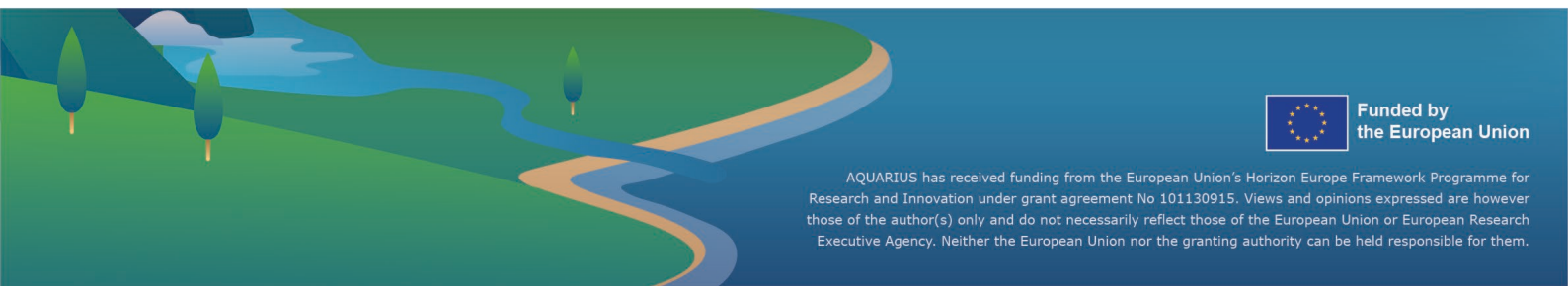




AQUARIUS Transnational Access Platform (TAP)

Online Submission Guidelines

21.05.2025/V2.1



Funded by
the European Union

AQUARIUS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation under grant agreement No 101130915. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

About this document

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1. Application steps and form

The following pages offer a step-by-step guideline for the online submission process. You can use them as a checklist to make sure you have all the information needed in order to fill in the form. The different screenshots displayed in this document will guide you through the submission process.

Proposals must be submitted exclusively in electronic form via the **AQUARIUS Transnational Access Platform (TAP)**. Data that is not entered in the TAP will not be considered in the evaluation process and cannot be funded.

The proposal submission involves the following steps:

- 1) Registration in the [TAP](#) and confirmation of e-mail address.
- 2) Log in to TAP. Complete the Transnational Access application form in the TAP with all relevant information, following the workflow in the TAP. The application consists of two main parts:

A. Application information to be inserted online in the TAP: General information about the project, applicants (user group leader and user group), logistic information, and travel and logistic costs for the intended access.

B. Appendices to the application, to be uploaded in the TAP:

- 1) **Research plan.** Applicants should follow the AQUARIUS research plan template, provided in the TAP document library (mandatory).
- 2) **CV of the user group leader**, using the dedicated CV template in the TAP document library (mandatory).
- 3) **Preliminary/Initial Data Management Plan**, using the dedicated DMP template in the TAP document library and specified in AQUARIUS [deliverable 6.2](#) (mandatory).
- 4) Optional: **Letter(s) of Recommendation** for applicants without a PhD.

These documents must be uploaded at the end of the online application process as separate, unprotected PDF files.

- 3) **Step 3:** Review the application and **submit it**.

2. Transnational Access Platform (TAP)

2.1. Step 1 - Registration

In order to be able to use the AQUARIUS [Transnational Access Platform \(TAP\)](#), you have to create a user account by inserting your registration details and confirm your e-mail address.

You can request a new password at any time if you have lost it.

When you have registered and confirmed your e-mail address, you can log in to the [Transnational Access Platform \(TAP\)](#).

On the TAP landing page, you will find the open TA call for which you can apply. Click on **'Apply'** to initiate the application process.

2.2. Step 2 – Preparation of the application

2.2.1. Overview and Step 1: Before you start

On the left side of the TAP you can see the TAP menu with the open TA calls, your application, the document library where you can find all guidelines and templates for the application, as well as the AQUARIUS Privacy and Cookie Policy.

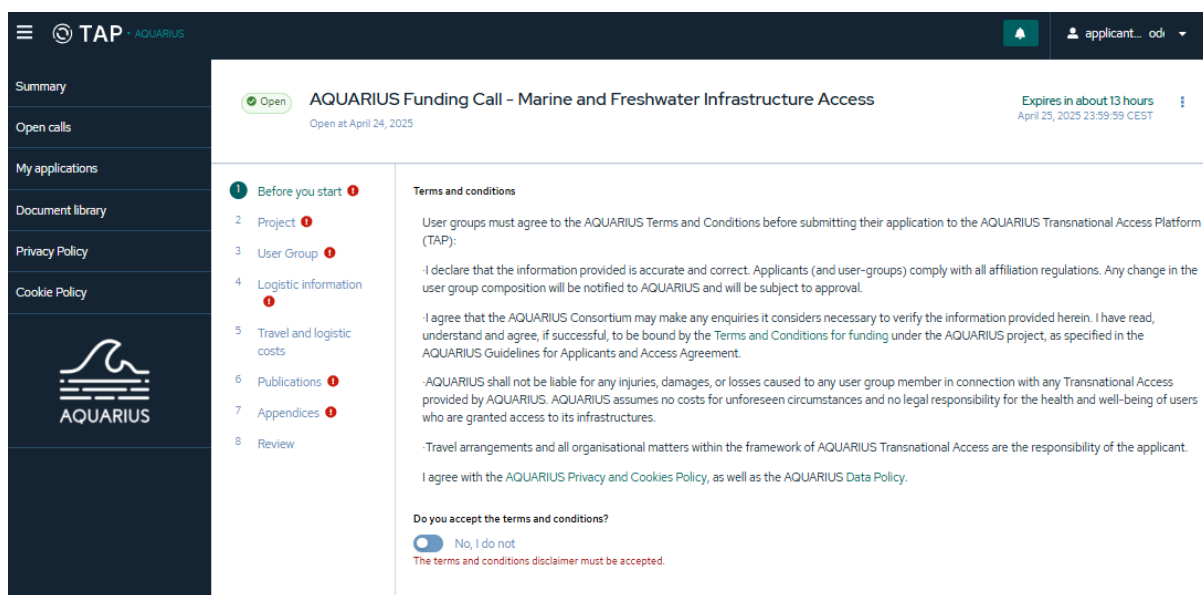
As soon as you start the application process, the call menu will guide you through the various steps of the application.

You must complete the various forms for the application one after the other. After completing each form, you must save the content so that you can open the completed form again later. You can then go back to the individual forms of the application process at any time.

The individual forms and data entered can be changed and adapted at any time until you finally submit the application.

Fields marked with a red asterisk are mandatory.

Before you can start the application, you must agree to the Terms and Conditions of AQUARIUS.



The screenshot shows the AQUARIUS TAP application interface. On the left is a dark sidebar menu with options: Summary, Open calls, My applications, Document library, Privacy Policy, and Cookie Policy. The main content area is titled 'AQUARIUS Funding Call – Marine and Freshwater Infrastructure Access' and indicates it is 'Open' as of April 24, 2025, with an expiration of about 13 hours. A progress bar shows 8 steps: 1. Before you start (active), 2. Project, 3. User Group, 4. Logistic information, 5. Travel and logistic costs, 6. Publications, 7. Appendices, and 8. Review. The 'Before you start' step contains the 'Terms and conditions' section, which includes a declaration of accuracy, an agreement to the AQUARIUS Terms and Conditions, and a confirmation of acceptance. At the bottom, there is a toggle switch for 'Do you accept the terms and conditions?' set to 'No, I do not', with a note that the disclaimer must be accepted.

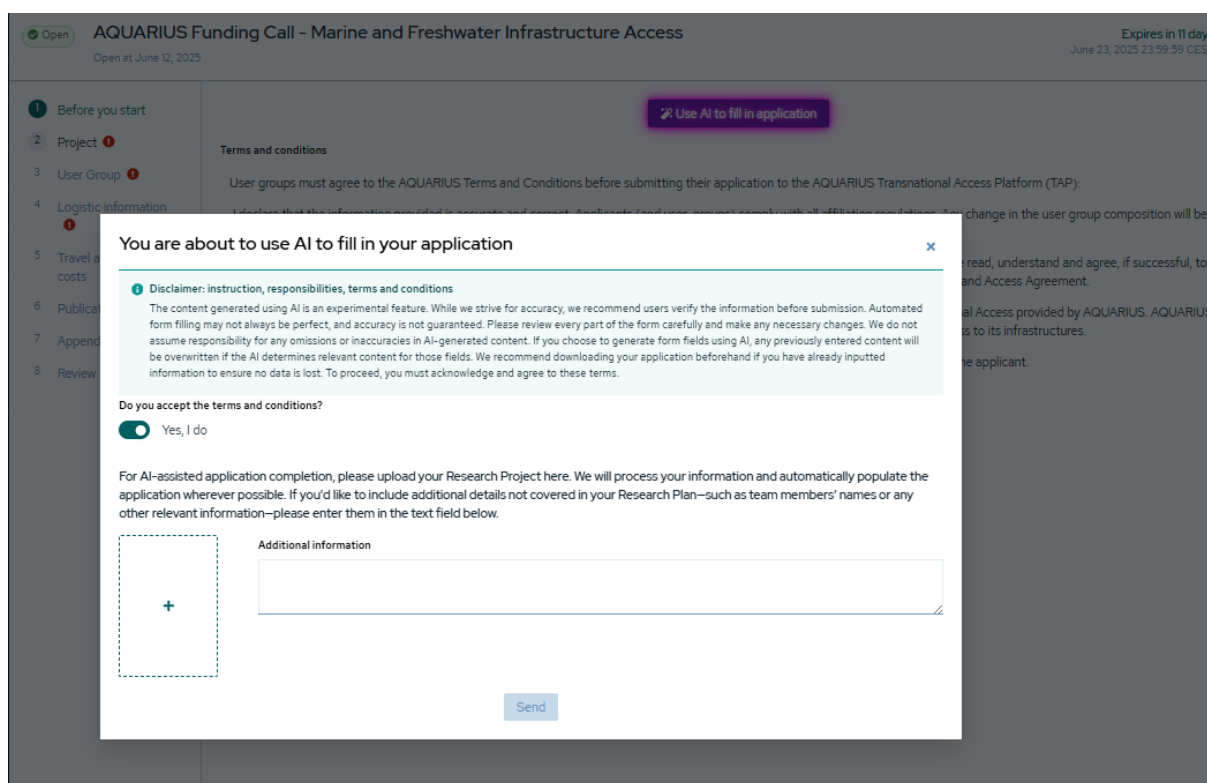
Figure 1: Acceptance of Terms and Conditions.

After agreeing to the Terms and Conditions, you can start entering the information about your project.

The TAP offers the option of automatically filling in some information in the online application form using a new AI function. This means that you have to enter less information, e.g. about the users or the project summary, in the online form later. To do this, use the "Use AI to fill in application" button at the top of the screen. The AI takes the information from the research plan, which you can upload here. This version of the research plan does not have to be the final one yet, the finalised research plan can be uploaded later at the end of the application process.

Please note that the information on the user group and logistic information that is not included in the research plan must be entered manually in the online form in the next steps.

The fill-in function with the AI can only be used once to prevent discrepancies when updating the data in the research plan and in the online platform.



The screenshot shows the 'AQUARIUS Funding Call - Marine and Freshwater Infrastructure Access' application form. A modal window titled 'You are about to use AI to fill in your application' is open. It contains a disclaimer about the experimental nature of the AI feature, a toggle switch for 'Do you accept the terms and conditions?' (which is turned on), and a section for uploading a research project. Below this is a text field for 'Additional information' and a 'Send' button. The background shows the application steps: 1. Before you start, 2. Project, 3. User Group, 4. Logistic information, 5. Travel costs, 6. Publications, 7. Appendix, and 8. Review. A 'Use AI to fill in application' button is visible at the top right of the form.

Figure 2: Filling in project information using AI.

2.2.2. Step 2: Project information

In the **Project** form, you must include information on the project, a summary/abstract and scientific discipline and topic keywords. The topic keywords will be used to find scientific reviewers for your application later. Therefore, please choose the 5 most suitable keywords from the list provided in the TAP.

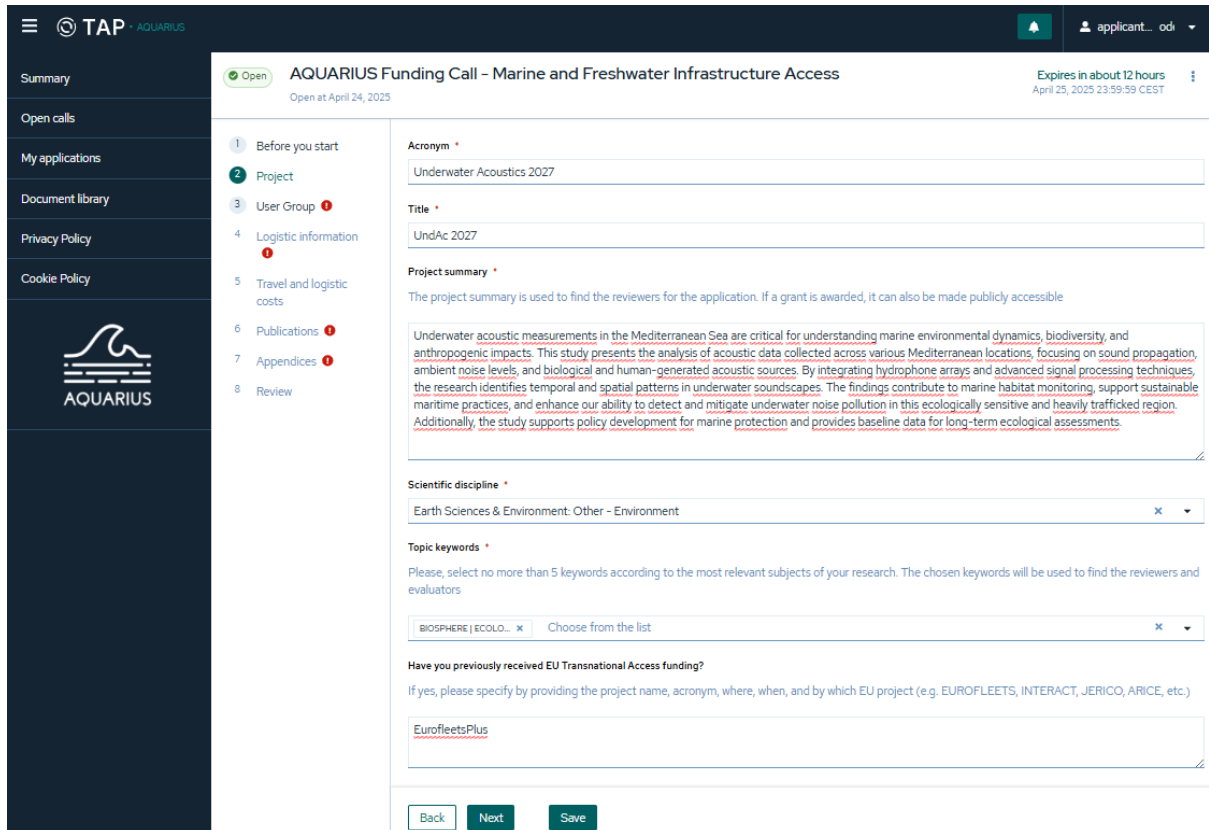


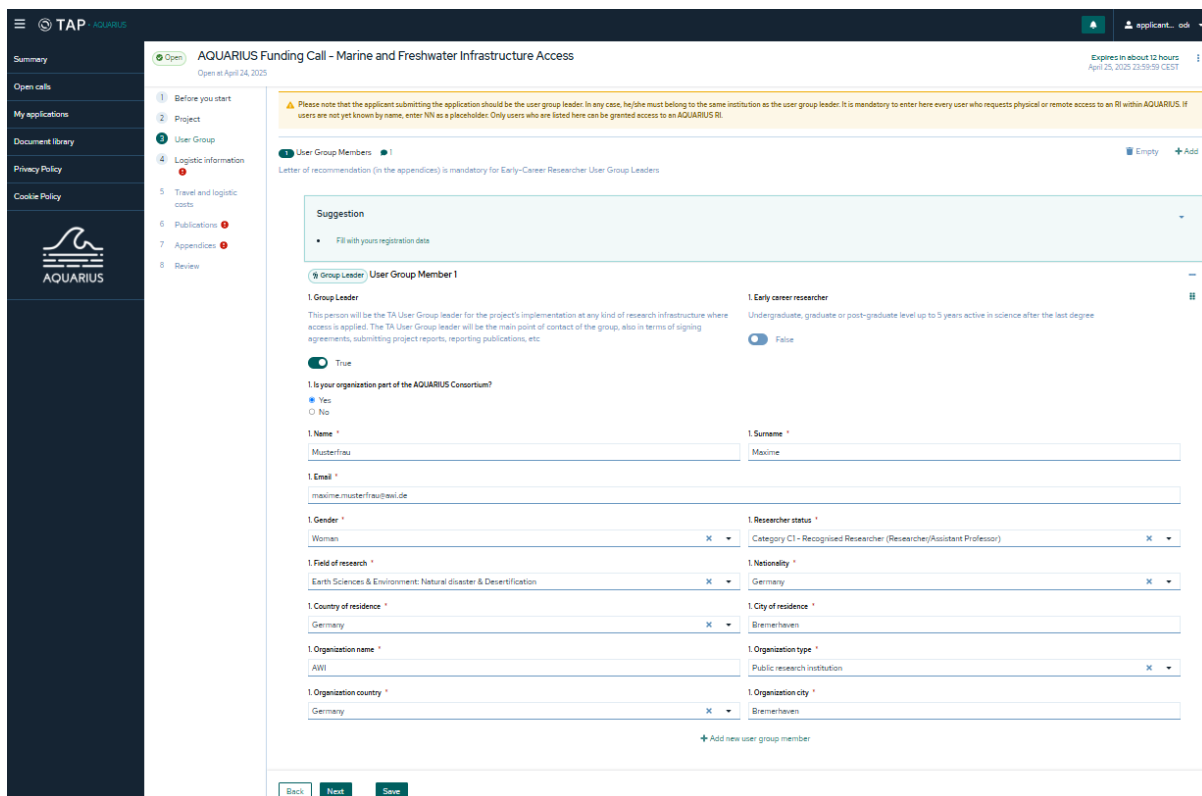
Figure 3: Entering the Project Background Information.

2.2.3. Step 3: User Group

Now enter all participants who are requesting access in your application. **Only those who are listed here will be eligible for access and financial compensation.** If users are not known yet by name, enter NN as placeholder. Please indicate who will be the user group leader and who is an Early Career Researcher.

You can add the first user by clicking on **+ Add first user group member** and in the following new user group members by clicking on **+ Add new user group member** at the bottom of the page.

Please note: The applicant submitting the application should be the user group leader. In case of a successful evaluation and financial support of the project, Transnational Access Agreements and the financial compensation (for Scientists' Travel and Logistics costs) will be concluded exclusively with the institution of the user group leader.



AQUARIUS Funding Call - Marine and Freshwater Infrastructure Access
Open at April 24, 2023

Expires in about 12 hours
April 25, 2023, 23:59:59 CEST

Please note that the applicant submitting the application should be the user group leader. In any case, he/she must belong to the same institution as the user group leader. It is mandatory to enter here every user who requests physical or remote access to an RI within AQUARIUS. If users are not yet known by name, enter 'NN' as a placeholder. Only users who are listed here can be granted access to an AQUARIUS RI.

User Group Members: 1

Letter of recommendation (in the appendices) is mandatory for Early-Career Researcher User Group Leaders

Suggestion

- Fill with your registration data

User Group Member 1

1. Group Leader
This person will be the TA User Group leader for the project's implementation at any kind of research infrastructure where access is applied. The TA User Group leader will be the main point of contact of the group, also in terms of signing agreements, submitting project reports, reporting publications, etc.

☒ True

1. Is your organization part of the AQUARIUS Consortium?
☒ Yes
☐ No

1. Name *
Musterfrau

1. Surname *
Maxime

1. Email *
maxime.musterfrau@uni.de

1. Gender *
Women

1. Researcher status *
Category C1 - Recognized Researcher (Researcher/Assistant Professor)

1. Field of research *
Earth Sciences & Environment: Natural disaster & Desertification

1. Nationality *
Germany

1. Country of residence *
Germany

1. City of residence *
Bremen

1. Organization name *
AWI

1. Organization type *
Public research institution

1. Organization country *
Germany

1. Organization city *
Bremen

+ Add new user group member

Back Next Save

Figure 4: User Group information.

2.2.4. Step 4: Logistic information

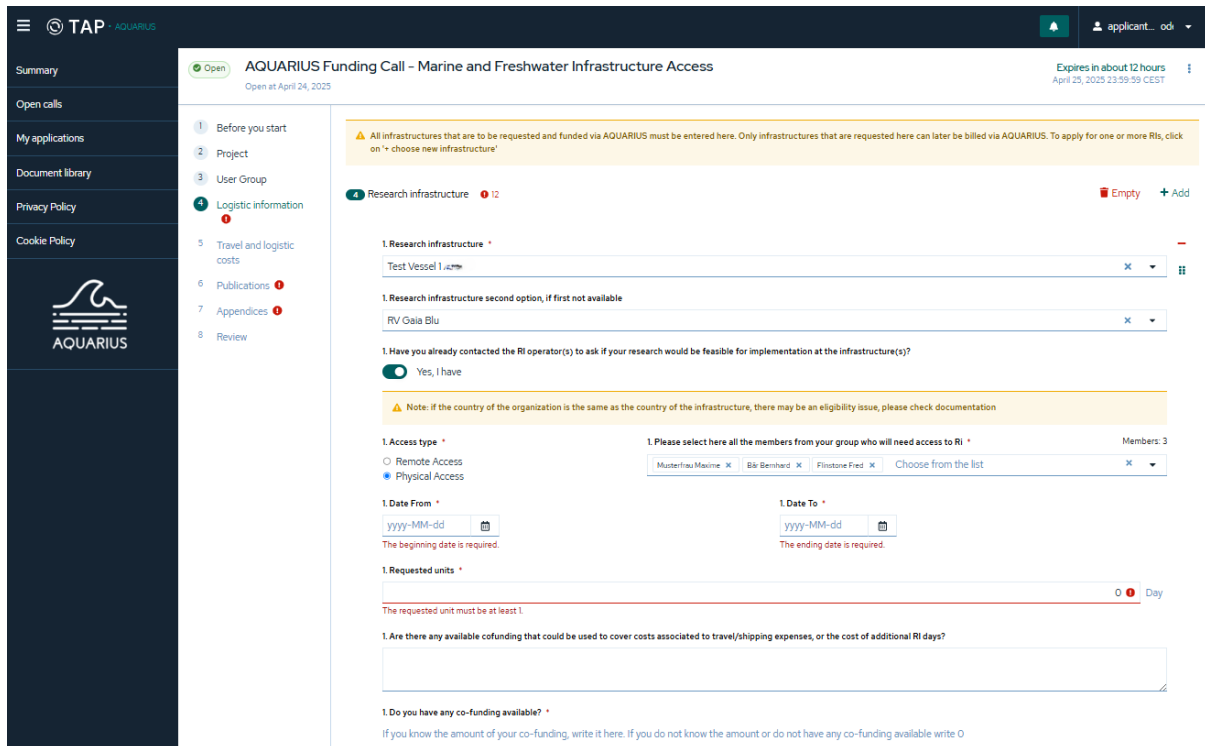
To include infrastructures in your application, click on **+Choose first research infrastructure**. Only infrastructures that are entered here in the TAP can later be compensated by AQUARIUS.

After you have selected a RI and an alternative option, if applicable, specify whether you require physical or remote access for this RI, depending on what the RI offers. Enter your preferred access period and the number of requested units of access (Figure 4).

Now also select all members from your user group who would like to have access to the requested RI. You can select the members from the list provided in TAP, depending on the users you inserted previously in step 3 'User Group'. This only applies for physical access.

Note: specific case for research infrastructures *EMBRC-IMEV*, *EMBRC-OOB* and *EMBRC-SBR*:

In case you are requesting any of these infrastructures, you have to add the logistic information for the full group, i.e. each user group member individually to the infrastructure by clicking **+Add new access**. You can choose the User Group Member from the list provided in the TAP, and insert the requested access period and access units for the respective member. **For each additional member of your user group** who would like to have access to the requested RI, you must click on **+Add new access**.



AQUARIUS Funding Call – Marine and Freshwater Infrastructure Access

Expires in about 12 hours
April 25, 2025 23:59:59 CEST

Open at April 24, 2025

1 Before you start
2 Project
3 User Group
4 **Logistic information**
5 Travel and logistic costs
6 Publications
7 Appendices
8 Review

⚠ All infrastructures that are to be requested and funded via AQUARIUS must be entered here. Only infrastructures that are requested here can later be billed via AQUARIUS. To apply for one or more RIs, click on + choose new infrastructure

Research infrastructure 0/2 Empty + Add

1. Research infrastructure *

Test Vessel 1.xm

1. Research infrastructure second option, if first not available

RV Gaia Blu

1. Have you already contacted the RI operator(s) to ask if your research would be feasible for implementation at the infrastructure(s)?

☒ Yes, I have

⚠ Note: If the country of the organization is the same as the country of the infrastructure, there may be an eligibility issue, please check documentation

1. Access type *

☐ Remote Access
☒ Physical Access

1. Please select here all the members from your group who will need access to RI *

Members: 3

Musterfrau Maxime X Bär Bernhard X Flinstone Fred X Choose from the list

1. Date From *

yyyy-MM-dd

The beginning date is required.

1. Date To *

yyyy-MM-dd

The ending date is required.

1. Requested units *

The requested unit must be at least 1.

0/1 Day

1. Are there any available cofunding that could be used to cover costs associated to travel/shipping expenses, or the cost of additional RI days?

1. Do you have any co-funding available? *

If you know the amount of your co-funding, write it here. If you do not know the amount or do not have any co-funding available write 0

Figure 5: Entering Logistic Information.

To apply for multiple RIs, click on **+Choose new research infrastructure**.

Now you have to specify the access for your user group members who wants to have access to this additional RI, as described above.

You can repeat this for any number of RIs.

At the end, each member of the user group should have access to each of the RIs requested for them.

2.2.5. Step 5: Travel and logistic costs

Now enter the requested costs for the requested RI for your user group. If a proposal is successful and access granted, AQUARIUS will pay the travel and logistics costs to the institution of the group leader. Therefore, if you use a research infrastructure (e.g. a research vessel) as an entire group at the same time, it is sufficient to enter the requested cost items for the entire group only with the user group leader.

Note: for the infrastructures *EMBRC-IMEV*, *EMBRC-OOB* and *EMBRC-SBR*, you have to add the individual cost items for each user.

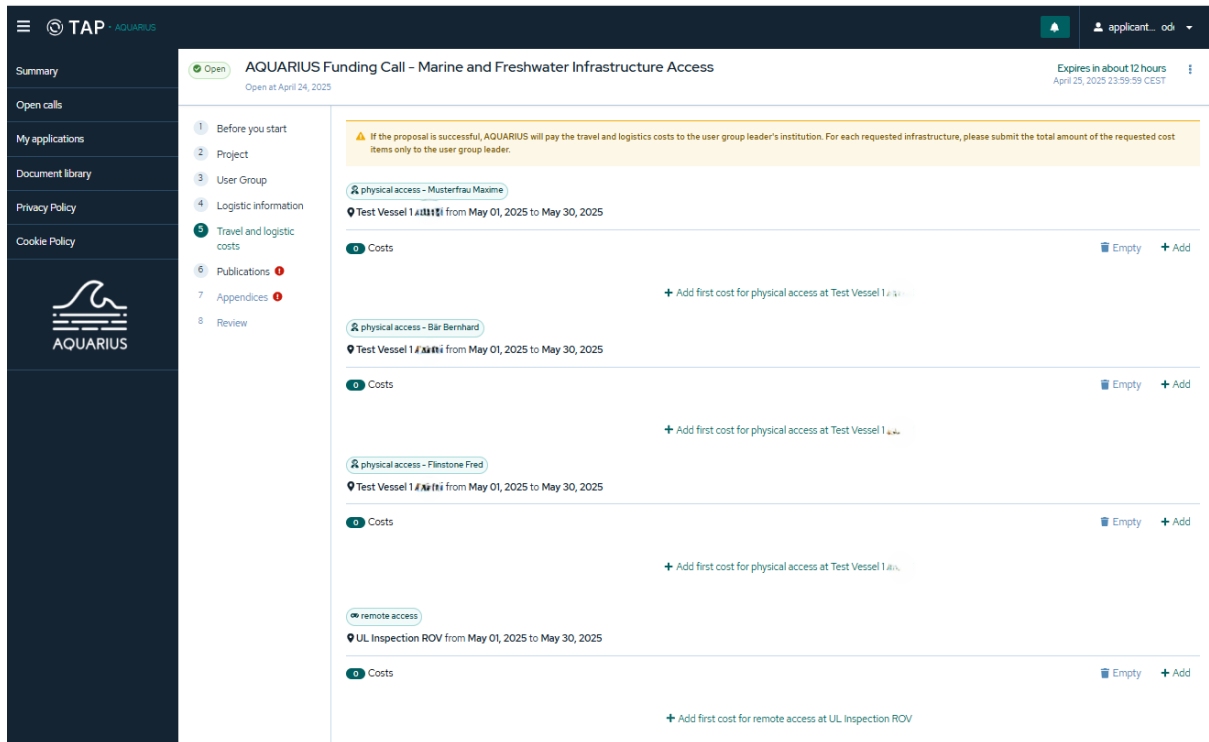
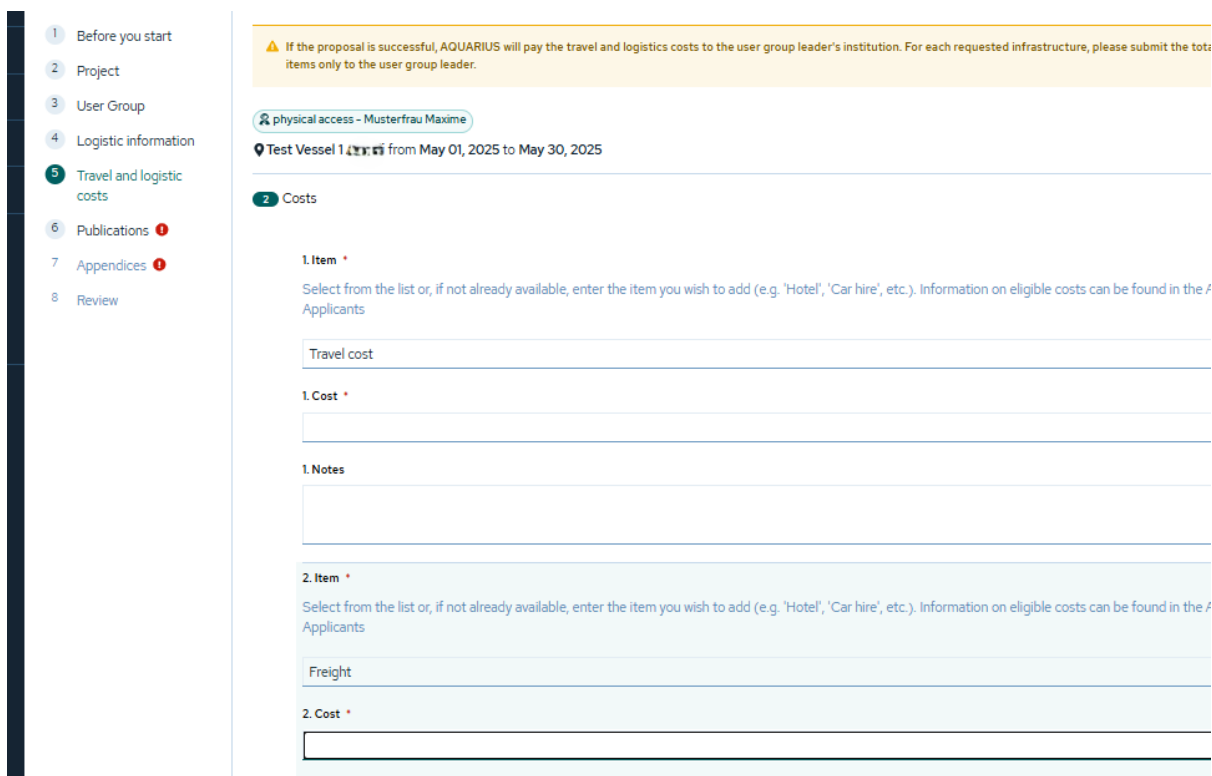


Figure 6: AQUARIUS will reimburse costs only to the institution of the group leader. If you use an infrastructure as a whole group at the same time, e.g. as it is the case with a research vessel, please enter the requested cost items for the entire group under the user group leader (in this example, Musterfrau Maxime). You can leave the costs for the other group members (here in the example Bear Bernhard, Flinstone Fred) blank.

Under **+Add first/new cost for physical access** you can enter the costs you want to request for your user group. You can select cost categories from the drop-down menu or enter manually requested cost categories. Several cost categories can be requested (Figure 6).



1 Before you start

2 Project

3 User Group

4 Logistic information

5 Travel and logistic costs

6 Publications 1

7 Appendices 1

8 Review

⚠ If the proposal is successful, AQUARIUS will pay the travel and logistics costs to the user group leader's institution. For each requested infrastructure, please submit the total items only to the user group leader.

physical access - Musterfrau Maxime

Test Vessel 1 from May 01, 2025 to May 30, 2025

2 Costs

1. Item *

Select from the list or, if not already available, enter the item you wish to add (e.g. 'Hotel', 'Car hire', etc.). Information on eligible costs can be found in the / Applicants

Travel cost

1. Cost *

1. Notes

2. Item *

Select from the list or, if not already available, enter the item you wish to add (e.g. 'Hotel', 'Car hire', etc.). Information on eligible costs can be found in the / Applicants

Freight

2. Cost *

Figure 7: Entering different cost items for the requested infrastructure(s). Several cost items can be added. Cost items can be selected from the dropdown menu, or typed in manually.

2.2.6. Step 6: Publications

In this form, indicate to which EU Mission Ocean geographical region your application can be assigned to. If your research concerns several EU Mission Ocean regions, you can select several regions here.

In the following, specify the working area of your planned project, e.g. Strait of Gibraltar. This helps us to be made aware of possible diplomatic clearances in advance.

Furthermore, it is important to indicate how your proposed work **contributes** to at least one of the given **priorities and challenges of the TA call** and the objectives of the European Mission Ocean 2030. This is an important evaluation criterion.

Additionally, indicate in this step if you already have publications planned, as well as the 5 most relevant publications of the user group for the application. These publications are also relevant for finding potential independent reviewers for your proposal.

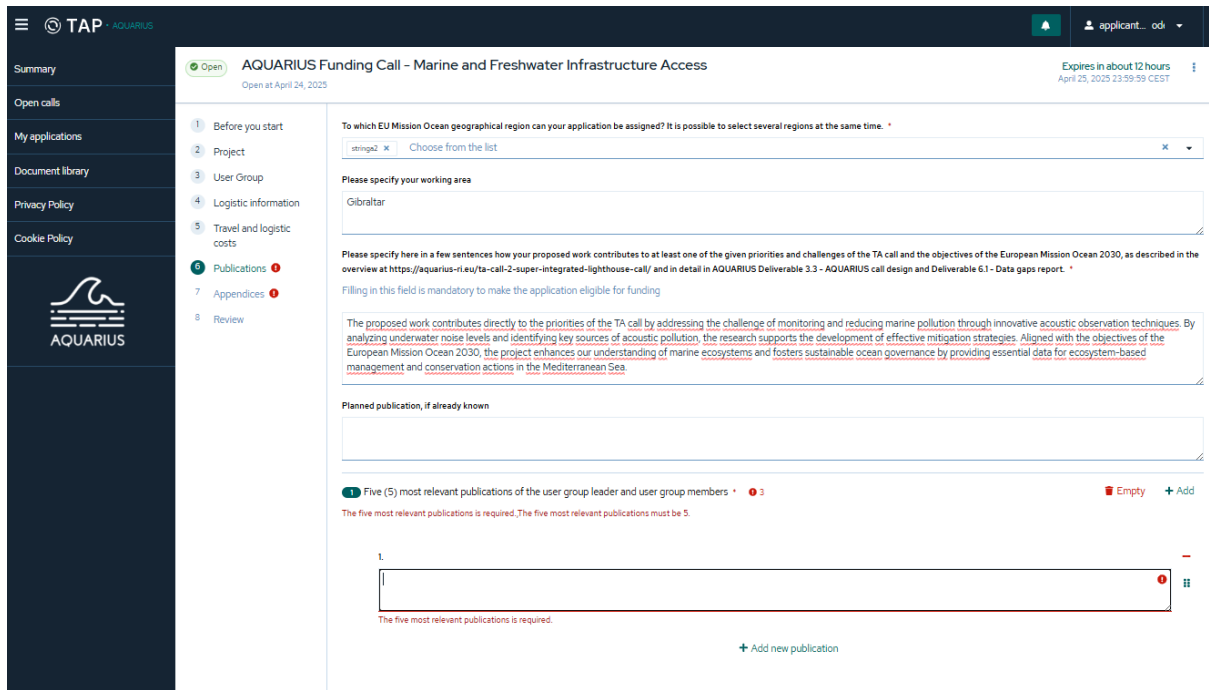
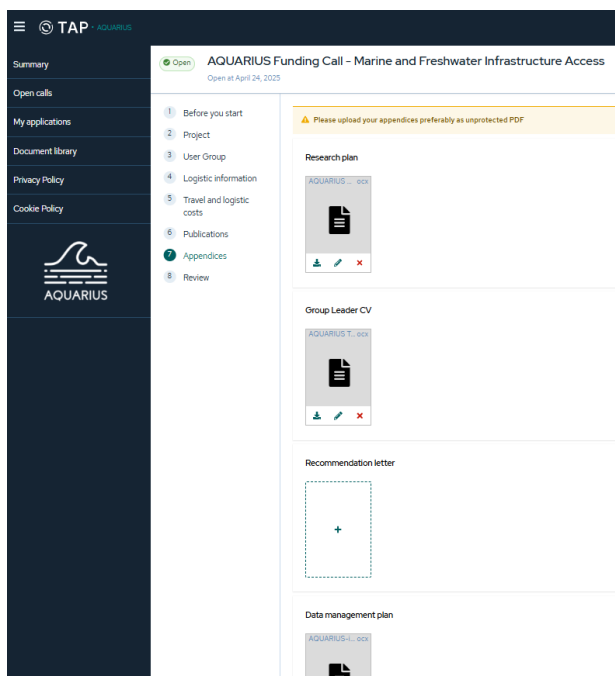


Figure 8: Entering the EU Mission Ocean geographical region, the specific working area of the project, and publications.

2.2.7. Step 7: Appendices



You must now upload the attachments for the application, preferably as unprotected PDF. The documents must be prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for Applicants and the AQUARIUS templates.

All guidelines and templates can be found in the TAP Document library.

Important note: You can upload a modified version of your attachments at any time until the call deadline. However, no changes are possible after you have submitted your final proposal as described in the next step.

Figure 9: Document upload

2.3. Step 3 – Review and Submission

After preparing your application, you can now review the data you have entered and the documents you have uploaded.

Change information: Before finalising the submission, all data in all forms as well as the appendices can be changed. Simply go to the relevant page and enter your changes. When the page is saved, the information on the final review page will also change.

Important note: If you click on the "**Submit**" button, your submission is finalised and you can no longer make any changes.

After the final submission of the proposal, the user group leader will receive an automatically generated e-mail confirming the successful submission.

Additional information: The same user can only submit **one proposal** per call.

3. Contact details

For questions regarding the AQUARIUS TA application procedure and call documentation, please contact: aquarius.eu@awi.de.

For technical questions about the AQUARIUS TAP, contact: aquarius@inkode.it.