STORAGE **R**ESEARCH **I**NFRASTRUCTURE **E**CO-**S**YSTEM

D2.2 – "General Rules for Transnational Access according to Access Policy"

WP 2 - Transnational and Virtual Access to world-class Research infrastructures

Task 2.1 - Transnational access management

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CES	Chemical Energy Storage
DMP	Data Management Plan
EES	Electrochemical Energy Storage
ES	Energy Storage
GA	Grant Agreement
MES	Mechanical Energy Storage
RI	Research Infrastructure
SMES	Superconducting Magnetic Energy Storage
SP	Selection Panel
TES	Thermal Energy Storage
TNA	Transnational Access
WG	Working Group
WP	Work Package

CONTENTS

1 TRANSNATIONAL ACCESS IN StoRIES – INTRODUCTION

The aim of StoRIES is to provide researchers, engineers, and students from Europe and beyond access to the world-class research infrastructures (RI) brought together in the StoRIES community.

Work Package 2 (WP2) is completely dedicated to this access provision. Task 2.1 of WP2 focuses on the management of StoRIES Transnational Access (TNA), provides the rules and methodology (included in deliverables D2.2 and D2.3), and monitors the process. It also supports the preparation of the calls for proposals, collects the proposals from users and actively contributes to the various panels, such as Working Groups 2 and 3 of Work Package 1 (WP1) and the Selection Panel (described in D2.1), which provide scientific expertise to the process.

The call preparation and execution rules are described in this deliverable and in deliverable D1.1 (WP1 - *Definition of governance for the WGs*), which will be submitted in M6. The TNA governance is provided in deliverable D2.3 *Access Policy-Agreement between coordinator infrastructure owner and user*. The governance of the Selection Panel is outlined in D6.1 *Project Management Plan* (WP6) and in D2.1 *Validation of Selection Panel*.

This document in its various sections includes summarised information of the rules, conditions and eligibility governing access to the facilities participating and made available in the StoRIES Transnational Access program under the Horizon 2020 project (Grant Agreement No. 101036910 with the European Commission). It tries to identify the most relevant information for potential users of the facilities.

In case of any information provided conflicts with the Grant Agreement with the Commission, the terms of the latter shall prevail.

2 DEFINITIONS

Definitions that apply:

Access means access to and use of a Research Infrastructure or Research Infrastructure for Research under StoRIES guidance.

Access Agreement means the agreement as stated in Article 8.1 of the Access Policy (D2.3).

Access Policy means this Access Policy.

Access Procedure(s) means the Access procedures as described in Article 4.3 of the Access Policy (D2.3).

Access Provider means a beneficiary or linked third party that is in charge of providing access to one or more research infrastructure or installations, or part of them, as described in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement.

Agency or '**the Agency**' the European Research Executive Agency (REA), under the powers delegated by the European Commission ('the Commission').

Access Summary Report means the project summary and Research Infrastructure evaluation report of the Access that must be completed by the User(s) and the Access provider at the end of the Access.

Applicant(s) means a (team of) researcher(s), scientist(s) and student(s) that file(s) the Application or who are named in the application.

Application means an application (proposal) for Access.

Application Form means the form by which the Application must be filed (see Annex 1).

Application Procedure means the application procedure as described in Article 4.3 of the Access Policy (D2.3).

HSE means health, safety, and environment.

Infrastructure means a Research Infrastructure, a resource (or a coherent set of them) together with the related services and expertise that are used by the scientific community to conduct research.

Installation means a part or a service of a research infrastructure that could be used independently from the rest. A research infrastructure consists of one or more installations.

Peer Review Committee means the management of StoRIES TNA consisting of Work Package 2 leader and representatives of Working Group 2 and 3

Peer Review Procedure means the general Access Procedure named Peer Review Procedure as described in Article 4.3 of the Access Policy.

Project Management means StoRIES Project Management including the WP2 leader.

Research means basic or applied research in the field of ES. For the purpose of this Access Policy, education and training in the field of ES also means Research.

Research Infrastructures (RIs) are facilities, resources and services that are used by the research communities to conduct research and foster innovation in their fields. Where relevant, they may be used beyond research, e.g., for education or public services. They include: major scientific equipment (or sets of instruments); knowledge-based resources such as collections, archives or scientific data; e-infrastructure such as data and computing systems and communication networks; and any other infrastructure of a unique nature essential to achieve excellence in research and innovation. Such infrastructure may be 'single-sited', 'virtual' or 'distributed'.

Selection Panel means experts nominated by the StoRIES to evaluate an Application.

StoRIES refers to the StoRIES project and for obligations the responsible party is Coordinator together and any involved Beneficiaries (i.e., work-package leaders and task leaders) for the responsibilities as described in the EU Grant Agreement. Basis for this is the EU Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement which states in article 6.1: "The Coordinator is the legal entity acting as the intermediary between the Parties and the Funding Authority. The Coordinator shall, in addition to its responsibilities as a Party, perform the tasks assigned to it as described in the Grant Agreement and this Consortium Agreement."

StoRIES member means a member or linked third party of StoRIES according to the latest version of StoRIES Grant Agreement.

StoRIES Website means StoRIES official website Home | StoRIES (storiesproject.eu).

User(s) means an individual researcher or one within a user group. I.e., Applicant(s) who have been granted Access to a Research Infrastructure (RI). This definition encompasses the Applicant(s) who will physically access the RI as well as those who will not.

User group means a team of one or more researchers and/or engineers given access to the infrastructure under the project. Each user group is led by a user group leader. Members of a user group can come from one institute or from different institutes across the EU (or its Associated Countries). The reason for the participation of each member of the group must be precisely defined in the application procedure. StoRIES may neglect the participation of group members if they participation is not necessary for a successful finalization of the User/user group project at StoRIES Research Infrastructure.

Unit is the minimum unit of time offered by a Research Infrastructure. In Stories the various RIs might use different Units.

StoRIES TNA Helpdesk provided by WP2 through info@storiesproject.eu, will offer information, assistance and referral to applicants and access users and will assist with complaints and grievances.

3 TRANSNATIONAL ACCESS AND VIRTUAL ACCESS IN STORIES

Overview over the process (steps stated in chronological order):

1. TNA / VA call open;
2. TNA / VA applications submitted electronically via StoRIES webpage;
3. Pre-screening by Peer Review Committee for completeness and EU access criteria
4. Initial review by **RI providers** assessing technical feasibility and time and period of Access;
5. Applicants will be informed about any issues to be able to revise, refine or supplement application;
6. TNA / VA call closes;
7. Independent Peer Review by internal and external independent reviewers appointed from the Selection Panel (list of members of SP can be found in D2.1 and on the StoRIES website);
8. Notification of applicants if proposal is successful or not
   a. Proposals that cannot be implemented under StoRIES TNA will be rejected;
   b. If a proposal is not accepted the reason(s) will be provided;
   c. For accepted proposals the further arrangements for conducting the research project will be initiated;
9. Reporting;
10. Refunding of costs to users;
11. Refunding of costs to RI owners who had access;

3.1 General description of the TNA program

The StoRIES project offers industrial and academic researchers easy, seamless, and free of charge access to a selection of the best scientific infrastructures and services related to ES technologies in Europe. Users will receive on-site or remote access to 64 infrastructures from 39 different organisations in 17 countries.

• 58 physical laboratories: EES (11), CES (10), TES (13), MES (2), SMES (2), cross-cutting (20)

• 6 virtual services.

This project opens to research and innovation activities in all areas of ES (namely, electro-chemical, chemical, thermal, mechanical, super-conducting magnetic as well as cross-cutting issues) performed by users granted access to research facilities based on **common access modalities** and a **peer review procedure for user project selection**.

For that, the StoRIES project manages an extensive programme for **Transnational Access (TNA)** addressing those research areas. Several facilities allow to combine systems, while others are focusing on materials research, covering the whole value chain from materials manufacturing to recycling.

Six virtual RIs are also included in the portfolio, including some addressing socio-economic issues.

The ES R&D community opens its RIs for access to achieve synergies, share competencies and resources, and leverage the important test RI investments of the national laboratories and industries. The goal of the StoRIES TNA is to provide access to approximately 320 Users (up to 10 000 hours) supported by the budget provided by EU Horizon 2020 Programme. This is the first time that this community is offered free access to RIs. To maximise the innovative impact of such access possibilities, Users will have the possibility to connect to the StoRIES general innovation services.

The **Transnational Access** and **Virtual Access activities** are targeting industrial and academic researchers (from Research Institutes, Academia, Industry and SME's), providing them with the best environment to conduct research, validate, test, and further improve.

Transnational access to installations available through the StoRIES project is provided free of charge, including logistical, technological, and scientific support and includes the specific training that is usually provided to external researchers using the infrastructure. The test setup will remain property of the provider, unless otherwise agreed upon.

3.2 Call topic preparation

T3.5 of WP3 (*Call Definition*) of the project will determine the **topics of the TNA calls** by cooperation with the external and internal representatives of academia and industry gathered in the **WG2 of WP1**.

WP1 will build a long-term forum/ecosystem on hybrid ES from research, academia, and industry. One of the tasks is to offer support to the selection of the Transnational Access calls for access to the infrastructures. The topics of the TNA and VA calls will be discussed and selected in the forum as well as the collection of feedback from the Users of the RIs to improve and customise their services. There will be two working groups relevant to TNA:

- WG2 on the selection of call topics and
- WG3 on the Transnational Access activities based on the submitted and approved user proposals and the feedback from the users and the RIs.

T3.5 and WG2 will start the procedure for defining call topics for Transnational and Virtual Access executed in WP2. From discussions and workshop with the participating partners, call topics will be suggested and sent to the External Layer of StoRIES, which will provide input. The final decision on the call topic will be taken by the WG2. After the call topics have been defined, WP2 will launch the call.

The first call topic defined in M5 and published in M6 is presented below:

Application oriented hybrid and sustainable energy storage solutions
The call topic foresees three different sources of innovation: material research, development and testing of a component, device or device cluster and the integration of the innovation in the energy system.
Proposals concentrating on the same innovation source and investigating it from different scientific directions (proposal cluster) with the aim of fast and successful implementation of the innovation to the market, will receive additional points by the proposal evaluation. This approach will support solutions with a clear and predefined path for an uptake to the market.
The proposals should include sustainability-oriented assessments regarding e.g., the use of critical raw materials, possible environmental and economic impacts over the entire lifecycle of the storage solution, as well as indications about the potential recyclability of used materials. Beyond that, social implications related to relevant upstream value chains, the use and end of life phase should be considered.

For the definition of the following call topics, WG2 will take advantage from the user's and RI feedbacks provided by WP2 and WG3 of WP1.

3.3   Call administration with preparation, launch, review, selection, and reporting

The call topics will be defined by T3.5 and WG2. WP2 will **launch the calls** for access (6 calls are planned during the project in **Apr/22, Oct/22, Apr/23, Oct/23, Apr/24, Oct/24**), manage the review and selection of the user projects according to the EC's rules specified for integrating activities.

WP2 will deal with all tasks required to administrate Transnational Access provision within the StoRIES framework of review panel (Selection Panel) and access policies and procedures.

WP2 will together with the Access Provider:

- Ensure that users comply with the terms and conditions of the EU Grant Agreement
- Ensure that the Access Providers obligations under Articles 35, 36, 38 and 46 of the Grant Agreement also apply to the users.

3.3.1   Call preparation and launch

Calls for access to the facilities/infrastructures of StoRIES will be prepared as described above and are being launched every 6 months using the StoRIES website. Calls will be **advertised widely in social media, during various events and included on a dedicated StoRIES website**.

StoRIES will **promote equal opportunities** in advertising the access and takes into account the gender dimension when defining the support provided to users.

3.3.2   User application

3.3.2.1   Eligibility

Transnational Access must be provided to selected "users" or "user-groups", i.e., teams of one or more researchers (users) led by a "user group leader".

To be eligible, users/user groups (led by a user group leader) must satisfy the following conditions:

a) The user group leader and the majority of the users must work in a country other than the country(ies) where the installation is located. This rule does not apply if access is provided by an international organisation or similar legal entities

b) Only users/user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under the project/action may benefit from the access, unless the users are working for SMEs

c) Access for user groups with a majority of users not working in a EU or associated country (see Annex 7 for a list) is limited to 20% of the total amount of units of access provided under the grant.

3.3.2.2   Application process

The user / user groups must request access by submitting (in writing) a description of the work that they wish to carry out and the names, nationalities, and home institutions of the user(s).

Applications need to be submitted while a call for access is open.

The draft TNA application form can be found in Annex 1.

- Applications for Access to the RIs received before the deadline of the call will be considered in the selection procedure.
- Applications received after the deadline of the call need to be resubmitted during the next suitable call.
- All applications need to be submitted electronically.

- For each project the applicant is required to complete the application form, which can be found on the StoRIES project website. This form contains all necessary information, such as a description of the work to be carried out, the names, nationalities, and home institutions of the users.
- If possible, the planned visit and extent of stay should be discussed between the visiting researcher and host before the application is submitted.
- Users must declare the contents of any chemicals, substances or equipment they might want to bring with them to test at any of the StoRIES facilities. Neither the personnel of the Infrastructure nor the Infrastructure itself accept liability for the damage or loss of any instruments, apparatus and test equipment of the Users whether or not such damage or loss was caused directly or indirectly by their negligence. Each visiting user will ensure he/she has appropriate insurance, including personal health, accident cover and personal liability.

After completion by the responsible user / scientist and submitting it, the application will be sent to the StoRIES Peer Review Committee for checking eligibility and completeness of submitted information who will then send it to the host organisations contact person for initial technical review and for information before it will be going through the peer review.

3.3.3 Pre-screening, peer review procedure and principles and project selection

The user / user groups will be selected by the Peer Review Committee and a group of experts of Selection Panel chosen by the StoRIES consortium for a call.

3.3.3.1 Main principles

The StoRIES peer review procedure is based on the following principles:

Transparency: The peer review process is transparent and clear to all stakeholders in StoRIES including funding agencies of all member countries and users from academia, research institutions and industry.

Fairness: Proposals are evaluated on merit and potential high impact on European and international science and economy.

Reviews are done by experts in the scientific field of the proposal, with no declared conflict of interest, based on criteria published in the StoRIES call description for TNA proposals. Individual reviewers for a proposal will be selected from a pool of reviewers.

Confidentiality: Proposals will be treated with the needed confidentiality by StoRIES staff and reviewers. The identities of the peer reviewers for individual proposals shall not be disclosed to anyone else than project participants and commission. **PLEASE NOTE:** the European Commission has the right to publish the list of TNA visitors, containing their names, home institutions and description of the work.

Right to reply to technical and scientific evaluations.

3.3.3.2 Review process

The peer review encompasses an independent evaluation of the proposal, and when completed the applicant and RI owner will receive formal notification from the StoRIES Work Package 2 leader.

The review and selection of user project proposals will be done by the Peer Review Committee and the Selection Panel (SP) representatives according to the **general rules** that will be developed during the project implementation. The SP is composed of external and internal reviewers as described below.

The review and selection process:

Pre-screening: The pre-screening of proposals submitted by the applicants requires a technical appraisal. The purpose of the pre-screening is to analyse the type of activity the applicants will undertake and the ability of the facilities to meet the technical requirements specified by the applicants. In doing so, Peer Review Committee will undertake a quality assurance check with the Access Provider by independently matching the technical capabilities of the RI requested to the objectives of the work planned by the applicants.

Selection of proposals: This will be managed by a group of experts gathered in the SP and chaired by the project coordinator. The group of 5-10 experts will be chosen out of SP members according to the availability of the experts for the process, the expertise needed for a specific call topic and according to the rule of impartiality. **Evaluation** of the TNA project proposals will be made in accordance with the **Commissions principles** (scientific quality, relevance, and uniqueness) and the **selection criteria** developed at the beginning of the project implementation outlined below.

3.3.3.3   Selection Panel

Main principles:

- The user / user groups will be selected by a group of experts of Selection Panel chosen by the StoRIES consortium for a call
- The Selection Panel is composed of international experts in the field, at least half of them independent from the beneficiaries of the project
- The Selection Panel will assess all qualifying proposals received and recommend a short-list of the users and user groups that should benefit from access.

The Selection Panel will ensure that the goals of **objectivity, transparency, impartiality and quality** are met:

- The Selection Panel membership will be ratified by the projects Governing Board. The review process will be documented, and the outcome communicated in a deliverable D2.5
- The review process for each call will be documented (D2.4) and the outcome communicated to the applicant
- For rejected applications, reasons and feedback will be given to the applicant
- If an application is accepted, an invitation for access, detailed instructions and documents are provided to the applicant four weeks ahead of the scheduled access according to the General Rules for TNA
- The TNA Programme web page (where applicants will find RI descriptions, locations and contact details, and instructions for applying for access) will be available on the StoRIES website before the first TNA call opens
- This will be managed in collaboration with WP5 as well as the promotion of the calls to attract potential users

- Each user that is granted access to RIs and the corresponding RIs will be asked to fill out a questionnaire and a project report, which will be collected and aggregated by the coordinator (monthly after M12)
    - A confidential report on the review and selection process of user project proposals for each call will be completed.
    - A confidential list of accumulated TNA activities will be produced
    - A confidential collection of project reports by each User/User group granted access will be compiled.
    - A confidential collection of questionnaires filled by each User granted access assessing the quality of services will be put together.
- These experiences will be made available to WP3 and WP4 to improve the quality of services supported by the infrastructures and improve online and testing services and WP1 (WG3) for the reporting on the overall analysis of the Transnational activities.

3.3.3.4   Criteria to evaluate TNA/VA proposals

The Selection Panel will base its selection on **scientific merit**, considering that priority should be given to users / user groups composed of users who:

- Have not previously used the RI and
- Are working in countries where no equivalent research RI exists.

The access to the StoRIES research infrastructure and facilities will be granted on competitive terms and conditions. Transnational Access in StoRIES will be granted based on open calls for topical research by the project.

The assessment of TNA research proposals uses specific selection criteria for a ranking of the proposals. Applications will be primarily evaluated in accordance with the Commissions principles "**scientific quality, relevance, and uniqueness**" and prioritised based on their **scientific and technological excellence** and their **appropriateness** towards the objectives of StoRIES and the concerned RI(s). The following criteria should be fully addressed in the application. They include technical as well as scientific criteria. Reviewers will assess proposals against these criteria. For some calls additional assessment criteria (for example TRL or Level of research) might be applicable. This will be communicated in the respective call.

- **Scientific quality / excellence**. The proposed research must demonstrate scientific excellence and have a potential for high European and international impact.
- **Alignment** of the Application (including the Research objectives) with the objectives of StoRIES and the related TNA call (including any prioritised research objectives) - **relevance to the TNA call**: Proposal needs to address how the proposed project is addressing the scope of the call, if a specific scope is stated in the call.
- **Significance, innovation** and potential results - **uniqueness / and innovation potential**: Proposals should be novel, develop an important scientific topic of major relevance to European research, describe possible transformative aspects, and expected advances.
- **Match** between the respective RI(s) and the content of the Application; **Feasibility** of the requested RI. The requested RI must be suitable for the proposed project. The assessment may redirect projects to a more appropriate RI.
- **Methodology**: extent to which the conceptual experimental framework, design, methods, and/or analyses are adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the

Application. The methodology used should be described and appropriate to achieve the goals of the project.

- **Capabilities**, track record and experience of the Applicant(s); the **project manager and/or the project group** should have adequate structure and experience so that it is ensured that the project can be successfully completed.
- The projects funding limitations for the Access.
- **Required time** for the Research: The EC supported access programme is intended to finance primarily short visits to individual facilities. The access provider must request written approval from the Commission (see Article 52) for the selection of users and user groups requiring visits to the RI(s) exceeding 3 months.
- Requirement for scientific and technical support.
- Efficient use of the RI and resources.
- The previous use by the Applicant(s) of any RI.
- Any reasonable Access Provider objections to the Access.
- **Dissemination and communication**. The planned channels and resources for dissemination and communication of results should be described.
- **HSE issues, Ethics issues** and potential for negative environmental impacts.

3.3.3.5   Before and during access

- Users shall abide by the normal working practices, working hours, and health and safety regulations of the Infrastructure while present at the site
- The Infrastructure shall incur no liability in respect of any claim that may arise from the use of its Infrastructure under this contract. The presence of users in the Infrastructure occurs at their own risk
- The Infrastructure or WP2 will conclude an Access contract with the leader of a user group.

3.3.4   Post research questionnaire and summary report

Users must complete a pre- and a post-research questionnaire. Users must provide a written report, conforming to the rules specified by the European Commission, at the end of their visit (one-page summary report and description of highlights of project outcome / results). Summaries from these reports will be submitted by the StoRIES coordinator to the Commission as annual or final reports, which may be published by the Commission. Users must also complete the EU on-line survey at https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/RIsurveyUSERS. The payment of travel and subsistence costs will only be completed after receipt of these reports.

3.3.4.1   Users' feedback to the EU

One of the aims of the European Commission Research Infrastructures Action is to provide scientists from anywhere within the Union with easy access to Europe's major research infrastructures. The Action is implemented through Grant Agreements between the European Commission and network of key European research infrastructures. These Grant Agreements serve to support, among others, the mobility costs of visiting scientists and their costs of using the infrastructure.

To enable the Commission to evaluate the Research Infrastructures Action, to monitor the individual Grant Agreements, and to improve the services provided to the scientific community, each Group Leader of a user-project supported under an EU Research Infrastructure Grant Agreement is requested to complete the EU "User Group Questionnaire". The questionnaire must be submitted once by each user group as soon as the experiments on the infrastructure come to end.

All replies will be treated in strictest confidence. The information given will only be used for monitoring and assessment purposes.

You will find the questionnaire at: https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/RIsurveyUSERS

When completing the questionnaire, the User/User group must indicate the StoRIES EC contract no. 101036910 and the acronym of the host institution as given in the proposal acceptance received by email.

3.3.4.2 Users' feedback to the StoRIES project and the host institution

a. Access Summary Report

After having completed their stay at the host institution users are required to fill out the Access Summary Report and submit it to the StoRIES Work Package 2 leader. The draft form for the Access Summary Report can found in Annex 2.

b. StoRIES TNA user exit questionnaires

In addition, users will be asked to complete the StoRIES TNA user exit questionnaires. Users/User group will receive an e-mail with a link or a form that will provide them with the questionnaires in connection with their TNA project.

The questionnaire's purpose is to get users' TNA project information and feedback to complete EU project reporting. It is also used to evaluate the StoRIES TNA access programme, to give useful advice to the individual host facilities, to get input to the health and safety and the ethics report and to generally improve the services offered to users.

Please note that this questionnaire is to be completed in addition to the one issued by the EU (described above). The EU questionnaire aims only at a general evaluation of the EU Access programme.

3.3.5 Publications resulting from Access to a specific StoRIES Research Infrastructure

Users must acknowledge in their publications that their work was financially supported by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme by displaying the EU emblem and including the following text: "This [insert type of research/result] is part of a project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036910"

Users are required to publish their results within a reasonable time in the open literature. Suitable publicity shall be made for the access provided to users under the StoRIES contract with the European Commission, specifying that the project leading to the publication has received research funding from the EC's Horizon 2020 Programme, e.g.,

Acknowledgement of EU funding — obligation and right to use the EU emblem

Unless the Agency requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.) and any infrastructure, equipment and major results funded by the grant must:

a) display the EU emblem and
b) include the following text:

For communication activities: "This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036910"

For major results: "This [insert type of result] is part of a project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036910"

Applications for protection of results (including patent applications) filed by or on behalf of a beneficiary: *"The project leading to this application has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036910"*

Results that could contribute to European or international standards: "Results incorporated in this standard received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036910".

When displayed together with another logo, the EU emblem must have appropriate prominence.

Please note: It is a contractual obligation to acknowledge the EC support in all publications and presentations, to which TNA users agree when they submit an application.

3.3.6   Travel and subsistence reimbursement process

Travel and subsistence expenses for eligible users, irrespective of their nationality, will be reimbursed according to the normal internal rules and procedures of the StoRIES project, as long as the total costs do not exceed the total available budget. This covers international travel from the User's institution to the RI visited for each period of occupancy of the RI and a maximum daily subsistence rate for each day of occupancy of the RI. Exceptions to these rules need prior confirmation in writing by the StoRIES Work Package 2 leader.

Provisions for covering travel and subsistence expenses for Transnational Access in WP2 are available through the StoRIES project. A maximum rate is used for each research visit, covering airfare, lodging, meals, and local transportation. Up to 500 € for travel costs and up to €100 per day at the RI can be reimbursed. All users will be reimbursed by the project coordinator.

Pre-requirements for travel and subsistence reimbursements for the Transnational Access user:

- The most economical means of transportation should be chosen, and transportation arrangements should be made as early as possible after a TNA project is awarded
- Sign the attendance list each day at the visiting RI
- Submit your bank details in the form provided
- Submit via email to the WP2 leader, a Travel Reimbursement Request (TRR) within 30 calendar days after the end date of Access (together with the supporting documents)
- Supporting documentation must be archived by each claimant and kept for four (4) years after the end of the Grant Period in which the meeting takes place.

EU project funding, up to the maximum budget available, will be allocated to travel and subsistence support to StoRIES Research Infrastructure Transnational Access (TNA) users, according to the following criteria:

- Travel:

A **maximum** contribution of up to 500€ per TNA project user can be granted for travel per research project. Justified exceptions need to be agreed before the travel is booked.

TNA users will get reimbursed for the lowest class of travel expenses (2nd class rail tickets, economy class tickets for flights) for the travel and flight costs from the home institute to the StoRIES RI visited and back to the home institute. In exceptional cases, travel expenses from or to another institute than the location of the home institute will be reimbursed (only if pre-approved and these costs do not exceed the travel or flight costs to or from the home institute).

The most economical form of transportation which is practical must be chosen. Taxi journeys will be covered only in exceptions and if pre-approved. Typically, public transport should be chosen.

Use of Private Cars: Generally, TNA users are required to take public transportation for their travel. If the use of a car is unavoidable due to heavy equipment, substantial cost saving or similar reasons, TNA users should give notice when applying for reimbursement. In this case, the car journey can be compensated with a flat rate of € 0.30 per kilometre.

- Accommodation / subsistence:

A **maximum** contribution of up to 100€ per person and per day can be granted for subsistence (accommodation and food).

Costs for overnight stays, which are not directly related to the TNA research project, cannot be refunded.

- General:

The contribution from StoRIES will never exceed the actual travel cost. That means only the actual costs will be refunded!

Only claims for actually incurred costs with scans of receipts attached can be reimbursed (receipts for travel, accommodation, and food).

TNA users must enclose and return all receipts and tickets in original form including boarding cards with the claim or scan all receipt and ticket originals including boarding cards and include them with the claim. In the case of e-tickets also attach a copy of the electronic booking confirmation. If TNA usere choose to send scanned version of receipts, they are required to keep them for at least 5 years in case of an EU audit after the project has concluded.

Financial reimbursement will be processed only after the Access Summary Report has been submitted and accepted.

Expenses which have been / are being reimbursed by someone else cannot be claimed to StoRIES.

Before the expenses will be refunded the following forms need to be completed (within 4 weeks of your visit):

- Post TNA project report form "Access Summary Report"
- User feedback questionnaire
- Travel claim form
- StoRIES post-research questionnaire after the visit of the Research Infrastructure.

Links to any publications and presentations made as the result of this research to publish them on their website (this does not affect or limit the full rights of the researcher) should be send to StoRIES coordinator.

Eligibility conditions of EC Horizon 2020 / Horizon Europe support for Transnational Access:

- Publications (including presentations) which result from Transnational Access at StoRIES should contain the project acknowledgement mentioned above
- Users should also note that the EC has the right to publish the list of project titles, users and their home institutions
- The StoRIES project reports to the EC will contain the names, home institutions and description of the work of the users
- Access for users or user groups with a majority of users not working in an EU or associated country (Horizon 2020 Associated Countries: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine) is limited to 20% of the total amount of units of access provided under the grant
- On the StoRIES website a list of TNA projects naming the researchers organisation, the research project title, a short description and the RI used will be published.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES;

Accommodation, meals, and local transport expenses;

International travel.

NOT ELEGIBLE EXPENSES:

Material cost of user /user group;

Cost of transport of material from the home to host organisation and back;

Other costs not mentioned in eligible costs.

3.3.7 Rules for publicising results and collection of publications

- Apart from the above-mentioned requirement that publications (including presentations) which result from Transnational Access at StoRIES should contain the **project acknowledgement** we would appreciate an acknowledgement of the RI owner and the RI: "We appreciate the support of the StoRIES Horizon 2020 project and the *RI name* RI from the StoRIES member *RI owner name*."

- Users should also note that the EC has the right to publish the list of project titles, users, and their home institutions
- The StoRIES project reports to the EC will contain the names, home institutions and description of the work of the users.

3.4   Pro-active innovation support

Task 3.6 *Innovation Support* of WP3 will support users in their application for a proposal to access RI. It will help to establish a direct contact between the applicant users and the TNA and VA provider to enhance the **success of the user proposals** and **maximise the outcome** of each user access. Upon the progression of the project, this task will take advantage from the **user's and RI feedbacks** provided by WP2 and WG3 of WP1, i.e., considering feedback and experiences obtained from the previous TNA and VA. This will facilitate joint developments of **specific services** and integrate **joint access procedures**, improve, and customise the services the infrastructures provide, and to further develop on-line and testing services. This task will monitor the impact of the overall "pro-active innovation support" measures and provide feedback to Advisory Board (AB) and Governing Board (GB). New recommendations will be coordinated with the relevant members of the consortium and communicated to the public.

3.5   Data Management Plan

An initial Data Management Plan (DMP) will be created particularly considering the system put in place in the project for Transnational and Virtual Access to research infrastructures and updated as the project progresses since not all data or potential uses will be clear at the initial stage. That DMP will represent the project's most recent view on the **datasets and exchanges in the project** and between the project and the "outside world". The StoRIES' DMP will be a tool for **identifying and managing all the data in the project**, to identify their origin, their content, the responsible person (data manager), and the servers where they will be hosted. In this respect, the document will contain a **complete directory of all the datasets** indicating the WPs and tasks dealing with them. The DMP will also serve as a guideline to **make the project data more FAIR** (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Re-usable) which will be both useful for the internal purposes in the project consortium and **for the external community** (**regarding the publicly available part of the project data**). The DMP initial version will **specify which data and reports will be in open access** and which ones will be confidential within the consortium. It will provide first elements on how the FAIR-ness approach will be realised in practice. Greater details will be provided in subsequent versions as the work proceeds in the WPs. The preparation of the initial DMP will enable identification of questions on the FAIR aspects of the project data that cannot be answered initially and will be addressed later.

It is planned, that the RI contacts of the visited RI together with the TNA user will complete the information identified in the DMP.

The project will collect personal-related data. StoRIES will therefore strictly consider the regulations of the participating countries on data privacy-related issues and the EU Directive on the Protection of Personal Data, as well as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

3.6 Information for Research Infrastructure Owners

The TNA budget is held by the project coordinator and distributed according to actual RI use for TNA during the project to the partners, LTPs and subcontractors based on which RIs have received a TNA visit/s in the current year.

ANNEX 1: APPLICATION FORM – DRAFT

STORIES draft trans-national access application form

TNA Call No.	
Date of submission	

Proposal resubmitted:
☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Preferred host research infrastructures	1st option:
	2nd option:
	3rd option:
Proposed starting date for the access	
Expected access duration (in days/weeks)	

USER PROJECT PROPOSAL	
User Project acronym	
User Project title	
Main scientific/technical fields (ES technologies)	
Keywords (5 max., free text)	

USER (LEADER OF THE PROPOSING GROUP)	
Name	
Phone	
E-mail address	
Nationality	
Gender	
Organization name	

Organization address	
Organization website	
Position in organization	
Activity type and legal status of organization[1]	

USER (MEMBER OF THE PROPOSING GROUP) (repeat for all members)	
Name	
Phone	
E-mail address	
Nationality	
Gender	
Organization name	
Organization address	
Organization website	
Position in organization	
Activity type and legal status of organization[1]	

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED RESEARCH (max 1/2 page)
[Prepare a ½ page summary describing the relevance, scope and objectives of the proposed work, and the expected outcomes.]

STATE-OF-THE-ART (max 1 ½ page)
[Describe in brief (about 1½ page) the current knowledge on the subject, citing recent relevant references. Identify any knowledge gaps and their relevance.]   **References**   *[List relevant references.]*

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT: OBJECTIVES, HYBRIDIZATION; EXPECTED OUTCOMES, FUNDAMENTAL SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL VALUE (max 2 pages)

[Provide a detailed description of the objectives of the proposed activity, the way these objectives will be fulfilled through the proposed work, as well as indications on the expected outcomes and the fundamental scientific and technical value and interest of the proposal. Specify the activities to be undertaken, the type of TNA infrastructure needed, the foreseen test setup, number of tests, possible test sequence, and parameters to be measured and controlled. Describe any special requirements for equipment, standards, safety measures, etc. Evaluate how robust and realistic the proposed approach is. Point out any shortcomings, uncertainties and risks for the fulfilment of the project objectives, as well as the means to mitigate relevant risks.]

ORIGINALITY, HYBRIDIZATION, INNOVATION AND IMPACT OF PROPOSED RESEARCH (max 1 page)

[Demonstrate the originality and innovation of the proposed work and the impact the expected results will have on current and future research or practice, public safety, European standardization, competitiveness, integration and cohesion and on sustainable growth.]

SYNERGY WITH ONGOING RESEARCH/ ANOTHER StoRIES TNA PROPOSAL (max ½ page)

[Provide information on any concurrent research project/another TNA proposal within the same StoRIES call with the same or similar subject with the one proposed. Describe the synergy (if any) that will be sought between the existing and the proposed project. Explain the degree of alignment with the StoRIES approach, scope and objectives (ES hybridization)]

PROPOSED HOST RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE/INSTALLATION – JUSTIFICATION (max 1 page)

[Specify the type of TNA infrastructure/installation needed for the research, which must be coherent with the preferred options indicated in the first page of this proposal; justifications should be provided on the grounds of the test set-up, testing method, equipment, past experience in relevant subject, etc. Describe the potential benefits for the host research infrastructure in terms of improvement of know-how or enhancement of technologies and methods. Explain whether the proposing User Group intends to deliver to the premises of the TNA Infrastructure parts or components to be tested at the User Group's expense and responsibility, or to cover the whole or part of the construction/adaptation cost of the specimens to be tested. List chemicals and materials, you will bring to the RI to be tested or used for your project. Use of some dangerous substances may be restricted or prohibited by some facilities. List any equipment or instrument, which you will need to integrate to the RI.]

SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES TO BE CONCERNED (max ½ page)

[Specify the sustainability/environmental aspects or potential harm to persons of the planned experiments and the further development of the innovation, which will or may impact the implementation. Consider the life cycle assessment of your experiment and mention any rare material you plan to use. By any questions, please contact StoRIES management team to get support from the StoRIES services dealing with the issues.]

DISSEMINATION – EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS (max ½ page)

[In addition to the mandatory reporting for the access described in the "StoRIES TNA Procedure and Rules" document (to be found on the StoRIES webpage), indicate other means through which the results to be obtained from the proposed project will be diffused and made broadly known.]

TIME SCHEDULE (max ½ page)

[Provide an indicative time-schedule for the proposed work and a target starting date.]

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSING TEAM (as long as needed)

[Give a short description of each member (organization and persons) of the proposing team including projects, publications, technical experience and capabilities and role in the proposed project.]

HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THE STORIES TNA? (optional)

---

[1] Choose from:

- *Higher education institution*
- *Public research organization*
- *Private not-for-profit research organization*

- *Small or medium size private enterprise*
- *Large private enterprise*
- *Other* (please specify)

ANNEX 2: ACCESS SUMMARY REPORT FORM – DRAFT

After the StoRIES Transnational Access stay or Virtual Access, users are required to submit an initial research access summary report. This should be done within 4 weeks after the Access is completed unless otherwise agreed. The Access Summary Report form will be given to the User(s) by the Project Management or the Access Provider. The report contains sections related to the work performed, the main results and observations that were achieved. The Access Summary Report may be slightly different depending on the type of application and RI.

The draft Access Summary Report is currently included in the draft post research questionnaire which can be found below in Annex 3.

ANNEX 3: POST RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE (WITH SATISFACTION SURVEY): USER (S) - DRAFT

Summary report form (exit questionnaire) for users who have been granted Transnational Access (TNA) under the StoRIES project Horizon 2020 TNA scheme

General information about the project	
Project title (as used in application)	
Project acronym (max 15 characters)	
StoRIES TNA RI(s) accessed	
Keywords (up to ten, free text)	
Arrival date (in town where RI located)	
Departure date (from town where RI located)	
Starting date of access (first day at RI)	
Finishing date of access (last day at RI)	
Number of days not using the RI (during the above period)	
Reason for not using RI those days (describe)	
Number of days using the RI	
Number of users granted access (group size)	
Comments	
User	
User group leader or sole applicant (user group member 1)	
First name	
Last name	
Affiliation / Employer	
Country of Employer	
E-mail	

Comments	
User group member 2	
First name	
Last name	
Affiliation / Employer	
Country of Employer	
E-mail	
Comments	
User group member 3	
First name	
Last name	
Affiliation / Employer	
Country of Employer	
E-mail	
Comments	
User group member 4	
First name	
Last name	
Affiliation / Employer	
Country of Employer	
E-mail	
Comments	
Please insert more fields if your groups had more than four members.	

Access Summary Report - work performed and initial results

Brief description of the objectives of your project (up to 200 words)

[Please describe short the main objectives of your project]

Activities performed (up to 600 words)

[Please summarise the work carried you (steps taken, instrumentation used, techniques employed, data sources consulted etc.)]

Scientific results (up to 800 words)

[Summarise the (initial) outcomes of your study at the RI(s).]

Interpretation of the results (up to 400 words)

[Discuss the data obtained and describe the major scientific conclusions drawn.]

Main achievements during the TNA related work (up to 250 words)

[Describe the main achievements during your stay at the site(s)]

Difficulties during the TNA related work (up to 250 words)

[List problems and issues you had, completing out your research project: Did you get access to all the necessary equipment, facilities, databases, etc.?
If not, please specify the problems that occurred and list equipment the was not working or accessible.]

Intended publications

[Explain where and how you expect to publish the outcomes of your project work. Include also anything already published (What and where?)]

Conclusions / additional comments

[Provide any other comments you might have on your work]

Did you complete the EC user questionnaire?

☐ *Yes*   ☐ *No*

Feedback – HSE, Ethics and Satisfaction

Please rate on a scale from 1 (excellent) to 5 (poor). Feel free to provide additional comments

Practical information on how to apply for Transnational Access and the overall application process	1 (excellent)	2	3 (neutral)	4	5 (poor)
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comment

Information provided, once your project was accepted, on how to proceed	1 (excellent)	2	3 (neutral)	4	5 (poor)
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comment

Support received at the site(s) regarding technical/scientific matters and logistics	Have you got sufficient support from the RI staff during the project? If not, please, specify the problems. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*

Please specify any problems

RI extension / upgrades required	In your opinion, is the RI needed to be upgraded? If yes, please give an explanation. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*

Please specify

Problems with local regulations	Have you had any problems with regulations of the visited RI owner (HSE, lab working hours, etc.)? If yes, please, specify ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*

Please specify

Health and safety issues	Did you encounter any health or safety issue during your research? Please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*

Please provide details

Environment & Ethics	Did your research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to the environment, to animals or plants? Please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*

Please provide details

Environment & Ethics	Did your research deal with endangered fauna and/or flora and/or protected areas? Please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*

Please provide details	
Environment & Ethics	Did your research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to humans, including research staff? Please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Environment & Ethics – Dual use	Does your research have the potential for military applications? Please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Environment & Ethics – Misuse	Does your research have the potential for malevolent /criminal/terrorist abuse? Please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Environmental issues	Were any potentially dangerous substances (materials / gases etc.) released into the environment (atmosphere, water, or land)? Please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Ethics issues	Are there any other ethics issues that should be taken into consideration? Please specify ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	

	1 (excellent)	2	3 (neutral)	4	5 (poor)
Overall impression of communication and interaction after finishing your TNA related work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comment	
Suggestions for facilities not included in StoRIES which you would use for your research	Please provide suggestions for specific type of facilities missing (RI gaps) or measurement / experiments you would like to perform which can not be done on current StoRIES facilities.
Your suggestions	

Suggestions how StoRIES can improve future TNA program	Provide any other comments
Comment	

I declare that the above provided information and especially that information on the number of days visited the RI is correct.

Your full name:

Your signature:

ANNEX 4: POST RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE FORM: RI OWNER - DRAFT

Summary report form (exit questionnaire) for facilities that had a Transnational Access (TA) visit under the StoRIES H2020 TA Scheme

General information about the TA project	
Project title	(project name)
StoRIES TNA RI(s) accessed	(RI name)
Name of lead (main) visiting researcher	
Your name	
Your position	
Start date of access (first day at RI)	
Completion date of access (last day at RI)	
Days to commission / prepare RI before the visit	(State number of days before first access day)
Days to decommission RI after the visit	(State number of days after last access day)
Please give a short description of commissioning / decommissioning	
Number of days RI used during the above period	
Number of days RI not used during the above period	
Reason for not using RI those days – describe	(For example: weekend, RI not working, health and safety training, etc.)

User(s)	
Other group member (apart from the group leader above)	
Name Group member 1	
Name Group member 2	
Name Group member 3	
Name Group member 4	
Name Group member 5	
…..	
Work performed	
Did the researcher (/group) comply with your facilities / organisation's regulations?	Yes / No. If not, please, explain the problem. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
[describe here]	
Did the research project cause any damage to the RI? If yes, what was the estimated damage?	Yes / No. If yes, describe and estimate the damage? ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
[describe and estimate here]	
Did you need to contact directly the researcher's (/group's) institution?	Yes / No. If yes, why? ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
[describe here]	

Where there any complaints from the researcher (/group)?	Yes / No. If yes, please, list them. ☐ *Yes*　☐ *No*
[list here]	
Are you satisfied with how the research was performed and with the results achieved?	Yes / No. If not, please, explain why. ☐ *Yes*　☐ *No*
[explain here]	
Difficulties during the researchers TA visit or any problems with the RI during the research project?	
*[*List problems or inconveniences during the project: (access available to all the necessary equipment, facilities, databases, etc.?) If not, please specify the problems that occurred and list equipment not working or accessible. *]*	
What would you suggest could improve the StoRIES Transnational Access program?	
[describe here]	
Feedback about the research project	
Could the research be performed as planned?	(Any RI upgrades required? If yes, please give an explanation.) ☐ *Yes*　☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Problems with local regulations	Were there any issues regarding your facilities regulations (lab working hours, etc.)? If yes, please, specify ☐ *Yes*　☐ *No*
Please provide details	

Health and safety issues	Did you or the researcher encounter any health or safety issue during your research? If yes, please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Environment & Ethics	Did the research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to the environment, to animals or plants? If yes, please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Environment & Ethics	Did the research deal with endangered fauna and/or flora and/or protected areas? If yes, please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Environment & Ethics	Did the research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to humans, including research staff? If yes, please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Environment & Ethics – Dual use	Does the research have the potential for military applications? If yes, please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	
Environment & Ethics – Misuse	Does the research have the potential for malevolent/criminal/terrorist abuse? If yes, please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	

Environmental issues	Were any potentially dangerous substances (materials / gases etc.) released into the environment (atmosphere, water, or land)? If yes, please provide details. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
[Please provide details	
Ethics issues	Were there any other ethics issues that should be taken into consideration? If yes, please specify ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*
Please provide details	

ANNEX 5: TRAVEL CLAIM FORM OF STORIES TNA – DRAFT

[Choose date]

Travel and subsistence reimbursement for StoRIES RI users from EU, Associated States or approved other countries

This travel claim form should be completed, signed, and sent to the following person, along with all eligible receipts either by e-mail to info@storiesproject.eu or/and by postal mail to:

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology
Olga Sumińska-Ebersoldt
Hermann-von-Helmholtz-Platz 1
76344 Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen
Germany

(Each traveller who needs to be reimbursed individually should complete a separate form for each TNA visit)

Please complete, sign, and send this form, together with all original receipts, by post to the StoRIES project management contact above. Please provide all original tickets, vouchers, boarding passes and receipts for travel, accommodation, and food.
Please also scan the receipts and send them with the 2 completed forms (this one & the bank details as a filled in Word file and a signed and scanned (pdf) file) electronically.

Your details		RI and visit details	
User Name		**Host institution**	
User e-mail		**RI used**	
User phone		**Date of arrival**	
Home institution		**Date of departure**	
Home institution Town		**Research Project Title**	
Home institution Country		**Modify payment reference for the transfer, if required**	StoRIES TNA Nr.: *(application number)*

Dates and time of installation use

I / we used the above RI during the following period for *x* days:

From:	*[First day of access]*
To:	*[Last day of access]*
Individual single days:	*[State how many actual days you used the RI]*
Comments:	

Expenses

StoRIES Transnational Access (TNA) – Travel Claim Form

Please make one entry in the table below for each receipt / item (insert more columns if necessary):

Type	Details (what / from / to / where)	Name of person for this item	Receipt cur-rency	Amount in local receipt currency	Amount in €
	description	*name*	*€/…*		*X €*
Air Fares (flight details, from & to)					
Bus, Train and other Fares (from & to)					
Accommodation (type, name & town)					
Meals (type, name & town)					

Miscellaneous *(please specify)*					
Total (in Euro)					
Total in your own home currency					
Comments					
Total claimed (own currency)					

I declare that the expenses claimed above are correct, directly connected to the above-mentioned StoRIES TNA research project and are not being reimbursed from any other source

Signature claimant   Date

Internal use - controlled and approved by:

	Name	Date	Signature / Initials
Controlled			
Approved			
Paid			

ANNEX 6: EU GRANT AGREEMENT SECTIONS - RULES FOR PROVISION OF TRANSNATIONAL OR VIRTUAL ACCESS TO RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE (GA ARTICLE 16)

GA 16.1 - Rules for providing trans-national access to research infrastructure

GA 16.1.1 - For trans-national access to research infrastructure 'Access providers' must provide access to research infrastructure or installations in accordance with the following conditions:

a) **access** which must be provided:
   - The access must be **free of charge**, **trans-national** access to research infrastructure or installations for selected users or user-groups
   - This access must include the **logistical, technological, and scientific support and the specific training** that is usually provided to external researchers using the infrastructure.

b) **categories of users** that may have access:
   - **Trans-national** access must be provided to **selected users** or 'user-groups', i.e., teams of one or more researchers (users) led by a 'user group leader'
   - The user group leader and the **majority** of the users must **work in a country other than the country(ies) where the installation is located**
   - Only user groups that are **allowed to disseminate the results** they have generated under the action may benefit from the access, unless the users are working for SMEs
   - Access for user groups with a **majority of users not working in a EU or associated country* is limited to 20 %** of the total amount of units of access provided under the grant.

   *EU 'associated country' means a third country which is party to an international agreement with the Union, as identified in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013, such as: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine (and United Kingdom).

c) **procedure and criteria for selecting** users / user groups:
   - The user groups must **request access by submitting (in writing)** a **description of the work** that they wish to carry out and the **names, nationalities, and home institutions** of the users
   - The user groups must be selected by a **selection panel** set up by the access providers
   - The selection panel must be composed of **international experts in the field**, at least **half of them independent** from the beneficiaries (, unless otherwise specified in Annex 1)
   - The selection panel must **assess all proposals** received and **recommend a short-list** of the user groups that should benefit from access
   - The selection panel must base its selection on **scientific merit**, taking into account that priority should be given to user groups composed of users who:
     i. have **not previously used the installation**
     ii. are working in **countries where no equivalent research infrastructure exist**.
   - It will apply the principles of **transparency, fairness, and impartiality**.

d) other conditions:
- The access provider must **request written approval from the Agency** (see GA Article 52) for the selection of user groups requiring **visits to the installation(s) exceeding 3 months**, unless such visits are foreseen in Annex 1.

GA 16.1.2 - In addition, the access provider must:

- **advertise widely**, including on a dedicated website, the access offered under the Agreement
- **promote equal opportunities** in advertising the access and considering the gender dimension when defining the support provided to users
- ensure that **users comply with the terms and conditions of this Agreement**
- ensure that **its obligations under GA Articles 35, 36, 38 and 46 also apply to the users**.

GA 16.2 - Rules for providing virtual access to research infrastructure

'Access providers' must provide access to research infrastructure or installations in accordance with the following conditions:

a) **access** which must be provided:
- The access must be **free of charge, virtual access** to research infrastructure or installations.
- **'Virtual access' means open and free access through communication networks to resources needed for research**, **without selecting the researchers to whom access is provided**;
b) other conditions:
- The access provider **must have the virtual access services assessed periodically by a board composed of international experts in the field**, at least **half of whom must be independent from the beneficiaries**, unless otherwise specified in Annex 1.

GA 16.3 - Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary **breaches** any of its obligations under GA Articles 16.1.1 and 16.2, the **costs of access will be ineligible** (see Article 6) and will be rejected (see Article 42).

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under GA Articles 16.1.2, the **grant may be reduced** (see Article 43).

Such breaches may also lead to any of the other measures described in GA Chapter 6.

Record-keeping

Record-keeping — The beneficiaries must **keep appropriate records and supporting documentation to justify the number of units of trans-national access for which they declare costs** (see GA Article 18), including:

- **users' names, nationalities, and home institutions**

the **nature of access** and **quantity of access** provided to them.

Access providers must include **detailed information on the provision of access activity** in the **periodic technical reports** (see Article 20.3).

- **For trans-national access** to research infrastructure: The report must **detail the access activity**, indicating the **members of the selection panel**, the **selection procedure**, the **exact amount of access** provided to the user groups, the **description of their work**, and **information on the users (including names, nationality, and home institutions)**
- **For virtual access** to research infrastructure: The reports must **detail the access activity**, with **statistics on the virtual access provided in the period**, including **quantity, geographical distribution of users** and, whenever possible, **information/statistics on scientific outcomes (publications, patents, etc.) acknowledging the use of the infrastructure**.

GA Article 16.1 contains both additional cost eligibility conditions (in Article 16.1.1) and 'other obligations' (in Article 16.1.2):

Rules for reimbursement of costs related to the provision of Transnational Access to research infrastructure

Access Provider reimbursement

Access Provider is being reimbursed — for the provision of access activity — the following types of costs:

- For TNA 'access costs' (i.e., the operating costs of the research infrastructure or installation and costs related to logistical, technological and scientific support for users, including ad-hoc user training and the preparatory and closing activities needed to use the installation)
- For TNA users' travel and subsistence costs
- costs of advertising the trans-national access offered under the action
- costs related to the selection procedure (e.g., the selection panel members' travel and subsistence costs, logistical costs of meetings, fees, etc.)
- costs of preparing the detailed access activity information that must be included in the periodic technical reports (see GA Article 20.3).

The access costs may be declared as unit costs, actual costs or — under certain conditions — as a combination of the two (see GA Articles 5.2(f) and 6.2.F), while the other costs in this list must be declared as actual costs (see GA Articles 5.2(d) and 6.2.D).

> If access costs are declared as unit cost, they must be declared under the budget category F.2 'access costs for providing trans-national access to research infrastructure' (see GA Article 5.2(f) and 6.2.F)

> If they are declared as actual costs, they must be declared under the other budget categories (see GA Articles 5.2(a-e) and 6.2.A-E).

Capital investments (i.e., equipment costs for renting, leasing, purchasing depreciable equipment, infrastructure, or other assets) will **NOT** be reimbursed (for the provision of access activities; see GA Article 6.2.D.2).

Trans-national access must be measured (in 'units of access').

- The units of access for the various installations that provide trans-national access under the grant must be specified in Annex 1 of the GA

- Examples (units of access): per week of access for a historical archive; per campaign-day for a research vessel
- For trans-national access, the GA will always specify a unit of access (independently of whether the costs are declared as unit cost or actual costs).

Other Rules and Obligations

a) Additional cost eligibility condition: Access which must be provided

Trans-national access can be either:

- **in person** (hands-on), provided to selected users that visit the installation or
- **remote**, through the provision to selected users of remote scientific services.

    Examples (remote access): provision of reference materials or samples (e.g., shipping of a virus strain); performing a remote sample analysis or sample deposition; remote access to a high-performance computing facility

- Remote trans-national access requires competitive selection of the users to be served under the GA as usually it applies to resources that are not unlimited (e.g., computing hours on a supercomputer or remote analysis of a sample). It is thus different from virtual access, which applies to resources that can be simultaneously used by an unlimited number of users (e.g., a dataset available on the internet)
- Trans-national access must be given to selected user groups (free of charge).

b) Additional cost eligibility condition: Categories of users that may have access — Limited access for special user groups

For trans-national access, user groups in which all or most users work in non-associated third countries may ONLY have access for up to 20 % of the total number of units of access provided under the grant.

c) Additional cost eligibility condition: Selection procedure with a selection panel

For trans-national access, access providers must set up a common selection panel that regularly evaluates the applications for access and recommends a shortlist of the user groups that would benefit from access.

    If justified, an access provider may use several different selection sub-panels.

        Example: Different thematic selection sub-panels could be set up for a set of analytical facilities serving multidisciplinary communities.

d) 'Other obligation': Controls on the users (by the Commission/Agency, ECA and OLAF) — Evaluation of the impact of the action

The beneficiaries must ensure that the Commission/Agency, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) have the right to carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations on the users (see GA Article 22), and in particular to audit proper implementation of action tasks.

They must also ensure that the Commission/Agency has the right to make an evaluation of the impact of the action under GA Article 23.

It is the beneficiaries' responsibility to ensure that these obligations are accepted by the users (for example, if they refuse access and the Commission/Agency cannot verify the eligibility of the costs, it will reject them).

e) 'Other obligation': Extension of obligations under the GA to users

The beneficiaries must also ensure that the users comply with certain obligations under the GA.

Obligations that must be extended to users:

- Avoiding conflicts of interest (GA Article 35)
- Maintaining confidentiality (GA Article 36)
- Promoting the action and give visibility to the EU funding (GA Article 38)
- Liability for damages (GA Article 46).

It is the beneficiaries' responsibility to ensure that these obligations are accepted by the users.

Access rights for third parties:
For trans-national access to research infrastructure: The access provider must — unless it is subject to legal restrictions or limits, including those imposed by the rights of third parties (including personnel) — give users royalty-free access to background needed to implement the action.

The access provider must inform the users as soon as possible of any restriction which might substantially affect the granting of access rights.]

Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 43).

Such breaches may also lead to any of the other measures described in Chapter 6.

Rules for reimbursement of costs related to the provision of virtual access to research infrastructure

Access Provider reimbursement

Grants for this type of actions usually reimburse — for the provision of access activity — the following types of costs:

- 'access costs' (i.e., the operating costs of the installation during the course of the action and costs related to technological and scientific support for users access (e.g., a helpdesk)
- costs of advertising virtual access offered under the action
- costs related to the assessment carried out by the board of international experts (e.g., costs of organising a board meeting)

- costs of preparing the detailed access activity information that must be included in the periodic technical reports (see Article 20.3) and the assessment report (see below point 3).

As from the Work Programme 2020, the access costs may be declared as unit costs, actual costs or — under certain conditions — as a combination of the two (see Articles 5.2(f) and 6.2.F), while the other costs in this list must be declared as actual costs (see Articles 5.2(d) and 6.2.D).

If access costs are declared as unit cost, they must be declared under the budget category F.2 'access costs for providing trans-national access to research infrastructure' (see Article 5.2(f) and 6.2.F)

If they are declared as actual costs, they must be declared under the other budget categories (see Articles 5.2(a-e) and 6.2.A-E).

Capital investments (i.e., costs of renting, leasing, purchasing depreciable equipment, infrastructure or other assets) will NOT be reimbursed — unless provided for in the work programme/call. In this case only the portion used to provide virtual access under the project is eligible.

Virtual access may or may not be measured. If measured, the GA will specify a unit of access.

When the research infrastructure access policy requires the identification of users, the EU financial support to virtual access will cover the access costs incurred by the infrastructure or installation for the provision of access under the grant to the identified users. The proposal can also define eligibility criteria (e.g., affiliation to a research or academic institution) for the users to whom access will be provided under the grant

When access is provided without identifying users, the research infrastructures virtual services to be supported by the EU must be widely used by the European research community42.

The beneficiaries must provide detailed information on the provision of access activity in the periodic technical reports including, when access is provided without identifying users, statistics on all users in the reporting period compiled through web analytical tools (see Article 20.3).

Article 16.2 contains additional cost eligibility conditions.

a) Additional cost eligibility condition: Access which must be provided

Virtual access applies to widely used research resources that are openly and freely available through communication networks.

Example: access to an open database available on the internet

Access must be open to all users; users are not selected.

b) Additional cost eligibility condition: Periodic assessment by a board of international experts

For virtual access, the access services must be regularly assessed by an external board of international experts.

At least two assessments are usually carried out during the course of an action.

The assessment reports must already be part of the proposal (as deliverables; see the proposal templates) and be included in Annex 1 of the GA.

ARTICLE 27 — PROTECTION OF RESULTS — VISIBILITY OF EU FUNDING

27.1 Obligation to protect the results

Each beneficiary must examine the possibility of protecting its results and must adequately protect them — for an appropriate period and with appropriate territorial coverage — if:

>   (a) the results can reasonably be expected to be commercially or industrially exploited and

>   (b) protecting them is possible, reasonable, and justified (given the circumstances).

When deciding on protection, the beneficiary must consider its own legitimate interests and the legitimate interests (especially commercial) of the other beneficiaries.

27.2 Agency ownership, to protect the results

If a beneficiary intends not to protect its results, to stop protecting them or not seek an extension of protection, the Agency may — under certain conditions (see Article 26.4) — assume ownership to ensure their (continued) protection.

27.3 Information on EU funding

Applications for protection of results (including patent applications) filed by or on behalf of a beneficiary must — unless the Agency requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible — include the following:

"The project leading to this application has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No [number]".

27.4 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 43).

Such a breach may also lead to any of the other measures described in Chapter 6.

1. Protection of results

The beneficiaries must — for any results that can reasonably be expected to be commercially or industrially exploited —:

– examine the possibility of protecting them and

– if possible, reasonable, and justified, protect them

even if this requires further research and development or private investment.

Example (no protection necessary): if protection is impossible under EU or national law or not justified (in view of the (potential) commercial or industrial exploitation, the action's objective, and other relevant elements, such as potential markets and countries in which competitors are located, whether additionally protecting a part of certain technology would bring significantly broader protection or not, etc.)

Best practice: Beneficiaries should consider seeking expert advice to help them decide whether and how to protect results.

This obligation also applies to beneficiaries not receiving EU funding (see Article 9).

ANNEX 7: EU ASSOCIATED STATES

- Iceland
- Norway
- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Montenegro
- Serbia
- Turkey
- Israel
- Moldova
- Switzerland (partial association, see below)
- Faroe Islands
- Ukraine