Policy Enlarge Open Call Terms and Conditions

WP3: Joint Calls and Actions

FundingBox

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POLICY ENLARGE

R&I POLICY SUPPORT FOR ENLARGEMENT COUNTRIES

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Open Call Terms and Conditions

Funding Instrument #1: Small Grants for Joint Regional Innovation Actions;
Funding Instrument #2: Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results;
Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects.

Submission of applications starts: 9 September 2026 at 12:00 Brussels time
First Cut-off Date: 12 November 2026 at 17:00 Brussels time

TABLE OF CONTENT

Open Call Terms and Conditions 4
POLICY ENLARGE Team. 4
1. About POLICY ENLARGE 4
2. Open call basic conditions 4
3. Submission and evaluation process 9
3.1. Initial Check 10
3.2. Pre-scoring 10
3.3. External Evaluation 11
3.4. Consensus Meeting 12
4. Formal check & Agreement signature 13
5. After Sub-Grant Agreement signature 13
5.1. Payment conditions 13
5.2. Progress evaluation 13
6. Contact us 14
7. Complaints 15
8. Final provisions 15
Annex 1: Technical Annex – Project scope and eligible activities 17
Funding Instrument #1: Small Grants for Joint Regional Innovation Actions 17
Funding Instrument #2: Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results 18
Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects 20
Quality expectations 21
Annex 2. Indicative R&I policy priorities and challenges in enlargement countries 23
Annex 3: Glossary of terms and acronyms 0

List of tables

Table 1: Basic conditions of the open call 9
Table 2: Payment milestones 14
Table 3: Acronyms 1

Open Call Terms and Conditions

Welcome to the POLICY ENLARGE Open Call Terms and Conditions (also Terms or Guide). This document outlines the rules for participation in the POLICY ENLARGE Open Call, including eligibility criteria, maximum grant amount, timeline, submission rules, and the evaluation process.

Please take a moment to read this document carefully to understand the requirements and process. For any questions, please contact us at policyenlarge.helpdesk@fundingbox.com.

Good luck!

POLICY ENLARGE Team.

1. About POLICY ENLARGE

POLICY ENLARGE - R&I Policy Support for Enlargement Countries - is a Horizon Europe project focused on contributing to the alignment of national and regional research, innovation, and education policies for the countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo*, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine, hereinafter named enlargement countries[1]. The project aims to support the integration of enlargement countries into EU Research and Innovation actions and policy-making through policy dialogue, capacity building, mutual learning and targeted support to cross-border cooperation.

Through its Open Call, POLICY ENLARGE will provide Financial Support to Third Parties for small cross-border projects, collaborative uptake of results and people-to-people cooperation activities involving stakeholders from enlargement countries. These activities are expected to contribute to stronger cooperation, better internationalisation and closer alignment with EU Research and Innovation priorities.

2. Open call basic conditions

Section	Description
Call opening date:	9 September 2026, 12:00 Brussels time.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

[1] https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy_en: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Ukraine.

Call deadline:	This is a continuously open call with several Cut-off Dates. ● Cut-off Date 1: 12 November 2026, 17:00 Brussels time ● Cut-off Date 2: 5 May 2027, 17:00 Brussels time ● Cut-off Date 3: 3 November 2027, 17:00 Brussels time ● Cut-off Date 4 / final call deadline: 3 May 2028, 17:00 Brussels time Cut-off Dates and call closing dates might be adjusted depending on the Project needs and the value of the available funds.
Max. grant amount	The **max. grant amount** is up to **EUR 8,000** per third-party project (with a strict limit of up to EUR 4,000 per individual consortium partner) under Funding Instrument #1: **Small Grants for Joint Regional Innovation Actions** and Funding Instrument #2: **Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results**, and up to **EUR 5,000** per mobility grant under Funding Instrument #3: **Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects**, **based on the budget included in the application form** (for Track A with a strict limit of up to EUR 2,500 per individual consortium partner and for Track B, the entire mobility grant of up to €5,000 is fully allocated to fund the single secondee from the Enlargement Country). The Project budget is part of the application form. The total amount you list will be fixed and will determine the grant you'll receive. The funding rate is up to 80% of the budget included in your application form. This means you must cover the remaining 20% from your own resources (co-funding), which must be clearly demonstrated in the budget of your application form**.** The grant will be paid as a lump sum.
How to apply?	Submit your proposal via our online form https://opportunities.getonepass.eu/opportunities/policy-enlarge before the relevant Cut-off Date. Your application must be in English, and all mandatory sections must be completed. Proposals cannot be modified after submission. Multiple submissions for the same Funding Instrument and the same Cut-off Date are not permitted. If the same entity submits more than one proposal for the same Funding Instrument and Cut-off Date, only the most recently submitted proposal will be taken into consideration. Each third party may benefit from no more than one POLICY ENLARGE Funding Instrument/Grant throughout the entire Open Call, irrespective of the Funding Instrument or Cut-off Date. If the same third party is included in more than one proposal selected for funding, only the highest-scoring proposal involving that third party will be considered for funding. The other proposal(s) may be replaced by the next-ranked eligible proposal(s), in accordance with the ranking list. If a third party has already received POLICY ENLARGE funding under a previous Cut-off Date, any subsequent proposal involving the same third party as a funded participant shall be considered ineligible for funding.

Who can apply?	For Funding Instrument #1: Small Grants for Joint Regional Innovation Actions and Funding Instrument #2: Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results: **consortia including at least two independent legal entities, each established in a different enlargement country are eligible**. The participating entities can be Companies[2], Research Organisations[3] and Academia Research Groups[4], Non-profit entities[5], Digital Innovation Hubs[6] /European Digital Innovation Hubs[7], and others relevant R&I actors. For Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects: **consortia including** participation of **Researchers[8]** affiliated to a Research organization[11] or an Academia Research Group[12]. **Artists, designers, cultural heritage experts, media professionals, and other creative individuals**[9] belonging to Creative Industries[10]. **Entrepreneurs, start-up founders, and innovators**[11] from SMEs and start-ups established in enlargement countries, and **staff from European incubation networks**[12] - affiliated with independent legal entities, established either in different Enlargement Countries or in an Enlargement Country and an EU Member State are eligible. Secondees, i.e. applicants for the mobility programme, must be citizens of an eligible enlargement country (please see below) or hold a permanent residence permit in an enlargement country.

[2] Company is a legally recognized entity formed by one or more individuals to conduct business and pursue profit

[3] Research organisation means an entity, such as university or research institute, irrespective of its legal status (organised under public or private law) or way of financing, whose primary statutory goal is to conduct fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development and to disseminate their results by way of teaching, publication or technology transfer; all profits are reinvested in these activities, the dissemination of their results or teaching; undertakings that can exert influence upon such an entity, in the quality of, for example, shareholders or members, shall enjoy no preferential access to the research capacities of such an entity or to the research results generated by it." Source: 'Community framework for state aid for research and development and innovation' (2006/C 323/01)

[4] Academic sector refers to (1). public or private higher education institutions awarding academic degrees; (2). public or private non-profit research organisations whose primary mission is to pursue research; (3). international European interest organisations. Source: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/glossary

[5] Non-profit legal entity refers to an entity or organisation which by its legal form is non-profit-making or which has a legal obligation not to distribute profits to its shareholders or individual members. Source: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/glossary

[6] Digital Innovation Hubs refers to DIH which are registered in the European Catalogue of Digital Innovation Hubs (https://european-digital-innovation-hubs.ec.europa.eu/edih-catalogue?f%5B0%5D=edih_soe%3Aedih&f%5B1%5D=edih_soe%3Asoe)

[7] European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) are one-stop shops funded under the DIGITAL Europe Programme or have received the Seal of Excellence by the EC. EDIHs are registered in the EDIHs Catalogue (https://european-digital-innovation-hubs.ec.europa.eu/edih-catalogue)

[8] **Researchers** are professionals primarily engaged in the conception or creation of new knowledge, products, processes, methods, and systems, as well as in the management of the projects concerned (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Researcher)

[9] **Creative professionals** are individuals whose primary occupation involves the application of individual creativity, skill, and talent to generate original ideas, intellectual property, and culturally significant products or services (https://www.unesco.org/reports/reshaping-creativity/2022/en)

[10] **Creative Industries** are industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property (UNESCO, https://unevoc.unesco.org/bilt/TVETipedia+Glossary/lang=en/show=term/term=Creative+industries)

[11] **Entrepreneur** is a person who identifies and acts upon economic opportunities by developing, producing, and selling goods or services, assuming the inherent risks in creating or expanding economic activity (OECD - https://msmepolicy.unescap.org/defining-entrepreneurship-and-entrepreneurs)

[12] **Incubation networks** refers to interconnected system of business incubators and other entrepreneurship support organizations (such as accelerators, research centers, universities, investors, and government bodies) that collaborate strategically.

Additional conditions related to who can apply?	To be eligible, applicants shall be based in the Enlargement Countries, which are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. In the case of Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects, the hosting entity can also be from any EU Member State and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) or Horizon Europe Associated Country. POLICY ENLARGE partners and their affiliated entities can NOT be involved in the Financial Support to Third Parties recipients' projects nor their employees and associates, including persons working under employment contract or contract equal or similar to employment contract and board members. Former employees and associates shall also be excluded if they were involved in the project execution at any stage. Applicants under EU restrictive measures are ineligible: - Following the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506, as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be signed with Hungarian public interest trusts established under Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Other restrictive measures: - Since June 2024, the European Commission has suspended financial bilateral assistance directly benefiting Georgian authorities until further notice. As the EU continues to fund programmes directly benefiting Georgian citizens and has increased support to civil society and independent media, the project will support Georgian researchers. Regulation (EU) 2021/947, in particular Articles 3, 8, 19, 20, and 25 et seq., in conjunction with Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 and the relevant Commission implementing decisions establishing or amending assistance programs for Georgia.
Project scope - type of activities that can be funded	The following types of activities can be funded: ● Small grants supporting the development of collaborative R&I projects, access EU funding opportunities, strengthen R&I management and technology transfer capacities, and contribute to evidence-based policy reforms and digital and green transformation. ● Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results: small grants aimed at implementing joint activities to support R&I, regulatory, or societal uptake of results. ● Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects: small grants aimed at implementing people-to-people cooperation projects with and within enlargement countries. For a more detailed description and examples of eligible activities, please check Annex I.

Number of grants and total funding available	We will support up to 45 Projects in this Open Call: • up to 15 projects under the Small Grants for Joint Regional Innovation Actions, • up to 10 projects under the Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results, and • up to 20 mobility grants under the Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects. The total budget available for this Open Call is EUR 300,000. POLICY ENLARGE expects to select an indicative number of proposals under each Cut-off Date (up to 4 under Funding Instrument #1, up to 3 under Funding Instrument #2, and up to 5 under Funding Instrument #3). The project aims to select at least 1 Project per enlargement country. However, the final number of selected proposals, the distribution across countries, and the Cut-off Dates themselves may be flexibly adjusted based on the quantity and quality of applications and available budget. Any unused budget or places will be transferred to subsequent Cut-off Dates.
Duration of the Support Programme	The Grant is offered together with the POLICY ENLARGE Support Programme. Our Programme lasts up to 6 months.
Support Programme	Our Support Programme covers the implementation of the selected Third Party Projects under the three POLICY ENLARGE Funding Instruments. The Support Programme is divided into two main stages over the 6 months. Third-party projects will receive their grant in instalments upon the successful completion of each stage. For more details on the exact payment schedule and how each project's progress will be evaluated, please refer to the Payment Conditions and Milestones Review chapters.
Ground rules and formal requirements	1. **Submission deadline:** Only proposals submitted through the online form https://opportunities.getonepass.eu/opportunities/policy-enlarge before the relevant Cut-off Date will be considered. 2. **Language requirement:** Proposals must be written in English. If mandatory sections are in another language, the proposal will be rejected. Non-mandatory sections in another language will not be evaluated, but the proposal will remain valid. 3. **Data accuracy:** The information you provide must be correct, complete, and allow proper evaluation. Extra material provided by you that was not requested in the form will not be considered. Although we may use other resources to verify that the provided data is true. 4. **Completeness:** Ensure all required fields are filled. Proposals cannot be modified after submission, unless there's an error in the administrative data (e.g., contact info). For corrections, email us with the proposal ID. 5. **European dimension:** Your proposal should align with EU goals and contribute to creating a positive impact within the EU, in particular by supporting the integration of enlargement countries into EU Research and Innovation actions and policy making. 6. **Conflicts of interest:** We will check for any conflicts of interest between applicants and Consortium partners. POLICY ENLARGE

	partners, their affiliated entities, and their employees cannot participate. Each case of conflict will be reviewed individually. Former employees and associates shall also be excluded if they were involved in the project execution at any stage. 7. **Financial stability:** Entities under liquidation, in financial difficulty, or excluded from receiving EU funding are not eligible. We also exclude companies in bankruptcy. 8. **Original work:** Execution of your project should not violate third-party IPR. It must be based on your intellectual property or you must be allowed to use third-party rights. IPR to the project can not be subject to any dispute. 9. **AI content:** The use of AI tools to improve clarity and structure is permitted, provided the content remains accurate and fact-based. Applications may be rejected if found to be AI-generated and lacking a factual foundation. All submissions must be authentic reflections of the project, and the applicant team must evidence the technical and operational capacity required for implementation. Providing unverifiable or non-authentic information is grounds for immediate rejection. 10. **Other requirements:** each third party may not benefit from more than one POLICY ENLARGE Funding Instrument / Grant. The exception to this rule may be applicable in case of large entities like Universities, Public authorities, if different departments are engaged in the activities. The amount entities receive through the POLICY ENLARGE Funding Instruments cannot be higher than EUR 60,000. 11. **Gender Equality Plan (GEP):** Public bodies, universities, and research organisations from EU or Associated countries must have a GEP. **Acceptance of rules:** By applying, you agree to the Open Call Terms and Conditions outlined in this document.
More info about POLICY ENLARGE	You can find more information about our Project page on https://enlargement-infohub.eu/theme/policy-enlarge/. Open call is managed by FundingBox Accelerator sp. z o.o., and organised by the POLICY ENLARGE Consortium partners. All documents - including the template of the Sub-grant Agreement - can be found here: https://opportunities.getonepass.eu/opportunities/policy-enlarge .

Table 1: Basic conditions of the open call

3. Submission and evaluation process

Only proposals submitted through the online form https://opportunities.getonepass.eu/opportunities/policy-enlarge before the relevant Cut-off date will be considered. You will receive an email confirmation once the form has been successfully submitted. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please contact us immediately.

Our evaluation process is transparent, fair and equal to all participants. We will evaluate your project in a few phases described below. We will inform you about the results of the evaluation as soon as they become available.

3.1. Initial Check

After the closure of the open call, the system will review your proposal to ensure it meets the Call Terms and Conditions (section 1). This check will be based on the declarations in your proposal.

The projects that do not comply with those criteria will be excluded and marked as ineligible. After the evaluation process, all applicants will receive information about the results.

3.2. Pre-scoring

The Selection Committee might decide to apply Pre-scoring in case of a large number of applications on the relevant Cut-off Date and Funding Instrument. Proposals will be automatically scored based on specific criteria related to the selected Funding Instrument:

- Excellence & entity profile (up to 20 points): evaluating the type of entities involved in the consortium, their complementary strengths, and the added value the partners or host organisation bring to the cross-border cooperation.
- Impact (up to 20 points): expected use of the project output or transfer-back of knowledge, and its direct link with Research and Innovation or policy needs in enlargement countries.
- Implementation & talent (up to 20 points): evaluating the talent, specific skills, and proven experience of the core team assigned to execute the project, as well as the gender balance and readiness of the proposed work plan or secondment.

As an applicant, choose the option that best fits your project for each criterion and confirm all your statements are true. We will check them during the next phases. If we identify false information, we may reject the proposal.

Each pre-scoring question (2 questions per criterion) will be scored from 0 to 10 points. Your project can earn up to 60 points. The top applications, up to twice the number of proposals expected to be funded under the relevant Cut-off Date and Funding Instrument, will move on to the next phase.

Ties will be solved using the following criteria, listed in order of priority:

- The highest score obtained in Implementation and Budget;
- The highest score obtained in Impact;
- The highest score obtained in Excellence.

3.3. External Evaluation

Eligible proposals will be evaluated by 2 independent experts using predefined award criteria:

- **EXCELLENCE:** Ambition of the proposed third-party project, including its contribution to closer links between research and innovation and to institutional cooperation producing high-quality knowledge underpinning economic and societal solutions. The evaluators will also assess the level of innovation, the added value and contribution of the project to enlargement countries, and the soundness of the approach and credibility of the proposed methodology. For Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects, the extent and quality of the accompanying activities at the host institution, such as training, capacity building and soft skills development, will also be considered.
- **IMPACT:** Market relevance and relevance to the regional, economy-level or local policy context, including, where relevant, the indicative R&I policy priorities and challenges listed in Annex 2. The evaluators will assess how effectively the project enables enlargement countries to better internationalise and integrate into EU Research and Innovation actions and policy making. Environmental and social impact will also be considered, including the contribution to closer integration with EU priorities, notably the Green Deal and digital transformation, with emphasis on research, innovation and knowledge transfer. For Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects, the contribution to joint follow-up measures, long-term cooperation, career perspectives and skills development of secondees will also be assessed.
- **IMPLEMENTATION:** Management and leadership qualities of the team, ability to carry through the proposed ideas, cross-border composition, background and skills base, and gender balance. The evaluators will also assess the quality and effectiveness of the resources assigned to achieve the objectives, work plan and deliverables proposed, including the estimated budget. For Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects, hosting arrangements and allocation of resources will also be considered.

Each criterion will be scored on a scale from 0 to 5, with evaluators providing individual reports and scores based on these criteria. Once the Individual Evaluation Reports are submitted, the final score for each criterion will be calculated as the average of the individual assessments provided by each evaluator on each criterion. The final score per application will be calculated as the sum of the final scores for each criterion.

For each criterion, the minimum threshold is 3 out of 5 points. **The maximum total score will be 15 points, with a minimum total threshold of 10 points.**

In case of major deviations between the two evaluations of more than 5 points in the total evaluation, a third evaluator will be engaged, and the review that differs the most from the mean of the three reviews will be discarded.

As a result of this phase, an Independent Evaluation Ranking List will be produced for each Funding Instrument.

Ties will be solved using the following criteria, listed in order of priority:

1. The highest score obtained in Section Impact;
2. Other factors related to the objectives of the Open Call and the need to ensure a balanced selection across enlargement countries and Funding Instruments. In the case of Funding Instrument #3, intra-enlargement cooperation will be prioritised where relevant.

3. Gender balance among the personnel responsible for carrying out the activities;

3.4. Consensus Meeting

The Selection Committee will review and discuss the results of the previous evaluation stage. The Selection Committee will aim to reach consensus on the list of proposals to be selected. If consensus cannot be achieved, the decision will be taken by a two-thirds majority vote

The Selection Committee may be supported, if needed, by external experts, advisors or other Consortium members involved in the follow-up of third-party projects. These participants will take part in an advisory capacity, with voice but without vote.

The final decision will be made based on the evaluation results. During the Consensus Meeting, the Selection Committee will review and discuss the highest-ranked proposals under the relevant Cut-off Date and Funding Instrument. This process will result in a list of proposals selected for funding and, where relevant, a reserve list.

To support balanced participation across enlargement countries, proposals may be grouped or tagged according to the enlargement countries involved in each proposal. This country participation overview may be used by the Selection Committee when preparing the final list of selected proposals, taking into account the cumulative portfolio of projects selected across previous and current Cut-off Dates.

Keep in mind that although the highest-scoring proposals are usually chosen for funding, the Selection Committee can reject a candidate for valid reasons, such as misalignment with POLICY ENLARGE objectives, goals and scope, limited potential impact, commercial competition issues, serious ethical concerns, or possible conflicts of interest. In this case, the choice may pass to the next-ranked proposal.

The exact number of proposals approved will be decided based on the overall quality of the proposals, the available budget, the limits applicable to each Funding Instrument, and the need to ensure a balanced selection across enlargement countries.

4. Formal check & Agreement signature

Finalists will undergo a formal check to confirm their legal status and eligibility (e.g., registration document, financial documents, ownership structure, tax ID, etc.). Therefore, we will ask you to provide documents to confirm all the details.

To confirm your formal status, we may ask the applicants for: the entity's registration document, the legal representation document (optionally POA), tax ID number, financial statements, Bank Identification Form, Gender Equality Plan where applicable, and other documents in case of doubts raised during the checks. This list is not exhaustive.

For Funding Instrument #3, additional documents may be requested to confirm the status, affiliation and eligibility of the secondee(s), sending organisation(s) and host organisation(s).

Documents must be provided within the given deadline. If you don't deliver the requested documents on time, without a clear and reasonable justification, we will have to exclude you from further formal assessment.

After passing this check, we will invite you to sign the Sub-grant Agreement with the POLICY ENLARGE Consortium to officially participate in the programme.

5. After Sub-Grant Agreement signature

5.1. Payment conditions

The Grant will be paid as a lump sum and will not be linked to the reimbursement of actual costs incurred. Payments will be made upon successful completion and approval of the stages and deliverables defined in the Individual Follow-up Plan developed at the beginning of the Support Programme.

Payments are scheduled in tranches as follows:

- **Stage 1: Individual Follow-up Plan** - 25% of the Grant Amount by month 1, after approval of the Individual Follow-up Plan.
- **Stage 2: Final deliverable** - 75% of the Grant Amount by month 6, after approval of the final deliverable.

5.2. Progress evaluation

We pay upon the delivery of the agreed results - not upon delivery of certain receipts. Therefore, Consortium Partners, gathered in the Selection Committee, will evaluate your progress regularly.

Payment milestone	Explanation

Stage 1: Individual Follow-up Plan	Within the first month of the Support Programme, you will prepare an Individual Follow-up Plan, based on the presented proposal, outlining the final budget, KPIs and deliverables for performance assessment. The Individual Follow-up Plan will be evaluated by the Selection Committee, taking into account Deliverable quality (90%) and Deadline compliance (10%). Each criterion will be scored from 0 to 10, and the final score will be calculated based on the weights indicated. A score of 7 points or more is required to continue in the programme.
Stage 2: Final Deliverable	Before the final payment, the Selection Committee will review your progress. Performance will be evaluated based on: - Deliverables quality (30%); - KPIs (60%); - Deadline compliance (10%). Each criterion will be scored from **0 to 10**, and the final score will be calculated based on the weights indicated. A score of **7 points** or more is required to successfully complete the programme. For more details, please check the template of the Sub-grant Agreement.

Table 2: Payment milestones

The final score will be calculated based on the weight of each criterion.

A threshold of 7 points is required to continue in the programme. Third-party projects that perform as expected, will receive the corresponding part of the grant as a lump sum. Those not reaching the expected performance, will receive additional time for completion, will receive a reduced grant (if less than 7 points grant will be reduced following the scheme - 6-6,99 points - 25% reduction, 5-5,99 points - 50% reduction, less than 5 points - exclusion without payment) or will be invited to leave the program without receiving the corresponding payments, depending on individual situation.

6. Contact us

If you have any questions about our application process, feel free to reach out to our helpdesk at policyenlarge.helpdesk@fundingbox.com.

Please note that responses are given individually and do not change these Terms; they are provided for informational purposes only.

In case of any technical issues or problems, please include the following information in your message:

- your username, phone number and email address;
- details of the specific problem, such as error messages you encountered, bug description, i.e. if a dropdown list isn't working, etc.; and
- screenshots of the problem.

7. Complaints

If you believe there was an error in one of the evaluation phases, you may submit a complaint within three (3) calendar days after sending the results to you. Send it to policyenlarge.helpdesk@fundingbox.com in English and include:

- your contact details, including email;
- the subject of your complaint;
- evidence of the specific issue.

Please note that we will review only complaints related to:

- errors in the process caused by our staff;
- technical issues beyond the applicant's control;
- clear human or mechanical errors made by our staff;
- incorrectly marked statements, minor clerical errors, and obvious typographical mistakes.

Please note that we will not review complaints related to the content of the expert evaluations.

Complaints will be reviewed within seven (7) calendar days. If more time is needed, we will inform you via email. Anonymous complaints or those with incomplete information will not be considered.

8. Final provisions

Any issues not covered by these Terms and Conditions are governed by Polish law, Horizon Europe Programme rules, and EU grant regulations.

We make our best effort to keep all provided data confidential; however, for the avoidance of doubt, you are solely responsible for indicating your confidential or sensitive information as such. Please be aware that your application form will be shared with the external evaluators and POLICY ENLARGE Consortium partners.

You retain ownership of your intellectual property rights (IPR).

The signature of the Sub-grant Agreement is the initial condition to establish any obligations among applicants and any Consortium partners, with respect to the obligation of confidentiality of the application. The Sub-grant Agreement will include a set of obligations towards the European Commission, for example: promoting the project and giving visibility to the EU funding, maintaining confidentiality, and understanding potential controls by the EC/ECA, EPPO, and OLAF.

Please be aware that eligibility criteria will be checked throughout the process, including a final review and support programme.

In the event of any discrepancies between these Terms and their Annexes, the Terms shall prevail.

The POLICY ENLARGE Consortium reserves the right to cancel or modify the call at any time, informing applicants accordingly.

Need more help? Contact us at policyenlarge.helpdesk@fundingbox.com, and we'll be happy to assist.

Annex 1: Technical Annex – Project scope and eligible activities

The POLICY ENLARGE Open Call targets cross-border cooperation, collaborative uptake of results and people-to-people cooperation with and within enlargement countries. The Open Call includes three Funding Instruments.

Supported activities must be realistic, proportional to the size of the grant and implementable within a maximum period of 6 months.

Funding Instrument #1: Small Grants for Joint Regional Innovation Actions

Funding Instrument #1 supports joint actions supporting stakeholders from enlargement countries to develop collaborative R&I projects, access EU funding opportunities, strengthen R&I management and technology transfer capacities, and contribute to evidence-based policy reforms and digital and green transformation

Funding Instrument #1 supports joint regional innovation actions from enlargement countries to better internationalise and integrate into EU Research and Innovation actions and policy making.These grants act as catalyst to integrate participants into the European research and innovation ecosystem, thereby establishing a solid baseline of mutual cooperation. These joint innovation actions are intended to prepare for future, larger collaborative projects or activities to support the alignment with EU priorities. Projects must focus on small-scale, realistic, and innovative actions that promote regional integration.

For Funding Instrument #1: Small Grants for Joint Regional Innovation Actions: **consortia including at least two independent legal entities, each established in a different enlargement country are elegible**. The participating entities can be Companies, Research Organisations and Academia Research Groups, Non-profit entities, Digital Innovation Hubs /European Digital Innovation Hubs, and others relevant R&I actors.

Eligible activities include:

- **Joint R&I Small-Scale Innovation Actions**: small-scale actions supporting business-academia cooperation across enlargement countries. At least one entity from academia and one from the business sector should apply and cooperate.
- **Joint Innovation Actions for collaborative projects**: actions helping stakeholders from enlargement countries understand and access R&I funding programmes, such as – but not exclusively – Horizon Europe (e.g. RIA, IA projects or calls under Pillar III). Participants can organise different activities that contribute to building cooperation projects.
- **Joint R&I Capacity Building and Policy Support:** Technical assistance, training, workshops, and peer-learning initiatives between enlargement countries. Supported activities can focus on improving Research and Innovation (R&I) management, or technology transfer processes, or digital

skills, and/or facilitating R&I policy reforms (including evidence-based policymaking), such as the Green Deal and the digital transformation.

Examples of expected outputs under Funding Instrument #1 may include:

- cooperation roadmap between partners from different enlargement countries;
- small-scale joint innovation action report;
- capacity-building materials;
- joint workshop report with conclusions and follow-up steps;
- technology transfer or innovation management roadmap;

- joint concept note for a future Horizon Europe or other EU-funded proposal;
- proposal preparation roadmap for a larger joint action.

Funding Instrument #2: Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results

Funding Instrument #2 supports joint activities between enlargement countries' stakeholders to support Research and Innovation, regulatory or societal uptake of results.

For Funding Instrument #2: Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results: **consortia including at least two independent legal entities, each established in a different enlargement country**. The participating entities can be Companies, Research Organisations and Academia Research Groups, Non-profit entities, Digital Innovation Hubs /European Digital Innovation Hubs, and others relevant R&I actors.

Eligible activities include:

- **Joint projects to integrate research findings into policies:** small-scale pilot projects demonstrating the practical application and societal benefits of R&I results in a real-world setting.
- **Joint projects to apply research results into society:** small projects involving end-users, citizens or specific communities in the development and validation of R&I solutions, ensuring relevance and increasing the likelihood of adoption.
- **Other joint uptake of results activities** aimed at supporting Research and Innovation, regulatory or societal uptake of results in enlargement countries.

Examples of expected outputs under Funding Instrument #2 may include:

- Joint uptake roadmap for research results;
- Joint policy brief or policy recommendation note;
- Cross-border stakeholder validation report;
- Joint societal uptake plan;
- Common regulatory uptake note;
- Cross-border end-user engagement report;

- Joint community validation report;
- Joint practical guidance note for applying research results;
- Joint action plan for wider adoption of research results;
- Joint dissemination and exploitation roadmap.
- Joint publication of the uptake of results in a scientific journal.

Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects

Funding Instrument #3 supports mobility programmes designed to support the implementation of people-to-people cooperation projects with and within enlargement countries.

For Funding Instrument #3: Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects: **consortia including participation of Researchers, Artists, or Entrepreneurs - affiliated with independent legal entities-**, established either in different Enlargement Countries or in an Enlargement Country and an EU Member State.

Eligible activities include:

- **Mobility programme for Researchers** from Higher Education Institutions and R&I organisations.
- **Mobility programme for Creative Professionals** from Creative Industries.
- **Mobility programme for Entrepreneurial Talent / Staff** from European Incubation Networks.
- **Other people-to-people cooperation projects** supporting partnerships between higher education institutions, creative professionals and industries, and European incubation networks for creativity-driven innovation.
- **Other people-to-people cooperation projects** supporting partnerships between the previous categories.

Funding Instrument #3 may support intra-enlargement secondments or cross-enlargement secondments. Secondments are the mechanisms through which mobility is implemented.

Intra-enlargement secondments involve two different enlargement countries. They require a reciprocal exchange, where one person from one enlargement country undertakes a secondment at a host organisation in another enlargement country, and an individual from the host organisation completes a secondment at the sending organisation. The duration of each secondment is 15 to 30 days per secondee. This type of collaboration is particularly encouraged, as it fosters shared learning, resource transfer and stronger relationships between enlargement countries.

Cross-enlargement secondments involve one enlargement country and one eligible host country. In this case, only a person from an enlargement country undertakes a secondment at a host entity in an EU Member State, its Overseas Countries and Territories, or a Horizon Europe Associated Country. The duration is limited to 15 days.

Research and innovation in both types of secondments, the proposed cooperation has to address issues related to research and innovation in enlargement countries in their programming and implementation.

Funding Instrument #3 may support people-to-people cooperation projects involving:

- Researchers affiliated with Research Organisations or Academia Research Groups established in enlargement countries;
- artists, designers, cultural heritage experts, media professionals and other creative individuals belonging to Creative Industries established in enlargement countries;
- entrepreneurs, start-up founders, innovators from SMEs or start-ups established in enlargement countries;
- staff from European incubation networks within enlargement countries.

All mobility projects must be cross-border, short-term and address Research and Innovation issues in enlargement countries.

The proposal should describe the expected activities during and after the secondment, including where relevant and proportionate :

- training;
- mentoring;
- capacity building;
- access to methods, networks, infrastructures or facilities;
- structured meetings with relevant stakeholders;
- peer-learning activities;
- knowledge transfer activities;
- transfer-back session or report after the mobility;
- follow-up cooperation roadmap.

Examples of expected outputs under Funding Instrument #3 may include:

- secondment report;
- transfer-back report;
- training or mentoring material jointly developed;
- cooperation roadmap;
- follow-up action plan or roadmap;
- skills development report;
- short methodology or practice note;
- joint concept note for future cooperation;
- stakeholder or network engagement report.

Quality expectations

Applicants should ensure that their proposed activities are clear, focused and proportionate to the available grant and timeframe.

A strong proposal should:

- clearly explain the cooperation needed;
- show why the proposed partners or host organisation are relevant;
- demonstrate a clear link with Research and Innovation needs in enlargement countries;
- describe realistic activities and outputs;
- include a credible work plan;
- explain how the results will be used after the project;
- contribute to the stronger integration of enlargement countries into EU Research and Innovation actions and policy making.

Annex 2. Indicative R&I policy priorities and challenges in enlargement countries

Since priorities evolve, the table is illustrative and should not be interpreted as exhaustive or mandatory and as a consequence, proposals addressing other relevant Research and Innovation needs in enlargement countries may also be considered, provided they are consistent with the objectives of the Open Call.

Enlargement country	Main strategic / policy focus areas	Indicative R&I policy challenges and needs	Relevant POLICY ENLARGE capacity-building topics
Albania	RDI / Science; S3; Digital; Energy; Health; Industry / Technology.	Outdated research infrastructure; low innovation capacity; low private-sector engagement in R&I; brain drain; weak international cooperation; fragmented digital ecosystem.	Regulatory impact assessment; S3 implementation; Open Science and data management; innovation management and TTO set-up; Gender Equality Plan development.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	RDI / Science; S3 in progress; Open Science; Higher Education; Industry / Technology.	Complex R&I framework; limited monitoring and impact assessment; weak coordination across sectors and stakeholders; low implementation of Open Science; regional disparities in R&D; limited R&D investment; outdated research infrastructure; low innovation capacity; poor academia–industry links; limited administrative expertise and capacity to support RDI; inadequate digital infrastructure.	Support for Horizon Europe proposal preparation; capacity building in research management and administration; academia–industry links; assistance in co-creating policy documents; support to Open Science.
Georgia	RDI / Science; Higher Education; Economic / regional development.	Limited monitoring and impact assessment; outdated research infrastructure; poor academia–industry links; scarce technology transfer and valorisation tools; limited administrative expertise and capacity to support RDI.	Cooperation between higher education and businesses; role of universities in innovation ecosystems; Green Deal; digital transformation and ICT/digital skills.

Kosovo	RDI / Science; S3 in progress; Digital; Higher Education; Entrepreneurship / start-up / SME; Economic / regional development.	Limited monitoring and impact assessment; weak coordination across sectors and stakeholders; outdated research infrastructure; poor academia–industry links; limited commercialisation of research results; brain drain; limited administrative expertise and capacity to support RDI; weak international cooperation; low participation in EU Framework Programmes; inadequate digital infrastructure; limited financing for companies; low national funding for R&D and education.	Support to National Science Programme implementation and monitoring; Open Days on Horizon Europe and EU Framework opportunities; Green Action Space initiatives supporting the twin transition; inputs and monitoring on key policy documents.
Moldova	RDI / Science; S3; Digital; Industry / Technology.	Limited monitoring and impact assessment; weak coordination across sectors and stakeholders; low implementation of Open Science; regional disparities in R&D; outdated research infrastructure; scarce technology transfer and valorisation tools; limited commercialisation of research results; low participation in EU Framework Programmes; fragmented digital ecosystem; inadequate digital infrastructure; low national funding for R&D and education.	Research management and grant application preparation; knowledge valorisation and technology transfer; learning best practices from EU institutions; fostering international cooperation.
Montenegro	RDI / Science; S3 in progress; Digital; Higher Education.	Weak coordination across sectors and stakeholders; poor academia–industry links; scarce technology transfer and valorisation tools; low private-sector engagement in R&I; brain drain; weak international cooperation; inadequate digital infrastructure; limited financing for companies; low national funding for R&D and education.	University–industry collaboration and the role of innovation ecosystems; knowledge transfer between academia and industry; start-up and incubation support; digital transformation.

North Macedonia	RDI / Science; S3; Higher Education; Entrepreneurship / start-up / SME; Industry / Technology.	Too complex R&I framework; limited monitoring and impact assessment; weak coordination across sectors and stakeholders; limited R&D investment; outdated research infrastructure; poor academia–industry links; scarce technology transfer and valorisation tools; low private-sector engagement in R&I; brain drain; limited administrative expertise and capacity to support RDI; weak international cooperation; low national funding for R&D and education.	Business R&D and innovation commercialisation; digital and green transformation; gender integration in R&I; R&I ecosystem networking and cooperation.
Serbia	RDI / Science; S3; Entrepreneurship / start-up / SME; Industry / Technology; AI; Economic / regional development.	Weak coordination across sectors and stakeholders; regional disparities in R&D; limited R&D investment; outdated research infrastructure; low innovation capacity; poor academia–industry links; limited commercialisation of research results; brain drain; limited administrative expertise and capacity to support RDI; weak international cooperation; limited financing for companies.	Science–industry collaboration frameworks; knowledge valorisation and ERA integration; green and digital transitions in R&I; research management and project development skills.
Türkiye	RDI / Science; Industry / Technology; Economic / regional development.	Limited monitoring and impact assessment; regional disparities in R&D.	Use of existing programmes such as IPA, EBRD and EIF for Framework Programme participation; alignment of national/regional R&I strategies with the European Research Area; access to finance and support for start-ups/SMEs; digital skills and emerging technologies.
Ukraine	Digital; Economic / regional development.	Limited R&D investment; fragmented digital ecosystem; low participation in EU Framework Programmes.	Capacity building in monitoring and evaluation; strengthening academia–industry links; support to the development of a Smart Specialisation Strategy.

Annex 3: Glossary of terms and acronyms

Term / Acronym	Definition / Meaning
AC	Associated Country to Horizon Europe.
Applicant	A legal entity or consortium submitting a proposal to the POLICY ENLARGE Open Call.
Beneficiary	A selected applicant that has passed the evaluation and formal check and has signed the Sub-grant Agreement.
CoD / Cut-off Date	A specific deadline within the continuously open POLICY ENLARGE Open Call. After each Cut-off Date, proposals submitted before that date are evaluated.
DIH	Digital Innovation Hub.
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
EC	European Commission.
EDIH	European Digital Innovation Hub.
EIF	European Investment Fund.
Enlargement Countries	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine.
EU	European Union.
FI / Funding Instrument	One of the three POLICY ENLARGE funding schemes: FI#1 Small Grants for Joint Regional Innovation Actions; FI#2 Small Grants for Collaborative Uptake of Results; and FI#3 Small Grants for People-to-People Cooperation Projects.
FSTP	Financial Support to Third Parties. It refers to the financial support provided by POLICY ENLARGE to selected third-party projects through the Open Call.
GEP	Gender Equality Plan.
HEI	Higher Education Institution.
IFP / Individual Follow-up Plan	The plan prepared at the beginning of the Support Programme, defining the final budget, deliverables and performance indicators.

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IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator.
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories.
R&I	Research and Innovation.
RDI	Research, Development and Innovation.
S3	Smart Specialisation Strategy.
Secondee	A person undertaking a secondment under Funding Instrument #3.
SGA / Sub-grant Agreement	The agreement signed between the selected applicant and the POLICY ENLARGE Consortium before participation in the Support Programme.
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise. An SME will be considered as such if it complies with the European Commission's Recommendation 2003/361/EC. As a summary, the criteria defining an SME are: headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250; and annual turnover less or equal to EUR 50 million, or annual balance sheet total less or equal to EUR 43 million. The figures of partners and linked enterprises should also be considered as stated in the SME user guide.
Third-party project	A project selected and funded through the POLICY ENLARGE Open Call.
TTO	Technology Transfer Office.

Table 3: Acronyms

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