

**Title: Models, tools and rationales for stakeholder engagement and informed decision-making in radiation protection research, policy and practice for situations involving exposures to ionising radiations.**

**Challenge**

Governance of radiological risks is challenged by the particularities of ionizing radiation (e.g. scientific and societal uncertainties, different perceptions of risks, societal trust issues) and the evolving European societal landscape (e.g. new mass media, active citizenship). To address this, research on new models, tools and rationales of stakeholder engagement in radiation protection research, policy and practice is needed, for different exposure situations. Although a number of national and international recommendations and legal requirements for stakeholder engagement in radiation protection (e.g. Basic Safety Standards, Aarhus Convention) have been developed, there is still a big gap between discourse and practice, as highlighted for instance by the FP7 projects EAGLE and PREPARE. In addition, the increasing capacity of organised civil society stakeholders and citizens to investigate by themselves radiological protection issues and to produce knowledge poses new challenges for institutional actors in radiation protection to engage with non-institutional stakeholders and develop new models of interaction taking into account these social dynamics. The aim of this action is to improve the governance of radiological risks by enhancing stakeholder engagement and informed decision-making on multiple levels (e.g. institutional, non-institutional, individual), by clarifying the venues and instruments for stakeholder engagement, the factors that inform engagement (socio-psychological, political, economic, cultural, legal, ethical), and the impact of stakeholder engagement on justification, health and wellbeing.

**Scope**

Proposals will identify and address key challenges in stakeholder engagement and informed decision making in radiation protection, by analysing rationales and developing new models and tools for stakeholder interaction and engagement. This is needed for different exposure situations and categories of exposures, whether affecting an individual, groups of people, or larger communities. The proposed outcomes may include the analysis of societal needs for and evaluation of legal instruments and governance frameworks supporting access to information, public participation and access to justice in relation with radiation protection issues; the ethical principles guiding engagement and justification; and the examination, assessment and design of stakeholder and public participation tools and methodologies for different radiological exposure situations and categories of exposure. Proposal may entail highlighting roles and rules of stakeholders in the engagement process; the interaction between institutional and non-institutional stakeholders; factors facilitating engagement; stakeholders' sense-making of ionizing radiation concepts, risk and uncertainty (e.g. practitioners, patients, local population); impact of stakeholder engagement on the interplay of psychological aspects associated with radioactivity, social environment, culture and radiation protection behaviours; and the role of recent developments in communication including social media (e.g. citizens' journalism).

**Expected impact**

The research should bring insights on ways to intensify responsiveness to societal needs and concerns, increasing the quality of radiation protection approaches, techniques and culture. It

should improve the mutual understanding between stakeholders, and enable informed decision making. Proposals should reinforce the links between social sciences and humanities research and the radiation protection platforms (MELODI, NERIS, ALLIANCE, EURADOS, EURAMED) and help with disseminating and understanding stakeholder engagement processes. The research results should be applicable, for instance to support the implementation of Basic Safety Standards.

**Type of action:**

Research and innovation. Project proposals may address the entire or part of the scope.

draft proposal