



Rules of Contest Soft Innovation Prize

Euratom Work Programme 2018

Version 1.0
21 November 2017



1. THEME: SOFT INNOVATION PRIZE

1.1 Objectives pursued

The SOFT Innovation Prize highlights and rewards the excellence in innovation that can be found in fusion research as well as the quality of the researchers and industries involved. Following the successful running of this contest in coordination with SOFT 2014 and 2016 (Symposium on Fusion Technology), the European Commission is holding the contest again in coordination with the next SOFT 2018. There are no specific categories for this prize. Contestants are free to submit an application concerning any physics or technology innovation that has been or is being developed in magnetic confinement fusion research and that has a market potential or has been taken up (or recognised) by industry to be further developed for the market.

1.2 Expected results

By awarding the 'SOFT Innovation Prize', the Commission will showcase innovations in this research sector giving visibility to the most dynamic, forward-looking and innovative researchers, research teams or industrial contestants. This visibility will provide greater potential for valorisation of the research, and the contest will stimulate the research community globally and in the EU to develop a stronger innovation and entrepreneurial culture in fusion research.

2. PRIZE AMOUNTS: First prize: 50 000 EUR, second prize: 25 000 EUR and third prize: 12500 EUR.

3. DEADLINES & ADMISSIBILITY:

Deadlines	
Opening of the submission:	7 December 2017
Closing date for submission:	8 March 2018 at 17:00 CET ¹

Joint applications by a group of participants are admitted. In this case, the participants must appoint a 'lead participant' to represent them towards the Commission. The participants will be jointly responsible and must all fulfil and respect the conditions set out in these Rules of Contest.

Applications must be submitted by the (lead) participant via the Participant Portal 'Submission Service', accessible via the [call page](#).

¹ Central European Time = Brussels local time.

Applications must be readable, accessible and printable. Incomplete applications may be considered inadmissible if essential elements are missing ([see General Annex B to the Main Work Programme](#)).

The researcher, research team or industrial participant must obtain permission from the owner of the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) to submit an application. The owner of the IPR should comment on the state of the IPR, i.e. free or contractually embedded, and name of possible contractor/s.

The complete application for the 'SOFT Innovation Prize' should include the following documents in the application form:

- a. a technical description of the innovation;
- b. a state-of-the-art assessment of the innovation (using a publicly available patent database such as the EPO Espacenet)
- c. an account, in general terms, of the market potential for the exploitation of the innovation;
- d. the contribution that the prize could provide for the exploitation of the innovation.
- e. Proof of IPR permission

The page-limit for this prize is 15 pages.

Sample application forms are available as reference documents on the [Participant Portal](#).

4. ELIGIBILITY:

4.1 Eligibility criteria

1. The contest is open to researchers or research teams funded under the Euratom fusion research programme, to researchers or research teams working for a national programme in an ITER partner country or in any third country that has a bilateral fusion cooperation agreement with Euratom, and to industrial participants benefitting from the ITER project. *Example of proof:* The European Commission may request substantiating document such as contracts, etc.

Please note however that special rules may apply for entities from certain countries ([see General Annex C to the Main Work Programme](#)).

Please also be aware that participants that have already received an EU or Euratom prize cannot receive a second prize for the same activities.

4.2 Exclusion criteria

Participants will be excluded if they (or one of them):

- are subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion)²
- are in one of the following situations³:
 - bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
 - declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
 - found guilty of grave professional misconduct⁴ by a final judgment or decision (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
 - found guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- have misrepresented information required for participating in the contest or fail to submit such information

² See Articles 131(4) and 106(1) Financial Regulation.

³ See Articles 138(2) and 106(1), 107 of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 (OJ L 218, 26.10.2012, p.1).

⁴ Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain an advantage.

- were involved in the preparation of the prize documents and this entails a distortion of competition.

5. AWARD CRITERIA:

The prize will be awarded, after the closure of the contest, to the participant(s) who in the opinion of the jury best address(es) the following cumulative criteria:

1. **Originality and replicability:** The extent to which the idea is innovative, original and a first-of-a-kind use of the technology in industry or in the domain of application. The description should be clear, logically presented and well-illustrated.
2. **Technical excellence:** The extent to which the innovation is demonstrably state-of-the-art and based on excellent science and engineering.
3. **Economic impact and exploitation of the innovation:** The extent to which the submission demonstrates understanding and awareness of the relevant innovation aspects, including market potential / needs and business opportunities.
4. **Plans for potential exploitation and further development of the innovation:** The short term potential for successful exploitation and further development of the innovation, as described in the application.

6. DOCUMENTS:

The mandatory supporting documents are set out in the application form.

Participants may be asked at a later stage for further documents (for legal entity validation, bank account validation, ethics review, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, etc.).

7. PROCEDURE:

The jury evaluation is planned to take place between April 2018 and June 2018.

The jury will evaluate each application against the four award criteria and score them as follows:

Criterion	Threshold	Maximum points
1. Originality and replicability:	3	5
2. Technical excellence:	3	5
3. Economic impact and	3	5

exploitation of the innovation:		
4. Plans for potential exploitation and further development of the innovation:	3	5
Total	12	20

On the basis of the evaluation by the jury, the Commission will decide on the award of the prize. All participants will be informed at the latest in September 2018 (at SOFT conference 2018, Giardini Naxos, Italy) on the outcome of their application.

8. OTHER CONDITIONS:

8.1 Payment arrangements

The prize money (1st prize: 50000 EUR, 2nd prize: 25000 EUR and third prize: 12500 EUR) will be paid to the (lead) participant in one instalment after the award ceremony by bank transfer, provided all the requested documents have been submitted.

8.2 Publicity — Promoting the prize — Visibility of EU funding

8.2.1 Publicity by the winners

The winners must promote the prize and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner.

Unless the Commission requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.) must:

- (a) display the EU emblem and
- (b) include the following text:

“This person was winner of the SOFT Innovation Prize from the Horizon2020 Euratom Research and Training Programme 2014-2018”.

When displayed together with another logo, the EU emblem must have appropriate prominence.

For the purposes of their obligations, the winners may use the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from the Commission.

This does not, however, give it the right to exclusive use.

Moreover, the winners may not appropriate the EU emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

8.2.2 Publicity by the Commission

The Commission may use, for its communication and publicising activities, information relating to the action, documents notably summaries for publication and deliverables as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material that it receives from the winners (including in electronic form).

The Commission will publish the name of the winners, their origin, the amount of the prize and its nature and purpose— unless they have requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threatening its security and safety or harm its commercial interest).

Photos and videos taken by the Commission either in preparation of the award ceremony or during the award ceremony are the sole property of the Commission.

8.3 Dissemination and exploitation of results

The winners must comply with the obligations set out in Title III of the Rules for Participation Regulation No 1290/2013⁵.

8.4 Processing of personal data

8.4.1 Processing of personal data by the Commission

Any personal data will be processed by the Commission under Regulation No 45/2001⁶ and in accordance with the [Participant Portal privacy notice\(s\)](#).

All winners consent that the Commission publishes the following information:

- name
- Member State of origin (address or NUTS 2 region)
- their activities in relation to the award of the prize (via the summary for publication they provided)
- prize amount

in whatever form and medium.

⁵ Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 laying down the rules for participation and dissemination in "Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)" (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013 p81).

⁶ Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8, 12.01.2001, p. 1).

8.4. 2. Processing of personal data by the participants

The participants must process personal data in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements, if any).

8.5 Ethics

The activities must be carried out in compliance with:

- (a) ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and
- (b) applicable international, EU and national law.

No prize will be awarded for activities carried out outside the EU, if they are prohibited in all Member States.

The participants must ensure that the activities have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

The participants must ensure that the activities do not:

- (a) aim at human cloning for reproductive purposes
- (b) intend to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads) or
- (c) intend to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

Research activities involving human embryonic stem cells (hESC) are moreover subject to the conditions set out in the [Statement of the Commission related to research activities involving human embryonic stem cells](#).

The participants must respect the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity⁷.

For more information and best practice, see the Participant Portal Online Manual, the Guidance — How to complete your ethics self-assessment and the Guidance note — Research focusing exclusively on civil applications.

8.6 Security

The activities must be carried out in compliance with Commission Decision [2015/444](#), i.e. security-sensitive information must be EU-classified, if its unauthorised disclosure could

⁷ European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA (All European Academies) and ESF (European Science Foundation) of March 2017 http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf

adversely impact the interests of the EU or of one (or more) of its Member States. Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be awarded a prize.

For more information and best practice, see the Guidance — [Guidelines for the classification of information in research projects](#), the Guidance — [Guidelines for the handling of classified information in EU research projects](#), the Guidance note — [Potential misuse of research results and the Guidance note](#) — [Research involving dual use items](#).

8.7 Conflict of interests

The participants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective award of the prize is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest (**'conflict of interests'**).

They must inform the Commission without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The Commission may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

8.8 Liability for damages

The Commission cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the contestants or to third parties as a consequence of the prize, including for gross negligence.

The Commission cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the prize.

8.9 Checks, audits and investigations

The Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may carry out checks, audits and investigations in relation to the prize.

8.10 Withdrawal of the prize — Recovery of undue amounts

The Commission may withdraw the prize and recover all payments made, if it finds out that:

- (a) false information or fraud or corruption was used to obtain it or
- (b) a winner was not eligible or should have been excluded

- (c) a winner is in serious breach of its obligations under these Rules of Contest.

8.11 Administrative sanctions

If a participant has committed irregularities or fraud or has made false declarations, the Commission may also:

- (a) exclude the participant from all future contracts, grants and contests financed from the EU or Euratom budget for a maximum of five years (or 10 years in case of repetition) and/or
- (b) impose a financial penalty between 2% and 10% of the value of the prize (or between 4% and 20% in case of repetition).

8.12 Cancellation of the contest

The Commission may cancel the contest or decide not to award a prize — without any obligation to compensate participants —, if:

- (a) no applications are received
- (b) the jury does not find a winner or
- (c) the winner is not eligible or must be excluded.

8.13 Complaints

Complaints against decisions negatively affecting the rights of a participant or winner can be brought before the General Court — or, on appeal, the Court of Justice of the European Union — under Article 263 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

9. CONTACT:

In case of questions, please contact RTD-FUSION@ec.europa.eu