

# **CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS UNDER AN ACTION TO SUPPORT NATIONAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

NSRF 2021 - 2027

MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION





# CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST 2023

The General Secretariat for Research and Innovation launches a **call for expression of interest** with the aim of collecting proposals submitted by National Research Infrastructures (RIs), to be used for the update of the Multiannual Budgeting Plan (MBP) for Research Infrastructures 2014-2020 and the development of the National Roadmap for 2021-2027 Programming Period.

Specifically, this Call aims to:

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- 1. support those MBP 2014-2020-funded RIs that have completed the preparatory phase of development and are about to transition into full operation,
- 2. further strengthen those MBP 2014-2020-funded RIs that need to complete the preparatory phase of their operation,
- 3. select a limited number of new RIs to be supported during the preparatory phase of their operation, if additional needs emerge in areas covered by the National Smart Specialization Strategy 2021-2027, as reflected in the thematic priorities highlighted by the entrepreneurial discovery process of the 2021-27 Programming Period.

It is pointed out that submission of proposals under this call does not constitute a funding application; instead, its goal is to contribute to developing the RI Roadmap for the 2021-2027 programming period. The Research Infrastructures that will be included in the Roadmap will be invited to submit funding proposals in a future call under the "Competitiveness 2021-2027" OP.

In total the maximum number of RIs that will be included in the in the RI Roadmap 2021-2027, will not exceed 20.

Proposals submitted under this call must take into account the fact that duration of the projects cannot exceed 4 years. Maximum public spending for the full operation phase of RIs can amount to € 8 million for groupings of existing RIs (under the Multiannual Budgeting Plan 2014-2020). Public spending for mature¹ existing infrastructures cannot exceed € 6 million, and public spending for new or existing infrastructures that have not reached maturity yet can amount to € 4 million.

The participation of new partners in the RIs is permitted under the condition that it demonstrates a significant increase in the services provided of the <u>mature RIs</u> and only when it does not affect the original goal and nature of the RI involved.

Research Infrastructures that result from the breakdown of an existing RI, under the 2014-2020 MBP, can only submit proposals for the preparatory phase of this Call.

It is pointed out that, upon completion of three years of project implementation, all the Research Infrastructures for their performance progress will be evaluated based on specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

The Research Infrastructures that will achieve good performances in the above assessment could receive an additional funding equal to 15% of the approved public expenditure link with concrete deliverables.

In this case, the total approved budget of the proposals will include the additional 15%, the payment of which will be linked with concrete additional workload and deliverables, that will be implemented in parallel with the rest of the approved workload during the fourth, and final year of the project's timeframe, and after the positive evaluation of their project based on the obligatory KPIs mentioned.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For clarification see Supporting Document, "Assessment of NRIs in Greece2014-2020", (see: <a href="https://gsri.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Support-to-Greece-for-policies-developing-research-infrastructures-and-the-RI-ecosystem.pdf">https://gsri.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Support-to-Greece-for-policies-developing-research-infrastructures-and-the-RI-ecosystem.pdf</a>)





Based on the above, during the submission of the proposals and under the relevant section that describes the workload and the budget breakdown of the activities planned, it must be included a discrete section containing the description of the additional workload that will be undertaken after a possible positive evaluation and award of an additional 15% in addition to the above set limits of maximum public expenditure per category of research infrastructure.

In the Table below you can find the 5 obligatory performance indicators (Key Performance Indicators-KPIs):

## Table of obligatory KPIs for NRIs 2021-2027

Category	Indicator(s)	Detailed indicators
Research Infrastructure usage	Usage of the NRI	<ul> <li>For NRIs providing access to facilities/equipment:         <ul> <li>Number of requests for use received and granted.</li> <li>Total annual usage hours by users external to NRI consortium partners as % of total available usage hours.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Broken down by academic users, business users (and other user types depending on the NRI) and whether Greek or internationally located.</li> <li>For resource/data NRIs one or more of the following:         <ul> <li>number of registered users of collections or data services,</li> <li>Number of downloads of datasets or digital resources.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Training and education	Number of students using and being trained at the NRI	Broken down by academic users, business users (and other user types depending on the NRI) and whether Greek or internationally located.  Number of masters and PhD students who have been trained at or performed some of their studies/research at the NRI. Each student should only be counted once per year (not per access). The indicator can also further quantified by the number of training hours at the NRI provided (per student).  Data should be broken down by:  Masters / PHD / others (e.g. short courses for industrial researchers).  Distinguishing between students funded/hosted by NRI consortium partners and external to NRI students  by nationality (Greek or international).
Income	Income generated by the NRI additional to ERDF grant	Total income generated broken down by source:  • grant (e.g. Horizon Europe, other national or regional programmes, etc.),  • charitable donation,  • payment for services provided  • intellectual property licence payments, etc.),





Category	Indicator(s)	Detailed indicators
		others (to specify).
		By type of organisation providing the funding: public, private, NGO, etc. Where funding is provided by business, categorise by the relevant S3 priority.
		By share of income from Greece, other EU Member States', EU level programmes (Horizon Europe, etc.) or non-EU countries.
Publications	Number of publications acknowledging use/services provided by	Number of publications based on research performed using facilities and (digital) resources provided by the NRI.
	the NRI	Distinguishing between publications authored by researchers of the NRI consortium partners and external researchers.
		Over time this indicator can be further refined, e.g. to track the percentage of open access publications, the percentage of publications in the top (10%) cited publications in the same field and the percentage of publications co-published with industry.
Open Science	Number of publicly accessible datasets used externally	Number of data sets produced as a result of researchers using the NRI that are subsequently accessed by other users.
	externally	For date NRIs, number of datasets (digital objects), metadata, software, etc. made available to users,
		For NRIs that do not yet have publicly accessible datasets, alternative indicators may be used that measure progress towards making open research data available.

Without prejudices to the obligatory KPIs above all National Research Infrastructures are strongly advised to develop, define, and utilize an extra set of KPIs relevant to their nature and pertinent to their objectives on which they want their performance to be assessed and similarly indicate baselines and targets.

We recommend that each NRI adopts a limited number of KPIs, and not more than 10 KPIs.

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These additional indicators can be drowned from the Figure below which describes the NRI Performance reporting framework taken from the PSF Country Report:





Maturity of governance structure and management procedures

Quality of user access policy

Strategic outlook: uniqueness and alignment with national strategy

European collaboration

Impact on research excellence (including training of researchers)

Impact on innovation (on one or more S3 priorites)

## **Eligibility to participate:**

The following are eligible to participate:

- A) RI covered by the Multiannual Budgeting Plan (MBP) 2014-2020;
- B) New RIs proposed in the following thematic priority areas:
  - Agri-food Sector
  - Bioscience, Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals
  - Sustainable Energy
  - Materials, Constructions & Manufacturing
  - Digital Technologies
  - Transport & Logistics

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- Tourism, Culture & Creative Industry
- Environment & Circular Economy

In order to enhance the outreach, international visibility and expected impact on society and the economy, as well as facilitate users, it is recommended that interested parties pursue **synergies and collaborations** among RIs, in the context of one or more priority areas, in order to develop interdisciplinary approaches (e.g. Agri-food Sector and Biosciences, Environment, Energy and Transport etc.). It must be pointed out that the unique nature of each individual RI at the national level will be of primary importance during evaluation.

The selection procedure for proposals submitted under this call will apply all criteria proposed by the European Commission Policy Support Facility (PSF) in the Final Report on the Review of the 28 Research Infrastructures covered by the Multiannual Budgeting Plan 2014-2020. The Report is available at: <a href="https://gsri.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Support-to-Greece-for-policies-developing-research-infrastructures-and-the-RI-ecosystem.pdf">https://gsri.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Support-to-Greece-for-policies-developing-research-infrastructures-and-the-RI-ecosystem.pdf</a>. Adhesion to Open Science principles and application of the FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) criteria constitute conditions for strengthening RIs.





The proposal selection procedure will consist in two successive phases:

A. During the **first phase** candidates are invited to submit proposal summaries comprising the strategic goals of the RI, the organizations to be involved and the personnel required, their maturity level (Full Operation or Preparatory Development Phase), anticipated users and the expected impact on society and the economy, as well as an indicative budget. New RIs or <u>Research Infrastructures that result from the breakdown of an existing RI, under the 2014-2020</u> MBP, can only submit proposals for the preparatory phase of this Call.

During this phase, relevance with the Research Infrastructure *definition*<sup>1</sup>, as well as alignment with the Smart Specialization Strategy 2021-2027, constitute criteria for the acceptance/rejection of submitted proposals. Proposals will then be evaluated based on **scientific and technological excellence**; on their **unique nature** for Greece; on the expected impact for Greece; on the quality, range and necessity of their **service provision to users**, as well as the potential number of users, both in the academic and scientific communities, in social and policy planning organisations and, particularly, in the private sector and the productive sectors at large; and, finally, on the long range operational and organizational **sustainability**.

Specifically, proposals will be assessed in terms of the following, based on the Policy Support study recommendations:

- significance of the RI involved in the promotion of science at the national level, namely its contribution to supporting research and innovation in the priority thematic areas under the National Smart Specialization Strategy, as well as existence of alternative approaches at the national level (it will be an asset if the proposal can demonstrate the development of a unique/scientifically pioneering RI at national level). The level of maturity and its international networking will also be taken into account.
- existence of a concrete list of services offered to different users (scientific/business community, state
  agencies, etc.). The services must be inclusive for the user, which may include an interdisciplinary scientific
  approach. The proposal must demonstrate a concrete quality concept of the expected changes and what that
  will entail operationally to succeed it. The projected number of potential users (internal users from the
  consortium itself and external users broken down by user type) and the strategy to attract new users must
  also be estimated.
- submission of an indicative budget based on the RI maturity level.

B. After conclusion of the first evaluation phase, successful proposals will be invited, for the **second phase**, to submit full proposals comprising a 4-year financing/development plan and describing in detail the governance scheme, user access policy, development strategy, international affiliations (e.g. European ESFRI infrastructures, other European Research Infrastructures, international organizations, etc.), as well as the requested budget and its justification.

The second phase will assess the following:

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 RI Governance and Management. Proposals should comprise a clear and operationally effective governance scheme that will describe the appropriate organizational structure and the necessary procedures for the smooth operation of the E.Y., the offer of quality services and, in general, the implementation of the proposal.

Aspects under evaluation include the following:





- the credibility of the RI legal status<sup>2</sup> in that it guarantees a central/single access point for users, as well as a central/cohesive financial management, the procurement procedures and the quality assurance plan in place for the services etc.;
- the composition and expertise of the RI management team (including the technical personnel responsible for facilities and equipment), the Human Recourses needs analysis as well as the in situ strategy to attract the new personnel;
- governance bodies and strategic planning processes (international advisory panels, interdisciplinary approaches, user involvement in the RI strategic choices, etc.).
- The performance indicators proposed, both qualitative and quantitative, for the management and monitoring of the NRI.
- **RI Operation / Policy and Quality of Access.** Proposals must include a description and justification of the envisaged user access policy and the evaluation procedure for access requests.

# More specifically, they must comprise:

- a concrete description of the conditions for access (who, when and which type of access is provided), the procedures for request submission and evaluation and the evaluation criteria (applying criteria of excellence or offering broad access, or a mixture of both);
- the costing and pricing policy (cost/price of access to the various services including by user type);
- any access restrictions to external users (from the scientific or/and the productive sectors) based on the "capacity" of the RI and the potential number of users;
- the level of digitalization and electronic equipment including relative costs in the budget and for ensuring the necessary access to HPC/cloud services (e.g. via GRNET);
- a data management strategy and evidence of applying the principles of Open Science and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable), as well as ensuring interoperability with other national and European RIs and with ESFRI infrastructures); To be noted that Open Science, in addition to open access practices, data management, FAIR criteria, establishing incentives through the evaluation of research and researchers, etc., include actions for citizens engagement in Science and awareness in the research process.
- ethics and gender equality aspects and plan to combat discrimination.
- Finally, it must be underlined that in the electronic submission platform there are fields to be filled with all the major equipment of the NRI, existing and planned.
- Outward orientation / International Affiliations. The RI must demonstrate a potential to become an internationally recognized facility conducting high-quality research which could attract users from the wider region and beyond. Aspects under evaluation include the following:
  - significance of the proposed RI for science at the European and international level, and existence of any competitive infrastructures;

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The legal form of R.I. is determined. (informal consortium or legal entity), as well as the coordinating body of the R.I.

- whether the proposal contributes to an internationally unique/leading RI and strengthens the position of Greece globally;
- level of alignment with the long-term strategy in the context of the international research landscape (Multiannual Plan for RIs, Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe, ESFRI, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), etc.).
- Viability. The scientific and financial viability of the infrastructure must be documented in a concrete viability
  plan comprising the various sources of funding and income, based on the scope of its operation and the
  services to be offered.

Aspects under evaluation include the following:

- the quality and feasibility of the 4-year RI financial/development plan describing the ability of participants to cover part of the costs, the plans to attract additional public funding or generate income through economic activities, the envisaged use and capacity of the RI, as well as the costing of services provided to users;
- the suitability and justification of the requested public funding.
- Proof of suitability of then organizational and operational structure of the NRI (which may include the establishment of a new legal entity) so as to ascertain the sustainability of NRI's operation in the long run.

# Expected impact

- Expected impact of services provided by the RI to users from the research community in the thematic area
  of its specialization (by type of service, including training/education) with the purpose of achieving
  scientific excellence in Greece;
- Expected impact of services provided by the RI in other thematic areas beyond its field of specialization (through interdisciplinary and collaborative activities);
- Expected impact from the uptake/reuse of RI-generated data from third parties (in addition to the participants);
- Expected impact of services provided by the RI to users from the business sector, especially on the specific
   Smart Specialization Strategy priority areas;
- Expected impact of services provided by the RI to other users (public sector, education bodies, the civil society, public awareness/information actions).
- Maturity. In order to strengthen the Full Operation Phase, the infrastructure must have the basic equipment,
  the appropriate personnel and know-how required for its efficient operation; the RI must also document
  efficient use of any previous funding from national or European sources. In particular, the existence of a critical
  mass of partners for its efficient operation should be documented. and their positive contribution in the
  production of quality and inclusive services.

The total public expenditure of the Action is 120 M euros.

The proposals will be submitted in English on the digital platform of the General Secretariat of Information Systems and Digital Governance, which was specially configured for the needs of the General Secretariat of Research and Innovation under the link: <a href="https://webapps.gsis.gr/dsae/researchinfrastructures">https://webapps.gsis.gr/dsae/researchinfrastructures</a>.

The evaluation will be carried out by international experts.





Further information on the goals of the undertaking and on the procedures for expression of interest, and for proposal submission and evaluation aimed at developing the National Roadmap 2021-2027 are provided on the detailed background document below.

<sup>1</sup> According to Communication from the Commission "Framework for state aid for research, development and innovation", C(2022) 7388 final/19-10-2022, «research infrastructure» means facilities, resources and related services that are used by the scientific community to conduct research in their respective fields and covers scientific equipment or set of instruments, knowledge-based resources such as collections, archives or structured scientific information, enabling information and communication technology-based infrastructures such as grid, computing, software and communication, or any other entity of a unique nature essential to conduct research. Such infrastructures may be "single-sited" or "distributed" (an organized set of resources).





#### **NATIONAL RTDI INFRASTRUCTURES**

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENT**

#### Introduction

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Research Infrastructures (RIs) constitute an essential component of the research system in each country, of the European Research Area (ERA) and of the global innovation system. Research infrastructures are high on the EU agenda, with a specific Action to "Strengthen sustainability, accessibility and resilience of research infrastructures in the ERA" –in which Greece is a participant– included in the new ERA policy agenda 2022-2024. As pointed out in the ESFRI High-Level Expert Group report<sup>3</sup>, supporting research infrastructures contributes to transforming the way of conducting research in Europe, through establishment of an open, meritocratic access to state-of-the-art research facilities and equipment.

Research infrastructures are facilities, research resources, organizational systems and services that are used by the scientific communities to conduct research and generate innovation in their respective fields. Where necessary, they may be used for purposes beyond research, e.g. for training or public services. Research infrastructures comprise basic scientific equipment (or sets of instruments), knowledge-based resources such as collections, archives or scientific information, e-infrastructures, computing systems and software, communication networks and systems promoting open access and digital trust, and any other infrastructure of a unique nature essential to achieve excellence in research and innovation.

The General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI), in its capacity as the public body in charge of Research, Technological Development and Innovation (RTDI) developed a **Multiannual Budgeting Plan** for the 2014-2020 programming period which funded 28 national research infrastructures, most of them distributed. Development of a Multiannual Plan for Research Infrastructures fully aligned with the strategic priorities set by RIS3 2014-2020 was an *ex-ante conditionality* for the mobilization of the total funding allocated to RTDI actions under EPAnEK 2014-2020.

Later, as part of the development of a new strategy to further support and upgrade National Research Infrastructures (NRIs) for the 2021-2027 period, including updating of the Multiannual Budgeting Plan (MBP) 2014-2020, the GSRI sought assistance from the Policy Support Facility (PSF) at the DG for Research and Innovation in June 2021. The PSF contribution involved an independent review of the 28 research infrastructures covered by the MBP 2014-2020, with a view to contributing to the reforms necessary for strengthening the Greek research and innovation system including through enhanced international visibility and competitiveness of research infrastructures (RIs).

The review (available at <a href="https://gsri.gov.gr/apotimisi-ton-erevnitikon-ypodomon-2014-20/">https://gsri.gov.gr/apotimisi-ton-erevnitikon-ypodomon-2014-20/</a>) resulted in a Final Report comprising a set of recommendations seeking to optimize operation and efficiency of RIs during the 2021-2027 period by introducing a long-term viability model promoting scientific excellence while simultaneously helping address socioeconomic challenges. This call is in line with the expert panel recommendations, both on the application of the selection procedure for candidate RIs, on evaluation criteria and on performance-based funding and KPIs, and regarding the broader directions for the RI support strategy and international good practices. In the evaluation of the proposals in terms of the criteria of uniqueness, maturity, access policy, international recognition and the impact

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Supporting the transformative impact of research infrastructures on European research: report of the High-Level Expert Group to assess the progress of ESFRI and other world class research infrastructures towards implementation and long-term sustainability, Publications Office, 2020,





achieved, the final assessment of the existing 28 Research Infrastructures, as recorded in the final report of the PSF study, will be taken into account however without having a binding nature.

During the current 2021-2027 programming period, funding for the support of Research Infrastructures, in addition to the NSRF "Competitiveness" OP, will be provided by the Recovery and Resilience Facility, regional programs, the Just Transition Fund, the European Investment Bank, et al.

A. **Conditions for participation**: the present call is addressed to research bodies (according to the definition given by Law 4386/2016), namely research centres, technology bodies and higher education institutions.

More specifically, the following are eligible for participation:

- The 28 RIs covered by the Multiannual Budgeting Plan 2014-2020. These must submit new proposals
  demonstrating the need to continue receiving funds in order either to launch their Development Phase or
  complete the Preparatory Phase, where further action is needed.
- New RIs covering concrete gaps in essential infrastructures in the Greek research system, provided that they fall into one or more priority areas of the National Smart Specialization Strategy 2021-2027.

Proposals submitted must be accompanied by a letter of support by the legal representative of each participating research body.

# B. Project Duration: 4 years.

C. Amount of requested public spending. Maximum public spending for the Full Operation Phase of RIs can amount to € 8 million for groupings of existing RIs (under the Multiannual Budgeting Plan 2014-2020). Public spending for mature existing infrastructures cannot exceed € 6 million, and public spending for new or existing infrastructures that have not reached maturity yet can amount to € 4 million.

#### D. Eligible actions and expenditure.

- Provision of access to members of the academic/research community for implementation of high-quality research projects. Access will be provided after evaluation of proposals to use facilities and equipment. Evaluation will be carried out by a committee independent from the bodies involved in the RI. The committee will evaluate the number of days of access and the body will receive an amount corresponding to a number of days X the average operation cost of the RI body.
- Development of collaborative research projects aimed at improving quality of the provided access.
- Networking at the national and European/international level.

A number of eligible expenditure are listed below by way of example (subject to compliance with Decision no 114947/1-12-2022 by the Deputy Minister of Development & Investments "National eligibility rules for NSRF 2021-2027 programmes").

# 1) Personnel costs:

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a) cost of newly recruited personnel, working on contract: researchers (including postdoctoral researchers and PhD candidates), technicians and other supporting personnel, as long as they work on the project and is employed





by the entity either by a contract of fixed duration (full or part time occupation) or by an employment project contract, if the provisions of paragraphs 2.c and 3 of article 15of the 114947/1-12-2022 Decree.

It is pointed out that total remuneration received by postdoctoral researchers should correspond to at least 90% of the remuneration received by C-Grade researchers and cannot exceed 3000€/month (gross), according to article 16, para.12 a, Law 4386/2016

To be noted that in all contracts, project or fixed term, the timeline of the project's implementation, the deadline, the workpackages involved and the total sum of the remuneration received by the individual must be clearly stipulated. The remuneration of the individual must be based on the time constraints imposed by the project implementation and should not divert significantly from the remuneration the entity provides to its personnel which carries out similar work, or personnel employed in other businesses with similar qualifications or job description. The compensation/remuneration of the individual must be closely linked with the work packages of the project.

Regarding the costs of newly recruited personnel these must be recorded in global timesheets and the gross cost of employment that is financed by the grant should not exceed the amount of 4000Euros/month and  $A\Phi M$  (National Tax Number) for all the present Action.

- b) costs of existing personnel based on their actual hourly additional occupation according to the provisions of article 15, 114947/1-12-2022 Decision.
- 2) fixed equipment costs: purchase costs of equipment for the establishment and/or modernization of the infrastructure, is eligible and must correspond to at least 50% of the total budget of the project. It is clarified that:
  - a) Expenses related to the upgrading and or extending the work viability of equipment is eligible, since it increases the the value of the existing asset according to the provisions of National Legislation and the depreciation costs do not constitute eligible expenditure for the present Action.
  - b) Costs related to impromptu repair/ maintenance of existing equipment, used for the implementation of the Act, are not eligible, except if those costs increase the value of the existing asset and is declared in the Act as depreciation (article 21, para 4-b of the 114947/1-12-2022 Decree.
  - c) Costs for preventive/scheduled equipment maintenance and purchase costs of consumables required for proper operation of equipment are eligible for the time period this equipment is used for the purposes of the action (article 21 para. 48c of Decision no 114947/1-12-2022).
  - d) Costs for purchasing spare parts (as fixed assets) are eligible if are considered indispensable parts of the main components of the purchased equipment, that is imerative for the proper operation of the equipment according to its terms of purchase that the supplier offers. These costs should not exceed 10% of the purchasing cost of the equipment (article 21, para 5 Decision 114947/1-12-2022).
- 3) Costs for the purchase and use of intangible assets such as IPR rights, software etc. (article 23, Decision 114947/1-12-2022)
- 4) Costs of contracted research work, as well as expenses for advisory or equivalent support services used exclusively for the project, including feasibility studies<sup>4</sup> if needed; advisory services include assistance and



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Feasibility studies are included if they are required for the implementation of the project.

professional training in knowledge transfer, intangible asset acquisition, protection and exploitation, use of standards and relevant regulations; support services in innovation include provision of office spaces, databases, libraries, market research material, as well as use of laboratories, quality labeling, testing and certification, article 43, Decision 114947/1-12-2022.

- 5) Expenses for laboratory consumables and supplies and for the purchase of software for project implementation, article 43, Decision 114947/1-12-2022.
- 6) Costs of small-scale refurbishing work for research premises, including expenses incurred with a view to improve access for persons with disabilities, up to 10% of the total equipment costs.
- 7) Indirect costs including general expenses and other operating costs, are defined with implementation of a flat rate of 25% of the total eligible direct costs of the Action, excluding direct eligible costs of subcontracting and capital investment (fixed), third party financial support and any unit costs or lump sums that include indirect costs. In addition, this category includes expenses for travel and hosting, networking, promotion and dissemination of results, expenses related to the education and training of the users of the R.I. but also the training of new researchers, as well as costs for networking actions with related or complementary R.I. of abroad. Expenses for the organization of conferences and seminars with the aim of disseminating and promoting the activities of R.I. to the scientific community or the general public.

The above categories of expenditure are eligible if they are directly related to the implementation of the co-funded project and if this relation can be firmly established.

Regarding Value Added Tax (VAT) the provisions of article 25. 114947/1-12-2022 Decision apply.

- **D) Content of proposals submission:** The proposals will be submitted in English on the digital platform of the General Secretariat of Information Systems and Digital Governance under the link: https://webapps.gsis.gr/dsae/researchinfrastructures.
- E) Submission Deadline: The deadline for the submission of proposals of the first step (Pre-selection of Proposals) is Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 17.00 local time (Athens).
- **F)** Evaluation Procedure: Evaluation will be carried out by panels of highly-esteemed international experts according to the procedure and the criteria set in this Call.
- **G)** Lodging of Objections. Objections may be lodged after publication of the evaluation results, according to Decision no 110565/22-11-2022 on "Submission and assessment procedure for objections raised against evaluation results of proposals to participate in NSRF 2021-2027 programmes ["objection" in accordance with Law 4914/2022 (A' 61) article 36 paragraph 7]".

#### **Subsequent Steps**

Coordinators of proposals that obtain a positive result under the 2 evaluation phases of this Call for expression of interest will be invited to submit a Proposed Action Datasheet to the Managing Authority of the "Competitiveness" OP, in order to receive funding under the "Competitiveness 2021-2027" OP.

All national RTDI infrastructures selected for funding under the "Competitiveness" OP or through other sources under EPAnEK will be included in the National Research Infrastructure Roadmap 2021-2027.



