



# RIANA User Guidelines

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## INTRODUCTION

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The present document aims at guiding users through the application process for access to the analytical research infrastructures offered in the framework of **RIANA for the Standard Access Route** ([RIANA-TNA](#)). A separate guide is available for industrial applications with confidential results ([RIANA-SME](#)).

The portfolio of instrumentation and techniques available can be found in our Catalogue of Techniques.

All proposals are reviewed with transparency, fairness and impartiality by our independent external **Proposal Review Panel**, whose members are participating in **RIANA** due to their expertise in the areas of nanoscience and nanotechnology and analytical techniques at the facilities.

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

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### 1. [Pre-proposal submission](#)

This is an *optional* submission for users who have an idea they wish to develop but may be unsure of its general feasibility or of the technique(s) required or are simply interested in complementary techniques they may not be familiar with. Through this option, **RIANA** offers the unique possibility for users to access the **Science Support**, which is comprised of Junior Scientists who offer direct support as well as an **Expert Network** of Senior Scientists offering additional advice. These experts are ready to help you translate your challenge into a research project by employing two or more different methods/techniques. Pre-proposals can be submitted at any time.

Pre-proposals do not go through a review process and do not directly lead to the allocation of instrument time. This is only allocated once a full proposal is submitted and approved.

### 2. [Full proposal submission](#)

For General User Access ([RIANA-TNA](#)), the application is open throughout the project and implemented as a rolling call. It is open to academia (with or without industry collaboration) and requires users to publish results openly (see [Dissemination of Results](#)).

The General User Access requires that at least two infrastructures are selected. The goal of using complementary techniques is to generate impactful results in nanoscience and nanotechnology and to promote interdisciplinarity of the user community. If a user is unsure of which techniques to use, it is strongly recommended to reach out to the **Science Support** through a pre-proposal.





## REGISTRATION, SUBMISSION & REVIEW

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### Step 1 – Creating an account

- All members of the research team (“Users”), including the Principal Investigator (PI), must create individual accounts in ARIA, ([access portal – Login/Register](#)), enabling the Applicant to identify and select all team members when filling in the full Proposal Form.<sup>1</sup>

### Step 2 – Pre-proposal Submission

- The Applicant can submit a title and informal abstract through the access portal using the pre-proposal form (accessible via “Calls” in the top menu of the portal).
- The Applicant can include any questions for our experts, be it in relation to the choice of technique, the experiment itself, data analysis, or application procedures.
- The Applicant will be contacted by the project by email within one week after of submission and matched with the most appropriate expert to discuss their idea.

### Step 3 – Proposal submission

- Before completing the form itself, the team should complete the [Word template](#) of the Project Description as main proposal document that should then be uploaded to the online form.
- In the portal, the Applicant will first be requested to select two (or more) options from the list of techniques (“services”). After the technique selection, the Applicant is requested to select a preferred infrastructure (“service host”). The preference will be considered, but RIANA reserves the right to appoint a different infrastructure.
- All team members should then be added to the proposal. Once they have created accounts, their names can be found through the search field.
- Next, the online Proposal Form should be completed in the portal. Word and pdf versions are available to prepare and review content in advance. The online form can be saved as a draft and returned to later.
- The Applicant will then be asked to have read and accepted the Terms of Use, this User Guide, the eligibility criteria, and privacy policy.
- After submission of the form, the Applicant and all team members including the PI will receive a confirmation by email.

### Step 4 – Confirmation of infrastructure choice and feasibility check (typically < 4 weeks)

- All proposals will be checked by the RIANA TNA Coordinator. For each proposal, the selected infrastructures will either be confirmed by the TNA Coordinator, or a different infrastructures will be assigned. This may happen due to scientific considerations or available instrument time.
- If the assigned infrastructures are different from the chosen ones, this amendment will be done in the proposal directly by the Project Administrator, and the Applicant will be notified.
- The technical feasibility of each proposal will be assessed by scientists at the assigned infrastructures.

### Step 5 – Independent external review (typically < 6 weeks)

- All proposals will be assigned three Reviewers from our Proposal Review Panel and given an overall grade. The main criteria for evaluation by our Reviewers are:
  - Scientific / technological excellence (10/30)
  - Methods (10/30)
  - Impact (5/30)
  - Level of crossdisciplinarity (5/30)

Details of the evaluation criteria are given in the [Guidelines for Reviewers](#).

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<sup>1</sup> This step does not replace the creation of User accounts at selected facilities, which must be done separately after a proposal is accepted by RIANA in order to be scheduled.



- In case of projects at equal ranking by Reviewers, preference will be given to:
  - Users who have not previously used RIANA infrastructures
  - Users who are working in countries where no equivalent research infrastructure exists
  - Proposals of greatest benefit to Europe (proportion of EU scientists, collaboration within Europe, EU company benefiting from the research, participation of widening countries)
  - Users with a fair balance of female/male team members.
- An email will be sent to notify the Users of the outcome of their submission:
  - *Accepted* – the proposal has been granted TNA access.
  - *Rejected* – the proposal has not been granted TNA access. Comments explaining the reasons for rejection are provided.

### Step 6 – Scheduling

- After proposal acceptance, the infrastructures will contact the Users to clarify details of access,<sup>2</sup> including infrastructure-specific aspects such as safety, availability of resources, local contact.
- Access should be completed within a maximum of 18 months after acceptance.

### Step 7 – Feedback

- After the visits have taken place, the Applicant will be required to complete the *User Feedback Form* to provide feedback on the visit and the RIANA project in general.
- The submission of an *Experiment Report* is required as well based on a [template on the RIANA documents page](#). The Experiment Report can be submitted via the User Feedback Form.

**RIANA** makes every effort to respect timelines with the active collaboration of Users.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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### Relation to nanoscience and nanotechnology

Proposals that are supported by RIANA need to address a topic in the fields of nanoscience and nanotechnology. This criterion is checked by the Chairs of the Proposal Review Panel as follows:

*RIANA REFERS TO “NANOOBJECTS” WHENEVER THE STRUCTURES OF AN OBJECT THAT DETERMINE ITS KEY PROPERTIES ARE SMALLER THAN 100 NM IN AT LEAST ONE DIMENSION. CONSEQUENTLY, “NANOSCIENCE” IS THE SCIENCE OF NANOOBJECTS, AND “NANOTECHNOLOGY” IS THE TECHNOLOGY EXPLOITING NANOOBJECTS.*

### Transnational access (TNA)

Access to the facilities is completely free of charge and includes the logistical, technological, and scientific support as well as specific training. Moreover, a contribution is given for travel and subsistence expenditures. TNA is provided in two types:

- Physical access with users visiting the infrastructure in person, receiving the service “hands-on”
- Remote access that may include, e.g., the analysis of mail-in samples, remote access to a high-performance computing infrastructure, without users physically visiting the infrastructure.

To be eligible for TNA, the following criteria must be fulfilled:

- The PI and the majority of the team must work in a country other than the country where the infrastructure is located, unless access is provided by an international organisation such as an ERIC.
- The users must be allowed and willing to disseminate the results they have generated.
- The User Feedback Form has been completed and submitted for any previous project of the Users.

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<sup>2</sup> The RIANA proposal submission and review replaces the scientific review at the infrastructure level. However, further technical details may need to be provided to the infrastructure prior to access.



## Gender equality

RIANA promotes the EU Gender Equality Strategy towards a gender-equal Europe. Gender equality in scientific research and specifically encourages applications from women. The prerequisite to scientific and societal prosperity is the creation of an atmosphere of acceptance and trust, embracing all differences stemming from personal ways of life or personal living situations, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, ideologies, biographies, religion, beliefs, disability, age, appearance, and many other aspects.

## PRE-ACCESS TRAINING

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RIANA provides the opportunity to apply for pre-access training visits prior to or after granted access. This training is targeted towards young scientists (at the PhD or postdoctoral level) who lack experience in using the techniques offered by the host infrastructures. The training visits will typically take place immediately prior to the actual access period. The typical duration of a pre-access training visit varies from few days to a week maximum for one person. The pre-access visit may be extended in well-justified exceptional cases.

The pre-access training can be conducted either as an on-site visit or remotely, provided that both the host and the trainee agree. Travel and subsistence costs for the trainee will be covered as part of the overall user travel and subsistence reimbursement.

Requests for pre-access training will be assessed during the proposal evaluation process by the host in collaboration with RIANA.

Trained users will be required to deliver short reports on the results and the level of satisfaction from the pre-access training visits, in addition to the experimental report.

## SITE ACCESS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

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### Site access

The infrastructure (typically the User Office of the host) is responsible for contacting the user group concerning site access, accommodation, insurance/medical conditions, shipping of samples, safety, and all other information related to the visit. Users are *highly encouraged* to book accommodation and travel as soon as a visit is scheduled to avoid extra costs due to late booking. In particular, Users are asked to contact the host contact as early as possible to check for the availability of rooms in a guesthouse.

### Financial support

EU funding will be allocated to travel and subsistence support to user groups who fit the eligibility criteria. A maximum of two researchers per experiment/visit are entitled up to a maximum of 600 EUR reimbursement each, based on a calculated reimbursement of:

- Up to 300 EUR per user for travel costs
- Up to 50 EUR per night and per user for accommodation up to a maximum of 6 nights

### Reimbursement

Users are entitled to reimbursement after submission of the *User Feedback Form* in the access portal. To receive reimbursement, Users should fill in the [reimbursement form available on the website](#) and send a signed version in PDF format together with invoices and receipts of travel and accommodation expenses to [reimbursement@riana-project.eu](mailto:reimbursement@riana-project.eu).

The overall duration of a stay must be consistent with the experiment days scheduled for the respective user experiment. If no justification for an extended stay is provided, the maximum number of supported days equals the number of experiment days plus two.



## DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS

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Users are obliged to acknowledge support from RIANA by the following text string that needs to be literally included into the publication:

**“Funded by the European Union as part of the Horizon Europe call HORIZON-INFRA-2023-SERV-01 under grant agreement number 101130652. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union and the European Union cannot be held responsible for them.”**

Open access publication should strongly be favoured. In addition, it is encouraged to also acknowledge the infrastructures and local support staff.

## TERMS OF USE AND PRIVACY POLICY

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The [Terms of Use](#) and the [Privacy Policy](#) of RIANA are available on our website.

## CONTACT

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- For questions regarding pre-proposal submission and general scientific support, contact [scienceservice@riana-project.eu](mailto:scienceservice@riana-project.eu) .
- For technical issues regarding proposal submission in the access portal, contact the administrator via the portal messaging system or send an email to [admin@riana-project.eu](mailto:admin@riana-project.eu).
- For questions related to the assignment of facilities, contact [admin@riana-project.eu](mailto:admin@riana-project.eu).
- For questions related to site visits, contact the User Office for that infrastructure.

