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Multi-Modal and Multi-Aspect Holistic Human-Robot Interaction



FORTIS

FORTIS Open Call #2

Annex 1 – Guide for applicants

Submission: from 1 September 2026 to 4 November 2026

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1 What is FORTIS?

The FORTIS project is an EU-funded initiative that addresses the development of a solution to help and support the human at work and augment the workforce, while keeping humans firmly in the loop. Recognizing that effective human-robot interaction (HRI) must be holistic, the consortium aims to enable robots to interact with human workers in a natural, human-like manner over long periods. To know more about the consortium, it's vision, pilots and use cases visit <https://fortis-project.eu/>.

FORTIS in a nutshell:

- FORTIS works on the creation of comprehensive interaction between humans and robots, encompassing both physical and non-physical communication.
- FORTIS studies how humans interact with each other, model human behaviour and understand the factors that influence human trust in robots.
- FORTIS provides a solution for testing and experimenting with new human-robot collaboration and interaction scenarios.
- FORTIS develops HRI systems that are more effective, user-friendly, and context-aware, allowing robots to work together with humans in a coordinated manner.

FORTIS main objectives:

1. Develop, integrate, and provide a human-centric solution for modelling and analysing humans.
2. Develop and provide a flexible and agile multi-robotic-centric solution interacting with humans.
3. Integrate and provide the FORTIS solution where a safe and trustworthy HRI is guaranteed and provides optimized operations for both humans and robots.
4. Demonstrate the solution in several scenarios, through its pilots in construction, railways and manufacturing.

TANGIBLE EXPECTED OUTCOMES (TEOs)

IMPACT 1: *Human-Centric*

- Enrich the knowledge in a wide range of fields by understanding and modelling human behaviour.
- Bring new collaborative robot generations, more human-status aware and adaptable, able to provide more intuitive and user-friendly interfaces tailored to the cognitive capabilities of their users.
- Develop human-robot communication (HRC) and HRI systems that are more effective, user-friendly, and context-aware, leading to improved collaboration between humans and robots.
- Develop AI systems that are more effective, context-aware, and user-friendly, user satisfaction, and business outcomes.

IMPACT 2: *Robot-Centric*

- Providing a solution for testing and experimenting with new human-robot collaboration and interaction scenarios.
- Expansion of product portfolio, improvement of user experience, and meeting the increasing market demand for AI-embodied systems.

IMPACT 3: *Human-Robot Trustworthy Interaction*

- Better understanding of the factors that influence human trust in robots.
- Improve the efficiency of manufacturing and production, allowing multiple robots to work together in a coordinated manner.
- Reduce the need for expensive physical prototypes and testing and reduce the risk of accidents and injuries in the workplace.
- Enhance business processes, integrating AI and machine learning in robots.
- Enhanced HRI architecture to endure both internal and external workplaces.
- Improve the quality of the work and the safety of workers.

Core philosophy:

The FORTIS project adopts a holistic human-centred approach, to bridge the gap between people and technology. Beyond enhancing and promoting job quality, FORTIS aims to create safer workplaces and enrich public services, fostering collaboration through stakeholders.

Validation and expansion through Open Call #2:

FORTIS technologies are tested and validated across three pilots – construction, railway infrastructure and manufacturing – and five use cases (<https://fortis-project.eu/use-cases/>). The second open call expands the deployment and reach of FORTIS solutions through two main topics and corresponding objectives:

Topic 2.1: Pushing towards the deployment of FORTIS

- Demonstrate solutions within existing FORTIS pilot environments.
- Transition from development to real-world deployment.
- Drive increased adoption, scalability, and measurable impact.

Topic 2.2: Exploiting the FORTIS solution in other key sectors

- Demonstrate solutions in new sectors and real-world use cases.
- Focus on technology transfer and cross-sector adoption.
- Require clearly defined use cases, lifecycle definitions, and KPIs.

2 What is the FORTIS Open Call #2 offer?

The Open Call #2 provides access to the FORTIS Programme #2. It targets academia and industry actors looking to integrate and deploy their technologies within the FORTIS ecosystem (Topic OC#2.1) or demonstrate scalability and cross-sector migration (Topic OC#2.2).

Key Details & Timeline

- **Submission period: 1 September 2026 until 4 November 2026 (17:00 Brussels time).**
- **Programme duration:** 10 months; it is divided into 3 short, focused working phases called **sprints**. In each sprint, teams build and test specific deliverables to hit key project milestones. Payments will be released after successful submission of deliverables, at the end of each sprint.
 - **Sprint 1:** 11 January 2027 – 10 April 2027 (3 months)
 - **Sprint 2:** 11 April 2027 – 10 July 2027 (3 months)
 - **Sprint 3:** 11 July 2027 – 10 November 2027 (4 months)
- **Mentorship support from the FORTIS consortium:** Beneficiaries are assigned an **administrative mentor** (F6S, for progress tracking, administrative support) and a **technical mentor** (technical partner for integration expertise, technical problem solving). For detailed information on available support, please refer to [Section 6.1](#).
- **Indicative budget:** EUR 3 142 746.92 total
 - **Topic OC#2.1:** EUR 2 065 373.46 (up to EUR 250 000 per project for at least 8 projects).
 - **Topic OC#2.2:** EUR 1 077 373.46 (up to EUR 170 000 per project for at least 6 projects).
 - **Total projects supported:** Indicative total of 14 proposals¹, subject to budget availability, to be paid in form of lump sums at the end of each sprint. The FORTIS project estimates that these contribution amounts will allow the topic outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude the submission and selection of proposals requesting different amounts.

Relevant links and contacts

- Project website: <https://fortis-project.eu/>
- Open Call #2 proposal form: <https://www.f6s.com/fortis-open-call-2/apply>
- Contact us: fortis-opencalls@f6s.com

¹ The FORTIS consortium reserves the right to support more than 14 applications if the call's indicative budget is not fully requested, dependent on remaining budget.

3 Who can apply and how?

3.1 Types of applicants

The FORTIS OC #2 is looking for systems actors and innovators - universities/researchers, midcaps, SMEs and start-ups - in the framework of the FORTIS project.

3.1.1 Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants for the FORTIS Open Call #2 are:

- **Research organisations (RTOs) and universities** with a documented track record or active research division on the sectors of activities indicated in [Section 3.1.3](#). This should be demonstrated by relevant publications, and participation in related research projects.
- **Mid-caps, SMEs, and Startups** whose core business or primary R&D activities include the development of technologies for Human-Robot Interaction (HRI). Applicants must provide evidence of relevant technological development, such as software/hardware prototypes, commercial solutions, or technical roadmaps in this domain.
- **Relevant notes:**
 - Please consult the *EU SME Definition*² for details on what constitutes an SME.
 - A signed version of the Declaration of Honour and the SME Declaration ([Section 5](#)) will be requested during the contract preparation phase.

NOTE: Neither natural persons nor entities that are associated with the partners of the FORTIS consortium are eligible.

3.1.2 Consortium requirements

Each proposal must be submitted by a multidisciplinary consortium led by a designated coordinator.

- **Consortium size:** 3 eligible entities for Topic OC#2.1 or 2 eligible entities for Topic OC#2.2, as detailed in [Section 3.1.1](#). The partners must collectively show capacity for technology development and innovations.
- **SME participation:** minimum of 1 SME.
- **Budget limits:** Non-industry partners cannot exceed 30% of the total project budget.
- **Geographical coverage:**
 - OC#2.1: Multi-country consortium required (at least 2 different eligible countries).
 - OC#2.2: Single-country consortia allowed.

NOTE: All entities of the consortia must be registered with a verifiable VAT (which will be requested as part of the individual Declaration of Honour ([Section 5](#))). **Single entity proposals are non-eligible.**

² https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-fundamentals/sme-definition_en

3.1.3 Sectors of activity

Participants (excluding RTOs and universities) of the FORTIS Open Call #2 should belong to the following sectors of activity:

- Computational and artificial intelligence
- Autonomous robots
- Intelligent robots
- Robot learning
- Robot programming
- Robotics and automation
- Robot sensing systems
- Human-robot interaction
- Internet of Things (IoT)
- Systems, human and cybernetics
- Activity recognition
- Human factors
- Behavioural systems
- Biosignal processing

- Note:

Scope Expansion for Topic OC#2.2 (Demonstration & Scaling Up): To foster real-world adoption, Topic OC#2.2 is also open to SMEs and end-users operating directly in the target application sectors (including agriculture, farming, forestry, mining, fishing, healthcare, events, airports, shopping malls, others). These entities are eligible to join proposals to pilot and validate FORTIS technologies within their operational environments.

3.1.4 Eligible countries

Financial support is available to legal entities established in:

- The Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions.
- The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to the MS³.
- Horizon Europe (HE) associated countries, which at the time of signature of the FORTIS GA (November 2023) had already signed a HE association agreement producing legal effects (see Horizon Europe associated countries listed in official HE document v2.7⁴ 15/09/2023⁵).

The FORTIS OC#2 follows the rules applied by the EC for the R&D Programme Horizon Europe in terms of geographical coverage, eligibility, and exclusions, which take precedence.

³ Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked.

⁴ Entities established in associated countries are eligible for funding only if the HE association agreement with their respective country of establishment is applicable at the time of signature of the FORTIS GA (November 2023). It is hereby clarified that, at the time of signing the FORTIS GA (November 2023) the United Kingdom and Switzerland had not yet signed an association agreement producing legal effects.

⁵ List of participating countries at the time of signature of Grant Agreement of FORTIS: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/fundingtenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation-horizon-euratom-v2.7-en.pdf>

3.1.5 Multiple submissions

To ensure fair competition and broad distribution of funds, the FORTIS OC#2 program enforces strict limits on applicant participation.

General Limit on Participation

An entity may participate as a **consortium coordinator/lead applicant** in a maximum of **one (1) submitted proposal**.

- **Default Rule:** If a standard company/entity participates in multiple proposals - as a lead - **only the last proposal submitted** (based on the platform system timestamp) will enter the evaluation process.
- **Impact on Consortia:** If a proposal is declared ineligible because a participating applicant violated this rule, **the entire proposal/consortium will be disqualified**. Consortia are responsible for verifying that their leading partner has not joined other proposals.

Universities and Research and Technology Organizations (RTOs) participation:

- **Departmental Independence:** Different independent units, departments, or research groups from the **same University or RTO** may apply with separate proposals, provided that:
 1. Each proposal addresses a **different topic/sub-topic** (Section 3.2.1);
 2. The research groups/departments operate as distinct organizational units.
- **Evaluation & Funding Limit:** Unlike standard applicants, **all validly submitted proposals** from different departments of an RTO or University will enter the evaluation process. However, to prevent over-concentration of funding, **a maximum of one (1) project per University/RTO legal entity will be funded**.
- **Selection Mechanism:** If multiple proposals from different departments of the same University/RTO pass all evaluation thresholds, **only the single highest-ranked proposal** will be selected for funding. Lower-ranked proposals from that same institution will be passed over in favor of the next eligible entity on the ranking list.

3.2 Types of projects

The FORTIS Open Call #2 aims to attract and engage key system actors and innovators—universities, researchers, mid-caps, SMEs, and startups—capable of:

- Incorporating their own systems into the FORTIS framework;
- Validating these applications within the project's established pilot environments; and
- Demonstrating the effectiveness of FORTIS solutions in new environments centred on human-robot interaction.

Ultimately, the outcomes of this open call will drive the development and deployment of the FORTIS ecosystem while expanding its reach into other key sectors.

3.2.1 FORTIS OC#2 Topics

Applicants must select either Topic OC#2.1 (including one subtopic) or Topic OC#2.2. These topics are summarized in Table 1 below, briefly described in this section, and detailed comprehensively in **Annex 1.1: FORTIS Technical Specifications**. Annex 1.1 provides the complete technical breakdown required for applicants to successfully integrate, deploy, scale up, and demonstrate the effectiveness of the FORTIS solution.

Table 1. Description of FORTIS Open Call #2 topics, objectives and expected outcomes.

Topic	Objectives	Expected outcomes
Topic 2.1: Pushing towards the deployment of FORTIS <i>(8 Technical Subtopics)</i> • HRC / Task Allocation • Flexible Interface Digital Twin • HRI Watchdog • HRI Activities DT • Omnideployment • Ergonomics-Aware HRC • XR Interfaces • Trust-Aware Localisation	Engage industry, research, and societal players to integrate third-party systems into the FORTIS framework. Adapt and extend existing FORTIS toolkits for real-world pilot deployment. Advance TRLs through real-time integration, dynamic HRC, and context-aware solutions.	Validated deployment of integrated solutions across FORTIS industrial pilot environments. Proven performance improvements supported by quantitative technical and operational KPIs. Enhanced adoption, scalability, and interoperability of the FORTIS ecosystem.
Topic 2.2: Exploiting the FORTIS solution in other key sectors. <i>(Open Topic)</i>	Engage end-users and SMEs to drive cross-sector technology transfer into non-core domains. Validate existing FORTIS components in civilian Human-Robot Interaction (HRI) use cases. Test solution adaptability, usability, and added value under realistic operational conditions.	Tangible demonstration of FORTIS technologies operating in target sector environments. Comprehensive validation, KPI evaluation, and technical documentation packages. Documented benefits, open datasets, and actionable guidelines for post-project adoption.

3.2.1.1 Subtopics for Open Call #2.1

Subtopics connected to Human-robot collaboration:

Subtopic 1: Optimisation of HRC/task allocation: Coordinating humans and robots in highly dynamic industrial environments (factories, logistics, airports) is a challenging task. Due to the complexity of modelling human behaviour and the safety regulations governing robotic systems, allocating tasks between humans and robots is not trivial. The FORTIS project aims to deploy its human-friendly robotic solutions in environments where task allocation can be optimised in real time with minimal knowledge about the human

operating around the robot. The project seeks to advance the state of the art in adaptive task and resource allocation for human–robot collaboration. By leveraging real-time context awareness, human-centric intelligence, and optimization capabilities, FORTIS aims to enable the dynamic allocation of tasks between human operators and robotic systems while balancing operational efficiency, flexibility, and safety. In this sense, supporting collaborative and trustworthy human–robot operations, allowing organizations to optimize the use of available resources and improve overall performance in complex and evolving industrial environments. For this open call, proposals are invited to adapt the Rapid and Agile resource allocation toolkit into applications that address the challenges of real-time task and resource allocation in human–robot collaborative settings, contributing to more efficient, resilient, and adaptive industrial operations.

Subtopic 2: Flexible Interface Digital Twin: Digital Twins are becoming a key enabler for the design, monitoring, optimization, and validation of human–robot collaborative systems. Within the FORTIS project, significant effort is dedicated to the creation of digital representations of human–robot interactions, where human models, robotic systems, environmental information, and operational processes are integrated to simulate, predict, and evaluate collaborative activities. These digital representations support the development of safer, more efficient, and human-centric robotic solutions by providing a virtual environment where different operational scenarios can be tested before deployment. However, current Digital Twin implementations are often highly tailored to specific environments, applications, or operational workflows. Such tight coupling limits their scalability, reusability, and adaptability across different industrial sectors and use cases. As organizations increasingly require flexible solutions capable of supporting dynamic production systems, changing workflows, and heterogeneous robotic platforms, there is a growing need for Digital Twin frameworks that can easily adapt to new operational contexts without extensive redevelopment efforts. The FORTIS project aims to address this challenge through the development and deployment of a Flexible Interface Digital Twin capable of supporting multiple use cases through configurable and modular interfaces. By decoupling the Digital Twin core functionalities from application-specific implementations, the solution can facilitate seamless integration with diverse human–robot collaboration environments, simulation tools, robotic platforms, enterprise systems, and data sources. For this open call, proposals are invited to adapt, extend, and validate the FORTIS Digital Twin framework by developing flexible interfaces and integration mechanisms that enable the rapid deployment of Digital Twin solutions across different industrial scenarios. The objective is to demonstrate how configurable and interoperable Digital Twin architectures can enhance the usability, scalability, and impact of the FORTIS human–robot collaboration solutions.

Subtopic 3: HRI watchdog: FORTIS aims to develop a reusable HRI Watchdog to assess human-robot interaction practices, data flows and AI-enabled system behaviour during development, testing and real-world deployment. The toolkit should identify potential ethical, safety, privacy, cybersecurity and regulatory risks, including those related to the EU AI Act and the Cyber Resilience Act. The solution may use an AI-assisted monitoring agent to detect problematic patterns, generate traceable alerts and recommend actions for human review. It should support developers and operators without replacing legal assessment, formal compliance evaluation or human decision-making.

Subtopic 4: HRI Activities DT: Human–Robot Interaction (HRI) is a fundamental component of the FORTIS vision for enabling safe, trustworthy, and efficient collaboration between humans and robotic systems in industrial environments. The FORTIS Digital Twin framework is expected to provide analysis, simulation, monitoring, and decision-support capabilities for both human operators and robots while executing individual and collaborative tasks. Through digital representations of humans, robots, and operational environments, the FORTIS solution aims to support the design, optimization, and validation of collaborative

workflows across a range of industrial applications. However, while humans and robots can be individually represented within a Digital Twin environment, the interactions between them constitute a distinct and equally important element that can itself be digitally twinned. Human–Robot Interactions involve dynamic exchanges of information, actions, intentions, decisions, and responses that directly influence the effectiveness, safety, and success of collaborative operations. As interaction scenarios lie at the core of FORTIS, representing these activities as Digital Twin entities creates new opportunities for monitoring, analysing, predicting, and optimizing collaboration processes. The FORTIS project seeks to advance the state of the art by developing an Interaction-Centric Digital Twin capable of modelling HRI activities and propagating their effects on the human operator, the robotic system, and the achievement of the interaction objective. Such a Digital Twin should capture the evolution of collaborative activities, contextual factors influencing interactions, and the resulting impact on operational performance and collaboration quality. For this open call, proposals are invited to develop, adapt, and validate frameworks for digitally twinning Human–Robot Interaction activities, including the definition and implementation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and metrics that characterize interactions from three complementary perspectives: the human, the robot, and the interaction goal. The objective is to demonstrate how interaction-aware Digital Twins can improve the understanding, assessment, optimization, and trustworthiness of collaborative operations in real-world industrial environments.

Subtopic 5: Omnideployment of the FORTIS solution: This topic focuses on the omnideployment of the FORTIS solution, enabling system modules to be deployed either fully on edge devices, entirely on centralized/edge servers, or dynamically partitioned across both to optimize hardware usage and system latency. The FORTIS ecosystem comprises heterogeneous AI modules with vastly different computational footprints, ranging from heavy Vision-Language Models (VLMs), Large Language Models (LLMs), and transformer-based segmentation models (e.g., SAM3), to lightweight LSTM networks and classical perception tools. The objective is to develop a smart orchestration, optimization, and hardware recommendation framework for deploying FORTIS AI modules across heterogeneous computing infrastructures. Rather than performing unsafe live code migration during operation, the solution will establish pre-deployed edge/server configurations and intelligently route processing streams according to real-time operational requirements, such as network latency, computational load, energy consumption, and hardware availability. During an onboarding and profiling phase, the framework will benchmark the provided FORTIS ROS2 packages across candidate hardware platforms, using NVIDIA Jetson devices as the reference upper-performance target for edge deployment. The framework will then evaluate whether optimized versions of the models can achieve comparable performance on lower-cost edge devices, or whether execution should instead be assigned to more capable edge platforms or server infrastructure. Based on these performance profiles, the framework will automatically apply optimization techniques—including model quantization, tensor optimization, parameter reduction, and parallelization—to maximize execution efficiency. A key objective is to evaluate the cost-performance trade-off of different deployment strategies, recommending whether a workload is more efficiently executed on a cluster of lower-cost edge devices, a high-performance edge platform, or an offloaded server infrastructure. No new datasets will be required or provided for this topic; the focus is strictly on the optimization, orchestration, and deployment of existing FORTIS models.

Subtopics connected to Human and AI perspectives:

Subtopic 6: Ergonomics-Aware Human State and Interaction Context for Adaptive HRC: This topic focuses on extending the FORTIS Human-Centred Toolkits with an ergonomics-aware human state and interaction-context module for adaptive human-robot collaboration (HRC). The proposed solution should estimate and

interpret worker ergonomic risk indicators during collaborative tasks involving humans, robots, and/or autonomous machines. The module may combine wearable and non-wearable sensing, with preference for robot-centric or infrastructure-based sensing whenever feasible, to infer posture quality, effort/fatigue proxies, workload-related indicators, task phase, role, and confidence/uncertainty of the assessment. The objective is not only to monitor ergonomics offline, but to transform human-state information into robot-actionable context that can support real-time behavioural adaptation by robots, the Fleet Management System (FMS), and FORTIS communication and interaction toolkits. Examples include adapting robot speed, distance, waiting behaviour, task sequencing, confirmation loops, or communication modality when a worker is under strain, fatigue, high workload, or constrained posture.

Subtopic 7: Interfaces with XR: To increase human immersion, situational awareness, and interaction effectiveness during Human-Robot Interaction (HRI), the FORTIS project aims to extend its multimodal interaction capabilities through innovative Augmented Reality (AR) and Extended Reality (XR) interfaces, including AR/MR smart glasses. The objective is to bring humans and autonomous systems closer together by enabling intuitive, context-aware communication in complex industrial environments where traditional interfaces (e.g., screens, tablets, or handheld devices) may be ineffective due to noise, poor visibility, limited accessibility, or occupied hands. The proposed solution should exploit the data, services, interaction context, and multimodal capabilities provided by the FORTIS ecosystem to enable users to perceive, understand, and interact naturally with embodied AI systems, including individual robots, robotic fleets, and their associated digital representations. Smart glasses should act as a bi-directional interaction node, combining wearable sensing capabilities with an intuitive communication interface. On one side, they should provide additional perception capabilities by streaming first-person-view (POV) video, audio, and other relevant user context information to FORTIS perception and cognition modules. On the other side, they should deliver relevant information back to the user through immersive and context-aware AR/MR visualizations. The interface should provide users with meaningful information about robot status, intentions, planned actions, task progress, environmental conditions, safety constraints, and requests for human intervention. By visualizing robot states and future actions directly in the user's field of view, the system should improve human understanding of autonomous behaviours, increase trust in robotic systems, and support safer decision-making during collaborative tasks. The solution should also enable intuitive bidirectional interaction mechanisms, allowing users to provide commands, confirmations, corrections, or feedback through one or more natural modalities, such as gestures, gaze, voice, touch, or spatial annotations. These mechanisms should support situations in which direct physical interaction with robots is unsafe, inefficient, or impractical, enabling workers to guide and supervise autonomous systems while maintaining awareness of the surrounding environment. A key aspect of the topic is the evaluation of human factors and usability. Proposed solutions should include a human-centric assessment of UI/UX aspects, considering operator preferences, workload, cognitive effort, and interaction effectiveness under realistic industrial constraints. The evaluation should consider challenging environmental conditions, including dust, noise, low illumination, occlusions, protective equipment, distance from robots, and limited connectivity, to identify the most effective XR communication strategies. The proposed AR/XR interface should complement the existing interaction channels available within FORTIS and should not rely on a single communication modality. Instead, it should provide robust multimodal interaction capabilities capable of adapting to different operational conditions and user needs. The objective is to deliver a reusable and deployable AR/XR interface that integrates with the FORTIS ecosystem, enhances human understanding of robot behaviour, enables safe and efficient bidirectional communication, and supports more adaptive, reliable, and trustworthy human-robot collaboration across different FORTIS scenarios.

Subtopic connected to Robotics and AI perspectives:

Subtopic 8: Trust-Aware Multi-Sensor Localisation and Mapping for FORTIS Robotic Platforms : This topic aims to strengthen the FORTIS Robotic Toolkits with a robust multi-sensor localisation and mapping module for mobile robotic platforms operating in semi-structured, dynamic, and partially GNSS-denied environments. The solution should fuse data from available sensing sources, when available, such as LiDAR, stereo/RGB-D cameras, IMU, GNSS-RTK, wheel odometry, joint states, fiducial markers, or other proprioceptive/exteroceptive sources, to provide reliable pose estimation, mapping, localisation diagnostics, and map alignment for FORTIS robots. The key technical requirement is trust-aware sensor fusion: the system should dynamically assess the reliability (and unavailability) of each sensing modality and adapt localisation and mapping accordingly, rather than assuming that all sensors are always equally reliable. The topic is not intended as a generic SLAM add-on only. It should deliver a localisation and mapping capability that is aware of its own uncertainty, detects degraded sensing conditions, and provides diagnostics that can be used by robot navigation, the FMS, the Digital Twin, and safety supervision layers. The solution should support different FORTIS mobile robotic platforms and should degrade gracefully when not all sensing modalities are available.

3.2.1.2 Topic for Open Call #2.2

Topic: exploiting the FORTIS solution in other key sectors: This open call topic (no sub-topics associated) aims to expand the footprint of FORTIS solutions by engaging end-users in entirely new domains beyond the current pilot frameworks. The core focus is on driving technology transfer and cross-sector adoption, specifically targeting real-world use cases centered around civilian human-robot interaction (HRI). Selected projects will be expected to deliver a tangible demonstration of FORTIS solutions in action, backed by a clearly defined lifecycle and well-structured Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

This open call topic aims to expand the adoption of FORTIS solutions by engaging end-users in application domains beyond the current FORTIS pilot scenarios. The objective is to promote technology transfer and cross-sector adoption by validating existing FORTIS technologies in new operational environments centered around civilian Human-Robot Interaction (HRI).

Applicants are expected to identify a relevant use case within one of the eligible sectors – namely agriculture, farming, forestry, mining, fishing, healthcare, events, airports, shopping malls, among others -and integrate two or more FORTIS ROS packages into their proposed solution. Rather than developing entirely new technologies, proposals should focus on demonstrating the applicability, usability, and added value of the FORTIS ecosystem in realistic operational conditions.

Details on the toolkits and respective ROS packages are available at <https://fortis-project.eu/toolkits/>. Selected projects will receive technical support from relevant FORTIS partners to integrate the chosen components. Applicants are responsible for adapting the solution to their specific use case (including the data needed for any training or calibration of the existing FORTIS toolkits), performing validation activities, defining quantitative and qualitative Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and providing evidence of the achieved results. The expected outcome is a tangible demonstration of the selected FORTIS technologies, supported by a well-defined lifecycle and clear documentation highlighting the benefits and challenges of transferring the technology to a new sector.

3.2.2 Proposal and solution TRL

Proposals must enter at **TRL 4–5** and aim to achieve **TRL 7** by project completion.

3.3 Funding conditions

- **Eligibility & Limits:** Any entity applying as part of a consortium will only be considered for funding once. Each proposal may request a total contribution of up to EUR 250 000.00 in Topic OC#2.1 and up to EUR 170 000.00 in Topic OC#2.2.
- **Cumulative Cap:** FORTIS OC#1 beneficiaries may apply for OC#2, but a single legal entity cannot exceed a lifetime cumulative limit of EUR 200 000 across all FORTIS OCs. E.g., if you received EUR 150 000 in OC1, your OC2 request is capped at EUR 50 000. As we cannot fund any amount above this ceiling, applicants whose total request exceeds the cap will be invited to readjust their budget and secure alternative funding sources. Proposals that fail to comply with this will be disqualified.
- **Funding Rates:** OC#2 matches standard FORTIS beneficiary rates⁶: 100% for non-profit organizations and 70% for SMEs/for-profit organizations.
- **Budget & Costs:** Applicants must estimate and justify all project-related expenses. External experts will evaluate costs for efficiency and economy. Eligible costs include direct personnel, purchase costs (travel, equipment depreciation, software/licenses), indirect costs (25% flat rate on direct personnel and purchase costs), and minor subcontracting.
- **Disbursement:** Lump sum payments released upon successful evaluation of deliverables at the end of each sprint ([Section 6.2.1.](#)).

3.4 Timeline of proposal submission and selection process

The F6S platform will be the single-entry point for all proposals to the FORTIS OC#2. Interested applicants should register at the FORTIS F6S page (<https://www.f6s.com/fortis-open-call-2/apply>). The relevant links and timings for the proposal process are provided in Table 2 but are subject to change.

Table 2. Proposal and selection process and expected timeline

Phase	Description	Expected Timeline
Proposal submission	Fill in and submit proposal including: • Proposal form on F6S: (https://www.f6s.com/fortis-open-call-2/apply). • Proposal template: https://fortis-project.eu/open-call-2/	Launch date: 1 September 2026 Submission deadline: 4 November 2026
Eligibility & technical check ⁷	Verification of eligibility criteria.	5 - 17 November
Proposal evaluation ⁷	External remote evaluation and initial scoring.	17 - 27 November

⁶ further details available at [13-General Annexes of the HE Work Program 2023-2025](#)

⁷ Applicants can submit an appeal within 3 working days of receiving a rejection letter informing the application as non-eligible or an ESR of non-acceptance, as described in [Section 4.4.](#)

Online interviews	Top-ranked proposals pitch the project to FORTIS consortium members.	30 November – 4 December
Announcement of results	Applicants receive a rejection/approval letter. Awarded projects start the onboarding for FORTIS Programme #2.	14 December

The submission date for proposals is final. All other dates, including those of the programme, may be subject to change.

3.5 Other proposal requirements and considerations

- **Submission:** Proposal submission (PDF) strictly online via <https://www.f6s.com/fortis-open-call-2/apply>. Any other submission method will not be accepted.
- **Complete proposal:** All mandatory questions must be answered, and all requested documents must be uploaded. Incomplete proposals will be disqualified.
- **Accept terms:** Applicants must agree to the proposal's terms and conditions.
- **English language:** All documentation and communication must be in English.
- **Document format:** Unless otherwise agreed, all documents in all phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format without printing restrictions.
- **Deadline:** Failure to submit the proposal by the submission deadline, regardless of cause (e.g., network issues, multiple browsers or windows), is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. It is recommended to apply well before the deadline.
 - Applicants may edit and resubmit their proposal at any time prior to the call deadline. However, to reopen a fully submitted proposal, applicants must request support via support@f6s.com at least **two (2) working days** before the deadline to guarantee processing.
 - The deadline may be extended only in case of unforeseen F6S platform technical issues. All applicants will be notified of the new deadline.
- **Review future documents:** Applicants are encouraged to get familiar with the documents that will be required in the contracting phase.
- **Notifications:** Applicants are encouraged to enable F6S notifications for the programme in their profile settings to ensure communications regarding their proposal are received.
- **Applicants list:** A full list of applicants containing their basic information will be created for statistical and transparency purposes and shared with the European Commission.

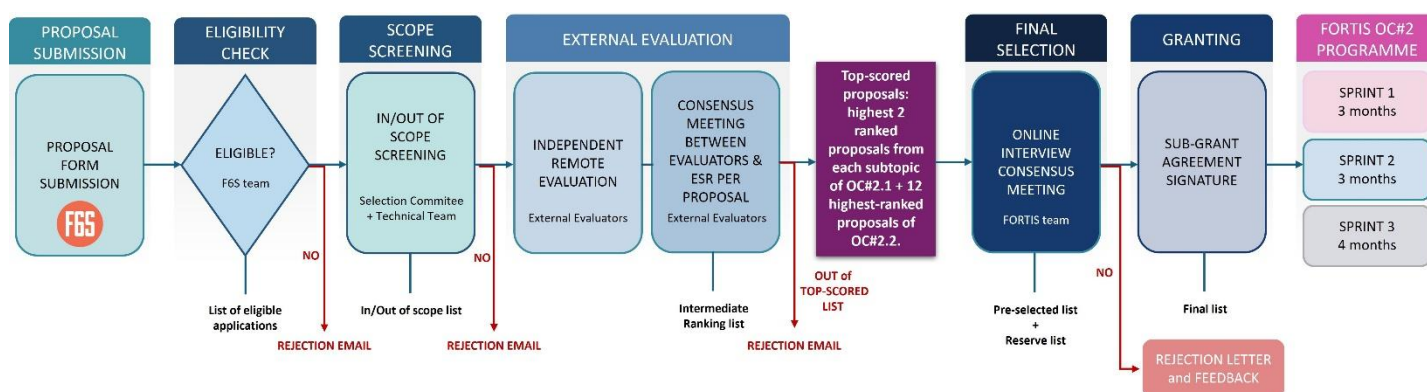
4 How will proposals be evaluated and selected?

The evaluation of proposals is conducted by the FORTIS consortium with support from an independent Evaluation Panel of external experts. The process adheres strictly to principles of fairness and transparency outlined in the EC's rules on proposal submission and evaluation. Table 3 describes the roles of each evaluation group, as well as a brief overview of their responsibilities.

Table 3. Description of roles and activities in the evaluation of proposals

Role	Activities
FORTIS Selection Committee	Decision-making body responsible for FSTP management: It approves open call documents, validates eligibility and results, selects winning proposals during online interviews. During the FORTIS OC#2 programme, they evaluate grantee performance after each sprint and authorize lump-sum disbursements.
FORTIS Technical team	Participate in in/out of scope screening, participate in online interview meetings to decide the final ranking list. During the FORTIS OC#2 programme, they evaluate applicants' performance based on deliverables and on online reviews.
External evaluators	The Expert Evaluation Board is a collective body composed of individual experts with relevant experience across FORTIS domains. Prior to evaluation, all members sign a binding commitment to maintain strict confidentiality and ensure no conflicts of interest exist that could compromise their objective assessment (Section 7.5.). Each proposal is evaluated by two independent experts and a consensus meeting between evaluators will be held to provide an intermediate ranking of proposals. The best scored proposals are selected for the online interview with the FORTIS consortium.

The selection and evaluation process is described in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.** FORTIS proposal and selection process

The FORTIS consortium reserves the right to request at any moment of the process additional information and/or documentation to clarify any doubts regarding the eligibility of the applicant(s) and/or the proposal.

4.1 Eligibility Check

An initial eligibility verification will be done to filter out non-eligible proposals. A proposal is only considered eligible if it meets **all the eligibility criteria and requirements** listed in [Section 3.](#), related with: types of applicants ([Section 3.1.](#)); types of projects ([Section 3.2.](#)); funding conditions ([Section 3.3.](#)); proposal process ([Section 3.4.](#)); and, other proposal requirements and considerations ([Section 3.5.](#)).

The eligibility check enables the establishment of a shortlist of proposals to be evaluated in the next step of the evaluation process ([Section 4.2.](#)). This step establishes the shortlist for external remote evaluation. Proposals marked as non-eligible will receive a rejection letter outlining the justification.

4.2 External remote evaluation

The Expert Evaluation Board evaluates the proposals remotely. Experts are recruited from a pool established via “Call for Expressions of Interest”. Experts are required to be independent, impartial, and objective. All experts will sign a contract, which includes a declaration of confidentiality and the absence of conflicts of interest. Any known conflict of interest will be immediately communicated to the FORTIS team. Proposals are allocated electronically to experts and reviewed using a bespoke evaluation form against the defined criteria in Table 4 and 5.

4.2.1 Evaluation criteria & scoring

Each proposal will be reviewed by 2 external experts from the expert evaluation board. Proposals will be scored against the criteria highlighted in Table 4.

Table 4. FORTIS OC#2 criteria

Criteria	Definition
Excellence & innovation (40% weighting)	Clarity and pertinence of the project’s objectives, and the extent to which the proposed work is ambitious and addresses the OC topic/subtopic challenges and requirements. Interoperability level and innovation degree of the proposed solution. Project outcomes, respective measurements and KPIs.
Impact (20% weighting).	Quality and feasibility of measures to maximize project outcomes, including a clear 10-month exploitation roadmap. Evaluators will assess the project’s explicit contributions to environmental, social, and economic impacts, along with their alignment with relevant EU strategies. Furthermore, evaluation will cover the appropriateness of the dissemination and communication strategy, the realism of proposed outreach KPIs, and the commitment to mandatory project deliverables (e.g., poster and article).
Implementation (40% weighting)	Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall. Capacity and role of each participant, and extent to which the consortium brings the necessary expertise. Appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content.

Each criterion will be evaluated according to the following **dimensions** (Table 5):

Table 5. Criteria for award of support

Criteria	Dimensions
1. Excellence & Innovation	1.1 Problem description and motivation: - The extent to which third party(ies) project contributes to the project scope, topic, and is beyond the State of the Art. 1.2 Ambition: - Innovative approach (e.g. ground-breaking approaches, new software, others). - Contribution to the advancement and scale up of FORTIS solution according to the topic they selected. 1.3 Topics/challenges - Clear identification of the FORTIS topic. - Demonstrated prior experience with similar technical approaches. - Clear identification of technical requirements and real-world scenarios. Seamless integration with FORTIS solutions. - High-quality plan to execute project technical milestones. - Sound overall approach and credible proposed methodology.
2. Impact	Solution development and exploitation: - Information about the exploitation model that should highlight the sustainability aspect and the potential common exploitation between the FORTIS consortium and the third-party applicant(s). - Describe market potential and commercialization strategy if applicable. - Relevance to the European industrial competitiveness. 2.2 Economic, environmental and social impact: - Clarity on the project contribution towards environmental, social and economic impacts to contribute to sustainable development - e.g., Green Deal.
3. Implementation	3.1 Workplan: - Demonstration of a quality workplan with clear tasks that align with the requirements of the topic - Description of relevant milestones, KPIs, identification of risks and barriers - Testing and validation procedures clearly described

Criteria	Dimensions
	• Clear integration of proposed systems with FORTIS technologies for Topic 2.1 and clear interaction/execution of the FORTIS solutions in other sectors for Topic 2.2 3.2 Team: • Demonstration of domain experience in robotics, AI, activity recognition, or related areas relevant to the proposed project. • Demonstration of technical expertise evidenced by listing up to 3 scientific articles with DOIs, up to 2 previous R&D project grant numbers / commercial product deployments, and other verifiable, tangible results. • Demonstration of management and leadership qualities, as well as the operational resources and capacity required to implement the project. • Cross-functional team structure with a strong background and skills base, verified by key team CVs including at least one team member with 3+ years of documented R&D or industry experience in robotics, AI, or activity recognition. • Gender balance 3.3 Budget: • Operational capacity and appropriateness of resource allocation (e.g., person-months, task distribution, and required equipment/infrastructure) to convincingly achieve the proposed objectives and deliverables

Each criterion will be scored between 0 and 5 Score values will indicate the following assessments:

- **0:** The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
- **1: Poor.** The proposal addresses the criterion in an inadequate manner or there are significant weaknesses.
- **2: Fair.** The proposal addresses the criterion broadly, but there are still several weaknesses.
- **3: Good.** The proposal addresses the criteria well, but improvements are necessary.
- **4: Very Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but some improvements are still possible.
- **5: Excellent.** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The final score is the average of the scores provided by the external evaluators and may include decimals. The minimum threshold for each criterion will be **3 (three) out of 5 (five)**, while the overall score threshold will be **9 (nine) out of 15 (fifteen)**. Proposals that do not meet the minimum thresholds (per criteria or overall score) will be excluded.

After the individual scoring by the expert evaluation board, the Selection Committee will:

- Check for large differences (over 2 points per criterion) between evaluators.
- If differences exist, evaluators meet to discuss and agree on scores.
- If an agreement is not reached, another expert may be invited to provide a third assessment.

4.2.2 Ranking & selection

Proposals will be ranked in single separate lists per topic/subtopic, based on average score. If multiple proposals have the same score, ties are broken using the highest criteria in this order:

1. Excellence & innovation
2. Implementation
3. Impact

4.3 Interview

The top-ranked proposals of the external experts evaluation phase ([Section 4.2](#)) will be invited to an online interview conducted by the FORTIS team.

- **Selection:** The 2 highest-ranked proposals from each subtopic under Topic OC#2.1 and the 12 highest-ranked proposals for Topic OC#2.2 are invited.
- **Format:** Applicants present their project pitch and answer questions from the FORTIS team. Further details will be provided for those selected for the interviews.
- **Scoring:** Evaluators re-score the proposal and pitch against the core criteria. This score replaces the previous remote evaluation score. Proposals failing to meet minimum thresholds or deviating negatively from their written application will be rejected.
- **Ranking List:** The committee agrees on a final ranking list and reserve list based on post-interview overall scores, applying the tie-breaking rules if necessary.

The scores provided after the interview will be used to define the top-ranked proposals. After the online interview, the consortium is not obliged to select the highest scoring proposal when it has specific grounds for objecting to the participant on, for example, commercial competition issues or strategic issues relevant to balance experiments between the different projects (which may become apparent during the evaluation process). In this case, the choice may pass to the next-ranked proposal. In such case, the Granting Authority will be informed through a specific report. The consortium is not obligated to award all available cascade funding if too few proposals meet or exceed the required evaluation thresholds. In such cases, the consortium may relocate the budget to other topic/subtopic.

All applicants will receive notification of their results.

4.4 Appeals

Within three (3) working days of receiving (1) a rejection letter informing them that their proposal is ineligible or (2) a letter of non-acceptance with an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), an applicant may submit a

request for an appeal if they believe **the eligibility criteria were incorrectly applied**, or if they feel there has been a shortcoming in how their proposal was evaluated. All requests for appeal must be sent to fortis-opencalls@f6s.com and must:

- Focus on aspects concerning the evaluation of the proposal (e.g. admissibility or eligibility checks, evaluation procedure, etc), not their scientific/technical merits.
- Clearly describe the complaint.
- Be received within the time limit (3 working days) from the reception of a rejection letter considering the proposal as non-eligible or the ESR information letter delivered.
- Sent by the entities' legal representative that has also submitted the proposal.

Note that the evaluation is carried out by highly qualified experts. FORTIS will neither question nor interfere with their original evaluation. Mere repetitions of the content of the proposal or disagreements with the result or reasoning of the technical evaluation will not be considered.

5 What happens after selection?

Selected applicants will be invited to the contracting phase, where administrative and financial details and documents are verified and validated. To carry out mandatory Know Your Customer (KYC) checks, proof of residency and proof of ID from one or more members of the organisation(s) is required.

The steps of this phase are:

1. **Workplan optimization:** Comments, conditions, or recommendations (if any) provided in the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) and during the online review meeting will be incorporated into the Sub-Grant Agreement (SGA) to optimize the work plan and proposal deliverables.
2. **Validation** of the entities based on the provision of the following documentation:
 - a. Formal proof of the entity's legal existence and tax activity.
 - b. Declaration of Honour, for all participating entities, signed by the legal representative of the entity (Annex 4).
 - c. Consortium Declaration of Honour, signed by the legal representative of each consortium partner (Annex 5).
 - d. Proof of the SME status, including the SME Declaration Form (Annex 6).
 - e. Bank Account Information (Annex 7).
3. **Signing of the sub-grant agreement** between FORTIS Consortium represented by its Coordinator (Fundacion Tecnalia Research & Innovation), the Treasurer (F6S EU Tech Innovation Network Designated Activity Company) and the Lead Beneficiary.

Additional considerations:

- A valid VAT is mandatory.
- The sub-grant agreement (contract) is final and cannot be altered.
- Electronic digital signatures are required for signed documents (unless otherwise agreed).
- Deadlines for document submission will be provided and will normally be concluded within two weeks.
- Failure to complete the negotiation in time will result in ejection of the proposal.

6 What is the FORTIS Programme #2 and its requirements?

6.1 Programme Sprints

The FORTIS Programme #2 will run for 10 months, and it includes 3 key sprints:

1. Sprint 1 from M1 to M3
2. Sprint 2 from M4 to M6
3. Sprint 3 from M7 to M10

Selected projects receive structured support:

- **Administrative and Financial support:** F6S guides beneficiaries through contracting, onboarding, mentor introductions, and sprint reviews.
- **Technical Mentoring:** beneficiaries will be paired with dedicated mentors from the technical team - **selected to match each project's topic expertise** - to guide solution integration into FORTIS and maximize impact across other environments. Through hands-on technical assistance, these expert mentors will help teams overcome key challenges, reach performance milestones, and unlock their full potential. Additionally, the mentoring program actively supports outreach by encouraging joint scientific publications and facilitating pre-agreements on IP results between beneficiaries and FORTIS partners.
- **Exploitation/support services:** F6S, as exploitation lead partner, together with technical mentors, assist third parties in identifying exploitable assets, and the development of a tailored exploitation plan (if applicable).

6.2 Programme review

6.2.1 Review summary

The FORTIS OC#2 program has a **10-month duration**, divided into **3 sprints**. At the end of each sprint, beneficiaries must submit a progress report and relevant deliverables and attend an online review meeting. Their progress is evaluated and continuation to the next sprint depends on a positive review assessment (Table 6).

Table 6. FORTIS Programme # 2 – Payment Schedule

Sprint	Item	Description
Sprint 1	Requirement	Submission of Progress Report #1.
	Result	Payment of 30% of the grant after positive assessment of the work developed during the sprint.
	Timeline	End of month 3.
	Requirement	Submission of Progress Report #2.

Sprint	Item	Description
Sprint 2	Result	Payment of 30% of the grant after positive assessment of the work developed during the sprint.
	Timeline	End of month 6.
Sprint 3	Requirement	Submission of Final Report.
	Result	Payment of 40% of the grant after positive assessment of the work developed during the sprint, and after the end of the FORTIS project final payment (successful completion of the project and approval of the Final Payment is subject to final confirmation).
	Timeline	End of month 10.

To keep teams on track regarding the timeline, the administrative monitor (F6S) will oversee progress. Beneficiaries must submit their progress reports and deliverables to the project repository at least **one week before** the review meeting. Coordinated by F6S, this online meeting requires beneficiary representatives to present their work and respond to questions while the mentor, Project Coordinator, and/or Technical Coordinator evaluate the sprint's progress, reports, and submitted deliverables.

After each successful review and within **5 working days**, the beneficiary should send the relevant payment request document. Grant funding for the Open Call winners will be disbursed in three instalments according to a **30% + 30% + 40%** structure. **The final 40% instalment is retained until final project completion and EC approval (subject to final confirmation).**

6.2.2 Additional reporting and requirements

During the FORTIS Programme #2 and after the applicant ends its activities, the consortium may request additional reports/contributions during or after the programme to comply with EC rules, internal requirements, or promotional efforts, including:

- Details on data management practices of the beneficiaries, as part of the project they are implementing or specific to the entity.
- Details on origin and management of data that is being brought into the project (using an existing data provider) and not generated exclusively during the project implementation.
- Information about the implementation and conclusions of the project to develop promotional materials (e.g., videos, success stories).
- Statistics on researchers and employees working on the project for the beneficiary.
- Information on planned Intellectual Property measures.

7 What else is important to know?

The selected entities are indirectly beneficiaries of EC funding. Therefore, selected entities are responsible for the appropriate use of the funding and must comply with obligations under Horizon Europe specific requirements as described in Horizon Europe. Specific details and guidelines related to all aspects of the responsibilities of the beneficiaries are provided in the sub-grant agreement (to be provided later).

7.1 Intellectual Property Rights

7.1.1 Background

If needed for the beneficiaries' activities during the FORTIS Programme #2, when possible, the consortium will facilitate access to materials and resources necessary for beneficiaries to carry out their intended collaboration.

Prior to the start of the programme, it is the responsibility of beneficiaries and consortium partners and mentors to identify their respective backgrounds regarding FORTIS Open Call #2 theme and scope. Such identification could be performed agreeing on a list of knowledge and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) included or excluded.

7.1.2 Foreground

The property of the products and/or services developed exclusively by the beneficiaries during their participation as part of the FORTIS Programme #2, within the framework of the Open Call #2, will be entirely owned by them. As the results from the programme may be generated in collaboration with the FORTIS consortium, beneficiaries and/or the FORTIS consortium partners may decide to establish a different ownership system and agree to transfer/share the ownership of the results created during their participation in the Open Call #2. In this case, the FORTIS Consortium will work towards facilitating agreements between the parties with the goal of finding a common ground.

If the beneficiaries and the FORTIS consortium partners who mentored them produce jointly generated results, where their respective contribution to these results cannot be ascertained, or where it is not possible to separate such joint results for the purpose of applying for, obtaining or maintaining the relevant intellectual property rights protection, they shall have joint ownership of those results. The Sub-Grant Agreement will introduce provisions concerning joint ownership of the results of the sub-granted projects.

7.2 On conflicts of interest

Applicants must prevent any situation compromising objective sub-project implementation due to economic interests, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest (conflict of interest'). Applicants must formally notify the FORTIS OC manager (F6S) without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interest and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The FORTIS coordinator will verify if the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specific deadline.

If a sub-granted project consortium member breaches any of its obligations, the sub-grant agreement may be automatically terminated. Moreover, costs may be rejected.

- Relevant note: A conflict of interest exists if you:

- **Have organizational ties to FORTIS:** Are an employee, board member, advisor, or partner in any organization that belongs to the core FORTIS consortium or is involved in managing or evaluating FORTIS Open Call #2;
- **Have financial or ownership links:** Hold shares, stock options, direct equity, or commercial interests in a core FORTIS consortium partner, or if a member of the FORTIS evaluation team holds financial interests in your organization;
- **Have personal or family connections:** Share close personal, family (e.g., spouse, child, sibling, parent), or financial ties with any evaluator, decision-maker, or partner involved in the management or evaluation of FORTIS Open Call #2;
- **Have close professional or academic links:** Currently collaborate closely, co-author publications, share active grants, or maintain a recent supervisory/subordinate relationship with a member of the FORTIS Expert Evaluation Board;
- **Are involved in self-evaluation:** Serve as an external expert evaluator or reviewer for FORTIS Open Call #2 while simultaneously participating in or contributing to a submitted proposal.

7.3 Ethical issues

The FORTIS project complies with the fundamental ethical issues particularly those outlined in the “European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity”.

- All applicants must submit a self-assessment ethics questionnaire, available in the Proposal Template.
- If the applicant confirms the existence of potential ethical issues, they must contact us via email.
- The FORTIS consortium will verify the declaration's consistency with the proposal contents and may contact applicants to resolve any ethical issues.
- Proposals that fail to properly address ethical issues or inadequately deal with privacy aspects will be rejected.

7.4 Data protection

In order to process and evaluate proposals, and manage project implementation, the FORTIS consortium will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data.

F6S Network Ireland Limited will carry out all processing operations on personal data submitted through the F6S platform for these purposes. Please see F6S privacy policy [here](#).

- A Data Protection Officer (DPO) has been appointed by Data Controllers (member of FORTIS project) generally, to ensure compliance with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and that personal data is collected, processed, and stored in a secure manner.
- The F6S platform's system design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR).

- Each applicant will accept the terms of the processing of their data, which are informed [here](#), as a guarantee of compliance with legislation on the protection of personal data.
- Apart from the F6S platform, data will also be stored in the F6S Google Drive, and in the project repository on SharePoint managed by the project coordinator Fundacion Tecnia Research & Innovation.
- Note that the FORTIS consortium must maintain generated data until five years after the balance of the FORTIS project is paid or longer if there are ongoing procedures (such as audits, investigations or litigation). In this case, the data must be kept until their conclusion.

7.5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality obligations:

- Selected applicants are required to maintain confidential any project data, documents, invoices and other materials (in any form) during the implementation of the activities and for 5 years after project completion.
- This confidentiality period can be extended by agreement with the EC and the FORTIS consortium.
- Information shared during the project, whether written or spoken, is only considered confidential if the FORTIS consortium agrees and confirms it in writing within 15 days.
- Confidential information must only be used for project implementation, unless otherwise agreed upon.
- Any information shared during the proposal stage will be treated as confidential.

7.6 Promotion of the action and ensuring visibility of the EU funding

The beneficiary must promote their project, the FORTIS project, and its results in a strategic and effective manner by providing targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media and the public, while explicitly highlighting the financial support of the EC across all channels, including the official third-party website. As a mandatory requirement, **each proposal is expected to deliver at least one poster or one article** detailing their work. To ensure proper alignment, the proposal must explicitly outline the project's communication and dissemination objectives alongside a structured delivery plan. The FORTIS Communication team will guide and support selected beneficiaries with official branding and communication guidelines.

7.7 Checks and reviews

The EC may, at any time during the implementation of the sub-project and up to five years after the end of the sub-project, arrange for a check and review activity to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the EC services themselves, including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC.

There will be no financial checks, reviews, or audits to check costs, since beneficiaries have no obligation to document the costs incurred for the action. Checks, reviews, and audits will focus on the technical implementation of the action.

8 Relevant links and contacts

The FORTIS Consortium will provide information to the applicants via the F6S page, so that all information (questions and answers) is visible to all participants.

Project website: <https://fortis-project.eu/>

- Open call proposal form: <https://www.f6s.com/fortis-open-call-2/apply>
- Contact us: fortis-opencalls@f6s.com
- Online Q&A/ discussion board: <https://www.f6s.com/fortis-open-call-2/discuss>
- F6S platform support team: support@f6s.com

(For issues with the submission, resubmission, access to the platform, etc.)

9 Relevant Open Call definitions

Table 7. Acronyms and definitions

Acronym	Explanation/ Definition
AWU	Annual Work Unit
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
ESR	Evaluation Summary Report
FORTIS	Multi-Modal and Multi-Aspect Holistic Human-Robot Interaction project
FSTP	Financial Support to Third Parties
F6S	F6S Network Ireland Limited
GA	Grant Agreement
HE	Horizon Europe
HRI	Human-robot interaction
HRC	Human-robot communication
IoT	Internet of Things
IP	Intellectual Property
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
KYC	Know Your Customer
MS	Member States
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories
RTO	Research and Training Organisation
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
TEO	Tangible Expected Outcomes
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
VAT	Value Added Tax
WP	Work Package

Table 8. Terms and definitions

Term	Definition
Applicant(s)	The legal entity or group of legal entities that intend(s) to submit or that submitted a proposal to the Open Call.
Proposal Eligibility Criteria	Criteria used to assess if an proposal can be considered for the open call. Possible values (Yes/No).
Proposal Eligible or Non-Eligible	Proposal that is or is not compliant with eligibility criteria.
Proposal Timestamp	Timestamp of the final submission of an proposal. If the proposal is reopened and resubmitted the last date will be considered.
Bank Account Information	Form where the beneficiary provides information of the bank account to which payments will be made during the project implementation.
Beneficiary or 3rd Party	An entity or a consortium that submitted an proposal to the open call that was accepted to be funded, and have signed, or are in the process of signing, a sub-grant agreement.
Consortium	Set of legal entities that are cumulatively responsible for implementing the project as defined in the Grant Agreement signed with the European Commission.

Term	Definition
Consortium Declaration of Honour	Declaration where the applicants/ beneficiaries, participating as a consortium, declare they accept all conditions of the open call, acceleration process & programme; and agree - if applicable - on budget share. One CDoH is required for each sub-granted project.
Contract Deadline	Date and time until when the selected entities need to provide contractual information.
Declaration of Honour (DoH)	Declaration where the applicant/ beneficiary declares they accept all conditions of the open call, acceleration process & programme. One DoH is required for each applicant/ beneficiary.
External Evaluator	Expert hired by the consortium to assist in the evaluation of the Open Call. External evaluators cannot have conflicts of interest and are bound by a confidentiality agreement.
F6S Proposal Form	Proposal form available in F6S Platform.
F6S Platform	Platform provided by F6S.
FSTP	Financial support to third parties. Payments made to entities that are not members of the consortium.
FSTP – Lump Sum	Payment made to the third party based on the achievement of a milestone.
Internal evaluation committee	Group of appropriately qualified persons of the consortium partners that are assigned the responsibility of performing evaluations or reviews at any stage of the open call implementation or programme.
Mentor	Person from the consortium that works closely with the beneficiary to foster communication with the consortium and assess progress of the project. The mentor may be part of an evaluation committee.
Open Call	Competitive process to access a Programme.
Open Call and Programme deadlines	The project has planned the programme carefully, but unexpected things can happen. The proposal deadline is fixed and will only change if something unforeseen occurs. Other dates, including of the programme, are flexible and may be adjusted as needed, and communicated to all applicants.
Open Call close date	Date and time when proposals close.
Open Call selection prioritisation	Rules used to order proposals.
Proof of Bank Account Information	The account where the funds will be transferred will be indicated via a specific form signed by the entity, individuals, and the bank owners. The holder of the account will be the entity/ individual. Provided using Annex 7.
Proof of Legal Existence	Company/ organisation register, official journal or other official document per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
Proof of SME Status	Proof of the SME condition is required: • If the applicant has been fully validated as an SME on the Beneficiary Register of the EC Participant Portal, the PIC number must be provided. • Provision of the signed (with a valid e-signature) SME Declaration (Annex 6): in the event the beneficiary declares being non-autonomous, the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for

Term	Definition
	upstream and downstream organisations is required. A Status Information Form may be requested, which includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company. Supporting documents: In cases where either the number of employees or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional, association records, etc.
Reserve List	Eligible proposals that were not selected for funding which can be invited in case selected proposals do not provide contractual data.
Schedule for payments to Beneficiaries	All payments to beneficiaries are dependent on the successful review of deliverables/ reports at the end of each sprint, and reception by the consortium of the corresponding payment request. All payments will be made with undue delay, preferably no later than 30 calendar days after the reception of the financial statement.
Score, Expert	Unless otherwise stated, experts will rank each sub-criterion with marks between 0 and 5. Half point scores may be given (steps of 0.5). Score values will indicate the following assessments: 0: The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing/incomplete information. 1: Poor. The proposal addresses the criterion in an inadequate manner or there are significant weaknesses. 2: Fair. The proposal addresses the criterion broadly, but there are still several weaknesses. 3: Good. The proposal addresses the criteria well, but improvements are necessary. 4: Very Good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but some improvements are still possible. 5: Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.
Score, Per Committee	When the evaluation is made by a committee, the average score of each criterion is rounded to the nearest point or half point (1, 1.5, 2, ..., 4, 4.5, 5), before computing the overall score. Overall score is the sum of the scores of each criterion multiplied by the respective weight, rounded to the nearest integer value.
Selected proposal	Proposal that was selected to participate in the Open Call Implementation.
SME	An incorporated enterprise that complies with the rules defined by the European Commission to be qualified as an SME ⁸
SME – Autonomous Enterprise	An autonomous enterprise is not a partner with or linked to another enterprise
SME – Linked Enterprise	Linked enterprises are those that form a group through direct or indirect control of the majority of voting rights of an enterprise by another or through the ability to exercise a dominant influence on an enterprise.

⁸ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-fundamentals/sme-definition_en

Term	Definition
SME – Partner Enterprise	The enterprise holds a minimum of 25% (Capital or voting rights in another enterprise, or 25% (Capital or voting rights) are owned by another enterprise.
SME Declaration Form	Declaration where the SME status is assessed.
Sprint	A Sprint is a time-boxed execution phase within the FORTIS OC#2 program where selected participants develop and deliverables to meet key performance milestones. Success in each sprint is required to complete the stage and progress further. The 10-month FORTIS OC#2 program is divided into three consecutive sprints: Sprint 1 and Sprint 2 last three months each, followed by a four-month Sprint 3.
Sub-grant Agreement	Signed between the Project Consortium, represented by its Coordinator and the beneficiary. The sub-grant agreement will also include the comments (if any) of the proposal's ESR to the work plan.



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