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Questions & Answers

Online FOODPathS Funders Forum

Held on Tuesday 29th of November 2022

Q&A FOODPathS Online Funders Forum

1. Sessions 2 and 3 on the SFS Partnership and the CSA FOODPathS (presentations by Daniela Lüth of the EC and Hugo de Vries of INRAE)

Question 1: Daniela's final slide mentioned the participation of the Member States and Associated Countries. What about non-Associated Countries (e.g. Brazil, USA) or countries that are not yet associated (e.g. New Zealand and Canada)? Can they participate as beneficiaries? As well as Israel? Will non-associated countries be permitted to co-fund external calls as external funders (e.g. New Zealand in EJP Soil)?

Answer 1: A non-associated country can be part of a partnership if there is added value in their participation. Regarding third countries: there is a difference in being part of the partnership and being beneficiaries. Third countries can participate but cannot be beneficiary, at least that is the situation for Switzerland (please see further explanation in section 4 of this document). In the case of the CSA FOODPathS, there is a dedicated WP for targeting trade-offs and co-benefits with other countries/continents outside Europe.

Question 2: is there a certain indication of how many RPOs are "allowed" in the consortium (is there a certain balance foreseen)?

Answer 2: There is no clear cut-off mentioned. There is always the question how many countries are able to make it work. Each partnership works differently. There are for example some countries that are signing the grant agreement, and some are affiliated countries and do not sign the agreement.

Question 3: Is it possible to have the detail of contributions per MS?

Answer 3: the letters to MS were just to get an overview, and the individual contributions are confidential.

Question 4: How can Partners join after the Grant Agreement? With a classical Amendment?

Answer 4: A single grant agreement is foreseen, but if countries want to join the partnership later there is an amendment needed.

Question 5: Are the external calls and internal calls the same as they were for the European Joint Programmes (e.g. EJP Soil) or European Research Area (ERA) NETs (for external calls)?

Answer 5: this is similar to other programmes with internal calls which have in-kind contributions, and external calls which have in-cash contributions. With regard to the consortium, there is a lot of freedom on how to frame them. There is a difference between being part of the partnership and being a beneficiary.

Question 6: Will be there only one Grant Agreement for the whole duration of the Partnership, or more than one as previously supposed?

Answer 6: Only one grant agreement is foreseen, while the partnership will receive additional funding for future WPs exceptionally.

Question 7: Are there parties who have indicated willingness to lead the future partnership?

Answer 7: There is a country that has come forward to indicate interest to lead the partnership, but there is nothing official yet. This is communicated by the SCAR Special Working Group on Food Systems.

Question 8: What is the relation between the CSA and the Partnership from the EC's point of view?

Answer 8: The CSA is crucial to help setting up the partnership, with relevant preparatory actions of the partnership. Some other partnerships have a similar set-up.

Question 9: Can RPOs involved in the CSA FOODPathS also be partners of the SFS Partnership? In terms of entities? In terms of persons?

Answer 9: Yes that is possible. RPOs being involved in FOODPaths can also join the partnership.

Question 10: Which time period does the grant agreement cover?

Answer 10: The grant agreement covers the whole duration of the partnership.

Question 11: Other existing Horizon projects such as FEAST, FoodSDSHIFT2030 and CLEVERFOOD are building up networks and Communities of Practice - how will these networks link up with the FS Partnership?

Answer 11: The exact strategy for linking up will be worked out by the future SFS consortium. The CSA FOODPathS will provide suggestions.

Question 12: How do you mitigate the contributions/participation (balance) from small and larger countries from EU?

It is up to the governance of the partnership consortium to be inclusive. Regarding the CSA FOODPathS, the focus is EU-wide including all countries with their specific priorities. Therefore, its consortium is built on networks with actors in all countries, like for example BIOEAST, the ERANETts SUSFOOD and CORE Organic or JPI HDHL.

Question 13: There was mention of a call being launched in 2022 is that likely at this point?

The Horizon Europe Work Programme has been published. Info Days are scheduled for 13 and 14 December, and the Brokerage event is on 19 December. We warmly invite you to join, register here: <https://research-innovation-community.ec.europa.eu/events/2tcohVdY0dfgCvuJRi8RTw/overview>.

Question 14: What type of organisations are expected in the partnership?

Answer 14: Ministries that are financing. Everybody who has a legal entity can theoretically join. It is important however, that they will have a clear task in one of the WPs. Even if not being part of the consortium there are other options to join the partnership, e.g. as an associated partner and to join calls (see section 4 of this document).

Question 15: The SRIA must be delivered at the end of January 2023. What is your exact activity among the CSA in relation with the SRIA ?

Answer 15: The SRIA is elaborated under the SCAR (Standing Committee on Agricultural Research) Strategic Working Group on Food Systems that is trying to collect all information that is coming in via the open consultation. The FOODPathS consortium is not going to repeat the process in its CSA, but focuses on how we can translate what is written in the SRIA into R&I topics and link it to policy measures

and education programs. Innovation trajectories are also foreseen, even though it is true that there tends to be more attention to basic research. For innovation, it's necessary to align with e.g. EIT Food which is innovation-focused and has already a sound basis and action program.

Question 16: Now that the WP are pre-published, when do you think the consortium must be closed to submit a proposal? Are regional governments still on time to be part of it?

Answer 16: the calls are open for 90 days, so after the official publication, each consortium has 90 days to submit a proposal.

Question 17: When do you think the first call can be scheduled?

Answer 17: This is up to the partnership once the grant agreement (see Q18) is signed. The consortium is asked to hand in, together with the proposal and the SRIA, a draft Work Programme for the first year.

Question 18: When is the collaborative research agreement likely to be signed for the partnership?

The deadline for the call is 12/04/2023, and the deadline for the grant agreement signature is 23/11/2023.

2. Session 5 on WP 3 of the CSA FOODPathS (presentation by Nikola Hassan, FZJ)

Question 19: What are the tasks of this WP in relation to the formation of the partnership consortium?

Answer 19: Within this WP the focus is on preparing the partnership with regard to the funders and the funding. We are doing that by looking at what are best practices and what are the points that we can improve. Co-creating funding approaches and seeing how they work and how to integrate them. This is for the partnership and not for the CSA itself. The CSA FOODPathS consortium will be there alongside the partnership and support further.

Question 20: Can you please define more precisely the meaning of the word "funder"? Is it merely a money provider or is it more than that?

Answer 20: A funder is clearly defined for Horizon Europe as an organisation that can provide funding to third parties. The Partnership will be open to public as well as private funders (e.g. foundations). But funders are not purely organisations that give money. A lot of effort will go into the alignment of research strategies, shaping of the funding programmes and support schemes funding..

Question 21: Are you also allowing private Venture Capital to be on your funding map? You might connect to AgFunder who is providing these type of investments, mostly for start-ups.

Answer 21: There is no limitation for the map. In the Partnership the classical public research funding will make up a major part, but there is no limitation to also include other sources. An example of another type of instrument are living labs, which will work differently. We need all expertise, so please join the FOODPathS Funders Network and Map.

Question 22: When is the physical funding forum?

Answer 22: The date is not yet set, but we will share the information asap (envisaged in the second half of February or beginning of March 2023).

3. Overview of links shared in the chat

- Link to Horizon Europe Cluster 06 Info Days and Brokerage event (13 December and 18 December): <https://research-innovation-community.ec.europa.eu/events/2tcohVdY0dfgCvuJRj8RTw/overview>
- SFS partnership narrative and fact sheet: <https://scar-europe.org/index.php/food-main-actions/food-systems-partnership> and <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ca9da79e-df96-11eb-895a-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>
- SFS Partnership template: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-04/ec_rtd_he-partnership-sustainable-food-systems-april_2022.pdf
- SRIA – 2nd draft and public consultation: <https://scar-europe.org/food-main-actions/food-systems-partnership> => public consultation is open until 19th December 2022
- The official pre-publication of the work programmes: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/horizon-europe-work-programmes_en

4. Notes on categories of countries and partners

Categories of countries:

- Automatically eligible for EU funding: Low and middle income countries (see [list](#)).
- Countries associated to Horizon Europe
- Non associated third countries not eligible for EU funding
- Exceptions on a case-by-case basis + specified in topic calls
- Co funding mechanisms (e.g. Canada, Monaco, China, Switzerland. For further information please see: [complementary-funding-mechanisms-in-third-countries_he_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#))

General information:

Becoming a partner: Co-funded partnerships are implemented through a Horizon Europe Programme Co-fund Action. This means that all partners are members of successful consortia implementing a Horizon Europe grant agreement. To become a partner, a country (generally represented by a Ministry or research agency) needs to be listed as a beneficiary in the proposal submitted to the Commission in response to the open calls for proposals that will lead to a co-funded partnership. If a country is not part of the selected consortia at the launch of a partnership (for instance if association of a third country to Horizon Europe is not yet complete), it can still join the consortium at a later stage, with the agreement of the consortium coordinator, by requesting an amendment of the grant agreement.

Participating in the partnership's activities: The only way of participating in the activities of a co-funded partnership without being a partner is to apply to the **transnational calls** that most of those partnerships will launch. As the consortium members that will receive cascading grants at national level will be selected based on national rules, this means that in most cases only beneficiaries based in partner countries will be able to apply.

Receiving funding: Entities established in Member States and Associated Countries that are part of the consortia implementing the co-funded partnerships (i.e. those signing the grant agreement with the Commission) will be able to receive EU funding in these partnerships

There are different types of partners:

Associated partner: their activities and what they commit to do can be described as part of the action; they do not sign the GA and do not have all the obligations of being a GA beneficiary, but do not get EU co-funding. This is a flexibility of co-funded partnerships that are programmes, not typical projects. It is also possible to amend the GA to have them as beneficiaries at a later stage and can then get EU co-funding. So they could start as associated partners and then eventually change category. For an associated partner there is no need for a formal link to a GA beneficiary, they generate their own costs. These costs are not eligible to EU co-funding, as the associated partner is not a GA beneficiary, but it is a way for the associated partners to be involved in the consortium, and to possibly contribute resources. There is no requirement to describe the expected volume of activities to be performed by associated partners.

Affiliated partner: it is what was defined as 'linked third party' under H2020. In this case, there must be a pre-existing legal link with a GA beneficiary, and it cannot be created only for the sole purpose of the partnership. Affiliated partners usually generate eligible costs.

If the private partner is **neither a beneficiary nor an affiliated entity**, the costs it generates does not count for the EU contribution; it can be in kind contribution, but because they cannot claim it and cannot receive EU contribution, it is not something that needs to be transmitted to the EC because it will not make a practical difference, at least for EU funding.