



## FUNDING SCHEME

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

## PROGRAMME

**EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIPS – EUROSTARS-3**

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**EP/EUROSTARS-3/0125**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Republic of Cyprus



RESEARCH  
& INNOVATION  
FOUNDATION

## INTRODUCTION

The Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF) announces the Call for Proposals for the «European Partnerships» Programme within the framework of the **«RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period 05/2022 – 06/2025** and invites potential beneficiaries to submit relevant Project Proposals (Proposals).

The present Call for Proposals covers the participation of local organisations in the **8<sup>th</sup> Cut-off-Date of the EUROSTARS-3 Programme, which is implemented in the frame of the «Partnership on Innovative SMEs»** and aims to support innovative enterprises for the development of new products, processes and services, through transnational Projects and to commercially exploit the new knowledge.

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

<b>Pillar</b>	<b>I. SMART GROWTH</b>
<b>Programme</b>	<b>European Partnerships – EUROSTARS-3</b>
<b>Call Identifier</b>	<b>EP/EUROSTARS-3/0125</b>
<b>Call Budget</b>	<b>500.000 Euros</b>
<b>Maximum Funding Per Project</b>	<b>200.000 Euros for the Cypriot Consortium or 250.000 Euros for the Cypriot Consortium, when the Project Coordinator of the Transnational Consortium is a Cypriot SME.</b>
<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>29 January 2025</b>
<b>Deadline Submission to EUREKA</b>	<b>13 March 2025, 14:00 (Brussels Time)</b>
<b>Deadline for Proposal Submission to the RPF</b>	<b>20 March 2025, 13:00 (Local Time)</b>

***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

«European Partnerships» Programme aims to encourage local organisations to participate in transnational consortia for the implementation of research and innovation projects in areas of high importance for Cyprus, which are implemented in the frame of Joint Programmes of European Partnerships under the EU «Horizon Europe» Programme, in which the country participates. Furthermore, the Programme promotes the extroversion of local enterprises and research organisations, and their collaboration and networking with foreign organisations through their participation in the transnational projects.

The present Call for Proposals aims to encourage innovative SMEs to participate in transnational research activities and to enhance their competitiveness through the development of new products / services / production methods of high added value or the development of significantly improved existing products / services / production methods which are expected to be commercially exploited by the participating organisations. Furthermore, the Programme aims to promote the networking and collaboration between Cypriot and foreign organisations through the participation in transnational industrial research and development projects.

## DESCRIPTION

«European Partnerships» Programme offers the opportunity to local organisations to participate in transnational research and innovation projects in sectors and thematic areas of high importance for Cyprus. Furthermore, the Programme promotes the extroversion of local enterprises and research organisations, and their collaboration and networking with foreign organisations through their participation in projects implemented in the frame of the European Partnerships in which the country participates.

European Partnerships are initiatives where the EU, national authorities and/or the private sector jointly commit to support the development and implementation of a programme of research and innovation activities. Partnerships will:

- address complex challenges outlined in «Horizon Europe» Programme, such as accelerating the transitions towards a society and economy that are climate neutral and circular,
- support the achievement of EU priorities, such as the European Green Deal, a Europe fit for the digital age, an economy that works for people, and a stronger Europe in the world,
- be impact-driven by deploying a broad range of R&I activities, from concept to demonstration and validation, to those supporting market, regulatory and societal uptake, and

- contribute to a stronger European Research Area (ERA), by avoiding the duplication of efforts, creating critical scales of investment and enhancing synergies between programmes.

«EUROSTARS-3» Joint Programme, is implemented in the frame of the «Partnership on Innovative SMEs» by the participating countries and the EU, through the Horizon Europe Programme, and supports innovative enterprises, through the implementation of transnational projects, to develop new products, methods and services, as well as to commercially exploit new knowledge.

Research and innovation projects driven by innovative enterprises are implemented by transnational consortia which consist organisations from the participating countries in the Programme. Central submission and evaluation procedures are followed, while participating organisations are funded by their respective national funding organisations.

A EUROSTARS-3 project should meet the following conditions:

- The project consortium is composed of at least two entities that are independent from one another.
- The project consortium is composed of entities from at least two participating countries, with a minimum of one organisation from an EU or Horizon Europe Associated Country.
- The Coordinator of the Transnational Consortium should be an Innovative SME<sup>1</sup> from one of the participating countries in EUROSTARS-3 Programme.
- A minimum of 50% of the Transnational Project's budget (excluding subcontracting Costs), should be allocated to the SMEs from EUROSTARS participating countries.
- The allocation of tasks within the Transnational Consortium must be well balanced, whereby no partner organisation or country is allocated more than 70% of the project work.
- The project duration is 36 months or less.
- The project has an exclusive focus on civil applications.

## **BENEFICIARIES**

Research Organisations, Enterprises, Other Organisations

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<sup>1</sup> In Eurostars, any SMEs with the ambition to collaborate on R&D and innovation with international partners, to develop new products, processes, and services for European and global markets, are considered as "innovative". To be innovative, SMEs do not need a proven track record of R&D activities.

## **SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION**

Host Organisation (of the Cypriot Consortium) should be a Small or Medium Enterprise (B.1, B.2).

Research Organisations, Enterprises and Other Organisations can participate as Partner Organisations (in the Cypriot Consortium).

Maximum number of organisations in the Cypriot Consortium should be between one to three (1-3).

Participation of startups is not allowed except for those with marketable products/services, with a record for sales and turnover and audited financial statements for at least two (2) years.

Each Enterprise can receive funding from the RIF for a maximum of two (2) Projects in the frame of EUROSTARS-3 Programme during the 2021-2027 period.

It is noted that Organisations from the Collaboration Countries are funded by their respective national funding organisations/agencies.

## **PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

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

Dissemination activities are eligible only for those entities which fall under Category A (Research Organisations) and C2 (Other Public and Broader Public Sector Organisations).

## **DURATION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

12 - 36 Months

All projects receiving funding from the RIF must be completed by 31 July 2029 at the latest.

## **BUDGET**

€ 500.000

## **MAXIMUM FUNDING PER PROJECT**

€ 200.000 (For the Cypriot Consortium)

In the occasion that a Cypriot Organisation undertakes the coordination of the Transnational Consortium, the maximum funding for the Cypriot organisations can be up to €250.000.

The maximum aid intensity for Enterprises and other Private Sector Organisations cannot exceed 70%.

## ELIGIBLE COSTS

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

The costs for the dissemination activities are eligible **only** for those entities which fall under Category A (Research Organisations) and C2 (Other Public and Broader Public Sector Organisations).

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.

It is noted that, 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)

Beneficiaries of this Programme will automatically become Beneficiaries of the services and tools for knowledge transfer offered by RIF, in the framework of the Central Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO).

Aiming at enhancing the projects' potential for exploitation of research results, all Project Consortia funded under the present Call are obliged to contact the Central Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO) for the preparation of a specialised Service Delivery Plan. It is noted that, the acceptance of the Service Delivery Plan by the Project Consortia and the 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 Programme «Creation and Initial Development of Startups with International Orientation (PRE-SEED)», as well as the other RESTART 2016-2020 Programmes, are included in the **«RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period 05/2022 – 06/2025**, 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

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

- All private law entities (Host Organisation and Partner Organisations) should submit to 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. Furthermore, during contract preparation, all private law entities are obliged to submit the Declaration of Beneficial Owners accompanied by the official proof of registration. In addition, all Private Law Entities applying for funding exceeding EUR 150.000 must also submit in the Declaration of Beneficiaries the details of their actual beneficiaries (Name, Identity Card/Passport Number and Date of Birth).
- 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.
- The budget of the proposal to be submitted to the RIF (personnel cost and requested funding) should be the same with the budget of the Cypriot participant(s) included in the transnational proposal budget. If the two budgets differ, during the contract preparation stage the RIF will define as budget for the personnel costs, the amount included in the transnational proposal. In any case, requested funding in the Contract should not exceed: (a) the requested funding included in the transnational proposal, and (b) the maximum funding per project as defined in the national Call for Proposals.

## SUBMISSION

The Proposal is submitted electronically (on-line application form) by the Transnational Project Coordinator, through the EUROSTARS Programme Project Management Platform (<https://myeurekaproject.org/>).

Furthermore, the Coordinator of the Cypriot Consortium should also submit a Proposal on the RIF's IRIS Portal (<https://iris.research.org.cy>), not later than the deadline specified in the Table «General Call Information» above.

It is noted that, the Project Coordinator and all local participating organizations of the Cypriot 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 Proposal submitted to the RIF includes only general information regarding the Transnational Proposal (Title, Acronym etc), the Coordinator of the Cypriot Consortium and the partner organisations of the Transnational Consortium (including the Cypriot organisations) as well as detailed budget for each partner participating in the Cypriot Consortium.

**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. ANNEX II – Call Specific Information to be disclosed to the Evaluators – **Mandatory Submission** (document to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format and includes the «SMART SPECIALISATION SECTORS (S3Cy 2023-2030)» Table for the selection of the Priority Sector/ of the Smart Specialisation Strategy that the Proposal is applied to). *The relevant document is available in IRIS Portal, under the specific Call (Call Documents). The selection is obligatory and should be limited to only one Priority Sector.*
3. ANNEX III – Call Specific Information – **Mandatory Submission** (document to be uploaded as Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format): *Financial Statements: Audited Financial Statements of the Host Organisation for the previous financial year or the year preceding it, for the purposes of preliminary and financial viability check – Obligatory Submission. Organisations undergone a financial viability check by the RIF in the frame of previous contract preparation, with valid financial viability check results, are exempted.*

It is noted that, for Proposals with Cypriot partners which will be selected for funding, the Coordinator of the Cypriot Consortium will be asked to submit supplementary information and supporting documentation regarding the role and activities of the Cypriot Consortium, in the IRIS Portal, during the contract preparation phase.



## PROJECT SELECTION

### Evaluation Procedure

A Proposal Eligibility Check will be performed for every Proposal with Cypriot participants, as described in the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme.

The «EUROSTARS-3» Programme applies its own procedures and regulations for submission and evaluation of proposals and selection of projects, which are described [in the Transnational Call Document and the Guidelines of the Programme](#). Interested organisations are strongly advised to read thoroughly the aforementioned documents before submitting a Proposal.

### Evaluation Criteria

Central evaluation criteria of the EUROSTARS-3 Programme apply, as described in the relevant Programme Documents.

### Selection

The final funding decision is taken centrally by all the Member States of the Programme, based on the results of the scientific evaluation and the available budget.

The Research and Innovation Foundation will select Proposals with Cypriot participation based on the final Ranking List, until the exhaustion of the available budget and provided that the Proposals have the financial support of the other participating countries as well.

## INFORMATION – CONTACT DETAILS

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### RIF Support Service

#### E-mail

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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.*