

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) available online

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this task is to collect questions and answers from different sources. After a quality check the questions are published both on the virtual helpdesk platform, for NCPs, and on the RICH public website (www.rich2020.eu), for all stakeholders. This provides all NCPS with an efficient and shared tool to support their clients in a timely and competent manner.

Following the Information Day on the Research Infrastructures Work Programme 2016-2017, organised in October 2015 in Brussels, the new FAQ were put online in December 2015. As of today there are 43 questions about the new RI Work Programme and 7 about the WP 2014-2015. New questions will be added on an ongoing basis.



2. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this task is to collect questions and answers from different sources, mainly via the Virtual Helpdesk (VHD), during triplings, trainings, conferences and information days. After a quality check the questions and answers are published both on the VHD platform, so that NCPs can see if their question has been answered already, and on the RICH public website (www.rich2020.eu), so that all interested stakeholders have access to them directly. This will enable the whole RI-NCP network to have an efficient and shared tool to support their clients in a timely and competent manner.

During the first 12 months of the project, the FAQ from the WP 2014-2015, generated in the EurorisNet+ project, were transferred to the RICH website and published in a first step. In December 2015 new FAQ were put online following the Information Day organised on 28 October 2015 in Brussels for the Research Infrastructures Work Programme 2016-2017. Details about these questions are given below.



3. DETAILS ABOUT FAQ

The questions prepared by the NCPs for the RI-NCP meeting on 27 October and those asked by the audience during the Information Day on 28 October 2015 in Brussels were gathered, compiled and sent to the EC for completion and review. The consolidated answers are now available as FAQ on the RICH website (<http://www.rich2020.eu/faq>) and therefore publicly available for all stakeholders.

This is the first batch of questions concerning the new WP 2016-2017. The FAQ were clustered into 6 groups:

- General: concerning all calls
- INFRADEV
- INFRAIA
- EINFRA
- INFRAINNOV
- WP 2014-2015.

There are no specific questions concerning INFRASUPP so far. A new group will be created on the website when required.

There are 50 different questions in total on the website, listed in the different groups above (43 for the WP 2016/17 and 7 for the WP 2014/15). Please be aware that the same question can appear in several groups, therefore being repeated. A free search text box enables to search according to key words (Fig. 1a, Fig. 1b).

Via the virtual helpdesk, more questions will be transformed into FAQs and published on the website. During the course of the project, questions arising out of trainings and conferences will also be gathered, and published after a quality check by the designed team of experienced NCPs.



FAQs

These FAQ aim to clarify the scope of the calls, topics and areas within topics. Opinion on the precise content of a draft proposal cannot be provided by the Commission services. In general, the potential applicants are encouraged to liaise with their national contact points (NCPs) – see the [NCP list on the participant portal](#).

Please refer also to the general [FAQ on Horizon 2020 on the participant portal](#).

There are several questions related to the focus of a topic (or an area within topic INFRAIA-1-2014/2015); there is in general no definitive answer to such a question, although as much guidance is given here as possible. Too broad a proposal might not be convincing in delivering concrete outcomes while too focused an approach might not be convincing on the impact on the European Research Area (ERA). Once there is a draft concept for a proposal, it is recommended to self-assess it versus 1/ specific challenge, 2/ scope and 3/ expected impact which are described for each topic of the work programme (WP). In particular the section on impact may tend to be neglected when preparing a proposal, but each section accounts for one-third of the score.

SEARCH

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Ask your National Contact Point



Figure 1a. Screenshot of the FAQ page of the RICH website.

European research infrastructures (65)

+ General Questions

+ Which Calls are open to ESFRI project only?

- Can the methodology for costing of large research infrastructure (Art. 6.2.D.4 of the model grant agreement) be used within proposals under this part of the Work Programme?

As specified in the model grant agreement, this option is not applicable for any topics within calls under Part 'Research Infrastructure', except for e-Infrastructure topics. See page 22 of the December 2013 [model grant agreement](#).

+ The Integrating Activities call addresses two classes of different communities, 'Advanced and Starting Communities'. For the latter, the topic description states that "The strongest impact for these communities will be expected typically to arise from a focus on networking, standardisation and establishing a common access procedure, which lay the foundation for well-used trans-national and virtual access provision." Does a Starting Community need to provide access, describe the peer review procedures to select trans-national access users, etc.?

+ How do access costs have to be entered in the Part A budget table?

+ The Integrating Activities call addresses two classes of different communities, 'Advanced and Starting Communities'. For the latter, the topic description states that "The strongest impact for these communities will be expected typically to arise from a focus on networking, standardisation and establishing a common access procedure, which lay the foundation for well-used trans-national and virtual access provision." Does a Starting Community need to provide access, describe the peer review procedures to select trans-national access users, etc.?

+ Which rules apply to depreciation of durable equipment and capital investment?

Figure 1b. Screenshot of the first questions in the general section. The answers are displayed by clicking on the + sign.



4. CONCLUSIONS

The FAQ are a very useful tool, both internally for RI-NCPs and externally for all stakeholders. They will be updated regularly according to questions arising from further trainings and events. It is therefore an ongoing process.

Could you please add an Annex containing all FAQ collected in 2015?

Annex1: Questions to the EC compiled by the RICH project

1. ALL CALLS

CAN PARTNERS FROM COUNTRIES OUTSIDE THE EU PARTICIPATE TO THE PROJECTS AND RECEIVE EC FUNDING?

Please refer to the Guide on Funding of applicants from non-EU countries & international organisations[1]. Regarding the association status of Switzerland, please see the Note on Swiss participation in Horizon 2020[2].

TAGS: RI WP 2016-2017; third countries; non-EU countries

2. ALL CALLS

CAN THE METHODOLOGY FOR COSTING OF LARGE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE (ART. 6.2.D.4 OF THE MODEL GRANT AGREEMENT) BE USED WITHIN PROPOSALS UNDER THIS PART OF THE WORK PROGRAMME?

As specified in the model grant agreement, this option is not applicable for any topics within calls under Part 'Research Infrastructure', except for e-Infrastructure topics. See page 25 of the model grant agreement³. However, the 2016-2017 Work Programme has explicitly excluded the use of this methodology for some e-infrastructure topics too

TAGS: RI WP 2016-2017, Eligible costs; infrastructures; Large Research Infrastructures,

3. ALL CALLS

WHICH CALLS ARE OPEN TO ESFRI PROJECT ONLY?

Only one topic, INFRADEV-2-2016, is restricted to projects in the ESFRI roadmap. Another topic of the same call, INFRADEV-3-2016-2017 is open only to ESFRI projects and other world class research infrastructure with in Europe, with established legal structure and international governance.

TAGS: RI WP 2016-2017, ESFRI, INFRADEV-2-2016; INFRADEV-3-2016-2017; Research infrastructures

4. ALL CALLS

IS THE EXCHANGE OF STAFF BETWEEN RIS ADDRESSED BY THE 'RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES' SECTION OF THE HORIZON 2020 WORK PROGRAMME 2016-2017?

The exchange of personnel between research infrastructures is explicitly mentioned as a possible activity under the calls INFRAIA and EINFRA, as well as for one of the areas under topic INFRASUPP-1-2016.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-3cpart_en.pdf

² http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-hi-swiss-part_en.pdf

³ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/mga/gga/h2020-mga-gga-multi_en.pdf

Complementary to the Research Infrastructures actions, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie action such as the “Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE)” might be considered. Under RISE, the organisations constituting the partnership contribute directly to the implementation of the joint research and innovation activities by seconding and/or hosting eligible staff members. Staff members in RISE are researchers (early-stage researchers and experienced researchers), administrative, managerial and technical staff supporting the research and innovation activities of the project. Only inter-sectorial or international mobility is supported.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; INFRASUPP-01-2016; INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES.

5. ALL CALLS

WHICH RULES APPLY TO DEPRECIATION OF DURABLE EQUIPMENT AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT?

PLEASE REFER TO THE ANNOTATED MODEL GRANT AGREEMENT [4] AND IN PARTICULAR TO ARTICLE 6.2 AND RELATED ANNOTATIONS. THERE IS HOWEVER AN EXCEPTION TO OPTION D.2 OF ARTICLE 6.2 ON DEPRECIATION COSTS OF EQUIPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE OR OTHER ASSETS: “FOR TRANS-NATIONAL AND VIRTUAL ACCESS TO RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE: AS AN EXCEPTION, THE BENEFICIARIES MUST NOT DECLARE SUCH COSTS (I.E. COSTS OF RENTING, LEASING, PURCHASING DEPRECIABLE EQUIPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER ASSETS) FOR PROVIDING TRANS-NATIONAL OR VIRTUAL ACCESS TO RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE (SEE ARTICLE 16)”. THE NON-ELIGIBILITY, WITHIN TRANS-NATIONAL AND VIRTUAL ACCESS PROVISION ACTIVITIES, OF CAPITAL INVESTMENT, DEPRECIATION AND SIMILAR COSTS APPLIES TO TOPIC INFRADEV-3-2016-2017, TO ALL THE TOPICS UNDER INFRAIA CALL AS WELL AS TO THE TOPICS OF EINFRA CALL AND THE GEANT SGA WHICH FALL UNDER THEME 1.

TAGS: RI WP 2016-2017 DURABLE EQUIPMENT, DEPRECIATION, INFRADEV-3-2016-2017; INFRAIA-1-2016-2017; INFRAIA-2-2017;

6. ALL CALLS

THERE ARE MANAGEMENT COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH OF THE WORK PACKAGES THAT ARE INCURRED NOT ONLY BY THE COORDINATOR, BUT ALSO BY VARIOUS OTHER PARTNERS. DO ALL THESE MANAGEMENT COSTS HAVE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE MANAGEMENT WORK PACKAGE?

THE MANAGEMENT WORK PACKAGE SHOULD INCLUDE ONLY THE OVERALL PROJECT MANAGEMENT TASKS, INCLUDING RELATIONS WITH AND REPORTING TO THE EC. THE INTERNAL MANAGEMENT OF EACH INDIVIDUAL WORK PACKAGE (INCLUDING THE REPORTING TO THE COORDINATOR) IS DONE, AND THEREFORE CHARGED, WITHIN THE WORK PACKAGE ITSELF.

TAGS: RI WP 2016-2017, Management costs

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf

7. INFRADEV-04-2016: EUROPEAN OPEN SCIENCE CLOUD FOR RESEARCH
WHY IS THIS NOT AN EINFRA-CALL?

The need for a cloud-like infrastructure for research emerged from the Science 2.0 consultation. This need will be addressed by the E-INFRA call too (see topic INFRA-12-2017), however the topic included in the RTD part aims to foster the involvement of the scientific communities and to ensure that their specific needs are properly addressed.

TAGs: INFRADEV-04-2016; Open science cloud

8. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES
HOW TO DETERMINE WHETHER A CONSORTIUM IS A STARTING COMMUNITY OR AN ADVANCED ONE?

According to the Definition: "A starting Community has never been supported for the Integration of its infrastructures under FP7, H2020...". There is no other definition or measure. The external experts, before evaluating a proposal, will assess whether the content of a proposal "corresponds, wholly or in part, to the topic/contest description for which it is submitted". They will be provided with the list of all the communities supported in the past through an Integrating Activity⁵ grant. A proposal involving exactly the same type(s) of infrastructures (e.g. marine biological stations or particle accelerators or RIs for art restoration) already supported under an FP7 or Horizon 2020 Integrating Activity would not be eligible. In other cases, for example a combination of starting and advanced Communities applying for the integration of their infrastructures, the proposal could be eligible. In any cases applicants are reminded that the experts will assess, among others, pertinence of objectives, soundness of the concept, the extent to which the proposed work is beyond the state of the art (Award criteria "Excellence"), as well as the extent to which the outputs of the project would contribute to each of the expected impacts mentioned in the work programme under the this topic (Award criteria "Impact").

TAGs: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; Integrating activities; starting communities; advanced communities.

9. INFRAIA-02-2017 INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES

THE INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES CALL ADDRESSES TWO CLASSES OF DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES, 'ADVANCED AND STARTING COMMUNITIES'. FOR THE LATTER, THE TOPIC DESCRIPTION STATES THAT "THE STRONGEST IMPACT FOR THESE COMMUNITIES WILL BE EXPECTED TYPICALLY TO ARISE FROM A FOCUS ON NETWORKING, STANDARDISATION AND ESTABLISHING A COMMON ACCESS PROCEDURE, WHICH LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR WELL-USED TRANS-NATIONAL AND VIRTUAL ACCESS PROVISION." DOES A STARTING COMMUNITY NEED TO PROVIDE ACCESS, DESCRIBE THE PEER REVIEW PROCEDURES TO SELECT TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS USERS, ETC.?

⁵ See the funded projects on the Research Infrastructures web site
http://ec.europa.eu/research/infrastructures/index_en.cfm?pg=projects

Indeed, every proposal for an Integrating Activity MUST include Trans-national and/or Virtual Access activities along with Networking and Joint research activities. This is stated in the 'Scope' section of the topic description ("*All three categories of activities are mandatory as synergistic effects are expected from these different components.*") and in the box stating the eligibility conditions ("*Given the specific nature of this topic, specific eligibility conditions, in addition to the standard eligibility conditions for Research and Innovation Action, apply: all the three types of activities: networking, access and joint research activities shall be included in the proposal*"). Therefore also Starting Communities need to include Access activities. A proposal without any Access activities would be ineligible and therefore would not be evaluated.

A proposal needs to describe the peer review procedure, even in general terms, and, if necessary, can use a Networking Activity Work Package to develop and refine it, as well as the access procedure in general, to adapt to the needs of users (see the description of Networking Activities on p. 71 of the Work Programme, which includes "joint management of access provision").

TAGS: INFRAIA-02-2017, Integrating Activities; starting Communities; Networking; Transnational access;

10. **INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES**

THE CALL ADDRESSES "ADVANCED COMMUNITIES' WHOSE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES SHOW AN ADVANCED DEGREE OF COORDINATION AND NETWORKING AT PRESENT, ATTAINED, IN PARTICULAR, THROUGH INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES AWARDED UNDER PREVIOUS FRAMEWORK PROGRAMMES. THE STRONGEST IMPACT FOR THESE COMMUNITIES WILL BE EXPECTED TYPICALLY TO ARISE FROM FOCUSING ON INNOVATION ASPECTS AND ON WIDENING TRANS-NATIONAL AND VIRTUAL ACCESS PROVISION." DOES THIS MEAN THAT IT IS ASSUMED THAT NETWORKING ACTIVITIES ARE CONSIDERED TO HAVE ALREADY EXHAUSTED THEIR ROLE IN THE PREVIOUS IA AND THAT THE STRONGEST IMPACT IS INDEED EXPECTED FROM INNOVATION ACTIONS, READ JOINT RESEARCH ACTIVITIES?

"Innovation aspects" do not automatically equate to "innovation actions" or "Joint Research Activities". For further guidance, please consider in detail the statements on innovation in text of the Call, in particular:

1. The "scope" section of the IA call on p. 16: "*Integrating Activities in particular should contribute to fostering the potential for innovation, including social innovation, of research infrastructures by reinforcing the partnership with industry, through e.g. transfer of knowledge and other dissemination activities, activities to promote the use of research infrastructures by industrial researchers, involvement of industrial associations in consortia or in advisory bodies.*"
2. The "expected impact" section on p. 22: "*Innovation is fostered through a reinforced partnership of research organisations with industry.*"

"Industry" can be interpreted as all industry including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It is up to the proposers to determine which kind of activity within a project and consortium would be best suited to make such a contribution and to



achieve the desired impact, including on innovation aspects. It should be kept in mind also that Integrating Activities need to include all three kinds of activities: Joint Research, Networking, Trans-national/Virtual Access.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; Advanced Communities; innovation; industry; SMEs;

11. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES:

HOW AND UP TO WHICH LEVEL SHOULD THE REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURES BE INVOLVED IN THE INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES ?

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES ADDRESSED BY THIS CALL MUST BE OF EUROPEAN INTEREST. THE CALL AIMS TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC CHALLENGE: “EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS NEED EFFECTIVE AND CONVENIENT ACCESS TO THE BEST RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES IN ORDER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY. THE AIM OF THIS ACTION IS TO BRING TOGETHER, INTEGRATE ON EUROPEAN SCALE, AND OPEN UP KEY NATIONAL AND REGIONAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES TO ALL EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS, FROM BOTH ACADEMIA AND INDUSTRY, ENSURING THEIR OPTIMAL USE AND JOINT DEVELOPMENT.”

Furthermore “As the scope of an integrating activity is to ensure coordination and integration between all the key European infrastructures in a given field and to avoid duplication of effort, at most one proposal per area is expected to be funded.”

In this context, experts will be asked in particular to assess and compare between proposals the expected impact as described in the WP for the INFRAIA topic.

Integrating activities are open to regional infrastructures of European interest if they are relevant for the scope of the proposal. The structuring impact on the European Research Area (ERA) remains essential, therefore the European scale is essential.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017, Regional research infrastructures.

12. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES:

HOW DO ACCESS COSTS HAVE TO BE ENTERED IN THE PART A BUDGET TABLE?

Depending on how trans-national/virtual access costs are calculated, they are entered as follows:

1. *Access costs on the basis of unit cost* need to be entered in column (G) ‘Special unit costs covering direct and indirect costs’.

2. *Access costs on the basis of actual costs* need to be entered (excluding the 25% flat-rate indirect cost / overhead) in the appropriate columns:

a. Cost of human effort / direct personnel costs in column (A)

b. Consumables and other direct costs in column (B)

c. Subcontracting costs, if any, in column (C), etc.

The 25% flat-rate indirect cost is added automatically in column (F).

3. *Access costs on the basis of a combination of the two above* need to be split into the unit cost and actual cost parts, and these entered as specified above.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017, Access Costs; Unit Costs; actual Costs

13. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES:
 UNDER INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES, WHAT DOES IT MEAN VIRTUAL ACCESS?

For the definition of the two access categories, please refer to the section “Specific features for research infrastructures, C. Integrating Activities, (ii) Trans-national and/or virtual access activities” on pp. 72-73 of the Work Programme 2016-2017. Virtual Access means *“access to resources needed for research through communication networks without selecting or even identifying the researchers to whom access to resources is provided. Examples of virtual access activities are databases available via Internet, or data deposition services. Only virtual services widely used by the community of European researchers will be supported, therefore the services offered under a project shall be periodically assessed by an external board”*. As these services are already freely available, there is no need for a competitive selection of users and therefore no need to set up a selection panel. There is no need to identify users either. However, user identification may still be necessary as part of virtual access when this is subject to specific requirements such as registration, authentication and/or authorisation of users (e.g. for access to sensitive data). Clearly there is no need for users to visit the infrastructure to get access and no need to define a unit of access. The access provider will still need to publicise widely the access offered and set up an external board to periodically assess the services offered, as only virtual services widely used by the community of European researchers will be supported. The service assessment report must be provided to the EC together with statistics on the access offered during the project, e.g. quantity, geographical distribution of users and, when possible, information/statistics on scientific outcomes acknowledging the use of the infrastructure (publications, patents, etc.).

14. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES:
 UNDER INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS AND WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REMOTE TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS AND VIRTUAL ACCESS?

Trans-national Access means *“To provide 'free of charge' trans-national access to researchers or research teams including from industry to one or more infrastructures among those operated by participants. These access activities should be implemented in a coordinated way such as to improve the overall services available to the research community. Access may be made available to external users, either in person ('hands-on') or through the provision of remote scientific services, such as the provision of reference materials or samples, the performance of sample analysis or sample deposition. ... The selection of researchers or research teams shall be carried out through an independent peer-review evaluation of their research projects.”*

Note therefore that access provided through communication networks is not automatically virtual access: if such access requires a competitive selection of the users to be served, it is not “virtual access” but “remote trans-national access”. An example of this would be access to a high-performance computer, where the computing cycles are not unlimited and you need to allocate them competitively. Other

cases could include services that need project-specific preparatory work (e.g. anonymisation) to enable access to resources via internet. Remote trans-national access requires the definition of a unit of access, the set-up of a selection panel for the selection of users and all the other obligations specified in the Grant Agreement for trans-national access.

**15. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES:
WHICH RULES APPLY FOR CLAIMING ACCESS COSTS FOR TRANSNATIONAL AND
VIRTUAL ACCESS?**

The funding rules are laid down in Article 16 of the Model Grant Agreement [6]. Additional information is contained in the Annotated Model Grant Agreement [7]. For trans-national access there have been important changes to the funding rules compared to FP7: *“Access costs can be supported through the reimbursement of the eligible costs specifically incurred for providing access to the research teams selected for support under the project, or on the basis of unit costs calculated according to the methodology indicated in the Commission Decision C(2013)8199. In the latter case the access costs will be calculated multiplying the unit cost by the quantity of access provided under the grant. The cost of the unit of access to the infrastructure, the unit cost, shall then be indicated in the proposal. A combination of the two methods mentioned above will also be possible.”* (footnote 36 on p. 73 of the Work Programme 2016-2017). The Commission Decision on the use of Unit costs [8] for trans-national access is available on the Participant Portal.

Note also that *“a unit of access to the infrastructure shall be identified and precisely defined in the Grant Agreement”* to satisfy the reporting requirements (p. 73 of the Work Programme 2016-2017) even if trans-national access costs are to be reimbursed exclusively as direct costs.

Virtual access costs to be claimed are the actual costs specifically incurred for the provision of virtual access to resources. They must not be covered by other EU funds.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017, trans-national access, virtual access

**16. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES
WHICH RULES FOR INDIRECT COSTS APPLY TO TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE IN
TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS?**

The rules on indirect costs have changed significantly compared to FP7. The Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation (RfP) [9] stipulate in Article 29.1: *“Indirect eligible costs shall be determined by applying a flat rate of 25 % of the total direct eligible costs, excluding direct eligible costs for subcontracting and the costs of resources made*

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/mga/gga/h2020-mga-gga-multi_en.pdf

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/legal/unit_costs/unit-costs_tna-infra_extr_en.pdf

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/legal_basis/rules_participation/h2020-rules-participation_en.pdf

available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the beneficiary, as well as financial support to third parties." Note that the Unit costs for trans-national access costs already include indirect cost.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017, indirect costs

17. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES:

CAN THE SAME ORGANISATION SUBMIT PROPOSALS AT THE SAME TIME UNDER THE SAME CALL TOPIC, OR UNDER ONE MORE THAN ONE AREA AND/OR DOMAIN LISTED IN THE CALL INFRAIA-01-2016/2017; AND HENCE BE PART OF TWO DIFFERENT CONSORTIA EITHER WITHIN THE SAME CALL TOPIC, OR (IN THE CASE OF INFRAIA-02-2016/2017) WITHIN ONE OR SEVERAL AREAS? IN CASE OF RESTRICTIONS, DO THEY APPLY AT ENTITY OR DEPARTMENT LEVEL?

Yes. The same organisation can participate in more than one proposal under the same call topic; there is no restriction on eligibility. Obviously, participants involved in several proposals under the same topic, or the same area, will be competing against themselves.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017, integrating activities; consortium

18. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES:

THE WP SAYS ON P.14-15 AND 23: "AN INTEGRATING ACTIVITY WILL MOBILISE A COMPREHENSIVE CONSORTIUM OF SEVERAL KEY RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES IN A GIVEN FIELD AS WELL AS OTHER STAKEHOLDERS [...] AND OTHER THIRD COUNTRIES WHEN APPROPRIATE, IN PARTICULAR WHEN THEY OFFER COMPLEMENTARY OR MORE ADVANCED SERVICES THAN THOSE AVAILABLE IN EUROPE." DOES IT MEAN THAT EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS WILL BE ALLOWED THROUGH THE TRANSNATIONAL ACCESS TO VISIT NON-EUROPEAN RIS "WHEN THEY OFFER MORE ADVANCED SERVICES"?

European researchers are allowed to access any infrastructure offered for trans-national access by the project, including when the access providers are from third countries. However, the action is targeting research infrastructures of European interest, therefore trans-national access is not expected to be offered to third country infrastructures offering the same services as those already available in the EU and the Associated Countries.

TAGs: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; Integrating activities; Research infrastructure; third countries; transnational access

19. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 & INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES:

THE WP SAYS ON P.16 AND 24: "INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES ARE EXPECTED TO DULY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ALL RELEVANT ESFRI AND OTHER WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES TO EXPLOIT SYNERGIES..." WHAT DOES IT PRACTICALLY MEAN "TAKE INTO ACCOUNT"? AS A PARTNER? OTHER CONNECTIONS?

INFRAIA topics are explicitly targeting key national and regional research infrastructures of European interest. However, as the development of pan-European

ESFRI projects often implies the setting of common standards, common ICT solutions etc., the Integrating Activities should when appropriate make use of these results, exploit synergies and ensure interoperability. Depending on what is most suitable to achieve the project goals, this could be achieved either by involving the relevant ESFRI projects in the Consortium or by appropriate networking activities.

TAGs: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; Integrating activities; ESFRI

20. INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES FOR STARTING COMMUNITIES:

THE WP DEFINES FOLLOWING REQUIREMENT FOR STARTING COMMUNITIES:

"INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES FOR STARTING COMMUNITIES RANGE ACROSS ALL AREAS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. PROPOSALS SHOULD NOT RESTRICT THEIR SERVICES TO TOO NARROW RESEARCH FIELDS AND SHOULD ADDRESS THE WIDER SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITIES, EVEN MULTIDISCIPLINARY ONES, WHICH CAN BE SERVED BY THE INVOLVED SETS OF RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES." THIS IS DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT THAN IN THE CASE OF ADVANCED COMMUNITIES WHICH SHOULD OPERATE "IN A GIVEN FIELD". THE QUESTION IS HOW STRICTLY THIS REQUIREMENT WILL BE TAKEN DURING THE EVALUATION.

Both topics refer exactly with the same wording to "a given field". It is not expected that one community is more or less multidisciplinary. However, starting communities do not have the same experience of the integrating activity instrument and, based on past FP7 and Horizon 2020 calls as well as the prior consultation for possible topics in 2012-2013, it was felt useful to highlight this point further for starting communities. In particular it is not expected to receive several proposals from a similar group of infrastructures just targeting different very restricted research fields.

TAGs: INFRAIA-02-2017; Starting Communities; Integrating activities

21. INFRAIA-02-2017: Integrating Activities for Starting Communities:

The WP states on page 15: "An Integrating Activity will mobilise a comprehensive consortium of several key research infrastructures ... from different Member States, Associated Countries and other third countries" and later on the same page "Access should be provided only to key research infrastructures of European interest, i.e., those infrastructures able to attract significant numbers of users from countries other than the country where they are located." The latter Statement seems to be contradictory to the first one.

They are not contradictory sentences as the latter refers only to the research infrastructures involved in a proposal as access providers. Indeed Research infrastructures can be involved in an integrating activity in different ways: as external partners invited/associated to some of the networking activities, as beneficiaries contributing to (tasks within) work packages and as beneficiaries offering access (access providers). With regards to the two last categories, experience shows that the involvement of all RI beneficiaries in trans-national access activities is not necessary nor beneficial, and an optimised implementation and impact will be achieved by an appropriate selection of the most attractive and complementary RIs.

TAGS: INFRAIA-02-2017, Starting Communities; research infrastructures;

22. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017: Integrating Activities for Advanced Communities:

Do all proposals for Advanced Integrating Activities exclusively have to be based on previously funded Activities? The definition seems to strongly point in this direction, but does not explicitly say so: „...an advanced degree of coordination and networking at present, attained, in particular, through Integrating Activities awarded under FP7 or previous Horizon 2020 calls.“ We would be grateful for a clarifying statement by the COM.

The areas do not refer to specific past Integrating Activities and therefore leave fully open which consortium and RIs can apply to the topic. Depending on the level of integration achieved by past initiatives and projects, and the extent to which these were actually involving the key European infrastructures, the consortium might, or might partially, or, very rarely, might not be based on former consortia. However in all cases the proposal should demonstrate that the work proposed is beyond the state-of-the-art, that it takes into account the outcome of all relevant projects and initiatives and, when appropriate, builds on their results. In addition as the scope of an IA is to integrate the RI services at EU level, we do not expect competing proposals within the same area. Therefore all the relevant RIs in the field should make an effort to integrate under the same proposal.

TAGs: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; Integrating activities; Advanced Communities

23. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES.

Virtual Access activities: How the services offered will be evaluated by the external board?

According to the H2020 General model grant agreement ¹⁰ *"The virtual access services must be assessed periodically by a board composed of international experts in the field, at least half of whom must be independent from the beneficiaries"* (art. 16.2 Rules for providing virtual access to research infrastructure) and *"The reports must detail the access activity, with statistics on the virtual access provided in the period, including quantity, geographical distribution of users and, whenever possible, information/statistics on scientific outcomes (publications, patents, etc.) acknowledging the use of the infrastructure."* (art. 20.3 Periodic reports — Requests for interim payments).

The assessment should take into account the level of use of the infrastructure with respect to the size of the targeted user community as well as the appreciation of users. To help the external board, the project will provide appropriate data (e.g. number of downloaded data sets, number of users downloading data or visiting the web site, country of origin etc.). It might also plan user questionnaires for direct feedback on the services.

¹⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/mga/gga/h2020-mga-gga-multi_en.pdf



TAGs: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; Integrating activities; virtual access;

24. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017 Integrating activities.

Eligibility criteria for Advances Communities: a consortium is not obliged to have the same beneficiaries of previous FP7 or H2020 grants to apply as an advanced community as long as the consortium is able to demonstrate the necessary level of coordination and networking. Are there any technical or formal restrictions as from which prior sources of funding an existing consortium (or parts of it) have been employed before?

The text defines advances communities as communities *“whose research infrastructures show an advanced degree of coordination and networking at present, attained, in particular, through Integrating Activities awarded under FP7 or previous Horizon 2020 calls”* while starting communities as communities *“never been supported for the integration of its infrastructures under FP7 or Horizon 2020 calls, in particular within an integrating activity”*

Therefore an advanced community is a community that has in the past been supported for the integration of its research infrastructures, not just for the networking and integration of this specific community. This type of action, i.e. integration/coordination/networking of research infrastructures has been mainly funded under the Research Infrastructures action of the various FP, therefore our multi annual plan, identifying the communities to be invited under each call, is based on the communities funded in the past under our actions (clearly excluding the ones which are already integrated under a pan-European legal form such as the ESFRI research infrastructures). If however a community can demonstrate that it has been specifically supported for the integration of its research infrastructures under another FP or even EU action and has attained through this funding an advanced level of coordination of its RI, it could apply to one of the invited advanced community areas. However, as the main objective of an integrating activity is the integration of a specific research infrastructure service at EU level, we do not expect competing proposals for the same area. Therefore, all the relevant infrastructures in that area should make an effort to integrate under a same proposal, taking into account that there is always a reference community for each of the invited areas. Please note also that only key research infrastructures, for that area should be involved as access providers in a proposal, not all the national and regional infrastructures of the community.

TAGs: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017, Advanced communities; eligibility criteria

25. EINFRA-21-2017: PLATFORM-DRIVEN E-INFRASTRUCTURE INNOVATION:

IN ORDER FOR NCPS TO BE PREPARED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON RELATIVELY NEW FUNDING INSTRUMENTS, WE WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION ON INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS PUBLIC PROCUREMENT OF INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS. TO WHAT EXTEND DOES THE COMMISSION EXPECT RI NCP FAMILIARITY WITH THESE TOOLS? IN CASE WE SHOULD ADVISE CLIENTS IN DEPTH, WE WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE MATERIAL.

Two informative links on procurement instruments are included for your convenience:
For PPIs:

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/public-procurement-innovative-solutions>

Some FAQs (mixed between PCP and PPIs, very extensive...)

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/news/frequently-asked-questions-about-pcp-and-ppi>

The PPI mentioned in EINFRA-21-2017 is for public procurers in the area of HPC (which is already an extremely reduced circle of entities) they should be aware of this instrument so we do not expect that you will be overloaded with questions.

26. INFRAINNOV-02-2016: SUPPORT TO TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURES:

ARE THERE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE DEFINITION AND SCOPE OF "TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURES"?

Large-scale platforms combining R&D (Research and Development) focussed on technological needs of Research Infrastructures, integration and validation can be viewed as Technological Infrastructures. They provide longer-term visibility and involvement of industry in scientific and technological advancements. Technological Infrastructures permit the creation of a more efficient integrated ecosystem between academic laboratories working with Research Infrastructures, large companies as well as SMEs, motivated by the innovative environment and the market opportunities created by the Research Infrastructure needs.

TAGs: INFRAINNOV-02-2016; Technological Infrastructures Scientific platforms

27. INFRAINNOV-01-2017: FOSTERING CO-INNOVATION FOR FUTURE DETECTION AND IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES.

WHICH TYPES OF ACTORS AND COMMUNITIES THIS INITIATIVE STRIVES TO ADDRESS?

This initiative addresses research infrastructures which, for the supply of advanced solutions for their construction and upgrade, engage both their research communities in Europe and the industry (including SMEs).

This action allows for the provision of financial support to third parties in line with the conditions set out in Part K of the General Annexes. The financial support to third parties is the primary aim of the action.

TAGs: INFRAINNOV-01-2017; industry; Research Infrastructures; third parties,

28. INFRADEV-03-2016-2017: INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT TO ESFRI AND OTHER WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

In the Section "Specific features for Research infrastructure, B. Individual support to ESFRI and other world-class research infrastructures", the conditions related to combined support with ESIF are described. Where can information relevant to ESIF be found?

Please refer to the guide "Enabling synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes"¹¹ for generic information.

- a. The S3 Platform - Eye@RIS3 - assists EU countries and regions to develop, implement and review their Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3). The Eye@RIS3 is an interactive online tool and database, intended to help strategy development rather than a source of statistical data¹²
- b. As Member States are responsible for managing programmes that are supported by Cohesion Policy, it is advised to contact the relevant managing authority¹³.

TAGs: INFRADEV-03-2016-2017: ESFRI; ESIF; Cohesion policy; Structural funds; S3 Platform; Smart specialization

29. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017.

Can researchers from SMEs be supported for their TNA?

Researchers working for SMEs can apply for access as any other researcher. If successful they can be supported by the EU in their access to research infrastructures even if they are not allowed to disseminate the results of the research carried out on the infrastructure. In addition, as indicated in the work programme, each integrating activity proposal is invited to reinforce partnership with industry, including SMEs, by for example, outreach and dissemination activities, transfer of knowledge and activities to foster the use of research infrastructures by industrial researchers.

TAGs: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017; Integrating activities; SMEs; transnational access; TNA

30. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES.

Is the virtual access to e-infrastructures free of charge? Who manages the access to them?

In principle virtual access is free of charge. Each grant is responsible for the management of the access provision.

TAGs: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017;

¹¹ http://ec.europa.eu/research/regions/pdf/publications/h2020_synergies_201406.pdf

¹² <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/eye-ris3>

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/managing-authorities/

31. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES.

How is the funding of the data management plan evaluated?

The development of a data management plan is part of the GA and, like for any other action under a grant, the budget must be justified by the foreseen activities.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; DMP; data management plan;

32. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES.

What about the long-term curation of the data?

A grant can only support the costs for long-term curation of data that are incurred during the grant lifecycle. Therefore there are no specific funds allocated for this activity outside the grants.

The Commission is investigating the development of cloud solution funded at EU-level for storing research data.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017; long-term curation of data;

33. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES.

Have all integrating activity areas and all the other topics in the 2014 and 2015 calls been funded?

It was not possible to fund a project for each Integrating activity area. On the other hand, for some of the other topics and areas no proposals were of sufficient maturity to be retained.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017;

34. INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES.

Will both steps of the evaluation process of 2-stage proposals be evaluated by external experts?

Yes, first stage by 3 experts per proposal and second stage (full proposal) by 5 experts. Evaluators will not be necessarily the same in the two stages however evaluators in stage 2 will have full access to stage 1 results.

TAGS: INFRAIA-02-2017; 2-stage submission; experts; evaluation

35. ALL CALLS.

What are the timelines after submission of proposals?

The time for notification and signature of the GA is 8 months from call deadline (not 5 + 3 anymore)

36. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. EINFRA-2016-2017

What is the difference between INFRAIA and EINFRA-2016-2017 calls?

EINFRA focuses on ICT-based infrastructures. Integrating activities are focussing on bringing together existing infrastructures and offering integrated services. Of course even integrating activities include ICT activities as the management of data and ICT systems are growing components in each research infrastructure.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. EINFRA-2016-2017

37. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017.

How can virtual access provided by countries not receiving EU funding be reimbursed?

For virtual access the eligibility for funding of third country beneficiaries follows the general rules, i.e. for beneficiaries from countries not automatically eligible for EU support funding will be provided if the participation is deemed essential for carrying out the action.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017; VIRTUAL ACCESS; THIRD COUNTRIES.

38. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017.

Is there a limitation in the number of user groups from third countries allowed to get transnational access?

The limitation is on the amount of access provided not on the number of user groups. Max. 20% of the access can be provided to user teams with a majority of users working in third countries.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: Integrating activities. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017;

39. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017.

What is the definition of "free of charge"?

It means free of charge for the users. The infrastructure costs occurred for the provision of access to the users is reimbursed by the EC.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: Integrating activities. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017; free of charge; costs

40. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017.

Can you restrict the access to facilities?

Yes. Further selection conditions can be added in the Grant. However, restrictions have to be justified by the consortium and approved by the EC.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017; ACCESS;

41. INFRADEV-03-2016.

In case there are “observer countries” that are non-formally part of an ERIC, but are providing in kind contribution to it, can these countries join the Consortium that is willing to apply?

Yes. The proposal consortium doesn't have to match the membership of the ERIC. The proposals should include all and only the participants needed to carry out the foreseen activities and to achieve its objectives, in particular the long term sustainability of the RI.

TAGS: INFRADEV-03-2016; ERIC; observer countries;

42. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017.

Open data: Is it possible that the “opting out” applies only to one WP (e.g. the one dealing with SMEs)?

The Model Grant Agreement indicates that, as an exception, the beneficiaries do not have to ensure open access to specific parts of their research data if the achievement of the action's main objective, as described in Annex I, would be jeopardised by making those specific parts of the research data openly accessible. In this case, the data management plan must contain the reasons for not giving access.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: Integrating activities. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017; open data; data management plan; DMP

43. INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017.

Access Costs: is it possible to move from Unit Costs to Actual Costs if the UC during the proposal phase was calculated without any concrete evidence as the facility was still under construction?

Yes. This must be done during the Grant Agreement Preparation with the EC.

TAGS: INFRAIA-01-2016-2017; INFRAIA-02-2017: INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES. INFRADEV3-03-2016-2017; UNIT COSTS; ACCESS COSTS