Overview of the participants to the on-site Info Day

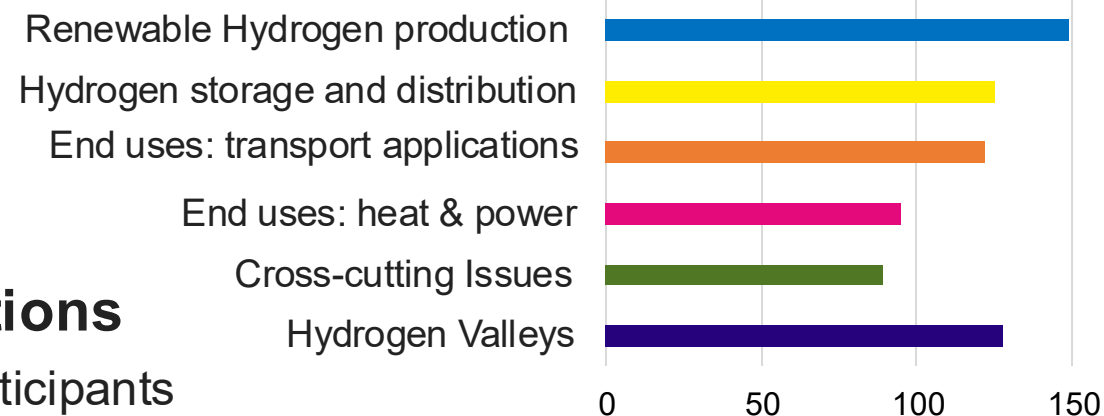**Clean Hydrogen Partnership**

Geographies

Number of organisations
- ≥ 15
- 11 – < 15
- 6 – < 11
- 2 – < 6
- 1 – < 2
- < 1
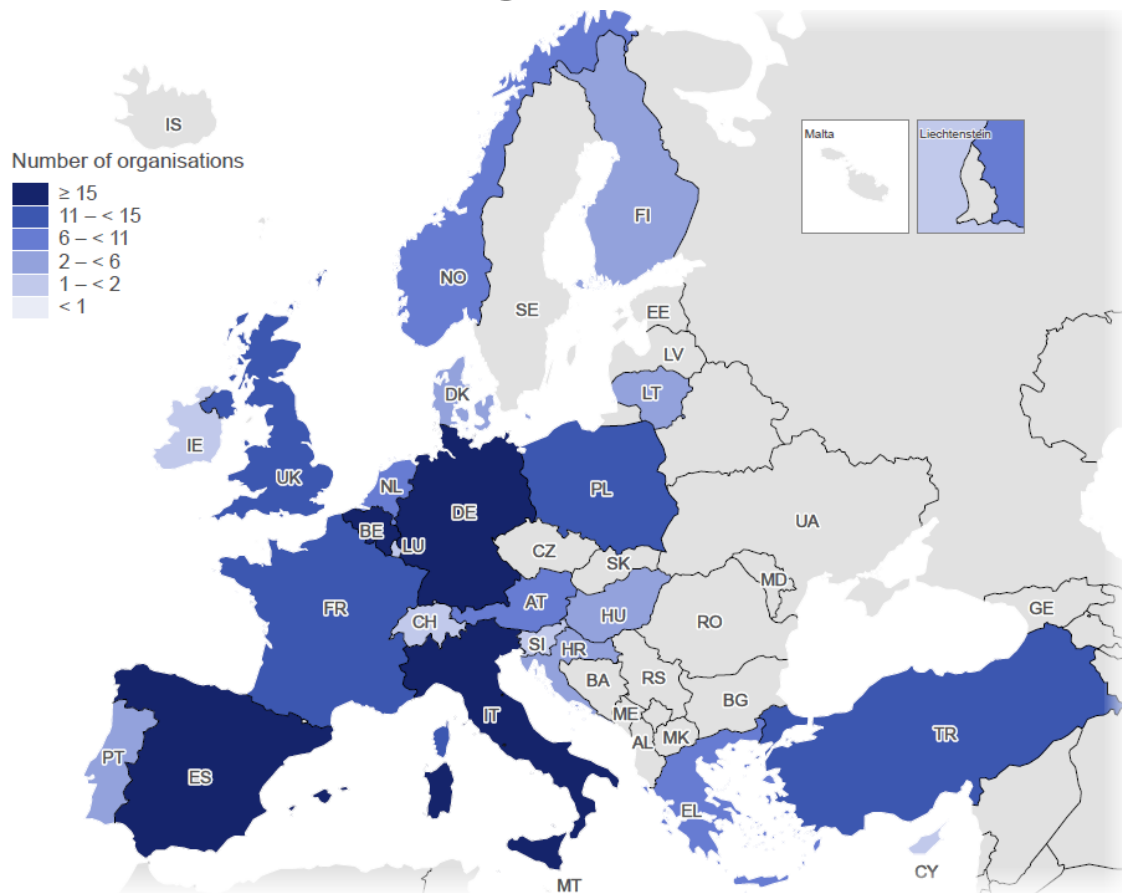
+ 1 entity from China, Canada, Pakistan, South Korea, and United Arab Emirates (outside map)

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Field(s) of interest

- Renewable Hydrogen production
- Hydrogen storage and distribution
- End uses: transport applications
- End uses: heat & power
- Cross-cutting Issues
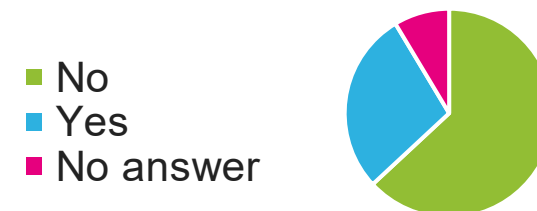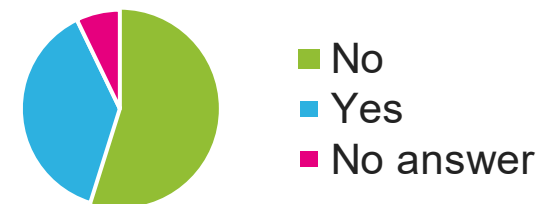- Hydrogen Valleys

(axis: 0, 50, 100, 150)

Registrations

- 279 participants
- 209 organisations

JU Participations

- Have on-site organisations **already applied to previous JU call(s)?**

- No
- Yes
- No answer

- Are on-site organisations **currently participating in JU project(s)?**

- No
- Yes
- No answer

From Call Text to Evaluation: Mastering Horizon Europe Requirements

Lionel BOILLOT

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Call 2026 – Main steps from publication to projects

Publication

20 January 2026

Find a topic

Find partners

Submit the proposal

Closure

15 April 2026

Admissibility and Eligibility checks

Evaluations

Grant Agreement preparation

Grant Agreement signature

15 December 2026

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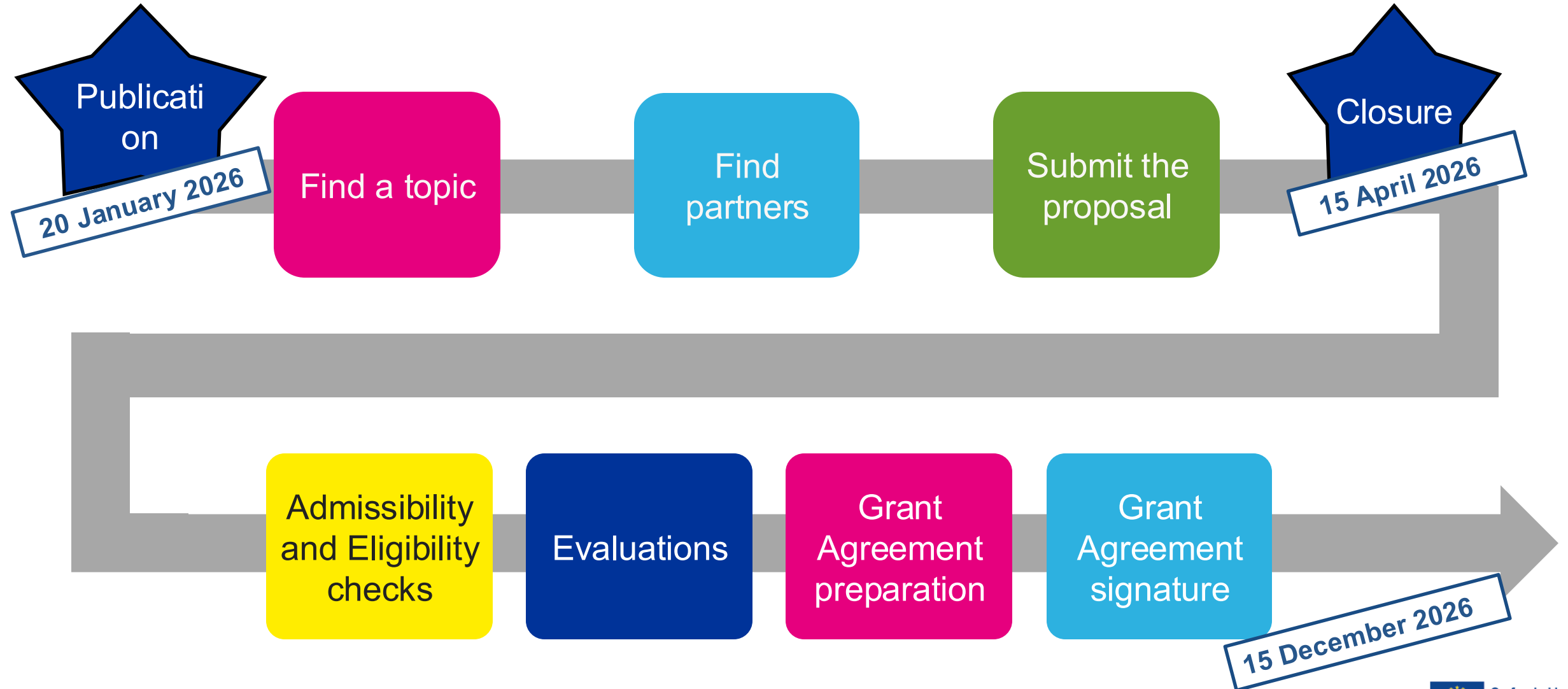
A proposal is a response to a topic, read it carefully

Clean Hydrogen Partnership

- TRL at start and end
- Consortium composition
- Indicative budget and maximum budget
- …

- Technical targets
- Costs reduction
- Contribution to policies (env., indus., …)
- SRIA KPIs
- …

- Operational requirements
- Technical boundaries
- Extra focus on circularity, EU competitiveness, etc.
- Safety plan (IA)
- …

Out-of-scope proposals = ineligible

HORIZON-JTI-CLEANH2-2024-03-01: Balance of plant components, architectures and operation strategies for improved PEMFC system efficiency and lifetime

Specific conditions

Specific conditions	
	...llion would
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Action
Technology Readiness Level	Activities are expected to start at TRL 3 and achieve TRL 5 by the end of the project - see General Annex B.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025)[157].

Expected Outcome

To achieve the ambitious goal of the European Green Deal (at least 90% reduction in transport emissions by 2050 to be consistent with climate neutrality), reducing CO2 emissions attributed to ... **Expected outcomes** ... this topic is to achieve the overall improvement of the PEMFC[158]-based systems by addressing the Balance of Plant (BoP) as the remaining system technology building block, thereby ensuring successful implementation of outcomes from R&I actions currently dedicated to improving fuel cells technology for transport by addressing components from core materials to stack level, in parallel to hydrogen storage on-board.

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Solutions for improving efficiency and durability of the PEMFC system (at least 100 kW, as aimed for Heavy-duty (HD) road application), applicable for integration / implementation in a prototype for at least one HD transport mean by 2030;

Scope

The topic focuses on the development and demonstration at an operational environment of a lightweight, robust, containerised and modular zero-emission transportable of at least 50 kW$_e$ fuel cell system to power critical infrastructures in the event of a natural disaster. The system ... **Scope** ... fuel cell system, its operation epitomising

The fuel cell system should:

- be easily transported, installed and started
- sustain vibrations and low (-30°C) and high (+50°C) ambient temperature
- be able to operate with air at low ambient pressure typical for mountain regions and other extreme environmental conditions.
- be compatible with the specific requirements and norms for transport and operation under relevant harsh environment conditions .

Find the topics in [JU Annual Work Programme 2026](#) (pages 51-136)

Check [FAQ document](#)
- Publicly available for all applicants
- Clarify important points of the call or topics

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Types of Actions and funding rates

Clean Hydrogen Partnership

RIA - Research and Innovation Actions

Activities that aim primarily to establish new knowledge or to explore the feasibility of a new or improved technology, product, process, service or solution. This may include basic and applied research, technology development and integration, testing, demonstration and validation of a **small-scale** prototype in a laboratory or simulated environment.

*funding rate max.**100%***

IA- Innovation Actions

Activities that aim directly to produce plans and arrangements or designs for new, altered or improved products, processes or services. These activities may include prototyping, testing, demonstrating, piloting, **large-scale** product validation and market replication.

*funding rate max.**70%*****

*Funding 100% for non-profit legal entities

CSA - Coordination and Support Action

Activities that contribute to the objectives of Horizon Europe. This **excludes R&I activities**. Also eligible are bottom-up coordination actions which promote cooperation between legal entities from Member States and Associated Countries to strengthen the European Research Area, and which receive no EU co-funding for research activities

*funding rate max.**100%***

Technology readiness levels (TRL)

RIA

IA
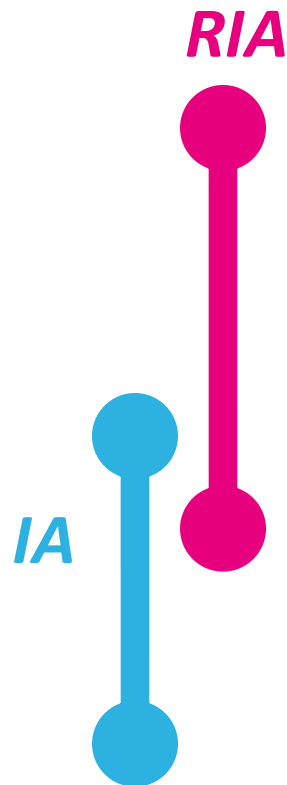
TRL 1 – basic principles observed

TRL 2 – technology concept formulated

TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept

TRL 4 – technology validated in lab

TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment

TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment

TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment

TRL 8 – system complete and qualified

TRL 9 – actual system proven in operational environment

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International participation and Eligibility for funding

Applicants from all over the world can participate, <u>except</u>:

- Entities subject to EU restrictive measures (see <u>EU Sanctions map</u>)
- Chinese entities in RIA and IA, in any capacity (including as subcontractors)
- Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine
- And other exceptions

Yet, to be eligible for funding, beneficiaries must be established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:

- The EU members states and their overseas countries and territories
- Countries associated to Horizon Europe (for example CA, CH, KR, NO, UK, etc.)
- Low and middle-income countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, … , Zambia, Zimbabwe
- **Exceptionally,** any other country, if
    - The Clean Hydrogen JU considers that their participation as a beneficiary is essential for implementing the project

If not eligible for funding, applicants will have to participate at their own cost.
These participants should **explain in the proposal how their funding will be secured**.

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Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial Capacity:

▪ Applicants must have **stable and sufficient resources** for the project(s)

▪ Coordinator completes a self-assessment at the proposal stage

Operational Capacity (including operational resources - human, technical and other):

▪ Applicants must have the **know-how, qualifications and resources**

▪ Scored by the experts under implementation, based on partners information:

    ▪ Qualifications and experience of **staff**

    ▪ Description of the consortium participants, including **infrastructure**

    ▪ List of **relevant activities/projects/publications**

Exclusion:

▪ If subject to EU administrative sanctions or in exclusion situations

▪ **Misrepresented information** or involved in the call preparation and create a distortion of competition

> Capacity and role of each participant, and the extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise

> Each individual participant has, or exceptionally will have in due time, competence and experience to carry out its tasks in the proposed work plan?

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Question: The template of proposal remains the same as last year?

- No?   Anwer: **No**

Admissibility principles unchanged

A proposal is **ADMISSIBLE**, when:

- **Submitted** electronically via the Funders & Tenders Portal **on time**
- **Readable**, accessible and printable + in line with content and format instructions
- **Complete** (admin data, proposal description, **detailed budget table,** etc.)
- Must include a **plan for the exploitation and dissemination** of the results
- Consist of 3 parts:
  - Part A: administrative and funding data
  - **Part B: technical description**
  - Detailed budget table- Excel file

Use the correct Part B template!

Reduced page limit for Part B!
CSA = 28 pages
RIA = 45 pages
IA = 70 pages

Simplified Part B information

- Thematic deletions (DNHS, IA robustness)
- **Data management simplified**
- **Impact & Implementation streamlined**:
  - Sections 2.1 (Impact pathways) and 3.1 (Work plan) simplified
- Costs: reduced info
  - Purchase cost justification **only focuses on equipment** (15% threshold), i.e. Travel and minor goods/services are deleted

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Application form (proposal template)

The proposal contains **three parts**:

Part A: Administrative

Part B: Technical

Detailed budget table

For hydrogen valleys ONLY

Additional Annex

Who?
- Participants data
- Funding
- Ethics and security

How?
- Excellence
- Impacts
- Implementation

For how much?
- Detailed budget per participant and per WP

- Part A (web-based forms) is generated by the IT system. It is based on the information entered by the participants through the submission system in the Funding & Tenders Portal

- Narrative part that includes three sections corresponding to evaluation criteria. Part B must be uploaded as a PDF following the templates downloaded in the submission system for the specific topic
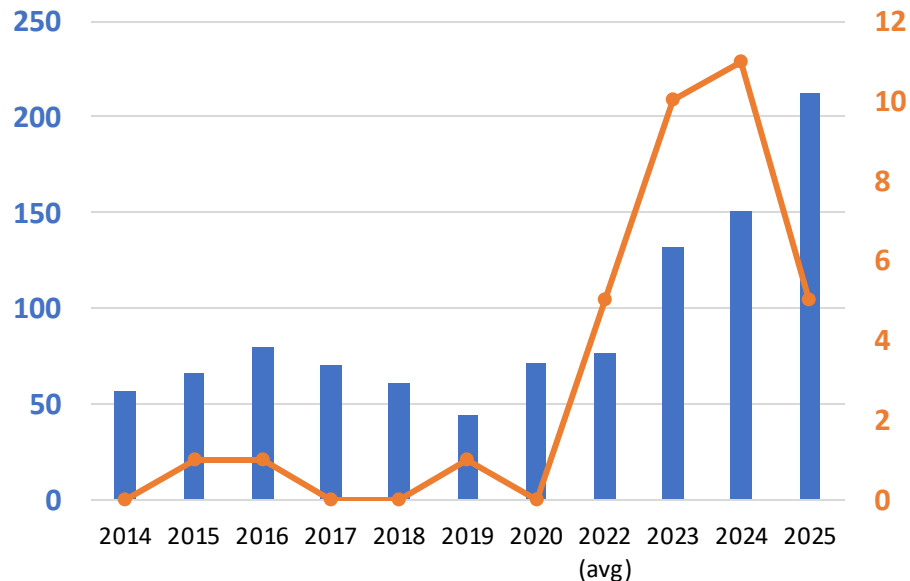
- The detailed budget table is an Excel file. You must download it from the online submission system, fill it and submit it as an annex to the Part B of your application form.

- Evidences of commitment of stakeholders

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Admissibility and eligibility

 # Proposals submitted

 # Proposals inadmissible or ineligible

Horizon Europe General Annexes

HorizonEU

Reasons:

- Do not contain a plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities
- Ineligible consortium composition
- Not in scope

+ **JU - AWP2026 Specific rules**

Clean Hydrogen Partnership

Only for topics: 03-03, 04-02, 06-01, 06-02

Reasons:

- Exceed the maximum contribution
- HE/HER membership not satisfied

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Eligibility : minimum consortium composition

Horizon Europe General Annexes

Consortium includes, as beneficiaries three legal entities independent from each other and each established in a different country as follows:

RIA and IA	- at least one independent legal entity established in a Member State; and - at least two other independent legal entities, each established in different Member States or Associated Countries
CSA	- At least one legal entity established in a Member State or Associated Country

Is this consortium eligible?

Consortium composition for a RIA, all entities independent from each other :
- Beneficiary 1: consultancy in Germany
- Beneficiary 2: industry in Norway
- Beneficiary 3: SME in Germany
- Associated partner: research institute in Switzerland

Yes?   Anwer: **No**

Evaluation process

Individual evaluation

Consensus group

Panel review

Finalisation

Experts assess proposals **individually**.

Minimum of three experts per proposal

All individual experts discuss together to agree on a **common position**, including comments and scores for each proposal

The panel of experts reach an **agreement** on the scores and comments for all proposals within a call, checking **consistency across the evaluations**.

if necessary, resolve cases where evaluators were unable to agree.

Rank the proposals with the same score

The Clean Hydrogen JU reviews the results of the experts' evaluation and puts together the **final ranking list**

Award criteria, scores, weighting and thresholds

The proposals will be evaluated against the following **award criteria**:
- **Excellence**
- **Impact**
- Quality and efficiency of the **implementation**

Evaluation grid available in Annex D
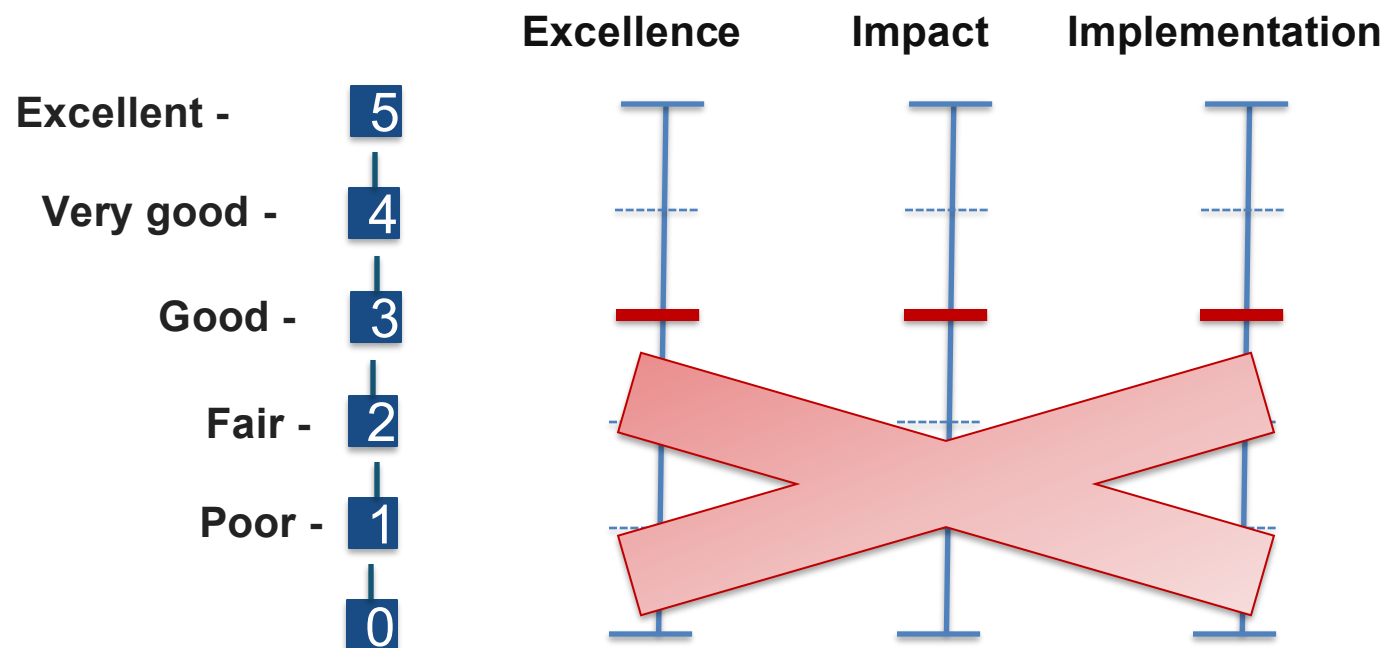
Thresholds apply to:
- Individual criterion, score must be ≥ 3
- Overall score must be ≥ 10

	Excellence	Impact	Implementation
Excellent - 5			
Very good - 4			
Good - 3			
Fair - 2			
Poor - 1			
0			

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Make quality your competitive advantage !

Excellence

- Clearly position the state of the art and **TRLs**
- Explain the science and highlight the **innovation** potential
- Set **clear, measurable KPIs** with a credible path to delivery

Impacts

- Show **realistic, measurable impacts** aligned with AWP/SRIA
- Define clear, usable **outcomes** and who will take them forward
- Deliver a focused dissemination & exploitation **plan** with innovative communication

Implementation

- Build a **balanced, relevant consortium** aligned with the topic
- Deliver a **credible work plan** with clear milestones and deliverables
- Manage risks proactively and justify a realistic, **well-structured budget**

Simple Language | **Information easy to find** | **Easy to follow**

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Evaluation by independent experts

European Commission database of experts
Register through the **Funding & tender opportunities Portal and notify us with your interest**

25% new experts

Selection of experts
- High level of skill, experience and knowledge
- Independence and absence of conflict of interest

    And **a balance** in terms of:
    - geographical diversity
    - gender
    - where appropriate, the private and public sectors, and
    - an appropriate 'rotation' from year to year.

Large fields of expertise

Network with fellows

In principle, each proposal will be examined by **at least three experts**

Presence of **one or more independent observers**
Experts that have a **conflict of interests** will be excluded by us !

Click here to register!

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Resources and Support
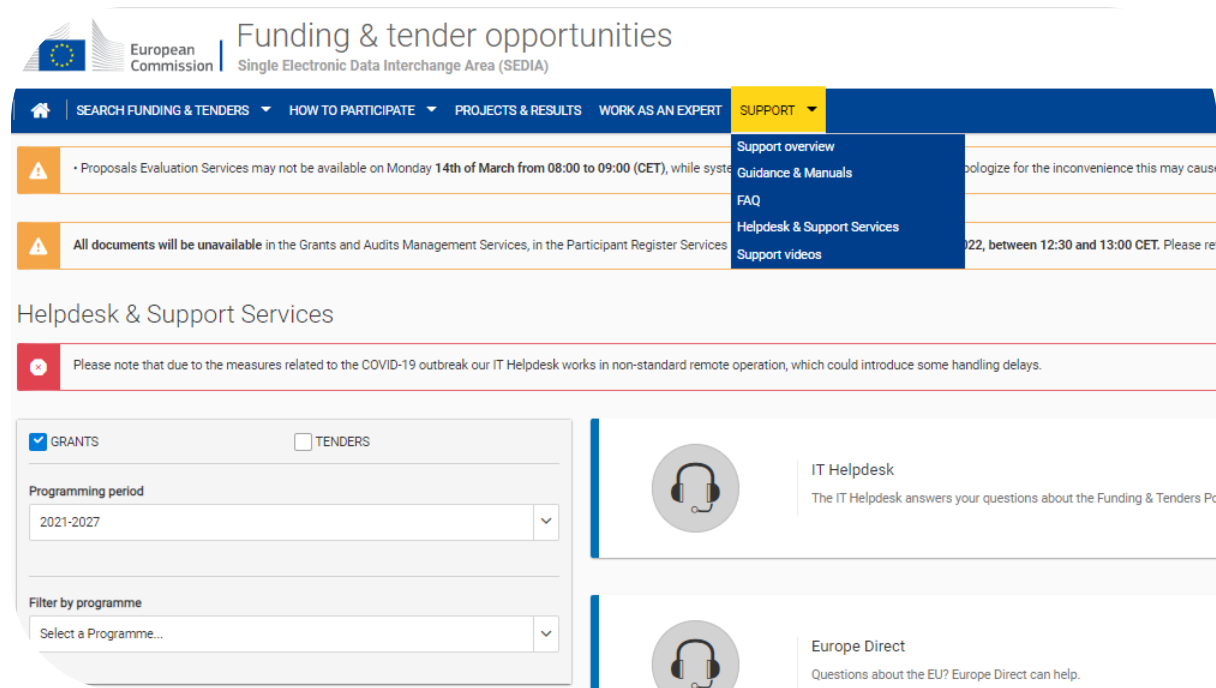
Funding and Tenders Opportunities Portal

Get Support

▪ Online Manual is your guide on the procedures from proposal submission to managing your grant

▪ IT How To wiki (guide for IT processes)

▪ Funding & Tender Portal FAQ find the answers to most frequently asked questions on submission of proposals, evaluation and grant management

▪ Research Enquiry Service enquiries about the validation process of the legal entities

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