Implementing co-funded European Partnership: a Training for Newcomers

29 – 30 September 2025

Aim of the training

Scope of the webinar:

- Guide participants through the operational aspects of managing and implementing of co-funded partnerships
- Share best practices, real-world case studies, and networking opportunities
- Equip participants with the tools and knowledge to engage effectively in co-funded European Partnerships

Out of scope:

- Discuss individual partnerships specific challenges
- The future of European Partnerships in FP10
- Any topics concerning particular calls of partnerships

European Commission

	Agenda	Speaker
	Moderation: Tor Ivar Eikaas, ERA-LEARN	
10:30	Introduction to ERA-LEARN	Roland Brandenburg (ERA-LEARN)
	Introduction co-funded partnership	Kathrin Kapfinger (DG RTD.G.4)
	Legal requirements - Grant Agreement	Bartosz Majewski, Miguel Escandon Martin (DG RTD, H.1)
	Q&A	
	Example: How to organize a co-funded PS	Margit Noll, DUT
12:30	Break	
13:30	Example: Good practices organising the joint call	Teresa Losek, DUT
	Example; What is the work of a co-funded PS	Margherita Cappelletto, SBEP
	Q&A	
15:00	Closing hybrid part	

European Commission
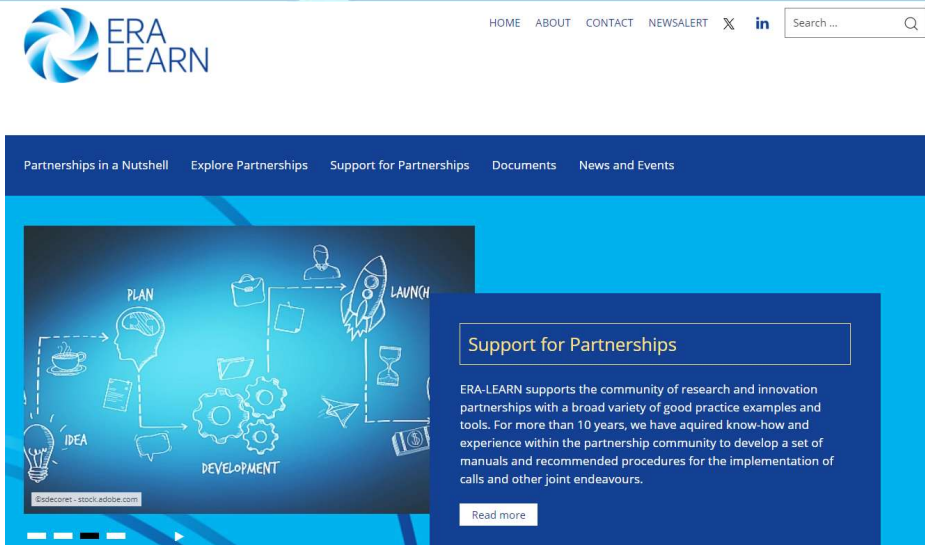
ERA-LEARN: service provider & facilitator

- consortium of funding organisations and analysts

- providing support & guidance to the community since 2009

- **current phase July 2023 - June 2027**

- supporting the European Partnerships under Horizon Europe

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
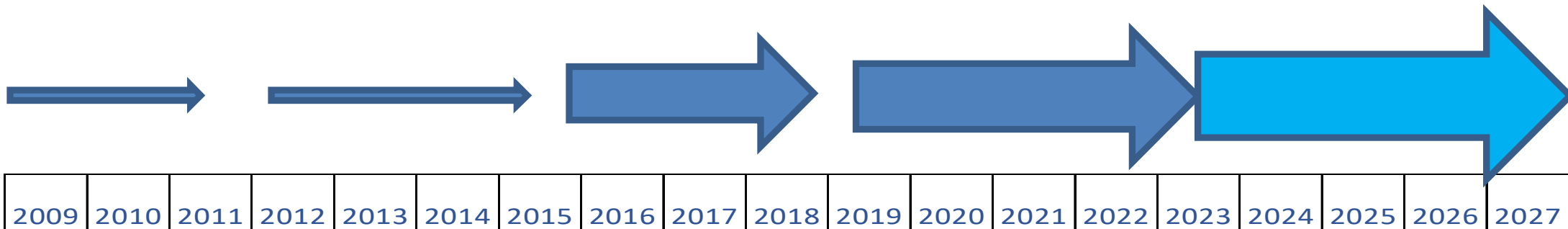
ERA LEARN

Central information hub: the ERA-LEARN portal

Partnerships in a Nutshell   Explore Partnerships   Support for Partnerships   Documents   News and Events

Support for Partnerships

ERA-LEARN supports the community of research and innovation partnerships with a broad variety of good practice examples and tools. For more than 10 years, we have aquired know-how and experience within the partnership community to develop a set of manuals and recommended procedures for the implementation of calls and other joint endeavours.

Read more

ERA-LEARN reaches out to all stakeholders:
- Policy level
- Networks
- Funding organisations
- Researchers

Find information on European Partnerships!
https://www.era-learn.eu

- **Partnerships in a nutshell**
  - Strategic Coordinating Process
  - Types & Portfolio
- **Explore Partnerships**
  - networks
  - countries
  - projects
  - calls
- **Support for Partnerships**
  - Governance & financial
  - Joint calls
  - Additional activities
- **Documents**
  - Annual Reports & Country Reports
  - external documenta
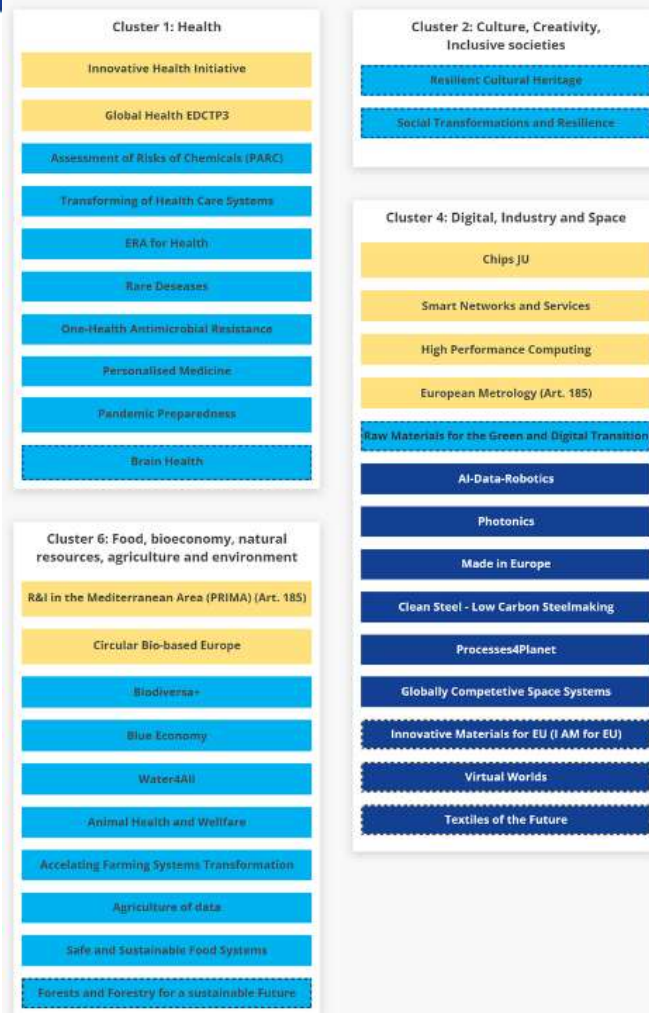- **News & events**

Eur. Partnership portfolio

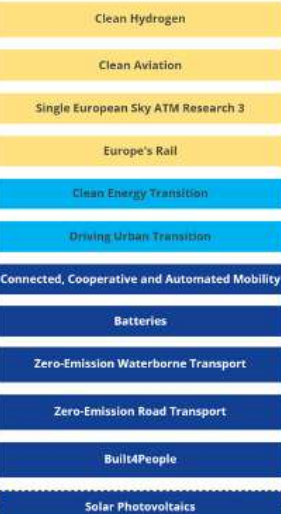**Legend:** Institutionalised partnerships (Art. 185/7, EIT KICs) | Co-funded partnerships | Co-programmed partnerships | Proposed new candidate European Partnerships under the 2nd Strategic Plan 2025-2027

Pillar II - Global challenges & European industrial competitiveness

2nd Strategic Plan 2025-2027

Cluster 1: Health
- Innovative Health Initiative
- Global Health EDCTP3
- Assessment of Risks of Chemicals (PARC)
- Transforming of Health Care Systems
- ERA for Health
- Rare Diseases
- One-Health Antimicrobial Resistance
- Personalised Medicine
- Pandemic Preparedness
- Brain Health

Cluster 6: Food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment
- R&I in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) (Art. 185)
- Circular Bio-based Europe
- Biodiversa+
- Blue Economy
- Water4All
- Animal Health and Welfare
- Accelating Farming Systems Transformation
- Agriculture of data
- Safe and Sustainable Food Systems
- Forests and Forestry for a sustainable Future

Cluster 2: Culture, Creativity, Inclusive societies
- Resilient Cultural Heritage
- Social Transformations and Resilience

Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space
- Chips JU
- Smart Networks and Services
- High Performance Computing
- European Metrology (Art. 185)
- Raw Materials for the Green and Digital Transition
- AI-Data-Robotics
- Photonics
- Made in Europe
- Clean Steel - Low Carbon Steelmaking
- Processes4Planet
- Globally Competetive Space Systems
- Innovative Materials for EU (I AM for EU)
- Virtual Worlds
- Textiles of the Future

Cluster 5: Climate, Energy and mobility
- Clean Hydrogen
- Clean Aviation
- Single European Sky ATM Research 3
- Europe's Rail
- Clean Energy Transition
- Driving Urban Transition
- Connected, Cooperative and Automated Mobility
- Batteries
- Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport
- Zero-Emission Road Transport
- Built4People
- Solar Photovoltaics

Pillar III - Innovative Europe & Cross-Pillars

EIT: The European Institute of Innovation and Technology
- EIT InnoEnergy
- Climate KIC
- EIT Digital
- EIT Food
- EIT Health
- EIT Raw Materials
- EIT Manufacturing
- EIT Urban Mobility
- Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries

European Innovation Ecosystems
- Innovative SMEs

Cross-Pillars II and III
- European Open Science Cloud

upcoming calls for Partnerships in HE work programmes

Horizon Europe Calls for Partnerships

2025: Partnership related Horizon Europe calls

Title / Call Identifier	Type of Action	Budget	Call closure
Cluster 1: Health			
HORIZON-HLTH-2025-02-DISEASE-01: European Partnership for Brain Health	Programme Cofund Actions	150 M€	03 June 2025
HORIZON-HLTH-2025-02- DISEASE-02: European partnership fostering a European Research Area (ERA) for health research (Phase 2)	Programme Cofund Actions	77 M€	03 June 2025
Cluster 2: Culture, Creativity, Inclusive Societies			
HORIZON-CL2-2025-03-HERITAGE-01: Co-funded European partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage	Programme Cofund Actions	60 M€	16 Sept. 2025
Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space			

https://www.era-learn.eu/partnerships-in-a-nutshell/european-partnerships/european-partnership-portfolio

Partnership network database – overview of all former and new Partnerships

- overview on all Partnerships including predecessors
- filter by type, country, ..
- individual country's participation
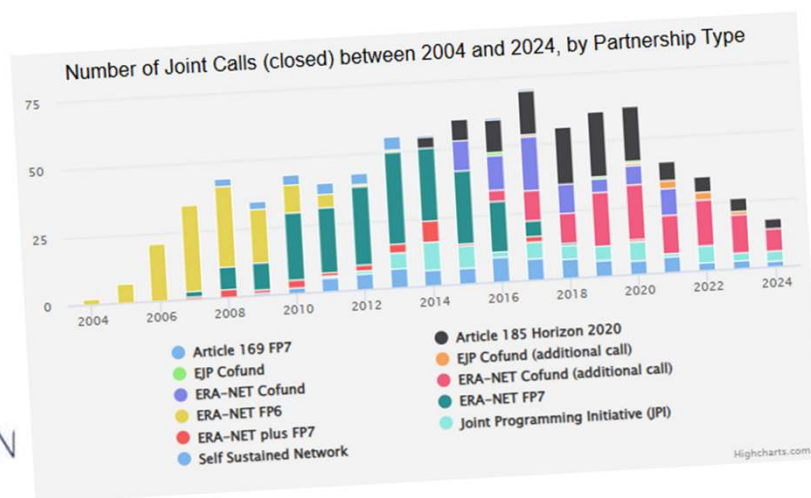- call calendar: joint calls launched by the Partnerships
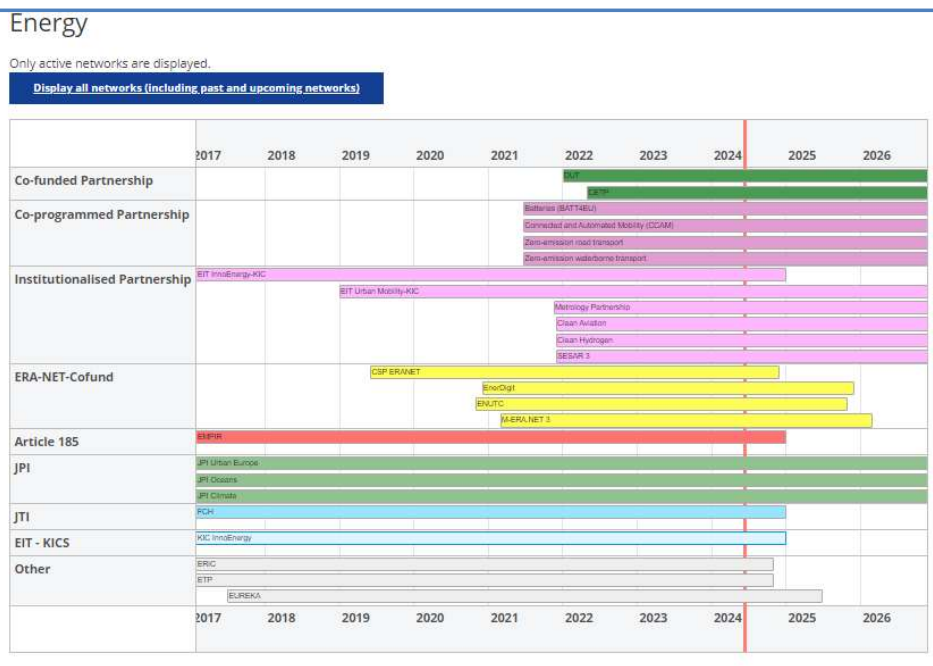
Documents, facts & figures

- Annual Reports
- Country Reports
- publications
- external documents
- Facts & figures
(*note: data collection on HE networks under responsibility of EC*)

Supporting the practical implementation of Partnerships

| Partnerships in a Nutshell | Explore Partnerships | Support for Partnerships | Documents | News and Events |

GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION & LEGAL BASE

Governance Models of Horizon Europe Partnerships

Agreements

Financial Issues

Monitoring and Assessment

Responsible Research & Innovation

Monitoring and Evaluation of European R&I Partnerships: The R²IPE toolkit

IMPLEMENTING JOINT CALLS

Call planning &

After the Call

- guiding docs
- manuals and tools
- examples of good practice

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Strategy and Foresight

Alignment and Synergies

Knowledge Valorisation and Stakeholder Engagement

International Cooperation

Openness and Transparency

Widening Participation and the European Research Area

ERA LEARN

Benefit from provided material!

ERA-LEARN: interaction with community

https://www.era-learn.eu/news-events/events

❖ **workshops/webinars on specific issues (co-organised with DG RTD)**
- Implementing co-funded Partnerships (April 2023)
- Synergies with Cohesion Policy Funds (May 2023)
- Monitoring & Evaluation framework (Sep 2023)
- Co-funded Partnerships: add. activities beyond joint calls (Jan 2024)
- Workshop on Administrative Burden of Eur. Partnerships (5 June 2024)
- Webinar on Data Transfer for Eur.Partnerships (20 June 2025)

❖ **annual large events (co-organized with DG RTD)**
- Annual Partnership Stakeholder Forum (15-16 Nov 2022)
- Annual Partnership Stakeholder Forum (5-6 Dec 2023)
- Annual Partnership Stakeholder Forum (4-5 Dec 2024)
- **Annual Partnership Stakeholder Forum (3 Dec 2025)**

→ **participate in events!**

ERA-LEARN: interaction with community

Welcome to the ERA-LEARN newsalert!

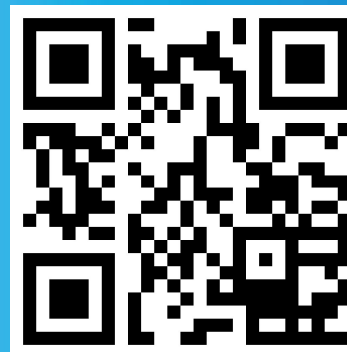17/07/2025

Legislative proposal for FP10 published by the European Commission

The European Commission published its proposal for the 10th Framework Programme on Research and Innovation, Horizo... 17 July 2025. According to the proposal, Europea... an important element but will face substantial cha... predecessor programme. This primarily concerns... Partnership formats them with a discontinuation... Partnerships and introducing a different system... European Union, its Member States and private... Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

A first analysis of relevant parts for European Pa... is available on our 'Partnerships in FP10' page.

Read more

➢ **Stay up to date -register to our news alert:**

https://www.era-learn.eu/newsletter

Partnerships in a Nutshell   Explore Partnerships   Support for Partnerships   Documents   News and Events

Research and Innovation

Horizon Europe 2028 - 2034: twice bigger, simpler, faster and more impactful

Programme structure

Partnerships in FP10

The European Commission published its proposal for the 10th Framework Programme on Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe (2028 – 2034) on 17 July 2025. According to the proposal, European Partnerships will remain an important element of the the new Horizon Europe but will face substantial changes compared to the predecessor programme.

Read more

ERA LEARN

Thank you!

Further information:

www.era-learn.eu

Support & guidance: https://www.era-learn.eu/support-for-partnerships

Events: https://www.era-learn.eu/news-events/events

News alert: https://www.era-learn.eu/newsletter

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#HorizonEU

HORIZON EUROPE

THE EU RESEARCH & INNOVATION PROGRAMME

2021 – 2027

EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS UNDER HORIZON EUROPE

ERA-LEARN Newcomer Workshop: Implementing co-funded European Partnerships

**Introduction
29 September 2025**

*Kathrin Kapfinger,
DG Research & Innovation
G.4 – Common Missions & Partnerships Service*

Research and Innovatio

European Partnerships – what and why

European Partnerships are strategic instruments which enable long-term collaborations between the Union and public and/or private partners to tackle common challenges through the co-design and implementation of joint R&I programmes

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION

Foster directionality of funding in line with EU policy priorities

CREATING CRITICAL MASS

- Avoid fragmentation and duplication of R&I efforts
- Achieve greater scale and impact

FOSTERING ECOSYSTEMS

- Integrated value chains and ecosysems
- Integrative activties outside of funding

European Commission

New approach under Horizon Europe

New generation of objective-driven and more ambitious partnerships in support of agreed EU policy objectives

Key Features

- Strategic orientation
- Simple architecture and toolbox
- Common set of criteria for the entire life-cycle (Horizon Europe regulation Article 10 and Annex III)

CO-PROGRAMMED
Based on Memoranda of Understanding/contractual arrangements; implemented independently by the partners and by Horizon Europe

CO-FUNDED
Based on a joint programme agreed and implemented by partners; commitment of partners for financial contributions and additional activities

INSTITUTIONALISED
Based on long-term dimension and need for high integration; partnerships based on Art 185/187 of TFEU and the EIT legal acts for 2021-2027

European Commission

Strategic Coordinating Process

- Governance framework for European Partnerships

- Objective: support an evidence-based policy for partnerships and a strategic vision of the landscape

- Partnership Knowledge Hub (PKH)

- Biennial Monitoring Report (BMR)

- European Partnership Stakeholder Forum → 3 December 2025 in Brussels

Budgetary commitments to European Partnerships*

PARTNERSHIPS

58
European Partnerships

Over
€25 bn
Estimated commitments from Horizon Europe

42%
Of Horizon Europe's Pillar II budget

Over 25%
of Horizon Europe total

€38 bn
Estimated total commitments from partners other than the Union

Figures do not include partnerships whose budget is still under consideration

European Commission

Overview of European Partnerships

PILLAR II - Global challenges & European industrial competitiveness

PILLAR III - Innovative Europe

CLUSTER 1: Health	CLUSTER 2: Culture, Creativity, Inclusive Societies	CLUSTER 4: Digital, Industry & Space	CLUSTER 5: Climate, Energy & Mobility	CLUSTER 6: Food, Bio-economy, Agriculture, Env…	EUROPEAN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS
Innovative Health Initiative	Resilient Cultural Heritage*	Chips (formerly KDT)	Clean Hydrogen	Circular Bio-based Europe	Innovative SMEs
Global Health Partnership	Social Transformations and Resilience*	Smart Networks & Services	Clean Aviation	R&I in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA, Art. 185)**	
Transformation of health systems		High Performance Computing	Single European Sky ATM Research 3	Biodiversa+	EIT
Chemicals risk assessment		European Metrology (Art. 185)	Europe's Rail	Climate Neutral, Sustainable & Productive Blue Economy	InnoEnergy
ERA for Health		AI-Data-Robotics	Connected and Automated Mobility (CCAM)		Climate
Rare diseases		Photonics	Batt4EU	Water4All	Digital
One-Health Anti Microbial Resistance*		Made in Europe	Zero-emission waterborne transport	Animal Health & Welfare	Food
Personalised Medicine		Clean steel – low-carbon steelmaking	Zero-emission road transport	Accelerating Farming Systems Transitions	Health
Pandemic Preparedness*		Processes4Planet	Built4People	Agriculture of Data*	Raw Materials
Brain Health*		Global competitive space systems*	Solar Photovoltaics*	Safe & Sustainable Food System	Manufacturing
		Innovative Materials for EU (I AM for EU)*	Clean Energy Transition	Forests and Forestry for a sustainable Future*	Urban Mobility
		Virtual Worlds*	Driving Urban Transitions		Cultural and Creative Industries*
		Textiles of the Future*			Water, Marine and Maritime Sectors and Ecosystem*
		Raw Materials for the Green and Digital Transition*			

Legend:
- ▬ Institutionalised Partnerships (Art 185/7)
- ▬ Institutionalised partnerships / EIT KICs
- ▬ Co-Programmed
- ▬ Co-Funded
- ▭ Proposed new candidate European Partnerships under the Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027

Not yet launched
** Direct continuation of a H2020

CROSS-PILLARS I AND II

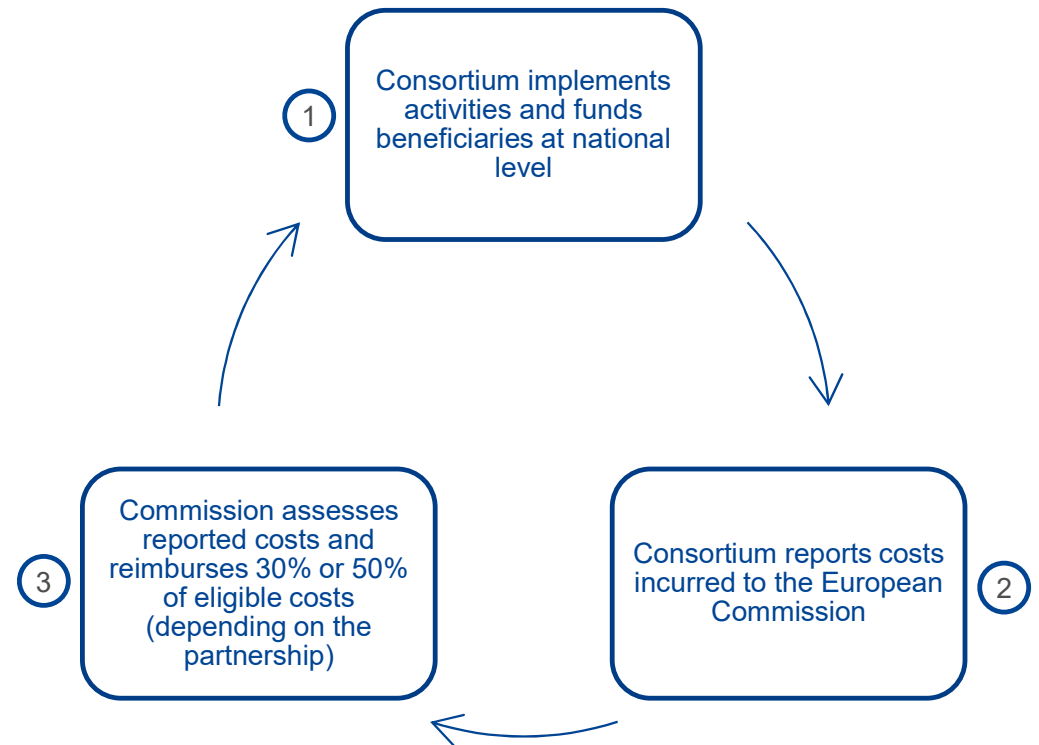European Open Science Cloud

Co-funded European Partnerships (I)

- **Partners:** National funding bodies/agencies, ministries

- **Legal form:** Grant Agreement (based on a programme co-fund action) signed between a consortium of beneficiaries (the partners) and the Commission

- **Implementation:**
  - Partners design a common programme to be implemented under their responsibility, pooling national funding/resources with co-funding from the Union
  - Joint transnational calls (financial support to third parties) as usually the principal activity, complemented by additional activities fostering further integrartion
  - Calls and evaluations are organised centrally, beneficiaries in selected projects are funded at national level (on the basis of rules agreed by partners and national rules)
  - Funding rate 30% [in justified cases up to 50%]
  - EU top-up based on Horizon Europe eligible costs, including financial support to third parties

European Commission

Co-funded European Partnerships (II)

Preparation

1. Participating States (PS) and the Commission set the priorities for the partnership

2. Budget of the partnership is established → request for national commitments

3. Call topic is published in the Work Programme

4. Grant Agreement is signed with a consortium of PS that will implement the partnership

Implementation

1 Consortium implements activities and funds beneficiaries at national level

2 Consortium reports costs incurred to the European Commission

3 Commission assesses reported costs and reimburses 30% or 50% of eligible costs (depending on the partnership)

Cycle repeats until the end of the partnership

What does the future hold?

- Legal package adopted in July 2025, interinstitutional negotiations ongoing:

  - **Regulation** establishing Horizon Europe including the rules for participation and dissemination (as required by the Treaty)

  - **Specific programme** to implement 'Horizon Europe' (as required by the Treaty)

- Key elements:

  - Strong portfolio dimension in the selection of future partnerships

  - Streamlining and consolidating the current landscape

  - Simplifying the toolbox

  - Ensuring reciprocity by partners through tangible contributions

  - Harmonised rules and procedures

Further resources

- European Partnerships website on europa.eu

- ERA Learn

- RTD-EUROPEAN-PARTNERSHIPS@ec.europa.eu

Legal requirements for co-funded European Partnerships

Implementing co-funded European Partnership workshop

Bartosz Majewski & Miguel Escandon Martin (DG RTD H.1)

European Commission

Content of today's presentation

- Legal base

- AGA

  ➢ Participation modes

  ➢ Eligible costs

- FSTP/joint calls: core obligations (evaluation, CoI)

When & What

- Co-funded partnerships are the evolution of ERA-NET Cofunds under H2020.

- The specific rules for Co-funded Partnerships apply to certain HE Programme Co-fund types of action (i.e. calls with COFUND ToA).

What is a programme co-fund action?

Horizon Europe Regulation, Art.2(36):

'Programme co-fund action' means an action to provide **multi-annual co-funding to a programme of activities** established or implemented by **legal entities managing or funding R&I programmes**, other than Union funding bodies; such a programme of activities may support networking and coordination, research, innovation, pilot actions, and innovation and market deployment actions, training and mobility actions, awareness raising and communication, dissemination and exploitation, and provide any relevant financial support, such as grants, prizes and procurement, as well as Horizon Europe blended finance or a combination thereof. The programme co-fund action may be implemented by those legal entities directly or by third parties on their behalf.

→ Usually implemented through two streams of activities: **Joint calls** (i.e. financial support to third parties) and **additional activities**

Providing financial support vs implementation of transnational projects by the beneficiaries

- A core part of Co-funded Partnerships is to provide **financial support to third parties** (FSTP)

- FSTP = the EU support received via the Co-funded Partnerships grant is passed on to recipients that are not party to the GA (also called 'cascade funding')

| European Commission | → *Cofunded Partnership Grant* → | Beneficiary | → *Provides the financial support* → | Final recipient | *Implements the project* |

What is FSTP / cascade funding ?

Financial support from beneficiaries **to** (one or more) **recipients that are not party to the EU Grant Agreement** (third party).

Grants i.e., financial donation to **natural persons** (e.g. allowance, scholarship, fellowship) **or legal persons** (e.g. non-repayable financial assistance to local NGOs)

Prizes are given on the basis of a contest organised by the beneficiary.

Under any grant (RIA, IA, CSA)

Granting authority

Beneficiary 1 Beneficiary 2 Beneficiary 3

Final recipient A Final recipient B Final recipient C

European Commission
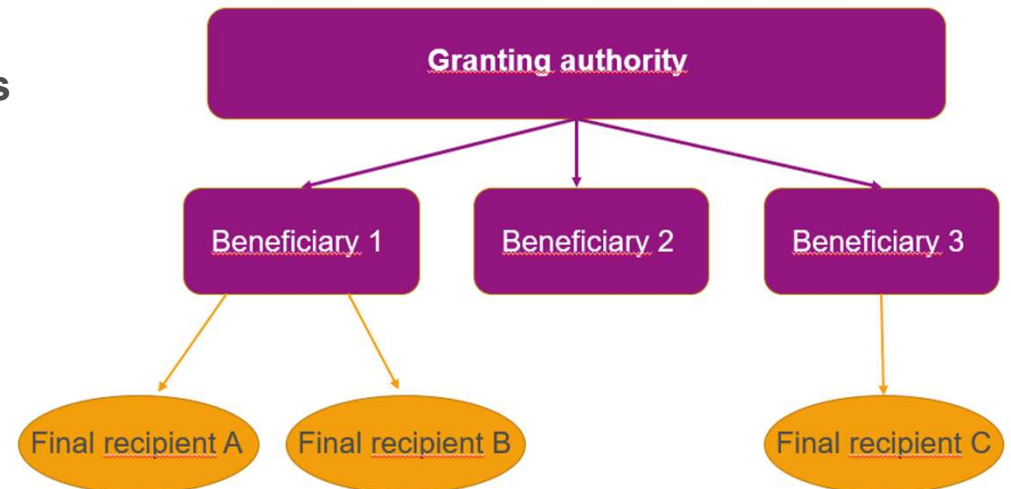
Legal Framework – in brief

Financial Regulation
2018/1046
- Article 204
- Article 206 (prizes)

General Annexes
He Main WP
- General Annex B
- General Annex G

MGA
- Article 6.2.D.1
- Article 9.4
- Annex 5 – Specific Rules on Co-funded Partnerships

European Commission

Legal Framework – Rules and conditions

Financial Regulation 2018/1046

Art 204

In particular:

No margin for discretion if the grant agreement specifies the following:

a) the maximum amount that can be paid to a third party **which shall not exceed EUR 60 000*** and the criteria for determining the exact amount;

b) the different types of activities that may receive such financial support, on the basis of a fixed list;

c) the definition of the persons or categories of persons which may receive such financial support and the criteria for providing it.

*may be exceeded where achieving the objectives of the actions would otherwise be impossible or overly difficult

In particular:

❑ The **specific call conditions** must explicitly **allow for it**

❑ The applicants must clearly **describe the objectives and the expected results**, via the application template dedicated part;

❑ projects must **publish their open calls widely** and adhere to **EU standards of transparency, equal treatment, conflict of interest and confidentiality**;

❑ all calls for third parties and all calls that are implemented by third parties must be **published on the Funding & Tenders Portal, and on the beneficiaries' websites**; the calls must remain **open for at least 2 months**;

❑ the calls must have a clear **European dimension**

General Annex B

Art 6.2.D.1

&

In particular:

• *Costs […] are eligible, if and as declared eligible in the call conditions, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions, are calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and the support is implemented in accordance with the conditions set out in Annex 1*.

   → **These conditions must ensure objective and transparent selection procedures (and reflect those mentioned in the Financial Regulation Art 204).**

• *Extension of obligations under the Grant Agreement to final recipients*.

European Commission

Legal Framework

In the context of Co-funded partnerships, there are some specific rules set out ALSO in the General Annexes of the Work Programme (Part B), setting the minimum of conditions to be fulfilled where FSTP.

Co-funded Partnerships are ALSO subject to the rules for recipients of financial support in Article 9.4.

The Annex 5 provisions focus ONLY on the cascading scenario (i.e. where beneficiaries provide financial support to third parties; so-called 'co-funded calls'). For transnational projects implemented by the beneficiaries themselves (as part of the action), the standard rules of the Grant Agreement apply.

European Commission

Extension of obligations under the Grant Agreement to final recipients

- The implementation of the transnational projects by final recipients will follow in principle the rules of the grant agreements they sign with the beneficiaries.

- In all cases, the beneficiaries must ensure that the final recipients comply with certain **obligations from the EU grant.**

- It is the **beneficiaries' responsibility** to ensure that these obligations are respected by the final recipients

-Avoiding conflict of interest (see Article 12)
-Confidentiality and security obligations (see Article 13)
-Ethics (see Article 14)
-Give visibility to the EU funding, as appropriate (see Article 17.2)
-Respect specific rules for the action implementation (see Article 18)
-Information obligations (see Article 19)
-Record-keeping (see Article 20)

- Moreover, the beneficiaries must also ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, the European Court of Auditors (ECA), the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)) have the right to carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations on the recipients, and in particular to audit the payments received.

European Commission

Cascaded Calls (1)
Annex 5 of the Horizon Europe MGA

Annex 5 of the HEU Model Grant Agreement contains specific rules for implementing Co-funded Partnerships. See [page 416 of the Annotated Grant Agreement](#) for more details.

Annex 5 outlines the **mandatory conditions** for implementing Financial Support to Third Parties and / or financial support through implementing partners, including:

- **Conflict of interest** avoidance, principles of **transparency**, **non-discrimination** & **sound financial management**,
- Types of activities and categories of person to be supported,
- Selection process and use of the standard Horizon Europe award criteria
- Proper governance and oversight.

> ⚠️ Non-compliance with the mandatory rules and / or specific aspects of the grant agreement for a given project / partnership can lead to **cost rejection**.

Cascaded Calls (2)

- Cascaded projects should be selected for funding following a **joint transnational call for proposals**.

- To be eligible, **cascaded projects must be trans-national**, i.e. at least two independent legal entities from two different Member States or Associated Countries or one legal entity from a Member State or Associated Country and one legal entity from a non-associated third country (not receiving financial support).

- The consortium must **publish the joint call(s) on the Funding and Tenders portal** (and the partnership / partner websites).

- The joint / co-funded call(s) must be kept open for at least **2 months**.

- The selection must follow a **two-step procedure**, with

  - Step 1: eligibility check / review at national or trans-national level, and

  - Step 2: single international peer review.

  A two-step procedure is necessary to ensure that only entities that are eligible for funding under the national funding rules are invited to Step 2 and that consortia can balance the requested funding and available funding per participating Member State and associated country between Steps 1 and 2.

- In Step 2, proposals must be evaluated with the assistance of at least **three independent experts** per proposal.

Cascaded Calls (3)

- **The evaluation must use the same award criteria as Horizon Europe calls: Excellence, Impact, Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation (see details for Cofund actions under Part D of the Horizon Europe Work Programme General annexes)** wp-14-general-annexes_horizon-2025_en.pdf

- The selection procedure must be followed by an **independent expert observer** who must make a report. That report is a mandatory deliverable.

- Proposals must be ranked according to the evaluation results.

- The selection of trans-national projects ('joint selection list') must be based on the order of the **ranking list** (or the ranking lists, if there are different topics).

- The consortium must foresee to provide information about the co-funded call and projects in the correct template / format to allow for **data transfer** to Commission IT system.

- The proposal must specify the **maximum amount** of financial support to a third party (grant beneficiaries under national funding rules) and the **criteria** for determining the exact amount under national funding rules.

European Commission

Types of participants

Beneficiaries

- Sign the GA, have all the rights and obligations

Affiliated Entities

- Have a legal or capital link to beneficiaries. Carry out work in the project and declare costs

Other participants involved in the action

- Associated partners: Work for the Action but can NOT declare costs

- Subcontractors: Work on action tasks and invoice the beneficiary/affiliated entity

- Third parties providing contributions: Make available some of their resources to a beneficiary (in-kind contributions) who can declare the cost

- Recipients of FSTP: Financial support given to them is part of an action task, to be declared as FSTP cost by a beneficiary
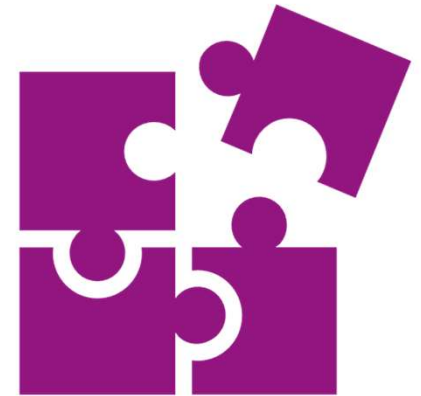
Important aspects - at proposal stage

- The applicants must clearly **describe the objectives and the expected results**, via the application template dedicated part (General Annex B).
- when the calls allow for FSTP, the applicants must add the 'Information on financial support to third parties' form to their application.

Funding & tender opportunities
Single Electronic Data Interchange Area (SEDIA)

ERS ▼ **HOW TO PARTICIPATE** ▼ PROJECTS & RESULTS WORK AS AN E

- ⊕ Simplified cost decisions
- ⊕ Guidance
- ⊖ Templates & forms
  - ⊖ Application forms

Information on financial support to third parties (HE) ＞
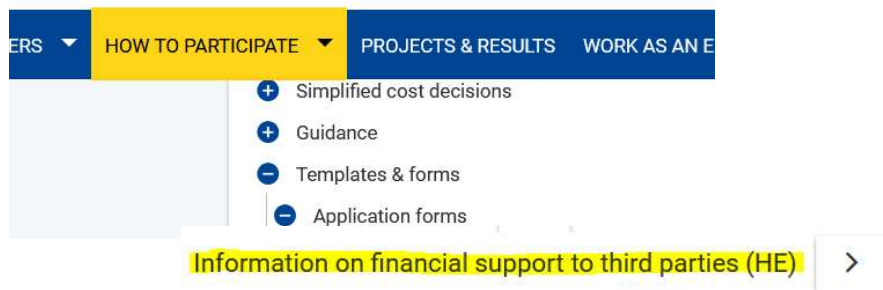
2. contain the following specifications (as a minimum):

   a) the maximum amount of financial support for each third party; this amount may not exceed 60 000 EUR, unless explicitly mentioned in the Work Programme topic. If your project requires a higher amount per third party than the threshold amount set in the call conditions, justify and explain why this is necessary in order to fulfil your project's objectives.

   b) the criteria for calculating the exact amount of the financial support

   c) the different types of activity that qualify for financial support, on the basis of a closed list

   d) the persons or categories of persons that may receive financial support, and

   e) the criteria for giving financial support

European Commission

At proposal stage

- Before the signature of the Grant Agreement, the granting authority **must control and agree** with the FSTP scheme proposed by the applicants.

- **All this information will be reflected in the DoA (Annex 1).**

Third parties – eligibility

- Entities based in non-associated countries may receive financial support through FSTP calls, provided that the FSTP scheme, and in particular **the persons or categories of persons that may receive financial support,** complies with the conditions and specific rules enacted in the particular Work Programme in the call for proposals, and that it is not aimed at circumventing Horizon Europe funding rules.

- The selection procedure and criteria for providing FSTP must be decided **by the beneficiaries** and explained already in their proposal.

Beneficiaries may decide at proposal stage that legal entities based in a non-associated third country are not eligible to receive FSTP.

European Commission

Third parties - eligibility

To keep in mind:

➢ Restrictions on participation in Innovation Actions *(China).*

➢ EU restrictive measures *(Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)20 as well as Article 75 TFEU).*

➢ Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine.

➢ Measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary *(Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021).*

Important aspects – MGA level

- **Regardless of the form of the financial support to the third party (lump sum or actual costs), costs** must comply with General and Specific cost eligibility conditions.

- **Article 6.2.D.1**
    - HE grants reimburse beneficiaries for the actual costs they have incurred.
    - The support is implemented in accordance with the conditions set out in Annex 1.

  →**These conditions must ensure objective and transparent selection procedures (and reflect those mentioned in the Financial Regulation Art 204)**

Beware where co-funders external to the consortium also provide financial support to the recipients. If external co-funders provide directly financial support to end-recipient alongside the beneficiaries, this financial support cannot be declared as eligible FSTP cost of the beneficiaries.

European Commission

Costs: General eligibility conditions

Actual costs must:

Check Article 6.1 of the MGA

- be **actually incurred** by the beneficiary

- be incurred during the **action duration**

- be declared under one of the **budget categories**

- be incurred **in connection with the action** (Annex 1) and **necessary** for its implementation

- 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**

- comply with the **applicable national law** on taxes, labour and social security and

- be **reasonable, justified** and must comply with the principle of **sound financial management**, in particular regarding economy and efficiency

European Commission

Types of costs

A. Personnel costs	B. Subcontracting costs	C. Purchase costs	D. Other cost categories	E. Indirect costs
• Employees • Natural person under direct contract • Seconded person • SME owners and natural person beneficiaries • Other personnel costs	• Services outsourced to third parties to implement specific project tasks	• Travel and subsistence • Equipment costs • Other goods, works, and services	• Financial support to third parties • Internally invoiced goods and services • Transnational or virtual access to research infrastructure costs • PCP/PPI procurement costs	• 25% flat rate, calculated automatically: eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteer costs, subcontracting costs, financial support to third parties and exempted specific cost categories, if any)

European Commission

Conflicts of interest

In principle, beneficiaries (member of the consortium) to the EU grant can NOT also be final recipient of FSTP. However, there are cases where exceptions are permitted, under certain conditions.

•To make the funding of beneficiary RPOs through FSTP possible, they shall not take part in work streams connected to the preparation of FSTP actions.

•These exceptions should be read in the specific rules set out in ANNEX 5 of the MGA i.e., measures to avoid potential conflicts of interest or unequal treatment of applicants must be ensured (notably through appropriate communication/exchange of information channels and independent and fair complaints procedures).

European Commission

Annotations on measures to avoid conflict of interest

In practical terms, the consortium is asked to:

- Present a clear list of **beneficiaries** (or department of a beneficiary) that will have the **responsibility of drafting call texts**, and managing the award procedure

- Identify the **beneficiaries** (or other departments of the same beneficiary) **which can apply** for funding under the co-funded call for proposals

- Explain the **measures* to mitigate** (potential) conflict of interest or unequal treatment of applicants

- Reflect this fully in their DoA Annex 1, both in the context of the description of the co-funded call and in relation to the monitoring of the transnational projects.

- If needed, beneficiaries must set up **information barriers*** ('firewalls') to prevent exchanges or communication that could lead to conflicts of interest or unequal treatment of applicants and ensure independent and fair complaints procedures.

* Those measures will have to be approved by the Executive Agencies managing the relevant grant agreements.

European Commission

Further guidance

- ERA-LEARN

- Horizon Europe National Contact Points (NCPs)

- Good practices for implementing FSTP in EU grants

- Research Enquiry Service

- Resources:

  - Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement (AGA)

  - Horizon Europe Programme Guide

  - Topic text and specific conditions for *your* Partnership!

From ERA-NETs to Partnerships

ERA-NETs

- Single co-funded calls

- Focus on implementation of joint calls, limited number of additional activities

- Unit costs

European Partnerships

- Long-term strategic approach with multiple co-funded calls

- Comprehensive programme implementation including strategic actions to enhance impact

- Direct costs

DUT Vision

The DUT Partnership steps up the game to tackle urban challenges. We enable local authorities and municipalities, business and citizens to make global strategies into local action. We develop the skills and tools to make urban change happen and boost the urgently needed urban transformations.

![DUT Driving Urban Transitions logo] EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP | Co-funded by the European Union

The DUT Partnership

shaping and managing a transnational innovation eco-system on urban transitions

- Public-public partnership for research and innovation, co-funded and co-created by 67 partners from 29 European countries, and the European Commission

- DUT Consortium

  - **National and regional R&I funders**

  - **National or regional authorities and agencies dealing with urban policy**

  - **Research performing and other organisations as strategic partners**

- approx. 450 Mio indicative budget for 2022-2028

DUT Governance

- Specific configurations for decision making allowing to acknowledge different roles of DUT partners

- Dedicated bodies to support strategic development and comprehensive programme management

- Formats and interfaces to cooperate with neighbouring initiatives and stakeholders
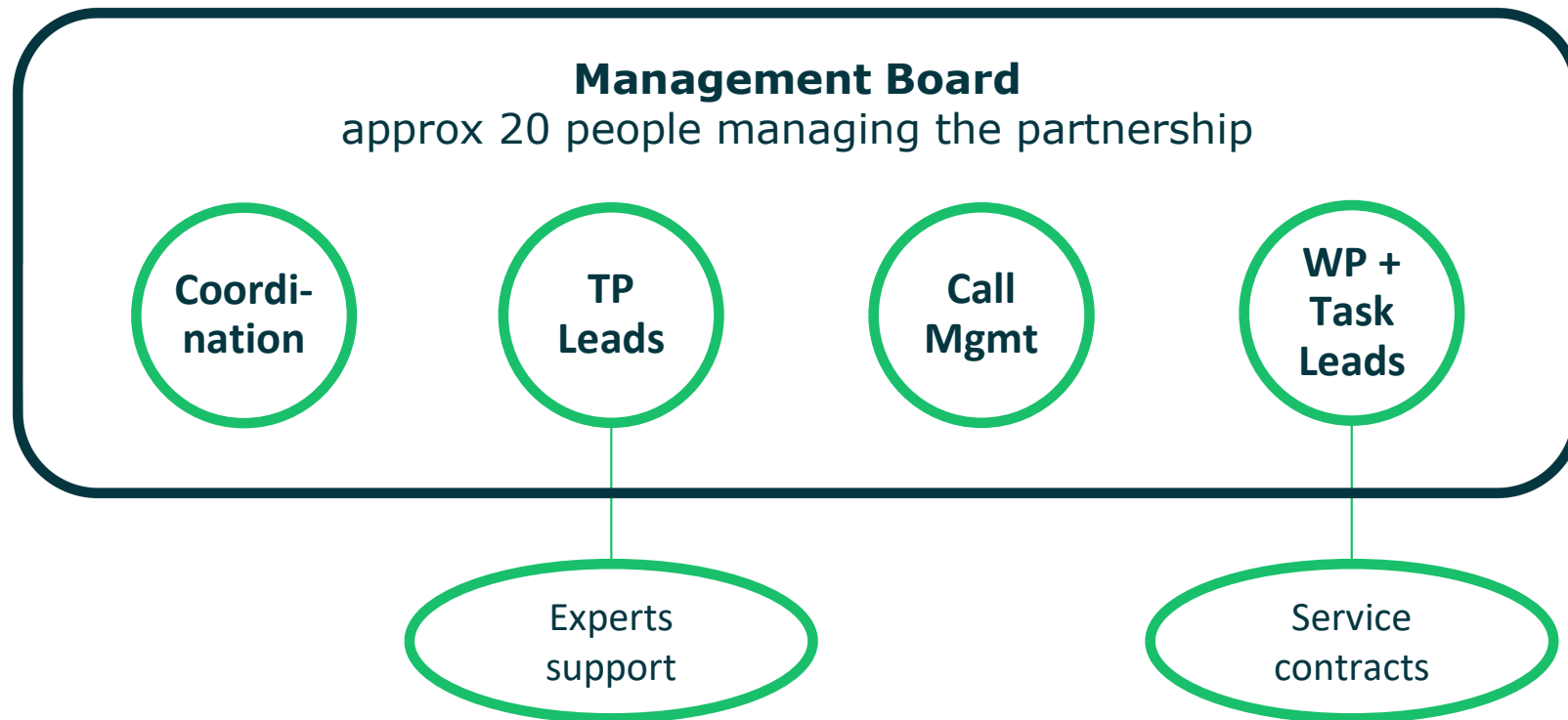
Key Elements of the DUT Governance

**Dedicated bodies to allow joint agenda setting, alignment and decision making**

Management Board

Management Board
approx 20 people managing the partnership

Coordi-
nation

TP
Leads

Call
Mgmt

WP +
Task
Leads

Experts
support

Service
contracts
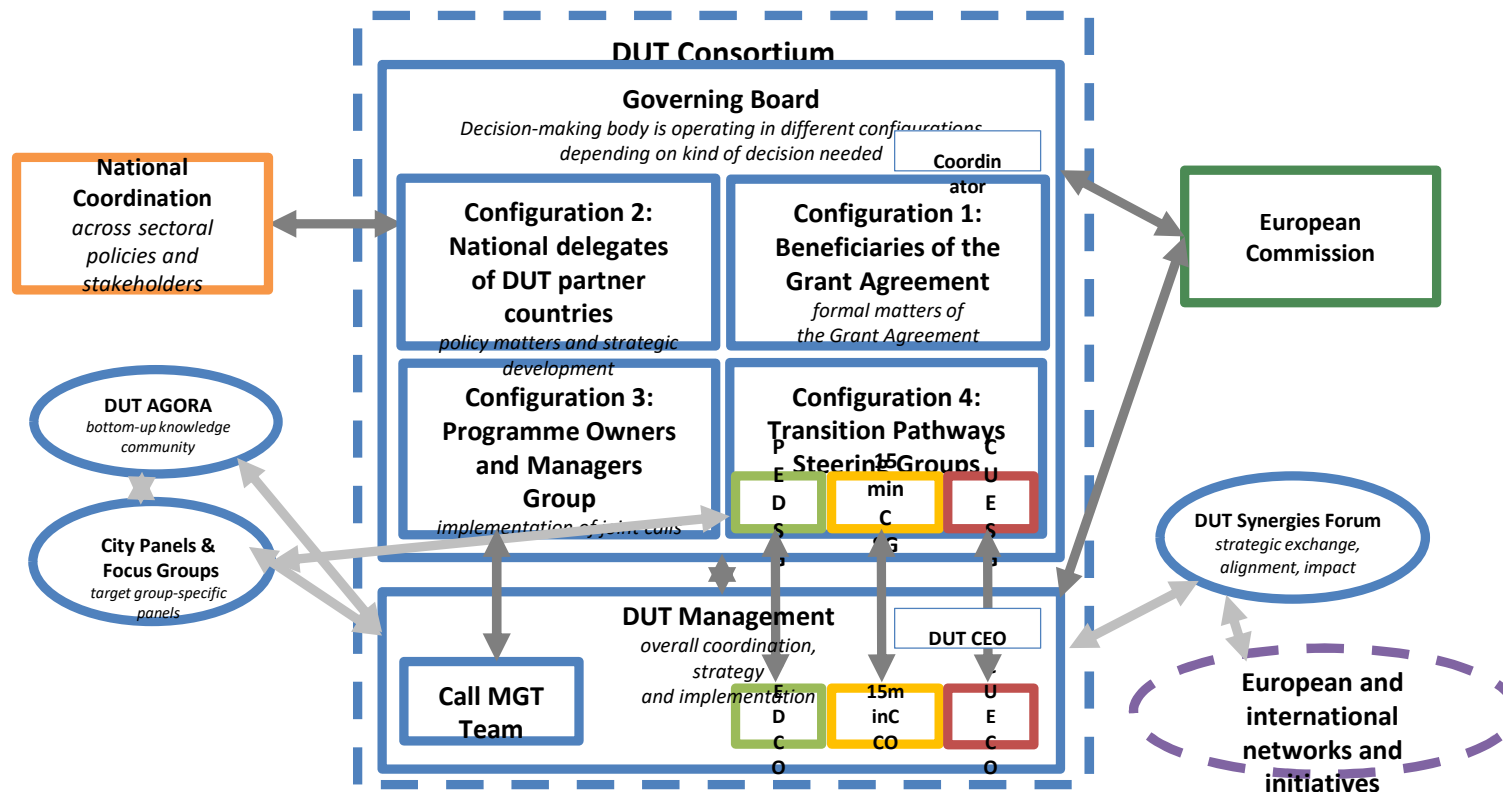
Transformative Research and Innovation Ecosystem

- Strategic planning and alignment

- Community building and empowerment

- Synthesis and dissemination

- Showcasing and valorisation
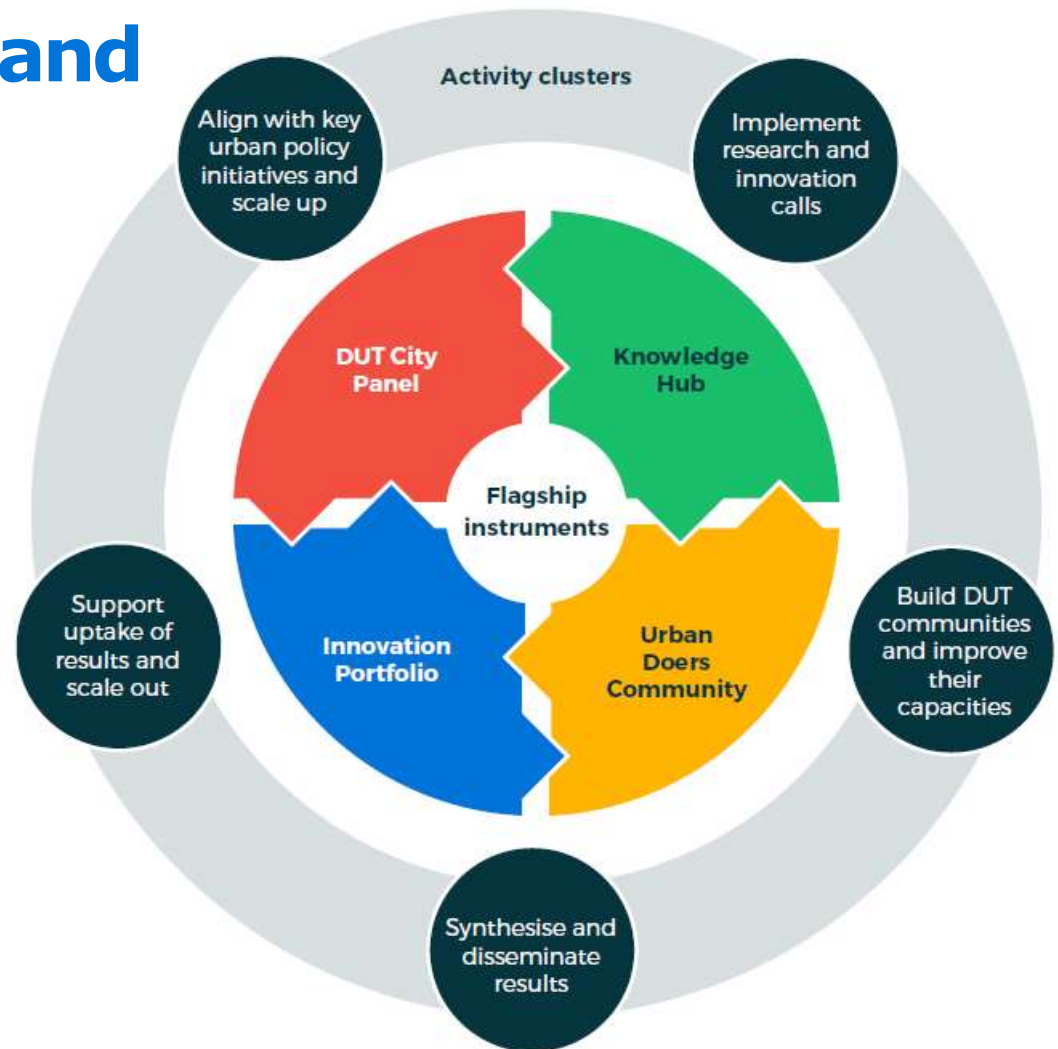
Involvement of R&I Organisations

Role of R&I Organisations in DUT

- Providing resources and expertise for programme management activities, e.g.
  - thematic analysis along Transition Pathways
  - expertise for the DUT Knowledge Hub
  - support for replication and valorisation efforts

Model of involvement

- As consortium partners with clear rules for conflict of interest and firewalls
- Contracting of experts
- Expert support from funded projects by mandatory resources in project proposals and budgets

Strategic Priority Setting and Alignment

- Joint roadmap defining the common goal and thematic priorities

- Extensive consultation processes to ensure relevance for target groups and strategic fit for DUT partners

- Dedicated mobilisation measures for specific target groups

- Call for national coordination to connect the partnership with the national innovation ecosystems

Openness

- **Openness to new funding partners**: trial phase for interested funding partners in Associated Countries or Third Countries by joining calls without becoming a consortium member for 2 years

- **Openness to new stakeholders**: mobilising and managing a broad spectrum of urban actors and stakeholders with different backgrounds in co-creative events (AGORA, City Panel) for agenda setting and reflection and exploitation of results.

- **Openness to new target groups**: establishing the Urban Doers Community as a selected group of urban initiatives to connect to research and innovation and help them share their knowledge and experiences across Europe

AGORA

AGORA is the key format within DUT for co-creative events that bring together the knowledge of stakeholders and urban actors with different backgrounds.

City Panel

The DUT City Panel engages representatives of urban public administration to build upon their experiences, needs and priorities. As problem-owners and experts their views are key to develop challenge-driven solutions.

![DUT Driving Urban Transitions logo]

Urban Doers Community

The Urban Doers Community is an initiative of the DUT Partnership that aims at supporting urban initiatives to connect to research and innovation and help them share their knowledge and experiences across Europe to make their innovative ideas work in urban areas.

Governance of European Partnerships

- **Dedicated substructures** to accommodate for different needs and range of activities

- **Substantial resources** for PS management are essential to gain traction

- **Consortium** combining policy competences and implementation capacity to ensure relevance and speed

- **National resources** for participation in joint processes to engage in transnational coordination and to enhance impact

- **Shift in perception** of co-funded partnerships from R&I funding networks towards European ecosystems for transformation and stronger engaging in additional activities

DUT Call Implementation

Hurdles and Stepping Stones

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Agenda

- Driving Urban Transitions Calls – Overview
- Call Implementation Hurdles
- Call Implementation Stepping Stones
    - Balancing Oversubscription Limits
    - Inclusion Procedure
      Fallback Procedure
    - Mandatory Budget Tool
- Call Implementation – Results Call 3

Driving Urban Transitions Calls - Overview

Most important DUT Call facts for context:

- DUT is a **co-funded partnership**, first Call launched in 2022 – **3 Calls** completed so far
- The DUT Consortium consists of both **cofundable** Agencies (EU member states and Horizon Europe associated countries) and Agencies from **beyond** the EU/HE scope
- DUT Calls have **two stages**
  - Pre-Proposal stage (Stage 1)
    - A **first project draft** is submitted by applicants and evaluated by independent experts; after evaluation, the participating Funding Agencies choose which pre-proposals are invited to Stage 2
    - After the Pre-Proposal stage, cofundable Agencies are allowed to be **oversubscribed** up until a certain limit
      - Oversubscription = factor by which applicant funding demand exceeds Agency budget
      - ⇒ If an Agency's funding demand is €2,000,000 and the budget is €1,000,000, the oversubscription is 2
  - Full Proposal stage (Stage 2)
    - the **full proposal** is submitted by applicants and evaluated by independent experts; after evaluation, the participating Funding Agencies choose which full proposals will be selected for funding
  - After this stage, **national contracting** starts

Call Implementation Hurdles

Problem	Description	Problematic because
Unbalanced over- and undersubscription rates	Some Agencies drastically underspend their budgets, mostly after losing many technically fundable proposals to budget bottlenecks; on the other side of the spectrum, there are Agencies whose funding demand is far higher than their available budget. This leads to very unbalanced success rates as well as financial inefficiencies	Agencies are unable to spend their budgets (which may have ramifications for subsequent Calls)
Eliminating excellent proposals due to financial constraints	Oversubscribed Agencies cause funding bottlenecks and block ranking lists, leading to proposals being rejected purely because of financial reasons since there is no money to accept them	Proposals with (very) good scores are lost, which is frustrating for Applicants; those Applicants may refrain from resubmitting, thus causing the Calls to get fewer proposals. Additionally: the Partnership's impact creation is negatively impacted as excellent proposals are lost
Losing potential top up	Undersubscribed Agencies are unable to spend their budgets; this means that the Partnership also loses out on the top up these budgets would have been able to generate	Within DUT, top up is also used for management costs as well as additional activities such as the Urban Doers grant; therefore, failing to generate necessary top up puts both impact creation and the partnership as a whole at risk
Insufficient Agency budgets (from the start)	Agencies (for whatever reason) cannot put sufficient money into the Call	This is the root cause for all abovementioned issues

Summary – Call Implementation Hurdles

The most critical problem threatening the successful implementation of co-funded Calls are **financial bottlenecks caused by insufficient budgets**. This threatens the Call on several levels:

➢ Good projects are **lost** due to financial reasons

➢ Agencies with sufficient budgets **cannot spend their money**

➢ The partnership can't generate the maximum possible amount of cofund, meaning that less money is available not only for **project funding** but also for **management costs** and **additional activities**

➢ **Impact creation** suffers (fewer good projects, fewer additional activities, frustrated applicants might not reapply in the future)

Call Implementation Stepping Stones

Problems occur in every phase of call implementation, therefore the possible solutions also vary. Depending on the issue, the ideal point in time to address it may vary:

➢ **Budget insufficiencies** are best addressed in the **planning phase** of the Call, before it opens for applications

➢ At the end of **Stage 1**, the focus should be on **inviting as many excellent pre-proposals as possible,** thus losing as few as possible due to financial bottlenecks

➢ **Stage 2** is generally **too late to address fundamental issues** since the full proposal pool is finalized after the Stage 2 invitations; changes can mostly occur on the **proposal consortium** level

Call Implementation Stepping Stones

There are **four main stepping stones** within the DUT Calls; one has been around since Call 1, the others were introduced in Call 3

I will give a **general overview** for each mechanism, then compare Call 3 to the previous Calls to analyse the results

For more information, slides with a closer look at the mechanisms are also included; however, in order to not take up too much time, we won't go over those in detail

➤ If you have detailed questions regarding any of the mechanisms, please feel free to ask them during the Q&A or contact me at teresa.losek@ffg.at

Stepping Stone Overview – Balancing Oversubscription Limits

Place in the implementation timeline: end of **Stage 1**

➢ Oversubscription limits have certain advantages such as:
- Applicants with **low chances at being funded** don't have to go through the elaborate process of writing a full proposal
- Applicants get a chance to **improve their proposals** (they receive expert feedback at the end of Stage 1)
- Agencies and the Call Secretariat have **planning security** by avoiding a far too high budget demand at the end of Stage 2

➢ However, if the limits are too strict, they can artificially decrease the pool of full proposals (viable pre-proposals are eliminated due to financial reasons)

➢ It is important to find a balance to avoid making them too strict while also avoiding making them too high and therefore ineffective

➢ For DUT, we found that Calls 1 and 2 had limits that were too strict, so we increased them

Stepping Stone Detailed Look – Balancing Oversubscription Limits

Oversubscription limits are important (among other reasons) to avoid frustrating applicants, help improve proposals, give Agencies and the Call Secretariat some planning security

For Calls 1 and 2, the **oversubscription limits** at the end of Stage 1 were as follows:
- Agency **eligible** for cofund: OS of max 3
- Agency **not eligible** for cofund: OS of max 2
⇒ Agencies not eligible for cofund have lower limits because their budget cannot be supplemented with cofund

➢ This was **quite strict** compared to some similar partnerships
➢ For Call 3 and onwards, we increased the limits:
  - Agency eligible for cofund: OS of max 4
  - Agency not eligible for cofund: OS of max 3
➢ This increase helps **alleviate budget constraints in Stage 1**

Example:
- Agency A is located in an EU/HE member state and has a budget of €250.000
- Agency B is located outside the EU/HE scope and has a budget of €250.000

At the end of Stage 1, the Agencies face the following limits:
- Agency A may select pre-proposals with a total funding demand of up to €1.000.000
- Agency B may select pre-proposals with a total funding demand of up to €750.000

Stepping Stone Overview – Inclusion Procedure

Place in the implementation timeline: during **Stage 2**

➢ Some Agencies will be left with **unspent budget** at the end of Stage 1

➢ Some invited proposals will receive expert feedback stating that they should **involve more partners** (stakeholders, municipalities, partners delivering expertise their proposal lacks, …)

➢ The Inclusion Procedure gives Agencies with unspent budget the chance to **add more applicants** in Stage 2, and invited proposals the chance to **increase the quality** of their idea by adding more partners to their consortium

DUT Driving Urban Transitions

Stepping Stone Detailed Look – Inclusion Procedure

The Inclusion Procedure allows certain Agencies to accept new applicants after Stage 1
- These Agencies **must not exceed an oversubscription of 1.5** at the end of Stage 1
- After the addition of the new applicants, the „normal" OS limits **must still be observed**
  - OS of max 4 for cofundable Agencies
  - OS of max 3 for noncofundable Agencies

- In broad terms, the inclusion follows these steps:
  - During the full proposal writing process, the **main applicant** of a consortium invited to Stage 2 looks for new co-applicants from eligible Agencies
  - They contact the **Agency** in question and ask for confirmation that a new co-applicants can be added
  - If the Agency confirms this addition, the main applicant forwards the confirmation to the **Call Secretariat**
  - The new co-applicant can be added in the **submission system**

➢ This helps **even out the balance** between over- and unsubscribed Agencies
➢ It also **strengthens the proposals**, especially if this inclusion is done as part of implementing the expert panel feedback all pre-proposals receive after Stage 1

Stepping Stone Overview – Fallback Procedure

Place in the implementation timeline: end of **Stage 1** for **Agencies**, during **Stage 2** for **proposals**

➢ At the end of Stage 1, some proposals may face elimination due to partners from **only one highly oversubscribed Agency** in their consortium

➢ In order to avoid this, they are invited to Stage 2 on the condition that they will **remove the partners from said Agency** from their consortium

➢ This is only a **last resort** and will only target proposals that **would not have been invited otherwise**

Stepping Stone Detailed Look – Fallback Procedure

During the Stage 1 Selection meeting, **all pre-proposals** that can be invited to Stage 2 **without** exceeding any Funding Agency's OS limits **are selected**. Afterwards, the DUT Consortium checks if there are any pre-proposals left which **fulfil all following criteria**:

- The pre-proposal must be **fundable**
- The pre-proposal must include applicants from **only one** Funding Agency with an exceeded oversubscription rate
- These applicants must **not include** the Main Applicant
- The **cumulated** person months contributed by these applicants **must not exceed** 25% of the overall project person months

All proposals qualifying according to these criteria **will be invited to Stage 2** and asked to remove the applicants from the oversubscribed Agency. After Stage 2, these proposals will be checked by the Call Secretariat; if the applicants in question were not removed, the proposals are **ineligible** for funding.

- ➢ The Fallback Procedure provides an **additional means** to avoid losing projects due to high oversubscription rates of individual Funding Agencies.
- ➢ Ideally, it works **hand in hand** with the Inclusion Procedure
- ➢ Due to the strict eligibility criteria, **not many proposals** qualify (in Call 3, one proposal qualified)

Stepping Stone Overview – Mandatory Budget Tool

Place in the implementation timeline: **planning phase**; before Call opens for applications

➢ Insufficient budgets are the **main problem** occuring in DUT Calls, but they are difficult to fix once the Call has opened for applications
   ⇒ Not all Agencies have reserve funds they can use to increase their budget during an open Call

➢ In order to avoid insufficient budgets from the beginning, DUT uses a Budget Tool based on data from previous Calls to **estimate how much budget** a participating Agency will need

➢ Agencies can also use the budget to **test out how certain parameters** such as number of covered pathways and topics, introduction and adjustment of funding limits, … will affect their budget needs

➢ If the budget needs are not met, the Agency will **not be able to participate in the current Call**

DUT Driving Urban Transitions

Stepping Stone Detailed Look – Mandatory Budget Tool (1/2)

The Budget Tool uses **data from previous Calls** to predict the oversubscription rates that can be expected in Stage 1 as well as the budget an Agency will need to fund all excellent, all very good and 33% of all proposals.

Agencies are able to **change several parameters** within the Tool to see how they affect the predicted oversubscription rates:
- Budget
- Number of covered Transition Pathways
- Number of covered Topics within the Transition Pathways
- Funding limits

Using those factors, the predicted oversubscription within the Tool **must** be brought under the following limits before the Call starts; Agencies **who do not meet these limits cannot participate** in the Call
- Cofundable Agencies: limit of 5 (buffer of 1 compared to the real Stage 1 oversubscription limit of 4)
- Non-cofundable Agencies: limit of 4 (buffer of 1 compared to the real Stage 1 oversubscription limit of 3)

➢ The Tool is continuously updated to include data from previous Calls. It allows Agencies to understand **how much budget** they will need and ensures that everyone is well prepared, thus **limiting funding bottlenecks**.

Stepping Stone Detailed Look – Mandatory Budget Tool (1/2)

FP Acronym	Agency 1 Agency13	Agency 2	Agency 3	Agency 4 _	Agency 5	Agency 6	Agency 7	Agency 8	Agency 9	Agency10	Agency 11	Agency12	N
# PED topics covered	2	3	3	3	3	3	0	1	3	3	3	3	2
# 15minC topics covered	1	3	0	3	3	3	2	0	3	3	3	3	2
# CUE topics covered	0	3	3	3	3	3	0	0	3	3	3	3	2
Max funding per Project 1 [€]	150 000	500 000	150 000	150 000	300 000	500 000	400 000	330 000	180 000	300 000	300 000	1 000 000	300 000
Max funding per Project 2 [€]			300 000				350 000		330 000				200 000
Max funding per Project 3 [€]							500 000						
Co-Funded Partner?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

Budgets needed for Stage 2

	Agency 1	Agency 2	Agency 3	Agency 4	Agency 5	Agency 6	Agency 7	Agency 8	Agency 9	Agency10	Agency 11	Agency12	N
Budget to fund all excellent projects	-	1 697 208	100 023	382 379	718 693	797 921	4 220 223	298 334	540 629	554	124	568	331
Based on last years call	-	321 402	-	134 324	-	332 505	1 733 806	-	266 092	409 795	48		
In case of an increase of 25%	-	401 753	-	167 905	-	415 632	2 167 257	-	332 616	512 243	60		
In case of a decrease of 25%	-	241 052	-	100 743	-	249 379	1 300 354	-	199 569	307 346			
In case that projects improve					718 693	797 921	4 220 223	298 334	540 629	554 636	124		
Budget to fund all very good projects	263				1 268 202	4 690 828	12 640 576	1 493 442	4 554 788	1 796 055	494		2
Based on last years call	130				1 014 561	3 420 187	10 112 460	597 815			159 216	1 131 893	231 134
In case of an increase of 25%					1 268 202	4 275 234	12 640 576	747 269			199 020	1 414 866	288 918
In case of a decrease of 25%					760 921	2 565 140	7 584 345	448 362			119 412	848 920	173 351
In case that projects improve	263				1 014 561	4 690 828	12 620 004	1 493 442			494 409	2 021 141	334 272
Flat rate of 33% of projects funded	201 783	3 154 269	437 881	187 618	480 645	2 092 781	5 909 922	616 045			203 944	1 057 520	227 890
Based on last years call	161 427	2 523 415	350 304	150 094	384 516	1 674 225	4 727 937	492 836			163 155	846 016	182 312
In case of an increase of 25%	201 783	3 154 269	437 881	187 618	480 645	2 092 781	5 909 922	616 045			203 944	1 057 520	227 890
	121 070	1 892 561	262 728	112 571	288 387	1 255 669	3 545 953	369 627	1 480 087	552 801	122 366	634 512	136 734

Budgets needed for

|	Agency 1	Agency 2	Agency 3	Agency 4	Agency 5	Agency 6	Agency 7	Agency 8	Agency 9	Agency10	Agency 11	Agency12	N
Budget 2025 in €	550 000	1 300 000	300 000	150 000	1 000 000	3 000 000	3 000 000	1 000 000	1 000 000	1 000 000	900 000	16 000 000	500 000
Predicted Oversubscription	0,89	5,88	3,54	3,03	1,17	1,69	4,78	1,49	5,98	2,23	0,55	0,16	1,10
Budget to fund all eligible projects [€]	489 172	7 646 713	1 061 529	454 831	1 165 201	5 073 409	14 327 083	1 493 442	5 980 148	2 233 540	494 409	2 563 685	552 460

To help Agencies plan the upcoming Call, the Tool also shows estimates for the amount of budget needed to fund a certain subset of proposals

Agency parameters can be adjusted; this will affect the predicted oversubscription

Call Data along with Agency parameters are used to calculate predicted oversubscription
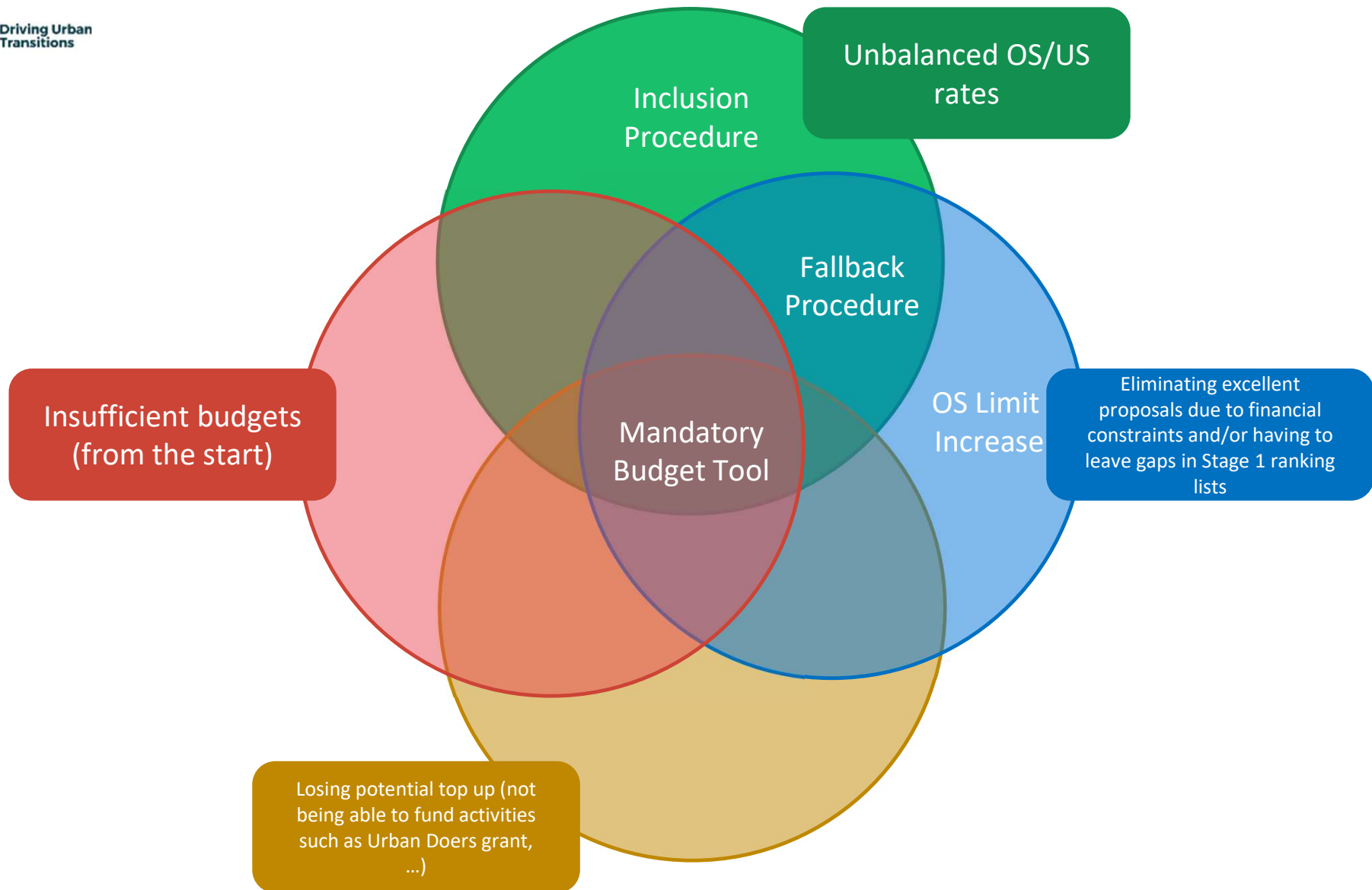
Call Implementation – Context Call 3

Important context: DUT Call 3 received an unforeseen influx in proposals; the increase in submissions was 39% and the **increase in funding demand was 38%.** However, the **overall budget decreased by 30%**. This can be seen in the bar chart below.
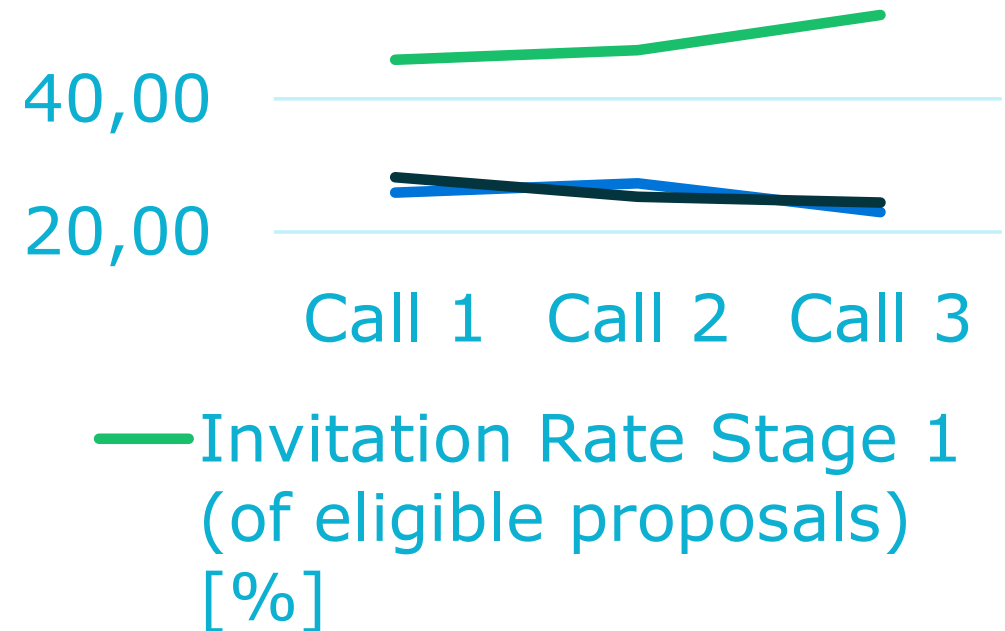

Increase Overall

■ # of Proposals Increase [%]

■ (€) Funding Demand Increase [%]

■ (€) Budget Increase [%]
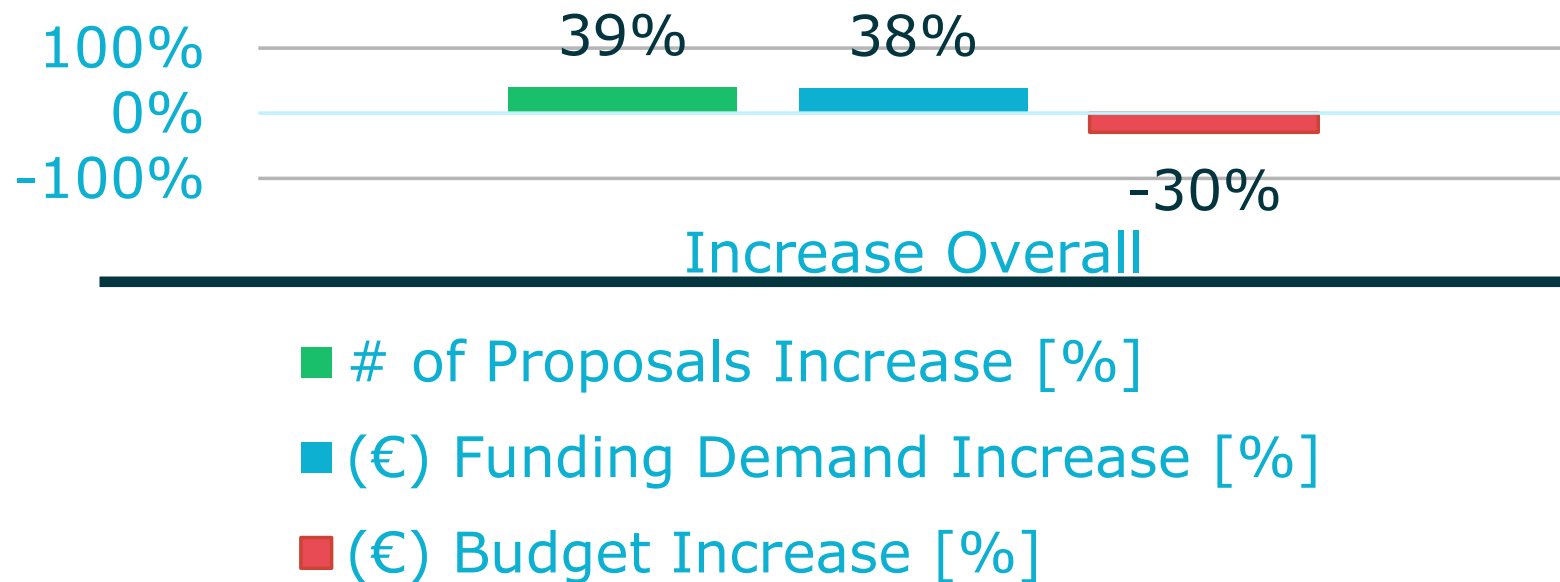
*compared to Call 2

Call Implementation – Results Stage 1

Despite the influx in proposals, the four listed mitigation mechanisms helped us **achieve better results** in Stage 1 of Call 3 than we did in the previous Calls:

Call	Invitation Rate Stage 1 (of eligible proposals) [%]	Eligible Pre-Proposals rejected due to low score [%]	Eligible Pre-Proposals rejected due to financial reasons [%]
1	45.9 (78 out of 170)	28.2 (48 out of 170)	25.9 (44 out of 170)
2	47.3 (71 out of 150)	25.3 (38 out of 150)	27.3 (41 out of 150)
3	52.6 (110 out of 209)	24.4 (51 out of 209)	23.0 (48 out of 209)

40,00

20,00

Call 1   Call 2   Call 3

—— Invitation Rate Stage 1 (of eligible proposals) [%]

Call Implemetation – Results Stage 2

Call 3 concluded in July of 2025, with 47 projects funded – almost as many as in Call 1 and more than in Call 2, **despite** a far lower budget.
Looking at the results regarding utilisation of Agency budgets, it is quite clear that this Call was much more balanced than the previous ones and **more efficient** in regards to budget spending.

➢ 88% of the budget available in Call 3 was spent compared to around 60% in Calls 1 and 2, while keeping project selection numbers constant

Budgets available in the Calls [M€]

75,0
55,0
35,0

72,1
58,8
45,3

Call 1   Call 2   Call 3
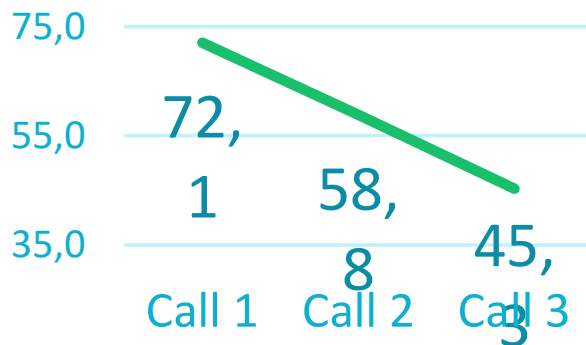
Funded Projects in the Calls

50
45
40

48
42
47

Call 1   Call 2   Call 3
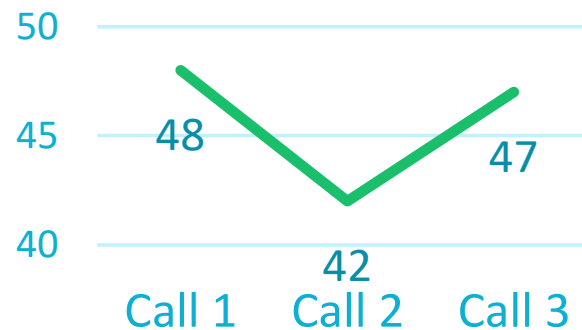
Budget utilisation in the Calls [%]

100%
0%

42%   36%   12%
58%   64%   88%

Call 1   Call 2   Call 3

■ Budget not used [%]

■ Budget used [%]
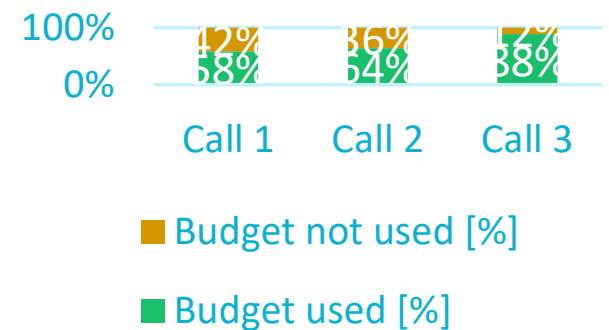
Call Implementation – Results Overall

For the first time, the invitation rate in Stage 1 **was above 50%.** We also rejected more proposals due to low scores than due to financial reasons (unlike in 2023).

In Stage 2, **88% of the available budget was spent**, leading to 47 proposals being selected for funding (all proposals with a score of 12 (out of a max of 15) or above)
For comparison: Call 2 had a higher budget but only 42 funded proposals; Call 1 had a much higher budget and only 1 funded project more (48 in total)

Summing up:
- Stage 1 of Call 3 achieved better results than the previous Calls
  - despite an **increase** in submissions and funding demand and
  - despite the fact that the overall available budget **decreased**
- Stage 2 of Call 3 was more successful as well
  - despite a much lower budget, proposal selection numbers **remained constant**
  - looking at the budget spent, Call 3 had a **much better balance and efficiency** than the previous Calls
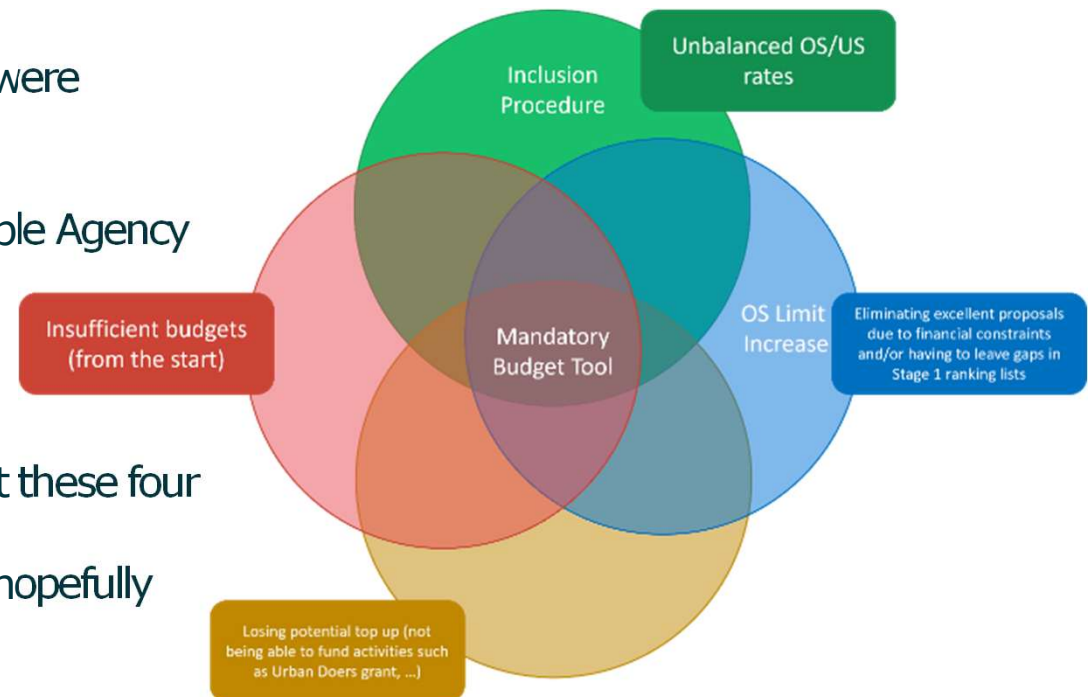
Call Implementation – Summary

Summing up:
➢ Improved OS/US balance ✓
➢ All projects with a score of 12 (out of 15) and above were funded ✓
➢ More efficient leverage of EC Cofund ✓
➢ Much more efficient and balanced utilisation of available Agency budget ✓

⇒ Of course there is **still room for improvement**, but these four measures yielded promising results in Call 3
⇒ We will **continue to adapt and improve them** to hopefully achieve even better outcomes in the future

Inclusion Procedure

Unbalanced OS/US rates

Insufficient budgets (from the start)

Mandatory Budget Tool

OS Limit Increase

Eliminating excellent proposals due to financial constraints and/or having to leave gaps in Stage 1 ranking lists

Losing potential top up (not being able to fund activities such as Urban Doers grant, ...)

Call Implementation Stepping Stones

Measure	Description	Pros	Cons	Timing of Implementation
OS limit of 4 at the end of Stage 1	Raises the limit of allowed OS at the end of Stage 1 to 4 (2022&2023: 3)	More excellent pre-proposals can be invited – fewer gaps in ranking lists and a bigger pool of full proposals for Stage 2 Easy to implement and no action necessary for applicants	Does not fix the OS issue! If a FA does not have a sufficient budget, they will still block the ranking list (at the end of Stage 2 instead of Stage 1)	DUT Call 3 and onwards
Inclusion Procedure	Allows consortia of invited Pre-Proposals to include additional applicants during Stage 2 (of Agencies with low OS)	Helps balance out over-/undersubscription rates after Stage 1 Helps enhance the proposals	Does not prevent pre-proposals from being eliminated due to budget reasons Applicants must match-make as part of their Full Proposal writing process	Since Call 1
Fallback Procedure	Allows the CSC to remove specific applicants (of highly oversubscribed Agencies) from a pre-proposal before inviting it to Stage 2	Helps protect pre-proposals from elimination due to one oversubscribed Agency Complements the Inclusion Procedure	Forces applicants to change the consortium if they want to proceed to Stage 2 – complicated Does not fix the root of the problem (high oversubscription rates) Only applicable under certain circumstances	DUT Call 3 and onwards
Mandatory Budget Tool	Mandatory predicted OS of below 5 (4 for non-cofundable Agencies) in the Budget Tool (2024 version)	Tackles the OS issue at its root and helps prevent budget-based eliminations of excellent proposals Comes into play in the planning phase, thus decreasing the need for last minute budget changes	Controversial among Funding Agencies, was therefore difficult to implement (pilot version was needed) Based on data from previous Calls – won't ever be 100% accurate	DUT Call 3 and onwards

New OECD Report

The Ocean Economy to 2050

- OECD Ocean Economy Monitor
  - Global ocean economy GVA doubled in real terms from 1.3 trillion USD in 1995 to 2.6 trillion USD in 2020, accruing an annual average growth rate of 2.8%
  - Annual growth across all ocean economic activity groups except marine fishing, aquaculture and fish proceeding outpaced that of the average industry in the wider economy.
  - Growth in 'offshore wind and marine renewables' from USD 38 million in 2000 to USD 5 billion in 2020, exhibiting an annual average growth rate of 31% but remained negligible compared to other activity groups peaking at 0.1% of global ocean economy GVA in 2015.

The Ocean Economy in 2030

Integrated pan-European initiative
30+ countries and the EC
450 M€

Innovation funds

National ministries

30+ countries + EC

Research organisations

Regional authorities
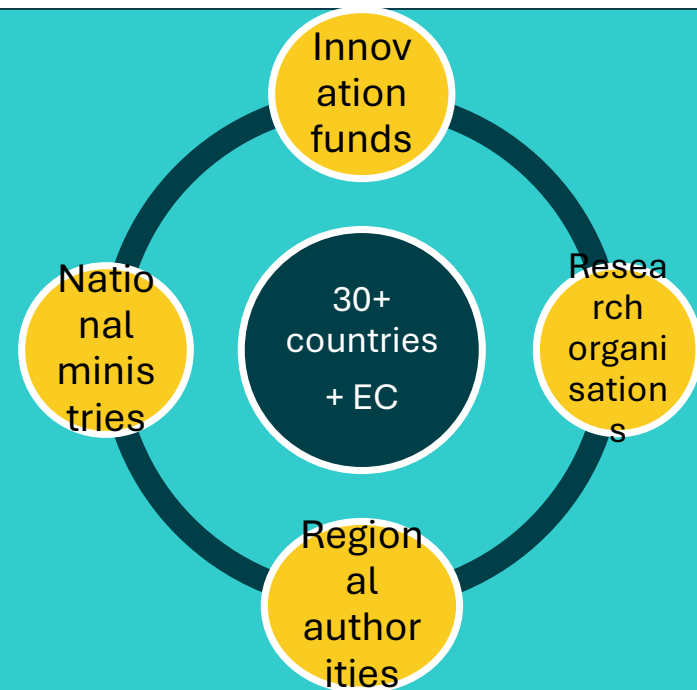
- Boosting a just, green and digital transition of all economic sectors based on the ocean, seas and coasts
- Through innovative solutions and technologies

International connectivity

Impact-oriented Intervention Areas

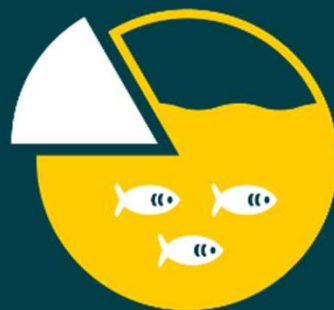**Digital Twins of the Ocean**

Transitioning blue economy sectors

Resilient **coastal communities** and **businesses**
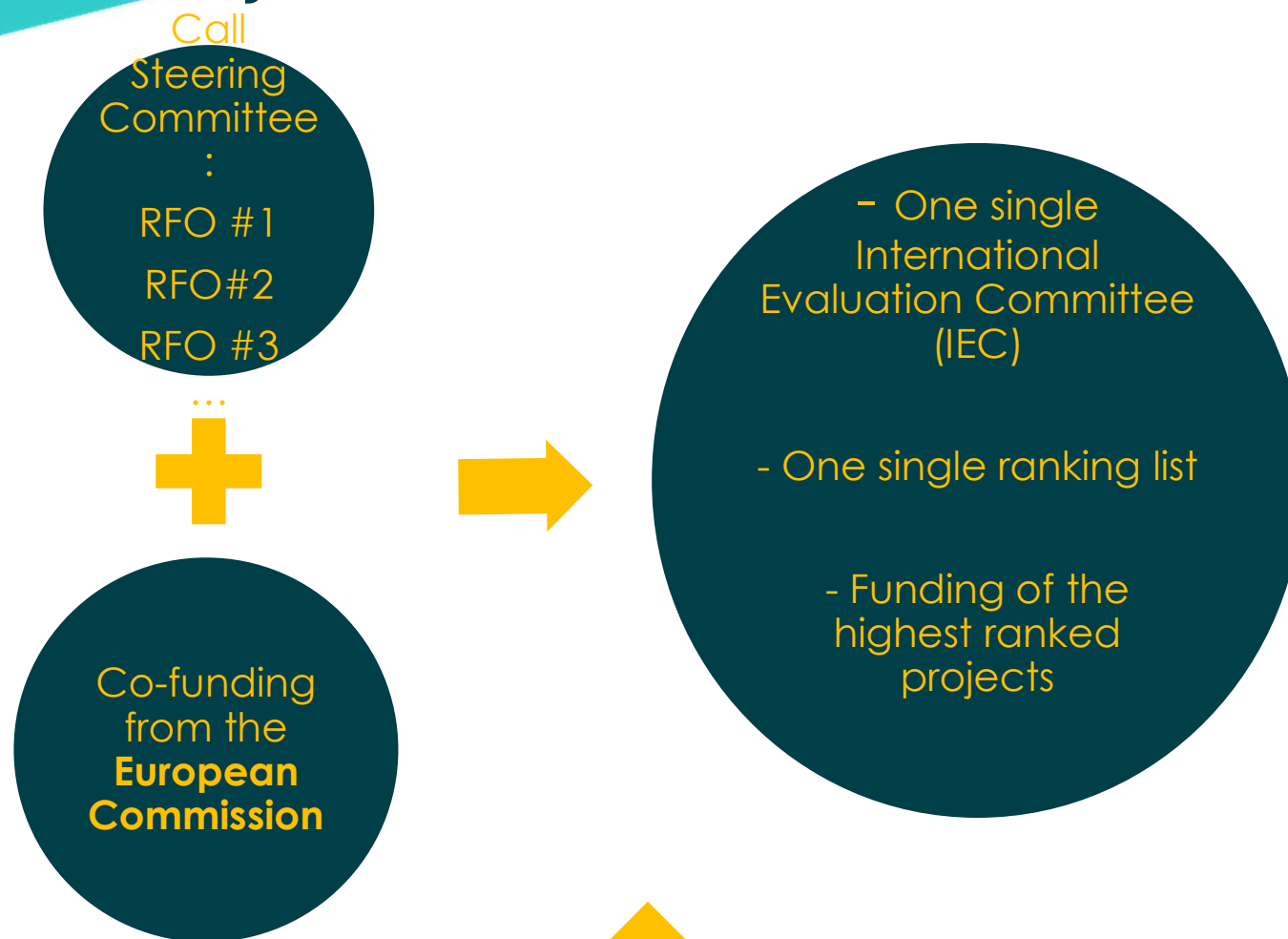
Blue Bioresources

Managing sea-uses

Joint Calls (cofunded through different funding streams) and other opportunities

- https://bluepartnership.eu/projects
  - 19 projects cofunded under the first Joint Call (2023)
  - 24 projects cofunded under the second Joint Call (2024)

- Third Joint Call launched on 15 Sep 2025 (first stage closing 17 Nov 2025), https://bluepartnership.eu/funding-opportunity/sustainable-blue-economy-partnerships-third-joint-transnational-call

- 3 additional Joint Calls to be launched each year in September from 2026 to 2028

- 1 rolling-call for access to Research Infrastructures opening in Feb 2026, https://bluepartnership.eu/transnational-access-call-research-infrastructures

- 1 call for Thematic Portfolio of Projects launched in July 2025, https://bluepartnership.eu/news/sustainable-blue-economy-partnerships-thematic-portfolio-call-interest-finally-here and two additional ones (thematic/regioanl) foreseen in 2027 and 2028
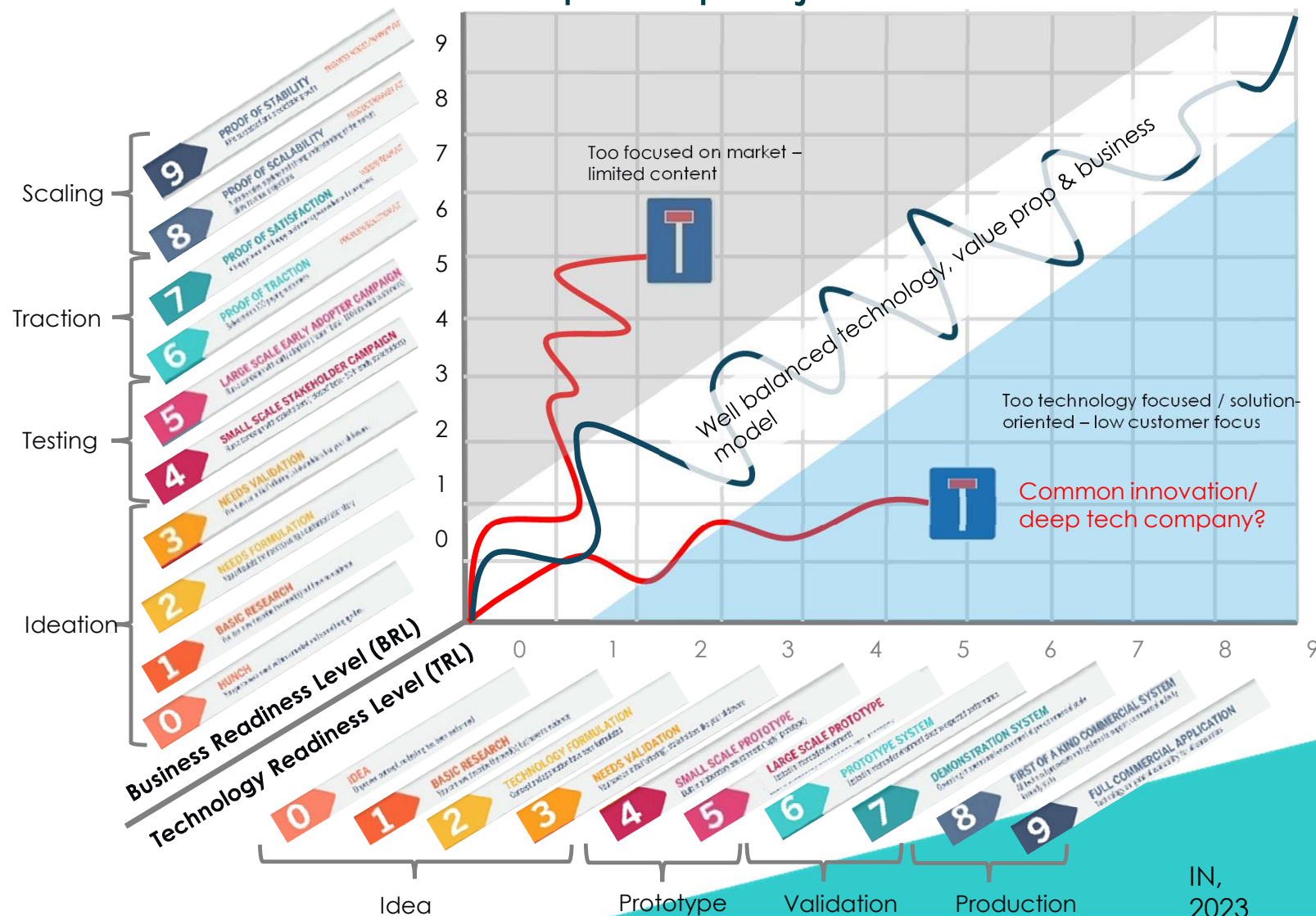
How the joint call works

Call Steering Committee :

RFO #1

RFO#2

RFO #3

...

+

Co-funding from the European Commission

→

– One single International Evaluation Committee (IEC)

- One single ranking list

- Funding of the highest ranked projects

Made possible by a Joint Call Secretariat

- **Training on Theory of Change, Open Science, KPIs and market uptake:**
  - TRL / BRL Balance ensures success and avoid "valley of death"
  - High-TRL funds evaluate prospective candidates with these criteria
  - Enable sensible activities
  - Visualise dvlp trends and next steps

Too focused on market – limited content

Well balanced technology, value prop & business model

Too technology focused / solution-oriented – low customer focus

Common innovation/ deep tech company?

Scaling

Traction

Testing

Ideation

Business Readiness Level (BRL)

Technology Readiness Level (TRL)

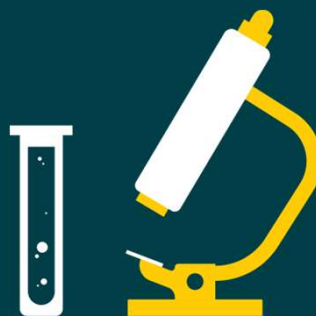Idea | Prototype | Validation | Production

IN, 2023

Additional Activities as non-financial contribution to the Partnership

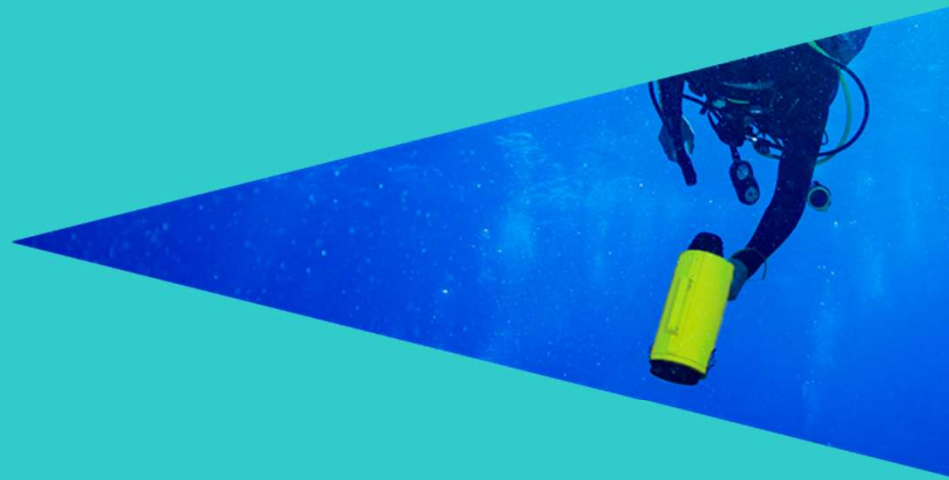Alignment of Thematic Annual Programming

Alignment of Monitoring Programmes

Sharing of Research Infrastructures

Advancing Marine Data Sharing through Private Sector Engagement - Activity in support of EOOS

Portfolios of Projects

Alignment of national Thematic Annual Programming (TAP)

Develop an agile alignment tool to cluster R&I projects

WHY	HOW
- **Align national research programs** and connect research communities	- Interested **beneficiaries (typically RFOs) join a Governing Board (TAP-GB)**
- **Establish an international cluster of excellence** by linking national and regional R&I projects addressing similar topics, gaps, or challenges	- GB agree on the topic
- **Achieve a critical mass of research and innovation,** fostering excellence and greater, synergistic impact at the European level	- Identification by RFOs of **fit to purpose national/regional projects** to take part in the action and become TAP Member (according to **internal procedures, from direct selection to open call**)
- **Increase** the **efficiency** of public funding, avoiding duplication of efforts, shifting from competition to cooperation between projects	- Personnel **effort of RFOs reimbursed at 30% rate** (non-financial contribution)
- **Supports alignment and directionality** in the European research area	- **Travel and accommodation** for at least two physical meetings attended by coordinators of selected projects are **covered by the respective RFOs** (Other goods, works and services or Subcontract)
	- **No extra budget for TAP Members' personnel efforts**
	- Action supported by a **dedicated Secretariat**

Alignment of monitoring programmes

Develop an internal project to support integrated Marine Environmental Monitoring

WHY	HOW
- **Align national programmes with EU added value** - Promote **solution-oriented R&I collaboration between organisations responsible for monitoring** in Member States / Associated State - **Test new technologies** for marine monitoring to support EU directives (e.g. Water Framework Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive) - **Showcase efficiency**, reliability, and potential cost savings for environmental agencies, assessing costs and benefits of using these technologies compared to current monitoring methods - **Promote intercalibration and standardization** - **Develop integrated best practices** for deployment, maintenance, and data handling	- **Co-design the action** with relevant stakeholders including agencies and Regional sea conventions - **Put forward a model test case** (DK on modernize marine monitoring by integrating satellite data, autonomous buoys, and real-time ecosystem modeling, supporting cost-effective, scalable monitoring and ensuring compliance with EU directives like the Water Framework Directive (WFD), Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), and the EU Nature Restoration Law) - **Implement pilot activities** - **Disseminate results and plan scaling-up actions** - **Costs** incurred by partners fore the <u>sole purpose of Partnership's action</u> are **reimbursed at a 30% rate** (non-financial contribution)

Sharing of Research Infrastructures (RIs)

Promote access to a portfolio of RIs through an open call,
https://bluepartnership.eu/transnational-access-call-research-infrastructures

WHY	HOW
- **Leverage national RI plans and investments** - **Advance** the Partnership's Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda **(SRIA)** - Support widening and **internationalisation** - Foster **synergies with relevant EU initiatives** (e.g., EU Mission 'Restore our Ocean and Waters', Horizon Europe & ESFRI-ERIC) - Promote EOOS, Open Data, and Open Science - Encourage innovative services, SME solutions transfer, and skills development - **Enhance policy support** and operational efficiency through **structured Partnership-RI collaboration**	- **RIs providers** (many are RPOs) become **SBEP beneficiaries** and define a budget breakdown according to **eligible cost categories** (actual costs incurred, <u>unit costs not allowed</u>) - A **RIs portfolio** is built: research vessels, fixed/mobile platforms, portable equipment, analytical labs, test benches, and HPC centres, ... - Actual incurred **costs** <u>for the sole purpose of Partnership's action</u> are **refunded at 30%** rate (non-financial contribution) - A **Call for Access to RIs** addressed to public and private organizations worldwide is open (complying with openness and transparency) - **Eligibility check** is performed and then **proposals** are **evaluated by a Panel of International Experts** on the basis of scientific excellence - Succeful proposals are awarded **access to the selected infrastructure for free** while other **project's costs are not supported** - The entire process is supported by a **dedicated Secretariat**

Thematic and regional portfolio of projects

Create synergies between Partnership co-funded projects and projects granted by other European funding streams at thematic (Innovation for Responsible Fisheries and Carbon Neutrality in Aquaculture) and regional level (EU sea basins - Black Sea, Mediterranean, Baltic, North Sea + Atlantic Ocean)

WHY	HOW
- Create **active networking to enhance collaboration**, knowledge sharing, and joint outcomes to develop e.g. mutual presentations, communities of practice, data sharing and collaboration, comparative analyses and syntheses, joint outputs, knowledge transfer to industry, policy dialogues and recommendations, outcome promotion, ... - **Maximize leverage** and efficiency - **Avoid duplication by promoting complementarities** and impactful co-delivery	- **Set-up a Portfolio Board** to agree on topic details and procedures, outline implementation strategy (costs of participating partners reimbursed at 50% rate) - Launch **Calls for Expressions of Interest** to invite projects to join portfolios and participate in joint activities over **two years** (**eligible projects** include those funded by **EU Missions, Cluster 6 Partnerships, JPIs, DG RTD, DG MARE, DG ENV, INTERREG, ERDF, and national/regional programs**) - **Select projects** according to eligibility criteria, **appoint one Chair** per portfolio and **engage coordinators** in at least two meetings - Portfolio setup and development of planned activities is supported by a **dedicated Secretariat** (costs of participating partners reimbursed at 50% rate) - **Budget** available **to support organization of meetings** while **other expenses** (incl. travel, personnel effort) are **self-funded**

Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership

Thank you!

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