



PRIMA Proposal Writing Assistance Scheme 2020: For Public Entities and Research and Dissemination organisations

National Rules for Participation

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1. Introduction

Funding Party: Malta Council for Science and Technology for and on behalf of the Foundation for Science and Technology,
Villa Bighi, Kalkara, KKR 1320
Malta

1.1 Scope and Focus

The Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) is an initiative launched by 19 Euro-Mediterranean Countries, including 11 EU States (Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain) and 8 non-EU Countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey) to participate in a EU joint research and innovation programme funding R&I projects in the field of Water Management, Sustainable Agriculture and Food.

This PRIMA proposal writing assistance scheme has been launched to provide opportunities for entities, intending to submit a PRIMA pre- / full proposal as a coordinator of a consortium, to engage a service provider (local or foreign) who can support the applicant through the pre / full proposal writing and/or submission stages.

1.2 National Contact Point

Correspondence should be directed to:

The Malta Council for Science & Technology
Villa Bighi, Kalkara KKR 1320, Malta
E-mail: prima.mcst@gov.mt

1.3 Definitions

Applicant means anyone eligible to apply in terms of these Rules for Participation and who consequently applies for funding under this scheme.

Council refers to the Malta Council for Science and Technology.

Partner is defined as a partner in a consortium of a funded transnational project.

Project Coordinator is one of the beneficiaries of a project consortium that is appointed as the single point of contact between the Lead Agency and/or the funding bodies and the consortium partners from proposal submission to project end. He/she will have the responsibility of ensuring that all the partners involved in the consortium are eligible and supervises the project workflow with the help of WP leaders. Additionally, he/she will be required to submit the project application on behalf of the consortium and must also compile and submit reports / deliverables to the funding bodies which in turn will relay these documents to the Lead Agency. Can also be referred to as **Principal Investigator**.

Public Entity means any Maltese Public Service Department or Maltese Public Sector Entity, or any Maltese Legal Entity which has more than 50% government shareholding. Public Service refers to all Ministries and Departments; and Public Sector Entities refers to authorities, corporations, agencies and commercial public-sector entities in which the Government has a majority shareholding and that are not listed on the stock exchange. Public Entities also include foundations, local councils and public academic entities. In the case of public academic entities, this includes but is not limited to a higher education entity or a research institute, whether as a whole body or as a component unit or department within such body, provided that the entity's ongoing education and research is scientifically in line with the subject of the application being submitted during this call provided that the higher education entity must be in possession of a license for Higher Education according to the Further and Higher Education (Licensing, Accreditation and Quality Assurance) Regulations – Subsidiary Legislation 327.433. This does not include the license for a tuition centre.

Research and knowledge-dissemination organisation means an entity (such as universities or research institutes, technology transfer agencies, innovation intermediaries, research-oriented physical or virtual collaborative entities), irrespective of its legal status (organised under public or private law) or way of financing, whose primary goal is to independently conduct fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development or to widely disseminate the results of such activities by way of teaching, publication or knowledge transfer. Where such entity also pursues economic activities the financing, the costs and the revenues of those economic activities must be accounted for separately. Undertakings that can exert a decisive influence upon such an entity, in the quality of, for example, shareholders or members, may not enjoy preferential access to the results generated by it.

Research and Development is defined as the systematic investigation, work or research carried out in any field of science or technology through experiment, theoretical work or analysis undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge, primarily directed towards a specific practical aim or objective, and includes:

- a) **Fundamental Research** means experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any direct commercial application or use in view
- b) **Industrial Research** means the planned research or critical investigation aimed at the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for developing new products, processes or services or for bringing about a significant improvement in existing products, processes or services. It comprises the creation of components parts of complex systems, and may include the construction of prototypes in a laboratory environment or in an environment with simulated interfaces to existing systems as well as of pilot lines, when necessary for the industrial research and notably for generic technology validation
- c) **Experimental Development** means acquiring, combining, shaping and using existing scientific, technological, business and other relevant knowledge and skills with the aim of developing new or improved products, processes or services. This may also include, for example, activities aiming at the conceptual definition, planning and documentation of new products, processes or services

Experimental development may comprise prototyping, demonstrating, piloting, testing and validation of new or improved products, processes or services in environments representative of real-life operating conditions where the primary objective is to make further technical improvements on products, processes or services that are not substantially set. This may include the development of a commercially usable prototype or pilot which is necessarily the final commercial product, and which is too expensive to produce for it to be used only for demonstration and validation purposes.

Experimental development does not include routine or periodic changes made to existing products, production lines, manufacturing processes, services and other operations in progress, even if those changes may represent improvements;

2. Eligibility for Participation

2.1 Applicant eligibility

The applicant must be an entity registered as one of the following:

- i. Public research and knowledge-dissemination organisation
- ii. Public entity

Applicants who have other funded projects with the Council and are in default, and/or have gone beyond the timelines of the project, are not eligible to participate.

Any application submitted by or including the participation of any legal person or legal entity having, in totality or in majority ownership, the same shareholders, partners or persons holding and / or exercising a controlling power in any other legal entity which will have been at any time prior to such application declared as non-compliant or defaulting on any other contract or agreement entered into with the Council, shall be automatically declared as inadmissible.

Funding under this scheme is made available on the basis that the Applicant has not benefited and will not benefit from any other grant or financial incentive of whatever nature, applied for and/or utilised for the same scope as that subject of the funding requested under this scheme.

2.2 Application eligibility

An application is considered eligible for funding if:

- The submitted pre- / full proposal is successfully submitted through the PRIMA online submission platform
- The National Application Form is successfully submitted to the Council by the imposed deadline (applicable only to the pre-proposal stage). The National Application Form submitted shall need to be complete and also includes all the relevant supporting documents.
- The submitted pre- / full proposal shall need to be coordinated by an entity that satisfies the eligibility criteria of Section 2.1
- The submitted pre- / full proposal shall need to satisfy the eligibility criteria found in both the National Rules for the Section 2 2020 Calls, the eligibility criteria imposed by the PRIMA secretariat as well as that of the other foreign partners in the consortium.

3. Submission of Applications

3.1 Application Process

The Proposal Writing Assistance Scheme Application form is to be submitted via eusubmissions.mcst@gov.mt. All the relevant annexes will need to be submitted with the application form for the form to be considered for further processing.

3.2 Submission Deadline

Deadline for submission of the application form coincides with the deadlines imposed by PRIMA for the submission of the preproposal. However, applicants under this scheme must keep in mind that service provider engagement and work on the proposal writing cannot start before the Letter of Intent signed by the Council as otherwise the costs will be rendered ineligible. Thus, it is advisable that the application is sent well in advance of the deadline in order to offer enough time for the engaged service provider to provide the desired outcome.

3.3 Budget

The total maximum budget available for the running of this scheme is €50,000. If the budget is exhausted prior to the submission deadline/s, the scheme will be automatically closed for the year. The amount of funds provided to per pre- / full proposal to a service provider, must be equivalent to the current market prices for such a service (quoting separately for the pre-proposal and full proposal respectively). The applicant shall need to provide the Council with three quotations for the service. The cheapest option will need to be chosen (except for specific scenarios where the cheapest option is not possible. In such cases, a justification shall need to be provided and is subject to prior approval from the Council.)

4. Eligible Costs

Eligible costs under the PRIMA proposal writing assistance scheme are the costs related to the fees of service providers for proposal writing and / or consulting services fees.

The aid intensity shall be equal to 100% of the costs incurred and will be provided through a re-imburement process. The costs incurred for the writing of the pre-proposal and full proposal need to be quoted separately. The re-imburement of each stage will take place separately subject to the following confirmations for each stage:

- Pre- / full proposal is submitted and coordinated by a National entity
- Pre- / full proposal has met the eligibility criteria of PRIMA Call 2020 National Rules for Participation (not applicable for Section 1 submissions)
- Pre- / full proposal has met the eligibility criteria of the National Rules of the other participating countries (not applicable for Section 1 submissions)
- Pre- / full proposal has met the eligibility criteria of the PRIMA secretariat

The beneficiary must follow procurement regulations and must also provide evidence that the services were value for money e.g. three quotations and track record of selected service provider.

The applicant must need to consider that no conflict of interests exists with the chosen proposal writer/s or consulting service. A conflict of interest (COI) exists if the appointed service provider/s;

- has been already involved in the preparation of the PRIMA proposal writing assistance scheme application form
- stands to benefit directly if the proposal is positively evaluated. Providing market research information to the applicant will not be considered a COI
- has a family / personal relationship with any person representing the applicant
- is a director / trustee / partner of the applicant or involved in the management of the applicant's entity or is an employee of the same entity

To apply under these National Rules, the Applicant needs to adhere to the justifications found in the Application Form as to why the activities to be undertaken do not meet the criteria of Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (i.e. not falling under State Aid implications).

5. Evaluation

The applications received will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Proposed project idea is in line with one of the eligible PRIMA call topics and regulations of the 2020 Call
- Profile of pre-identified consortium partners (if already identified), including their track record in relation to R&I projects as well as the diversity amongst the consortium partners (i.e. a healthy mix of academic, public and private partners). If consortium partners have been identified, letters of support need to be sent together with the application form
- A proposal of at least 3 potential proposal writers or consulting services providers (depending on the level of assistance required) together with their proven track record including a list of other European funded projects that they have supported in the past
- Applying entity profile / track record in relation to the undertaking of R&I projects

6. Post-selection Phase

Once an application is selected for funding, a Letter of Intent will be signed between the successful Applicant and the Malta Council for Science and Technology. This Agreement will act as the basis for issuing of funding and the corresponding regulations that need to be abided by the successful Applicant.

The Council reserves the right not to proceed with signing any Letter of Intent in the event that it results that doing so would be too high an exposure risk to the Council.

The re-imbusement for the pre-proposal assistance costs will be disbursed to the successful Applicant once the eligibility criteria have been satisfied.

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7. Interpretation of Rules

This document endeavours to establish comprehensive and unambiguous rules governing participation in this initiative. However, should circumstances arise where the rules are inadequate, unclear, ambiguous or conflicting, the Council shall exercise its discretion in the interpretation of the rules through the setting up of an *ad hoc* committee.

8. Confidentiality of Submissions

Unless otherwise indicated, all application submissions shall be treated in strict confidence.

The data collected by the Council via the application for the aid and its subsequent processing by the Council to evaluate data subject's request for aid under the Scheme is in line with:

- i. The National Rules for Participation;
- ii. Data Protection Act, Chapter 440 of the Laws of Malta and Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).
- iii. The legitimate basis to process personal data submitted by the data subject by virtue of his/her written application for aid is Regulation 6 (1)(b) of the General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR"), as 'processing is necessary in order to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to entering into a contract'.

Further information may be found within the application form.