TRACE

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH IN ACTION
FOR CANCER IN REGIONAL ECOSYSTEMS

TRACE OPEN CALL

Annex 1 | Guide for Applicants

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1 What is TRACE?

TRACE – Translational Research in Action for Cancer in Regional Ecosystems is funded under the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme and aims to bridge the gap between research and practice in cancer awareness and prevention, with a particular focus on reducing health inequalities and improving outcomes for underserved populations.

The foundations for TRACE are rooted in the European Commission's (EC) Mission on Cancer, which aims to reduce the impact of cancer across the continent. By supporting projects on understanding cancer, prevention and early detection, diagnosis and innovative treatments, and quality of life for patients and their families, the Mission aims to save millions of lives and improve the quality of life for cancer patients and survivors. Previous calls for funding have touched relevant aspects of the mission but did not fully address translational research or public health initiatives, which require further support.

With over 40% of the cancer burden being linked to unhealthy lifestyles, metabolic risks, and poor environmental conditions, a public health perspective is critical to targeting vulnerable populations and reducing the overall cancer burden effectively. Several key contributors and risk factors linked to cancer disproportionately affect lower-income and less-educated populations. Addressing inequalities requires a robust public health approach, focusing on comprehensive prevention strategies, including enhanced access to health information, community engagement through primary healthcare, schools, and workplaces, and improving health literacy.

TRACE aims to bridge the research-to-practice gap in regional ecosystems around three universities (based in Portugal, Poland and Serbia) on effective cancer awareness and prevention, with a focus on underserved populations, by collecting and analysing evidence on their needs that can swiftly inform decision-making and promote a more equitable access to health.

The three regional ecosystems mobilise higher education institutions, healthcare actors, civil society organisations, industry, innovators and other regional stakeholders. Through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration, the project seeks to support the development, testing and uptake of evidence-based and innovative approaches that respond to locally identified needs in cancer prevention, screening, health literacy and care.

A relevant part of TRACE is dedicated to Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP). Through its Open Call, the project will support third party projects that address the specific challenges and objectives identified within the Portuguese, Polish and Serbian ecosystems, helping to translate knowledge and innovative solutions into practical approaches with tangible regional impact.

Further information about TRACE, its objectives, activities, consortium and regional ecosystems is available on the TRACE project website.

2 What is the TRACE Open Call offer?

The **TRACE Open Call for Community-driven Translational Cancer Solutions** (TRACE OC) is a competitive process through which eligible applicants can apply to receive financial support and participate in the TRACE programme. F6S Network Ireland Limited (F6S IE) will act as the OC Manager and Treasurer (funding partner of the OC).

Applications to the OC will be accepted from **25 November 2026 to 26 January 2027 at 17:00 CET (Brussels time)**. Following the evaluation and selection process, successful applicants will be invited to sign a Sub-grant Agreement and begin their participation in the TRACE programme.

Through the OC, TRACE will select a total of 15 projects, with five projects funded in each of the three TRACE ecosystems: Portugal, Poland and Serbia. Each selected project will receive up to **€40.000** (and a maximum of €40.000 per entity), representing a total of €600.000 in Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP).

The OC will fund innovative projects that respond to the specific cancer-related needs and challenges identified within each ecosystem, respectively through:

- **Portugal** (*ECO-01–Portugal*): Innovative approaches to cancer-related health promotion, prevention, early detection and screening, and to improving the quality of life and wellbeing of people affected by cancer, with particular attention to health inequalities, health literacy, equitable access and underserved populations.
- **Poland** (*ECO-02–Poland*): Innovative, evidence-based and interdisciplinary solutions that enhance cancer awareness, prevention and quality of oncology care through one of two complementary tracks: (1) Track A – Art in Cancer Education and Prevention, (2) Track B - Wellbeing of Oncology Healthcare Professionals.
- **Serbia** (*ECO-03–Serbia*): Innovative approaches to improve cancer screening awareness, availability, accessibility and efficiency and support cancer survivorship (wellbeing/quality of life), including awareness/prevention initiatives, technical solutions and tools facilitating reliable information provision, efficient screening and cancer survivorship support.

Further details on the challenges, expected solutions and requirements applicable to each ecosystem are provided in **Section 3.5**.

Selected projects will implement their activities over a period of 12 months, with the tentative start date for the programme being May 2027. During implementation, beneficiaries will participate in regular monitoring activities and will have access to relevant TRACE expertise, resources, workshops, webinars, mentoring and key ecosystem stakeholders to support the successful implementation and impact of their projects.

Relevant links and contacts

- **Project website:** https://tracecancer.eu/
- **Open Call application form:** https://www.f6s.com/trace-cancer-open-call
- **Contact us:** trace.opencalls@f6s.com

3 Who can apply and how?

3.1 Types of applicants

The TRACE OC is looking for applicants capable of developing and implementing innovative, evidence-based solutions that address the specific cancer-related challenges and needs identified within the Portuguese, Polish and Serbian ecosystems.

Applicants must have the relevant expertise, resources and capacity to successfully implement their proposed project and contribute to the objectives and expected impact of the TRACE ecosystem to which they are applying.

TRACE encourages interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches that bring together relevant expertise and support the translation of knowledge, evidence and innovation into practical solutions with tangible benefits for citizens, patients, communities and healthcare ecosystems.

3.2 Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants for the TRACE OC are legal entities with the relevant expertise and capacity to develop and implement solutions addressing the objectives of the call. Applications may be submitted by:

- Single legal entities.
- Consortia of (a maximum) two legal entities.
    - Each consortium must consist of two different types of applicants to ensure project interdisciplinarity (e.g. two SMEs or research organisations cannot apply as a consortium).
    - All consortium members must meet the defined applicant and eligibility requirements.

Depending on the ecosystem and the proposed solution, the accepted types of applicants are:

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups [*select: SME*];
- Research and academic organisations [*select: Academia*];
- Healthcare and public health organisations and providers [*select: Health*];
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations, including patient and community organisations, grass roots and local organisations/ communities [*select: NGO and Civil Society*];
- Municipalities and other similar and/or relevant public bodies [*select: Municipalities and Public Bodies*];

Applicants are also required to:

- Have a valid VAT, which is required and will be verified as part of the administrative eligibility check.
- For applicants that are exempt from having a VAT number (which must be justified in the application), a registration number is required.

- A PIC number is recommended, but not mandatory at the application stage. A PIC number will be required if the applicant is selected.
- A signed Declaration of Honour and proof of registration (including VAT/ Registration Number) is required from all applicants during the contract preparation phase.
- An SME Declaration is required from all SMEs; please consult the EU SME Definition for details on what constitutes an SME.

Applicants must demonstrate that they possess the appropriate expertise, resources and operational capacity to carry out the proposed activities and achieve the expected results within the project implementation period.

TRACE beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners, including their departments, research groups or other organisational units, are not eligible to apply or receive financial support under this Open Call. Entities subject to EU restrictive measures are also not eligible. Applicants must not be in a situation of actual or potential conflict of interest with the TRACE consortium, evaluators or other persons involved in the selection process.

Applicants, participating alone or in a consortium, can apply to become a stakeholder of the TRACE project under the Regional Ecosystems Creation and Collaboration Frameworks, regardless of being funded or not under this call. Specific eligibility conditions apply. Benefits and requirements of the collaboration framework are separate from the open call.

3.3 Eligible countries

Legal entities established in the following countries are eligible to receive funding:

- European Union Member States.
- Horizon Europe associated countries (those that have signed an agreement with the EU as identified in the HE Programme Guide) according to the list published by the EC at the date of signature of the TRACE Grant Agreement (20 May 2025).

The TRACE Open Call follows the rules applied by the EC for the R&D Programme Horizon Europe in terms of geographical coverage, eligibility, and exclusions, which take precedence.

3.4 Multiple submissions

The following rules apply:

- Applicants can submit a maximum of one application to the TRACE OC, regardless of the selected ecosystem.
- If an applicant submits more applications than the indicated amount, only the first submitted (as registered on the system) will be considered.
- An exception for **research and academic organisations** will apply as they may consist of several groups in one umbrella entity: these entities can submit a maximum of **three** applications, regardless of the ecosystem, if they are from different departments/research groups. This information must be specified in the application form. Regardless of the number of applications submitted, a maximum of one application in which the applicant participates may be funded.

3.5 Types of projects

The TRACE Open Call aims to fund innovative and evidence-based projects that address the specific cancer-related challenges and needs identified within the three TRACE ecosystems and respective challenge areas: Portugal, Poland and Serbia (Table 1). The challenge areas reflect the different contexts, needs, and priorities identified in each country.

The call does not fund purely research-oriented projects. While research activities may be included as supporting components, the primary objective is to develop, implement and/or evaluate practical interventions addressing the challenges of the selected ecosystem.

Applicants are required to select the ecosystem that their proposed project will address and demonstrate how their project and respective solution responds to the specific objectives, needs and expected impact of that ecosystem.

Given the community-focused nature of the call, it is expected that projects and solutions be implemented in a language that facilitates and maximises engagement and participation in the regional ecosystem. Any required reporting must be done in English.

A total of 15 projects will be selected for funding, with five projects selected within each ecosystem.

Table 1. TRACE Open Call Ecosystems

Ecosystem	Focus
ECO-01 - Portugal	**Translating evidence into equitable cancer prevention and early detection.** Support innovative approaches to cancer-related health promotion, prevention, early detection and screening, and to improving the quality of life and wellbeing of people affected by cancer, with particular attention to health inequalities, health literacy, equitable access and underserved populations.
ECO-02 - Poland	**Innovative solutions supporting cancer education, prevention and quality of care.** Support the development and implementation of innovative, evidence-based and interdisciplinary solutions that enhance cancer awareness, prevention and quality of oncology care through two complementary tracks: • ***Track A – Art in Cancer Education and Prevention:*** Using art, design and creative communication methods to raise health awareness, improve cancer prevention literacy and encourage participation in cancer screening programmes. • ***Track B – Wellbeing of Oncology Healthcare Professionals:*** Developing and piloting evidence-based solutions that support the wellbeing of healthcare professionals working in oncology care, with particular emphasis on their potential impact on the quality, organisation and sustainability of patient care

Ecosystem	Focus
ECO-03 - Serbia	**Translating knowledge and technology into accessible and efficient cancer-screening pathways.** Support cancer campaigns and initiatives, solutions for equal access to screening, and AI-driven tools providing reliable cancer information, adapted to their target populations and contributing to prevention, screening awareness, access and efficiency, and cancer survivorship, with particular attention to underserved populations.

The specific scope and requirements of each ecosystem are described in the following sections.

3.5.1 Portugal - Cancer Prevention, Screening and Early Detection, and Quality of Life

Focus

Support innovative approaches that translate evidence and research into practical, community-oriented approaches to cancer prevention, screening and early detection, with particular attention to underserved populations, health literacy, participation and inequalities in access.

Challenge / Need

Portugal has a solid policy base for cancer control, including national strategies, HPV vaccination and organised cervical, breast and colorectal screening, yet inequalities remain regarding prevention, early detection and care. Screening, prevention and early detection access and participation are shaped by socioeconomic and geographical inequalities, low health literacy and awareness, and logistical barriers (e.g. long waiting times and travel costs). Parts of the population such as migrants, rural communities, and older and lower-income populations are often disproportionately affected. As a result, many cancers are lately diagnosed in emergency care rather than through screening. Promising ways forward include culturally adapted information and initiatives to promote prevention, screening and early detection and health literacy.

Scope and Expected Solutions

Projects should propose innovative approaches to promote cancer prevention, screening/early detection, health literacy and/or quality of life of cancer patients and survivors. Solutions may address participation in existing initiatives, emerging approaches for prevention, screening, early detection, health literacy and awareness, and targeted approaches for populations experiencing barriers to access to cancer care. The approaches that may be more valuable would include lung, prostate and stomach cancer, among others.

Expected Impact

Projects should contribute to more equitable access and participation in cancer prevention and screening, particularly among underserved populations. Specific territorial challenges have been identified in Alentejo, parts of the Algarve and Northern Portugal, as well as among specific groups in Lisbon and Tagus Valley.

Specific Requirements

Projects should encourage multi-sectoral collaboration, involving relevant actors such as healthcare providers, academia, third-sector organisations and community groups.

3.5.2 Poland - Innovative Solutions Supporting Cancer Education, Prevention and Quality of Care

Focus

Support the development and implementation of innovative, evidence-based and interdisciplinary solutions that enhance cancer awareness, prevention and quality of oncology care through two complementary tracks:

- **Track A – Art in Cancer Education and Prevention**: Using art, design and creative communication methods to raise health awareness, improve cancer prevention literacy and encourage participation in cancer screening programmes.
- **Track B – Wellbeing of Oncology Healthcare Professionals**: Developing and piloting evidence-based solutions that support the wellbeing of healthcare professionals working in oncology care, with particular emphasis on their potential impact on the quality, organisation and sustainability of patient care.

Challenges / Needs

Cancer prevention and education in Poland face persistent challenges related to health literacy, public engagement and access to clear, accessible and trustworthy information. Traditional communication approaches do not always effectively reach diverse populations, highlighting the need for innovative, creative and inclusive methods of health education. At the same time, healthcare professionals working in oncology face significant emotional, psychological and organisational challenges that may affect their wellbeing and the quality and sustainability of cancer care. Innovative, evidence-based approaches are needed to better support oncology professionals and improve their working environments.

Scope and Expected Solutions

Projects should develop and pilot innovative, interdisciplinary solutions addressing one of the two complementary tracks described above.

Expected Impact

Projects should contribute to improved cancer awareness, health literacy and engagement in preventive behaviours (Track A), or enhanced wellbeing, professional support and working conditions for oncology healthcare professionals, with potential benefits for the quality of cancer care (Track B). Solutions should demonstrate measurable benefits for their target groups and potential for sustainability, replication or scaling to other healthcare or community settings.

Specific Requirements

Projects must be evidence-based, respond to identified needs and demonstrate a user-centred approach. They should involve relevant stakeholders and target groups in proposed solutions. Solutions should ensure accessibility, inclusiveness and compliance with relevant

ethical requirements, where applicable. All projects must include appropriate methods for evaluating and measuring their outcomes.

3.5.3 Serbia - Cancer Screening Awareness, Access and Efficiency

Focus

Support cancer campaigns and initiatives, solutions for equal access to screening, and AI-driven tools providing reliable cancer information, adapted to their target populations and contributing to prevention, screening awareness, access and efficiency, and cancer survivorship, with particular attention to underserved populations.

Challenge / Need

Cancer screening in Serbia faces limitations in geographical coverage, healthcare capacity, public awareness and accessibility. Some municipalities lack screening services, while limited digital literacy among parts of the target population creates additional barriers to information and participation.

Scope and Expected Solutions

Projects should address one or more of three areas: (1) innovative cancer campaigns and initiatives; (2) solutions for improving cancer screening and equal access; and (3) information-processing and AI-driven solutions providing reliable cancer information and/or improving prevention, screening and cancer survivorship (quality of life).

Expected Impact

Projects should contribute to better-informed and more engaged populations, improved access to screening and more efficient screening pathways, including for geographically remote and socially underserved populations.

Specific Requirements

Solutions should be adapted to their intended populations, including people with limited digital literacy, and should demonstrate a clear contribution to one of the following: (1) cancer prevention, (2) screening awareness and access, organisation and/or workflow efficiency, (3) and cancer survivorship (quality of life).

3.5.4 Project focus

In addition to addressing the specific objectives, needs and expected impact, and considering the community-focused nature of the three ecosystems, applications are encouraged to:

- Have a community and person-centric approach and initiatives that may use technology as support.
- Demonstrate multi-sectoral collaboration and capacity to reach relevant target groups.
- Ensure a stronger focus on underserved and more vulnerable populations.
- Demonstrate impact through:
    - Pre- and post-project qualitative assessment of the solution.
    - Organisation of events with and for the targeted community(ies), with video testimonials and media coverage.

3.6 Funding conditions

Any applicant will only be considered for funding once, regardless of the number of applications submitted.

Each selected project will receive up to €40.000 in lump-sum funding. Likewise, the maximum funding per entity is €40.000 in total under this Open Call, irrespective of the number of applications in which it participates. The funding must represent up to 100% of the total project costs (in-kind contributions are not accepted in this OC).

All applications must include a detailed estimation and justification of the planned costs and resources required to implement the proposed activities. The requested resources and associated costs must be appropriate and proportionate to the proposed activities, implementation plan and expected results.

The exact amount of funding will be based on the budget requested in the application and on the assessment of whether the proposed resources and costs are necessary, reasonable and proportionate to the planned 12-month implementation activities. Where requested resources are considered overestimated or insufficiently justified, the amount may be adjusted before signature of the Sub-grant Agreement, without affecting the ranking established by the independent experts.

In the case of a consortium, the two partners must agree on their share of the project budget, considering the defined funding conditions.

Funding is foreseen to support the following categories of costs:

- Project management;
- Research and technical development;
- Equipment;
- Testing and piloting;
- Other goods and services;
- Communication, promotion, and exploitation;
- Travel (if required).

The type of costs that may be reported include human resources, other direct costs, and indirect costs (fixed 25% flat rate of direct costs). Subcontracting is not eligible in this open call.

Any application with a budget above €40.000, cost categories beyond those listed, explicit subcontracting costs, or miscalculated indirect costs may be disqualified.

3.7 Other application requirements and considerations

- **Submission**: Applications must be submitted via https://www.f6s.com/trace-cancer-open-call. Any other submission method will not be accepted.
- **Complete application**: All mandatory form questions must be answered, and all requested documents must be uploaded. Incomplete applications, including an incomplete technical proposal, will be disqualified.
    - Applicants are responsible for ensuring the documents they upload, including the technical proposal annex, are correct and readable.

- A technical proposal with a total number of pages beyond the defined limit may disqualify the full proposal.
- Any change to a document requiring a resubmission must be done within the defined deadline as indicated below.
- Any unreadable/ corrupt documents will be disqualified. Applicants must double check document accessibility before submission.

- **Acceptance of terms**: Applicants must agree to the application's terms and conditions.
- **English language**: All applications and communication with TRACE must be in English. Programme implementation must be done in a language that facilitates and maximises engagement and participation in the regional ecosystem. Any required reporting must be done in English.
- **Document format**: Unless otherwise agreed, all documents in all phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format without printing restrictions.
- **Document naming**: All required documents, including the technical proposal, must include the project acronym. Documents must not include any special characters (e.g. #!+<>^|*) as these may make it unreadable/ corrupt. In such cases, the application may be disqualified and resubmission will not be accepted after the call closure.
- **Deadline:**
  - Failure to submit the application by the submission deadline, regardless of the cause (e.g., network issues, multiple browsers or windows), is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. It is recommended to apply well before the deadline.
  - Resubmissions are possible if the OC deadline has not passed but are only guaranteed if requested by 25 January 2027 (12.00 CET) via trace.opencalls@f6s.com.
  - The deadline may be extended only in case of unforeseen F6S platform technical issues. All applicants will be notified of the new deadline.
- **Review future documents:** Applicants are encouraged to get familiar with the documents that will be required in the contracting phase.
- **Notifications:** Applicants are encouraged to enable F6S notifications for the programme in their profile settings to ensure communications regarding their application are received.
- **Applicants list:** A full list of applicants containing their basic information will be created for statistical and transparency purposes and shared with the EC.
- **Binding information**: In the unlikely occurrence of a contradiction between the information provided via the OC channels (e-mail, webinars or other means) and the information included in the GfA, the latter is binding.
- FSTP practices: Consult EU guidance on good practices for implementing financial support to third parties for further information.

4 How will applications be evaluated and selected?

TRACE will adopt a consistent and transparent evaluation framework in all steps of the evaluation. Figure 1 summarises the open call phases starting from the applications submission phase to the evaluation and selection phase, which leads to the funding programme.

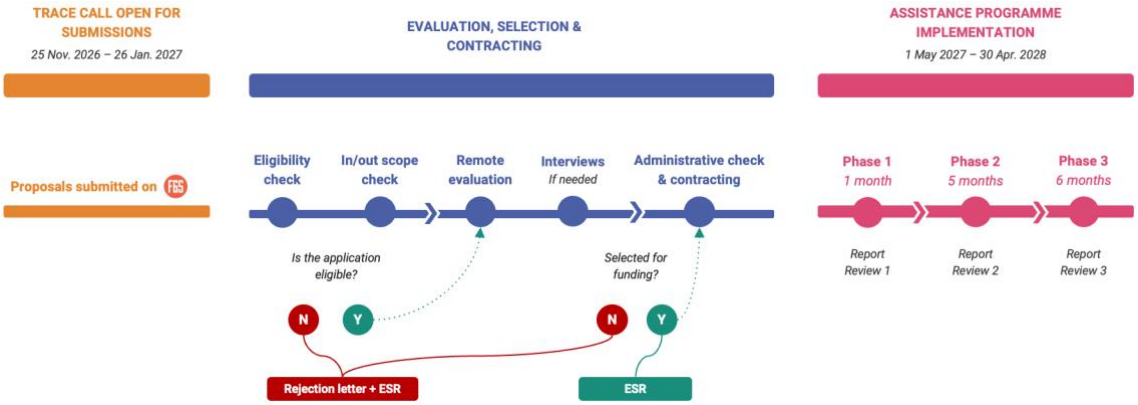

Figure 1. TRACE application and evaluation process

TRACE reserves the right to request at any moment of the process additional information and/or documentation to clarify any doubts regarding the eligibility of the applicant(s) and/or the application.

4.1 Application process

The TRACE Open Call will be published on the EC Funding & Tenders Portal, on the TRACE project website and on other relevant funding websites. The F6S platform will be the only accepted entry point for all applications to the TRACE OC. Registration is required.

Table 2 presents the main phases and indicative timeline of the application and evaluation process. Except for the submission deadline, the dates presented may be subject to change.

Table 2. TRACE Open Call Application Process and Timeline

Phase	Description	Timeline
Application	Applicants complete and submit the application through the TRACE F6S platform, including all required information and supporting documents.	25/11/2026 to 26/01/2027 (17:00 CET)
TRACE OC webinars	General webinar – Register here	02/12/2026 (15:00 CET)
Eligibility & In/Out scope check	The TRACE Consortium performs (1) an internal check of the applications against the eligibility requirements of the OC; (2) an in/out scope check to confirm applications are aligned with the scope and project requirements.	26/01/2027 to 10/02/2027
Application evaluation	Eligible applications are assessed by external independent evaluators against the evaluation criteria defined in these Guidelines. Applications are evaluated and ranked within the relevant TRACE ecosystem.	15/02/2027 to 05/03/2027

Phase	Description	Timeline
Online interviews	Where necessary, applicants may be invited to an online interview to clarify specific aspects of their application and respond to questions raised during the evaluation process.	08/03/2027 to 19/03/2027
Announcement of the results	Applicants are informed of the outcome of the evaluation. Successful applicants will be invited to proceed with the contracting and onboarding process.	By 31/03/2027

The submission deadline for applications is final. All other dates may be subject to change. Any changes to the Open Call timeline will be communicated through the appropriate TRACE Open Call communication channels.

4.2 Eligibility check

An initial eligibility verification will be done to filter out and discard non-eligible applications. An application is only considered eligible if it meets **all the eligibility criteria and requirements** listed in **Section 3**, related with, among others, type of applicant(s), consortium formation, countries, multiple submissions, funding, language, technical proposal.

The eligibility check will establish the list of applications to be evaluated in the next step of the evaluation process. Applications marked as non-eligible (for not meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria) will receive a rejection letter with a justification.

4.3 In/out scope check

The in/out scope check will be done to check and discard applications that are not aligned and do not meet the minimum requirements. The check will be carried out by TRACE consortium partners, using an abstract form with defined questions.

An application is only considered within scope if the description, provided in the relevant section of technical proposal and submitted with the application, clearly addresses and aligns with requirements. In this check, the full proposal will not be evaluated, even if it contains complementary information.

The in/out scope screening will check the following questions:

1. **Access to and participation and engagement commitment of relevant target groups/ communities.** *Applicants must convincingly*:
    - List the target groups/ communities their application/ solution is for and describe their relevance.
    - Describe how they have access to them.
    - Describe how they will ensure their participation in planned activities.
2. **Solution sustainability, including post-project deployment and support commitment.** *Applicants must convincingly:*
    - List and describe key activities that ensure the sustainability of the project and continuous deployment post-project.
    - Describe expected stakeholder commitment to ensure project sustainability.
3. **Capacity to implement**. *Applicants must convincingly:*

- Describe knowledge and capacity linked to the selected ecosystem to implement the project.
- List at least one example of a previous project/ activity aligned with the selected ecosystem and demonstrates the capacity to implement.
- List at least two examples of proven current active channels for regional community engagement (e.g. end-users, key stakeholders).

The criteria to assess these questions will be:

- Each question is answered Yes/No, based only on the information provided in the dedicated section of the technical proposal.
- A full assessment of project quality, impact, sustainability and feasibility will be exclusively evaluated by the external experts (Section 4.4).
- An application is only considered out of scope when it clearly fails one or more of these questions; in case of doubt, it proceeds to the expert evaluation.

The check will establish the final list of applications that proceed to the expert evaluation stage. All applications that are evaluated as out of scope will receive a rejection letter with a justification.

4.4 Expert evaluation

The expert evaluation will be supported by external experts, which will be selected through a call for expressions of interest. The selection will be based on their expertise in the TRACE domains, the ecosystem landscape, and relevant evaluation experience. TRACE partners may propose candidate experts with relevant knowledge of the ecosystem for the pool.

The Expert Evaluation Board (EEB) will consist of the experts selected to be evaluators, which are required to be independent, impartial, and objective. All evaluators will sign a contract, which includes a declaration of confidentiality and the confirmation of the absence of conflicts of interest.

Before the evaluation starts, the TRACE ecosystem partners will provide the evaluators with a briefing on the context, needs and specific requirements of each ecosystem.

TRACE consortium partners will not score, rank or comment on individual applications, and the briefing will be shared with the EC if requested.

4.4.1 Evaluation criteria & scoring

Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of two evaluators from the EEB. Applications will be scored against the criteria defined in Table 3. Note that criteria C1.4A and C1.4B are specific sub-criteria that will be evaluated for applications submitted to Track A or B of the Polish ecosystem only.

Table 3. TRACE Open Call Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Description
C1 - Excellence	• **[C1.1] Alignment, Relevance and Objectives**: Alignment with the selected ecosystem, relevance of the problem addressed, project objectives and expected results and indicators. • **[C1.2] Translational and Evidence-Based Approach**: How the application/ solution builds on existing knowledge, research, and evidence to translate solutions into scientifically and technically sound real-world applications. • **[C1.3] Innovation and User-Centred Value**: The unique added value and innovation of the application compared to existing solutions, and how effectively the solution responds to the specific context and needs of its target groups and intended beneficiaries. • **[C1.4A – *Poland only*] Artistic Quality, Originality and Creative Merit**: Artistic quality, originality and creative merit of the proposed concept, including its aesthetic and conceptual coherence, creativity, quality of artistic expression and potential to deliver a compelling and professionally executed artistic experience. • **[C1.4B – *Poland only*] Quality and Professional Credibility of the Proposed Wellbeing Intervention**: Quality, coherence and professional credibility of the proposed wellbeing intervention, including the appropriateness of the selected methods, their consistency with recognised good practices, and consideration of their suitability for the specific challenges and realities of oncology care and caregiving.
C2 - Impact	• **[C2.1] Stakeholder and Community Involvement**: Planned active engagement of relevant ecosystem actors, healthcare providers, and target communities to ensure relevance and co-creation. • **[C2.2] Expected Benefits, Equality and Empowerment**: The significance, measurability, and direct contribution of the benefits to reduce inequalities, improving health literacy and awareness, and empowering underserved groups. • **[C2.3] Sustainability, Scalability and Promotion**: The strategic plan for the solution's long-term continuation beyond TRACE funding, potential for replication/scaling, and project promotion.
C3 - Implementation	• **[C3.1] Workplan and Budget:** Quality, coherence, and feasibility of the work plan, KPIs, milestones, timeline, and cost-effectiveness of the requested project budget in relation to expected results. • **[C3.2] Team Capacity:** The knowledge, skills, operational capacity, and team complementarity required to deliver the project successfully; access to the target stakeholders and groups addressed by the project. • **[C3.3] Monitoring, Adaptation, and Risk Management:** The quality of key performance indicators and tracking methodology; mechanisms to include stakeholder feedback into the project implementation; identification of implementation, scientific, technical, ethical and operational risks and adequacy of the proposed mitigation measures.

Table 6 (*item 'Score, Evaluator'*) defines how individual criteria will be scored. The minimum threshold for each criterion will be ***3 (three) out of 5 (five).*** Applications that do not meet the minimum thresholds will be excluded from the programme. After the individual scoring by the EEB, the Open Call Management Team will:

- Check for large differences (over 2 points per criterion) between evaluators.
- If differences exist, evaluators meet to discuss and agree on scores.
- If an agreement isn't reached, another evaluator may be invited to provide a third assessment.

It must be noted that any application that may have passed through the eligibility check (Section 4.2) and in/out scope checks (Section 4.3) may still be disqualified based on evaluators' assessments within this phase.

4.4.2 Ranking & (pre-) selection

All applications will be ranked in a single list per ecosystem based on their overall score, which is calculated from the average scores given by the evaluators. Therefore, scores may be a decimal. If multiple applications have the same overall score, the following tie-breaking criteria and priority to criteria scoring and other items will be applied in the following order:

1. Rule 1: Applications that have higher scoring in the Excellence criterion (C1).
2. Rule 2: Applications that have higher scoring in the Impact criterion (C2).
3. Rule 3: Applications that have higher scoring in the Implementation criterion (C3).
4. Rule 4: In case there are applications with the same scoring after Rule 3, an interview with those applications will be organised, following interview rules (Section 5).

A total of 15 projects will be selected, with five projects funded within each ecosystem. For the Polish ecosystem (two Tracks), there are no restrictions in the selection process.

For each ecosystem, in case there are (1) an insufficient number of applications submitted or (2) an insufficient number of applications above the threshold after evaluation, additional projects per ecosystem can be selected and funded (if they are above the threshold).

4.5 Interview

If after establishing the final ranking from the expert evaluation there are/is (1) various applications with overall scores that do not substantially differ and/or (2) value in further understanding and confirming the project concept, alignment with the challenge and ecosystem, and motivation to ensure sustainability of proposed results, the TRACE consortium reserves the right to organise interviews with applicants. This decision will be made individually for each ecosystem. If organised, F6S as the TRACE Open Call Manager, will manage the process between the invited applicants and the evaluators.

The interview format, evaluation and scoring, and final ranking process is as follows:

Interview selection and format

- Organised with the top-ranked applications, inviting a minimum of six and up to 10 applicants (per ecosystem) for a 30-minute online interview.

- Applicants present their project (15 minutes) and answer questions from the evaluators (15 minutes).
- Applicants can use a template of their choice but must structure the presentation to address the interview evaluation items (Table 4).

Evaluation and scoring

- Evaluators assess the application and information presented in the interview, considering the defined criteria (Table 4).
- If the applicant fails to uphold or adequately present the original application contents, the application may be automatically rejected.
- Additional written questions may be requested and considered as part of the interview evaluation.

Table 4. TRACE Open Call Interview Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Specific criteria
C1 - Excellence	• [C1.1] Alignment, Relevance and Objectives • [C1.3] Innovation and User-Centred Value
C2 - Impact	• [C2.1] Stakeholder and Community Involvement • [C2.3] Sustainability, Scalability and Promotion
C3 - Implementation	• [C3.1] Workplan and Budget • [C3.4] Team Capacity

Final ranking and selection

- Evaluators assess, discuss and agree on the scores, which may include an update to the score previously given to a criterion indicated in Table 4.
- Applications are ranked by their overall score, including any updated scores.
- Tie-breaking follows the same rules defined in section 4.4.2.

All applicants at all stages of the evaluation process will be informed about the result of their evaluation along with an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), prepared by the defined rapporteur.

4.6 Appeals

Within three working days of receiving (1) a rejection letter informing the application as non-eligible or (2) an ESR of non-acceptance, an applicant may submit an appeal if (1) they believe the results of the eligibility checks have not been correctly applied, or (2) if they feel that there has been a shortcoming in the way their application has been evaluated.

All requests for appeal must be sent to trace.opencalls@f6s.com and must:

- Focus on aspects concerning the evaluation of the application (e.g. admissibility or eligibility checks, evaluation procedure, etc), not their merits.
- Clearly describe the complaint.
- Be received within the time limit (three working days) from the reception of a rejection letter considering the application as non-eligible or the ESR information letter delivered.
- Sent by the entities' legal representative that has also submitted the application.

Note that the evaluation is carried out by highly qualified experts, with specific expertise in the three different ecosystems. TRACE will neither question nor interfere with their original evaluation. Mere repetitions of the content of the application or disagreements with the result or reasoning of the technical evaluation will not be considered.

5 What happens after selection?

Selected applicants will be invited to the contracting phase, where administrative and financial details and documents are verified and validated.

Furthermore, to carry out mandatory Know Your Customer (KYC) checks, proof of residency and proof of ID from one or more members of the organisation(s) is required.

The steps of this phase are (see Table 6) for complementary information):

1. Inclusion of comments (if any) provided in the Evaluation Summary Report as part of the Sub-grant Agreement (contract).
2. Validation of the entities based on the provision of the following documentation:
   - Formal proof of the entity's legal existence and tax activity.
   - Proof of the SME status, including the SME Declaration Form).
   - [*In the case of a single entity*] Declaration of Honour, for all participating entities, signed by the legal representative of the entity.
   - [*In the case of a consortium*] Consortium Declaration of Honour, signed by the legal representative of each consortium partner.
   - Bank Account Information.
3. Ethics review of the application and respective workplan to ensure ethical alignment with TRACE principles. Any ethics issue flagged will have to be addressed by the applicant. Applicants can consult the EC ethics self-assessment guide for further information and guidance.
4. Signing of the Sub-grant Agreement between the Treasurer (F6S Network Ireland Limited (F6S IE)) and the Lead Beneficiary.

Additional considerations:

- A valid VAT is mandatory.
- The Sub-grant Agreement (contract) is final and cannot be altered.
- Electronic digital signatures are required for signed documents (unless otherwise agreed).
- Deadlines for document submission will be provided and will normally be concluded within two weeks.
- Failure to complete the negotiation in time will result in rejection.

Following completion of the selection and contracting process, the results of the Open Call will be published on the TRACE project website. The published information will include, at minimum, participation statistics, the final recipient's legal name and country, project title and brief description, award date and project duration.

6 What is the TRACE - Open Call and its requirements?

6.1 Programme Phases

The TRACE Programme includes 3 key phases:

- PHASE 0 - Onboarding & Pre-financing
- PHASE 1 - Implementation & Progress
- PHASE 2 - Consolidation, Impact & Sustainability

6.1.1 PHASE 0 - Onboarding & Pre-financing

Timeline: M1 | May 2027

This preliminary phase will provide sub-grantees with pre-financing to support project delivery and will take place after signature of the sub-grant agreement.

Expected outputs of Phase 0 include:

- Signed sub-grant agreement

6.1.2 PHASE 1 – Implementation & Progress

Timeline: M1-M6 | May - October 2027

This phase begins with a KoM with the TRACE consortium and individual onboarding meetings with TRACE partners. These meeting will be an opportunity to confirm the implementation plan, review milestones and KPIs, and align on specific support requirements.

During this phase, projects are expected to move forward with project implementation. Depending on the nature of the project, activities may include the refinement or adaptation of the proposed solution, engagement of relevant stakeholders and target groups, preparation of implementation or testing activities, development of tools or interventions, collection of baseline information, and initial deployment or testing in the relevant context.

Depending on the project needs, beneficiaries may benefit from access to tools and resources, tutorials, workshops, webinars, and access to key ecosystem stakeholders. This support will help beneficiaries implement their proposed solutions, strengthen relevant capacities and establish connections with actors that can contribute to successful implementation.

Projects must engage relevant actors from the ecosystem whenever appropriate, particularly where their participation is important for ensuring that the proposed solution responds to real needs and can be effectively implemented in practice. This may include healthcare professionals, researchers, public authorities, civil society organisations, patients and citizens, technology providers, businesses or other relevant stakeholders.

Project quality and progress will be regularly assessed against the agreed implementation plan, milestones and expected results. Each project will be assigned two mentors (one ecosystem mentor and one member of the monitoring team) and online progress meetings are expected (at least every two months).

Expected outputs of Phase 1 include:

- Initial implementation results, according to the nature and objectives of the project.
- Evidence of stakeholder/end-user engagement, where relevant.
- Participation in TRACE Funding Program Meetings, including the onboarding meeting and expected mentoring sessions.
- Participation in TRACE programme activities, such as workshops, webinars and other relevant support or ecosystem activities organised during the phase.
- Progress against the agreed milestones and KPIs, including identification of deviations, risks and mitigation measures.
- Plan for Phase 2, incorporating relevant findings, feedback and adjustments from the first implementation period.
- Report 1, summarising Phase 1 (Months 1-6) activities, progress, results and implementation plan for Phase 2 (Months 7-12).

The completion of Phase 1 will be assessed through the first programme review, as further described in Section 6.2. Besides assessing the activities performed, progress towards the project KPIs and milestones, stakeholder engagement and communication activities, risks and mitigation measures, and the plan for the following implementation period, the review will also allow TRACE and the beneficiary to identify any necessary adjustments or corrective actions before proceeding to Phase 2.

By the end of Phase 1, projects must demonstrate clear progress towards their objectives and provide evidence that the proposed activities are being implemented according to plan.

6.1.3 PHASE 2 - Consolidation, Impact & Sustainability

Timeline: M7-M12 | November 2027 - April 2028

This phase will focus on completing project implementation, validating the proposed solution/ approach in its relevant context, assessing results and consolidating the project's contribution to the respective TRACE ecosystem.

Building on the work carried out during Phase 1, beneficiaries will complete the activities described in their implementation plan and address any recommendations or adjustments identified during the first programme review.

Depending on the nature and maturity of the project, this phase may include further deployment or testing, validation with relevant users or stakeholders, refinement of the proposed solution based on feedback and evidence collected, evaluation of results, and activities supporting the future sustainability, replication or scale-up of the solution.

The beneficiaries will continue to benefit from access to tools and resources, as well as tutorials, workshops, webinars, and facilitated access to key ecosystem stakeholders. The focus of this support will be on completing implementation, validating and strengthening the proposed solutions, and maximising their potential impact and sustainability within the respective ecosystem. Beneficiaries will also be encouraged to explore opportunities for continued implementation, adoption, replication or scale-up, as well as the development of new approaches or business models where relevant.

Projects must assess not only whether the planned activities were completed, but also what changes or benefits resulted from their implementation. This must include how the project contributed to the relevant TRACE ecosystem challenge and, where applicable, its contribution to cancer prevention, early detection, health literacy, equity, accessibility, citizen or patient engagement, or improved healthcare practices and processes.

Beneficiaries must also reflect on the potential continuation of the results beyond the TRACE funding period, including opportunities for further implementation, adoption, replication, scale-up or integration within the relevant ecosystem.

Expected outputs of Phase 2 include:

- Completed project solution/intervention, in accordance with the approved proposal and agreed milestones.
- Results from implementation, testing and/or validation, as applicable to the nature of the project.
- Continued Participation in TRACE Funding Program Meetings, including the onboarding meeting and expected mentoring sessions.
- Continued Participation in TRACE programme activities, such as workshops, webinars and other relevant support or ecosystem activities organised during the phase.
- Final assessment of KPIs and project results, supported by appropriate evidence.
- Assessment of ecosystem impact, including benefits generated for relevant target groups and stakeholders.
- Sustainability and continuation plan, identifying opportunities for continued use, adoption, replication or scale-up of project results, where relevant.
- Report 2 / Final Report, consolidating the activities, results and impact achieved throughout the implementation period.

Quality assessment during Phase 2 will focus on the completion of the agreed activities and milestones, achievement of KPIs, quality and relevance of the project results, and impact on the respective ecosystem.

The completion of Phase 2 will be assessed through the final programme review described in Section 6.2. During the final review, beneficiaries will report and present their final results and impact. The review will consider the results achieved throughout the full implementation period, including stakeholder engagement, communication activities, risks and mitigation measures, lessons learned, and the sustainability and potential future use of the project results.

Failure to meet the agreed project requirements or demonstrate satisfactory progress may affect the acceptance of the project results and the corresponding payment, in accordance with the Sub-grant Agreement.

6.2 Programme review

6.2.1 Review summary

Each project will go through assessment points, each one highlighting the end of a phase.

Table 5. TRACE Programme overview

Phase	Payment	Item	Description
Phase 0 – Onboarding and Pre-financing	**Pre-financing**	Requirement	• Signature of the Sub-grant Agreement • Participation in onboarding meeting with mentors
		Result	Payment of 50% of the grant (up to €20.000 per project)
		Timeline	• *Payment*: May 2027
Phase 1 - Implementation & Progress	**Payment 2**	Requirement	Submission of Report 1 , including: • Description of activities M1-M6 • Reporting on KPIs and Milestones M1-M6 • Communication and outreach activities M1-M6 • Risks and mitigation actions • Planning M7-M12
		Result	Payment of 35% of the grant (up to €14.000 per project)
		Timeline	• *Implementation:* Months 1-6 (June - October 2027) • *Report review:* November 2027 • *Payment:* November/December 2028
Phase 2 - Consolidation, Impact & Sustainability	**Payment 3**	Requirement	Submission of Report 2, including: • Description of all activities from M1-M12 • Reporting on KPIs and Milestones M1-M12 • Lessons learned M1-12 • Communication and outreach activities M1-M12 • Impact and sustainability within the ecosystem M1-M12
		Result	Payment of 15% of the grant (up to €6.000 per project)
		Timeline	• *Implementation:* Months 7-12 (November 2027 - April 2028) • *Report review:* May 2028 • *Payment:* May/June 2028

Sub-grantees are required to submit a report on the last calendar day at the end of each Phase. The report allows the monitoring of performance and evaluating the project at the end of each phase. If necessary, a remote review may be held between TRACE representatives and the sub-grantee to discuss the report and project progress.

Approval of the report will trigger the payment associated with each phase after verification of the achievement of the requirements set for the phase. After each successful review and confirmation of acceptance, the beneficiary will be contacted to initiate payment procedures.

All reports will be reviewed and assessed by TRACE partners. Reports that do not meet the expected quality standards (e.g. incomplete descriptions or sections, lack of evidence, poor formatting) may be rejected and returned for revision within a specified period.

The repeated failure to submit a report that meets the phase requirements and quality standards may result in suspension of the payment at the end of any phase. The beneficiary may then recover the suspended value in subsequent phases.

When the beneficiary is unwilling to comply with the programme requirements, TRACE may opt to terminate the Sub-grant Agreement and respective payments, including requiring the return of any pre-financing paid out.

6.3 Additional programme and reporting requirements

At any moment during the TRACE programme and after the end of the project activities, the TRACE consortium may require additional reporting and or contributions from the beneficiaries. These will be requested to ensure that the TRACE project respects any specific requests from the EC, to ensure compliance with any requirements internal to a TRACE partner, or to support the promotion of the project. Such requests may include, but are not limited to:

- Support and participate in the respective ecosystem activities, in alignment with the ecosystem representatives (e.g. dissemination of TRACE training materials, public awareness campaigns, citizen science activities, training activities and Regional Ecosystems meetings when needed) and provision of feedback.
- Making available developed solutions (technical or other) through the ecosystem TRACE platform, to ensure the solution visibility through the platform.

7 What else is important to know?

The selected entities are indirectly beneficiaries of EC funding. Therefore, selected entities are responsible for the appropriate use of the funding and must comply with obligations under Horizon Europe specific requirements as described in Horizon Europe. Specific details and guidelines related to all aspects of the responsibilities of the beneficiaries are provided in the Sub-grant Agreement.

7.1 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

Solutions developed and results achieved by the third parties belong to the third parties. Applicants will remain the sole owners of their respective IPRs and retain the IPR for their solutions.

Regarding the evaluation and the review processes, each evaluator will sign an Agreement including confidentiality clauses before receiving access to the applications database to protect the applicants' intellectual property and sensitive non-disclosed information.

7.2 On conflicts of interest

Applicants must not have any actual and/or potential conflict of interest with the TRACE selection process and during the project implementation. All cases of conflict of interest will be assessed case by case.

7.3 Ethical issues

TRACE complies with the fundamental ethical issues particularly those outlined in the “European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity”.

- All applicants must submit a self-assessment ethics questionnaire, available in the proposal template. Applicants can consult the EC ethics self-assessment guide for further information and guidance.
- If the applicant confirms the existence of potential ethical issues, they must contact the TRACE Helpdesk for guidance, as required.
- The TRACE will verify the declaration's consistency with the application contents and may contact applicants to resolve any ethical issues.
- Applications that fail to properly address ethical issues or inadequately deal with privacy aspects will be rejected.

7.4 Data protection

In order to process and evaluate applications, and manage project implementation, the TRACE consortium will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data.

- F6S Network Ireland Limited will act as Data Controller for data submitted through the F6S platform for these purposes. Please see the F6S privacy policy here.
- A Data Protection Officer (DPO) has been appointed by F6S generally, to ensure compliance with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection

Regulation (GDPR), and that personal data is collected, processed, and stored in a secure manner.

- The F6S platform's system design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR).
- Each applicant will accept the F6S terms to ensure compliance. Please refer to https://www.f6s.com/privacy-policy to review the F6S platform's privacy policy and data security policy.
- Apart from the F6S platform, data will also be stored in the F6S Google Drive, and in the project repository on SharePoint managed by the Project Coordinator (Universidade Nova De Lisboa).
- Note that the TRACE consortium must retain generated data until five years after the balance of the TRACE project is paid or longer if there are ongoing procedures (such as audits, investigations or litigation). In this case, the data must be kept until their conclusion.

7.5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality obligations:

- Selected applicants are required to maintain confidential any project data, documents, invoices and other materials (in any form) during the implementation of the activities and for five years after project completion.
- This confidentiality period can be extended by agreement with the EC and the TRACE consortium.
- Information shared during the project, whether written or spoken, is only considered confidential if the TRACE agrees and confirms it in writing within 15 days.
- Confidential information must only be used for project implementation, unless otherwise agreed upon.
- Any information shared during the application stage will be treated as confidential.

7.6 Promotion of the action and ensuring visibility of the EU funding

The beneficiary must promote the project, the TRACE project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to highlight the financial support of the EC, including on the official third-party website. The TRACE Communication team will guide and support these communication activities to selected beneficiaries.

7.7 Checks and reviews

The EC may, at any time during the implementation of the sub-project and up to five years after the end of the sub-project, arrange for a check and review activity to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the EC services themselves, including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC.

There will be no financial checks, reviews, or audits to check costs, since beneficiaries have no obligation to document the costs incurred for the action. However, checks, reviews, and audits may cover the technical implementation of the action and the workplan (and activities) and nonfinancial obligations, including compliance with rules on intellectual property, ethics and integrity, visibility of EU funding, etc.

8 Relevant links and contacts

The TRACE Consortium will provide information to the applicants via the F6S page, so that all information (questions and answers) is visible to all participants.

- Project website: https://tracecancer.eu/
- Open call application form: https://www.f6s.com/trace-cancer-open-call
- Contact: trace.opencalls@f6s.com
- Q&A/discussion board: https://www.f6s.com/trace-cancer-open-call/discuss
- F6S platform support: support@f6s.com *(For issues with the submission, resubmission, access to the platform, etc.).*
- EU guidance on good practices for implementing FSTP
- Register for the General webinar (02 December 2026, 15.00 CET)

Relevant definitions

Table 6. Terms & Definitions

Term	Definition
Applicant(s)	The legal entity or group of legal entities that intend(s) to submit or that applied to the Open Call.
Application Eligibility Criteria	Criteria used to assess if an application can be considered for the open call. Possible values (Yes/No).
Application Eligible or Non-Eligible	Application that is or is not compliant with eligibility criteria.
Application Timestamp	Timestamp of the final submission of an application. If the application is reopened and resubmitted the last date will be considered.
Bank Account Information	Document(s) where the beneficiary provides information of the bank account to which payments will be made during the project implementation.
Beneficiary, Sub-grantee, Third Party	An entity or a consortium that applied to the open call that was accepted to be funded, and have signed, or are in the process of signing, a sub-grant agreement.
Consortium	Set of legal entities that are cumulatively responsible to implement the project as defined in the Grant Agreement signed with the European Commission.
Consortium Declaration of Honour (CDoH)	Declaration where the applicants/ beneficiaries, participating as a consortium, declare they accept all conditions of the open call, acceleration process & programme; and agree - if applicable - on budget share. One CDoH is required for each sub-granted project.
Contract Deadline	Date and time until when the selected entities need to provide contractual information.
Declaration of Honour (DoH)	Declaration where the applicant/ beneficiary declares they accept all conditions of the open call, acceleration process & programme. One DoH is required for each applicant/ beneficiary.
External Evaluator	Expert hired by the consortium to assist in the evaluation of the Open Call. External evaluators cannot have conflicts of interest and are bound by a confidentiality agreement.
F6S Application Form	Application form available in F6S Platform.
F6S Platform	Platform provided by F6S.
FSTP	Financial support to third parties. Payments made to entities that are not members of the consortium.
FSTP – Lump Sum	Payment made to the third party based on the achievement of a milestone.
Mentor	Person from the consortium that works closely with the beneficiary to foster communication with the consortium and assess progress of the project.
Open Call	Competitive process to access a Programme.
Open Call and Programme deadlines	The project has planned the programme carefully, but unexpected things can happen. The OC deadline is fixed, and will only change if something unforeseen occurs. Other dates, including of the programme, are flexible and may be adjusted as needed, and communicated to all applicants.
Open Call close date	Date and time when applications close.
Open Call selection prioritisation	Rules used to order applications.

Term	Definition
Proof of Legal Existence	Company/ organisation register, official journal or other official document per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
Proof of SME Status	Proof of the SME condition is required: • If the applicant has been fully validated as an SME on the Beneficiary Register of the EC Participant Portal, the PIC number must be provided. • Provision of the signed (with a valid e-signature) SME Declaration: in the event the beneficiary declares being non-autonomous, the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and downstream organisations is required. A Status Information Form may be requested, which includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company. • Supporting documents: In cases where either the number of employees or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional, association records, etc.
Reserve List	Eligible applications that were not selected for funding which can be invited in case selected applications do not provide contractual data.
Schedule for Payments to Beneficiaries	All payments to beneficiaries are dependent on the successful review of deliverables/ reports at the end of each phase, and reception by the consortium of the corresponding payment request. All payments will be made preferably no later than 30 calendar days after the reception of the financial statement. Payment conditions in the agreement take priority.
Score, Evaluator	Unless otherwise stated, evaluators will score each criterion between 0 and 5. Score values will indicate the following assessments: • 0: Fail. The application fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information. • 1: Very poor. The criterion is addressed in an unsatisfactory manner. • 2: Poor. There are serious inherent weaknesses. • 3: Good. While the application broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would need correcting. • 4: Very Good. The application addresses the criterion well, although certain improvements are possible. • 5: Excellent. The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.
Selected Application	Application that was selected to participate in the Open Call Implementation.
SME	An incorporated enterprise that complies with the rules defined by the European Commission to be qualified as an SME
SME – Autonomous Enterprise	An autonomous enterprise is not a partner with or linked to another enterprise
SME – Linked Enterprise	Linked enterprises are those that form a group through the direct or indirect control of the majority of voting rights of an enterprise by

Term	Definition
	another or through the ability to exercise a dominant influence on an enterprise.
SME – Partner Enterprise	The enterprise holds a minimum of 25% (Capital or voting rights in another enterprise, or 25% (Capital or voting rights) are owned by another enterprise.
SME Declaration Form	Declaration where the SME status is assessed.
Sub-grant Agreement	Signed between the Project Consortium, represented by its Coordinator and the beneficiary. The sub-grant agreement will also include the comments (if any) of the application's ESR to the work plan.
Sub-granted Project	The project that has been selected and awarded, implemented according to the approved work plan, and in accordance with the signed Sub-grant Agreement.