Project proposal writing tips

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Key principles

Your proposed work must be within the **scope** of a work programme topic.

You need to demonstrate that you idea is ambitious and **goes beyond the state-of-the-art**.

Your scientific methodology must take into account:
- **interdisciplinary**,
- **gender dimension** and
- **open science** practices.

Pathway to impact - you should show how your project contributes to the outcomes and impacts described in the work programme.

Dissemination and exploitation strategy - you should plan and describe the measures to maximise the impact of your project (including communication activities).
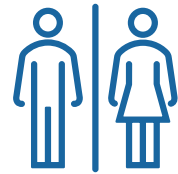
You should demonstrate the **quality of your work plan, resources and participants**.

Policy and horizontal considerations

Open science across the programme

Gender dimension in R&I content

Pathway to impact

Measures to maximise impact

Do Not Significant Harm principle (DNSH)

Artificial intelligence

These aspects must be considered in all Horizon Europe calls (unless explicity mentioned in the topic description).

Specific calls may include other aspects to take into account.

Policy – Cluster 6 specifics

- ☑ EU Strategy for Biodiversity 2030

- ☑ Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP)

- ☑ Zero Pollution Action Plan

- ☑ Farm to Fork Strategy

- ☑ EU Climate Law

- ☑ EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability

- ☑ A new approach to a sustainable blue economy

The excellence criterion (1/2)

Focus on the project objectives

- Are they **clear** and **pertinent** to the topic?

- Are they **measurable** and **verifiable**?

- Are they **realistically achievable**?

- Is the proposed work ambitious and **goes beyond the state-of-the-art**?

- Does the proposed work include **groundbreaking R&I**, **novel concepts** and approaches,

  new products, services or **business** and organisational models?

- Is the **R&I maturity** of the proposed work in line with the topic desrciption?

Mesure your progres beyond the state-of-the-art with Technology Readiness Level (TRL).
There are different TRLs expected for Research and Innovation Actions (RIA) / Innovation Actions (IA).
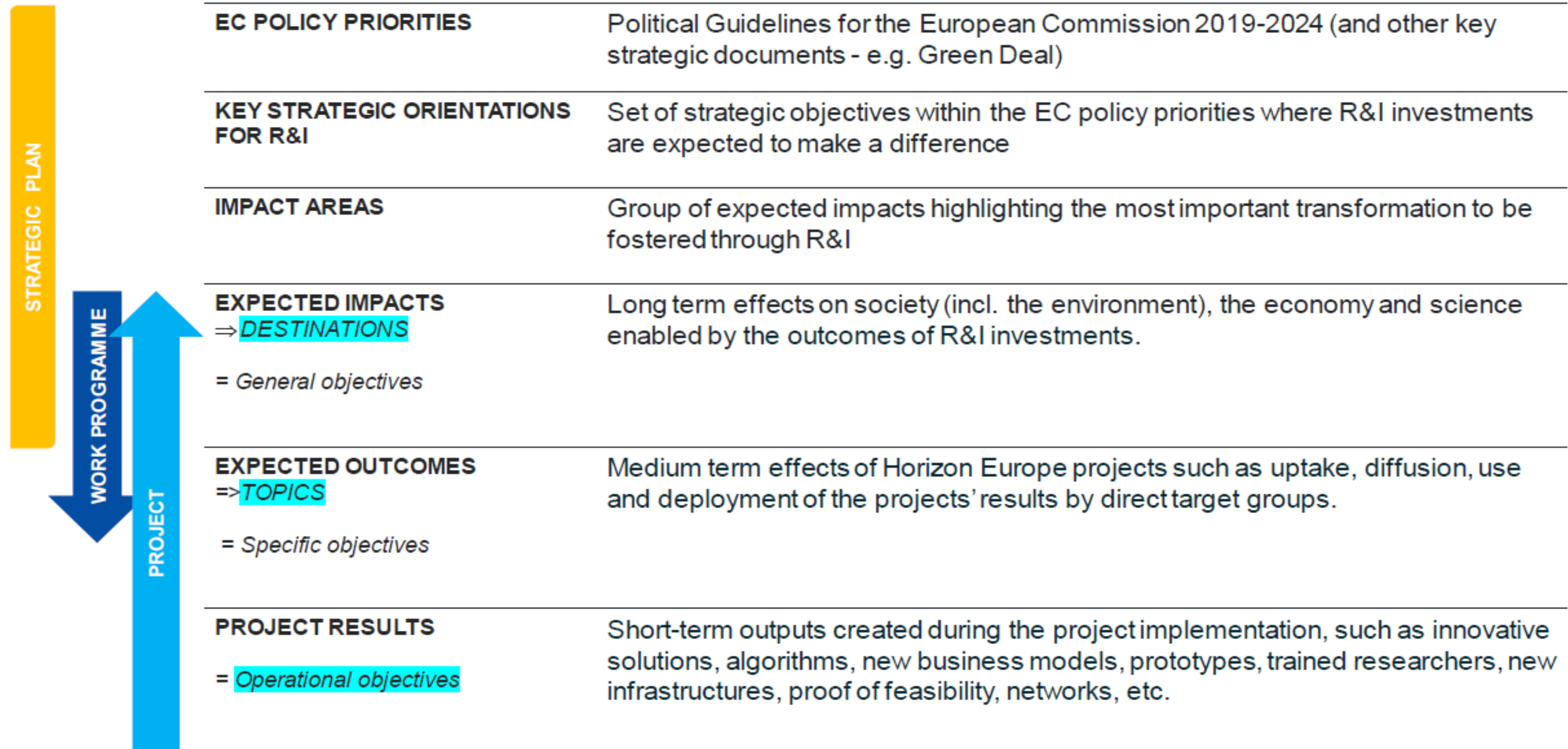
The excellence criterion (2/2)

Focus on the project scientific methodology

- Is the scientific methodology **clear** and **sound**?

  (i.e. the concepts, models and assumptions that underpin the work)

- Is it clear how expertise and methods from **different disciplines will be brought together** and **integrated**

  in pursuit of the objectives?

  (If applicants justify that an inter-disciplinary approach is unnecessary, is it credible?)

- Has the gender dimension in research and innovation content been **properly taken into account**?

- Are the open science practices **properly implemented** as an integral part of the proposed methodology?

- Is the **research data management** properly addressed?

- For the topics that indicated the need of **integration of social science and humanities**, is the role of

  those disciplines properly addressed?

IMPACT IMPLEMENTATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

WORK PROGRAMME

PROJECT

EC POLICY PRIORITIES	Political Guidelines for the European Commission 2019-2024 (and other key strategic documents - e.g. Green Deal)
KEY STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS FOR R&I	Set of strategic objectives within the EC policy priorities where R&I investments are expected to make a difference
IMPACT AREAS	Group of expected impacts highlighting the most important transformation to be fostered through R&I
EXPECTED IMPACTS ⇒ *DESTINATIONS* = *General objectives*	Long term effects on society (incl. the environment), the economy and science enabled by the outcomes of R&I investments.
EXPECTED OUTCOMES => *TOPICS* = *Specific objectives*	Medium term effects of Horizon Europe projects such as uptake, diffusion, use and deployment of the projects' results by direct target groups.
PROJECT RESULTS = *Operational objectives*	Short-term outputs created during the project implementation, such as innovative solutions, algorithms, new business models, prototypes, trained researchers, new infrastructures, proof of feasibility, networks, etc.

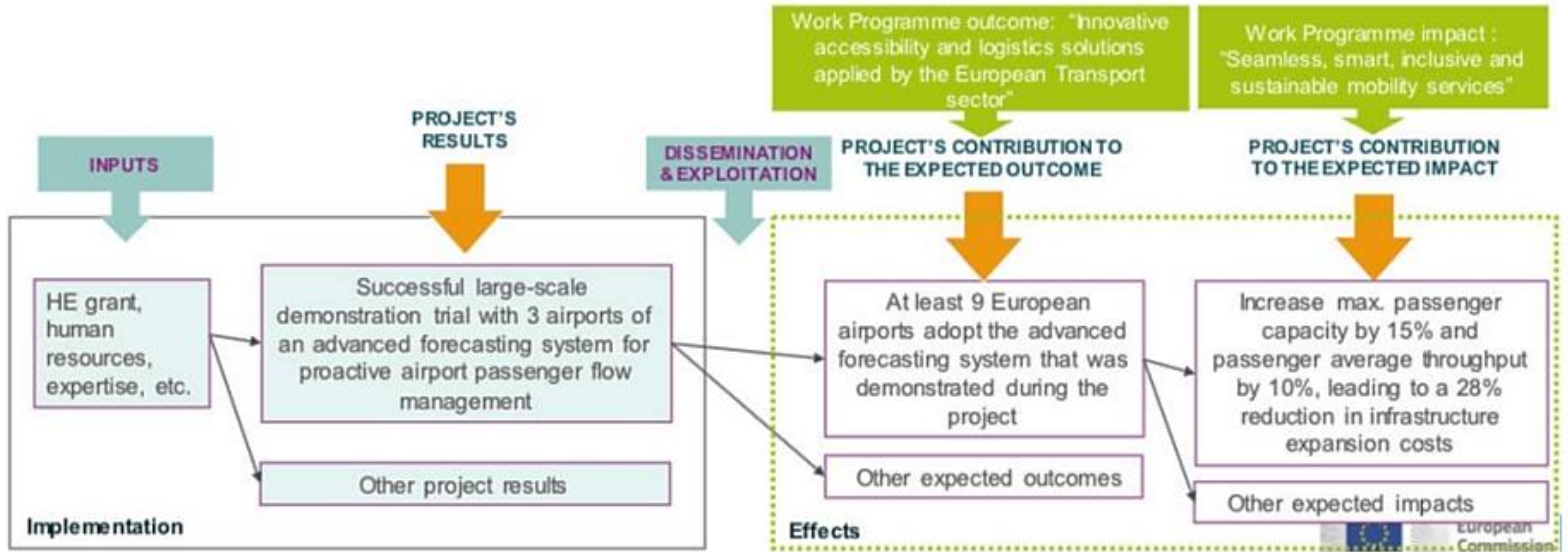**Focus on the project pathways towards impact**

- Is the contribution of the project towards

  (1) **expected outcomes of the topic**
  (2) **wider impacts in the longer term** as specified in the work programme credible?

- Are the **potential barriers** to the expected outcomes and impacts identified?

  - If YES, are mitigation measures proposed?

- Any potential **negative environmental impact**?

  - If YES, is harm management proposed?

- Are the **scale and significance of the project contribution** to the expected outcomes and impacts estimated and quantified?

  (1) **SCALE** – how widespread the outcomes and impacts are likely to be (i.e. target groups)
  (2) **SIGNIFICANCE** – importance or value of benefits (i.e. years of healthy life, resources savings)

The impact criterion (3/4)

The impact criterion (4/4)

Focus on measures to maximise impact: Dissemination, exploitation and communication

- Are the proposed dissemination, exploitation and communication measures **suitable for project** and **good quality**?

> All measures should be proportionate to the scale of the project and contain concrete actions to be implemented both **during** and **after** the project.

- Are the **target groups** for those actions properly identified and addressed?
- Is the **strategy for intellectual property management** properly outlined and suitable to suport exploitaition of the results?

The quality of implementation (1/2)

Focus on proposed work plan and the effort and the resources

- Is work plan **good quality** and **effective**?

- Does it include **quantified information** so the progres can be monitored?

- Does it follow the **logic structure** (i.e. timing of work packages)?

- Are the **critical risks**, relating to the project implementation, properly identified and proper **risk mitigation measures** proposed?

The quality of implementation (2/2)

Focus on the quality of the participants and the consortium as a whole

- Does the **consortium match the project objectives** and bring togehther the the **necessary disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge**?

- For SSH flagged topics, does the consortium include **expertise in social science and humanities**?

- Do partners have access to **critical infrastructure** needed to carry out the project activities?

- Are the project **partners complementing** one another/cover the value chain where apriopriate?

- Do they all have **valid role** in the project/contribute to the project?

- Do they have **capacity** and **resources** to implement the project?

- Is there **industrial/commercial involvement** in the project to ensure exploitation of the results?

Tips for proposal writing (1/2)

INTRIGUE

- Exciting first pages

- Very good abstract

- Clear and convincing objectives

- Undisputed innovation

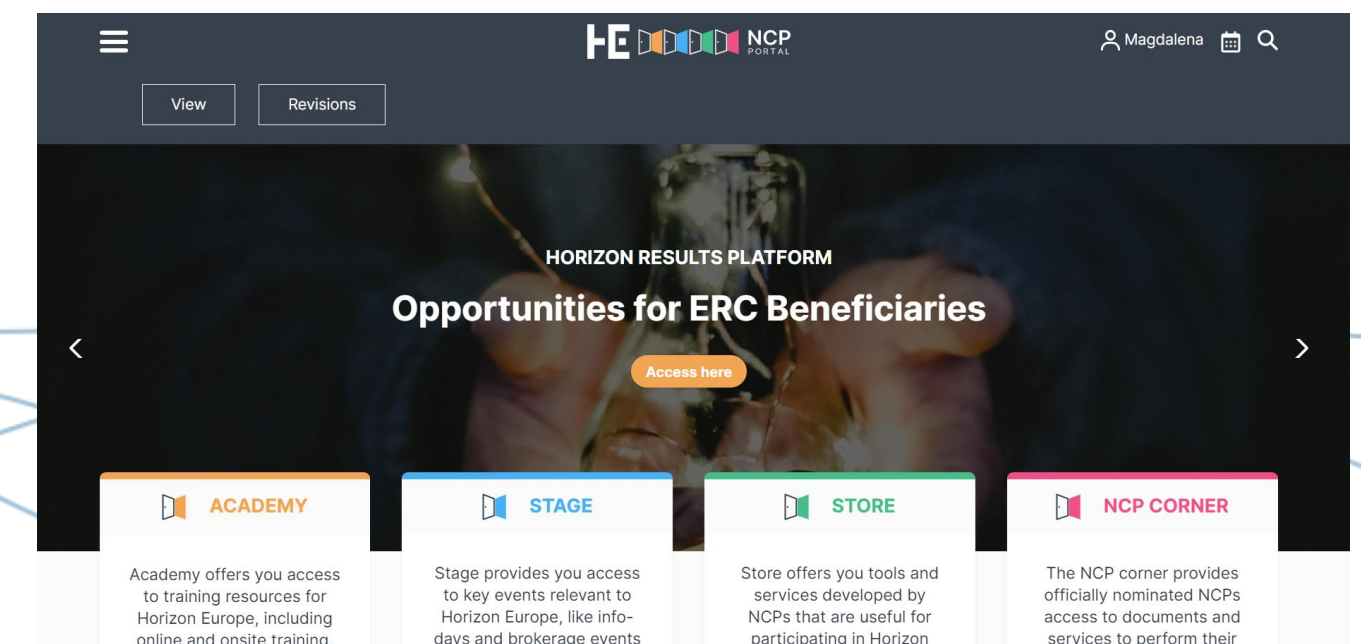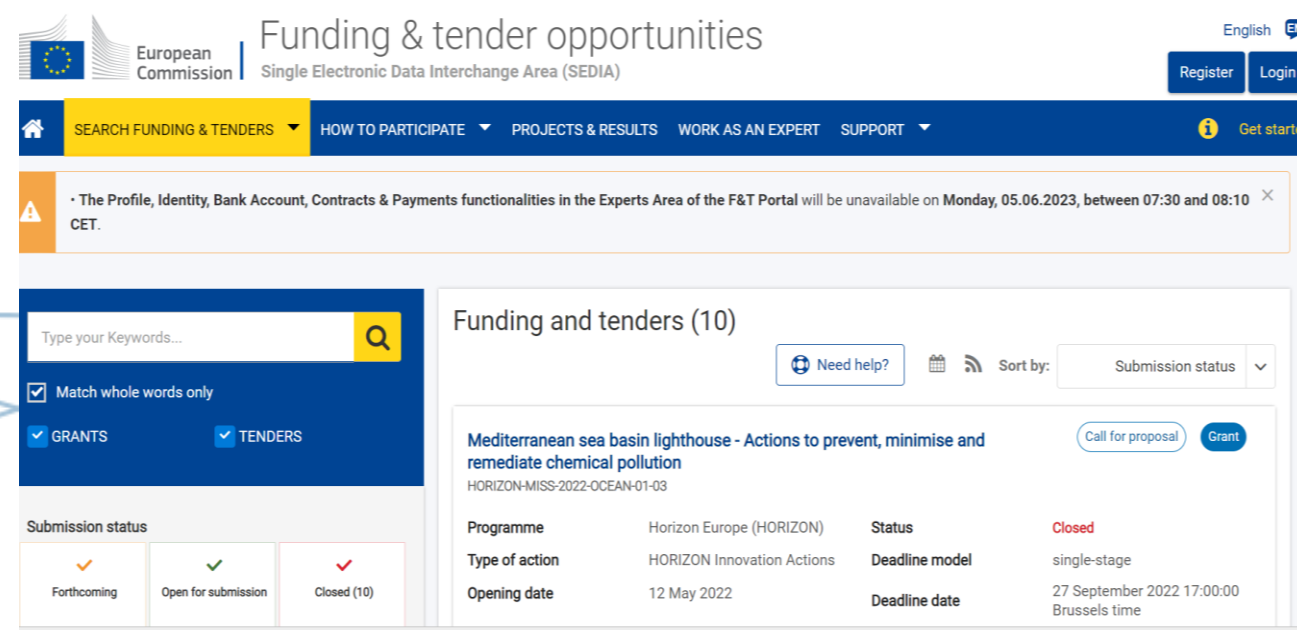- High quality graphics

SHOW MATURITY

- Well structured

- Not generic

- Clear enough

- Consistent

- Sufficiently challenging

PLAN WELL

- Specific and measurable indicators

- Reasonable number of deliverables

- Balance of partners and expertise

- Balance between academia and business

- Geographical balance

- Balance of budget between partners and workpackages

- Apriopriate resources

- Use of experts

Tips for proposal writing (2/2)

✓ Register as an expert to [EC database](#)

✓ Explore all sources of information on [Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal](#)

✓ Participate in Info Days and Brokerage events

✓ Start early

✓ Explore all sources on [HE NCP Portal](#) (online courses, webinars, reports, etc.)

✓ Cluster 6 NCPs Network: [Care4Bio](#)

✓ Contact your [National Contact Point](#)

Questions?

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