



ERA-NET Cofund

Guidelines for
participants and
synergies with
European Structural
and Investment Funds



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This document has been prepared using as main sources:

- ◆ Deliverable 3.1 SYNAMERA
- ◆ Deliverable 4.2 SYNAMERA
- ◆ ERA.LEARN 2020 webpage: <https://www.era-learn.eu>
- ◆ EC Guidance documents
- ◆ Annotated model Grant Agreement

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ERA-NET COFUND, GUIDELINES FOR NEWCOMERS BEFORE I START MY PARTICIPATION

What is ERA-NET Cofund?

ERA-NET Cofund is a funding instrument of the EU Framework Programme for research and innovation (Horizon 2020), targeted to research funders to carry out joint activities, notably the implementation of one EU co-funded joint call for proposals to fund transnational research and/or innovation projects. In addition to this mandatory co-funded call, the consortia may implement other joint activities including other joint calls without EU co-funding.

What are the main activities of an ERA-NET Cofund?

The main activity is the organisation and execution of a co-funded call for proposals.

In addition to the mandatory co-funded call, ERA-NET Cofund actions may implement other joint activities related to the coordination of public research and innovation programmes such as:

- ◆ Other joint calls
- ◆ Mapping national/trans-national activities
- ◆ Foresight and common vision
- ◆ Strategic Research Agenda / Implementation Plan
- ◆ Additional joint calls
- ◆ Knowledge sharing amongst researchers
- ◆ Mobility and Training of Researchers / Activities promoting early career scientists and young
- ◆ Research Infrastructures
- ◆ Stakeholder involvement
- ◆ Dissemination / Up-Take of research results
- ◆ Widening Participation (activities related to extending cooperation with less active EU countries)
- ◆ Internationalisation (activities related to extending cooperation to third / non-EU countries)
- ◆ Monitoring and evaluation/assessment activities both in relation to the network itself or the co-funded projects
- ◆ Other activities that support the alignment of national programmes



Who can participate in an ERA-NET Cofund?

Participants in ERA-NET Cofund actions must be research funders, that is, legal entities owning or managing public research and innovation programmes:

- ◆ Programme Owners are typically national/regional ministries/authorities responsible for defining, financing or managing research programmes carried out at national or regional level.
- ◆ Programme Managers are typically research councils or funding agencies or other national or regional organisations that implement research programmes under the supervision of the programme owners. Their participation has to be mandated by the national/regional authorities in charge (normally the responsible Ministry).

Only in addition to the minimum conditions, and if justified by the nature of the action, programmes funded by other entities (international programmes, foundations or other non-public programmes) may participate.

Why taking part in an ERA-NET Cofund?

- ◆ To allow national/regional researchers to cooperate transnationally:
 - For SMEs it is the opportunity to start international cooperation and reach new markets afterwards.
 - For Research Organisations it is the opportunity to cooperate with EU wide excellent research partners and improve their international profile.
- ◆ To learn from other countries/regions
- ◆ To achieve a critical mass in a certain research area
- ◆ To use synergies (e.g. joint research infrastructure, joint foresights, joint trainings)
- ◆ To avoid duplications in research activities
- ◆ Complementary to Horizon 2020
- ◆ Typically smaller projects than Horizon 2020 (e.g. Average project M-ERA.NET 2012-2015: 3-5 partners from 2-3 countries; project costs 1 Mio EUR; duration 2-3 years)
- ◆ To foster R&I public private partnerships and employment



What does the EU support cover in an ERA-NET Cofund?

- ◆ 33% of the funding to transnational projects selected in the co-funded call
- ◆ "Unit costs" (lump sum or fixed amount per beneficiary per year) for other joint activities of up to €11,962.5 per beneficiary per year

ERA-NET Cofund funding goes to the consortium, which decides how to divide it between participants/partners.

What are eligible costs in an ERA-NET Cofund?

- ◆ Direct costs related to trans-national projects (that is, direct costs of providing financial support to third parties implementing transnational projects)
- ◆ Direct coordination costs for additional activities if the beneficiary carries out activities that go beyond the co-funded call
- ◆ Indirect costs

Costs for organising the calls (preparation of the call, selection of the projects etc.) are not eligible.

How much money do I need to participate in an ERA-NET Cofund?

There is no general upper or lower limit to the budget of each participant, it depends on several factors:

- ◆ Size of the Region's research community in the area covered by the particular ERA-NET Cofund (foreseen subscription)
- ◆ Participation of other agencies covering the Region

Can my Region participate in an ERA-NET Cofund action where my Country's National Agency is participating?

There is no general rule or limitation to the involvement in an ERA-NET Cofund of eligible participants. It is the decision of each Funding Organisation, taking into consideration its strategy and the particular circumstances of each country/region and call:

- ◆ Complementarity in terms of type of research and innovation actors funded (SMEs, Research Organisations, Universities, Large Industry)
- ◆ Complementarity in terms of type of topics funded
- ◆ Complementarity in terms of call budget





ERA-NET COFUND, GUIDELINES FOR NEWCOMERS

PREPARING A PROPOSAL FOR AN ERA-NET COFUND

Where do I find information about open calls for proposals for ERA-NET Cofund?

Calls for proposals for ERA-NET Cofund are included in the work programmes of Horizon 2020 and they are announced in the Participant Portal <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html> also you may find a summary of Horizon 2020 ERA-NET Cofund calls in ERA-LEARN 2020 website <https://www.era-learn.eu/h2020-calls-for-p2p>

What are the contents of the proposal for an ERA-NET Cofund?

As other Horizon 2020 proposals, ERA-NET co-fund proposals consist of:

◆ Administrative forms (Part A)

Part A includes the following contents: general information (title, abstract, duration, etc.), administrative data of participating organisations, budget of the proposal and ethics issues table.

◆ Research proposal (Part B)

Part B contains the following sections: excellence (objectives, relation to the work programme, concept and methodology and ambition), impact (expected impacts and measures to maximise impact), implementation (project plan, management structure and procedures, consortium and resources to be committed) and members of the consortium (participants and participating programmes) and ethics and security.

Specific templates can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/call_ptef/pt/2016-2017/h2020-call-pt-eranet-2016-17_en.pdf

How is the EU contribution calculated?

The maximum EU contribution is calculated at the time of submitting the proposal based on the preliminary national/regional commitments from EU Member States and Associated States and taking into account the conditions (budget) set out in the Horizon 2020 work programme. The funding quote is 33%. ESIF contributions are excluded for this calculation. After the implementation of the co-funded the EU contribution is determined based on the funding for transnational projects selected in the joint call.



ERA-NET COFUND, GUIDELINES FOR NEWCOMERS

IMPLEMENTING AN ERA-NET COFUND

What are the characteristics of the co-funded calls?

Transnational calls must:

- ◆ Be open for submission at least 60 days
- ◆ Follow a two-step procedure
- ◆ Evaluate at Step 2 with a peer review by 3 independent experts
- ◆ Appoint an Observer
- ◆ Use Horizon 2020 evaluation criteria: (a) excellence; (b) impact; (c) quality and efficiency of the implementation
- ◆ Establish a Joint ranking list according to the evaluation results
- ◆ Select proposals for funding following the ranking

What are the characteristics of the funded projects?

The projects must be trans-national projects involving at least two independent entities from two different EU Member States or Associated Countries and they must be selected in transnational calls for proposals.

Can Structural Funds be used for funding of transnational projects?

- ◆ In the co-funded call:
Structural Funds can be used for funding additional projects/beneficiaries. But these cost for additional projects/beneficiaries are not eligible costs concerning the EU TOP-Up.
- ◆ Additional calls:
They can be used for funding transnational projects.





ERA-NET COFUND, SYNERGIES WITH EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS

What are the potential synergies of ERA-NET Cofund with structural funds?

Four types of synergies between ERA-NETs and European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) can be identified:

1. Synergies in different levels of strategies

This type of synergies are important to be more efficient in public spending. They consist in aligning the different Regional, National and European strategies.

2. Sequential synergies

ESIF can be used in order to help building an ecosystem and to fund research infrastructures to be used in Horizon 2020 projects. ESIF can also be used to develop further projects after a Horizon 2020 project.

3. ERA-NETs as good instruments to create synergies

ESIF can be used in the calls for transnational projects of ERA-NET Cofund:

- ◆ In the co-funded call: Structural Funds can be used for funding additional projects/beneficiaries. But these cost for additional projects/beneficiaries are not eligible costs concerning the EU Top-up.
- ◆ Additional calls: Structural Funds can be used for funding transnational projects.

4. Synergies for excellence

Horizon 2020 projects well evaluated but not funded can be funded through ESIF if they match the Smart Specialisation Strategy and the operational programme, providing funding from alternative sources for positively evaluated but not funded Horizon 2020 proposals.

Are there examples of these synergies in the NMP area?

1. Synergies in different levels of strategies

Some regions have realized that their strategies, especially the Smart Specialisation Strategy had to be narrowed and focused on few sectors to be more efficient, for example North-East Romania and East Netherlands Region.

2. Sequential synergies

Some regions have set up structures to assist SMEs and research organisations to join EU consortia, to develop their project ideas or to fund trainings for potential applicants to Horizon 2020 calls. That is the case of Region Hauts-de-France and Madrid Region.

3. ERA-NETs as good instruments to create synergies

MANUNET III and M-ERA.NET 2 are examples of ERA-NET Cofund actions where regions are involved with Structural Funds. Some regions have chosen to use ESIF instead of Horizon 2020 funds in the Co-funded calls (MANUNET III) and regions which take part in the co-funded or additional calls with ESIF receive EU contribution for their activities in the ERA-NET like any other partner (M-ERA.NET 2).

4. Synergies for excellence

Some regions provide ESIF funding to Horizon 2020 projects that are positively evaluated but for which there is not sufficient call budget, e.g. Madrid Region support to SME Instrument phase 2 projects and Region Hauts-de-France with ERC Starting Grants and Consolidator Grants.

Where can I find more information?

- ◆ ERA.LEARN 2020 webpage: www.era-learn.eu
- ◆ EC Guidance documents: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/era-net_en.htm
- ◆ Annotated model Grant Agreement
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf
- ◆ EU Funds working together for Jobs and Growth: Synergies between the R&I Framework Programmes and the European Structural & Investment Funds, European Commission, Directorate-General Research and Innovation (2016), Luxembourg
<https://ec.europa.eu/research/pdf/publications/ki-01-16-339-en-n.pdf>
- ◆ Synergies for innovation: lessons learnt from the S2E national events, Andrea Conte, Nida Kamil Ozbolat (2016), Stairway to excellence Briefs Series, Issue#1, JRC104861, European Commission, Seville
http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/20182/154972/LessonsLearntFromS2Eevents_PolicyInsight1.pdf/9f992b38-feef-40ad-b597-0b440b826bf3
- ◆ Enabling synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes – Guidance for policy-makers and implementing bodies, European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban policy (2014), Brussels
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/guides/synergy/synergies_en.pdf



NMP ERA-NET COFUND EXAMPLES AND CONTACT DETAILS



ERA-MIN 2

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