

INFRA-FED call

Impulse action to foster the development of emerging research infrastructures within federal research institutions.

Information document including submission and evaluation guidelines and budget rules

UPDATED Deadlines:

Expression of interest: **Tuesday 11 October 2022** - 14h00

Full proposals: **Tuesday 6 December 2022** - 14h00

***Amended version 20/09/2022 – Please check Annex I.
UPDATED Submission deadlines and calendar - IV Call procedure.***

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I CONTEXT

I.1 RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

Research infrastructure (RI) as defined by the DG Research EU Commission means facilities, resources and related services used by research communities to conduct research and stimulate innovation in their respective fields. Where appropriate, they may be used beyond research, for example for education or public services. They include major scientific equipment or sets of instruments; knowledge resources such as collections, archives, or structures for scientific information; e-infrastructures such as data and computing systems and communication networks; and any other infrastructure of a unique nature, essential for achieving excellence in research and innovation.

Research Infrastructures are classified as "single site", "virtual" or "distributed, according to their structure, location and access. In addition, Research Infrastructures can be categorised according to their scope (national or international), to their size (small, medium or large); to their level of development (design, preparation, implementation, operation phase); to the diversity of the served communities...

Moreover, it now appears that the complexity and urgency of a socio-economic and environmental transition requires the emergence of new flexible infrastructure services. It is likely that these RI can emerge from the adoption of interdisciplinary approaches applied on existing but dispersed infrastructure embryos. These RI are referred to in the present call as emerging research infrastructures.

I.2 BELSPO FUNDING INSTRUMENTS THAT SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEDERAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

BELSPO has supported RI-related R&D projects in the framework of the following programmes:

- ✓ BRAIN-be: Within the two successive phases of BRAIN-be, particularly under axis 6 (management of collections), as well as in BRAIN-be 2.0 within Pillar 2 (Heritage Science). Several of those projects have delivered products that form now nascent RIs.
- ✓ FED-tWIN: Several post-docs funded by the FED-tWIN programme are developing expertise in the development and implementation of RIs.

Two additional funding schemes addressing the federal research infrastructures belonging to the ESFRI roadmap have been developed by BELSPO in the recent years.

- ✓ Specific call: At the end of 2018, BELSPO launched a specific call with a budget of 4.3M€. This call aimed at upgrading federal components belonging to 5 ESFRI strategic infrastructures. The available funds enabled the projects to acquire the minimum

standards required for subsequent integration into the European ESFRI RIs. Selected projects are reaching the final year of funding.

- ✓ ESFRI-FED: In 2021, BELSPO launched a structural programme, with a total budget of 9M€ available over the course of 3 biennial calls. The so-called ESFRI-FED programme aims to strengthen the integration of the most promising existing federal components within ESFRI infrastructures in the (pre)-operational phase. Following the first call, 7 projects were selected and are running. The next ESFRI-FED call will be launched in the beginning of 2023.

Aware of financial constraints and that RIs require long-term investments, a suitable strategic and cost-effective approach is needed to support the federal research infrastructure portfolio in a balanced way. In this context, it is important to provide opportunities for RI building blocks to fully emerge in the research infrastructure landscape and to increase their impact's potential.

II DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THIS CALL

The following documents are available on the impulse action's website

https://www.belspo.be/belspo/IMPULS/call2022_infra_en.stm

- information document (the present document)
- expression of interest (EOI) template
- full proposals template.
- Gantt chart template
- Gender checklist
- Evaluators eligibility: eligibility rules of proposed experts for the evaluation of the proposal
- Evaluation matrix: overview of the evaluation ratings
- Cash or in-kind commitment letter: non mandatory.
- FAQ

Further information about this call can be obtained by contacting the **secretariat**:

infra-fed@belspo.be

III CALL INFORMATION

III.1 CALL FRAMEWORK

The INFRA-FED impulse action is included in the Federal government's Restart and Transition plan. BELSPO has been allocated with an envelope of **11,704 M€**, to launch an impulse action which aims at fostering the development of emerging research infrastructures within the federal research institutions, complementing the existing funding schemes mentioned in I.2.

III.2 RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES TARGETED BY THE PRESENT CALL

The federal research institutions¹ hold, together or individually, many building elements, sometimes unique, of research infrastructures. A broad range of federal RI types exist of different scales and scope and at different levels of maturity.

Very often, these infrastructures are in the making. They cover any types of facilities, resources or services that are not provided yet to the stakeholders. They are generally the results of previous research and developments such as for instance models, webservices , software, or data collection.

Due to a lack of resources and strategic investment, infrastructure elements are currently not sufficiently developed or used at their optimal capacity. Also, these nascent infrastructures are often loosely connected to European or international infrastructures.

The present call aims to stimulate the development, upgrade and deployment of such emerging infrastructures held by the federal research institutions with an impactful potential for the (inter)national scientific community and/or society.

The present call:

- Can, but is not limited to addressing the ESFRI-RIs. The scope of the present impulse action call is different from the [ESFRI-FED programme](#) calls which only concern RI projects of the ESFRI-RI roadmap in (pre-)operational phase.
- Addresses RIs flagging societal, scientific or political priorities, not just “nice to have” RI
- Is tailored to facilities existing in the federal research institutions.
- Addresses actions that go beyond a simple upgrade of essential standard RI services within the applying institution and that show improvement of RI services based on specific assets or expertise present in the institution.

¹ see the list in [ANNEX 1](#)

- Requires making optimal use of services emerging from previous development or expertise notably benefitting from BELSPO support (eg BRAIN-be, FED-tWIN, ...).
- Requires tangible outcomes by the end of the project timespan.
- Needs to serve varied communities of researchers and/or society.
- Favours proposals with impactful potential and delivering responsive solutions to broad and urgent societal challenges.
- Considers sustainability of development or operation of the developed RI e.g by demonstrating the important role of the RI in the research strategy of the Institutions, the provision of in-kind-contribution or other stable sources of funding.
- Encourages the development of monitoring tools and metrics to assess the performance of the RI and its impact.

The main requirements for the RI actions to be eligible are:

- To be based on existing building blocks or nascent RI and related expertise within federal research institutions.
- To require a collaborative approach to be further developed.
- To be likely to play a key/unique role for stakeholders at the (inter)national level.
- To have the potential to be embedded in EU or international Research Infrastructures and/or to be used by European or International Int networks or initiatives.
- In the case of the RI action being connected to an ESFRI RI, to contribute to it in early phases (1 to 3) of its [lifecycle](#). From level 4 (the ESFRI RI at implementation phase), the action is not eligible for INFRA-FED call as it would be eligible in the ESFRI-FED programme.

Those call's features are reflected in the evaluation criteria listed in IV.5

III.3 THE PROJECTS

III.3.1 PROJECT PARTNERS AND BUDGET

The federal research institutions eligible to introduce a project and be a project partner funded by BELSPO are listed in [ANNEX 1](#).

Non-eligible Belgian partner institutes and/or non-Belgian universities or public research institutes are allowed to participate to the project as self-funded partner. They cannot coordinate the project.

The maximum budget for a project is **1 M€**.

III.3.2 PROJECT SET-UP

The actions covered by the call **differ from** classical **research projects** in that they aim to **develop infrastructure services** for a use by researchers in particular (but not limited to them). The

development of use cases or testing new services will nevertheless require specific scientific and technical expertise that can be developed and covered within the projects.

The development of new RI assets or services will require a multi skills or multi disciplinary approach. **Scientific/ technical collaborations** will preferably be sought **within the institution or with another federal research institution**. The envisaged collaboration must be robust, sustainable, and strategic.

Project can be submitted by one or a network of several partner research institution(s).

Within each project, a **Coordinator** is appointed who shall:

- Coordinate all activities to be carried out in the framework of the project.
- Coordinate the meetings with the Follow-up Committee and BELSPO and write the reports of these meetings.
- Coordinate the production of the interim and final project reports intended for BELSPO.
- Inform BELSPO of any problems that might hinder the implementation of the project.
- Coordinate valorisation and outreach activities.

The project may require specific or punctual expertise, which can be delivered in the form of **subcontracting**, including by non-eligible partners..

The type of partnership or future **cooperation with international partner(s)** (Network, RI, Institutions) should be indicated. It can take the form of a Memorandum of Understanding, a Partnership agreement, a Letter of Intent, a Letter of support

The types of **collaboration** at different stages of the development between applicants and **stakeholders** must be precised.

Each project must ensure the correct management, publication of and open access to the project **data**. **Open access** rule applies unless it might go against paid service provision to stakeholders that can ensure sustainability of the RI.

BELSPO promotes equality between men and women in research. The projects should seek for a **gender balanced** staff composition.

III.3.3 BUDGET RULES

The project budget is reserved exclusively for the project activities. The different categories of expenditure financed by BELSPO are:

Staff: Pre-tax wages associated with increases in the cost of living, employers' social security and statutory insurance contributions, as well as any other compensation or allowance due by law and secondary to the salary itself and tax-free scholarships. BELSPO does not allow cumulative wages for Staff. A researcher bound contractually to an institution - full time or part time cannot apply for him/herself for BELSPO staff budget for that part.

The staff costs (scholarships excluded) are limited to a maximum amount of:

- 4 750 €/month FTE for a technician/bachelor (regardless of years of experience)
- 6 700 €/month FTE for a scientist with a Master's degree (regardless of years of experience)
- 8 250 €/month FTE for a scientist with a PhD (regardless of years of experience)

BELSPO prefers staff to be hired under a labour contract. However tax-free doctoral or post-doctoral scholarships can be exceptionally accepted under the following restricted conditions. The total number of person months funded by the BELSPO project under a tax-free scholarships scheme is limited to max. 50% of the total number of person months funded under labour contract. In any case, there shall not be more than 2 tax-free scholarships/project. Tax-free scholarships refer to a grant subject to tax exemption under the tax laws. The costs for scholarships are limited to a maximum amount of:

- 4 450 €/month FTE for a tax-free doctoral scholarship* (regardless of years of experience)
- 5 600 €/month FTE for a tax-free postdoctoral scholarship* (regardless of years of experience)

These amounts for staff and scholarships are not applicable to persons that are identified by name in the proposal.

At least 60% of the total proposal's budget has to be devoted to staff.

General operating costs: this includes day-to-day/usual supplies and products for the laboratory, workshop and office, documentation, shipments, use of day-to-day software and IT facilities, organisation of internal meetings, etc.. The budget envelope for this category may not exceed 15% of the staff budget for the coordinator and 10% of the staff budget for the other partners in network projects. The amounts claimed must correspond to actual expenditures strictly related to the project, even if supporting documents are not requested. The institution must keep these invoices in its accounts in the event of an audit.

Specific operating costs: this includes operating costs specific to the execution of the project tasks, such as costs for project analyses, maintenance and repair of equipment purchased by the project, use of specific IT facilities and software, costs for surveys, open data publications*, organisation of workshops and events, etc....

Overheads: Institutions' general overheads that cover, in one lump sum, administration, telephone, postal, maintenance, heating, lighting, electricity, rent, machine depreciation, and insurance costs. The total amount of this item is set as 5% of the total staff and operating costs.

Equipment: Purchase and installation of scientific and technical apparatus and instruments, including computer hardware. Equipment needs to be purchased in the first half of the project.

Subcontracting: Expenses incurred by a third party to carry out tasks or provide services that require special scientific or technical competences outside the institution's normal area of activity. The amount may not exceed 25% of the total budget allocated to the Belgian partner concerned.

** In the case of an online article published within an Open Access journal, the Article Processing Charge (APC) will be of maximum 1 300 €, and a copy of the Editor's version must be immediately deposited in an institutional repository and made public and free of access*

III.3.4 PROJECT START AND DURATION

The projects selected within the context of the current call will start early spring 2023 and should end by December 2026 the latest.

IV CALL PROCEDURE

The indicative calendar for the call for proposals is as follows:

Launch of the call	Thursday 9 September 2022
Info session	Monday 19 September 2022
Deadline expression of interest	Tuesday 11 October 2022
Deadline full proposals	Tuesday 6 December 2022
Evaluation (remote + panel)	Early March 2023
Communication of selection	Mid April 2023
Start of the projects	End April 2023

IV.1 INFORMATION SESSION

Given the particularities of the call and its strategic nature, an online information session will be organised by BELSPO between the launch of the call and the deadline for submission of expressions of interest.

The objective of the info session will be to present the call and address questions that future applicants may have sent prior to the session through an inscription form.

Online information session:
Monday 19 September 2022 10:00-12:00

IV.2 SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

IV.2.1 PHASE 1 – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

An **Expression of Interest** must be submitted in word and pdf via email to: infra-fed@belspo.be.

Name of the file: EoI_[project acronym]

Applicants must first submit an **Expression of Interest (EoI)**. If the EoI has not been submitted in time and filled in correctly, it will be impossible to submit a full proposal. EoIs do not constitute a step in the evaluation process; they will be used by BELSPO to seek foreign experts for the remote evaluation of the research proposals.

The EoI will contain:

- The title and acronym of the project
- A brief description of the intended project
- The name and contact details of the project partners, incl. name of the project coordinator and other promoters.
- The name and contact details of 4-6 experts capable of assessing the proposal (not just from a scientific point of view but also from an RI angle). See also document 'Evaluators eligibility'.
- The name and contact details of 2 non-grata experts that will be excluded from the evaluation of the proposal (optional).
- 6 keywords

The description of the project is understood as an early stage of reflexion. The content of the description in the full proposal may vary from that of the EoI to some extent. However, it cannot diverge to the point that the expertise mobilised for the evaluation of the proposal will become irrelevant. Changes concerning the partners are accepted. Acronym and keywords must remain the same.

Deadline for the Expression of Interest:

Tuesday 11 October 2022 @ 14h00

Submitting an EoI before the deadline is a mandatory condition to submit a full proposal.

IV.2.2 PHASE 2 – FULL PROPOSAL

The **Full Proposal** is composed of several documents which must be submitted in word/excel and pdf via email to infra-fed@belspo.be, with the subject of the email:

INFRA-FED 2022 FullProp_[project acronym]

The deadline for submission of Full Proposals is **Tuesday 6 December 2022 @14h00**

If the Full Proposal does not comply with the submission rules or has not been submitted in time, it will not be taken into account for evaluation.

The proposal will contain ([see website for the templates](#)):

- **Proposal description template:** Document containing the title, acronym, total budget, duration and summary of the project, as well as the name and contact details of the project partner(s) and the description of the proposal (scientific description; implementation and budget justification; added value and sustainability – also including gender and ethic aspects).
- **GANTT chart:** Calendar of the different tasks and deliverables of the workpackages.
- **Budget table:** Requested project budget by partners and budget categories.
- **Data Management Plan:** Document stating how data are acquired, produced, stored and made available.
- **Ethics form:** Form regarding the ethic aspects of the proposal.
- **Follow-up committee letter of intent – optional:** Letters signed by future members of the Follow-up Committee.
- **Cash or in-kind commitment letter – optional:** Letters signed pledging cash or in-kind contributions to the project.

Deadline for Full Proposals:

Tuesday 6 December 2022 @ 14h00

IV.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The selection of proposals is based on a peer-review evaluation that guarantees scientific excellence and the alignment of the projects with (inter)national/EU priorities and strategies regarding RIs.

IV.3.1.1 SCIENTIFIC PEER REVIEW EVALUATION

BELSPO organises and coordinates a scientific / technical peer review evaluation of each proposal. The evaluation takes place in two steps:

- A Written evaluation
- A Panel meeting

IV.3.1.2 WRITTEN EVALUATION

For each proposal, an individual written evaluation is performed by a set of 3 foreign independent experts having an adequate combined expertise to evaluate the proposal. BELSPO is responsible for

composing this remote 'written evaluation team' with experts from BELSPO's own database and experts suggested by the applicants.

As much as possible, the proposals will be clustered and assigned to a set of experts belonging to the main RI domains aligned on ESFRI categories: Environment, Health and Food, Social and Cultural science and generic domain (eg EOSC).

The written evaluation takes place remotely, based on an evaluation form. During this assessment, the experts will only have access to the proposals they will evaluate.

Each expert will assess the proposal and provide comments taking into account (sub)criteria, in the following categories

(1)	Quality and relevance of the proposal and potential for international anchoring
(2)	Quality of the implementation, incl. pertinence of the requested budget
(3)	Impact, added value and sustainability.

Check the **written evaluation criteria** here:

[Section: Submission content for applicants vs. evaluation criteria for remote evaluators.](#)

The scale used to assess the criteria is given in the **Evaluation Matrix**

Individual evaluations are **not communicated to the applicants.**

IV.3.1.3 PREPARATION OF THE PANEL EVALUATION

BELSPO will anonymise and compile the individual evaluations for each proposal and transmit them to the Panel.

The Panel will be composed of Belgian and foreign experts having the broadest possible expertise in Research Infrastructures and their (inter)national landscape².

For each proposal a **Consensus Report** will be drafted by one of the panel members. The consensus report will consist of appreciations and comments for the different (sub)criteria.

The draft consensus reports will be discussed and finalised - by adjustments if necessary - in the Panel meeting.

In preparation of the panel meeting, BELSPO will translate the appreciations given to each sub-criterion into scores. The 3 criteria categories have the same weight. Each proposal has consequently

² In case of need and as a last resource BELSPO may call upon Panel members to perform remote evaluations, in the same way that if some Panel member finds him/herself unable to attend, we may invite a remote expert to the Panel.

one single overall score. Therefore, proposals can be ranked arithmetically. This ranking serves as input to the discussion in the panel. The outcome of this discussion is a finalised ranking (**Panel Funding Scenario**).

IV.3.1.4 PANEL EVALUATION

A **Panel meeting** will be organised by BELSPO.

Prior to the meeting, each panel member will have access to:

- the **Full proposals**
- the **Compiled individual evaluations** (anonymous)
- the pre-drafted **Consensus Report**
- the pre-drafted **Panel Funding Scenario** (the document ranking the proposals according to their arithmetical score)

The **Panel Funding Scenario**, based on the pre-drafted document which ranks the proposals according to their score, will classify all proposals according to the individual evaluation criteria, and considering the panel evaluation criteria:

- budget availability and value for money of the whole portfolio of selected proposals
- the coverage in terms of domains and types of infrastructure services
- any kind of consideration for strategic prioritisation

The **Panel Funding Scenario** will classify all proposals in:

- Highly recommended for funding
- Recommended for funding
- Not recommended for funding

IV.3.1.5 FINAL SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

Based on the Panel Funding Scenario, the final selection of proposals to be funded is validated by the State Secretary in charge of Science Policy





IV.4 SUBMISSION CONTENT FOR APPLICANTS VERSUS EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR REMOTE EVALUATORS



These guidelines consist of two columns, describing the required submission content and the criteria for the evaluation of proposals.

- If you are an **APPLICANT**, you will find the submission content guidelines on the **LEFT**
- If you are an **EVALUATOR**, you will find the evaluation criteria guidelines on the **RIGHT**

Note that proposals are composed of **several documents**. The instructions here concern all those documents. However, **unless otherwise specified, the information regarding the criteria is found in the document: Proposal Description.**



<p style="text-align: center;">SUBMISSION CONTENT GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICANTS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EVALUATION CRITERIA GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATORS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants are required to fill in the corresponding sections of the proposal • The different sections can be found as downloadable templates on the website (https://www.belspo.be/belspo/IMPULS/call2022_infra_en.stm) • Texts have to be comprehensive, to the point, and focused on the specific criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluators are required to mark the specified criteria • Specific comments must be provided for each selection criteria • The comments have to be comprehensive, to the point and focused on specific positive and/or negative aspects explaining/justifying the attributed appreciation • The comments must avoid summarising the research proposal content









A. GENERAL INFORMATION OF THE PROPOSAL	
<p> Proposal description</p> <p>Title of the proposal Acronym of the proposal Proposal summary: see point 1 below Keywords</p>	<p> Proposal description</p> <p>Note: This section does not require an evaluation.</p>
B. PROMOTOR/PARTNERSHIP	
<p> Proposal description</p> <p>Proposals are introduced by one or a network of several partner institution(s). The federal research institutions eligible to introduce a project and be a project partner funded by BELSPO are listed in ANNEX 1.</p>	<p> Proposal description</p> <p>Note: This section does not require an evaluation.</p>



1. PROPOSAL SUMMARY (max 2 pages)	
<p> Proposal description</p> <p>Briefly describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context and motivation of the project • The infrastructure service(s) to be developed from RI building blocks existing in the federal research institution(s) • The potential impact of the developments on the targeted categories of users at the national and/or international level. • The collaborative approach to carry out and valorise the project. 	<p> Proposal description</p> <p>Note: This section does not require an evaluation.</p>





2. COMPLIANCE WITH THE SCOPE OF THE CALL (max 0,5 pages)	2. COMPLIANCE WITH THE SCOPE OF THE CALL
<p data-bbox="208 296 439 320">📄 Proposal description</p> <p data-bbox="208 363 1198 459">Explain the significance of the proposal as an impulse action to further develop and improve the impact potential of an emerging research infrastructure within the federal research institution.</p>	<p data-bbox="1243 296 1473 320">📄 Proposal description</p> <p data-bbox="1243 363 1594 387">IN / OUT of scope evaluation</p> <p data-bbox="1243 395 2087 459"><i>Please indicate whether the project proposal is in scope, partially out of scope or totally out of scope.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1243 507 1361 531">IN SCOPE:</p> <p data-bbox="1243 539 2119 563">The project is clearly in line with the philosophy and objectives of the call:</p> <ul data-bbox="1243 579 2119 866" style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal is based on “emerging” federal research infrastructures or RI at infancy stage: e.g. existing under the form of a loose network visible on a webpage, or likely to have already delivered output material, or founding documents of the RI available • If applicable, the proposal contributes to an ESFRI RI in early phases (1 to 3) of its lifecycle. • The proposal aims at developing, upgrading or deploying the emerging RI to increase its impact's potential. <p data-bbox="1243 906 1568 930">PARTIALLY OUT OF SCOPE:</p> <p data-bbox="1243 938 2051 962">A proposal will be considered partially out of the scope of the call if:</p> <ul data-bbox="1243 978 2119 1042" style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal is rather a research-like project than the development of an infrastructure <p data-bbox="1243 1090 1429 1114">OUT OF SCOPE:</p> <ul data-bbox="1243 1121 2119 1265" style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal is clearly not in line with the philosophy and objectives of the call . • The proposal contributes to an ESFRI RI in phase 4 and beyond of its lifecycle.

	<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you consider the proposal as ‘OUT of scope’, your evaluation ends here. • If you consider the proposal ‘IN scope’ OR ‘partially OUT of scope’, you must complete the rest of the evaluation. • Proposals ‘partially OUT of scope’ may only be financed based upon the agreement of the Panel, who may impose adequate adjustments for it to be ‘IN scope’.
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3. SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION	3. SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL QUALITY
<p>3.1 Objectives and state of the art (max. 3 pages without references)</p>	<p>3.1 Objectives and state of the art</p>
<p>3.1.1 Project objectives and state of the art</p> <p> Proposal description</p> <p>Explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objectives of the project. • The state of current RI landscape at national and international level on your topic. • The position of the project within the state of the art. • Describe how this proposal is essential for the European and/or international (research) initiative(s). • Describe the opportunities for (new) national and/or international collaborations and links with other (inter)national (research) initiatives. • Include a list of reference with relevant publications at the end of the section. 	<p>3.1.1 Project objectives and state of the art</p> <p> Proposal description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the objectives clear and coherent in relation to the challenges the project wishes to tackle? • Does the proposal provide an accurate overview of the state of the art? How is the project positioned in relation to the state of the art? • Is the project timely and relevant for/within European or international (research) initiatives ? • Will the project contribute to foster new opportunities to expand collaboration (inter)nationally?

<p>3.2 Translation of objectives into appropriate and well-described methodology (max. 10 pages)</p>	<p>3.2 Quality of the methodological approach and methodology</p>
<p>3.2.1 Methodological approach  Proposal description</p> <p>Describe the overall methodological approach of your project</p>	<p>3.2.1 Methodological approach  Proposal description</p> <p>Is the methodological approach well suited to meet the project objectives and challenges? Evaluate the approach undertaken.</p>
<p>3.2.2 Methodology  Proposal description  Gender checklist  Ethics form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translate the objectives into a methodology (used methods, techniques, systems and/or way of working) in order to achieve the results, taking into account the different expertises, skills or disciplines mobilised regarding the project approach as described above. • Gender: Detail gender-related topics in the content of the project, outcomes and impact when appropriate/relevant. Explain how the methodology ensures that (possible) gender differences will be investigated and gender differences in data, data gathering or data use will be taken into account. Use the gender checklist for guidance. • Ethics: Fill out the Ethics form, and if the project is not concerned by ethics, explain why this is the case in the proposal. <p>Note: If, after the start of the research, it appears that due to partner negligence or insufficient knowledge of the field, the needed data(bases)/collections/samples will not be available in time, this may constitute a reason for BELSPO to cancel the contract.</p>	<p>3.2.2 Methodology  Proposal description  Gender checklist  Ethics form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the chosen methodology (taking into account the different skills or disciplines mobilised) and the articulation of the objectives-methodology-expected outcomes. • Assess the treatment of gender aspects and/or issues within the content of the project. Use the gender checklist for guidance. • Assess the awareness of ethical issues of the project and ways to deal with these using appropriate channels. See the Ethics form filled out by the applicants.

3.3 Quality and relevance of the proposal and potential for international anchoring	3.3 Quality and relevance of the proposal and potential for international anchoring
<p>3.3.1. Quality and relevance of the proposal and potential for international anchoring (max. 2 pages)</p> <p> Proposal description</p> <p>Explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature (scientific, technical, educational, ...) of infrastructure services to be developed and the tangible products to be delivered by the end of the project. • Why the project is relevant in the context of urgent need for solutions to (multiple) societal challenges and/or environmental transition and to what extend the proposal contribute to international effort? • For which (inter)national stakeholders and users are the specific RI services intended (scientists, policy and decision-makers, industries, others) and how these will meet their needs? • To what extend the project contain innovant elements beyond the single upgrade of an existing infrastructure within the partner institution? 	<p>3.3.1. Quality and relevance of the proposal and potential for international anchoring</p> <p> Proposal description</p> <p>Assess whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RI services to be provided is timely, tangible and relevant in relation to the scientific, political or societal challenges the project wishes to tackle. • The proposal is likely to play a key/unique role for stakeholders at the (inter)national level. • The proposal has the potential to be embedded in EU/International Research Infrastructures and/or to be used by EU/ International networks or initiatives. • The proposal brings a clear added value to the existing RI elements in the federal research institution(s)?

4. IMPLEMENTATION & BUDGET	4. QUALITY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION and PERTINENCE OF THE BUDGET
<p>4.1 Methodological collaborative approach (max. 10 pages)</p> <p>4.1.1. Expertise in the frame of the project (max 2 pages)  Proposal description</p> <p>Provide a short description of expertise and skills for each participant in the project, including funded and non-funded staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The professional background • Relevant publications , products or outputs relevant for the proposal • A list of the (inter)national contacts and the (inter)national networks to which they belong within the context of the proposal. • The scientific quality, management, synthesis and communication skills of the coordinator. • Include web-links for all the information above. 	<p>4.1. Quality of the methodological collaborative approach</p> <p>4.1.1. Quality of the expertise in the frame of the project  Proposal description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the scientific and technical quality and expertise of the participants in the frame of the project. • Assess the coordinator’s skills in terms of project management and coordination of work packages, synthesis and communication according to the project’s needs.
<p>4.1.2. Collaborative approach  Proposal description</p> <p>Explain the overall multi-expertise methodological approach of your project from the design phase to the implementation and outreach of RI services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument the relevance of the composition of the project team(s) in addressing the objective of the proposal (complementarity of expertises or disciplines; the collaborative way of working (multi, inter) to properly cover the project; the strengthening or development of expertise and competences (new techniques, knowledge, way of working...) within Federal research institutions. If applicable, include the added value of the contribution of the subcontractors. • How the expertises and skills will be mobilised to design, develop, implement, promote the use and/or ancore the RI services into international initiatives? 	<p>4.1.2. Quality of the Collaborative approach  Proposal description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the composition of the project team(s) adequate to contribute to solution of the flagged societal, political or scientific priorities? • Is the multi-expertise collaborative approach appropriate well thought out to deliver products in a cost-effective way? • How promising is the implementation and valorisation methodologies (taking into account the different disciplines /skills and expertises mobilised) and the articulation with stakeholders, indirect and direct users? • Does the relationships with the target groups of users operate in a suitable way ?

<p>4.1.3. Follow-up Committee & Stakeholders' involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Follow-up Committee letter of intent (not compulsory) 📄 Proposal description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the composition, role (members who are informed, consulted, or involved) of the members of the follow-up committee and way of working (meetings, exchange of information, co-developing the RI services,) <p>Note: Members can confirm their interest and possible contribution to the committee via the completion of a Follow-up Committee member intent. Though this document is NOT compulsory, letters of support from members of existing or envisaged international collaborations are encouraged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how/ when users and stakeholders will be associated to the development and/or will benefit from the services provided, and how do relationships with the targeted group of users will operate (e.g. user manual, documentation on the facilities, training workshops, ...) 	<p>4.1.3. Follow-up Committee & Stakeholders' involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Follow-up Committee letter of intent (not compulsory) 📄 Proposal description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the suitability of the composition of the follow-up committee as a way to implement the collaborative approach described in point 4.1.1. • Assess the committee's proposed role and functioning with the foreseen impact of the project. • Assess the way of working with stakeholders in terms of development of, or profiting from the project/services provided.
<p>4.1.4. Gender Equality Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Proposal description <p>A Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a systematic and strategic instrument that establishes priorities and concrete objectives (based on a thorough status quo assessment), and the specific measures that will be implemented to improve gender equality within organisations and in the field of R&I. For more information click here.</p> <p>Please include a link to your institutions' GEP, or if your institution does not have one, explain why, and how will you ensure gender mainstreaming in the project.</p>	<p>4.1.4. Gender Equality Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Proposal description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do(es) the participating institution(s) have a GEP? If not, will gender mainstreaming be assured in the project?

4.2 Detailed description of the work plan	4.2 Adequacy of the work plan
<p>4.2.1. Detailed description of the work plan</p> <p> Proposal description</p> <p>Provide a description of the project in terms of work packages, tasks, and deliverables in accordance with the GANTT chart (see Point 4.2.2). Refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and title of Work Package, Work Package leader (financed, non-financed) • Number, title and timing of tasks, task leader, participants to the task (financed, non-financed, subcontractors...) • Timing of deliverables • Number of person-months for each task • Means, tools, procedures, techniques to carry out the tasks <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work plan must be detailed to the level of work packages (WP) and tasks (Tasks). The definition of subtasks is not possible. • Compulsory work packages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination, project management and reporting - Data management - Exploitation / Valorisation / Dissemination • Work packages or tasks necessary for the implementation of the project but not financed by BELSPO must also be described and added to the GANTT chart. 	<p>4.2.1. Adequacy of the relation of the work packages to the proposal theme(s) and aim(s)</p> <p> Proposal description</p> <p>Notwithstanding work intensity and duration of tasks and WP, assess the way the breakdown of the work plan in work packages and tasks enables the realisation of the project.</p>

4.2.2. Work planning and time schedule: GANTT chart

 GANTT chart

Complete BELSPO's **GANTT chart** in accordance with the description of the detailed work plan, tasks and deliverables above:

- Work intensity of each partner within each task (expressed in person-month [PM])
- Include for each partner the person-months funded by the BELSPO project and the person-months funded by other sources (see notes below).

Notes:

- Partners include: financed, non-financed and subcontractors.
- 1 Person-month [PM] = 1 full-time equivalent [FTE] or 2 half-time equivalents over 1 month...
- Other sources of financing may include: salary payment by institution other than BELSPO and/or via other projects, voluntary contributions... If a given task requires 7 person-months, and 6 months will be financed by the BELSPO project, the 7th month must appear under 'other sources of financing'.

4.2.2. Quality and pertinence of the work planning and time schedule: GANTT chart

 GANTT chart

- Is the work planning (time schedule, duration and person-power effort per task) appropriate and feasible to run the project? (horizontal lecture of the GANTT chart)
- Is the requested level of person-power of each partner throughout the work packages and tasks adequate? (vertical lecture of the GANTT chart, with recommendations regarding the intensity of their activities and pertinence of participation in them)
- Is it well-distributed among partners in function of their expertise? (horizontal lecture of the GANTT chart, not going into detail for each partner, with recommendations regarding the length and pertinence of the activities within the calendar)
- If the proposal is deemed 'reasonable - good' in this category please describe the necessary/possible improvements within the comments.

4.2.3. Implementation risk management plan

📄 Proposal description

- Number, identify and explain the main incurring risks that could delay or hinder the project and the contingency plans foreseen to deal with them. (max. 1page).
- Locate the number (R1, R2, Rx) of each risk in terms of its likelihood of occurrence and impact on the project within the **Table 'Risk likelihood vs. impact'** on the template.

Table: Risk likelihood vs. impact.

		IMPACT				
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	Very likely	Low	Medium	Medium-High	Severe	Severe
	Likely	Low-Medium	Low	Medium	Medium-High	Severe
	Possible	Low-Medium	Low	Medium	Medium-High">R1, R3	Medium-High
	Unlikely	Low-Medium	Low	Low	Medium	Medium-High">R2
	Very Unlikely	Low-Medium	Low-Medium	Low	Medium	Medium

→ E.g:

Risk 1 (R1): IPR or GDPR issue

Risk 2 (R2): technical failure

Risk 3 (R3): quality of data insufficient





	Low
	Low-Medium
	Medium
	Medium-High
	Severe

4.2.3. Quality of the implementation risk management plan

📄 Proposal description

Assess the quality of the implementation risk management and contingency plans.

<p>4.3. Data management plan</p> <p>4.3.1. Data management plan Data Management Plan</p> <p>Fill out the DMP form with information applicable to the proposal.. Within the context of open science it is required that the e-services financed by BELSPO in the context of previous programmes and calls are reused as much as possible in the framework of Research Infrastructures programmes. The present call might address proposals that will describe which e-services will be reused, complemented or extended by the beneficiaries and made interoperable with identified EU or global RIs.</p>	<p>4.3. Quality of the Data management plan</p> <p>4.3.1. Quality of the Data management plan Data Management Plan</p> <p>If the FAIR compliance of data is not the subject of the application itself, is the access and openness of data and expertise developed in the proposal adequate?</p> <p>If the FAIR compliance of data is the subject of the proposal, assess the provided DMP as a contribution to the evolution of EOSC.</p>
<p>4.4. Budget</p> <p>4.4.1. Budget table Budget table</p> <p>Fill out the budget table, detailing your requested budget in the different budget categories. Considering the wide range of proposal types and expected products and services (ranging from a test phase to the creation of a data centre), it is important to draw special attention to the “value for money” of the proposal.</p>	<p>4.4. Budget assessemnt</p> <p>4.4.1. Pertinence of the budget table & 3.4.2. Pertinence of the justification of the requested budget Budget table & Proposal description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the requested budget in line with the ambition of the proposal? • If applicable, is the budget balanced in the network? • How cost-effective is the proposal ?
<p>4.4.2. Justification of the requested budget Proposal description</p> <p>Justify the requested resources. If your project is implemented by a network, please explain the distribution/balance among the teams.</p>	

5. IMPACT, ADDED VALUE & SUSTAINABILITY	5. IMPACT AND ADDED VALUE
5.1 Potential impact of the project (max. 1,5 pages)	5.1 Potential impact of the project
5.1.1. Potential impact of the project in light of the expected outcomes and added value for the RI and the Federal Research Institution  Proposal description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the RI: Self - assess the potential contribution of the proposal to increasing the potential impact (political, socio-economic and or scientific) of the RI services developed on the different categories of users. • For the Federal Research Institution: Explain how the the federal research Institution will benefit from the development of the RI service and play a key role at the national/ international level? 	5.1.1. Potential impact of the project in light of the expected outcomes and added value for the RI and the Federal Research Institution  Proposal description <p>Assess the potential impact as described in the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extend the proposal serves different communities of researchers and/or policymakers or other stakeholders ? • Is the specific role of the federal research institution(s) clear and adequately described? • Are the expected socio-economical and/or scientific impacts realistic and significant? • Does the proposal contribute in a significant way to the societal challenges and/or environmental transition?
5.2. Sustainability	5.2. Sustainability
5.2.1. Sustainability  Proposal description <p>Provide a business plan which guarantees sustainability of the RI beyond the project duration, containing (among other):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General management and operation of the RI • KPIs for the monitoring of the performance of the services delivered by the project (access, data management, feed-back from stakeholders). • Embedding of the services in international initiatives. • Estimated running costs of the RI • In-kind contribution(s) of the partner institution and how it is likely to change over time. • External stable sources of (co-)funding, including users fees. • Estimated operation time, network activity plan. • Suitability model (location of the RI) 	5.2.1. Sustainability  Proposal description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the proposed monitoring of the performance of the RI once the RI is set-up adequate? • Is the provided information on the temporal phasing use by different users communities of the RI convincing? • Are the funding sources explored well thought out? Those include users fees, estimated operation time, network activity plan, individual commitment (in-kind),

V CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS FOR SELECTED PROJECTS

V.1 CONTRACTS

For the selected proposals, a contract is concluded between BELSPO and the funded institution(s).

For this purpose, the applicants of the selected proposal will be asked at the end of the evaluation and selection procedure to concisely formulate the specifications on the basis of which the contract is to be drawn up. This Technical Annex to the contract will be drawn up in consultation with BELSPO and will take into account the recommendations formulated by the evaluators.

Adaptations to the original proposal may relate, among other things, to the content of the project, the composition of the project partnership or Follow-up Committee, the budget, the proposals for valorising the RI.

BELSPO grants the selected projects the funds required for their implementation. BELSPO shall reimburse at most, and up to the amount specified in the granted budget, the actual costs proven by the partners providing these costs are directly related to the implementation of the project.

V.2 REPORTS AND PROGRESS MEETINGS

The contract foresees the following reports to be submitted to BELSPO:

- Initial report: to be submitted within three months after the start of the project.
- Activity reports: to be submitted annually.
- Final report: to be submitted at the end of the project.
- If deemed useful by BELSPO, an activity report may be requested for an external evaluation of the project.
- BELSPO can ask for a report or other input at any time during the course of the project in order to provide scientific support to valorisation and service actions related to the programme.

These reports are to be included in the project work plan and the cost of preparing them (including possible translations) must be covered by the project budget.

Meetings on the project's progress must be organised - minimum once a year - between the project partner(s), BELSPO and the follow-up committee. The organisation of these meetings must be included in the project work plan and the project budget.

V.3 DATA, RESULTS, INTELLECTUAL OWNERSHIP AND OPEN ACCESS

Foreground - the results (including information) produced by the project - shall be the property of the institution carrying out the work generating this foreground, as mentioned in article 12 of the General Conditions (Annex II of the contract). As regards existing information and data, ownership remains the same.

Each institution shall ensure that the foreground of which it has ownership, is disseminated as fast as possible and free of charge.

In accordance with the relevant BELSPO Open Research Data Mandate, each Institution undertakes to make the foreground and background relating to research data, available as soon as possible and free of charge in an approved data repository (Open Research Data Repository). This concerns data that supports the research results, with its metadata and other contextualised (curated) and/or raw data mentioned in the Data Management Plan (DMP) submitted by the grant applicant. The data must comply with the FAIR principle (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) and must be accessible according to the principle "As open as possible, as closed as necessary".

Specifically for research areas concerning the marine environment, biodiversity and climate, a copy of the analysis and measurement data and/or metadata must be transferred to specific databases such as:

- AMD (Antarctic Master Directory) (<http://gcmd.gsfc.nasa.gov/KeywordSearch/Home.do?Portal=amd&MetadataType=0>),
- BMDC (the [Belgian Marine Data Centre](#)). The Belgian Marine Data Centre, our federal NODC (National Oceanographic Data Centre), (bmdc@naturalsciences.be), can be contacted for assistance in the development of a DMP for marine applications and/or in choosing the right repository.
- GBIF ([Global Biodiversity Information Facility](#)). The [Belgian Biodiversity Platform](#) can be contacted for assistance in the development of DMP for biodiversity related applications and/or in choosing the right repository. See also the [guidance document](#).
- The promoters of projects that include tasks in which biological materials are used, must ensure the preservation of this biological material by depositing it in a culture collection (Biological Resource Centre), and preferably one in Belgium. This does not apply to material that promoters can prove has already been deposited in a culture collection or for which existing agreements (Material Transfer Agreement) do not allow it to be deposited. Biological material includes cultivable organisms such as microorganisms, viruses, plant, animal and human cells as well as the replicable parts of these organisms, such as non-modified and recombinant plasmids (including those with DNAC inserts).
- Belgian Climate Centre : the upcoming Climate Center can be contacted for assistance to centralize in a central hub all available observed and modelled climate data and information (from different research centers) for the territory of Belgium

V.4 RESEARCH ETHICS

The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018) serves as ethical reference and self-regulatory framework for research projects funded by BELSPO.

<https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/#toggle-id-8>

The code originally published in 2014 by ALLEA (All European Academies) and then revised in 2018 addresses emerging challenges emanating from technological developments, open science, citizen science and social media, among other areas. It is translated into all official EU languages.

All projects must take this code of ethics into account in their research. If necessary, the Ethical Board of the institutions concerned by a project must be consulted before submitting a proposal.

V.5 GENDER

BELSPO strongly encourages projects to take into account the equality between women and men and to ensure gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the project. The project should include this both in the choice of the experts and, where relevant, by integrating the gender dimension into their project. All statistics produced, collected and commissioned are, where appropriate, disaggregated by sex and gender indicators are established where relevant.

VI COMPLAINTS

BELSPO places great importance on the quality of its service and on improving the way it operates. A special form to handle complaints has been created.

The complaint form is available at the following address:

http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/complaints_en.stm

Complaints submitted anonymously or which are offensive or not related to our organisation will not be processed.

A complaint is handled as follows:

- Once your complaint has been filed, a notification of receipt will be sent.
- The complaint will be forwarded to the relevant departments and individuals and will be processed within one month.
- An answer will be sent by e-mail or letter.
- The complaint will be treated with strict confidentiality.

If you are dissatisfied by the initial response to a complaint, you can always contact the Médiateur Fédéral / Federal Ombudsman, rue Ducale / Hertogstraat 43, 1000 Brussels (email: contact@mediateurfederal.be / contact@federaalombudsman.be).

ANNEX 1: ELIGIBLE FEDERAL RESEARCH INSTITUTES

AFMPS-FAGG	Agence fédérale des médicaments et des produits de santé - Federaal agentschap voor geneesmiddelen en gezondheidsproducten
BNB-NBB	Service d'étude de la Banque Nationale - Studiedienst Nationale Bank
AFSCA-FAVV	Agence fédérale pour la sécurité de la chaîne alimentaire - Federaal Agentschap voor de Veiligheid van de Voedselketen
AGR-ARA	Archives générales du Royaume et Archives de l'Etat dans les Provinces - Algemeen Rijksarchief en Rijksarchief in de Provinciën
Bel V	Bel V (filiaal van agentschap nucleaire controle)
BFP-FPB	Bureau fédéral du plan - Federaal Planbureau
CARHIF-AVG	Centre d'Archives et de Recherches pour l'Histoire des Femmes - Archief- en Onderzoekscentrum voor Vrouwengeschiedenis
CDCS-CMDC	Centre de Documentation et de Coordination Sociales - - Centrum voor Maatschappelijke Documentatie en Coördinatie
CEN-SCK	Centre d'Etude de l'Énergie nucléaire - Mol - Studiecentrum voor Kernenergie - Mol
DLD	Laboratoires de la défense - Defensielaboratoria
ERM-KMS	Ecole royale militaire - Koninklijke Militaire school
HMRA-MHRA	Hôpital Militaire Reine Astrid - Militair Hospitaal Koningin Astrid
IASB-BIRA	Institut d'Aéronomie spatiale de Belgique - Koninklijk Belgisch Instituut voor Ruimte-Aeronomie
IEFH-IGVM	Institut pour l'égalité des femmes et des hommes - Instituut voor de Gelijkheid van Vrouwen en Mannen
IFDD-FIDO	Institut fédéral pour le Développement Durable - Federaal Instituut voor Duurzame Ontwikkeling
IGN-NGI	Institut géographique national - Nationaal Geografisch Instituut
INCC-NICC	Institut National de Criminalistique et de Criminologie - Nationaal Instituut voor Criminalistiek en Criminologie
IRE	Nationaal instituut voor radio-elementen / Institut National des Radioéléments
IRM-KMI	Institut royal Météorologique de Belgique - Koninklijk Meteorologisch Instituut van België
IRPA-KIK	Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique - Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium
IRSNB-KBIN	Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique - Koninlijk Belgisch Instituut voor Natuurwetenschappen
KBR	Bibliothèque royale de Belgique - Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België
KCE	Centre fédéral d'expertise des soins de santé - Federaal Kenniscentrum voor de gezondheidszorg
MRAC-KMMA	Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale - Koninlijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika
MRAH-KMKG	Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire - Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis
MRBAB-KMSKB	Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique - Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België

MYRI A	Centre fédéral pour l'analyse des flux migratoires et la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains - Federaal Centrum voor de analyse van de migratiestromen en de strijd tegen mensenhandel
ONDRAF-NIRAS	Organisme national des Déchets radioactifs et des Matières fissiles enrichies - Nationale Instelling voor Radioactief Afval en Verrijkte Spleijstoffen
ORB-KSB	Observatoire royal de Belgique - Koninklijke Sterrenwacht van België
Sciensano	Sciensano
WHI	War Heritage Institute

Correction: BELNET which figured on the previous version of this table, has been removed as eligible partner due to it being structurally linked to BELSPO.