

FAQ for coordinators CBE JU-funded projects

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Purpose

This document is only applicable for projects funded under the CBE JU / Horizon Europe framework (as of Call for proposals 2022); a separate FAQ for coordinators exists for projects funded under the BBI JU / Horizon 2020 framework (Calls between 2014 – 2020), which can be found on <https://www.cbe.europa.eu/bbi-ju-funded-projects>

In this document, the most frequently received questions from coordinators are gathered, and answers are provided. Where possible, links to official Horizon Europe and CBE JU projects-related guidelines will be provided. This document complements but does not replace these official guidelines; if different interpretations could be found, the information provided in the official guidelines always has precedence.

The structure of this document (see also table of contents on the next page) is based on the project lifecycle: a Grant Agreement (GA) is signed, reports and deliverables are submitted, audits and reviews are carried out, project results are assessed, payments are made, and project results are disseminated, communicated and exploited.

For additional questions, please contact:

- Your CBE JU Project Officer (PO) for project-specific questions
- info@cbe.europa.eu for general questions.

Version history

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Main updates</i>
1.0	07/06/2023	First version

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1. Grant Agreement (GA)

As CBE JU uses the same grant management procedure as the EC/Horizon Europe, please consult the [Horizon Europe online manual](#) and the [annotated model grant agreement](#).

1.1. Amendments

1.1.1. How & when to submit an amendment request?

Before submitting an amendment request, consult with your Project Officer (PO) and check art. 39 of the [Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#) (AGA), where all relevant information is provided, including a sample list of cases where an amendment is (not) necessary.

The amendment process, incl. timing and info on the IT environment (Funding & Tender Opportunities Portal), is described in the online Horizon Europe manual, and is divided in:

- A 5-step process on [how to launch an amendment](#);
- An overview on [how to prepare an amendment](#), incl. a list of the different amendment types.

1.2. Change of SME status

1.2.1 What happens if during a project's lifetime, a company that was an SME at the start of the project grows and reaches non-SME size?

Contrary to BBI JU projects (Call 2014-2020), the loss of SME status does NOT have an effect on funding eligibility in CBE JU projects. However, it remains the responsibility of each organisation to keep their profile updated via their profile on the Funding & Tender opportunities Portal.

To be accepted as a small or medium sized enterprise (SME) under Horizon Europe, the enterprise must be a micro-, small or medium-sized enterprise as defined in Commission Recommendation No 2003/361/EC. More information on SME status (including an SME self-assessment tool) can be found midway the registration/validation page of the [registration/validation page of the Horizon Europe online manual](#)

According to the Rules for Participation and Dissemination (Regulation No 1290/2013), once a company has been validated as an SME, that legal status shall be assumed to prevail for the entire duration of the project, even in case where the company, due to its **(own) growth**, later exceeds the ceilings of the SME definition. However, this rule does not apply in the case of enterprises that exceed the relevant SME thresholds, for example, as a result of **a change in ownership** following an acquisition. Enterprises that are subject to a change in ownership need to be assessed on the basis of their shareholder structure at the time of the transaction, not at the time of closure of the latest accounts. Therefore, the loss of SME status may be immediate if the relevant SME thresholds are exceeded as a result of the acquisition.

2. Reporting & Audits

2.1 Continuous Reporting – incl. deliverables & milestones

2.1.1. Where can we find templates for deliverables?

There is no template for deliverables; the only restriction is that via the Funding & Tender Opportunities Portal, one (and only one) document can be uploaded per deliverable.

Although no mandatory format exists, including the following information on the front page of each deliverable adds considerable value:

- Project acronym, logo (if any) and grant agreement number;
- Deliverable title & number;
- Type of deliverable (R, DEM, DEC, DMP,...);
- Dissemination level (public or sensitive);
- Lead beneficiary name & contact details;
- Scheduled (according to GA) submission Date and Month (e.g. 1 July 2024 – M12);
- Actual submission Date and Month.

2.1.2. What type of info should be included in ‘non-textual’ deliverables such as the creation of a project website?

Be pragmatic, and ask yourself the question: “does the submitted deliverable provide enough (links to) information for CBE JU and/or external reviewers/auditors to assess that the objectives of the deliverable have been reached?” For ‘non-textual’ deliverables like the launch of the project website, create e.g. a deliverable with a front page, the URL of the website, some screenshots, the general structure of the website and basic data of its use.

2.1.3. What level of detail is required for ‘textual’ deliverables (how long should they be)?

Although there are no requirements on the min. or max. amount of pages, each deliverable should provide sufficient information to both CBE JU and external reviewers (see [section 3](#) of this document) to assess the project’s progress and if the activities described in the Grant Agreement have been successfully carried out. Info found in deliverables should also be in line with (e.g. financial) information found in periodic reports.

2.1.4. How/where should milestone-related information be reported?

Milestones are part of the ‘continuous monitoring/reporting’ of Horizon Europe / CBE JU-funded projects. Like deliverables, the achievement of a milestone should be reported immediately after its achievement via the Funding & Tender Opportunities Portal / the SyGMA IT tool, in the respective module. In order to submit the milestone info in SyGMA, please:

- Check the check box to indicate whether the milestone has been achieved or not;
- Select the delivery date;
- Add a comment (optional);
- Click the Save button.

2.1.5. Will public deliverables be published, and if so: when & where?

Public deliverables (dissemination level 'PU – Public') are automatically published on [Cordis](#) (the EC's primary portal for results of EU-funded research projects) after approval of this deliverable by CBE JU. In principle, deliverables will only be approved after the assessment of the corresponding periodic report (see also Q 4.1.2).

Please also note that in order to change the dissemination level of a deliverable, an amendment to the Grant Agreement is required. Therefore, please contact your CBE JU Project Officer as soon as you become aware of a dissemination level change, as not officially (= via an amendment) updating the dissemination level might result in the unwanted publication of confidential data.

2.1.6. Besides deliverables, which other elements are part of continuous reporting?

CBE JU uses the Horizon Europe approach regarding continuous reporting; more information can be found in the Horizon Europe online manual, specifically in the [continuous reporting](#) section.

2.1.7. Are all deliverables visible to the whole consortium?

Yes. This is in line with art. 7 of the Grant Agreement, which states that the beneficiaries are "jointly responsible for the technical implementation of the action. If one of the beneficiaries fails to implement their part of the action, the other beneficiaries must ensure that this part is implemented by someone else (without being entitled to an increase of the maximum grant amount and subject to an amendment". This article can only be implemented if all beneficiaries are aware at all times of the project's progress (e.g. via its deliverables).

4.1.2. When will deliverables and milestones be assessed and/or approved?

Deliverables and milestones will be checked by CBE JU in 2 phases:

- At the time of their submission, at least a formal check will be carried out (does the deliverable contain all elements it says it contains, or are certain parts missing? Is there an appropriate front page and structure? Is the level and quality of the provided information sufficient to assess the project's results, progress and achievements? Etc.). At this stage, deliverables might be rejected, and the resubmission of an updated deliverable might be requested.
- At the time of the assessment of the periodic report, all deliverables and milestones linked to the period in question will be assessed in detail by CBE JU and potentially external reviewers. Specifically, the consistency between the Grant Agreement, deliverables, milestones and the relevant periodic report will be assessed. Deliverables can only be accepted after finalisation of a periodic assessment.

Deliverables can also be rejected if they do not provide sufficient information to conduct a proper assessment, resulting in a (partial) cost (and thus funding) rejection.

2.1.8 How to report on CBE JU KPIs?

CBE JU has specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set in the Annex V of CBE JU SRIA. More information on the new reporting tool, currently under development, are expected to be provided in Q4 2023.

2.2. Periodic reporting

2.2.1. Where can we find periodic reporting templates?

The most recent version of the CBE JU template for the technical/scientific reporting will be made available to projects at the start of each periodic reporting. The CBE JU template will have the same structure as the Horizon Europe Periodic Report Template, and will most likely also include some CBE JU-specific questions. Relevant information about periodic reporting can already be found in the [Horizon Europe online manual](#). Please also note that in order to submit a complete periodic report, all 'continuous reporting' SyGMA tabs in (e.g. summary for publication, critical risks, publications, ...) also need to be completed.

2.2.2. What happens if the expected impacts of the project are not achieved at the end of the project?

The consortium should focus on implementing the project in line with the Description of the Action (DoA; see Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement (GA)). CBE JU will monitor the project and assess the correct technical and scientific implementation as described in the DoA. Any important deviation to the GA, which for instance might affect the expected impacts, should be communicated to CBE JU as soon as possible in order to check if an amendment of the GA is needed. If after assessments (see FAQ [section 4](#)) or other intermediate checks it is proven that the consortium is not performing the DoA activities, corrective actions will be undertaken, including – as a last resort – the termination of the GA and/or repayment of (pre)payments.

2.2.3. Which reports need to be submitted at the end of a project?

(Only) the last periodic report (similar to the one described above); there is no need to submit a 'separate' final report. Therefore, please ensure that your continuous reporting data is updated before submitting the last periodic report.

Please also note that in the final periodic report, some additional elements need to be included in the (public) 'summary for publication', and – if relevant - the Certificates on the Financial Statements (CFS) need to be submitted. More information on the final periodic report can be found in the [online manual](#).

2.3. Financial reporting

2.3.1. Where can we find reporting templates?

In the relevant [‘IT – How to’ section](#) of the Funding & Tender opportunities Portal, a dedicated section is devoted to [how to complete your financial statement](#).

2.3.2. Which costs are eligible for CBE JU funding?

All types of eligible costs for CBE JU funding are described in article 6 of the Grant Agreement (GA). The [Annotated Model GA \(AGA\)](#) provides more concrete examples (e.g. calculation of hourly rates via ‘financial year’ or ‘monthly’ methods; travel and subsistence allowance; depreciation costs; etc.).

2.3.3. How and when to report CFS (Certificate on Financial Statement) costs?

Only costs of a mandatory CFS are eligible, and can only be claimed via the final periodic report. A CFS is mandatory for each beneficiary/affiliated entity that requests a total financial contribution of at least € 430 000. This is different from BBI JU projects (Calls 2014-2020), where a different threshold and calculation method was used. For more information, please consult point 4.3 of the ‘data sheet’ embedded in your Grant Agreement.

Best practice: identify those organisations that will require a CFS asap and inform them about this requirement, so that they can contract an external auditor (well) before project’s end. This will avoid unnecessary delays when submitting the final periodic report (as CFSs need to be submitted together with all other elements of the final periodic report).

2.3.4. Should affiliated entities also submit financial statements?

Yes, but via the participant to which the affiliated entity is linked. See also the relevant page on the [Horizon Europe online manual](#).

2.3.5. What is the level of detail required for the financial periodic reporting?

When completing the (periodic) financial statements, please ensure that you do not only add amounts (EUR) per cost category in the IT forms, but that you also provide all requested additional details. This level of information is essential for a good (financial) review (by external experts) and assessment (by CBE JU). For more information, please follow the [financial statement guidelines on the Horizon online manual](#).

2.3.6. (How) can previously submitted financial statements be adjusted?

As of the second periodic report, costs submitted via previous periodic reports can be adjusted. For more information and screenshots, please [click here](#).

2.4. IKOP and IKAA

2.3.1. How is IKOP reported and certified?

'In-kind contributions to **operational activities**' (**IKOP**) can be deduced from the project budget and checking which project participants are BIC members. At the moment of writing this question, CBE JU is discussing with BIC and the EC how and when to report and certify IKOP. More information will be provided - via a next version of the FAQ - when this has been clarified. Currently, there are no plans of annual IKOP reporting.

2.3.2. How is IKAA reported and certified?

'Additional **Activities** (**IKAA**)' are described in Annex I, part B, section 3 the Grant Agreement (GA). At the moment of writing this question, CBE JU is discussing with BIC and the EC how and when to report and certify IKAA. More information will be provided - via a next version of the FAQ - when this has been clarified.

2.5. Financial Audits

2.5.1. When / how will financial audits be organised?

Financial audits will be coordinated by the Horizon Europe common audit service and will be performed either by the EC's auditor or by external audit firms. In addition to these audits, other institutions (e.g. the European Court of Auditors) can also initiate and perform audits. More information about which elements are typically audited can be found in the [relevant online manual section](#).

2.5.2. If our project or organisation is audited: how should we include the results of this audit in the (financial statements of the) periodic report? Should we for example submit updated financial statements of the affected project periods during the next reporting period?

As communicated in the letter of conclusion of the audit, you should not take any action in respect of the implementation of the adjustments in relation with the audited periods. The financial impact of audit findings will be initiated by CBE JU and you will receive a registered communication in this regard. Only non-audit-related cost adjustments (if any) should be submitted during periodic reporting.

2.5.3. Which beneficiaries can be audited (financial audit over cost claims)?

All beneficiaries that receive CBE JU funding.

3. Reviews

3.1. Structure & content of review meetings

3.1.1. Which documents will be assessed during a review?

The review will be based on the documents submitted within the period in question: the periodic report, financial statements, all elements submitted or achieved during the continuous reporting (e.g. deliverables, milestones, critical risks, info on dissemination, IPR, gender, etc.), plus possibly other documents (e.g. needed for the interim impact evaluation). The reference document for the progress assessment is the GA, and especially its Annexes I (Description of Action - DoA) and II (budget).

3.1.2. How to deal with confidentiality issues between consortium members?

Some (industrial) consortium members might be competitors in their daily business, and might not want to share certain confidential (e.g. commercial) information with each other when additional information is requested during the review. CBE JU will take this into account when organising the review meeting by proactively discussing / identifying such issues with the coordinator, and take appropriate measures (e.g. by structuring the review meeting agenda in such a way that some presentations are given and heard by only part of the consortium representatives).

3.1.3. What are potential outcomes of a review?

The review outcomes will be used as an additional input for the assessment of the period by the CBE JU Project Officer.:

- If the review shows ineligible costs or substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or serious breach of obligations (including non- or improper implementation of the action as described in Annex 1), it may lead to suspension, termination, cost rejection, grant reduction and recovery and to exclusion and/or financial penalties;
- If carried out during the implementation of the action, a review may also recommend reorientations to the action.

3.2. Expert-reviewers

3.2.1. How to select expert-reviewers, taking into account confidentiality issues?

CBE JU will select independent experts on the basis of the relevant expertise needed to review the (scientific, industrial, IPR, etc.) progress of the project. The CBE JU Project Officer will consult the preselected candidatures of experts with the consortium. Consortia will be able to refuse experts on grounds of (commercial) Conflicts of Interest (CoI). Furthermore, experts will sign a contract with CBE JU that includes clear confidentiality arrangements.

3.2.2. How many expert-reviewers will be used?

The review will be carried out (standard rule) with the support of 1-2 independent experts, depending on the complexity of the topic / project / value chain.

4. Assessment & payments

4.1. Assessment

4.1.1. How long does an assessment of a periodic report last?

The coordinator must submit the periodic report within 60 days following the end of each reporting period. CBE JU must execute the payment within 90 days after having received all the elements of the *complete* periodic report. However, if not all required documents are submitted within the 60-day period, CBE JU cannot proceed with the assessment and payment. If the information provided in the periodic report is incomplete or insufficient, CBE JU will ask additional questions, and the 90-day period will be suspended until the requested additional information is provided. Furthermore, a review (see FAQ section 3 above) might be carried out before or during this 90-day period. The approval of the reports and any required deliverables by the CBE JU Project Officer will then trigger the payment.

4.2. Payments

4.2.1. How much is the pre-financing?

The pre-financing amount is fixed in each Grant Agreement (GA) at the time of the Grant Agreement Preparation. Please also note that an amount of 5% of the maximum grant amount is retained by the CBE JU from the pre-financing payment and transferred into the Mutual Insurance Mechanism (MIM), the successor of Horizon 2020's Participant Guarantee Fund (PGF).

4.2.2. When is the pre-financing paid?

The pre-financing will be paid to the coordinator within 30 days, either from the entry into force of the Grant Agreement (GA) or from 10 days before the starting date of the action, whichever is the latest (See section 4.2 of the GA's datasheet).

4.2.2.1. When are payments after (periodic) assessments done?

CBE JU aims to pay within 90 days from receiving the *complete* periodic report. More information: see [FAQ 4.1](#).

5. Dissemination, communication and exploitation

5.1 What is the difference between dissemination and exploitation?

CBE JU uses the [Horizon Europe programme definitions](#) to distinguish dissemination and exploitation.

5.2. What are your project's contractual communication obligations?

There are two communication obligations stipulated in the Art.17 and Annex V of your grant agreement:

1. In all communication material:
 - a. Display logos of CBE JU, BIC and EU
 - b. Acknowledge the CBE JU funding
 - c. Display a disclaimer
2. Promote the project & its results

For the most up-to-date information, please always consult the '[Manage your project](#)' section on the CBE JU website, where you can find the most recent CBE JU communication guidelines, logos and template text of the funding acknowledgment and disclaimer.

5.3. How to use CBE JU's communication channels to promote your project?

CBE JU offers the following communication channels to promote your project's activities and results:

- [CBE JU's website](#), in particular the '[Achievements](#)' section.
- The CBE JU newsletter. Please subscribe via [this link](#).
- CBE JU's [LinkedIn account](#): tag us in your project-related messages and follow our news.
- CBE JU's Twitter account is [@CBE_JU](#). Tag it, along with [@BIC](#) and [@HorizonEU](#) in your posts. If you have a Twitter account for your project, please follow us so we can share your news.
- CBE JU's [YouTube channel](#). Share your project's videos with us to add them on the dedicated YouTube channel.

For all communication-related questions and requests for inclusion / promotion of your communication material, please e-mail communications@cbe.europa.eu with your CBE JU Project Officer in CC.

5.4 Which other types (besides CBE JU) of support for dissemination, communication and/or exploitation exist within the Horizon framework?

Check the '[Manage your project](#)' section on the CBE JU website for a non-exhaustive list of other – often free - support measures, such as:

- The [Horizon Results Platform](#), a free online space where you can promote projects' key exploitable results to target audiences.
- The [Horizon Results Booster](#), which offers free consulting services to step up a project's dissemination and exploitation efforts. These services include creating a results portfolio, drafting and implementing a common dissemination strategy for a cluster of projects, improving the exploitation plan, supporting the development of a business plan, and coaching on market activities.
- The [Horizon Standardisation Booster](#) allows ongoing or completed Horizon Europe projects to apply for practical guidance to assess the standardisation readiness of their project results, and match them up with standardisation experts to guide the project on how these results can feed into standardisation working groups or technical committees;
- [GREEN ASSIST](#): this green advisory service for sustainable investments support helps beneficiaries to prepare green/greener investment projects, across diversified sectors and private & public beneficiaries.