GAP 4 EDIH

DIGITAL EUROPE

European Commission

DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

Grant Agreement Preparation (GAP)

for

the European Digital Innovation Hubs for Associated Countries (EDIH)

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#DigitalEuropeProgramme

CNECT R5

The Grant Agreement Preparation process

You received the "Evaluation Summary Report" for your proposal and an invitation for "Grant preparation".
Congratulations!

Now we have to prepare the **Grant Agreement**, which means going from a successfully evaluated proposal to a legally valid grant (or contract)

Proposal → GAP / Grant Agreement Preparation → **Signed Grant Agreement** → Prefinancing → 1 Euro

CNECT A.4: Artificial Intelligence Innovation and Policy Coordination

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How does it work?

All the interactions happen through the participant portal.

The reference documents can be found here.

(https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/reference-documents;programCode=DIGITAL)
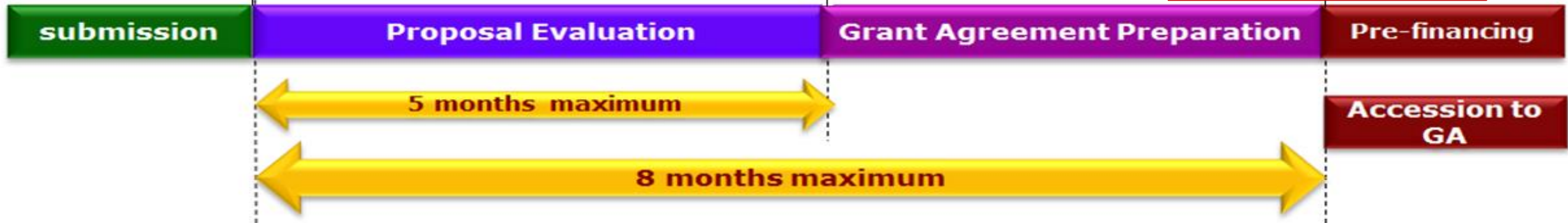
GAP: a time-bound process

EDIH call: 10/04/2024

Planned deadline: 24/10/2024

Call deadline	Invitation to grant preparation	Grant signature

fully electronic process

GA must be signed before the end of 2024

submission	Proposal Evaluation	Grant Agreement Preparation	Pre-financing

5 months maximum

Accession to GA

8 months maximum

- The GA preparation – the conclusion of the grant agreement is subject to time limits – **strict deadlines** (this is a regulatory requirement)
- The invitation letter specifies deadlines applicable for the GAP
    - Align yourself with the applicable deadlines and make diligent efforts to comply with the dates set
    - Notify the EU services if you encounter delays
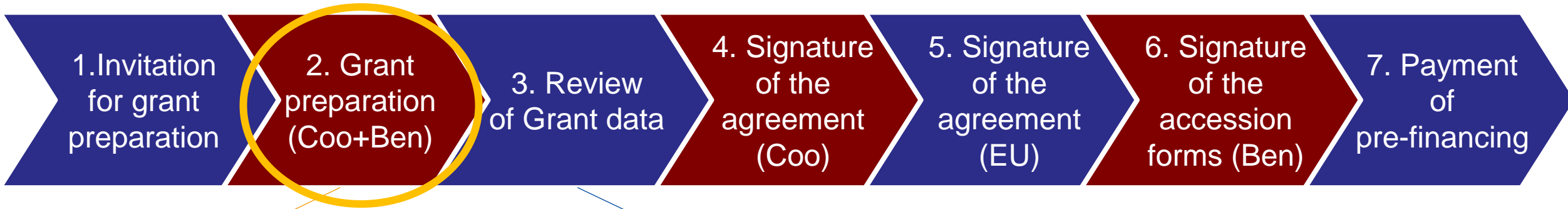   - The non-respect of the deadlines may lead to the termination of grant preparation (rejection).

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GAP: Timing

Invitation + ESR

Grant agreement data (GA data)

Grant signature

3,5 months max.

5 weeks

~1 week

2 weeks

consortium

EC

consortium

submit GA data

remaining issues (if any)

submit GA data (final)

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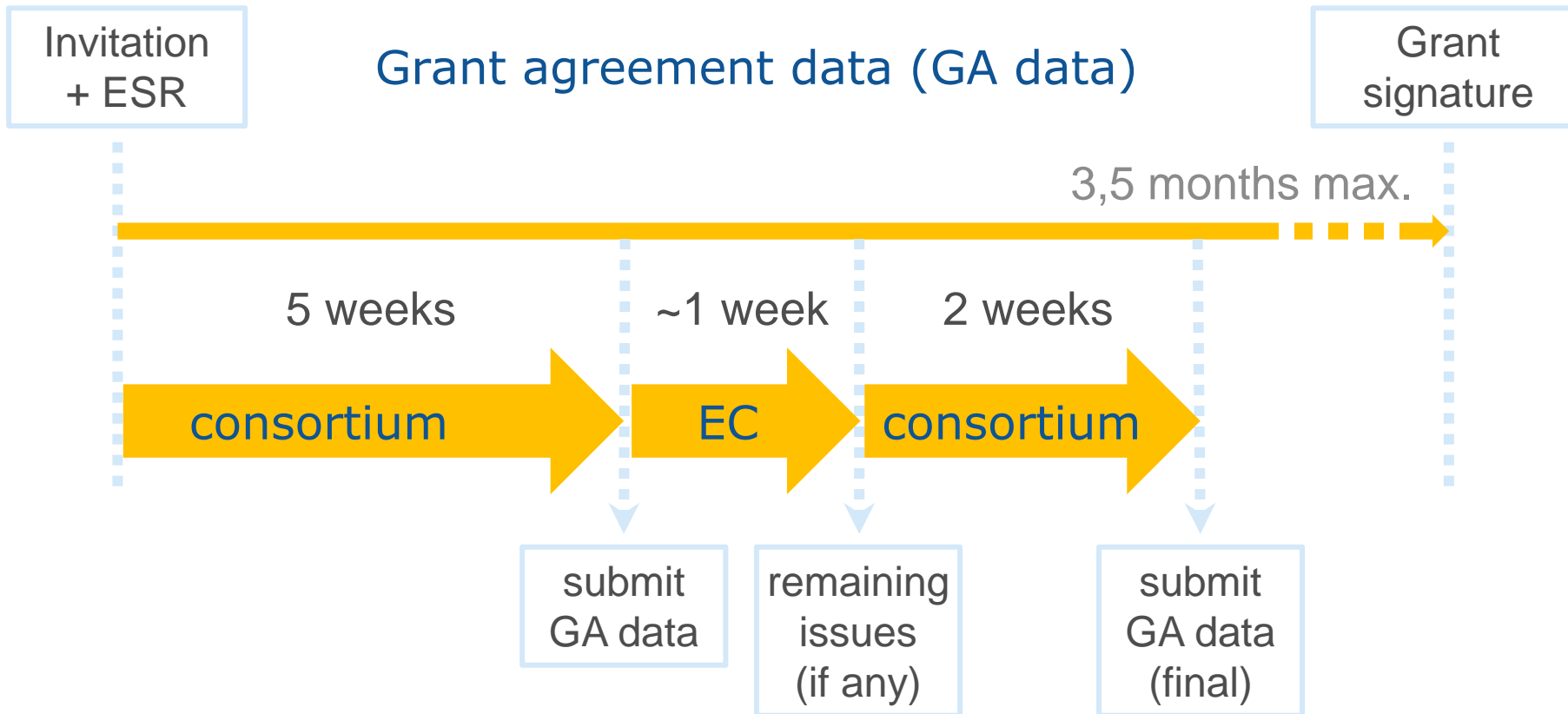
GAP: The steps in the process

We are now at step 2

Coo = coordinator
Ben = beneficiary

1. Invitation for grant preparation

2. Grant preparation (Coo+Ben)

3. Review of Grant data

4. Signature of the agreement (Coo)

5. Signature of the agreement (EU)

6. Signature of the accession forms (Ben)

7. Payment of pre-financing

Validation of participants

Setting identity access management (IAM) roles (each ben)

Signature of the 'Declaration of honour' (e-signature, each ben)

Transforming proposal into Description of Action (DoA)

* further iterations possible (completion/correction of grant data)

Ex-ante checks, reservation of funds, preparation of award decision

Steps 2 and 3 are the "heavy" ones

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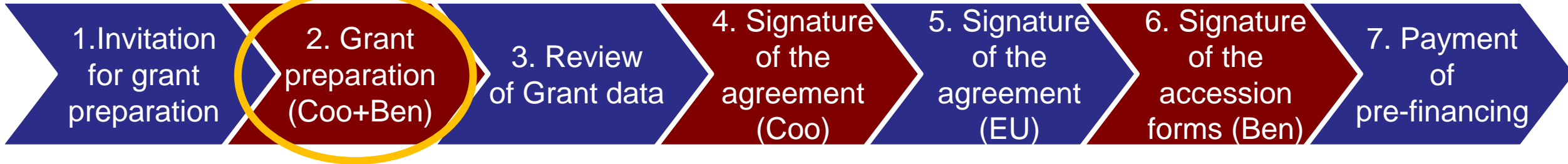
First principle: Changes should be limited

What if there are changes to the consortium?

- **A beneficiary wants to leave: Inform CNECT-DIH@ec.europa.eu and PO, propose an alternative, and if agreed implement the changes. The leaving beneficiary needs to write a withdrawal letter that should be uploaded to the portal (formal communication)**

- **Addition of affiliated entities is allowed, but a description should be added in the DoA including proof of link between beneficiary and affiliate**

What if there are changes to the budget?

- **Requested EU funding can not be higher than mentioned in invitation letter**

- **New budget distribution should be agreed with PO by writing to CNECT-DIH and PO**

We recommend to avoid writing only to your PO, because she/he might be on holidays or busy on other things and the answer could be delayed

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First principle: Changes should be limited

Adapt deliverables and milestones to reporting periods and reviews

- 2 or 3 reporting periods – still to be decided

- Review meeting at the end of each reporting period

- Deliverables need to be ready well in time before the review – at least 3 weeks before

Implement suggestions of the ESR

- **ONLY IF** you do not agree with the recommendations, or you cannot implement them, **THEN** contact the functional mailbox **CNECT-DIH@ec.europa.eu** and PO

Correct clerical errors

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The first things to do are some **administrative** and **financial** checks.

The **coordinator and other beneficiaries** (partners and affiliated entities) must be registered in the participant portal – this requires providing some documents and identifying a **Legal Entity Appointed Representative** (LEAR)

If your organization has worked in another EU project, usually this is already done.

EC also needs to check financial stability of private organisations: the **"financial viability check"**

Colleagues from REA Central Validation Service explained this process in detail
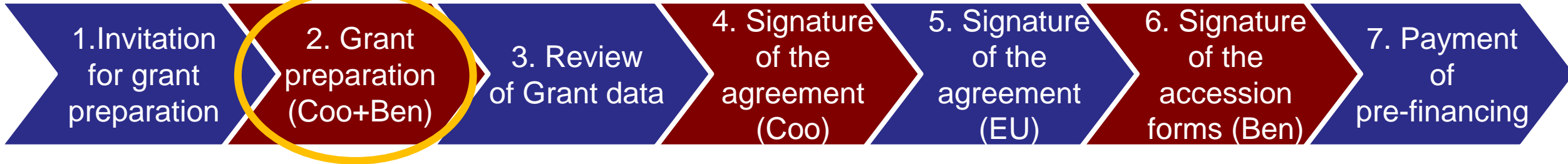
The second thing to do is to **record in the Participant Portal all the data of the grant**, **which includes transforming the proposal in the "Description of Action" (DoA), which is the part of the Grant Agreement describing the actions to be performed.**
Proposal and DoA are very similar, but not exactly the same.

The official template of the DoA is here:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/digital/temp-form/gap/doa_digital_en.docx

DoA has two sections

- Part A (structured)

- Part B (text)

Project: [insert number] — [insert acronym] — [insert call identifier]

EU Grants: Description of the action (DoA) — Annex 1 (DEP): V1.0 – 01.11.2021

IMPORTANT NOTICE

What is the Description of the Action (DoA)?

The Description of the Action (DoA) is the Annex of the Grant Agreement which contains the details of how the project will be carried out. For EU framework partnerships for grants (FPAs) this Annex is called Action Plan.

It consists of 2 parts, which must be generated from the submitted proposal:

- Part A contains structured tables with project information

- Part B is a narrative description on the work to be carried out.

Part A is generated by the IT system. It is based on the information which you enter into the Portal Grant Preparation screens.

Part B (+ annexes) must be uploaded on the Grant Preparation Documents screen.

⚠ Make sure that Part B is synchronised with the information entered into the screens. Make sure that any changes are agreed with us.

Project: [insert number] — [insert acronym] — [insert call identifier]

EU Grants: Description of the action (DoA) — Annex 1 (DEP): V1.0 – 01.11.2021

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION (PART A)
[for FPAs: **ACTION PLAN (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:	[project number]
Project name:	[project title]
Project acronym:	[acronym]
Call:	[call ID]
Topic:	[topic ID]
Type of action:	[ToA ID]
Service:	[responsible unit, e.g. HOME/E/01]
Project starting date:	[dd/mm/yyyy]
Project duration:	[number of months]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project summary
List of participants
List of work packages
Staff effort
List of deliverables *(n/a for FPAs)*
List of milestones (outputs/outcomes) *(n/a for FPAs)*
List of critical risks *(n/a for FPAs)*

Project: [insert number] — [insert acronym] — [insert call identifier]

EU Grants: Description of the action (DoA) — Annex 1 (DEP): V1.0 – 01.11.2021

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.

Insert text (same text as proposal abstract)

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS

Grant Preparation (Beneficiaries screen) — Enter the info.

Partner No	Role	Short Name	Legal Name	Country	PIC
1	COO				
2	BEN				
2.1	AE				
3	BEN				
4	AP				

These structured tables are filled automatically from the data you encode in the participant portal

opean
nmission

Follow the detailed instructions for the <u>Part B</u>

<u>Avoid any duplications with Part A</u>

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION (PART B)
[for FPAs: ACTION PLAN (PART B)]

Part B of the Description of the Action (DoA) must be uploaded on the Portal Grant Preparation Documents screen.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR PART B

- Start from Part B of your proposal. Use the version that was submitted for evaluation.

  ⚠ The version used should be the submitted version of the proposal (— unless you have been explicitly requested to make changes). All changes need to be discussed and agreed with the EU Project Officer. Substantial changes to the proposal are NOT allowed.

- Replace the cover page.
- Delete the footer (if any).
- Replace the header.
- Remove the project summary (already included in Part A).
- Remove the risk management section (to be encoded on the screens).
- Remove the work package tables, including milestones and deliverables (to be encoded on the screens).
- Remove the staff effort table (to be encoded on the screens).
- Cross-check all sections in order to implement changes required by/agreed with the EU. Ensure coherence with the information entered on the screens.
- Add a table with the history of changes.

  Specify all changes compared to your proposal. Changes should be described concisely. You do not need to include minor changes that do not modify the substance of the DoA (e.g. correction of spelling and grammar, changes in formatting).

- Update the table of contents.
- Merge all parts of Part B and all required Annexes (except for the Ownership Control Questionnaire, which does not need to be re-submitted) into a single file, convert it into PDF and upload the PDF on the Grant Preparation Documents screen.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION			GRANT PREPARATION	
Data entry Submission System	Proposal – Part A (automatically generated by the system)	→	Structured system data	Annex 1 – Part A (automatically generated by the system)
			Data entry Grant Management System	
Part B Narrative	Proposal – Part B (uploaded as PDF; annexes separate, if allowed; detailed budget table as Excel or PDF)	↗ ↘	Part B Narrative	Annex 1 – Part B (uploaded as single PDF; detailed budget table as Excel or PDF)
Annexes to Part B (detailed budget table, etc.)		→	Annexes to Part B (detailed budget table, etc.)	

| 1.Invitation for grant preparation | 2. Grant preparation (Coo+Ben) | 3. Review of Grant data | 4. Signature of the agreement (Coo) | 5. Signature of the agreement (EU) | 6. Signature of the accession forms (Ben) | 7. Payment of pre-financing |

Very very important!

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.11.2021	Initial version (new MFF).

Include an history of the changes done to your Part B, explaining the differences with the proposal (if any)

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1.Invitation for grant preparation	2. Grant preparation (Coo+Ben)	3. Review of Grant data	4. Signature of the agreement (Coo)	5. Signature of the agreement (EU)	6. Signature of the accession forms (Ben)	7. Payment of pre-financing

This will be done by the Commission and might lead to further iterations with you. All the information stored in the system for your project is checked:

- **Summary**
- **Beneficiaries**
- **General information**
- **Reporting period**
- **GA information**
- **GA options**
- **Financial overview…**

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SyGMa — Grant Agreement Data

23621 (223621 TEST) HORIZON-...
ll: HORIZON-CL6-2021
pic: HORIZON-...-2021-...-02-01

Project Summary | Beneficiaries | General Information | Reporting Periods | GA Information | GA Options | Financial Information | LF Overview | Associated Partners | Researchers | Work Packages | Deliverables | Milestones | Reviews | Critical Risks | Ethics Info | Security

DOCUMENTS

Project Summary ⑦

Legend – icons used
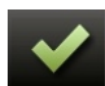
 No missing information

 Missing information: blocking

 For information only

 Missing information: not blocking at this point

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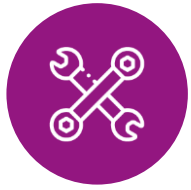
IT system for grant management - walkthrough

Grant management service

Beneficiaries

Partner summary

- Coordinator/beneficiary Partner Summary is automatically listed after receiving the invitation letter.

- The **department** needs to be added (mandatory for all beneficiaries, except for Affiliated Entities)

Financial information

- Coordinator/beneficiary financial Information is automatically listed after receiving the invitation letter (from proposal).

Project representatives

- If no Project Representatives are listed, please complete in the **roles management section of the Funding & Tenders Portal**.
- Check all information and update, if necessary, in the **roles management section of the Funding & Tenders Portal**.
- Both Coordinators and beneficiaries should, as soon as they have been invited, nominate in the Funding & Tenders Portal, their Legal Entity Appointed Representative (LEAR) and Project Legal Signatory (PLSIGN). Once this has been done, the PLSIGN who will appear in the Grant Agreement has to be selected in this screen. Please note that all other PLSIGNs can sign the Grant Agreement.

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Affiliated entities

- Affiliated entities Financial Information is automatically listed after receiving the invitation letter (from proposal)

- It is possible to add new AE

Associated partners

- Data prefilled with proposal information
- Associated partners do not sign the grant agreement and cannot declare costs
- It is possible to add new AP

Bank account (coo only)

- Select your bank account from the list of accounts already registered in the Participant Register.
  For more information about how to register a bank account in the Participant Register, please click here.

Work Packages

Number ▲		Name	Lead Beneficiary	Total Effort	Start Month	End Month	Deliverables No.
1	✔	Promote projects a	A	61.25	1	84	1, 2, 3 ...
2	✔	Promote and support	M	1186.07	1	84	10, 11 ...
3	✔	Promote a	M	30.25	1	84	17, 18 ...
4	✔	Connectin	SE	28.5	1	84	24, 25 ...
5	✔	Intern	D	26.25	1	84	30, 31 ...
6	✔	Commun	F	15.5	1	84	36, 37 ...
7	⚠	Sta	F	0	1	84	42, 43 ...
8	✔	Develop and	BEL	10.5	1	84	49, 50 ...
9	✔	Coordination and Management	B	190.6	1	84	56, 57 ...
		Total:		1548.92			

- The Project Work Packages are not automatically listed after receiving the invitation letter.
- Complete all necessary work packages
- You can change the order of the work packages by **dragging and dropping**.

Deliverables

- Deliverables are not automatically listed
- All deliverables in proposal need to be included with the same details
- Select appropriate Dissemination status (Public, Sensitive (limited under conditions in GA), EU classified (EU-restricted/EU-confidential/EU-secret).

Milestones

- Milestones are not automatically listed
- All milestones in proposal need to be included with the same details

Critical risks

- Critical risks are not automatically listed
- All critical risks in proposal need to be included with the same details

Ethics

- Ethics screen is available as read only
- Before a final Opinion is encoded by Ethics experts in the Ethics evaluation process, at times, additional information may be requested from the applicant.
- The Consortium or its representative has to upload the requested information in Grant Management application in the Funding & Tenders Portal, under section 'Additional Information request'

Part B of DoA

Check instructions on slide 14 of this presentation
- Before uploading the part B, please remove the cover pages, the list of participants and add a history of changes. Changes need to be described concisely. Please add also a table of contents and page numbers.
- Please remove also, deliverables, milestones, risks and work packages as these are included in part A
- After creating the pdf, you may upload in the documents section
- Avoid repetition of information

When all the data (DoA, legal data, financial data) is OK,

- The **Coordinator** signs the grant

- Then the representative of the **European Commission** signs the grant

- All the **beneficiaries** sign the "accession form" which is the legal basis for their participation to the project

This part of the process is quite straightforward, but keep in mind that, if you have a large consortium, you may have to chase all the involved people and remind them to put their signature in the system!

At this point, the European Commission transfers the prefinancing amount on the bank account of the coordinator.

Note that:

- **The project can start on the date of the signature, or on a fixed date, even before the grant agreement is signed (at your risk!)**

- **The consortium must have a Consortium Agreement. The European Commission is not involved in it. You can find a model agreement and documentation here:**

https://intellectual-property-helpdesk.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/horizon-europe-projects-updated-desca-model-consortium-agreement-now-available-2022-01-11_en

The EDIH projects are co-funded from the European Commission and from the Country.

This means that typically there will be **one grant between the project and the EC**, and **another grant between the project and the Country**.

In case of questions

FAQ - **FAQ: European Digital Innovation Hubs | European Digital Innovation Hubs Network (europa.eu)**

Funding & Tenders Portal - **Guidance & Manuals | EU Funding & Tenders Portal (europa.eu)** - guidance documents and some very simple videos on 'how to'

Send your question to **CNECT-DIH@ec.europa.eu** and to your Project Officer

Thank you!