GRAIL Genesis Open Call

Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ consolidates the questions received by the GRAIL Helpdesk. Answers are based on the Open Call Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) and the Technical Guidelines. Replies are provided for informational purposes only and do not change the T&Cs, which prevail. For anything not covered here, contact the Helpdesk at

grail.helpdesk@fundingbox.com.

1. Who can apply

Is a sole trader (a business without separate legal personality) eligible?

The call is open to single entities (no consortia): SMEs including start-ups, research organisations, mid-caps and large companies, **registered as legal entities before the end date of the call** (10 February 2027, 17:00 Brussels time).

If you are unsure, register a company with legal personality before the deadline, or ask the Helpdesk for a written position before applying. Please note that this does not amount to a guarantee of eligibility.

I am an individual or an unincorporated project. Can I become eligible, and what evidence is needed?

Yes, if you establish a legal entity in an eligible country and register it before the call deadline.

Finalists go through a Formal Check. Evidence requested includes the registration document, tax ID, ownership structure, financial statements and a bank identification form; the list is not exhaustive.

Keep in mind that a cross-functional team, gender balance and demonstrated technical and operational capacity are part of the evaluation.

Which countries are eligible?

Entities must be established in an EU Member State, Iceland or Norway, or in one of the following associated countries: Canada, Israel, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

Can an individual or a company work with a consortium partner or a Testing Hub, or be paid for services outside the grant?

Not through this Open Call. For this Open Call, only single entities may apply, not consortia. GRAIL partners, affiliates, their employees and associates cannot be involved in funded projects, and conflicts of interest are checked. Participation in any capacity is limited to entities established in and controlled from eligible countries.

Testing Hub access is not a general entitlement. It arises only where agreed in a funded project's Individual Mentoring Plan (Stage 1 of the Support Programme). Collaboration of this kind may be possible in the forthcoming GRAIL Open Calls (https://grail-robotics.ai/open-call/).

The Open Call concerns only what happens within the grant process. Paid services, in-kind arrangements and proofs of concept outside it are not covered.

Can the Helpdesk tell me whether my approach meets a genuine need or fits a topic?

No. The Helpdesk cannot pre-assess projects. Assessment takes place only through the evaluation phases. Please consult Annex 1 of the T&Cs for the detailed requirements of each topic.

2. Ownership, control and guarantees

Does the Ownership Control Declaration apply to me?

Legal entities **directly or indirectly controlled from non-eligible countries** are ineligible unless they submit an Ownership Control Declaration accompanied by country-assessed guarantees. Entities with no such control are not caught by this restriction and need no guarantees. All selected entities submit the declaration at the Formal Check; the guarantees are required only if applicable.

Examples:

- **Entity in an eligible country, owner resident there (e.g. a Belgian business with a Belgian owner):** no non-eligible control, so no guarantees are needed.
- **Entity wholly owned by a company in a non-eligible country (e.g. a French company owned by a UAE company, or a Korean subsidiary of a US parent):** this falls within the restriction. The entity is ineligible unless it submits the declaration and guarantees. The T&Cs do not promise that such guarantees will be accepted.

Please contact the Helpdesk with your ownership structure before committing to an application.

The T&Cs also limit participation in any capacity to entities established in and controlled from eligible countries.

What must the guarantees show, who assesses them, and when are they due?

The guarantees must substantiate that, for the purpose of the project:

- control over the applicant is not exercised so as to restrict its ability to carry out the project and deliver results, or to restrict its infrastructure, facilities, assets, resources, IP or know-how needed for the project;
- access by a non-eligible country or entity to sensitive project information is prevented, with national security clearance of staff where appropriate;
- ownership of project IP and results stays with the recipient, is not subject to control by non-eligible countries or entities, and is not exported outside eligible countries, nor is access granted from outside, without the approval of the eligible country of establishment.

The guarantees must be **positively assessed by the eligible country of establishment**. The T&Cs do not name the competent authority or describe the procedure.

Selected entities submit the declaration and, if applicable, the guarantees during the Formal Check, within the deadline given. Late submission without justification leads to exclusion. Applicants who may need guarantees should start preparing early.

Measures that follow the three points above include: vesting project IP in the eligible-country entity; no parent licence or control over project results; hosting and personnel access arranged within eligible countries; and governance that keeps a non-eligible owner from directing delivery. The T&Cs do not prescribe specific measures.

3. Where project activities can take place

Can data capture or annotation take place outside the eligible countries (for example in India), including by a subcontractor?

No. Project activities, including subcontracted work, must take place in eligible countries. Data capture and annotation are project activities. Partner factories or subcontractors outside eligible countries would also be participants that are not established in eligible countries.

“Europe-first data sovereignty” is a separate, additional condition. It does not relax the location rule.

Remote access by an annotator or other person outside the eligible countries would additionally touch the rule that access to project results from outside eligible countries requires prior formal authorisation from the country where the entity is established.

Can data captured before the project, outside eligible countries, be used as background data?

Nothing forbids describing prior capability in the application. New capture funded by GRAIL must take place in an eligible country. Using such data for pre-training or benchmarking would itself be a project activity and so must be performed in eligible countries.

The project must be based on your own IP or on third-party rights you are allowed to use, with no IPR dispute. Your legal-compliance documentation and warranty must cover consent, provenance and licensing, so consent of the people recorded, for EU processing and release, would need to be evidenced.

Pre-existing data cannot substitute for the funded deliverable. Note also that a dataset already sold openly on the market can be a ground for the Selection Committee to object.

Can the project be overseen or managed from a non-eligible country?

The T&Cs require project activities to take place in eligible countries and participation to be by entities controlled from eligible countries. Remote management from a non-eligible country carries risk and should be **checked with the Helpdesk**.

If staff in a non-eligible country access project IP or results, the authorisation requirement for access from outside eligible countries applies. Collection, annotation, processing and hosting inside the eligible country are consistent with the rule.

Can team members work from different eligible countries (e.g. Korea, Switzerland, Italy)?

Yes. Activities in any eligible country satisfy the location rule, and project IP and results may circulate among eligible countries.

Team members must work for, or under contract to, an entity established in and controlled from an eligible country. Staff engaged through a parent company in a non-eligible country would not meet this condition.

Also consider: the application must show a European dimension and positive impact within the EU; the Sub-grant Agreement brings controls by the EC/ECA, EPPO and OLAF and EU-funding visibility obligations; matters not covered by the T&Cs are governed by Polish law, Horizon Europe rules and EU grant regulations; the limits are EUR 100,000 per project and EUR 500,000 per entity across the three Open Calls.

4. Data, IP and licensing

Who owns the IP, and can results be licensed commercially outside the eligible countries?

You retain ownership of your IPR. Due to security restrictions, project IP and results cannot be subject to control, restrictions or claims by non-eligible countries or foreign entities, and **cannot be exported outside eligible countries, nor accessed from outside, without prior formal authorisation** from the eligible country where your entity is established.

Licensing to customers outside the eligible countries is therefore not forbidden outright, but requires that authorisation.

Exclusivity or licence terms that would block GRAIL's tiered private/protected/public data model are grounds for the Selection Committee to object to a project, and evaluators look for licensing that "does not hinder adoption".

How much of the dataset must be public?

Results, code and datasets should be made available as open source **where feasible** and registered on the GRAIL Platform and the AI-on-Demand platform. The applicant must state the access tier under the private/protected/public model in its data description.

Does the restriction on IP and data export apply if my IP and existing data are not security-sensitive?

The restrictions apply to **project IP and results** and are justified by security restrictions. Existing openly licensed material (e.g. CC BY photographs) is pre-existing third-party material, not project IP. It raises the usual checks: licence compliance and attribution, provenance documentation, and no data whose processing is prohibited. Images of people may raise privacy questions. Explain how any existing material is relevant to your chosen topic.

What is meant by "Europe-first data sovereignty"?

All data sharing, storage and processing must strictly respect Europe-first data sovereignty rules. If your plan involves a provider headquartered outside the eligible countries (for example a non-EU cloud provider) or processing outside Europe, describe it in your application and **ask the Helpdesk beforehand.**

5. Budget and AI tools

Can the budget include equipment, such as a refurbished GPU server, at purchase price?

The grant is a lump sum of up to **EUR 100,000** (100% funding rate). The budget is part of the application and the amount listed is fixed. No invoices need to be presented to prove cost, but you must show delivery against milestones and must still keep the cost documentation required by fiscal regulation.

Justify the budget split according to the needs of your project. Payment depends on delivering results at the milestone stages, not on purchase costs.

May commercial cloud AI services (e.g. an LLM API with EU data processing) be used as a development aid?

All data sharing, storage and processing must strictly respect Europe-first data sovereignty rules. If you plan to use a provider headquartered outside the eligible countries, disclose such use in the application and keep project data and personal data out of it.

Are there licence requirements for a vision-language model (VLM) used in Topic 7?

Topic 7 says only that VLMs may be used optionally to generate plans containing failures for humans to correct. No licence is prescribed.

Duties that make the choice matter: legal-compliance documentation covering provenance and licensing; a **written warranty** that the data is legally compliant for its intended use in the project; results, code and datasets made available as open source where feasible; and possible objection by the Selection Committee to licence terms that block GRAIL's tiered data model. You should plan for lawful, documented licensing.

In practice the model's licence must allow its outputs to be released openly and used to train another model. Licences differ on this, so you must check and document it.

6. Evaluation and timeline

Will unsuccessful applicants receive scores and evaluators' comments?

Applicants are informed of the evaluation results as soon as they become available. You will receive the average score of the independent evaluators and their comments. If you were selected for the Jury Day but not among the top 10 projects, you will also receive the jurors' comments.

When are results and interviews expected, and when do projects start?

The call closes on 10 February 2027 at 17:00 Brussels time. There are currently **no fixed dates** for results and interviews; interviews are estimated for March 2027.

The Support Programme is expected to start in May 2027 and lasts 8 months across three stages of 1 + 4 + 3 months.

7. Topic-specific questions

Topic 5: is a proposal without direct force/torque measurement compliant if the omission is justified?

Yes, in principle. Applicants are expected to cover most of the core data, and **justified omissions are acceptable where a sensor is impractical**. Time synchronisation, failure annotation and consent documentation are required in all cases.

Force/torque (at least 100 Hz) is one item on the core list. The rest must still be met: head-mounted RGB-D at least 30 fps with calibrated intrinsics/extrinsics; two wrist-mounted RGB views; hand pose (at least 21 keypoints per hand) and wrist 6-DoF pose; a shared clock with tolerance below 10 ms; task annotations; a failure and recovery taxonomy; natural-language descriptions; provenance and consent metadata; and operator demographics with at least 40% women/non-binary participants.

Competitiveness: force/torque is named as the modality that existing recordings largely lack. Omitting it weakens the gap argument that evaluators assess under Excellence, and the omission must be credibly shown to be impractical.

Topic 8 and other topics: where are the detailed requirements?

Please consult Annex 1 of the T&Cs, which sets out scope, objectives, datasets and deliverables for each of the eight topics, together with the general legal and technical requirements. One application can address only one topic.