



European  
Commission

## **Q&A on the UK's participation in Horizon Europe**

***The UK is expected to become an associated country to the EU's R&I Framework Programme Horizon Europe. The UK will therefore have the same rights and obligations as other countries associated to the Programme.***

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Research and  
Innovation

### **How will the UK be associated to Horizon Europe?**

Through the Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the UK (TCA). All aspects of the UK association to [Horizon Europe](#) were agreed on 24 December 2020 in the TCA and documents attached to the Agreement. The association will enter into force through the formal adoption of a Protocol that is already agreed in principle. No additional negotiations are foreseen.

#### **Details**

*The [Trade and Cooperation Agreement](#) (TCA) has been provisionally applied since 1st January 2021 and entered into force on 1 May 2021.*

*Part V of the TCA addresses UK participation in EU programmes. It is complemented by a financial annex specifying the implementation of the financial conditions and by a draft protocol, called [Protocol I](#). This Protocol specifies the Programmes in which the UK will participate and the scope of its participation, as well as some rules specific to each programme, including Horizon Europe.*

*This protocol is still in draft form and will be finalised and adopted by the joint EU-UK Specialised Committee on Participation in Union Programmes.*

*When the Protocol enters into force, the UK will be formally associated to Horizon Europe.*

### **Can UK entities take part in the first calls for proposals of Horizon Europe?**

Yes. UK entities including universities, research centres, scientists, innovative businesses, industry, etc. can participate in the first calls for proposals of Horizon Europe as soon as they are published on the [European Commission's website](#).

In duly justified exceptional cases, restrictions may apply and these will be clearly specified in the calls for proposals.

#### **Details**

*The General Annexes attached to the main Horizon Europe work programme (2021-2022) ensure that UK applicants are treated as if the UK is an associated country throughout the process, from admissibility and eligibility to evaluation, up until the preparation of grant agreements. However, grant agreements can only be signed if the association has come into force. The same treatment is also granted to any applicants from other associated countries currently engaged with the European Commission in an active process of association.*

### **What parts of Horizon Europe will the UK be associated to?**

The UK is associating to the full Horizon Europe programme with the only exception of the EIC Fund (which is the loan/equity instrument of the EIC, see below). The scope of association includes the European Research Council (ERC), the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, the six 'Global Challenges' clusters and Missions, the partnerships, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, etc.

UK entities are not eligible to participate in the EIC Fund part of the EIC Accelerator, since the UK decided not to take part in financial instruments of the EU. This means UK entities can apply for grants under the Accelerator but they will not be eligible for loans or equity. They can also participate on an equal footing with entities from EU Member States and other associated countries in the EIC's Pathfinder component.

The UK is also expected to become associated to the Euratom Research and Training Programme, as well as fusion-related activities carried out by the European Joint Undertaking for ITER and the Development of Fusion Energy (F4E) under the ITER Agreement, and the Broader Approach Agreement.

The UK will not participate in the European Defence Fund, which has a different legal basis and is not covered by the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

### **Details**

*In duly justified exceptional cases for actions related to Union strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security, Horizon Europe work programmes may provide that the participation can be limited to those legal entities established in Member States only, or, to those legal entities established in specified associated or other third countries in addition to Member States.*

*Moreover, for duly justified and exceptional reasons, in order to guarantee the protection of the strategic interests of the Union and its Member States, the work programme may also exclude the participation of legal entities established in the Union or in associated countries directly or indirectly controlled by non-associated third countries or by legal entities of non-associated third countries from individual calls, or make their participation subject to conditions set out in the work programme.*

### **What are the rights of UK participants?**

Once the Associated Country status is in force, UK participants will have the same rights as EU participants, with the very limited aforementioned exceptions. UK entities will be eligible for funding at the same rates and under the same conditions. They will be able to lead project consortia. They will also count towards the minimum number of countries in calls for transnational projects.

### **What does the UK have to pay to participate in Horizon Europe?**

The UK's financial contribution will consist of:

- an operational contribution covering operational and support expenditure; and
- a participation fee that covers the administrative costs of organising the system of participation to Union programmes.

Correction mechanisms will apply if significant imbalances appear between the UK's operational contribution and what it receives from the programme.

### **Details**

*The operational contribution will be calculated by applying the ratio of UK GDP to the EU27 GDP to the amount allocated to Horizon Europe. Adjustments will be made to deduct calls from which the UK might exceptionally be excluded or quasi-excluded.*

*The participation fee will be introduced progressively. It will be 4% of the operational contribution in 2027, at the end of the phase-in period.*

*In case the UK receives more in competitive grants than its operational contribution (after deduction of support expenditure) an automatic correction has been set with a threshold of 8% over two successive years.*

*In case the UK receives significantly less, the first way to rebalance the situation should be to try to improve the level of UK participation. If the UK overpays by more than 12%, it may bring the matter to the joint Specialised Committee on Participation in Union Programmes for consideration and agreement of appropriate measures to balance the situation. In case the imbalance persists and exceeds 16%, the Specialised Committee can make adaptations to the UK's participation and adjust future financial contributions. At this stage, the UK may also reconsider its participation in the Programme or parts thereof.*

### **Will other countries associate to Horizon Europe?**

Sixteen countries were associated to Horizon 2020. Similarly, Horizon Europe is open to the association of:

- European Free Trade Association (EFTA) members which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA);
- Acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates; and
- Countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy.

In addition, Horizon Europe is also open to the association of other third countries and territories located anywhere in the world and that share the EU's fundamental values, as well as have a good capacity in science, technology and innovation, in line with the requirements of Article [16] (1)(d) of the Horizon Europe Regulation.

Information on association to Horizon Europe is also [published on this website](#) and regularly updated.

### **Details**

Article 16 of the [Horizon Europe regulation](#) details the conditions for association to Horizon Europe.