

Call for applicants

Training programme on EU funding





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Introduction to EUTOPIA_Health

EUTOPIA_Health is a 5-year project that aims at facilitating institutional transformations and to spearhead academic excellence and innovation in health-related domains. The project targets specifically three Widening countries (Romania, Slovenia, Portugal) that have traditionally lagged in European Research & Innovation programmes, with the aim of strengthening their profiles by overcoming funding and publication disparities. As such, EUTOPIA Health will facilitate changes in the academic landscape within the European health research area. The activities planned in EUTOPIA_Health are multifaceted, and include, among others: webinars on EU funding and technology transfer; mobility programs; transdisciplinary training activities; and mentorship.

The project has received funding from the European Commission as part of its WIDERA programme (*Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence*), which contributes to building research & innovation capacity for countries lagging. Projects under this programme will strengthen the countries' potential for successful participation in transnational research and innovation processes, as well as promote networking and access to excellence.

The four specific objectives of EUTOPIA_Health are: (1) Empowering institutional transformation by strengthening Research & Innovation management capacity of EUTOPIA members from Widening countries; (2) Reinforcing the role of higher education institutions in innovation ecosystems and strengthening collaboration between science and society; (3) Increasing connectedness for excellence in Health research; (4) Mainstreaming best practices and tools for Open and Inclusive Science.

The EUTOPIA_Health consortium is coordinated by Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca (Romania) and includes the following partner countries: Vrije Universiteit Brussels (Belgium), Ca'Foscari University of Venice (Italy), CY Cergy Paris Université (France), Technische Universität Dresden (Germany), University of Gothenburg (Sweden), University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), NOVA University Lisbon (Portugal), Pompeu Fabra University-Barcelona (Spain), and the University of Warwick (United Kingdom) as associated partner.

Snapshot of EUTOPIA_Health

- **Call:** HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-03
- **Type of Action:** HORIZON-CSA (Coordination and Support Actions)
- **Start of the project:** 1 January 2024
- **Duration:** 60 months
- **Budget:** 4,999,960 euros

Introduction to EU-funding training programme using i-ISO

This is a call for applications for a 3-year training program which will be organized and led by Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) within the context of EUTOPIA_Health. The training programme will focus on European funding and will be structured as follows:

- **3-day in-person and hands-on workshops** at your institution covering: (i) the structure and the programmes of Horizon Europe*; (ii) building a consortium; (iii) developing a Horizon Europe proposal section by section; (iv) building a budget; (v) filling administrative forms; and (vi) reading and interpreting an evaluation summary report.
- **3-year dedicated and intensive support** provided by the VUB EU Support Team aiming at the submission of a Horizon Europe* proposal. The support offered will include: (i) support in identifying a EU call that matches your research profile; (ii) support in shaping your initial concept and in attracting consortium partners; (iii) bi-weekly online meetings with the VUB EU Support Team; (iv) regular co-writing of your proposal with the VUB EU Support Team; and finally (v) proposal submission.

The researchers who are selected for this training programme will also be invited to take part in a feedback survey at the end of the 3-year period, during which we will measure the overall satisfaction and quality of the training programme. Results from the survey will allow the VUB EU Support Team to strengthen and improve the training provided.

IMPORTANT*

The VUB EU Support Team will support applications for applied research, meaning applications for Pillar 2 and Pillar 3 of Horizon Europe, as well as several non-framework programmes (e.g. the Innovative Health Initiative, or EU4Health). Applying for these calls will require that you build an interdisciplinary and international consortium. We will assist you with this task.

Type of support

The VUB EU Support Team has developed and refined a support system that can be summarized as i-ISO. The i-ISO concept includes:

- *Identifying* EU funding calls that match the researchers' expertise;
- *Informing* researchers about relevant calls through multiple channels;
- *Stimulating* researchers in applying for EU funding;
- *Supporting* researchers in writing and submitting proposals.

Timeline

Location and preliminary dates for the workshop are presented below:

Location: University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), room to be confirmed

Dates: 27. - 28. March 2024

The intensive and dedicated support phase will start after the workshop has taken place. The timeline below contains a preliminary overview of what to expect:



How to apply?

Requirements

This call is open to researchers (professors and postdoctoral researchers - at least 3 years after the completion of the PhD) who:

- Carry out research in a health domain (e.g. biomedical areas, medicinal chemistry, public health, mental health, health economics, environmental health);
- Have an employment contract at University of Ljubljana (Slovenia);
- Have a good command of written and spoken academic English;
- Are committed to applying for a major collaborative Horizon Europe proposal.

Documentation

In order to apply, please send us:

- An updated Curriculum Vitae (free format);
- A short description of your proposal idea and motivation (see Annex 1 below): candidates are expected to think about a preliminary idea for a proposal to be submitted for EU funding.

Both documents should be sent to the email addresses in the contact information section (page 7) by **Friday, 8 March 2024**. Later submissions will not be accepted.

Selection procedure

Your host institution and the VUB EU Support Team will select 5 applicants based on the quality and innovativeness of their proposal idea. The candidates will be notified by email about the outcome of the selection procedure.

What to expect if selected?

If you are selected, participation in the training programme is free of charge for you. However, it is **mandatory** that you:

- Take part in the initial 3-day workshop and engage with the workshop activities;
- Are present at the online bi-weekly meetings (once every two weeks) with the VUB EU Support Team;
- Re-schedule the bi-weekly meetings if on some occasion you are not able to attend;
- Answer promptly communications from VUB EU Support Team and notify them of any issues that might affect the training programme;
- Are willing to implement the feedback received in order to strengthen your proposal;
- Commit to the (long) writing process that is necessary to produce a high-quality and competitive Horizon Europe proposal;
- Submit your proposal before the deadline;
- Complete the final feedback survey.

All communications with the VUB EU Support Team will be in English.

Contact information and application form

Please submit your **CV and a short description of your proposal idea and motivation by March 8, 2024**, via application form: <https://forms.office.com/e/vdd9Yq44Y7>

If you have any questions regarding this application procedure, please contact:

- Simona Rataj: simona.rataj@uni-lj.si (University of Ljubljana)
- Philippe Westbroek: philippe.westbroek@vub.be (VUB EU Support Team)

We look forward to reading your application!

Annex 1: Motivational letter

Please think about a potential research proposal idea and send us a document (PDF format) of maximum 2 pages containing the following information:

What are the objectives of your research proposal? What do you aim to achieve?

Which methods will be needed to achieve these objectives?

What are the innovative aspects of your proposal? And what is its societal, scientific, economic, and/or technological impact?

Please explain your motivation to apply for this training programme in maximum 150 words (not included in the 2-pager).