

# Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda

## EU Call for Project Proposals

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5. Dezember 2025

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# European long-term budgeting

# EU institutions and bodies I



**European Commission**

which makes proposals



**European Parliament**

representing EU citizens



**Council of the European Union**

representing EU countries

## Abbildung: EU institutions and bodies [Com25c]

The EU budget combines resources at EU level and enables EU countries to achieve more together than they could if they acted alone, for instance financing infrastructure or research projects [Com25c].

# EU institutions and bodies II

1

## Proposals are made



Abbildung: European Commission makes proposals for EU investments [Com25c]

- proposes the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)
- Resources Decision
- as specific sectoral legislation sets rules for specification of EU investments [Com25c]

# EU institutions and bodies III

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## Discussions and negotiations start



Abbildung: Parliament and Council of the EU negotiate [Com25c]

- Council of the EU discusses the proposals until all EU countries agree and adopts its positions
- In parallel, the European Parliament discusses the proposals and adopts its positions [Com25c]

# Long-term budget I

- The **Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)** defines the EU's long-term spending priorities and limits
- It sets maximum annual expenditure for the entire EU budget and its main policy areas
- The current MFF covers the period **2021–2027**
- Together with NextGenerationEU, the long-term budget amounts to around **€2 trillion** [Uni25]

# Funding programmes and open calls of the current period I

- **Horizon Europe** — Budget: **€95.5 billion**.  
EU research and innovation framework programme (2021–2027) focusing on climate action, UN SDGs, competitiveness, and knowledge creation [**Com25a**]



**Figure:** Horizon Europe [eur20]



# Types of European Partnerships I

## ● Institutionalised Partnerships

- Long-term structured collaborations
- Strong integration between partners
- Implemented through dedicated EU bodies
- Includes EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs)

## ● Co-funded Partnerships

- Joint research and innovation programmes
- Funded by EU + national authorities
- Typically run joint international calls

## ● Co-programmed Partnerships

- Joint planning of research and innovation priorities
- Based on cooperation with industry associations
- EU provides funding through Horizon Europe calls [Com25a]

# Horizon Europe Partnerships I

- The Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 2025–2027 introduces new candidate co-funded and co-programmed partnerships.
- The full portfolio will consist of **60 European Partnerships**.
- **Partnership areas:**
  - Climate, energy and mobility
  - Culture, creativity and inclusive society
  - Digital, industry and space
  - Food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment
  - Health [Com25a]

# SRIA

# What is a SRIA? I

- A **Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA)** is the core strategy document of a European Partnership
- It defines objectives, impact areas, expected outcomes, activities, outputs, and milestones
- Provides a **long-term systemic plan** with clear principles, impact logic, and pathways
- Forms the basis for annual or multi-annual work programmes [ERI25]

# Principles for SRIA creation I

- **Strategic & impact-driven:** Clear vision, objectives, and measurable targets
- **Openness & transparency:** Inclusive and transparent development process
- **Flexibility:** Adaptable structure with periodic review and refinement
- **Commitment & ownership:** Active involvement of all key stakeholders
- **Synergies:** Alignment with EU, national, and regional initiatives [ERI25]

# General structure of a SRIA I

- **Vision & Mission:** defines the long-term ambition and the core purpose of the partnership
- **Intervention Logic & Impact Pathways:** maps how objectives lead to outcomes, impacts and results, and tracks progress
- **Prioritized Lines of Action:** a detailed action plan that enables annual or multi-annual work plans
- **Objectives & Targets:** clear, measurable goals to assess progress and success
- **Engagement of Stakeholders & Adaptability:** includes involvement of relevant actors and allows adaptability to changing needs or context [ERI25]

# Example for an SRIA I

# Why the EU funds projects



# EU Research and Missions



The **European Union** invests money in research and innovation.



EU **missions** focus on big problems like climate, cancer, oceans, cities and healthy soil.

# From Call to Project

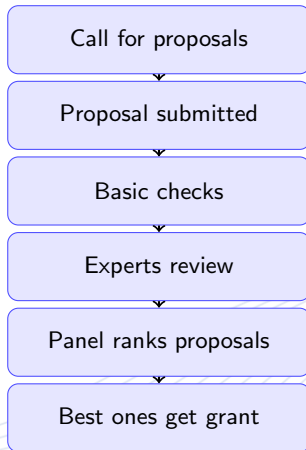
- The EU publishes a **call text** with a topic and rules.
- A group of partners writes a **project proposal**.
- They send the proposal on time through the online portal.
- After the deadline, the proposal enters the **evaluation process**.
- Only the best proposals become **funded projects**.

# Who checks the proposals

# Who Evaluates the Proposal?

- Proposals are checked by **independent experts**.
- Experts come from **different countries** and backgrounds.
- They are chosen for their **knowledge** in the topic.
- They must follow **conflict of interest** rules (they cannot judge their own project).
- Each proposal is read by **several experts**, not only one person.

# Evaluation Pipeline



Each step removes proposals that do not fit the rules or have low quality.

# How the evaluation works

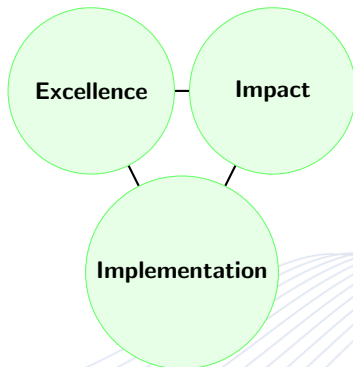
# Scoring System

- Experts give scores from **0** (very poor) to **5** (excellent).
- Scores are given for each **criterion**.
- A proposal must reach a **minimum score** to stay in the game.
- Later, experts meet and agree on a **common score**.
- Then the EU creates a **ranked list** from the best to the worst.

# The three main criteria: **Excellence, Impact, Implementation**



# Three Main Evaluation Criteria



Every proposal is judged on these three **pillars**.

# Excellence: The Idea

- The proposal must start with a **simple and clear problem**.
- It must explain what people **already know** about this problem.
- It must show what is **missing** or what is not solved yet.
- It should have **clear goals** that the team wants to reach.
- The idea should follow a **logical plan** and make sense.

# Excellence: The Method

- The proposal must show **how** the team will work.
- It should list the **tools** and **techniques** they will use.
- It must explain **why** these tools are the right choice.
- It should say how they will **collect** and **study** data.
- It must mention possible **problems** and how they will solve them.

# Impact: The Change

- Describes what will **change** if the project is successful.
- Links the project to **EU missions** or strategies.
- Explains who will **benefit** and how.
- Gives simple **numbers** to measure success (for example fewer accidents, less energy use).

# Impact Plans: Use and Communication

- Shows how results will be **used** after the project (for example product, service, policy).
- Explains how results will be **shared**: reports, websites, open events, training.
- Talks about the **target groups**: cities, companies, citizens, students.
- Makes sure the project does not end in a **drawer**.

# Implementation: Work Plan

- Breaks the project into **work packages**.
- Each work package has tasks, a leader and a time period.
- Shows a simple **timeline** (Gantt style).
- Explains how partners will **manage** the project: meetings, reports, risk checks.

# Implementation: The Team

- A good consortium mixes:
  - **Universities** (knowledge)
  - **Companies** (market and products)
  - **Cities or users** (real-life testing)
- Each partner has a **clear role**.
- The coordinator has experience in **project management**.

## Short Overview of the Three Criteria

<b>Excellence</b>	Quality of the idea and method. Clear problem and clear objectives.
<b>Impact</b>	Useful change in society or the market. Strong link to EU goals.
<b>Implementation</b>	Realistic work plan, good team and management.



# Example Project: Smart Traffic



- Goal: make a city **safer** at busy crossings.
- University builds an **AI model** to predict risky situations.
- Company builds **smart cameras** and software.
- City installs the system at real junctions.

# A simple **smart traffic** example

# Smart Traffic Project and the Criteria

- **Excellence:** clear accident problem, new AI-based solution.
- **Impact:** fewer injuries, supports green and smart city mission.
- **Implementation:** clear work packages, 3-year plan, partners with real responsibilities.

# Typical Weak Points in Proposals

- Problem is **not clear** or too broad.
- Many nice words but **no concrete impact**.
- Work plan looks **too optimistic** for the time and budget.
- Missing important partners (for example no city partner for a city project).
- Risks are ignored or only written in one short line.

# What Makes a Proposal Strong

- Simple and **clear story** that everyone understands.
- Real **innovation**, but still realistic.
- Impact that matches **EU missions**.
- Work plan that looks **doable**.
- Team that has the **right skills**.

# Students in EU Projects



- Students cannot be **main applicants**.
- But they can work inside a **university team**.
- They help with data, coding, tests and reports.
- This gives strong **experience** and a good CV.

# How students can join such projects

# How a Student Can Join a Project





# Typical Student Roles

- **Data work:** collecting, cleaning and simple analysis.
- **Programming:** small modules, scripts, dashboards.
- **Testing:** trying out prototypes in the lab or in the field.
- **Support:** helping with figures, slides and documentation.
- **Thesis:** writing a project-related bachelor or master thesis.

# Benefits for Students

- Learn how real **EU projects** work.
- Build an **international network**.
- Gain experience that looks strong on a **CV**.
- Understand how research ideas become **funded projects**.

# Summary

- EU projects are evaluated on **Excellence**, **Impact** and **Implementation**.
- Only clear, realistic and high-impact proposals are funded.
- Students cannot lead these proposals but can **join** them.
- Working in such a project is a strong step for a **future career**.

Thank you for listening.  
Questions?

Thank You  
for your attention

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