

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### for Managing Authorities wishing to express their interest in receiving Technical Assistance to generate Synergies with the Clean Hydrogen Partnership

**UPDATED 10/07/2023.**

In the present document you will find frequently asked questions about the services which may be provided under the programme 'Technical Assistance to Generate Synergies with the Clean Hydrogen Partnership' and the associated expression of interest process. This document will be updated as and when new questions arise.

Contacts between the contracting authority and applicants are prohibited throughout the period while the applications are open save in exceptional circumstances and under the following conditions only:

During Submission phase (before the time-limit for receipt of applications):

- Upon request, the contracting authority may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the procurement documents.
- Any request for additional information must be made in writing only to [synergies@clean-hydrogen.europa.eu](mailto:synergies@clean-hydrogen.europa.eu)
- The contracting authority is not bound to reply to requests for additional information received less than six working days before the time-limit for closure of the call.

The contracting authority may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or any other type of clerical error in the text of the procurement documents.

Any additional information will be published on the call website. The website will be updated regularly and it is the applicants' responsibility to check for updates and modifications during the submission period.

## 1. What does a Managing Authority means in the context of the EOI?

A Managing Authority<sup>1</sup> is responsible for the management and implementation of an operational programme. It may be a national, regional or local public or private body that has

<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/in-your-country/managing-authorities\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/in-your-country/managing-authorities_en)  
[https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/funding-and-financing/energy-and-managing-authorities-network\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/funding-and-financing/energy-and-managing-authorities-network_en)

been nominated and approved by a EU Member State or by a country associated with Horizon Europe<sup>2</sup>.

## **2. Who is this Technical Assistance targeting?**

A Managing Authority that has or wishes to have hydrogen in its operational programme and/or smart specialisation strategy, and is responsible for the associated EU, national and regional funds necessary for its implementation.

## **3. What will successful Managing Authorities receive?**

The successful Managing Authorities will receive targeted technical support to develop synergies with the Clean Hydrogen Partnership. As a result of the support Managing Authorities can expect to strengthen cooperation and synergies with the JU in key areas regarding R&I and the exploitation of results, including: Technical Assistance, Knowledge Management and Funding and Financing, leading to the signature of Cooperation Agreements. The agreements will reflect the assessment of the different synergy instruments at hand, together with concrete commitments in regard to the implementation of synergies.

The Cooperation Agreements will structure cooperation differently per authority, allowing the implemented synergies to be tailored to each authority's needs and context. Because of this tailoring, the specific services that will be provided to each successful MA will be co-defined early on in the provision of support.

## **4. What are the requirements for applications?**

In order to be considered for the evaluation process, the applicants and EOI responses must meet the following criteria:

- Applications to the Call for EOI must be completed in English
- Applications to the Call for EOI must be submitted before the deadline via the web interface
- Applications to the Call for EOI must be submitted by a Managing Authority (MA) located within an EU member state or associated country
- The applicant Managing Authority must complete and sign the Expression of Interest Form (to be uploaded via the application form)

If an application does not meet all the above requirements, it will be considered ineligible and will not be considered for the evaluation process.

## **5. How can I submit an expression of interest?**

Completed first stage application forms and supporting documents should be submitted by 17:00:00 p.m. (CET) on 14th July 2023 through this website: [Call for Expression of Interest for receiving Technical Assistance to generate Synergies with the Clean Hydrogen Partnership \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-atom_en.pdf).

Every applicant must provide:

- i. Completed synergies application form in English Completed and signed Expression of Interest form (to be uploaded via the online application form)

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<sup>2</sup> See the list of associated countries here: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation\\_horizon-atom\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-atom_en.pdf)

## **6. What does the application form include and how will be my EOI be evaluated?**

The application form includes a set of questions that will gather information regarding the development of hydrogen projects within your jurisdiction, your previous experience with hydrogen development related projects, your future plans regarding the support of hydrogen development together with your Authority's willingness to cooperate in specific areas within this field. The answers provided to these questions will be used to understand the status of your managing authority and the hydrogen context within its jurisdiction. The evaluation criteria have been defined against five domains (impact, engagement, commitment, willingness and readiness). In addition, the evaluation procedure has been designed to ensure quality, diversity, and a wide European geographic coverage amongst the Managing Authorities to be selected.

## **7. What languages can I write my application in?**

We will only accept applications written in English.

## **8. How will I know that my expression of interest was received?**

If your expression of interest is correctly submitted (i.e. following the two steps outlined in point 3 above), you will receive a confirmation email within 48 hours of submission. If you do not receive this email, please get in touch with us through [synergies@clean-hydrogen.europa.eu](mailto:synergies@clean-hydrogen.europa.eu)

## **9. What should I do if I have a technical problem with submitting my expression of interest?**

If you experience technical issues in submitting your expression on interest, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us at [synergies@clean-hydrogen.europa.eu](mailto:synergies@clean-hydrogen.europa.eu).

## **10. How many Managing Authorities will be selected? What happens if my Managing Authority is not selected?**

Taking into account (i) the highest scores (ii) the widest geographic coverage (at least half of the selected managing authorities must be from at least 5 different EU 13 countries<sup>3</sup>) and (iii) only one Managing Authority per country (should enough applications be submitted), around 10 Managing Authorities will be selected to receive technical assistance with the 5 next highest scoring regions placed on a reserve list. Regions from the reserve list may receive technical assistance support should any of the selected regions withdraw or in a future expansion of this initiative. Decisions on which reserve project will receive support will be based on the score and geographical coverage.

The contracting authority, the Clean Hydrogen Partnership, reserves the right to advise on final selections, for reasons of improved geographical coverage or any specific additional knowledge the JU may gather around each application including their relevance to ongoing projects supported by the Clean Hydrogen Partnership.

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<sup>3</sup> Countries that joined the EU since 2004

### **11. Will I receive feedback on my application?**

Once the final list of successful projects, reserve projects and unsuccessful projects has been confirmed, applicants will receive the results concerning their applications.

### **12. 10/07/23. When will the Technical Assistance begin?**

Successful Managing Authorities will be informed in Sep 2023. The technical assistance will start after a managing authority is informed.

If your Managing Authority is not selected, in spite of fulfilling the eligibility criteria, it will be placed on a reserve list and may be included in the case of a drop out of another selected authority or in a future expansion of this initiative. If your Managing Authority was not selected due to eligibility or other factors you will also receive a notification of the decision, in both cases, you will also be invited to stay in touch with the Clean Hydrogen Partnership and follow any updates on this initiative or others run by the Partnership.

### **13. How will I be notified if my Managing Authority has been selected?**

You will receive a notification email confirming that you have been selected and suggesting an initial meeting to kick-off the technical assistance offering.

### **14. Can two or more Authorities from the same country submit expressions of interest?**

Two or more Authorities from the same country can indeed submit expressions of interest, however only one Managing Authority per country can be selected be it regional or national (should enough applications be submitted).

### **15. Are Managing Authorities from countries in the process of becoming Associated Countries to Horizon Europe eligible for application?**

Eligibility with regard to the country of establishment will be considered at the moment of the deadline for submission of applications; as such should the Association Agreement of the country in question not be signed at that time of the deadline, then such entities shall be considered ineligible. On the contrary, should the Association Agreement be signed by that date, the entity shall be considered as eligible.

### **16. 27/06/23. Can the EoI be pursued collaboratively between 2 authorities within the same region/country?**

Yes, it is possible to respond to the EoI on behalf of 2 or more Managing Authorities within a region/country. This could be the case for instance, when the operational programmes sit with one authority, while hydrogen strategies/plans are the responsibility of another. In these cases, a "collaborative" EoI is allowed. The EoI would still be submitted under the name of one of the authorities. Applicants are expected to explain the situation in the Expression of Interest Form under 'description of the managing authority'. Please refer to question 24 regarding the editable version of the Expression of Interest form.

### **17. 27/06/23. Is there funding available?**

Note that there is no direct funding for the initiative.

### **18. 27/06/23. My hydrogen development strategy is only available in a language other than English, can I still submit it to support my Expression of Interest?**

You may submit your hydrogen development strategy in another language.

**19. 27/06/23. I manage EU funds, but I am not the designated Managing Authority, can I take part in the Call?**

Please refer also to question 2. If hydrogen falls under the programme of your Managing Authority, and you are also responsible for the management and implementation of the associated EU funds, then you may take part in the Call without being the designated Managing Authority in your jurisdiction. Applicants are expected to explain the situation in the Expression of Interest Form and in the Application Form as relevant. Please refer to question 24 regarding the editable version of the Expression of Interest form.

**20. 27/06/23. Do funding and financing synergies explored in the framework of this initiative need to be related to ERDF?**

Funding and financing synergies can be explored across different sources of funding that an Authority has at its disposal, including but not limited to ERDF resources.

**21. 27/06/23. Can you provide examples of the possible cooperation between your Partnership and a selected Managing Authority?**

Refer to question 3.

**22. 27/06/23. Is it possible to fill and digitally sign the EoI form?**

Yes, digitally signed and filled Expression of Interest forms will be accepted.

**23. 27/06/23. Do the application form questions refer only to the core staff of the Managing Authority?**

If hydrogen relevant activities are implemented within your jurisdiction in collaboration with other offices, then those may be included in the data provided through the application form.

**24. 27/06/23. Is there a word version of the expression of interest form?**

There is now an editable word version available on the Call landing page.

If you have any further questions, get in touch with us [synergies@clean-hydrogen.europa.eu](mailto:synergies@clean-hydrogen.europa.eu)