



Horizon Europe

Call for a prize — Rules of Contest

The European Innovation Procurement Awards 2025

HORIZON-EIC-2024-PRIZE-EIPA

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EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL AND SMEs EXECUTIVE AGENCY (EISMEA)

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I.01 EU and place-based Innovation Ecosystems

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS – RULES OF CONTEST

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0. Introduction

This is a call (contest)¹ for an EU recognition **prize** in the field of innovation under the **Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation**.

The regulatory framework for this EU Funding Programme is set out in:

- Regulation 2018/1046 ([EU Financial Regulation](#))
- the basic act (Horizon Europe Regulation(EU) 2021/695²)

The call is launched in accordance with the 2024 [European Innovation Council \(EIC\) Work Programme](#)³ and is managed by the **European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency** ('Agency').

We invite you to read the **call documentation** on the Funding & Tenders Portal Topic page carefully, and in particular these Rules of Contest as well as the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual](#).

These documents provide clarifications and answers to questions you may have when preparing your application:

- the [Call Document](#) (Rules of Contest) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, scope, activities that can be funded and the expected results (sections 1 and 2)
 - available budget and timetable (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility, eligibility (including mandatory documents, sections 5 and 6)
 - criteria for exclusion (section 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - other conditions (section 10)
 - how to submit an application (section 11)
- the [Online Manual](#) outlines the procedures to register and submit applications online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal'). You are also encouraged to visit the the [Prize website](#) to consult the list of prizes funded previously.

¹ For ease of reference and consistency on the Funding & Tenders Portal, the terms 'call', 'project' and 'participant' are used as equivalent to 'contest', 'application' or 'contestants/applicants'.

² Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013 (OJ L 170/1 of 12.05.2021).

³ Commission Implementing Decision C(2023) 8849 of 12 December 2023 on the financing of the European Innovation Council component of the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) and on the adoption of the Work Programme for 2024.

1. Background

Innovation procurement boosts the process of transforming research results and ideas into innovative solutions. It represents an untapped potential to stimulate the demand for innovation. Moreover, it appears to have a positive impact on private spending on research and innovation activities and innovation commercialisation success.

By putting in place dedicated strategies aimed to lift and enhance the use of innovation procurement, the public and private sectors can provide state-of-the-art services and goods to the society and, at the same time, offer new growth and commercialisation opportunities for suppliers of disruptive solutions, particularly start-ups and SMEs.

The European Union has recognized the importance of innovation procurement as a tool for modernizing the public sector, strengthening Europe's industrial competitiveness, and addressing key societal challenges such as climate change and the transition to a sustainable, net-zero economy. The New European Innovation Agenda⁴ sets out a vision for harnessing the power of innovation to drive economic growth, social progress, and environmental sustainability in Europe. The Agenda emphasizes the need for strategic investments in key technologies, including deep tech, and for stronger collaboration between public and private sector actors to foster innovation and promote the uptake of new solutions.

In this context, the European Innovation Procurement Awards 2025 "Facing societal challenge category" focuses on the theme of net-zero, in line with the EU's commitment to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and the recent proposal for a NetZero Industry Act⁵. The awards in this category recognize public and/or private procurer, individuals/natural persons and/or legal entities that are using innovation procurement to support the transition to a sustainable, net-zero economy, and are driving innovation across key sectors such as energy, transportation, construction and manufacturing.

The European Innovation Procurement Awards 2025 "Facing societal challenge category" provides an opportunity to reward the procurement of innovative solutions and /or innovation procurement practices that are driving Europe's transition to a sustainable, net-zero economy, and to recognize the outstanding efforts of those leading the way in this critical area.

2. Objectives – Themes and priorities – Activities– Expected results

Objectives

The European Innovation Procurement Awards 2025 aim to recognise public and private buyers, natural persons and those legal entities supporting these practices across Europe in their efforts to promote and stimulate both procurement of innovative solutions and the innovative ways the solutions are procured.

⁴ A Communication from the Commission on a new European innovation agenda adopted on 5.07.2022 (COM(2022)332 final)

⁵ COM(2023) 161 - Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a framework of measures for strengthening Europe's net-zero technology products manufacturing ecosystem (Net Zero Industry Act)

These Awards complement and encourage synergies with other EIC initiatives aiming to support and foster innovation procurement in the European Union (i.e EIC Business Acceleration Services Innovation Procurement Program)⁶. The Awards also aim to demonstrate how innovation procurement positively transforms society and the economy by not only creating new and sustainable markets, but also by tackling societal challenges such as green energy transition⁷.

Expected results

The awards aim to:

- Stimulate the innovation procurement uptake;
- Acknowledge and support the efforts done by public and private procurers, and legal entities supporting them, to deliver better services and/or to bring products to the market in an innovative way, while facilitating the access to procurement markets to innovative SMEs and start-ups including EIC beneficiaries⁸ and;
- Build a diverse European community of public and private buyers to share, work together and inspire each other in the design of innovative procurement processes, and particularly in the delivery of public services.

Categories

In this edition, the European Innovation Procurement Awards will feature the following two categories⁹:

- **Innovation procurement initiative (including implementation) category:** to reward actions, and completed work from mid/long-term strategies and action plans that trigger different innovation procurements as well as to reward procurements of R&D services and/or procurements to buy and deploy innovative solutions. Special focus will be placed on the facilitation of the access to procurement markets to innovative SMEs and start-ups including EIC beneficiaries¹⁰.

⁶ The contest is open to all public and private procurers, both individuals/natural persons and legal entities supporting the use of innovation procurement and that meet the eligibility criteria set in section 6, including, but not limited to the ones addressing specifically EIC initiatives or EIC beneficiaries. References in this Rules of contest to either of these do not limit in any manner the participation of entities not linked to EIC initiatives, nor affect the evaluation outcome of applications not addressing specifically EIC beneficiaries or not referring to EIC initiatives.

⁷ For the clarifications on the content of each category, please refer to the specific section below

⁸ See footnote 6.

⁹ The first category 'Innovation Procurement Initiative' is open to innovation procurement initiatives that address any challenge. Both categories are open to innovation procurement initiatives that address challenges in any sector (e.g. health, transport, construction, energy, environment, water, manufacturing, education, security etc). The second category 'Facing societal challenges' of this years' European Innovation Procurement Awards is only open to innovation procurement initiatives that support Europe in addressing the societal challenge of transitioning to a Net Zero economy.

¹⁰ See footnote 6.

- **Facing societal challenges category: - “Net Zero Industry Procurement”** to reward procurement practises and/or the procurement of R&D services and/or the procurement and deployment of innovative solutions that contribute to achieving the goals set out in the Net Zero Industry Act. This may include solutions that promote circularity, energy efficiency, and the use of renewable energy in industry, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote sustainable and responsible production and consumption. Special focus will be placed also on the facilitation of the access to procurement markets to innovative SMEs and start-ups including EIC beneficiaries¹¹.

3. Available budget

Each category will reward the winner with EUR 75 000 (1st ranked) and one runner-up (ranked 2nd) with EUR 50 000, and one runner-up (ranked 3rd) with EUR 25 000.

4. Timetable and deadlines

| Timetable and deadlines | |
|---|---|
| Call opening: | 26 June 2024 |
| <u>Deadline for submission:</u> | 26 September 2024 – 17:00:00 CET (Brussels) |
| Evaluation: | September 2024 – January 2025 |
| Information on evaluation results/ award: | January - March 2025 |

5. Admissibility and documents

Applications must be submitted before the **call deadline** (see *timetable section 4*).

Applications must be submitted **electronically** via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section). Paper submissions are NOT possible.

Applications (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided *inside* the Submission System (⚠ NOT the documents available on the Topic page — they are only for information).

Applications must be **complete** and contain all the requested information and all required annexes and supporting documents:

- Application Form Part A — contains administrative information about the applicant organisations (*to be filled in directly online*)
- Application Form Part B — contains the technical description of the application (*to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded as PDF in the system*)

¹¹ See footnote 6.

- Mandatory annex (to be uploaded): the awarded procurement/procurement practice must relate to completed or ongoing initiatives started after 1 January 2019. Therefore, the applicant must submit as an annex a supporting document that proves the starting date of the initiative. This document can be, for example tender documents. This document must be uploaded in the system separately from Part B and have a page limit of 10 pages.

Your application must be **readable, accessible, printable**.

Applications are limited to maximum **15 pages** (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

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

- For more information about the submission process (including IT aspects), consult the [Online Manual](#).

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants (eligible countries)

In order to be eligible, the applicants must comply with the following eligibility criteria:

- Eligible applicants are any public and/or private procurer, individuals/natural persons and/or legal entities supporting the use of innovation procurement¹² established in one of the Member States including overseas countries and territories (OCTs) or [Associated Countries to Horizon Europe](#).
- Winners of all former European Innovation Procurement Awards editions, as well as runners-up of the previous edition 2023-2024, are not eligible;
- Applicants that have already received an EU or Euratom prize cannot receive a second prize for the same activities.

Applicants are expected to provide proof of eligibility upon request.

Applicants must register in the [Participant Register](#) — before the call deadline — and will have to be validated by the Central Validation Service (REA Validation). For the validation, you will be requested to upload documents showing legal status and origin.

¹² Individuals/natural persons and/or legal entities that have supported public and/or private buyers in using innovation procurement includes for example individual experts and national/regional competence centres for innovation procurement that have assisted public or private buyers to create innovation procurement strategies and/or to implement new innovation procurements, as well as policy makers that are public law bodies (such as ministries for public procurement, ministries for research and innovation, regional authorities, or local authorities) that have launched a strategy, action plan or financial support programme that provides political and/or financial support to public or private buyers in their country, region or city to implement more innovation procurements. This does not include suppliers that have provided R&D and / or innovative solutions to public and/or private buyers.

Specific cases

Entities without legal personality — Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons¹³.

Third countries currently negotiating association agreements to Horizon Europe — Applicants established in third countries with ongoing negotiations may participate in the call and can receive a prize if the Horizon Europe association agreement with the third country concerned applies at the time when the award decision is taken (see Annex 2 General conditions for proposals in the EIC Work Programme 2024)

EU restrictive measures — Special rules apply for certain entities (*e.g. entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)*¹⁴ and entities covered by Commission Guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#)¹⁵). Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity.

Measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary — Following the [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for prizes. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible to be awarded the prize.

- ❗ For more information, see [Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment](#).

Eligible activities

Eligible activities, as set out in section 2 above, must:

- The awarded procurement/procurement practice must relate to completed or ongoing initiatives started after 1 January 2019. In the case of ongoing activities, only work completed by the submission deadline will be considered for the prize;
- Applicants can only apply to one of the two categories for the same set of activities. If the applicant submits two or more applications with the same set of activities, the awarding Authority may ask the applicant to choose one or more of them to be withdrawn. If the applicant should refuse to withdraw one or more of them, then the awarding Authority may decide to consider only the latest submitted application and the rest of them will be declared ineligible.

¹³ See Article 197(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

¹⁴ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

¹⁵ Commission guidelines No [2013/C 205/05](#) on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11).

Geographic location (target countries)

The awarded procurement/procurement practice must have taken place in a Member State (including overseas countries and territories, OCTs) or in an Associated Country to Horizon Europe;

Ethics and values

Activities must comply with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles.

Moreover, they must respect basic EU values (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).

The activities must comply with:

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

Applications involving ethics issues will have to undergo an ethics review to authorise funding. Applications that did not respect the above ethical principles and standards cannot be awarded a prize.

Security

Applications involving EU classified information must comply with Decision [2015/444 and its implementing rules](#). Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be awarded a prize.

7. Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate¹⁶:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- guilty of grave professional misconduct¹⁷ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize)

¹⁶ See Articles 136 and 141 EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

¹⁷ 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 advantage.

- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize).

Applicants will also be refused if it turns out that¹⁸:

- during the award procedure they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information
- they were previously involved in the preparation of the call and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

8. Evaluation and award procedure

Applications will be subject to a formal evaluation by a **jury** in each category.

If there are more than 60 applications in one category, there will be a **pre-selection** phase in that category to select the best 60 applications to pass to the jury review. Otherwise, all eligible applications will pass directly to jury review.

The pre-selection panel and jury usually have a different composition, but jury members may participate in the pre-selection panel.

The pre-selection panel/jury will evaluate each application against the award criteria.

For applications with the same score, the pre-selection panel/jury will determine a **priority order** according to the following approach: the score for the criterion No 5 will be given a weight of 2 and the score for criterion No 2 will be given a weight of 1.5. If two or more applications still tie for any rank or category, the prize will be equally divided and awarded to all applications with the same score.

The 6 best ranked applications in each category will be invited for a hearing with the jury in Brussels. This hearing may take place remotely.

On the basis of the evaluation by the jury (and after the mandatory checks: *ethics review, security scrutiny, legal entity validation, non-exclusion, double funding and plagiarism, etc*), the awarding authority will decide on the award of the prize.

All applications will be informed about the evaluation result (**evaluation result letter**). Successful applications will be awarded the prize; the not successful ones will be rejected.

¹⁸ See Article 141(1) EU Financial Regulation [2018/1046](#).

If you believe that the evaluation procedure was flawed, you can submit a **complaint** (following the deadlines and procedures set out in the evaluation result letter). Please note that notifications are deemed to have been accessed (and received) 10 days after sending and that deadlines will be counted from then (see also [Funding & Tenders Portal Terms and Conditions](#)).

9. Award criteria

If admissible and eligible, the applications will be evaluated and ranked against the following **award criteria**:

1. Transformation – stimulating innovation procurement with the aim to ensure a sustainable and inclusive growth. In this criterion, the applicant should bear in mind that this transformation refers to the shift into (a) buying the process of innovation (research and development services); (b) buying the outcomes of innovation; or (c) the establishment of innovation procurement friendly frameworks which include tools to measure results of support actions.

2. Uptake – the innovative procurement practice or action is replicable and scalable, and therefore, contributes to providing, more efficient and effective solutions. In this criterion, among others, the applicant should provide information (KPIs) about how the procurement practice/action is replicable and scalable, the number of countries, entities and/or sectors where the solution has been implemented and/or replicated; or about how it has provided more efficient and effective solutions.

3. Collaboration – demonstrated co-operation linked to the innovation procurement practice. Special attention should be paid to the establishment of synergies, to the promotion of best practices, to the support to capacity building and skill development, and to the efforts of knowledge sharing between stakeholders within the different territories, especially among those at different state of maturity in innovation procurement. In this criterion, among others, the applicant should provide information (KPIs) about the number of partners (including start-ups, universities, academics, public and private organisations) involved in this collaboration; publications; conferences and events organised/attended to share knowledge, actions implemented to foster collaboration; or about the ratio of engagement and influence within the innovation ecosystem.

4. Innovative SMEs and start-ups access to procurement markets – how the innovative procurement practise or action facilitates the access of innovative SMEs and start-ups (including but not limited to EIC beneficiaries¹⁹) to procurement markets. Complementarity and synergies with other EIC initiatives aimed at supporting and fostering innovation procurement in the European Union²⁰ must be taken into account²¹.

5. Societal impact – procurement practices/actions with a demonstrated positive quantitative and qualitative impact on society, with special emphasis to achieving the green deal and digital transformation priorities. In this criterion, among others, the applicant should provide information (KPIs) about the number of purchased and deployed

¹⁹ See footnote 6.

²⁰ The EIC initiatives supporting innovation procurement are provided through the [EIC Business Acceleration Services Innovation Procurement Programme](#).

²¹ In view of the open nature of the prize, previous involvement with other EIC initiatives aimed at supporting and fostering innovation procurement in the European Union will not affect the evaluation outcome of applications.

solutions and/or projects implemented that contribute to achieving green and digital transitions; or about concrete positive transformations in the ecosystem.

| Award criteria | Minimum pass score | Maximum score |
|---|--------------------|---------------|
| Transformation | 6 | 10 |
| Uptake | 6 | 10 |
| Collaboration | 6 | 10 |
| Innovative SMEs and start-ups access to procurement markets | 6 | 10 |
| Societal impact | 6 | 10 |
| Overall (pass) scores | 30 | 50 |

Maximum points: 50 points.

Individual thresholds: 6/10 points.

Overall threshold: 30 points.

Applications must pass both the individual thresholds and the overall threshold. The prize will be awarded to the application with the best scores. Other applications will be rejected.

10. Other conditions

Payment arrangements

The prize money will be paid to the prize winners after the award ceremony, provided all the requested documents have been submitted. In case of a group of winners, the payment will be made to the lead applicant.

Communication — Dissemination — Visibility of funding

Prize 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.

Communication activities related to the prize (*including media interviews, press statements, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.*), must acknowledge EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages, where appropriate):



Funded by the
European Union



Co-funded by the
European Union



Funded by the
European Union



Co-funded by the
European Union

The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text.

Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.

When displayed in association with other logos (*e.g. of winners or sponsors*), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

For the purposes of these obligations, the winners may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from the awarding authority. This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

Any communication or dissemination activity related to the prize must use factually accurate information.

Moreover, it must indicate the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate):

“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or of the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the awarding authority can be held responsible for them.”

IPR – Rights of use

The awarding authority does not obtain ownership of the results produced in the context of the prize.

The awarding authority has the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the prize and materials and documents received from the winners (*such as pictures or audio-visual material, in paper or electronic form*) for information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes.

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

Checks, audits and investigations

The awarding authority, the European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the European Court of Auditors (ECA) may carry out checks, audits and investigations in relation to the prize.²²

Withdrawal of the prize – Recovery of undue amounts

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

- false information, fraud or corruption was used to obtain it
- the prize winners were not eligible or should have been excluded or
- the prize winners are in serious breach of their obligations under these Rules of Contest.

11. How to submit an application

All applications must be submitted directly online via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System. Paper applications are NOT accepted.

You can access the Portal [here](#), or by clicking 'Apply now' on the official prize webpage.

Submission is a **2-step** process:

a) create a user account and register your organisation

To use the Submission System (the only way to apply), all participants need to [create an EULogin user account](#).

²² For the powers of OLAF, EPPO and ECA, see Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (OJ L 248, 18/09/2013, p. 1), Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/1996 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L 292, 15/11/1996, p. 2), Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 of 12 October 2017 implementing enhanced cooperation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office ('the EPPO') and Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and Article 257 of EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

Once you have an EULogin account, you can [register yourself as a natural person](#) in the Participant Register. When your registration is finalised, you will receive a 9-digit participant identification code (PIC).

b) **submit the application**

Access the Electronic Submission System via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section.

Submit your application in 3 parts, as follows:

- Part A includes administrative information about the applicant organisations . Fill it in directly online
- Part B (description of the action) covers the technical content of the application. Download the mandatory word template from the Submission System, fill it in and upload it as a PDF file
- Mandatory Annex: (if any; *see section 5*). Upload them as PDF files (single or multiple depending on the slots). Excel upload is sometimes possible, depending on the file type.

The application must keep to the **page limits** (*see section 5*); excess pages will be disregarded.

Documents must be uploaded to the **right category** in the Submission System otherwise the application might be considered incomplete and thus inadmissible.

The application must be submitted **before the call deadline** (*see section 4*). After this deadline, the system is closed and applications can no longer be submitted.

Once the application is submitted, you will receive a **confirmation e-mail** (with date and time of your application). If you do not receive this confirmation e-mail, it means your application has NOT been submitted. If you believe this is due to a fault in the Submission System, you should immediately file a complaint via the [IT Helpdesk webform](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the application (and, if possible, screenshots to show what happened).

Details on processes and procedures are described in the [Online Manual](#). The Online Manual also contains the links to FAQs and detailed instructions regarding the Portal Electronic Exchange System.

12. Help

Additional information can be found:

- [European Innovation Procurement Awards website](#)
- [European Innovation Council \(EIC\) Work Programme 2024](#)
- [Prize FAQs](#)
- [Online Manual](#)

Please also consult the Topic page regularly, since we will use it to publish call updates.

Contact

For individual questions on the Portal Submission System, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#).

Non-IT related questions should be sent to the following email address: EISMEA-EUIPA@ec.europa.eu.

Please indicate clearly the reference of the call and topic to which your question relates (*see cover page*).

13. Important



IMPORTANT

- **Don't wait until the end** — Complete your application sufficiently in advance of the deadline to avoid any last minute **technical problems**. Problems due to last minute submissions (*e.g. congestion, etc.*) will be entirely at your risk. Call deadlines can NOT be extended.
- **Consult** the Portal Topic page regularly. We will use it to publish updates and additional information on the call (call updates).
- **Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Exchange System** — By submitting the application, all applicants **accept** to use the electronic exchange system in accordance with the [Portal Terms & Conditions](#).
- **Registration** — Before submitting the application, all applicants must be registered in the [Participant Register](#). The participant identification code (PIC) (one per applicant) is mandatory for the Application Form.
- **Joint applications** — Joint applications by a group of applicants are admitted. In this case, you must appoint a lead applicant (coordinator) to submit the application and represent you towards the awarding authority. All applicants will be jointly responsible and must all fulfil and respect the conditions set out in these Rules of Contest.
- **No double funding** — There is a strict prohibition of double funding from the EU budget. Applications that have already received an EU prize cannot receive a second prize for the same activities.
- **Resubmission** — Applications may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission. For first past the post prizes with cut-off dates, applications can be changed and re-submitted until the cut-off date; the re-submission may however let you use your position as first in place.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in these Rules of Contest (and the documents they refer to). Applications that do not comply with all the call conditions will be **rejected**. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire application will be rejected.
- **Cancellation** — The awarding authority may cancel the contest or decide not to award the prize — without any obligation to compensate participants (*e.g. no applications, jury cannot determine winner, winner is not eligible or must be excluded, objectives have already been achieved, etc*). In this case, you will be informed via a call update.
- **Language** — You can submit your application in any official EU language. However, for reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English. If you need the call documentation in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, see *section 12*).

- **Transparency** — In accordance with Article 38 of the [EU Financial Regulation](#), information about EU prizes awarded and the winners (name, address and amount awarded) is published each year on the [Europa website](#).

The publication can exceptionally be waived (on reasoned and duly substantiated request), if there is a risk that the disclosure could jeopardise your rights and freedoms under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights or harm your commercial interests.

- **Data protection** — Any processing of personal data in the context of this prize will be done in accordance with Regulation [2018/1725](#). It will be processed solely for the purpose of evaluating your application (and subsequent management of your prize and, if needed, programme monitoring, evaluation and communication). Details are explained in the [Funding & Tenders Portal Privacy Statement](#).