



October 2026

## Horizon Europe Newsletter

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Dear colleagues,

Canada's association to Pillar 2 of Horizon Europe (HE) continues to create new avenues for international collaboration on research and innovation. Canadian expertise and know-how are globally sought out to complete and lead interdisciplinary consortia on many priority topics such as health, security, digital innovation, industry decarbonization, bioeconomy and many more!

The final wave of calls for the 2026-2027 HE Work Programme is fast approaching! The newly released [2027 Horizontal Activities](#) calls allocates an additional €500 million to tackle issues relating to biodiversity, AI-enabled innovations, and climate.

If you have any questions or seeking guidance on how to get started on the application process, please connect with your [Canadian National Contact Points](#) (NCPs). They offer sector and program expertise to help you navigate the program.

To stay up to date with all things HE, we encourage you to regularly visit our [Horizon Europe website](#) and subscribe to the Secretariat's [email distribution list](#). For any other general enquiries, please contact our Inbox at [horizoneurope@ised-isde.gc.ca](mailto:horizoneurope@ised-isde.gc.ca).

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your network.

Best regards,

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### What Is in the Newsletter?

Use the links below to navigate across the different featured content:

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## Insights from Canadian Horizon Europe Participants

Since 2024, Canadian organizations have been awarded funding and have participated in HE Pillar 2 consortia. As members of interdisciplinary consortia, Canadian researchers and innovators are contributing their knowledge and expertise in common Canada-EU priority areas such as antibiotic resistance, biomaterials, and artificial intelligence.

The Canadian HE Secretariat has invited successful Canadian organizations to tell us about their project, share their experience, and provide insights to prospective applicants. To learn more about each project, please click the project title to access its CORDIS profile.

### [Phage therapy for arthroplasty infections using local and conservative surgery \(PHAGE4DAIR\)](#)

**Cluster:** Health (Cluster 1)

**Thematic Area:** Clinical trials, antibiotic resistance

**Country Collaborators:** Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States



PHAGE4DAIR is a €15 million, 60-month HE Research and Innovation Action evaluating adjunct bacteriophage therapy in a multinational, randomised, double-blind Phase I/II clinical trial for *Staphylococcus aureus* prosthetic joint infection. Qeen Biotechnologies Canada, a Quebec-based company, coordinates the project, sponsors the clinical trial, and develops and manufactures the investigational phage product. The testimonial below highlights the work and insights of the Qeen Team.

### What prompted your decision to apply to HE?

*“Qeen’s decision to apply was based on our clinical and manufacturing experience. We have manufactured and supplied clinical-grade phages for patients with serious, antibiotic-resistant infections in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and France. These cases demonstrated the therapeutic potential of phages, but also the limitations of compassionate-use and named-patient pathways. Broader access requires well-designed randomised controlled trials that generate robust safety and efficacy evidence for regulators, clinicians and health systems. HE provided the multinational scientific, clinical and regulatory framework needed to move from individual access toward broader approval and evidence-based clinical use.”*





### **Which aspect of your participation are you most proud?**

*“We are proud to have helped build a truly exceptional consortium: 20 beneficiaries across eight countries, with associated partners extending its geographic reach to nine countries. Its expertise spans prosthetic joint infection, infectious diseases, trial methodology, biostatistics, microbiology, pharmacology, Good Manufacturing Practices, regulatory science, patient engagement and commercialisation. We are equally proud of the scope of Queen’s responsibility within PHAGE4DAIR. Queen coordinates the project, serves as clinical-trial sponsor, and develops and GMP manufactures the fixed five-phage *S. aureus* investigational product. These capabilities are necessary to conduct a rigorous multinational trial and establish a credible path from clinical evidence to regulatory approval and broader patient access. We are also proud to be part of the executive team of another HE funded project ([PPEAKS](#)).”*

### **What is one program obstacle that surprised you and how did you overcome it?**

*“The principal challenge was the coordination required to convert a successful proposal into an executable Grant Agreement. Across 20 beneficiaries, the scientific plan, work packages, institutional responsibilities, budgets, person-months, deliverables, milestones, legal information and Portal records had to be consistent. This required sustained engagement with partners and the granting authority, careful document control, and timely resolution of discrepancies. We addressed it through structured governance, defined responsibility matrices, regular consortium meetings and centralised tracking of contractual, scientific and financial actions. The process was demanding, but it established clearer accountability and a stronger operational foundation for implementation.”*

### **If you were to give one tip to an aspiring applicant, what would it be?**

*“Begin with the clinical or societal problem and define the pathway from research to use. Scientific excellence is necessary, but applicants should also address regulatory strategy, manufacturing, intellectual property, commercialisation, reimbursement, health-system adoption and patient acceptability from the outset. Each result should be linked to a task, deliverable, budget and accountable partner. The consortium should be assembled around complementary capabilities rather than institutional prestige. A strong HE proposal shows not only that the research question is important, but how the evidence can become an accessible, sustainable intervention with measurable benefits for patients, health systems and society.”*





**Bio-based long lasting safe and sustainable by design  
surface coatings for demanding and extreme  
conditions (BLUECOAT)**

**Cluster:** Circular Bio-based Joint Undertaking (Cluster 6)  
**Thematic Area:** Low carbon coatings, biomaterials  
**Country Collaborators:** Austria, Belgium, Canada, France  
 Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom



**UNIVERSITY  
OF ALBERTA**

The University of Alberta is a research and innovation hub in Canada. It has a strong focus on key research and innovation priority areas such as energy and the environment, artificial intelligence, health and well-being, and many others. The testimonial below highlights the work and insights of Dr. Hongbo Zeng and the BLUECOAT consortium.

**What prompted your decision to apply to HE?**

*"We were motivated by HE's strong emphasis on international collaboration, interdisciplinary research, and real-world impact. The BLUECOAT project aligns closely with our research on advanced functional coatings and interfacial science, and the program provided a unique opportunity to work with outstanding global partners to translate fundamental discoveries into sustainable technologies for demanding environments."*

**What aspect of your participation are you most proud of?**

*"We are most proud of the collaborative spirit of the consortium and the ability to integrate expertise across chemistry, materials science, interfacial science, engineering, and sustainability assessment. This synergy has allowed us to co-develop innovative, bio-based coating solutions that address both performance requirements and environmental responsibility from the design stage."*

**What is one program obstacle that surprised you and how did you overcome it?**

*"One unexpected challenge was navigating the complexity of multinational administrative and reporting requirements. We addressed this by establishing clear internal coordination structures, frequent communication with partners, and early alignment on deliverables and documentation, which greatly streamlined project management and compliance."*

**If you were to give one tip to an aspiring applicant, what would it be?**

*"Start building your consortium early and focus on complementarity rather than similarity. Successful proposals clearly demonstrate how each partner uniquely contributes to scientific excellence, implementation feasibility, and societal impact, while aligning strongly with the call's strategic priorities."*



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**Tracking and countering technology-facilitated gender-based violence through evidence-based approaches across the conflict-refuge continuum in Europe (TRACE)**

**Cluster:** Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society (Cluster 2)

**Thematic Area:** International law, artificial intelligence

**Country Collaborators:** Canada, Germany, Iraq, Netherlands, Sweden, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom



Western University has built one of Canada's most established research infrastructures on gender-based violence, including through its Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children (CREVAWC). The testimonial below highlights the work and insights of Dr. Valerie Oosterveld and the TRACE consortium.

**What prompted your decision to apply to HE?**

*"My decision to apply came from the urgent gap TRACE addresses: we have anecdotal evidence that technology is increasingly used to perpetrate and deepen gender-based violence against women and girls displaced by conflict, yet the research base to counter it barely exists. Prof. Heather Flowe (Birmingham) and I, along with some of the other members of the consortium, had worked together in the past to examine how technology can be used to investigate gender-based violence in war. We realized while conducting this research that technology was also being used to perpetrate or deepen the harms of this gender-based violence. Helping to initiate this HE consortium let me bring Western's strengths in conflict-related sexual violence and CREVAWC's expertise on violence against women and children into a truly global collaboration spanning fifteen partners across eight countries."*

**Which aspect of your participation are you most proud?**

*"I am most proud of the multidisciplinary team Western University is bringing to TRACE. My decades of work on conflict-related sexual violence and international criminal justice sit alongside Katreena Scott's extensive expertise at CREVAWC in violence against women and children, and Juan-Luis Suárez's digital humanities approach to data analysis and AI, developed through the CulturePlex Lab. Together, we cover the full arc TRACE demands: legal and policy analysis, survivor-centred research on abuse and prevention, and the AI-enabled pattern recognition needed to track digital harms across borders. That said, Western's contribution is only one piece of a much larger picture. Consortium partners in Iraq and Ukraine bring direct, front-line experience documenting technology-facilitated gender-based violence in conflict, while colleagues elsewhere in the consortium contribute scholarly expertise on human trafficking and refugee resettlement. The combination of academic rigour and lived proximity to the crisis makes TRACE genuinely greater than the sum of its parts."*



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**What is one program obstacle that surprised you and how did you overcome it?**

*“One obstacle I had not fully anticipated was the sheer complexity of coordinating such a diverse, interdisciplinary consortium: fifteen partners across eight countries, spanning academic, legal, humanitarian, and survivor-focused organizations. Time zones, cultural differences, and uneven access to law enforcement and policymakers across jurisdictions all complicated the practical work of aligning research methods early on. What made this manageable was, first, the University of Birmingham's outstanding coordination as lead institution, which kept the consortium organized and on track from the outset. At Western, we also invested significant effort in understanding HE's specific requirements and processes, since this framework operates differently from funding structures with which we are more familiar. Beyond that, there is a genuine commitment across the consortium to constant communication, and a willingness among all partners to keep learning from one another as the project takes shape.”*

**If you were to give one tip to an aspiring applicant, what would it be?**

*“Start early and build your consortium organically. Look first to your existing research networks: who have you collaborated with before, and who have they worked with in turn? These second-degree connections often extend the depth and disciplinary reach of a proposal in ways that cold outreach cannot. HE consortia succeed when partners bring together genuine, complementary expertise. The result is a stronger, more coherent proposal. Ultimately, a collaborative approach, grounded in at least some pre-existing relationships, is key.”*

If you have success stories to share, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Secretariat at [horizoneurope@ised-isde.gc.ca](mailto:horizoneurope@ised-isde.gc.ca).





## Upcoming Horizon Europe Events

### European Commission (EC) Events

#### HE Info Days

These virtual sessions provide an overview of upcoming calls and their respective policy contexts. It also provides applicants an opportunity to ask questions from the EC's topic experts and may be accompanied by a corresponding matchmaking event.

Upcoming Info Days:

- **November 19, 2026 (09:00 am – 05:00 pm CET):** [Cluster 5 – Climate, Energy and Mobility](#)
- **November 26, 2026 (09:00 am – 05:00 pm CET):** [Cluster 1 - Health](#)
- **January 13-14, 2027 (09:00 am – 05:00 pm CET):** [Cluster 6 – Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment](#)

You can also find [past info day webinar recordings here](#).

#### HE Information Sessions

- **November 12, 2026 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm CEST):** [Lump Sum Funding in HE: How does it work? How to write a proposal?](#): This online session will provide an overview of lump sum funding in HE and will host a panel discussion on the practical components of managing projects with lump sum funding. The session will also have a Q&A session for participants.
- You can also find [other events and recordings of past information sessions](#) here.

### HE Matchmaking Events

*\*Please register as soon as possible. \**

- **October 15, 2026 – October 22, 2026:** [La Francophonie dans Horizon Europe – Cluster 6](#): This virtual matchmaking event, organized by NCPs from France and Belgium's Wallonie region alongside Quebec's Sector-Based Industrial Research Clusters, brings together researchers and innovators interested in pursuing 2027 Cluster 6 calls.
- **October 27, 2026 (01:00 PM – 03:00PM EST):** [NZ-CAN-NL-UK Online Brokerage Event on Biodiversity Calls](#): Cluster 6 NCPs from New Zealand, Canada, Netherlands and the UK are organising a joint virtual partnering event focused on 2027 biodiversity calls.
- **December 1, 2026 (09:30 am – 01:00 pm CEST):** [Interdisciplinary pathways towards green transition and resilient societies](#): This virtual matchmaking event, organized by Net4Society (Cluster 2 NCP Network), targets applicants interested in submitting proposals related to the green transition and climate resilience, cross-cutting across HE clusters.





### Other Exciting Research and Innovation Events!

- **November 6-9, 2026:** [Falling Walls Science Summit](#): Falling Walls is one of the biggest science, research, technology, and innovation conferences in the world. The event is being hosted online and in-person in Berlin with Canada as the featured country for the year!
- **November 10-11, 2026:** [European Research and Innovation Days](#): This event brings together policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders to debate and shape the future of research and innovation in Europe and beyond. This year's event will focus on topics such as talent attraction, helping innovative companies scale up, and deepening international collaboration.
- **November 24-27, 2026:** [Canadian Science Policy Conference](#): This conference brings together key stakeholders from Canadian science and innovation communities. This year, the CSPC is welcoming the European Union as its inaugural international partner. The event is being hosted in-person in Ottawa and will focus on emerging issues relating to Canada's science, technology and innovation landscape. We look forward to meeting Canadian researchers and innovators at the HE booth during the event!





## Horizon Europe Applicant Toolkit

### Toolkit Essentials

- **[ISED HE Website](#)**: Dedicated webpage for Canadians navigating HE with an overview of the programme, [applicant how-tos](#), and other helpful links
- **[Canada's National Contact Point \(NCP\) Network](#)**: NCPs offer both sector specific and program expertise to Canadian applicants
- **[HE Glossary](#)**: Explains the general HE concepts and terminology
- **[HE Annotated Grant Agreement](#)**: Reference document for grant administration policies (e.g., reporting, auditing, and other legal and financial topics).
- **[HE Annotated Templates](#)**: NCP annotated templates to craft a competitive proposal.
- **[Horizon Academy](#)**: Publicly accessible portal for NCPs with training modules, event information, and applicant tools. The Horizon Academy has also prepared a guide on [HE Legal, Financial, and Administrative Rules](#).
- **[CORDIS](#)**: Database of EU funded research with project descriptions (e.g., coordinator, participating countries, funding, and grant timelines).

### Past Webinar Recordings

- **[Delegation of the EU to Canada YouTube Page](#)**: Includes recordings of previous information sessions such as the introduction to HE clusters, collaboration opportunities with the EU's Joint Research Centre and best practices for proposal preparation.
- **[Health NCP Network \(HHN\) – Webinar: From Idea to Winning Proposal](#)**: Provides tips and tricks on preparing competitive Cluster 1 (Health) proposals.
- **[European IP Helpdesk – Consortium Agreement Webinar](#)**: Provides an overview of consortium agreements, who signs them, and shares existing model agreements.
- **[European Commission – Lump Sum Funding in HE](#)**: Provides an overview of lump sum funding and how to prepare lump sum proposals.

### Navigating HE – Key Support Resources for Canadians

- **[Canadian HE Secretariat Inbox](#)**: Provides guidance on general eligibility requirements, and the financial and administrative components of Pillar 2 of Horizon Europe.
- **[European Enterprise Network \(EEN\)](#)**: It is the world's largest network helping startups, small and medium-sized enterprises and researchers connect internationally, with more than 3,000 experts in over 60 countries.
  - EEN offers concrete tools such as partner search profiles, sector-focused groups and cooperation databases that help organizations identify European partners for research, innovation, and business projects. [The European Canadian Centre for Innovation and Research \(ECCIR\)](#) coordinates the network in Canada.





- **EURAXESS North America**: Promotes European research and innovation opportunities in Canada and the United States and provide expert insights on Pillar 1 programs.
- **EU Funding & Tenders Research Enquiry Service**: Dedicated service for questions regarding EU research and funding and account-related questions.
- **European IP Helpdesk**: Provides free-of-charge support to small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries of EU-funded projects to manage their intellectual property.

Stay up to date with all things HE by visiting our [website](#) and subscribing to [our distribution list](#).

