



## Organization of H2020 training events 1

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Authors: Mariana Pestana ([marianapestana@tecnico.ulisboa.pt](mailto:marianapestana@tecnico.ulisboa.pt)), Alexandra Mendes ([alexandra.mendes@tecnico.ulisboa.pt](mailto:alexandra.mendes@tecnico.ulisboa.pt)), Catherine Mulligan ([catherine.mulligan@tecnico.ulisboa.pt](mailto:catherine.mulligan@tecnico.ulisboa.pt)), Nuno Nunes ([nunojnunes@tecnico.ulisboa.pt](mailto:nunojnunes@tecnico.ulisboa.pt)), Rodrigo Rodrigues ([rodrigo.miragaia.rodrigues@tecnico.ulisboa.pt](mailto:rodrigo.miragaia.rodrigues@tecnico.ulisboa.pt))

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List of Contributors	
Name	Partner
Alexandra Mendes	IST / ITI/LARSyS
Nuno Nunes	IST / ITI/LARSyS
Rodrigo Rodrigues	INESC-ID / IST
Catherine Mulligan	IST / ITI/LARSyS

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## 1. Summary

Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLT) are transformative and bring about a potential for improvement in European citizenship and economic growth - enabling decentralised, trusted, transparent, user-centric digital services, stimulating new and improved business models, and promoting decentralised social innovations. For this purpose, the EC is considering these technologies strategic for the next decades, promoting a holistic approach to their deployment in multiple application domains: from medical data to smart homes and grids, citizenship and democratic decision making, transport, creative industries and digital social media. While many of the challenges related to blockchain technologies may be perceived as exclusively technical, or deeply infrastructural, these technologies have the potential to impact business and human experience and values profoundly. Effective deployments of blockchain will require bringing together in a synergistic way the technical expertise and a design innovation perspective based on the principles of design thinking, which focus on a deep understanding of human needs to produce strong case studies in different domains through an iterative process of ideation and real-world testing.

The following general impacts in terms of innovation can be expected:

- **Improving existing blockchain products and services** in the key application domains of LARSyS and INESC-ID, most notably mobility and logistics, energy and climate action, urban systems and ocean exploration, and exploitation in close collaboration with existing and future industry partners;
- **Developing new business segments and applications** in ICT, emerging from ongoing research and not necessarily confined to the above domains. The project will develop components, systems, applications and also services that could be exploited by system integrators, application developers and other industry stakeholders to integrate new data-based technologies into their offerings thereby creating new valuable business opportunities;
- **Developing traditional (local) businesses**, in particular for the **Energy, Tourism and Creative Industries** sectors that can integrate new ICT technologies into their systems by becoming more flexible, responsive, innovative and competitive.

A significant part of BIG aims to help improve INESC-ID and LARSyS in obtaining competitive funding, namely in the context of the EU Framework Programs (H2020 and ESIF). The GA (pg. 20) clearly states that “*Measure 5 – Introduce structural changes to increase performance: relates to the incorporation in INESC-ID and LARSyS management of best practices and standards developed in the context of the ERA Chair project, thereby strengthening the structure of the research centres but also of Técnico - Lisbon as a whole*”. For this, the GA of BIG proposes several structural actions (pg. 8): increasing critical mass and focusing the research topics on blockchain innovation technologies and design innovation and twinning with international partners to “improve the participation of its associated labs ICT research labs LARSyS and INESC-ID in the Horizon 2020 and ESIF programmes”.

It is important to restate what the GA of BIG defines as structural changes and goals related to Blockchain technologies and design Innovation for Social Good (BIG) developing a campus-wide initiative in the

premier engineering school in Portugal which includes more than 885 faculty members and 23 research units including both INESC-ID and ITI/LARSyS. BIG is not about blockchain technologies per se (in fact INESC-ID already includes several world-class researchers working on many technical aspects of blockchain - including co-PI Rodrigo Rodrigues previous recipient of an ERC grant “Dependable Cloud”). The concept of BIG was to bridge the existing technical expertise at INESC-ID with the design innovation perspective focused on the deep understanding of human needs to produce strong case studies in different domains for real-world testing which is the expertise of ITI/LARSyS. As stated in the GA (pg. 5): “*BIG will dedicate resources to design and other creativity-enhancing practices for exploration of innovative solutions for blockchain and distributed ledger technologies via design studios, developing unexpected uses of technology, testing of unusual application domain solutions, and working on social innovation/acceptance.*”

The Deliverable 3.1 "Organization of Horizon 2020 Training Events" is a report on the training events in the scope of the BIG project in the first 12 months of the project.

### **WP3, Task 3.1. Acquiring Horizon 2020 funding development expertise (M6-M24).**

*"This task will include the training of the ERA Chair team and the current staff and Faculty of LARSyS and INESC-ID in Horizon 2020 project management and EC funding development. This task will guarantee that we create the local expertise in EU research funding that will allow us to be more effective in accessing Horizon 2020 funds and creating know-how for the management of future projects, knowledge protection and entrepreneurship. This will include attending specialized training courses for the ERA Chair Support team, LARSyS and INESC-ID project managers: two training courses dedicated to H2020 applications (4 people x 2 training courses), plus one training course in-house for all LARSyS and INESC-ID researchers by an invited external expert (1 person x 1 training course). "*

This deliverable was required to be revised with the following information:

- Detailed information on the collaboration of the BIG Research Team with other stakeholders on the preparation and submission of H2020 proposals, including the following: Horizon Europe topic, consortium, the title of proposal, link and relevance to the BIG project strategic areas;
- Added value of the prepared and submitted proposals to the BIG project activities;
- Status of the proposal's evaluation.

The deliverable is now divided into two parts. Part 1 responds directly to this request. Part 2 concerns EU funding training up until the current date, as a response to the following comment in the report “The activities for the training of the BIG ERA Team members during the 1st Reporting Period are only a few (attendance to two training events, 1 participation to EU R&I Days). The beneficiary needs to provide a more concrete plan of how the team members will gain sufficient expertise to prepare and submit high-quality proposals for funding at national and European levels.”

## 2. Objectives

LARSyS and INESC-ID are two Portuguese research units evaluated in 2018 by FCT – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, as Excellent. The items under evaluation were: quality, merit, relevance and internationalization of the R&D activities.

Although the evaluation was the best we could expect, these 2 R&D units face some difficulties obtaining EU funding. We lack support and management staff with experience in managing EU grant proposals and reaching out to entities in the European Research Area. We also lack highly experienced senior researchers with a track record of successful EU grant proposals that can train and support younger Faculty. Our younger team members must learn to better project their results within the European Research Area's innovation networks.

The main objective of this deliverable is to overcome the needs mentioned above by training critical members of LARSyS and INESC-ID to prepare applications to H2020 and ESIF funds, which should increase the chances of getting projects approved.

### **H2020 Proposals prepared and submitted by BIG Research Team with other stakeholders:**

Title of proposal: **CULTURE CHAIN - Cultural BlockChain and Artificial Intelligence for the Protection and Preservation of Digital Cultural Heritage**

H2020 call: HORIZON-CL2-2021-HERITAGE-01

Type of action: HORIZON-RIA

ERA Chair Members involved: Valentina Nisi, Nuno Nunes

Horizon Europe topic: Heritage

Consortium: Fondazione Istituto Italiano Di Tecnologia, Associacao Do Instituto Superior Tecnico Para A Investigacao E Desenvolvimento, Ey Advisory Spa, University Of Surrey, Noho Limited, Ecom Centro Europeo Per L'organizzazione E Il Management Culturale -European Centre For Cultural Organisation And Management Associazione, Kea European Affairs, Withers Llp, Artivive Gmbh, Muzej Novejse Zgodovine Slovenije, Instituto Marques De Valle Flor

Link and relevance to the BIG project strategic areas: CULTURE CHAIN promotes the preservation of digital tangible and intangible cultural heritage by providing tools for the re-use of assets enabling traceability, acknowledgement, licensing, endorsement, and access. The driving principle of the project is to co-design with relevant stakeholders groundbreaking BlockChain (BC) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology that protect CH digital assets, while being invisible to the users, with the aim to safely ease and democratise access to culture. To bring technology tailored to the stakeholders, the project implements new actions for user-centered design to: understand the NEEDS of artists and creators, co-design interfaces to suit their needs; DEVELOP the audience through participation strategies; during and after the current pandemic crisis. The fruition of this will be achieved through novel ICT tools to handle ACKnowledgment through (semi-) automatic referencing methods by identifying where and how a piece has been influenced or derived from the prior art; PROTECT using Blockchain and embed Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT) support by a Knowledge Graph to handle authenticity, the endorsement of use and the remuneration; ACCESS to create a general-purpose platform for smooth deployment of content using polyvocal storytelling, AR and VR visualization of digital CH and Art.

Added value of the prepared and submitted proposals to the BIG project activities: CULTURE CHAIN will be deployed and demonstrated on three pilots with unique stakeholders and case studies. First, a community of AR Artists, needing greater safe access to digital content and new methods for remuneration. Secondly, managing digital exhibitions in small-medium size museums promoting the re-use of digital assets across Europe with a limited budget. Finally, CULTURE CHAIN will expose polyvocal stories of the inhabitants of Lisbon intermixing tangible and intangible heritage and assets of the locals into guided tours through the city.

Status of the proposal's evaluation: Not funded (12.5/15, threshold 10)

Title of proposal: **WILD – Into the Wild**

H2020 call: H2020-FETPROACT-2020-2, RIA

ERA Chair Members involved: Valentina Nisi, Nuno Nunes

Horizon Europe topic: Future and Emerging Technologies

Consortium: IIT, ITI/LARSyS, U. C. Sacro Cuore, U. College London, Noho

Link and relevance to the BIG project strategic areas: Society is changing; more people where holidays, commuting or generally being outdoors, are changing be it due to a pandemic or the environmental implications, travel across the world is being impacted. Therefore, there is a need for new spaces to augment social presence and extend the range of social interaction possibilities among human beings. Such spaces need to be more than just meeting places but places of collaboration, self-expression and exploration.

We propose to use storytelling as a vehicle to promote social inclusion where we transport disjoint people into a physical (or digital copy) of reality to collaboratively experience stories where blockchain technologies can be employed. We rely on the full range of XR (from Real to VR), overcoming the need for an artist to meticulously create visual assets as, is common in VR, our real-world provides the context where AI weaves together compelling stories into a coherent narrative around the target area, transforming the environment to reflect the narrative of the story and the interactions of the users. Set in the natural environment of the islands of Madeira for its stunning scenery, heritage and diversity; for the Into the WILD project, truly encapsulates its name in both reality and the depths of the imagination. When reading a story, we imagine the fantasy world differently, guided by experiences and our emotional state.

Added value of the prepared and submitted proposals to the BIG project activities: WILD in based on data which can be stored in DLTs and blockchains such as cues from social media, interactions and biometric information of the users to guide the transformation of reality creating a relatable and immersive experience to the users and building an element of implicit codesign and uniqueness to the experience. WILD employs ethically considerate AI and privacy-preserving to create layers around the users focusing on demonstrated interaction to guide the experience beyond the simple friend and follower relationship.

Status of the proposal's evaluation: Not funded 2.70 (Threshold: 0)

Title of proposal: **DCitizens: Fostering Digital Civics Research and Innovation in Lisbon**

H2020 call: Twinning - Widening

ERA Chair Members involved: Horizon Europe topic: Hugo Nicolau

Consortium: IST-ID, IIT, U. Siegen, U. Northumbria

Link and relevance to the BIG project strategic areas: While governments act as transactional providers of uniform and static services, the challenges of contemporary society require different models of service design and delivery that are built on long-term engagement, participation, and co-creation with local communities and citizens. Digital Civics posits the use of technology in the provision of relational models of public services by empowering citizens and non-state actors to co-create, take an active role in shaping agendas, making decisions about service



provision, and making such provisions sustainable and resilient. DCitizens builds on those principles to achieve 5 main objectives: O1) Enhance ITI research profile and innovation competence in Digital Civics; O2) Provide training to Staff and Early Stage Researchers to build critical mass at the interface of research, local government, and the private/third sectors; O3) Establish a leading pole of excellence in Digital Civics; O4) Strengthen and expand the collaborative network between the Twinning partners; and O5) Establish a Digital Civics Research and Innovation Agenda in line with the SMART Specialization Strategy for Lisbon. We identified four interconnected Strategic Areas in Digital Civics to be strengthened with the Twinning partners' support that provide solid ground to establish the methodology and action plan to reach these objectives. The Strategic Areas are: 1) Community-based Research Methods, 2) Emerging Technologies, 3) Design Justice, and 4) Civics, Policy, and Economic Models. Based on these areas, the project's work plan includes a staff-exchange programme, the organisation of joint scientific/training events, activities to enhance the profile of young researchers, training of research management staff, and a small citizen-led research project. The consortium includes partners from one widening country (ITI - Portugal), and three leading institutions in the field: IIT (Italy), University of Siegen (Germany), and University of Northumbria (UK).

Added value of the prepared and submitted proposals to the BIG project activities: According to the GA (pg. 5) the goal of BIG is to look at Blockchain and design innovation for social good in multiple application domains (from medical data to smart homes and grids, citizenship and democratic decision making, transport, creative industries and digital social media). This proposal enhances the application domains of BIG to cultural heritage (including cultural creative industries) as defined in the S3 priorities of Lisbon (see Figure 3 of the GA, pg. 22). In particular this project will look at the area of digital civics and open collaboration with a consortium of partners looking at novel digital technologies in the cultural and creative sector.

Status of the proposal evaluation: Funded

Title of the proposal: **Qualichain: Decentralised Qualifications' Verification and Management for Learner Empowerment, Education, Reengineering and Public Sector Transformation**

H2020 call: DT-TRANSFORMATIONS-02-2018-2019-2020

ERA Chair Members involved: Miguel Correia

Horizon Europe topic: Socioeconomic and Cultural Transformations In The Context Of The Fourth Industrial Revolution

Consortium: NTU, Atos, Fraunhofer, Knowledgebiz Consulting, The Open University, Technische Informationsbibliothek, INESC\_ID, Supreme Council, Agência Modernização, INA.

Link and relevance to the BIG project strategic areas: This project targets the creation, piloting and evaluation of a decentralised platform for storing, sharing and verifying education and employment qualifications and focuses on the assessment of the potential of blockchain technology, algorithmic techniques and computational intelligence for disrupting the domain of public education, as well as its interfaces with private education, the labour market, public sector administrative procedures and the wider socio-economic developments.

Added value of the prepared and submitted proposals to the BIG project activities: The project focuses more specifically on the assessment of the implications (technical, political, socio-economic, legal and cultural) as well as the impact - in terms of benefits and risks - of the prescribed solution's utilisation, whose disruptive potential lies both in the exploitation of the innovative features of the aforementioned individual technologies, as well as in their unique combination in a new territory for the provision of a set of baseline services (Awards'/Qualifications' Archiving; Awards'/Qualifications' Verification; Qualifications' Portfolio Management) and a number of value-adding services (Career Counselling and Intelligent Profiling and Competency Management including Recruitment; Competencies' Evaluation and Development; Consulting and Decision Support). The proposed solution will be piloted through four representative scenarios, including: (i) cross-university degree equivalence verification; (ii) smart curriculum design; (iii) staffing the public sector; (iv) providing HR consultancy and competency management services.

Status of the proposals' evaluation: Funded (EU H2020 grant agreement No 822404)

Title of proposal: **TRUSTyFOOD: Stakeholders-driven pathways for blockchain implementation in the agri-food sector**

H2020 call: HORIZON-CL6-2021-FARM2FORK-01-07

ERA Chair Members involved: Miguel Correia

Horizon Europe topic: Fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food systems from primary production to consumption

Consortium: Tecnoalimenti, Ethniko, Fraunhofer, U. Koblenz, INESC-ID, Stitching, Udruga, Compellio, OMDA, Link and relevance to the BIG project strategic areas: 13 participants from 7 EU and 1 third countries join forces for supporting the Strategic Research Agenda of the future joint research program on the subject of Blockchain by shedding light on the current partial and fragmented picture of BCT applications in the agri-food domain and by clarifying the benefits and opportunities which BCT can concretely to stakeholders throughout the food chain offer. The project intends to prepare the way for R&I activities for the decade to come, basing its assumptions on systematic monitoring and reviews of national, European and international R&I pilots/use cases, experiences and best practices and on consolidated and balanced stakeholder views. The active involvement of users is required from the very beginning for the identification of needs and use cases, which will be subsequently translated into operational requirements for services. The goal of the proposal is to understand why communities, i.e. users, accept/reject blockchain-based projects, the mistakes done by others for not repeating them, and the best and innovative practices in blockchain development in the agri-food sector (considering its complexity) for arriving to shape different possible futures for BC application.

Added value of the prepared and submitted proposals to the BIG project activities: The project will investigate and discuss both technical aspects as well as non-technical barriers to BCTs deployment, but also other issues fostering BCTs deployment, such as interoperability, innovative business models, standardisation and regulatory issues and will be at the base of White Papers addressed to EC. At the same time, the proposal intends to provide to users some a framework of services (and guidelines) for empowering them in future BC technology implementation.

Status of the proposal evaluation: Not funded

Title of proposal: **DRAIS - Designing Responsible Human-Centred AI Systems**

H2020 call: COST Action - OC-2021-1-25513

ERA Chair Members involved: Augusto Esteves

Horizon Europe topic: COST

Consortium:

Link and relevance to the BIG project strategic areas: Computing is impacting everyday lives. Work environments are complex pervasive computing systems. Mobile computing technologies are intertwined with our personal lives. Communication and entertainment are computer-mediated. We expect that over the next decade many of these computing systems, that are ubiquitous in our lives, are engineered to become intelligent systems. With artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, we can add new qualities to computing systems, bringing benefits to the individual as well as to our society as a whole. With advances in machine learning (ML) systems can perceive their environment (e.g. computer vision for vehicles) and make decisions.

Added value of the prepared and submitted proposals to the BIG project activities: There is a growing understanding of the potential benefits and risks of this type of technology including its integration with DLTs. The expected advantage of using AI is to create systems that can perform tasks and actions with little human involvement, making systems easier to use, more efficient, and requiring less attention. In our

project, we investigate how to put humans at the centre of the development of intelligent systems. The key aspect is to understand and develop processes and tools for designing and developing a responsible human-centered AI system. Methodologies, techniques, and tools, able to support system designers to build responsible human-centered AI, are still lacking. The main goal of this proposal is to create a group of discussions in Europe, to advance the field of Human-Centered AI by promoting research that can overcome the current lacks.

Status of the proposal's evaluation: Not funded

## Horizon Europe Training

In this first year of the project, the staff and faculty acquired H2020 expertise through local training and online webinars lectured by the European Commission. One member of the support team from LARSyS, Alexandra Mendes, attended the training course “Horizon Europa and the preparation of applications for European projects” organized in the scope of the Horizon2020 project – FORWARD. The training course focused on the Pillars and topics of the Horizon Europa Program. The first session addressed the Participant Portal and all the information inherent and necessary to submit a proposal. On the second day, the theme was Pillar I and the types of projects and proposals for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions. In the third session, the focus was on Pillar II- Widening and filling out the sections of the forms. In the fourth and final training, Pillar III was addressed and its types of projects and the European Innovation Council (EIC).

LARSyS (Alexandra Mendes, Senior Research Manager) support staff also participated in a meeting organized by Instituto Superior Técnico on June 16, 2021, to discuss the financial, administrative and technical aspects of HE applications, specifically for the thematic Collaborative Pillar 2 projects and for the Pathfinder Challenges (closing dates September/October/November), so that we can advise and support researchers in preparing their applications. Furthermore, Alexandra Mendes attended the Financial Management of Horizon 2020/EUROPE Projects, delivered by the [European Fund Management Consulting \(EFMC\)](#), specifically designed for project managers, finance services, and EU post-award offices, which took place from the 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> of February 2022 in Vienna (Austria).

Catherine Mulligan and Alexandra Mendes participated in the European Research and Innovation Days event, organized by the European Commission on June 23 and 24, 2021. This event covered topics such as Horizon Europe, the European Research Area, and the European Innovation Ecosystems.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 2021, we delivered deliverable 3.1 (Organization of Horizon training events), through an info session on the new Horizon Europe program for LARSyS and DCentral researchers, focused specifically on the upcoming project funding opportunities, delivered by IST's Pre-award officer (Marta Candeias). Building on the success of the session, the information and calls under the new Horizon Europe program, and with the ERA Chair research team now in place, we have arranged a new meeting with IST's Pre-award officer on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2022. This meeting aims to inform the ERA Chair Research team on the Horizon Europe funding opportunities, and potential partners' search and identify the gaps of knowledge on the ERA Chair Research team to support with further training.

Furthermore, we are liaising with other Portuguese organizations supporting EU funding application, such as the national representatives and contact points at for example the Agência Nacional de Inovação (ANI, National Innovation Agency, João Ribau) and Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT, Science and Technology Foundation, Rui Munhá). We will map the interests of the ERA Chair Research Team, LARSyS and INESC-ID to understand the gaps and organize sessions to support the researchers, in close collaboration with IST's Pre-award officer, Marta Candeias.

At the European level, we have recruited a UK company with expertise in successfully obtaining EU funding, [Make Time Count](#), to support our ERA Chair on funding applications. We are also considering further support from other companies such as EUMasterclass, an expert consultant for EU funding projects, to train the ERA Chair on successfully applying for EU funding. We expect to deliver this training by September 2022, as per the grant agreement (deliverable 3.2).

Date: June 14, 2021

Venue: Zoom

Participants: Alexandra Mendes, Cátia Jardim, Catherine Mulligan, Élvio Gouveia, Sabrina Scuri, Augusto Esteves, Mary Barreto, Ana Rodrigues, Vanessa Cesário, Sheikh Mostafa, Cintía França, João Prudente, Hélder Lopes

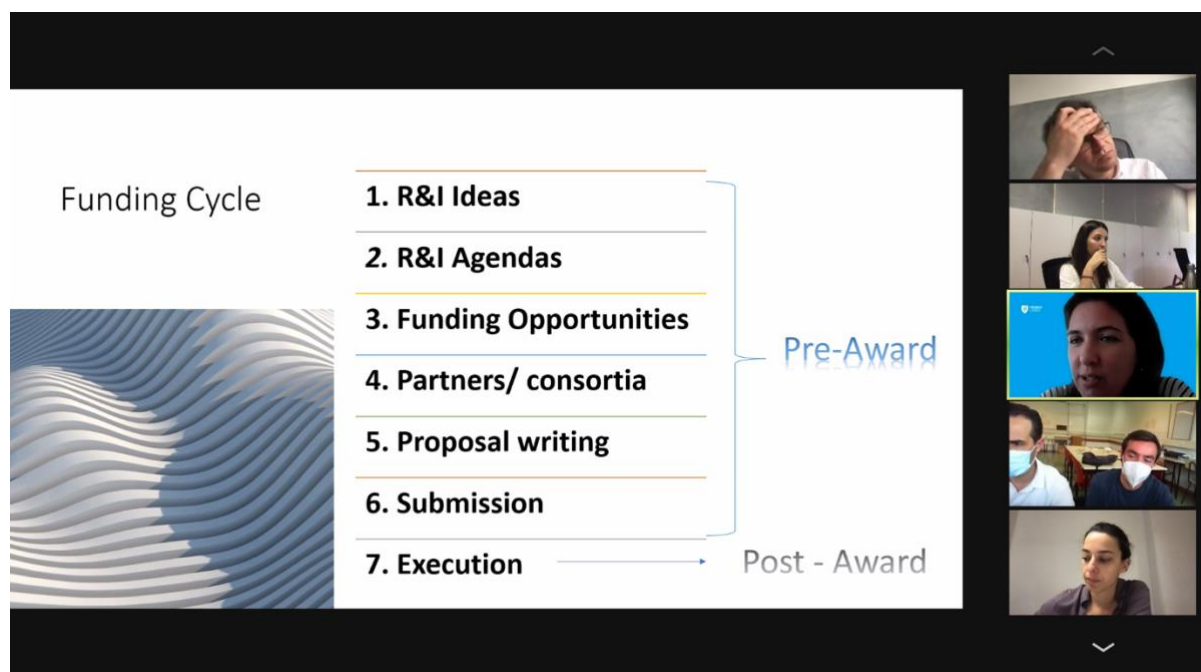


Figure 1- Info-Session Horizon Europe, June 14, 2021

Marta Candeias- Head of Research & Innovation Funding Support at IST-ID, conducted the info session (Figure 1). Marta has followed national and European policies to support research and innovation and the European Horizon Europa, H2020 and FP7 programs, and ensured national representation in Nanotechnologies, Materials, Production and Process Technologies, and Artificial Intelligence support activities for innovation in companies. She has experience as a trainer in courses on European funding

opportunities and has provided advice and coaching in business development derived from research and innovation activities.

The info session focused on the following key points:

- A. Horizon Europe Program
- B. Funding Instruments along the Innovation cycle
- C. What's New on Horizon Europe?
- D. Rules for Participation
- E. Horizon Europe Proposals: Key Points

## Horizon Europe Programme

Marta started the info session by giving an overview of the Horizon Europe Program. The main goals of this program are to support the creation and diffusion of high-quality knowledge; Strengthen the impact of R&I in supporting EU policies and foster all forms of innovation and strengthen market deployment. We were better able to understand that the main programme focus is to help build a greener and more sustainable future.

## Funding Instruments along the Innovation cycle

Marta presented to the group all the funding opportunities available (Figure 2), considering each individual's goals. There was a key focus on some specific actions, considering the researcher's requests since some were applying for these calls.

### Funding Instruments along the Innovation cycle

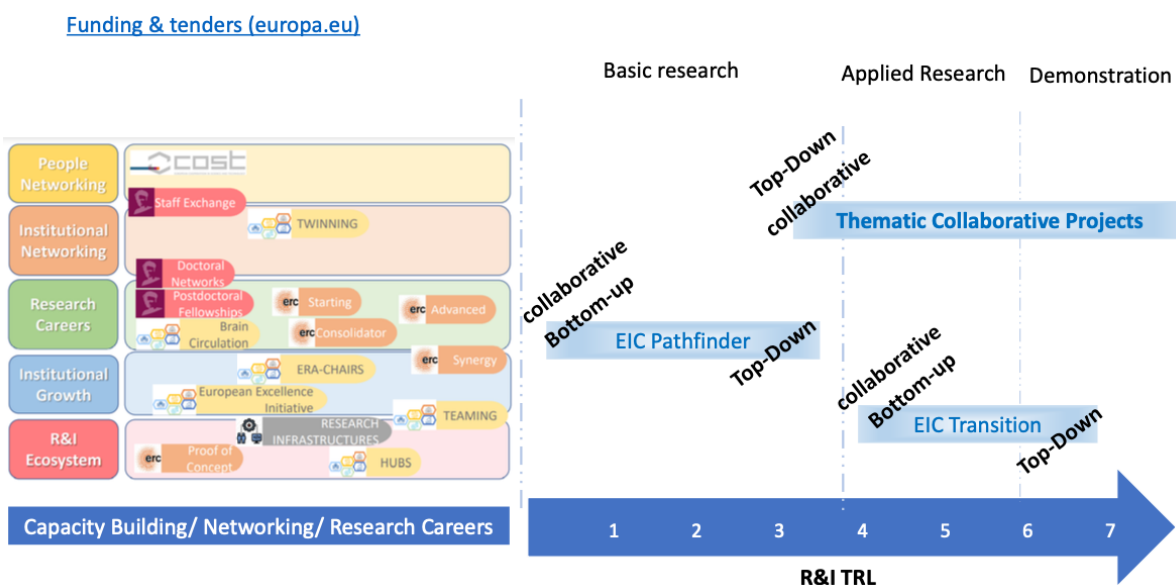


Figure 2 - Presentation slide - Funding Instruments

**Cost actions** are the perfect funding opportunity for young researchers. These networks are dedicated to scientific collaboration and allow recent PhD holders to establish themselves in the scientific world while connecting with different researchers.

**ERC** projects aim to fund researchers who wish to execute their projects in any European Country. These grants allow researchers, especially young ones, to pursue their research goals independently.

## What's New on Horizon Europe?

<b>The European Innovation Council</b>	Will bring the most promising ideas from lab to real-world application and support the most innovative start-ups and companies
<b>EU-wide R&amp;I missions:</b>	Research and innovation missions to increase the effectiveness of funding by pursuing clearly defined targets
<b>Open Science</b>	The obligation of Beneficiaries to exploit their R&I Results
<b>Simpler rules</b>	Reduced administrative burden for beneficiaries and programme administrators.

## Rules for Participation

### Conditions of participation

- At least three independent legal entities from 3 different Member State and Associated Countries
- Public bodies, research organizations or higher education establishments must have a gender equality plan.
- Include a plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results

### Page Limits:

- Research and Innovation Actions – 45 Pages
- Innovation Actions – 45 pages
- Coordination & Support Actions – 30 Pages

### Evaluation Criteria:

- Excellence
- Impact

- Quality & Efficiency of Implementation

## **Horizon Europe Proposals: Key Points**

The researchers were advised to do the following when planning to write a Horizon Europe Proposal:

- Contact the Science & Technology Manager to discuss their proposal idea and discuss its relevance to the Call or ask for help on identifying a call that they may contribute to and how
- Prepare a Proposal Summary
- Approach Potential Partners
- Attend Relevant Webinars and Info-Days
- Register in the EU Experts Database- because the best way of learning is by doing

Once all the steps mentioned above are accomplished, the researchers should focus on the proposal writing, keeping in mind the proposal size and the number of pages.

The project objectives should be well-aligned with the topic description, and the researchers should be clear when quantifying the expected impacts of the project and its relation to the work programme.

The budget breakdown should be well-justified and presented in the proposal. The communication and dissemination measures should be coherent and broadly described.

## **3. Conclusion**

A number of H2020 projects were submitted by the ERA Chair research team. It is expected that the continued training will lead to a substantial increase in grant preparations and submissions.