

Preparation of the Horizon Europe work programme 2026-2027

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HORIZON EUROPE

— EU RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME —

Horizon Europe WP2026-27 preparation – content

Work Programme 2026-2027 preparation

timeline

key novelties

general issues

New co-funded Partnerships and

some current calls

Tips for calls and participation

Horizon Europe 2021 – 2027: ~95,5 billion €

25 mrd. €
(26,2 %)

Pillar 1 Excellent Science

European Research Council

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

Research Infrastructures

53.5 mrd. €
(56 %)

Pillar 2 Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness

Clusters

1. Health
2. Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society
3. Civil Security for Society
4. Digital, Industry and Space
5. Climate, Energy and Mobility
6. Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment

Joint Research Centre

13,6 mrd. €
(14,2 %)

Pillar 3 Innovative Europe

European Innovation Council

European innovation ecosystems

European Institute of Innovation and Technology

3,4 mrd. €
(3,5 %)

Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area

Widening participation and spreading excellence

Reforming and Enhancing the European R&I system

Horizon Europe work programme 2026-2027

Timeline, key novelties, general observations

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WP 2026-27 preparation timeline(s)

- Program committees are working on the work programmes for each cluster/committee
- Strategic Programme committee is working on General Introduction, General Annexes as well as Missions and New European Bauhaus (NEB) work programmes
- Expected adoption of the 'main' work programme: **December 2025**
- **WP drafts available** ➤ [Comitology Register](#) OR euti@businessfinland.fi
- Separate work programmes on annual basis for European Research Council (ERC) and European Innovation Council (EIC)
 - [ERC WP2026](#) published with [several reforms](#)
 - Adoption of EIC WP2026 expected in November

Key novelties 2026-2027 (1/2)

- **Simplification measures**

- Shortened work programme, reduced number of topics, less prescriptive topics, increased lump sum funding, reduced complexity of proposals, etc.

- **Choose Europe for Science** (MSCA, ERC, national initiatives)

- **Cross-cutting calls** (investing in climate action, biodiversity and the digital transition)

- R&I in support of the Clean Industrial Deal (CID) – ca. 600 M€ across 2026 and 2027:
 - Btw CL4&CL5, themes: 1) Clean Technologies for Climate Action, and 2) Decarbonisation of Energy-Intensive Industries
 - Innovation Actions; business plan and market study as a precondition; target TRL 8
- AI in Science – RAISE pilot horizontal calls, across 2026 and 2027
 - WP2026 : Thematic Networks of Excellence for AI in Science (RIA, 28 M€)
 - WP2026: RAISE Doctoral Networks for AI in Science (30 M€, MSCA compliance)

Key novelties 2026-2027 (2/2) – tbc



Cross-cutting activities in Missions

- A proposal: "*EU Missions Exhibitions & Envoys*" to raise awareness and enhance engagement among citizens in the EU Missions
- Proposed budget: EUR 7.6 million
- Exhibitions:
 - To be hosted in public spaces: town halls, fairs, universities, museums.
 - Travelling exhibition on the EU Missions around Europe, in local languages with interactive elements. Appr. 10 countries with ca. 5 exhibitions per year.
- Envoys:
 - A diverse group of individuals (scientists, influencers, activists etc.) to become part of a pool of EU Missions envoys to amplify the outreach of EU Missions.
 - Based on short-term engagements, promotion of the exhibition events (covering all stops), post on social media and possibly attend other presential/online events



Overview of the changes for WP 2026-2027

Two-stage
calls

Blind
evaluation

Gender
Equality Plan

[GEP eligibility
criterion](#)

Proposal
template –
simplification

Read General Intro &
Annexes

Specific instruments

Fast Track to R&I (FTRI)

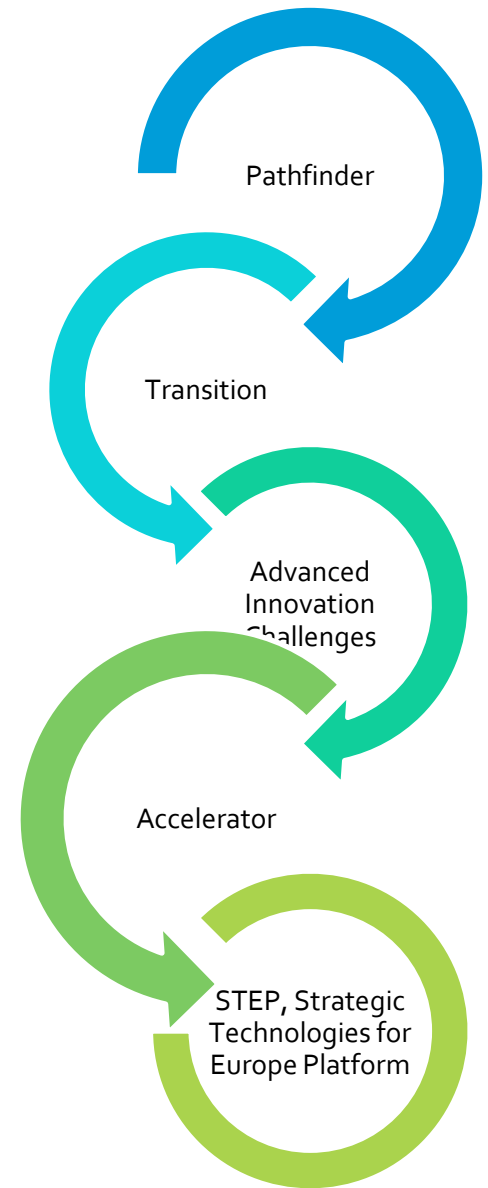
- a bottom-up funding scheme within the EU's H2020/ European Innovation Council framework designed to accelerate market-ready innovations. An agile, industry-led funding route aimed at bringing breakthrough ideas from prototype to market in a fast, efficient way. It's ideal for SMEs, startups, research institutions and other stakeholders ready to scale commercial or societal-impact innovations quickly across the EU.

Financial support to third parties (FSTP)

- The objective is to promote the participation of SMEs and civil society actors by providing funding within the project for targeted actions. The draft work programme currently includes 26 topics where the use of FSTP could be enabled. [FSTP Guide](#)

European Innovation Council EIC – WP2026 draft, TBC

- [Pathfinder](#) (262 M€): Early stage research to develop breakthrough technologies (TRL 1-4). In open calls, always multidisciplinary/multifaceted consortia; in thematic calls, single or multi participation. 4 M€/project
- [Transition](#) (100 M€): Development and validation of new ideas towards commercialisation (TRL 3/4–5/6). **The idea must be based on the results of a previously EU-funded project (check eligibility).** Up to 2,5 M€/ project.
- ➔ • [Advanced Innovation Challenges – PILOT 2026](#) (6 M€): 1. stage projects up to 0,3 M€ for developing solutions, after which chosen 2. phase projects up to 2,5 M€ for prototyping and user testing.
- [Accelerator](#) (634 M€): an individual company's project to commercialize an innovation (TRL 6-8). Projects up to 2,5 M€ + equity financing up to 10 M€.
- [STEP Scale Up](#) (300 M€): EIC Fund equity financing 10-30 M€ for companies operating in critical technologies (deeptech, cleantech, biotechnology, up to 20 % of total investment).



European Partnerships under Horizon Europe

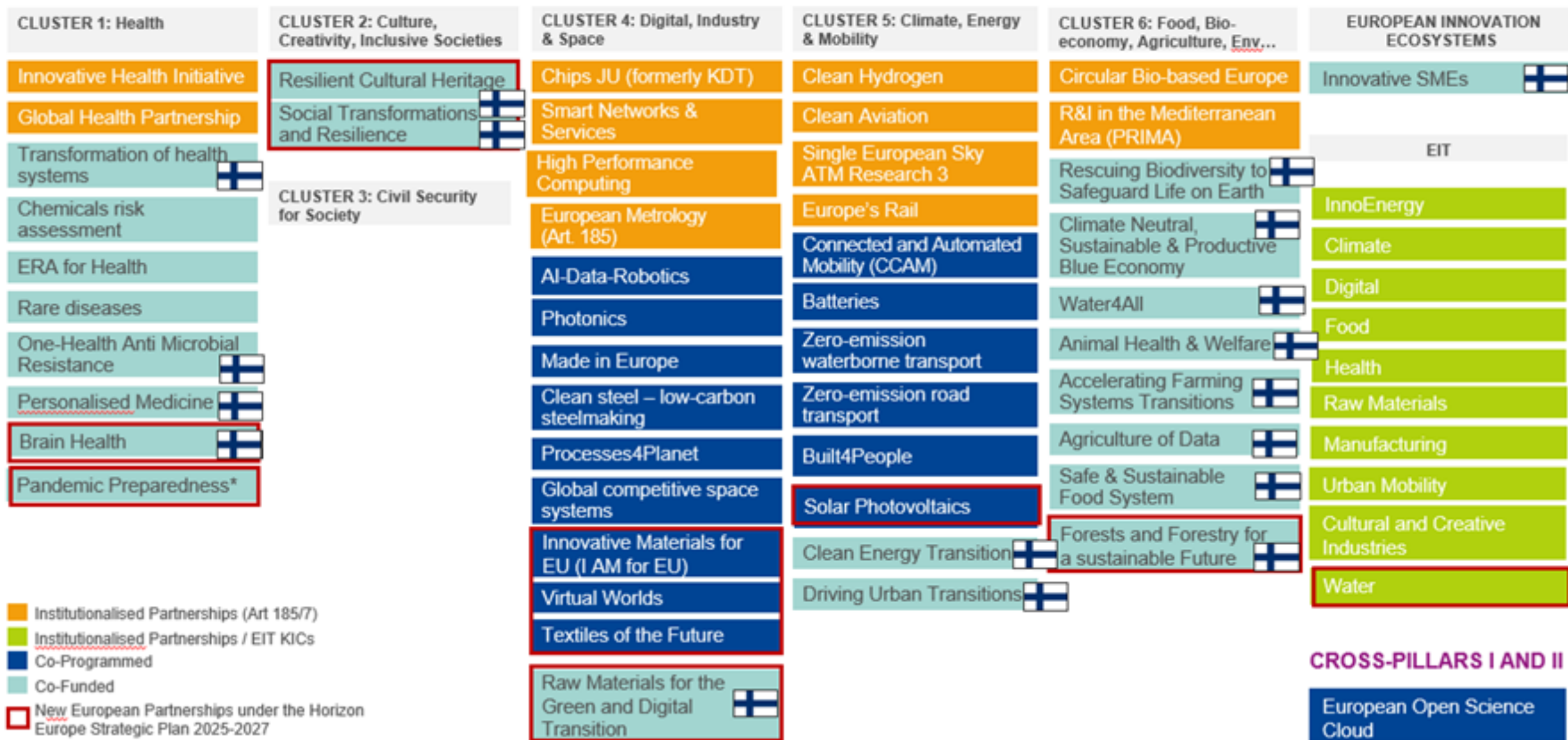


Horizon Europe partnership types

- **Institutionalised Partnerships** – Long-term, formal collaborations between the EU and partners (public or private) established by legal acts. They have a structured governance and stable funding, aiming for strategic goals in research and innovation.
 - *Calls implemented according to partnership's own annual work programmes*
- **Co-programmed Partnerships** – Partnerships that are based on joint programming of research and innovation activities and mobilisation of additional activities by partners in line with the objectives of the partnership. They are based on a Memorandum of Understanding, which the Commission signs with industry associations.
 - *Calls implemented through Horizon Europe (Pillar II) Cluster 4 and Cluster 5 work programmes*
- **Co-funded Partnerships** – Implemented through Horizon Europe Grant Agreements signed by the Commission and a consortium of partners, generally composed of research and innovation funders and other public authorities. Partners generally implement joint transnational calls as well as additional activities, with 30 % (or 50 %) of co-funding from Horizon Europe.
 - *Participation in the call requires participation of a national funding body. However, not every Funding Agency in every country may fund every call, topic or organisation type. Usually 2-stage calls with a separate submission platform.*

PILLAR II - Global challenges & European industrial competitiveness

PILLAR III - Innovative Europe



CROSS-PILLARS I AND II

European Open Science Cloud

horisonttieurooppa.fi > Tutustu ohjelmaan > [Kumppanuusohjelmat](#)

ERA-LEARN portal: Explore partnerships, Call calendar, etc

New co-funded partnerships starting 2025-2027

Partnership

- CL2: Resilient Cultural Heritage
- CL2: Social Transformations and Resilience*
- CL6: Forest and Forestry (coord FI!)
- CL4: Raw Materials for the Green and Digital Transition
- CL1: Brain Health
- CL1: Pandemic Preparedness**

Funding body in calls from FI

- RCF
- RCF
- MAF, RCF and BF
- BF and RCF
- RCF
- – (for info, contact MSAH)

*) WP2026 – starting later

**) from the Strategic Plan 2021-2024

BF= Business Finland

MAF= Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry FI

RCF= Research Council of Finland

Business Finland as a partner/funder in the HE Partnerships

Participation so far

- Personalised Medicine; BF funding reservation ~ 3 M€ / year
- Clean Energy Transition Partnership CETP; BF funding reservation ~ 5-7 M€ / year
- **Driving Urban Transition DUT**; BF funding reservation ~ 1 M€ / year
- Eurostars III (Innovative SMEs); BF funding reservation ~ 3 M€ / year
- Chips Joint Undertaking; BF funding reservation ~ 10 M€ / year
- Upcoming, TBC: Sustainable Sustainable Food Systems, FutureFoodS 10/2025



Coordination of BF's participation: elina.holmberg@businessfinland.fi

Open calls: [Ajankohtaista - Business Finland](#)

RCF is funding co-funded partnership calls

Participation so far

- Biodiversa + - 3 calls (JTC2021, JTC2022, JTC2024)
- Transforming Health and Care Systems, THCS – 2 calls (JTC2023, JTC2025)
- **Water4All** – 2 calls (JTC2023, JTC2025)
- **Sustainable Blue Economy, SBEP** – 2 calls (JTC2024, JTC2025)
- Personalised Medicine – 1 call (JTC2024)
- One Health AMR - Anti Microbial Resistance – [launched](#) 23 Sep 2025

Coordination of RCF's participation: marko.uutela@aka.fi

Open calls: [Haut - Suomen Akatemia](#)

MAF is participating in co-funded CL6 partnership calls

Participation so far

- Biodiversa+ (funder)
- Water4All
- Sustainable Blue Economy, SBEP
- Agroecology living labs and research infrastructure, AE (funder + other activities)
- Animal Health and Welfare, PAHW
- Agriculture of Data, AgData
- Sustainable Food Systems, FutureFoodS

Coordination of MAF's participation: elina.nikkola@gov.fi

Open calls: [Hakuilmoitukset - Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö](#)

Tips for calls and participation

- More detailed information about Horizon Europe calls **Funding & Tenders** portal ([link](#))
- View the draft HE work programmes now!
- Start looking for consortium partners as soon as possible
- Also follow other relevant programs
- Check out the partnerships, e.g. here [Horisontti Eurooppa](#)
- [Integration of Social Sciences and Humanities in Horizon Europe](#) – a follow-up report
- For networking several platforms, also [COST-actions](#)
- Get in touch: euti@businessfinland.fi or [NCPs Finland](#)
- Follow the LinkedIn group "HorisonttiEU"

Thank you!

At your service:

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