



FUNDING SCHEME

«RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation of the Research and Innovation Foundation

PROGRAMME

«Bilateral Collaborations»

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

BILATERAL/ISRAEL (IIA)/0524



Co-funded by
the European Union



Republic of Cyprus



RESEARCH
& INNOVATION
FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

The Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF) announces the **“Bilateral collaboration Cyprus – Israel (IIA)” Call for Proposals**, under the **“Bilateral Collaborations” Programme**, within the framework of the **“RESTART 2016-2020” Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation** and invites potential beneficiaries to submit relevant Project Proposals (Proposals).

The present Call will be co-financed by the Republic of Cyprus and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), in the frame of the Operational Programme «ΘΑΛΕΙΑ» 2021-2027 under Priority 1: “Competitive, Smart and Digital Economy” and the Specific Objective (1i): “Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies”.

GENERAL CALL INFORMATION

Pillar	I. SMART GROWTH
Programme	Bilateral Collaborations
Call Identifier	BILATERAL/ISRAEL (IIA)/0524
Source of Funding	Operational Programme «ΘΑΛΕΙΑ» 2021-2027 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
Call Budget	900.000 Euro
Maximum Funding Per Project	200.000 Euro
Publication Date	21 May 2024
Submission Deadline	30 October 2024, 12:00

The English version of the Call, even though an official translation endorsed by the Research and Innovation Foundation, is provided for information purposes only. Only the Greek version of the Call is legally binding and shall prevail in case of any divergence in interpretation.

OBJECTIVES

The “Bilateral Collaborations” Programme aims at developing collaborations and networking of Cypriot organisations with organisations of a specific collaboration country through the implementation of joint research Projects in selected thematic areas of interest to both parts.

Specific targets and objectives:

- The development of collaborations between Cypriot organisations and leading European and/or international organisations.
- Expansion of the role and upgrade of existing bilateral agreements.
- The development of new bilateral agreements with countries of specific interest.

- Activation of general agreements - cooperation frameworks in matters of research and technological development through the promotion of joint programmes.
- Promotion of the participation of Cypriot organisations in international RTDI programmes.

The Cyprus – Israel (IIA) joint Call for Proposals aims to promote and support collaboration between Israeli and Cypriot scientists. The Funding Agency on the Israeli side is the Israel Innovation Authority (IIA).

DESCRIPTION

The starting point for the “Bilateral Collaborations” Programme is the Bilateral Agreements or Cooperation Protocols signed by the Cypriot Government and the Government of another country. Usually, one of their fundamental provisions is the launch of a Joint Collaboration Programme in the areas of Research and Innovation which allows interested organisations from the two countries to submit proposals for the implementation of joint projects in selected thematic areas that reflect the common interests of the two parts.

The Research and Innovation Foundation for Cyprus, and another organisation/agency from the other country undertake the responsibility for implementing the provisions set by each Agreement or Cooperation Protocol.

Usually, in each Call for Proposals in the frame of the “Bilateral Collaborations” Programme, different evaluation, selection, funding and monitoring procedures may apply, depending on the provisions of the Agreement between the two countries.

In the frame of the Programme, it is expected that the supported projects apart from networking activities will also include research activities that serve the Priority Sectors of the S3Cy. Therefore, although it is possible to specify Thematic Areas within a Call for Proposals according to the provisions of the Agreement between the two countries, it should be in the frame that has emerged through the S3Cy.

The aim of the Cyprus – Israel (IIA) joint Call for Proposals is to support the development of scientific and technological cooperation between Cypriot and Israeli enterprises and other organisations.

As the Programme is part of Pillar I - “Smart Growth”, proposed projects are expected to include activities in one of the S3Cy Priority Sectors:

- 1. Digital Technologies**
- 2. Advanced Materials**
- 3. Agrifood**
- 4. Maritime and Shipping Ecosystems**
- 5. Renewable energy**
- 6. Space Ecosystem**

7. Health

8. Environment

BENEFICIARIES

Research Organisations, Enterprises, Other Organisations

SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

The Host Organisation (HO) can be a Research Organisation (Cat. A.1, A.2) or an Enterprise (Cat. B.1, B.2, B.3) or Other Organisations (Cat. C.1, C.2). The Cypriot Consortium must include at least one Enterprise (B.1, B.2, B.3).

Research Organisations, Enterprises or Other Organisations may participate as additional Partner Organisations in the Cypriot Consortium.

At least 40% of the project budget of the Cypriot Consortium must be allocated to Enterprises (Type B) that participate in the Consortium.

The Bilateral Consortium, in addition to the Cypriot participants, must include at least one Small-Medium Enterprise (SME) from Israel. It is noted that the Bilateral Consortium, which will be composed of Israeli and Cypriot entities, it must consist of legal entities, independent of one another, none of them being under the direct or indirect control of the other or under the same direct or indirect control.

Participation of Large Enterprises (including Private Universities) is only permitted when an SME is also participating in the Cypriot Consortium, in accordance with EU Regulation 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The Projects must include only Industrial Research and/or Experimental Development.

Projects must fall within Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 4-7 in compliance with the relevant definitions adopted by the EU¹.

¹ The Technology Readiness Levels adopted by the EU are the following:

TRL 1 - basic principles observed,

TRL 2 - technology concept formulated,

TRL 3 - experimental proof of concept,

TRL 4 - technology validated in lab,

TRL 5 - technology validated in relevant environment,

TRL 6 - technology demonstrated in relevant environment,

TRL 7 - system prototype demonstration in operational environment,

TRL 8 - system complete and qualified,

DURATION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

12-24 Months

BUDGET

€ 900.000

MAXIMUM FUNDING PER PROJECT

€200,000

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Personnel costs, Instruments and Equipment Costs, Costs for External Services, Costs for Travelling Abroad, Consumables, Other Specific Costs, Overheads.

It is noted that, all beneficiaries that have not previously participated in the RESTART 20262020 Programmes, should make use of the simplified cost Method "Standard Scales of Unit Costs" for the calculation of personnel costs.

MANAGEMENT & EXPLOITATION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Ownership of background and foreground Intellectual Property (IP), as well as relevant conditions for the use of IP, shall be settled accordingly through bilateral or other agreements among Consortium Partners.

RESTART 2016-2020 WORK PROGRAMME

All general rules and procedures for the participation of organisations and individuals, the eligible activities and costs, as well as the specific information regarding the "Cyprus Israel (IIA) - Bilateral Collaboration" Programme, as well as the other RESTART 2016-2020 Programmes, are included in the **RIF's Work Programme for the "RESTART 2016-2020" Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period 05/2022 – 12/2024**, which is the main reference document and an important information source for interested parties and can be found on the Research and Innovation Foundation's **IRIS (Innovation Research Information System) Portal** (<https://iris.research.org.cy/#/documentlibrary>).

TRL 9 - actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies)

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

In the frame of the present Call, the following specific conditions apply:

- Each enterprise may participate in up to two (2) proposals cumulatively either as a Contractor or as a Partner.
- Once the Joint Committee's selection decision is announced, Project Coordinators will have the right to submit a request for redress to RIF, regarding the procedure followed, within 10 calendar days via email (not through IRIS), as described in **Annex - Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process in the "Bilateral Collaborations" Programme**.
- All private legal entities (Host Organisation and Partner Organisations) should submit to the Competent National Registries updated data regarding their ultimate beneficial owners as per "The prevention and suppression of money laundering and terrorist financing Law of 2007 (188(I)/2007)". RIF reserves the right to carry out checks in the competent Registers and to request an official proof for the registration.
- Funded Projects should comply with the "Do No Significant Harm" principle, according to which they must not include or support activities that could cause significant harm to any of the six environmental objectives, as per Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 2020/852, on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment.

SUBMISSION

Participants have to submit Project Proposals at national level, according to their country's regulations, in order to secure funding from their respective national funding organisation.

Proposals for the Cypriot participants are submitted through the Research and Innovation Foundation's **IRIS Portal** (<https://iris.research.org.cy>).

The Project Coordinator and all the local organisations participating in the Cypriot Project Consortium, should register in advance on the IRIS Portal.

Potential applicants are advised to read the "**Guide for Applicants**", which contains guidelines and clarifications regarding the Submission procedure and the "**IRIS Portal User Manual**" which can be found on the IRIS Portal (<https://iris.research.org.cy/#/documentlibrary>).

The Research and Innovation Foundation encourages in all its Calls for Proposals:

- *the participation of women as Project Coordinators, and*
- *a gender-balanced participation in Projects.*

The Project Proposal consists of the following parts:

1. Part A – General Information & Budget (electronic form (fields) to be completed online through the IRIS Portal).

2. Part B – Technical Annex (document to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format). **Note:** *The template provided for this Call must be submitted **without any alterations**. The Part B template for this Call can be found on the IRIS Portal, under the relevant Call for Proposals (Call Documents).*
3. Annex I – Curricula Vitae (document to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format and includes the CVs of the Coordinator and the key personnel of the project team – **Optional Submission**). **Note:** *It is recommended that CVs are created according to the EUROPASS format and do not exceed 5 pages per person.*

PROJECT SELECTION

Evaluation Procedure

For the evaluation of Proposals to be submitted under this specific Call for Proposals, each country follows an independent and separate procedure.

A Proposal Eligibility Check and a remote scientific evaluation procedure by one (1) independent evaluator, as described in the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme, will be performed by the RIF. **It is noted that, in case the requested documents are not submitted at the Proposal submission stage, then the proposal will not be forwarded for scientific evaluation.**

Before scoring each proposal according to the evaluation criteria, the following will be considered:

- (a) the Objectives of the Programme, and the Call for Proposals, and
- (b) the selected S3Cy priority sector/sub-sector, and
- (c) the “Do No Significant Harm” principle, and

the compatibility of the proposed type(s) of research with the proposed Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) and those allowed by the Call for Proposals.

The evaluator will not proceed with the assessment of the evaluation criteria should the Proposal fail the compatibility assessment.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Excellence – Weight 40%

- Quality of Project Objectives.
- Degree of Project Innovation and Originality in relation to the existing knowledge (state-of-the-art) at international level.
- Soundness, credibility and feasibility of the proposed concept.
- Justification for the selection of the involved research teams, particularly the Collaboration Country Organisation(s) (CCO).

- ⬡ Degree of collaboration between partners from the two countries.
- ⬡ Relevance of the proposed research activities (industrial research, experimental development) with the Project's and Call's objectives.

2. Added Value and Benefit – Weight 30%

- ⬡ Scientific and/or technological and/or social and/or economic impact at national and international level and measures to maximize it.
- ⬡ Effectiveness of the proposed measures for the exploitation and dissemination of results for achieving maximum Project visibility.
- ⬡ Added value generated through this cooperation and prospects for further collaboration between the participating research teams.

3. Implementation – Weight 30%

- ⬡ Completeness and appropriateness of the proposed work, the allocation of the various activities, the timetable and the budget.
- ⬡ Effectiveness of the proposed methodology for the implementation of the deliverables.
- ⬡ Completeness, quality and capacity of the Consortium and the CCO(s) (qualifications / expertise / experience / available resources and infrastructures) for the joint qualitative implementation of the Project (at the level of Organisations and/or individuals) and achievement of the proposed objectives.
- ⬡ Suitability and adequacy of the proposed coordination and management activities, including identification and handling of potential risks.

Selection

The final selection of the Proposals to be funded will be made by the Joint Cyprus – Israel (IIA) Committee, based on the evaluation results of both countries. Only proposals with an average score above-threshold 12.00/15.00 will be considered for selection by the Joint Cyprus – Israel (IIA) Committee.

INFORMATION – CONTACT DETAILS

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The Research and Innovation Foundation may at its discretion, proceed to the extension or revocation of the present Call by applying the same publication procedure.

Annex

Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process in the “Bilateral Collaborations” Programme

1. After the deadline for submission of proposals, the two cooperating national funding agencies exchange tables containing the proposals submitted to each country for preliminary check purposes. Only proposals passing the preliminary check procedure by both national agencies are forwarded for scientific evaluation.
2. The national agencies carry out separate evaluation procedures, in accordance with each country's national regulations and the evaluation criteria published in the Call for Proposals. Only proposals submitted in both countries are evaluated.
3. Each national funding agency draws up its own proposals ranking list according to the scores received by each proposal during the evaluation.
4. The national agencies exchange their proposals ranking lists before the meeting of the Joint Committee of the 2 countries.
5. Only proposals deemed eligible under national regulations in both countries will be forwarded to the Joint Committee for final selection (this refers to proposals with an evaluation score of at least 12.00/15.00).
6. At the Joint Committee meeting, representatives of the cooperating national funding agencies will:
 - i. establish a joint proposals ranking list in accordance with the average score obtained by the proposals (*only the eligible ones*) in the separate evaluations of the two countries,
 - ii. select the proposals to be funded¹ according to:
 - the joint proposals ranking list, and
 - the available budget until its exhaustion, and
 - iii. summarise the rationale behind the selection of the Joint Committee.
7. In case of proposals with equal score, if there is no available budget to fund all of them, the selection of the Joint Committee will be taken according to the following tie criteria:
 - i. In order of the average score received in the “Excellence” criterion.
 - ii. If proposals are still tied, in order of the average score received in the “Added Value and Benefit” criterion.
8. The national agencies will:
 - i. announce the preliminary results (Joint Committee selection and joint proposals ranking list without score but with a funding decision), and
 - ii. send to the IIA / RIF Project Coordinators ² an email with an attached letter announcing the result, without the Evaluation Report.
9. PCs will have the right to submit a request for redress to their respective funding agency, regarding the procedure followed, within 10 calendar days to RIF³.
10. A Joint Redress Committee will be set up to examine only those requests for redress that have been submitted to both national funding agencies.
11. In case a breach of the foreseen evaluation process is substantiated, the two cooperating national funding agencies will take the necessary corrective actions.

² Relevant information will also be sent to the Legal Representatives (LRs)

³ Redress requests will be submitted by email (not through the IRIS platform)

12. The outcome of the Joint Redress Committee decision shall be communicated to the PIs / PCs by the national funding agencies, with the obligation to disseminate it to the rest of the partners of the proposal(s).
13. The final results will be announced.