



TECHNOLOGY
CENTRE PRAGUE

EEI 2025 CALL

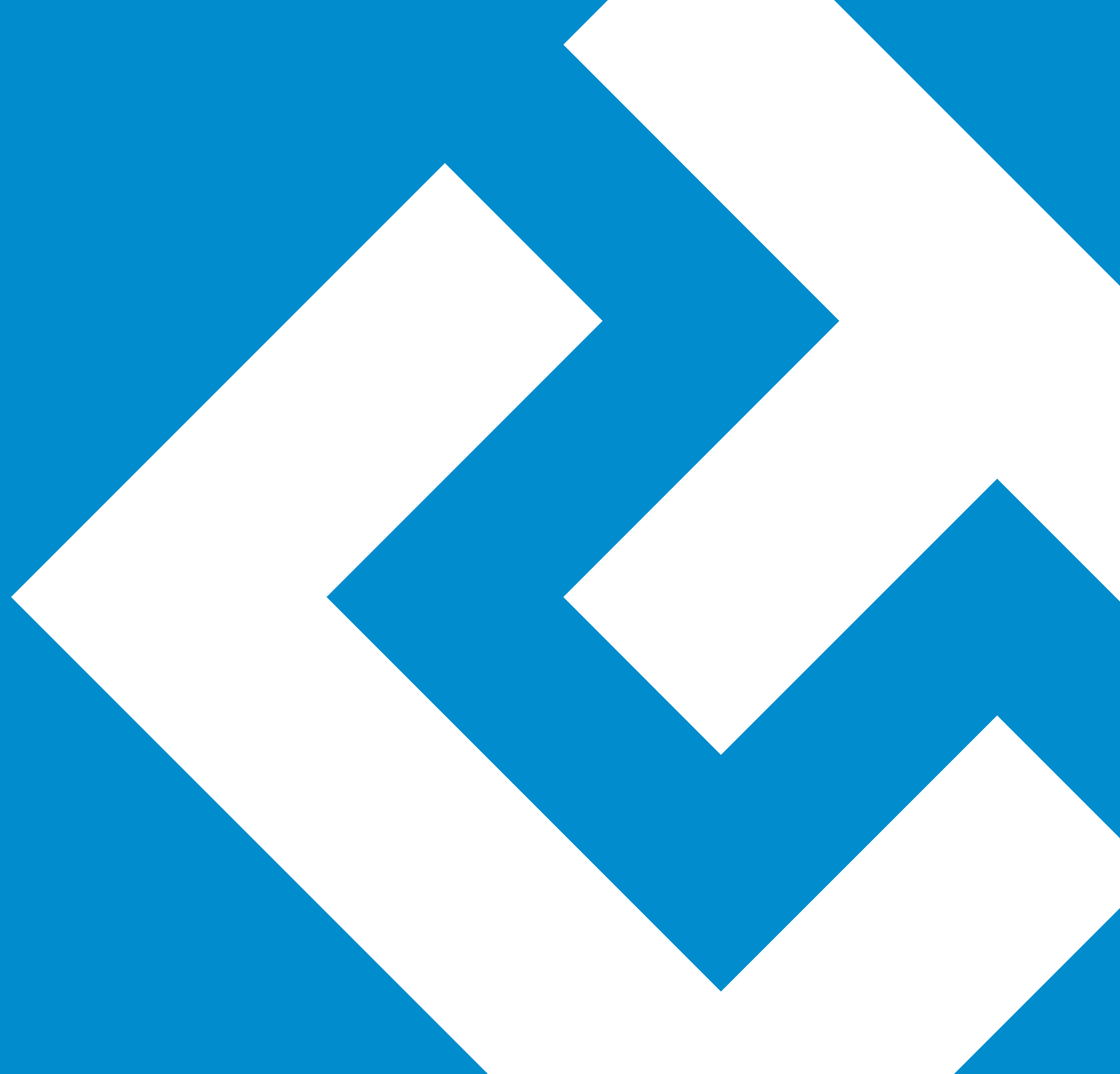
Anna Vosečková, WIDERA and EIT NCP
CZ-SK webinar on EEI 2025 call
4 September 2025



OVERALL POLICY OBJECTIVES OF WIDENING 2025

1. **Encourage institutional reforms and transformation processes** of the R&I system at national and regional level in widening countries in line with ERA principles;
2. **Mobilise national investments** in R&I capacity in widening countries;
3. **Raise the bar for excellence of R&I actors** in widening countries in partnership with outstanding European and international institutions ('win-win situation');
4. **Increase number of participations and success rates** of widening actors in research and innovation projects in other parts of Horizon Europe (notably in Pillars 2 and 3);
5. **Promote the creation of new innovation ecosystems**, interconnect and scale up existing ones by a set of measures, which include place-based and international collaboration between academia and business in widening countries;
6. **Foster brain circulation**, including inter-sectoral mobility for researchers and innovators and turn it into brain gain for widening countries.

**EUROPEAN
EXCELLENCE
INITIATIVE (EEI)**





EUROPEAN EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

MAIN OBJECTIVE – capacity building for strengthening HEIs networks and cooperation with surrounding ecosystems to:

- ✓ **Raise excellence in science and in value creation** through deeper and geographically inclusive cooperation in alliances of HEIs with a particular focus on Widening countries
- ✓ **Improve global competitiveness and visibility of Europe's HEIs**, especially in key areas such as the green transition and HE mission areas
- ✓ **Improve researchers career opportunities, balanced circulation of talents, fair and modern research assessment**

IMPORTANT ISSUES

- Cooperation of universities will be supported to **create critical R&I mass and pursue specific objectives that contribute to accelerating key R&I areas** of own choice with strategic relevance for the European Union.
- Call topics are in principle bottom up but **applicants are encouraged to take into account** key aspects of the political guidelines of the next European Commission published in July 2024, such as the Clean Industrial Deal, the Energy Union, digital tech diffusion, artificial intelligence, the European Life Science strategy, Union of Skills and/or start ups
- Activities need to **focus on research and innovation** conducted in the higher education sector – **solely research and Innovation intensive alliances**
- Educational activities such as Master or doctoral programmes are out of scope of this call.
- Further **possible partners**: research organisations, SMEs, NGOs etc.
- **Consortium**: not too numerous, no quadruple helix needed

OUTCOMES (NEED TO REFLECT ALL OF THEM)

- Modernisation and upgrade of HEIs in the R&I dimension, through **integrated collaboration between institutions and with other actors** in local ecosystems and/or internationally;
- Mainstreamed culture of excellence in **science and knowledge valorisation** amongst HEIs, and particularly in less research-intensive institutions and countries, in particular Widening countries;
- Accelerated **institutional reforms in the R&I dimension and strengthened R&I capacities** in HEIs, notably those located in Widening countries, leading to **better research careers including in non-academic sectors**;
- Strengthened **digital skills and capacities including artificial intelligence** of the R&I dimension of the higher education sector;
- **Increased global competitiveness and critical mass of research** in the European higher education system;
- Contribution to implementation of the relevant ERA Policy Agenda 2022-24 actions in higher education sector (**Action 13: Empower HEIs and actions 1 to 9 under the header 'Deepening a truly functioning internal market for knowledge'**, where relevant).

PROJECTS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE

Implementation of the relevant ERA Policy Agenda 2022-24 actions in higher education sector (**Action 13 Empower HEIs and actions 1 to 9** under the header ‘Deepening a truly functioning internal market for knowledge’, where relevant).



European Strategy for Universities 18/01/2022
and Council Conclusions on the **Implementation of the European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe** of 5 April 2022



21.4.2022 EN Official Journal of the European Union C 167/9

Council conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe
(2022/C 167/03)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Recalling the political background to this issue set out in Annex to these conclusions,

RECALLING THAT:

1. Higher education institutions (HEIs) ⁽¹⁾ in Europe largely participate in knowledge creation, distribution and certification. They are irreplaceable in achieving both the European Education Area and the new European Research Area, in synergy with the European Higher Education Area. HEIs are key to reaching the target set out in the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) – namely that the share of 25 to 34 year olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 45 % by 2030.
2. In the coming years, growth in higher education enrolments – which has been a fundamental global trend in recent decades – will intensify. The number of 25 to 34 year olds with a tertiary qualification in OECD and G20 countries is expected to reach 300 million by 2030 ⁽²⁾.
3. Numerous opportunities and challenges will influence the future development of HEIs in Europe. World demographic trends and globalisation will challenge Europe's position as a prominent hub of knowledge creation. Global warming and environmental degradation, the acceleration of technological change and the growing race for digital technologies already affect HEIs' strategies and positioning within Europe and in the global context. The availability of a large pool of talent with excellent education and training will become increasingly crucial for Europe to maintain and assert its position as a world leader in a context of heightened global competition.
4. In the meantime, the growing demand for high-quality and inclusive education as well as excellent research and innovation in emerging countries is increasing global networking, while new threats are emerging to the fundamental values and principles that European democracies aim to uphold. At the European and global level, increasing inequalities and the challenges posed by aging societies will transform the labour market and deepen the need for inclusion and for higher education attainment, which will entail new expectations for lifelong learning.

MAIN CHANGES FROM THE EEI 2023 CALL

- Increased overall call budget from 54 M€ to 80 M€
- No lump sum
- Streamlined objectives and outcomes
- **Widening conditions (centre of gravity in Widening countries)** changed from formerly 'Applicants have to convincingly demonstrate this geographical focus, for instance, by a budget allocation of at least 70% to participants from Widening countries.' to '**... to convincingly demonstrate this geographical focus conceptually and by allocation of the major share of the budget (at least 51%) to participants from Widening countries**'
- Requirement to present **research activities in a distinct WP**
- Modular structure of **activity catalogue**

PACKAGE OF ACTIVITIES (STRUCTURED IN 5 MODULES)

Modules are underpinned with non-exhaustive examples of related activities

Applicants should address at least four modules and may propose concrete activities different to the examples as long as they are in line with the objectives of this call

1. **Institutional modernisation and reforms** (modern research assessment, improved RMAs practices, promoting interdisciplinary research entities)
2. **Upskilling of research, technical and management staff** (exchanges, trainings, entrepreneurial and communication training)
3. **Development of research excellence** (share R&I capacities, develop joint strategic R&I agendas, seed projects)
4. **Digital transformation** (AI techniques, upgrading digital infrastructure, data science and management)
5. **Outreach** (links with innovation ecosystems including industries, engaging with citizens, cities and regions, development of internationalisation strategies and partnerships)

EUROPEAN EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

HORIZON-WIDERA-2025-01-ACCES-01

- **Consortium:** coordinator from a Widening country and min. 2 partners from other EU Member States or Countries associated to HE
- **Costs for R&I activities** cannot exceed **20% of the total budget and need to be done in a specific Work Package** – see activity module 3
 - 3. development of research excellence**
 - Sharing R&I capacities including infrastructures
 - Developing joint strategic R&I agendas
 - Seed R&I projects to test R&I agendas, explore new joint strands and consolidate partnership
- **Educational activities are excluded**

Type of action: **CSA**

Funding rate: **100%**

Project duration: **3–5 years**

Indicative number of projects: **27**

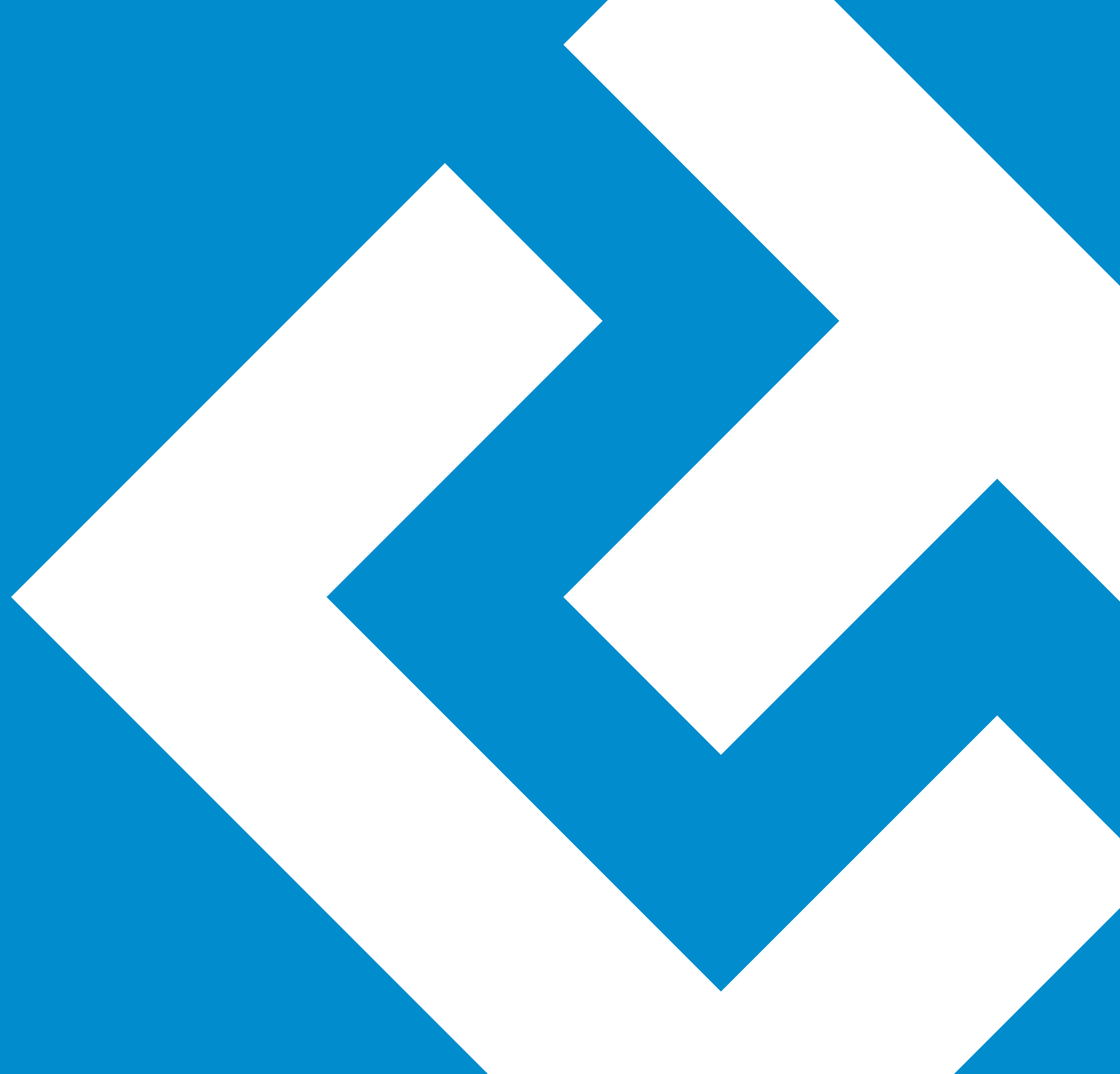
Call budget: **80 M€**

Project budget: **2–5 M€**

Call opening: **14. 5. 2025**

Call closing: **20. 11. 2025**

EEI 2025 – PROPOSAL TEMPLATE



DOCUMENTS

CSA TEMPLATE (30 PAGES)



Horizon Europe Programme
Standard Application Form (HE CSA)

Project proposal – Technical description (Part B)

Version 4.0
16 December 2024

PROPOSAL TEMPLATE - STRUCTURE

1. Excellence

- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Coordination and/or support measures and methodology

2. Impact

- 2.1 Project's pathways towards impact
- 2.2 Measures to maximise impact - Dissemination, exploitation and communication
- 2.3 Summary

3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation

- 3.1 Work plan and resources
- 3.2 Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole

ADMINISTRATIVE FORMS – PART A (HOW TO FILL IN)

ncpwideranet.eu

Administrative Forms

Part A



NCP_
WIDERA.NET



Funded by
the European Union

PROJECT'S OUTREACH

Your project's outreach

Communication

Tips and requirements on communicating your Horizon Europe, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions or Research for Coal and Steel project.

Open science

What you should comply with when applying for funding and implementing your Horizon Europe project.

Dissemination and exploitation

Advice and resources on how to disseminate and exploit your research results.

Communication – Agri-food promotion

Instructions for the use of the "Enjoy, it's from Europe" signature.

How to inform policymakers

10 steps to effectively inform policymakers of your findings and maximise your policy impact.

10 steps to
reach and
inform
policymakers

GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF GENERATIVE AI (2023)

- When considering the use of generative AI tools for the preparation of the proposal, it is imperative to exercise caution and careful consideration. **The AI-generated content should be thoroughly reviewed and validated by the applicants to ensure its appropriateness and accuracy, as well as its compliance with intellectual property regulations. Applicants are fully responsible for the content of the proposal (even those parts produced by the AI tool) and must be transparent in disclosing which AI tools were used and how they were utilized.**
- Specifically, applicants are required to:
 - ✓ **Verify the accuracy, validity, and appropriateness** of the content and any citations generated by the AI tool and correct any errors or inconsistencies.
 - ✓ **Provide a list of sources used to generate content** and citations, including those generated by the AI tool. Double-check citations to ensure they are accurate and properly referenced.
 - ✓ **Be conscious of the potential for plagiarism** where the AI tool may have reproduced substantial text from other sources. Check the original sources to be sure you are not plagiarizing someone else's work.
 - ✓ **Acknowledge the limitations of the AI tool in the proposal preparation**, including the potential for bias, errors, and gaps in knowledge.

CHANGES IN THE CSA TEMPLATE SINCE 2024

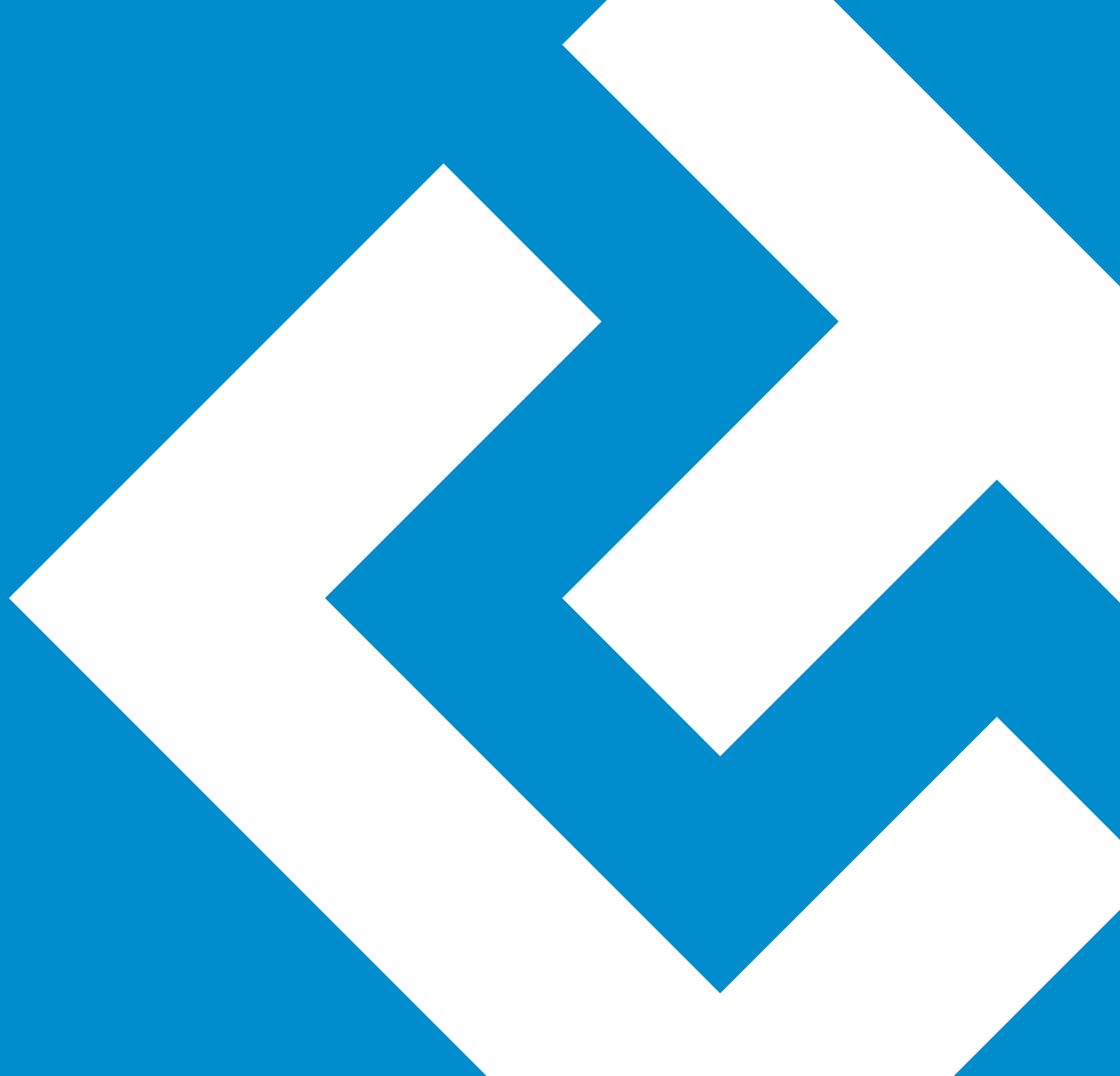
PART 1 – EXCELLENCE

- The “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) principle **has been removed from the proposal templates**. Aspects relating to DNSH now only need to be taken into account if they are explicitly required in the call text/conditions.
- **The section on AI robustness has been removed**. In the “Ethics Self-Assessment” in Part A, it is still required to address ethical concerns related to human rights and values of AI based systems.
- **The section on research data management has been partly removed and simplified**. There is only a reference left that a detailed Data Management Plan (DMP) will need to be developed by proposals selected for funding and planned as a deliverable by month 6.
- The **Evaluation forms have been changed accordingly** (removed references to Do No Significant Harm principle and AI robustness)

CHANGES IN GENDER BALANCE CRITERION (GENERAL ANNEXES)

- [Annex F \(Procedure\) for WP 2023-2024](#) states "*...the gender balance among the **researchers** named in the researchers table in the proposal will be used as a factor for prioritisation;*"
- [Annex F \(Procedure\) for WP 2025](#) states "*... the gender balance among the **researchers with a leading role** named in the researchers table in the proposal, will be used as a factor for prioritisation.*"
- The change to the gender balance in lead researchers (in the project, calculated for the whole consortium) applies to **calls under WP 2025 and onwards**. The leading role could be both the task leader and work package leader, **as long as they are declared as having a leading role in the researchers table in the proposal template Part A.**

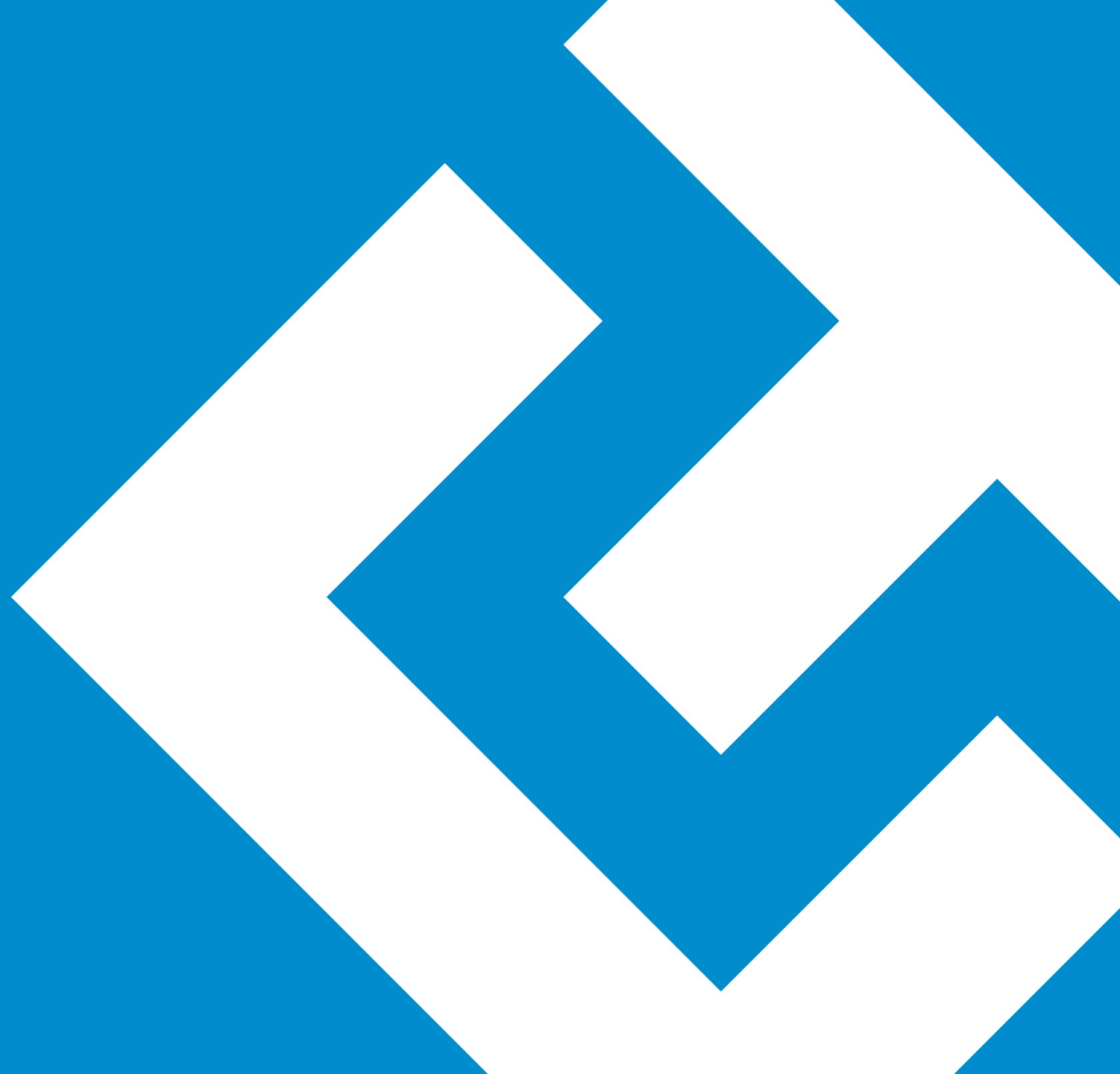
EVENTS 2025



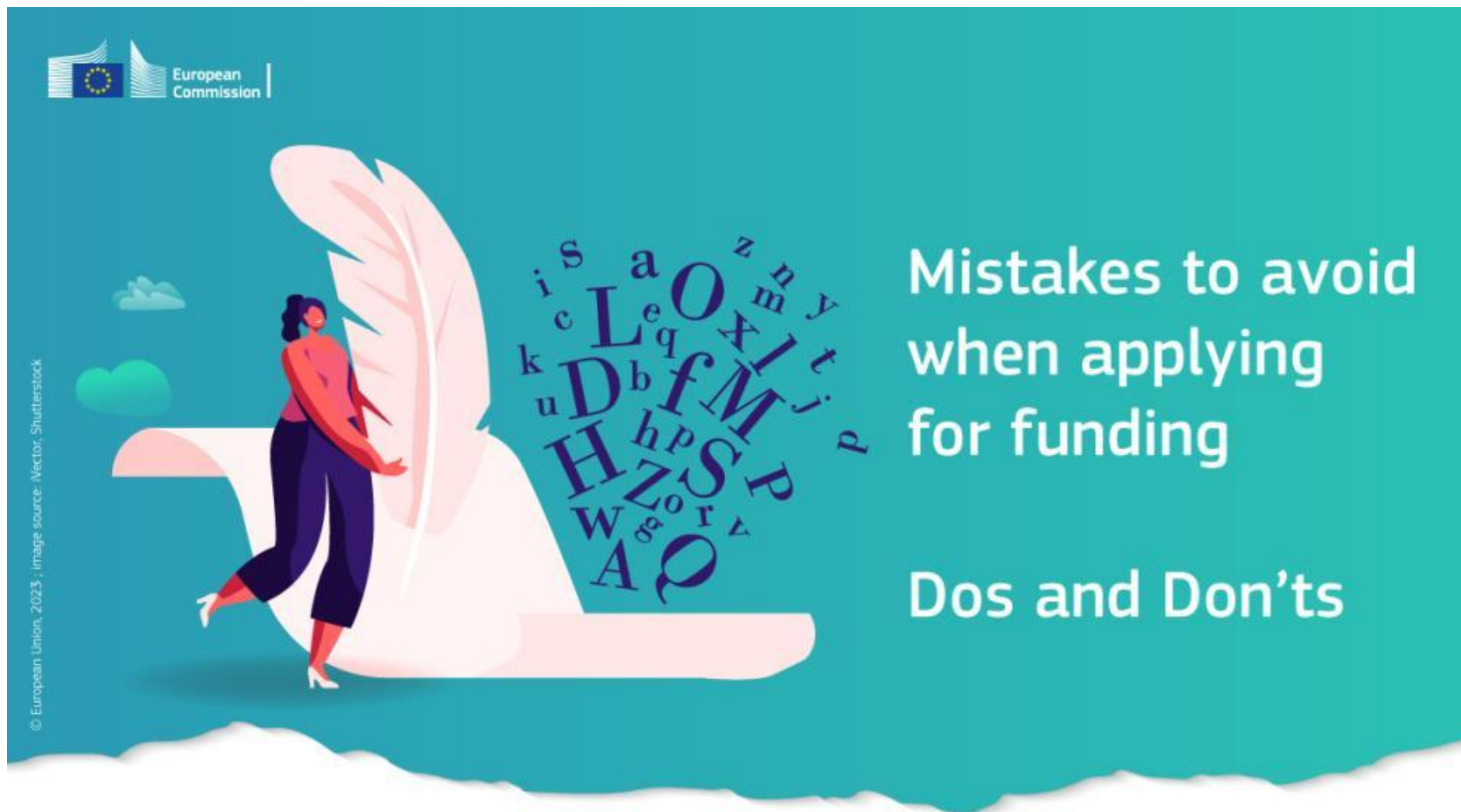
INFORMATION DAYS (LINKS IN THE PICTURES)



PROPOSAL WRITING USEFUL DOCUMENTS



EC REA RECOMMENDATIONS ON QUALITY PROPOSALS PREPARATION (LINKS TO BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS INCLUDED)





QUESTIONS? DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT ME!

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