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WORK PROGRAMME 2014 – 2015

*15. SPREADING EXCELLENCE AND WIDENING
PARTICIPATION*

DRAFT

Table of contents

<i>Introduction to Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation</i>	<i>3</i>
Call for Widespread	4
WIDESPREAD 1-2014: Teaming.....	4
WIDESPREAD 2-2014: ERA Chairs.....	5
WIDESPREAD 3-2014: NCP.....	7
Call for Twinning.....	11
Other actions (not subject to calls for proposals).....	14
COST.....	14
Policy Support Facility.....	15
Support to an event organised by the EU Greek Presidency	16
External Expertise.....	17

Introduction to Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

Despite serious efforts deployed at national and European level, the Union sees significant internal disparities in terms of research and innovation performance. These trends are further exacerbated by the continuing severe financial crisis, and the subsequent adverse effects on public research and innovation budgets.

There is significant evidence pointing to the fact that the pathway to economic growth and competitiveness is largely connected to the scaling up of investment in research and innovation. To maximise such investment there is the need to tap into Europe's yet unexploited potential on research and innovation through a stronger commitment by the low-performing Member States and regions. This focus will enable the European Research Area to function in a more streamlined and homogeneous way, where the individual strengths of every Member State may be optimised.

Furthermore, research and innovation performance is correlated with the efficiency of the national research and innovation systems and technical assistance and expertise is needed for those low performing Member States and regions to improve their research and innovation systems and policies.

Moreover, participation in the EU Framework Programmes is increasingly dependent on networking and staying connected with partners across the EU. It is imperative for those pockets of excellence in Europe to enter and remain on the "framework programmes grid", thus facilitating access to networks and partnering opportunities. In order to address the above challenges of R&D investments, efficiency of national research and innovation systems and networking, Horizon 2020 introduces specific measures for spreading excellence and widening participation through engaging those who commit less in the EU research and innovation effort. This will greatly enhance competitiveness.

The separate actions of *Teaming* and *Twinning* will create new Centres of Excellence and expertise and encourage pan-European networking among researchers with a strong focus on excellence and innovation. They will build on knowledge transfer and, exchange of best practice between research institutions, building on the strengths of leading partners.

ERA Chairs will bring outstanding researchers to universities and other research institutions that have high potential for research excellence. On their side, institutions should mobilise support from different funding sources, including from the European Structural and Investment Funds, to invest in facilities and infrastructures in the context of Smart Specialisation Strategic Policy Frameworks and commit to institutional change and a broader support to innovation.

A *Policy Support Facility* will inform better the formulation and optimisation of research and innovation policies in low performing Member States and regions aiming to make them more competitive at European level by offering expert advice to public authorities. Efforts to improve the international experience and networking capacities of peripheral institutions will be made by stimulating their participation with cross-border science networks through dedicated *COST* activities, connecting unexploited pockets of excellence throughout Europe.

Finally, actions to facilitate the trans-national co-operation between *NCPs* will be deployed, helping less experienced entities in low performing Member States or regions, bridge the knowledge gap and rapidly acquire know-how accumulated in other countries thus enabling better access to funding opportunities in the EU Framework Programmes and beyond.

Call for WIDESPREAD

H2020-WIDESPREAD-2014

WIDESPREAD 1-2014: Teaming

Specific challenge: Despite its strengths, the European Research and Innovation landscape presents a lot of structural disparities, with research and innovation excellence concentrated in a few geographical zones. These disparities are due to, among other reasons, the insufficient critical mass of science and competence centres that could strategically engage countries and regions in a path of innovative growth, building on freshly developed capabilities. This could help countries and regions that are lagging behind in terms of research and innovation performance reclaim their competitive position in the global value chains. Teaming will address this challenge by creating such centres of excellence, building on partnerships between leading scientific institutions and low performing partners that display the willingness to engage together on this purpose.

Scope: Teaming, will involve in principle, two (2) parties: a research intensive university or research organisation (public or private) or a consortium of research intensive institutions and the participant organisation from a low performing Member State (typically a research agency at national or regional level, or a regional authority). Teaming actions will be selected for funding through the following process:

Stage 1: Partner organisations will have to explain clearly their vision for the establishment of a new Centre of Excellence (or the upgrading of an existing one) that would be hosted in the low performing Member State or region involved. This will include a long-term science and innovation strategy of the future Centre. Furthermore, proposers should include a clear analysis of how this strategy would fit with the relevant Smart Specialisation Strategic Policy Framework of the participating low performing Member State or region. In the case of an upgrade of an existing centre of excellence, additional information concerning organisation profile, activities and strategy of the centre should be provided. Successful applicants will receive a grant to produce an extensive, detailed and robust Business Plan for the setting-up / upgrading of a Centre of Excellence.

The Business Plan should demonstrate the potential of the future Centre to develop new (or connect effectively with existing) regional cluster formation. It has to include commitments from the interested national or regional authorities to commit financial resources (e.g. resources coming from the European Structural and Investment Funds) as appropriate, for implementing the future Centre, in particular regarding investment in infrastructure and equipment. The duration of a typical first stage of a Teaming project will be 12 months.

Stage 2: All funded proposals of the first stage will automatically enter into the second stage of the competition that will involve an in-depth evaluation (by an international high-level expert panel) of all submitted Business Plans. These will be evaluated in terms of content (scientific excellence), impact on innovation and quality of the proposed implementation plan.

Following this evaluation and depending on available budget, the Commission will enter into a Grant agreement with the highest ranked proposals to provide further substantial support (administrative costs, salaries etc.) for the start-up and implementation phase of the future Centre. It is to be noted however, that Horizon 2020 will not support infrastructure or large equipment costs associated with the new or upgraded centre (as reflected above, such costs are expected to be supported by other types of funding, including where relevant by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)).¹ The duration of a typical second stage of a Teaming project will be 3-5 years.

[The long term cooperation between the Commission and the selected partner organisations that have been successful in Stage 1 will be formalised with a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA). This agreement shall specify the common objectives, the nature of the specific actions planned and the general rights and obligations of each party. It is noted however, that the FPA will continue in Stage 2 only with those organisations that have received the highest ranking (through an evaluation by an international high-level expert panel) for their submitted Business Plans from Stage 1.]

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU between EUR 0.3 and 1 million for Stage 1 and between EUR 15 and 20 million for Stage 2 would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact: Actions will lead to the creation of new (or significant upgrades of existing) Centres of Excellence in Member States and regions currently identified as low performers in terms of research and innovation, increasing on the one hand their scientific capabilities and on the other, enabling them to engage in a strategic growth path in terms of economic development. It is also expected that improved scientific capabilities will allow them to improve their chances to seek competitive funding in international fora (including the EU Framework Programmes). Over the medium to long term there will be a measurable and significant improvement in the research and innovation culture (as shown through indicators such as research intensity, innovation performance, enhanced strategy, values and attitudes towards research and innovation) within Member States currently with low R&I performance. These will be fostered through constructive and sustainable partnerships achieved between

¹ Following an initial (minimum) three years' operating period, the Commission may consider to award “labels of excellence” to those newly established Centres that have met strict international standards through an independent international evaluation process (to be further organised by the Commission). There would however, be no additional EU funding involved. It should also be noted that this operation is not part of this Work Programme and Call.

research and innovation-intensive institutions and the partnering organisation in the low performing Member State or region. Benefits will also accrue to the institutions from the more intensive research and innovation performers, in terms of issues such as access to new research avenues, creativity and the development of new approaches, as well as a source for increased mobility (inwards and outwards) of qualified scientists.

[Type of action: Specific Grant Agreement established under an Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) and implemented as a Coordination and Support Action]

The conditions for this topic are provided in the general conditions for this call. [[Link](#)]

WIDESPREAD 2-2014: ERA Chairs

Specific challenge: Outstanding researchers can have a decisive and positive impact on the culture and performance of research institutions. Yet issues such as the availability of research funding, institutional rigidities and access to resources can hamper the mobility of such leaders to promising institutions, particularly in low performing Member States and regions. ERA Chairs actions will address the specific challenge to create the appropriate conditions and opportunities for high quality researchers and research managers to move and engage with willing institutions to improve the excellence of their research and thereby modify their research and innovation landscape.

Scope: The ERA Chairs actions will support universities or other eligible research institutions to attract and maintain high quality human resources and implement the structural changes necessary to achieve excellence on a sustainable basis. An ERA Chair holder should be an outstanding researcher and research manager in the given field of research, with a proven record of effective leadership. They should establish their own team and help the research organisation to significantly improve its research performance and to be more successful in obtaining competitive funding.

Research organisations interested in establishing an ERA Chair shall submit a proposal aimed at facilitating structural change in the institution and ensuring that the conditions are in place to foster excellent research. This should include arrangements for compliance with ERA priorities², better use of the installed research capacity (in particular of EU co-funded research infrastructures & facilities) and/or a description of the necessary investments in facilities and infrastructures. To the latter, interactions with national or regional authorities and other stakeholders to coordinate actions and mobilise support, including from European Structural and Investment Funds, are a must.

The ERA Chairs may be in any area of science and technology, including socio-economic sciences and humanities, but are expected to be in line with relevant regional and national strategies for smart specialisation. The Chair should have a full-time position within the organisation/university, professor or similar, that will allow her/him to freely apply for research funding in order to raise the level of research excellence of the team and the institution. The appointment of an ERA Chair holder must follow an open and merit-based recruitment process, and will be subject to monitoring by the European Commission. The appointment will be undertaken by the host institution at the beginning of the action. The position of the ERA Chair holder must be open to all EU and non-EU nationals.

The grant will cover the appointment of the ERA Chair holder and a number of team members and will also provide a contribution towards measures aimed at facilitating

² http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/era-communication_en.pdf

structural changes in the institution, for a maximum period of five years. Hence, the grant is not a measure to fund research per se.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of EUR 2.5 million, would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact:

- Increased attractiveness of the institution, region and country for internationally excellent and mobile researchers.
- Increased research excellence of the institution in the specific fields covered by the ERA Chair holders.
- Improved capability to compete successfully for internationally competitive research funding.
- Institutional changes within the ERA host institution to implement the European Research Area priorities, (including an open recruitment policy, gender balance, peer review, and doctoral training);
- Contributing to the objectives of regional or national smart specialisation strategies, including increased interactions with economic and social actions, and complementing support provided under the European Structural and Investment Funds.

Type of action: Coordination and Support Action

The conditions for this topic are provided in the general conditions for this call. [\[Link\]](#)

WIDESPREAD 3-2014: Transnational network of national contact points (NCP)

Specific challenge: Facilitate trans-national co-operation between NCPs within the ‘Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation’ part with a view to identifying and sharing good practices and raising the general standard of support to programme applicants, taking into account the diversity of actors that make up the constituency of this the ‘Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation’ part.

Scope: Support will be given to a network of formally nominated NCPs in the area of the ‘Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation’ part. The activities will be tailored according to the nature of the area, and the priorities of the NCPs concerned. Various mechanisms may be included, such as benchmarking, joint workshops, enhanced cross-border brokerage events, specific training linked to this ‘Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation’ part as well as to gender dimension of Research and Innovation. Special attention will be given to enhance the competence of NCPs, including helping less experienced NCPs rapidly acquire the know-how accumulated in other countries.

The focus throughout should be on issues specific to the ‘Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation’ part.

Proposals can only include NCPs from EU Member States, and Associated Countries, who have been officially appointed by the relevant national authorities.

The consortium should have a good representation of experienced and less experienced NCPs.

If certain NCPs wish to abstain from participating, this fact should be explicitly documented in the proposal. These NCPs are nevertheless invited and encouraged to participate in the project activities, and are eligible for reimbursement of their participation.

Participation of NCPs from third countries is welcome, but these NCPs are not eligible for reimbursement for their participation.

The Commission expects to receive and fund a single proposal under this heading.

Expected impact:

- An improved and professionalised NCP service across Europe, thereby helping simplify access to Horizon 2020 calls, lowering the entry barriers for newcomers, and raising the average quality of proposals submitted.
- A more consistent level of NCP support services across Europe.
- Increased application levels as well as improved quality of proposals particularly from newcomers

Type of Action: Coordination and Support Action

The conditions for this topic are provided in the general conditions for this call. [\[Link\]](#)

CONDITIONS FOR THIS CALL: WIDESPREAD

Publication date³: 11/12/2013

Deadline(s)⁴:

WIDESPREAD 1-2014	XX/XX/XXXX at 17.00.00 Brussels time
WIDESPREAD 2-2014	XX/XX/XXXX at 17.00.00 Brussels time
WIDESPREAD 3-2014	XX/XX/XXXX at 17.00.00 Brussels time

Indicative budget: [\[Link to the relevant option on "margin of manoeuvre"\]](#)

Overall indicative budget: EUR 37.91 million from the 2014 budget⁵

	2014	2015	
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³ The Director-General responsible for the call may publish it up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date of publication.

⁴ The Director-General responsible may delay this deadline by up to two months.

⁵ Subject to the adoption of the draft budget 2014 by the Budgetary Authority without modifications of the appropriations foreseen on the corresponding budget line (08 02 04 02) or the availability of appropriations in 2014 under the rules of provisional twelfths referred to in Article 315 of TFEU.

HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

	EUR million	EUR million	
WIDESPREAD 1-2014	12.00		[2 stage ⁶ (through an FPA)]
WIDESPREAD 2-2014	33.91		Single stage
WIDESPREAD 3-2014	2.00		Single stage

Eligibility conditions:

WIDESPREAD 1-2014	The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
	<p>1. [SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS - TBC]</p> <p>2. Teaming proposals must involve a minimum of <u>two</u> participants:</p> <p>a. The applicant organisation (typically a research agency at national or regional level, or a regional authority) must satisfy the condition set out in point 1 above.</p> <p>b. At least one (or a consortium of) teaming/partnering organisation(s) which should be a public or private research intensive university or research organisation of international repute coming from a Member State other than that of the applicant.</p>

WIDESPREAD 2-2014	The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
	<p>1. [SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS - TBC]</p> <p>2. ERA Chairs proposals must be submitted by a single participant. The applicant must satisfy the condition set out in Criterion 1 above.</p> <p>3. The requested EU contribution shall not exceed a maximum of EUR 2.5 million for a period of up to 60 months and 90% of the total estimated budget for each proposal.</p>

WIDESPREAD 3-2014	The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
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⁶ [FOR STAGE 2 TEAMING: XX MILLION WILL BE COMMITTED FROM 2016 BUDGET: IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH A FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (FPA)].

	Annex X before the preparation of your application.
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Evaluation criteria:

WIDESPREAD 1-2014	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
	<p>The following specific evaluation criteria will apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposal must clearly identify alignment and complementarity with the relevant Smart Specialisation Strategic Policy Framework of the Member State or region from which the applicant is coming from (as defined in the relevant Regulations of the European Parliament and the Council regarding the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)). 2. Proposals will have to include a presentation of the long-term science and innovation strategy of the future Centre based on a SWOT analysis. 3. Proposals must respond to and provide sufficient details in line with the Scope and Expected Impact of the Teaming action as described within the specific Work Programme.

WIDESPREAD 2-2014	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.
	<p>The following specific evaluation criteria will apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposals are encouraged to identify alignment and complementarity with the national or regional Smart Specialisation Strategic Policy Framework of the Member State or region where the applicant organisation is located. 2. Proposals will have to include a presentation of the long-term science and innovation strategy of the institution based on a SWOT analysis. 3. Proposals will need to describe clearly the roles, level of responsibility and obligations of the ERA Chair holder allowing for the determination of the feasibility of his/her tasks. 4. Proposals must respond to and provide sufficient details in line with the Scope and Expected Impact of the ERA Chairs action as described within the specific Work Programme.

WIDESPREAD 3-2014	The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.

Evaluation procedure: [\[Link to the annex on standard evaluation procedure\]](#)

Proposal page limits and layout: [\[as appropriate\]](#)

- Indicative timetable for evaluation and grant agreement⁷:

	Information on the outcome of the evaluation (<i>single stage</i>)	Indicative date for the signing of grant agreements
All topics	Within 5 months after the relevant deadline	Within 8 months after the relevant deadline.

Consortium agreement: Proposals funded under topic WIDESPREAD 1-2014 and WIDESPREAD 3-2014 are required to conclude a consortium agreement. For WIDESPREAD 2-2014 the action is aimed at supporting individual institutions. To ensure that selected institutions will fully benefit from the scheme, this is a mono-beneficiary action and ERA Chairs proposals must be submitted by a single participant. Therefore, participants are NOT required to conclude a consortium agreement.

Call for Twinning

H2020-TWINN-2015

Specific challenge: The specific challenge is to address networking gaps and deficiencies between the research institutions of the low performing Member States and regions and their more research intensive counterparts at EU level. Driven by the quest for excellence, research intensive institutions tend to collaborate increasingly in closed groups, producing a crowding-out effect for a large number of promising institutions. This is the challenge that a specific Twinning action will try to address.

Scope: Twinning aims at significantly strengthening a defined field of research in a particular knowledge institution (a research active university or a public research organisation) by creating a link between this institution and at least two internationally-leading research intensive counterparts in other Member States. Twinning will:

- Enhance the S&T capacity of the linked institutions;
- Help raise staff's research profile as well as the one of the institutions involved.

Successful Twinning proposals will have to clearly outline the scientific strategy for stepping up and stimulating scientific excellence and innovation capacity in a defined area of research as well as the scientific quality of the partners involved in the twinning exercise. They are also

⁷ Should the call publication postponed, the dates in this table should be adjusted accordingly.

HORIZON 2020 – WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2015

Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

encouraged to explain how the Twinning activity will contribute to the overall Strategic Policy Framework for Smart Specialisation of the specific location of the initiating institution.

Such a strategy should include a comprehensive set of measures to be supported. These could be: short term staff exchanges; expert visits and short-term on-site or virtual training; workshops; conference attendance; organisation of joint summer school type activities; dissemination and outreach activities. Twinning activities will provide no support to infrastructure and equipment and no support for hiring new permanent research staff.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of EUR 1 million, would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact: There will be a measurable and significant improvement in the overall scientific and innovation capacity of the initiating institution in a particular field of research through linking with research intensive counterpart institutions in other Member States and thereby expect positive impacts on the overall research and innovation potential of the Member State or the region the initiating institution is located in. Such improvement could be measured through an increase of peer-reviewed publications, increased impact factors in terms of citations etc.

Impact indicators should reflect an increase in relative terms based on the situation before the project compared to the projected situation immediately after the project is completed, as well as within the foreseeable future after completion. These indicators are important for determining the potential regional and national impact, as well as long-term sustainability and viability of the beneficiary organisations.

Type of action: Coordination and Support Action.

The conditions for this topic are provided in the general conditions for this call. [\[Link\]](#)

CONDITIONS FOR THIS CALL: TWINNING

Publication date⁸: 01/07/2014

Deadline(s)⁹: XX/XX/XXXX at 17.00.00 Brussels time

Indicative budget: [\[Link to the relevant option on "margin of manoeuvre"\]](#)

Overall indicative budget: EUR [64.120] million from the 2015 budget¹⁰

Eligibility conditions:

Twining	The standard eligibility conditions apply. Please read carefully the
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⁸ The Director-General responsible for the call may publish it up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date of publication.

⁹ The Director-General responsible may delay this deadline by up to two months.

¹⁰ These amounts will be included in the financial decision for 2015.

	<p>provisions [Link to the annex on standard eligibility conditions] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.</p>
	<p>1. [SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS - TBC]</p> <p>2. Twinning proposals must involve a minimum of <u>three</u> participants:</p> <p>a. The applicant organisation (typically a research active university or a public research organisation) must satisfy the condition set out in point 1 above.</p> <p>b. At least two internationally-leading research intensive counterparts located in at least two different Member States other than that of the applicant organisation which should be a public or private research intensive university or research organisation of international repute.</p>

Evaluation criteria:

<p>Twinning</p>	<p>The standard evaluation criteria apply. Please read carefully the provisions [Link to the annex on standard evaluation criteria] under Annex X before the preparation of your application.</p> <p>The following specific evaluation criteria will apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposals are encouraged to identify alignment and complementarity with the national or regional Smart Specialisation Strategic Policy Framework of the Member State or region from which the applicant organisation is coming from (as defined in the relevant Regulations of the European Parliament and the Council regarding the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)). 2. Proposals will have to clearly outline the scientific strategy for stepping up and stimulating scientific excellence and innovation capacity in a defined area of research as well as the scientific quality of the partners involved in the twinning exercise. 3. Proposals must respond to and provide sufficient details in line with the Scope and Expected Impact of the Twinning action as described within the specific Work Programme. 4. Proposals will be expected to illustrate quantitatively and qualitatively the extent of the expected potential impact within the initiating institution and subsequently the potential impact at regional and national level based on the following indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of potential impact of a project at regional / national level
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	<p>defined in terms of expected publications in peer reviewed journals, successful participation in new national or EU level research and innovation programmes, collaboration agreements with businesses, intellectual property, new innovative products or services).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of synergy expected through cooperation with research intensive organisations due to increased research and innovation capacity.
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Evaluation procedure: [\[Link to the annex on standard evaluation procedure\]](#)

Proposal page limits and layout: *[as appropriate]*

- Indicative timetable for evaluation and grant agreement¹¹:

	Information on the outcome of the evaluation (<i>single stage</i>)	Indicative date for the signing of grant agreements
Twinning	Within 5 months after the relevant deadline	Within 8 months after the relevant deadline.

Consortium agreement: A consortium agreement is required for each Twinning action between the knowledge institution and the two internationally-leading research intensive counterparts.

Other actions (not subject to calls for proposals)

1. COST

COST was established as an intergovernmental framework in 1971 for promoting cooperation among researchers across Europe. Within COST, research carried out at national level is funded by the COST Member States, while the EU funds central administration and coordination.

Starting from 2003, under FP6 & FP7, support to COST was provided through a grant agreement between the Commission and an external legal entity designated by COST as its implementing agent, whose identity was communicated to the Commission by the General Secretariat of the Council.

COST has now decided to establish its own dedicated managing structure (COST Association, an AISBL under Belgian law) in order to handle directly EU support to COST activities. It is therefore through this entity that future support to COST under Horizon 2020 is expected to be channelled. Such new governance should lead to increased efficiency in management and lower administrative expenditure levels.

¹¹ Should the call publication be postponed, the dates in this table should be adjusted accordingly.

Support to COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology)

COST, as an integral part of the Innovation Union and the European Research Area shall contribute to the delivery of the Europe 2020 agenda and the Innovation Union goals through efficient implementation of the COST networking activities.

COST has a long experience in networking European researchers and a high leverage power. In fact, a recent review concluded that the COST Action portfolio corresponds to nationally funded research inputs estimated in excess of EUR 2 billion. Furthermore, COST has a significant role in bringing new partners, notably younger researchers or researchers from countries less active in the Framework Programme, into contact with excellent researchers elsewhere in Europe.

During Horizon 2020, COST will receive EU funding for supporting:

- **A) Scientific and Technological Cooperation.** This part will include the established networking activities carried out by COST and will be funded under “Societal Challenges 6 – Inclusive Societies”.

- **B) Widening Activities.** COST will expand its range of traditional cooperation instruments and include a set of tools aimed at providing structural support to ERA, widening the European research base and promote S&T cooperation with other countries, beyond COST current membership¹². Moreover, COST shall contribute to foster inclusive research and innovation policy by bringing together "pockets of excellence", which are not yet well integrated in European and global research, also enhancing capacity building. This second component will be funded under the “Widening Participation” heading.

It is expected that half of the overall COST budget available under Horizon 2020 will be allocated to Scientific and Technological Cooperation Activities and half to Widening Activities, although the budget split could be adjusted on a yearly basis depending on the actual needs.

The grant beneficiary must ensure that there will be no double funding of the same COST Activities during the overlapping period of time between FP7 and H2020 grant Agreements.

Legal entity: COST Association AISBL

Evaluation criteria: The Coordination and Support Action will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria set out in Article XX of the Horizon 2020 rules of participation [\[Link to the annex\]](#).

Rate of co-financing: The maximum possible rate of co-financing is set out in Article XX of

¹² Current COST members are: Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Israel is a Cooperating State, non-voting member of COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO).

the Horizon 2020 rules of participation [\[Link to the annex\]](#).

Type of action: Grant to identified beneficiary (*Coordination and Support Action*)

Indicative budget:

Part IIIa: “Widening Activities”: **EUR 20 585 000 for 2014 + [EUR 28 015 000] for 2015**

2. Policy Support Facility

This line of activities aims at supporting the development of R&I policies at EU, national and regional level, through the use of the dedicated Policy Support Facility (PSF) that will be set up under Challenge 6 – 6.2.1. There is a first focus on offering on a voluntary basis expert advice to national/regional authorities for developing national and regional R&I policies and strategies, and a second on supporting policy coordination and mutual learning among MS with a view to better exploit transnational synergies and coherence in R&I policies within the EU.

During Horizon 2020, Policy Support Facility will receive EU funding for:

- A) Setting up of the Policy Support Facility

Setting-up and operation of the Policy Support Facility (PSF), aimed at improving the design and implementation of innovation policies by providing access to relevant evidence-base, expertise and evaluation results through added-value systems and services.

Type of action: Coordination and Support Action – public procurement through an open call for tender

Timeframe: 2015

Indicative budget: EUR 6 000 000 (under part 6.2.1 of Challenge 6)

- B) Support to the Policy Support Facility

A call for tender will be prepared and published in 2014 (signature beginning 2015) in view of the signature of a Framework Service Contract aiming to support in-situ ‘innovation missions’ in the context of the Policy Support Facility with a budget ceiling of 20 million.

Type of action: Coordination and Support Action – call for tender in view of the signature of a framework service contract

Timeframe: 2014

Indicative budget: XXXX

- C) Innovation missions

Innovation missions will be organised and supported on request to review various aspects of national/regional R&I systems to provide expert advice to public authorities. Individual contracts will be signed using the PSF Framework Service Contract (see B) above).

Type of action: Coordination and Support Actions – public procurement through a framework contract.

Timeframe: 2015

Indicative budget: EUR 1 000 000

3. Support to an event organised by the EU Greek Presidency: Week of Innovative Regions in Europe (WIRE V)

Identifier: H2020-WIRE-2014 (*Week of Innovative Regions in Europe – WIRE V*)

Technical content / scope: A two-day conference (WIRE V) will be organised during the EU Greek Presidency (Presidency Conference). This conference will aim at giving an appropriate follow up to the WIRE IV conference organised during the Irish Presidency in 2013. It will focus on enhancing research and innovation investment as well as policy efficiency, in the context of the new programming period (2014-2020). In particular, it will concentrate on the new specific objective of Horizon 2020 on Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation and will pay attention to the newly proposed measures to help address the innovation divide through actions on Teaming, Twinning and ERA Chairs, bringing excellence and innovation to research institutions. Additionally, in that context, the links and synergies of research and innovation policy with Cohesion Policy and the specific tool of clusters will be examined, especially regarding the modalities stemming from the new legislation of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

Schedule: May/June 2014 in Greece

Type of action: Coordination and Support Action (Supporting Action) – Grant to a named Beneficiary: National Documentation Centre/Hellenic Research Foundation

Address: Avenue Vas. Constantinou 48, Athens, 11635, GREECE.

Indicative Budget: EUR 0.25 million from the 2014 budget¹³

Expected impact: This conference will take stock of the results achieved since the conference WIRE IV organised in 2013 by the Irish Presidency. This event will provide a platform for stakeholders to have an in depth discussion on the opportunities presented for research and innovation through the 2014-20 funding programmes of Horizon 2020 and ESIF and their possible synergies. A particular focus on the new programmes relating to Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation, will increase information and raise awareness

¹³ Subject to the adoption of the draft budget 2014 by the Budgetary Authority without modifications of the appropriations foreseen on the corresponding budget line (08 02 04 02) or the availability of appropriations in 2014 under the rules of provisional twelfths referred to in Article 315 of TFEU.

regarding the specific measures, therefore increasing the funding opportunities for the Member States and regions from Horizon 2020.

4. External expertise

This action will support the use of appointed independent experts for the evaluation of project proposals and, where appropriate, for the reviewing of running projects.

Indicative budget: EUR 0.50 million from the 2014 budget¹⁴

Type of action: Expert contracts

¹⁴ Subject to the adoption of the draft budget 2014 by the Budgetary Authority without modifications of the appropriations foreseen on the corresponding budget line (08 02 04 02) or the availability of appropriations in 2014 under the rules of provisional twelfths referred to in Article 315 of TFEU.