



ΙΔΡΥΜΑ  
ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ  
ΚΑΙΝΟΤΟΜΙΑΣ

## **PROGRAMME**

**«INNOVATION FACTORY – SUPPORT SCHEME FOR ENTERPRISES WITH  
HIGH GROWTH POTENTIAL»**

## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**INNOFACTORY-EIC\_0624**

## INTRODUCTION

The Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF) announces the Call for Proposals for the «Innovation Factory – Support Scheme for Enterprises with High Growth Potential» Programme and invites potential beneficiaries to submit relevant Project Proposals (Proposals).

## GENERAL CALL INFORMATION

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Innovation Factory – Support Scheme for Enterprises with High Growth Potential</b>
<b>Call Identifier</b>	<b>INNOFACTORY-EIC_0624</b>
<b>Call Budget</b>	<b>30.000 Euro</b>
<b>Maximun Funding Per Project</b>	<b>3.000 Euro</b>
<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>04 June 2024</b>
<b>Deadline</b>	<b>3 July 2024, 13:00, or until budget exhaustion</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

«Innovation Factory – Support Scheme for Enterprises with High Growth Potential» Programme falls within the «Innovation Factory» Initiative and aims to provide support to enterprises with high growth potential to acquire mentoring/coaching support services in order to succeed in the European Innovation Council (EIC) «EIC Accelerator» Programme, of the «Horizon Europe» Programme of the EU for Research and Innovation (2021-2027).

## DESCRIPTION

Through the «Innovation Factory» Initiative, the RIF aims to promote and support innovation in the business community, through:

- specially designed educational programs,
- mentoring / coaching services,
- assessment services regarding the business's innovation capacity,
- networking with investors, and
- events and activities that generally support the development of the ecosystem.

Through «Innovation Factory – Support Scheme for Enterprises with High Growth Potential» Programme, the RIF will provide funding up to 3.000 Euro, in enterprises eligible to submit a full proposal under the «EIC Accelerator» Programme – Stage 2.

Funding will be used for the acquisition of mentoring/coaching services from external experts in order to support beneficiaries to improve their business strategy, with the aim to increase their chances to succeed in evaluation Stage 2 of the Programme.

The «EIC Accelerator»<sup>1</sup>, which falls under the «Horizon Europe» Programme of the EU for Research and Innovation for the period 2021-2027, supports SMEs to develop and scale-up high impact innovations with the potential to create new markets or disrupt existing ones, at a European or global level. The Programme focuses on «deep tech» innovations based on scientific discovery or technological breakthroughs. The Programme offers financial support through a Grant Component up to € 2,5 M for research, development and innovation activities (TRL 5/6 to 8), with an Investment Component up to € 15 M for scale-up and other relevant costs. For the selection of Projects to be funded by the EIC, the evaluation procedure consists of 3 Stages:

- Stage 1: Submission of Short-Proposal remotely evaluated by EIC Expert Evaluators.
- Stage 2: Submission of Full-Proposal remotely evaluated by EIC Expert Evaluators.
- Stage 3: Face-to-face Interviews with the EIC Jury (evaluation committee).

Successful proposals in Stage 1, or proposals that have been qualified for Stage 2 through the EIC Plug-In scheme, have the right to submit a Full-Proposal to the EIC. It is noted that, according to the EIC Plug-In Scheme, projects that have been selected for funding through certified by the EU, National Funding Programmes from EU or associated countries, which fulfil the eligibility conditions of the EIC Accelerator, may be forwarded directly to Stage 2, for the submission of a Full-Proposal. For Cyprus, the EU has certified RIF's SEED and INNOVATE Programmes.

Eligible organisations in the frame of their Full-Proposal preparation, are entitled to receive **free business coaching** by the EU by business coaches through the EIC Business Acceleration Services. Beneficiaries are given access to a dedicated EIC platform, in order to identify and select of experts to provide the services.

«Innovation Factory – Support Scheme for Enterprises with High Growth Potential», covers the cost for additional mentoring/coaching services by external experts.

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<sup>1</sup> More information for the EIC Accelerator Programme, are available in the [EIC Work Programme 2024](#).

Experts to provide the mentoring/coaching services are expected to have good knowledge of the business environment in the proposal field and experience in the international markets. For the identification of appropriate experts, beneficiaries may utilise among others the EIC Platform for business coaches. Beneficiaries may use the same expert that has provided the business coaching services on behalf of the EU, however, they are advised to select a different expert to receive more extended feedback, different perspectives/views, and to enhance the level of services to be provided.

The participation of the Cypriot enterprises in the present Programme is supported by the Enterprise Europe Network Cyprus (EEN-Cy 2022-2025), in which RIF participates as partner.

## BENEFICIARIES

Enterprises<sup>2</sup> which are eligible to submit a Full-Proposal under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cut-Off date of the «EIC Accelerator» Programme Stage 2<sup>3</sup>, on 3 October 2024.

## SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

In the frame of the present Call, each enterprise can submit only one proposal and may receive funding in only one Project.

After the completion of the Project and the acquisition of services, the submission of the Full-Proposal under the Stage 2 of the «EIC Accelerator», is obligatory. The RIF will require the submission of relevant proofs to justify that the Full-Proposal has been submitted.

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Projects cover the acquisition of mentoring/coaching services by external experts, in the frame of the Full-Proposal preparation to be submitted under Stage 2 of the «EIC Accelerator» Programme.

It is recommended that, emphasis should be placed on the acquisition of consulting services related to the formulation of the company's go-to-market strategy including, among others, the analysis of the market and the competition, the estimation of the market size, the development of the business model, the estimation of financial needs and forecasts, and the management of intellectual property rights.

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<sup>2</sup> Small, Medium, or Large Enterprises with less than 499 employees (Small Mid-Caps).

<sup>3</sup> Eligible enterprises are those that have been successfully qualified through Stage 1 of the EIC Accelerator, or have been forwarded directly to Stage 2 through the EIC Plug-In scheme.

## DURATION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Beneficiaries will have to utilise the approved funding for the acquisition of mentoring/coaching services by external experts within the period between the date of the RIF's approval letter and the 2nd Cut-Off date of the «EIC Accelerator» Programme Stage 2.

## BUDGET

€ 30.000

## MAXIMUM FUNDING PER PROJECT

Up to € 3.000

Aid intensity amounts up to 100% of eligible expenses.

## ELIGIBLE COSTS

Cost for External Services for the abovementioned services.

Funding will be awarded after the provision of services by the expert and after the submission of the Full-Proposal to the «EIC Accelerator» Stage 2, by the beneficiary.

Funding will be awarded as a one-off payment, in the form of the Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831 of 13 December 2023 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid.

VAT is not eligible.

It is noted that according to the EU Regulation No 2023/2831 for De-Minimis Aid, enterprises active in the sectors of fishery and aquaculture and primary production of agricultural products, cannot be funded.

## 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, 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>).

**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).
3. Annex II – Call Specific Information (documents to be uploaded as an Annexes on the IRIS Portal in PDF format, duly completed and signed as requested):  
*(a) Single Undertaking Declaration.*

## PROJECT SELECTION

### Evaluation Procedure

For the evaluation of Proposals to be submitted under the Programme, an internal evaluation procedure is carried out by RIF staff according to the Call requirements.

Evaluation is carried out upon submission of each proposal (first-in-first-served).

### Evaluation Criteria

- Adequate description of the company's coaching needs, and the expected services to be provided by the expert,
- Suitability of the selected expert, and
- Justification of the added value to emerge as a result of the acquisition of the mentoring/coaching services.

### Selection

Prioritised by order of submission to the RIF (non-competitive procedures apply) on condition that proposals have been deemed eligible for funding following the internal evaluation procedure, until the total requested funding of approved Proposals, equals the total Call budget. In total, up to ten (10) proposals are expected to be funded, according to the Call's available budget.

## COMPLETION

Upon the completion of the assigned work to the external expert the beneficiary submits to the RIF a brief Report using the «Report Form» document, which is available in the IRIS Portal,

and a Payment Request which includes the original invoice issued by the expert which has provided the services. In the «Report Form» beneficiaries should provide proof that the Proposal has been submitted to the Stage 2 of the «EIC Accelerator» and briefly describe the services that have been provided by the expert.

The «Report Form» and the Payment Request will be examined by the RIF and the approved funding will be awarded to the beneficiary.

If the total cost, according to the invoice issued, is lower than the approved funding then the actual cost will be paid.

## INFORMATION – CONTACT DETAILS

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### RIF Support Service

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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.*