



# Announcement

## Finnish-German Call for Proposals for Joint R&D Projects

**Deadline for proposal submission: 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

### 1. Scope

Business Finland, the Finnish funding agency for research and technology development and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) intend to support joint Finnish-German research and development projects (R&D projects) in order to develop innovative products, processes or technical services from all technology and application areas.

Funding will be available for R&D projects in which new products, services or processes with a 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 BMWK) support the applicants in the phase of submission of project proposals, in the evaluation and in the implementation phase.

Business Finland and AiF Projekt GmbH will evaluate the submitted proposals and communicate the results within around 4 to 5 months after the call deadline.

### 2. Call Structure

The call invites partners to present joint proposals for industrial R&D projects until 15th September 2025, according to the following procedures.

#### 2.1 Financing

Eligible project participants from Germany and Finland will finance their costs from the national funding schemes and complementarily from their own resources. Provision of funding from one national scheme neither will indicate that funding from the other national scheme 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 technical services, which are based on the international state of the art. The project proposals have to comply with the following guidelines:

- The consortium must include at least one Finnish and one German commercial company.
- Participation of research organizations (RTOs) and further companies is welcome as additional participants or subcontractors according to each country's funding regulations. Please note: in Finland participation of RTOs is only possible as a subcontractor.
- Companies and/or research organizations from other countries may also participate. However, these partners will neither be funded by Business Finland nor BMWK. Instead, they follow the financing rules including procedures and the funding regulations of these partners' countries of origin.
- The project should have an obvious advantage and added value resulting from the cooperation between the participants from the two countries (e.g. increased knowledge base, commercial lead, 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 the person months.
- In case one or more research organizations are involved in the consortium, they may altogether not contribute more than 50% of total person months combined.
- 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 3rd March 2025 and the call deadline on 15th September 2025 all participants file one short common proposal in English, legally signed by all organizations participating in the project.

The proposal form is available on [www.zim.de/finnland](http://www.zim.de/finnland).

The common proposal be sent electronically as an attachment to the Business Finland funding application and to [zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de](mailto:zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de)

According to the German funding conditions, a cooperation agreement must be concluded between the German and Finnish project partners to regulate the cooperation. These are discussed on the German side in the ZIM guideline and include, among other things, the regulation of property rights and rights of use as well as the joint use and marketing of the results of the cooperation. The existence of such an agreement must be confirmed when the application is submitted.

**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).**

## Finland

Research and Development projects of companies based in Finland are eligible for Business Finland funding;

Normal Business Finland funding principles are applied. For more information, see <https://www.businessfinland.fi/en/for-finnish-customers/services/funding/>.

The grant for SMEs' research projects accounts for at 50 % of total eligible project costs. For large and midcap companies, grant covers at 40 % of total eligible project costs.

The company must always prove that it has the capacity to cover its own funding share of the project. Research organizations participate in these market-oriented projects as subcontractors.

We pay aid afterwards based on your reported realized costs.

## 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) whose project is funded. Research and technology organizations are eligible to apply as cooperation partners of eligible companies.

Detailed criteria for submitting applications and the email address for requesting the ZIM application form can be found on the ZIM website ([www.zim.de](http://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.

Current notice:

The federal budget for 2025 has not yet been adopted at the time of publication of this call for proposals. The approval of positively evaluated project applications is therefore subject to the German Bundestag's decision on the 2025 budget.

## Contact

Early stage consultations with the national funding organizations (Business Finland in Finland, AiF Projekt GmbH in Germany) are highly recommended. Please find the contact details below.



**BUSINESS  
FINLAND**

Germany

**Questions on ZIM funding  
Mr. Christian Fichtner**

AiF Projekt GmbH  
Tschaikowskistrasse 49  
13156 Berlin, Germany

Phone: +49 (0)30 48163-590

[c.fichtner@aif-projekt-gmbh.de](mailto:c.fichtner@aif-projekt-gmbh.de)  
[zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de](mailto:zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de)  
[www.zim.de/international](http://www.zim.de/international)

Finland

**Questions on funding by Business Finland  
Ms. Kirsi Armanto**

Business Finland  
Porkkalankatu 1  
00180 Helsinki, Finland

Phone: + 358 50 396 2846

[kirsi.armanto@businessfinland.fi](mailto:kirsi.armanto@businessfinland.fi)  
[www.businessfinland.fi](http://www.businessfinland.fi)