Call: HORIZON-CL6-2022-GOVERNANCE-01
Project 101086512

INN WATER

Promoting social innovation to renew
multi-level and cross sector water governance

Guidelines for Applicants
Open Call for Replication Sites & Local Replication Experts

1. THE INNWATER PROJECT

InnWater is a European project funded by the European Commission within the framework of the Horizon Europe Research & Innovation programme.

InnWater aims at promoting social innovation to renew multi-level and cross sector water governance, associated with economic and financial mechanisms to support EU Green Deal transition while ensuring water systems sustainability.

The methodology consists in providing tailored innovative and cross sector governance tools, methods and supports that are tested and co-developed in 5 Pilot Sites, including:

-A water governance assessment tool and guidance for water managers to implement governance-related actions;

-A guidance for citizens' engagement at river basin level;

-Support to decision making via information and modelling tools to better understand the interactions between water resources management and economic activities.

The Pilot Sites are from 5 different countries (IT, HU, UK, FR, SP), implementing different types of governance mechanisms and covering different water challenges:

- France (La Réunion – Economic focus)
- Italy (Brenta - Ecosystem services - Drinking water sector)
- Spain (Figueres – Water scarcity)
- United Kingdom (West Country – Water quality)
- Hungary (Middle Tisza – Water allocation).

The overall approach of InnWater is embedded in the social innovation approach that considers the technological, governance, capacity development and economic dimensions of innovative solutions. By considering these 4 dimensions, InnWater aims to give to the stakeholders a clear role to co-develop and experience tailored governance solutions that they will use in an autonomous manner in the end.

This will lead to the replication path of InnWater solutions and the identification of the policy and regulatory recommendations at the local, European and international scales.

With a total timespan of 36 months, the InnWater project is coordinated by OiEau and structured into 6 work packages.
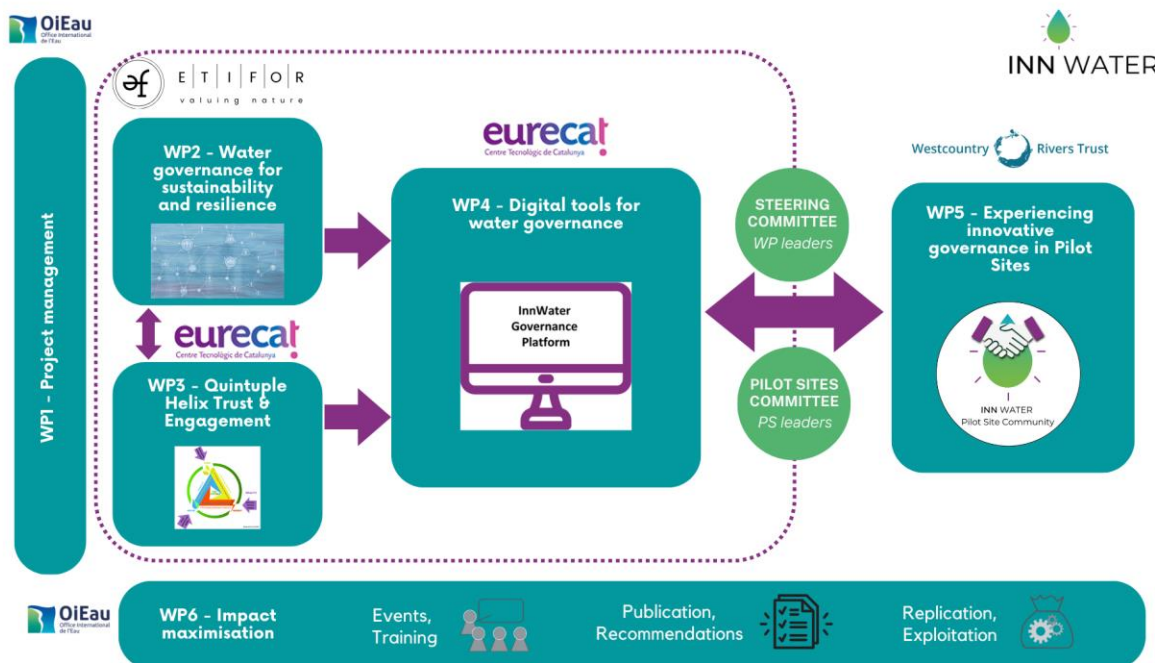

Figure 1: InnWater structure, with 6 Work Packages (WP)

To ensure the suitability, applicability, and usefulness of InnWater methods, tools, and results in areas outside the original project locations, a **replication assessment** is planned in 14 locations across Europe. Some sites have already been identified, others have to be.

2. OPEN CALL FOR REPLICATION SITES & EXPERTS

2.1 General objectives

Replication assessment tests the suitability, applicability, and usefulness of InnWater methods, tools and results in areas outside the original project locations. **The primary goal is not to implement or use InnWater results in other locations, but to assess their usability under** different circumstances and in other parts of Europe.

This open call, launched within the InnWater project, aims to select **6 replication sites together with local replication experts** in charge of carrying the conduction of the replication assessment under the guidance of a lead partner; but also **5 local experts for 5 replication sites for which the location is specified.**

The missions of the local replication experts will include the following activities:

- Participate to online meeting to receive information on the projects and the results to be assessed
- A water governance assessment
- Conduct activities like: survey filling, tool testing, information collection, workshop organization
- Final interview with InnWater experts and production of a summary report.

All replication experts will carry out the water governance assessment which is a transversal topic (see 2.2.1). I**n addition, one specific tool or solution will be assessed by each expert**, as detailed in the table below.

This open call aims to select:

Assessment tool/solution	What has to be selected	
	Replication sites	**Local expert**
MicroSimulation Model	3 sites	3 local experts
Citizen science solutions	1 site	1 local expert
	For Poland – Warta river basin	1 local expert
Citizen engagement instruments and actions	2 sites in Spain	2 local experts
Citizen engagement solutions	1 site	1 local expert
	For Czech Republic - Usti and Labem	1 local expert
InnWater governance platform – User assessment	For Slovenia - Sava river basin	1 local expert
	1 site	1 local expert

2.2 Assessment tools and replication requirements

2.2.1 Water Governance assessment

The InnWater project has developed a water governance assessment tool based on existing water governance frameworks and principles. The application of this tool across all replication sites (RS) serves two purposes: (i) To test the suitability of the method and tool in different institutional, legal, economic, and geographical environments. (ii) To gather contextual information from all RSs that can aid in interpreting the outputs of replication assessments in other areas.

Description of task and methodology

The replication expert will provide water governance information using the Water Governance Assessment Tool developed in the InnWater project. This tool is designed to help stakeholders identify key governance gaps within their respective water systems. The expert will receive training on the governance assessment methodology and specific tasks related to the tool in an online session. The InnWater project team will provide assistance in using the tool as needed. At the end of this task, the replication expert will receive feedback from the tool (a governance assessment output), while she/he will provide feedback for improving the tool.

Depending on the expert's prior experience in water policy and governance, the estimated time to complete this task is 1–3 working days.

The tool's questions are organized around the following topics:

    i) Mega Trends & Resilience

    ii) Policy, Institutions & Regulation

    iii) Financing

    iv) Data, Monitoring & Evaluation

    v) Stakeholder Engagement

The replication expert's tasks are as follows:

- Participate in an online training event on the water governance tool and its associated assessment questions.
- Gather relevant information on water governance at the replication site.
- Conduct a water governance assessment of the replication site using the provided tool.
- Attend a follow-up interview with the InnWater expert.

Expert requirements

- Some experience in water policy and governance.

2.2.2 MicroSimulation Model

What InnWater needs for this task:

-**3 Replication sites** together with **the experts**

Description of task and methodology

Within the InnWater project a microsimulation model is developed to evaluate the impact of household drinking water and sanitation tariffs on consumption and the economic burden posed to consumers. The model organizes and visualizes the resulting data tables in an informative manner. This involves user-friendly interfaces and a dashboard. The model is used at the project pilot site of La Reunion. Replication assessment will evaluate the adaptability of the tool to other locations, given data availability, tariff methodologies, the institutional environment, modelling capabilities.

Replication assessment of the microsimulation model primarily involves evaluating the availability of the necessary input data and the expertise required for model use, including data processing, scenario development, and interpretation of results. It is also crucial to understand the tools currently used to evaluate new water and sanitation tariff designs and levels, and how the microsimulation model can complement these existing solutions. Developing a road map for implementation of the tool, considering all the different prerequisites, is also a task for the expert, but the actual implementation of the model at the replication site is beyond the scope of the InnWater project.

The replication expert's tasks are as follows:

- Participation at an online workshop, where the microsimulation model and the replications tasks are introduced and discussed
- Data and information collection and filling in a tailored questionnaire focusing on the following topics:

  - Availability of data necessary to generate the inputs for the microsimulation model
  - Currently applied tariff setting methodology, tariff structures and the economic tools utilised for tariff determination at the replication site
  - Preconditions to utilise the InnWater microsimulation model at the replication site

- Developing a road map for implementation of the microsimulation tool
- Participation in a follow up interview held by the InnWater project expert

Expert requirements

- Knowledge of the water sector and the issues involved in sound water resource management.

- Knowledge of the regulations governing the pricing of public drinking water and, where applicable, wastewater services, and of the issues involved in getting a right price for the domestic uses of water.
- The candidate must be an economist with strong skills in micro-economics, evaluation of public policies. Background in econometrics is a plus.
- The person must have some knowledge of the academic literature in the field of water economics.
- The person must have some knowledge of the available data sources, in particular the major national surveys, which would enable the micro-simulation model to be replicated, and of the processes for mobilising them (if applicable).

2.2.3   Citizen science solutions

What InnWater needs for this task:

-1 Replication site together with **the expert**

-1 Expert for the Replication site already identified: **Poland - Warta river basin**

Description of task and methodology

Citizen science involves public participation in scientific research, allowing non-professional volunteers to contribute to data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Within the InnWater project, citizen science is employed to gather data on surface water quality by engaging local communities in sampling and monitoring activities at the West Country pilot site (WP5). Volunteers collect water samples, measure parameters such as pH, turbidity, temperature, and nutrient levels, and report their findings through online platforms or mobile apps. This approach enhances data collection, public engagement, education, cost-effectiveness, and the ability to compile long-term and large-scale datasets. However, potential data quality issues may arise due to varying levels of participant training and experience, inconsistent sampling methods, and the need for effective coordination and data validation. Citizen science has gained traction in recent years due to advancements in technology and communication, facilitating broader participation and real-time data sharing.

Based on the West Country pilot site experience, the InnWater project aims to contribute to the knowledge and methodology of citizen science in water quality data collection. However, considering the advanced level of citizen participation in the UK, it is important to test how well this method can be deployed in other countries with different civic, legal, and institutional environments. Replication assessment will serve this purpose. During the assessment, the project aims to learn about the citizen science experience at the replication site, as well as the experience with official and civil initiatives related to water data collection.

The replication assessment task will address questions such as:

- Who collects water quality data in the replication site, and the respective country?
- Is the data sufficient to determine the health of rivers and water status?
- How receptive are members of the public or other groups to collecting water quality data?

- Do people already collect data?

The replication expert will also consult on the feasibility and challenges related to each main step of carrying out citizen science:

- Selecting parameters for measurement with the community balancing benefit of data versus cost of kit
- Identifying sites to be adopted that are safe and accessible
- Setting up data platform and data feed in (e.g. online form/cartographer)
- Setting up risk assessment and volunteer management to show they have agreed to health and safety regulations
- Purchasing kit and deploying to volunteers alongside health and safety briefing and data platform
- Getting volunteers to sample preferably on a monthly basis adopted sites
- Compiling data on a yearly basis to feedback averages per sub catchment and run community feedback event.
- Source funding to make the whole scheme self-sustaining

The replication expert's tasks are as follows:

- Participation at an online orientation event
- Information collection in line with the questions detailed above
- Filling in a questionnaire based on the collected information
- Follow up interview with an expert from the InnWater project.

Expert requirements

For the expert responsible for conducting the replication assessment of citizen science solutions, especially in the context of water quality data collection, the following preliminary requirements are devised for the call:

- At least bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in environmental science, water resource management, public engagement, citizen science, or a closely related field.
- Minimum of 2 years of experience in water quality monitoring, environmental management, or citizen science initiatives, particularly with a focus on community involvement in scientific research.

Not a definite requirement, but an advantage:

- Demonstrated experience with water quality testing methods, data collection and analysis.
- Experience in designing and implementing projects involving citizens or other forms of public engagement.
- Knowledge of the legal and institutional frameworks related to water management and water quality data.
- Existing community engagement with the geographic area of interest (i.e. an existing good relationship)

- Knowledge of water and catchment function
- Ability to collate and articulate data.

2.2.4 Citizen engagement instruments and actions

What InnWater needs for this task:

-2 Replication sites in Spain together with **the experts**

Description of task and methodology

The focus for replication sites 1 and 2 is on assessing citizen engagement instruments and actions in Spain to address water scarcity challenges. The assessment will examine how existing engagement tools and initiatives are utilized and their effectiveness in fostering citizen participation to improve water resource management under scarcity conditions.

The tasks for the replication expert include:

- Participate in an online orientation session about the scope and methodology for assessing citizen engagement.
- Identify and analyze existing citizen engagement instruments and actions addressing water scarcity in Spain.
- Gather insights on local challenges, stakeholder involvement, and public participation mechanisms.
- Facilitate discussions to understand the effectiveness of current engagement actions and identify potential improvements.
- Analyze the findings to assess the relevance, usability, and impact of current citizen engagement mechanisms.
- Prepare a detailed report summarizing the results, including recommendations for enhancing citizen participation in addressing water scarcity.

Expert requirements

- At least bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in environmental science, water resource management, economics or a closely related field.
- Experience in public engagement, citizen participation, or water governance.
- Experience in facilitating workshops and working with diverse stakeholder groups
- Familiarity with water scarcity issues in Spain and related governance and policy frameworks.
- Understanding of citizen engagement tools and their application in water management contexts.
- Preferably based in Spain with an understanding of the regional water management context.

2.2.5   Citizen engagement solution

What InnWater needs for this task:

-**1 Replication site** together with **the expert**

-**1 Expert** for the Replication site already identified: **Czech Republic - Usti and Labem**

Description of task and methodology

One of the focus areas of the InnWater project is water scarcity. The Middle Tisza pilot site experiments with how farmers can be engaged to develop common solutions to enhance the water balance of their farms. Common action is important, because the ownership or use of low lying land parcels suitable for enhanced infiltration and water storage are often split among several farms. Engaging farmers to cooperate on water balance improvement, however, poses several challenges. Individual farmers often have differing priorities based on crop types, land use, and financial circumstances, which may make collective action seem less beneficial or practical for some. Water retention often requires setting aside portions of land temporarily or permanently e.g. for wetlands or ponds, which leads to reductions in productive land use and income - a difficult trade-off, especially for small-scale farmers. Agricultural subsidy schemes sometimes create adverse incentives. There are also trust and coordination issues; farmers may hesitate to collaborate without clear benefits or guarantees that their neighbors will uphold their commitments. There is often a lack of knowledge or experience in managing collective water resources, or understanding how infiltration may boost productivity on neighbouring parcels.

The Middle Tisza pilot collaborates with farmers to explore ways to address these challenges, including implementing financial incentives to promote collective action. The key findings from this work will be consolidated into a guidance note. The replication expert will then assess the feasibility of the proposed solutions by engaging with local stakeholders at the replication site.

The replication expert's tasks include the following:

- Participate in an online training and discussion session with InnWater project experts.
- Organize two workshops (preferably in-person events) at the replication site, involving farmers and, where possible, other local stakeholders such as civil organizations, municipalities, and forest managers.
- Facilitate workshop discussions on the prerequisites and implementation of enhanced water retention practices on agricultural land.
- Prepare a written summary of the workshop conclusions.
- Conduct a follow-up interview with an InnWater project expert.

Expert requirements

For the expert responsible for the replication assessment of citizen engagement solutions based on work at the Middle Tisza pilot site, the following qualifications should be considered when drafting the call:

- At least bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in environmental science, water resource management, economics or a closely related field.
- Experience and understanding of water management practices, especially related to water services for agriculture.
- Experience working with land users in the geographic area of the replication
- Excellent communication skills for engaging with stakeholders
- Understanding of governance models and economic mechanisms related to water management and agricultural land use will be an advantage.

2.2.6   InnWater governance platform – User assessment

What InnWater needs for this task:

-**1 Replication site** together with **the expert**

-**1 Expert** for the Replication site already identified: **Slovenia - Sava river basin**

Description of task and methodology

The InnWater Governance Platform will serve as an eLearning environment and a web-based decision support tool for water authorities, policymakers, and WEFE (Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem) managers across community systems and scales (municipalities and river basins) within pilot sites. Initially focused on these communities, it will later expand to other InnWater audiences as the project's main dissemination and co-creation product. The platform integrates scientific and practical advancements in water governance, offering enhanced visualization, decision-making support for the WEFE nexus, and eLearning. It functions by integrating other tools through an "iframe," enabling an AI assistant to provide informed responses based on use case data.

Replication assessment aims to evaluate the platform's usability for new users, including ease of navigation, understanding of tool relationships, and data accessibility for each use case. This process offers a critical opportunity to test the tool's applicability with external users, providing essential feedback for fine-tuning and assessing broad-scale usability.

The replication expert's tasks are as follows:

- Participate at an online training event about the platform held by the InnWater team.
- Assess the platform's ease of use for new users, including navigation and data accessibility.
- Evaluate how clearly relationships among tools are presented on the platform.
- Provide feedback on the platform's usability and applicability for a broader user base.
- Identify areas for improvement based on user experience to aid in fine-tuning the platform.
- The work will conclude in a written summary of the main conclusions of the assessment.

Expert requirements

- At least a bachelor's degree in water governance, water policy, environmental management, information systems, or a closely related field.
- Minimum of 5 years of experience in water governance, policy analysis, or digital tools for environmental management.
- Demonstrated experience with decision support tools, digital platforms, or eLearning environments, particularly those used in water governance or environmental management contexts.
- *The expert should have experience in the Sava river basin, only for the dedicated replication site.*

2.3 Draft schedule

The work will mainly span over the year 2025.

-**End of January 2025**: experts contractualisation

-**February 2025**: English language online training workshop for experts, to explain the tasks with a focus on the water governance assessment tool

-**March 2025**: Running of the Water Governance Assessment Tool

-**March to August 2025**: Local workshops / interviews / desk study to gather information

-**July & August 2025**: Interview with InnWater expert & final summary report to be sent to the project partner

-**September 2025**: Final workshop with all the replication experts (TBC)

Regular meetings with the project partner can also be set.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.1 Who Can Apply?

This call is open to any natural or legal person wishing to bid for the assignment and established in any of the European Union Member States and its overseas countries and territories or Horizon Europe associated countries[1].

Applicants are required to adhere to the key legal and ethical standards stipulated in the Horizon Europe Framework Programme. They must specifically ensure compliance with the obligations outlined in the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, including Article 11 (Proper Implementation of the Action), Articles 12 (Conflict of Interest), 13 (Confidentiality and Security),

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[1]   https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

14 (Ethics), 17.2 (Visibility), 18 (Specific Rules for Carrying Out Actions), 19 (Information), and 20 (Recordkeeping).

A proof of tax residency may be requested.

4. FUNDING, REPORTING & PAYMENTS

4.1 Funding

The amount of financial support to be granted to each local replication expert is **5.000€,** including indirect costs. This will be paid to either the natural or legal person contracting for the work.

4.2 Reporting

A final summary report is due for September 2025, with the method and conclusions of the work done, in a concise format.

4.3 Payments

2.500€ will be provided after the water governance assessment, and 2.500€ at the end of the work.

5. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process is based on Horizon Europe guidelines and is divided in four parts:

1. **Eligibility check:** After submission, an eligibility check will be performed to review if the proposal adheres to the eligibility criteria defined in Chapter 3 above. If the proposal meets the eligibility criteria, the proposal will go on to individual review. If not, the application will be rejected.

2. **Individual review:** Each proposal will be individually reviewed by three evaluators. The score will be based on the criteria from the table below, with scores ranging from 0 to 5 along with explanatory comments if relevant.

3. **Consensus meeting:** After the individual review phase, all evaluators come together to discuss each proposal and align on their scores and comments. At the end of this meeting, a consensus report will be produced that outlines the final scores and comments for each proposal.

4. **Selection committee:** Based on the consensus report, a selection committee discusses the proposals and finalises the selection. The committee ensures that all proposals have been treated in equal terms.

Evaluation Criteria
Method How does the expert plan to carry out the work?

Expert requirement	How does the expert meet the expected knowledge, skills and experience requirements?
Local Network How could the local network of the expert be mobilized to implement the actions?	

Each criterion will be scored on a scale from 0 to 5. For a proposal to be considered for being selected for funding, the score must pass a threshold of 3 out of 5 in each individual category. The individual scores have the following interpretation:

Results	Score	Details
Fail	0	The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information
Poor	1	The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses
Fair	2	While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses
Good	3	The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary
Very Good	4	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
Excellent	5	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

The final decision will be made by the selection committee. Applicants will be notified of the evaluation results via an email.

6. TIMETABLE AND PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS

6.1 Timetable

	Date	Time (CET)

Deadline for asking clarification	17/01/2025	18:00
Submission deadline	31/01/2025	18:00
Notification of award	12/02/2025	18:00
Indicative start date	21/02/2025	12:00

6.2 Application platform and form

Applicants can only submit their proposal via sending an email to opencall-innwater@groups.oieau.fr

Applicants can only use the application form provided.

Applicants may ask questions by sending an email to the same email address, before the deadline mentioned in the above timetable.

Applicants should submit one proposal per site. If they wish to apply for several replication sites, they must submit as many proposals as the number of sites they are applying for.

6.3 Language

English is the official language for this InnWater Open Call and applicants must have a good command of this language. Applications submitted in any other language will not be considered for evaluation. Throughout the entire duration of the InnWater project, English will remain the working language for all communications, reports, and deliverables.

All required documents as part of the application must be submitted in English. However, official documents (such as **proof of legal registration**) may be submitted in their original language. In such cases, if necessary for the evaluation process, applicants may be asked to provide a certified English translation within a specified timeframe to complete the eligibility review.

7. DATA PROTECTION

All personal data collected during the application process will be processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679, also known as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

If processing your application involves transfer of personal data (such as names, contact details and CVs), they will be processed solely for the purposes of the monitoring of the procurement procedure and of the implementation of the contract.

For any other information on the management of your personal data or to exercise your rights, please contact the following e-mail address: dpo@oieau.fr

INN WATER

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