

#### **CICERONE**

Coordination and Support Action (CSA)

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## Functional specifications of multi-stakeholder portal

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## **Summary**

This report outlines the key specifications needed to develop the online portal for the future Programme Owner platform developed within WP3. The objective of the document is to provide an overview of stakeholder expectations, needs, and translate the key services of the platform into digital solutions for users of the portal. The report provides an overview of the key objectives of the platform, outlines the services, defines they key users and journeys, and presents a framework for the online portal for both public and member use.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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## **KEYWORDS**

Sustainable innovation, circular economy, environment, resources and sustainability, public sector innovation, sustainability, programme owners, platform, portal, services, joint programming.





#### 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Public funding is the key source of financing for Circular Economy Research & Innovation programmes: 70% are financed at national level, 18% at regional and 8% at European level. However, national and regional strategies are partly contradictive throughout Europe, leading to fragmentation and lack of alignment on priorities for the circular economy.

Circular economy is often not directly addressed or defined in funding programmes — with many focusing on specific sectors, which don't consider the interdisciplinarity and systemic context of circular economy. Funding also often occurs on a very technical level, looking into specific aspects of the value chain rather than with a systemic and holistic approach. Moreover, the lack of generic circular economy indicators makes it hard to evaluate the impact of programmes, projects having their specific bottom-up indicators.

CICERONE aims to address this challenge by developing the strategic coordination of objectives and priorities of regional, national and European funding programmes, through three high-level objectives:

- Assess and benchmark current performance of C.E. R&I funding in Europe resulting in a deep analysing of the performance of national, regional and local programmes at European and international levels
- Establish an efficient and inclusive mechanism to jointly define and prioritise C.E. R&I priorities at EU scale resulting in the publication of the Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda (SRIA), a key working document for funders and designers of circular economy R&I projects
- Build and test a lasting organisation and pathways to reach the desired impact resulting in the deployment of a funding platform, where public authorities can co-create, cooperate and co-fund joint programmes.

The future platform, the "EU Circular Cooperation Hub", will act as an offline and online networking and co-creation space for public programme owners (public-to-public partnerships), with the aim of increasing joint programming initiatives. It will also be a key source of information for third-party stakeholders, e.g. businesses, academia, civil society, etc. to access opportunities for circular economy R&I funding at EU, national and regional levels.

The work described in this deliverable is directly linked to the third objective "Build and test a lasting organisation and pathways to reach the desired impact", with the objective of defining the user requirements and specifications for the future online portal of the platform.

#### 1.2 Mission and vision

CICERONE's mission is to increase collaboration and alignment between funders of circular economy R&I programmes in Europe, which will be achieved by building a common European strategy and platform for circular economy Research & Innovation – the "EU Circular Cooperation Hub" (or EU CCH).

The current fragmentation of circular economy priorities and initiatives is hindering the impact that could be achieved at European level. By addressing the challenge in a collaborative and systemic way,





the new platform will increase the sustainability of circular economy transition at EU level, all the while valorising existing knowledge and resources.

CICERONE is committed to bringing national, regional and local governments together to jointly tackle the circular economy transition needed to reach net-zero carbon emissions and meet the targets set in the Paris Agreement and EU Green Deal.

This will be achieved through three main outputs:

- Strategy: Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for Europe, to support owners and funders of circular economy programmes in aligning priorities and approaching the circular economy transition in a systemic way.
- Joint programmes: joint and systemic programmes to tackle the circular economy transition across four key challenges areas: urban areas, industrial systems, value chains and territory & sea.
- Platform: a platform for circular economy programme owners at national, regional and local level to share best practices, co-create and collaborate on joint programmes for circular economy research & innovation



Figure 1. Strategic framework for the CICERONE project





### 1.3 Deliverable scope

The objective of this deliverable is to develop the functional requirements for the future online portal of the platform, a multi-stakeholder portal to support the operations of the future platform designed within WP3. The deliverable is a direct result of the work undertaken within activity *A.5.2.1: Specifications for the stakeholder portal.* The future portal will be strategically designed to match its users' expectations (which may differ according to the type of stakeholders) and to avoid redundancy with existing initiatives (such as ECESP).

The two main streams of work within this deliverable are:

- Develop user specifications involving various stakeholder types, to ensure the online platform can be effective in delivering services developed in the business model development in WP3.
- Specify the required functions and design for the portal to match personalised user requirements, thus facilitating seamless adoption by all relevant stakeholder types. This will be refined, tested and deployed in the activity A.5.2.2: UX design, development, deployment and operation led by LGI.

The objective of the online portal is to provide a tool for stakeholders to access and use the services proposed by CICERONE within WP3, namely:

- Joint programming
- Shaping policy for CE transition
- Knowledge sharing
- Capacity building

The portal will provide access to a network of European programme owners and their initiatives, an updated Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda (SRIA), a space for actors to share ideas and cocreate, and will enable capacity building to support national, regional and local governments in their implementation of joint programmes.

The interactive portal primarily targets Programme Owners (i.e. public funders of circular economy research & innovation) to increase public-to-public partnerships and joint programming, but should also present itself as a key resource centre for other stakeholders, the direct beneficiaries of the funding channelled through the platform.

This will entail a two-dimensional online portal: a public facing portal accessible to all stakeholders, with access to resources and strategic documents, as a well a dedicated member-only section specifically for programme owners to network, co-create and develop joint programming. This will result in the launch of joint calls on the public-facing website.

As per the CICERONE proposal, the following portal functionalities have been explored and adapted based on stakeholder feedback throughout the project duration.

- Overview section describing the platform, its role, members and their priorities, contact points, etc.
- Dissemination of future updates of SRIA and implementation plans





- A funding page announcing all opportunities (calls for projects / calls for tender by programmes owners throughout the EU), linking with other websites
- Stakeholder-specific resources
- Supporting capacity building tools, e.g. a MOOC for POs
- A specific section on international best practices will allow to pursue the exchanges with non-European stakeholders
- A member-restricted area for sharing confidential information (such as governance-related documentation, supporting management meetings, etc.)
- A section with legacy of CICERONE (deliverables, acknowledgement of EU support, etc.)

Table 1. Examples of portal features indicated at proposal phase

User expectations, requirements and expressions of interest for the platform have been collected throughout the numerous stakeholder engagement activities within WP4, translated into digital specifications for the online portal. Specifications and functionalities are therefore based on the priority services and subservices identified within WP3, tested and validated through WP4 consultations and in collaboration with CICERONE partners.

## 1.4 Target audience

Ten key stakeholder categories have been identified by the CICERONE project, representing both direct users of the platform, as well as indirect beneficiaries of the EU CCH activities. The stakeholder mapping developed within WP4 has acted as a basis for the identification of portal user needs, in line with overarching needs, opportunities and barriers identified throughout the project.



Figure 2. Stakeholder types targeted by CICERONE and the EU Circular Cooperation Hub

Target audiences for the online portal (as for the platform) can be divide in two segments:

- End users (highlighted): will directly use the portal and tools set up by CICERONE and proposed by the EU Circular Cooperation Hub, more specifically the SRIA and joint programming platform services. These include all programme owners (European, National, Regional, Municipal) and Innovation Ecosystems & Clusters
- Indirect beneficiaries: these stakeholders are not direct users of the portal's outputs, but will indirectly benefit from deliverables and activities, for example by being able to more efficiently work with circular economy projects or access funding for circular economy initiatives. These stakeholders also have an interest in the studies and





findings of the reports offered by the platform. These include SMEs, industry, civil society and academia.

The basis for the user requirements will be focused along these two categories of stakeholders:

- Stakeholders that will use the portal to channel their funding, build joint programmes and launch calls via the platform: EU POs, National POs, Regional POs, Municipal POs. Private investor will also be considered for future development of the platform to increase blended finance, however in the first phase of the launch, a focus on public POs (public-to-public partnership) will be favoured following stakeholder feedback and needs analysed within WP3.
- Stakeholders that will take interest in the platform to seek funding opportunities for circular economy R&I: Industry, SMEs, Research & Academia, Civil society & NGOS; as well as stay abreast of the latest strategic directions for circular economy R&I (via the SRIA update).

### 2 PLATFORM PORTAL OBJECTIVES

#### 2.1 Goals

The goal of the online portal is to provide a digital front-end to the "EU Circular Cooperation Hub platform", where target audiences - or "users" - can gain insights into the initiative, access resources, see value in the services offered by the platform, and use it to build and deliver joint programmes with other public authorities. The online portal should be easy to navigate and user-friendly, so as to convert visits to the digital portal by programme owners into actual buy-in, sign-up and participation to the platform activities.

## 2.2 Platform services

The objective of the portal will be to present and offer access to the services and sub-services proposed by the platform (developed in WP3 and available in full detail in D3.3 Business model options and financial plan for the platform). For the purpose of the user requirement specifications, only the top 3 sub-services proposed for each service have been considered, in order to provide strategic focus to the online portal and not duplicate work with other existing online platforms. The services are hereby listed below, translated into high-level functions the portal could offer as a solution in the third chapter of this report.

#### 2.2.1 Joint programming

This service aims at initiating and coordinating joint programmes between members of the EU Circular Cooperation Hub. This will be achieved through the identification of common priorities (using the SRIA as a guideline), the set-up of co-creation working groups to agree on the scope of the joint calls, the identification of appropriate funding to launch joint projects and the implementation of a project monitoring methodology. In the long term, the service has the ambition to contribute to the reduction





of the fragmentation of European research in the circular economy and to engage EU countries less advanced in their circular transition into ongoing activities/initiatives.

#### **Activities and potential digital supporting services**

- Common R&I programming
- Joint calls
- Project monitoring & exchange

### 2.2.2 Scientific policy advice for EU CE transition

This service aims to channel the position of the EU CCH's members to EU, national and regional policymakers in circular economy. This objective is based on a number of shortcomings identified presented in D3.3 such as the difficulty to gain access to policy-makers. In collaboration with all the EU CCH's members, this objective can be reached by drafting policy roadmaps, position papers, the organisation of specific events, communications campaigns, etc. In the end, the service is expected to accelerate EU circular economy transition.

#### **Activities include:**

- Issuing position papers
- Policy roadmap
- Policy events

#### 2.2.3 Capacity building

This service aims to increase the skills, knowledge and understanding for POs to implement joint programming and integrate circular economy priorities in their activities. This will be facilitated by the organisation of a yearly conference, training events, the establishment and regular update of MOOCs and the publication of policy toolkits. The objective is to reach the four levels of capacity: individual (i.e. the level of individual staff members in POs), intra organisational (i.e. the level of departments/ teams within the POs organisation to enable activities such as joint programming, SRIA updates, etc.) inter organisational (joint programming), external rules incentives (policy).

#### **Activities include:**

- EU support toolkit
- Yearly conference on circular economy research
- Training courses & workshops

### 2.2.4 Knowledge sharing

Complementary to the capacity building service, this service aims to provide data, information, knowledge on circular economy themes and other targeted needs defined by the members of the platform. Further, it should also facilitate exchanges, webinars, workshops on themes of interest for





POs. The ambition of the service is to support the exchange of data, knowledge and know-how between the main users of the platform. The service should also benefit least experienced POs in circular economy, who will have the opportunity to exchange with frontrunners.

### **Activities include:**

- Online repository of circular economy programmes
- Meeting space for interactions
- Funding/event watch

For the development of the platform specifications, the above services have been reviewed and adapted, where possible, to a digital format for the development of the online portal. All services are reflected in the portal site map in the following chapter of this deliverable.

## 3 USER SPECIFICATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

#### 3.1 User personas

An analysis of stakeholder needs was undertaken at the start of the project and continuously updated throughout the project duration, to capture potential concerns and risks around the platform. This identification including drive, incentives, challenges and needs for each stakeholder type has served as the backbone for developing the services of the future PO platform within WP3, and the basis for identifying user personas for the platform and future portal.







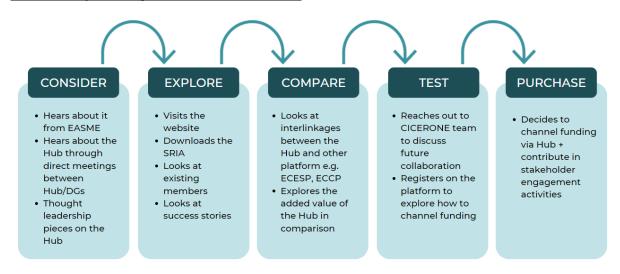
#### Figure 3. Snapshot of stakeholder needs analysis, captured per stakeholder type

Full version available at: https://miro.com/app/board/o9J kxioYow=/

## 3.2 Potential user journeys

In order to ensure the online platform best meets user needs, an analysis of potential user journeys was developed to examine to actions of stakeholders when entering the online portal. The user journeys were established based on the multiple feedback and stakeholder consultations undertaken within WP3 and WP4, and interpreted to define users experiences. The users selected for the journeys include demonstrate the diversity of target stakeholders of the EU Circular Cooperation Platform: EU Programme Owners, National/Regional Programme owners and indirect users such as academia and business — who are not the primary users of the portal but will benefit from the results, i.e. joint calls. This selection provides an all-round overview of the various stakeholders that are likely to use the online portal.

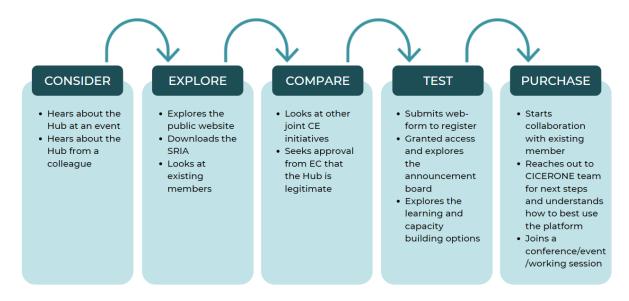
**User 1: European Programme Owner (end-user)** 



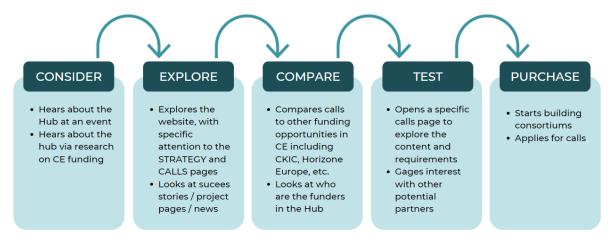




<u>User 2: National/Regional Programme Owners (end-user)</u>



User 3: Indirect beneficiaries (e.g. academia, business)



## 3.3 Required functionalities

As laid out in 1.3 Project Scope of this document, the online portal should include two main areas:

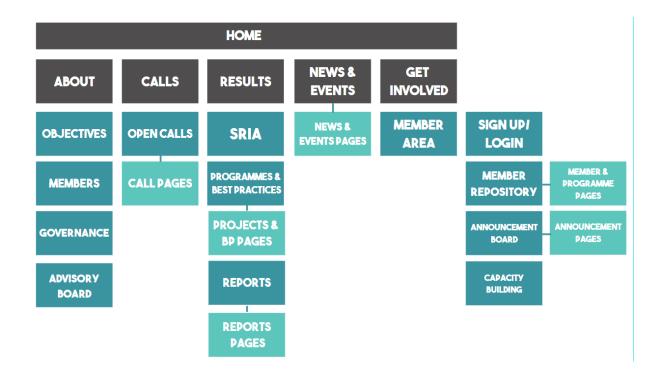
- A **public-facing area (extranet)** accessible to all, which will lay out the objectives, mission and vision of the platform, as well as key strategic documents (e.g. the SRIA)
- A member-only area (intranet) for the primary "clients" of the platform, i.e. programme owners, to collaborate and launch joint calls and actions. This section will also include tools to support programme owners, for example capacity building tools.





## 3.3.1 Site map

Based on the stakeholder journeys and key services of the platform to increase joint programming, the below site map is proposed to facilitate the navigation of stakeholders on the platform. As noted previously, the portal will contain a public-facing website accessible to all stakeholder groups and providing information on future calls, priorities and access to the Strategic Research & Innovation agenda. A private intranet will be developed in parallel – accessible from the main website, specifically targeting future members of the joint programming platform, i.e. programme owners at EU, national, regional and local levels.



In order to increase engagement and enable a good level in terms of user experiences, the wording and terms used to describe the services, have in some cases, been adapted.

#### 3.3.2 Requirements & functionalities

PAGE	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENTS
HOME	The homepage will provide an overview of the activities of the EU CCH, with quick links to specific sections of the website.	<ul> <li>Image banner (scrolling) for announcements</li> <li>Content – text</li> <li>Quick links to: Objectives – Members – Get involved</li> </ul>
ABOUT		
OBJECTIVES	This content page will present the key objectives of the EU Circular Cooperation Hub + include a call to action to become a member	<ul><li>Content page (text)</li><li>Sidebar (call to action – Member area)</li></ul>





MEMBERS	This page will present a list existing members. An interactive map could be an option to present different member states and regions.	<ul> <li>Directory (incl. search by country)</li> <li>Interactive map with selected places</li> <li>Tags</li> <li>Sidebar (call to action – Member area)</li> </ul>
GOVERNANCE	This page will present the governance model and leading entities of the Hub.	List - links
ADVISORY BOARD	This page will present the profiles of advisory board members and organisations	• List
CALLS		
OPEN CALLS	This page will introduce the concept of joint programming and the model for co-funding programmes.	Content page (text) + sidebar call to action to become a Member
	This will be followed by a list open calls that visitors can apply to for funding.	<ul> <li>Directory with keyword options (depending on number of calls at once) + search by theme/challenge</li> </ul>
CALL PAGES	These pages will provide details on each specific call, on a standardised template to be defined within WP2/WP3. These pages will also allow linking to third party websites.	<ul> <li>Template content page with different categories</li> <li>Tags</li> </ul>
RESULTS	. ,	
SRIA	This page will introduce the SRIA, host the final document and marketing materials related to it + present a timeline for the SRIA update	<ul> <li>Content page (text) with link to download or embedded download</li> <li>Timeline</li> </ul>
PROGRAMMES & BEST PRACTICES	This page will present the four programmes developed within the SRIA. Below will be success stories/best practices on the SRIA implementation, joint programming, as well as impact from projects funded by JPI	Content page (text), with download options
PROGRAMMES & BEST PRACTICES PAGES	These content pages will provide further information on programmes and best practices, available in the list in the above page.	<ul><li>Content page (text)</li><li>Blog</li></ul>
REPORTS	This page will list reports published by the Hub, including policy related studies, thought leadership pieces and other key research outputs.	Directory/list
REPORTS PAGES	These content pages will provide further information and description of reports, available in the list in the above page.	<ul><li>Content page (text)</li><li>Blog</li></ul>





NEWS & EVENTS	This news feed page will host latest news articles, blogs and upcoming events organised by the Hub.	• List - links
NEWS & EVENTS PAGES	Individual news/events pages	Blog     Event calendar
GET INVOLVED (+ MEMBER AREA)	This page will lay out who can become a member of the EU Circular Cooperation Hub, the benefits of joining, how this portal can support joint programming and what a user can expect by joining. A webform should be integrated to request access to join based on pre-defined criteria.	<ul> <li>Content page (text)</li> <li>Webform / online application</li> <li>Contact information for offline applications</li> <li>Sign up / Member / user management</li> <li>Password protected page</li> </ul>
	This page will also lead to the intranet portal for existing members of the platform, and should include sign-in credentials. Access to the member area will be accessible on the "Get involved" page.	
MEMBER REPOSITORY	This section of the member area will provide a repository of existing members (template). Fields will be decided and agreed.	Directory (search by country)
MEMBER PROFILES	This page will present a specific member, based on the above profile fields requested.  This will also include a section to provide information on programmes of members of the platform.	<ul> <li>Profile &amp; programme webform at registration that will automatically direct through the repository</li> <li>Tags</li> </ul>
ANNOUNCEMENT BOARD	This page will allow members to post announcements (social media style), regarding their initiatives, calls, requests for collaborations, etc.	<ul> <li>File sharing</li> <li>List server (for group email communications)</li> <li>Comment option</li> </ul>
CAPACITY BUILDING	This page will provide access to capacity building tools, e.g. policy toolkit, MOOC to support skills building for joint programming, supported by best practices.	<ul> <li>Content page with links / downloads to capacity building tools (TBD format)</li> </ul>

The above-mentioned functional requirements for each menu and landing page will be supplemented with general functionalities for the entire website, to enable increase user experiences for visitors. This includes:

- Search bar for the entire site and portal based on key words
- Multilanguage option (Deepl, Google Translate), to ensure accessibility to a wide range of programme owners and stakeholders
- Google Analytics to monitor visits and user behaviours on the portal, for the purposes of evaluation and improvement





- Webforms
- Social media links
- Multimedia: the website should provide easy tools to upload a variety of media such as JPEGs, PNGs, videos, PDFs, DOCS, etc.

### 3.3.3 Webforms

In order to generate profiles for members and their programmes, webforms will be developed to enable users of the platform to submit information. All webforms will need to be reviewed and validated by the website administrator before publication.

This includes a section which allows members to enter information about existing programmes, visible to other members. The programme pages will be visible to members only, and will be accessible on each member profile page. This will enable members of the platform to see the areas of work of each programme owner, and increase collaboration for joint programming.

Two main webforms will be developed on the site:

- Member profiles (profile of POs registered in the member area and their related programmes)
- Announcement board

All information shared and submitted by the members in the intranet will be evaluated for dissemination on the EU CCH's public communications channels.

### 3.3.3.1 Member profile webform (including programme information)

The objective of this webform is to allow members of the platform intranet to create a profile visible to other members. The profile pages will be visible to members only, with high-level information extracted to be visible on the public website.

#### **FIELDS**

- Name of organisation Free text entry
- Country Drop-down menu
- Representative name Free text entry
- Representative email contact Free text entry (system should detect that this is an email address)
- Logo Upload option
- Description of organisation 300 words max free text
- Themes addressed: Multiple choice
  - Biomass & Biotechnologies
  - Chemicals
  - Construction & Demolition
  - o Food
  - Plastic
  - Raw Materials
  - Waste





- Water
- Other: Free text
- Challenges of interest: Multiple choice
  - o Urban areas
  - Industrial systems
  - o Value Chain
  - o Territory and Sea
  - o Other: Free text
- Name of programmes Free text entry with links enabled
- Budget of programme (in euros) Free text (optional)
- Duration of programme Free text entry
- Programme contact: Free text entry
- Description of programme 500 words max free text

Information that will automatically feed into the public-facing website:

- Name and logo of organisation, to appear under ABOUT MEMBERS
- Country to appear on interactive map, to appear under ABOUT CURENT MEMBERS

#### 3.3.3.2 Announcement board

This internal announcement board will enable members of the platform to post updates, announcements and events to share with other members. Information on this page can be extracted by the web administrator to feed content on the public-facing website.

#### **FIELDS**

- Type of announcement: Drop down
  - Event
  - o Call
  - News
  - o Other
- Title of announcement Free text
- Description Free text
- Contact details Free text

All submissions by members will undergo a review process by the administrator before appearing in the portal. Once the platform is fully operational and interactions between members increase, a review of user behaviour will inform our future strategy for potential improvement of the online portal.

## 4 DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION

The following section provides high-level guidelines in terms of visual design and technical requirements of the portal. Elements described below will be further developed and implemented in A.5.2.2: UX design, development, deployment and operation led by LGI.





#### 4.1 Benchmark

In order to align the EU CCH with other existing JPIs, a review of existing JPI websites was undertaken in order to ensure consistency in the sections of the portal describes in Section 2. This is particularly important when considering that Programme Owners, already engaged in JPIs across other sectors, would appreciate a certain level of consistency, language and presentation between various joint programming initiatives. We thus aimed to align as much as possible all the while preserving the unique mission of the EU CCH, to create a sense of familiarity for stakeholder.

The considered websites in the benchmark were:

- Alzheimer and other Neurodegenerative Diseases (JPND)
- Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (FACCE)
- A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life
- Cultural Heritage and Global Change: A New Challenge for Europe
- Urban Europe Global Urban Challenges, Joint European Solutions
- Connecting Climate Knowledge for Europe
- More Years, Better Lives The Potential and Challenges of Demographic Change
- Antimicrobial Resistance- The Microbial Challenge An Emerging Threat to Human Health
- Water Challenges for a Changing World
- Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans

## 4.2 Branding

Through consultation with the project partners, a new brand guide was developed for the EU Circular Cooperation Hub, including a logo and visual identity for the platform, to be applied to all external communications material including the online portal. This branding has already been applied to the Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda (SRIA) published in 2020, to ensure consistent branding across all outputs on the EU CCH. This brand guide includes, among others, a logo, brand colours and typefaces.

This brand guide will be applied to the online portal to ensure a continuity of the visual identity of the platform. Key elements of the brand, to be applied on the website, can be found below.



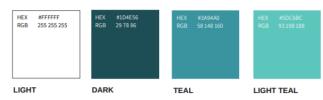






#### PRIMARY COLOUR PALETTE

Our primary colour palette should be the most prominent colours used on all marketing and communications materials. Secondary colours can be used as occasional accents.



#### SECONDARY COLOUR PALETTE



## **TYPOGRAPHY**

TITLE & ACCENT FONT

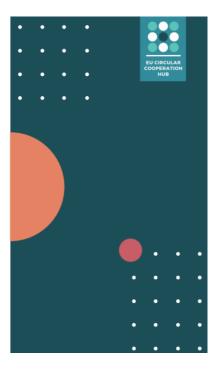
#### MONTSERRAT CLASSIC BOLD

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhliJjKkLlMmNnOo PpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz

**TEXT FONT** 

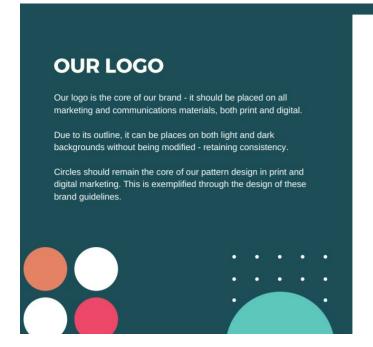
#### ARIAL / ARIALLE

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhliJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQ qRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz











## 4.3 Hosting

Although a strong connection will be made to the CICERONE website, the EU CCH portal will act as a standalone initiative, with its own brand and domain name. Resources from CICERONE, including deliverables, as well as from the project partners will however be shared on the EU CCH website.

The domain selected for the platform portal is www.circularcooperationhub.eu, reflecting all elements of the project name.

### **CONCLUSION**

The presented functional specifications, developed based on user needs, requirements and journeys, provide an overview of the online portal architecture, services and functionalities to be implemented in A.5.2.2: UX design, development, deployment and operation. Based on this deliverable, the development and deployment of the online portal will define the technical back-end required to meet requirements, ensure branding is consistent and undertake a final user experience review to ensure the portal is user friendly and in line with user behaviour across all stakeholder types. The final overview of the platform portal will be presented in D5.6. Multi-stakeholder portal.