



FUNDING SCHEME

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

PROGRAMME

«Commercial Proof of Concept - Energy»

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

COM-CONCEPT-ENERGY/0624



**Funded by the
European Union**
NextGenerationEU



Republic of Cyprus



RESEARCH
& INNOVATION
FOUNDATION



ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΗ

The Research and Innovation Foundation announces the Call for Proposals for the «Commercial Proof of Concept - Energy» of the «Commercial Proof of Concept - Energy» Programme within the framework of the «RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period 05/2022 – 12/2024 and invites potential beneficiaries to submit relevant Project Proposals (Proposals).

The present Call will be financed by the Recovery and Resilience Facility of the Next Generation EU instrument, in the frame of the action C6.117 « Thematic research in enterprises for energy production, storage, transmission and distribution solutions ». The Action is implemented under Policy Axis 6, and specifically the Component 6.1 «REPowerEU» of the Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan.

GENERAL CALL INFORMATION

Pillar	I. Smart Growth
Programme	Commercial Proof of Concept - Energy
Call Identifier	COM-CONCEPT-ENERGY/0624
Source of Funding	Recovery and Resilience Facility EU
Call Budget	1.607.00 Euro
Maximun Funding Per Project	200.000 Euro
Publication Date	26 June 2024
Deadline	25 October 2024, 13.00

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 «Commercial Proof of Concept» Programme aims to accelerate innovation in the energy production, storage, transmission and distribution verticals and address key challenges in grid integration, renewable energy utilization, and energy system resilience.

The primary objective is to support transitioning solutions from pilot deployments to commercial readiness. It helps intensify R&D efforts to scale up and optimize solutions already deployed in the field.



It aims to enhance the performance, reliability, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of existing technologies, ensuring their viability for widespread adoption in primarily industrial and commercial applications.

DESCRIPTION

Through this Programme it is expected that enterprises will have the opportunity to verify the commercial industrial application potential of a technology/knowhow that will address challenges in the areas of energy production, storage, transmission and distribution and address key challenges in grid integration, renewable energy use and energy system resilience.

The Programme will fund research projects with experimental development activities aimed at developing technological solutions with a view to their exploitation mainly in industrial and commercial applications.

As the Programme is part of Pillar I, “Smart Growth”, the projects must be applicable in one of the designated Priority Sectors, provided that they are in line with the objectives of REPowerEU.

Proposals submitted under this Call should address challenges in energy production, storage, transmission and distribution.

Of particular interest are solutions that address the following challenges, but not limited to these specifically:

- (a) Management of dispersed generation and smooth and reliable integration into the energy infrastructure including demand-side management through use of platforms to monitor production, control/cutback production, modify operational settings, etc.
- (b) Efficient, economic and environmentally sustainable energy storage including the ability to cope with response to demand, capabilities for seamless grid integration ensuring stability, flexibility and resilience and minimization of the environmental footprint of energy storage solutions.
- (c) Use of advanced technologies to modernize aging grid infrastructure, including the digitalization of transmission and distribution systems through the use of sensors and communication devices and harnessing the power of data analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence to analyze large grid datasets and optimize grid operations, equipment failures and provide decision support for drive operators and also consumers.
- (d) Grid Resilience and Security: Enhancing the resilience of energy production, storage, transmission and/or distribution against physical and cyber threats by implementing robust security measures, hardening strategies and resilience-enhancing technologies.

BENEFICIARIES

Research Organisations (A.1, A.2), Enterprises (B.1, B.2, B.3), Other Organisations (C1, C.2)).



SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

- The Host Organisation (HO) of a project must be a Small, Medium or Large Sized Enterprise (B1, B2, B3) who can document sales and turnover through audited financial statements of the last 2 years (according to the previous financial year (N-1) or the year preceding it (N-2), where "N" is the year of the date of announcement of the Call).
- The project should be initiated by the Enterprise/Host Organisation, which should have a direct and significant commercial interest in achieving the Call's objectives.
- Research Organisations (Cat. A), Enterprises (Cat. B) or Other Organisations (Cat. C) may participate as Partner Organisations.
- Please note that participation of a Large Enterprise in a RESTART 2016-2020 Programme project is possible after the justification, through the proposal, of the incentive effect that the funding will have for the Large Enterprise, as specified in Chapter 1.2, Section III, of the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme for the Period 05/2022 – 12/2024.
- Enterprises will have the possibility to use research results for the development and production of innovative technological solutions (i.e. through exclusive or non-exclusive licenses) as described in the provisions of the current Work Programme Section III, Chapter 7 - "Exploitation and Dissemination of Knowledge". Additionally, in case of participation of a Research Organisation, the Host Organisation should be granted the right for first refusal on IP generated through project results.
- The participation of Foreign Research Organisations is allowed.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- The projects must necessarily include Experimental Development activities. They may also include Industrial Research activities and/or Feasibility Study.
- Under the Feasibility study activities the following are included: Scientific / technical Feasibility Study for the innovative business idea, including the investigation of its commercial potential, and validation of the business model
- Project activities should fall within Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 5-8, but it must include at least activities of TRL ≥ 6 in compliance with the relevant definitions adopted by the EU¹ (this will be, inter alia, an evaluation point during the scientific evaluation of the Projects).

¹ The Technology Readiness Levels adopted by the EU are:

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

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



DURATION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

12 months

BUDGET

€ 1,607,000

MAXIMUM FUNDING PER PROJECT

€ 200,000

ELIGIBLE COSTS

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

The calculation of the Proposal Budget will be based on the simplified cost method “Personnel costs plus 40% on Personnel Costs for covering the rest of the Project costs”.

All beneficiaries that have not previously participated in the RESTART 2016-2020 Programmes, should make use of the simplified cost Method «Standard Scales of Unit Costs» for the calculation of personnel costs.

SERVICES OF THE CENTRAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER OFFICE (KTO)

The beneficiaries of the following Programmes will automatically become beneficiaries of the services and tools for support and knowledge transfer that will be provided by the RIF in the framework of the Central Office for Knowledge Transfer (KTO).

Aiming at enhancing the projects’ potential for exploitation of research results, all Project Consortia funded under the present Call will be required to contact the Central Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO) for the preparation of a specialised Service Delivery Plan. Acceptance of the Service Delivery Plan by the Project Consortia and utilization of the central KTO services will be optional.

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 RESTART 2016-2020 Programmes, are included in the **[RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme – 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>).

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

- The signing of the Contracts must be completed up to 2 months from the date of the invitation to the Contract Preparation procedure. Otherwise, RIF reserves the right to terminate the Contract Preparation process.
- In the frame of the present Call, each organisation can receive funding as Host Organisation in up to two (2) Projects.
- Payment Requests for the interim and final payment are submitted up to thirty (30) calendar days following the end of the time period they pertain to. In case of delay in submitting the Report, RIF reserves the right to terminate the project and the Project Contract.
- During the Examination of Payment Requests, the deadline for the submission of additional information is set at fourteen (14) calendar days.
- RIF may allocate additional budget to this Call that has not been allocated under other calls of the 'REPowerEU' chapter of the Cyprus CIP, provided that the successful implementation of all relevant targets under the CIP is ensured.
- All private organisations (Host Organisation and Partner Organisations) are required to register the updated data regarding their ultimate beneficial owners in the Competent National Registry / Archive, as per «The prevention and suppression of money laundering and terrorist financing Law of 2007 (188(I)/2007)». The RIF maintains the right to proceed with the appropriate checks in the competent Registries to verify the registration. For this purpose, all private organisations should submit an official proof for the data registration during the Contract Preparation stage. Furthermore, all private organisations (Host Organisation and Partner Organisations) who request funding exceeding 150.000 Euro, during the Contract Preparation stage will be required to also submit the data (Name and Surname, ID / Passport Number and Date of Birth) of their ultimate beneficial owners through the relevant Declaration.
- 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

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

The Project Coordinator and the Host Organisation and, if there is a Project Consortium, all Partner Organisations, should register in advance on the IRIS Portal.



Potential applicants are advised to use 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>).

Early submission of proposals is recommended to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties and delays/inconvenience before the deadline.

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: CVs of the Coordinator and the key personnel of the project team – **Optional Submission**. *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 the « **Commercial Proof of Concept – Energy** » Programme, a Proposal Preliminary Check and a remote scientific evaluation procedure by two (2) independent evaluators will be followed, as described in the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme – Programmes for the period May 2022 – December 2024.

Prior to the scientific evaluation of each Proposal according to the evaluation criteria, evaluators are requested to assess the Proposal’s compatibility with:

- the Objectives of the Programme and the Call for Proposals, and
- the selected Priority Area, and
- 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 20%

- Technological Breakthrough:
 - The technology has a high degree of novelty compared to other technologies available, or in development.
 - The Novelty creates the potential for new applications and functionalities.
 - The results of the technology demonstration and validation so far indicate the potential for application.
- Project Objectives:
 - Relevance to the objectives of the Programme and the Call.
 - Clarity, completeness, quality, scientific/technical documentation. Adequate documentation of the challenge that the proposed solution/technology has been chosen to address.
 - The proposed research activities are relevant with the Programme objectives, including the target for implementing experimental development activities TRL \geq 6.
 - Objectives for the planned technology development and validation of the innovation in relevant application environments are appropriate, credible and feasible.
 - Potential industrial and commercial applications of the technology have been identified and are plausible.
 - The timing for this technology/innovation is right.

2. Added Value and Benefit – Weight 40%

- Credibility of the Impact:
 - Expected impact described is credible and realistic within the project and beyond. The potential and need for widespread adoption of the solution/technology in industrial and commercial applications is documented.
 - The proposed business model of the Host Organisation, as described in the proposal (Business Model Canvas) is sound and credible.
 - There is a convincing market penetration strategy, including possible regulatory approvals to be secured, standardization, certifications that may be needed (if applicable), time to market penetration.
- Economic, Scientific and/or Societal Benefits:



- The project is expected to contribute to the enhancement of the Host Organisation's competitiveness in domestic and/or international markets, and subsequently in the growth of the local economy.
- The project is expected to generate other benefits such as the increase of employment in the Host Organisation or the broader economy (Partner Organisations, Vendors etc), contribute in addressing one or more existing societal, scientific and/or other local or EU challenges etc.
- The project is expected to generate other benefits in addressing energy challenges and possibly environmental challenges at local or EU level, etc.
- ◇ Effectiveness of the proposed measures for the exploitation of results (including management of Intellectual Property Rights) and maximizing their dissemination.
 - Reliability of the proposed Commercialization Plan.
 - Management and protection of intellectual property rights that may arise from the implementation of the project and its relevance to the objectives of the project and the Programme, including the "right of first refusal" to the participating enterprises.

3. Implementation – Weight 40%

- ◇ Quality and Motivation of the Team:
 - The Consortium has the necessary capabilities and motivation to implement the proposed technological innovation and activities related to commercial and industrial application.
 - The Consortium has the necessary expertise to create a unique commercial value from the emerging technology and develop an attractive business and investment proposition.
- ◇ Workplan and Allocation of Resources:
 - The allocation of resources (person-months, budget and equipment) in the workplan/work packages and project partners is appropriate.
 - Relevant and clearly defined Milestones and Deliverables are provided (measurable, timed, comparable etc.) to track progress along the pathway towards the objectives.
 - The suitability and contribution of organisations and individuals of the Consortium (including Foreign Research Organisations, where applicable) to the implementation of the project according to their specialization and real capabilities.
 - The adequacy of the existing/proposed infrastructure to achieve the technological maturity level and activities of the project.



- The ability and motivation of the team members to exploit the results of the project.
- Risk assessment:
 - The main risks (technological, market, financial etc.) have been identified, together with measures to mitigate in order to achieve the project objectives, including risks that might prevent the validation of the innovation in relevant application environment and/or market success been appropriately considered.

Selection

Proposals will be selected for funding according to their ranking as determined by their score until the exhaustion of the Call Budget.

Funding Payment

For this Call, regardless of the provisions described in Chapter 3.7 Funding Payment of the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme, funding payment will be provided as follows:

- **Pre-financing:** pre-financing corresponds to 50% of the Requested Funding and will be paid upon Contract signature.
- **Final Payment:** the Final Payment, may correspond to up to the balance of the Requested Funding, taking into consideration the eligible costs of the project, the Final Aid Intensity and on the condition that the proposal, coordinated by the Host Institution, has been submitted to Horizon Europe and the Final Progress Report has been approved by the RIF as specified in the section “Specific Conditions” of the current Call.

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.