



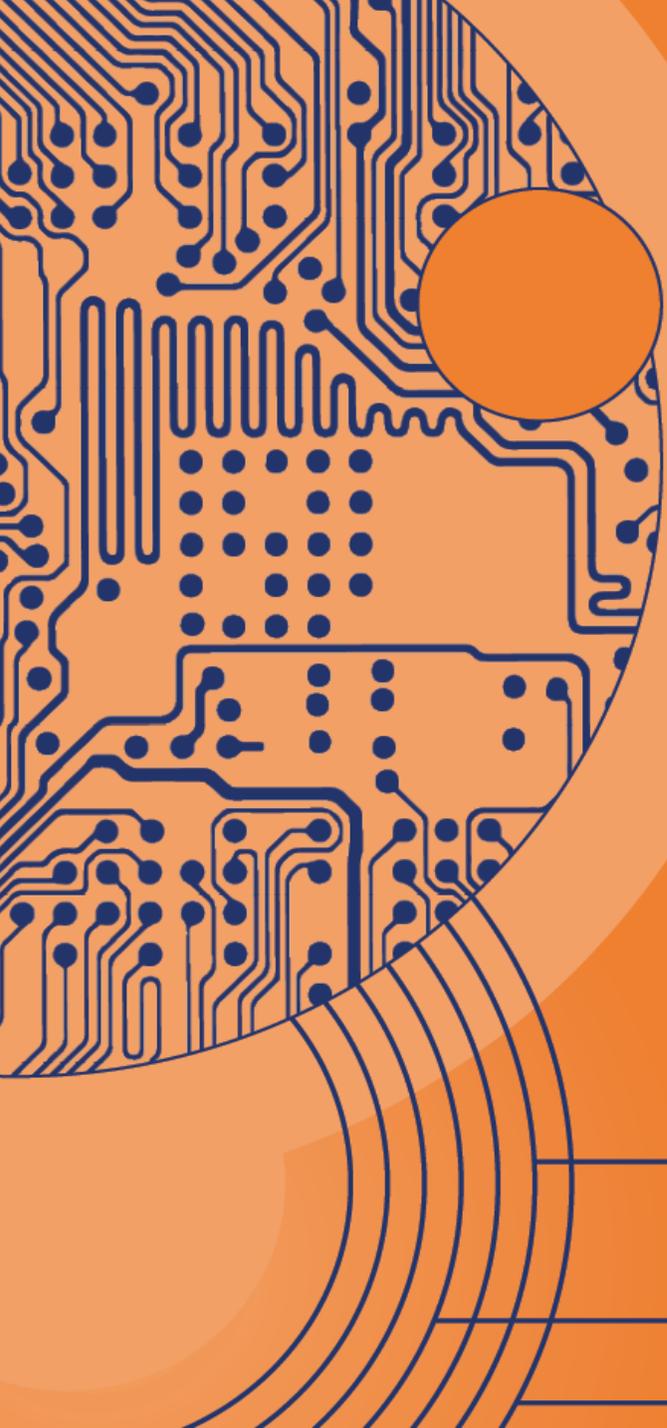
13

Interregional
Innovation
Investment
Instrument

Information Day

19 January 2023





Policy background

Eric AMARAL GARCIA

DG REGIO, Programme Assistant G.1 - Smart and Sustainable Growth

13 thematic areas and strands

THEMATIC AREAS



**DIGITAL
TRANSITION**



**GREEN
TRANSITION**



**SMART
MANU-
FACTURING**

STRANDS

Strand 1 | support for investments in interregional innovation projects in shared smart specialisation areas

Strand 2a | support for investments in interregional innovation projects for the development of value chains in less developed regions

Strand 2b | Capacity building for the development of value chains in less developed regions

Technical assistance & experimentation

€ 570 million



Capacity building policy challenge

Less developed regions face obstacles linked to innovation building and diffusion and often experience difficulties in building institutional and legal environments conducive to innovation.

Main objective

Increasing the capacity of regional innovation ecosystems in less developed regions to collaborate in EU value chains



Capacity building scopes

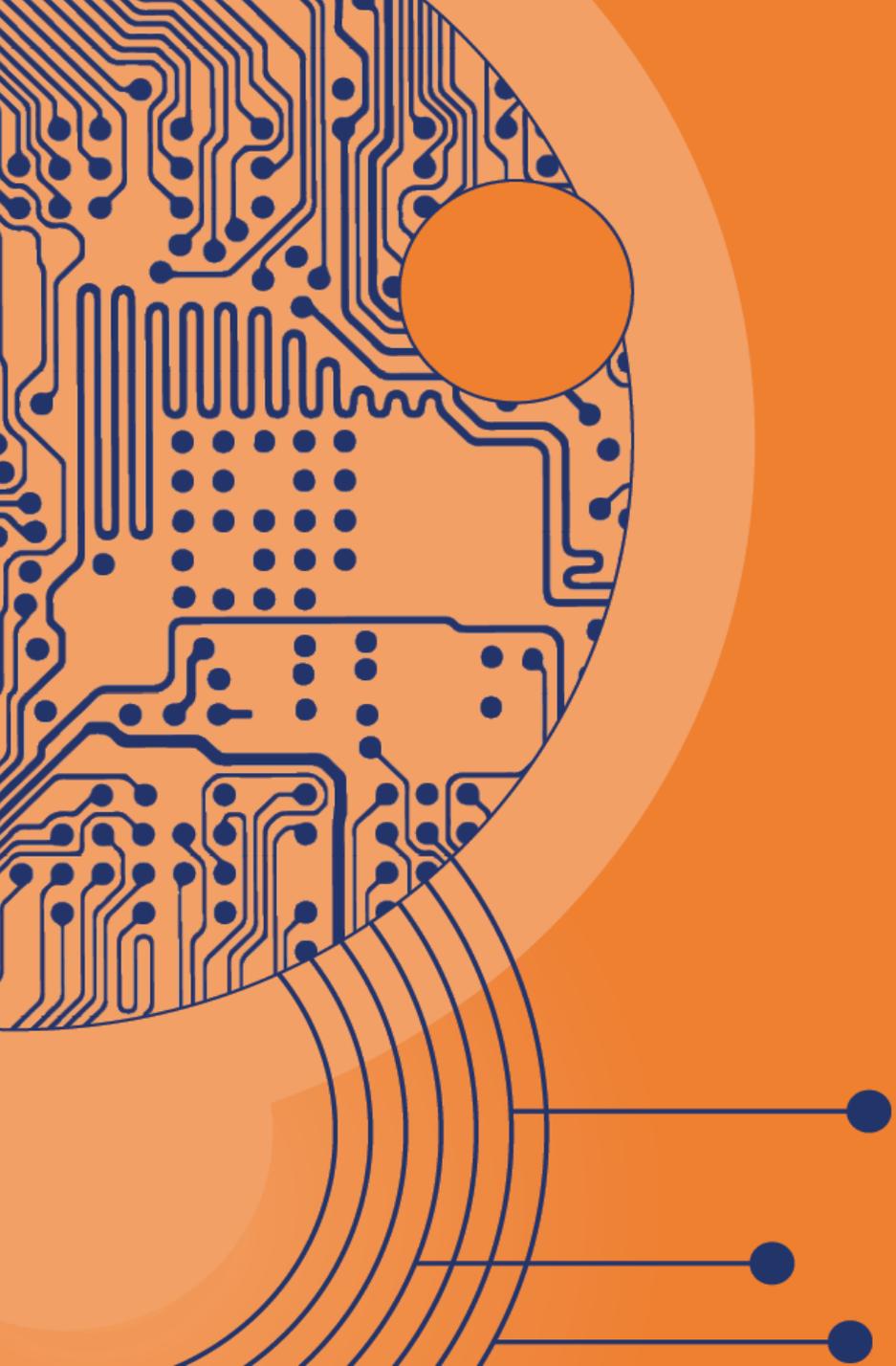


Fostering collaboration between more developed regions, transition regions and less developed regions

Facilitating interregional cooperation between regional innovation ecosystem actors to participate in calls under I3 strands 1 and 2a

Addressing the needs of regions with specific challenges, such as EU outermost regions and regions with difficulties in retaining and attracting talents





Strand 2b

Capacity Building in Less Developed Regions

Michael BERZ

EISMEA: Project Adviser, Unit I.01 EU and place-based Innovation Ecosystems

Erik HENGMITH

EISMEA: Project Officer, Unit I.01 EU and place-based Innovation Ecosystems

Capacity building – Strand 2b call I3 2021-2022 WP

What	For whom	How	How much
<p>Increase the capacity of regional innovation ecosystems in less developed regions to collaborate in EU value chains</p>	<p>Innovation actors such as public administrations, research and academia, industry, end users</p>	<p>Implemented under direct management.</p> <p>DG REGIO supported by EISMEA</p>	<p>Available call budget</p> <p>€ 7,155,858.00</p>



Challenge & Expected Impact

13

Interregional
Innovation
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Instrument

Challenge:

Less developed regions are facing different challenges and obstacles linked to innovation building & diffusion.

Expected Impact:

Increase of the capacities of less developed regions to deliver concrete interregional innovation investments within EU value chains.



General Objectives

Support in building & reinforcing innovative and resilient ecosystems

Optimisation of the relevant local administrative structures and processes

Advice in the identification of investment projects

Strengthening links and structures among the stakeholders of quadruple-helix ecosystems

Capacity building of less developed regions to enable interregional ecosystems to deliver concrete interregional innovation investments along the S3 priorities within the framework of the EU value chains, as well as the capacity to participate in partnerships with other regions.

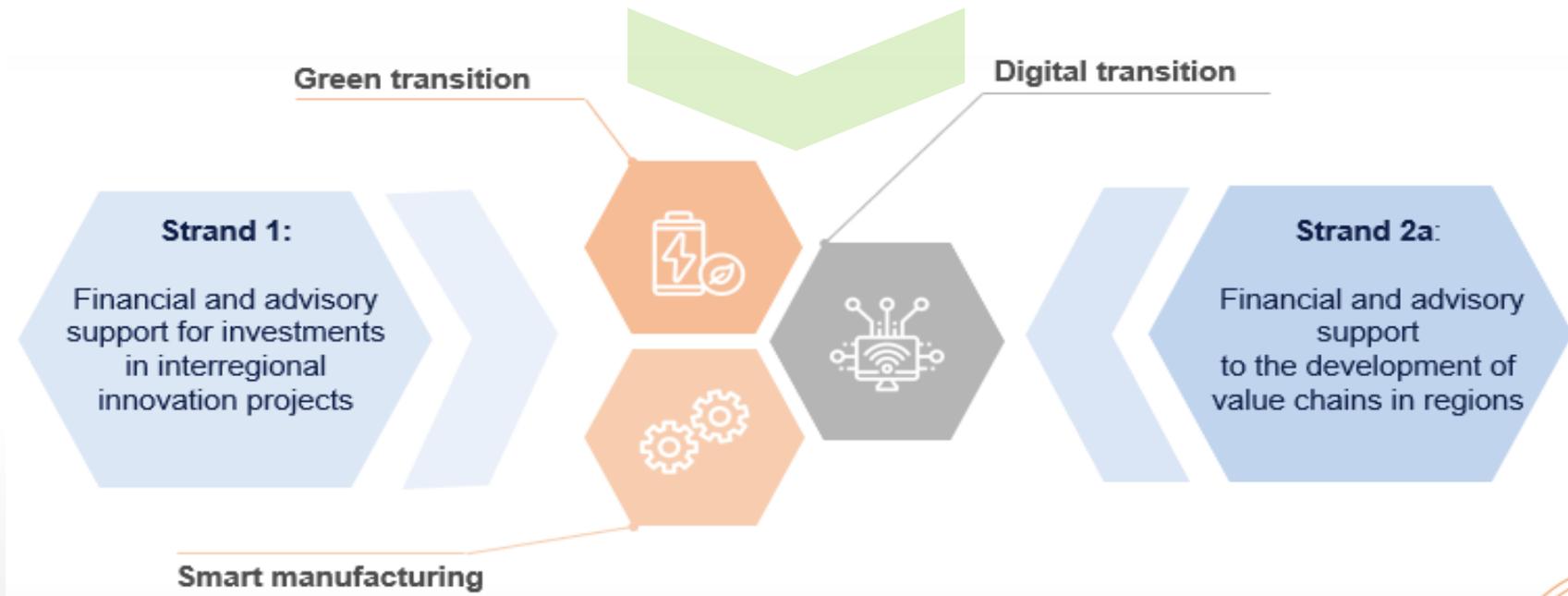


General Objectives

- Strong cohesion dimension
- Linkages between EU regions



- Capacities for Strand 1 & 2a participation
- Interregional cooperation to share good practices, experiment new approaches



<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/projects-results;programCode=13>



Specific objectives

Preconditions for interregional cooperation and investments in S3

Experiment new approaches and deliver validated solutions & good practice examples

Increase the capacity to engage in interregional innovation processes

Facilitation of the validation process of investment ideas through improved knowledge

Involve actors of the quadruple-helix ecosystem, in particular SMEs

Impact of the project on less developed regions



Themes and Priorities

Capacity building and investment project piloting



**DIGITAL
TRANSITION**

Company engagement and identification of a pipeline of investment projects



**GREEN
TRANSITION**

Investment readiness and capacity for interregional business and investment plans;



**SMART
MANUFACTURING**

Technical assistance to structure and reinforce the local ecosystems



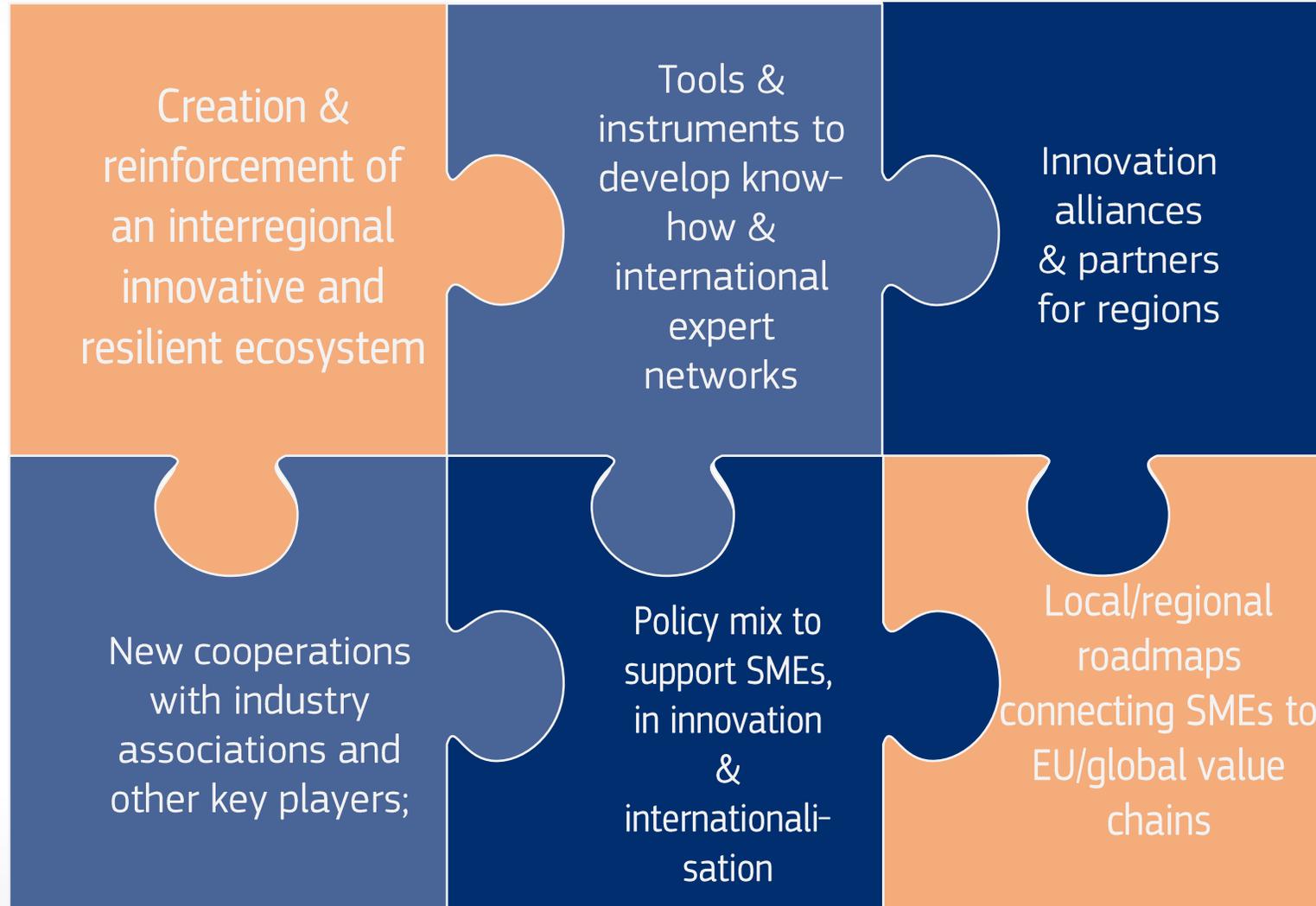
**Deep tech
innovation**

Connecting the less developed regions with other ecosystems

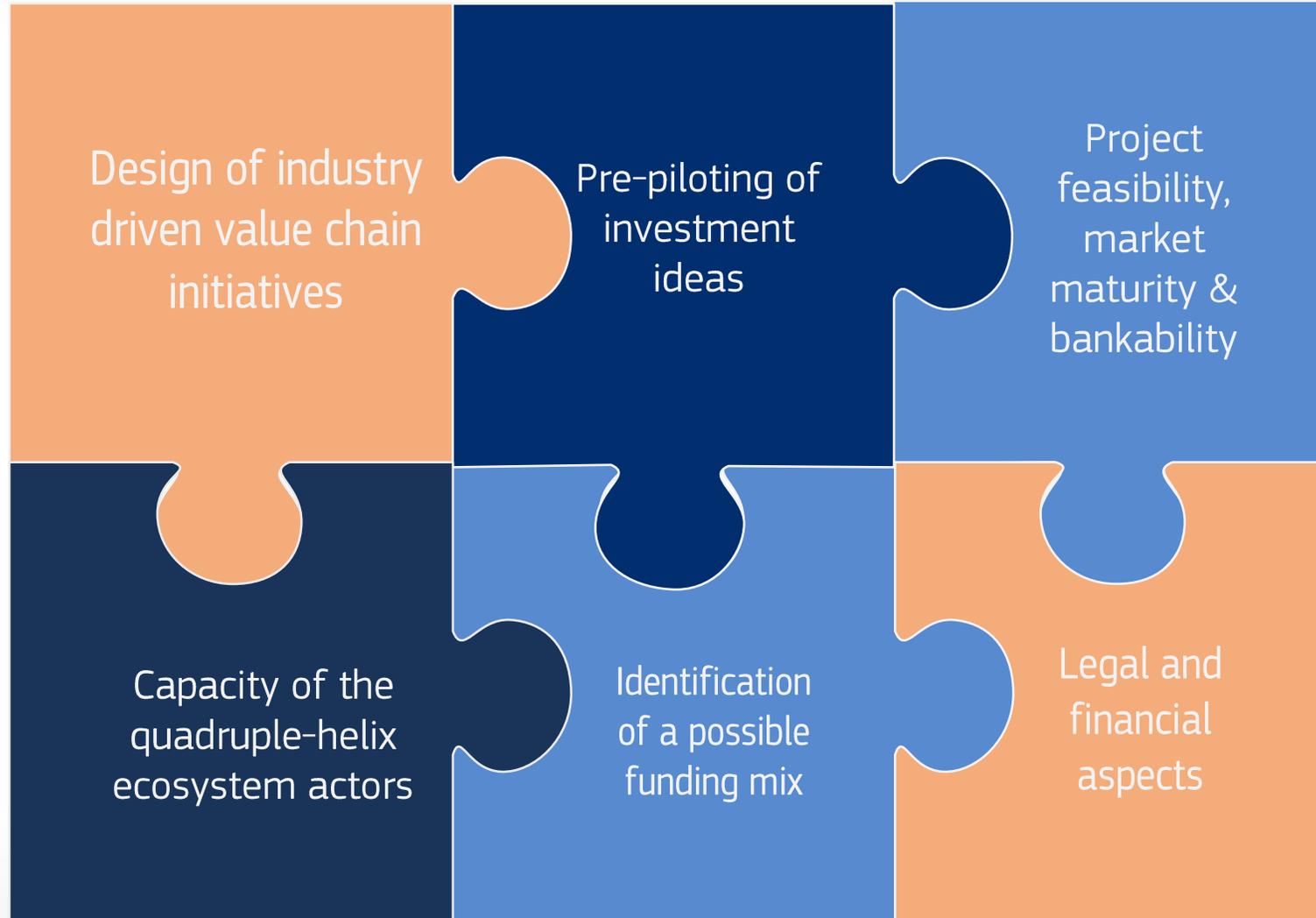
Building capacities to understand value chains articulation and implementation



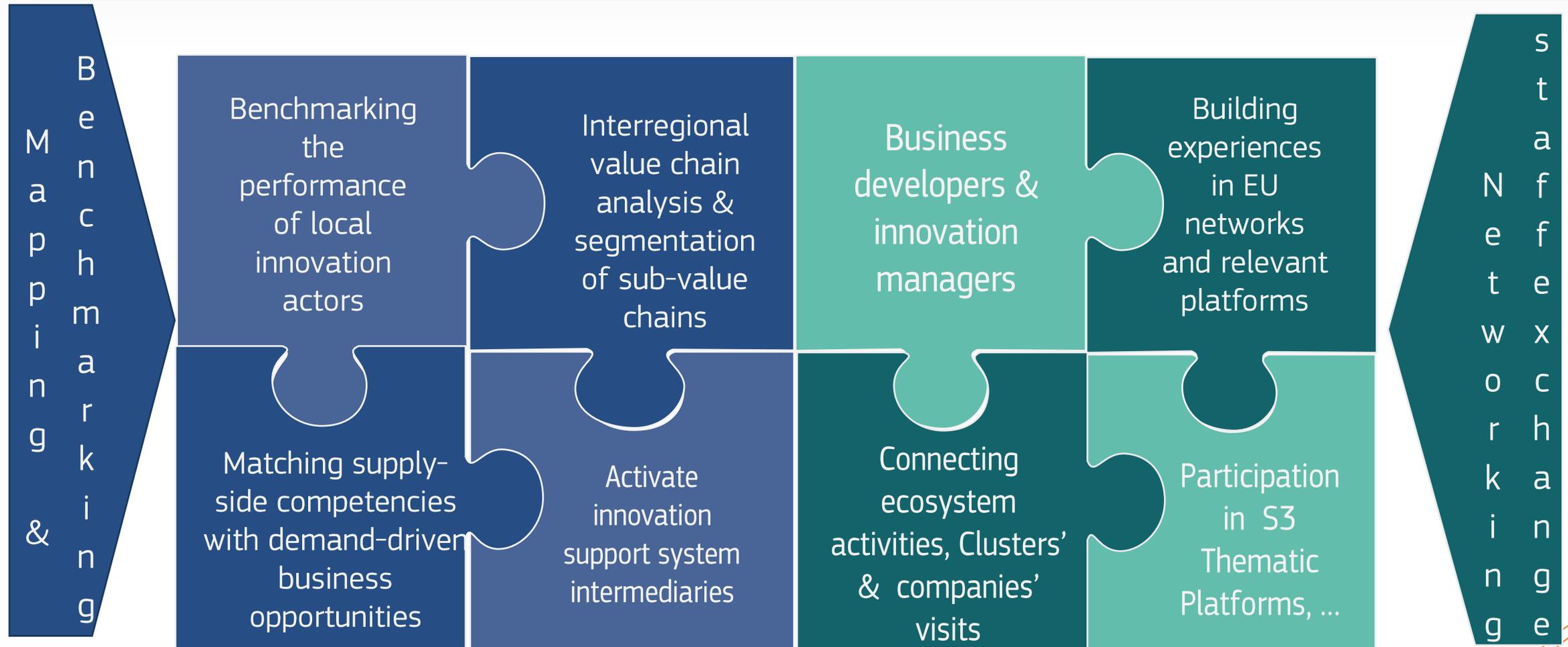
Core Actions: Ecosystem Building and Connection



Core Actions: Support of investment project identification



Support activities



What do we expect?

- Policy measures & action plans, based on S3 strategies
- Improved innovation environment & infrastructure
- Dissemination of best practice examples, showcases, up taking, replication
- I3 Instrument related value chains & investment pipelines
- Business cases for I3 1&2a calls

- Reinforced capacity of quadruple-helix innovation ecosystem actors
- Implemented support measures for innovation diffusion and investment identification, value chain participation
- Increased maturity of I3 Instrument projects consortia
- S3 based roadmaps in place contributing to European Strategic Innovation agendas.



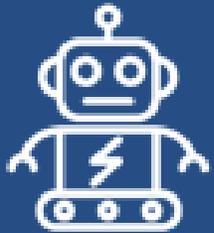
Key Performance indicators



**Interregional
dimension**



**Socio-economic
benefits**



Policy dimension

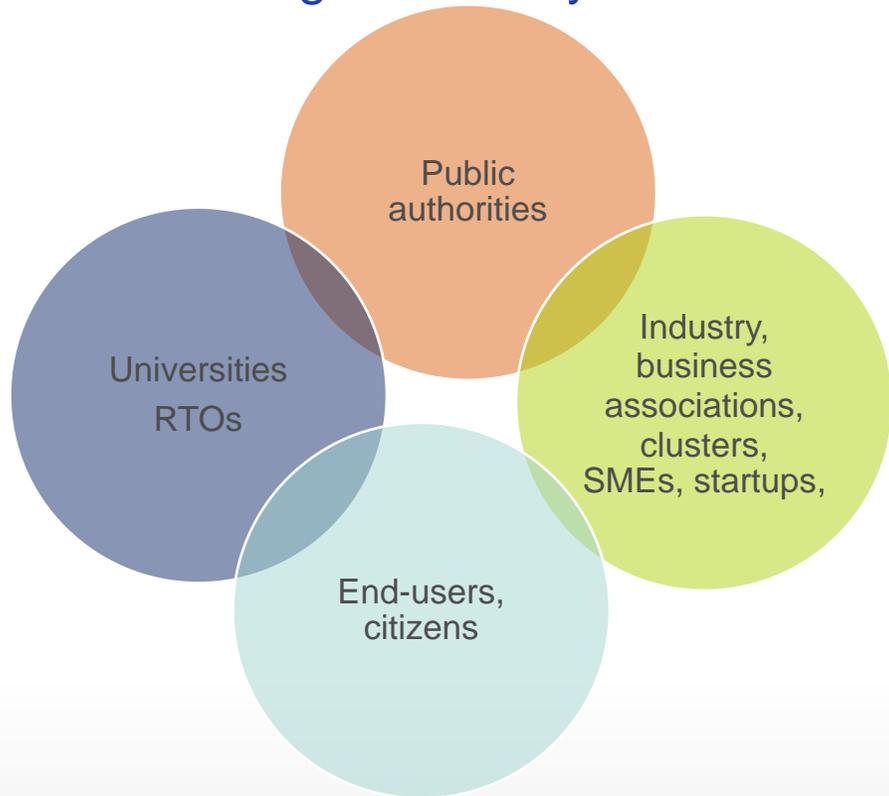


**Gender dimension/
persons reached**



Consortium composition

Innovation Actors & Q-helix partnerships on behalf of regional ecosystems



The coordinator must be:
established in an EU Member State from a “less developed region”
a public body, private non-profit organisation or international organisation.”

Minimum 2 independent legal entities representing 2 different regional ecosystems from 2 different EU Member States.

At least 1 “more developed region” of an EU Member State.

Endorsed by competent bodies for Smart Specialisation



Geographic location – Duration – Budget – Funding Rate



Proposals must relate to activities taking place in the eligible countries and S3 participating regions covered by the consortium.



Projects are expected to range between 18 and 24 months.

Project budgets (maximum grant amount) are expected to be around EUR 500 000 – EUR 1 500 000 per project.

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement (up to 100%).



Award Criteria

Relevance

- Extent to which the project matches the themes, priorities, objectives of the call
- Relevance & effectiveness
- Involvement of stakeholders from the relevant innovation ecosystems....

Quality

- Technical quality & quality of the consortium and project teams
- Methodology for implementing the project
- Procedures and problem-solving mechanisms...

Cost effectiveness

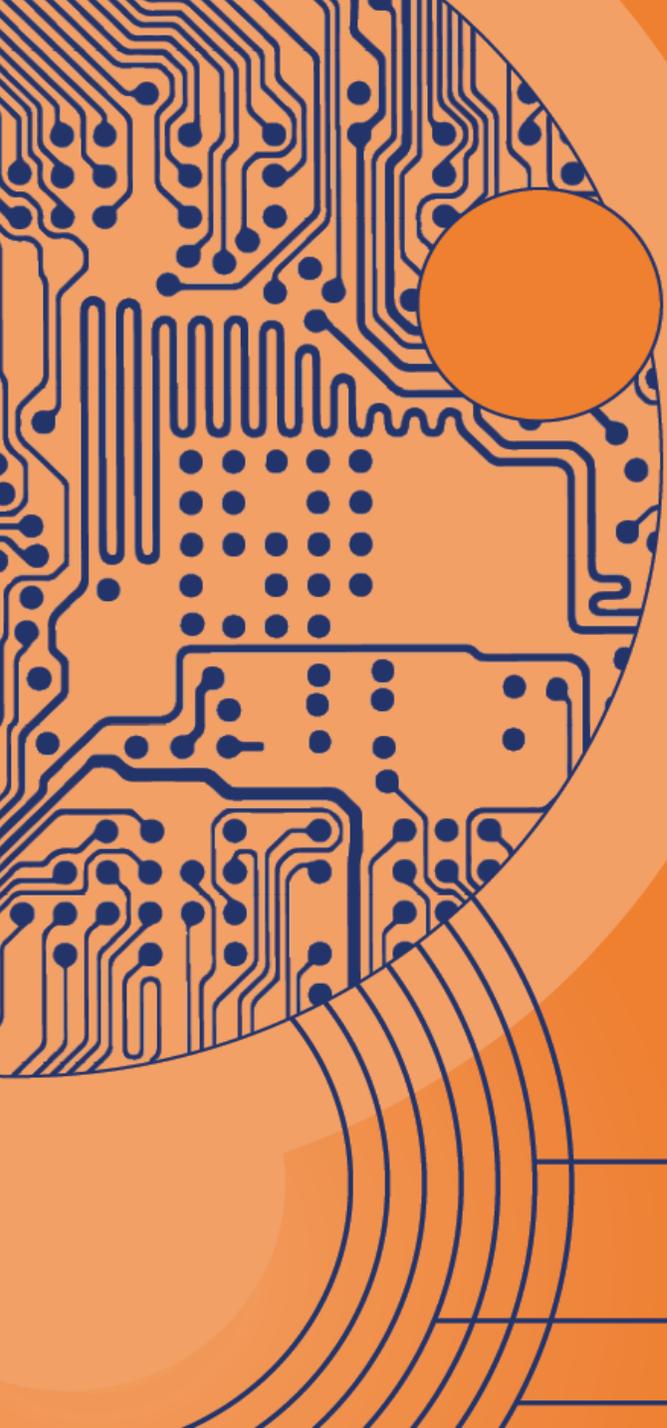
Impact

- Ambition and expected long-term impact of results
- Dissemination strategy
- Extent to which the action will foster capacity to participate in future I3 investment projects
- credibility on the long term policy impact ...



Indicative timeline





Detailed budget table

Tanya HRISTOVA

EISMEA, Financial Adviser, Unit
C.01

1. Instructions

INSTRUCTIONS (DETAILED BUDGET TABLE ACTION GRANTS – PROPOSAL/GRANT PREPARATION)

General

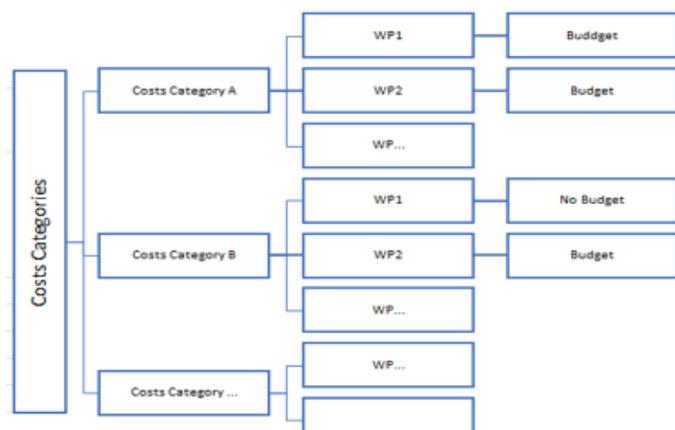
The file is composed of **5 sheets** (Instructions, Start, Detailed table, Consolidated table (participants) and Consolidated table (project)) which must be used to create your detailed budget table.

Depending on the instructions in the call document, you should submit the budget table either as part of your **proposal** and/or during grant preparation:

- for proposal: merge, scan and attach it as a **single PDF** to your Application Form Part B (Funding & Tenders Portal Submission System; only sheets 3, 4, and 5 needed; for sheets 3 and 4: **one per beneficiary/affiliated entity**; more details on technical instructions are in the Online Manual)
- for grant preparation (if needed, after changes requested by the EU): merge, scan and attach it as a single PDF to your Description of the Action (DoA) Part B (Funding & Tenders Portal Grant Preparation tool).

ATTENTION! You may be asked to provide an Excel file by email during evaluation and grant preparation, if needed.

The budget table is broken down by cost category and work packages. For technical reasons the number of work packages has to be the same in all categories. Please leave them empty, if there are no costs.



1. Instructions

2. Start

3. Detailed table

4. Consolid table (participant)

5. Consolid table (project)



3. Detailed table

EU GRANTS DETAILED BUDGET TABLE (ACTION GRANTS)

Project number:	
Project acronym:	
Participant short name:	
Participant PIC:	

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ATTENTION: This table should be filled out one per participant (beneficiary, affiliated entity)

ATTENTION: This table may ONLY contain eligible costs (i.e. costs that comply with the eligibility rules of the grant agreement that is part of your call documents). At proposal stage and during grant preparation, it should contain estimated costs/income. Costs must be estimated in EUR.

ATTENTION! List each budgeted cost item ONLY once in this table, for the main WP.

ATTENTION! White cells mean that you are required to enter data. Blue cells are calculated automatically.

EU PROJECT BUDGET TABLE (PER PARTICIPANT)

PROJECT COSTS

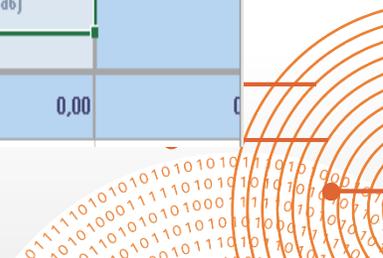
A. Personnel costs

	Costs (actual costs)			Also working for other work packages? YES/NO and which WP	Description of project role/activities/responsibilities	
	Type of rate (monthly/other)	Rate (amount)	Time (months/other of work on the action)			Total (EUR)
		a	b			c = a * b
Total personnel (all WPs)				0.00		



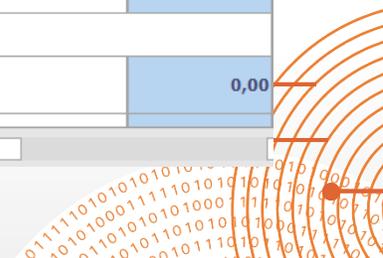
4. Consolidated table per participant

EU GRANTS DETAILED BUDGET TABLE (ACTION GRANTS)												
Project number:												
Project acronym:												
Participant short name:												
Participant PIC:												
CONSOLIDATED COSTS PER WORK PACKAGE (PER PARTICIPANT)												
COSTS PER WORK PACKAGE												
	A.1 Employees A.2 + A.3 Natural persons under direct contract and seconded persons	A.4 SME owners	B. Subcontracting costs	C. Purchase costs						D. Other cost categories	E. Indirect costs	Total
				C.1 Travel and subsistence	C.1 Travel	C.1 Accomodation	C.1 Subsistence	C.2 Equipment	C.3 Other goods, work and services			
	a1 - a2	a3	b	c1	c1a	c1b	c1c	c2	c3	d1	$e = \text{flat-rate} * (a1 + a2 + a3 + a5 + b + [c1a + c1b + c1c] + c2 + c3 + d1 + d2 + d3 + d4 + d5 + d6)$	
TOTAL COSTS PARTICIPANT	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00



5. Consolidated table per project

EU GRANTS DETAILED BUDGET TABLE (ACTION GRANTS)												
Project number:												
Project acronym:												
ATTENTION! Delete columns that do not apply for your grant.												
CONSOLIDATED COSTS PER WORK PACKAGE (PROJECT)												
PROJECT COSTS PER WORK PACKAGE												
	A.1 Employees A.2 + A.3 Natural persons under direct contract and seconded persons a1 - a2	A.4 SME owners a3	B. Subcontracting costs b	C. Purchase costs						D. Other cost categories D.1 Financial support to third parties d1	E. Indirect costs $e = \text{flat-rate} * (a1 + a2 + a3 + a5 + b + [c1a + c1b + c1c] + c2 + c3 + d1 + d2 + d3 + d4 + d5 + d6)$	Total
				C.1 Travel and subsistence c1	C.1 Travel c1a	C.1 Accomodation c1b	C.1 Subsistence c1c	C.2 Equipment c2	C.3 Other goods, works and services c3			
PARTICIPANT [name]												
TOTAL COSTS PARTICIPANT (Proposal Step)												0,00
TOTAL COSTS PARTICIPANT (Grant Preparation Step)												0,00
PARTICIPANT [name]												
TOTAL COSTS PARTICIPANT (Proposal Step)												0,00



3. Detailed budget table (per participant)



PROJECT COSTS

- A. Personnel costs
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
- E. Indirect costs

PROJECT INCOME

- EU Contribution
- Revenues and contribution by third parties
- Own resources



A. Personnel costs

A.1 Employees (or equivalent)

A.2 Natural persons under a direct contract

A.3 Seconded persons

A.4 SME owners without salary



Costs for employees or equivalent

Eligible if:

- related to personnel working for the beneficiary under an employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action;
- limited to: salaries, social security contributions, taxes and other costs linked to the remuneration (if they arise from national law or the employment contract - or equivalent appointing act - and be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred.

You must fill in monthly rates for each person who will work on the action.



Costs for natural and seconded persons

- **Seconded persons** temporary transfer of personnel from a third party to the beneficiary against payment;
- **Natural persons** working under a direct contract, other than an employment contract such as a civil, free-lance or expert contract are eligible if:
 - The natural person works under conditions similar to those of an employee;
 - The costs are not significantly different from those for personnel performing similar tasks;
 - The result of the work carried out belongs to the beneficiary;
 - The remuneration is based on working hours/days/months and timesheets.



Costs for SME owners

- SME owners for the action: direct owners of beneficiaries that are small and medium-sized enterprises not receiving a salary;
- Natural persons are NOT eligible.

Calculation method: unit cost (daily rate) multiplied by the number of day-equivalents worked on the action.

Annex 2a or [Commission Decision of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme \(C\(2020\)7715\)](#)



B. Subcontracting costs

Eligible if:

- Related to the implementation of specific tasks which are part of the action and are described in Annex 1;
- Only a limited part of action can be subcontracted -> NO core tasks; NO tasks of the coordinator;
- Subcontractor does not work under the direct supervision of the beneficiary (as opposed to in-house consultants);
- Ensure best value for money or, if appropriate, the lowest price;
- Avoid any conflict of interests.



C. Purchase costs

Services, works or goods, needed to carry out the action:

C.1 Travel and subsistence

C.2 Equipment

C.3 Other goods, works and services



Travel, accommodation and subsistence

- Be budgeted only for the personnel working on the action;
- Be justified: travel costs must be necessary for the implementation of the action and information about the calculation of the estimates to be provided in the Description column;
- Be budgeted as actual or unit costs: note that different columns apply.

[Commission Decision of 12 January 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework \(C\(2021\)35\)](#)



Equipment

depreciation costs of equipment, infrastructure or other assets are eligible if:

the equipment is purchased in compliance with the principles of procurement

the assets are included in the asset register of the beneficiary

the depreciation is recorded in the beneficiary's accounts and is calculated in accordance with international accounting standards and beneficiary's usual accounting practices.

Only portion of costs which corresponds to **the duration of the action** and **the rate of actual use** for the purpose of the action can be charged to the project

Rental and Leasing are eligible - if costs do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment



Other goods, works and services

are directly linked and purchased specifically for the implementation of the action

- must not fall into one of the above-mentioned categories of direct costs;
- must be in compliance with the principles of the best value for money or the lowest price.

Examples: catering costs, renting of a meeting room, printing of leaflets, consumables and supplies, promotion, dissemination, protection of results, translations, publications, certificates on the financial statements and financial guarantees (if required under the Agreement)



E. Indirect costs

Running or operating costs (overheads)

Not directly linked to the action implementation

(Vs 'direct costs', that are directly linked to the action implementation and can therefore be attributed to it directly)

- Reimbursed at the flat-rate of 7% of the eligible direct costs
- Automatically calculated by the IT system

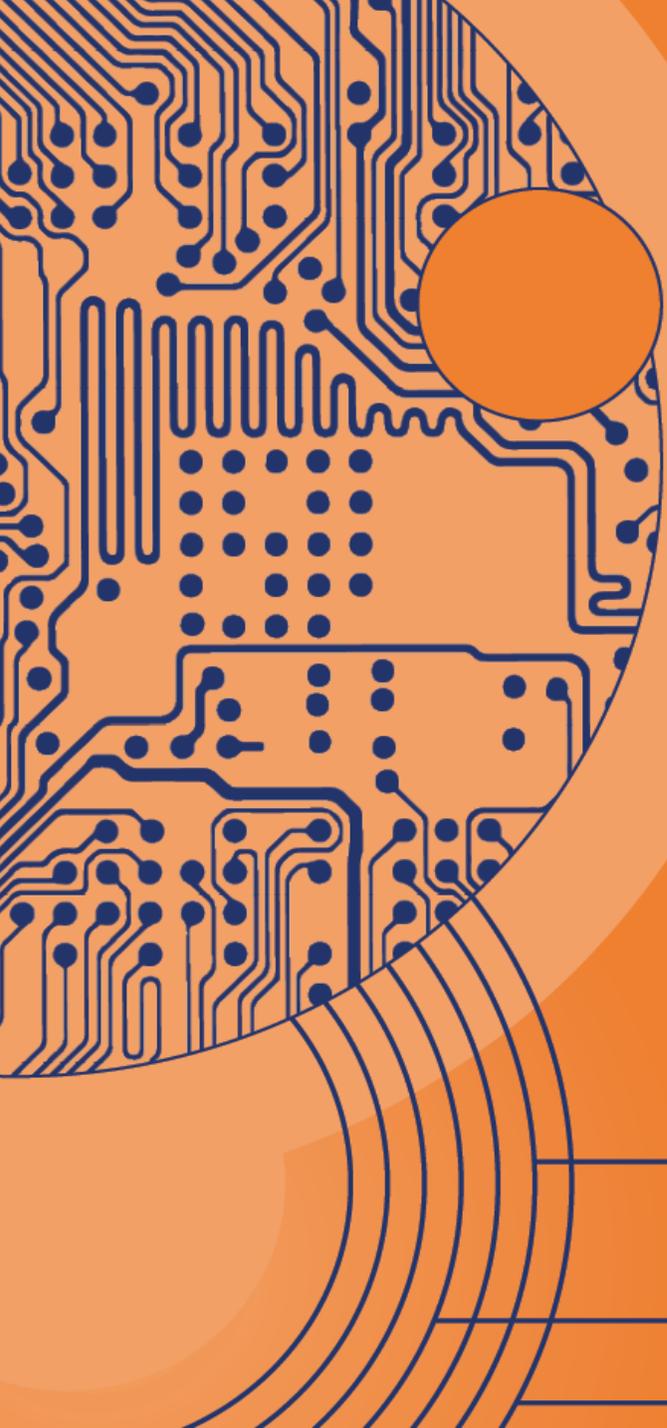
Example: computers, stationery, utilities etc.



Project income

- EU contribution (grant) – **100% of total project costs**
- Revenues and contributions by third parties:
 - income generated by the action such as direct revenues or receipts of the projects (e.g. conference participants fees, sales of books);
 - In-kind or financial contributions from third parties.
- Own resources or the own contribution of the beneficiary





Submitting a good proposal

Eric KOCH

EISMEA: Project Adviser, Unit I. EU and place-based
Innovation Ecosystems 01

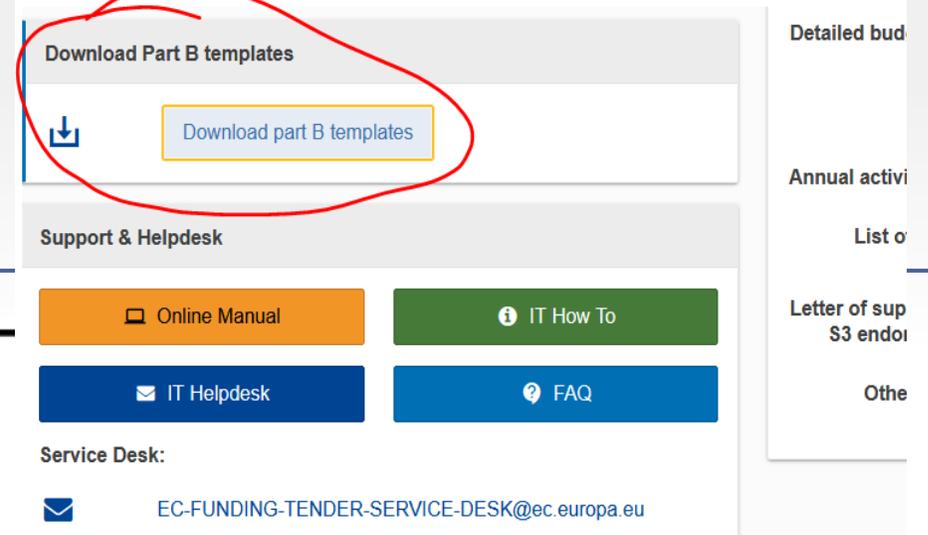
Basics- Is my organisation/proposal eligible?

- **Number + type** of entities (quadruple helix)
- Number of **countries/regions**
- Development **status** of regions
- **Status** of coordinator (e.g. no profit, public),
- **Existing** smart specialisation strategy for the topic (upload also the support letters per region),
- No environmentally **harmful** proposals,
- **No** double funding.

Non-exhaustive list



Get familiar with the main steps



Structure of the Proposal

The proposal contains two parts:

- **Part A** of the proposal is generated by the IT system. It is based on the information entered by the participants through the submission system in the Funding & Tenders Portal. The participants can update the information in the submission system at any time before final submission.
- **Part B** of the proposal is the narrative part that includes three sections that each correspond to an evaluation criterion. Part B needs to be uploaded as a PDF document following the templates downloaded by the applicants in the submission system for the specific call or topic. The templates for a specific call may slightly differ from the example provided in this document.

Part C - obligatory: NUTS participants data, non-obligatory: innovation type, TRL levels, time to market.

The electronic submission system is an online wizard that guides you step-by-step through the preparation of your proposal.

The submission process consists of 6 steps:

- Step 1: Logging in the Portal
- Step 2: Select the call, topic and type of action in the Portal
- Step 3: Create a draft proposal: Title, acronym, summary, main organisation and contact details
- Step 4: Manage your parties and contact details: add your partner organisations and contact details.
- Step 5: Edit and complete web forms for proposal part A and upload proposal part B
- Step 6: Submit the proposal

template



Think about the basics

No upload, direct entry

Compulsory

Edit forms  Edit Part C View history Print preview 

Part B and Annexes

In this section you may upload the technical annex of the proposal (in PDF format only) and any other requested attachments. 

Part B *		Upload 
Detailed budget table *		Upload 
CVs *		Upload 
Annual activity reports		Upload 
List of previous projects		Upload 
Letter of support (MS S3 endorsement) *		Upload 
Other annexes		Upload 

Press and check the errors

← BACK TO PARTICIPANTS LIST

VALIDATE

SUBMIT



Be prepared

- **Not enough to pass the minimum** (2.5/5 or 5/10) + (7/10 or 17,5/25). You have only one shot (One stage)
- EU calls highly competitive → Strive for **perfectionism** → Go for Gold!
- Ask **experienced** former applicants from similar calls (e.g. Strand 1/2a).
- Don't repeat the WP/call text. → Your proposal's **specific contribution and impact on involved regions!**
 - Objectives, activity scopes and expected impacts/KPIs
 - Focus on less developed regions
 - Increase capacity to participate in 13 projects (Strand 1/2a)
 - Core actions (at least one!): Ecosystem building, validation of investment ideas
 - Support actions: Mapping/benchmarking, networking/staff Exchange
- Look for the **right partners in the consortium** (early stage of proposal process)
 - F&T Portal partner search database or Enterprise Europe Network ([EEN](#)). Only add partners if they agree!
- **Ask/consult call specific questions.** Answers posted a few days later (max 3 days before call deadline). Topic call related FAQs mirrored on the call page under “Topic related FAQ”.
- Consider the **different weighting of the 4 award criteria.** Although you have to be as good as possible in all of them...



Award criterion 1: Relevance

- **Match/contribution** with/to the WP/call topic priorities
- Soundness of **needs/gaps** analysis
- **“SMART”** objectives
- **Synergies** with other related projects
- **European** dimension



Award criterion 2: Quality

- What makes your proposal “more excellent” than others? Your specific **value proposition**.
- **Methodology** and match with objectives
- Team quality / sound **distribution of resources** in consortium
 - action tasks by subcontractors (Part B, section 5): limited in nature/amount+best value for money)
 - in kind contributors (not budgeted but can be explained in Part B.1-5)
- Each beneficiary's **contribution**
- **Precise staff list** with function/profile/CVs for beneficiaries + affiliated/associate partners
- **Consortium** management, quality assurance and monitoring strategy
- **Project management** and monitoring (of methods and KPIs) + risk management/mitigation



Award criterion 3: Cost effectiveness

- **Measures** to reaching objectives/results efficiently
- Efficiency of the **financial management**
- No overly detailed WP cost description but **why budget table is considered** as effective
- Take your **budget planning** seriously: Detailed budget table to fill in. It takes time to go through all budget categories, work packages and participants – especially the staff costs! Often the source of financial errors. Check out the guidance for staff costs/daily rates calculation (in the annotated grant agreement, Article 6)
- A **consortium agreement** is highly recommended. Can also be signed at a later stage during grant agreement preparation



Award criterion 4: Impact

- Check Key performance indicators (**KPIs**) mentioned in call text
- Define **desired effects** of project (portfolio) – short and long term (e.g. define time to impact)
- **Target groups** and how will they benefit?
- Describe the **innovation** aspects
- Environmental, territorial, social **impact**
- **Communication** (during) and **dissemination** (after) the project to the public/private stakeholders
- **Sustainability** of the project (follow-up, business plans, synergies)



General information

Topic updates

Topic description

Conditions and documents

Partner search announcements

Submission service

Topic related FAQ

Get support

Call information

Call updates

Consult the call doc/page in detail

- Read and re-read the EU Funding and tenders [Call page](#) →
- The [Call document](#) is the main reference
- Check out the [I3 model grant agreement \(MGA\)](#) and [annotated MGA](#)
- Policy/regulatory background docs (Call doc, chapter 1+2) → I3, smart specialisation, European Regional Development Fund
- Proposal template → Use [sub questions/criteria](#) as [red thread](#) (part B).



Think about the evaluators...

- Put yourself **in their shoes**. Be to the point. More WPs/deliverables/text is not necessarily better
- **Max 60 pages, min Arial 9, min 15 mm margin, A4(Part B).**
 - Don't delete parts of template/any instructions to win space
 - Don't change the format to win space
 - Excess pages watermarked/disregarded by evaluators
- Write **reader friendly**: No endless sentences + Limit abbreviations + Use a glossary.
- Be complete. Do not forget **any document** (Part A+B+C, detailed budget table, CVs, support letter).
- Budget entered twice (Part A + uploaded detailed table). Numbers must match. Uploading a given document twice = overwriting the older version!
- Use (Gantt) **charts and images** if they make things more readable.
- Do **not** put images just for the sake of them or to fill the pages!



Final tips

- Experts / EU take and evaluate the proposal as it is. In principle no detailed negotiation (do not assume the EU will improve your proposal..). **Write as if no improvements should be made** in the grant preparation; even if for awarded proposals adaptations can be made during grant preparation
- **Do not overshoot:** be ambitious but stay realistic about what you can achieve with your project
- **Consult** the
 - [Call page](#)
 - [Online Manual, How to](#) section
 - IT questions: EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu / +32 229 92222
 - Non-IT questions: eisma-i3-instrument@ec.europa.eu
 - [I3 Instrument website](#)
 - [Smart Specialisation Platform](#)





Thank you!



<https://eisma.ec.europa.eu>



EISMEA-I3-INSTRUMENT@ec.europa.eu



#I3Instrument