used as drivers for competition in attracting students and researchers and/or as prerequisite for having access to funding. Building on the feasibility study for a European award/certification system for gender equality in research organisations, including universities, carried out by Horizon 2020 project CASPER, an annual Award scheme is established. The “EU Award for Gender Equality Champions” is meant as a booster and complement to the requirement for higher education and research organisations applying to Horizon Europe to have in place a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place, and as an enabler for the new priority on inclusive gender equality plans and the transformation agenda for universities set in the new European Research Area, in synergy with the European Education Area and in line with the new European Strategy for Universities.

The Prize will be awarded to up to four academic or research organisations, and contestants can apply to one among the following three prize categories:

- Sustainable Gender Equality Champions: Organisations that can demonstrate a significant and sustained record of activity and a high level of achievement through the implementation of their GEP;
- Newcomer Gender Equality Champions: Organisations that have recently started implementing a GEP and can demonstrate the most progress in its implementation and achieved results;
- Inclusive Gender Equality Champions: Organisations that have developed the most innovative inclusive GEP addressing intersections with other social categories such as ethnicity, social origin, sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTI+) or disability.

Each prize winner will receive EUR 0.1 million: EUR 0.4 million maximum in total, from the 2022 budget.

The contestants will have to provide proof of eligibility and a written presentation of their achievements, as well as support their applications with a link to a video. The submission consists of a complete application.

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Essential award criteria:

Eligible applications will be evaluated by a Jury consisting of a group of independent experts, with expertise on gender equality plan implementation and intersectional approaches in research and higher education institutions, appointed by the Commission.

The prize will be awarded, after closure of the contest, to the contestants who in the opinion of the jury best address a set of cumulative criteria set for each of the three prize categories.

Eligibility criteria:

The contestant must be a university, higher education institution, or research performing organisation (public or private) located in an EU Member State or a country associated to Horizon Europe<sup>107</sup>.

Applicants that have already received an EU or Euratom prize cannot receive a second prize for the same activities.

The specific rules of the contest will be published each year by the European Commission (on the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#) but also actively publicised elsewhere to maximise participation), which will directly launch and manage the contest and award the prize based on the judgement of independent experts.

Expected results: The prizes will boost public awareness of the importance of addressing gender equality in academic and research organisations through institutional change, incentivise a high degree of commitment to the implementation of inclusive GEPs, and create a community of champions inspiring other academic and research organisations into become gender equality champions themselves.

Indicative timetable of contest(s):

Stages	Date and time or indicative period
Opening of the contest	Second quarter of 2022
Deadline for submission of application	Third quarter of 2022
Evaluation and solutions demonstration (if applicable)	N/A
Award of the prize	Fourth quarter of 2022

Form of Funding: Prizes

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<sup>107</sup> In accordance with the Horizon Europe Rules for participation, due to the specific policy requirements, to the nature and objectives of the action, the type of legal entity and the place of establishment are limited to research performing organisations among legal entities falling under the eligibility criterion on the requirement to have a Gender Equality Plan in place (see General Annexes to the Horizon Europe Work Programme)

Type of Action: Recognition Prize

Indicative timetable: Q4/2022

Indicative budget: EUR 0.40 million from the 2022 budget

## **2. Horizon impact award**

Expected Outcomes:

- To celebrate the successful uptake and use of EU funded project results, thus boosting and promoting their achieved impact.
- To showcase best practices, create role models and inspire R&I beneficiaries to use their research results to create value for the society at large.

The Commission will award on an annual basis a recognition prize to reward beneficiaries that have successfully used their research results to create value for society. The beneficiaries must be able to show proof of effective exploitation and uptake of their research results. This action aims to illustrate the wider socio-economic benefits of the EU investment in R&I and to encourage project beneficiaries to best manage and use their research results.

In particular, six winners will be selected by the evaluation jury for their achievements. The prizes are monetary and each of the six winners will receive EUR 25.000.

Total of six prizes of EUR 0.025 each: EUR 0.15 million from the 2021 budget, and EUR 0.15 million from the 2022 budget.

All applicants are required to submit letter(s) of support coming from the user community that can provide testimony on achieved impact.

Essential award criteria: The prize will be awarded, after closure of the contest, to the contestant(s) who in the opinion of the jury best addresses the following cumulative criteria:

### **1. Pathway from results to societal benefits:**

Applicants will need to detail how the R&I results were directly or indirectly exploited after the lifetime of the project. They will need to describe the activities that were done to ensure that the R&I results lead to societal benefits. They will need to describe the scale and the sustainability of their actions.

### **2. Achieved impact:**

Applicants will need to demonstrate the already existing impact and created societal benefits. They will need to detail concrete examples of how their research results have benefitted the society and who are the user communities that have profited from it. The achieved impact must be already materialized. The letter of support will serve as a testimony of the described impact.

Eligibility criteria: The contest is open to all legal entities (i.e. natural or legal persons, including international organisations) or groups of legal entities that participated as beneficiaries in FP7 or Horizon 2020<sup>108</sup>. The projects must have ended by close of the contest<sup>109</sup>. Natural persons such as ERC principal investigators or MSCA fellows and legal entities principally created by past beneficiaries for the exploitation of the project results, are also eligible.

Applicants that have already received an EU or Euratom prize cannot receive a second prize for the same activities

For the common Rules of Contest for Prizes please see the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#).

The specific Rules of Contest will be published in 2021<sup>110</sup> and in 2022 by the European Commission, which will directly launch and manage the contest and award the prizes based on the judgement of independent experts.

Indicative timetable of contest(s):

Stages	Date and time or indicative period
Opening of the contest	Q1-Q2 (2021/2022)
Deadline for submission of application	Q2-Q3 (2021/2022)
Evaluation and solutions demonstration (if applicable)	N/A
Award of the prize	Q3-Q4 (2021/2022)

Form of Funding: Prizes

Type of Action: Recognition Prize

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021 and Q2 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 0.15 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 0.15 million from the 2022 budget

## **EXPERT CONTRACT ACTIONS**

### **1. External expertise for monitoring of Widening and ERA actions**

This action will support the use of appointed independent experts for the monitoring of actions (grant agreement, grant decision, public procurement actions, financial instruments)

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<sup>108</sup> In accordance with the Horizon Europe Rules for participation, due to the specific policy requirements, to the nature and objectives of the action, the type of legal entity is limited

<sup>109</sup> Refers to the end date of the project as in the Grant Agreement.

<sup>110</sup> The Horizon Impact Award has not been implemented in 2021

funded under Horizon Europe and previous Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation and where appropriate include ethics checks.

Form of Funding: Other budget implementation instruments

Type of Action: Expert contract action

Indicative budget: EUR 0.60 million from the 2022 budget

## **2. Monitoring experts for Horizon 2020 legacy**

This action is for financing external experts in charge of reviewing legacy projects from Horizon 2020 related to SEWP and Swafs.

Form of Funding: Other budget implementation instruments

Type of Action: Expert contract action

Indicative budget: EUR 0.40 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 0.40 million from the 2022 budget

## **3. Use of individual experts in support of the new ERA's objectives**

This action will support the provision of independent expertise to improve the evidence base and collect advice on various aspects related to the Reforming and Enhancing the EU Research and Innovation System and the pursued of the revitalised European Research Area. Individual experts will work in the following domains:

- Experts to contribute to the development of the ERA Scoreboard, to enable monitoring of progress of the realisation of ERA's objectives;
- Experts to map out the academic freedom landscape in Europe and to devise an appropriate system for monitoring its development;
- Experts on Human Resources and researchers' careers, experts on services for researchers such as those of the EURAXESS services network, as well as experts in employment conditions and contracts, social security and remuneration; the experts will contribute to the development of a wide range of actions related to the strengthening of research careers, including researchers' mobility, improvement of the attractiveness of researchers' work conditions, careers, remuneration, assessment;
- Experts in legal matters related to cross-border institutional cooperation, and cooperation within knowledge ecosystems, to support the development of a legal toolbox that facilitates such cooperation;
- Experts in various areas of higher education institutional transformation, in order to monitor transformation and strengthen synergies between education, research and innovation.

The ERA Scoreboard will provide internationally comparable quantitative data and indicators to monitor progress on the realisation of the new ERA at EU and national level, revise priorities and actions in the ERA Roadmap and provide evidence and analysis for the European Semester. The Scoreboard will be issued on an annual basis.

Academic freedom is a prerequisite for scientific excellence and for fostering strong collaborative links between researchers, international partners, scientific organisations and businesses. Academic freedom and the values that it encompasses lead to the creation of resilient R&I ecosystems that cherish, among others, openness, freedom of discussion, autonomy by engaging into open science, peer reviews, research verifiability and replicability, autonomous research agenda setting. The independent experts will contribute to reinforce the future *European Pact for Research and Innovation*, which aims at deepening the implementation of the new ERA's objectives, setting out commonly agreed values and principles and indicating the areas where Member States will jointly develop priority actions. In the frame of the implementation of the "European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers" (C&C), the European Commission relies on independent experts to perform the peer review assessments on which the continuous monitoring mechanism for the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) award and renewal is based. The creation of a larger pool of experts is envisaged, including in legal, HR, skills, social security, remuneration and employment conditions matters, as well as in science education, skills, financial instruments, innovation, value creation, cooperation and ecosystems, foreign interference, science diplomacy and international competitiveness. This should allow greater flexibility and crossed interactions between various intervention fields, including legal, technical, and operational ones.

Experts in cross-border institutional cooperation and mobility of R&I talents should allow gathering evidence and advice to facilitate cross-border cooperation between higher education institutions and between higher education institutions and other actors of the ecosystem, as well as facilitate circulation of talents.

A special allowance of EUR 450/day will be paid to the experts appointed in their personal capacity who act independently and in the public interest.

Form of Funding: Other budget implementation instruments

Type of Action: Expert contract action

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021 and Q3 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 1.00 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 1.20 million from the 2022 budget

#### **4. Commission expert group on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality in EU R&I**

The Expert Group will deliver a study on the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis and the pandemic containment measures put in place at institutional, national and EU level, on the

work and productivity of women researchers and on gender equality in the EU R&I system in general.

A special allowance of EUR 450/day will be paid to the experts appointed in their personal capacity who act independently and in the public interest. This amount is considered to be proportionate to the specific tasks to be assigned to the experts, including the number of meetings to be attended and possible preparatory work.

Form of Funding: Other budget implementation instruments

Type of Action: Expert contract action

Indicative timetable: Q4 / 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 0.20 million from the 2021 budget

### **5. External expertise for ad hoc tasks related to the implementation of Horizon Europe Ethics Appraisal scheme**

This action will support the use of independent experts to advise on or assist with the implementation of the Horizon Europe Ethics Appraisal scheme in view of ensuring and maintaining its quality and effectiveness.

Since the above tasks requires specialised knowledge in research ethics/integrity and the related national and European legal framework (e.g. Data protection and privacy, Informed Consent, Artificial Intelligence and Emerging technologies, Benefit sharing, etc.) a special allowance of EUR 450/day will be paid to the experts appointed in their personal capacity who act independently and in the public interest.

Form of Funding: Other budget implementation instruments

Type of Action: Expert contract action

Indicative budget: EUR 0.10 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 0.10 million from the 2022 budget

### **6. Use of individual expert(s) on ad hoc tasks related to the implementation of the European Valorisation policy**

This action will support the use of independent experts to advice on or assist with the implementation of the European Valorisation policy. Individual experts will work in the following areas:

- European knowledge valorisation strategy and specific dimensions and results of its development and implementation, in particular for the delivery of the European Research Area
- IP strategy for European R&I



- Industry-academia knowledge exchange and collaboration
- Citizen engagement and knowledge valorisation through collaboration with cities and communities
- Science and research informing policies
- Other specific aspects with a key role in the European Knowledge Valorisation policy

The tasks require specialised knowledge in R&I Valorisation, intellectual property management, exploitation and dissemination of research results, open innovation, university-business collaboration, citizen engagement for innovation etc.

A special allowance of EUR 450/day will be paid to the experts appointed in their personal capacity who act independently and in the public interest.

Form of Funding: Other budget implementation instruments

Type of Action: Expert contract action

Indicative budget: EUR 0.10 million from the 2021 budget

## **7. Support for policy makers – Horizontal support to the Strategic Coordinating Process for partnerships**

This action will offer horizontal support to the strategic coordinating process for partnerships, focusing on issues related to the implementation of the process, mutual learning across the community involved and strengthening the evidence base for strategic discussions.

It will support the continued monitoring of the new approach to European Partnerships, the identification of gaps, emerging opportunities and potential novel approaches in the partnerships landscape and support the preparedness of Member States' and Associated Countries' Horizon Europe participation in the Strategic Coordinating Process. It will contribute to the implementation of the revised policy approach for European Partnerships in Horizon Europe.

Form of Funding: Other budget implementation instruments

Type of Action: Expert contract action

Indicative timetable: Q3 and Q4 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 0.40 million from the 2022 budget

## **PUBLIC PROCUREMENT**

### **1. EU data for R&I policy**

Overall, the set up of an initiative to allow MS and the European Commission to share microdata related to R&I projects, and the progressive integration of R&I project data with

other sources of related data, are fundamental to strengthen ERA and reinforce our research and innovation systems by informing better evidence based policy making. The main tasks are: (1) Data sharing and interoperability of different sources of competitive or non-competitive Research and Innovation funding in Europe, and integration with relevant external data sources; (2) Digital enabling infrastructure; (3) Data analysis and visualisation tools (The EU Dashboard); (4) Capacity building. These activities will be complemented with other data activities aimed at acquiring, interlinking and visualising R&I related data.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021 and Q2 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 1.50 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 1.50 million from the 2022 budget

## **2. Development of the European Innovation Scoreboard**

This action will support the continuation and enhancement of the European Innovation Scoreboard, which provides a comparative analysis of innovation performance in EU countries, other European countries, and regional neighbours.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 0.75 million from the 2021 budget

## **3. Overview of regulatory sandboxes and innovation-enabling approaches to regulation**

The study will analyse innovation-enabling approaches to regulation with a focus on regulatory sandboxes. It will establish a state-of-play regarding the use of regulatory sandboxes and experimentation clauses in the European Union, with a benchmarking internationally and vs. other experimentation-enabling instruments. The study will identify key features, benefits and risks related to regulatory sandboxes, present best practices regarding the implementation and evaluation of regulatory sandboxes and analyse how learning from regulatory sandboxes at national level can contribute to evidence-based policy-making at EU level. It will also briefly present an overview of sandboxes and similar instruments in European Programmes.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q2 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 0.20 million from the 2021 budget

#### **4. Implementation of Workshop series with industry and other stakeholders as well as discussions with Member States to prepare ERA common industrial technology roadmaps**

This action is a key element to implement priority action 5 under ERA with which the Commission will work with stakeholders from relevant industries to develop by end of 2022 common industrial technology roadmaps which ensure a better transfer of R&I into the real economy and make EU industry more competitive. Industrial technology roadmaps will address R&I for the development of key industrial technology roadmaps across Horizon Europe clusters, ranging from circular industries over health equipment to clean transport and social innovation. They will gauge the prospects of future technological development, collect relevant evidence and co-design R&I investment agendas from basic research to deployment.

The Commission will co-create Industrial technology roadmaps with Member States, industrial companies, RTOs, universities and other stakeholders. The preparation of roadmaps within the deadline stipulated by ERA will require 4-5 meetings per roadmap with industry and other stakeholders and 4-5 meetings with representatives from Member States (ERA Forum for Transition). In order to inform, steer and organize these discussions, the Commission requires support services for the preparation, implementation and summary of discussions, organisation of the meeting venue and administrative support.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q4 / 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 1.00 million from the 2021 budget

#### **5. Implementation of the Horizon Policy Support Facility**

In order to make research and innovation deliver on their full potential to be the key drivers of economic growth and of the transition towards a sustainable society, ambitious policy reforms of national R&I systems are necessary. Through the Policy Support Facility (PSF), the Commission assists Member States and countries associated to Horizon in developing and implementing those reforms. It offers, on a voluntary basis, high-level expertise and tailor-made advice to national public authorities. An overview of past activities can be found at <https://rio.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/policy-support-facility>. The PSF has demonstrated that it serves as enabler for concrete policy changes.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021 and Q2 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 1.50 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 1.50 million from the 2022 budget

## **6. ERA Talent Platform – the international dimension**

The new ERA Communication outlines that EURAXESS services, network and portals will be broadened into an ERA Talent Platform, an online one-stop-shop, with improved structure and governance, exploiting links to Europass, the EU platform for people to manage their learning and careers and the EURES network of European public employment services. The Council Conclusions on the Future of the ERA calls on the Commission and Member States to develop EURAXESS as the ERA pilot action to foster “inclusiveness” within the ERA into an ERA Talent Platform fit to address existing barriers to unbalanced mobility pattern by supporting researchers in their career development within the ERA, connecting researchers and institutions and improving employability and talent absorption and mobility schemes.

The scope of this action is to complement the ERA Talent Platform with an additional dimension and module addressing international and European researchers living and working outside of Europe. It is expected to consist of the development of a portfolio of support services and associated tools, designed to create transnational ties with researchers and scientific communities within the global R&I ecosystem.

This action will build on the EURAXESS Worldwide structure of international hubs and it is expected to be a physical and virtual networking, knowledge-sharing and advocacy platform of services and tools that will serve as a diplomacy asset internationally and promoting instrument of European R&I landscape, attracting international talent and European researchers back home.

This action should be in strong connection with the European dimension of the Talent Platform. Collaboration is foreseen between EURAXESS Worldwide international hubs and EURAXESS Bridgehead Organisations/ National Coordinators and centers across Europe. It is expected to bridge researchers working outside of Europe to their peers in the home countries, also to activate scientific communities and connect them with business and professional associations, as well as R&I employers and funders.

The international dimension of the ERA Talent Platform should also be fostered through networking events, information sessions or trainings, as well as online instruments and tools, with a mission, *inter alia* to:

- (i) promote the European values and R&I landscape as a favourable environment for excellent research,
- (ii) facilitate knowledge and skills transfer, scientific collaboration and recruiting processes, while lifting obstacles to return,
- (iii) strengthen S&T links with home countries through policy feedback tools and dialogues, as well as

(iv) improve data to a better understanding of European researchers living and working outside of Europe, as well as on mobility and research careers policy in general.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q3 /2021 - Q3 / 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 2.50 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 2.50 million from the 2022 budget

## **7. Observatory on Knowledge Ecosystems and Research Careers**

This action is expected to build on the preparatory work of the previous Work Programme, in particular the study “*Knowledge ecosystems in the new ERA: a comprehensive analysis of the state of play, the design of monitoring mechanisms, and creation of a toolbox of support measures*” (2021), both at the level of knowledge ecosystems, and research careers and mobility. In particular, it should build (1) on the knowledge ecosystems mapping exercise and liaise and coordinate activities with the beneficiaries of the “Testing of the ERA Hub concept – pilot phase” action mentioned elsewhere in this work programme. It will contribute to the understanding of successful knowledge ecosystems across Europe through a recurrent monitoring process and development of an interactive online platform as an Observatory on Knowledge Ecosystems and ERA Hubs testing, endorsing and implementing structures. Next to this, (2) it will need to enable real-time monitoring of national systems of remuneration and employment conditions, social security policies, portability of grants and pensions, as well as research mobility patterns of researchers, both geographically and intersectoral mobility. The observatory should integrate, analyse and map data related to the emergence of ecosystem actors engaged in knowledge production, circulation and use and will reflect how they interact, network and coordinate each other on common agendas, smart specialization strategies, value chains, etc.

Four main targets are foreseen:

- Single actors in knowledge ecosystems (higher education institutions, research organisations, business, other actors)
- Ecosystems (platforms, collaborations, and other structures between above mentioned actors)
- ERA Hubs (structures and practices enabling interactions between knowledge ecosystems), and how the concept helps the ecosystems to work and interact better
- Tracking of researchers in terms of mobility, careers, skills, and working conditions

This action is expected to ensure a recurrent stock taking exercise of existing knowledge ecosystems, including, but not limited to, ERA Hubs, endorsing and implementing collaboration capacities (platforms and other structures of cooperation between ecosystem

actors) at European, national and regional level. The exercise needs to be based on surveys, data collection processes and tools, as well as analyses that need to provide quantitative and qualitative high-level insights, such as on the available types of structures, functions, expertise, the geographical coverage and gaps in the territory, the broader context in which they are functioning, including framework conditions, investment and key operational characteristics.

The Observatory should function as an online platform and real-time assessment of the state of play, reflecting the inventory of knowledge ecosystem actors according to predefined criteria as set in above mentioned Knowledge Ecosystems study. It should also propose a forward-looking perspective to complement and reinforce the ecosystem landscape and maximize its impact. It should identify challenges and needs in order to fill in the gaps in the territory, any white space where no such capacities are currently active, and the gaps in expertise and best practices with a view to mainstream them. Benchmarking in the broader geopolitical context (e.g. Silicon Valley) should be also provided.

Expected impact: Actions are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Provide evidence-based policy support through recurrent monitoring, data collection and analysis on knowledge ecosystem actors across Europe through dedicated processes and tools.
- Gain insight into the dynamics and evolution of the knowledge ecosystems across Europe and measure progress in terms of geographical coverage, patterns of cooperation, interaction, networking and functioning at European, national and regional level;
- Measure progress of testing and implementing the ERA Hubs concept, as well as identify gaps in the territory where such actions could be further needed and stimulated;
- Gain insight in the mobility of researchers, both in terms of the regional/national capacity of attracting and retaining R&I talents, and flow-through of talents between sectors;
- Measure progress of countries, regions, and institutions, in terms of acquisition of new skills and competences by early-career researchers, matching skills needs of employers, in terms of working conditions (remuneration, contract duration, social security provisions), and in terms of research careers and career assessment.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q3 / 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 2.75 million from the 2022 budget

## **8. Development of the ERA Talent Platform: website, proof of concept, online services, design, maintenance, communication**

EURAXESS is one of the key initiatives enhancing researcher careers and, as such, is one of the operational instruments of the European Research Area (ERA). It particularly contributes to removing the barriers to mobility and making Europe more attractive to researchers. As an ERA implementation measure, the EURAXESS portal and instruments under its umbrella will be expanded towards a comprehensive recruitment, career development and social networking web-platform - ERA Talent Platform, dedicated to researchers and institutions seeking for R&I talent or willing to improve their institutional talent management policies and practices.

This action will build on the preparatory work under the previous Work Programme, in particular the Study on ERA Priority 3 (*“Taking stock, evaluating the achievements and identifying the way forward for the ERA Priority 3 policy measures with a focus on European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (C&C), the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) and EURAXESS”*, 2020). The newly designed portal is expected to support institutional transformations on recruitment, working conditions and career development of researchers, and it should be aligned to the reviewed European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, as well as the updated Skills Agenda. It should also be interoperable with other European websites and platforms such as EURES and the new Europass, as well as adopt new functionalities required in line with the European Skills, Competences Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO), the enhanced framework of research careers, ERC panel descriptors, etc.

The primary purpose of the ERA Talent Platform is to create a virtual hub for researchers and institutions, R&I employers and funders. The newly designed EURAXESS website should be seen as an interface that facilitates matching between researchers and employers, candidates and jobs, beneficiaries and benefits, research and funding. The action will also develop activities to provide a new facelift to sections of the website and the instruments under its umbrella, *inter alia* additional modules for RESAVER and the upgrade of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) e-tool based on the Charter and Code future revisions and developments. The ERA Talent Platform is also expected to integrate an additional online instrument - a portal gathering EU and national programmes and schemes for intersectoral mobility, which should provide easy access for individuals who want to engage into intersectoral mobility or want to be employed as intermediate between academic and non-academic sector, notably businesses.

The secondary purpose of the newly designed website is to create tools that facilitate automatized data gathering on researchers, research careers, and institutions (R&I employers and funders), in order to allow the Commission to produce high quality data and evidence in support of future ERA policy developments, relevant legislation and actions.

This action requires collaboration with a large group of stakeholders, including EURAXESS Bridgehead Organisations/ National Coordinators, national portal administrators and

EURAXESS Worldwide. It should encompass different activities, such as the development of a proof of concept with the re-conceptualisation of the EURAXESS portal and associated national portals and tools under its umbrella, graphical and functional enhancements, as well as technical development and maintenance. Activities should also include services by external information system provider(s) who, on the basis of inputs provided by the responsible Commission services, guarantee the smooth running of the platform.

Web communication and online promotion activities with stakeholders related to the rollout of the newly designed platform and the portals and tools under its umbrella should also be foreseen as part of this action.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021 and Q3 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 2.75 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 1.00 million from the 2022 budget

## **9. Technical support to Retirement Savings Vehicle for European Research Institutions and research performing individuals (RESAVER)**

As asserted in Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality. Nevertheless social security in most member states is under pressure and mobile employees, researchers in particular, experience additional obstacles in accumulating an adequate amount of pension provisions. Most prominent issues experienced by mobile researchers in relation to accumulation of occupational pensions (second pillar) are the vesting period, transferability of assets and administrative burden during accumulation phase and at retirement.

RESAVER Pension Fund has been created with the ambition to tackle the issues listed above by facilitating free circulation of researchers and removing pension as an obstacle to mobility which corresponds to the strategic objectives of the Union policy as stipulated in Article 179 TFEU on the establishment of a European Research Area.

RESAVER Occupational fund became operational in May 2017 and since then the fund has welcomed research organisations from Hungary, Austria, Netherlands, Italy and Cyprus. In parallel with geographical expansion, RESAVER has the ambition to engage in mutually beneficial collaborations with local occupational pension funds for the benefit of mobile employees. In order to answer to the needs of mobile researchers that do not receive occupational pension employee benefits, or receive an insufficient level of contributions, a personal pension product is expected to be developed that should utilise the existing structure to the extent possible. In addition, investment strategy should be fine-tuned continuously in



order to correspond to the specific needs of researchers and research performing organisations.

In this context following technical support is needed: pension fund management, implementation of additional countries and organisations in the pension fund, providing advice to the board concerning the legal framework, coordinate the development of a third pillar product, support the project in ad hoc tasks, contribute to the establishment of partnerships with local pension funds and coordination of investment strategy adjustments.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q4 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 1.00 million from the 2021 budget

## **10. Monitoring and evaluating the Horizon 2020 complementary support for the European Universities initiative**

The European Universities initiative piloted under Erasmus+ and supported under Horizon 2020 offers a testbed for the Higher Education Transformation Agenda to support modernisation of higher education institutions, and explore new integrated ways of cooperation between universities and with other actors in their surrounding ecosystem. In view of the potential full deployment of the European Universities initiative as of 2023, the Commission will monitor progress and identify and address remaining barriers to the transformation agenda.

This action is expected to focus on the R&I dimension of the pilot projects and needs to be implemented in synergy with a similar exercise for the education dimension.

The analysis should include progress made by the project portfolio on areas in the transformation agenda, and in implementing measures for borderless cooperation and circulation of knowledge and talents. Project(s) are expected to provide recommendations to developing future effective synergies with the Erasmus programme and with national or regional funding mechanisms.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q3 / 2021

Indicative budget: EUR 0.50 million from the 2021 budget

## **11. Studies and communication**

Activities should support the implementation of the ERA Communication objectives and may include studies, support and communication activities that are needed to analyse and enhance the EU space R&I environment, for example

- higher education in the EU versus needs of the space R&I community;
- dissemination of scientific results;
- analysis of the portfolio of EU-funded projects in the field of research careers, universities, research assessment, researcher mobility;
- collection of project feedback, in particular with respect to key exploitable results;
- organisational support for consulting the R&I stakeholders community on R&I needs;
- production and dissemination of communication material and the organisation of events related the ERA, synergies with the EEA, European R&I agendas and Horizon Europe;
- support to Member States ensuring coherent communication activities on *the implementation of the ERA policy agenda* across target groups.

Activities are expected to include surveys as appropriate implemented through public procurement, and/or appointing (groups of) independent experts. These limited numbers of contracts may be implemented on the basis of framework contracts, in order to further ensure that the Commission is provided with appropriate and timely analyses, which in turn should facilitate the proper integration of policy studies into the preparation of new policy initiatives.

Cooperation with the presidencies of the Council of the European Union and stakeholders is envisaged and could include direct support to ERA-related presidency events.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q3 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 0.95 million from the 2022 budget

## **12. Monitoring gender equality in Research and Innovation - Development, implementation and dissemination of indicators (She Figures)'**

The European Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, will continue collecting sex-disaggregated data and monitoring with appropriate indicators, the implementation of gender policies, objectives, guiding targets and actions at institutional, national and EU level. The study will update data and indicators on human resources in Science and Technology, Research & Development personnel, seniority grades, education, work-life balance, the

inclusion of the gender dimension in research and innovation content, boards' composition, funds, institutional change, gender and innovation, collected insofar.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q2 / 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 0.50 million from the 2021 budget

### **13. Service Facility in Support of the Strategic Development of International Cooperation in Research and Innovation**

The Strategic Development of International Cooperation in Research and Innovation aims to provide services that support the policy development, priority setting, follow-up and implementation of the strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation.

A new framework contract for services will be launched and it would reflect on the new political priorities “making Europe stronger in the world” and facilitate strategic international cooperation in research and innovation. It would also support the monitoring of Associated Countries’ alignment with the ERA principles, and it would facilitate strengthening the coordination and alignment of the Member States international R&I strategies with the EU.

- **Activity description:** international cooperation in R&I is a cross-cutting activity relevant for the whole HE programme. The framework contract should reflect on the new political priorities “making Europe stronger in the world”. The objective is to provide services that support the policy development, priority setting, and follow-up and implementation of the strategy for international cooperation in R&I.
- **Information related to the activity:** it is a contribution to the implementation of international dimension of HE and it would facilitate strengthening the coordination and alignment of the Member States international R&I strategies with the EU. It would also support the monitoring of Associated Countries’ alignment with the ERA principles.
- **Impact:** The activities under the framework contract should result in in-depth and well-informed policy dialogues, improved framework conditions for cooperation in R&I, strategic priority setting for R&I, coordination between internal and external policies and better coordination and alignment with member states’ R&I international strategies

The service facility will be implemented through a new framework contract for services to be launched and signed for a duration of 4 years, with an estimated budget ceiling for its entire duration of 25 million euro, as well as through other existing framework contracts (i.e. for communication related activities). Several specific contracts will be signed under this framework contract.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q4/2021

Indicative budget: EUR 7.00 million from the 2021 budget and EUR 7.00 million from the 2022 budget

#### **14. Implementation of the ERA Monitoring Mechanism**

The Council Conclusions on the Future Governance of the European Research Area (ERA) calls on the Commission and Member States to develop a new **ERA online policy platform** with the aim to have a consistent, robust and quality tested national reporting system, taking into account current instruments. Furthermore, the Council recommendation on a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe (Pact for R&I), defines that the platform should inform on (i) the implementation of the ERA policy agenda at Union and national level; and on (ii) other relevant investments, reforms and activities supporting the principles and ERA priority areas set out in the Pact for R&I. The Commission and the Member States should share information through the ERA policy online platform on their current and planned policies and programmes that contribute to implementing the ERA policy agenda, and more broadly contribute to the principles and priorities set out by the Pact for R&I. In that sense, the online platform could serve as a kind of “hub” for sharing information around the new ERA and ease exchange between all actors.

Considering this, the online policy platform should be structured around the various elements that ensure the future monitoring of and reporting on the ERA implementation, including a scoreboard and dashboard and a tool for reporting from the Member States and the Commission on the implementation of the ERA policy agenda (e.g. annual reports to the Member States). Moreover, it should provide for easy access to and information on the priorities areas of the Pact for R&I, the ERA policy agenda, including its list of joint actions and their state of implementation, and on Member States. A clear structure should ensure compatibility and comparability of information per country and per action.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q3/Q4 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 1.20 million from the 2022 budget

#### **15. EU Gender Equality Competence Facility**

This EU Gender Equality Competence Facility will follow up on the pilot European knowledge and support facility for fostering institutional change through gender equality plans, and the GE Academy project, funded under the 2020 work programme of Horizon 2020, under the Science-with-and-for-society programme.

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In support to the requirement for public bodies, research organisations and higher education establishments applying to Horizon Europe to have a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place as an eligibility criterion, and the new ERA policy agenda, this facility will act as a competence centre and deploy support to public bodies, research organisations and universities on how to design, implement, evaluate, and sustain a gender equality plan.

This practical support will include the development of an enhanced digital, interactive platform to offer i) access to gender knowledge and expertise on gender equality plans, including to national-level contact points appointed through the pilot European knowledge and support facility for fostering institutional change through gender equality plans; ii) as well as trainers on gender equality in research and innovation certified through the GE Academy project.

This support will include providing guidance, information and assistance at institutional level, as well as disseminating the good practices and best tools in the field, adapted to specific country contexts and organisations' needs

The platform will include digital training modules and an extensive range of useful, applicable and appealing end-user material for the implementation of GEPs. It will take into account and build on the GEAR tool developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and DG Research and Innovation. Activities should be implemented in close cooperation and complementarity with the EIGE.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: Q2/Q3 2022

Indicative budget: EUR 1.00 million from the 2022 budget

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**Budget<sup>111</sup>**

	Budget line(s)	2021 Budget (EUR million)	2022 Budget (EUR million)
<b>Calls</b>			
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-01-two-stage			180.00
	<i>from 01.020401</i>		<i>180.00</i>
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-02		21.00	
	<i>from 01.020401</i>	<i>21.00</i>	
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-03		149.00	
	<i>from 01.020401</i>	<i>149.00</i>	
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-04			50.00
	<i>from 01.020401</i>		<i>50.00</i>
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-05		30.00	
	<i>from 01.020401</i>	<i>30.00</i>	
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-06		5.00	
	<i>from 01.020401</i>	<i>5.00</i>	
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-07			40.00
	<i>from 01.020401</i>		<i>40.00</i>
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-01			80.00
	<i>from</i>		<i>80.00</i>

<sup>111</sup> The budget figures given in this table are rounded to two decimal places. The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for years 2021 and 2022.

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	<i>01.020401</i>		
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-02			8.00
	<i>from 01.020401</i>		8.00
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-03			24.00
	<i>from 01.020401</i>		24.00
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-TALENTS-04			8.00
	<i>from 01.020401</i>		8.00
HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01		61.50	
	<i>from 01.020402</i>	61.50	
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01			59.00
	<i>from 01.020402</i>		59.00
<b>Other actions</b>			
Grant to identified beneficiary according to Financial Regulation Article 195(e)		168.55	6.70
	<i>from 01.020401</i>	161.00	0.50
	<i>from 01.020402</i>	7.55	6.20
Prize		0.15	0.55
	<i>from 01.020402</i>	0.15	0.55
Expert contract action		1.80	2.70
	<i>from 01.020401</i>	0.40	1.00
	<i>from 01.020402</i>	1.40	1.70
Public procurement		19.20	19.40

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	<i>from</i> <i>01.020402</i>	<i>19.20</i>	<i>19.40</i>
<b>Estimated total budget</b>		456.20	478.35