



# THE EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL

Como preparar e submeter uma  
proposta Pathfinder challenge

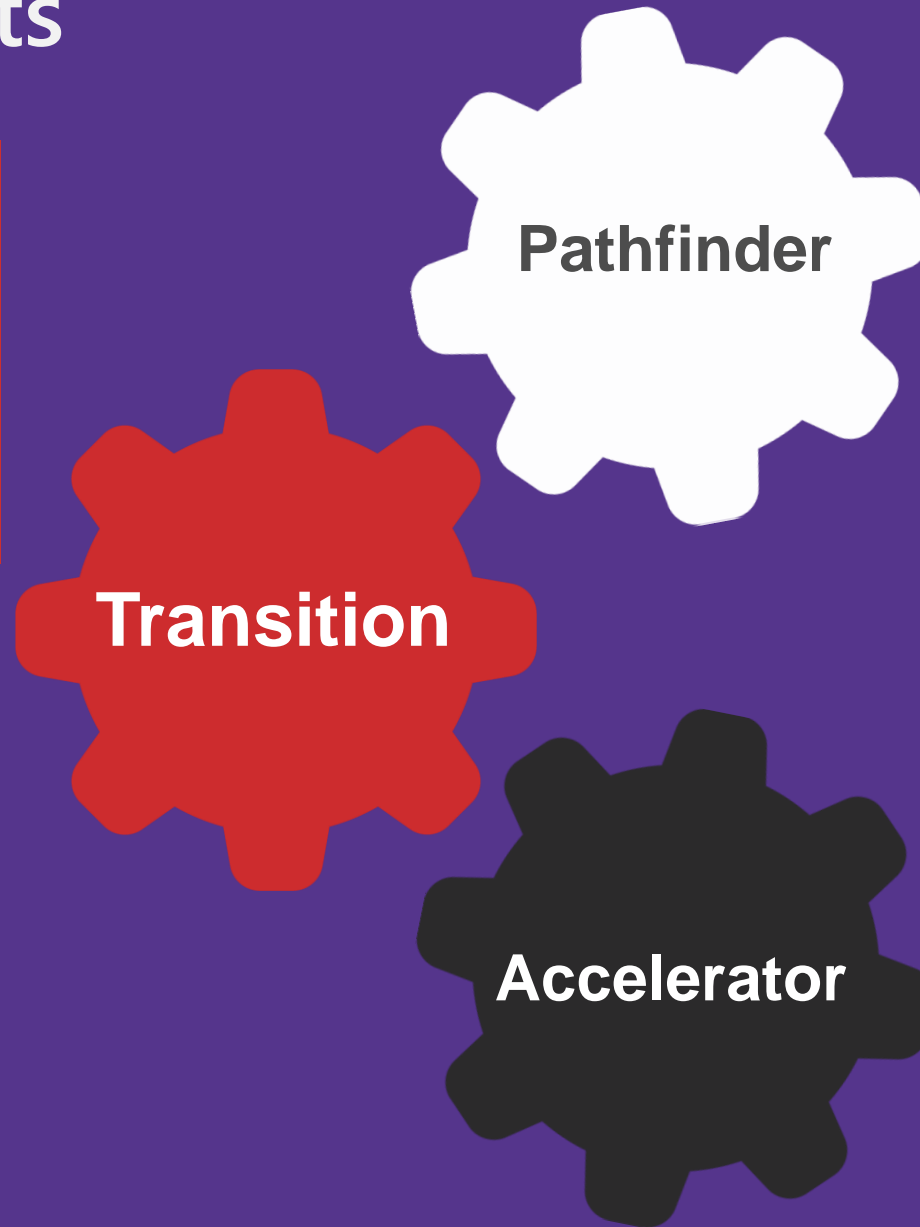
25 Setembro 2024

Célia Alves Rodrigues



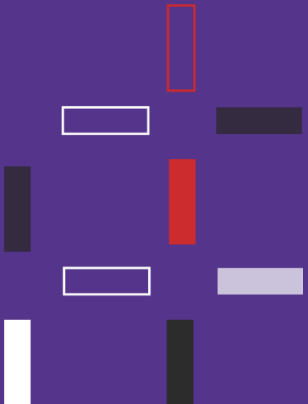
# EIC instruments

- Technology maturation from proof of concept to validation
- Business and market readiness
- Grants up to 2.5 million EUR



- Early stage research on breakthrough technologies
- Grants up to 3 to 4 million EUR
- Successor of FET (Open & Proactive)

- Development & scale up of deep-tech/disruptive innovations by startups/SMEs
- Blended finance (grants up to 2.5 million EUR; equity investment up to 15 million EUR)
- Successor of SME Instrument



1

# Statistics from 2021-2023 Pathfinder calls





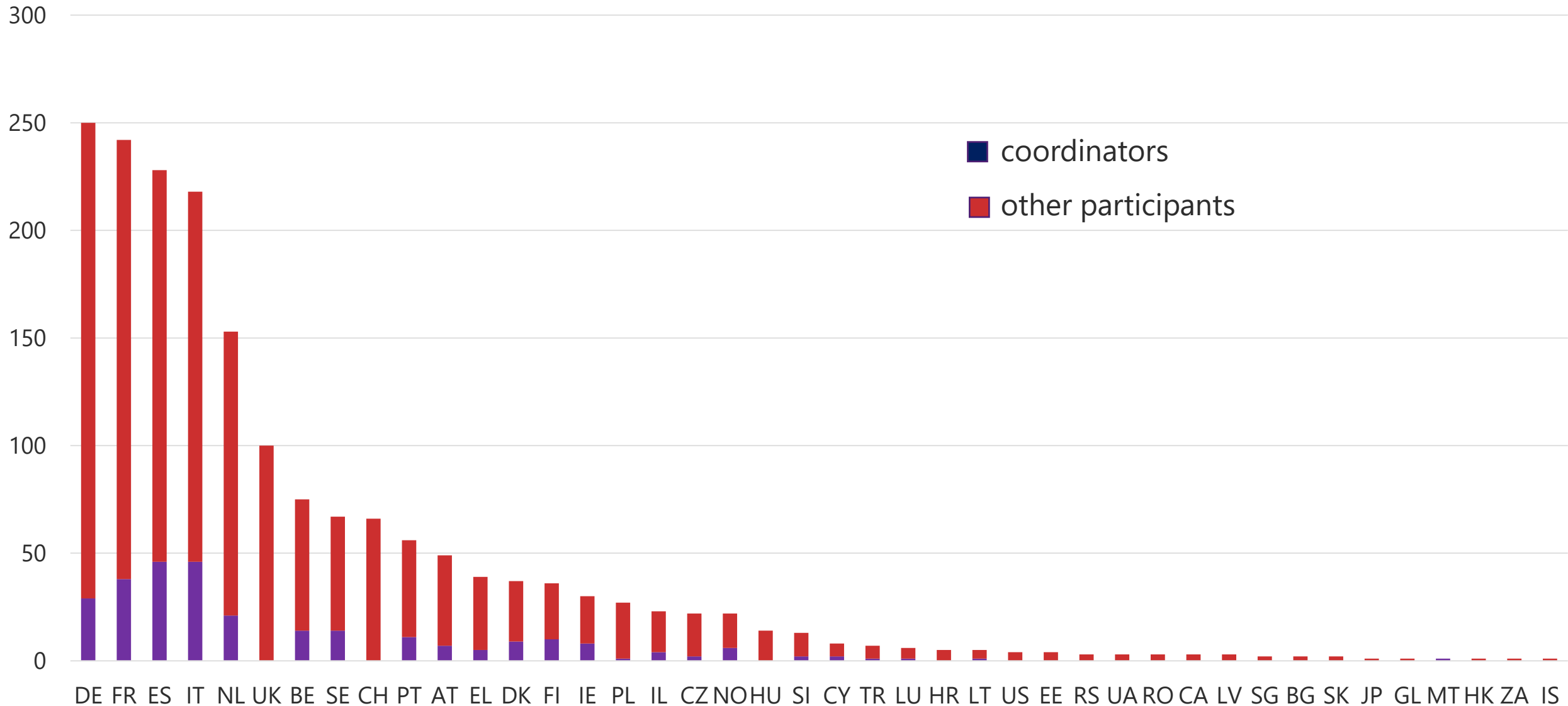
# Call statistics EIC Pathfinder 2021-2023

<b>open</b>	eligible proposals	funded proposals	EU contribution	success rate
2021	868	60	180,2 M€	6,9%
2022	858	66	197,2 M€	7,7%
2023	783	61	177 M€	7,9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2509</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>554,4 M€</b>	<b>7,5%</b>

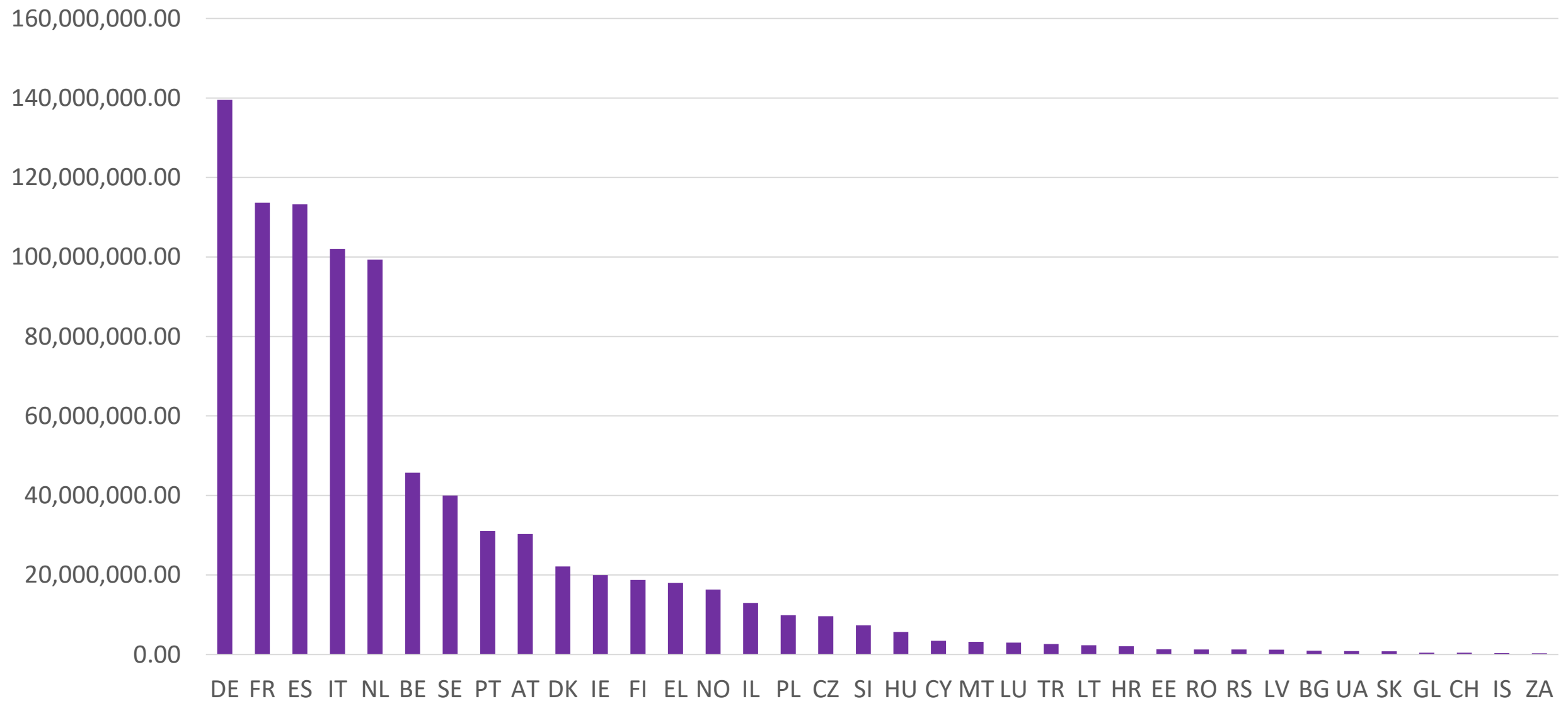
  

<b>challenges</b>	eligible proposals	funded proposals	EU contribution	success rate
2021	403	42	146,8 M€	10,4%
2022	436	49	178,2 M€	11,2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>325 M€</b>	<b>10,8%</b>

# Participants in EIC Pathfinder projects



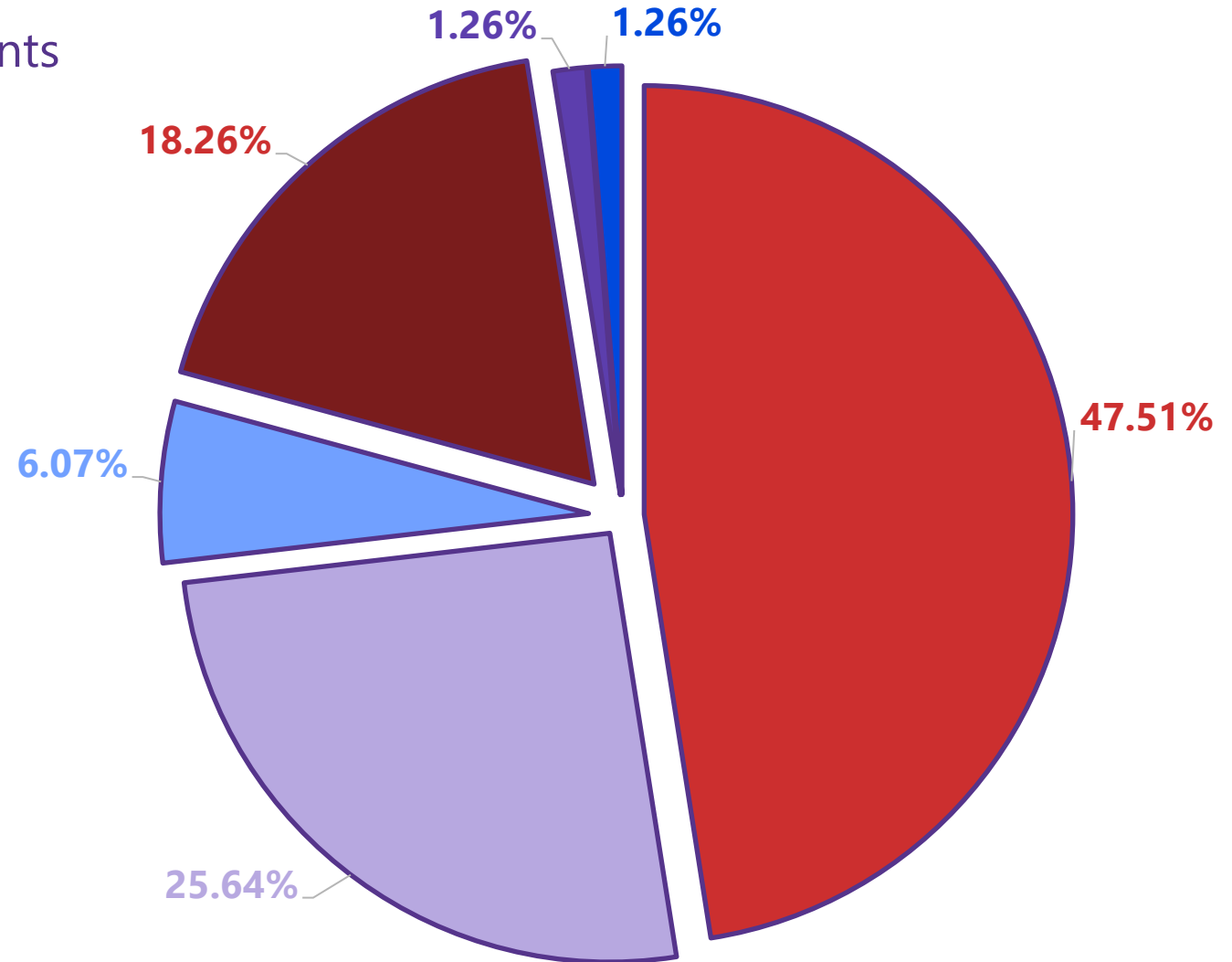
# EU funding in EIC Pathfinder projects



# Beneficiaries of EIC Pathfinder projects



- Higher or Secondary Education Establishments
- Research Organisations
- Private for-profit entities (excl. SMEs)
- SMEs
- Public bodies
- Other

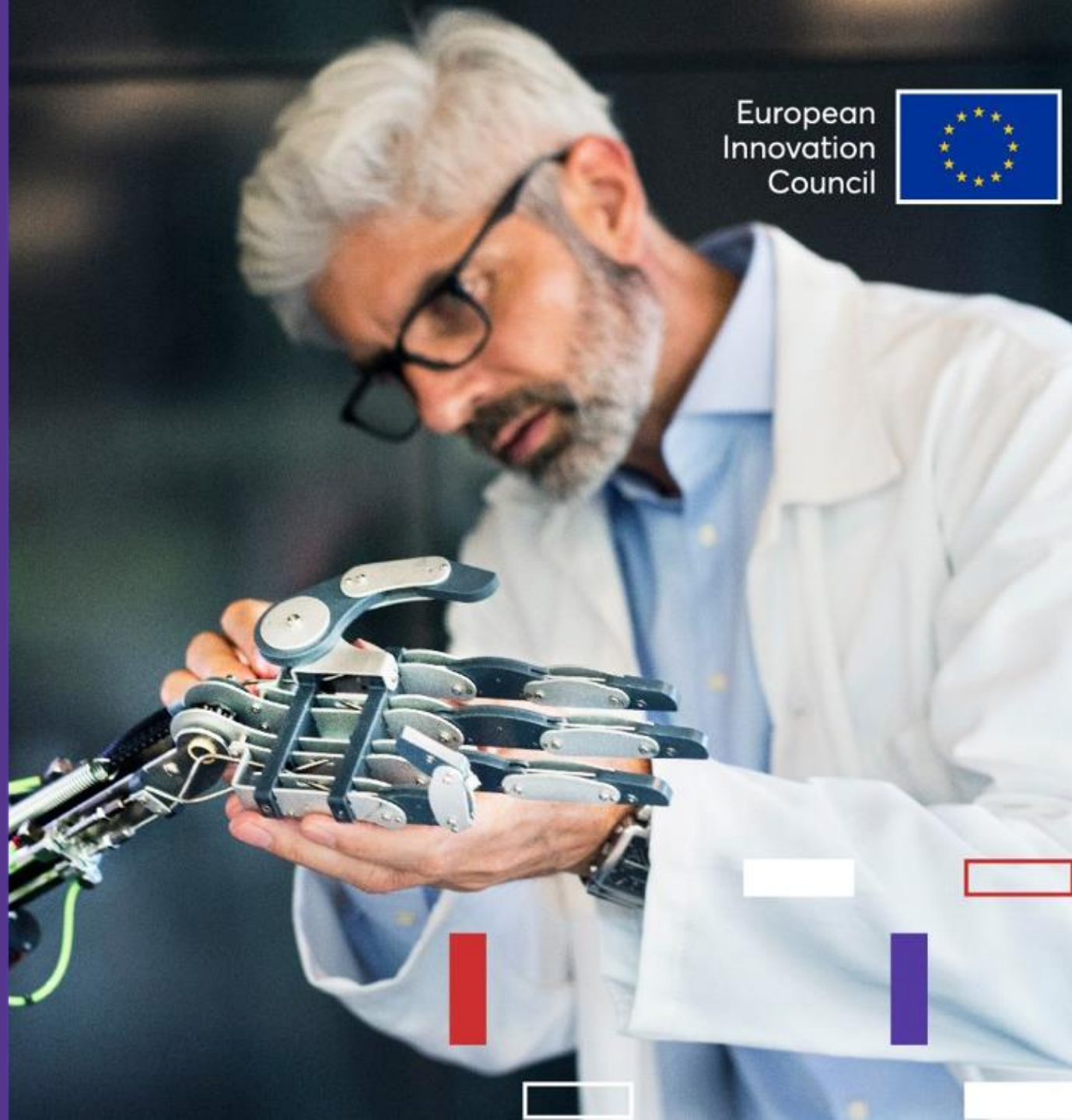




2

# 2024 EIC Pathfinder Challenges call

European  
Innovation  
Council





# PATHFINDER CHALLENGES

## PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

DEADLINE OCTOBER 2023



**371**

**Proposals submitted**



**€163.5 Million**

**Estimated budget**



**2077**

**Participants**



**41**

**Countries**



**€3.2 Million**

**Average EU grant**



**2024**

**Results Spring 2024**

- 116 proposals under Responsible electronics
- 81 proposals under Precision nutrition
- 69 proposals under Clean and efficient cooling
- 66 proposals under Architecture, Engineering and Construction digitalisation for a novel triad of design, fabrication, and materials
- 39 proposals under In-space solar energy harvesting for innovative space applications

# Pathfinder Challenges for 2024



1. *Solar-to-X devices for the decentralised prosumption of renewable fuels, chemicals and materials as climate change mitigation pathway*
2. *Towards cement and concrete as a carbon sink*
3. *Nature inspired alternatives for food packaging and films for agriculture*
4. *Nanoelectronics for energy-efficient smart edge devices*
5. *Strengthening the sustainability and resilience of EU space infrastructure*

EIC Pathfinder Challenges INFODAY: was on 20 March 2024 (9:00-13:00)

See recorded [videos](#) online.

# 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;
- Proactively steered by **EIC Programme Managers**

# 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** as well as an assessment of relevant aspects related to **regulation, certification, and standardization.**
- 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

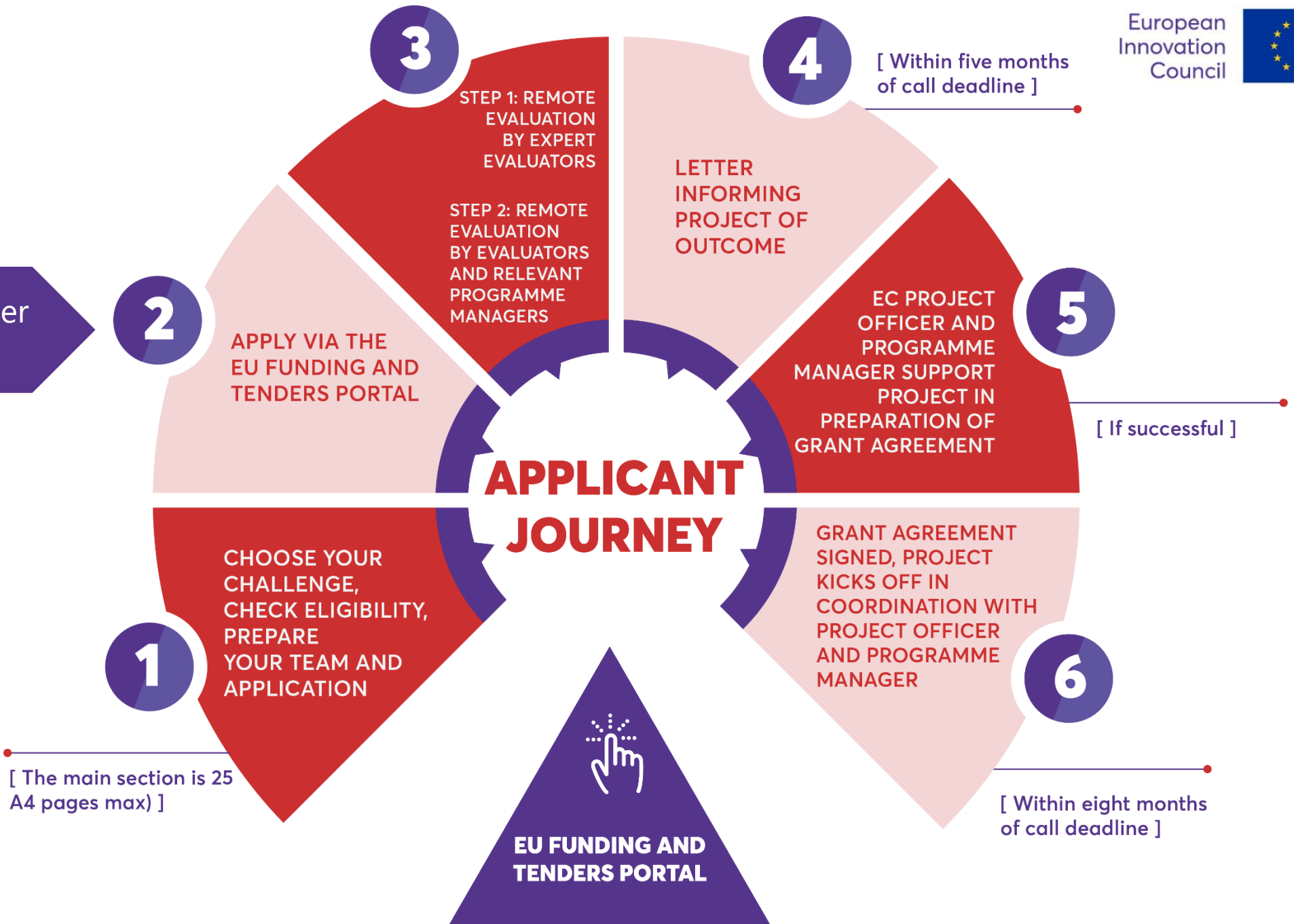
# Pathfinder Challenge Guides



- Challenge Guides provide more guidance and background :
  - **The Scope and Objectives** of the Challenge
  - **Portfolio considerations** used for the final selection of proposals to be funded
  - **Implementation aspects of the Challenge Portfolio**
- Challenge Guides have been published on the [EIC website](https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-pathfinder-new-template/eic-pathfinder-challenges_en):  
[https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-pathfinder-new-template/eic-pathfinder-challenges\\_en](https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-pathfinder-new-template/eic-pathfinder-challenges_en)
- Watch the EIC Pathfinder Challenge Information day [videos](#) too



Apply by 16 October  
2024



# 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**.
- The call opened on 20 June 2024.
- The deadline to submit the proposal is **16 October 2024 at 17.00 CET**.

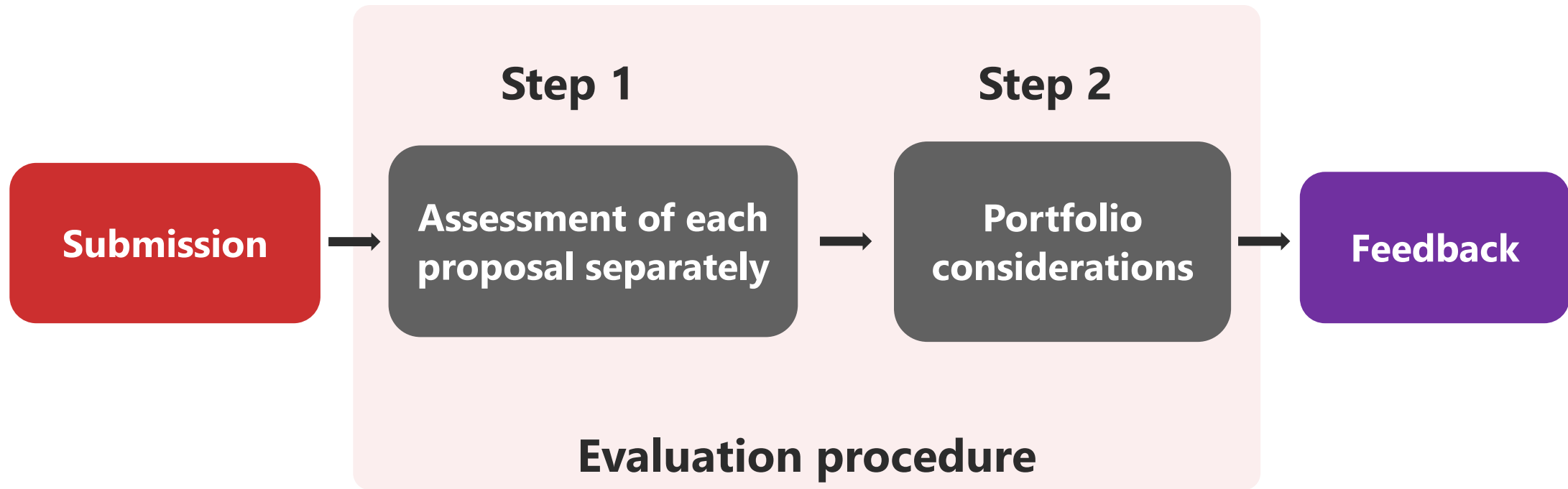




- The Proposal Application Form is composed of **two parts**:
  - **Part A:** to be filled online (no page limit). It contains administrative details, the summarised budget and call specific questions.
  - **Part B:** to be uploaded as a single document (page limit: maximum of **30** A4 pages – Section 1 to 3). It contains the technical description of the project.
- The estimated budget must be described in a **detailed budget table**. This will be used as a basis for justifying and/or fixing the **lump sum amount**.
- Template will be available on the [Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal](#)



# How is proposal funding determined?



**NEW**

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

# Award criterion “Excellence”



- **Long-term vision:** How convincing is the vision of a radically new technology towards 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?
- **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?

Threshold  
4/5

Weight  
60%

**NEW**

# Award criterion “Impact”



Threshold  
3.5/5

Weight  
20%

- **Long-term impact:** How significant are the transformative positive effects to our economy, environment and society?
- **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?
- **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?

NEW

NEW

# Award criterion “Quality and efficiency of the implementation”



- **Work plan:** How coherent and effective are the work plan (work packages, tasks, deliverables, milestones, timeline, 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?
- **Quality of the applicant/consortium (depends if mono or multi-beneficiaries):** To what extent does the applicant / do **all** the consortium members have the necessary **capacity and** high quality expertise for performing the project tasks?

Threshold  
3/5

Weight  
20%

**NEW**

# 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.

# Step 1: Assessment of each proposal separately



- At least three EIC expert evaluators evaluate and score **each proposal individually** with respect to the award criteria
- After the individual evaluation, these evaluators will get together in a **consensus group** to agree on a common position on comments and scores.
- The **evaluation committee** (composed of EIC expert evaluators and EIC Programme Managers) will check consistency across the evaluation of each individual proposal and **finalise the scores and comments** for all proposals





# Step 2: Portfolio considerations



- All proposals that meet the thresholds defined in the award criteria will be considered in step 2
- **Mapping of proposals in categories** stemming from overall goal and specific objectives of the Challenge (e.g., building blocks or subsystems, technical areas and/or competing technologies, platforms, applications areas, risk level and stage of technology readiness level, size)
- A **suitable portfolio of proposals** to be selected by evaluation committee by applying **portfolio considerations** in order to propose for funding a coherent set of projects that will achieve expected outcomes and impacts of the Challenge and maximise their impact.
- Further information and details about categories and portfolio considerations to be detailed in **EIC Pathfinder Challenge Guides**, which will be topic and domain specific
- Evaluation committee may also **propose some minor adjustments** to the proposals.

# Feedback to Applicants



- Applicants will receive an **Evaluation Summary Report** that will comprise of:
  - the **final score**;
  - **comments endorsed** by the evaluation committee;
  - **additional comments**.
- Applicants will also be informed about the **underlying portfolio considerations** in case their proposal **was either retained for funding or** not retained for funding while it received a score that was higher than other proposals retained for funding under the same Challenge.
- **Comments on the detailed lump sum budget table will be provided in the Evaluation Summary Report only for proposals invited to grant agreement preparation (or placed in the reserve list) and ones rejected (in part) due to significant overestimation or underestimation of costs.**

**NEW**

**NEW**

# What support will you receive if your proposal is funded? (1)



- 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 in the form of a lump sum.**
- Total indicative budget for this call: **€ 120 million** (expected to be allocated in approximately equal shares across the Challenges)
- Successful applicants will receive tailor-made access to a wide range of **Business Acceleration Services** and interactions with **EIC Programme Managers** and other actions in the portfolio of projects selected



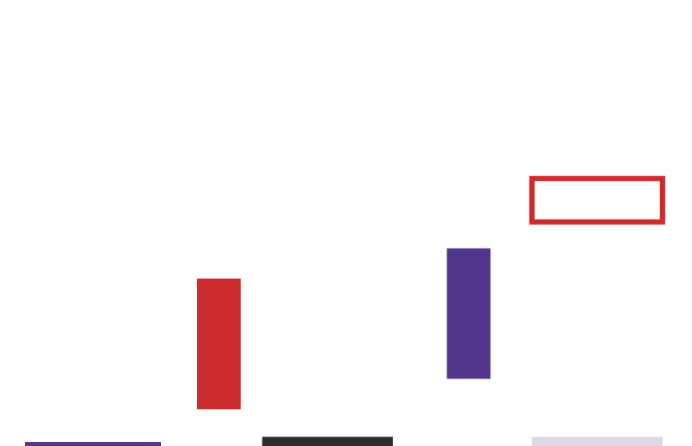
# What support will you receive if your proposal is funded? (2)



- Eligible costs will take the form of a **lump sum** and **the amount will be determined during the evaluation process.**
- Applicants must **propose the amount of the lump sum** based on their estimated project costs
- It is advised to include a **work package** dedicated to **portfolio activities** and allocate at least 10 person-month to it.



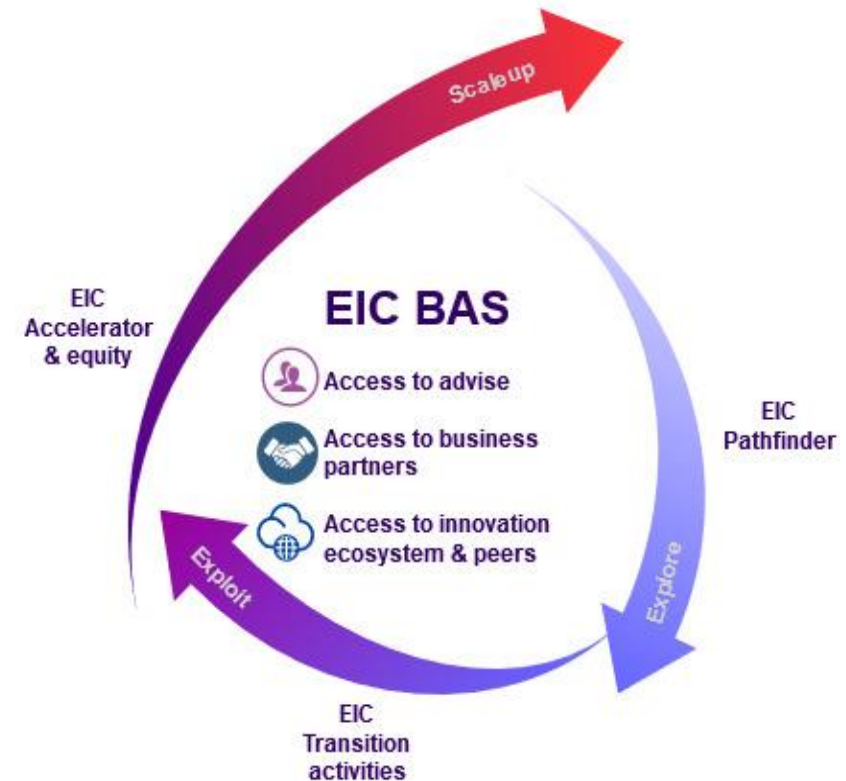
# You will be part of the EIC Community





# Access to Business Acceleration services

-  Accelerate EIC innovations and growth of EIC companies
-  Tailor-made service to meet needs of our clients
-  All EIC beneficiaries: Accelerator, Pathfinder, Seal of excellence, applicants
-  Activate partners all around Europe



**Excellence , European added value , go beyond services that exist**

# Tips to be successful



- Read the WP, the challenges guides and the FAQ carefully
- Follow the Programme Manager, participate in the info days
- Find and connect with partners in the Funding and Tenders Portal
- High risk high gain / novel technology
- Focus on technology and applications – market value
- Join an inter-disciplinary consortium – find your strength and uniqueness





# Thank you !

<https://eic.ec.europa.eu>

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