FUNDING SCHEME

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

PROGRAMME

«Proof of Concept for Technology / Knowhow Applications»

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

CONCEPT-HYDRO/1026

Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης

Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία

ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΙΝΟΤΟΜΙΑΣ

Τα Προγράμματα RESTART 2016-2020 συγχρηματοδοτούνται από την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία και το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης της ΕΕ.

INTRODUCTION

The Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF) announces the Call for Proposals **«Proof of Concept for Technology / Knowhow Applications» for the «Proof of Concept for Technology / Knowhow Applications»** Programme within the **framework of the «RESTART 2016-2020» Programmes** for Research, Technological Development and Innovation – Programmes for the Period May 2022 – December 2026 and invites potential beneficiaries to submit relevant Project Proposals (Proposals) in the hydrocarbons sector.

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	**Proof of Concept for Technology / Knowhow Applications**
Code Identifier	**CONCEPT-HYDRO/XX26**
Call Budget	**€150.000**
Maximun Funding Per Project	**50.000 euro**
Publication Date	**29 October 2026**
Deadline	**15 January 2027, 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 "Proof of Concept for Technology / Knowhow Applications" Programme aims at the preliminary investigation of possible industrial applications of a technology/knowhow. In particular, this Special Call addresses technology / know-how applications (engineering and technology) related to the hydrocarbon sector. Indicatively, the proposals that will be submitted may relate to fields such as Hydrocarbon Utilization, Natural Gas Storage, Natural Gas Use, etc.

DESCRIPTION

Through this Programme it is expected that Host Organisations will have the opportunity to verify the industrial application potential of a technology/knowhow before being involved in a broader scale research project of Technological Development and Innovation.

As the Programme is part of Pillar I, "Smart Growth", the projects must be applicable in one of the designated Priority Sectors of the Smart Specialization Strategy 2023-2030.

BENEFICIARIES

Research Organisations, Enterprises, Other Organisations

SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

The Host Organisation can be a Research Organisation or Enterprise.

The Consortium must consist of at least one Enterprise (Category B) and one Research Organisation (Category A).

Research Organisations, Enterprises and Other Organisations can participate as Partner Organisation.

At least 40% of the project budget must be allocated to the enterprises (Category B) participating in the Consortium.

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.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The projects must only include Industrial Research activities.

The projects must fall within Technology Readiness Levels 3-4 (TRL 3-4) in compliance with the relevant definitions adopted by the EU[1].

DURATION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Up to nine (9) months

BUDGET

Total Call budget: € 150.000

---

[1]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).

MAXIMUM FUNDING PER PROJECT

€ 50.000

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Personnel costs, Instruments and Equipment Costs, Costs for External Services, 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”.

It is clarified that, in Projects where the simplified method "Personnel Cost + 40% on Personnel Cost for Other Expenses”, only the expenses of the Personnel Cost category are declared in the Payment Request. However, the use of this simplified method does not waive the Beneficiaries’ obligation to comply with the provisions of the RESTART 2016–2020 Programmes Call, regarding the eligibility of expenses, the basic principles of project management, including the maintenance of relevant supporting documents, as well as compliance with National Legislation and the EU Regulatory Framework, as described in the Call.

Expenses for dissemination activities are eligible only for entities of Category A and C2.

It is noted that all beneficiary entities that have not previously participated in the RESTART 2016–2020 Programmes are required to use the simplified method of “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 (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 «Innovation Vouchers» 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 May 2022 – December 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 and Research Information System) (https://iris.research.org.cy/#/documentlibrary).**

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

In the frame of the present Call, the following specific conditions 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.
- 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.

- 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 the event 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 (In Part-A, Question: «Has this Proposal (or a similar one with minor deviations regarding the content and / or participants) been submitted under any other Programme of the 4 RESTART 2016 - 2020 Programmes?»), 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.

SUBMISSION

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

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**» and «**IRIS Portal User Manual**» which can be found (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). It is noted that the template provided for this Call must be submitted, without any differentiation. The Part B template 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). *It is recommended that, CVs are created according to the EUROPASS format and do not exceed 5 pages per person*.
4. Annex III – Call Specific Information (documents to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format):
   A. Business Strategy or Commercialization Strategy for EACH of the participating organizations. The document must clearly explain how the results of the Project are expected to be exploited commercially and/or as part of the organisation's business activities. Each organisation's strategy must be specific and tailored to its role and interests.**Submission is MANDATORY for ALL members of the Consortium. In case it is not submitted, the proposal will not proceed to the scientific evaluation stage.**

PROJECT SELECTION

Evaluation Procedure

For the evaluation of Proposals to be submitted under the «Proof of Concept for Technology / Knowhow Applications» 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 2026.

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 30%

- Quality of Project Objectives. Clarity, completeness, scientific / technical documentation.
- 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 idea.
- Relevance with the Programme's objectives including the objective for the implementation of industrial research which falls within Technology Readiness Levels2 (TRL) 3-4 (TRL 3 - experimental proof of concept, TRL 4 - technology validated in lab).

2. Added Value and Benefit – Weight 40%

- Industrial application potential of the technology / knowhow, potential scientific/technological, social and/or economic benefit and prospects for the exploitation of the project results by the participating Organisations.
- Effectiveness of the proposed measures for the exploitation of results (including management of Intellectual Property Rights) and maximizing their dissemination.
- Justification of the proposed Project's selected topic in relevance with the business / commercialisation strategy of the participating Organisations.

3. Implementation – Weight 30%

- Completeness and appropriateness of the Work Packages' content, the allocation of the various activities (**including the allocation of person-months for each participating Organisation per Work Package**), the timetable and the budget.
- Effectiveness of the proposed methodology for the implementation of the deliverables.
- Completeness, quality and capacity of the Consortium or the Host Organisation (in case there is no Consortium) for the implementation of the Project (at the level of Organisations and/or individuals) and the achievement of the proposed objectives.
- Suitability and adequacy of the proposed management activities, including identification and handling of potential risks.

Selection

Projects are ranked based on their score and the selection of the proposals for funding will be made according to their ranking, until the exhaustion of the Total Call Budget.

INFORMATION – CONTACT DETAILS

RIF Support Service

Email
callsupport@research.org.cy

Telephone
+35722205000

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.