

Research and Enterprise Newsletter (February 2025 edition)

Horizon Europe

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We value your input

Please take a moment to share your thoughts and feedback on our Horizon Europe Special Edition Newsletter. Your insights will help us improve and better serve our community. You can send your feedback to kosta.tabakakis@otago.ac.nz.

1. What's New?

MBIE Top-up Funding for Cluster 2

From 1 February 2025, projects in **Cluster 2** (Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society) will **no longer be eligible for funding through the MBIE Horizon Europe Top-Up funding scheme**.

This change is being made to align the Top-Up fund settings with the Government's priorities for Science, Innovation & Technology investments, and direction outlined in the Catalyst Fund investment Plan. Research organisations who have submitted a proposal for a Cluster 2 project which opened before 1 February 2025 and who registered for Top-Up funding with MBIE within 10 working days of the European Commission (EC) call for proposals closing will still be eligible for Horizon Europe Top-Up funding.

This change only applies to eligibility for the MBIE Horizon Europe Top-Up funding scheme. New Zealand participants may still take part in Cluster 2 proposals and can still receive funding from the EC for these projects.

December 2024 Update on Horizon Europe Partnerships

New Zealand was invited by the European Union to consider joining the new partnerships being established under the 2nd Strategic Plan of Horizon Europe. The Government has elected to join two new co-fund partnerships

Brain Health

New Zealand leads: Professor Louise Parr-Brownlie, Departmental Science Advisor, MBIE and Dr Justin Dean, University of Auckland

BE READY PLUS: pandemic preparedness

New Zealand leads: Alex Semprini and Marina Dzhelali, Medical Research Institute of New Zealand (MIRNZ)

These partnerships are being designed through a process of negotiation between the partners (generally research funding agencies and other public authorities of EU member states and Associated Countries) and the European Commission. The outcome of these negotiations will determine the work programme and activities for the partnership, how the funding is allocated, and what opportunities there are for New Zealanders to get involved.

We will provide further updates as more information becomes available.

Please contact your RA if you are interested in applying to calls relating to European Partnerships. Further details on European Partnerships can be found [here](#).

Horizon Europe – Draft Work Programmes for Clusters 1-5

Leaked draft work programmes for Pillar II can be found on the Science|Business website (Clusters 2, 3, 4 and 5 [here](#) and Cluster 1 Health [here](#)).

2. What is Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe is the European Union's key funding programme for research and innovation. On 9 July 2023, [New Zealand associated to Pillar II of Horizon Europe](#). This means that New Zealand pays into the Horizon Europe budget, and NZ researchers can participate in project consortia under similar conditions as EU Member States. The UK, Canada, South Korea and Switzerland. Negotiations are still ongoing between the EU and Singapore.

Benefits of joining Horizon Europe:

- Horizon Europe enables New Zealand researchers and institutions to access significant funding, collaborate with leading global researchers, and contribute to solving major global challenges.
- Being part of Horizon Europe also allows New Zealand to have a voice in shaping global research agendas and policy discussions. As an associated country, New Zealand holds observer status in the Programme Committees which govern Horizon Europe funding and priorities. New Zealand is represented on these Committees by MBIE officials and the Chief Science Advisors.
- At an individual level, participating in Horizon Europe offers significant networking and career development opportunities as well exposure to different research methodologies and perspectives.

3. Pillar II Key Points

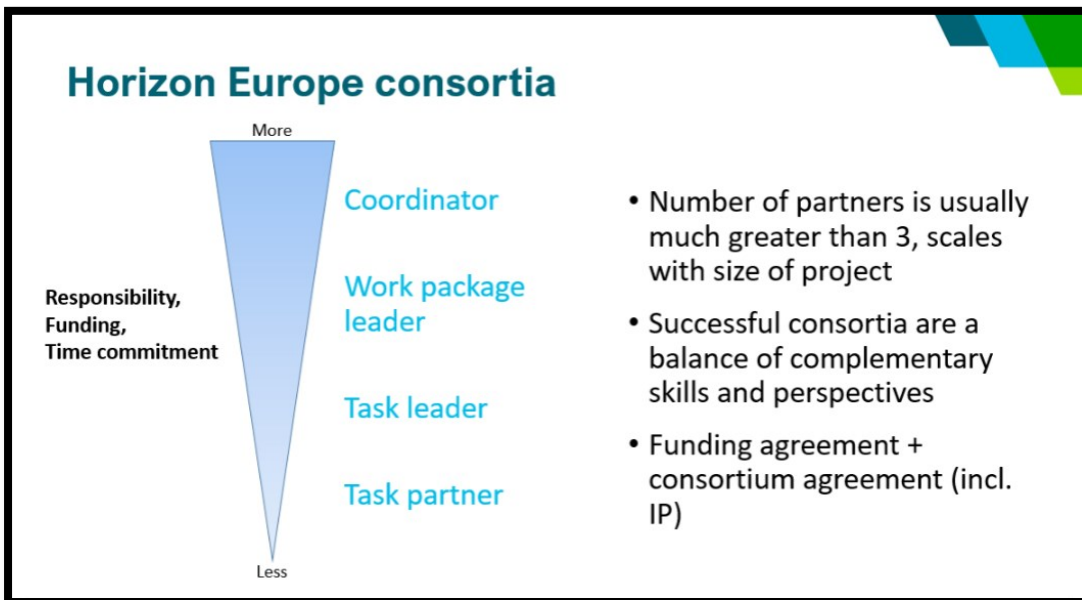
What is Pillar II?

Pillar II of Horizon Europe focuses on science and technologies to address major global challenges, such as climate change, energy and health, with funding of €53.5 billion over the 2021 to 2027 period.

Funding opportunities are organised under 'Work Programmes', grouped by cluster:

- Cluster 1: [Health](#)
- Cluster 2: [Culture, Creativity and an Inclusive Society](#)
- Cluster 3: [Civil Security for Society](#)
- Cluster 4: [Digital, Industry and Space](#)
- Cluster 5: [Climate, Energy and Mobility](#)
- Cluster 6: [Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment](#)

- **Horizon Europe Pillar II funding is not ‘curiosity driven’**, it is highly directed with detailed calls for proposals that require applicants to show how they will address specific listed outcomes and expected impact.



- [Work programmes](#) detail the funding opportunities (calls) available under Horizon Europe. Year on year these do not change significantly, and the ‘Clusters’ and ‘Destinations’ remain the same. Current and previous work programmes as well as leaked drafts of future work programmes are available on the [Science|Business website](#).
- Horizon Europe requires mandatory open access to publications and adherence to open science principles - [Open science - European Commission](#)
- Organisations applying for Horizon Europe funds are required to have a gender equality plan in place. The University of Otago’s plan is available on our [website](#).

4. How do I Apply?

Notify your dedicated Research Advisor (RA) that you intend to apply.

1. Create and Update Your Profile:

- You need an online and up-to-date [personal profile](#) to be found by consortia and take full advantage of networking opportunities.

- Register your personal profile by creating an account on the Funding & Tenders (F&T) Portal under "[How to Participate](#)".
- Upload your information from your [ORCID profile](#) to populate your profile information tabs.

2. Eligibility and Consortium Requirements:

- Eligibility for Horizon Europe Pillar II is characterised by "general openness" to consortia, which are multinational and interdisciplinary groups of individuals, research organisations, industry, and/or governments.
- To be funded, you must be part of a consortium comprised of **at least three organisations** representing at least two Associate Members (AM) countries and one Member State (MS). Organisations representing **low and middle-income countries (LMICs)** should also be invited to participate.
- Be mindful of specific eligibility criteria, such as the requirement for law enforcement agencies to be part of a consortium for crime-related calls.

3. Joining Consortia:

- Identify and harness your existing network of research contacts in the European Union and abroad.
- Utilise online resources and contestable seed funding available through the Royal Society's [Catalyst Fund](#) (Leaders and Seeding) if you wish to travel.
- In the [F&T Portal](#), publish "partner search announcements" per call for proposals, allowing others to note your interest and invite you to joint bids.

4. Accessing Past and Present Projects:

- Consult [CORDIS](#) Europa to access all past and present Horizon projects and learn what other organisations are doing in your research space.
- [Register to work as an expert](#) and assess proposals to help you network and understand the application process upfront.

5. Application Process:

- Notify the Research Office through your dedicated RA when applying to Horizon Europe.
- The application will be submitted through the F&T Portal. The Research Office holds UO's "PIC," a **9-digit Participant Identification Code** needed to participate in a proposal. Use this PIC only with permission from your RA.

- Communicate proactively with your RA to guarantee institutional signoff and full support of your application.

6. Consortium Coordination:

- If invited to join a research consortium, ask the “Primary Coordinator Contact” (PCoCo) to nominate you and your RA as a “Participant Contact” (PaCo). This allows you and your RA to receive pre- and post-award notifications and manage your award through the F&T Portal.

7. Budget and Funding:

- The standard overhead rate for Horizon is 25% on Direct costs. The Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) will top-up the overhead costs shortfall (up to 100% of Direct Costs) if a proposal is successful, **up to NZ\$1.05 million per project**.
- Structure your submission as a fully funded application with a budget including 25% overheads. Your RA will help you prepare the budget and obtain necessary internal approvals.

8. Grant Preparation and Agreement:

- When an application is awarded, liaise with your RA to receive a signed Financial Identification Form and Declaration of Honour.
- Your RA will support you through the Grant Agreement Signature phase and reporting.

9. Searching for Calls for Proposals:

- Look at the Cluster PDF Work Programme documents available [here](#) and select those that interest you. Note potential keywords and run a search on the PDF document using these keywords.
- Check for application deadlines and award budgets associated with each call for proposal.
- Alternatively, identify calls for proposals in the F&T Portal, searching by keyword and using available filters.

10. Partner Search Announcements:

- Where applicable, add your own partner search announcement on the Funding and Tenders portal under the relevant call, with an expertise offer or request.

- Think about your profiles on other platforms and what comes up on a Google search.

5. How can the R & E Team help?

The team is available to support with Horizon Europe (HE) funding in several ways.

Kosta Tabakakis (Research Adviser focused on HE) can help with:

- Navigating the HE Work Programmes and [Funding & Tenders portal](#) to identify potential opportunities based on your research area.
- Introducing you to your National Contact Point (NCP) and setting up a meeting for your research colleagues/group/institute.
- Developing your HE 1-page profile document.
- Facilitating connections with potential project partners in Europe/associated countries and information about networking events for your Cluster (research area).
- Regular updates about HE and forthcoming funding calls.

*If you would like to know more, please contact Kosta
(kosta.tabakakis@otago.ac.nz)*

As with other funding sources, your [Research Adviser](#) can support with the following:

- Proposal development, proofreading, and final application checks.
- Drafting a budget, including advice about the [MBIE domestic top up scheme for Horizon Europe](#).
- Reviewing consortium agreements/contracts and any variations/amendments.
- Understanding the specific reporting requirements, audits, and financial documentation needed for HE projects.
- Project management support (for HE projects, this primarily takes place within the EU Funding and Tenders portal).
- General advice about university policies and practices.

*For a full list of the Research & Enterprise team and related colleagues,
see [Research and Enterprise People](#)*

6. National Contact Points

The National Contact Points (NCPs) provide guidance, practical information, assistance on building research consortia, and all aspects of participation in Horizon Europe. NCPs details can be found on the MBIE Horizon Europe [website](#).

Take the time to communicate with the **NCP assigned to your Cluster or area of interest** by sending a copy of your completed two-page profile.

7. Events

Details on **upcoming events** can be found [here](#) on the European Commission's website.

Keep an on the events page for upcoming *info days* and *brokerage events*.

The Horizon Europe **Info Days** provide prospective applicants and other stakeholders of EU research and innovation the opportunity to get information and ask questions about the main funding instruments, processes of Horizon EU per programme Cluster. You can attend these online.

The Horizon Europe **Brokerage Events** provide unique opportunities for Horizon Europe proposers to find partners, discuss project ideas, stay informed, and build networks. Brokerage events can be in person-only, online-only or hybrid (in-person and online).

Previous Events

Links to recordings and slides can be found on the R & E Horizon Europe UO Researcher Support MS Teams channel [here](#) (under Key Resources). Please liaise with your RA if you require access.

8. Crowdhelix

The [Crowdhelix](#) platform will facilitate collaborations with a global network of over 730 renowned international Universities and innovative companies. Please liaise with your RA if you require access.

9. University of Otago Horizon Europe Researcher Register

Please complete the following table and email it to your dedicated RA if you would like to be added to the register to receive key updates from the Research Office.

First name	
Last name	
Department	
Division	
Research expertise (up to five keywords)	
Early career	Yes/No (delete one)
Horizon Europe Pillar II Readiness level (started working on bid)	Yes/No (delete one)
Pillar II (Global Challenges) cluster(s)	List here
Horizon 2020 or Horizon Europe Funding experience	Yes/No (delete one)
EU External collaborating institutions (previous and current)	List here if applicable
I would like access to the Horizon Europe – UO Researcher Support MS Teams channel. <i>Your RA will send you the link.</i>	Yes/No (delete one)

10. University of Otago Horizon Europe MS Teams Channel

A collaborative space designed specifically for university academics and researchers seeking guidance and support for submissions related to Horizon Europe Pillar II. It aims to provide a supportive environment where individuals can exchange insights, ask questions, receive guidance, and stay updated on the latest information and best practices related to Horizon Europe funding opportunities.

11. Decision Tree

