



TECHNOLOGY  
CENTRE PRAGUE

# WIDENING INSTRUMENTS IN 2026–2027 WORK PROGRAMME

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Anna Vosečková, WIDERA and EIT NCP  
17 December 2025



# HORIZON EUROPE


Current Framework  
Programme for  
Research and  
Innovation (2021 –  
2027) has almost 3  
billion EUR on  
Widening and 0,5  
billion on ERA



# WIDENING COUNTRIES IN HE

- **15 Member States** – Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.
- **15 countries associated to the HE** (as of 1 December 2025) – Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine
- **9 EU Outermost regions** (as defined in [Art. 349 TFEU](#),) – French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion, Saint-Martin, The Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands.

**Only institutions  
from these  
countries can  
coordinate the  
Widening projects**



Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czech Republic  
Estonia  
Greece  
Hungary  
Latvia  
Lithuania  
Malta  
Poland  
Portugal  
Romania  
Slovakia  
Slovenia

# BROŽURA WIDENING V HE

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Anna Vosečková

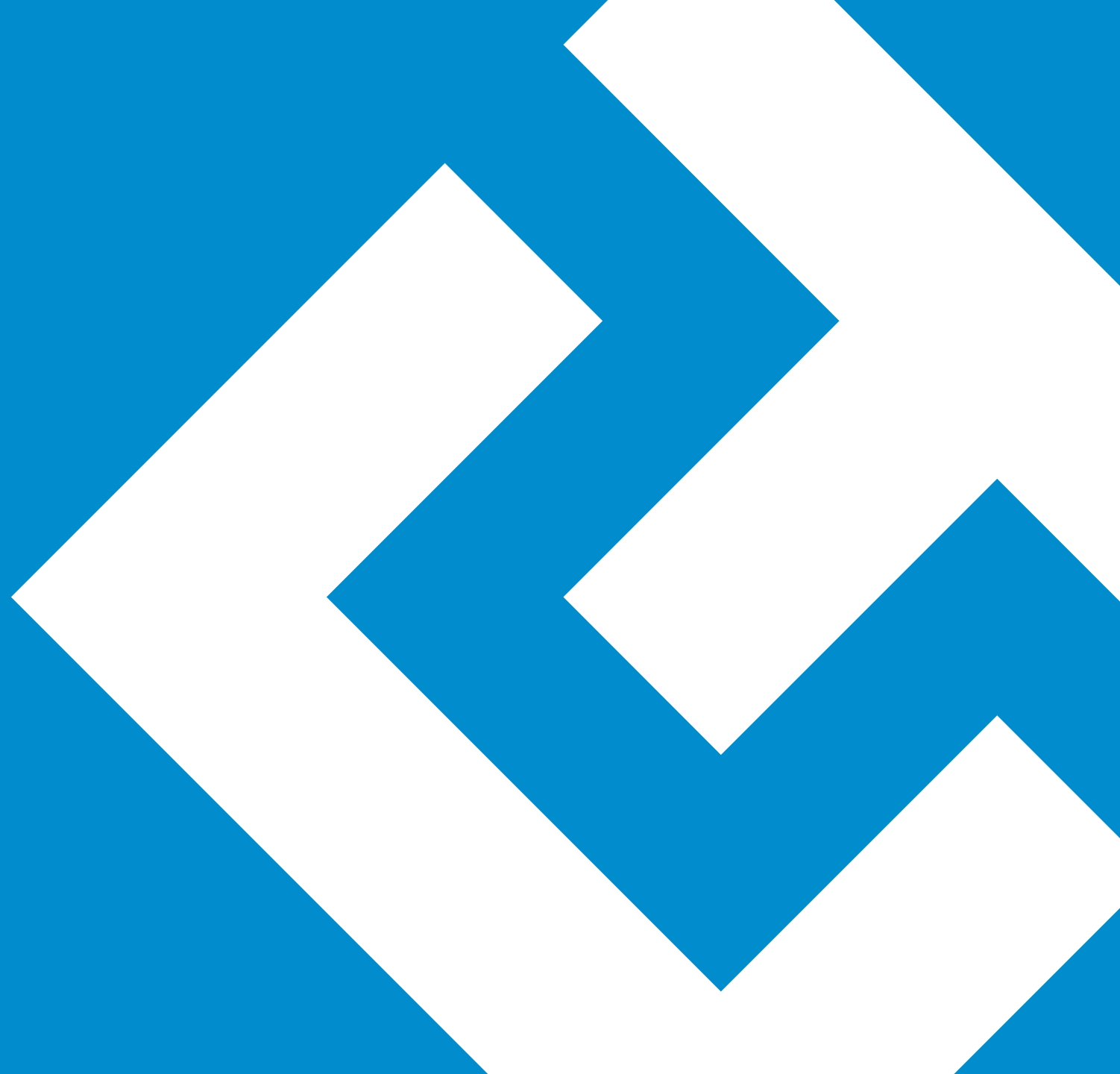
VADEMECUM<sup>2025</sup>  
Horizon Europe

Rozšiřování účasti a šíření excelence  
Widening participation and spreading excellence  
(WPSE, Widening)

# **WIDENING CALLS 2026-2027**

**WORK PROGRAMME  
WIDERA PUBLISHED  
ON 11 DECEMBER 2025**

**OVERALL BUDGET 955 M€**



# WP WIDERA 2026–2027 STRUCTURE

**EC WIDENING  
INFODAY  
22 January 2026**

- **Introduction (pp 5–7)**
  - Policy background and general description of the 2 parts – Widening participation and spreading excellence (Widening) and Strengthening the ERA by reforming and enhancing the European R&I system (ERA)
- **Calls – Widening and ERA (pp 8–22)**
  - Opening/deadlines, type of action, call budget, budget per project, indicative no. of funded projects, general conditions (common to all the calls)
- **Destination Widening (pp 23–56)**
  - General introduction and Expected impacts (p 23)
  - Individual calls (pp 24–56)
- **Destination ERA (pp 57–133)**
  - General introduction. Four-pillar structure and Expected impacts (57–59)
  - Individual call topics (59–104)
- **Prizes (pp 105–108), Grants to identified beneficiaries, GIBs (pp 109–119), Public procurement (pp 120–126), External expert actions (pp 127–128), Other actions without a call, COST (pp 129–130)**
- **Budget (131–133)**

# POLICY BACKGROUND



## Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027

Key strategic orientations

- Communication on a New ERA for R&I (2020)
- Communication on the implementation of the ERA (2024)
- Competitiveness Compass (2025)
- Pact for R&I in Europe (2021)
- WP WIDERA 2026-2027 contributes toward the implementation of the **Pact's four priority areas**:
  - I. Deepening a truly functioning internal market for knowledge
  - II. Green transition and digital transformation and other challenges with impact on society, and increasing society's participation in the ERA
  - III. Enhancing access to R&I excellence and enhancing interconnections between innovation ecosystems across the Union
  - IV. Advancing concerted R&I investments and reforms



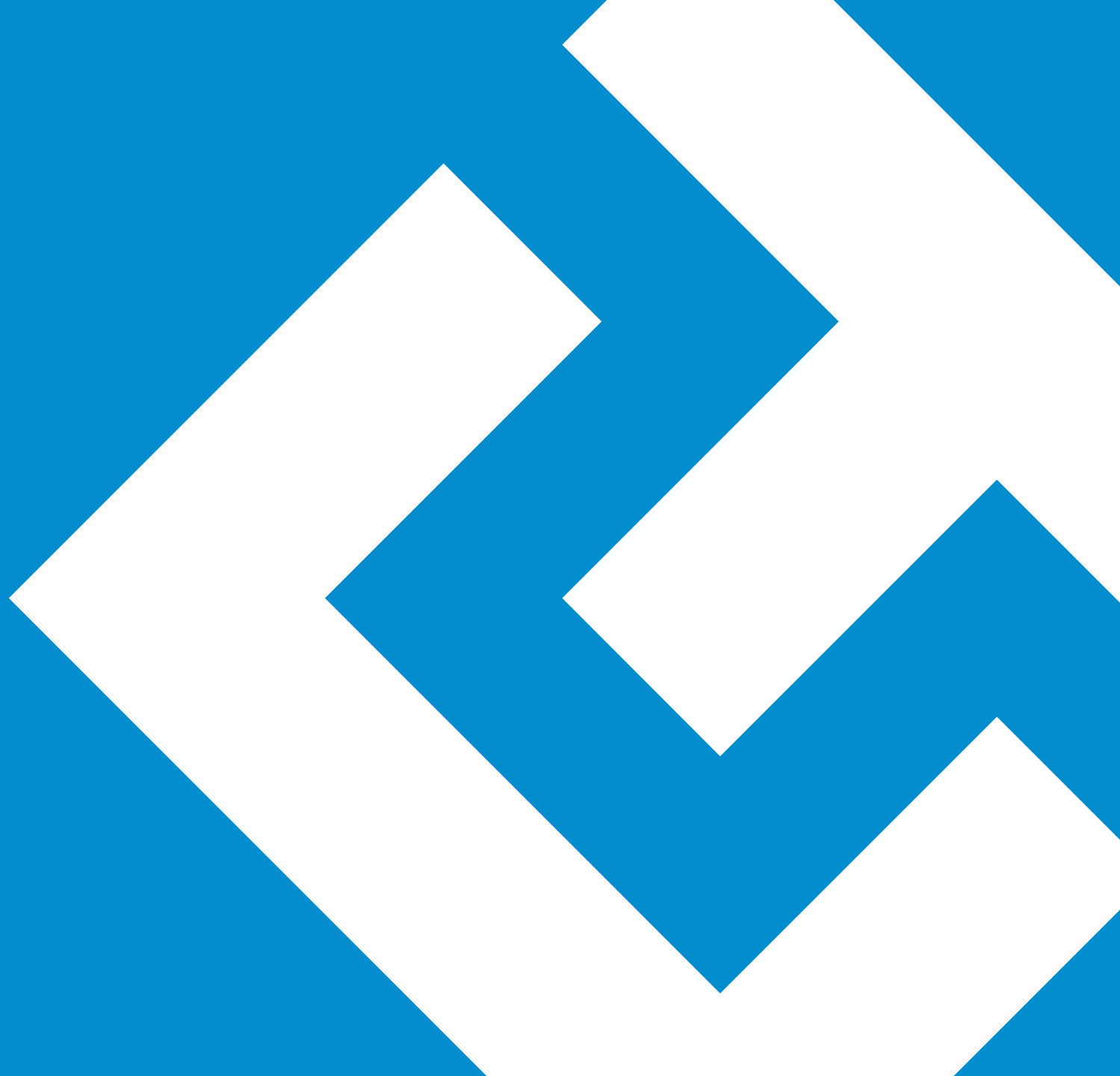
# DESTINATION WIDENING

## EXPECTED IMPACTS (10) – choose the most appropriate

- **Increased R&I capacities** for all actors in the R&I system in Widening countries;
- Structural changes leading to **modernised and more competitive R&I systems** with increased attractiveness and **retention of research talents**;
- **Mobilisation** of national and European resources for strategic investments;
- Higher participation in HE and **more leadership roles in collaborative projects**;
- Stronger **linkages between academia and business** and improved career permeability;
- Greater involvement of **regional actors in the R&I process**;
- **Excellent talents attracted** to institutions including research infrastructures;
- **Balanced circulation of R&I talents** including intersectoral mobility, and improved **gender equality and inclusiveness**;
- Improved linkages and **increased mobility between academic and business**, notably by overcoming sectoral barriers;
- **Free circulation of knowledge and expertise** in line with ERA priorities.



# WIDENING CALLS 2026



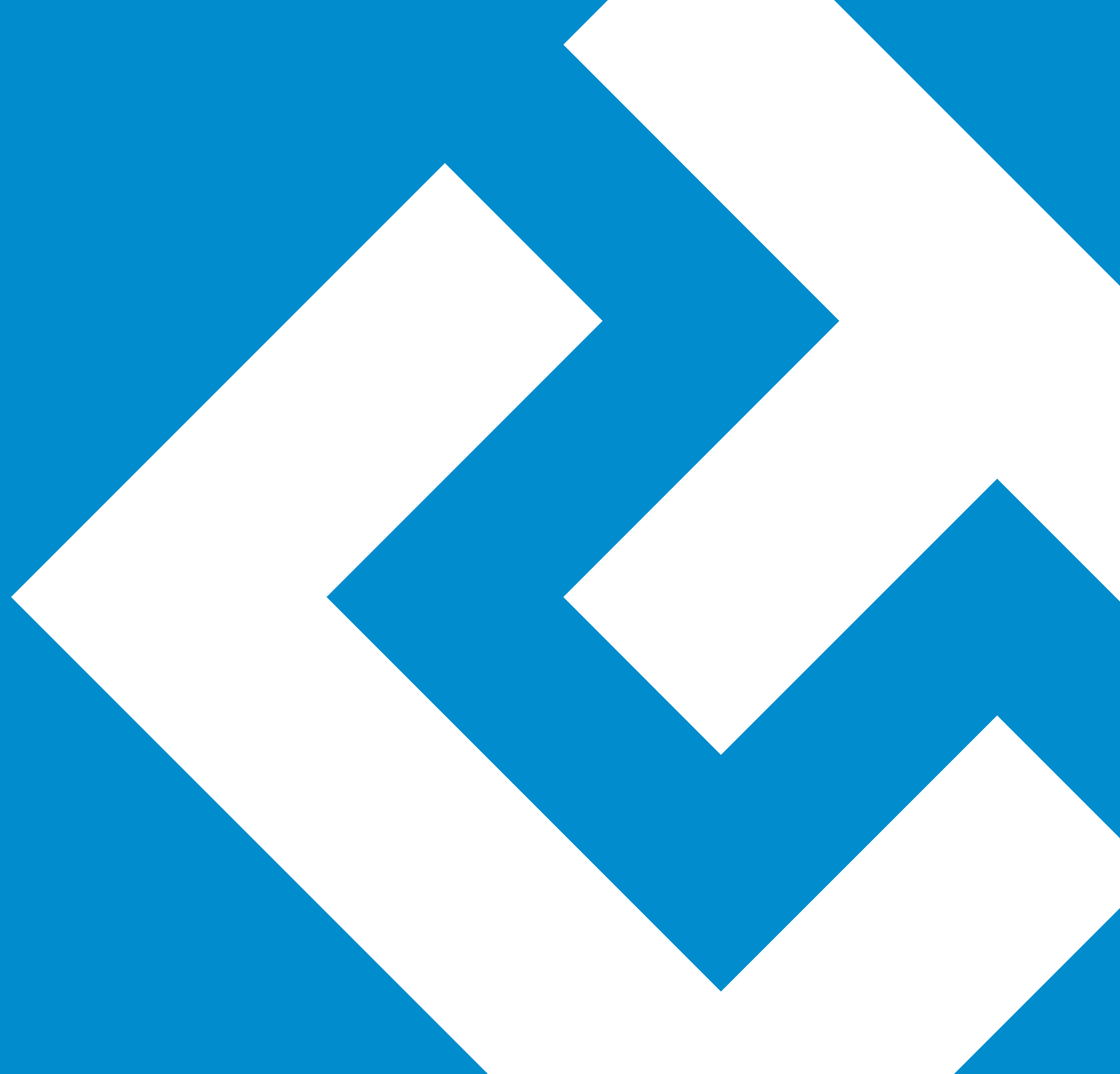
# WIDENING CALLS 2026

SPECIFIC  
APPLICATION  
FORMS

CODE / TITLE	OPENING DEADLINE	CALL BUDGET (M€)	PROJECT BUDGET (M€)	INDICATIVE NO. OF PROJECTS
WIDERA-2026-01-WIDENING-01 <b>Teaming Synergies</b>	23/04/2026 24/09/2026	7	7	1
WIDERA-2026-02-WIDENING-01 <b>Twinning</b>	08/01/2026 09/04/2026	264,50	0,8-1,5	210
WIDERA-2026-03-WIDENING-01 <b>Hop-On Facility</b>	13/01/2026 24/09/2026	30	0,2-0,6	60
WIDERA-2026-04-WIDENING-01 <b>Research Management Facility</b>	23/04/2026 24/09/2026	7	7	1
WIDERA-2026-05-WIDENING-01 <b>ERA Fellowships</b>	09/04/2026 09/09/2026	8	cca 0,19 M€ for Czechia	50



# TEAMING FOR SYNERGIES



# TEAMING SYNERGIES 2026

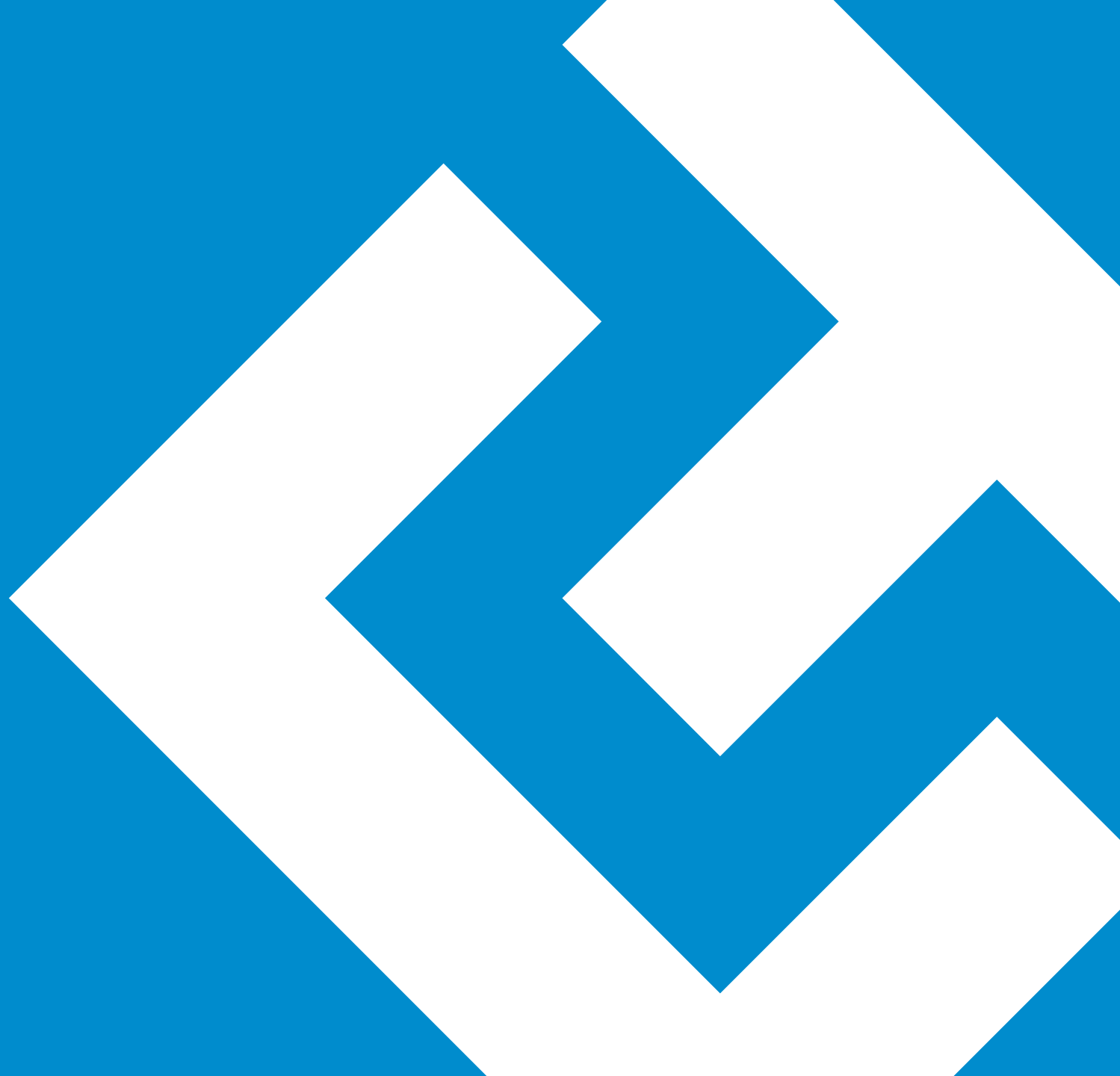
## BASIC INFORMATION

- **MAIN AIM - fostering collaboration among Teaming CoEs**, both existing ones and those resulting from ongoing or future calls, to support their efforts towards sustainability and increased impact at the regional, national and European level
- **Core of the consortium** should be able to demonstrate successful implementation of sustainability strategies of a Teaming CoEs
- **Complementary members** can provide specific expertise on e.g. communication, training, knowledge valorisation and IPR issues
- Consortium should demonstrate a **geographical coverage of its activities** - to reach all past, existing and future Teaming CoEs that wish to participate in the activities and benefit from the services offered by the consortium

## CALL OVERVIEW

- WIDERA-2026-01-WIDENING-01
- **Opening: 23 April 2026**
- **Deadline: 24 September 2026**
- Type of action: CSA
- Overall indicative budget: M€ 7
- Budget per project: M€ 7
- Project duration: 5 years
- Consortium: core and complementary members
- **Expected no. of projects: 1**

**TWINNING**



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Whether you're a researcher, innovator, or just curious, here you'll find information on projects, topics, and publications funded by the EU's research programs - in multiple languages.

CORDIS belongs to the [Research and Innovation community platform of the European Commission](#) and complements the [Funding and tender opportunities](#) website, where you can apply for funding and search for partners.

Stay connected -- check out the [CORDIS Newsletter](#) and [subscribe](#) for the latest updates.



### Thematic Packs

Keep up with the latest breakthroughs enabled by EU funding with our multilingual collections of the articles focusing on a specific theme



2 October 2025

[Explore all](#)



### Videos

Connect with EU science thanks to our short explanatory videos focusing on the scientific content and exploitation aspects of EU research projects



23 September 2025

[Watch more](#)



### Podcasts

Dive into some of the key scientific solutions being developed by EU-funded researchers to address the major societal challenges that we all face today



3 October 2025

[Discover more](#)



### Results in Brief

Read general public summaries of the main outcomes at the end of each project, explaining the achievements and highlighting the next steps



**AI-powered robots transform road repairs in Europe**



### News

Discover ongoing projects with our news articles based on media reports or project announcements



**Climate change and its effects**



### HORIZON dashboard

Learn key facts & figures on Horizon proposals, projects and participants with an interactive tool with filter options by theme, geography, organisation profile, and more



**EU Research and Innovation data at your fingertips**

# USEFUL INFORMATION

## CORDIS

- Projects' basic data including abstracts and objectives, reporting and results

## 2021 TWINNING projects

## 2023 TWINNING projects

# AIM

- To enhance networking activities **between the research institutions and research infrastructures of the Widening countries** by linking it with **at least two internationally leading research institutions** from two different Member States or Associated Countries
- To raise the **research profile of the institution from the Widening country and its staff**, including strengthening the **research management capacity**





# SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

## ELIGIBILITY

- Participation as **coordinators** is limited to legal entities established in **Widening countries**
- **Gender equality plan** is an eligibility criterion

## FINANCIAL AND LEGAL

- Eligible costs take the form of a **lump sum – BUT: there will be only ONE reporting period (after the project completion), so no need for more Work Packages**

## OTHER

- Open for **participation of the JRC** that can contribute specific expertise where relevant, for the **development of R&I strategies** depending on the R&I domain chosen by the project, technology transfer and IPR management as well as linking up to **regional smart specialisation strategy**

# EXPECTED **OBLIGATORY** OUTCOMES

1. **Improved research excellence and capacities** in Widening countries closing the research and innovation gap within the European Union;
2. **Enhanced strategic collaboration** between the research institutions or higher education establishments of the Widening countries and at least two internationally leading research institutions or higher education establishments at European Union level;
3. **Raised reputation, research profile and attractiveness** of the coordinating institution, and improved research profile of its staff;
4. **Strengthened research management capacities** of the coordinating institution;
5. **Development of novel approaches in R&I collaboration** with increased mobility (inwards and outwards) of researchers.

# WORK PACKAGE: RESEARCH COMPONENT

- A research and innovation component **not exceeding 30%** of the total Horizon Europe grant (including the indirect costs) may be included, which should be presented in a **dedicated work package (WP1) entitled 'Research component**
- At least **50% of the budget for this component should be allocated to the coordinator**
- A research and innovation component may involve:
  - ❖ development and implementation of **new ideas, methods, or technologies**
  - ❖ advances the current state of the art in a particular field by pushing the **boundaries of knowledge and creating novel solutions**
- **All trainings related to R&I that advances beyond the state of the art should be budgeted and included in this work package**

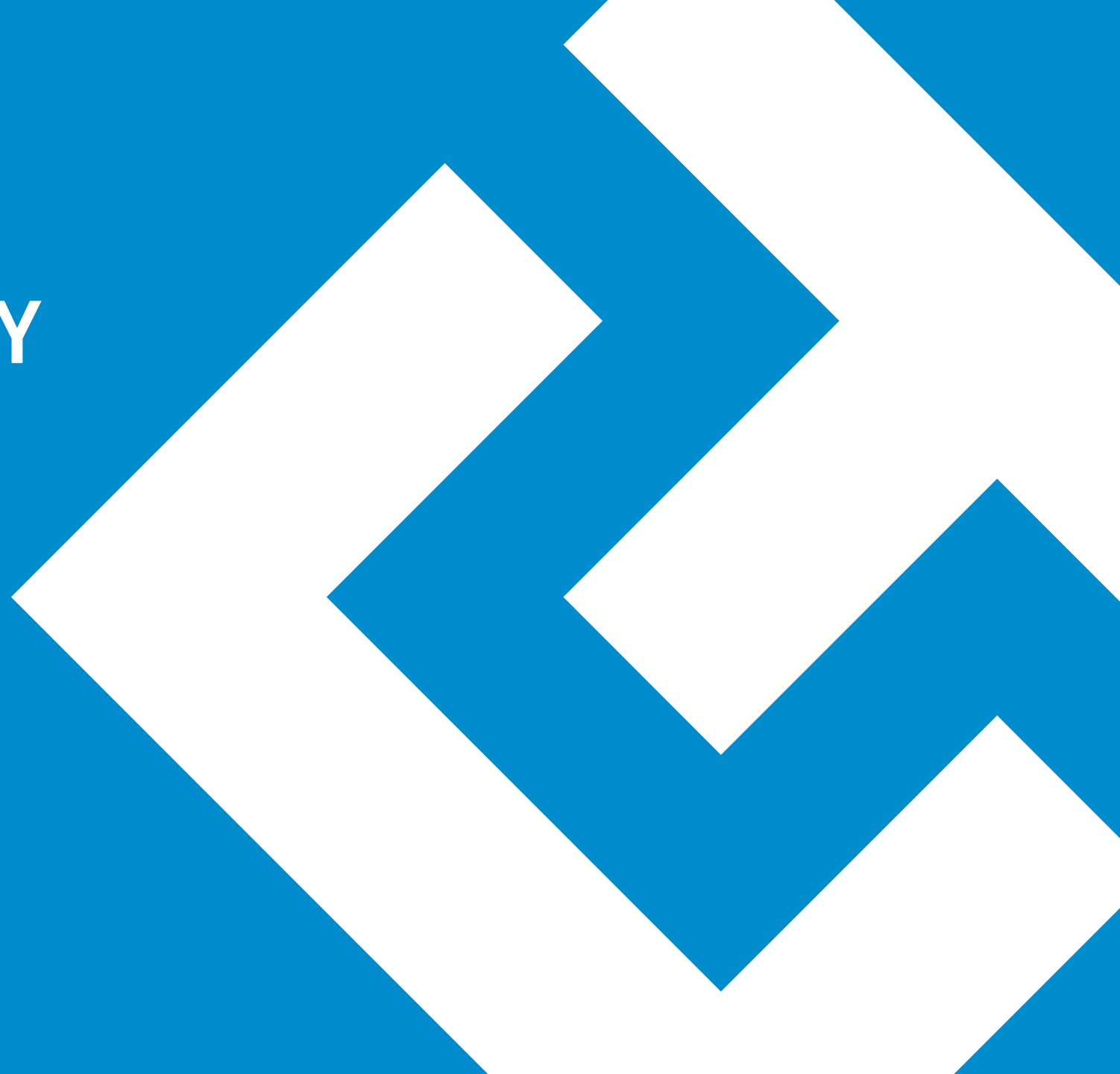


**Type of action:** CSA  
**Funding rate:** 100% (lump sum)  
**Project duration:** 3 years  
**Indicative number of projects:** 210  
**Call budget:** 264.5 M€  
**Project budget:** 0,8 – 1,5 M€  
**Call opening:** 8. 1. 2026  
**Call closing:** 9. 4. 2026

## TWINNING 2026

- **MAIN OBJECTIVE – institutional networking enabling:**
  - ✓ transfer of knowledge and skills and exchange of best practices
  - ✓ raising the research profile of the institution and its staff
  - ✓ special focus on strengthening research management and administrative skills
  - ✓ 30% of total budget can be spend on R&I, out of which 50% goes to coordinator

**HOP-ON FACILITY**





Type of action: **RIA**

Funding rate: **100%**

Project duration: it depends

**Indicative number of projects: 60**

Call budget: **30 M€**

Project budget: **0,2 – 0,6 M€**

**Call opening: 13. 1. 2026**

**Call closing: 24. 9. 2026**

## HOP ON FACILITY 2026

**MAIN OBJECTIVE – accession of one new additional partner from a Widening country to already implemented **RIA project** (without any Widening partner) funded from**

- ✓ **Any of the six Clusters of HE Pillar 2**
- ✓ **EIC Pathfinder instrument**
- Choose only from the list of eligible RIA projects available on **FTOP**
- **Proposal must be submitted by a coordinator of the relevant project**
- 10% of the proposed budget can be allocated to the coordinator

# INFORMATION ON HOP ON

## LEAFLET



**NÁSTROJ HOP ON**

Nástroj Hop On je jedním ze čtyř nových průřezových opatření balíčku Advancing Europe Package, který v rámci programu Horizont Evropa (HE) doplňuje čtyři hlavní nástroje z předchozího programu H2020 (TEAMING, TWINNING, ERA Chairs a program COST). Společně cílí na snižování přetrvávajících rozdílů ve výkonnosti výzkumu a inovací prostřednictvím sdílení znalostí a odborných poznatků napříč EU. Nástroj umožňuje přistoupení jednoho partnera ze skupiny tzv. Widening zemí ke konsorciu kolaborativního projektu HE.

**ZPŮSOBILÉ PROJEKTY**

O nového partnera z Widening zemí se mohou ucházet projekty financované v klástrech Pillře 2 (Globální výzvy a konkurenceschopnost) a v EIC Pathfinder v Pillři 3 (Inovativní Evropa) programu HE s již podepsanou grantovou dohodou a bez partnera z jakékoliv Widening země. Jedná se vždy výhradně o kolaborativní projekty typu RIA – Research and Innovation Action. Seznam způsobilých projektů je zveřejněn na Portálu pro finanční příležitosti a veřejné zakázky (PTDP) u výzvy Hop On a je Evropskou komisí aktualizován každý týden. Subjekty z Widening zemí se zájmem o přistoupení

ni mohou oslovit přímo koordinátora relevantního projektu vyplněním kontaktního formuláře po přihlášení do PTDP (tlačítko Contact u každého projektu).

**SKUPINA WIDENING ZEMÍ**

- 13 tzv. nových členských států EU (včetně Česka), Portugalsko a Řecko,
- 9 nejvzdálenějších regionů EU,
- země přidružené k programu Horizont Evropa spadající do kategorie zemí s nízkými a středními příjmy (v H2020 jich bylo 12).

Jmenný výčet Widening zemí je uveden u výzvy v kolonce Call updates.

**CHARAKTERISTIKA VÝZVY 2022**

Identifikátor:  
HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-07-01  
Rozpočet celkem: 40 mil. €  
Rozpočet na nového partnera: 0,2–0,5 mil. €  
Typ: Jednokolová  
Datum otevření: 27. 1. 2022  
Termíny uzavření: 20. 4. a 10. 11. 2022  
Předpokládaný počet projektů: 80

[www.tc.cz](http://www.tc.cz)

## E-LEARNING



Nástroj Hop On: pilotní výzva 2022

KAPITOLA

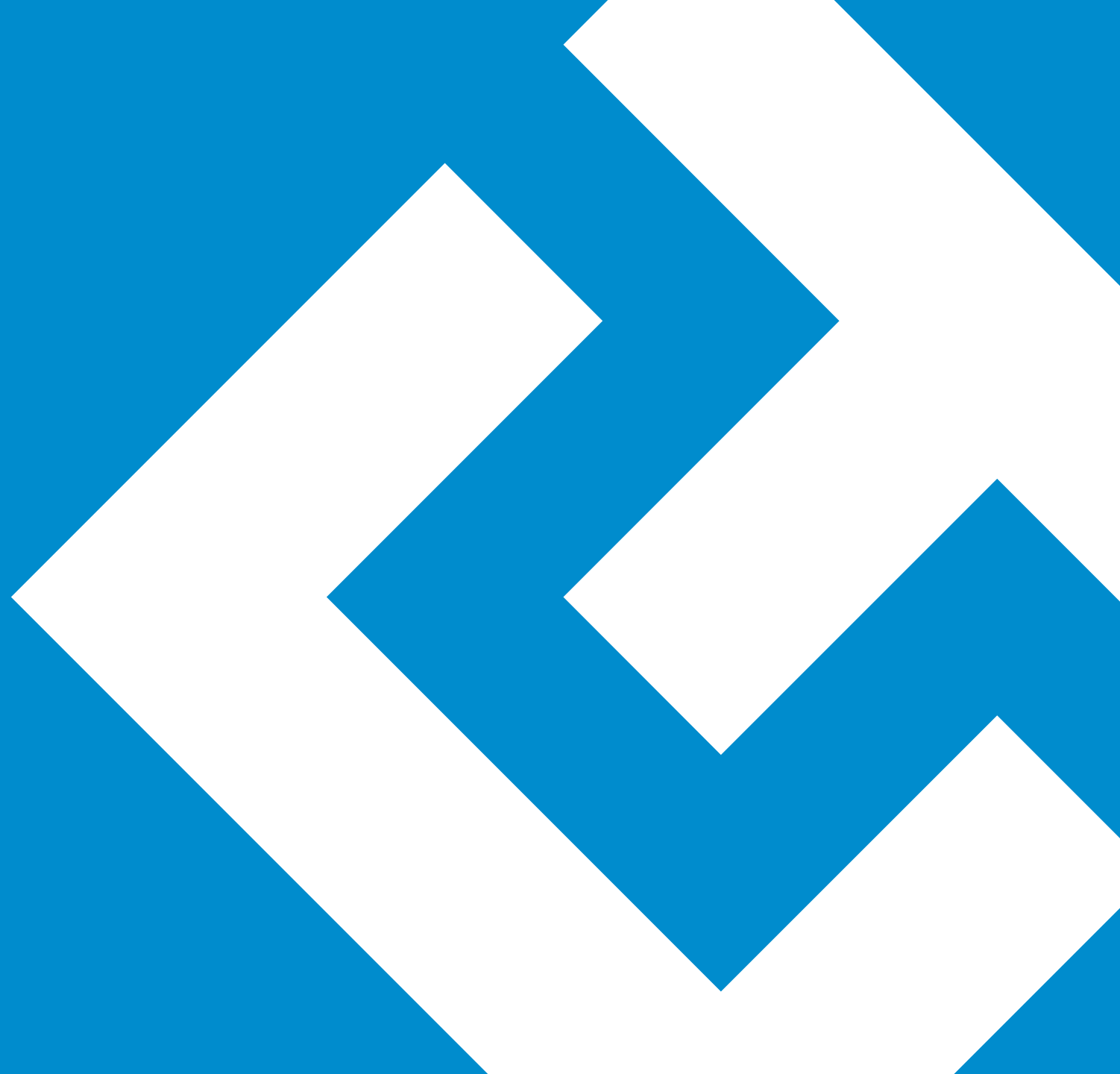
**Nástroj HOP ON**

**pilotní výzva 2022**

TECHNICKÉ CENTRUM AV ČR



# RESEARCH MANAGEMENT FACILITY





## RESEARCH MANAGEMENT FACILITY 2026

### MAIN OBJECTIVE – address research management and its multiple dimensions

- Provide training and consulting services to institutions in Widening countries that
  - Lack such capacities
  - Do not have sufficient expertise for
    - ✓ Setting up a grant office
    - ✓ And / or research management teams
  - To empower them to take over the consortium leadership tasks
  - FSTP may be provided (grants up to 60 000 EUR)

**ONE PROJECT: 23/04/2026 – 23/09/2026**

**ERA FELLOWSHIPS**



HANDBOOK FOR MSCA  
POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS



AVAILABLE NOW

- **MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2026 (HORIZON-MSCA-PF-2026)**

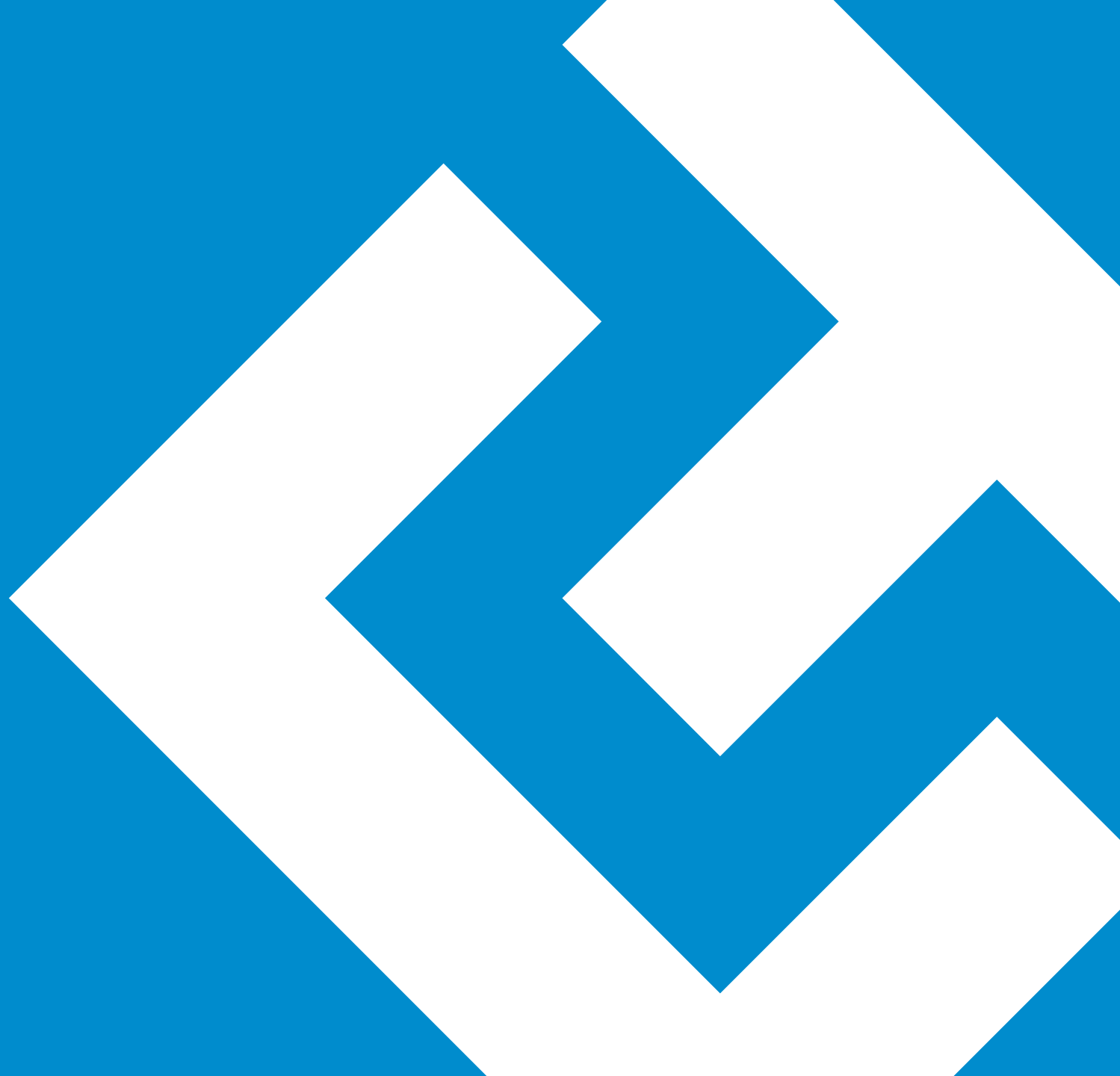
- **9/4 - 9/9/2026**
- Call budget: 8 M€
- Projects to be funded: 50

## ERA FELLOWSHIPS 2026

**MAIN OBJECTIVE – individual grants for researchers holding a PhD who wish to**

- ✓ carry out their research activities in Widening countries
- ✓ acquire new skills
- ✓ and develop their careers
- Applications are submitted to MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships calls
- Automatically transferred to ERA Fellowships in case not receiving the MSCA grant

# WIDENING CALLS 2027



# WIDENING CALLS 2027

SPECIFIC  
APPLICATION  
FORMS

CODE / TITLE	OPENING DEADLINE	CALL BUDGET (M€)	PROJECT BUDGET (M€)	INDICATIVE NO. OF PROJECTS
WIDERA-2027-01-WIDENING-01: <b>EIC Pre-accelerator - Widening</b>	05/05/2027 18/11/2027	40	0,5-1,0	60
WIDERA-2027-02-WIDENING-01: <b>ERA Chairs</b>	06/04/2027 14/09/2027	175	1,5-2,5	80
WIDERA-2027-02-WIDENING-02: <b>ERA Research Managers</b>	06/04/2027 14/09/2027	65	1,5-2,5	30
WIDERA-2027-03-WIDENING-01: <b>ERA Fellowships</b>	07/04/2027 08/09/2027	8	cca 0,19 M€ for Czechia	50
WIDERA-2027-04-WIDENING-01: <b>Excellence Hubs</b>	02/09/2026 04/03/2027	100	1,5-4,5	30



# EIC PRE-ACCELERATOR - WIDENING



CALL TEXT MIGHT CHANGE DUE  
TO THE CALL 2025 EVALUATION  
RESULTS





## EIC PRE-ACCELERATOR – WIDENING

**MAIN OBJECTIVE – increase the innovation potential of early-stage deep-tech startups in the Widening countries, in order to:**

- ✓ enable them to better attract private investments and scale up
- ✓ increase business, investor and technology readiness
- ✓ develop further their innovations (from TRL 4 to TRL 5/6)

# SCOPE

- focus on early-stage deep-tech startups which
  - 1) have high-impact innovation technology, product, service, or business model that could create new markets or disrupt existing ones, and
  - 2) have the ambition and commitments to scale up

# SPECIFIC OUTCOME

1. be successful in applying and attracting the EIC Accelerator funding and/or;
2. manage to secure other private investment and/or;
3. attract successfully national or regional funding as alternative funding sources (e.g. through Seal of Excellence programmes)

# GRANT IS EXPECTED TO BE USED FOR

- addressing the investor and market readiness towards commercialisation and deployment (market research, value proposition, business case and business model, prospects for growth, intellectual property protection, competitor analysis etc.
- maturation and validation of novel technologies beyond proof of concept to viable demonstrators of the technology in the intended field of application (i.e., from minimum TRL 4 up to TRL 6)

# AT ITS END, THE PROJECT NEEDS TO

- demonstrate that the technology component of their innovation has been tested and validated in a laboratory and other relevant environment (e.g. at least completed all aspects of TRL 5)
- be ready to apply for EIC Accelerator and/or to seek other investors or sources of funding, to enter licensing or collaboration agreements with third parties, or other routes to market deployment

# EIC PRE-ACCELERATOR – WIDENING HORIZON-WIDERA-2027-01-WIDENING-01

- **Mono-beneficiary action** – one legal entity (SME) from a Widening country
- **Seal of Excellence** awarded to all projects meeting the evaluation thresholds but not funded due to lack of available budget
- **Ex-aequo proposals:** prioritised according to geographical diversity criteria
- Funded projects will have **access to the EIC Accelerator Fast Track for submissions to the Accelerator programme** following a project review in the project's 2nd half
- Successful applicants and those with SoE will have **free access to EIC Business Acceleration Services**

**Type of action:** CSA

**Funding rate:** 70%

**Type of funding:** Lump sum

**Project duration:** 2 years max.

**Indicative number of projects:** 60

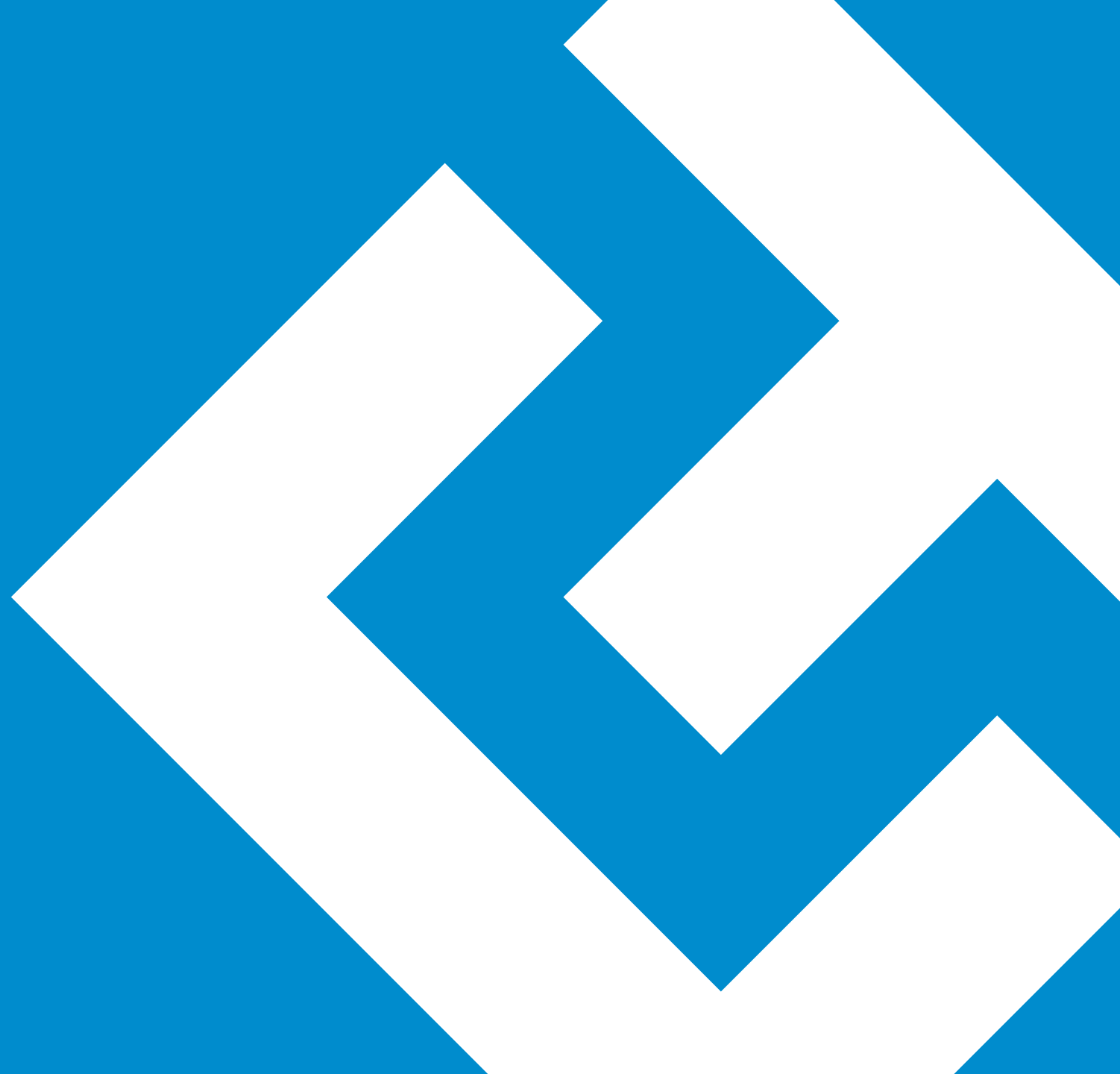
**Call budget:** 40 M€

**Project budget:** 0,5–1,0 M€

**Call opening:** 5. 5. 2027

**Call closing:** 18. 11. 2027

ERA CHAIRS



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### HORIZON dashboard

Learn key facts & figures on Horizon proposals, projects and participants with an interactive tool with filter options by theme, geography, organisation profile, and more



# USEFUL INFORMATION

## CORDIS

- Projects' basic data including abstracts and objectives, reporting and results

## 2022 ERA CHAIRS projects

## 2023 ERA CHAIRS projects



# AIM

- To bring **outstanding academic** with proven research excellence and management skills to universities, research institutions or research infrastructures (brain gain)
  - ✓ Choosing a **promising or cross-cutting area of research**
  - ✓ **ERA Chair**: experienced researcher and innovator from any country in the world identified and committed
  - ✓ Setting up a **permanent top research team**





# SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

## ELIGIBILITY

- Participation as **coordinators** is limited to legal entities established in **Widening countries**
- **Proposals must include:**
  1. **a letter signed by the prospective ERA Chair holder** expressing his commitment corresponding to at least 50% full time equivalent (FTE) until the permanent appointment of a research group leader by M36; Following the recruitment of the research leader, the ERA chair should remain committed (at least 20%) for the remaining duration of the project in support to the research leader to ensure efficient reforms and improved research performance.
  2. **a letter signed by the head of the coordinator institution** committing to the proposal and stating that the ERA Chair holder will receive adequate support for their tasks and duties

## FINANCIAL AND LEGAL

- Eligible costs take the form of a **lump sum**

## PROCEDURE

- Seals of Excellence will be awarded to applications exceeding all evaluation thresholds but which cannot be funded due to lack of budget available to the call

# EXPECTED OUTCOMES

## (CHOOSE SOME OF THEM OR USE ALL)

### At system level:

- Increased international, interdisciplinary, and intersectoral **mobility of R&I talent towards Widening countries**;
- **Institutional reforms** in research institutions and national R&I systems;
- Strengthened human capital with **more entrepreneurial and well-trained researchers**;
- **Better communication** of R&I results to society;
- **Enhanced research capacity**, competitiveness, and economic growth.

### At organisation level:

- **Strengthened research excellence** in ERA Chair fields;
- **Increased attractiveness** to top international researchers;
- Establishment of a **lasting, high-performing research group** with institutional benefits;
- **Improved success** in EU and global competitive funding.

# PAY ATTENTION TO:

- Proposals should **include a CV** in Europass form of the prospective ERA Chair (CV should be uploaded as an Annex to the proposal)
- **Recruitment of the research team** must follow an open, transparent and merit-based process and should be conducted by an international panel chaired by the ERA Chair;
- **Leader of the newly created research group** should be appointed on a permanent basis within the first 3 years of the project through an open recruitment process monitored by the EC, and to which the ERA Chair holder may apply.
- **ERA Chair holders** may relocate permanently or temporarily to the coordinating institution, with secondments, sabbaticals, or part-time arrangements also possible.
- **Grant covers** salaries, recruitment, travel and consumables and equipment (up to 10% of the EU contribution), as well as administrative expenses
- **Proposed structural reforms** should be outlined, such as improving working conditions, career prospects, HR policies, research governance, grant management and knowledge transfer; Gender equality should be addressed



**Type of action:** CSA (mono-beneficiary)

**Funding rate:** 100% (lump sum)

**Project duration:** 5 years

**Indicative number of projects:** 80

**Call budget:** 175 M€

**Project budget:** 1,5 – 2,5 M€

**Call opening:** 6. 4. 2027

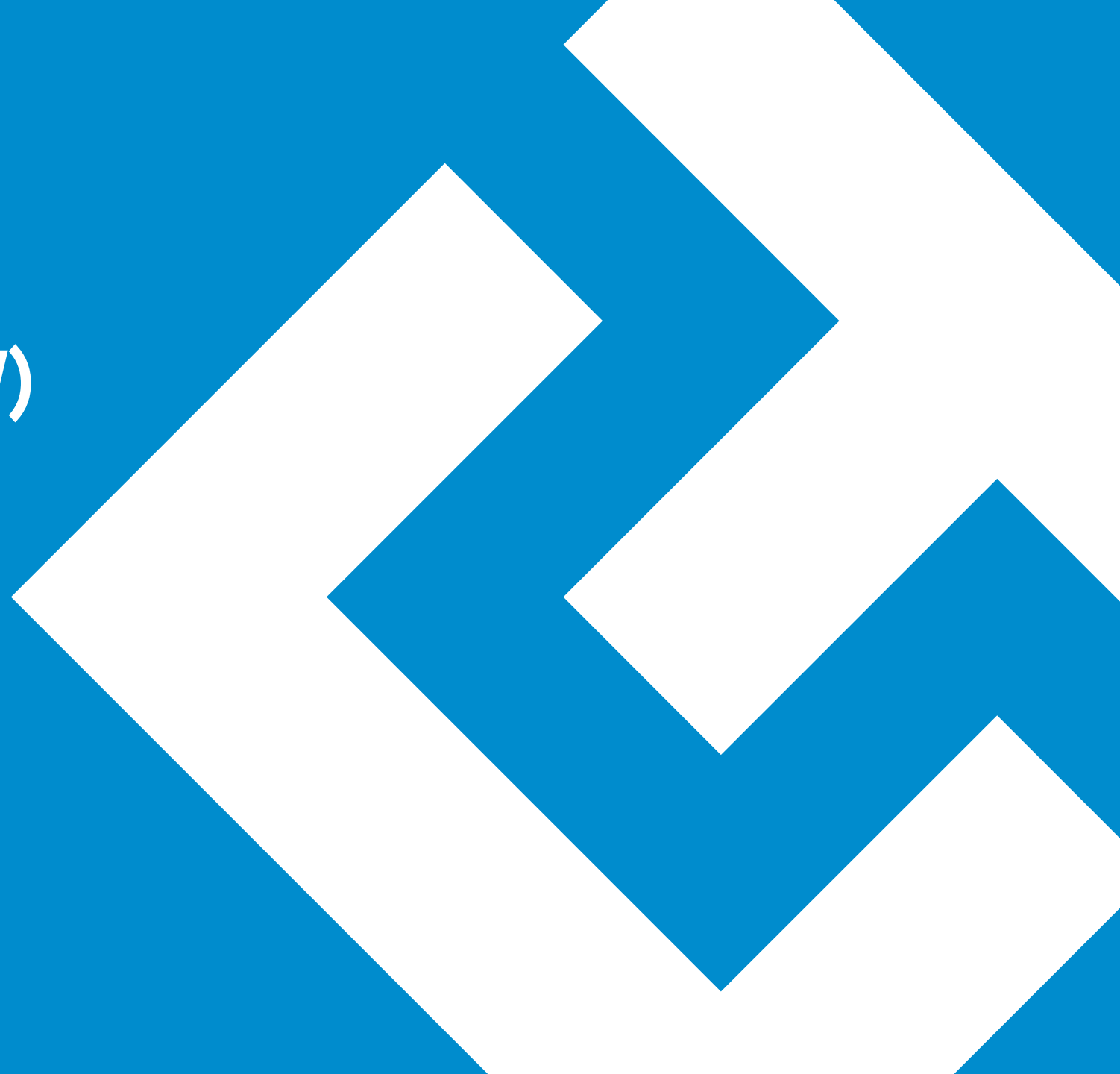
**Call closing:** 14. 9. 2027

## ERA CHAIRS

**SCOPE** – ERA CHAIR holder's leadership and the establishment of a permanent, high-quality research group will boost excellence, visibility, and integration within the ERA, improving competitiveness in research and promoting institutional reforms aligned with ERA priorities

- ✓ At least 50% full time equivalent (FTE) at least until the appointment of a research group leader by M36
- ✓ Need to quantify expected impacts, including new research partnerships, institutional changes, increased research output enhanced, research knowledge and practice, innovative research

# ERA RESEARCH MANAGERS (NEW)



# AIM

- Improve capacities in research management as they are essential for institutions and national R&I systems to capitalize on their R&I activities, and
  - ✓ to attract experienced research managers to universities, research organisations or research infrastructures in Widening countries,
  - ✓ establishing or upgrading institutional capacities for research management,
  - ✓ fostering brain circulation
  - ✓ and creating pockets of excellence that enhance institutional culture and performance



# SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

## ELIGIBILITY

- Participation as **coordinators** is limited to legal entities established in **Widening countries**
- As the ERA Research Manager and team is expected to operate at the level of the institute, **only one proposal per legal entity can be submitted**
- **Proposals must include:**
  1. **a letter signed by the prospective ERA Research Manager** committing to the proposal corresponding to at least 50% full time equivalent (FTE) at least until the appointment of a research management leader on a permanent basis by M36
  2. **a letter signed by the head of the coordinator institution** committing to the proposal and confirming that the ERA Research Manager will receive adequate support for their tasks and duties

## PROCEDURE

- Seals of Excellence will be awarded to applications exceeding all evaluation thresholds but which cannot be funded due to lack of budget available to the call

# EXPECTED OUTCOMES

## (CHOOSE SOME OF THEM OR USE ALL)

### At system level:

- Increased international, interdisciplinary, and intersectoral **mobility of R&I talent towards Widening countries**;
- **Institutional reforms** in research institutions and national R&I systems;
- Strengthened human capital with **more entrepreneurial and well-trained researchers**;
- **Better communication** of R&I results to society;
- **Enhanced research capacity**, competitiveness, and economic growth.

### At organisation level:

- **Strengthened research management** capacities;
- **Increased attractiveness** to top international research managers, and subsequently researchers;
- Establishment of a **lasting, high-performing research management group** with institutional benefits;
- Improving the **institution's global visibility** and success in securing competitive funding;
- Promote **best practices in agreed ERA priorities** such as ethics, open science and data, gender equality, thus strengthening the institution's overall research ecosystem.



# PAY ATTENTION TO:

- Proposals should **include a CV** in Europass form of the prospective ERA Research Manager (CV should be uploaded as an Annex to the proposal) – ERA Research Manager may be from any country but may not already have a contractual relationship with the research institution
- Need to include a **self-assessment of the beneficiary's existing institutional capacities** and its **needs in research management and administration**
- **Recruitment of the research management team** must follow an open, transparent and merit-based process and should be conducted by an international panel chaired by the ERA Research Manager;
- **Leader of the newly created research management group** should be appointed on a permanent basis within the first 3 years of the project through an open recruitment process monitored by the EC, and to which the ERA Chair holder may apply.
- **ERA Research Managers** may relocate permanently or temporarily to the coordinating institution, with secondments, sabbaticals, or part-time arrangements also possible;
- outline all contractual arrangements including salary, travel, daily allowances and other benefits; if employment is the preferred option, contractual details must be provided.



**Type of action:** CSA (mono-beneficiary)

**Funding rate:** 100%

**Project duration:** 5 years

**Indicative number of projects:** 30

**Call budget:** 65 M€

**Project budget:** 1,5 – 2,5 M€

**Call opening:** 6. 4. 2027

**Call closing:** 14. 9. 2027

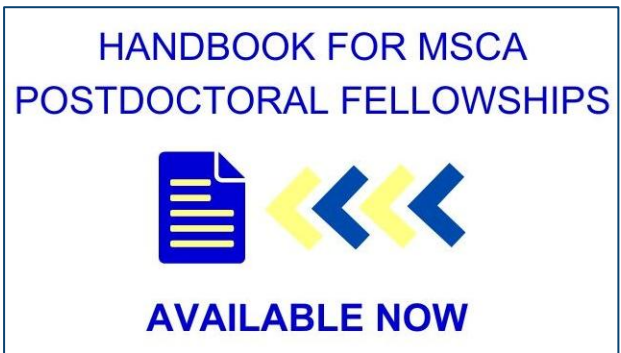
## ERA RESEARCH MANAGERS

**MAIN OBJECTIVE – bring excellent research manager with international experience (RM Comp) to the institution in order to:**

- ✓ establish or upgrade research management capacities including research management team
- ✓ ensure that the conditions are in place to foster excellent research management aligned with ERA priorities
- ✓ A minimum 50% full-time equivalent (FTE) commitment, including on-site presence, must be ensured, at least until the appointment of a research management leader on a permanent basis

# ERA FELLOWSHIPS





## MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2027 (HORIZON-MSCA-PF-2027)

- **7/4 – 8/9/2027**
- Call budget: 8 M€
- Project to be funded: 50

## ERA FELLOWSHIPS 2027

### MAIN OBJECTIVE – individual grants for researchers holding a PhD who wish to

- ✓ carry out their research activities in Widening countries
- ✓ acquire new skills
- ✓ and develop their careers
- Applications are submitted to MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships calls
- Automatically transferred to ERA Fellowships in case not receiving the MSCA grant

**EXCELLENCE HUBS**



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EU Research and Innovation data at your fingertips

# USEFUL INFORMATION

## CORDIS

- Projects' basic data including abstracts and objectives, reporting and results

## 2022 Excellent Hubs projects

## 2023 Excellent Hubs projects

# AIM

- Allow innovation ecosystems in Widening countries and beyond, **to team up and create better linkages** between academia, business, government and society in order to
  - ✓ **foster a place-based innovation culture** in Widening countries based on
    - **a strategic agenda** aligned with regional or national smart specialisation strategies, and
    - **clearly identified expectations** for economic and societal impacts.





# SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

## ELIGIBILITY

- Participation as **coordinators** is limited to legal entities established in **Widening countries**
- Proposals must involve **at least two R&I ecosystems from two different Widening countries**
- Each Widening country R&I ecosystem must comprise **four different categories of actors**: a) academic institutions, b) business entities, c) public authorities or authorised agencies operating at regional or local level and d) societal actors
- **Two modes of involvement** of a Widening Country R&I ecosystem in the project:
  - participation, as a beneficiary, by **one or more umbrella organisations**, whose membership comprises the four different categories of Widening Country R&I actors for the relevant country
  - participation, as beneficiaries, of **individual legal entities** representing each of the four categories of actors for the relevant Widening country

## LEGAL AND FINANCIAL

- **Funding rate is 70 %** of the eligible costs – An explanation should be provided in the proposal on **how the remaining 30% will be secured and shared among the beneficiaries**
- Beneficiaries may provide **financial support to third parties**. The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants and is **limited to SMEs and start-up companies**; maximum amount to be granted to each third party is **EUR 60 000**.



# EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Excellent and sustainable regional R&I ecosystems** in Widening countries and beyond in relevant domains of **cutting-edge science and innovation**;
- **Long term joint R&I strategies** underpinned by concrete action plans of European relevance;
- **Common investment plans for R&I**, including infrastructures, leveraging national, regional and European funds as well as private capital in a synergetic manner;
- **R&I pilot projects** alongside a joint strategy and in line with regional and national strategies, notably **regional innovation strategies for smart specialisation (RIS3)**;
- **New competencies and skills** for researchers, entrepreneurs and professionals in R&I intensive domains;
- **Strengthened linkages between science, businesses and society**;
- **New business opportunities for SMEs, university spin-offs and start-ups, especially in deep tech areas.**

# PAY ATTENTION TO:

- **Seek synergies with relevant initiatives** such as European Innovation Ecosystems, EIC Pathfinder, EIT KICs, in particular EIT Community Hubs, JRC's '[Partnerships for Regional Innovation](#)' and the Widening Dissemination and Exploitation Facility
- Projects support the **ERA's third priority** of translating R&I results into the economy, aiming to enhance European competitiveness in the global technology race.
- **Legal entities from non-Widening countries** may join if the consortium demonstrates that this is necessary to achieve the expected impacts.
- **Include at least the following activities (possible Work Packages):**
  - ✓ Design and implementation of a **cross-border joint R&I strategy**
  - ✓ **R&I collaboration** strengthening academia-business linkages and providing evidence for strategy building and investment – **must be in a distinct Work Package**
  - ✓ Development of **investment plans** to implement the strategy, including business models for commercially sustainable products and services
  - ✓ **Conceptual design and pre-planning for pilots and demonstrators** in line with the strategy (if applicable)
  - ✓ **Complementary activities** to promote knowledge transfer, visibility, mutual learning, skills development, and engagement with local governments and citizens



Type of action: **CSA**

Funding rate: **70%**

Project duration: **5 years**

**Indicative number of projects: 30**

Proposal page limit: **40 pages**

Call budget: **100 M€**

Project budget: **1,5 – 4,5 M€**

**Call opening: 2. 9. 2026**

**Call closing: 4. 3. 2027**

## EXCELLENCE HUBS

**MAIN OBJECTIVE** – create networks of innovation ecosystems in Widening countries, involving larger communities based on the quadruple helix principle

**R&I collaboration (distinct Work Package): R&I component**

- ✓ should be developed through joint research projects, closing knowledge gaps and advancing science and technology with market potential
- ✓ its description should include a long-term vision beyond the state of the art of the chosen R&I domain
- ✓ should not constitute the dominant part of the project; strengthening academia-business linkages and providing evidence for strategy building and investment

# EVENTS



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- **EC Infoday on Widening 2026 - 2027**

**When:** 22 January 2026 09:30 - 15:30

**Where:** Brussels online

[Presentations and recording here](#)

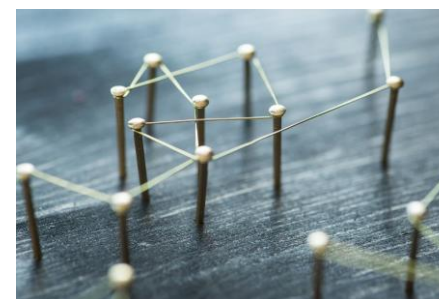


- **CZ-SK workshop on TWINNING 2026 Call**

**When:** 5 February 2026 9:30 - 12:00

**Where:** online Bratislava-Praha

**Presentations and recording on the web**



## **Preliminary timetable of Widening instruments events organised by TC Prague**

✓ April/May 2027

ERA Chairs, ERA Research Managers

✓ June 2027

EIC Pre-accelerator Widening

✓ September/October 2027

Excellence Hubs



# QUESTIONS?

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