Terminology glossary and useful links

Training #1: Access to public fundings and grants – why funding matters (Module 1)

Published in February 2026

Disclaimer: The links and references provided in this glossary are the most up to date at the time of publication of Training #1. Please note that European Commission portals, programs, and guidance documents are subject to periodic updates and revisions. Users are strongly advised to always verify the latest information directly on the official websites of the European Commission and other relevant funding bodies before preparing or submitting any proposal.

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union (Grant n°.101113011) Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or REA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

General terms

Public funding	Financial support provided by EU, national, or regional authorities to stimulate innovation, sustainability, and socio-economic development.
Grant	A financial contribution from public institutions to support specific projects without repayment obligations, provided the project follows the agreed rules.
Call for proposals (Call)	An official invitation by the European Commission or national agencies to submit project proposals under a funding programme.
Consortium	A formal grouping of independent legal entities, established in different countries that collaborates on a specific research and innovation project.

EU funding programmes

Horizon Europe (HEU)	European Union's key funding programme for research and innovation from 2021 to 2027, with a budget of €95.5 billion
Pillars	One of the three main sections of the Horizon Europe programme, each grouping specific types of funding and objectives. It includes **Pillar II - Global Challenges & Industrial Competitiveness**.
Clusters (CL)	Six broad, thematic areas under Pillar II that fund research and innovation to address global challenges and boost European industrial competitiveness. Includes **cluster 6 - Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment**
Missions	Large-scale and cross-cutting initiatives under Horizon Europe setting clear, time-bound goals that drive focused efforts towards concrete solutions to some of the greatest societal challenges by 2030. It includes the **Mission "A soil deal for Europe"** to establish 100 Living Labs and Lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils
Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking (CBE JU)	A public-private partnership supporting bio-based value chains and industrial innovation, including biowaste valorisation.
LIFE programme	EU funding instrument for environment and climate action, supporting pilot and demonstration projects.
Community Agricultural Policy (CAP)	EU policy to support agriculture, ensuring food security, fair farmer income, and the sustainable development of rural areas and landscapes. It includes funding for rural development that promotes environmental protection.
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	EU financial instrument designed to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion in the European Union.

Key concepts to read a call and proposal structure (focus on HEU)

EU Funding & Tenders Portal	The official online platform for finding calls, submitting proposals, and managing funded projects.
Expected outcome	Results that a call requires funded projects to deliver, used as evaluation criteria for the impact section (see below)
Scope	Defines the thematic and technical boundaries of a call, i.e., what the EU intends to fund.
Technology Readiness Level (TRL)	A scale (1–9) measuring the maturity of a technology, from basic research (TRL 1) to market-ready solutions (TRL 9).
Part A	The administrative section of an EU proposal (online forms in the Funding & Tenders Portal).
Part B	The narrative section of an EU proposal, covering Excellence, Impact, and Implementation. It usually has a specific page limit.
Excellence	One of the three core sections of the proposal and of the evaluation criteria, including the quality and originality of the proposed work, its scientific/technological soundness and ambition beyond the state of the art.
Impact	One of the three core sections of the proposal and of the evaluation criteria, including long term socio-economic, environmental, and market benefits of the project (it usually refers to the Expected Outcome of the Call).
Implementation	One of the three core sections of the proposal and of the evaluation criteria, including the work plan, consortium structure, milestones, deliverables, and risk management
Work Package (WP)	A subdivision of the project work plan grouping related tasks to achieve specific objectives.
Deliverable	A concrete output produced during the project at a specific time (e.g., report, prototype, dataset).
Milestone	A control point in the project to track progress (e.g., proof of concept completed).
Key Perfomance Indicator (KPI)	A measurable value used to assess the success and impact of a project.

Financial and management terms

Eligible costs	Project expenses that can be funded.
Person-month (PM)	Unit used to measure the effort: one person working full-time for one month on the project.
Subcontracting	Outsourcing of specific project tasks to external entities not part of the consortium.
Indirect costs	Overheads (e.g., utilities, administration) covered by a fixed percentage of direct costs (subcontracting and other costs categories excluded)
Actual costs	Expenses that a beneficiary really paid for carrying out project activities, documented with invoices, timesheets or equivalent records.

Lump sum model	Funding mechanism where beneficiaries receive a fixed amount for completing project tasks, rather than reporting actual costs.
Model Grant Agreement (MGA)	Contractual agreement between the European Commission and the project beneficiaries that details the rights, obligations, and rules for an EU-funded project
Annotated Grant Agreement (AGA)	Detailed user guide published by the European Commission explaining especially funding rules that complements the Model Grant Agreement (MGA)

Network and support

National Contact Points (NCPs)	National experts who provide guidance, practical information and assistance on all aspects of participation in Horizon Europe.
Regional Innnovation Agencies	Local institutions managing regional innovation funding and support.
Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)	EU-wide network helping SMEs find partners, funding opportunities, and market support.
European Partnership Network	A collaborative platform within the Horizon Europe framework that brings together the European Commission, Member States, and various stakeholders to jointly fund and implement research and innovation programs