



## FUNDING SCHEME

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

## PROGRAMME

VISION ERC

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

VISION ERC/0525



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Republic of Cyprus



RESEARCH  
& INNOVATION  
FOUNDATION

## INTRODUCTION

The Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF) announces the Call for Proposals of the " VISION ERC" Programme within the framework of the **«RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period May 2022 – June 2025** and invites potential beneficiaries to submit relevant Project Proposals (Proposals).

The present Call will be co-financed by the Republic of Cyprus and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), in the frame of the Operational Programme «ΘΑΛΕΙΑ» 2021-2027 under Priority 1: «Competitive, Smart and Digital Economy» and the Specific Objective (1i): «Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies».

## GENERAL CALL INFORMATION

<b>Pillar</b>	<b>PILLAR III "Transformation of RTDI System"</b>
<b>Programme</b>	<b>VISION ERC</b>
<b>Call Identifier</b>	<b>VISION ERC/0525</b>
<b>Source of Funding</b>	<b>Operational Programme «ΘΑΛΕΙΑ» 2021-2027 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)</b>
<b>Call Budget</b>	<b>1.000.000 Euro</b>
<b>Maximun Funding Per Project</b>	<b>100.000 Euro</b>
<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>9 May 2025</b>
<b>Submission Deadline</b>	<b>Open Call until 17 December 2025 13:00 or the exhaustion of the available budget</b>

***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

The VISION ERC Programme aims to encourage more top young and experienced researchers to participate in the European Research Council's (ERC) Call for Proposals under Horizon Europe, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2021-2027.

The objectives of the Programme falls within the strategic objectives of the "Research and Innovation Strategy 2024-2026" and the related Action Plan, since one of the main priorities of the "Research and Innovation Strategy 2024-2026" is the dissemination of scientific excellence in the research and innovation ecosystem through the cultivation of an enabling environment that promotes excellence in research and innovation, placing Cyprus at the forefront of technological developments in key areas.

## DESCRIPTION

Funded projects should relate to research activities that will form the basis of the coordinator's proposal to the European Research Council (ERC). Proposals can be submitted via one of the following two PATHS:

**PATH 1:** Project coordinators must be researchers who have received funding under the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships Programme, interested in submitting an ERC proposal and fulfil the criteria for participation in the ERC Programme. The proposal should be submitted to RIF at least 6 months before the completion of the EU MSCA project.

**PATH 2:** Project coordinators must be researchers interested in submitting an ERC proposal and fulfil the criteria for participation in the ERC Programme.

Proposals should include a specific reference to the ERC Call to which the Coordinator intends to submit a proposal. It is noted that the submission of the ERC proposal should take place during the project.

Horizon Europe ERC calls to which a proposal can be submitted are:

- Starting Grant
- Consolidator Grant
- Advanced Grant
- Synergy Grant

## BENEFICIARIES

Research Organisations (A.1, A.2), Enterprises (B.1, B.2, B.3), Other Organisations (C1., C.2)

## SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

The Host Organisation (HO) must be a Research Organisation (A.1, A.2) or Enterprise (B.1., B.2) or Other Organisations (C1., C.2).

The participation of Partner Organisations is not allowed.

Participation of Large Enterprises (including organisations in category C1 that are categorised as large enterprises for funding purposes) is not permitted.

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The Projects must include the following type of activities: Basic Research and/or Industrial Research and/or Experimental Development.

## DURATION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

9-24 Months

## BUDGET

€ 1.000.000

## MAXIMUM FUNDING PER PROJECT

€ 100.000

## ELIGIBLE COSTS

Personnel costs, Cost for Foreign Research Organisations, Costs for External Services, Costs for Travelling Abroad, Consumables, Other Specific Costs, Overheads.

It is noted that in cases of expenses incurred in the context of a contract between a Contracting Authority and Foreign Research Organisations, the "Law Providing for the Regulation of Public Procurement Procedures and Related Matters of 2016 – 73(I)/2016" applies.

All beneficiaries that have not previously participated in the RESTART 2016-2020 Programmes, should make use of the simplified cost Method «Standard Scales of Unit Costs» for the calculation of personnel costs.

## 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 – 06/2025,** 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 Project Coordinator is required to submit a proposal to the ERC with a Host Organisation legally established and operating in areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus within the duration of the project and not earlier than six (6) months after the start of the project. The proposal must be submitted to the ERC Call of Horizon Europe selected when submitting the proposal to the "VISION ERC".
- ⬡ Individuals who will secure funding under the VISION ERC/0525 call will automatically become eligible for funding under the ERC FELLOWSHIP/0524 call. The proposal for the ERC Visiting Research Fellowship must be submitted at least 9 months before the end of the VISION ERC/0525 project.
- ⬡ Proof of submission of the proposal to the ERC Call of Horizon Europe is a deliverable of the project and a condition for the final payment of project funding.
- ⬡ With the aim of strengthening the competitiveness of the proposals to be submitted to the ERC Calls of Horizon Europe, pre-screening of the proposal to be submitted to the ERC by the National Contact Points of Cyprus for the ERC Programme of Horizon Europe is **obligatory** in the frame of the present Call and will be a deliverable of the project.

- ⬡ 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 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.
- ⬡ 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.

## 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 organizations of the Cypriot Consortium should register in advance on the IRIS Portal.

Potential applicants are advised to read the «**Guide for Applicants**», which contains guidelines and clarifications regarding the Submission procedure as well as 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*
- ⬡ *a gender-balanced participation in 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). **Note:** *The template provided for this Call must be submitted **without any alterations**. The Part B template for this Call can be found on the IRIS Portal, under the relevant Call for Proposals (Call Documents).* – **Obligatory Submission**
3. Annexes (documents to be uploaded as Annexes on the IRIS Portal in PDF format).
  - **Annex I: CV of the Coordinator – Obligatory Submission**  
*It is recommended that, CVs are created according to the EUROPASS format and do not exceed 5 pages per person.*

## PROJECT SELECTION

### Evaluation Procedure

**PATH 1:** For the evaluation of Proposals to be submitted under the « VISION ERC » Programme, a Proposal Preliminary Check and a remote scientific evaluation procedure by one (1) independent evaluator will be followed, as described in RIF's Work Programme for the «RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period 05/2022 – 06/2025. **Proposals receiving a score of at least 12,00/15,00 are considered eligible for funding.**

**PATH 2:** For the evaluation of Proposals to be submitted under the « VISION ERC » Programme, a Proposal Preliminary Check and a remote scientific evaluation procedure by two (2) independent evaluators will be followed, as described in RIF's Work Programme for the «RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period 05/2022 – 06/2025. **Proposals receiving a score of at least 13,00/15,00 are considered eligible for funding.**

Prior to the scientific evaluation of each Proposal according to the evaluation criteria, evaluators are requested to assess the Proposal's compatibility with:

- the Objectives of the Programme and the Call for Proposals, and
- the «Do No Significant Harm» principle, and

the compatibility of the proposed type(s) of research with those allowed by the Call for Proposals.

The evaluator will not proceed with the assessment of the evaluation criteria should the Proposal fail the compatibility assessment.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

### **1. Excellence – Weight 60%**

- Compatibility with the objectives and priorities of the ERC call to which the proposal will be submitted.
- The innovative nature, ambition and feasibility of the research project which may lead to a significant advancement of knowledge in the field.
- Degree of Project Innovation and Originality in relation to the current state of the art at international level.
- Quality of the project objectives and their contribution to the development of the scientific area(s) of the project.
- Soundness, credibility and feasibility of the proposed idea.
- The competence, creativity, and commitment of the Coordinator, with emphasis on the extent to which the Coordinator has the scientific expertise and capacity required for the successful implementation of the project. The competence and research track record (e.g. publications, invitations to presentations, awards, honours and project funding received) of the Project Coordinator.

## 2. Added Value and Benefit – Weight 20%

- ⬡ Scientific and/or technological and/or social and/or economic impact at national level and measures to maximize it.
- ⬡ Effectiveness of the proposed measures for the exploitation of results (including management of Intellectual Property Rights) and maximizing for achieving maximum Project visibility according to Open Science Principles.
- ⬡ Creation of potential for securing funding from the European Research Council.

## 3. Implementation – Weight 20%

- ⬡ Completeness and appropriateness of the Work Packages' content, the allocation of the various activities, the timetable and the budget.
- ⬡ Effectiveness of the proposed methodology for the implementation of the deliverables.
- ⬡ Completeness, quality and capacity of the Host Organisation for the implementation of the Project and the achievement of the proposed objectives.
- ⬡ Suitability and adequacy of the proposed management activities, including identification and handling of potential risks.
  - Justification of the Coordinator's ability to coordinate the project.
- ⬡ Completeness and credibility of the Contingency Plan in the frame of the implementation of the Project.

## Selection

Prioritised in order of submission to the RIF (non-competitive procedures apply) on the condition that proposals have been deemed eligible for funding following the internal evaluation procedure until the sum of:

- (a) The requested funding in proposals submitted to the RPF and that of ongoing projects, and
- (b) the approved funding for projects that have been completed, equals the total Call budget.

## Funding Payment

For this Call, regardless of the provisions described in Chapter 3.7 Funding Payment of the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme, funding payment will be provided as follows:

- **Pre-financing:** pre-financing corresponds to 50% of the Requested Funding and will be paid upon Contract signature.
- **Final Payment:** the Final Payment, may correspond to up to the balance of the Requested Funding, taking into consideration the eligible costs of the project, the Final Aid Intensity and on the condition that the proposal, coordinated by the Host Institution, has been submitted to Horizon Europe and the Final Progress Report has been approved by the RIF as specified in the section "Specific Conditions" of the current Call.

## INFORMATION – CONTACT DETAILS

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RIF Support Service

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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.*