

Standard Operation Procedures	SOP_069
Effective Date: 09/10/2024	Supersedes: Public

SOP_069 Partnerships

Special Requirements	This procedure is a controlled document maintained by Quality Management. It may not be deleted without comparable controls. Please note that this document becomes uncontrolled once printed. Make sure by always referring only to the Repository that you have the right version in use. Deviations from the provision of this document need to be recorded in the Exception Request Workflow . The procedure should be updated when there are changes in EFSA with respect to what is stated in the document (e.g. Relevant Standards, legislation, and documents, change in procedure, etc.). The person responsible for maintaining this procedure up to date is the Lead author with the support of the QM.
Process Responsibility	Process owners are accountable this procedure being adhered to within their respective or unit. All relevant staff is responsible for the correct implementation of the procedure. Responsibilities for performing specific steps are outlined in the document.

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

This procedure describes how to plan for and implement partnerships for EFSA, by integrating EFSA's corporate vision, its needs and any emerging opportunities within EFSA's ecosystem of actors. It describes how to engage with individual Partners, to establish, maintain and improve EFSA's networks and to widen sourcing options to ensure relevance and quality of science. Such Partners would primarily be MS Competent Bodies, EU Agencies or Commission Services (such as DG JRC). This SOP covers the process 07.01.



RELEVANT STANDARDS, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS	
n/a	
ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITION	
EU	European Union
CSO	Chief Scientist Office
GPS	Global Performance Service
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
ENREL	Engagement & External Relations
HoD	Head of Department
HoU	Head of Unit
FDP	Front-Desk & Workforce Planning (FDP)
FIN	Finance
JRC	Joint Research Centre
KNOW	Knowledge, Innovation and Partnership Management
SO	Scientific Officer
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SMU	Subject Matter Unit(s)
EFSA Supporting publications	<p>Supporting Publications include the following type of outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Report • External Scientific Report • Event Report <p>These publications are not published in the EFSA Journal. For more information see: https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/23978325</p>
Food Risk Assess Europe	<p>Food Risk Assess Europe (FRAE) is an open access repository of selected scientific articles from the national food safety agencies of the EU Member States. The articles are selected to inform the work of the European risk assessment community for food and feed safety and to leverage the knowledge generated by the national agencies for the benefit of all. It is relevant to the work under the process this SOP supports, as it allows visibility to the risk assessment work done by Member States' organisations. For more information see: https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/29401399</p>



Tenderer(s)/ Contractor(s), Grant applicants/ Grant beneficiaries	<p>In this SOP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenderer(s) indicate organisations that submit offers to EFSA's calls for tender. • Contractor(s) indicate organisations that have signed contract(s) - or framework contracts - to provide services to EFSA (selected following calls for tender or negotiated procedures, etc.). Experts selected via the Independent Scientific Advisors scheme also constitute contractors. • Grant applicants indicate Member States competent bodies (also known as 'organisations of the Article 36 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002' or as 'Art. 36 organisations') which apply to calls for grant, alone or in consortium with other Member States competent bodies. • Grant beneficiaries indicate Member States competent bodies that have signed grant agreements or framework partnership agreements with EFSA.
WIN	Work Instruction
PROCEDURE	
	Previous SOPs in the process:
Step 1a	<p>1a. Proactively scan the Ecosystem of organisations with possible interest to work with EFSA to look for Partnership opportunities</p>
Connect Team KNOW	<p>1.a.1 KNOW collects inputs from SMUs and scientific networks indicating recurring needs or ideas to be developed</p> <p>1.a.2 KNOW consults and integrates the outputs from the activities under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.3 Workforce planning • 8.1 Environment Scanning, • 7.2 Community Management (including information held in the MS risk assessment plans database), and • 7.3 Strategic Engagement • Ad hoc bilateral or multilateral institutional discussions with existing or potential partner organisations • Ad hoc or regular interactions with established EFSA-relevant Communities on partnership-related matters, in coordination with the lead Unit of EPA 7.2 and 7.3 (ENREL)



	<p>1.a.3</p> <p>Each year, in order to enhance cooperation, alignment and efficiency gains through partnering, EFSA's GPS Unit coordinates the internal review of the draft Multiannual Work Programmes of EMA, ECHA, ECDC, EEA, and EUDA (ex. EMCDDA). This activity is foreseen in the Memoranda of Understanding between EFSA and its EU Sister Agencies. The outcome of this review is shared with the concerned Agency. In this exercise, KNOW provides input on any activities that would be relevant to the process 07.01 Partnership (e.g., any activity that would benefit from cooperation between EFSA and the other Agency).</p> <p>1.a.4 KNOW, on its own initiative or at the request of ENREL, the Chief Scientist Office, a SMU, the Executive Director, gathers information on organisations or groups of organisations, with the aim to support decision-making regarding engagement or partnership options. Such information may include the scientific competences of an organisation, their recent published scientific activity, information on networks or joint scientific activities of theirs, activity on any of EFSA's publications (EFSA Journal, EFSA Supporting publications, Food Risk Assess Europe), etc.</p>
Step 1b	1b. Collect insights to grasp info on science needs/ patterns
FIN/GPS/KNOW/FDP /SMU	<p>1.b.1 KNOW reviews the collection of EFSA needs list by GPS and/or FIN, information on incoming mandates by FDP and taking into consideration any relevant information from the mandate medium-term plan from the EC - with a focus on needs that have periodicity across the years, information on outsourcing plans for business-as-usual scientific needs that may be collected during the regular dialogue between FIN and SMU.</p> <p>1.b.2 KNOW discusses with the corresponding SMU(s) in order to identify or clarify needs or ambitions and the timeframe thereof.</p>
Step 2	2. Analyze collected info to identify elements that would be suitable for Outsourcing via Partnership
Connect Team KNOW /SMU	<p>2.1 KNOW works to better define and understand the identified needs through portfolio analysis, also based on prioritization inputs by GPS. This step will indicate whether the needs identified would have relevance to additional actors in EFSA.</p> <p>2.2 KNOW performs additional checks and considerations (e.g., utilising information on relevant recent or ongoing RA activities of the MS), around the capacity of partners with regards to a specific topic and the implications for the structure of EFSA partnerships.</p> <p>2.3 KNOW coordinates with the SMU to develop a business case.</p>



Step 3	3. Coordinate with SMU to define/ state the target Partners' features (e.g., type, competencies, etc.)/ tasks specifications to be shared with FIN)
SMU/KNOW	<p>3.1 KNOW coordinates with the SMU to define exactly what would be suitable for outsourcing (normally via a Grant-supported project). FIN is approached to advise, when needed.</p> <p>3.2 KNOW shares the task specifications with FIN.</p>
Step 4	4. Analyse the list of existing contracts (provided by FIN) to check whether there is already a contract in place related to the identified opportunity
FIN/KNOW	4.1 KNOW coordinates with FIN (and others, as needed) to extract information with regards to existing framework contracts or grant agreements that are relevant to the need identified.
Step 5	5. Gather and appraise Market insights taking into account FIN expert advice on G&P schemes
FIN/SMU/KNOW	<p>5.1 If a contract is not already in place, KNOW and the SMU research the existence of a feasible market and analyse whether partners can absorb the need.</p> <p>5.2 FIN contributes by providing insight on contractors' past work delivered, reputation and past performances, and by giving discussing on the outsourcing approach based on the nature of the work to be outsourced and type of partners sought.</p> <p>5.3 FIN carries out market analysis for the opportunities/calls that require it, in close collaboration with the SMU – and KNOW, as needed, each leveraging any prior knowledge or tools or services they may have access to.</p>
Step 6	6. Advise the SMU on how to amend the contract
FIN/SMU/KNOW	<p>6.1 If a contract is already in place and appears likely to be suitable to cover in whole or in part the need, the possibility to utilize its services is discussed among SMU (which frames their need), KNOW (which considers alternative solutions for the said need) and FIN (which leads on contract management). In the discussion FIN gives advice on the feasibility of the amendments required.</p> <p>6.2 FIN leads the process to change the contract/grant agreement as required.</p>
Step 7	7. Draft a list of specifications: technical (SMU); financial (FIN), additional (KNOW) (support to EPA 10.02)
FIN/SMU/KNOW	<p>7.1 The SMU drafts the scientific and technical specifications of the call.</p> <p>7.2 FIN adds the administrative and financial provisions.</p> <p>7.3 If the call involves investments or integration of digital</p>



	services, KNOW seeks feedback on the specifications by TS. 7.4 KNOW adds specifications related to the management and exploitation of the knowledge expected to be produced by the project (link to process 6.3), and shares them with the SMU and FIN. If the specifications need to make reference to the monitoring of partnership indicators, such as those in Step 10, KNOW proposes them at this stage.
Step 7a	7a Re-frame the problem (e.g., join needs in a single call to make it more appealing or split it in smaller ones)
SMU/KNOW	7.a.1 If outsourcing is deemed not likely to be successful, KNOW and the SMU discuss to re-frame the problem and question the breadth and volume of the need (e.g. consider the possibility of splitting the need into smaller calls).
Step 7b	7.b Analyse need and options offered by actors in the Ecosystem, opting for the best strategy to increase likelihood of success
ENREL/CSO/KNOW	7.b.1 Alternatively if outsourcing is not deemed to be successful, KNOW coordinates with ENREL and the CSO (and others, as needed) to establish the best strategy to stimulate the market (e.g. raising awareness of the community; stimulating specific actors to provide viable solutions; engaging with information multipliers and close partners to improve outreach for a specific partnership challenge, etc.)
Step 8	8. Plan related activities to deliver additional messages and increase visibility
ENREL/SMU/KNOW	8.1 If a call needs additional visibility, KNOW stimulates and cooperates with ENREL and COM to use their broader channels and plan activities that increase the visibility of the call by delivering additional messages. For instance, calls and/or the scientific work around it may be highlighted in meetings of the Advisory Forum, shared with another Agency (one of EFSA's Sister Agencies) for further targeted promotion, or receive focus on EFSA's website. Where dedicated workflows are available, those will be utilised as they are appropriate (e.g. the form for audience management requests).
Step 9	9. FIN takes over with 10.2 process (prepare and launch call)
Step 10	10. Collect intelligence/ lessons learnt throughout the execution of the Partnership
	Following SOPs in the process: n/a