BattleVerse Open Call 1

Frequently Asked Questions document

Project acronym: BattleVerse

Project full name: A Human-Centred MSaaS Ecosystem for Enhanced Mission Planning and Execution via Battlefield Modelling, Adversarial AI, and Multi-domain Simulation Environments

Project grant agreement number: 101224034

Topic: EDF-2024-RA-SIMTRAIN-BRG-STEP

Programme: European Defence Fund (EDF)

This project has received funding from the European Union's European Defence Fund Research Actions programme under Grant Agreement No 101224034

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1. INTRODUCTION

The present document provides a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and corresponding answers pertaining to the BattleVerse 1st Open Call. Based on the information provided in the call guidelines, the document will provide clarifications on eligibility questions, application procedures and funding concerns.

In order to ensure a fair, equal and transparent selection and evaluation process, each question addressed through the BattleVerse helpdesk will be included and published in the FAQ document. This approach will ensure all interested applicants are provided with the same information, thereby preventing discrimination.

More information on the Call for Proposals can be found in the Guide for Applicants available on the **BattleVerse EMS platform**.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1. What is BattleVerse?

BATTLEVERSE conceives an innovative approach to successful mission planning and execution. By **leveraging AI-driven scenario generation and reinforcement learning**, BattleVerse bridges the gap between real and virtual battle environments, enabling the effective **simulation of complex multi-domain mission scenarios**.

In this context, BattleVerse provides an **interactive virtual battlespace**, designed to support decision making and dynamic strategies. Enriched by digital twins of battle assets, landscapes and meteorological conditions, BattleVerse's cutting-edge military metaverse offers **strategic insights into battlefield dynamics**, effectively improving response times and tactical mission approaches. This interactive ecosystem fosters collaborative and cross-functional mission planning, consistently reducing fragmentation and inefficiency across a wide range of military simulations.

2.2. What is the objective of the 1st BattleVerse Open Call?

The 1st BattleVerse Open Call is designed to identify simulation software solutions that enhance **mission planning and simulation frameworks**. The call supports the development of innovative add-ons that enhance mission effectiveness and realisms in simulated scenarios.

The BattleVerse Open Call aims to provide the opportunity for European organisations to participate and contribute to a crucial field within the European Union – the defense sector – supporting the growth of entities in military simulation.

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2.3. What are the different topics outlined in the 1st Open Call?

The BattleVerse 1st Open Call outlines **3 technical topics** to guide experiment activities:

- **Topic 1:** LLMs for strategic decision-making, symbolic reasoning, game theory, and mission planning under uncertainty;
- **Topic 2:** Multi-physics simulation capabilities for surface/submarine warfare, electronic warfare, and continuous combat across land, air, or naval platforms;
- **Topic 3:** Distributed AI for autonomous systems (UxVs) with for coordinated swarm operations.

Applications covering topics not included in the Open Call description will not be eligible for funding under the BattleVerse project.

2.4. What is the application deadline?

The deadline for the submission of proposals under the BattleVerse 1st Open Call is the **16th of November at 17:00 CET**.

As specified in the Guide for Applicants any proposals received after the deadline for submission will not be considered for funding.

2.5. Is the Space Domain part of this call?

The Space domain is out of scope of the BattleVerse First Open Call.

3. CONDITIONS FOR APPLICANTS

3.1. Who is Eligible to Apply?

The BattleVerse Open Call is addressed to SMEs and start-ups established in countries eligible under the European Defence Fund (EDF).

Eligible applicants may consist of:

- **CASE 1: Individual SME or Start-ups –** In this configuration the experiment is implemented by a single SME or start-up with sufficient in-house capabilities to independently carry out the proposed technical activities.
- **CASE 2: Small-scale Consortium –** In this configuration, experiments may involve up to 3 individual entities. In this case, an SME or start-up may apply together with one or two complementary entities. Where an organisation other than an SME is included, its participation must be duly justified by the specific expertise or capabilities required for the experiment and by the absence of a suitable SME able to provide such expertise or capabilities.

3.2. How is an SME defined?

According to the **Commission Recommendation 2003/361:**

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The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million[1].

3.3. What is the required composition of a consortium?

Applicants intending to apply as a consortium must ensure that:

- The consortium is composed of a maximum of 3 eligible entities;
- At least one participating entity is an SME or start-up established in an eligible country;
- Any participating RTO or academic institution is included as a complementary partner to the SME/start-up; and only if there are capabilities that cannot be adequately substituted by an available SME.
- None of the participating entities are controlled by a non-associated third country or by a non-associated third-country entity, in accordance with the applicable EDF eligibility rules.

Consortia that do not comply with these requirements will not be considered eligible for funding under the BattleVerse Open Call.

3.4. What are the geographical requirements?

All applicants must be legal entities established in one of the:

- **Member States** of the European Union;
- Norway and Ukraine – in accordance with the Commission Implementing Decision of 29 January 2025 (C(2025) 568 final.

Entities based outside these countries will not be eligible to apply or participate.

3.5. Can the same consortium apply for more than only technical topic?

Yes, consortiums may apply for more than one technical topic; however, only one experiment will ultimately be selected per consortium.

Please note that, the same organisation cannot participate in 2 or more selected proposals. If selected in more than one winning proposal, the organizations must choose which project to proceed with.

[1] European Commission. (2003). Commission Recommendation of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (2003/361/EC). Official Journal of the European Union, L 124, 36–41. Available: EUR-Lex - 32003H0361 - EN - EUR-Lex

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3.6. Is sole proprietorship considered an eligible "legal entity"?

Self-employed persons and sole traders may apply where their business does not have a legal personality separate from that of the natural person, provided that they meet all other eligibility requirements set out in this Open Call.

Applicants are responsible for assessing whether their organisation meets the applicable SME and eligibility requirements set out in the Guide for Applicants.

3.7. What IPR conditions apply to the BattleVerse Open Call?

Applicants should be aware of the following specific intellectual property (IP) provisions before submitting their proposals:

- Results generated during the experiment will be owned by the sub-grantee that generates them.
- Pre-existing background IP remains the property of the party that brings it into the project.
- The BattleVerse consortium will receive the access rights necessary to integrate and demonstrate the experiment within the project. These access rights are intended to enable the required integration and demonstration activities and do not imply a transfer of ownership.

3.8. What access rights does the BattleVerse consortium receive over the software and results developed by sub-grantees?

As outlined in FAQ §3.7, Background IP remains with its original owner, while results generated during the experiment belong to the respective sub-grantee. The consortium receives the access rights necessary to integrate and demonstrate the experiment within the project. The specific scope, duration and conditions of these rights, including any use after the project, are governed by the applicable Sub-Grant Agreement and EDF provisions.

3.9. How is SME status assessed when a natural person owns companies operating in different sectors?

SME status is assessed in accordance with Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC, including the provisions concerning linked and partner enterprises. Applicants should complete their self-assessment accordingly. Final eligibility is subject to verification.

3.10. How is confidential information in submitted proposals protected?

Proposals are treated confidentially. Evaluators are subject to confidentiality and conflict of interest obligations and must not disclose information received during the evaluation process.

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4. TECHNICAL SCOPE

4.1. What interoperability standard does the BattleVerse platform use — HLA, DIS, FMI/FMU, a proprietary API, or a combination and is a technical interface specification available to applicants prior to submission

BattleVerse uses a combination of standards. Simulation components are federated with the High-Level Architecture (HLA, IEEE 1516), using Pitch pRTI as the runtime infrastructure and an object model based on the RPR-FOM, extended for BattleVerse. AI and decision-support components connect through a BattleVerse service API. DIS and FMI/FMU are not native interfaces, but models using them can be integrated through a gateway or by wrapping them as HLA federates. A detailed interface specification is not available before submission; an integration guide with the object model and the API specification will be provided to selected sub-grantees at onboarding. Proposals should describe their integration approach at this level (HLA federate or API client).

4.2. To what extent is the BattleVerse simulation platform operational at this stage, and what integration milestones would a selected experiment realistically be working against during the first two months?

BattleVerse is a research project in its first year. The reference architecture and the simulation testbed are under development, and selected experiments will integrate with a development environment that matures during the sub-grant period rather than with a finished product. In the first two months, a selected experiment is expected to receive the integration guide and access to the development environment, align its experiment with a BattleVerse use case, deliver an integration plan and complete a first connectivity test.

4.3. Will selected experiments be put in contact with military advisers, planners or end users through the consortium?

Selected experiments will benefit from the coaching and guidance activities foreseen under the Open Call, according to the needs of the experiment and the expertise available within the BattleVerse consortium.

4.4. May an experiment use a commercial AI model hosted outside an eligible country, given Article 9(2) of the EDF Regulation and the declaration on infrastructure location?

Applicants must comply with the applicable EDF eligibility, security and infrastructure requirements, as set out in the Open Call documentation and the relevant declarations. The proposed technical approach should demonstrate compliance with these requirements.

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4.5. Does BattleVerse already include a reusable framework?

BattleVerse does not currently provide a reusable framework; beneficiaries are solely responsible for developing, implementing, and validating their own solutions.

4.6. Which BattleVerse services can selected experiments use, and from which month?

During the proposal stage detailed technical interface control documents, the full FOM schema extensions, and API endpoints are not provided. Therefore, proposals need to identify their high-level integration pathway. After onboarding (M1) API specifications is provided, and SDK access is granted.

Outputs are delivered based on the provided specifications, with dedicated integration support provided at a later stage if agreed with the consortium.

4.7. Do we, as applicants, need to provide our own environment for testing and validating the solution?

Applicants should provide their own environment for testing and validating the solution. The objective is to validate the solution at **TRL 5**, which requires testing in an application-relevant environment.

4.8. Can Topic 3 experiments be developed and validated entirely in a simulation environment, without testing on physical UAV/UUV platforms?

Topic 3 experiments may be developed and validated entirely in a realistic simulation environment. Physical UAV/UUV testing is not mandatory. Please note that BattleVerse will not provide physical UAV platforms for testing. Applicants remain responsible for demonstrating that their proposed validation approach meets the technical objectives and expected outcomes of Topic 3.

4.9. Must Deliverable 2 include source code, or is an API service enough (export licensing)?

Source code is not required for Deliverable 2, as long as the report clearly addresses the KPIs and objectives. However, a documented API service should be included for integration purposes.

4.10. What TRL should applicants start from, and can they target a TRL higher than TRL 5?

TRL 5 represents the minimum required target, but applicants are free to propose experiments aiming for a higher TRL. They may start from an existing solution at a lower TRL (e.g. TRL 2–4) or develop a new solution from scratch. In all cases, applicants must demonstrate alignment with the topic objectives and expected outcomes, as well as the feasibility of reaching at least TRL 5 (or higher) within the six-month implementation period.

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4.11. Which HLA versions, FOM modules, Service API technologies and integration arrangements will be supported?

Detailed technical specifications and integration arrangements are still being developed. Further technical guidance will be provided to selected beneficiaries during implementation.

4.12. Will BattleVerse provide reference scenarios, simulated assets or access to end users for validation?

The availability of specific scenarios, simulation assets and end-user involvement cannot be confirmed in advance. Applicants should describe their proposed validation approach in accordance with the relevant topic requirements.

5. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

5.1. What is the total budget for the BattleVerse 1st Open Call?

The total budget allocated to the 1st BattleVerse Open Call is **1,200,000€**. This budget will be distributed among the selected beneficiaries in accordance to the conditions outline in the BattleVerse Guide for Applicants.

5.2. What is the maximum funding available per experiment?

The maximum funding available is up to **€60,000 per beneficiary**, with a total maximum budget of **€180,000 per experiment**, depending on the number of participating beneficiaries.

5.3. How many third-party beneficiaries will be funded?

The 1st BattleVerse Open Call aims to fund **up to 20 third-party beneficiaries**. The number of participants funded will be subject to the final distribution of the available budget.

5.4. What is the Lump Sum funding model?

The term **Lump Sum** refers to a payment system established by the European Commission designed to reduce the need for detailed and complex financial reporting.

As a simplified payment method, the lump sum model provides beneficiaries a fixed payment based on pre-approved work plan and budget. As such, the disbursement of funds is link to the full completion of work packages and agreed milestones.

In the context of the BattleVerse Open Calls, payments are aligned with the delivery and implementation of specific milestones and deliverables, in alignment with the requirements and conditions outlined in the BattleVerse Guide for Applicants.

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5.5. What costs are eligible?

Eligible costs include direct personnel costs required for the implementation of the experiment. Note that subcontracting costs (i.e. outsourcing project activities) are not eligible. When drafting the budget, the proposer needs to take into consideration the mandatory activities listed in sub-section 6.1.1, especially the in-person sessions.

5.6. Can owner-directors or individuals working under direct service contracts be included under personnel costs?

Direct personnel costs required for implementing the experiment are eligible. The eligibility of specific remuneration and contractual arrangements cannot be confirmed in advance.

5.7. What happens if an experiment does not achieve all its KPIs or a deliverable is not approved?

The final payment is conditional on successful completion of the experiment and approval of the required deliverables. Specific acceptance conditions and any implications for payment are subject to the applicable Sub-Grant Agreement.

6. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCESS

6.1. How should applications be submitted?

Applications must be submitted in a single stage through the **BattleVerse EMS platform**. To begin the submission process, applicants must:

- Visit the BattleVerse EMS website and click on "Register".
- Select "New Proposal," and provide the required project information (title, acronym, keywords).
- Upload the required documentation under the "Annexes" section (proposal document and declaration of honour and ownership control)
- Select and press the "Submit" button to complete the submission process.

After the call closure, applicants will receive an acknowledgment of receipt via email to confirm the successful submission of their proposals.

6.2. What documentation is required for the submission?

Under the 1st BattleVerse Open Call, applicants are required to submit:

- **A Proposal Document:** the proposal must not exceed 15 pages in length (with text no smaller than 11-point Century Gothic font).
- **A Mandatory Annex:** applicants must complement the submission of their proposal with a Declaration of Honour and Ownership Control.

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The documentation must comply with the formatting and requirements outlined in the BattleVerse Guide for Applicants.

6.3. What is expected from selected experiments?

Selected experiments are expected to develop and validate innovative solutions addressing the selected technical topic, ensuring their relevance and applicability, and including experimental demonstrators, validation activities and final reporting efforts. Specifically, experiments are expected to:

- Attend and engage with planned events and meetings;
- Submit the mandatory deliverables defined by the call;
- Participate in dissemination activities.

6.4. Will technical support be provided?

Yes. Selected experiments will receive technical guidance and follow-up support from the BattleVerse consortium. Technical support will be provided in accordance with the outlined support mechanisms under each Open Call topic.

6.5. Are letters of support or intent from end users allowed or taken into account?

Applicants should submit the documentation required as defined in the Guide for Applicants. Additional letters of support are not a mandatory requirement of the application; however, applicants are welcome to submit them as part of the additional documentation.

6.6. Is VAT registration mandatory for a legally established company to participate in BattleVerse Open Call 1?

The Declaration of Honour and Ownership Control requires a legal registration number and does not explicitly request a VAT number. Applicants may provide their national company registration number in the relevant fields. All applicable eligibility requirements remain subject to verification.

7. Legal and security

7.1. Are there data protection obligations?

Yes. Beneficiaries must fully comply with the GDPR - Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation – GDPR) and any other applicable national data protection legislation.

7.2. How does Article 9(4) of the EDF Regulation apply to this call?

In accordance with Article 9 (4) of the EDF Regulation, even if the company is controlled by a shareholder from a non-associated country, it may still be eligible to

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participate under this Call, provided that they submit a guarantee by their respective Member State, reassuring the Consortium that the involvement of said entity will not contravene the security and defence interests of the Union and its Member States.

In this regard, those guarantees must address, among other things, independence in carrying out the action, protection of sensitive/classified information, ownership of results/IP and restrictions on third-country access.

7.3. Does ownership/control by a non-EU natural person affect eligibility under the BattleVerse Open Call?

Applicants must comply with the applicable EDF ownership and control requirements, as specified in the Guide for Applicants and the Ownership Control Declaration.

For the purposes of the ownership and control assessment, an entity may be considered non-EU controlled where a shareholder, partner, member or owner that is a non-EU country, non-EU entity or non-EU national has the possibility to exercise decisive influence over the entity, directly or indirectly, including in relation to strategic business decisions.

Applicants must provide the relevant information on their ownership and control structure in the Ownership Control Declaration. Compliance will be assessed during the eligibility check.

7.4. Can a startup that is undergoing incorporation apply if its legal registration is completed before the application deadline?

Any company can apply under this call provided that it can prove it has legal personality (according to Article 2(1) of the EDF Regulation). Therefore, if the legal incorporation happens before the application deadline, the startup would be eligible under the call, subject to meeting all the other eligibility requirements identified in the Guide for Applicants.

In general terms, in order to apply under this call, applicants must be incorporated and have a VAT number before the deadline of the call.

7.5. Can non-classified experiment data be processed through cloud computing or AI services hosted outside the eligible countries?

Non-classified experiment data generated or processed under the project may not be routed, processed, or stored through cloud computing or AI services hosted outside the eligible countries.

7.6. Can applicants request restrictions on the public visibility of their participation in BattleVerse due to security concerns?

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Applicants with security concerns regarding the public disclosure of their participation or experiment-related information should clearly describe these concerns and any necessary restrictions in Section 3.5 – Ethics, Security and Data Protection of the Proposal Template.

7.7. Does a minority shareholder from a non-EU country automatically make an applicant ineligible?

A non-EU minority shareholding does not automatically determine whether an applicant is subject to third-country control. The assessment considers the overall ownership and control structure, including the ability to exercise decisive influence. Applicants must accurately disclose the relevant information in their ownership and control declarations. Compliance is verified during the formal eligibility assessment.

7.8. Can applicants controlled by non-associated third-country nationals participate by providing national security guarantees?

Applicants must comply with the applicable EDF ownership and control requirements. The acceptance of security guarantees and their submission arrangements are subject to the relevant regulatory and Open Call conditions. Individual eligibility cannot be confirmed in advance.

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