



## FUNDING SCHEME

Research and Innovation Foundation 's «RESTART 2016-2020»  
Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation

## PROGRAMME

«Research in Enterprises»

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

ENTERPRISES/0326



**Funded by the  
European Union**  
NextGenerationEU



Republic of Cyprus



RESEARCH  
& INNOVATION  
FOUNDATION



## INTRODUCTION

The Research and Innovation Foundation announces the Call for Proposals for the «**Research in Enterprises**» Programme within the framework of the «**RESTART 2016-2020**» Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period **05/2022 – 12/2026** 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 C3.212 «Innovation Funding Programmes and Funding Schemes for the Enhancement of Growth and Competitiveness of Startups, Innovative Companies and SMEs» of the Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan. The Action is implemented under Policy Axis 3: «Strengthening the Resilience and Competitiveness of the Economy», and specifically the Component 3.2 «Enhanced Research and Innovation».

## GENERAL CALL INFORMATION

<b>Pillar</b>	<b>I. Smart Growth</b>
<b>Programme</b>	<b>Research in Enterprises</b>
<b>Call Identifier</b>	<b>ENTERPRISES/0326</b>
<b>Call Budget</b>	<b>€2.400.000 Euro of which €1.400.000 will be allocated to projects involving collaboration between enterprises (Category B) and research organisations (Category A).</b>
<b>Maximum Funding Per Project</b>	<b>150.000 Euro</b>
<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>24 March 2026</b>
<b>Deadline</b>	<b>30 June 2026, 13:00</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

The “Research in Enterprises” Programme aims at (a) enhancing the competitiveness of Cypriot enterprises thus resulting in making a contribution in the country’s economic growth, through the development of new products / services / production methods of high added value, or significantly enhanced products / services / production methods which will be commercially used, and (b) intensifying the participation of Cypriot enterprises in research activities resulting in raising the contribution of the private sector in the country’s RTDI (Research, Technological Development and Innovation) investments.

## DESCRIPTION

«Research in Enterprises» Programme supports the involvement of Cypriot enterprises in research, technological development and innovation (RTDI) activities, for the development of



new or the significant advancement of existing products / services/ production methods of high added value with market entry potential.

The Programme is expected to contribute to the enhancement of the capacity and the competitiveness of Cypriot enterprises, the increase of private investments in RTDI activities, and the country's economy growth. Furthermore, it is expected to create new employment at participating enterprises, thus contributing positively in dealing with unemployment at national level.

The Programme covers a wide range of industrial research and experimental development activities. The experimental development activities should include the production of a prototype, demonstration, pilot operation, testing and validation of new or significantly optimised products / services / production methods in an environment representative of real-life operating conditions. Research and development activities should be relevant to the core area of activities of the beneficiaries, while project results should be of commercial value for the beneficiaries.

The Programme does not cover projects that are concerned with customary modifications or modifications that incur over time on products, production lines, services, production methods, even if these modifications are considered as improvements.

As the Programme is part of Pillar I, "Smart Growth", the projects must be applicable in one of the Priority Sectors of the Smart Specialisation Strategy.

## BENEFICIARIES

Research Organisations (A1, A2), Enterprises (B1, B2, B3) , Other Organisations (C1, C2)

## 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) which:

- (a) demonstrates sales and turnover of at least **€150.000** from the sale of products/services/new methods already available on the market (excluding passive income such as royalties, interest, dividends, financial leases, rental income, etc., as well as subsidies, grants and funding), ***as evidenced by audited financial statements for 2024 or 2025 and a certification from an External Auditor confirming that the amount derives from the sale of products and services;*** and
- (b) employs at least **four (4) employees**, as documented by the Statement of Earnings and Contributions of the Social Insurance Services for the last three months prior to the month of proposal submission, for which the employer is required to have paid social insurance contributions.

The project should be initiated by Host Organisation, which should have a direct commercial interest in achieving the project's results. Furthermore, the core activities of the Host Organisation should be relevant to the project activities.



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

Research Organisations, Enterprises or Other Organisations may participate as Partner Organisations. Partner Organisations shall support the Host Organisation in accomplishing the project's objectives and may have their own commercial and/or scientific interests in achieving the Project results.

Participation of Foreign Research Organisations is allowed.

Within the framework of the present Call the following specific conditions also apply:

- Each Enterprise may participate in up to two (2) proposals in total, either as a Host Organisation or as a Partner Organisation and may receive funding for only one (1) Project as a Host Organisation under the present Call. In case of participation in more than two (2) proposals, only the first two proposals in order of submission will be taken into consideration.
- The Host Organisation is required to submit a report on the impact of the project's results, including financial data, at least twice within a five (5)-year period following the end of the Project—two (2) years and five (5) years after its completion.
- 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.
- In case that it is found that the Proposal (or a similar one with minor deviations regarding the content and / or participants) has been submitted under any other Programme / Call of the RESTART 2016 - 2020 Programmes, and this has not been duly declared by the Project Coordinator at the Proposal Submission Stage (Part-A), the RIF has the right to declare the proposal ineligible and/or to consider to impose sanctions to the Host Organisation and/or the Project Coordinator.

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES



The projects must necessarily include Experimental Development activities. They may also include Industrial Research activities.

Project activities should fall within Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 4-7 in compliance with the relevant definitions adopted by the EU<sup>1</sup>.

It is noted that by completion of the Project Implementation, the Host Organisation must prepare a “Commercialization Plan” which will be submitted to the RIF as a Deliverable along with the Final Report. The “Commercialization Plan” must include an assessment and analysis of the project results’ market potential, in order to support future decisions by the Host Organisation and/or the Consortium, and the planning of exploitation of results. It is noted that, activities related to the implementation of actions included in the “Commercialization Plan”, are not eligible in the frame of the funded projects.

## **DURATION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

12-18 Months

## **BUDGET**

€ 2.400.000

## **MAXIMUM FUNDING PER PROJECT**

€ 150.000

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 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”.

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<sup>1</sup> 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)



For proposals involving a consortium, at least 40% of the project budget must be allocated to the enterprises (Category B) participating in the Consortium.

Costs for dissemination activities are eligible only for entities falling under Category A and Category C2.

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.

It is noted that, in projects where the simplified method 'Personnel Costs + 40% flat rate on Personnel Costs to cover the remaining costs' is applied, only costs under the category 'Personnel Costs' are declared in the Payment Request. The Simplified Cost Option and expenditure declaration "Personnel costs plus 40% on Personnel Costs for covering the rest of the Project costs" in a funded project does not revoke the obligation to follow the National Law and the Union Regulatory Framework, as described in Part 8.6 of the RESTART Work Programme document.

## 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 (CKTO) 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 CKTO 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 – 12/2026**, 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>).

## 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>).

*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 (a separate document to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format).
3. Annex I – Curricula Vitae (document to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format – Non-Mandatory). It is recommended that, CVs are created according to the EUROPASS format and do not exceed 5 pages per person.
4. **ANNEX II – Mandatory Submission of Call-Specific Information** (documents duly completed and signed, to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format):
  - (a) *Audited Financial Statements of the Host Organisation (signed by an external auditor) for the previous financial year (N-1) or the year preceding it (N-2), where “N” is the year of proposal submission (2024 or 2025); and*
  - (b) *A certification from an External Auditor confirming that an amount of at least €150,000 derives from the sale of products and services; and*
  - (c) *A Statement of Earnings and Contributions from the Social Insurance Services for the last three months prior to the month of proposal submission, for which the employer is required to have paid social insurance contributions. For example, if the proposal is submitted in June 2026, the Statement of Earnings and Contributions for the months January, February and March 2026 must be submitted.*

## PROJECT SELECTION

### Evaluation Procedure

For the evaluation of Proposals to be submitted under the «Research in Enterprises» Programme, a Proposal Preliminary Check and a remote scientific evaluation procedure by three (3) independent evaluators (with a Consensus Report) will be followed, as described in the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme.

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 relevant 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:
  - The proposed research activities (experimental development, industrial research) are relevant given the core activities of the Host Organisation and compatible with the project's, the Programmes's and the Call's Objectives (activities fall within technology readiness levels (TRL 4-7)).
  - Objectives for the planned technology development and validation of the innovation in relevant application environments are appropriate, credible and feasible.
  - Potential applications been identified and are they plausible.
  - The timing for this technology/innovation is right.

## 2. Added Value and Benefit – Weight 40%

- Credibility of the Impacts:
  - Expected impacts described are credible and realistic within the project and beyond.
  - The technology has added value for users/customers in factors such as, usability, functionality, cost and ease of use.
  - The proposed business model of the Host Organisation, as described in the proposal (Business Model Canvas) is sound and credible.
- 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.
  - There is substantial demand for the proposed innovation, including the willingness of buyers to purchase the product/service.
  - 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 environmental, societal, scientific and/or other local or EU challenges etc.
- Investment readiness and go-to-market Strategy:



- The proposal and its activities, including IPR Protection and Market Validation, contribute to a large extent to make the technology and the team investment ready from internal and/or external sources. There is demonstrated awareness of potential funding sources.
- There is a convincing go to market pathway/strategy, including what regulatory approvals, standardisation, certifications may be needed (if relevant), time to market, possible business and revenue model.

### 3. Implementation – Weight 40%

#### ○ Quality and Motivation of the Team:

- The project team has the necessary capabilities and motivation to implement the proposed technological innovation and market-related activities.
- The applicant(s) have 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.
- Milestones and KPIs are present, relevant and clearly defined (measurable, timed, comparable etc.) to track progress along the pathway towards objectives.

#### ○ Risk assessment:

- The main risks (technological, market, financial etc.) have been identified, together with measures to mitigate in order to achieve the project objectives.
- 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 follow:

- For the amount of €1.400.000:
  - Priority will be given to proposals involving collaboration between enterprises (Category B) and research organisations (Category A), where the Host Organisations have not previously received funding as Host Organisations under the RESTART 2016–2020 Programmes. An exception applies to participation as Host Organisation in funded projects with a maximum requested project funding of €35.000.
  - Subsequently, proposals involving collaboration between enterprises (Category B) and research organisations (Category A) will be selected based on ranking, until the total available budget of €1.400.000 is exhausted.



- For the amount of €1.000.000:
  - Priority will be given to proposals with Host Organisations that have not previously received funding as Host Organisations under the RESTART 2016–2020 Programmes. An exception applies to participation as Host Organisation in funded projects with a maximum requested project funding of €35.000.
  - Subsequently, proposals will be selected based on ranking, until the total available budget of €1.000.000 is exhausted.
- The remaining eligible proposals will be funded according to their ranking, until the total available budget of the Call is exhausted.

## 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.*