



D7.1 Management & Quality Plan – 1st period

Q-PLAN INTERNATIONAL

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Executive Summary

The present document constitutes the Management and Quality Plan (MQP) for the FIERCE project. FIERCE is a 3-year Coordination and Support Action, funded by the European Union's (EU) Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon Europe under Grant Agreement No 101177496.

With a mission to accelerate Europe's green and digital transition, FIERCE will mobilise 2.5 million EUR in financial support for 70 SMEs, start-ups and scale-ups to fuel the development, demonstration and commercialisation of green space-enabled solutions. On top of that, FIERCE will support 140 SMEs with specialised technical and business advisory to design business solutions and engage in process innovation using downstream space data in areas such as circularity, raw materials, environmental monitoring and corporate sustainability. In parallel, FIERCE will enable a series of local entrepreneurship initiatives driven by innovation intermediaries and business support networks aimed at creating even more opportunities for space-enabled green innovation through synergies with regional industrial, research and market actors.

In this context, the current Management and Quality Plan defines the overall project management principles and procedures applied to FIERCE and the quality assurance (QA) provisions for safeguarding high-quality project outcomes. It describes the roles and responsibilities of each project participant, with emphasis on work breakdown and management, progress reporting, payment processes, risk identification and change management.

Proper QA and risk mitigation measures are put in place for FIERCE to ensure project outcomes, namely deliverable reports, methodologies, etc., are of high quality and offer value to the project's stakeholders. The underlying management and QA mechanisms, as described in this document, are obligatory for all FIERCE partners, while they aim at complementing (and not replacing) the provisions of the Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement of the project.

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List of Terms and Definitions

Table 1: Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AB	Advisory Board
AE	Affiliated Entity
BEN	Beneficiary
CA	Consortium Agreement
COO	Coordinator
EC	European Commission
EM	Exploitation Manager
EU	European Union
DM	Dissemination Manager
DoA	Description of the Action
FSTP	Financial Support to Third Parties
FSTP SC	Financial Support to Third Parties Selection Committee
GA	Grant Agreement
HaDEA	European Health and Digital Executive Agency.
MQP	Management and Quality Plan
PC	Project Coordinator
PO	Project Officer
QA	Quality Assurance
QR	Quality Review
SC	Steering Committee
WTL	Work Task Leader
WBS	Work Breakdown Structure
WP	Work Package
WPL	Work Package Leader

1. General provisions

1.1 Objectives

The current document has been elaborated within the framework of the FIERCE project, which is funded by the European Union's (EU) Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2021-2027 under Grant Agreement No. 101177496.

With a mission to accelerate Europe's green and digital transition, FIERCE will mobilise 2.5 million EUR in financial support for 70 SMEs, start-ups and scale-ups to fuel the development, demonstration and commercialisation of green space-enabled solutions. On top of that, FIERCE will support 140 SMEs with specialised technical and business advisory to design business solutions and engage in process innovation using downstream space data in areas such as circularity, raw materials, environmental monitoring and corporate sustainability. In parallel, FIERCE will enable a series of local entrepreneurship initiatives driven by innovation intermediaries and business support networks aimed at creating even more opportunities for space-enabled green innovation through synergies with regional industrial, research and market actors.

The project will reach further to key EU-wide networks (EEN, SME Alliance, EARSC) through the Strategic Partnership Network to create synergies and joint activities to navigate SMEs and innovation intermediaries towards exploiting high-impact opportunities for funding, collaboration and knowledge exchange. Along these lines, the FIERCE digital toolbox will be deployed to enrich the business support programme with multiple learning resources and 70+ qualified service providers to create a vibrant dedicated community. Finally, towards the end of the project practical replication handbooks will be issued and widely disseminated to inspire wider application and recommendations for enabling better-informed policy making.

The consortium of FIERCE consists of 7 partners across 7 different European countries, as presented in the following table.

Table 2: FIERCE partners

Partner Role*	Partner No	Partner Name	Partner short name	Country
COO	1	Q-PLAN INTERNATIONAL ADVISORS PC	Q-PLAN	Greece
BEN	2	NOVASPACE GMBH	NVS-DE	Germany
AE	2.1	NOVASPACE SRL	NVS-BE	Belgium
BEN	3	FUNDINGBOX ACCELERATOR SP ZOO	FBA	Poland
AE	3.1	FUNDINGBOX COMMUNITIES SL	FBC	Spain
BEN	4	EUROPA MEDIA SZOLGALTATO NONPROFITKOZHASZNU KFT	EMNP	Hungary
BEN	5	TECH TOUR GLOBAL EOOD	TTG	Bulgaria
BEN	6	EIT RAW MATERIALS GMBH	EIT-RM	Germany

BEN	7	DRAXIS RESEARCH VENTURES ASTIKI MI KERDOSKOPIKI ETAIRIA	DREVEN	Greece
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* COO = Coordinator, BEN = Beneficiary, AE = Affiliated Entity

In this context, the main objectives of the MQP are to:

- Ensure the smooth implementation and on-time completion of the diverse activities foreseen in the framework of the FIERCE project.
- Safeguard the quality of the project activities and deliverables in line with the contractual obligations of the consortium against the European Commission.

The MQP provides an overview of the management structure as well as the roles and responsibilities of the partners and defines the procedures for progress monitoring, quality assurance and project management.

Important Remarks

- Compliance with the MQP is obligatory for all partners of the FIERCE project.**
- The MQP complements and does not replace the Grant Agreement (GA) signed with the Commission (including its Annexes) and the Consortium Agreement (CA) of the project.**

1.2 Structure

The remaining document consists of 5 sections:

- Section 2 presents the project's management structure and describes the partners' roles and responsibilities in this respect.
- Section 3 analyses the control (quality control, monitoring of changes, management of records/files, etc.) of the project's documents (deliverables, reports, etc.).
- Section 4 addresses project communication issues, both "internal" (between project partners) and "external" (formal communication with the EC, communication with coordinators of other relevant projects or initiatives, etc.).
- Section 5 outlines the procedures for distributing the payments made by the EC to the partners.
- Section 6 describes how the project planning and monitoring are performed (work packages, tasks, quality reviews, etc.).

Finally, the Annexes of the MQP include: (i) a list of files that are directly related to the MQP (administrative management documents and instructions, templates, etc.) (ii) a Gantt Chart with the work schedule showing the timing of the project's deliverables and milestones (iii) the Work Breakdown Structure of the project including its Work Packages (WP) and Tasks, list of deliverables, list of milestones, and the interdependencies of the Work Plan components (iv) a preliminary table with the project partners assigned to review the quality of each deliverable foreseen in the context of

the FIERCE project and (v) the Terms of Reference prepared for the set-up and operation of project's Advisory Board.

1.3 Control

The MQP was produced by the Project Coordinator (PC). The PC is responsible for updating or changing the MQP when necessary. The PC is also responsible for periodically reviewing the MQP and recommending relevant changes. In case of ambiguities or disagreements regarding the content of the MQP, the Steering Committee (SC) of FIERCE is responsible for taking the final decision. Changes may concern any section of the MQP. In any case, changes are marked appropriately (briefly on the cover page of the MQP, new or modified text highlighted accordingly, etc.). After each change, a new version of the MQP will be published and distributed.

Before the new version is put into force, it will be first sent by the PC to the SC for comments. The PC will consider the comments of the SC partners, finalise the new version of the MQP and distribute it to all partners (in electronic form).

The methodology of FIERCE for project management and quality assurance builds on know-how, tools and templates that were developed internally by Q-PLAN as well as on good practices from the literature. As in previous EU-funded projects, tailored modifications to the methodology were implemented for FIERCE as well, to comply with the GA conditions and the particularities of the project. Along these lines, this deliverable presents the adjusted methodology as it was further developed and applied in the context of FIERCE as well as presents the results from its application during the project.

2. Organisational issues

2.1 Management structure

The management structure of FIERCE is depicted in the following figure.

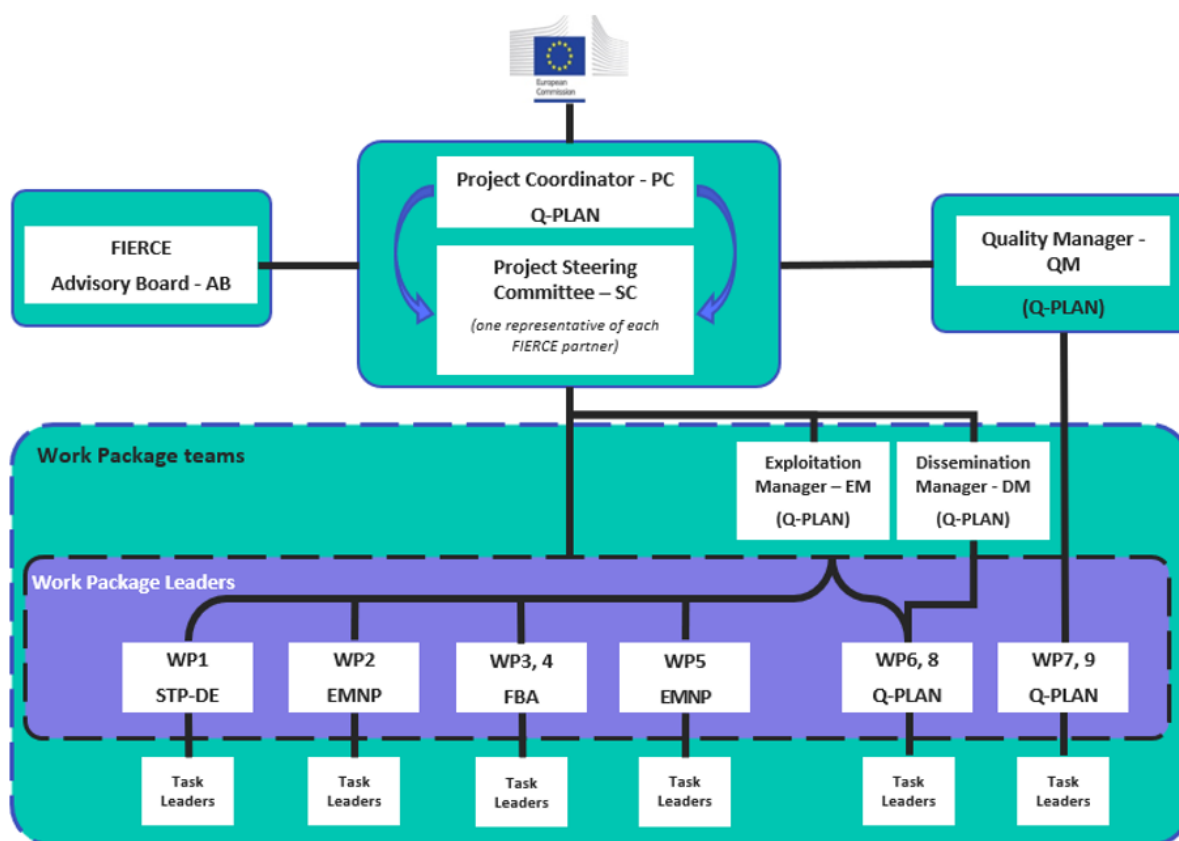


Figure 1: FIERCE management structure

The various management levels, roles and responsibilities are explained in the following sub-sections.

2.1.1 Steering Committee

The Project Steering Committee (SC) consists of one representative per partner and is the highest decision-making body of the project, which deals with all key strategic project decisions. Individually, SC members are responsible for the on-time delivery of results on behalf of the partner they represent, assure the quality of the work executed, monitor technical results, and gather input for internal and external reporting and documentation. The SC is chaired by the PC and coordinates and manages items affecting the contractual terms with the Commission. The exact authorities, responsibilities and operational procedures of the SC are documented within the provisions of the project's CA (see Articles 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3).

2.1.2 Project Coordinator

The Project Coordinator serves as the chairperson of the SC (central decision maker of the project) and is responsible for coordinating project activities. The PC coordinates and manages those items that affect the contractual terms with the Commission and the consortium's technical and scientific activities. The mandate of the PC is described within the provisions of Article 6.4 of the project's CA.

2.1.3 Quality Manager

The Quality Manager (QM) assists the SC and the PC with project implementation. More specifically, the QM is responsible for:

- Elaborating and monitoring the implementation of the project's MQP.
- Supporting the evolution of the work plan and provide the PC with advice in terms of monitoring the project's activities and adjusting partners' efforts.
- Providing administrative and organisational support for project meetings (preparation, agenda, minutes, circulation of presentations and minutes, etc.).
- Supporting the PC in handling the project's payments.
- Assisting the PC concerning both internal and external reporting.
- Safeguarding the effectiveness of internal communication.

2.1.4 Advisory Board

The Advisory Board (AB) includes high qualified professionals linked to the scientific and business fields relevant to FIERCE. The AB assumes an external role, supporting the assessment of the project's progress and deliverables, when necessary, while also facilitating dissemination and exploitation by informing and inviting their networks to benefit from project results and opportunities. Furthermore, the AB will help the project partners be up to date regarding significant changes in the innovation ecosystems underpinning its activities. It operates mostly remotely using online channels, abiding to specific Terms of Reference that will be developed and agreed to this end.

The Terms of Reference developed for providing meaningful information about FIERCE as well as about the expected contribution of its Advisory Board members along with the conditions pertaining to their membership are annexed to this document (see Annex V). The AB of FIERCE will be open for new members across the duration of the project, allowing for further additional expertise and knowledge to flow into the project, if necessary, while also extending its reach out to key stakeholder groups across Europe. In addition, will widely support the replication of the results of the FIERCE project. The specific AB composition will be included in the progress reports elaborated under Tasks 7.1 and 9.1.

2.1.5 Exploitation Manager

The Exploitation Manager (EM) is responsible for coordinating the FIERCE innovation activities and for the successful exploitation of the project's results. To this end, the EM will define the project's Innovation Management Strategy and prepare the "Exploitation and Sustainability Plan" (D6.2 First

version due in M6 – April 2025, D6.4 Interim version in M18 – April 2025) while the final version D8.2 will be submitted in M36 – October 2027). At the same time, the EM ensures that innovative ideas which arise during FIERCE are thoroughly examined and assessed for potential exploitation. Finally, the EM is in close communication with the PC and SC to ensure continuous feedback from escalating project activities.

2.1.6 Dissemination Manager

The Dissemination Manager (DM) is responsible for the design, implementation and evaluation of the “Dissemination and Communication Plan” (D6.1 due in M3, D6.4 in M18 and D8.1 in M36) targeting to create awareness on the scope and activities of the FIERCE project. The DM coordinates the dissemination and sharing of ideas with external stakeholders and ensures the widest possible diffusion of FIERCE’s outcomes to its main target groups.

2.1.7 Work Package Leaders Group

The Work Package Leaders Group consists of the Coordinator and Work Package Leaders. The Work Package Leaders Group is responsible for:

- Keeping track of the effective and efficient implementation of the Project, particularly regarding the completion of the work package activities in tasks and deliverables of each partner
- Evaluating suggestions of the Work Package Leaders for the reallocation of tasks and budget in work packages
- Making suggestions for amendments to Annex 1 and Annex 2 of the Grant Agreement to the Steering Committee, especially if restructuring is required to enable the finalisation of non-completed work packages or in case of termination of a Party
- Assessing reports presented by each Work Package Leader, which have been compiled by the Work Package Leader based on the Internal Progress Reports
- Assessing the status or completion of each work package and preparing the periodic reporting for the work packages together with the Coordinator
- Proposing payment instalments to the Coordinator according to the outcomes of these assessments
- Supporting the Coordinator in preparing meetings with the Granting Authority and in preparing related information and deliverables
- Supporting the Coordinator in the collection of information regarding the termination report and amendment procedures in case of termination of a Party’s participation
- Suggesting performance indicators for the determination of proper completion of work packages to the Steering Committee.

For more information please check article 6.5 of the Consortium Agreement (page 15/65)

2.1.8 Work Package Leader and Task Leaders

The Work Package Leaders (WPL) are responsible for coordinating the partners collaborating under their respective WPs to ensure the quality of the executed work. The WPL are also responsible for:

(a) resolving day-to-day administrative, technical and resource problems within their WP, (b) disseminating information relating to all aspects of the work to the other WPL ensuring smooth coordination of WP activities and (c) reporting to the upper levels of project management (i.e., the PC and SC). In FIERCE, WPLs play a critical role and assume full responsibility for ensuring the achievement of respective WP targets and the delivery of punctual and high-quality results.

Finally, Task Leaders (TL) are responsible for the on-time elaboration of the deliverables and results of their respective tasks. They work under the direct control of their respective WPL and report directly to them.

2.1.9 FSTP Selection Committee

The FSTP Selection Committee (FSTP SC) serves as the primary decision-making body for all key matters related to Open Call and FSTP management. The FSTP SC responsibilities include: (a) approving the Open Call Document Package, (b) validating decisions made during the Selection Process, (c) choosing the top proposals during the Consensus Meetings, (d) validating the SMEs' performance in the Milestone Reviews, including the Transformation Plan, (e) authorize all FSTP payments done to FSTP recipients by the partner in charge of the FSTP management. The FSTP SC consists of all partners and will be coordinated by FBA. However the composition can be extended in the following cases: (a) Consensus Meeting - by invitation, if needed Experts who participate in the Independent Evaluation. The experts take part in an advisory capacity (i.e. with voice but without vote), (b) Review Milestones - by including Lead Mentors who participate in the evaluation of the deliverables providing a report or assessment (See Task 4.2). The Lead Mentors will take part in the meetings if needed for the validation of deliverables in some critical cases. They will participate in an advisory capacity (i.e. with voice but without vote), (c) other cases agreed by the partners. Decisions made by the FSTP SC are reached either through consensus or by a minimum two-thirds majority vote.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the SC and the PC are mentioned in detail in the project CA. All partners should respect the decisions of the SC.

Moreover, the roles and responsibilities of each partner are described in detail within Annex 1 to the GA, namely the DoA and, more specifically, within Part A, Section "List of Work packages" (pp. 4 - 15).

Important Remark

All partners should take all the necessary measures and provide all essential resources for the on-time and smooth elaboration of their tasks and responsibilities.

The synthesis of the SC and the names of the WPL are available within "MQP_FIERCE_E06_SCandWPL" form.

3. Records and quality control of deliverables

3.1 Records

Throughout the project, the PC and all other partners maintain records in electronic and/or paper form. The PC has the responsibility of maintaining the central records of the project. These records include:

- Contractual documents and correspondence with the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) of the EC.
- Correspondence with project partners.
- Deliverables submitted to the Funding and Tenders portal.
- The Management and Quality Plan (all versions).
- Meeting minutes and progress reports (internal and external).
- Other important documents.

Important Remarks

- Each partner should maintain records of all documents that concern them or for which they are responsible.**
- The PC and all other partners are responsible for storing and maintaining those documents in a way that they are protected against damage, deterioration or loss.**
- In particular, concerning electronic records (digital files), all partners should regularly perform back-ups.**

The WPLs are responsible for sending the deliverables of the tasks of each WP to the PC. The PC is the only one responsible for releasing a deliverable (publicly and/or to the EC). When a deliverable is released, version 1 is assigned to it. The version changes only after important corrections/ remarks from the Commission or when a deliverable is updated, according to the work plan described in the DoA annexed to the GA. The PC is the only one responsible for changing the versions of a deliverable.

Concerning electronic records (digital files), the following guidelines should be followed in terms of the name of the file:

- File name should preferably not exceed 30 characters. For deliverables, the project acronym, the deliverable number and official name (shortened as much as necessary but in a meaningful way), as stated in the GA, should be part of the file name.
- The partner responsible for the deliverable puts their short name on the file.
- File name contains the versioning number before the final version released by the PC i.e. if the released version is 1, the previous versioning is 0.1, 0.2, etc.

The abovementioned rules regarding the naming of electronic files apply to deliverables before the PC releases them. When another version of a deliverable is elaborated, the file name should also contain the last version. The new version number will be included within the name of the deliverable name only when it is ready for release and only by the PC.

An example demonstrating the rules which apply to the naming of electronic files is provided below:

- FIERCE_D7.1_MQP_Q-PLAN_v0.2.docx – Project acronym, Deliverable 7.1, MQP (shortened title of Management and Quality Plan), short name of partner responsible for the deliverable, version number 0.2, before being released by the PC.
- FIERCE_D7.1_MQP_v1.docx – Deliverable 7.1 as it was released by the PC.
- FIERCE_D7.1_MQP_Q-PLAN_v1.1 – Project acronym, Deliverable 7.1. MQP (shortened title of Management and Quality Plan), short name of partner responsible for the deliverable, version number before being released by the PC.
- FIERCE_D7.1_MQP_v2.docx – The second version of deliverable 7.1 as it was released by the PC.

The latest versions of all deliverables and other documents relevant to the MQP can be found in “MQP_FIERCE_E07_QMdocuments”.

3.2 Quality control of deliverables

All deliverables produced in the context of FIERCE will undergo a dedicated quality control process before their (internal) approval and ultimate release. The (internal) approval of the deliverables will be considered completed only after the successful completion of the respective quality control process.

In this framework, each deliverable will be examined concerning its:

- Content: to what extent is the deliverable content relevant and meets its objectives as set out in the DoA; to what degree does it include all the required information.
- Quality: whether the quality of the deliverable is acceptable; whether it meets the specifications/ standards that have been set (where relevant).
- Structure, format and appearance: where necessary and especially with respect to the deliverable’s model template.
- Data/Information: cross-check (where necessary and if applicable) to ensure no contradictions or overlaps between different deliverables exist.
- Accordance with the timetable: check the delivery date which has to be in line with the agreed-upon date.
- Attached documents: check if all necessary accompanying documents are attached.

With that in mind, the 1st quality check is implemented by the partner responsible for preparing the deliverable. After its 1st quality check, the deliverable is submitted (keeping the PC in copy) to (i) the WPL of the WP under which the deliverable is being elaborated and (ii) one more partner. Both of them will serve as quality reviewers for the respective deliverable. In case the WPL is responsible for the preparation of the deliverable, its quality control shall be performed by two other project partners (see Annex IV for more details on the quality reviewers assigned for each deliverable to be produced in the framework of FIERCE).

The quality reviewers are responsible for the 2nd quality check of the deliverable, which is implemented with the help of a dedicated quality review form (see “MQP_FIERCE_E07_QualityReviewForm”). The

quality reviewers inspect the deliverable, and if there are any remarks/ comments/ deficiencies, it is rejected and returned to the responsible partner for improvement (with the PC in copy). Quality reviewers shall perform the quality check and respond to the partner responsible for preparing the deliverable within 5 working days by providing the quality review form (QR form) and the commented deliverable. The appropriate adaptations are implemented within three working days by the responsible partner, and the deliverable is sent for another quality check to the quality reviewers. The deliverable is then re-examined to ensure that all comments have been addressed. If necessary, the process is reiterated. When the quality reviewers accept the deliverable, it is submitted for a final quality check to the PC (see Figure 2 on the next page of this document).

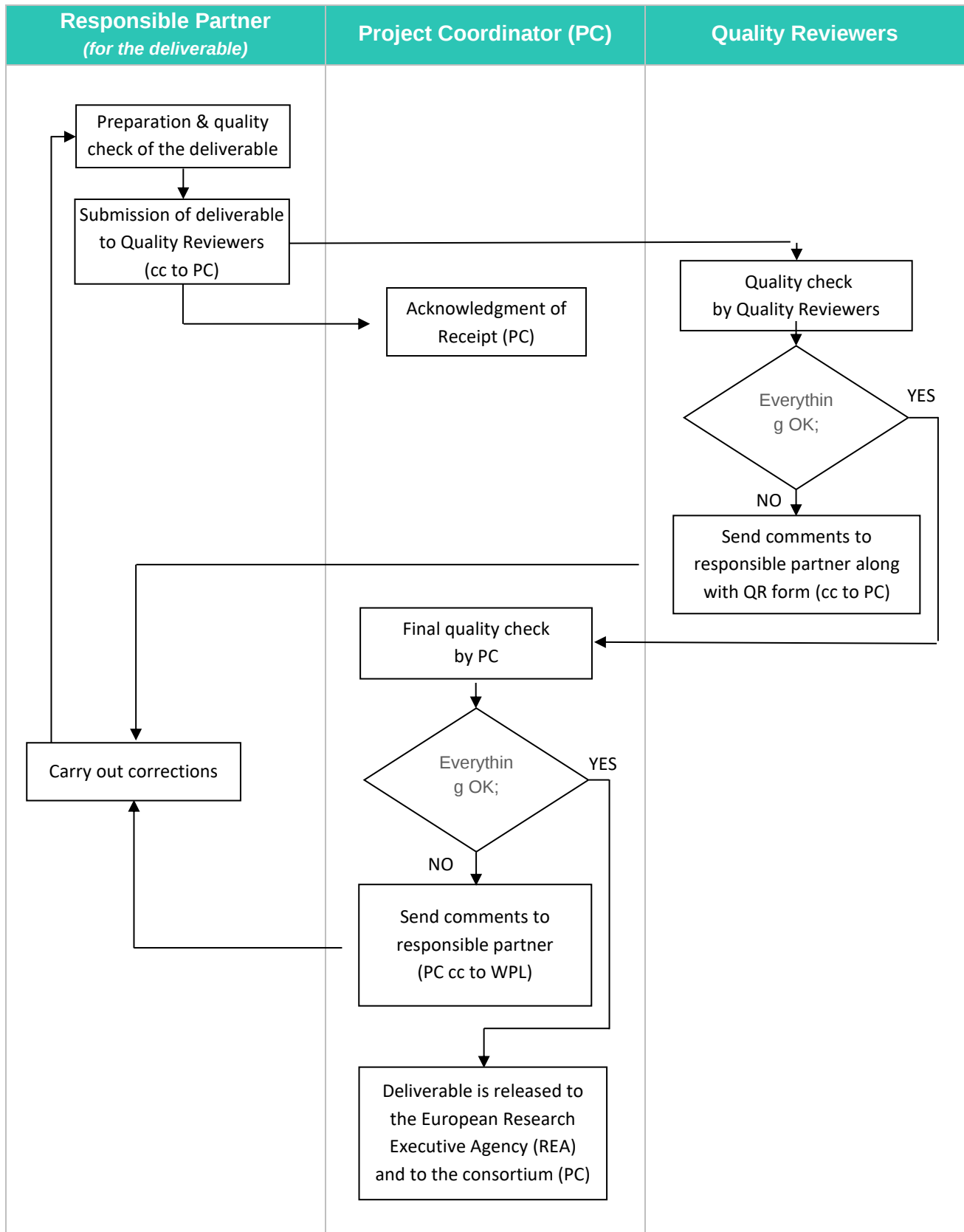


Figure 2: Internal process for controlling the quality of deliverables

The rule of two reviewers per deliverable will not be applied on specific deliverables that describe project management processes and strategies that concern and are binding for the whole consortium,

such as the MQP, the Data Management Plan, the Dissemination and Communication Plan, and the Exploitation and Sustainability Plan. Deliverables of this nature will be reviewed and accepted by all partners within the consortium before submission so that all partners are aware of and reach a consensus on important administrative processes and strategies put in place for FIERCE.

The PC releases the deliverable to the Commission only after its internal approval. The PC monitors the entire internal preparation and quality control procedure of deliverables. The partners responsible for FIERCE's deliverables and the quality reviewers assigned to each deliverable are listed in Annex IV.

Important Remarks

- i) To ensure enough time for the quality control of each deliverable, the respective deadlines should be set well before the contractual deadline.**
- ii) Each partner is responsible for the quality of its deliverables. The PC is overall responsible for the quality of the whole project.**
- iii) Where possible, all deliverables are prepared in a standard format based on the template of the present document.**

4. Project coordination

4.1 Internal communication

Communication between the PC and project partners takes place in any available – convenient way (e.g., email, telephone, teleconferencing, fax, and meetings). Internal communication may be distinguished into formal and informal. The PC has the main responsibility of ensuring smooth and effective internal communication.

The contact details of FIERCE partners are kept in a separate file (see “MQP_FIERCE_E01_PartnerData”).

If there is any change in the contact details or the project team, partners should update the file and notify the PC by email, who will inform the rest of the partners (and, if necessary, the EC).

Communication for important issues (e.g., sending deliverables and planning meetings), as well as any formal communication (e.g., project meetings), should be documented – written (e.g., by preparing the meeting minutes and maintaining an electronic (e.g., emails) or paper copy record).

Informal communication takes place between the PC, the WPL and the partners (through telephone, informal emails, etc.) and may not be documented. The PC and WPL are expected to communicate regularly with the project partners to follow the project and WPs’ progress closely to identify and rectify potential deviations in time.

Close collaboration and communication between project partners are essential, especially in cases where they have to cooperate to perform specific project tasks.

4.2 External communication

4.2.1 Communication with the EC

The PC is solely responsible for communicating with the responsible Project Officer (PO) of the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) of the EC with respect to the project. Project partners should not contact the PO directly. Only in exceptional cases, and if the PO requires so, may a project partner contact the PO directly. In such a case, the PC is kept fully informed (in writing) about the communication content.

The PC is responsible for submitting to HaDEA all reports and deliverables of the project. The PC also provides to HaDEA any additional information and/ or clarification (that has been requested by HaDEA). Finally, the PC keeps all partners informed about any important communication with HaDEA.

4.2.2 Communication with third parties

Project partners may and should communicate with third parties (e.g., SMEs in the space sector, innovation intermediaries in the space ecosystem, other EU-funded projects, etc.) within the context of the project. In all external communications, a reference to the project should be made (e.g., project acronym, EU programme, GA No, etc.).

4.2.3 Complaints – disputes

The members of the SC and the WPL will immediately notify the PC of any events or circumstances that may significantly affect the performance of the work executed in the WP they are leading. Indicative examples include (i) suggestions for considerable improvements and modifications/changes in the methodology, timetable and task allocation, (ii) potential delays and (iii) disputes between partners.

The PC will be responsible for and try resolving the abovementioned issues by consulting with the SM, the WPL and any partner directly involved in the respective WP. The PC will try to achieve a compromise between the conflicting parties based on consensus, taking into account the conformance to the objectives and work plan of the project.

If the mediation of the PC does not turn out to be successful, then the PC will forward the conflict to the SC for taking the final decision. The SC will try to respond to changes or settle conflicts by achieving consensus among the parties involved. If consensus cannot be achieved and/ or conflicts remain unresolved, the SC will decide on the matter via vote. Further details concerning decision-making, conflict resolution, and the management of internal administrative-financial issues are incorporated in the project's CA. In any case, the mediation process and the final decision remain to the PC and the SC. When necessary, the PC informs the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) requesting feedback.

5. Payments

The European Health and Digital Executive Agency provides the EU contribution in 3 payment moments over the project's lifetime.

1. Pre-financing at the beginning of the project (upon signature of the GA): 80% of the total EU contribution, minus 5% of the maximum grant amount which the Granting Authority keeps for the Mutual Insurance Mechanism.
2. Interim Payment after the end of the 1st project period.
3. Final Payment after the end of the 2nd project period – end of the project, including the Mutual Insurance Mechanism contribution.

The transfer of the initial pre-financing was handled in accordance with Article 22.1 and Article 7 of the Grant Agreement following this payment schedule:

All Parties agreed that the amount of Financial Support to Third Parties included in the Consortium Plan, in particular 2.500.000 € (two and a half million euros), would be reserved from the pre-financing payment by the Coordinator to secure the entire amount from the beginning of the Project. The remaining pre-financing was paid by the Coordinator to the partners in a single instalment. The amount of the pre-financing reserved for covering the FSTP, will be transferred by the Coordinator to FBA in separate instalments matching the batches of payments due for the recipients of FSTP.

Regarding the 2nd and the 3rd payment, the steps involved in the payment and distribution process are the following:

1. All scheduled reports and deliverables for the period must have been submitted.
2. The Commission confirms that targets have been achieved through a successful official review meeting.
3. The Granting Authority pays the PC based on the periodic reports.
4. The PC calculates the distribution plan for the entire amount received. All partners are informed accordingly.
5. All partners, through their SC representatives, agree with the distribution plan suggested by the PC and confirm/ update their bank accounts.
6. The PC conducts the payment of the respective amounts.

More information about the payments can be found in the “Section 7 – Financial Provisions” of the CA (p.16).

6. Work-planning, monitoring and control

6.1 Work planning

The project work-plan is divided into WPs, and each WP is divided into Tasks. The overall work-planning of the project is presented in “MQP_FIERCE_E02_WorkPlanning” and includes:

- ✓ the WP and respective tasks,
- ✓ the duration, start and end dates for each task and WP as a whole,
- ✓ the responsible partner and the partners involved, and
- ✓ the respective deliverables (as mentioned in the DoA of the GA with the REA)

A Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), along with a Gantt chart and a schedule per task, related deliverables, and dependencies on other tasks, are included in the respective Annexes of this document.

Any modification/ change (which again does not affect the project’s overall course) in the work-planning should be approved by the PC. Any significant change should be in line with the contractual obligations and the rules of the EC.

Important Remark

If the consortium fails to send a deliverable on time to the HaDEA, the PC should inform HaDEA before the deadline, justify the delay and suggest a new deadline. For this reason, all partners should provide early warnings about delays to the respective WPL, and the WPL to the PC (see also Section 6.5 Risk Management of the current document).

6.2 Project meetings

A total of 7 project meetings are anticipated in the framework of the FIERCE project: Q-PLAN (Thessaloniki, Greece): Kick-off meeting; FBA (Poland) 2nd Project Meeting combined with Design Sprint; EMNP (Hungary) 3rd Project Meeting combined with the 1st roadshow event; TTG (Bulgaria) 4th Project Meeting combined with the 2nd roadshow event; EIT-RM (Germany) 5th Project Meeting combined with the 3rd roadshow event; DREVEN (Thessaloniki, Greece) 6th Project Meeting combined with the 4th roadshow event; NOVASPACE (Germany) 7th Project Meeting combined with the Policy Roundtable and the Final Conference. For more details, see the Part A of the DoA (pp 13,15). The PC is responsible for the preparation of minutes for all project meetings. The meeting minutes are sent to all partners for approval.

Monthly project meetings will be organised remotely in order to monitor the progress of work and identify potential risks that need to be mitigated.

6.3 Progress monitoring (internal reports)

Every six months, a short progress report will be prepared by each WPL, following collection of information from the corresponding task leaders and the other partners involved in each WP, to summarise the work progress, including progress against targets (see model template in “MQP_FIERCE_E03_ SemesterActivityReport” for activity reporting).

Important Remark

Given the fact that the project is based in the lump sum approach, financial reporting to the Managing Authority is not required. Emphasis will be placed on the Work Packages (WP) due to be completed in the first reporting period, to ensure that all corresponding tasks are concluded on time by the end of the first reporting period. Otherwise, the payment will be jeopardised for all partners and for a whole WP in which even one task is delayed.

Based on the individual semester progress reports, the PC will elaborate the respective “Internal Semester Report” for the whole project, ultimately feeding the external reporting to the HaDEA (periodic report).

All individual semester progress reports should be sent to the PC not later than 30 days after the end of the respective reporting period. Within 15 days after receiving all individual semester progress reports, the PC integrates them into the “Internal Semester Report” and sends it to the partners with comments on any missing information and feedback needed.

The Internal Semester Report will be incorporated with the major reports to the HaDEA when the time of their elaboration coincides (in month 19 and month 36).

6.4 Reports to the Commission (external reports)

The PC is overall responsible for the preparation and on-time submission of the project reports to HaDEA. In FIERCE, two such reports are required at the end of the two respective reporting periods (M1 to M18 and M19 to M36). The exact content of the aforementioned reports is specified in the GA (Article 21, pp. 30 - 32).

6.5 Risk management

Risks that may affect the progress and quality of the project considerably have been identified, and relevant contingency plans have been elaborated. The list of risks will be updated on an ad hoc basis or once every six months.

6.5.1 Main risks and contingency plans

Two types of risks have been identified:

- **Internal** risks. They are linked with the operation of the project team (characterised by a large number of experts, different backgrounds and geographical dispersion), delays, changes in the project team, etc.

- **External risks.** They are induced by the project’s targeted stakeholders, though they may still be caused by an inappropriate project approach or inadequate performance.

Risks are assessed separately and reported in the reports to the EC. Each WPL is responsible for identifying additional risks that may arise during the project’s implementation and constantly assessing those identified. Contingency planning may be adapted accordingly.

6.5.2 Risk process and roles

Risks are handled by the SC, PC and WPL. In particular:

- WPL submits a Risk Report to the PC on the date a new risk is identified or every six months for the already identified risks. Within this report, they provide detailed info about the identified risks, propose countermeasures and report on the implementation of those measures (based on the model template in “MQP_FIERCE_E05_RiskReport”). The PC also uses the same document to inform the SC about the identified risk and to communicate the SC decisions per risk back to the responsible WPL.
- The PC informs the SC about the identified risks, monitors the implementation of the countermeasures, and assesses the results/ outcomes.
- The SC decides which countermeasures should be applied, by whom and when.

6.5.3 Risk assessment

Table 3: Risk assessment

Risk assessment factors	Estimation-assessment		
Impact factor	1 - Low	2 - Medium	3 - High
Probability of occurrence	1 - Low (P < 35%)	2 - Medium (35% < P < 70%)	3 – High (P > 70%)

A risk management section is included in the internal semester reports of WPL, referring to the WPs that will be affected by a specific risk. A risk management section will be included in the reports to the HaDEA, reporting the major risks and the countermeasures taken by the consortium.

6.5.4 Corrective actions – Contingency plans

If a risk is identified and/ or the project’s effort does not conform to the project’s work-planning and/ or objectives, the PC may apply corrective actions (based on SC decisions). In case of non-conformities, the PC may also activate contingency plans. With that in mind, the table below summarises the main internal and external risks and the respective contingency plans.

Table 4: Risks and contingency plans

Description of risk	Linked WP	Risk Mitigation Measures
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Low participation in interviews, online survey, and workshops. (Low probability / Low impact)	1	To ensure high participation of subjects in surveys, studies and workshop, we will engage partners' networks and EU-wide networks from strategic partners, as well as online survey tools.
Lack of willingness of innovation intermediaries to deploy local entrepreneurship initiatives. (Medium probability / Low impact)	3,4	Local entrepreneurship initiatives will be flexibly designed and adapted to respect diverse organisations' needs, capacity, interests and resources. We engage the InnORBIT network of 30+ innovation intermediaries and strategic partners (ECCP, CCRI, EBN).
Developed methodologies and tools fail to answer SMEs' needs. (Low probability / High impact)	2,3,4,5	Our programmes, services, training and tools rely on existing resources to a degree that allows quick finetuning, iterative deployment and direct feedback collection for early diagnosis.
Delays and underperforming SME Transformation Projects (FSTP) (Medium probability / High impact)	3,4	We employ a wide array of mitigation measures, including multiple selection and starting dates for SME financed projects, to reduce impact and increase flexibility and technical supervision by the consortium. Payments are made based on successful delivery, reducing the financial risk, also reserved lists to substitute underperforming projects.
Difficulties in coordinating with the network of strategic partners. (Low probability / Low impact)	6,8	Our strategy and joint events specifications are designed in line with common interests with targeted partners, being flexible enough to mutually agree on their scope and schedule, but also find alternative networks in case of no interest.
Changes in the project consortium (Low probability / Medium impact)	7,9	Partners will be required to include substitutes with equivalent (or higher) qualifications and experience. The substitutes will be informed in detail about the project, their role, and responsibilities.
Delays in project timetable (Low Probability / High impact)	7,9	The Steering Committee (SC) agrees and applies contingency plans (tailored to exact circumstances) incl.: (i) re-allocation of resources, (ii) parallel execution of tasks and (iii) re-scheduling of activities.

7. Final important general recommendations

Project management & internal communication

- ✓ **Grant Agreement:** For the whole implementation of the project, partners should refer to the Grant Agreement - Description of Action. It is added in the shared drive of FIERCE and can also be downloaded from the project EU portal. Going forward, partners should ignore the proposal and put it – metaphorically speaking – in the “recycling bin”.
- ✓ **Key reference documents for FIERCE:** Partners shall always consult Grant Agreement (GA) (all sections of it), Consortium Agreement (CA) and core deliverables related to quality, in particular:
 - MQP: Management and Quality Plan
 - DCP: Dissemination and Communication Plan
 - DMP: Data Management Plan

Technical coordination & interdependencies

- ✓ **Grant Agreement:** With regard to the technical activities, partners should consult the Grant Agreement, reading not only the tasks’ descriptions, but also the methodology, as well as the rest of the GA sections.
- ✓ **Task meetings:** Regarding internal meetings for the organisation of tasks, if necessary, these can be conducted through digital meetings. The task leader is responsible for initiating such requests.
- ✓ **Monthly consortium meeting:** The consortium will conduct a monthly digital meeting for the entire project to address any emerging issues.
- ✓ **Tasks’ interdependencies & partners’ cooperation:** Partners, especially task leaders, should **NOT** view their tasks in isolation. Instead, they should aim to align them with preceding and succeeding tasks, focusing on the interdependencies and potential associated risks.
- ✓ **Desk research & literature review:** Partners that conduct desk research in the frame of the tasks that they lead should have a very good understanding of what is already available from previous projects and studies. We shall not repeat work previously done but rather build on that work to take further research steps to answer questions not answered yet by previous relevant projects and initiatives.
- ✓ **Library folder in the repository:** Partners are encouraged to use and enrich the library folder in the FIERCE repository, where Q-PLAN has added relevant resources that were investigated during the proposal preparation. This Library comprises a useful online space, which Task leaders may consult during their research work, adding any other available resources they may find during their work. Task teams should avoid repeating the same work, looking for information already available in this Library.

8. Annexes

This section provides (i) the list of MQP-related files, (ii) the project's Gantt chart, (iii) a Work Breakdown indicating schedule per task, responsible partner, related deliverables and milestones, tasks' interdependencies, (iv) a preliminary list of deliverables' quality reviewers, and (v) the Advisory Board Terms of Reference.

Annex I - List of files related to the Management and Quality Plan

Table 5: List of files related to the Management and Quality Plan

Title of document		
Official documents		
FIERCE Grant Agreement		
FIERCE Consortium Agreement		
Internal forms / templates		
Title	Code	Type
FIERCE partner data	MQP_FIERCE_E01	Spreadsheet
Work-planning	MQP_FIERCE_E02	Spreadsheet
Semester Activity Report template (per partner)	MQP_FIERCE_E03	Document
Deliverables template	MQP_FIERCE_E04	Document
Risk report	MQP_FIERCE_E05	Document
List of names (SC and WPL)	MQP_FIERCE_E06	Spreadsheet
Quality review form	MQP_FIERCE_E07	Document
List of QM documents	MQP_FIERCE_E08	Spreadsheet
Deliverable Quality Reviewers	MQP_FIERCE_E09	Spreadsheet

Annex II – Gantt Chart

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24	M25	M26	M27	M28	M29	M30	M31	M32	M33	M34	M35	M36
WP1 Context Analysis to design the FIERCE services and support										MS3																										
1.1 State-of-play, success factors and perceptions on the use of downstream space for circularity and sustainability						D1.1																														
1.2 Profiling innovation ecosystems with potential for driving the space-enabled green transition						D1.2																														
1.3 Co-design of blueprints for the FIERCE support to SMEs and innovation ecosystems										D1.3																										
WP2 FIERCE Digital Toolbox Setup and Service Content												MS4																								
2.1 FIERCE digital toolbox platform integration																		D2.1																		
2.2 Development of content for the digital toolbox and services																																				
2.3 Design of the FIERCE Monitoring & Evaluation Framework for impact and performance assessment																		D2.2																		
WP3 Open Calls and implementation of the FIERCE Programmes – 1st period																		MS5																		
3.1 SME Advisory Services implementation - 1st period																		D3.1																		
3.2 Funded Transformation Projects implementation - 1st period																		D3.2																		
3.3 Ecosystem Building Programme implementation - 1st period																		D3.3																		
WP4 Open Calls and implementation of the FIERCE Programmes – 2nd period																										MS6			MS7						MS8	
4.1 SME Advisory Services implementation - 2nd period																										D4.1										
4.2 Funded Transformation Projects implementation - 2nd period																																				D4.2
4.3 Ecosystem Building Programme implementation - 2nd period																																				D4.3
WP5 Learning to drive improved impact, replication and policy feedback																																				
5.1 Digital toolbox maintenance and performance-based finetuning																																				D5.1
5.2 Assessment of the programmes' impact on SMEs at organisational, regional and EU level																																				D5.2
5.3 FIERCE Replication Framework																																				D5.3
5.4 FIERCE Policy Recommendations																																				
WP6 Dissemination, Exploitation and International Community - 1st Period				MS2														MS6																		
6.1 Dissemination and Communication - 1st Period			D6.1															D6.1																		
6.2 Exploitation and IPR Management - 1st Period						D6.2												D6.2																		
6.3 Strategic Partnerships Network development - 1st Period																		D6.3																		
WP7 Coordination and Quality Management - 1st Period	MS1																																			
7.1 Coordination and Quality Management - 1st Period			D7.1																																	
7.2 Data Management - 1st Period			D7.2															D7.2																		
7.3 Project Meetings and Reporting - 1st Period																																				
WP8 Dissemination, Exploitation and International Community - 2nd Period																																				MS9
8.1 Dissemination and Communication - 2nd Period																																				D8.1
8.2 Exploitation and IPR Management - 2nd Period																																				D8.2
8.3 Strategic Partnerships Network development - 2nd period																																				D8.3
WP9 Coordination and Quality Management - 2nd Period																																				
9.1 Coordination and Quality Management - 2nd Period																																				
9.2 Data Management - 2nd Period																																				D9.1
9.3 Project Meetings and Reporting - 2nd Period																																				

Annex III - FIERCE Work Breakdown by WPs, Tasks, Deliverables and Milestones

Table 6: FIERCE Work Breakdown by WPs and Tasks

Activities per Work package		Leader	Start	End
WP1	Context Analysis to design the FIERCE services and support	NVS-DE	M1	M10
T1.1	State-of-play, success factors and perceptions on the use of downstream space for circularity and sustainability	DREVEN	M1	M6
T1.2	Profiling innovation ecosystems with potential for driving the space-enabled green transition	NVS-DE	M1	M6
T1.3	Co-design of blueprints for the FIERCE support to SMEs and innovation ecosystems	DREVEN	M6	M10
WP2	FIERCE Digital Toolbox Setup and Service Content	EMNP	M1	M18
T2.1	FIERCE digital toolbox platform integration	FBC	M1	M18
T2.2	Development of content for the digital toolbox and services	EMNP	M6	M18
T2.3	Design of the FIERCE Monitoring & Evaluation Framework for impact and performance assessment	EMNP	M8	M18
WP3	Open Calls and implementation of the FIERCE programmes – 1st Period	FBA	M8	M18
T3.1.1	Open Calls publication and management	DREVEN	M8	M18
T3.1.2	FIERCE Advisory Services Implementation	DREVEN	M8	M18
T3.2	Funded Transformation Projects implementation – 1 st period	FBA	M13	M18
T3.3	Ecosystem Building Programme implementation – 1 st period	NVS-DE	M11	M18

WP4	Open Calls and implementation of the FIERCE programmes - 2nd Period	FBA	M19	M36
T4.1	SME Advisory Services Implementation – 2 nd period	DREVEN	M19	M26
T4.2.1	Open Calls publication and management	FBA	M19	M36
T4.2.2	SME Transformation project implementation and FSTP management	FBA	M19	M36
T4.3	Ecosystem Building Programme implementation – 2 nd period	NVS-DE	M19	M36
WP5	Learning to drive improved impact, replication and policy feedback	EMNP	M19	M36
T5.1	Digital toolbox maintenance and performance-based finetuning	EMNP	M19	M36
T5.2	Assessment of the programmes' impact on SMEs at organisational, regional and EU level	EMNP	M19	M36
T5.3	FIERCE Replication Framework	Q-PLAN	M24	M36
T5.4	FIERCE Policy Recommendations	NVS-DE	M27	M36
WP6	Dissemination, Exploitation and International Community – 1st Period	Q-PLAN	M1	M18
T6.1	Dissemination and Communication – 1 st Period	Q-PLAN	M1	M18
T6.2	Exploitation and IPR Management – 1 st Period	Q-PLAN	M1	M18
T6.3	Strategic Partnerships Network development – 1 st Period	TTG	M1	M18
WP7	Coordination and Quality Management – 1st Period	Q-PLAN	M1	M18
T7.1	Coordination and Quality Management – 1 st Period	Q-PLAN	M1	M18
T7.2	Data Management – 1 st Period	Q-PLAN	M1	M18
T7.3	Project Meetings & Reporting – 1 st Period	Q-PLAN	M1	M18
WP8	Dissemination, Exploitation and International Community – 2nd Period	Q-PLAN	M19	M36

T8.1	Dissemination and Communication – 2 nd Period	Q-PLAN	M19	M36
T8.2	Exploitation and IPR Management – 2 nd Period	Q-PLAN	M19	M36
T8.3	Strategic Partnerships Network development – 2 nd Period	TTG	M19	M36
WP9	Coordination and Quality Management – 2nd Period	Q-PLAN	M19	M36
T9.1	Coordination and Quality Management – 2 nd Period	Q-PLAN	M19	M36
T9.2	Data Management – 2 nd Period	Q-PLAN	M19	M36
T9.3	Project Meetings & Reporting – 2 nd Period	Q-PLAN	M19	M36

Table 7: List of Deliverables

Del. No	Deliverable name	WP	Lead Partner	Type*	Diss. Level**	Due Date
D1.1	State-of-play, success factors and requirements for space-enabled green entrepreneurship	1	DREVEN	R	PU	M6
D1.2	Innovation ecosystems archetypes for space-enabled green entrepreneurship	1	NVS-DE	R	PU	M6
D1.3	Blueprint of the FIERCE support for SMEs and innovation ecosystems	1	DREVEN	R	PU	M10
D2.1	FIERCE digital toolbox	2	FBC	OTHER	PU	M18
D2.2	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Development	2	EMNP	R	PU	M18
D3.1	Results of SME Advisory Services - 1 st period	3	DREVEN	R	SEN	M18
D3.2	Results of the Transformation Projects – 1 st period	3	FBA	R	SEN	M18
D3.3	Results of the Ecosystem Building Services - 1 st period	3	NVS-DE	R	SEN	M18
D4.1	Results of SME Advisory Services – 2 nd period	4	DREVEN	R	SEN	M26
D4.2	Results of the Transformation Projects – 2 nd period	4	FBA	R	SEN	M36
D4.3	Results of the Ecosystem Building Services – 2 nd period	4	NVS-DE	R	SEN	M36

D5.1	Performance-based improvement of the FIERCE support	5	EMNP	R	PU	M36
D5.2	Impact of the FIERCE programmes and services on SMEs green and digital transition	5	EMNP	R	PU	M36
D5.3	FIERCE Replication & Policy Recommendations	5	Q-PLAN	R	PU	M36
D6.1	Dissemination & Communication Plan - 1 st period, Initial version	6	Q-PLAN	R	PU	M3
D6.2	Exploitation & Sustainability Plan – 1 st period, Initial version	6	Q-PLAN	R	SEN	M6
D6.3	Strategic Network Development – 1 st period	6	TTG	R	PU	M18
D6.4	Dissemination & Communication Plan - 1 st period, Interim version	6	Q-PLAN	R	PU	M18
D6.5	Exploitation & Sustainability Plan – 1 st period, Interim version	6	Q-PLAN	R	SEN	M18
D7.1	Management & Quality Plan – 1 st period	7	Q-PLAN	R	PU	M3
D7.2	Data Management Plan – 1 st period, Initial version	7	Q-PLAN	DMP	PU	M3
D7.3	Data Management Plan – 1 st period, Interim version	7	Q-PLAN	DMP	PU	M18
D8.1	Dissemination & Communication Plan - 2 nd period, Final version	8	Q-PLAN	R	PU	M36
D8.2	Exploitation & Sustainability Plan - 2 nd period, Final version	8	Q-PLAN	R	SEN	M36
D8.3	Strategic Network Development Plan – 2 nd period	8	TTG	R	PU	M36
D9.1	Data Management Plan - 2 nd period, Final version	9	Q-PLAN	DMP	PU	M36

*R: Reports, DEC: Websites, patents filing, press & media actions, videos, etc., DMP: Data Management Plan

**PU: Public, SEN: Sensitive

Table 8: List of Milestones

MS/NO	Milestone title	Related WP(s)	Lead Beneficiary	Delivery Date	Means of verification
MS1	Project Kick-off meeting completed	7	Q-PLAN	M1	Meeting minutes
MS2	FIERCE brand and online presence established	6	Q-PLAN	M4	Promo kit, social media, website available
MS3	FIERCE Programmes blueprints defined	1	DREVEN	M10	Design Sprint with stakeholders completed
MS4	FIERCE digital toolbox launched	2	FBC	M13	Toolbox and content available online
MS5	Round 1 SME Advisory Services completed	3	EMNP	M19	1st performance review workshop organised, and advisory services evaluation results available
MS6	Round 2 SME Advisory Services completed	4	EMNP	M27	2nd performance review workshop organised, and advisory services evaluation results available
MS7	Round 1 SME Transformation Projects completed	4	FBA	M30	Final milestone review for Round 1 SMEs conducted
MS8	Round 2 SME Transformation Projects completed	4	FBA	M36	Final milestone review for Round 2 SMEs conducted
MS9	Final plans for project results exploitation in motion	8	Q-PLAN	M36	Defined exploitation plan (as documented in D8.2)

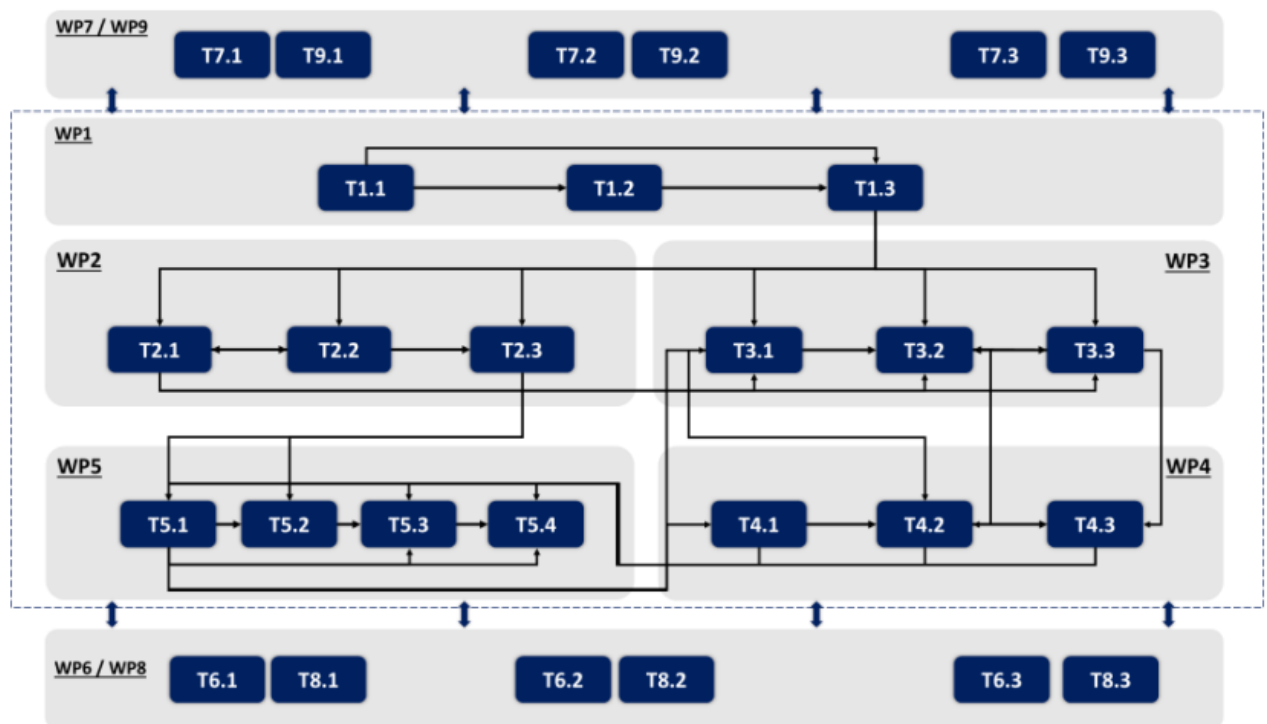


Figure 3: PERT Chart showing the interdependencies of the Work Plan components

Annex IV – Distribution of Deliverables Quality Reviews amongst partners

Del. No	WPL	Deliverable name	Responsible partner	Due Date (M)	Quality Reviewer No 1*	Quality Reviewer No 2*
D1.1	NVS-DE	State of play, success factors and requirements for space-enabled green entrepreneurship	DREVEN	6	NVS-DE	EIT-RM
D1.2	NVS-DE	Innovation ecosystems archetypes for space-enabled green entrepreneurship	NVS-DE	6	DREVEN	Q-PLAN
D1.3	NVS-DE	Blueprint of the FIERCE support for SMEs and innovation ecosystems	DREVEN	10	NVS-DE	EMNP
D2.1	EMNP	FIERCE Digital toolbox	FBC	18	EMNP	Q-PLAN
D2.2	EMNP	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Development	EMNP	18	DREVEN	TTG
D3.1	FBA	Results for SME Advisory Services - 1st period	DREVEN	18	FBA	NVS-DE
D3.2	FBA	Results of the Transformation Projects - 1st period	FBA	18	Q-PLAN	EIT-RM
D3.3	FBA	Results of the Ecosystem Building Services - 1st period	NVS-DE	18	FBA	EMNP
D4.1	FBA	Results of SME Advisory Services - 2nd period	DREVEN	26	FBA	NVS-DE
D4.2	FBA	Results of the Transformation Projects - 2nd period	FBA	36	Q-PLAN	EIT-RM
D4.3	FBA	Results of the Ecosystem Building Services - 2nd period	NVS-DE	36	FBA	EMNP
D5.1	EMNP	Performance-based improvement of the FIERCE support	EMNP	36	DREVEN	TTG

D5.2	EMNP	Impact of the FIERCE programmes and services on SMEs green and digital transition	EMNP	36	TTG	DREVEN
D5.3	EMNP	FIERCE Replication & Policy Recommendations	Q-PLAN	36	TTG	EIT-RM
D6.1	Q-PLAN	Dissemination & Communication Plan - 1st period, Initial version	Q-PLAN	3	All partners	
D6.2	Q-PLAN	Exploitation & Sustainability Plan - 1st period, Initial version	Q-PLAN	6	All partners	
D6.3	Q-PLAN	Strategic Network Development - 1st period	TTG	18	All partners	
D6.4	Q-PLAN	Dissemination & Communication Plan - 1st period, Interim version	Q-PLAN	18	All partners	
D6.5	Q-PLAN	Exploitation & Sustainability Plan - 1st period, Interim version	Q-PLAN	18	All partners	
D7.1	Q-PLAN	Management & Quality Plan 1st period	Q-PLAN	3	All partners	
D7.2	Q-PLAN	Data Management Plan - 1st period, Initial version	Q-PLAN	3	All partners	
D7.3	Q-PLAN	Data Management Plan - 1st period, Interim version	Q-PLAN	18	All partners	
D8.1	Q-PLAN	Dissemination and Communication Plan - 2nd period, Final version	Q-PLAN	36	All partners	
D8.2	Q-PLAN	Exploitation and Sustainability Plan – 2nd period, Final version	Q-PLAN	36	All partners	
D8.3	Q-PLAN	Strategic Network Development - 2nd period	TTG	36	All partners	
D9.1	Q-PLAN	Data Management Plan – 2nd period, Final version	Q-PLAN	36	All partners	

Annex V – Advisory Board Terms of Reference

Introduction

You have been invited to the **FIERCE Advisory Board (AB)**. The current document outlines the Terms of Reference that will help you understand what this involves before you decide to participate. Please take the time to carefully read this document and ask for any clarifications you may require.

FIERCE in a nutshell

FIERCE is a 3-year Coordination and Support Action, running from November 2024 to October 2027, funded by the European Commission under the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2021-2027.

With a mission to accelerate Europe's green and digital transition, FIERCE will mobilise 2.5 million EUR in financial support for 70 SMEs, start-ups and scale-ups to fuel the development, demonstration and commercialisation of green space-enabled solutions. On top of that, FIERCE will support 140 SMEs with specialised technical and business advisory to design business solutions and engage in process innovation using downstream space data in areas such as circularity, raw materials, environmental monitoring and corporate sustainability. In parallel, FIERCE will enable a series of local entrepreneurship initiatives driven by innovation intermediaries and business support networks aimed at creating even more opportunities for space-enabled green innovation through synergies with regional industrial, research and market actors.

The project will reach further to key EU-wide networks (EEN, SME Alliance, EARSC) through the Strategic Partnership Network to create synergies and joint activities to navigate SMEs and innovation intermediaries towards exploiting high-impact opportunities for funding, collaboration and knowledge exchange. Along these lines, the FIERCE digital toolbox will be deployed to enrich the business support programme with multiple learning resources and 70+ qualified service providers to create a vibrant dedicated community. Finally, towards the end of the project practical replication handbooks will be issued and widely disseminated to inspire wider application and recommendations for enabling better-informed policy making.

In this context, the AB of FIERCE will be composed of experts in diverse domains related to space-enabled innovation and SME support. They will be strategically involved in key stages of the project, contributing their expertise and representing the views and interests of their stakeholder communities. This ensures that the project's outcomes are better aligned with the needs and priorities of SMEs, innovation intermediaries, and the broader ecosystem supporting green and digital transformation.

Project Partners

The FIERCE project brings together a consortium of 7 partners across 7 different countries:

- Q-PLAN INTERNATIONAL is development consultancy with an over 2 decades experience in serving as coordinator as well as dissemination, communication and exploitation manager in >50 EU R&I projects. In parallel, Q-PLAN provides business and innovation management support to SMEs of different sizes and sectors across Europe.
- NOVASPACE is a boutique firm providing strategy and technology consultancy services, business coaching for space start-ups and SMEs, owning in parallel a Venture Capital & Lift-

off Accelerator. NOVASPACE is a contractor of pivotal EU space initiatives (Copernicus MOOC, CASSINI Hackathons, EUSPA Learning Academy).

- FUNDINGBOX is a business Accelerator and European leader of FSTP management, managing >85M EUR.
- EUROPA MEDIA NON-PROFIT is a leader in EU funding training and designing of capacity building programmes for >10,000 professionals facilitating EU funding, innovation, dissemination, and communication. EMNP has been supporting the European and global collaboration of different innovation players.
- TECH TOUR GLOBAL is Europe's largest investment community with >1000 investors and >1000 innovative entrepreneurs supported per year to raise investments and to grow, progressing their innovative solutions.
- EIT RAW MATERIALS is the largest consortium in the raw materials sector worldwide, having supported > 300 start-ups and helped to reach > 156M EUR of external investment. EIT RAW MATERIALS unites more than 300 partners from leading industries, universities, research, and technology organizations.
- DRAXIS RESEARCH VENTURES is a high-level research and development service provider, integrating space-enabled technologies and environmental ICT solutions for green transformation, ESG, climate change, air quality, energy and circular economy, providing specialised environmental consultancy services.

Role and benefits

Role

The AB will be set up and operated to share its knowledge and expertise with the consortium of the project in key implementation stages. The role of the AB in the context of the project may be summarised as follows:

- **Act as a consultation body for the FIERCE consortium**, by providing valuable feedback aimed at aligning project outcomes with the needs of users and stakeholders.
- **Suggest actors involved in generating/ supporting space-enabled green solutions** to participate in project activities.
- **Support the dissemination and replication of the FIERCE results**, by informing and inviting their networks across Europe to benefit from its opportunities and outcomes.

To fulfil this role, it is envisaged that the AB, during the course of the project, will operate mostly through digital means, participate in the project's Design Sprint, the online performance review workshops and the EU policy roundtable in Germany (travel and subsistence will be covered by the project). If deemed necessary, the support of the AB (either of the entire board or of specific members based on their particular expertise) will be requested for ad hoc needs.

Benefits

The project provides **several benefits** to its AB members, such as:

- **Networking opportunities and visibility** as an expert stakeholder in a large multi-stakeholder community focused on downstream space-enabled green solutions.
- **First-hand access to meaningful insights, knowledge and practical solutions** generated exclusively within the context of the project and its activities.

- Unique opportunity to **align the solutions offered by FIERCE with the needs of their stakeholders** to ensure that they make the most out of its value propositions.

Terms of membership and management

Terms of membership

The AB shall be composed of eminent experts coming from diverse backgrounds to offer a blend of expertise in the space enabled twin transition. In the beginning of the project, around 5 members will be selected with the possibility to further expand the AB in the future in order to draw from additional expertise and increase the outreach of FIERCE. New members could be appointed to the AB when necessary and as the project evolves.

Although members of the AB may be selected because of their affiliations with key organisations, they serve on the AB in their **individual capacity** to represent the interests and views of their stakeholder communities. **Members of the AB may not delegate another person to carry out the role expected from them** or be replaced by any other person without prior written agreement with the FIERCE consortium.

Members of the AB are appointed for the entire duration of the project. If due to job changes or attrition, an AB member loses links to important networks or constituencies, the consortium may decide to fill in this gap by appointing additional members.

The contribution of AB members is on a **pro bono** basis, apart from the cases in which physical travel is involved and a specific budget for their reimbursement is foreseen in the framework of the project. In such cases, the travel and accommodation expenses of AB members will be reimbursed by the project. Moreover, participation in the AB is **entirely voluntary**. There will be no adverse consequences if an AB member decides not to participate or to withdraw at any stage.

In fact, AB members may withdraw their participation at any time by informing the AB Manager (see Section 4 of the current document). They may also request for their data to be withdrawn without giving a reason and without prejudice. Anonymous data already collected will be used because this information cannot be traced back to a specific person, but no further data or input will be collected, nor any other procedure will be carried out in relation to the specific member.

Management

The AB is managed by the **AB Manager** (see Section 4 below) that facilitates the communications and interactions between the AB and the consortium, ensuring that AB members are not overloaded. The AB Manager will also ensure that for each task requiring input from the AB, the partners have beforehand prepared an action plan and all necessary briefings and material. Only then will the AB manager introduce a partner who may directly communicate with the AB in order to achieve the expected goals at each time.

Contact point

Any enquiry, complaint or concern about any aspect of your experience as a member of the Advisory Board can be addressed to the **FIERCE Advisory Board Manager** that oversees the set up and manages the Advisory Board. The contact details of the AB Manager are provided below:

FIERCE Advisory Board Manager: Q-PLAN INTERNATIONAL

Contact person: Mrs. Christina Balla

Phone: +30 2310 411191

Email: balla@qplan-intl.gr



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Partners



NOVASPACE



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