

YUFE Research Relay 2.0

Call for Researchers

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Objectives.....	3
3. Eligibility Criteria.....	3
4. Programme Structure and Participation Logic.....	4
4.1 Phase 0- Team formation.....	4
4.2 Phase 1- Online Programme (February-June 2026).....	4
Tentative Online Programme Schedule.....	5
4.3 Phase 2 – Selection and Summer School in Madrid (22nd-26th June).5	5
5. Selection Procedure.....	6
5.1 Evaluation Criteria for admission.....	6
5.1 Conditional Admission for the Madrid Summer School (end of January).7	7
5.2 Attendance Requirements for the Summer School.....	8
5.3 Funding Arrangements for Travel to Madrid.....	9
6. Concept Note Submission and Award.....	10
Evaluation criteria.....	11
Award for the Highest-Scoring Concept Note.....	11
7. Participants' responsibilities.....	12
8. Application process.....	13
9. Key Dates.....	13
Annex I- Topics list.....	14
Topics List.....	14
Topic 1.1: Addressing disabilities through the life course to support independent living and inclusion.....	15
Topic 1.2: Prevention and management of chronic noncommunicable diseases in children and young people (GACD).....	17
Topic 1.3: Development of predictive biomarkers of disease progression and treatment response by using AI methodologies for chronic non-communicable diseases.....	19
Topic 2.1: Open topic on supporting disruptive technological innovations for civil security.....	21
Topic 2.2: Designing new ways of risk awareness and enhanced disaster preparedness.....	23
Topic 2.3: Societal resilience, engagement of the younger generations and	

The Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) is one of the dynamic European University Alliances, selected by the European Commission. YUFE aims to shape a holistic and inclusive future for students and learners, and their society in Europe. The YUFE Alliance strives to be the front-running Alliance of European Higher Education in which students, learners, and staff are co-leaders, co-dreamers, and co-creators. YUFE's mission is to become a successful model of a socially responsible European University.

digital innovation for disaster resilience.....	25
Topic 3.1: Advancing understanding, modelling and prediction of extreme events in a changing climate.....	27
Topic 3.2: Assessing the performance of policy instruments to inform climate change mitigation action.....	29
Topic 3.3: Understanding and avoiding maladaptation to climate change.	31

1. Introduction

The **YUFE Research Relay** is a flagship initiative within Work Package 5 – **YUFE Responsible, Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Research**, designed to strengthen research collaboration across the [YUFE alliance](#) and support the development of competitive proposals for **Horizon Europe**, particularly within **Cluster 1- Health, Cluster 3- Civil Security for Society, and Cluster 5- Climate, Energy and Mobility** priority areas.

This **second edition of the YUFE Research Relay** (hereinafter, “**YUFE Research Relay 2.0**”) builds on the strong achievements of the [inaugural programme](#) in 2024-2025, which engaged **around 30 researchers from eight YUFE universities** and successfully led to the **submission of three Horizon Europe proposals**, demonstrating the programme’s potential to seed high-quality, collaborative project ideas across the alliance.

In 2026, the YUFE Research Relay 2.0 adopts an enhanced two-phase structure combining:

1. A **9-sessions online training and teamwork programme (February-June)**, and
2. A **five-day in-person Summer School in Madrid (22nd -26th June)**.

Together, these activities aim to provide high-quality training, structured collaboration, and step-by-step support for the development of concept notes and full proposals aligned with Horizon Europe priorities.

This Call for Researchers details the objectives, eligibility criteria, evaluation procedures, and responsibilities of participants. Detailed calls for participation and additional specifics can be found in Annex I.

2. Objectives

The YUFE Research Relay 2.0 seeks to:

- Foster robust interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers from YUFE universities to strengthen the development of proposals aimed at Horizon Europe.
- Offer targeted and practical training on proposal writing (Excellence, Impact, Implementation, narrative building, TRL/SRL, pathways to impact, and work plan design) following the pedagogical approach used in the [YUFE Research Relay 1.0](#).
- Create a vibrant networking environment to promote knowledge sharing, partnership development, and collective innovation across the alliance.
- Improve both the quality and competitiveness of the research proposals submitted under Horizon Europe calls, thereby increasing the chances of securing funding.

3. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for participation in the YUFE Research Relay 2.0, researchers must:

- Be currently affiliated with a [YUFE alliance member university](#).

Additionally, eligible researchers should:

- Have an active interest in submitting proposals within Horizon Europe's Cluster 1, Cluster 3 or Cluster 5.
- Commit to engaging meaningfully in interdisciplinary collaboration and fully participating in all phases of the programme, including team-based proposal writing activities.

Up to **80 eligible applicants** will be admitted to the **online programme** following a single selection process based on the same eligibility and evaluation criteria.

From among these selected participants, the **top 30 applicants**, ranked according to the same selection criteria, will be invited to attend the **on-site Summer School in Madrid**, subject to **additional participation requirements** (see Section 4 and 5).

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4. Programme Structure and Participation Logic

The YUFE Research Relay 2.0 follows a two-phase participation model, designed to ensure openness at the training stage and a transparent, merit-based selection for the in-person phase.

4.1 Phase 0- Team formation

Teams will be strategically formed by the Organizing Committee based on the responses to the YUFE Pilot Network survey (run from November and December 2024 among researchers from the ten YUFE Alliance universities) and participants' chosen Horizon Europe calls. The goal is to create diverse, multi- and interdisciplinary teams with international composition, striving whenever possible to include researchers from different YUFE universities.

Participants may request a maximum one group change within the first two online sessions, subject to the agreement of the majority of the participants of the receiving group.

4.2 Phase 1- Online Programme (February-June 2026)

All eligible applicants are admitted to the online programme, which consists of:

- Nine bi-weekly online sessions combining:
 - 1-hour of theoretical training on Horizon Europe proposal preparation (Excellence, Impact, Implementation, narrative building, TRL/SRL¹, KERs², etc.).
 - 1-hour of supervised teamwork facilitated by mentors from YUFE universities.
- Structured interdisciplinary collaboration within topic-based teams.
- Development of a **team-based Concept Note**, following templates and guidance aligned with Horizon Europe evaluation criteria.

Attendance is required for **selected core sessions**, which are marked as *mandatory* and count towards eligibility for final admission to the Summer School in Madrid (for more details see section 5.2).

¹ Technology Readiness Level/Social Readiness Level

² Key Exploitable Results

Tentative Online Programme Schedule

Date	Session	Mandatory
10.02.2026	Kick-off, team presentation and research mapping tool	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
24.02.2026	What is HE and how to read a Work Programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
10.03.2026	Design thinking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
24.03.2026	Excellence I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
07.04.2026	Excellence II	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
21.04.2026	Impact I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
05.05.2026	Impact II	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
19.05.2026	Implementation I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
02.06.2026	Implementation II	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

For consistency and planning purposes, all sessions are ideally scheduled on **Tuesdays at 15:00 CET**. However, participants are kindly informed that, with prior notice, the calendar may be subject to minor adjustments to accommodate organisational and/or speaker-related constraints.

4.3 Phase 2 – Selection and Summer School in Madrid (22nd-26th June)

Participants selected for the Summer School in Madrid will engage in an intensive, high-value programme combining methodological training, horizontal skills development and dedicated teamwork. The five-day programme will include:

- **Advanced workshops on Horizon Europe Excellence, Impact and Implementation**, with practical guidance on building a compelling narrative, defining robust objectives, and crafting credible impact pathways aligned with EU policy priorities.
- **Hands-on proposal development sessions**, where teams will receive structured expert feedback and refine the key components of their emerging Horizon Europe proposals.

- **Thematic horizontal sessions** on **Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)**, research ethics, Open Science, inclusiveness, and gender dimension—core elements in Horizon Europe evaluation.
- **Soft skills and leadership training**, covering collaborative leadership, conflict resolution, effective communication in consortia, and strategies for managing interdisciplinary teams.
- **Dedicated group work time**, allowing teams to consolidate their concept, align roles, and develop a coherent and competitive project structure with the support of mentors.
- **Team-building and cross-institutional networking activities**, designed to strengthen trust, facilitate new collaborations and expand participants' European research networks.

5. Selection Procedure

The selection process will be based on the information provided by applicants in the survey referred to in Section 8.

5.1 Evaluation Criteria for admission

Admission to the programme is based on the following criteria:

A. Balance across YUFE institutions and gender diversity

To ensure broad and inclusive representation across the alliance:

- The programme aims to include participants from all YUFE universities.
- Within each institution, gender diversity is considered, including non-binary identities where applicants self-identify.

B. Priority for early- and mid-career researchers

Priority is given to researchers within **12 years of PhD defence**, applying the same extensions used in European Research Council calls (e.g. maternity, paternity, long-term illness).

How this is evaluated:

- Years since PhD defence are calculated.

- Extensions are applied following European Research Council eligibility extension rules (see [ERC 2026 Work Programme](#) Section 1.4.2.2 *Eligible Principal Investigator(s)* for reference).
- Applicants are prioritised accordingly.

C. Motivation and expected contribution

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Clear motivation to participate;
- Willingness to engage in interdisciplinary teamwork;
- Expected contribution in terms of expertise, perspective, or skills.

How this is evaluated:

Motivation answers in the application form are scored using a shared rubric assessing:

- Clarity and relevance of motivation;
- Added value to team dynamics;
- Commitment to proposal development.

D. Fit with the selected Horizon Europe topic

Applicants' expertise must align with the selected Cluster 1, 3 or 5 topic to enable strong and complementary teams.

How this is evaluated:

- Review of research background, keywords, and experience;
- Assessment of complementarity within each topic team;
- Avoidance of disciplinary over-representation.

The 80 highest-scoring applicants will be admitted to the online programme, and the top 30 among them will also receive **conditional admission** to the Summer School.

5.1 Conditional Admission for the Madrid Summer School (end of January)

At an early stage of the programme, all participants in the online phase are evaluated for **conditional admission** to the Summer School.

Top 30 applicants who meet the selection criteria will receive a **Conditional Admission Letter**, which:

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- Confirms their provisional eligibility to attend the Summer School in Madrid;
- Can be used to apply for Erasmus+ or other institutional mobility funding at their home university.

Applicants who receive conditional admission may initiate the mobility funding request process at their home university. However, conditional admission does not guarantee final participation in the Summer School since it is contingent upon fulfilling all mandatory participation requirements.

Final admission will be confirmed after the last mandatory session, ideally on May 20th 2026.

All other eligible applicants will be placed on a waiting list and may be invited to replace a selected participant up to 20th May.

5.2 Attendance Requirements for the Summer School

- Applicants selected for the Madrid Summer School must attend all mandatory online sessions live to remain eligible for final admission. Please note that failure to attend mandatory sessions may result in selected participants being replaced by candidates on the waiting list.
- All other participants are strongly encouraged to take part in the mandatory sessions, as active participation is essential for the quality and continuity of the programme, and because they may be called upon to replace other participants if places become available.
- Attendance at non-mandatory sessions is strongly recommended, as these sessions provide additional tools and feedback that directly strengthen the quality of the Concept Note.
- Sessions will be recorded and shared among participants to ensure training fulfillment; however, watching recordings does not count towards the mandatory attendance requirement.

Final admission to the Summer School is granted only to participants who:

- Have received conditional admission; **and**
- Have attended all the mandatory session indicated in section 4.2 **of the online sessions live; and**
- Have actively contributed to the development of the team Concept Note.

Participants who fail to meet the attendance requirement will **not** receive the final Certificate of Attendance required to validate mobility, even if they have secured funding.

5.3 Funding Arrangements for Travel to Madrid

Travel and subsistence costs for the Summer School in Madrid are **not covered centrally** by the YUFE Research Relay.

To support participants in identifying funding options:

- The organising team will provide a **Funding contact table** (see below), listing for each YUFE university:
 - The relevant Erasmus+ or staff mobility contact person;
 - Alternative institutional funding schemes, where applicable.

Participants are expected to:

- Contact the person indicated for their home institution;
- Apply for Erasmus+ mobility funding where available.

If:

- A university does **not** offer Erasmus+ mobility for staff but provides **alternative internal funding**, this will be indicated in the table and participants must follow the corresponding procedure.
- No institutional funding is available, participants are expected to **seek internal or personal funding from their home university**.

Funding contact table

University	Type of funding available	Contact person	Contact email	Maximum number of people funded?
University of Bremen	Erasmus+	Mathias Bücken	mbuecken@uni-bremen.de	TBC
Maastricht University	TBC- Check with contact person	Ebru İşgülerer-Önder	ebru.isgülerer-onder@maastrichtuniversity.nl	TBC

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University of Eastern Finland	Erasmus+	Merja Haapiainen	merja.haapiainen@uef.fi	3
University of Rijeka	Erasmus+	Tea Dimnjašević	tea.dimnjasevic@uniri.hr	TBC
University of Cyprus	TBC- Check with contact person	Emma Zeniou	zeniou.emma@ucy.ac.cy	3
University of Antwerp	TBC- Check with contact person	Joëlle Pletinckx	joelle.pletinckx@uantwerpen.be	TBC
University of Essex	No funding in principle- Eligible participants will be contacted if funding becomes available	Richard Gunn	richard.gunn@essex.ac.uk	TBC
Sorbonne Nouvelle University	Erasmus+	Elisabeth Lacroix	elisabeth.lacroix@sorbonne-nouvelle.fr	TBC
Nicolaus Copernicus University	Erasmus+	Karol Mojkowski	karol.mojkowski@umk.pl	TBC
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid	No funding needed			

6. Concept Note Submission and Award

At the end of the online phase:

- Every team submits a **Concept Note**, developed collaboratively during the online programme and following the structure and templates introduced

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during training and aligned with the evaluation principles used in Horizon Europe.

- All Concept Notes are evaluated according to Horizon Europe criteria (Excellence, Impact, Quality of Implementation).

Evaluation criteria

Excellence (0–5 points)

- Clarity, ambition and relevance of objectives.
- Scientific soundness and methodological coherence.
- Degree of innovation beyond the state-of-the-art.
- Inclusion of gender dimension, SSH aspects (when relevant), and open science principles.

Impact (0–5 points)

- Contribution to the Expected Outcomes of the selected topic.
- Identification of stakeholders and credible impact pathways.
- Preliminary strategies for dissemination, exploitation and communication.

Quality of Implementation (0–5 points)

- Overall coherence of the project concept.
- Realistic early work plan outline.
- Complementarity and balance of team expertise.

Award for the Highest-Scoring Concept Note

The team achieving the **highest score** in the Concept Note evaluation will receive a **premium strategic support package** designed to significantly boost the competitiveness of their Horizon Europe proposal.

Prize: A full, professional pre-submission review of the complete Horizon Europe proposal, conducted by experienced research support specialists from the YUFE network and valued at €1,500.

The winner team will be chosen after the online phases and announced during the Summer School.

The winning group is expected to submit a proposal to Horizon Europe within **18 months of the prize announcement**. In order to benefit from the proposal revision support, the group must formally inform the organisers of their intention to submit a proposal and request the revision **at least five months before the relevant call deadline**.

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If the winning group does not submit a proposal within the 18-month period, or fails to notify the organisers within the required timeframe, the revision support will be automatically reassigned to the next-ranked group, following the original evaluation results.

This comprehensive review will include:

- In-depth feedback on Excellence, Impact and Implementation;
- Strategic alignment check with the selected Horizon Europe topic and Destination;
- Recommendations to strengthen the narrative, structure, and evaluability;
- Actionable guidance to maximise clarity, coherence and impact potential.

This prize provides the winning team with a high-value, bespoke mentoring opportunity that can meaningfully increase their chances of success in a highly competitive funding landscape.

Submission of a Concept Note is **independent from Summer School admission** and all groups are welcome and encouraged to submit it and participate in the prize competition.

7. Participants' responsibilities

Selected participants are expected to:

- Engage actively in all scheduled online sessions and teamwork activities.
- Contribute to the development of their team's Concept Note.
- Respect internal deadlines and maintain constructive collaboration.
- Participate fully in the Summer School (if selected).
- Demonstrate commitment to further proposal development after the programme.

Those who receive a conditional admission to the Summer School are expected to seek funding for travel to Madrid from their respective institutions (for example, via Erasmus+ mobility programmes).

8. Application process

Interested researchers must complete and submit the designated [registration form](#) (opening on **9th January 2026**) before **26th January 2026, at 23.59 CET**. Participants will receive detailed instructions about subsequent steps upon successful registration.

For further queries, please contact info.yufe@uc3m.es.

9. Key Dates

January 9th, 2026	Registration open
January 26th, 2026 at 23:59	Registration closed
February 4th, 2026	Admission confirmation for the online programme and conditional admission for Summer School
February 10th, 2026	Online Kick-Off & Team Formation Session
February 10th- June 2nd, 2026	Online Programme
May 20th, 2026 (at the latest)	Final admission confirmation for Summer School
May 25th, 2026	Deadline for receiving concept notes for the prize
June 22nd-26th, 2026	Summer School in Madrid and prize winners announcement

Annex I- Topics list

This annex presents the selected Horizon Europe calls identified as strategic priorities based on internal surveys and consultations within the YUFE alliance. These calls have been specifically chosen due to their alignment with the research strengths and collaborative interests of YUFE member universities. Researchers are encouraged to consult this annex for detailed information on relevant calls, topics, deadlines, and specific guidance for proposal development.

Topics List

[Topic 1.1: Addressing disabilities through the life course to support independent living and inclusion](#)

[Topic 1.2: Prevention and management of chronic noncommunicable diseases in children and young people \(GACD\)](#)

[Topic 1.3: Development of predictive biomarkers of disease progression and treatment response by using AI methodologies for chronic non-communicable diseases](#)

[Topic 2.1: Open topic on supporting disruptive technological innovations for civil security](#)

[Topic 2.2: Designing new ways of risk awareness and enhanced disaster preparedness](#)

[Topic 2.3: Societal resilience, engagement of the younger generations and digital innovation for disaster resilience](#)

[Topic 3.1: Advancing understanding, modelling and prediction of extreme events in a changing climate](#)

[Topic 3.2: Assessing the performance of policy instruments to inform climate change mitigation action](#)

[Topic 3.3: Understanding and avoiding maladaptation to climate change](#)

Topic 1.1: Addressing disabilities through the life course to support independent living and inclusion

Summary: This topic focuses on advancing human-centred, life-course research and innovation to support independent living, autonomy, and social inclusion of persons with long-term disabilities (physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory). Projects are expected to develop and test innovative health-related solutions that remove barriers to independent living, support deinstitutionalisation, and strengthen community-based, person-centred care and support systems.

Proposals should adopt an integrated approach combining health research, assistive and accessible technologies, service models, prevention strategies, and social innovation, while embedding social sciences and humanities (SSH) and actively involving persons with disabilities and their representative organisations throughout the research process. The topic contributes to the destination “Staying healthy in a rapidly changing society” within Horizon Europe.

Expected Outcomes:

- Persons with disabilities are empowered to exercise their rights to independent living, community participation, and inclusion on an equal basis with others.
- The scientific community delivers innovative, evidence-based solutions that reduce barriers to autonomy and strengthen community-based support services across the life course.
- Policymakers, health and social care providers, disability organisations, funders, and other stakeholders are informed by robust research evidence and best practices to improve policies and services supporting independent living and inclusion.

Keywords: Disability, Independent Living, Inclusion, Life-Course Approach, Community-Based Care, Deinstitutionalisation, Assistive Technologies, Rehabilitation, Prevention, Person-Centred Care, SSH Integration, Health and Social Innovation.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Health and Medical Sciences:** Public Health, Rehabilitation Medicine, Neurology, Psychiatry, Paediatrics, Geriatrics, Epidemiology, Preventive Medicine, Digital Health.

- **Engineering & Technology:** Assistive and Accessible Technologies, Medical Devices, Digital Tools for Health and Care, Low-tech and High-tech Solutions for Autonomy.
- **Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH):** Disability Studies, Sociology, Social Policy, Psychology, Ethics, Human Rights, Gender Studies, Economics of Health and Care.
- **Education and Lifelong Learning:** Inclusive Education, Transition from Childhood to Adulthood, Support for Ageing Populations.
- **Interdisciplinary and Applied Research:** Community-based service models, co-creation with persons with disabilities, policy-oriented research, data harmonisation and use of European research infrastructures.

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Topic 1.2: Prevention and management of chronic noncommunicable diseases in children and young people (GACD)

Summary: This topic supports implementation research to prevent, detect, and manage chronic noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) across critical life stages from early childhood to young adulthood (1–24 years). Launched in coordination with the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD), it prioritises equitable, real-world solutions for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and underserved populations in high-income countries (HICs).

Projects should adapt, scale, and sustain evidence-based interventions addressing social, structural, commercial, and behavioural determinants of health, using robust implementation science frameworks (e.g. hybrid designs). Strong stakeholder co-design, meaningful involvement of children, young people, and families, and equitable HIC-LMIC partnerships are essential. The topic contributes to the destination “*Tackling diseases and reducing disease burden*” within Horizon Europe.

Expected Outcomes:

- Researchers and healthcare providers—particularly in LMICs and services reaching disadvantaged populations—gain improved evidence on early prevention, risk reduction, and timely diagnosis of NCDs in children and young people.
- Policymakers, public health authorities, parents, children, and young adults access actionable recommendations to improve quality of life and extend healthy life expectancy.
- Enhanced understanding among researchers, clinicians, and decision-makers on how to adapt and scale interventions effectively at local, regional, and national levels.
- Communities and local stakeholders are actively engaged in implementing and sustaining NCD interventions for children and young people.

Keywords: Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs), Children and Young People, Implementation Research, Prevention, Early Diagnosis, Chronic Disease Management, Health Equity, LMICs, Underserved Populations, Life-Course Approach, Co-design, Implementation Science.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Health & Medical Sciences:** Paediatrics, Adolescent Medicine, Public Health, Preventive Medicine, Mental Health, Neurology, Endocrinology, Sleep Medicine.
- **Implementation & Health Systems Research:** Implementation Science, Health Services Research, Hybrid Study Designs, Real-World Effectiveness, Integrated Care Pathways.
- **Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH):** Sociology of Health, Health Policy, Behavioural Sciences, Economics, Ethics, Equity and Social Determinants of Health.
- **Digital & Data-Enabled Health:** Digital screening and diagnostic tools, mHealth, data-informed prevention strategies.
- **Global & Community Health:** LMIC-focused research, Indigenous and underserved populations, community-based and school-based interventions, stakeholder engagement and capacity building.

Topic 1.3: Development of predictive biomarkers of disease progression and treatment response by using AI methodologies for chronic non-communicable diseases

Summary: This topic aims to advance personalised medicine for chronic non-communicable diseases (excluding cancer) by developing and clinically validating AI-enabled, multimodal predictive biomarkers of disease progression and treatment response. Moving beyond the traditional “single biomarker” paradigm, projects are expected to integrate clinically used and candidate biomarkers with longitudinal clinical data and Real-World Data (RWD) using established, trustworthy AI methodologies.

The focus is on delivering clinically actionable, validated tools that improve stratification, prognosis, and therapy selection, while ensuring AI trustworthiness, transparency, bias assessment, and GDPR compliance. The topic contributes to the destination “*Developing and using new tools, technologies and digital solutions for a healthy society*” within Horizon Europe.

Expected Outcomes:

- Clinical researchers and developers gain access to novel predictive biomarkers enabling more accurate assessment of disease progression and treatment response in chronic NCDs.
- Clinicians and healthcare professionals adopt clinically validated, biomarker-guided approaches to support personalised medicine and improve patient outcomes.
- Key stakeholders benefit from trustworthy AI tools that generate higher-accuracy, multimodal predictive biomarkers compared to current practice.
- Citizens experience improved health outcomes through enhanced clinical guidelines, more effective clinical research, and personalised healthcare pathways.

Keywords: Predictive Biomarkers, Artificial Intelligence, Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases, Personalised Medicine, Disease Progression, Treatment Response, Multimodal Data, Real-World Data, Clinical Validation, Trustworthy AI.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Biomedical & Clinical Sciences:** Translational Medicine, Clinical Research, Neurology, Cardiology, Metabolic and Autoimmune Diseases, Chronic Disease Management.
- **Data Science & Artificial Intelligence:** Machine Learning, Multimodal Data Integration, AI for Health, Explainable and Trustworthy AI, Bias and Performance Metrics.
- **Bioinformatics & Systems Medicine:** Biomarker discovery, molecular and cellular profiling, integration of omics, imaging, physiological and digital biomarkers.
- **Health Data & Digital Infrastructure:** Real-World Data, Electronic Health Records, Clinical Registries, Health Data Governance, GDPR-compliant data processing.
- **Regulatory, Innovation & Industry Interfaces:** Clinical validation strategies, regulatory science, exploitation and valorisation of health innovations, SME participation in health tech.

Topic 2.1: Open topic on supporting disruptive technological innovations for civil security

Summary: This open topic supports disruptive, early-stage technological innovations with the potential to transform civil security operations by significantly improving performance and/or reducing costs. Projects should bridge the gap between low TRL research (<4) and operational security solutions, advancing technologies to TRL 4–5 through rigorous testing, validation, and co-development with end users.

A strong emphasis is placed on real-world relevance, requiring close collaboration among security practitioners, public authorities, industry, and research organisations (including at least two practitioners and one RTO as beneficiaries). Proposals should ensure robustness, reliability, scalability, interoperability, ethical soundness, and transparency, accelerating adoption and strengthening Europe's preparedness and risk mitigation across diverse threat scenarios. The topic aligns with long-term EU priorities within Horizon Europe.

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved preparedness, evidence-based approaches, and response capabilities through the integration of validated disruptive technologies into real-world civil security operations.
- Accelerated adoption of innovative solutions by reducing barriers via testing and validation, and by aligning technologies with practitioner needs through structured collaboration between authorities, industry, and researchers.

Keywords: Civil Security, Disruptive Technologies, Preparedness, Risk Mitigation, Low TRL Innovation, Practitioner Co-Development, Technology Validation, Interoperability, Ethical and Trustworthy Security Solutions.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Security & Safety Technologies:** Crisis management, disaster response, border and maritime security, critical infrastructure protection, cyber-physical security.
- **Engineering & Applied Sciences:** Sensors and detection systems, robotics and autonomous systems, communications, AI-enabled security tools, space-enabled security applications.

- **Research & Technology Organisations (RTOs):** Translational research, prototyping, testing and validation environments.
- **Public Sector & Practitioners:** Civil protection agencies, emergency responders, law enforcement, border authorities, local and national security administrations.
- **Social Sciences, Ethics & Governance:** Technology assessment, ethics-by-design, societal acceptance, transparency and accountability in security innovation.

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Topic 2.2: Designing new ways of risk awareness and enhanced disaster preparedness

Summary: This topic supports innovative, inclusive and technology-enabled approaches to strengthen risk awareness, disaster preparedness and societal resilience across Europe, following a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach. Projects should co-design and validate new methods for risk perception, communication and preparedness planning, integrating behavioural insights, advanced digital tools (e.g. immersive technologies, AI-enabled decision support, simulations), and strong multi-stakeholder governance.

A core emphasis is placed on inclusive participation, ensuring that marginalised and vulnerable groups (e.g. considering gender, disabilities and social factors) have equitable access to risk information and preparedness resources. Outcomes should enable early warning to early action, coordinated multi-level responses, and adaptive frameworks that improve collaboration among public authorities, civil society, local/regional actors and the private sector, contributing to EU priorities under Horizon Europe.

Expected Outcomes:

- Development of innovative tools and methodologies to monitor and improve risk awareness across society, integrating diverse community perspectives and advanced technologies.
- Uptake of solutions that increase safety culture and societal resilience, including concrete materials and practices, with attention to inclusion and protection of marginalised populations.
- Creation of comprehensive, inclusive preparedness plans across governance levels, enabling coordinated and effective disaster responses (from early warning to early action), including scenarios of resource scarcity.
- Establishment of adaptive response frameworks that enhance collaboration between public authorities, communities and private actors, improving overall disaster resilience.

Keywords: Disaster Risk Awareness, Preparedness, Societal Resilience, Risk Communication, Behavioural Insights, Inclusive Governance, Early Warning to Early Action, AI Decision Support, Digital Twins, Community Engagement.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Disaster Risk Reduction & Civil Protection:** Preparedness planning, crisis management, early warning systems, recovery and resilience frameworks.
- **Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH):** Risk perception, behavioural science, governance models, community engagement, inclusion of vulnerable groups.
- **Digital & Emerging Technologies:** AI-driven decision support, simulations and scenario-based exercises, immersive technologies, digital platforms, digital twins (including Destination Earth).
- **Public Policy & Multi-level Governance:** Coordination across national, regional and local authorities; civil society participation; public-private collaboration.
- **Civil Society & Local/Regional Actors:** Community-based preparedness, safety culture, participatory tools and co-creation methodologies.

Topic 2.3: Societal resilience, engagement of the younger generations and digital innovation for disaster resilience

Summary: This topic focuses on strengthening societal resilience by actively engaging younger generations (typically ages 13–30) in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery through digital innovation, education, and participatory approaches. Projects should design and test youth-centred, inclusive solutions—such as gamified learning, immersive tools (VR/AR), AI-enabled engagement, and digital platforms—that enhance risk awareness, behaviour, leadership skills, and community participation.

A strong emphasis is placed on co-creation with youth organisations and civil society, intersectionality, and the meaningful integration of youth-generated insights into crisis management and decision-making. Outcomes should be practical and scalable, contributing to EU priorities under Horizon Europe and aligning with population preparedness and civil protection frameworks.

Expected Outcomes:

- Tailored education and training programmes for younger generations using digital tools and gamification to improve disaster awareness and engagement.
- Enhanced societal resilience through active involvement of young people, citizens, and local authorities in preparedness and response initiatives.
- Collaborative research and innovation that integrates youth perspectives and community participation into resilience strategies.
- Improved behaviours and coping capacities of children, young people, and other vulnerable groups before, during, and after climate-related disasters and health emergencies.
- Practical training and education tools that empower youth and vulnerable populations in preparedness and crisis management.

Keywords: Societal Resilience, Youth Engagement, Disaster Preparedness, Digital Innovation, Gamification, Participatory Approaches, Citizen Science, Crisis Communication, Vulnerable Groups.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Youth Studies & Education:** Youth engagement, civic participation, inclusive and experiential learning, leadership development.

- **Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH):** Risk perception, behavioural insights, intersectionality, community resilience, governance and participation.
- **Digital & Emerging Technologies:** Gamification, serious games, VR/AR, AI-supported engagement, social media analytics, digital platforms for participation.
- **Disaster Risk Reduction & Civil Protection:** Preparedness education, community-based resilience, early warning to early action, recovery and adaptation.
- **Civil Society & NGOs:** Youth organisations, CSOs, citizen science initiatives, community mobilisation and co-creation.

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Topic 3.1: Advancing understanding, modelling and prediction of extreme events in a changing climate

Summary: This topic aims to significantly advance scientific understanding, modelling, prediction, and attribution of extreme climate events under ongoing climate change, addressing single, compound, and cascading hazards from local to continental scales. Projects are expected to integrate multiple lines of evidence—including observations, high-resolution Earth system models, digital twins, and AI-based methods—to improve seamless prediction and projection across timescales (from weather to sub-seasonal, decadal, and multi-decadal).

The work should deliver actionable knowledge to support preparedness, early warning, response, and long-term resilience, directly informing EU adaptation policies and risk assessments. Strong links to European and global infrastructures and initiatives are expected, contributing to EU strategic priorities within Horizon Europe.

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved understanding of past and present extreme events in Europe and globally, including interactions among hazards and cumulative/cascading impacts under climate change.
- Enhanced prediction, projection and attribution capabilities for extreme events and their likelihood, supporting preparedness, response and resilience for EU, national and regional actors.
- Up-to-date contributions to climate science and policy, including risk assessments, adaptation strategies, and improved early warning systems for single- and multi-hazard extremes.

Keywords: Extreme Climate Events, Climate Change, Compound and Cascading Hazards, Prediction and Attribution, Earth System Models, Digital Twins, Artificial Intelligence, Early Warning Systems, Climate Risk Assessment, Adaptation.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Climate & Earth System Sciences:** Climate dynamics, extreme events, attribution science, modelling across timescales, internal variability and anthropogenic drivers.
- **Data Science & AI for Climate:** Machine learning for extremes, hybrid modelling, emulation, uncertainty quantification, high-performance computing.

- **Risk, Resilience & Adaptation:** Climate risk assessment, disaster risk reduction, resilience planning, adaptation strategies and policy support.
- **Remote Sensing & Digital Infrastructures:** Satellite data exploitation, Earth observation, digital twins, climate services interoperability.
- **Interdisciplinary & Applied Research:** Socio-economic impacts, infrastructure resilience, ecosystems, and links between climate science and decision-making.

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Topic 3.2: Assessing the performance of policy instruments to inform climate change mitigation action

Summary: This topic supports interdisciplinary research and innovation to rigorously assess how climate mitigation policy instruments perform at EU and Member State levels, with the aim of improving effectiveness, fairness, and social acceptability on the path to climate neutrality by 2050. Projects should deliver robust ex-ante and ex-post evaluation methodologies to quantify greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions attributable to policies—particularly in sectors outside the EU ETS—while accounting for behavioural change, distributional impacts, co-benefits, and trade-offs.

Research should move beyond traditional decomposition approaches, applying state-of-the-art econometrics, economy-wide modelling, and digital tools (e.g., machine learning), and foster co-creation with policymakers and stakeholders to ensure uptake. The topic contributes to EU priorities under Horizon Europe, supporting implementation of the European Green Deal and the Fit for 55.

Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced evidence on the effectiveness of EU and national policy instruments for mitigation, informing policy improvement while ensuring fair transition and social acceptability.
- Improved methodologies for ex-ante assessment and ex-post evaluation of GHG emission reductions from climate policies and measures.
- Strengthened collaboration and networks among researchers, policy experts, and government officials involved in climate policy design and evaluation.

Keywords: Climate Mitigation Policy, Policy Evaluation, Greenhouse Gas Reductions, Ex-Ante and Ex-Post Assessment, Behavioural Change, Fair Transition, Econometric Modelling, Machine Learning, Policy Mixes.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Economics & Public Policy:** Climate and energy economics, policy evaluation, cost-effectiveness analysis, distributional impacts.
- **Political Science & Governance:** EU and national policymaking, multi-level governance, policy design and acceptability.

- **Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH):** Behavioural science, gender analysis, social acceptance, justice and equity in transitions.
- **Data Science & Modelling:** Econometrics, economy-wide and cross-sectoral modelling, machine learning for policy analysis.
- **Climate & Energy Systems:** Mitigation pathways in non-ETS sectors, policy interactions across biodiversity, agriculture, and trade.

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Topic 3.3: Understanding and avoiding maladaptation to climate change

Summary: This topic addresses the growing risk of maladaptation (adaptation actions that unintentionally increase climate risks, emissions, environmental damage, or social inequities) by advancing a systemic, evidence-based understanding of its drivers, impacts, and prevention. Projects are expected to retrieve and systematise existing evidence, generate new interdisciplinary knowledge, and integrate findings into EU knowledge repositories to inform policy and practice.

Research should strengthen risk and adaptation assessment frameworks by explicitly incorporating maladaptation, develop methodological and analytical tools (qualitative and quantitative), and deliver practical guidelines and corrective strategies for policymakers and stakeholders across scales. Strong SSH integration, intersectional perspectives (including gender-disaggregated data where feasible), and end-user engagement are essential. The topic supports EU priorities under Horizon Europe and the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change.

Expected Outcomes:

- Comprehensive retrieval and integration of evidence on maladaptation into EU repositories (e.g., Climate-ADAPT and Mission Adaptation portals).
- Improved risk and adaptation assessment frameworks that better capture maladaptation risks, trade-offs, and feedbacks.
- Actionable guidelines and tools for preventing and correcting maladaptation, informing EU and Member State adaptation strategies and plans.

Keywords: Maladaptation, Climate Adaptation, Climate Risk Assessment, Unintended Consequences, Trade-offs, Social Equity, Environmental Impacts, SSH Integration, Adaptation Policy.

You might find this call particularly relevant if your research or expertise is in:

- **Climate Adaptation & Risk:** Adaptation planning, climate risk assessment, resilience and vulnerability analysis.
- **Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH):** Policy analysis, governance, decision-making under uncertainty, equity and justice, intersectionality, gender analysis.
- **Environmental & Ecological Sciences:** Biodiversity impacts, ecosystem-based adaptation, environmental trade-offs.

- **Economics & Systems Analysis:** Cost-benefit analysis, feedbacks across sectors, long-term sustainability of adaptation measures.
- **Policy, Practice & Knowledge Transfer:** Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation actions, guideline development, stakeholder engagement.

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