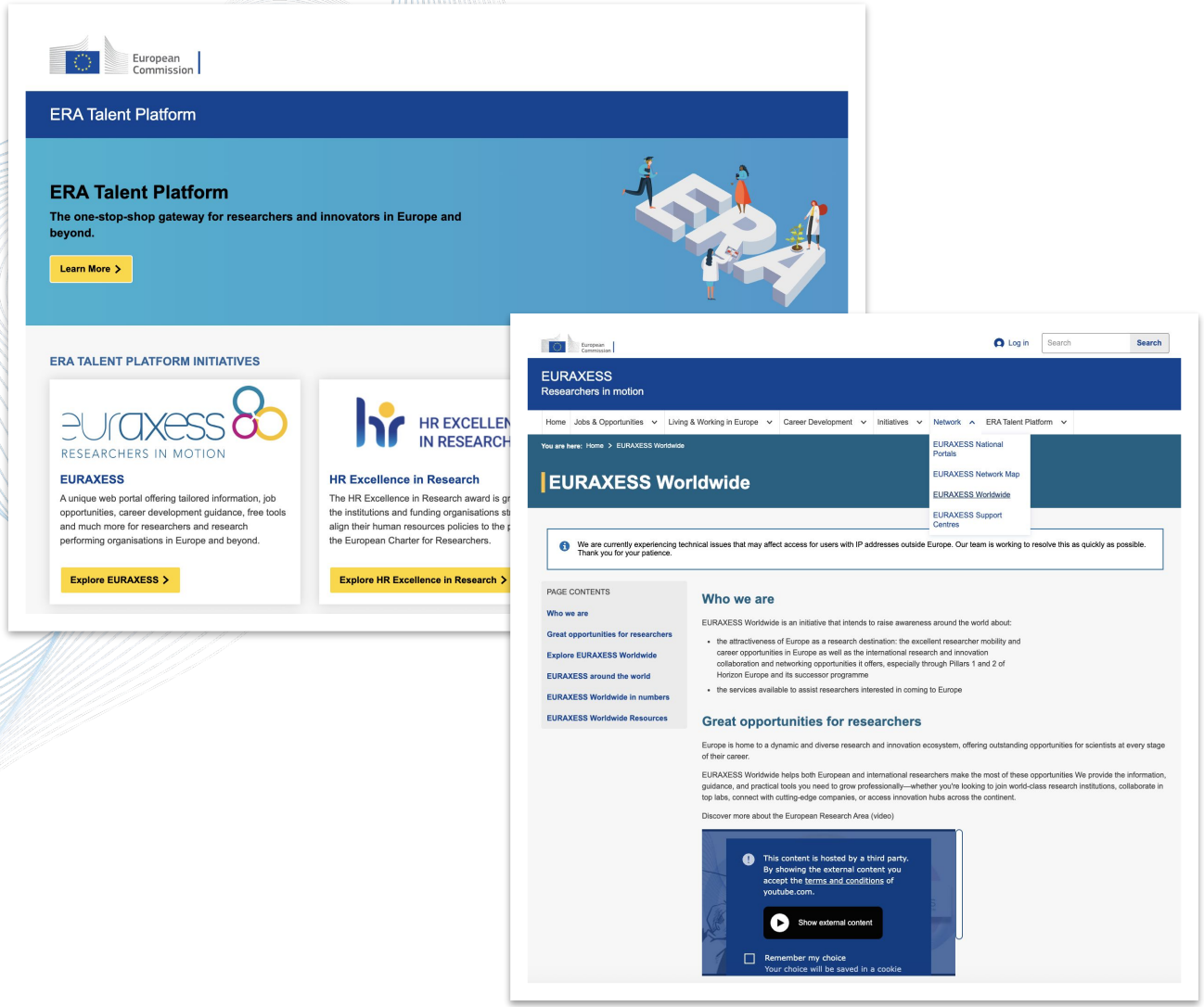
MSCA Staff Exchanges: practical aspects

Cristina Gómez and Ahmed Maalel
EURAXESS Worldwide representatives

EURAXESS Worldwide: Objectives



Raise awareness around the world about:

1. Attractiveness of Europe as a research destination with focus on Horizon Europe:

- Excellent researcher mobility and career opportunities in Europe
- International research and innovation collaboration
- Networking opportunities

2. Services available to assist researchers interested in coming to Europe

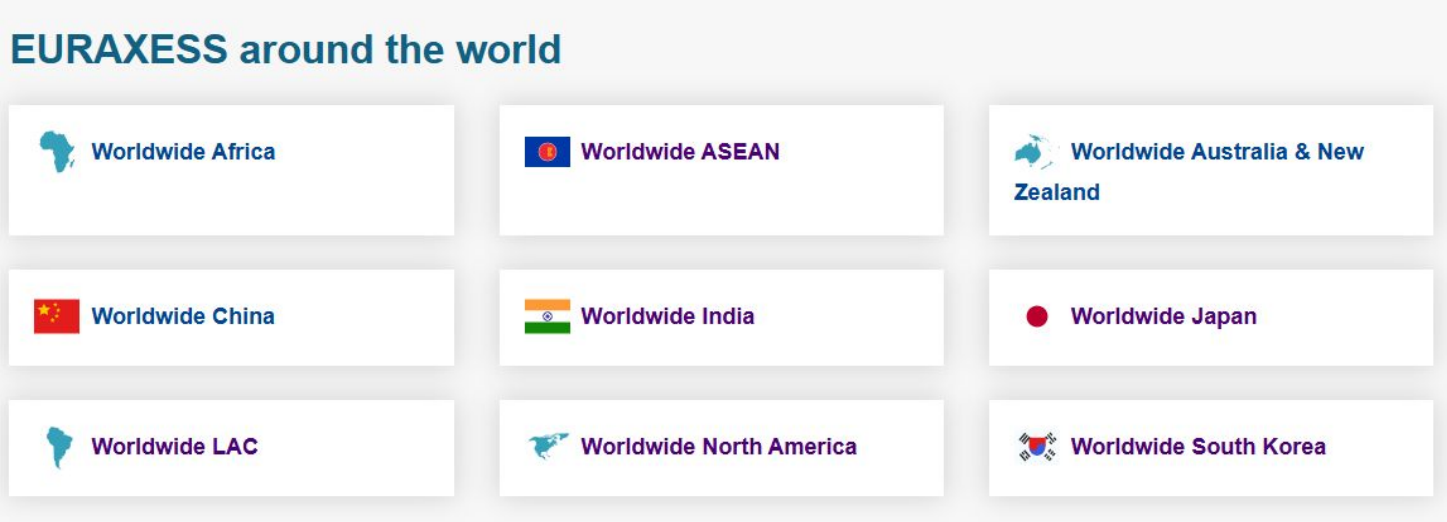
The project contributes to the implementation of the EU's Global Approach to Research and Innovation.

EURAXESS Worldwide in Numbers

Since 2013, EURAXESS Worldwide has:

- organised almost **3 000 events** with over **195 000 participants**
- collected more than **2,6 million visitors on country/hub portals** overall
- collected more than **130,000 likes and followers via social media** and posted more than **11 500 news**, funding opportunities and events information on the portals

Only in 2024, over 750 activities were carried out, reaching close to 36 000 participants. The different portals received over 470 000 visits and Social Media channels used surpassed the 130 000 followers.



EURAXESS Worldwide Team

EURAXESS North America

Derya Büyüktanir Karacan

Jackson Howard

EURAXESS Africa

Ahmed Maalel

Yedilfana Setarge

EURAXESS Korea

Tomasz Wierzbowski

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EURAXESS India

Samrat Kumar

EURAXESS China

Kārlis Rokpelnis

EURAXESS ASEAN

Leonie Nagarajan

Tatas Brotosudarmo

EURAXESS Australia & New Zealand

Nishant Shandilya

Central Management Team: PRACSIS / tecnalia

EURAXESS Worldwide activities – EURAXESS Africa

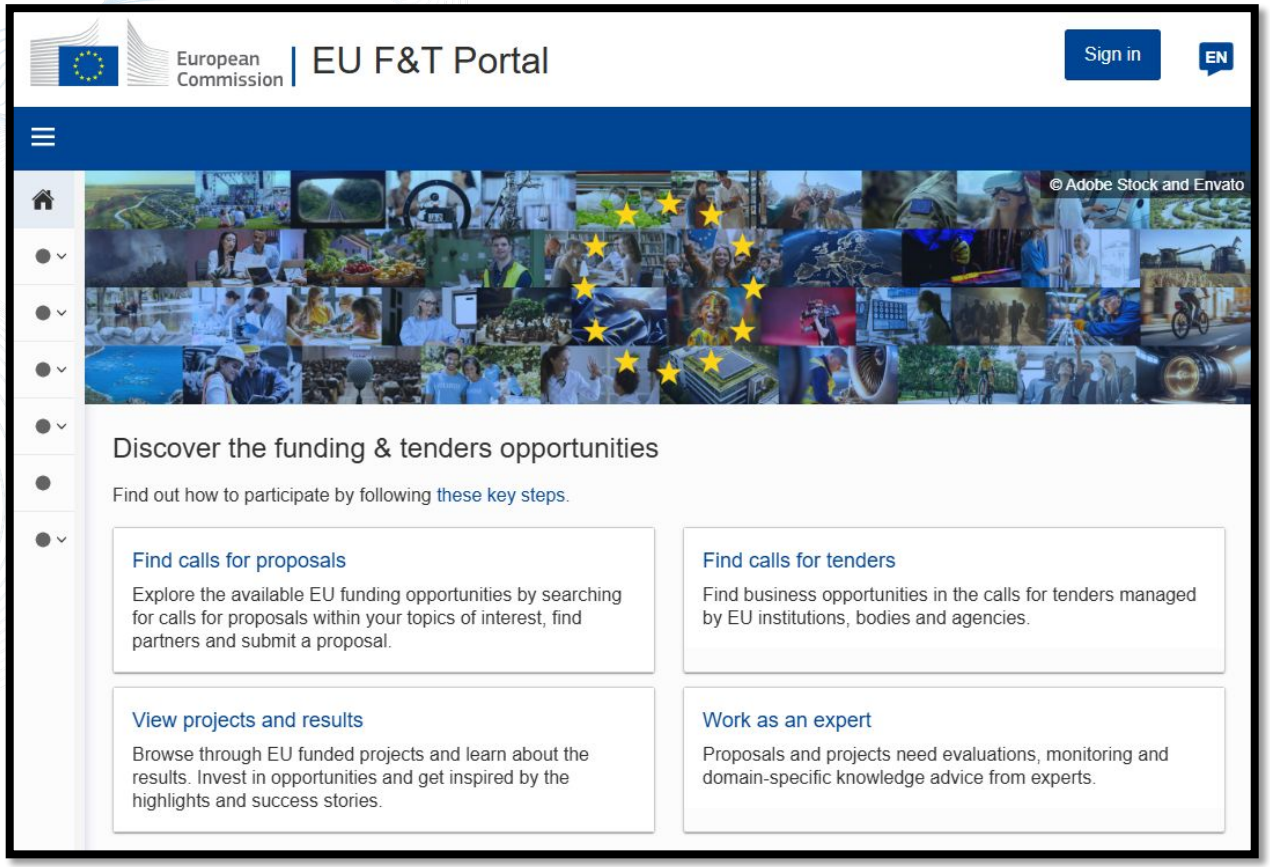
- Information sessions: on HE, European research policies, funding (EU and national), and collaboration opportunities
- **Thematic session: 'how to apply' workshops for MSCA or ERC, etc**.
- Networking: to promote the network and grow membership
- Match-making: to promote scientific collaboration between researchers from the respective country/region and researchers in Europe
- Fairs: stands /other presence in career fairs

- How to submit an MSCA SE Project?
- Understanding the evaluation process
- Where to find partners and how to create a successful consortium
- Meeting the Evaluation criteria
- Final tips

How to submit an MSCA SE Project?

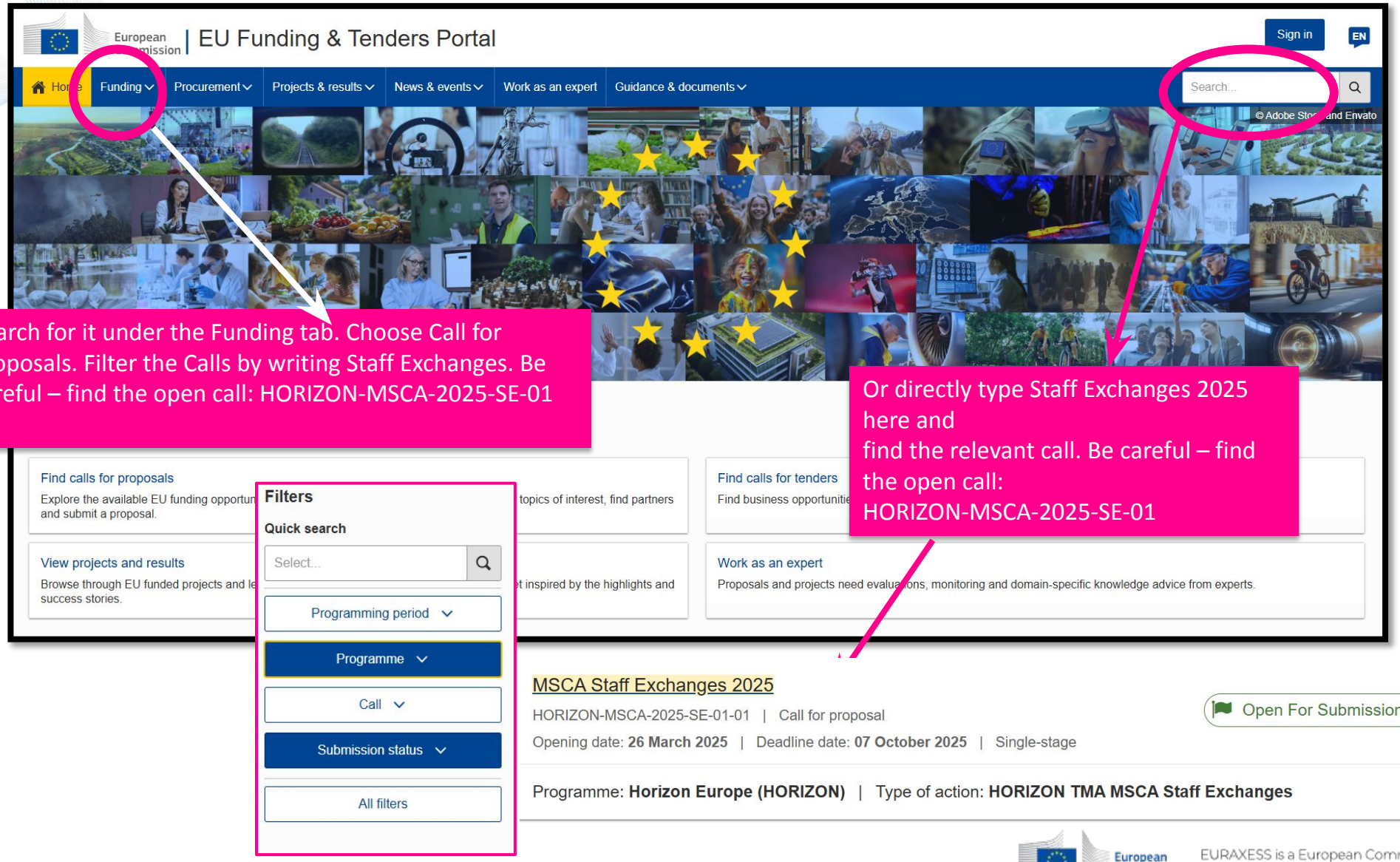
Open EU Funding & Tenders Portal

Click on the link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home

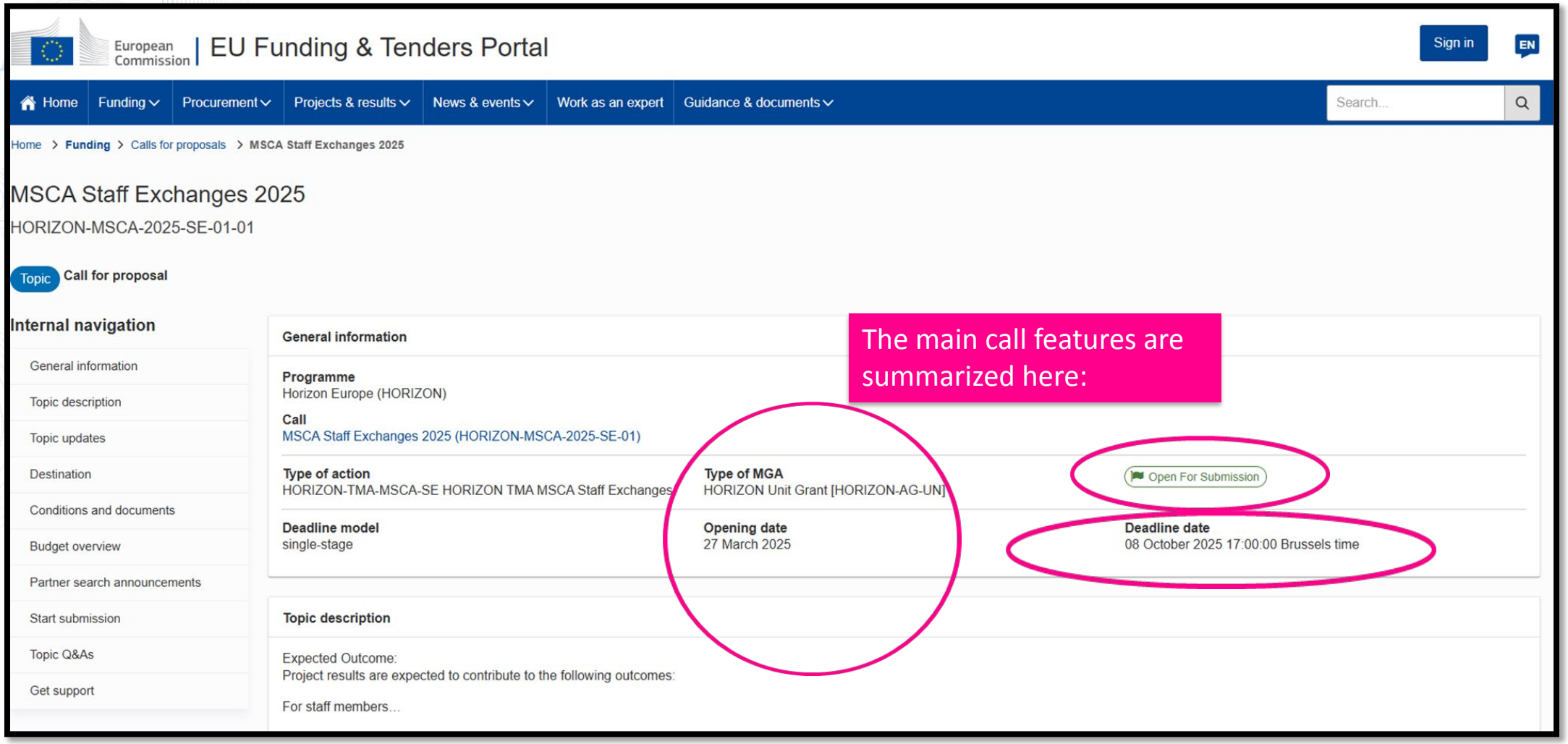


European Commission
EURAXESS is a European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation initiative

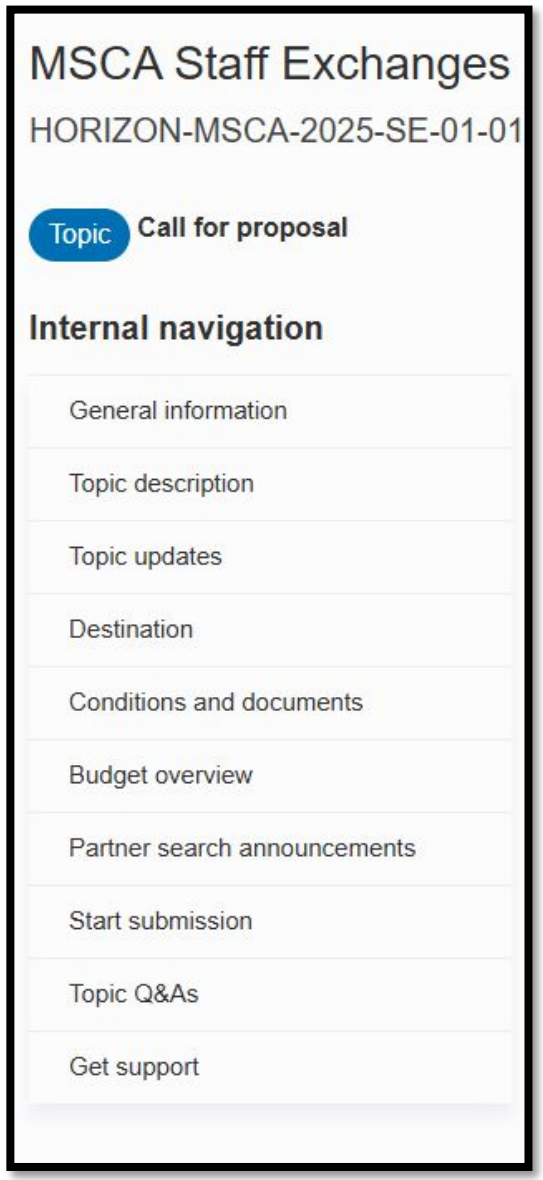
Find the Call



See the call features



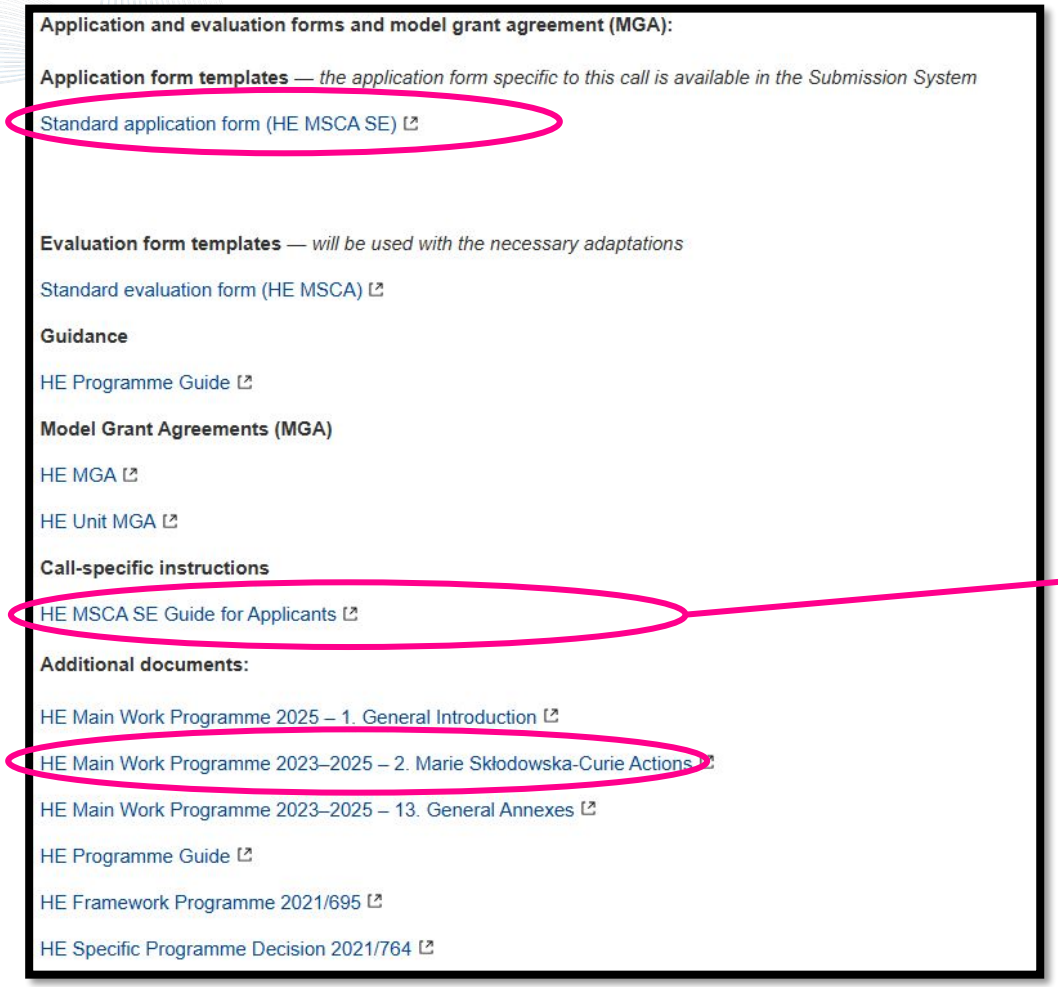
Scroll down



By scrolling down you can see all relevant information about this call.

Please click on ‘show more’ buttons under each section.

Download the documents



Application and evaluation forms and model grant agreement (MGA):

Application form templates — *the application form specific to this call is available in the Submission System*

Standard application form (HE MSCA SE)

Evaluation form templates — *will be used with the necessary adaptations*

Standard evaluation form (HE MSCA)

Guidance

HE Programme Guide

Model Grant Agreements (MGA)

HE MGA

HE Unit MGA

Call-specific instructions

HE MSCA SE Guide for Applicants

Additional documents:

HE Main Work Programme 2025 – 1. General Introduction

HE Main Work Programme 2023–2025 – 2. Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

HE Main Work Programme 2023–2025 – 13. General Annexes

HE Programme Guide

HE Framework Programme 2021/695

HE Specific Programme Decision 2021/764

If you haven't done so yet, you can download the Work Programme, Guide for Applicants and other useful documents here under the heading 'General Conditions'. Please read them to prepare your SE proposal.

When you click the link, you will be directed to the CIRCABC website where you can download the documents. You do not have to log in at this stage, you can access the document as a guest visitor.

Guide for Applicants

European Commission

Horizon Europe Programme

Guide for Applicants

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – Staff Exchanges (SE)

Version 5.0 - 2025
27 March 2025

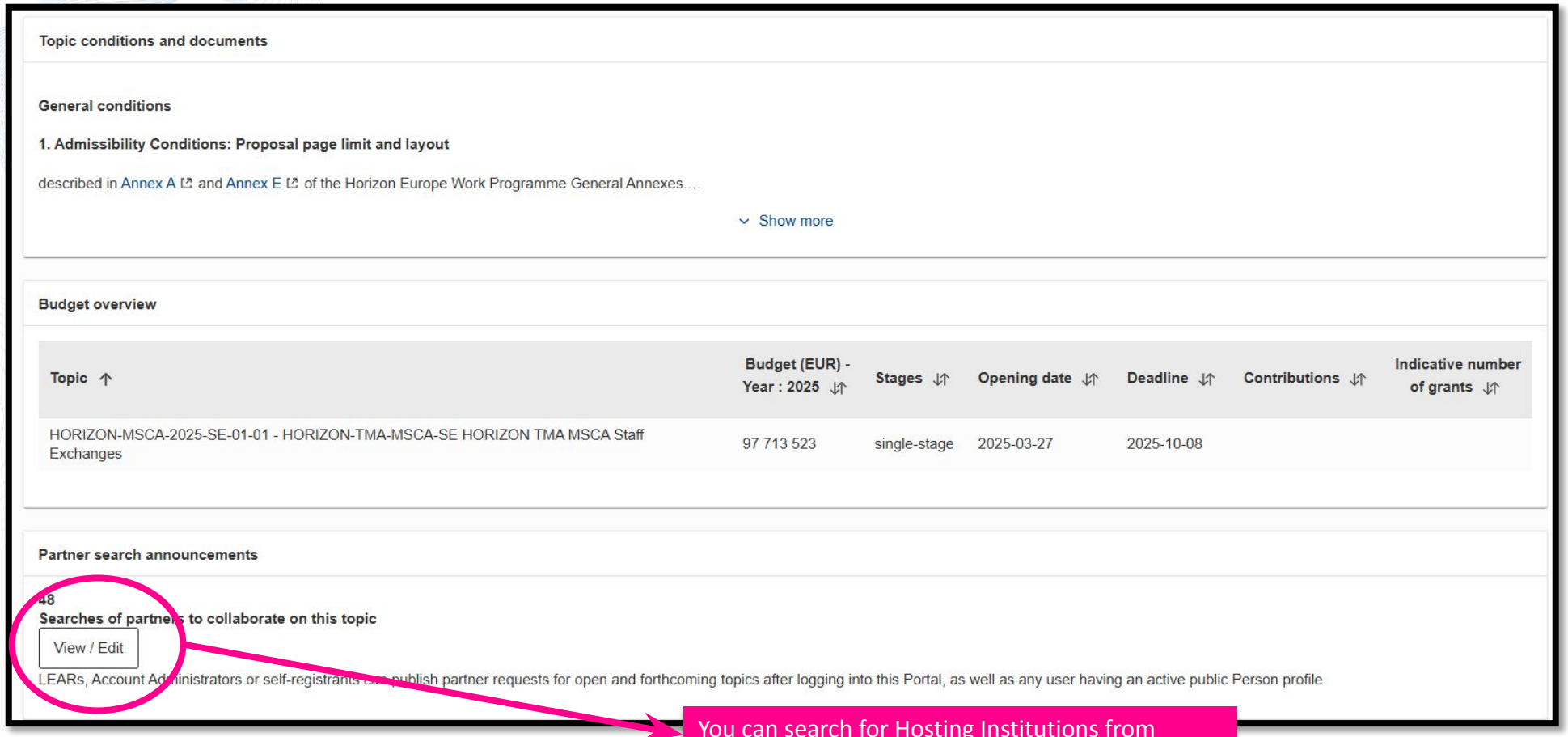
Disclaimer
This guide aims to support potential applicants to the MSCA-SE 2025 call. It is provided for information purposes only and is not intended to replace consultation of any applicable legal sources. Neither the European Commission, nor the European Research Executive Agency (or any person acting on their behalf) can be held responsible for the use made of this guidance document. The guidance provided in the MSCA Financial Guide shall prevail in case of discrepancies. The budget amount of the MSCA-SE 2025 call should be reviewed as the current figure published in the WP/F&T Portal does not yet reflect the UK contribution.

This is the main document where you can find the details of the MSCA-SE call, how to prepare your proposal etc.

PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY.

All main definitions (not included in this guide) are available in the MSCA part of the Work Programme.
Links to other official documents (e.g. Horizon Europe General Annexes of the Work Programme, Horizon Europe Unit Model Grant Agreement, Horizon Europe Programme Guide) are provided on the call page on the Funding and Tenders Portal.

General Conditions – Budget – Partner Search



Topic conditions and documents

General conditions

1. Admissibility Conditions: Proposal page limit and layout

described in Annex A and Annex E of the Horizon Europe Work Programme General Annexes....

Show more

Budget overview

Topic	Budget (EUR) - Year : 2025	Stages	Opening date	Deadline	Contributions	Indicative number of grants
HORIZON-MSCA-2025-SE-01-01 - HORIZON-TMA-MSCA-SE HORIZON TMA MSCA Staff Exchanges	97 713 523	single-stage	2025-03-27	2025-10-08		

Partner search announcements

48

Searches of partners to collaborate on this topic

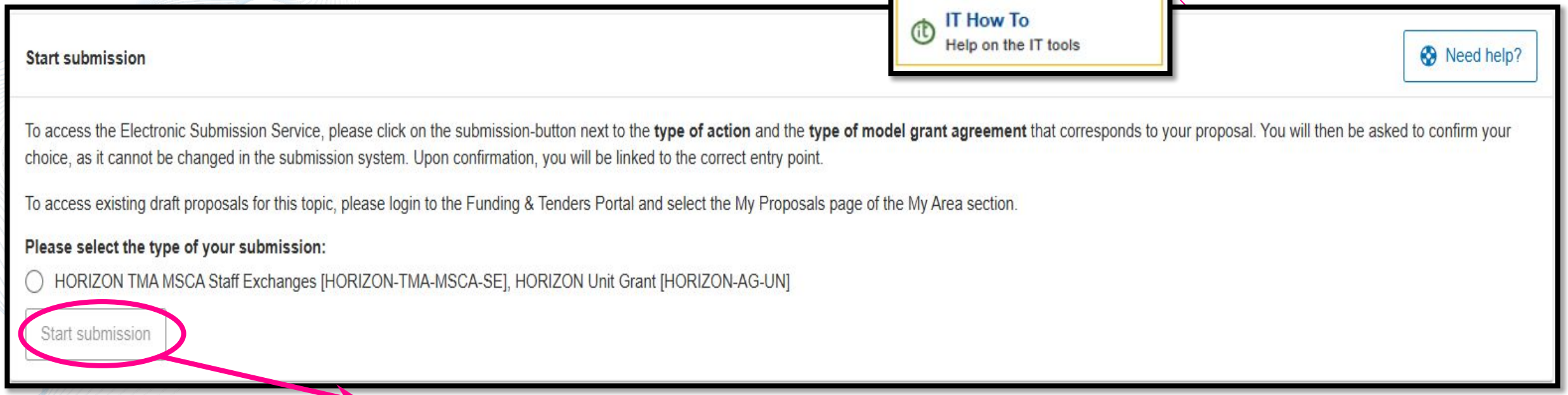
View / Edit

LEARs, Account Administrators or self-registrants can publish partner requests for open and forthcoming topics after logging into this Portal, as well as any user having an active public Person profile.

You can search for Hosting Institutions from partner search announcements. Please check this link.

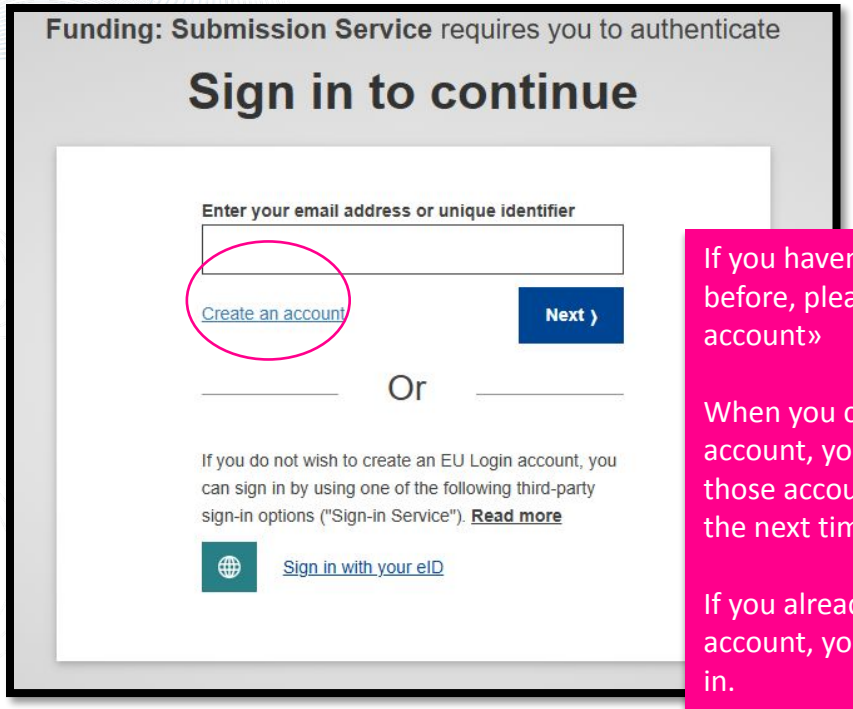
Start Submission

You can download a manual for the HE submission system via this link.



You can start submitting your proposal if you decided to become a coordinator of your proposal.

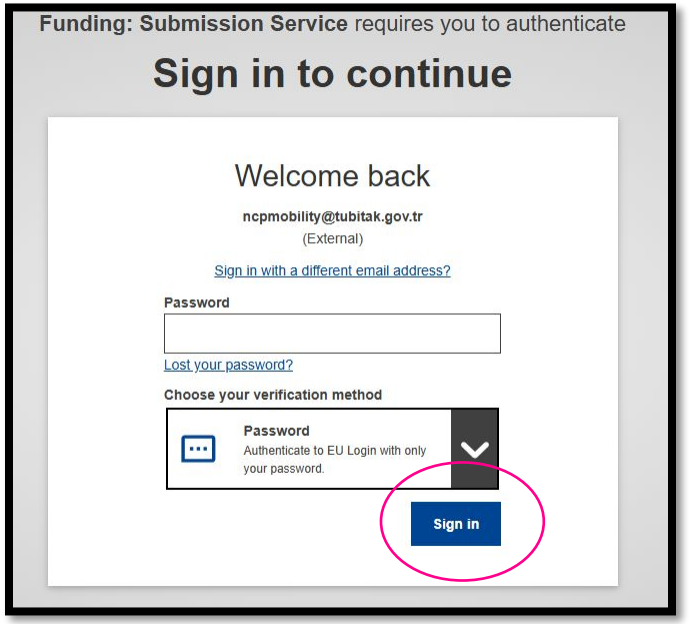
Sign in to continue



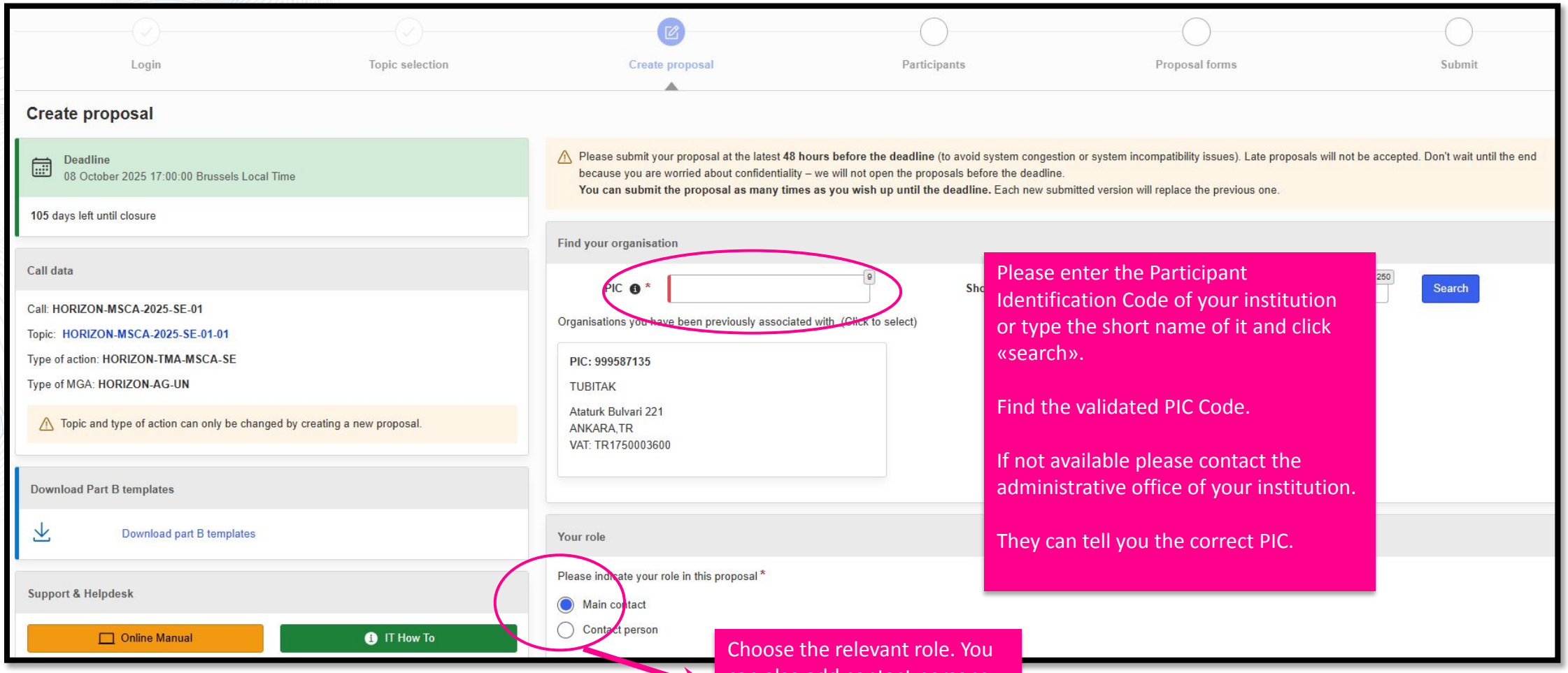
If you haven't signed in before, please «create an account»

When you create an account, you can use those account details for the next time.

If you already have an account, you can just sign in.



When you sign in..



Please enter the Participant Identification Code of your institution or type the short name of it and click «search».

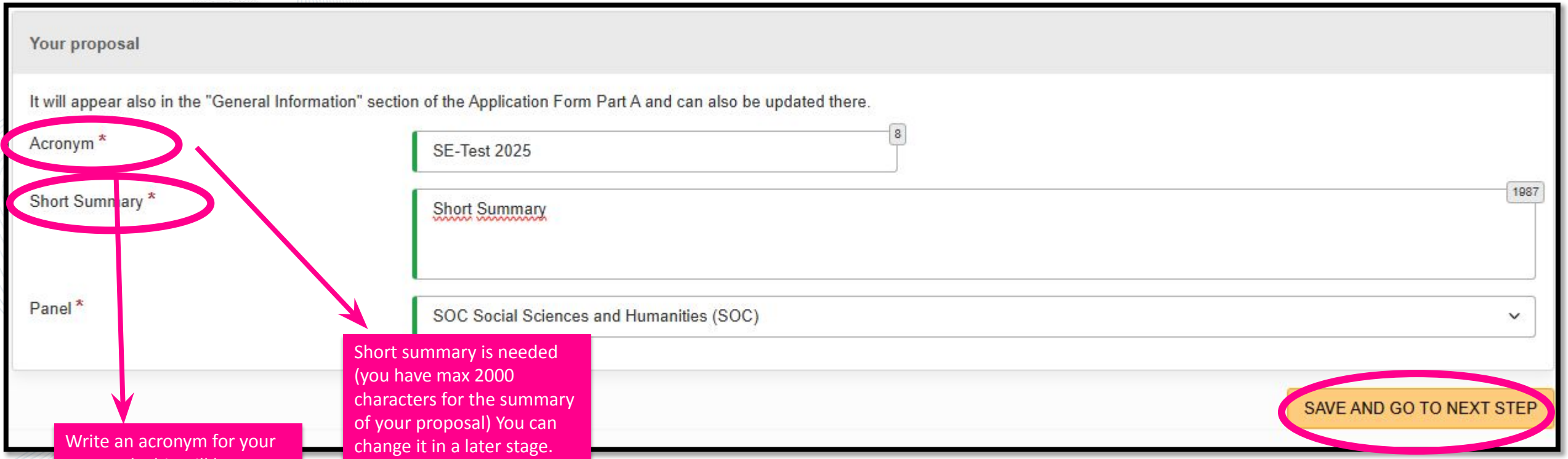
Find the validated PIC Code.

If not available please contact the administrative office of your institution.

They can tell you the correct PIC.

Choose the relevant role. You can also add contact persons after adding a main contact.

Acronym & Short Summary

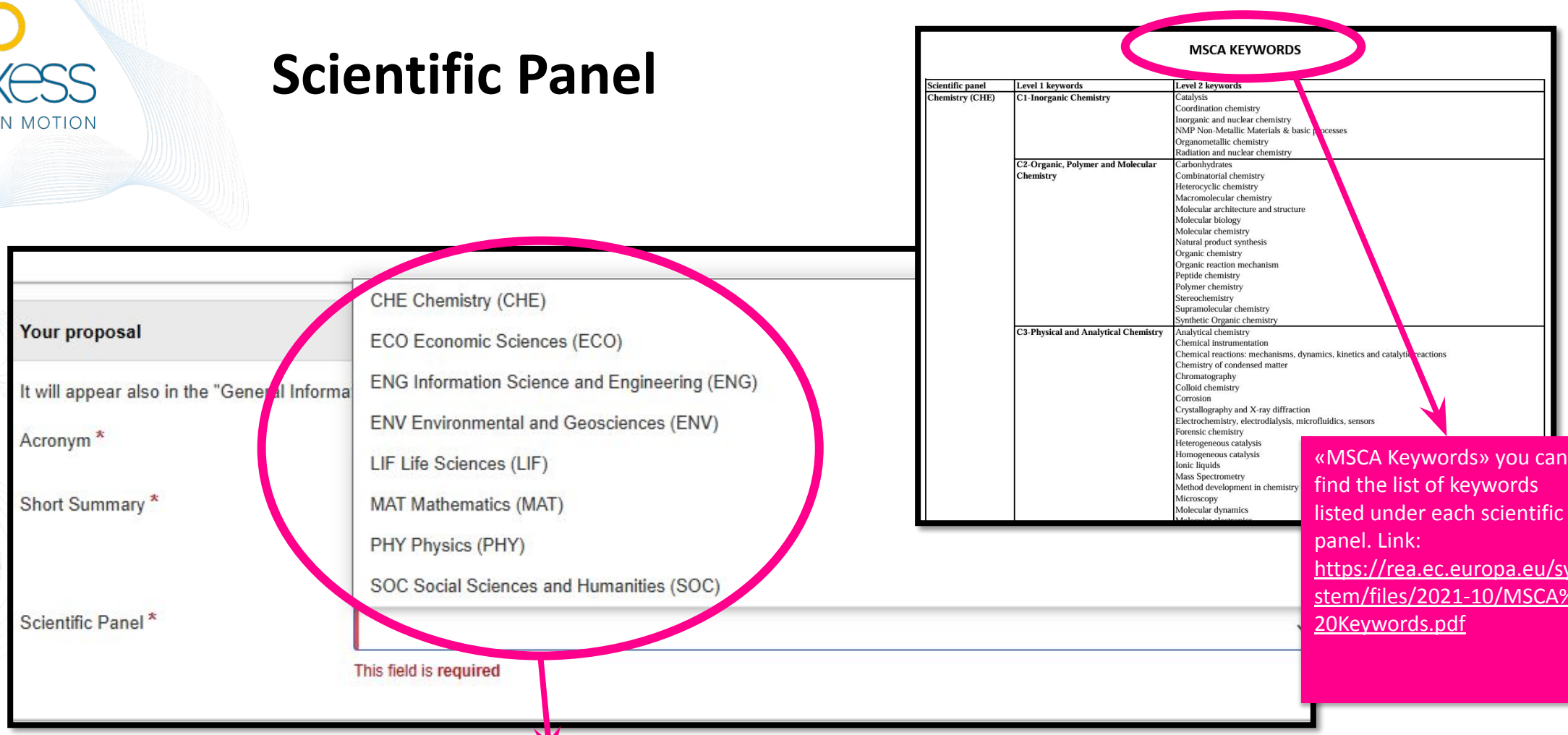


Write an acronym for your proposal. This will be your project's short name.. This can be changed from A forms at a later stage.

Short summary is needed (you have max 2000 characters for the summary of your proposal) You can change it in a later stage.

Click here to continue.

Scientific Panel



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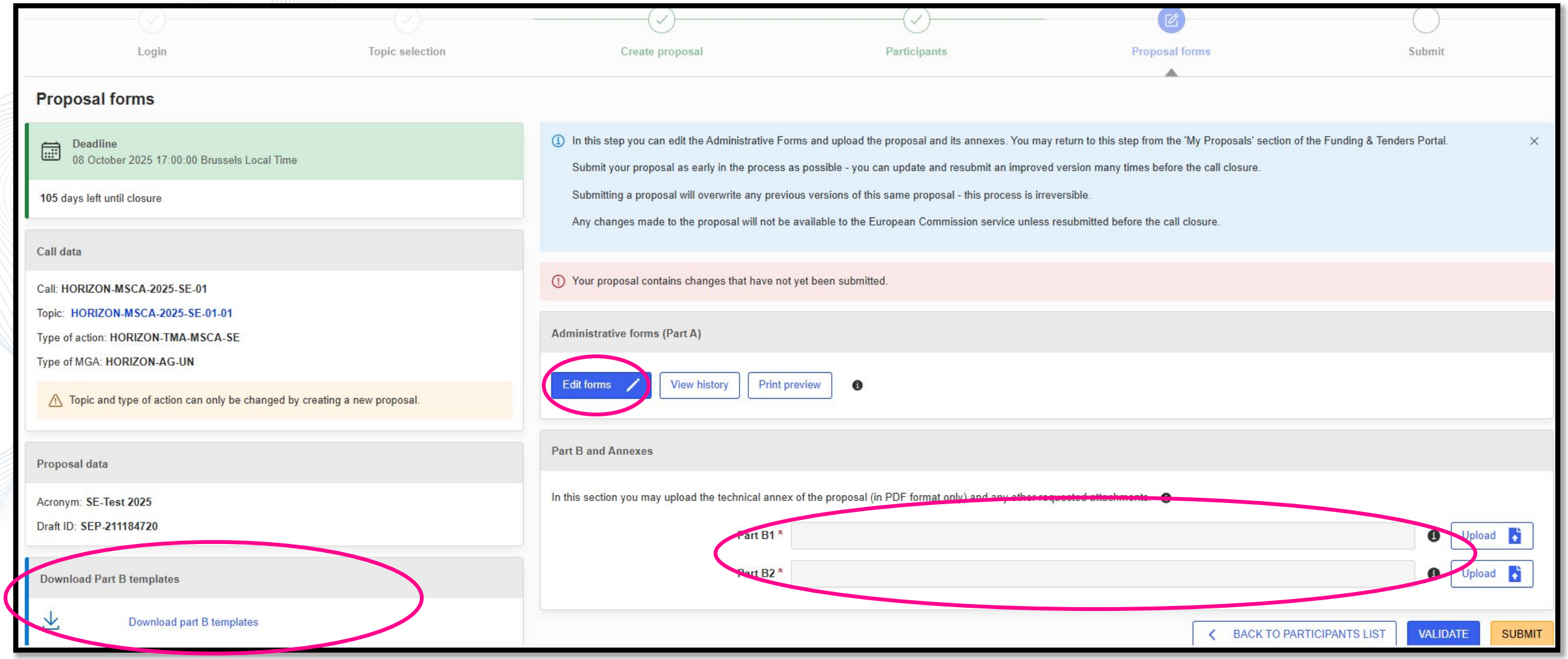
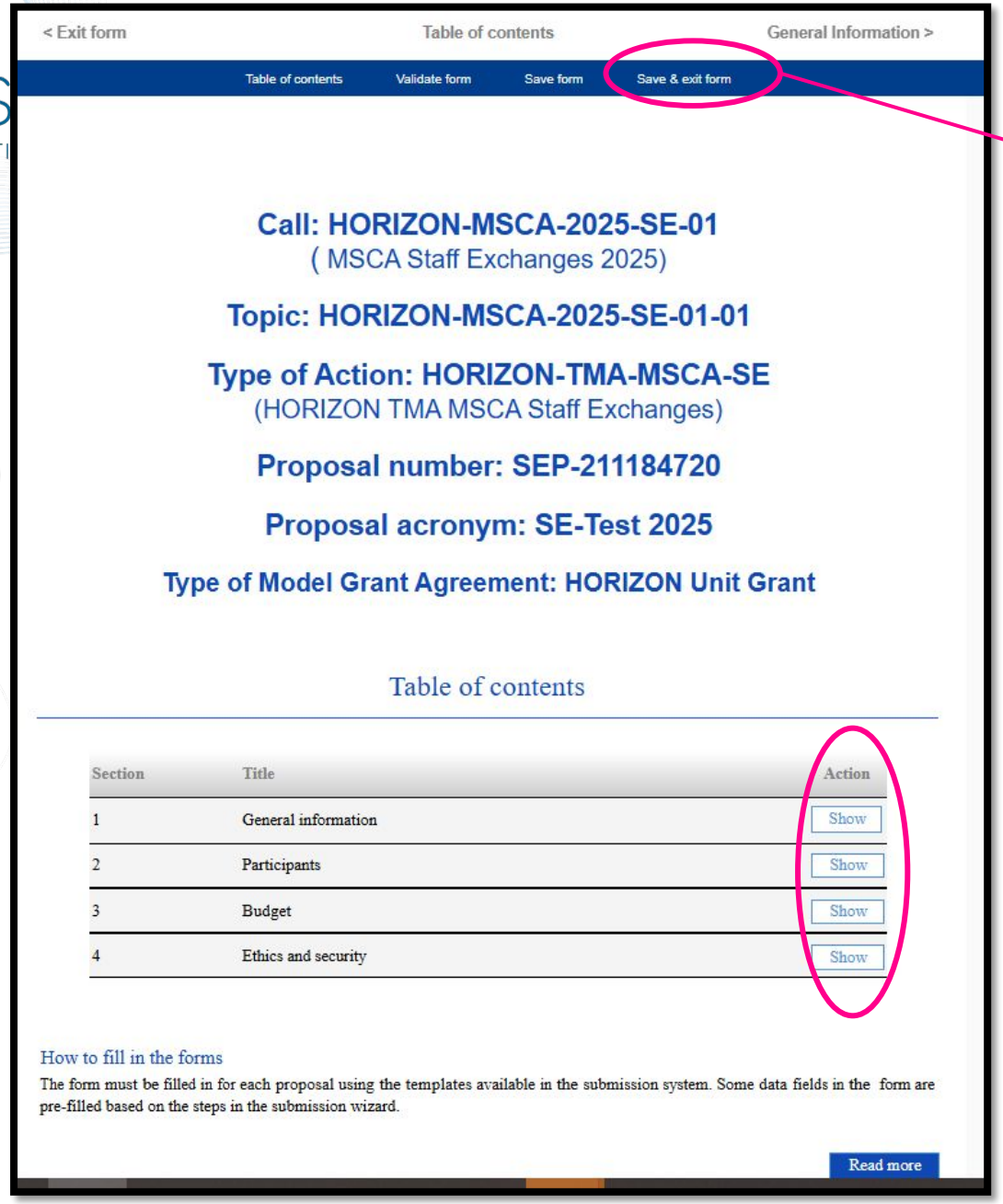


European Commission
EURAXESS is a European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation initiative



You can save the information you enter in the form. You don't need to complete everything as soon as you open the participant portal — you have time until the deadline. (Please follow the instructions in the guide you opened on the previous page.)

30 pages to convince Europe your Project is the best!

Template available at the Funding and Tenders Portal

Part A – Administrative documentation
To be completed online in the Funding and Tenders Portal

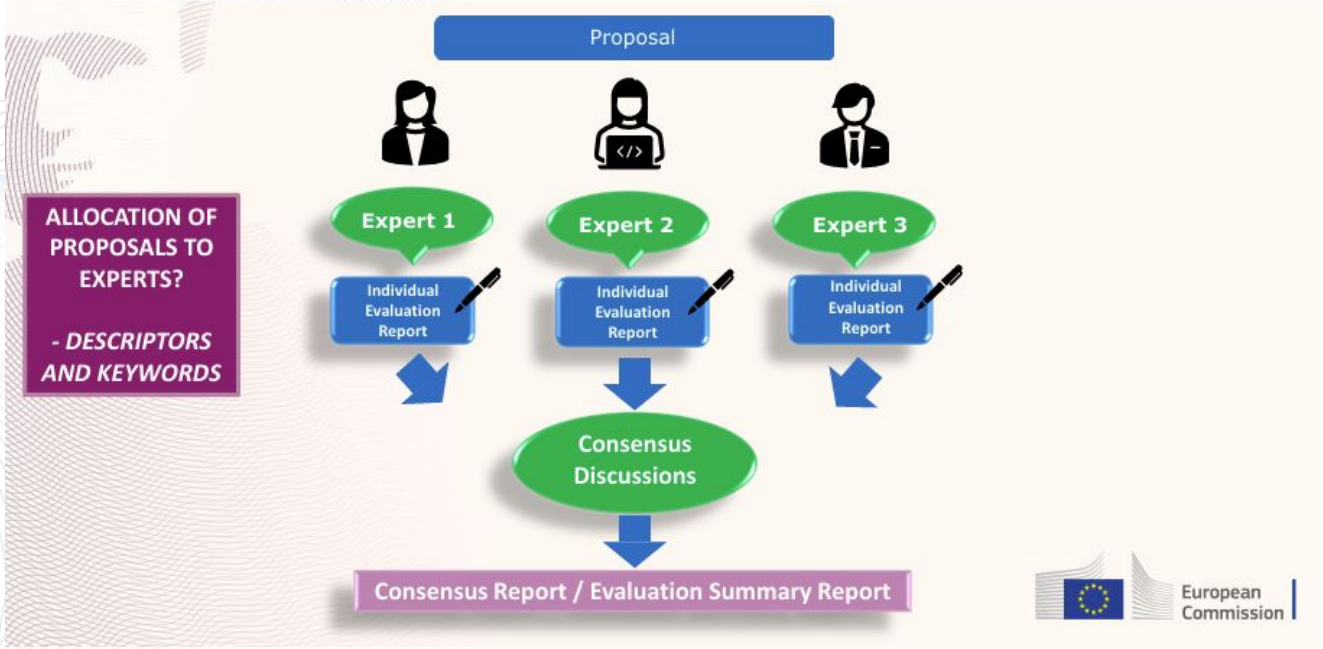
Part B1 – technical proposal: 30 pages (PDF in english)
Excellence
Impact
Implementation

Part B2 - PDF, no page limits
Participating Organisations
Explanation of the use of generative AI in the preparation of the proposal (when applicable)
Environmental aspects – MSCA Green Charter

Understanding the evaluation process

How are projects evaluated?

How are projects evaluated?



EXCELLENCE	IMPACT	IMPLEMENTATION
?/5.00	?/5.00	?/5.00
50%	30%	20%

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Scoring:

Scoring must be in the range from 0-5. Half-marks may be given.

- **0** — The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
- **1** — Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- **2** — Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
- **3** — Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
- **4** — Very Good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
- **5** — Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Thresholds & weighting:

The threshold for the individual criteria is 3. The overall threshold, applying to the sum of the 3 individual scores, is 10 points.

Weighting is only for the ranking (not to determine if the proposal passed the thresholds).

⚠ Specific calls or topics may have different rules regarding threshols and weighting.

Specific cases:

Two-stage calls

For stage 1 proposals, only the criteria Excellence and Impact will be evaluated and within those criteria only the aspects indicated in bold in General Annex of the Main Work Programme. The threshold for each of the two individual criteria is 4.

After the evaluation, the call coordinator will then fix an overall threshold, to limit the proposals that will be invited to stage 2. (This overall threshold will be set at a level which ensures that the total requested budget of proposals admitted to stage 2 is as close as possible to three times the available budget, and in any case, not less than 2.5 the available budget. The actual level will therefore depend on the volume of proposals received. The threshold is expected to normally be around 8 or 8.5.)

Where to find partners and how to create a successful consortium

How we feel at the beginning...

What we need to achieve...

MSCA consortia: important aspects

- ✔Solid management structure, mechanisms that allow researchers to concentrate on that
- ✔Previous skills and experience
- ✔Adequate infrastructure and resources
- ✔Excellent and interested researchers
- ✔Contributing to “triple I” dimension
- ✔Gender balance
- ✔Synergies and complementary between members
- ✔Previous collaborations are well seen
- ✔Commitment and trust are essential

Ask yourself:

- Are the partners eligible?
- Are roles and responsibilities clear?
- Are all target audiences covered?

How to find partners for MSCA projects?

NETWORKING EVENTS (CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, ETC.)

FORMER OR CURRENT COLLABORATIONS

JOINT PROJECTS

FUNDING AND TENDER PORTAL

MSCA MATCHMAKING PLATFORM

EUROPEAN ENTERPRISE NETWORK

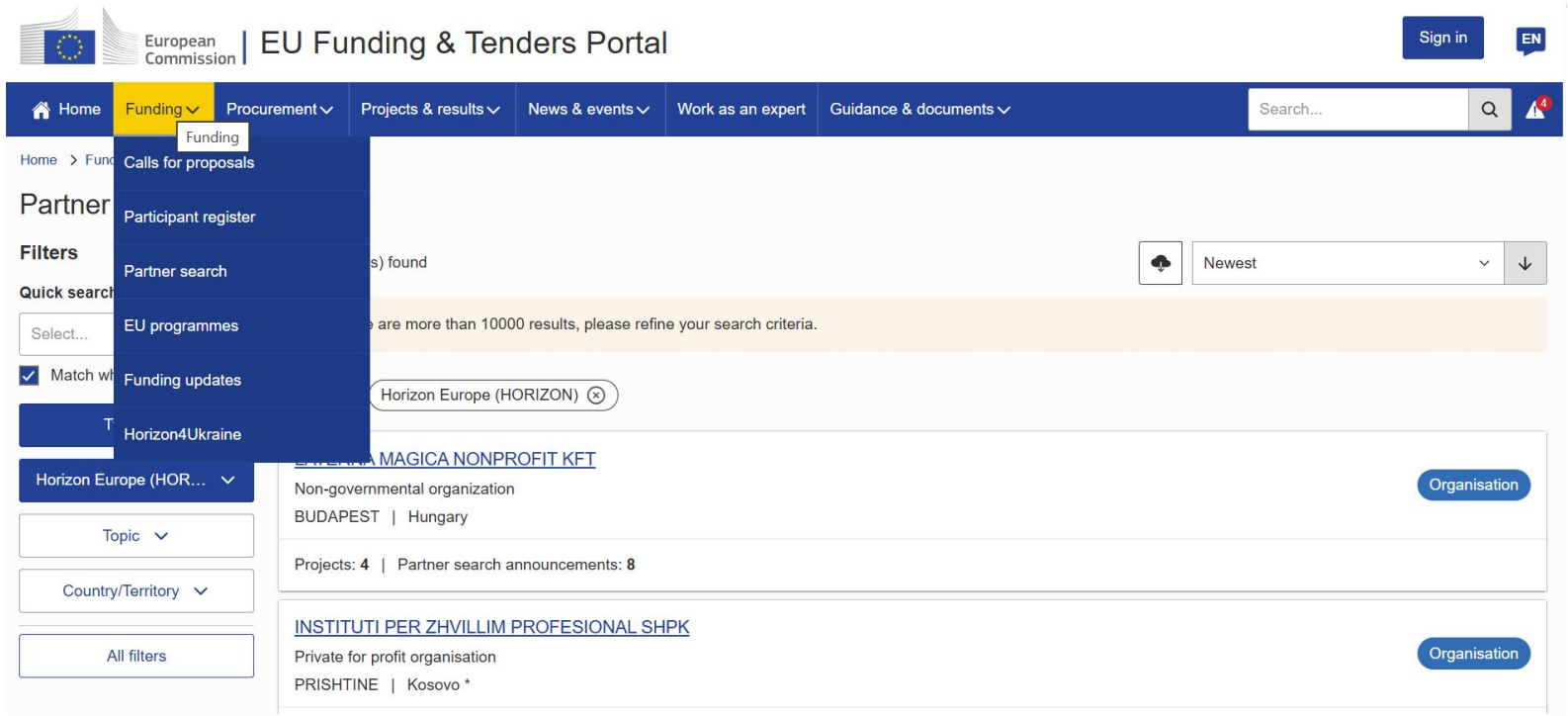
NATIONAL CONTACT POINT

European Commission
EURAXESS is a European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation initiative

Partner search

[Funding and Tenders Portal]

- ✔ In the official Call documentation
- ✔ You can see the institution profile, their collaborations….
- ✔ You can publish your own expression of interest



Partner search

RADIANCE matchmaking platform

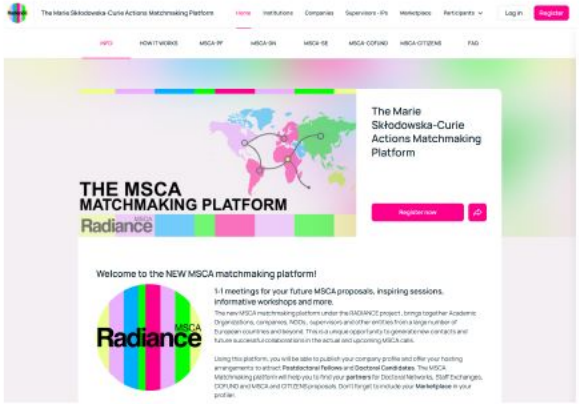
https://www.b2match.com/e/radiance-msca

- The **NEW MSCA matchmaking platform** brings together companies, supervisors, Academic Institutions and any other entity from a large number of European countries and beyond.
- This is a unique opportunity to **generate new contacts and future successful projects** in the upcoming MSCA calls 2025, 2026 and 2027
- Using this platform, you will be able to publish your **supervisor profile** looking for fellows, your company profile and **offer your hosting arrangements, placements** to attract talent or participate in Doctoral Networks, Staff Exchanges, COFUND and NIGHT Proposals.

If you are an **Academic Institution**, you can advert your expertise, your needs and your project ideas.

Build your new consortium for your new MSCA project!

The Platform includes MSCA NCPs, MCAA and Euraxess Worldwide Members.

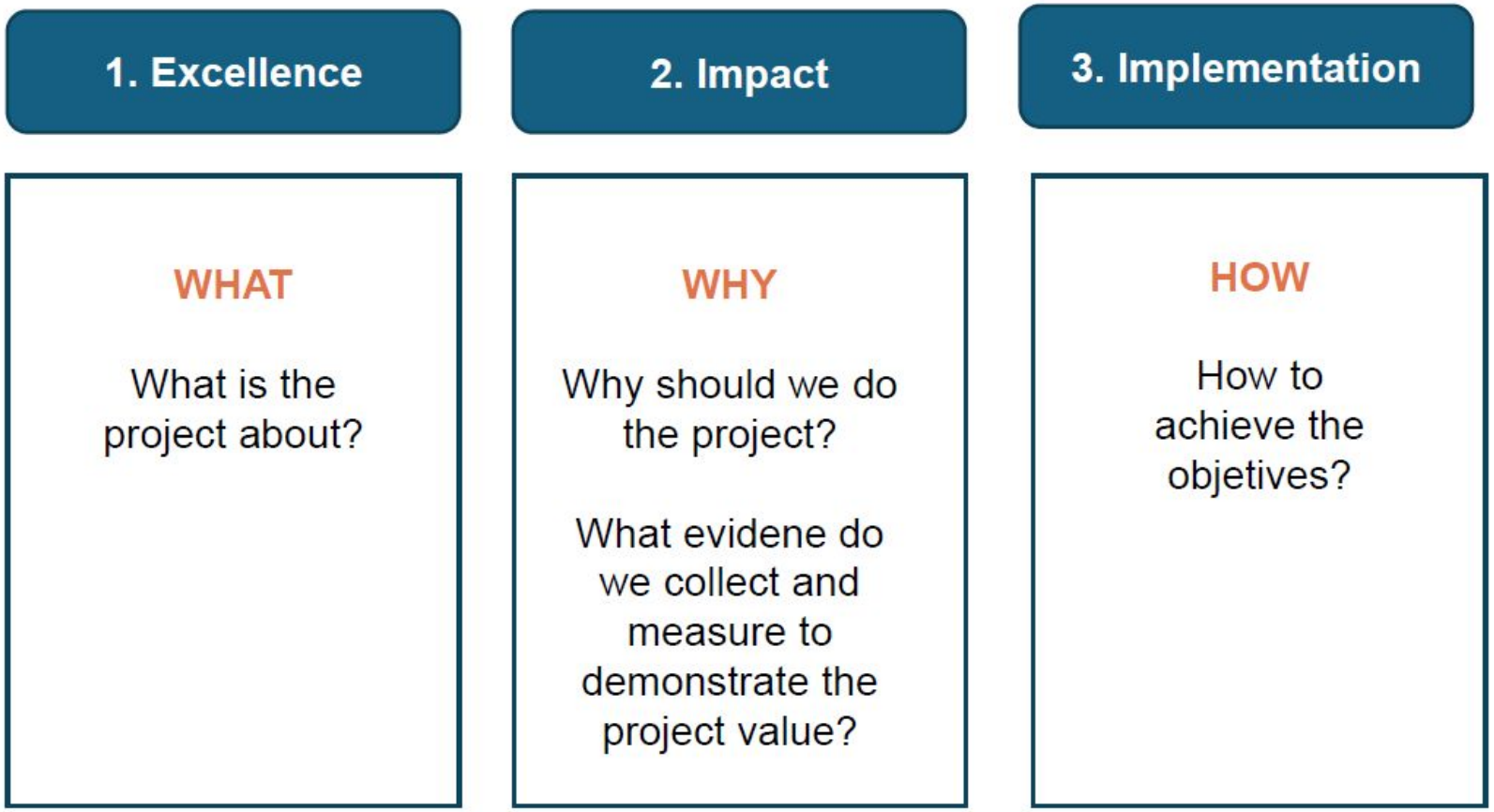


How we feel at the beginning...

What we need to achieve...

Meeting the Evaluation criteria

Award Criteria – Part B



euraxess
RESEARCHERS IN MOTION

WHAT DOES

EXCELLENCE

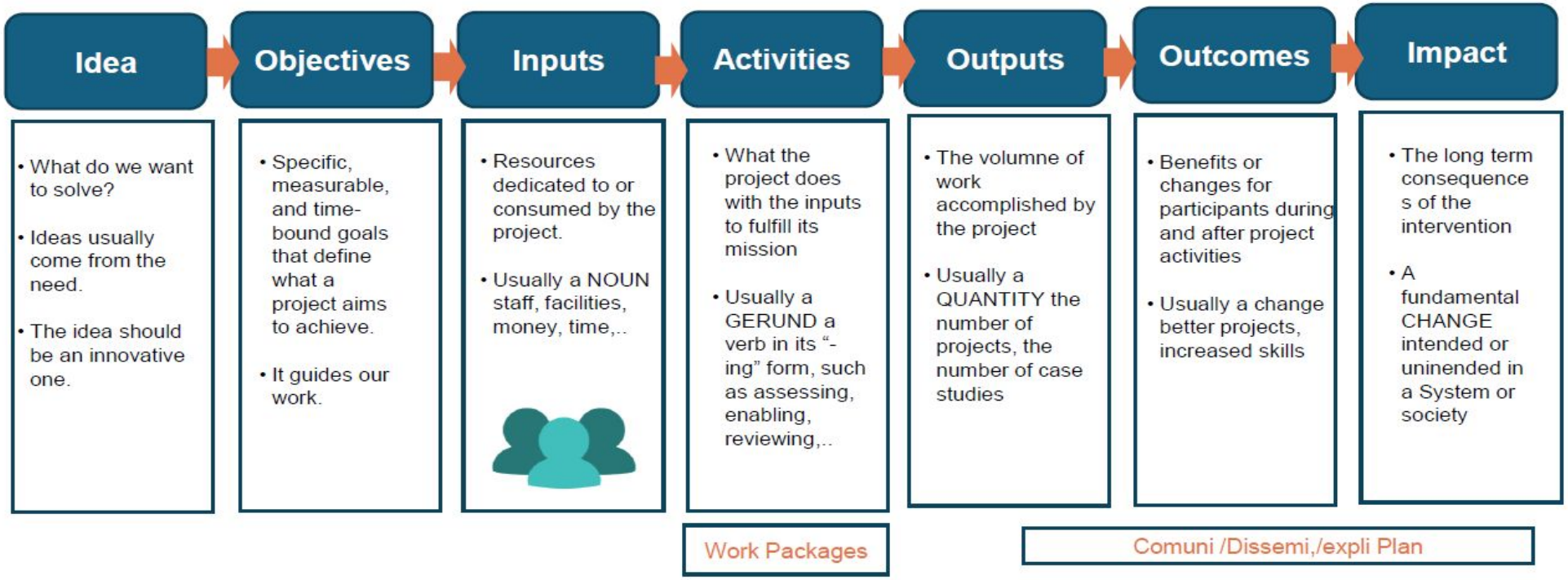
IMPACT

IMPLEMENTATION

MEAN FOR YOU

APPLYING FOR A PROJECT MEANS….

Application form:



EVALUATION CRITERIA
(SE 2025)

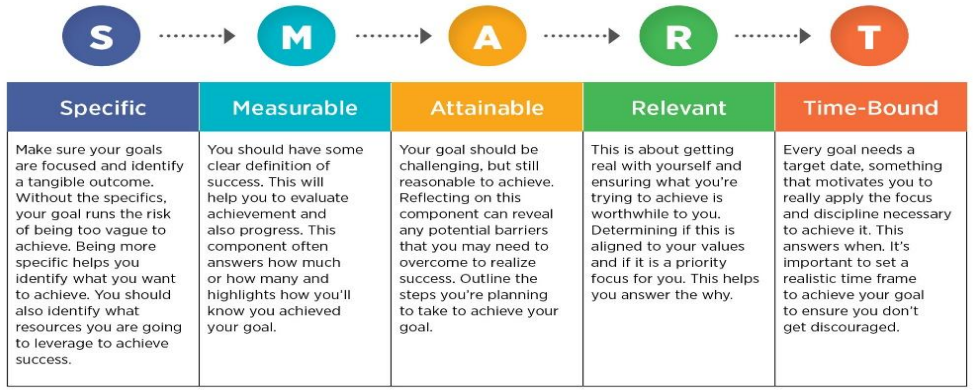
Excellence	Impact	Quality and efficiency of the implementation
Quality and pertinence of **the project's research and innovation objectives** (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art)	**Developing new and lasting collaborations, achieving transfer of knowledge between participating organisations** and contribution to improving research and innovation potential at the European and global level	Quality and effectiveness **of the work plan**, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages
	Credibility of the measures to enhance the **career perspectives of staff members** and contribution to their skills development	
Soundness of the proposed methodology (including International, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant for the research project, and the quality of open science practices)	Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise **expected outcomes and impacts**, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities	**Quality, capacity and role of each participant,** including hosting arrangements and extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise
Quality of the **proposed interaction between the participating organisations** in light of the	The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the **expected scientific, societal and economic impacts**	

KEY ASPECTS OF THE EXCELLENCE SECTION

- **Innovative Project with the best consortium**
- **Excellent methodology**
- **Exchanges between participating institutions are of added value and well conceived**

- **Always start with an executive summary: who, how, what, when**
  - Relevance and timely research: European Policies, SDG, Global Challenges
  - Research objectives: clear and well focuses (SMART)
  - Unique consortium with a triple “I” dimension

- **Innovation and originality:**
  - Novelty in comparison with the State of the Art (up-to-date bibliography, previous work together…) : What is the challenge in the scientific field, what are the needs?
  - Avoid overambitious work



KEY ASPECTS OF THE EXCELLENCE SECTION

- Innovative Project with the best consortium
- Excellent methodology
- **Exchanges between participating institutions are of added value and well conceived**

Integration of methods and disciplines

Gender Dimension

Open Science

KEY ASPECTS OF THE EXCELLENCE SECTION

- Innovative Project with the best consortium
- Excellent methodology
- **Exchanges between participating institutions are of added value and well conceived**

- The **contributions of the participants** to the **planned activities** (e.g., process design and optimisation, data analysis, modelling) should be substantiated in **relation to the expertise** of the consortia.

- The **main networking activities** must be justified, you may include annual consortium meetings, workshops, training schools, and industry focus events, this will help to **support collaboration** and **knowledge exchange**

KEY ASPECTS OF THE IMPACT SECTION

How do you foster sustainable partnerships with a medium- to long-term focus?

What do the projects mean not only for the organisations but also for the research staff?

How are the results maximised? How are they disseminated? How are they communicated? To what audiences?

How are impacts measured? In which areas?

European Commission
EURAXESS is a European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation initiative

DIFFERENCE IN TERMS: COMMUNICATE, DISSEMINATE, EXPLOIT

Communication:
Promote your action and results

Inform, promote and communicate your activities and results

Reaching multiple audiences
Citizens, the media, stakeholders

How?
- Having a well-designed strategy
- Conveying clear messages
- Using the right media channels

When?
From the start of the action until the end

Why?
- Engage with stakeholders
- Attract the best experts to your team
- Generate market demand
- Raise awareness of how public money is spent
- Show the success of European collaboration

Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement

Dissemination:
Make your results public

Open Science: knowledge and results (free of charge) for others to use

Only to scientists?
Not only but also to others that can learn from the results: authorities, industry, policymakers, sectors of interest, civil society

How?
Publishing your results on:
- Scientific magazines
- Scientific and/or targeted conferences
- Databases

When?
At any time, and as soon as the action has results

Why?
- Maximise results' impact
- Allow other researchers to go a step forward
- Contribute to the advancement of the state of the art
- Make scientific results a common good

Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement

Exploitation:
Make concrete use of results

Commercial, Societal, Political Purposes

Only by researchers?
Not only, but also:
- Industry including SMEs
- Those that can make good use of them: authorities, industrial authorities, policymakers, sectors of interest, civil society

How?
- Creating roadmaps, prototypes, softwares
- Sharing knowledge, skills, data

When?
Towards the end and beyond, as soon as the action has exploitable results

Why?
- Lead to new legislation or recommendations
- For the benefit of innovation, the economy and the society
- Help to tackle a problem and respond to an existing demand

Legal obligation of your Grant Agreement

IMPACTS OF YOUR MSCA PROJECT

- Differentiate between the types of impacts associated with the project.
- Impacts will take place once the Project is over.
- Alignment with major global initiatives (Missions, SDGs ...etc.)

Scientific impact

- Contribute to the advancement of the state of the art
- Generate new knowledge
- advancing experimental and numerical methods

Economic and technological impact

- Create new services, products to market
- Reduce costs, increase efficiency in processes
- Technological advances in the proposal field, which will facilitate the design of new equipment for scientific research.

Social impact

- Improve public policies and decisions based on results.
- Raise public awareness on specific issues
- Reduction of avoidable mortality (traffic accidents, child births...)

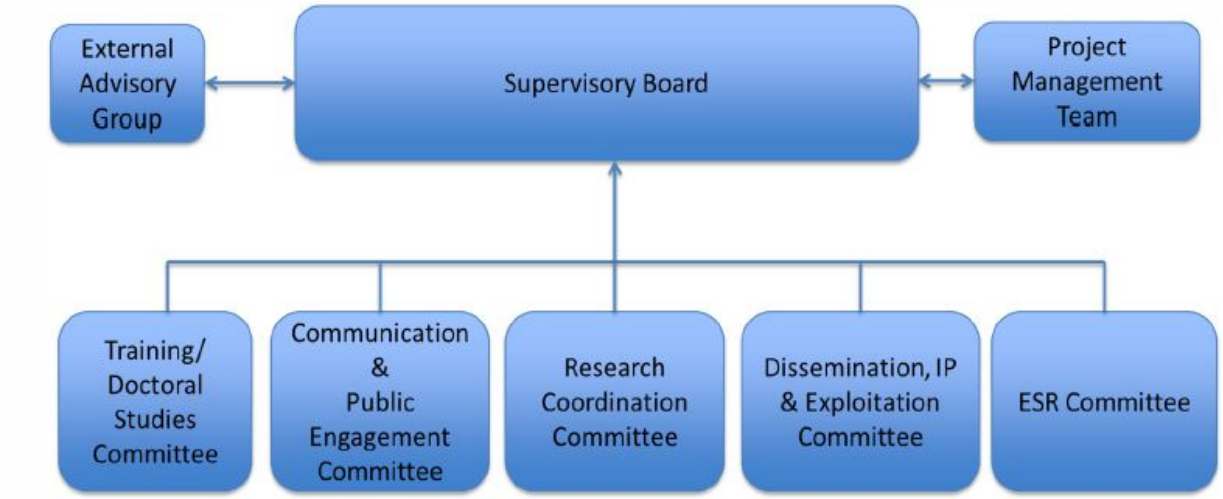
KEY ASPECTS OF THE IMPLEMENATION SECTION

What work plan is established?

What control and management mechanisms will be put in place?

How are risks counteracted?

IMPLEMENTATION: YOU NEED TO HAVE A MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE IN PLACE AND YOU HAVE THE RIGHT CONSORTIUM



example

Customize to your needs and project

FINAL TIPS

- **Follow the rules!**
- **All criteria are relevant**
- **Highlight the EU dimension**
- **Allow enough time for proposal preparation**
- **Sustainability of collaboration**
- **Contact your National Contact Point**

Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less

THANK YOU!

Cristina Gómez
EURAXESS Worldwide Coordinator
cristina.gomez-corchete@euraxess.net

European Commission
EURAXESS is a European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation initiative