
FAQs on PRIMA Calls

These FAQs provide guidance for applicants to PRIMA Calls for Proposals to supplement the information provided in the Call text and Call documents. The FAQs will be updated regularly in response to questions from potential applicants.

In case you do not find answer to your specific question write to: info@prima-med.org

Overview of PRIMA Programme

What is PRIMA?

In recent years, the agricultural sector in the Mediterranean has been suffering from severe water shortages and decreasing crop yields. Today, 180 million people in the Mediterranean basin are considered 'water poor'. The lack of clean water and nutritious food has adverse effects on the health and stability of the populations.

Who we are

By funding R&I through competitive calls, PRIMA - the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area - will contribute to the development of much-needed solutions for a more sustainable management of water and agro-food systems. The main objective of the ten-year initiative (2018 – 2028), which is partly funded by EU's research and innovation programme Horizon 2020, is to devise new R&I approaches to improve water availability and sustainable agriculture production in a region heavily distressed by climate change, urbanisation and population growth. The partnership, which is based on the principles of co-ownership, mutual The partnership currently consists of 16 Participating Countries: Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Jordan, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. As the initiative is evolving over time, more participants, from both EU and non-EU countries e.g. Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco are expected to join soon.

The partnership will be financed through a combination of funding from participating countries (currently €274,8 million), and a €220 million contribution from the EU through Horizon 2020, its research and innovation funding programme (2014 – 2020).

Which is the legal basis for the PRIMA initiative?

The legal basis for PRIMA is Article 185 TFEU. This enables the EU to participate in research and development programmes undertaken by several Member States, including in the structures created for the execution of those programmes. Article 26 of the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme Regulation specifies the conditions and criteria for identifying and proposing an initiative pursuant to Article 185 TFEU.

Adoption of the PRIMA Decision (DECISION (EU) 2017/1324 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL)

On 13 June 2017, the European Parliament adopted the PRIMA Decision on the participation of the Union in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) jointly undertaken by several Member States On 26 June 2017, the Council endorsed the initiative. The Decision entered into force on 7 August 2017.

Which is the total amount of financial resources committed to PRIMA?

PRIMA can count on the following amount of financial resources:

- 220 million euros from European Union (dedicated to *Indirect Actions funded by PRIMA-IS*, see question below);
- 274,8 million euros from Participating States (dedicated to *Activities funded by the Participating States without the Union financial contribution*, see question below)

What is PRIMA-IS?

The PRIMA Implementation Structure (PRIMA-IS) is the implementation Structure of the PRIMA initiative. It is legally established as a foundation under Spanish law in Barcelona, Spain and is also referred to in this document as 'PRIMA Foundation'.

What are the Vision and Mission of PRIMA?

PRIMA vision is inclusive, healthy and prosperous Mediterranean societies through innovative solutions in agro-food and water systems, contributing, by the end of the programme, to sustainable use of natural resources, economic growth and stability.

PRIMA mission is to achieve, support and promote integration, alignment and joint implementation of research and innovation initiatives under a common research and innovation strategy to address the diverse challenges in water scarcity, agriculture, food security

Which are the objectives and thematic areas of PRIMA?

In line with the priorities of Horizon 2020, the general objectives of PRIMA are to build research and innovation capacities and to develop knowledge and common innovative solutions for agro-food systems, to make them sustainable, and for integrated water provision and management in the Mediterranean area, to make those systems and that provision and management more climate resilient, efficient, cost-effective and environmentally and socially sustainable, and to contribute to solving water scarcity, food security, nutrition, health, well-being and migration problems upstream.

In order to contribute to the general objective, PRIMA shall fulfil the following specific objectives:

- The formulation of a long-term, common, strategic agenda in the area of agro-food systems, to make them sustainable, and in the area of integrated water provision and management;
- The orientation of relevant national research and innovation programmes towards the implementation of the strategic agenda;
- The involvement of all relevant public and private sector actors in implementing the strategic agenda by pooling knowledge and financial resources to achieve the necessary critical mass;
- The strengthening of the research and innovation funding capacities and of the implementation capabilities of all actors involved including SMEs, academia, non-governmental organisations and local research centres.

PRIMA covers 3 main thematic areas:



To maximize its impact, PRIMA has identified strategically important areas of research and innovation (4 Priorities) in each thematic area:

THEMATIC AREA MANAGEMENT OF WATER

1. Water resources availability and quality within catchments and aquifers
2. Sustainable, integrated water management
3. Irrigation technologies and practices

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4. Use of alternative water resources

THEMATIC AREA FARMING SYSTEMS

1. Adaptation of agriculture to climate change
2. Developing sustainable and productive agro-ecosystems
3. Preventing emergence of animal and plant diseases
4. Developing farming systems able to generate income, to create employment and to contribute to a balanced territorial development

THEMATIC AREA AGRO-FOOD VALUE CHAIN

1. Valorising food products from traditional Mediterranean diet
2. Food Safety in local food chains
3. Implementation of innovation in the Agro-food chain, promoting higher quality, sustainability and competitiveness, with particular reference to smallholders
4. Implications of dietary shifts and sustainable diets for the Med populations and food industry

Which countries participate in PRIMA?

PRIMA can currently count on the participation of 16 Euro-Mediterranean Countries, including 11 EU States: CROATIA, CYPRUS, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, ITALY, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA, PORTUGAL, SLOVENIA AND SPAIN of 5 non-EU countries: ALGERIA, ISRAEL, JORDAN, EGYPT, LEBANON, TUNISIA AND TURKEY.

In addition, MOROCCO will be fully participant in PRIMA upon condition that they have concluded international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA. Updated news on the status of participation of Morocco will be provided in the PRIMA website (<http://prima-med.org/>). This strongly structured long-term committed partnership, is working to further extend the initiative to other interested countries.

A. Application

When are the deadlines for Calls for Proposals this year?

Please refer to the 'Our Calls/Calls' page of the PRIMA website prima-med.org for the information on specific deadlines <http://prima-med.org/calls-for-proposals/>.

Where can I find information on: budget; consortium composition; and project duration, page limits?

Please refer to the corresponding sections in the call text for information on budget and project duration. Detailed eligibility requirements for consortium composition are outlined in the "eligibility" section of the call text.

What kind of proposals must be prepared?

The proposal must be created by the project coordinator and consists of 2 main parts: the **administrative & financial data** and the **Scientific document** which is the description of the planned project.

Proposal templates are available on www.prima-med.org.

The limit that applies for the scientific document are:

Stage 1: 10 pages (Pre-proposal)

Stage 2: 70 pages (Full proposal)

Proposals and all the annexes or additional documents must be **written in English**, in an eligible font. Further guidance on the use of fonts, margins and other page formatting will be included in the proposal templates available on the PRIMA website.

NO MODIFICATIONS are allowed in the consortium composition (Coordinators and PI), budget and scientific objectives between stage 1 and stage 2.

Can I submit more than one application (with the same applicants/co-applicants) to the same Call for Proposals?

There is no rule to prevent a group of applicants submitting multiple proposals. Please consider submitting your best, single application as this is likely to offer the greatest chance of success rather than submitting multiple proposals to the same call. The external experts will evaluate all proposals and may recommend withdrawal or merging of similar proposals.

Is there a legal limitation to the possibility for a legal entity to submit two or more different proposals as coordinator, or to be part of other applicant consortia that are submitting different proposals following the same call or parallel calls for proposals?

For Section 1 calls, H2020 Rules for participation (RfP) contain no legal limitation to the possibility for a legal entity to submit two or more different proposals as coordinator, or to be part of other applicant consortia that are submitting different proposals following the same call or parallel calls for proposals.

As for Section 2 a coordinator, intended as a person not an institution, cannot submit more than one proposal as coordinator in all the PRIMA calls.

The same proposal cannot be submitted to different calls. **Two proposals will be considered similar if 75%** of the project in terms of objectives, methodology and consortium composition are identical.

Do the same proposal can be submitted to different calls?

According to H2020 Rules for participation (RfP) there is no legal limitation for participation either, but, in the event of the proposal being successful, Article 37 RfP on Cumulative funding (in particular the rule that grants cannot cover the same costs items) applies.

Where can I find partners?

A PARTNERING TOOL is available in the PRIMA website: www.prima-med.org. This tool will allow you to post a candidature to be part of a proposal, describing competences and role and to search for partners that registering in the system.



B. Rules for participation and funding

Who are eligible participant in project consortia?

By way of derogation from Article 10(1) and (2) of Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013, the following participants are eligible for funding by PRIMA-IS:

- Any legal entity established PRIMA Participating States: ALGERIA, CROATIA, CYPRUS, EGYPT, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, ISRAEL, ITALY, JORDAN, LEBANON LUXEMBOURG, MALTA, PORTUGAL, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, TUNISIA AND TURKEY.

Legal entities from MOROCCO shall be considered fully Participating States through the conclusion of international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation with the Union setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA.

Can legal entities from EU Member States or other countries **not (or not yet) included among PRIMA Participants States** participate in funded projects and receive funds in response to the transnational calls organised and managed by PRIMA-IS (Section 1 Calls)

Legal entities from Countries are not (not yet) a PRIMA Participating State can participate in consortia that apply for funding in response to Section 1 transnational calls but as entities from non-Participating States, they will not count against the minimum conditions of participation of at least 3 legal entities established in 3 different PS set for in paragraph 10 of Article 6 of the PRIMA Decision.

Any international organization or any legal entity established in countries not listed above as PS will be eligible for funding provided that at least one of the following conditions is fulfilled:

- participation is deemed to be essential for carrying out the action;
- such funding is provided under a bilateral scientific and technological agreement or any other arrangement between the Union and the international organization or, for entities established in a country which is not a Participating State, the country in which the legal entity is established.

Funding by PRIMA-IS may be granted provided that the *participation is deemed to be essential for carrying out the action* by PRIMA-IS.

In addition, without prejudice to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, to Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 and to Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013, the applicable model grant agreement may lay down that also legal entities established in countries which are not Participating States and which receive funding from PRIMA-IS shall provide appropriate financial guarantees.

Can legal entities from EU Member States or other countries **not (or not yet) included among PRIMA Participants States** participate in funded projects and receive funds in response to the transnational calls organised by PRIMA-IS but managed by National Funding Bodies under the national programmes (Section 2 Calls)?

Participants from countries not (or not yet) included among PRIMA Participant States, *can participate in PRIMA funded projects but they have to fund their own participation*.

They cannot coordinate the project and they are not taken into account in the minimum number of participants required to have an eligible consortium.

They also have to attach to their proposal a letter from their organization (signed by a legal representative of the structure) attesting that the funds to cover their participation to the projects (task(s), participation to meetings...) in the project will be available.

How many participants have to be in projects?

Consortia must be composed by at **least three independent legal entities established in three different countries considered to be Participating States** by the submission deadline under the relevant call for proposals, of which:

- At least one is established in a Member State

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- At least one is established in Algeria, Jordan, Egypt Israel, Lebanon Tunisia and Turkey or in the following Third Countries (Morocco) provided that international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation with the Union setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA will be concluded at the time that the grant agreement shall be signed with those legal entities

In duly justified cases provided for in the annual work plan, the minimum condition shall be the participation *of one legal entity established in a Participating State* in accordance with this Decision by the submission deadline under the relevant call for proposals.

Which is Consequences for eligibility for participation of “To be Participating State”?

Legal entities established in “to be Participating States” (actually only Morocco) WILL NOT COUNT towards the minimum number of participants in the consortium if the international agreement with the country where they are established does not produce legal effects by the day of the submission deadline.

Please consult the updated list of PS in the “about us” section of our website (www.prima-med.org).

Can Non Participant States eligibility to participate in and be funded by PRIMA?

As stated in the PRIMA Decision any international organization or any legal entity established in countries that are not PRIMA Participant States (both EU or not EU members), will be eligible for funding in response to Section 1 transnational calls provided that at least one of the following conditions is fulfilled:

- * participation is deemed *to be essential* for carrying out the action;

- * such funding is provided under a bilateral scientific and technological agreement or any other arrangement between the Union and the international organization or, for entities established in a country which is not a Participating State, the country in which the legal entity is established (it does not have to be considered by EU Members but only by Third Countries).

In conclusion, for entities from EU members not (or not yet) PRIMA PS (like the Netherlands), eligibility for funding by PRIMA-IS is granted.

Those entities can participate in consortia that apply for funding in response to Section 1 transnational calls but as entities from non-Participating States, they will not count against the minimum conditions of participation of at least 3 legal entities established in 3 different PS set for in paragraph 10 of Article 6 of the PRIMA Decision.

Can Palestine eligibility to participate in and be funded by PRIMA?

There are no differences for Palestine. This follows from Horizon 2020, where Palestine is listed in the WP as “countries” whose entities are automatically eligible for funding (with the disclaimer concerning Palestine ** “This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue”).

Therefore, entities from Palestine may participate in PRIMA under the *same conditions of legal entities from countries which are not PRIMA Participating States*: can participate since PRIMA is open like Horizon 2020, but not counting to the minimum eligibility criteria nor automatically eligible for funding. Exceptional funding in line with Article 7(5)(a) Decision 2017/1324 may apply of course.

Could indicate the duration of the project?

The duration of the project is set to 3 years (as it is generally for the European projects)

For the RIA in section 1. the funding rate is 100% but is this rate apply to private organisation /profit organisation? or the private entities are funded at a rate of 70% as it is for the IA?

As this question refers to Section 1 of the draft PRIMA WP 2018, the H2020 Rules for Participation (RfP) apply. In line with Article 28(3) and (4) of the H2020 RfP, PRIMA WP establishes the reimbursement rate at 100 % for RIA (a single funding rate for the action), regardless of the legal nature of the beneficiary. Therefore the rate of 100% applies also to private entities.

Moreover, non-profit legal entities may be funded at 100 % even for innovation actions (IA). In this respect, as indicated in Article 28(5): “The Horizon 2020 grant shall be limited to a maximum of 70 % of the total eligible costs for

innovation actions and programme co-fund actions. By way of derogation from paragraph 3, the Horizon 2020 grant may, for innovation actions, reach a maximum of 100 % of the total eligible costs for non-profit legal entities, without prejudice to the co-financing principle.

We ask to the applicant to check their financial capacity, but does the Commission (maybe the Research Executive Agency) do some verification on that point or is it only declarative? Is this step linked to the delivery of the PIC number?

Please note that, according to Article 15(9) of the H2020 RfP it is the responsibility of the relevant funding body, in this case of the PRIMA-IS, to verify in advance the financial capacity of only the coordinators, in cases where the requested funding is equal or superior to EUR 500.000,00 and in all cases whenever there are grounds to doubt the financial capacity of the coordinator or other participants on the basis of available information. For further legal background, please refer also to paragraphs 10 and 11 of Article 15 RfP.

Can a NGO participate a project?

In principle, PRIMA is a research programme and therefore the key participants are research organisations i.e. non-profit organisations that carry out research or technological development as one of their main objectives. Non-governmental organisations may participate in a project but they have to cover all of their project costs by themselves.

Can a company participate in a project?

PRIMA is encouraging an adequate participation of enterprises in PRIMA proposals in particular when specified in the annual workplan.

Can Swiss legal entities (public or private) participate in PRIMA funded projects and receive funding?

As from 1 January 2017 Switzerland is associated to the entire Horizon 2020 programme. This means Swiss legal entities are eligible for funding. However they do not count towards the eligibility criteria of PRIMA calls which require a minimum of three PRIMA Participating States.

Which are the types of activities financed by PRIMA?

PRIMA programmes will support research and innovation through distinct types of actions/activities:

- In Section 1: Research & Innovation Actions (RIA), and Innovation actions (IA) as defined in the General Annexes of H2020 Rules applying to these actions are the standard Horizon 2020 rules for participation (RfP).
- In Section 2: Research and Innovation Activities (RIA) based on national rules. As the projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by the national funding bodies they will be subject to the respective national regulations.
- In Section 3: Activities organised, managed and funded by the PS
 - Activities under the national programmes of the Participating States including transnational projects referred to as “Participating States’ Initiated Activities” (PSIAs)
 - Activities organised and funded by PS supporting PRIMA programme implementation.
- Activities under national programmes of Participating States (PSIAs) spanning from national calls for research and innovation, training actions and/or supports to joint research project or joint research units managed and funded directly by the PRIMA Participating States. They are in-kind contributions of the PS to the PRIMA programme and constitute an integral part of the PRIMA programme, following the positive outcome of an external evaluation by international peer review with regard to the objectives of the PRIMA programme. (you will find the full list of PSIAs included in the PRIMA AWP 2018, in the PRIMA website: prima-med.org).

How are PRIMA activities will be implemented?

PRIMA shall be implemented on the basis of annual work plans covering activities to be undertaken for the period from 1 January to 31 December of a given year (“reference year”). PRIMA-IS shall adopt the annual work plans by 31 March of the reference year, after obtaining approval from the Commission. In adopting the annual work plans, both PRIMA-IS and the Commission shall act without undue delay. PRIMA-IS will make the annual work plan publicly available in the PRIMA website: prima-med.org.

What kind of research does PRIMA fund?

PRIMA should support all types of research and innovation activities, including research, development and innovation projects, innovative demonstrators and pilot plants, capacity building, training, awareness-raising and dissemination actions, and researcher mobility, addressing a wide range of Technology Readiness Levels and ensuring an appropriate balance between small and large projects