

European Commission

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## Norwegian Hydrogen Forum's recommendation for Horizon Europe and the implementation of European partnerships as joint undertakings

Norwegian Hydrogen Forum (NHF) appreciates the invitation to submit recommendations for Horizon Europe 2028-2034 and the implementation of European partnerships as joint undertakings.

The Norwegian value chain for hydrogen and hydrogen-based fuels is evolving at an accelerating pace. With the investment decisions that have been taken so far, production of clean hydrogen will increase five-fold in the coming years, and hydrogen and hydrogen-based fuels will be made available for consumption in large parts of the country. On the demand side, there is noticeable development in all hard-to-abate sectors, but particularly in the maritime sector. New vessels under construction will increase demand for hydrogen-based fuels significantly when they come into operation from autumn 2026 and onwards.

This would not have been possible today without leading Norwegian Research and Innovation (R&I) institutions, which together with technology providers and industry are scaling up hydrogen with technology and competence developed from R&I projects funded through Horizon Europe and other EU innovation programs.

The Clean Hydrogen Joint Undertaking has given important contributions to the development of the Norwegian hydrogen ecosystem. In total, Norwegian research institutions and industrial innovation partners have been active in approximately 40 projects funded through this Joint Undertaking. In March this year, Norway's first Large-Scale Hydrogen Valley NORHyWAY was established. The public funding this project consortium receives enables additional investments on top of investments already made and thereby contributes to accelerating the scale-up of production, distribution and consumption of hydrogen at a relatively low cost.

The current positive development of hydrogen in Norway exemplifies how a dedicated Joint Undertaking for hydrogen can lead to important investments that contribute to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, future-oriented industrial development, increased security of energy supply and industrial competitiveness. The next decade will determine whether Europe

can lead in the emerging market for clean hydrogen, and it is crucial that the EU continues to support hydrogen R&I ambitiously in the coming Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

There is still need for a dedicated Joint Undertaking for hydrogen. Further research is needed throughout the value chain to develop emerging technologies, improve effectiveness of existing technologies and reduce costs. The value chain is complex and needs coordination and public-private collaboration. Specifically, in the EU's R&I framework, there is a funding gap between the first demonstration at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6-7 and industrial scale-up at TRL 8-9. It is crucial that this gap is reduced and that clear pathways are given from TRL 6-7 to industrial replication and market uptake. For this reason, the next framework programme must bridge early phase R&I and market scale-up by combining Horizon Europe with the European Competitiveness Fund through a dedicated and adequately funded independent program for hydrogen – by establishing a new Clean Hydrogen Joint Undertaking.

### **About Norwegian Hydrogen Forum (NHF)**

Norwegian Hydrogen Forum is the national members' association for hydrogen and hydrogen-based derivatives in Norway. Its members represent the entire hydrogen value chain, from producers via distributors to end users, including both industry, public authorities and academia. NHF promotes its members' interests towards public authorities and decision makers and works actively to disseminate key information on hydrogen as an indispensable climate solution.

With kind regards,  
Norwegian Hydrogen Forum

**Ingebjørg Telnes Wilhelmsen**  
**Secretary General**

**Tor Kristian Haldorsen**  
**Lead Advisor Government and  
International Relations**