EUROPEAN RESEARCH EXECUTIVE AGENCY (REA)

REA.C – Future Society
C.4 – Reforming European R&I and Research Infrastructures

GRANT AGREEMENT

Project 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC

PREAMBLE

This **Agreement** ('the Agreement') is **between** the following parties:

on the one part,

the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and

on the other part,

1. 'the coordinator':

ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER), PIC 899261102, established in VIA PIERO GOBETTI 101, BOLOGNA BO 40129, Italy,

and the following other beneficiaries, if they sign their 'accession form' (see Annex 3 and Article 40):

2. **FUNDACIO EURECAT (EURECAT)**, PIC 928030235, established in AVENIDA UNIVERSITAT AUTONOMA 23, CERDANYOLA DEL VALLES (BARCELONA) 08290, Spain,

3. **ECOPLUS.NIEDEROSTERREICHS WIRTSCHAFTSAGENTUR GMBH (ECOPLUS)**, PIC 996700415, established in NIEDEROSTERREICHRING, HAUS A 2, ST POLTEN 3100, Austria,

4. **INESC TEC - INSTITUTO DE ENGENHARIADE SISTEMAS E COMPUTADORES, TECNOLOGIA E CIENCIA (INESCTEC)**, PIC 999513706, established in RUA DR ROBERTO FRIAS CAMPUS DA FEUP, PORTO 4200 465, Portugal,

5. **CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE (CNR)**, PIC 999979500, established in PIAZZALE ALDO MORO 7, ROMA 00185, Italy,

6. **TRONDHEIM TECH PORT (TTP)**, PIC 887659223, established in OLAV TRYGGVASONS GATE 2B, TRONDHEIM 7011, Norway,

7. **SVEUCILISTE U SPLITU (UNIST)**, PIC 999818189, established in RUDERA BOSKOVICA 31, SPLIT 21000, Croatia,

8. **Masarykova univerzita (MU)**, PIC 999880657, established in Zerotinovo namesti 9, BRNO 601 77, Czechia,

9. **AGENTIA DE DEZVOLTARE REGIONALA NORD-VEST (ADRNV)**, PIC 998907844, established in SAT RADAIA 50, BACIU CLUJ 407059, Romania,

10. **POLITECHNIKA WARSZAWSKA (WUT)**, PIC 999884052, established in PLAC POLITECHNIKI 1, WARSZAWA 00-661, Poland,

Unless otherwise specified, references to 'beneficiary' or 'beneficiaries' include the coordinator and affiliated entities (if any).

If only one beneficiary signs the grant agreement ('mono-beneficiary grant'), all provisions referring to the 'coordinator' or the 'beneficiaries' will be considered — mutatis mutandis — as referring to the beneficiary.

The parties referred to above have agreed to enter into the Agreement.

By signing the Agreement and the accession forms, the beneficiaries accept the grant and agree to implement the action under their own responsibility and in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

The Agreement is composed of:

Preamble

Terms and Conditions (including Data Sheet)

Annex 1 Description of the action[1]

Annex 2 Estimated budget for the action

Annex 2a Additional information on unit costs and contributions (if applicable)

Annex 3 Accession forms (if applicable)[2]

Annex 3a Declaration on joint and several liability of affiliated entities (if applicable)[3]

Annex 4 Model for the financial statements

Annex 5 Specific rules (if applicable)

[1] Template published on Portal Reference Documents.
[2] Template published on Portal Reference Documents.
[3] Template published on Portal Reference Documents.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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DATA SHEET

1. General data

Project summary:

Project summary
Overarching aim of the ERA_FABRIC project is to define, structure, populate and validate the "interconnected knowledge space" foreseen by the EU ERA Hubs initiative (COM 2020 628 final). Three distinct, and intertwined, dimensions, all of them relevant for policy making, are adopted as a structuring principle for the community to be built and cultivated during the project: 1) ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems: fostering the dynamic interaction of R&D and innovation actors at regional and multiregional levels, taking into account the different knowledge and cultural contexts and the alignment of research foci and industrial needs; 2) ERA Hubs as Multi Stakeholder Platforms: bringing together the representatives of the various involved interest groups in a seamless and uninterrupted discussion and deliberation on strategic priorities, actions and results evaluation; 3) ERA Hubs as a Policy Co Creation Toolbox: a transformative set of measures and tools operating in a "middle ground" needing to be configured as a distinct space from both the EU and the MS/Regional levels, historically presided over by "ad hoc" sets of instruments (e.g. Framework Programmes for R&I, Structural and Investment Funds, Interregional and Cross Border Cooperation Programmes). It is the consortium's vision and assumption that the 3 above dimensions should be presided over and made interoperable, in order for the ERA Hubs initiative to become path breaking and impactful at broad EU level. ERA_FABRIC is designed by leading European actors in the domain of regional development. The 11 partners represent 8 Member States and 1 Associated State. With the addition of the letters of interest gathered before the proposal presentation, almost half of EU27 territorial coverage has been reached.

Keywords:

- Valorisation and capacity building
- Innovation
- Smart Specialisation strategies

Project number: 101094821

Project name: Framing And Bridging Regional research and Innovation ecosystems Capacities for a renewed ERA

Project acronym: ERA_FABRIC

Call: HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01

Topic: HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-30

Type of action: HORIZON Coordination and Support Actions

Granting authority: European Research Executive Agency

Grant managed through EU Funding & Tenders Portal: Yes (eGrants)

Project starting date: fixed date: 1 January 2023

Project end date: 30 June 2025

Project duration: 30 months

Consortium agreement: Yes

2. Participants

List of participants:

N°	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Max grant amount
1	COO	ART-ER	ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI	IT	899261102	235 000.00	235 000.00
2	BEN	EURECAT	FUNDACIO EURECAT	ES	928030235	127 875.00	127 875.00
3	BEN	ECOPLUS	ECOPLUS.NIEDEROSTERREICHS WIRTSCHAFTSAGENTUR GMBH	AT	996700415	100 000.00	100 000.00

N°	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Max grant amount
4	BEN	INESCTEC	INESC TEC - INSTITUTO DE ENGENHARIADE SISTEMAS E COMPUTADORES, TECNOLOGIA E CIENCIA	PT	999513706	155 000.00	155 000.00
5	BEN	CNR	CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE	IT	999979500	115 625.00	115 625.00
6	BEN	TTP	TRONDHEIM TECH PORT	NO	887659223	194 475.00	194 475.00
6.1	AE	NTNU	NORGES TEKNISK-NATURVITENSKAPELIGE UNIVERSITET NTNU	NO	999977851	43 125.00	43 125.00
7	BEN	UNIST	SVEUCILISTE U SPLITU	HR	999818189	121 875.00	121 875.00
8	BEN	MU	Masarykova univerzita	CZ	999880657	108 750.00	108 750.00
9	BEN	ADRNV	AGENTIA DE DEZVOLTARE REGIONALA NORD-VEST	RO	998907844	80 750.00	80 750.00
10	BEN	WUT	POLITECHNIKA WARSZAWSKA	PL	999884052	147 500.00	147 500.00
Total						1 429 975.00	1 429 975.00

Coordinator:

– ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER)

3. Grant

Maximum grant amount, total estimated eligible costs and contributions and funding rate:

Total eligible costs (BEN and AE)	Funding rate (%)	Maximum grant amount (Annex 2)	Maximum grant amount (award decision)
1 429 975.00	100	1 429 975.00	1 429 975.00

Grant form: Budget-based

Grant mode: Action grant

Budget categories/activity types:

- A. Personnel costs
  - A.1 Employees, A.2 Natural persons under direct contract, A.3 Seconded persons
  - A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
  - C.1 Travel and subsistence
  - C.2 Equipment
  - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- D. Other cost categories
  - D.2 Internally invoiced goods and services
- E. Indirect costs

Cost eligibility options:

- In-kind contributions eligible costs
- Parental leave
- Project-based supplementary payments

- Average personnel costs (unit cost according to usual cost accounting practices)

- Limitation for subcontracting

- Travel and subsistence:
  - Travel: Actual costs
  - Accommodation: Actual costs
  - Subsistence: Actual costs

- Equipment: depreciation only

- Indirect cost flat-rate: 25% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs, subcontracting costs, financial support to third parties and exempted specific cost categories, if any)

- VAT: Yes

- Other ineligible costs

Budget flexibility: Yes (no flexibility cap)

4. Reporting, payments and recoveries

4.1 Continuous reporting (art 21)

Deliverables: see Funding & Tenders Portal Continuous Reporting tool

4.2 Periodic reporting and payments

Reporting and payment schedule (art 21, 22):

Reporting					Payments	
Reporting periods			Type	Deadline	Type	Deadline (time to pay)
RP No	Month from	Month to				
					Initial prefinancing	30 days from entry into force/10 days before starting date – whichever is the latest
1	1	12	Periodic report	60 days after end of reporting period	Interim payment	90 days from receiving periodic report
2	13	30	Periodic report	60 days after end of reporting period	Final payment	90 days from receiving periodic report

Prefinancing payments and guarantees:

Prefinancing payment	
Type	Amount
Prefinancing 1 (initial)	1 143 980.00

Reporting and payment modalities (art 21, 22):

Mutual Insurance Mechanism (MIM): Yes

MIM contribution: 5% of the maximum grant amount (71 498.75), retained from the initial prefinancing

Restrictions on distribution of initial prefinancing: The prefinancing may be distributed only if the minimum number of beneficiaries set out in the call conditions (if any) have acceded to the Agreement and only to beneficiaries that have acceded.

Interim payment ceiling (if any): 90% of the maximum grant amount

Exception for revenues: Yes

No-profit rule: Yes

Late payment interest: ECB + 3.5%

Bank account for payments:

IT47Q0200802480000002853795

Conversion into euros: Double conversion

Reporting language: Language of the Agreement

4.3 Certificates (art 24):

Certificates on the financial statements (CFS):

Conditions:

Schedule: only at final payment, if threshold is reached

Standard threshold (beneficiary-level):

- financial statement: requested EU contribution to costs ≥ EUR 430 000.00

Special threshold for beneficiaries with a systems and process audit(see Article 24): financial statement: requested EU contribution to costs ≥ EUR 725 000.00

4.4 Recoveries (art 22)

First-line liability for recoveries:

Beneficiary termination: Beneficiary concerned

Final payment: Each beneficiary for their own debt

After final payment: Beneficiary concerned

Joint and several liability for enforced recoveries (in case of non-payment):

Individual financial responsibility: Each beneficiary is liable only for its own debts (and those of its affiliated entities, if any)

5. Consequences of non-compliance, applicable law & dispute settlement forum

Suspension and termination:

Additional suspension grounds (art 31)

Additional termination grounds (art 32)

Applicable law (art 43):

Standard applicable law regime: EU law + law of Belgium

Dispute settlement forum (art 43):

Standard dispute settlement forum:

EU beneficiaries: EU General Court + EU Court of Justice (on appeal)

Non-EU beneficiaries: Courts of Brussels, Belgium (unless an international agreement provides for the enforceability of EU court judgements)

6. Other

Specific rules (Annex 5): Yes

Standard time-limits after project end:

Confidentiality (for X years after final payment): 5

Record-keeping (for X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Reviews (up to X years after final payment): 2

Audits (up to X years after final payment): 2

Extension of findings from other grants to this grant (no later than X years after final payment): 2

Impact evaluation (up to X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL

ARTICLE 1 — SUBJECT OF THE AGREEMENT

This Agreement sets out the rights and obligations and terms and conditions applicable to the grant awarded for the implementation of the action set out in Chapter 2.

ARTICLE 2 — DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Agreement, the following definitions apply:

Actions — The project which is being funded in the context of this Agreement.

Grant — The grant awarded in the context of this Agreement.

EU grants — Grants awarded by EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies (including EU executive agencies, EU regulatory agencies, EDA, joint undertakings, etc.).

Participants — Entities participating in the action as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties.

Beneficiaries (BEN) — The signatories of this Agreement (either directly or through an accession form).

Affiliated entities (AE) — Entities affiliated to a beneficiary within the meaning of Article 187 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046[4] which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries (obligation to implement action tasks and right to charge costs and claim contributions).

Associated partners (AP) — Entities which participate in the action, but without the right to charge costs or claim contributions.

Purchases — Contracts for goods, works or services needed to carry out the action (e.g. equipment, consumables and supplies) but which are not part of the action tasks (see Annex 1).

Subcontracting — Contracts for goods, works or services that are part of the action tasks (see Annex 1).

In-kind contributions — In-kind contributions within the meaning of Article 2(36) of EU Financial

[4] For the definition, see Article 187 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1): "**affiliated entities** [are]:
(a) entities that form a sole beneficiary [(i.e. where an entity is formed of several entities that satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant, including where the entity is specifically established for the purpose of implementing an action to be financed by a grant)];
(b) entities that satisfy the eligibility criteria and that do not fall within one of the situations referred to in Article 136(1) and 141(1) and that have a link with the beneficiary, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation".

Regulation 2018/1046, i.e. non-financial resources made available free of charge by third parties.

Fraud — Fraud within the meaning of Article 3 of EU Directive 2017/1371[5] and Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995[6], as well as any other wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain.

Irregularities — Any type of breach (regulatory or contractual) which could impact the EU financial interests, including irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation 2988/95[7].

Grave professional misconduct — Any type of unacceptable or improper behaviour in exercising one's profession, especially by employees, including grave professional misconduct within the meaning of Article 136(1)(c) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

Applicable EU, international and national law — Any legal acts or other (binding or non-binding) rules and guidance in the area concerned.

Portal — EU Funding & Tenders Portal; electronic portal and exchange system managed by the European Commission and used by itself and other EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies for the management of their funding programmes (grants, procurements, prizes, etc.).

CHAPTER 2 ACTION

ARTICLE 3 — ACTION

The grant is awarded for the action **101094821 — ERA_FABRIC** ('action'), as described in Annex 1.

ARTICLE 4 — DURATION AND STARTING DATE

The duration and the starting date of the action are set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 1).

CHAPTER 3 GRANT

ARTICLE 5 — GRANT

5.1 Form of grant

The grant is an action grant[8] which takes the form of a budget-based mixed actual cost grant (i.e. a

[5] Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2017 on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29).
[6] OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.
[7] Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).
[8] For the definition, see Article 180(2)(a) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: '**action grant**' means an EU grant to finance "an action intended to help achieve a Union policy objective".

grant based on actual costs incurred, but which may also include other forms of funding, such as unit costs or contributions, flat-rate costs or contributions, lump sum costs or contributions or financing not linked to costs).

5.2 Maximum grant amount

The maximum grant amount is set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 3) and in the estimated budget (Annex 2).

5.3 Funding rate

The funding rate for costs is 100% of the action's eligible costs.

Contributions are not subject to any funding rate.

5.4 Estimated budget, budget categories and forms of funding

The estimated budget for the action is set out in Annex 2.

It contains the estimated eligible costs and contributions for the action, broken down by participant and budget category.

Annex 2 also shows the types of costs and contributions (forms of funding)[9] to be used for each budget category.

If unit costs or contributions are used, the details on the calculation will be explained in Annex 2a.

5.5 Budget flexibility

The budget breakdown may be adjusted — without an amendment (see Article 39) — by transfers (between participants and budget categories), as long as this does not imply any substantive or important change to the description of the action in Annex 1.

However:

- changes to the budget category for volunteers (if used) always require an amendment
- changes to budget categories with lump sums costs or contributions (if used; including financing not linked to costs) always require an amendment
- changes to budget categories with higher funding rates or budget ceilings (if used) always require an amendment
- addition of amounts for subcontracts not provided for in Annex 1 either require an amendment or simplified approval in accordance with Article 6.2
- other changes require an amendment or simplified approval, if specifically provided for in Article 6.2
- flexibility caps: not applicable.

[9] See Article 125 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

ARTICLE 6 — ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In order to be eligible, costs and contributions must meet the **eligibility** conditions set out in this Article.

6.1 General eligibility conditions

The **general eligibility conditions** are the following:

(a) for actual costs:

(i) they must be actually incurred by the beneficiary

(ii) they must be incurred in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of costs relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be incurred afterwards; see Article 21)

(iii) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2

(iv) they must be incurred in connection with the action as described in Annex 1 and necessary for its implementation

(v) they must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular recorded in the beneficiary's accounts in accordance with the accounting standards applicable in the country where the beneficiary is established and with the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices

(vi) they must comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security and

(vii) they must be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency

(b) for unit costs or contributions (if any):

(i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2

(ii) the units must:

- be actually used or produced by the beneficiary in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of units relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be used or produced afterwards; see Article 21)

- be necessary for the implementation of the action and

(iii) the number of units must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular supported by records and documentation (see Article 20)

(c) for flat-rate costs or contributions (if any):

(i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2

(ii) the costs or contributions to which the flat-rate is applied must:

- be eligible
- relate to the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of costs or contributions relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be incurred afterwards; see Article 21)

(d) for lump sum costs or contributions (if any):

(i) they must be declared under one of the budget categories set out in Article 6.2 and Annex 2

(ii) the work must be properly implemented by the beneficiary in accordance with Annex 1

(iii) the deliverables/outputs must be achieved in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of deliverables/outputs relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be achieved afterwards; see Article 21)

(e) for unit, flat-rate or lump sum costs or contributions according to usual cost accounting practices (if any):

(i) they must fulfil the general eligibility conditions for the type of cost concerned

(ii) the cost accounting practices must be applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding

(f) for financing not linked to costs (if any): the results must be achieved or the conditions must be fulfilled as described in Annex 1.

In addition, for direct cost categories (e.g. personnel, travel & subsistence, subcontracting and other direct costs) only costs that are directly linked to the action implementation and can therefore be attributed to it directly are eligible. They must not include any indirect costs (i.e. costs that are only indirectly linked to the action, e.g. via cost drivers).

In-kind contributions provided by third parties free of charge may be declared as eligible direct costs by the beneficiaries which use them (under the same conditions as if they were their own, provided that they concern only direct costs and that the third parties and their in-kind contributions are set out in Annex 1 (or approved ex post in the periodic report, if their use does not entail changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants; 'simplified approval procedure').

6.2 Specific eligibility conditions for each budget category

For each budget category, the **specific eligibility conditions** are as follows:

Direct costs

A. Personnel costs

A.1 Costs for employees (or equivalent) are eligible as personnel costs if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are related to personnel working for the beneficiary under an employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action.

They must be limited to salaries (including net payments during parental leave), social security contributions, taxes and other costs linked to the remuneration, if they arise from national law or the employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred, in accordance with the following method:

{daily rate for the person

multiplied by

number of day-equivalents worked on the action (rounded up or down to the nearest half-day)}.

The daily rate must be calculated as:

{annual personnel costs for the person

divided by

215}.

The number of day-equivalents declared for a person must be identifiable and verifiable (see Article 20).

The actual time spent on parental leave by a person assigned to the action may be deducted from the 215 days indicated in the above formula.

The total number of day-equivalents declared in EU grants, for a person for a year, cannot be higher than 215, minus time spent on parental leave (if any).

For personnel which receives supplementary payments for work in projects (project-based remuneration), the personnel costs must be calculated at a rate which:

- corresponds to the actual remuneration costs paid by the beneficiary for the time worked by the person in the action over the reporting period
- does not exceed the remuneration costs paid by the beneficiary for work in similar projects funded by national schemes (‘national projects reference’)
- is defined based on objective criteria allowing to determine the amount to which the person is entitled

and

- reflects the usual practice of the beneficiary to pay consistently bonuses or supplementary payments for work in projects funded by national schemes.

The national projects reference is the remuneration defined in national law, collective labour agreement or written internal rules of the beneficiary applicable to work in projects funded by national schemes.

If there is no such national law, collective labour agreement or written internal rules or if the project-based remuneration is not based on objective criteria, the national project reference will be the average remuneration of the person in the last full calendar year covered by the reporting period, excluding remuneration paid for work in EU actions.

If the beneficiary uses average personnel costs (unit cost according to usual cost accounting practices), the personnel costs must fulfil the general eligibility conditions for such unit costs and the daily rate must be calculated:

- using the actual personnel costs recorded in the beneficiary's accounts and excluding any costs which are ineligible or already included in other budget categories; the actual personnel costs may be adjusted on the basis of budgeted or estimated elements, if they are relevant for calculating the personnel costs, reasonable and correspond to objective and verifiable information

and

- according to usual cost accounting practices which are applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding.

A.2 and **A.3 Costs for natural persons working under a direct contract** other than an employment contract and costs for **seconded persons by a third party against payment** are also eligible as personnel costs, if they are assigned to the action, fulfil the general eligibility conditions and:

(a) work under conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organised, the tasks that are performed and the premises where they are performed) and

(b) the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary (unless agreed otherwise).

They must be calculated on the basis of a rate which corresponds to the costs actually incurred for the direct contract or secondment and must not be significantly different from those for personnel performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary.

A.4 The work of **SME owners** for the action (i.e. owners of beneficiaries that are small and medium-sized enterprises[10] not receiving a salary) or **natural person beneficiaries** (i.e. beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary) may be declared as personnel costs, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are calculated as unit costs in accordance with the method set out in Annex 2a.

B. Subcontracting costs

Subcontracting costs for the action (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible or non-refundable value added tax (VAT)) are eligible, if they are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred, fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are awarded using the

[10] For the definition, see Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC: micro, small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) are enterprises

- engaged in an economic activity, irrespective of their legal form (including, in particular, self- employed persons and family businesses engaged in craft or other activities, and partnerships or associations regularly engaged in an economic activity) and

- employing fewer than 250 persons (expressed in 'annual working units' as defined in Article 5 of the Recommendation) and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million.

beneficiary's usual purchasing practices — provided these ensure subcontracts with best value for money (or if appropriate the lowest price) and that there is no conflict of interests (see Article 12).

Beneficiaries that are 'contracting authorities/entities' within the meaning of the EU Directives on public procurement must also comply with the applicable national law on public procurement.

Subcontracting may cover only a limited part of the action.

The tasks to be subcontracted and the estimated cost for each subcontract must be set out in Annex 1 and the total estimated costs of subcontracting per beneficiary must be set out in Annex 2 (or may be approved ex post in the periodic report, if the use of subcontracting does not entail changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants; 'simplified approval procedure').

C. Purchase costs

Purchase costs for the action (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible or non-refundable value added tax (VAT)) are eligible if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are bought using the beneficiary's usual purchasing practices — provided these ensure purchases with best value for money (or if appropriate the lowest price) and that there is no conflict of interests (see Article 12).

Beneficiaries that are 'contracting authorities/entities' within the meaning of the EU Directives on public procurement must also comply with the applicable national law on public procurement.

C.1 Travel and subsistence

Purchases for **travel, accommodation** and **subsistence** must be calculated as follows:

- travel: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel
- accommodation: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel
- subsistence: on the basis of the costs actually incurred and in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel .

C.2 Equipment

Purchases of **equipment, infrastructure or other assets** used for the action must be declared as depreciation costs, calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and written off in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices.

Only the portion of the costs that corresponds to the rate of actual use for the action during the action duration can be taken into account.

Costs for **renting or leasing** equipment, infrastructure or other assets are also eligible, if they do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment, infrastructure or assets and do not include any financing fees.

C.3 Other goods, works and services

Purchases of **other goods, works and services** must be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred.

Such goods, works and services include, for instance, consumables and supplies, promotion, dissemination, protection of results, translations, publications, certificates and financial guarantees, if required under the Agreement.

D. Other cost categories

D.2 Internally invoiced goods and services

Costs for internally invoiced goods and services directly used for the action may be declared as unit cost according to usual cost accounting practices, if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions for such unit costs and the amount per unit is calculated:

- using the actual costs for the good or service recorded in the beneficiary's accounts, attributed either by direct measurement or on the basis of cost drivers, and excluding any cost which are ineligible or already included in other budget categories; the actual costs may be adjusted on the basis of budgeted or estimated elements, if they are relevant for calculating the costs, reasonable and correspond to objective and verifiable information

and

- according to usual cost accounting practices which are applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding.

'Internally invoiced goods and services' means goods or services which are provided within the beneficiary's organisation directly for the action and which the beneficiary values on the basis of its usual cost accounting practices.

This cost will not be taken into account for the indirect cost flat-rate.

Indirect costs

E. Indirect costs

Indirect costs will be reimbursed at the flat-rate of 25% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs, subcontracting costs, financial support to third parties and exempted specific cost categories, if any).

Contributions

Not applicable

6.3 Ineligible costs and contributions

The following costs or contributions are **ineligible**:

(a) costs or contributions that do not comply with the conditions set out above (Article 6.1 and 6.2), in particular:

(i) costs related to return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary

(ii) debt and debt service charges

(iii) provisions for future losses or debts

(iv) interest owed

(v) currency exchange losses

(vi) bank costs charged by the beneficiary's bank for transfers from the granting authority

(vii) excessive or reckless expenditure

(viii) deductible or refundable VAT (including VAT paid by public bodies acting as public authority)

(ix) costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during grant agreement suspension (see Article 31)

(x) in-kind contributions by third parties: not applicable

(b) costs or contributions declared under other EU grants (or grants awarded by an EU Member State, non-EU country or other body implementing the EU budget), except for the following cases:

(i) Synergy actions: not applicable

(ii) if the action grant is combined with an operating grant[11] running during the same period and the beneficiary can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any (direct or indirect) costs of the action grant

(c) costs or contributions for staff of a national (or regional/local) administration, for activities that are part of the administration's normal activities (i.e. not undertaken only because of the grant)

(d) costs or contributions (especially travel and subsistence) for staff or representatives of EU institutions, bodies or agencies

(e) other :

(i) country restrictions for eligible costs: not applicable

(ii) costs or contributions declared specifically ineligible in the call conditions.

6.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary declares costs or contributions that are ineligible, they will be rejected (see Article 27).

This may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

[11] For the definition, see Article 180(2)(b) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: '**operating grant**' means an EU grant to finance "the functioning of a body which has an objective forming part of and supporting an EU policy".

CHAPTER 4 GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 1 CONSORTIUM: BENEFICIARIES, AFFILIATED ENTITIES AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS

ARTICLE 7 — BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries, as signatories of the Agreement, are fully responsible towards the granting authority for implementing it and for complying with all its obligations.

They must implement the Agreement to their best abilities, in good faith and in accordance with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

They must have the appropriate resources to implement the action and implement the action under their own responsibility and in accordance with Article 11. If they rely on affiliated entities or other participants (see Articles 8 and 9), they retain sole responsibility towards the granting authority and the other beneficiaries.

They are jointly responsible for the *technical* implementation of the action. If one of the beneficiaries fails to implement their part of the action, the other beneficiaries must ensure that this part is implemented by someone else (without being entitled to an increase of the maximum grant amount and subject to an amendment; see Article 39). The *financial* responsibility of each beneficiary in case of recoveries is governed by Article 22.

The beneficiaries (and their action) must remain eligible under the EU programme funding the grant for the entire duration of the action. Costs and contributions will be eligible only as long as the beneficiary and the action are eligible.

The **internal roles and responsibilities** of the beneficiaries are divided as follows:

(a) Each beneficiary must:

(i) keep information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date (see Article 19)

(ii) inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) immediately of any events or circumstances likely to affect significantly or delay the implementation of the action (see Article 19)

(iii) submit to the coordinator in good time:

- the prefinancing guarantees (if required; see Article 23)
- the financial statements and certificates on the financial statements (CFS) (if required; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)
- the contribution to the deliverables and technical reports (see Article 21)
- any other documents or information required by the granting authority under the Agreement

(iv) submit via the Portal data and information related to the participation of their affiliated entities.

(b) The coordinator must:

(i) monitor that the action is implemented properly (see Article 11)

(ii) act as the intermediary for all communications between the consortium and the granting authority, unless the Agreement or granting authority specifies otherwise, and in particular:

- submit the prefinancing guarantees to the granting authority (if any)
- request and review any documents or information required and verify their quality and completeness before passing them on to the granting authority
- submit the deliverables and reports to the granting authority
- inform the granting authority about the payments made to the other beneficiaries (report on the distribution of payments; if required, see Articles 22 and 32)

(iii) distribute the payments received from the granting authority to the other beneficiaries without unjustified delay (see Article 22).

The coordinator may not delegate or subcontract the above-mentioned tasks to any other beneficiary or third party (including affiliated entities).

However, coordinators which are public bodies may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(ii) last indent and (iii) above to entities with 'authorisation to administer' which they have created or which are controlled by or affiliated to them. In this case, the coordinator retains sole responsibility for the payments and for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Moreover, coordinators which are 'sole beneficiaries'[12] (or similar, such as European research infrastructure consortia (ERICs)) may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(i) to (iii) above to one of their members. The coordinator retains sole responsibility for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must have **internal arrangements** regarding their operation and co-ordination, to ensure that the action is implemented properly.

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 1), these arrangements must be set out in a written **consortium agreement** between the beneficiaries, covering for instance:

- the internal organisation of the consortium
- the management of access to the Portal
- different distribution keys for the payments and financial responsibilities in case of recoveries (if any)
- additional rules on rights and obligations related to background and results (see Article 16)

[12] For the definition, see Article 187(2) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: "Where several entities satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant and together form one entity, that entity may be treated as the **sole beneficiary**, including where it is specifically established for the purpose of implementing the action financed by the grant."

- settlement of internal disputes
- liability, indemnification and confidentiality arrangements between the beneficiaries.

The internal arrangements must not contain any provision contrary to this Agreement.

ARTICLE 8 — AFFILIATED ENTITIES

The following entities which are linked to a beneficiary will participate in the action as 'affiliated entities':

- **NORGES TEKNISK-NATURVITENSKAPELIGE UNIVERSITET NTNU (NTNU)**, PIC 999977851, linked to TRONDHEIM TECH PORT (TTP)

Affiliated entities can charge costs and contributions to the action under the same conditions as the beneficiaries and must implement the action tasks attributed to them in Annex 1 in accordance with Article 11.

Their costs and contributions will be included in Annex 2 and will be taken into account for the calculation of the grant.

The beneficiaries must ensure that all their obligations under this Agreement also apply to their affiliated entities.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the affiliated entities.

Breaches by affiliated entities will be handled in the same manner as breaches by beneficiaries. Recovery of undue amounts will be handled through the beneficiaries.

If the granting authority requires joint and several liability of affiliated entities (see Data Sheet, Point 4.4), they must sign the declaration set out in Annex 3a and may be held liable in case of enforced recoveries against their beneficiaries (see Article 22.2 and 22.4).

ARTICLE 9 — OTHER PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN THE ACTION

9.1 Associated partners

Not applicable

9.2 Third parties giving in-kind contributions to the action

Other third parties may give in-kind contributions to the action (i.e. personnel, equipment, other goods, works and services, etc. which are free-of-charge) if necessary for the implementation.

Third parties giving in-kind contributions do not implement any action tasks. They may not charge costs or contributions to the action, but the costs for the in-kind contributions are eligible and may be charged by the beneficiaries which use them, under the conditions set out in Article 6. The costs will be included in Annex 2 as part of the beneficiaries' costs.

The third parties and their in-kind contributions should be set out in Annex 1.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the third parties giving in-kind contributions.

9.3 Subcontractors

Subcontractors may participate in the action, if necessary for the implementation.

Subcontractors must implement their action tasks in accordance with Article 11. The costs for the subcontracted tasks (invoiced price from the subcontractor) are eligible and may be charged by the beneficiaries, under the conditions set out in Article 6. The costs will be included in Annex 2 as part of the beneficiaries' costs.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 11 (proper implementation), 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the subcontractors.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the subcontractors.

9.4 Recipients of financial support to third parties

If the action includes providing financial support to third parties (e.g. grants, prizes or similar forms of support), the beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping)also apply to the third parties receiving the support (recipients).

The beneficiaries must also ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the recipients.

ARTICLE 10 — PARTICIPANTS WITH SPECIAL STATUS

10.1 Non-EU participants

Participants which are established in a non-EU country (if any) undertake to comply with their obligations under the Agreement and:

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)
- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: to use qualified external auditors which are independent and comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC[13]
- for the controls under Article 25: to allow for checks, reviews, audits and investigations

[13] Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts or similar national regulations (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

(including on-the-spot checks, visits and inspections) by the bodies mentioned in that Article (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.).

Special rules on dispute settlement apply (see Data Sheet, Point 5).

10.2 Participants which are international organisations

Participants which are international organisations (IOs; if any) undertake to comply with their obligations under the Agreement and:

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)

- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: to use either independent public officers or external auditors which comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC

- for the controls under Article 25: to allow for the checks, reviews, audits and investigations by the bodies mentioned in that Article, taking into account the specific agreements concluded by them and the EU (if any).

For such participants, nothing in the Agreement will be interpreted as a waiver of their privileges or immunities, as accorded by their constituent documents or international law.

Special rules on applicable law and dispute settlement apply (see Article 43 and Data Sheet, Point 5).

10.3 Pillar-assessed participants

Pillar-assessed participants (if any) may rely on their own systems, rules and procedures, in so far as they have been positively assessed and do not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries.

'Pillar-assessment' means a review by the European Commission on the systems, rules and procedures which participants use for managing EU grants (in particular internal control system, accounting system, external audits, financing of third parties, rules on recovery and exclusion, information on recipients and protection of personal data; see Article 154 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046).

Participants with a positive pillar assessment may rely on their own systems, rules and procedures, in particular for:

- record-keeping (Article 20): may be done in accordance with internal standards, rules and procedures

- currency conversion for financial statements (Article 21): may be done in accordance with usual accounting practices

- guarantees (Article 23): for public law bodies, prefinancing guarantees are not needed

- certificates (Article 24):

    - certificates on the financial statements (CFS): may be provided by their regular internal or external auditors and in accordance with their internal financial regulations and procedures

- certificates on usual accounting practices (CoMUC): are not needed if those practices are covered by an ex-ante assessment

and use the following specific rules, for:

- recoveries (Article 22): in case of financial support to third parties, there will be no recovery if the participant has done everything possible to retrieve the undue amounts from the third party receiving the support (including legal proceedings) and non-recovery is not due to an error or negligence on its part

- checks, reviews, audits and investigations by the EU (Article 25): will be conducted taking into account the rules and procedures specifically agreed between them and the framework agreement (if any)

- impact evaluation (Article 26): will be conducted in accordance with the participant's internal rules and procedures and the framework agreement (if any)

- grant agreement suspension (Article 31): certain costs incurred during grant suspension are eligible (notably, minimum costs necessary for a possible resumption of the action and costs relating to contracts which were entered into before the pre-information letter was received and which could not reasonably be suspended, reallocated or terminated on legal grounds)

- grant agreement termination (Article 32): the final grant amount and final payment will be calculated taking into account also costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination takes effect, if the contract was entered into before the pre-information letter was received and could not reasonably be terminated on legal grounds

- liability for damages (Article 33.2): the granting authority must be compensated for damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement only if the damage is due to an infringement of the participant's internal rules and procedures or due to a violation of third parties' rights by the participant or one of its employees or individual for whom the employees are responsible.

Participants whose pillar assessment covers procurement and granting procedures may also do purchases, subcontracting and financial support to third parties (Article 6.2) in accordance with their internal rules and procedures for purchases, subcontracting and financial support.

Participants whose pillar assessment covers data protection rules may rely on their internal standards, rules and procedures for data protection (Article 15).

The participants may however not rely on provisions which would breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries or call into question the decision awarding the grant, such as in particular:

- eligibility (Article 6)

- consortium roles and set-up (Articles 7-9)

- security and ethics (Articles 13, 14)
- IPR (including background and results, access rights and rights of use), communication, dissemination and visibility (Articles 16 and 17)
- information obligation (Article 19)
- payment, reporting and amendments (Articles 21, 22 and 39)
- rejections, reductions, suspensions and terminations (Articles 27, 28, 29-32)

If the pillar assessment was subject to remedial measures, reliance on the internal systems, rules and procedures is subject to compliance with those remedial measures.

Participants whose assessment has not yet been updated to cover (the new rules on) data protection may rely on their internal systems, rules and procedures, provided that they ensure that personal data is:

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and
- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data.

Participants must inform the coordinator without delay of any changes to the systems, rules and procedures that were part of the pillar assessment. The coordinator must immediately inform the granting authority.

Pillar-assessed participants that have also concluded a framework agreement with the EU, may moreover — under the same conditions as those above (i.e. not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries) — rely on the provisions set out in that framework agreement.

SECTION 2 RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

ARTICLE 11 — PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION

11.1 Obligation to properly implement the action

The beneficiaries must implement the action as described in Annex 1 and in compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, the call conditions and all legal obligations under applicable EU, international and national law.

11.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 12 — CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

12.1 Conflict of interests

The beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the Agreement could be compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest ('conflict of interests').

They must formally notify the granting authority without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The granting authority may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

12.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28) and the grant or the beneficiary may be terminated (see Article 32).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 13 — CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

13.1 Sensitive information

The parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as sensitive in writing ('sensitive information') — during the implementation of the action and for at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6).

If a beneficiary requests, the granting authority may agree to keep such information confidential for a longer period.

Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use sensitive information only to implement the Agreement.

The beneficiaries may disclose sensitive information to their personnel or other participants involved in the action only if they:

(a) need to know it in order to implement the Agreement and

(b) are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The granting authority may disclose sensitive information to its staff and to other EU institutions and bodies.

It may moreover disclose sensitive information to third parties, if:

(a) this is necessary to implement the Agreement or safeguard the EU financial interests and

(b) the recipients of the information are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The confidentiality obligations no longer apply if:

(a) the disclosing party agrees to release the other party

(b) the information becomes publicly available, without breaching any confidentiality obligation

(c) the disclosure of the sensitive information is required by EU, international or national law.

Specific confidentiality rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

13.2 Classified information

The parties must handle classified information in accordance with the applicable EU, international or national law on classified information (in particular, Decision 2015/444[14] and its implementing rules).

Deliverables which contain classified information must be submitted according to special procedures agreed with the granting authority.

Action tasks involving classified information may be subcontracted only after explicit approval (in writing) from the granting authority.

Classified information may not be disclosed to any third party (including participants involved in the action implementation) without prior explicit written approval from the granting authority.

Specific security rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

13.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 14 — ETHICS AND VALUES

14.1 Ethics

The action must be carried out in line with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles.

Specific ethics rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

14.2 Values

The beneficiaries must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values (such as respect for

[14] Commission Decision 2015/444/EC, Euratom of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).

Specific rules on values (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

14.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 15 — DATA PROTECTION

15.1 Data processing by the granting authority

Any personal data under the Agreement will be processed under the responsibility of the data controller of the granting authority in accordance with and for the purposes set out in the Portal Privacy Statement.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission, an EU regulatory or executive agency, joint undertaking or other EU body, the processing will be subject to Regulation 2018/1725[15].

15.2 Data processing by the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must process personal data under the Agreement in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/679[16]).

They must ensure that personal data is:

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subjects
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and
- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the data.

[15] Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

[16] Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (‘GDPR’) (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1).

The beneficiaries may grant their personnel access to personal data only if it is strictly necessary for implementing, managing and monitoring the Agreement. The beneficiaries must ensure that the personnel is under a confidentiality obligation.

The beneficiaries must inform the persons whose data are transferred to the granting authority and provide them with the Portal Privacy Statement.

15.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 16 — INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) — BACKGROUND AND RESULTS —ACCESS RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF USE

16.1 Background and access rights to background

The beneficiaries must give each other and the other participants access to the background identified as needed for implementing the action, subject to any specific rules in Annex 5.

'Background' means any data, know-how or information — whatever its form or nature (tangible or intangible), including any rights such as intellectual property rights — that is:

(a) held by the beneficiaries before they acceded to the Agreement and

(b) needed to implement the action or exploit the results.

If background is subject to rights of a third party, the beneficiary concerned must ensure that it is able to comply with its obligations under the Agreement.

16.2 Ownership of results

The granting authority does not obtain ownership of the results produced under the action.

'Results' means any tangible or intangible effect of the action, such as data, know-how or information, whatever its form or nature, whether or not it can be protected, as well as any rights attached to it, including intellectual property rights.

16.3 Rights of use of the granting authority on materials, documents and information received for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes

The granting authority has the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the action and materials and documents received from the beneficiaries (notably summaries for publication, deliverables, as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material, in paper or electronic form) for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes — during the action or afterwards.

The right to use the beneficiaries' materials, documents and information is granted in the form of a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence, which includes the following rights:

(a) **use for its own purposes** (in particular, making them available to persons working for the granting authority or any other EU service (including institutions, bodies, offices, agencies, etc.) or EU Member State institution or body; copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers; and communication through press information services)

(b) **distribution to the public** (in particular, publication as hard copies and in electronic or digital format, publication on the internet, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file, broadcasting by any channel, public display or presentation, communicating through press information services, or inclusion in widely accessible databases or indexes)

(c) **editing or redrafting** (including shortening, summarising, inserting other elements (e.g. meta-data, legends, other graphic, visual, audio or text elements), extracting parts (e.g. audio or video files), dividing into parts, use in a compilation)

(d) **translation**

(e) **storage** in paper, electronic or other form

(f) **archiving**, in line with applicable document-management rules

(g) the right to authorise **third parties** to act on its behalf or sub-license to third parties the modes of use set out in Points (b), (c), (d) and (f), if needed for the information, communication and publicity activity of the granting authority

(h) **processing**, analysing, aggregating the materials, documents and information received and **producing derivative works**.

The rights of use are granted for the whole duration of the industrial or intellectual property rights concerned.

If materials or documents are subject to moral rights or third party rights (including intellectual property rights or rights of natural persons on their image and voice), the beneficiaries must ensure that they comply with their obligations under this Agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary licences and authorisations from the rights holders concerned).

Where applicable, the granting authority will insert the following information:

"© – [year] – [name of the copyright owner]. All rights reserved. Licensed to the [name of granting authority] under conditions."

16.4 Specific rules on IPR, results and background

Specific rules regarding intellectual property rights, results and background (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

16.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such a breach may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 17 — COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY

17.1 Communication — Dissemination — Promoting the action

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, the beneficiaries must promote the action and its results by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in accordance with Annex 1 and in a strategic, coherent and effective manner.

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the granting authority.

17.2 Visibility — European flag and funding statement

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, communication activities of the beneficiaries related to the action (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded by the grant must acknowledge EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate):

Funded by the European Union

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union

Co-funded by the European Union

The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text.

Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.

When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. of beneficiaries or sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

For the purposes of their obligations under this Article, the beneficiaries may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from the granting authority. This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

17.3 Quality of information — Disclaimer

Any communication or dissemination activity related to the action must use factually accurate information.

Moreover, it must indicate the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate):

> "Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or [name of the granting authority]. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them."

17.4 Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules

Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

17.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 18 — SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

18.1 Specific rules for carrying out the action

Specific rules for implementing the action (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

18.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such a breach may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

SECTION 3 GRANT ADMINISTRATION

ARTICLE 19 — GENERAL INFORMATION OBLIGATIONS

19.1 Information requests

The beneficiaries must provide — during the action or afterwards and in accordance with Article 7 — any information requested in order to verify eligibility of the costs or contributions declared, proper implementation of the action and compliance with the other obligations under the Agreement.

The information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

19.2 Participant Register data updates

The beneficiaries must keep — at all times, during the action or afterwards — their information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date, in particular, their name, address, legal representatives, legal form and organisation type.

19.3 Information about events and circumstances which impact the action

The beneficiaries must immediately inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) of any of the following:

(a) **events** which are likely to affect or delay the implementation of the action or affect the EU's financial interests, in particular:

  (i) changes in their legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour signed before grant signature)

  (ii) linked action information: not applicable

(b) **circumstances** affecting:

  (i) the decision to award the grant or

  (ii) compliance with requirements under the Agreement.

19.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 20 — RECORD-KEEPING

20.1 Keeping records and supporting documents

The beneficiaries must — at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6) — keep records and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the action in line with the accepted standards in the respective field (if any).

In addition, the beneficiaries must — for the same period — keep the following to justify the amounts declared:

(a) for actual costs: adequate records and supporting documents to prove the costs declared (such as contracts, subcontracts, invoices and accounting records); in addition, the beneficiaries' usual accounting and internal control procedures must enable direct reconciliation between the amounts declared, the amounts recorded in their accounts and the amounts stated in the supporting documents

(b) for flat-rate costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the eligibility of the costs or contributions to which the flat-rate is applied

(c) for the following simplified costs and contributions: the beneficiaries do not need to keep specific records on the actual costs incurred, but must keep:

(i) for unit costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the number of units declared

(ii) for lump sum costs and contributions (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove proper implementation of the work as described in Annex 1

(iii) for financing not linked to costs (if any): adequate records and supporting documents to prove the achievement of the results or the fulfilment of the conditions as described in Annex 1

(d) for unit, flat-rate and lump sum costs and contributions according to usual cost accounting practices (if any): the beneficiaries must keep any adequate records and supporting documents to prove that their cost accounting practices have been applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding, and that they comply with the eligibility conditions set out in Articles 6.1 and 6.2.

Moreover, the following is needed for specific budget categories:

(e) for personnel costs: time worked for the beneficiary under the action must be supported by declarations signed monthly by the person and their supervisor, unless another reliable time-record system is in place; the granting authority may accept alternative evidence supporting the time worked for the action declared, if it considers that it offers an adequate level of assurance

(f) additional record-keeping rules: not applicable

The records and supporting documents must be made available upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits or investigations (see Article 25).

If there are on-going checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims under the Agreement (including the extension of findings; see Article 25), the beneficiaries must keep these records and other supporting documentation until the end of these procedures.

The beneficiaries must keep the original documents. Digital and digitalised documents are considered originals if they are authorised by the applicable national law. The granting authority may accept non-original documents if they offer a comparable level of assurance.

20.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, costs or contributions insufficiently substantiated will be ineligible (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 27), and the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 21 — REPORTING

21.1 Continuous reporting

The beneficiaries must continuously report on the progress of the action (e.g. **deliverables, milestones, outputs/outcomes, critical risks, indicators,** etc; if any), in the Portal Continuous Reporting tool and in accordance with the timing and conditions it sets out (as agreed with the granting authority).

Standardised deliverables (e.g. progress reports not linked to payments, reports on cumulative expenditure, special reports, etc; if any) must be submitted using the templates published on the Portal.

21.2 Periodic reporting: Technical reports and financial statements

In addition, the beneficiaries must provide reports to request payments, in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2):

- for additional prefinancings (if any): an **additional prefinancing report**
- for interim payments (if any) and the final payment: a **periodic report**.

The prefinancing and periodic reports include a technical and financial part.

The technical part includes an overview of the action implementation. It must be prepared using the template available in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool.

The financial part of the additional prefinancing report includes a statement on the use of the previous prefinancing payment.

The financial part of the periodic report includes:

- the financial statements (individual and consolidated; for all beneficiaries/affiliated entities)
- the explanation on the use of resources (or detailed cost reporting table, if required)
- the certificates on the financial statements (CFS) (if required; see Article 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3).

The **financial statements** must detail the eligible costs and contributions for each budget category and, for the final payment, also the revenues for the action (see Articles 6 and 22).

All eligible costs and contributions incurred should be declared, even if they exceed the amounts indicated in the estimated budget (see Annex 2). Amounts that are not declared in the individual financial statements will not be taken into account by the granting authority.

By signing the financial statements (directly in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool), the beneficiaries confirm that:

- the information provided is complete, reliable and true
- the costs and contributions declared are eligible (see Article 6)
- the costs and contributions can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documents (see Article 20) that will be produced upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Article 25)
- for the final periodic report: all the revenues have been declared (if required; see Article 22).

Beneficiaries will have to submit also the financial statements of their affiliated entities (if any). In case of recoveries (see Article 22), beneficiaries will be held responsible also for the financial statements of their affiliated entities.

21.3 Currency for financial statements and conversion into euros

The financial statements must be drafted in euro.

Beneficiaries with general accounts established in a currency other than the euro must convert the costs recorded in their accounts into euro, at the average of the daily exchange rates published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union* (ECB website), calculated over the corresponding reporting period.

If no daily euro exchange rate is published in the *Official Journal* for the currency in question, they must be converted at the average of the monthly accounting exchange rates published on the European Commission website (InforEuro), calculated over the corresponding reporting period.

Beneficiaries with general accounts in euro must convert costs incurred in another currency into euro according to their usual accounting practices.

21.4 Reporting language

The reporting must be in the language of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

21.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a report submitted does not comply with this Article, the granting authority may suspend the payment deadline (see Article 29) and apply other measures described in Chapter 5.

If the coordinator breaches its reporting obligations, the granting authority may terminate the grant or the coordinator's participation (see Article 32) or apply other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 22 — PAYMENTS AND RECOVERIES — CALCULATION OF AMOUNTS DUE

22.1 Payments and payment arrangements

Payments will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

They will be made in euro to the bank account indicated by the coordinator (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2) and must be distributed without unjustified delay (restrictions may apply to distribution of the initial prefinancing payment; see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

Payments to this bank account will discharge the granting authority from its payment obligation.

The cost of payment transfers will be borne as follows:

- the granting authority bears the cost of transfers charged by its bank
- the beneficiary bears the cost of transfers charged by its bank

- the party causing a repetition of a transfer bears all costs of the repeated transfer.

Payments by the granting authority will be considered to have been carried out on the date when they are debited to its account.

22.2 Recoveries

Recoveries will be made, if — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — it turns out that the granting authority has paid too much and needs to recover the amounts undue.

Each beneficiary's financial responsibility in case of recovery is in principle limited to their own debt and undue amounts of their affiliated entities.

In case of enforced recoveries (see Article 22.4), affiliated entities will be held liable for repaying debts of their beneficiaries, if required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.4).

22.3 Amounts due

22.3.1 Prefinancing payments

The aim of the prefinancing is to provide the beneficiaries with a float.

It remains the property of the EU until the final payment.

For **initial prefinancings** (if any), the amount due, schedule and modalities are set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

For **additional prefinancings** (if any), the amount due, schedule and modalities are also set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2). However, if the statement on the use of the previous prefinancing payment shows that less than 70% was used, the amount set out in the Data Sheet will be reduced by the difference between the 70% threshold and the amount used.

The contribution to the Mutual Insurance Mechanism will be retained from the prefinancing payments (at the rate and in accordance with the modalities set out in the Data Sheet, see Point 4.2) and transferred to the Mechanism.

Prefinancing payments (or parts of them) may be offset (without the beneficiaries' consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

22.3.2 Amount due at beneficiary termination — Recovery

In case of beneficiary termination, the granting authority will determine the provisional amount due for the beneficiary concerned. Payments (if any) will be made with the next interim or final payment.

The **amount due** will be calculated in the following step:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the 'accepted EU contribution' for the beneficiary for all reporting periods, by calculating the 'maximum EU contribution to costs' (applying the funding rate to the accepted costs of the beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs and CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting amount is the 'total accepted EU contribution' for the beneficiary.

The **balance** is then calculated by deducting the payments received (if any; see report on the distribution of payments in Article 32), from the total accepted EU contribution:

{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary

minus

{prefinancing and interim payments received (if any)}}.

If the balance is **positive**, the amount will be included in the next interim or final payment to the consortium.

If the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the amount due, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered and ask this amount to be paid to the coordinator (**confirmation letter**).

If payment is not made to the coordinator by the date specified in the confirmation letter, the granting authority may call on the Mutual Insurance Mechanism to intervene, if continuation of the action is guaranteed and the conditions set out in the rules governing the Mechanism are met.

In this case, it will send a **beneficiary recovery letter**, together with a **debit note** with the terms and date for payment.

The debit note for the beneficiary will include the amount calculated for the affiliated entities which also had to end their participation (if any).

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

The amounts will later on also be taken into account for the next interim or final payment.

22.3.3 Interim payments

Interim payments reimburse the eligible costs and contributions claimed for the implementation of the action during the reporting periods (if any).

Interim payments (if any) will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Payment is subject to the approval of the periodic report. Its approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of its content.

The **interim payment** will be calculated by the granting authority in the following steps:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will calculate the 'accepted EU contribution' for the action for the reporting period, by first calculating the 'maximum EU contribution to costs' (applying the funding rate to the accepted costs of each beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs, and CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions from beneficiary termination (if any). The resulting amount is the 'total accepted EU contribution'.

Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

The resulting amount is then capped to ensure that the total amount of prefinancing and interim payments (if any) does not exceed the interim payment ceiling set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Interim payments (or parts of them) may be offset (without the beneficiaries' consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

22.3.4 Final payment — Final grant amount — Revenues and Profit — Recovery

The final payment (payment of the balance) reimburses the remaining part of the eligible costs and contributions claimed for the implementation of the action (if any).

The final payment will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Payment is subject to the approval of the final periodic report. Its approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of its content.

The **final grant amount for the action** will be calculated in the following steps:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the 'accepted EU contribution' for the action for all reporting periods, by calculating the 'maximum EU contribution to costs' (applying the funding rate to the total accepted costs of each beneficiary), taking into account requests for a lower contribution to costs, CFS threshold cappings (if any; see Article 24.5) and adding the contributions (accepted unit, flat-rate or lump sum contributions and financing not linked to costs, if any).

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting amount is the 'total accepted EU contribution'.

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

If the resulting amount is higher than the maximum grant amount set out in Article 5.2, it will be limited to the latter.

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

If the no-profit rule is provided for in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2), the grant must not produce a profit (i.e. surplus of the amount obtained following Step 2 plus the action's revenues, over the eligible costs and contributions approved by the granting authority).

'Revenue' is all income generated by the action, during its duration (see Article 4), for beneficiaries that are profit legal entities (— with the exception of income generated by the exploitation of results, which are not considered as revenues).

If there is a profit, it will be deducted in proportion to the final rate of reimbursement of the eligible costs approved by the granting authority (as compared to the amount calculated following Steps 1 and 2 minus the contributions).

The **balance** (final payment) is then calculated by deducting the total amount of prefinancing and interim payments already made (if any), from the final grant amount:

{final grant amount

minus

{prefinancing and interim payments made (if any)}}.

If the balance is **positive**, it will be **paid** to the coordinator.

The amount retained for the Mutual Insurance Mechanism (see above) will be released and **paid** to the coordinator (in accordance with the rules governing the Mechanism).

The final payment (or part of it) may be offset (without the beneficiaries' consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

If — despite the release of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism contribution — the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the final grant amount, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why
- requesting a report on the distribution of payments to the beneficiaries within 30 days of receiving notification and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received) and the coordinator has submitted the report on the distribution of payments, it will calculate the **share of the debt per beneficiary**, by:

(a) identifying the beneficiaries for which the amount calculated as follows is negative:

{{{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary

divided by

total accepted EU contribution for the action}

multiplied by

final grant amount for the action},

minus

{prefinancing and interim payments received by the beneficiary (if any)}}

and

(b) dividing the debt:

{{amount calculated according to point (a) for the beneficiary concerned

divided by

the sum of the amounts calculated according to point (a) for all the beneficiaries identified according to point (a)}

multiplied by

the amount to be recovered}.

and confirm the amount to be recovered from each beneficiary concerned (**confirmation letter**), together with **debit notes** with the terms and date for payment.

The debit notes for beneficiaries will include the amounts calculated for their affiliated entities (if any).

If the coordinator has not submitted the report on the distribution of payments, the granting authority will **recover** the full amount from the coordinator (**confirmation letter** and **debit note** with the terms and date for payment).

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.3.5 Audit implementation after final payment — Revised final grant amount — Recovery

If — after the final payment (in particular, after checks, reviews, audits or investigations; see Article 25) — the granting authority rejects costs or contributions (see Article 27) or reduces the grant (see Article 28), it will calculate the **revised final grant amount** for the beneficiary concerned.

The **beneficiary revised final grant amount** will be calculated in the following step:

Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

<u>Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution</u>

The granting authority will first calculate the 'revised accepted EU contribution' for the beneficiary, by calculating the 'revised accepted costs' and 'revised accepted contributions'.

After that, it will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting 'revised total accepted EU contribution' is the beneficiary revised final grant amount.

If the revised final grant amount is lower than the beneficiary's final grant amount (i.e. its share in the final grant amount for the action), it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The **beneficiary final grant amount** (i.e. share in the final grant amount for the action) is calculated as follows:

{{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary

divided by

total accepted EU contribution for the action}

multiplied by

final grant amount for the action}.

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered (**confirmation letter**), together with a **debit note** with the terms and the date for payment.

Recoveries against affiliated entities (if any) will be handled through their beneficiaries.

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.4 Enforced recovery

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the amount due will be recovered:

(a) by offsetting the amount — without the coordinator or beneficiary's consent — against any amounts owed to the coordinator or beneficiary by the granting authority.

In exceptional circumstances, to safeguard the EU financial interests, the amount may be offset before the payment date specified in the debit note.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, debts may also be offset against amounts owed by other Commission services or executive agencies.

(b) financial guarantee(s): not applicable

(c) joint and several liability of beneficiaries: not applicable

(d) by holding affiliated entities jointly and severally liable (if any, see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)

(e) by taking legal action (see Article 43) or, provided that the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, by adopting an enforceable decision under Article 299 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 100(2) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

If the Mutual Insurance Mechanism was called on by the granting authority to intervene, recovery will be continued in the name of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism. If two debit notes were sent, the second one (in the name of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism) will be considered to replace the first one (in the name of the granting authority). Where the MIM intervened, offsetting, enforceable decisions or any other of the above-mentioned forms of enforced recovery may be used mutatis mutandis.

The amount to be recovered will be increased by **late-payment interest** at the rate set out in Article 22.5, from the day following the payment date in the debit note, up to and including the date the full payment is received.

Partial payments will be first credited against expenses, charges and late-payment interest and then against the principal.

Bank charges incurred in the recovery process will be borne by the beneficiary, unless Directive 2015/2366[17] applies.

For grants where the granting authority is an EU executive agency, enforced recovery by offsetting or enforceable decision will be done by the services of the European Commission (see also Article 43).

22.5 Consequences of non-compliance

[17] Directive (EU) 2015/2366 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on payment services in the internal market, amending Directives 2002/65/EC, 2009/110/EC and 2013/36/EU and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010, and repealing Directive 2007/64/EC (OJ L 337, 23.12.2015, p. 35).

22.5.1 If the granting authority does not pay within the payment deadlines (see above), the beneficiaries are entitled to **late-payment interest** at the rate applied by the European Central Bank (ECB) for its main refinancing operations in euros ('reference rate'), plus the rate specified in the Data Sheet (Point 4.2). The reference rate is the rate in force on the first day of the month in which the payment deadline expires, as published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

If the late-payment interest is lower than or equal to EUR 200, it will be paid to the coordinator only on request submitted within two months of receiving the late payment.

Late-payment interest is not due if all beneficiaries are EU Member States (including regional and local government authorities or other public bodies acting on behalf of a Member State for the purpose of this Agreement).

If payments or the payment deadline are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30), payment will not be considered as late.

Late-payment interest covers the period running from the day following the due date for payment (see above), up to and including the date of payment.

Late-payment interest is not considered for the purposes of calculating the final grant amount.

22.5.2 If the coordinator breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 29) and the grant or the coordinator may be terminated (see Article 32).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 23 — GUARANTEES

Not applicable

ARTICLE 24 — CERTIFICATES

24.1 Operational verification report (OVR)

Not applicable

24.2 Certificate on the financial statements (CFS)

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.3), the beneficiaries must provide certificates on their financial statements (CFS), in accordance with the schedule, threshold and conditions set out in the Data Sheet.

The coordinator must submit them as part of the periodic report (see Article 21).

The certificates must be drawn up using the template published on the Portal, cover the costs declared on the basis of actual costs and costs according to usual cost accounting practices (if any), and fulfil the following conditions:

(a) be provided by a qualified approved external auditor which is independent and complies with Directive 2006/43/EC[18] (or for public bodies: by a competent independent public officer)

(b) the verification must be carried out according to the highest professional standards to ensure that the financial statements comply with the provisions under the Agreement and that the costs declared are eligible.

The certificates will not affect the granting authority's right to carry out its own checks, reviews or audits, nor preclude the European Court of Auditors (ECA), the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) or the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) from using their prerogatives for audits and investigations under the Agreement (see Article 25).

If the costs (or a part of them) were already audited by the granting authority, these costs do not need to be covered by the certificate and will not be counted for calculating the threshold (if any).

24.3 Certificate on the compliance of usual cost accounting practices (CoMUC)

Not applicable

24.4 Systems and process audit (SPA)

Beneficiaries which:

- use unit, flat rate or lump sum costs or contributions according to documented (i.e. formally approved and in writing) usual costs accounting practices (if any) or

- have formalised documentation on the systems and processes for calculating their costs and contributions (i.e. formally approved and in writing), have participated in at least 150 actions under Horizon 2020 or the Euratom Research and Training Programme (2014-2018 or 2019-2020) and participate in at least 3 ongoing actions under Horizon Europe or the Euratom Research and Training Programme (2021-2025 or 2026-2027)

may apply to the granting authority for a systems and process audit (SPA).

This audit will be carried out as follows:

Step 1 – Application by the beneficiary.

Step 2 – If the application is accepted, the granting authority will carry out the systems and process audit, complemented by an audit of transactions (on a sample of the beneficiary's Horizon Europe or the Euratom Research and Training Programme financial statements).

Step 3 – The audit result will take the form of a risk assessment classification for the beneficiary: low, medium or high.

Low-risk beneficiaries will benefit from less (or less in-depth) ex-post audits (see Article 25) and a higher threshold for submitting certificates on the financial statements (CFS; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3).

[18] Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts or similar national regulations (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

24.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary does not submit a certificate on the financial statements (CFS) or the certificate is rejected, the accepted EU contribution to costs will be capped to reflect the CFS threshold.

If a beneficiary breaches any of its other obligations under this Article, the granting authority may apply the measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 25 — CHECKS, REVIEWS, AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS — EXTENSION OF FINDINGS

25.1 Granting authority checks, reviews and audits

25.1.1 Internal checks

The granting authority may — during the action or afterwards — check the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement, including assessing costs and contributions, deliverables and reports.

25.1.2 Project reviews

The granting authority may carry out reviews on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement (general project reviews or specific issues reviews).

Such project reviews may be started during the implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

If needed, the granting authority may be assisted by independent, outside experts. If it uses outside experts, the coordinator or beneficiary concerned will be informed and have the right to object on grounds of commercial confidentiality or conflict of interest.

The coordinator or beneficiary concerned must cooperate diligently and provide — within the deadline requested — any information and data in addition to deliverables and reports already submitted (including information on the use of resources). The granting authority may request beneficiaries to provide such information to it directly. Sensitive information and documents will be treated in accordance with Article 13.

The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may be requested to participate in meetings, including with the outside experts.

For **on-the-spot visits**, the beneficiary concerned must allow access to sites and premises (including to the outside experts) and must ensure that information requested is readily available.

Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

On the basis of the review findings, a **project review report** will be drawn up.

The granting authority will formally notify the project review report to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned, which has 30 days from receiving notification to make observations.

Project reviews (including project review reports) will be in the language of the Agreement.

25.1.3 Audits

The granting authority may carry out audits on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Such audits may be started during the implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the beneficiary concerned and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

The granting authority may use its own audit service, delegate audits to a centralised service or use external audit firms. If it uses an external firm, the beneficiary concerned will be informed and have the right to object on grounds of commercial confidentiality or conflict of interest.

The beneficiary concerned must cooperate diligently and provide — within the deadline requested — any information (including complete accounts, individual salary statements or other personal data) to verify compliance with the Agreement. Sensitive information and documents will be treated in accordance with Article 13.

For **on-the-spot** visits, the beneficiary concerned must allow access to sites and premises (including for the external audit firm) and must ensure that information requested is readily available.

Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

On the basis of the audit findings, a **draft audit report** will be drawn up.

The auditors will formally notify the draft audit report to the beneficiary concerned, which has 30 days from receiving notification to make observations (contradictory audit procedure).

The **final audit report** will take into account observations by the beneficiary concerned and will be formally notified to them.

Audits (including audit reports) will be in the language of the Agreement.

25.2 European Commission checks, reviews and audits in grants of other granting authorities

Where the granting authority is not the European Commission, the latter has the same rights of checks, reviews and audits as the granting authority.

25.3 Access to records for assessing simplified forms of funding

The beneficiaries must give the European Commission access to their statutory records for the periodic assessment of simplified forms of funding which are used in EU programmes.

25.4 OLAF, EPPO and ECA audits and investigations

The following bodies may also carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations — during the action or afterwards:

- the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) under Regulations No 883/2013[19] and No 2185/96[20]
- the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) under Regulation 2017/1939
- the European Court of Auditors (ECA) under Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 257 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

If requested by these bodies, the beneficiary concerned must provide full, accurate and complete information in the format requested (including complete accounts, individual salary statements or other personal data, including in electronic format) and allow access to sites and premises for on-the-spot visits or inspections — as provided for under these Regulations.

To this end, the beneficiary concerned must keep all relevant information relating to the action, at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (Point 6) and, in any case, until any ongoing checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims have been concluded.

25.5 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations — Extension of results of reviews, audits or investigations

25.5.1 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations in this grant

Findings in checks, reviews, audits or investigations carried out in the context of this grant may lead to rejections (see Article 27), grant reduction (see Article 28) or other measures described in Chapter 5.

Rejections or grant reductions after the final payment will lead to a revised final grant amount (see Article 22).

Findings in checks, reviews, audits or investigations during the action implementation may lead to a request for amendment (see Article 39), to change the description of the action set out in Annex 1.

Checks, reviews, audits or investigations that find systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations in any EU grant may also lead to consequences in other EU grants awarded under similar conditions ('extension to other grants').

Moreover, findings arising from an OLAF or EPPO investigation may lead to criminal prosecution under national law.

25.5.2 Extension from other grants

Results of checks, reviews, audits or investigations in other grants may be extended to this grant, if:

(a) the beneficiary concerned is found, in other EU grants awarded under similar conditions, to have committed systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant and

[19] Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (OJ L 248, 18/09/2013, p. 1).

[20] Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/1996 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L 292, 15/11/1996, p. 2).

(b) those findings are formally notified to the beneficiary concerned — together with the list of grants affected by the findings — within the time-limit for audits set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6).

The granting authority will formally notify the beneficiary concerned of the intention to extend the findings and the list of grants affected.

If the extension concerns **rejections of costs or contributions**: the notification will include:

(a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings

(b) the request to submit revised financial statements for all grants affected

(c) the correction rate for extrapolation, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors, to calculate the amounts to be rejected, if the beneficiary concerned:

(i) considers that the submission of revised financial statements is not possible or practicable or

(ii) does not submit revised financial statements.

If the extension concerns **grant reductions**: the notification will include:

(a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings and

(b) the **correction rate for extrapolation**, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors and the principle of proportionality.

The beneficiary concerned has **60 days** from receiving notification to submit observations, revised financial statements or to propose a duly substantiated **alternative correction method/rate**.

On the basis of this, the granting authority will analyse the impact and decide on the implementation (i.e. start rejection or grant reduction procedures, either on the basis of the revised financial statements or the announced/alternative method/rate or a mix of those; see Articles 27 and 28).

25.6 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, costs or contributions insufficiently substantiated will be ineligible (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 27), and the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 26 — IMPACT EVALUATIONS

26.1 Impact evaluation

The granting authority may carry out impact evaluations of the action, measured against the objectives and indicators of the EU programme funding the grant.

Such evaluations may be started during implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the coordinator or beneficiaries and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

If needed, the granting authority may be assisted by independent outside experts.

The coordinator or beneficiaries must provide any information relevant to evaluate the impact of the action, including information in electronic format.

26.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the granting authority may apply the measures described in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

SECTION 1 REJECTIONS AND GRANT REDUCTION

ARTICLE 27 — REJECTION OF COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

27.1 Conditions

The granting authority will — at beneficiary termination, interim payment, final payment or afterwards — reject any costs or contributions which are ineligible (see Article 6), in particular following checks, reviews, audits or investigations (see Article 25).

The rejection may also be based on the extension of findings from other grants to this grant (see Article 25).

Ineligible costs or contributions will be rejected.

27.2 Procedure

If the rejection does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the rejection, the amounts and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the rejection (payment review procedure).

If the rejection leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

27.3 Effects

If the granting authority rejects costs or contributions, it will deduct them from the costs or contributions declared and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

ARTICLE 28 — GRANT REDUCTION

28.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — reduce the grant for a beneficiary, if:

(a) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:

(i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or

(ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or

(b) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (see Article 25).

The amount of the reduction will be calculated for each beneficiary concerned and proportionate to the seriousness and the duration of the errors, irregularities or fraud or breach of obligations, by applying an individual reduction rate to their accepted EU contribution.

28.2 Procedure

If the grant reduction does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the reduction, the amount to be reduced and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the reduction (payment review procedure).

If the grant reduction leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

28.3 Effects

If the granting authority reduces the grant, it will deduct the reduction and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

SECTION 2 SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION

ARTICLE 29 — PAYMENT DEADLINE SUSPENSION

29.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at any moment — suspend the payment deadline if a payment cannot be processed because:

(a) the required report (see Article 21) has not been submitted or is not complete or additional information is needed

(b) there are doubts about the amount to be paid (e.g. ongoing audit extension procedure, queries about eligibility, need for a grant reduction, etc.) and additional checks, reviews, audits or investigations are necessary, or

(c) there are other issues affecting the EU financial interests.

29.2 Procedure

The granting authority will formally notify the coordinator of the suspension and the reasons why.

The suspension will **take effect** the day the notification is sent.

If the conditions for suspending the payment deadline are no longer met, the suspension will be **lifted** — and the remaining time to pay (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2) will resume.

If the suspension exceeds two months, the coordinator may request the granting authority to confirm if the suspension will continue.

If the payment deadline has been suspended due to the non-compliance of the report and the revised report is not submitted (or was submitted but is also rejected), the granting authority may also terminate the grant or the participation of the coordinator (see Article 32).

ARTICLE 30 — PAYMENT SUSPENSION

30.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at any moment — suspend payments, in whole or in part for one or more beneficiaries, if:

(a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:

 (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or

 (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or

(b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant.

If payments are suspended for one or more beneficiaries, the granting authority will make partial payment(s) for the part(s) not suspended. If suspension concerns the final payment, the payment (or recovery) of the remaining amount after suspension is lifted will be considered to be the payment that closes the action.

30.2 Procedure

Before suspending payments, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to suspend payments and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the suspension (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

At the end of the suspension procedure, the granting authority will also inform the coordinator.

The suspension will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent.

If the conditions for resuming payments are met, the suspension will be **lifted**. The granting authority will formally notify the beneficiary concerned (and the coordinator) and set the suspension end date.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid to the beneficiaries concerned. For interim payments, the periodic reports for all reporting periods except the last one (see Article 21) must not contain any financial statements from the beneficiary concerned (or its affiliated entities). The coordinator must include them in the next periodic report after the suspension is lifted or — if suspension is not lifted before the end of the action — in the last periodic report.

ARTICLE 31 — GRANT AGREEMENT SUSPENSION

31.1 Consortium-requested GA suspension

31.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the suspension of the grant or any part of it, if exceptional circumstances — in particular *force majeure* (see Article 35) — make implementation impossible or excessively difficult.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the date the suspension takes effect; this date may be before the date of the submission of the amendment request and
- the expected date of resumption.

The suspension will **take effect** on the day specified in the amendment.

Once circumstances allow for implementation to resume, the coordinator must immediately request another **amendment** of the Agreement to set the suspension end date, the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the amendment. This date may be before the date of the submission of the amendment request.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during grant suspension are not eligible (see Article 6.3).

31.2 EU-initiated GA suspension

31.2.1 Conditions

The granting authority may suspend the grant or any part of it, if:

(a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:

(i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or

(ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or

(b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant

(c) other:

(i) linked action issues: not applicable

(ii) the action has lost its scientific or technological relevance, for EIC Accelerator actions: the action has lost its economic relevance, for challenge-based EIC Pathfinder actions and Horizon Europe Missions: the action has lost its relevance as part of the Portfolio for which it has been initially selected

31.2.2 Procedure

Before suspending the grant, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator:

- formally notifying the intention to suspend the grant and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the suspension (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

The suspension will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent (or on a later date specified in the notification).

Once the conditions for resuming implementation of the action are met, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator a **lifting of suspension letter**, in which it will set the suspension end date and invite the coordinator to request an amendment of the Agreement to set the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the lifting of suspension letter. This date may be before the date on which the letter is sent.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Costs incurred or contributions for activities implemented during suspension are not eligible (see Article 6.3).

The beneficiaries may not claim damages due to suspension by the granting authority (see Article 33).

Grant suspension does not affect the granting authority's right to terminate the grant or a beneficiary (see Article 32) or reduce the grant (see Article 28).

ARTICLE 32 — GRANT AGREEMENT OR BENEFICIARY TERMINATION

32.1 Consortium-requested GA termination

32.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the termination of the grant.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the date the consortium ends work on the action ('end of work date') and
- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

The termination will **take effect** on the termination date specified in the amendment.

If no reasons are given or if the granting authority considers the reasons do not justify termination, it may consider the grant terminated improperly.

32.1.2 Effects

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit a **periodic report** (for the open reporting period until termination).

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before the end of work date (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after the end of work are not eligible.

If the granting authority does not receive the report within the deadline, only costs and contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

Improper termination may lead to a grant reduction (see Article 28).

After termination, the beneficiaries' obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

32.2 Consortium-requested beneficiary termination

32.2.1 Conditions and procedure

The coordinator may request the termination of the participation of one or more beneficiaries, on request of the beneficiary concerned or on behalf of the other beneficiaries.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the opinion of the beneficiary concerned (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing)
- the date the beneficiary ends work on the action ('end of work date')
- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

If the termination concerns the coordinator and is done without its agreement, the amendment request must be submitted by another beneficiary (acting on behalf of the consortium).

The termination will **take effect** on the termination date specified in the amendment.

If no information is given or if the granting authority considers that the reasons do not justify termination, it may consider the beneficiary to have been terminated improperly.

32.2.2 Effects

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit:

(i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned

(ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work, the financial statement, the explanation on the use of resources, and, if applicable, the certificate on the financial statement (CFS; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)

(iii) a second **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with other amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before the end of work date (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after the end of work are not eligible.

The information in the termination report must also be included in the periodic report for the next reporting period (see Article 21).

If the granting authority does not receive the termination report within the deadline, only costs and contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/ contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

If the granting authority does not receive the report on the distribution of payments within the deadline, it will consider that:

- the coordinator did not distribute any payment to the beneficiary concerned and that
- the beneficiary concerned must not repay any amount to the coordinator.

If the second request for amendment is accepted by the granting authority, the Agreement is **amended** to introduce the necessary changes (see Article 39).

If the second request for amendment is rejected by the granting authority (because it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or breaches the principle of equal treatment of applicants), the grant may be terminated (see Article 32).

Improper termination may lead to a reduction of the grant (see Article 31) or grant termination (see Article 32).

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

32.3 EU-initiated GA or beneficiary termination

32.3.1 Conditions

The granting authority may terminate the grant or the participation of one or more beneficiaries, if:

(a) one or more beneficiaries do not accede to the Agreement (see Article 40)

(b) a change to the action or the legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation of a beneficiary is likely to substantially affect the implementation of the action or calls into question the decision to award the grant (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour)

(c) following termination of one or more beneficiaries, the necessary changes to the Agreement (and their impact on the action) would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants

(d) implementation of the action has become impossible or the changes necessary for its continuation would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants

(e) a beneficiary (or person with unlimited liability for its debts) is subject to bankruptcy proceedings or similar (including insolvency, winding-up, administration by a liquidator or court, arrangement with creditors, suspension of business activities, etc.)

(f) a beneficiary (or person with unlimited liability for its debts) is in breach of social security or tax obligations

(g) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has been found guilty of grave professional misconduct

(h) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed fraud, corruption, or is involved in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking

(i) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) was created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin (or created another entity with this purpose)

(j) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:

    (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or

    (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.)

(k) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings from other grants to this grant; see Article 25)

(l) despite a specific request by the granting authority, a beneficiary does not request — through the coordinator — an amendment to the Agreement to end the participation of one of its affiliated entities or associated partners that is in one of the situations under points (d), (f), (e), (g), (h), (i) or (j) and to reallocate its tasks, or

(m) other:

    (i) linked action issues: not applicable

    (ii) the action has lost its scientific or technological relevance, for EIC Accelerator actions: the action has lost its economic relevance, for challenge-based EIC Pathfinder actions and Horizon Europe Missions: the action has lost its relevance as part of the Portfolio for which it has been initially selected

32.3.2 Procedure

Before terminating the grant or participation of one or more beneficiaries, the granting authority will send **a pre-information letter** to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to terminate and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the termination and the date it will take effect (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

For beneficiary terminations, the granting authority will — at the end of the procedure — also inform the coordinator.

The termination will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent (or on a later date specified in the notification; 'termination date').

32.3.3 Effects

(a) for **GA termination**:

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit a **periodic report** (for the last open reporting period until termination).

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before termination takes effect (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination are not eligible.

If the grant is terminated for breach of the obligation to submit reports, the coordinator may not submit any report after termination.

If the granting authority does not receive the report within the deadline, only costs and contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

Termination does not affect the granting authority's right to reduce the grant (see Article 28) or to impose administrative sanctions (see Article 34).

The beneficiaries may not claim damages due to termination by the granting authority (see Article 33).

After termination, the beneficiaries' obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

(b) for **beneficiary termination**:

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit:

(i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned

(ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work, the financial statement, the explanation on the use of resources, and, if applicable, the certificate on the financial statement (CFS; see Articles 21 and 24.2 and Data Sheet, Point 4.3)

(iii) a **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with any amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the costs incurred and contributions for activities implemented before termination takes effect (see Article 22). Costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination are not eligible.

The information in the termination report must also be included in the periodic report for the next reporting period (see Article 21).

If the granting authority does not receive the termination report within the deadline, only costs and contributions included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no costs/ contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

If the granting authority does not receive the report on the distribution of payments within the deadline, it will consider that:

- the coordinator did not distribute any payment to the beneficiary concerned and that
- the beneficiary concerned must not repay any amount to the coordinator.

If the request for amendment is accepted by the granting authority, the Agreement is **amended** to introduce the necessary changes (see Article 39).

If the request for amendment is rejected by the granting authority (because it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or breaches the principle of equal treatment of applicants), the grant may be terminated (see Article 32).

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

SECTION 3 OTHER CONSEQUENCES: DAMAGES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

ARTICLE 33 — DAMAGES

33.1 Liability of the granting authority

The granting authority cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the beneficiaries or to third parties as a consequence of the implementation of the Agreement, including for gross negligence.

The granting authority cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the beneficiaries or other participants involved in the action, as a consequence of the implementation of the Agreement.

33.2 Liability of the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must compensate the granting authority for any damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement, provided that it was caused by gross negligence or wilful act.

The liability does not extend to indirect or consequential losses or similar damage (such as loss of profit, loss of revenue or loss of contracts), provided such damage was not caused by wilful act or by a breach of confidentiality.

ARTICLE 34 — ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES

Nothing in this Agreement may be construed as preventing the adoption of administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion from EU award procedures and/or financial penalties) or other public law measures, in addition or as an alternative to the contractual measures provided under this Agreement (see, for instance, Articles 135 to 145 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046 and Articles 4 and 7 of Regulation 2988/95[21]).

SECTION 4 FORCE MAJEURE

ARTICLE 35 — FORCE MAJEURE

A party prevented by force majeure from fulfilling its obligations under the Agreement cannot be considered in breach of them.

'Force majeure' means any situation or event that:

- prevents either party from fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement,
- was unforeseeable, exceptional situation and beyond the parties' control,
- was not due to error or negligence on their part (or on the part of other participants involved in the action), and
- proves to be inevitable in spite of exercising all due diligence.

Any situation constituting force majeure must be formally notified to the other party without delay, stating the nature, likely duration and foreseeable effects.

The parties must immediately take all the necessary steps to limit any damage due to force majeure and do their best to resume implementation of the action as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 6 FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 36 — COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARTIES

36.1 Forms and means of communication — Electronic management

[21] Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).

EU grants are managed fully electronically through the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal').

All communications must be made electronically through the Portal, in accordance with the Portal Terms and Conditions and using the forms and templates provided there (except if explicitly instructed otherwise by the granting authority).

Communications must be made in writing and clearly identify the grant agreement (project number and acronym).

Communications must be made by persons authorised according to the Portal Terms and Conditions. For naming the authorised persons, each beneficiary must have designated — before the signature of this Agreement — a 'legal entity appointed representative (LEAR)'. The role and tasks of the LEAR are stipulated in their appointment letter (see Portal Terms and Conditions).

If the electronic exchange system is temporarily unavailable, instructions will be given on the Portal.

36.2 Date of communication

The sending date for communications made through the Portal will be the date and time of sending, as indicated by the time logs.

The receiving date for communications made through the Portal will be the date and time the communication is accessed, as indicated by the time logs. Formal notifications that have not been accessed within 10 days after sending, will be considered to have been accessed (see Portal Terms and Conditions).

If a communication is exceptionally made on paper (by e-mail or postal service), general principles apply (i.e. date of sending/receipt). Formal notifications by registered post with proof of delivery will be considered to have been received either on the delivery date registered by the postal service or the deadline for collection at the post office.

If the electronic exchange system is temporarily unavailable, the sending party cannot be considered in breach of its obligation to send a communication within a specified deadline.

36.3 Addresses for communication

The Portal can be accessed via the Europa website.

The address for paper communications to the granting authority (if exceptionally allowed) is the official mailing address indicated on its website.

For beneficiaries, it is the legal address specified in the Portal Participant Register.

ARTICLE 37 — INTERPRETATION OF THE AGREEMENT

The provisions in the Data Sheet take precedence over the rest of the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement.

Annex 5 takes precedence over the Terms and Conditions; the Terms and Conditions take precedence over the Annexes other than Annex 5.

Annex 2 takes precedence over Annex 1.

ARTICLE 38 — CALCULATION OF PERIODS AND DEADLINES

In accordance with Regulation No 1182/71[22], periods expressed in days, months or years are calculated from the moment the triggering event occurs.

The day during which that event occurs is not considered as falling within the period.

'Days' means calendar days, not working days.

ARTICLE 39 — AMENDMENTS

39.1 Conditions

The Agreement may be amended, unless the amendment entails changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

Amendments may be requested by any of the parties.

39.2 Procedure

The party requesting an amendment must submit a request for amendment signed directly in the Portal Amendment tool.

The coordinator submits and receives requests for amendment on behalf of the beneficiaries (see Annex 3). If a change of coordinator is requested without its agreement, the submission must be done by another beneficiary (acting on behalf of the other beneficiaries).

The request for amendment must include:

- the reasons why
- the appropriate supporting documents and
- for a change of coordinator without its agreement: the opinion of the coordinator (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing).

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the party receiving the request agrees, it must sign the amendment in the tool within 45 days of receiving notification (or any additional information the granting authority has requested). If it does not agree, it must formally notify its disagreement within the same deadline. The deadline may be extended, if necessary for the assessment of the request. If no notification is received within the deadline, the request is considered to have been rejected.

An amendment **enters into force** on the day of the signature of the receiving party.

An amendment **takes effect** on the date of entry into force or other date specified in the amendment.

[22] Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1182/71 of the Council of 3 June 1971 determining the rules applicable to periods, dates and time-limits (OJ L 124, 8/6/1971, p. 1).

ARTICLE 40 — ACCESSION AND ADDITION OF NEW BENEFICIARIES

40.1 Accession of the beneficiaries mentioned in the Preamble

The beneficiaries which are not coordinator must accede to the grant by signing the accession form (see Annex 3) directly in the Portal Grant Preparation tool, within 30 days after the entry into force of the Agreement (see Article 44).

They will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of its entry into force (see Article 44).

If a beneficiary does not accede to the grant within the above deadline, the coordinator must — within 30 days — request an amendment (see Article 39) to terminate the beneficiary and make any changes necessary to ensure proper implementation of the action. This does not affect the granting authority's right to terminate the grant (see Article 32).

40.2 Addition of new beneficiaries

In justified cases, the beneficiaries may request the addition of a new beneficiary.

For this purpose, the coordinator must submit a request for amendment in accordance with Article 39. It must include an accession form (see Annex 3) signed by the new beneficiary directly in the Portal Amendment tool.

New beneficiaries will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of their accession specified in the accession form (see Annex 3).

Additions are also possible in mono-beneficiary grants.

ARTICLE 41 — TRANSFER OF THE AGREEMENT

In justified cases, the beneficiary of a mono-beneficiary grant may request the transfer of the grant to a new beneficiary, provided that this would not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

The beneficiary must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with

- the reasons why
- the accession form (see Annex 3) signed by the new beneficiary directly in the Portal Amendment tool and
- additional supporting documents (if required by the granting authority).

The new beneficiary will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of accession specified in the accession form (see Annex 3).

ARTICLE 42 — ASSIGNMENTS OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT AGAINST THE GRANTING AUTHORITY

The beneficiaries may not assign any of their claims for payment against the granting authority to any third party, except if expressly approved in writing by the granting authority on the basis of a reasoned, written request by the coordinator (on behalf of the beneficiary concerned).

If the granting authority has not accepted the assignment or if the terms of it are not observed, the assignment will have no effect on it.

In no circumstances will an assignment release the beneficiaries from their obligations towards the granting authority.

ARTICLE 43 — APPLICABLE LAW AND SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

43.1 Applicable law

The Agreement is governed by the applicable EU law, supplemented if necessary by the law of Belgium.

Special rules may apply for beneficiaries which are international organisations (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 5).

43.2 Dispute settlement

If a dispute concerns the interpretation, application or validity of the Agreement, the parties must bring action before the EU General Court — or, on appeal, the EU Court of Justice — under Article 272 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

For non-EU beneficiaries (if any), such disputes must be brought before the courts of Brussels, Belgium — unless an international agreement provides for the enforceability of EU court judgements.

For beneficiaries with arbitration as special dispute settlement forum (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 5), the dispute will — in the absence of an amicable settlement — be settled in accordance with the Rules for Arbitration published on the Portal.

If a dispute concerns administrative sanctions, offsetting or an enforceable decision under Article 299 TFEU (see Articles 22 and 34), the beneficiaries must bring action before the General Court — or, on appeal, the Court of Justice — under Article 263 TFEU.

For grants where the granting authority is an EU executive agency (see Preamble), actions against offsetting and enforceable decisions must be brought against the European Commission (not against the granting authority; see also Article 22).

ARTICLE 44 — ENTRY INTO FORCE

The Agreement will enter into force on the day of signature by the granting authority or the coordinator, depending on which is later.

SIGNATURES

For the coordinator

Vito Massimiliano Bianco with ECAS id n00a92k9 signed in the Participant Portal on 15/11/2022 at 14:09:27 (transaction id SigId-117441-id7v46TxQNLFbKO9y4WSfOyG4QPYrzknH5T59bipLcZh6zj6zUPtSsrURdvhdsK1R6gQGPaPiG41oMHMbuBkVrG-rS0vSrmBGYCYOonzu9chxJ-bNOslTrPO1qODIHKUxEoW2L0Q0jOJEu9ubbzaazix2lRsFbVQOuSIYonytNtR9fNPrGKKcNKK1d61BvsqQWH63).
Timestamp by third party at
2022.11.15 14:09:34 CET

For the granting authority

Signed by Sari VARTIAINEN-MATHIEU with ECAS id vartisi as an authorised representative on 16-11-2022 17:55:59 (transaction id SigId-16249-9QVnN8bYoJc3lhqC4ue1YfExhzY5LQArp0LCr4H8YIoUbpwBclVIt5PqKnAzGkpRukRAOhRwhvNk4y72XWgU07-jpJZscgsw0KzOcDzY5LHew0-Zx7oQh94AKkojzJAyWV9HBTvmMglWpHrxAOOaMJkrO5wxp1QyGUA7eQW2pxSS6ezPPY0ZRgzZ65ZZC93oWNn20m)
2022.11.16 17:56:02 CET

European Commission

ANNEX 1

Horizon Europe (HORIZON)

Description of the action (DoA)

Part A

Part B

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2022)7396349 - 25/10/2022

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION (PART A)

COVER PAGE

Part A of the Description of the Action (DoA) must be completed directly on the Portal Grant Preparation screens.

PROJECT *Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Enter the info.*	
Project number:	101094821
Project name:	Framing And Bridging Regional research and Innovation ecosystems Capacities for a renewed ERA
Project acronym:	ERA_FABRIC
Call:	HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01
Topic:	HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-30
Type of action:	HORIZON-CSA
Service:	REA/C/04
Project starting date:	fixed date: 1 January 2023
Project duration:	30 months

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project summary
Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Provide an overall description of your project (including context and overall objectives, planned activities and main achievements, and expected results and impacts (on target groups, change procedures, capacities, innovation etc)). This summary should give readers a clear idea of what your project is about. *Use the project summary from your proposal.*
Overarching aim of the ERA_FABRIC project is to define, structure, populate and validate the "interconnected knowledge space" foreseen by the EU ERA Hubs initiative (COM 2020 628 final). Three distinct, and intertwined, dimensions, all of them relevant for policy making, are adopted as a structuring principle for the community to be built and cultivated during the project: 1) ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems: fostering the dynamic interaction of R&D and innovation actors at regional and multiregional levels, taking into account the different knowledge and cultural contexts and the alignment of research foci and industrial needs; 2) ERA Hubs as Multi Stakeholder Platforms: bringing together the representatives of the various involved interest groups in a seamless and uninterrupted discussion and deliberation on strategic priorities, actions and results evaluation; 3) ERA Hubs as a Policy Co Creation Toolbox: a transformative set of measures and tools operating in a "middle ground" needing to be configured as a distinct space from both the EU and the MS/Regional levels, historically presided over by "ad hoc" sets of instruments (e.g. Framework Programmes for R&I, Structural and Investment Funds, Interregional and Cross Border Cooperation Programmes). It is the consortium's vision and assumption that the 3 above dimensions should be presided over and made interoperable, in order for the ERA Hubs initiative to become path breaking and impactful at broad EU level. ERA_FABRIC is designed by leading European actors in the domain of regional development. The 11 partners represent 8 Member States and 1 Associated State. With the addition of the letters of interest gathered before the proposal presentation, almost half of EU27 territorial coverage has been reached.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS

Grant Preparation (Beneficiaries screen) — Enter the info.

Number	Role	Short name	Legal name	Country	PIC
1	COO	ART-ER	ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI	IT	899261102
2	BEN	EURECAT	FUNDACIO EURECAT	ES	928030235
3	BEN	ECOPLUS	ECOPLUS.NIEDEROSTERREICHS WIRTSCHAFTSAGENTUR GMBH	AT	996700415
4	BEN	INESCTEC	INESC TEC - INSTITUTO DE ENGENHARIADE SISTEMAS E COMPUTADORES, TECNOLOGIA E CIENCIA	PT	999513706
5	BEN	CNR	CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE	IT	999979500
6	BEN	TTP	TRONDHEIM TECH PORT	NO	887659223
6.1	AE	NTNU	NORGES TEKNISK-NATURVITENSKAPELIGE UNIVERSITET NTNU	NO	999977851
7	BEN	UNIST	SVEUCILISTE U SPLITU	HR	999818189

PARTICIPANTS *Grant Preparation (Beneficiaries screen) — Enter the info.*					
Number	**Role**	**Short name**	**Legal name**	**Country**	**PIC**
8	BEN	MU	Masarykova univerzita	CZ	999880657
9	BEN	ADRNV	AGENTIA DE DEZVOLTARE REGIONALA NORD-VEST	RO	998907844
10	BEN	WUT	POLITECHNIKA WARSZAWSKA	PL	999884052

LIST OF WORK PACKAGES

Work packages

Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.

Work Package No	Work Package name	Lead Beneficiary	Effort (Person-Months)	Start Month	End Month	Deliverables
WP1	Coordination and Management	1 - ART-ER	15.00	1	30	D1.1 – Quality guidelines D1.2 – Gender and ethical requirements D1.3 – Data Management Plan D1.4 – Updated Data Management Plan
WP2	ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems	5 - CNR	27.50	1	30	D2.1 – Knowledge ecologies for territorial value creation D2.2 – EU Place-based R&I ecosystems D2.3 – Stakeholder survey results D2.4 – ERA_FABRIC partner profiles D2.5 – ERA_FABRIC self assessment and guidance tool
WP3	ERA Hubs as Multi- Stakeholder Platforms	7 - UNIST	32.95	1	30	D3.1 – Stakeholder mapping in the ERA_FABRIC regions D3.2 – R&I policies and strategies in the ERA_FABRIC regions D3.3 – Syllabus of ERA_FABRIC training facility D3.4 – Multi-stakeholder platform governance manual
WP4	ERA Hubs as a transformative set of measures and tools	2 - EURECAT	29.00	1	30	D4.1 – Catalogue of measures and tools D4.2 – ERA Hubs Theory of Change
WP5	Monitoring, evaluation and standards	8 - MU	29.75	1	30	D5.1 – Monitoring and evaluation methodology D5.2 – Impact and outcome evaluation results 1

Work packages *Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.*						
Work Package No	**Work Package name**	**Lead Beneficiary**	**Effort (Person-Months)**	**Start Month**	**End Month**	**Deliverables**
						D5.3 – Impact and outcome evaluation results 2 D5.4 – ERA_FABRIC Quality label
WP6	Widening and sustainability	4 - INESCTEC	28.35	1	30	D6.1 – Classification of ERA Hub schemes D6.2 – ERA_FABRIC policy legacy D6.3 – ERA_FABRIC business plan and roadmap
WP7	Communication, Dissemination and Public Engagement	10 - WUT	29.90	1	30	D7.1 – Communication and dissemination plan D7.2 – ERA_FABRIC policy brief 1 D7.3 – ERA_FABRIC policy brief 2 D7.4 – Updated Communication and Dissemination Plan

Work package WP1 – Coordination and Management

Work Package Number	WP1	**Lead Beneficiary**	1. ART-ER
Work Package Name	Coordination and Management		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	30

Objectives
This WP aims to ensure an efficient, effective and mutually inspiring collaboration and guidance of all ERA_FABRIC activities. In particular, the goals are to: ● Deliver Quality Guidelines for the consortium, including internal communication, production of deliverables, etc. ● Ensure Technical Coordination across WPs and project activities ● Handle the relationship with the members of the External Advisory Board. ● Carry out effective Monitoring and Reporting to ensure timely delivery and transparent/accountable use of resources both internally and towards the European Commission. ● Provide an internal risk management and contingency planning function. ● Release a data management plan conforming to the requirements of the Open Research Data initiative. ● Supervise and guarantee gender equality and ethical compliance for all project activities.

Description
Task 1.1 Consortium coordination and internal communication (Lead: ART-ER, M01 - M24) Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. For the entire project duration partners will be engaged in online communication through state of the art means such as A/V conferencing and emailing. Periodic physical meetings will be organised, mostly in association with public events such as study visits, workshops and seminars. An internal document repository will be established and managed by the Lead Partner. Task 1.2 Legal, financial and contractual management (Lead: ART-ER, M01 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. ART-ER on behalf of the whole consortium will handle the legal, financial and contractual aspects related to the project and will be the first contact point for the European Commission and any third party needing to interact with ERA_FABRIC. Task 1.3 Quality, risk and data management (Lead: UNIST, M01 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. Quality guidelines will be issued at the beginning of the project to establish rules and procedures for the delivery of outputs (not only deliverables but also online and offline meetings, workshops and training sessions), bearing in mind each partner’s different way of operating and finding a common quality assurance system. A Data Management Plan will describe the consortium’s strategy for the delivery of Open Research Data. Finally, a risk log handled by the Task Leader will periodically be revised and used to analyse the consortium’s technical and financial performance and propose mitigation approaches and contingency adjustments. Task 1.4 Gender equality and ethical compliance (Lead: ART-ER, M01 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. ART-ER will pay special attention to overview gender balance and any other ethical risk associated with project activities. Such risks are mainly related to involving and engaging participants in the working groups and any other events organised by the consortium. Task 1.5 External Advisory Board (Lead: ART-ER, M01 - M24). Partners involved: NONE This Task deals with the management of technical and financial relationships with the international experts invited to be part of the ERA_FABRIC’s External Advisory Board. Currently the following experts have accepted to join the EAB: Annamaria Inzelt (HU), Pirita Lindholm (ERRIN director) and Richard Tuffs (BE/UK). Up to 5 members will be selected, respecting both the gender and a territorial balance.

Work package WP2 – ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems

Work Package Number	WP2	**Lead Beneficiary**	5. CNR
Work Package Name	ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	30

Objectives

Building on the information on document entitled "Testing of the ERA Hub concept – pilot phase" and complementing it with evidence from an EU-wide survey of relevant stakeholders, this WP will analyse existing ERA Hubs-like ecosystems and design a reference model based on their most recurrent characteristics. It will also provide a self assessment and guidance tool for EU regions and MS willing to transition towards successful and fully functioning ERA Hubs, in respect of local specificities.

Description
Task 2.1 Knowledge ecology as a territorial value production on factor: theories and evidence (Lead: INESCTEC, M01 - M06). Partners involved: CNR, TTP, UNIST, MU, and WUT. This Task will develop an overview of existing theories and evidence concerning the role of knowledge and information flows exchanged by regional stakeholders in creating shared practices to support value production, and of how to keep those processes robust and adaptable. Task 2.2 Census of related experiences and good practice examples within the EU (Lead: CNR, M04 - M09). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. This Task will map existing place-based research and innovation ecosystems within the consortium members, covering both advanced and emerging regions and focusing on 3 specific thematic domains: Sustainable manufacturing, Bio-based circular economy and Clean renewable energy. At least 5 ecosystems per domain will be considered. Task 2.3 EU-wide stakeholder survey on the most recurrent characteristics of knowledge ecosystems (Leads: TTP, M07 - M12). Partners involved: ALL but CNR. This Task will launch an EU-wide survey of national, regional and local stakeholders identified through both the census carried out in Task 2.2 and the mapping done in Task 3.1 for the preparation of the thematic working groups. Questions will delve into the success factors identified by the information document entitled "Testing of the ERA Hub concept – pilot phase". The target number of respondents will be above 100. Task 2.4 Assessment of the degree of conformance of partner regions to the ideal type (Lead: WUT, M13 - M18). Partners involved: ALL but CNR and NTNU. Based on the analysis of survey results, the conclusions from Task 2.1 and the selected R&I ecosystems within Task 2.2 it will be possible to compare the current performance of partner regions and countries to the "ideal type" of ERA Hub emerging as a reference model. Task 2.5 Development of a self assessment and guidance tool for regions (Lead: UNIST, M13 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. This Task will deliver a self-reflection tool for regional innovation policy makers and stakeholders, inspired by the HEInnovate interactive questionnaire and RE-ACT project (HEInnovate for RIS3). It will provide an indicative set of policy priorities and strategies for a holistic transformation approach to research and innovation policy and implementation in dependence of various possible territorial characteristics in relation to knowledge ecosystems. This assessment will identify characteristics of the ecosystem (strong, emerging, etc.) and the success factors as proposed in "Knowledge Ecosystems in the new ERA". Before using it as a policy instrument, we will test and validate the assessment on a smaller sample and on the level of each (partner) area.

Work package WP3 – ERA Hubs as Multi- Stakeholder Platforms

Work Package Number	WP3	**Lead Beneficiary**	7. UNIST
Work Package Name	ERA Hubs as Multi- Stakeholder Platforms		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	30

Objectives
This WP looks at the emergent ERA Hubs "phenomenon" from a different perspective, namely that of regional and local stakeholder discovery, variety and engagement. To this end it borrows from extant literature the definition of Multi-Stakeholder Platforms "bringing together representatives from different interest groups to discuss shared challenges, opportunities, policy actions and advocacy strategies... They have the potential to tackle complex development challenges and to assist in the scaling up of necessary innovations" (Acosta et al., 2018 10). This definition will be

implemented through the instrument of thematic working groups, and complemented by a capacity building facility for policy makers as well as a collection of evidence based governance rules and arrangements.

Description
Task 3.1 Mapping regional/local stakeholders and communities and needs analysis (Lead: UNIST, M01 - M06). Partners involved: ALL but CNR and NTNU. This Task will inialise the WP by mapping existing and emerging stakeholders (incl. large companies and key industries), including their communities and networks in the project partner locations, keeping the distinction (if and where relevant) among the 3 thematic domains of Sustainable manufacturing, Bio-based circular economy and Clean renewable energy. Mapping will be supported by an in-depth study (so called needs analysis) which will highlight the challenges associated with grasping the potential of available knowledge flows and transforming them into opportunities for growth and jobs. Task 3.2 Mapping regional/local policies and instruments and gap analysis (Lead: ADRNV, M01 - M06). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. This Task will run in parallel to the previous one and analyse the main characteristics of national and regional policies for R&I in the project partner locations, again maintaining the focus set on the 3 identified thematic domains (if and when relevant). A gap analysis will be carried out to identify what is missing to foster place-based knowledge ecosystems and improve the effectiveness of public research and innovation investments and granting facilities, including synergy opportunities. Task 3.3 Matchmaking of stakeholder interests and creation of thematic working groups (Lead: UNIST, M01 - M18). Partners involved: ALL but CNR and NTNU. While the previous two Task activities are mostly done at partner level, this Task builds bridges amongst them to facilitate the convergence of efforts and the establishment of concurrently working and seamlessly communicating working groups in the 3 thematic domains previously identified, and based on identified complementarities and needs. Based on respective interests, local and regional stakeholders will be invited to join these working groups and the results of their discussions will feed into WP4 as bottom up suggestions and WP6 as lessons learnt and policy recommendations. Task 3.4 Capacity building of policy makers and civil servants on the platorm's theory of change (Lead: TTP, M07 - M24). Partners involved: ALL. Learning how to coordinate the relationships between the new ERA and relevant national or regional stakeholders in order to achieve the smart directionality goal is clearly a challenge, because of the novelty of the topic and the resulting need for a strategic realignment by both policy makers and civil servants. The approach taken by ERA_FABRIC builds on the Theory of (expected) Change the ERA Hub model should bring to the AS-IS scenario of R&D and innovation and its implications for policy action. While it is WP4 globally and Task 4.5 specifically in charge of articulating the key features of such a Theory of Change, its actionable implications will be synthesised in a dedicated syllabus for executive training and capacity building, which NTNU has previously designed in the course of other related projects, and thus can advise TTP and the other partners. During the project's life time, the syllabus will be implemented via minimum 6 webinars, also open to the participants of non-members of the consortium. Task 3.5 Governance rules and arrangements (Lead: ECOPLUS, M19 - M24). Partners involved: ALL except NTNU. This Task will take stock of previous activities by looking at the different angles of interaction among ERA Hub stakeholders, both within the same territory and between different ones. We will collect and describe best practices of governance rules and arrangements and develop recommendations based on learning in the project. In so doing, the fundamental traits of ERA Hubs as Multi-Stakeholder Platforms will be clarified and operationalised.

Work package WP4 – ERA Hubs as a transformative set of measures and tools

Work Package Number	WP4	**Lead Beneficiary**	2. EURECAT
Work Package Name	ERA Hubs as a transformative set of measures and tools		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	30

Objectives
This WP gathers the results of the interaction amongst local and regional stakeholders within the thematic groups created in WP3. These results are structured along 4 main action lines, which cut across the 3 thematic domains identified

previously. Activities are expected to start in M01 with problem setting and statement of objectives by the Task leader, then as soon as the working groups start being formed all partners will animate the stakeholder discussions and provide a catalogue of results to be released as the main WP contribution on at M24. Additionally, the outcomes from the activities described will converge in Task 4.5, which will define the ERA Hubs Theory of Change and identify the mechanisms that may help the ERA Hub concept make an impact in the European, national, and regional R&D and innovation ecosystems.

Description
Task 4.1 Promoting a single market for the green and digital transition (Lead: ART-ER, M01 - M18). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. This Task aims to assess the roles of ERA Hubs as promoters of the so-called twin transition, intended as a growth strategy where the ecological and digital dimensions are intertwined. Relevant inputs for the analysis will notably include the (by now forthcoming) Foresight Report of the Vice President of the European Commission on that topic. Final outputs of stakeholder discussions will be measures and tools focused on accelerating the twin transition. Task 4.2 Connecting territories through smart specialisation complementarities (Lead: ECOPLUS, M01 - M18). Partners involved: ALL but CNR and NTNU. This Task aims to enhance the "outward looking" dimension of S3/S4 strategies: i.e. identify synergies and complementarities among territories that could be further exploited through the application of the ERA Hubs model. Relevant inputs for this analysis will be the learnings, in terms of success and failure stories, from relevant European initiatives (such as Vanguard) addressing the challenge. Outputs of stakeholder discussions will include measures and tools to promote Quadruple Helix collaborat based on regional complementarities along European value chains. Task 4.3 Enhancing the local impacts and synergies of EU framework programme project results (Lead: EURECAT, M01 - M18). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. This Task will focus on identifying a set of measures and tools to be adopted by ERA Hubs with the aim of boosting the impact of EU-funded programmes for R&D and innovation on in the local environment (local, regional, interregional). This catalogue will be finalised through the organisation of (physical and virtual) events, engaging with local actors and stakeholders (including civil society). Task 4.4 Deepening the human centricity of R&D and innovation policies (citizen science, RRI, living labs etc) (Lead: EURECAT, M01 - M18). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. This Task will focus on valorising the human centricity of European research and innovation activities, which has been widely acknowledged to be a peculiar aspect of our continental model (such as in the case of living labs or ethical AI) but misses a wider and deeper acknowledgment in (especially) local and regional policies. Thus the stakeholder discussions carried out in the working groups will first align the knowledge of participants and then help identify a catalogue of exemplary initiatives to be adopted in future programmes involving ERA Hubs. Task 4.5 Wrap-up and definition of the ERA Hubs theory of change (Lead: EURECAT, M19 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. Task 4.5 is based on the outcomes of the previous tasks as well as the activities implemented in WP4 (namely, stakeholder mapping, needs analysis and capacity building) and WP5 (namely process and outcome evaluation of the project). The main objective of this Task is to define the ERA Hubs Theory of Change, intended as a catalogue of measures and tools focused on four main areas of transformation - accelerating the twin transition (Task 4.1), enhancing the “outward looking” dimension of smart specialisation (Task 4.2), strengthening the local impacts of EU funded R&D and innovation (Task 4.3) and making human related aspects more integrated in regional & local policies (Task 4.4) - that can be easily replicated and implemented in other ecosystems.

Work package WP5 – Monitoring, evaluation and standards

Work Package Number	WP5	**Lead Beneficiary**	8. MU
Work Package Name	Monitoring, evaluation and standards		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	30

Objectives
WP5 aims to carry out a systematic monitoring and assessment of project activities, results and impacts. Particularly it will have the following objectives:

● Draw up a Monitoring and Evaluation methodology accompanied by KPI and metrics, tools and instruments. ● Carry out two rounds of data gathering and interpretation on of what works, what doesn't, and why within the project. ● Deliver an Outcome evaluation to assess the results delivered in relation to expectations. ● Deliver an Impact Evaluation to understand progress towards medium- and long-term impacts as stated in the Call.

Description
Task 5.1 Monitoring and evaluation methodology definition (including KPIs and metrics) (Lead: MU, M01 - M06). Partners involved: ART-ER, NTNU. This Task will establish the overarching Monitoring and Evaluation methodology for ERA_FABRIC activities, directly based upon the definition of Theory Change proposed in Section 1. MU will design the data collection and analytical protocols, as well as the KPIs and metrics in accordance with the operational and strategic targets for the project. Task 5.2 Data collection and interpretation activities (Lead: TTP, M07 - M24). Partners involved: ALL. TTP will prepare this Task by developing the semi-automated data collection database built into the project web platform as an additional functionality and lead the consortium's effort (repeated twice along the project's timeline) to gather data from field activities, notably through stakeholder surveys and interviews, and analyse them, with inputs from all project partners. Task 5.3 Impact and outcome evaluation (interim) (Lead: MU, M13 - M18). Partners involved: ART-ER. First round of presentation of shared learnings from the monitoring and evaluation phase, also for dissemination purposes. Task 5.4 Impact and outcome evaluation (final) (Lead: MU, M19 - M24). Partners involved: ART-ER. Second and final round of presentation of shared learnings from the monitoring and evaluation phase. Task 5.5 Definition of standards and a quality label (Lead: WUT, M13 - M24). Partners involved: ALL except TTP and NTNU. This Task will ensure that validated KPIs and metrics are further used as standard procedures and to define a quality label of future ERA Hubs, mirroring the extent to which they comply with high level principles such as those set out by the UN as SDGs and other relevant features emerged from the Theory of Change in WP4 and especially T4.5. This together with the profiling exercise of T6.3 will help support the transition towards successful and fully functioning ERA Hubs.

Work package WP6 – Widening and sustainability

Work Package Number	WP6	**Lead Beneficiary**	4. INESCTEC
Work Package Name	Widening and sustainability		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	30

Objectives
This WP adopts a twin perspective - inward and outward looking - to post-project sustainability. From the internal perspective of the consortium, their stakeholders and networks, a visible impact and a sustainable follow up to the project will derive from the extent to which its innovative proposals will be included in concrete policy actions and strategies. This is the ambition of the first two Tasks. From the perspective of external stakeholders, including the European Commission, the lessons learnt and the evidence gathered in previous WPs will generate a tentative classification of possible ERA Hub schemes, which may serve as an inspiration to widen the range of European territories becoming interested in a selective take up of results for their own policy purposes. A broader set of written recommendations and a suggested roadmap and business plan for the next generation of ERA Hubs (beyond those started in the meantime) will complete this contribution to widening policy goals.

Description
Task 6.1 Innovation management and search for synergies among funding programmes and instruments (Lead: INESCTEC, M01 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. Innovation management is about designing and implementing strategies to make innovation concrete. Due to the nature of this Action and its limited budget allowance, there was no room for properly organised "pilot activities". However this Task will commit to exploring the potential synergies among funding programmes and instruments that can help materialise some of the innovative proposals of the project. The partners themselves or the Regional/National authorities

of reference (some of which have signed LoIs) will be exploring and developing concrete synergies among regional, national and EU level programmes and instruments to ensure the societal and economic uptake of innovative results. Task 6.2 Scaling and sustainability potential of proposed actions and initiatives (Lead: INESCTEC, M07 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. This Task will take up a significant number (up to 10) of actions and initiatives analysed within the previous WPs 2 through 4 and describe how these can become supporting instruments and tools to facilitate the future establishment of ERA Hub-like initiative in the participant regions and countries. The results of this Task will contribute to consolidating the ongoing trend towards establishing a consolidated European movement of ERA Hubs. Task 6.3 Profiling and (tentative) classification on of ERA Hub schemes (Lead: EURECAT, M13 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. Based on activities and outputs of WP2, WP3 and WP4, Task 6.3 will implement a profiling exercise, resulting in a tentative classification of alternative ERA Hub schemes according to their distinctive characteristics. These schemes will act as reference models, facilitating their recognition and future take-up according to the specificities of each involved ecosystem. The definition of standards and quality label in Task 5.5 will run in parallel and be furthered by the classification developed here. Task 6.4 Lessons learned and policy recommendations (Lead: ART-ER, M07 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. A well-functioning research and innovation ecosystem is essential to improve the innovation performance of regions and countries. But how can this be done in practice? The results of ERA_FABRIC represent a useful tool to highlight best practice examples and suggest policy priorities with direct relation with successful Quadruple Helix approaches to place-based ecosystem development. This Task will deliver recommendations on implementing ecosystems, the challenges, barriers, strengths and weaknesses reflecting the recurrent characteristics and validated functionalities that define an ERA Hub. Such recommendations will be disseminated throughout the partners' established networks and communication channels with local and regional policymakers and be the subject of dedicated policy workshops. Task 6.5 Business plan and road map for (2nd generation) ERA Hubs post pilot phase (Lead: INESCTEC, M19 - M24). Partners involved: ALL but NTNU. By the time ERA_FABRIC concludes its activities, the first wave of ERA Hubs directly supported by the EC will start delivering its own results. However there is ample room for comparing this evidence (gathered through a dedicated Task, T7.4) against the implications and recommendations of our project. This will be achieved by delivering a business plan for the long term sustainability of the "average" ERA Hub and a roadmap for the further widening and expansion of the European movement.

Work package WP7 – Communication, Dissemination and Public Engagement

Work Package Number	WP7	**Lead Beneficiary**	10. WUT
Work Package Name	Communication, Dissemination and Public Engagement		
Start Month	1	**End Month**	30

Objectives
This WP coordinates the communication, dissemination and public engagement actions of the project as outlined in Sections 1 and 2, which constitute the essence of ERA_FABRIC outward looking strategy as a Coordination and Support Action.

Description
Task 7.1 Communication and dissemination planning and monitoring (Lead: WUT, M01 - M06). Partners involved: ALL except NTNU. This Task identifies the key messages, targets and channels and draws up the Communication and Dissemination Plan as outlined in Sec on 2.2. Activities here include both the planning and scheduling of the local events (at partner sites) and the international ones described in Sec on 1.1 among the project objectives. They also include setting up of a monitoring exercise to see their status and taking stock of progress and achievements. Task 7.2 Visibility and outreach generation approaches, tools and materials (Lead: WUT, M01 - M24). Partners involved: ALL except NTNU.

This Task covers the delivery of the logo and brand image of the project (including communication guidelines and templates of deliverables, PowerPoint presentations, letterhead, roll-ups, etc.) as well as the following tools:
● Project web platform and news feed (in EN) - They will be created to be the ensure a visible presence of ERA_FABRIC on the Internet, providing general information about the project, its advances, multimedia contents (brochures, videos), news and posts to state current developments and updates as they emerge;
● E-brochure and E-leaflet - to support the awareness and promotion of ERA_FABRIC, its vision and concept. This material will be in English and also translated in the languages of the consortium (CZ, DE, ES, HR, IT, NO, PL, PT, RO) and others as appropriate to support public presentations and events (workshops, seminars, webinars);
● 2 Policy Briefs with reports of major project achievements;
● Creation of ERA_FABRIC social media accounts (in EN) on LinkedIn, Researchgate, Twitter and YouTube.

Task 7.3 Awareness raising and bringing science closer to citizens (Lead: UNIST, M01 - M24). Partners involved: ALL except NTNU. The consortium will consider the possibility of synergizing with new and existing projects, funded by national and European sources, to achieve one of the priority targets of the ERA Hub model that is a diffused engagement of citizens. At project start and recurrently across time, each partner will identify potential synergy projects and join forces with them to carry out such dissemination. For instance, at UNIST there is the European Researcher Night every year, a Science festival every spring (implemented on national level in different cities), and other running projects (SEA-EU, ReSEArch-EU, etc.) which run activities aimed at citizens (i.e. living labs, transformation labs, Hackathons, etc.).

Task 7.4 Networking with other ERA Hubs (Lead: ECOPLUS, M07 - M24). Partners involved: ALL except NTNU. This task addresses KER #12, i.e. the establishment of permanent relations with the sister project(s) funded by the same HE Call, new and emerging ERA Hubs and other EU initiatives such as Digital Innovation Hubs. At least 1 meeting per semester will be organised to ensure interaction and communication with the sister project(s) while ERA Hubs and DIHs will be kept informed of the various initiatives organised by the consortium as per Section 1.1 and T7.1 above.

Task 7.5 Synergies with other EU initiatives (Lead: CNR, M01 - M24). Partners involved: ALL except NTNU. Synergies with other initiatives such as European University Alliances, EIT KICs, Enterprise Europe Network, European Digital Innovation Hubs, TEFs, Smart Specialisation Platform, EURAXESS, ERA4You, Horizon Europe ERN etc. will be guaranteed. These connections will be facilitated thanks to direct involvement of many ERA_FABRIC partners in the abovementioned initiatives and projects, as documented in Table 1.3. Synergies will also be created with recent initiatives such as the Partnership for Regional Innovation-PRI, as well as with the Thematic Partnerships built within the Smart Specialisation Platform.

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2022)7396349 - 25/10/2022

STAFF EFFORT

Staff effort per participant

Grant Preparation (Work packages - Effort screen) — Enter the info.

Participant	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP7	Total Person-Months
1 - ART-ER	6.00	2.50	3.00	3.00	5.50	4.50	3.50	28.00
2 - EURECAT	1.00	2.00	3.00	8.00	2.00	3.00	2.50	21.50
3 - ECOPLUS	0.50	1.00	0.70	2.00	0.50	1.25	1.40	7.35
4 - INESCTEC	1.00	3.00	3.00	2.50	2.00	5.00	2.50	19.00
5 - CNR	0.50	3.00	0.75	1.00	0.75	2.50	2.50	11.00
6 - TTP	1.00	3.50	4.50	2.50	2.00	2.50	2.00	18.00
6.1 - NTNU		0.50	1.00		2.00			3.50
7 - UNIST	2.00	4.00	5.50	2.50	2.00	2.50	4.00	22.50
8 - MU	1.00	2.50	3.00	2.50	8.00	2.50	2.50	22.00
9 - ADRNV	1.00	2.00	5.50	2.50	2.00	2.10	2.50	17.60
10 - WUT	1.00	3.50	3.00	2.50	3.00	2.50	6.50	22.00
Total Person-Months	15.00	27.50	32.95	29.00	29.75	28.35	29.90	192.45

LIST OF DELIVERABLES

Deliverables

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

The labels used mean:

Public — fully open (⚠ automatically posted online)
Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement
EU classified —RESTREINT-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision 2015/444

Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D1.1	Quality guidelines	WP1	1 - ART-ER	R — Document, report	PU - Public	1
D1.2	Gender and ethical requirements	WP1	1 - ART-ER	R — Document, report	PU - Public	2
D1.3	Data Management Plan	WP1	1 - ART-ER	DMP — Data Management Plan	PU - Public	6
D1.4	Updated Data Management Plan	WP1	1 - ART-ER	DMP — Data Management Plan	PU - Public	30
D2.1	Knowledge ecologies for territorial value creation	WP2	4 - INESCTEC	R — Document, report	PU - Public	6
D2.2	EU Place-based R&I ecosystems	WP2	5 - CNR	R — Document, report	PU - Public	10
D2.3	Stakeholder survey results	WP2	6 - TTP	R — Document, report	PU - Public	15
D2.4	ERA_FABRIC partner profiles	WP2	10 - WUT	R — Document, report	PU - Public	22
D2.5	ERA_FABRIC self assessment and guidance tool	WP2	7 - UNIST	DEC —Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	PU - Public	30
D3.1	Stakeholder mapping in the ERA_FABRIC regions	WP3	7 - UNIST	R — Document, report	PU - Public	9
D3.2	R&I policies and strategies in the ERA_FABRIC regions	WP3	9 - ADRNV	R — Document, report	PU - Public	9

Deliverables

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

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Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D3.3	Syllabus of ERA_FABRIC training facility	WP3	6 - TTP	OTHER	PU - Public	13
D3.4	Multi-stakeholder platform governance manual	WP3	3 - ECOPLUS	R — Document, report	PU - Public	30
D4.1	Catalogue of measures and tools	WP4	2 - EURECAT	R — Document, report	PU - Public	24
D4.2	ERA Hubs Theory of Change	WP4	2 - EURECAT	R — Document, report	PU - Public	30
D5.1	Monitoring and evaluation methodology	WP5	8 - MU	R — Document, report	PU - Public	6
D5.2	Impact and outcome evaluation results 1	WP5	8 - MU	R — Document, report	PU - Public	21
D5.3	Impact and outcome evaluation results 2	WP5	8 - MU	R — Document, report	PU - Public	30
D5.4	ERA_FABRIC Quality label	WP5	10 - WUT	OTHER	PU - Public	30
D6.1	Classification of ERA Hub schemes	WP6	2 - EURECAT	R — Document, report	PU - Public	30
D6.2	ERA_FABRIC policy legacy	WP6	1 - ART-ER	R — Document, report	PU - Public	30
D6.3	ERA_FABRIC business plan and roadmap	WP6	4 - INESCTEC	R — Document, report	PU - Public	30
D7.1	Communication and dissemination plan	WP7	10 - WUT	R — Document, report	PU - Public	6
D7.2	ERA_FABRIC policy brief 1	WP7	10 - WUT	DEC —Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	PU - Public	12
D7.3	ERA_FABRIC policy brief 2	WP7	10 - WUT	DEC —Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	PU - Public	30

Deliverables *Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.* *The labels used mean:* *Public — fully open (⚠ automatically posted online)* *Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement* *EU classified —RESTREINT-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision 2015/444*						
Deliverable No	**Deliverable Name**	**Work Package No**	**Lead Beneficiary**	**Type**	**Dissemination Level**	**Due Date (month)**
D7.4	Updated Communication and Dissemination Plan	WP7	10 - WUT	R — Document, report	PU - Public	30

Deliverable D1.1 – Quality guidelines

Deliverable Number	D1.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	1. ART-ER
Deliverable Name	Quality guidelines		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	1	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
A summary of internal rules and procedures

Deliverable D1.2 – Gender and ethical requirements

Deliverable Number	D1.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	1. ART-ER
Deliverable Name	Gender and ethical requirements		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	2	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
Report on gender and ethical issues guidelines and monitoring, including respect of GDPR provisions

Deliverable D1.3 – Data Management Plan

Deliverable Number	D1.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	1. ART-ER
Deliverable Name	Data Management Plan		
Type	DMP — Data Management Plan	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	6	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
Data Management Plan - complying with the Open Research Data principles

Deliverable D1.4 – Updated Data Management Plan

Deliverable Number	D1.4	**Lead Beneficiary**	1. ART-ER
Deliverable Name	Updated Data Management Plan		
Type	DMP — Data Management Plan	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP1

Description
Updated Data Management Plan

Deliverable D2.1 – Knowledge ecologies for territorial value creation

Deliverable Number	D2.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	4. INESCTEC
Deliverable Name	Knowledge ecologies for territorial value creation		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	6	**Work Package No**	WP2

Description
overview of existing theories and evidence concerning the role of knowledge and information flows exchanged by regional stakeholders and of how to keep those processes robust and adaptable.

Deliverable D2.2 – EU Place-based R&I ecosystems

Deliverable Number	D2.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	5. CNR
Deliverable Name	EU Place-based R&I ecosystems		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	10	**Work Package No**	WP2

Description
Map of existing place-based research and innovation ecosystems within the consortium members, covering both advanced and emerging regions and focusing on 3 specific thematic domains: Sustainable manufacturing, Bio-based circular economy and Clean renewable energy. At least 5 ecosystems per domain will be considered.

Deliverable D2.3 – Stakeholder survey results

Deliverable Number	D2.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	6. TTP
Deliverable Name	Stakeholder survey results		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	15	**Work Package No**	WP2

Description
EU-wide survey of national, regional and local stakeholders identified through both the census carried out in Task 2.2 and the mapping done in Task 3.1 for the preparation of the thematic working groups. Questions will delve into the success factors identified by the information document entitled "Testing of the ERA Hub concept – pilot phase". The target number of respondents will be above 100.

Deliverable D2.4 – ERA_FABRIC partner profiles

Deliverable Number	D2.4	**Lead Beneficiary**	10. WUT
Deliverable Name	ERA_FABRIC partner profiles		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	22	**Work Package No**	WP2

Description
Report on the assessment of the degree of conformance of partner regions to the ideal type. Based on the analysis of survey results, the conclusions from Task 2.1 and the selected R&I ecosystems within Task 2.2 it will be possible to compare the current performance of partner regions and countries to the "ideal type" of ERA Hub emerging as a reference model.

Deliverable D2.5 – ERA_FABRIC self assessment and guidance tool

Deliverable Number	D2.5	**Lead Beneficiary**	7. UNIST
Deliverable Name	ERA_FABRIC self assessment and guidance tool		
Type	DEC —Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP2

Description
Self-reflection tool for regional innovation policy makers and stakeholders, inspired by the HEInnovate interactive questionnaire and RE-ACT project (HEInnovate for RIS3). It will provide an indicative set of policy priorities and strategies for a holistic transformation approach to research and innovation policy and implementation in dependence of various possible territorial characteristics in relation to knowledge ecosystems. This assessment will identify characteristics of the ecosystem (strong, emerging, etc.) and the success factors as proposed in "Knowledge Ecosystems in the new ERA".

Deliverable D3.1 – Stakeholder mapping in the ERA_FABRIC regions

Deliverable Number	D3.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	7. UNIST
Deliverable Name	Stakeholder mapping in the ERA_FABRIC regions		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	9	**Work Package No**	WP3

Description
Output of T3.1 mapping existing and emerging stakeholders (incl. large companies and key industries), including their communities and networks in the project partner locations, keeping the distinction (if and where relevant) among the 3 thematic domains of Sustainable manufacturing, Bio-based circular economy and Clean renewable energy. Mapping will be supported by an in-depth study (so called needs analysis) which will highlight the challenges associated with grasping the potential of available knowledge flows and transforming them into opportunities for growth and jobs.

Deliverable D3.2 – R&I policies and strategies in the ERA_FABRIC regions

Deliverable Number	D3.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	9. ADRNV
Deliverable Name	R&I policies and strategies in the ERA_FABRIC regions		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	9	**Work Package No**	WP3

Description
output of T3.2

Analysis of the main characteristics of national and regional policies for R&I in the project partner locations, maintaining the focus set on the 3 identified thematic domains. A gap analysis will be carried out to identify what is missing to foster place -based knowledge ecosystems and improve the effectiveness of public research and innovation investments and granting facilities, including synergy opportunities

Deliverable D3.3 – Syllabus of ERA_FABRIC training facility

Deliverable Number	D3.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	6. TTP
Deliverable Name	Syllabus of ERA_FABRIC training facility		
Type	OTHER	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	13	**Work Package No**	WP3

Description
The approach taken by ERA_FABRIC builds on the Theory of (expected) Change the ERA Hub model should bring to the AS-IS scenario of R&D and innovation and its implications for policy action. While it is WP4 globally and Task 4.5 specifically in charge of articulating the key features of such a Theory of Change, its actionable implications will be synthesised in a dedicated syllabus for executive training and capacity building. During the project's life time, the syllabus will be implemented via minimum 6 webinars, also open to the participation of non-members of the consortium

Deliverable D3.4 – Multi-stakeholder platform governance manual

Deliverable Number	D3.4	**Lead Beneficiary**	3. ECOPLUS
Deliverable Name	Multi-stakeholder platform governance manual		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP3

Description
Governance rules and arrangements: stock of previous activities by looking at the different angles of interaction among ERA Hub stakeholders, both within the same territory and between different ones. Collection and description of best practices of governance rules and arrangements and recommendations based on learnings in the project. In so doing, the fundamental traits of ERA Hubs as Multi-Stakeholder Platform will be clarified and operationalised.

Deliverable D4.1 – Catalogue of measures and tools

Deliverable Number	D4.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	2. EURECAT
Deliverable Name	Catalogue of measures and tools		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	24	**Work Package No**	WP4

Description
output of T4.1, T4.2, T4.3, and T4.4 Gathering of the results of the interactions amongst local and regional stakeholders within the thematic groups created in WP3. These results are structured along 4 main action lines, which cut across the 3 thematic domains identified. Activities are expected to start in M01 with problem setting and statement of objectives by the Task leader, then as soon

as the working groups start being formed all partners will animate the stakeholder discussions and provide a catalogue of results to be released as the main WP contribution at M18.

Deliverable D4.2 – ERA Hubs Theory of Change

Deliverable Number	D4.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	2. EURECAT
Deliverable Name	ERA Hubs Theory of Change		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP4

Description
Catalogue of measures and tools focused on four main areas of transformation - accelerating the twin transition, enhancing the “outward looking” dimension of smart specialisation, strengthening the local impacts of EU funded R&D and innovation and making human related aspects more integrated in regional & local policies - that can be easily replicated and implemented in other ecosystems.

Deliverable D5.1 – Monitoring and evaluation methodology

Deliverable Number	D5.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	8. MU
Deliverable Name	Monitoring and evaluation methodology		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	6	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
Output of T5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation methodology for ERA_FABRIC activities, directly based upon the definition on of Theory Change proposed in Section 1. MU will design the data collection and analytical protocols, as well as the KPIs and metrics in accordance with the operational and strategic targets for the project.

Deliverable D5.2 – Impact and outcome evaluation results 1

Deliverable Number	D5.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	8. MU
Deliverable Name	Impact and outcome evaluation results 1		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	21	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
Impact and outcome evaluation (interim). First round of presentation of shared learnings from the monitoring and evaluation phase, also for dissemination purposes.

Deliverable D5.3 – Impact and outcome evaluation results 2

Deliverable Number	D5.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	8. MU
Deliverable Name	Impact and outcome evaluation results 2		

Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
Second and final round of presentation of shared learnings from the monitoring and evaluation phase.

Deliverable D5.4 – ERA_FABRIC Quality label

Deliverable Number	D5.4	**Lead Beneficiary**	10. WUT
Deliverable Name	ERA_FABRIC Quality label		
Type	OTHER	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP5

Description
Definition of standards and a quality label Compliance with high level principles such as those set out by the UN as SDGs and other relevant features emerged from the Theory of Change. This together with the profiling exercise of T6.3 will help support the transition towards successful and fully functioning ERA Hubs.

Deliverable D6.1 – Classification of ERA Hub schemes

Deliverable Number	D6.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	2. EURECAT
Deliverable Name	Classification of ERA Hub schemes		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP6

Description
Classification of alternative ERA Hub schemes according to their distinctive characteristics. These schemes will act as reference models, facilitating their recognition and future take-up according to the specificities of each involved ecosystem. The definition of standards and quality label in Task 5.5 will run in parallel and be furthered by the classification developed here.

Deliverable D6.2 – ERA_FABRIC policy legacy

Deliverable Number	D6.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	1. ART-ER
Deliverable Name	ERA_FABRIC policy legacy		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP6

Description
Recommendations on implementing ecosystems, the challenges, barriers, strengths and weaknesses reflecting the recurrent characteristics and validated functionalities that define an ERA Hub.

Deliverable D6.3 – ERA_FABRIC business plan and roadmap

Deliverable Number	D6.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	4. INESCTEC
Deliverable Name	ERA_FABRIC business plan and roadmap		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP6

Description
Business plan for the long term sustainability of the “average” ERA Hub and a roadmap for the further widening and expansion of the European movement.

Deliverable D7.1 – Communication and dissemination plan

Deliverable Number	D7.1	**Lead Beneficiary**	10. WUT
Deliverable Name	Communication and dissemination plan		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	6	**Work Package No**	WP7

Description
The draft plan will be confirmed at the very beginning of the project (M3), consolidated with partners input in month 6 and will be updated and evaluated during project's life. It contains communication and dissemination strategy, main messages, targets and channels, including both the planning and scheduling of events and monitoring indicators.

Deliverable D7.2 – ERA_FABRIC policy brief 1

Deliverable Number	D7.2	**Lead Beneficiary**	10. WUT
Deliverable Name	ERA_FABRIC policy brief 1		
Type	DEC —Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	12	**Work Package No**	WP7

Description
First Policy Brief with reports of major project achievements

Deliverable D7.3 – ERA_FABRIC policy brief 2

Deliverable Number	D7.3	**Lead Beneficiary**	10. WUT
Deliverable Name	ERA_FABRIC policy brief 2		
Type	DEC —Websites, patent filings, videos, etc	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP7

Description

Policy Brief with reports of major project achievements

Deliverable D7.4 – Updated Communication and Dissemination Plan

Deliverable Number	D7.4	**Lead Beneficiary**	10. WUT
Deliverable Name	Updated Communication and Dissemination Plan		
Type	R — Document, report	**Dissemination Level**	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	**Work Package No**	WP7

Description
Revision of the Communication Plan issued in month 6

LIST OF MILESTONES

Milestones *Grant Preparation (Milestones screen) — Enter the info.*					
Milestone No	**Milestone Name**	**Work Package No**	**Lead Beneficiary**	**Means of Verification**	**Due Date (month)**
1	ERA_FABRIC web platform	WP7	10-WUT	Having the web platform available with its *.eu domain	3
2	Thematic WGs	WP3	7-UNIST	WGs created in each participating EU country/ region	12
3	Stakeholder survey	WP2	6-TTP	Results gathered within D2.3 issued at the same date	15
4	ERA_FABRIC catalogue	WP4	2-EURECAT	Detailed measures and tools described in D4.1	24
5	Self assessment tool	WP2	7-UNIST	Released at the same date as D2.5	30
6	Quality label	WP5	10-WUT	Presented also as D5.3 issued at the same date	30
7	BP and roadmap	WP6	4-INESCTEC	Both described in D 6.3 issued at the same date	30

LIST OF CRITICAL RISKS

Critical risks & risk management strategy *Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.*			
Risk number	**Description**	**Work Package No(s)**	**Proposed Mitigation Measures**
1	Activities are time consuming and collaboration is hard to keep alive. Likelihood: Medium Severity: Moderate	WP1, WP3, WP6, WP4, WP5, WP2, WP7	A risk management facility is operating in WP1, coordinated by UNIST, which will allow identifying and acting to overcome potential delays in collaborative work every third month. Partners will meet online on a weekly basis to monitor development.

Critical risks & risk management strategy *Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.*			
Risk number	**Description**	**Work Package No(s)**	**Proposed Mitigation Measures**
2	Not a research project, but needing comparable efforts and resources. Likelihood: Medium Severity: Moderate	WP1, WP3, WP6, WP4, WP5, WP2, WP7	Partners have been selected because of their specialist knowledge in the topic. A good number of them are indeed Universities and will put seasoned researchers in the respective teams (also because the budget available doesn't suffice for ad hoc hiring).
3	The concurrent EU initiative of ERA Hubs is delayed or takes another configuration/direction. Likelihood: Low Severity: High	WP1, WP3, WP6, WP4, WP5, WP2, WP7	The policy goal of "rebuilding the ERA" comes directly from the December 2020 Council conclusions. Should the ERA Hub initiative be abandoned or substantially modified, most of the contents and tools proposed by the project would still be relevant for further elaboration and practical use, both at EU and MS/regional levels.
4	It proves more difficult than expected to form, animate and keep alive the thematic working groups. Likelihood: Low Severity: High	WP3, WP4	Most of the partners have deep connections with the respective region's/country's managing authorities who are in charge of the S3/S4 as well as the ESIF programme implementation. Also because of their transnational character, most of the working group meetings will be done by video conference and this will facilitate attendance.
5	Not enough respondents to the stakeholder survey. Likelihood: Medium Severity: Moderate	WP2	The partners hold a wide network of contacts within their respective areas of operation. A good number of institutions from outside the area covered by the consortium members have signed letters of interest and will contribute to expand the geographical outreach.

PROJECT REVIEWS

Project Reviews *Grant Preparation (Reviews screen) — Enter the info.*			
Review No	**Timing** (month)	**Location**	**Comments**
RV1	15		
RV2	30		

ANNEX 1 - PART B

Proposal number: 101094821

Project acronym: ERA_FABRIC

Project name: Framing And Bridging Regional research and Innovation ecosystems Capacities for a renewed ERA – ERA_FABRIC

Table of content

0. History of change

08.09.2022	35	Included a new table under "Table 3.1g Subcontracting costs items" dedicated to Partner ECOPLUS indicating that 15.000 Euro have been allocated to subcontracting costs for supporting the implementation of activities related to WP3
08.09.2022	36-37	Included a new table under "Table 3.1g Subcontracting costs items" dedicated to Partner TTP indicating that 5.000 Euro have been allocated to subcontracting costs for the development of the database as part of the project web platform (Task 5.2)
08.09.2022	37	Included a new table under "Table 3.1g Subcontracting costs items" dedicated Partner WUT indicating that 35.000 have benn allocated as subcontracting costs for external marketing and PR agenzie supporting communication and dissemination activities including web platform design and management
15.09.2022	23	Updated GANTT chart based on the new total duration of the project estended to 30 months (Figure 3.2). The extension has been requested to have the possibility to under take all actions with the necessary time also considering the holidays periods of different partners involved (north-south-east-west) that have proven to be a critical issue already during the preparation phase. With the new timing activities and deliverables will be performed with the appropriate expected quality. This new duration will also allow both the exploitation of synersgies with other projects and more networkign activities.
15.09.2022	24	Updated Table 3.1a "List of work packages" according to the 30 months extension (change in the end date) and to the budget review (change in the PMs)
15.09.2022	24-33	Updated Table 3.1b "Work packages description" with changes in the WP and tasks duration (start and end month) and efforts (
15.09.2022	32-33	Updated Task 7.2 with 2 Policy briefs and related delivery dates
15.09.2022	33-34	Updated Table 3.1c "List of deliverables" namely the Delivery date according to the new GANTT
15.09.2022	34	Updated Table 3.1d "List of milestones" according to the new GANTT
15.09.2022	36	Updated Table 3.1f "Summary of staff effort" following budget review
15.09.2022	37	Reviewed the figures and justification in the table of Partner WUT and inclusion of a table for partner ECOPLUS ("Table 3.1h Purchase costs items").
21.09.2022	25	Integrated a new deliverable D 1.4 Updated DMP
21.09.2022	33	Integrated a new deliverable D 7.4 Updated - Communication and dissemination plan
21.09.2022	33	Integrated the two new deliverables D1.4 and D7.4 as integrated in the related WP1 and WP7
05.10.2022	24	Integrated Table 3.1h Purchase costs items (travel, subsistence, equipment and other goods, works and services) for partner ECOPLUS and WUT

1. Excellence

1.1. Objectives

The following Table describes the **overarching aim** the consortium has set, the underlying **challenges**, the **means of achievement**, and the related **key expected results**.

Table 1.1 ERA_FABRIC in a nutshell

Overarching aim of the ERA_FABRIC project is to define, structure, populate and validate the "interconnected knowledge space" foreseen by the EU ERA Hubs initiative (COM 2020 628 final[1]).
Underlying challenges: We understand, and adopt as a structuring principle for the community to be built and cultivated during the project, that a new "**interconnected knowledge space**" will be created by the EU ERA Hubs initiative, having three distinct, and intertwined, dimensions, all of them relevant for policy making: 1) **ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems**: fostering the dynamic interaction of R&D and innovation actors at regional and multiregional levels, taking into account the different knowledge and cultural contexts and the alignment of research foci and industrial needs; 2) **ERA Hubs as Multi Stakeholder Platforms**: bringing together the representatives of the various involved interest groups in a seamless and uninterrupted discussion and deliberation on strategic priorities, actions and results evaluation; 3) **ERA Hubs as a Policy Co Creation Toolbox**: a transformative set of measures and tools operating in a "**middle ground**" needing to be configured as a distinct space from both the EU and the MS/Regional levels, historically presided over by "ad hoc" sets of instruments (e.g. Framework Programmes for R&I, Structural and Investment Funds, Interregional and Cross Border Cooperation Programmes). It is the consortium's vision and assumption that the 3 above dimensions should be presided over and made interoperable, in order for the ERA Hubs initiative to become path breaking and impactful at broad EU level.
Means of achievement: Three ERA_FABRIC WPs (2 through 4) will separately, but jointly and in a coordinated way, deal with the aforementioned dimensions, supported by a monitoring and evaluation mechanism (implemented in WP5).
Key Expected Results (KERs)
KER #1: A census of ERA-Hub-like experiences and good practice examples within the EU (output of Task 2.2); **KER #2:** A collection of recurrent characteristics of ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems (output of Task 2.3); **KER #3:** A self-assessment and guidance tool for Regional and MS stakeholders, similar to HEInnovate[2] (output of Task 2.5); **KER #4:** A EU-wide mapping of regional/local actors, communities (output of Task 3.1), existing policies and instruments (output of Task 3.2), with associated needs and gap analyses with respect to the requirements of the new "middle ground"; **KER #5:** A replicable capacity building programme for policy makers and civil servants (output of Task 3.4); **KER #6:** A collection of governance rules and arrangements for the ERA Hub as a stakeholder platform (output of Task 3.5), including stocktaking of the experience of thematic working groups (output of Task 3.3); **KER #7:** An exemplary and reusable set of policy measures and tools (output of Task 4.5) focused on four main areas of transformative change: Accelerating the twin transition (Task 4.1), Enhancing the "outward looking" dimension of smart specialisation (Task 4.2), Strengthening the local impacts of EU funded R&D and innovation (Task 4.3), and Making human related aspects (RRI, citizen science, user driven innovation) more integrated in regional & local policies (Task 4.4); **KER #8:** Supported by a dedicated monitoring and evaluation exercise, definition of a standard and quality label for the upcoming EU funded ERA Hubs (output of Task 5.5 and the entire WP5); **KER #9:** As a result of a profiling exercise, a tentative classification of alternative ERA Hub schemes according to their distinctive characteristics (output of Task 6.3); **KER #10:** A business plan and roadmap for the "next generation" of EU funded ERA Hubs taking direct benefit of project results (output of Task 6.5); **KER #11:** A set of policy recommendations (output of Task 6.4) drawn from the consortium's joint reflections on innovation management (Task 6.1) and on scalability and sustainability (Task 6.2); **KER #12:** The creation of a solid community of interest among Quadruple Helix stakeholders[3] including the establishment of permanent relations with the sister project(s) funded by the same Horizon Europe Call, new and emerging ERA Hubs and other related EU initiatives (such as the European University Alliance, EIT KICs, Enterprise Europe Network, European Digital Innovation Hubs, Smart Specialisation Platform, EURAXESS, ERA4You, Horizon Europe EEN, etc.)

Instrumental to the overarching aim of the project and to the achievement of the aforementioned KERs are the **10 operational objectives** described below, each associated with one or more project WPs and their respective KPIs:

[1] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?ur=CELEX:52020DC0628&usg=AOvVaw3uk970IyttNLlmhu_5cQV5
[2] https://www.heinnovate.eu/en
[3] https://op.europa.eu/it/publication-detail/-/publication/6e54c161-36a9-11e6-a825-01aa75ed71a1

Table 1.2 List of ERA_FABRIC objectives

Operational objective	Sub-objectives	Evidence of success	Involved WPs
Obj. 1 - Enlist and engage an EU-wide population of Quadruple Helix actors and stakeholders in the co-design of the ERA_FABRIC community of interest.	1.1 Engage actors and stakeholders in each of the participant territories to build and maintain local communities of interest. 1.2 Involve local communities in parallel working groups, capacity building initiatives, needs analyses, co-design, monitoring and evaluation activities (see Obj. 5 and 7).	• 9 regional/local communities of at least 50 participants each. • At least 8 meetings (1 per quarter) per each working group. • At least 6 capacity building webinars for the whole project. • At least 9 short videos of testimonials reporting about their experiences and perceived benefits (1 per region).	WP3 WP5 WP7
Obj. 2 - Schedule a plan of P2P learning events (both online and offline) to ensure a true and consistent exchange of knowledge among the project partners and with their community members (notably including civil society).	2.1 Define (already at kick-off) a tentative list of private (closed-door) and public gatherings (both directly organised and from relevant third parties) to be attended by the project partners. 2.2 Ensure a broad participation of local actors and stakeholders (if needed, by appropriate translation of proceedings) to each partner's public event(s).	• At least 8 public events (1 per quarter) in combination with the periodic consortium meetings. • At least 9 ecosystem profiles. • At least 20 individual partner attendances to third party events (e.g. policy workshops or academic conferences). • At least 500 non-unique individual attendances from local actors and stakeholders.	WP4 WP7
Obj. 3 - Exploit the existing, EU-wide and international networks of the consortium members to raise the awareness and increase the visibility of the ERA_FABRIC project, its aims and achievements.	3.1 Attribute (already at kick-off) to each partner an average number of 2 additional regions or countries, prioritising those that are not represented in the consortium. 3.2 Establish a continuous flow of communication with actors and stakeholders from these regions for the entire project duration. 3.3 Liaise with the sister project(s) of this call, existing and upcoming ERA Hubs, and other EU initiatives.	• At least 10 additional territories covered with formal alliances. • At least 100 individual attendances to project events from actors and stakeholders not belonging to the consortium. • At least 500 recipients of the ERA_FABRIC policy brief e-newsletters. • At least 10 other projects and initiatives clustered.	WP7
Obj. 4 - Explore and substantiate with field evidence the concept of ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems.	4.1 Deliver a state of the art analysis of knowledge ecology as a territorial production factor, including a census of related experiences and good practice examples. 4.2 Run a EU-wide stakeholder survey on the most recurrent characteristics of knowledge ecosystems and assess the degree of conformance of partner regions to the ideal type. 4.3 Develop a self-assessment and guidance tools for regions aiming to verify their strategic alignment to the model.	• 1 online publication. • 1 survey exercise with at least 100 respondents. • 1 online self-assessment tool with at least 100 checked profiles.	WP2 WP7

Obj. 5 - Develop and structure a real-life instantiation of the concept of ERA Hubs as Multi Stakeholder Platform.	5.1 Liaise with regional and local actors, stakeholders and communities from both within and outside the consortium to deliver a needs analysis as well as a gap analysis of their existing policies and instruments. 5.2 Form thematic working groups at local level, connected with parallel activities in the other partner sites, on three main topics of interest for the consortium. 5.3 Set up the project's capacity building infrastructure for policy makers and other interested stakeholders.	● 9 need and gap analyses (1 per partner location). ● 3 thematic working groups at project level (with instances at each partner site) on the topic of sustainable manufacturing, biobased circular economy and clean renewable energy. ● 1 syllabus and IT infrastructure for the delivery of webinars (see Obj. 1). ● 1 collection of governance rules and arrangements.	WP3 WP7
Obj. 6 - Select a combination of existing (proven) and innovative (yet to be tested) instruments for the implementation of the concept of ERA Hubs' Policy Co Creation Toolbox.	6.1 Structure the activity of the thematic working groups on four main priority areas for policy innovation, as explained below in this proposal (T4.1 through T4.4). 6.2 Organise the results of the three working groups according to the four areas with a summary of the transformative potential of the ERA Hubs "middle ground" model.	● 4 sections of the Policy toolbox. ● At least 10 meaningful case studies per section. ● At least 5 tested instruments per section / collection of case studies ● At least 1 innovative instrument proposed per section ● 1 theory of change of the ERA Hubs model.	WP3 WP4
Obj. 7 - Monitor and evaluate the project activities and their results, including gender balance and standardisation potential.	7.1 Define a methodology for impact and outcome evaluation, based on the theory of change. 7.2 Deliver two rounds of data collection and interpretation, notably including gender balance. 7.3 Assess feasibility of a quality label and standardisation approach.	● 1 methodology and plan of monitoring and evaluation activities. ● At least 40 interviews and 2 evaluation surveys involving no fewer than 120 participants. ● 1 feasibility study for a quality label of ERA Hubs.	WP5 WP1
Obj. 8 - Define a replicable model for ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems, Multi Stakeholder Platform, and Policy Toolbox.	8.1 Promote a wide reflection on key widening and sustainability related aspects of the ERA Hubs model. 8.2 Build a taxonomy of ERA Hub schemes with related profiles and implications for policy. 8.3 Draw lessons and policy recommendations, particularly for the next generation of ERA Hubs.	● 3 ERA_FABRIC policy briefs. ● 1 classification of ERA Hub schemes. ● 1 business plan and road map for the post-grant phase.	WP6 WP7
Obj. 9 - Communicate and disseminate project activities and results to accompany the development of the ERA_FABRIC community towards its impact targets.	9.1 Define and maintain a professional graphic design and communication strategy. 9.2 Communicate effectively within the consortium and with the external actors and stakeholders. 9.3 Develop a project web platform and news feed representing the consortium and its achievements, as a first step towards the official ERA Hubs platform. 9.4 Disseminate project results to scientific and sectoral targets and channels.	● Broad international visibility of the consortium and the ERA_FABRIC image. ● Single message for the vision and mission shared internally and in the participant communities. ● Project web platform and news feed with 15,000 visitors by project end. ● Publication of at least 5 articles and papers on refereed journals and in conference proceedings.	WP7

Obj. 10 - Carry out effective project management to ensure smooth and risk free operations and meeting project objectives, including gender balance.	10.1 Ensure quality management, including an initial quality handbook and continuing with risk assessment and the production of 6-monthly internal Progress Reports. 10.2 Strategic project coordination and Advisory Board engagement in guiding and evaluating project activities. 10.3 Professional technical management and reporting to the Commission. 10.4 Governance and Steering Committee meetings, with the drawing up of a Consortium Agreement and management of project/contractual issues as required.	• Low number of incidences of tensions or conflict between partners. • Degree of originality and rigour coherent with project objectives. • Timely delivery of project results within budgets and targets. • Strategic coherence with the directions of the EU ERA Hubs and related initiatives. • External Advisory Board composed of at least 5 internationally renowned experts.	WP1

1.2. Coordination and/or support measures and methodology

The ERA FABRIC approach is based on two building blocks:

1) **Theory of Change**. This is a systematic and cumulative study of the links between activities, outcomes, and context of a new policy intervention. It involves the specification of an explicit theory of how and why an intervention might cause an effect, which is used to guide understanding. It does this by investigating the (supposedly causal) relationships between context-input-output-outcomes-impacts in order to understand the combination of factors that has led to the intended or unintended outcomes and impacts. Theory of Change, therefore, tests, and normally develops the implementation theory of an intervention and allows this to be modified or refined through the evaluation process. The ERA_FABRIC Theory of Change posits that the three dimensions of the ERA Hub "middle ground" model are equally relevant for its success – Knowledge Ecosystems, Multi Stakeholder Platform, and Policy Toolbox – and will therefore promote work at both analytical and empirical level within the consortium, to **identify the mechanisms that may help the model make an impact**.

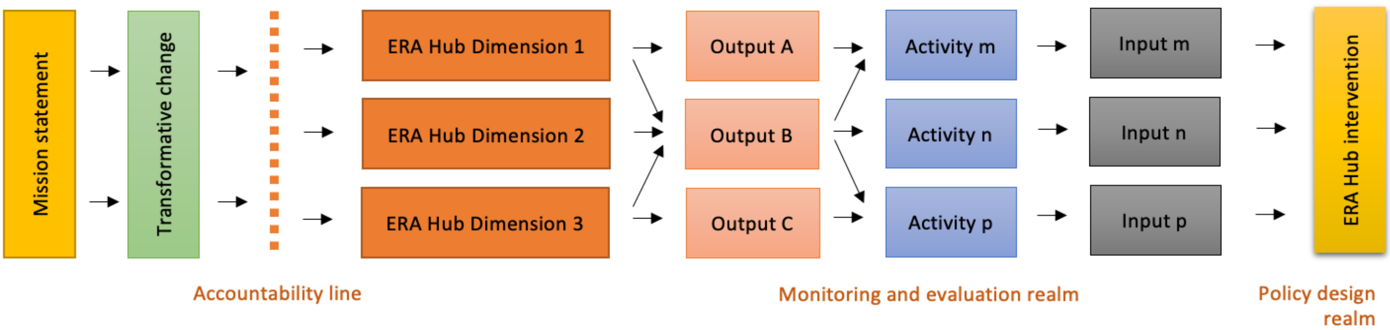

Figure 1.1 - The ERA_FABRIC Theory of Change

2) **Thematic Focus**. While the project's reflection is designed to be multidisciplinary, however, in its field implementation, a thematic focus will be adopted to channel efforts and get to concrete first results. The thematic focus agreed by partners fall within the scope of the EU policy priority of the so-called **twin transition**, intended as a growth strategy where the ecological and the digital dimension are intertwined and affect all aspects of living and working, producing and consuming, and contribute to make business more innovative and capable of creating new quality jobs. More precisely, **Sustainable manufacturing, Biobased circular economy and Clean renewable energy** will be the focus areas of field activities. These areas are consistent with the S3 (Smart Specialisation Strategies) of partners' regions where policies and programmes support research and innovation activities, and will contribute to moving towards S4 (thus integrating sustainability in a broad sense).

In practical terms, the ERA_FABRIC work plan will be carried out according to the following **Agile Development**[4] principles:

- **Requirement analysis**. In order to gain the necessary insights into the needs of the local/regional sites, the first goal of ERA_FABRIC is to elicit their requirements. Specifically, a deep analysis of the actors and stakeholders, their needs, the gaps and limitations of the policy plans and instruments in place, will be carried out by each partner in the respective community and (on a voluntary basis, depending on their availability) also in the aggregated communities during the project phase. Special attention will be paid to data gathering for the purpose of benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation. This requirement gathering will not be a one/off activity but a continuous one, supported by the numerous events organised by the consortium in the different locations, also for validation and verification purposes.
- **Early definition of a "middle ground" model**. Once the AS-IS situation has been clarified, a preliminary version of the ERA Hub model will be suggested, which responds to the early definition of requirements and that will be refined in the forthcoming field activities. As explained earlier, the three dimensions of the model are separately, yet concurrently examined in WP2, WP3 and WP4 of the proposed project plan. As a derivative of the main model, a number of supportive tools and systems will be designed (and to a great extent, co-designed, not only by the partners but also in the framework of the various community initiatives involving Quadruple Helix stakeholders). These include, among others: the self assessment and guidance tool marked as KER#3, the capacity building programme marked as KER#5, and the policy toolkit marked as KER #7.
- **Thematic discussion**. Having developed the building blocks of the framework, its concrete implementation will follow the thread of the transformative capacity of ERA Hubs towards a twin transition of the three focus areas identified earlier and which will inform both the discussion within the working groups and the delivery of the project's KERs. In this sense, the ERA Hub model will be customised to meet the specific needs and requirements suggested by the local/regional communities involved. Each of the three topics has its own scope which makes the coverage of ERA_FABRIC more comprehensive and the feedback to the model more suggestive.
- **Monitoring and evaluation for evidence based implications**. The Theory of Change of ERA_FABRIC will be tested empirically according to domain specific KPIs generated bottom up from the discussion. Only as an example, these KPIs may include: enterprise performance indicators, measures of benefits from public / private / people collaboration, metrics of learning outcomes and diffusion, integration of ecological and digital transition aspects in R&D and innovation results, etc. An exhaustive evaluation exercise will be conducted, structured in two consecutive rounds, as explained in WP5. The feedback collected will lead to adjustments of the initial model and support the following considerations, done in WP6, aimed at capitalisation of results and a roadmap to policy mainstreaming.
- **Seamless integration**. Project work will be executed in highly parallel streams of activities in the involved WPs and with iterative cycles of interaction with local actors and stakeholders. As such, the consortium considers continuous integration during the project lifetime as key, adopting it since the beginning of the work plan and throughout the planning, doing acting, and checking actions in a seamless way. This agile development methodology also allows working in autonomous teams with periodic result sharing sessions, thereby creating flexibility (design, test, modify), reliability and quality (feedback the end-user), and reduced risks (early troubleshooting).

Example. A known limitation of regional/national approaches to S3 in the previous programming period has been the so-called (lack of) "outward looking perspective", which would enable to find potential advantages in international markets, and identify partners who can help deliver new solutions and solve common challenges. According to a JRC survey[5], EU regions most often collaborated with other regions in their own country, rather than opening up to mutually advantageous relationships cutting across the country borders. This was related to lack of financial resources, insufficient political commitment, poor incentives to the engagement of stakeholders and lack of clarity of such extended collaboration objectives. ERA_FABRIC will translate this issue (as action research question) into a collection of requirements, which will be formulated and validated within the thematic working groups and lead to the co-creation of a set of incentivising policies and instruments.

4 https://agilemanifesto.org/iso/en/principles.html

5 https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/w/how-outward-looking-is-smart-specialisation-results-from-a-survey-on-inter-regional-collaboration-in-smart-specialisation-strategies-ris3-

1.2.1. Open science practices

ERA_FABRIC follows thoroughly all the required actions in order to be aligned with the Open Science practices as also defined in Horizon Europe guidelines. In particular, ERA_FABRIC will adopt the following principles:

Early and open sharing of results. All partners will follow methods to assure early and open sharing of action objectives (hypotheses) and achievements, submitting reports into Open Access Repositories. These will include both EU magazines such as Cordis News and Research EU and specialised portals in social science (SocArXiv) and general purpose research (e.g. Figshare, PeerJ, OSF Preprints, Zenodo).

Output management and measures to ensure reproducibility of outputs. ERA_FABRIC ensures reproducibility of all action outputs (data, reports, publications, etc.) through: reproduction, replication, and re-use and depending on the availability of data and methods.

Co-creation of work agendas and contents. ERA_FABRIC will have active engagement with the general public and non-professional scientists in all the project's phases.

The following initiatives will be taken into account by the partners for the initialisation of project activities:

Table 1.3 Relation to national and international projects and initiatives

Acronym / Name - URL	**Aim of the project, consortium, network, community**	**Involved Partner(s)**
ECCP / European Cluster Collaboration Platform - *https://clustercollaboration.eu*	The ECCP's mission is to be the European online hub for cluster stakeholders (cluster organisations, policymakers and other related stakeholders from the cluster ecosystem) and the reference one-stop-shop for stakeholders in third countries aiming to set up partnerships with European counterparts.	ART-ER and Clust-ERs associations (member of the regional ecosystem)
EIT-KICs *https://eit.europa.eu/*	EIT's Knowledge and Innovation Communities are partnerships that bring together businesses, research centres and universities. They allow: innovative products and services to be developed in every area imaginable, including climate change, healthy living and active ageing; new companies to be started; a new generation of entrepreneurs to be trained	INESCTEC (Raw Materials, Manufacturing, Digital) ART-ER (Climate, Raw Material, Manufacturing) NTNU (Climate, Raw Materials, InnoEnergy, Health)
EIT RIS / Regional Innovation Scheme - *https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme*	The EIT RIS was introduced in 2014 to advance the innovation performance of more countries and their regions across Europe, especially countries with moderate or modest innovation scores as defined by the European Innovation Scoreboard. Since its establishment, the EIT RIS, which is steered by the EIT and implemented by its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), has successfully led to a significant expansion of EIT Community activities to more countries and regions across Europe, contributing to a pan-European spread of EIT Community engagement opportunities and networks.	ADRNV (Nord Vest Region) INESCTEC (Norte Region) MU (Jihovỳchod Region) UNIST (Jadranska Hrvatska Region) WUT (Mazowieckie Region)
EARTO - European Association of Research and Technology Organisations *https://www.earto.eu/*	Founded in 1999, EARTO promotes RTOs and represents their interest in Europe. EARTO network counts over 350 RTOs in more than 20 countries. EARTO members represent 150.000 of highly-skilled researchers and engineers managing a wide range of technology infrastructures. From the lab to your everyday life. RTOs innovate to improve your health and well-being, your safety and security, your mobility and connectivity. RTOs' technologies cover all scientific fields. Their work ranges from basic research to new products and services development. RTOs are non-profit organisations with public missions to support society. To do so, they closely cooperate with industries, large and small, as well as a wide array of public actors.	INESCTEC (Full Member)

European Digital Innovation Hubs *https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/edihs*	European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) will function as one-stop shops that help companies dynamically respond to the digital challenges and become more competitive. By providing access to technical expertise and experimentation as well as the possibility to 'test before invest', EDIHs help companies improve business/production processes, products, or services using digital technologies. They also provide innovation services, such as financing advice, training, and skills development that are needed for a successful digital transformation. Environmental issues are also taken into account, in particular with regard to energy consumption and low carbon emissions.	INESCTEC (Produtech Digital Innovation Hub and iMan Norte Hub for Customer Driven Manufacturing), MU (National centre of competence for cybersecurity), UNIST (Blue digital innovation hub-BlueDIH)
Testing and Experimentation Facilities *https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/testing-and-experimentation-facilities*	To achieve the European Artificial intelligence (AI) strategy's aim to optimise development and deployment of AI, the European Commission introduced AI Testing and Experimentation Facilities (TEFs) in the Digital Europe programme. To optimise investment, the Commission foresees to co-fund (through Digital Europe Programme) with Member States a limited number of specialised large-scale reference sites to serve the needs of European technology providers. The TEFs will focus on four sectors – manufacturing, healthcare, agri-food and smart cities and communities – as well as on edge AI as a technology.	INESCTEC (proposals in dev/ for TEF in manufacturing and agri-food).
Plan for industrial transition of the Adriatic Croatia	The Ministry of regional development and EU funds in 2019 started the process of industrial transition of three NUTS 2 regions (incl. Adriatic Croatia) that have the potential to contribute to strengthening competitiveness of Croatian regional economies. The plan specifies regional priority areas based on regional, innovation and industry policies.	UNIST
PRI / Partnership for Regional Innovation (CoR/JRC) - https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pri	A pilot action promoted by the Committee of Regions and the JRC, which will involve 24 EU regions in a 1-year pathway for the transition from S3 to S4 and the analysis of potential fund synergies and policy collaborations.	Candidates: Emilia-Romagna
S3 platform for Industrial Modernisation - https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/industrial-modernisation	The Smart Specialisation Platform for Industrial Modernisation (S3P-Industry) aims to support EU regions committed to generate a pipeline of industrial investment projects following a bottom-up approach - implemented through interregional cooperation, cluster participation and industry involvement.	Croatia Emilia-Romagna Generalitat de Catalunya Norte Region North West Romania South Moravia Trøndelag
Vanguard Initiative - https://www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu	The Vanguard Initiative offers a platform for businesses, clusters and knowledge institutes to meet and join forces in finding new innovative solutions.	Emilia Romagna Region Lower Austria - Niederösterreich Generalitat de Catalunya Norte Region

1.2.2. Data management and management of other research outputs

ERA_FABRIC involves carrying out data collection, including personal data and metadata during field activities but no major collection of sensitive personal data that can be relevant to consider upfront because of its ethically sensitive implications. It is also planned to gather specific field data from existing (public or private) sources to take inspiration, validate and assess the effectiveness of the proposed framework in real-life conditions.

All processing of personal data will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of: a) the GDPR (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) (European Union, 2016), b) the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention 108 for the Protection of Individuals with Regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, and c) the national laws applying its provisions, including those governing the acquisition of valid consent.

Personal data managed during the project will be processed only under the following preconditions which need to be met: (i) When the data subject has given her/his consent; (ii) When the processing is necessary for the performance of or the entering into a contract; (iii) When processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation; (iv) When processing is necessary in order to protect the vital interests of the data subject. Personal data managed within ERA_FABRIC will only be related to the personal identities of the participants in local activities and stored electronically with their permission. The consortium will establish a data management framework that guarantees the security of collected data from potential abuse, theft, or loss. Research data that will be collected and/or generated by the project will be -in principle- made FAIR according to the principles of the Open Research Data Pilot, in which ERA_FABRIC declares its intention to participate.

Data as research outputs. ERA_FABRIC will collect data from real-world baseline environments and aggregate it to existing information and knowledge providing input for the modelling and evaluation phases. Data may be made available in several types such as numerical data, texts, images, tables and other formats. During the project it is estimated that data will be produced specifically from the participants in field activities. Normally no attention will be paid to the anonymization of received personal data due to the absence of criticalities. However, for a wider publication data will be abstracted in a way that core messages can be communicated, not revealing the identities of those who generated them. Data other than FAIR will be stored privately on-premise and never be made public.

Findability of data/research outputs. The findability of the data is supported by the use of Persistent identifiers (PIDs) and Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) on trusted repositories such as Zenodo, as well as Standard Rich metadata schemes e.g., Dublin Core, CERIF, DDI (general data) and ISO 19115.

Accessibility of data/research outputs. The research outputs will be made available in the project web platform as well as in Zenodo. General principles for handling background and foreground knowledge and IPR including access rights within ERA_FABRIC will be settled in the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement. The IPR strategy and the exploitation management will be handled therein as well as in WP6 and in Section 2 below.

Reusability of data/research outputs. Research outputs will have a clear licence to govern the terms of their reuse (e.g., Public Domain, Attribution, Non-commercial, No Derivatives, or other). Indicatively, ERA_FABRIC will use the Creative Commons licences and more specifically, the Attribution (CC BY) licence and Creative Commons Zero (CC0) which is for dedicating works to the public domain.

Curation and storage/preservation costs. Data storage will be performed in a secured form (e.g., access rights controlled and passwords encrypted with a strong cryptographic protocol) in servers indicated by the respective project partners, and agreed upon within the consortium.

Public domain definition. All outcomes of the ERA_FABRIC project will be made available to various stakeholders and projects through connections of the consortium members, and made available through the official project web platform as well as other Open Access channels.

Data management plan. A Data Management Plan (DMP) will detail what data the project generates (i.e., content, type, format, volume), which standards and methodologies are used for data collection and management, whether and how it will be exploited and how it will be made Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR). A first version of the DMP will be submitted by M6, to be continuously updated until the end of the project. Management of research data will be done in accordance with related soft law instruments governing scientific research, such as the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, the Guidelines to rules on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Open Access to Research Data in Horizon Europe, and the Guidelines on Data Management in Horizon Europe.

1.2.3. Compliance with the “Do no significant harm principle”

ERA_FABRIC complies with the ‘do no significant harm’ principle. ERA_FABRIC contributes to EU environmental objectives by targeting higher energy efficiency and a more efficient use of resources, thereby positively impacting climate change mitigation.

1.2.4. Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary aspects

Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary elements are introduced through the field activities and their respective application domains. We use a matrix type of approach to the mobilisation of scientific knowledge to answer concrete societal, economic and environmental needs and challenges, as defined by the S3 in each country and region. With this matrix approach across the R&I cycle, from knowledge production to market uptake, interdisciplinarity becomes an engine of not only cross-sectoral but cross-regional cooperation. For example, in the manufacturing area, several results of European research projects were further developed, tested and demonstrated in new application sectors, using national or regional funding programmes devoted to promoting further exploitation and cross fertilisation of research results.

1.2.5. Integration of social science and humanities

ERA_FABRIC attention to social science aspects is multifold from privacy preservation, ethics and security, to the human-centric design approach to enhance trust and acceptability. Especially working group implementation and outputs validation by Quadruple Helix Stakeholders (including e.g. citizens, professionals, associations, etc.) will contribute to ensure: a) the relevance and effectiveness of the project results for the assumptions and research questions on which it is based, and b) the enlargement of collective creativity and quality capabilities to the scope of research and the quantity and quality of data c) transparency, science literacy and empowerment of the public in research. Best practices and know-how from other EU funded projects and initiatives will be taken under consideration in order to succeed with the best results.

1.2.6. Gender dimension

In accordance with EU's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 of the European Commission and SDG#5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls", ERA_FABRIC integrates the gender dimension into its global approach and content delivery process. It puts special emphasis on the role of gender regarding the economic, environmental, social, ethical, technical and financial perspectives of societies in order to explore whether and how the ERA Hub model may affect or concern women and men differently. ERA_FABRIC has a gender-sensitive approach that considers sex and gender aspects in all research and innovation phases (identification of a problem, design of a solution, implementation, data collection and analysis, dissemination etc.).

This proposal shows a balanced mix between female and male researchers as well as representatives from partners. Special attention will be paid during the implementation of WP2 and WP3 to the involvement of all genders in the thematic working groups (WP3) and in the survey activities (WP2). Based on individual responses and preferences, ERA_FABRIC aims also to investigate what gender norms, relations, or identities are relevant to the specific policies and instruments identified within WP4 and highlight social and behavioural patterns, barriers and drivers for all genders in the forthcoming ERA Hub movement.

Evidence-based analyses on gender-related peculiarities and conclusions for the relative importance and social acceptance of proposed tools to all genders will be part of the dissemination WP7 as well as of the management WP1. Concerning the dissemination of ERA_FABRIC results special attention will be paid to: a) Reporting sample characteristics by gender, sex, and relevant intersecting variables and how information on gender identity was obtained, by avoiding overemphasizing gender differences; b) Disaggregating reported results by sex and gender and report all results: positive and negative; c) Ensuring that gender variations are properly reported in tables, figures, and conclusions; d) Considering following the SAGER publication guidelines (EASE, 2016[6]). In turn, WP1 will build upon the integration of the gender dimension in the execution of the project in order to ensure gender balance in research and decision-making towards the implementation of the activities, evaluation panels and other relevant advisory boards/groups of experts and foster women's empowerment according to Horizon Europe requirements. Therefore, the gender dimension will be covered in the periodic plans and reports produced by all the various WPs.

2. Impact

2.1. Project's pathways towards impact

The aim of ERA_FABRIC is to ***support the ongoing process of creation of a European network of ERA Hubs***, by helping to define, structure and populate the "interconnected knowledge space" foreseen by the EU ERA Hubs initiative. The figure below outlines the **logic model of the project** which explains how it expects to achieve the outcomes and impacts of the Call, as well as further ones that are reported and commented on below.

Expected outcomes and impacts of the call are discussed in this paragraph, providing evidence of whether and to what extent the project will achieve such results for its partners, target beneficiaries as well as for the wider ERA community. Barriers, obstacles, enabling conditions are also discussed and presented hereunder, together with related mitigation actions and other specific requirements of this proposal.

6 https://ease.org.uk/communities/gender-policy-committee/the-sager-guidelines/

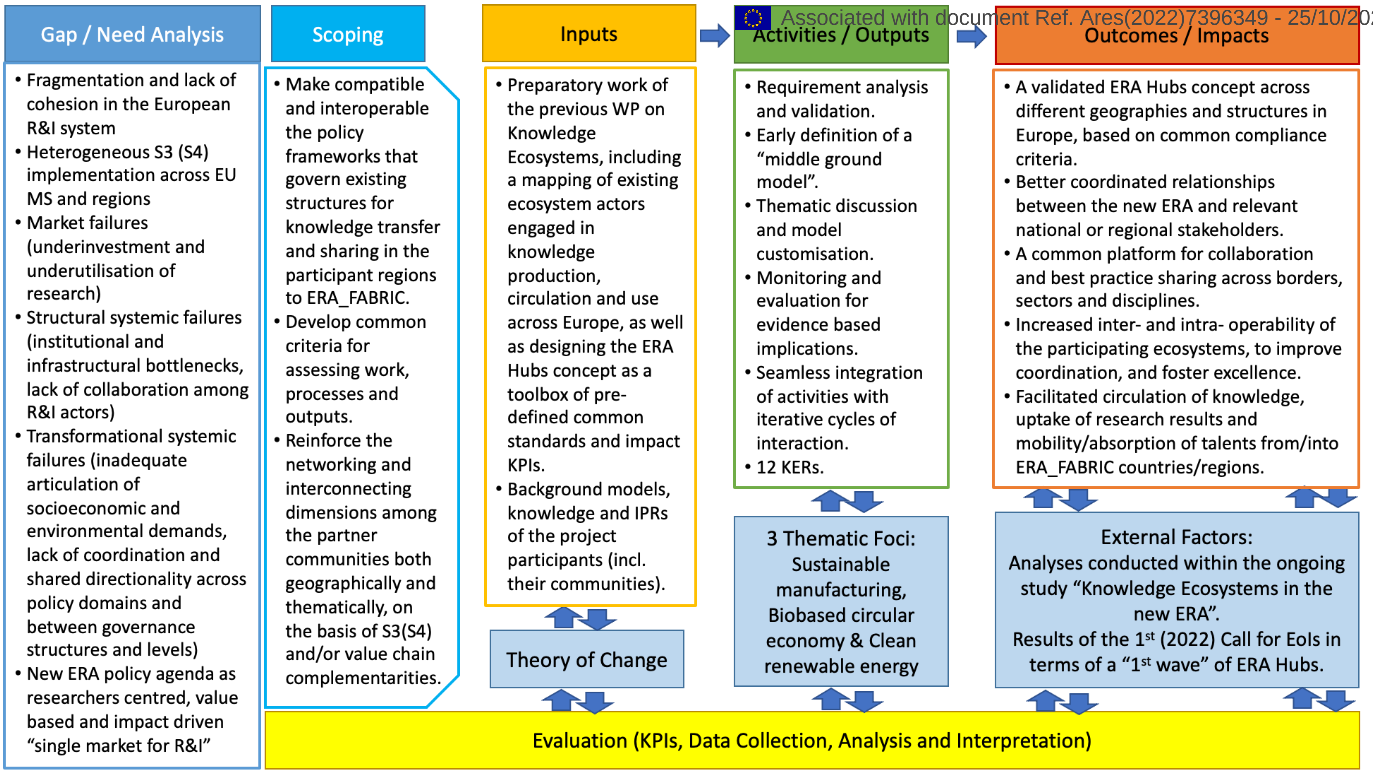

Figure 2.1 - The ERA_FABRIC logic model

The Table below was created by associating the expected Outcomes and Impacts (namely **Destination Strands**) mentioned in the Horizon Europe Call, with the ERA_FABRIC's **Key Expected Results (KERs)** derived from Section 1 of this proposal. In so doing, we have followed the logical pathway that the deployment of KERs in the time frame of the project:

- Either fulfils one of the expected Outcomes of the Call directly, or
- Is aligned with one of the stated Impacts/Destination Strands, or
- Provides benefits to specific target groups, such as the project partners themselves, or their respective communities and networks, or other European third parties participating in the ERA_FABRIC activities as aggregated stakeholders, and such benefits indirectly contribute to the Call's Outcomes and Impacts in the longer term.

All of these possible occurrences are specified as comments to the descriptions contained in the Table cells and highlighted in **bold** to facilitate reading.

Table 2.1 ERA_FABRIC pathways towards expected outcomes and impacts

EXPECTED IMPACTS OF THE CALL (DESTINATION 3 OF WP ANNEX 11)	EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE CALL	ASSOCIATED KERs OF THE PROJECT
Strand 1 - 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 (indirect). Providing support for policy makers in addressing the need for better analysis and evidence, including simplifying and facilitating the inter-play between national and European R&I systems.	Provide a toolbox of best practices for researchers, innovators, industry and institutions across Europe to cooperate. 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.	**KER #7**: An exemplary and reusable set of measures and tools focused on four main areas of transformation: accelerating the twin transition, enhancing the "outward looking" dimension of smart specialisation, strengthening the local impacts of EU funded R&D and innovation and making human related aspects (RRI, citizen science, user driven innovation) more integrated in regional & local policies. **KER #5**: A replicable capacity building programme for policy makers and civil servants. **KER #3**: A self-assessment and guidance tool for Regional stakeholders.

Strand 2 - Improving access to excellence and increasing the performance of R&I systems. Giving emphasis to dedicated Horizon Europe measures as well as complementarities with smart specialisation strategies under the Cohesion Policy.	Increase both the interoperability of the European ecosystems and the intra-operability within each territorial ecosystem, aiming to improve coordination, and foster excellence.	**KER #11**: A set of policy recommendations drawn from the consortium's joint reflections on innovation management, scalability and sustainability. **KER #6**: A collection of governance rules and arrangements for the ERA Hub as a stakeholder platform including stocktaking of the experience of thematic working groups.
Strand 3 - Translating R&I results into the economy. R&I policies should aim to boost the resilience and competitiveness of our economies and societies.	Test the new ERA Hubs 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 increase (interregional) connections, and for less advanced ecosystems to reach the criteria facilitating support from European, national and regional level.	**KER #1**: A census of ERA-Hub-like experiences and good practice examples within the EU. **KER #2**: A collection of recurrent characteristics of ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems. **KER #8**: As a result of a dedicated monitoring and evaluation exercise, definition of a standard and quality label for the upcoming EU funded ERA Hubs. **KER #9**: As a result of a profiling exercise, a tentative classification of alternative ERA Hub schemes according to their distinctive characteristics. **KER #10**: A business plan and roadmap for the "next generation" of EU funded ERA Hubs taking direct benefit of project results.
Strand 4 - Underpinning a new ERA benefiting from knowledge creation, circulation and use. This empowers higher education institutions and research organisations to embrace a transformative process. It enables a highly skilled workforce to circulate freely. It ensures research outputs are shared. It assures gender equality. It makes it so that the outcomes of R&I are understood, trusted and increasingly used, by educated informed scientists and citizens to the benefit of society.	Better coordinated relationships between the European Research Area and relevant national and/or regional stakeholders in order to ensure the smart directionality introduced in the new ERA. Facilitate a better circulation and absorption of talents in countries/regions, as well as improve knowledge circulation and uptake of research results.	**KER #4**: A EU-wide mapping of regional/local stakeholders, communities, existing policies and instruments with associated needs and gap analyses with respect to the requirements of the new "middle ground". **KER #12**: The creation of a solid community of interest among Quadruple Helix stakeholders, focused on transforming regional innovation systems into proper ecosystems of knowledge and therefore duly prioritising knowledge and expertise sharing, circulation and uptake at the broadest EU level.

Table 2.2 Barriers, obstacles and enabling conditions

Potential barriers / obstacles	Mitigation actions / Enabling conditions	Involved WPs
Stakeholder acceptance: participation in the field activities may not be taken for granted and the Quadruple Helix approach could be jeopardised because of lack of interest.	A clear statement should highlight the mission and value proposition of the survey and thematic working groups, leveraging the gap and needs analyses carried out in preparation for it. Support from the regions may help.	WP2
Resistance to change of targeted policy actors - due to the heavy burden and high potential risks of deviating from the "usual".	A hands on approach is proposed from the start and the idea is to deliver concrete and actionable results in terms of measures, tools and instruments for policy.	WP4
Heterogeneities of the participating policy environments - preventing a unitary or harmonised approach to materialise.	In fact the territorial differences will be highlighted, rather than obliterated, in order to discover several possible variants of the basic ERA Hub scheme	WP5, WP6

Heterogeneities of the identified thematic domains - making "ad hoc" solutions more desirable than standard ones.	A process oriented, rather than (only) output/outcome oriented view will be adopted and the supportive governance and implementation mechanisms stressed.	WP3, WP4
Inherent complexities of the topics preventing diffused learning and reuse of recommended solutions	Capacity building and the dissemination of policy recommendations will be two adopted strategies aimed at using the "same language" of targeted actors.	WP5, WP6

2.2. Measures to maximise impact - Dissemination, exploitation and communication

All partners commit throughout and beyond the project to mobilise the appropriate networks of stakeholders, communication channels and tools, both made on purpose and already in place to multiply the effects of their dissemination and exploitation activities. From the start of the project, our KPI-driven community engagement and capacity building strategies ensure wide diffusion of the project's advancements to the targeted audiences with appropriate mechanisms in a timely manner. Dissemination relies on communication activities to create early stage engagement and constantly active participation of stakeholders in the project's exploitation and market update while respecting IPR rules. An initial list of these target groups for the ERA_FABRIC project is depicted in the following Table, including communities existing as subcategories under each target group.

Table 2.3 Dissemination and Exploitation Target Groups

Description	**Interest in the project**
A – Industry 4.0, Smart Cities, Smart Energy, Bio Agriculture domain actors at local/regional and national/EU levels	
Professional experts Entrepreneurs Startuppers Intermediary organisations Private investors Venture capitalists	Support project activities via active participation in the working groups Get inspired for new ideas, services, and applications Participate in project's engagement, capacity building and dissemination activities Use shared infrastructures and services Join the project's capacity building, dissemination and evaluation activities and events
B – Actors from Research performing organisation, Research infrastructures and e-Infrastructures belonging to the ERA	
Researchers Academics Technical staff Administrative staff Supporting subcontractors	Support project activities via active participation in the working groups Enhance assets' recognizability Definition of future research and innovation directions Help with removing barriers/ framework conditions Join the project's capacity building, dissemination and evaluation activities and events
C – Civil Society and Educational actors at local/regional and national levels	
Professional associations Business associations Districts/Clusters Professional & High schools NGOs (e.g. Environmental)	Support project activities via active participation in the working groups Stay tuned with emerging policy trends and opportunities Develop new value-adding services for their associates/beneficiaries Help with indicating how to remove barriers/improve framework conditions Join the project's capacity building, dissemination and evaluation activities and events
D – Policy makers, Civil servants, Financial organisations and Standardisation bodies	

Policy makers and Civil servants from Cities, Regions, Ministries and the EC Bankers Donors Standard setting bureau members	Support project activities via active participation in the working groups Utilise project's results in everyday operations Help with indicating how to remove barriers/improve framework conditions Join the project's capacity building, dissemination and evaluation activities and events Revise/improve existing policies and strategies based on acquired knowledge
E – Related Projects, Networks and Initiatives	
EARTO EEN ERRIN EURADA Vanguard Initiative Etc.	Identification of common topics Synergies and collaborations for results promotion Enhance innovation through results' combination Define of future research and innovation directions based on acquired knowledge Inputs for standardisation activities Co-organisation of events
F – Social media and Press	
Participants in the project's social media groups. Journalists General public and anyone interested in the project.	Understand the vision and mission of ERA_FABRIC project Be informed about and take part in the activities of the project Be engaged in future activities at local level (post-project) such as citizen science

2.2.1. Dissemination Strategy

The dissemination activities will deal with the diffusion of knowledge generated within the context of the project, aiming to ensure both a mid– and long-term impact by informing the European target audiences A-F, as identified in Table 2-3.

The dissemination strategy to be applied in the project is aligned to the following objectives:

- **D.O.1**: Ensure maximum visibility of the project in the target audiences via appropriate key messages. (Target Audiences: A-F)
- **D.O.2**: Timely diffuse the knowledge generated in the project within and beyond the project's consortium. (Target Audiences: A-F)
- **D.O.3**: Establish liaisons with other projects and initiatives for knowledge and innovation production, transfer and uptake. (Target Audiences: A-E)
- **D.O.4**: Engage the targeted audiences to get feedback and validate the project's results. (Target Audiences: A-E)
- **D.O.5**: Attract potential adopters and stimulate the appropriate target segments to support the project's exploitation strategy. (Target Audiences: A-D)
- **D.O.6**: Encourage the development of further outcomes in new initiatives. (Target Audiences: A-E)

An initial, draft dissemination plan is devised in the Table below. This plan will be confirmed at the very beginning of the project (until M3) and will be updated and evaluated at the end of each phase.

Table 2.4 . Draft ERA_FABRIC Dissemination Plan

ERA_FABRIC Dissemination Activities	**Ph. I: Raise Awareness (M1-M06)** Objectives: D.O. 1,2,3,4	**Ph. II: Inform & Interact (M07-M18)** Objectives: D.O. 1,2,3,4,5	**Ph. III: Promote (M19-M24)** Objectives: D.O. 2,3,4,5,6
(D1) Organisation of public events both offline and online	D1.I) Organisation of workshops/seminars alongside project meetings	D1.II) Organisation of workshops/seminars and training events (webinars)	D1.III) Organisation of workshops/seminars and training events (webinars).

(D2) Participation in third party events (EU and national policy gatherings)	D2.I) Presentation of project scope; Interaction with participants.	D2.II) Presentation of project results; Interaction with participants.	D2.III) Presentation of project results; Interaction with participants.
(D3) Participation in scientific conferences and academic events	D3.I) Publication of position papers; Organisation of special sessions.	D3.II) Publication of interim results; Organisation of special sessions.	D3.III) Publication of final results; Organisation of special sessions.
(D4) Community Building / Engagement with local stakeholders	D4.I) Creation of thematic working groups.	D4.II) Discussions within the thematic working groups; sharing of early results.	D4.III) Video demonstrations of activities and sharing of the final project results.
(D5) Collaboration and Synergies with sister Projects and ERA Hubs	D5.I) Synergy identification; establishment of contact points; exchange of ideas & intentions.	D5.II) Periodic bilateral exchange of news & results, joint presence at events.	D5.III) Joint engagement in events and initiatives.
(D6) Internal dissemination through Partners Networks	D6.I) Project's links & news in partners' websites, social media accounts, newsletters.	D6.II) Inclusion of project' results in partners' events.	D6.III) Demonstration of use of results in partners' regions.
(D7) Contributions to standards	D7.I) State of the art analysis.	D7.II) Definition of criteria and conditions for quality assessment.	D7.III) Finalisation and public presentation of the quality scheme.

2.2.2 Exploitation Strategy, Preliminary Business Model and Business Plan

The exploitation of ERA_FABRIC results will strengthen the EU's ERA Hub initiative on a systemic level and policy level. The business plan and roadmap developed in WP6 (Task 6.5) will include a scale-up strategy and a strategic roadmap for exploitation and long-term sustainability of project results. The development of the Exploitation Plan has four steps: 1) Assess the knowledge base, project deliverables and solutions of the ERA_FABRIC; 2) Assess the needs of the target stakeholders; 3) Match knowledge base, deliverables and outcomes with target stakeholders and identify key messages, communication channels; 4) Drafting a post-project vision based on the envisaged Exploitation plan, which will be further deepened and detailed within the final ERA_FABRIC business plan. The final edition of this document will include -at least- the following aspects: **Vision**, or the use of project outcomes including objectives and requirements; **Innovation management**, which will underpin the exploitation of project results; **Approach** to maximise ERA_FABRIC impact and guarantee its medium-long term sustainability. The WP6 activities will help refine the "middle ground" model dimensions explored within the project and its individual outputs listed as KERs (Key Expected Results) in terms of i) Value Proposition, ii) Contextual Analysis and Stakeholders Identification, iii) Analysis of "Competing" Concepts, iv) Sustainability Modelling, v) Deployment Plan, vi) Joint Exploitation Plan, vii) Organisation and Use of Resources, viii) Financial Plan and Risk Analysis.
Following are the key exploitable outcomes foreseen by the consortium at proposal preparation stage.

Table 2.5 Draft list of ERA_FABRIC Exploitable outcomes

KER ID	Short description of exploitable outcome	Exploitation options & potential users
KER #1	A census of ERA-Hub-like experiences and good practice examples within the EU	Open access publication, for all interested policy makers at (especially) regional and national levels.
KER #2	A collection of recurrent characteristics of ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems	Open access publication, serving as baseline for the standard and quality label (KER #8)
KER #3	A self-assessment and guidance tool for Regional and MS stakeholders, similar to HEInnovate	Open access service, for all interested policy makers at (especially) regional and national levels.

KER #4	A EU-wide mapping of regional/local actors, communities, existing policies and instruments, with associated needs and gap analyses with respect to the requirements of the new "middle ground"	Open access publication, of particular interest for the EC and the upcoming movement of ERA Hubs
KER #5	A replicable capacity building programme for policy makers and civil servants	Open access syllabus and recorded webinars, put at free disposal of EU, national and regional public administration
KER #6	A collection of governance rules and arrangements for the ERA Hub as a stakeholder platform, including stocktaking of the experience of thematic working groups	Open access publication, of particular interest for the EC and the upcoming movement of ERA Hubs
KER #7	An exemplary and reusable set of policy measures and tools focused on four main areas of transformative change: Accelerating the twin transition, Enhancing the "outward looking" dimension of smart specialisation, Strengthening the local impacts of EU funded R&D and innovation, and Making human related aspects (RRI, citizen science, user driven innovation) more integrated in regional & local policies	Open access publication, of particular interest for the EC and the upcoming movement of ERA Hubs, as well as national and regional policy makers and civil servants engaged in S3 and S4 and ESIF implementation
KER #8	Definition of a standard and quality label for the upcoming EU funded ERA Hubs	If proven reliable, the quality label could be submitted to CEN for recognition as standard
KER #9	A tentative classification of alternative ERA Hub schemes according to their distinctive characteristics	Open access publication, of particular interest for the EC and the upcoming movement of ERA Hubs, as well as national and regional policy makers and civil servants engaged in S3 and S4 and ESIF implementation
KER #10	A business plan and roadmap for the "next generation" of EU funded ERA Hubs taking direct benefit of project results	Open access publication, of particular interest for the EC and the second wave of ERA Hubs (materialising after the end of the granted period)
KER #11	A set of policy recommendations drawn from the consortium's joint reflections on innovation management and on scalability and sustainability	Open access publication, of particular interest for the EC and the upcoming movement of ERA Hubs, as well as national and regional policy makers and civil servants engaged in S3 and S4 and ESIF implementation
KER #12	Creation of a solid community of interest among Quadruple Helix stakeholders including the establishment of permanent relations with the sister project(s) funded by the same Horizon Europe Call, new and emerging ERA Hubs and other EU initiatives	If proven wide and solid enough, it could ultimately serve to justify the transformation of the ERA_FABRIC consortium into a community of interest / practice forming the "middle ground" testbed of the ERA Hubs movement

2.2.3. Communication Activities

Communication activities include all actions that contribute to the diffusion of the project's results beyond the consortium and the direct stakeholders, maximising the project's contribution to innovation and inviting a wide range of stakeholders to embrace and benefit from the project's advancements. In this direction, the project will: define concrete measurable objectives for communication activities for the appropriate target groups; implement a modern inclusive communication strategy and action plan to reach these objectives; set up the different channels, tools and mechanisms for the communication plan and targeted audiences; define guidelines for communication and dissemination actions (e.g., project identity, messages to convey, internal reporting rules, etc.); measure communication impact, apply corrective actions and identify new opportunities to maximise visibility.

The following communication objectives are directly linked to the project dissemination phases:

- **C.O.1**: Create project awareness among potential adopters/users in the general public (Target Audiences: A-F).
- **C.O.2**: Convey the project's concept, goals, results through key messages in communication material (Target Audiences: A-F).
- **C.O.3**: Activate a community of potential users, collect feedback (Target Audiences: A-F).
- **C.O.4**: Prepare for the exploitation of the project's results (Target Audiences: A-F)
- **C.O.5**: Targeted dissemination of the project's results (Target Audiences: A-f).
- **C.O.6**: Foster wide adoption of the project's results in industry and society (Target Audiences: E-F).

The draft ERA_FABRIC Communication Plan can be represented as per the following Table:

Table 2.6: Draft ERA_FABRIC Communication Plan

ERA_FABRIC Communication Activities	**Phase I: Raise Awareness (M1-M06)** C.O. 1, 2, 3, 5	**Phase II: Inform and Interact (M07-M18)** C.O. 1, 2, 3, 5	**Phase III: Promote (M19-M24)** C. O. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
(C1) Project's web platform	C1.I) Design & develop an intuitive and responsive project's web platform; search engine optimisation.	C1.II) Regular update of the web platform content; watch web platform's analytics to measure impact and provide content of interest.	C1.III) Regular update of the web platform content; clear visibility of results, demo/application material in an interactive way.
(C2) Social Media Presence	C2.I) Establish a presence in social media. Reproduce relevant content and monitor relevant hashtags; upload public material; follow influencers of the domain; engage to other projects and initiatives.	C2.II) Promote project's outcomes and events; interact with followers to get feedback; answer on comments and private messages on the various channels; upload public material; reproduce relevant content and monitor relevant hashtags.	C2.III) Promote project's outcomes and events; interact with followers to get feedback; answer on comments and private messages on the various channels; upload public material; reproduce relevant content (more sporadically).
(C3) Project's news feed	C3.I) Deploy project's news feed; provide news feed posts related to project's positioning and interim achievements.	C3.II) Provide frequent posts to initiate discussions on specific issues relevant to the project to receive feedback.	C3.III) Publish frequent news feed posts to demonstrate and promote the project's results.
(C4) Traditional Media	C4.I) Press release to announce the project's launch and progress.	C4.II) Press releases to announce the significant events/results.	C4.III) Press releases to promote the policy value and societal benefits of the project's results.
(C5) Communication Material	C5.I) Design logo & graphic identity; prepare brochure, leaflet, first policy brief and promotional video.	C5.II) Revise brochure, leaflet and release new policy brief; post to EU publications (e.g., Cordis News, Research EU magazines etc.).	C5.III) Prepare final brochure, leaflet, policy brief and video demonstrators; post to EU publications.

We will ensure continuous monitoring and fine tuning of the project's communication activities to maximise the achieved impact and increase the size of communities, along with the project's Dissemination and Communication plans' objectives and activities (see Tables 2.3 & 2.6 above).

Table 2.7: Expected impacts of ERA_FABRIC Communication Plan

Activity label	Expected Impact	KPI targets
D1	Increased collaboration with other relevant initiatives and networks; synergy establishment for joint activities, information exchange and dissemination; increased awareness.	**8** public events organised, **12** webinars for capacity building
D2	Idea gathering, knowledge exchange with relevant communities and initiatives; information about latest advancements; liaisons with other initiatives; increased awareness.	**10** attendances to policy gatherings, **100** to project events organised by the consortium
D3	Promotion of results to scientific communities; diffusion of a new academic research agenda on related topics.	**5** conference and journal papers and **10** attendances from the consortium
D4	Validation of project's concept, findings and advancements; idea gathering and knowledge exchange; attraction of potential adopters; increased awareness.	**3** thematic working groups with **500** participants, **1** survey exercise with **200** respondents
D5	Knowledge exchange; mutual validation of results; joint dissemination activities; attraction of potential partners for collaboration.	**10** additional territories, **10** projects with synergies, **4** joint activities
D6	Communication of project news, events & results; validation of project's concept, findings and advancement; ideas' gathering and knowledge exchange; increased awareness.	**40** interviews and **2** evaluation surveys involving at least **120** participants
C1	Main online information point; communication of project news, events & results; liaisons with other initiatives, projects through links; increased awareness.	**15,000** unique visitors, **2** min. average visit duration, **100,000** page views
C2	Increasing visibility to social media; attainment of interest of active stakeholders; viral marketing by "word of mouth" through followers; direct communication mechanism with followers.	**4** social media groups, **750** accumulative followers, **1,000** accumulative posts, **250** interactions
C3	Communication of the main project's concepts and advances in a catchy and easily understandable manner.	**500 news feed** posts, **1,000** interactions
C4	Communication of project news, events & results; increased awareness.	**20** press releases, **500** e-newsletter (policy briefs) recipients
C5	Unique branding and visual identity of the project; provision of instant information about the project; creating a unified experience for the audiences targeted; improved communication of results and information provision during events.	**9** ecosystem profiles, **2** brochures and leaflets (in English and native languages), **3** e-Newsletters, **9** videos, **5** posts in EC news portals and magazines

2.2.4. IPR Management Strategy

To manage the knowledge brought forward by the ERA_FABRIC project including IPR protection, a specific plan will be considered including all administrative decisions. All partners will make an agreement before the start of the project concerning the explicit rules of IP ownership, rights to Background and Foreground IP and the Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) for confidential information. This agreement will be taken and documented in the Consortium Agreement (CA) signed by all partners. As recommended in the Guide to Intellectual Property Rules for European projects, the consortium members will sign the consortium agreement to "*ensure that, where necessary, they reach an agreement with their employees and other personnel if the latter are entitled to claim rights to intellectual property in order for the participant to be able to meet its contractual obligations*".

2.3. Summary

Table 2.8: Key elements of the ERA_FABRIC Impact Section

SPECIFIC NEEDS	EXPECTED RESULTS	D & E & C MEASURES
The "interconnected knowledge space" foreseen by the EU ERA Hubs initiative (COM 2020 628 final) is currently not well defined in terms of actors, processes, and strategies. There is a clear need for setting up an acknowledged model to better channel and valorise ongoing and upcoming efforts from EU Members States and Regions to develop common strategic research agendas, align multi level plans and governance strategies, define and implement transnational programmes, and make sure that the outputs and outcomes of R&I are understood and trusted by informed citizens and bring benefit to the European society as a whole.	**12 KERs** as presented in Section 1.1 and in Tables 2.1 and 2.4. These will contribute to defining and validating a list of key success factors for ERA Hubs to ensure knowledge production, circulation and usage across Europe. Further to that, the consortium will pay special attention to differentiating the possible profiles and implementation approaches of ERA Hubs according to the distinctive characteristics of the regions participating in the project, which in turn reflect the four tiers of the Regional Innovation Scoreboard as well as the geographical spread and variety of European territories, communities, ecosystems and value chains.	**Innovation management:** Embedding results into the S3/S4 and ESIF actions of the partner regions and countries. **Exploitation:** Preparation of a roadmap for the "next wave" of ERA Hub and a business plan for the post-grant phase. **Communication and Dissemination**: Both local and EU-wide, targeting institutional first and more generally, Quadruple Helix stakeholders. **Communication towards citizens:** In synergy with ongoing and upcoming projects at EU and national levels. **Visible presence in the new ERA:** Clustering with sister projects and selected ERA Hubs (after the EU Call); Organisation of public events and training webinars for policy makers.
TARGET GROUPS	**OUTCOMES**	**IMPACTS**
EU national and regional policy makers: The ones directly represented in the consortium, the others signing a letter of interest, and those who will be attracted by the various project initiatives (workshops, training sessions etc.). **Quadruple Helix stakeholders**: Those invited to participate in the 3 thematic working groups and others reached by the communication and dissemination activities (including on social media). **Civil society**: Both locally (in synergy with running and forthcoming projects such as the European Researcher Night) and globally (particularly through social media). **ERA Hubs**: Meanwhile identified by the EC after a public call (1st wave) and to be further selected at later stages (2nd wave). **Sister projects, networks, communities and initiatives**: such as Digital Innovation Hubs, EEN, ERRIN, EURADA, Vanguard Initiative, etc.	**Uptake by national and regional policy makers:** Activating P2P learning processes within the Member States and Regions directly or indirectly represented in the consortium. Spreading awareness on the project and its achievements, particularly the Theory of Change, the quality label for ERA Hubs, the catalogue of measures and tools and the classification of alternative ERA Hub schemes. **Uptake by running/future ERA Hubs:** As the project will develop in parallel to the EU initiatives aimed at forming the "interconnected knowledge space" we expect to contribute to increasing the convergence and harmonisation of efforts at a broad European level. **Increased awareness of business and civil society stakeholders/networks:** On the value and transformative goals of ERA Hubs for the socioeconomic progress of the EU as a whole. **Influence on academic research topics and education directions**.	**Policy:** Coordinated national and regional R&I programmes by pooling national resources and contributing to the alignment of national research and innovation policies. Prioritisation of investments and reforms, realisation of the recovery and the twin transitions. Synergies between R&I and higher education policies and programmes. **Socioeconomic:** Increased number of interconnected knowledge ecosystems, strong in knowledge creation, circulation and use. Increased alignment of R&I with societal needs, expectations and values. Increased capacity in the EU R&I system to conduct open science and engage citizens with relevant activities. **Economic/technological:** Greater quality of the scientific production and stronger translation of R&I results into sustainable growth and jobs. **Societal:** Increased trust in science and R&I outcomes, and greater two-way communication between science and society, education and business.

3. Quality and efficiency of implementation

3.1. Work plan and resources

The ERA_FABRIC workplan is structured across 7 WPs each composed of 5 Tasks. The common project functions are provided by **WP1** (Coordination and Management) and **WP7** (Communication, Dissemination and Public

Engagement) - the latter with a special eye on civil society and the mobilisation of lay people in the participating territories. The three core WPs are **WP2** (ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems), which makes a census of existing experiences across the EU, also with the support of a stakeholder survey; **WP3** (ERA Hubs as a Multi Stakeholder Platform), which establishes thematic working groups in the participating territories on the three selected project domains and proposes a capacity building exercise as well as governance rules and arrangements for the coming wave of EU funded ERA Hubs; and **WP4** (ERA Hubs as a transformative set of measures and tools), which provides an overview of the key transformative aspects of this initiative based on the discussion within the working groups and concrete actions. Then **WP5** (Monitoring, Evaluation and Standards) assesses these transformative aspects through interviews and surveys of both partners and their community/network members and delivers the proposal of a label to qualify the most convincing/effective schemes examined. Finally **WP6** (Widening and Sustainability) analyses the policy implications of previous activities and draws a roadmap for a next generation of EU funded ERA Hubs. The PERT diagram on the left shows the main interdependencies among WPs. The GANTT chart below makes evident how all WPs actually span across the entire duration of the project (30 months), although most of them include sequential rather than concurrent tasks, also in light of these dependencies.

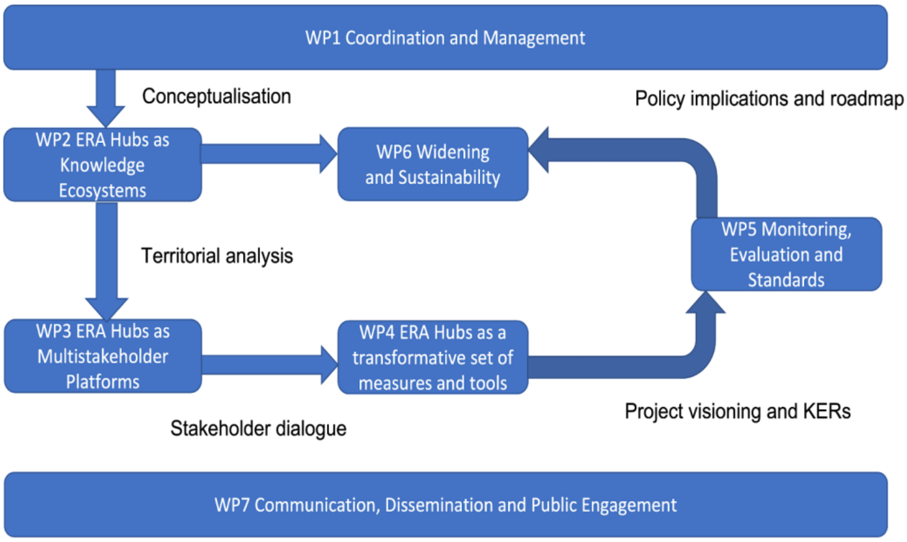

Figure 3-1. PERT Diagram

ERA_FABRIC	Lead	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Months	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
WP 1 Coordination and Management	**ART-ER**																														
T1.1 Consortium coordination and internal communication	ART-ER																														
T1.2 Legal, financial and contractual management	ART-ER																														
T1.3 Quality, risk and data management	UNIST																														
T1.4 Gender equality and ethical compliance	ART-ER																														
T1.5 External Advisory Board	ART-ER																														
WP 2 ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems	**CNR**																														
T2.1 Knowledge ecology as a territorial value production factor:	INESCTEC																														
T2.2 Census of related experiences and good practice examples	CNR																														
T2.3 EU-wide stakeholder survey on the most recurrent	TTP																														
T2.4 Assessment of the degree of conformance of partner	WUT																														
T2.5 Development of a self assessment and guidance tool for	UNIST																														
WP 3 ERA Hubs as Multistakeholder Platforms	**UNIST**																														
T3.1 Mapping regional/local stakeholders and communities and	UNIST																														
T3.2 Mapping regional/local policies and instruments and gap	ADRNV																														
T3.3 Matchmaking of stakeholder interests and creation of	UNIST																														
T3.4 Capacity building of policy makers and civil servants on the	TTP																														
T3.5 Governance rules and arrangements	ECOPLUS																														
WP 4 ERA Hubs as a transformative set of measures and	**EURECAT**																														
T4.1 Promoting a single market for the green and digital	ART-ER																														
T4.2 Connecting territories through smart specialisation	ECOPLUS																														
T4.3 Enhancing the local impacts and synergies of EU	EURECAT																														
T4.4 Deepening the human centricity of R&D and innovation	EURECAT																														
T4.5 Wrap-up and definition of the ERA Hubs theory of change	EURECAT																														
WP 5 Monitoring, evaluation and standards	**MU**																														
T5.1 Monitoring and evaluation methodology definition (including	MU																														
T5.2 Data collection and interpretation activities	TTP																														
T5.3 Impact and outcome evaluation (interim)	MU																														
T5.4 Impact and outcome evaluation (final)	MU																														
T5.5 Definition of standards and a quality label	WUT																														
WP 6 Widening and sustainability	**INESC TEC**																														
T6.1 Innovation management and search for synergies among	INESC TEC																														
T6.2 Scaling and sustainability potential of proposed actions and	INESC TEC																														
T6.3 Profiling and (tentative) classification of ERA Hub schemes	EURECAT																														
T6.4 Lessons learned and policy recommendations	ART-ER																														
T6.5 Business plan and road map for (2nd generation) ERA	INESC TEC																														
WP 7 Communication, Dissemination and Public	**WUT**																														
T7.1 Communication and dissemination planning and monitoring	WUT																														
T7.2 Visibility and outreach generation approaches, tools and	WUT																														
T7.3 Awareness raising and bringing science closer to citizens	UNIST																														
T7.4 Networking with other ERA Hubs	ECOPLUS																														
T7.5 Synergies with other EU initiatives (EURAXESS, ERA4You	CNR																														

Figure 3-2. Gantt Chart

Each partner will contribute to the finalisation of WPs activities by **committing internal resources even beyond those accounted for in the budget**, if needed, bearing in mind that relevant effort will be dedicated to exchange and collective activities among partners (CSA) without reaching the level of conceptual depth that is normally associated to scientific work (RIA). Additionally the partners will jointly and individually commit to mobilising their respective networks and communities, liaising them to each other through the mechanism of thematic working groups, and pinpoint the main areas of interest for policy making resulting from such stakeholder dialogues. This approach is presented more thoroughly in the WP descriptions that follow.

3.2. Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole

ERA_FABRIC is designed by leading European actors in the domain of regional development. The 11 partners represent 8 Member States and 1 Associated State. With the addition of the letters of interest gathered before the proposal presentation (see cover page for details), almost half of EU27 territorial coverage has been reached. The consortium represents **all the 4 profiles of the Regional Innovation Scoreboard**: Innovation Leader (NO06 - Trøndelag), Strong Innovator (AT1 - Ostösterreich, ITH5 - Emilia Romagna), Moderate Innovator (ES51 - Cataluña, CZ06 - Jihovỳchod, PL12 - Mazowieckie and PT11 - Norte), as well as Emerging Innovator (HR03 Jadranska Hrvatska and RO11 - Nord Vest). This ensures that best practice and strong innovation capacity are shared, and that transferred knowledge is adapted to the ecosystemic challenges faced by regions aiming to rise to a new Scoreboard tier. The Project will build on the partners experience regarding the design and implementation of smart specialisation strategies to inspire and trigger outstanding examples of reform and performance enhancement at national and regional level leading to critical knowledge instrumentalisation.

3.3. Budget and Effort

ERA_FABRIC has a budget of 1.429.975,00 Euros that is distributed among the consortium members in accordance with their planned efforts, an overview of which is provided in the Table below:

The following information is provided only for the partner foreseeing a subcontracting budget (Table 3.1g Subcontracting costs items) and those exceeding the 15% ratio between “other direct costs” and “staff costs” budget (Table 3.1h Purchase costs items).

Table 3.1g Subcontracting costs items

Partner: ART-ER/ Name: ART-ER Società Consortile per Azioni	
Costs (€)	**Justification**
10.000,00	Fees and travel reimbursements (if any) for the members of the External Advisory Board.
15.000,00	Specialist methodological expertise in support of WP5 (Monitoring and Evaluation)
25.000,00	**Total**

Partner: ECOPLUS/ Name: ECOPLUS Niederösterreichs Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH	
Costs (€)	Justification
15.000,00	External expertise in support of the implementation of activities related to WP3 (ERA-Hubs as Multi Stakeholder Platform)
15.000,00	**Total**

Partner: TTP/ Name: Trondheim Tech Port	
Costs (€)	Justification
5.000,00	External expertise for the development of the database as part of the project's web platform (Task 5.2 Data collection and interpretation activities)
5.000,00	**Total**

Partner: WUT/ Name: Politechnika Warszawska	
Costs (€)	Justification
35.000,00	External marketing & PR agency supporting communication and dissemination activities listed in the proposal, including web platform design and maintenance
35.000,00	**Total**

Table 3.1h Purchase costs items (travel, subsistence, equipment and other goods, works and services)

Partner: WUT/ Name: Politechnika Warszawska	
Costs (€)	**Justification**
8,000,00	**Travel and subsistance:** costs needed to cover travel and subsistance costs of the project manager and and colleagues supporting the project implementation
5,000.00	**Other goods, works and services:** public event costs (including catering, moderator, speakers fees) and other communication and dissemination related costs (WP4-WP7)
13,000.00	**Total**

Partner: ECOPLUS/ Name: ECOPLUS Niederösterreichs Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH	
Costs (€)	**Justification**
7,200.00	**Travel and subsistance:** costs needed to cover travel and subsistance costs of the project manager (senior expert) carrying out the activities and colleagues supporting the project implementation
2,000.00	**Other goods, works and services:** communication and dissemination related costs (WP7)
9.200,00	**Total**

4. Ethic self-assessment

4.1. Ethical dimension of the objectives, methodology and likely impact

Generally speaking the project doesn't raise any ethically sensitive issue. Even the handling of personal data is limited to 4 very simple cases:
1) softly identifying the respondents to the online stakeholder survey described in WP2;
2) softly identifying the participants in the discussions within the thematic working groups described in WP3 and WP4;
3) interacting with the partners and external third parties in the context of the data collection exercise for monitoring and evaluation purposes described in WP5;
4) interacting with stakeholders in the context of the project's communication and dissemination activities of WP7, including the creation of a web platform and social media groups.
In all the above cases, informed consent forms will be prepared and withdrawn from all natural persons keeping the collection and storage of personal data at a very minimum. No sensitive data will ever be collected and no personal data used for commercial purposes.
Regarding the web platform and the possibility of having some users registered therein, the only requirement will be a valid email address for security purposes.

4.2. Compliance with ethical principles and relevant legislations

Compliance with GDPR will be ensured at all times. In the above cases labelled as 1) and 3) the survey's prior information notice will document compliance and define the perimeter and rationale of data collection in full.
In the case labelled as 2) the participants will be natural persons belonging to the respective regional innovation systems of the partners and their contributions to the debates will be public and not even require anonymisation/pseudonymisation.
In the case labelled as 4) there are indeed security reasons suggesting to store the email addresses of registered users but the requirement of identification will be stopped at the level of an email address.

ANNEX 2

ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR THE ACTION

	Estimated eligible[1] costs (per budget category)										Estimated EU contribution[2]			
	Direct costs								Indirect costs	Total costs	EU contribution to eligible costs			Maximum grant amount[6]
	A. Personnel costs			B. Subcontracting costs	C. Purchase costs			D. Other cost categories	E. Indirect costs[3]		Funding rate %[4]	Maximum EU contribution[5]	Requested EU contribution	
	A.1 Employees (or equivalent) A.2 Natural persons under direct contract A.3 Seconded persons		A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries	B. Subcontracting	C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.2 Equipment	C.3 Other goods, works and services	D.2 Internally invoiced goods and services	E. Indirect costs					
Forms of funding	Actual costs	Unit costs (usual accounting practices)	Unit costs[7]	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Unit costs (usual accounting practices)	Flat-rate costs[8]					
	a1	a2	a3	b	c1	c2	c3	d2	e = 0,25 * (a1 + a2 + a3 + c1 + c2 + c3)	f = a + b + c + d + e	U	g = f * U%	h	m
1 - ART-ER	154 000.00	0.00	0.00	25 000.00	10 000.00	0.00	4 000.00	0.00	42 000.00	235 000.00	100	235 000.00	235 000.00	235 000.00
2 - EURECAT	90 300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8 000.00	0.00	4 000.00	0.00	25 575.00	127 875.00	100	127 875.00	127 875.00	127 875.00
3 - ECOPLUS	58 800.00	0.00	0.00	15 000.00	7 200.00	0.00	2 000.00	0.00	17 000.00	100 000.00	100	100 000.00	100 000.00	100 000.00
4 - INESCTEC	114 000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8 000.00	0.00	2 000.00	0.00	31 000.00	155 000.00	100	155 000.00	155 000.00	155 000.00
5 - CNR	82 500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8 000.00	0.00	2 000.00	0.00	23 125.00	115 625.00	100	115 625.00	115 625.00	115 625.00
6 - TTP	140 580.00	0.00	0.00	5 000.00	8 000.00	0.00	3 000.00	0.00	37 895.00	194 475.00	100	194 475.00	194 475.00	194 475.00
6.1 - NTNU	31 500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3 000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8 625.00	43 125.00	100	43 125.00	43 125.00	43 125.00
7 - UNIST	85 500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8 000.00	0.00	4 000.00	0.00	24 375.00	121 875.00	100	121 875.00	121 875.00	121 875.00
8 - MU	77 000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8 000.00	0.00	2 000.00	0.00	21 750.00	108 750.00	100	108 750.00	108 750.00	108 750.00
9 - ADRNV	56 200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7 000.00	0.00	1 400.00	0.00	16 150.00	80 750.00	100	80 750.00	80 750.00	80 750.00
10 - WUT	77 000.00	0.00	0.00	35 000.00	8 000.00	0.00	5 000.00	0.00	22 500.00	147 500.00	100	147 500.00	147 500.00	147 500.00
Σ consortium	967 380.00	0.00	0.00	80 000.00	83 200.00	0.00	29 400.00	0.00	269 995.00	1 429 975.00		1 429 975.00	1 429 975.00	1 429 975.00

[1] See Article 6 for the eligibility conditions. All amounts must be expressed in EUR (see Article 21 for the conversion rules).
[2] The consortium remains free to decide on a different internal distribution of the EU funding (via the consortium agreement; see Article 7).
[3] Indirect costs already covered by an operating grant (received under any EU funding programme) are ineligible (see Article 6.3). Therefore, a beneficiary/affiliated entity that receives an operating grant during the action duration cannot declare indirect costs for the year(s)/reporting period(s) covered by the operating grant, unless they can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action. This requires specific accounting tools. Please immediately contact us via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal for details.
[4] See Data Sheet for the funding rate(s).
[5] This is the theoretical amount of the EU contribution to costs, if the reimbursement rate is applied to all the budgeted costs. This theoretical amount is then capped by the 'maximum grant amount'.
[6] The 'maximum grant amount' is the maximum grant amount decided by the EU. It normally corresponds to the requested grant, but may be lower.
[7] See Annex 2a 'Additional information on the estimated budget' for the details (units, cost per unit).
[8] See Data Sheet for the flat-rate.

ANNEX 2a

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON UNIT COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

SME owners/natural person beneficiaries without salary (Decision C(2020) 7115[1])

Type: unit costs

Units: days spent working on the action (rounded up or down to the nearest half-day)

Amount per unit (daily rate): calculated according to the following formula:

{EUR 5 080 / 18 days = **282,22**}
multiplied by
{country-specific correction coefficient of the country where the beneficiary is established}

The country-specific correction coefficients used are those set out in the Horizon Europe Work Programme (section Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions) in force at the time of the call (see Portal Reference Documents).

HE and Euratom Research Infrastructure actions[2]

Type: unit costs

Units[3]: see (for each access provider and installation) the unit cost table in Annex 2b

Amount per unit*: see (for each access provider and installation) the unit cost table in Annex 2b

* Amount calculated as follows:

For trans-national access:

$$\frac{\text{average annual total trans-national access costs to the installation (over past two years}^{4}\text{)}}{\text{average annual total quantity of trans-national access to the installation (over past two years}^{5}\text{)}}$$

For virtual access:

$$\frac{\text{total virtual access costs to the installation (over the last year}^{6}\text{)}}{\text{total quantity of virtual access to the installation (over the last year}^{7}\text{)}}$$

Euratom staff mobility costs[8]

Monthly living allowance

Type: unit costs

[1] Commission Decision of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme (C(2020)7715).

[2] Decision of 19 April 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for the costs of providing trans-national and virtual access in Research Infrastructure actions under the Horizon Europe Programme (2021-2027) and the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025).

[3] Unit of access (e.g. beam hours, weeks of access, sample analysis) fixed by the access provider in proposal.

[4] In exceptional and duly justified cases, the granting authority may agree to a different reference period.

[5] In exceptional and duly justified cases, the granting authority may agree to a different reference period.

[6] In exceptional and duly justified cases, the granting authority may agree to a different reference period.

[7] In exceptional and duly justified cases, the granting authority may agree to a different reference period.

[8] Decision of 15 March 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for mobility in co-fund actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025).

Units: months spent by the seconded staff member(s) on research and training in fission and fusion activities (person-month)

Amount per unit*: see (for each beneficiary/affiliated entity and secondment) the unit cost table in Annex 2b

* Amount calculated as follows from 1 January 2021:
{**EUR 4 300** multiplied by
country-specific correction coefficient** of the country where the staff member is seconded}[9]

**Country-specific correction coefficients as from 1 January 2021[10]

EU-Member States[11]

Country / Place	Coefficient (%)
Bulgaria	59,1
Czech Rep.	85,2
Denmark	131,3
Germany Bonn Karlsruhe Munich	101,9 95,8 98 113,9
Estonia	82,3
Ireland	129
Greece	81,4
Spain	94,2
France	120,5
Croatia	75,8
Italy Varese	95 90,7
Cyprus	78,2
Latvia	77,5
Lithuania	76,6
Hungary	71,9
Malta	94,7
Netherlands	113,9
Austria	107,9
Poland	70,9
Portugal	91,1
Romania	66,6
Slovenia	86,1

---

9 Unit costs for living allowances are calculated by using a method of calculation similar to that applied for the secondment to the European Commission of seconded national experts (SNEs).

10 For the financial statements, the amount must be adjusted according to the actual place of secondment.
The revised coefficients were adopted in the Decision authorising the use of unit costs for the Fusion Programme co-fund action under the Research and training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community 2021-2025. They are based on the 2020 Annual update of the remuneration and pensions of the officials and other servants of the European Union and the correction coefficients applied thereto (OJ C 428, 11.12.2020) to ensure purchasing power parity. The revised coefficient are applied as from 1 January 2021 through an amendment to the grant agreement.

11 No correction coefficient shall be applicable in Belgium and Luxembourg.

Slovakia	80,6
Finland	118,4
Sweden	124,3

Third countries

Country/place	Coefficient (%)
China	82,2
India	72,3
Japan	111,8
Russia	92,7
South Korea	92,3
Switzerland	129.2
Ukraine	82.3
United Kingdom	97.6
United States	101,4 (New-York) 90,5 (Washington)

Mobility allowance

Type: Unit costs

Units: months spent by the seconded staff member(s) on research and training in fission and fusion activities (person-month)

Amount per unit: **EUR 600** per person-month; see (for each beneficiary/affiliated entity and secondment) the unit cost table in Annex 2b

Family allowance

Type: unit costs

Units: months spent by the seconded staff member(s) on research and training in fission and fusion activities (person-month)

Amount per unit: **EUR 660** per person-month; see (for each beneficiary/affiliated entity and secondment) the unit cost table in Annex 2b

Education allowance

Type: Unit costs

Units: months spent by the seconded staff member(s) on research and training in fission and fusion activities (person-month)

Amount per unit*: see (for each beneficiary/affiliated entity and secondment) the unit cost table in Annex 2b

*Amount calculated as follows from 1 January 2021:
{EUR 283.82 x number of dependent children[12]**}**

[12] For the estimated budget (Annex 2): an average should be used. (For the financial statements, the number of children (and months) must be adjusted according to the actual family status at the moment the secondment starts.)

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2022)7396349 - 25/10/2022

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

FUNDACIO EURECAT (EURECAT), PIC 928030235, established in AVENIDA UNIVERSITAT AUTONOMA 23, CERDANYOLA DEL VALLES (BARCELONA) 08290, Spain,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC ('the Agreement')

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

Xavier LÓPEZ with ECAS id nlopexvi signed in the Participant Portal on 17/11/2022 at 12:23:16 (transaction id SigId-7654-9cYFPf5driCvbsBW5b7olzrgozhWS1jOqqnIvBybnrwLjAhGRIJs0AUvKXgobQ8Y6t2CgAEBWwk4wJyLXCIjiG-rS0vSrmBGYCE4gJvsVbRLK-HQLOFwqNN7Jv4FjzvbCJEOKBI2X70bb4jPKD2d65OzN47UNcDRgU95jDp0CUymdOn03911K0Igzt3xHhzzp6yQk). Timestamp by third party at 2022.11.17 12:23:24 CET

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

ECOPLUS.NIEDEROSTERREICHS WIRTSCHAFTSAGENTUR GMBH (ECOPLUS), PIC 996700415, established in NIEDEROSTERREICHRING, HAUS A 2, ST POLTEN 3100, Austria,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC ('the Agreement')

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

Simone HAGENAUER with ECAS id nhagensi signed in the Participant Portal on 24/11/2022 at 14:38:52 (transaction id SigId-80972-azw1E6XFO61Mrdy8wqwnEjGjJgzVSWeHxGq1FAV1vxqjzzL7f7OcwOzziri8XCCmaSOjioDsVv8nMzLsqqtM0TrS-jpJZscgsw0KzOcDzY5LHew0-zHAACo8tuVoczJ4VEUx1KiXpgiObywmuEuMNQBjAjiyWq1JeUHxCTOkfWzyrgyO4MnRG9cY4zXn6mB9p4JtiXJ4). Timestamp by third party at 2022.11.24 14:38:57 CET

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

INESC TEC - INSTITUTO DE ENGENHARIADE SISTEMAS E COMPUTADORES, TECNOLOGIA E CIENCIA (INESCTEC), PIC 999513706, established in RUA DR ROBERTO FRIAS CAMPUS DA FEUP, PORTO 4200 465, Portugal,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC ('the Agreement')

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

Joao CLARO with ECAS id nclajoao signed in the Participant Portal on 05/12/2022 at 13:19:33 (transaction id SigId-54492-2L7U5zR8z nv0RcAzeJEK9vtoI8YHAmkTzUX4DrBWFEihATF5aQsZO1N1j5bGbN 1vbtoIkpkbKbrHOG4MeAzXxxc-yntOf97TTHqYSWbdLAFzhs-J5EzH ogC2UPMwLIdcCqurC9e3ArJiKjXKYdkWGjCCQVASZLNalbnKQJggW mDrDy9TXh9FIK3Rfy52fxrzUpVfc). Timestamp by third party at 2022.12.05 13:19:38 CET

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE (CNR), PIC 999979500, established in PIAZZALE ALDO MORO 7, ROMA 00185, Italy,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC ('the Agreement')

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

GIULIO SALERNO with ECAS id n00502oy signed in the Participant Portal on 16/11/2022 at 18:06:30 (transaction id SigId-16400-FrGTXXA5WDeJLKixRXDzhndGkgY7OpRHANXlN4pYFjSd3tsZSs2s5r9zha9mltqy7OV6wrgvREaMgYd8oWEdlg-jpJZscgsw0KzOcDzY5LHew0-Ly2BD9JyNJnhMVYXzdfRrV2kqzhREVxOiq9NomGVXoNgZD9cJomHPaXHn8liHVWAeSAFltej2uFEEzLGaGp3bNm). Timestamp by third party at 2022.11.16 18:06:35 CET

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2022)7396349 - 25/10/2022

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

TRONDHEIM TECH PORT (TTP), PIC 887659223, established in OLAV TRYGGVASONS GATE 2B, TRONDHEIM 7011, Norway,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC (‘the Agreement’)

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** (‘EU executive agency’ or ‘granting authority’), under the powers delegated by the European Commission (‘European Commission’),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

SVEUCILISTE U SPLITU (UNIST), PIC 999818189, established in RUDERA BOSKOVICA 31, SPLIT 21000, Croatia,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC ('the Agreement')

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

Dragan Ljutic with ECAS id n006jwf4 signed in the Participant Portal on 22/11/2022 at 10:22:05 (transaction id SigId-40157-A00zWUQpm O9BaAl9xK2b1N3i0zO3j49sUoQ2ayqZZZiQqDIsSo5cIwgPYd1J6UGG oZ1hUTFOMiEe9frftZ1QkD-jpJZscgsw0KzOcDzY5LHew0-i5zsXcRdPU yHauMQ0au1XXMtRGM4S4uagpLTsl8preKDztkztacyH1j8EDTU8Vi2L ywAoG3vWPWlFpJEzHaQcHm). Timestamp by third party at 2022.11.22 10:22:11 CET

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2022)7396349 - 25/10/2022

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

Masarykova univerzita (MU), PIC 999880657, established in Zerotinovo namesti 9, BRNO 601 77, Czechia,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC (‘the Agreement’)

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** (‘EU executive agency’ or ‘granting authority’), under the powers delegated by the European Commission (‘European Commission’),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

Lukas Palko with ECAS id n002s2hh signed in the Participant Portal on 21/11/2022 at 17:33:50 (transaction id SigId-33909-RJ02UYgcozfJ1EvsCeBn3qwzh1nFFKQhZFoP7lGwMkf4dFnkArRN4GOBjRzWk69p8PP29AkzsW82AzMCJd0TRos-jpJZscgsw0KzOcDzY5LHew0-5XVa8WSeej2Mcp8K2gBBXTenF8oU8P6zJwZGhb2viUQCdAgxpS3Eakm79YPltOc1Xy7ehYrtLhwVO2A5v0QaJm). Timestamp by third party at 2022.11.21 17:33:56 CET

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

AGENTIA DE DEZVOLTARE REGIONALA NORD-VEST (ADRNV), PIC 998907844, established in SAT RADAIA 50, BACIU CLUJ 407059, Romania,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC ('the Agreement')

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

POLITECHNIKA WARSZAWSKA (WUT), PIC 999884052, established in PLAC POLITECHNIKI 1, WARSZAWA 00-661, Poland,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101094821 — ERA_FABRIC ('the Agreement')

between ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI (ART-ER) **and** the **European Research Executive Agency (REA)** ('EU executive agency' or 'granting authority'), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('European Commission'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

Mariusz Malinowski with ECAS id n003zpve signed in the Participant Portal on 29/11/2022 at 23:09:01 (transaction id SigId-2388-HzUyJIn A0wAnVVHR6RXwbUin58KmMoW5OgNOPfjqVu7F0zk1gxDIF2uVchf kf7sv9HjX66t0RsHehVztOnB9bM0-rS0vSrmBGYCARa0Hof7Noi-ysDk 94qJzV3X6y71pgu2dGkwHtMujNLjOSHTwbSxOCrw6GGHlvQ5dqlKie I6SnI7wPV62tAhSwv5IJRYVuqYki). Timestamp by third party at 2022.11.29 23:09:08 CET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR [PARTICIPANT NAME] FOR REPORTING PERIOD [NUMBER]

	Eligible[1] costs (per budget category)																	**EU contribution[2]**				**Revenues**
	Direct costs															**Indirect costs**	**Total costs**	**EU contribution to eligible costs**			**Total requested EU contribution**	**Income generated by the action**
	A. Personnel costs			**B. Subcontracting costs**	**C. Purchase costs**			**D. Other cost categories**								**E. Indirect costs[2]**		**Funding rate %[3]**	**Maximum EU contribution[4]**	**Requested EU contribution**		
	A.1 Employees (or equivalent) A.2 Natural persons under direct contract A.3 Seconded persons		A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries	B. Subcontracting	C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.2 Equipment	C.3 Other goods, works and services	[D.1 Financial support to third parties]	D.2 Internally invoiced goods and services	[D.3 Transnational access to research infrastructure unit costs]	[D.4 Virtual access to research infrastructure unit costs]	*[OPTION for HE PCP/PPI:* D.5 PCP/PPI procurement costs]	*[OPTION for Euratom Programme Cofund Actions:* D.6 Euratom Cofund staff mobility costs]	*[OPTION for HE ERC Grants:* D.7 ERC additional funding]	*[OPTION for HE ERC Grants:* D.8 ERC additional funding (subcontracting, FSTP and internally invoiced goods and services)]	E. Indirect costs						
Forms of funding	Actual costs	Unit costs (usual accounting practices)	Unit costs[5]	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs	[Actual costs]	Unit costs (usual accounting practices)	[Unit costs[5]]	[Unit costs[5]]	[Actual costs]	[Unit costs[5]]	[Actual costs]	[Actual costs]	Flat-rate costs[6]						
	a1	a2	a3	b	c1	c2	c3	[d1a]	d2	[d3]	[d4]	[d5]	[d6]	[d7]	[d8]	e = 0,25 * (a1 + a2 + a3 ~~+ b~~ + c1 +c2 + c3 ~~+ d1a + d2 + d3 + d4 [+ d5][+ d6]~~ [+d7] ~~[+ d8]~~)	f = a+b+c+d+e	U	g = f*U%	h	m	n
XX – [short name beneficiary/affiliated entity]																						

The beneficiary/affiliated entity hereby confirms that:

The information provided is complete, reliable and true.

The costs and contributions declared are eligible (see Article 6).

The costs and contributions can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Articles 19, 20 and 25).

For the last reporting period: that all the revenues have been declared (see Article 22).

ⓘ Please declare all eligible costs and contributions, even if they exceed the amounts indicated in the estimated budget (see Annex 2). Only amounts that were declared in your individual financial statements can be taken into account lateron, in order to replace costs/contributions that are found to be ineligible.

[1] See Article 6 for the eligibility conditions. All amounts must be expressed in EUR (see Article 21 for the conversion rules).

[2] If you have also received an EU operating grant during this reporting period, you cannot claim indirect costs - unless you can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action. This requires specific accounting tools. Please contact us immediately via the Funding & Tenders Portal for details.

[3] See Data Sheet for the reimbursement rate(s).

[4] This is the *theoretical* amount of EU contribution to costs that the system calculates automatically (by multiplying the reimbursement rates by the costs declared). The amount you request (in the column 'requested EU contribution') may be less.

[5] See Annex 2a 'Additional information on the estimated budget' for the details (units, cost per unit).

[6] See Data Sheet for the flat-rate.

SPECIFIC RULES

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY (— ARTICLE 13)

Sensitive information with security recommendation

Sensitive information with a security recommendation must comply with the additional requirements imposed by the granting authority.

Before starting the action tasks concerned, the beneficiaries must have obtained all approvals or other mandatory documents needed for implementing the task. The documents must be kept on file and be submitted upon request by the coordinator to the granting authority. If they are not in English, they must be submitted together with an English summary.

For requirements restricting disclosure or dissemination, the information must be handled in accordance with the recommendation and may be disclosed or disseminated only after written approval from the granting authority.

EU classified information

If EU classified information is used or generated by the action, it must be treated in accordance with the security classification guide (SCG) and security aspect letter (SAL) set out in Annex 1 and Decision 2015/444[1] and its implementing rules — until it is declassified.

Deliverables which contain EU classified information must be submitted according to special procedures agreed with the granting authority.

Action tasks involving EU classified information may be subcontracted only with prior explicit written approval from the granting authority and only to entities established in an EU Member State or in a non-EU country with a security of information agreement with the EU (or an administrative arrangement with the Commission).

EU classified information may not be disclosed to any third party (including participants involved in the action implementation) without prior explicit written approval from the granting authority.

ETHICS (— ARTICLE 14)

Ethics and research integrity

The beneficiaries must carry out the action in compliance with:

- ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity)

[1] Commission Decision 2015/444/EC, Euratom of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

and

- applicable EU, international and national law, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols.

No funding can be granted, within or outside the EU, for activities that are prohibited in all Member States. No funding can be granted in a Member State for an activity which is forbidden in that Member State.

The beneficiaries must pay particular attention to the principle of proportionality, the right to privacy, the right to the protection of personal data, the right to the physical and mental integrity of persons, the right to non-discrimination, the need to ensure protection of the environment and high levels of human health protection.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the activities under the action have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the activities under the action do not:

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

Activities involving research on human embryos or human embryonic stem cells may be carried out only if:

- they are set out in Annex 1 or
- the coordinator has obtained explicit approval (in writing) from the granting authority.

In addition, the beneficiaries must respect the fundamental principle of research integrity — as set out in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity[2].

This implies compliance with the following principles:

- reliability in ensuring the quality of research reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources
- honesty in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair and unbiased way

[2] European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA (All European Academies).

- respect for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment
- accountability for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts

and means that beneficiaries must ensure that persons carrying out research tasks follow the good research practices including ensuring, where possible, openness, reproducibility and traceability and refrain from the research integrity violations described in the Code.

Activities raising ethical issues must comply with the additional requirements formulated by the ethics panels (including after checks, reviews or audits; see Article 25).

Before starting an action task raising ethical issues, the beneficiaries must have obtained all approvals or other mandatory documents needed for implementing the task, notably from any (national or local) ethics committee or other bodies such as data protection authorities.

The documents must be kept on file and be submitted upon request by the coordinator to the granting authority. If they are not in English, they must be submitted together with an English summary, which shows that the documents cover the action tasks in question and includes the conclusions of the committee or authority concerned (if any).

VALUES (— ARTICLE 14)

Gender mainstreaming

The beneficiaries must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action and, where applicable, in line with the gender equality plan. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) — BACKGROUND AND RESULTS — ACCESS RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF USE (— ARTICLE 16)

Definitions

Access rights — Rights to use results or background.

Dissemination — The public disclosure of the results by appropriate means, other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results, including by scientific publications in any medium.

Exploit(ation) — The use of results in further research and innovation activities other than those covered by the action concerned, including among other things, commercial exploitation such as developing, creating, manufacturing and marketing a product or process, creating and providing a service, or in standardisation activities.

Fair and reasonable conditions — Appropriate conditions, including possible financial terms or royalty-free conditions, taking into account the specific circumstances of the request for access, for example the actual or potential value of the results or background to which access is requested and/or the scope, duration or other characteristics of the exploitation envisaged.

FAIR principles — 'findability', 'accessibility', 'interoperability' and 'reusability'.

Open access — Online access to research outputs provided free of charge to the end-user.

Open science — An approach to the scientific process based on open cooperative work, tools and diffusing knowledge.

Research data management — The process within the research lifecycle that includes the organisation, storage, preservation, security, quality assurance, allocation of persistent identifiers (PIDs) and rules and procedures for sharing of data including licensing.

Research outputs — Results to which access can be given in the form of scientific publications, data or other engineered results and processes such as software, algorithms, protocols, models, workflows and electronic notebooks.

Scope of the obligations

For this section, references to 'beneficiary' or 'beneficiaries' do not include affiliated entities (if any).

Agreement on background

The beneficiaries must identify in a written agreement the background as needed for implementing the action or for exploiting its results.

Where the call conditions restrict control due to strategic interests reasons, background that is subject to control or other restrictions by a country (or entity from a country) which is not one of the eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions and that impact the exploitation of the results (i.e. would make the exploitation of the results subject to control or restrictions) must not be used and must be explicitly excluded from it in the agreement on background — unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority.

Ownership of results

Results are owned by the beneficiaries that generate them.

However, two or more beneficiaries own results jointly if:

- they have jointly generated them and
- it is not possible to:
  - establish the respective contribution of each beneficiary, or
  - separate them for the purpose of applying for, obtaining or maintaining their protection.

The joint owners must agree — in writing — on the allocation and terms of exercise of their joint ownership ('**joint ownership agreement**'), to ensure compliance with their obligations under this Agreement.

Unless otherwise agreed in the joint ownership agreement or consortium agreement, each joint owner may grant non-exclusive licences to third parties to exploit the jointly-owned results (without any right to sub-license), if the other joint owners are given:

- at least 45 days advance notice and
- fair and reasonable compensation.

The joint owners may agree — in writing — to apply another regime than joint ownership.

If third parties (including employees and other personnel) may claim rights to the results, the beneficiary concerned must ensure that those rights can be exercised in a manner compatible with its obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must indicate the owner(s) of the results (results ownership list) in the final periodic report.

Protection of results

Beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must adequately protect their results — for an appropriate period and with appropriate territorial coverage — if protection is possible and justified, taking into account all relevant considerations, including the prospects for commercial exploitation, the legitimate interests of the other beneficiaries and any other legitimate interests.

Exploitation of results

Beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — use their best efforts to exploit their results directly or to have them exploited indirectly by another entity, in particular through transfer or licensing.

If, despite a beneficiary's best efforts, the results are not exploited within one year after the end of the action, the beneficiaries must (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the granting authority) use the Horizon Results Platform to find interested parties to exploit the results.

If results are incorporated in a standard, the beneficiaries must (unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority or unless it is impossible) ask the standardisation body to include the funding statement (see Article 17) in (information related to) the standard.

Additional exploitation obligations

Where the call conditions impose additional exploitation obligations (including obligations linked to the restriction of participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons), the beneficiaries must comply with them — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Where the call conditions impose additional exploitation obligations in case of a public emergency, the beneficiaries must (if requested by the granting authority) grant for a limited period of time specified in the request, non-exclusive licences — under fair and reasonable conditions — to their results to legal entities that need the results to address the public emergency and commit to rapidly and broadly exploit the resulting products and services at fair and reasonable conditions. This provision applies up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Additional information obligation relating to standards

Where the call conditions impose additional information obligations relating to possible standardisation, the beneficiaries must — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — inform the granting authority, if the results could reasonably be expected to contribute to European or international standards.

Transfer and licensing of results

Transfer of ownership

The beneficiaries may transfer ownership of their results, provided this does not affect compliance with their obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their obligations under the Agreement regarding their results are passed on to the new owner and that this new owner has the obligation to pass them on in any subsequent transfer.

Moreover, they must inform the other beneficiaries with access rights of the transfer at least 45 days in advance (or less if agreed in writing), unless agreed otherwise in writing for specifically identified third parties including affiliated entities or unless impossible under the applicable law. This notification must include sufficient information on the new owner to enable the beneficiaries concerned to assess the effects on their access rights. The beneficiaries may object within 30 days of receiving notification (or less if agreed in writing), if they can show that the transfer would adversely affect their access rights. In this case, the transfer may not take place until agreement has been reached between the beneficiaries concerned.

Granting licences

The beneficiaries may grant licences to their results (or otherwise give the right to exploit them), including on an exclusive basis, provided this does not affect compliance with their obligations.

Exclusive licences for results may be granted only if all the other beneficiaries concerned have waived their access rights.

Granting authority right to object to transfers or licensing — Horizon Europe actions

Where the call conditions in Horizon Europe actions provide for the right to object to transfers or licensing, the granting authority may — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — object to a transfer of ownership or the exclusive licensing of results, if:

- the beneficiaries which generated the results have received funding under the grant
- it is to a legal entity established in a non-EU country not associated with Horizon Europe, and
- the granting authority considers that the transfer or licence is not in line with EU interests.

Beneficiaries that intend to transfer ownership or grant an exclusive licence must formally notify the granting authority before the intended transfer or licensing takes place and:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the new owner or licensee and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or licence on EU interests, in particular regarding competitiveness as well as consistency with ethical principles and security considerations.

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the granting authority decides to object to a transfer or exclusive licence, it must formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information it has requested).

No transfer or licensing may take place in the following cases:

- pending the granting authority decision, within the period set out above
- if the granting authority objects
- until the conditions are complied with, if the granting authority objection comes with conditions.

A beneficiary may formally notify a request to waive the right to object regarding intended transfers or grants to a specifically identified third party, if measures safeguarding EU interests are in place. If the granting authority agrees, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

Granting authority right to object to transfers or licensing — Euratom actions

Where the call conditions in Euratom actions provide for the right to object to transfers or licensing, the granting authority may — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — object to a transfer of ownership or the exclusive or non-exclusive licensing of results, if:

- the beneficiaries which generated the results have received funding under the grant
- it is to a legal entity established in a non-EU country not associated to the Euratom Research and Training Programme 2021-2025 and
- the granting authority considers that the transfer or licence is not in line with the EU interests.

Beneficiaries that intend to transfer ownership or grant a licence must formally notify the granting authority before the intended transfer or licensing takes place and:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the results, the new owner or licensee and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or licence on EU interests, in particular regarding competitiveness as well as consistency with

ethical principles and security considerations (including the defence interests of the EU Member States under Article 24 of the Euratom Treaty).

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the granting authority decides to object to a transfer or licence, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

No transfer or licensing may take place in the following cases:

- pending the granting authority decision, within the period set out above
- if the granting authority objects
- until the conditions are complied with, if the granting authority objection comes with conditions.

A beneficiary may formally notify a request to waive the right to object regarding intended transfers or grants to a specifically identified third party, if measures safeguarding EU interests are in place. If the granting authority agrees, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

Limitations to transfers and licensing due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons of the EU and its Member States

Where the call conditions restrict participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons, the beneficiaries may not transfer ownership of their results or grant licences to third parties which are established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) — unless they have requested and received prior approval by the granting authority.

The request must:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the new owner and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or license on the strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States.

The granting authority may request additional information.

Access rights to results and background

Exercise of access rights — Waiving of access rights — No sub-licensing

Requests to exercise access rights and the waiver of access rights must be in writing.

Unless agreed otherwise in writing with the beneficiary granting access, access rights do not include the right to sub-license.

If a beneficiary is no longer involved in the action, this does not affect its obligations to grant access.

If a beneficiary defaults on its obligations, the beneficiaries may agree that that beneficiary no longer has access rights.

Access rights for implementing the action

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — on a royalty-free basis — to background needed to implement their own tasks under the action, unless the beneficiary that holds the background has — before acceding to the Agreement —:

- informed the other beneficiaries that access to its background is subject to restrictions, or
- agreed with the other beneficiaries that access would not be on a royalty-free basis.

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — on a royalty-free basis — to results needed for implementing their own tasks under the action.

Access rights for exploiting the results

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — under fair and reasonable conditions — to results needed for exploiting their results.

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — under fair and reasonable conditions — to background needed for exploiting their results, unless the beneficiary that holds the background has — before acceding to the Agreement — informed the other beneficiaries that access to its background is subject to restrictions.

Requests for access must be made — unless agreed otherwise in writing — up to one year after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Access rights for entities under the same control

Unless agreed otherwise in writing by the beneficiaries, access to results and, subject to the restrictions referred to above (if any), background must also be granted — under fair and reasonable conditions — to entities that:

- are established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country
- are under the direct or indirect control of another beneficiary, or under the same direct or indirect control as that beneficiary, or directly or indirectly controlling that beneficiary and
- need the access to exploit the results of that beneficiary.

Unless agreed otherwise in writing, such requests for access must be made by the entity directly to the beneficiary concerned.

Requests for access must be made — unless agreed otherwise in writing — up to one year after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Access rights for the granting authority, EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies and national authorities to results for policy purposes — Horizon Europe actions

In Horizon Europe actions, the beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must grant access to their results — on a royalty-free basis — to the granting authority, EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies for developing, implementing and monitoring EU policies or programmes. Such access rights do not extend to beneficiaries' background.

Such access rights are limited to non-commercial and non-competitive use.

For actions under the cluster 'Civil Security for Society', such access rights also extend to national authorities of EU Member States for developing, implementing and monitoring their policies or programmes in this area. In this case, access is subject to a bilateral agreement to define specific conditions ensuring that:

- the access rights will be used only for the intended purpose and
- appropriate confidentiality obligations are in place.

Moreover, the requesting national authority or EU institution, body, office or agency (including the granting authority) must inform all other national authorities of such a request.

Access rights for the granting authority, Euratom institutions, funding bodies or the Joint Undertaking Fusion for Energy — Euratom actions

In Euratom actions, the beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must grant access to their results — on a royalty-free basis — to the granting authority, Euratom institutions, funding bodies or the Joint Undertaking Fusion for Energy for developing, implementing and monitoring Euratom policies and programmes or for compliance with obligations assumed through international cooperation with non-EU countries and international organisations.

Such access rights include the right to authorise third parties to use the results in public procurement and the right to sub-license and are limited to non-commercial and non-competitive use.

Additional access rights

Where the call conditions impose additional access rights, the beneficiaries must comply with them.

COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION, OPEN SCIENCE AND VISIBILITY (— ARTICLE 17)

Dissemination

Dissemination of results

The beneficiaries must disseminate their results as soon as feasible, in a publicly available format, subject to any restrictions due to the protection of intellectual property, security rules or legitimate interests.

A beneficiary that intends to disseminate its results must give at least 15 days advance notice to the other beneficiaries (unless agreed otherwise), together with sufficient information on the results it will disseminate.

Any other beneficiary may object within (unless agreed otherwise) 15 days of receiving notification, if it can show that its legitimate interests in relation to the results or background would be significantly harmed. In such cases, the results may not be disseminated unless appropriate steps are taken to safeguard those interests.

Additional dissemination obligations

Where the call conditions impose additional dissemination obligations, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

Open Science

Open science: open access to scientific publications

The beneficiaries must ensure open access to peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to their results. In particular, they must ensure that:

- at the latest at the time of publication, a machine-readable electronic copy of the published version or the final peer-reviewed manuscript accepted for publication, is deposited in a trusted repository for scientific publications

- immediate open access is provided to the deposited publication via the repository, under the latest available version of the Creative Commons Attribution International Public Licence (CC BY) or a licence with equivalent rights; for monographs and other long-text formats, the licence may exclude commercial uses and derivative works (e.g. CC BY-NC, CC BY-ND) and

- information is given via the repository about any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to validate the conclusions of the scientific publication.

Beneficiaries (or authors) must retain sufficient intellectual property rights to comply with the open access requirements.

Metadata of deposited publications must be open under a Creative Common Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent, in line with the FAIR principles (in particular machine-actionable) and provide information at least about the following: publication (author(s), title, date of publication, publication venue); Horizon Europe or Euratom funding; grant project name, acronym and number; licensing terms; persistent identifiers for the publication, the authors involved in the action and, if possible, for their organisations and the grant. Where applicable, the metadata must include persistent identifiers for any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to validate the conclusions of the publication.

Only publication fees in full open access venues for peer-reviewed scientific publications are eligible for reimbursement.

Open science: research data management

The beneficiaries must manage the digital research data generated in the action (‘data’) responsibly, in line with the FAIR principles and by taking all of the following actions:

- establish a data management plan (‘DMP’) (and regularly update it)

- as soon as possible and within the deadlines set out in the DMP, deposit the data in a trusted repository; if required in the call conditions, this repository must be federated in the EOSC in compliance with EOSC requirements

- as soon as possible and within the deadlines set out in the DMP, ensure open access — via the repository — to the deposited data, under the latest available version of the Creative Commons Attribution International Public License (CC BY) or Creative Commons Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or a licence with equivalent rights, following the principle 'as open as possible as closed as necessary', unless providing open access would in particular:

    - be against the beneficiary's legitimate interests, including regarding commercial exploitation, or

    - be contrary to any other constraints, in particular the EU competitive interests or the beneficiary's obligations under this Agreement; if open access is not provided (to some or all data), this must be justified in the DMP

- provide information via the repository about any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to re-use or validate the data.

Metadata of deposited data must be open under a Creative Common Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent (to the extent legitimate interests or constraints are safeguarded), in line with the FAIR principles (in particular machine-actionable) and provide information at least about the following: datasets (description, date of deposit, author(s), venue and embargo); Horizon Europe or Euratom funding; grant project name, acronym and number; licensing terms; persistent identifiers for the dataset, the authors involved in the action, and, if possible, for their organisations and the grant. Where applicable, the metadata must include persistent identifiers for related publications and other research outputs.

Open science: additional practices

Where the call conditions impose additional obligations regarding open science practices, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

Where the call conditions impose additional obligations regarding the validation of scientific publications, the beneficiaries must provide (digital or physical) access to data or other results needed for validation of the conclusions of scientific publications, to the extent that their legitimate interests or constraints are safeguarded (and unless they already provided the (open) access at publication).

Where the call conditions impose additional open science obligations in case of a public emergency, the beneficiaries must (if requested by the granting authority) immediately deposit any research output in a repository and provide open access to it under a CC BY licence, a Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent. As an exception, if the access would be against the beneficiaries' legitimate interests, the beneficiaries must grant non-exclusive licenses — under fair and reasonable conditions — to legal entities that need the research output to address the public emergency and commit to rapidly and broadly exploit the resulting products and services at fair and reasonable conditions. This provision applies up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities

Unless excluded by the call conditions, the beneficiaries must provide and regularly update a plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities.

SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION (— ARTICLE 18)

Implementation in case of restrictions due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States

Where the call conditions restrict participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security, the beneficiaries must ensure that none of the entities that participate as affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties are established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) — unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority.

The beneficiaries must moreover ensure that any cooperation with entities established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) does not affect the strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States.

Recruitment and working conditions for researchers

The beneficiaries must take all measures to implement the principles set out in the Commission Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers[3], in particular regarding:

- working conditions
- transparent recruitment processes based on merit, and
- career development.

The beneficiaries must ensure that researchers and all participants involved in the action are aware of them.

Specific rules for access to research infrastructure activities

Definitions

Research Infrastructures — Facilities that provide resources and services for the research communities to conduct research and foster innovation in their fields. This definition includes the associated human resources, and it covers major equipment or sets of instruments; knowledge-related facilities such as collections, archives or scientific data infrastructures; computing systems, communication networks, and any other infrastructure, of a unique nature and open to external users, essential to achieve excellence in research and innovation. Where relevant, they may be used beyond research, for example

[3] Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (OJ L 75, 22.3.2005, p. 67).

for education or public services, and they may be 'single-sited', 'virtual' or 'distributed'[4]:

When implementing access to research infrastructure activities, the beneficiaries must respect the following conditions:

- for transnational access:

  - access which must be provided:

    The access must be free of charge, transnational access to research infrastructure or installations for selected user-groups.

    The access must include the logistical, technological and scientific support and the specific training that is usually provided to external researchers using the infrastructure. Transnational access can be either in person (hands-on), provided to selected users that visit the installation to make use of it, or remote, through the provision to selected user-groups of remote scientific services (e.g. provision of reference materials or samples, remote access to a high-performance computing facility).

  - categories of users that may have access:

    Transnational access must be provided to selected user-groups, i.e. teams of one or more researchers (users).

    The majority of the users must work in a country other than the country(ies) where the installation is located (unless access is provided by an international organisation, the Joint Research Centre (JRC), an ERIC or similar legal entity).

    Only user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under the action may benefit from the access (unless the users are working for SMEs).

    Access for user groups with a majority of users not working in a EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country is limited to 20% of the total amount of units of access provided under the grant (unless a higher percentage is foreseen in Annex 1).

  - procedure and criteria for selecting user groups:

    The user groups must request access by submitting (in writing) a description of the work that they wish to carry out and the names, nationalities and home institutions of the users.

    The user groups must be selected by (one or more) selection panels set up by the consortium.

[4] See Article 2(1) of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme Regulation 2021/695.

The selection panels must be composed of international experts in the field, at least half of them independent from the consortium (unless otherwise specified in Annex 1).

The selection panels must assess all proposals received and recommend a short-list of the user groups that should benefit from access.

The selection panels must base their selection on scientific merit, taking into account that priority should be given to user groups composed of users who:

- have not previously used the installation and
- are working in countries where no equivalent research infrastructure exist.

It will apply the principles of transparency, fairness and impartiality.

Where the call conditions impose additional rules for the selection of user groups, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

- other conditions:

  The beneficiaries must request written approval from the granting authority for the selection of user groups requiring visits to the installations exceeding 3 months (unless such visits are foreseen in Annex 1).

  In addition, the beneficiaries must:

  - advertise widely, including on a their websites, the access offered under the Agreement
  - promote equal opportunities in advertising the access and take into account the gender dimension when defining the support provided to users
  - ensure that users comply with the terms and conditions of the Agreement
  - ensure that its obligations under Articles 12, 13, 17 and 33 also apply to the users
  - keep records of the names, nationalities, and home institutions of users, as well as the nature and quantity of access provided to them

- for virtual access:

  - access which must be provided:

    The access must be free of charge, virtual access to research infrastructure or installations.

    ‘Virtual access’ means open and free access through communication networks to digital resources and services needed for research, without selecting the users to whom access is provided.

    The access must include the support that is usually provided to external users.

Where allowed by the call conditions, beneficiaries may in justified cases define objective eligibility criteria (e.g. affiliation to a research or academic institution) for specific users.

- other conditions:

The beneficiaries must have the virtual access services assessed periodically by a board composed of international experts in the field, at least half of whom must be independent from the consortium (unless otherwise specified in Annex 1). For this purpose, information and statistics on the users and the nature and quantity of the access provided, must be made available to the board.

The beneficiaries must advertise widely, including on a dedicated website, the access offered under the grant and the eligibility criteria, if any.

Where the call conditions impose additional traceability[5] obligations, information on the traceability of the users and the nature and quantity of access must be provided by the beneficiaries.

These obligations apply regardless of the form of funding or budget categories used to declare the costs (unit costs or actual costs or a combination of the two).

[5] According to the definition given in ISO 9000, i.e.: “Traceability is the ability to trace the history, application, use and location of an item or its characteristics through recorded identification data.” The users can be traced, for example, by authentication and/or by authorization or by other means that allows for analysis of the type of users and the nature and quantity of access provided.

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