



**Circular  
Bio-based  
Europe**  
Joint Undertaking

# **CBE JU Call 2026 Training**

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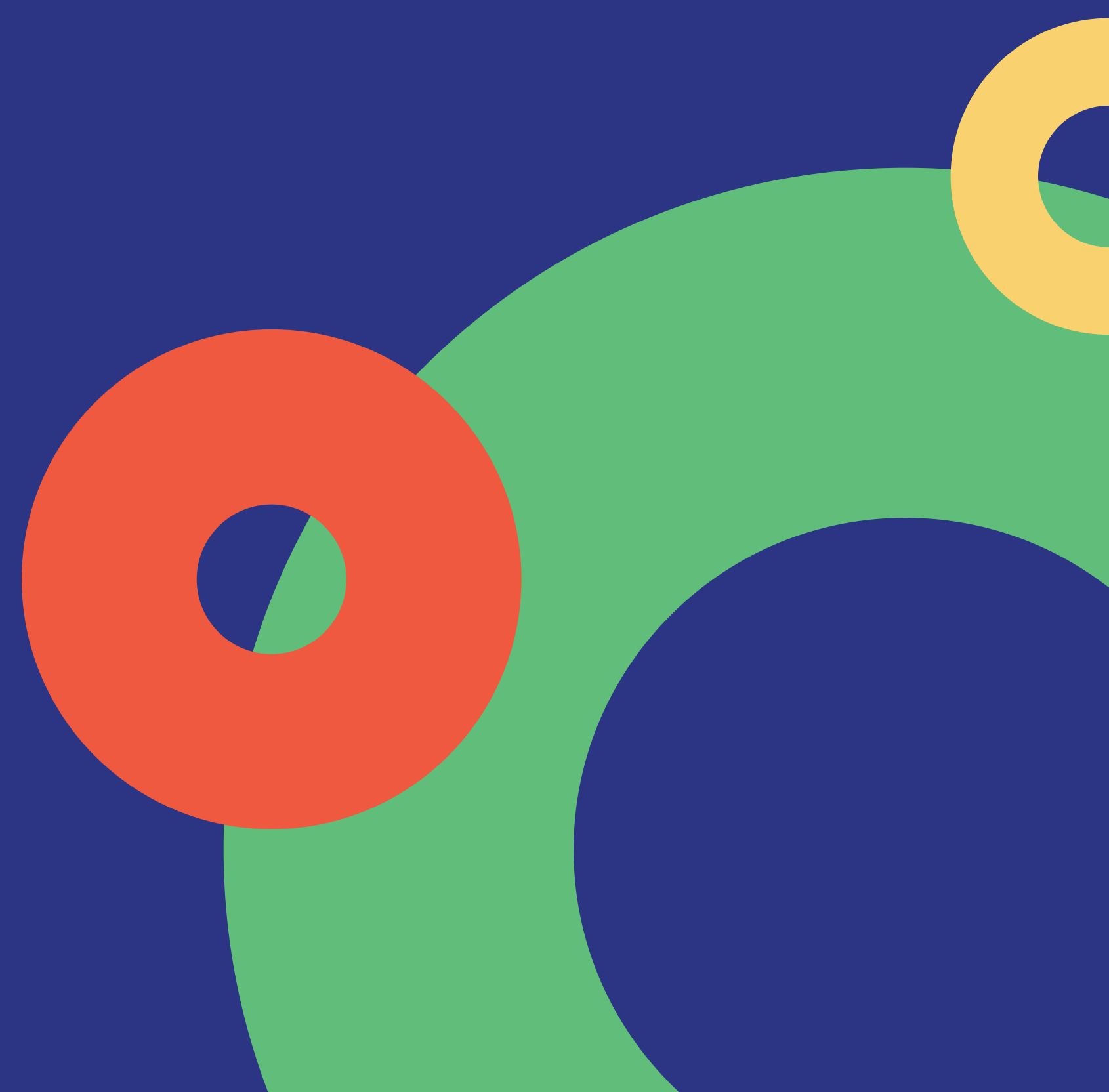


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**CBE JU**  
**2026 call:**  
**Tips for a**  
**good proposal**  
**– focus on IA**



# Proposal template (Part B)

## Topic

## Proposal

### Expected outcomes

Successful proposals will contribute to the updated EU Bioeconomy Strategy, Farm to Fork Strategy, the Horizon Europe Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe', in particular the objectives: 'Reduce soil pollution and improve soil health' as well as the Clean Industry Deal.

Projects resulting from this call should:

- Full industrial scale production of bio-based fertilisers
- Increased use of bio-based fertilisers and/or crop protection products
- Reduced use of mineral and chemical fertilisers and/or crop protection products
- Increased cooperation among bio-based industries and farmers.

- Increased soil health, including minimising accumulation of microplastics and pollutants in soil and water, with positive effects on quality, security and resilience of food production in agriculture.

### Scope

FAO estimates that up to 40% of food crops are lost due to plant pests and diseases globally every year.<sup>24</sup> Chemical synthetic products are conventionally used to protect crops and other plants from pests and diseases. The use of mineral and chemical fertilisers and/or crop protection products also poses concern for the environment, especially the use of non-renewable resources.

SSbD bio-based solutions create a sustainable stream (for feedstock supply and/or products). However, workability, efficiency and robustness of the solution should be considered (also in terms of cost-effectiveness).

Proposals under this call should:

- Demonstrate (at TRL 8) the efficient industrial production of SSbD bio-based solutions as alternatives to current fertilising and/or crop protection products. Bioactive molecules and/or biotechnology solutions for bio-fertilisers, bio-stimulants and/or pest/disease control (e.g., bioherbicides, biopesticides, bioinsecticides), or a combination thereof, are in scope. Products in scope can be applicable at any crop(s) cycle stage.

**Expected outcomes**

**Scope**

**1. Excellence**

**2. Impact**

**3. Implementation**

- Objectives & ambition
- Methodology
- Pathways to impact
- Measures to maximise impact
- Workplan & resources
- Consortium capacity

# Proposal template (Part B)



Download template from your draft proposal page in F&TP

One document, duplicated:

## 1. Template with instructions:

- Editorial instructions: page limit, allowed formatting...
- Definitions
- Sections **Excellence**, **Impact** and **Implementation**:  
Detailed descriptions of what to include where
- Descriptions of annexes to include

## 2. Template without instructions:

- Empty template to draft proposal

### 1. Excellence

#### **Excellence – aspects to be taken into account.**

- Clarity and pertinence of the project's objectives, and the extent to which the proposed work is ambitious, and goes beyond the state of the art.
- Soundness of the proposed methodology, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, interdisciplinary approaches, appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content, and the quality of open science practices, including sharing and management of research outputs and engagement of citizens, civil society and end users where appropriate.

⚠ *The following aspects will be taken into account only to the extent that the proposed work is within the scope of the work programme topic.*

#### 1.1 Objectives and ambition [e.g. 6 pages]

- Briefly describe the objectives of your proposed work. Why are they pertinent to the work programme topic? Are they measurable and verifiable? Are they realistically achievable?
- Describe how your project goes beyond the state-of-the-art, and the extent the proposed work is ambitious. Indicate any exceptional ground-breaking R&I, novel concepts and approaches, new products, services or business and organisational models. Where relevant, illustrate the advance by referring to products and services already available on the market. Refer to any patent or publication search carried out.
- Describe where the proposed work is positioned in terms of R&I maturity (i.e. where it is situated in the spectrum from 'idea to application', or from 'lab to market'). Where applicable, provide an indication of the Technology Readiness Level, if possible distinguishing the start and by the end of the project.

⚠ *Please bear in mind that advances beyond the state of the art must be interpreted in the light of the positioning of the project. Expectations will not be the same for RIAs at lower TRL, compared with Innovation Actions at high TRLs.*

#### 1.2 Methodology [e.g. 22 pages]

- Describe and explain the overall methodology, including the concepts, models and assumptions that underpin your work. Explain how this will enable you to deliver your project's objectives. Refer to any important challenges you may have identified in the chosen methodology and how you intend to overcome them. [e.g. 14 pages]

⚠ *This section should be presented as a narrative. The detailed tasks and work packages are described below under 'Implementation'.*

- Describe the feedstock to be used in the project and ensure that it is under the scope of the feedstocks foreseen in the CBE JU Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) (including Annex V) (<https://www.cbe.europa.eu/system/files/2022-06/cbeju-sria.pdf>).

Include information about the geographical origin of the feedstock. Also, explain how the feedstock will contribute to strengthening the European bio-based value chains.

Include information on how the feedstock is produced or generated respecting local ecological limits.

Under the condition of respecting the "food first" and "cascading use" principles, agricultural biomass can be used as feedstock for CBE JU projects. IAs, including Flagships, should:



Specific requirements



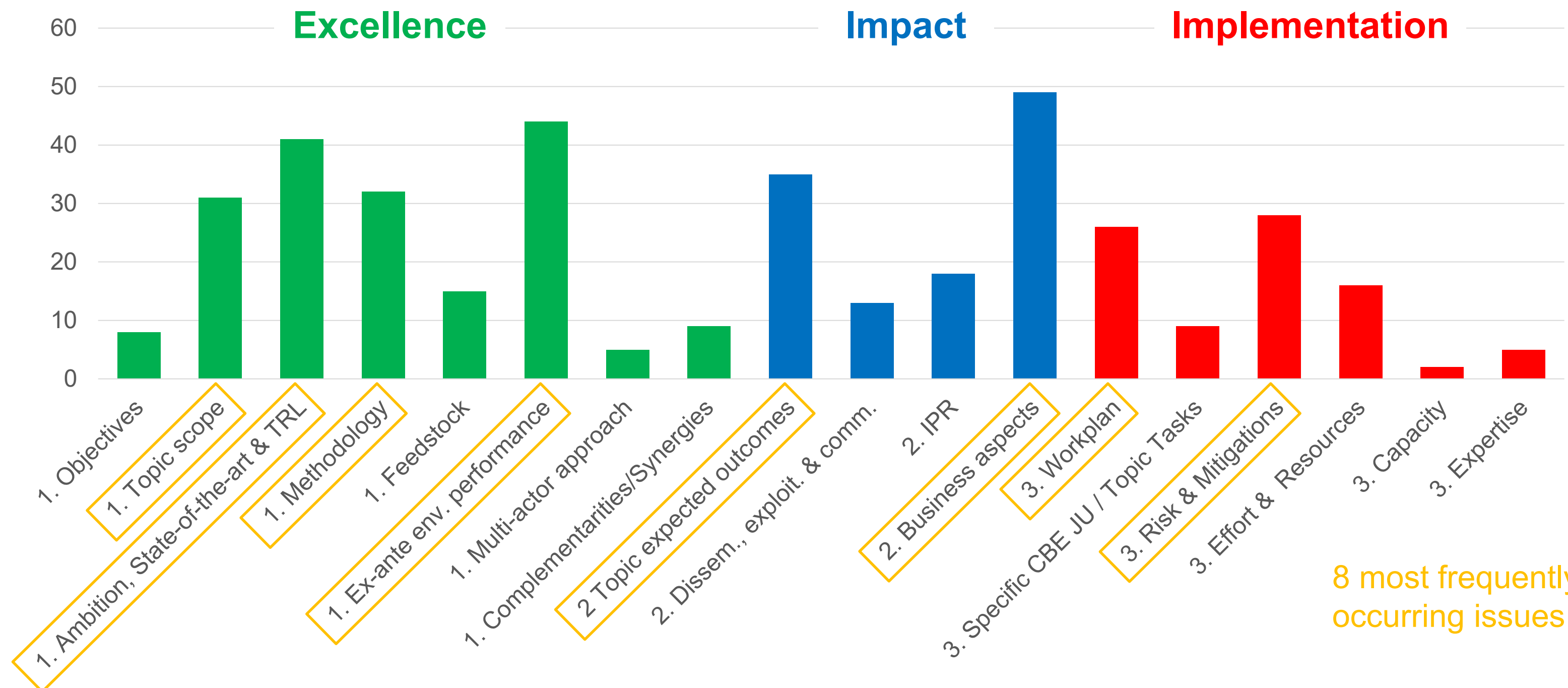
# CBE JU 2026 specific requirements

Specific CBE JU requirement	Type of action	Section in Proposal Part B
Bio-based feedstock description	RIA and IA, incl. FLAG	<b>1.2 Methodology</b>
Environmental performance, circularity and sustainability assessment: ex-ante and ex-post	RIA and IA, incl. FLAG	<b>1.2 Methodology</b> + <b>3.1 Workplan &amp; resources</b>
Multi-actor approach (MAA)	All types of actions	<b>1.2 Methodology</b>
Digital technologies	RIA and IA, incl. FLAG	<b>1.2 Methodology</b>
Cross-disciplinary aspects	All types of actions	<b>1.2 Methodology</b>
Socio-economic impacts	IAs, incl. FLAG	<b>2.1 Pathways to impact</b>
Business case, business model	RIA and IA	<b>2.2 Measures to maximise impact</b>
Executive summary of business plan	FLAG	<b>Annex (Business plan, FLAG)</b>
Business plan	FLAG	

# Lessons learnt from past calls: Focus on IA

Call 2025 analysis - 92 IA proposal evaluations

Distribution of issues per proposal element :





## Topic scope

### 1.1 Objectives and ambition:

- *Briefly describe the objectives of your proposed work. Why are they pertinent to the work programme topic? Are they measurable and verifiable? Are they realistically achievable?*

### Tips

- Carefully analyse the topic 'Scope'
- List of elements under "Proposals under this topic should ...":
  - Make sure to have covered **each bullet point**
- Evaluators read hundreds of proposal pages.
  - Making their work easier = increasing your chance of success
  - Refer to 'Scope' bullet points as **explicitly** as possible



## Ambition, state of the art & TRL

### 1.1 Objectives and ambition:

- *Describe how your project goes beyond the state-of-the-art, and the extent the proposed work is ambitious.*
- *Describe where the proposed work is positioned in terms of R&I maturity (...) provide an indication of the Technology Readiness Level (...)*

### Tips

- Stand out with clarity: (1) current state-of-the-art (*ideally* start-TRL)  
(2) proposal improvement (*certainly* **end-TRL**) (expectation: see topic)
- Often, a proposal has multiple technologies and TRL-progressions:
  - Ensure that expected end-TRL accords to proposal **key technology**
- Ambitious targets, but also realistic (for example, achievable in the project duration)



## Methodology

### 1.2 Objectives and ambition:

- *Describe and explain the overall methodology, including the concepts, models and assumptions (...). Explain how this will enable you to deliver your project's objectives. Refer to any important challenges you may have identified in the chosen methodology and how you intend to overcome them.*

### Tips

- Present this part as a **narrative**:

*Based on the following concepts, models and assumptions,  
we plan to use methods A,  
to go via B, to C.*

*We see challenges X,  
but plan to overcome them by Y.*

- Add **quantitative** targets = adds credibility



specific requirement  
(see [AWP2026](#))

## Ex-ante environmental performance

### 1.2 Objectives and ambition:

- *identification of the environmental critical issues;*
- *an ex-ante estimation of the environmental sustainability performance (...) compared to benchmark(s) (and) how it will improve environmental performance;*
- *if applicable, a preliminary assessment of the carbon capture, use and/or storage potential*

### Tips

- Explain the **key issues** determining environmental performance
- Describe how environmental performance of the new solution will surpass existing solutions
  - Compare with the most appropriate, generally accepted **benchmarks** of the current highest performing solutions.
- Support your claims by **numbers & calculations**: quantitative measures of improvement



## Topic expected outcomes

### 2.1 Project's pathways towards impact:

- *Provide a narrative explaining how the project's results are expected to make a difference in terms of impact, beyond the immediate scope and duration of the project. The narrative should include*
  - (a) *Outcomes and longer term impacts*
  - (b) *Scale and significance*
  - (c) *Potential barriers*
  - (d) *Socio-economic value* →  specific requirement (see [AWP2026](#))

### Tips

- Describe the **pathway** to impact + support your claims by **numbers** = more credible
- List of elements in Topic text 'Expected outcomes'
  - Make sure to have covered **each bullet point**
- Potential barriers = risks for impact (after project) ≠ project execution risks
- Socio-economic value: estimation of future value creation & distribution when reaching full scale



specific requirement  
(see [AWP2026](#))

## Business aspects

### 2.2 Measures to maximise impact:

- *For IA topics (excluding Flagships), present:*
  - a quantified business case for investment, including the relevant technical, economic, market, social, environmental and regulatory, and
  - a proposed business model and an estimate of appropriate economic indicators

= **most frequent issue** in IA proposals !

### Tips

- Carefully check the definitions of quantified business case and model in the [AWP2026](#); ensure that you cover all aspects.
- Dedicate special **time & attention** to this part.

Every proposal's business part is evaluated by business assessment specialists.

# Implementation



## Work plan

### 3.1 Work plan and resources:

- *detailed work description (work packages, tasks, deliverables, milestones...)*

### Tips

- Aim for **100% consistency** of work descriptions in different parts of the proposal  
for example: between title and description of a task, between text and GANTT chart...



## Risks and mitigations

### 3.1 Work plan and resources:

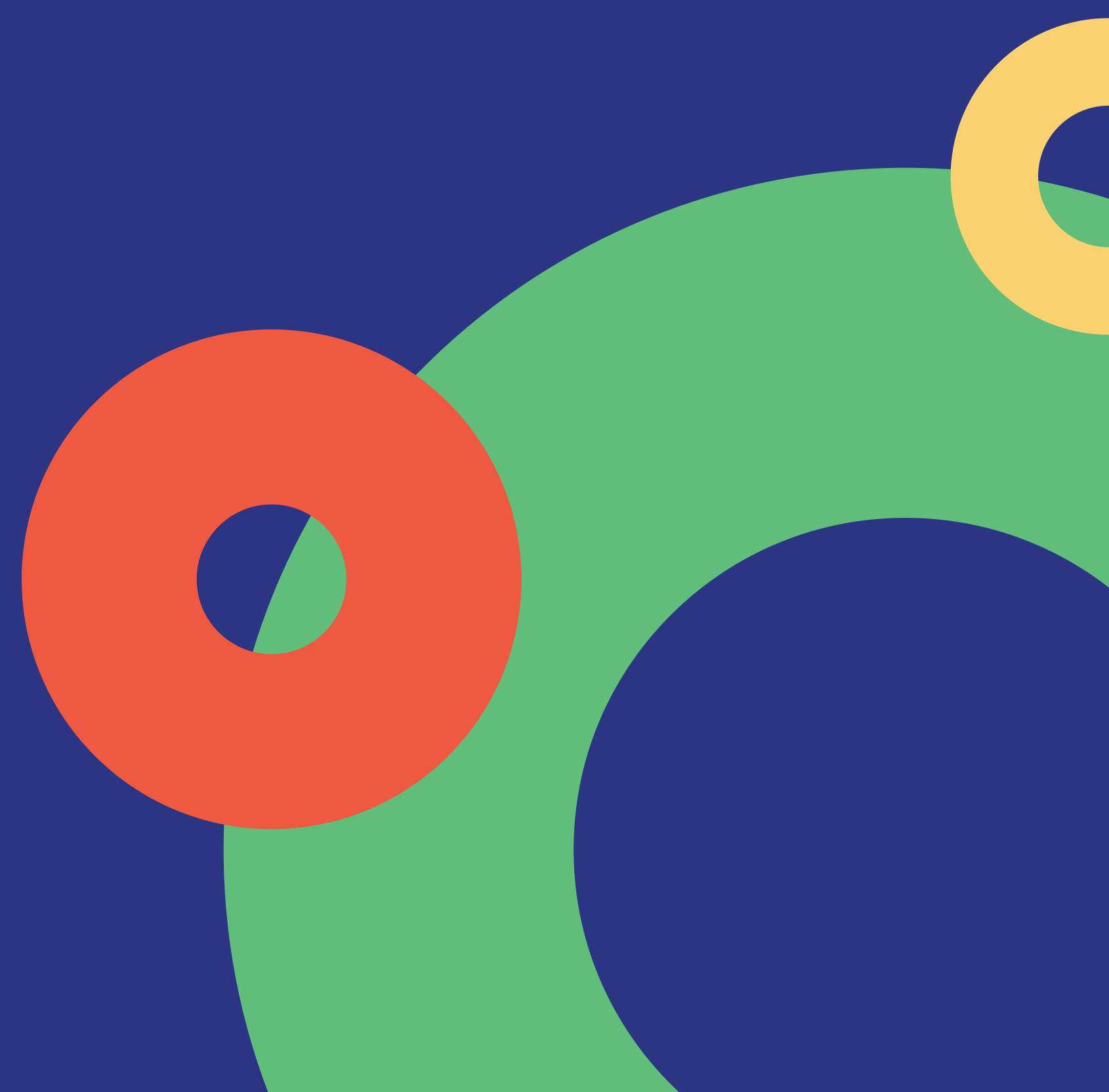
- *a list of critical risks, relating to project implementation, that the stated project's objectives may not be achieved. Detail any risk mitigation measures.*

= Risks factors that influence project results, for example: technical risks, management risks

### Tips

- Strive to be **complete** and **open** about risks: Evaluators are real experts in the field
- Pair each risk with a **specific mitigation** action

# **CBE JU 2026 call: Coordinator role**



# Coordinator role



The coordinator is not just an administrator, but an

- **architect** of the proposal
- **orchestrator** of the consortium
- **interface** with CBE JU
- **guardian** of project execution

This role evolves across the 3 phases:

1. Proposal preparation – 2. Grant preparation – 3. Project execution

# Coordinator role



## 1. Proposal preparation

- Define concept, objectives, and structure
- Build and manage consortium
- Lead the writing process
- Develop and validate budget
- Manage timeline and submission

# Coordinator role



## 2. Grant preparation

- Single contact point with CBE JU
- Finalise DoA and Part A
- Finalise budget
- Coordinate partner contributions
- Lead Consortium Agreement negotiations

## 3. Project execution

- Monitor progress
- Manage reporting and finances
- Coordinate consortium governance
- Communicate with CBE JU

# Coordinator vs partner role



Both roles are essential — but responsibilities and workload differ

## Coordinator

- responsible for steering the whole project
  - main interface with CBE JU
  - guardian of the project's overall quality and progress
- ▶ *heaviest and most continuous workload across all phases*

## Partners

- responsible for delivering the technical work assigned to them
  - providing accurate reporting
- ▶ *more focused and task-specific workload*

# Coordinator role: Benefits

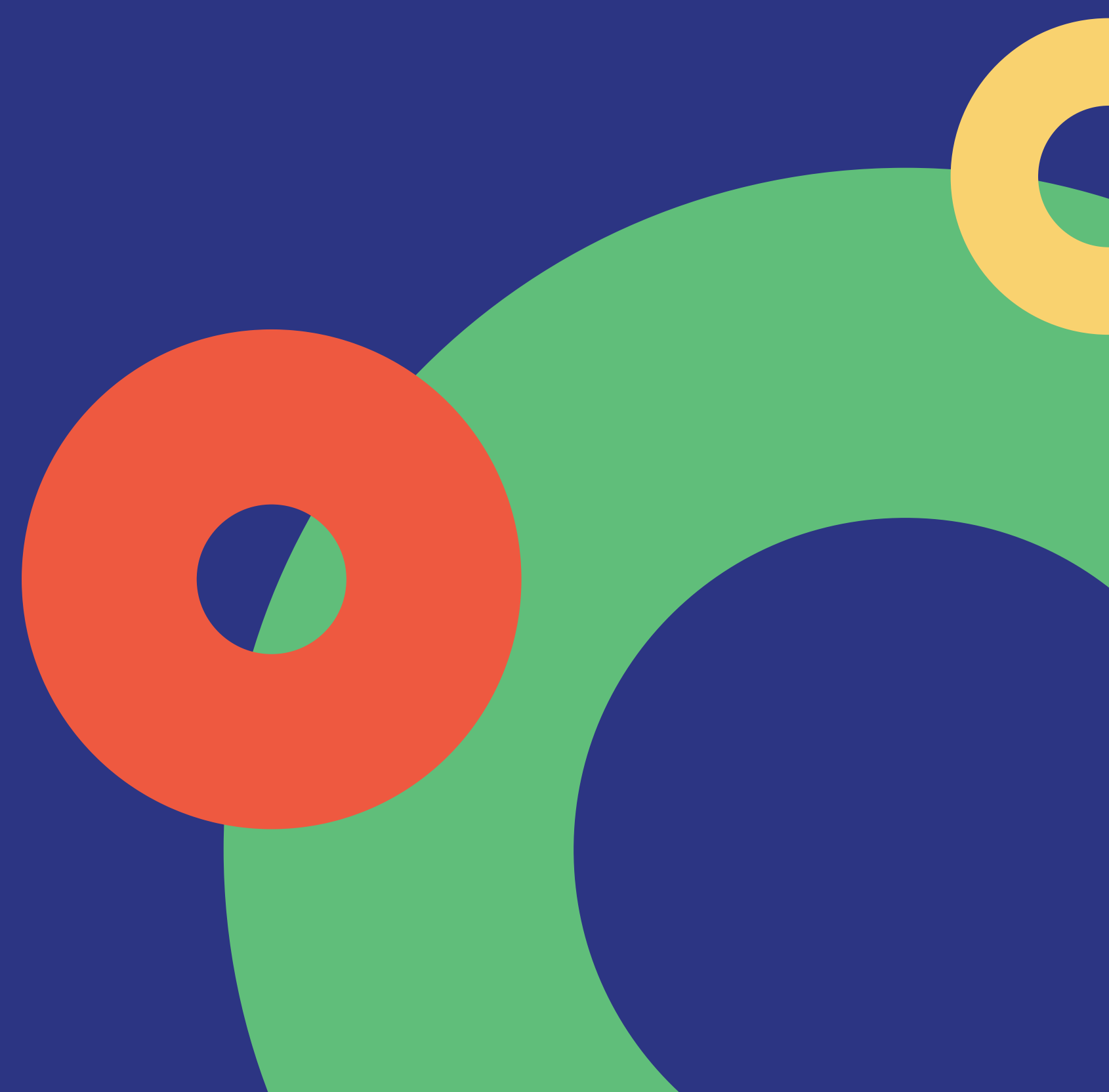


- Strategic influence
- Visibility and prestige
- Stronger networks
- Early access to opportunities
- Capacity building

It's a responsibility—but it's also a **competitive advantage**.

Being a partner is good. Being a coordinator is transformative.

**CBE JU  
2026 call:  
Final tips  
and call  
timeline**



# Final tips



## Start early!

There is a correlation between earlier proposal creation date (in the Funding & Tenders Portal) and higher evaluation result

*every single **word** in **topic text** counts ! every single **requirement** counts !*



## Don't lose "easy" points

- Don't forget an explicit topic requirement, for example to include in the workplan a dedicated task for SSbD
- Double check IKOP calculation in the proposal budget table and ensure consistency with the annexed BIC annexes
  - IKOP counted only for demonstrated BIC members !
  - Participant's identifier code must be identical in proposal and BIC certificate !



*Every single **word** in **topic text** counts ! Every single **requirement** counts !*

# Grant agreement & project start



## Call for proposals



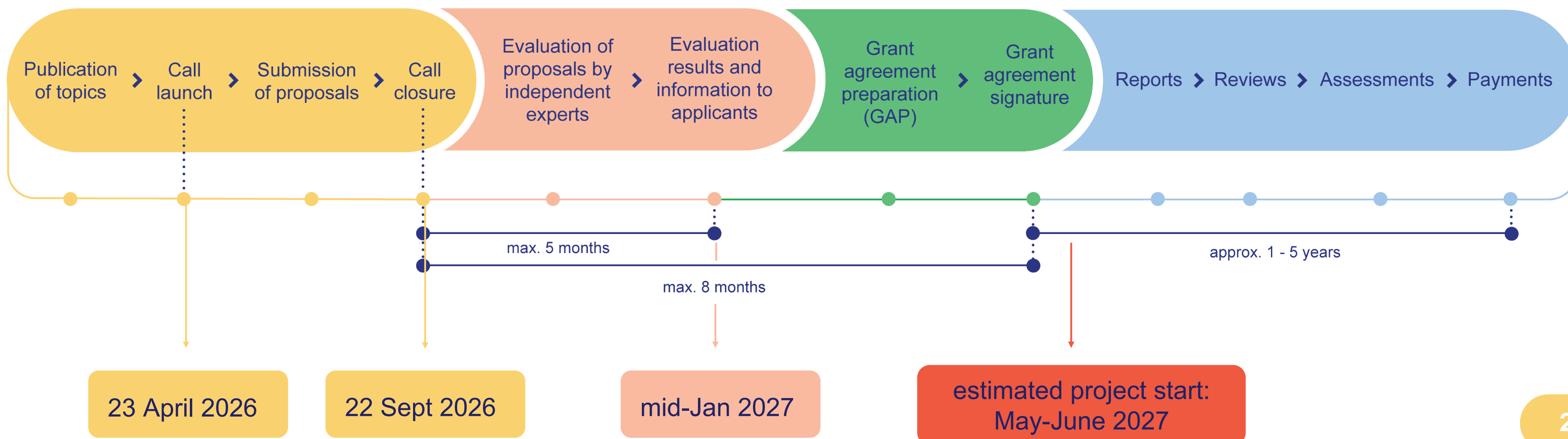
## Evaluation



## Grant agreement



## Project management





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