Public Funding for Deep Tech Projects
Financing for small and medium-sized enterprises, large companies, and research institutions

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Partner in consortium:

Partner in Consortium
- Digital Hub Logistics Hamburg
- HITeC — HAMBURGER INFORMATIK TECHNOLOGIE-CENTER
- aric
- Handwerkskammer Hamburg
- TUHH
- HAW HAMBURG

Associated Partner
- HK Handelskammer Hamburg
- IKS Hamburg — Innovations Kontakt Stelle — verbindet Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft
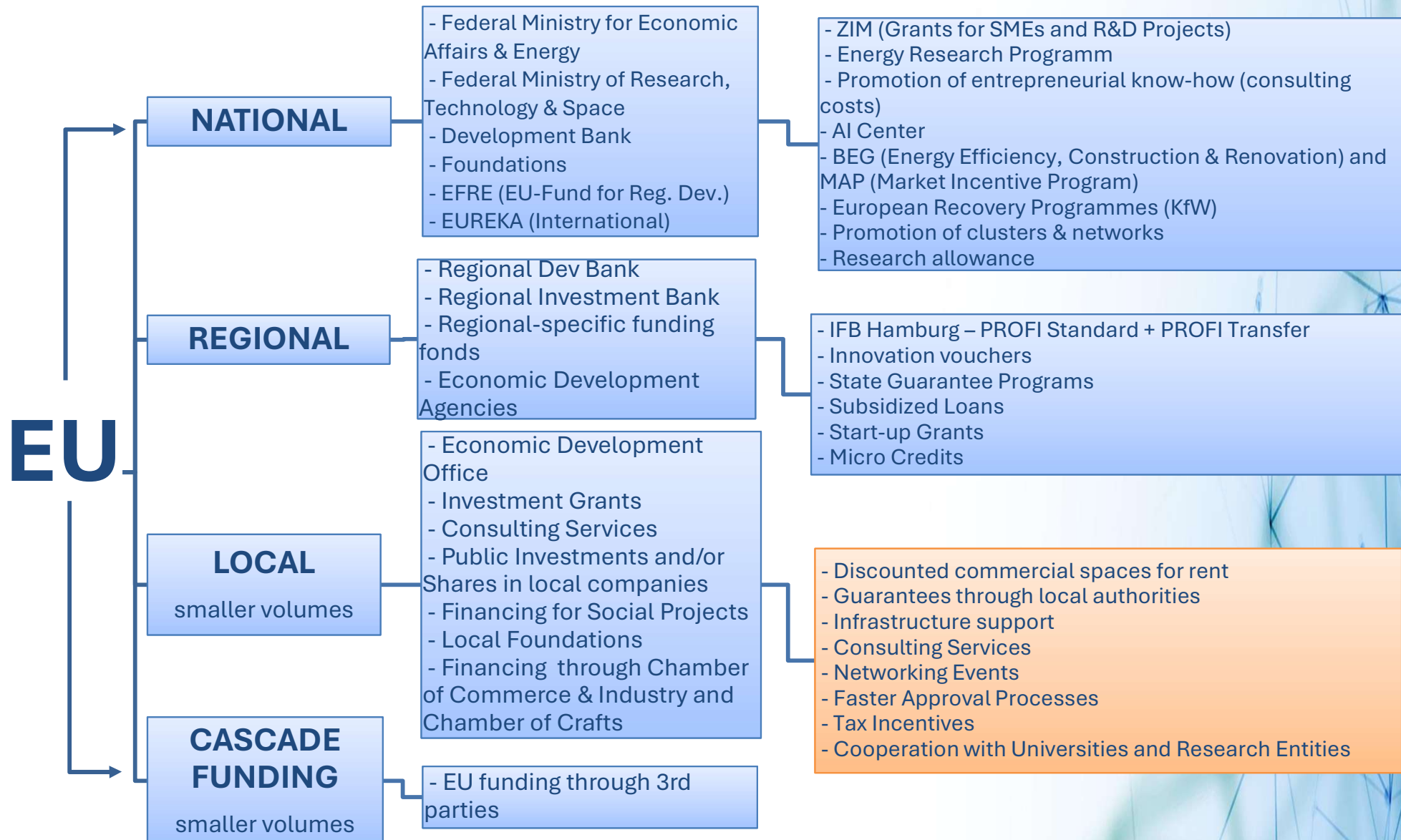
Support & Cooperation
- de:hub digital ecosystems
- Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Hamburg

The EDIHs as intermediaries and innovation drivers across Europe

1) Test before invest

2) Skills and Training

3) Innovation Ecosystems

4) Support to Find Investment

Technological changes & opportunities due to digitization of the supplc chains and value networks

Logistics | Transport-ation | Aviation Industry | Maritime Industry | Services | Crafts | Food
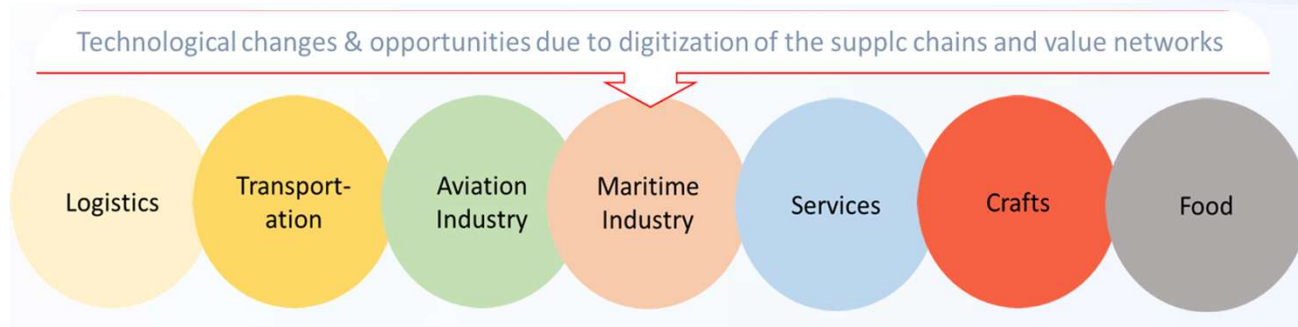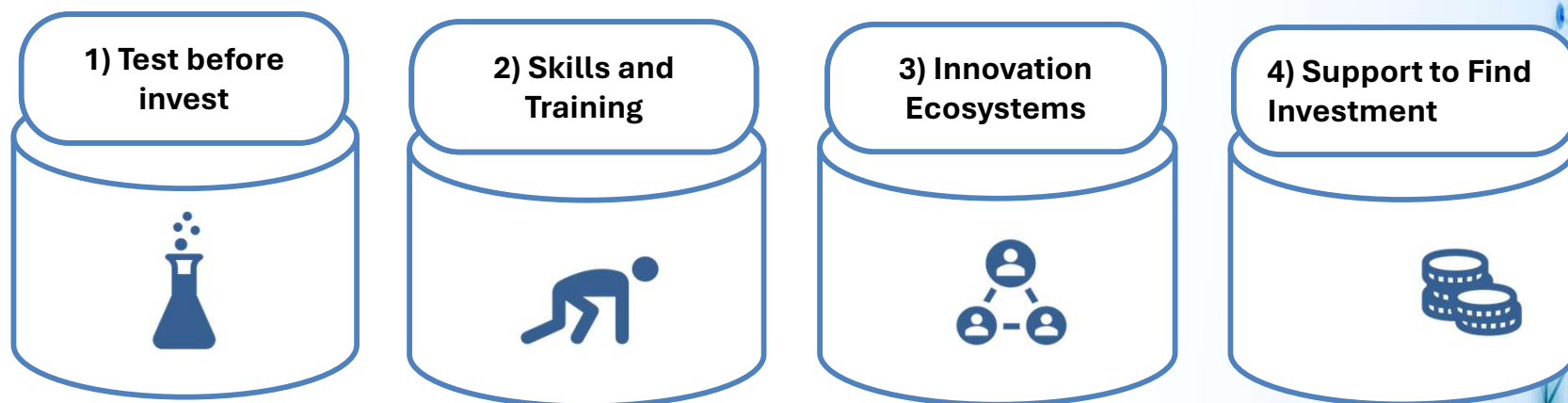
European and national funding sources and mechanisms for distributing of funding

EU

NATIONAL
- Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs & Energy
- Federal Ministry of Research, Technology & Space
- Development Bank
- Foundations
- EFRE (EU-Fund for Reg. Dev.)
- EUREKA (International)

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- ZIM (Grants for SMEs and R&D Projects)
- Energy Research Programm
- Promotion of entrepreneurial know-how (consulting costs)
- AI Center
- BEG (Energy Efficiency, Construction & Renovation) and MAP (Market Incentive Program)
- European Recovery Programmes (KfW)
- Promotion of clusters & networks
- Research allowance

REGIONAL
- Regional Dev Bank
- Regional Investment Bank
- Regional-specific funding fonds
- Economic Development Agencies

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- IFB Hamburg – PROFI Standard + PROFI Transfer
- Innovation vouchers
- State Guarantee Programs
- Subsidized Loans
- Start-up Grants
- Micro Credits

LOCAL
smaller volumes
- Economic Development Office
- Investment Grants
- Consulting Services
- Public Investments and/or Shares in local companies
- Financing for Social Projects
- Local Foundations
- Financing through Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Chamber of Crafts

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- Discounted commercial spaces for rent
- Guarantees through local authorities
- Infrastructure support
- Consulting Services
- Networking Events
- Faster Approval Processes
- Tax Incentives
- Cooperation with Universities and Research Entities

CASCADE FUNDING
smaller volumes
- EU funding through 3rd parties

Overview current EU-Programmes

Connecting Europe Facility CEF2027	**Creative Europe** CREA2027	**Customs Control Equipment Instrument** CCEI	**Customs Programme** CUST
Digital Europe Programme DIGITAL	**Erasmus+ Programme** ERASMUS2027	**EU Anti-fraud Programme** EUAF	**EU External Actions** RELEX
EU Renewable Energy Financing Mechanism RENEWFM	**EU4Health Programme (EU4H)** EU4H	**Euratom Research and Training Programme** EURATOM2027	**EUROPE DIRECT** ED
European Defence Fund EDF	**European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund** EMFAF	**European Parliament (EP)** EP	**European Social Fund +** ESF
European Solidarity Corps ESC2027	**Fiscalis Programme** FISC	**Horizon Europe** HORIZON	**IMCAP** IMCAP2027
Information Measures for the EU Cohesion policy IMREG	**Innovation Fund** INNOVFUND	**Internal Security Fund** ISF	**Interregional Innovation Investments** I3
Just Transition Mechanism JTM	**Justice Programme** JUST2027	**Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI)** NDICI	**Pilot Projects Funds** PPPA2027
Programme for Environment and Climate Action LIFE2027	**Promotion of Agricultural Products** AGRIP2027	**Protection of the Euro against Counterfeiting Programme** PERI	**Research Fund for Coal and Steel** RFCS2027
Single Market Programme SMP	**Social Prerogative and Specific Competencies Lines Programme** SOCPL	**Technical assistance for ERDF, CF and JTF** ERDFTA	**Technical Support Instrument (TSI)** TSI
Union Civil Protection Mechanism UCPM2027			

HORIZON Europe: an example for the complexity of the funding programmes

Horizon Europe structure

Pillar 1 Excellent Science	Pillar 2 Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness	Pillar 3 Innovative Europe
European Research Council	Clusters • Health • Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society • Civil Security for Society • Digital, Industry and Space • **Climate, Energy and Mobility** • Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment	European Innovation Council
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions		European innovation ecosystems
Research Infrastructures	Joint Research Centre	European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area

Widening participation and spreading excellence	Reforming and Enhancing the European R&I system

European Commission

Funded Technologies:

Artificial Intelligence	Public Policy & Governance	Smart Cities	Marine & Maritime Research
Deep Tech	Manufacturing & Industry	Agriculture & Food	Space & Space Exploration
Quantum Computing	Transportation & Mobility	Tourism & Cultural Heritage	Robotics & Automation
Nuclear	Circular Economy & Sustainability	(Science) Education, Training	Energy & Environment
Economy & Finance	Nanotechnology & Advanced Materials	Social Sciences & Humanities	Digital Society & E-Inclusion
Security & Defence	Arts, Culture & Heritage	Life Science & Health	Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
Neuromorphic Computing		Social Innovation & Community Development	

Target groups for public funding

Companies*	Academia	Others
✓ Large Enterprises 1000+ employees	✓ Universities	✓ Competence Centers
✓ SMEs (Definition for SME could slightly differ in the diff. calls)	✓ Research Entities & Technology Centers	✓ Local Authorities
✓ Start-ups	✓ Spin-offs	✓ Consortia (national/international)
✓ Internationally cooperating companies	✓ Individual Researchers	✓ Non-profit Organizations

Explanations & Notes:
- Terminology: EU-Calls for Proposals = EU-Funding Calls
- EU calls are subject to very strict deadlines. Some of these involve multiple stages. Applicants can withdraw a rejected funding application and reapply. The withdrawal period varies and ranges from seven to 30 days, depending on the program.
- Company PIC Number
- TRL (Technology Readiness Level) 1 - 9 = from 1 (basic technology research) up to 9 (system test, launch & operations)

Important platforms for public funding, project partner search and support*

EU- Funding	Cascade Funding	National & Regional Funding		Service portals & Project partner search	
European Institute of Innovation & Technology	Cascade Funding Hub	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz	Förderberatung des Bundes	enterprise europe network	
European Commission	CoARA	NKS DIT	GERMAN ACCELERATOR	EUROPEAN CLUSTER COLLABORATION PLATFORM	
EIC FUND European Innovation Council	**SUCHE CASCADE FUNDING** European Commission	Plattform für Soziale Innovationen & Gemeinwohlorientierte Unternehmen		euresearch	Dealflow.eu
HORIZON European Commission		IFB HAMBURG	IFB innovations starter	eureka	
EUROPE DIGITAL European Commission	**EFRD**	HTGF	eXIST	IKS Hamburg	startupcity hamburg

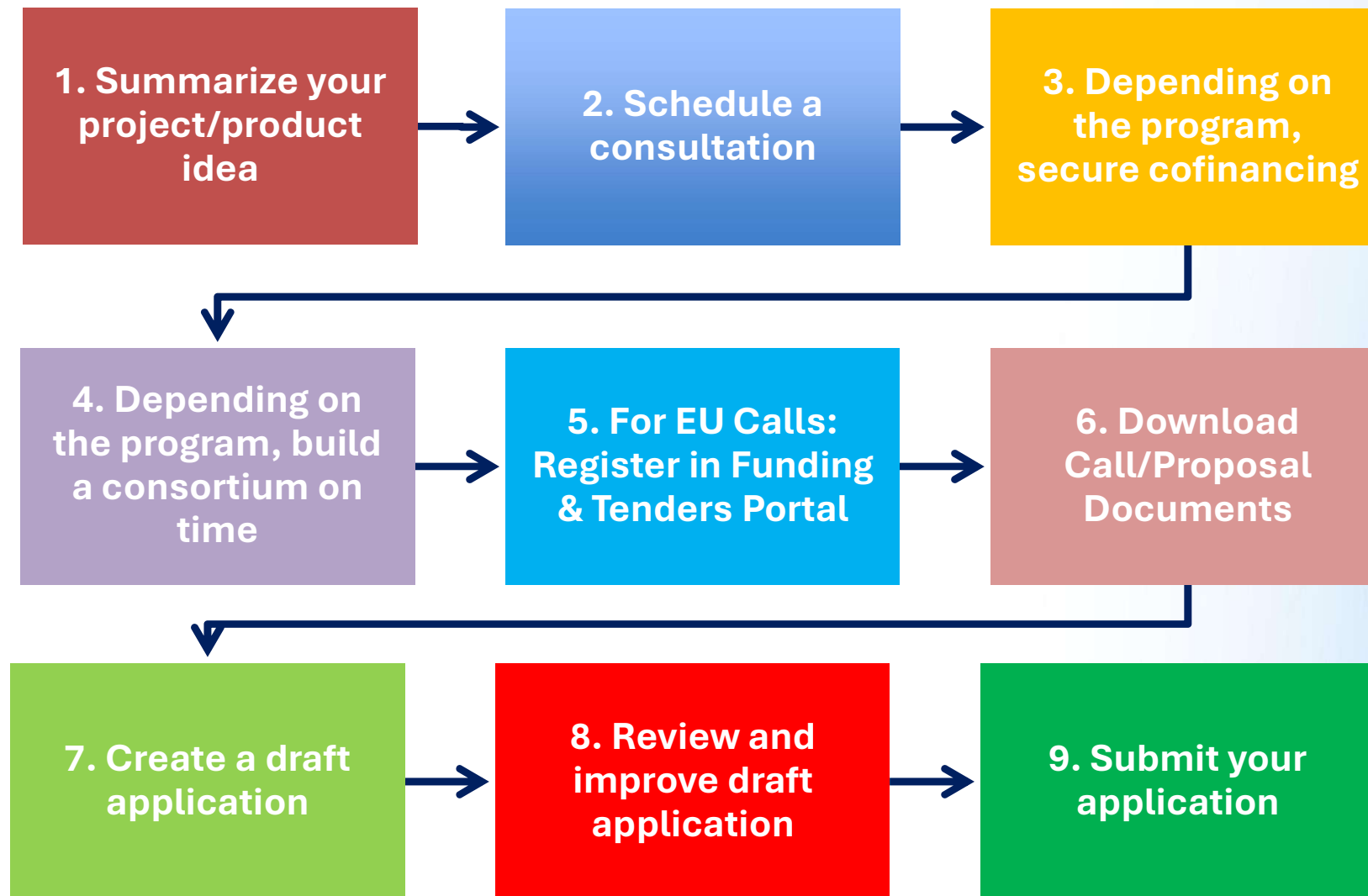**NOTE**: This list **does not include all currently avalable** sources for public funding.

What should you consider first when looking for public funding?

✓ **Development stage of the project to be funded:** Idea | Prototype | MVP | Pre-Seed | Seed | Scale-up

✓ **Eligible applicants:** Established SMEs | Startups | University researchers | Individual research institutions

✓ **Activity status:** Basic research | Applied R&D | Technical feasibility | Market validation | Business model testing

✓ **Eligible sectors:** Deep tech | Life sciences | Digital | Social projects | Innovation in SMEs, etc.

✓ **Funding type:** Full funding | Grant (non-repayable) | Loan (repayable) | Equity required | For consortia – proportional funding between partners, etc.

✓ **Eligibility criteria:** Location | Size/number of employees | Partnerships | TRL

✓ **Application effort vs. reward:** Strength of competition | Estimated time required | Compliance with requirements | Lack of time | Actual degree of innovation, etc.

✓ **IP rights considerations:** IP rules for funding | Willingness to collaborate on external platforms | Patent status | Shared IP rights, etc.

✓ **Ethical considerations:** The project/development complies with current ethical requirements

Checklist before applying for public funding:

- ✓ Is my company registered in the EU or in an associated/partner country?
- ✓ Does my company meet the permitted company size requirements?
- ✓ Do I have permanent employees?
- ✓ Can I implement the project alone, or am I looking for partners?
- ✓ Am I already collaborating with other companies, R&D institutions, academia, etc.?
- ✓ What is the technological level of my company/project? (compare your project to EU's Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs))
- ✓ How does my project exceed the state of the art (level of innovation)? Customer benefit/market?
- ✓ Do I have the time and knowledge to apply for funding?
- ✓ Have I found the right funding program? Are there alternatives?
- ✓ Can I cover part of the costs by myself?
- ✓ Do I already have a project outline?
- ✓ Do I already have or am I currently receiving other funding?
- ✓ Can I meet the funding requirements?

How to prepare your application for funding?

1. Summarize your project/product idea	**2. Schedule a consultation**	**3. Depending on the program, secure cofinancing**
4. Depending on the program, build a consortium on time	**5. For EU Calls: Register in Funding & Tenders Portal**	**6. Download Call/Proposal Documents**
7. Create a draft application	**8. Review and improve draft application**	**9. Submit your application**

Quelle: www.een-hhsh.de

References to open calls:

CALL	DESCRIPTION	DL	Budget
AMALTEA	Supporting proposals to develop innovative software or hardware solutions for facade applications, focusing on AI-enhanced design, digital twins, and robotics, to drive sustainability and efficiency in construction	**07.11.2025**	up to 100K/120K for 9-12 months
COSMIC 1st Open Call	AI and Data Solutions to Boost the Green Transition	**27.10.2025**	up to €150 K, duration 10 months
INNOWWIDE Note: Info webinar: 15.10.25	Supports innovative SMEs and startups from all sectors to test and enter new markets (bilateral "Market Feasibility Projects")	25.11.2025	€ 60K, 6 months
Forschungszulage	Provided as a tax credit for German companies of all sizes amounting to 25% of eligible R&D personnel costs, with SMEs receiving an increased rate of 35	ongoing	tax relief up to €3.5 Mio/year
Förderdatenbank	Calls & Project Funding Opportunities (also for international projects)	ongoing	
SPRIND Challenges	Challenges/Project Funding in different sectors & technologies	ongoing	
EU Funding & Tenders Portal	EU Database & Portal for Funding Calls Newly released: App for Android and IoS to track funding opportunities & proposals	ongoing	

… and many other funding opportunities, the application for which requires a highly individual approach!

Additional References for Deep Tech SMEs:

- **Future Tech Week 2026 – 19 to 23 January 2026:** The event will provide an enhanced platform for EIC projects and stakeholders to engage with Europe's Deep Tech landscape.

- **Follow on LinkedIn** or **subscribe** for **DeepSync.eu** Newsletter (initiated by EIC, focus on Deep Tech)

- Join the **O-CEI Discord Community (Cloud-Edge-IoT (CEI) networks)**: As a Horizon Europe Innovation Action program, O-CEI aims to create an open CEI platform with a strong focus on interoperability, security, and reliability, making it easier for different sectors to collaborate and share data in real-time.

--> 📅 **17 October | Online O-CEI 1st Open Call - 2nd Infoday**

Discover how to apply for the O-CEI Open Call and secure €100K equity-free funding for your Cloud-Edge-IoT innovation. Get expert tips, ask questions, and boost your chances of success.

👉 **Save your spot!**

- Explore & Apply for **EIC International Trade Fairs (ITF) Programme 3.0**

- **13.11.2025, 11-12:00 h Funding for Research & Innovation Projects in HORIZON Europe**
👉 Register: https://join.next.edudip.com/de/webinar/fordermoglichkeiten-fur-digitale-technologien-in-horizont-europa/2571411

Q & A SESSION.

Arrange your individual consultation appointment directly at:
al-ubaydi@aric-hamburg.de

Or submit your initial enquiry in less than 2 min:

THANK YOU.

Please share your feedback: