



Open Call for Contributing Members of the BRIDGE Knowledge and Community Hub

- Governance of the BRIDGE Contributor Pool -

Purpose

The BRIDGE Knowledge and Community Hub contributor pool enables the project to draw on external expertise and stakeholder perspectives for specific activities throughout the project. This note sets out the governance arrangements for admission to the contributor pool, management of its composition, selection of contributors for individual activities, management of potential conflicts of interest, and suspension or removal from the pool.

The arrangements are intended to support a transparent, proportionate and consistent approach while retaining the flexibility needed to respond to the evolving stakeholder and expertise needs of BRIDGE.

1. Admission to the contributor pool

Applications will be assessed against the published BRIDGE Knowledge and Community Hub Contributor Admission Scorecard. Two members of the BRIDGE consortium will independently assess each application. The scores awarded against each criterion will be averaged and compared with the published minimum thresholds.

Applicants meeting the threshold for each individual criterion will normally be admitted to the contributor pool. Admission is therefore based on the published quality thresholds and is not subject to competitive ranking or quotas.

The BRIDGE Hub Coordination Group will administer the admission process and confirm routine admission outcomes on the basis of the completed assessments. Where information provided by an applicant is incomplete or unclear, further clarification may be sought before the admission decision is confirmed.

Where an application raises an exceptional governance issue that cannot be resolved through the normal assessment process, the Hub Coordination Group may refer the matter to the BRIDGE Executive Committee, which will take the final decision.

2. Conflicts of interest in the assessment process

Assessors must disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest relating to an application. An assessor who identifies such a conflict must not participate in the assessment of the application concerned. The Hub Coordination Group will appoint an alternative assessor where necessary.

Where a potential conflict or other concern relates to the applicant rather than the assessor, the applicant may be asked to provide clarification. Declaring an affiliation or interest does not in itself prevent admission to the

contributor pool. The relevance of declared affiliations and interests will be considered in the context of individual BRIDGE activities.

3. Composition of the contributor pool

BRIDGE seeks to maintain access to a broad range of stakeholder perspectives and relevant areas of expertise. The Hub Coordination Group will therefore periodically review the composition of the contributor pool, taking account, where appropriate, of factors such as:

- stakeholder groups and organisational perspectives represented;
- areas of thematic and technical expertise;
- geographical coverage; and
- identified expertise or stakeholder needs arising from BRIDGE work packages, case studies and simulation activities.

Balanced representation is not an additional admission criterion, and applicants who meet the published admission thresholds will not normally be excluded because a particular stakeholder group is already well represented.

Where gaps or areas of under-representation are identified, BRIDGE may undertake targeted communication and outreach activities to encourage additional applications from relevant stakeholder groups or areas of expertise. The need for any further balancing measures may be reviewed if substantial imbalances emerge during implementation.

4. Selection for individual BRIDGE activities

Admission to the contributor pool does not guarantee participation in a particular BRIDGE activity.

Where external input is required, the Hub Coordination Group, in consultation with the responsible work package or activity lead, will identify suitable contributors from the pool. Selection will take account of the requirements of the activity, including the contributor's expertise and experience, stakeholder perspective, declared affiliations and interests, availability and, where relevant, the complementarity of the perspectives represented.

For routine engagement activities, contributor selection will be managed by the Hub Coordination Group together with the responsible work package or activity lead. Where additional project-level oversight is considered appropriate, the proposed group of contributors may be referred to the BRIDGE Executive Committee for review or confirmation before invitations are issued.

The Executive Committee may also be consulted where a significant conflict of interest or other exceptional governance issue arises in relation to the proposed involvement of a particular contributor.

Participation will remain voluntary, and invited contributors may decide whether they are available to participate in each individual activity.

5. Suspension, withdrawal and removal

Contributors may withdraw from the contributor pool at any time by contacting the BRIDGE team.

The Hub Coordination Group may temporarily suspend a contributor's participation where an issue arises that needs to be clarified before further engagement can take place. This may include, for example:

- materially inaccurate or misleading information relevant to participation;

- a significant conflict of interest that has not previously been disclosed;
- failure to comply with confidentiality requirements applicable to a BRIDGE activity; or
- other circumstances that could materially compromise the appropriate conduct of Hub activities.

Where appropriate, the contributor will be informed of the issue and given an opportunity to provide clarification before a final decision is taken.

Any proposed removal from the contributor pool will be referred to the BRIDGE Executive Committee for a final decision. Decisions and their rationale will be documented in a proportionate manner.

6. Oversight and review of the governance arrangements

The Hub Coordination Group will monitor the practical operation of the contributor pool and the way in which contributors are engaged across BRIDGE activities.

At appropriate intervals, the Hub Coordination Group will provide the Executive Committee with an overview of the operation and use of the contributor pool, including, where relevant:

- the overall composition of the contributor pool;
- stakeholder groups and areas of expertise represented in BRIDGE activities;
- any material gaps or imbalances identified;
- any significant conflicts of interest or other governance issues encountered; and
- any proposed adjustments to the operation of the pool.

The Executive Committee may provide guidance on the overall approach to contributor engagement and recommend adjustments where this is considered necessary to support appropriate stakeholder representation, transparency or effective project governance.

The Hub Coordination Group may also propose amendments to these governance arrangements where experience during implementation indicates that clarification or additional measures are required. Material changes will be subject to approval through the relevant BRIDGE governance structures.