ESFRI-FED PROGRAMME

IN SUPPORT OF THE VALORISATION OF FEDERAL COMPONENTS IN ESFRI DISTRIBUTED AND VIRTUAL INFRASTRUCTURES
PHASE 1 – [2021-2025]

CALL FOR PROPOSALS | 2023-2024
INFORMATION FILE

Submission deadlines:

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST: **7 March 2023 @ 14:00**
FULL PROPOSALS: **30 May 2023 @ 14:00**

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PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE ESFRI-FED PROGRAMME

ESFRI-FED website:

EN: https://www.belspo.be/belspo/ESFRI-FED/index_en.stm
FR: https://www.belspo.be/belspo/ESFRI-FED/index_fr.stm
NL: https://www.belspo.be/belspo/ESFRI-FED/index_nl.stm

ESFRI-FED secretariat: esfri-fed@belspo.be

1.1. FOCUS OF THE ESFRI-FED PROGRAMME: DISTRIBUTED AND VIRTUAL ESFRI RI

On the 16th of July 2021, the Council of Ministers approved the implementation of the first phase of the ESFRI-FED programme in support of the valorisation of the federal components in ESFRI distributed and virtual infrastructures, to be carried out under the responsibility of the Federal Science Policy (BELSPO).

ESFRI, the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures, is a strategic instrument to develop the scientific integration of Europe and to strengthen its international outreach. The mission of ESFRI is to support a coherent and strategy-led approach to policymaking on research infrastructures in Europe, and to facilitate multilateral initiatives leading to the better use and development of research infrastructures, at EU and international level[1].

Research infrastructures as defined by ESFRI are facilities, resources and services that are used by the research communities to conduct research and foster innovation in their fields. These include: major scientific equipment (or sets of instruments), knowledge-based resources such as collections, archives and scientific data, e-infrastructures, such as data and computing systems and communication networks and any other tools that are essential to achieve excellence in research and innovation[2]. Beyond research, these infrastructures provide public services and education. They are classified as: single site, distributed or virtual infrastructures.

The ESFRI-FED programme focuses on distributed and virtual ESFRI research infrastructures. A distributed research infrastructure consists of a Central Hub and interlinked National Nodes, holding a unique specific name and legal status, and governance structure. Distributed infrastructures define and follow a joint investment strategy aimed at strengthening the research infrastructure through the Nodes and common/shared facilities. User-wise, each infrastructure has a common access policy, providing a single point of access for all users.

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[1] For more information on ESFRI: https://www.esfri.eu/forum
[2] https://www.esfri.eu/glossary

1.2. AIM OF THE ESFRI-FED PROGRAMME

ESFRI-FED is first and foremost designed to support the participation of Belgian Federal Scientific Institutions (FSI)[3] and federal departments (listed in Annex I) in ESFRI distributed and virtual research infrastructures, through the funding of R&D projects based on scientific excellence and European anchorage. Accessorily and providing that the necessary expertise does not exist within the FSI, the programme is open to universities, institutions of higher education, public scientific institutions or non-profit research centres. Explicit conditions regarding eligible participants are given in Part I – Point 2.2. Eligible participants of this document.

More concretely, the framework programme aims to:

- Support ESFRI research infrastructures in implementation or operational phase, and to which Belgium has formally adhered.
- Better position the presence of Belgium and especially its federal level within said ESFRI infrastructures.
- Further develop, test, reinforce and/or improve Belgian federal components and/or services within said ESFRI infrastructures.
- Valorise the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI infrastructure through the development of services or specific modules within the Federal Scientific Institutions.

1.3. OPERATIONALISATION, CALENDAR & BUDGET OF THE PROGRAMME

The first phase of the programme runs from 2021 to 2026 with 3 biennial calls for projects, each of them with an indicative budget of 3M€.

	Call 1 2021-2022	Call 2 2023-2024	Call 3 2025-2026	Total
Budget (k€)	3 800*	3 000	3 000	9 800

800k€ were reallocated to the programme from leftover budget of other initiatives.

For its operationalisation BELSPO is assisted by a Strategic **Programme Committee**. This committee is an **independent panel established for the duration of the programme**. The committee is composed of designated members from the FSI and federal departments concerned with ESFRI research infrastructures. Its role is to monitor and insure consistency of the implementation procedures. Details of its composition and mandate are provided in the Terms of Reference available on the website.

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[3] The acronym FSI covers the institutions as defined in the Royal Decree of 30 October 1996 and their possible legal successors, such as Sciensano.

2. CONSTRUCTION OF R&D ESFRI-FED PROJECTS

R&D projects of the ESFRI-FED programme must:

- Address (at least) one eligible ESFRI research infrastructure.
- Include (at least) one FSI in the proposal, with the exception for those ESFRI RI which are of federal interest but in which no FSI participate.
- Produce or improve (a) service(s) within the addressed ESFRI research infrastructure(s).
- Anchor federal components and/or services within an addressed ESFRI infrastructure(s).

2.1. ELIGIBLE ESFRI RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

The ESFRI research infrastructures addressed by the different programme calls must meet all **the following conditions:**

- They have **Belgium among its members**; either as a legal entity or via a formal participation agreement (i.e. signature of a 'political support' document in the name of Belgium, a 'memorandum of understanding', a 'letter of intent', or its equivalent).
- They are in **implementation or operation phase**[4].
- They have a **'federal component'**[5]; this is, activities funded at the federal level, performed by federal actors (particularly FSI), or in the interest of federal authorities performed by non-federal actors in support of federal competencies.

In accordance with the legal base of the programme, a rolling call agenda is planned together with the Strategic Programme Committee, allowing each ESFRI RI filling the above conditions to be addressed and enriched with a federal component by the end of the ESFRI-FED programme time span.

The ESFRI RI eligible for this call, approved by the ESFRI-FED Programme Committee are the following:

Domain	Acronym	Name
Environment	**ACTRIS**	Aerosols, Clouds and Trace gases Research Infrastructure
	DiSSCo	Distributed System of Scientific Collections
Health & Food	**METROFOOD**	Infrastructure for Promoting Metrology in Food and Nutrition
Social & Cultural Innovation	**CESSDA**	Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives
	E-RIHS	European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science
Digit	**EBRAINS**	European Brain ReseArch INfrastructures

Synergies among FSI, Belgian Federal components and ESFRI RI are strongly encouraged. BELSPO will propose synergies whenever possible based on the Expressions of Interest received.

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[4] According to the description of the ESFRI lifecycle approach described in the Strategy Report on Research Infrastructures Roadmap 2018: http://roadmap2018.esfri.eu/strategy-report/the-esfri-methodology/

[5] A "federal component" is distinct from an "ESFRI National Focal Point" or "ESFRI node" for which the mission is to ensure the interface between the infrastructure's headquarters and the national contributions.

2.2. ELIGIBLE PROJECT PARTNERS

Eligible partners **financed by the project** need to be part of the Belgian federal component of the addressed ESFRI RI.

	Coordinator	Financed Partner	Non-financed Partner*	Subcontractor
FSI	✓	✓	✓	(✓)
Belgian federal research institutions	(✓)	✓	✓	✓
Belgian federated research institutions	(✓)	✓	✓	✓

* Non-financed partners appear as 'other partner' in the proposal templates.
( ) See conditions in points A, B and C here below.

Non financed partners can be associated to the project. For instance: Federal Departments may contribute to the project with cash or in-kind, in which case they will appear as (O) 'other partners' in the proposal's templates.

> BELSPO does NOT fund **Federal Departments**, only Research Institutions.

A. BELGIAN FEDERAL SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTIONS (FSI)

Participants in the ESFRI-FED programme will be mainly FSI, which may submit proposals alone, or as part of a consortium. In case of submitting proposals as part of a consortium, the FSI will hold the role of coordinator. FSI can be a financed and non-financed partner. Marginally they can also appear as subcontractors if their role in the project is minor and adheres to the activities described under subcontracting (see Part I - Point 2.5. Budget).

B. BELGIAN FEDERAL RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Other Belgian Federal Research Institutions can participate in the call in the following cases:

- As **coordinator** of a proposal which focuses on federal priorities[6] for which the expertise required does not exist within FSI[7] (there is no FSI in the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI RI).
- As **partner** to FSI in a consortium, if justified by the proposal. Their participation in a consortium must be essential to valorise the federal component within the ESFRI RI.
- As **subcontractor** in proposals submitted by FSI, under conditions described on Part I - Point 2.5. Budget.

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[6] Federal priorities are those that concern the competences of the federal departments and the FSI.
[7] The added value of developing a federal component (e.g., a 'federal node') born of the coordination by a Belgian research institution other than FSI will have to be demonstrated, together with the absence of subsidies for the project by the federal or federated authorities.

C. BELGIAN FEDERATED RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Universities or Research Centres belonging to federated entities can participate in the call in the following cases:

- As **coordinator** of a proposal which focuses on federal priorities[6] for which the expertise required does not exist within FSI[7] (there is no FSI or no Belgian Federal Research Institutions in the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI RI).
- As **partner** to a FSI in a consortium, if justified by the proposal. Their participation in a consortium must be essential to valorise the federal component within the ESFRI RI.
- As **subcontractor** in proposals submitted by FSI, under conditions described on Part I - Point 2.5. Budget.

2.3. ELIGIBLE PROPOSALS

✓ Proposals submitted in response to a call of the ESFRI-FED programme **must focus on** the development, test, strengthening or improving, AND anchoring of **federal components and/or services within an addressed ESFRI infrastructure**. Services and specific modules developed by FSIs (or by federated partners on behalf of the federal level) will valorise the Federal contribution to the ESFRI RI in phase of implementation or operation.

✗ Proposals submitted in response to a call of the ESFRI-FED programme **must NOT:**
  - Produce completely new services that do not build on any previous development already organically linked to the targeted ESFRI infrastructure.
  - Implement research which makes use of data or services produced by the ESFRI research infrastructure.

2.4. PROJECT DURATION

Projects will have a duration of 2 to 4 years.

2.5. PROJECT BUDGET

Given the envelope available for the call, projects will have a maximum budget of:

- **400 000€ for projects with a single partner.**
- **750 000€ if there are two or more partners in the consortium.**

The budget will exclusively cover the cost of the R&D activities related to the development of services and the anchoring of the federal component in the ESFRI infrastructure. The budget breakdowns as follows:

- **Staff:** devoted to the implementation of the project [recruited personnel and/or existing personnel made (partially) available to the project and in charge of the budget].
- **Operation costs**: expenses derived from the implementation of the project and the services [monitoring, cost needed for the functioning and maintaining of the research infrastructure component …].
- **Equipment:** only if strictly necessary for the integration of the federal component into the ESFRI infrastructure.
- **Subcontracting:** the amount may not exceed 25% of the claimed budget by the Belgian partner concerned.
- **Overheads:** the total may not exceed 5% of [Personnel + operation costs].

> In order to preserve the implemented technologies and keep them sustainable and scalable when the project funding ends, it is possible to have BELNET as subcontractor. However, besides the durability aspect they may be able to offer, its inclusion will have no effect in the evaluation.

For more information regarding the budget please consult the Budget Rules document on the website. General conditions to BELSPO's R&D contracts apply.

3. DOCUMENTATION RELATED TO THIS CALL

The following documents are available on the ESFRI-FED website.

DOCUMENTS WITH INFORMATION REGARDING THE PROGRAMME AND THE CALL

- Information file: General Information of the Programme and the Call.
- Gender checklist: Checklist regarding Gender Equality.
- Personal data protection statement: Disclaimer of personal data acquisition and use.
- Evaluators eligibility: Eligibility rules for the evaluators employed in the programme.
- Terms of reference of the Programme Committee.

TEMPLATES

For the Expression of Interest:

- Part A: General information & Contact details (compulsory)
- Part B: Summary (compulsory)

For the Full proposal:

- Template 1 General information & Contact details (compulsory)
- Template 2 Proposal description (compulsory)
- Template 3 Gantt chart (compulsory)
- Template 4 Budget table (compulsory)
- Template 5 Data Management Plan (compulsory)

- Template 6 Contribution commitment letter (optional)
- Template 7 Follow-up committee letter of intent (optional)

For more information on how to fill out and send these documents please see Part II – Point 7. Submission of proposals.

4. INDICATIVE TIMING OF THE CALL

For more precise and up-to-date information please check the ESFRI-FED website.
Submission deadlines are always at 14h00, Brussels' time.

Closing date	Phase
February 2023	Opening of the call
Early March 2023	Expression of Interest
End May 2023	Full proposal
Mid Aug 2023	Individual evaluation
End Sept 2023	Panel interview evaluation
End Oct 2023	Full Proposal selection validation by Programme Committee
Mid Dec 2023	Communication of selected proposals

5. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS FOR SELECTED PROJECTS

5.1. CONTRACTS

For the selected proposals, a contract is concluded between BELSPO and the funded institution(s).

For this purpose, the applicants of the selected proposal will be asked at the end of the evaluation and selection procedure, to concisely formulate the specifications of their projects to be included in the contract. This Technical Annex to the contract will be drawn up in consultation with BELSPO and will consider the recommendations formulated by the evaluators and the Programme Committee.

Adaptations to the original proposal may relate, among other things, to the content of the proposal, the composition of the project partnership or Follow-up Committee, the budget, and/or ways of enhancing value and sustainability of the project.

BELSPO grants the selected projects the funds required for their implementation. BELSPO shall reimburse at most, and up to the amount specified in the granted budget, the actual costs proven by the partners providing these costs are directly related to the implementation of the project.

The general terms of the contract are detailed in 'Annex II of the contract: General Conditions', on the website.

5.2. REPORTS AND PROGRESS MEETINGS

The contract foresees the following reports to be submitted to BELSPO:

- **Initial administrative report:** to be submitted within three months after the start of the project.
- **Mid-term progress report:** only for 3 and 4 year projects, to be submitted half-way the project.
- **Final scientific report:** to be submitted at the end of the project.

The templates are on the [Promotors' documents](#) of the ESFRI-FED website.
If deemed useful by BELSPO, an activity report may be requested for an external evaluation of the project. BELSPO may also ask for other reports/input at any time during the project to provide scientific support to valorisation and service actions related to the programme.

These reports are to be included in the project work plan and the cost of preparing them (including possible translations) must be covered by the project budget.

Meetings on the project's progress must be organised - minimum once a year - between the project partner(s), BELSPO and the Follow-up Committee. The organisation of these meetings must be included in the project work plan and the project budget.

5.3. DATA, RESULTS, INTELLECTUAL OWNERSHIP & OPEN ACCESS

In the framework of the open science policy, participants are reminded to comply with current and future open data legislation and guidelines, whereby all components of the infrastructure must be preserved as open digital objects for the long term and are made available for reuse by other researchers or research institutions. Digital objects include, among other things: open research data or FAIR data, open-source software components, etc.

It is also required that the e-services financed by BELSPO in the context of the previous programmes and calls, are reused as much as possible in the framework of ESFRI-FED. The project proposals will describe which e-services will be reused, complemented, or extended by the beneficiaries (example: the BELSPO long-term preservation platform, the Dataverse research dataset management platform, the use of BELNET services, including authentication and authorisation (AAI) services, Secure Storage in secure redundant data centres and managed services).

The results (including information) produced by the project shall be the property of the institution carrying out the work generating this foreground. In accordance with the relevant BELSPO Open Research Data Mandate, each Institution undertakes to make the foreground and background relating to research data, available as soon as possible and free of charge in an approved data repository (Open Research Data Repository). This concerns data that supports the project results, with its metadata and other contextualised (curated) and/or raw data mentioned in the Data Management Plan (DMP) as part of the proposal submitted by the grant applicant. The data must comply with the FAIR principle (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) and must be accessible according to the principle "As open as possible, as closed as necessary".

5.4. RESEARCH ETHICS

The first code of ethics for scientific research in Belgium was drawn up in 2009: http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/publ/pub_ostc/Eth_code/ethcode_en.pdf.

The "Code of Ethics for Scientific Research in Belgium" is a joint initiative of the Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, the Académie Royale de Médecine de Belgique, the Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten and the Koninklijke Academie voor Geneeskunde van België, with the support of BELSPO.

All projects must take this code of ethics into account in their research. If necessary, the Ethical Board of the institutions concerned must be consulted before submitting a proposal.

5.5. GENDER

Projects must consider equality in terms of gender and ensure gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the project. If the institutions participating in the project have a **Gender Equality Plan** they must include the weblink to it in the Full proposal description.

- **Gender equality in the project team(s):** The project must describe and explain the composition of the team(s) under the perspective of gender, ensuring gender balance as much as possible. If the participating institutions have developed a Gender Equality Plan, a link to the document must be provided in description of the team within the proposal.

- **Gender in the content of proposal**: Where relevant, the gender dimension must be integrated in the R&D project. Projects must take into account all possible differences between men and women (biological characteristics as well as social and cultural features), boys and girls, or males and females in their content. All statistics produced, collected, and commissioned are, where appropriate, disaggregated by sex and gender indicators are established where relevant.

6. COMPLAINTS

BELSPO places great importance on the quality of its service and on improving the way it operates. A special form to handle complaints has been created.

The complaint form is available at the following address: http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/complaints_en.stm.

Complaints submitted anonymously or which are offensive or not related to our organisation will not be processed.

A complaint is handled as follows:

1. Once your complaint has been filed, a notification of receipt will be sent.
2. The complaint will be forwarded to the relevant departments and individuals and will be processed within one month.
3. An answer will be sent by e-mail or letter.
4. The complaint will be treated with strict confidentiality.

If you are dissatisfied by the initial response to a complaint, you can always contact the Médiateur Fédéral / Federal Ombudsman, rue Ducale / Hertogstraat 43, 1000 Brussels (email: contact@mediateurfederal.be / contact@federaalombudsman.be).

PART II:
SUBMISSION & EVALUATION PROCEDURE

7. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Applications will be submitted in two compulsory stages: Expression of Interest (EoI) and Full Proposal. BELSPO will conduct a match-making process of EoIs seeking possible synergies and propose teams to submit (if possible and relevant) joint Full Proposals.

7.1. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EoI)

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST must be submitted:

- By the coordinator of the EoI
- Within the deadline
- Using (and correctly re-naming) the templates on the website
- To: esfri-fed@belspo.be
- With the subject: **ESFRI-FED CALL 2023 EOI ACRONYM**

Expressions of Interest are not evaluated, they allow BELSPO to identify the key elements of the project, find synergies with other proposals through a match-making process and to prepare the evaluation. The submission of an EoI is a prerequisite for the submission of a Full proposal. BELSPO will carry out an eligibility check (compliance with the conditions of the call) of the EoIs.

The Expression of Interest consist of 2 parts, which must be labelled as follows to be submitted:

- **Template PART A: General Information & Contact Details**
  Please rename as: ACRONYM_EoI_General Info.xlsx
- **Template PART B: Summary**
  Please send the summary in format Word (.docx) and PDF (.pdf)
  Please rename as: ACRONYM_EoI_Summary.docx
  ACRONYM_EoI_Summary.pdf

The Information contained in the EoI concerns:

- The title and acronym of the project.
- The institution coordinating the project, partner institutions and subcontractors.
- The ESFRI infrastructure(s) concerned by the project.
- The maximum budget of the project.
- The name and contact details of the foreseen partner(s).
- A brief description of the intended project, and 6 keywords.
- Proposed reviewers of the proposal.

The title and description of the project is understood as an early stage of reflection. The content of the description in the Full Proposal may vary from that of the EoI to some extent. However, it cannot diverge to the point of making it irrelevant for the Full Proposal. Changes concerning the partners (including the coordinator) are accepted. Acronym and keywords must remain the same.

Full proposals resulting of the merge of matched projects at the stage of the EoI are exempted from these rules. If the merge requires substantial change to the initial content of the proposals, the coordinator is required to contact BELSPO, who may ask for a new EoI, particularly if the changes render the experts provided in the prior EoIs irrelevant.

BELSPO will only correspond with the coordinator of the EoI. It is the responsibility of the coordinator to communicate with the partners.

7.2. THE MATCH-MAKING PROCESS

The philosophy behind the match-making process is to foster collaboration among applicants rather than competition, increasing the chances of success for the proposals submitted, and making a better use of the available resources.

In this process, BELSPO will analyse the Expressions of Interest received to find synergies in terms of the ESFRI research infrastructures addressed and will put in contact the teams whose proposals show there could be a clear concerted effort, only disclosing information about the targeted ESFRI RI.

The teams will be free to take up (or not) BELSPO's suggestions and will be given the opportunity to explain their reasons for (not) following those suggestions in the Panel Evaluation. This information will be passed along to the Strategic Programme Committee, who will propose a Funding Scenario to the Secretary of State based on a set of criteria including (but not restricted to) having balance in terms of the ESFRI RI funded in the call.

7.3. FULL PROPOSALS

FULL PROPOSALS must be submitted:

- By the coordinator of the proposal
- Within the following deadline
- Using (and correctly re-naming) the templates on the website
- To this email address: esfri-fed@belspo.be
- With the subject: **ESFRI-FED CALL 2023 PRP ACRONYM**
- And the attachments named as indicated below

Full proposals provide the scientific/technical details, budgetary and operational aspects that will be evaluated. BELSPO will carry out an eligibility check (compliance with the conditions of the call) of the Full proposals. Only eligible proposals will be submitted for evaluation.

Full proposals consist of the following parts, which must be labelled as follows:

- **Template 1 General information & Contact details (compulsory)**
  Contains the general information of the proposal and the contact details of the applicants
  Please rename as: ACRONYM_1_General information.xlsx
- **Template 2 Proposal description (compulsory)**
  Contains the text of the proposal (word file).
  Please rename as: ACRONYM_2_Proposal description.pdf.
  Send also the word version: ACRONYM_2_Proposal description.docx.
- **Template 3 Gantt chart (compulsory)**
  Contains the breakdown of the work plan, attribution of tasks and calendar (excel file).
  Please rename as: ACRONYM_3_Gantt chart.xlsx
- **Template 4 Budget table (compulsory)**
  Contains an explanation of the Budget rules, and the breakdown of the budget (excel file).
  Please rename as: ACRONYM_5_Budget table.xlsx
- **Template 5 Data Management Plan (compulsory)**
  Contains the description of data use, management, back-up and storage related to the project (word file).
  Please rename as: ACRONYM 4_DPM.pdf
- **Template 6 Contribution commitment letter (optional)**
  Not compulsory. For in-cash or in-kind contributions that come from institutions/persons that are not paid partners in the project (word file). Please rename as: ACRONYM_6_Contribution commitment letter.pdf
- **Template 7 Follow-up Committee letter of intent (optional)**
  Not compulsory. For future members of the Follow-up Committee who wish to express their intention of joining the committee (word file). Please rename as: ACRONYM_7_Follow-up Committee.pdf

Additionally, applicants may join a **Gender Equality Plan** document to the full proposal (ACRONYM_8_GEP), though BELSPO prefers to have a weblink to this document in the Proposal description template.

7.4. ELIGIBILITY CHECK

BELSPO will check the eligibility of the proposals before sending them to the evaluators. Non-compliant proposals will not be evaluated.

Eligible Full Proposals meet the following conditions:

1. They are sent by email, using, and adequately labelling the appropriated documents as explained in Part II – Point 7.3. Full Proposals, within the deadline.
2. All the fields in the templates provided are adequately filled.
3. They are drafted concisely, respecting the length limitations, in comprehensible English.
4. They focus on the specific ESFRI(s) addressed by the call, provided in Part I – Point 2.1. Eligible ESFRI RI.
5. They have a FSI as coordinator, except in the case where no FSI participates in the ESFRI RI and the infrastructure is of federal interest.
6. They have a max. budget that is in accordance with the number of partners in the project (max. 400 k€ for single-partner proposals, max. 750 k€ for multi-partner proposals).

8. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

The evaluation procedure is based on a national and international peer-review that guarantees the pertinence of the selected projects, their scientific/technical excellence, quality implementation, their impact and added value both at federal level and for the ESFRI infrastructure, as well as the long-term sustainable perspectives of the Belgian federal component within the ESFRI.

The evaluation is preceded by an eligibility check and runs in two phases: Written evaluation of Full Proposals and Panel interview with the applicants. It is followed by the selection of proposals.

8.1. PROJECT EVALUATORS

BELSPO is responsible for composing the evaluation team. The team of experts will include:

A. A Belgian non-thematic expert on the research landscape and ESFRI infrastructures in Belgium.
B. An expert from a foreign funding agency with experience in calls related to ESFRI infrastructures.
C. An expert on sustainability and long-term integration aspects of components in the ESFRI.
D. A foreign expert [in Environment OR Food & Health OR Social & Cultural Innovation OR Physical sciences & engineering OR Digit OR Energy...] depending on the nature of the ESFRI concerned, who will study all the proposals submitted in their domain according to the ESFRI categories.
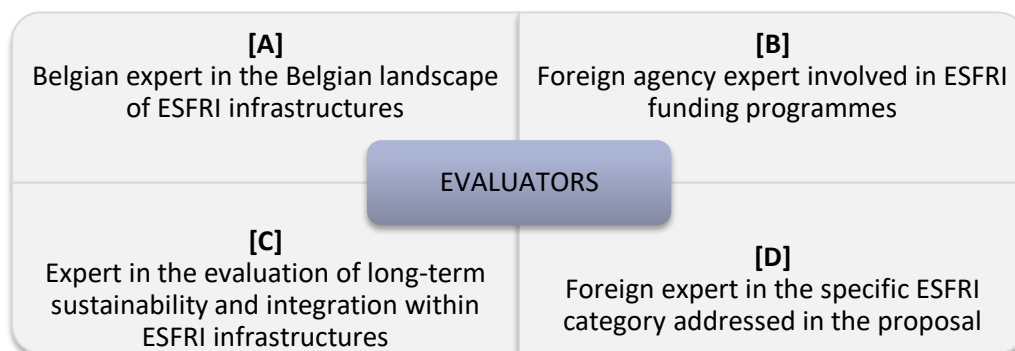
This pool of experts [A], [B], [C] and [D]s, will perform individual remote evaluations and, whenever possible, will constitute the Panel. Preferably, and to ensure continuity, the same experts are solicited for each call of the ESFRI-FED programme.

Experts will be assigned the role of reporter for a few proposals: They will draft the Consensus Report, and the comments regarding those proposals on the Panel Report.

8.2. INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION

The written evaluation will take place remotely, based on an **evaluation form** which will be sent by email directly to the evaluators, following an **evaluation matrix** available on the website. During this assessment the experts will only have access to the proposals they will evaluate. They will not have access to each other's evaluation.

The evaluators will also prepare a **list of written questions** for the applicants in preparation of a face-to-face (or videoconference) Panel interview. These questions, compiled by BELSPO, will aim to clarify specific aspects of the proposal or gather additional information regarding the pertinence and relevance of the project, its scientific/technical excellence, quality of implementation, impact and added value for the federal government and ESFRI, as well as the long-term sustainable perspectives of the Belgian federal component within the ESFRI.

An additional section regarding the match-making process will be included in the list of questions, where applicants will be able to explain if they have been suggested to submit a joint Full Proposal with another team, whether or not they have followed the suggestion, and why.

BELSPO will compile these questions, anonymise them, and transmit them to the applicants in preparation of the panel interview evaluation.

8.3. PANEL INTERVIEW EVALUATION

A face-to-face (or videoconference) Panel interview based on the questions from the individual evaluation will take place following the individual evaluation, allowing the coordinator of the project to briefly present and clarify different aspects of the proposal.

Prior to the Panel Interview

- **The coordinator** of the project will receive the questions addressed to their own proposal in advance. The coordinator will address these questions during the interview, assisted (if desired) by another project partner. Any supports used by the coordinator during the interview will be sent to BELSPO after the meeting.
- **Panel members** will have access to the ensemble of proposals and evaluations, as well as to the questions posed to the applicants, and a preliminary Proposal Ranking elaborated based on the results of the Individual Evaluation.

During the Panel Interview

Interviews with candidates will have a duration of 45 to 60 minutes each, depending on the number of proposals received, divided in 3 periods:

- **First period**: The coordinator (and their project partner) will briefly present the project and answers to the questions regarding their proposal, addressed to them via BELSPO (and if relevant the reasons why the matchmaking recommendations were not followed)
- **Second period:** The evaluators will discuss these questions (or other which may arise) with the coordinator (and their project partner).
- **Third period:** The evaluators will discuss the proposal in absence of the candidates, agreeing on the feedback to be given to the applicant and on the remarks to be passed on to the Programme Committee. (For more information regarding the documents produced by the panel, please see Part II – Point 8.4: Outcome of the evaluation.)

After the Panel Interview

At the end of all the presentations, the Panel will rank the proposals according to their quality against the criteria mentioned in Part III: Submission-Evaluation criteria, classifying them into the categories described in Part II – Point 8.6. Scoring, and producing a Panel Report. A Consensus Report will be drafted, per proposal, by one of the panel experts (reporter of the proposal). This anonymous report will be provided as feedback to the applicants.

8.4. OUTCOME OF THE EVALUATION

Based on the Individual Evaluation and the Panel Evaluation, the members of the Panel will produce the following documents:

- **Proposal Ranking**: With proposals classified in 'highly recommended', 'recommended' or 'not recommended' for funding.
- **Panel Report:** Explaining the Proposal Ranking to the Programme Committee.
- **Consensus Report:** (one per proposal): It will serve as feedback for the Applicants. The Consensus Report is anonymous and addresses the different evaluation criteria and provides suggestions for the improvement of the proposal wherever needed. The Consensus Report is final. It will be not modified in the subsequent steps of the evaluation-selection process.

8.5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Eligible proposals submitted in response to the call will be evaluated according to the following main criteria:

- **Pertinence of the project & Relevance and scientific or technical excellence**
- **Quality of the implementation**
- **Impact and added value & Sustainability**

These three criteria will hold the same weight and will be evaluated through a set of sub-criteria. And will account for the different level of maturity of both ESFRI research infrastructures and their Belgian (federal) components. For more information regarding the evaluation criteria please see Part III: Submission-Evaluation criteria.

8.6. SCORING

Individual Evaluation

Each of the 3 criteria categories will be given a appreciation mark (scale from 1 to 5) in the individual evaluation.
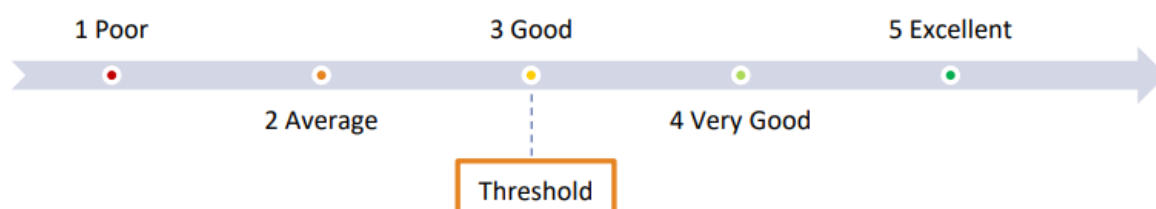
Proposals that will be discussed by the panel:
- Will have a score of at least 3/5 on all three categories to be fundable, AND
- Will have a general score of at least 9/15.

Proposals with general scores lower than 9/15 or below 3/5 in one of the categories will be considered as 'not recommended for funding' and will not be discussed by the panel.

The total score will determine the position of the proposal in the preliminary ranking, to be discussed by the Panel after the Panel interview.

Panel Evaluation

The Panel will consider the individual evaluation, the preliminary ranking, and the exchange during the Panel interview to produce a ranking in which proposals will be classified as:

- Highly recommended for funding
- Recommended for funding
- Not recommended for funding

9. SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

9.1. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The proposals' ranking elaborated by the Panel (with proposals classified as 'highly recommended for funding', 'recommended for funding' and 'not recommended for funding') will be submitted to the Strategic Programme Committee, who will propose a selection of projects to be funded.

To make this selection, the Strategic Programme Committee will only consider proposals labelled 'highly recommended' or 'recommended for funding', and apply the following criteria:

- **The quality of the proposals (Panel Evaluation, Consensus Report), and recommendations by the Panel as stated in the Panel Report.**
- **The balance in terms of ESFRI research infrastructure domains (environment, health & food, social sciences & humanities, digit...)**
- **The balance of the ESFRI RI infrastructures (possible overlapping of project proposals).**

This selection will be sent (via BELSPO) to the State Secretary in charge of Science Policy for approval.

9.2. STRATEGIC ROGRAMME COMMITTEE

A Strategic Programme Committee is set up to ensure coherence and control of the implementation of the ESFRI-FED programme. This committee is established for the duration of the programme and composed of designated members from FSIs and Federal Departments. The full description of the committee and its role will be defined in its ['Terms of Reference'](#) made available on the website.

PART III:
# SUBMISSION-EVALUATION CRITERIA

10. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Submission-Evaluation criteria are divided in four parts corresponding to the main criteria categories: A, B, C and D. These criteria categories are divided in different criteria, which are detailed on the following section.

- **Part A** concerns the general information of the proposal and contact detail of the applicants. This part is not evaluated.
- **Parts B, C, and D** correspond to the main criteria categories and will be evaluated through a set of sub-criteria. Part B, C and D will hold the same weight.

Parts	Criteria Categories	Criteria
PART A: General Information	(Not evaluated)	General information
		Summary & keywords
		Details of the applicants
PART B: Compliance with the Scope of the Call & Scientific Case	Pertinence of the project. Relevance and scientific or technical excellence.	1. Compliance with the scope of the call
		2. Objectives of the project
		3. Justification of the project
		4. Methodology
PART C: Implementation Case	Quality of the implementation.	5. Partnership
		6. Workplan
		7. Budget
		8. Data Management Plan
PART D: Impact & Sustainability Case	Impact and added value. Sustainability.	9. Impact
		10. Sustainability

The Submission-Evaluation criteria refer to the ESFRI research infrastructure, the Belgian federal component and the FSI or the institutions which, in absence of a FSI are at the core of the Belgian federal component. The FSI or the institutions at the core of the Belgian federal component appear as applicants in the proposal.
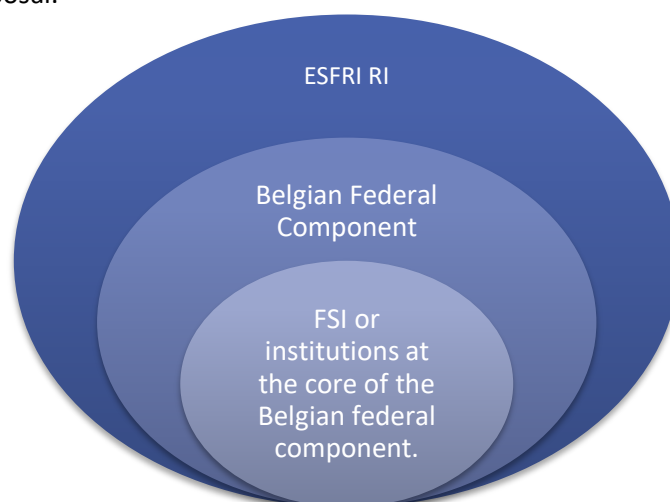
BELSPO understands that there are differences related to the lifecycle stage of the ESFRI Research Infrastructures addressed by the call (implementation vs. operational phase)[8] and the level of maturity of the Federal Components[9] within these infrastructures (promising components vs. established) and will make sure each project is evaluated bearing in mind these two variables.

Whatever the lifecycle stage of ESFRI RI is, the maturity of the Belgian Federal component is viewed as the stability of the position it holds within the research infrastructure (new or promising vs. established) and its durability, understood as the capacity to hold said position via the institution's structural (or other) funds, rather than through BELSPO's projects. In the case of **promising components**, the ESFRI-FED programme should contribute to strategically secure the component's position within the infrastructure. In the case of **established components**, the ESFRI-FED programme should contribute to strategically advance that placement to a more prominent position.

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[8] From the ESFRI Roadmap 2021: The IMPLEMENTATION phase aims at establishing the legal entities and launching services to the user community of research infrastructures. This implies intense negotiations as both the Central Hub and the national nodes require specific commitments to develop a successful governance and management structure. During their OPERATION phase research infrastructures produce frontier research and deliver advanced services for excellent science satisfying the users' demand, boosting brain circulation of early career scientists and trainees, therefore improving the ranking of their academic and research institutions. Research infrastructures can create spin-offs and start-ups and attract corporate partners generating a high potential for innovation.
https://www.esfri.eu/sites/default/files/ESFRI_Roadmap2021_Public_Guide.pdf

[9] Federal component: Component of the ESFRI RI funded at the federal level, whose activities are performed by federal actors (particularly FSI), or in the interest of federal authorities performed by non-federal actors in support of federal competencies.

11. CRITERIA FOR THE WRITTEN EVALUATION AND THE PANEL INTERVIEW

These guidelines consist of two columns describing the required submission content (LEFT) and the criteria for the evaluation of project proposals (RIGHT).

SUBMISSION CONTENT GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICANTS	EVALUATION CRITERIA GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATORS
• Applicants are required to fill in the corresponding sections of the proposal using the appropriate templates as indicated. Templates are available for download from the website. • Texts must be concise: comprehensive, to the point, and focused on the specific criteria here below.	• Evaluators are required to fill out the corresponding sections of the evaluation template which will be sent to them via email. This evaluation includes questions for the applicants. • Evaluations must be comprehensive and to the point, avoiding summarising the research proposal content, but providing enough context to be understood by the applicants. Questions must refer to aspects requiring clarification and or complementary information. • The evaluation criteria match the different sections the applicants are required to complete.

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION

General Information of the project	
Template 1 General information This section contains the general information of the project.	*Document 1 General information* This section does not require an evaluation.
Summary	
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1/2 page)* • Context and motivation of the project. • Expected results and how these will impact science, economy, civil society, culture/heritage, public policy or services, environment and/or quality of life. • Brief explanation concerning the implementation of the project. • Provide 6 relevant keywords for the project.	*Document 2 Proposal description* This section does not require an evaluation.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE SCOPE OF THE CALL & SCIENTIFIC CASE

1. Scope of the project	
1.1. Compliance with the scope of the call	**1.1. IN/OUT of scope evaluation**
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1/2 page)* Explain how the proposal answers to the scope of the call, considering that ESFRI-FED projects aim to: • Develop, test, strengthen, or improve Belgian federal components and/or services within an eligible ESFRI research infrastructure. • Further anchor Belgian federal components and/or services within an eligible ESFRI infrastructure. • Valorise the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI through the development of services or specific modules, supporting the above-mentioned infrastructures.	*Document 2 Proposal description* Is the project in scope, partially out of scope or completely out of scope, considering the criteria of the programme? • **Proposals 'IN scope':** Completely fulfil the criteria of scope. • **Proposals 'partially OUT of scope':** Partially fulfil the criteria of scope. If you consider the proposal as 'partially OUT of scope', <u>you must complete the rest of the evaluation</u>. Note however that these proposals may be only financed based upon agreement of the Panel, who may impose necessary adjustments for it to be 'IN' scope. • **Proposals 'OUT of scope':** Do not fulfil the criteria of proposals 'IN scope'. If you consider the proposal as 'OUT' of scope, <u>your evaluation ends here</u>.
2. Justification of the project	
2.1. Objectives of the project	**2.1. Objectives of the project**
Template 2 Proposal description • State the duration of the project: *Example:*	*Document 2 Proposal description* • Are the project objectives clear and coherent? • Are the project objectives feasible within the duration and the budget category of the project?

	2 years	3 years	4 years
Duration	☒	☐	☐

• State the budget category of the project:

Example:

	400 000€	750 000€
Budget category	☐	☒

• Provide the general aim of the project. *(Max. 1/2 page)* • List the specific objectives of the project.	
2.2. Position and motivation of the project	**2.2. Position and motivation of the project**
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1 page + graphics)* • State the maturity of the ESFRI Research Infrastructure and its Belgian Federal component (if the infrastructure is in between both phases, please mark both phases): *Example:*	*Document 2 Proposal description* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure and its Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind:

ESFRI RI lifecycle phase*	☒Implementation	☐Operation
Maturity of Belgian federal component**	☐Promising	☒Established

* If the infrastructure is in between both phases please mark both.
** This is an auto-assessment.

• Position the project within the Belgian federal component and the chosen ESFRI RI, and the FSI involved. Demonstrate that there is an existing link between the FSI, the Belgian federal component and the ESFRI RI. • Explain the role and contribution of the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI so far, mentioning the funding received. • Explain how the project builds upon previous development and funding, and how it would advance the position of the component in the ESFRI RI. • Motivate what is the added value of the project within the chosen ESFRI RI. **Note:** In the absence of a FSI, please refer to the institutions that are at the core of the Belgian federal component.	• Is the project clearly positioned within the Belgian federal component, the chosen ESFRI RI, and the FSI involved? • Is there an existing link between the FSI, the Belgian federal component and the ESFRI RI? • Is the position optimal for the development of the activities/services foreseen in the project? • Is the history of the role and the contribution of the Belgian federal component to the ESFRI clear? • Is the funding history of the Belgian federal component clear and in line with the objectives of the project? • Is the project adequate to the maturity of the ESFRI RI and the Belgian Federal component? • Will the project contribute to strategically place/advance the position of the component in the ESFRI RI? **Note:** In the absence of a FSI, the applicants refer to the institutions that are at the core of the Belgian federal component.

2.3. Risk of the non-implementation of the project	2.3. Risk of the non-implementation of the project
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1/2 page)* ● List and explain the main risks of the non-implementation of the project from the perspective of: A. The Belgian federal component of the ESFRI RI concerned. B. The FSI (or actors of the project) involved in the Belgian federal component. C. The ESFRI RI concerned. **Note:** In the absence of a FSI, please refer to the institutions that are at the core of the Belgian federal component. **Note:** Please be specific. For instance, avoid stating general risks such as 'risk of not securing the Belgian federal component's position within the infrastructure' for a promising component or 'risk of not advancing the position of the Belgian federal component within the infrastructure' for an established component. In the case of the risk related to the ESFRI RI concerned, avoid the obvious risk related to the need for long-term support. *Example:*	*Document 2 Proposal description* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure and its Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind: ● Is the risk of non-implementation clearly explained from the perspective of… A. The Belgian federal component of the ESFRI concerned? B. The FSI involved in the Belgian federal component? C. The ESFRI concerned? ● Based on the risks signalled, how essential is the realisation of the project from these three perspectives? **Note:** In the absence of a FSI, the applicants will refer to the institutions that are at the core of the Belgian federal component.

For the Belgian federal component	A1	***Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.*** *Aenean scelerisque lorem id commodo mollis. Aenean finibus velit at sollicitudin semper. Aliquam fermentum lectus in porttitor posuere. Etiam commodo eros in tempor venenatis.*
	A2	…
	A3	…
B. For the FSI / Federal Department	B1	…
	B2	…
	B3	…
C. For the ESFRI	C1	…
	C2	…
	C3	…

3. Methodology	
3.1. Methodological approach	**3.1. Methodological approach**
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1/2 page)* • Describe the overall methodological approach of your project. • Describe how the services/activities issued from the project will be anchored (for promising Belgian federal components) or reinforced (for established Belgian federal components) in the ESFRI RI and the different steps needed to do so. (E.g., Labelling process, SLA).	*Document 2 Proposal description* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure and its Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind: • Is the methodological approach adequately described? • Is the methodological approach pertinent for the project's objectives? • Is the process of anchoring of the services/activities issued from the project well explained? • Will the foreseen steps allow the project to anchor (for promising Belgian federal components) or reinforce (for established Belgian federal components) the services/activities of the project within the ESFRI?
3.2. Translation of the project objectives into appropriate and well-described methodology	**3.2, 3.3 & 3.4. Methodology, Gender dimension and Ethic issues in the content of the R&D project**
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1 page)* • Detail the methodology of the project: Translate your research objectives into a methodology (used methods, techniques, systems and/or way of working) to achieve the results, considering the different disciplines and skills mobilised regarding the project approach as described above. • Detail the results your approach will enable to gather (expected outcomes).	*Document 2 Proposal description* *Please consult the Gender Equality checklist before evaluating this part.* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure and its Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind: • Does the chosen methodology adequately articulate the objectives with the expected outcomes? • Are the different disciplines and skills mobilised and the technical aspects adequate to achieve the project's results? • Are the expected outcomes of the project achievable by means of the methodology presented? • Does the project consider all the sex/gender aspects that could be linked to its objectives, methodology and outcomes? • Have the sex/gender aspects been adequately addressed?
3.3. Gender dimension in the content of the R&D project	
Please consult the Gender Equality checklist before answering this part *(Max. 1/2 page)* Explain the gender dimension in the content of the project. If your institution has a Gender Equality Plan, please provide the weblink or include the document with the proposal, labelled as ACRONYM_8_GEP.	

3.4. Ethics in the content of the R&D project *(Max. 1/2 page)*	• Does the project consider all the ethical aspects that could be linked to its objectives, methodology and outcomes?
• Answer the Ethics issues form. In absence of ethical issues. • Please provide a brief explanation of the ethical issues. In absence of ethical issues, please provide a brief explanation of why there are none. **Note:** Research involving activities marked with an asterisk (*) in the first column of the Ethics issues form requires the advice of the ad hoc Board at the level of their institution and an official agreement delivered by the Belgian competent authorities before the project start	• Have the ethical aspects been adequately addressed?

PART C: IMPLEMENTATION CASE

4. Partnership	
4.1. Coordinator	**4.1 & 4.2. Quality of the individual partners**
Template 2 Proposal description Provide a short description of expertise and skills of the coordinator: • Number of years of management experience. • Describe the professional background and experience working in ESFRI infrastructures. *(Max. 1/2 page).* • List max. 5 top achievements, milestones or peer-reviewed publications related to the project. • List the projects carried out over the past five years in the field(s) related to the project or the ESFRI (specify: duration, funding source, and role). • If possible, include web links for all the information above.	*Document 2 Proposal description* *Document 6 Contribution commitment letter – non compulsory* • Is the individual quality, expertise, and adequacy of each partner a good match for the project? • Does the coordinator have sufficient experience as a manager to coordinate the project? **Note:** If the Full Proposal contains a **Contribution Commitment letter** mentioning in-kind contributions in the form of staff devoted to the project, please consider them in assessing the quality of the consortium. Note that this letter is not compulsory, therefore proposals that do not include shall not be ranked lower because of it.
4.2. Partner(s)	
Template 2 Proposal description *Template 6 Contribution commitment letter – non compulsory* Provide a short description of expertise and skills of the partner(s): • Describe the professional background and experience working in ESFRI infrastructures. *(Max. 1/2 page).* • List max. 5 top achievements, milestones or peer-reviewed publications related to the project. • List the projects carried out over the past five years in the field(s) related to the project or the ESFRI (specify: duration, funding source, and role). **Note:** Please include here only (P) partners. • (P) partners: These are the Belgian Partners listed <u>under point 2.2. Eligible project partners</u> of this document **which are paid by the project** and therefore will sign the project's contract if the proposal is selected for funding. The (P)	

partners may also carry out non-paid activities in the project, and thus can also appear in the 'person-months other sources' of the Gantt chart. • (O) partners: These are partners that **are not paid by the project** and will not sign the project's contract if the proposal is selected for funding. However, they can formalise their contribution to the project using the **Contribution Commitment letter template**.	
4.3. Combined expertise of the consortium	**4.3. Quality of the consortium**
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1/2 page).* **Note:** For single-partner projects, please write 'NA' and skip 4.3. Describe the adequacy and added value of the partnership in addressing the topic of the project and supporting the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI. Explain why this/these partner(s) are crucial to the achievement of the project: • Complementary expertise, disciplines and/or way of working. • Integration of the contributions. • Development of new expertise (techniques, way of working) within the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI and the FSI involved. • In the case of non-FSI partners, demonstrate the pertinence of the selected partner.	*Document 2 Proposal description* **Note:** Skip this point 4.3 for single-partner projects. • Is the partnership essential and adequate for the project? • Are the contributions of the partners well integrated for the achievement of the project? • Will the partnership lead to the development of new expertise within the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI and the FSI involved?
4.4. Gender balance in the R&D project	**4.4. Gender balance in the R&D project**
Template 2 Proposal description *Please consult the Gender Equality checklist before answering this part* *(Max. 1/2 page).* • Signal if the applicants' institutions have a Gender Equality plan. If yes, please provide the weblink to it (or send the GEP as a separate file *ACRONYM_8_GEP.pdf*) • Comment how gender balance is considered in the project.	*Document 2 Proposal description* *Document 8 GEP, non compulsory* *Please consult the Gender Equality checklist before answering this part* • Is the staff on the project as much gender balanced as possible? • Does gender balance apply to all layers of hierarchy? • Are there equal opportunities for people of different gender to participate in the project? • Are there mechanisms in place to ensure equal participation in terms of gender?

5. Workplan	
5.1. Gantt chart	**5.1. & 5.2 Workplan**
Template 3 Gantt chart *Template 6 Contribution commitment letter – not compulsory*	*Document 3 Gantt chart* *Document 6 Contribution commitment letter – not compulsory* *Document 2 Proposal description*
Please fill out the **Gantt chart**. **Note:** There are different three different types of partner in the GANTT chart: • (P) partners: These are the Belgian Partners that appear in sub-criterion 4.2. Expertise of the partners in *Template 2 Proposal description* and *Template 4 Budget table*. The (P) partners are paid by the project and will sign the project's contract if the proposal is selected for funding. The (P) partners may also carry out non-paid activities in the project, and therefore can also appear in the 'person-months other sources' of the Gantt chart. • (O) partners: These are partners that do NOT appear in sub-criterion 4.2 Expertise of the partners in *Template 2 Proposal description, or Template 4 Budget table*. The (O) partners are not paid by the project and will not sign the project's contract if the proposal is selected for funding. However, they can formalise their contribution to the project using the **Contribution Commitment letter (template available on the website)**. • (S) subcontractors: Subcontractors are listed in *Template 4 Budget table*. The (S) subcontractors are paid by the project but will not sign the project's contract if the proposal is selected for funding, therefore they do not appear in sub-criterion 4.2. Expertise of the partners.	• Is the Gantt chart adequately completed? • Is the description of the work plan coherent with the Gantt chart? • Are the work packages, tasks, and deliverables coherent with the objectives, methodology and expected results of the project? • Is the calendar for the tasks and deliverables adequate and feasible for the completion of the project (in terms of when they are scheduled and the duration of the tasks)? • Is the person-power effort for the tasks adequate? • Is the work plan well distributed among partners in function of their expertise?
5.2. Detailed description of the work plan according to the Gantt chart	
Template 2 Proposal description • Provide a graphic explanation of the workflow in the project (optional). • Use the table provided to list the work packages, name and briefly describe the tasks, and list the deliverables that constitute the work plan of your project in accordance with the GANTT chart. Do not describe work packages or deliverables. Note that the definition of subtasks is not possible.	

- There are 3 compulsory work packages:
  - Coordination, project management and reporting.
  - Data management.
  - Valorisation, diffusion and exploitation of results.

Example:

WP 0: Title of the work package		

T.0.1.	Title of the task	
	Task leader	
	Brief description of the task	
	D.0.1.1	Name of the deliverable associated to the task
	D.0.1.2	Name of the deliverable associated to the task
	D.0.1.3	Name of the deliverable associated to the task

Note: (P) partners must ensure the follow-up of outsourced tasks carried out by the (S) subcontractors. The coordinator must ensure the follow-up of tasks carried out by (O) partners.

5.3. Risk management

5.3. Risk management

Template 2 Proposal description
(Max. 1/2 page).

- Number and identify the main incurring risks that could delay or hinder the project and the contingency plans foreseen to deal with them, as concisely as possible.

Example:

Risk	Name of the Risk	Contingency Plan
R.1.1.	Online survey input insufficient	Contact administration XXX to access data from the previous trimester from which the input could be extracted.

Document 2 Proposal description

- Have the main incurring risks been identified?
- Are the contingency plans adequate in terms of timing, duration and resources?

6. Budget	
6.1. Budget of the project	6.1. Budget of the project
Template 4 Budget table *Template 6 Contribution commitment letter – not compulsory* **Note:** For information regarding the project's budget see point 2.5 of this document. The budget rules are further detailed in **Template 4 Budget table**. The budget is distributed into the following categories, which are described in the budget rules: • Staff • Operation costs • Overheads • Equipment • Subcontracting **Note:** • (O) partners: are considered under the in-kind category when listed in the budget under staff costs. They are under the responsibility of the Coordinator of the project. • It is possible to inform of the commitment of in-cash and in-kind contributions to the project from (O) partners, by filling out the **Contribution Commitment letter (template available on the website)**. • (S) subcontractors: are not counted as staff but listed in the subcontracting category under the responsibility of a (P) partner, who lists them within their budget.	*Document 4 Budget table* *Document 6 Contribution commitment letter – not compulsory* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure and its Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind: • Is the budget realistic for the project? • Is the budget well-balanced among partners? • Is the budget (and the budget distribution) in line with the objectives and expected outcomes of the project? • Are all budget categories well adjusted?

7.1. Data Management Plan	7.1. Data Management Plan
Template 5 Data Management Plan	*Template 5 Data Management Plan*

Please fill out the **Data Management Plan**.	• What is the quality of the Data Management Plan?
	  - Will the DMP ensure the high quality and availability of the generated data?
	  - Do the data comply with FAIR principles?
	  - Is the description of data and metadata adequate and sufficient?
	  - Have the legal issues/aspects of the data been adequately and sufficiently addressed?
	  - Is the data storage and back-up adequately and sufficiently described?

8. Impact	
8.1. Impact of the project for the ESFRI RI	8.1. Impact of the project for the ESFRI RI
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1/2 page).* • Explain how the integration of the service/activities developed by the project will contribute to advance the agenda of the ESFRI in terms of its objectives, scope, lifecycle, and readiness level.	*Document 2 Proposal description* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind: • Is the impact for the ESFRI clearly explained? • Is the description of the project's impact on the ESFRI realistic? Does it match the expectations in terms of advancing the agenda (objectives, lifecycle, readiness level)?
8.2. Impact of the project for the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI	8.2. Impact of the project for the Belgian federal component of the ESFRI RI
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1/2 page).* • Describe how the project will result in a gain of visibility, or will open the scope, or increase the potential of collaboration of the Belgian federal component within the ESFRI, and outside of it. • Explain to what extent will the project contribute to the anchoring of the Belgian federal component in the ESFRI.	*Document 2 Proposal description* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind: • Is the impact for the Belgian federal component clearly explained? • Will the Belgian federal component be sufficiently developed within the project as to be effectively anchored (promising components) or reinforced (established components) within the infrastructure?
8.3. Impact of the project for the FSI and/or federal authority	8.3. Impact of the project for the FSI and/or the federal authority
Template 2 Proposal description • Describe the impact of the project for the FSI / federal authority in terms of its own development, according to the FSI's research strategy.	*Document 2 Proposal description* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure and its Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind:

• Explain how the project will contribute to valorise the FSI's / federal authority's position in the EU/International context. **Note:** In absence of a FSI, please refer to the federal authority, which is the federal department concerned by the ESFRI RI.	• Has the impact of the project for the FSI / federal authority been adequately estimated? • Will the project be an added value to the FSI / federal authority ? • Will it contribute to valorise the FSI / federal authority within the international landscape? • Is this valorisation sufficient considering the ambitions of the project? **Note:** In absence of FSI, applicants will refer to the federal authority, which is the federal department concerned by the ESFRI RI.
8.4. Follow-up Committee	**8.4. Follow-up Committee**
Template 2 Proposal description *Template 7 Follow-up committee letter of intent – non compulsory* *(Max. 1/2 page).* • Briefly the list of possible members or profiles present in the Follow-up committee, their function and role (informed, consulted, involved in research). • Motivate the list of possible committee members with their role and profiles. Members can confirm their interest and possible contribution to the committee via the completion of a **Follow-up Committee letter of intent (template available on the website) - non-compulsory**. • Explain how the members of the Follow-up Committee will contribute to achieve the foreseen impact of the project. • Describe the gender balance in the composition of the committee. **Note:** Each project is accompanied by a Follow-up Committee. The objective of this committee is to provide an active follow-up, throughout the entirety of the project, via exchange and provision of data and information, giving advice, suggesting means of valorisation, etc. The follow-up committee is composed of potential stakeholders, such as representatives of public authorities at national, regional, European, or international level, social actors, scientists, industrial actors, end users, etc. The members of the follow-up committee are non-funded. The final composition of the follow-up committee will be defined in collaboration with BELSPO.	*Template 2 Proposal description* *Document 7 Follow-up committee letter of intent – non compulsory* • Is the composition of the committee coherent? • Is the description of their roles and functioning (information, consultation, involvement) as well as the means of functioning (number of meetings, method of information exchange, etc.) clear? • Is the description of their roles and functioning in line with the foreseen impact of the project? • If applicable: Are there non-scientific stakeholders involved in the early stages of the project (co-creation of results)? • Is there a gender balanced representation in the committees? **Note:** The set-up of a Follow-up Committee is compulsory. Check out if there are any **Follow-up Committee Letters of intent** included in the proposal. The role and the contributions from the committee expressed in these letters shall be evaluated as part of the Follow-up Committee description. However, bear in mind that these letters are not mandatory. A proposal providing letters of intent shall therefore not be ranked automatically 'higher' than one without them.

9. Sustainability	
9.1. Integration of the services/activities developed by the project	9.1. Integration of the services/activities developed by the project
Template 2 Proposal description *(Max. 1/2 page)* • Explain how the services/activities developed by the project will be integrated and maintained within the missions (and recurrent activities) of the concerned FSI after the project has ended. • Specify if these services/activities will be at least partially sustained through their use by the scientific and non-scientific community. • Describe possible foreseen updates that will keep the service/activities current, as to meet future user demands, both for the scientific and non-scientific community. **Note:** In the absence of a FSI, please refer to the institutions that are at the core of the Belgian federal component.	*Document 2 Proposal description* Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure and its Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind: • Will the service/activities developed by the project be integrated and maintained among the missions of the concerned FSI after the project ends? • Is the way they will be integrated pertinent? Will it allow for the services/activities to continue in the short, mid, and long term? • Is the plan to make the service/activities sustainable through use adequate for the project? • Are the foreseen updates likely to meet user demands, in a way that the service/activities provided as a result of the project remain relevant? **Note:** In the absence of a FSI, applicants will refer to the institutions that are at the core of the Belgian federal component.
9.2. IT sustainability	9.2. IT sustainability
(Max. 1/2 page) Describe the long-term sustainability of the IT components of the service/activities developed by the project: • Refer to digital data, products (including software) and services. • Comment on how these will be made open and easily available in agreement with FAIR principles, having them be 'as open as possible as close as necessary'. • Mention their management, storage, and preservation solutions. • Explain if any synergy has been sought out with other FSI in terms of IT sustainability.	• Does the project contemplate adequate and feasible solutions in terms of IT sustainability? • Does it describe well how the services/activities will be made available? • Are the storage and preservation solutions appropriate? • Does the project describe possible synergies with other FSI in terms of IT solutions? • According to the description, and considering point 10.2, will the FSI be able to sustain the IT components of the service/activities developed by the project after the project has ended?

Note: In the absence of a FSI, please refer to the institutions that are at the core of the Belgian federal component. **Note:** BELSPO encourages interoperability for the IT components of the projects in the programme. FSI shall mutualise resources and develop common solutions as much as possible.	**Note:** In the absence of a FSI, applicants will refer to the institutions that are at the core of the Belgian federal component.
9.3. Sustainability budget plan	**9.3. Sustainability budget plan**

Left column:

Template 2 Proposal description

- Provide a list and % distribution of possible (co-)funding avenues, in view of making the service/activity sustainable during the 5 years after the project ends.
- The % funding column needs to add up to 100%.

Example:
(This example is hypothetical, fictional, not exhaustive)

	Category	Profile / Item	Source of funding	If other: Specify	% funding
	• *Staff* • *Operation* • *Equipment*	*Name the item, staff profile, specific service...*	• *FSI* • *Other*	• *Public* - *Federal* - *EU* - *Internat. …* • *Private* - *…*	*relative to the cost of maintenance of the service /activities*
1	*Staff*	*IT developer*	*FSI*	*-*	*X%*
2	*Staff-Operation*	*IT web admin*	*FSI + Other*	*EU – ERIC*	*X%*
3	*Operation*	*Service provided to users - Consumables related to measurements*	*Other*	*EU – ERIC; EU funding XXX ; Private*	*X%*
5	*Equipment*	*Update and mainteinance*	*FSI + Other*	*National funding via project XXX*	*X%*

Right column:

Template 2 Proposal description

Please consider proposals in terms of the maturity of the ESFRI research infrastructure and its Belgian federal component (see Point 10. General Considerations). Bearing this in mind:

- Are the avenues of revenue adequately described and reasonable?
- Is the plan feasible?
- Will the service be sustainable once the project has ended?

ANNEX I: LIST OF FEDERAL SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTIONS AND FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED BY ESFRI-FED

This list consists of Federal Scientific Institutions and Federal Departments concerned by the ESFRI-FED programme.

Federal Scientific Institutions - fundable partners:

- National Archives and State Archives in the Provinces (ARA-AGR)
- National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology (NICC-INCC)
- Royal Belgian Institute for Space Aeronomy (BIRA-IASB)
- Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (KBIN-IRSNB)
- Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA)
- Royal Library of Belgium (KBR)
- Royal Meteorological Institute of Belgium (KMI-IRM)
- Royal Museum for Central Africa (KMMA-MRAC)
- Royal Museums of Art and History (KMKG-MRAH)
- Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium (KMSKB-MRBAB)
- Royal Observatory of Belgium (KSB-ORB)
- Sciensano
- War Heritage Institute (WHI)

Federal Departments:
BELSPO does not fund Federal Departments, only Research Institutions. Federal Departments may contribute with cash or in-kind. For more information, please check Part I – point 2.2. Eligible project partners).

- FPS Social security
- FPS Public Health, Safety of the Food Chain, and Environment
- FPS Employment