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SYSTEMEU

TRANSFORMING INNOVATION EUROPEAN ECOSYSTEMS

FAQ

Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) for JOINT INTERREGIONAL PROJECTS (JIP)

The project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe
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11. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q1: Can an entity from a region not listed in SYSTEMEU participate?

Answer: Yes, but only as a **self-funded partner**. Such an entity receives 0% FSTP funding from SYSTEMEU and must prove its own financial security. Furthermore, a consortium can include at most one self-funded partner, and this partner is not permitted to coordinate the project.

Q2: What is the exact definition of "Independent" in the Startup criteria?

Answer: To be considered independent, at least **51%** of the company's capital and voting rights must remain in the hands of the founders, active employees, business angels, or venture capital funds. If a medium-sized or large corporation holds 50% or more, the startup is legally classified as a subsidiary of that corporation, disqualifying it from the 100% funding rate (70 % for startups based in Castile-León, Spain).

Q3: How do we prove the "zero dividends" rule for Startups?

Answer: Startups must upload their official financial audits or certified tax returns from their date of inception. These documents must show that no capital distributions have been made to shareholders.

Q4: What happens if our project fails to reach TRL 8 at the end?

Answer: If a project fails to reach TRL 8 due to unforeseen, justified technological risks, the funding is generally not recovered, provided the consortium can prove they executed the work plan diligently in good faith. However, if the project fails due to negligence, lack of effort, or non-compliance with the work packages, the regional Funding Authority may reserve the right to take appropriate contractual measures.

Q5: Is subcontracting within the same consortium allowed?

Answer: No. Subcontracting between partners of the same project consortium is strictly prohibited to avoid conflicts of interest, transfer pricing issues, and double funding risks.

Q6: Are clinical studies in other EU regions eligible for funding?

Answer: Any clinical trials outside the SYSTEMEU geography must be self-funded or potentially subcontracted with justification by beneficiary from SYSTEMEU region.

Q7: Can a company participate in more than one proposal?

Answer: Yes, an enterprise can be a partner in multiple proposals, provided each proposal addresses a completely different technological challenge and uses different staff teams. SYSTEMEU suggests that as long as the total dedication by each staff member does not exceed 100%, the same staff can participate in more than one project. However, the total cumulative funding that a single company can receive across all SYSTEMEU open calls remains strictly capped at **600.000 EUR**. as long as the total dedication by each staff member does not exceed 100%, the same staff can participate in more than one project.



Q8: What if a partner fails the financial check during the Grant Agreement Preparation phase?

Answer: If a partner is found to be financially unstable or fails to prove their liquidity, the consortium will be given a 14-day window to replace the partner or adapt the work plan. If the consortium cannot resolve the issue without reducing the project's overall quality, the project will not be funded, and the budget will be reallocated to the next highest-ranked project on the reserve list.

Q9: What happens if our regional Funding Agency cannot fund its share?

Answer: In the highly unlikely scenario of a Funding Agency having to revoke after selection, the General Assembly will immediately convene to evaluate options. This includes replacing the affected partner, utilising the SYSTEMEU reserve fund (PENDING: 371.764 EUR), or adapting the budgets of other partners.

Q10: How do Bosnian partners account for financial reports since they do not use the Euro?

Answer: Partners based in Tuzla Canton (BiH) must maintain their accounting in local currency (Convertible Mark - BAM). For the official financial statement in Part C and subsequent reporting, all values must be converted to Euro (EUR) utilising the average daily exchange rate published in the C series of the Official Journal of the European Union over the corresponding reporting period.

Q11: How do I find and connect with eligible partners to build my interregional consortium?

Answer: Building a highly complementary and cross-border consortium is one of the most critical steps in preparing a competitive JIP application. Because the call requires a minimum of two independent entities from at least two different SYSTEMEU partner regions, applicants are strongly encouraged to initiate matchmaking activities as early as possible.

The SYSTEMEU project provides a series of dedicated, free-of-charge matching mechanisms and support tools to facilitate this process:

1. **The OpenHubs Community Platform:** Applicants should register on the official SYSTEMEU online matching directory at <https://openhubs.io/topics/47675/feed>. Once registered, you can create a detailed organisational profile, post concrete project ideas, list specific technological, commercial, or clinical requirements, and directly message potential partners from other participating valleys.
2. **Active Matchmaking & Pitching Sessions:** Throughout the call preparation phase, several dedicated virtual matchmaking webinars, and an international summit is hosted by the consortium partners. These events feature dedicated "pitch sessions" and virtual B2B speed-dating tables where you can showcase your technology directly to public bodies, research organisations (RTOs), and other commercial



enterprises.

3. **Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Support:** You are highly encouraged to leverage the services of the Enterprise Europe Network. EEN advisors in every SYSTEMEU region are specifically briefed on this call and can tap into Europe's largest business support database to identify matching research and commercial partners tailored to your project's technical scope.
4. **Regional Contact Points (RCP):** If you face difficulties finding partners in a specific target region, contact your local RCP (as listed in Section 9.2). The regional managing agencies maintain active local databases of quadruple-helix actors and can facilitate direct introductions to verified local players interested in joining cross-border consortia.

Q12: Can we apply if we are in TRL7?

Answer: Yes. The target TRL range for open FSTP calls is 6-8.

Q13: Can a consortium or applicant submit more than one application?

Answer: Yes, an entity or applicant can be part of multiple projects, as long as their overall budget across all applications does not exceed the maximum amount of 600,000 EUR.

Q14: Can organisations from regions outside the 5 SYSTEMEU target areas (e.g., Norway) join a project consortium?

Answer: Yes, entities from non-SYSTEMEU regions are allowed to participate in a Joint Interregional Project (JIP), but they are strictly ineligible to receive financial support (FSTP funding) from SYSTEMEU. Such participants join on a **self-funded basis**, meaning they must cover their own project costs through alternative financial sources (e.g., internal resources, regional/national grants, or third-party co-funding).

Please observe the following mandatory conditions for self-funded participants:

- **Consortium Cap:** A consortium may include **at most one** self-funded partner.
- **Role Limitation:** A self-funded partner **cannot** act as the JIP Lead Coordinator.

Q15: If a consortium contains multiple for-profit companies, must each company possess an independent TRL 6 technology?

Answer: No, not every for-profit partner needs to bring a standalone TRL 6 technology. The TRL 6 entry requirement applies to the **overall joint project/solution** at the start of the action. One partner (company or research organization) may provide the core TRL 6 prototype, while additional for-profit partners act in a supporting capacity by contributing complementary software modules, hardware integration, telemetry, or pilot testing capabilities necessary to reach TRL 8.

Q16: Can two separate TRL 6 prototypes be merged into a single project?

Answer: Merging two related TRL 6 prototypes from separate companies into one



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application is fully allowed, provided they are integrated into a single, cohesive cross-border solution that directly addresses the call challenge and demonstrates clear interregional resource sharing.