BIO PRO
Baden-Württemberg GmbH

Website address:
https://www.bio-pro.de/en/service/funding/eic-pathfinder-challenges

EIC Pathfinder Challenges

Type:	Funding programme
Submission deadline:	28-Oct-2026
Funded by:	European Commission
Reach:	EU

The following text does not reflect the entire content of the announcement, but contains individual extracts from the guideline.

EIC Pathfinder Challenges aim to build on new, cutting-edge directions in science and technology to disrupt a field and a market or create new opportunities by realising innovative technological solutions grounded in high-risk/high-gain research and development.

With each specific Challenge, the EIC will establish a portfolio of projects that explore different perspectives, competing approaches or complementary aspects of the Challenge. The complexity and high-risk nature of this research will require multi- disciplinary collaborations.

Challenges

- Advanced Materials for Miniaturised Energy Harvesting SystemsNature inspired alternatives for food packaging and films.
- Biotechnology for Healthy Ageing
- DeepRAP: Deep Reasoning, Abstraction & Planning towards trustworthy Cognitive AI Systems

Why should you apply?

You should apply if you have a potential cutting-edge project that would contribute to the specific objectives of the respective Challenge. Specifically, your project must aim to deliver by its end the expected outcomes defined in the respective Challenge. In general, the starting point of a proposal answering to a Pathfinder Challenge is early TRL (e.g.,2) to up to proof of concept or validation in the lab (e.g., TRL 3 or 4). Project results should also include top-level scientific publications as well as an adequate formal protection of the generated intellectual property (IP) as well as an assessment of relevant aspects related to regulation, certification and standardisation.

In addition, you are encouraged to involve and empower in your team 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. Your project should reinforce their mind-set for targeted research and development aimed at high-impact applied results. This will strengthen Europe's capacity for exploiting the scientific discoveries made in Europe throughout the steps to market success or for solving global challenges. You are particularly encouraged to empower female researchers in your project and to achieve gender balance among your work package leaders.

Can you apply?

In order to apply, your proposal must meet the general eligibility requirements (see Annex 2) as well as specific eligibility requirements for the Challenge (if applicable). Please check for particular elements (e.g., specific application focus or technology) in the respective Challenge chapter below.

The EIC Pathfinder Challenges support collaborative or individual research and innovation from consortia or from single legal entities established in a Member State or an Associated Country (unless stated otherwise in the specific Challenge chapter). In case of a consortium your proposal must be submitted by the coordinator on behalf of the consortium. Consortia of two entities must be comprised of independent legal entities from two different Member States or Associated Countries. Consortia of three 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 one legal entity established in a Member State; and
- at least two 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, natural persons. In the case of single beneficiary projects, mid-caps and larger companies will not be permitted.

What support will you receive if your proposal is funded?

The total indicative budget for this call is EUR 120 million which is expected to be allocated in approximately equal shares across the Challenges.

You will receive a grant for a Research and Innovation Action to cover the eligible costs, necessary for the implementation of your project, including the portfolio activities. For this call, the EIC considers proposals with an EU contribution of up to EUR 4 million as appropriate. Nonetheless, this does not preclude you to request larger amounts, if duly justified or stated otherwise in the specific Challenge.

How do you apply?

The call deadline for submitting your proposal is **28 October 2026 at 17h00 Brussels local time**.

You must submit your proposal via the European Funder & Tender Opportunities Portal before the given deadline.

1) Consortia of two entities must be comprised of independent legal entities from two different Member States or Associated Countries. Consortia of three or above entities follow standard rules i.e. they must include at least one legal entity established in a Member State and at least two other independent legal entities, each established in different Member States or Associated Countries.

Funding

21-May-2024
Source: European Commission

Contact

Further information

- European Innovation Council (EIC) Work Programme 2026
- Announcement of funding
- EIC Pathfinder Homepage
- National Contact Point EIC Pathfinder (NCP EIC Pathfinder)