Horizon Europe

Guide to an adequate partner search

NATIONAL CONTACT POINT
HORIZON EUROPE

BRIDEGE2HE project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement number 101005071

Workpackage	4
Name of the lead contractor of this deliverable	Luxinnovation (LXI)
Version	Final
Dissemination level	Public

PUBLICATION INFORMATION:

This report was produced under the framework of BRIDGE2HE. The project prime objective is to act as a bridge for NCPs and participants between H2020 and Horizon Europe. For questions regarding this report please contact us at Stefano.pozzimucelli@luxinnovation.lu.

Introduction

As a huge part of Horizon Europe is channelled through **collaborative projects**, this tool aims to provide a guidance around the current ways available for participants to **look for partners for their proposals.**

Although in the current social media & digital era, there are many channels available where suitable partners can be found to start research collaborations, **the official support structures of Horizon Europe** do also continue to **provide this type of support service** tailor-made to the special needs of Horizon Europe consortia.

This document provides guidance around the various partner search tools officially available in the launch of Horizon Europe but, more importantly, it offers applicants **an outline to create a complete partner profile** to be used for such searches.

Furthermore, this profile may not only be useful to enter the different partner search tools but also to participate in the numerous **brokerage events and sessions** that will take place **around Horizon Europe calls** in the near future.

BRIDGE2HE:

The BRIDGE2HE project "Bridging the gap between Horizons through transnational cooperation of its NCP support structures" (ref H2020- ref: H2020-101005071) is the project that supports the writing of this tool and, that facilitates training, tools and services for NCPs and participants during the time between Horizon 2020 and the first calls of Horizon Europe. It has created a central point for relevant information regarding Horizon Europe that can be found in this link .

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1 WHY PARTNER SEARCHES?

Most EU-funded projects involve **collaboration between organisations** from different EU countries or associated countries. In most of Horizon Europe calls, eligibility of organization is very wide and almost every natural person or every type of legal person can participate in the calls. Where some of them are not eligible, it will be clearly stated in the call fiche.

Normally, institutions willing to lead into the European RDI schemes have already a number of partners to work with in their projects ranging from scientific collaborators to value chain partners, from media companies for communication and marketing campaigns to environmental consultants, and many more… and they just need to complete the consortium with concrete profiles.

On the other hand, at the view of topics, institutions willing to participate in projects can offer its expertise and track record to contribute to a project despite they are not able to/willing to lead the project. **This supply and demand of profile offers and project requests feed a very dynamic environment during the period when the calls are drafted and promoted until the deadline** when the calls are closed and the projects are evaluated. Although Local NCPs can support, as well as industrial associations in finding relevant partners, there are **specialised repositories where consortia can source potential new partners**, and where indeed interested applicants can put their profile online to be evaluated by such consortia.

Of course, this should not be the strategy to recruit a full consortium from and neither should be seen as the only strategy to join a proposal to be submitted. In fact, based on a deep analysis of consortia building in the last Framework programmes, it has been shown that participating in thematic brokerage events was the most successful way to incorporate in winning consortia source and that partner search were really helpful in completing very concrete missing profiles.

The matching between offers and needs can be approached from two different philosophies:

- An **open partner search tool** based on a one-to-one interaction between proposers and profiles, as offered through the Funding and Tender portal.
- An **intermediated partner search tool** based on a wide network of stakeholders with high capillarity in Europe that will help in the matching between proposers and profiles. This is the approach followed under the Enterprise Europe Network and also, although less systematized, by the thematic National Contact Point networks that offer this partner search service.

2 PARTNER SEARCH TOOLS & PLATFORMS

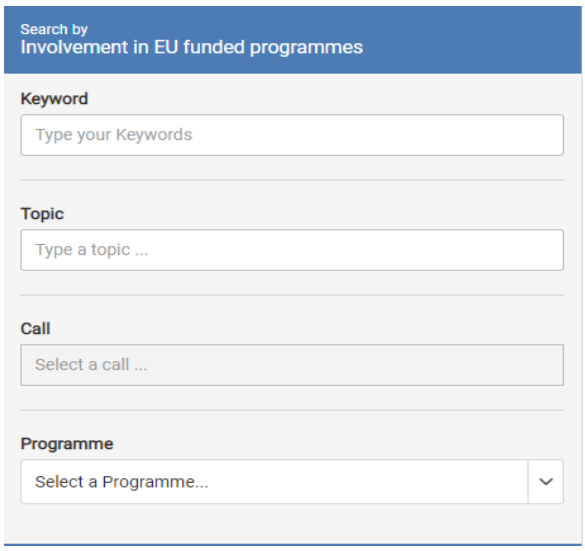
2.1 Funding and Tenders Portal

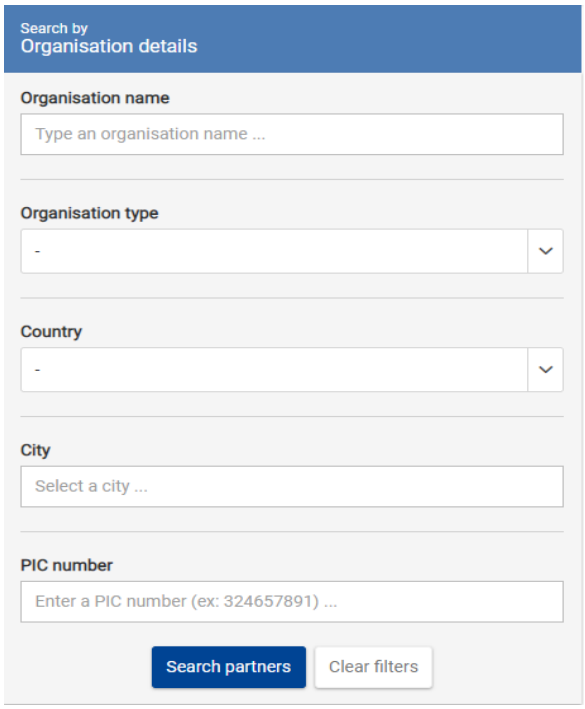
The F&T Portal Partner Search tool offers the possibility to find partners and to post offers directly in the same portal used for accessing the funding opportunity. Please, be aware that this tool is not for commercial purposes so a misuse of the system can lead to the refusal of access to the F&T Portal. Similarly, as the system is not supervised, there is no quality control done by the portal on the content and its quality. Each entity is fully responsible of the information it shares in the portal.

It is possible to access the search/offer function both from a dedicated page and through a dedicated section inside the topic page.

Accessing through its dedicated tool the following functions are offered (as shown below):

- Find partners based on their involvement in EU funded programmes, using a keyword, a topic or a past call for proposals.
- Find organizations based on their details, such as geographical criteria, types of organisation or even by PIC number.

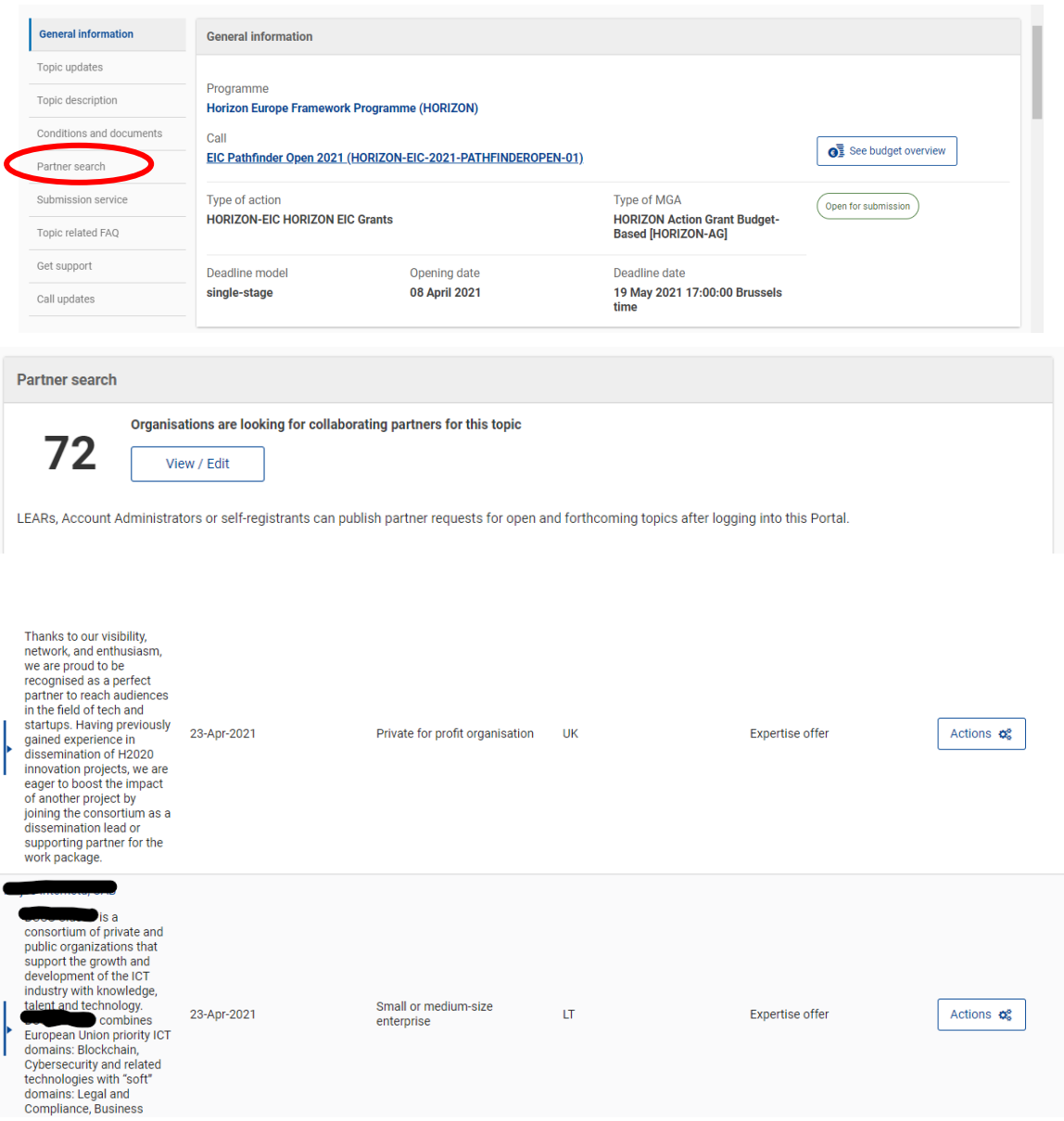




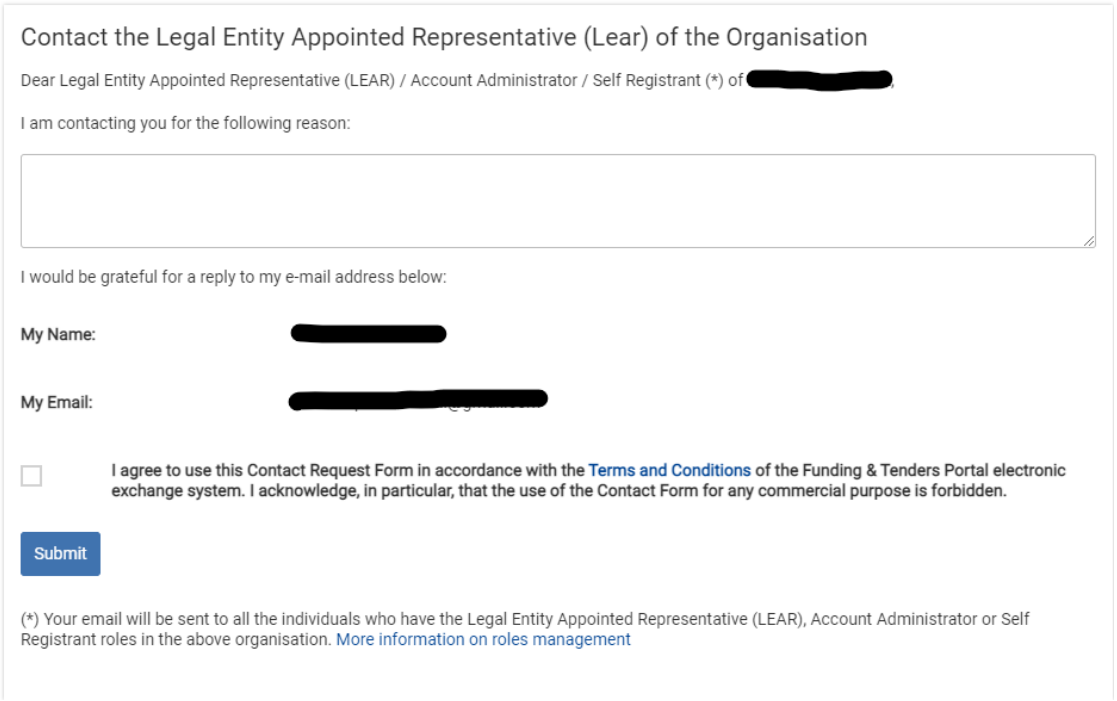
The information provided per entity listed in the page is very complete. It does not only include the name, the PIC or the location, but also it includes the list of projects where this entity has participated, the role it has had (coordinator or beneficiary) and also the main collaboration partners of such entity.

It also includes a "contact organization" button to send an email to the LEAR (Legal Entity Appointed Representative) of the entity.

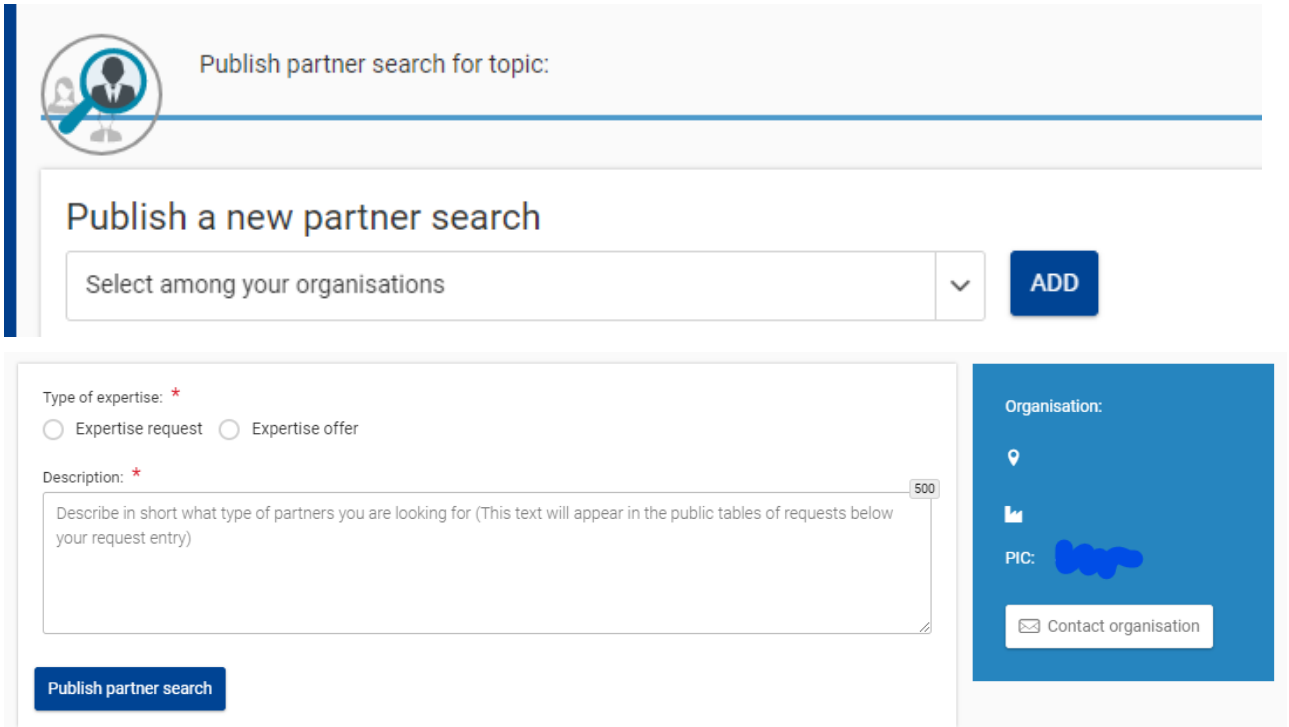
On the other hand, **when you access through the topic page, you will find in the left menu a direct access to the partner searches only for this topic.** This way, it is rather simple for consortia to search for partners for a given topic, without having to filter from larger databases, however in this case, the information provided is more limited.



Everyone can see the listed partners, that includes its name, a short description of the organisation, the date of publication, the type of institution and indeed, whether it is an offer or a search. However, **you will need an EU Login Account to be able to** conduct any further action (right button), either **contact the partner** or see the whole partner search.



Similarly, to post a new partner search for your institution, only LEARs, Account Administrators or self-registrants can publish it. To do so, one should select the organisation for which they are creating the entry and click on the "Add" button in the Partner Search page of the topic, above the list of already existing entries. After this, they are presented with a page where they can insert the short description of their partner search, whether an offer or a search, in maximum 500 characters.

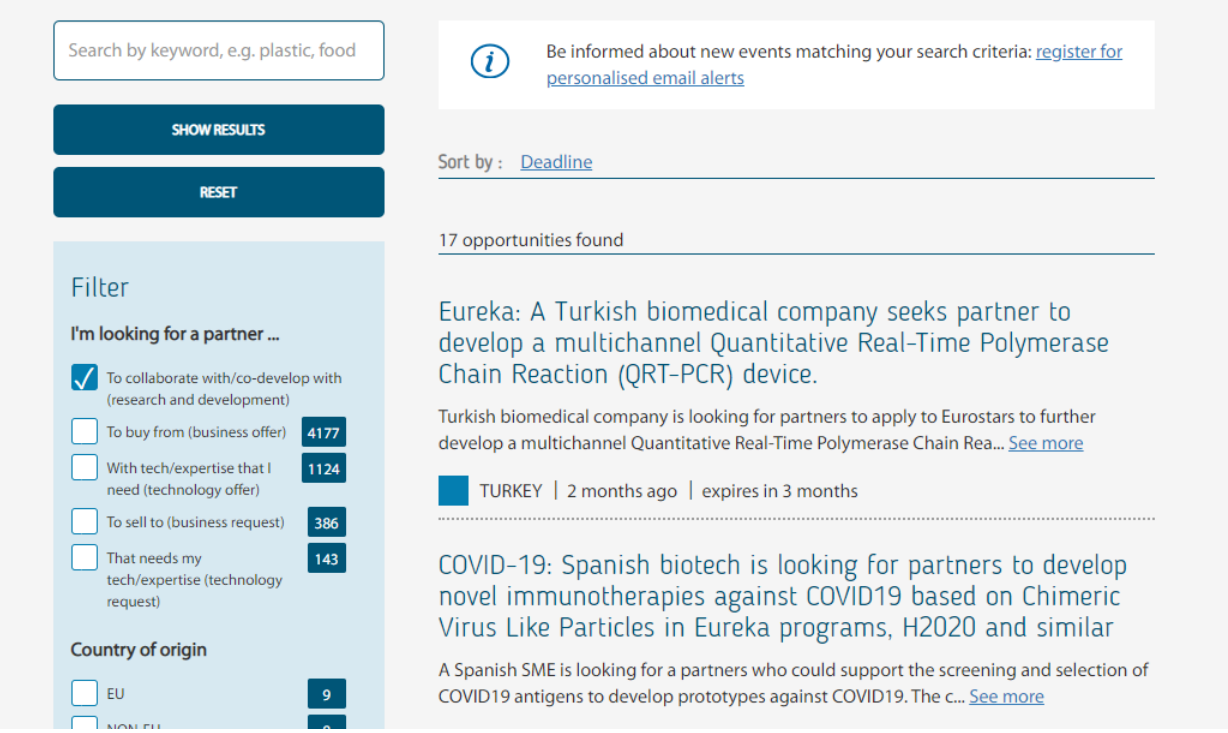


RECOMMENDATION:

500 characters are not much, so it is important to have a well-tailored description to address one's possible contribution to the topic, with well selected keywords, while avoiding a general description copied and pasted from one topic to the next one. It is important to mention unique selling points, specialised equipment that may be available, pioneering contribution to the research and innovation field. Essentially, it is key to stand out from the crowd.

2.2 Enterprise Europe Network partner search tool.

EEN manages a very large database of business opportunities, and among all these business opportunities, it is possible to filter the ones in which one is searching for partners **"To collaborate with/co-develop with (research and development)"**. The search of the current entries is available at the EEN website: https://een.ec.europa.eu/partners.



Once you filter the opportunities there is a direct link to express your interest. **Only registered users can reply to the searches from the system.**

The partner search fiche consists of a relevant set of information for the proposer including:

- fiche identification details (Title, unique reference, expiration dates),
- fiche main description fields (Summary, Description, Advantages and Innovations, Technical Specification or Expertise Sought, Stage of Development)
- a number of keywords to allow filtering (Technology Keywords, Market Keywords, NACE Keywords)
- a number of characteristics for the profile sought (Type and Role of Partner Sought, Type and Size of Partner Sought, Type of Partnership Considered)
- a set of elements of the call (Programme-Call, Framework Programme, Call title and identifier, Submission and evaluation scheme, Coordinator Required, Deadline for EOI, Deadline of the Call
- a number of data about the proposer (Client, Type and Size of Client, Year Established, Already Engaged in Trans-National Cooperation, Languages Spoken, Client Country, Enterprise Europe Network Contact, Contact data

One of the most interesting features of the EEN website when you are registered is the possibility to **save queries to get periodic updates** (daily, weekly, monthly) about partner searches according to different criteria.

- Based on keywords (Free search, Technology Keywords, Market Keywords)
- Based on search types (Business offer, Business request, Research and Development request, Technology offer, Technology request)

- Based on client characteristics (Type and Size of Client (Industry, SME, Inventor, R&D institution, University, Other), NACE Keywords, Partnership considered, Country and Language, Industrial Sectors, Location
- Based on event types (Brokerage Event, Company Mission, Conference/Seminar/Information Day, Fair/Exhibition, Sector Group Meeting, Training, Working Group Meeting, Workshop

RECOMMENDATION:

Considering the number of details to be included in the partner profile, the EEN network partners are available to support applicants in the preparation of their partner profiles. Furthermore, as this system is intermediated, profiles are validated before publishing and the interaction between proposers and "repliers" is monitored by the local EEN.

To identify your local contact point, interested applicants can visit the EEN dedicated webpage, to find the branch closer to their premises.

2.3 National Contact Point Networks partner search tools

Most of the NCP networks have been offering partners searches tools to their communities in the past. With the current reorganisation of the NCP networks due to the start of Horizon Europe, it is not clear how partner search tool offer will look like in the future, considering the updated service from the Funding and Tender portal presented before.

In any case, do not hesitate to contact your national Contact Point (s) to benefit to this or other services they would offer you either nationally or at European level, as invitations to brokerage event, training sessions, periodic newsletters, relevant tools and so on.

3 BUILD YOUR PARTNER DESCRIPTION IN 5 STEPS.

It is difficult to provide a unified template for all the different partner search tools and services available. Different portals use different formats. However, it is possible to define some general recommendations to ensure key information is not missing.

STEP 1: Your contact details

Organisation	*If it is written as it is written in the PIC is more than helpful to easy locate it in the funding and tender portal if needed.*
Contact person	
Department (if needed)	*Specially for large organization is good to position adequately who is proposing or responding to the partner search*
Phone	
e-mail	*Avoid functional email addresses here, give it a personal touch!* *People know that info@ email addresses are not the most monitored ones!*

STEP 2: Your organisation

Describe your organisation:	*Be sure to include relevant information here, in particular if you have already identified a specific call.* *Be sure to mention what makes you stand out from the crowd: unique equipment, pioneering R&D contribution, market positioning, you know what it is.* *Also, don't be lazy and just put the website of your organisation, but include the link at the end!*
Type of organization:	*Ensure that your type of organization is eligible for the call text*
List up to 5 keywords describing your sector or specialisation:	*Try to have a mix of general and specific keywords here* *Avoid remaining too high level, or you will not be visible.* *Avoid remaining too detailed, or you will not be easy to find.*

STEP 3: Your experience

Have you already participated in an EU funded project?	*If so, provide some references. Information from the Funding and tender portal can be very useful as well as the one you may find in the project dashboards!*

STEP 4A: Your project idea

Reference of Call/topic of interest	*It is better to demonstrate having done some homework here, so, try to have one or two relevant topics here!*
Your project idea: describe your project or idea, and how it contributes to the scope of the topic(s) you have identified.	*Knowing where you are more interested in participating is better, so try to demonstrate how you can better contribute to some key expected impacts of the call(s) for proposals you have identified.* *Keep it short and succinct, avoid too much jargon, to ensure it is nice to read.*
List up to 5 keywords describing your project idea:	*If these keywords are close to the topic, better!*

STEP 4B: Your offered expertise and contribution

Your offered contribution	*If you have not focused on a project yet, please describe your main internal competences, collaborations and research strategy.* *You can also use this space to volunteer for the leadership of a Work Package, if you are interested.*
Your offered role (Coordinator, Work package leader or partner	*Being coordinator is not an easy task, it requires technical experience and knowledge of administrative rules, both in the proposal preparation stage, and in the implementation if you are successful. So, don't rush into being a coordinator if you are participating as a relative newcomer.* *Start gradually as a partner, then test yourself as WP Leader, and after you know the process like the back of your hands, you can coordinate.*

	And if you can't wait, remember to ask for assistance and support from your institution, your NCPs, or consider also professional help

STEP 5: Define what you are looking for

Describe what expertise you look for	*If you look for a concrete expertise, ensure to describe it in detail. It will save you a lot of time to discard non-relevant profiles.*
Define the expected contribution you are looking for	*Either you prefer any type of entity for whatever the reasons or any other conditions to the replies, ensure it is clear here.* *Do not promise what you cannot offer.*
Define a deadline for the search.	*Partner search calls are time dependant. Ensure you leave enough time for you to work on the proposal with the consortium already completed. Ensure that this partner search is no longer open if it is no longer needed.*