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JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE

Strategy, Work Programme and Resources  
**Scientific Development**

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**FRAMEWORK FOR ACCESS TO THE  
PHYSICAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES  
OF THE JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE (JRC)**

*REVISION 2022*

# FRAMEWORK FOR ACCESS TO THE PHYSICAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES OF THE JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE (JRC)

## 1. PURPOSE

The present document defines the Framework for access to the physical Research Infrastructures of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), Directorate General of the European Commission, with the purpose of delivering access to users for conducting research, undertaking experimental development, and providing education and training. It defines the principles and modalities under which the JRC opens its facilities to external users, following an open access policy.

Access to the Research Infrastructures of the JRC fosters innovative research and development, dissemination of knowledge, improves related methods and skills, training and fosters collaboration at European level. Moreover, it promotes interaction with a wide range of social and economic actors, including academia, research institutions, industry, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and public services, in order to maximise the return on the investment of the unique Research Infrastructures of the JRC in terms of the scarce experimental facilities and resources available in Europe.

It creates the framework for the JRC to integrate with the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI)<sup>1</sup>, raising JRC Research Infrastructures to a status of pan-European relevance.

Several legal instruments provide for accessing JRC facilities to third parties:

- Annex I, Pillar II, section 7.2.4 of Council Decision (EU) 2021/764<sup>2</sup>:

*Scientific Excellence - The JRC shall pursue excellence and integrity in research and extensive collaboration with top level research institutions worldwide. It will carry out research in emerging fields of science and technology and promote open science and open data as well as knowledge transfer.*

*Broad Lines*

- [...]
  - *Access to JRC research infrastructures;*
  - *Training of scientists and national experts; [...]*
- Annex I of Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/765<sup>3</sup>:

*The specific objectives referred to in Article 3(2) shall be pursued across the Euratom Programme, according to the broad lines of activity described in this Annex. [...]*

*(b) maintain and further develop expertise and competence in the nuclear field within the Community:*

- (i) education, training and mobility [...]*
- (v) support for the provision, availability and appropriate access of European and international research infrastructures, including JRC's infrastructures (5);*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.esfri.eu/>

<sup>2</sup> Council Decision (EU) 2021/764 of 10 May 2021 establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and repealing Decision 2013/743/EU (Text with EEA relevance)

<sup>3</sup> Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/765 of 10 May 2021 establishing the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community for the period 2021-2025 complementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and repealing Regulation (Euratom) 2018/1563

Within this activity, the JRC opens its research infrastructures as follows:

- JRC opens its non-nuclear research infrastructures to User Institutions from Member States and countries associated to the Horizon Europe programme<sup>4</sup>.
- JRC opens its nuclear research infrastructure to User Institutions from Member States and countries associated to the Euratom research programme<sup>5</sup>.

User Institutions from international organisations are also eligible to access JRC's nuclear and non-nuclear Research Infrastructures, provided that the JRC has concluded a collaboration instrument that ensures reciprocity for Access of Users from the JRC and User Institutions to their respective Research Infrastructures. The list of such User Institutions will be published at the call for proposals at the EU Science Hub.

Individual Users may have other nationalities, provided they are personnel<sup>6</sup> of a User Institution located in a Member State or country associated to Horizon Europe or the Euratom research programme, or in an international organisation as detailed in the call for proposals.

## 2. APPLICABILITY

This document regulates Access to all nuclear and non-nuclear physical Research Infrastructures of the JRC at the sites of Ispra, Geel, Karlsruhe and Petten under the JRC action "Framework for Access to the physical Research Infrastructures of the JRC".

It does not replace, but comes in addition to, other forms of access by external users to JRC Research Infrastructures under other existing schemes specifically providing for such access, such as:

- on the basis of a Collaboration Instrument;
- on the basis of a Grant Agreement or a Consortium Agreement under EU or Euratom research programmes;
- under other agreements containing ancillary provisions on the access to the JRC facilities;
- under licence, joint ownership or similar and technology transfer agreements regulating use of the intellectual property of the JRC containing ancillary provisions on access to the JRC facilities.

The conditions for access in those cases will be regulated under the specific applicable scheme.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

### *a. Research Infrastructures*

The 'Research Infrastructures' are physical facilities, resources and services that are used to conduct research and foster innovation in their fields through the use of major scientific equipment (or sets of instruments) complemented by knowledge-based resources (e.g. collections, archives and scientific

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<sup>4</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013

<sup>5</sup> Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/765 of 10 May 2021 establishing the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community for the period 2021-2025 complementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and repealing Regulation (Euratom) 2018/1563

<sup>6</sup> 'personnel' shall mean all persons associated with the User Institution, including (i) employees, (ii) guest researchers, (iii) persons under contracts similar to employment contracts and (iv) any other persons whose actions can be reasonably attributed to that User Institution.

data) that are essential to achieve excellence in research and innovation. All facilities of the JRC are 'single-sited' (i.e. physically located in one site).

#### *b. User*

'Users' of Research Infrastructures are individuals, either alone or in teams, appointed by the User Institutions to receive Access to the Research Infrastructure. They are engaged in the conception or creation of new knowledge, products, processes, methods and systems and also in the management of projects. Physical access of Users to JRC Research Infrastructures is regulated by the User Access Agreement, signed by the User.

#### *c. User Institution*

A 'User Institution' is a public or private legal entity (e.g. academia, business, industry, public services, etc.) participating in the User Access Project and appointing the Users. Each User Institution is responsible for the Users it has appointed.

#### *d. Lead User Institution*

The 'Lead User Institution' is the User Institution in charge of preparing the proposal for access to JRC Research Infrastructures and coordinating the User Access Project in close cooperation with the JRC Research Infrastructure concerned. In particular, the Lead User Institution should:

- be in charge of steering the process negotiation and signature of the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement for all User Institutions
- where required, provide to the JRC the contribution in cash for Access to the JRC Research Infrastructure;
- coordinate the provision of in-kind contribution(s) by User Institution(s)
- report to the JRC on the progress of the work, when requested by the JRC;
- supervise the performance of the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement together with JRC

#### *e. Lead User*

The 'Lead User' is a User from the Lead User Institution responsible for the preparation and submission of the proposal for access. The Lead User acts as main point of contact between all User Institutions and the JRC.

#### *f. User Access Project*

A 'User Access Project' are the activities undertaken at the concerned JRC Research Infrastructure(s) to achieve the objectives according to the scope and description of the access of Users to the JRC Research Infrastructure(s) to which access is granted. A User Access Project is regulated by the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement.

#### *g. Access*

'Access' refers to the legitimate and authorised physical, remote and virtual admission to, interactions with and use of Research Infrastructures. Such Access can be granted, amongst others, to machine time, computing resources, software, data, data-communication services, trust and authentication services, sample preparation, archives, collections, the set-up, execution and dismantling of

experiments, education and training, expert support and analytical services. Access to research data will be in line with the JRC Data Policy<sup>7</sup>.

#### *h. Payment*

'Payment' means a contribution in cash provided by the Lead User Institution or User Institution in exchange for access to JRC Research Infrastructures.

#### *i. User Access Report*

The 'User Access Report' describes the results of the test campaign carried out at the JRC Research Infrastructure in the framework of the User Access Project.

## **4. PRINCIPLES**

This section defines the principles applicable to the Access of Users to the Research Infrastructures of the JRC. These principles are further defined in the "Access Policy" (Section 5).

#### *a. Acknowledgement and Intellectual property rights*

Users should acknowledge the contribution of the Research Infrastructure in any output (i.e. publication, patent, data, etc.) deriving from research conducted within its realms.

The principles for the allocation of intellectual property rights are defined in Annex 1.

#### *b. Health, safety, security and environment*

The JRC together with the User Institution shall undertake the necessary measures to ensure the health, security and safety of any User accessing its Research Infrastructures as well as to take the necessary actions to minimise the impact on the environment according to the legislation applicable to each site. Users must comply with security, health and safety, environmental rules and with procedures in force at the JRC sites, in particular concerning the notifications on introduction of material and instrumentation that could induce risks or ethical issues to the JRC Research Infrastructures and persons.

#### *c. Contributions to the User Access Project*

The contributions to the User Access Project, in cash, is determined by the mode of access delivered to Users, in line with EU Financial Regulations<sup>8</sup> and its Implementing Rules<sup>9</sup> as well as the financial circuits applicable in the JRC.

#### *d. Confidentiality and ethical conduct*

Users shall comply with confidentiality requirements and should adhere to the code of conduct and standard ethical behaviour in scientific research when conducting research, and using and

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<sup>7</sup> EUR 27163 EN JRC Data Policy (2019) ISBN 978-92-76-08380-1 ISSN 1831-9424 doi:10.2760/637912

<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2015/1929 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 October 2015 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union - [O.J.L 286 of 30/10/2015](#)

<sup>9</sup> Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/2462 of 30 October 2015 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 on the rules of application of Regulation 966/2012 - [O.J.L 342 of 29/12/2015](#)

disseminating research data and findings, as detailed in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of the European Science Foundation<sup>10</sup>.

#### *e. Implementation*

Access to the JRC Research Infrastructures will be in accordance to the rules and procedures of the JRC. This applies in particular to the granting of Access and selection of User Access Projects, entrance permits, length of stay, health and safety and security of Users at the JRC sites.

#### *f. User instructions*

The JRC will provide Users with instructions for the effective and efficient Access to its Research Infrastructures. Instructions relevant to the use of the Research Infrastructures will be provided by each Research Infrastructure delivering Access.

#### *g. Protection of personal data*

The JRC shall process any personal data relating to the Access in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

#### *h. Insurances*

All Users accessing the JRC shall have full insurance coverage for health care, accident as well as for third party civil liability, which will cover the Users' activities during their stay at JRC. The User Institution or the User shall provide proof of this coverage

## **5. ACCESS POLICY**

The policy for Access to the JRC Research Infrastructures defines Access in terms of Access Units, states the specific Access mode, states the conditions for Access, describes the processes and interactions involved in the Access and elaborates on the support measures facilitating the Access. Access to the Research Infrastructure will include all infrastructural, logistical, technical and scientific support (including training courses) that is necessary to carry out the User Access Project.

#### *a. Access modes*

Access to the JRC Research Infrastructures may be provided according to two different Access modes, i.e. `relevance-driven` and `market-driven`. Acknowledging the different purposes of Access and in function of possible contractual and legal obligations, Access will be regulated according to one Access mode. Each Access mode enables collaborative research and technological development efforts across geographical and disciplinary boundaries.

#### ***Relevance-driven Access***

The Relevance-driven Access mode is exclusively dependent on the scientific and socio-economic relevance at European level, excellence, originality and technical and ethical feasibility of an application evaluated through a peer review conducted by a User Selection Committee.

Relevance-driven access will be granted upon Payment of the additional costs related to Access with respect to normal operation of the Research Infrastructure, subject to a mutual consensus

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<sup>10</sup> [https://www.allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Code\\_Conduct\\_ResearchIntegrity.pdf](https://www.allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Code_Conduct_ResearchIntegrity.pdf)

between the Lead User Institution and the JRC. Payment may be waived under certain conditions as detailed in the Conditions for Access.

Nuclear Research Infrastructures may also grant Access free of charge on the conditions specified in the Conditions for Access (heading *d.* below).

### ***Market-driven Access***

The market-driven Access mode applies when Access is subject to an agreement between the Lead User Institution and the JRC Research Infrastructure providing for a "full" fee for the Access.

#### ***b. Access Unit***

The Access Unit specifies the nature of Access, which ranges from precise values like days of use of an infrastructure, hours or sessions of beam time, or processing time and gigabytes of data transmitted, up to quotations based on an inventory of User's needs. The definition of an Access Unit is specific to the type and nature of each JRC Research Infrastructure delivering access. The Access Unit will be the basis to allocate Access to Users when announcing the calls for access in the relevance-driven mode or when providing Access in the market-driven mode.

#### ***c. User Stay Day***

A User Stay Day is a day of physical presence of a User at the concerned Research Infrastructure for Access related to the User Access Project. A User Stay Day counts as a registered entry to the JRC site where the Research Infrastructure is located.

#### ***d. Conditions for Access***

The User Institutions will have the possibility of contributing to a User Access Project through the provision of physical resources, such as testing models, instrumentation, testing rigs and components, complementary testing and any other material needed for the User Access project. The User Institutions may also contribute through the provision of human resources for running all or parts of the experimental work. These resources, free of charge for the JRC, are considered as in-kind contributions, and shall be managed in line with the administrative procedures and safety regulations of the JRC.

The JRC will issue calls for proposals at the EU Science Hub:

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/research-facility/open-access>

The final decision on the granting of access will remain with the relevant JRC Directorate and/or Director General.

### ***Relevance-driven access mode***

For the Relevance-driven access mode each JRC Research Infrastructure, or a pool of JRC Research Infrastructures will issue calls for proposals announced on a yearly basis, at six month intervals, or depending on the availability of the Research Infrastructure(s).

The call for proposals will include the following information:

- Description of the Research Infrastructure(s)
- Priority topics of the Research Infrastructure(s)
- Opening and closing dates of the call
- Expected date of communication to the Lead User of the assessment of proposals

- Eligibility criteria, including, when relevant, list of eligible international organisations.
- Option for the allocation of intellectual property rights, and for operating the Research Infrastructure
- Instructions for the submission of proposals

For each Research Infrastructure:

- Definition of an Access Unit
- Estimated additional costs per Access Unit
- Estimated total number of Access Units allocated to the call
- Estimated number of Access Units per User Access Project
- Estimated total number of User Stay Days eligible for T&S<sup>11</sup> allocated to the call
- Estimated number of User Stay Days eligible for T&S per User Access Project
- Maximum duration of the User Access Project

For Access to non-nuclear Research Infrastructures, Payment of the additional costs may be waived in the following cases:

- For certain Research Infrastructures where such waiver has been indicated in the call.
- For User Access Projects where the Lead User Institution and at least 2/3 of all the User Institutions (including the Lead User Institution) are located in a country eligible for the Widening participation and spreading excellence<sup>12</sup> action under the Horizon Europe programme. In case of one or two User Institutions (including the Lead User Institutions), this requirement is only applied to the Lead User Institution.
- For User Access Projects where the total amount calculated for the Payment is less than 5000 euro.

Access to nuclear Research Infrastructures is free of charge.

Any consumables needed for the User Access Project and not part of the additional costs must be provided by the User Institutions as in-kind contribution as detailed in the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement (see Section 5i).

The JRC may provide a financial or in-kind contribution to support Users to cover their costs of travel and subsistence related to the User Stay Days, subject to the availability of funds, personnel and other resources, in the following cases, as specified in the call for proposals:

- For JRC non-nuclear Research Infrastructures: Users from User Institutions located in a country eligible for the Widening participation and spreading excellence action under the Horizon Europe programme.
- For JRC nuclear Research Infrastructures
  - o Users accessing JRC nuclear Research Infrastructures as part of the Pilot Action on open access to JRC research infrastructure in the field of nuclear safety<sup>13</sup>, or other similar initiatives covering the travel and subsistence of users for projects on nuclear safety and involving access to JRC nuclear research infrastructures.

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<sup>11</sup> T&S: travel and subsistence

<sup>12</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/widening-participation-and-spreading-excellence\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/widening-participation-and-spreading-excellence_en)

<sup>13</sup> Commission Implementing Decision of 14.12.2018, C(2018) 8412 final, on the financing of indirect actions within the framework of Council Regulation (Euratom) No 2018/1563 and on the adoption of the work programme for 2019-2020; Action OA-05, Administrative Arrangement with the JRC on a pilot action on open access to JRC research infrastructure



- Users from User Institutions located in an EU Member State or a country associated to the Euratom research programme, provided that the country is eligible for the Widening participation and spreading excellence action under the Horizon Europe programme.

User Institutions from international organisations are eligible, as announced in the call for proposals, under the condition that:

- The Lead User Institution and at least 2/3 of all the User Institutions (including the Lead User Institution) are located in a Member State or a country associated to Horizon Europe or to the Euratom research programme. In case of one or two User Institutions (including the Lead User Institutions), this requirement is only applied to the Lead User Institution.

Proposals shall be submitted through the EU Science Hub using a specific template; the Lead User is encouraged to contact the Research Infrastructure(s) during preparation of the proposals, in order to assess feasibility aspects related to the capacity of the Research Infrastructure(s). The Lead User Institution must be from a university, research or public institution, or from a Small-Medium-Enterprise (SME).

Proposals will be evaluated by a User Selection Committee. The Committee will be composed of experts from academia and research institutions at European level<sup>14</sup>, of which one will be an official or other servant of the JRC acting as chair of the Committee. A User Selection Committee may evaluate proposals related to calls from one or more Research Infrastructures within the field(s) of science related to the call. In case of calls addressing more than one Research Infrastructure, the User Selection Committee will have a representative from each of the Research Infrastructures.

Members of the User Selection Committee are considered as experts pursuant to Chapter IV of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>15</sup>. The work dedicated by these experts and the travel and subsistence costs to attend the meetings at the JRC will be paid in accordance with the rules applicable in the Commission. Experts must register at the Expert area of the Participant Portal of Horizon Europe<sup>16</sup>.

The JRC will carry out an eligibility criteria check with respect to ethics, on the type of the Lead User Institution and the country of location of the User Institutions. The Lead User from non-eligible proposals will be contacted by the JRC within three weeks after the closing date of the call.

The evaluation of eligible proposals will be made with regard to selection criteria grouped in the following four categories:

Scientific implementation (50 points):

- Scientific and technical value
- Description of work
- Originality and innovation
- Dissemination and exploitation plan
- Quality of the proposing team

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<sup>14</sup> The composition of the USC should be geographically balanced, in particular towards the RTD list of “Widening participation and spreading Excellence” of countries. The USC should also aim at meeting the 40% target of the under-represented gender, taking into account the situation in the specific field.

<sup>15</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013 (Text with EEA relevance)

<sup>16</sup> <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/funding-tenders-opportunities/display/OM/Expert+registration>

Collaboration and access to new Users (20 points):

- Uniqueness and availability of similar facilities and expertise in any of the Users Institution's countries
- Previous use of the Research Infrastructure by any User or User Institution
- Training (involvement of young scientists)
- Synergies and complementarities with existing research projects and the ESFRI/ERIC

Strategic relevance (30 points):

- Relevance to priority topics of the Research Infrastructure(s)
- Importance for European standardisation and harmonisation
- Importance for European integration and cohesion

Proposals are graded by the User Selection Committee. The grades given by individual User Selection Committee members are averaged for each selection criterion.

Proposals that do not meet a minimum of 30 points for the criteria of “Scientific Implementation”, and a minimum total (considering all criteria) of 60 points, are rejected. The User Selection Committee establishes a list of the evaluated proposals ranked according to their final grade.

In addition, the JRC member(s) of the User Selection Committee will evaluate the cost and feasibility according to the Research Infrastructure(s). The evaluation of the JRC for cost and feasibility will be discussed and agreed at the User Selection Committee meeting. Proposals that cannot be carried out in terms of cost and feasibility will be rejected. Alternatively, the JRC may propose re-dimensioning the experimental campaign to fit the capacity of the Research Infrastructure(s) while not substantially changing the scope of the proposal.

The JRC member(s) of the User Selection Committee will also identify the relevance of the proposal to the priorities of the JRC. Proposals that do not meet any of the priorities of the JRC will be signalled to the User Selection Committee for special decision on the acceptance of the proposal based on grounds of exploring new research topics not fully aligned with JRC’s Work Programme.

Starting with the highest ranking, the JRC Research Infrastructure(s) establishes a shortlist of selected proposals according to the number of Access Units allocated to the call and to the schedule and capacity of the Research Infrastructure(s). The remaining eligible, non-rejected proposal are put on a waiting list. Lead Users from eligible proposals are contacted by the JRC, notifying them of the outcome of the selection process and on the total grading for each category of the selection criteria.

The Research Infrastructure(s) contacts the Lead Users of the selected proposal to delineate the details of the test program and the specimen(s), the experimental equipment to be used, as well as Payment and/or the provision of contributions from the Lead User Institution or other User Institutions. Discussions may also include the extent of a possible financial contribution from JRC to support Users to cover the costs of travel and subsistence related to the User Stay Days. The discussions will take into account the schedule of the Research Infrastructure, the available resources and the technical feasibility of the test campaign.

Where the discussions allow JRC and the Lead User Institution to reach an agreement on the points mentioned above, a Research Infrastructure Access Agreement will be signed. Both parties commit to negotiate in good faith but should an agreement not prove possible, the JRC reserves the right to terminate the discussions and to not conclude a Research Infrastructure Access Agreement.

Subsequent changes to essential elements in the proposal, such as changes in the User Institutions or their eligibility will prevent signature of the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement, or the termination of such agreement if already signed. Nevertheless, the JRC may decide to accept the User Access Project resulting from the changes, where such changes would not call into question the

decision to conclude the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

In case an agreement is not reached, the JRC Research Infrastructure(s) concerned will start negotiations with the Lead User Institution having submitted the first ranked proposal on the waiting list.

A list of the successful proposals having signed a Research Infrastructure Access Agreement will be published at the EU Science Hub. The list will contain the names of the User Institutions and a summary of the proposal.

The Lead User Institution whose proposal was rejected or was not selected following the discussions may resubmit the proposal in the next call for proposals.

### ***Market-driven access mode***

For the Market-driven access mode each JRC Research Infrastructure, or pool of JRC Research Infrastructures, will announce the possibility for submitting, on a continuous basis, market-driven proposals. The call for proposals will include the following information:

- Description of the Research Infrastructure(s)
- Eligibility criteria, including, when relevant, list of eligible international organisations.
- Allocation of intellectual property rights and option for operating the Research Infrastructure
- Instructions for the submission of proposals

For each Research Infrastructure:

- Definition of an Access Unit
- Estimated 'full' costs per Access Unit
- Maximum duration of the User Access Project

The JRC will review proposals on a first-come basis. Proposals will be first checked by the JRC for eligibility with respect to ethics and on the country of location of the User Institutions. The Lead User from non-eligible proposals will be contacted by the JRC within three weeks after submission of the proposal.

Retained proposals will be evaluated with regard to selection criteria grouped in the following four categories:

Scientific implementation (50 points):

- Scientific and technical value
- Description of work
- Originality and innovation
- Exploitation plan
- Quality of the proposing team

Access to SMEs and new Users (20 points):

- Uniqueness and availability of similar facilities and expertise in any of the Users Institution's countries
- Previous use of the Research Infrastructure by any User or User Institution
- Participation of SMEs

Strategic relevance (30 points):

- Relevance to European priorities, regulations and directives.
- Value for the research performed at the JRC Research Infrastructure
- Importance for European standardisation and harmonisation

Proposals are graded by the JRC. Proposals that do not meet a minimum of 30 points for the criteria of “Scientific Implementation”, and a minimum total (considering all criteria) of 60 points, are rejected.

In addition, the JRC will evaluate the cost and feasibility according to the Research Infrastructure(s). Proposals that cannot be carried out in terms of cost and feasibility will be rejected. Alternatively, the JRC may propose re-dimensioning the experimental campaign to fit the capacity of the Research Infrastructure(s) while not substantially changing the scope of the proposal.

Lead Users from eligible proposals are contacted by the JRC, notifying them of the outcome of the selection process and on the total grading for each category of the selection criteria.

The concerned Research Infrastructure(s) initiates discussions with the Lead User Institution of the selected proposal to delineate the details of the test program and the specimen(s), the experimental equipment to be used, as well as Payment and/or the provision of contributions from the Lead User Institution or other User Institutions. The discussions will take into account the schedule of the Research Infrastructure, the available resources and the technical feasibility of the test campaign.

Where the discussions allow JRC and the Lead User Institution to reach an agreement on the points mentioned above, a Research Infrastructure Access Agreement will be signed. Both parties commit to negotiate in good faith but should an agreement not prove possible, the JRC reserves the right to terminate the discussions and to not conclude a Research Infrastructure Access Agreement.

Subsequent changes to essential elements in the proposal, such as changes in the User Institutions or their eligibility will prevent signature of the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement, or the termination of such agreement if already signed. Nevertheless, the JRC may decide to accept the User Access Project resulting from the changes, where such changes would not call into question the decision to conclude the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement or breach the principle of equal treatment of applicants.

#### *e. Physical Access of Users*

Two types of access are distinguished: Users operating the Research Infrastructure and Users not operating the Research Infrastructure. Users operating the Research Infrastructure have to successfully pass a short training period, assisted by the technical staff of the Research Infrastructure.

Where Users can operate the research facility as part of a User Access Project, such possibility will be explicitly stated in the call for proposals of the relevant Research Infrastructure.

#### *f. Assistance measures facilitating Access*

When appropriate, the JRC may offer assistance to Users concerning accommodation, transport and any other logistics needed for the access and stay of Users during their stay at the JRC sites.

#### *g. Travel and subsistence of Users*

The JRC may provide a financial or in-kind contribution to support Users to cover their costs of travel and subsistence as described in Section 5d of this Framework. The JRC will also reimburse the costs associated to obtaining a medical certificate when required by the JRC for full medical clearance of users visiting JRC Research Infrastructures. The financial contribution and the modalities for covering the costs of travel and subsistence, and medical certificate, will be indicated in the invitations issued to individual Users before their physical presence at the concerned Research Infrastructure.

The JRC will not provide a financial or in-kind contribution to support Users from international organisations as User Institutions to cover travel and subsistence costs.

#### *h. Education and training*

The Research Infrastructures of the JRC will offer technical training to Users in so far as it is necessary for carrying out the User Access Project and will collaborate with other institutions and organisations that would benefit from using the Research Infrastructure for their education and training purposes.

#### *i. Research Infrastructure Access Agreement*

Access to the JRC Research Infrastructure shall be regulated by a Research Infrastructure Access Agreement. The Research Infrastructure Access Agreement will detail the organisation and management of the User Access project and will cover any necessary technical and legal aspects (including the modalities for Access, the rights and obligations of the JRC and the Lead User Institution and Users, intellectual property rights, data protection, confidentiality, liability, insurances, eventual fees to be paid, in-kind contributions, possible JRC contribution to travel and subsistence costs, reports).

The technical description (Description of Work) of the User Access Project in the Research Infrastructure Access Agreement may differ from the description of the project in the proposal phase, as it will reflect the results from the cost and feasibility assessment of the JRC Research Infrastructure undertaken in agreement with the Lead User Institution.

The Research Infrastructure Agreement will be signed by all User Institutions (or by the Lead User Institution only, depending on the template of the Research Infrastructures Access Agreement chosen by the Research Infrastructure) and the JRC, and will contain as annex a list of the Users.

#### *j. User Access Agreement*

Physical access of Users to the JRC will be regulated by the User Access Agreement, signed by the User.

The User Access Agreement will cover legal aspects including intellectual property rights, confidentiality, third party liability, insurances, the documents to be provided by the User, and the rules on the JRC sites.

#### *k. Transparency*

The EU Science Hub will provide clear and transparent information on the Access policy, data management policy and the terms and conditions of access of Users. Each JRC Research Infrastructure delivering access will have a dedicated contact point providing technical information related to the use of the facility, in particular in what concerns cost and feasibility.

#### *l. Limitations*

Access to JRC Research Infrastructures may be limited or refused, amongst others, by the following:

- Ethical considerations in accordance with EU Law, in particular Art. 19 of Regulation (EU) 2021/695, and applicable laws and regulations in the EU Member States;
- Limited capacity;
- Security and safety considerations.

## **6. ASSESSMENT**

The JRC will regularly assess the relevance and applicability of this Framework for Access to the physical Research Infrastructures of the JRC, based on its experience on the implementation of delivering Access. To this end, the Lead User will be requested to complete a user questionnaire upon submission of the User Access Report.

## **7. ANNEXES**

- Annex 1: Intellectual Property Rights

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