

Hanoi, 30.10.2023.

PROPOSAL WRITING STRATEGIES

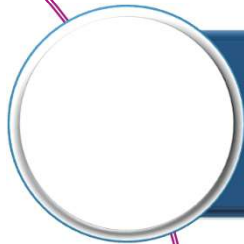
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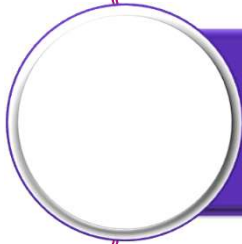
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CONTENT



Structuring your proposal: From abstract to work plan



Addressing evaluation criteria and impact assessment



Best practices in writing a clear and compelling proposal





Structuring your proposal:
From abstract to work plan

Before start

Basic rules
before start

Get familiar with how funding works

Make sure you can apply

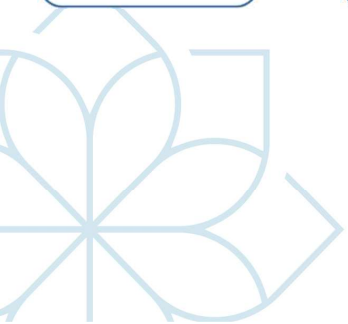
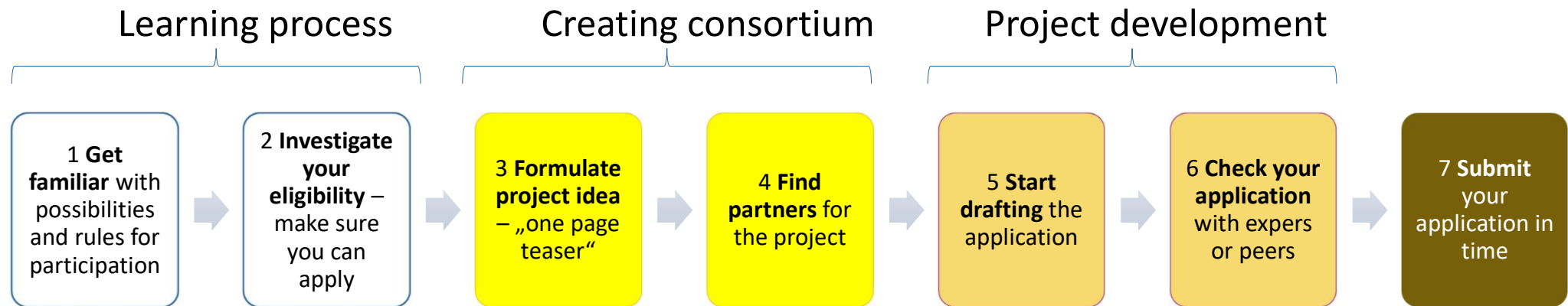
Find a partner(s)

Download documents from the call topic page only

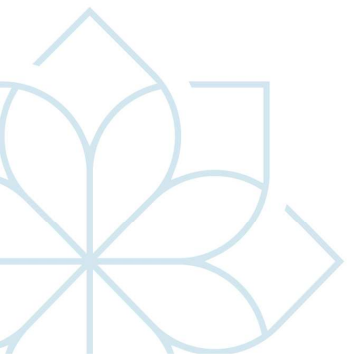
Jointly draft the application with partner(s)



Steps in project preparation for Pillar 2



Common mistakes in preparing proposals



Why this? Why now?

The topic is **not aligned with the focus of the call** e.g. call specifies university-business cooperation in higher education and the proposal is prepared about innovation in higher education generally

The project is **not innovative enough** or has been done before

The reason **why this project is absolutely necessary** is not clearly explained

The **specific problem you are addressing is not described clearly and aligned with the outcomes** you expect from the project

The **urgency for addressing the problem is not clear**

This **isn't a strong impact** beyond the project finish and beyond the project consortium

What aim? Why like this?

There is **no clear primary aim or sub-aims** described

There is a **lack of connection** between (i) the aims and (ii) the activities and (iii) the expected outcomes

The **method or approach described in the project isn't likely to get the outcome** desired

The **timeline for the project doesn't allow sufficient time** for successful project completion, proper target group engagement, or time to create impact

The project is challenging but **not feasible in the time or budget or with the consortium** in the project

Adequate **quality measures and processes are not in place**

The **finance requested doesn't match the workload** in the different work-packages

Why you?

Not the right:

- Number and mix of partners
- Lack of expertise
- No geographic spread

Process problems

- Not having a dedicated person to manage the process of proposal creation and acquiring consortium partners
- Not having a small team of drafters to keep consistency in the proposal
- Not have the financials done by someone experienced in the call or in creating project financials

Writing errors

- Not responding to the questions or the points requested in the call
- The language of your proposal does not match that of the call e.g. focus on sustainability whilst the call asks for the circular economy
- Using a mix of terms rather than consistent use of terms e.g. using all of green, sustainable, circular economy, regenerative... at various points during the proposal.



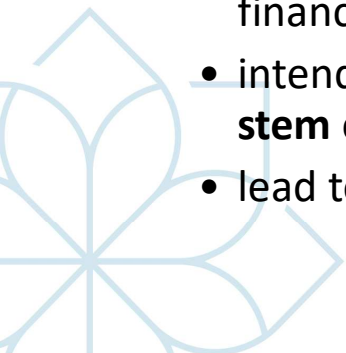
Eligibility of activities

Eligible activities are the ones described in the call and topic conditions.

The **types of action** include different activities eligible for funding.

Activities must **focus exclusively on civil applications** and **must not:**

- aim at **human cloning** for reproductive purposes;
- intend to **modify the genetic heritage of human beings** which could make such changes heritable (except for research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed);
- intend to **create human embryos** solely for the purpose of research, or for the purpose of **stem cell procurement**, including by means of **somatic cell nuclear transfer**;
- lead to the **destruction of human embryos**.



Part A introduction

- 1 Part A of the proposal is **generated by the IT system**.
- 2 **Starts at Step 3** of submission process.
- 3 It is based on the **information entered by the participants** through the submission system in the Funding & Tenders Portal.
- 4 Participant Identification Code – **PIC number** (9-digit).
- 5 The participants can update the information in the submission system at any time before final submission – **last update counts**.

Part B – General information

Formatting and completing requirements:

- **Times New Roman (Windows platforms)**, Times/Times New Roman (Apple platforms) or Nimbus Roman No. 9 L (Linux distributions).
- The minimum font size allowed is **11 points**.
- **Standard character spacing** and a minimum of **single line spacing** is to be used (incl. body text and text in tables)
- Headers, foot/end notes, captions, formula's, may deviate
- The page size is **A4**, and **all margins at least 15 mm** (top, bottom, left, right)

Part B maximum length:

- **RIAs and IAs** type of actions: limit for a full application is **45 pages (50 if lump sum)**
- CSAs: limit is 30 pages
- First stage proposals: limit is 10 pages
- EIC Pathfinder: limit is 17 pages
- **Exceptions in the call text**, if any.

Structure of Part B

| Criteria | Section | E.g., no of pages |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Excellence | 1.1 Objectives and ambition | 4 |
| | 1.2 Methodology | 14 |
| 2. Impact | 2.1 Project's pathways towards impact | 4 |
| | 2.2 Measures to maximise impact - Dissemination, exploitation and communication | 5 |
| | 2.3 Summary – Key elements of the Impact section | Incl. in 2.2 |
| 3. Quality and efficiency of implementation | 3.1 Work plan and resources | 14 (19 in case of lump sum) |
| | 3.2 Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole | 3 |
| | Tables to section 3.1 | - |
| | TOTAL | Max 45 (50 for lump sum) |

Steps to submit the proposal

Step 1: Logging in the Portal

Step 2: Select the call, topic and type of action in the Portal

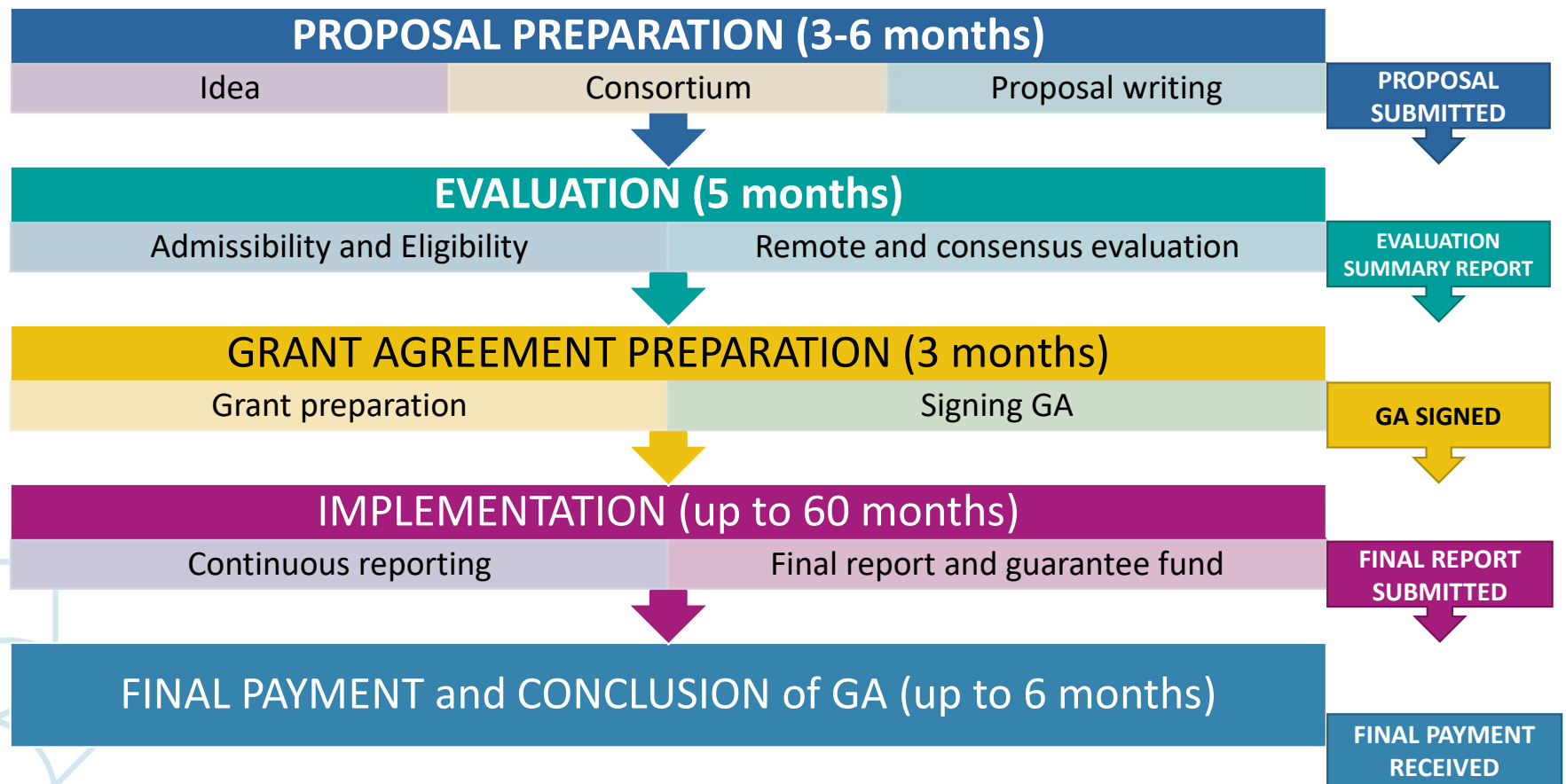
Step 3: Create a draft proposal: Title, acronym, summary, main organisation and contact details

Step 4: Manage your parties and contact details: add your partner organisations and contact details.

Step 5: Edit and complete web forms for proposal part A and upload proposal part B

Step 6: Submit the proposal

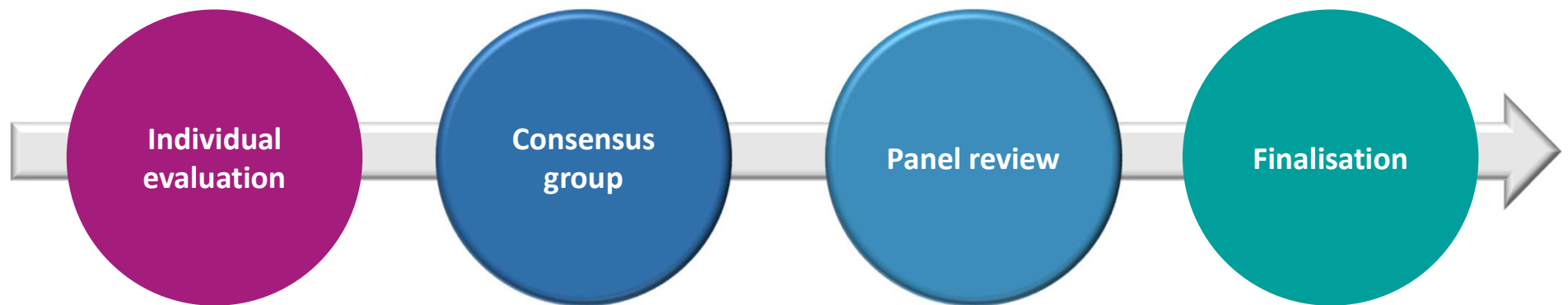
From project idea to finished project





Evaluation process

What is standard evaluation process?



Experts assess proposals **individually**. Minimum of three experts per proposal (but often more than three).

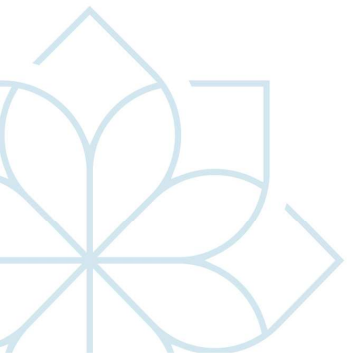
All individual experts discuss together to agree on a **common position**, including comments and scores for each proposal.

The panel of experts reach an **agreement** on the scores and comments for all proposals within a call, checking **consistency across the evaluations**.

if necessary, resolve cases where evaluators were unable to agree.

Rank the proposals with the same score

The Commission/Agency reviews the results of the experts' evaluation and puts together the **final ranking list**.



Only three criteria for evaluation?

EXCELLENCE

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Soundness of the proposed **methodology**, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, inter-disciplinary 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.

IMPACT

- ✓ 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 due to the project.
- ✓ Suitability and quality of the **measures to maximize expected outcomes and impacts**, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.

QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ Quality and effectiveness of the **work plan**, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall.
- ✓ Capacity and role of each **participant**, and extent to which the **consortium** as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.

Ethics review

Same criteria as in H2020

For all activities funded, ethics is an **integral part** of research from beginning to end, and **ethical compliance** is essential to achieve real research excellence. An ethics review process is carried out systematically in all Horizon Europe proposals, based on a **self-assessment** included in the proposal.

Ethical research conduct implies the application of fundamental ethical principles and legislation in all possible domains of research. This includes the adherence to the highest standards of **research integrity** as described in the **European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity**.

Adapted following lessons learnt

- Focus mainly on complex/serious cases
- Reduce number of ethics requirements in funded projects.

Security scrutiny

New in Horizon Europe

Security issues will be checked **systematically** in all Horizon Europe proposals (in H2020 only proposals submitted to topics flagged as 'security-sensitive' were checked).

The checks are based on a **self-assessment** included in the proposal.

The focus is on:

- Whether the proposal uses or generates **EU classified information**
- Potential of **misuse** of results (that could be channeled into crime or terrorism)
- Whether activities involve information or materials subject to **national security restrictions**

The checks based on the self-assessment may trigger an **in-depth security scrutiny**.



Best practices in writing a clear and compelling proposal

Points to consider



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



You need to demonstrate that your **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**. It must **not significantly harm the environment**



You should show how your project could **contribute to the outcomes and impacts described** in the work programme (the pathway to impact)



You should describe the planned **measures to maximise the impact of your project** ('plan for the dissemination and exploitation including communication activities')



You should demonstrate **the quality of your work plan, resources and participants**



How to make your proposal interesting to evaluators?

Narrative parts

- Make them easy to read and understand (let the project tell the story)

Diagrams

- Use them to explain the concepts and actions

Tables and Graphs

- Use them as a support

Numbers

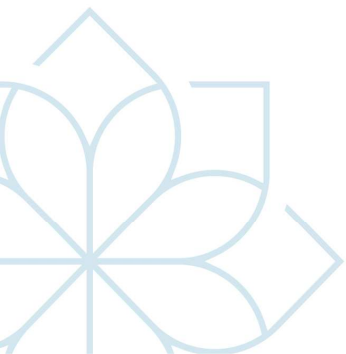
- Numbers important – eye catching and attention focus

Quatations

- Use *Italic* style for quotes and make them as stand alone sentences

Text

- Short and clear sentences
- Proof read grammar and spelling
- Avoid jargons
- Explain accronyms
- Be consistent
- Respect the templates (no changes or alterations)



Converting idea into the project

Be persuasive

Be clear and precise

Be consistent

Be ready for compromises

Learn about evaluation

Put yourself in evaluators' shoes

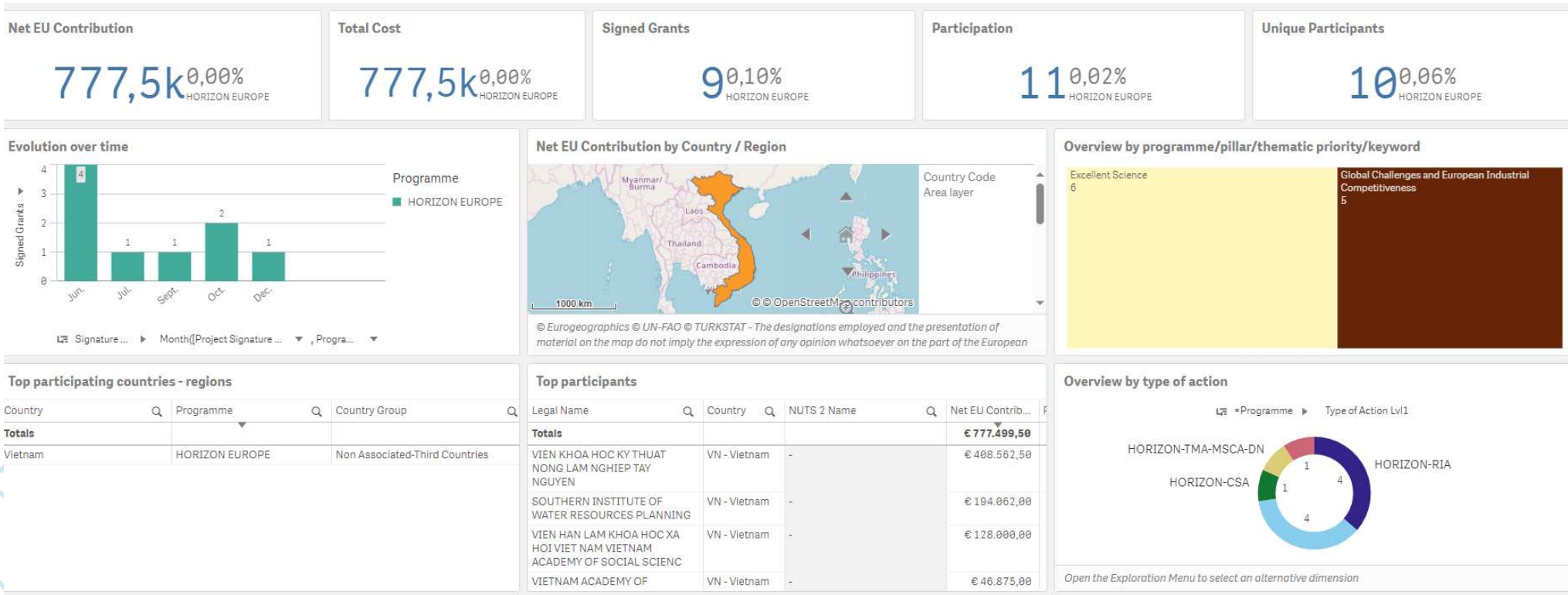
Accept failure and try again



Conclusion



Vietnam in Horizon Europe*



*Source: [Horizon Dashboard](#), 10.10.2023.

Take away messages

It high **competitive**, **prestigious** R&I funding **programme** with multiple **benefits**

Most important – your **research** will be funded and **skills** upgraded

Your **network** will grow and your success will be **visible**

Increase your **research visibility** (articles, congresses, ...)

Start with **low profile activities** if not experienced

Be proactive – offer your expertise on portals and fora

Join different associations to **increase visibility**

TRY and Don't Give Up!!!

**Thank you for your
attention!!!**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!!!

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