

# Excellence Hubs

**HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07-01**

**Topic Conditions Brochure**

**NCP@UEFISCDI**

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## Preambul

Acest material suport integrează informații referitoare la instrumentul de finanțare:

**"Excellence Hubs - HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07-01"**

extrase din următoarele surse:

1. Work Programme „Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area”

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-11-widening-participation-and-strengthening-the-european-research-area\\_horizon-2023-2024\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-11-widening-participation-and-strengthening-the-european-research-area_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf)

2. Topic description and Destination din „Funding&Tenders opportunities”

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-widera-2023-access-07-01>

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**Citate și extrase din documentele Comisiei Europene - Horizon Europe - "Excellence Hubs - HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07-01"/Work Programme „Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area” 2023-2024 / Topic description, Destination & FAQ – „Funding&Tenders opportunities”**

**Imagine folosită pe pagina de copertă: Parsa, <https://unsplash.com/photos/a-computer-generated-image-of-lines-and-shapes-pMvHxhusJ80>**

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## CONSORTIA/PLACE BASED ECOSYSTEM<sup>1</sup>

### □ Consortia

- at least two different place-based R&I ecosystems in at least two different countries eligible to host the co-ordinator under the widening part of Horizon Europe

### □ Place-based ecosystem/geographical reference

- place-based ecosystem ≡ ecosystem operating in a specific territorial (i.e. regional or local context)\*
  - four different categories of actors/each ecosystem
    - academic institutions (universities and/or non-university research centers or labs)
    - business entities (active established firms with relevant revenues)
    - public authorities or authorised agencies
    - societal actors (civil society organisations, associations, citizens, end users, media, cultural actors etc.)
  - geographic proximity, favours close links between actors (especially academia and business)
  - border-crossing ecosystems (e.g. in EUregio context) including two or more countries ≡ "place-based" ecosystems, too

\* The territorial context and place based approach should be described in the proposal.

- no prescribed geographical reference such as a territorial unit defined by NUT

### □ Not place based ecosystems i.e. connected by geographical proximity (e.g. from different countries)

- Not place based ecosystems can participate
  - in addition to the minimum condition of having two quadruple helix ecosystems in the consortium
  - added value of participation (to be clearly demonstrated)

### □ Ideal number of consortia partners (i.e. organisations)

- no prescribed maximum number of partners
- typical consortium: two (minimum condition) to four place-based ecosystems, such as:
  - 10 to 16 partners (appropriate consortium size)
  - do not exceed 25 partners (oversized consortia/management difficulties)

### □ Practice of the consortium – who sign the contract

- quadruple helix needs to be presented in the proposal either:
  - by one or more umbrella organisations (e.g. clusters) or
  - representative individual entities (representing each of the four categories)
- for complex innovation ecosystems, with a large number of members (when there is no umbrella organisation)
  - limited number of core partners (at least two, one research + one established business partner) represent the consortium and sign the grant agreement (GA)
  - other members of the ecosystem are listed in the proposal (incl. short description of their roles) and do not sign the GA
- the associated partners:

- benefit from the knowledge generated and services offered by the project (e.g. training, study visits)
- contribute with their expertise to the strategic work of the consortium
- potential option if applicable - use of affiliated partners
- *are not eligible to incur direct personnel cost but may benefit via service contracts (other goods and services), staff secondment to core partners, travel and subsistence for meeting participation and expert honoraria*

#### □ **Dedicated legal entity or agreement (incl. all components of the quadruple helix)**

- **no obligation**
- recommended: to make use of existing umbrella organisations (e.g. clusters) to reduce the number of individual consortium members
- consortium agreement is mandatory according to the general conditions (no further requirements for formal agreements)

#### □ **SMEs versus over large companies**

- SMEs are especially encouraged to participate
- Ecosystems  $\equiv$  adequate mix of large and small companies acc. to the chosen domain and business sector.

#### □ **Partners from non-widening countries**

- non widening partners (not necessarily a fully quadruple helix ecosystem) can participate if the minimum condition is fulfilled and:
  - the coordinator is from a widening country
  - clear centre of gravity in widening countries
  - at least 70% of the financial resources of the project is allocated to widening countries
  - benefits for widening countries are demonstrated and in line with the political objective of the programme
  - contribution from non-widening countries  $\equiv$  transfer of knowledge and good practice or a specialised expertise

#### □ **Business entities (active established firms with relevant revenues)**

- at least one of the business entities per ecosystem (not start-up) having:
  - significant and proven operational income by commercial activity (not public funding) and enclosing balance sheets or extracts from annual business reports
  - at least two years of existing before the call publication
- consultants and start-ups may participate too, if duly justified.

#### □ **Societal actors**

- should be selected acc. to their added value for the project and its R&I context.
  - their added value, outreach and impact will be evaluated by the experts
- should be neither commercial nor part of the public administration
  - business associations are normally not considered societal actors

#### □ **European relevance**

- 'European relevance' - there is an added value of a joint European funding versus isolated regional/national activities for the participating ecosystems
  - The consortium is more than the sum of the individual ecosystems and the proposed European collaboration (as a whole) brings strategic benefits

## PROJECT CORE COMPONENTS<sup>1</sup>

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

### □ Cross-border joint R&I strategy

- no template or standardised approach for the R&I strategy
- key elements:
  - analysis of research and development needs and gaps/chosen domain; how these are to be complementary addressed
  - pathway to commercial exploitation
  - how scientific results will be translated into the economy
- choice/definition of the R&I domain, e.g. regional smart specialisation vs. European policy priority, can be either:
  - based on regional smart specialisation strategies (RIS3)
    - the consortium identifies a common denominator in the RIS3s of all place-based ecosystems involved, set up the project around this topic and explain the reasoning behind.
  - or based on European policy priorities
    - the topic selection is based on EU policy priorities (green and digital transition), explaining what particular aspect of these will be addressed and economic benefit as well
- single project addressing both

### □ R&I project

- distinct and convincing work plan/tasks/sub-tasks, similarly to RIA project
  - demonstrate that it will strengthen the link between science and business
  - its results will feed into a commercialisation and investment path

plus

- clear reference and link to the R&I strategy needs
- range of TRL 3 to 7 would be appropriate
- no fixed maximum percentage for research cost
- an overly dominant research part would cast doubts on the credibility of a balanced approach of up to five core actions and is not in line with the overall character of a CSA and the policy objectives of the call
- the applicants and the evaluators justify and assess the research needs of each individual project.

#### □ Investment plan

- no fully-fledged investment plan is required at proposal level
- investments needs should be derived from the joint R&I strategy to be elaborated during the project
- some key elements of the investment plan should be presented, notably:
  - the purpose and type of investment
  - the envisaged funding sources
  - the approach to ensure its sustainability and expected impact.
- commitment for a complementary funding from regional authorities or other sources
  - their participation in the proposal is sufficient at proposal level
  - financial commitments may be included in the investment plans to be elaborated during the lifetime of the project.

#### □ Pilots and demonstrators

- not funded - procurement of major equipment, R&I infrastructure and construction
- funded - a number of preparatory actions for the development of pilots and demonstrators
  - could be eligible for funding:
    - specification and pre-development of major equipment,
    - pre-planning cost for infrastructures
    - feasibility studies

#### □ Accompanying measures

- types of accompanying actions:
  - to be customised to the scope of the project
  - development of human resources, transferable skills, brain circulation and entrepreneurship are particularly targeted

**Projects should contribute to the outcomes listed in the call topic!!!**

#### □ SOURCES

1. Excellence Hubs, HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07-01, Topic page (incl. FAQ), Link: [Excellence Hubs](#)