



EGI COMPETENCE CENTRES

Terms of Reference

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Call for Competence Centres

Project proposal: EGI-Engage, Topic EINFRA-1 Action 6, H2020 WP 2014-15

Deadline for submission: 4 July 2014, h 24:00 CEST

Timeline:

30/05/2014	Opening of Call for EGI Competence Centres
04-07-2014, h 24:00 CEST	Deadline for submission of proposals
05-15/07/2014	Evaluation of proposals

EGI has opened a call for Competence Centres (CCs) proposals. CCs will be one of the instruments of EGI for e-Science support at a pan-European level.

Information about the Competence Centre and its activities is provided by the document "EGI Competence Centres, Call for participation".

Competence Centre proposals will undergo a selection process; the selected ones will become part of the programme of work (user engagement of the EGI-Engage project proposal for submission to the EC Horizon 2020 Call "European research infrastructures (including e-Infrastructures)", Topic EINFRA-1, to address Activity 6¹:

*"Support to the **evolution** of EGI (European Grid Infrastructure) towards a flexible compute/data infrastructure capable of federating and enabling the sharing of resources of any kind (public or private, grid or cloud, etc.) in order to offer computing and storage services to the whole European scientific community. The proposal will address operations for supplying services (IaaS, PaaS, SaaS) at European level, **engagement of and tailoring of services to new user communities** and dissemination activities."*

This document provides information on funding, rules for participation, budget, the selection process and deadlines.

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<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/2137-einfra-1-2014.html>
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/2137-einfra-1-2014.html>

1 Conditions for eligibility

1.1 Activities

In order to be eligible for funding the CC needs to conduct **all** of the following activities, as detailed in the Competence Centre Call for Participation:

- Technical support and training,
- Integration and innovation including requirements gathering and definition of user cases together with the user community. Integration and innovation will be delivered by submitting one or more mini-project, which are an integral part of the CC proposal.
- Exploitation of new service capabilities.

1.2 Eligibility and admissibility

The selected CCs will become part of the user engagement activities of the EGI-Engage project proposal, which will be submitted to Call3, Topic EINFRA-1 Activity 6 of the H2020 Work Programme 2015-2015 (deadline for submission: 02 September 2014).

Funding of the proposal is subject to the outcome of the evaluation process.

Participation to EGI-Engage through a CC is subject to the eligibility and admissibility rules of the H2020 work programme applicable to the EINFRA-1 topic, which are defined at: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/2137-einfra-1-2014.html#tab2>

1.3 CC implementation in EGI-Engage

The CCs and related mini-projects that will be selected for funding in EGI-Engage will become part of the Description of Work of the EGI-Engage project proposal (User Engagement).

The activities of the selected CCs will become part of the “User Engagement” Work Package of the EGI-Engage proposal. The training activities that will be delivered by the CC will become integral part of the EGI-Engage training programme.

Partners contributing work to the CC will be part of the EGI-Engage consortium according to the rules for participation defined in this document.

2 Duration

The EGI-Engage duration is envisaged to be 30 Project Months (PMs) starting in January 2015.

The duration of the CC activities can be from a **minimum of 12 PMs** to a **maximum equal to the project duration (30 PMs)**. Duration depends on the user needs and the readiness of their Virtual Research Environment.

3 Mini-projects

Integration and innovation activities as defined in the document “Competence Centre – Call for Participation”, are delivered through mini-projects, which are an integral part of the proposed activities of the CC.

Mini projects have duration:



- **from 3 to maximum 12 months** for “path-finding” mini-projects,
- **from 13 to a maximum of 24 months** for “lighthouse” mini-projects.

Each CC proposal should include a minimum of n. 2 path-finding mini-projects or n. 1 lighthouse mini-projects.

The CC proposal will undergo a selection process; each mini-project of the CC will be individually evaluated. The number of approved mini-projects per CC will vary depending on the outcome of the selection.

3.1 Duration

A Mini-project has duration from 3 to maximum 12 months for path-finding mini-projects and maximum 24 months for lighthouse mini-projects.

The start and end time of the mini-project are defined in the CC proposal according to the needs and level of readiness of the user communities.

3.2 Evaluation

Each mini-project is individually subject to a selection, whose purpose is to evaluate the impact of the proposed activities and their exploitation potential, the adequacy of the resources allocated, quality and efficiency of the implementation. The selection process will adhere to the H2020 selection criteria adopted by the EC, as defined by the H2020 General Annexes

(http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/pse/h2020-guide-pse_en.pdf).

Experts will evaluate on the basis of the criteria ‘excellence’, ‘impact’ and ‘quality and efficiency of the implementation’:

Excellence: the following aspects will be taken into account

- Clarity and pertinence of the objectives,
- Soundness of the concept, including trans-disciplinary considerations where relevant,
- Extent that proposed work is ambitious, has innovation potential and is beyond the state of the art.
- Relevant to the EGI User Engagement Strategy (<https://documents.egi.eu/document/2079>).

Impact: the extent to which the outputs of the mini-project should contribute at the European and/or international level by:

- addressing user requirements that cannot otherwise be met with the existing EGI services and existing activities in the EGI collaboration,
- improving the support to the European Research Area,
- promoting the reuse of EGI services capabilities.

The following aspects will be taken into account:

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- Enhancing innovation capacity and integration of new knowledge;
- Strengthening the competitiveness and growth of companies where relevant,
- Any other environmental and socially important impacts.

Quality and efficiency of the implementation. The following aspects will be taken into account:

- Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan,
- Complementarity of the participants, participation of user communities, level of demonstrated expertise, capability of leveraging the expertise available in the EGI collaboration, geographic coverage of the services providers involved in the CC.
- Participation from other e-Infrastructures (in Europe and world wide) to join efforts and share expertise. These e-Infrastructures will be part of the CC in the form of Associated Partners and their human effort will be unfunded.
- Type and amount of free in-kind contributions offered to the CC.
- The sustainability plans of the CC for its assets including software support, training, user support. EGI will offer its core services as applicable to support the activities of the CC.

4 Rules for participation

Organizations participating to a CC need to comply to the Eligibility and admissibility conditions defined by the EC for the H2020 work programme 2014-2015 as described in part B and C of the General Annexes of the General Work Programme (<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/2137-einfra-1-2014.html#tab2>).

The organizations contributing to a CC will be funded partners or associated partners, depending on the type of partner (see below).

Organizations participating to a CC need to contribute to one or more functions as defined in the document “EGI Competence Centre – Call for Participation”:

- User support,
- Development,
- Service provisioning.

The following paragraph define how organizations contributing to the CC will be configured within the EGI-Engage consortium

4.1 Funded partners

Organizations contributing to the CC for user support, development and service provisioning will be funded through the EGI-Engage project. This is subject to the outcome of the project evaluation process established by the EC for the project proposals in H2020.

- Existing and prospective service providers will be associated to a NGI-related JRU when there is a country-level JRU supporting the NGI model on which EGI is based, or



- an independent JRU in case there is no NGI in a country. Service providers need to participate to the EGI Council and commit to the multiannual fee policy.
- Technology providers will be associated to a NGI-related JRU when there is a country-level JRU supporting the NGI model on which EGI is based, or independent beneficiary in the consortium in case there is no NGI in a country. These are expected to engage with EGI in a MoU or SLA for the long-term support of the software that will be deployed to ensure maintenance, adherence to quality verification criteria and support to users and service providers.
 - User Communities are represented by one or more organizations that will become partner of the consortium. These organizations must be legal entities participating to a scientific collaboration, a Research Infrastructure, for example an ERIC where present and already established. For the implementation of the consortium, legal entities representing the User Community can be associated to a NGI-related JRU where applicable (or other JRU when no NGI construct exists in a country), or can be an independent beneficiary.

4.2 Associated partners

Associated partners will contribute to the activities of the CC with own resources; EGI-Engage will provide travel support for participation to the main EGI events.

Organizations from cooperating e-infrastructures will participate as associated partners.

5 Funding

Activities of the CC will be 100% co-funded by the EC.

Mini-projects funding will depend on the duration.

- **Path-finding mini-projects of duration from 3 to 12 months:** can apply to a maximum allocated budget of **60 Keuro**.
- **Lighthouse mini-projects of duration from 13 to 24 months:** can apply to a maximum allocated budget of **120 Keuro**.

The remaining eligible activities of the CC (including training, user support, service exploitation and integration activities to support communities not addressed by mini-projects – see section 1) will be allocated 20% of the total mini-project budget.

The maximum budget allocated to CCs amounts to 2 MEuro, distribution of the budget depends on the outcome of the selection.

Unfunded in-kind contributions can be provided in the form of: additional effort to develop Virtual Research Environments and EGI services, resource capacity (storage and computation) to be contributed to the user communities of the CC and, if applicable, to any user community through the EGI distributed resource pool (https://wiki.egi.eu/wiki/Resource_Allocation), which can be accessed through the e-Grant portal <http://e-grant.egi.eu/>).

6 Selection process

The CC proposal and each mini-project individually are subject to a selection process.

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Proposals and mini-projects will be short-listed by a panel at EGI.eu personnel.

The selection panel reserves the right of approving a subset of the proposed mini-projects and to propose a merge of CC proposals depending on the user communities addressed and the type of innovation and integration proposed through the mini-projects, in order to create synergies.

7 Submission guidelines

A CC template is provided to describe the proposed activities and mini-projects. The CC proposal needs to adhere to the template provided and need to be submitted to:

cc-call@mailman.egi.eu

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8 Support

In case of questions please mail: egi-engage@mailman.egi.eu