

# Hydrogen Valleys

## Topics in the Call 2026

**Antonio Aguilo  
Pietro Caloprisco  
Renata Kadric**



# Hydrogen Valleys - Overview



## Main Focus

- Demonstrate an ecosystem built on the complete value chain of hydrogen;
- Large and small-scale hydrogen valleys acting as testbeds to showcase first regional "hydrogen economies";
- Topic open to foster the emergence of the widest possible array of valleys configurations;
- Innovation in Hydrogen Valleys is not about the technology development of an application, but on system integration of hydrogen production, its distribution and storage, and its subsequent use (TRL >=6-8)



## What is new

- Change in the minimum volumes of hydrogen production & offtake and accordingly lower Clean Hydrogen JU funding per project
- Geographical location of small-scale Hydrogen Valleys should be in EU-13 countries
- FAQs on Hydrogen Valleys available

# Hydrogen Valleys - Overview

Topic	Type of Action	Budget (M€)
HORIZON-JTI-CLEANH2-2026-06-01: Hydrogen Valleys (large-scale)	IA	17*
HORIZON-JTI-CLEANH2-2026-06-02: Hydrogen Valleys (small-scale)	IA	8*

**\*This is the maximum Clean Hydrogen JU contribution that may be requested – proposals requesting Clean Hydrogen JU contributions above this amount will not be evaluated**

# Hydrogen Valleys - Topics

## HORIZON-JTI-CLEANH2-2026-06-01: Hydrogen Valleys (large-scale)



### Develop and demonstrate a large-scale Hydrogen Valley with innovative approaches at system level



- Production of  $\geq$  3,000 tonnes of clean H<sub>2</sub> per year using new hydrogen production capacity (GOs)
- $\geq$  2 hydrogen applications from  $\geq$  2 sectors (energy, industry, transport),  $\geq$  2 years of operations
- Production plants may be distributed across the territories involved but should share common hydrogen supply infrastructure



## HORIZON-JTI-CLEANH2-2026-06-02: Hydrogen Valleys (small-scale)



### Develop and demonstrate a small -scale Hydrogen Valley with innovative approaches at system level



- Production of  $\geq$  400 tonnes of clean H<sub>2</sub> per year using new hydrogen production capacity (GOs)
- Supply more than one end sector or application (mobility, industry energy),  $\geq$  2 years of operations;
- Geographical location of the Hydrogen Valleys should be in EU-13 countries, while the topic is open to participation of entities from EU and Associated Countries e.g. to provide/build equipment etc.



# Hydrogen Valleys - Topics

## Common elements applicable to Hydrogen Valley Topics (1/2)

- **Costs for construction and commissioning phase** of H2 production technologies (e.g connection to the electricity grid, electricity costs) and other H2 infrastructure (e.g HRS, storage, pipelines, etc) **may be funded**;
- **Costs of renewable energy plants** (e.g., PV or wind plant) or related **costs for operation of the Hydrogen Valley** (e.g., electricity for electrolyzers) will not be funded;
- Provide concrete project **implementation plans** with a clear calendar, defining the key phases of the implementation of the action;
- Provide a **funding plan** to ensure implementation of the project in synergies with other sources of funding;
- Clearly and coherently present the Hydrogen Valley (across the whole value chain) including the investments/actions supported directly by this topic as well as **other investments/actions supported by other funding /financing sources**;
- Demonstration of how **financial viability** is expected to be reached after two years of operation.

# Hydrogen Valleys - Topics

## Common elements applicable to Hydrogen Valley Topics (1/2)

- Provide **evidence of the commitment** and role of public authorities and of any other necessary stakeholders (e.g. hydrogen off-takers) at least in the form of **Letters of Intent (LOI)**, remember to include as annexes;
- **Replicability and cooperation** between regions to facilitate transfer of knowledge across the EU with a focus on fostering replication of Hydrogen Valleys elsewhere;
- **Scalability** showing how the valley is expected to grow;
- Demonstrate **contribution to EU competitiveness and industrial leadership**.

# Synergies with National and Regional Programmes

## STEP (Sovereignty) Seal



Managing authorities can directly award support to projects if they align to the scope of ERDF and ESF+ and contribute to the programme objectives

**Increasing visibility of quality projects available for funding and help attract alternative and cumulative funding for quality projects, and simultaneously to provide a potential project pipeline for regional and national programmes**

