

Call for Applications for the Recovery and Resilience Plan Funding

Transformation and Innovation Consortia (shortened version for foreign partners)

Call ID:	09I02-03-V01
Name of the Call:	Transformation and Innovation Consortia
Aim and Purpose:	<p>The goal of the call is to strengthen the research and innovation environment in Slovakia through funding a small number of clearly thematically defined Transformation and Innovation Consortia (TIC). These Consortia will connect public and private actors from Slovakia with leading institutions from abroad, and they will generate new research and innovation activities and projects throughout the entire innovation chain. The aim is to support the transformation of key sectors of the economy with high innovation potential, which will be defined by the applicants themselves in their submitted applications.</p> <p>The purpose of the call is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) To address economic and social challengesb) To generate transformative research and innovation activities, new collaborations and subsequent projects in key sectors of the economy with high innovation potentialc) To mobilize private sector investments in research, development and innovationd) To connect relevant actors within the entire innovation chain in the given areae) To establish long-term collaborations and joint activities of key actors in the field of research and innovation beyond the duration of the projectf) To apply results in social and economic practice <p>Expected results of the call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Increased number of joint research, development and innovation activities and outputs with high innovation potential in key sectors of the economy at the national and international level

	<p>b) Establishment of functioning TIC with a sustainable funding plan after the project is finalized (e.g. a multi-source funding plan for the following 5 years at least).</p> <p>c) Increased private investments in research, development and innovation within TIC</p> <p>d) Improvement of technology transfer (e.g. in the form of European or international patents, licensing, spin-offs, etc.) and improvement of business skills</p> <p>e) Creation of new business opportunities and increased share of innovative businesses (e.g. the creation of new innovative companies, start-ups, etc.).</p> <p>f) Improved quality of human resources within the TIC and beyond</p> <p>g) Increased participation of Slovak entities in international projects and especially in the European Research Area.</p> <p>h) Refined definition of research and innovation priorities and topics, which have a potential to become pillars of the Slovak economy, by TIC themselves (bottom up)</p> <p>Applicants can apply for funding from 10 to 15 million EUR (excluding VAT) per project for the period of 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2026.</p>
State Aid Scheme	<p>State aid scheme for research, development and innovation projects within the component 9 of the Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Slovak Republic. The scheme is registered by the European Commission under number SA.106633 and is publicly available (in Slovak) at: https://vaia.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Schema_SP_VVal_K9POO-SA.106633.pdf?csrt=3003162182056910973</p>

A. FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

Call Duration

Start Date: 12. 6. 2023

End Date: 4. 10. 2023

Call Allocation

The call allocation is 107,928,000 EUR, of which:

- a) Resilience and Recovery Plan: 89 940 000 EUR
- b) Resilience and Recovery Plan – payment of VAT: 17 988 000 EUR

Application Attachments in English

- Project Description (60 pages)
- Budget
- Partnership Declaration
- Data required to request an extract from the criminal record of the Slovak Republic
- State-aid self-assessment form
- Authorization
- CVs of key project researchers listed in the project description

B. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicant and partners eligibility criteria

TIC will be established on the partnership of the applicant and the partners. At the time of signing a grant agreement, the applicant will be asked to submit a valid consortium agreement, which will regulate the relations between the applicant and the partners.

Applicant eligibility criteria:

The following entities based in the Slovak Republic (categories a, b, c) can be eligible applicants:

- a) Slovak Academy of Sciences

- a) Budget and contributory organizations established by central state administration bodies
- a) Public research institutions
- a) Universities
- b) Civic associations and non-profit organizations
- b) Associations of legal entities that are not established by the central state administration body
- c) Enterprises according to §2 par. 2a of the Commercial Code

Partner eligibility criteria:

The following entities based in the Slovak Republic (categories a, b, c, d) can be eligible partners:

- a) Slovak Academy of Sciences
- a) Budget and contributory organizations established by central state administration bodies
- a) Public research institutions
- a) Universities
- b) Civic associations and non-profit organizations
- b) Associations of legal entities that are not established by the central state administration body
- c) Enterprises according to §2 par. 2a of the Commercial Code
- d) Local and regional self-government units and budget and contribution organizations established by them

a

- e) A non-Slovak partner operating in the field of research and development (category e) that is not from the Russian Federation or the Republic of Belarus

Applicant exclusivity criteria:

Within this call, the applicant cannot be simultaneously a partner in another application, except for the Slovak Academy of Sciences and Universities, which can be applicants and/or partners in several applications provided that each application is aimed at supporting a different TIC. Other eligible entities may be applicants in only one application provided that they are not partners in another application at the same time.

Consortium of partners' eligibility criteria:

TIC must consist of at least three eligible entities (the applicant and at least two partners) whereas the following categories of eligible entities must be represented: a), c), e).

Project eligibility criteria

The applicant should:

- a) Define and describe the specific area of the TIC project, its transformation potential, i.e. the impact on the economy and/or society, its connection to the European Research Area (ERA) and justify the need for such a project in Slovakia.
- b) Based on the prior analysis, justify why the area and the identified key sector and/or sectors of the economy, which TIC will be focused on, have significant research and innovation potential for Slovakia.
- c) Describe the compliance of the TIC project with relevant strategic documents in the field of research and innovation at the national and European level (e.g. the National Strategy for Research, Development and Innovation of the Slovak Republic).
- d) Describe the demand for activities that the TIC project will perform, that is, how they respond to specific needs on the market or in society and why it is not possible to finance this need from other sources.
- e) Justify the expected impact of the submitted TIC project on a specific area, sector of the economy or the solution to a societal challenge.
- f) Describe the mechanisms of mobilization of the private sector within the TIC project, as well as the method of increasing private investments in RDI. Describe joint innovation activities and outputs (e.g. creation of new business plans and companies, technology transfer, incubation activities, development of business skills, etc.) and the method of protection and transfer of intellectual property into practice.
- g) Describe how TIC will use or modernize existing research and innovation infrastructure (primarily university science parks and research centers, incubators, coworking spaces, etc.) and engage in transnational networks.
- h) Describe how TIC will link research, development and innovation – that is how TIC will cover the entire innovation chain. TIC must be based on a partnership principle and include excellent institutions from various sectors. Supported projects should include relevant actors in the given area in Slovakia. This means that TIC should connect a sufficient number of partners to cover the entire innovation chain and at the same time be able to fulfill the project's goals.
- i) Describe the experience and expertise of the applicant and partners in the given area, as well as how and with what capacities they plan to develop the given area. As well as the method of adopting and defining the best practice in the

management of research and innovation in the consortium of involved entities. At the same time, the executive management of the involved institutions should have international experience in managing similar projects or centers.

- j) Justify the selection and describe the method of involvement of at least one excellent foreign institution and its role in the project. The foreign partner must be an integral part of the consortium management. Describe also the way in which the consortium will transfer the various experiences and knowledge of its foreign partner to the research and innovation ecosystem in Slovakia.
- k) Describe the development of human resources in TIC, the influx of talented researchers/innovators from abroad and their activities in TIC, joint educational activities within TIC (e.g. mutual learning and capacity building among partners, etc.), exchange stays and internships of TIC members (short-term or medium-term).
- l) Describe the TIC sustainable funding plan after the project is finalized for at least the next 5 years (e.g. formalization of TIC operations, multi-source financing plan). The applicant must clearly justify how the project will contribute to better long-term collaborations between individual actor after the end of funding from the Recovery and Resilience Plan (e.g. preparation of project applications for the subsequent period, etc.).

TIC can also focus on other activities beyond the above mentioned, but they must lead to the fulfillment of the defined goals.

Eligible activities of foreign partners:

- Applied / industrial research and experimental development
- Employee exchanges between TIC partners in connection with the implementation of research or development within the project
- Organization of events to promote knowledge exchange, networking and transnational cooperation

Non-eligible activities

- Activities that do not comply with the Do-No-Significant-Harm policy
- Activities financed from other programs (double financing)

Expenses eligibility criteria

Eligible direct expenses of foreign partners:

- **Personal costs** of researchers, technicians and other support staff to the extent in which they participate in the relevant eligible activity of the project
- **Depreciation of capital assets** (movable and immovable) in the scope and period of their use within the project, calculated on the basis of generally accepted accounting principles
- Expenditure on knowledge and patents purchased or licensed from external sources based on the principle of market distance for the given project
- Other goods and services (including audit expenses) except travel allowances

Personal costs are subject to the regime of simplified expense reporting and are calculated in the form of unit personal costs of eligible subjects as follows:

- For foreign partners: according to the country MEDIAN value from *Horizon Dashboard for Lump Sum Evaluations*¹ increased by 19% and, if relevant, reduced in accordance with the State Aid Scheme

Indirect costs of the project are subject to the regime of simplified expense reporting and are calculated by applying a flat rate of 7% of the total direct expenses.

Recovery and Resilience Plan resources cannot be provided to a recipient and/or partner that receives a subsidy, contribution, grant or other form of assistance to finance the same expenses – that would constitute double financing. Double financing also means the situation if the result of the given project is reached not only by using the RRP's funds, but also by using other resources from the EU budget.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/programmes/horizon/lump-sum/dashboard>