



# Announcement

## 11<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals for Joint Research and Development (R&D) Projects between Germany and France

**Project applications and national funding applications will be accepted until 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

### 1. Scope

Bpifrance and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) intend to support joint French-German research and development projects (R&D projects) in order to develop innovative products, processes, or technical services in all technological and application areas. Funding will be available for R&D projects in which new products, technical services or processes will in subsequent steps generate sustainable solutions with high market potential.

In Germany, funding is provided through the Central Innovation Programme for SMEs (ZIM). In France, funding is provided through Bpifrance Aide à l'Innovation funding scheme.

AiF Projekt GmbH, ZIM project management agency on behalf of the BMWK, and Bpifrance will assist the German and French project partners with basic information during the submission of project proposals, in the evaluation and in the implementation phase.

### 2. Call Structure

The call invites partners to present joint proposals for R& D projects until November 18<sup>th</sup> 2024 according to the following procedures used by Bpifrance and ZIM, specified on the Bpifrance website and the guideline of the ZIM programme.

## 2.1 Financing

Eligible project participants from Germany and France will finance their costs from their respective national funding schemes (in Germany ZIM, in France by Bpifrance) and complementarily from their own resources. Provision of funding from one national scheme will neither indicate that funding from the other funding agency will be provided, nor bind the other national scheme in its provision of funds to the eligible project participants.

## 2.2 Minimum Requirements

Project results will have to contribute to the development of commercial products, processes and / or technology-based services. The project proposals have to comply with the following guidelines:

- Naming of all project partners
- The short project title given in the Proposal Application Form should be the same for all partners.
- The partners must include at least one company from France and one German small medium-sized Enterprise (SME), independent from each other.
- Participation of research institutes and other companies are welcome as additional participants or subcontractors according to each country's funding regulations
- The project should focus on the development of new products, services or processes of industrial application, which are based on the international state of the art, leading to commercialisation in the domestic and/or global markets.
- The project should have an obvious advantage and differentiated value proposition resulting from the cooperation between the participants from the two countries (e.g. increased innovation capability, commercial leads, access to R&D infrastructure, new fields of application, etc.).
- Project duration should not exceed three years.
- The project should demonstrate a balanced technological contribution by the participants from both countries and must be equally significant to all participants. In a project with two cooperating partners, no partner may contribute more than 70% of total person months to the project. In a project with more than two cooperating partners, no partner may contribute more than 50% of total person months. All research organisations involved in the consortium may altogether not contribute more than 50% of the total person months.

Any partner whose cooperative R&D project is consistent with the aforesaid criteria may apply to the present announcement in accordance with the national laws, rules, regulations and procedures in effect.

### 3. Submission

Between the opening of the call on June 5<sup>th</sup> 2024 and the call deadline on November 18<sup>th</sup> 2024 all German and French participants are asked to file the Proposal Application Form, which should be filled out and signed by all organisations in the project and the draft Consortium Agreement (not yet signed) that regulates the terms of cooperation between all partners (also in English). These documents have to be submitted electronically to [zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de](mailto:zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de) and [international.innoproject@bpifrance.fr](mailto:international.innoproject@bpifrance.fr)

The minimum requirements for the Cooperation Agreement are:

- Naming of all project partners
- Description of the project aims, scope, role division and differentiation of the subprojects of the partners including their working plans with person months (for this the common application proposals can be declared as part of the agreement)
- A clause that provides for all partners to be informed if third parties are involved in the project
- Regulation of intellectual property rights (background and foreground)
- Basic regulation of joint commercialization and apportioning of benefits
- Joint final reporting is to be done according to the regulations set by ZIM and BPI France
- If research organisations from either country are involved the publishing rights of each party must be regulated

The Consortium Agreement shall be consistent with Bpifrance's and ZIM's terms and conditions for funding.

In addition to the Proposal Application Form, project partners who want to apply for funding within this call must submit a national application according to the respective rules (see below).

The Proposal Application Form as well as additional country-specific information and requirements are available at [www.zim.de/Frankreich](http://www.zim.de/Frankreich) and at Bpifrance's homepage.

#### 3.1. France

French partners must submit an application with all mandatory appendices included, in addition to the short project title used in the Proposal Application Form with their German partners.

- Eligible Beneficiaries: French companies up to 2000 fulltime equivalents (FTE)
- Eligible costs: Industrial research and experimental development (industrialization and commercialization costs are not eligible)

- **Funding:** Financial support may be provided to eligible French companies in support of industrial research or technological development activities. Eligible French partners can be funded through an ADI (Aide pour le Développement de l'Innovation), ie through a reimbursable advance or an R&D loan of up to 3M€ within the limit of own equity.

NB: If the company is considered as a Deeptech company, the funding could be different.

In any case, all the above information regarding French funding could be adapted to the company's profile and project.

French partners may also participate in a collaborative project on a self-funding basis.

**Any payment is subject to a signed consortium agreement.**

### 3.2 Germany

Each German project partner submits an individual ZIM application to the ZIM Project Management Agency AiF Projekt GmbH. Every SME with an establishment or branch in Germany, in accordance with the relevant EU regulations, as well as medium-sized companies with less than 500 employees (full-time equivalents), which carry out R&D for the development of innovative products, processes or technical services, are eligible to apply. Other medium-sized companies with less than 1,000 employees are eligible to apply for funding if they cooperate with at least one SME (in accordance with EU regulations) whose project is funded. Research and technology organisations (RTOs) are eligible to apply as cooperation partners of eligible companies.

An instruction on how to receive the ZIM application form and detailed criteria for submitting applications can be found on the ZIM website ([www.zim.de](http://www.zim.de)); you may also contact AiF Project GmbH directly as described below. The application must be written in German and comply with the regulations of the ZIM guideline.

In addition to the ZIM application, the Proposal Application Form and the draft Consortium Agreement mentioned above have to be submitted electronically via [zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de](mailto:zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de), so that your application can be allocated correctly.

### 3.3 Decision and project start

Projects should be submitted to each national agency by November 18<sup>th</sup> 2024, after which the technical assessment by each national authority will take place.

For all applicants, consultation with their respective national agencies (Bpifrance and ZIM Project Management Agency AiF Projekt GmbH) is highly recommended at an early stage.

## Contact



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