

H2020 SOCIETAL CHALLENGE 2

Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy

FAQs - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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General Question – Brexit

Con l'avvicinarsi del 31 ottobre 2019, termine fissato (al momento) per l'uscita del Regno Unito dall'Unione Europea, ed in un contesto di incertezza politica sull'approvazione o meno di un accordo che regoli i rapporti tra la Gran Bretagna e i 27 Stati Membri, aumentano i dubbi (e le domande) sulla partecipazione degli enti britannici nelle proposte e nei progetti Horizon 2020.

Per essere sempre aggiornati con notizie ufficiali sul tema, consigliamo di consultare la sezione del [sito del governo britannico](#) dedicata ad H2020; la pagina dell'[UK Research and Innovation – UKRI](#) (ente delegato dal governo alla gestione del finanziamento agli enti del Regno Unito), contenente anche le FAQ sul tema; nonché il [factsheet](#) (aggiornato al 9 agosto 2019) dell'UK Research Office (UKRO, ufficio alle dipendenze di UKRI) che riassume brevemente e in maniera chiara le conseguenze dell'uscita del Regno Unito dall'UE con o senza accordo, fornendo anche un completo elenco di documenti ufficiali sul tema.

General Question – Eligibility of International Agencies

Enquires about the eligibility of “international agencies” in H2020 calls for proposals (this is different to an international organisation of European interest (who do get automatic funding) as follows: World Health Organisation; UN FAO.

Answer

Both organisations (World Health Organisation and UN FAO) are registered as International Organisations but not of European Interest (because the majority of their members are not from EU/AC)

Therefore, as a general rule, international organisations are eligible for funding under H2020 if they fulfil one of the conditions set out in Article 10(2) of the H2020 Regulation on Rules for Participation: such international organisations would only be eligible for funding if it is considered that its participation essential for carrying out the action in question or if such a funding would be stipulated in an international agreement/arrangement between the EU and that international organisation.

SFS-04-2019-2020

Question:

In the project they want to include veterinary residues and the effects of these on plants and soils and as consequence on animals (feed) and humans. Are such residues within the scope of this topic? The definitions on biocides, if also veterinary substances are included, are not easy to understand. It seems there are several definitions on biocides.

Furthermore, they want to address associated components added to pesticides formulations to mobilise, increase the impact, etc. of these. Also the question here, are such associated components within the scope of the topic.

Answer:

*"The topic SFS-04 has two scopes. The scope A in 2019 is focusing on the integration of plant protection in a global health approach and targeting the impacts of **plant protection products and their metabolites** (PPPs) on plant, human, animal and ecosystem health.*

Plant protection products are 'pesticides' that protect crops or desirable or useful plants:
https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides_en

They contain at least one **active substance** and have one of the following functions:

- protect plants or plant products against pests/diseases, before or after harvest
- influence the life processes of plants (such as substances influencing their growth, excluding nutrients)
- preserve plant products
- destroy or prevent growth of undesired plants or parts of plants

They may also contain **other components including safeners and synergists**.

Veterinary residues are not within the core scope of this topic SFS-04-A. Associated components added to the active substance in plant protection products are within the scope of scope A of the topic."

Question2:

1. The call is referring to "the context of a global health approach", does it mean that the project should look at human, animal and environmental health and their interconnections (as the One Health concept) ? Or that the project should look international health security (EU and other context) ?
2. A project answering the SFS04 call should be focused on the use of PPPs for agricultural needs only? or the urban use of pesticide need to be addressed ?

SFS-35-2019-2020

Question:

"The Topic text reads: "Preference will be given to proposals focusing on specific regions of Africa."

What does this mean concretely? Does the selected region have an influence on the evaluation? Could there be more than one project in a region? Will the Commission try to cover multiple regions in Africa? How can CGIAR Centers with a Headquarter in Africa (ILRI, ICRAF) be incorporated into consortia? Will they count as African regional partners, international partners or like "overarching" African partners?"

Answer (per sub-question):

Q:

The Topic text reads: "Preference will be given to proposals focusing on specific regions of Africa."

What does this mean concretely? Does the selected region have an influence on the evaluation?

A:

The selected region does not have any influence on the evaluation.

Q:

Could there be more than one project in a region?

A:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria under H2020 and there is a possibility that two proposals having the same region in focus will be rank high and both might be funded.

Q:

Will the Commission try to cover multiple regions in Africa?

A:

Under the SFS-35-2019 topic the total budget is 35 million EUR, the EU contribution under the sub-topic A is up to 7,5 million EUR and up to 5 million EUR under sub-topic B. Under sub-topic A the intention is that the highest rank proposals will be having different regions in Africa as the main focus.

Q:

How can CGIAR Centers with a Headquarter in Africa (ILRI, ICRAF) be incorporated into consortia? Will they count as African regional partners, international partners or like "overarching" African partners?

A:

For this specific topic any general African organization located on the African continent will be counted towards African partners, as they have pan-African role they cannot be counted towards African regional partners.

Regarding the legal status of the organization in terms of obtaining funding the general H2020 rules apply:

- Organization set up under the local law is recognized as national organization and will be able to benefit from funding as per rules applied to that country. In other words the research centres and other public bodies (but not international organizations) which are established and registered as public bodies in a country, and for which the national law applies, will be considered as entities from this country;*
- Organization set up as international organization can be a partner in the proposal, however funding will be only granted if the participation will be essential in obtaining the results of the project. That said organization can be a cost free partner (i.e. partner that will use its own resources) to any of the project proposals.*

The General Annex A to the H2020 WP 2018-2020 clearly states that international organizations are eligible for funding:

When funding is provided for under bilateral scientific and technological arrangement or any other arrangement between the EU and the international organization;

When the EC deems participation of the entity essential for carrying out the action funded through H2020

[see http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/wp/2018-2020/annexes/h2020-wp1820-annex-ga_en.pdf]

In the particular case of ILRI and ICRAF both are national organizations as they are established under the Kenyan national law.

Question2:

In terms of the requirements for African partners, that “proposals shall include at least five participants from [specific region of Africa](#) (as defined by the African Union) and a minimum of eight participants from Africa”. Does this mean five participants from five different countries within the region, or just a total of five partners from the region, with all potentially coming from the same country? Similarly, can all eight participants come from the same region?

Answer2:

It should be read: eight legal entities from any of the African countries which includes five legal entities from the same region (as defined by African Union). The legal entities can be from the same country and the eight legal entities can be from the same region. Please pay attention that not all entities which are using ‘international organization’ in its name are registered as international one, many of them are registered under national law of the country were they are located. At the same time many of the umbrella

organizations are having multiple country registration thus only the entity registered under one of the African countries law will be counted towards the African countries limit i.e. entity working with African and having in its title 'Africa' but registered in a MS will be counted towards MS requirement.

Question3:

- 1. This call is defined as a RIA call but in the call text they are requesting to implement and test systems which seems more like demonstration activities. Could you please clarify this point.**
- 2. The requirements is involving different regions in the proposal – does the system approach need to be performed in each different region? Is it possible to advance a single pilot case for advancing intensification through dual cultures while applying the system approach.**

Answer3:

- 1. SFS-35-2019-2020 is a Research and Innovation Action (RIA) type of call, large part of the topic concentrates on research developed under the multi-actor approach concept. It is expected that the proposed research solutions will be testes in selected case studies together with farmers involved in the conceptualization.*
- 2. It is expected that each of the proposals will be focusing on one region in particular and will as much as possible analyse multiple agricultural systems. The list in the topic text is only indicative and any type of system can be proposed.*

Question4:

In the call text there is a requirement to include a task to cluster with projects financed under SFS-33-2018. What does it mean? Is it necessary to contact with the project before submitting the application? Does it require collaboration with the project's members?

Answer4:

The project funded under SFS-33-2018 - LEAP4FNSSA is creating a platform for cooperation between all projects funded under the FNSSA partnership. The requirement to have a task to cluster with this project should help to first allow the consortia funded under SFS-35 have finances to travel for meetings under the partnership. This task should also potentially allow to do some common work (either as cluster with SFS-33 but also with other SFS-35 projects in case they do cover a similar area).

There is no need to contact other project coordinators before submitting the proposal.

Cooperation with other projects members should be envisaged if a scope for joint work is possible (this can be with SFS-35 projects but also with others).

SFS-34-2019

Question:

In the “Topic and Documents” section of the call is stated that: “Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the General Annexes, proposals shall include at least four participants from a specific region of Africa (as defined by African Union) and a minimum of five participants from Africa”. Does this mean that the minimum number of participants from Africa is 5 and that 4 participants out of 5 should belong to a specific region? Or maybe that the minimum number of participants from Africa is 9 (4 from a specific region + 5 from Africa)?

Answer:

The proposal should have minimum 5 entities from Africa. Minimum 4 entities should be from a specific region, while additional 1 (or more) could be from other parts of Africa or from the already chosen region. Please pay attention to the definition of regions as per the African Union definition and also to the legal status of the entities. The legal status will define the country of the entity.

SFS-39-2019

Question:

As there seems to be a Deadline from MOST for a pre-proposal on the 9th of December 2018, which is the first necessary step for Chinese applicants to be able to submit a full proposal, what happens if the Chinese applicants will not pass this first evaluation hurdle? Does this mean that the European Consortium Partners will therefore not fulfil the evaluation criteria set by the EC for SFS-39 or not be eligible to submit their proposal?

What if the European SFS-39 proposal is negatively evaluated, but the Chinese proposal selected for funding by MOST or the other way round?

Do the EC and MOST communicate about their decision and make sure that if one of the proposals is selected by the EC or MOST, the other party is informed and this will be taken into consideration in the evaluation? Do you have any more insights into how this entire process will look like?

Answer2:

The 2018 call of MOST is only for the H2020 calls of 2018. A dedicated MOST call for the H2020 Work Programme 2019 will be published in the next months.

The evaluation by MOST and EC is done in parallel with exchange of information and at this moment the timing of final evaluation is much closer than in the previous years. The project proposals are evaluated based on the criteria set up by MOST and EC respectively. Thus for the 2019 proposals should be submitted to both EC and MOST (in 2018 the EC deadline was in February, MOST call was closed in March).

At the end of the evaluation process the EC will grant agreement to the winning consortium and the expectation is that MOST will fund the Chinese partners. However, since there are specific rules MOST might support all, some or none of the Chinese partners. From practice, if not all partners are funded by MOST, we see that some of them are getting financial support from other funding streams (e.g. Chinese Academy of Sciences) or self-fund. Thus, indeed there is a risk that the project that will be selected under H2020 will only have funding from H2020 and the Chinese partners will not be successful. This scenario will not change the EC decision, however this will be a risk for the consortium. In those cases EC is helping and discussing with Chinese counterpart to see if other solutions are possible.

We encourage Chinese applicants to read the MOST call in detail as they are some specific rules to whom the funding is addressed.

Question3:

- 1. The title of the call says High quality organic fertilisers from biogas digestate. Must the produced fertiliser be classified as an organic fertiliser? In some EU countries there would be an advantage if the fertiliser produced from digestate could be classified as a mineral fertiliser.**
- 2. Proposals shall ensure solid collaboration between agro-food actors, technology providers, research centers, end-users and public administration. Do all these have to be partners or can they collaborate in other ways?**
- 3. Proposals shall promote balanced research and innovation cooperation between the EU and China. What is meant by balanced? How does the Chinese co-funding mechanism work?**

4. **Proposals shall include a task to cluster with other projects financed under topic RUR CE-08-2018/2019/2020. What does this mean?**

Answer3:

1. *No option is excluded, provided that it is produced from digestate.*
2. *The only requirement is that there should be a “solid collaboration”.*
3. *Balanced influence in project conception and decisions, balanced contribution to scientific work. In sum, avoid marginal or “cosmetic” collaboration. Information on the co-funding mechanism can be found here:<https://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm?pg=china>.*
4. *A task should be included in one of the work packages for this purpose, and some resources should be allocated to it.*

RUR-08-2018-2019-2020

Question:

What does the following sentence exactly mean?

"For sub-topics B and C, participation of partners from CELAC countries is encouraged"

Indeed, as there's no Framework agreement for H2020 with CELAC countries such as with China and Africa the precise questions are the following:

- **Why a partnership with CELAC especially? Is there some specific lobby behind this request?**
- **What are the expectations behind it? In terms of business? in terms of Partnership?**
- **Is it linked to the specific theme of "Bio-based fertilisers from animal manure"?**

Answer

The [EU-CELAC relations](http://www.technopolis-group.com/celac-pai/) include a joint initiative on research and innovation. In this context, a pilot action has been launched in 2018 to support a regional research mission on management and re-use of waste (<http://www.technopolis-group.com/celac-pai/>). Topic CE-RUR-08 has been identified as potentially contributing to the implementation of this pilot action.

Cooperation in this domain aims mainly at facilitating technology transfer/adaptation to the specific conditions of CELAC countries, and the development of a local market for organic-based fertilisers.

The scopes concerned are B and C. Only scope B will be open in 2019, with a focus on animal manure.

It must be highlighted that, whilst the topic encourages cooperation, this does not constitute a requirement, i.e. proposals shall not be penalised for not integrating a cooperation dimension.

FNR-05-2020 – [Subtopic A]

Question:

Regarding topic FNR-05-2020, subtopic A Husbandry for Sustainability, is poultry included under the concept of "livestock"?

Answer

Regarding the topic “FNR-05-2020, subtopic A.(2020) Husbandry for sustainability (RIA)”, where in the text is indicated: “...diverse EU livestock production systems, covering all the EU’s major types of production

systems and most important species” and in the footnote is detailed: “livestock production systems for human food”, the term “livestock” is used in a broad sense to cover all grown animals regardless of age, location or purpose of breeding. Thus, poultry is included under the concept of livestock.

CE-FNR-07-2020

Question:

I could not attend the SC2 Infoday so I watched it online today. Our research institute is interested in coordinating or participations in a project in response to the topic FNR-07-2020. As we are already involved in other relevant projects, we think it could be a good fit to offer a strong centralised coordination. Nevertheless, it was not clear what the EC is expecting in terms of coordination and we would not want to dive in such a big project if a national research institute would not be eligible, or even relevant in your eyes. Another possibility would be that a city we are involved in coordinates the action but you said that a city would not have the capacity.

Could you tell us whether a city or a research institute would be eligible to coordinate such an action?

Answer

As mentioned during the Infoday in Brussels on the 4th of July, it would make sense to apply the same methodology/approach to each city, of course taking into account local differences. Managing such a complexity could be challenging for a city, that is why we are not expecting the coordinator of the project(s) to be a local municipality.

FNR-11-2020

Question:

- 1. Regarding initial biodiscovery step, should the proposal start from already existing libraries or rather to include prospecting terrestrial/aquatic biological resources as part of the project?**
- 2. Does the scope refer to already known molecules with new functionalities or to new molecules?**
- 3. Is it necessary to cover all the steps of the development pipeline, as indicated in the scope?**
- 4. Is it allowed to include the use of GMOs?**

Answer

- *Regarding the ‘starting point’ (questions 1-2), it can be commented that the scope allows both options, i.e. the starting point being prospecting terrestrial/aquatic biological resources or existing ‘open access and proprietary compound libraries’. Both new molecules with new bioactivities, qualities and applications and already known molecules with new bioactivities, qualities and applications might be considered, and the choice should be presented in the proposal.*
- *Regarding the coverage of the development pipeline (question 3), it is expected that to some extent all elements mentioned in the topic are covered, however the applicants are free to focus on specific bottlenecks and critical elements necessary for the final product development. Again, their choice should be well argued in the proposal.*
- *Regarding use of production platforms based on molecular engineering (question 4), all available technological solutions can be applied (including GMO), in order to meet the objectives listed in the topic. At the same time, the applicants must ensure adherence to the legal requirements binding in their territories, including on the use and commercialisation of the GMOs, if applicable.*