EIC, Europe's most ambitious innovation initiative

European Innovation Council

Budget
€ 10 billion

Unique
combines research & accelerator for SMEs, startups, scaleups

Largest deep-tech innovator in Europe
Over €3 billion

Enhances the European Innovation Ecosystems
Partnerships with ERC,EIT regions...

Annual Work Programmes (separate from Horizon Europe main WP)
- First WP (2021) adopted 18 March 2021, €1.5 billion
- Second WP (2022) adopted 7 February 2022, €1.7 billion
- Third Work Programme (2023) adopted 7 December 2022, € 1.7 billion
- **Fourth Work Programme (2024) adopted 12 December 2023, € 1.2 billion**

EIC IMPACTS
(From 2022)

CROWDING IN OTHER INVESTMENTS

- **€ 10 billion** follow up investments to EIC supported companies

- Leverage effect: 2.6 times private co-investment on EIC Fund investments

- **12 unicorns** - value € 1 billion+

- **112 centaurs** - value € 100 million+

ADDRESSING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Main thematic in:
  - ✓ **Green Deal**
  - ✓ **Digital**
  - ✓ **Health**

GROWING SUPPORT TO STARTUPS & SMEs

- **1600** supported since 2014
- **410 selected for blended finance with € 2.18 billion equity proposed**
- Increase in startups with female CEOs

A PIPELINE OF BREAKTHROUGH TECHNOLOGIES

- **400** research projects
- **800** innovations tracked
- **Pilot of Transition funding** to follow up research results into applications

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EIC PRIZES

- Women innovators
- Capital of innovation
- Innovation procurement
- Social innovation
- Horizon
- Humanitarian Innovation
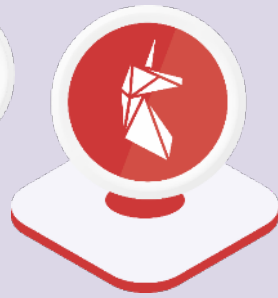
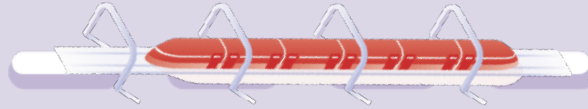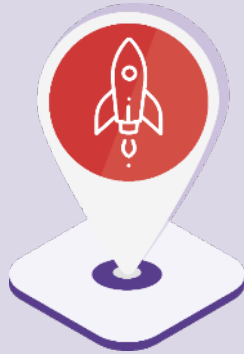**SEAL OF EXCELLENCE**

Fast track to other funding

EIC ACCELERATOR SERVICES

- Mentors, coaches
- Global partners
- Innovation ecosystems
- EIC Community Platform

EIC ACCELERATOR

- For single companies
- Grants up to €2.5 million
- Equity up to €15 million or above
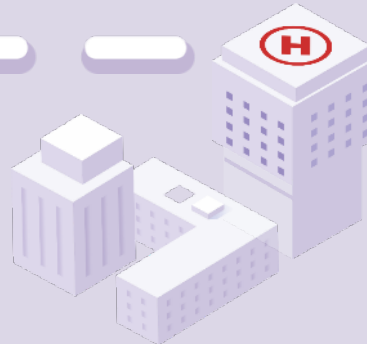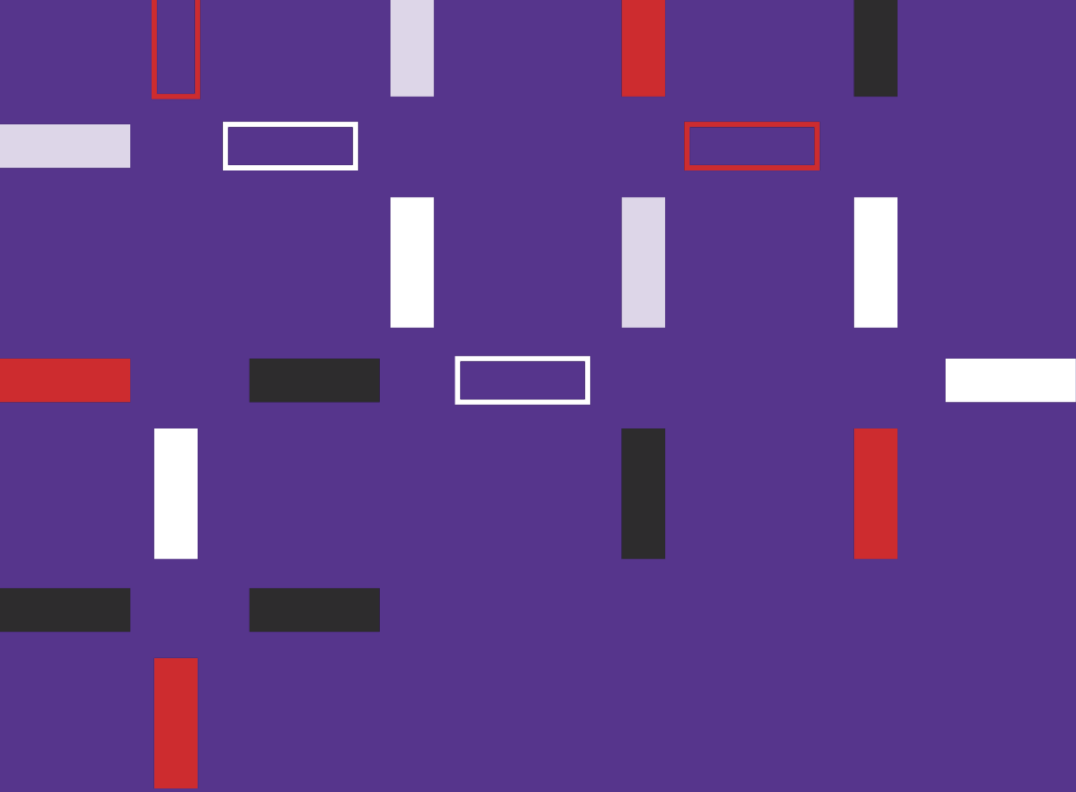- To enter the market & scale-up (TRL 6-9)

EIC TRANSITION

- For consortia & single companies
- Grants up to €2.5 million
- To develop business cases (TRL 4-6)

EIC PATHFINDER

- Mainly for consortia
- Grants up to €4 million
- To research technology breakthroughs (TRL 1-4)

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EIC Pathfinder

What is the EIC Pathfinder?

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- 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 & technology** to disrupt a field and a market or create new opportunities

- realises innovative technological solutions to identify, develop and scale up **breakthrough technologies** and **disruptive innovations** in Europe

Funding schemes

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EIC Pathfinder Open

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

EIC Pathfinder Challenges

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

2024 EIC Pathfinder Open call & its main novelties

EIC Pathfinder Open: Gatekeepers

Collaborative, interdisciplinary research, meeting the following criteria:

- **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 envisioned technology;

- **high-risk & high-gain research approach & methodology**, with concrete and plausible objectives.

Why apply?

- Realise **an ambitious vision for radically new technology**, with potential to create new markets and/or to address global challenges.

- Support for **early stage development of such future technologies** (e.g., various activities at low **Technology Readiness Levels from 1 to 4**), based on high-risk/high-gain science-towards-technology breakthrough research (including 'deep-tech').

- This research must provide the **foundations of the technology** you are envisioning.

- Overall, the general call text of the EIC Pathfinder Open call 2024 remained relatively stable compared to 2023, with only minor changes

- **Main** novelties for **Pathfinder Open**:

    - Increase of page limit for sections 1-3 of application form (part B) from 17 to 20

    - Discontinuation of rebuttal pilot

    - Small revisions of the three award criteria

    - Added reference to assessment of relevant aspects related to regulation, certification, and standardization as example for expected project results

Expected output of EIC Pathfinder Open projects

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- Expected output is the **proof of principle** that the **main ideas of the envisioned future technology are feasible**, thus validating its scientific and technological basis

- Project results should include **top-level scientific publications** in open access

- Projects are expected to take the necessary measures to **allow future uptake to take place**, for instance through an **adequate formal protection of the generated Intellectual Property (IP)** and an assessment of relevant aspects related to regulation, certification, and standardization.

NEW
- 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

Consortium composition

- Proposals must be **submitted by the coordinator,** on behalf of a consortium including 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, industrial partners or natural persons.

Proposal Application Form

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- **Part A:** to be filled online (no page limit). It contains administrative details, the summarised budget and call specific questions.

- **Part B:** to be uploaded as a single document (page limit: maximum of **20** A4 pages – Section 1 to 3). It contains the technical description of the project. Modified to reflect the award criteria as indicated in the EIC Work Programme 2024.

Template available on the Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal

NEW

Award criterion "Excellence"

Threshold 4/5

Weight 60%

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- **Long-term vision:** How convincing is the vision , which the project would contribute in the long term?

- **Science-towards-technology breakthrough:** How concrete, novel and ambitious is the proposed science-towards-technology breakthrough with respect to the state-of-the-art? What advancement does it provide towards realising the envisioned technology?

NEW

- **Objectives:** How concrete and plausible are the proposed objectives **to reach the envisaged proof of principle**? To what extent is the high-risk/high-gain research approach appropriate for achieving them? How sound is the proposed methodology, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, alternative directions and options, appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research content, and the quality of open science practices?

- **Interdisciplinarity:** How relevant is the interdisciplinary approach from traditionally distant disciplines for achieving the proposed breakthrough?

Award criterion "Impact"

Threshold 3.5/5

Weight 20%

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- **Long-term impact:** How significant are the potential transformative positive effects that the envisioned new technology would have to our economy, environment and society?

NEW

- **Innovation potential: To what extent does the envisioned new technology have potential for generating disruptive innovations in the future and for creating new markets?** How adequate are the proposed measures for protection of results and any other exploitation measures to facilitate future translation of research results into innovations? How suitable are the proposed measures for involving and empowering key actors that have the potential to take the lead in translating research into innovations in the future?

NEW

- **Communication and Dissemination:** How suitable are the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, including **scientific publications**, communication activities, for raising awareness about the project results' potential to establish new markets and/or address global challenges?

Award criterion "Quality and efficiency of the implementation"
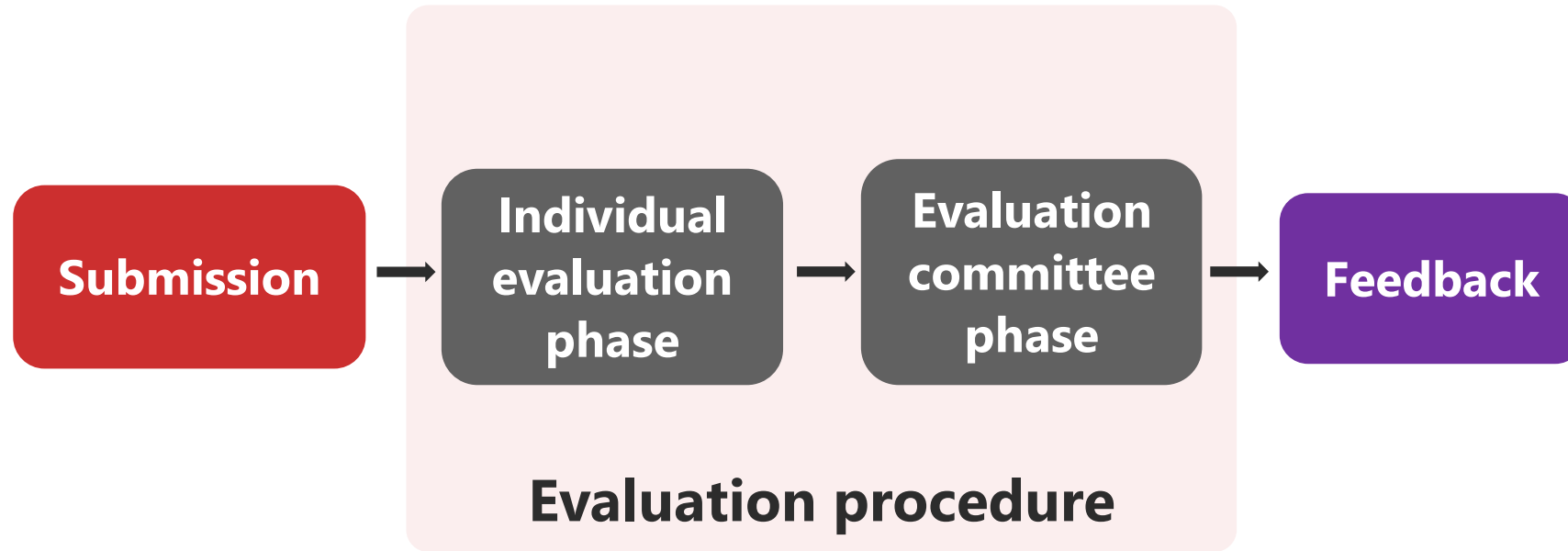
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Threshold 3/5

Weight 20%

- **Work plan:** How coherent and effective are the work plan (work packages, tasks, deliverables, milestones, time-line, etc.) and risk mitigation measures in order to achieve the project objectives?

- **Allocation of resources:** How appropriate and effective is the allocation of resources (comprising person-months and other cost items) to work packages and consortium members?

NEW
- **Quality of the consortium:** To what extent do **all** the consortium members have the necessary **capacity and** high quality expertise for performing the project tasks?

How is proposal funding determined?

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Submission → **Individual evaluation phase** → **Evaluation committee phase** → **Feedback**

Evaluation procedure

NEW   The pilot on the rebuttal ("right to react") process has been discontinued

Individual evaluation phase

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- At least four EIC expert evaluators evaluate and score the proposals individually with respect to the **award criteria**:
  - Excellence
  - Impact
  - Quality and efficiency of the implementation
- The **score** for each evaluation criterion will be the **median of the evaluators' scores**.

- The **overall score from this individual evaluation phase** will be the **weighted sum** of the three median scores from the three award criteria.

Evaluation committee phase

- The evaluation committee will be composed of **EIC expert evaluators different** than those who evaluated the proposals individually;

- the **final score** will be decided based on the score from the individual evaluation phase and the outcome of the consensus discussions;

- **EIC expert evaluators** who evaluated and scored the proposals individually may be **invited to the consensus discussions**, in particular to clarify diverging evaluators' opinions.

Feedback to applicants

Applicants will receive an **Evaluation Summary Report** that will comprise of:

- the **final score;**

- a **collation of the comments from individual reports**, or extracts of them

- a **comment that summarises** the assessment by the evaluation committee;

- **additional comments,** possibly including advice not to resubmit proposal.

How long does it take?

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- 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**.

- The deadline to submit the proposal is **7 March 2024 at 17.00 CET**.

Support Upon Proposal Funding

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- You will receive a grant for a **Research and Innovation Action** to cover the **eligible costs**, necessary for the implementation of your project.

- For this call, the EIC considers 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.

- The total indicative budget for this call is EUR **136 million**.

- Successful applicants will receive tailor-made access to a wide range of **Business Acceleration Services** and interactions with **EIC Programme Managers**

Projects funded through EIC Pathfinder are eligible:

- to receive **EIC Booster grants** (up to 3 per project or more if duly justified) of a fixed amount not exceeding EUR 50 000 to undertake complementary activities:

    - to explore potential pathways to commercialization
    - for portfolio activities

- to submit an **EIC Transition** proposal

- to submit an **EIC Accelerator** proposal via the **Fast Track** scheme

- to participate in '**Next Generation Innovation Talents**' scheme (personnel costs of participating researchers are eligible under Pathfinder grants)

Pathfinder calls 2024 – Summary table

	Pathfinder Open	Pathfinder Challenges
Total budget	**€136 million**	**€120 million**
Proposals	Up to €3 million	Up to €4 million
Funding rate	100% of eligible costs	100% of eligible costs
Opening	2 January 2024	20 June 2024
Deadline	7 March 2024 at 17.00 CET	16 October 2024 at 17.00 CET
Length	20-page proposal (part B)	30-page proposal (part B)
Applicants	**Consortia:** min. 3 partners from 3 different Member States /Associated Countries of which at least 1 partner in a Member State	**Consortia:** • If 2 partners: from different MS/AC, • If 3+ partners: from min 3 different MS/AC of which at least 1 partner in a MS **Single legal entities** in a MS/AC

Thank you !

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