



FUNDING SCHEME

«RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation

PROGRAMME

«HORIZON EUROPE – 2nd OPPORTUNITY EIC»

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

OPPTY_EIC/0323



**Funded by the
European Union**
NextGenerationEU



Republic of Cyprus



RESEARCH
& INNOVATION
FOUNDATION



INTRODUCTION

The Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF) announces the Call for Proposals for the «**Horizon Europe – 2nd Opportunity EIC**» Programme within the framework of the «**RESTART 2016-2020**» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period **05/2022 – 03/2023** and invites potential beneficiaries to submit relevant Project Proposals (Proposals).

The present Call will be financed by the Recovery and Resilience Facility of the NextGenerationEU instrument, in the frame of the action C3.212 «Innovation Funding Programmes and Funding Schemes for the Enhancement of Growth and Competitiveness of startups, innovative companies and SMEs» of the Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan. The Action is implemented under Policy Axis 3: «Strengthening the Resilience and Competitiveness of the Economy», and specifically the Component 3.2 «Enhanced Research and Innovation».

GENERAL CALL INFORMATION

Pillar	II. SUSTAINABLE RTDI SYSTEM
Programme	Horizon Europe – 2nd Opportunity EIC
Call Identifier	OPPTY_EIC/0323
Funding Source	EU Recovery and Resilience Facility
Call Budget	1.500.000 Euro
Maximun Funding Per Project	500.000 Euro
Publication Date	17 March 2023
Deadline	Open Call for Proposals until 15/12/2023, 13:00 or until budget exhaustion.

The English version of the Call, even though an official translation endorsed by the Research and Innovation Foundation, is provided for information purposes only. Only the Greek version of the Call is legally binding and shall prevail in case of any divergence in interpretation.

OBJECTIVES

«Horizon Europe – 2nd Opportunity EIC» Programme aims to provide a second opportunity to enterprises that have submitted proposals in the frame of the EIC Accelerator Programme of the «Horizon Europe» Programme of the EU, which either have been awarded with a Seal of Excellence or they were rejected in the final evaluation stage (face-to-face interviews) of the Programme, in order to improve their Proposals and reapply for EU funding through the Programme.



More specifically, the Programme aims to support beneficiaries to address weaknesses/shortcomings of the original proposals submitted to the EIC Accelerator and to improve the technological and commercial readiness of the innovative idea.

DESCRIPTION

Through the «Horizon Europe – 2nd Opportunity EIC» Programme enterprises that have awarded with a Seal of Excellence in the frame of the «EIC Accelerator» or they were rejected in the final evaluation stage (face-to-face interviews) of the Programme are supported, in order to improve weaknesses or possible shortcomings of their original proposals and to resubmit them in the «EIC Accelerator» Programme with higher chances of success.

It is noted that, organisations that have been rejected in the final stage of the «EIC Accelerator», following a decision by the EIC Jury, may resubmit their proposals in the second (Full-Proposal) or the third (Face-to-Face Interviews) evaluation stage of the Programme.

The «Horizon Europe – 2nd Opportunity EIC» in the frame of the RIF funded Projects, covers the implementation of experimental development research activities which may include prototype development, demonstration, pilots, testing and validation of new or improved innovative products / services, which aim to improve the technological readiness level of the innovation. The Programme also covers innovation activities, which may include the purchase of consulting services and innovation support services, which aim to further develop the innovative business idea towards a more commercial-ready product or service. Through the Programme, the project team's involvement in activities relevant to implementation of feasibility study of the project, as well as Marketing and Communication activities, are also supported.

BENEFICIARIES

Enterprises

SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

The Host Organisation (HO) of a project must be a Small, Medium or Large Sized Enterprise (B1, B2, B3).

The participation of Partner Organisations and Foreign Research Organisations is not permitted.

The date of the EU Notification Letter to the participants, on the evaluation result for their proposal, should be later than the announcement date of the present Call for Proposals of the Programme «Horizon Europe – 2nd Opportunity EIC». It is noted that condition will be a preliminary check criterion.



After the Project completion, the resubmission of the proposal to the «EIC Accelerator», at the appropriate evaluation stage indicated by the EIC Jury, is obligatory, at the latest fifteen (15) months from the date of the communication of the evaluation results by the EU. Otherwise, the HO will be requested to return funding awarded back to the RIF. The RIF will request the submission of relevant proofs to justify the resubmission of the proposal.

All beneficiaries that have not previously participated in the RESTART 2026-2020 Programmes, should make use of the simplified cost Method «Standard Scales of Unit Costs» for the calculation of personnel costs.

Each Enterprise can receive funding from the RIF for only one Project in the frame of the Programme during the 2022-2027 period.

Funding of same activities that have already been supported by the RIF in the frame of previous funded projects, is not allowed.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The Projects must include the following activities:

Experimental Development:

Prototyping, demonstration, pilot operation, testing and validation of new or improved innovative products/services.

Feasibility Study:

Scientific / technical Feasibility Study for the innovative business idea, including the investigation of its commercial potential, and validation of the business model.

Innovation Activities:

The following Innovation Activities are allowed by the beneficiary:

- Innovation advisory services, assistance and training in the use of standards and regulations embedding them.
- Innovation support services for:
 - (a) Measurements, tests, certification and analyses,
 - (b) Access to research infrastructures, libraries and databases,



- (c) Market Research (which may indicatively cover market size estimation and segmentation, estimation of purchase intention from potential customers, pricing issues, involvement of key stakeholders and opinion leaders, competition analysis), and
- (d) Quality Labelling.

Other Communication, Investment Attraction and Market Penetration Activities:

- Personnel Costs for activities that may include Branding/Marketing/Investment Readiness, meetings/users' involvement, product and packaging design, internationalisation e.t.c.
- Design and preparation of Communication Material (publications, audio-visual material, graphic design services) to be used for attracting investors/customers.
- Support services and research for internationalisation/penetration in new markets.
- Traveling abroad for meetings with potential investors/customers.

DURATION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

6-12 Months, according to the EIC Jury decision and the appropriate time limits to resubmit.

BUDGET

€ 1.500.000

MAXIMUM FUNDING PER PROJECT

Up to € 500.000

The Aid Intensity of the Host Organisation for Experimental Development Activities and Feasibility Study is calculated according to the provisions of Chapter 3.2 of the present Work Programme. Aid Intensity for Innovation Activities is 50%, and for activities to be funded as De-Minimis Aid is 100%. Furthermore, Aid Intensity for Large Enterprises, as Host Organisations, for Innovation Activities which will be funded as De Minimis Aid will be 50%

ELIGIBLE COSTS

The following costs are eligible:

Experimental Development:

- Personnel Cost



- Costs for Instruments and Equipment (depreciation)
- Costs for External Services
- Costs for Travelling Abroad
- Consumables
- Other specific costs
- Overheads

Feasibility Study:

- Personnel Cost
- Overheads

Innovation Activities:

- Costs for External Services

For Large Enterprises, the funding for these costs will be provided on the basis of the De-Minimis Aid Regulation.

Other Activities (De-Minimis):

- Personnel Cost
- Costs for External Services
- Costs for Travelling Abroad

For «Other Activities» funding will be in the form of De-Minimis Aid (Commission Regulation, No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013).

It is noted that, for Eligible Costs Categories, unless specified otherwise, the EU framework for State Aid applies, and specifically the Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty.

RESTART 2016-2020 WORK PROGRAMME

All general rules and procedures for the participation of organisations and individuals, the eligible activities and costs, as well as the specific information regarding the «Innovation Vouchers» Programme, as well as the other RESTART 2016-2020 Programmes, are included in



the RIF's Work Programme for the «RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period 05/2022 – 03/2023, which is the main reference document and an important information source for interested parties and can be found on the Research and Innovation Foundation's IRIS (Innovation Research Information System) Portal (<https://iris.research.org.cy/#/documentlibrary>).

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

In the frame of the present Call, the following specific conditions apply:

- The Host Organisation is required to register the updated data regarding its ultimate beneficial owners in the Competent National Registry / Archive, as per «The prevention and suppression of money laundering and terrorist financing Law of 2007 (188(I)/2007)». The RIF maintains the right, via the appropriate authorities, to proceed with the appropriate checks in the competent Registries to verify the registration of the data and it is possible to request for the submission of official proofs. For this purpose, the Host Organisation should submit an official proof for the data registration during the contract preparation phase. Furthermore, in case where requested funding exceeds 150.000 Euro, during the contract preparation phase, the Host Organisation will be required to also submit the data (Name and Surname, ID / Passport Number and Date of Birth) of its ultimate beneficial owners through the relevant Declaration.
- Funded Projects should comply with the «Do No Significant Harm» principle, according to which they must not include or support activities that could cause significant harm to any of the six environmental objectives, as per Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 2020/852, on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment.
- In order to support the exploitation of research results, the interaction between the Host Organisation and the Central Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO) for the preparation of a customised Action Plan for the Provision of Services by the KTO, is **obligatory** in the frame of the present Call. It is noted that, the adoption of the Action Plan and the acquisition of the Services are not mandatory.
- For budget revisions in funded Projects, the following apply:
 - Budget revisions for which the Project Coordinator may proceed without prior approval from RIF, as defined in Chapter 5.2. Section III of the Work Programme, apply only for transfers within the same type of Activity Eligible for Aid.
 - In the cases where there is a need for budget revisions between different types of Activities Eligible for Aid, the Project Coordinator should submit a relevant request for approval by the RIF.
- For budget revisions between different types of Activities Eligible for Aid, the following apply:
 - The Final Aid Intensity, which is the percentage of the Requested Funding over the Project Budget, should not exceed the Final Aid Intensity defined in the Project



Contract, and the Final RIF Funding (for the funded Project) should not exceed the Project Requested Funding as defined in the Contract.

- Aid intensities for each of the type of Activity Eligible for Aid, cannot exceed the maximum allowed Aid Intensity for each activity, as defined in the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme.
- Project Representatives should attend a workshop, to be organised by the RIF, to cover issues related with the proper project management and administration, and to be certified accordingly.
- Periods for Progress Report submission and the amounts of funding instalments, will be defined in the Project Contract. All Progress Reports and the relevant Payment Requests, should be submitted up to fifteen (15) calendar days following the end of the time period they pertain to.

SUBMISSION

Proposals are submitted through the Research and Innovation Foundation’s **IRIS Portal** (<https://iris.research.org.cy>).

The Project Coordinator and all local participating organisations in the Project Consortium, should register in advance on the IRIS Portal.

Potential applicants are advised to use the «**Guide for Applicants**», which contains guidelines and clarifications regarding the Submission procedure and the «**IRIS Portal User Manual**» which can be found on the IRIS Portal (<https://iris.research.org.cy/#/documentlibrary>).

The Research and Innovation Foundation encourages in all its Calls for Proposals:

- *the participation of women as Project Coordinators, and*
- *the gender-balanced formation of projects.*

The Project Proposal consists of the following parts:

1. Part A – General Information & Budget (electronic form (fields) to be completed online through the IRIS Portal).
2. Part B – Technical Annex (document to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format).
3. Annex I – Curricula Vitae (document to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format – Optional). It is recommended that, CVs are created according to the EUROPASS format and do not exceed 5 pages per person.
4. Annex II – Call Specific Information (documents to be uploaded as an Annexes on the IRIS Portal in PDF format - Mandatory):

(a) Copy of the EU Notification Letter to the participants, on the evaluation result of the third evaluation stage (face-to-face interviews) and the Evaluation Summary



*Reports for the second and third evaluation (Remote Evaluation of Full Proposal and Face-to-face interviews), and
(b) Copy of the Full Proposal submitted to the EU.*

PROJECT SELECTION

Evaluation Procedure

The evaluation procedure of the Programme consists of the Preliminary Check, as it is described in the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme, and then the distant Evaluation by an Evaluation Committee consisted by three (3) Independent Experts and a rapporteur with technical and business background (EIC Experts), with a Consensus Report which will be communicated to the Project Coordinators.

The final decision regarding the selection of a proposal for funding by the RIF, is based on the Committee's evaluation (Go, No-Go).

The Committee's decision, which will be communicated to the Project Coordinator, is final and cannot be appealed against.

Evaluation Criteria

- The proposed plan responds to a large extent to the comments provided by the EIC Jury by addressing the weaknesses of the original proposal identified by the Jury.
- The activities of the proposed project are expected to significantly improve the technological and commercial readiness of the innovative idea included in the original proposal submitted to the EIC Accelerator, which will enable the Proposal resubmitted to the Programme to claim EU funding with higher chances of success.
- The content of the project proposal and the working packages, the time plan, the proposed person-months, and the proposed budget, are complete, credible and appropriate for the implementation of the project objectives.
- The project team (including any third parties/subcontractors) has the appropriate skills for the implementation of the proposal and the proposed objectives, and demonstrates its commitment for the project implementation within the proposed time plan.

Selection

Proposals prioritised by order of submission to the RIF, on condition that they have been deemed eligible for funding following the evaluation procedure, will be selected for funding until budget exhaustion.



INFORMATION – CONTACT DETAILS

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The Research and Innovation Foundation may at its discretion, proceed to the extension or revocation of the present Call by applying the same publication procedure.