

Announcement

12th German-Finish Call for Proposals for joint R&D projects by Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

Deadline for proposal submissions: 15th December 2021

1. Scope

Business Finland, the Finnish funding agency for research and technology development, and BMWi, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, intend to support German-Finnish research and development (R&D) projects in order to develop innovative products, processes or technical from all technological and application areas - especially in the field of Health and Digitalisation and Information Technology (incl. service, platform development). Funding will be available for R&D projects in which new products, services or processes with high market potential are developed and subsequently transformed into marketable products.

In Germany, funding is provided through the Central Innovation Programme for SMEs (ZIM). Business Finland and AiF Projekt GmbH (ZIM project management agency on behalf of the BMWi) support the applicants during the stages of proposal submission, evaluation and implementation.

2. Call Structure

The call invites partners to present joint proposals for R&D projects until **15th December 2021** according to the following procedures.

2.1. Financing

Eligible project participants from Germany and Finland will finance their costs from national funding schemes and complementarily from their own resources. Provision of funding from one national scheme will neither indicate that funding from the other national scheme will be provided, not 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 technical services. The project proposals have to comply with the following guidelines:

- The consortium has to include at least two independent enterprises (SMEs), one from Finland and one from Germany, which contribute considerably to the project. Participation of research and technology organisations (RTO) and other companies is welcome as additional participants (in Germany) or following the co-innovation funding scheme (in Finland). See more under section 3.1.
- Companies and/ or research organisations from other countries may also participate. These partners' participation is neither funded by Business Finland nor BMWi.
- The project should focus on the development of new products, services or processes of industrial application leading to commercialisation in the domestic and/or global markets.
- The project should have an obvious advantage and added value 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.).
- 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 in 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 total person months.
- The maximum duration of the project should not exceed 3 years.

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

3. Submission

Between the opening of the call on 1st June 2021 and the call deadline on 15th December 2021, all participants file one short common proposal in English (Proposal Application Form), legally signed by all organisations participating in the project and a 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 Business Finland via www.businessfinland.fi/asiointi (Finnish applicants) and to AiF Projekt GmbH via zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de (German applicants).

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

The minimum requirements for the Consortium Agreement are:

- Naming of all project partners
- Description of the project aims, scope, role division and differentiation of the subprojects of the partners
- Work plans with person months of all the partners (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 Business Finland
- If research organisations from Germany are involved, a passage has to be included that allows them to publish their own results without duty to obtain consent from the other partners.

The Proposal Application Form as well as additional country-specific information and requirements are available at www.zim.de/finnland and www.businessfinland.fi/asiointi

3.1 Finland

Development projects of companies based in Finland are eligible for Business Finland funding (www.businessfinland.fi/en/for-finnish-customers/services/funding/in-brief/).

The funding can cover part of the project's costs. The company must always prove that it has the capacity to cover its own funding share of the project.

NEW:

This time also research institutes in Finland can participate in the Call. This is done by Co-innovation funding scheme: If one or more research organizations are involved in the Co-innovation project, there must also be at least three companies which have applied for Business Finland funding for their R&D project. [Co-Innovation Funding in a nutshell](#)

The funding application is available on Business Finland website www.businessfinland.fi/asiointi. For further information about financing of Finnish participants visit www.businessfinland.fi/en/for-finnish-customers/services/funding/in-brief/ or contact Business Finland directly.

3.2 Germany

Each German project partner submits an individual ZIM application to AiF Projekt GmbH. Every German SME, 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 and whose project is being funded. Research and technology organisations are eligible to apply as cooperation partners of eligible companies.

Detailed criteria for submitting applications and the ZIM application form can be found on the ZIM website (www.zim.de); you may also contact AiF Projekt GmbH directly as described below. The application must be written in German and comply with the regulations of the ZIM guideline.

Consultation with the national funding organizations is highly recommended at an early stage. It is possible to hand in a project sketch in order to receive non-binding feedback on your project idea before filing a full application.

Contacts



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