



Guidelines for Applicants

PRIMA Call-2024-Section 1 RIA & IA (Two Stage Submission)

PRIMA - Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area

Version 1.0



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DISCLAIMER

This document was prepared by PRIMA-IS to provide guidance to applicants, the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains. In case of discrepancies between this document and the AWP 2024, the latter legally prevails.

Glossary

AC: Associated Countries
AWP: Annual Work Plan
CA: Consortium Agreement
CV: Curriculum Vitae
DMP: Data Management Plan
ESR: Evaluation Summary Report
ESS: Electronic Submission System
EU: European Union
FPs: Full Proposals
GA: Grant Agreement
IPR: Intellectual Property Right
KPI: Key Performance Indicators
MPC: Mediterranean Partner Countries
NCP: National Contact Point
OCT: Overseas Countries and Territories
PI: Principal Investigator
PRIMA-IS: PRIMA – Implementation Structure
PS: Participating State
RIA: Research and Innovation Action
RfP: Rules for Participation
SDG: Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SRIA: Scientific Research and Innovation Agenda
TC: Third Countries
TRL: Technology Readiness Level

SUBMISSION INFORMATION***Stage 1 Pre-proposals***

Deadline for Submission: 02/04/2024, 17:00 Barcelona Time

Documents for Stage-1:

- ✓ *Administrative and financial data, the full cost and requested amount per partner (to be filled directly on the ESS)*
- ✓ *PART I: Administrative data (template to be uploaded as pdf on the ESS)*
- ✓ *Scientific document- pre proposal (Part II, to be uploaded as pdf on the ESS)*

Stage-2 Full proposals

Deadline for Submission: 25/09/2024 17:00 Barcelona Time

Documents for stage 2:

- ✓ *Administrative and financial data, the full cost and requested amount per partner (to be checked directly on the ESS)*
- ✓ *PART I: Administrative data (template to be uploaded as pdf on the ESS, as an annex)*
- ✓ *PART II: Detailed Scientific document – full proposal (template to be uploaded as pdf on the ESS)*
- ✓ *Detailed budget (template to be uploaded as an Excel file in the ESS)*

One month before the deadline for submission, the Electronic Submission System link will be announced on the PRIMA web page in the section corresponding to the call.

Download all templates and reference documents from <https://prima-med.org/documents-reports/>

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The calls will follow a two-stage evaluation procedure.

For the First Stage, a short Scientific pre-proposal, Part II (10 pages), as well as Part I for administrative data, must be submitted to the Electronic Submission System **by the first stage deadline (02/04/2024, 17:00 Barcelona Time)**.

Guidance about the Electronic Submission System is provided in “Electronic Submission System Handbook”. **The link to the electronic submission system will be announced ONE MONTH before the submission deadline on the PRIMA web page, in the section corresponding to the call.**

Please note that when these guidelines refer to “proposal”, this means that the conditions apply to both pre-proposal (First Stage) and full proposal (Second Stage).

The Annual Work Plan 2024 (AWP2024) contains the full description of the actions; please refer to this document to have more detailed information on participation.

I. Actions funded by PRIMA

1 Thematic Area 1-Water management in the Nexus:

Topic 1.1.1-2024 (IA) Sustainability of Mediterranean irrigated agriculture through the implementation of the WEF Nexus approach.

2 Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus:

Topic 1.2.1-2024 (IA) Transformative adaptation of Mediterranean dry farming systems using water harvesting technique to address extreme drought in arid and semi-arid environments.

3 Thematic Area 3-Food value chain in the Nexus:

Topic 1.3.1-2024 (IA) Developing cost-effective and sustainable technologies adapted to Mediterranean Food Systems to decrease food loss and waste.

Types of Action: Specific Provisions and Funding Rates

Research and innovation actions (RIA)

Description: Action primarily consisting of activities aiming to establish new knowledge and/or to explore the feasibility of a new or improved technology, product, process, service or solution. For this purpose, they may include basic and applied research, technology development and integration, testing and validation on a small-scale prototype in a laboratory or simulated environment.

Projects may contain closely connected but limited demonstration or pilot activities aiming to show technical feasibility in a near to operational environment.

Funding rate: 100%

Innovation actions (IA)

Description: Action primarily consisting of activities directly aiming at producing plans and arrangements or designs for new, altered or improved products, processes or services. For this purpose, they may include prototyping, testing, demonstrating, piloting, large-scale product validation and market replication.

A 'demonstration or pilot' aims to validate the technical and economic viability of a new or improved technology, product, process, service, or solution in an operational (or near to operational) environment, whether industrial or otherwise, involving where appropriate a larger scale prototype or demonstrator.

A 'market replication' aims to support the first application/deployment in the market of an innovation that has already been demonstrated but not yet applied/deployed in the market due to market failures/barriers to uptake. 'Market replication' does not cover multiple applications in the market of an innovation¹ that has already been applied successfully once in the market. 'First' means new at least to PRIMA countries or new at least to the application sector in question. Often such projects involve a validation of technical and economic performance at system level in real life operating conditions provided by the market.

Projects may include limited research and development activities.

Funding rate: 70% (except for non-profit legal entities, where a rate of 100% applies).

All participants to activities funded by the PRIMA are required to label or co-label any communication or publication related to their activities with the following acknowledgement "[name of the activity/grant code] is part of the PRIMA Programme supported by the European Union", as well as with the PRIMA logo.

II. Before the Submission of Proposal

There are some important steps to get ready before starting the preparation of the proposal. They are as follows:

- Carefully read the Guidelines for applicants and check the eligibility and admissibility conditions (e.g. minimum number of required partners or their place of establishment).
- Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact PRIMA Officers as well as PRIMA National Contact Points (NCPs), published on PRIMA website, to receive more information and guidance on PRIMA calls.
- Get familiar with the standard administrative and technical documentation to fill in. These templates are available on the PRIMA website (Reference Documents) to allow an early preparation of the proposal. Please note that a different template is used for Section 1 pre-proposal and full proposal stages with different information.
- The PRIMA website (<http://prima-med.org/>) features a "find partners tool" which allows applicants to search for potential partners.
- Each consortium consists of several teams, each one with a Principal Investigator (PI), who is the leader of the team, lab, or institution. One of these PIs shall be nominated as Project Coordinator, whose responsibilities during the submission and the evaluation phase are to:
 - Ensure that all members of the consortium are eligible;
 - Submit the pre proposal and full proposal, and all other requested documents, on behalf of the consortium;
 - Be the single point of contact between the PRIMA-IS and the consortium;

¹ A new or improved technology, product, design, process, service or solution.

III. Preparing the Proposal

The proposal must be created by the Project Coordinator and consists of two main parts: Part I: the **administrative & financial data** (to be filled directly on the ESS, and uploaded as well using Part I template), and Part II: the **scientific document** (Part II), which is the description of the planned project. The project budget breakdown (excel table) is needed only during the Second Stage. All templates are available on <http://prima-med.org/>.

The applied page limits are:

- Stage-1, for the scientific document (Part II): max 10 pages, all sections included;
- Stage-2, for the scientific document (Part II): max 50 pages, all sections included;

Proposals, all Annexes, and any additional documents **must be written in English**, in a legible font. Further guidance on the use of fonts, margins and other page formatting will be included in the pre-proposal and full proposal templates available on the PRIMA website.

The work described in the proposal must correspond to the PRIMA Call Section 1. The proposal has to meet all eligibility and admissibility conditions described in these guidelines. Proposals that do not comply with such requirements will be considered ineligible or not admissible.

Between Stage-1 and Stage-2, NO MODIFICATIONS are allowed in the consortium composition (Organizations, Coordinator and PIs), budget and scientific objectives.

During First Stage, and on the online submission system, for each partner, the Project Coordinator should indicate the requested amount to PRIMA and the total cost of the project (please refer to the Electronic Submission System Handbook). Please ensure that your requested contribution to PRIMA does not exceed the maximum per grant as stated in the call text. The project total cost = requested amount to PRIMA + own funding.

A detailed explanation of eligible and ineligible costs can be found in the **Art. 6 of the PRIMA Model Grant Agreement** (available on <http://prima-med.org/>). A detailed budget breakdown will be requested for the full proposal (Second Stage).

Applications, including all required forms and annexes, must be received by the PRIMA-IS, only via the electronic submission system, **before each stage deadline** as stated in this document. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to do not wait until the last moment to submit your proposal. **Proposals submitted after the deadline are not eligible** for evaluation and will be automatically rejected. No extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration.

It is possible for the consortium to withdraw an already submitted proposal at any time before the deadline, or even during the review process. Correcting or revising of proposals is only possible before the deadline. PRIMA will use the latest version of the proposal submitted by the deadline for review.

ONLY consortia whose pre-proposals are selected by PRIMA-IS (based on the evaluation panel's ranking list, please refer to Section VII of these guidelines for more information on the evaluation process), will be invited to submit a full proposal (Stage-2). The submission of a pre-proposal is mandatory.

Proposals submitted by coordinators will be opened and authenticated by the PRIMA-IS, which will perform the admissibility and eligibility check. No clarification or integration requests will be accepted after the call deadline. If the admissibility and eligibility criteria are met, the proposal will be then sent to evaluators.

Table 1. Main steps for the preparation and submission of a proposal

Main steps for the preparation and submission of a proposal	
1	Consortium composition and appointment of the Project Coordinator;
2	Verification of the eligibility conditions for all partners;
3	Pre-proposal writing (check the evaluation criteria, fill in the appropriate template);
4	Check Financial capacity: In line with the Financial Regulation No 966/2012 and the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation No 1290/2013 by following this link: https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/grants/applying-for-funding/register-an-organisation/financial-capacity-check_en.htm

IV. List of Countries Eligible for Funding

Legal entities established in the following countries and territories are eligible to receive funding through PRIMA grants:

a) The PRIMA Participating States² :

The following Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU): Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia. It includes the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to some of these Member States³:

The following Third Countries associated to Horizon 2020 (AC): Israel, Tunisia, and Turkey.

The following Third Countries not associated with to Horizon 2020 (TC), having concluded international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco.

These Associated Countries (AC) and Third Countries (TC) mentioned above are collectively called the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC).

In addition, the following entities are eligible to receive funding through PRIMA grants:

b) Any legal entity created under the European Union law.⁴

c) Any international European interest organisation⁵, as defined in point (12) of Article 2(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013

²New PS may join PRIMA and the regularly updated list of PS will be provided by PRIMA-IS (at the following link to be inserted to PRIMA webpage).

³Entities 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.

⁴As set out in Art 7 (1) of H2020 Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 and reflected in Art 7. (4) of the PRIMA Decision (EU) 2017/1324,

⁵'International European interest organisation' means an international organisation, (IO) the majority of whose members are Member States or associated countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe".

For these two types of entities (b, c), their place of establishment is not relevant for eligibility for funding.

- d) Any international organisation (IO)⁶ OR any legal entity established in countries not listed above as PS may be eligible for funding provided that at least one of the following conditions is fulfilled:
 - i. participation is deemed to be essential for carrying out the action⁷;
 - ii. Such funding is provided under a bilateral scientific and technological agreement or any other arrangement between the Union and the international organisation or, for entities established in a country that is not a Participating State, the country in which the legal entity is established.

Participants from countries not listed in point 5.1.1.a) and not falling under b), c) or d) above can participate, but they must fund their participation.

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

V. Standard of admissibility and related requirements

After the corresponding deadlines, PRIMA-IS will check if the proposal is **admissible** (complete and properly put together) and **eligible**.

Eligibility checks include basic checking: if the contents of proposals are in line with the topic description, if they meet standard and any other eligibility conditions listed in these guidelines. Only proposals which are **admissible and eligible** will be evaluated.

1. To be considered **admissible**, a proposal must be:
 - (a) Submitted in the Electronic Submission System before the deadline given in the call conditions;
 - (b) Readable, accessible, and printable;
 - (c) **Complete** and inclusive of the requested administrative data, the proposal description, and any other obligatory supporting documents specified in the call conditions;
 - (d) Include a **draft plan for the exploitation and dissemination of the results**. The draft plan is **not required at the first stage**.
2. In addition to the above admissibility requirements, page limits will apply to parts of proposals. The limit for a **Stage-1 'Pre-Proposal'** is **10 pages (THIS APPLIES ONLY TO THE SCIENTIFIC Document, Part II)**, while the limit for a **Stage-2 'Full Proposal'** is **50 pages (THIS APPLIES ONLY TO THE SCIENTIFIC Document, Part II)**.

⁶ The place of establishment of the IOs is not relevant for eligibility for funding.

⁷ The applicant may be eligible for funding if its participation has clear benefits for the consortium, such as: access to unique know-how, access to research infrastructures, access to geographical environments, involving key partners in emerging markets, access to data, etc.

Electronic Submission System will automatically reject the proposal if it exceeds the page limits.

Proposals must be written in a legible font. Further guidance on acceptable fonts, margins and other page formatting will be included in the proposal templates. The structure of proposals must correspond to the requirements specified under each section of the proposal template. Applicant are requested to use the templates provided by PRIMA that can be downloaded from the PRIMA website under the relevant call section.

We strongly encourage you to write your proposal in a concise and precise way (please bear in mind that the length of the proposal is not considered as a guarantee of quality and evaluators appreciate to receive precise and clear documentation).

3. The following **supporting documents** will be required to determine the operational capacity for grant proposals (for **Stage-2 only**, as integral part under Section 4 of the Part II 'Full Proposal', count toward the max page limit):

- A curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the persons who will be primarily responsible for carrying out the proposed research and/or innovation activities;
- A list of up to five relevant publications, and/or products, services (including widely-used datasets or software), or other achievements relevant to the call content;
- A list of up to five relevant previous projects or activities, connected to the subject of this proposal;
- A description of any significant infrastructure and/or any major items of technical equipment, relevant to the proposed work;
- A description of any third parties that are not represented as project partners, but who will nonetheless be contributing towards the work (e.g. providing facilities, computing resources).

This scrutiny will be carried out by the evaluators during the evaluation process under the selection criteria, in particular the award criterion 'Quality and efficiency of the implementation'.

VI. Standard Eligibility Conditions

All proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out in the Rules for Participation of Horizon 2020 Regulation No. 1290/2013 and any derogations to these as specified in the PRIMA Decision.

Furthermore, proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out in these guidelines.

A proposal will only be considered **eligible** if:

- a) the coordinator of the proposal is a legal entity established in a PRIMA PS⁸;
- 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 below, depending on the type of action:

⁸ This measure is aimed to protect the Union's financial interests and is in line with Art. 7(7) of the PRIMA Decision.

Type of Action	Eligibility conditions for participation
Research & Innovation Action (RIA)	<p>At least three legal entities established in three different countries considered as Participating States as defined in point 5.1.1. of AWP 2024. Each of the three must be established in a different country considered to be PRIMA PS by submission deadline under the relevant call, out of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -at least one must be established in a EU Member State or a third country associated to Horizon 2020 and not being a MPC; and -at least one must be established in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC) <p>All three legal entities must be independent of each other.</p>
Innovation actions (IA)	<p>At least three legal entities established in three different countries considered as Participating States as defined in point 5.1.1. of AWP 2024. Each of the three must be established in a different country considered to be PRIMA PS by submission deadline under the relevant call, out of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -at least one must be established in a EU Member State or a third country associated to Horizon 2020 and not being a MPC and -at least one must be established in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC) <p>All three legal entities must be independent of each other.</p>

SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR THE CALLS 2024

Due to the specific challenge of these topics, and in line with our principles of allowing maximum participation from Southern Mediterranean Countries to foster both North-South and South-South cooperation, the following additional eligibility criteria apply:

"In addition to the minimum number of participants (3 legal entities) set out in the standard eligibility conditions (mentioned above), consortia must include at least one additional independent legal entity established in any of the MPC.

So the eligibility rules can be read as follows:

At least four legal entities established in at least three different countries considered as PRIMA Participating States, out of which:

-at least one must be established in an EU Member State or a third country associated with Horizon 2020 and not being an MPC

-at least two must be established in third country/countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC): Algeria, Jordan, Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey."

Examples:

Germany-Greece-Morocco-Turkey is eligible

Germany-Greece-Morocco entity 1-Morocco entity 2 is eligible

Germany entity 1-Germany entity 2-Greece-Morocco IS NOT ELIGIBLE, lack of the 4th partner from a MPC

France-Algeria-Egypt is NOT ELIGIBLE, lack a 4th partner that can be from a MPC OR from a EU PRIMA PS

Between Stage-1 and Stage-2, NO MODIFICATIONS are allowed in the consortium composition (Organizations, Coordinator and PIs), budget and scientific objectives.

NB:

For section 1, the PI can submit more than one proposal as coordinator but in case that more than one proposal is selected for funding, the coordinator will have to choose one project to be funded and withdraw the others (one funding per year). The PI can be partner in other projects.

For Section 2, the PI cannot be a coordinator in both Section 1 & Section 2 of the same year, but can be a partner in other proposals in both Sections, with an eligibility condition that proposals must be different in terms of objectives, methodology and consortium composition.

VII. Evaluation Rules

-Selection Criteria

1. *Financial Capacity: In line with the Financial Regulation 2018/1046 and the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation No 1290/2013. For grants, coordinators will be invited – at the proposal stage – to complete a self-assessment using an on-line tool:*

https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/grants/applying-for-funding/register-an-organisation/financial-capacity-check_en.htm

In cases where the requested funding for the action is equal to or superior to EUR 500,000 and whenever there are grounds to doubt the financial and operational capacity of the coordinator or other participants on the basis of available information, the PRIMA-IS shall verify their financial and operational capacity as reported in paragraphs 10 and 11 of Article 15 RfP H2020, unless the coordinator is:

- a. A public body;
- b. A higher or secondary education establishment;
- c. An international organisation or body whose participation is guaranteed by the government of an EU country or associated country, in accordance with the PRIMA MGA.

2. *Operational Capacity: As a distinct operation, carried out during the evaluation of the award criterion 'Quality and efficiency of the implementation', experts will indicate whether each individual participant has, or will have in due time, a sufficient operational capacity to successfully carry out its tasks in the proposed work plan. This assessment will be based on the competence and experience of the applicant, including its operational resources (human, technical and other) and, if applicable, exceptionally the concrete measures proposed to obtain it by the time of the implementation of the tasks.*

Financial and Operational Capacity will be performed by PRIMA-IS at the evaluation phase of proposals in Second Stage calls and have the same timeline.

- Award criteria, Scores and Weighting

1. Grant proposals will be evaluated by experts, on the basis of the **award criteria** 'Excellence', 'Impact' and 'Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation' (see Article 15 of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation No 1290/2013).

The aspects to be considered in each case depend on the types of action as set out in the table below:

Table 2. Aspects to be considered in the evaluation.

Type of Action	Excellence*	Impact*	Quality and efficiency of the implementation (only for stage 2) The following aspects will be taken into account:
Research & Innovation Activities (RIAs) and Innovation Actions (IAs)	<p>The following aspects will be taken into account, to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the topic description in the work plan.</p> <p>Fit with the scope and objectives of the PRIMA programme and the call topic description;</p> <p>Clarity and pertinence of the objectives;</p> <p>Soundness of the concept, and credibility of the proposed methodology;</p> <p>Extent that the proposed work is beyond the state of the art, and demonstrates innovation potential (e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches, new products, services or business and organisational models)</p> <p>Appropriate consideration of interdisciplinary approaches and, where relevant, use of stakeholder knowledge and gender dimension in research and innovation content.</p>	<p>The following aspects will be taken into account:</p> <p>The extent to which the outputs of the project would contribute to one or several of the expected impacts mentioned in the work plan under the relevant topic.</p> <p>-Scores of the proposals will not depend on the number of expected impacts covered.</p> <p>-Any substantial impacts not mentioned in the work plan, that would enhance innovation capacity, create new market opportunities, strengthen competitiveness and growth of companies, address issues related to climate change or the environment, or bring other important benefits for society;</p> <p>-Quality of the proposed measures to:</p> <p>-Exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), and to manage research data where relevant.</p> <p>-Communicate the project activities to different target audiences.</p>	<p>Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, including extent to which the resources assigned to work packages are in line with their objectives and deliverables;</p> <p>Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management;</p> <p>Complementarity of the participants and extent to which the consortium as whole brings together the necessary expertise;</p> <p>Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants have a valid role and adequate resources in the project to fulfil that role.</p>

* In stage 1 evaluations, only aspects in bold will be considered.

-Scoring and Weighting:

- Evaluation scores will be awarded for the criteria, and not for the different aspects listed in the above table. For full proposals, 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.
- For Innovation actions to determine the ranking, the score for the criterion 'impact' will be given a weight of 1.5.

- For the evaluation of First Stage proposals under a two-stage submission procedure, only the criteria '**Excellence**' and '**Impact**' will be evaluated. With regard to the impact criterion only the aspects in **bold** will be considered for first stage proposals. The threshold for both individual criteria will be 4. For each indicative budget-split in the call conditions, the overall threshold, applying to the sum of the two individual scores, will be set at the level such that the total requested budget of proposals admitted to Stage-2 is as close as possible to three times the available budget, and in any case, not less than two and a half times the available budget. In any case, not less than two and a half times the available budget.
- The actual level will therefore depend on the volume of pre-proposals received. The threshold is expected to normally be set at least at 8 or 8.5 (stage 1).

Table 3. Score description for the evaluation criteria.

Score description for the evaluation criteria (half point scores may be given)		
0	Weak	The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
1	Poor	The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair	While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.
3	Good	The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.
4	Very Good	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
5	Excellent	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

Evaluation Procedure

- **Individual Evaluation:** Each eligible proposal is evaluated remotely by at least three expert evaluators (see Article 15 of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation no. 1290/2013), who carry out a technical evaluation on the basis of the criteria mentioned above. An Individual Evaluation Report, which includes comments and scores for all evaluation criteria, is prepared by each evaluator.
- **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. On consensual way, the panel review will recommend one ranked list for the proposals under evaluation, following the scoring systems indicated above and the discussion of the panel. They will prepare an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) for each proposal, which shows the outcome of the evaluation of the project proposal.

Project funding decision will be taken based on this ranking list. The panel configuration allows evaluators to have an overview of all eligible proposals, not just the one they have evaluated, which enables them to decide fairly when ranking the proposals.

In case of disagreement or in case of project proposals with the same score, the panel shall determine the priority order for proposals described in the section below.

-Priority order for proposals with the same score:

The following method will be applied (except for the pre-proposal stage, where proposals having the same score are kept together and no prioritization is made).

If necessary, the panel will determine a priority order for proposals, which have been awarded the **same score** within a ranked list. Whether or not such a prioritization is carried out will depend on the available budget or other conditions set out in the call text.

The following approach will be applied successively for every group of *ex-aequo* proposals requiring prioritization, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

- a) Proposals that address topics, or sub-topics, not otherwise covered by more highly-ranked proposals, will be considered to have the highest priority.
- b) The proposals identified under (a), if any, will themselves be prioritized according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion excellence. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on scores for the criterion impact.
- c) If necessary, any further prioritization will be based on the following factor: number of MPCs partners, presence of SMEs, gender balance among the personnel named in the proposal who will be primarily responsible for carrying out the research and/or innovation activities.
- d) If a distinction still cannot be made, the panel may decide to further prioritize by considering how to enhance the quality of the project portfolio through synergies between projects, or other factors related to the objectives of the call or to Horizon 2020 in general. These factors will be documented in the report of the Panel.
- e) The method described in (a), (b), (c) and (d) will then be applied to the remaining ex-aequos in the group.

At the end of the panel meeting, the panel will recommend one ranking list for the proposals under evaluation, following the scoring systems indicated above.

VIII. Communication of Evaluation Results

Coordinators will receive an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) at the end of the evaluation process, showing the results of the evaluation. In the ESR, the overall scores will be provided. For proposals that successfully pass the first stage of two-stage submission process, common feedback is provided to all coordinators, but the first stage ESR is only sent after the second step evaluation.

The final decision of funding will be taken according to the ranking list produced by the evaluation panel after the evaluation of full proposals, starting by the project ranked number 1 in the list in a descending order, until funds are available.

Applicants whose proposal is awarded funding will receive a formal communication informing them that the grant preparation phase can start. A positive result **does not constitute a confirmed offer of a grant**.

Information on the means of redress

You may request an evaluation review on the procedural aspects of the evaluation. This procedure is intended for applicants who believe that the evaluation of their proposal has not been carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in the Annual Work Plan. **This procedure covers only the procedural aspects of the evaluation, and not the merits of the proposal.**

The full procedure is available at the following link: https://prima-med.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/PRIMA-Appeals-procedure_v_01.12.21.pdf

IX. Conditions related to open access to research data

Participants will engage in research data sharing, according to Article 29.3 of the PRIMA Model Grant Agreement(s). This means that beneficiaries must deposit and take measures to make it possible for third parties to access, mine, exploit, reproduce and disseminate, free of charge for any user: 1) data needed to validate the results presented in scientific publications ('underlying data'); 2) other data as specified by the beneficiaries in their Data Management Plan (DMP, see below).

Projects can "opt-out" of these provisions before or after the signature of the grant agreement (thereby freeing themselves from the associated obligations) on the following grounds:

- a) Incompatibility with the Horizon 2020 obligation to protect results that are expected to be commercially or industrially exploited
- b) Incompatibility with the need for confidentiality in connection with security issues
- c) Incompatibility with rules on protecting personal data
- d) Incompatibility with the project's main aim
- e) If the project will not generate / collect any research data, or
- f) If there are other legitimate reasons not to provide open access to research data.

Please note that it is also possible to initially opt-out before signature and opt-in during project implementation.

Any costs related to the implementation of these provisions are eligible for reimbursement during the duration of the grant.

A proposal will not be evaluated more favourably if the consortium agrees to share its research data, nor will it be penalised if it opts out. Further information on open access to research data is available on the EU portal: https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/open-access-data-management/open-access_en.htm.

A Data Management Plan (DMP) details what data the project will generate, how it will be exploited and made accessible for verification and re-use, and how it will be curated and preserved. The use of a Data Management Plan is obligatory for all projects that do not opt-out. Projects that opt-out are also strongly encouraged to submit a Data Management Plan if relevant for their planned research. Further information on Data Management Plans is available on PRIMA electronic submission system.

X. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and SDG

PRIMA programme will be implemented in compliance with the objectives and provisions set out in the Decision (EU) 2017/1324 and will be based on the priorities described in the PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA).

For the proper evaluation and monitoring of the projects, consortia must consider in their proposal how and to which extent it will contribute to the targeted research and innovation objectives of the PRIMA programme and to its overall expected impacts.

For this purpose, proposals should clearly define a series of KPIs - Key Performance Indicators (that can be the ones listed in the call text or additional ones tailored after the objectives/activities of the proposal) that will allow the evaluation and measurement of the progress of the project and its impact. The proposals are also requested to identify any links with relevant SDGs and explain how the project will contribute to reach the objectives of the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

XI. Call Secretariat – PRIMA-IS

The Call Secretariat of the **PRIMA-IS** will provide administrative support to applicants regarding the calls, call documents and procedures.

Project Officers:

Kindly note that communication via email is most preferred.

For Water Management in the nexus: Ali Rhouma

Phone : +34 93 019 08 23

E-mail : ali.rhouma@prima-med.org

For Farming Systems in the Nexus: Fabrice Dentressangle

Phone : +34 93 019 08 23

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For Food Value Chain in the Nexus: Mohamed Ahmed Wageih

Phone : +34 93 019 08 23

E-mail : mohamed.wageih@prima-med.org

XII. National Contact Points

Besides the Call Secretariat, each country has nominated representatives at national level as National Contact Point (NCP). These representatives give support to the applicants and are the primary points of contact for all general matters related to the calls, and can act as a link between PRIMA and the coordinator of the project. A list of the National Contact Points is provided on the PRIMA website (<https://prima-med.org/ncps-contacts/>).

XIII. Use of the Electronic Submission System

The proposal submission occurs online via Electronic Submission System. It is the duty of the Project Coordinator to enter the data online. Please READ CAREFULLY THE ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION SYSTEM HANDBOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION. (download from prima website)

The ESS will ask for the following information:

- Project Title;
- Project Acronym;
- Project duration;
- Topic;
- Keywords. You can select predetermined keywords for main topic selected or add any new keyword;
- Abstract;
- Documents. You can upload the required documents (Scientific document, budget table, in PDF or EXCEL files). Max allowed file size: 10 MB;
- The ESS will ask you for the total cost / partner and the requested amount to PRIMA / partner.
For information Total cost = requested amount to PRIMA + own funding;

The Project Coordinator has to list all partners of the consortium. After having entered the required information, each partner will receive a confirmation email and will be able to edit his/her administrative and financial data.

Annex 1: Timeline for PRIMA-2024 Calls, Section 1

THEMATIC AREA	CALL TOPICS	Call publication and opening	Submission deadline Stage 1	Evaluation results Stage 1	Submission deadline Stage 2	Evaluation results Stage 2
Water management	Topic 1.1.1 (IA)	25/01/2024	02/04/2024	27/06/2024	25/09/2024	02/12/2024
Farming systems	Topic 1.2.1 (IA)	25/01/2024	02/04/2024	27/06/2024	25/09/2024	02/12/2024
Agri-food chain	Topic 1.3.1 (IA)	25/01/2024	02/04/2024	27/06/2024	25/09/2024	02/12/2024

