

SCHEDA EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL

Tavolo Progetti Internazionali- Gruppo di Lavoro 'Horizon Europe'

Linea tematica

- *Innovazione in Horizon Europe*



Coordinatrice: Donata Franzi, UNISI.
Coordinatrice del gruppo EIC: Nadja Saendig, UNIMORE.
Partecipanti: Ilaria Libani UNIMI; Ferdinando Di Maggio
UNIMORE; Lorena Pizzale UNIUD; Claudio Nidasio UNIVR



EIC - Data Collection

This data collection sheet includes only those types of actions for which Universities are eligible. For Programmes/Funds/Instruments still being defined, only those sections for which official information is available are filled in.

Section I - Programme/Fund/Instrument

1.1 Name Programme/Fund/Instrument:

European Innovation Council - HORIZON-EIC-2021

1.2 Short description of the programme:

The European Innovation Council (EIC) has been established under the EU **Horizon Europe** programme. It has a budget of €10.1 billion to support game changing innovations throughout the lifecycle from early-stage research, to proof of concept, technology transfer, and the financing and scale up of start-ups and SMEs.

The EIC is Europe's flagship innovation programme to identify, develop and scale up breakthrough technologies and game changing innovations. It aims to identify and support breakthrough technologies and game changing innovations to create new markets and scale up internationally

A unique feature of the EIC is that it provides funding for individual companies (mainly start-ups and SMEs) through both grants and investments. The investments currently take the form of direct equity or quasi-equity investments and are managed by the **EIC Fund**.

1.3 Sub programmes:

The funding and support are organized into three main funding schemes:¹

- the EIC Pathfinder for advanced research to develop the scientific basis to underpin breakthrough technologies;
- the EIC Transition to validate technologies and develop business plans for specific applications; and

¹ TRL1 - basic principles observed
TRL2 - technology concept formulated
TRL3 - experimental proof of concept
TRL4 - technology validated in lab
TRL5 - technology validated in relevant environment
TRL6 - technology demonstrated in relevant environment
TRL7 - system prototype demonstration in operational environment
TRL8 - system complete and qualified
TRL9 - actual system proven in operational environment

- the EIC Accelerator to support companies (SMEs, start-ups, spin-outs and in exceptional cases small mid-caps) to bring their innovations to market and scale up.



1.3.1 EIC Pathfinder: With its Pathfinder programme the EIC supports the exploration of bold ideas for radically new technologies. It welcomes the high-risk/high gain and interdisciplinary cutting-edge science collaborations that underpin technological breakthroughs. Pathfinder goes beyond what is already known. Visionary thinking can open up promising avenues towards powerful new technologies.

Applicants participating in EIC Pathfinder projects are typically visionary scientists, entrepreneurial researchers and research organizations, start-ups, high-tech SMEs and industrial stakeholders interested in technological research and innovation.

Projects involve consortia of researchers and other partners from at least three different countries, but there are also opportunities for individual teams and small consortia (two partners).

Grants of up to 3 to 4 million euro support early-stage development of future technologies, up to **proof of concept**. Pathfinder projects can also receive additional funding for testing the innovation potential of their research outputs.

1.3.1.1 Open Funding

EIC Pathfinder Open provides funding for projects in any field of science or technology, based on high-risk/high-gain science-towards-technology breakthrough interdisciplinary research.

1.3.1.2 EIC Pathfinder Challenges

EIC Pathfinder funding is available for specific challenges that are typically steered by an EIC Programme Manager. In 2021 these Challenges are:

- ✓ Challenge: Awareness inside

For projects to develop new concepts of awareness that are applicable to systems other than human; to demonstrate and validate the role and added-value of such an awareness in an aware technology, class of artefacts or services; and to define an integrative approach for awareness engineering, its technological toolbox, the needs and implications and its limits, including ethical and regulatory requirements.

- ✓ Challenge: Tools to measure & stimulate activity in brain tissue

For projects to develop novel neurotechnologies to diagnose or treat brain, spinal cord or peripheral nerve-related disorders which can be rapidly accepted by clinicians and patients.

- ✓ Challenge: Emerging technologies in cell & gene therapy

For breakthrough projects that propose novel concept-based technological solutions or technological platforms far beyond the current state-of-the-art with aim to tackle current bottlenecks from discovery

to the manufacturing step towards clinical grade and thus, reinforce critical components of the European cell and gene therapy innovation-driven community.

- ✓ Challenge: Novel routes to green hydrogen production

For projects to develop novel processes and technologies to produce Green H₂, at different scales (from small to large) and with higher flexibility, entirely based on renewable sources and on the use of toxic free, non-critical raw materials.

- ✓ Challenge: Engineered living material

For projects to develop new technologies and platforms for the controlled and made-on-demand production of engineered living materials with multiple functionalities, shapes and scales.

1.3.2 EIC Transition funds innovation activities that go beyond the experimental proof of principle in laboratory to support both, the maturation and validation of your novel technology in the lab and in relevant application environments and the development of a business case and (business) model towards the innovation's future commercialisation.

Grants of up to €2.5million and more are available to validate and demonstrate technology in an application-relevant environment and develop market readiness. EIC Transition has open funding for projects in any field of science or technology as well as challenge driven funding on specific strategic fields. Single applicants (SMEs, spin-offs, start-ups, research organisations, universities) or small consortia (max 5 partners) may apply.

As Transition funding is a new scheme of Horizon Europe, for 2021 it is **restricted to applications based on results generated by the following eligible projects**, EIC Pathfinder projects (including projects funded under EIC pilot Pathfinder, Horizon 2020 FET-Open, FET-Proactive, FET Flagships and FET ERANET calls) and European Research Council (ERC) Horizon 2020 Proof of Concept projects.

Regarding the IP asset: they must be relevant for the solution proposed and Freedom to operate, competitive advantage present and future and IP exploitation rights should be guaranteed.

1.3.2.1 Open Funding

The majority of funding will be awarded through open calls with no predefined thematic priorities.

This Open Funding is designed to enable support for any technologies and innovations that cut across different scientific, technological, sectoral and application fields or represent novel combinations.

1.3.2.2 EIC Transition Challenges

- ✓ Challenge: Medical Technology and Devices: from Lab to Patient:

Proposals submitted to this call can target any technology addressing important health needs in the direct clinical treatment and care of patients.

- ✓ Challenge: Energy harvesting and storage technologies:

The proposals will aim at developing energy storage technologies or combined energy harvesting/storage technologies ready for investment and business development.

1.3.3 The EIC Accelerator supports individual Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), in particular Start-ups and spin out companies to develop and scale up game-changing innovations. In some cases, small mid-caps (up to 500 employees) are supported. Technology should be at TRL from 6/7 and brought to TRL 9.

The EIC Accelerator provides substantial financial support with:

- grant funding (non-dilutive) of up to €2.5 million for innovation development costs,
- investments (direct equity investments) of up to €15 million managed by the EIC Fund for scale up and other relevant costs.

In addition, EIC selected companies receive coaching, mentoring, access to investors and corporates, and many other opportunities as part of the EIC community. It particularly welcomes applications from start-ups and SMEs with **female CEOs**.

Two stages submission module, offers the possibility to have a first evaluation through an AI diagnostic tools: proposals have a chance to be granted if they have an evaluation with at least two B, otherwise modifications are suggested.

1.3.3.1 Open Funding

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1.4 Policy of Open Science and Intellectual Property Rights:

For Pathfinder, provisions will be applied to ensure open access to scientific publications and promote the uptake of research results.

Pathfinder and Transition projects may be requested by EIC Programme Managers to actively share information about results (including preliminary findings), within their portfolio and with other relevant EIC projects and parties.

To ensure full confidentiality with beneficiaries retaining the right on a case-by-case basis to fully disclose or not their intellectual property.

The [EIC Work Programme 2021](#) has a specific Annex concerning Intellectual Property for Pathfinder and Transition actions (Annex 7 - pages 150-155), in particular to put more emphasis on exploitation of results.

The table below broadly summarizes some of the main provisions concerning Intellectual Property for Pathfinder and Transition actions.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ABOUT PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND RESULTS	EIC Programme Manager may request any beneficiary to make available through the EIC Market Place information on preliminary findings and results generated by the action
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NON-DISCLOSURE OBLIGATIONS	Where beneficiaries are informed to any preliminary findings, results or other intellectual property generated by other EIC actions they must keep it strictly confidential
PLAN FOR EXPLOITATION AND DISSEMINATION	EIC Beneficiaries must report to the granting authority on their exploitation and dissemination activities together with any updated version of the plan for exploitation and dissemination (also for the benefit of EIC Portfolio activities)
DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES	When approving the plan for exploitation and dissemination of the results or any update, the granting authority may subject any proposed dissemination activity the prior assessment of any innovation potential of the results
EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS	Beneficiaries must use their best efforts to exploit their results or have them exploited by a third party including through transfer or licensing
FAILURE TO EXPLOIT OR DISSEMINATE	The granting authority is entrusted with the right to disseminate and promote the exploitation of results that have not been made public through dissemination activities or patent or protection by any other IPR where the beneficiary does not provide any information regarding exploitation or dissemination of those results or neither intends to exploit nor disseminate those results.
POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL OR COMPLEMENTARY EIC SUPPORT FOR EXPLOITATION	Any beneficiary or group of beneficiaries or the consortium of a Pathfinder action, including EIC inventors, may be awarded an additional grant of up to EUR 50,000 to undertake limited EIC Transition activities

In particular for the Transition project, proposals built on results from an ongoing or finished project, must include a declaration of the coordinator or the IP owner(s) of the necessary rights and ownership of results to be exploited. If the Applicants are not the owner of the results, they must provide a letter from the relevant beneficiary of the previous projects/owner(s) of the results that confirms the existence of the necessary agreements with the applicants on IPR.

It is important that potential future consortium members decide on the ownership of results. Beneficiaries must indicate the owner(s) of the results in the **final periodic report of the Horizon Europe project in the so-called Results Ownership List**. If the ownership of results has not been carefully thought through at the proposal phase, beneficiaries may face difficulties in filling in the Results Ownership List at the reporting stage.

IP score tool online to assess and investigate the IP assets:

Since it is important to have a strong IP, it can be useful, with the help of University TTO's, to verify the weakness or strength of the Intellectual property assets. An online tool to this aim is IP score: <https://www.epo.org/searching-for-patents/business/ip-score.html>

Section II - Useful links and contact persons

2.1 Programme website:

https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities_en

<https://horizoneurope.apre.it/struttura-e-programmi/innovative-europe/european-innovation-council/>

2.2 Further EIC sub programmes:

Business Acceleration Services: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/business-acceleration-services_en

EIC Women Leadership Programme:

https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/business-acceleration-services/eic-women-leadership-programme_en

EIC Greenhouse Gas programme: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/business-acceleration-services/eic-greenhouse-gas-programme_en

European Innovation Ecosystems: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/european-innovation-ecosystems_en

Women TechEU: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/european-innovation-ecosystems/women-techeu_en

EIC prizes: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-prizes_en

European Capital of Innovation Awards: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-prizes/european-capital-innovation-awards_en

EU Prize for Women Innovators: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-prizes/eu-prize-women-innovators_en

EIC Horizon Prizes: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-prizes/eic-horizon-prizes_en

European Social Innovation Competition: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-prizes/european-social-innovation-competition_en

European Innovation Procurement Awards: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-prizes/european-innovation-procurement-awards_en

2.3 Link to the calls and for the proposal submission:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

2.3.1 Guide for Applicants: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/guide-applicants_en

2.4 FAQ: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-frequently-asked-questions_en#ecl-inpage-321

2.5 Work programme: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021/wp_horizon-eic-2021_en.pdf

2.6 Contact persons APRE:

Mail EIC APRE	eic@apre.it
Steven Frigerio	frigerio@apre.it ;
Marta Calderaro	calderaro@apre.it
Alessia Rotolo	rotolo@apre.it
Stefania Marassi	marassi@apre.it

2.7 Useful documents

Toolbox Guidelines: <https://access2eic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Toolbox-guidelines.pdf>

The Business Glossary: https://access2eic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Access2EIC_Business-Glossary-sep-2020-Final-4.pdf

TB.Tool and B.size tool: <https://access2eic.eu/access2eic-tools-from-technology-to-business/>

Section III - Further details

3.1 Eligible Consortia

Consortia of at least three different independent legal entities (e.g., research organizations, universities, SMEs, industry) established in at least 3 different eligible countries. Single applicants or small consortia (two partners) may be able to apply for Pathfinder Challenges according to the call specifications.

3.2 Evaluation Process

The EIC approach to the evaluation of proposals is tailored to the objectives of each of the EIC funding schemes. In particular for higher technology, business and market readiness levels closer to market funding, greater emphasis is put on face-to-face interviews with applicants and a simplified binary scoring (GO/ NO GO).

Pathfinder Open

- 1) First evaluation and score remotely by EIC expert evaluators with respect to the evaluation criteria.
- 2) The remote score for each evaluation criterion will be the median of the evaluators' scores. The overall remote score will be the weighted sum of the three median scores from the three evaluation criteria.
- 3) A rebuttal procedure after the remote phase will provide the consortium with the opportunity to reply within seven calendar days with a strict page limit (maximum two A4 pages) to the evaluators' comments. The replies cannot be used to alter or add to the content of the proposals, but must strictly focus on responding to potential misunderstandings or errors by the evaluators. The replies will be made available to the evaluation committee.

For the **EIC Transition**, which funds innovation activities that go beyond the experimental proof of principle, proposals will first be evaluated remotely, scored and ranked based on criteria and thresholds. For the top ranked applicants which are invited to the face-to-face interview, the jury will decide based on a binary scoring (GO/NO GO).

For the **EIC Accelerator**, which supports high risk/high gain innovations to go to the market and scale up, proposals will be evaluated remotely and at face-to-face interviews based on a binary scoring (GO/NO GO).

3.3 Duration of projects: (Min/max)

The duration of the projects can vary from 2 to 5 years. Usually, the projects have a duration of 3 years (36 months)

3.4 Deadline:

Regular opening and closing of new calls.

3.5 Collaboration with EIT

In January 2021, the European Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the European Innovation Council (EIC) and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) to reinforce their cooperation to support the best European entrepreneurs. This will enable innovators, innovative SMEs and start-ups, higher education institutions and research organizations to receive quality support services to deploy and scale up innovations faster and with greater impact.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and the European Innovation Council (EIC):

<https://eit.europa.eu/library/memorandum-understanding-between-european-institute-innovation-and-technology-eit-and-dg>

3.6 Principal novelties compared to the FET OPEN programme

The EIC Pathfinder, before known as the Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) in Horizon 2020 (H2020), has moved from the basic science-driven “Excellent Science” pillar in H2020 to the more market-driven “Innovative Europe” pillar in Horizon Europe. This move was an important step in achieving the EC vision to establish an integrated agile support system across the full innovation spectrum from early-stage research to start-up and scale-up of innovative ideas and technologies.

From a new proposal structure

Part A

- Part A of the proposal will be automatically generated based on information entered by the participants directly into the submission system.
- The profiles of the participants are now integrated into part A; part B2, known from FET Open proposals, does not exist anymore.
- The participants will be required to fill in a new table in part A, “Researchers involved in the proposal”. This table contains some basic information about all researchers involved in the proposal, including gender, nationality, career stage and role in the project. The table is for researchers only; other personnel involved in the proposal does not need to be included.
- Part A also contains a second new table, “Role of participation organization in the project”. This table provides a list of various potential roles the participants could choose from; selecting more than one option is possible.
- Ethics self-assessment and security issues tables are also included in Part A.
- information on participants’ previous activities related to the call

Part B

- Part B of the proposal is restricted to 17 A4 pages.
- The table of contents of Part B is simplified, it contains fewer subsections and only 3 main sections corresponding to the evaluation criteria Excellence, Impact, and Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation.
- The proposal template provides detailed explanation on what is expected to be included in the different (sub)sections of Part B.

- Definitions of important proposal elements, for example critical risks, milestones, outcomes, are provided.
- Glossary of terms

... to a stronger impact on Europe's economy and society

The new EIC Work Programme reveals more than mere structural difference between the two funding instruments. Like its predecessor, the EIC Pathfinder Open will fund science-towards-technology breakthrough interdisciplinary high-risk research. But the move to the EIC shows that the focus will very likely shift to selecting and supporting projects that can clearly demonstrate an ambitious long-term vision for developing a radically new technology with potential to have a transformative positive effect on the European economy and society. In this respect, the EIC Pathfinder Open is expected to be more business and market-driven than its predecessor was.

EIC marketplace concept

The EIC Market Place is a trusted IT interface (platform) between the EIC Community and the Granting authority for exchange of information and data on the action, in relation notably to Portfolio activities, in order to cross-fertilize activities and stimulate and nurture potential innovation out of these findings. It will also provide for co-creating new ideas and activities, including but not exclusively for the purpose of applying for additional Pathfinder, Transition or Accelerator support. It may also be used by the granting authority to interact with stakeholders at large on such issues as raising awareness and consultation on portfolio objectives, in support of the implementation of EIC Business acceleration services, and to contribute to the dissemination of EIC actions results.

I Partecipanti alla Linea tematica Horzon Europe – Innovazione

Donata Franzì	Università di Siena
Martina Fatìconi	Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele
Adele Del Bello	Università degli Studi di Ferrara
Cristina Dolfi	UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI FIRENZE
Alessandro Kim Cerutti	Università degli studi di Torino
Elisa Ambrosio	Politecnico di Torino
Ferdinando Dimaggio	UNIMORE
Nadja Saendig	UNIMORE
Irene Chini	UNIMORE
Daniele Bruschi	Uni Sapienza
Claudio Nidasio	UNIVR
Marta Capiluppi	UNIVR
Lorena Pizzale	UNIUD
Dajana D'Andrea	Università degli Studi "G.d'Annunzio" Chieti-Pescara
Gessica D'Agostino	Università degli Studi "G.d'Annunzio" Chieti-Pescara
Claudia Piccioni	Università Bocconi Milano
Francesca Fazio	Università Bocconi Milano
Ilaria Libani	Università degli Studi di Milano
Marco Filippozzi	FONDAZIONE B. KESSLER
Miriam Tullii	UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI TERAMO
Andrea Carini	Università degli Studi di Pavia
Stefania Pesce	Politecnico Milano
Antonella Benvenuto	Università Campus Bio-Medico di Roma
Simona De Simone	Università di Camerino