

# The European Innovation Council (EIC): Pathfinder

Europe Day @ DESY

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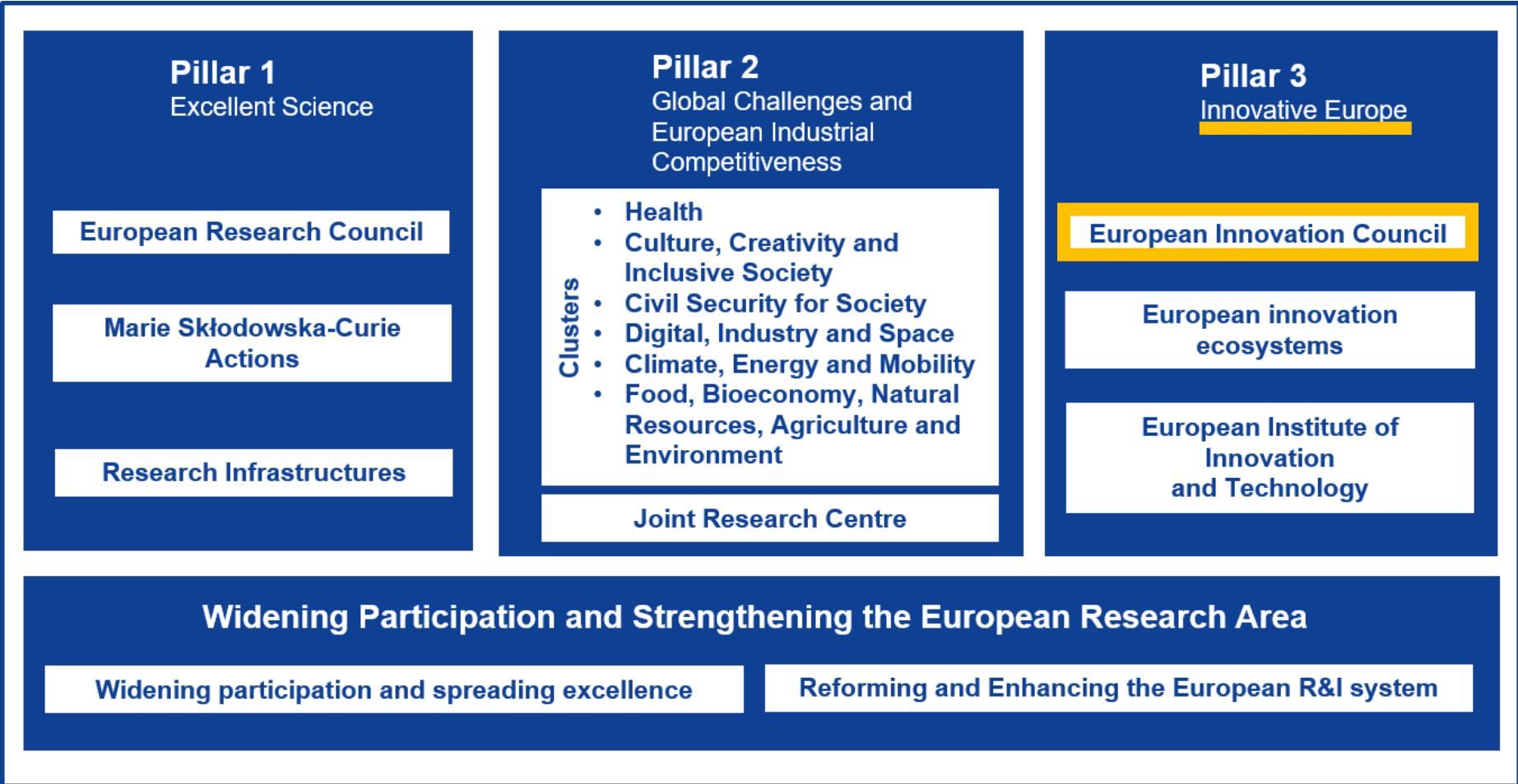
EU Project Office (EUP)  
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# Table of content

- EIC Funding opportunities
- Pathfinder Programme
- Statistics
- Deadlines
- Useful links

# Horizon Europe — 9th Research Framework Program

## Pillar 3: Innovative Europe



# European Innovation Council (EIC)



IDENTIFY

### EIC Pathfinder

Support to research teams to research or develop an emerging breakthrough technology



DEVELOP

### EIC Transition

Building on promising research results to demonstrate and mature the technology and develop business plans for specific applications



SCALE UP

### EIC Accelerator

Funding and investments through the EIC Fund for individual start-ups and small companies to develop and scale up game changing innovations

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# What is the EIC Pathfinder?



From basic research  
to validation and  
demonstration to  
market access

## The **EIC Pathfinder**

- funds **research** to develop the **scientific basis** to underpin breakthrough technologies
- supports the **earliest stages** of scientific, technological or deep-tech R&D
- aims to build on new, **cutting-edge directions in science and technology** to transform a field and a market or create new opportunities
- implements innovative technological solutions to identify, develop and disseminate breakthrough technologies and breakthrough innovations in Europe

# Funding schemes

## EIC Pathfinder Open

(open topics)



to support **projects in any field** of science, technology or application without predefined thematic priorities ('bottom-up')

## EIC Pathfinder Challenges

(theme-based)



to support **coherent portfolios** of projects within predefined thematic areas with the aim to achieve specific objectives for each Challenge

**Pathfinder Open**



# Why should you apply?

- You should apply if you are looking for support from EIC Pathfinder Open to realise an **ambitious vision for radically new technology** with potential to create new markets and/or to address global challenges
- EIC Pathfinder Open supports **early stage development of such future technologies** (e. g. various activities at low **Technology Readiness Levels 1-4**), based on high risk/high gain science towards technology breakthrough research (including ‘deep tech’)
- This research must provide the basis for the technology you plan to use

# EIC Pathfinder Open: Criteria's

Collaborative, interdisciplinary research, meeting the following criteria's:

- **convincing, long-term vision of a radically new technology** that has the potential to have a transformative positive effect to our economy and society;
- **concrete, novel and ambitious science-towards-technology breakthrough**, providing advancement towards the targeted technology;
- **high-risk & high-gain research approach & methodology**, with concrete and plausible objectives.

# Expected output of EIC Pathfinder Open projects

- Expected output is the **proof of principle** that the **main ideas of the planned future technology are feasible**. Thus, the scientific and technological basis is validated. Project results should include **top-level scientific publications** in open access
- Measures must be taken to enable future takeovers, e.g. through adequate formal protection of the intellectual property (IP)
- Projects are encouraged to involve and empower in their teams **key actors** that have the potential to **become future leaders** in their field such as excellent early-career researchers or promising high-tech SMEs, including start-ups
- Project are also encouraged to **empower female researchers** and to achieve gender balance among the work package leaders

## Can you apply? Consortium composition

- Proposals must be **submitted by the coordinator**, on behalf of a consortium
- A consortium consist of **at least 3 legal entities**, independent from each other and each established in a different country as follows:
  - at least **1 legal entity established in a Member State**; and
  - at least **2 other independent legal entities**, each established in different Member States or Associated Countries.
- The legal entities may be for example be universities, research organisations, SMEs, start-ups, industrial partners or natural persons.

# What support will you receive if your proposal is funded?

- You will receive a grant for a **Research and Innovation Action** to cover the **eligible costs**, necessary for the implementation of your project.
- The EIC considers Pathfinder open proposals with a requested EU contribution of **up to EUR 3 million** as appropriate. Nonetheless, this does not preclude you to request larger amounts, if properly justified.
- The funding rate of this grant will be 100% of the eligible costs.

## **EIC support beyond funding:**

- All EIC supported projects and companies get access to coaching, mentoring, partnering and other EIC Business Acceleration Services
- Find out more [here](#)

# Additional opportunities for Pathfinder selected projects

Projects funded through EIC Pathfinder are eligible:

- to receive additional **EIC Booster grants** (up to 3 per project or more if duly justified) of up to EUR 50 000 to undertake complementary activities:
  - to explore potential pathways to commercialization
  - for portfolio activities
- to submit an **EIC Transition** proposal

# How do you apply: how long does it take?

- You must submit your application via the **Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal** before the given deadline.
- You will be informed about the outcome of the evaluation within **5 months from the call deadline** (indicative).
- If your proposal is selected for funding, you can expect your grant agreement to be signed by **8 months after the call deadline**.

# Pathfinder Challenges



# EIC Pathfinder Challenges - introduction

- Build on **new, cutting-edge directions in science and technology**
- Disrupt a market or to create new opportunities **by realising innovative technological solutions** grounded in high-risk/high-gain research and development;
- Establish a portfolio of projects for each challenge that explore different perspectives, competing approaches or complementary aspects

# Expected project outcomes

- Expected outcomes defined in the respective Challenge
- Project results should include **top-level scientific publications** as well as an **adequate formal protection of the generated Intellectual Property**
- Projects are encouraged to involve and empower in their teams **key actors** that have the potential to **become future leaders** in their fields such as excellent early-career researchers or promising high-tech SMEs, including start-ups
- Project particularly encouraged to **empower female researchers** and to achieve gender balance among the work package leaders

# Pathfinder Challenge Guides

Challenge Guides will provide more information about:

- Objectives of the Challenges
  - Technical information underpinning the objectives
  - Portfolio considerations used for the final selection of proposals to be funded
- Challenge Guides will be published on the [EIC website](#)

## Can you apply?

- **Single legal entities** established in a Member State or an Associated Country (medium-sized and larger companies will not be permitted)
- **Consortia of 2 entities** must be two independent legal entities from two different Member States or Associated Countries
- **Consortia of 3 or more entities** must include as beneficiaries at least three legal entities, independent from each other and each established in a different country as follows:
  - at least 1 legal entity established in a Member State; and
  - at least 2 other independent legal entities, each established in different Member States or Associated Countries.
- The legal entities may for example be universities, research organisations, SMEs, start-ups, industrial partners or natural persons.

# What support will you receive if your proposal is funded?

- A **grant** for a **Research and Innovation Action** to cover eligible costs
- EIC considers proposals with an EU contribution of **up to € 4 million** as appropriate (larger amounts possible, if duly justified)
- Funding rate **100% of the eligible costs**

## **EIC support beyond funding:**

- All EIC supported projects and companies get access to coaching, mentoring, partnering and other EIC Business Acceleration Services
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# Pathfinder– Summary table

	Pathfinder Open	Pathfinder Challenges
Proposals (indicative)	Up to €3 million	Up to €4 million
Funding rate	100% of eligible costs	100% of eligible costs
Length of proposal	17-page proposal (part B)	25-page proposal (part B)
Applicants	<p><b>Consortia</b> min. 3 partners from 3 different Member States /Associated Countries (of which at least 1 partner in a Member State)</p>	<p><b>Consortia:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If 2 partners: from different MS/AC,</li> <li>• Min 3 partners from 3 different MS/AC (of which at least 1 partner in a MS)</li> </ul> <p><b>Single legal entities</b> in a MS/AC</p>

# Pathfinder– Statistic

	Programme	selected proposals	success rate	Budget	Size of the consortia	Duration	SMEs
2022	Pathfinder Open	57	6,64%	Average budget of projects selected for funding: 3,17M Out of 57, 30 projects applied for more than 3M Highest budget selected for funding: 5.47M	Size of the consortia varied from 3 to 10 partners in the successful projects, with a concentration of 5 to 7 partners.	0x24months, 14x36m, 7x42m, 30x48m, 6x60m	SMEs are involved in 46 of the 57 projects (80.7%); a total of 65 SME partners
	Pathfinder Challenges	44	10,09%	Average budget of projects selected for funding: 3.8 M	Size of the consortia varied from 1 to 12 partners in the successful projects, with a concentration of 4 to 7 partners.		16% of participants are SMEs

# EIC — Call Dates for 2023

	Pathfinder Open	Pathfinder Challenges
Call opens	November 2022	20/06/2023
Deadline to submit applications	Closed in March 2023	18/10/2023
Budget	EUR 179.5 million	EUR 163.5 million

- Call dates and deadlines will expected similarly in 2024



# Helpful Resources

## Useful Links

- ❖ [Find more information on the European Commission's EIC Website](#)
- ❖ [Work Programme 2023](#)
- ❖ [EIC Frequently asked questions](#)
- ❖ [TRL self-assessment tool](#)
- ❖ [Factsheet on EIC Pathfinder Open - Interview with Timo Hallantie, Head of Unit at EISMEA](#)

## Contact Persons at DESY's EU Project Office

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