



Guidelines for Applicants

PRIMA CALLS-2025-SECTION 1

RIA – RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ACTIONS IA – INNOVATION ACTIONS

(Single Stage Submission)

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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 Work Programme 2025, the latter legally prevails.

PRIMA Partnership
www.prima-med.org



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● GLOSSARY

AC: Associated Countries
CA: Consortium Agreement
DMP: Data Management Plan
ESR: Evaluation Summary Report
ESS: Electronic Submission System
EU: European Union
IA: Innovation Action
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
SDG: Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SRIA: Scientific Research and Innovation Agenda
TC: Third Countries
TRL: Technology Readiness Level
WP: Work Programme

- **SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Single stage - Full proposals

Deadline for Submission: 15/07/2025, 17:00 Barcelona Time

Documents required:

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 – 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/>

Contents

• GLOSSARY.....	2
• SUBMISSION INFORMATION.....	3
I. Actions funded by PRIMA.....	5
II. Before submission of the proposal	6
III. Preparing and submitting the proposal	7
IV. List of countries eligible for funding.....	8
V. Standard of admissibility and related requirements	10
VI. Standard eligibility conditions.....	10
VII. Evaluation rules	13
VIII. Communication of evaluation results	18
IX. Conditions related to open access to research data.....	18
X. Gender-related aspects in research and innovation.....	20
XI. Responsible use of generative AI in research	21
XII. Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	21
XIII. Call Secretariat – PRIMA-IS.....	21
XIV. National Contact Points.....	22
XV. Use of the Electronic Submission System	22
XVI. Annex 1: Timeline for PRIMA-2025 Calls, Section 1.....	23

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The calls will follow a single stage evaluation procedure.

A full scientific proposal (Part II-technical description-max. 45 pages), as well as Part I for administrative data, must be submitted to the Electronic Submission System by **the deadline (15/07/2025, 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.**

The Work Programme 2025 (WP2025) 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 1.1.1-2025 (IA) Upscaling Nature Based Solutions for sustainable water management to address extreme events in the Mediterranean

2 Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus:

Topic 1.2.1-2025 (IA) Enhancement of Sustainable Farming Systems within Mediterranean Wetlands for Conservation and Coexistence

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

Topic 1.3.1-2025 (IA) – Transforming Mediterranean Food Systems: Empowering Consumers for Sustainable Diets

Types of Action: Specific Provisions, Funding Rates and Technology Readiness Levels

Innovation Actions (IA)

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.

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.

Funding rate: up to 70 % of the total eligible costs may be reimbursed, except for non-profit legal entities where up to 100 % of the total eligible costs may be reimbursed.

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)

Applicants are encouraged to use the [TRL self-assessment tool](#) to accurately determine the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of their proposal. It is also recommended that applicants clearly indicate the TRL level at both the start and the conclusion of the project to demonstrate progression in technology readiness.

II. Before submission of the proposal

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

- Carefully read the call text and this 'Guidelines for Applicants' document 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), whose contact emails are published on the [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.
- The [PRIMA website](#) features a "find partners tool" which allows applicants to search for potential partners.

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

- 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 proposal, and all other requested documents, on behalf of the consortium;
 - Be the single point of contact between the PRIMA-IS and the consortium.

III. Preparing and submitting the proposal

The proposal must be submitted via the Electronic Submission System (ESS) by the Project Coordinator and consists of three main parts:

- Part I: the **administrative & financial data**, which comprise both those to be filled out directly on the ESS, and those to be uploaded by using the Part I template.
- Part II: the **technical description** (scientific document), which is the description of the planned project, whose page limit is 45 pages, all sections included.
- The proposal **budget breakdown** (excel table).

All templates are available on <http://prima-med.org/>.

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 Part II proposal templates available on the PRIMA website.

The work described in the proposal must correspond to the PRIMA Call Section 1. The proposal must meet all eligibility and admissibility conditions described in these guidelines and in the WP2025. Proposals that do not comply with such requirements will be considered ineligible or inadmissible.

On the online submission system, for each partner, the Project Coordinator must 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/>).

Applications, including all required forms and annexes, must be received by the PRIMA-IS, only via the ESS, **by the deadline** as stated in this document. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to not wait until the last moment to submit your proposal.

Please note that there is **no "Submit" button** on the ESS. The last version of all the uploaded documents will be automatically submitted at the call deadline's closure time.

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 proposals is only possible before the deadline. PRIMA will use the latest version of the proposal submitted by the deadline for review. **Proposals sent after the deadline are not eligible** for evaluation and will be automatically rejected. No extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration.

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 then be 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	Proposal writing (check the evaluation criteria, fill in the appropriate template);
4	<p>Financial capacity check: Applicants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects.</p> <p>The financial capacity check will be done by PRIMA during the grant preparation stage. <u>However, it is recommended that applicants already carry out a financial capacity self-check (simulation tool available here) at the proposal preparation stage.</u></p>

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): Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, including the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to these Member States.³

- The following Third Countries associated with Horizon Europe (AC): Israel⁴, Tunisia and Türkiye.
- The following Third Countries not associated with Horizon Europe (TC): Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco. These countries will continue to be considered PRIMA Participating States only upon the conclusion of an agreement, in the form of an exchange of letter with the Union setting new terms for their continued participation in PRIMA to update the scientific and technological cooperation international agreements.⁵

² New PS may join PRIMA and the regularly updated list of PS will be provided by PRIMA-IS (at the following link: <https://prima-med.org/international-agreements/>).

³ 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.

⁴ Commission guidelines No 2013/C 205/05 on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11).

⁵ The status of these countries regarding their participation with PRIMA will be provided in the PRIMA website

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

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 by the adoption of this Work Programme, please refer to the WP2025 Section on Additional Participating States in PRIMA – Practical Aspects. For the most up-to-date information on PRIMA Participating States, applicants should consult the PRIMA webpage.

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

b) European Research and Innovation Organisations (ERIOs)

Any European Research and Innovation Organisations (ERIOs), as defined in Article 22 of the Horizon Europe Regulation (EU) 2021/695, are eligible for funding, regardless of where they are established.

c) International European Interest Organisations

Any international European interest organisation⁶, as defined in Article 2(1), point (12), of Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013, or Entities outside Participating States is eligible for funding for activities under Article 3(1), point (a), of Decision (EU) 2024/1167. The place of establishment for these organisations does not affect their eligibility for funding.

In the case of a participating international organisation or of a participating legal entity established in a country that is not a Participating State, neither of which is eligible for funding, funding by PRIMA-IS may be granted provided that at least one of the following conditions is fulfilled:

(a) participation of the international organisation or legal entity concerned is deemed to be essential by PRIMA-IS for implementing the action. An applicant from such an organisation may be eligible for funding if their involvement provides distinct benefits to the consortium, including but not limited to: access to unique know-how or expertise; specialized research infrastructures; specific geographical environments relevant to the research; involvement of key partners in emerging markets; access to exclusive data or resources.

These criteria ensure that the participation of international entities contributes substantial added value to the project, facilitating the achievement of PRIMA's strategic objectives.

(b) participation of such entities is foreseen in the Work Programme and the possibility of such funding is provided for under a bilateral scientific and technological agreement or under any other arrangement that ensures the protection of the financial interests of the Union, which is concluded between the Union and the international organisation or, for an entity established in a country that is not a Participating State, the country in which that legal entity is established.

⁶ '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

Participants not eligible to funding

Participants from countries not listed in the previous points may still participate in PRIMA projects but they shall **not** be eligible to receive funding from PRIMA. 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.

For further details, please refer to Decision (EU) 2024/1167.

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 and in the WP2025. 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**.

2. In addition to the above admissibility requirements, page limits will apply to parts of proposals. The limit for a **Full Proposal is 45 pages (THIS APPLIES ONLY TO THE 'PART II – TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION' Document)**.

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

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. Applicants must 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).

VI. Standard eligibility conditions

While having a PIC is not mandatory for submitting an application, it is strongly recommended to facilitate the application process and subsequent checks.

All proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out 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) and subject to any derogations to these as specified in amending Decision (EU)

2024/1167 as regards the continuation of the Union's participation in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) under Horizon Europe. Furthermore, proposals must comply with the following eligibility conditions unless supplemented or modified in the call conditions.

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

- a) its 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 the table below, depending on the type of action.

Table 2. Eligibility conditions for participation

Type of Action	Eligibility conditions for participation
Innovation Actions (IA)	<p>At least three legal entities established in three different countries considered as the Participating States. Each of the three must be established in a different country considered to be PRIMA PS by the time the relevant Grant Agreement is signed, out of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>at least one must be established in an EU Member State or a third country associated to Horizon Europe and not being an MPC</i> <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>at least one must be established in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC)</i> <p>All three legal entities must be independent of each other.</p>
<i>Additional eligibility conditions for this call can be found in the table below</i>	

Additional Eligibility Condition for the calls 2025

*Due to the specific challenge of the topics, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the Standard Eligibility Conditions section above, consortia must include at least **an additional legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC)**.*

*Due to the scope of this topic, consortia must include at least **one small and medium-sized enterprise** ("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)") **established in a PS** in the research consortia.*

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 Europe 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, Türkiye

Examples:

Germany-Greece-Morocco- Türkiye : is eligible

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

Germany entity 1-Germany entity 2-Greece-Morocco : IS NOT ELIGIBLE due to lack of the 4th partner from an MPC

France-Algeria-Egypt : is NOT ELIGIBLE due to lack of a 4th partner that can be from an MPC OR from a EU PRIMA PS

NOTA BENE:

Under Section 1, the PI can submit more than one proposal as coordinator. But in case 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.

The PI cannot be a coordinator in both Section 1 & Section 2 calls 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: Applicants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects.

The financial capacity check will be done by PRIMA 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 and 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 organisations or body whose participation is guaranteed by the government of an EU country or associated country following the PRIMA MGA;
- and cases where the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000 (low-value grant).

If needed it 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 they 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.

2. 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 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:
 - o Identity of researchers involved in the proposal (through the researchers table);
 - o up to five most relevant publications widely used datasets software goods services or any other achievements relevant to the call content;
 - o up to five most relevant previous projects or activities connected to the subject of this proposal; and
 - o description of any significant infrastructure and/or any major items of technical equipment relevant to the proposed work.

Public bodies, Member State organisations, and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

The PRIMA-IS will perform the operational capacity check at the evaluation phase while the financial capacity check is performed before the grant agreement is signed (however, it is recommended that applicants already carry out a financial capacity self-check at the proposal preparation stage: simulation tool [available here](#)).

- Award criteria, Scores and Weighting

1. If admissible and eligible, proposals will be evaluated by experts, based on the **award criteria** 'Excellence', 'Impact' and 'Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation' (see description of each criterion in the table below).

Table 3. Description of evaluation criteria

	Excellence (The following aspects will be taken into account to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the description in the work programme)	Impact	Quality and efficiency of the implementation
Innovation Actions (IA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. - Soundness of the proposed methodology 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts specified in the work programme, and the likely scale and significance of the contributions from the project. - Suitability and quality of the measures to maximize expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall. - Capacity and role of each participant, and the extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.

- **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.
- 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.

Table 4. Score description

Score description for the evaluation criteria (half point scores may be given)		
0	Weak	The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
1	Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair	The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
3	Good	The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
4	Very Good	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
5	Excellent	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

- **Evaluation Procedure**

Calls in Work Programme 2025 are subjected to a single-stage submission procedure.

Applicants will be requested to submit a full application which will be evaluated against the full award criteria set.

Proposals will be checked for formal requirements (admissibility and eligibility) and then evaluated (for each topic separately) by an evaluation committee see Article 49 Horizon Europe Regulation (EU) 2021/695⁷ composed of independent external experts for operational capacity and award criteria. Then they will be ranked according to their quality score.

Ranked list will be drawn up for every indicative budget shown 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

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 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

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**

For proposals with **the same score** within a single budget envelope a method to establish the priority order will be determined taking into consideration the objectives of the specific topic. In the absence of special arrangements in the specific call conditions the following method will apply:

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 more highly ranked proposals have not otherwise covered will be considered to have the highest priority.
- 2) The proposals identified under 1), if any, will themselves be prioritized 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 named in the researchers table in the proposal will be used as a factor for prioritization.
- 4) If necessary, any further prioritization 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 to PRIMA 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 methods described in 1) 2) 3) 4) and 5) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranked proposals in the group.

An evaluation review committee will provide an opinion on the procedural aspects of the evaluation. The evaluation review committee may recommend a re-evaluation of the proposal to be carried out by evaluators who were not involved in the previous evaluation or a confirmation of the initial evaluation.

VIII. Communication of evaluation results

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 selected for funding will receive a formal communication informing them that the grant preparation phase can start.

If special procedures apply, they will be set in the call conditions.

No commitment to provide funding — The 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.

- Information on the means of redress

If the consortium believes that the evaluation procedure was flawed, the coordinator can submit a **complaint** (following the deadlines and procedures also set out in the communication of the results).

Only the procedural aspects of an evaluation may be the subject of a request for an evaluation review. The evaluation of the merits of a proposal will not be the subject of an evaluation review. A request for an evaluation review must relate to a specific proposal and must be submitted within 30 days after the beneficiary accesses the evaluation results. The maximum size limit of the request is 5000 characters.

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

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) 2021/695⁸.

Open science practices⁹ are considered in the evaluation of proposals under 'Excellence' and under the 'Quality and efficiency of implementation'. Proposers should be aware of both mandatory and recommended practices and integrate them into their proposals.

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 ([//eur-lex. uropa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0695](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0695))

⁹ 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).

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;
- 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 exploiting the resulting products and services on fair and reasonable conditions. This exception is limited to four years after the end of the action.

Data protection¹⁰**Research Data Management (RDM)**

Responsible management of research data shall be ensured in line with the principles of '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:

- Prepare a Data Management Plan (DMP) and keep it updated throughout the course of the project
- Deposit data in a trusted repository and provide open access to it ('as open as possible as closed as necessary')
- Provide information (via the same repository) about any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to re-use or validate the data

¹⁰ 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.

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).

Please make sure you also check the relevant sections of the WP2025 addressing other important aspects i.e.: Confidentiality and security (EU classified information), Ethics (research integrity), and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).

X. Gender-related aspects in research and innovation

In alignment with [Article 7 of Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#), PRIMA 2025 calls require organisations participating in PRIMA actions to develop and implement a Gender Equality Plan (GEP).

This will be an eligibility criterion for all public bodies, higher education institutions, and research organisations from EU Member States and associated countries wishing to participate. However, it will not yet be required for organisations established in Third Countries.

At the initial proposal submission stage, organisations are required to submit a self-declaration through a dedicated questionnaire to be uploaded with the proposal, confirming their commitment to establishing a GEP. While a fully implemented GEP is not mandatory at this stage, it must be in place by the time of the Grant Agreement signature.

To support institutions in meeting this eligibility requirement, the European Commission has created a detailed [Guidance document on GEPs](#). This document outlines each mandatory "building block" and recommended thematic areas, providing practical examples and resources to facilitate the development, implementation, and evaluation of GEPs in line with Horizon Europe's gender equality goals.

Moreover, during the proposal evaluation process, the inclusion of the gender dimension integration of the gender dimension into the content of research and innovation will be assessed as an integral part of the review. Evaluators specifically examine how the gender dimension has been considered and integrated into the research content and methodology, ensuring that gender considerations are effectively embedded in the project's design and objectives.

For more information on the GEP and gender-related aspects, please check the PRIMA WP2025 and its General Annexes.

XI. Responsible use of generative AI in research

The European Commission and the European Research Area countries and stakeholders have prepared a set of guidelines on the responsible use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in research. The contents of the guidelines are relevant for any researchers from PRIMA Participating States. You can find more information [here](#) and download the guidelines from [here](#). Please take some time to read them, and make sure that you follow the principles they outline when developing your proposal.

XII. Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

The PRIMA partnership will be implemented in compliance with the objectives and provisions set out in the Decision (EU) 2024/1167 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 partnership and to its overall expected impacts.

For this purpose, proposals should clearly define KPIs - Key Performance Indicators that will allow the evaluation and measurement of the progress of the project and its impact. At least three PRIMA-specific KPIs must be selected by applicants at the proposal stage. These should reflect expected project outcomes and PRIMA's broader goals. While PRIMA-specific KPIs are required, applicants are encouraged to propose custom KPIs to capture unique project impacts.

A [KPI Handbook](#) will be available at the call opening: the handbook provides detailed descriptions, data collection methods, reporting guidelines, and baselines for each KPI. Please make sure you check the KPI handbook as well as the relevant sections on KPIs of the WP2025 and call texts.

XIII. 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: Marco Orlando

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For Farming Systems in the Nexus: Fabrice Dentressangle

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For Food Value Chain in the Nexus: Eda Demir

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XIV. 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/>).

XV. Use of the Electronic Submission System

The proposal submission occurs online via the 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 (Part I-Administrative Form, Part II- Technical Description/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 must 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.

XVI. Annex 1: Timeline for PRIMA-2025 Calls, Section 1

THEMATIC AREA	CALL TOPICS	Call publication and opening	Submission deadline	Evaluation results
Water management in the nexus	Topic 1.1.1 (IA)	8/4/2025	15/07/2025	10/12/2025
Farming systems in the nexus	Topic 1.2.1 (IA)	8/4/2025	15/07/2025	10/12/2025
Agri-food value chain in the nexus	Topic 1.3.1 (IA)	8/4/2025	15/07/2025	10/12/2025