



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

RULES OF CONTEST

2018 European Social Innovation Competition

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1. THEME: 2018 European Social Innovation Competition

The European Social Innovation Competition (hereinafter referred to as 'the Competition') is organised by the European Commission (hereinafter referred to as 'the Commission') with the support of a consortium made up of Nesta, Kennisland, European Network of Living Labs, Ashoka and Scholz & Friends (hereinafter all referred to as 'the Contractor'). The Commission department in charge of the Competition is the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, also known as DG GROW.

The official webpage of the Competition on the Commission's website is: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/policy/social/competition_en.

The Competition is funded under the European Union budget. The legal basis for this Competition is the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (see http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/reference_docs.html), and more particularly the 2018-2020 work programme for the societal challenge *Europe in a changing world – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies* (see pages 44-46 in the work programme posted at <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/innovation-smes>).

The Competition is open to natural persons or legal persons established in EU Member States or Associated countries to Horizon 2020 (the list of Associated Countries is available at http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf).

Read these rules of contest carefully before submitting an entry. By submitting an entry, you accept these rules of contest and agree to comply with them.

1.1 Objectives pursued

The objectives of the prize are:

The Competition aims at stimulating social innovation's potential to provide solutions to societal challenges and foster sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe. It will directly support some ideas best illustrating that potential. It will engage citizens, businesses (including start-ups) in a large range of sectors, as well as universities, business and engineering schools, thereby creating new connections, sources of growth and job opportunities.

The 2018 Competition, **RE:THINK LOCAL**, calls for the most innovative products, services, business models and collaborations that empower young people to participate fully in a changing economy. Such ideas should address local challenges or be based on the creation of opportunities, impact and value locally or at community level. Further background on the theme of the Competition is available on the Competition webpage

All ideas are welcome, even if they are not mature yet. The Competition aims to induce new solutions and help them reach the stage of prototyping and implementation.

The Competition has been designed to offer more than just prizes. It includes a strong mentoring component that will benefit not only the winners but all semi-finalists. This mentoring component aims to help participants turn their ideas into tangible and sustainable projects, so that they deliver results and achieve maximum impact. The Competition provides other benefits such as visibility for the ideas and networking opportunities. It will allow semi-finalists to connect to a wide range of social innovation experts, organisations, investors and networks from Europe and beyond.

1.2 Expected results

Entries must be original ideas from contestants. They may propose new or improved ways to implement existing solutions, combine them, or adapt them to a different context or target group, but they cannot be exact copies of those. The contestants must demonstrate the novelty of their solution, in comparison with those already developed/implemented by themselves or by others in their context. The contestants are also expected to indicate how the participation in the Competition may benefit their idea (e.g. prize, mentoring, networking, visibility or other related benefit).

2. PRIZE AMOUNT(S): 200.000 EUR

The Competition will support the winning solutions with cash prizes awarded in two steps:

- **in 2018**, it will award **3 challenge prizes of 50,000 euros** each to the best 3 ideas, from those selected as 'semi-finalists' (i.e. indicatively 30 entries selected for the second phase);
- **in 2019**, it is expected to award **1 impact prize of 50,000 euros** to the project which has achieved most results amongst the above-mentioned 2018 semi-finalists (subject to the allocation of the required budget appropriations).

3. DEADLINES, TIMELINE & ADMISSIBILITY

Deadlines	
Opening of the submission:	21 March 2018
Closing date for submission:	27 April 2018, at 12:00:00 (noon) CET ¹
Assessment of entries	May –June 2018
Social Innovation academy for semi-finalists	16-20 July 2018 – Cluj (Romania)
Submission of detail plans by semi-finalists	August 2018 (exact date to be announced at the Social Innovation academy for semi-finalists)
Assessment of entries	September 2018
Selection of finalists	October 2018
Award of challenge prizes	November 2018
Award of impact prize	November 2019 ²

Apart from the deadline applicable to the first phase of the Competition (27 April 2018, 12:00:00, noon, Brussels time), other timelines remain indicative at this stage and will be confirmed thereafter, with sufficient notice to allow the contestants to prepare for the next steps and organize their travels.

Applications must be submitted, in one of the official languages of the European Union, by the (lead) participant via the online entry form available at <http://eusic.challenges.org>, which is also linked through DG GROW Competition webpage.

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.

¹ Central European Time = Brussels local time.

² Subject to the allocation of the required budget appropriations

Late entries will not be accepted. The Commission is not responsible for entries which are lost, damaged or late due to computer, network or telecommunications failure.

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 provision of a draft plan for dissemination and exploitation is not required for this contest.

4. ELIGIBILITY

4.1 Eligibility criteria

The competition is open to any legal entity (including natural persons) or group of legal entities, except public administrations, established in EU Member States or Associated countries to Horizon 2020 (the list of Associated Countries is available at http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf).

Ideas and proposals from all sources, sectors and all types of organisations including for-profit, non-for-profit, or private companies are welcome. Applications involving several organisations and/or from various countries are possible.

Eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the competition. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the competition period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, your application will be rejected.

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)³
- are in one of the following situations⁴:
 - 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 misconduct⁵ 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)

³ See Articles 131(4) and 106(1) Financial Regulation.

⁴ 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).

⁵ 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.

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

5. AWARD CRITERIA FOR THE CHALLENGE PRIZES

The challenge prizes will be awarded in 2018 to the 3 entries that best address the following cumulative criteria.:

- **Innovation**: either disruptive or incremental (building on what has gone before). Critically, the idea must be innovative within its given socio-economic and geographical context;
- **Impact**: the potential of the proposed idea to tackle the issue outlined in the challenge statement. The entrant should demonstrate a clear definition of the problem they solve and for whom, feeding into a well-elaborated theory of change;
- **Sustainability**: the financial and environmental sustainability of the idea, as well as the potential for adequacy and uptake stemming from the development of the idea carried out with users, from first concept, through testing, validation and business modelling
- **Scale**: the idea's growth potential and potential to scale and be replicated throughout Europe;

6. AWARD CRITERIA FOR THE IMPACT PRIZE

The impact prize will be awarded in 2019 to one of the semi-finalists (see section 8) that can prove the greatest impact over the course of the previous year. For the purposes of the impact prize, impact is defined as the demonstrated capacity of the proposed idea to tackle the issue outlined in the challenge statement.

7. 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).

8. PROCEDURE

The organisation of the Competition is supported by the Contractor, which notably includes facilitating jury meetings, facilitating the social innovation Academy and organising the Awards Ceremony.

At all stages, entries will be assessed by a pre-selection and a selection jury appointed by, but independent from, the Commission composed of various profiles and originating from various countries. Jury members can be appointed to both panels.

The jury will make recommendations to the Commission, which will take the final decision on the lists of semi-finalists, finalists and winners of the Competition. This applies both to the challenge and the impact prizes.

8.1 First phase (May-June 2018)

For the **first phase of the Competition**, all entries which have been received by the deadline will be assessed in order to select the most promising ideas which will qualify for the second phase of the Competition.

The pre-selection jury (**first phase**) will evaluate each application against the **4 award criteria** and score them as follows (half marks are possible decimals are not):

Criterion	Threshold	Maximum points
1. Innovation	20	40
2. Impact	10	20
3. Sustainability	12,5	25
4. Scale	7,5	15
Total	50	100

For applications with the same score, the pre-selection jury will determine a priority order according to the following approach: The score for the criterion No 1 will be given a weight of 2 and the score for criterion No 2 will be given a weight of 1.5.

The final decision in this regard will be taken and made public by the Commission, upon recommendation from the pre-selection jury. The entries with the highest scores (30 entries indicatively) will be selected for the second phase and be **designated as semi-finalists**. They will be informed immediately about that decision.

The other contestants will be informed that their entry has not passed the first phase.

Given the large number of entries which are expected over the first phase of Competition, the Commission will not be in a position to provide individual and customized feedback to unsuccessful contestants at that stage.

8.2 Social Innovation Academy (16-20/07/2018)

The semi-finalists will be invited to attend the social innovation Academy. From the announcement of semi-finalists until the end of the Academy, the Competition process will pause. The Academy will consist of a mentoring session of several days where semi-finalists will receive coaching by international business, communication and finance professionals as well as advice from social entrepreneurs and representatives of public sector organisations.

The travel and accommodation costs for their participation in the Academy will be covered by the Commission (in principle two participants per entry). Being unable to participate in the mentoring session will not prevent semi-finalists from competing for the second phase. Their participation is however highly recommended.

Invitation with detailed information will be sent to the semi-finalists as soon as they are informed of their selection in June 2018.

8.3 Second phase (September 2018)

From the day after the Academy until the end of September 2018, the Competition will enter its second phase.

Once this **second phase** has begun and with the view of ensuring equal treatment between contestants, no contact will be allowed between, on the one hand, the semi-finalists and, on the other hand, Competition organisers and jury members. On the basis of the inputs received during the academy, the semi-finalists will be asked to develop their idea and **to submit a 'detailed plan'**.

Practical modalities will be further specified and communicated to them. **Detailed plans are expected to be submitted at the end of August 2018. The exact deadline will be communicated in due time to semi-finalists.**

The selection jury will evaluate the detailed plans submitted by the semi-finalists against the **4 award criteria** and score them as follows (half marks are possible decimals are not):

Criterion	Threshold	Maximum points
1. Innovation	12,5	25
2. Impact	12,5	25
3. Sustainability	12,5	25
4. Scale	12,5	25
Total	50	100

For applications with the same score, the selection jury will determine a priority order according to the following approach: The score for the criterion No 1 will be given a weight of 2 and the score for criterion No 2 will be given a weight of 1.5.

8.4 Award stage & Award ceremony (October-November 2018)

Upon recommendation from the selection jury, the Commission will select the best entries which will be called **'finalists' and will compete for the three challenge prizes**. Indicatively 10 ideas are expected to be selected as 'finalists' for the **Awards Ceremony**.

The prize winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony. The award of three prizes must be considered an indicative maximum number.

Unsuccessful semi-finalists will receive comments about the strengths and weaknesses of their proposal. Such an assessment will also be provided to finalists and winners, once the Awards Ceremony has taken place.

The travel and accommodation costs for their participation of the "finalists" in the Ceremony will be covered by the Commission (in principle two participants per entry). Unsuccessful semi-finalists are invited too and encouraged to join the Ceremony considering the unique networking and exposure opportunities that the Ceremony provides. The same reimbursement rules will apply to them.

8.5 Third phase

Once the competition for the three challenge prizes is over, **the third phase** of the Competition is expected to open with a view of awarding the Impact Prize in 2019. **This third phase will be restricted to the 2018 semi-finalists** and will aim at incentivizing faster implementation of their ideas and greater results from the projects. This Impact Prize may be awarded to a winner of a challenge prize or to a non-winning semi-finalist irrespectively. The Impact Prize is expected to be awarded during the Awards Ceremony of the 2019 edition, together with the next group of challenge prizes.

The Commission intends to award the Impact Prize against the sole criterion of *impact* as described above but no longer for the potential of the idea. The impact prize will be awarded to the project having achieved the most substantial results. Those results would have to be evidenced and, to the extent possible, quantified against smart indicators.

Subject to budget availability, the Commission intends to launch the competition for the Impact Prize in early 2019. The deadline, for the 2018 semi-finalists to report back on their results, will be communicated to them at that time, as well as the evidence expected from them.

9. OTHER CONDITIONS

9.1 Payment arrangements

The Challenge and Impact prize money (EUR 50.000 for each) will be paid to the winners via bank transfer in one single instalment within 60 days after the award ceremony, provided all the requested documents have been submitted.

Winners are responsible for payment of taxes and applicable when using the prize money.

9.2 Publicity — Promoting the prize — Visibility of EU funding

9.2.1 Publicity by the winner(s)

Both finalist(s) and winner(s) 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 action/activity/person was finalist for/winner of the 2018 EU Social Innovation Competition from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme”.

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

For the purposes of their obligations, the finalist(s) and winner(s) may use the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from the Commission.

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

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

9.2.2 Publicity by the Commission

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

The Commission will publish the name of both the finalist(s) and the winner(s), 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 Academy or award ceremony are the sole property of the Commission.

9.3 Dissemination and exploitation of results

The winner(s) must comply with the obligations set out in Title III of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation No 1290/2013⁶

For more information and best practice, see Articles 23a-31 of the [H2020 AGA — Annotated grant agreement](#).

⁶ 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 p.81).

9.4 Processing of personal data

9.4.1 Processing of personal data by the Commission

Any personal data will be processed by the Commission under Regulation No 45/2001⁶

All finalist(s) and winner(s) 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.

9.4.2 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).

9.5 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](#).

9.6 Equal opportunity

The European Union promotes equality between women and men and shall aim in all its activities to eliminate gender inequalities. Women are particularly encouraged to enter the Competition.

9.7 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 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](#).

9.8 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.

9.9 Liability for damages

The Commission cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the participants 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.

9.10 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.

9.11 Withdrawal of the prize — Recovery of undue amounts

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

- (a) false information, fraud or corruption was used to obtain it
- (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.

9.12 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).

9.13 Cancellation of the contest

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

- (a) no applications are received
- (b) the jury does not find a winner
- (c) the winner is not eligible or must be excluded
- (d) the objective of the contest has already been achieved.

9.14 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).

9.15 Questions and answers

The list of questions and answers about the Competition will be published on the Competition webpage

10. CONTACT

For more information, please see the prize website: <http://eusic.challenges.org/>

For any questions, please contact info@socialinnovationprize.eu