



## EUROPEAN RESEARCH EXECUTIVE AGENCY (REA)

### Hop-On Facility in Horizon Europe

The Hop-On Facility call will provide the possibility for legal entities from widening countries to join already ongoing Research and Innovation Actions (RIA) projects under the six clusters of Pillar 2 and the EIC Pathfinder of Horizon Europe.

In order to stimulate the participation of widening countries in Horizon Europe in particular in the Pillar 2 Clusters and in the EIC Pathfinder, the European Commission has created the Hop-On Facility call ([HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-06](#)). This call will be funded through the [Work Programme Widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area](#) and contributes to the inclusiveness ambition of the future European Research Area. This call will provide the possibility for one legal entity from a widening country to join an ongoing RIA project, subject to the agreement of the respective consortium and provided that legal entity from widening countries is not participating in it yet.

The call is now open, since the 10 January 2023. This call has two cut-off dates, the first is on the **28 September 2023** and the second one will be the **26 September 2024**.

### Widening Countries

As defined in the Horizon Europe regulation the so-called widening countries Member States are Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

The widening Associated countries<sup>1</sup> (on condition of an association agreement) are Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine.

The widening outermost regions are (as defined in [Art. 349 TFEU](#)): Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Réunion, Mayotte Saint-Martin, The Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands.

### How does it work?

The proposal must be submitted by the **co-ordinator** of a consortium funded under Pillar 2 or EIC Pathfinder Actions of Horizon Europe with a valid grant agreement that does not have any participant from a country eligible to host the coordinator under the Widening component (Widening country). The proposal must include the accession of **one** additional partner from a widening country. Therefore, it is expected that **no more than one** Hop-On proposal will be submitted by the Coordinator of the eligible running project in order to meet the objectives of the Hop-On Facility.

<sup>1</sup> For an updated list of widening Associated countries with applicable association agreements in place, please consider to regularly visit the official European Commission related page for [Updates on the association of third countries to Horizon Europe | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

All consortium partners need to agree with the inclusion of this new partner from a widening country. The application needs to describe in detail the profile of the new partner and the role of this partner in the project and the R&I relevance and complementarity of this new partner also needs to be demonstrated in the application. All the information will have to be added in the customized application form part B available in the submission system page. An additional mandatory annex “Project Grant Agreement” (the running project’s grant agreement) is requested to be submitted along with the application in the submission system.

To ensure that the activities can be financed, correctly implemented, and achieve the intended impacts according to the call conditions and objectives of the Hop On facility, the projects should have **18 months or more** left in the duration of the ongoing grant agreement at the submission deadline (26/9/2024). Projects with less than 18 months duration left at the submission deadline are discouraged from submitting a proposal as given the time constraint, the possibility to achieve in a meaningful way the intended impact and objectives of the Hop-on facility will be severely limited/jeopardised.

The successful applications will be invited to submit an amendment for accession of the new partner, the modification of the description of the action and upgrade of the budget.

On the Funding and Tenders Portal, you will find a [list of the projects<sup>2</sup>](#) funded to date under Horizon Europe’s Pillar 2 and the EIC Pathfinder, which can assist applicants to the Hop-on call. This list is purely indicative and does not give a legally binding information on the eligibility for participation in the Hop-On facility call. Please, note that new projects will be added to this list gradually as grant agreements are signed as the evaluation of some calls under Pillar 2 clusters and the EIC Pathfinder are still ongoing.

## **Budget**

The European Commission foresees a budget of between 100K EUR and 600K EUR per project. This additional top-up will be added to the initial budget of the existing consortium. However, this budget increase should be exclusively spent for the benefit of the new partner with the exception of a coordination fee of up to 10% of the increased budget to be allocated to the coordinator of the consortium.

## **Expected impact**

The proposals for this additional top-up will need to contribute to the following expected impacts:

- At system level: mobilise excellence and increase visibility of the participants from the Widening countries, improve knowledge circulation, and reduce lack of participation of Widening countries in thematic domains.
- At organisation level: open up silos of established closed consortia and improve research excellence of the Widening country’s institutions in specific fields.
- At the level of the beneficiary: create new competencies and skills (from working in transnational projects) including on research management and dissemination and exploitation of results.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/horizon/hop-on>

The European Commission acknowledges that the Hop-On facility is a voluntary scheme, however, kindly asks the Coordinators of eligible projects to react to the widening entities proposing a collaboration towards an Hop-On Facility application preparation.

For any question, please refer to the National Contact Points ([Home | Horizon Europe NCP Portal](#)) and to the Research Enquiry Service ([Research Enquiry Service | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)).