



## **Guidelines for Applicants**

# **PRIMA CALL-2025-SECTION 2** **FUNDED BY PARTICIPATING STATES**

## **(Single Stage Submission)**

Version 1.0  
03 April 2025

### *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 Work Programme 2025, the latter legally prevails.*

**PRIMA Partnership**  
[www.prima-med.org](http://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  
GA: Grant Agreement  
IPR: Intellectual Property Right  
KPI: Key Performance Indicators  
MPC: Mediterranean Partner Countries  
NCP: National Contact Point.  
NFA: National Funding Agency  
OCT: Overseas Countries and Territories  
PI: Principal Investigator  
PRIMA-IS: PRIMA – Implementation Structure  
PS: Participating State  
RIA: Research and Innovation Activities  
RfP: Rules for Participation  
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 8/7/2025, 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 technical description– 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 (ESS) 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 call 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 8/7/2025, 17:00 Barcelona Time**.

Guidance about the ESS is provided in “Electronic Submission System Handbook”. **The link to the ESS 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.

**AS THIS CALL IS FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL FUNDING AGENCIES (NFAs), PLEASE READ CAREFULLY THE NATIONAL REGULATIONS OF YOUR COUNTRY (AVAILABLE ON THE PRIMA WEBSITE) TO VERIFY YOUR ELIGIBILITY AND COMMUNICATE WITH THE NATIONAL CONTACT POINTS. THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE [PRIMA WEBSITE](#).**

## I. Activities funded under Section 2

### Description of the Activities: Research and Innovation Activities (RIA)<sup>1</sup>

Activities primarily aim to establish new knowledge and/or to explore the feasibility of a new or improved technology, product, process, service, or solution. For this purpose, projects 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.

All projects will have to include collaborative research. Collaborative research is compulsory and undertaken by a partnership of institutions (consortium) designed to produce new knowledge through scientific research, whereby each team within the partnership actively pursues specific tasks and objectives with a view to pooling the results to contribute to the achievement of a set of common, well-defined project objectives.

### Funding Level

The level of funding and the list of eligible costs are set out in the national regulations document. Each applicant must comply with the requirements stated in their own national regulations. A contact point established in each country and who can be contacted directly by the applicant belonging to the same

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

country, will inform the applicants about the rules (list of NCPs can be found: <http://prima-med.org/calls-for-proposals/ncps/>).

### 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. Section 2 Call Overview

The Section 2 Call 2025 will focus on a unique call for RIA, addressing the following topics:

### 1 - Thematic Area 1-Water Management in the Nexus:

Topic 2.1.1-2025 (RIA) Enhancing Policy Development through Impact-Driven Water Footprint and Virtual Water Concepts in the Mediterranean Region

### 2 - Thematic Area 2-Farming Systems in the Nexus:

Topic 2.2.1-2025 (RIA) Upscaling Agroecology Practices at the Farm Level in the Mediterranean

### 3 - Thematic Area 3-Food Value Chain:

Topic 2.3.1-2025 (RIA) Towards a Plant-Based Alternative Protein products Transition in the Mediterranean Region

The Section 2 Call will be launched in a single stage process. The PRIMA-Secretariat (PRIMA-IS) will be responsible for evaluating proposals, which will be conducted under rules analogous to those of Horizon Europe, through a peer review process involving a panel that will rank the proposals.

Admissibility and eligibility of proposals will be first checked by the PRIMA-IS having regard to the eligibility criteria set forth in the PRIMA Decision. After the eligibility check done by PRIMA-IS, a second eligibility check will be performed by the NFAs, aimed at the verification of eligibility for funding.

Only proposals that are considered eligible both by PRIMA-IS and by the NFAs will enter the evaluation process. At the end of the evaluation, the evaluation panel will produce a unique ranking list in order to guarantee that highly ranked projects will be funded. In the event that one or more projects cannot be funded (in case that a funding body runs out of budget), the projects following directly in the ranking may be selected.

To receive the funds, the beneficiaries will have to sign a grant agreement directly with their NFAs. Thus, to ensure compliance of the beneficiary with the national regulations, a second eligibility check will be performed by the NFAs at the end of the announcement of results.

PRIMA Section 2 call will address the topics described above and the cross-cutting issues among them. A full description of the topics is available in the "Call text and Supporting Information" on the PRIMA website. Research projects can address issues that are cross cutting between two topics as long as they are both eligible for funding by the NFAs of the PRIMA Participating States. PRIMA Section 2 call will fund collaborative research projects aiming at achieving clear impacts and being policy driven.

When training and mobility is eligible by the funding bodies, these actions will be encouraged and projects should integrate in their work plan schemes for the mobility of young researchers/ postgraduates/ post doctorates, in accordance with the modalities set out in the national regulations of the funding bodies.

Projects must deliver tangible outputs and enhance technological and social innovation, depending on the research question addressed. The projects could include the use of innovative technologies, such as smart digital technologies, space data and related data and technologies. When explicitly allowed by the national regulations of the funding bodies, actions should involve the private sector in the project consortium, and particularly relevant SMEs.

All participants to activities funded by the PRIMA-IS or by Participating States of the PRIMA partnership 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 partnership supported by the European Union*", as well as with the PRIMA and EU logos. Additionally, it is important that Section 2 projects also provide visibility to their NFAs by including their full names on the website, along with logos and links to their websites. For this, they should follow the visibility rules outlined in their national contracts.

### III. Before the Submission of a Proposal

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

- Carefully read the text of the call and this 'Guidelines for Applicants' document and check the general eligibility conditions (e.g. minimum number of required partners or their place of establishment) and the national regulations applying to your consortium (available on the PRIMA website).
- Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact PRIMA Officers as well as PRIMA [National Contact Points \(NCPs\)](#), 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 section) to allow an early preparation of the proposal.
- The [PRIMA website](#) features a “find partners tool” which allows applicants to search for potential partners.
- Each consortium is formed by 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 coordinator of the project, whose responsibilities during the submission and the evaluation phase are to:
  - Ensure that all the consortium partners are eligible (according to PRIMA rules and their NFA regulations);
  - 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 partners.
- The coordinator will not be responsible for the financial management of PRIMA research funding, which will be handled directly between national beneficiaries and their NFAs in each Participating State.

#### IV. 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 template available on the PRIMA website.

The work described in the proposal must correspond to the PRIMA Call for Section 2. 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 total cost of the whole project and each partner’s requested amount to their NFA (total cost = amount requested + own funding). Please ensure that the total value of your requested budget respects the national regulations. Not all costs are eligible for all funding agencies. A detailed explanation of which costs are eligible and which are not eligible can be found in the National Regulations on the PRIMA website. Please, read this document carefully. A detailed budget breakdown outlining the different cost categories will be required too: applicants shall fill out the specific template (Excel file) provided on the PRIMA website and upload it to the ESS.

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 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 coordinator
2	Verification of the eligibility conditions for the partners
3	Proposal writing (check the evaluation criteria, fill in the appropriate forms)
4	<p>For <b>Single Stage ‘Full Proposals’</b>, the Project Coordinator will have to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Administrative data (Part I, PDF to be uploaded on the ESS, as well as information to be completed on the ESS: names of the partners, contact details, institutions, etc.)..</li> <li>✓ Technical Description/Scientific Document (Part II, PDF to be uploaded on the ESS.</li> <li>✓ A detailed budget table (Excel file to be uploaded to the ESS).</li> </ul> <p>The PI is the team leader = One person per team, lab or institution.</p>

## V. List of Countries Eligible for Funding

Legal entities established in the following PRIMA Participating States<sup>2</sup> will, in general, be eligible to receive funding through PRIMA grants:

- 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.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 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/>)

<sup>3</sup> Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked.

- The following Third Countries associated with Horizon Europe (AC): Israel<sup>4</sup>, 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.<sup>5</sup>
- These Associated (AC) and Third Countries (TC) mentioned above are the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC).

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

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

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

The information provided in this section is without prejudice to the national funding rules of PS, which may also envisage eligibility for funding for specific entities not established in these PS. The national funding rules of a PS will determine whether a particular entity would be eligible for funding. After the eligibility check done by PRIMA-IS, a second eligibility check will be performed by the NFAs, aimed at the verification of eligibility for funding.<sup>6</sup>

In this context, proposals that are considered eligible for participation by PRIMA-IS (at the consortium level) will enter the evaluation process. However, should the NFAs deem one consortium partner not eligible for funding, PRIMA-IS may require additional information from the consortium or the partner concerned, such as an attestation that the funds to cover the participation in the project will be available.

For the eligibility for funding, applicants should refer to the national regulations and contact their National Contact Points (NCP).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> 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).

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

<sup>6</sup> The national regulations mention the eligible structures for funding (for example, some funding bodies can fund private entities and others cannot) and a list of criteria to check for their eligibility. National regulations also provide a comprehensive list of eligible costs (for example some funding bodies can support mobility or sub-contracting and others cannot). Therefore, before applying to the call of the Section 2, applicants must verify their own national eligibility for funding by reading carefully the national regulations and by contacting the NCP appointed for this task.

<sup>7</sup> Please refer to the National Regulations available in the PRIMA website. Find the NCP contacts at the following link :<https://prima-med.org/ncps-contacts/>

Please refer to the table below, which presents indicative financial commitments of Participating States with respect to the call covered by Section 2. The latest information on the PRIMA PS can be found on PRIMA webpage: <http://http://prima-med.org//>

**Table 2. Indicative PRIMA PS planned financial contributions for Section 2 in Work Programme 2025 in EUR**

**N.B.:** Wherever relevant, local currencies have been converted into EUR using official exchange rates

PRIMA Participating State	Funding Agency		Financial annual commitment per National Funding Agency	Financial annual commitment per PS
	Acronym	Full name	(EUR)	(EUR)
Algeria	DGRST	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	2,000,000	2,000,000
Bulgaria	BNSF	Bulgarian National Science Fund	500,000	500,000
Croatia	MSE	Ministry of Science and Education	500,000	500,000
Cyprus	RIF	Research and Innovation Foundation	400,000	400,000
Egypt	ASRT	Academy of Scientific Research & Technology	1,500,000	
Egypt	STDF	Science, Technology and Innovation Funding	2,150,000	3,650,000
France	ANR	Agence Nationale de la Recherche	4,000,000	4,000,000
Germany	BMBF	German Ministry for Education and Research	2,850,000	2,850,000
Greece	GSRI	General Secretariat for Research and Innovation - Ministry of Development	2,000,000	2,000,000
Israel	MOST	Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology Office	300,000	
Israel	IIA	Israel Innovation Authority	150,000	450,000
Italy	MUR	Ministry of University and Research	7,000,000	7,000,000
Jordan	HCST	The Higher Council for Science and Technology	330,000	
Jordan	SRSF	The Scientific Research and Innovation Support Fund	125,000	455,000
Lebanon	CNRS-L	National Council for Scientific Research of Lebanon	100,000	100,000
Luxembourg	FNR	Luxembourg National Research Fund	400,000	400,000
Malta	XM	Xjenza Malta	500,000	500,000
Morocco	MESRSFC	Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche Scientifique et de la Formation des Cadres	2,000,000	2,000,000
Portugal	FCT	Fundacao para a Ciencia e a Tecnologia	1,200,000	1,200,000
Slovenia	ARIS	Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency	170,000	170,000
Spain	AEI	Agencia Estatal de Investigación	3,500,000	
Spain	CDTI	Centro para el Desarrollo Tecnológico y la Innovación, Spanish Funding Agency	2,000,000	5,500,000

Tunisia	MESRS	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research/Tunisia	1,500,000	1,500,000
Türkiye	TUBITAK	The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye	1,000,000	1,000,000
<b>Total amount committed</b>				<b>36,175,000</b>

Please note that if you are submitting a proposal that is cross-cutting between two topics, you must declare it in the relevant section of the ESS by ticking the two relevant topics. To be eligible, the two topics selected must be funded by all the NFAs involved.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The financial contributions from PRIMA PS for WP2025 are provided based on a formal commitment letter signed yearly by the competent authorities of the PRIMA NFAs involved.**

## VI. Standard of admissibility and related requirements

1. Proposals must comply with the admissibility requirements set out in this sub-section, unless they are supplemented or modified in the call conditions.

To be considered **admissible**, a proposal must be:

- (a) Submitted in the ESS 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 **Single Stage 'Full Proposal' is 45 pages (THIS APPLIES ONLY TO THE 'PART II – TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION' Document).**

The ESS will automatically reject the proposal if it exceeds the page limits.

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 receiving precise and clear documentation).

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 are requested to use the templates provided by PRIMA that can be downloaded from the PRIMA website under the relevant call section.

**⚠ Applicants should check with their NCPs if the submission must also be made at national level.**

## VII. Standard eligibility conditions

All proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out in the Rules for Participation of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe (OJ L 170 12.5.2021 p. 1) as well as any derogations specified in the Decision (EU) 2024/1167 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 amending Decision (EU) 2017/1324 as regards the continuation of the Union's participation in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) under Horizon Europe. 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) the coordinating institution of the proposal is a legal entity established in a PRIMA PS<sup>8</sup>;
- (b) its content corresponds, wholly or in part, to the scope and objectives of the topic for which it is submitted;
- (c) it complies with the eligibility conditions for participation set out below, depending on the type of action;
- (d) It complies with PRIMA PS National Regulations.

**Table 3. Standard eligibility conditions**

Type of Action	Eligibility conditions for participation <sup>9</sup>
<b>Analogous to Research &amp; Innovation Action (RIA)</b>	At least three legal entities established in three different countries considered as Participating States <sup>10</sup> by the time of the signature of the relevant grant agreement, out of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <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<sup>11</sup></i></li> </ul> and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>At least one must be established in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC).</i></li> </ul> All three legal entities must be independent of each other.

<sup>8</sup> This measure is aimed to protect the Union's financial interests and is in line with Art. Article 7(7) of Decision (EU) 2024/1167.

<sup>9</sup> The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission notice Nr. 2013/C 205/05 (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp.9-11) apply for all actions under the Work Programme 2025 including for third parties that receive financial support under the action (in accordance with Articles 204 and 205 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046), notably programme co-fund actions.

<sup>10</sup> The status of PRIMA PS is to the extent of their participation in activities of PRIMA funded under Horizon Europe. PS are considered the following EU Member States (MS): Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, including the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to these Member States; the following third countries associated with Horizon Europe (AC): Israel, Tunisia, and Türkiye; the following Third Countries not Associated with Horizon Europe (TC): Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco under the condition that these countries update their scientific and technological agreements with EU setting the conditions of their participation in PRIMA

<sup>11</sup> These countries include Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain.

### SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT 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 consortia must include at least **an additional legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC)**.*

*In addition to the standard admissibility and eligibility conditions, the following additional eligibility condition applies: **each applicant must check its own eligibility for participation/funding in accordance with their National Funding Agencies.***

*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 an EU PRIMA PS**

For the Section 2 call, after the eligibility check done by PRIMA-IS, a second eligibility check will be performed by the NFAs, aimed at the verification of eligibility for funding. In this context, proposals that are considered eligible for participation by PRIMA-IS (at the consortium level) will enter the evaluation process.

The national regulations mention the eligible structures or entities that are allowed to apply (for example, some NFAs can fund private entities and others cannot). Each funding agency establishes its own national regulations, outlining the topics eligible for funding under the call and providing a list of eligibility criteria. National regulations also provide a comprehensive list of eligible costs (for example some NFAs can support mobility or sub-contracting and others cannot).

#### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

*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.*

*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.*

## VIII. Evaluation rules

### - Operational capacity

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

This assessment of operational capacity will be carried out by external experts during the evaluation of the award criterion 'Quality and efficiency of the implementation'. It will be based on the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams including their operational resources (human technical and other) or exceptionally the measures proposed to obtain the necessary competence and experience by the time the tasks are implemented.

If the evaluation of this award criterion leads to a score above the applicable threshold, then the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

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

- description of the consortium participants; and
- for each participant:
  - 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.

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

### - Award criteria

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

**Table 4. Aspects to be considered in the evaluation**

	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
Research and innovation actions (RIA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Soundness of the proposed methodology, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, interdisciplinary approaches, appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content, and the quality of open science practices, including sharing and management of research outputs and engagement of citizens, civil society, and end-users where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan including communication activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages and the resources overall.</li> <li>- Capacity and role of each participant and the extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.</li> </ul>

**- Scoring and weighting:**

Unless otherwise specified in the call conditions:

- Evaluation scores will be awarded for the overall criteria and not for the different aspects listed in the above Table.
- Each criterion will be scored out of 5. The threshold for individual criteria will be 3. The overall threshold applying to the sum of the three individual scores will be 10.

**Table 5. Score description for the evaluation criteria**

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

#### - Evaluation procedure

Calls in the WP2025 are subjected to a **single-stage submission procedure**.

Applicants will be requested to submit a full proposal 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) 2021/695). 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 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 yet to cover will be considered to have the highest priority.
- 2) The proposals identified under 1) if any will be prioritized according to the scores awarded for 'Excellence'. When these scores are equal priority will be based on scores for 'Impact'.
- 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 prioritisation will be based on geographical diversity defined as the number of MPC represented in the proposal not otherwise receiving funds from projects higher up the ranking list (and if equal in number, then by budget).
- 5) If a distinction still cannot be made the panel may decide to further prioritise by considering other factors related to the objectives of the call or to 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 panel may decide to further prioritise 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 PRIMA in general. These factors will be documented in the report of the Panel. The method described in 1) 2) 3) 4) and 5) will then be applied to the remaining equally ranked proposals in the group.

At the end of the panel meeting the panel will recommend one or more ranked lists for the proposals under evaluation following the scoring systems indicated above. A ranked list for every indicative budget shown in the call conditions will be drawn up.

## **IX. Communication of evaluation results**

In line with Article 6(10)(c) of the PRIMA Decision, the proposals will be ranked according to evaluation results. The selection of proposals to be funded will be made by PRIMA-IS based on this ranking. However, since the funding of participants in the activities will be the responsibility of PS and not PRIMA-IS, the respective PS will need to provide adequate funding in line with the national rules. In

the event that one or more projects cannot be funded by the PS, PRIMA-IS may decide to select for funding the projects directly following them in the ranking list(s).

Proposal coordinators receive an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), showing the results of the evaluation for a given proposal. In the ESR, the overall scores will be provided. 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

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](https://prima-med.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/PRIMA-Appeals-procedure_v_01.12.21.pdf)

## X. Conditions related to open access to research data

PRIMA encourages open science as an approach to the scientific process based on cooperative work and diffusing knowledge in particular in accordance with the following elements which shall be ensured in accordance with Article 39(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695<sup>12</sup>.

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

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

### Data protection<sup>13</sup>

#### 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

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<sup>12</sup> 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)

<sup>13</sup> PRIMA ensures compliance with EU data protection regulations, aligning with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – Regulation (EU) 2016/679, which governs the lawful processing of personal data, ensuring privacy, security, and fundamental rights protection in research activities. Additionally, PRIMA follows the principles outlined in Regulation (EU) 2021/695 (Horizon Europe Framework Programme) regarding open science, research data management, and ethical data handling.

requirements. As part of making research data findable accessible interoperable and re-usable (FAIR) RDM can be applied to research outputs other than data (i.e. workflows protocols software samples etc). Beneficiaries must manage the digital research data generated in the action ('data') responsibly in line with the FAIR principles and should at least do the following:

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

**Please make sure you also check the relevant sections of the WP2025 addressing other important aspects i.e.: Ethics (research integrity), Applicable common principles, Equal treatment, Transparency, Exploitation, and dissemination of results.**

## XI. Gender-related aspects in research and innovation

In alignment with [Article 7 of Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695](#), PRIMA 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.

## **XII. 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.

## **XIII. Key Performance Indicators**

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.

## **XIV. Project Monitoring and Reporting for Funded Projects**

In addition to the specific requirements of the NFAs, project coordinators will be required to provide a scientific and financial **mid-term and final report** to PRIMA-IS. All project partners will have to provide inputs to these reports. In addition, it will be expected to include evidence of impact in these mid-term and final reports.

Detailed information on the reporting and monitoring procedures as well as templates will be provided to the coordinators of the funded projects in due course.

## **XV. Additional information and relations between beneficiaries and NFAs**

### Grant Agreement (GA)

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

### Consortium Agreement (CA)

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

- The repartition of the tasks between partners;
- The sharing of the intellectual property rights (IPR) of the project results;
- The conditions of publication and dissemination of the results;
- The technology transfer and the exploitation of the results;
- Any specific requirements from a funding body.

There is no template provided by NFAs or PRIMA-IS for the CA. The DESCA model CA can be used, but beneficiaries are free to use whatever template they prefer.

### The Project Coordinator

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

For the preparation and the submission of the proposal:

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

During the implementation of the project:

- Be the single point of contact between the PRIMA-IS and the consortium partners;
- Be a point of contact between the NFAs and the consortium partners in case of requiring a grant extension or scientific/managerial modifications. The NFAs shall also be in direct contact with their beneficiaries to discuss changes that affect the grant agreement;
- Ensure the role of supervision of the project workflow with the help of work package leaders;
- Joint monitoring reports (midterm and final reports) should be submitted to the PRIMA-IS online monitoring platform.

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

## XVI. Call Secretariat – PRIMA-IS

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

### Project Officers for Section 2 Call Topics:

Ali Rhouma

E-mail: [ali.rhouma@prima-med.org](mailto:ali.rhouma@prima-med.org)

Mohamed Wageih

Email: [mohamed.wageih@prima-med.org](mailto:mohamed.wageih@prima-med.org)

**Disclaimer: Kindly refrain from forwarding identical inquiries to each officer through distinct emails. Feel free to communicate your message to either one of them or to both parties in a consolidated email.**

## XVII. 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.

The National Contact Points list is provided on the PRIMA website (<http://prima-med.org/calls-for-proposals/ncps/>).

## XVIII. Use of the Electronic Submission System

The proposal submission occurs online via ESS. It is the duty of the Project Coordinator to enter the data online. Please READ CAREFULLY THE ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION SYSTEM HANDBOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION (available on the 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.

## Annex 1: Timeline for the call in Section 2

THEMATIC AREA	CALL TOPICS	Call publication and opening	Submission deadline	Evaluation results
<b>Water management in the nexus</b>	Topic 2.1.1 (RIA)	8/4/2025	8/7/2025	10/12/2025
<b>Farming systems in the nexus</b>	Topic 2.2.1 (RIA)	8/4/2025	8/7/2025	10/12/2025
<b>Agri-food value chain in the nexus</b>	Topic 2.3.1 (RIA)	8/4/2025	8/7/2025	10/12/2025