DEFRA

DEFENCE-RELATED RESEARCH ACTION

PLATFORM SUBMISSION GUIDELINES
for applicants

Call for proposals 2025

SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

Pre-proposals: Thursday 20 February 2025 at 14h00
Full proposals: Thursday 2 May 2025 at 14h00

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

> All **Pre-proposals** and **Full Proposals** must be electronically created and
> **submitted via the online DEFRA online Submission Platform**: https://defra.belspo.be/

Welcome to the **Platform Submission Guidelines**. This document will guide you through the practical aspects of the online submission procedure. **Please read the instructions carefully and follow them STEP by STEP**.

AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

Before you begin, be sure to consult the different documents concerning this call that are available on the **DEFRA website** : https://www.belspo.be/defra

POSSIBLE PARTNERS

The **DEFRA online Submission Platform** is accessible for potential applicants affiliated to the following types of organisations. **The eligibility criteria for project partners are set out in section 2.2. of the Information document.**

- Universities
- Colleges of Higher Education
- Federal Scientific Institutions
- Defence Research Institutes
- Other Public research institutes
- Private non-profit research centres
- Private companies

WHO CAN ACCESS THE PLATFORM?

Only the coordinator can create, edit and submit a (Pre-/Full) proposal. Partners included in a proposal will not have access to the given (Pre-/Full) proposal.

HOW TO ACCESS THE PLATFORM

The creation of a personal profile via the registration procedure is required in order to access the **online Submission Platform**. Each account is linked to a **unique email address**. The **same registered account** will be used for all the Pre-proposals and Full proposals in which the applicant is involved.

HOW TO COMPLETE A PRE- OR FULL PROPOSAL

Pre-proposals and Full proposals are composed of **fields to be completed online** and **additional documents to be downloaded**, **filled out**, and **uploaded** to the platform. These templates are available on the DEFRA submission platform. BELSPO will not accept Pre-proposals or Full proposals other than the ones submitted via the platform.
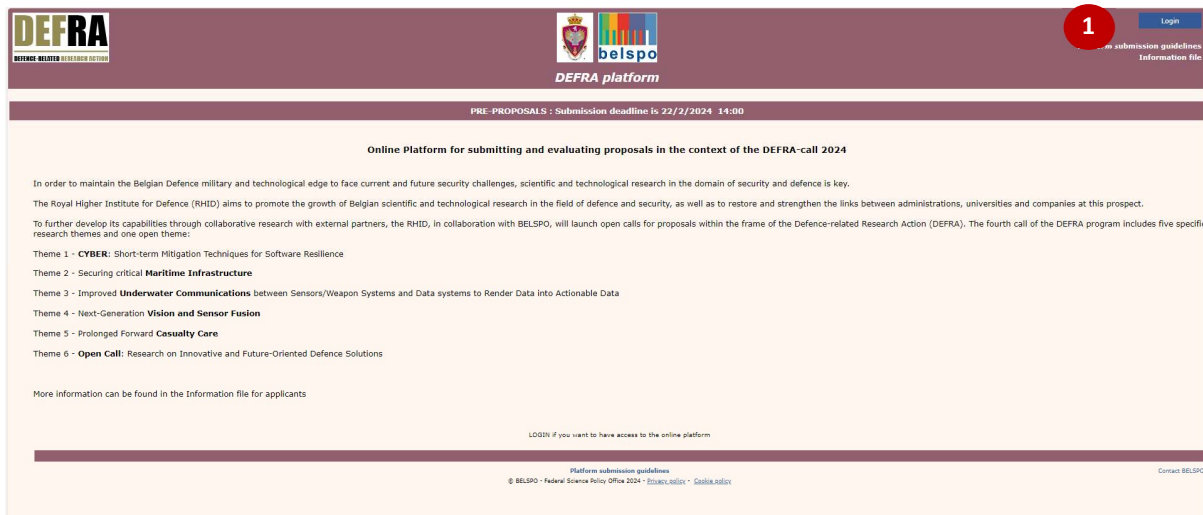
Pre-proposals and Full proposals must be written in English and formulated concisely, avoiding abbreviations. The font used for the uploaded documents must be Calibri, size 11, with 1.15 line spacing.

2. ACCESS, REGISTRATION AND LOGIN TO THE PLATFORM

2.1 ACCESS TO THE PLATFORM [Platform Homepage before Log In]

🖱 **Click on the following address or copy it in your internet browser** https://defra.belspo.be/ **to go to the Platform Homepage.**

Within the **Platform Homepage** there is the 'Login' button ❶:

🖱 **Click on the 'Login' button to proceed to the Log in Page.**

2.2 REGISTRATION AND LOG IN TO THE PLATFORM [Log In Page]

ONE EMAIL ADDRESS = ONE ACCOUNT
- If you have previously used the FED-tWIN, DRUGS or the BRAIN-be 2.0 online Submission Platform, or if you have participated in a previous DEFRA call or the NGCAT call, please **Log In using your existing account**.
- This account must be used **for all the Pre-proposals and Full Proposals** you participate in.

This is the **Log In page:**

Within the **Log In page** there are:

- Fields to log in with your existing account: 'Email' and 'Password' ❶
- Link to create a new account: 'create your account' ❷
- Link to recover the forgotten password: 'Forgot your password?' ❸

2.2.1. LOG IN (with an existing account)

🖱 **Enter your email address and password ❶ and click on the 'Log In' button**.

If you have forgotten your password, you can always retrieve it via the link **'forgot your password'** ❸
Once the Log In is completed, you will be directed to the **Platform Homepage**. Your email will appear on the top right corner.

2.2.2. REGISTRATION (with a new account) [Registration Page]

🖱 **Click on the 'Create your account' link** ❷. You will be directed to the **Registration page** where you will be able to complete the registration form**.**

This is the **Registration page:**

Please note that:

- For the Universities, Colleges of Higher Education, Federal Scientific Institutions and Defence Research Institutes, the eligible organisations must be chosen from a **dropdown menu**.

- For the Other Public research institutes, Private non-profit research centres and Private companies, **free fields** must be completed with the organisation's name and abbreviation.

  In case of uncertainty of your organisation's eligibility, please send an **email to BELSPO** (defra@belspo.be).

🖱 **Enter the required information and click 'Save'.** You will be directed to the **Platform Homepage,** and your email will appear on the top right corner.

3. CREATE, EDIT, SUBMIT, PRINT AND DELETE AN PRE-PROPOSAL

Pre-proposals are compulsory and the first step towards introducing a Full proposal.
If the pre-proposal has not been submitted in time, it will be impossible to submit a full proposal.

3.1 CREATE A PRE-PROPOSAL

3.1.1. THE PERSONAL HOMEPAGE – once you are logged in

Prior to creating a new Pre-proposal you will have logged in or registered within the platform. In doing so, you will be directed back to your **personal Homepage**:

You will notice that your email will appear on the top right corner ❶

🖱 Click on the "Add Pre-proposal" ❷ button to create a Pre-proposal.

3.1.2. THE PRE-PROPOSAL PAGE

This is the Pre-proposal page:

Within the **Pre-proposal page** there are several fields that must be completed:

- Themes of the Call
- Proposal's Acronym
- Proposal's Title
- Name, institution and contact details of the Coordinator
- Partners (names, institutions and e-mail address)
- Summary
- Keywords
- Approval statements for submission

In order to be able to save the Pre-proposal, at least the acronym and the title must be entered.

🖱 **Complete the required information and click 'Save'.**

By saving the information your Pre-proposal will be created and identified by the reference **Pre-XXX**. You may update and save the content, check the input, and submit or delete the Pre-proposal at any time using the **Pre-proposal page**.

🖱 **Click on 'Back to List'.** You will be directed to your **Personal Homepage.**

3.1.3. YOUR PERSONAL HOMEPAGE – AFTER SAVING A NEW PRE-PROPOSAL

Your **Personal Homepage** will change after saving a Pre-proposal. It will now look like this:

Now, you will see the Pre-proposal ❶ you have created and a menu on the right side of the page❷ :

- **Information sheet**: Displays the Pre-proposal page for **further editing**
- **Content**: contains the downloadable pre-proposal template to be filled in off-line and subsequently uploaded to the platform, as well as the button to upload the extract(s) of the UBO register
- **Experts**: Allows introducing 6 proposed experts (of which 4 are compulsory) and 2 non-grata experts
- **Print Pre-proposal**: Preview.pdf file of the Pre-proposal
- **Submit**: Display the Pre-proposal page for submitting the Pre-proposal

3.1.4. THE CONTENT PAGE

> Do **NOT** use the **'Portfolio' function** from Adobe to create the PDF file for the Pre-proposal description.
> As the browsers do not support this function, **evaluators will not be able to read the document**.

🖱 **Click on 'Content'.** You will be directed to the **Content page.**

This is the **Content Page**:
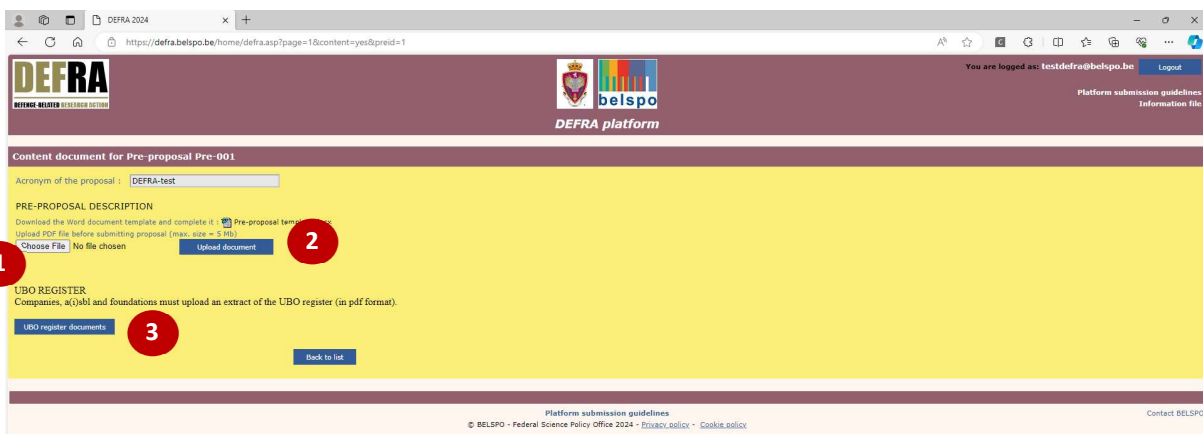
It contains the downloadable pre-proposal template necessary for the submission of the Pre-proposal:

- PRE-PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

🖱 **Download the document, complete and upload on the Platform.**

Use the **'Choose File'** button ❶, AND the **'Upload document'** subsequently❷.

When uploading the document, the platform automatically assigns the reference number **_1** to the document:

- **Uploaded document:** PreXXX**_1**

In case of updating (**new**-uploading) of the document on the platform, the previous uploaded document will be removed. Beware of the fact that the new upload will receive the same reference (PreXXX**_1)** as the previous one.

- UBO REGISTER

🖱 **Click on "UBO register documents"**❸

The companies, a(i)sbl and foundations that are a Partner in the pre-proposal must provide an extract of the "Ultimate Beneficial Owner" (UBO) Register to the Coordinator of the pre-proposal - in pdf format. The extract(s) must be uploaded on the online submission platform.

Use the **'Choose File'** button ❶, AND the **'Upload document'** subsequently❷.
When uploading the document(s), the platform automatically adds the reference PreXXX_yyyyyy to the file name (with yyyyyy a random number).

🖱 **Click on 'Back to content'.** You will be directed to you're the **Content Page** of your pre-proposal**.**

🖱 **Click on 'Back to list'.** You will be directed to your **Personal Homepage.**

3.1.5. THE EXPERTS PAGE

🖰 **Click on 'Experts'.** You will be directed to the **Experts Page.** There, you will be able to introduce the names and contact details of the experts you propose for the evaluation of your Full proposal.

This is the **Experts Page:**

Within the **Experts page** there are several fields for 6 proposed experts and 2 non-grata experts:

- Name, gender, email, telephone
- Organisation, Country, Webpage, Department/Research unit/Division
- Scientific disciplines
- Keywords

You need to provide the information for minimum 4 proposed evaluators (minimum 2 Belgian and 2 foreign experts) with appropriate expertise in the research proposal, gender-balanced whenever possible. You must also take into account the **criteria for experts** mentioned in the Eligibility Evaluator document available on the DEFRA website: https://www.belspo.be/belspo/defra/call_en.stm#documents

🖰 **Fill out all the required fields and click 'Save'.**

🖰 **Click 'Back to list'**. You will be directed to your **Personal Homepage.** Note that after saving, the experts provided will appear in alphabetic order.

3.2 EDIT A PRE-PROPOSAL

If you are in your **Personal Homepage**, you can edit a Pre-proposal in the following way:

🖰 **Click on 'Information sheet'**. You will be directed to the **Pre-proposal** page. There, you will be able to edit the information.

🖰 **Edit the required information and click 'Save'**.

🖱 **Then, click on 'Back to List'**. You will be directed to your **Personal Homepage.**

For uploading a revised version of the Pre-proposal description: see under section 3.1.4.

3.3 SUBMIT A PRE-PROPOSAL

If you are in your **Personal Homepage**, you can submit a Pre-proposal in the following way:

🖱 **Click on 'Submit'**. You will be directed to the **Pre-proposal page.**

The following confirmation must be given prior to submitting the Pre-proposal:

✓ *As the coordinator, I confirm to have read and to have asked all the natural persons involved and mentioned in this Pre-proposal to read the **privacy statement** related to the DEFRA programme. Furthermore, I confirm to have obtained these persons' explicit consent to process their personal data in the context of this privacy statement.*

🖱 **At the bottom of the page, click on 'Check'**. This "function" **ONLY** checks if all necessary fields are completed. The content of the Pre-proposal and the fulfilment of the eligibility conditions are your responsibility.

🖱 **At the bottom of the page, click on 'Submit'**. The Pre-proposal will be submitted to BELSPO and you will be directed to your **Personal Homepage.**

After successful submission, you will receive an automatically generated confirmation of receipt, and a '✓' will appear on your **Personal Homepage** ❶. No email will be sent to the partners; you will be responsible of informing them.
In case the '✓' does not appear, the pre-proposal has not been submitted.

3.4 PRINT / DOWLOAD A PRE-PROPOSAL

When you are in your **Personal Homepage**, you can print / download a Pre-proposal in .pdf form, in the following way:

🖱 **Click on 'Print Pre-proposal'.** A new tab will open in your internet browser containing a printable version of your Pre-proposal.

3.5 DELETE A PRE-PROPOSAL

When you are in your **Personal Homepage**, you can delete a Pre-proposal in the following way:

🖱 **Click on 'Information sheet'**. You will be directed to the **Pre-proposal page.**

🖱 **At the bottom of the page, click on 'Delete'**. The Pre-proposal will be deleted, and you will be directed to your **Personal Homepage.**

Once you have submitted the Pre-proposal it is no longer possible to delete it.

4. WHICH OF THE PRE-PROPOSAL FIELDS CAN BE CHANGED IN THE FULL PROPOSAL?

	Can be changed?	Comment
Theme(s)	NO	The theme will appear by default and must be kept the same as in the Pre-proposal.
Proposal's Acronym	NO	The acronym will appear by default and will be the same as in the Pre-proposal. Once the Pre-proposal is submitted you will not be able to change it in the Full proposal.
Proposal's Title	YES	The same title will appear by default, but it can be changed.
Coordinator	NO	The same coordinator will appear by default, but another person from the same institution may be given this role in the Full proposal after approval by the DEFRA administration. Changes concerning the Organisation responsible for the project coordination can only be accepted after the explicit approval of RHID.
Partner(s)	NO	The partner(s) mentioned in the Pre-proposal will appear by default in the Full proposal, but another person from the same institution may be given this role in the Full proposal. Changes in the partnership (change of partner organisation) of the project can only be accepted after the explicit approval of RHID.
Project Summary	YES	You may edit the summary to some extent and to better align with the summary requested in the full proposal template (Word document). However, it cannot diverge to the point that the expertise mobilised for the evaluation of the proposal will become irrelevant.
Keywords	NO	The keywords will appear by default and must preferably remain the same as in the Pre-proposal. BELSPO searches for experts based on these keywords.
Experts	NO	BELSPO may contact the suggested experts as soon as the Pre-proposal is submitted, which is why you will not be asked to provide experts for the Full proposal.

5. CREATE, EDIT, SUBMIT, PRINT AND DELETE A FULL PROPOSAL

5.1 CREATE AND EDIT A FULL PROPOSAL

5.1.1. YOUR PERSONAL HOMEPAGE – BEFORE INTRODUCING A FULL PROPOSAL

If you have been invited to create and submit a full proposal, you will see a new button: 'Add full proposal' within the right-side menu of your **Personal Homepage.**

🖱 **Click on 'Add full Proposal'** ❶ **to introduce the Full proposal**. You will be directed to the **New full proposal page**.

5.1.2. THE FULL PROPOSAL PAGE

This is the **New full proposal page**:

Within the **New full proposal page** you will see that the fields are automatically filled with the information completed in the Pre-proposal. In order to see to what extent fields can be modified, please check Section 4 of this document.

🖱 **Update the required information - if necessary - and click 'Save'.**

By saving the information, your **Full proposal** will be created and identified by reference Full proposal Prp-xxx of Pre-proposal Pre-xxx. You may update and save the content at any time using the **Information sheet** page

🖱 **Click on 'Back to list' you will be directed to your Personal Homepage.**

5.1.3. YOUR PERSONAL HOMEPAGE – AFTER INTRODUCING A NEW FULL PROPOSAL

Your **Personal Homepage** will have changed after introducing the Full Proposal:

Next to the added full proposal, your **Personal Homepage** will show a menu containing the following ❶:

- **Information sheet**
- **Content Documents:** Contains all the downloadable forms to be filled out off-line, and subsequently uploaded to the platform
- **Print Full Proposal**: Preview.pdf file of the Full proposal
- **Submit:** Displays the Information sheet for submitting the Proposal

5.1.4. THE CONTENT DOCUMENTS PAGE

In order to download the different templates of the Full proposal, you need to go to the **Content Documents page**.

🖱 **Click on 'Content Documents'.** You will be directed to the **Content Document page:**

The page contains all the downloadable templates necessary for the submission of the Full proposal:

- **Full Proposal description**
- **Gantt chart**
- **Budget file**
- **Cash or in-kind commitment letter** (from organisations which are not partners in the project) – non mandatory, only if applicable

🖱 **DOWNLOAD the templates, complete them and UPLOAD the documents to the Content documents page.**

Do **NOT** use the **'Portfolio' function** from Adobe to create the PDF file for the Pre-proposal description. As the browsers do not support this function, **evaluators will not be able to read the document**.

When uploading the documents, the platform automatically assigns a reference number to the document:
- **Prpxxx_1** for Full Proposal Description
- **Prpxxx_2** for GANTT chart
- **Prpxxx_3** for Cash or in-kind commitment letter

In case of updating (**new**-uploading) of the documents on the platform, the previous uploaded document will be removed. Beware of the fact that the new upload will receive the same reference (Prp-xxx_1, Prp-xxx_2 or Prp-xxx_3) as the previous one.

🖱 **Click on 'Back to list'.** You will be directed to your **Personal Homepage.**

5.2 SUBMIT THE FULL PROPOSAL

When you are in your **Personal Homepage**, you can submit the Full proposal in the following way:

🖱 **Click on 'Submit'.** You will be directed to the bottom of the **Information sheet page** of the full proposal.

Note that the following confirmation must be given prior to submitting the Full proposal:
- ✓ *The coordinator shall ensure to be mandated by his/her as well as by the partners' organisations for the submission of the full proposal.*

🖱 **Click on 'Check'.** This function **ONLY** checks if all necessary online fields are completed and if the 2 mandatory Content documents are uploaded. The content of the Proposal is your responsibility.

🖱 **Click on 'Submit'.** Full proposal will be submitted to BELSPO.

After successful submission, the coordinator will receive an automatically generated confirmation of receipt, and a '✓' will appear on his/her **Personal Homepage❶**. In case the '✓' does not appear, the full proposal has not been submitted.

5.3 DELETE THE FULL PROPOSAL

When you are in your **Personal Homepage**, you can delete the Full proposal in the following way:

🖱 Click on **'Information sheet'**. You will be directed to the **Full proposal page**.

🖱 **At the bottom of the page, click on 'Delete'.** The Full proposal will be deleted and you will be directed to your Personal Homepage.

Remark : Submitted proposals cannot be deleted.

5.4 PRINT / DOWNLOAD THE FULL PROPOSAL

When you are in your **Personal Homepage**, you can print / download the Full proposal in .pdf form, in the following way:

🖱 Click on **'Print full proposal'**. A new tab will open in your internet browser containing a printable version of your Full proposal.

6. CONTACT

If you have any questions, or require further information, please contact the secretariat: **defra@belspo.be**

ANNEX 1: OTHER BUTTONS YOU WILL FIND IN THE PLATFORM

- **Save:** Saves the input of the form
- **Check:** Saves the content and **ONLY** checks if all necessary fields are completed.
- **Delete:** Deletes a Proposal
- **Back to list:** Takes you back to your Personal Homepage