



Announcement

3rd Call for Proposals for Joint Research and Development (R&D) Projects between Germany and the United Kingdom

Project applications and national funding applications will be accepted until 3rd June 2024

1. Scope

Innovate UK and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) intend to support joint UK-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 the UK, funding is provided through Innovate UK grant funding.

AiF Projekt GmbH, ZIM project management agency on behalf of the BMWK, will assist the German 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 3rd June 2024 according to the following procedures used by Innovate UK and ZIM, specified on the Innovate UK website and the guideline of the ZIM programme.

2.1 Financing

Eligible project participants from Germany and UK will finance their costs from their respective national funding schemes (in Germany ZIM, in the UK by Innovate UK) 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 both the UK application and German Common Proposal Application Form should be the same
- The partners must include at least one company from UK and one German 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 and start on 1st December 2024.
- 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 5th February 2024 and the call deadline on 3rd June 2024 all German 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 by the German project partner to zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de

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 Innovate UK
- If research organisations from either country are involved the publishing rights of each party must be regulated

The Consortium Agreement shall be consistent with Innovate UK'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 and at Innovate UK's homepage www.ukri.org.

3.1. United Kingdom

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

Innovate UK operate a strict deadline policy and all applications by UK consortia must be submitted on time by the date and time specified. Details on the application will be published on our Funding Opportunities webpage in due course: <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/search>.

Here you will also be able to find further information on the UK eligibility requirements and further information on what the application process will entail, and any relevant supporting information.

UK business applicants can apply for a total grant of up to 70% of project costs at a maximum of £500,000 for each project.

UK research organisations undertaking non-economic activity as part of the project can share up to 30% of the total eligible project costs. If your consortium contains more than one research organisation undertaking non-economic activity, this maximum is shared between them. Of that 30% you could get funding for your eligible project costs of up to:

- 80% of full economic costs (FEC) if you are a Je-S registered institution such as an academic
- 100% of your project costs if you are an RTO, charity, not for profit organisation, public sector organisation or research organisation

Each project must:

- be collaborative
- last between 18 months and 36 months

UK project partners must carry out the majority of their project work in the UK and intend to exploit the results from or in the UK.

The UK registered partners in the project must nominate one business, of any size, to start an Innovate UK application. We refer to them as the 'lead organisation' and the person they nominate to have overall responsibility as the 'lead applicant'.

The lead applicant has an overall view of the application and must:

- start the application
- use the same project title as in the German Proposal Application Form
- monitor the partners' application progress
- make sure all UK partners complete their parts of the application
- click submit once the application is complete

The UK lead applicant must collaborate with at least one German organisation participating in the competition through the ZIM Programme. It must be a separate legal entity, not linked to the UK partners.

The aim of this competition is to support UK and German business-led collaboration in innovation with grand funding. With Innovate UK, AiF Projekt GmbH will support German businesses to collaborate successfully with UK counterparts and build your global growth prospects. We would particularly welcome applications from the following sectors: AI, Quantum, Semiconductors, Future Telecommunications, Engineering Biology and Green technologies.

Your collaborative R&D proposal must demonstrate:

- a clear game-changing or disruptive innovative idea leading to new products, processes or services
- a strong and deliverable business plan that addresses (and documents) market potential and needs
- sound, practical financial plans and timelines
- good value for money, which will always be a consideration in Innovate UK funding decisions
- a clear, evidence-based plan to deliver significant economic impact, return on investment (ROI) and growth through commercialisation, as soon as possible after project completion
- clear, considerable potential to significantly benefit the UK economy or national productivity
- the benefit of participants from the countries working together and how this adds value
- a clear definition of where intellectual property (IP) can be used and shared between the participants and countries
- a clear route to market within 2 to 3 years of project completion

Please refer to the Innovate UK Innovation Funding Service website for further information on this opportunity.

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); 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 documents mentioned above have to be submitted electronically via zim-international@aif-projekt-gmbh.de.

3.3 Decision and project start

Projects should be submitted to each national agency by 3rd June 2024, after which the technical assessment by each national authority will take place. Funding decisions will be communicated at the beginning of October 2024. Joint projects are expected to start on 1st December 2024.

For German applicants, consultation with ZIM Project Management Agency AiF Projekt GmbH is highly recommended at an early stage.

Contact



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