



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology

CNECT.I – Media Policy

CNECT.I – Media Policy

GRANT AGREEMENT

Project 101135691 — STARTS

PREAMBLE

This **Agreement** ('the Agreement') is **between** the following parties:

on the one part,

the **European Union** ('EU'), represented by the European Commission ('European Commission' or 'granting authority'),

and

on the other part,

1. 'the coordinator':

ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE), PIC 905834016, established in ARS-ELECTRONICA-STRASSE 1, LINZ 4040, Austria,

and the following other beneficiaries, if they sign their 'accession form' (see Annex 3 and Article 40):

2. **INOVA+ - INNOVATION SERVICES, SA (INOVA)**, PIC 999928478, established in RUA DR AFONSO CORDEIRO 567, MATOSINHOS 4450-309, Portugal,

3. **FRENCH TECH GRANDE PROVENCE (FTGP)**, PIC 925171354, established in 2 AVENUE DU BLANCHISSAGE, AVIGNON 84000, France,

4. **TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITAET DRESDEN (TUD)**, PIC 999897729, established in HELMHOLTZSTRASSE 10, DRESDEN 01069, Germany,

5. **MEDIA SOLUTION CENTER BADEN-WURTTENBERG E.V. (MSC bw e.V.)**, PIC 891346484, established in NOBELSTRASSE 19, STUTTGART 70569, Germany,

6. **ADVANCED MUSIC SL (Sonar)**, PIC 946340052, established in Calle Zamora 45, Piso 6, Barcelona 08005, Spain,

7. **SALZBURGER FESTSPIELFONDS (SFS)**, PIC 883530806, established in HOFSTALLGASSE 1, SALZBURG 5020, Austria,

8. **T6 ECOSYSTEMS SRL (T6ECO)**, PIC 999529614, established in VIA AURELIANA 63, ROMA 00187, Italy,

Unless otherwise specified, references to ‘beneficiary’ or ‘beneficiaries’ include the coordinator and affiliated entities (if any).

If only one beneficiary signs the grant agreement (‘mono-beneficiary grant’), all provisions referring to the ‘coordinator’ or the ‘beneficiaries’ will be considered — mutatis mutandis — as referring to the beneficiary.

The parties referred to above have agreed to enter into the Agreement.

By signing the Agreement and the accession forms, the beneficiaries accept the grant and agree to implement the action under their own responsibility and in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

The Agreement is composed of:

Preamble

Terms and Conditions (including Data Sheet)

Annex 1 Description of the action¹

Annex 2 Estimated budget for the action

Annex 3 Accession forms (if applicable)²

Annex 3a Declaration on joint and several liability of affiliated entities (if applicable)³

Annex 4 Model for the financial statements

Annex 5 Specific rules (if applicable)

¹ Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

² Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

³ Template published on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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DATA SHEET

1. General data

Project summary:

Project summary
<p>In the digital age and the decades of societal and environmental emergency states that we live in, science, technology, and industry have hit the innovation ceiling. New approaches, alternative perspectives, and creative solutions to inspire progress and accelerate development are needed: Artistic thinking can provide the boost we need to tackle the great challenges of our times. Science, Technology and arts (S+T+ARTS for short) form a nexus at which insightful observers have identified extraordinarily high potential for innovation. And innovation is precisely what's called for if we're to master the social, ecological and economic challenges that Europe is facing. STARTS Ec(h)o's main objective is building towards the triple transformation and developing artist-led approaches through creative experimentation and recognising the most successful ones: • The S+T+ARTS Prize will highlight and promote 90 outstanding technology-driven artistic projects and the achievements of the teams behind them towards the green transition and social sustainability. • Through S+T+ARTS residencies, artists will be enabled to develop 10 new pilots on human-centered and sustainable technologies in the fields of AI, high-performance computing, simulation & visualisation, digital twins, medical tech or circular economy. • An annual AIxMusic program at Sonar will create an international platform for pushing limits of digital technology and exploring the compatibility of digital with human values and needs through artistic thinking. Ars Electronica, Sonar, Salzburg Festival, Inova+, T6, French Tech Grand Provence, Technical University Dresden and Media Solution Center Baden Württemberg will stimulate arts-driven innovation that is human compatible and ecological consciousness and showcase outstanding examples from the field of S+T+ARTS in 12 events at the Ars Electronica Festival, Sonar and the Salzburg Festival and hence new pathways to European innovation.</p>

Keywords:

- ICT & art
- Art-driven innovation, Triple Transformation, STARTS Prize, STARTS Residencies, AIxMusic

Project number: 101135691

Project name: STARTS Ec(h)o: fostering ECOlogically conscious and Human compatible digital technology

Project acronym: STARTS

Call: HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-CNECT

Topic: HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-82

Type of action: HORIZON Coordination and Support Actions

Granting authority: European Commission-EU

Grant managed through EU Funding & Tenders Portal: Yes (eGrants)

Project starting date: fixed date: 1 January 2024

Project end date: 31 December 2026

Project duration: 36 months

Consortium agreement: Yes

2. Participants

List of participants:

N°	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Max grant amount
1	COO	AE	ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG	AT	905834016	769 008.75
2	BEN	INOVA	INOVA+ - INNOVATION SERVICES, SA	PT	999928478	816 250.00
3	BEN	FTGP	FRENCH TECH GRANDE PROVENCE	FR	925171354	187 250.00
4	BEN	TUD	TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITAET DRESDEN	DE	999897729	173 750.00

N°	Role	Short name	Legal name	Ctry	PIC	Max grant amount
5	BEN	MSC bw e.V.	MEDIA SOLUTION CENTER BADEN-WURTEMBERG E.V.	DE	891346484	180 616.25
6	BEN	Sonar	ADVANCED MUSIC SL	ES	946340052	551 250.00
7	BEN	SFS	SALZBURGER FESTSPIELFONDS	AT	883530806	148 125.00
8	BEN	T6ECO	T6 ECOSYSTEMS SRL	IT	999529614	173 750.00
Total						3 000 000.00

Coordinator:

– ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE)

3. Grant

Maximum grant amount, total estimated eligible costs and contributions and funding rate:

Maximum grant amount (Annex 2)	Maximum grant amount (award decision)
3 000 000.00	3 000 000.00

Grant form: Lump Sum

Grant mode: Action grant

Budget categories/activity types: Lump sum contributions

Cost eligibility options: n/a

Budget flexibility: No

4. Reporting, payments and recoveries**4.1 Continuous reporting** (art 21)

Deliverables: see Funding & Tenders Portal Continuous Reporting tool

4.2 Periodic reporting and payments

Reporting and payment schedule (art 21, 22):

Reporting					Payments	
Reporting periods			Type	Deadline	Type	Deadline (time to pay)
RP No	Month from	Month to				
					Initial prefinancing	30 days from entry into force/10 days before starting date – whichever is the latest
					Interim payment	90 days from receiving periodic report
					Final payment	90 days from receiving periodic report
1	1	12	Periodic report	60 days after end of reporting period		
2	13	36	Periodic report	60 days after end of reporting period		

Prefinancing payments and guarantees:

Prefinancing payment	
Type	Amount
Prefinancing 1 (initial)	2 400 000.00

Reporting and payment modalities (art 21, 22):

Mutual Insurance Mechanism (MIM): Yes

MIM contribution: 5% of the maximum grant amount (150 000.00), retained from the initial prefinancing

Restrictions on distribution of initial prefinancing: The prefinancing may be distributed only if the minimum number of beneficiaries set out in the call conditions (if any) have acceded to the Agreement and only to beneficiaries that have acceded.

Interim payment ceiling (if any): 90% of the maximum grant amount

No-profit rule: n/a

Late payment interest: ECB + 3.5%

Bank account for payments:

AT265400000003721115

Conversion into euros: n/a

Reporting language: Language of the Agreement

4.3 Certificates (art 24): n/a

4.4 Recoveries (art 22)

First-line liability for recoveries:

Beneficiary termination: Beneficiary concerned

Final payment: Each beneficiary for their own debt

After final payment: Beneficiary concerned

Joint and several liability for enforced recoveries (in case of non-payment):

Individual financial responsibility: Each beneficiary is liable only for its own debts (and those of its affiliated entities, if any)

Joint and several liability of affiliated entities — n/a

5. Consequences of non-compliance, applicable law & dispute settlement forum**Suspension and termination:**

Additional suspension grounds (art 31)

Additional termination grounds (art 32)

Applicable law (art 43):



Standard applicable law regime: EU law + law of Belgium

Dispute settlement forum (art 43):

Standard dispute settlement forum:

EU beneficiaries: EU General Court + EU Court of Justice (on appeal)

Non-EU beneficiaries: Courts of Brussels, Belgium (unless an international agreement provides for the enforceability of EU court judgements)

6. Other

Specific rules (Annex 5): Yes

Standard time-limits after project end:

Confidentiality (for X years after final payment): 5

Record-keeping (for X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

Reviews (up to X years after final payment): 2

Audits (up to X years after final payment): 2

Extension of findings from other grants to this grant (no later than X years after final payment): 2

Impact evaluation (up to X years after final payment): 5 (or 3 for grants of not more than EUR 60 000)

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL

ARTICLE 1 — SUBJECT OF THE AGREEMENT

This Agreement sets out the rights and obligations and terms and conditions applicable to the grant awarded for the implementation of the action set out in Chapter 2.

ARTICLE 2 — DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Agreement, the following definitions apply:

Actions — The project which is being funded in the context of this Agreement.

Grant — The grant awarded in the context of this Agreement.

EU grants — Grants awarded by EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies (including EU executive agencies, EU regulatory agencies, EDA, joint undertakings, etc.).

Participants — Entities participating in the action as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties.

Beneficiaries (BEN) — The signatories of this Agreement (either directly or through an accession form).

Affiliated entities (AE) — Entities affiliated to a beneficiary within the meaning of Article 187 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046⁴ which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries (obligation to implement action tasks and right to charge costs and claim contributions).

Associated partners (AP) — Entities which participate in the action, but without the right to charge costs or claim contributions.

Purchases — Contracts for goods, works or services needed to carry out the action (e.g. equipment, consumables and supplies) but which are not part of the action tasks (see Annex 1).

Subcontracting — Contracts for goods, works or services that are part of the action tasks (see Annex 1).

In-kind contributions — In-kind contributions within the meaning of Article 2(36) of EU Financial

⁴ For the definition, see Article 187 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1): "**affiliated entities** [are]:

- (a) entities that form a sole beneficiary [(i.e. where an entity is formed of several entities that satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant, including where the entity is specifically established for the purpose of implementing an action to be financed by a grant)];
- (b) entities that satisfy the eligibility criteria and that do not fall within one of the situations referred to in Article 136(1) and 141(1) and that have a link with the beneficiary, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation".

Regulation 2018/1046, i.e. non-financial resources made available free of charge by third parties.

Fraud — Fraud within the meaning of Article 3 of EU Directive 2017/1371⁵ and Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995⁶, as well as any other wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain.

Irregularities — Any type of breach (regulatory or contractual) which could impact the EU financial interests, including irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation 2988/95⁷.

Grave professional misconduct — Any type of unacceptable or improper behaviour in exercising one's profession, especially by employees, including grave professional misconduct within the meaning of Article 136(1)(c) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

Applicable EU, international and national law — Any legal acts or other (binding or non-binding) rules and guidance in the area concerned.

Portal — EU Funding & Tenders Portal; electronic portal and exchange system managed by the European Commission and used by itself and other EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies for the management of their funding programmes (grants, procurements, prizes, etc.).

CHAPTER 2 ACTION

ARTICLE 3 — ACTION

The grant is awarded for the action **101135691 — STARTS** ('action'), as described in Annex 1.

ARTICLE 4 — DURATION AND STARTING DATE

The duration and the starting date of the action are set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 1).

CHAPTER 3 GRANT

ARTICLE 5 — GRANT

5.1 Form of grant

⁵ Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2017 on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29).

⁶ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

⁷ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).

The grant is an action grant⁸ which takes the form of a lump sum grant for the completion of work packages.

5.2 Maximum grant amount

The maximum grant amount is set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 3) and in the estimated budget (Annex 2).

5.3 Funding rate

Not applicable

5.4 Estimated budget, budget categories and forms of funding

The estimated budget for the action (lump sum breakdown) is set out in Annex 2.

It contains the estimated eligible contributions for the action (lump sum contributions), broken down by participant and work package.

Annex 2 also shows the types of contributions (forms of funding)⁹ to be used for each work package.

5.5 Budget flexibility

Budget flexibility does not apply; changes to the estimated budget (lump sum breakdown) always require an amendment (see Article 39).

Amendments for transfers between *work packages* are moreover possible only if:

- the work packages concerned are not already completed (and declared in a financial statement) and
- the transfers are justified by the technical implementation of the action.

ARTICLE 6 — ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS

6.1 and 6.2 General and specific eligibility conditions

Lump sum contributions are eligible ('eligible contributions'), if:

- (a) they are set out in Annex 2 and
- (b) the work packages are completed and the work is properly implemented by the beneficiaries and/or the results are achieved, in accordance with Annex 1 and during in the period set out in Article 4 (with the exception of work/results relating to the submission of the final periodic report, which may be achieved afterwards; see Article 21)

They will be calculated on the basis of the amounts set out in Annex 2.

⁸ For the definition, see Article 180(2)(a) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: '**action grant**' means an EU grant to finance "an action intended to help achieve a Union policy objective".

⁹ See Article 125 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

6.3 Ineligible contributions

‘Ineligible contributions’ are:

- (a) lump sum contributions that do not comply with the conditions set out above (see Article 6.1 and 6.2)
- (b) lump sum contributions for activities already funded under other EU grants (or grants awarded by an EU Member State, non-EU country or other body implementing the EU budget), except for the following case:
 - (i) Synergy actions: not applicable
- (c) other:
 - (i) country restrictions for eligible costs: not applicable.

6.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary declares lump sum contributions that are ineligible, they will be rejected (see Article 27).

This may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4 GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 1 CONSORTIUM: BENEFICIARIES, AFFILIATED ENTITIES AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS

ARTICLE 7 — BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries, as signatories of the Agreement, are fully responsible towards the granting authority for implementing it and for complying with all its obligations.

They must implement the Agreement to their best abilities, in good faith and in accordance with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

They must have the appropriate resources to implement the action and implement the action under their own responsibility and in accordance with Article 11. If they rely on affiliated entities or other participants (see Articles 8 and 9), they retain sole responsibility towards the granting authority and the other beneficiaries.

They are jointly responsible for the *technical* implementation of the action. If one of the beneficiaries fails to implement their part of the action, the other beneficiaries must ensure that this part is implemented by someone else (without being entitled to an increase of the maximum grant amount and subject to an amendment; see Article 39). The *financial* responsibility of each beneficiary in case of recoveries is governed by Article 22.

The beneficiaries (and their action) must remain eligible under the EU programme funding the grant



for the entire duration of the action. Lump sum contributions will be eligible only as long as the beneficiary and the action are eligible.

The **internal roles and responsibilities** of the beneficiaries are divided as follows:

(a) Each beneficiary must:

- (i) keep information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date (see Article 19)
- (ii) inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) immediately of any events or circumstances likely to affect significantly or delay the implementation of the action (see Article 19)
- (iii) submit to the coordinator in good time:
 - the prefinancing guarantees (if required; see Article 23)
 - the financial statements and certificates on the financial statements (CFS): not applicable
 - the contribution to the deliverables and technical reports (see Article 21)
 - any other documents or information required by the granting authority under the Agreement
- (iv) submit via the Portal data and information related to the participation of their affiliated entities.

(b) The coordinator must:

- (i) monitor that the action is implemented properly (see Article 11)
- (ii) act as the intermediary for all communications between the consortium and the granting authority, unless the Agreement or granting authority specifies otherwise, and in particular:
 - submit the prefinancing guarantees to the granting authority (if any)
 - request and review any documents or information required and verify their quality and completeness before passing them on to the granting authority
 - submit the deliverables and reports to the granting authority
 - inform the granting authority about the payments made to the other beneficiaries (report on the distribution of payments; if required, see Articles 22 and 32)
- (iii) distribute the payments received from the granting authority to the other beneficiaries without unjustified delay (see Article 22).

The coordinator may not delegate or subcontract the above-mentioned tasks to any other beneficiary or third party (including affiliated entities).

However, coordinators which are public bodies may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(ii) last

indent and (iii) above to entities with ‘authorisation to administer’ which they have created or which are controlled by or affiliated to them. In this case, the coordinator retains sole responsibility for the payments and for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Moreover, coordinators which are ‘sole beneficiaries’¹⁰ (or similar, such as European research infrastructure consortia (ERICs)) may delegate the tasks set out in Point (b)(i) to (iii) above to one of their members. The coordinator retains sole responsibility for compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must have **internal arrangements** regarding their operation and co-ordination, to ensure that the action is implemented properly.

If required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 1), these arrangements must be set out in a written **consortium agreement** between the beneficiaries, covering for instance:

- the internal organisation of the consortium
- the management of access to the Portal
- different distribution keys for the payments and financial responsibilities in case of recoveries (if any)
- additional rules on rights and obligations related to background and results (see Article 16)
- settlement of internal disputes
- liability, indemnification and confidentiality arrangements between the beneficiaries.

The internal arrangements must not contain any provision contrary to this Agreement.

ARTICLE 8 — AFFILIATED ENTITIES

Not applicable

ARTICLE 9 — OTHER PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN THE ACTION

9.1 Associated partners

Not applicable

9.2 Third parties giving in-kind contributions to the action

Other third parties may give in-kind contributions to the action (i.e. personnel, equipment, other goods, works and services, etc. which are free-of-charge) if necessary for the implementation.

Third parties giving in-kind contributions do not implement any action tasks. They may not charge contributions to the action (no lump sum contributions) and their costs are considered entirely covered by the lump sum contributions paid to the beneficiaries.

¹⁰ For the definition, see Article 187(2) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046: “Where several entities satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant and together form one entity, that entity may be treated as the **sole beneficiary**, including where it is specifically established for the purpose of implementing the action financed by the grant.”

The third parties and their in-kind contributions should be set out in Annex 1.

9.3 Subcontractors

Subcontractors may participate in the action, if necessary for the implementation.

Subcontractors must implement their action tasks in accordance with Article 11. The beneficiaries' costs for subcontracting are considered entirely covered by the lump sum contributions for implementing the work packages (irrespective of the actual subcontracting costs incurred, if any).

The beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 11 (proper implementation), 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the subcontractors.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the subcontractors.

9.4 Recipients of financial support to third parties

If the action includes providing financial support to third parties (e.g. grants, prizes or similar forms of support), the beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the third parties receiving the support (recipients).

The beneficiaries must also ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the recipients.

ARTICLE 10 — PARTICIPANTS WITH SPECIAL STATUS

10.1 Non-EU participants

Participants which are established in a non-EU country (if any) undertake to comply with their obligations under the Agreement and:

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)
- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: use qualified external auditors which are independent and comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC¹¹
- for the controls under Article 25: allow for checks, reviews, audits and investigations (including on-the-spot checks, visits and inspections) by the bodies mentioned in that Article (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.).

¹¹ Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts or similar national regulations (OJ L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 87).

Special rules on dispute settlement apply (see Data Sheet, Point 5).

10.2 Participants which are international organisations

Participants which are international organisations (IOs; if any) undertake to comply with their obligations under the Agreement and:

- to respect general principles (including fundamental rights, values and ethical principles, environmental and labour standards, rules on classified information, intellectual property rights, visibility of funding and protection of personal data)
- for the submission of certificates under Article 24: to use either independent public officers or external auditors which comply with comparable standards as those set out in EU Directive 2006/43/EC
- for the controls under Article 25: to allow for the checks, reviews, audits and investigations by the bodies mentioned in that Article, taking into account the specific agreements concluded by them and the EU (if any).

For such participants, nothing in the Agreement will be interpreted as a waiver of their privileges or immunities, as accorded by their constituent documents or international law.

Special rules on applicable law and dispute settlement apply (see Article 43 and Data Sheet, Point 5).

10.3 Pillar-assessed participants

Pillar-assessed participants (if any) may rely on their own systems, rules and procedures, in so far as they have been positively assessed and do not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries.

‘Pillar-assessment’ means a review by the European Commission on the systems, rules and procedures which participants use for managing EU grants (in particular internal control system, accounting system, external audits, financing of third parties, rules on recovery and exclusion, information on recipients and protection of personal data; see Article 154 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046).

Participants with a positive pillar assessment may rely on their own systems, rules and procedures, in particular for:

- record-keeping (Article 20): may be done in accordance with internal standards, rules and procedures
- currency conversion for financial statements (Article 21): may be done in accordance with usual accounting practices
- guarantees (Article 23): for public law bodies, prefinancing guarantees are not needed
- certificates (Article 24):
 - certificates on the financial statements (CFS): may be provided by their regular internal or external auditors and in accordance with their internal financial regulations and procedures

- certificates on usual accounting practices (CoMUC): are not needed if those practices are covered by an ex-ante assessment

and use the following specific rules, for:

- recoveries (Article 22): in case of financial support to third parties, there will be no recovery if the participant has done everything possible to retrieve the undue amounts from the third party receiving the support (including legal proceedings) and non-recovery is not due to an error or negligence on its part
- checks, reviews, audits and investigations by the EU (Article 25): will be conducted taking into account the rules and procedures specifically agreed between them and the framework agreement (if any)
- impact evaluation (Article 26): will be conducted in accordance with the participant's internal rules and procedures and the framework agreement (if any)
- grant agreement suspension (Article 31): certain costs incurred during grant suspension are eligible (notably, minimum costs necessary for a possible resumption of the action and costs relating to contracts which were entered into before the pre-information letter was received and which could not reasonably be suspended, reallocated or terminated on legal grounds)
- grant agreement termination (Article 32): the final grant amount and final payment will be calculated taking into account also costs relating to contracts due for execution only after termination takes effect, if the contract was entered into before the pre-information letter was received and could not reasonably be terminated on legal grounds
- liability for damages (Article 33.2): the granting authority must be compensated for damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement only if the damage is due to an infringement of the participant's internal rules and procedures or due to a violation of third parties' rights by the participant or one of its employees or individual for whom the employees are responsible.

Participants whose pillar assessment covers procurement and granting procedures may also do purchases, subcontracting and financial support to third parties (Article 6.2) in accordance with their internal rules and procedures for purchases, subcontracting and financial support.

Participants whose pillar assessment covers data protection rules may rely on their internal standards, rules and procedures for data protection (Article 15).

The participants may however not rely on provisions which would breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries or call into question the decision awarding the grant, such as in particular:

- eligibility (Article 6)
- consortium roles and set-up (Articles 7-9)
- security and ethics (Articles 13, 14)

- IPR (including background and results, access rights and rights of use), communication, dissemination and visibility (Articles 16 and 17)
- information obligation (Article 19)
- payment, reporting and amendments (Articles 21, 22 and 39)
- rejections, reductions, suspensions and terminations (Articles 27, 28, 29-32)

If the pillar assessment was subject to remedial measures, reliance on the internal systems, rules and procedures is subject to compliance with those remedial measures.

Participants whose assessment has not yet been updated to cover (the new rules on) data protection may rely on their internal systems, rules and procedures, provided that they ensure that personal data is:

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and
- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data.

Participants must inform the coordinator without delay of any changes to the systems, rules and procedures that were part of the pillar assessment. The coordinator must immediately inform the granting authority.

Pillar-assessed participants that have also concluded a framework agreement with the EU, may moreover — under the same conditions as those above (i.e. not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants or beneficiaries) — rely on provisions set out in that framework agreement.

SECTION 2 RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

ARTICLE 11 — PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION

11.1 Obligation to properly implement the action

The beneficiaries must implement the action as described in Annex 1 and in compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, the call conditions and all legal obligations under applicable EU, international and national law.

11.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 12 — CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

12.1 Conflict of interests

The beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the Agreement could be compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest ('conflict of interests').

They must formally notify the granting authority without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The granting authority may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

12.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28) and the grant or the beneficiary may be terminated (see Article 32).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 13 — CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

13.1 Sensitive information

The parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as sensitive in writing ('sensitive information') — during the implementation of the action and for at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6).

If a beneficiary requests, the granting authority may agree to keep such information confidential for a longer period.

Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use sensitive information only to implement the Agreement.

The beneficiaries may disclose sensitive information to their personnel or other participants involved in the action only if they:

- (a) need to know it in order to implement the Agreement and
- (b) are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The granting authority may disclose sensitive information to its staff and to other EU institutions and bodies.

It may moreover disclose sensitive information to third parties, if:

- (a) this is necessary to implement the Agreement or safeguard the EU financial interests and
- (b) the recipients of the information are bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The confidentiality obligations no longer apply if:

- (a) the disclosing party agrees to release the other party
- (b) the information becomes publicly available, without breaching any confidentiality obligation
- (c) the disclosure of the sensitive information is required by EU, international or national law.

Specific confidentiality rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

13.2 Classified information

The parties must handle classified information in accordance with the applicable EU, international or national law on classified information (in particular, Decision 2015/444¹² and its implementing rules).

Deliverables which contain classified information must be submitted according to special procedures agreed with the granting authority.

Action tasks involving classified information may be subcontracted only after explicit approval (in writing) from the granting authority.

Classified information may not be disclosed to any third party (including participants involved in the action implementation) without prior explicit written approval from the granting authority.

Specific security rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

13.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 14 — ETHICS AND VALUES

14.1 Ethics

The action must be carried out in line with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles.

Specific ethics rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

14.2 Values

The beneficiaries must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values (such as respect for

¹² Commission Decision 2015/444/EC, Euratom of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).

Specific rules on values (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

14.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 15 — DATA PROTECTION

15.1 Data processing by the granting authority

Any personal data under the Agreement will be processed under the responsibility of the data controller of the granting authority in accordance with and for the purposes set out in the Portal Privacy Statement.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission, an EU regulatory or executive agency, joint undertaking or other EU body, the processing will be subject to Regulation 2018/1725¹³.

15.2 Data processing by the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must process personal data under the Agreement in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/679¹⁴).

They must ensure that personal data is:

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subjects
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and
- processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the data.

¹³ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

¹⁴ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC ('GDPR') (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1).

The beneficiaries may grant their personnel access to personal data only if it is strictly necessary for implementing, managing and monitoring the Agreement. The beneficiaries must ensure that the personnel is under a confidentiality obligation.

The beneficiaries must inform the persons whose data are transferred to the granting authority and provide them with the Portal Privacy Statement.

15.3 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 16 — INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) — BACKGROUND AND RESULTS — ACCESS RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF USE

16.1 Background and access rights to background

The beneficiaries must give each other and the other participants access to the background identified as needed for implementing the action, subject to any specific rules in Annex 5.

‘Background’ means any data, know-how or information — whatever its form or nature (tangible or intangible), including any rights such as intellectual property rights — that is:

- (a) held by the beneficiaries before they acceded to the Agreement and
- (b) needed to implement the action or exploit the results.

If background is subject to rights of a third party, the beneficiary concerned must ensure that it is able to comply with its obligations under the Agreement.

16.2 Ownership of results

The granting authority does not obtain ownership of the results produced under the action.

‘Results’ means any tangible or intangible effect of the action, such as data, know-how or information, whatever its form or nature, whether or not it can be protected, as well as any rights attached to it, including intellectual property rights.

16.3 Rights of use of the granting authority on materials, documents and information received for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes

The granting authority has the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the action and materials and documents received from the beneficiaries (notably summaries for publication, deliverables, as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material, in paper or electronic form) for policy information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes — during the action or afterwards.

The right to use the beneficiaries’ materials, documents and information is granted in the form of a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence, which includes the following rights:

- (a) **use for its own purposes** (in particular, making them available to persons working for the granting authority or any other EU service (including institutions, bodies, offices, agencies, etc.) or EU Member State institution or body; copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers; and communication through press information services)
- (b) **distribution to the public** (in particular, publication as hard copies and in electronic or digital format, publication on the internet, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file, broadcasting by any channel, public display or presentation, communicating through press information services, or inclusion in widely accessible databases or indexes)
- (c) **editing or redrafting** (including shortening, summarising, inserting other elements (e.g. meta-data, legends, other graphic, visual, audio or text elements), extracting parts (e.g. audio or video files), dividing into parts, use in a compilation)
- (d) **translation**
- (e) **storage** in paper, electronic or other form
- (f) **archiving**, in line with applicable document-management rules
- (g) the right to authorise **third parties** to act on its behalf or sub-license to third parties the modes of use set out in Points (b), (c), (d) and (f), if needed for the information, communication and publicity activity of the granting authority and
- (h) **processing**, analysing, aggregating the materials, documents and information received and **producing derivative works**.

The rights of use are granted for the whole duration of the industrial or intellectual property rights concerned.

If materials or documents are subject to moral rights or third party rights (including intellectual property rights or rights of natural persons on their image and voice), the beneficiaries must ensure that they comply with their obligations under this Agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary licences and authorisations from the rights holders concerned).

Where applicable, the granting authority will insert the following information:

“© – [year] – [name of the copyright owner]. All rights reserved. Licensed to the [name of granting authority] under conditions.”

16.4 Specific rules on IPR, results and background

Specific rules regarding intellectual property rights, results and background (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

16.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such a breach may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 17 — COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY

17.1 Communication — Dissemination — Promoting the action

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, the beneficiaries must promote the action and its results by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in accordance with Annex 1 and in a strategic, coherent and effective manner.

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the granting authority.

17.2 Visibility — European flag and funding statement

Unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority, communication activities of the beneficiaries related to the action (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded by the grant must acknowledge the EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate):



Funded by the
European Union



Co-funded by the
European Union



Funded by the
European Union



Co-funded by the
European Union

The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text.

Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.

When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. of beneficiaries or sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

For the purposes of their obligations under this Article, the beneficiaries may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from the granting authority. This does not, however, give them the right to

exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

17.3 Quality of information — Disclaimer

Any communication or dissemination activity related to the action must use factually accurate information.

Moreover, it must indicate the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate):

“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or [name of the granting authority]. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.”

17.4 Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules

Specific communication, dissemination and visibility rules (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

17.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 18 — SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION

18.1 Specific rules for carrying out the action

Specific rules for implementing the action (if any) are set out in Annex 5.

18.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such a breach may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

SECTION 3 GRANT ADMINISTRATION

ARTICLE 19 — GENERAL INFORMATION OBLIGATIONS

19.1 Information requests

The beneficiaries must provide — during the action or afterwards and in accordance with Article 7 — any information requested in order to verify eligibility of the lump sum contributions declared, proper implementation of the action and compliance with the other obligations under the Agreement.

The information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

19.2 Participant Register data updates

The beneficiaries must keep — at all times, during the action or afterwards — their information stored in the Portal Participant Register up to date, in particular, their name, address, legal representatives, legal form and organisation type.

19.3 Information about events and circumstances which impact the action

The beneficiaries must immediately inform the granting authority (and the other beneficiaries) of any of the following:

- (a) **events** which are likely to affect or delay the implementation of the action or affect the EU's financial interests, in particular:
 - (i) changes in their legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour signed before grant signature)
 - (ii) linked action information: not applicable
- (b) **circumstances** affecting:
 - (i) the decision to award the grant or
 - (ii) compliance with requirements under the Agreement.

19.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 20 — RECORD-KEEPING

20.1 Keeping records and supporting documents

The beneficiaries must — at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6) — keep records and other supporting documents to prove the proper implementation of the action (proper implementation of the work and/or achievement of the results as described in Annex 1) in line with the accepted standards in the respective field (if any); beneficiaries do not need to keep specific records on the actual costs incurred.

The records and supporting documents must be made available upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits or investigations (see Article 25).

If there are on-going checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims under the Agreement (including the extension of findings; see Article 25), the beneficiaries must keep these records and other supporting documentation until the end of these procedures.

The beneficiaries must keep the original documents. Digital and digitalised documents are considered

originals if they are authorised by the applicable national law. The granting authority may accept non-original documents if they offer a comparable level of assurance.

20.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, lump sum contributions insufficiently substantiated will be ineligible (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 27), and the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 21 — REPORTING

21.1 Continuous reporting

The beneficiaries must continuously report on the progress of the action (e.g. **deliverables, milestones, outputs/outcomes, critical risks, indicators**, etc; if any), in the Portal Continuous Reporting tool and in accordance with the timing and conditions it sets out (as agreed with the granting authority).

Standardised deliverables (e.g. progress reports not linked to payments, reports on cumulative expenditure, special reports, etc; if any) must be submitted using the templates published on the Portal.

21.2 Periodic reporting: Technical reports and financial statements

In addition, the beneficiaries must provide reports to request payments, in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2):

- for additional prefinancings (if any): **an additional prefinancing report**
- for interim payments (if any) and the final payment: a **periodic report**

The prefinancing and periodic reports include a technical and financial part.

The technical part includes an overview of the action implementation. It must be prepared using the template available in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool.

The financial part of the additional prefinancing report includes a statement on the use of the previous prefinancing payment.

The financial part of the periodic report includes:

- the financial statement (consolidated statement for the consortium)
- the explanation on the use of resources (or detailed cost reporting table): not applicable
- the certificates on the financial statements (CFS): not applicable.

The **financial statement** must contain the lump sum contributions indicated in Annex 2, for the work packages that were completed during the reporting period.

For the last reporting period, the beneficiaries may exceptionally also declare partial lump sum

contributions for work packages that were not completed (e.g. due to force majeure or technical impossibility).

Lump sum contributions which are not declared in a financial statement will not be taken into account by the granting authority.

By signing the financial statement (directly in the Portal Periodic Reporting tool), the coordinator confirms (on behalf of the consortium) that:

- the information provided is complete, reliable and true
- the lump sum contributions declared are eligible (in particular, the work packages have been completed, that the work has been properly implemented and/or the results were achieved in accordance with Annex 1; see Article 6)
- the proper implementation and/or achievement can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documents (see Article 20) that will be produced upon request (see Article 19) or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Article 25).

In case of recoveries (see Article 22), beneficiaries will be held responsible also for the lump sum contributions declared for their affiliated entities (if any).

21.3 Currency for financial statements and conversion into euros

The financial statements must be drafted in euro.

21.4 Reporting language

The reporting must be in the language of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

21.5 Consequences of non-compliance

If a report submitted does not comply with this Article, the granting authority may suspend the payment deadline (see Article 29) and apply other measures described in Chapter 5.

If the coordinator breaches its reporting obligations, the granting authority may terminate the grant or the coordinator's participation (see Article 32) or apply other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 22 — PAYMENTS AND RECOVERIES — CALCULATION OF AMOUNTS DUE

22.1 Payments and payment arrangements

Payments will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

They will be made in euro to the bank account indicated by the coordinator (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2) and must be distributed without unjustified delay (restrictions may apply to distribution of the initial prefinancing payment; see Data Sheet, Point 4.2).

Payments to this bank account will discharge the granting authority from its payment obligation.

The cost of payment transfers will be borne as follows:

- the granting authority bears the cost of transfers charged by its bank
- the beneficiary bears the cost of transfers charged by its bank
- the party causing a repetition of a transfer bears all costs of the repeated transfer.

Payments by the granting authority will be considered to have been carried out on the date when they are debited to its account.

22.2 Recoveries

Recoveries will be made, if — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — it turns out that the granting authority has paid too much and needs to recover the amounts undue.

Each beneficiary's financial responsibility in case of recovery is in principle limited to their own debt and undue amounts of their affiliated entities.

In case of enforced recoveries (see Article 22.4), affiliated entities will be held liable for repaying debts of their beneficiaries, if required by the granting authority (see Data Sheet, Point 4.4).

22.3 Amounts due

22.3.1 Prefinancing payments

The aim of the prefinancing is to provide the beneficiaries with a float.

It remains the property of the EU until the final payment.

For **initial prefinancings** (if any), the amount due, schedule and modalities are set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

For **additional prefinancings** (if any), the amount due, schedule and modalities are also set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2). However, if the statement on the use of the previous prefinancing payment shows that less than 70% was used, the amount set out in the Data Sheet will be reduced by the difference between the 70% threshold and the amount used.

The contribution to the Mutual Insurance Mechanism will be retained from the prefinancing payments (at the rate and in accordance with the modalities set out in the Data Sheet, see Point 4.2) and transferred to the Mechanism.

Prefinancing payments (or parts of them) may be offset (without the beneficiaries' consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

22.3.2 Amount due at beneficiary termination — Recovery

In case of beneficiary termination, the granting authority will determine the provisional amount due for the beneficiary concerned.

This will be done on the basis of work packages already completed in previous interim payments. Payments for ongoing/not yet completed work packages which the beneficiary was working on before termination (if any) will therefore be made only later on, with the next interim or final payments when those work packages have been completed.

The **amount due** will be calculated in the following step:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the ‘accepted EU contribution’ for the beneficiary, on the basis of the beneficiary’s lump sum contributions for the work packages which were approved in previous interim payments.

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting amount is the ‘total accepted EU contribution’ for the beneficiary.

The **balance** is then calculated by deducting the payments received (if any; see report on the distribution of payments in Article 32), from the total accepted EU contribution:

$$\begin{aligned} & \{\text{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary} \\ & \text{minus} \\ & \{\text{prefinancing and interim payments received (if any)}\} \}. \end{aligned}$$

If the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the amount due, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered and ask this amount to be paid to the coordinator (**confirmation letter**).

If payment is not made to the coordinator by the date specified in the confirmation letter, the granting authority may call on the Mutual Insurance Mechanism to intervene, if continuation of the action is guaranteed and the conditions set out in the rules governing the Mechanism are met.

In this case, it will send a **beneficiary recovery letter**, together with a **debit note** with the terms and date for payment.

The debit note for the beneficiary will include the amount calculated for the affiliated entities which also had to end their participation (if any).

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.3.3 Interim payments

Interim payments reimburse the eligible lump sum contributions claimed for work packages implemented during the reporting periods (if any).

Interim payments (if any) will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Payment is subject to the approval of the periodic report and the work packages declared. Their approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of their content.

Incomplete work packages and work packages that have not been delivered or cannot be approved will be rejected (see Article 27).

The **interim payment** will be calculated by the granting authority in the following steps:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the ‘accepted EU contribution’ for the action for the reporting period, by calculating the lump sum contributions for the approved work packages.

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions from beneficiary termination (if any). The resulting amount is the ‘total accepted EU contribution’.

Step 2 — Limit to the interim payment ceiling

The resulting amount is then capped to ensure that the total amount of prefinancing and interim payments (if any) does not exceed the interim payment ceiling set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Interim payments (or parts of them) may be offset (without the beneficiaries’ consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

22.3.4 Final payment — Final grant amount — Revenues and Profit — Recovery

The final payment (payment of the balance) reimburses the remaining eligible lump sum contributions claimed for the implemented work packages (if any).

The final payment will be made in accordance with the schedule and modalities set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 4.2).

Payment is subject to the approval of the final periodic report and the work packages declared. Their approval does not imply recognition of compliance, authenticity, completeness or correctness of their content.

Work packages (or parts of them) that have not been delivered or cannot be approved will be rejected (see Article 27).

The **final grant amount for the action** will be calculated in the following steps:

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

Step 1 — Calculation of the total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the ‘accepted EU contribution’ for the action for all reporting periods, by calculating the lump sum contributions for the approved work packages.

After that, the granting authority will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting amount is the ‘total accepted EU contribution’.

Step 2 — Limit to the maximum grant amount

Not applicable

Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule

Not applicable

The **balance** (final payment) is then calculated by deducting the total amount of prefinancing and interim payments already made (if any), from the final grant amount:

$$\begin{aligned} &\{\text{final grant amount} \\ &\text{minus} \\ &\{\text{prefinancing and interim payments made (if any)}\}\}. \end{aligned}$$

If the balance is **positive**, it will be **paid** to the coordinator.

The amount retained for the Mutual Insurance Mechanism (see above) will be released and **paid** to the coordinator (in accordance with the rules governing the Mechanism).

The final payment (or part of it) may be offset (without the beneficiaries’ consent) against amounts owed by a beneficiary to the granting authority — up to the amount due to that beneficiary.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, offsetting may also be done against amounts owed to other Commission services or executive agencies.

Payments will not be made if the payment deadline or payments are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30).

If — despite the release of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism contribution — the balance is **negative**, it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the final grant amount, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why
- requesting a report on the distribution of payments to the beneficiaries within 30 days of receiving notification and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received) and the coordinator has submitted the report on the distribution of payments, it will calculate the **share of the debt per beneficiary**, by:

- (a) identifying the beneficiaries for which the amount calculated as follows is negative:

$$\left\{ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary} \\ \text{divided by} \\ \text{total accepted EU contribution for the action} \end{array} \right\} \times \text{final grant amount for the action} \right\},$$

minus

$$\left\{ \text{prefinancing and interim payments received by the beneficiary (if any)} \right\}$$

and

- (b) dividing the debt:

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{amount calculated according to point (a) for the beneficiary concerned} \\ \text{divided by} \\ \text{the sum of the amounts calculated according to point (a) for all the beneficiaries identified according to} \\ \text{point (a)} \end{array} \right\}$$

multiplied by

$$\text{the amount to be recovered}.$$

and confirm the amount to be recovered from each beneficiary concerned (**confirmation letter**), together with **debit notes** with the terms and date for payment.

The debit notes for beneficiaries will include the amounts calculated for their affiliated entities (if any).

If the coordinator has not submitted the report on the distribution of payments, the granting authority

will **recover** the full amount from the coordinator (**confirmation letter** and **debit note** with the terms and date for payment).

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.3.5 Audit implementation after final payment — Revised final grant amount — Recovery

If — after the final payment (in particular, after checks, reviews, audits or investigations; see Article 25) — the granting authority rejects lump sum contributions (see Article 27) or reduces the grant (see Article 28), it will calculate the **revised final grant amount** for the beneficiary concerned.

The **beneficiary revised final grant amount** will be calculated in the following step:

Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

Step 1 — Calculation of the revised total accepted EU contribution

The granting authority will first calculate the ‘revised accepted EU contribution’ for the beneficiary, by calculating the ‘revised accepted contributions’.

After that, it will take into account grant reductions (if any). The resulting ‘revised total accepted EU contribution’ is the beneficiary revised final grant amount.

If the revised final grant amount is lower than the beneficiary’s final grant amount (i.e. its share in the final grant amount for the action), it will be **recovered** in accordance with the following procedure:

The **beneficiary final grant amount** (i.e. share in the final grant amount for the action) is calculated as follows:

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{total accepted EU contribution for the beneficiary} \\ \text{divided by} \\ \text{total accepted EU contribution for the action} \end{array} \right\} \times \text{final grant amount for the action}.$$

The granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to recover, the amount to be recovered and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If no observations are submitted (or the granting authority decides to pursue recovery despite the observations it has received), it will confirm the amount to be recovered (**confirmation letter**), together with a **debit note** with the terms and the date for payment.

Recoveries against affiliated entities (if any) will be handled through their beneficiaries.

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the granting authority will **enforce recovery** in accordance with Article 22.4.

22.4 Enforced recovery

If payment is not made by the date specified in the debit note, the amount due will be recovered:

- (a) by offsetting the amount — without the coordinator or beneficiary's consent — against any amounts owed to the coordinator or beneficiary by the granting authority.

In exceptional circumstances, to safeguard the EU financial interests, the amount may be offset before the payment date specified in the debit note.

For grants where the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, debts may also be offset against amounts owed by other Commission services or executive agencies.

- (b) financial guarantee(s): not applicable
- (c) joint and several liability of beneficiaries: not applicable
- (d) by holding affiliated entities jointly and severally liable (if any, see Data Sheet, Point 4.4)
- (e) by taking legal action (see Article 43) or, provided that the granting authority is the European Commission or an EU executive agency, by adopting an enforceable decision under Article 299 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 100(2) of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

If the Mutual Insurance Mechanism was called on by the granting authority to intervene, recovery will be continued in the name of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism. If two debit notes were sent, the second one (in the name of the Mutual Insurance Mechanism) will be considered to replace the first one (in the name of the granting authority). Where the MIM intervened, offsetting, enforceable decisions or any other of the above-mentioned forms of enforced recovery may be used mutatis mutandis.

The amount to be recovered will be increased by **late-payment interest** at the rate set out in Article 23.5, from the day following the payment date in the debit note, up to and including the date the full payment is received.

Partial payments will be first credited against expenses, charges and late-payment interest and then against the principal.

Bank charges incurred in the recovery process will be borne by the beneficiary, unless Directive 2015/2366¹⁵ applies.

For grants where the granting authority is an EU executive agency, enforced recovery by offsetting or enforceable decision will be done by the services of the European Commission (see also Article 43).

22.5 Consequences of non-compliance

22.5.1 If the granting authority does not pay within the payment deadlines (see above), the beneficiaries are entitled to **late-payment interest** at the reference rate applied by the European

¹⁵ Directive (EU) 2015/2366 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on payment services in the internal market, amending Directives 2002/65/EC, 2009/110/EC and 2013/36/EU and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010, and repealing Directive 2007/64/EC (OJ L 337, 23.12.2015, p. 35).

Central Bank (ECB) for its main refinancing operations in euros, plus the percentage specified in the Data Sheet (Point 4.2). The ECB reference rate to be used is the rate in force on the first day of the month in which the payment deadline expires, as published in the C series of the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

If the late-payment interest is lower than or equal to EUR 200, it will be paid to the coordinator only on request submitted within two months of receiving the late payment.

Late-payment interest is not due if all beneficiaries are EU Member States (including regional and local government authorities or other public bodies acting on behalf of a Member State for the purpose of this Agreement).

If payments or the payment deadline are suspended (see Articles 29 and 30), payment will not be considered as late.

Late-payment interest covers the period running from the day following the due date for payment (see above), up to and including the date of payment.

Late-payment interest is not considered for the purposes of calculating the final grant amount.

22.5.2 If the coordinator breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28) and the grant or the coordinator may be terminated (see Article 32).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 23 — GUARANTEES

Not applicable

ARTICLE 24 — CERTIFICATES

Not applicable

ARTICLE 25 — CHECKS, REVIEWS, AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS — EXTENSION OF FINDINGS

25.1 Granting authority checks, reviews and audits

25.1.1 Internal checks

The granting authority may — during the action or afterwards — check the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement, including assessing lump sum contributions, deliverables and reports.

25.1.2 Project reviews

The granting authority may carry out reviews on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement (general project reviews or specific issues reviews).

Such project reviews may be started during the implementation of the action and until the time-limit

set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

If needed, the granting authority may be assisted by independent, outside experts. If it uses outside experts, the coordinator or beneficiary concerned will be informed and have the right to object on grounds of commercial confidentiality or conflict of interest.

The coordinator or beneficiary concerned must cooperate diligently and provide — within the deadline requested — any information and data in addition to deliverables and reports already submitted. The granting authority may request beneficiaries to provide such information to it directly. Sensitive information and documents will be treated in accordance with Article 13.

The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may be requested to participate in meetings, including with the outside experts.

For **on-the-spot visits**, the beneficiary concerned must allow access to sites and premises (including to the outside experts) and must ensure that information requested is readily available.

Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

On the basis of the review findings, a **project review report** will be drawn up.

The granting authority will formally notify the project review report to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned, which has 30 days from receiving notification to make observations.

Project reviews (including project review reports) will be in the language of the Agreement.

25.1.3 Audits

The granting authority may carry out audits on the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the Agreement.

Such audits may be started during the implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the beneficiary concerned and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

The granting authority may use its own audit service, delegate audits to a centralised service or use external audit firms. If it uses an external firm, the beneficiary concerned will be informed and have the right to object on grounds of commercial confidentiality or conflict of interest.

The beneficiary concerned must cooperate diligently and provide — within the deadline requested — any information (including complete accounts, individual salary statements or other personal data) to verify compliance with the Agreement. Sensitive information and documents will be treated in accordance with Article 13.

For **on-the-spot** visits, the beneficiary concerned must allow access to sites and premises (including for the external audit firm) and must ensure that information requested is readily available.

Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested, including electronic format.

On the basis of the audit findings, a **draft audit report** will be drawn up.

The auditors will formally notify the draft audit report to the beneficiary concerned, which has 30 days from receiving notification to make observations (contradictory audit procedure).

The **final audit report** will take into account observations by the beneficiary concerned and will be formally notified to them.

Audits (including audit reports) will be in the language of the Agreement.

25.2 European Commission checks, reviews and audits in grants of other granting authorities

Where the granting authority is not the European Commission, the latter has the same rights of checks, reviews and audits as the granting authority.

25.3 Access to records for assessing simplified forms of funding

The beneficiaries must give the European Commission access to their statutory records for the periodic assessment of simplified forms of funding which are used in EU programmes.

25.4 OLAF, EPPO and ECA audits and investigations

The following bodies may also carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations — during the action or afterwards:

- the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) under Regulations No 883/2013¹⁶ and No 2185/96¹⁷
- the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) under Regulation 2017/1939
- the European Court of Auditors (ECA) under Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 257 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

If requested by these bodies, the beneficiary concerned must provide full, accurate and complete information in the format requested (including complete accounts, individual salary statements or other personal data, including in electronic format) and allow access to sites and premises for on-the-spot visits or inspections — as provided for under these Regulations.

To this end, the beneficiary concerned must keep all relevant information relating to the action, at least until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (Point 6) and, in any case, until any ongoing checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims have been concluded.

25.5 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations — Extension of findings

25.5.1 Consequences of checks, reviews, audits and investigations in this grant

¹⁶ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (OJ L 248, 18/09/2013, p. 1).

¹⁷ Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L 292, 15/11/1996, p. 2).

Findings in checks, reviews, audits or investigations carried out in the context of this grant may lead to rejections (see Article 27), grant reduction (see Article 28) or other measures described in Chapter 5.

Rejections or grant reductions after the final payment will lead to a revised final grant amount (see Article 22).

Findings in checks, reviews, audits or investigations during the action implementation may lead to a request for amendment (see Article 39), to change the description of the action set out in Annex 1.

Checks, reviews, audits or investigations that find systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations in any EU grant may also lead to consequences in other EU grants awarded under similar conditions ('extension to other grants').

Moreover, findings arising from an OLAF or EPPO investigation may lead to criminal prosecution under national law.

25.5.2 Extension from other grants

Findings of checks, reviews, audits or investigations in other grants may be extended to this grant, if:

- (a) the beneficiary concerned is found, in other EU grants awarded under similar conditions, to have committed systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant and
- (b) those findings are formally notified to the beneficiary concerned — together with the list of grants affected by the findings — within the time-limit for audits set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6).

The granting authority will formally notify the beneficiary concerned of the intention to extend the findings and the list of grants affected.

If the extension concerns **rejections of lump sum contributions**: the notification will include:

- (a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings
- (b) the request to submit revised financial statements for all grants affected
- (c) the correction rate for extrapolation, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors, to calculate the amounts to be rejected, if the beneficiary concerned:
 - (i) considers that the submission of revised financial statements is not possible or practicable or
 - (ii) does not submit revised financial statements.

If the extension concerns **grant reductions**: the notification will include:

- (a) an invitation to submit observations on the list of grants affected by the findings and
- (b) the **correction rate for extrapolation**, established on the basis of the systemic or recurrent errors and the principle of proportionality.

The beneficiary concerned has **60 days** from receiving notification to submit observations, revised financial statements or to propose a duly substantiated **alternative correction method/rate**.

On the basis of this, the granting authority will analyse the impact and decide on the implementation (i.e. start rejection or grant reduction procedures, either on the basis of the revised financial statements or the announced/alternative method/rate or a mix of those; see Articles 27 and 28).

25.6 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, lump sum contributions insufficiently substantiated will be ineligible (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 27), and the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

ARTICLE 26 — IMPACT EVALUATIONS

26.1 Impact evaluation

The granting authority may carry out impact evaluations of the action, measured against the objectives and indicators of the EU programme funding the grant.

Such evaluations may be started during implementation of the action and until the time-limit set out in the Data Sheet (see Point 6). They will be formally notified to the coordinator or beneficiaries and will be considered to start on the date of the notification.

If needed, the granting authority may be assisted by independent outside experts.

The coordinator or beneficiaries must provide any information relevant to evaluate the impact of the action, including information in electronic format.

26.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the granting authority may apply the measures described in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

SECTION 1 REJECTIONS AND GRANT REDUCTION

ARTICLE 27 — REJECTION OF CONTRIBUTIONS

27.1 Conditions

The granting authority will — at interim payment, final payment or afterwards — reject any lump sum contributions which are ineligible (see Article 6), in particular following checks, reviews, audits or investigations (see Article 25).

The rejection may also be based on the extension of findings from other grants to this grant (see Article 25).

Ineligible lump sum contributions will be rejected.

27.2 Procedure

If the rejection does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the rejection, the amounts and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the rejection (payment review procedure).

If the rejection leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

27.3 Effects

If the granting authority rejects lump sum contributions, it will deduct them from the lump sum contributions declared and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

ARTICLE 28 — GRANT REDUCTION

28.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — reduce the grant for a beneficiary, if:

- (a) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:
 - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
 - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or
- (b) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings; see Article 25.5).

The amount of the reduction will be calculated for each beneficiary concerned and proportionate to the seriousness and the duration of the errors, irregularities or fraud or breach of obligations, by applying an individual reduction rate to their accepted EU contribution.

28.2 Procedure

If the grant reduction does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the

coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the reduction, the amount to be reduced and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the reduction (payment review procedure).

If the grant reduction leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

28.3 Effects

If the granting authority reduces the grant, it will deduct the reduction and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

SECTION 2 — SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION

ARTICLE 29 — PAYMENT DEADLINE SUSPENSION

29.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at any moment — suspend the payment deadline if a payment cannot be processed because:

- (a) the required report (see Article 21) has not been submitted or is not complete or additional information is needed
- (b) there are doubts about the amount to be paid (e.g. ongoing extension procedure, queries about eligibility, need for a grant reduction, etc.) and additional checks, reviews, audits or investigations are necessary, or
- (c) there are other issues affecting the EU financial interests.

29.2 Procedure

The granting authority will formally notify the coordinator of the suspension and the reasons why.

The suspension will **take effect** the day the notification is sent.

If the conditions for suspending the payment deadline are no longer met, the suspension will be **lifted** — and the remaining time to pay (see Data Sheet, Point 4.2) will resume.

If the suspension exceeds two months, the coordinator may request the granting authority to confirm if the suspension will continue.

If the payment deadline has been suspended due to the non-compliance of the report and the revised report is not submitted (or was submitted but is also rejected), the granting authority may also terminate the grant or the participation of the coordinator (see Article 32).

ARTICLE 30 — PAYMENT SUSPENSION

30.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at any moment — suspend payments, in whole or in part for one or more beneficiaries, if:

- (a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:
 - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
 - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or
- (b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings; see Article 25.5).

If payments are suspended for one or more beneficiaries, the granting authority will make partial payment(s) for the part(s) not suspended. If suspension concerns the final payment, the payment (or recovery) of the remaining amount after suspension is lifted will be considered to be the payment that closes the action.

30.2 Procedure

Before suspending payments, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to suspend payments and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the suspension (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

At the end of the suspension procedure, the granting authority will also inform the coordinator.

The suspension will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent.

If the conditions for resuming payments are met, the suspension will be **lifted**. The granting authority will formally notify the beneficiary concerned (and the coordinator) and set the suspension end date.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid to the beneficiaries concerned. For interim payments, the periodic reports for all reporting periods except the last one (see Article 21) must not contain any financial statements from the beneficiary concerned (or its affiliated entities). The coordinator must include them in the next periodic report after the suspension is lifted or — if suspension is not lifted before the end of the action — in the last periodic report.

ARTICLE 31 — GRANT AGREEMENT SUSPENSION

31.1 Consortium-requested GA suspension

31.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the suspension of the grant or any part of it, if exceptional circumstances — in particular *force majeure* (see Article 35) — make implementation impossible or excessively difficult.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the date the suspension takes effect; this date may be before the date of the submission of the amendment request and
- the expected date of resumption.

The suspension will **take effect** on the day specified in the amendment.

Once circumstances allow for implementation to resume, the coordinator must immediately request another **amendment** of the Agreement to set the suspension end date, the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the amendment. This date may be before the date of the submission of the amendment request.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Moreover, no work may be done. Ongoing work packages must be interrupted and no new work packages may be started.

31.2 EU-initiated GA suspension

31.2.1 Conditions

The granting authority may suspend the grant or any part of it, if:

- (a) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed or is suspected of having committed:
 - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
 - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or
- (b) a beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings; see Article 25.5)
- (c) other:

- (i) linked action issues: not applicable
- (ii) the action has lost its scientific or technological relevance, for EIC Accelerator actions: the action has lost its economic relevance, for challenge-based EIC Pathfinder actions and Horizon Europe Missions: the action has lost its relevance as part of the Portfolio for which it has been initially selected

31.2.2 Procedure

Before suspending the grant, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator:

- formally notifying the intention to suspend the grant and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the suspension (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

The suspension will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent (or on a later date specified in the notification).

Once the conditions for resuming implementation of the action are met, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator a **lifting of suspension letter**, in which it will set the suspension end date and invite the coordinator to request an amendment of the Agreement to set the resumption date (one day after suspension end date), extend the duration and make other changes necessary to adapt the action to the new situation (see Article 39) — unless the grant has been terminated (see Article 32). The suspension will be **lifted** with effect from the suspension end date set out in the lifting of suspension letter. This date may be before the date on which the letter is sent.

During the suspension, no prefinancing will be paid. Moreover, no work may be done. Ongoing work packages must be interrupted and no new work packages may be started.

The beneficiaries may not claim damages due to suspension by the granting authority (see Article 33).

Grant suspension does not affect the granting authority's right to terminate the grant or a beneficiary (see Article 32) or reduce the grant (see Article 28).

ARTICLE 32 — GRANT AGREEMENT OR BENEFICIARY TERMINATION

32.1 Consortium-requested GA termination

32.1.1 Conditions and procedure

The beneficiaries may request the termination of the grant.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the date the consortium ends work on the action ('end of work date') and

- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

The termination will **take effect** on the termination date specified in the amendment.

If no reasons are given or if the granting authority considers the reasons do not justify termination, it may consider the grant terminated improperly.

32.1.2 Effects

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit a **periodic report** (for the open reporting period until termination).

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the lump sum contributions for activities implemented before the end of work date (see Article 22). Partial lump sum contributions for work packages that were not completed (e.g. due to technical reasons) may exceptionally be taken into account.

If the granting authority does not receive the report within the deadline, only lump sum contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

Improper termination may lead to a grant reduction (see Article 28).

After termination, the beneficiaries' obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

32.2 Consortium-requested beneficiary termination

32.2.1 Conditions and procedure

The coordinator may request the termination of the participation of one or more beneficiaries, on request of the beneficiary concerned or on behalf of the other beneficiaries.

The coordinator must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with:

- the reasons why
- the opinion of the beneficiary concerned (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing)
- the date the beneficiary ends work on the action ('end of work date')
- the date the termination takes effect ('termination date'); this date must be after the date of the submission of the amendment request.

If the termination concerns the coordinator and is done without its agreement, the amendment request must be submitted by another beneficiary (acting on behalf of the consortium).

The termination will **take effect** on the termination date specified in the amendment.

If no information is given or if the granting authority considers that the reasons do not justify termination, it may consider the beneficiary to have been terminated improperly.

32.2.2 Effects

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit:

- (i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned
- (ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work
- (iii) a second **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with other amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the reports submitted in previous interim payments (i.e. beneficiary's lump sum contributions for completed and approved work packages).

Lump sum contributions for ongoing/not yet completed work packages will have to be included in the periodic report for the next reporting periods when those work packages have been completed.

If the granting authority does not receive the report on the distribution of payments within the deadline, it will consider that:

- the coordinator did not distribute any payment to the beneficiary concerned and that
- the beneficiary concerned must not repay any amount to the coordinator.

If the second request for amendment is accepted by the granting authority, the Agreement is **amended** to introduce the necessary changes (see Article 39).

If the second request for amendment is rejected by the granting authority (because it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or breaches the principle of equal treatment of applicants), the grant may be terminated (see Article 32).

Improper termination may lead to a reduction of the grant (see Article 31) or grant termination (see Article 32).

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

32.3 EU-initiated GA or beneficiary termination

32.3.1 Conditions

The granting authority may terminate the grant or the participation of one or more beneficiaries, if:

- (a) one or more beneficiaries do not accede to the Agreement (see Article 40)



- (b) a change to the action or the legal, financial, technical, organisational or ownership situation of a beneficiary is likely to substantially affect the implementation of the action or calls into question the decision to award the grant (including changes linked to one of the exclusion grounds listed in the declaration of honour)
- (c) following termination of one or more beneficiaries, the necessary changes to the Agreement (and their impact on the action) would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants
- (d) implementation of the action has become impossible or the changes necessary for its continuation would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants
- (e) a beneficiary (or person with unlimited liability for its debts) is subject to bankruptcy proceedings or similar (including insolvency, winding-up, administration by a liquidator or court, arrangement with creditors, suspension of business activities, etc.)
- (f) a beneficiary (or person with unlimited liability for its debts) is in breach of social security or tax obligations
- (g) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has been found guilty of grave professional misconduct
- (h) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed fraud, corruption, or is involved in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking
- (i) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) was created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin (or created another entity with this purpose)
- (j) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:
 - (i) substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or
 - (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.)
- (k) a beneficiary (or person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (extension of findings; see Article 25.5)
- (l) despite a specific request by the granting authority, a beneficiary does not request — through the coordinator — an amendment to the Agreement to end the participation of one of its

affiliated entities or associated partners that is in one of the situations under points (d), (f), (e), (g), (h), (i) or (j) and to reallocate its tasks, or

(m) other:

- (i) linked action issues: not applicable
- (ii) the action has lost its scientific or technological relevance, for EIC Accelerator actions: the action has lost its economic relevance, for challenge-based EIC Pathfinder actions and Horizon Europe Missions: the action has lost its relevance as part of the Portfolio for which it has been initially selected

32.3.2 Procedure

Before terminating the grant or participation of one or more beneficiaries, the granting authority will send a **pre-information letter** to the coordinator or beneficiary concerned:

- formally notifying the intention to terminate and the reasons why and
- requesting observations within 30 days of receiving notification.

If the granting authority does not receive observations or decides to pursue the procedure despite the observations it has received, it will confirm the termination and the date it will take effect (**confirmation letter**). Otherwise, it will formally notify that the procedure is discontinued.

For beneficiary terminations, the granting authority will — at the end of the procedure — also inform the coordinator.

The termination will **take effect** the day after the confirmation notification is sent (or on a later date specified in the notification; ‘termination date’).

32.3.3 Effects

(a) for **GA termination**:

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit a **periodic report** (for the last open reporting period until termination).

The granting authority will calculate the final grant amount and final payment on the basis of the report submitted and taking into account the lump sum contributions for activities implemented before termination takes effect (see Article 22). Partial lump sum contributions for work packages that were not completed (e.g. due to technical reasons) may exceptionally be taken into account.

If the grant is terminated for breach of the obligation to submit reports, the coordinator may not submit any report after termination.

If the granting authority does not receive the report within the deadline, only lump sum contributions which are included in an approved periodic report will be taken into account (no contributions if no periodic report was ever approved).

Termination does not affect the granting authority’s right to reduce the grant (see Article 28) or to impose administrative sanctions (see Article 34).

The beneficiaries may not claim damages due to termination by the granting authority (see Article 33).

After termination, the beneficiaries' obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

(b) for beneficiary termination:

The coordinator must — within 60 days from when termination takes effect — submit:

- (i) a **report on the distribution of payments** to the beneficiary concerned
- (ii) a **termination report** from the beneficiary concerned, for the open reporting period until termination, containing an overview of the progress of the work
- (iii) a **request for amendment** (see Article 39) with any amendments needed (e.g. reallocation of the tasks and the estimated budget of the terminated beneficiary; addition of a new beneficiary to replace the terminated beneficiary; change of coordinator, etc.).

The granting authority will calculate the amount due to the beneficiary on the basis of the reports submitted in previous interim payments (i.e. beneficiary's lump sum contributions for completed and approved work packages).

Lump sum contributions for ongoing/not yet completed work packages will have to be included in the periodic report for the next reporting periods when those work packages have been completed.

If the granting authority does not receive the report on the distribution of payments within the deadline, it will consider that:

- the coordinator did not distribute any payment to the beneficiary concerned and that
- the beneficiary concerned must not repay any amount to the coordinator.

If the request for amendment is accepted by the granting authority, the Agreement is **amended** to introduce the necessary changes (see Article 39).

If the request for amendment is rejected by the granting authority (because it calls into question the decision awarding the grant or breaches the principle of equal treatment of applicants), the grant may be terminated (see Article 32).

After termination, the concerned beneficiary's obligations (in particular Articles 13 (confidentiality and security), 16 (IPR), 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility), 21 (reporting), 25 (checks, reviews, audits and investigations), 26 (impact evaluation), 27 (rejections), 28 (grant reduction) and 42 (assignment of claims)) continue to apply.

SECTION 3 OTHER CONSEQUENCES: DAMAGES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

ARTICLE 33 — DAMAGES

33.1 Liability of the granting authority

The granting authority cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the beneficiaries or to third parties as a consequence of the implementation of the Agreement, including for gross negligence.

The granting authority cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the beneficiaries or other participants involved in the action, as a consequence of the implementation of the Agreement.

33.2 Liability of the beneficiaries

The beneficiaries must compensate the granting authority for any damage it sustains as a result of the implementation of the action or because the action was not implemented in full compliance with the Agreement, provided that it was caused by gross negligence or wilful act.

The liability does not extend to indirect or consequential losses or similar damage (such as loss of profit, loss of revenue or loss of contracts), provided such damage was not caused by wilful act or by a breach of confidentiality.

ARTICLE 34 — ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES

Nothing in this Agreement may be construed as preventing the adoption of administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion from EU award procedures and/or financial penalties) or other public law measures, in addition or as an alternative to the contractual measures provided under this Agreement (see, for instance, Articles 135 to 145 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046 and Articles 4 and 7 of Regulation 2988/95¹⁸).

SECTION 4 FORCE MAJEURE

ARTICLE 35 — FORCE MAJEURE

A party prevented by force majeure from fulfilling its obligations under the Agreement cannot be considered in breach of them.

‘Force majeure’ means any situation or event that:

- prevents either party from fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement,
- was unforeseeable, exceptional situation and beyond the parties’ control,
- was not due to error or negligence on their part (or on the part of other participants involved in the action), and
- proves to be inevitable in spite of exercising all due diligence.

Any situation constituting force majeure must be formally notified to the other party without delay, stating the nature, likely duration and foreseeable effects.

¹⁸ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).

The parties must immediately take all the necessary steps to limit any damage due to force majeure and do their best to resume implementation of the action as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 6 FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 36 — COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARTIES

36.1 Forms and means of communication — Electronic management

EU grants are managed fully electronically through the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal').

All communications must be made electronically through the Portal in accordance with the Portal Terms and Conditions and using the forms and templates provided there (except if explicitly instructed otherwise by the granting authority).

Communications must be made in writing and clearly identify the grant agreement (project number and acronym).

Communications must be made by persons authorised according to the Portal Terms and Conditions. For naming the authorised persons, each beneficiary must have designated — before the signature of this Agreement — a 'legal entity appointed representative (LEAR)'. The role and tasks of the LEAR are stipulated in their appointment letter (see Portal Terms and Conditions).

If the electronic exchange system is temporarily unavailable, instructions will be given on the Portal.

36.2 Date of communication

The sending date for communications made through the Portal will be the date and time of sending, as indicated by the time logs.

The receiving date for communications made through the Portal will be the date and time the communication is accessed, as indicated by the time logs. Formal notifications that have not been accessed within 10 days after sending, will be considered to have been accessed (see Portal Terms and Conditions).

If a communication is exceptionally made on paper (by e-mail or postal service), general principles apply (i.e. date of sending/receipt). Formal notifications by registered post with proof of delivery will be considered to have been received either on the delivery date registered by the postal service or the deadline for collection at the post office.

If the electronic exchange system is temporarily unavailable, the sending party cannot be considered in breach of its obligation to send a communication within a specified deadline.

36.3 Addresses for communication

The Portal can be accessed via the Europa website.

The address for paper communications to the granting authority (if exceptionally allowed) is the official mailing address indicated on its website.

For beneficiaries, it is the legal address specified in the Portal Participant Register.

ARTICLE 37 — INTERPRETATION OF THE AGREEMENT

The provisions in the Data Sheet take precedence over the rest of the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement.

Annex 5 takes precedence over the Terms and Conditions.

The Terms and Conditions take precedence over the Annexes other than Annex 5.

Annex 2 takes precedence over Annex 1.

ARTICLE 38 — CALCULATION OF PERIODS AND DEADLINES

In accordance with Regulation No 1182/71¹⁹, periods expressed in days, months or years are calculated from the moment the triggering event occurs.

The day during which that event occurs is not considered as falling within the period.

‘Days’ means calendar days, not working days.

ARTICLE 39 — AMENDMENTS

39.1 Conditions

The Agreement may be amended, unless the amendment entails changes to the Agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

Amendments may be requested by any of the parties.

39.2 Procedure

The party requesting an amendment must submit a request for amendment signed directly in the Portal Amendment tool.

The coordinator submits and receives requests for amendment on behalf of the beneficiaries (see Annex 3). If a change of coordinator is requested without its agreement, the submission must be done by another beneficiary (acting on behalf of the other beneficiaries).

The request for amendment must include:

- the reasons why
- the appropriate supporting documents and
- for a change of coordinator without its agreement: the opinion of the coordinator (or proof that this opinion has been requested in writing).

The granting authority may request additional information.

¹⁹ Regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1182/71 of the Council of 3 June 1971 determining the rules applicable to periods, dates and time-limits (OJ L 124, 8/6/1971, p. 1).

If the party receiving the request agrees, it must sign the amendment in the tool within 45 days of receiving notification (or any additional information the granting authority has requested). If it does not agree, it must formally notify its disagreement within the same deadline. The deadline may be extended, if necessary for the assessment of the request. If no notification is received within the deadline, the request is considered to have been rejected.

An amendment **enters into force** on the day of the signature of the receiving party.

An amendment **takes effect** on the date of entry into force or other date specified in the amendment.

ARTICLE 40 — ACCESSION AND ADDITION OF NEW BENEFICIARIES

40.1 Accession of the beneficiaries mentioned in the Preamble

The beneficiaries which are not coordinator must accede to the grant by signing the accession form (see Annex 3) directly in the Portal Grant Preparation tool, within 30 days after the entry into force of the Agreement (see Article 44).

They will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of its entry into force (see Article 44).

If a beneficiary does not accede to the grant within the above deadline, the coordinator must — within 30 days — request an amendment (see Article 39) to terminate the beneficiary and make any changes necessary to ensure proper implementation of the action. This does not affect the granting authority's right to terminate the grant (see Article 32).

40.2 Addition of new beneficiaries

In justified cases, the beneficiaries may request the addition of a new beneficiary.

For this purpose, the coordinator must submit a request for amendment in accordance with Article 39. It must include an accession form (see Annex 3) signed by the new beneficiary directly in the Portal Amendment tool.

New beneficiaries will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of their accession specified in the accession form (see Annex 3).

Additions are also possible in mono-beneficiary grants.

ARTICLE 41 — TRANSFER OF THE AGREEMENT

In justified cases, the beneficiary of a mono-beneficiary grant may request the transfer of the grant to a new beneficiary, provided that this would not call into question the decision awarding the grant or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

The beneficiary must submit a request for **amendment** (see Article 39), with

- the reasons why
- the accession form (see Annex 3) signed by the new beneficiary directly in the Portal Amendment tool and

- additional supporting documents (if required by the granting authority).

The new beneficiary will assume the rights and obligations under the Agreement with effect from the date of accession specified in the accession form (see Annex 3).

ARTICLE 42 — ASSIGNMENTS OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT AGAINST THE GRANTING AUTHORITY

The beneficiaries may not assign any of their claims for payment against the granting authority to any third party, except if expressly approved in writing by the granting authority on the basis of a reasoned, written request by the coordinator (on behalf of the beneficiary concerned).

If the granting authority has not accepted the assignment or if the terms of it are not observed, the assignment will have no effect on it.

In no circumstances will an assignment release the beneficiaries from their obligations towards the granting authority.

ARTICLE 43 — APPLICABLE LAW AND SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

43.1 Applicable law

The Agreement is governed by the applicable EU law, supplemented if necessary by the law of Belgium.

Special rules may apply for beneficiaries which are international organisations (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 5).

43.2 Dispute settlement

If a dispute concerns the interpretation, application or validity of the Agreement, the parties must bring action before the EU General Court — or, on appeal, the EU Court of Justice — under Article 272 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

For non-EU beneficiaries (if any), such disputes must be brought before the courts of Brussels, Belgium — unless an international agreement provides for the enforceability of EU court judgements.

For beneficiaries with arbitration as special dispute settlement forum (if any; see Data Sheet, Point 5), the dispute will — in the absence of an amicable settlement — be settled in accordance with the Rules for Arbitration published on the Portal.

If a dispute concerns administrative sanctions, offsetting or an enforceable decision under Article 299 TFEU (see Articles 22 and 34), the beneficiaries must bring action before the General Court — or, on appeal, the Court of Justice — under Article 263 TFEU.

For grants where the granting authority is an EU executive agency (see Preamble), actions against offsetting and enforceable decisions must be brought against the European Commission (not against the granting authority; see also Article 22).

ARTICLE 44 — ENTRY INTO FORCE



The Agreement will enter into force on the day of signature by the granting authority or the coordinator, depending on which is later.

SIGNATURES

For the coordinator

For the granting authority



ANNEX 1



Horizon Europe (HORIZON)

Description of the action (DoA)

Part A

Part B

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION (PART A)

COVER PAGE

Part A of the Description of the Action (DoA) must be completed directly on the Portal Grant Preparation screens.

PROJECT	
Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Enter the info.	
Project number:	101135691
Project name:	STARTS Ec(h)o: fostering ECOlogically conscious and Human compatible digital technology
Project acronym:	STARTS
Call:	HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-CNECT
Topic:	HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-82
Type of action:	HORIZON-CSA
Service:	CNECT/I/04
Project starting date:	fixed date: 1 January 2024
Project duration:	36 months

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Project summary

Grant Preparation (General Information screen) — Provide an overall description of your project (including context and overall objectives, planned activities and main achievements, and expected results and impacts (on target groups, change procedures, capacities, innovation etc)). This summary should give readers a clear idea of what your project is about.

Use the project summary from your proposal.

In the digital age and the decades of societal and environmental emergency states that we live in, science, technology, and industry have hit the innovation ceiling. New approaches, alternative perspectives, and creative solutions to inspire progress and accelerate development are needed: Artistic thinking can provide the boost we need to tackle the great challenges of our times. Science, Technology and arts (S+T+ARTS for short) form a nexus at which insightful observers have identified extraordinarily high potential for innovation. And innovation is precisely what's called for if we're to master the social, ecological and economic challenges that Europe is facing. STARTS Ec(h)o's main objective is building towards the triple transformation and developing artist-led approaches through creative experimentation and recognising the most successful ones:

- The S+T+ARTS Prize will highlight and promote 90 outstanding technology-driven artistic projects and the achievements of the teams behind them towards the green transition and social sustainability.
- Through S+T+ARTS residencies, artists will be enabled to develop 10 new pilots on human-centered and sustainable technologies in the fields of AI, high-performance computing, simulation & visualisation, digital twins, medical tech or circular economy.
- An annual AIxMusic program at Sonar will create an international platform for pushing limits of digital technology and exploring the compatibility of digital with human values and needs through artistic thinking.

Ars Electronica, Sonar, Salzburg Festival, Inova+, T6, French Tech Grand Provence, Technical University Dresden and Media Solution Center Baden Württemberg will stimulate arts-driven innovation that is human compatible and ecological consciousness and showcase outstanding examples from the field of S+T+ARTS in 12 events at the Ars Electronica Festival, Sonar and the Salzburg Festival and hence new pathways to European innovation.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS

Grant Preparation (Beneficiaries screen) — Enter the info.

Number	Role	Short name	Legal name	Country	PIC
1	COO	AE	ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG	AT	905834016
2	BEN	INOVA	INOVA+ - INNOVATION SERVICES, SA	PT	999928478
3	BEN	FTGP	FRENCH TECH GRANDE PROVENCE	FR	925171354
4	BEN	TUD	TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITAET DRESDEN	DE	999897729
5	BEN	MSC bw e.V.	MEDIA SOLUTION CENTER BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG E.V.	DE	891346484
6	BEN	Sonar	ADVANCED MUSIC SL	ES	946340052
7	BEN	SFS	SALZBURGER FESTSPIELFONDS	AT	883530806
8	BEN	T6ECO	T6 ECOSYSTEMS SRL	IT	999529614

LIST OF WORK PACKAGES

Work packages <i>Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.</i>						
Work Package No	Work Package name	Lead Beneficiary	Effort (Person-Months)	Start Month	End Month	Deliverables
WP1	MANAGE	1 - AE	27.00	1	36	D1.1 – Definition of expert pool D1.2 – Data management plan D1.3 – Data management plan - Updated Version
WP2	PILOT	2 - INOVA	56.00	1	30	D2.1 – Residency open call working document D2.2 – Incubator & training strategy D2.3 – Strategy on uptake for STARTS' results D2.4 – Residency call selection report D2.5 – STARTS residency methodology D2.6 – Pilot results & impacts documentation D2.7 – STARTS ecosystem assessment & exploitation report
WP3	AWARD	1 - AE	21.00	1	36	D3.1 – Prize open call working document D3.2 – Prize winner publication - cycle I D3.3 – Prize winner publication - cycle II D3.4 – Prize winner publication - cycle III
WP4	SHOWCASE	6 - Sonar	54.00	6	36	D4.1 – Dissemination plan & event strategy D4.2 – AlxMusic report D4.3 – Final dissemination report
WP5	SHARE	3 - FTGP	29.00	1	36	D5.1 – Communication strategy D5.2 – Mid-term communication report D5.3 – Publication of E-magazine series

Work packages						
Grant Preparation (Work Packages screen) — Enter the info.						
Work Package No	Work Package name	Lead Beneficiary	Effort (Person-Months)	Start Month	End Month	Deliverables
						D5.4 – Final communication report

Work package WP1 – MANAGE

Work Package Number	WP1	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Work Package Name	MANAGE		
Start Month	1	End Month	36

Objectives

- To ensure the general, financial, and administrative management and its successful implementation.
- To deliver all foreseen project deliverables within the timeframe and budget planned.
- To provide solid knowledge management and communication within the consortium, with all associated partners, the STARTS community, and the European Commission.
- To guarantee a solid quality management and coherent continuation of the project and its evaluation.
- To prepare the required reporting and documentation as detailed in the deliverables.

Description

Task 1.1: Set-up of project's governance structure (Lead: AE), [M1-M6]

Three committees will be installed: 1) Consortium board, 2) General assembly, and 3) Creation of pool for advisory experts. While the first two committees ensure the sound implementation of the project itself, the pool of external advisors will be created in conjunction with WP2 and WP3 to support their activities. Both the STARTS Prize and the residency call & incubation program heavily rely on external advisors and their recommendations for projects and expertise in mentoring the residency projects. This ensures the widest possible reach of submissions in terms of disciplines, geography, professions, organizational structures, and social and cultural diversity, and the access to necessary domain expertise for the incubation program.

Task 1.2: Project management and quality assurance (Lead: INOVA), [M1-M36]

To monitor and implement the project in a timely manner, INOVA will organize monthly online and regular on-site consortium meetings (twice a year), if possible linked to dissemination events (WP3), and prepare status reports based on input from all partners. The experience of INOVA in managing EU-funded projects, in particular STARTS projects, will be key to the quality assurance of the project and its intended effects on external stakeholders and the European Commission. INOVA will set up and regularly update: (1) a Management, Coordination and Quality Assurance Plan and Tool, which will support regular update of the project management plan and distribution of work, ensuring the timely & directed fulfillment of all deliverables & milestones and their review by partners, manage interdependencies amongst WPs and tasks, organization of consortium meetings; (2) a Risk Management Tool which will support the evaluation and actively countervail identified risks; (3) a Data Management Plan as a living document, including IPR Protocol Baseline (D1.2, D1.3), which will ensure the development, monitoring and - in case of changing circumstances – adaptations of IPR management, specifically related to the protection of private data (submitters information) as well as a clear IPR policy for the call.

Task 1.3: Financial and administrative management (Lead: AE), [M1-M36]

All contractual tasks, the monitoring of the foreseen budget in accordance with the actual costs, periodic reporting as well as the collection of all relevant information will be the central duties of this task. AE will create a shared workspace and regularly update and store direct content produced by the project (deliverables, reports, minutes,...) and support material (background material, state-of-the-art information,...). AE will manage the communication with EC, manage partner agreements, distribute budget, define escalation mechanisms, ensure documentation as well as handling of funding administration, and interim and final reporting.

Task 1.4: Ensuring the project's sustainability (Lead: INOVA), [M10-M36]

This task is a transversal activity across all WPs to coordinate and accelerate the project's results to stay relevant for STARTS and other innovation communities, increase the awareness of STARTS methodologies, foster collaboration and an increase interest in the uptake and potential exploitation of STARTS results. INOVA will coordinate the definition of an exploitation plan for STARTS Ec(h)o key results, which will be designed in a collaborative process with all project partners. It will be kicked-off with an exploitation workshop and followed by the organization of regular online meetings. A wide range of stakeholders (academia, business, etc.) will be invited to take part in this process. Regular online STARTS Family events will be organised to bring stakeholders together, offer networking opportunities and facilitate the exploitation. INOVA will coordinate these efforts with the planned dissemination events (see section 1.2.1.5) to maximize synergies and project sustainability.

Work package WP2 – PILOT

Work Package Number	WP2	Lead Beneficiary	2. INOVA
Work Package Name	PILOT		
Start Month	1	End Month	30

Objectives

- To support and monitor art-driven experimentation developed in 6 specific ICT innovation areas.
- To enhance human-centered and sustainable innovation in Europe through piloting projects with clear impacts towards the triple transformation (green, digital, social).
- To increase the impact of the pilots by targeted mentoring and a dedicated incubation program focused on sustainability and exploitable results.
- To evaluate the impact generated by the pilots and collect the results for other STARTS practitioners as well as extensive dissemination.
- To ensure STARTS residency methodologies are collected, preserved, and presented to innovation communities across Europe, providing additional recommendations on necessary framework conditions.

Description

Task 2.1 Designing and implementing open call & financial support to third parties (Lead: INOVA), [M1-M10]
 This task will set up an open call for artists and creative professionals working in data visualization and simulation; information design; bio & life sciences; (urban) digital twins; high-performance computing; and artificial intelligence. It will develop the challenges for the call in consultation with the residency hosts and develop a Call Package that will include: call text, schedule, templates to be used by candidates, evaluation criteria and process, Frequently Asked Questions, among other relevant documents. The task will also set up and maintain a proposal submission platform, which will control workflows for the submission of all necessary documentation to apply, check application eligibility, manage proposal review (by multiple reviewers), edit and comment on reviews, and submit final recommendations. The system will also allow to collect anonymized statistics required for analyzing the open call. Further, the task covers managing the relationship with prospective and current applicants to the open call by setting up a support email inbox and providing virtual resources, namely webinars and textual guides to encourage and enable prospective applicants to apply. This task also implements the review process that selects artists for the residencies. This includes (1) appointment of a jury panel, including members of the project consortium and external experts, (2) management and training of the reviewers to ensure the review process is consistent and fair, and (3) handling any questions regarding the evaluation process. Each application will be evaluated by 2 experts. An Evaluation Package (and training sessions) will be created to be shared with Jury members, incl. presentation of Residencies scope, challenges, evaluation procedures, scorings, among other relevant information. This task will collate and publish call-related statistics in an online dashboard that informs the wider public, and the STARTS community, and a closed deliverable allowing more (sensible) details.

Task 2.2 Piloting and experimentation in 6 innovation areas (Lead: TUD & INOVA), [M10-M27]

This task will oversee the development and implementation of the pilots, making sure the work progresses as outlined in the pilot proposals. The task will manage the signature of all contracts and cover all financial arrangements necessary for the implementation of the pilots. INOVA will be responsible for financial & workplan implementation controlling and identifying possible deviations. This includes regularly collecting data for communication and impact assessment purposes. TUD will closely cooperate with the other residency hosts and the consortium to manage the piloting process dynamically and advise the pilots to ensure successful implementation. TUD & INOVA will create templates and tools to support the residencies management.

Task 2.3 Incubation program (Lead: INOVA), [M6-M24]

In this task, INOVA will match each residency artist with at least two high level expert mentors and coordinate the 24 hours of consultancy “tickets” every piloting artist will receive. INOVA and FTGP will design (M6-M10) and implement the full incubation program (M10-M24), inviting experts to provide specific required expertise, practitioners to present best practices, multipliers, and relevant contacts for networking as well as the wider STARTS community (incl. former STARTS Prize winners) for peer-exchange. A total of 9-11 online sessions (Kick-Off Days and sustainability workshops both multi-days, other half-day to full-day sessions) will be realized. One of the aims of the incubation program is further to bring STARTS residency outputs closer to industry and consult the artists in their exploitation journey.

Task 2.4 Collecting STARTS residency methodology & encourage result’s uptake (Lead: T6), [M1-M30]

Building on an overview & comparative report on STARTS residency methodologies, T6 will collect data from the residency participants through desk research, literature review, participatory observation with parties and interviews

and focus groups with artists and experts. T6 will conduct an assessment of the residencies and pilot outcomes, impact of STARTS residencies at large and the framework conditions required to implement similar cross-sectorial residency programs to inform other innovation communities on STARTS practices. Further, T6 will include recommendations on how to evolve such residencies. T6 will collaborate with INOVA & AE to ensure the outcomes of this assessment are widely disseminated and provided to relevant European communities. This task will be implemented in collaboration with Task 1.4.

Work package WP3 – AWARD

Work Package Number	WP3	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Work Package Name	AWARD		
Start Month	1	End Month	36

Objectives

- To ensure the high-level continuation of the open call launches by building on the robust submission database, preparing clear, transparent and attractive submission guidelines as well as reaching out to all fields of arts at the intersection with technology, science, industry, media, and society.
- To link to the annual Prix Ars Electronica to maximize impact and recognition.
- To secure both a high quantity, submission numbers diversity through advisors and active research staff and various nomination strategies.
- To design a highly transparent, efficient, and quality-ensuring process of evaluation and selection of submitted works through a jury methodology.
- To build a solid working ground for WP4 and WP5 by collecting and editing the data for dissemination, and to assure a coherent and qualitative documentation package of all selected projects.

Description

Task 3.1: Prize definition & preparations (Lead: AE), [M1-M4, 12, 24]

Due to the successful implementation of 8 previous STARTS Prize editions, the consortium has extensive experience in operating this task and will build on an established submission infrastructure and developed call guidelines. The two existing STARTS Prize categories will be re-fined each year and the award criteria, entry details, submission rules & rights will be updated according to agreement with the EC. Details on the methodological approach for the open call of the STARTS Prize are outlined in Section 1, further details are provided in the Annex. This task will also handle the online submission platform. AE hosts an existing stable, tested and regularly updated submission tool, which was developed for Prix Ars Electronica and has already been successfully in use for the STARTS Prizes 2016-2023. The platform uses secure online communication (https) and is hosted on servers of Ars Electronica complying with GDPR standards and the data management objectives as outlined in this proposal. The STARTS Prize open calls will have a visually independent design from the Prix Ars Electronica. The submission tool features not only (1) the submission module itself, but also (2) the statistics and overview module, (3) a review and evaluation module for the jury and consortium (with separate account management), (4) a publication module to the STARTS Prize website and (5) an archiving.

Task 3.2: Launch, research and promotion of open calls (Lead: AE), [M1-3, M13-15, M25-27]

Promotion Phase: Announcement and call for submissions: The target of this task is wide dissemination through different channels (web, social media, newsletters, print, partners,...). Building on a well-established, high-profile, and visible competition like the Prix Ars Electronica with more than 40 years' experience and over 70.000 submitters (many of them world famous professionals) as well as 8 highly recognized STARTS Prize editions will guarantee to reach out to the relevant stakeholders. Additional efforts to disseminate the open call, in close collaboration with WP5, will include a press release, several newsletters for call information & attraction of submitters, blog interviews with experts in the STARTS field, extensive social media work (partly through paid advertisements and a dedicated media partner), and outreach to STARTS partners' networks. In the Research Phase the Dual submission approach as described in section 1.2.1.3 will be applied. AE will advise submitters about relevant issues and answer questions on a daily basis through a "STARTS Prize Helpdesk" during the submission period (email, telephone, hotline,...), and will monitor the submissions by checking the formal requirements and - if necessary - contacting the projects for formal checks.

Task 3.3: Organization of evaluation process and jury meetings (Lead: AE), [M4-5, M16-17, M28-29]

The selection of prize winners will be carried out through a pre-jury (first online review and pre-evaluation by jury), followed by a 3-day main jury & selection meeting in Linz. The selection of the jury (5 jurors per cycle) ensures the best

possible expertise for evaluating the interdisciplinary and complex nature of the projects. A good balance of experts (at least one expert from the fields of arts, media, and innovation and/or policy, and two industry or technology experts) with extensive expertise in the most recent trends and activities will be selected. AE will contract the jury members, ensure transparency, and manage any conflict of interest as well as develop a manual for submission managers and jury members. This task will also deliver jury evaluations resulting in yearly public evaluation essays with an overview of the submitted works, developments in the STARTS field, a statement on the prizewinning works' excellence as well as the identified STARTS fields and challenges.

Task 3.4: Data collection for the winner announcement (Lead: AE), [M5-10, M17-22, M29-34]

Each STARTS Prize call cycle will be followed by the public announcement of the winners through the Prize website, starts.eu & related channels, social media, blog posts in the form of winner interviews, videos, and a dedicated STARTS press conference and press release. The communication tasks for this are foreseen in WP5, but Task 3.4 has the responsibility of collecting all necessary data from all 30 selected projects each year, editing them in a coherent way and providing the material as a working basis for WP4 and WP5, including coherent, edited abstracts and project descriptions, bios, high-resolution project photos/headshots, full credits (including linked industry partners and investors), as well as social media channels.

Work package WP4 – SHOWCASE

Work Package Number	WP4	Lead Beneficiary	6. Sonar
Work Package Name	SHOWCASE		
Start Month	6	End Month	36

Objectives

- To use the outreach effects of existing, high-level events at Ars Electronica, SONAR, Salzburg Festival, and several partners worldwide by linking heavy STARTS communication measures to these events.
- To showcase the significance of AI for the creation and distribution of music as well as the transformation of the music industry through an annual AIxMusic program at SONAR.
- To bring an extensive number of relevant stakeholders (artists, curators, scientists, innovation managers, academics, media, policy makers) to different events in order to stimulate the exchange in the field of ICT and media innovation driven by arts.
- To create visibility through presentations (exhibitions), discussions (winner conferences) and social events (award ceremony), showcasing the STARTS Prize winners, residency projects, and best practices as well as relevant STARTS topics/fields and the STARTS initiative in general.
- To create dissemination synergies by co-organizing dissemination events with internationally renowned & established partners to strengthen the outreach and connectivity to other communities (particularly DIHs, STARTS community, EITs) to achieve great impact and outreach on European and international level.

Description

Task 4.1: Annual prize ceremony of STARTS Prize winners at AE Festival (Lead: AE), [M9, M21, M33]

AE will provide a high-profile framework for the presentation of the STARTS Prize winners with large visibility. To enhance the profile, the awards will be presented by high-ranking representatives of the EC. The event will be annually attended by representatives from art, technology, society, innovation, industry, research, and policy and followed by 50+ media representatives. It will feature short introductory videos of the STARTS Prize winners and be followed by a get-together for STARTS relevant stakeholders after the ceremony.

Task 4.2: Annual exhibition and STARTS Day at the Ars Electronica Festival (Lead: AE), [M7-9, M19-21, M31-33]

AE will realize 3 high visible exhibitions each September during the annually held and internationally renowned Ars Electronica Festival. With 100.000+ visits in 5 days from the general public, approx. 400 media representatives from more than 30 countries, and 1.000+ actively involved artists/scientists/technologists each year, this allows best synergies on a financial, communicational and administrative level and makes it more attractive for relevant STARTS stakeholders to attend the events. This ensures to bring the community together to discuss the role of artists designing new approaches towards media and ICT technology. Further, AE will organize an annual STARTS Day including the annual STARTS Family meeting (internal meeting for all STARTS consortia) with the purpose of linking each STARTS Day to one pertinent European community. For now, links to the Next Renaissance Movement of the EIT Culture & Creativity and to the DIH² network and other Digital Innovation Hubs working on robotics and AI are planned.

Task 4.3: Annual AIxMusic program at SONAR Festival (Lead: Sonar), [M4-7, M16-19, M28-35]

SONAR will organize an annual AIxMusic strand within the world-renowned SONAR Festival on Tech & Culture to increase visibility and synergies. With more than 110.000 visitors per year and 1+ Mio. social media followers (FB, Twitter, Instagram), SONAR is the best stage to demonstrate the opportunities digital innovation and technologies – in particular AI – have for human creativity in art and music and thus showcase how the artistic use of digital can push limits of digital technology. Each year, the AIxMusic STARTS program will take over various stages and spaces during one day of Sonar through different formats, adding up to a total of 10 activities solely dedicated to this theme and gathering more than 20 participants annually.

Task 4.4: S+T+ARTS Event at Salzburg Festival (Lead: SFS), [M7-M32]

With more than 240.000 visitors from 76 nations, many of them high-level politicians and industry representatives from all over the world, generating more than 30 Mio. € ticket revenues per year and 500+ journalists present at each edition, the Salzburg Festival is considered one of the most important cultural festivals in the world. During a dedicated event, SFS will present projects from their own developments of immersive media innovation in the field of cultural productions and invite high-level representatives to the event.

Task 4.5: Presentation of S+T+ARTS projects at dissemination partners (Lead: T6), [M6-M36]

3 dissemination events will be realized in addition to the events by AE, SONAR, and SFS to present the winners, residency outputs, and lessons learned from the project. To maximize the impact, these presentations will be linked to the most important events at the intersection of art, technology, science, and industry. T6 will select both discursive and presentation-based dissemination events to ensure a good anchorage of the project's outcomes in significant events hosted by other practitioners from the European innovation community. In addition, all residency hosts (TUD & MSC) will stage a presentation of the project outcomes on their premises. Each consortium partner additionally disseminates the project in at least 3-5 conferences, events or dedicated presentations at European or national level (online or onsite) to innovation and HEU players and academia.

Work package WP5 – SHARE

Work Package Number	WP5	Lead Beneficiary	3. FTGP
Work Package Name	SHARE		
Start Month	1	End Month	36

Objectives

The WP on communication, outreach, and dissemination covers the management of the project website, event communication, and promotional material, and the delivery of an active partner outreach and engagement strategy by building on the existing STARTS brand and design. The WP aims:

- To design and implement an effective communication and dissemination strategy.
- To highlight the relevance and impact of artists and creative professionals in ICT innovation processes by targeted communication actions on different levels.
- To strengthen the open calls by actively supporting WP2/3 through on- and offline promotional activities.
- To provide great visibility of the planned activities, events, and residency outputs to a wide range of stakeholders and actively engage them in the distribution of communicational measures.
- To exploit the recognition, and outreach effects of world-renowned events of AE, SONAR, and SFS.
- To ensure extensive communication and documentation of the outcomes.

Description**Task 5.1: Communication strategy and plan (Lead: FTGP), [M1-M3]**

Based on the communication and corporate design manual from both the STARTS initiative and the STARTS Prize, FTGP will create and update the communication plan regularly and will

- make use of the existing visual identity to increase the communication effect and brand recognition
- detail the tools, measures, target groups, timing, media, channels, and objectives of planned communication measures to be executed in task 5.2
- focus on aspects of synergies and mutual communication efforts with other STARTS initiatives as well as EIT Culture & Creativity to 1) coordinate communication strategies amongst partners through regular conference calls, and 2) intensify the communication impact by combined campaigns

- consider timing of the planned communication and detail it in a communication calendar with a strong focus on 1) call campaign and promotion as well as 2) communication and promotion of events
- involve all partners to activate their networks and the wider community to provide all stakeholders with relevant information.

Task 5.2: Communication of results (Lead: FTGP), [M1-M36]

Maintain STARTS websites. <https://starts.eu/> and <https://starts-prize.aec.at> will be the main public platforms for the project. The websites will be used to host information about the calls including details on the STARTS initiative, how to apply to the funds, and criteria. STARTS Ec(h)o will also feed into the content sections with blogs, stories, videos, reports, and articles. AE as current host of starts.eu will ensure its continuation for at least 2 years after the end of the project period.

Partner networks. Supporting partners to leverage their networks and the wider community, especially during open calls and the residency incubation program. Also, they will be regularly provided with communication feeds.

Communication & social media. Implementation of the communication plan through identified objectives (T5.1), target groups, messages, defined tools, allocated tasks along the timeline, and planned evaluation process to monitor impact. The project will continue to host and maintain the official @startseu social media channels and send out quarterly newsletters to the STARTS community (including information from other STARTS projects).

Documentation. An extensive photo and video documentation will be collected throughout the project's lifespan including material from all projects as well as documentation from events and available for free download under creative commons license and the STARTS Youtube channel.

Digital communication. AE will continue to update the STARTS archive <https://archive.aec.at/startsprize/> (containing 300+ projects to date) and FTGP will investigate possibilities to present it in a mobile, app-based version. Both will be used to disseminate the diversity of project outcomes at events and social media.

Press. FTGP will subcontract a specialized PR agency to support the project with dedicated media outreach to promote the open calls and position STARTS protagonists (artists, collaborators, experts) in international media. This will result in a minimum of 12 press releases and 3 press conferences to inform national and international media outlets, as well as 30+ media coverages.

Task 5.3: S+T+ARTS Compendium (Lead: FTGP), [M5-36]

FTGP will publish a book containing a summary on S+T+ARTS methodologies and a selection of projects from STARTS Prize and STARTS Residencies. The compendium should provide an overview of the scope and diversity of STARTS projects implemented in the 10 year's legacy of the initiative.

Task 5.4: S+T+ARTS e-magazines (Lead: FTGP), [M10-33]

FTGP will produce an e-magazine series of at least 6 editions specifically targeting industry and the European innovation community. To best address their specialized interest areas, the editions will focus on specific industry sectors (such as robotics, manufacturing, media, health, energy), ensuring that selected STARTS practices and outputs pertinent to that specific sector are conveyed. The e-magazines will be published and distributed online to at least 2.500 contacts and will also be printed in small runs for specific dissemination events.

STAFF EFFORT

Staff effort per participant <i>Grant Preparation (Work packages - Effort screen) — Enter the info.</i>						
Participant	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	Total Person-Months
1 - AE	7.00	2.00	16.00	8.00	4.00	37.00
2 - INOVA	8.00	22.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	38.00
3 - FTGP	2.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	14.00	24.00
4 - TUD	2.00	12.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	19.00
5 - MSC bw e.V.	2.00	10.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	17.00
6 - Sonar	2.00			18.00	3.00	23.00
7 - SFS	2.00			10.00	1.00	13.00
8 - T6ECO	2.00	6.00		7.00	1.00	16.00
Total Person-Months	27.00	56.00	21.00	54.00	29.00	187.00

LIST OF DELIVERABLES

Deliverables <i>Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.</i> <i>The labels used mean:</i> <i>Public — fully open (⚠ automatically posted online)</i> <i>Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement</i> <i>EU classified —RESTREINT-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision 2015/444</i>						
Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D1.1	Definition of expert pool	WP1	1 - AE	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	3
D1.2	Data management plan	WP1	2 - INOVA	DMP — Data Management Plan	SEN - Sensitive	5
D1.3	Data management plan - Updated Version	WP1	2 - INOVA	DMP — Data Management Plan	SEN - Sensitive	20
D2.1	Residency open call working document	WP2	2 - INOVA	R — Document, report	PU - Public	4
D2.2	Incubator & training strategy	WP2	2 - INOVA	R — Document, report	PU - Public	6
D2.3	Strategy on uptake for STARTS' results	WP2	8 - T6ECO	R — Document, report	PU - Public	8
D2.4	Residency call selection report	WP2	2 - INOVA	R — Document, report	SEN - Sensitive	10
D2.5	STARTS residency methodology	WP2	2 - INOVA	R — Document, report	PU - Public	12
D2.6	Pilot results & impacts documentation	WP2	2 - INOVA	R — Document, report	PU - Public	27
D2.7	STARTS ecosystem assessment & exploitation report	WP2	8 - T6ECO	R — Document, report	PU - Public	30
D3.1	Prize open call working document	WP3	1 - AE	R — Document, report	PU - Public	2
D3.2	Prize winner publication - cycle I	WP3	1 - AE	R — Document, report	PU - Public	10
D3.3	Prize winner publication - cycle II	WP3	1 - AE	R — Document, report	PU - Public	22

Deliverables

Grant Preparation (Deliverables screen) — Enter the info.

The labels used mean:

Public — fully open ( automatically posted online)

Sensitive — limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement

EU classified — RESTREINT-UE/EU-RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIEL-UE/EU-CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET-UE/EU-SECRET under Decision [2015/444](#)

Deliverable No	Deliverable Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Type	Dissemination Level	Due Date (month)
D3.4	Prize winner publication - cycle III	WP3	1 - AE	R — Document, report	PU - Public	34
D4.1	Dissemination plan & event strategy	WP4	1 - AE	R — Document, report	PU - Public	6
D4.2	AIxMusic report	WP4	6 - Sonar	R — Document, report	PU - Public	35
D4.3	Final dissemination report	WP4	1 - AE	R — Document, report	PU - Public	36
D5.1	Communication strategy	WP5	3 - FTGP	R — Document, report	PU - Public	3
D5.2	Mid-term communication report	WP5	3 - FTGP	R — Document, report	PU - Public	18
D5.3	Publication of E-magazine series	WP5	3 - FTGP	R — Document, report	PU - Public	33
D5.4	Final communication report	WP5	3 - FTGP	R — Document, report	PU - Public	36

Deliverable D1.1 – Definition of expert pool

Deliverable Number	D1.1	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Deliverable Name	Definition of expert pool		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	3	Work Package No	WP1

Description
Pool of 100+ experts for selection of jury & advisors

Deliverable D1.2 – Data management plan

Deliverable Number	D1.2	Lead Beneficiary	2. INOVA
Deliverable Name	Data management plan		
Type	DMP — Data Management Plan	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	5	Work Package No	WP1

Description
Initial DMP version (living doc)

Deliverable D1.3 – Data management plan - Updated Version

Deliverable Number	D1.3	Lead Beneficiary	2. INOVA
Deliverable Name	Data management plan - Updated Version		
Type	DMP — Data Management Plan	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	20	Work Package No	WP1

Description
Updated version of DMP

Deliverable D2.1 – Residency open call working document

Deliverable Number	D2.1	Lead Beneficiary	2. INOVA
Deliverable Name	Residency open call working document		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	4	Work Package No	WP2

Description
Call guidelines with details as outlined in Annex

Deliverable D2.2 – Incubator & training strategy

Deliverable Number	D2.2	Lead Beneficiary	2. INOVA
Deliverable Name	Incubator & training strategy		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	6	Work Package No	WP2

Description
Toolkit detailing the formats, training objectives, and areas covered by incubation program

Deliverable D2.3 – Strategy on uptake for STARTS’ results

Deliverable Number	D2.3	Lead Beneficiary	8. T6ECO
Deliverable Name	Strategy on uptake for STARTS’ results		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	8	Work Package No	WP2

Description
Strategy to increase uptake of STARTS’ results by the wider sector. To be updated in D2.7

Deliverable D2.4 – Residency call selection report

Deliverable Number	D2.4	Lead Beneficiary	2. INOVA
Deliverable Name	Residency call selection report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	SEN - Sensitive
Due Date (month)	10	Work Package No	WP2

Description
Details on applicants, statistics, evaluation & selection procedures, issues occurred

Deliverable D2.5 – STARTS residency methodology

Deliverable Number	D2.5	Lead Beneficiary	2. INOVA
Deliverable Name	STARTS residency methodology		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	12	Work Package No	WP2

Description
Summary of STARTS residency methods, best practices & tools

Deliverable D2.6 – Pilot results & impacts documentation

Deliverable Number	D2.6	Lead Beneficiary	2. INOVA
Deliverable Name	Pilot results & impacts documentation		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	27	Work Package No	WP2

Description
Report on 10 pilot outcomes & sustainability plans

Deliverable D2.7 – STARTS ecosystem assessment & exploitation report

Deliverable Number	D2.7	Lead Beneficiary	8. T6ECO
Deliverable Name	STARTS ecosystem assessment & exploitation report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	30	Work Package No	WP2

Description
Summary of STARTS tools, impacts, framework requirements to inform other EU innovation communities

Deliverable D3.1 – Prize open call working document

Deliverable Number	D3.1	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Deliverable Name	Prize open call working document		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	2	Work Package No	WP3

Description
Call guidelines with details on admissibility, eligibility and award criteria

Deliverable D3.2 – Prize winner publication - cycle I

Deliverable Number	D3.2	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Deliverable Name	Prize winner publication - cycle I		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	10	Work Package No	WP3

Description
Publication of 30 winners (text, bios, photos) incl. jury statement

Deliverable D3.3 – Prize winner publication - cycle II

Deliverable Number	D3.3	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Deliverable Name	Prize winner publication - cycle II		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	22	Work Package No	WP3

Description
Publication of 30 winners (text, bios, photos) incl. jury statement

Deliverable D3.4 – Prize winner publication - cycle III

Deliverable Number	D3.4	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Deliverable Name	Prize winner publication - cycle III		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	34	Work Package No	WP3

Description
Publication of 30 winners (text, bios, photos) incl. jury statement

Deliverable D4.1 – Dissemination plan & event strategy

Deliverable Number	D4.1	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Deliverable Name	Dissemination plan & event strategy		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	6	Work Package No	WP4

Description
Event plan detailing target groups, aims, formats, KPIs

Deliverable D4.2 – AIXMusic report

Deliverable Number	D4.2	Lead Beneficiary	6. Sonar
Deliverable Name	AIXMusic report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	35	Work Package No	WP4

Description
Report on topics, projects, impact, established collaborations of 3 editions, incl. recommendations on future programs

Deliverable D4.3 – Final dissemination report

Deliverable Number	D4.3	Lead Beneficiary	1. AE
Deliverable Name	Final dissemination report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	36	Work Package No	WP4

Description
Report on dissemination events, established partnerships, reached target groups, impacts, KPIs

Deliverable D5.1 – Communication strategy

Deliverable Number	D5.1	Lead Beneficiary	3. FTGP
Deliverable Name	Communication strategy		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	3	Work Package No	WP5

Description
Plan detailing all comms objectives, channels, tools, measures, target groups, timing, media & KPIs

Deliverable D5.2 – Mid-term communication report

Deliverable Number	D5.2	Lead Beneficiary	3. FTGP
Deliverable Name	Mid-term communication report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	18	Work Package No	WP5

Description
Report on comms measures (incl. PR campaign) and KPIs reached

Deliverable D5.3 – Publication of E-magazine series

Deliverable Number	D5.3	Lead Beneficiary	3. FTGP
Deliverable Name	Publication of E-magazine series		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	33	Work Package No	WP5

Description
Publication of final edition (of 6) & joint Zenodo upload

Deliverable D5.4 – Final communication report

Deliverable Number	D5.4	Lead Beneficiary	3. FTGP
Deliverable Name	Final communication report		
Type	R — Document, report	Dissemination Level	PU - Public
Due Date (month)	36	Work Package No	WP5

Description
Report on comms measures (incl. PR campaign) and KPIs reached

LIST OF MILESTONES

Milestones <i>Grant Preparation (Milestones screen) — Enter the info.</i>					
Milestone No	Milestone Name	Work Package No	Lead Beneficiary	Means of Verification	Due Date (month)
1	STARTS Communication Material	WP5	3-FTGP	Visual identity, communication material and guidelines shared with all partners	1
2	Submission database for Prize	WP3	1-AE	Database set up, tested and opened	2
3	Data Management Plan	WP1	2-INOVA	First version created and circulated	4
4	Prize submission cycle I	WP3	1-AE	Call reached 1200 submitters	4
5	Submission database for Residency	WP2	2-INOVA	Database set up, tested and opened	6
6	Exploitation plan	WP1	2-INOVA	Plan shared with and reviewed by all partners	12
7	Incubation program started	WP2	2-INOVA	2 sessions held & artists paired with mentors	12
8	Dissemination events 2024	WP4	1-AE	3-4 events realized & documented	12
9	Prize submission cycle II	WP3	1-AE	Call reached 1200 submitters	16
10	PR campaign	WP5	3-FTGP	PR campaign delivered 20 articles (mid-term milestone of PR campaign)	18
11	Dissemination events 2025	WP4	1-AE	3-4 events realized & documented	24
12	Prize submission cycle III	WP3	1-AE	Call reached 1200 submitters	28
13	Dissemination events 2026	WP4	1-AE	3-4 events realized & documented	36

LIST OF CRITICAL RISKS

Critical risks & risk management strategy			
Grant Preparation (Critical Risks screen) — Enter the info.			
Risk number	Description	Work Package No(s)	Proposed Mitigation Measures
1	Insufficient applicants for open calls	WP2, WP3	Communication across and beyond the STARTS community will be conducted by all partners to provide the furthest reach for the open calls. Actively engaging STARTS multipliers, including the starts.eu ecosystem. Encouraging public nominations through social media.
2	Low participation of underrepresented groups in calls	WP2, WP3	Featuring best practice projects by non-males and other underrepresented groups through blog interviews, video productions, and social media posts. Engaging experts for activating diverse submitters.
3	Little participation in events	WP4	Linking to world-renowned events (Ars Electronica Festival, Salzburg Festival, Sónar). Specific communication campaigns to attract the relevant target groups. Involving PR agency to increase reach.
4	Insufficient anchorage of Prize / residency outputs	WP2, WP3	Engaging nomination advisors and juries with a wide geographical and disciplinary coverage, with a strong focus on industry and media. Addressing multipliers through consortium's networks. Activation of target groups through highly visible events.
5	Low interest in communication measures	WP4	Applying social media analytics & allocating advertising budgets for social media. Ensuring target group specific communication through industry e-publication series. Increasing media reach by professional PR campaign.
6	Insufficient project staff / too high staff turnover	WP1	Each partner will ensure that staff absence/turnover can be handled adequately. Partners have a vested interest in the project and can pull in members of staff with similar expertise to avoid delays. Knowledge management tools will smoothen learning curves.
7	Delayed delivering of tasks or activities	WP1	Monitoring the schedule and milestones closely in the regular meetings and with consortium board and steering committee. A shared project management calendar will help to minimize the risks.
8	Isolated results of the project	WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5	Identification of impacts and recommendations for the sector (eg. EIT Culture & Creativity) and beyond will be provided in a report (D2.7). Highly visible events with diverse audiences will ensure a wide spread.

PROJECT REVIEWS

Project Reviews			
Grant Preparation (Reviews screen) — Enter the info.			
Review No	Timing (month)	Location	Comments
RV1	12	Hybrid	
RV2	24	Hybrid	
RV3	36	Hybrid	

Annex I Part B: technical description

S+T+ARTS EC(H)O: fostering ECOlogically conscious and HUMAN compatible digital technology

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HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	DATE	CHANGE
1.0	27.08.2023	Annex 1 – Part A: Change of start date of Task 2.4 from M3 to M1
1.0	27.08.2023	Annex 1 – Part A: Added further details on industry link as part of incubation program in Task 2.3 Annex 1 – Part B: Added same details in 1.2.1.2
1.0	27.08.2023	Annex 1 – Part B: Thematic focus for AixMusic Festivals specified on page 9
1.0	27.08.2023	Annex 1 – Part A: Change Task 5.3 from press work to publication of book/compendium Annex 1 – Part B: Added a book/compendium as outcome (page 13, 17, 18)

1. Excellence

In the digital age and the decades of societal and environmental emergency states that we live in, science, technology, and industry have hit the innovation ceiling. New approaches, alternative perspectives, and creative solutions to inspire progress and accelerate development are needed: Artistic thinking can provide the boost we need to tackle the great challenges of our times. [STARTS](#) is an initiative of the European Commission to foster alliances of technology, science and artistic practice to nurture innovation and benefit the art world. By directly linking the STARTS initiative to the goal of triple transformation (fostering the digital, social, and in particular ecological transition), STARTS Ec(h)o will ensure the impact of a multitude of European STARTS efforts for the long term by building on the specific expertise of experienced consortium partners. From 2016 to 2023, Ars Electronica and its partners have conceptualized and organized the STARTS Prize of the European Commission with great success. The link between the Prize and the annual Prix Ars Electronica, the oldest media prize for art, science & technology in the world, provided stable high submission numbers (2000 submissions/year) and a diverse spectrum of STARTS Prize winners that demonstrate excellence and the effectiveness of the STARTS approach. SONAR has effectively used its unique standing in the field of new music to implement the previous edition of the AixMusic festival, thereby fostering public recognition of innovative artistic approaches to the use of technology. INOVA designed and co-organised the first iteration of STARTS residencies, later implemented by many other European practitioners (including AE and MSC).

By joining efforts in organising the STARTS Prize, STARTS residency program and the AixMusic program within the scope of one project, the development of new projects will be encouraged and the impact of successfully implemented projects demonstrated, thereby accelerating the dynamics within the STARTS community and fostering its expansion. Building on existing expertise and experience in the implementation of this trajectory will be a key strategy of this consortium and ensure effectiveness and success in the implementation. In the upcoming iteration of the STARTS initiative project, the new, extended consortium proposes not only to build on expertise and interweave prize recognition with piloting, but it is set to **expand the project's objectives** in the direction of the triple transformation (green, social, digital) of Europe. The new setup of the consortium partnership in this project will apply the addressed innovation areas in a purpose-driven way by means of technology.

- The STARTS prize will highlight and promote outstanding technology-driven artistic approaches towards the green transition / sustainability.
- Through STARTS residencies, artists will be enabled to develop and contribute new perspectives on human-centered and sustainable development in 6 specific ICT innovation areas.
- By disseminating the artistic approaches enabled and collected by the STARTS project in an effective way, uptake of and trust in the digital in society and thereby also its market value will be increased.

By building a practice community of artists, companies, scientists and researchers, and by thus significantly contributing to the European approach to open research and innovation, the STARTS Prize has helped shape how we tackle the challenges of our time on a European as well as global level. The past success of the STARTS Prize was to no small part due to the expertise of the consortium partners involved in previous project iterations: Ars Electronica has coordinated STARTS Prize projects since its foundation, and built a strong partnership with La

French Tech Culture, Inova+, and T6 Ecosystems to ensure effective implementation in a well-established team. Along with that, SONAR has successfully implemented the AIxMusic festival in 2021 (while being led by AE in 2018 & 2019). Building on this legacy, the new consortium will enable the impact expansion of the STARTS approach to further fields by introducing it to the practitioners as an alternative dynamic to open new perspectives. With a strong representation in the music industry, by SONAR and Salzburg Festival, and digital arts by AE, the consortium will target an artistic community whose practices involve cutting-edge technologies. And two partners with elaborate technical expertise, TU Dresden and Media Solution Center Baden Württemberg, are joining in for hosting residencies, thereby boosting the technological profile of the consortium. Merging the experience of already involved partners and adding new ones who will, in addition to their expertise, bring in new perspectives, will dynamicise the collaboration and take the project impact to a new level. The profiles of the consortium partners are a diverse and complimentary pool of expertise and excellence, described in section 3.3.

1.1 Objectives

To make European society fit for the digital age and continue its unique standing in the networked world, we rely on the creative and disruptive potential of the key players of arts and the cultural sector to connect with the private sector.¹ With international big tech often dictating how we live together rather than society itself taking the lead in developing democratic and caring communality, Europe must balance these developments by combining artistic ingenuity with a mix of publicly funded research, generating openness in the private sector on a much more individual scale. In addition, Europe must take seriously its responsibility in creating fair, unbiased, socially, ecologically, and economically balanced regulations and legislations for emerging technologies in order to enable society to preserve its agency. Considering this as a starting point, the relevance of the past, current, and future projects of the STARTS initiative becomes abundantly clear. With its events and studies, it has contributed greatly to make this nexus between science, technology, and the arts known to a broader audience, to support, collect, and share findings about interdisciplinary collaborations. It has created a unique environment for artistic exploration and developed a framework within which art-driven innovation can achieve both societal and market impact. The strengthening of this highly influential approach is a vital pillar of the future of Europe's leading role in the conservation of democracy and the triple transformation needed to preserve the planet for future generations.

(01) Foster artistic experimentation & piloting: The first step in building towards the triple transformation and developing innovative and sustainable solutions through artistic approaches is to create an environment without preconditions that allows creative development through experimentation. At the same time, elaborate infrastructure to implement experiments is crucial to the development of new ideas.

How we address this objective and deliver results: Through experienced partners with high-level technological expertise, the consortium will create this unique environment and support 10 artists / team to pilot projects (T2.1, T2.2) with € 400.000,- pilot grants under the directive of the triple transformation; contributing to impacts EO#2 and EI#1. A comparative report on STARTS residency methodologies ensures that previous knowledge is used effectively (D(eliverable)2.5). A specifically designed incubation program (T2.3) and extensive communication & dissemination activities (WP4/5) will accelerate the impact.

(02) Foster recognition & awarding excellence: Thanks to many years of European investment in the development of STARTS collaborations, an ever-growing community of practice has developed impressive projects and innovative products. The STARTS Prize will be an effective and well-established tool to recognize these achievements and inspire further development by highlighting the most successful creatives and their work on the one hand, and supporting them financially on the other.

How we address this objective and deliver results: The consortium will continue to award the STARTS Prize for 3 years (WP3), awarding 2 grand prizes in the established categories worth 20.000 € each, as well 10 honorary mentions and 18 nominations each year (published annually, D3.2, D3.3, D3.4). This continuity will reassure the community and create a stability to provide a solid basis for new innovation; contributing to impact EI#1. An annual prize ceremony (T4.1) and extensive dissemination events (T4.2, T4.5) showcasing these achievements will ensure broad visibility; contributing to impacts EO#1 and EO#3.

(03) Foster synergies between digital and human creativity: With the accelerating developments in the field of the digital, especially AI, in big tech and industry, new approaches are needed to redefine the role of human inspiration in the creative and innovation process. Artists can contribute unique perspectives to develop the ways in which we will live with technology in the future.

¹ Sandberg, B. Art Hacking for Business Innovation: An Exploratory Case Study on Applied Artistic Strategies. J. Open Innov. Technol. Mark. Complex. 2019.

How we address this objective and deliver results: The AIxMusic program by Sonar (T4.3) will create a unique platform for pushing limits of digital technology and exploring the compatibility of digital with human values and needs through artistic thinking; thus contributing to impact EI#1. It will be implemented by an experienced consortium member, building on a developed methodology and simultaneously innovating the process through the exchange with new partners. D4.2 will highlight these novel ways of collaboration and how it may change innovation dynamics. With 150.000+ expected audiences the AIxMusic program will create a high visibility on human compatible R&D&I; hence contributing to impacts EO#1 and EO#4.

(O4) Foster interdisciplinary collaboration and professional community development: The STARTS creative collaboration incentives have without doubt started to impact European innovation culture. The STARTS initiative has brought together agents from the cultural, academic, and economic fields for novel collaborations and honored outstanding existing partnerships. This newly evolved community needs to be further supported and expanded.

How we address this objective and deliver results: By bringing together existing, but up to now separated networks, the partners will increase their reach throughout various cultural and economic fields throughout Europe and amplify the development by creating synergies. Thus, the consortium foresees substantial efforts to bring STARTS practitioners and other European innovation communities together and working towards sustainability of the STARTS initiative at large (T1.4). Further activities for cooperation and active outreach – specifically during events in WP4 - will anchor the project results and learnings in communities such as Digital Innovation Hubs, EITs, HEU projects as well as international alliances; and thus contribute to impact EO#1. This will allow to develop the STARTS brand in new directions and reposition it in the European innovation ecosystem.

(O5) Foster public awareness: The STARTS initiative develops, showcases, and awards outstanding artistic approaches that can greatly contribute to raising awareness and fostering the uptake of digital methods and technology in the general public. The new consortium understands the demonstration of how these projects contribute to the revolution of our life in the digital age as one of its core tasks.

How we address this objective and deliver results: By involving new partners with massive public recognition such as the Salzburg Festival, the new consortium gains a unique standing and will be able to create extensive public impact (contributing to impacts EO#1 and EI#1) in 34 single activities (targeting 1,5 Mio+ reach through event promotion and 240.000+ event attendees). Through audience tailored dissemination events (planned in D4.1), targeted communication measures (planned in D5.1) on social media, and professionally crafted PR campaign (T5.3), the consortium will reach the general public effectively and thus foster the awareness for Europe's leading role in art+tech innovation.

1.2 Coordination and/or support measures and methodology

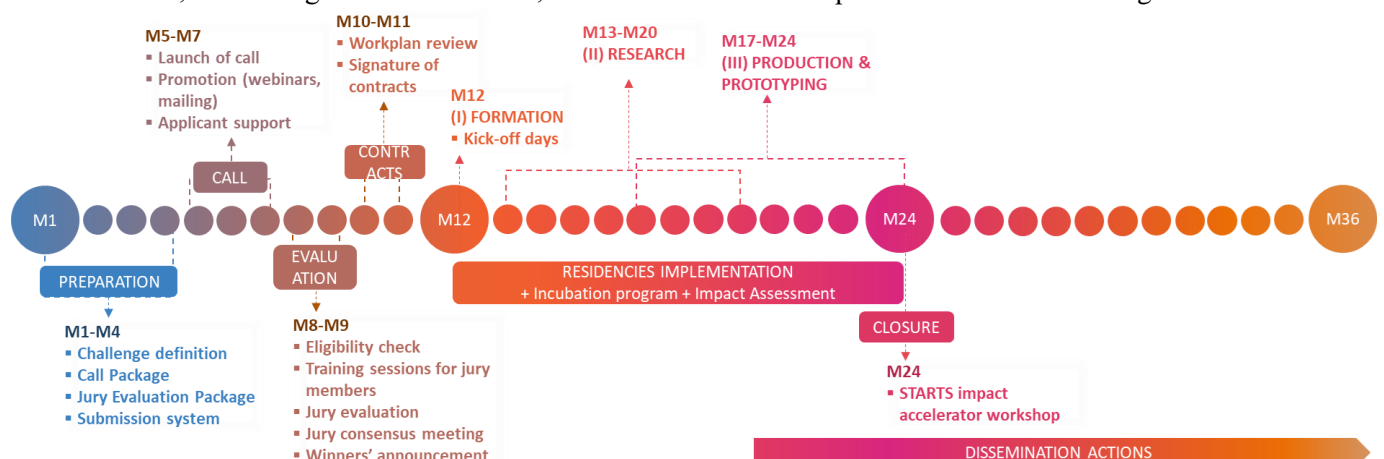
1.2.1 Overall concept and project methodology

The S+T+ARTS Ec(h)o's concept is built around 5 main pillars, each one contributing to one or more project objectives:

1. Develop and pilot residencies in 6 innovation areas towards the triple transition (O1)
2. Enhance residencies' impact through an incubation and knowledge exchange program (O1, O4)
3. Increase recognition through the STARTS Prize and outstanding achievements (O2)
4. Foster this recognition and awareness through extensive dissemination and communication (O3, O4, O5)
5. Build uptake & exploitation potential by sharing S+T+ARTS methodologies and knowledge (O3, O4, O5)

1.2.1.1. Develop and pilot residencies in 6 innovation areas towards the triple transition

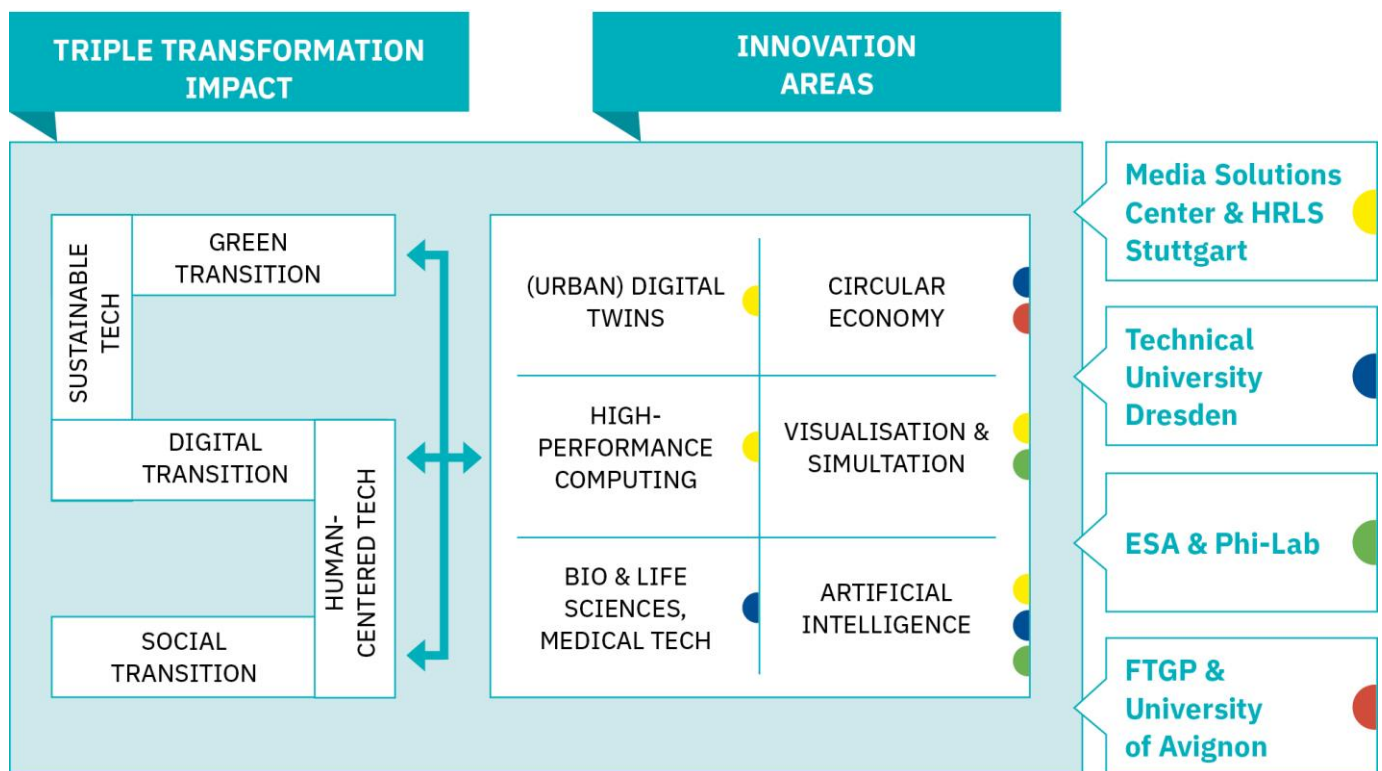
10 residencies, each being awarded € 40.000, will be selected in one open call with the following timeline:



The piloting (implementation of the residencies) is clustered into three phases: **1) Formation** (initial meetings with hosts & refining concepts) in M12, **2) Research** from M13-M20, **3) Production & prototyping** from M17-M24, with the last two phases typically overlapping in an iterative way. Detailed information and training on this methodology will be provided to the artists in the incubation program (see section 1.2.1.2). A total of four institutions will **host residencies** (with further details on relevant infrastructure in section 3.2):

- **TUD** will host **3 residencies** within their wide range of laboratories and technical experimental facilities in engineering, environmental sciences, and computer science and provides the infrastructure of its 40 unique teaching and research collections between art and science.
- **MSC** will function as the point of contact for enabling **3 residencies** to use the infrastructure from HLRS Stuttgart, home to one of Europe's fastest supercomputers.
- **ESA** (external to consortium; committed to host **3 residencies**) will open their Phi-Lab on Earth Observation.
- **FTGP** will implement **1 residency** by pairing up with University of Avignon, their digital faculty, and ICTT Lab providing access to immersive research labs & NLP infrastructure.

Call definition. The **STARTS residencies** will work towards the triple transformation by putting the digital transition at the center of the efforts. Through 10 art+tech collaboration in the fields of human-centered and sustainable technology, the social and green transition will be linked through innovative digital thinking by activities in 6 innovation areas. Each host will contribute to several innovation areas by bringing in their specific expertise in the fields of (1) Data Simulation & Visualisation, (2) High Performance Computing, (3) (Urban) Digital Twins, (4) Clean Tech/Circular Economy, (5) Artificial Intelligence, and (6) Bio & Life Sciences. By providing free access to these highly resource intensive technologies, the hosts will empower the residents to develop unique new solutions and maximize their impact. The call will be designed in collaboration with the hosts, in particular the challenges to be addressed by applicants.



All innovation areas intend an impact in the **digital transition**, and will further create added values being ecologically conscious (**green transition**) or/and human compatible (**social transition**):

Innovation Area 1: Data simulation & visualisation + Innovation Area 2: Supercomputing

Residency Hosts: MSC, ESA (Target: 3-5 residencies)

Purpose: Applicants to these innovation areas need to demonstrate a clear societal piloting purpose or justify how their data simulation & visualisation approach is pertinent for Earth Science.

Destination: Cutting-edge data simulation & visualisation is the foundation of data-informed decision making on complex scales for public administration, science, and private companies. As simulation models become more complex and datasets grow larger, the graphic representation and interpretation of data has become an essential method of science and engineering, as well as of public communication of complex phenomena represented in

otherwise abstract datasets. Through MSC's partnership with the German National Supercomputing Center, artists will have access to these high-performance computing systems and expertise allowing support in a broad range of topics for the most computationally demanding simulation projects. ESA's Phi-Lab, on the other hand, specifically works on data simulation & visualisation of earth observation data and will focus on this topic.

Industry vision: These visualizations can inform scientists, engineers across disciplines, professionals in nonscientific fields, and the public. Applications are found in architecture, city planning, media, earth sciences, or information management. The consortium will put emphasis on projects with clear socio-ecological impacts.

Innovation Area 3: (Urban) Digital Twins + Innovation Area 4: Clean Tech & Circular Economy

Residency Host: MSC, TUD, FTGP (Target: 3-4 residencies)

Purpose: Applicants to these innovation areas need to demonstrate a clear impact towards urban development, sustainability and/or circular economy and justify how their pilot contributes to the EU Green Deal.

Destination: 3D scanners, sensors for measuring air quality, machine learning algorithms, virtual and augmented reality, and other tools make it possible to create comprehensive models of towns and cities called digital twins. This allows scientists and public administrations to come to robust decisions based on integrative models of urban spaces, facilitate participatory planning among a variety of stakeholders (including citizens), and make effects of city planning understandable. While MSC will focus on digital twins, TUD and FTGP will choose a different approach to sustainability: circular economy. Combining biology, hydro and agricultural sciences with ICT technologies and object cultures from teaching and research collections of forest sciences and biology will be their core focus. Key topics will include circular economy strategies, research on mineral recycling, waste management, remediation of contaminated sites, and clean technologies.

Industry vision: Implementing a circular economy in the EU could create 180,000 extra jobs by 2030 and 2 million jobs in the longer term. Sustainability and circular economy strategies are no longer only nice-to-have visions, but represent existential geo-political, urban, and economical requirements. Data, digital technologies, and ICT infrastructures play a crucial role in advancing these approaches.

Innovation Area 5: Artificial Intelligence + Innovation Area 6: Life Science & Medical Technologies

Residency Host: TUD, MSC (Target: 2-4 residencies)

Purpose: Applicants to these innovation areas need to demonstrate a clear impact towards "AI for good" / "Tech for good" and justify how their pilot contributes to the EC's communication on "Trustworthy AI".

Destination: A wide range of residency topics will be welcomed for the innovation area on AI, reaching from e.g. AI to fight misinformation to AI for medical applications. TUD offers access to & collaboration with the Center for Interdisciplinary Digital Sciences (CIDS) and the Centre for Tactile Internet with Human-in-the-Loop (CeTI excellence-cluster) with the aim of interlocking AI and sound. In this context, specific research collections on acoustics, computer technology, and others are available as infrastructure. Further, they will encourage pilots on innovative medical imaging techniques in the special facilities of the University Hospital Carl Gustav Carus and the TUD-excellence cluster Physics of Life (PoL).

Industry vision: Industry 5.0 is led by augmenting human intelligence with machine intelligence; hence increasing the necessity of human-machine collaboration. Fostering the understanding of AI will increase the likelihood of societies' readiness to take up and trust these technologies.

The open call will be heavily communicated through the measures outlined in section 2.2.1.1. INOVA, AE and FTGP all have an exceptional track record in running open calls in the context of ICT and art. The processes, tools, and platforms established in previous STARTS projects will be reused and repurposed to ensure efficiency, quality, and fairness. **Applications will follow a predefined template**, consisting of an online form and a downloadable document. Applications and reviews will be submitted via **AE's submission platform**. The reviews will be conducted in three stages: first, all applications will be assessed according to **formal eligibility criteria**, such as location of applicants or adherence to call requirements; second, **eligible applications will be reviewed** by two reviewers with relevant expertise, from within and beyond the consortium. All applications will be ranked in a point system, creating a **shortlist**; third, applicants shortlisted will be passed on to the evaluation panel who will make the final decision. Based on experience, we estimate around 20-30% of the applications to pass to this stage.

The **reviewing criteria** will cover four areas, mirroring the structure of the application template: (1) artistic mission statement; (2) relevance for specific innovation area/industrial sector; (3) experimental use of digital technologies; and (4) focus on purpose & triple transformation challenges. Information **webinars** to explain what we are looking for and answering questions will be organized. We will produce comprehensive **tutorials** to make it easy for artists to produce high-quality applications. The tutorials will include specific guidelines detailing the scope of the call and deadlines, an annotated application template, a FAQ, detailed eligibility criteria and funding

conditions, a guide for using the submission platform, as well as a transparent account of the selection criteria. Further details are provided in the Annex. An **email hotline** to communicate will be available. The consortium will publish aggregated statistics (e.g., countries, number of applications, acceptance rates, innovation areas).

1.2.1.2. Enhance residencies' impact through an incubation and knowledge exchange program

The **incubation program** will support the residency teams in kickstarting the pilots and nurturing them to accelerate their impact. The program will consist of (1) joint kick-off STARTS Days, (2) shared training & peer-exchange sessions over the course of the piloting period, (3) individual mentoring and (4) a STARTS impact accelerator workshop at the end of the residency cycle.

- INOVA will organize **Kick-off Days** (three-day virtual format) to bring the new STARTS practitioners together in dedicated introductory sessions for artists and technology partners, and stage parts exclusively for artists to take advantage of synergies and peer learning. One day will introduce the project's methodology and steps of the residencies, sharing experiences from previous STARTS residency methodologies and toolkits. AE will subcontract one organisation with specific (STARTS) residency facilitation experience in the fields approached in this project to deliver this training and co-define with INOVA the methodology to be implemented in the STARTS Ec(h)o Residencies (D2.5). The methodology will be designed based on existing methodologies to build on these efforts of existing resources, best practices & tools, particularly from other STARTS projects, considering the specific needs of the innovation areas targeted in the project.
- INOVA and FTGP will co-design and host **8-10 joint training sessions** (culminating at the end of the residency phase in a two-day virtual **STARTS impact accelerator workshop**) during the piloting phase on the topics of business model creation (with a specific focus on creative & sustainable entrepreneurship and circular economy), additional funding sources (both private and public), storytelling/pitching/marketing capacities as well as exploitation strategies. A core priority of the incubation program is to bring the STARTS residency outputs closer to industry and consult the artists (and if relevant their collaboration partners) in identifying further opportunities to develop and exploit their results from the residencies further. This might include introducing the artists to relevant industry partners from the network, connecting them to investors, consulting them in possible follow-up funding or providing them with business development expertise. Additionally, IPR management will be one key aspect to expand the residents' knowledge to foster professional market exploitation. Wherever necessary, the consortium will involve external expertise from the extensive networks of all partners and the STARTS community to deliver the workshops. The sessions will not only aim for targeted capacity building, but also peer-exchange, network building (with experts, mentors, and other practitioners), and inspiration through best practice presentations. The strategy will be detailed in D2.2 and can serve as a template for similar future programs by other practitioners. Dedicated sessions of the incubation program will also be opened to STARTS Prize teams (from the project and the past), thus further fostering the STARTS network.
- Additionally, INOVA will work with each residency team to develop a **mandatory, tailored individual mentoring plan** with goals and activities, based on the team's specific domain expertise, needs, priorities, and resources. The needs assessment shall result in the identification of mentors that will provide advice to teams. Each residency project will receive support from (1) the host partner, (2) one sci-tech mentor with expertise in the domain approached by the teams and that shall complement the expertise of the host; (3) and one business mentor with expertise in business and exploitation development, with track record on high-tech businesses. Sci-tech and business mentors are experts external to the consortium; each residency will be allocated on average 24 mentorship hours (1-to-1 sessions). Costs for mentoring are foreseen in addition to the allocation of residency grants (€40.000) and managed by INOVA.

1.2.1.3. Increase recognition through the STARTS Prize and outstanding achievements

While the STARTS residencies are designed to target pre-defined innovation areas, the **STARTS Prize is purposefully designed to be as open as possible** encouraging the widest possible participation and thus allowing even unexpected or disrupting submissions. AE will issue three editions of the STARTS Prize (2024, 2025, 2026) with submission periods being open from January to March each year. Annually, 2 Grand Prizes, 10 Honorary Mentions and 18 Nominations will be chosen and thus a total of 90 STARTS projects selected within the project. A cornerstone in the thematic narration for the open calls will be emphasizing the project's relevance towards the triple transition (green, social, and digital) to ensure that the STARTS Prize projects will align with European policies (e.g. EU Green Deal, New European Bauhaus, Digital Agenda for Europe). To ensure openness and continuity, the two grand prize categories will be continued: one prize for **artistic exploration** where appropriation by the arts has altered (the use, deployment, or perception of) technology and one prize for **innovative collaboration** of ICT and the arts (and the creative profession at large) that opens new pathways for innovation and/or society in particular in the context of regional development.

The entry regulations, the conditions of participation, call timeline, award criteria, rights, and arrangement of payments are detailed in the Annex. The submissions will be handled through a submission tool (developed/hosted by Ars Electronica and used for all previous STARTS Prize calls). It features the following modules with different access/viewing levels: 1) submission, 2) statistics, 3) review & jury, 4) publication, 5) archiving. The consortium will build on the success of the **dual submission process** established in previous years of the Prize by a) actively promoting the open call through extensive promotion & outreach, while also b) focusing on targeted & high-quality nominations from experts on various levels.

- **Open Call:** AE will use its large database of contacts (5.000+ STARTS contacts only), networks and platforms (300+) for promoting the annual open calls (eg. industry alliances, DIH networks, universities, regional SME representations, research centers, art/design call platforms) to directly communicate the call to potential submitters. This will be complimented by a press release, min. 4 newsletters/mailings per call cycle, strong social media promotion, and blogs/vlogs to illustrate best practices and highlight winners.
- **Nominations:** To guarantee not only quantity, but also quality of submissions and to attract submitters beyond the consortium's immediate reach, the following nomination process will be implemented: 1) Nominations through an international advisory committee (15 advisors per cycle; as complimentary as possible), 2) Nominations through AE research staff and one nomination officer per partner, 3) Nominations through the Prix Ars Electronica juries to enlarge the diversity and scope, 4) Nominations through other STARTS consortia and the public through twitter (dedicated hashtag). A nomination does not lead to any advantage in the selection process. To ensure a transparent selection, nominated projects will be contacted by the organizers and will need to go through the standard submission & evaluation procedure.

The jury members will be selected each year anew to ensure the best possible expertise and transparency in the evaluation process. The review and **selection process** is divided in three steps:

Monitoring the submissions and checking admissibility and eligibility: AE will monitor the submission process to inform submitters up to deadline in case their submissions are incomplete. After the submission closes, AE will check admissibility and eligibility.

Pre-jury, first online review and selection: In the next step, the jury members are given online access to the submissions for their first review. In this first round, they single out the projects they consider interesting enough to be reviewed and evaluated in the main jury meeting (supported by AE researchers).

Three-day main jury meeting: In a three-day in-person jury meeting, jury members will discuss the online review and come to a joint decision on winners, honorary mentions, and nominations. Experience shows that a physical jury selection process is highly important to build a common understanding, and allows a refinement of the selection criteria for the next years based on a joint evaluation of trends and the scene.

After the jury sessions, the jury will deliver a mutual *public jury statement* which gives an overview of the selection process and reasonings. AE will provide a guide on potential conflicts of interest to jury members and will address this in the jury contracts to ensure an objective selection process.

1.2.1.4. Foster recognition and awareness through extensive dissemination, events & communication

The **dissemination phase** of the project is the most important warrantor for showcasing project results both from the STARTS Prize as well as the STARTS residencies, highlighting their innovation areas and demonstrating Europe's leading role in promoting art-driven innovation. For this project, the dissemination events will mostly happen in the form of cultural events (festivals, performative shows, short-time exhibitions) as this allows to reach the biggest audience and address **different key target groups** based on their core interests:

- **STARTS Community** as well as **professional art&innovation communities** (eg. EIT Culture & Creativity) and their interest in state-of-the-art projects and methodologies will be targeted and connected through the annual STARTS Day at Ars Electronica Festival and 3 dedicated professional community outreach events
- **General audiences** will be reached at Sónar through the AIxMusic program and the STARTS exhibition at Ars Electronica Festival
- **Scientists and researchers** will be involved and informed through the events of the residency hosts and the workshops, seminars, and collaborative events of the AIxMusic program at Sónar
- **Policy and high-level representatives from industry** will be reached through the Prize Ceremony at Ars Electronica Festival and the policy event at the Salzburg Festival

The **Ars Electronica Festival** will be the main platform to annually present the outcomes from the STARTS Prize and research progress from residencies in September 2024/25/26. With approx. 100,000 visitors, 400+ press representatives and audiences from arts, science, innovation, and society, AE is one of the most renowned European platforms for interdisciplinary innovation and artistic creation and an established meeting place for the STARTS community as well as many stakeholders from European national ministries, EIT Culture & Creativity, and innovation professionals. Every year, AE will stage:

- *Award ceremony of STARTS Prize at the Ars Electronica Festival* with large visibility and approximately 1500 guests from industry, politics, culture, science, and the public. To enhance the profile of the STARTS Prize the awards should be presented by high ranking representatives of the EC.
- *Conference & networking program for professionals* in the form of an annual STARTS Day with 300+ participants each year. It is planned that each STARTS Day will be jointly staged with one major European platform (eg. under the Next Renaissance movement of the EIT C&C, DIH-networks or the New European Bauhaus community).
- *Exhibitions of prize-winning projects* for the general public and festival audiences at large. The exhibitions will be heavily STARTS & EU branded and present not only the winners, but the also the STARTS initiative.

One of the key objectives of the dissemination phase is to increase the understanding of and trust in technology within the general public. Music is an ideal example medium to highlight the potentials of linking art and technology to develop novel ways of artistic creation, presentation, and distribution and simultaneously foster the trust in human compatible technologies. The main platform in Europe for this ongoing discourse and music-tech led experimentation is [Sónar](#), with more than 120.000 annual visitors and extensive media attention (Sónar 2022 generated 4.054 features with an impact of 2.133.584.234 in online, written press, TV and Radio). To increase visibility and make use of this established brand, Sónar will deliver an annual AIxMusic program, branded through STARTS, as a central part of its program in June 2024/25/26. To reach not only specialised audiences with dedicated music-tech interest, but also the general public, Sónar will organically integrate the AIxMusic program in the key lineup, while ensuring a consistent STARTS branding. The program will focus on exploring the applications and challenges of AI in music/sound creation through a variety of formats. Key thematic areas of the three festival editions will focus on AI, machine learning and language models both in music creation as well as the music industry at large. The whole value chain of the music industry from programming, elaboration, recording and distribution is strongly influenced by the latest technological developments in AI and often functions as a forerunner in the cultural and creative industries. While the program will strongly focus on these research & innovation trends, a wide range from computer composition, algorithmic composition, experimental performance, generative music, sound installation, biotechnology applied to music, and augmented reality sound projects will be encouraged to display the wide range of innovation in the field. One main impact will be to learn more about AI through music and sound and create awareness about its potential applications across different disciplines. Sónar will organise a dedicated AIxMusic Day with 10+ activities each year:

- **Two lecture-performances:** Using the visual 7-screen display of the Stage+D, artists, thinkers, technologists, and researchers from the fields of sciences and humanities will present their lectures along with music, either live or recorded, and visual support.
- **Two to three masterclasses:** Masterclasses will take place at the SonarÀgora stage and focus on key aspects of working with AI and music. Artistic, technological, and transdisciplinary approaches will be considered. Lectures will include both artists dissecting the development process of their work with AI as well as scientists and technologists presenting relevant research in the field of AI and music.
- **One 2-day Workshop:** Participants from different fields will be invited to participate in a hands-on approach to AI music making. The workshop will be open to artists, researchers, and technologist with the aim to prototype tools, performances, and experiences that help broaden the angle at which music is recorded, played, performed, and experienced.
- **A selection of musical shows in Sónar by Day and Sónar by Night:** AI has sparked the inspiration and curiosity of artists of all ages, genres, and music scenes. At least one show in Sónar by Day and one in Sónar by Night will feature AI in different ways, favouring creative and innovative concepts and uses of AI in the context of live music performance, fostering the understanding and awareness of audiences of AI.
- **A selection of AI and Music-related projects** in the Project Area, Sónar+D's exhibition space where art meets industry and research. Artists and studios showcase their work, start-ups exhibit their products and prototypes, and research centres and universities present either the results of their work or the processes of their ongoing research. This will also feature selected results from the STARTS residencies (specifically those working on AI and music) as well as thematically relevant STARTS Prize winners.

One target of the project is to further disseminate the STARTS initiative to policy and high-level multipliers from industry and research. With 240.000+ visitors from 76 countries and 31 Mio.+ € ticket revenues, the [Salzburg Festival](#) is not only one of the world's most famous classical music festival, but also a meeting hotspot for European politicians, top-level industry leaders, and representatives from academia. In this context, Salzburg Festival plans to stage a STARTS event (either in August 2024 or 2025) showcasing the potential of immersive technologies and next generation media innovation towards culture. A specific project will function as the central showcase to trigger the interest of the target group and demonstrate the potential of immersive technology in other

sectors and for applications beyond culture, thus highlighting STARTS practices. This showcase is an advanced prototype of the virtual recreation of the famous *Fauststadt* from Max Reinhardt's last Salzburg production (1933-1937), which resurrects the singular stage set in a multi-perspective tour. While this VR experience is currently already being developed by Salzburg Festival, the application will evolve into an AR experience in the course of the STARTS project, making it more accessible and evolving it into an ideal example project for the policy audiences of the dedicated STARTS event.

To maximize **dissemination** potential, the consortium further foresees the following **events**:

- presenting residency outcomes in the form of exhibitions or pop-up presentations at the residency hosts (Technical University Dresden, Media Solution Center in Germany and the Phi-Lab at the European Space Agency's premises in Frascati, Italy)
- presenting STARTS at relevant European innovation events (organised by T6), with a focus on events that offer high synergy potential in target groups, increasing the interest in and uptake of STARTS methodologies

Extensive communication measures will accompany all dissemination events to support their promotion and outreach. Each event will thus have its dedicated **communication campaign** (see section 2.2) implemented jointly by the respective dissemination event host and FTGP. As the consortium is dedicated to actively practicing what the project topics preach, all dissemination partners will pay particular attention to organising the events in a sustainable manner, reducing CO2 emissions to the necessary minimum. AE, Sónar, and Salzburg Festival all have dedicated sustainability strategies and are either already certified "Green Events" or currently in the process of becoming it.

1.2.1.5. Build uptake & exploitation potential and investigate brand evolution through sharing S+T+ARTS methodologies and knowledge

By the end of the project duration, STARTS will celebrate its 10 years anniversary having achieved significant results through 300+ STARTS Prize projects and 160+ residencies and pilots. It created a dynamic, active, and future-oriented European community that has tremendous significance for other European innovation communities, including those from the EIT, New European Bauhaus, DIHs, national innovation communities, and other HEU projects. Thus, the project's target is also to increase the awareness, uptake, and potential towards exploitation of STARTS methodologies through other EU players. Therefore, the consortium plans **three dedicated outputs** which shall create knowledge on art-driven experimentation and foster synergies to avoid siloed results: 1) an encompassing overview of STARTS residency methodologies used to foster art-driven innovation (D2.5) available to the residency practitioners as well as the field at large, 2) an incubation strategy (summarized in a report D2.2) aiming at informing other European innovation communities on how to benefit from knowledge exchange and increase the impact of such residencies, and 3) a STARTS ecosystem assessment report (D2.7) providing insights into STARTS impacts, framework conditions necessary for implementing such programs as well as recommendations for further development. To present these outputs and foster collaboration, the consortium will bring together stakeholders in **dedicated events**. The annual STARTS Day at Ars Electronica Festival will evolve to create alliances between STARTS and other European innovation communities. As it is expected that not all relevant stakeholders can be activated to visit events hosted by the consortium partners directly, T6 will select three strategic innovation events targeting professional communities with potential interest in STARTS methodologies and organically include STARTS presentations in these events. AE will also further investigate, in close collaboration with the EC, potential formal alliances between STARTS and other relevant communities – either through implementing one or more STARTS pillars to other organizations & platforms (both publicly as well as privately funded) or through brand merging. Particular efforts will be made to investigate closer collaboration or brand alliances with the EIT Culture & Creativity (in particular their lighthouse movement "Next Renaissance"), as AE is part of both communities.

In total, the following **indicators** will determine the success of the methodology and the project at large:

1. Launched and supported 10 artistic driven experimentation residencies in 6 innovation areas contributing to the Green Deal and triple transformation.
2. Set up an incubator that helps advance the impact of the residency projects with 30+ experts and mentors from the field, with the aim of creating a blueprint for future programs.
3. Implemented an influential STARTS prize with at least 5.000 submissions, showcasing Europe's role as a global leader in art-driven innovation, recognizing 90 achievements and their collaborative practices.
4. Realized extensive target-group specific dissemination through 12+ events for STARTS professionals, general audiences, policy and research/innovation communities to reach 300.000 people in events and 1,5 Mio. in linked communication measures on STARTS projects and the initiative.

5. Enhanced the impact of STARTS projects supported and selected within this and other STARTS consortia through tailored outreach and dissemination activities.
6. Engaged and expanded the community within and beyond STARTS stakeholders, through network activities with 100+ organisations/platforms, accelerating the uptake of STARTS methods by other EU players.

1.2.2 Ethics, Inclusion and Open Approach

1.2.2.1 Ethics

The STARTS consortium is committed to avoiding any harm through its own activities, and that of the winners and participants. The potential for harm will mainly rest in the collection and use of personal data on the one hand, and IPR aspects on the other. The consortium will collect quantitative and qualitative data about STARTS projects, their artistic engagement and research activities, as well as personal data for the open calls, Prizes, and the residency program, which will inform policy, assessment, dissemination, and outreach activities. Details on the data management strategy are outlined below. Within the activities of the involved projects, additional issues may arise that will be assessed upon emergence and approached through a policy of active awareness during the selection of and work with them. Ethical considerations will form part of the evaluation criteria for the residencies and Prizes. We will not consider any proposals that have obvious ethical flaws, such as breaching EC requirements for responsible research. We will look for proposals that reflect on the ethical dimension of their activities, and work with the selected projects to make them aware of the potential ethical implications of their work.

1.2.2.2 Inclusion

STARTS partners will address social equality at different levels. At consortium level, we will continuously support diverse leadership and encourage the active participation of non-males and other underrepresented societal groups at all levels, functions, and disciplines within the project organisation. Social diversity and expertise and competence in this field will be considered in the selection of involved externals (experts, jury members, etc.). We will ensure a balanced representation of society in all images and visuals used in the project dissemination materials. To provide an example of an inclusive research, creative, and innovation environment, social and gender diversity will also be one of the evaluation criteria for both the selection of residencies and Prize winners.

1.2.2.3 Open approach & Data management

The STARTS consortium is committed to following an Open approach, both within the consortium itself, as well as in the projects selected, while simultaneously paying attention to protecting and strengthening the IPR and particularly exploitation rights of the residency participants and the Prize winners. Data management within the consortium is centrally managed in WP1, which will oversee best practice being implemented across the whole project: We will develop and continuously update a Data Management Plan (DMP), which will outline how administrative, research, and project-related data will be processed during and after the project.

Data sources. Various types of data will be generated by the project: 1) Submission data: participants submit their project title, video, photos, description, bio, contact details; 2) Documentation and evaluation material as well as communication statistics (website & social media trace data,...) generated by the project, 3) Stakeholder data: During the project period, the consortium will actively collect organization and individual person data (eg. name, address, contact details, country, category,...), 4) Internal project-related data, 5) Project publications and outputs

Consent for data sharing and long-term preservation is collected in the submission questionnaires for open calls and through other data collection measures dealing with personal data. Following data minimisation principles, all data collection will be limited and conducted appropriately. We will not collect any sensitive personal data. Personal data will be processed strictly for the purposes it was collected for, in accordance with the GDPR. The DMP (D1.2) as well as the STARTS Prize Call Working Document (D2.1), which will be based on previous STARTS Prize calls and also include details on submission rights & IPR, will further detail the internal project Data Management strategy and IPR strategies related to external content (Prize submissions). AE and INOVA will be responsible for regularly monitoring and, if necessary, updating the documents and strategies.

Project data storage and archiving. All internal project data will be stored on servers of AE and monitored by the Data Security Group of AE following GDPR conformity. Automatic mirroring of the data is performed several times a day, weekly and monthly. A snapshot of all virtual machines is created every day that can be recreated for 90 days. Furthermore, every three months, all digital content is saved on tape (LTO6). The tapes are stored off-premises, and serve as an additional physical backup. Website and, in particular, access to submissions will be managed through secure website access (https) and via an account management system (with several viewers/editors rights) and is password protected.

Data sharing and ownership. Internal project data will continue to be owned by the partner organizations involved. Data submitted to the Prize competition or residency belongs to the submitting parties only. However, all submitting parties consent that, in case of being selected, they grant all consortium partners as well as the European Commission the full right to use the submitted material for communication & dissemination purposes in conjunction with the STARTS initiative. The full entry rights can be found in the Annex.



Open access and archiving of project outputs (even beyond the projects' duration). All documentation and evaluation material produced by the STARTS project itself (such as videos, audio recordings, photos, evaluation papers) will be made available to the general public and published under a Creative Commons (CC) License (depending on feasibility considering third party rights and appropriate crediting of involved partners, funders, and other rights holders). The same approach will be followed in the AE archive and STARTS / STARTS Prize website, which will remain available and publicly accessible after the project period for a minimum of 2 years. AE will include the STARTS Prize winners, residencies, as well as further details and publications in the public AE archive <http://archive.aec.at/startsprize/>. Conforming with international standards in long-term archiving ensures the accessibility to results beyond the projects' duration. ISBN codes will be used for publications, and all public deliverables will additionally be made available online under CC licenses via Zenodo to ensure long term availability through persistent identifiers (DOIs).

2.1 Project's pathways towards impact

STARTS Ec(h)o will foster the potential of arts to stimulate innovation that is human compatible and ecological aware. The goal of the project is to reach a wider adoption of artistic experimentation by actors in R&I in technology development processes and a massive recognition of art as catalyst of human and green driven digital innovation. In this context, the project envisions to contribute to the ambitions defined in various EU Agendas - Europe's Digital Decade, European Green Deal -, being fully aligned with the call baselines. We will maximise the benefits of different STARTS Pillars by bringing them together in one project, thus achieving a multiple and high impact effect on different entities and at various scales. The project will have relevant effects among the quintuple-helix ecosystems of (1) Academia, research, (2) Industry, economy, (3) Political system (here specified with decision makers & innovation communities), (4) Media and culture-based organisations and (5) civil society:

Research & Academia	Industry	EU innovation communities & decision makers	Media and culture based orgs	Civil society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand research perspectives through artistic catalysts Collaborate on pilots and projects (honored in prizes) Gain recognition for open & responsible research involving humanities (arts) and often citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use 10 pilot outputs from residencies Stimulate interest in socio-ecological innovation to better target products/services & reach climate targets Understand how to lead open innovation driven through arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve similar (increasing) regional/ national/ EU initiatives based on STARTS methodologies Build on 460+ projects from STARTS initiative and established recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become active players in innovation (policies) Share best practices and gain recognition outside of sector Validate methods (beyond own sector) and develop new knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain critical understanding, reflective use, trust or literacy in tech Perceiving STARTS methodologies as strong alternative for a new pathway towards innovation Involvement of citizens in tech development

2.1.1 Contributions to the expected outcomes from the call

STARTS Ec(h)o will contribute to the Expected Outcomes (EO#) specified in the topic call as follows:

EO#1. To promote «a mind change regarding the role of the arts in R&I in the spirit of a European innovation policy based on culture and values.»

The project builds on the experience of the STARTS initiative and the consortium partners to stimulate sci-tech-arts collaborations. It innovates by stimulating and supporting the field through residencies and co-creation in some of the most innovative and futuristic digital technology fields: data visualization and simulation; information design; bio & life sciences; (urban) digital twins; high-performance computing; and artificial intelligence. Past STARTS Residencies have already proven the benefits of art-driven innovation; in the current project, we intend to capitalize on these experiences and to sharpen the profile of the role of arts and artists in the innovation process as well as increase recognition. To achieve this goal, the project will on top of hosting the residency program promote public events of different scales and for different target groups to ensure a wider *mind change*.

Scale (size of target groups benefitting)	Significance (importance, or value, of those benefits)
The project will reach 300.000 people directly and 1.5 Mio. stakeholders through communication. 2.000+ R&I stakeholders will be made aware of benefits of human-centred, art-driven innovation.	The project will benefit the stakeholders through the organisations of 34 activities in total (residencies, events, communication & dissemination activities) and a compendium (book) containing a variety of projects.

EO#2. Facilitate artistic experimentation with (digital) technologies to accelerate development and novel use cases of digital technologies. The emphasis will be on ecologically conscious and human compatible technologies and use cases of digital technologies.

STARTS Ec(h)o will address the green and social transformation through its different activities to support art-driven collaborations through STARTS residencies. Participants of residencies will rethink digital technology considering the needs related to the green and social transition, and, thus, to involve relevant stakeholders (such as

Scale (size of target groups benefitting)	Significance (importance, or value, of those benefits)
10 residencies: 10 artists + 10 sci/tech stakeholders	40.000€ per residency + knowledge enhancement through mentoring program

EO#3. Continuation of the annual S+T+ARTS prize: Achieve visibility of successful art and technology collaborations via an annual Prize (FSTP in form of prizes) in two defined categories, organize annual calls (launch, evaluation) and disseminate the Prizes and its winners in an award ceremony and exhibitions.

STARTS Ec(h)o will promote the STARTS Prize, capitalizing on past experience in the organisation of the Prize. The project will continue to raise recognition for science, technology & arts collaborations by attracting more than 5.000 submitters, selecting 90 cutting-edge projects and disseminating their achievements as well as their teams worldwide in 4-5 exhibitions, 3-4 conferences, 3 international award ceremonies and community building events as part of the incubation program. The dissemination success will benefit from the consortiums' expertise in strong storytelling to reach not only expert audiences, but also the general public. Through reaching out to various new communities, the project will further expand the collaboration group and create new ties for future collaboration.

Scale (size of target groups benefitting)	Significance (importance, or value, of those benefits)
90 cutting-edge projects promoted by at least 180 stakeholders	6 Grand Prizes prizes with € 120.000 Prize money; 30 honorary mentions; 54 nominations
60+ experts involved in jury selection	€ 24.000 expert fees for evaluation investing approx. 700 hours and generating 3 jury statements & evaluations

EO#4. Organise an annual AIxMusic S+T+ARTS Festival. The festival will highlight synergies of digital – in particular AI - with human creativity in art and music. Artistic use of digital can push limits of digital technology and is considered a measure of compatibility of digital with human values and needs.

STARTS Ec(h)o will organise the annual AIxMusic Festival within Sónar Festival in Barcelona, one of the biggest events in Europe promoting music-tech experimentation. The project intends to reach specialised audiences as well as the general public through a program that will focus on exploring the applications and challenges of AI in music / sound creation. Each year, the AIxMusic program at Sónar will take over various stages and spaces during one day through 10+ activities: two lecture-performances; two to three masterclasses; one 2-day workshop; a selection of musical shows in Sónar by Day and Sónar by Night; and a selection of AI and Music-related projects.

Scale (size of target groups benefitting)	Significance (importance, or value, of those benefits)
3.000+ professional stakeholders (artists, AI researchers, entrepreneurs, start-ups, media) 150.000+ citizens / general public	10 activities (lectures, performances, masterclasses, workshops, exhibitions) per year, establishing and showcasing collaborations between music & tech

2.1.2 Contributions to the expected impacts from the call

STARTS Ec(h)o will contribute to the Expected Impacts (EI#) specified in the topic call as follows:

EI#1: Proposals for topics under this Destination should set out a credible pathway to contributing to a human-centred and ethical development of digital and industrial technologies, and more specifically to one or several of the following impacts:

- Increased inclusiveness, by supporting a human-centred approach to technology development that is aligned with European social and ethical values (including gender and intersectional aspects), as well as sustainability;

STARTS Ec(h)o will not only foster the development of technology that is human-driven, inclusive, and ecologically conscious, but also widely promote, showcase, and celebrate existing projects exploring and developing innovations with these concerns at their basis. The calls and protocols for the project activities will consider these needs and the quality control task will follow and assess their proper implementation, particularly taking social diversity into consideration for the selection of residency participants and Prize winners and defining compliance with European policy for Openness and FAIR² data management as one of the core selection criteria to

² Wilkinson, M., Dumontier, M., Aalbersberg, I. et al. The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and

Scale (size of target groups benefitting)	Significance (importance, value, of those benefits)
Two thirds of citizens receiving the pilots well developed in STARTS Residencies; 50% of submitters & participants in events are non-male;	10 solutions developed in STARTS Residencies Open calls for 10 residencies and 6 STARTS Prize 12+ dissemination & communication events

2.1.3 Potential barriers to expected impact

Barriers	Mitigation action	WP
Pilots have difficulties developing high-quality results	All scientific/technological partners have long-standing expertise in facilitating artists; hence they are not siloed in the labs but supported by the hosts and the network along the process. STARTS Ec(h)o will support them with training materials (eg. methodological support) to ensure previous knowledge is passed on to them. Dedicated mentoring units and a shared learning space with peers will support qualitative outcomes.	WP2
Prizes are not sufficiently anchored and trigger little interest	The consortium builds on extensive expertise on how to disseminate the STARTS Prize winners not only in Europe, but internationally. 12+ dissemination events and strong communication will ensure visibility.	WP3
Lack of connectivity towards other EU innovation communities	Steady community outreach & collaboration (eg. towards joint STARTS Days, supporting with best practices for specific needs of these communities or communication exchange) and targeted liaison measures with other initiatives (e.g. EIT Culture & Creativity) will foster anchorage.	WP4
Weak absorption of results by industry	Direct outreach by all partners to their networks and a dedicated sector-specific magazine series are intended to increase industry's interest.	WP4/5

2.2 Measures to maximise impact - Dissemination, exploitation and communication #@COM-DIS-VIS-CDV@#

2.2.1 Dissemination and exploitation of results

Dissemination activities are key for sharing the project outcomes and increasing its impact. Communication & outreach within WP5 will ensure that the findings, learnings as well as the outcomes are meaningfully shared beyond the project's direct orbit. The communication activities will be led by FTGP who is highly experienced in developing innovative communication strategies for STARTS and has been managing the STARTS channels already for 6+ years. FTGP will be actively supported by AE with its extensive STARTS network and by Sónar, both with extensive experience in leading pan-European communication campaigns for dissemination events. FTGP, with input from all partners, will deliver a **communication strategy** (D5.1) in M3 as a strategic tool crafted to maximise the project's impact and will continually monitor it to ensure its successful implementation:

- Provide shared external representation of the project, facilitating its recognition, raising awareness and attracting relevant target groups both within the STARTS community as well as beyond;
- Plan strategically the objectives, channels, target groups, timing for communication measures (see 2.2.1.1);
- Promote the open calls as widely as possible and support event outreach and communication;
- Ensure the visibility of STARTS actions and activity.

One of the project's key objectives (and thus main activities) is to disseminate the project's results and those of the STARTS initiative at large extensively through events (see section 1.2.1.4). To achieve a targeted reach, and to ensure the events are systematically addressing the target groups and impacts intended, AE will deliver a **dissemination plan** (D4.1) in M6 detailing the aims, target groups, intended impacts, and KPIs of each event. It will detail specific follow-up measures after each event to ensure the activated audiences are continuously served with information and contribute to the sustainability of the project working towards the following objectives:

- Grow awareness and recognition of STARTS to promote the idea and impact of art-driven innovation in technology and media by disseminating the examples of excellence from the Prize winners.
- Disseminate the publications (D2.2, D2.3, D2.5, D2.6, D2.7, D3.2-4, D4.2, D5.3) and results of the project to relevant target audiences, including industry, research, European innovation communities, and policy.
- Leverage existing connections with national and European networks (eg. EIT, DIH, NEB) to foster partnerships and increase their willingness to initiate STARTS programs.

2.2.1.1 Communication activities

As of March 2023, the consortium has the following extensive, international reach:

Newsletter contacts	Monthly website pageviews	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	Youtube	Annual Visitors	PR/Media contacts
119 257	2 947 000	890 368	359 032	238 448	57 960	707 000+	19 000

The project will make use of existing STARTS channels and templates and will thus be able to start with extensive communication from day 1. STARTS Ec(h)o will use a range of tools to ensure **effective communication actions**:

- **Visual identity** (M1): the project will use the established STARTS brand and visual identity and ensure all partners use it for all communication measures (incl. STARTS Prize and STARTS residencies sub-brands). Further, FTGP will provide the piloting artists and Prize winners with STARTS branded templates. A Canva account will be managed (and provided to other STARTS consortia) to easily design visuals.
- **Communication and dissemination material** (M1-M36): Both printed and digital material in line with the project's visual identity will be produced in English (and partly translated into national languages).
- **Website** (M1): The consortium will continue hosting the starts.eu and dedicated STARTS Prize website with information about the project, partners, pilots, winners, events, and incubation process as well as resources. A dedicated press & media section will be updated regularly. Traffic towards the website will be brought via partners' individual websites as well as through social media. AE will keep the websites online after the project closure for at least 2 years and develop in consultation with the EC a legacy strategy for starts.eu.
- **Newsletters** (M1-M36): The project will create STARTS monthly or quarterly newsletters to inform about updates, resources, and all relevant information not only from this, but from all STARTS projects. For this FTGP will collect relevant monthly updates through an online form from all STARTS consortia. Further, it is intended to offer newsletter placements also to other European innovation communities to increase collaboration and leverage their interest in STARTS (AE holds 5.000+ STARTS contacts).
- **Social media** (M1-M36): the project will take responsibility of all official starts.eu channels (to communicate with the STARTS community) and leverage all partners' social media channels to build on the existing communities (to reach further artists, researchers, innovation managers).
- **Videos** (M3-M36): To increase the impact on social media, the project will create approx. 10 videos for open call promotion with contents from previous winners, jury interviews, as well as the AIXMusic program.
- **Press releases and press campaign** (M2-M36): the consortium will announce open calls, STARTS Prize winners, selected pilots, and the major dissemination events in dedicated press releases. Further, the consortium plans to stage an annual press conference to announce the Prize winners and update the press about STARTS results (held at AE premises in Linz, Austria). The press conferences will be held in German and English, and open to journalists to join on site or remotely. To strengthen the positioning of STARTS in international media, the consortium will further subcontract a specialised PR agency to place STARTS Prize winners and residency teams in international media. While our own communication is in large parts directed towards promoting open calls, Prize winner announcements and event promotion, the objective of the press campaign is to highlight the outstanding achievements through tech/art collaboration from single Prize winners and STARTS residency artists. This shall be of course contextualized under the STARTS brand, but allows to be more specific and interesting to a broader audience.
- **E-Magazine series** (M6-M36): To reach industry and ensure their interests are met in communication material, the consortium plans a series of e-magazines (at least 6 editions) on specific industry sectors (eg. robotics, media, manufacturing, medical technologies) and the relevance of previous STARTS artists for this sector. The publications will be published on Zenodo, distributed in e-mailings, and additionally printed in a small edition (if the consortium is attending a sector specific event).
- **Scientific and non-scientific publications** (M9-M36): AE will annually publish the STARTS Prize winners in a lavish catalogue (with Prix Ars Electronica). The book will be distributed via official resellers through an international publishing house (eg. Hatje Cantz) as well as online (ensuring long-term availability by uploading

it to Zenodo). The consortium will encourage artists and investigate possibilities for publishing results also in scientific journals or contexts.

A set of Key Performance Indicators will be put in place for monitoring communication channels:

Channel	KPI
STARTS website	Targeting 5000 unique visitors/month
Press activities	12+ press releases, 3+ press events
STARTS covered in national or international media	Targeting 30 coverages
Social media activities	150+ posts reaching at least 1,5 Mio. views
Newsletters	40+ newsletters reaching 200.000+ and targeting 500+ subscribers
Participation at external events	30+ presentations at EU & national level
Attendees to STARTS events	300.000 physical attendees
Run of STARTS Prize catalogues and E-Magazines	3.500+ printed Prize publications & 300+ printed magazines, long-term online availability on Zenodo
Publication	1 Book
Documentation produced	10+ videos, 500+ photos

2.2.2 Target groups

The project's target groups are

- **Artists and creative professionals (total reach 45 000 professionals³):** these include both individual creatives as well as staff of cultural/creative organisations. Partners will leverage their networks to communicate about open calls and results. The project will directly engage with at least 10.000 professionals through submissions and events. Professionals from outside the bubble of the consortium will be reached through paid social media advertisement and attracted to the STARTS newsletter.
- **STARTS professionals and community (total reach 5500+ individuals⁴):** European professionals with interdisciplinary expertise and previous STARTS experience. They will act as multipliers, experts, and potential addressees for residencies and Prizes.
- **Industry and ICT companies (total reach 160 companies⁵):** technological providers and ICT companies. While some companies will be directly involved in events (mainly AIxMusic program), others will be reached out to and informed about the project through the dedicated sector e-magazines.
- **Policy-makers and decision-makers (total reach of at least 200 professionals⁶):** local administrations, ministries of culture / research / digital & innovation, EU policy-makers, funding agencies, and foundations. These high-level stakeholders will be reached via events (AE, Salzburg Festival) and direct contacting.
- **Other European innovation communities (total reach of at least 500 professionals⁷):** EIT Culture & Creativity as well as representatives from other EIT (Digital, Food, Climate,...), Digital Innovation Hub Networks, and other pertinent communities. The consortium leverages existing communication and networks to lobby for STARTS to increase the uptake of STARTS results/methods of these communities.
- **Researchers (total reach 1500 individuals⁸):** researchers working in ICT, digital technologies, creative industries as well as universities at large. They will be mostly reached through publications, the STARTS mailing lists, and participation in dissemination events (particularly the AIxMusic program). The consortium members will thus leverage their extensive networks to academia and research labs.
- **Civil society (total reach 1.5 Mio. people⁹)** is an indirect target group of the project. Although STARTS will not aim its communication activities to the public on a primary level, they will be reached by dissemination

³ In total STARTS will reach at least 45 000 artists and creative professionals. AE has a database of around 15 000 contacts of digital artists, Sónar has more than 63 000 newsletter contacts (of which at least a third are artists). Additionally, both parties are in massive networks of artist communities and platforms.

⁴ AE holds currently a database of 5.000 STARTS contacts and FTGP will increase this by at least 500 over the course of the project.

⁵ Each partner commits to leverage contacts to 10-15 companies, reaching 120 companies. Further, Sónar will invite 10-20 start-ups and companies for their AIxMusic program.

⁶ An estimate of 100 European and national policy-makers will be reached by dissemination events, whereas additional 80 national policy-makers will be contacted directed. Further, each pilot will reach out to at least 2 local or regional stakeholders, adding another 20.

⁷ AE holds around 250 contacts from the EIT Culture & Creativity, 4 consortium partners are involved in E-DIHs and thus reach 200+ innovation stakeholders in Europe. Additional 50 will be contacted directly for inviting them to events and discuss collaboration.

⁸ The consortium has together a network of 150+ universities around the world and established contacts to individual researchers already previously engaged in STARTS.

⁹ It is estimated that 300 000+ visitors attend the events and approx. 1.5 Mio. people will follow the event promotion activities online.

events and social media activities, thereby creating awareness on social and ecological innovation developed in and for Europe.

We will deploy a range of tools on multiple channels, bespoke for each audience group, and monitor and analyse how effective they are in achieving the expected outcomes and impacts. Some of the indicators and target numbers to help monitor the impact of such activities are listed in the table below.

Objectives	Provisional strategy	Target Group	KP1 (input)	KP2 (impact)
Enhance STARTS' visibility	Online outreach, event promotion and direct contacts at events	All primary target groups	150+ social media posts	5.000+ website hits/month
Promote open calls to attract excellent results	Global mailing lists, press releases, platforms, paid social media campaign, multipliers	Artists, creative professionals, researchers, STARTS community	3+ press releases	1.300+ submissions per year
Promote events	Direct invitations, newsletters, social media promotion, documentation	STARTS community, industry, decision-makers, EU innovation communities, society	40+ newsletters	300.000+ attendees
Raise awareness on Europe's role in innovation	PR campaign, content development showing project's excellence	EU innovation communities, industry, decision-makers, society	10+ videos, 500+ photos, 100+ texts	30+ media coverages 1 book
Develop comprehensive materials to ensure results delivery	Attractive design, products tailored to interests of target groups	EU innovation communities, industry & research, decision-makers	6 sector-specific industry e-magazines	11 relevant reports (deliverables)
Establish conditions for a robust legacy	Targeted networking, high-quality content	EU innovation communities, decision-makers, industry, research	Attending 30+ external events	50+ collaborations established

2.2.3 Sustainability and exploitation

Sustainability

On an **individual STARTS project** (outcome) level, STARTS Ec(h)o is built to be the starting point for the pilots and STARTS Prize winners, therefore it will provide all practitioners with know-how (through the incubation program) and visibility (through dissemination & communication) to ensure that their outcomes are just the beginning of a longer journey that will outlast the project's lifespan. Dedicated sustainability workshops as part of T2.3 support this sustainability further and allow expanding the initial pilots, developing new partnerships or exploitation models, and ensuring adequate follow-up financing. On a **sectoral level**, the project will gather the previously very fragmented information on methodologies for STARTS residencies and provides a more holistic and comparative overview; thus informing other European innovation practitioners on how to continue one or more STARTS pillar or method. On the **level of the initiative** itself, a specific transversal task (T1.4) is foreseen to coordinate all STARTS sustainability efforts (of this project and others) and increase chances for positioning some pillars in other initiatives, thereby increasing the use of STARTS methodologies in HEU and other European innovation projects. Finally, the project as a whole will also build on the individual local impacts achieved by each of the pilots through the involvement of **policy-makers** both at the local and the European level. The project fully endorses the principle of Open Access (OA) and the FAIR principles and will make all of the outputs available on starts.eu which will be kept functional after the project closure for at least 2 years and, where appropriate, on Zenodo. Furthermore, AE will include the project's outcomes in the already existing, public STARTS archive and thus ensures long-term preservation. Further investigations will be conducted to identify any potential interest from the network partners to leverage and take over available outputs on their websites or – in consultation with the EC – starts.eu at large.

Exploitation

STARTS Ec(h)o aims to be an initial incentive to ignite art-driven innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration in Europe. The project has foreseen specific efforts to ensure that its results will be versatile, adaptable, and flexible, and thus to encourage uptake by other interested institutions and professionals. Task 2.4 will focus on devising a strategy to exploit the results beyond the project lifespan and consortium. The measures to increase the exploitation capacity include:

- A strategy document on STARTS ecosystem update (D2.7) to utilise the methodologies and inform the wider innovation community about framework conditions required and possible development steps;
- A strategy document detailing the incubation framework informing the innovation sector on how to increase impact in art-driven residencies;
- Each of the pilots will be mentored by one specific expert focusing on business model planning or alternative exploitation to ensure economic vision and sustainability for their individual projects;
- An E-magazine series compiling industry sector-specific outcomes and inspirational achievements by previous STARTS residencies and STARTS Prize winners;
- The consortium will identify professional communities and networks interested in exploitation and actively invite them to events (STARTS Days and Salzburg Festival) to intensify existing and actively seek new partnerships and multiply the desired exploitation effects.

2.2.4 IPR strategy

The ownership and access to all project outputs will be managed following an Open and FAIR approach according to the provisions laid out in the Consortium Agreement. These will allow the consortium to collectively and individually pursue dissemination and exploitation opportunities arising from STARTS activities. Consortium partners will publish key results and deliverables under a CC-BY 4.0 International license to ensure that they are shared with minimal restrictions while still enabling us to track impact and providing maximum sustainability of the results. All outputs of the residency pilots remain under their IPR and control. Some of the capacity building measures will be explicitly dedicated to educating residents in IPR to enable professional exploitation of results, while still encouraging Open approaches and conformity with the FAIR principles where feasible. The property rights in relation to projects submitted to the STARTS Prize will fully remain with the submitters, while innovative IPR management and Open/FAIRness will be a key evaluation criterion in the competition.

2.3 Summary

Specific Needs	Expected Results	D&E&I Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry rarely engages artists as innovation catalysts. Innovation must consider societal needs and ecological targets. Interdisciplinary teams struggle to access funding. Art-driven innovations lacks recognition. Artists need training and mentoring to increase their potential impact. Citizens have unanswered questions about technologies (specifically AI) and need to build more trust, tech literacy, and behavioral change by tech uptake. Policy makers and EU innovation communities lack models and successful examples, as STARTS practices are increasingly in demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 10 artists supported with € 40.000 grants each and a dedicated incubation program (80 hours of training delivered and 240 hours of mentoring). 10 pilots implemented in 6 ICT innovation areas. 90 best-practices selected for award recognition from 5.000+ submissions. 12 events held, specifically designed to address 7 different target groups. 300.000+ attendees in events and 1,5 Mio. through online channels reached. 10 pilots assessed & 20+ interviews held in terms of impact, developing “pathways to impact”, STARTS methodologies for local advocacy and policy engagement plans. 	<p><u>Exploitation</u>: 2 strategy briefs how STARTS collaborations can be built, extensive community outreach & stakeholder engagement, mentoring towards pilot’s sustainability & exploitation</p> <p><u>Dissemination</u>: 12+ dissemination events for all target groups, anchored in a variety of networks & multipliers, 9+ publications pertinent for the wider sector</p> <p><u>Communication</u>: Extensive PR campaign to highlight STARTS projects, social media campaigns to accelerate the open calls and promote events, newsletter outreach to inform professional target groups and documentation & content development to ensure a qualitative & in-depth coverage (KPIs see table 2.2.1.1.)</p>
Target Groups	Outcomes	Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artists and creative professionals (benefit from Prizes, residencies). STARTS community (benefits from project outputs, events). ICT industry (benefits from pilot outcomes, sector-specific practices). Policy makers (benefit from impact assessment and framework conditions required). EU innovation communities (benefit from STARTS methodologies and other outcomes to be used by them). Researchers (benefit from events and project outputs). Public (benefits from events and human-centered tech discourse). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported STARTS projects maximize their impacts, get scientific and political recognition and start new collaborations. Stronger evidence of STARTS impacts and higher recognition of their value by EU actors of the quadruplex helix. Increased number of citizens aware of or literate in ICT. Increased number and diversity of actors in Europe capable of delivering high quality STARTS collaborations. Higher uptake of STARTS methodologies by decision makers leading to more and better support at regional, national, and EU levels. Dozens of research outputs generated by the pilot projects and the consortium. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STARTS is recognized as an effective approach towards societally relevant innovation. Accelerated the triple transformation within the EU. Contributed to EU policies (EU Green Deal, Trustworthy AI), so more local, regional, and national policymakers understand the value of STARTS and develop appropriate support measures, hence increasing the number of outputs. Open & interdisciplinary innovation becomes the norm in R&D&I. Trust in tech across the EU increases as people are literate and can act informed, selective, and reflected.

3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation

3.1 Work plan and resources

3.1.1 Overall structure of work plan

The project is divided into 5 work packages (WPs), aligned to the objectives as set out in section 1. **WP1** is built to **manage, administer and monitor** the most adequate **implementation**. **WP2** delivers the open calls, defines challenges for art driven innovation, selects the most promising proposals, and ensures their success through an incubation program. **WP3** implements the **launch of the annually awarded STARTS Prize** calls, targets an extensive number of submissions through an elaborated submission tool, and guides the **submission process and selection**. **WP4** is dedicated to **dissemination activities** to reach a broad impact and increase recognition for art driven innovation in Europe. **WP5** is focused on intensive **communication through social media, video projects, press relations, and publications**, both via established STARTS channels and the outreach to new platforms.

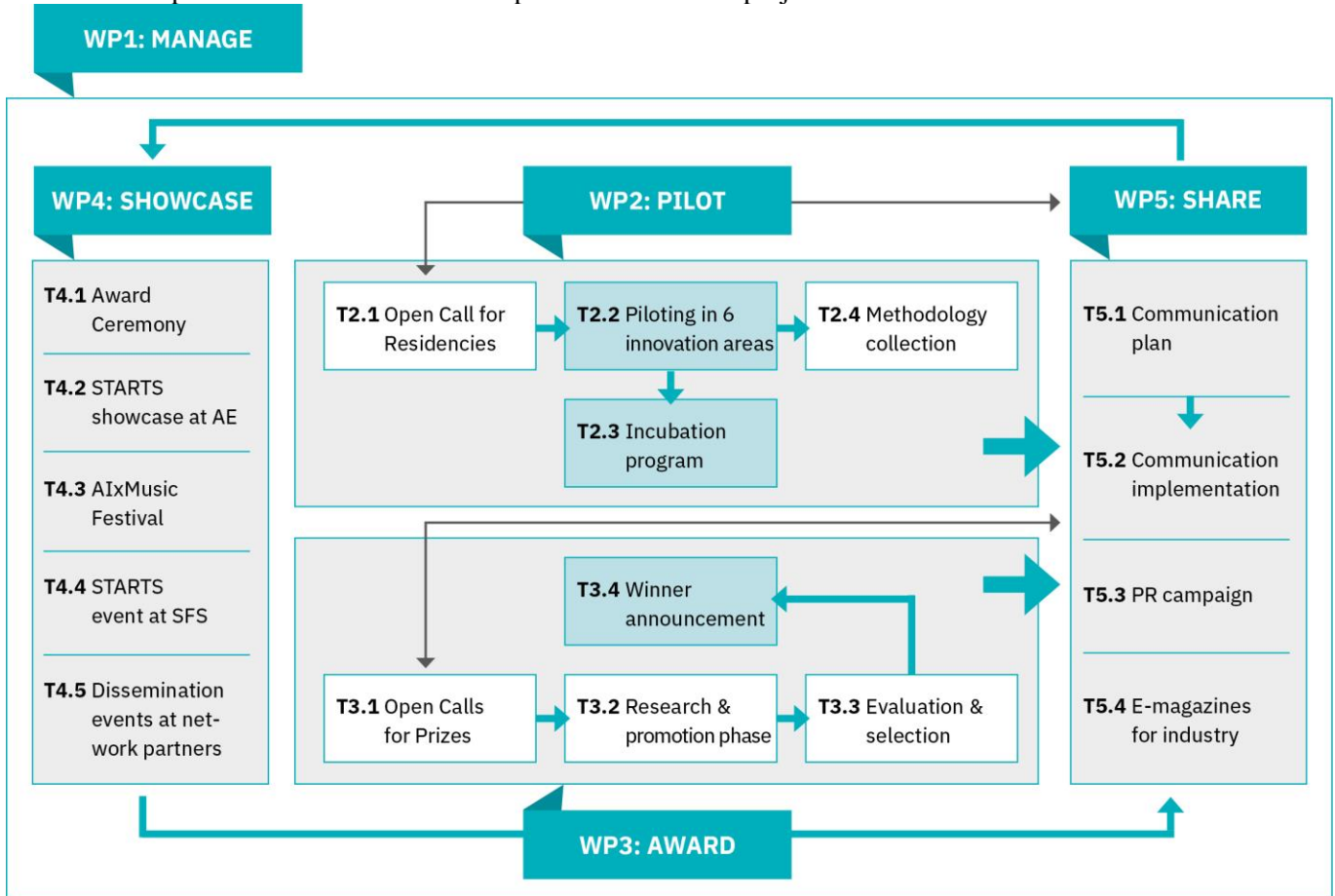
From an effort allocation point of view, we have two types of WPs: **WPs 1, 4 and 5** are cross-cutting efforts, which require close collaboration within the consortium. **WPs 2 and 3** are more thematically focused on residencies and Prize. While no work will be produced in isolation, we believe – based on our experience in European projects with open calls and prizes – that focus task structures with one core responsible will allow us to work most effectively. This will support a streamlined, efficient work plan which optimizes resources and reduces overheads by clearly identifying the tasks that require continuous input from the whole team vs those that benefit from individual partner ownership and expertise.

3.1.2 Timing of work packages and their components

PROJECT MONTH		M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24	M25	M26	M27	M28	M29	M30	M31	M32	M33	M34	M35	M36	
WP1: MANAGE																																						
T1.1	Set-up of project's governance structure			D1.1																																		
T1.2	Project management and quality assurance				D1.2																D1.3																	
T1.3	Financial and administrative management			M3																																		
T1.4	Ensuring the project's sustainability											M6																										
WP2: PILOT																																						
T2.1	Design and implement open call			D2.1		M5				D2.4																												
T2.2	Piloting and experimentation																										D2.6											
T2.3	Incubation program					D2.2						M6																										
T2.4	Collecting STARTS residency methodology							D2.3				D2.5																		D2.7								
WP3: AWARD																																						
T3.1	Prize definition & preparations		D3.1																																			
T3.2	Launch, research and promotion of open calls		M2		M4											M9													M12									
T3.3	Organization of evaluation process and jury meetings																																					
T3.4	Winner announcement									D3.2												D3.3													D3.4			
WP4: SHOWCASE																																						
T4.1	Annual prize ceremony																																					
T4.2	Annual exhibition/STARTS-Day at AE																																					
T4.3	Annual AIXMusic program																																				D4.2	
T4.4	S+T+ARTS Event at Salzburg Festival																																					
T4.5	Presentation at dissemination partners					D4.1						M7														M11											D4.3 M13	
WP5: SHARE																																						
T5.1	Communication strategy & plan			D5.1																																		
T5.2	Communication of results	M1																	D5.2																	D5.4		
T5.3	S+T+ARTS PR Campaign																	M10																				
T5.4	S+T+ARTS e-magazines																																D5.3					

3.1.3 Pert chart

The links between the work packages are visualized in the chart below. WP2 and WP3 generate outputs to be disseminated/communicated by WP4 and WP5. Additionally, WP3 is repeated in three cycles (per year) regularly providing novel outputs and projects for WP4 and WP5. Several tasks of individual WPs link to the definition and/or execution of tasks of others. WP5 is further designed to promote activities in WP4 and the open calls in WP2/3. WP1 supervises the most effective implementation of the project as a whole.



3.2 Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole

The consortium unites a **wide range of experience, disciplines, and expertise** in order to engage all stakeholders:

- **Ars Electronica** and its media art and technology focus: Since 1979, Ars Electronica has been implementing the largest festival for new media on the nexus of art, science & technology in the world, and with the Prix awarded the most significant achievements in the field, thus building a unique organism for Europe's innovative, radical and eccentric discourse on art and technology.
- **INOVA** and its expertise in building European and international innovation communities & cooperation projects: INOVA will use their extensive knowledge about designing and implementing (STARTS) residency programs, manage financial support to third parties & engage innovations communities across Europe.
- **La French Tech Grand Provence** and their expertise in STARTS related communication: FTGP is a regional hub, supporting the innovation ecosystem in the field of cultural and creative industries, start-ups, and entrepreneurs, managing and developing STARTS communication channels since the beginning.
- **Technical University Dresden** and its extensive technological and partner infrastructure has a strong research network and is ideally situated with its Office for Academic Heritage, Scientific & Art Collections (Kustodie) to facilitate residencies with scientific-technological excellence, technology transfer and access to industry-specific networks & unique technical and scientific collections from teaching/research over the last 200 years.
- **Media Solution Center Baden Württemberg** and its linked High-Performance Computing Center provide an outstanding framework for artistic exploration with technological means. For a better interconnectedness of industry and research in the fields of data simulation and high-performance computing, MSC contributes to technology transfer by establishing a network in the media industry and provides the infrastructure.
- **SONAR** as the International Festival of Advanced Music and Congress of Technology and Creativity, is a pioneering cultural event with outstanding format and content: its first-class reputation as a leading reference

for international festivals is thanks to its attention in curation, combining a playful nature, the avant-garde, and experimentation with newest trends in dance and electronic music.

- **Salzburger Festspielfonds** with the Salzburg Festival, which is considered one of the most important cultural festivals in the world and its unique standing as an exchange platform for policy makers: As one of the most renowned cultural festivals in the world, the Salzburg Festival attracts key players in policy with an interest in culture and thus provides a unique platform for the dissemination of STARTS achievements to political bodies on a global scale.
- **T6 Ecosystems** and its long-lasting expertise in impact assessment & policy recommendations. T6 is a research and consulting SME specialised in creating ad-hoc framework and analysis to assess the socio-economic impact of policy interventions in order to provide evidence-based policy recommendations.

All partners have extensive experience in facilitating interdisciplinary innovation and can be considered as Europe's and international pioneers in this field. The consortium is built on the cooperation between strong dissemination partners (AE, Sonar, SFS) with world-renowned events at the nexus of art and technology, research & industry partners (TUD, MSC) with state-of-the-art expertise in ICT R&D and access to labs and piloting infrastructure as well as innovation partners (INOVA, French Tech, T6) with long-standing expertise in designing and implementing interdisciplinary innovation, residencies, and incubation and assessment programs. One key advantage is that the sci-tech partners of the consortium (MSC, TUD) are not only excellent in their field, but have also significant experience in facilitating artists in tech or research, both building on knowledge from Europe-wide art&science residency programs. The consortium brings together 8 highly complementary partners from 6 countries with dedicated, distinctive roles:

- **AE**: Use STARTS Prize experience, annual festival & extensive STARTS network for dissemination
- **Sónar**: Use Europe's most-renowned music-tech platform for AIxMusic program & extensive dissemination
- **TUD**: Use research excellence & infrastructure in 4 of 6 innovation areas
- **MSC**: Use research excellence & infrastructure in 5 of 6 innovation areas
- **INOVA**: Use extensive cascade funding experience & know-how in managing STARTS residencies
- **FTGP**: Use expertise in managing & developing STARTS communication channels
- **T6**: Use excellence in program assessment, policy design and exploitation
- **SFS**: Use world-renowned cultural platform for policy and industry outreach and dissemination

Additionally, the consortium is supported by the **European Space Agency** (ESA/ESRIN), which will make its Phi-Lab on their premises and research facilities in Frascati (Italy) available for 2-3 residencies. The Phi-Lab focuses on connecting actors from industry, investment, academia, research, and humanities to accelerate the future of Earth Observation (EO) by the means of digital technologies. AE has extensive experience in collaborating with ESRIN and has developed and designed large parts of their showroom exhibitions for public encounters on EO innovation.

A key advantage of the consortium is its effectiveness and quality assurance due to the know-how of partners in managing the STARTS Prize, various previous and ongoing editions of STARTS residencies as well as STARTS communication. While the organizational structure of the consortium is built to make best use of the competences of the consortia partners, an efficient collaboration and dynamic hand-in-hand management between all partners is ensured by precise knowledge of the tasks and extensive previous collaborations between most of the partners on bilateral basis or within consortium structures. The three partners in charge of the Prize (AE with 25%), Residencies (INOVA with 27%) and the AIxMusic program (Sónar with 18%) hold the largest parts of the **budget** to implement the key activities as well as manage and distribute the financial support to third parties. The resources are equally distributed to the other 5 partners (with approx. 5-6% of the total budget). Costs are allocated predominantly for staff efforts for research partners (TUD, MSC) to ensure comprehensive support for the pilots and collaboration with their researchers. An additional **unique advantage** of the consortium is the possibility to link the STARTS programs to some of the **most famous art&tech events in the world**, utilizing their reputation, visibility and credibility. Additionally, the **key competences of the consortium** are:

- Experience in addressing and establishing working relations with stakeholders from various disciplines (All)
- Experience in designing state-of-the-art innovation programs (AE, Sónar, INOVA, T6, FTGP, TUD, MSC)
- Experience in cutting-edge ICT innovation (such as AI, HPC, digital twins, data simulation & visualisation) (TUD, MSC)
- Experience in art-based R&D of emerging technologies with societal relevance (AE, MSC, TUD)
- Experience in implementing competitions at the nexus of art & technology for more than 30 years (AE)
- Experience in managing calls with financial support to third parties (AE, INOVA)
- Experience in designing and implementing highly visible and world-famous events (AE, Sónar, FSF)
- Experience in designing open research processes and R&D&I led by humanities (AE, INOVA, TUD, MSC)

- Experience in activating a vast network of technology partners, scientific intuitions, innovation driven industry partners, and artists (AE, Sónar, INOVA, T6, FTGP, TUD, MSC)
- Experience in creating impact through communication on EU level (FTGP, Sónar, AE, INOVA)
- Experience and involvement in the STARTS community (AE, Sónar, INOVA, T6, FTGP, MSC)
- Experience in impact assessment and designing policy (T6, INOVA)
- Experience in managing EU/international projects across different sectors (All)

Furthermore, all partners are very well **experienced in collaborating on national, European, and international levels**, for example in the field of Creative Europe, Erasmus+, H2020/HEU - both as project coordinators as well as partner organizations. The projects range from artistic productions, education & dissemination projects to innovation & research projects, but have their interdisciplinary nature and excellence in common, eg.:

- STARTS Prize 2016, 2017-2020, 2021-2023 <http://starts-prize.aec.at/> (AE, INOVA, T6, FTGP)
- STARTS Ecosystem, Regional Centers, Residencies (AE, MSC, INOVA, FTGP)
- AIXMusic Festival 2018, 2019, 2021 (AE, Sónar)
- European ARTificial Intelligence Lab <https://ars.electronica.art/ailab/de/> (AE)

Also, all residency hosts will be able to **provide significant infrastructure** pro bono as well as access to staff.

- **TUD**: wide range of laboratories and technical experimental facilities in engineering, environmental sciences, and computer science as well as networks (with possibility to access further infrastructures if necessary) at the Max Planck, Leibniz and Fraunhofer Institutes in Dresden
- **MSC**: point of contact for media, culture, and arts to use the infrastructure from HLRS Stuttgart, home to one of Europe's fastest supercomputers, and related expertise and labs working on HPC, (big) data analytics, computational engineering and cutting-edge simulation and visualization technologies
- **ESA/Phi-Lab**: Europe's epicenter for Earth Observation data and labs working on this data with AI, machine learning, Quantum Computing, Internet of Things, Blockchain, and Cognitive Space
- **FTGP**: pairing up with University of Avignon for the implementation of 1 residency, their digital faculty and ICTT Lab providing access to immersive research labs and NLP infrastructure

Aside from the physical infrastructure, the most important asset for the reach of the open calls (specifically the Prize) and dissemination of results and activities is the network of the consortium. The consortium offers an international network of partner institutions not only in the areas of art and technology, but also in many fields of media, industry, commercial partnerships, media education, science, and creativity. Active collaborations with universities and academics, R&D labs, companies, associations, and initiatives are an integral part of the success of the project and include:

- academic collaborators (eg. MIT, UCLA, ETH, TUD, Aalto, Una Europa, University of Tsukuba, QUT)
- media partners or press contacts (eg. arte, ORF, Wired, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Le Soir, La República)
- research institutions (eg. CERN, ESO, ESA, Fraunhofer, Helmholtz Foundation)
- cultural organizations (eg. ICOM - International Council of Museums, the European Festival Association, International Music Council) and 500+ individual cultural partners (eg. Iracm, Laboral, V&A)
- commercial cooperation in the field of creative catalysis (eg. Hakuodo, Mercedes Benz, Wacom, Greiner)
- industrial partnerships (eg. BMW, Schäufli, Nikon, Sonylab, SAP)
- international institutions (eg. EU, ITU, UNESCO)
- media education organizations (eg. Science Galleries, Hans-Riegel-Stiftung, various STEAM consortia)

A solid and responsive overall management will ensure that the capacity of each partner and their infrastructures can be best used for the benefit of the project and increased impact. **Ars Electronica** will be responsible for the overall management of the project, supported by INOVA in the daily management processes and data management. The **overall project management** will include the day-to-day management of the project including project management and communication plan with timing; handling of the consortium agreement; communication with all partners, associated partners, third parties and the European Commission; collecting all necessary information for reporting, financial and administrative management; conflict management; writing periodic and final reports and coordination of the project's advisors and governance structure. The consortium's management structure will be built through a central project manager at AE (Veronika Liebl), WP leaders, task leaders, and a consortium board, and will be supported by external expertise (jury, mentors, advisors). The core management group will meet regularly (monthly) as well as WP/task-specific online and four times in physical consortium meetings (linked to major dissemination events).

4. Ethics self-assessment

4.1. Human Embryonic Stem Cells and Human Embryos Page

Does this activity involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)? No

Does this activity involve the use of human embryos? No

4.2. Humans

Does this activity involve human participants? No

Does this activity involve interventions (physical also including imaging technology, behavioural treatments, etc.) on the study participants? No

Does this activity involve conducting a clinical study as defined by the Clinical Trial Regulation (EU 536/2014)? No

4.3. Human Cells / Tissues (not covered in section 1)

Does this activity involve the use of human cells or tissues? No

4.4. Personal Data

Does this activity involve processing of personal data? Yes

Does it involve the processing of special categories of personal data (e.g.: genetic, biometric and health data, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical beliefs)? No

Does it involve profiling, systematic monitoring of individuals, or processing of large scale of special categories of data or intrusive methods of data processing (such as, surveillance, geolocation tracking etc.)? No

Does this activity involve further processing of previously collected personal data (including use of preexisting data sets or sources, merging existing data sets)? No

Is it planned to export personal data from the EU to non-EU countries? Specify the type of personal data and countries involved No

Is it planned to import personal data from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non-EU country to another non-EU country? No

Does this activity involve the processing of personal data related to criminal convictions or offences? No

4.5. Animals

Does this activity involve animals? No

4.6. Non-EU Countries

Will some of the activities be carried out in non-EU countries? Yes

In case non-EU countries are involved, do the activities undertaken in these countries raise potential ethics issues? No

Is it planned to use local resources (e.g. animal and/or human tissue samples, genetic material, live animals, human remains, materials of historical value, endangered fauna or flora samples, etc.)? No

Is it planned to import any material (other than data) from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non-EU country to another non-EU country? No

Is it planned to export any material (other than data) from the EU to non-EU countries? No

Does this activity involve low and/or lower middle income countries? No

Could the situation in the country put the individuals taking part in the activity at risk? No

4.7. Environment, Health and Safety

Does this activity involve the use of substances or processes that may cause harm to the environment, to animals or plants? No

Does this activity deal with endangered fauna and/or flora / protected areas? No

Does this activity involve the use of substances or processes that may cause harm to humans, including those performing the activity? No

4.8. Artificial Intelligence

Does this activity involve the development, deployment and/or use of Artificial Intelligence? No

4.9. Other Ethical Issues

Are there any other ethics issues that should be taken into consideration? No

5. FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THIRD PARTIES

5.1. Financial support in the form of a grant awarded after a call for proposals

S+T+ARTS Ec(h)o foresees one open call awarding a total of 10 beneficiaries with each €40.000 awarded for the pilot implementation. Details on the objectives and impacts of the financial support to third parties are detailed in the proposal section 1-2 and summarized here.

The residencies will make use of the established STARTS residency brand and thus explicitly not use the STARTS Ec(h)o name but will be communicated as “**S+T+ARTS Residencies**”.

5.1.1 Objectives

Through STARTS Residencies, artists will be enabled to develop and contribute new perspectives on human-centred and sustainable development in 6 specific ICT innovation areas.

Innovation Areas	Residency Hosts			
	Media Solutions & HRLS Stuttgart	Technical University Dresden	ESA & Phi-Lab	FTGP & University of Avignon
(Urban) Digital Twins	X			
Circular Economy		X		X
High-Performance Computing	X			
Data Visualisation and Simulation	X		X	
Bio & Life Sciences, Medical Tech		X		
Artificial Intelligence	X	X	X	
<i>No. Residencies hosted:</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>

STARTS residencies’ aim at the following **objectives**:

- To support and monitor art-driven experimentation developed in 6 specific ICT innovation areas.
- To enhance human-centred and sustainable innovation in Europe through piloting projects with clear impacts towards the triple transformation (green, digital, social).
- To increase the impact of the pilots by targeted mentoring and a dedicated incubation program focused on sustainability and exploitable results.
- To evaluate the impact generated by the pilots and collect the results for other STARTS practitioners as well as extensive dissemination.
- To ensure STARTS residency methodologies are collected, preserved, and presented to innovation communities across Europe, providing additional recommendations on necessary framework conditions.

The **methodology of STARTS Ec(h)o’s financial support to third parties** is built on the following pillars and explained below in detail:

- **Profound launch methodology with call announcement** (see point 1.2)
- **Definition of full open call details, requirements, eligibility & award criteria, and additional specifications** (see points 1.3-1.6)
- **Specifications on pilot amount and payment process** (see point 1.7)
- **Elaborated submission process with helpdesk for submitters, submission platform and proposal template** (see points 1.8-1.10)
- **Entry rights** (see point 1.11)
- **Transparent and clear evaluation and selection procedure with external experts** (see points 1.12-1.13)
- **Public announcement of results including feedback to submitters and open call report** (see points 1.14-1.16)

5.1.2 Call Announcement

The open call will be announced at the beginning of M5 in the format detailed below on starts.eu. This information will be provided to the Project Officer of the European Commission at least 30 days before the open call opens. It will further specify the timeline for submission, open call & guidelines for all applicants.

Call announcement format
Announcement of an open call for recipients of financial support Project acronym: S+T+ARTS Residencies Project grant agreement number: XXX Project full name: S+T+ARTS Ec(h)o Project XXX, funded from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation program under grant agreement No XXX, foresees as an eligible activity the provision of financial support to third parties, as a means to achieve its own objectives. The types of activities to perform that qualify for receiving financial support are listed in the following section. Deadline: XXX Expected duration of participation: XXX Maximum amount of financial support for each third party: € 40.000,- Call identifier: XXX call Language in which proposal should be submitted: English Web link for further information (full call text/proposal guidelines/call results) can be found on the official project web site: starts.eu Email address for further information: XXX@XXX.com

The open call will be **published** via all channels of the consortium, the European Commission and all partner networks. Heavy promotion with press information, social media posts, blogs and newsletters will be conducted. The call will be published in M5 and remains open to the end of M7.

For the call promotion a press release will be issued, the website will be updated, several newsletters for call information & attraction of submitters will be distributed, blog interviews with S+T+ARTS experts, advisors and mentors will be published, extensive social media (partly paid via advertisements) will be campaigned, and information material distributed to stakeholders of the project.

5.1.3 Description of types of proposals eligible to receive financial support

FULL CALL DETAILS. The consortium will develop from M1-M4 an **open call framework** (T2.1) detailing all the conditions of participation, challenges & innovation areas, entry regulations, open call timeline, eligibility & admissibility criteria, award criteria, rights and arrangement of payments with specifications on:

- Piloting framework specifying the innovation areas and challenges to be addressed by submitters (in close collaboration with the residency hosts);
- Detailed description of types of pilots and activities being eligible to receive a fund;
- Pilot & residency procedure, expected milestones and payments;
- Required proposal documents and contents;
- Eligibility;
- Additional details about submitting an entry (such as submission & reception procedure), submission helpdesk, additional submission information);
- Entry rights and sample agreement;
- Award criteria.

The **first part** of the full call details will explain the objectives and the **pilot framework** with a focus on how the art-driven innovation shall contribute to the triple transformation. This should help submitters understand the full scope of the program.

The **second part** will detail the definition of **eligible activities** to be eligible to receive financial support and will stem from STARTS Ec(h)o's initial identification of Innovation Areas (see section 1.2.1.1, pages 5 & 6 of the proposal). It will be refined together with the residency hosts to precise the definition and wording and include

Applicants must submit proposals targeting digital innovation in one of the **6 innovation areas**, clearly justifying how this proposed research & pilot outcome will support human-compatible and ecologically conscious technology. The consortium is not limiting the type of required **outcome**, hence prototypes, material research, software or hardware-based outcomes, research outputs, datasets, publications, applications or other types of outcomes will be accepted. Submitters will however need to duly justify their choice and will be assessed based on their proposed outcome and targeted impact this specific outcome is able to achieve.

Further, the full call details will include the **overall commitment** expected by the beneficiaries (with specific timing indicated):

- Workplan and deliverables required
- Obligatory participation in the incubation program (including mentoring sessions)
- Communication plan requirements from each beneficiary
- Data management, consent and data exchange structures
- Open research policy & IPR handling

Further, it will explain the **process with the residency hosts**:

- Field of expertise and exemplary know-how available for the submitters during collaboration
- Available infrastructure for the submitters at the venues of the residency's hosts
- Timeframe and stages of the residency program, including proposed timing for being at the host's venue
- Other potential details pertinent to the specific residency host (eg. accommodation available, accessibility of labs, specific background IP regulations,...)

A **sample agreement** with INOVA will be published with the opening of the call and will inform submitters – in addition to the call information package – on the overall obligations.

5.1.4 Specific arrangements

Further, the call will specify the **deliverables** every piloting artist needs to submit. While the timetable should provide an indicative overview of the expected deliverable, INOVA will agree with each pilot individually on the deliverable due dates:

Deliver. Nr.	Deliverable	Deliverable Timeframe (Months indicate pilot timeframe, not projects')
1	Pilot agreement signature	M2
2	Individual research & innovation plan (detailing the expectations, milestones, timing, resources & know-how required as well as preliminary output plans)	M3
3	Communication plan	M4
4	Sustainability plan	M12
5	Publishable summary of the project's outcomes (incl. photo(s), bio info, collaboration details, credits)	Latest M14

Additional conditions:

- Artists may submit more than one proposal (up to 2 proposals maximum).
- Selected artists must **make a commitment to take part in the incubation program**.

5.1.5 Eligibility criteria

The calls will be open to **all types of artists defined below** acting as natural person (no matter if they are a business or not).

An artist refers to:

- person or entity, registered under NACE Code '9003 Artistic creation', or

- a self-employed individual (freelancer) that undertakes artistic activities as a profession/job occupation, such as creative technologists, media artists, creative coders, artistic front & back-end designers & hackers, digital artists, etc.

The artist must have produced enough artworks to assess their artistic quality and experience. The artist must share evidence for artwork reference as part of their portfolio. Previous experience with art-tech experimentation projects will be valued but does not represent a condition for participation. The natural persons who act as artists have to be citizens or permanent residents in any of the eligible countries listed below:

- The Member States of the European Union and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) or
- Associated Countries to Horizon Europe.

All projects need to adhere to the following **eligibility criteria**:

- Adherence to call requirements (i.e. implementing a pilot responding to one of the innovation areas addressed in the open call);
- Submitted the application forms filled in correctly, with all required fields completed, respecting the pages or number of characters limit and on time – online and in English language;
- Result in an outcome as detailed in 1.3;
- Explain a clear European dimension and contribution to European policies (such as European Green Deal, New European Bauhaus, Trustworthy AI,...);
- The project and applicant cannot have conflicts of interest with the consortium or its partners and their ethical standards;
- Submitted a granting of rights form along with their application (accepting the open call rules & confirm the IP is 100% owned by the submitter), including the confirmation of key RRI concerns and open research approaches;
- Applicants must demonstrate a clear objective & offer for the S+T+ARTS collaborative practice and foresee participation in the collaboration program (eg. co-creation weeks);
- The proposed project is new, meaning:
 - The project has received no major EU funding;
 - The project has been running for less than six months at the time of submission or is significantly re-developed.

5.1.6 Criteria determining the award of the financial support

All proposals will be assessed in the following (indicative) criteria matrix:

Criteria	Strategic dimension	Implementation dimension	Sustainability dimension
<i>Artistic Mission</i> 25%	Concept & theoretical basis of the idea	Artistic thinking and methodology	Proposed aesthetic & design quality of the outcome
<i>Relevance for innovation area & industry sector</i> 25%	Relevance of the technological/scientific innovation for the chosen innovation area	Quality of partnership and benefit from infrastructure & know-how	Scalability & exploitability for the industry sector
<i>Experimental use of technologies</i> 25%	Potential to develop, alter, hack, disrupt or govern the use of the technology	Realistic chance & likelihood of achieving the proposed results	Value proposition of pilot through the use of ICT
<i>Triple transformation</i> 25%	Holistic transformation approach	Human compatible approach	Sustainable approach & ecological consciousness

All submitted proposals will be scored according to these criteria and ranked. Proposals having passed the threshold in the first stage of the evaluation will be ranked according to their overall score and passed on to the evaluation panel. To ensure a sufficient **geographical balance**, the evaluation panel may discuss a deviating

5.1.7 Criteria determining the exact amount of financial support

All beneficiaries will be requested to submit a workplan and budget along their goals and expected impacts for their projects. The maximum amount for each residency grant is €40.000. Selected beneficiaries must implement their project following the workplan and budget submitted at the application phase (and that will be included in the contract). The funds will be paid as a lump sum, in 3 instalments (after the contract signatures, an interim review date and after the final project accounting). The distribution is foreseen as such:

Financial support	Number of beneficiaries	Amount foreseen for each beneficiary	Total amount foreseen
Call for Proposals	10	40.000 €	€ 400.000
Remaining funds	It is expected that a limited number of pilots may underspend the initial foreseen budget*		

*In case of remaining funds (due to unforeseen underspending of pilots), the consortium will agree on distributing the amounts in agreement with the European Commission project officer to ongoing projects identifying additional development potential. A priority for distributing these funds will be placed on cross-pilot collaboration, so pilots having identified a synergy potential.

5.1.8 Proposal template

With opening the calls, the consortium will provide a proposal template detailing all required information and specifying the proposal questions. Two sections are foreseen:

Part A will require applicants to submit contact information, statistical information and some relevant pilot data directly in the submission portal:

- Contact information of applicants' main contact person
- Contact information of artist
- Bio or portfolio of artist
- Geographic information
- Innovation Area
- Budget template upload
- Declaration of rights (including GDPR compliant processing)
- Consortium and STARTS Newsletter (opt-in or out)

Part B requires the upload of a PDF on the prototype outline:

- **Idea:** Submitters need to specify in detail what the *art-driven pilot in the specific innovation area* is they are seeking to develop. This includes explaining in detail the artistic mission they follow, which technology they are exploring, the excellence of the idea in terms of technological & scientific innovations and types of value proposition they want to create.
- **Impact:** In this section submitters need to specify their analysis of their impact areas they plan to address (incl. a summary of the targeted industry sector and how they will create evidence that the pilot's output will create impact for this sector), how they will measure outcomes, why this approach is most appropriate to be sustained and what is their contribution towards human compatible and ecological conscious innovation.
- **Partnership:** Submitters need to explain in detail how the collaboration with the residency host is expected and how they will profit from the expertise & infrastructure provided. Further, they will need to specify which additional expertise (in the form of mentors) they wish to receive and how they think they can sustain the partnership with the residency host and the STARTS community at large. This may include references to other networks and how the beneficiaries intend to involve other partners.
- **Work & resource plan:** Budget required, timeline for delivery, proposed tasks, deliverables and approaches to evaluation, communication and dissemination, and the artist/team behind the project.

What sorts of materials/documentation have to be submitted?

- Obligatory: A clear, detailed description of the concept (PDF) as detailed above.
- Obligatory: A short bio (PDF)
- Obligatory: A budget template (excel)
- Obligatory: Contact and statistical data as specified above(database fields)
- Optional: A video documentary (max 5 minutes in length)

- Optional: Images & prototype sketches or additional material such as documents (JPG, TIF, BMP, PNG, PDF) at the highest possible resolution can also be submitted (max. 10GB); compressed files (such as .zip or .lzh files) are unacceptable.

5.1.9 STARTS Ec(h)o's submission helpdesk and Q&A

Both the starts.eu' website as well as the submission platform will specify a contact information for technical help and questions. This will be a general email address, operated daily between 10am-5pm (Brussels time) and during the weekend before the submission deadline. INOVA will be responsible for managing this email address.

Further, INOVA will offer **webinars** to clarify submitter's questions and summarize on a regular basis the most common requests and publish them in a **"FAQ"-document**.

5.1.10 STARTS Ec(h)o's proposal reception

Proposal reception is only possible by using the foreseen online submission platform and templates without exceptions. Submitters will receive a registration information, an acknowledgement of receipt of the submission (see below), an information when the call is closed and an information on the decision through the platform.

To handle the submission process of this size with several hundred expected submissions an elaborated **online submission platform** is needed. This has also the advantage that many submissions can be handled easily. The same submission platform as for the STARTS Prize will be used (details provided under 2.4). The electronic exchange system will also allow to identify the time of submission and stop the submission once the deadline is reached. No late submissions or changes after call closure will be accepted.

Acknowledgement of receipt
<p>Dear XXX,</p> <p>Thank you for submitting your proposal for consideration as recipient of financial support in the frame a S+T+ARTS residency.</p> <p>The evaluation of all proposals received will take place in the next few weeks. You will be notified as soon as possible after this of whether your proposal has been successful or not.</p> <p>In the meantime, please visit starts.eu for our current activities and events.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, STARTS Ec(h)o Team</p>

5.1.11 Entry rights

Concerning the **rights**, the call package will detail all the rights and declarations necessary for submitting an entry and ask submitters to agree on them:

Entry Rights

- Documentation and promotion rights of the selected pilots
- Commitment required for the pilot programme
- GDPR
- Pilot agreement template

IPR declaration

The entrants need to declare that he/she/they is legally authorized to convey such rights to the extent stipulated in the rights, that he/she/they has obtained any and all necessary consent from third parties as called for by regulations governing copyright, personal property rights, intellectual property rights or other such legal provisions, and that he/she/they is prepared to provide proof of such at any time if requested by the consortium. The IPR declaration will also link to a sample agreement for a pilot specifying the IPR handling of the pilots.

Further details on this will be also framed in the data management plan as part of D1.2 and D1.3 "Data Management Plan" of the project.

GDPR

The collection and/or processing of personal data as part of the submission phase is explained below: To participate in the open call, each submitter has to provide all information necessary to judge the project. The collected data serves as a base for the evaluation process and for the publications afterwards. Except for the selected beneficiaries, this collected data remains confidential and will not be used for research and deleted as soon

as the data is no longer necessary for the purpose of which it was collected (see section “*Retention periods and deletion*”). Collected contact information (email addresses and names) are used to further disseminate the project (only if agreed through a check-box confirmation “newsletter” from the submitting party). This contact information will be transferred to a separate contact management software for both STARTS.EU as well as the consortium members (“Mailworx” and “Mailchimp”), so that all data in the submission platform can be deleted.

Types and formats of generated and collected data are outlined in section 1.8 and are a result of the submission form.

Consent for data sharing is included in the submission questionnaires dealing with personal data. The project’s entry rights explicitly foresee the following **Data Protection Policy**, which information is part of the submission process:

“The personal data entered by you in conjunction with your submission of a proposal for the STARTS residency consideration will be processed in compliance with legal provisions governing data protection (General Data Protection Regulation, EU 2016/679, Data Protection Law).

Your personal data are processed for the purpose of conducting the pilot selection and, in order to achieve this objective, may be forwarded to third parties. In case these data are forwarded to third parties, we assure you that they will comply with the General Data Protection Regulation.

For additional information about the processing of your personal data and about your rights, please read our Data Protection Declaration.”

Confidentiality of the shared data is managed through a thorough process (see section “*Confidentiality*”). Consent will be asked for in written and will link to further information from the Ars Electronica GDPR group with further contacts, if needed for clarification.

Data entered into the electronic submission portal will not made public without prior written consent from the submitting party.

Retention periods and deletion. Deletion of data from the open calls will be processed in two steps:

- Non beneficiaries: As soon as each of the open calls are decided and at the latest one month after having the successful beneficiaries contracted, all submissions will be deleted as they are no longer necessary for the purposes for which they were collected. Data will not be used subsequently for any other purpose.
- Beneficiaries: Deletion of data for parties granted are derived from the legally mandated terms for the storage of the data in conjunction with the project’s grant agreement and will be handled as soon as the retention obligations expire.

Handling requests. All submitters have in addition the following rights: information, correction, deletion, restriction, data portability, revocation, and objection. To exercise these rights, the open call platform will direct stakeholders to: dsk@ars.electronica.art.

In case of doubts that the processing of data violates rights to data protection, or that the entitlement to data protection has been violated in some other way, stakeholders can contact the appropriate federal regulatory agency. In Austria, this is the Datenschutzbehörde [data protection authority].

Confidentiality

As confidentiality and IPR protection are important for the integrity and trustworthiness of the open calls and are even an integral topic of STARTS, the consortium will take all necessary actions to protect the confidentiality of submitted projects by:

- Only accessing those projects which have clearly provided the consent (as the participation is voluntarily, participants can still withdraw from the competition while the competition is open)
- Manage accounts in a password protected way
- Contract all jury/evaluation members and oblige them to confidentiality and not making use of an IP submitted without consent of the submitting party (evaluation members will be further asked not to disclose the beneficiaries until the public announcement)
- Non-Disclosure Agreements with all other, third parties having direct access to the submission tool

5.1.12 Evaluation and selection

Applications will be reviewed by consortium members and an external review panel, following an initial filtering of applications if they meet the eligibility & admissibility criteria. To ensure the highest possible quality, the review and selection process is divided into three steps:

Monitoring the submissions and checking the formal requirements: The first step is checking the formal requirements (eligibility criteria, completeness of submitted documents, admissibility) right after the submission deadline has closed. This process will be conducted by INOVA.

Pre-review, individual online review and selection: In the next step, all applicants will be reviewed and scored by one consortium internal and one external expert. An arithmetic average of the rankings for each project will be calculated. The ranking will be made available to the evaluation committee.

Review panel: All members of the evaluation committee will come together for an (online) group discussion to ensure the consistency of evaluation & scoring and transparency in the evaluation process. The group decides on the final selected 10 artists based on the pool of ranked projects (only those above the threshold will be discussed) and a priority order in case of same scores. They will further decide on a number of ranked proposals for a waiting-list, in case the selected artists are not able to commit to the program.

The evaluation committee will issue a public statement with an overview of the selection process, outcomes, and rationales, in the spirit of transparency and accountability. The statement will include the names of the evaluators. All submitters will be notified after this selection process.

Each evaluation will result in an evaluation form combining the two individual evaluations from the two evaluators:

Evaluation form for each proposal	
Individual evaluation Proposal No. : Acronym :	
1. Artistic mission (25%)	Score: (x) Threshold: (3/6)
2. Relevance for innovation area and industry sector (25%)	Score: (x) Threshold: (3/6)
3. Experimental use of technology (25%)	Score: (x) Threshold: (3/6)
4. Impact on triple transformation (25%)	Score: (x) Threshold: (3/6)
REMARKS	Total Score: (x) Threshold: (12/24)
I declare that, to the best of my knowledge, I have no direct or indirect conflict of interest in the evaluation of this proposal Name Signature Date	

5.1.13 Evaluators

Approx. 5 external evaluators will be selected from the pool of expert advisors to conduct the external evaluation. Their overall involvement is expected with 20-25 working days in total. Both INOVA and AE have an extensive track record of staging evaluation and jury sessions with experts from all over the world.

TRANSPARENCY. All external evaluators members and those parties having access to the tool or proposals will have to sign a declaration of confidentiality and agree upon the listed terms. Further, the transparency of selection is ensured through a group review meeting. Here the evaluation committee can discuss the mutual understanding of assessments, diversity and clarify open discussion points. Further, the evaluation committee issues a mutual *public* statement which gives an overview over the selection process and reasonings to remain transparent and comprehensible. To guarantee the independence of any individuals from the selection phase, it is planned that:

- INOVA issues a guideline on potential conflicts of interest and confidentiality and contracts this with each individual evaluator.
- Members who are financially involved in a project are not eligible to take part in the evaluation.

To ensure this, all evaluators will need to sign an agreement also detailing the confidentiality and a declaration for a

Confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration

I the undersigned declare that, in participating as an independent expert in the evaluation of proposals received in the open call for STARTS residencies I undertake to treat as confidential all information contained in the proposals which I am asked to evaluate, both during the evaluation and afterwards.

I will not reveal to any third party the identity or any details of the views of my fellow evaluator(s), neither during the evaluation nor afterwards I do not, to the best of my knowledge, have any interest in any of the proposals submitted in this call, I have not been involved in their preparation and I do not benefit either directly or indirectly from the eventual selection. Should I discover a conflict of interest during the evaluation, I undertake to declare this and to withdraw from the evaluation.

Name

Signature

Date

5.1.14 Feedback to submitters

All applicants will receive a summary of their evaluation based on the evaluation form. They will be asked to keep the decision confidential until the date of the public announcement.

- Those applicants who have been selected for the piloting, will be contacted and an agreement process started.
- Those 3-5 applicants which are not selected but ranked highest (for replacement in case other third-parties drop out) will be informed about their listed position.
- All other applicants, who receive a negative financing decision, will be informed about the project's progress and public options to get engaged in the project.

5.1.15 Public announcement

The public announcement of the calls' results will be published on starts.eu in M12. It will contain statistical information and data on the applicants (exemplary public announcement see below) as well as public summaries of the selected projects for the first communication measures.

Statistical information

STARTS Ec(h)o, funded from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No XXX, launched an open call (call ID ref XXX) for recipients of financial support. The call closed on XXX. A total of XXX proposals were received for this call. XXX proposals will receive funding for a total amount of XXX EUR. The evaluation and selection has been completed. All proposers have been informed about the evaluation results for their proposal for financial support.

The call was published on project XXX's website (URL XXX) and on the Horizon Europe Participants Portal (URL XXX) on XXX. Full call details were published at: (URL XXX)

	Number of proposals	Funding requested
Proposals received		
Eligible proposals		
Proposals above threshold		
Selected proposals		

List of selected proposals

Organisation	Country	Funding awarded

The announcement of the call decision will be accompanied by a communication campaign on the social media channels of the consortium as well as the third parties.

5.1.16 Open call report

Deliverable D2.4 (Residency call selection report) will detail the necessary specifications on the open call to the European Commission and will include:

- A listing of proposals received, identifying the proposing artists involved;
- Public summary of statistic information (table above);
- Communications with applicants before call closure and during evaluation;
- The names and affiliations of the experts involved in the evaluation;
- For each proposal a copy of the filled forms used in the evaluation;
- A record of all incidents which occurred during the evaluation (e.g. how conflicts of interest were handled if they were detected during the evaluation process) and any deviation from standard procedure (e.g. if a proposer selected was not the highest scoring one, it will be documented the objective reasons why the highest scoring one was passed over).

5.2. Financial support in the form of a prize

Under the official title “*S+T+ARTS Prize— Grand prize of the European Commission honoring innovation in Technology, Industry and Society stimulated by the Art*”, the project foresees two annual prizes of 20.000€ for the years of 2024, 2025 and 2026 each – therefore a total of 120.000€ Prize Money. Details on the objectives and prize methodology (incl. definition of categories, launch measures, eligibility & award criteria as well as the selection process) are detailed below and in section 1 of the proposal.

5.2.1 Objectives of the STARTS Prize

The STARTS prize will

- ✓ single out the most forward-looking collaborations at the crossings of creativity and innovation as well as at the intersection of art, science, technology and society,
- ✓ showcase achievement and encourage further collaborations between the arts & innovation activities,
- ✓ honour inspiring individuals and teams behind these achievements,
- ✓ build recognition for the field of S+T+ARTS in Europe & beyond and
- ✓ center both social and economic added value of creativity for a change in innovation.

The “STARTS Prize” aims to showcase and celebrate visions and achievements at the nexus of innovation and creation—driven by both science/technology and the arts. One of the core aims of the STARTS Prize is not only to center the excellence of projects, but also give recognition to the outstanding achievements of the teams behind these projects. By opening it to artists, creative professionals, researchers and companies from all over the world, the STARTS Prize is a unique pool of best-practice examples from all over the globe; thus bringing innovation to Europe while at the same time highlighting Europe’s power as a breeding ground for art-driven innovation.

5.2.2 Conditions for participation – admissibility & eligibility criteria

The call will be published each second week of January in 2024, 2025 and 2026 through Ars Electronica, all partners, starts.eu, the European Commission (through the project officer) and then widely spread across various platforms, partners and channels.

Proposal reception is only possible by using the foreseen submission platform (starts-prize-call.aec.at) and templates without exceptions. Submitters will receive a registration information, an acknowledgement of receipt of the submission, an information when the call is closed and an information on the decision of the STARTS Prize through the platform.

Two prizes, each with €20,000 prize money, are offered to honour innovative projects at the intersection of science, technology and the arts: one for artistic exploration, and thus projects with the potential to influence or change the way technology is deployed, developed or perceived, and one for innovative collaboration between industry/technology and art/culture in ways that open up new paths for innovation.

- **Grand Prize – Artistic Exploration** Awarded for artistic exploration and art works where appropriation by the arts has a strong potential to influence or alter the use, deployment or perception of technology.
- **Grand Prize – Innovative Collaboration** Awarded for innovative collaboration between industry or technology and the arts that opens new pathways for innovation.

Who can enter?

Artists / creative professionals or the researchers / companies involved in the project. STARTS Prize applications are not limited to citizens of EU-member states (but needs to demonstrate a clear European dimension).

Additional details about submitting an entry

- **The submission phase for the STARTS Prize will begin each mid January.** The submission platform will be then accessible until each March (day to be defined) 23:59 CET, at starts-prize-call.aec.at.
- Every submitted project must be, at the time of its submission, either totally completed or far enough along for the jury to be able to assess its quality and the likelihood of it being successfully implemented. The same applies to collaborative arrangements—at the time they’re submitted, they must already be up-and-running and in the implementation stage. No consideration will be given to entries that are purely concepts, ideas or proposals for collaboration.

- Projects should **not be older than two years** or have to show a significant update or further development within the last two years.
- There is no fee to enter the STARTS Prize competition.
- **Every submission to the Prix Ars Electronica prize competition can also be entered for STARTS Prize consideration.**

What sorts of materials/documentation have to be submitted?

- A video documentary (approximately 3 minutes in length).
- Images (JPG, TIF, BMP, PNG) at the highest possible resolution; compressed files (such as .zip or .lzh files) are unacceptable.
- A clear, detailed description of the concept, collaborative dimension & stakeholders of the project, innovative dimension and the form of interaction and technical implementation.
- The project's specifications as to hardware & software and presentation & spatial requirements should be detailed to allow partners of the consortium to assess the quality of the project's presentation to the public and the tech requirements for STARTS Ec(h)o's dissemination events.
- A printable portrait photo and a biography of the artist/creator/innovator.
- At the entrant's option, additional material such as images, documents and drawings (as PNG or PDF) can also be submitted.

Additional conditions:

- A creator may submit more than one work.
- All entries have to be done via the online submission portal without exception.
- If an entry is awarded a prize, the contents will be used and therefore cleared for any communication purpose from Ars Electronica, the consortium members or the European Union (see <http://starts-prize.aec.at/rights>).
- Winners of the STARTS Prize must **make a commitment to accept their awards in person** and to present their works at the STARTS Days. Groups and institutions are requested to nominate a representative to fulfil this commitment. As guests of Ars Electronica as well as all other partners, winners will receive complimentary hotel and economy class airline tickets for their trip to Linz or other destinations.

When and how does the jury reach its decision?

The jury convenes always between April and May in person in Linz, Austria. All STARTS Prize winners will be notified by Mid-June of the specific year at the latest.

Where and when will the winning projects be presented?

At the Ars Electronica Festival in September in Linz, Austria and at various exhibitions and events at partner institutions worldwide.

If the submitted work is selected and honoured by the jury the artist **is committed to present the submitted work** at the Ars Electronica Festival. Any further commitment for presentations will be negotiated with the artists individually.

Timeline for submissions and nominations (per cycle)

Announcement and Call for Submissions	.....	each second week of January
Period for nominations	.....	end of February
1 st Deadline for submissions	.....	beginning of March
<i>Experience shows that an extension of the deadline for submissions is useful in terms of communication and because most submissions are made in the last minute.</i>		
2 nd Deadline for submissions	.....	mid of March
Evaluation of formal requirements and preparation of material for jury members	.....	ongoing
Online preselection by jury members	.....	end of March to mid of April
Jury meetings	.....	second half of April
Information of the winners	.....	immediately after jury meeting
Announcement and press conference	.....	mid of May

5.2.3 Award criteria for STARTS Prize evaluation and selection

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2023)7143372 - 20/10/2023

What can be submitted?

- Ground-breaking collaborations and projects driven by both technology and the arts. Purely artistic or technologically driven projects are not the focus of this competition.
- All forms of artistic works and practices with a strong link to innovation in technology, business and/or society; furthermore, STARTS is not restricted to a particular genre such as media art and digital art.
- All types of technological and scientific research and development that has been inspired by art or involve artists as catalysts of novel thinking.
- All types of art-driven innovation outputs, in particular those which are clearly ecologically conscious and human compatible and demonstrate potential impact towards the triple transformation.

According to which criteria are the entries judged?

- Quality of the artistic research and its potential influence on technology
- Quality, level (intensity) and sustainability of the collaboration between art and technology or individual artists and researchers or technologists
- Quality and intensity of the connection to innovation, education, social inclusion or sustainability
- Relevance and possible impact for industry
- General criteria such as aesthetics, originality, convincing concept, innovation and the technique and quality of the presentation

The **European dimension** will be of core importance in the selection and dissemination of the STARTS prize and will be part of the submission questions:

- Submitters will need to justify how their projects are contributing to the European priorities (2019-2024)¹⁰ and at least one of the missions¹¹ of the Horizon Europe programme (*may be updated in case new priorities will be launched during the project's period*)

While the call will be opened worldwide, AE will ensure a strong promotion of the call in the European area to explicitly stimulate European submissions & participation.

All proposals will be assessed in the following dimensions:

Artistic Quality (25%)

1. Aesthetical aspects
2. Workmanship / Execution of the work
3. Artistic innovativeness
4. Concept / Theoretical basis

Collaboration (25%)

1. Diversity of partnership
2. Impact of partnership
3. Scope and dimension of artistic involvement
4. Sustainability of collaboration

Innovation (Technological & Scientific Quality) (25%)

1. European dimension
2. Technological component
3. Scientific innovation
4. Impact potential

Social & Environmental Quality (25%)

1. Social innovation
2. Community aspect
3. Sustainability & environmental impact
4. Responsible & minimalizing use of resources

5.2.4 Communication with applicants

CALL ANNOUNCEMENTS. The call will be published via all channels of the consortium, the European

¹⁰ https://european-union.europa.eu/priorities-and-actions/eu-priorities/european-union-priorities-2019-2024_de

¹¹ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe_en

Commission (through the project officer) and all partner networks. Heavy promotion with press information, social media posts, blogs and newsletters will be conducted. The calls will be published in the second week of each January and close in mid of March. As the STARTS Prize asks for already realized projects (and not the development of proposals), experience has shown that this period is best to keep the attention high. *Prior to the call closure* a press release will be issued, the website will be updated, several newsletters for call information & attraction of submitters will be distributed, blog interviews with experts in the field of STARTS, or nominating advisors/ jurors will be posted, extensive social media (partly paid via advertisements and a dedicated media partner) will be campaigned and information material distributed to relevant communities (which will be further addressed in the research phase).

PROPOSAL RECEPTION is exclusively possible via the SUBMISSION PLATFORM. To handle a submission process of this size with several thousand expected submissions an elaborated **online submission platform** is needed. Ars Electronica will provide in-kind an already existing, tested and regularly updated submission tool, which has been developed for Prix Ars Electronica, hosts 5.000+ submissions/year and has been already successfully in use for the STARTS Prizes 2016-2023. The platform uses secure online communication (https) and is hosted on servers of Ars Electronica complying with GDPR standards and the data management objectives as outlined in this proposal. The STARTS Prize open calls will have a visually independent design from the Prix Ars Electronica - in the look & feel of the STARTS branding. The submission tool features not only (I) the submission module itself, but also (II) the statistics and overview module, (III) a review and evaluation module for the jury and consortium (with separate account management), (IV) a publication module to extract data or put it forward to the STARTS Prize website as well as (V) an archiving module (to be integrated in the STARTS Prize archive <http://archive.aec.at/startsprize/>). No costs and resources will be needed for the establishment of the tool. Ars Electronica will yet annually evaluate and update minor modifications according to the lessons learned. The electronic exchange system will also allow to identify the time of submission and stop the submission once the deadline is reached. No late submissions or changes after call closure will be accepted.

SUBMITTER INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION. To ensure that submitters are guided in the best possible way, AE will conduct the following measures:

- All submission questions will be published in a template PDF, allowing submitters to prepare answers before entering them into the submission portal.
- A submission helpdesk (email and telephone), operated by AE, will run from Monday to Friday during office hours, and on the weekend before the submission deadline closes to support submitters with questions and any technical issues.
- Upon finalising the projects' submissions, all entering parties will receive an acknowledgment receipt confirming the project was submitted to the prize consideration.

PUBLISHING RESULTS. All awarded projects will be published online & communicated to all submitters on the day of the press conference and supported with a report from the jury. As it is expected that we receive 1.000+ submissions per year, submitters will not receive individual feedback on their submission, but a general announcement of the results & winners. *After this announcement* the Prize Winners will be published online and in print, on the website, starts.eu, in the archive, on social media and via blogs and videos to intensify the impact already for the next launch.

Deliverables D3.2 (for 2024), D3.3 (for 2025) and D3.4 (for 2026) will further inform about the Prize winners, honorary mentions and nominations and include statistics such as the number of submissions or from how many countries they were entered as well as a jury statement with evaluations on the general observations of the submissions at large, relevant focus areas and qualitative statements on grand prizes and honorary mentions.

5.2.5 Entry Rights

All **property rights** will remain with the submitters and only those works which are selected for a prize should provide the permissions to publish it within the dissemination of WP4 and the communication in WP5 as well as commit to contribute to evaluations & impact assessment. Ars Electronica has developed entry rights over the past years, which govern the core rights still agreeable for the industry/research sector. Otherwise, rights management or IP uncertainty is often a burden and reason to step back from submission. A suggestion for the submission rights are provided below:

Documentation and Promotion of the STARTS Prize Competition and the Results thereof: The organizer Ars

Electronica Linz GmbH & Co KG and partners of the “*STARTS Prize—Grand prize of the European Commission*”^{Associated with document Ref. Ares(2023)7143372 - 20/10/2023} wish to make the results of the competition accessible to the public (*publications as hard copy and in electronic or digital format, publication on the Internet, including the European website, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file, broadcasting any kind of technique of transmission, public display or presentation, communication through press information services, inclusion in widely accessible databases or indexes.*) The European Union is also permitted to use the results of the action for its own purposes, and in particular, making available to persons working for the Commission, other Union institutions, agencies and bodies and to member states’ institutions, as well as, copying and reproducing communication material in whole or in part and in an unlimited number of copies. All documentation and promotion material will be used in connection with the “STARTS Prize” only.

The works selected for recognition by the jury will be documented (in whole or in part) in the following media with a clear reference to the STARTS Prize:

- starts.eu website (with references on all linked STARTS websites)
- Project website (STARTS Prize)
- Ars Electronica website (ars.electronica.art) and Ars Electronica archive (archive.aec.at)
- All partner’s websites
- Ars Electronica Festival catalogue and other brochures
- Homepage, media and storage of the European Union, Commission and other Union institutions, agencies and bodies to Member States’ institutions

Due to technical and organizational constraints Ars Electronica, the European Union and the project partners reserve the right to determine the actual extent, timing and layout/editing of the above-mentioned publications and documentaries. No duty on the part of Ars Electronica, the European Union or partners to make publications and/or documentaries can be imputed.

Ars Electronica has an online/paper—archive/storage to collect digital media arts. Therefore, Ars Electronica intends to make the “*STARTS Prize*” accessible to interested members of the public both on site and online. To this end, Ars Electronica has a non-exclusive, irrevocable, royalty-free, objective right, irrespective of time and place, to publish the submitted material in the online-archive as well as to present the submitted material at the exhibitions of Ars Electronica and the project partners. Ars Electronica will use the material only in connection with the “STARTS Prize”.

Entrants hereby consent to the submitted material, in whole or in part, being used, stored on a data-storage medium, and/or made public on the Internet or via any other digital medium by Ars Electronica, the European Union and the project’s partners for purposes of public relations, advertising and promotion, documentation, archiving or scientific research in connection with the “STARTS Prize”. In using such works, Ars Electronica, the European Union and the project’s partners will accord all due consideration to the legitimate interests of the entrant but assume no statutory duty in this connection. The rights conveyed to Ars Electronica, the European Union and the project’s partners are unlimited with respect to their subject matter, their time-frame and their geographical location, but are limited to the purpose of the conveyance of rights.

The participants assign Ars Electronica, the European Union and the project’s partners the non-exclusive, factually, temporally and spatially unrestricted right to use the communication & documentation material of the submitted works on existing and future video-streaming platforms (such as YouTube or Flickr) in connection with the “STARTS Prize”, the exhibition of Ars Electronica and other future dissemination events. No publication requirement by Ars Electronica, the European Union or project’s partners on video-streaming platforms is imputed.

The entrant hereby declares that he/she/they is legally authorized to convey such rights to the extent stipulated above, that he/she/they has obtained any and all necessary consent from third parties as called for by regulations governing copyright, personal property rights or other such legal provisions, and that he/she is prepared to provide proof of such at any time if requested by Ars Electronica.

The entrant will not take any action (especially the conveyance of rights to third parties) which is likely to affect the rights granted to Ars Electronica and the European Union.

This agreement setting out the terms of participation in the “STARTS Prize” is governed by Austrian law with the exception of the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods and all norms serving as legal reference. The place of jurisdiction is Linz.

Data Management Plan

Further details will be framed and updated in the data management plan as part of D1.2 and D1.3 “Data Management Plan”. As the protection of the intellectual property of all submitters is key for the success and integrity of the open call (STARTS Prize), the consortium members put priority on a strong and updatable IPR and data management strategy.

5.2.6 Evaluation & selection

PROPOSAL EVALUATION. Experience shows that a joint and physical jury & selection process is highly important to build a qualitative, common understanding, in particular in Prizes with such a diverse range of disciplines, to ensure a transparent and fair proposal evaluation. Further, the physical jury meeting should encourage refinement of the selection criteria for the next years based on a mutual evaluation of trends and the scene. The jury members will be selected to ensure the best possible expertise and transparency in the evaluation process. To ensure the highest possible quality, the review and **selection process** is divided into three steps:

- 1) *Monitoring the submissions and checking the formal requirements:* The first step is checking the formal requirements right after the submission period closed (admissibility & eligibility checks).
- 2) *Pre-jury, first online review and selection:* In the next step, Ars Electronica will conduct a first pre-evaluation in order to reduce the number of submissions and allow the jury a pre-review. For this, AE will score all projects based on the set of criteria, determine a threshold and pass on all submissions above this score to the jury members for their first review. In this first round they single out those projects they consider interesting enough to be reviewed and evaluated in the main jury meeting. Each submission which was sorted out in this first round can be brought back into the main jury meeting on request.
- 3) *Three day main jury meeting:* In a three day jury meeting the projects are being discussed by the jury and the numbers of projects reduced until the 2 winning projects, the 10 honorary mentions and the 18 nominated projects are determined. Further, the jury will work on a joint statement and will be consulted for feedback & recommendations for the following year. The jury members will be selected to ensure the best possible expertise and transparency in the evaluation process.

TRANSPARENCY & CONFIDENTIALITY. All jury members and those parties having access to the tool or proposals will have to sign a declaration of confidentiality and agree upon the listed terms. Further, the **transparency of selection** will be ensured contractually (jury member agreements) and a guide for jury members on conflicts of interest will be shared. Further, the jury issues a mutual *public jury* statement which gives an overview over the selection process and reasonings. The jury statements are later published in the printed catalogue, online and additionally on an open-source publishing platform for the jury process to remain transparent and comprehensible. To guarantee the independence of any individuals from the selection phase, AE will ensure that no conflict of interests arise from the evaluation process; in particular:

- Jurors who are financially involved in a project are not eligible to vote for this project in the evaluation phase and jury rounds and have to exclude themselves from any discussion.
- Jurors who are in any other way involved in a submitted project must inform the whole jury committee about this.

5.2.7 Amount of the prize

The STARTS Prize is foreseeing two annual prizes of 20.000€ each between 2024 and 2026 – therefore a total of 6 Prizes and 120.000€ Prize Money.

5.2.8 Arrangements for payment

The winning artist/submitter(s) will receive a prize money of €20,000. AE will liaise with the submitter (if different from the artist) who will be the recipient of the prize money, and in case of dispute, agree & decide on an appropriate split and transfer of the amounts. In exceptional cases (in particular in terms of collectives and several collaborators), AE agrees to transfer the amounts in tranches to several accounts. In general, the prize money is to be paid by direct bank deposit, each September of the corresponding year and upon presentation of an invoice stating “Prize Money STARTS Prize 202X”. This is the only method by which Ars Electronica can transfer funds. The prize money can be paid as a net amount only if Ars Electronica is provided with the original signed form ZS-

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QU1 (ZS-QU2 for legal entities) and only as long as there is a double taxation agreement between Austria and the state of residence of the submitter which is applicable and does not state conflicting clauses; officially confirmed from the foreign tax authorities. Without this confirmation, Ars Electronica will be unable to pay the fee as a net amount and under international tax laws will have to retain 20% withholding tax (subject to any change in the rate of tax). There are valid double taxation agreements between Austria and all other EU countries.

Prizes are not subject to value-added tax (VAT) according to Austrian tax law.

ANNEX 2

ESTIMATED BUDGET (LUMP SUM BREAKDOWN) FOR THE ACTION

Forms of funding	Estimated EU contribution					
	Estimated eligible lump sum contributions (per work package)					Maximum grant amount ¹
	WP1 MANAGE	WP2 PILOT	WP3 AWARD	WP4 SHOWCASE	WP5 SHARE	
	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	Lump sum contribution	
	a	b	c	d	e	f = a + b + c + d + e
1 - AE	70 250.00	56 250.00	334 000.00	242 258.75	66 250.00	769 008.75
2 - INOVA	77 500.00	678 750.00	7 500.00	37 500.00	15 000.00	816 250.00
3 - FTGP	16 750.00	31 000.00	10 500.00	10 500.00	118 500.00	187 250.00
4 - TUD	21 250.00	90 000.00	7 500.00	33 750.00	21 250.00	173 750.00
5 - MSC bw e.V.	23 822.50	87 862.50	8 786.25	36 322.50	23 822.50	180 616.25
6 - Sonar	25 054.35	0.00	0.00	497 989.13	28 206.52	551 250.00
7 - SFS	14 375.00	0.00	0.00	128 125.00	5 625.00	148 125.00
8 - T6ECO	26 250.00	52 500.00	0.00	86 250.00	8 750.00	173 750.00
Σ consortium	275 251.85	996 362.50	368 286.25	1 072 695.38	287 404.02	3 000 000.00

¹ The 'maximum grant amount' is the maximum grant amount fixed in the grant agreement (on the basis of the sum of the beneficiaries' lump sum shares for the work packages).

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

INOVA+ - INNOVATION SERVICES, SA (INOVA), PIC 999928478, established in RUA DR AFONSO CORDEIRO 567, MATOSINHOS 4450-309, Portugal,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101135691 — STARTS ('the Agreement')

between ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE) and the European Union ('EU'), represented by the European Commission ('European Commission' or 'granting authority'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

FRENCH TECH GRANDE PROVENCE (FTGP), PIC 925171354, established in 2 AVENUE DU BLANCHISSAGE, AVIGNON 84000, France,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101135691 — STARTS ('the Agreement')

between ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE) and the European Union ('EU'), represented by the European Commission ('European Commission' or 'granting authority'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITAET DRESDEN (TUD), PIC 999897729, established in HELMHOLTZSTRASSE 10, DRESDEN 01069, Germany,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101135691 — STARTS ('the Agreement')

between ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE) and the European Union ('EU'), represented by the European Commission ('European Commission' or 'granting authority'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

MEDIA SOLUTION CENTER BADEN-WURTTENBERG E.V. (MSC bw e.V.), PIC 891346484, established in NOBELSTRASSE 19, STUTTGART 70569, Germany,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101135691 — STARTS ('the Agreement')

between ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE) and the European Union ('EU'), represented by the European Commission ('European Commission' or 'granting authority'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

ADVANCED MUSIC SL (Sonar), PIC 946340052, established in Calle Zamora 45, Piso 6, Barcelona 08005, Spain,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101135691 — STARTS ('the Agreement')

between ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE) and the European Union ('EU'), represented by the European Commission ('European Commission' or 'granting authority'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

SALZBURGER FESTSPIELFONDS (SFS), PIC 883530806, established in HOFSTALLGASSE 1, SALZBURG 5020, Austria,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101135691 — STARTS ('the Agreement')

between ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE) and the European Union ('EU'), represented by the European Commission ('European Commission' or 'granting authority'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

ANNEX 3

ACCESSION FORM FOR BENEFICIARIES

T6 ECOSYSTEMS SRL (T6ECO), PIC 999529614, established in VIA AURELIANA 63, ROMA 00187, Italy,

hereby agrees

to become beneficiary

in Agreement No 101135691 — STARTS ('the Agreement')

between ARS ELECTRONICA LINZ GMBH & CO KG (AE) and the European Union ('EU'), represented by the European Commission ('European Commission' or 'granting authority'),

and mandates

the coordinator to submit and sign in its name and on its behalf any **amendments** to the Agreement, in accordance with Article 39.

By signing this accession form, the beneficiary accepts the grant and agrees to implement it in accordance with the Agreement, with all the obligations and terms and conditions it sets out.

SIGNATURE

For the beneficiary

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE ACTION FOR REPORTING PERIOD [NUMBER]

EU contribution												
Eligible lump sum contributions (per work package)												Requested EU contribution
	WP1 [name]	WP2 [name]	WP3 [name]	WP4 [name]	WP5 [name]	WP6 [name]	WP7 [name]	WP8 [name]	WP9 [name]	WP10 [name]	WP [XX]	
Forms of funding	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	[Lump sum contribution// Financing not linked to costs]	
Status of completion	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	COMPLETED	PARTIALLY COMPLETED	PARTIALLY COMPLETED	COMPLETED	NOT COMPLETED	
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l = a + b+ c+ d+ e+ f+ g+ h+ i+ j+ k
1 – [short name beneficiary]												
1.1 – [short name affiliated entity]												
2 – [short name beneficiary]												
2.1 – [short name affiliated entity]												
X – [short name associated partner]												
Total consortium												

The consortium hereby confirms that:

The information provided is complete, reliable and true.

The lump sum contributions declared are eligible (in particular, the work packages have been completed and the work has been properly implemented and/or the results were achieved; see Article 6).

The proper implementation of the action/achievement of the results can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Articles 19, 21 and 25).

ANNEX 5

SPECIFIC RULES

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY (— ARTICLE 13)

Sensitive information with security recommendation

Sensitive information with a security recommendation must comply with the additional requirements imposed by the granting authority.

Before starting the action tasks concerned, the beneficiaries must have obtained all approvals or other mandatory documents needed for implementing the task. The documents must be kept on file and be submitted upon request by the coordinator to the granting authority. If they are not in English, they must be submitted together with an English summary.

For requirements restricting disclosure or dissemination, the information must be handled in accordance with the recommendation and may be disclosed or disseminated only after written approval from the granting authority.

EU classified information

If EU classified information is used or generated by the action, it must be treated in accordance with the security classification guide (SCG) and security aspect letter (SAL) set out in Annex 1 and Decision 2015/444¹ and its implementing rules — until it is declassified.

Deliverables which contain EU classified information must be submitted according to special procedures agreed with the granting authority.

Action tasks involving EU classified information may be subcontracted only with prior explicit written approval from the granting authority and only to entities established in an EU Member State or in a non-EU country with a security of information agreement with the EU (or an administrative arrangement with the Commission).

EU classified information may not be disclosed to any third party (including participants involved in the action implementation) without prior explicit written approval from the granting authority.

ETHICS (— ARTICLE 14)

Ethics and research integrity

The beneficiaries must carry out the action in compliance with:

- ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity)

¹ Commission Decision 2015/444/EC, Euratom of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

and

- applicable EU, international and national law, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols.

No funding can be granted, within or outside the EU, for activities that are prohibited in all Member States. No funding can be granted in a Member State for an activity which is forbidden in that Member State.

The beneficiaries must pay particular attention to the principle of proportionality, the right to privacy, the right to the protection of personal data, the right to the physical and mental integrity of persons, the right to non-discrimination, the need to ensure protection of the environment and high levels of human health protection.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the activities under the action have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

The beneficiaries must ensure that the activities under the action do not:

- aim at human cloning for reproductive purposes
- intend to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such modifications heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed)
- intend to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer, or
- lead to the destruction of human embryos (for example, for obtaining stem cells).

Activities involving research on human embryos or human embryonic stem cells may be carried out only if:

- they are set out in Annex 1 or
- the coordinator has obtained explicit approval (in writing) from the granting authority.

In addition, the beneficiaries must respect the fundamental principle of research integrity — as set out in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity².

This implies compliance with the following principles:

- reliability in ensuring the quality of research reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources
- honesty in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair and unbiased way

² European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA (All European Academies).

- respect for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment
- accountability for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts

and means that beneficiaries must ensure that persons carrying out research tasks follow the good research practices including ensuring, where possible, openness, reproducibility and traceability and refrain from the research integrity violations described in the Code.

Activities raising ethical issues must comply with the additional requirements formulated by the ethics panels (including after checks, reviews or audits; see Article 25).

Before starting an action task raising ethical issues, the beneficiaries must have obtained all approvals or other mandatory documents needed for implementing the task, notably from any (national or local) ethics committee or other bodies such as data protection authorities.

The documents must be kept on file and be submitted upon request by the coordinator to the granting authority. If they are not in English, they must be submitted together with an English summary, which shows that the documents cover the action tasks in question and includes the conclusions of the committee or authority concerned (if any).

VALUES (— ARTICLE 14)

Gender mainstreaming

The beneficiaries must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action and, where applicable, in line with the gender equality plan. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) — BACKGROUND AND RESULTS — ACCESS RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF USE (— ARTICLE 16)

Definitions

Access rights — Rights to use results or background.

Dissemination — The public disclosure of the results by appropriate means, other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results, including by scientific publications in any medium.

Exploit(ation) — The use of results in further research and innovation activities other than those covered by the action concerned, including among other things, commercial exploitation such as developing, creating, manufacturing and marketing a product or process, creating and providing a service, or in standardisation activities.

Fair and reasonable conditions — Appropriate conditions, including possible financial terms or royalty-free conditions, taking into account the specific circumstances of the request for access, for example the actual or potential value of the results or background to which access is requested and/or the scope, duration or other characteristics of the exploitation envisaged.

FAIR principles — ‘findability’, ‘accessibility’, ‘interoperability’ and ‘reusability’.

Open access — Online access to research outputs provided free of charge to the end-user.

Open science — An approach to the scientific process based on open cooperative work, tools and diffusing knowledge.

Research data management — The process within the research lifecycle that includes the organisation, storage, preservation, security, quality assurance, allocation of persistent identifiers (PIDs) and rules and procedures for sharing of data including licensing.

Research outputs — Results to which access can be given in the form of scientific publications, data or other engineered results and processes such as software, algorithms, protocols, models, workflows and electronic notebooks.

Scope of the obligations

For this section, references to ‘beneficiary’ or ‘beneficiaries’ do not include affiliated entities (if any).

Agreement on background

The beneficiaries must identify in a written agreement the background as needed for implementing the action or for exploiting its results.

Where the call conditions restrict control due to strategic interests reasons, background that is subject to control or other restrictions by a country (or entity from a country) which is not one of the eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions and that impact the exploitation of the results (i.e. would make the exploitation of the results subject to control or restrictions) must not be used and must be explicitly excluded from it in the agreement on background — unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority.

Ownership of results

Results are owned by the beneficiaries that generate them.

However, two or more beneficiaries own results jointly if:

- they have jointly generated them and
- it is not possible to:
 - establish the respective contribution of each beneficiary, or
 - separate them for the purpose of applying for, obtaining or maintaining their protection.

The joint owners must agree — in writing — on the allocation and terms of exercise of their joint ownership (**‘joint ownership agreement’**), to ensure compliance with their obligations under this Agreement.

Unless otherwise agreed in the joint ownership agreement or consortium agreement, each joint owner may grant non-exclusive licences to third parties to exploit the jointly-owned results (without any right to sub-license), if the other joint owners are given:

- at least 45 days advance notice and
- fair and reasonable compensation.

The joint owners may agree — in writing — to apply another regime than joint ownership.

If third parties (including employees and other personnel) may claim rights to the results, the beneficiary concerned must ensure that those rights can be exercised in a manner compatible with its obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must indicate the owner(s) of the results (results ownership list) in the final periodic report.

Protection of results

Beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must adequately protect their results — for an appropriate period and with appropriate territorial coverage — if protection is possible and justified, taking into account all relevant considerations, including the prospects for commercial exploitation, the legitimate interests of the other beneficiaries and any other legitimate interests.

Exploitation of results

Beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — use their best efforts to exploit their results directly or to have them exploited indirectly by another entity, in particular through transfer or licensing.

If, despite a beneficiary's best efforts, the results are not exploited within one year after the end of the action, the beneficiaries must (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the granting authority) use the Horizon Results Platform to find interested parties to exploit the results.

If results are incorporated in a standard, the beneficiaries must (unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority or unless it is impossible) ask the standardisation body to include the funding statement (see Article 17) in (information related to) the standard.

Additional exploitation obligations

Where the call conditions impose additional exploitation obligations (including obligations linked to the restriction of participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons), the beneficiaries must comply with them — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Where the call conditions impose additional exploitation obligations in case of a public emergency, the beneficiaries must (if requested by the granting authority) grant for a limited period of time specified in the request, non-exclusive licences — under fair and reasonable conditions — to their results to legal entities that need the results to address the public emergency and commit to rapidly and broadly exploit the resulting products and services at fair and reasonable conditions. This provision applies up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Additional information obligation relating to standards

Where the call conditions impose additional information obligations relating to possible standardisation, the beneficiaries must — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — inform the granting authority, if the results could reasonably be expected to contribute to European or international standards.

Transfer and licensing of results

Transfer of ownership

The beneficiaries may transfer ownership of their results, provided this does not affect compliance with their obligations under the Agreement.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their obligations under the Agreement regarding their results are passed on to the new owner and that this new owner has the obligation to pass them on in any subsequent transfer.

Moreover, they must inform the other beneficiaries with access rights of the transfer at least 45 days in advance (or less if agreed in writing), unless agreed otherwise in writing for specifically identified third parties including affiliated entities or unless impossible under the applicable law. This notification must include sufficient information on the new owner to enable the beneficiaries concerned to assess the effects on their access rights. The beneficiaries may object within 30 days of receiving notification (or less if agreed in writing), if they can show that the transfer would adversely affect their access rights. In this case, the transfer may not take place until agreement has been reached between the beneficiaries concerned.

Granting licences

The beneficiaries may grant licences to their results (or otherwise give the right to exploit them), including on an exclusive basis, provided this does not affect compliance with their obligations.

Exclusive licences for results may be granted only if all the other beneficiaries concerned have waived their access rights.

Granting authority right to object to transfers or licensing — Horizon Europe actions

Where the call conditions in Horizon Europe actions provide for the right to object to transfers or licensing, the granting authority may — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — object to a transfer of ownership or the exclusive licensing of results, if:

- the beneficiaries which generated the results have received funding under the grant
- it is to a legal entity established in a non-EU country not associated with Horizon Europe, and
- the granting authority considers that the transfer or licence is not in line with EU interests.

Beneficiaries that intend to transfer ownership or grant an exclusive licence must formally notify the granting authority before the intended transfer or licensing takes place and:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the new owner or licensee and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or licence on EU interests, in particular regarding competitiveness as well as consistency with ethical principles and security considerations.

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the granting authority decides to object to a transfer or exclusive licence, it must formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information it has requested).

No transfer or licensing may take place in the following cases:

- pending the granting authority decision, within the period set out above
- if the granting authority objects
- until the conditions are complied with, if the granting authority objection comes with conditions.

A beneficiary may formally notify a request to waive the right to object regarding intended transfers or grants to a specifically identified third party, if measures safeguarding EU interests are in place. If the granting authority agrees, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

Granting authority right to object to transfers or licensing — Euratom actions

Where the call conditions in Euratom actions provide for the right to object to transfers or licensing, the granting authority may — up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1) — object to a transfer of ownership or the exclusive or non-exclusive licensing of results, if:

- the beneficiaries which generated the results have received funding under the grant
- it is to a legal entity established in a non-EU country not associated to the Euratom Research and Training Programme 2021-2025 and
- the granting authority considers that the transfer or licence is not in line with the EU interests.

Beneficiaries that intend to transfer ownership or grant a licence must formally notify the granting authority before the intended transfer or licensing takes place and:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the results, the new owner or licensee and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or licence on EU interests, in particular regarding competitiveness as well as consistency with

ethical principles and security considerations (including the defence interests of the EU Member States under Article 24 of the Euratom Treaty).

The granting authority may request additional information.

If the granting authority decides to object to a transfer or licence, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

No transfer or licensing may take place in the following cases:

- pending the granting authority decision, within the period set out above
- if the granting authority objects
- until the conditions are complied with, if the granting authority objection comes with conditions.

A beneficiary may formally notify a request to waive the right to object regarding intended transfers or grants to a specifically identified third party, if measures safeguarding EU interests are in place. If the granting authority agrees, it will formally notify the beneficiary concerned within 60 days of receiving notification (or any additional information requested).

Limitations to transfers and licensing due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons of the EU and its Member States

Where the call conditions restrict participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security reasons, the beneficiaries may not transfer ownership of their results or grant licences to third parties which are established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) — unless they have requested and received prior approval by the granting authority.

The request must:

- identify the specific results concerned
- describe in detail the new owner and the planned or potential exploitation of the results, and
- include a reasoned assessment of the likely impact of the transfer or license on the strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States.

The granting authority may request additional information.

Access rights to results and background

Exercise of access rights — Waiving of access rights — No sub-licensing

Requests to exercise access rights and the waiver of access rights must be in writing.

Unless agreed otherwise in writing with the beneficiary granting access, access rights do not include the right to sub-license.

If a beneficiary is no longer involved in the action, this does not affect its obligations to grant access.

If a beneficiary defaults on its obligations, the beneficiaries may agree that that beneficiary no longer has access rights.

Access rights for implementing the action

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — on a royalty-free basis — to background needed to implement their own tasks under the action, unless the beneficiary that holds the background has — before acceding to the Agreement —:

- informed the other beneficiaries that access to its background is subject to restrictions, or
- agreed with the other beneficiaries that access would not be on a royalty-free basis.

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — on a royalty-free basis — to results needed for implementing their own tasks under the action.

Access rights for exploiting the results

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — under fair and reasonable conditions — to results needed for exploiting their results.

The beneficiaries must grant each other access — under fair and reasonable conditions — to background needed for exploiting their results, unless the beneficiary that holds the background has — before acceding to the Agreement — informed the other beneficiaries that access to its background is subject to restrictions.

Requests for access must be made — unless agreed otherwise in writing — up to one year after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Access rights for entities under the same control

Unless agreed otherwise in writing by the beneficiaries, access to results and, subject to the restrictions referred to above (if any), background must also be granted — under fair and reasonable conditions — to entities that:

- are established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country
- are under the direct or indirect control of another beneficiary, or under the same direct or indirect control as that beneficiary, or directly or indirectly controlling that beneficiary and
- need the access to exploit the results of that beneficiary.

Unless agreed otherwise in writing, such requests for access must be made by the entity directly to the beneficiary concerned.

Requests for access must be made — unless agreed otherwise in writing — up to one year after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Access rights for the granting authority, EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies and national authorities to results for policy purposes — Horizon Europe actions

In Horizon Europe actions, the beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must grant access to their results — on a royalty-free basis — to the granting authority, EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies for developing, implementing and monitoring EU policies or programmes. Such access rights do not extend to beneficiaries' background.

Such access rights are limited to non-commercial and non-competitive use.

For actions under the cluster 'Civil Security for Society', such access rights also extend to national authorities of EU Member States for developing, implementing and monitoring their policies or programmes in this area. In this case, access is subject to a bilateral agreement to define specific conditions ensuring that:

- the access rights will be used only for the intended purpose and
- appropriate confidentiality obligations are in place.

Moreover, the requesting national authority or EU institution, body, office or agency (including the granting authority) must inform all other national authorities of such a request.

Access rights for the granting authority, Euratom institutions, funding bodies or the Joint Undertaking Fusion for Energy — Euratom actions

In Euratom actions, the beneficiaries which have received funding under the grant must grant access to their results — on a royalty-free basis — to the granting authority, Euratom institutions, funding bodies or the Joint Undertaking Fusion for Energy for developing, implementing and monitoring Euratom policies and programmes or for compliance with obligations assumed through international cooperation with non-EU countries and international organisations.

Such access rights include the right to authorise third parties to use the results in public procurement and the right to sub-license and are limited to non-commercial and non-competitive use.

Additional access rights

Where the call conditions impose additional access rights, the beneficiaries must comply with them.

**COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION, OPEN SCIENCE AND VISIBILITY (—
ARTICLE 17)**

Dissemination

Dissemination of results

The beneficiaries must disseminate their results as soon as feasible, in a publicly available format, subject to any restrictions due to the protection of intellectual property, security rules or legitimate interests.

A beneficiary that intends to disseminate its results must give at least 15 days advance notice to the other beneficiaries (unless agreed otherwise), together with sufficient information on the results it will disseminate.

Any other beneficiary may object within (unless agreed otherwise) 15 days of receiving notification, if it can show that its legitimate interests in relation to the results or background would be significantly harmed. In such cases, the results may not be disseminated unless appropriate steps are taken to safeguard those interests.

Additional dissemination obligations

Where the call conditions impose additional dissemination obligations, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

Open Science

Open science: open access to scientific publications

The beneficiaries must ensure open access to peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to their results. In particular, they must ensure that:

- at the latest at the time of publication, a machine-readable electronic copy of the published version or the final peer-reviewed manuscript accepted for publication, is deposited in a trusted repository for scientific publications
- immediate open access is provided to the deposited publication via the repository, under the latest available version of the Creative Commons Attribution International Public Licence (CC BY) or a licence with equivalent rights; for monographs and other long-text formats, the licence may exclude commercial uses and derivative works (e.g. CC BY-NC, CC BY-ND) and
- information is given via the repository about any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to validate the conclusions of the scientific publication.

Beneficiaries (or authors) must retain sufficient intellectual property rights to comply with the open access requirements.

Metadata of deposited publications must be open under a Creative Common Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent, in line with the FAIR principles (in particular machine-actionable) and provide information at least about the following: publication (author(s), title, date of publication, publication venue); Horizon Europe or Euratom funding; grant project name, acronym and number; licensing terms; persistent identifiers for the publication, the authors involved in the action and, if possible, for their organisations and the grant. Where applicable, the metadata must include persistent identifiers for any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to validate the conclusions of the publication.

Only publication fees in full open access venues for peer-reviewed scientific publications are eligible for reimbursement.

Open science: research data management

The beneficiaries must manage the digital research data generated in the action ('data') responsibly, in line with the FAIR principles and by taking all of the following actions:

- establish a data management plan ('DMP') (and regularly update it)

- as soon as possible and within the deadlines set out in the DMP, deposit the data in a trusted repository; if required in the call conditions, this repository must be federated in the EOSC in compliance with EOSC requirements
- as soon as possible and within the deadlines set out in the DMP, ensure open access — via the repository — to the deposited data, under the latest available version of the Creative Commons Attribution International Public License (CC BY) or Creative Commons Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or a licence with equivalent rights, following the principle ‘as open as possible as closed as necessary’, unless providing open access would in particular:
 - be against the beneficiary’s legitimate interests, including regarding commercial exploitation, or
 - be contrary to any other constraints, in particular the EU competitive interests or the beneficiary’s obligations under this Agreement; if open access is not provided (to some or all data), this must be justified in the DMP
- provide information via the repository about any research output or any other tools and instruments needed to re-use or validate the data.

Metadata of deposited data must be open under a Creative Commons Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent (to the extent legitimate interests or constraints are safeguarded), in line with the FAIR principles (in particular machine-actionable) and provide information at least about the following: datasets (description, date of deposit, author(s), venue and embargo); Horizon Europe or Euratom funding; grant project name, acronym and number; licensing terms; persistent identifiers for the dataset, the authors involved in the action, and, if possible, for their organisations and the grant. Where applicable, the metadata must include persistent identifiers for related publications and other research outputs.

Open science: additional practices

Where the call conditions impose additional obligations regarding open science practices, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

Where the call conditions impose additional obligations regarding the validation of scientific publications, the beneficiaries must provide (digital or physical) access to data or other results needed for validation of the conclusions of scientific publications, to the extent that their legitimate interests or constraints are safeguarded (and unless they already provided the (open) access at publication).

Where the call conditions impose additional open science obligations in case of a public emergency, the beneficiaries must (if requested by the granting authority) immediately deposit any research output in a repository and provide open access to it under a CC BY licence, a Public Domain Dedication (CC 0) or equivalent. As an exception, if the access would be against the beneficiaries’ legitimate interests, the beneficiaries must grant non-exclusive licenses — under fair and reasonable conditions — to legal entities that need the research output to address the public emergency and commit to rapidly and broadly exploit the resulting products and services at fair and reasonable conditions. This provision applies up to four years after the end of the action (see Data Sheet, Point 1).

Plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities

Unless excluded by the call conditions, the beneficiaries must provide and regularly update a plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities.

SPECIFIC RULES FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTION (— ARTICLE 18)

Implementation in case of restrictions due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States

Where the call conditions restrict participation or control due to strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security, the beneficiaries must ensure that none of the entities that participate as affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties are established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) — unless otherwise agreed with the granting authority.

The beneficiaries must moreover ensure that any cooperation with entities established in countries which are not eligible countries or target countries set out in the call conditions (or, if applicable, are controlled by such countries or entities from such countries) does not affect the strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security of the EU and its Member States.

Recruitment and working conditions for researchers

The beneficiaries must take all measures to implement the principles set out in the Commission Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers³, in particular regarding:

- working conditions
- transparent recruitment processes based on merit, and
- career development.

The beneficiaries must ensure that researchers and all participants involved in the action are aware of them.

Specific rules for access to research infrastructure activities

Definitions

Research Infrastructures — Facilities that provide resources and services for the research communities to conduct research and foster innovation in their fields. This definition includes the associated human resources, and it covers major equipment or sets of instruments; knowledge-related facilities such as collections, archives or scientific data infrastructures; computing systems, communication networks, and any other infrastructure, of a unique nature and open to external users, essential to achieve excellence in research and innovation. Where relevant, they may be used beyond research, for example

³ Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (OJ L 75, 22.3.2005, p. 67).

for education or public services, and they may be ‘single-sited’, ‘virtual’ or ‘distributed’⁴:

When implementing access to research infrastructure activities, the beneficiaries must respect the following conditions:

- for transnational access:

- access which must be provided:

The access must be free of charge, transnational access to research infrastructure or installations for selected user-groups.

The access must include the logistical, technological and scientific support and the specific training that is usually provided to external researchers using the infrastructure. Transnational access can be either in person (hands-on), provided to selected users that visit the installation to make use of it, or remote, through the provision to selected user-groups of remote scientific services (e.g. provision of reference materials or samples, remote access to a high-performance computing facility).

- categories of users that may have access:

Transnational access must be provided to selected user-groups, i.e. teams of one or more researchers (users).

The majority of the users must work in a country other than the country(ies) where the installation is located (unless access is provided by an international organisation, the Joint Research Centre (JRC), an ERIC or similar legal entity).

Only user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under the action may benefit from the access (unless the users are working for SMEs).

Access for user groups with a majority of users not working in a EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country is limited to 20% of the total amount of units of access provided under the grant (unless a higher percentage is foreseen in Annex 1).

- procedure and criteria for selecting user groups:

The user groups must request access by submitting (in writing) a description of the work that they wish to carry out and the names, nationalities and home institutions of the users.

The user groups must be selected by (one or more) selection panels set up by the consortium.

⁴ See Article 2(1) of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme Regulation 2021/695.

The selection panels must be composed of international experts in the field, at least half of them independent from the consortium (unless otherwise specified in Annex 1).

The selection panels must assess all proposals received and recommend a short-list of the user groups that should benefit from access.

The selection panels must base their selection on scientific merit, taking into account that priority should be given to user groups composed of users who:

- have not previously used the installation and
- are working in countries where no equivalent research infrastructure exist.

It will apply the principles of transparency, fairness and impartiality.

Where the call conditions impose additional rules for the selection of user groups, the beneficiaries must also comply with those.

- other conditions:

The beneficiaries must request written approval from the granting authority for the selection of user groups requiring visits to the installations exceeding 3 months (unless such visits are foreseen in Annex 1).

In addition, the beneficiaries must:

- advertise widely, including on a their websites, the access offered under the Agreement
 - promote equal opportunities in advertising the access and take into account the gender dimension when defining the support provided to users
 - ensure that users comply with the terms and conditions of the Agreement
 - ensure that its obligations under Articles 12, 13, 17 and 33 also apply to the users
 - keep records of the names, nationalities, and home institutions of users, as well as the nature and quantity of access provided to them
- for virtual access:
 - access which must be provided:

The access must be free of charge, virtual access to research infrastructure or installations.

‘Virtual access’ means open and free access through communication networks to digital resources and services needed for research, without selecting the users to whom access is provided.

The access must include the support that is usually provided to external users.

Where allowed by the call conditions, beneficiaries may in justified cases define objective eligibility criteria (e.g. affiliation to a research or academic institution) for specific users.

- other conditions:

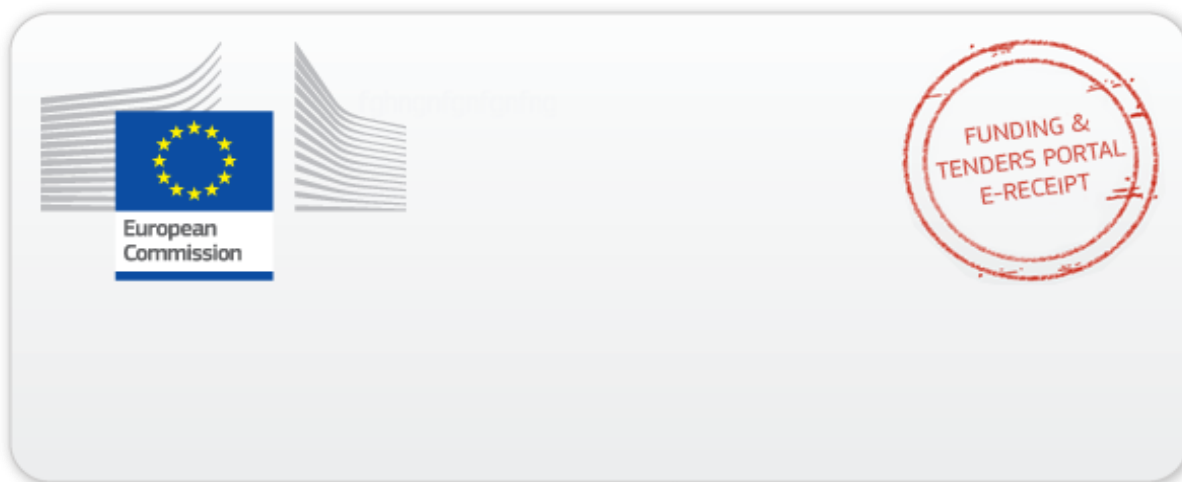
The beneficiaries must have the virtual access services assessed periodically by a board composed of international experts in the field, at least half of whom must be independent from the consortium (unless otherwise specified in Annex 1). For this purpose, information and statistics on the users and the nature and quantity of the access provided, must be made available to the board.

The beneficiaries must advertise widely, including on a dedicated website, the access offered under the grant and the eligibility criteria, if any.

Where the call conditions impose additional traceability⁵ obligations, information on the traceability of the users and the nature and quantity of access must be provided by the beneficiaries.

These obligations apply regardless of the form of funding or budget categories used to declare the costs (unit costs or actual costs or a combination of the two).

⁵ According to the definition given in ISO 9000, i.e.: "Traceability is the ability to trace the history, application, use and location of an item or its characteristics through recorded identification data." The users can be traced, for example, by authentication and/or by authorization or by other means that allows for analysis of the type of users and the nature and quantity of access provided.



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