

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Informal Expert Group to act as “shadow” Strategic Configuration of the Horizon Europe Programme Committee

1. Mandate and Tasks

The mandate of the Informal Expert Group is to provide advice and expertise to the Commission and its departments in relation to the preparation of legislative proposals and policy initiatives, as well as coordination and cooperation with Member States and stakeholder in that regard as set out in Article 3 of Commission Decision C(2016)3301 on Commission expert groups.

The Informal Expert Group will support the work of the European Commission in preparing the implementation of the Horizon Europe programme.

The scope of work for this Informal Expert Group will be centred on – but not limited to - the process of Strategic Planning for Horizon Europe, which will result in the first Strategic Plan under Horizon Europe.

In this context the tasks of the Informal Expert Group include to provide advice on the following elements of the strategic plan (see Article 4a Horizon Europe Specific Programme¹):

- a) “Key strategic orientations for R&I support, including a description of expected impacts, cross-cluster issues and intervention areas covered.
- b) Identification of European Partnerships according to Article 8(1)(a and b) of the [FP Regulation].
- c) Identification of Missions according to Article 5 of the Specific Programme and Article 7 and Annex Va of the Regulation establishing Horizon Europe.
- d) Areas for international cooperation, actions to be aligned with Research & Innovation of other nations and regions of the world at major scale, or actions to be carried out in cooperation with organisations in third countries.
- e) Specific issues, such as the balance between research and innovation; the integration of Social Sciences and Humanities; the role of Key Enabling Technologies and strategic value chains; gender equality, including the integration of gender dimension in the R&I content; adherence to the highest ethics and integrity standards; priorities for dissemination and exploitation.”

¹ *Proposal for a DECISION OF THE COUNCIL on establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation - Partial General Approach of 15 April 2019*

2. Working Modalities

The Informal Expert Group and its subgroups will meet on a regular basis from May 2019 until the end of 2020 and the entry into force of the Horizon Europe programme.

Sub-groups

The Informal Expert Group will have 20 sub-groups.

Five of the sub-groups will mirror the expected five Expert Groups related to mission implementation within the following areas:

- Adaptation to Climate Change, including Societal Transformation
- Cancer
- Healthy Oceans, Seas and Coastal and Inland Waters
- Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities
- Soil Health and Food

Two further sub-groups will develop with the Commission:

- the relevant 'Minimum Standards' for the operation of national support structures under Horizon Europe
- the 'Transitional Forum for R&I Partnerships'.

Thirteen further sub-groups will act as 'shadow' thematic configurations of the Horizon Europe Programme Committee. They will mirror the expected ten configurations of the two Horizon Europe Programme Committees:

- European Research Council (ERC)
- Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)
- Research Infrastructures
- Health
- Culture, creativity and Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry and Space
- Climate, Energy and Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment
- The European Innovation Council (EIC) and European Innovation ecosystems
- Widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area
- Fission
- Fusion

The Informal Expert Group may establish further ad-hoc sub-groups to examine specific issues that require in-depth investigation and/or actions with rapporteurs appointed by the Member States' representatives.

Chair

Meetings of the Informal Expert Group are chaired by DG RTD. The sub-groups may be chaired by DG RTD or co-chaired with or chaired by other Commission services.

Secretariat

The Informal Expert Group is assisted by a Secretariat, provided by the Commission services.

Experts' Group agenda, meeting planning and minutes

Meetings of the group shall, in principle, be held on Commission premises. DG RTD, and/or other services as appropriate, is responsible for creating the conditions for productive discussions, information sharing and decision-making. This includes ensuring that:

- a. Key agenda items are identified for future meetings. Inputs from Member States' representatives for the future meetings' agendas are encouraged.
- b. Minutes from each meeting will be circulated to the Informal Expert Group Members, within three weeks after each meeting date.

Invited experts

DG RTD, and/or other services as appropriate, may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group or sub-groups on an ad hoc basis.

Rules of procedure

On a proposal by and in agreement with DG RTD, the group shall adopt its rules of procedure by simple majority of its members, on the basis of the standard rules of procedure for expert groups, in compliance with the horizontal rules².

3. Transparency

The group and subgroups shall be registered in the Register of expert groups. As concerns the group composition, the name of Member States' and of EEA authorities shall be published on the Register of expert groups.

4. Expenses

Participants in the activities of the group shall not be remunerated for the services they offer.

Travel expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group shall be reimbursed by the Commission (only one representative per member will be reimbursed). Reimbursement shall be made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission and within

² See Article 17 of the horizontal rules.

the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission departments under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

5. Composition

Members of the group are Member States' authorities (Type D) and European Economic Area authorities (Type E, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) that will designate representatives in accordance with Article 9 (1) and (2) of Decision C(2016)3301.

6. Professional secrecy and handling of classified information

The members of the group and their representatives, as well as invited experts, are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy, which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members of the institutions and their staff, as well as to the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of Union classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/4433 and 2015/4444. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

³ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41).

⁴ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).