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ANNEX – PART 2/2

**ANNEX**

*to the*

**COMMISSION DECISION**

**on the financing of the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) for the year 2026 and on the approval of the annual work programme for 2026**

## ANNEX



# ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2026

For the Partnership for Research and  
Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)

*DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL  
amending Decision (EU) 2017/1324 as regards the continuation of the Union's  
participation in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area  
(PRIMA) under Horizon Europe*

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## Table of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full name
AC	Associated Country
AGA	Annotated Grant Agreement
AWP	Annual Work Programme
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBE	Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking
CSA	Coordination and Support Action
DG	Directorate-General
DMP	Data Management Plan
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Environment Agency
EIP	European Innovation Partnership
EIT	European Institute of Innovation and Technology
ERIC	European Research Infrastructure Consortium
ESFRI	European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures
ESR	Evaluation Summary Report
ESS	Electronic Submission System
EU	European Union
FAIR	Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GWP	Global Water Partnership
H2020	Horizon 2020
HE	Horizon Europe
HRB	Horizon Results Booster
IA	Innovation Action
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
JPI	Joint Programming Initiative
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LCA	Life Cycle Assessment
MAA	Multi-Actor Approach
MED	Mediterranean
MedECC	Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MGA	Model Grant Agreement
MS	Member State
NCP	National Contact Point
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe
NFA	National Funding Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OJ	Official Journal of the European Union
PDO / PGI	Protected Designation of Origin / Protected Geographical Indication
PIC	Participant Identification Code
PRIMA	Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area
PRIMA-IS	PRIMA Implementation Structure
PS	Participating State
PSC	PRIMA Steering Committee

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Full name</b>
PSIAs	Participating States' Initiated Activities
R&I	Research and Innovation
RDM	Research Data Management
RfP	Rules for Participation
RIA	Research and Innovation Action
RoC	Rules of Contest
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFS-MED	Sustainable Food Systems Mediterranean Platform
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
SRIA	Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda
SSH	Social Sciences and Humanities
TC	Third Country
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNEP-MAP	United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan

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## Introduction

### **PRIMA: A Strategic EU Institutionalised Partnership for the Mediterranean**

The [Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area \(PRIMA\)](#), is an EU Institutionalised Partnership established under [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#), as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#), and executed pursuant to [Article 185 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union \(TFEU\)](#).

Its mission is to address the region’s shared and systemic transboundary challenges by fostering sustainable water resource management and enhancing the resilience, sustainability, and competitiveness of Mediterranean agri-food systems. Given the Mediterranean’s deep ecological interdependencies, accelerating climate variability, and diverse socio-economic contexts, these challenges cannot be effectively tackled by individual countries acting alone. They require coordinated, long-term, and cross-border approaches that mobilise scientific excellence, and multi-stakeholder cooperation across the region. PRIMA provides the framework for Participating States to pool expertise and resources to co-develop innovative, practice-oriented solutions that strengthen sustainability and resilience across the Mediterranean.

PRIMA is co-funded by the European Union and Participating States. The indicative total budget of PRIMA is EUR 709 million for the period 2018–2031. The EU contribution is set out as “up to EUR 325 million”, comprising EUR 220 million from Horizon 2020 and EUR 105 million from Horizon Europe. Participating States match this EU contribution with an indicative co-funding commitment of at least EUR 384 million.

Participating States include both EU Member States and third countries participating in PRIMA in accordance with [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#), as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#). Participation of third countries in PRIMA-funded activities takes place either:

- as Associated Countries to Horizon Europe, or
- on the basis of relevant international agreements with the European Union.

Applicants shall consult the PRIMA website (<https://prima-med.org/>) for updated information on eligibility for Union funding.

At the time of adoption of this Annual Work Programme (AWP)<sup>1</sup>, the Participating States in PRIMA, as defined in Decision (EU) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision (EU) 2024/1167, are: Algeria\*, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malta, Morocco\*, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, and Türkiye<sup>2</sup>.

For the purposes of this AWP, the following PRIMA Participating States that are Third Countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea are referred to as Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPCs),

<sup>1</sup> The composition of the PRIMA Participating States may evolve during the implementation of the Annual Work Programme. Additional countries may join PRIMA as Participating States in accordance with Articles 6 and 7 of Decision (EU) 2024/1167, provided that they commit a national financial contribution to PRIMA and conclude the necessary administrative arrangements. Applicants are therefore advised to regularly consult the PRIMA website ([https://prima-med.org](https://prima-med.org/)) for up-to-date information on the status of Participating States and their eligibility for funding.

<sup>2</sup> Countries indicated with the asterisk (\*) are subject to the entry into force of the relevant international agreement with the European Union. Legal entities established in these countries may participate in proposals but may count towards the minimum consortium eligibility conditions and sign the Grant Agreement as beneficiaries only if the international agreement has entered into force at the time of Grant Agreement signature. Until that moment, they shall not be considered PRIMA Participating States for eligibility purposes. Applicants are encouraged to consult the PRIMA website for the most up-to-date information on country eligibility and participation status at the time of proposal submission.

without prejudice to their legal status under Decision (EU) 2017/1324, as amended. These MPCs are Algeria<sup>3</sup>, Egypt<sup>4</sup>, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco<sup>5</sup>, Tunisia, and Türkiye.

The Partnership is implemented through its dedicated Implementation Structure, the [PRIMA Foundation](#), (PRIMA-IS), based in Barcelona, which is responsible for managing the operational aspects of the EU contribution, in accordance with Article 62(1)(c)(vi) of the [Financial Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2024/2509](#), and for coordinating the execution of the Annual Work Programme. Funding provided by the Participating States is managed directly by their respective national funding agencies, in line with applicable national financial regulations. This implementation model combines centralised coordination of the EU contribution with decentralised administration of national contributions, ensuring a coherent and jointly agreed programme of work.

The first Interim Evaluation of PRIMA, carried out by the European Commission in 2023, assessed the programme’s implementation and confirmed the relevance of its mission, thereby supporting the continuation of the initiative. A second Interim Evaluation is currently underway to evaluate PRIMA’s performance during the transition from Horizon 2020 to Horizon Europe, in accordance with [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#).

### **Thematic focus of PRIMA**

The PRIMA Partnership is implemented in accordance with the [PRIMA’s Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda \(SRIA\)](#), which defines its thematic priorities and operational modalities. Its thematic focus centres on sustainable water management, farming systems and agri-food value chain. These thematic areas are addressed through the Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus, an integrated framework that recognises the interdependencies across resource systems, including linkages between freshwater, coastal, and, where relevant, marine environments. This approach ensures that solutions are technically sound, context-specific, and adapted to the region’s diverse agro-climatic and socio-economic conditions.

The SRIA is translated annually into Work Programmes and corresponding calls for proposals. The AWP 2026 is the second one financed under Horizon Europe following the adoption of [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#), which extends PRIMA’s implementation period to 2027<sup>6</sup>, and aligns its programming with Horizon Europe. Projects funded under PRIMA may involve research organisations, enterprises, public authorities, and other stakeholders, in line with the requirements set out in each AWP. Between 2018 and 2024, PRIMA supported around 300 projects, involving 1,269 unique beneficiary organisations, and mobilised over EUR 630 million in research and innovation funding.

### **PRIMA objectives and link with the SRIA**

#### **General Objective**

PRIMA is implemented under the framework of [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#), and notably in line with the programmes’ objectives set out in its Article 3, and pursues the [General Objective](#) set out in [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#), as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#). Stating:

*“1. PRIMA shall contribute to the general and specific objectives of Regulation (EU) 2021/695, and in particular Article 3 thereof, and shall deliver on the general objectives of*

<sup>3</sup> Status of Algeria regarding eligibility for participation in PRIMA: Negotiations with the European Union are ongoing. Any possible participation of Algeria as a PRIMA Participating State for the purposes of this Work Programme remains subject to the conclusion and entry into force, or provisional application, of the relevant international agreement. Accordingly, the eligibility of legal entities established in Algeria to receive Union funding under PRIMA is conditional upon the completion of these procedures.

<sup>4</sup> [Egypt has signed the Horizon Europe Association Agreement](#) in October 2025, and following the exchange of Notes Verbales, its association is now legally effective. Egypt is therefore considered an Associated Country to Horizon Europe, and legal entities established in Egypt participate in PRIMA under the same terms and conditions as those established in EU Member States.

<sup>5</sup> Morocco’s participation in PRIMA-funded activities under Horizon Europe remains conditional upon the conclusion or provisional application of the relevant international agreement with the European Union, in accordance with Decision (EU) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision (EU) 2024/1167.

<sup>6</sup> Pursuant to Article 6 (7) of [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) “The final activities to be funded, including the final calls for proposals under the relevant annual work programmes shall be launched by 31 December 2027. In duly justified cases, they may be launched by 31 December 2028.”

*building research and innovation capacities and developing knowledge and common innovative solutions for agro-food systems, making them sustainable, and for integrated water provision and management in the Mediterranean area, in order to make them, their management and their provision more climate resilient, efficient, cost-effective and environmentally and socially sustainable, and to enhance their contribution to solving water scarcity, food security, nutrition, health, well-being and migration problems upstream..”*

## Specific Objectives

This general objective is **operationalised through four Specific Objectives**, as set out in [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#):

1. To develop and implement a long-term strategic research and innovation agenda addressing sustainable water management and sustainable agri-food systems in the Mediterranean region.
2. To align and coordinate national research and innovation programmes of the Participating States with PRIMA’s objectives, promoting coherence, complementarity, and reducing fragmentation and duplication of efforts.
3. To foster broad and inclusive stakeholder participation—including research organisations, SMEs and businesses, policymakers, civil society, and end-users—in the co-design and co-implementation of research and innovation activities.
4. To strengthen scientific, technical, and institutional capacities across the Mediterranean, enhancing knowledge exchange, skills development, and long-term collaboration.

## Operational Objectives

The Specific Objectives are further translated into Operational Objectives (OOs), as defined in [PRIMA’s Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda \(SRIA\)](#). These OOs constitute the practical framework guiding the design, funding, and implementation of PRIMA’s research and innovation activities. The OOs are structured around three thematic areas, reflecting the core challenges of the Mediterranean region and the interdependencies among water, agriculture, and food systems:

- **Management of Water:** OO1 – Water-saving solutions; OO2 – Land and water sustainability; OO3 – Water governance systems.
- **Farming Systems:** OO4 – Smart and sustainable farming; OO5 – Pests and pathogens in farming.
- **Agri-Food Value Chain:** OO6 – Nutrition and health; OO7 – Reduce losses and wastes; OO8 – New agro-food business models.

TABLE 1. PRIMA THEMATIC AREAS AND ITS OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES (OO)

Thematic Area	Operational Objective (OO)	Description
Management of Water	OO1 – Water-Saving Solutions	To test and stimulate adoption of context-tailored water-saving solutions, in particular in agriculture.
	OO2 – Land and Water Sustainability	To improve land and water sustainability in arid and semi-arid watersheds.
	OO3 – Water Governance System	To elaborate and stimulate adoption of innovative policies and protocols for the governance of water management systems.
Farming Systems	OO4 – Smart and Sustainable Farming	To develop smart and environmentally sustainable farming systems to maintain natural resources and increase production efficiency.
	OO5 – Pests and Pathogens in Farming	To design and promote sustainable approaches to reduce the impact of pests and pathogens in farming, including their consequences on human health.
Agri-Food Value Chain	OO6 – Nutrition and Health	To innovate in Mediterranean food products based on the Mediterranean diet and heritage, and to enhance the links between nutrition, physical activity, and health.
	OO7 – Reduce Losses and Wastes	To find context-adapted solutions to increase food and water chain efficiency and reduce losses and wastes.
	OO8 – New Agro-Food Business Models	To develop and implement new business models and innovative policies that integrate local and regional resources, fostering new jobs and economic growth.



FIGURE 1. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES BY THEMATIC AREA (WITH A WEFÉ NEXUS APPROACH)

## PRIMA Cross-Cutting Themes and Activities

PRIMA promotes a set of transversal themes and activities that complement its three thematic areas:

**The WEFE Nexus:** The Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus highlights the interdependence between water, energy, food security and ecosystems—including soil, land and biodiversity—and calls for integrated management and governance across these domains. PRIMA has progressively embedded the WEFE Nexus into its programming, and since the Annual Work Plan 2024 it has been applied as a core guiding framework for the design and implementation of PRIMA-funded research and innovation activities.

**Soil sustainability:** Soil sustainability is essential in the Mediterranean, where degraded and water-stressed soils limit productivity and resilience. Sustainable soil practices help safeguard this non-renewable resource and support adaptation to climate and socio-economic pressures.

**Digitalisation:** Digital technologies improve efficiency, climate adaptation and resource management, making them essential for modernising Mediterranean water, agriculture and food systems under PRIMA.

**Capacity development:** Capacity development strengthens skills and cooperation—especially in Mediterranean Partner Countries—through training, peer learning and knowledge-sharing, ensuring balanced participation and supporting the uptake of PRIMA results.

**Socio-Economic Research Integration in PRIMA:** Socio-economic research is particularly important in PRIMA because challenges related to water management, farming systems, and agri-food value chains in the Mediterranean are shaped not only by technologies, but also by local practices, market conditions, institutional arrangements, and governance dynamics. Technical solutions alone may not be effective unless they align with these social and economic realities.

To address this, PRIMA encourages the integration of socio-economic and [Social Sciences and Humanities \(SSH\) disciplines](#) defined by the European Commission, within project consortia<sup>7</sup>. Such analysis contributes to developing solutions that are feasible, context-appropriate, and likely to be adopted in Mediterranean settings.

PRIMA topics therefore encourage multidisciplinary teams that combine:

- technological and environmental expertise (e.g., water management, farming practices, circular resource use), and
- socio-economic and SSH expertise (e.g., economics, sociology, anthropology, political science, behavioural sciences).

The contribution of SSH should be clearly reflected in the work plan, stakeholder engagement activities, and impact pathways, ensuring that project outcomes take into account real-world adoption conditions. At programme level, this integration is encouraged across PRIMA-funded actions. In specific topics where the interaction between technology, governance, and user behaviour is critical, the inclusion of socio-economic and SSH perspectives is explicitly indicated and forms part of the scope. Where relevant, projects may also draw on structured approaches such as the [Societal Readiness Thinking Tool \(Bernstein et al., \*Science & Engineering Ethics\*, 2022\)](#)<sup>8</sup> to consider societal needs, institutional feasibility, and implementation dynamics throughout the project lifecycle.

<sup>7</sup> European Commission. Integrating Social Sciences and Humanities across Research and Innovation Framework Programmes. Horizon Europe – Cross-Cutting Priorities. Available at: [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/social-sciences-and-humanities\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/social-sciences-and-humanities_en)

<sup>8</sup> Bernstein, M. J., Klein, J. L., & Forsberg, E. M. (2022). The Societal Readiness Thinking Tool: A practical guide for reflecting on societal readiness in research projects. *Science & Engineering Ethics*, 28, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-021-00381-6>

## Intervention Logic and Impact

PRIMA’s General, Specific, and Operational Objectives form an intervention logic that links strategic goals to funded activities and their intended effects. This logic aligns with the Horizon Europe impact model, ensuring consistency in planning, implementation, and performance assessment. The intervention logic is operationalised through the PRIMA Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, which uses Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), presented in the chapter ‘[PRIMA Annual Work Programme 2026](#)’, to track progress at 3 levels:

- Outputs – immediate results generated by PRIMA-funded projects (e.g., scientific publications, innovations, pilot demonstrations, policy briefs).
- Outcomes – medium-term effects contributing to capacity-building, knowledge uptake, cooperation, and alignment of R&I agendas among PRIMA countries.
- Impacts – longer-term contributions to sustainable and resilient food systems, enhanced water resource management, strengthened innovation ecosystems, and improved socio-economic conditions in the Mediterranean region.

This pathway reflects the Horizon Europe three-tier impact structure:

**TABLE 2. HORIZON EUROPE IMPACT MODEL**

Level	Focus	Examples
Scientific Impact	Advancing research excellence and shared knowledge in the Mediterranean	Collaborative publications, open data, shared infrastructures
Technological & Economic Impact	Improving innovation capacity, systems performance, and market readiness	Demonstrated solutions, tested pilots, new products, SME participation
Societal Impact	Supporting sustainability, resilience, inclusiveness, and effective governance	Adoption of practices, community benefits, policy integration

## PRIMA funding scheme

The implementation of the PRIMA Programme is governed by a three-tiered funding structure, herein referred to as Sections 1, 2, and 3. This structure delineates the source of funds, the entity responsible for managing the calls, and the applicable legal framework for participation, in accordance with [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#) (Horizon Europe Regulation) and Decision (EU) 2017/1324 as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) establishing the PRIMA Partnership.

### Implementation Modalities and Legal Basis

PRIMA is implemented through the following funding modalities:

- In **Section 1**, the funds are provided by the European Union, while the PRIMA Foundation (PRIMA-IS) is the entity responsible for managing the calls
- In **Section 2**, the funds are provided by the Participating States (PS), while PRIMA-IS is the entity responsible for managing the calls and monitoring the activities
- In **Section 3**, the funds are provided and managed directly by the Participating States (PS)



FIGURE 2. SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE PRIMA PARTNERSHIP FUNDING SCHEME, DETAILING THE SOURCES OF FINANCING, IMPLEMENTING AUTHORITIES, AND APPLICABLE RULES OF PARTICIPATION ACROSS SECTION 1, 2 AND 3, UNDER HORIZON EUROPE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME.

In more detail:

**Section 1: Actions organised by PRIMA and funded exclusively by Horizon Europe.** Section 1 encompasses activities funded with Union contribution and managed by the PRIMA Implementing Structure (PRIMA-IS). These activities fall under two subcategories:

- Actions organized and managed by PRIMA-IS through transnational calls and funded with the EU contribution.
- Activities supporting programme operations funded by the EU contribution and implemented by PRIMA-IS

**Section 2: Activities selected following transnational open and competitive calls for proposals organised by PRIMA-IS and funded by the national funding bodies of PS.** These activities fall under two subcategories:

- Activities following transnational calls organized by PRIMA-IS and funded by the PRIMA Participating States.
- Activities supporting programme operations funded by PS and implemented by PRIMA-IS.

**Section 3: Activities organised, managed, and funded by the PS.** Section 3 encompasses:

- Activities under the national programmes of the Participating States, including transnational projects referred to as "Participating States' Initiated Activities" (PSIAs),
- Activities organised and funded by PS supporting the implementation of the PRIMA partnership are designated as "Other Activities" in this document.

Legal basis: National legal frameworks of the Participating States; Article 10 of [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#); principles of coherence, transparency, and alignment with Union standards. The Participating States entirely manage Section 3 activities according to common principles which aim to ensure transparency, fairness, and alignment with Union standards. They are informed by the following regulatory references:

- Title VIII of the [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2024/2509](#) ("the Financial regulation") in particular provisions on grants;
- Chapter II 'Grants' of [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#) (the Horizon Europe Regulation), which sets out the general principles for Union research and innovation actions;
- Guidelines incorporated in Decision (EU) 2017/1324 as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#), including those related to monitoring and implementation.

# PRIMA Annual Work Programme 2026

## Strategic Framing

The PRIMA Annual Work Programme 2026 (AWP 2026) continues the implementation of PRIMA’s mission to promote sustainable development, systemic transformation, and resilience across Mediterranean food systems, agriculture, and water management. It translates the PRIMA SRIA into concrete actions that support science-based cooperation, context-appropriate innovation, and solutions adapted to local socio-ecological conditions. In this context, the PRIMA AWP 2026 encourages alignment with Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3), supporting place-based innovation and enhancing synergies with regional priorities and innovation ecosystems.

The formulation of the PRIMA AWP 2026 is grounded in a dual evidence base:

1. A comprehensive internal gap analysis of funded projects, systematically monitored, analysed, and reported by the PRIMA Secretariat;
2. An independent expert [portfolio analysis of projects](#)<sup>9</sup> of PRIMA-funded projects (2018–2024), assessing thematic coverage and strategic positioning, with a focus on the direction and coherence of investments rather than on project results or impacts.

Both assessments confirm that PRIMA has enabled a broad range of relevant research and innovation activities. At the same time, specific **technological, thematic, and systemic gaps** persist. Addressing these is necessary to strengthen deployment, uptake, and long-term policy and market relevance of innovations.

### 1. Water Management

Despite substantial investments in water governance, irrigation optimisation, and wastewater reuse, two gaps remain evident:

- Desalination for agriculture has been only marginally addressed. A small number of projects in the 2018–2023 portfolio (e.g., [FIT4REUSE](#), [SmaCuMed](#)) examined aspects of desalination; however, none developed integrated, affordable, energy-efficient systems suitable for small-scale agriculture in areas lacking viable water alternatives, in line with the [European Water Resilience Strategy’s](#) “water efficiency first” approach. There remains a need for operational-scale demonstration of systems incorporating safe brine management, starting at TRL  $\geq 5$  and advancing toward deployment levels (TRL 7–8).
- Intermittent (non-perennial) rivers, which play a key role in groundwater recharge and biodiversity, received limited attention. Only [INWAT](#) explicitly focused on these systems. While their ecological and socio-hydrological relevance is expected to increase under climate change, systematic approaches integrating hydrology, governance, monitoring, and nature-based restoration remain underdeveloped. Addressing these systems in a structured manner would help avoid fragmented efforts.

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<sup>9</sup> Prista, L., Baumann, M., Chimini, G., Brunori, G., De Vries, H., Hámor, T., Jacquet, F., & Unver, O. (2024). PRIMA Portfolio Analysis 2018–2023. The analysis reviewed 237 funded projects for alignment with PRIMA’s SRIA, EU, and UfM policies. It included an in-depth evaluation of 59 completed projects (KERS, TRLs, policy impact) and thematic clustering of ongoing ones. Mixed methods were applied, drawing on PRIMA’s M&E framework, project deliverables, and strategic policy documents.

## 2. Farming Systems

PRIMA has supported substantial progress in agroecology, crop diversification, and conservation agriculture. However, important gaps remain in operationalisation and scale:

- Although 10 PRIMA-funded projects addressed pest and pathogen monitoring and integrated pest management (e.g. [INTOMED](#), [ZERO PARASITIC](#), [PLANT-B](#), [LAGMED](#)), no project has deployed real-time, AI-enabled monitoring and early-warning systems in open-field Mediterranean farming contexts. Most innovations remained at TRL 3–5, focusing on laboratory-scale biological or molecular diagnostics rather than field-ready, scalable surveillance infrastructures.
- Work on circular feed solutions and alternative protein production from agri-food by-products has progressed through exploratory approaches [SUSTAvianFEED](#), [NEWFEED](#). However, no project has yet demonstrated an integrated, territorial closed-loop feed system linking crop residues, livestock systems, and local processing actors. The region still lacks a bio-circular model for feed autonomy, particularly for small ruminants and mixed-farming systems in water-scarce areas.

## 3. Agri-Food Value Chain

With 86 funded projects, this area is the most populated in PRIMA’s portfolio. Nevertheless, critical challenges remain:

- Post-harvest losses in the Middle East and North Africa average around 15% between harvest and retail, with much higher rates for fruits and vegetables in areas where cold-chain logistics and processing infrastructure are weak. While PRIMA-funded projects addressing Operational Objective 7 (Reduce Losses and Wastes)—such as [DAINME-SME](#), [FRUALGAE](#), and [MEDISMART](#)—have advanced waste valorisation and post-harvest innovation, their interventions were implemented primarily at fixed-site or pilot scale (TRL 5–6). This limits their relevance for remote, infrastructure-poor, and water-scarce Mediterranean areas where rural cooperatives and smallholders lack access to centralised processing facilities.
- Digital traceability systems remain underdeveloped across Mediterranean agri-food value chains. While projects such as [SUREFISH](#), [Med Food TTHubs](#), and [MEDIFIT](#) explored blockchain, QR code, and EPCIS-compliant traceability models, solutions developed fragmented and at pilot scale, with limited uptake among SMEs and cooperatives. The absence of harmonised protocols, cost-effective deployment models, and cross-border interoperability continues to hinder their scalability, regional integration, and sustained market impact.

### Overview of PRIMA Section 1 Topics Addressing Identified Gaps

The Section 1 topics for 2026 are explicitly designed to address these strategic gaps:

- In **water management**, the persistent absence of affordable, decentralised desalination options for small-scale farming is tackled through a *topic dedicated to demonstrating renewable-powered brackish water desalination systems with circular brine management*, enabling real deployment where no other water sources are viable and supporting the implementation of the [European Water Resilience Strategy](#).
- In **farming systems**, the lack of operational models linking alternative protein production with territorial resource cycles is addressed by the *topic on next-generation sustainable animal feeds*, which promotes the valorisation of suitable agri-food by-products into context-adapted feed solutions that reinforce circularity, reduce dependence on imported protein sources, and enhance the resilience of Mediterranean livestock systems.

- In **agri-food value chains**, the challenge of high post-harvest losses and the lack of accessible transformation infrastructure in remote and water-scarce territories is addressed through the topic on sustainable on-site processing, which supports modular, low-energy, renewable-energy-powered processing units that enable cooperatives, women-led enterprises and smallholders to retain value locally and strengthen territorial economies.
- Finally, the CSA on institutionalising the Mediterranean **WEFE Nexus** Community of Practice directly responds to the fragmentation of Nexus implementation by transitioning from isolated pilot experiences to a structured, regionally anchored cooperation mechanism that enables policy uptake, coordinated governance, cross-sector learning and access to investment pathways, ensuring that validated solutions can be adapted and scaled across diverse Mediterranean contexts. Together, these topics move PRIMA from exploration and pilot testing toward operational deployment, system-level integration and long-term transformative impact.

### Overview of PRIMA Section 2 Topics Addressing Identified Gaps

The Section 2 topics for 2026 complement the Section 1 actions by addressing the strategic gaps that require research, methodological development, and governance-oriented solutions.

- The topic on *Governance and Restoration of Non-Perennial Mediterranean Watercourses* responds directly to the lack of attention to intermittent rivers within the PRIMA portfolio, advancing knowledge on their hydrology, governance models, and restoration through nature-based approaches, in line with the EU Nature Restoration Regulation and the [European Water Resilience Strategy](#).
- The topic on *Remote and Non-Invasive ICT Monitoring for Pest and Disease Control* builds on previous work in plant health by adapting and validating affordable, field-ready digital surveillance tools suited to smallholder conditions, helping to overcome the current limitations of laboratory-focused approaches and supporting the implementation of the EU Organic Action Plan and the EU Plant Health Regulation.
- Finally, the topic on *Context-Aware Digital Traceability for Traditional Mediterranean Agri-Food Systems* addresses the limited uptake of digital traceability solutions identified in the portfolio analysis, focusing on modular, interoperable tools tailored to fragmented value chains, thereby strengthening market access, transparency and fraud prevention for high-value traditional products. Together, these research-oriented topics consolidate knowledge, strengthen governance and digital capacities, and create the enabling conditions for the large-scale demonstration and deployment efforts supported under Section 1.

## Implementation

### Funding Instruments and Types of Actions

The PRIMA AWP 2026 supports three types of actions—Innovation Actions (IAs), Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs), and activities analogous to Horizon Europe’s Research and Innovation Actions (RIAs)—in accordance with the [Horizon Europe Rules for Participation \(RfP\)](#) and the legal framework established under [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#) as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#).

Approximately **30 projects** (IAs, CSAs, and analogous RIAs) are expected to be funded under the 2026 calls. For the purposes of PRIMA implementation, the definitions and scopes of these action types are adapted to reflect the specific objectives, governance structure, and co-funding modalities of the Programme. While inspired by Horizon Europe, these definitions do not constitute a formal application of the action types as defined in Article 2(32), (33), and (39) of the Horizon Europe Regulation.

Each action type corresponds to a defined Technology Readiness Level (TRL) range and a specific functional scope:

- **Innovation Actions (IAs)** support the further development, piloting, and demonstration of innovations in (near to) operational environments, with the objective of enabling large-scale validation and market uptake. These actions typically target a TRL of 6–8 by the end of the project.
- **Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs)** do not involve research and innovation activities per se but focus on cross-cutting functions such as stakeholder mobilisation, capacity building, dissemination and exploitation, policy dialogue, and the alignment of innovation agendas. These actions are TRL-independent.
- **Actions analogous to Research and Innovation Actions (RIAs)**, funded under Section 2, support research and innovation activities aimed at generating new knowledge, exploring innovative solutions, and validating technologies or approaches at an early stage. These actions typically span TRLs 3 to 6, subject to national funding rules and the specific scope of the topic. Eligible activities may include fundamental and applied research, technology development, experimental proof of concept, and validation in laboratory, controlled, or small-scale field environments. While functionally aligned with Horizon Europe RIAs, these actions are implemented under the PRIMA Participating States' co-funding mechanism, in accordance with their respective national regulations and priorities.

### Structure of the PRIMA AWP 2026

The PRIMA AWP 2026 is structured around **five calls for proposals**, divided into two main sections, Section 1 and Section 2, according to the funding source and applicable rules. The distribution of topics between Section 1 and Section 2 reflects the distinct objectives, funding modalities, and expected outcomes defined under PRIMA’s implementation model.

Section 1 topics are positioned where solutions are sufficiently mature to be **demonstrated, piloted and validated in relevant operational environments**. These actions focus on the **development, testing, demonstration and validation of new or improved products, processes or services**, including adaptation to real-life conditions.

Such actions typically require larger budgets, strong involvement of SMEs and end-users, and multi-actor co-development to ensure that innovations progress towards **uptake, replication, scaling readiness and integration into market, policy or operational frameworks**, without implying full market deployment. Where relevant, projects are encouraged to connect with regional Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) to enhance market uptake and territorial deployment of innovative solutions.

Accordingly, Section 1 topics prioritise:

- Higher TRLs (typically  $\geq 5$  to 7–8),
- On-the-ground demonstration and validation,
- Business model development and capacity for replication,
- Direct benefits for farmers, cooperatives, SMEs and local authorities.

By advancing deployment-ready solutions (e.g., decentralised desalination, circular feed autonomy, on-site processing units), Section 1 topics directly address the implementation and scaling gaps identified in the PRIMA portfolio. In contrast, Section 2 topics address areas where further research, methodological refinement, governance arrangements, or enabling conditions are needed before large-scale deployment can be effective. These actions operate at lower TRL levels (typically 3–6) and focus on generating knowledge, frameworks, and digital or institutional tools that are foundational for future operational uptake, including:

- Integrated governance and restoration models for non-perennial rivers,
- Adaptation and field-validation of digital pest monitoring systems,
- Affordable, context-aware traceability frameworks for fragmented value chains.

### **Section 1 – EU Funded Calls**

Section 1 is co-funded by the European Union and fully implemented in line with the [Horizon Europe Rules for Participation \(RfP\)](#). It includes **four thematic calls**, each with its own ranking list, aligned with PRIMA’s core intervention areas: Water Management, Farming Systems, and the Agri-Food Value Chain all approached through the integrated Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus lens and a fourth one related to the cross-cutting nexus theme.

- **Three Innovation Action (IA) calls** support the demonstration, piloting, and scaling up of innovative solutions in near-operational settings. Projects are expected to reach a Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of 6–8 by the end of implementation. **Twelve Innovation Actions (IAs)** are expected to be funded each with an EU contribution of up to **EUR 2.7 million**.
- **One Coordination and Support Action (CSA) call** focuses on cross-sectoral coordination, capacity building, facilitating long-term uptake, policy alignment, and stakeholder engagement across PRIMA countries. **One Coordination and Support Action (CSA)** is expected to be funded, with an EU contribution of up to **EUR 1.05 million**.

### **Section 2 – Participating States-Funded Calls Multi-Topic Call**

Section 2 is financed directly by the national funding bodies of the PRIMA Participating States and is implemented through a single, multi-topic transnational call with a single ranking list.

This call for proposals invites submissions that focus on **one of the three core thematic areas** of PRIMA: Water Management in the Nexus, Farming Systems in the Nexus, and Agri-Food Value Chain in the Nexus. Although the three topics are released simultaneously under a single call and will be evaluated together under the same ranking list, each proposal must be tailored to address the specific scope and expected outcomes of only one of the topics.

The actions funded under Section 2 are **analogous to Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Actions (RIAs)**<sup>10</sup> and support collaborative R&I activities across a broad TRL spectrum (typically TRL 3–7, with TRL 8 permitted under national rules). Funding is provided directly by each partner’s

<sup>10</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the rules applying to these actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RfP) established in Regulation (EU) 2021/695. In contrast, while the rules used in Section 2 are partially based on the Horizon Europe RfP, specific provisions concerning participation and funding rates apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to the respective national regulations. For more detailed information regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants available on the PRIMA website

national funding agency, in accordance with its own regulations, funding rates, and eligibility conditions. Around **twenty projects** are expected to be funded with an indicative national contribution of at least **EUR 1 million** per project.

While Section 2 draws on the general principles of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 it is implemented in accordance with Articles 6(9) and 6(10) of [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#) as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) and is governed by specific national rules. In line with Article 6(9), projects are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to national regulations, including eligibility conditions, funding rates, cost models, and administrative procedures.

At the same time, the transnational eligibility conditions set out in Article 6(10)(a) apply at proposal submission stage. In particular, proposals must involve at least three independent legal entities established in three different Participating States, including at least one entity established in a Member State or a country associated to Horizon Europe, and at least one entity established in a third country listed in Article 1(2) of the [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#) as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) or in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

### **Conditions applicable to both Sections**

All proposals—regardless of the Section—must be submitted to PRIMA-IS and will undergo a **centralised peer review process**, following the evaluation procedures and award criteria outlined in the PRIMA AWP 2026 [General Annexes](#). In addition, any specific conditions or requirements set out in the individual topic descriptions also apply and must be duly considered by applicants.

Applicants must consult the [National Funding Rules](#) available in the [PRIMA website](#) among the call document available at the opening of the calls, to ensure compliance. Applicants are strongly advised to contact their [National Contact Point \(NCP\)](#) before submission, as some national funding bodies may require a parallel submission at the national level in addition to the PRIMA-IS application.

### **Gender Equality Plan (GEP) Requirement for PRIMA calls**

In line with [Article 7 of Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#), the requirement to have a **Gender Equality Plan (GEP)** is an **eligibility condition** for public bodies, research organisations, and higher education establishments, including private entities falling under these categories, participating in PRIMA actions. While [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#) as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) does not explicitly refer to this provision of the [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#), this requirement is applied by analogy, in line with Horizon Europe practices.

The **applicable eligibility rules, scope, and minimum requirements for the GEP** are set out in [Section 1 – General Annex B \(Eligibility\)](#) of this Annual Work Programme. Applicants are required to comply with those provisions.

**Support and Guidance:** To help institutions meet this requirement, the European Commission has prepared a [Guidance document on Gender Equality Plans](#) that PRIMA advises referring to when preparing it. Applicants are encouraged to refer to this guidance when preparing or updating their institutional GEP. In addition, the [HE Programme Guide](#) provides practical guidance on identifying, analysing, and appropriately integrating the gender dimension into research and innovation content, including when such integration is relevant and how it may be addressed in project design.

The integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content, should be duly considered where relevant.

## Promoting a Multi-Actor Approach (MAA) in PRIMA Projects

**PRIMA encourages consortia to incorporate a Multi-Actor Approach (MAA) in their projects.**

*“A Multi-Actor Approach should ensure genuine and sufficient involvement of a targeted diversity of actors, essentially the (end-) users of the project results completed with some useful intermediaries who can bring in further useful knowledge, such as farmers/farmers’ groups, foresters/foresters’ groups, advisors, food processors, businesses, consumer associations, local communities, citizens, civil society organisations including NGOs etc. The genuine and sufficient involvement of such actors should occur all along with the project: from participation in planning the project and experiments to implementation, the dissemination of results, and a possible demonstration phase. Building blocks for the project proposal are expected to come from science, practice, and intermediaries (“co-creation”). End-users and practitioners are to be involved, not as a study object, but to use their local knowledge and/or entrepreneurial skills for developing solutions and creating “co-ownership” of results, which speeds up the acceptance and take-up of new ideas.”<sup>11</sup>*

The purpose is not to involve end-users merely as study subjects, but to recognise and integrate their practical knowledge, local experience, and entrepreneurial skills. This co-creation process helps to ensure that solutions are context-appropriate, socially grounded, and more rapidly adopted. PRIMA thus expects projects to clearly explain:

1. Which actors are involved and why they are relevant
2. How they will be engaged at each stage of the project
3. What mechanisms will ensure shared decision-making and co-ownership of outcomes.

## Supporting activities aiming to increase impact

Under previous AWP, PRIMA has supported the development of innovative solutions its three thematic areas, adapted to Mediterranean environmental and socio-economic conditions. Many solutions have already been successfully demonstrated at local scales. To advance market uptake, replication, and long-term sustainability, reinforced support is required for exploitation planning, business model development, value-chain integration, and access-to-market strategies. In this context, alignment with Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) can further support the territorial uptake and scaling of PRIMA-funded innovations through stronger links with regional innovation ecosystems and investment priorities.

### Boosting innovation potential of PRIMA projects

#### Horizon Results Booster (HRB)

Eligible PRIMA projects may benefit from the [Horizon Results Booster \(HRB\)](#), a free European Commission service providing:

- Exploitation strategy and IPR support
- Business planning and go-to-market roadmaps
- Investment readiness guidance
- Joint dissemination and clustering opportunities

This support strengthens the potential for PRIMA-funded outcomes to contribute to innovation ecosystems, employment, and socio-economic resilience in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

<sup>11</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16).

### Innovation Acceleration and Venture Building (CGIAR A4IP)

Opportunities for innovation acceleration may be pursued through [CGIAR Accelerate for Impact Platform \(A4IP\)](#), which links scientific research with entrepreneurship and private-sector engagement. Building on initiatives such as the [AgriTech4Egypt Innovation Challenge](#), future collaboration may include:

- Challenge-based acceleration programmes
- Support for science-based startup creation
- Validation phases with end-users and agribusiness actors
- Investor matchmaking and venture-building activities

This cooperation can reinforce exploitation strategies and entrepreneurial pathways for PRIMA Innovation Actions.

### PRIMA–EIT Food Collaboration

PRIMA is strengthening collaboration with EIT Food to support scale-up and market deployment. A 2025 mapping exercise identified complementarities with EIT Food’s [TeamUp](#) and [Impact Funding Framework \(IFF\)](#). Joint opportunities under exploration for 2026 include:

- Shared innovation challenges and matchmaking
- Access to acceleration and mentoring programmes
- Support for co-development with industry partners

This may help consortia mature innovations and develop business or cooperation models tailored to Mediterranean contexts.

### Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Research-to-Business Actions

In 2026, the UfM will launch a dedicated *Research-to-Business (R2B)* programme targeting Mediterranean innovators, explicitly open to projects funded under PRIMA. This R2B programme will include capacity-building, matchmaking and valorisation support, enabling innovators emerging from PRIMA R&I results to access business development, entrepreneurial ecosystems and investor networks. The initiative builds directly on the UfM’s 2025 high-level conference “[From Research to Business: Turning Knowledge into Jobs, Innovation and Growth](#)” which served both as the launch-event and as a consultation platform for the UfM’s “Scalability Strategy” for Mediterranean research and innovation ecosystems.

UfM and PRIMA will also cooperate on a joint paper/white-paper on “scalability of projects” in the Mediterranean innovation ecosystem, aligned with the upcoming UfM Scalability Strategy and mindful of lessons from PRIMA-funded Innovation Actions. UfM will contribute to PRIMA’s own Research to Business activities thereby extending the Mediterranean dimension of PRIMA, leveraging UfM’s convening role, regional networks and policy platforms.

### Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)

EEN can play an important role in supporting matchmaking, business partnerships, and innovation uptake, particularly for consortia seeking to scale solutions or engage with private sector actors. Collaboration with these networks broadens international contacts beyond the immediate project consortium, enhances capacity building—especially in countries with widening participation needs—and increases the visibility and exploitation potential of PRIMA-supported innovations. These efforts can be further reinforced through synergies with Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3), facilitating connections with regional innovation actors, clusters, and funding instruments that support the deployment and scaling of innovative solutions.

## Promoting Synergies

### Synergies among projects

The PRIMA AWP 2026 emphasises synergies to enhance collective learning and maximise impact. Consortia are encouraged to plan interactions with other PRIMA and Horizon Europe projects through:

- Joint knowledge exchange activities (workshops, staff exchanges, shared training)
- Alignment of data, indicators, and methodologies
- Joint dissemination and visibility actions (policy-relevant peer-reviewed publication, demonstration events)

PRIMA will continue facilitating such collaboration through **PRIMA Project Days**, thematic clustering, and cross-project events. A notable example of such synergy is the collaborative initiative [NEXTGEN4MED](#), which brings together the [OurMED](#), [NATMed](#), and [SALAM-MED](#) projects around a shared ambition to promote inclusive, resilient, and innovation-driven water governance in the Mediterranean. This collaboration illustrates how projects can pool resources and capacities to strengthen regional innovation ecosystems, support youth-led entrepreneurship, and enhance the visibility and uptake of Mediterranean solutions.

Projects working on integrated resource management and nexus-based approaches are particularly encouraged to collaborate with the **Mediterranean WEF Nexus Community of Practice (NCoP)**, supported by the [WEFE4MED project](#). The NCoP acts as a platform connecting researchers, public authorities, civil society organisations, SMEs, and farmers; it provides a space for knowledge exchange, capacity-building, and co-design of solutions; and it serves as a channel to link research outputs to policy processes and multi-level stakeholder dialogues across the Mediterranean.

### Leveraging European Networks

Synergies may extend beyond PRIMA-specific activities. European cooperation frameworks such as [COST Actions](#) offer structured opportunities for coordination, mutual learning, and shared dissemination across multiple projects working on related themes. Several COST Actions, including [FoodWaStop COST Action](#) and [ENFIBERS](#)<sup>12</sup>, have already brought together clusters of PRIMA projects, contributing to shared methodologies, strengthened communities of practice, and improved scientific and technical coherence.

### Synergies with EU Missions/EU Partnerships

PRIMA encourages projects to build synergies with relevant EU Missions and European Partnerships, where appropriate and feasible, to maximise the value, reach, and policy relevance of their R&I actions. These synergies can be achieved through context-specific demonstrators, place-based innovation models, and multi-actor engagement across Mediterranean territories. Several EU Missions explicitly promote the use of Living Labs and Demonstration Sites as instruments for co-creation, testing, scaling, and policy uptake. PRIMA can create strong complementarities with these efforts by leveraging:

- Mediterranean place-based innovation ecosystems
- Multi-stakeholder platforms and participatory governance
- Territorial demonstration environments adapted to local socio-ecological contexts

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<sup>12</sup> FoodWaStop COST Action, launched in 2022, successfully engaged eight PRIMA-funded agrifood projects. The recently approved ENFIBERS – European Network for Valorising Food Processing Waste involves 15 PRIMA projects, creating a vibrant community of practice around circularity and valorisation of agri-food waste streams.

## Complementarities with Horizon Europe Missions

Consortia are invited to consider synergies with the following Missions:

- [Mission “Adaptation to Climate Change](#): Relevant to resilience-building strategies, climate risk management, and locally tested solutions for climate-stressed agri-food and water systems.
- [Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe](#): Particularly regarding agroecological transitions, circular nutrient management, farmer-driven innovation, and integrated soil–crop–livestock systems.
- [Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters](#): Especially regarding integrated water governance at basin level, nature-based solutions for stressed water bodies, and climate-resilient allocation and reuse approaches.

## Synergies with European Partnerships (Cluster 6 of Horizon Europe)

Projects selected under this AWP are encouraged to collaborate with, or build on outcomes from, [Horizon Europe Partnerships under Cluster 6](#), where appropriate. In particular, synergies are encouraged with:

- the [Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership](#), notably in areas related to the sustainability and resilience of aquatic ecosystems, including the land–sea interface and freshwater systems;
- the [Water4All Partnership](#), particularly in relation to integrated water management, water scarcity, and climate resilience;
- the [FutureFoodS Partnership](#) (Sustainable Food Systems), especially regarding food system transformation, innovation uptake, and sustainable agri-food value chains.
- the Agroecology Partnership

## **Section 1 – Actions (Innovation Actions and Coordinated Support Action)**

- **Topic 1.1.1** – Potential synergies with the [Water4All Partnership](#), particularly with projects supporting sustainable water management, non-conventional water use, nature-based and decentralised treatment systems, and circular water resource solutions. Shared contributions may include Mediterranean demonstration sites and climate-resilient irrigation models.
  - Collaboration pathways may include shared pilot sites in water-stressed basins, co-development of decision-support tools, participation in Water4All demonstration clusters, and alignment of monitoring indicators on water reuse safety and efficiency.
- **Topic 1.2.1** – Alignment with the [Agroecology Partnership](#) which supports transition pathways towards agroecological farming systems, including Living Labs and Research Infrastructures to co-develop and assess innovations in real contexts. Complementarities also exist with the [Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking \(CBE JU\)](#), which promotes valorisation of biomass and agri-food side streams and development of bio-based products, including alternative feed ingredients and circular nutrient cycles. Additional synergies may be explored with the [Animal Health and Welfare Partnership](#), particularly regarding improved livestock nutrition, reduced reliance on antibiotics, and integrated animal health–environment sustainability. and the promoting circular feed systems, low-input livestock farming, and agroecological practices (incl. Living Labs) with shared sustainability metrics. (e.g., circular feed production, valorisation of agri-food by-products).
  - *Collaboration pathways include shared experimental sites, circular feed innovation clusters, harmonised sustainability metrics, and knowledge exchange on feed–health–environment interactions.*

- **Topic 1.3.1** – Complementarities with the [FutureFoodS Partnership](#), focused on sustainable, resilient, and healthy food systems. Areas of mutual interest include reduction of food loss.
  - *Synergies may include joint food system modelling, consumer behaviour research, shared territorial Living Labs, and coordinated actions to support SMEs in Mediterranean food chains.*
- **Topic 1.4.1** – Cross-cutting synergies with [Water4All Partnership](#), [Agroecology](#), and [FutureFoodS](#), as well as regional initiatives on multi-level governance and stakeholder engagement. The institutionalisation of the Mediterranean WEFE Nexus Community of Practice offers a platform to bridge governance, research, demonstration networks, and policy coordination across Partnerships.
  - *Collaboration pathways include joint governance dialogues, shared WEFE indicators, integrated capacity-building programmes, and participation in cross-Partnership policy*

## Section 2 – Analogous to Research and Innovation Actions

- **Topic 2.1.1** – Strong alignment with [Water4All Partnership](#), thematic priorities on hydrology under climate stress, ecological restoration, and water allocation governance.
  - *Synergies may include co-development of modelling frameworks, deployment of shared field observatories, and joint dissemination through basin governance platforms.*
- **Topic 2.3.1** – Synergies with the [Agriculture of Data Partnership](#), which develops interoperable, FAIR, and trusted agricultural data infrastructures. Projects may contribute through context-adapted digital traceability systems for small-scale Mediterranean producers, supporting alignment with EU frameworks such as digital product passports, provenance verification, and traceability standards.
  - *Collaboration pathways include shared data ontologies, integration into agricultural data spaces, and joint capacity-building for producers and value chain actors.*

### Synergies with European Research Infrastructures

PRIMA has initiated collaboration with key [European Research Infrastructures \(RIs\)](#) to enhance the scientific excellence, methodological consistency, and policy relevance of its funded activities. In this AWP, applicants are encouraged to make use of relevant RIs where appropriate. In particular,

**Topic 1.3.1** explicitly invites the use of [METROFOOD-RI](#) which focuses on food traceability and quality, to support harmonised traceability and authenticity assessments at the Mediterranean level, thereby extending the relevance of this infrastructure beyond EU Member States.

In addition, PRIMA is seeking to strengthen synergies with [LifeWatch ERIC](#), which provides tools and data for biodiversity and ecosystem monitoring and modelling, and with [EMPHASIS](#) the pan-European infrastructure dedicated to plant phenotyping and crop performance analysis. These collaborations aim to support improved data comparability, shared analytical standards, and enhanced research capacity across PRIMA-funded projects.

To ensure that these synergies benefit the entire Mediterranean region, PRIMA also encourages connections with European RIs and national competence centres in Participating States, supported by researcher mobility, staff exchanges, and joint training among PRIMA projects. This will help harmonise methodologies, promote shared protocols, and facilitate long-term cooperative networks across diverse agri-ecological and socio-economic contexts.

### Synergies with External Actions and Regional EU programmes

In line with the guidance from the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the [Directorate-General for International Partnerships \(DG INTPA\)](#), PRIMA encourages, where relevant, applicants to involve EU [Delegations \(EUDELs\)](#)<sup>13</sup> in Participating States, particularly in Mediterranean Partner Countries<sup>14</sup>, to facilitate policy alignment, stakeholder engagement, and institutional uptake of project results. Consortia are invited to inform EU Delegations, via PRIMA, of key project milestones, to engage them in policy dialogues and outreach events, and to coordinate with them when linking project outputs to national and regional priorities and investment frameworks. Such collaboration can help ensure that PRIMA-funded innovations are embedded within long-term strategies and can contribute to systemic transformation.

Where relevant, this engagement may be complemented by regional cooperation instruments under the [NDICI–Global Europe instrument](#) and [Team Europe Initiatives](#), which provide additional opportunities to align research outcomes with territorial development pathways and to mobilise resources supporting scaling and replication. Applicants are encouraged to explore synergies with these programmes where such linkages can enhance impact and reinforce knowledge transfer across borders.

In addition, PRIMA encourages consortia, where appropriate, to build on and complement EU regional cooperation programmes such as [INTERREG NEXT MED](#). By contributing technical solutions, digital tools, and policy-relevant evidence to such territorial cooperation platforms, PRIMA-funded projects can increase the visibility and uptake of Mediterranean innovations beyond the research and innovation community, while ensuring coherence with broader EU external action and regional development priorities.

### Synergies with Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3)

PRIMA encourages, where relevant, the alignment of project activities with national and regional Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3), as key frameworks for place-based innovation across participating countries. Consortia are invited to explore synergies with S3 priorities to strengthen links with regional innovation ecosystems, facilitate interregional cooperation, and enhance the uptake, scalability, and long-term impact of PRIMA-funded solutions. This may include collaboration with regional authorities, innovation clusters, and managing authorities of S3-related programmes. In doing so, PRIMA can contribute to strengthening regional innovation capacities and act as a catalyst for connecting Mediterranean R&I ecosystems with S3-driven investment and policy frameworks.

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<sup>13</sup> EU Delegations are the diplomatic missions of the European Union to countries outside the EU. They represent the EU's interests and promote its policies in their respective host countries. Links of the PRIMA PS EU Delegation: EU Delegations are the diplomatic missions of the European Union to countries outside the EU. They represent the EU's interests and promote its policies in their respective host countries. Relevant EU Delegations for PRIMA Participating States include: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and Türkiye.

<sup>14</sup> PRIMA context, Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPCs) refers to the non-EU countries that participate in PRIMA bordering the Mediterranean Sea located in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Türkiye.

## PRIMA key performance indicators (KPIs)

PRIMA’s monitoring and evaluation framework is aligned with the Horizon Europe impact model set out in Annex V to the Horizon Europe Regulation, where indicators are structured across three overarching areas of impact, further organised into **six indicator domains**. This approach supports a harmonised assessment of project outputs, outcomes, and longer-term impacts across scientific, technological, economic, environmental, and societal dimensions.

TABLE 3. PRIMA IMPACT AREAS AND MAIN INDICATORS

Impact Area	Indicator Domains	Focus
Economic and Technological Impact	Economic Indicators	Contribution to investment, innovation uptake, and value creation in agri-food and water sectors.
	Technological Indicators	Development, adaptation, or demonstration of technological solutions, methods, or digital tools.
Scientific Impact	Scientific Indicators	Production and dissemination of knowledge, research collaborations, open science practices, and capacity strengthening.
Societal Impact	Social Indicators	Inclusiveness, gender and youth engagement, stakeholder participation, and community-level benefits.
	Environmental Indicators	Resource efficiency, climate resilience, biodiversity preservation, and ecosystem health.
	Policy and Governance Indicators	Alignment with policy frameworks, institutional cooperation, and evidence uptake in decision-making.

This structure enables PRIMA to:

- assess the immediate outputs of funded projects (e.g., publications, prototypes, data, capacity built),
- monitor outcomes such as knowledge uptake, stakeholder collaboration, and adoption of practices, and
- track contributions to longer-term impacts in sustainability, resilience, and innovation systems across the Mediterranean.

The figure illustrates how PRIMA’s KPIs are organised into these three impact areas and six indicator domains, ensuring a coherent and comparable evaluation framework aligned with Horizon Europe.

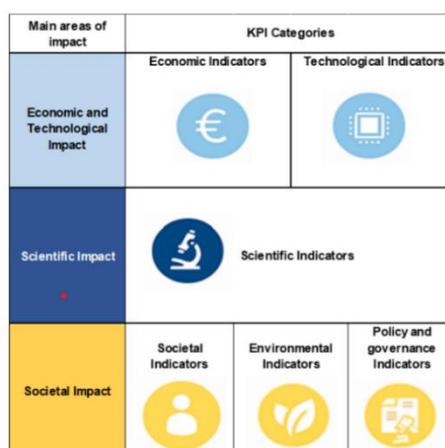


FIGURE 3. STRUCTURE OF PRIMA KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) ACROSS THREE IMPACT AREAS AND SIX INDICATOR DOMAINS, ALIGNED WITH THE HORIZON EUROPE IMPACT MODEL

### Applicant Requirements

At the proposal stage, applicants should **select at least three PRIMA KPIs** from the PRIMA KPI Table 5 included in this AWP. Detailed definitions and methodological guidance are provided in the [PRIMA KPI Handbook for Applicants](#). The selected KPIs should clearly correspond to the expected outcomes of the project, align with the PRIMA SRIA and its Operational Objectives (OOs).

Where relevant, applicants are encouraged to include at least one KPI from each of the following:

- Scientific or technological output
- Socio-economic or environmental benefit
- Policy, capacity-building, or governance uptake

For certain topics, **recommended KPIs may be indicated directly in the topic description**.

For each selected KPI, the proposal should indicate the baseline, meaning the situation at the start of the project, and the target value expected to be achieved by project end. It should also describe the methodology and data sources that will be used to monitor, measure, and verify progress over time. Each KPI should be quantified, when appropriate, using a numerical metric, and qualified with a brief explanation of its relevance to the project objectives. KPIs must also be linked to the project's expected outputs and outcomes, with supporting evidence provided where applicable—for example, publications, demonstration records, training materials, or stakeholder engagement documentation.

### Reporting Requirements

Projects must report progress on selected KPIs via the [PRIMA Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning \(MEL\) Platform](#), and through Mid-Term and Final KPI Deliverables (template will be provided at call launch). The PRIMA Secretariat may request additional KPI updates if needed.

TABLE 4. REPORTING SCHEDULE

Stage	Requirements
Mid-Term	Update KPI values in the MEL Platform and submit the Mid-Term KPI Progress Report.
Final	Update KPI values in the MEL Platform and submit the Final KPI Results Report, including supporting evidence.

### Custom KPIs (Optional)

Applicants may propose **custom KPIs** to capture project-specific impacts, particularly in cases of:

- Emerging or interdisciplinary research areas,
- Community-led or place-based innovation,
- Region-specific socio-economic or environmental outcomes not represented in standard KPIs.

**TABLE 5. PRIMA SPECIFIC KPIS\* GROUPED BY IMPACT CATEGORY, WITH EACH KPI'S NUMBER, BRIEF DESCRIPTION, AND LINKED OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE(S) (OO)**

Main Areas of Impact	KPI Categories	PRIMA-Specific KPIS (linked to Operational Objectives)
Economic and Technological Impact	<b>Economic Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPI 1: Number of solutions developed for cost reduction in agri-food/farming/water (OO4)</li> <li>• KPI 2: Number of startups created and MSMEs using solutions developed by PRIMA projects</li> <li>• KPI 3: Number of patents registered using PRIMA project results</li> <li>• KPI 4: Number of jobs created in beneficiary entities, categorized by sector</li> <li>• KPI 22: Number of agri-food businesses adopting PRIMA-generated business models benefiting smallholders and communities (OO8)</li> </ul>
	<b>Technological Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPI 8: Number of types of solutions developed (e.g., validated solutions, prototypes)</li> <li>• KPI 9: Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of developed technologies (average or range of TRLs reached)</li> </ul>
Scientific Impact	<b>Scientific Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPI 10: Number of peer-reviewed publications involving Southern Mediterranean researchers</li> <li>• KPI 11: Number of datasets made available in open repositories</li> <li>• KPI 12: Number of individuals trained through structured sessions (e.g., workshops, research exchanges)</li> </ul>
Societal Impact	<b>Societal Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPI 5: Number of beneficiaries from vulnerable or marginalized groups (e.g., women, youth, rural communities)</li> <li>• KPI 6: Number of social innovations (e.g., farmers' organizations, consumer behaviour changes)</li> <li>• KPI 7: Identification of specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) addressed by each project</li> </ul>
	<b>Environmental Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPI 13: Number of solutions achieving 20% increase in water-use efficiency (OO1)</li> <li>• KPI 14: Number of solutions achieving 20% increase in energy efficiency (OO4)</li> <li>• KPI 15: Number of solutions addressing land degradation (OO4; Soil sustainability)</li> <li>• KPI 16: Number of solutions reducing carbon footprint by 20% (OO4)</li> <li>• KPI 17: Number of Nature-Based Solutions implemented (OO2)</li> <li>• KPI 18: Number of hectares under sustainable agricultural practices (OO4)</li> <li>• KPI 19: Number of large-scale pest and pathogen control/IPM techniques implemented (OO5)</li> <li>• KPI 20: Number of new food items with improved nutrition or health benefits (OO6)</li> <li>• KPI 21: Number of circular economy solutions implemented (OO7)</li> </ul>
	<b>Policy &amp; Governance Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPI 23: Successful implementation of WEFE Nexus model (OO2/OO3/OO4)</li> <li>• KPI 24: Number of policy briefs developed</li> <li>• KPI 25: Number of policies influenced or developed</li> <li>• KPI 26: Number of inclusive water governance case studies</li> <li>• KPI 27: Number of policies integrating the WEFE Nexus approach.</li> </ul>

\*Full definitions and reporting rules are in the [PRIMA KPI Handbook for Applicants \(2025\)](#)

# Section 1: Actions and activities organised and managed by PRIMA-IS and funded with EU funds, HE rules

## Transnational Calls

Under the PRIMA AWP 2026, PRIMA will launch four transnational calls for proposals under Section 1, funded through the EU contribution and implemented in accordance with the Rules for Participation of Horizon Europe, as set out in Title II of Regulation (EU) 2021/695

Three Innovation Actions (IAs) and one Coordination and Support Action (CSA) are expected to be funded. These actions aim to support the development, validation, and uptake of innovative solutions (IAs), as well as to foster coordination, capacity building, and knowledge exchange (CSA), in response to the interlinked challenges of sustainable water management, farming systems, and agri-food value chains in the Mediterranean region.

### TRL Focus and Activity Scope

#### Innovation Actions (IAs)

Proposals funded as Innovation Actions (IAs) under Section 1 are expected to address Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 6–8, advancing solutions from demonstration and piloting to pre-market deployment. In addition to technological innovation, IAs may also encompass organisational innovation—such as internal or systemic changes that enhance performance, resilience, and sustainability across institutions, value chains, or territorial ecosystems. Full market deployment generally corresponds to TRL 9, which lies beyond the scope of PRIMA funding. Applicants clearly specify the expected TRLs at the start and end of the proposed project and are encouraged to consult the [European Commission TRL self-assessment tool](#).

To ensure market relevance and entrepreneurial engagement, Innovation Actions (IAs) must involve for-profit organisations, in line with the eligibility conditions set out in the PRIMA AWP 2026 [General Annex B for Section 1](#). The contribution and role of for-profit organisations will be assessed under the award criteria. Please refer to the [General Annex D for Section 1](#) for the standard award criteria applicable to each type of action.

Given the deployment-oriented nature of Innovation Actions, proposals are also expected to include a clear and credible assessment of the economic and financial viability of the proposed innovations. While technical performance—such as enhanced resource efficiency, environmental sustainability, or productivity improvements—is essential, it should be accompanied by a robust analysis of cost-effectiveness, investment requirements, and scalability under realistic market conditions. These aspects will be assessed under the award criteria for Innovation Actions.

#### Coordination and Support Action (CSA)

CSAs under PRIMA do not target specific TRLs, as their objective is not to develop technological or non-technological solutions but to support the broader research and innovation system. In 2026, the CSA will focus on establishing a WEF E Nexus Community of Practice (NCoP). Activities may include:

- Networking and stakeholder engagement
- Knowledge dissemination and policy dialogue
- Data exchange and coordination of enabling frameworks
- Capacity building and best practice transfer
- Promotion of integrated Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems approaches in the Mediterranean

## Evaluation, Funding, and Implementation Modalities

Proposals submitted to PRIMA under the PRIMA Annual Work Programme 2026 shall undergo a peer review and evaluation process centrally managed by PRIMA-IS.

The evaluation procedure is described in the [General Annex F for Section 1](#), while the award criteria applicable to each type of action are set out in the [General Annex D for Section 1](#). The submission and evaluation processes are implemented in accordance with the applicable Horizon Europe framework, including the Rules for Participation and Dissemination (Title II of [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#)).

- Innovation Actions (IAs) will follow a two-stage submission and evaluation procedure, whereby only proposals that pass the first-stage evaluation (based on *Excellence* and *Impact*) will be invited to submit a full application in the second stage, assessed against the full set of award criteria.
- Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) will follow a single-stage submission and evaluation procedure, with full proposals evaluated directly against all applicable award criteria.

These procedures are further detailed in the [General Annexes of Section 1](#) in this document, in full compliance with the programme's governance and implementation rules.

The PRIMA AWP 2026 General Annexes set out the general conditions applicable to all calls and topics for grants and other forms of funding under the PRIMA Partnership. They also detail the applicable evaluation and award procedures, as well as other criteria governing access to PRIMA funding. In particular, the General Annexes outline the following:

- [Admissibility and Eligibility Criteria](#) (Annexes A–C): Define the requirements for proposal submission, eligibility for participation and funding, and include provisions on financial and operational capacity as well as exclusion criteria
- [Award Criteria and Evaluation Procedures](#) (Annexes D–F): Specify the award criteria, mandatory documentation, and the procedures for proposal evaluation, including submission modalities (single-stage or two-stage) and panel composition
- [Legal and Financial Set-Up](#) (Annex G): Establish the rules governing the structure of grant agreements, funding rates, eligible costs, and beneficiaries' financial obligations

Successful proposals will be funded by the European Union with the PRIMA Foundation (PRIMA-IS) acting as the implementing structure responsible for managing the calls and awarding the grants. Grant agreements will be signed between the selected consortia and PRIMA-IS and will follow the [PRIMA Model Grant Agreement \(PRIMA MGA\)](#), which is aligned with the [Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement](#).

## Visibility and Acknowledgement

Visibility and acknowledgement requirements for PRIMA-funded actions are governed by the applicable provisions of the [PRIMA Model Grant Agreement \(PRIMA MGA\)](#), which is aligned with the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.

## Other Activities

PRIMA AWP 2026 includes the award of financial contributions in the form of two equivalent Prizes under the **PRIMA Young Innovators Award – Fostering Sustainable Innovation in the Southern Mediterranean**. These prizes will be awarded following a **contest procedure**, as detailed in the [Prizes—Recognition](#) section of this document.

## Section 1 Calls: Topics 2026

### **CALL Thematic Area 1 - Water management in the Nexus:**

Topic 1.1.1-2026 (IA): Decentralised Brackish Water Desalination for Climate-Resilient and Resource-Efficient Mediterranean Agriculture

### **CALL Thematic Area 2 - Farming systems in the Nexus:**

Topic 1.2.1-2026 (IA) Next Generation of Sustainable and Alternative Animal Feeds for Circular and Resilient Mediterranean Farming Systems

### **CALL Thematic Area 3 - Food value chain in the Nexus:**

Topic 1.3.1-2026 (IA) Sustainable On-Site Transformation of Perishable Mediterranean Agri-food Products

### **CALL Nexus Theme (cross-cutting)**

Topic 1.4.1-2026 (CSA) Institutionalising and Scaling the Mediterranean WEFE Nexus Community of Practice for Cross-Sectoral Governance and Policy Uptake

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## Topic 1.1.1-2026 (IA): Decentralised brackish water desalination for climate-resilient and resource-efficient Mediterranean agriculture

TABLE 6. CALL GENERAL CONDITIONS

 <b>Thematic Area 1-Water management in the Nexus</b>	
Topic 1.1.1 (IA) –2026	<b>Decentralised Brackish Water Desalination for Climate-Resilient and Resource-Efficient Mediterranean Agriculture</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective: 1/ WATER SAVING SOLUTIONS 2/LAND AND WATER SUSTAINABILITY Additional Cross-cutting Alignment: Soil Sustainability Socio-Economic Research and Stakeholders Involvement Digital Revolution
Contribution to EU Policies	<a href="#">Water Framework Directive</a> <a href="#">New Circular Economy Action Plan</a> <a href="#">European Water Resilience Strategy</a> <a href="#">Long term Vision for Rural Areas</a> <a href="#">A Vision for Agriculture and Food</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation</a> <a href="#">SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy</a> <a href="#">SDG 13: Climate Action</a>
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 1.</a>
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 1.</a>
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 1.</a>
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 1.</a>
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 1.</a>
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 1.</a>
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 1.</a>
Expected EU contribution per project	PRIMA estimates that a contribution of around <b>EUR 3.6 million</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is <b>EUR 10.815 million</b>
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.
Type of Action	Innovation Action (IA)
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Activities are expected to achieve <b>TRL 7-8</b> by the end of the project. Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

## **Expected Outcomes.**

Enhancing water-use efficiency and increasing the availability of irrigation water are critical to adapting Mediterranean agriculture to climate change and mitigating the pressures on overexploited aquifers. This is aligned with the objectives of the [European Water Resilience Strategy](#), the [European Green Deal](#), [A Vision for Agriculture and Food](#) and [New Circular Economy Action Plan](#). The action will support water autonomy for smallholder and peri-urban farmers by valorising underutilised brackish water sources, while minimising energy consumption and environmental impact. Projects are expected to deliver measurable contributions to reducing freshwater withdrawals, improving water-use productivity in agriculture, and lowering the carbon and chemical footprint of irrigation through modular, nature-positive technologies.

### **Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following outcomes:**

- Improved access to sustainable and cost-effective irrigation water for Mediterranean smallholders through decentralised, renewable-energy-powered brackish water desalination systems.
- Demonstration of scalable, low-energy desalination solutions adapted to rural and peri-urban farming contexts, including circular brine management strategies that prevent environmental harm.
- Progress toward a climate-neutral, climate-resilient, circular, and resource-efficient agricultural economy by enabling the recovery and reuse of by-products (e.g., nutrients, minerals) and reducing the environmental footprint of irrigation practices.
- Evidence-based recommendations to support policy dialogue and regulatory guidance on non-conventional water use and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), in collaboration with competent authorities and relevant regional platforms.
- A clear market uptake pathway, including cost-performance benchmarks, validated business models for smallholder adoption, and engagement with local SMEs, technology providers, and financial actors to enable scalability and post-project continuity.

**Scope:** Water scarcity is a growing challenge in the Mediterranean, where agriculture accounts for 64–79% of freshwater withdrawals, particularly in southern and eastern regions (FAO 2016; Malek & Verburg 2018)<sup>15</sup>. Brackish water desalination offers a promising alternative to sustain agricultural production, especially for high-value crops and smallholder systems. However, costs, energy intensity, brine disposal, and limited integration with renewable energy and digital optimisation tools hinder adoption (Jones et al., 2019; IRENA, 2022)<sup>16</sup>.

This topic aims to improve the cost-effectiveness, environmental sustainability, and agricultural applicability of brackish water desalination systems, through solutions co-designed with farmers and adapted to local agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions. The use of digital monitoring and optimisation tools (e.g., IoT, Digital Twins, AI) is encouraged where this improves performance or reduces operating costs.

All solutions should comply with the Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) principle under the [EU Taxonomy Regulation, as amended by the Delegated Act of 4 July 2025](#). and ensure no harm to freshwater or marine ecosystems, biodiversity, or circular resource use, applying the “water efficiency first” principle of the [European Water Resilience Strategy](#). Compliance with the DNSH principle will be verified by PRIMA during the project implementation, specifically at reporting time.

Solutions should be co-designed with relevant stakeholders — including farmers, water user associations, community organisations, and public authorities — to ensure they address practical needs and socio-cultural contexts.

<sup>15</sup> FAO (2016a). AQUASTAT Main Database. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Rome. Malek, Ž., & Verburg, P. H. (2018). Adaptation of land management in the Mediterranean under scenarios of irrigation water use and availability. *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change*, 23(5), 821–837. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11027-017-9751-0>

<sup>16</sup> IRENA (2022). *Renewable Energy for Desalination: Technology Brief*. International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Abu Dhabi. ISBN: 978-92-9260-417-5.

**Projects are expected to address at least three of the following activities:**

- Develop and pilot decentralised; environmentally sustainable low-cost brackish water desalination systems specifically tailored for agricultural reuse.
- Test and validate renewable-energy-powered desalination units in different agro-ecological contexts, ensuring energy efficiency and seasonal adaptability
- Assess lifecycle impacts (environmental, economic, and social), including carbon footprint, soil health, cost–benefit analysis, and WEFE Nexus indicators.
- Produce guidelines and toolkits for the design, implementation, and scaling of sustainable desalination solutions for agricultural use, adaptable to various local contexts.

While emphasis may be placed on demonstration, projects must establish a clear foundation for replication and scaling across Mediterranean contexts. Proposals are expected to demonstrate economic and financial viability, including cost-effectiveness, affordability for smallholder and peri-urban farmers, and scalable business and financing models, with engagement of relevant market actors where appropriate.

In line with the Innovation Action award criteria, proposals will be assessed on the credibility of their market uptake and impact pathways, including the meaningful involvement of SMEs. Projects should also include an environmental impact assessment, with particular attention to brine management and ecosystem protection. In light of the specific aims and expected impacts of this topic, PRIMA encourages applicants to additionally include KPIs related to energy use, operational costs, brine management, and farm-level adoption, as these indicators can significantly strengthen monitoring and support the effective implementation of decentralised desalination solutions.

Proposals should adopt a Multi-Actor Approach (MAA)<sup>17</sup>, ensuring that all key actors—end users, practitioners, SMEs, technology providers, researchers, and competent authorities—are meaningfully involved throughout the entire project lifecycle. This includes the definition of needs, co-design of solutions, testing and validation in real contexts, interpretation of results, and formulation of recommendations. Living Labs<sup>18</sup> are encouraged as a framework for participatory co-design and iterative adaptation.

Projects should ensure strong contributions from agronomy, water and resource management, socio-economics, and relevant [Social Sciences and Humanities \(SSH\)](#). To promote anticipatory and responsible innovation, consortia are encouraged to apply the [Societal Readiness Thinking Tool \(Bernstein et al., Science & Engineering Ethics, 2022\)](#) to systematically consider societal needs, ethical dimensions, and adoption pathways throughout the project lifecycle. Projects should define and monitor relevant social and behavioural outcomes, including those linked to *PRIMA KPI 6* (e.g., cooperative governance arrangements, social innovations, behavioural changes in irrigation and farming practices). SSH contributions must be clearly reflected in the work plan, stakeholder engagement, and impact pathways.

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<sup>17</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16)

<sup>18</sup> PRIMA adopts the ENOLL Living Labs definition recognising them as dynamic, open innovation ecosystems where research and innovation are developed, tested, and validated in real-life settings rather than isolated laboratory environments. Through a systematic co-creation approach, Living Labs place citizens, end-users, and local stakeholders at the centre of the innovation process, ensuring that new solutions are not only technically sound and creative, but also relevant, context-appropriate, and grounded in real-world needs.

## Topic 1.2.1-2026 (IA): Next Generation of Sustainable and Alternative Animal Feeds for Circular and Resilient Mediterranean Farming Systems

TABLE 7. CALL GENERAL CONDITIONS

	<b>Thematic Area 2 - Farming systems in the Nexus</b>
Topic 1.2.1. (IA) -2026	<b>Next Generation of Sustainable and Alternative Animal Feeds for Circular and Resilient Mediterranean Farming Systems</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective: 4/ SMART AND SUSTAINABLE FARMING. 7/ REDUCES LOSSES AND WASTE
Contribution to EU Policies	<a href="#">A Vision for Agriculture and Food</a> <a href="#">European Climate Law</a> <a href="#">European Green Deal</a> <a href="#">New Circular Economy Action Plan</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 2 – Zero Hunger</a> <a href="#">SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth</a> <a href="#">SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production</a>
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 1.</a>
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 1.</a>
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 1.</a>
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 1.</a>
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 1.</a>
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 1.</a>
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 1.</a>
Expected EU contribution per project	PRIMA estimates that an EU contribution of around <b>EUR 2.7 million</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is <b>EUR 10.815 million</b>
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.
Type of Action	Innovation Action (IA)
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Activities are expected to achieve <b>TRL 7-8</b> by the end of the project. Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

**Expected Outcomes**

This topic supports the objectives of the [Vision for agriculture and Food](#) and the [New Circular Economy Action Plan](#) promoting the transition towards sustainable, resource-efficient, and circular agri-food systems. It contributes to Operational Objectives 4 – Smart and Sustainable Farming and 7 – Reduce Losses and Wastes in PRIMA SRIA.

The topic promotes circular feed systems, low-input livestock farming, and the integration of agroecological practices, including through Living Lab approaches. These innovations should enable the valorisation of agri-food waste and biomass residues, reduce dependency on imported feedstocks, and lower the overall environmental footprint of feed production and use. In doing so, they contribute to climate change mitigation, resource efficiency, and the preservation of ecosystems.

Funded innovations are expected to reduce the environmental footprint, including methane emissions, associated with feed production and use, with a focus on resource-use efficiency, ecosystem co-benefits, and climate mitigation in line with the [Global Methane Pledge](#), the [EU Methane Strategy](#).

**Project results are expected to contribute to all the following expected outcomes:**

- Reduced dependence on imported animal feeds through the development and adoption of regionally sourced alternatives feed by farmers, supported by demonstration activities, knowledge sharing, capacity building, and policy support
- Reducing overall environmental impact (including methane emissions) of feed production and use, with improved resource-use efficiency and enhanced ecosystem benefits, aligned with circular economy and sustainable agriculture principles
- Effective valorisation of food and agricultural waste, reducing organic waste and minimising the embedded loss of water, energy, and nutrients
- Improved animal health, welfare, and productivity through affordable, nutritionally balanced, and safe feed formulations

**Scope:** Livestock and aquaculture are key sectors where innovation in animal feed can reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, curb nutrient pollution, improve resource-use efficiency, and valorise food system waste. These priorities are aligned with the [European Green Deal](#), the [New Circular Economy Action Plan](#), and the Vision for Agriculture and Food, which call for a fundamental transformation of farming systems toward sustainability, resilience, and circularity. This transformation includes creating fair income opportunities for producers, rewarding ecosystem services, and encouraging the engagement of young innovators in agriculture.

In the Mediterranean region, the sustainability of livestock and inland aquaculture systems is increasingly challenged by the high environmental and economic costs of conventional feed supply chains—particularly those reliant on imported cereals and fishmeal. These dependencies contribute to biodiversity loss, GHG emissions, pollution, and the overexploitation of natural resources, while exposing farmers to global market volatility. At the same time, the underutilisation of regional agri-food by-products and biomass residues represents a missed opportunity to close nutrient loops, reduce organic waste, and foster circular, place-based food systems<sup>19</sup>.

19 FAO (2021). The State of Food and Agriculture 2021: Making agrifood systems more resilient to shocks and stresses. Rome: FAO.<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/e51e0cf0-4ece-428c-8227-ff6c51b06b16/content>

The action aims to develop and validate sustainable, economically viable, and regionally adapted alternative feed solutions derived from locally available biomass, including agri-food waste streams. Proposed innovations should build on and advance existing knowledge and solutions from previous projects, including those supported under EU and PRIMA programmes, where relevant<sup>20</sup>.

Projects are expected to validate the proposed feed solutions in (near-)operational environments (TRL 6–7), demonstrating their technical performance, added environmental value, and competitiveness relative to conventional feed systems, with the objective of progressing toward higher TRLs and investment-readiness for deployment at farm and value-chain scale.

**Projects are expected to address at least three of the following activities:**

- Co-develop and optimise alternative feed formulations based on regionally available biomass legume crops and agri-food waste streams (e.g., processing residues, by-products, bakery waste), ensuring nutritional adequacy, digestibility, safety, environmental sustainability, and compliance with relevant EU and national regulations.
- Test and validate the selected feed solutions in (near-)operational environments (TRL 6–7), including livestock and/or aquaculture demonstration sites and Living Labs<sup>21</sup>, to assess technical performance, practicality, and adaptability across different production systems.
- Assess the effects of the alternative feeds on animal health and welfare, productivity, and the quality and safety of animal-derived products, ensuring conformity with relevant regulatory standards.
- Conduct environmental and economic performance assessments, including: – Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) (e.g., carbon footprint, water use, land use, biodiversity impacts), – Cost-benefit and competitiveness analysis compared to conventional feed chains, – Evaluation of contributions to circularity and resource-use efficiency.
- Develop strategies for scalability and commercialisation, including business and financing models, integration into local feed value chains, investment-readiness assessments, and engagement with market actors and potential investors.

In line with the award criteria for Innovation Actions, proposals will be assessed on the credibility of their pathways to impact, including the meaningful involvement and role of SMEs and other innovation actors, as well as on the economic and financial viability of the proposed feed solutions. Applicants are therefore expected to demonstrate cost-effectiveness, competitiveness with conventional feed systems, and scalability, supported by appropriate business and financing models and, where relevant, engagement with value-chain actors or investors.

Proposals should adopt a Multi-Actor Approach (MAA)<sup>22</sup>, ensuring that all key actors—end users, practitioners, SMEs, technology providers, researchers, and competent authorities—are meaningfully involved throughout the entire project lifecycle. This includes the definition of needs, co-design of solutions, testing and validation in real contexts, interpretation of results, and formulation of recommendations. Living Labs<sup>23</sup> are encouraged ensuring their relevance to local socio-ecological contexts, and their feasibility under real operational conditions.

<sup>20</sup> In particular, synergies with ongoing and recent projects particularly in relation to circular feed systems, feed additives, and GHG emission mitigation in livestock production, such as the NUTRIFEED project, as well as with relevant Horizon Europe calls (e.g. HORIZON-CL6-2026-02-FARM2FORK-05 and HORIZON-CL6-2027-02-FARM2FORK-02), should be considered to enhance complementarity, avoid duplication, and maximise impact.

<sup>21</sup> PRIMA adopts the ENOLL Living Labs definition recognising them as dynamic, open innovation ecosystems where research and innovation are developed, tested, and validated in real-life settings rather than isolated laboratory environments. Through a systematic co-creation approach, Living Labs place citizens, end-users, and local stakeholders at the centre of the innovation process, ensuring that new solutions are not only technically sound and creative, but also relevant, context-appropriate, and grounded in real-world needs.

<sup>22</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14–16).

<sup>23</sup> PRIMA adopts the ENOLL Living Labs definition recognising them as dynamic, open innovation ecosystems where research and innovation are developed, tested, and validated in real-life settings rather than isolated laboratory environments. Through a systematic co-creation approach, Living Labs place citizens, end-users, and local stakeholders at the centre of the innovation process, ensuring that new solutions are not only technically sound and creative, but also relevant, context-appropriate, and grounded in real-world needs.

Proposals are expected to integrate relevant [Social Sciences and Humanities \(SSH\) disciplines](#) to analyse socio-economic drivers, governance arrangements, and behavioural factors influencing the development and adoption of sustainable alternative feed solutions. This includes assessing farm-level decision-making, value-chain incentives, market acceptance, and cultural perceptions linked to animal-derived products.

Projects should define and monitor relevant social and behavioural outcomes, including PRIMA KPI 6 (e.g., cooperative governance models, social innovations, behavioural change in feed and farming practices). The SSH contribution should be clearly reflected in the work plan and methodology, stakeholder engagement processes (e.g., cooperatives, farmers, SMEs, feed producers, consumers), and impact pathways, including business and policy uptake. To support anticipatory and responsible innovation, consortia may use the [Societal Readiness Thinking Tool \(Bernstein et al., \*Science & Engineering Ethics\*, 2022\)](#) to systematically address societal needs, ethical considerations, and adoption pathways throughout the project lifecycle.

## Topic 1.3.1-2026 (IA): Sustainable on-site transformation of perishable Mediterranean agri-products

TABLE 8. CALL GENERAL CONDITIONS

 <b>Thematic Area-3-Food Value Chain in The Nexus</b>	
Topic 1.3.1 (IA) –2026	<b>Sustainable On-Site Transformation of Perishable Mediterranean Agri-Products</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective 7 (Reduce Losses and Wastes) Operational Objective 8 (New Agro-Food Business Models)
Contribution to EU Policies	A <a href="#">Vision for Agriculture and Food</a> , <a href="#">European Green Deal</a> <a href="#">Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)</a> <a href="#">EU Bioeconomy Strategy</a> , <a href="#">New Circular Economy Action Plan</a> <a href="#">Renewable Energy Directive (RED II as amended by RED III)</a> <a href="#">REPowerEU Plan</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)</a> <a href="#">SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)</a> <a href="#">SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)</a>
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 1</a> .
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 1</a> .
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 1</a> .
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 1</a> .
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 1</a> .
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 1</a> .
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 1</a> .
Expected EU contribution per project	PRIMA estimates that an EU contribution of around <b>EUR 2.7 million</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is <b>EUR 10.814 million</b>
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.
Type of Action	Innovation Action (IA)
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	To ensure continuity with previous developments and maximise impact, projects should <b>start from at least TRL 5</b> and to achieve <b>TRL 7-8</b> by the end of the project. Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

## **Expected Outcomes**

Reducing post-harvest losses and improving the capacity to retain value locally are critical priorities for strengthening climate resilience and economic sustainability in Mediterranean agri-food systems. In several parts of the region, losses of fresh and perishable products may reach 30–50%, largely due to climatic stress, insufficient storage, and limited access to appropriate processing infrastructure (FAO, 2019; MedECC, 2020)<sup>24</sup>.

This topic aims to support decentralised and renewable-powered on-site or near-site transformation solutions that extend shelf life, enhance product quality, and increase the share of added value retained within territories. By enabling resource-efficient, low-carbon, and socially inclusive value chain models, projects funded under this call will contribute to the objectives of the [Vision on Agriculture and Food](#), the [New Circular Economy Action Plan](#) and the [EU Bioeconomy Strategy](#), by enabling inclusive rural entrepreneurship, safeguarding agrobiodiversity, and increasing the added value retained within territories, while contributing to the decarbonisation goals of the [Renewable Energy Directive \(RED II as amended by RED III\)](#) and the [REPowerEU Plan](#).

### **Project results are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:**

- Reduction of post-harvest losses and spoilage of perishable Mediterranean agri-food products, particularly in water-scarce or infrastructure-constrained regions.
- Greater market value and competitiveness of traditional, local, and underutilised agricultural products through sustainable processing at or near the point of origin.
- Enhanced circular bioeconomy models, including valorisation of agrobiodiversity and agro-industrial by-products.
- Improved economic resilience and income diversification for smallholders, cooperatives, and rural communities, including in remote and mountain areas.
- Increased participation of women and youth in entrepreneurial and value-added agri-food activities.
- Greater local energy autonomy and reduced reliance on fossil fuels, through renewable-powered or hybrid processing solutions tailored to Mediterranean climatic conditions.

**Scope:** Proposals should support the co-design, development, demonstration, and validation of compact, modular, and cost-efficient processing solutions enabling the on-site or near-site transformation of perishable Mediterranean plant agricultural products (e.g., onions, tomatoes, peppers, grapes, olives, citrus fruits, figs, etc.) into higher-value food products (such as dried fruits, pastes, spreads, fermented products, preserved vegetables, herbal extracts etc.). Solutions should be adapted to typical Mediterranean agro-climatic conditions and socio-economic contexts, including areas with limited water availability and weak infrastructure. Technologies should be simple to operate, maintain, repair, and replicate locally, ensuring long-term adoption and sustainability. Processing units may be powered by renewable energy sources (e.g. solar, wind, biomass) or hybrid off-grid systems, and may include capabilities such as drying, cooling, fermentation, preservation, or green extraction. Where relevant, digital and AI-enabled functionalities may be integrated to improve quality control, resource efficiency, and traceability along the value chain.

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<sup>24</sup> Sources: FAO (2019). The State of Food and Agriculture 2019: Moving Forward on Food Loss and Waste Reduction. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. MedECC (2020). Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin – First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1). Union for the Mediterranean / UNEP-MAP Plan Bleu.

In line with the award criteria for Innovation Actions, proposals will be assessed on the credibility of their pathways to impact, including the meaningful involvement of SMEs and other innovation actors, as well as on the economic and financial viability of the proposed processing solutions. Applicants are therefore expected to demonstrate cost-effectiveness, affordability, replicability, and scalability, supported by appropriate business and financing models and, where relevant, engagement with value-chain actors or investors.

**Projects are expected to address all the following activities:**

- Co-develop, validate, and field-demonstrate decentralised and modular processing technologies adapted to smallholder, cooperative, and community-based production contexts, including mountain communities and other geographically remote or marginal rural areas.
- Solutions should integrate renewable-energy-powered or hybrid off-grid systems to ensure environmental and operational sustainability under diverse Mediterranean conditions.
- Apply participatory and user-centred design approaches throughout development, testing, and demonstration phases. Proposals are strongly encouraged to adopt a Multi-Actor Approach (MAA)<sup>25</sup>, ensuring meaningful involvement of end users, SMEs, technology providers, researchers, and local authorities/communities across the entire project cycle. Living Labs<sup>26</sup> are encouraged as a framework to support co-creation and stakeholder engagement in real operational contexts.
- Demonstrate technical performance, cost-effectiveness, replicability, and scalability of the proposed solutions in real operational settings. This should include comprehensive technological economic and market analyses, comparative cost and affordability assessments, and the validation of feasible business and scale-up models. Proposals should also present credible exploitation, manufacturing, and deployment strategies, including pathways for local production or assembly, distribution models, and long-term operational support structures.

In addition to selecting at least three PRIMA-specific KPIs, applicants are expected to monitor and report on the following compulsory KPIs:

- Reduction of post-harvest losses (%) for the targeted product(s)
- Energy consumption per unit of transformed product, including renewable energy share;
- Increase in added value retained locally (%) at farm, cooperative, or community level.

Proposals are encouraged to develop and implement training, maintenance, and capacity-building programmes to enable long-term operation, local repair capabilities, and sustained uptake within target territories. Projects selected under this topic are encouraged to establish active synergies with projects funded under the Horizon Europe call [HORIZON-CL6-2025-02-FARM2FORK-02](#). Such synergies could focus on the exchange of best practices, joint dissemination activities, and cross-fertilisation of innovative technological and business-model solutions.

<sup>25</sup>The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16).

<sup>26</sup> PRIMA adopts the ENOLL Living Labs definition recognising them as dynamic, open innovation ecosystems where research and innovation are developed, tested, and validated in real-life settings rather than isolated laboratory environments. Through a systematic co-creation approach, Living Labs place citizens, end-users, and local stakeholders at the centre of the innovation process, ensuring that new solutions are not only technically sound and creative, but also relevant, context-appropriate, and grounded in real-world needs.

## Topic 1.4.1-2026 (CSA): Institutionalising and scaling the Mediterranean WEF Nexus Community of Practice for cross-sectoral governance and policy uptake

TABLE 9. CALL GENERAL CONDITIONS

NEXUS THEME	
Topic 1.4.1 (CSA) –2026	<b>Institutionalising and Scaling the Mediterranean WEF Nexus Community of Practice for Cross-Sectoral Governance and Policy Uptake</b>
Contribution to SRIA	OO3 – Water Governance Systems OO4 – Smart and Sustainable Farming Systems OO7 – Reduce Losses and Wastes OO8 – New Agro-Food Business Models Alignment with SRIA Cross-Cutting Themes Soil Sustainability, Socio-Economic Research & Stakeholder Involvement, Digital Revolution, Capacity Building
Contribution to EU Policies	<a href="#">European Green Deal</a> <a href="#">EU Adaptation Strategy</a> <a href="#">Water Framework Directive</a> <a href="#">European Ocean Pact</a> <a href="#">European Water Resilience Strategy</a> <a href="#">Renewable Energy Directive (RED II as amended by RED III)</a> <a href="#">REPowerEU Plan</a> <a href="#">EU Soil Monitoring Law</a> <a href="#">Nature restoration regulation</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">All SDGs</a>
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 1.</a>
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 1.</a>
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 1.</a>
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 1.</a>
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 1.</a>
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 1.</a>
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 1.</a>
Expected EU contribution per project	PRIMA estimates that a contribution of around <b>EUR 1.05 million</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is <b>EUR 1.05 million.</b>
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations
Type of Action	Coordination and Support Action (CSA)

## **Expected Outcomes**

This Coordination and Support Action (CSA), aims to consolidate, institutionalise and scale the Mediterranean WEFE Nexus Community of Practice (NCoP) initiated under the PRIMA [WEFE4MED project](#). The action will support more coherent and coordinated governance of natural resources across the land–water–energy–food–ecosystems continuum, including the sea–to–land interface, by facilitating cross-sectoral dialogue, strengthening joint planning processes and promoting the integration of Nexus principles into territorial and sectoral strategies.

In doing so, the action will contribute to the objectives of the [European Water Resilience Strategy](#) and the [European Ocean Pact](#), support the protection and restoration of soil functions in line with the [EU Soil Monitoring Law](#), and align with the policy orientations set out in the [Vision for Agriculture and Food](#).

Through the networking of existing and newly identified WEFE Nexus demonstration cases, and by strengthening knowledge-sharing and capacity-building processes, the NCoP will consolidate and systematise lessons emerging from real-world implementations, while laying the foundations for long-term sustainability and institutional anchoring beyond the duration of this CSA.

### **Expected Short-to-Medium Term Outcomes:**

- A consolidated and functional Mediterranean WEFE NCoP, with a clear shared purpose, strengthened governance and sustained facilitation.
- A curated set of WEFE Best Management Practices (BMPs) from demonstration cases, documented using transparent criteria (technical/financial feasibility, stakeholder ownership, policy alignment, modularity).
- Practical guidance and decision-support tools (e.g., replication frameworks, practice briefs, policy notes) enabling the integration of Nexus principles into planning and resource management.
- Structured peer-learning and capacity-building, fostering continuous exchange and co-development among basin agencies, ministries, municipalities, cooperatives, SMEs, civil society, youth and women networks.

### **Expected Longer-Term Impacts (5–10 years):**

- Progressive uptake of WEFE Nexus approaches in national, sub-national and basin-level planning and governance processes.
- Institutional anchoring of the NCoP within Mediterranean cooperation frameworks, supported by a sustainability and long-term resource mobilisation strategy.
- Mobilisation of international and blended finance to replicate and scale validated Nexus Best Management Practices across diverse Mediterranean contexts.

**Scope:** Building on the foundations laid under the PRIMA-funded WEFE4MED project, this action will consolidate and expand the Mediterranean WEFE NCoP, fostering cross-sectoral cooperation and strengthening linkages to policy and investment agendas. The NCoP will operate as a structured and sustained mechanism for collaborative learning, cross-sectoral dialogue and the progressive uptake of Nexus approaches across the Mediterranean, including in contexts where land, water, energy, food and ecosystems interact along the land–water–coastal continuum.

The CSA will network, document, and draw lessons from existing and newly identified WEFE Nexus demonstration cases across the Mediterranean. Selected cases must exhibit (i) financial and operational feasibility, (ii) strong stakeholder ownership, (iii) alignment with regulatory and governance contexts and (iv) modular, adaptable design suitable for replication in diverse territorial and socio-economic settings. The CSA will support their identification, methodological strengthening, visibility and use as reference points for peer learning and policy uptake.

The action will reinforce the Community of Practice in line with the [Etienne Wenger model](#), by:

- Strengthening the shared domain (a common Nexus framing and problem space),
- Enabling an active community (facilitated, recurring, structured engagement), and
- Developing a shared practice (transferable tools, methods and validated Best Management Practices).

**Projects are expected to address all of the following activities:**

- Formalise and strengthen the governance and facilitation model of the NCoP, including clear roles, membership mechanisms, thematic working groups and engagement protocols, to ensure coordinated and sustained community animation.
- Design and deliver structured peer-learning and capacity-building programmes, such as practitioner exchanges and moderated community dialogues, to build shared understanding, skills and problem-solving capacity across sectors and governance levels.
- Synthesize lessons from demonstration cases into practical, transferable guidance, including replication frameworks, methodological notes, practice briefs and targeted policy recommendations, to enable adaptation and uptake in new contexts.
- Enhance and maintain a digital knowledge and interaction hub that supports ongoing knowledge and data exchange, collaborative development of materials and access to curated resources, ensuring the NCoP functions as a living, continuously-learning community
- Support selected public authorities and basin/coastal organisations in applying Nexus principles in planning and policy processes, through contextualised advisory support and facilitated multi-stakeholder dialogue, enabling real-world operational and governance improvements.
- Co-develop investment and partnership pathways for replication and scaling, including finance-ready concept notes and engagement with regional, EU and international funding mechanisms, to position validated Nexus practices for future deployment and financing.

**Sustainability and Long-Term Continuity.**

During the CSA, the project consortium will act as the coordination and facilitation team of the NCoP. The action should develop a realistic sustainability and institutional anchoring roadmap, identifying potential long-term hosts or co-hosts (e.g., PRIMA Secretariat or regional cooperation platforms), membership frameworks and resource mobilisation strategies to ensure the NCoP continues to operate beyond the duration of EU funding.

**Consortium Profile.**

Applicants should demonstrate proven experience in building and facilitating Communities of Practice and in managing science–policy interfaces and participatory processes. Consortia should be small and agile (3–4 partners), with the capacity to convene diverse actors and animate the NCoP through structured peer-learning, field exchanges and regional engagement activities.

## Call Calendar

All deadlines are set at **17:00:00 CET (Central European Time)**. The PRIMA-IS will conduct the eligibility check after each submission deadline and prior to the evaluation process.

The Executive Director of PRIMA-IS may decide to publish and open the call up to two weeks earlier or one month later than the envisaged date(s). Deadlines for proposal submission may also be postponed by up to two months, if duly justified.

The table below provides the indicative calendar for calls for proposals, including both stages of the submission process where applicable.

TABLE 10. TIMETABLE FOR SECTION 1 CALL FOR PROPOSALS IN 2026

THEMATIC AREA	CALL TOPICS	CALL PUBLICATION AND OPENING	SUBMISSION DEADLINE STAGE 1	EVALUATION RESULTS STAGE 1	SUBMISSION DEADLINE STAGE 2	EVALUATION RESULTS STAGE 2
<b>Water management in the nexus</b>	Topic 1.1.1 (IA)	20.3.2026	15.5.2026	30.6.2026	18.9.2026	11.12.2026
<b>Farming systems in the nexus</b>	Topic 1.2.1 (IA)	20.3.2026	15.5.2026	30.6.2026	18.9.2026	11.12.2026
<b>Food value chain in the nexus</b>	Topic 1.3.1 (IA)	20.3.2026	15.5.2026	30.6.2026	18.9.2026	11.12.2026
<b>Nexus Theme</b>	Topic 1.4.1 (CSA)	20.3.2026	15.5.2026	30.6.2026		11.12.2026

## Activities supporting programme operations with EU funds, implemented by PRIMA-IS

The PRIMA-IS is responsible for the evaluation of proposals submitted under Section 1 Calls, in accordance with the procedures set out in the [General Annexes for Section 1](#). It also ensures the monitoring and follow-up of funded projects, from the preparation of grant agreements to project completion. Detailed provisions on evaluation, selection, and award procedures, as well as applicable grant agreement types, funding rates, and financial conditions, are specified in each call topic and further elaborated in the [General Annexes for Section 1](#) of this AWP, in compliance with in compliance with [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon Europe](#).

### External expertise for the evaluation and monitoring of project proposals

#### Objective

This activity entails the implementation of the evaluation, selection, and ranking procedures for all eligible proposals submitted under the PRIMA Calls 2026, pursuant to the rules set out in the PRIMA AWP 2026 General Annexes and in accordance with the Rules for Participation and Dissemination laid down in Regulation (EU) No 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Horizon Europe).

The evaluation process shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions of General [Annex F – Evaluation Procedure and Ranking](#), including the involvement of independent external experts, the application of award criteria, and the establishment of ranked lists for funding. In 2026, both Section 1 and Section 2 calls will follow a two-stage submission and evaluation procedure, with the exception of the Coordination and Support Action (CSA) under Section 1, which shall follow a single-stage procedure.

Following the completion of the evaluation process, PRIMA-IS shall prepare the necessary documentation to support the decision of the PRIMA Board of Trustees, in line with [Article 9 of the PRIMA Statutes](#).

#### Evaluation, Selection, and Monitoring Procedures

PRIMA-IS shall appoint independent external experts to evaluate the proposals submitted under the 2026 PRIMA Calls and may be supported by additional external expertise, where relevant.

Experts shall be selected in accordance with Horizon Europe standards and the principles of transparency, equal treatment and absence of conflicts of interest, primarily from the PRIMA expert database established through the “[Register as an Expert](#)” portal. Where the expertise required for a given call is not sufficiently covered, PRIMA-IS may also appoint additional experts following a call for expression of interest. Experts may also be appointed for other assignments requiring high-level and impartial expertise, such as proposal reviews, hearings or advisory tasks.

The appointed experts shall carry out remote evaluations for both **first stage** and **second stage** (full proposals) submissions, in accordance with the evaluation criteria and procedures laid down in the [General Annexes for Section 1](#). PRIMA-IS shall provide evaluators with detailed guidelines for the remote assessment process and the drafting of individual evaluation reports. Following the remote evaluation phase, the experts shall convene in an evaluation panel to prepare consensus reports for each proposal. Once consensus is reached, the panel shall finalise the evaluation scores and comments and shall proceed to establish the ranking list of proposals in accordance with the procedures outlined in [Annex F – Evaluation Procedure and Ranking](#). This panel meeting may be held physically or remotely, as required.

PRIMA-IS shall cover the fees, travel, accommodation, and meeting-related expenses of the independent experts involved in the evaluation process, in line with European Commission standard practices.

In accordance with Article 6(2)(q) of the PRIMA Statutes, PRIMA-IS shall also support the organisation and operational costs of the PRIMA Board of Trustees' meeting, where the final funding decision on projects will be made based on the established ranking list. Additionally, PRIMA-IS shall cover the costs associated with the monitoring of funded projects, including activities related to the technical and financial reporting obligations of beneficiaries.

**Type of activity:** Expert's contracts.

**Indicative budget:** EUR 340 000

## Other actions not subject to calls for proposals

### *Project day meeting*

#### **Objective**

The PRIMA Project Day is a two-day onsite event held in Barcelona, bringing together around 80 to 100 participants from across the PRIMA community. The 2026 edition will welcome the coordinators and beneficiaries of newly funded projects under the PRIMA Annual Work Programme 2025, alongside the coordinators of projects funded under the 2024 Work Programme who are now entering their second year of implementation. Their joint participation fosters continuity between project cycles and enables direct exchange of practical insights and lessons learned. Representatives from National Funding Agencies, the PRIMA Board of Trustees, the Scientific Advisory Committee, the PRIMA Secretariat, and the European Commission also attend, contributing institutional perspectives, strategic guidance, and expert advice.

The objective of the event is to provide all beneficiaries with a comprehensive introduction to PRIMA's operational, administrative, and strategic framework. Participants receive clear guidance on project commencement, cost eligibility and financial management, communication and visibility obligations, and the monitoring, reporting, and performance-tracking procedures that govern PRIMA-funded actions. This ensures that newly funded consortia begin implementation with clarity, coherence, and full alignment with PRIMA standards.

In addition to these operational sessions, the event plays a central role in strengthening coordination between PRIMA-IS and project coordinators, harmonising expectations across all funded projects, and encouraging collaboration within the broader Mediterranean research and innovation ecosystem. A key highlight is the Project Pitching Session, where newly funded consortia present their project vision, approach, and expected impact in concise, high-visibility pitches that stimulate peer learning and early networking.

The programme also features a **Scientific Café with poster sessions**, designed as an interactive and informal space where participants can showcase ongoing work, discuss technical challenges, explore potential synergies, and engage in cross-project dialogue. This dedicated exchange format encourages meaningful interactions between new and ongoing projects and offers a relaxed environment for scientific discussion, matchmaking, and community building.

Over the course of the two days, the event blends plenary presentations, thematic workshops, hands-on clinics, project pitching, and the Scientific Café with poster sessions, alongside several opportunities for informal networking. By the conclusion of the meeting, participants leave Barcelona with a solid operational roadmap, strengthened professional connections, and an enhanced sense of belonging to the PRIMA community committed to advancing sustainable water, farming, and agri-food systems across the Mediterranean.

**Type of Action:** Public procurement

**Indicative Timetable:** Q3 2026

**Indicative Budget:** EUR 40,000

## *PRIMA Young Innovators Award 2026*

### **Objective**

The PRIMA Young Innovators Award 2026 is a *Recognition Prize*<sup>27</sup>, rewarding the creativity, leadership, and determination of young innovators<sup>28</sup> from Southern Mediterranean Countries who are shaping a more sustainable future for the region.

The Award aims to:

- Recognise young innovators who have personally led or significantly contributed to the conception and implementation of a solution aligned with PRIMA's mission;
- Promote youth leadership, initiative and problem-solving capacity in addressing Mediterranean sustainability challenges;
- Support innovations that demonstrate clear relevance to local Mediterranean contexts and respond to real societal, environmental and economic needs;
- Encourage initiatives with measurable or credible expected impacts on environmental sustainability, livelihoods, or social inclusion;
- Foster replication, scalability and youth empowerment, including inspiring and mentoring other young innovators, with particular attention to women innovators.

The PRIMA Young Innovators Award 2026 will be awarded following a contest procedure and a transparent evaluation process, as described in the Rules of Contest (RoC) published on the PRIMA website at the time of call launch. Two equivalent recognition prizes will be awarded to the two highest-ranked eligible applications following evaluation. Each prize amounts to **EUR 10,000**.

The prizes:

- are not category-based;
- are not designated as first and second prizes;
- cannot be split, combined, or reallocated.

Awardees will benefit from high visibility and recognition, including media coverage, public acknowledgement and networking opportunities. The RoC will be published on the [PRIMA website](#) once the PRIMA 2026 calls are officially launched.

<sup>27</sup> Recognition prizes: a prize to reward past achievements and outstanding work after it has been performed. Recognition prizes must help to raise public awareness of EU policies, create role models and support best practice exchange.

<sup>28</sup> For the purposes of this contest, 'young innovators' are defined as individuals who are 35 years old or younger at the closing date for submission of applications.

**Eligibility criteria**

Applicants must fulfil all of the following conditions:

- Be natural persons aged between 18 and 35 years at the deadline for submission;
- Be nationals and residents of one of the PRIMA Participating States bordering the Mediterranean Sea (Southern Mediterranean Countries), namely Algeria\*, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco\*, Tunisia, or Türkiye<sup>29</sup>;
- Submit an application either:
  - as an individual young innovator, or
  - as a group of young innovators through a joint application, provided that all applicants fulfil all eligibility criteria.

The Award is addressed exclusively to natural persons. Applications based on affiliation with or representation of a company, organisation, or other legal entity are not foreseen and are not eligible.

In the case of joint applications submitted by a group of persons:

- One applicant shall be designated as the lead participant for administrative and financial purposes;
- Eligibility checks shall be carried out on all applicants. If one applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria, the group shall be invited to replace that applicant; failing this, the entire application shall be rejected;
- The prize shall be awarded jointly to all eligible applicants;

The prize payment shall be made exclusively to the lead participant, in accordance with the applicable rules. Any recovery of amounts shall be subject to the applicable legal framework and, where relevant, to the agreement of PRIMA-IS. In practice, recoveries should be limited to cases of misrepresentation or fraud and will, in principle, be addressed to the lead participant. Any joint and several responsibilities of other applicants shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis and subject to agreement by the Legal Service.

The following applicants are not eligible:

- Employees of PRIMA;
- Members of PRIMA governance or advisory bodies (Board of Trustees, Steering Committee, Scientific Advisory Committee);
- Applicants who have already received an EU or Euratom prize for the same activity.

The proposed solution should have been conceived, developed, and/or implemented within one of PRIMA PS.

**Award criteria**

An independent panel of experts will evaluate all eligible applications. The award will be granted to the young innovator(s) who best demonstrate the following criteria, based on the solution they have conceived, developed and/or implemented, which serves as supporting evidence across all criteria.

**1. Innovator's Leadership and Creative Contribution**

The extent to which the applicant(s):

- Have played a leading role in the conception, development, and implementation of the proposed solution;

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29 For the countries indicated with an Asterisk (\*), they can be considered Participating State following the conclusion and entry into force of the relevant international agreement. Algeria is currently negotiating its participation in PRIMA. For Morocco, participation as Participating States is subject to the entry into force of the relevant international agreements. Applicants are encouraged to consult the PRIMA website for the most up-to-date information on country eligibility and participation status at the time of proposal submission.

- Demonstrate creativity, initiative, and problem-solving capacity in addressing Mediterranean challenges;
- Show personal commitment, vision, and the ability to mobilise ideas, skills, or stakeholders to deliver the solution.

## 2. Relevance of the Innovator's Work to Mediterranean Challenges

The extent to which the applicant(s), through their innovation:

- Address key Mediterranean challenges related to sustainable agriculture, resilient food systems, water management, and/or the responsible use of natural resources;
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of Mediterranean socio-environmental contexts, with the solution developed and/or implemented in at least one Mediterranean country;
- Show an innovative approach (technological, organisational, social, business-related, or community-driven) compared to existing practices.

## 3. Impact Achieved or Expected through the Innovator's Initiative

The extent to which the applicant(s) can demonstrate that their initiative has generated, or is expected to generate, tangible impacts, such as:

- Environmental benefits (e.g. reduced water or energy use, improved resource efficiency, lower emissions);
- Economic benefits (e.g. income generation, cost reduction, improved livelihoods, or market access);
- Social benefits (e.g. improved nutrition, job creation, social inclusion, gender equality, improved access to resources or services).

Applicants are encouraged to provide qualitative and/or quantitative evidence (e.g. indicators, data, or testimonials) to support their claims.

## 4. Potential for Growth, Replication, and Youth Empowerment

The extent to which the applicant(s):

- Demonstrate the potential to scale up or replicate their initiative in other Mediterranean contexts;
- Show awareness of feasibility aspects (technical, social, organisational, and/or economic);
- Contribute to youth empowerment, including the involvement, inspiration, or mentoring of other young people, and the potential to foster youth-led innovation and leadership in the Mediterranean region.

### **Rules of Contest (RoC)**

At the time of the call launch, applicants will have access to the official RoC, which will specify:

- The admissibility and eligibility conditions
- The award criteria, in line with those set out in this Work Programme
- The submission process, including required formats, supporting documentation and deadlines
- The evaluation and award procedure and prioritisation rules (e.g. in the case of an ex aequo)

**Type of action:** Recognition prizes

**Indicative timetable:** Prize contests will be launched in **Q1 2026** and remain open until **Q2 2026**.

**Prize Amount(s):** Two awards of EUR 10,000 each

**Total Budget:** EUR 20,000

## Section 2: Activities organised by PRIMA-IS and funded by the national funding bodies of Participating States

Activities funded under Section 2 of the PRIMA AWP 2026 are implemented and funded exclusively by the Participating States (PS).

Activities funded under Section 2 of the PRIMA AWP 2026 are funded by the Participating States (PS). The calls are centrally managed by the PRIMA Foundation (PRIMA-IS), including submission, evaluation and ranking, in accordance with the [Rules for Participation of Horizon Europe](#) and the applicable provisions of the [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2024/2509](#), while the award and management of national funding are governed by the relevant national funding regulations of each Participating State.

The 2026 Section 2 call will be launched as a single, multi-topic call, covering Research and Innovation Activities (RIA) across the full spectrum of Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs 3–7). Funding for higher TRLs (6–8) may be permitted only if explicitly allowed under the applicable national funding regulations. In the absence of specific guidance, applicants must consult the relevant [National Contact Points \(NCPs\)](#).

Each applicant must ensure compliance with the rules of their national funding agency prior to submission. This includes verifying funding rates, eligible costs, and specific conditions for participation. For any uncertainties, applicants are strongly encouraged to consult their national funding rules and contact the relevant NCP. Grant agreements will be signed directly between the beneficiaries and the respective national funding bodies, according to national legal and financial provisions (See [PRIMA AWP 2026 General Annexes for Section 2](#)).

### Submission and Evaluation Procedure

The 2026 Section 2 call will follow a two-stage submission and evaluation process:

- In Stage 1, applicants must submit a short proposal (maximum 10 pages), focusing on Excellence and Impact.
- Only proposals successfully evaluated in Stage 1 will be invited to submit a full proposal in Stage 2 (maximum 45 pages), covering all evaluation criteria.

Proposals must be submitted through the [PRIMA electronic submission system](#). The eligibility and admissibility checks will be carried out first by PRIMA-IS in accordance with the PRIMA General Annexes (Annexes [A](#) and [B](#)), and subsequently by each national funding agency, based on their national rules. If a participant in a consortium is found ineligible for funding under national regulations, PRIMA-IS may request a formal declaration of alternative funding or seek additional clarifications to ensure the project's integrity. Only those proposals that are deemed eligible by both PRIMA-IS and the relevant national funding bodies will proceed to evaluation.

Proposals will be evaluated by independent external experts, appointed by PRIMA-IS, following a transparent peer-review process. At the end of the evaluation, the expert panel will establish a single ranking list, ensuring that the highest quality proposals are prioritised for funding. If one or more projects cannot be funded due to national budget constraints, the next project(s) on the ranking list may be selected for funding, in accordance with available resources. For detailed information on the evaluation process and criteria, applicants are referred to General [Annex F – Evaluation](#) Procedure and Ranking of the PRIMA AWP 2026 General Annexes.

## Funding Instruments and Participation Rules

All beneficiaries funded under Section 2 will enter into grant agreements directly with their national funding bodies. Projects must address the topics listed in [Section 2 multi-topic Call \(three topics\)](#) of this AWP, including relevant cross-cutting issues where applicable. Proposals that address multiple topics may be admissible, provided they are eligible under the national rules of the involved countries.

Training and mobility activities (e.g. for early-career researchers, postgraduates, or postdoctoral fellows) are encouraged, when eligible under national funding rules. Projects should deliver tangible outputs and promote technological and social innovation.

Where allowed, projects are encouraged to integrate advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, smart digital tools, space-based data, or big data analytics, when they bring a clear added-value to the implementation of the project and to reach its objectives. Innovation Actions involving private sector actors, especially SMEs, may be eligible if expressly permitted by the national funding agency.

## Visibility and Acknowledgement

All participants in activities funded under Section 2 must ensure proper visibility of PRIMA and the European Union in all communication and dissemination materials. Any output (including publications, presentations, websites, media content, and promotional material) must include the following acknowledgement:

*“[Name of the activity / grant code] is part of the PRIMA Programme, supported by the European Union.”*

This statement must appear alongside the **PRIMA logo**, following the official PRIMA Communication and Visibility Guidelines. The **EU emblem** must also be displayed, accompanied by the statement:

*“Co-funded by the European Union.”*

The PRIMA logo and the EU emblem must be displayed together and at equal size, ensuring clear visibility and balanced representation. The EU emblem must comply with the European Commission’s official graphical standards and must not be modified. The **logo of all the relevant national funding agencies** shall also be included, in accordance with their respective visibility and branding requirements.

**Each funded action must establish an official project website.** The website must include the required acknowledgements and information on project activities and results and should be maintained and accessible for at least one year after the end of the project.

## Section 2 multi-topic Call (three topics)

### 1. Thematic Area 1-Water management in the Nexus

Topic 2.1.1-2026 (RIA\*<sup>30</sup>) Leveraging Ecosystem Functions and Enhancing Water Allocation for the Protection and Restoration of Non-Perennial Watercourses in the Mediterranean

### 2. Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus

Topic 2.2.1-2026 (RIA\*<sup>31</sup>) Novel remote and non-invasive ICT monitoring and control systems against disease and pest infestation

### 3. Thematic Area 3-Food value chain in the Nexus

Topic 2.3.1-2026 (RIA\*<sup>32</sup>) Empowering Mediterranean Food Value Chains through Context-Aware Digital Traceability

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<sup>30</sup>, <sup>31</sup>, <sup>32</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the rules applying to these actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RfP) established in Regulation (EU) 2021/695. In contrast, while the rules used in Section 2 are partially based on the Horizon Europe RfP, specific provisions concerning participation and funding rates apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to the respective national regulations. For more detailed information regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants available on the PRIMA website.

## Topic 2.1.1-2026 (RIA\*): Leveraging ecosystem functions and enhancing water allocation for the protection and restoration of non-perennial watercourses in the Mediterranean

TABLE 11. GENERAL CALL CONDITIONS

 <span style="float: right;">Thematic Area-1 Water management in the Nexus</span>	
Topic 2.1.1-2026 (RIA*)	<b>Leveraging Ecosystem Functions and Enhancing Water Allocation for the Protection and Restoration of Non-Perennial Watercourses in the Mediterranean</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective 2/LAND AND WATER SUSTAINABILITY 3/ WATER GOVERNANCE SYSTEM
Contribution to EU Policies	<a href="#">Water Framework Directive</a> <a href="#">EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030</a> <a href="#">EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change</a> <a href="#">Zero Pollution Action Plan</a> <a href="#">European Water Resilience Strategy</a> <a href="#">European Climate Law</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)</a> <a href="#">SDG 13 (Climate Action)</a> <a href="#">SDG 15 (Life on Land)</a> .
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 2</a> .
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 2</a> .
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 2</a> .
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 2</a> .
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 2</a> .
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 2</a> .
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 2</a> .
Expected contribution per project	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting contribution of at least <b>EUR 1 million</b> would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts or duration, following national regulations.
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.
Type of Action	Research & Innovation Activities (RIA* <sup>33</sup> )
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

<sup>33</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RFP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RFP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website.

### **Expected Outcomes**

Enhancing the protection, ecological functionality, and climate resilience of non-perennial watercourses is essential for safeguarding biodiversity, ecosystem services, and water security in the Mediterranean. This aligns with the [Water Framework Directive](#), the [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#), the [EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change](#), the [Zero Pollution Action Plan](#), and the recently adopted [European Water Resilience Strategy](#) and contributes to PRIMA Operational Objectives on Land and Water Sustainability and Water Governance Systems.

Projects will also support the [Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#)—particularly [SDG 6 \(Clean Water and Sanitation\)](#), [SDG 13 \(Climate Action\)](#), and [SDG 15 \(Life on Land\)](#).

The action will support inclusive and ecosystem-based approaches to the management and restoration of ephemeral, seasonal, and intermittent rivers, streams, and wadis, ensuring that environmental flows and ecosystem needs are recognised in water planning and allocation. Projects are expected to strengthen resilience to hydroclimatic variability by maintaining or restoring key ecological processes.

### **Project results are expected to contribute to the following expected outcomes:**

- Improved scientific and policy understanding of non-perennial water systems in diverse Mediterranean socio-ecological contexts
- Evidence-based evaluation of ecosystem services including their condition, functionality, and benefits, and their interactions with land use, water abstraction, and climate variability.
- Demonstrated ecological restoration and improved resilience through nature-based solutions (e.g. riparian zone rehabilitation, agroecological practices, floodplain reconnection)
- Strengthened livelihoods and agricultural sustainability in communities reliant on non-perennial watercourses
- Updated water allocation frameworks that explicitly integrate environmental flows and prioritise biodiversity and ecosystem integrity

**Scope:** Non-perennial watercourses — including ephemeral, seasonal, and intermittent rivers and streams — are integral to the hydrological and ecological systems of the Mediterranean<sup>34,35</sup>. However, they are increasingly vulnerable to climate change, groundwater over-extraction, land-use change, and agricultural intensification<sup>36</sup>, while their ecological roles remain insufficiently recognised in water governance<sup>37</sup>. Strengthening their protection and restoration is therefore critical for climate resilience, sustainable agriculture, and biodiversity conservation in the region. By improving the understanding of the ecosystem services provided by these systems and informing water allocation frameworks that acknowledge environmental flows, projects responding to this topic will support inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable water governance under climate stress. Proposals should generate robust evidence and co-develop nature-based solutions (NbS) that maintain or restore the ecological functionality of non-perennial watercourses.

34 Datry, T., Boulton, A., & Bonada, N. (2017). *Intermittent Rivers and Ephemeral Streams: Ecology and Management*. Academic Press.

35 T.N. Skoulikidis, S. Sabater, T. Datry, M. Morais, A. Buffagni, et al. Non-perennial Mediterranean rivers in Europe: Status, pressures, and challenges for research and management. *Science of the Total Environment*, 2017, 577, pp.1-18. [10.1016/j.scitotenv.2016.10.147](#). hal-01774966

36 IPCC (2022). *Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) – WGII: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*.

37 Gallart, F., Prat, N., García-Roger, E., et al. (2012). "A novel approach to analysing the regimes of temporary rivers." *Hydrological Sciences Journal*, 57(3), 742–758.

**Proposed activities should cover at least one of the following aspects:**

- Map Mediterranean non-perennial watercourses at country level to guide sustainable water planning and accounting under increasingly variable hydroclimatic conditions
- Co-design decision-support tools that integrate ecosystem water needs, users' demands, and biodiversity protection into water allocation and management processes. Tools should build on existing systems where appropriate and may include digital and AI-enabled features to enhance usability, transparency, and policy relevance.
- Implement and assess nature-based interventions to restore ecological functionality, stabilise soils, improve infiltration, and enhance biodiversity in non-perennial watercourses. These may include but are not limited to: riparian and catchment restoration, vegetated buffer strips, soil–water retention and erosion control measures, agroecological land and grazing management practices, and floodplain reconnection or reactivation where hydrologically feasible.

Projects should monitor biodiversity and ecosystem health to assess the effectiveness of interventions, with particular attention to maintaining ecological integrity under changing flow regimes.

While interventions may be tested at pilot scale, proposals are expected to lay the groundwork for scaling up tools, frameworks, and methodologies across different Mediterranean contexts, thereby enhancing both scientific knowledge and practical implementation.

Projects should ensure meaningful co-creation with local communities, water managers, and policymakers, so that solutions are socially relevant and policy-ready. Stakeholder engagement should therefore be embedded within solution-oriented activities, not treated as a stand-alone objective.

Proposals should adopt a Multi-Actor Approach (MAA)<sup>38</sup>, that ensures meaningful co-creation with local communities, end users, water managers, policymakers, SMEs, technology providers, researchers, and competent authorities. Stakeholder engagement should be embedded throughout the entire project lifecycle—including the identification of needs, the co-design of solutions, testing and validation under real operational conditions, interpretation of results, and formulation of policy-relevant recommendations—so that the solutions developed are socially relevant, context-appropriate, and policy-ready. Living Labs<sup>39</sup> are encouraged ensuring their relevance to local socio-ecological contexts, and their feasibility under real operational conditions.

Knowledge, innovations, and tools developed under this topic are expected to be linked with the [AQUAGRI-KNOW](#) thematic network and, where relevant, contribute to the future Horizon Europe topic HORIZON-CL6-2026-03-GOVERNANCE-09: Increasing knowledge flows to practice within AKIS via EU thematic knowledge hubs, specifically under the thematic knowledge hub on Sustainable Water Management under Climate Change.

<sup>38</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16).

<sup>39</sup> PRIMA adopts the ENOLL Living Labs definition recognising them as dynamic, open innovation ecosystems where research and innovation are developed, tested, and validated in real-life settings rather than isolated laboratory environments. Through a systematic co-creation approach, Living Labs place citizens, end-users, and local stakeholders at the centre of the innovation process, ensuring that new solutions are not only technically sound and creative, but also relevant, context-appropriate, and grounded in real-world needs.

## Topic 2.2.1-2026 (RIA\*): Novel remote and non-invasive ICT monitoring and control systems against disease and pest infestation

TABLE 12. GENERAL CALL CONDITIONS

 <b>Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus</b>	
Topic 2.2.1-2026 (RIA*)	<b>Novel remote and non-invasive ICT monitoring and control systems against disease and pest infestation</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective 5/ PESTS AND PATHOGENS IN FARMING
Contribution to EU policies	<a href="#">European Green Deal</a> <a href="#">EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030</a> <a href="#">EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change</a> <a href="#">Vision for Agriculture and food</a> <a href="#">Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)</a> <a href="#">Digital Europe Strategy</a> <a href="#">EU Global Food Security</a> <a href="#">EU Organic Action Plan</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)</a> <a href="#">SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)</a> <a href="#">SDG 13 (Climate Action)</a>
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 2</a> .
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 2</a> .
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 2</a> .
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 2</a> .
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 2</a> .
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 2</a> .
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 2</a> .
Expected contribution per project	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting contribution of at least <b>EUR 1 million</b> would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts or duration, following national regulations.
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.
Type of Action	Research & Innovation Activities (RIA* <sup>40</sup> )
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

<sup>40</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RFP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RFP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website.

**Expected Outcome:**

Enhancing the early detection, monitoring, and sustainable management of crop pests and diseases is essential for safeguarding agricultural productivity, ecosystem health, and food security in the Mediterranean Area.

This aligns with the [European Green Deal](#), the [Vision for agriculture and food](#), the [EU Plant Health Law](#), the [Digital Europe Strategy](#), and the [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#),, while supporting the objectives of the [Common Agricultural Policy](#), the [EU Organic Action Plan](#), and the [EU Global Food Security strategy](#).

In line with *PRIMA Operational Objective 5: Pests and Pathogens in Farming*, successful proposals will advance the development, testing, and adoption of innovative, digital, and non-invasive systems for the early detection, monitoring, and management of pests and crop diseases. These systems should support the transition to sustainable, climate-resilient, and digitally enabled farming practices in Mediterranean agro-ecological contexts.

Projects are expected to strengthen resilience to climate-driven pest pressures by improving surveillance capacity, reducing dependency on broad-spectrum chemical treatments, and enabling more precise, adaptive, and sustainable crop protection strategies.

**Funded projects are expected to deliver results that contribute to all of the following outcomes:**

- Enhanced early warning systems for pests and diseases through integrated digital technologies
- Increased adoption of affordable and user-friendly based pest and disease monitoring tools by smallholder farmers
- Reduced environmental footprint of pest and disease control through targeted and precise agrochemical application and/or eco-friendly treatments
- Improved institutional and farmer capacity in using digital tools for Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Increased stakeholder confidence in ICT-driven crop protection methods and decision support systems.

**Scope:** Pest and disease outbreaks, intensified by climate change, global trade, and biodiversity loss, pose increasing risks to agricultural productivity and food security in the Mediterranean, particularly for smallholder and open-field farming systems. FAO estimates that 20–40% of global crop production is lost to pests, underscoring the need for early detection and timely intervention<sup>41</sup>.

Despite progress in digital agriculture, adoption in rural and resource-constrained areas remains limited due to infrastructure gaps, cost barriers, and the lack of context-adapted, user-friendly tools. This often results in delayed action and continued reliance on broad-spectrum pesticides, with environmental and socio-economic consequences. Emerging technologies — including AI-assisted diagnostics, Earth Observation systems, proximal and remote pest sensing, and non-invasive field monitoring — offer strong potential to improve Integrated Pest Management (IPM) through earlier detection, real-time surveillance, and targeted response. However, solutions must be affordable, scalable, interoperable, and tailored to Mediterranean farming conditions, particularly those of smallholders.

This topic aims to co-develop and demonstrate cost-effective, ICT-enabled systems for pest and disease monitoring and management that reduce pesticide use, lower environmental impacts, and support the transition toward sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture in the Mediterranean.

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41 FAO (2019). Pests and plant diseases: a growing threat to food security. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1187738/icode/>

**Projects are expected to address at least two of the following activities** (consortia may cover more, depending on scope and resources):

- Implement, adapt, and validate existing low-cost, non-invasive digital tools (e.g., image recognition, *proximal pest sensing* devices such as smart traps or in-field optical sensors, handheld diagnostic tools, mobile-based plant stress imaging) for the early detection and monitoring of pests and diseases in Mediterranean farming conditions
- Proposals are encouraged to explore AI-powered solutions capable of providing real-time diagnosis, forecasting, and decision support via mobile or web-based platforms
- Integrate Earth Observation, satellite imagery, meteorological data, and in-situ monitoring to enable hyperlocal forecasting of pest and disease outbreaks and support tailored, context-specific treatment strategies
- Develop scalable business models to support the uptake, replication, and integration of digital tools into existing national agricultural advisory systems and ICT platforms
- Implement inclusive capacity-building initiatives targeting farmers, extension agents, and local institutions to ensure adoption, digital literacy, and long-term use. This should include training materials in local languages, interactive workshops, and support for digitally underserved communities
- Projects should produce technical guidelines, operational toolkits, and practical recommendations to support the deployment of ICT-based Integrated Pest Management (IPM) solutions, ensuring alignment with open data principles and national innovation ecosystems.

If applicants target regulated pests in the EU, such as *Xylella fastidiosa* or Fall Armyworm (FAW), they are expected to ensure full compliance with the applicable EU and national rules and procedures, including those set out in the [EU Plant Health Law \(Regulation \(EU\) 2016/2031\)](#) and relevant implementing acts. In such cases, the participation or formal involvement of the relevant National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs) is required to ensure alignment with official monitoring, control, and eradication measures.

Proposals should adopt a [Multi-Actor Approach \(MAA\)](#)<sup>42</sup> to ensure significant involvement of the [national plant protection organisation \(NPPOs\)](#) national plant protection organisation (NPPOs) together with the farming sector, in decision-making and implementation processes. Primary target groups include arable and horticultural farmers, farmer cooperatives, SMEs and technology providers in digital agriculture, advisory services, national plant protection organisations, and public authorities. These groups are expected to directly benefit from the project activities and should be actively engaged in co-design, training, demonstration, and knowledge transfer.

PRIMA strongly encourage collaboration and complementarity with other Horizon Europe relevant projects (e.g. [Cerberus](#), [Stella](#), [Forsaid](#), [Purpest](#), [WheatWatcher](#), [EUFAWREADY](#), [Bexyl](#), [SenseApeST](#), [EmergeNOW](#)). Proposals should consider joint dissemination activities, with particular emphasis on peer-reviewed publications and other high-quality scientific outputs, as well as concise summaries that distil research insights and practical recommendations to inform policy development and support evidence-based decision-making across relevant governance levels.

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<sup>42</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16).

## Topic 2.3.1-2026 (RIA\*): Empowering Mediterranean food value chains through context-aware digital traceability

TABLE 13. GENERAL CALL CONDITIONS

 <span style="color: #FFC300;">Thematic Area-3-Food Value Chain in The Nexus</span>	
Topic 2.3.1-2026 (RIA*)	<b>Empowering Mediterranean Food Value Chains through Context-Aware Digital Traceability</b>
Contribution to SRIA	Operational Objective 8 (New Agri-Food Business Models) Additional Cross-cutting Alignment: Capacity Building, Digital Revolution
Contribution to EU Policies	<a href="#">European Green Deal</a> <a href="#">EU's Vision for Agriculture and Food 2025–2029</a> <a href="#">European Union's Digital Decade strategy.</a> <a href="#">EU-AU Innovation Agenda</a>
SDGs	<a href="#">SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)</a> , <a href="#">SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)</a> , <a href="#">SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)</a> <a href="#">SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)</a>
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex A for Section 2.</a>
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in <a href="#">General Annex B for Section 2.</a>
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex C for Section 2.</a>
Award criteria	The criteria are described in <a href="#">General Annex D for Section 2.</a>
Documents	The documents are described in <a href="#">General Annex E for Section 2.</a>
Procedure	The procedure is described in <a href="#">General Annex F for Section 2.</a>
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in <a href="#">General Annex G for Section 2.</a>
Expected contribution per project	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting contribution of at least <b>EUR 1 million</b> would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts or duration, following national regulations.
Duration	PRIMA considers that proposals with a duration of <b>36 months</b> would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals with different durations.
Type of Action	Research & Innovation Activities (RIA* <sup>43</sup> )
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project. Applicants are encouraged to use the <a href="#">TRL self-assessment tool</a> to accurately determine the <a href="#">Technology Readiness Level (TRL)</a> of their proposal.

43 Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RFP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RFP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website.

## **Expected Outcomes**

Strengthening the sustainability, transparency, and competitiveness of Mediterranean agri-food value chains is essential to support rural livelihoods, safeguard cultural heritage, and improve market access for smallholders and traditional producers. This aligns with the [European Green Deal](#), the [Vision for agriculture and food](#), the [Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\)](#), [European Union's Digital Decade strategy](#), and [EU-AU Innovation Agenda](#).

In line with PRIMA Operational Objective 8 – New Agri-Food Business Models, successful proposals will support the development and adoption of context-aware, affordable, interoperable, and *non-destructive* digital traceability and decision-support systems tailored to the needs of Mediterranean food value chains. These systems should enable producers to demonstrate authenticity and sustainability, meet certification or regulatory requirements, access premium markets, and strengthen consumer trust.

Projects are expected to empower smallholders, cooperatives, SMEs, and traditional food systems by reducing technical, financial, and organisational barriers to traceability and data integration, thereby improving their ability to participate in regional and international markets.

### **Project results are expected to contribute to all the following expected outcomes:**

- Improved traceability, transparency, and authenticity verification across Mediterranean agri-food value chains through digital, interoperable, and non-destructive solutions.
- Enhanced market access and competitiveness for smallholders, cooperatives, and traditional food producers through affordable verification of origin, quality, and sustainability.
- Greater adoption of practical and user-friendly digital solutions, adapted to low-resource contexts and existing production infrastructures.
- Strengthened organisational and digital capacity of producer groups, cooperatives, SMEs, and local institutions to manage compliance and data flows.
- Increased consumer and buyer trust, leading to improved value retention and reduced risk of fraud and imitation.

**Scope:** Traditional Mediterranean agri-food value chains, especially those rooted in heritage and small-scale production systems, face persistent structural barriers to accessing premium and regulated markets due to the high cost and complexity of existing traceability and certification systems (CIHEAM, 2024)<sup>44</sup>. Although traceability can increase consumer trust and value retention, current digital solutions are rarely adapted to smallholder contexts, reinforcing fragmentation and reducing competitiveness (Skalkos et al., 2021)<sup>45</sup>.

This action aims to co-design, pilot, and validate modular, affordable, non-destructive, and context-adapted digital traceability systems for Mediterranean agri-food value chains. The scope includes value chains in both PRIMA Participating States and EU Member States, including those involving heritage and culturally significant products that are not covered by PDO/PGI<sup>46</sup> schemes.

Projects should address barriers such as fragmented production structures, low digital readiness, limited certification capacity, and high compliance costs. Solutions must be co-developed with producers, cooperatives, SMEs, and local authorities, ensuring usability, cost-effectiveness, and long-term uptake.

<sup>44</sup>[https://www.ciheam.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/SUSTAINABLE-FOOD-SYSTEMS-Change-of-route-in-the-Mediterranean\\_CIHEAM-2024.pdf](https://www.ciheam.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/SUSTAINABLE-FOOD-SYSTEMS-Change-of-route-in-the-Mediterranean_CIHEAM-2024.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Skalkos, D., Malandrakis, O., & Kafetzopoulos, D. (2021). Consumers' Perceptions of Traceability for Traditional Food Products: Evidence from Greece. *Sustainability*, 13(22), 12687. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132212687>

<sup>46</sup> Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) are EU quality schemes that protect the names of traditional food products linked to a specific geographical area. They ensure that only products genuinely originating from a defined region and made according to traditional methods can use that name on the market. This protects producers from imitation and helps consumers identify authentic products

**Projects are expected to address at least two of the following activities** (consortia may cover more, depending on scope and resources):

- Mapping value chain structures, data gaps, authenticity risks, and governance arrangements, identifying where non-destructive verification methods add value.
- Co-development and field demonstration of digital traceability modules (e.g., mobile-based logging, QR codes, lightweight distributed ledgers, AI-assisted authenticity verification where appropriate).
- Development of modular decision-support tools for producer groups, cooperatives, and local authorities.
- Capacity-building and long-term adoption strategies, including training, peer learning, and demonstration actions.
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue to ensure alignment with certification bodies, national regulators, and market actors.

Solutions developed under this topic should be compatible with the emerging [Common European Agricultural Data Space \(CEADS\)](#) and adopt data governance models that support data sovereignty, interoperability, and fair value-sharing among producers and value chain actors. The use of open standards and open-source components is strongly encouraged to avoid vendor lock-in. or ensuring continuity, scalability, and knowledge capitalisation.

Proposals should adopt a [Multi-Actor Approach \(MAA\)](#)<sup>47</sup> ensuring inclusive participation of farmers, cooperatives, SMEs, consumer organisations, and local authorities throughout the project lifecycle, from design to deployment. Multi-actor, trans-Mediterranean cooperation is required, with meaningful involvement of producers, value-chain organisations, consumer groups, and regional authorities.

Solutions should build on and interoperate with tools developed by previous PRIMA-funded<sup>48</sup> and Horizon Europe projects<sup>49</sup>.

Consortia are also encouraged to build strategic collaborations with relevant research infrastructures such as [METROFOOD-RI](#) which provide advanced capabilities in traceability analysis, food authenticity testing, and quality assurance. Such collaborations can strengthen technical capacity, harmonise digital traceability tools, and foster cross-project learning across the Mediterranean region. Primary Target Groups are smallholder farmers, rural and mountain cooperatives, women- and youth-led enterprises, SMEs in food processing, local authorities, and consumer organisations. These groups are expected to directly benefit from project results and should be central to demonstration and capacity-building activities.

<sup>47</sup> The definition and specific requirements of the multi-actor approach as applied in PRIMA can be found in the Introduction of the Horizon Europe Work Programme (2025) - Cluster 6 (pages 14-16)

<sup>48</sup> Applicants are encouraged to consider and leverage traceability solutions developed by PRIMA projects such as SUREFISH, Med Food TTHubs, and MEDIFIT, ensuring continuity, avoiding duplication, and maximising synergies across initiatives

<sup>49</sup> THEROS (Horizon Europe, 2022–2026) focuses on transparent food certification systems to boost trust and sustainability in agri-food supply chains. ALLIANCE (Horizon Europe, 2023–2027) aims to strengthen integrity and resilience in organic and geographical indication (GI) value chains through traceability and fraud prevention tools.

## Calls Calendar

All deadlines are at **17:00:00 CET** (Central European Time). The PRIMA-IS will conduct the admissibility and eligibility check after each deadline for submission and before the evaluation takes place, followed by an eligibility check by the national funding agencies according to their [National Regulations](#).

The Executive Director may decide to publish and open the call up to two weeks prior or one month after the envisaged date(s). The Executive Director may delay other deadlines by up to two months.

The following table shows the calendar of calls for proposals. Please note the two submission stages.

TABLE 14. TIMETABLE FOR SECTION 2 CALL FOR PROPOSALS IN 2026

THEMATIC AREA	CALL TOPICS	CALL PUBLICATION AND OPENING	SUBMISSION DEADLINE STAGE 1	EVALUATION RESULTS STAGE 1	SUBMISSION DEADLINE STAGE 2	EVALUATION RESULTS
Water management	Topic 2.1.1 (RIA)	20.3.2026	15.5.2026	3.7.2026	29.9.2026	16.12.2026
Farming systems	Topic 2.2.1 (RIA)	20.3.2026	15.5.2026	3.7.2026	29.9.2026	16.12.2026
Agri-food chain	Topic 2.3.1 (RIA)	20.3.2026	15.5.2026	3.7.2026	29.9.2026	16.12.2026

## Activities supporting programme operations funded and implemented by PRIMA PS

This section concerns the eligible management costs incurred by the Participating States (PS) for administering and monitoring projects funded under Section 2 of the PRIMA AWP 2026, following calls centrally managed by PRIMA-IS.

In accordance with the applicable financial provisions, such management costs **shall not exceed 6%** of the individual national financial contribution provided by each Participating State to Section 2.

For the 2026 financial year, the total ceiling for these contributions shall not exceed **EUR 2,176,200**.

## Section 3: Activities and actions organised, managed and funded by the PS

Participating States (PS) contribute to the objectives of the PRIMA Partnership by implementing and funding a variety of activities that fall outside the centrally managed calls. These activities are foreseen in two distinct categories:

- **Participating States Initiated Activities (PSIAs):**  
PSIAs are national or transnational activities funded through calls launched and managed by one or more Participating States, including their own evaluation, selection, and granting procedures. These activities must be implemented in line with the applicable common principles, as referenced in this AWP, and are subject to inclusion in the PRIMA AWP 2026 by PRIMA-IS following prior approval by the European Commission, in accordance with Article 6(2)(p) of the PRIMA Statutes.
- **Other Activities:**  
These refer to actions funded and implemented by the Participating States that contribute to the operation of PRIMA. Although not linked to project calls, they form an integral part of PRIMA and are essential to the achievement of its strategic and operational goals.

### Participating States Initiated Activities (PSIAs)

In accordance with [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) activities under the PRIMA Partnership may include actions implemented through the national programmes of the Participating States (PS), including national or transnational calls for research and innovation, training programmes, support for collaborative research projects, and the establishment or reinforcement of joint research units. These activities, referred to as Participating States' Initiated Activities (PSIAs), are listed in the PRIMA AWP, form part of the implementation of the programme and are managed and funded directly by the respective national authorities.

PSIAs shall be implemented in compliance with common principles agreed upon by the Participating States and the European Commission, taking into account the provisions in [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#), as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#), Title VIII of the Financial [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2024/2509](#) and Chapter II of [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#), in particular the principles of:

- Equal treatment
- Transparency
- Independent peer-review
- And selection based on excellence

(See the section “Applicable Common Principles” in this document)

PSIAs are recognised as in-kind contributions by the Participating States to PRIMA and constitute an integral part of the PRIMA Partnership, enhancing the alignment of national research and innovation agendas with PRIMA's objectives. The PSIAs included in this AWP have been evaluated and confirmed to be aligned with PRIMA's strategic goals through an independent assessment by international experts.

In accordance with PRIMA visibility rules, all participants in activities funded either by PRIMA-IS or by Participating States must include the following acknowledgement in any communication, dissemination, or publication related to their activity:

*"[Name of the activity / grant code] is part of the PRIMA Partnership supported by the European Union"*

and must display the **official PRIMA logo**.

**TABLE 15. PARTICIPATING STATES INITIATED ACTIVITIES 2026**

#	Code	Activity Title	Keyword(s)	Type of Action	Participating State(s) & Funding Body
1	ES.2026.1	AEI Annual Action Plan 2026	Research Networks, R&I Projects tackling Societal Challenges	RIA, IA, Training Action, Joint Research Project	Spain – AEI
2	ES.2026.2	National R&D Continuous Open Call	Water Management, Agrifood Value Chain, Farming Systems	IA	Spain – CDTI
3	EG.2026.1	JESOR – Development: Joint Collaborative Efforts of Egyptian Expatriates and Scientific Organizations	R&D, Food Security, Energy, Environment, Health, Industry	IA	Egypt – ASRT
4	FR.2026.1	Research Projects funded by ANR under the Annual National Call for Proposals (AAPG) or other PRIMA-related calls	Water Management, Agrifood Value Chain, Farming Systems	RIA	France – ANR
5	IL.2026.1	German-Israeli Water Technology Cooperation Bilateral R&D Programme	Water Management	RIA, IA	Israel – MOST
6	MT.2026.1	PRIMA National Call Supporting PRIMA Objectives	Water Management, Agrifood Value Chain, Farming Systems	RIA, IA	Malta – XM
7	MT.2026.2	PRIMA National Call Supporting PRIMA Objectives	Water Management, Agrifood Value Chain, Farming Systems	Mobility, Joint Research Project	Malta – XM
8	TR.2026.1	PRIMA National Call Supporting PRIMA Objectives	Water Management, Agrifood Value Chain, Farming Systems	RIA, IA, Scholarship, Mobility, Joint Research	Türkiye – TÜBİTAK

## Activities supporting programme operation funded and implemented by PS: “Other Activities.”

### **JO.2026.1 - EU-Jordan Research Days 2026**

#### Objectives:

This action will support the organisation of a PRIMA-focused EU–Jordan Research Days event in Jordan in Q2 2026. The initiative will build directly on the momentum and researcher networks activated in 2025 through the EU–Jordan Research Day at JUST and the Erasmus+ Information Days held across Jordan. In 2026, PRIMA will take advantage of the presence of Jordanian researchers already convened for Erasmus+, COST, MSCA and other EU cooperation activities to introduce and deepen engagement with PRIMA priorities.

Rather than a general awareness event, the 2026 edition will focus on strategic alignment and practical collaboration-building. Researchers, universities, ministries, national research bodies, and private actors will work together with European and Mediterranean partners to:

- Discuss the PRIMA AWP 2026 and its alignment with Jordan’s national priorities in water security, sustainable agriculture, food systems, climate adaptation and WEFE Nexus solutions;
- Participate in applied capacity-building sessions on how to structure competitive PRIMA proposals;
- Engage in matchmaking and partner networking, facilitating the formation of trans-Mediterranean consortia for PRIMA calls.

By leveraging existing academic mobility and cooperation platforms (Erasmus+, COST, MSCA), the action will broaden the PRIMA community in Jordan, enhance proposal quality, and increase successful Jordanian participation in PRIMA-funded research and innovation projects.

**Type of Activity:** Public procurement

**Indicative budget:** EUR 27,500

**Timetable:** Q2 2026

# PRIMA AWP 2026 Budget

## EU financial contribution (Section 1)

### Operational budget

**TABLE 16. OVERVIEW OF PLANNED EU CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS PRIMA CALLS FOR PROPOSALS IN 2026 ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME**

	EU-FUNDED PRIMA ACTIVITIES	INDICATIVE EU CONTRIBUTION (IN EUR)
<b>INNOVATION ACTIONS</b>	SECTION 1 CALL 1	10,815,000
	SECTION 1 CALL 2	10,815,000
	SECTION 1 CALL 3	10,814,000
<b>CSA</b>	SECTION 1 CALL 4	1,050,000
<b>OTHER ACTIVITIES</b>	ACTIVITIES FOR SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME INCLUDING PRIZES, MONITORING AND EVALUATION, PROJECT DAY	400,000
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF PRIMA-IS</b>	PERSONNEL, MISSIONS, CONSUMABLES, AND SUPPLIES,	1,700,000
	SERVICE CONTRACTS	
<b>TOTAL PLANNED CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2026</b>		<b>35,594,000</b>

### Administrative budget

The total administrative costs of the PRIMA-IS for implementing the PRIMA Partnership in 2026 amount to **EUR 1,700,000**. These costs encompass personnel expenses, meetings, supplies, and essential service contracts required to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the program. Below is a detailed description of the various components:

1. **Personnel Costs:** Totalling **EUR 1,402,894** this category includes salaries and social costs for the program's core personnel (15 staff unit). This allocation covers remuneration for key roles such as the Director, Deputy Director, Project Coordinator, Project Officers, Legal Officer, Accounting and Finance staff, Monitoring Officer, IT Officer, and Administrative Assistants. The costs include both base salaries and mandatory employer social contributions in line with regulatory requirements.
2. **Meetings and Missions:** With a total allocation of **EUR 120,000**, this category covers essential program-related gatherings and staff travel expenses:
  - **Meetings of Governance Bodies:** EUR 48,000 is dedicated to organizing meetings of the Board of Trustees, Steering Committee, and other key governance and coordination events.
  - **Administrative Staff Travel and Accommodation:** EUR 72,000 covers travel, accommodation, and related costs incurred by administrative staff attending missions, program-related meetings, and field visits.

3. **Consumables and Supplies:** Budgeted at **EUR 68,856** this category addresses essential office and operational needs:
- Office Consumables and Stationery: EUR 8,200 for general office supplies and consumables.
  - Taxes and Insurances: EUR 3,200 for various statutory taxes and insurance provisions.
  - Software Licenses: EUR 14,000 allocated for the purchase and renewal of necessary software licenses.
  - Bank Charges: EUR 6,900 to cover fees for banking and financial transactions.
  - Repairs and Maintenance: EUR 1,800 for minor repairs and maintenance of office equipment and infrastructure.
  - Depreciation: EUR 34,756 for depreciation costs associated with office equipment and assets.
4. **Service Contracts:** Totalling **EUR 108,250**, this segment includes critical outsourced services necessary for PRIMA’s operations:
- Foundation Audit Fees: EUR 11,000 allocated for audits required for annual reporting to the European Commission and compliance with financial regulations.
  - Payroll, Labour, and Fiscal Services: EUR 15,000 for outsourced payroll management, labour, and fiscal advisory services.
  - Other Professional Services: EUR 2,250 for specialized services as needed.
  - Maintenance and Back-Office Software Support: EUR 32,000 allocated to ensure the maintenance and operational efficiency of essential software systems and platforms.
  - Communication Budget and Graphic Layout: EUR 48,000 designated for communication activities, including the design, graphic layout, and dissemination of program-related materials to enhance visibility and stakeholder engagement.

TABLE 7. ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

DESCRIPTION	Amount (in EUR)
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	<b>1,402,894</b>
- SALARIES AND SOCIAL COSTS FOR SPECIFIED PERSONNEL	1,402,894
<b>MEETINGS AND MISSIONS</b>	<b>120,000</b>
- MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, STEERING COMMITTEE, ETC.	48,000
- ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION COSTS	72,000
<b>CONSUMABLES AND SUPPLIES</b>	<b>68,856</b>
- OFFICE CONSUMABLES & STATIONERY	8,200
- TAXES AND INSURANCES	3,200
- SOFTWARE LICENSES	14,000
- BANK CHARGES	6,900
- REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	1,800
- DEPRECIATION	34,756
<b>SERVICE CONTRACTS</b>	<b>108,250</b>
- FOUNDATION AUDIT FEES (REPORTING TO THE EC AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS)	11,000
- PAYROLL, LABOUR AND FISCAL SERVICES	15,000
- OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	2,250
- MAINTENANCE AND BACK-OFFICE SUPPORT FOR SOFTWARE	32,000
- COMMUNICATION BUDGET AND GRAPHIC LAYOUT	48,000
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS</b>	<b>1,700,000</b>

## Participating States financial contributions (Section 2)

TABLE 18. INDICATIVE PRIMA PS PLANNED FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR AWP 2026 SECTION 2 IN EUR<sup>50</sup>

PRIMA PARTICIPATING STATE	FUNDING AGENCY		FINANCIAL ANNUAL COMMITMENT PER NATIONAL FUNDING AGENCY	FINANCIAL ANNUAL COMMITMENT PER PS
	ACRONYM	FULL NAME	(EUR)	(EUR)
ALGERIA	DGRST	MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH	2,000,000	2,000,000
BULGARIA	BNSF	BULGARIAN NATIONAL SCIENCE FUND	500,000	500,000
CROATIA	MSE	MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND EDUCATION	500,000	500,000
CYPRUS	RIF	RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOUNDATION	310,000	310,000
EGYPT	ASRT	ACADEMY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY	1,500,000	3,650,000
	STDF	SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION FUNDING	2,150,000	
FRANCE	ANR	AGENCE NATIONALE DE LA RECHERCHE	4,000,000	4,000,000
GERMANY	BMBF	GERMAN MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH	2,850,000	2,850,000
GREECE	GSRI	GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION - MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT	1,750,000	1,750,000
ISRAEL	MOST	MINISTRY OF INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	300,000	800,000
	IIA	ISRAEL INNOVATION AUTHORITY	500,000	
ITALY	MUR	MINISTRY OF UNIVERSITY AND RESEARCH	7,000,000	7,000,000
JORDAN	HCST	THE HIGHER COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	540,000	540,000
LEBANON	CNRS-L	NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH OF LEBANON	100,000	100,000
LUXEMBOURG	FNR	LUXEMBOURG NATIONAL RESEARCH FUND	400,000	400,000
MALTA	XM	XJENZA MALTA	500,000	500,000
MOROCCO	MESRSFC	MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR, DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE ET DE LA FORMATION DES CADRES	2,000,000	2,000,000
PORTUGAL	FCT	FUNDAÇÃO PARA A CIÊNCIA E A TECNOLOGIA	1,200,000	1,200,000
SLOVENIA	ARIS	SLOVENIAN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AGENCY	170,000	170,000
SPAIN	AEI	AGENCIA ESTATAL DE INVESTIGACIÓN	3,500,000	5,500,000
	CDTI	CENTRO PARA EL DESARROLLO TECNOLÓGICO Y LA INNOVACIÓN, SPANISH FUNDING AGENCY	2,000,000	
TUNISIA	MESRS	MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH/TUNISIA	1,500,000	1,500,000
TÜRKIYE	TUBITAK	THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL OF TÜRKIYE	1,000,000	1,000,000
<b>Total amount committed</b>				<b>36,270,000</b>

<sup>50</sup> Wherever relevant, local currencies have been converted into EUR using official exchange rates.

**TABLE 19. PARTICIPATING STATES FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION FOR SECTION 3 ACTIVITIES**

#	CODE	PARTICIPATING STATE & FUNDING BODY	INDICATIVE COMMITMENT (EUR)
1	ES.2026.1	SPAIN – AEI	10,500,000
2	ES.2026.2	SPAIN – CDTI	30,000,000
3	EG.2026.1	EGYPT – ASRT	500,000
4	FR.2026.1	FRANCE – ANR	1,500,000
5	IL.2026.1	ISRAEL – MOST	250,000
6	MT.2026.1	MALTA – XM	300,000
7	MT.2026.2	MALTA – XM	25,000
8	TR.2026.1	TÜRKIYE – TÜBİTAK	183,758
9	JO.2026.1	JORDAN – HCST	27,500
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>43,286,258</b>

## Overview budget (EU and PS financial contributions)

**TABLE 20. OVERVIEW OF PLANNED COMMITMENTS TO ACTIVITIES OF THE PRIMA PARTNERSHIP BY THE EU AND PS**

ACTIVITIES	EU CONTRIBUTION (EUR)	PS CONTRIBUTION (EUR)	TOTAL CONTRIBUTION (EUR)
EU-FUNDED TRANSNATIONAL CALLS FOR PROPOSALS (SECTION 1)	33,494,000	–	33,494,000
PARTICIPATING STATES-FUNDED TRANSNATIONAL CALLS FOR PROPOSALS, MANAGED BY PRIMA-IS (SECTION 2)	–	36,270,000	36,270,000
<i>SUBTOTAL – TRANSNATIONAL CALLS</i>	33,494,000	36,270,000	69,764,000
<b>ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING PROGRAMME OPERATIONS</b>			
EVALUATION OF PROJECTS & MONITORING	340,000	–	340,000
PROJECT DAY	40,000	–	40,000
PRIZES	20,000	–	20,000
<i>SUBTOTAL – PROGRAMME OPERATIONS</i>	400,000	–	400,000
<b>IMPLEMENTATION BY PARTICIPATING STATES</b>			
PS ACTIVITIES MANAGED BY PS TO SUPPORT PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION	–	–	–
PS CONTRIBUTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS RESULTING FROM PS-FUNDED CALLS	–	2,176,200	2,176,200
PARTICIPATING STATES INITIATED ACTIVITIES (PSIAs)	–	43,286,258	43,286,258
<i>SUBTOTAL – PS IMPLEMENTATION</i>	–	81,732,458	115,626,458
<b>EU-FUNDED ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF PRIMA-IS</b>	1,700,000	–	1,700,000
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>35,594,000</b>	<b>81,732,458</b>	<b>117,326,458</b>

**TABLE 21. DETAILED OVERVIEW OF PLANNED COMMITMENTS TO ACTIVITIES OF THE PRIMA PARTNERSHIP IN 2026**

FUNDING SOURCE	GRANTS – FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS	PRIMA-IS ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	PS MANAGEMENT COSTS	ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING PROGRAMME OPERATIONS	PSIAs – IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS	TOTAL 2026
EUROPEAN UNION (EU)						
EU – HORIZON EUROPE	33,494,000	696,000	–	400,000	–	34,590,000
EU – HORIZON 2020 ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDS	–	1,004,000	–	–	–	1,004,000
<b>SUB-TOTAL EU</b>	<b>33,494,000</b>	<b>1,700,000</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>35,594,000</b>
PARTICIPATING STATES (PS)						
ALGERIA	2,000,000	–	120,000	–	–	2,120,000
BULGARIA	500,000	–	30,000	–	–	530,000
CROATIA	500,000	–	30,000	–	–	530,000
CYPRUS	310,000	–	18,600	–	–	328,600
EGYPT	3,650,000	–	219,000	–	500,000	4,369,000
FRANCE	4,000,000	–	240,000	–	1,500,000	5,740,000
GERMANY	2,850,000	–	171,000	–	–	3,021,000
GREECE	1,750,000	–	105,000	–	–	1,855,000
ISRAEL	800,000	–	48,000	–	250,000	1,098,000
ITALY	7,000,000	–	420,000	–	–	7,420,000
JORDAN	540,000	–	32,400	–	27,500	509,800
LEBANON	100,000	–	6,000	–	–	106,000
LUXEMBOURG	400,000	–	24,000	–	–	424,000
MALTA	500,000	–	30,000	–	325,000	855,000
MOROCCO	2,000,000	–	120,000	–	–	2,120,000
PORTUGAL	1,200,000	–	72,000	–	–	1,272,000
SLOVENIA	170,000	–	10,200	–	–	180,200
SPAIN	5,500,000	–	330,000	–	40,500,000	46,330,000
TUNISIA	1,500,000	–	90,000	–	–	1,590,000
TÜRKIYE	1,000,000	–	60,000	–	183,758	1,243,758
<b>SUB-TOTAL PS</b>	<b>36,270,000</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2,176,200</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>43,286,258</b>	<b>81,732,458</b>
<b>TOTAL EU + PS</b>	<b>69,764,000</b>	<b>1,700,000</b>	<b>2,176,200</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>43,286,258</b>	<b>117,326,458</b>

# General Annexes for Section 1

## A — Admissibility

For all Section 1 actions and PRIMA Prize under the PRIMA AWP 2026, proposals must comply with the admissibility requirements set out in this section, unless supplemented or modified by specific provisions under the corresponding call conditions.

Applications must be submitted before the **call deadline** via the [PRIMA Electronic Submission System \(ESS\)](#). Applications must be written in English, be **complete** and contain all parts and mandatory Annexes and supporting documents composed of the following parts:

A complete submission includes the following components:

- **Part I – Administrative Data:** This includes the administrative and financial details of the consortium. The Part I template must be completed and uploaded in PDF format via the ESS. In addition, general administrative and financial information—including the total cost and the amount requested per partner—must be entered directly into the ESS interface at the time of submission.
- **Part II – Technical Annex:** This includes the scientific and technical description of the project (Excellence, Impact, and Implementation). It must be uploaded in PDF format using the official Part II template
- **Detailed Budget Table** (Excel template) (*required only for full proposals*) For full proposals, a separate Excel budget table ([Excel template](#)) must be completed and uploaded, detailing the estimated costs and budget distribution per partner.

The structure, format, and content of Part II must strictly follow the instructions outlined in the official Part I and Part II Templates, available for download from the corresponding [call page](#) on the [PRIMA website](#). Only proposals that include all required parts and are submitted through the ESS by the call deadline will be considered admissible. Applicants are encouraged to follow guidance provided in the [ESS Handbook](#). Paper submissions are **NOT** accepted under any circumstances. All proposals must be readable, accessible, and printable. Proposals that do not meet these basic technical requirements may be deemed inadmissible.

 *The submission link will be published in the relevant call section of the [PRIMA website](#) and will open one month prior to the submission deadline.*

Applications must include a plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities<sup>51</sup>. Where the intended exploitation of project results involves the development, creation, manufacturing, or marketing of a product or process, or the provision of a service, the plan must outline a credible strategy for such exploitation, in line with Horizon Europe impact expectations.

<sup>51</sup> Exploitation and Dissemination obligations under article 39 of the REGULATION (EU) 2021/695 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013

## Page Limits

In accordance with the admissibility conditions, strict page limits apply to specific sections of the proposal. Proposals exceeding these limits will be automatically rejected by the [Electronic Submission System \(ESS\)](#), and will not be forwarded for evaluation.

For calls implemented under a two-stage submission procedure, unless otherwise specified in the specific call conditions, the page limit for first-stage proposals (pre-proposals) is **10 pages**. Unless otherwise stated in the specific call conditions, the maximum length of full proposals (second stage or single-stage submissions) for Section 1 actions is:

- Innovation Actions (IAs): **40 pages**
- Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs): **25 pages**

These limits refer to Part II of the proposal (Technical Description), as defined in the [Proposal Template Part II](#) provided by PRIMA at the opening of the calls. Applicants are strongly advised to respect these limits, as the submission system will block any attempt to submit a proposal exceeding the specified thresholds. In addition, font size, margins, and formatting must fully comply with the standards defined in the official proposal templates. Failure to do so may result in the proposal being declared inadmissible.

## B — Eligibility

### Entities eligible to participate <sup>52, 53, 54, 55</sup>

Any legal entity, regardless of its place of establishment including legal entities from third countries non-associated to Horizon Europe or international organizations (including international European research organizations<sup>56</sup> and International European interest organisations) is eligible to participate (whether it is eligible for funding or not) provided that the conditions laid down in the Horizon Europe Regulation<sup>57</sup> and any derogations to these as specified in [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#) as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) have been met along with any other conditions laid down in the specific call topic.

A ‘legal entity’ means any natural or legal person created and recognised as such under national law EU law or international law which has legal personality, and which may act in its own name exercise rights and be subject to obligations or an entity without legal personality<sup>58</sup>.

52 EU restrictive measures — Entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), as well as Article 75 TFEU, are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). The EU Official Journal contains the official list of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures. In case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the EU Sanctions Map. Special rules also apply to entities covered by Commission Guidelines No 2013/C 205/05

53 Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government-controlled territories of Ukraine — Given the ongoing geopolitical situation, there is currently no appropriate context for the implementation of actions under this programme with legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government-controlled territories of Ukraine. Therefore, even where such entities are not subject to EU restrictive measures, they are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis for duly justified reasons

54 Restrictions on participation of legal entities established in China — In accordance with Article 22(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 and the [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026–2027 General Annexes](#), legal entities established in China are not eligible to participate in Innovation Actions in any capacity, unless otherwise specified or exceptionally justified. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). These eligibility criteria may be reviewed in the future in line with relevant policy developments. Participation of certain Chinese universities — Universities established in China that are administered by or under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) are not eligible to participate in any action under this Work Programme, in line with Horizon Europe rules

55 Restrictions related to the protection of European communication networks — Where relevant and where actions are explicitly identified as being subject to such restrictions, entities assessed as high-risk suppliers of mobile network communication equipment (and entities they own or control) may be excluded from participation, in line with the [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026–2027 General Annexes](#) and the EU 5G cybersecurity toolbox.

56 Measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary — Following Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506, as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments may be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Such entities may apply to calls for proposals. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, they are not eligible to participate in any funded role (including beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support to third parties). In multi-beneficiary proposals, applicants may be required to remove or replace such entities or to change their status to associated partners, with a corresponding redistribution of tasks and budget

57 Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe.

58 As referred to in point (c) of Article 200 (2) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.

Beneficiaries and affiliated entities should register in the EC [Participant Register](#) before submitting their full proposal application to get a participant identification code (PIC). While having a PIC isn't mandatory for submitting an application, it's strongly recommended to facilitate the application process and subsequent checks.

## Eligibility for funding

### a) Legal entities established in a PRIMA Participating State or created pursuant to Union law<sup>59</sup>.

- The following **EU Member States (MS)**: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, including the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT)<sup>60</sup> linked to these Member States.
- The following **Third countries associated with Horizon Europe (AC)**: Egypt<sup>61</sup>, Israel, Tunisia, and Türkiye.
- The following **Third Countries not Associated with Horizon Europe (TC)**: Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Algeria<sup>62</sup>

**⚠** *The eligibility of legal entities from non-associated third countries is conditional upon the entry into force of an agreement with the Union, in the form of an exchange of letters amending their existing international agreements on scientific and technological cooperation.*

Legal entities in third countries applying for PRIMA funding will be eligible if the required international agreements have entered into force by the time the relevant Grant Agreement is signed. In cases where these agreements are not in effect by the adoption of this AWP, please refer to [General Annex I on practical aspects: participation and eligibility](#). Applicants are encouraged to consult the [PRIMA webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information on country eligibility and participation status.

### b) International European interest organisations<sup>63</sup> or international European research organisations<sup>64</sup>

In accordance with Article 7(4)(b) of Decision (EU) 2017/1324 as amended by Decision (EU) 2024/1167, and depending on the applicable budget as referred to in Article 3(1) thereof:

- International European interest organisations, as defined in Article 2(1), point (12), of Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013, are eligible to receive PRIMA funding for activities financed from the Horizon 2020 budget;
- International European research organisations, as defined in Article 2, point (15), of Regulation (EU) 2021/695, are eligible to receive PRIMA funding for activities financed from the Horizon Europe budget.

<sup>59</sup> New PS may join PRIMA and the regularly updated list of PS will be provided by PRIMA-IS. The composition of the PRIMA PS may evolve during the implementation of the Annual Work Programme. Additional countries may join PRIMA as PS in accordance with Articles 6 and 7 of Decision (EU) 2024/1167, provided that they commit a national financial contribution to PRIMA and conclude the necessary administrative arrangements. Applicants are therefore advised to regularly consult the PRIMA website (<https://prima-med.org>) for up-to-date information on the status of PS and their eligibility for funding.

<sup>60</sup> Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked.

<sup>61</sup> Egypt has signed the Horizon Europe Association Agreement in October 2025, and following the exchange of Notes Verbales, its association is now legally effective. Egypt is therefore considered an Associated Country to Horizon Europe, and legal entities established in Egypt participate in PRIMA under the same terms and conditions as those established in EU Member States.

<sup>62</sup> Status of participation of Third countries not associated to Horizon Europe at the time of adoption of this AWP.

- Jordan and Lebanon have completed the required steps for participation in accordance with Decision (EU) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision (EU) 2024/1167, and are eligible to participate under the conditions set out therein.
- Morocco has successfully concluded negotiations to amend its agreement with the European Union, with a view to enabling its participation in PRIMA-funded activities under Horizon Europe (2025–2027) on equal terms with other PRIMA Participating States. The procedures for the entry into force, or provisional application, of this agreement are currently ongoing.
- The possible participation of Algeria as a PRIMA Participating State remains subject to the outcome of ongoing negotiations with the European Union and to further assessment in accordance with applicable EU legislation

<sup>63</sup> An international European interest organisation means an international organisation the majority of whose members are Member States or countries associated to Horizon Europe; and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe.

<sup>64</sup> International European research organisation' means an international organisation, the majority of whose members are Member States or associated countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe.

### c) International Organisations

International organisations, as defined in Article 2, point (15), of Regulation (EU) 2021/695, may participate in PRIMA actions. Funding by PRIMA-IS to an international organisation, or to a legal entity established in a country that is not a PRIMA Participating State, may be granted only where at least one of the following conditions is fulfilled:

- The participation of the organisation or legal entity is deemed essential by PRIMA-IS for the implementation of the action<sup>65</sup>; or
- Such participation is foreseen in the AWP and funding is provided for under:
  - a bilateral or multilateral scientific and technological agreement, or
  - any other arrangement between the Union and the international organisation, or between the Union and the country where the legal entity is established, ensuring adequate protection of the Union's financial interests

### Participants not eligible to funding

Participants from countries not listed in points (a), (b), (c) may still participate as associated partners in PRIMA projects but they shall not be eligible for funding. Such entities must include a letter in their proposal from their organisation, signed by a legal representative, confirming that sufficient funds are available to support their role in the project, covering specific tasks, meeting attendance, and related activities.

**⚠** *The applicable Model Grant Agreement may also require financial guarantees from legal entities established in countries that are not Participating States, in accordance [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2024/2509](#). For further details, please refer to [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324 as amended by Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#).*

### Standard eligibility conditions

All proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions laid down in [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#), of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe (OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 1), as well as with any derogations introduced by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#), concerning the continuation of the Union's participation PRIMA under Horizon Europe. Proposals must comply with the additional eligibility conditions outlined in this section, unless supplemented or modified by the conditions set out in the individual call or topic descriptions.

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<sup>65</sup> For the purposes of this Annex, the participation of an international organisation or of a legal entity established in a country that is not a PRIMA Participating State may be considered essential for the implementation of the action where such participation provides clear and demonstrable added value that cannot be achieved by other consortium members. This added value may include, inter alia:

- Access to unique scientific, technical, or operational expertise or to specialised research infrastructures not otherwise available within the consortium;
- Activities carried out in geographical, environmental, or socio-economic contexts that are critical to the objectives of the research or innovation action;
- Access to exclusive data, knowledge, biological or genetic resources, or field sites necessary for achieving the expected outcomes;
- Engagement of key stakeholders, end users, or innovation actors that are essential for innovation uptake, deployment, or impact in the target regions or markets.

The essentiality of such participation shall be duly justified in the proposal and assessed by PRIMA-IS during the evaluation and grant preparation phases, in line with the applicable Horizon Europe rules. <sup>66</sup> The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission notice Nr. 2013/C 205/05 (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp.9-11) apply for all actions under this AWP including for third parties that receive financial support under the action (in accordance with Articles 204 and 205 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, notably programme co-fund actions.

A proposal will be considered eligible only if **all** of the following conditions are met:

- a) The proposal content corresponds wholly or in part to the scope and objectives of the topic to which it is submitted.
- b) It complies with the eligibility conditions for participation set out in **Table 22**, depending on the type of action.
- c) Where applicable, it complies with the **Gender Equality Plan (GEP) eligibility requirement**, as set out below.

**TABLE 22. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION FOR PRIMA ACTIONS SECTION 1**

Type of Action	Eligibility conditions for participation <sup>66,67</sup>
<b>Innovation Action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>At least three independent legal entities</b>, each established in a different PRIMA Participating State (<i>by the time of grant agreement signature</i>) out of which:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ at least one must be established in an EU Member State or a third country associated to Horizon Europe <u>and not being a third country bordering the Mediterranean (MPC)</u><sup>68</sup> and</li> <li>○ at least one must be established in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC)<sup>69</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>All three legal entities must be independent of each other.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In addition</b>, the consortium must include <b>at least one additional</b> legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC). This additional entity is not required to be established in a different PRIMA Participating State from the other participating entities.</li> <li>• <b>At least one</b> of the participating legal entities shall be a for-profit legal entity (which may include small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs))<sup>70</sup> established in a PRIMA Participating State.</li> </ul> <p><b>The minimum consortium size is therefore four independent legal entities.</b></p>
<b>Coordinated Support Action</b>	<p><b>At least one legal entity</b> established in a PRIMA Participating State (by the time of grant agreement signature). Proposals from a single legal entity are allowed.</p>

### Gender Equality Plan (GEP) – Eligibility requirement

In accordance with Horizon Europe eligibility rules, to be eligible for PRIMA funding, legal entities established in EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries that are public bodies, research organisations, or higher education establishments (including private research organisations and private higher education establishments), and that apply as beneficiaries or affiliated entities, must have a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place. The GEP must be in place at the time of grant agreement signature and must be maintained for the entire duration of the grant.

<sup>66</sup> The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission notice Nr. 2013/C 205/05 (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp.9-11) apply for all actions under this AWP including for third parties that receive financial support under the action (in accordance with Articles 204 and 205 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, notably programme co-fund actions.

<sup>67</sup> The latest information on PRIMA Participating States (PS) is available on the PRIMA website (prima-med.org). At the time of adoption of this Annual Work Programme, the PRIMA PS are: EU Member States Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain, including their Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs); Third Countries associated to Horizon Europe: Egypt, Israel, Tunisia and Türkiye. Third Countries not associated to Horizon Europe: Jordan and Lebanon have completed the required steps for participation in accordance with Decision (EU) 2017/1324 as amended by Decision (EU) 2024/1167. The eligibility of legal entities established in Morocco remains conditional upon the signature and entry into force, or provisional application, of an exchange of letters amending the existing international agreement on scientific and technological cooperation with the European Union. Any possible consideration of Algeria as a Participating State, and consequently as a Mediterranean Partner Country, is subject to the outcome of ongoing negotiations with the European Union and to further assessment in accordance with applicable EU legislation. For the legal consequences where these conditions are not met by the time of the relevant grant agreement signature, reference is made to the section “Legal Consequences for Non-Associated Third Countries” of this Work Programme.

<sup>68, 69</sup> For the purposes of this Annual Work Programme, third countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea (Mediterranean Partner Countries – MPCs) are those defined in Decision (EU) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision (EU) 2024/1167, namely: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Türkiye. Eligibility of legal entities established in these countries for Union funding is subject to the applicable Horizon Europe status and the relevant international agreements in force at the time of grant agreement signature.

<sup>70</sup> 'Small or medium-sized enterprise' or 'SME' means a micro, small or medium-sized enterprise as defined in Article 2 of the Annex to Recommendation 2003/361/EC (27)

### Minimum process-related requirements

The GEP must cover the following minimum process-related requirements:

- **Publication:** a formal document published on the institution's website and signed and/or formally adopted by top management;
- **Dedicated resources:** commitment of human and financial resources and availability of gender equality expertise for implementation;
- **Data collection and monitoring:** collection of sex- and/or gender-disaggregated data on personnel (and students, where applicable), with monitoring and reporting at least every two years;
- **Training:** awareness-raising and training activities on gender equality, including unconscious gender bias, for staff and decision-makers

### Recommended content elements

In terms of content, it is recommended that the GEP addresses, through concrete measures and targets:

- work-life balance and organisational culture;
- gender balance in leadership and decision-making;
- gender equality in recruitment and career progression;
- integration of the gender dimension in research and teaching content;
- measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

Compliance with the GEP eligibility requirement shall be confirmed through a self-declaration within Template Part 1, uploaded in the PRIMA ESS available at the following link at the opening of PRIMA calls: <https://prima-med.org/submit-your-project/>. The existence and compliance of the GEP will be verified during the grant preparation phase. Where all the mandatory requirements are fulfilled through another formal strategic document (e.g. a development plan, inclusion strategy, or diversity strategy), this may be considered equivalent, provided that all requirements listed above are met.

This eligibility requirement does not apply to:

- private for-profit organisations, including SMEs;
- non-governmental or civil society organisations;
- legal entities established in non-associated third countries.

### Eligible activities

The following activities are generally eligible for grants under Horizon Europe:

- **Innovation actions (IA):** Activities that aim directly to produce plans and arrangements or designs for new altered or improved products processes or services. These activities may include prototyping testing demonstrating piloting large-scale product validation and market replication. The funding rate for IAs depends on the legal status of the organization.

**Funding Rate:** 70% (except for non-profit legal entities where a rate of up to 100% applies)

- **Coordination and Support Actions (CSA)** cover activities that support the programme objectives but do not primarily include research or development. These may include coordination, networking, capacity building, training, policy dialogue, standardisation support, dissemination of results, and other measures that facilitate cooperation and the uptake of research and innovation outcomes.

**Funding Rate:** 100% of eligible costs, regardless of the type of legal entity.

## Other types of actions and forms of funding

In addition to the eligible activities described above the following types of action and forms of funding are used:

- **Recognition prizes:** a prize to reward past achievements and outstanding work after it has been performed. Recognition prizes must help to raise public awareness of EU policies create role models and support best practice exchange.
  - **Prize amounts:** The amount of the prize is specified in the contest. It is not linked to the costs incurred by the winner.
  - **Rules of Contest (RoC) for prizes:** The rules of the contest of a specific prize describe the eligibility and award criteria the evaluation procedure the indicative timetable and the reward. Rules of Contest for prizes are published on the [PRIMA website](#).

## Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)

Where a topic description refers to a TRL the following definitions apply unless otherwise specified:

- TRL 1 – basic principles observed
- TRL 2 – technology concept formulated
- TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept
- TRL 4 – technology validated in lab
- TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment
- TRL 8 – system complete and qualified
- TRL 9 – actual system proven in an operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space)

## C — Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

### Financial capacity

Applicants must **have stable and sufficient resources** to successfully implement the projects and deliver their share. Organizations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects. The financial capacity check will be performed by PRIMA-IS based on the documents exchanged by email with PRIMA-IS during the grant preparation stage (e.g. profit and loss account and balance sheet business plan audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last closed financial year etc.). The analysis will be based on neutral financial indicators but will also consider other aspects such as dependency on EU funding, deficit and revenue in previous years.

The check will normally be done for the coordinator if the requested grant amount is equal to or greater than **EUR 500 000** except for:

- public bodies (entities established as a public body under national law including local regional or national authorities) or international organizations or body whose participation is guaranteed by the government of an EU country or associated country following the PRIMA MGA
- cases where the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000 (low- value grant)

If needed, this check may also be done for the other applicants, including affiliated entities. If the financial capacity is structurally guaranteed by another legal entity, the financial capacity of that legal entity will be verified. If the PRIMA-IS considers that the financial capacity is not satisfactory it may require:

- further information
- an enhanced financial responsibility regime (i.e. joint and several responsibilities of affiliated entities) and
- pre-financing paid in instalments

or

- propose no pre-financing
- request that the applicant concerned is replaced

or

- if needed reject the entire proposal

### **Operational capacity**

Applicants must have the **know-how qualifications** and **resources** to successfully implement their tasks in the project and deliver their share (including when appropriate sufficient experience in EU/transnational projects of comparable size). This assessment of operational capacity will be carried out by external experts during the evaluation of the award criterion '**Quality and efficiency of the implementation**'. It will be based on the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams including their operational resources (human technical and other) or the measures proposed to obtain the necessary competence and experience by the time the tasks are implemented. If evaluating this award criterion leads to a score above the applicable threshold then the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

For this assessment applicants will be required to provide the following information in the application form:

- Description of the consortium participants; and
- For each participant:
  - Identity of researchers involved in the proposal (through the researchers table)
  - up to five most relevant publications widely used datasets software goods services or any other achievements relevant to the call content
  - up to five most relevant previous projects or activities connected to the subject of this proposal and
  - description of any significant infrastructure and/or any major items of technical equipment relevant to the proposed work

Public bodies, Member State organizations, and international organizations are exempt from the operational capacity check. Neither financial capacity nor operational capacity is subject to evaluation for prizes. PRIMA-IS will perform checks on the operational capacity at the evaluation phase of proposals. Financial capacity check is performed before the grant agreement is signed during grant preparation.

## D — Award criteria

If admissible and eligible the proposals will be evaluated and ranked against awards criteria:

TABLE 23. AWARD CRITERIA SECTION 1 CALLS

	<b>Excellence</b> (The following aspects will be considered to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the description in the AWP)	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Quality and efficiency of the implementation</b>
<b>Innovation actions (IA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Clarity and pertinence of the project’s objectives and the extent to which the proposed work is ambitious and goes beyond the state of the art.</b></li> <li>- <b>Soundness of the proposed [for the first stage: overall (*)] methodology</b> including the underlying concepts models assumptions inter-disciplinary approaches appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content and the quality of open science practices including sharing and management of research outputs and engagement of citizens civil society and end-users where appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>(*) Including all aspects mentioned in the first stage proposal template which also include the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content as well as open science practices.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts specified in the AWP</b></li> <li>- Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.</li> <li>- Soundness of the proposed approach to ensure market uptake, scalability and sustainability of the results, including the economic and financial viability of the proposed innovations, cost-effectiveness considerations, investment needs and deployment potential under realistic market conditions, where relevant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages and the resources overall.</li> <li>- Capacity, role and complementarity of each participant, including the contribution of for-profit organisations and SMEs where relevant, and the extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary scientific, technical, entrepreneurial and market-oriented expertise to achieve the project objectives.</li> </ul>
<b>Coordinated Support actions (CSA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Clarity and pertinence of the project’s objectives.</b></li> <li>- <b>Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures, including soundness of methodology</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts specified in the AWP</b></li> <li>- <b>Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall.</li> <li>- Capacity and role of each participant, and the extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.</li> </ul>

 *For two stage submission procedures, only the aspects in bold are considered for the evaluation of first stage*

## Scores and weighting

Evaluation scores will be awarded for the criteria and not for the different aspects listed in the table. Each criterion will be scored out of 5. The threshold for individual criteria will be 3. The overall threshold applying to the sum of the three individual scores will be 10. To determine the ranking for 'Innovation actions' the score for 'Impact' will be given a weight of 1.5.

Proposals that pass the individual and overall threshold will be considered for funding within the limits of the available call budget. Other proposals will be rejected.

## Submission and Evaluation

Under the PRIMA AWP 2026, proposals may be submitted under two types of actions:

- **Innovation Actions (IAs)**
- **Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs)**

Each action type is governed by specific procedures, in accordance with the [Horizon Europe Rules for Participation](#).

### ***Innovation Actions (IAs)***

For Innovation Actions in the AWP 2026, PRIMA applies a two-stage submission and evaluation procedure.

In the first stage, proposals will be evaluated solely based on the '**Excellence**' and '**Impact**' criteria. Only the elements explicitly highlighted in **bold** award criteria ([Table 23 - Award Criteria Section 1](#)) will be assessed.

- The individual threshold for both criteria is 4.
- The overall threshold (sum of the two scores) is determined during evaluation with the aim of selecting proposals corresponding to approximately three times (but not less than two times) the available budget. This threshold is typically set at 8 or 8.5, depending on the volume and quality of submissions.

Only proposals meeting or exceeding both individual thresholds and the overall threshold will be invited to submit a full proposal for the second stage.

In the second stage, proposals will be evaluated against the full set of award criteria: '**Excellence**', '**Impact**' and '**Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation**'. Each criterion will be scored out of 5, with an individual threshold of 3 and an overall threshold of 10. For Innovation Actions, the Impact criterion will be weighted by a factor of 1.5 in the final ranking.

### ***Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs)***

For Coordination and Support Actions, PRIMA applies a single-stage submission and evaluation procedure. Applicants must submit a complete proposal addressing all three award criteria: '**Excellence**', '**Impact**' and '**Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation**'.

The evaluation thresholds for CSAs are:

- Individual threshold for each criterion: 3
- Overall threshold (sum of the three criteria): 10

Proposals not meeting both the individual and overall thresholds will be rejected.

## E — Documents

### Submission

All proposals must be submitted **electronically** via the [Electronic Submission System](#) (ESS) (accessible via the topic page [in the call section](#)). Paper submissions are NOT possible. Proposals must be **readable, clear, complete** and contain all parts and mandatory annexes and supporting documents e.g. plan for the exploitation and dissemination of the results including communication activities etc.

The application form will have two parts:

- **Part I Administrative form** (to be completed partly online and uploaded in PDF format contains administrative information about the applicant organisations (future coordinator and beneficiaries and affiliated entities)
- **Part II Technical Annex** (templates to be downloaded from [PRIMA website call section](#) uploaded as a PDF in the ESS) contains the technical description of the project.
- **The Project's overall budget** (Excel file uploaded in the ESS) for CSA at the submission of the full proposal while for IAs at the second stage

Annexes and supporting documents must be uploaded as PDF files. Proposals should be designed to stay as close as possible to the award criteria (see [Annex D](#) above). The application form will help to achieve this.

When submitting the proposal, the coordinator must confirm that they have the mandate to act for all applicants. Moreover, they must confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that all participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding (especially eligibility GEP, financial and operational capacity exclusion etc.). Before signing the grant agreement each participant must confirm their commitment to the terms and conditions of the grant [by signing an Accession Form](#) annexed to the Grant agreement (Annex 3).

Applicants may be asked later for further documents (for legal entity validation financial capacity check bank account validation etc.).

## F — Procedure

### Evaluation procedure and ranking

Under Section 1 of the PRIMA AWP 2026, proposals may be submitted under two types of actions:

- Innovation Actions (IAs) – evaluated through a two-stage submission and evaluation procedure;
- Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) – evaluated through a single-stage submission and evaluation procedure.

These procedures are fully aligned with the provisions of the Horizon Europe Rules for Participation ([Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#)).

Proposals will first be assessed for **admissibility** and **eligibility**. Eligible proposals will then be evaluated per topic by an evaluation committee, composed of independent external experts, in accordance with Article 49 of Regulation (EU) 2021/695. The evaluation covers both operational capacity and the applicable award criteria. Proposals will be ranked according to their final evaluation score, and a ranking list will be drawn up for each indicative budget specified in the call conditions. The evaluation process is described in detail in the [PRIMA website](#).

## Individual Evaluation

Each eligible proposal is evaluated remotely by at least three independent expert evaluators (Article 29(1), Regulation (EU) 2021/695), based on the applicable award criteria. Each expert prepares an Individual Evaluation Report (IER), which includes scores and justifications for each criterion. Where proposals receive divergent individual scores, a consensus meeting is convened among the experts to discuss and agree on a common position.

## Panel Review

After the remote individual evaluation, evaluators meet in a panel to discuss and find agreement on the initial comments and scores attributed to each proposal. They will prepare an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) for each proposal which shows the outcome of the project proposal evaluation. The panel is also responsible for preparing a consensus ranking list of proposals.

Project funding decisions will be taken based on this ranking list. The panel configuration allows evaluators to overview all eligible proposals checking the consistency of comments and marks not just the ones they have evaluated. This enables them to make fair decisions when ranking the proposals.

In case of disagreement or project proposals with the same score, the panel will determine the priority order for proposals described in the section below. Special procedures will be set out in the call conditions if they apply.

## Priority order for proposals with the same score

In cases where proposals receive the **same final score** within a single budget envelope, a **priority order** will be established to determine which proposals are retained for funding.

For each group of proposals with the same score, starting with the group achieving the highest score and continuing in descending order:

- 1) Proposals that address aspects of the call that have not otherwise been covered by more highly ranked proposals will be considered to have the highest priority.
- 2) The proposals identified under 1), if any, will themselves be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for 'Excellence'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on scores for 'Impact'. In the case of 'Innovation actions', priority will be given to the score for 'Impact', followed by that for 'Excellence'.
- 3) If necessary, the gender balance among the researchers with a leading role named in the researchers table in the proposal, will be used as a factor for prioritisation.
- 4) If necessary, any further prioritisation will be based on geographical diversity, defined as the number of MPCs represented in the proposal, not otherwise receiving funds from projects higher up the ranking list (and if equal in number, then by budget).
- 5) If a distinction still cannot be made, the panel may decide to further prioritise by considering other factors related to the objectives of the call, or to Horizon Europe in general. These may include, for example, enhancing the quality of the project portfolio through synergies between projects or, where relevant and feasible, involving SMEs. These factors will be documented in the panel report.
- 6) The method described in 1), 2), 3) and 4) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranked proposals in the group.

All prioritisation decisions will be fully documented in the evaluation panel report, in line with the principles of transparency, equal treatment, and fairness. All such decisions will be **clearly**

**justified and documented in the ESR.** Once a proposal is prioritised within its group, the methods described in points **1 through 4** will be **reapplied to the remaining proposals** in the same group to determine their order.

### **Prizes – Evaluation and Award Criteria**

For prizes awarded under this AWP, the evaluation criteria, scoring, and weighting will be defined in the Rules of the Contest, which will be published on the [PRIMA website](#) under the section "Submit your proposal" at the time the prize call is launched.

### **Funding decision and communication**

At the end of the evaluation all applicants will be informed of the result. The proposal coordinators receive an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) showing the evaluation results for a given proposal. In the ESR the overall score will be provided.

Applicants whose proposals are successful will receive a formal communication informing them that the grant preparation phase can begin. If special procedures apply, they will be set in the call conditions.

**⚠ *No commitment to provide funding: Invitation to the grant preparation stage does NOT constitute a formal commitment to funding. Various legal checks are still needed before the grant can be awarded such as legal entity validation, financial capacity, exclusion check etc.***

### **Evaluation review procedure**

If a consortium believes that a procedural error or factual shortcoming occurred during the evaluation of its proposal, the coordinator may submit a request for evaluation review (redress review), following the process detailed in the Proposal Outcome Letter and the ESR.

**⚠ *The evaluation review procedure may only address procedural aspects of the evaluation. It cannot be used to contest the expert evaluators' scientific judgments. If the notification of evaluation results is not accessed within 10 calendar days of dispatch, the system will consider it accessed, and the 30-day deadline will start from that date.***

An **Evaluation Review Committee** will assess the complaint and issue a recommendation. The committee may:

- Re-evaluate the proposal by new independent experts, *only if the procedural shortcoming is clearly demonstrated and materially relevant to the evaluation outcome*
- Or confirmation of the original evaluation result, if no flaw or relevant impact is identified

The decision of the PRIMA Executive Director, based on the committee's recommendation, will be communicated to the coordinator by letter. PRIMA aims to process and issue the final outcome within six weeks from the close of the evaluation review time- limit. Further information on the evaluation review process is available on the [PRIMA website](#).

### **Indicative timetable for evaluation and for signature of the grant agreement**

Unless otherwise specified in the specific call conditions, the indicative timetable for evaluation and grant agreement preparation follows the standard Horizon Europe provisions. The timelines differ depending on whether the action is submitted in **two stages** (Innovation Actions) or **one stage** (Coordination and Support Actions).

**For Innovation Actions (IAs) with a two-stage submission procedure:**

- Notification of evaluation results for Stage 1: approximately three (3) months after the Stage 1 submission deadline.
- Notification of evaluation results for Stage 2: approximately five (5) months after the Stage 2 submission deadline.
- Signature of grant agreements: approximately eight (8) months from the Stage 2 submission deadline.

**For Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) with a one-stage submission procedure:**

- Notification of evaluation results: approximately five (5) months from the proposal submission deadline.
- Signature of grant agreements: approximately eight (8) months from the proposal submission deadline.

Those indicative timeframes apply to both Section 1 and for notification of evaluation for Section 2 actions, unless otherwise specified in the relevant topic conditions. For Section 2 actions, the signature of grant agreements generally requires a longer period due to national procedures; however, it should be completed within six (6) months from the notification of the evaluation results to applicants.

## G — Legal and financial set-up of the grant agreements

During the grant preparation stage, the consortium will be asked to prepare the [grant agreement](#), together with the PRIMA project officer and Legal officer.

This grant agreement will set out the framework for the grant implementation and its terms and conditions, particularly concerning deliverables, reporting, and payments. The applicable model with the complete text of the provisions is available on the topic page, together with the other call documentation.

### **Starting date & project duration**

The project starting date and duration will be fixed in the grant agreement (*see Data Sheet, point 1*). Normally, the starting date will be after the grant has been signed. A starting date before the date the grant is signed (retroactive) can be granted exceptionally for duly justified reasons, if agreed with the PRIMA-IS<sup>71</sup>. The project duration is provided in months (extensions will be possible only exceptionally, for duly justified reasons and if PRIMA-IS agrees).

### **Milestones and deliverables**

The milestones and deliverables for each project will be managed through the grant management system in the Portal and are reflected in Annex 1 of the grant agreement. The standard deliverables will be set out in the specific call/topic conditions.

### **Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount**

The grant parameters (maximum grant amount, funding rate, total eligible costs, etc.) will be fixed in the grant agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3 and Article 5*). The project budget is provided in EUR. The amount of the grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

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<sup>71</sup> See Article 196 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.

For **actual cost grants**, the grant will be a budget-based, mixed actual cost grant. This means that it will reimburse ONLY certain types of costs (eligible costs) and ONLY those costs *actually* incurred for the project (NOT the *budgeted* costs). The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the specific call/topic conditions and in the grant agreement.

Grants may NOT produce a profit. If there is a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs), it will be deducted from the final grant amount. Moreover, the final grant amount may be reduced in case of non-compliance (e.g. improper implementation, breach of obligations, etc).

The maximum Horizon Europe funding rates are as follows:

- Innovation Action: 70% (except for non-profit legal entities, where a rate of up to 100% applies)
- Coordination and support action: 100%

### **Budget categories and cost eligibility rules**

The budget categories and cost eligibility rules are fixed in the grant agreement.

Budget categories:

- actual costs (i.e. costs which are real and not estimated or budgeted) for:
  - personnel costs (unless declared as a unit cost; see below)
  - subcontracting costs
  - purchase costs (unless declared as a unit cost; see below) and
  - costs of providing financial support to third parties (if provided for in the specific call conditions)
- units (i.e. an amount per unit) for:
  - personnel unit costs
  - personnel costs of SME owners/natural persons not receiving a salary
  - personnel costs calculated by the beneficiaries according to their usual cost accounting practices (average personnel costs)
  - costs of internally invoiced goods and services calculated by the beneficiaries according to their usual cost accounting practices and
  - specific unit costs (if provided for in the specific call/topic conditions; see also Annex 2a of the grant agreement)
- flat rate (i.e. costs calculated by applying a percentage fixed in advance to other types of eligible costs) for:
  - indirect costs (25% flat-rate of the total eligible direct costs, excluding eligible direct costs for subcontracting, financial support to third parties and any unit costs or lump sums which include indirect costs)

### **Budget flexibility**

The budgets set out in the calls and topics are indicative. Unless otherwise stated, final budgets may change following evaluation. The final figures may change by up to 20% compared to the total budget indicated in each individual part of the work programme. Changes within these limits will not be considered substantial within the meaning of [Article 110\(5\) of Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) No 2024/2509](#).

### **Reporting & payment arrangements**

The reporting and payment arrangements are fixed in the grant agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and articles 21 and 22*).

After the grant has been signed, the consortium will normally receive a float to start working on the project (normally, pre-financing of 60% of the average EU funding per reporting period (i.e.

maximum grant amount/number of periods); exceptionally, less or no pre-financing). For actions with only one reporting period, it will be less, since 100% would mean the totality of the grant amount. At the moment of the prefinancing payment, an amount 5% of the maximum grant amount will be deducted from the prefinancing payment and transferred to the mutual insurance mechanism. This mechanism covers the risks associated with non-recovery of sums due from the beneficiaries.

There will be one or several interim payments linked to a periodic report, depending on the duration of the project. At the end of the project, the consortium will be invited to submit a report based on which the final grant amount will be calculated. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the beneficiaries concerned (or the coordinator) will be asked to pay back the difference (recovery).

Payments will be automatically lowered if one of the consortium members has outstanding debts towards the EU (granting authority or other EU bodies). Such debts will be offset by the granting authority, in line with the conditions set out in the grant agreement (see *Article 22*).

### **Certificates**

Depending on the size of the grant amount and on the type of beneficiaries, beneficiaries may be required to submit a certificate on the financial statements. The thresholds for this certificate are fixed in the grant agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and Article 24*).

### **Liability regime for recoveries**

The liability regime for recoveries is that of individual financial responsibility. Each beneficiary is liable only for their own debt (and those of its affiliated entities, if any) (*Data Sheet point 4.4 and Article 22*).

## **H — Provisions concerning project implementation**

### **Open access to research data**

Open science as an approach to the scientific process emphasizes collaborative work and the dissemination of knowledge openly. It aligns with Article 39(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695. Open science practices<sup>72</sup> are considered in the evaluation of proposals under ‘**Excellence**’ and under the ‘**Quality and efficiency of implementation**’. Applicants should be aware of both mandatory and recommended practices and integrate them into their proposals.

### **Mandatory open science practices**

Some open science practices are mandatory for all beneficiaries per the grant agreement. They concern:

- open access to scientific publications under the conditions required by the grant agreement
- responsible management of research data in line with the FAIR principles of ‘Findability’ ‘Accessibility’ ‘Interoperability’ and ‘Reusability’ notably through the generalised use of data management plans and open access to research data under the principle ‘as open as possible as closed as necessary’ under the conditions required by the grant agreement

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72 Open science practices include early and open sharing of research (for example through preregistration, registered reports, pre-prints, or crowd-sourcing); research output management; measures to ensure reproducibility of research outputs; providing open access to research outputs (such as publications, data, software, models, algorithms, and workflows); participation in open peer-review; and involving all relevant knowledge actors including citizens, civil society and end users in the cocreation of R&I agendas and contents (such as citizen science). These practices are explained and relevant resources provided in a separate section further below (open science practices and resources).

- information about the research outputs/tools/instruments needed to validate the conclusions of scientific publications or to validate/re-use research data
- digital or physical access to the results needed to validate the conclusions of scientific publications unless exceptions apply

As an exception, if providing open access would be against the beneficiaries' legitimate interests, the beneficiaries must grant non-exclusive licenses on fair and reasonable conditions to legal entities that need the research output to address the public emergency. These legal entities must commit to rapidly and broadly exploit the resulting products and services on fair and reasonable conditions. This exception is limited to four years after the end of the action.

### **Ethics (research integrity)**

Actions carried out under the AWP shall comply with ethical principles and relevant Union national and international law including [the Charter and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols](#).

Particular attention shall be paid to the principle of proportionality, to the right to privacy, the right to the protection of personal data, the right to the physical and mental integrity of a person, the right to non-discrimination, and to the need to ensure protection of the environment and high levels of human health protection<sup>73</sup>.

Legal entities participating in an action shall provide:

- a) an ethics self-assessment identifying and detailing all the foreseeable ethics issues related to the objective implementation and likely impact of the activities to be funded including a confirmation of compliance with Article 19(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 establishing Horizon Europe<sup>74</sup> and a description of how it will be ensured
- b) a confirmation that the activities will comply with the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) published by All European Academies and that no activities excluded from funding will be conducted
- c) for activities carried out outside the Union a confirmation that the same activities would have been allowed in a Member State and
- d) for activities making use of human embryonic stem cells as appropriate details of licensing and control measures that shall be taken by the competent authorities of the Member States concerned as well as details of the ethics approvals that shall be obtained before the activities concerned start

Proposals shall be systematically screened to identify actions which raise complex or serious ethics issues and submit them to an ethics assessment. Ethics screenings and assessments shall be carried out by PRIMA-IS with the support of ethics experts. PRIMA shall ensure the transparency of the ethics procedures without prejudice to the confidentiality of the content of those procedures. For preparing the ethics self-assessment make use of the official guide [“How to complete your ethics Self-Assessment”](#). The ethics assessment follows the scientific evaluation and is performed only in case that a proposal has been accepted for funding.

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<sup>73</sup> These requirements stem from the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Articles 3, 7, 8, 21, 35, 37, and 52) and from the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Articles 168 and 191).

<sup>74</sup> Paragraph 1 refers to the general ethical principles applicable to all actions, including compliance with national, EU and international legislation and the exclusion of activities not eligible for funding.

## **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)**

Beneficiaries shall own the results they generate. They shall ensure that any rights of their employees or any other parties in relation to the results can be exercised in a manner compatible with the beneficiaries' obligations in the grant agreement.

Two or more beneficiaries shall own results jointly where:

- they have jointly generated them; and
- it is not possible to: (i) establish the respective contribution of each beneficiary; or (ii) separate them when applying for obtaining or maintaining their protection.

The joint owners shall agree in writing on the allocation and terms of exercise of their joint ownership. Unless otherwise agreed in the consortium agreement or in the joint ownership agreement each joint owner may grant non-exclusive licences to third parties to exploit the jointly owned results (without any right to sub-license) if the other joint owners are given advance notice and fair and reasonable compensation. Beneficiaries which have received Union funding shall adequately protect their results if protection is possible and justified considering all relevant considerations including the prospects for commercial exploitation and any other legitimate interests. When deciding on protection beneficiaries shall also consider the legitimate interests of the other beneficiaries in the action.

In addition to the standard provisions, the following **specific provisions** in the model grant agreement will apply to all grants awarded under this AWP:

**Additional exploitation obligations in case of a public emergency:** If requested by the granting authority, beneficiaries must grant non-exclusive licences to their results – for a limited period of time specified in the request and on fair and reasonable conditions – to legal entities that need the results to address the public emergency. These legal entities must commit to rapidly and broadly exploiting the resulting products and services on fair and reasonable conditions. This provision will apply up to 4 years after the end of the action.

**Additional information obligation relating to standards:** Unless stated otherwise in the specific call conditions, beneficiaries must, up to 4 years after the end of the action, inform the granting authority if the results could reasonably be expected to contribute to European or international standards.

Where provided for in the specific call conditions, the granting authority may, up to 4 years after the end of the action, object to a transfer of ownership or to the exclusive licensing of results, as set out in the specific provision of Annex 5 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (MGA), applied through the PRIMA MGA

Communication, dissemination, open science and visibility (*Article 17 and Annex 5*). In addition to the standard provisions, the following specific provisions in the model grant agreement will apply to all grants awarded under this AWP:

**Open science - additional practices, validation of scientific publications:** Beneficiaries must provide (digital or physical) access to data or other results needed to validate the conclusions of scientific publications, to the extent that their legitimate interests or constraints are safeguarded (and unless they already provided the (open) access at publication).

**Open science - additional practices, public emergency:** In case of a public emergency, if requested by the granting authority, beneficiaries must immediately deposit any research output in

a repository and provide open access to it under a CC BY licence, a public domain dedication (CC 0) or equivalent.

As an exception, if providing open access would be against the beneficiaries' legitimate interests, the beneficiaries must grant non-exclusive licences, on fair and reasonable conditions, to legal entities that need the research output to address the public emergency. These legal entities must commit to rapidly and broadly exploiting the resulting products and services on fair and reasonable conditions. This exception is limited to 4 years after the end of the action.

- Specific rules for carrying out the action (*Article 18 and Annex 5*).

Other provisions may be set out in the specific call/topic conditions.

### **Non-compliance and breach of contract**

The grant agreement (*Chapter 5*) provides for the measures that may be taken in case of breach of contract (and other violations of law). For more information, see *the [Annotated PRIMA Model Grant Agreement \(MGA\)](#)*.

## General Annexes for Section 2

### A — Admissibility

For all Section 2 activities under the **PRIMA AWP 2026**, proposals must comply with the admissibility requirements set out in this section, unless supplemented or modified by specific provisions under the corresponding call conditions.

Applications must be submitted before the **call deadline** via the [PRIMA Electronic Submission System \(ESS\)](#). Applications must be written in English, be **complete** and contain all parts and mandatory Annexes and supporting documents. composed of the following parts:

A complete submission includes the following components:

- **Part I – Administrative Data:** This includes the administrative and financial details of the consortium. The Part I template must be completed and uploaded in PDF format via the ESS. In addition, general administrative and financial information—including the total cost and the amount requested per partner—must be entered directly into the ESS interface at the time of submission.
- **Part II – Technical Annex:** This includes the scientific and technical description of the project (Excellence, Impact, and Implementation). It must be uploaded in PDF format using the official Part II template.
- **Detailed Budget Table** (Excel template) (*required only for full proposals*)

The structure, format, and content of Part II must strictly follow the instructions outlined in the official Part I and Part II Templates, available for download from the corresponding [call page](#) on the [PRIMA website](#).

Activities under Section 2, analogous to Research and Innovation Actions (RIAs) follow a two-stage submission procedure. Therefore, a separate **Excel budget table** ([Excel template](#)) detailing the estimated costs and budget distribution per partner the detailed budget, must be completed and uploaded only at the Full Proposal stage (Stage 2).

Only proposals that include all required parts and are submitted through the ESS by the call deadline will be considered admissible. All proposals must be readable, accessible, and printable. Proposals that do not meet these basic technical requirements may be deemed inadmissible. Paper submissions are **NOT** accepted under any circumstances. Applicants are encouraged to follow guidance provided in the [ESS Handbook](#).

**⚠** *The submission link will be published in the relevant call section of the [PRIMA website](#) and will open one month prior to the submission deadline.*

Applications must include a plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities<sup>75</sup>.

**⚠ Applicants are strongly advised to consult their respective National Contact Points (NCPs) prior to the submission of a proposal, where additional submission procedures may apply. In certain Participating States, the competent national funding agencies require the submission of an application at national level, in parallel to the submission to PRIMA, and within the same deadlines as those established in the PRIMA Call for Proposals.**

**Failure to fulfil such national submission requirements shall result in the ineligibility of the proposal. It is therefore the sole responsibility of the applicants to verify and comply with the applicable national rules and procedures by consulting their NCPs.**

An NCP is designated in each PRIMA Participating State to provide tailored guidance to applicants based in that country. The full list of PRIMA NCPs, along with their contact details, is available at:

 <http://prima-med.org/calls-for-proposals/ncps/>

Applicants are responsible for ensuring compliance with both PRIMA and national requirements. Failure to follow national procedures—such as the submission of required forms to national agencies—may result in ineligibility of the proposal.

## Page limits

In accordance with the admissibility conditions, strict page limits apply to specific sections of the proposal. Proposals exceeding these limits will be automatically rejected by the [Electronic Submission System \(ESS\)](#), and will not be forwarded for evaluation.

- For calls implemented under a two-stage submission procedure, unless otherwise specified in the specific call conditions, the page limit for first-stage proposals (pre-proposals) is **10 pages**.
- Unless otherwise stated in the specific call conditions, the maximum length of full proposals (second stage or single-stage submissions) for Section 2 activities Analogous to RIAs<sup>76</sup> is **40 pages**.

These limits refer to Part II of the proposal (Technical Description), as defined in the [Proposal Template Part II](#) provided by PRIMA at the opening of the calls. Applicants are strongly advised to respect these limits, as the submission system will block any attempt to submit a proposal exceeding the specified thresholds. In addition, font size, margins, and formatting must fully comply with the standards defined in the official proposal templates. Failure to do so may result in the proposal being declared inadmissible.

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<sup>75</sup> Exploitation and Dissemination obligations under article 39 of the REGULATION (EU) 2021/695 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013

<sup>76</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RIP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RIP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website. [https://prima-med.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/PRIMA-SRIA\\_Strategic-Research-and-Innovation-Agenda.pdf](https://prima-med.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/PRIMA-SRIA_Strategic-Research-and-Innovation-Agenda.pdf)

## B — Eligibility

### Entities eligible to participate <sup>77, 78, 79, 80</sup>

Any legal entity, regardless of its place of establishment including legal entities from third countries non-associated to Horizon Europe or international organizations (including international European research organizations<sup>81</sup>) is eligible to participate (whether it is eligible for funding or not) provided that the conditions laid down in the Horizon Europe Regulation<sup>82</sup> and any derogations to these as specified in [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) have been met along with any other conditions laid down in the specific call topic.

A ‘legal entity’ means any natural or legal person created and recognised as such under national law EU law or international law which has legal personality, and which may act in its own name exercise rights and be subject to obligations or an entity without legal personality<sup>83</sup>.

Beneficiaries and affiliated entities should register in the EC [Participant Register](#) before submitting their full proposal application to get a participant identification code (PIC). While having a PIC isn't mandatory for submitting an application, it's strongly recommended to facilitate the application process and subsequent checks.

### Eligibility for Funding

By way of derogation from [Article 10\(1\) and \(2\) of Regulation \(EU\) No 1290/2013](#) and [Article 23\(1\) and \(2\) of Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#), the Legal entities established in the following countries and territories are eligible to receive funding through PRIMA grants under Section 2 calls<sup>84</sup>:

Legal entities established in a PRIMA Participating State or created pursuant to Union law<sup>85</sup>.

- The following **EU Member States** (MS): Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, including the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT)<sup>86</sup> linked to these Member States.

77 EU restrictive measures — Entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)<sup>20</sup> as well as Article 75 TFEU (Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the EU Sanctions Map), are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Special rules also apply to entities covered by Commission Guidelines No 2013/C 205/052.

78 Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government-controlled territories of Ukraine — Given the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the involvement of Belarus, there is currently no appropriate context allowing the implementation of the actions foreseen in this programme with legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government-controlled territories of Ukraine. Therefore, even where such entities are not subject to EU restrictive measures, such legal entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis for justified reasons.

79 Restrictions on participation of legal entities established in China — In accordance with Article 22(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 and the [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026–2027 General Annexes](#), legal entities established in China are not eligible to participate in Innovation Actions in any capacity, unless otherwise specified or exceptionally justified. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). These eligibility criteria may be reviewed in the future in line with relevant policy developments. Participation of certain Chinese universities — Universities established in China that are administered by or under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIT) are not eligible to participate in any action under this Work Programme, in line with Horizon Europe rules.

80 Restrictions related to the protection of European communication networks — Where relevant and where actions are explicitly identified as being subject to such restrictions, entities assessed as high-risk suppliers of mobile network communication equipment (and entities they own or control) may be excluded from participation, in line with the [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026–2027 General Annexes](#) and the EU 5G cybersecurity toolbox.

81 Measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary — Following the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506, as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc). In case of multi-beneficiary grant calls, applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly.

82 Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe.

83 As referred to in point (c) of Article 197 (2) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.

84 The composition of the PRIMA Participating States may evolve during the implementation of the Annual Work Programme. Additional countries may join PRIMA as Participating States in accordance with Articles 6 and 7 of Decision (EU) 2024/1167, provided that they commit a national financial contribution to PRIMA and conclude the necessary administrative arrangements. Applicants are therefore advised to regularly consult the PRIMA website (<https://prima-med.org>) for up-to-date information on the status of Participating States and their eligibility for funding.

85 New PS may join PRIMA and the regularly updated list of PS will be provided by PRIMA-IS

86 Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked.

- The following **Third countries associated with Horizon Europe (AC)**: Egypt<sup>87</sup>, Israel, Tunisia, and Türkiye.
- The following **Third Countries not Associated with Horizon Europe (TC)**: Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Algeria<sup>88</sup>

**⚠** *The eligibility of legal entities from non-associated third countries is conditional upon the entry into force of an agreement with the Union, in the form of an exchange of letters amending their existing international agreements on scientific and technological cooperation.*

Legal entities in third countries applying for PRIMA funding will be eligible if the required international agreements have come into legal effect by the time the relevant Grant Agreement is signed. In cases where these agreements are not in effect at the time of adoption of this AWP, please refer to [General Annex I on practical aspects: participation and eligibility](#).

Applicants are encouraged to consult the [PRIMA webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information on country eligibility and participation status at the time of proposal submission.

### **Participants from countries not listed above shall not be funded by PRIMA.**

All participants with their own funding must attach to their proposal a letter from their organization (signed by a legal representative of the structure) attesting that the funds to cover their participation in the projects (task(s), participation in meetings etc.) will be available.

The information provided in this section is without prejudice to the national funding rules of PS, which may also envisage eligibility for funding for specific entities not established in these PS. The national funding rules of a PS will determine whether a particular entity would be eligible for funding.

After the eligibility check is done by PRIMA-IS, a second eligibility check will be performed by the national funding bodies to verify eligibility for funding<sup>89</sup>. In this context, proposals that are considered eligible for participation by PRIMA-IS (at the consortium level) will enter the evaluation process. However, should the National Funding Bodies deem one consortium partner not eligible for funding, PRIMA-IS may require additional information from the consortium, or the partner concerned, such as an attestation that the funds to cover the participation in the project will be available. Applicants should refer to the national regulations for eligibility for funding and contact their national funding bodies (NCP)<sup>90</sup>.

### **Standard eligibility conditions**

All proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out in the [Rules for Participation of Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#) as well as any derogations specified in the [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#).

<sup>87</sup> Egypt has signed the Horizon Europe Association Agreement in October 2025, and, following the exchange of Notes Verbales, its association is now legally effective. Egypt is therefore considered an Associated Country to Horizon Europe, and legal entities established in Egypt participate in PRIMA under the same terms and conditions as those established in EU Member States.

<sup>88</sup> Status of Participation and Eligibility of Third Countries not Associated to Horizon Europe at the time of adoption of this AWP.

- Jordan and Lebanon have completed the required steps for participation in accordance with Decision (EU) 2017/1324, as amended by Decision (EU) 2024/1167.
- The eligibility of legal entities established in Morocco remains conditional upon the signature and entry into force, or provisional application, of an exchange of letters amending the existing international agreement on scientific and technological cooperation with the European Union.
- Algeria possible consideration as a Participating State, and consequently as a Mediterranean Partner Country, is subject to the outcome of ongoing negotiations with the European Union and to further assessment in accordance with applicable EU legislation.

<sup>89</sup> The national regulations mention the eligible structures for funding (for example, some funding bodies can fund private entities and other cannot) and a list of criteria to check for their eligibility. National regulations also provide a comprehensive list of eligible costs (for example some funding bodies can support mobility or sub-contracting and other cannot). Therefore, before applying to the call of the Section 2, applicants must verify their own national eligibility for funding by reading carefully the national regulations and by contacting the national contact point appointed for this task.

<sup>90</sup> Find the NCP contacts at the following link: <https://prima-med.org/neps-contacts/>

Furthermore, proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out in this sub-section unless supplemented or modified in the call conditions.

A proposal will only be considered eligible if:

- (a) the coordinator of the proposal is a legal entity established in a PRIMA PS<sup>91</sup>
- (b) its content corresponds wholly or in part to the scope and objectives of the topic to which it is submitted
- (c) It complies with the eligibility conditions for participation set out in the Table 24 below
- (d) Where applicable, it complies with the **Gender Equality Plan (GEP) eligibility requirement**, as set out below.

**TABLE 24. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION FOR PRIMA ACTIONS SECTION 2**

<b>Type of Action</b>	<b>Eligibility conditions for participation<sup>92,93</sup></b>
<b>Analogous to Research &amp; Innovation Action (RIA)<sup>94</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>At least three independent legal entities</b>, each established in a different PRIMA (by the time of grant agreement signature) out of which:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ at least one must be established in an EU Member State or a third country associated to Horizon Europe that <u>is not a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC)</u><sup>95</sup> and</li> <li>○ at least one must be established in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>All three legal entities must be independent of each other.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In addition</b>, the consortium must include <b>at least one additional</b> independent legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC). This additional entity may be established in the same PRIMA Participating State as another MPC participant or in a different one.</li> </ul> <p><b>The minimum consortium size is therefore four independent legal entities.</b></p>

### Gender Equality Plan (GEP) – Eligibility requirement

To be eligible, legal entities established in EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries that are public bodies, research organisations, or higher education establishments (including private research organisations and private higher education establishments), applying as beneficiaries or affiliated entities, must have a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place at the time of grant agreement signature and for the entire duration of the grant.

The GEP must meet the following minimum process-related requirements:

- **Publication:** a formal document published on the institution’s website and signed or formally adopted by top management

<sup>91</sup> This measure is intended to safeguard the financial interests of the Union

<sup>92</sup> The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission notice Nr. 2013/C 205/05 (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp.9-11) apply for all actions under this Work Programme including for third parties that receive financial support under the action (in accordance with Articles 204 and 205 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046), notably programme co-fund actions.

<sup>93</sup> The latest information on PRIMA Participating States (PS) is available on the PRIMA website (prima-med.org). At the time of adoption of this Annual Work Programme, the PRIMA PS are: EU Member States Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain, including their Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs); Third Countries associated to Horizon Europe: Egypt, Israel, Tunisia and Türkiye. Third Countries not associated to Horizon Europe: Jordan and Lebanon have completed the required steps for participation in accordance with [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#), as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#). The eligibility of legal entities established in Morocco remains conditional upon the signature and entry into force, or provisional application, of an exchange of letters amending the existing international agreement on scientific and technological cooperation with the European Union. Any possible consideration of Algeria as a Participating State, and consequently as a Mediterranean Partner Country, is subject to the outcome of ongoing negotiations with the European Union and to further assessment in accordance with applicable EU legislation.

<sup>94</sup> Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RfP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RfP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations.

<sup>95</sup> A Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC) refers to a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea participating in PRIMA in accordance with the applicable international agreements and legal acts in force at the time of the Grant Agreement signature namely: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Türkiye

- Dedicated resources: commitment of human and financial resources and gender equality expertise for implementation
- Data collection and monitoring: sex/gender-disaggregated data on personnel (and students, where applicable), with regular monitoring and reporting at least every two years
- Training: awareness-raising and training activities on gender equality, including unconscious gender bias, for staff and decision-makers

In terms of content, it is recommended that the GEP addresses, through concrete measures and targets:

- work–life balance and organisational culture
- gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- integration of the gender dimension in research and teaching content
- measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Compliance with the GEP requirement shall be confirmed through a self-declaration at proposal submission stage via the PRIMA Electronic Submission System (ESS). The existence and compliance of the GEP will be verified during the grant preparation phase.

If all the above mandatory requirements are fulfilled through another formal strategic document (e.g. a development plan, inclusion strategy, or diversity strategy), this may be considered equivalent.

This eligibility requirement does not apply to:

- private for-profit organisations, including SMEs
- non-governmental or civil society organisations
- legal entities established in non-associated third countries

### **National Funding Regulations**

Applicants must refer to their national funding regulations for detailed rules on:

- Eligible applicant types (e.g., some funding bodies may fund private entities, others may not);
- Topics supported at national level;
- Eligibility criteria for funding;
- Eligible costs (e.g., support for mobility or subcontracting may vary).

In some countries, funding agencies require a **parallel submission at national level**, to be completed by the same deadlines as the PRIMA call. **Failure to meet such national requirements may result in ineligibility**. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to consult their **National Contact Point (NCP)** prior to submission. The list of NCPs is available at: <http://prima-med.org/calls-for-proposals/ncps/>.

### **Restrictions between Stage 1 and Stage 2**

- No changes are permitted to the **consortium composition** (organisations, Coordinator, Principal Investigators), budget, or scientific objectives between Stage 1 and Stage 2.

### **⚠ Restrictions on the Role of the Principal Investigator (PI)**

- In Section 2, a PI **cannot act as Coordinator in both Sections 1 and 2** in the same year.
- A PI may act as **Partner** in proposals in both Sections, provided they differ in objectives, methodology, and consortium composition.
- In Section 1, a PI may submit more than one proposal as Coordinator, but if more than one is selected for funding, only one may be funded (one project per year). The PI may be Partner in other projects.

### **Eligible activities**

The following activities are generally eligible for grants under Section 2 calls: Activities analogous to Research and Innovation activities (RIA).

### **Funding Rate**

The level of funding and the list of eligible costs are set out in the national regulations. Each applicant has to comply with the requirements stated in their national regulations. A contact point established in each country and contacted directly by the applicant from the same country ([NCPs](#)) will inform the applicants about the rules.

### **Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)**

Where a topic description refers to a TRL the following definitions apply unless otherwise specified:

- TRL 1 – basic principles observed
- TRL 2 – technology concept formulated
- TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept
- TRL 4 – technology validated in lab
- TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment
- TRL 8 – system complete and qualified
- TRL 9 – actual system proven in an operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space).

### **Ethics**

According to Article 19 of [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#) establishing Horizon Europe, legal entities participating in an actions shall provide at the proposal stage an ethics self-assessment of the potential risks of misuse of the research project that could pose a threat to human beings animals and the environment. For preparing the ethics self-assessment use the official guide “[How to complete your ethics Self-Assessment](#)”. The ethics assessment follows the scientific evaluation and is performed only in case your project has been accepted for funding.

## C —Operational capacity and exclusion

### **Operational capacity**

Applicants must have the know-how qualifications and resources to successfully implement their tasks in the project and contribute their share (including when appropriate sufficient experience in EU/transnational projects of comparable size).

This assessment of operational capacity will be carried out by external experts during the evaluation of the award criterion '**Quality and efficiency of the implementation**'. It will be based on the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams including their operational resources (human technical and other) or exceptionally the measures proposed to obtain the necessary competence and experience by the time the tasks are implemented. If the evaluation of this award criterion leads to a score above the applicable threshold, then the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

For this assessment applicants will be required to provide the following information in the application form:

- description of the consortium participants; and
- for each participant:
  - identity of researchers involved in the proposal (through the researchers table)
  - up to five most relevant publications widely used datasets software goods services or any other achievements relevant to the call content
  - up to five most relevant previous projects or activities connected to the subject of this proposal and
  - description of any significant infrastructure and/or any major items of technical equipment relevant to the proposed work

Additional supporting documents may be requested if they are needed to confirm the operational capacity of any applicant.

## D — Award criteria

If admissible and eligible the proposals will be evaluated and ranked against the full set of **awards criteria**.

TABLE 25. AWARD CRITERIA SECTION 2 CALLS

	<b>Excellence</b> (The following aspects will be considered to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the description in the AWP 2026)	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Quality and efficiency of the implementation</b>
<b>Analogous to Research &amp; Innovation Action (RIA)<sup>96</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Clarity and pertinence of the project’s objectives and the extent to which the proposed work is ambitious and goes beyond the state of the art.</b></li> <li>- <b>Soundness of the proposed [for the first stage: overall (*)] methodology</b> including the underlying concepts models assumptions inter-disciplinary approaches appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content and the quality of open science practices including sharing and management of research outputs and engagement of citizens civil society and end-users where appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>(*) Including all aspects mentioned in the first stage proposal template which also include the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content as well as open science practices.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts specified in the AWP</b></li> <li>- Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan including communication activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages and the resources overall.</li> <li>- Capacity and role of each participant and the extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.</li> </ul>

**⚠ For two-stage submission procedures, only the aspects in **bold** are considered for the evaluation of first stage.**

96 Please note that the acronyms IA (Innovation Action) and RIA (Research and Innovation Action) are used in Section 1 and Section 2, respectively. In Section 1, the actions follow the standard Horizon Europe Rules for Participation (RfP). However, in Section 2, while some rules are based on Horizon Europe RfP, specific participation and funding rate regulations apply. Projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by national funding bodies and are therefore subject to respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website.

## Scores and weighting

For calls following a two-stage submission process (applicable to Activities Analogous to Research & Innovation Action (RIA) under this AWP):

- At Stage 1, proposals will be evaluated only on the **‘Excellence’** and **‘Impact’** criteria. Within these criteria, only the aspects indicated in bold in the evaluation forms and proposal templates will be assessed.
  - The individual threshold for each of these two criteria is 4.
  - An overall threshold, applied to the sum of the two scores, will be set with the aim of inviting proposals that together request approximately three times, but not less than twice, the available budget for the topic.
  - This overall threshold is typically set at 8 or 8.5, depending on the volume and quality of proposals received.
  - Only proposals meeting or exceeding both individual and overall thresholds at Stage 1 will be invited to submit a full proposal for Stage 2.
- At Stage 2, proposals will be evaluated against all three award criteria: **Excellence**, **Impact**, and **Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation**. The standard thresholds of 3 per criterion and 10 overall will apply.

## E — Documents

### Submission

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the PRIMA Electronic Submission System (ESS), accessible from the relevant call topic page on the [PRIMA website](#). Paper submissions are **NOT** accepted under any circumstances.

Proposals must be complete, containing all required parts, annexes, and supporting documents, including, where applicable, the plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results, and associated communication activities. Proposals must be submitted before the call deadline. Proposals should be drafted in close alignment with the award criteria set out in [Annex D](#) of this AWP. The application form is structured to assist applicants in addressing these criteria.

The application consists of two main parts:

- **Part I – Administrative Form:** This section contains information on the applicant organisations and is to be completed partly online and partly uploaded as a PDF.
- **Part II – Technical Annex:** This includes the technical description of the project. Templates must be downloaded from the PRIMA call section, completed as instructed, and uploaded as a PDF.

At Stage 2 (for two-stage calls), applicants must also submit a detailed project budget in Excel format, following the template provided: [Excel template](#). All annexes and supporting documents must be uploaded as PDF files (or other formats where explicitly allowed by the system). Templates and annexes will be available directly in the ESS. When submitting a proposal, the coordinator must confirm that they have the mandate to act on behalf of all applicants, and that the information provided is complete and accurate. The coordinator must also confirm that all participating entities comply with the eligibility, financial and operational capacity, and exclusion criteria applicable under Horizon Europe rules.

 **Applicants should check with their National Contact Points (NCPs) whether a parallel or subsequent submission at national level is required in accordance with national rules.**

## F — Procedure

### Evaluation procedure and ranking

All calls under this AWP follow a two-stage submission procedure. At Stage 2, applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal, which will be evaluated against the full set of award criteria as described in [Annex D](#).

Proposals will first undergo formal checks for admissibility and eligibility, and will then be evaluated per topic, by an evaluation committee composed of independent external experts, in accordance with Article 49 of the Horizon Europe Regulation (EU) 2021/695. These experts assess both the operational capacity of the applicants and the proposal's performance against the award criteria.

A separate ranking list will be established for each **indicative budget line** outlined in the call conditions.

**Individual Evaluation:** Each eligible proposal is evaluated remotely by at least three independent expert evaluators (Article 14 Horizon Europe Regulation (EU) 2021/695) who perform a technical evaluation based on the abovementioned criteria. An Individual Evaluation Report which includes comments and scores for all evaluation criteria is prepared by each evaluator. For proposals that receive very different scores from the evaluators consensus meetings are convened where the three evaluators discuss to reach a consensus on the scores to assign. The evaluation process is described in detail in the [PRIMA website](#).

**Panel review:** after the remote individual evaluation evaluators meet in a panel to discuss and find agreement on the initial comments and scores attributed to each proposal. They will prepare an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) for each proposal which shows the outcome of the project proposal evaluation. The panel is also responsible for preparing a consensus ranking list of proposals. Project funding decisions will be taken based on this ranking list. The panel configuration allows evaluators to overview all eligible proposals checking the consistency of comments and marks not just the ones they have evaluated. This enables them to make fair decisions when ranking the proposals.

In case of disagreement or project proposals with the same score the panel will determine the priority order for proposals described in the section below. Special procedures will be set out in the call conditions if they apply.

### Priority order for proposals with the same score

In cases where proposals receive the same final score within a single budget envelope under Section 2 of the PRIMA AWP 2026, a priority order will be established to determine which proposals are retained for funding.

For each group of proposals with the same score, starting with the group achieving the highest score and continuing in descending order:

1. Proposals that address aspects of the call that have not been covered by more highly ranked proposals will be given the highest priority.
2. The proposals identified under 1), if any, will themselves be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for '**Excellence**'. When these scores are equal, priority will be given to the '**Impact**' score. In the case of 'Innovation actions', priority will be given to the score for '**Impact**', followed by that for '**Excellence**'.
3. If necessary, the gender balance among the researchers with a leading role named in the researchers' table in the proposal will be used as a factor for prioritisation.

4. If necessary, any further prioritisation will be based on geographical diversity, defined as the number of MPCs represented in the proposal that are not otherwise receiving funds from projects higher up the ranking list (and, if equal in number, by budget).
5. If a distinction still cannot be made, the panel may decide to further prioritise by considering other factors related to the objectives of the call, or to Horizon Europe in general. These may include, for example, enhancing the quality of the project portfolio through synergies between projects or, where relevant and feasible, involving SMEs. These factors will be documented in the panel report.

The method described in 1), 2), 3) and 4) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranked proposals in the group.

At the conclusion of the panel meeting, the panel will recommend one or more ranked lists of proposals for each topic under evaluation, in accordance with the scoring system and priority rules described above. A separate ranked list will be established for each indicative budget line as set out in the call conditions.

### **Funding decision and communication**

In accordance with Article 6(10)(c) of [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#), proposals submitted under Section 2 will be ranked based on the results of the evaluation. PRIMA-IS, as the entity responsible for managing the central evaluation process, will establish a ranking list for each topic and budget envelope.

However, for Section 2, the funding of participants is the sole responsibility of the relevant Participating States (PS), not PRIMA-IS. Funding decisions will therefore be taken by the respective National Funding Agencies in accordance with their national funding rules. In cases where a Participating State is unable to fund one or more of its participants, PRIMA-IS may, in coordination with the PS, proceed to select subsequent projects in the ranking list, provided that those projects meet the quality thresholds and eligibility criteria.

Each proposal coordinator will receive an ESR, presenting the outcome of the evaluation for their proposal. For proposals submitted under a two-stage procedure, the ESR issued at the end of Stage 1 will include the overall scores and an indication of whether the proposal has been invited to Stage 2. Common feedback may also be provided to applicants whose proposals were not retained. Applicants whose proposals are recommended for funding will receive a formal notification of the outcome and, where applicable, information on the grant preparation process from their respective National Funding Agency. Any special procedures or deviations applicable to specific topics or funding arrangements will be clearly stated in the relevant call conditions.

### **Evaluation review procedure**

If a consortium believes that a procedural error or factual shortcoming has occurred during the evaluation of its proposal, the coordinator may submit a request for evaluation review (appeal), following the process detailed in the Proposal Outcome Letter and ESR.

***⚠ The evaluation review procedure may only address procedural irregularities or factual errors that may have affected the outcome of the evaluation. It cannot be used to contest the expert evaluators' scientific judgments or scores. If the notification of evaluation results is not accessed within 10 calendar days of dispatch, the system will consider the notification as accessed, and the 30-day deadline will start from that date.***

An **Evaluation Review Committee** will assess the complaint and issue a recommendation. The committee may:

- Re-evaluation of the proposal by new independent experts, only if the procedural shortcoming or factual error is clearly demonstrated and materially relevant to the evaluation outcome
- Or confirmation of the original evaluation result, if no flaw or relevant impact is identified

The decision of the PRIMA Executive Director, based on the committee's recommendation, will be communicated by letter to the coordinator. PRIMA aims to process and issue the final outcome within six weeks from the close of the appeal window. Further information on the evaluation review process is available on the [PRIMA website](#).

### **Indicative timetable for evaluation and for signature of the grant agreement**

Unless otherwise specified in the specific call conditions, the indicative timetable for **Section 2** calls is as follows:

- Information on the outcome of the evaluation: approximately **five (5) months** from the submission deadline.
- Indicative date for the signing of national grant agreements: approximately **six (6) months** from the communication of evaluation results.

Please note that for Section 2, the grant agreements are signed directly between the beneficiaries and their respective national funding bodies, in accordance with applicable national rules and timelines<sup>97</sup>.

## **G — Specific additional information and relations between beneficiaries and their national funding bodies**

### **Grant agreement**

Each beneficiary will be funded directly by its own national funding body. Therefore, a grant agreement is concluded between each beneficiary and its national funding body. The rules for this agreement are the national rules set in the national regulations. The grant agreement will cover the entire duration of the project and must be synchronized in time (starting date of the activities and end of the project) between the different funding bodies involved in the project's funding.

### **Consortium agreement**

A consortium agreement is required and must be sent to all the funding bodies involved in the project. This consortium agreement must address at least:

- 1) The repartition of the tasks between partners
- 2) The sharing of the intellectual property rights of the project results
- 3) The conditions of publication and dissemination of the results
- 4) The technology transfer and the exploitation of the results
- 5) Any specific requirements from a funding body

The funding agencies provide no template for the consortium agreement.

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<sup>97</sup> PRIMA national funding agencies may have different schedules for the signature of national contracts and to make payments to beneficiaries.

## The Project Coordinator

Each consortium needs to appoint a coordinator who will have the following role:

For the preparation and submission of the proposal:

- Be the single point of contact between the PRIMA-IS secretariat and the consortium partners from proposal preparation to submission
- Ensure that all the partners involved in the consortium are eligible for participation
- Submit the application form on behalf of the consortium to the ESS

During the implementation of the project:

- Be the single point of contact between the PRIMA-IS secretariat and the consortium partners from the proposal preparation to submission
- Be a point of contact between the Funding bodies and the consortium partners in case of requiring a grant extension or scientific/managerial modifications. The funding agencies should also be in direct contact with their beneficiaries to discuss changes that affect the grant agreement
- Ensure the role of supervision of the project workflow with the help of WP leaders
- Joint consortium reports (e.g. progress reports for PRIMA-IS) should be sent directly by the coordinator to the PRIMA-IS with the national funding agencies in the copy

The coordinator will not be responsible for the financial management of PRIMA research funding which will be handled directly between national beneficiaries and their national funding bodies in each participating country.

## H — Provisions concerning project implementation

### Open access to research data

PRIMA encourages open science as an approach to the scientific process based on cooperative work and diffusing knowledge in particular in accordance with the following elements which shall be ensured in accordance with Article 39(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695<sup>98</sup>:

- (a) Open access to scientific publications resulting from research funded under the Programme
- (b) Open access to research data including those underlying scientific publications in accordance with the principle 'as open as possible as closed as necessary'

As an exception if providing open access would be against the beneficiaries' legitimate interests the beneficiaries must grant non-exclusive licenses on fair and reasonable conditions to legal entities that need the research output to address the public emergency. These legal entities must commit to rapidly and broadly exploiting the resulting products and services on fair and reasonable conditions. This exception is limited to 4 years after the end of the action.

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<sup>98</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 ([//eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0695](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0695)).

## Data protection<sup>99</sup>

### Research Data Management (RDM)

Responsible management of research data shall be ensured in line with the principle's 'findability' 'accessibility' 'interoperability' and 'reusability' (the 'FAIR principles'). Attention shall also be paid to the long-term preservation of data. Proper Research Data Management (RDM) is mandatory for any PRIMA project generating or reusing research data. It is a key part of Horizon Europe's open science requirements. As part of making research data findable accessible interoperable and re-usable (FAIR) RDM can be applied to research outputs other than data (i.e. workflows protocols software samples etc). Beneficiaries must manage the digital research data generated in the action ('data') responsibly in line with the FAIR principles and should at least do the following:

- 1) Prepare a Data Management Plan (DMP) and keep it updated throughout the course of the project
- 2) Deposit data in a trusted repository and provide open access to it ('as open as possible as closed as necessary')
- 3) Provide information (via the same repository) about any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to re-use or validate the data
- 4) As part of making research data findable accessible interoperable and re-usable (FAIR) a DMP should include information on:
  - the handling of research data during & after the end of the project
  - what data will be collected processed and/or generated
  - which methodology & standards will be applied
  - whether data will be shared/made open access and
  - how data will be curated & preserved (including after the end of the project).

### Ethics (research integrity)

According to Article 19 of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 establishing Horizon Europe, legal entities participating in an action must provide, at the proposal stage, an ethics self-assessment identifying any potential ethical issues, including risks of misuse, dual-use concerns, or any potential harm to human beings, animals, or the environment. Applicants must prepare this self-assessment using the official guide "[How to Complete Your Ethics Self-Assessment](#)".

The ethics review takes place after the scientific evaluation and is performed only for proposals selected for funding. Where relevant, a security scrutiny may also be carried out in line with Horizon Europe procedures.

Actions funded under the PRIMA AWP 2026 must comply with the highest ethical standards and with all applicable Union, national, and international legislation, including the [Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights](#) and Fundamental Freedoms and its supplementary protocols.

All proposals retained for funding will include **ethics requirements** in the Grant Agreement, which beneficiaries must fulfil. Compliance with these requirements may be monitored during the implementation of the action and may lead to further ethics checks if necessary.

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<sup>99</sup> PRIMA ensures compliance with EU data protection regulations, aligning with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – Regulation (EU) 2016/679, which governs the lawful processing of personal data, ensuring privacy, security, and fundamental rights protection in research activities. Additionally, PRIMA follows the principles outlined in Regulation (EU) 2021/695 (Horizon Europe Framework Programme) regarding open science, research data management, and ethical data handling.

Legal entities participating in an action shall provide:

- a) an ethics self-assessment identifying and detailing all the foreseeable ethics issues related to the objective implementation and likely impact of the activities to be funded including a confirmation of compliance with paragraph 1 and a description of how it will be ensured;
- b) a confirmation that the activities will comply with the European Code of Conduct for Research [Integrity](#) published by All European Academies and that no activities excluded from funding will be conducted;
- c) for activities carried out outside the Union a confirmation that the same activities would have been allowed in a Member State; and

Proposals shall be systematically screened to identify actions which raise complex or serious ethics issues and submit them to an ethics assessment. The ethics assessment shall be carried out by the PRIMA-IS. Ethics screenings and assessments shall be carried out with the support of ethics experts. PRIMA shall ensure the transparency of the ethics procedures without prejudice to the confidentiality of the content of those procedures.

## Applicable common principles to all activities funded by the PRIMA Participating States

Under Article 6(9) of [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) activities included in AWP 2026 that the PS funds without the Union financial contribution (Sections 2 and 3 (PSIAs)) must be implemented in compliance with common principles adopted by PRIMA-IS after obtaining approval from the Commission.

### Equal treatment

Participation in Section 2 and PSIAs, including the right to receive funding, should generally be open to any legal entity private or public. However, it is understood and accepted that national legislation or specific objectives of action may dictate that only certain legal entities e.g. public institutions can participate and receive funding in particular activities.

Funding to PSIA actions should be allocated to the broadest possible extent through open calls for proposals and the PRIMA Partnership should be mentioned in the call text. However, it is understood and accepted that existing national research infrastructures and organizations e.g. publicly funded research institutes can be used to implement parts or the entire PSIA. Therefore, funding may be allocated through open calls for proposals rather than through internal competition within the research infrastructure or an overall strategic research plan. The principle of equality and non-discrimination based on gender racial or ethnic origin religion or belief disability age and sexual orientation should be observed and promoted.

### Transparency

The review process's evaluation selection criteria and details should be published before applicants submit proposals. Funding awarding through calls for proposals or institutional funding is made public. Any communication or publication related to PSIAs whether undertaken by the PRIMA-IS a Participating State or participants in an activity must be **labelled or co-labelled** as:

**'[name of the PSIA] is part of the PRIMA Partnership supported by the European Union.'**

### **Independent peer-review evaluation**

Applications submitted through open calls for proposals should be evaluated by panels of leading independent domestic and/or non-domestic experts (peer review). In case of direct funding to a national research infrastructure or organization the quality of the research output by the national research infrastructures or organization should be assessed regularly and structured manner preferably through independent peer review.

### **Ethics and scientific integrity**

As defined in the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) the principles of scientific integrity should be observed and promoted. Fundamental ethical principles particularly those related to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union the European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols should be adhered to and enforced both during the selection of funding and during the subsequent implementation of the actions.

### **Exploitation and dissemination of results**

The findings of research activities included as Participating States' Initiated Activities (PSIAs) in the PRIMA AWP 2026 should be promptly and openly made available to the research community and the general public, in line with the principles of transparency, scientific cooperation, and open science promoted under Horizon Europe.

Where possible, beneficiaries should ensure that results are disseminated through open access publications, data sharing platforms, and other suitable channels, while respecting any applicable intellectual property and confidentiality obligations.

## General Annex I on practical aspects: participation and eligibility

### Eligibility of Third Countries Not Associated to Horizon Europe

In accordance with Article 1(2) of the amended PRIMA [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#), the participation of non-EU third countries not associated to Horizon Europe in activities funded by PRIMA under Horizon Europe—namely **Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco**<sup>100</sup>—is conditional upon the conclusion of an international agreement with the European Union and its entry into force (or provisional application producing legal effects) by the time of Grant Agreement (GA) signature. These agreements must take the form of an exchange of letters amending and supplementing the existing bilateral agreements on scientific and technological cooperation between the EU and the respective countries.

### Application of eligibility criteria – Section 1

As per the [General Annex B - Eligibility for Section 1](#) a proposal is considered eligible if it involves a consortium composed of:

- **at least three independent legal entities**, each established in a different PRIMA Participating State **by the time of GA signature**, of which:
  - At least one legal entity established in an **EU Member State** or a **non-Mediterranean Partner Country (non-MPC) associated to Horizon Europe**; and
  - At least one legal entity established in a **Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC)** considered a PRIMA Participating State.
- **at least one additional** independent legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC). This additional MPC entity may be established in the same PRIMA Participating State as another MPC participant or in a different one and does not need to fulfil the ‘different country’ requirement applicable to the minimum consortium of three entities.

The minimum consortium size for Section 1 Innovation Actions (IAs) is **four independent legal entities**. Under Section 1 IAs, the consortium must also include at least one for-profit organisation as beneficiary. Therefore, legal entities established in countries whose status as PRIMA Participating States is still conditional upon the conclusion of the agreement may participate and be evaluated, but their eligibility for funding is contingent upon the required international agreement being signed and concluded or provisionally applied by that time. **Eligibility is re-assessed at the time of GA signature.**

### Legal Consequences in the event of non-conclusion – Section 1

If the required international agreement is not signed, concluded, or provisionally applied by the time of GA signature, entities established in the concerned country shall not be eligible for Union funding under Section 1. In such cases, the consortium may be invited to reconfigure to maintain eligibility by:

- Replacing the ineligible partner with one established in a PRIMA Participating State; **or**
- Demonstrating that the remaining partners still meet the minimum eligibility requirements.

<sup>100</sup> Status of third countries not associated to Horizon Europe regarding Participation in PRIMA is the following at the time of adoption of this AWP:

- Jordan and Lebanon have successfully concluded negotiations to amend their respective agreements to participate in PRIMA-funded activities under Horizon Europe (2025-2027) on equal terms with other PRIMA Participating States, in accordance with [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#), as amended by [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#).
- Morocco's participation in PRIMA-funded activities under Horizon Europe remains conditional upon the conclusion or provisional application of the relevant international agreement with the European Union.
- For Algeria, negotiations with the European Union are ongoing. Any possible consideration of Algeria as a Participating State for the purposes of this Work Programme is subject to the conclusion or provisional application of the relevant international agreement.

Applicants are encouraged to consult the PRIMA website for the most up-to-date information on country eligibility and participation status at the time of proposal submission.

If the eligibility conditions are no longer met, the proposal may be declared ineligible for funding. In accordance with Article 6(10)(c) of the amended PRIMA [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#), PRIMA-IS may allocate the funding to the next highest-ranked eligible proposal.

### Participation as partners not receiving Union funding – Section 1

Entities from countries whose agreements are not yet in legal force by the time of **GA signature** may still participate as unfunded partners, provided that:

- The consortium meets the eligibility criteria without counting the unfunded partner.
- The role of the unfunded partner is clearly described in the proposal and the GA.
- The entity provides a declaration of own or alternative funding and formally agrees that it will not receive PRIMA or Horizon Europe funding.

### Application of eligibility and participation conditions – Section 2

For actions funded under Section 2 of the PRIMA AWP 2026 ([see Table 24](#)), a proposal must involve:

- **at least three independent legal entities**, each established in a different PRIMA Participating State **by the time of grant agreement signature**, including:
  - At least one legal entity established in an **EU Member State** or a **non-MPC associated to Horizon Europe**; and
  - At least one legal entity established in an **MPC** considered a PRIMA PS<sup>101</sup>.
- **at least one additional** independent legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC). This additional MPC entity may be established in the same PRIMA Participating State as another MPC participant or in a different one and does not need to fulfil the ‘different country’ requirement applicable to the minimum consortium of three entities.

The minimum consortium size for Section 2 actions is therefore **four independent legal entities**. Eligibility to be counted toward the minimum consortium composition is subject to the condition under Article 1(2) of the amended PRIMA [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#).

For countries whose status is still conditional, the following applies: Entities may participate and may be eligible for funding from their national authorities, depending on national rules. **However, they cannot be counted toward the minimum eligibility conditions** unless the required exchange of letters with the European Union has been signed and concluded or provisionally applied by the time of GA signature.

If this condition is not fulfilled, the consortium must:

- Reconfigure to replace the ineligible entity; **or**
- Demonstrate that the remaining partners still meet the minimum eligibility requirements.

Applicants are advised to consult the latest list of PRIMA Participating States at <http://prima-med.org> and to verify the funding eligibility of their organisation through their National Contact Point (NCP) or relevant national funding body.

<sup>101</sup> Status of Participation of Third Countries not Associated to Horizon Europe:

- Jordan and Lebanon have successfully concluded the required procedures to participate in PRIMA-funded activities under Horizon Europe (2025–2027) on equal terms with other PRIMA Participating States.
- Morocco has successfully concluded negotiations to amend its agreement. The procedures for the entry into force of this agreement are ongoing.
- For Algeria, negotiations are ongoing. Any updates will be promptly communicated.

## Section 3

### Description of the Participating States Initiated Activities (PSIAs)

The PRIMA Participating States implement and fund a broad array of national programme activities that contribute to the objectives of the PRIMA Partnership. These Participating and Partner States' Initiated Activities (PSIAs) are implemented and funded independently from the PRIMA-IS by one PS alone or by several PS without the Union's financial contribution.

PSIAs are an important contribution from PS to the PRIMA Partnership as they promote research collaboration in the region and enable PSs to have an overview of activities that their country (research and development agencies different Ministries etc.) funds on water management farming systems and food-value chains and they support the PRIMA Partnership achieving its objective of promoting cooperation networking and integration of national research programmes. For these reasons PSIAs are included in the PRIMA AWP.

In line with Article 6 (8) of the [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#) those activities may be included in the AWP only following the positive outcome of their external independent evaluation by international peer review concerning the objectives of PRIMA and may be launched only in the reference year and only after the adoption of the AWP for that year.

Please note that the following Article 6(9) of [Decision \(EU\) 2024/1167](#) activities included in WP 2026 that the PS funds without the Union financial contribution must be implemented in compliance with common principles adopted by PRIMA-IS after obtaining approval from the EU Commission. In particular the principles of equal treatment transparency independent peer-review evaluation and selection.

**Any communication related to PSIAs whether undertaken by the PRIMA-IS a Participating State or any of the participants in a PSIA must indicate that they are part of the PRIMA Partnership supported by the EU.**

The total cost for new PSIAs in 2026 amount to: **43,286,258.**

All PSIAs are listed in [Table 19](#) and the sections below with a brief overview of the PS the subject matter of the activity the countries in the Mediterranean region where the activity is conducted and the total indicative commitment for the activity. Wherever relevant local currencies have been converted into Euros using official exchange rates.

The European Commission's acceptance of the PSIAs as in-kind contributions of the PRIMA Participating States to the PRIMA Partnership will be based on assessing the information provided through the PRIMA-IS annual reporting. This reporting should include reporting by the Participating States according to the requirements agreed with the European Commission in line with Article 19 of the Delegation Agreement concluded between PRIMA-IS and the European Commission. This assessment will verify the costs incurred by the Participating States for the implementation of those PSIAs the relevance of those PSIAs in contributing to the specific objectives of the Partnership their correct labelling in any communication and their compliance with the common principles agreed by the PRIMA-IS on behalf of the Participating States and the European Commission.

## PSIAs: ES.2026.1

Code	ES -2026-1
Theme:	<b>Water management Agrofood value chain Farming Systems</b>
Activity title	AEI Annual Action Plan 2026
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	<p>The Annual Action Plan 2026 will be configured as a planning instrument of the State Research Agency within the framework of the management contract which will include on basis of available resources the activities to be carried out in the corresponding year to achieve its objectives.</p> <p>In accordance with the provisions of article 23 of the Agency's Statute the Annual Action Plan includes among others the following activities:</p> <p>a) Those of a formative methodological nature and determination of management indicators of the activities that correspond to the Agency.</p> <p>b) Those of management monitoring and control of the actions that in terms of scientific technical and innovation research correspond to the Agency in accordance with its purpose and functions.</p> <p>c) The organization and management of the scientific-technical evaluation of the proposals that require financing from the programs and instruments assigned to the Agency or the results of the agreement and collaboration agreements.</p>
Rationale/Impact	Generation of knowledge improvement of social economic and technology conditions of the Spanish society.
Objectives	Plan the actions to implement financing evaluation management and monitoring of scientific and technical research activity aimed at the generation exchange and exploitation of knowledge promoted by the General Administration of the State by its sole initiative or in concurrence with other Spanish Administrations or entities or of other countries or international organizations.
Deliverables	In terms of Projects Researchers trained researchers under mobility
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the Call for Proposals	<p>Proyectos I+D Retos Investigación y Generación de Conocimiento.</p> <p>Acciones Dinamización Redes Investigación:</p> <p>-FPI subprogramme.</p> <p>-JdC Juan de la Cierva subprogramme.</p> <p>-RyC Ramón y Cajal subprogramme.</p>
Publication date	<p>2026 (different dates).</p> <p>Note, the most important instrument is 'Proyectos I+D Retos Investigación y Generación de Conocimiento'. It will be published in December 2026 or even January 2027. Projects will start at the end of 2027. This leads to a discrepancy in the year between the planned and reported figures reported for that year.</p>
Deadline for applications	2026 and in some cases, it could be 2027
Expected date of award	2026 and in some cases, it could be 2027
Scope of the Call for Proposals	<p><i>Proyectos I+D Retos Investigación y Generación de Conocimiento</i>: the objectives are to finance the execution of «R+D+I Projects tackling Social Challenges and the advancement of knowledge regardless of the time horizon and regardless of the scope of application</p> <p><i>Acciones Dinamización Redes Investigación</i>: "Research Networks" aim relation and development of networks of research:</p> <p>Thematic networks made up of researchers in similar thematic area of knowledge that require a multidisciplinary approach.</p> <p>Strategic networks made up of Spanish managers or researchers who participate in European research initiatives or who advise expand or disseminate scientific and technological knowledge among representatives of bodies of the State.</p> <p>All calls under the State Programme for the Promotion of Talent and Its Employability aim to promote formation and incorporation of national and foreign researchers with an outstanding</p>

	<p>trajectory in R&amp;D centres and private companies. On the one hand young researchers are granted contracts and on the other hand the program promotes the creation of permanent jobs for their subsequent incorporation in the agents of the Spanish science system technology and innovation beneficiaries. There are three different modalities open to researchers from all over the world:</p> <p>-FPI subprogramme that aims to train doctors by financing employment contracts.</p> <p>-JdC Juan de la Cierva subprogramme that aims to promote the recruitment by Spanish research organizations or R&amp;D centres of young people in possession of a doctor's degree.</p> <p>-RyC Ramón y Cajal subprogramme aims to promote the incorporation researchers with a distinguished career in R&amp;D centres.</p>
Implementation	
Type of Activity	<p>Please select one of the following</p> <p>Research Innovation Action (RIA) X</p> <p>Innovation Action (IA) X</p> <p>Training and Mobility Action (TMA): Please specify</p> <p>Scholarship <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Mobility <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Training action X</p> <p>Joint research project X</p> <p>- Consolidation of senior researchers</p>
Start date of the activity	Depending on the call. It should be 2026 or 2027
Duration	
Funding institution	Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI)
Funding beneficiaries	Spanish Research Institutions universities research centres technological centres Spanish and foreign Individuals for the Talent programme.
Countries where research is conducted	Not defined
Collaborating partner(s)	Not defined
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	10, 5 million
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The scientific lines "water management farming and food" of the AEI are aligned both with those of the Ministry of Science and Innovation and of the AEI. The financing procedures of the AEI have also been adapted with the aim of expediting the financing of international collaboration projects among which are those of PRIMA.
Website	<p>AEI Annual Action Plan 2025 (will be published in 2026). As similar one was published in 2025: <a href="https://www.aei.gob.es/sites/default/files/page/field_file/2025-01/PLAN%20DE%20ACTUACION%20ANUAL%202025%20APROBADO.pdf">https://www.aei.gob.es/sites/default/files/page/field_file/2025-01/PLAN%20DE%20ACTUACION%20ANUAL%202025%20APROBADO.pdf</a></p> <p>PROYECTOS I+D Retos Investigación y Generación de Conocimiento. Last call 2024: <a href="https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/proyectos-generacion-conocimiento-2024">https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/proyectos-generacion-conocimiento-2024</a></p> <p>Redes Investigación: <a href="https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-formacion-doctores-doctoras-empresas-otras">Redes de Investigación 2024   Agencia Estatal de Investigación</a></p> <p>-Doctores industriales: <a href="https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-juan-cierva-2024">https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-juan-cierva-2024</a></p> <p>-JdC - Juan de la Cierva subprogramme <a href="https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-ramon-cajal-ryc-2024">https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-ramon-cajal-ryc-2024</a></p> <p>-RyC - Ramón y Cajal subprogramme <a href="https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-ramon-cajal-ryc-2024">https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-ramon-cajal-ryc-2024</a></p>

## PSIAs: ES.2026.2

Code	ES -2026-2
Theme:	<b>Water management Agrofood value chain Farming Systems</b>
Activity title	Funding allocated to National projects in the Agri-food value chain Farming and Management of water R&D fields
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	<p>CDTI funds R&amp;D projects carried out by Spanish companies in a continuous open call. This R&amp;D Call is aimed to Industry-driven and market-oriented R&amp;D projects in Spain consisting in the development or substantial improvement of new products processes or services.</p> <p>Only enterprises are eligible to get the funding support; participation of research institutes/universities and other organizations is welcome as self-funded participants or subcontractors. These R&amp;D projects must have a minimum eligible budget of 175 000 EUR and its length may be from 12 to 36 months.</p> <p>The funding modality for the project will be a Partially Reimbursable Aid covering up to 85% of the total approved budget. This CDTI funding may be distributed in the following way:</p> <p>A reimbursable tranche (RT) within a time period of 10 or 15 years to be counted from the center of gravity of the project which is calculated in accordance with the project duration and the amount of the budget targets. The first reimbursement is made 3 years after the center of gravity of the project and at least 2 years since its completion date. The interest rate of the aforementioned RT shall be fixed and equal to the one-year Euribor which shall be determined when the project is approved.</p> <p>A non-reimbursable tranche (NRT) adjusted in accordance with the characteristics of the project the beneficiary and the source of the funds used for the funding. This tranche shall be contingent upon fund availability.</p> <p>An ex-ante document to allow the beneficiary to benefit from a tax exemption related to R&amp;D activities.</p>
Rationale/Impact	<p>It's expected to foster the business competitiveness of beneficiaries improving their portfolio of products and services as well as increasing the efficiency of their processes and activities.</p> <p>The outcomes of these projects will lead to the improvement of farming and agro- food activities to develop eco-friendly activities and production processes as well as a more sustainable use of water. A better quality of products will be promoted as well as the traceability in the food chain. A considerable reduction of environmental impact and a more efficient use of available resources are expected.</p>
Objectives	<p>The main objective of this instrument is to support R&amp;D activities of Spanish companies to foster their competitiveness trough the development of new/ improved products processes and services focused to fulfil economic environmental and social challenges. This Call hasn't a sectorial approach so is open to all sectors including the fields of water environment farming ecosystem agri-food etc.</p> <p>With a bottom-up approach R&amp;D open call projects aim to advance in the State of the Art of technologies products and processes tackled by Spanish companies which operates in the so related fields encouraging cooperation schemes with research entities and other companies from Spain or from other country all around the world.</p>
Deliverables	
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the Call for Proposals	National R&D continuous open CDTI Call
Publication date	This call is continuously open since the 80 's so it will be open the whole year 2026. There won 't be a publication date.
Deadline for applications	31-12-2026
Expected date of award	Approval of these projects could be done throughout 2026 and 2026 (depending on the submission date)
Scope of the Call for Proposals	R&D and innovation activities with a TRL 3-6 carried out by private companies.
Implementation	

Type of Activity	Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓ Innovation Action (IA) ✓ Mobility ✓ Joint research project ✓
Start date of the activity	Projects can be submitted since the 1st of January 2026
Duration	The whole year 2026
Funding institution	CDTI-Spanish Agency of Innovation
Funding beneficiaries	Spanish private companies and Economic Interest Groups (EIG)
Countries where research is conducted	Spain
Collaborating partner(s)	Companies Research bodies (Universities Public Research Bodies and Innovation and Technological Centres)
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	According to the figures previously committed by CDTI to the PRIMA PSIAs this amount could reach up to 30 million.
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The CDTI R&D National Call funds the development of technologies processes and products in the fields of water natural resources agri-food environment farming etc. with a bottom-up approach focused to market and social needs. The supported projects will contribute to a business competitiveness tackling technology social and environmental challenges in so related fields which are included in Thematic Areas of PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. Activities funded by the CDTI R&D instrument support interdisciplinary and cross- cutting actions that are aligned with the PRIMA WP2026
Website	<a href="https://www.cdti.es/index.asp?MP=100&amp;MS=802&amp;MN=2">https://www.cdti.es/index.asp?MP=100&amp;MS=802&amp;MN=2</a>

## PSIAs: EG.2026.1

Code	PS-EG-2026-1
Theme:	Multidisciplinary programme
Activity title	“JESOR – Development” Joint collaborative Efforts of Egyptian expatriates and Scientific Organizations towards tackling national R&D Challenges
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	JESOR is a national programme launched by the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) to foster collaboration between Egyptian researchers abroad and local institutions in Egypt. The programme supports R&D and innovation projects that address national development challenges, encourage knowledge transfer, and build sustainable partnerships between expatriate scientists and Egyptian research and industrial entities.
Rationale/Impact	JESOR aims to mitigate brain drain, facilitate technology transfer, and integrate Egyptian expatriate expertise into the national innovation system. It also seeks to strengthen Egypt’s scientific position by leveraging its global talent pool to solve domestic problems through applied research.
Objectives	Encourage joint research and innovation projects between Egyptian institutions and expatriate experts Promote capacity building and knowledge transfer Support development-focused research in line with Egypt Vision 2030 Create sustainable networks between diaspora scientists and local actors
Deliverables	20–30 funded projects involving expatriate experts Over 150 researchers engaged, including young Egyptian scientists At least 50 researchers supported through training or mobility activities
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the Call for Proposals	-
Publication date (call 2026)	May 2026
Deadline for applications	September 2026
Expected date of award	March 2027
Scope of the Call for Proposals	Open to proposals led by Egyptian expatriate scientists in collaboration with national universities, research centres, and industries. Projects must include R&D or innovation components and address strategic national challenges (e.g., food security, energy, environment, health, industry).
Implementation	
Type of Activity	Please select one of the following Research Innovation Action (RIA) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Innovation Action (IA) <input type="checkbox"/> Training and Mobility Action (TMA): Please specify Scholarship <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joint research project <input type="checkbox"/> – Other: Please specify the type of activity
Start date of the activity	May 2027
Duration	24-36 months
Funding institution	Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT), Egypt
Funding beneficiaries	Egyptian research institutions and universities in collaboration with Egyptian expatriates
Countries where research is conducted	Primarily in Egypt, with technical contributions from expatriates abroad
Collaborating partner(s)	Egyptian expatriate scientists and professionals affiliated with foreign universities or R&D centres
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in €)	500,000 €
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	Aligned through fostering innovation, capacity building, and promoting sustainable agri-food systems, water, and environmental research.
Website	<a href="http://www.asrt.sci.eg/open-calls-ar">http://www.asrt.sci.eg/open-calls-ar</a>

## PSIAs: FR.2026.1

Code	FR-2026 -1
Theme:	<b>Water management Agrofood value chain Farming Systems.</b>
Activity title	Research Projects funded by ANR under the Annual National Call for proposals (AAPG) or other specific Calls on PRIMA related issues.
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	The Generic Call for Proposals 2026 (AAPG) is the French National Research Agency's (ANR) main call. It is directed towards all scientific communities and all public and private players involved in French research. It is designed to give researchers in various scientific fields access to co-funding in a large number of research themes basic or applied in addition to their allocated recurrent funding.
Rationale/Impact	<p>The French National Research Agency (ANR) is a public administrative institution under the authority of the French Ministry of Higher Education Research and Innovation. The Agency funds project-based research carried out by public operators cooperating with each other or with private companies.</p> <p>The ANR was founded in 2005 to promote French project-based research and to stimulate innovation by promoting the emergence of collaborative multidisciplinary projects and encouraging collaboration between the public and private sectors. It also aims at strengthening the position of French research at European level and worldwide. The Agency's missions defined in the decree of 1st August 2006 amended on 24 March 2014 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To fund and promote the development of basic and targeted research technological innovation technology transfer and public-private partnerships</li> <li>• To implement the Work Programme approved by the French Minister of Research following consultation with the supervisory ministers of France's research bodies and public higher education institutions</li> <li>• To manage major government investment programmes in the fields of higher education and research and to oversee their implementation</li> <li>• To strengthen scientific cooperation across Europe and worldwide by aligning its Work Programme with European and international initiatives</li> <li>• To analyse trends in research offering and assess the impact of the funding it allocates on scientific and societal output in France.</li> </ul> <p>The ANR's activities are thus designed to support the excellence of French research at a variety of technological readiness levels (TRL) support basic research encourage academic and public-private scientific partnerships and promote European and international cooperation. To achieve these goals it organises competitive calls for proposals and conducts rigorous selection processes based on peer review in compliance with international standards: impartiality equal treatment confidentiality ethics scientific integrity and transparency.</p>
Objectives	AAPG 2026 is divided into 57 research themes each with its own Scientific Evaluation Panel (CES): There are 38 research themes across seven main scientific fields: environmental sciences energy and materials sciences digital sciences life sciences social sciences and humanities mathematics and its interactions and physics of matter high-energy Earth and universe sciences. There are 19 research themes covering cross-disciplinary challenges and integrating issues from various scientific fields.
Deliverables	
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the Call for Proposals	Generic Call for Proposals 2026
Publication date	Publication of the work programme and call for proposals 2026 in July 2025.
Deadline for applications	Publication of the results of the Call for Proposals in July 2026
Expected date of award	Deadline for Step 1: October 2025
Scope of the Call for Proposals	

Implementation	
Type of Activity	Please select one of the following Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓ Innovation Action (IA) Training and Mobility Action (TMA): Please specify Scholarship Mobility Training action Joint research project - Other: Please specify the type of activity
Start date of the activity	Second Quarter 2026
Duration	One year (programme duration)
Funding institution	ANR
Funding beneficiaries	All scientific communities and all public and private players involved in French research
Countries where research is conducted	Field work and collaborations may be performed in any country
Collaborating partner(s)	All the countries participating to PRIMA Calls are included in potential collaborating partners
Total national public commitment for entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	Around 1,5 M€/year
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The funded projects are in line with most of the main PRIMA SRIA thematic areas or are crosscutting between water management and farming systems. Research projects on food security and agri-food value chain are also increasingly funded.
Website	<a href="https://anr.fr/en/">https://anr.fr/en/</a>

## PSIAs: IL.2026.1

Code	IL-2026-1
Theme:	<b>Water management</b>
Activity title	German-Israel Water Technologies Cooperation
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	<p>Within the framework of the German-Israeli cooperation in Water Technology Research the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Israeli Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) fund bilateral R&amp;D projects.</p> <p>The research focus on solutions to the water problems in Israel and its surrounding area and/or Germany. The research should be multidisciplinary and be applicable to the needs of the water sector.</p> <p>In addition to scientific partners projects should preferably include industrial partners as well as related stakeholders.</p>
Rationale/Impact	Finding scientific based solutions or technologies for water challenges in Middle east Israel and Germany
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the water situation in Israel and the surrounding area and/or Germany. Transferability of the results to comparable regions should preferably be ensured.</li> <li>• To facilitate access to new markets for Israeli and German enterprises in the water and environmental sector.</li> <li>• To support and strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the water sector as well as cooperation between science and industry.</li> </ul>
Deliverables	Funding of 4-5 of projects every year
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	German-Israel Water Technologies Cooperation Call
Publication date (call 2026)	Expected to be around Jan-Feb 2026
Deadline for applications	2 months after publication
Expected date of award	About one year after publication
Scope of the call for Proposals	To be defined
Implementation	
Type of Activity	Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓ Innovation Action (IA) ✓ Mobility ✓ Joint research project ✓
Start date of the activity	Expected to be around Jan-Feb 2026
Duration	The program last for about 50 years each research project is funded for 3 years
Funding institution	BMBF (Germany) & MOST (Israel)
Funding beneficiaries	Academic Researchers in Universities and Research Institutions in Germany and Israel
Countries where research is conducted	Germany and Israel
Collaborating partner(s)	DE BMBF MOST
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	Around EUR 250 000 (only Israeli (MOST) contribution)
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	Applied Water Research and bi-national cooperation between two PRIMA's PS.
Website	<a href="https://www.fona.de/en/measures/german_israeli_cooperation_in_water_technology_research_copy.php">https://www.fona.de/en/measures/german_israeli_cooperation_in_water_technology_research_copy.php</a>

## PSIAs: MT.2026.1

Code	MT-2026-1
Theme:	<b>Water management Agri-food value chain Farming Systems</b>
Activity title	PRIMA Participating States Calls for Proposals supporting PRIMA
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	Through this action, national and bilateral calls for proposals in PRIMA-related thematic areas may be launched by Xjenza Malta (XM), as well as jointly launched by XM and other PS' funding entities. These initiatives are designed to enhance the Research and Innovation capacities in PRIMA-related thematic areas of PS involved.
Rationale/Impact	<p>The focus for these calls is to build Research and Innovation capacities and to develop knowledge and common innovative solutions for integrated water provision and management in the Mediterranean area, to make them more climate resilient, efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally and socially sustainable.</p> <p>This will be achieved through a competitive and transparent process of selection.</p> <p>The main impacts will be to (but not limited to these):          Successful projects will act as a springboard for consortia to apply for PRIMA Sections 1 and 2 Calls.          Increase awareness on the PRIMA Initiative.          Further support local researchers who have been unsuccessful in previous PRIMA Calls.          Encourage partnerships with other PRIMA PS to launch bi-lateral and multi-lateral calls to further support the collaborative nature of PRIMA.</p>
Objectives	<p>The general objective of these calls is to promote national and regional Research and Innovation in the strategic thematic areas of PRIMA and to encourage more participation in PRIMA activities.</p> <p>With a bottom-up approach, Research and Innovation calls will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generate new knowledge and advancements in technologies relevant to the PRIMA thematic areas.</li> <li>• Foster capacity-building through learning by doing and hands-on training.</li> <li>• Strengthen the link between evidence generation and policymaking in the PRIMA thematic areas.</li> <li>• Enhance experience-exchange with researchers in the other PRIMA PS.</li> </ul> <p>Enhance Malta's capacity for Research and Innovation in PRIMA-related thematic areas.</p>
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National/Bilateral R&amp;I projects on Water Management Farming Systems and Agri-Food Value Chain.</li> <li>• Research outcomes – scientific papers attendance at conferences participation in joint events between the PS as well as other dissemination efforts.</li> <li>• Project reporting during the interim and end of projects.</li> <li>• Increase the possibility of establishing consortia for future proposal submissions under PRIMA Sections 1 and 2 Calls.</li> </ul>
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	Calls for Proposals for the Implementation of Projects under the thematic areas of PRIMA
Publication date (call 2026)	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2026
Deadline for applications	Multiple deadlines spanning the entire duration of 2026
Expected date of award	Project approvals will be conducted throughout 2026 depending on the submission date
Scope of the call for Proposals	Promote Research and Innovation in PRIMA-related thematic areas to address identified national funding gaps and increase the use of evidence-based actions which may not have been addressed through the PRIMA calls under PRIMA Sections 1 and 2.
Implementation	
Type of Activity	Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓ Innovation Action (IA) ✓ Mobility ✓

	Joint research project ✓
Start date of the activity	1st quarter of 2026
Duration	Projects duration will be between 1-2 years
Funding institution	Xjenza Malta (XM) and other PRIMA Funding Agencies
Funding beneficiaries	PRIMA Participating Countries
Countries where research is conducted	PRIMA Participating Countries
Collaborating partner(s)	PRIMA Participating Agencies
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	MT – EUR 300 000. Other PS can have a specific allocated budget.
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The thematic focus on Agricultural Research Water Management and Agri Food Value Chain will be in alignment with the three thematic pillars of PRIMA
Website	<a href="https://xjenzamalta.mt/">https://xjenzamalta.mt/</a>

## PSIAs: MT.2026.2

Code	MT-2026-2
Theme:	<b>Water management Agri-food value chain Farming Systems</b>
Activity title	PRIMA Participating States Calls for Proposals supporting PRIMA
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	Through this action entities that are based in Malta can establish collaborative links with fellow peers in Universities Research Organizations and/or Industry that are based in another PRIMA PS. The PRIMA Training and Mobility Call will support strategic visits placements or other joint activities that may facilitate different partners to come together and potentially submit joint applications for PRIMA.
Rationale/Impact	<p>The focus for this action is to build research and innovation capacities through training and mobility activities. Such activities would empower researchers and R&amp;I stakeholders through training sharing of best practices knowledge transfer and networking as well as establish successful partner matches for future collaborations to propose and undertake joint R&amp;I PRIMA projects. This will be achieved through a competitive and transparent process of selection.</p> <p>The foreseen main impacts will be to (but not limited to):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Increase awareness on the PRIMA Initiative.</li> <li>2) Train researchers who are gaining expertise in the relevant thematic areas.</li> <li>3) Facilitate meetings between researchers with common research interests in order to successfully applied for the PRIMA-Calls.</li> <li>4) Share best practices through research visits and workshops.</li> <li>5) Transfer knowledge and encourage dissemination amongst entities from different PS through the organization of seminars and workshops.</li> <li>6) Further support local researchers who have been unsuccessful in previous PRIMA Calls to find new partners and to widen their network further.</li> </ol>
Objectives	<p>The objective of the Call is to promote national and regional research and innovation in the thematic areas of PRIMA and to encourage more participation in PRIMA through the fostering of international collaborations.</p> <p>This Call is foreseen to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widen the research network for Mediterranean researchers and practitioners operating in the fields of PRIMA.</li> <li>• Foster capacity-building of researchers/practitioners by learning through hands-on training and sharing of best practices on water sustainability land and food management.</li> <li>• Foster a culture for transnational research and high-quality research excellence outputs.</li> <li>• Provide access to research facilities.</li> </ul>
Deliverables	<p>- Mobility of researchers between Malta and other PRIMA PSs for training workshops and research seminars.</p> <p>- Joint Research Actions in the PRIMA thematic areas between stakeholders in different PRIMA PS</p> <p>- Research outcomes – scientific papers attendance at conferences as well as other dissemination efforts.</p> <p>- Technical/final Report at the end of the activity</p> <p>- Increase the possibility of establishing consortia for future proposal submissions under Section 1 and Section 2 PRIMA Calls</p>
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	PRIMA Training and Mobility Award (PTMA)
Publication date (call 2026)	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2026
Deadline for applications	Multiple deadlines spanning the entire duration of 2026
Expected date of award	PTMA project approvals will be conducted throughout 2026 depending on the submission date
Scope of the call for Proposals	Malta will launch a call for training and mobility under the PRIMA Section 3 initiatives for 2026. The aim of the call is to promote training and mobility activities associated with PRIMA-related topics that could address shortcomings associated with effective partner searching unsuccessful partner collaborations due to the lack of in-person and on-site meetings as well as limitations in the

	transfer and application of existing knowledge across PS. Addressing such limitations can help increase the propensity for stronger project consortia composition.
Implementation	
Type of Activity	Mobility ✓ Training action ✓ Joint research project ✓
Start date of the activity	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2026
Duration	Applicants would have the possibility to use the award within 1 year from date of award.
Funding institution	Xjenza Malta (XM) and other PRIMA Funding Agencies
Funding beneficiaries	Eligible Malta-based stakeholders according to National Rules for Participation
Countries where research is conducted	PRIMA Participating Countries
Collaborating partner(s)	Stakeholders in PRIMA Participating Countries
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	MT – EUR 25 000
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	This initiative aligns well with the Capacity Building cross-cutting activity described in Chapter 5 of the PRIMA SRIA whereby PRIMA strives to enhance research capacity in Euro-Mediterranean countries through training programmes for researchers and entrepreneurs.
Website	<a href="https://xjenzamalta.mt/">https://xjenzamalta.mt/</a>

## PSIAs: TR.2026.1

Code	TR-2026-1
Theme:	<b>Water management Agri-food value chain Farming Systems</b>
Activity title	PRIMA Participating States Calls for Proposals supporting PRIMA
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	Through this action bilateral/multilateral joint calls for proposals in PRIMA-related thematic areas may be set up between Türkiye's funding agency TÜBİTAK and other PS funding agencies. Such an initiative aims to build the Research and Innovation capacities of the PS involved in the areas of Water Food and Agriculture.
Rationale/Impact	The focus for these calls is to build research and innovation capacities and to develop knowledge and common innovative solutions for integrated water provision and management in the Mediterranean area to make them more climate resilient efficient cost-effective and environmentally and socially sustainable. This will be achieved through a competitive and transparent process of selection. The main impacts will be to (but not limited to these): 1) Successful projects will act as a springboard for consortia to apply for Section 1 and Section 2 PRIMA Calls 2) Increase awareness on the PRIMA Initiative 3) Further support local researchers who have been unsuccessful in previous PRIMA Calls 4) Encourage partnerships with other PRIMA PS to launch bi-lateral and multi-lateral calls to further support the collaborative nature of PRIMA.
Objectives	The general objective of the call is to promote national and regional research and innovation in the strategic thematic areas of PRIMA and to encourage more participation in PRIMA activities.  This call will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generate new knowledge relevant to the PRIMA thematic areas</li> <li>• foster capacity-building through learning by doing and hands-on training</li> <li>• strengthen the link between evidence generation and policy-making in the PRIMA thematic areas</li> <li>• enhance experience-exchange with researchers in the other PRIMA PS.</li> </ul>
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bilateral R&amp;I projects on Water Management Agriculture and Agri Food Value Chains</li> <li>- Mobility of researchers between the PRIMA PS - Research outcomes – scientific papers attendance at conferences participation in joint events between the PS as well as other dissemination efforts.</li> <li>- Project reporting during the interim and end of projects.</li> <li>- Increase the possibility of establishing consortia for future proposal submissions under Section 1 and Section 2 PRIMA Calls</li> </ul>
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	Calls for Proposals for the Implementation of Projects under the thematic areas of PRIMA
Publication date (call 2026)	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2026
Deadline for applications	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2026
Expected date of award	3 <sup>rd</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup> quarters of 2026
Scope of the call for Proposals	Participating States will launch a bi-/multilateral call for research proposals under the PRIMA Initiative calls Section 3 for 2026. The aim of such calls is to promote research in PRIMA-related topics which could address the identified national gaps in funding in these topics and to increase the use of evidence-based actions which may not have been addressed through the PRIMA calls under PRIMA Sections 1 and 2.
Implementation	
Type of Activity	<p><i>Please select one of the following</i></p> <p>Research Innovation Action (RIA) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Innovation Action (IA) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Training and Mobility Action (TMA): Please specify</p>

	Scholarship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mobility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training action <input type="checkbox"/> Joint research project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - Other: Please specify the type of activity
Start date of the activity	March-April 2026
Duration	Project duration will be 1-2 years
Funding institution	PRIMA Funding Agencies
Funding beneficiaries	PRIMA Participating Countries
Countries where research is conducted	PRIMA Participating Countries
Collaborating partner(s)	PRIMA Funding Agencies
<b>Commitments</b>	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity	TR- Up to 3.000.000 TRY (TBC) + Project Incentive Premium (max. 360.000 TRY) (TBC) + Overhead (max. 650.000 TRY) (TBC) <b>per project = 4.010.000 TRY (TBC)</b> = 91.879 <sup>102</sup> € (TBC) per project. <b>Considering 183.758 € for two projects</b> Other PS can have a specific allocated budget.
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The thematic focus on Agricultural Research Water Management and Agri-Food Value Chain will be in alignment with the three thematic pillars of PRIMA
Website	<a href="http://www.tubitak.gov.tr">www.tubitak.gov.tr</a>

<sup>102</sup> The ECB exchange rate of 8.5.2025 has been used: 1 Euro=43,6443 TRY.

## Other Activity: JO.2026.1

Code	JO-2026-1
Theme:	
Activity title	<b>EU-Jordan Research Days 2026</b>
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	<p>The EU-Jordan Research Day, organized by the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST). This event aims to raise awareness of PRIMA's funding opportunities and foster increased Jordanian participation in collaborative research that addresses key challenges in the Mediterranean region. As Jordan's National Focal Point for PRIMA, HCST is committed to advancing national engagement in this EU-Med initiative, which targets critical issues in water management, sustainable agriculture, food security, and environmental sustainability.</p> <p>In addition to PRIMA, the EU-Jordan Research Day also highlights opportunities under the Horizon Europe Framework Programme, FUTURE4PRIMA (F4P) strategic foresight initiative, and COST Actions, promoting synergies across EU-supported research and innovation programs. The event serves as a platform to introduce other relevant European funding instruments, contributing to a more integrated approach to research collaboration between Jordan and the EU.</p> <p>HCST, as the National Focal Point for PRIMA in Jordan, works in close coordination with the Scientific Research and Innovation Support Fund (SRISF) to support Jordanian involvement, particularly in Section 2 projects.</p> <p>The EU-Jordan Research Day will provide participants with essential information on PRIMA's objectives, thematic priorities, application processes, and practical (hands-on) guidance on developing competitive proposals. This initiative underscores Jordan's commitment to advancing research and innovation that contribute to a sustainable and resilient Mediterranean future.</p>
Rationale/Impact	<p>The EU-Jordan Research Days are expected to deliver significant impacts by empowering Jordanian researchers, universities, and research institutions to actively engage in European funded programs, one of them is PRIMA. By enhancing awareness, building capacity, and fostering international collaborations, the initiative aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Increase Jordanian Participation in EU-Funded Research:</b> Support more researchers and institutions in applying to and securing funding from programs such as PRIMA, leading to stronger integration of Jordanian research within the broader Mediterranean and European research communities.</li> <li><b>2. Enhance Proposal Quality and Competitiveness:</b> Provide practical hands-on training on proposal writing, application procedures, and project structuring, leading to higher-quality submissions and improved success rates in competitive calls.</li> <li><b>3. Foster International Partnerships and Networks:</b> Encourage the creation of cross-border research consortia, partnerships, and collaborative projects that strengthen ties between Jordanian researchers and their counterparts across EU-Med region.</li> <li><b>4. Strengthen National Research and Innovation Capacity:</b> Build the technical and administrative capacities of Jordanian researchers and institutions to manage and implement EU-funded projects effectively.</li> <li><b>5. Support National Priorities for Sustainable Development:</b> Align research efforts with national development goals, particularly in critical areas such as water security, sustainable agriculture, food systems, and environmental resilience, contributing to the achievement of national and regional sustainability targets.</li> <li><b>6. Promote a Culture of Innovation and International Engagement:</b> Inspire a new generation of researchers to pursue excellence, innovation, and global collaboration, positioning Jordan as an active and valuable player in international research and innovation ecosystems.</li> </ol> <p>Through these impacts, the EU-Jordan Research Days will contribute to the professional growth of individual researchers, and to the advancement of Jordan's role in addressing shared EU-Med challenges through science, innovation, and international cooperation.</p>
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Align National Priorities with EU Research Agendas</b> Promote strategic alignment between Jordan's national R&amp;I priorities and the thematic focus areas of key EU programs—such as water management, sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, food security, energy, health, and the WEF Nexus—to maximize the impact and relevance of Jordanian participation in European-funded initiatives.</li> <li><b>2. Enhance Researcher Capacity and Proposal Competitiveness</b> Equip Jordanian researchers, institutions, and stakeholders with the knowledge, tools, and best practices necessary to successfully participate in EU-funded programs through practical</li> </ol>

	<p>workshops, proposal writing guidance, and the sharing of lessons learned from successful projects.</p> <p>3. Foster International Partnerships and Networking Strengthen cross-border cooperation by facilitating connections between Jordanian institutions and potential partners across Europe and the Mediterranean, encouraging active involvement in multinational consortia under EU collaborative frameworks.</p> <p>4. Increase Awareness of EU Funding Opportunities Raise awareness among Jordanian stakeholders about available EU funding instruments—such as PRIMA, Horizon Europe, COST Actions, and other cooperation mechanisms—while clarifying participation rules, funding modalities, and application procedures.</p> <p>5. Support Inclusive and Sustainable Research Development Promote inclusive and impactful research that addresses shared regional challenges, supports innovation and technology transfer, and contributes to the long-term sustainability of Mediterranean ecosystems, societies, and economies.</p>
Deliverables	<p>As part of the EU-Jordan Research Days 2025, organized by the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) as Jordan's National Contact Point for the PRIMA Programme, the following key deliverables were achieved:</p> <p>1. Successful Regional Events across Jordan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three coordinated events held from 5 to 7 May 2025 in Northern (JUST University), Central (University of Jordan), and Southern (Mu'tah University) Jordan, ensuring wide geographic participation and accessibility.</li> <li>Attracted over 450 participants, including researchers, academics, public and private sector representatives, NGOs, and youth organizations.</li> </ul> <p>2. Awareness and Capacity Building on EU Funding Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive presentations and interactive workshops covering Horizon Europe, PRIMA, and COST, with a focus on enhancing Jordanian researchers' knowledge of EU funding opportunities and proposal development.</li> <li>Highlighted Jordan's active engagement in the FUTURE4PRIMA project, which supports updating PRIMA's Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) with emphasis on water, food, climate, and ecosystems.</li> </ul> <p>3. Increased PRIMA Section 2 Proposal Submissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of proposals submitted from Jordan under PRIMA Section 2 in the 2025 call doubled compared to 2024, reflecting heightened awareness and engagement.</li> <li>Demonstrated significant diversity in applicants, with proposals received from researchers and institutions across all regions of Jordan, underscoring the nationwide reach of the initiative.</li> </ul> <p>4. Strengthening National and Regional Collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fostered inclusive dialogue and cooperation among Jordanian and Mediterranean research communities, reinforcing Jordan's voice in regional policy and funding agendas.</li> <li>Promoted evidence-based policymaking and regional integration in addressing shared challenges such as water security, food systems, climate resilience, and ecosystem sustainability.</li> </ul>
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	Calls for Proposals for the Implementation of Projects under the thematic areas of PRIMA
Publication date (call 2026)	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2026
Deadline for applications	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2026
Expected date of award	3 <sup>rd</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup> quarters of 2026
Scope of the call for Proposals	Participating States will launch a bi-/multilateral call for research proposals under the PRIMA Initiative calls Section 3 for 2026. The aim of such calls is to promote research in PRIMA-related topics which could address the identified national gaps in funding in these topics and to increase the use of evidence-based actions which may not have been addressed through the PRIMA calls under PRIMA Sections 1 and 2.
Implementation	
Type of Activity	<p><i>Please select one of the following</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other activity: <b>Info Days</b></p>

Start date of the activity	May 2026
Duration	1 week
Funding institution	HCST
Funding beneficiaries	The beneficiaries of PRIMA funding through Section 2 include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Academic Institutions</li> <li>2. Research Centres and Institutes</li> <li>3. Private Sector Organizations</li> <li>4. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)</li> <li>5. Young Researchers and Early-Career Scientists</li> </ol>
Countries where research is conducted	Jordan
Collaborating partner(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PRIMA Project Consortium</li> <li>2. FUTURE4PRIMA (F4P) Project Consortium</li> <li>3. COST Association</li> <li>4. European Commission – Horizon Europe</li> <li>5. Other relevant European funding instruments</li> </ol>
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity	<b>27,500 €</b>
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	<p>The EU-Jordan Research Days 2025 are fully aligned with the PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), which identifies priority areas critical to the sustainability and resilience of the Mediterranean region. The event focused on strengthening Jordanian research engagement in the following three core thematic pillars of PRIMA:</p> <p>1. Water Management:  Water scarcity remains one of the most pressing challenges for Jordan and the Mediterranean region. The event emphasized the need for innovative solutions in water management, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficient irrigation techniques,</li> <li>• Water reuse and recycling,</li> <li>• Integrated water resource management,</li> <li>• Technologies for water conservation in agriculture.</li> </ul> <p>By aligning with PRIMA's water management priority, Jordanian researchers are positioned to contribute to regional efforts aimed at ensuring sustainable access to water for people, agriculture, and ecosystems.</p> <p>2. Agri-Food Value Chain:  Building resilient and sustainable agri-food systems is essential for food security, economic growth, and rural development. The EU-Jordan Research Days highlighted opportunities under PRIMA to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen local and regional agri-food value chains,</li> <li>• Promote food safety, quality, and traceability,</li> <li>• Enhance the competitiveness of the agri-food sector through innovation and technology adoption.</li> </ul> <p>This alignment encourages Jordanian proposals that address market access, value addition, supply chain sustainability, and equitable economic benefits for communities.</p> <p>3. Farming Systems:  The modernization and sustainability of farming systems are central to tackling the impacts of climate change, land degradation, and food insecurity. The events underscored the importance of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate-smart agriculture,</li> <li>• Biodiversity-friendly farming practices,</li> <li>• Sustainable land use and soil management,</li> <li>• Improving productivity while reducing environmental impacts.</li> </ul> <p>Jordanian researchers are encouraged to develop proposals that promote innovative, efficient, and eco-friendly farming systems that support rural livelihoods and environmental sustainability.</p> <p>By aligning with these three SRIA priorities—Water Management, Agri-Food Value Chain, and Farming Systems—the EU-Jordan Research Days 2025 support Jordan's strategic goals for sustainable development, strengthen national research capacities, and foster greater participation in Mediterranean research collaborations under PRIMA.</p>
Website	<a href="https://hcst.gov.jo/">https://hcst.gov.jo/</a>