

EN

Annex 18

Horizon 2020

Work Programme 2016 - 2017

15. Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

Important notice on the second Horizon 2020 Work Programme

This Work Programme covers 2016 and 2017. The parts of the Work Programme that relate to 2017 are provided at this stage on an indicative basis. Such Work Programme parts will be decided during 2016.

(European Commission Decision C (2015)XXXX of JJ Month 2015)

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Introduction

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 research and innovation. To tap into Europe's yet unexploited potential in research and innovation a stronger participation in Horizon 2020 coupled with greater commitment by the low-performing Member States and Associated Countries can be instrumental. 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 and Associated Country may be optimised.

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

In addition, 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 organisations of those countries which could commit more towards the EU research and innovation effort. This will greatly enhance competitiveness.

The Work programme is in line with the Horizon 2020 Responsible Research and Innovation¹ (RRI) cross-cutting issue, engaging society, integrating the gender and ethical dimensions, ensuring the access to research outcomes and encouraging formal and informal science education.

Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) is the on-going process of aligning research and innovation to the values, needs and expectations of society which allows to identify and to deliver new solutions to the societal challenges. In this process it is not only matter to engage the traditional stakeholders and partners but to engage wider the civil society and citizens to participate to definition and implementation of research and innovation policy agenda and activities. Therefore RRI policy approach is to be taken into account as well at local and regional levels, when relevant, in the processes on how to improve and optimise to the outcomes of the research and innovation activities presented in the submitted proposals.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/rome_declaration_RRI_final_21_November.pdf

The ethical dimension of the activities undertaken should be analysed and taken into account, including relevant socioeconomic implications. This implies the respect of ethical principles and related legislation during the implementation. Whenever possible, the activities should also include in their objectives a better understanding and handling of the ethical aspects as well as the promotion of the highest ethical standards in the field and among the actors and stakeholders. The most common issues to be considered include: personal data protection and privacy, protection of participants and researchers, ensuring informed consent, dual use and potential misuse of the research results, fair benefit sharing when developing countries are involved, environment protection, etc.

The specific policy requirements, scope and perspectives of the actions covered under the Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation Part necessitate specific geographical eligibility conditions, in order to maximise their real value and impact.

In particular, it is considered that research excellence is a key factor for research and innovation performance and for successful participation in Framework Programmes. Therefore, to serve the ultimate objectives of these actions it is necessary to target those which are low performing in terms of research excellence.

The Composite indicator of Research Excellence² (with a corrective threshold of 70% of the EU average) has been selected to distinguish those countries identified as **"low R&I performing"** or **"Widening" countries**. These are:

Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Associated Countries (subject to valid association agreements of third countries with Horizon 2020): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.

The actions funded through this work programme are therefore mostly targeting organisations and institutions in the above countries and are described below:

Teaming will invest in Europe's research and innovation potential through supporting the creation of new (or upgrading of existing) Centres of Excellence in low R&I performing Member States and Associated Countries on the basis of partnerships with internationally leading institutions.

Twinning aims to build on the huge potential of networking for excellence through knowledge transfer and, exchange of best practice between research institutions and leading partners.

² The detailed scores of the composite indicator can be found in p. 5 (Excellence in S&T 2010) of the "Research and Innovation Performance in EU Member States and Associated Countries 2013" at http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/state-of-the-union/2012/innovation_union_progress_at_country_level_2013.pdf

ERA Chairs will bring outstanding researchers to universities and other research organisations, in those countries, that have high potential for research excellence to help them attract and maintain high quality human resources and implement the structural changes necessary to achieve excellence on a sustainable basis.

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.

A *Policy Support Facility* will inform better the formulation and optimisation of research and innovation policies in low R&I performing Member States and Associated Countries aiming to make them more competitive at European level by offering expert advice to public authorities.

JPI Urban Europe enhances the knowledge and capacities in order to support urban transition towards sustainability in Europe and beyond. Under this Work Programme, efforts to extend the participation of low R&I performing Member States in *JPI Urban Europe* will be undertaken.

A novelty in Horizon 2020 is the Pilot on Open Research Data which aims to improve and maximise access to and re-use of research data generated by projects. While certain Work Programme parts and calls have been explicitly identified to participate in the Pilot on Open Research Data, individual projects funded under the other Work Programme parts and calls can choose to participate in the Pilot on a voluntary basis. Participating projects will be required to develop a Data Management Plan (DMP), in which they will specify what data the project will generate, whether and how it will be exploited or made accessible for verification and re-use, and how it will be curated and preserved. Further guidance on the Pilot on Open Research Data and Data Management is available on the Participant Portal.

WIDESPREAD

H2020-WIDESPREAD-2016-2017

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

WIDESPREAD-01-2016: Teaming Phase 2

Specific Challenge: Despite a recent trend for the research and innovation performance of individual countries in the EU to converge, sharp differences among Member States still remain. These disparities are due to, among other reasons, the insufficient critical mass of science and lack of centres of excellence having sufficient competence to engage countries and regions strategically in a path of innovative growth, building on newly developed capabilities. Moreover, by putting national budgets under constraint, the ongoing financial crisis is threatening to widen gaps. Exploiting the potential of Europe's talent pool by maximising and spreading the benefits of research and innovation across the Union is vital for Europe's competitiveness and its ability to address societal challenges in the future. This could help countries and regions that are lagging behind in terms of research and innovation performance to attain a competitive position in the global value chains.

Teaming will address this challenge by supporting the creation of new centres of excellence or upgrading the existing ones in low R&I performing countries, building on partnerships between leading scientific institutions and partner institutions in low R&I performing countries, that display the willingness to engage together on this purpose.

Scope: Successful applicants under topic WIDESPREAD-1-2014: Teaming, of the call H2020-WIDESPREAD-2014 have received a grant to produce an extensive, detailed and robust Business Plan within a timeframe of 12 months for the setting-up/upgrading of a Centre of Excellence. This Business Plan is expected to be submitted in form of a proposal for Teaming Phase 2, as explained in detail further below.

This proposal (Business Plan) should demonstrate the potential of the future Centre to develop new (or connect effectively with existing) regional cluster formation and the prospects of the hosting country/region to provide an innovation friendly environment. The proposal has to include commitments (the form of commitment needs to follow the Commission template that will be provided in due time) from the interested national/regional authorities or other private sources to commit financial resources (e.g. resources coming from the European Structural and Investment Funds or Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) funds as appropriate), for implementing the future Centre, in particular regarding investment in infrastructure and equipment. A properly functioning service-oriented administration that is able to provide the human resources needed to absorb the research and innovation potential of the new/upgraded Centre should be demonstrated.

The proposal (Business Plan) should:

- Illustrate the scientific and innovation potential of the future Centre of Excellence

- Demonstrate the growth potential of the Centre of Excellence for the benefit of the country or region
- Elaborate on the structure of the partnership and on the strong engagement of the partners
- Demonstrate how the newly established/upgraded Centre will have full autonomy in decision making
- Elaborate on the steps that will be taken towards eventual long term self-sustainability

Procedure for Teaming Phase 2: In the context of the Framework Partnership Agreements awarded under topic WIDESPREAD-1-2014: Teaming, of the call H2020-WIDESPREAD-2014, a Specific Grant Agreement (SGA) will be awarded on the basis of a call for proposals open to all the above mentioned grant holder consortia for which this type of activity is already included in the FPA action plan (in accordance with the procedure established in art. 2.2 of the FPA).

Applicants to the Teaming Phase 2 call for proposals are invited to submit as a proposal, the Business Plan produced as main deliverable of the grant awarded under topic WIDESPREAD-1-2014: Teaming, of the call H2020-WIDESPREAD-2014.

Following the evaluation of the submitted Teaming Phase 2 proposals, the Commission will enter into a Specific Grant Agreement with the highest ranked proposals to provide substantial support for the start-up and implementation phase of the future Centre. This will cover mainly administrative and operational costs as well as salaries of the future Centre of Excellence. However, equipment and consumables could be funded as long as they constitute only a minor part of the total Horizon 2020 funding requested and are sufficiently justified.

For grants awarded under this topic for a Coordination and Support Action funded by a Specific Grant Agreement awarded under the Framework Partnership Agreement the following cost categories will be ineligible costs:

- infrastructure costs;

The respective option of Article 6.5.C of the Model Grant Agreement will be applied. Such costs are expected to be supported by other types of funding, including where relevant by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) or the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) funds.

The duration of a Teaming Phase 2 project will be between 5 to 7 years.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of EUR 15 million, would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting lower amounts.

Expected Impact: The creation of new (or significant upgrades of existing) Centres of Excellence in "Widening" Countries through the Teaming partnerships is expected to:

- Increase their scientific capabilities and enable them to engage in a strategic growth path pointing to long-term opportunities for economic development. Potential links to innovative clusters would be an asset.
- Through improved scientific capabilities allow these countries to improve their chances to seek competitive funding in international fora (including the EU Framework Programmes).
- Over the medium to long term achieve a measurable and significant improvement in the research and innovation culture (as shown through indicators such as research intensity, innovation performance, values and attitudes towards research and innovation) of those countries.

The potential impact of the new/upgraded Centre of Excellence in terms of sustained excellence should be reinforced through projected measurable key performance and output related indicators.

Benefits will also accrue to the institutions from the more intensive research and innovation performers, in terms of 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 and Coordination and Support Action

The conditions related to this topic are provided at the end of this call and in the General Annexes.

WIDESPREAD-02-2016: Support to JPI Urban Europe³

Specific Challenge: The importance of urban areas in contributing to economic growth and innovation as well as in tackling social and environmental challenges is recognised by European policy agendas and beyond. Strong evidence exists that the largest urban areas are developing into 'global cities as knowledge hubs' that function in the worldwide networks of economic activities and innovation, communication as well as mobility and attract human capital. However, city regions in the Widening countries are facing specific challenges. For instance, the processes of severe regional polarisation and population shrinkage are hindering the development of many city regions into knowledge hubs in these countries. At the same time, there are huge possibilities of improvement for the Widening countries based on active collaboration with innovative urban regions of higher performing countries. Also other global megatrends such as demographic and climate change will have more severe negative impacts on urban regions in the Widening countries, especially in Eastern Europe, whereas city regions in Western and Northern parts of the Union will be less affected. In order to respond to these

³ This activity directly aimed at supporting public-public partnerships with Member States and associated countries, is excluded from the delegation to REA and will be implemented by the Commission services.

challenges, actors from the Widening countries should be actively involved in relevant R&I networks and activities having a strong policy-informing ambition.

Following the implementation of the actions foreseen by the Commission's Communication on Joint Programming to tackle Europe's major societal challenges of 2008, the Competitiveness Council has launched altogether ten Joint Programming Initiatives so far, among which is the Joint Programming Initiative 'Urban Europe Global Urban Challenges, Joint European Solutions' (JPI Urban Europe)⁴.

This initiative enhances the knowledge and capacities in order to support urban transition towards sustainability in Europe and beyond. In doing so, it develops innovative solutions and reduces the fragmentation of urban-related research and innovation funding as well as builds critical mass and visibility. Several Council Conclusions on Joint Programming⁵ invite the Commission to support JPIs via Coordination and Support Actions.

Scope: Proposals should contribute to achieving an increased participation of countries and actors from the Widening countries in the JPI Urban Europe. The proposals should also build on the coordination action 'BOOST – Cooperation in Urban Science, Technology and Policy' in support to the JPI Urban Europe that is expected to result in a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) and in a related Implementation Plan⁶. Proposals should focus on actions enabling the JPI members to carry out activities foreseen in the Implementation Plan, for instance, by favouring the alignment of these activities to the SRIA. Moreover, proposals should support alignment of national research as well as enable evidence-based policy-making and effective cross-policy actions, and investigate novel forms of the SRIA implementation such as collaborations with other JPIs or research infrastructures, development of funding synergies with the European Structural and Investment Funds and so on. Finally, proposals should further strengthen the positioning of the JPI Urban Europe in the context of existing national and European activities by ensuring coherence with other relevant initiatives. Proposals should also enhance the international dimension of the JPI.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU in the range of EUR 1.25 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 country participation of the JPI Urban Europe from the Widening countries by relationship building with actors, and by ensuring that the SRIA properly addresses the specific priorities and needs of these countries.

⁴ Council Conclusions of 8 December 2011

⁵ Council Conclusions of 12 October 2010, of 26 November 2010 and of 8 December 2011

⁶ The Implementation Plan is expected to apply effective and efficient methods of collaboration such as those proposed by the 'Voluntary guidelines on Framework Conditions', adopted by the High Level Group on Joint Programming (GPC).

- Improved overall uptake of the SRIA in national programmes and activities through alignment.
- Contribution to the development of specific instruments for the SRIA implementation such as urban observatories or data warehouses, and involving actors from the Widening countries in these developments.
- Improved professionalization of the programme management including knowledge exchange, capitalization of generated knowledge as well as implementation of new innovative solutions and concepts.
- Enhanced positioning of the JPI Urban Europe in terms of research approach, research areas and instruments in the context of existing national and European activities and beyond including the outreach to cities, city networks and other urban actors.
- Increased evidence-base for policy-making aimed at key EU priorities.

Type of Action: Coordination and support action

The conditions related to this topic are provided at the end of this call and in the General Annexes.

WIDESPREAD-03-2017: 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 R&I performing countries. ERA Chairs actions will address the specific challenge of creating 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 research organisations with the objective of attracting and maintaining high quality human resources under the direction of an outstanding researcher and research manager (the "ERA Chair holder") and in parallel implementing the structural changes necessary to achieve excellence on a sustainable basis.

The scientific field can be any domain of research and innovation addressed under the Treaty, however it needs to be closely connected with the activities of the ERA Chair holder and fully capitalise on his/her presence and expertise.

Research organisations interested in establishing an ERA Chair shall submit a proposal based on a SWOT analysis, aimed at facilitating structural change in the institution and ensuring that the conditions are in place to foster excellent research. Proposals should include arrangements for compliance with ERA priorities⁷ including the European Charter for Researchers & Code

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/era-communication_en.pdf

of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers⁸, the gender equality in research teams and decision making bodies, 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. For the latter, interactions with national or regional authorities and other stakeholders to coordinate actions and mobilise support, including, where relevant, from European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) or Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) funds, are an asset. If relevant, any links with sustainable development objectives are to be outlined.

ERA Chair holders should be outstanding researchers and research managers 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. The ERA Chair holder should have a position within the organisation/university, professor or similar, that will allow her/him to make appropriate resource allocation decisions, supervise team members and freely apply for research funding in order to raise the level of research excellence of the team and the institution. 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.

The position of the ERA Chair holder must be open to all EU and non-EU nationals. The appointment of an ERA Chair holder will be undertaken by the host institution at the beginning of the action and must follow an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment process that will be monitored by the European Commission.

It is expected that the Chair holder will commit him/herself for the full duration of the grant. In principle, the ERA Chair holder is to be appointed in a full-time position (permanent or non-permanent) in accordance with the national legislation of the institution hosting the grant but part-time arrangements might be agreed by the parts, if deemed beneficial for the action.

The grant that can have a duration of five years maximum will cover the appointment of the ERA Chair holder and a number of team members (e.g. their salaries, recruitment costs⁹, administrative costs, travel and subsistence costs).

The grant will also provide a contribution towards measures aimed at facilitating structural changes in the institution (e.g. costs for trainings, meetings, publications and patenting. Equipment costs can also be covered but only in duly justified cases and as long as they constitute a minor part of the total Horizon 2020 funding requested). Hence, the grant is not a measure to fund research per se and for grants awarded under this topic for a Coordination and Support Action, the following cost categories will be ineligible costs:

- research costs;

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/brochure_rights/am509774CEE_EN_E4.pdf

⁹ That can be considered under the category of "other direct costs".

- consumables;

The respective option of Article 6.5.C of the Model Grant Agreement will be applied.

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 lower amounts.

Expected Impact:

- Increased attractiveness of the institution, host 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 Chair host institution to implement the European Research Area priorities, (including an open recruitment policy, gender balance, peer review, and innovative doctoral training).

Type of Action: Coordination and support action

The conditions related to this topic are provided at the end of this call and in the General Annexes.

WIDESPREAD-04-2017: Teaming Phase 1

Specific Challenge: Despite a recent tendency for the research and innovation performances of individual countries in the EU to converge, sharp differences among Member States still remain. These disparities are due to, among other reasons, the insufficient critical mass of science and lack of centres of excellence having sufficient competence to engage countries and regions strategically in a path of innovative growth, building on newly developed capabilities. Moreover, by putting national budgets under constraint, the ongoing financial crisis is threatening to widen gaps. Exploiting the potential of Europe's talent pool by maximising and spreading the benefits of research and innovation across the Union is vital for Europe's competitiveness and its ability to address societal challenges in the future. This could help countries and regions that are lagging behind in terms of research and innovation performance to attain a competitive position in the global value chains.

Teaming will address this challenge by supporting the creation of new centres of excellence or upgrading the existing ones in low R&I performing countries, building on partnerships between leading scientific institutions and partner institutions in low R&I performing countries, that display the willingness to engage together on this purpose.

Scope: Teaming, will involve in principle, two (2) parties:

(1) The main applicant organisation (the coordinator) established in a "Widening" country (see section on specific eligibility criteria for more details) that must be either a national/regional authority or a research funding agency or a university or a research organisation. In case the coordinator organisation is not a public authority, it will need to provide the 'proof' of a serious intent of the public authority to financially commit (the Commission will provide a relevant template letter) to ensure the long-term nature and accountability of Teaming projects.

(2) A university or research organisation with an international reputation in research and innovation excellence.

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 "Widening" country. This will include details on the long-term science and innovation strategy of the future Centre, in particular, the detailed provisions for the good management of the project between the partners. Furthermore, proposers should include a clear analysis of how this strategy would fit broadly with the relevant Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Widening country, where relevant, or an equivalent growth strategy. 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.

Information for Teaming Phase 1:

Under Phase 1, successful applicants will receive a grant that will last for 12 months, to produce an extensive, detailed and robust Business Plan for the setting-up / upgrading of a Centre of Excellence.

Proposers will be asked to demonstrate within their (single) proposal two distinct, yet complementary aspects:

1. a long term vision, including a long term science and innovation strategy based on a SWOT analysis, for the new Centre of Excellence (or the upgrading of an existing one) that would be hosted in the Widening country.
2. a 12 month action aimed at producing a detailed and robust business plan for the setting-up/upgrading of the Centre of Excellence in line with the long term vision.

The Teaming proposal will need to demonstrate that the project is based on a true joint venture between the relevant partners from both parties. This long term joint venture cooperation is expected to continue also beyond the duration of the overall Teaming project, with the partners fully committed to continue supporting the new Centre in view of achieving sustainability in the long run and hopefully financial autonomy (also by successfully competing for European and international funding programmes).

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of EUR 0.40 million, would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting lower amounts.

Preliminary Information for Teaming Phase 2 (under WP 2018/19):

Once the 12 month CSA under Teaming Phase 1 is concluded, there will be a restricted call only for those participants successful in Phase 1 above for the concrete implementation of the Business Plan, i.e. for the establishment of the new/upgraded centre (Teaming, Phase 2).

The submitted proposals under this restricted call will undergo an independent evaluation, and those selected for funding will be awarded a CSA grant (Teaming Phase 2).

This new grant for Teaming Phase 2 will provide substantial support for the start-up and implementation phase of the future Centre of Excellence. This will cover mainly administrative and operational costs as well as salaries of the future Centre of Excellence. However, equipment and consumables could be funded as long as they constitute only a minor part of the total Horizon 2020 funding requested and are sufficiently justified.

It is to be noted, that Horizon 2020 under the Teaming action will not support infrastructure costs associated with the new or upgraded centre. Such costs are expected to be supported by other types of funding, including where relevant by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) or the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) funds.

The duration of a Teaming Phase 2 project may be between 5 to 7 years.

Further explanations for Teaming Phase 2 will be given in the future Work Programme 2018-2019.

Expected Impact: The creation of new (or significant upgrades of existing) Centres of Excellence in "Widening" Countries through the Teaming partnerships is expected to:

- increase their scientific capabilities and enable them to engage in a strategic growth path pointing to long-term opportunities for economic development. Potential links to innovative clusters would be an asset.
- through improved scientific capabilities allow these countries to improve their chances to seek competitive funding in international fora (including the EU Framework Programmes).
- over the medium to long term achieve a measurable and significant improvement in terms of research and innovation culture (as shown through indicators such as research intensity, innovation performance, values and attitudes towards research and innovation) of those countries.

The potential impact of the new/upgraded Centre of Excellence in terms of sustained excellence should be reinforced through projected measurable key performance and output related indicators.

Benefits will also accrue to the institutions from the more intensive research and innovation performers, in terms of access to new research avenues, increased creativity and development

of new approaches, as well as a source for increased mobility (inwards and outwards) of qualified scientists.

Type of Action: Coordination and support action

The conditions related to this topic are provided at the end of this call and in the General Annexes.

WIDESPREAD-05-2017: Twinning

Specific Challenge: The specific challenge is to address networking gaps and deficiencies between the research institutions of the Widening countries and internationally-leading 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 university or research organisation from a Widening country by linking it with at least two internationally-leading research institutions in other Member States or Associated Countries. Twinning will:

- Enhance the S&T capacity of the linked institutions with a principal focus on the university or research organisation from the Widening Country;
- Help raise the research profile of the institution from the Widening country as well as the research profile of its staff.

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. If relevant, any links with sustainable development objectives are to be outlined.

Such a strategy should include a comprehensive set of measures to be supported. These should include at least a number of the following: 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.

In general, costs relating to administration, networking, coordination, training, management, travel costs are typical costs that could be funded under a Twinning project.

However, Twinning will provide no support to infrastructure, equipment and research costs like consumables. Therefore, for grants awarded under this topic for a Coordination and Support Action the following cost categories will be ineligible costs:

- infrastructure costs;
- equipment;
- research costs;

- consumables;

The respective option of Article 6.5.C of the Model Grant Agreement will be applied.

The duration of a Twinning project can be up to 3 years.

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 lower amounts.

Expected Impact:

- Increased research excellence of the coordinating institution in the particular field of research as a result of the twinning exercise.
- Enhancing the reputation, attractiveness and networking channels of the coordinating institution.
- Improved capability to compete successfully for national, EU and internationally competitive research funding.
- Illustrate quantitatively and qualitatively the expected potential impact of the twinning exercise within the coordinating institution (and possibly at regional/national level) based on indicators like expected future publications in peer reviewed journals, collaboration agreements with businesses, intellectual property, new innovative products or services.

Benefits will also accrue to the institutions from the more intensive research and innovation performers, in terms of 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: Coordination and support action

The conditions related to this topic are provided at the end of this call and in the General Annexes.

Conditions for the WIDESPREAD call

Opening date(s), deadline(s), indicative budget(s):¹⁰

Topics (Type of Action)	Budgets (EUR million)		Deadlines
	2016	2017	
Opening: 03 Nov 2015			
WIDESPREAD-02-2016 (CSA)	1.25		04 Feb 2016
Opening: 08 Mar 2016			
WIDESPREAD-01-2016 (SGA-CSA)	89.53	45.47	30 Aug 2016
Opening: 11 May 2016			
WIDESPREAD-04-2017 (CSA)		12.00	15 Nov 2016
Opening: 12 Apr 2017			
WIDESPREAD-03-2017 (CSA)		33.91	05 Oct 2017
Opening: 16 May 2017			
WIDESPREAD-05-2017 (CSA)		20.00	15 Nov 2017
Overall indicative budget	90.78	111.38	

Indicative timetable for evaluation and grant agreement signature:

¹⁰ The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.

All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.

The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.

The deadline(s) in 2017 are indicative and subject to a separate financing decision for 2017.

The budget amounts for the 2016 budget are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the draft budget for 2016 after the adoption of the budget 2016 by the budgetary authority or, if the budget is not adopted, as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

The budget amounts for the 2017 budget are indicative and will be subject to a separate financing decision to cover the amounts to be allocated for 2017.

For single stage procedure:

- Information on the outcome of the evaluation: Maximum 5 months from the final date for submission; and
- Indicative date for the signing of grant agreements: Maximum 8 months from the final date for submission.

Eligibility and admissibility conditions: The conditions are described in parts B and C of the General Annexes to the work programme with the following exceptions:

WIDESPREAD-01-2016	This call for proposals is open <u>only</u> to those applicants that have been successful in the 2014 Teaming <u>Phase</u> 1 (under the topic WIDESPREAD-1-2014: Teaming, of the call H2020-WIDESPREAD-2014), and who have concluded a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with the Commission in the context of that Call.
WIDESPREAD-02-2016	All participants in the proposal must be independent legal entites which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance or manage publicly funded national or regional programmes related to the addressed domains or - Institutions mandated to represent the country/region in JPI Urban Europe activities.
WIDESPREAD-03-2017	1. The applicant organisation where the ERA Chair holder will be hosted should be established in a Member State or Associated Country that is ranked below 70% of the EU27 average of the composite indicator on Research Excellence ¹¹ . The selected corrective threshold of 70% of the EU average has been chosen in line with the particular policy requirements of the measure, to ensure the greatest possible impact through targeting only the lowest performing Member States, and thereby maximising the real value of these actions. Based on the above threshold, applicant organisations from the following Member States and Associated Countries (subject to valid association agreements of third countries with Horizon 2020) will be eligible to submit proposals (the "low R&I performing" or "Widening" countries):

¹¹ The detailed scores of the composite indicator can be found in p. 5 (Excellence in S&T 2010) of the "Research and Innovation Performance in EU Member States and Associated Countries 2013" at http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/state-of-the-union/2012/innovation_union_progress_at_country_level_2013.pdf

	<p><u>Member States</u>: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.</p> <p><u>Associated Countries</u>: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.</p> <p>2. ERA Chairs proposals must be submitted by a single applicant as they are a mono-beneficiary action. The applicant organisation must satisfy the condition set out in point 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 5 years.</p>
<p>WIDESPREAD-04-2017</p>	<p>1. The applicant organisation where the Centre of Excellence is/will be established should be established in a Member State or Associated Country that is ranked below 70% of the EU27 average of the composite indicator on Research Excellence¹².</p> <p>The selected corrective threshold of 70% of the EU average has been chosen in line with the particular policy requirements of the measure, to ensure the greatest possible impact through targeting only the lowest performing Member States, and thereby maximising the real value of these actions.</p> <p>Based on the above threshold, applicant organisations from the following Member States and Associated Countries (subject to valid association agreements of third countries with Horizon 2020) will be eligible to submit proposals as coordinators (the "low R&I performing" or "Widening" countries):</p> <p><u>Member States</u>: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.</p> <p><u>Associated Countries</u>: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.</p> <p>2. Teaming proposals must involve a minimum of <u>two</u> participants:</p> <p>a. The applicant organisation must satisfy the condition set out in point 1 above, and must be the coordinator of the proposal.</p>

¹² The detailed scores of the composite indicator can be found in p. 5 (Excellence in S&T 2010) of the "Research and Innovation Performance in EU Member States and Associated Countries 2013" at http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/state-of-the-union/2012/innovation_union_progress_at_country_level_2013.pdf

	<p>b. At least one teaming/partnering university or research organisation which must be coming from a Member State or Associated Country other than that of the coordinating applicant.</p> <p>3. The requested EU contribution shall not exceed a maximum of EUR 0.40 million for a period of 12 months.</p>
<p>WIDESPREAD-05-2017</p>	<p>1. The applicant organisation (coordinator) where a defined field of research aims to be strengthened as a result of the Twinning action should be established in a Member State or Associated Country that is ranked below 70% of the EU27 average of the composite indicator on Research Excellence¹³.</p> <p>The selected corrective threshold of 70% of the EU average has been chosen in line with the particular policy requirements of the measure, to ensure the greatest possible impact through targeting only the lowest performing Member States, and thereby maximising the real value of these actions.</p> <p>Based on the above threshold, applicant organisations from the following Member States and Associated Countries (subject to valid association agreements of third countries with Horizon 2020) will be eligible to submit proposals as coordinators (the "low R&I performing" or "Widening" countries):</p> <p><u>Member States</u>: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.</p> <p><u>Associated Countries</u>: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.</p> <p>2. Twinning proposals must involve a minimum of <u>three</u> participants:</p> <p>a. The applicant organisation must satisfy the condition set out in point 1 above, and must be the coordinator of the proposal.</p> <p>b. At least two internationally-leading research intensive counterparts that must be coming from a Member State or Associated Country other than that of the coordinating applicant.</p> <p>3. The requested EU contribution shall not exceed a maximum of EUR 1 million for a period of up to 3 years.</p>

¹³ The detailed scores of the composite indicator can be found in p. 5 (Excellence in S&T 2010) of the "Research and Innovation Performance in EU Member States and Associated Countries 2013" at http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/state-of-the-union/2012/innovation_union_progress_at_country_level_2013.pdf

Evaluation criteria, scoring and threshold: The criteria, scoring and threshold are described in part H of the General Annexes to the work programme with the following exceptions:

WIDESPREAD-04-2017	The proposal should identify broad alignment with the relevant Smart Specialisation Strategies of the Member State or region from which the applicant is coming (as defined in the relevant Regulations of the European Parliament and the Council regarding the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). Where this is not relevant an alignment with an equivalent growth strategy should be considered.
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Evaluation Procedure: The procedure for setting a priority order for proposals with the same score is given in part H of the General Annexes.

The full evaluation procedure is described in the relevant [guide](#) published on the Participant Portal.

Consortium agreement: Members of the consortium are required to conclude a consortium agreement for topics WIDESPREAD-1-2016, WIDESPREAD-2-2016, WIDESPREAD-4-2017 and WIDESPREAD-5-2017, in principle prior to the signature of the grant agreement. There is no requirement to conclude a consortium agreement for topic WIDESPREAD-3-2017, since this is a mono-beneficiary action aimed at supporting individual institutions.

Other actions¹⁴

1. External Expertise

This action will support the use of appointed independent experts for the monitoring and review of running projects where appropriate.

Type of Action: Expert Contracts

Indicative timetable: 2016 and 2017

Indicative budget: EUR 0.02 million from the 2016 budget and EUR 0.10 million from the 2017 budget

2. COST¹⁵

Scene-setter: 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 established its own dedicated implementation structure (COST Association, an AISBL under Belgian law) under the direct governance of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) in order to handle directly EU support to COST activities. It is therefore through this entity that support to COST under Horizon 2020 is expected to be channelled. Such governance is expected to lead to increased efficiency in management and lower administrative expenditure levels.

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.

¹⁴ The budget amounts for the 2016 budget are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the draft budget for 2016 after the adoption of the budget 2016 by the budgetary authority or, if the budget is not adopted, as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

The budget amounts for the 2017 budget are indicative and will be subject to a separate financing decision to cover the amounts to be allocated for 2017.

¹⁵ This activity directly aimed at supporting the promotion of coherent and effective cooperation with third countries is excluded from the delegation to REA and will be implemented by the Commission services.

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, through its openness and inclusiveness policies, COST has a significant role in bringing new partners, notably outstanding younger researchers or researchers from less research-intensive countries, into contact with excellent researchers elsewhere in Europe.

During Horizon 2020, COST will receive EU funding from two Work Programme parts, but shall manage it in an integrated manner to consistently contribute to both:

A) Scientific and Technological Cooperation:

COST will reinforce its networking activities carried out by COST actions. This part will be funded under “Societal Challenge 6 – Inclusive Societies”.

B) Widening Activities:

COST will contribute to fostering inclusive research and innovation policy by bringing together "pockets of excellence", outstanding researchers who are not yet well integrated in European and global research, also enhancing capacity building. Moreover, COST will include a set of measures aimed at providing structural support to ERA, widening the European research base and promote S&T cooperation with other countries, beyond COST current membership¹⁶. This second component will be funded under the “Widening Participation” heading.

It is expected that both components are implemented in an integrated manner whereby half of the overall COST budget available under Horizon 2020 will be spent at the benefit of participants from Widening countries.

Legal Entity: COST Association AISBL, Belgium

Type of Action: Specific Grant Agreement

7- year Framework Partnership Agreement number: 633054 – COST H2020 with identified beneficiary and specific grants awarded to identified beneficiary for Coordination and Support Action under the Framework Partnership Agreement.

The standard evaluation criteria, thresholds, weighting for award criteria and the maximum rate of co-financing for this type of action are provided in parts D and H of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: 2016 and 2017

¹⁶ 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).

Indicative budget: EUR 20.28 million from the 2016 budget and EUR 20.28 million from the 2017 budget

3. Policy Support Facility¹⁷

The Policy Support Facility (PSF) is a new instrument under Horizon 2020 to support Member States and Associated Countries in the design, implementation and evaluation of national R&I strategies, programmes and institutions. It offers, on a voluntary basis, high level expertise and tailor-made advice to national public authorities. A framework contract was established in 2015 to provide overall support to the management of the Policy Support Facility (PSF).

This provision serves to implement the framework service contract by providing the following services: support to Peer Reviews of national R&I strategies, programmes and institutions; specific support to countries (pre-peer reviews, post peer reviews, ad-hoc requests for support needed in the design, implementation or evaluation of specific R&I reforms); support to in-depth mutual learning between a group of countries; and dissemination activities.

Type of Action: Public Procurement - Specific Contracts under a Framework Contract

Indicative timetable: 2017

Indicative budget: EUR 2.00 million from the 2017 budget

4. WIRE VII Conference¹⁸

A two-day conference (WIRE VII) will be organised during the EU Dutch Presidency (Presidency Conference). This conference will aim at taking stock of the previous WIRE VI conference organised during the Latvian Presidency in 2015. It will focus on the enhancing the digital agenda in EU regions and on the lessons learnt in the implementation of the smart specialisation strategies in the context of the new programming period (2014-2020). In particular, it will concentrate on sharing practices and inspiring innovative approaches among the R&I 'quadruple helix' stakeholders on these topics on strengthening networking between stakeholders for building future R&I trans-European projects funded by FP7 and H2020.

Expected impact: The conference will take stock of the results achieved since the conference WIRE VI organised in 2015 by the Latvian Presidency and will provide a platform for stakeholders to have an in depth discussion on the innovative approaches adopted by regions and member states on the main themes of the conference.

¹⁷ This activity directly aimed at supporting the development and implementation of evidence base for R&I policies and supporting various groups of stakeholders is excluded from the delegation to REA and will be implemented by the Commission services.

¹⁸ This activity directly aimed at supporting the development and implementation of evidence base for R&I policies and supporting various groups of stakeholders is excluded from the delegation to REA and will be implemented by the Commission services.

Legal entities:

1 - Brainport Development N.V., Emmasingel 11, P.O. BOX 2181, NL-5600 CD Eindhoven, The Netherlands

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary - Coordination and support actions

The standard evaluation criteria, thresholds, weighting for award criteria and the maximum rate of co-financing for this type of action are provided in parts D and H of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: 2nd Quarter 2016

Indicative budget: EUR 0.25 million from the 2016 budget

5. WIRE VIII Conference ¹⁹

A two-day conference (WIRE VIII) will be organised in Slovakia, in the second quarter of 2017. This conference will aim at giving an appropriate follow up to the WIRE VII conference organised during the Dutch Presidency in 2016. Topics to be discussed include, enhancing research and innovation investment and policy efficiency for creative, social and trusted regional development, in the context of the midterm evaluation of the programming period (2014-2020). Furthermore the conference will concentrate on regional development innovation shifts in EU, linking Smart Specialisation Strategies, ESIF and scientific excellence, acceleration of innovative regional schemes for excellent R&I performance and creative, digital and social regional development.

Expected impact: This conference will firstly take stock of the results achieved since the conference WIRE VII organised in 2016 by the Dutch Presidency. Secondly, it will provide a platform for stakeholders to develop mutual learning on innovative practices and approaches.

Legal entities:

1 - The Technical University of Košice, Letná 1/9, 04200, Košice, Slovak Republic

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary - Coordination and support actions

The standard evaluation criteria, thresholds, weighting for award criteria and the maximum rate of co-financing for this type of action are provided in parts D and H of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: 2nd Quarter 2017

Indicative budget: EUR 0.25 million from the 2017 budget

¹⁹ This activity directly aimed at supporting the development and implementation of evidence base for R&I policies and supporting various groups of stakeholders is excluded from the delegation to REA and will be implemented by the Commission services.

6. Presidency Conference: Spreading Excellence and Crossing the Innovation Divide²⁰

A one day conference will be organized during the Slovak presidency of the Council of the European Union. The event will focus on enhancing research and innovation excellence as well as cooperation among countries from both sides of the innovation divide. The Horizon 2020 programme, through its Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation strand, addresses these issues. However, the opportunities for enlarging the cooperation and spreading excellence go beyond this programme. The conference will address the challenge of cooperating across the innovation divide which also includes European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and Smart Specialisation strategies. Specific attention will be given to the EU instruments supporting cooperation and exchange and identification of best practices in Member States. The conference will take place in Brussels.

Expected impact:

This event will provide a platform for stakeholders to have an in-depth discussion on the role of excellence in European research and innovation and opportunities presented through Horizon 2020 and ESIF for crossing the innovation gap between countries and regions. It will bring together stakeholders from Europe, in particular, universities, research organizations, SMEs and European, national and regional government representatives, among others, to assess results of Teaming, ERA chairs and Twinning projects in order to point out the main reasons for these disparities. This will encourage closer collaboration between institutions from both sides of the innovation divide in an effort to address these issues on the ground. Moreover, the conference will raise awareness of specific measures for spreading excellence and widening participation in Horizon 2020, like ERA Chairs, Teaming and Twinning.

Legal entities:

1 - Centrum vedecko-technických informácií SR, Lamačská cesta 8/A, 811 04, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

Type of Action: Grant to identified beneficiary - Coordination and support actions

The standard evaluation criteria, thresholds, weighting for award criteria and the maximum rate of co-financing for this type of action are provided in parts D and H of the General Annexes.

Indicative timetable: 4th Quarter 2016

Indicative budget: EUR 0.10 million from the 2016 budget

²⁰ This activity directly aimed at supporting the development and implementation of evidence base for R&I policies and supporting various groups of stakeholders is excluded from the delegation to REA and will be implemented by the Commission services.

7. Studies²¹

The following studies will be performed in 2016 with the aim of collecting useful evidence for the purpose of contributing to the mid-term evaluation of Horizon 2020, which will be finalised by the second half of 2017.

1. Study on ERA Chairs and Twinning

The study will be aimed at analysing the framework conditions enabling successful implementation of the ERA Chairs and Twinning actions. It will focus on progress made towards the actions' achievements, on implementations modalities and EU added value. The topic of structured mobility of researchers for bringing in excellence in the host institutions will receive special attention.

2. Study on Teaming

The study will be aimed at analysing the framework conditions enabling successful implementation of the Teaming actions. It will focus on progress made towards the actions' achievements, on implementations modalities and EU added value and will analyse the influence of specific geographical and institutional contexts on impact in institution building.

Type of Action: Public Procurement - Studies

Indicative timetable: 3rd Quarter 2016

Indicative budget: EUR 0.03 million from the 2016 budget

²¹ This activity directly aimed at supporting the development and implementation of evidence base for R&I policies and supporting various groups of stakeholders is excluded from the delegation to REA and will be implemented by the Commission services.

Budget²²

	Budget line(s)	2016 Budget EUR million	2017 Budget EUR million
Calls			
H2020-WIDESPREAD-2016-2017		90.78	111.38
	<i>from 08.020400</i>	<i>90.78</i>	<i>111.38</i>
Other actions			
Expert Contracts		0.02	0.10
	<i>from 08.020400</i>	<i>0.02</i>	<i>0.10</i>
Public Procurement		0.03	2.00
	<i>from 08.020400</i>	<i>0.03</i>	<i>2.00</i>
Grant to Identified beneficiary		0.35	0.25
	<i>from 08.020400</i>	<i>0.35</i>	<i>0.25</i>
Specific Grant Agreement		20.28	20.28
	<i>from 08.020400</i>	<i>20.28</i>	<i>20.28</i>
Estimated total budget		111.45	134.01

²² The budget figures given in this table are rounded to two decimal places.

The budget amounts for the 2016 budget are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the draft budget for 2016 after the adoption of the budget 2016 by the budgetary authority or, if the budget is not adopted, as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

The budget amounts for the 2017 budget are indicative and will be subject to a separate financing decision to cover the amounts to be allocated for 2017.