Annex 1: Open Call and Guidelines for Applicants

The EIT – Making Innovation Happen

Document history		
Version	Date	Description
v1.0	16/07/2021	First version

Contents

1. Introduction

This document provides a full set of information regarding the second Open Call for Proposals for the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project (RIS I40H).

1.1 Background information on RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project

The objective of RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs is to **assist manufacturing SMEs and start-ups from RIS countries in their digital transformation in post-crisis transition, their engagement in networks for digitalised manufacturing as supply-chain partners and contribute to the development of local ecosystems in RIS countries.**

RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs is dedicated to support digital transformation for manufacturing SMEs and start-ups in RIS countries and help them to engage in networks for digitalised manufacturing as supply-chain partners. These countries are classified as moderate innovators in European Innovation Scoreboards. Enterprises from those countries are characterised by lower indicators concerning digitization compared to other countries, especially from Western & Northern Europe. The RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project aims at overcoming the challenge related to limited knowledge or business contacts of SMEs from RIS countries, to take advantage of digitalised technologies, to develop technologies as well as to improve their skills and competences, integrate new work processes, develop digital business models, demonstrate or/and enhance new innovative solutions based on digital technologies.

With Industry 4.0, these needs increase as manufacturers need to focus on the challenge of increased complexity of their business (orders, customers, products, globalization) and improve flexibility in organization and process - based on technology and service orientated operations.

Although many of the companies in EIT RIS countries are smaller in size, they still play an important role in the overall supply chain structures of large companies and are an important part of improving the digitalization level of Europe. RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs will fulfil its objectives by combining 3 key activities:

1. Using self-assessment forms and questionnaires to learn the current status of digitalization and the support tools that are being used
2. Seminars, preceded by an open call for applicants, will be organised in six RIS countries in local languages and will gather at least 15 SMEs to ensure interactive format of the seminars with possible hands-on presentations of state-of-the-art solutions. The seminars will be recorded and made available online
3. Individual coaching for selected companies

The Open call aims for proposals requesting demonstration, testing, training, consulting activities between manufacturing SME companies in EIT RIS Countries and organizations offering Industry4.0 infrastructure (such as Digital Innovation Hubs – DIH- and competence centers).

Additionally, through the open call, a target of approximately 7 companies will receive individual expert consultations and digitalisation plans and 7 mini-grants. Approaching this from a digitalization process point of view allows companies to not only reflect about the state of their current business processes, but also to examine the integration of systems and to achieve cost effective integration. The results of these 7 projects will directly improve companies' process optimization (cost / quality), production efficiency, and decrease product development times.

More information in: https://ris-i40.eu/

1.2   Timeline – open call

Submission to the second Open Call will be enabled on the 16st of July 2021 and will end on the 06rd of August 2021, 17:00 CET (Brussels time). The RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium remains the right to modify the submission deadline if it may be considered as necessary for the benefit of the project. In case of new submission deadline this will be publicly announced in the open call site.

Below are presented the current tentative dates for the different phases. The opening and closing dates can be subject to change in case of any modifications in the project's schedule.

16 July 2021
Open Call Published

31 August 2021
Evaluation of open call proposals finishes

30 November 2021
Open Call projects end

06 August 2021 17:00 CET
Open Call Proposals' Submission Deadline
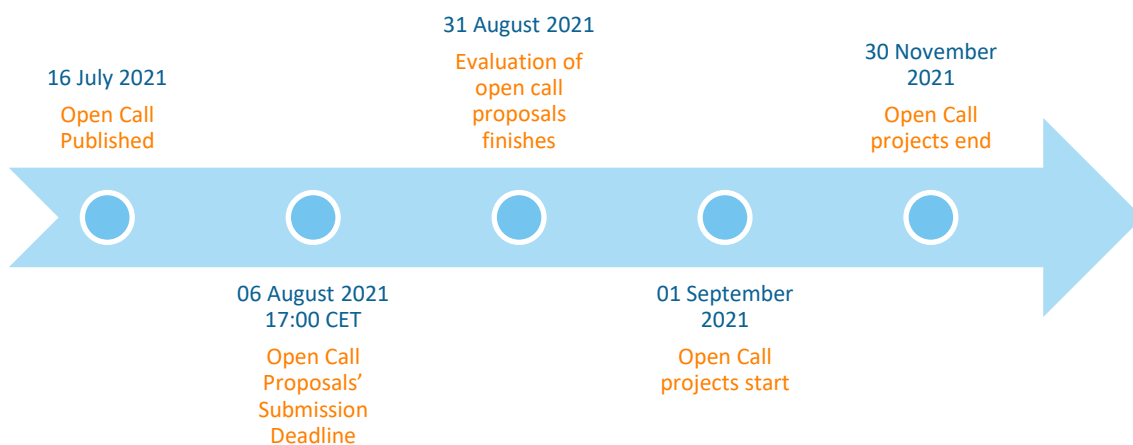
01 September 2021
Open Call projects start

Figure 1: RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs second Open Call timeline

2 General information

2.1 Means of submission

The EIT RIS I40H web portal (https://ris-i40.eu/) will be the entry point for all Open Call proposals. Submissions received by any other channel will be automatically discarded.
Documents required in subsequent phases will be submitted via a dedicated channel, which will be indicated by EIT RIS I40H consortium during the execution of the sub-granted project.

2.2 Language

English is the official language for the EIT RIS I40H open call. Submissions done in any other language will not be evaluated. English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs programme. This means any requested submission of the deliverable will be done in English in order to be eligible.

2.3 Documentation formats

Any document requested in any of the phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format without restrictions for printing.

2.4 Origin of the funds

Any selected proposer will sign a dedicated Sub-Grantee Funding Agreement with the members of the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium. The funds attached to the Sub-Grantee Funding Agreement come directly from the funds of the European Project RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs, and are, therefore, funds owned by the European Commission, whose management has been led to the project partners in RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs via EIT Manufacturing.

As can be seen in the Sub-Grantee Funding Agreement template, this relation between the sub-grantees and the European Commission through RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project carries a set of obligations to the sub-grantees with the European Commission. It is the task of the sub-grantees to accomplish them, and of the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium partners to inform about them.

2.5 Open call rules

The RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium retains the right to modify the rules of the open call at any time depending on the needs of the project. All the changes will be published in the open call web page.

3 Proposal Eligibility Criteria

The objective of this activity is to support the execution of digital transformation projects for the SMEs or midcaps in EIT RIS countries The consortia are encouraged to consist of the following types of organizations (however it is not mandatory that all types of organizations are members of a consortium except from SME/midcap as indicted in the eligibility rules of the following chapter):

- Manufacturing companies (e.g. Original Equipment Manufacturers – OEMs, production equipment supplier) SMEs/midcaps that produce products and parts and they are interested in evaluating digital transformation possibilities. These are the main beneficiaries of the project as they will receive the digital transformation services.
- Service providers: Software or technology provider or consulting companies in the manufacturing domain that can offer digital transformation services.
- Research/non-industrial legal entities (i.e. research centres, universities, Competence Centres), with relevant expertise that can offer digital transformation services
- Digital Innovation Hubs[1] that can offer digital transformation services.

3.1   Applicants & Consortium Eligibility

A consortium is considered eligible if it complies with all the following rules:

i. All consortium members are legal entities established and based in one of the EU Member States or an H2020 Associated country as defined in H2020 rules for participation[2].

ii. All consortia members are manufacturing companies' SMEs/midcaps or technology/software/consulting service providers in the manufacturing domain or research/non-industrial legal entities (i.e. research centres, universities, Competence Centres) or Digital Innovation Hubs.

iii. At least one member of the consortium must be a SME or midcap in the manufacturing domain that applies for a digital transformation service. This organization must be in one of the following EU RIS countries. Countries eligible to take part in the EIT RIS are:

EU countries
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech

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[1] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-innovation-hubs

[2] Association to Horizon 2020 is governed by Article 7 of the Horizon 2020 Regulation. The list of associated countries is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf

Estonia	
Greece	
Hungary	
Italy	
Latvia	
Lithuania	
Malta	
Poland	
Portugal	
Slovakia	
Slovenia	
Spain	

iv.   Consortia can only be led by industrial partners (SMEs or midcaps).

v.   The minimum number of consortium members is one (1).

3.2   Financial Eligibility

The following financial eligibility criteria apply:

i.   The budget per project can only be a fixed lump sum of €5.600. No other budget will be accepted.

A total amount of € 39.200 will be provided to the second open call sub-projects.

3.3   Number of proposals per applicant

- Manufacturing companies (e.g. Original Equipment Manufacturers – OEMs, production equipment supplier) SMEs/midcaps that produce products and parts and they are interested in evaluating digital transformation possibilities may participate, either as coordinator or as a consortium member, only with one (1) proposal at RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs open call. Multiple participation is a disqualify factor. In case the organization participates in more than one proposal per open call, all associated proposals will be automatic excluded from the evaluation process. Manufacturing companies that have been accepted in first RISI4.0H Open Call are not eligible to receive funding.

- Service providers: Software or technology provider or consulting companies in the manufacturing domain that can offer digital transformation services may participate in up to three (3) proposals. Service providers that have been accepted in up to three (3) proposals in first RISI4.0H Open Call are not eligible to receive funding
- Research/non-industrial legal entities (i.e. research centres, universities, Competence Centres), with relevant expertise that can offer digital transformation services may participate in up to three (3) proposals. Research/non-industrial legal entities (i.e. research centres, universities, Competence Centres), with relevant expertise that can offer digital transformation services that have been accepted in up to three(3) proposals in first RISI4.0H Open Call are not eligible to receive funding.
- Digital Innovation Hubs[3] that can offer digital transformation services may participate in up to three (3) proposals. Digital Innovation Hubs[4] that can offer digital transformation services that have been accepted in up to three (3) proposals in first RISI4.0H Open Call are not eligible to receive funding

4 Open Call submission and selection process

4.1 Open Call Submission

The Open Call submission will follow the steps that are listed in this section:

4.1.1 Open Call publication

Open call will be published on the dates shown in section 1.3. Each open call will be supported by:

- Annex 1: Open Call text and Guidelines for Applicants, this document.
- Annex 2: Proposal Template, an online application form, available at EIT Manufacturing platform (https://ris-i40.eu/open-call/)
- Annex 3: Sub-grant Agreement Template, which provides a template of the sub-grant agreement that the successful applicants will be requested to sign.
- Annex 4: Consortium and honour Declaration, which provides the consortium leader participant, the consortium members and the budget distribution per partner.
- Annex 5: Administrative data form/ SME Declaration, which evaluates the status of the SMEs participating in an open call.

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[3] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-innovation-hubs

[4] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-innovation-hubs

Please download the relevant files and read them carefully before you submit your proposal.

4.1.2   Applicants Registration

Interested applicants should register at the RIS Industry 4.0 Hub (https://ris-i40.eu/). This will be the central interface for managing the experiment applications for the remainder of the open calls.

4.1.3   Proposal Preparation

Please follow the steps:

1. For the proposal preparation, the applicants are requested to apply online in the EIT Manufacturing portal staring from here: https://ris-i40.eu/. They will be required to answer some fields related to the proposal and submit the proposal, in the template provided by RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium, the declaration of honour and the SME declaration form (if needed).
2. Applicants that do not accept the terms and conditions and do not sign and upload to the plaza platform the completed **Annex 4: Consortium** and **honour Declaration and Annex 5: Administrative data form/SME Declaration** (for SMEs only) will not be eligible.
3. It is highly recommended to submit your proposal before the deadline. If the applicant discovers an error in the proposal, and provided the call deadline has not passed, the applicant may request the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs team to re-submit the proposal (for this purpose please contact us at (info@ris-i40.eu). **However, RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs is not committed that resubmission in time will be feasible in case the request for resubmission is not received by the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs team at least 48 hours before the call deadline.**

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the message as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.

4.2   Open Call Evaluation

4.2.1   Proposals reception

Submissions will be done ONLY via the RIS I40H site on https://ris-i40.eu/. A full list of proposers will be drafted containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity (which will be also shared with EIT Manufacturing for transparency).

The application reception will close at **17:00 CET (Brussels time) on 06rd August 2021**.

Stage 1 - Eligibility

Automatic filtering to discard non-eligible proposals will follow the shortlist. Eligibility criteria check will verify:

a. All consortium entities are eligible for EC funding under the rules of H2020 [Y/N]
b. All consortia members are manufacturing companies' SMEs/midcaps that produce products and parts or technology/software/consulting service providers or research/non-industrial legal entities (i.e. research centres, universities, Competence Centres) or Digital Innovation Hubs. [Y/N]
c. The consortium coordinator is an SME (or midcap) [Y/N]
d. Are the participation rules as expressed in section 3.1 "Applicants & Consortium Eligibility" followed [Y/N]
e. Are the participation rules as expressed in section 3.2 "Financial Eligibility" followed [Y/N]
f. Is the participation rule as expressed in section 3.3 "Number of proposals per applicant" followed [Y/N]
g. Is the proposal written in the English Language [Y/N]
h. Are all required documentation: Annex 2: Proposal template, Annex 4: Consortium and honour Declaration and Annex 5: Administrative data form/ SME Declaration submitted correctly [Y/N]

Proposals being marked as non-eligible will get a rejection letter including the reasons for being catalogued as non-eligible. No further feedback on the process will be given.

Stage 2 – External remote evaluation

2 evaluators, members of EIT manufacturing will score and comment on each proposal according to the following evaluation criteria:

• **Impact** [1-5; min.3]: The expected impact on the industry by the digital transformation activity will be evaluated.
• **Implementation** [1-5; min.3]: The adequacy between the objectives stated in the proposal and the plan to achieve these objectives will be evaluated under this objective.

After evaluation proposals will be ranked. Only the top proposals (double number of expected proposals to be selected) will proceed to the next stage.

Stage 3 – Consensus meeting & notification

The evaluators will have a consensus meeting to finalize their Evaluation Summary Report of the proposals. Then the EIT Manufacturing will be informed for the short-listed proposals and the consortia members.

At the end, all applications will be informed about their scores and evaluation summary. RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs will publish the stage that each proposal achieved and selection/ non-selection. To the successful applicants, it will follow the Contracting phase, where financial and legal validation of the proposers and

signature of a binding agreement for the implementation of the application/ related technology will be performed.

4.3   Projects Preparations

After RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs conclusion of the Open Call evaluation, the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs team together with the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator will start preparation with the proposals' coordinator that have been evaluated in the shortlist. Preparations will go via administrative and financial checking (and potentially into technical negotiations) based on evaluators' comments. On a case by case approach, a face to face meeting in coordinator's premises may be needed for clarification.

The objective of the preparations is fulfilling the legal requirements between RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium and every beneficiary of the call. The items covered will be:

- Inclusion of the comments in the Evaluation Summary Report of the proposals and mapping to the Sub-grant agreement (contract).
- To validate the status information of the SME beneficiaries the following documents will be required:
    - o SMEs declaration: signed and stamped. In the event the applicant declares being non-autonomous, the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and downstream organizations should also be provided
    - o Status Information Form. In case this is not a start-up, it includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company. In case it is a start-up, legal document of the official founding date.
    - o Legal existence. Company Register, Official Gazette or other official documents per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and, if applicable, a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
    - o In cases where the number of employees and/or the owner is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional, association records, etc. In case it is a start-up, legal document of the official founding date and declaration of ownership.
- Bank account information: The account where the funds will be transferred will be indicated via a specific form signed by the SME, individuals and the bank owners. The holder of the account will be the SME or all the individuals (the coordinator of the group on its own, if allowed by the other team members).
- Sub-grantee funding agreement: Signed between the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs Consortium represented by Open Call leader (LMS) and the sub-project coordinator.

It should be emphasized that the coordinator SME or midcap of the consortium should provide at preparation time a valid VAT[5]. Failure to provide the VAT number at preparation time will automatically result in proposal rejection.

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[5] To be checked at European Commission services such as http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/vies/

The request, by RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium, of the above documentation will be done including deadlines. In general, the sub-project preparation should be concluded within 3 weeks. An additional week may be provided by the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator in case of significant reasoning. In case preparation have not been concluded within the above period, the proposal is automatically rejected and the next proposal in the reserve list is invited.

5 Sub-Projects Execution

5.1 Coaches

Each sub-project will be assigned at least one coacher. The coacher will communicate with the sub-project on a regular basis and order to overview the progress and provide technical or business advice.

5.2 Reviews

Each project will go through 2 online review, each one highlighting the end of a phase. The reviews will be organized by the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium headed by LMS.

The sub-project coordinator should deliver at least one (1) week in advance all relevant deliverables, so that the reviewers will be able to read it. During the review, the sub-project consortium members should present their work, answer questions and demonstrate their sub-project.

Tentative review	Tentative date
Midterm Review	First two weeks of M2
Final review	Last two weeks of M4

The duration of all sub-projects is fixed to 4 months period.

5.3 Payments

Payment is done as follows:

1. 60% of the total funding is provided as advanced payment within the first two weeks of project month 1 (M1).
2. 40% of the total funding is done against successful evaluation of final review (M4)

Details on the payment process are given in Annex III - Sub-grant agreement template.

6 Responsibilities of consortia members

The sub-projects consortia members are indirect beneficiaries of European Commission funding. As such, they are responsible for the proper use of the funding and ensure that the recipients comply with obligations under H2020 specific requirements as described in Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020). The obligations that are applicable to the recipients include[6]:

6.1 Conflict of Interest

The 3rd parties (sub-contract consortium member) must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the sub-project is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

They must formally notify the Commission (via the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator) without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

If the sub-contract consortium member breaches any of its obligations, the sub-contract may be automatically terminated. Moreover, in case of costs are not explicitly included in the sub-project, they may be rejected. Finally, the cost of the deliverables, which are clearly specified in the sub-project and are accepted during a review process, becomes eligible. Deliverables that are not accepted will be re-evaluated at the next review. If this is the last review, the cost of these deliverables will not be paid to the sub-project.

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[6] The obligations described here are not binding and may be modified, refined or additional obligations may be inserted during the sub-project preparation phase if needed.

6.2   Maintaining Confidentiality

During the implementation of the sub-project and for five years after the end of the sub-project, the parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as confidential at sub-contract signing time ('confidential information').

If a 3rd party requests, the Commission and the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium may agree to keep such information confidential for an additional period beyond the initial four years. This will be explicitly stated at the sub-contract.

If the information has been identified as confidential during the sub-project execution or only orally, it will be considered to be confidential only if this is accepted by the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator and confirmed in writing within 15 days of the oral disclosure. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use confidential information only to implement the Agreement.

The sub-project consortium may disclose confidential information to the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium and to the selected reviewers, who will be bounded by a specific Non-Disclosure Agreement.

6.3   Promoting the action and give visibility to the EU funding

The 3rd parties (sub-contract consortium member) must promote the sub-project, RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to highlight the financial support of the EC.

Unless the European Commission or the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.), any publicity, including at a conference or seminar or any type of information or promotional material (brochure, leaflet, poster, presentation, etc.), and any infrastructure, equipment and major results funded by the grant must:

(a) display the EU emblem

(b) display the EIT Manufacturing logo and

(c) include the following text:

For communication activities: "This project has indirectly received funding from the European Union's EIT Manufacturing programme, via an Open Call issued and executed under project RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs".

For infrastructure, equipment and major results: "This [infrastructure][equipment][insert type of result] is part of a sub-project that has indirectly received funding from the European Union's EIT Manufacturing programme via an Open Call issued and executed under project RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs".

When displayed in association with a logo, the European emblem should be given appropriate prominence. This obligation to use the European emblem in respect of projects to which the EC contributes implies no right of exclusive use. It is subject to general third-party use restrictions which do not permit the

appropriation of the emblem, or of any similar trademark or logo, whether by registration or by any other means. Under these conditions, the Beneficiary is exempted from the obligation to obtain prior permission from the EC to use the emblem. Further detailed information on the EU emblem can be found on the Europa web page[7].

Any publicity made by the Beneficiary in respect of the project, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, must specify that it reflects only the author's views and that the EC or EIT Manufacturing or RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

The EIT Manufacturing and the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs consortium shall be authorised to publish, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, the following information:

• the name of the sub-project coordinator and all consortium members
• contact address of the sub-project coordinator and all consortium members
• the general purpose of the project
• the amount of the financial contribution foreseen for the project; after the final payment, the amount of the financial contribution actually received by the sub-project
• the geographic location of the activities carried out;
• the list of dissemination activities and/or of a patent (applications) relating to the foreground;
• the details/references and the abstracts of scientific publications relating to the foreground and, if funded within the sub-project, the published version or the final manuscript accepted for publication;
• the publishable reports submitted to RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs;
• any picture or any audiovisual or web material provided to the EIT Manufacturing and RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs in the framework of the project.

The sub-project coordinator shall ensure that all necessary authorisations for such publication have been obtained and that the publication of the information by the EIT Manufacturing and RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs does not infringe any rights of third parties.

Upon a duly substantiated request by the sub-project coordinator on behalf of any sub-project consortium member, the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs, if such permission is provided by the EIT Manufacturing, may agree to forego such publicity if disclosure of the information indicated above would risk compromising the beneficiary's security, academic or commercial interests.

6.4 Financial audits and controls

The EIT Manufacturing will monitor that RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs beneficiaries and the sub-contract consortium members that comply with the conditions for financial support to third parties such as set out in RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs contract and may take any action foreseen by the grant agreement in case of non-compliance vis à vis the beneficiary concerned.

Moreover, the EC at any time during the implementation of the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project and up to five years after the end of the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project, arrange for financial audits to be carried out, by

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[7] https://ec.europa.eu/info/resources-partners/european-commission-visual-identity_en

external auditors, or by the EC services themselves including the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). The audit procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC. Such audits may cover financial, systemic and other aspects (such as accounting and management principles) relating to the proper execution of the grant agreement. They shall be carried out on a confidential basis.

The sub-project consortium member shall make available directly to the EC all detailed information and data that may be requested by the EC or any representative authorized by it, with a view to verifying that the grant agreement is properly managed and performed in accordance with its provisions and that costs have been charged in compliance with it. This information and data must be precise, complete and effective.

The sub-project consortium member shall keep all sub-project deliverables and the originals or, in exceptional cases, duly authenticated copies – including electronic copies - of all documents relating to the sub-project contract for up to five years from the end of the project. These shall be made available to the EC where requested during any audit under the grant agreement.

In order to carry out these audits, the sub-project consortium member shall ensure that the EC´s services and any external body(ies) authorised by it have on-the-spot access at all reasonable times, notably to the sub-project consortium member offices, to its computer data, to its accounting data and to all the information needed to carry out those audits, including information on individual salaries of persons involved in the project. They shall ensure that the information is readily available on the spot at the moment of the audit and, if so requested, that data be handed over in an appropriate form.

On the basis of the findings made during the financial audit, a provisional report shall be drawn up. It shall be sent by the EC or its authorised representative to the beneficiary concerned, which may make observations thereon within one month of receiving it. The Commission may decide not to take into account observations conveyed or documents sent after that deadline. The final report shall be sent to the beneficiary concerned within two months of the expiry of the aforesaid deadline.

On the basis of the conclusions of the audit, the EC shall take all appropriate measures which it considers necessary, including the issuing of recovery orders regarding all or part of the payments made by it and the application of any applicable sanction.

The European Court of Auditors shall have the same rights as the EC, notably right of access, for the purpose of checks and audits, without prejudice to its own rules.

In addition, the EC may carry out on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities.

6.5   Sub-project Consortium Agreement

The payment from the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project (Budget Holder) to the sub-project will take place via the sub-project coordinator organization. The RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs has no other obligation to ensure or monitor that funding has actually reached the sub-contract consortium participant. The sub-project coordinator is responsible to distribute the funding to the consortium members based on the sub-contract that has been signed and the funding distribution per deliverable and per party.

As such, the sub-project consortium members should ensure the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator via Annex 4 "Consortium Honour Declaration" that a relevant consortium agreement has been signed, where:

- The sub-project coordinator ensures for the financial viability of each sub-project consortium member
- Each consortium member authorized the sub-project coordinator to act on its behalf
- Each consortium member authorized the sub-project coordinator to receive the sub-project funding from the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator and distribute it according to the sub-contract
- A decision-making procedure and conflict resolution schema among the consortium members is defined
- A proper IPR protection of the sub-project consortium members is ensured.

6.6   Sub-project Communication

The sub-project coordinator should:

- Provide any notice be in writing to the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs project coordinator
- Notify immediately any change of persons or contact details to the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs coordinator. The address list shall be accessible to all concerned.

7 Checklist

1) Does your planned work fit with the call for proposals? Check that your proposed work does indeed address one of the topics open in this call.
2) Is your proposal eligible? The eligibility criteria are given in chapter 3 "Proposal Eligibility Criteria". In particular, make sure that you satisfy the minimum participation requirements (entity from eligible countries)
3) Budgetary limits. Check that you comply with any budgetary limits as expressed in chapter 3 "Proposal Eligibility Criteria". Any proposal not meeting the eligibility requirements will be considered ineligible and will not be evaluated.
4) Is your proposal complete? Have you completed all the mandatory questions?
5) Does your proposal fulfil questions requests/ comments? Proposals should be precise, concise and must answer to requested questions, which are designed to correspond to the applied evaluation. Omitting requested information will almost certainly lead to lower scores and possible rejection.

6) Have you maximised your chances? There will be strong competition. Therefore, edit your proposal tightly, strengthen or eliminate weak points.
7) Have you submitted your proposal before the deadline? It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the message as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.
8) Have you provided the necessary annexes?
9) Do you need further advice and support during the proposal phase? You are strongly advised to communicate with the RIS Industry 4.0 Hubs team via the email (info@ris-i40.eu).

Do not forget that it is mandatory the coordinating SME to have a valid VAT number during preparation time.