

DECISION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

approving the ranked lists of innovation actions selected for funding under the Europe's Rail call for proposals HORIZON-ER-JU-2024-01

N° 13/2024

THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE EUROPE'S RAIL JOINT UNDERTAKING, (hereafter referred as "EU-RAIL")

Having regard to Council Regulation (EU) No 2021/2085 of 19 November 2021 establishing the Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe and repealing Regulations (EC) No 219/2007, (EU) No 557/2014, (EU) No 558/2014, (EU) No 559/2014, (EU) No 560/2014, (EU) No 561/2014 and (EU) No 642/2014, and in particular point of Article 17(2)(u).

Whereas:

- (1) On 5 December 2024, the EU-RAIL Governing Board adopted the Europe's Rail Work Programme 2024 (hereafter "WP 2024")¹. This WP 2024 was the basis for the launch of the call for proposals HORIZON-ER-JU-2024-01, which was published on the Horizon Europe Funding and Tenders Portal on 25 January 2024 with a deadline of 5 June 2024 17:00 (Brussels time).
- (2) The call for proposals HORIZON-ER-JU-2024-01 comprised a total of 3 topics open to entities eligible under the general rules of the Horizon Europe Work Programme. Each of those topics had its own dedicated budget line. Hence, projects do not compete against each other for the same budget insofar as they come under different topics.
- (3) In return to its 2024-01 call for Proposals, the Europe's Rail received 3 proposals (one proposal for each topic) for a total estimated value of EUR 34 650 719.31 and a requested EU contribution of EUR 21 699 405.46.
- (4) The proposals were verified for their compliance with the admissibility requirements and eligibility conditions of the call. During the verification, it was found that the 3 proposals received were both admissible and eligible and therefore declared as such by the Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking.
- (5) The proposals submitted were evaluated by an evaluation committee composed of independent experts, as set-up in the rules of the European Union's Horizon Europe framework programme and in particular the Horizon Europe rules for participation² as well as the General Annexes to the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024 and in

¹ https://rail-research.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/GB-Decision_16_Annex_WP2024.pdf

The WP 2024 was amended on 26 February 2024, i.e., after the publication of the HORIZON-ER-JU-2024-01 call for proposals on 25 January 2024.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/695/oj>

accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the WP 2024 (Annex VIII). On the basis of this evaluation, the experts established a ranking list per topic (Annex 1 of the Decision). As there was only one proposal per topic, there was no priority order. All proposals equalled or passed the award criteria thresholds (i.e.: “excellence”, “impact” and “quality and efficiency of the implementation”).

- (6) In accordance with the procedures laid down in the Guide on the procedures from proposal submission to managing grants under Horizon Europe³ (Online Manual), one independent observer was appointed by the Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking to observe and to offer independent advice on the conduct and fairness of all phases of the evaluation process, on how evaluators apply award criteria and on how to improve processes. The report of the independent observer (Annex 2 of the Decision) concluded that “the evaluation was conducted with a high degree of impartiality, fairness, and confidentiality”.
- (7) The Governing Board took note and acknowledged the Report of the Executive Director on the outcome of the call for proposals HORIZON-ER-JU-2024-01, which includes the Call Evaluation Report with its annexes, as well as the individual evaluation summary reports which will be attached to the individual notification letters to be sent to the applicants. Nevertheless, Annexes 8, 10, 11 and 12 of the report were not disclosed to the members other than the Union of the Governing Board due to the risk of Conflict of Interest.
- (8) Having examined the results of the evaluation process as reported in the Call evaluation report, the Executive Director recommends to fund one activity per topic in the ranking order stemming from the independent experts' evaluation (Main list” flagged proposals in Annex 1 “EU ranked list(s)”) for an indicative total EU contribution of EUR 21 699 405.46 and to consider the unused budget of EUR 594.54 which is the difference between the total budget appropriation (i.e.: “Call indicative budget co-funding” indicated in annex 1) of EUR 21 700 000.00 and the requested EU contribution for other operational activities of the JU in 2024 or the following years.
- (9) As proposed by the Executive Director in his report, the Grant Preparation Phase will be essential to ensure the alignment and consistency of the proposed research and innovation activities and coordination and support actions. To this effect, the Executive Director in his capacity as authorising officer should make use of the possibilities offered by Article 200(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046⁴.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/om_en.pdf

⁴ The authorising officer responsible may invite an applicant to adjust its proposal in the light of the recommendations of the evaluation committee. The authorising officer responsible shall keep appropriate records of contacts with applicants during the procedure.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The ranked lists pertaining to the call for proposals HORIZON-ER-JU-2024-01 including the lists of actions selected for funding (Annex 1) are approved.

Article 2

The Executive Director shall inform simultaneously the applicants of the results of the evaluation by the means of a notification letter to which the relevant individual evaluation summary reports shall be attached. For the actions selected for funding, the notification letter sent by the Executive Director shall invite applicants to start the grant preparation.

Article 3

With a view to promoting the alignment and consistency of the proposed research and innovation activities, the Executive Director is invited to consider the application of Article 200(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, and report to the Governing Board as he deems appropriate.

Article 4

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, on 17th July 2024.

For the Governing Board



Magda KOPCZYNSKA
The Chairperson

- Annex 1: Ranked lists pertaining to the call for proposals HORIZON-ER-JU-2024-01 including the lists of actions selected for funding.
- Annex 2: Independent Observer's Report.