NCP@UEFISCDI

NCP UNIT STRATEGY

2021 – 2027

V1. Dec. 2021 - Core Strategy
V1. June 2022 - SWOT 2021, Gap Analysis 2021
V2. Feb. 2023 – SWOT 2022, Gap Analysis 2022
V3. Feb. 2024 – SWOT 2023, Gap Analysis 2023
V4. June 2024 – NCP EIC&EIE Individual Strategy
V5. Aug. 2024 – Update Strategy, Gap Analysis 2024
V6. May 2025 – Update Strategy, Project-based implementation

Contents

I. Vision, Mission, Values

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Horizon Europe NCP@UEFISCDI is to:

- **Promote awareness**. Raise awareness about the opportunities available under Horizon Europe among Romanian researchers, institutions, and companies.
- **Support participation**. Provide comprehensive support throughout the entire lifecycle of participation in Horizon Europe, from project conception and proposal submission to project management and dissemination.
- **Facilitate collaboration**. Act as a bridge between Romanian entities and potential international partners, fostering collaborative networks across Europe and beyond.
- **Ensure inclusivity**. Promote inclusivity by encouraging participation from a diverse range of entities, including those from less-developed regions, SMEs, and underrepresented groups.

Vision (one day...) (2027)

We will challenge our skills and abilities and create an NCP center of excellence for Horizon Europe that is strong, dependable, efficient and effective, allowing our colleagues from research and innovation communities in Romania to participate more and with more chances of success in the Horizon Europe programmes.

Mission (every day)

The mission of the Horizon Europe NCP@UEFISCDI is to foster excellence in research and innovation by facilitating Romanian participation in Horizon Europe. The NCP@UEFISCDI is committed to providing tailored guidance, support, and information to researchers, innovators, and institutions, ensuring they can effectively contribute to and benefit from the Horizon Europe framework programme. We are ready to help, and go the extra mile, and provide expert support and assistance to our colleagues to participate more and with more chances of success in the Horizon Europe framework programme.

Values

- Commitment
- Focus on the applicant
- Efficiency
- Effectiveness
- Growth
- Integrity

II. Strategy NCP@UEFISCDI

This Strategy applies to the Unit of National Contact Points at UEFISCDI (NCP@UEFISCDI) and the Horizon Europe programmes allocated to the Unit, i.e. ERC (European Research Council); MSCA (Marie-Sklodowska Curie Actions); CL2 (Cluster 2 – Culture, creativity and inclusive society); CL6 (Cluster 6 – Food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment); EIC (European Innovation Council); EIE (European Innovation Ecosystems); Widera (Widening participation and strengthening the ERA).

To realize its mission, purpose, and vision, the NCP@UEFISCDI will pursue the following **goals**:

1. Increasing the confidence of the Romanian academic and innovation community in the permanent support and expertise of the National Contact Points of the NCP Unit.

2. The establishment of collegial and professional working relationships with the entire Romanian community in order to participate with more chances of success in the Horizon Europe programs assigned to the NCP Unit.

II.1. Strategic Objectives

SO1. Information, awareness raising on Horizon Europe programmes at NCP@UEFISCDI. Outreach and communication.

SO2. Assistance and support for research and innovation proposals in Horizon Europe

SO3. Assistance and support for the internationalization & visibility of Romanian research and innovation communities.

SO4. NCP training-capacity building

SO1	Information, awareness raising on Horizon Europe programmes at NCP@UEFISCDI. Outreach and communication

- Newsletter (info email for news and calls, NCP website update, UEFISCDI website update, NCP Brainmap community update)

SO2	Assistance and support for research and innovation proposals in Horizon Europe

- Support materials (guides, presentations, e-learning videos)
- Events (info days, workshops, seminars) – online, hybrid, in person
- Q&A (email, phone..)
- Meetings with applicants
- Assistance for finding partners (e.g. expression of interest, organization profile on platforms)
- Proposal pre-check

SO3	Assistance and support for the internationalization & visibility of Romanian research and innovation communities

- Promote success stories
- Build networks and develop connections between organizations (in Romania and outside)
- NCP training (reading, participation at NCP training)
- Establish and maintain links with the EC and relevant POs per HE programme
- Assistance for finding partners (e.g. expression of interest, organization profile on platforms)

SO4	
	NCP training-capacity building

- Participate in EU NCP support networks
- Attend EC webinars and workshops
- Allocate time for studying EC and HE documents
- Facilitate peer learning and knowledge sharing

II.2. Strategy Map

1. Applicant Perspective

To achieve our vision, how must we look to our applicants?

- Expert and knowledgeable NCP
- Quality of support materials
- Prompt and useful assistance

2. Internal Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)

What are the internal processes or things that NCP@UEFISCDI must do well in order to make applicants happy?

- Newsletter (info email for news and calls, NCP website update, UEFISCDI website update, NCP Brainmap community update)
- Support materials (guides, presentations, e-learning videos)
- Events (info days, workshops, seminars) – online, hybrid, in person
- Q&A (email, phone..)
- Meetings with applicants
- Assistance for finding partners (e.g. expression of interest, organization profile on platforms)
- Proposal pre-check
- Promote success stories
- Build networks and develop connections between organizations (in Romania and outside)
- NCP training (reading, participation at NCP training)
- Establish and maintain links with the EC and relevant POs per HE programme

> **Internal processes NCP@UEFISCDI:**
>
> 1. Track participation and impact. Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track Romanian participation in Horizon Europe and assess the impact of NCP activities.
>
> 2. Continuous Improvement. Regularly review and refine strategies based on feedback and evolving needs of the research and innovation community.

3. Learning & Growth Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)

Human resources and a "people" perspective.

- NCP@UEFISCDI capacity building and training. Build expertise on each HE programme.
- Better communication skills (internal, external)

4. External Perspective (UEFISCDI, MCID, EC, NCP networks)

What are the internal processes or things that NCP@UEFISCDI must do well in order to make stakeholders happy?

- Prompt, useful and documented response to requests
- Inform UEFISCDI on relevant calls, EC policies and documents
- Report to UEFISCDI, MCID, EC and NCP networks annually
- Promote success stories to UEFISCDI, MCID, EC and NCP networks

II.3. Expected Outcomes

- Increased awareness of applicants on Horizon Europe opportunities
- Better knowledge of applicants of research and innovation proposals/projects in Horizon Europe

- Increased number of proposals submitted to Horizon Europe programmes
- Higher success rate of Romanian applications
- Better international visibility for Romanian applicants

II.4. Implementation Plan

Year 1-2 (2021-2023): Focus on building internal capacities, awareness campaigns, and establishing professional working relationships with the Romanian academic and innovation community.

Year 3-4 (2024-2025): Intensify support services, enhance digital tools, and expand outreach activities.

Year 5 onwards (2026-2027): Evaluate progress, refine strategies, and aim for greater integration of Romanian entities in Horizon Europe.

Annex 1. SWOT

SWOT 2021

	Helpful	Harmful
INTERNAL	**Strengths (S)**	**Weaknesses (W)**
	• Dedication • Knowledge • Efficiency • Effectiveness • Colegiality	• Insufficient contribution on legal & financial aspects • Inadequate time management • Inadequate NCP website
EXTERNAL	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
	• Expand to larger NCP team • Reach out to different communities (local & regional authorities) • Set up a ERA Dialogues and Strategic Consultation formats with vice rectors, scientific directors, heads of RDI departments	• Insufficient collaboration with other Romanian NCPs • Insufficient collaboration with national NCP coordinator(s)

SWOT 2022

	Helpful	Harmful
INTERNAL	**Strengths (S)**	**Weaknesses (W)**
	• Dedication • Knowledge & Expertise • Efficiency • Effectiveness • Colegiality	• Inadequate time management
EXTERNAL	**Opportunities (O)**	**Threats (T)**
	• NCP community on Brainmap • Reach out to different communities (local & regional authorities) • Increased connectivity with and among organisations	• Insufficient collaboration with other Romanian NCPs • Insufficient collaboration with national NCP coordinator • Lack of collaboration with members in EC Programme Committees

SWOT 2023

	Helpful	Harmful
INTERNAL	**Strengths (S)** • Dedication • Knowledge & Expertise • Efficiency • Effectiveness • Colegiality • Trustworthy relationships with applicants	**Weaknesses (W)** • Inadequate time management • High work volume and pressure on NCP
EXTERNAL	**Opportunities (O)** • NCP community on Brainmap • NCP community on LinkedIn • Reach out to different communities (local & regional authorities; EEN; ADR) • Increased connectivity with and among organisations	**Threats (T)** • Insufficient collaboration with other Romanian NCPs • Too many new EU policies in a short time span • Unclear, chaotic EC processes and programmes, lack of predictability • Lack of collaboration with members in EC Programme Committees • Difficult to motivate applicants

SWOT 2024

	Helpful	Harmful
	Strengths (S)	**Weaknesses (W)**
INTERNAL	• Dedication • Knowledge & Expertise • Efficiency • Effectiveness • Colegiality • Trustworthy relationships with applicants • NCP community on Brainmap	• Inadequate time management • High work volume and pressure on NCP
	Opportunities (O)	**Threats (T)**
EXTERNAL	• NCP community on LinkedIn • Reach out to different communities (local & regional authorities; EEN; ADR) • Increased connectivity with and among organisations • Active involvement in NCP support project proposals (eg. ERC, EIT, MSCA)	• Insufficient collaboration with other Romanian NCPs • Too many new EU policies in a short time span • Unclear, chaotic EC processes and programmes, lack of predictability • Lack of collaboration with members in EC Programme Committees • Difficult to motivate applicants to submit and re-submit • Low success rates of HEu calls discourage the applicants

SWOT 2025 (jan. – jun.)

	Helpful	Harmful
INTERNAL	**Strengths (S)** • Dedication • Knowledge & Expertise • Efficiency • Effectiveness • Colegiality • Trustworthy relationships with applicants • Growing NCP community on Brainmap	**Weaknesses (W)** • Inadequate time management • High work volume and pressure on NCP
EXTERNAL	**Opportunities (O)** • NCP community on LinkedIn • Reach out to different communities (local & regional authorities; EEN; ADR) • Increased connectivity with and among organisations • Active involvement in NCP support project proposals (eg. ERC, EIT)	**Threats (T)** • Insufficient collaboration with other Romanian NCPs • Too many new EU policies in a short time span • Lack of collaboration with members in EC Programme Committees • Difficult to motivate applicants to submit and re-submit • Low success rates of HEu calls discourage the applicants

Annex 2. Strategic Gap Analysis

HE NCP@UEFISCDI Strategic Gap Analysis 2021		
Current State	**Actions**	**Objective/Desired State**
Where you are now	Steps to achieve your goal	Where you aim to be
First time full-time NCPs for an EU R&I framework programme. Uncharted territory…	**1. Applicant Perspective** • Expert and knowledgeable NCP • Quality of support materials **2. Internal Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • NCP training (reading, participation at NCP training) • Support materials (guides, presentations) **3. Learning & Growth Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • NCP@UEFISCDI capacity building and training. Build expertise on each HE programme. • Better communication skills (internal, external) **4. External Perspective (UEFISCDI, MCID, EC, NCP networks)** • Inform UEFISCDI on relevant calls, EC policies and documents	Capacity building. Each and all NCPs become experts on their HE programmes, to provide expert support and assistance to our colleagues to participate more and with more chances of success in the Horizon Europe programme.

HE NCP@UEFISCDI Strategic Gap Analysis 2022		
Current State	**Actions**	**Objective/Desired State**
Where you are now	Steps to achieve your goal	Where you aim to be
Applicants & Institutions • Potential applicants do not have enough confidence to submit project proposals in Horizon Europe • The existence of other funding opportunities at the national level • Not all Romanian institutions have a strategy for the development and submission of HE proposals and provide timely support for potential applicants. • Not all Romanian institutions have strong international visibility/networks to achieve partnerships in Horizon Europe. • Missing (or very few) profile organizations on the Funding&Tenders portal. • Need for support in writing the proposal. • Need for specific legal and financial information during the elaboration of the proposal.	**1. Applicant Perspective** • Expert and knowledgeable NCP • Quality of support materials • Prompt and useful assistance **2. Internal Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • Newsletter (info email for news and calls, NCP website update) • Support materials (guides, presentations) • Events (info days, workshops, seminars) – online, hybrid, in person • Q&A (email, phone..) • Meetings with applicants • NCP training (reading, participation at NCP training) • Establish and maintain links with the EC and relevant POs per HE programme **3. Learning & Growth Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • NCP@UEFISCDI capacity building and training. Build expertise on each HE programme. • Better communication skills (internal, external) **4. External Perspective (UEFISCDI, MCID, EC, NCP networks)** • Prompt, useful and documented response to requests • Inform UEFISCDI on relevant calls, EC policies and documents • Report to UEFISCDI, MCID, EC and NCP networks annually	Building internal capacities, awareness campaigns, and establishing professional working relationships with the Romanian academic and innovation community.

HE NCP@UEFISCDI Strategic Gap Analysis 2023		
Current State	**Actions**	**Objective/Desired State**
Where you are now	Steps to achieve your goal	Where you aim to be
Applicants & Institutions • Inadequate support at the institutional level for applicants, including motivating them to apply on HE. • Insufficient or inadequate support for the implementation of theHE projects project on the financial, logistical, infrastructure side. • Researchers are not motivated to apply. • Researchers express their interest in HE by contacting the NCP and/or completing the EOI on our website, the NCP opens the way for a dialogue, but not all researchers are interested to continue.	**1. Applicant Perspective** • Expert and knowledgeable NCP • Quality of support materials • Prompt and useful assistance **2. Internal Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • Newsletter (info email for news and calls, NCP website update, UEFISCDI website update, NCP Brainmap community update) • Support materials (guides, presentations, e-learning videos) • Events (info days, workshops, seminars) – online, hybrid, in person • Q&A (email, phone..) • Meetings with applicants • Assistance for finding partners (e.g. expression of interest, organization profile on platforms) • Proposal pre-check • Promote success stories • Build networks and develop connections between organizations (in Romania and outside) • NCP training (reading, participation at NCP training) • Establish and maintain links with the EC and relevant POs per HE programme **3. Learning & Growth Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • NCP@UEFISCDI capacity building and training. Build expertise on each HE programme. • Better communication skills (internal, external) **4. External Perspective (UEFISCDI, MCID, EC, NCP networks)** • Prompt, useful and documented response to requests • Inform UEFISCDI on relevant calls, EC policies and documents • Report to UEFISCDI, MCID, EC and NCP networks annually • Promote success stories to UEFISCDI, MCID, EC and NCP networks	Increasing the confidence of the Romanian academic and innovation community in the support and expertise of each National Contact Point of the NCP Unit.

HE NCP@UEFISCDI Strategic Gap Analysis 2024		
Current State	**Actions**	**Objective/Desired State**
Where you are now	Steps to achieve your goal	Where you aim to be
Applicants: • Misidentification of their motivation to do the project. • Lack of expertise for EC/HE requirements or lack of expertise for the chosen field of research. • Some applicants have difficult relationships with other organizations. • Lack of sufficient knowledge to match their very specific areas with HE project calls. **Institutions:** • Organizations not sending feedback to the NCP for what they need. • We receive their requests at the last minute. • Lack of links with other Romanian organizations. • They not share their knowledge/collaborators to foster further HE participation.	**1. Applicant Perspective** • Expert and knowledgeable NCP • Quality of support materials • Prompt and useful assistance **2. Internal Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • Newsletter (info email for news and calls, NCP website update, UEFISCDI website update, NCP Brainmap community update) • Support materials (guides, presentations, e-learning videos) • Events (info days, workshops, seminars) – online, hybrid, in person • Q&A (email, phone..) • Meetings with applicants • Assistance for finding partners (e.g. expression of interest, organization profile on platforms) • Proposal pre-check • Promote success stories • Build networks and develop connections between organizations (in Romania and outside) • NCP training (reading, participation at NCP training) • Establish and maintain links with the EC and relevant POs per HE programme **3. Learning & Growth Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • NCP@UEFISCDI capacity building and training. Build expertise on each HE programme. • Better communication skills (internal, external) **4. External Perspective (UEFISCDI, MCID, EC, NCP networks)** • Prompt, useful and documented response to requests • Inform UEFISCDI on relevant calls, EC policies and documents • Report to UEFISCDI, MCID, EC and NCP networks annually • Promote success stories to UEFISCDI, MCID, EC and NCP networks	Providing tailored guidance, support, and information to researchers, innovators, and institutions, ensuring they can effectively contribute to and benefit from the Horizon Europe programme.

HE NCP@UEFISCDI Strategic Gap Analysis 2025 (jan. - jun.)		
Current State	**Actions**	**Objective/Desired State**
Where you are now	Steps to achieve your goal	Where you aim to be
Applicants: • Misidentification of their motivation to do the project. • Lack of expertise for EC/HE requirements or lack of expertise for the chosen field of research. • Some applicants have difficult relationships with other organizations. • Lack of sufficient knowledge to match their very specific areas with HE project calls. **Institutions:** • Organizations not sending feedback to the NCP for what they need. • We receive their requests at the last minute. • Lack of links with other Romanian organizations. • They not share their knowledge/collaborators to foster further HE participation.	**1. Applicant Perspective** • Expert and knowledgeable NCP • Quality of support materials • Prompt and useful assistance **2. Internal Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • Newsletter (info email for news and calls, NCP website update, UEFISCDI website update, NCP Brainmap community update) • Support materials (guides, presentations, e-learning videos) • Events (info days, workshops, seminars) – online, hybrid, in person • Q&A (email, phone..) • Meetings with applicants • Assistance for finding partners (e.g. expression of interest, organization profile on platforms) • Proposal pre-check • Promote success stories • Build networks and develop connections between organizations (in Romania and outside) • NCP training (reading, participation at NCP training) • Establish and maintain links with the EC and relevant POs per HE programme **3. Learning & Growth Perspective (NCP@UEFISCDI)** • NCP@UEFISCDI capacity building and training. Build expertise on each HE programme. • Better communication skills (internal, external) **4. External Perspective (UEFISCDI, MCID, EC, NCP networks)** • Prompt, useful and documented response to requests • Inform UEFISCDI on relevant calls, EC policies and documents • Report to UEFISCDI, MEC, EC and NCP networks annually • Promote success stories to UEFISCDI, MEC, EC and NCP networks	Offering continuous assistance, information, and support to the Romanian academic and innovation community to strategically engage it in participating in and securing funding from Horizon Europe.

Annex 3. NCP Individual Strategy and Operational Plan 2021- 2027

Aim

To effectively disseminate information, provide support to applicants, and enhance Romania's participation in the Horizon Europe (HE) programmes assigned to each NCP.

The HE programmes assigned to the NCP Unit at UEFISCDI are: ERC, MSCA, CL2, CL6, EIC, EIE, EIT, Widening&ERA.

Objectives

O1. Increase awareness: Raise awareness about the HE programme, opportunities, and benefits among Romanian researchers, innovators, and businesses.

O2. Support and guidance to enhance participation: Increase the number of high-quality applications from Romania to the HE programmes. Provide comprehensive support and guidance to potential applicants throughout the application process.

O3. Network building and visibility: Facilitate the creation of networks and partnerships between Romanian and European organizations. Increase the visibility of Romanian organisations.

Actions and Indicators

O1. Information dissemination, awareness raising

> **O1.1. NCP website:** Develop and maintain a comprehensive, user-friendly website with detailed information on HE calls, guidelines, success stories, FAQs, and resources.
>
> **O1.2. Newsletters (info emails):** Regularly send out newsletters with updates on new calls, deadlines, and relevant events.
>
> **O1.3. Events and workshops:** Organize webinars, workshops, and info days to provide detailed information and guidance on HE programmes.
>
> **O1.4. Social media:** Use LinkedIn to share news, success stories, and engage with the community.

Indicators:

I1.1. Website traffic and user engagement metrics.

I1.2. Number of newsletters sent per HE programme.

I1.3. Number of events organized and participant feedback.

I1.4. Social media engagement metrics (followers, likes, shares).

O2. Application support services

> **O2.1. Email support:** Provide email support for inquiries and assistance.
>
> **O2.2. Support materials**: Elaborate support materials (guides, presentations, e-learning videos) in Romanian and English.
>
> **O2.3. Proposal design:** Meetings (online, in person) to discuss and assist proposal design.
>
> **O2.4. Proposal review:** Pre-submission proposal review (pre-check) to enhance the quality of applications.
>
> **O2.5. Training and capacity building for applicants:** Organize training sessions (online, in person) on proposal writing, submission process and project management for potential applicants.
>
> **O2.6. Matchmaking services:** Facilitate matchmaking services to connect applicants with potential partners for collaborative projects (e.g. expression of interest, organization profile on platforms, brokerage events).

Indicators:

I2.1. Number of inquiries handled through email and phone (support interactions).

I2.2. Number of support materials (guides, presentations, e-learning videos).

I2.3. Number of proposal design meetings with applicants.
I2.4. Number of proposals reviewed and feedback provided.
I2.5. Number of training sessions conducted by NCP and participant feedback.
I2.6. Number of successful matchmakings and visibility initiated.

O3. Network building and visibility

O3.1. National and European networks: Contribute to national and European networks to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing.
O3.2. Knowledge and innovation ecosystem: Engage with the EEN, ADR, local authorities, including academia and innovation communities in Romania.
O3.3. HE programme community: Create and develop a community for each HE programme to benefit from information, networking, and training opportunities.
O3.4. Promotion of success stories: Highlight and promote success stories and case studies of Romanian entities that have benefited from HE funding ("Success @ Horizon!").

Indicators:
I3.1. Number of networking events organized.
I3.2. Number of new connections and partnerships formed.
I3.3. Increase in Romanian participants in the HE programme community.
I3.4. Number of success stories (case studies) shared.
I3.5. Number of Romanian organisations' profiles on European platforms.

O4. NCP training-capacity building

O4.1. Participate in EU NCP support networks: NCPs to engage with EU NCP support networks to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and collaborate on cross-border initiatives. NCPs to participate in specialized working groups within the EU NCP networks.
O4.2. Attend EC webinars and workshops: NCPs regularly attend webinars and workshops organized by the European Commission (EC) to stay updated on Horizon Europe (HE) and other EU programs. Provide NCPs with resources and support to effectively apply the knowledge gained from these webinars.
O4.3. Allocate time for studying EC and HE documents: Schedule and monitor dedicated study time for NCPs to review and stay updated on relevant EC and Horizon Europe (HE) documents, guidelines, and updates.
O4.4. Facilitate peer learning and knowledge sharing: NCPs to share their experiences, challenges, and solutions with peers, enhancing collective knowledge. Peer-review sessions where NCPs can critique and provide feedback on each other's proposals or strategies.

Indicators:
I4.1. Number of NCP trainings conducted within the EU NCP support networks.
I4.2. Number of active NCP participants in EU NCP support network activities.
I4.3. Number of NCPs attending EC webinars and workshops.
I4.4. Number of EC webinars attended by each NCP.
I4.5. Percentage of NCPs reporting increased knowledge and confidence after attending EC webinars.
I4.6. Average hours per month allocated by NCPs for studying EC and HE documents.
I4.7. Average number of key documents reviewed by NCPs each month.
I4.8. Level of participation in knowledge-sharing platforms (from 1 to 10).
I4.9. Number of NCPs reporting increased confidence and skills from peer interactions.

Annex 4. NCP EIC&EIE Individual Strategy and Operational Plan

Specific actions

1. Targeted awareness campaigns to inform specific sectors and stakeholders about EIC & EIE opportunities.

Why: Many potential applicants may not be aware of the EIC programs or how they can benefit from them.

Actions:

- Identify key sectors with high innovation potential (e.g., IT, biotech, green energy).
- Use sector-specific channels and events to disseminate information.
- Leverage media partnerships for broader reach.

Indicator: Increase in the number of inquiries and expressions of interest from targeted sectors.

2. Provide training and capacity-building programs focused on EIC-EIE applications.

Why: Low success rates often comes from poorly written proposals and lack of understanding of the application process.

Actions:

- Organize workshops and webinars on EIC & EIE application processes, focusing on successful proposal characteristics.
- Offer assistance and support for high-potential applicants.

Indicator: Improvement in the quality of submitted proposals and feedback from training participants.

3. Proposal review and feedback

Why: Providing constructive feedback before submission can significantly improve proposal quality.

Actions:

- Establish a team of sector-specific experts to review and provide detailed feedback on draft proposals.
- Set deadlines for submitting proposals for review well before the EIC & EIE deadlines.

Indicator: Increase in the number of proposals receiving positive feedback from the EIC & EIE.

4. Promote success stories and case studies of previous Romanian EIC & EIE applicants.

Why: Highlighting local success can inspire and motivate potential applicants. Provide concrete and practical tips and hints.

Actions:

- Create detailed case studies of successful applicants.
- Feature these stories prominently on the NCP website, newsletters, and social media.

Indicator: Higher engagement with promotional materials and increased interest in EIC & EIE programs.

5. Personalized consultation services to potential applicants.

Why: Direct, individualized support can address specific challenges and questions.

Actions:

- Set up a meeting system for one-on-one consultations.
- Provide tailored advice based on the applicant's project and sector.

Indicator: High satisfaction rates from consultation services and higher application submission rates.

6. Engagement with industry leaders and experts. Involve industry leaders and experts in the support process.

Why: Insights and advice from experienced professionals can greatly enhance proposal quality.

Actions:
- Create a group of industry leaders and innovation experts (EEN).
- Organize training programs where applicants can receive guidance from industry professionals.

Indicator: Improved proposal quality and increased success rates.

NCP EIC&EIE Focus
(to be monitored and revised annually)

EIC Pathfinder

EIC Pathfinder supports early-stage development of future and emerging breakthrough technologies. It targets high-risk, high-gain projects and is suitable for research-intensive and groundbreaking ideas.
Relevance for Romania:
- Research strengths. Romania has a solid academic and research base, with several universities and research institutions excelling in various fields.
- Innovation potential: There is significant potential for groundbreaking innovations in areas such as information technology, biotechnology, and renewable energy.
- Funding needs: Early-stage, high-risk projects often face challenges in securing initial funding, which Pathfinder can address.

NCP potential actions:
- Develop collaborations between academia and industry to develop high-risk, high-reward projects.
- Conduct targeted campaigns in research institutions to raise awareness about Pathfinder opportunities.
- Provide support for proposal development, including training on how to articulate high-risk, high-gain projects.

EIC Transition

EIC Transition funds innovation activities that go beyond the experimental proof of principle in laboratory to support both the maturation and validation of novel technologies and the development of a business case.
Relevance for Romania:
- Bridging the gap: Many Romanian projects successfully achieve proof of concept but struggle to transition towards market readiness.
- Commercialization challenges: Transition funding can help address challenges related to technology maturation and business model development.
- SME support: Romania has a growing number of innovative SMEs that can benefit from support to scale up their technologies.

NCP potential actions:
- Identify projects that have demonstrated proof of concept and need assistance in transitioning to market-ready solutions.
- Facilitate connections with potential investors and industry partners to aid in the transition phase.

EIC Accelerator

EIC Accelerator offers funding and support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups with high-risk, high-potential innovations to help them develop and scale up their business.
Relevance for Romania:
- Start-Up ecosystem: Romania's start-up ecosystem is growing, with an increasing number of tech-based start-ups and SMEs showing potential for innovation.

- Market expansion: Many Romanian SMEs are looking to expand their market reach and scale their operations.
- Support for growth: Accelerator funding can provide the necessary resources for SMEs to scale up, including funding, mentoring, and market access.

NCP potential actions:

- Identify high-potential SMEs and start-ups that can benefit from Accelerator funding and support.

Annex 5. Implementation plan – Gantt chart NCP@UEFISCDI

Implementation plan

Year 1-2 (2021-2023): Focus on building internal capacities, awareness campaigns, and establishing professional working relationships with the Romanian academic and innovation community.

Year 3-4 (2024-2025): Intensify support services, enhance digital tools, and expand outreach activities.

Year 5 onwards (2026-2027): Evaluate progress, refine strategies, and aim for greater integration of Romanian entities in Horizon Europe.

Gantt Chart 2021-2022

	2021	2022	
	Sem. II	Sem. I	Sem. II
O1. Information dissemination, awareness raising			
O1.1. NCP website			
O1.2. Newsletters (info emails)			
O1.3. Events and workshops			
O1.4. Social media			
O2. Application support services			
O2.1. Email support			
O2.2. Support materials			
O2.3. Proposal design			
O2.4. Proposal review			
O2.5. Training and capacity building for applicants			
O2.6. Matchmaking services			
O3. Network building and visibility			
O3.1. National and European networks			
O3.2. Knowledge and innovation ecosystem			
O3.3. HE programme community			
O3.4. Promotion of success stories			
O4. NCP training-capacity building			
O4.1. Participate in EU NCP support networks			
O4.2. Attend EC webinars and workshops			
O4.3. Allocate time for studying EC and HE documents			
O4.4. Facilitate peer learning and knowledge sharing			

Gantt Chart 2021-2023

	2021	2022		2023	
	Sem. II	Sem. I	Sem. II	Sem. I	Sem. II
O1. Information dissemination, awareness raising					
O1.1. NCP website					
O1.2. Newsletters (info emails)					
O1.3. Events and workshops					
O1.4. Social media					
O2. Application support services					
O2.1. Email support					
O2.2. Support materials					
O2.3. Proposal design					
O2.4. Proposal review					
O2.5. Training and capacity building for applicants					
O2.6. Matchmaking services					
O3. Network building and visibility					
O3.1. National and European networks					
O3.2. Knowledge and innovation ecosystem					
O3.3. HE programme community					
O3.4. Promotion of success stories					
O4. NCP training-capacity building					
O4.1. Participate in EU NCP support networks					
O4.2. Attend EC webinars and workshops					
O4.3. Allocate time for studying EC and HE documents					
O4.4. Facilitate peer learning and knowledge sharing					

Gantt Chart 2021-2024

	2021	2022		2023		2024	
	Sem. II	Sem. I	Sem. II	Sem. I	Sem. II	Sem. I	Sem. II
O1. Information dissemination, awareness raising		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O1.1. NCP website		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O1.2. Newsletters (info emails)		▓	▓	▓			
O1.3. Events and workshops		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O1.4. Social media		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O2. Application support services	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O2.1. Email support	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O2.2. Support materials	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O2.3. Proposal design				▓	▓	▓	▓
O2.4. Proposal review			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O2.5. Training and capacity building for applicants			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O2.6. Matchmaking services				▓	▓	▓	▓
O3. Network building and visibility				▓	▓	▓	▓
O3.1. National and European networks				▓	▓	▓	▓
O3.2. Knowledge and innovation ecosystem				▓	▓	▓	▓
O3.3. HE programme community					▓	▓	▓
O3.4. Promotion of success stories				▓	▓	▓	▓
O4. NCP training-capacity building	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O4.1. Participate in EU NCP support networks			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O4.2. Attend EC webinars and workshops	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O4.3. Allocate time for studying EC and HE documents	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
O4.4. Facilitate peer learning and knowledge sharing							▓

Annex 6 – Horizon Europe NCP Guide. Minimum standards and guiding principles for setting up national contact point (NCP) systems

European Commission

Horizon Europe (HORIZON)

NCP Guide

Minimum standards and guiding principles for setting up national contact point (NCP) systems

Version 3.0
15 December 2024

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This guide establishes the minimum standards and guiding principles for the setting up of national contact point (NCP) systems in the EU Member States and other countries participating in the Horizon Europe Framework Programme.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
Version	**Publication date**	**Changes**
1.0	04.05.2021	▪ Initial version.
2.0	15.05.2024	▪ Creation of the new NCP configuration 'The New European Bauhaus R&I NCPs'. Update in Annex 1, point no. 19 was added. In Addition, few technical corrections have been done in the document.
3.0	15.12.2024	▪ Update to the new Financial Regulation 2024/2509. ▪ Reformatting in line with Portal documents standards.

Table of contents

Minimum standards and guiding principles

1. Context

National Contact Points (NCPs) are support structures that have become an essential component in the implementation of successive Framework Programmes. They provide information and on-the ground advice to potential applicants and beneficiaries, through the project life cycle, in their own language, in a manner that would be impossible for the Commission and its Agencies acting alone.

A system of NCPs will be established for Horizon Europe, building on the experience of previous R&I Framework Programmes. To promote equal and consistent support, this document provides a common reference for all participating countries.

2. Mission

As highly professional support services, NCPs operating nationally will form an essential component of Horizon Europe implementation. They will have a key role in delivering the programme's objectives and impacts ensuring that it becomes known and readily accessible to all potential applicants, irrespective of sector or discipline.

3. Key principles and minimum standards

For the national NCP systems:

a) The system of NCPs will be established, operated and financed under the responsibility of the Member States and Associated Countries. While acknowledging different national circumstances, the relevant national authorities will ensure compliance with these minimum standards and guiding principles, including sufficient administrative capacity and performance monitoring. Member States and Associated Countries can designate more than one individual per NCP.

b) Member States and Associated Countries may adapt and extend the NCP structure to national/regional[1] circumstances, but any such modifications will not form part of the commonly recognised system.

c) Robust rules for ensuring confidentiality and for avoiding conflicts of interest should be established, in accordance with national law. In accordance with national law, systems should be in place to ensure that confidential information that comes into the possession of NCPs is treated accordingly.

d) A national NCP Coordinator will collaborate with the national authority in the operational management of that country's NCP system. In doing so the Coordinator will maintain an overview of the national system, to ensure overall operational consistency. The Coordinator will also liaise with the Commission coordinating services on cross-cutting questions that are not covered by other NCPs (See Annex 1).The Coordinator is also the contact person for general questions on partnerships and missions that are not covered by other NCPs listed in Annex 1.

e) A Horizon Europe dedicated web portal will be established by the relevant national authority in every country, building on existing web portals as appropriate. The portal will include relevant EU visual identity, essential references, and clear links to all the relevant national support services (which may themselves be subject to distinct web sites). The portal will provide a single entry point for all participants, including SMEs and particularly those new to EU programmes. The Commission will ensure that EUROPA (Funding & Tenders Portal) provides direct links to the national portals.

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[1] Including outermost regions, if applicable.

f) The Commission will facilitate the organisation and operation of the NCPs, provide coordination and training where necessary, and help ensure compliance with the minimum standards and guiding principles.

g) The Commission will ensure support for NCPs inter alia through regular meetings before calls as well as training and coaching. The Commission will also strengthen dedicated support structures and facilitate trans-national cooperation among them, as indicated in the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe[2].

h) Cooperation with the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) will be set up in each country, taking into account national circumstances. This will include provisions for a one-stop-shop service for SMEs, particularly newcomers, directing potential applicants to the most appropriate service.

i) Third Countries are also invited to nominate NCPs in line with the common structure.

For each NCP[3]:

a) The work of NCPs has to be guided by the principles of transparency and equal access to calls under Horizon Europe.

b) The work of NCPs should be independent and not be partial to the interests of individual stakeholders.

c) NCPs should be supported within their respective host organisations or by their national authorities in terms of staff and equipment (e.g. IT) to a level commensurate with the scope of the mandate, and the size of the potential constituency.

d) The NCP service should be accessible by e-mail and phone during working hours, with appropriate back-up arrangements in the case of absences (e.g. functional mailbox).

e) Every NCP should be fully conversant with the objectives, principles and content of that programme part for which they are the nominated experts. NCPs should at least be aware of opportunities provided by the relevant programmes (see Annex 3), and be familiar with the relevant sources of advice in the country concerned (e.g. Managing Authorities).

f) NCPs should be knowledgeable about all aspects of Horizon Europe beyond their area of expertise thereby allowing effective signposting in line with the principle of 'no wrong door' (effective communication channels and cooperation activities within the national NCP networks and the relevant services of the Commission should be established).

g) In line with the collaborative nature of the programme and with the goals of the European Research Area, NCPs should be ready to participate actively in transnational networks. They may act as trainers or as trainees as appropriate and as the case may be.

h) All NCPs will establish mutually supporting relationships with the EEN in their country, in accordance with the national arrangements.

i) NCPs should be good communicators, and be able to adapt methods as necessary, taking into account the diversity of actors that make up their constituency.

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[2] Council Decision (EU) 2021/764 of 10 May 2021 establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and repealing Decision 2013/743/EU,(*OJ L 167I , 12.5.2021, p. 1).*

[3] Because of their specific role, not all of the provisions of this document apply to the NCPs for the Joint Research Centre (See Annex 1 for more details).

4. Core functions of a NCP

Informing and awareness raising

a) Circulate general and specific documentation on the Horizon Europe, including on conditions for participation, on possibilities and conditions for submission of proposals, and on project budgeting and reporting.

b) Organise information and promotional activities – in liaison with the Commission services when appropriate - e.g. info-days, seminars, conferences, newsletters, web sites, brokerage events, fairs, etc.

c) Raise awareness of:

– Horizon Europe funding opportunities offered through the pillars of the programme and the specific parts such as Pillar II Clusters, the Missions[4], European Partnerships, and EIT KICs, newly established activities of the European Innovation Council in Horizon Europe, especially the equity funding mechanism of the Accelerator;

– The objectives to ensure gender balance in Horizon Europe and of strengthening the link between science and civil society;

– The activities of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the in-house science service of the Commission, to relevant national stakeholders from the scientific community, industry and public authorities.

Assisting, advising and training

a) Assist researchers and organisations, in particular new actors and SMEs, with a view to increasing and improving their participation in Horizon Europe.

b) Assist in partner search activities notably by using internet based tools, co-operation networks, EEN partnership services for SMES, etc.

c) Advise on administrative procedures, rules and issues (e.g. role and responsibilities of participants in a consortium, costs, rights and obligations of participants, ethical rules and for the principles laid down in the Commission Recommendation C(2005)576 on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their Recruitment).

d) Advise participants, in particular smaller organisations and SMEs, on the setting up of appropriate management and legal structures in projects with large budgets or numerous participants.

e) Explain the scope and the modalities of types of action foreseen in Horizon Europe.

f) Organise courses and training sessions (both physical and virtual) on Horizon Europe where appropriate, for intermediaries and information multipliers to ensure high quality of advice.

g) Where appropriate, organise courses and training seminars for specific target groups on specific topics (legal aspects, modalities for participation, research and innovation areas, financial rules, Open Science practices and FAIR[5] management of digital research outputs, etc.).

Signposting and cooperation

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4 There is a dedicated NCP for Missions; other NCPs should collaborate with that and work on signposting Missions.
5 Fair, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable

a) Signpost to other business support network services those potential participants who require assistance, for example on general EU matters or matters relating to internal market, technology transfer, intellectual property rights (IPR), standardization bodies, or regional development (see Annex 3).

b) Strengthen cooperation between NCPs within the network by promoting joint activities (see Annex 4).

c) Signpost to national/regional funding services and programmes and collaboration with Missions[6], European Partnerships and programme level research funders.

5. Cooperation between NCPs and Commission services

The Commission considers NCPs to be important partners in the implementation of Horizon Europe and the main structure for providing practical information and assistance to potential participants. NCPs are ambassadors at national level for Horizon Europe, perceived as true and impartial partners of the Commission Services and its Executive Agencies. The NCPs shall be the main interface between the Commission, its Executive Agencies and the applicants. The direct contact between the Commission, its Executive Agencies and the NCPs shall be ensured to facilitate a good communication and ensure standard high level of support to NCPs.

Main interactions

The Commission will:

a) Establish an efficient, up-to-date information channel (meetings, mailing lists, newsletters, webinars, alerts, newsfeed, CIRCABC) between the Commission, its Executive Agencies and the NCPs.

b) Provide in-time general and specialist in-depth information for the appropriate performance of the NCPs at the earliest[7] on:

– Relevant changes in the Funding & Tenders Portal

– Roadmaps, work programmes and upcoming calls

– Changes in priorities or administrative procedures, particular provisions related to externalised bodies

– Statistics of calls and evaluations (including the externalised measures) and other relevant information on funded projects, striving for equally high quality of information flow throughout

– Instruments and tools for promoting the calls (brokerage, proposal templates, guide for applicants)

– Other European R&I - programmes in all areas of the programme in the field of research and innovation (see Annex 3).

In particular, after the applicants' information of their evaluation results, the Member States and Associated Country NCP Coordinators will receive information on the proposals and their outcome; NCPs in third countries will receive aggregated data.

c) Invite NCPs to:

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6 There is a dedicated NCP for Missions.
7 Before the release to the general public when possible.

- Regular NCP meetings at least once a year[8] (mixture of physical and on-line[9] meetings to provide information and specific trainings if needed),

- Information and awareness actions related to the activities that are organised by the Commission services and its Agencies,

- Thematic conferences and seminars which the programme directorates organise,

- Specific actions related to the implementation of missions and partnerships.

The Commission will reimburse their travel and subsistence costs, according to the Commission rules and policy[10]. NCPs from third countries will not be reimbursed.

d) Provide leaflets, brochures and other relevant information for further distribution by NCPs.

e) Support NCP structures during national info-days and events when possible.

Practical modalities

The Commission will:

a) Nominate contact persons for NCPs in the Commission services mirroring the NCP structure.

b) Identify a contact point for encouraging mutually supporting relationships between NCPs and EEN on the basis of mutually binding guidelines.

c) Establish and operate a NCP web area for supplying information and as a discussion forum.

d) Support collaboration through specific NCP networking projects in the different Horizon Europe programme areas to address and advise the respective communities better/more specifically.

e) Ensure that NCPs are fully informed about the reimbursement rules applicable for their participation to meetings, and any relevant updates. These rules will be available with invitations for attending such meetings.

f) Where practicable, NCPs in third countries will be invited to participate in the activities and events mentioned above, but should not receive any financial support from the European Commission unless specifically agreed otherwise.

Maintaining and improving quality

a) The transnational networks mentioned above will, among other objectives, foster the minimum standards and enhance the competence of NCPs where needed.

b) For the NCP system as a whole, the Commission will convene regularly meetings of the NCP Coordinators to provide an opportunity to discuss the collaboration based on the minimum standards, share experience, identify good practices and address problems including pre-meetings and interactive sessions for internal exchange and possibility for peer learning. The training programme mentioned above will be developed in this context.

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[8] Depending on the foreseen calls and related needs.
[9] Use of digital media (streaming of meetings and webinars).
[10] Based on Commission Decision C(2007)5858 on Reimbursement of experts' costs.

Widening participation

The Commission will:

a) Provide specific training regarding the different widening instruments (e.g. TEAMING, TWINNING, ERA-CHAIRS, COST and widening fellowships).

b) Inform about the practicalities, legal & financial aspects and administrative needs.

c) Provide professional training on pre-proposal check regarding the different widening instruments.

d) Disseminate statistics and best-practices regarding the widening instruments.

e) Promote information and training events for stakeholders in the widening countries.

6. Nomination and recognition process

In appointing NCPs, it is important to avoid situations that could later give rise to potential conflicts of interest, particularly where the host organisation of a NCP may itself become an applicant in a proposal, or use its NCP status to gain or grant undue advantage. Confirmation in writing that the NCPs have read and accepted these minimum standards, and in particular the sections on confidentiality and avoidance of conflict of interest, must be included in their appointment letter and transmitted to the Commission by electronic means.

On behalf of the relevant national authorities, the Permanent Representations should send (only electronically) the appointment letter of the NCPs to the Director-General of DG Research and Innovation (with the template filled in appropriately), via the FMB RTD-NCP-NOMINATIONS@ec.europa.eu. This letter will include the names and contact details (address, telephone, organisation, email coordinates, etc.) of the appointed NCPs.

Any subsequent changes of the appointed NCPs should be communicated in the same way. However, changes of contact details can just be sent to the relevant DG R&I service for RTD NCP NOMINATIONS (FMB RTD-NCP-NOMINATIONS@ec.europa.eu).

The Commission will publish and regularly update the appointed NCPs on the Funding & Tenders Portal, and refer to it in the guidance and other information material.

If it becomes apparent that an NCP, or group of NCPs, is failing to comply with these minimum standards, the Commission services will raise the matter with the national authority, as appropriate. The aim will be to identify how best to improve the services, and to propose remedial actions.

If the problem persists, or in the case of grave misconduct, the Commission will inform the national authority or Permanent Representation. If necessary, having first consulted the national authority, the NCP(s) in question will be "de-recognised" and the national authority concerned will be invited to nominate a new NCP.

This will mean that the Commission will remove the NCP from the mailing lists, and will no longer send it information, including any confidential one. The NCP will no longer be listed on the relevant EU web site(s).

Further consequences due to the non-compliance to these minimum standards may apply to the NCP and the NCP host organisation, based on the Financial Regulation[11].

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[11] Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024).

7. Confidentiality

A written declaration from the relevant national authority will be required by the Commission, confirming that the measures in accordance with national law are in place with regard to the handling of any confidential information (e.g. the outcome of the evaluations).

8. Conflict of interest

a) NCPs must satisfy the requirements for avoidance of conflicts of interest between their NCPs activities and the rest of their professional activities. In all circumstances, NCPs must act to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest and ensure that they provide equal treatment to all participants.

b) NCPs will not be appointed as proposal evaluators or 'observers' in Horizon Europe proposal award procedures.

c) Special rules apply for the participation of an NCP in a proposal or in a project. In this context "participation in a proposal or in a project" means a named NCP identified as either carrying out the R&I activities, or in an advisory or supporting role (e.g. project advisory board). NCPs, acting in that capacity, shall not provide letters of support or similar documents in relation to specific proposals.

d) An NCP must not participate in a proposal or in a project in relation to the work programme part where it provides NCP services, unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Commission allows such participation, due to the specific nature of a given call (e.g. European Partnerships, dedicated CSAs for transnational cooperation between NCPs or collaboration between research funders).

e) If a host organisation does act as an applicant, mitigating measures should be established within the institution if necessary (e.g. "firewalls" between the departments involved in submitting proposals, and those responsible for the NCP function)[12]. In practice, if an NCP participates in a proposal or in a project in relation to a work programme part other than the one where he or she provides NCP services, the host organisation must:

– put in place measures to ensure that the NCP concerned does not receive confidential and privileged information from other NCPs,

– inform the Commission as soon as they start preparing the proposal (via written declaration) and the national Coordinator of the intended involvement of the NCP, describing the mitigating measures within the institution, and confirming that the necessary measures are in place.

f) An NCP may participate in an advisory or supporting role in a project, once grant preparation has started.

In case an NCP or a host organisation does not comply with the provisions of this section, it will be requested to withdraw from the proposal/action. Non-compliance may also lead to the consequences set in Articles 138 and 143 of the Financial Regulation (e.g. exclusion or rejection of a person or entity from participating in an award procedure or in an application/action).

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[12] This is not applicable to calls for proposals targeted at NCPs themselves (e.g. transnational networks).

Annex 1

NCP structure

1. NCP Coordinator
2. Legal and Financial aspects[13]
3. European Research Council (ERC)
4. Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)
5. Research Infrastructures
6. Health (including related partnerships)
7. Culture, creativity and Inclusive Society (including related partnerships)
8. Civil Security for Society (including related partnerships)
9. Digital, Industry and Space (including related partnerships)
10. Climate, Energy and Mobility (including related partnerships)
11. Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment (including related partnerships)
12. The European Innovation Council (EIC) and European Innovation ecosystems
13. Widening Participation and ERA[14]
14. Fission
15. Fusion
16. Joint Research Centre[15]
17. European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)
18. EU Mission
19. New European Bauhaus R&I[16]

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[13] Including legal and financial aspects related to gender equality, open access and open science, R&I integrity and ethics

[14] Including funding opportunities related to gender equality, open access and open science, R&I integrity and ethics.

[15] As the science and knowledge service of the European Commission, the Joint Research Centre carries out research and provides independent scientific advice and evidence to EU and national policymakers. JRC NCPs act as intermediaries and operational contact points between the JRC and the relevant stakeholders in their countries.
The JRC NCPs main missions are:
    i) to raise awareness about the JRC;
    ii) to provide information about the JRC to relevant stakeholders from the scientific community, industry and public authorities in their country;
    iii) to advise and support relevant stakeholders regarding the practical modalities to collaborate with or work at the JRC;
    iv) to foster the contacts and collaboration between the JRC and relevant stakeholders in their country;
    v) to act as a source of information and support for the activities of the JRC in relation with their country, notably to promote science for policy in their country in line with JRC priorities concerning, on the one hand, the green and digital transitions and, on the other, achieving a resilient, sustainable and innovative society.

[16] The New European Bauhaus R&I NCPs set up under these Guiding Principles deal only with the implementation of the research and innovation component of the New European Bauhaus under Horizon Europe. They have to be clearly distinguished from the National Contact Points set up to promote the New European Bauhaus more generally [https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/about/national-contact-points_en].

Annex 2

Terminology

Client: Any potential applicant or other participant in Horizon Europe seeking assistance from an NCP (the term does not imply payment for services rendered.)

Commission coordinating service:

An official in charge of coordination of the network as a whole. Liaises primarily with the national NCP coordinators.

Commission NCP Correspondent:

Officials in charge of exchanges with the individual NCP functions.

Commission services: European Commission including their executive agencies.

Host organisation: The legal entity (ministry, agency, research body, company etc.) to which an NCP is affiliated.

National authority: The relevant government department responsible for the Horizon Europe NCP system. NCP nominations are made officially by the national authority.

National Contact Point (NCP):

Individual(s) officially nominated by the national authority to perform one or more of the NCP functions in line with the common structure.

National NCP Coordinator: NCP in charge of coordinating the national system, and other horizontal tasks, and the main interlocutor with the Commission on operational policy questions.

Annex 3

Non-exhaustive list of potential related Horizon Europe programmes and services

(to be updated according to MFF)

COSME

ESIF

Erasmus+

ICT Knowledge

Digital Europe

European Defence Fund

LIFE

Invest EU

EIB

Structural Funds

YourEurope

Solvit

Annex 4

Examples of best practices between NCPs and other networks

Enterprise Europe Network:

There are many good practices for NCP-EEN collaboration that started during the previous Framework Programmes and that need to be reinforced. These are enabled by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) signed between different EEN Sector Groups and NCP CSAs. Within these MoUs following actions could be strengthened:

– Co-organisation of info-days to promote HE calls

– Co-organisation of brokerage events including at trade fairs

– Exchange of partner search profiles to enhance participation of SMEs in HE calls

– Co-organisation of training sessions

– on "how to prepare a successful proposal" addressed to potential applicants

– on pitching in front of jury panels

– Co-organisation of NCP-EEN workshops to exchange experience and good practices

For a more effective continuation of these existing good practices:

– The implementation of the MoUs must be strictly monitored

– Focus should be put on the joint elaboration of annual cooperation plans/activities

– Better coordination should be ensured for the partner search profiles between NCPs and EENs, where relevant

Joint NCP-EEN cooperation could also:

– aim at the involvement of associated/third countries

– explore common activities with the Digital Innovation Hubs

– explore the exploitation possibilities offered by the Innovation Radar

In order to further enhance the NCP-EEN collaboration in the future:

– cooperation at national and regional level could be envisaged in form of regular meetings between NCP Coordinators and thematic NCPs and the EEN national/regional consortia which could also facilitate mutual learning

– NCPs could rely on EEN advisors' expertise in access-to-funding consultation when it comes to the assistance for the Seal-of-Excellence holders