



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS IN HORIZON EUROPE

RELEVANCE, POSSIBLE APPROACH
STRATEGIES AND CURRENT NTNU
POSITIONINGS

NTNU BRUSSELS OFFICE



INTRODUCTION

The aims and objectives of this document are to give an introduction to the Strategic Partnership's instruments in Horizon Europe (HEU) and highlight the importance and advantages of being part of these partnerships for NTNU, also suggesting possible ways to approach them.

Positioning in partnerships will be more important in HEU compared to previous framework programmes, since significant amounts of funding will be channeled through them and they are expected to design the priorities on which the funding will be invested. The document is structured to provide an overview of the different types of partnerships, how they work and how they could be approached to achieve effective positioning, as well as an annex with a detailed analysis of the 49 proposed partnerships. The NTNU Brussels Office is also available for support throughout the positioning process and have already collaborated with faculties in organising this for several EU initiatives.

WHAT ARE EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS?

European Partnerships are initiatives where the EU, together with private and public partners, commit to jointly support the development and implementation of a programme of research and innovation activities targeted on a specific thematic area. The partners could represent industry, universities, research organisations, bodies with a public service remit at local, regional, national or international level or civil society organisations, including foundations and NGOs. Partnerships were first introduced in 2002 as part of the European Research Area to overcome fragmentation of research effort. Under HEU, the European Partnerships will be drivers of green and digital transition. They will also support the achievement of EU policy objectives, like *the European Green Deal, A Europe fit for the digital age and An economy that works for people*.

MAIN DIFFERENCES FROM HORIZON 2020

The partnerships in HEU are the result of a rationalisation process that the European Commission have put in place to reduce the number of these kind of initiatives in order to increase their effectiveness and impact. A major difference is the expectation that partnerships should take a “systemic approach in the achievement of the objectives”, including “approaches to ensure flexibility of implementation and to adjust to changing policy, societal and/or market needs”. The main differences that HEU partnerships have compared to the H2020 ones are in their legal form, and the degree of integration and implementation. HEU introduces a systemic process for selecting, implementing and monitoring for all partnerships, linking them with the Strategic Planning of HEU. Partnerships can only be supported when there is evidence that they are more effectively achieving policy objectives than HEU alone. Moreover, in HEU the partnerships will be more inclusive allowing easier participation from European stakeholders like universities. Finally, it is expected that the partnerships will channel HEU funding, with specific reference to pillar II where it is estimated that up to 50% of the total budget for R&I will be channeled through them.

HOW DO PARTNERSHIPS WORK?

The aim of European partnerships is to deliver on global challenges and modernise industry. There are three types of partnerships in HEU, and some are more convenient and practical for NTNU to approach than others due to their structure of governance. The three types are: Co-programmed European Partnerships, Institutionalised European Partnerships and Co-funded European Partnerships. The main differences between the three types of partnerships are in the legal form and implementation, with the Co-programmed being the simplest and the Institutionalised the most complex.

Co-programmed partnerships are formed between the EU, member-states, associated countries and/or other stakeholders based on a Memoranda of Understanding or contractual agreements with parts, similar to the cPPP model from Horizon2020. These partnerships elaborate joint research agendas which are realised by calls implemented in the work programmes of HEU. The nature of the Co-programmed partnerships allow external stakeholders to participate directly in the shaping of the strategic research and innovation agendas that the partnerships elaborate to indicate the priorities on where to allocate funding. This kind of partnerships represent the ideal playfield for NTNUs strategic positioning because they allow every interested stakeholder to participate and contribute in the shaping of the priorities. Normally, in order to participate, it is sufficient to apply for membership. However, it is advised to involve the EU support system and the Brussels Office to ensure an appropriate strategic approach.

Institutionalised partnerships have the most complex legal form and implementation among the partnerships and has its legal basis in Article 185 and 187 of the Treaty for the European Union. Since this type of partnership requires legislative proposals from the Commission to be formed, they are only implemented if the other forms would not achieve the objective, and if justified by a long-term perspective and high degree of integration.

Normally, institutionalised partnerships are accompanied by alliances of relevant stakeholders (coming, for instance, from industry, research, public sector, etc.). In order to **contribute to the shaping of priorities**, it is mandatory to **be a member of the relevant alliance** linked to the institutionalised partnership of interest.

In this case, the alliances represents the ideal playfield for NTNUs strategic positioning because they are the instrument to allow participation and contribution in the shaping of the priorities. Similarly to the co-programmed partnership, to participate, it is normally sufficient to apply for membership. Again, it is advised to involve the EU support system and the Brussels Office to ensure an appropriate strategic approach.

Co-funded partnerships have a more or less centralised blending of EU and national public and/or other R&I funding sources. At the core of the consortium of the co-funded partnerships are the research funders and other public authorities of EU member-states. This type of partnerships involve public authorities, but it is also possible to include foundations and international partners. The partnership is based on grant agreement between the Commission and the consortium of partners, resulting from a call for proposals for a programme co-fund action in the work programme of Horizon Europe. Member-states would design a common programme to be implemented under their responsibility. It pools national funding/ resources with co-funding from the Union. Calls and evaluations are defined and organised centrally by the participating countries' representatives. Beneficiaries in selected projects are typically funded at national level, based on rules agreed by the partners. The participating countries' representatives are normally coming from the ministries, but in some cases they are nominated from relevant national institutions (including NTNU).

For this type of partnerships, the positioning strategy should be different from the one suggested for the other two: an NTNU expert should be suggested as a candidate to the relevant ministry or national body responsible for the thematic area the partnership is coming from. In this case it is advised to contact NTNU research rectorate to discuss the possible approach.

The annex, where the partnerships are described in detail, also specifies their typology, on a case-by-case basis.

WHY ARE PARTNERSHIPS STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT FOR NTNU?

INFLUENCE

Participation to partnerships provides the possibility to contribute to the development of EU policies, strategies and programs in relevant fields. This means, active involvement in the design of the strategic research agendas allowing participants to influence their definition and to guarantee that NTNU and/or Norwegian priorities are included.

NETWORK

Strategic partnerships are normally consisting of or representing the best performers and actors on the European Research & innovation arena. Participation in partnerships provides the opportunity to network, build future collaborations, share ideas, and align on potential future research visions.

IMAGE RETURN

Active engagement guarantees acknowledgement of the NTNU brand. This could pay back in terms of visibility and impact on aspects like collaboration requests and/or evaluation of European grants. It must be underlined, in fact, that expert evaluators are in some cases members of European initiatives, like the partnerships.

INSIGHT

Participation in partnerships provides the opportunity to gain insight into political and strategic R&I objectives in a specific area. This allows for anticipatory actions in creating project applications way ahead of the opening of the call, allowing to design them with higher quality.



HOW TO ENSURE MOST IMPACT FOR NTNU

Active engagement in partnerships represents an investment both in terms of direct costs (fees) and personnel costs. This is why we need to guarantee the maximum return for NTNU. The best way to achieve this is through the use of an appropriate uniform model approach.

WHY HAVE A MODEL?

With the changes that are being adopted in the landscape of European partnerships, an effective model approach for NTNU is also needed. By adapting a similar model for all partnerships of interest, one ensures that the processes are comparable and inclusive throughout the entire NTNU system. The proposed model is designed to guarantee important aspects like: effective information and opportunities sharing inside NTNU, multidisciplinary impact capability, increased internal networking and collaboration in a specific area in line with the "One NTNU" approach.

PROPOSED MODEL

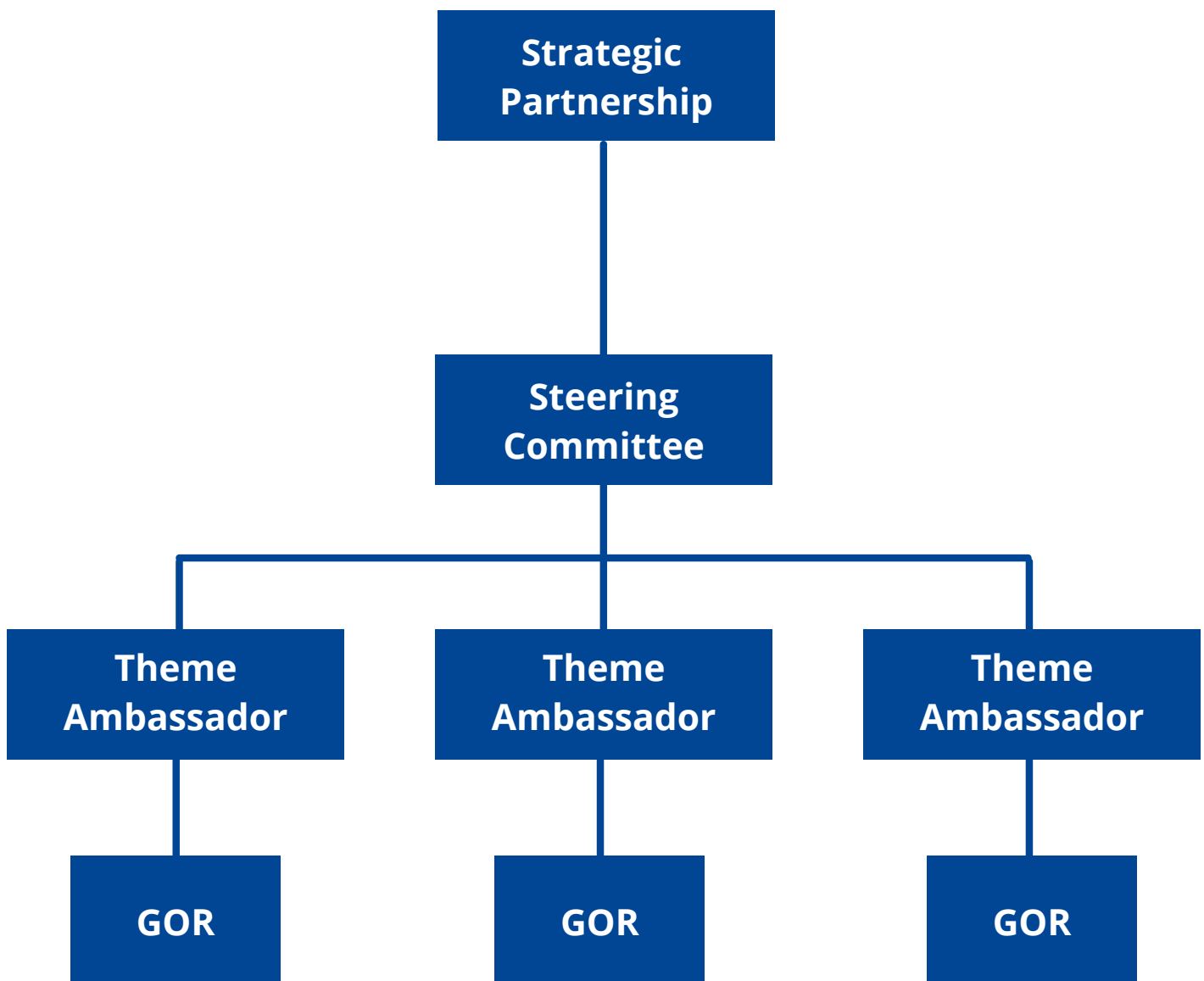
The proposed model consists of four levels, where three are within the NTNU system and the top-level is the partnership itself. This model follows a horizontal approach to guarantee appropriate involvement and joint decision processes. On level one, a steering committee guarantees continuity of action for the forum. The committee is composed by one or more ambassadors, administrative resources (for instance EU-advisors) and can also be complemented by representatives from the NTNU Brussels Office. It has no decisional power, but it is mandated to administer and orchestrate the forum, proposing actions to be agreed with the forum participants.

EXPERIENCES

This model has already been adopted for some EU initiatives within NTNU. For example, the NTNU Food Forum and the European Construction Technology Platform forum (ECTP) have implemented the proposed model and have had good return from it. While the ECTP forum is still in a "ramp-up" phase, the Food Forum has already received recognition and achieved several promising outcomes, despite the fact that it is a relatively recent initiative established in March 2020.

PROPOSED MODEL

This model represents a general sketch that could be adapted to the characteristics of the platform/initiative for which it is created.



- Cross Faculty Participation
- Information/Opportunities exchange
- Inputs preparation

PROPOSED MODEL EXPLAINED

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The portfolio of European Partnerships includes 49 candidates which have been taken into the next step of preparations. Each partnership can consist of one or more working groups, that work on different sub-areas within it.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee guarantees continuity of action for the forum. The committee is composed by the one or more ambassadors, administrative resources (for instance EU-advisors) and can also be complemented by representatives from the NTNU Brussels Office. It has no decisional power, but is mandated to propose/highlight strategic actions to be agreed with the forum participants. Moreover, it should guarantee appropriate animation of the forum itself.

THEME AMBASSADOR

The Theme Ambassador is a scientific expert which will follow specific focused activities within the participated strategic partnership. He/she is expected to guarantee an efficient exchange with and involvement of the group of reference linked to its specific thematic area inside the forum.

GROUP OF REFERENCE

The Group of Reference (GOR) is composed by NTNU experts interested in the specific thematic areas on which the partnership is structured upon. GOR-members are willing/interested to receive relevant information from the theme ambassador and are ready to provide strategic inputs to him/her when needed. Forum members can participate in one or more of the GORs inside the forum according to their interests/expertise.



NTNU FOOD FORUM



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Administrative Coordination



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Strategic advisory and EU positioning

Forum animation and orchestration

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Eva Falch	Johan Fredrik Rye	Paolo Pisciella	Widar Aalrust Kristoffersen

Strategic Initiatives Ambassadors



Eva Falch

- European Food Forum
- JPI A healthy diet for a healthy life (Scientific Advisory Board)
- European Multidisciplinary program on sustainable food and biomass
- European region of gastronomy
- National professional body for education and research in nutrition (UHR)
- Green research



Turid Rustad

- Metrofood infrastructure Europe



Hilde Bjørkhaug

- Norwegian Research Council/HEU Cluster 6*...



NN

- Animal Welfare Europe
- Food Systems...



CURRENT STATUS OF PARTICIPATION FOR NTNU IN EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS

NTNU participated in several partnerships under Horizon 2020. Many of them are going to be continued or integrated into the new Horizon Europe framework programme. Currently, inside NTNU, there is an ongoing process aimed to guarantee appropriately structured participation on the partnerships of strategic interest for NTNU. The process is working towards the revision of existing participations (with possible revision of internal initiatives in line with the proposed forum model) and positioning activities in partnerships where NTNU is still not engaged.

The Brussels Office is actively collaborating with the faculties in running this process and is willing to open further collaboration dialogues to address partnerships of interest that for the moment are still not approached.

The next paragraph presents a brief overview of the 49 different partnerships in Horizon Europe, highlighting the ones where NTNU participates. The annex to this document contains a detailed analysis for them including the possible contact points to be addressed in case of any collaboration interest.

INTRODUCTION TO ANNEX

The 49 partnerships under Horizon Europe are categorized into five thematic areas. The annex gives a more detailed analysis of the partnerships, as well as NTNU's involvement. The partnerships in light blue represents the ones in which NTNU is involved through a structured participation (internal forum), the partnerships in light yellow represents the ones where NTNU is involved without structured participation or is starting positioning activities.

Health

- EU-Africa Global Health
- Innovative Health
- Chemical Risk Assessment
- ERA for Health Research
- Health and Care Systems Transformation
- Personalised Medicine
- Rare Diseases
- Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)
- Pandemic Preparedness (BE READY)

Digital, industry and space

- High Performance Computing
- **Key Digital Technologies (KDT)**
- Smart Networks and Services
- **AI, Data and Robotics**
- **Photonics**
- Clean Steel - Low Carbon steelmaking
- Metrology
- Made in Europe
- **Processes4Planet**
- Globally competitive Space systems

Climate, energy and mobility

- **Transforming Europe's rail system**
- Integrated Air Traffic Management (ATM)
- **Clean Aviation**
- **Clean Hydrogen**
- **Built4People**
- **Towards zero-emission road transport (2ZERO)**
- Connected and Automated Driving (CCAM)
- **Zero-emission waterborne transport**
- **European Industrial Battery Value Chain (BATT4EU)**
- Driving urban transitions to a sustainable future (DUT)
- Clean Energy Transitions

Food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment

- Agroecology living labs and research infrastructures
- Animal health (PAH)
- Agriculture of data
- Rescuing biodiversity to safeguard life on Earth
- Climate neutral, sustainable and productive blue economy
- Safe and Sustainable Food systems
- **Circular bio-based Europe (CBE)**
- Water4all

Partnerships across various themes

- Innovative SMEs
- Open Science Cloud (EOSC)
- **EIT Climate-KIC**
- EIT Digital-KIC
- **EIT Food-KIC**
- **EIT Health-KIC**
- **EIT InnoEnergy-KIC**
- EIT Manufacturing-KIC
- **EIT Raw materials-KIC**
- EIT Urban Mobility-KIC
- **EIT Cultural and Creative industries-KIC**

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