

Work package 2

Deliverable: D2.9 Set of guidelines proposed for the future joint Baltic Sea and North Sea research and innovation programme implementation

Lead organization: BONUS EEIG, Task Leader: Minna Ulvila

Submitted by: Andris Andrusaitis, Coordinator of BANOS CSA
(andris.andrusaitis@bonuseeig.fi)

Submission date: 20 October 2021

The main outcomes

- Providing the model call related documents for launching BANOS calls for proposals and monitoring the funded projects
- Laying down the basic project level reporting principles of the BANOS Programme's projects described in the Guide for BANOS project participants

To be cited as: Sirendi M., M. Ulvila, K.A. Koho, A. Andrusaitis (2021). Set of guidelines proposed for the future joint Baltic Sea and North Sea research and innovation programme implementation. BANOS CSA/D2.9.

Authors: Meelis Sirendi, Minna Ulvila, Karoliina A. Koho, Andris Andrusaitis

Contact: meelis.sirendi@bonuseeig.fi

This work has been carried out by the *Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA)* project funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No. 817574.

Description of task: (i.e. as in the Description of Work)

The ongoing BONUS Art. 185 has currently a set of model contracts (BONUS grant agreement, BONUS co-financing agreement, Agreement on allocation of funds and management compensation, Agreement on reporting and auditing in-kind, free of charge infrastructure contributions, Agreement with beneficiary on national funding administered by BONUS EEIG) and guidelines (Guide for BONUS applicants, Guide for BONUS participants, Guide for BONUS evaluators, Guide on reporting of infrastructures, EPSS guidelines) which are based on the rules of the 7th Framework Programme (FP7).

In order to secure an effective commencement of the future programme, several model contracts and guidelines will be developed to be in line with respective funding instrument, framework programme rules and with the requirements agreed in the task 2.1. (Dedicated implementation structure) and 2.2. (Financial structure). New guidelines should also be considered for ensuring smooth management of the programme implementation as well as communication with stakeholders and society at large (guidelines for negotiations for grant agreement, stakeholder involvement guidelines). Work on this task will commence in M19 – as soon as the future programme's instruments and mechanisms are agreed upon – and will be completed at end of the project: M36. In M32 a set of the draft model agreements and contracts will be made available for accepting by the **BANOS CSA** Steering Committee.

Note:

Report – Deliverable 2.9

Type:

R	document, report
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Dissemination level:

PU	Public
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1 Executive summary

Based on the outcomes of the BANOS CSA task 2.2 *Agreeing on funding models and instruments* and the deliverable 2.7 *Set of model agreements proposed for implementation of the future joint Baltic and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme (BANOS)* of the task 2.3 *Model contract and guidelines*, a set of guidelines has been developed for the use of the centralised BANOS Programme management as planned in the BANOS CSA.

This set includes three necessary guidelines including a guide for applicants, guide for reviewers and a guide for project participants and a template for call announcement.

All model documents have been made so that they can be used in a variety of situations and easily modified as needed. The model guidelines will be used as reference document for developing the EPSS in the task 2.4 *Development of on-line programme management tool*.

In this deliverable the content of each document is described and the guidelines and the template themselves are included here as annexes.

2 Introduction

In order to secure an effective management of the BANOS Programme's joint calls, several guidelines will be needed to inform and guide all parties participating in a call: applicants, reviewers, and in later stage after the proposals have been evaluated and funding decisions made, the project consortia. All guidelines and associated documents should be available for the applicants at the moment of a call launch to inform and guide them in their proposal preparation. The guidelines should contain references to the call related documents and use of respective electronic tool for proposal submission. In addition, information should be given on proposals evaluation process: how the review is performed, how the applicants are informed about the review outcomes and whether they have a right for rebuttal/redress. In case where a proposal is funded, guidelines are needed for inform the consortium of their future obligations (e.g., reporting, data management, dissemination, etc).

After launching the ERA-NET initiatives in the FP6, the number of public-public partnerships (P2P) arranging the joint calls have explosively increased – first as ERA-NET Plus projects, later ERA-NET Cofunds, Art 185 programmes, European Joint Programmes, Joint Programming Initiatives etc. According to the ERA-LEARN, 689 joint transnational calls have been implemented by P2P networks by the end of 2019, with a cumulative investment of more than Euro 8 billion in almost 8,000 transnational projects¹. So, considering that the landscape of the instruments and networks is very diverse, so are the associated documents, tools and guidelines, providing assistance to the involved parties. To recommend effective and as simple as possible procedures for the use of the future BANOS Programme's participants, several call announcements, including examples of guidelines and templates, were investigated. Attention was paid in particular to recent calls where the current BANOS CSA members have been participating and playing a leading role, and in calls where the topic has a high affinity to the BANOS SRIA² e.g., the second BlueBio call 2021³, BIODIVERSA and WATER JPI joint call 2020-2021⁴, CHANSE call for proposals 2021⁵. Also, experiences from recently ended BONUS Art 185 Programme were considered as well as Horizon Europe's guiding documents.

Here, we recommend using a set of documents instead of a single long and comprehensive one, each of those targeting different participants of the call:

- Call announcement
- Guide for applicants
- Guide for reviewers
- Guide for project participants

In addition, as part of the BANOS CSA task 4.1 Developing mechanisms for impact monitoring D4.2 Guidelines for Applicants on integrating practical Impact Indicators in project design was developed, covering the aspects of stakeholder engagement. In addition, a comprehensive mapping of BANOS

¹ <https://www.era-learn.eu/>

² Koho K.A., A. Andrusaitis, M. Sirola, et al. (2021). The Baltic and North Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, BANOS SRIA 2021. BANOS CSA/D1.5

³ https://bluebioeconomy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/BlueBio-2nd-additional-call-document_July-2021.pdf

⁴ <https://www.biodiversa.org/1587>

⁵ <https://chanse.org/call-for-proposals/>

Programme relevant stakeholders was performed during the BANOS CSA project⁶ and a comprehensive stakeholder engagement handbook has been compiled by the BIODIVERSA project⁷ and this is available as well as relevant for all other similar initiatives. In the BANOS CSA Description of Action (DoA), guidelines for budget negotiations and use of the EPSS were mentioned. However, in the end these additional guidelines were found to be unnecessary. As all funding streams to the project participants – national as well as top-up from European funds – will go via funding partner organisations and each of them have their own rules and procedures. Minor part of negotiations concerns the description of work which will be carried out centrally with the call secretariat and this part is addressed in the guide for project participants. EPSS guidelines are incorporated into the other respective guidelines as well – to the reviewer's, applicant's and project participant's. Extensive guidelines as drop-down text boxes will be also included to the user's interface in the EPSS.

3 Call announcement

The call announcement presents the concise data of the call which is legally binding for all call participants: applicants, reviewers, representatives of funding agencies, the call secretariat. In it, the call topics are specified referring to the specific objectives and themes, and respective outcomes as described in the BANOS SRIA. The submission procedure, eligibility criteria, evaluation procedures, evaluation criteria and scores are presented, and call deadlines and later indicative deadlines specified. In the call announcement also the countries and funding partners organisations supporting the call are listed. In the Annex 1, a template for a call announcement filled with example data is presented.

4 Guidelines for applicants

The guidelines for applicants contain detailed information concerning the joint call and a detailed description of the application process. It is strongly recommended to define the full set of required information well in advance because it will be difficult to collect any information at a later stage.

Specific part of the guidelines for applicants is presenting the national/regional requirements that are not the same for all call applicants. It is because each participating funding organisation may impose complementary requirements in addition to the requirements defined by the network. It is important that such additional requirements are communicated to the applicants in a clear and transparent way and well in advance. List of national/regional contact points is included to the guide for applicants and a recommendation to contact these persons prior to submission of proposals in order to clarify all eligibility issues and other national/regional issues of importance.

It is important that the guidelines clarify the formal procedure for the submission: (i) how many steps are foreseen in the submission procedure, (ii) which forms have to be submitted for each step both at the network level and at the national/regional level, (iii) who has to submit which document. It should

⁶ Lescroart, J., F. De Raedemaeker, H. Pirlet, A-K. Lescrauwaet, M. Sirola (2019). A holistic map of the programme's stakeholders. BANOS CSA/D3.2.

⁷ Durham E., Baker H., Smith M., Moore E. & Morgan V. (2014). The BiodivERsA Stakeholder Engagement Handbook. BiodivERsA, Paris (108 pp).

be also clarified in the guidelines, what data is requested from the applicants needed for the selection process.

Guidelines for BANOS applicants is included as Annex 2 to this deliverable.

5 Guidelines for reviewers

The Guidelines for reviewers is a document providing evaluators and experts with the necessary information (procedures, criteria, thresholds, dates and deadlines) to perform their task, depending on the chosen evaluation process. It gives also background information on the call, providing links to all relevant information sources.

Guidelines for BANOS reviewers is included as Annex 3 to this deliverable.

6 Guidelines for project participants

The guidelines for project participants describe what actions are needed from the funded consortia after the decision on project funding has been made. The first part of the document describes the negotiation stage, and the second part the reporting requirements.

The negotiations stage is primarily focussed on the participants budgets. In the funding model as foreseen for BANOS Programme, all funding streams to participants – national as well as top-up from European funds – will take place via funding partner organisations and each of them have their own rules and procedures. In addition, the negotiations include agreement on the description of work which will be carried out centrally with the call secretariat and this part is addressed in the guide for project participants.

In addition to the standard reporting requirements of the participating FPOs at the national level, BANOS Programme has established procedures for joint scientific/technological reporting in order to have information on entire projects. The reporting requirements on project level are generally described in the Project Implementation Agreement but detailed in the guide for project participants.

Project reporting within BANOS Programme takes place according to the schedule of deliverables as outlined in the description of work. The periodic and final report shall include, in addition to the scientific report, a public summary and report on performance indicators. The list of indicators has been elaborated within deliverable *Report proposing impact indicators and programme-level impact monitoring mechanisms*⁸ and included to the guidelines for project participants.

Also other aspects of project management, like issues of intellectual property rights, dissemination and BANOS branding issues, etc. are addressed in the guide for project participants.

Guidelines for BANOS project participants is included as Annex 4 to this deliverable.

⁸ Koho K.A., M. Sirendi, M. Sirola, A. Andrusaitis (2020). Report proposing impact indicators and programme-level impact monitoring mechanisms BANOS CSA/D4.1.

7 Other guiding tools

BANOS Programme's or a call's website should be a central source of information for all participants. In addition to the call related documents, guiding materials and other referred documents frequently asked questions (FAQs) are recommended to be included into the website. In addition, a page should be created for downloading templates to assist the applicants and the project participants in appropriate proposal submission or project management, respectively.

Although many questions may be avoided by offering thoroughly elaborated guidelines, a collection of FAQs is a practical and effective tool for providing answers to potential concerns. FAQs may also be helpful for improving the call and project implementation itself, as apparent misunderstandings can be sorted out directly in the process. The advantage of FAQs is that they can be updated easily and as needed.

Templates can be created for easing the work of applicants and project participants from one side but also of call and programme management staff and the reviewers. Firstly, they outline what kind of information is expected and secondly, provide harmonized information facilitating an equal comparison of applications and reports in respect to provided information. Example templates could include a letter of commitment from applicants not requesting funding, a table for list of work packages, a template for description of work package, a list of deliverables, a list of milestones, etc.

Helpdesk services are vital for smooth processes of submission of proposals as well as during proposals' review and projects implementation. Two kinds of Helpdesk services should be provided – one addressing topical questions about call and another addressing technical questions e.g., use of EPSS. Also, the FPO contact persons list should be readily available with a strong recommendation to contact them for in respect to the national requirements.

Good practice is also to organise webinars or info sessions for respective call participants: to applicants to explain the details of the call topic and particularly the expected outcomes, and how to assure the foreseen impact of the project; to reviewers to guide them through the evaluation process to ensure uniform approach to the assessment and explain features of the call if those exist (for example, if SME participation is requested, how to assess this). It is recommended also to train the staff involved in call management, for example if staff of FPOs is expected to moderate review meetings, a preliminary training would be recommendable.

8 Conclusions

The guidelines presented here allow for a smooth and effective call and projects' management of the BANOS Programme. The flexibility of the presented guidelines allows them to be applied in a wide variety of call arrangements and to be modified as appropriate.

Annexes

Annex 1 Template for call announcement

Annex 2 Guide for applicants

Annex 3 Guide for reviewers

Annex 4 Guide for project participants

Annex 1 Template for call announcement

Title of the document call identifier [call identifier]

BANOS call background

Major research and innovation (R&I) funders of ten EU member states and two countries associated to EU's research and innovation framework: Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom together with four transnational strategic partners – HELCOM, OSPAR, ICES and JPI Oceans – joined their forces and developed preconditions for launching the future joint Baltic and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme – BANOS. This was supported by EU as the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA, 2018–2021). BANOS aims to deliver policy relevant research and innovation in support of sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services while generating strong EU added value and impact.

At the heart of the BANOS Programme is its Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda – SRIA which has been developed together with a wide range of stakeholders and experts. SRIA presents the objectives and themes with concrete descriptions and outcomes to overcome the challenges faced by the region and enabling the green transition of the blue economy.

Call scope, themes called and expected outcomes*

Themes called for BANOS call [call identifier]:

BANOS strategic and specific objective	Themes	Additional eligibility conditions
A. Healthy Seas and Coasts		
A.1: A Resilient Marine Ecosystem	A.1.1 Understanding Marine Food Web Interactions and Their Services	None
	A.2: Seamless Governance Linking Land, Coast and Sea	None
B. Sustainable Blue Economy	B.2.4 Recyclable and Sustainable Biobased Products from Marine Resources	Projects will be selected only on condition that at least 25% of the funding goes to SMEs

*The expected outcomes of each theme are presented in complete format in the BANOS SRIA

Call dates and deadlines

Call opens [28 October 2021]

Pre-proposal submission deadline [27 January 2022 14:00 EET]

Invitation for submission of full proposal [27 April 2022]

Full proposal submission deadline [27 June 2022 14:00 EEST]

Project duration

The project duration is [24 to 36] months.

Participation in the Call and funding models

The following funding agencies are providing funding for BANOS call [call identifier]: [list of countries and funding partner organisations (FPO) and funding they are providing]. More specific table on funding opportunities is provided in the Guide for applicants.

General eligibility criteria

- The consortium should consist of at least three legal persons eligible for funding from three different countries participating in the funding the call
- The legal person acting as the project coordinator is established in one of the [BANOS countries]/[countries participating in the call] and eligible for funding according to the respective national rules.
- The proposal is submitted by deadlines specified in the call announcement.
- The proposal is submitted via the electronic tool [[HTTPS://epss.banosportal.org](https://epss.banosportal.org)].
- Proposal is in English and is complete with all required parts specified in the Guide for Applicants [or should be listed – including the description of work, all administrative forms and declarations if those requested].
- Proposal addresses one key theme from those opened for this call [supplementary themes from BANOS SRIA optional]
- Each consortium partner in the full proposal requesting funding should be eligible for respective funding partner organisation [or: national eligibility conditions should be fulfilled in the full proposal stage].
- [if special requirements applied, these should be listed here].

Proposal is not eligible if (1) any of listed requirements is not fulfilled; (2) if any of the proposal partner requesting funding is not eligible for respective FPO.

Submission procedure

The proposals should be submitted via the electronic tool [[HTTPS://epss.banosportal.org](https://epss.banosportal.org)]. The deadline for pre-proposal submission is [27 January 2022 14:00 EET]. Invitation to submit the full proposal will be sent to successful preproposals by [27 March 2022]. The deadline for full proposal submission is [27 May 2022 14:00 EEST]. Only the preproposals which got invitation can submit the full proposal, allowed changes from pre-proposal to full proposal are described in the Guide for applicants.

Evaluation procedure

Proposals on all themes opened for this call are evaluated in accordance with the evaluation guidelines by independent reviewers and ranked within two separate ranked lists corresponding with the Themes 1 and Themes 2. These ranked lists are the basis for the funding decisions.

The evaluation follows a two stage procedure. Pre-proposals are evaluated on the basis of three core criteria (threshold score/highest score):

- relevance of proposal compared to call theme (4/5)
- excellence (3/5)
- foreseen impact (3/5).

The review panel will determine the ranking list of the pre-proposals and based on it, the Call Steering Committee (composed of representatives from FPO-s) will decide on the pre-proposals to be invited to submit the full proposal. While selecting pre-proposals for inviting to the second stage

the Committee may take into consideration the coherence of the proposal portfolio and to ensure a reasonable balance of requested and available regional/national budgets.

Full proposals are evaluated on the basis of three core criteria (threshold score/highest score):

- scientific and/or technological excellence (4/5)
- impact (3/5)
- quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management (3/5).

The total score threshold is 11, below of which no proposal can be invited to submit full proposal nor be funded. Scores may be awarded with 0.5 point step.

The review panel will determine a priority order for full proposals which have been awarded the same total score within the same ranked list. The following approach will be applied successively for every group of proposals requiring such prioritisation:

- Proposals will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion of scientific and/or technological excellence
- If necessary, any further prioritisation will be based on other appropriate characteristics, to be decided by the panel (e.g. presence of enterprises, international cooperation, public engagement)

Other indicative deadlines

- Evaluation of full proposal and panel meetings: **November 2022**
- Announcement of the evaluation outcome: **December 2022**
- Earliest start of the projects: **January 2023**

Annex 2 Guide for applicants

Guide for BANOS applicants

Specific to the BANOS call [call identifier]

Opening on [date]

Submissions of pre-proposals by [date and time]

Submissions of full proposals by [date and time]

Please note that this document may be subject to changes. Any changes made are announced on the BANOS website at [to be specified] .

Disclaimer

This guide is aimed at assisting applicants for BANOS projects. It is provided for information purposes only and its contents are not intended to replace consultation of any applicable legal sources or the necessary advice of a legal expert, where appropriate. Neither the call secretariat nor any person acting on its behalf can be held responsible for the use made of these guidance notes.

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1. About BANOS

Major research and innovation (R&I) funders of ten EU member states and two countries associated to EU's research and innovation framework: Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom together with four transnational strategic partners – HELCOM, OSPAR, ICES and JPI Oceans – joined their forces and developed preconditions for launching the future joint Baltic and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme – BANOS. This was supported by EU as the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA, 2018–2021). In future, BANOS aims to deliver policy relevant research and innovation in support of sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services while generating strong EU added value and impact.

1.1. BANOS mission

Fostering high-level cooperative research and innovation across the Baltic Sea and the North Sea to support sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services with robust scientific knowledge and know-how.

In BANOS vision, to deliver a decisive and much needed boost to the sustainable marine and maritime economy, the collective R&I capacity of the Northern European region needs to be elevated to the next level through a scientifically, administratively, and financially firmly integrated R&I programme. The core of BANOS is the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda – the BANOS SRIA. It marks a clear path forward while at the same time, through regular review and update, allows sufficient space for agile response to emerging needs for enquiry by scientists and innovator

1.2. The objectives of BANOS

The overall framework of the BANOS SRIA consist of three mutually interlinked strategic objectives, all aiming to support and enable the ecosystem-based management in the BANOS region. These are:

- **Healthy Seas and Coasts**
- **Sustainable Blue Economy**
- **Human Wellbeing**

The strategic objectives, which are underpinned by nine specific objectives and 32 R&I themes, are all discussed in detail in the thematic section of the BANOS SRIA. The structure of the thematic section clearly illustrates the current state of the art and bottle necks in R&I as well as explicit expected R&I outcomes that will provide concrete solutions or steps towards solving the issues in support of reaching the good environmental status in the BANOS region as well as enabling the development of the sustainable blue economy sector with minimal environmental impacts.

It should also be highlighted that the content of the BANOS SRIA is highly policy relevant and the expected outcomes are tailored towards development and implementation of science informed policies. Here the focus has been centred around the European green transition while aiming to deliver a decisive boost to sustainable marine and maritime economy sector and bringing the R&I capacity of the BANOS region to the next level.

2. Participation in the Call and funding models

The following funding agencies are providing funding for BANOS call [call identifier]: [list of countries and funding partner organisations (FPO)]. Table 1 includes the budgets from respective FPO-s, specifics regarding funding for type of organisations and any other major priorities, limitations or additional comments specific to national funders.

Table 1. Overview of funding opportunities for BANOS call [call identifier]

Country	FPO	Available budget	Funding available for:			Other comments
			Research	Industry	NGO-s	

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Funding for transnational projects is based on a virtual common pot instrument. This means that applicants granted funding will receive the grant directly from their national/regional funding institution in accordance with their terms and conditions. Applicants should be aware that they may have different administrative rules. Therefore, applicants are strongly advised to consider the National Regulations/National Factsheets published in Annex 1 of this document. Applicants (coordinators and partners) should contact their national or regional funding bodies prior to submission of the pre-proposal for further information. The ineligibility of a partner in a consortium may result in the rejection of the entire proposal.

The project partner which is eligible for funding is a legal person represented by principal investigator (PI). There is no restriction in call level which type of legal person it is (public, private; research, industry, non-governmental organization, international organization) nor qualification requirements towards PI-s. However, respective requirements could be introduced by the FPO-s and are listed in Annex 1. It should be noted that in case of enterprise participation there may be implications concerning state aid obligations.

The coordinator is one of the legal persons in the consortium represented by PI. The coordinator including its PI should be eligible for funding from their respective FPO.

The minimum consortium should involve at least three eligible for funding legal persons that are independent of each other, from three different call participating countries.

The participation of consortium members not requesting funding from call participating funding agencies from BANOS countries or other countries is allowed. The consortium members not requesting funding must bring their own funds and provide a letter of commitment stating this as part of the full proposal submission. These partners are not considered in the required minimum number of eligible partners and countries and cannot apply as coordinators of the research proposal consortium.

3. The themes of the current call

The themes of the BANOS calls for proposals are derived from the SRIA¹. These have been developed and agreed upon in consultation among the participating states, a broad range of stakeholders and the European Commission. The themes open in this call are listed in the call-specific call announcement and described in more detail within the BANOS SRIA.

4. Additional documents and guidelines relevant to this call

Besides this guide, the rules and procedures are described in more detail in other BANOS guidelines, BANOS SRIA and model Statement of Intent on Project Implementation which are openly available at [[BANOS programme website](#)]:

- The Baltic and North Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, BANOS SRIA 2021
- Guide for BANOS reviewers specific to the BANOS call
- Guide for BANOS project participants
- Guidelines for Applicants on integrating practical Impact Indicators in project design
- Model Project Implementation Agreement

Where appropriate applicants are also encouraged to familiarise themselves with BANOS impact enablers, a set of dedicated strategies to enhance the impact of R&I at all levels. For summary and more details, see BANOS SRIA, section 6.

¹Koho K.A., A. Andrusaitis, M. Sirola, et al. (2021). The Baltic and North Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, BANOS SRIA 2021. BANOS CSA/D1.5

5. Structure of the BANOS project proposal

All BANOS call proposals should be submitted exclusively by using the BANOS EPSS [web address to be provided].

A proposal consists of two sections:

Section A is submitted by the project coordinator and consists of two parts:

- Part one is an electronic form for administrative information including the total budget and mandatory declarations
- Part two is the narrative part that includes three sections that each correspond to an evaluation criterion. This part should be uploaded as a PDF document following the templates downloaded by the applicants

Section B is submitted by each applicant including the project coordinator. Each submission is composed of at least two parts:

- Part one is an electronic applicant-specific information. It contains administrative information about the legal entity involved including the *Curriculum Vitae* of the PI, a list of recent publications, patents of other relevant products, members of the team and the applicant's budget
- Part two is a letter of funding commitment for applicants that do not apply for funding.

If the person in charge is involved in several proposals, (s)he may fill in different *Curriculum Vitae* information or related publications/products for each proposal.

6. Submission of the pre-proposal

The pre-proposal must be submitted electronically via the BANOS EPSS (website [to be provided]) by [date and time to be specified]. Detailed instructions for the use of EPSS are in the specific guidelines and inside the EPSS. It will be possible to update and resubmit the pre-proposal as many times as required up to the submission deadline, but not after the deadline has expired.

The application should be submitted by the project coordinator on behalf of the project consortium. Applicants should note that the online system may experience high traffic volumes in the last hours before the submission deadline and it is therefore highly recommended that the final version of the pre-proposal is submitted well in advance of the deadline to avoid any last-minute technical problems. Requests for extensions to the deadline due to last minute technical problems will not be considered.

If national/regional forms are required for individual partners, these must be submitted directly to the national/regional agency by the deadlines stated.

Applicants should note that information on the partner description (core data) cannot be substantially changed between pre- and full proposals, in particular, neither the composition of the consortia nor the funding requested by each partner in the second step unless explicitly requested by the national contacts and approved by the Call Steering Committee.

The information given in the pre-proposal will be used to check for eligibility, to find appropriate evaluation experts and to evaluate the pre-proposal.

6.1. Administrative information

Administrative information will be inserted by the coordinator:

- Project title: – *submission in the final format, max 150 characters*

- Project acronym: – *submission in the final format, max 15 characters*
- Key theme addressed: – *submission in the final format*
- Foreseen duration in months - *submission in the final format*
- Keywords: - *can be modified until the submission of the full proposal, max 100 characters*
- Abstract: – *can be modified until the submission of the full proposal, max 1500 characters*

6.2. Partner description

The following information about the project partners, including coordinator, must be submitted during pre-proposal stage via BANOS EPSS:

- Name of the partner organization, type of the organization and address, PIC number if available
- PI information, including first and last name, e-mail address, position, expertise and 5 most relevant for the proposal publications
- Description of ongoing projects related to the present thematic area indicating project name, funding source and amount, and potential overlap or link with the current proposal (if any)
- Budget estimate in EUR

6.3. Project description

The project description of work (DoW) is the key document of each proposal applying funding from BANOS. It serves as the most important source of information in the evaluation of the proposal quality and selection for funding. The DoW will be uploaded as a pdf-file.

Recommended composition of a project description of work in the pre-proposal stage:

- 1) Cover page²
- 2) Table of content
- Relevance of proposal compared to call theme***
- 3) Relevance to the thematic content of the call, contribution in producing expected outcomes specified for the themes addressed

Excellence

- 4) State of the art and theory
- 5) Research approaches and methodology
- 6) List of work packages and Gantt chart or similar showing the timing of different work packages
- 7) Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole, and the extent to which the consortium brings together the necessary expertise

Foreseen impact

- 8) Main results of the project that can be expected and measures to disseminate (stakeholder engagement, communication, etc.)
- 9) European and regional added value of the proposed project with a focus on societal and policy relevance
- 10) Reference list.

The text font size cannot be smaller than 11 pt, page margins cannot be smaller than 1.27 cm. Single line spacing is allowed.

(The total length of the proposal parts 3-9 must not exceed 10 pages. All pages beyond this limit are discarded and therefore will not be forwarded to the reviewers. No annexes are allowed.

² Template provided in call web-page

7. Evaluation of pre-proposals

7.1. Eligibility check

All pre-proposals will be assessed for their eligibility with respect to national rules and requirements by the respective FPOs and for general eligibility requirements by the call secretariat. The general eligibility rules are listed in the call announcement, the national requirements as Annex 1 to the current guidelines.

If the pre-proposal has been identified as ineligible according to the general eligibility rules, the pre-proposal is not forwarded to the evaluation. The outcome of the eligibility assessment by the FPOs will be collated by the call secretariat and communicated to the coordinators of those pre-proposals invited to submit the full proposal.

7.2. Reviewing of pre-proposals

The scientific review of eligible pre-proposals will be carried out by independent reviewers in an International Review Panel (IRP). The IRP will be from inside and outside the call countries, and balanced in terms of nationality, age, gender and expertise background, while avoiding conflict of interest with applicants or applications. The independent IRP chair and members will be researchers, practitioners and other stakeholders with high standing and expertise in the relevant research and/or innovation areas and the overall objectives of the call.

Each pre-proposal will be evaluated at least by two reviewers, one of them acting as rapporteur. The pre-proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria: [relevance of proposal compared to call theme, scientific or technological excellence, foreseen impact]. The scoring system uses a 5-point scale (see explanation of scale and introduced thresholds in Section 3.2. in the Guide for BANOS reviewers

The IRP will agree on a final consensus report and score for each pre-proposal and will produce a ranking list of pre-proposals above thresholds introduced.

7.3. Selection of pre-proposals

Based on the review results the Call Steering Committee (composed of representatives from FPO-s) will decide on the pre-proposals to be invited to submit the full proposal. While selecting pre-proposals for inviting to the second stage the Committee may take into consideration the coherence of the proposal portfolio and to ensure a reasonable balance of requested and available regional/national budgets.

All coordinators of the research consortia will be informed about the evaluation results in an anonymous way, and whether they are invited for full proposal submission. Furthermore, coordinators will be informed about proposals rejected for eligibility reasons. Coordinators who are invited for full proposal submission will receive feedback of the pre-proposal eligibility check.

8. Submission of the full proposal

The full proposal must be submitted electronically via the BANOS EPSS (website [to be provided]) by [date and time to be specified]. Only research consortia invited to submit a full proposal can do it. Applicants should note that information on the core data cannot be changed in full proposals, unless explicitly requested by the funding organisation(s) and approved by the Call Steering Committee. The information provided in the pre-proposal will automatically be imported into the full proposal in the EPSS. It is the duty of the coordinator and other partners to enter additional data online, modify the existing content as seen necessary and ensure that all required information is included.

8.1. Administrative information

All administrative information has been inserted during the pre-proposal submission. Only the abstract and keywords can be slightly modified when submitting the full proposal.

In addition to the information provided in the pre-proposal, the coordinator should submit on behalf of consortium the consent with declarations (Annex 2).

8.2. Partner description

The following information about the project partners, including coordinator, must be submitted during full proposal stage:

- CV of the PI (the form available in EPSS)
- List of other senior level scientific members of the team
- Short description (max. 2,000 characters) about project team, fields of expertise and other relevant experience.
- Partners budget by major budget lines as requested in EPSS³

8.3. Project description

Recommended composition of the project description of work in the full proposal stage:

- 1) Cover page
- 2) Table of content

Scientific and/or technological excellence

- 3) State of the art of knowledge and theory, innovative characteristics of the project
- 4) Quality and effectiveness of the scientific and/or technological methodology, including inter-disciplinary approaches, the quality of open science practices, open data management and management of other research outputs

Impact

- 5) Main results of the project and how these are expected to make difference in terms of impact
- 6) Measures to maximise impact – dissemination, exploitation and communication

Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management

- 7) Detailed work plan, including extent to which the resources assigned to the work packages are in line with their objectives and deliverables (list of work packages, description of each work package, list of deliverables, list of milestones, list of critical risks related to project implementation)⁴
- 8) Management structures and procedures
- 9) Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole
- 10) Reference list

The text font size cannot be smaller than 11 pt, page margins cannot be smaller than 1.27 cm. Single line spacing is allowed. The total length of the proposal parts 3-9 must not exceed 30 pages. All pages beyond this limit are discarded and therefore will not be forwarded to the reviewers. No annexes allowed.

³ Applicants not requesting funding have to upload the letter of commitment (template provided on the call web-page)

⁴ Templates for respective tables will be provided for downloading in the call web-page

9. Evaluation of full proposals

9.1. Eligibility check

All full proposals will be assessed for their eligibility with respect to national rules and requirements by the respective FPOs and for general eligibility requirements by the call secretariat. The general eligibility rules are listed in the call announcement, the national requirements as Annex 1 to the current guidelines.

If the full proposal has been identified as ineligible according to any eligibility rules (national or general), the full proposal is not forwarded to the evaluation.

9.2. Reviewing of full proposals

The scientific review of eligible full proposals will be carried out by independent reviewers in an IRP. The IRP will be from inside and outside the call countries, and balanced in terms of nationality, age, gender and expertise background, while avoiding conflict of interest with applicants or applications. The independent IRP chair and members will be researchers, practitioners and other stakeholders with high standing and expertise in the relevant research areas and the overall objectives of the call.

Each full proposals will be evaluated at least by three reviewers, one of them acting as rapporteur. The full proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria: [Scientific and/or technological excellence, Impact, Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management]. The scoring system uses a 5-point scale (see explanation of scale and introduced thresholds in Section 3.2. in the Guide for BANOS reviewers).

The IRP will agree on a final consensus report and score for each full proposal and will produce a ranking list of proposals above thresholds introduced.

10. Selection of projects to be funded

The final decision about which projects are recommended to be funded is made by the Call Steering Committee. In its decision, the Steering Committee follows the ranking lists compiled by the IRP. It will support the selection of projects strictly in priority order following the ranked lists based on the total scores. The funding organisations will take the final decision for national/regional funding following the order of the ranking list provided by the IRP and recommended by the Call Steering Committee and taking into account the available budget of each funding organization. The number of selected projects will depend on the available budget of the involved funding organisations.

Each proposal, funded or not, will receive a written evaluation summary report after the decision. This information letter will also indicate the address and instructions on how to submit a request for redress in case he/she believes that there have been shortcomings in the handling of the respective proposal, and that these shortcomings would jeopardise the outcome of the evaluation process. An internal evaluation review committee ("redress committee") will examine all such complaints.

Coordinators of the successful proposals will be invited to conclude the project implementation agreement with the call secretariat and all partners within successful projects to conclude the grant agreement with the relevant national funding institution. The negotiations may include modifications of the project's description of work and/or budget. Thereafter the national funding institutions will make the decisions which are necessary for mobilising the national funding.

11. Annexes

11.1. Annex 1 National rules and requirements

[National rules and requirements of participation FPOs in alphabetical order of participating countries]

11.2. Annex 2 Declarations the coordinator should submit on behalf of consortium

- 1) We declare to have explicit consent of all applicants on their participation and on the content of this proposal.
- 2) We confirm that the information contained in this proposal is correct and complete and that none of the project activities have started before the proposal was submitted.
- 3) We declare to have financial and operational capacity to carry out the proposed project.
- 4) We declare that the proposal complies with ethical principles (including highest standards of research integrity as set out in the *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity* (<https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/>), (as well as applicable international and national law, including the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union* and the *European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols*). Appropriate procedures, policies and structures are in place to foster responsible research practices, to prevent questionable research practices and research misconduct, and to handle allegations of breaches of the principles and standards in the Code of Conduct.
- 5) We declare that any utilization of aquatic resources will be carried out in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol and all actions will be accordance with ethical principles and applicable national, EU and international law.
- 6) We have read, understood and accepted the BANOS Electronic Programme Service System's (EPSS) Terms and Conditions and the Privacy Statement that set out the conditions of use of the EPSS and the scope, purposes, retention periods, etc. for the processing of personal data of all subjects whose data we communicate for the purposes of the application, evaluation, award and subsequent management of our project and agreements.
- 7) *(We declare that the proposal has an exclusive focus on civil applications (activities intended to be used in military application or aiming to serve military purposes cannot be funded)).*

Annex 3 Guide for BANOS reviewers

Guide for BANOS reviewers

Specific to the BANOS call [call identifier]

Please note that this document may be subject to changes. Any changes made are announced on the BANOS website at [[www.](#)] and notified as appropriate.

Disclaimer

This guide is aimed at assisting reviewers in BANOS proposals. Neither the BANOS call secretariat nor any person acting on its behalf can be held responsible for the use made of these guidance notes.

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1. Welcome

You have been contracted as a reviewer – an evaluation panel member to participate in the evaluation process of the call for proposals submitted to the joint Baltic Sea and North Sea research and innovation programme BANOS. The panel consists of science, technology and policy experts appointed by the BANOS call secretariat lead by [lead institutions name].

The following chapters introduce BANOS Programme and provide practical guidance for the evaluation process. Other documents providing further support for the evaluation task at hand are:

- **The Baltic and North Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda** – BANOS SRIA 2021 that sets the overall framework of the BANOS Programme and describes its strategic objectives, themes and the expected outcomes, including those relevant for this call
- **The BANOS call [call identifier] announcement** that gives the concise key data about this call for proposals including the themes covered, call timeline and eligibility conditions
- **The BANOS guide for applicants** consisting of guidelines for preparing BANOS project application including details of the information that should be provided in the proposal
- **The BANOS conflict of interest policy** (Annex)

The evaluation process includes the following steps:

- 1) The call secretariat checks the proposals against the eligibility criteria listed in the call announcement and the guide for applicants.
- 2) Each proposal is sent to reviewers based on their closest possible competence in relation to the topic of the proposal and expertise necessary to cover the evaluation criteria set. The call secretariat appoints one of the reviewers as the 'rapporteur' for the group of reviewers working on the same proposal, making him/her responsible for formulating a consensus evaluation report on the proposal.
- 3) Each reviewer examines the received proposals individually and submits an individual evaluation report on each proposal separately through the BANOS Electronic Programme Service System (EPSS [www specified]) by the deadline set. The proposals are evaluated on the basis of their individual merits applying the criteria presented in this guide, according to the principles of confidentiality and the conflicts of interest rules. The evaluation is done by the reviewers alone.
- 4) After the deadline of submissions set for the reviewers, the rapporteur goes through all the individual evaluation reports of the proposals under his/her responsibility. Approximately in one week's time, based on these individual evaluation reports, (s)he prepares a draft consensus evaluation report for the panel meeting.
- 5) All reviewers attend an evaluation panel meeting to agree about the scores, comments and ranking of the proposals.
- 6) The comments and scores are first agreed in consensus panel meetings among the reviewers who have evaluated the particular proposal in question. Then the ranking of proposals is agreed upon in a review meeting represented by all of the consensus panels. The call secretariat and the representatives of the funding partner organisations, as well as [optional: an independent observer] will be present during the evaluation panel meetings.

2. About BANOS

Major research and innovation (R&I) funders of ten EU member states and two countries associated to EU's research and innovation framework: Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom together with four transnational strategic partners – HELCOM, OSPAR, ICES and JPI Oceans – joined their forces and developed preconditions for launching the future joint Baltic and North Sea Research and Innovation Programme – BANOS. This was supported by EU as the Baltic and North Sea Coordination and Support Action (BANOS CSA, 2018–2021). In future, BANOS aims to deliver policy relevant research and innovation in support of sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services while generating strong EU added value and impact.

2.1. BANOS mission

Fostering high-level cooperative research and innovation across the Baltic Sea and the North Sea to support sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services with robust scientific knowledge and know-how.

In BANOS vision, to deliver a decisive and much needed boost to the sustainable marine and maritime economy, the collective R&I capacity of the Northern European region needs to be elevated to the next level through a scientifically, administratively, and financially firmly integrated R&I programme. The core of BANOS Programme is the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda – the BANOS SRIA. It marks a clear path forward while at the same time, through regular review and update, allows sufficient space for agile response to emerging needs for enquiry by scientists and innovators.

2.2. The objectives of BANOS

The overall framework of the BANOS SRIA consist of three mutually interlinked strategic objectives, all aiming to support and enable the ecosystem-based management in the BANOS region. These are:

- **Healthy Seas and Coasts**
- **Sustainable Blue Economy**
- **Human Wellbeing**

The strategic objectives, which are underpinned by nine specific objectives and 32 R&I themes, are all discussed in detail in the thematic section of the BANOS SRIA¹. The structure of the thematic section clearly illustrates the current state of the art and bottlenecks in R&I as well as explicit expected R&I outcomes that will provide concrete solutions or steps towards solving the issues in support of reaching the good environmental status in the BANOS region as well as enabling the development of the sustainable blue economy sector with minimal environmental impacts.

It should also be highlighted that the content of the BANOS SRIA is highly policy relevant and the expected outcomes are tailored towards development and implementation of science informed policies. Here the focus has been centred around the European green transition while aiming to deliver a decisive boost to sustainable marine and maritime economy sector and bringing the R&I capacity of the BANOS region to the next level.

2.3. The themes of the current call

The themes of the BANOS calls for proposals are derived from the SRIA. These have been developed and agreed upon in consultation among the participating states, a broad range of stakeholders and the European Commission. The themes open in this call are listed in the call-specific call announcement and described in more detail within the BANOS SRIA.

The call announcement is published when the call opens on the BANOS website ([to be specified]) and in relevant national and European media and it contains key information about the following topics: the themes that are open and their expected impacts, list of countries/ funding agencies participating in the call, eligibility and ranking criteria as well as available budget for support in total or an array of themes, the duration of the projects and other specific criteria and related eligibility criteria.

2.4. Principles of the evaluation procedure

In selecting the reviewers and setting up the evaluation procedure, the call secretariat has paid particular attention to the broad-based expertise and qualifications that are needed in order to cover the themes of the call, including scientific, technological and policy expertise. Moreover, that no conflict of interest arises and that the evaluation procedure follows the principles of:

- **Excellence.** Projects selected for funding must demonstrate a high quality in the context of the topics and criteria set out in the call.
- **Transparency.** Funding decisions are based on clearly described rules and procedures and applicants receive adequate feedback on the outcome of the evaluation of their proposals.

¹Koho K.A., A. Andrusaitis, M. Sirola, et al. (2021). The Baltic and North Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, BANOS SRIA 2021. BANOS CSA/D1.5

- **Fairness and impartiality.** All proposals submitted to the call are treated equally. They are evaluated impartially on their merits, irrespective of their origin or the identity of the applicants.
- **Confidentiality.** All proposals and related data, knowledge and documents communicated between call secretariat and reviewers are treated in confidence.
- **Efficiency and speed.** Evaluation and grant preparation are as rapid as possible and commensurate with maintaining the quality of the evaluation.
- **Ethical considerations.** Any proposal that contravenes fundamental ethical principles may be excluded at any time from the process of evaluation, selection and award.

Most of the funding organisations in BANOS Programme have signed the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA, <https://sfdora.org/>). As such, it is not recommended to use journal-based metrics, like Journal Impact Factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist's contributions, or in hiring, promotion, or funding decisions.

All materials handled by the reviewers during the evaluation process shall be destroyed after the completion of the evaluation. The identity of the reviewers participating in the evaluation process is made public after the funding decisions are confirmed on general, non-proposal specific level.

3. Reviewer's work before the panel meeting

Each proposal is to be evaluated remotely via EPSS by at least three reviewers. [optional: Each pre-proposal is to be evaluated remotely via EPSS by at least two reviewers and full proposal by three reviewers.] During the contract negotiation, each reviewer needs to confirm that (s)he is obliged to inform the call secretariat if there is a conflict of interest related to the proposals appointed to her/him. The criteria for conflict of interest are presented in Annex.

Each contracted reviewer receives a unique pass to the BANOS EPSS (website at [specified]) granting access to the relevant proposals. Before the access to the proposals is granted, the reviewer has to agree with (1) confidentiality agreement, (2) reconfirm that there is no conflict of interest related to the proposal that is to be evaluated, (3) assess her/his competence relevant to the respective proposal. If a conflict of interest appears, the reviewer should immediately inform the call secretariat about this. If in any doubt, reviewers are advised to consult the call secretariat ([contact data specified]).

3.1. The evaluation criteria

The reviewers are invited to review the quality of the submitted proposals based on the core evaluation criteria.

3.1.1. Evaluation criteria for pre-proposals

The core evaluation criteria and respective sub-criteria in evaluating the preproposals are:

Relevance of proposal compared to call theme (score 0-5, threshold 4):

- the relevance of the proposed research against the thematic priorities and objectives set forth in the text of the call

Excellence (score 0-5, threshold 3):

- Scientific novelty / originality and innovation of the research goals and objectives: to what extent the proposed work has innovation potential, and is beyond the state of the art (e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches);

Foreseen impact (score 0-5, threshold 3):

- Expected impact of the proposed research to science, society and/or economy, including measures of stakeholder engagement and dissemination.

3.1.2. Evaluation criteria for full proposals

The core evaluation criteria and respective sub-criteria in evaluating the full proposals are:

Scientific and/or technological excellence (score 0-5, threshold 4):

- soundness of concept and quality of objectives, progress beyond the state-of-the-art
- quality and effectiveness of the scientific and/or technological methodology, including interdisciplinary approaches, the quality of open science practices

Impact (score 0-5, threshold 3):

- The expected impact of the proposed research for society and policy
- Efficiency and credibility of plans for stakeholder engagement, including appropriateness of measures for the dissemination and/or exploitation of results, and management of intellectual property

Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management (score 0-5, threshold 3):

- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, including extent to which the resources assigned to the work packages are in line with their objectives and deliverables
- Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management
- Complementarity of the participants and extent to which the consortium as whole brings together the necessary expertise to accomplish the project goals and objectives
- Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants have valid role and adequate resources in the project to fulfil that role.

Total score: 0-15, threshold 11.

3.2. The scoring scale

Numerical evaluation of the proposals is made with scores ranging from 0 to 5 as described below. The use of the whole scale is recommended, i.e. reviewers should not hesitate to score below “3 –good” when appropriate. Both full and half numbers can be used. If proposal is addressing the theme and expected outcomes only partially, the score could be lowered accordingly and relevant comment included.

- 0 – **The proposal fails to address the criterion** under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
- 1 – **Poor.** The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- 2 – **Fair.** While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.
- 3 – **Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.
- 4 – **Very good.** The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.

- 5 – **Excellent.** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

The reviewers should also provide their comments on each of the three criteria as well as an overall impression of the proposal.

3.3. Preparing the evaluation reports in the BANOS EPSS

In order to complete the evaluation in the BANOS EPSS, one has to register into the system. The call secretariat provides the reviewer his/her individual login details required.

After the reviewer has logged into the BANOS EPSS, the evaluation report form and proposals to be evaluated are displayed on the main page. By clicking the proposal title line, the entire content of the proposal can be viewed:

- Description of work as a PDF-file
- Administrative information: Form A (general administrative information), and Form B (information about the applicants)

Easy navigation to different sections is done by clicking on the titles: description of work, administrative information, and evaluation report form. On the main page, also the status of the proposal evaluation reports assigned to him/her can be viewed.

In case of queries related, contact the helpdesk by emailing [address to be provided]

Box 1. Steps of preparing the individual evaluation report in the BANOS EPSS

1. You will receive an invitation by e-mail from the call secretariat with username and password details to log in to the BANOS EPSS.
2. Access the EPSS from the link provided in the invitation e-mail or at [\[web address to be provided\]](#) using your username and password details obtained. On this call specific webpage, you can also browse other useful background documents and information.
3. When in the BANOS EPSS, confirm that you agree with the confidentiality agreement.
4. Open the proposal with the proposal evaluation report form at the very bottom of the page.
5. Fill in your Absence of Conflict of Interest declaration and assess your competence in the field of the proposal.
6. Edit your proposal evaluation report. Please use the 0-5 scale, and give your assessment on each of the three criteria and the overall assessment, supported by explanatory remarks, comments and recommendations. The evaluation session can be interrupted and resumed later at any stage between 4 and 6.
7. Submit your evaluation report once completed.

In case of any technical problem when filling in or submitting the proposal evaluation report form, contact the helpdesk by email: [\[address to be provided\]](#).

Editing and modifying of the individual evaluation reports is possible until the deadline set for the reviewers.

Each section in the BANOS EPSS has guidelines that can be found from the dropdown list: it is recommended to review these guidelines before starting to work on individual evaluation report.

3.4. Preparing the draft consensus evaluation report

After the deadline above, the reviewer assigned as the rapporteur receives access to all individual evaluation reports assigned to him/her for the preparation of the consensus evaluation report. It is advised to focus on strengths and weaknesses of the proposal under each criterion and to avoid general narrative part, to identify and list points of agreement for each criterion on which no or little discussion is needed, and points of divergence on which the discussion should focus on when experts come together during the consensus meeting.

Same steps for the individual evaluation reports (Box 1) should be followed when preparing the consensus evaluation reports.

4. The panel meetings

After the individual evaluation phase has been completed, all reviewers attend a consensus panel meeting (virtual or physical). The panel meeting consists of several consensus meetings among those reviewers who evaluated the same proposal to mutually agree about the scores and comments of the proposal concerned and complete and approve the consensus evaluation report.

The ultimate ranking and priority order within the groups of proposals having equal scores is agreed in a review meeting after all consensus meetings have been completed.

4.1. Consensus meetings

In the consensus meeting the reviewer appointed as the rapporteur briefly presents the proposal and the comments given to it. The proposal is discussed. The discussion is moderated by a member of the call secretariat. The rapporteur makes notes, and afterwards modifies the draft consensus evaluation report accordingly. Thereafter the consensus scores are agreed.

The rapporteur finalises the consensus evaluation report. It is important that the numerical scoring and written statements correspond with each other. Wordings should be precise and appropriate, avoiding emotional expressions and personal tone (such as *I think...*, *according to this reviewer's experience...* etc.).

4.2. The review meeting

After all consensus meetings have been completed, nominated reviewers representing all consensus panels convene to the review meeting. This meeting is chaired by a chairperson appointed by the Call Steering Committee. The main task of the review meeting is to examine and compare the consensus evaluation reports and to confirm consistency of the scores and explanatory statements applied during the consensus meetings. Also, as and when necessary, a new set of scores, or a revision of explanatory statements (but not both!), are proposed. In this process the review meeting produces an evaluation summary report for each proposal. Ultimately the task of the review meeting is to decide about the final ranking order of the proposals on the basis of the total consensus scores assigned to the projects. Within the groups of equally scored proposals, the criteria for ranking are applied in the following order:

- (i) Proposals will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion *scientific and/or technological excellence*.
- (ii) If necessary, any further prioritisation will be based on other appropriate characteristics, to be decided by the panel (e.g. presence of SMEs, international co-operation, public engagement).

Thus, the outcome of the review meeting is a report entailing:

- an evaluation summary report for each proposal, including explanatory statements and scores. Where relevant, any ethical issues and any security considerations are also reported.
- ranked lists of proposals passing all thresholds, along with a final score for each proposal passing the thresholds and the panel recommendations for priority order
- a list of evaluated proposals having failed one or more thresholds
- a list of any proposals having been found ineligible during the evaluation
- a summary of any other recommendations of the panel

In case of voting, single majority rule is followed.

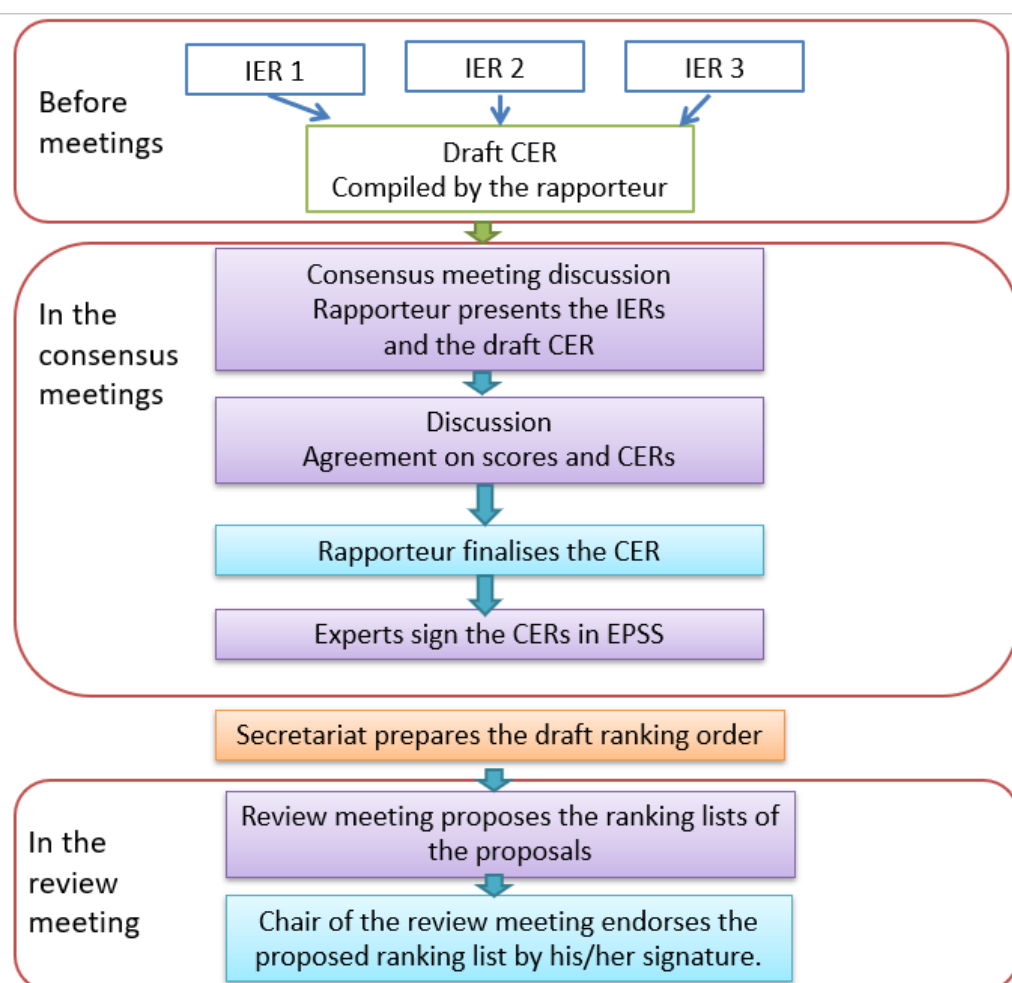


Figure 1. A schematic presentation of the panel's work frame. IER – individual evaluation report, CER – consensus evaluation report, EPSS – Electronic Programme Service System.

The review meeting report is signed by its chair and the reviewers.

5. [Independent observer – include if relevant]

The whole evaluation and decision-making process is monitored by an independent expert appointed by the BANOS Call Steering Committee. The observer participates in the meetings of the Committee as well as in the

panel's consensus and review meetings. The observer may interview individual reviewers, as well as contact the reviewers afterwards in order to get feedback on their opinions concerning the evaluation procedure. Observations and recommendations are summarised in an independent observer's report. The observer will have no conflict of interest and will be experienced with proposals evaluation within the context of EU's framework programmes.

A representative from the call participating funding organisations can be present to observe the evaluation, ranking and selection meetings in the same way as the independent observer.

6. Decision about projects to be funded

The final decision about which projects are recommended to be funded is made by the Call Steering Committee. In its decision, the Steering Committee follows the ranking lists given by the evaluation panel. It will support the selection of projects strictly in priority order following the ranked lists based on the total scores. The available parts of the call budget will be applied to the respective ranking lists and the cut-off points of projects to be funded on both ranking lists determined.

Each project, funded or not, will receive a written evaluation summary report after the decision. Coordinators of the successful proposals will be invited to enter the negotiation phase. The negotiations may include modifications of the project's description of work and/or budget. Thereafter the funding partner organisations will make the decisions which are necessary for mobilising the national funding.

7. Annex The BANOS conflict of interest policy

BANOS conflict of interest policy

Preamble

This policy sets out the conflict of interest principles and procedures of the persons in participating call process (e.g. proposals application, evaluation and decision-making), or any other decision-making situation in the [BANOS] Programme context. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the objectivity and transparency of the overall decision making in [BANOS] Programme and especially in the call process, i.e., to guarantee an equal and fair treatment of the applicants.

This policy is a mutual statement of intent among the members, who agree to make every reasonable effort to fulfil the intents expressed herein. The members of Call Evaluation Panels and possible observers guarantee the impartiality according to this policy in a separate signed declaration.

This policy will come into force on the date of their approval by the [BANOS legal entity] Steering Committee. This policy may be amended or modified by the decision of the [BANOS legal entity] Steering Committee.

Applicability

This policy applies, except as otherwise stated, to every person associated with [BANOS] Programme, its Secretariat or any of its legal organ as a representative of the Steering Committee delegate, observer, staff member or reviewer.

[BANOS] Steering Committee (SC) is composed of at least one representative of member organisations of the [BANOS].

Reviewer is an external science, innovation or policy expert who participates in the call evaluation process and attends to a Call Evaluation Panel.

Call Steering Committee is composed of one delegate from each funding partner organisation (FPO) participating in the call for proposals. It supervises the call and makes decisions concerning the projects to be funded. It also steers the scientific coordination and monitoring of the funded projects.

Call Secretariat is composed of [the staff of the BANOS association and] the representatives of FPOs. It is responsible for the overall organisation of the call for proposals, and it takes care of all local matters in each funding partner organisation.

Call Evaluation Panels consist of scientific or policy experts. The duty of the panels is to evaluate the project proposals submitted to the Call in regards the criteria identified for that call.

Disqualifications

A person shall be **disqualified**, i.e. has a **conflict of interest**

- If s/he, within an any decision-making context, is subject to two coexisting interests that are in a direct conflict with each other
- if s/he, in any way, benefits or will be disfavored from the approval or rejection of a proposal in the call process.
- if his/her impartiality may otherwise be endangered, or if s/he feels that there is a conflict of interest and therefore is disqualified to participate in the call process or decision-making.

A person shall also be disqualified if s/he:

- participates or has been involved in preparation of any proposal being evaluated or submitted under the call
- stands to benefit directly should the proposal be accepted for funding
- has close research collaboration with the applicant
- has been a superior, subordinate or instructor of the applicant during the past three years
- is currently applying for the same post as the applicant
- is a director, or is a member of the board, council or corresponding governing body of an organisation, which has submitted an application to the call
- is in close family relationship with any person representing the applicant organisation in the proposal. A close family relationship is:
 - 1) the spouse or ex-spouse (also de facto), child, grandchild, sibling, parent, grandparent or a person otherwise especially close to the member (e.g. fiancé/e or a close friend), as well as their spouses (also de facto)
 - 2) a sibling of the member's parent or his/her spouse (also de facto), a child of a sibling, or previous spouse (also de facto)
 - 3) a child, grandchild, sibling, parent or grandparent of the member's spouse as well as their spouses (also de facto), a child of a sibling of the member's spouse
 - 4) or a half-relative comparable to the above mentioned.

A person has a ***potential conflict of interest*** if s/he:

- is employed by one of the applicants in a proposal or has been so within the previous three years
- has been involved in a contract or research collaboration with an applicant organisation in the previous three years

In these cases, as well as in any other situation that casts doubt or that could reasonably appear to do so, the disqualification is decided by the Call Steering Committee.

Duty to inform

A person is required to declare any personal interests according to the criteria listed above. It is preferred that a person individually by her/himself will consider hers/his conflict of interest to avoid possible conflicts during the call process. If needed the Call Steering Committee decides on the presence or absence of conflict of interest and the further procedure.

Call process

All cases of (potential) conflict of interest must be notified to the [BANOS] Call Secretariat and the Call Steering Committee as soon as they are revealed.

If a hitherto unsuspected conflict of interest becomes apparent during the call process, a person must announce this immediately to the [BANOS] Call Secretariat and the Call Steering Committee. If the conflict is found to be a disqualifying one, a person must abstain from further activities within the call process. Any comments and scores made earlier within the call process by that person (Reviewer) for the proposal concerned will be discounted.

Other decision making

A person should not participate as a delegate in the [BANOS]/Call Steering Committee meetings in person and cannot vote on any decisions where circumstances of a personal or professional nature can, directly or indirectly, compromise hers/his ability to decide objectively and in accordance with transparency principles.

At each meeting, the Chair shall ask delegates to declare if they perceive any conflict of interest. If a delegate considers herself/himself to be in a situation of potential conflict of interest s/he shall raise the issue with the Chair as soon as possible, who in turn shall inform the SC that a potential conflict of interest has been declared. In such a case, the delegate cannot take part in the discussion and the decision (where relevant) on the specific item of the agenda of the SC meeting to which the conflict of interest relates and, as the case may be, another delegate of the member organisation should vote on behalf of the member. If no other delegate is attending the SC meeting (who does not have a conflict of interest), such a member organisation shall be deemed to abstain from voting.

In order to guarantee the quorum of the decision making and a sufficient national expertise in the [BANOS legal entity] management, the member organisation may in the case of the conflict of interest, appoint a substitute to represent the member in the (Call) Steering Committee or in the Call Secretariat.

If it is established that a delegate has failed to inform the Chair of an existing conflict of interest, the delegate can be held liable for any damages which would follow therefrom.

Annex 4 Guide for BANOS project participants

Guide for BANOS project participants

Please note that this guide may be subject to changes. Modifications are notified to the participants of the active projects. The up-to-date version of this guide is always available at [address to be provided]

Disclaimer

This guide is aimed at assisting project participants of the BANOS projects. It is provided for information purposes only and its contents are not intended to replace consultation of any applicable legal sources or the necessary advice of a legal expert or other, where appropriate. Neither the BANOS call secretariat nor any person acting on its behalf can be held responsible for the use made of these guidance notes.

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1. Getting started

This guide contains information about the responsibilities and obligations of the BANOS project participants. Guidance is given about the applicable rules and procedures, initialising and managing a project, reporting procedures as well as on intellectual property rights and data management.

The guide for participants is updated regularly reflecting developments in legal framework and projects' implementation. List of changes in subsequent versions is as follows:

[data and subject of modification added here when appropriate]

The BANOS projects are co-financed by the funding partner organisations (FPO) participating in the BANOS Programme. Each call can have different configuration of FPO-s, in addition, project participants not receiving funding from any call participating FPO can participate in the projects.

2. Applicable rules and procedures

All project participants follow the common rules for scientific/technological reporting set by BANOS. However, funding of project participants is arranged according to the national rules and respective partners should report accordingly.

In addition to this guide, the following documents provide information and guidance on the applicable rules and procedures (documents or links available on):

- Science Europe 2021. Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.4915861](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4915861)
- [The list will be completed when more detailed information on calls for proposals is known]

In case of the participation of an enterprise or of any other organisation undertaking work within the project that may have implications concerning the application of state aid rules, guidance is provided in:

- Community Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation¹
- EU State Aid Legislation²

3. Starting the project

Communication with the funding partner organisations

Funding for the BANOS projects requires decision making at two levels: in the BANOS Call Steering Committee (CSC) and in the FPOs. Therefore, after the selection of the projects recommended for funding by CSC, the FPOs will contact the respective national participants for agreeing funding conditions. In most cases, request to submit the project proposal and/or other related documents (detailed participant's budget for example) according to the national application procedures applies.

¹ Communication from the Commission — Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation *OJ C 198*, 27.6.2014, p. 1–29

² https://ec.europa.eu/competition-policy/state-aid/legislation_en

Negotiations

The negotiation process before the project starts includes several phases and actors which are involved at different stages of the process. A schematic presentation of the process is given in Figure 1.

Project implementation negotiations: This part of the negotiations includes possible changes to be made to the project's description of work (DoW). The negotiation is initiated by the BANOS call secretariat. In case there are some suggestions for improving the DoW made by the evaluation panel, the CSC or the call secretariat, these requests are communicated to the coordinators and the consortia should consider these carefully. The negotiations concerning the DoW will be carried out via email and the final version uploaded as PDF file to the EPSS. A DoW of each BANOS project is included as an annex to the Project Implementation Agreement (BANOS PIA). After the DoW is approved the coordinator is also requested to insert separately the schedule of deliverables (SoD) to the EPSS. This will be used as the basis for monitoring of the scientific reporting.

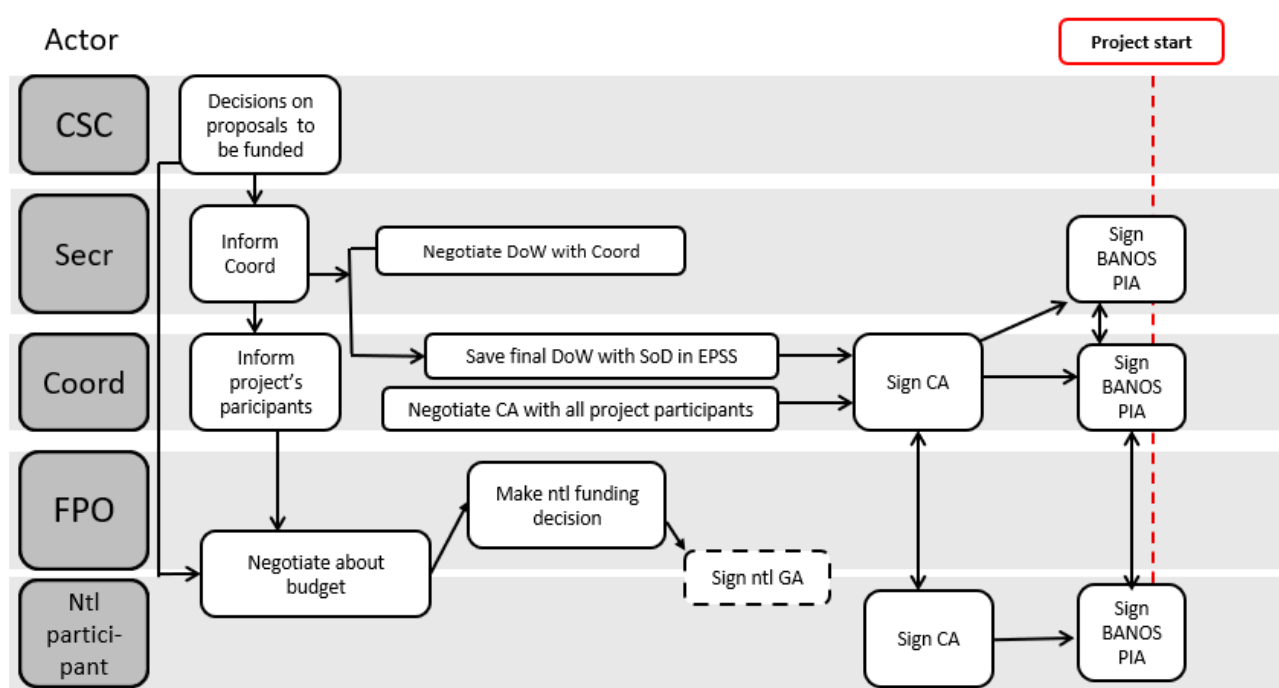


Figure 1. Process for negotiations. (BANOS PIA – project implementation agreement; CA – consortium agreement; DoW – description of work; FPO – funding partner organisation; SoD – schedule of deliverables)

Budget and national grant agreement negotiations: After the CSC has decided which projects are recommended for funding, the FPOs contact the participants in their respective countries. The FPOs may negotiate about changes in the budget or request other relevant information (submission of the proposal to the respective national system, a detailed budget description etc.). The budget negotiations end with national funding decisions and in most cases, concluding a grant agreement.

Consortium agreement

Project consortia are recommended to conclude a consortium agreement to stipulate how various issues that may arise during the project will be handled. Although, the format of the consortium agreement is free, there are several models available (e.g. DESCA www.desca-2020.eu). It must be noted that the consortium agreement must not be in conflict with the BANOS Project Implementation Agreement nor with any of the

national grant agreements. It is mandatory that all the project participants sign the consortium agreement prior to signing the Project Implementation Agreement.

Drafting a consortium agreement may be a time-consuming process where views and legal aspects originating from different national regulations and practices have to be reconciled. Therefore, in order to prevent delays in starting the project, appropriate time and expertise should be secured for the procedure.

4. Contracting procedure

There are two separate contracts or decisions: the BANOS Project Implementation Agreement (BANOS PIA) between all the project participants and the BANOS call secretariat and bilateral grants agreements between individual project participants and the respective funding partner organisations³.

BANOS PIA will be prepared and signed after negotiations have been completed and the coordinator has notified that all the project participants have signed the consortium agreement.

BANOS PIA is concluded between all project participants and the BANOS call secretariat. A model agreement is available on the BANOS website accessible from [\[to be specified\]](#). Project participants become parties of this agreement by signing the agreement [the mode of signature to be specified]. In the agreement, the obligations and responsibilities of the coordinator and project participants towards BANOS call secretariat are laid down.

On the national level, the funded project participants from the participating states are contracted on case by case basis by their funding partner organisations as regards the national contribution and related obligations. The list of FPO contact points is available for further information concerning the national contracting requirements on the BANOS call website.

5. Project management

The management of a BANOS project is recommended to be included as a separate work package in the project's DoW. The organisation and management procedures binding for all project participants must be described in the consortium agreement. A project needs to create its internal organisation which includes the management bodies and possible committees and/or working groups. These include also mechanisms to secure stakeholders' involvement in the project governance and knowledge transfer, as appropriate. In order to achieve smooth implementation of a project, the consortium must establish a proper communication system for the full duration of the project.

Project coordinator

The project coordinator is the legal entity represented by its principal investigator (PI) which has an overall responsibility for the respective BANOS project. This includes the project management tasks towards other project participants and acting as the contact point between the BANOS call secretariat and the project participants.

The project coordinator

³ Not all FPOs are concluding grant agreement but it could be replaced by eg. official decision

- Coordinates all necessary steps for initialising the project including negotiations concerning the implementation as well as preparations and signing of the consortium agreement
- Coordinates the implementation of the project work according to the project's DoW
- Leads on the everyday management of the project and tasks established in the DoW and/or decided during the project implementation by the consortium
- Is responsible for developing and implementing an efficient communications action plan from the start of the project within the consortium, with the BANOS call secretariat, with the results' end-users, other stakeholders and general public
- Monitors project participant' compliance with their obligations and approves the deliverables produced by the project before transmitting these to the BANOS call secretariat in EPSS
- Reports regularly to the project participants and to the BANOS call secretariat about the progress of the project in accordance with the reporting requirements set in the Project Implementation Agreement

The project coordinators' tasks are included to the BANOS PIA.

6. Reporting obligations by project participants

The project cycle is divided into reporting periods of [x] months. Projects with duration of less than or equal to 18 months have only one reporting period. The project has to submit the periodic and final reports to the BANOS via the EPSS within 60 days of the end of each reporting period. Information on scientific and/or technological progress of the project is compiled on the basis of contributions from the project participants and integrated within a single report prepared and submitted by the project coordinator (Figure 2). Each report consists of the scientific and/or technological report and report on performance indicators. The financial reporting should be submitted by each partner to the respective FPO according to their rules and deadlines.

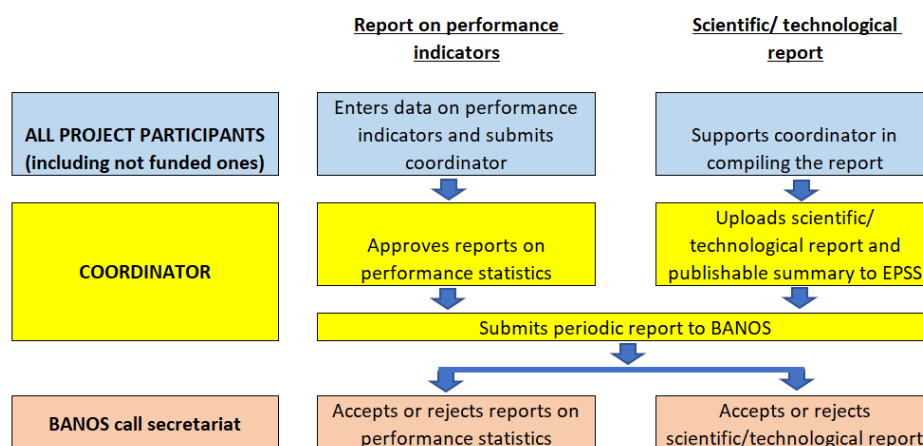


Figure 2. Flow-chart of the report submission and its acceptance process.

7. Scientific and/or technological reporting

Scientific and/or technological reporting of each project follows the schedule of deliverables which is an integral part of the project's DoW. Besides identifying the deliverables (including the periodic and final reports), the schedule also lists their submission deadlines, responsible project participant, the relevant work package, type of deliverables and their level of publicity. Types of deliverables and their minimum proof of

delivery are identified in the table below. Deliverables are reported through the EPSS in accordance with the procedures and models set therein.

Types of deliverables and their minimum proof of delivery

Nature of deliverable	Minimum proof of delivery ⁴
RE = report	Full report uploaded to the EPSS as a pdf file. In the case of periodic and/or final report (marked as RE/PR and RE/FR, accordingly), also (a) the project indicators are updated; (b) publishable summary is uploaded as separate file.
SP = scientific publication	Manuscript submitted to publisher. Abstract and manuscript uploaded to the EPSS as a pdf file.
PP = popular publication	Manuscript submitted to publisher. Abstract and manuscript uploaded to the EPSS as pdf file.
DB = data base or data set	Data set placed in a permanent repository of public domain. Metadata uploaded to the EPSS as a spreadsheet file of predefined structure.
MO = model	Brief annotation describing model functionality is inserted to the EPSS.
PT = prototype (programme or device including prototype decision support tools). <i>A prototype is intended as a man-made object which shows the scientific and technical feasibility of a concept.</i>	Brief annotation describing the prototype is inserted to the EPSS. For the web-based prototypes URL and, if necessary, a pass is provided.
DE = demonstrator. <i>A demonstrator goes beyond the prototype because it is intended to show the full feasibility of the concept at the real scale of commercialisation.</i>	Brief annotation describing the demonstrator is inserted to the EPSS. For the web-based demonstrators URL and, if necessary, a pass is provided.
TE = training/ educational material (including web-based)	Brief annotation describing the educational material is inserted to the EPSS. For web-based educational materials URL and, if necessary, a pass is provided.
ER = event report	Brief annotation describing the purpose of event, its programme, outcome, venue, time and participants is inserted to the EPSS.
OT = other	Brief annotation describing the deliverable is inserted to the EPSS.

Project teams are encouraged to submit summary information about each deliverable and upload the deliverable in the EPSS as soon as the work on it has been finished in accordance with the project's schedule of deliverables. Information on each deliverable is submitted by the responsible partner identified in the project's description of work.

⁴ BANOS is entitled to request further proof of existence of deliverables

Coordinator's duties are: (1) to assign the deliverables to the responsible partners in EPSS, and (2) to review and, if acceptable, approve each of the deliverables. In case a deliverable is disapproved by the coordinator, it is returned to the responsible partner for necessary modification. A deliverable accepted by the coordinator is closed for further modification and opened for review by the BANOS call secretariat. The project coordinator is notified accordingly. If necessary, a deliverable may be returned for corrections and resubmission.

The periodic scientific and/or technological reports shall summarise briefly the progress of project implementation during the reporting period in the context of the original DoW and the schedule of deliverables. It shall recite the main deliverables produced and milestones passed, discuss issues encountered, and the solutions found. If any deviations from the DoW or schedule of deliverables have happened or are expected to happen in the next reporting period, these shall be explained in the periodic report(s).

The final report focuses on the outcomes of the project with an emphasis on the impact of its results. The final report shall contain a chapter covering the wider societal implications of the project, including gender equality actions, ethical issues (if appropriate), efforts to involve other actors, and spread awareness as well as the plan for the use and dissemination of foreground.

The recommended headings for the periodic and final reports

Report	Heading	Explanation
PR and FR	Title page	
PR and FR	Scientific and/or technological results achieved during the reporting period	Subdivided into chapters in accordance with the project work packages.
only FR	Summary of the produced intellectual property, plan for the use and dissemination and measures taken for its protection	See chapter 11 for more explanations.
only FR	Further research needed in the field	
PR and FR	Summary of the promoted an effective science-policy interface to ensure optimal take up of research results.	Corresponding with the relevant entries of performance indicators 11 and 13.
PR and FR	Overview of the collaboration with relevant research programmes and the science communities on international level	Corresponding with the relevant entries of performance indicator 6. See chapter 8 for more explanations.
PR and FR	Progress in comparison with the original research plan and the schedule of deliverables	
only FR	Wider societal implications.	Please describe the implications the project results have on society in general. Also gender equality actions, ethical issues (if appropriate) and efforts to involve

		other actors and spread awareness should be covered in this chapter.
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It is recommended to keep both periodic and final reports concise.

An approval of all deliverables scheduled for the respective period is a precondition for the approval of the project specific periodic reports.

The **publishable summaries** of the periodic and final scientific and/or technological reports are uploaded to the EPSS as a separate file. Once reviewed and accepted these are made publicly available on the BANOS website.

The length of the publishable summary should not exceed two pages for periodic report and six pages for final report. In support of the narrative, figures, illustrations and photographs may be included, accompanied with captions and the mandatory credits necessary for posting these online.

The publishable summary of the periodic report should include the following headings:

- Brief description of the project's overall goal(s) and expected final results (one brief paragraph only)
- Work performed since the beginning of the project/ since last reporting period / over the course of the full implementation phase of the project
- Main results achieved during the reporting period, including potential impact and use envisaged by the results noted (including the socio-economic impact and the wider societal implications).

The final publishable summary should include the following headings:

- Description of the project's goals and results as set at the beginning of the project cycle
- Work performed over the course of the full implementation phase of the project
- A summary of the main results achieved during the project, including impact and use 1) substantiated and 2) envisaged by the results outlined (including the socio-economic impact and the wider societal implications).

8. Report on performance indicators

Throughout the lifetime of the project, the consortia must collect and record a number of key performance indicators listed in the table below. Each participant should insert the relevant statistics in the EPSS when consortium is compiling the project's periodic or final report and submit it to the coordinator for approval. The duty of the coordinator is to validate these data (for example, take measures for avoiding double-counting) and submit the report on performance indicators to the BANOS call secretariat as part of the report. The information on these performance indicators is collected by the BANOS call secretariat in order to assess programme's progress towards its objectives.

The BANOS academic and societal performance indicators, including both numeric and narrative indicators. The societal indicators are further sorted into policy, society, innovation and overarching performance indicators.

Academic performance indicators

1. Number of PhD students and the number of post-docs funded by the project
2. Number of research staff involved (fully or partly funded or contributed as in kind) by seniority and gender.
3. List of international and national scientific events organized by the project
4. Number of attendances at international and national scientific events with presentations (oral/poster)
5. Number of academic training courses organized by the project and number of persons participating
6. List of co-operation activities involving project partners from other European marine basins or internationally
7. List of peer-reviewed publications arising from the project
8. List of datasets to openly accessible common databases arising from the project
9. List of known R&I project collaborations that have verifiably utilized the results of BANOS project
10. List of doctoral theses defended (career advancement)

Societal performance indicators

Policy related performance indicators

11. List of suggestions for designing, implementing and evaluating the efficacy of relevant public policies and governance on international, European, the regional sea basin or national level originating from the work of the project. (The list will indicate what has been suggested to whom, when this took place and in which form)
12. List of stakeholder committees, e.g. EC, ICES, HELCOM, OSPAR, VASAB etc., the scientists working in the project are members or observers in. (the list will contain the name of the committee and who in the consortium is involved in it)
13. List of occasions the project has verifiably contributed to the development and implementation of 'fit-to-purpose' regulations, policies and management practices on international, European, the Baltic Sea region or national level aimed at safeguarding the sustainable use of ecosystem's goods and services, in particular input to HELCOM and OSPAR strategies, EU Integrated Maritime Policy, EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and its implementation.

Society related performance indicators

14. Number of interviews given to media by the project consortium members. (the content of the interviews should have a verifiable relation to the funded project)
15. List of project activities related to citizen science and enhancing ocean literacy (examples will be provided in the detailed instructions based on strategy developed in BANOS D4.8 Measures stimulating citizen science).
16. Number of popular science papers and books produced by the project.
17. Number of multi-media products produced, and TV episodes featured by project consortium members (both should have a verifiable relation to the funded project)

*Innovation related performance indicators**

18. List of industrial internships involving PhD students, postdocs and early career scientists involved in the project (the internship should have a verifiable link to the funded project)

Other cross-cutting performance societal indicators.

19. List of international, national and regional (non-academic) stakeholder events, and outreach and dissemination activities organized by the project consortium members (with a verifiable relation to the funded project).

20. List of non-academic training courses and education activities organized by the project consortium members related to professional skills development (with a verifiable relation to the funded project). In detailed instructions, specific examples will be provided.

9. Amendments

In principle, all major requests for amendments need to be addressed in writing to the BANOS call secretariat in advance and approved jointly by the Call Steering Committee and the respective FPO.

Changes in the consortium composition

The coordinator and any other project partner may, on well-grounded reasons, be changed in the course of the project implementation.

Requests for termination of the participation of one or more partners shall include the reasons for requesting the termination, the consortium's proposal for reallocation of the tasks, the proposed date on which the termination shall take effect, a letter containing the opinion of the partner whose participation is requested to be terminated and the reports and deliverables relating to the work carried out by this partner.

Adding a new partner is possible only in case if the new partner is replacing the terminated one within same FPO funding and strictly depends on the decision of the respective FPO.

Change of the person in charge (PI) or of the other contact persons is in the partner's competence. However, in case of PI the partner has to ensure that the same level of competence as described in the project application is maintained.

Changing the description of work

In well justified cases, changes in the DoW, such as changes in work packages, the schedule of deliverables or tasks, may be initiated throughout the duration of project implementation upon coordinator's written request to the BANOS call secretariat. The requested changes are effective exclusively upon a written, joint approval by the BANOS call secretariat and the relevant FPO.

Requests for changing the DoW should be made in a written format in a request letter that includes the following matters:

- the change requested
- justification for the change

- implications for achieving the promised results and deliverables
- any other matter relevant for the change request

The request letter is signed and submitted by the coordinator. Depending on the size and impact of the change, the decision is made either by the respective FPO and/or the Call Steering Committee. No retroactive change requests are accepted.

No permission is needed for minor changes in the DoW, such as timing of various activities within the planned year etc. If there is uncertainty about the change being minor or major, the coordinator is advised to consult the BANOS call secretariat.

Extension of the duration of the project

Extending the project duration is allowed only under exceptional circumstances and may be requested only for a very well justified reason. A written request has to be submitted to the Call Steering Committee as well as to the respective FPOs well in advance of the termination of the duration of the project. Any related documents in support of this request shall be appended.

10. Dissemination of results and acknowledgements

Results and outputs generated in the project shall be made available to the research community with as few restrictions as possible. This includes storing the original data in common data bases such as SeaDataNet, Pangea, ICES and publishing the research results as far as possible in 'Open Access' literature. Existing standards for data collection and management shall be used.

All data shall be accompanied by contextual information or documentation (metadata) to provide a secondary user with any necessary detail on the origin or manipulation of the data in order to prevent any misuse, misinterpretation or confusion.

Mandatory BANOS branding of the projects

It is mandatory to include BANOS as part of the project's acronym every time the project is referred to. In other words, the names of the projects receiving funding through BANOS calls are referred to both orally and in writing as for example BANOS DIVINE project etc.

All scientific and/or technological papers produced by BANOS projects shall include the following acknowledgement:

"This work resulted from the BANOS xxx project was supported by BANOS Programme, funded jointly by the [list of all respective funding partner organisations]."

Unless requested otherwise, any publicity, including pro-active presence/display at a conference or seminar or any type of information or promotional material (brochure, leaflet, poster, presentation etc.), must note the following:

"[BANOS xxx project has received funding from BANOS Programme, funded jointly by [list of all respective funding partner organisations]."

Use the BANOS logo (downloadable from the homepage) in all BONUS project related materials and presentations.

The projects are required to allocate resources in their travel budgets to participate in the events organised by BANOS, e.g. annual conferences and specific dissemination action and events.

For each project financed under BANOS Programme, at least the following information is published on the respective website:

- a) the name and identification of the project or grant
- b) the size of the grant and total value of the project
- c) an abstract of the envisaged work
- d) the name and location of the project participants
- e) project fact sheet regularly updated during the life of the project to give account of the progress and achieved results
- f) publishable summaries of the results and work undertaken.

11. Intellectual property rights, use and access to results and data

Results and new Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) resulting from projects funded through the BANOS calls will be owned by the project partners according to the conditions stated in the Consortium Agreement. At the project level, IPR will be considered according to the national rules. Project participants should consult the individual FPO any queries arise.

Data obtained during the project must be collected, stored and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679). Researchers are encouraged to actively exploit the results of the research project and make them available for use, whether for commercial gain or not, for public benefit to be obtained from the knowledge created. It is expected that the publication of results should be carried out in accordance with BANOS Strategy on Open Access⁵, BANOS Programme's Data strategy and mechanisms for its implementation⁶ and the Science Europe's 'Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management'⁷.

12. EPSS guidelines during project management

Proposals selected for funding are transferred to the section 'Project management' in the EPSS and coordinator and partners can access and modify the data.

The section includes the following headings:

- Project data and nominating other contact persons
- Description of work
- Deliverables
- Consortium agreement

⁵ In 'Wallberg, P., L. Nordin, V. Hylén, S. Johansson (2020). Report proposing programme-level strategies supporting firm establishing of 'open science''

⁶ In 'Lescroart J., L. Van Maldeghem, G. Maudire, K. Exter, F. ten Hoopen (2020). Report proposing new programme's data strategy and mechanisms for its implementation.'

⁷ Science Europe 2021. Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management. DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.4915861](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4915861)

Nominating other contact persons

Each participant can assign 'other' contact persons in addition to the PI to manage a partner's data. These other contact persons can be scientific or administrative experts, can be also changed according to the project needs by the PI.

The other contact persons have the following rights:

- Inserting the deliverables (if the participant is nominated as responsible partner) and submitting them to the coordinator
- Viewing the deliverables of the project
- Inserting the performance indicators on behalf of partner

The other contact persons of the coordinating institution have the following rights:

- Uploading the description of work into the EPSS
- Inserting and editing the schedule of deliverables (negotiation stage only)
- Assigning responsible partners for deliverables reporting
- Inserting, editing and submitting report on performance indicators to the coordinator

Description of work

This section is for uploading and storing the DOW. The DoW negotiations as well as amendments will take place outside of EPSS. When the process is finished, the coordinator will upload the DoW file and submit it to BANOS.

Amending the DoW should be requested as described in chapter 9 of this guide. If amendments are accepted, the DoW section will be opened for coordinator to replace the previous version with the updated version and submit it.

Deliverables

This section is for uploading the Schedule of Deliverables (SoD) during the negotiation stage and reporting the deliverables (including the periodic and final reports) during the implementation stage.

When the negotiations on the DoW has been finalised and final version uploaded to the EPSS, the coordinator enters the SoD (generally as separate chapter in the DoW) into the EPSS and submits it. Changing the SoD in the EPSS is not possible by the project coordinator after the BANOS PIA has been signed. If changes are needed, the project coordinator describes the changes in the request to the BANOS call secretariat via e-mail and the SoD is modified by the secretariat if the request is approved.

During the implementation stage, the deliverables are reported according to the SoD.

First, the project coordinator should assign a responsible participant to each deliverable (under *Assign the partners responsible for deliverables*). The PI as well as the other contact person(s) of this participant will get an access to the deliverables uploading interface in the EPSS.

Uploaded files should be in .PDF format, except for the deliverable type DB (database) when a metadata description in a form of specifically formatted Excel worksheet can be uploaded. For deliverables RE (report), RE/SP (report/ scientific publication), RE/PP (report/ popular publication), RE/PR (report / periodic report), RE/FR (report/ final report), SP (scientific publication), PP (popular publication) and ER (event report) the full

deliverables shall be uploaded mandatorily; for deliverables MO (model), PT (prototype), DE (demonstrator), TE (training event) and OT (other) a brief report is expected as a proof of delivery.

Each deliverable is first inserted and submitted, then approved by the project coordinator (and only coordinator; the other contact persons of the coordinating participant cannot approve the deliverables) and forwarded to the BANOS call secretariat for accepting. Instead of approving, the project coordinator can send the deliverable back to the responsible partner for further improvement. Similarly, the BANOS call secretariat can reject the deliverable and send it back for further improvement.

Special case for submitting the periodic reports.

Submitting the periodic reports requires input from all the project participants (Figure 2):

- All participants should submit the report on performance indicators to the coordinator.
- Coordinator should approve the summary report on performance indicators, insert the scientific/technological report and the publishable summary to it and submit the periodic report.

It is important to remember that approval / sending the report to the BANOS call secretariat is possible only if

- 1) all deliverables within the reporting period have been approved by the coordinator and sent to BANOS call secretariat for accepting;
- 2) both parts of the reporting (performance indicators and scientific/technological reporting) are complete.

Consortium agreement

According to the Article 1 of the BANOS PIA, the project participants should conclude a consortium agreement (CA) regarding the internal organisation of the Consortium prior to the signature of the BANOS PIA. In this section, coordinator confirms that the CA has been signed by all participants and enters the date.