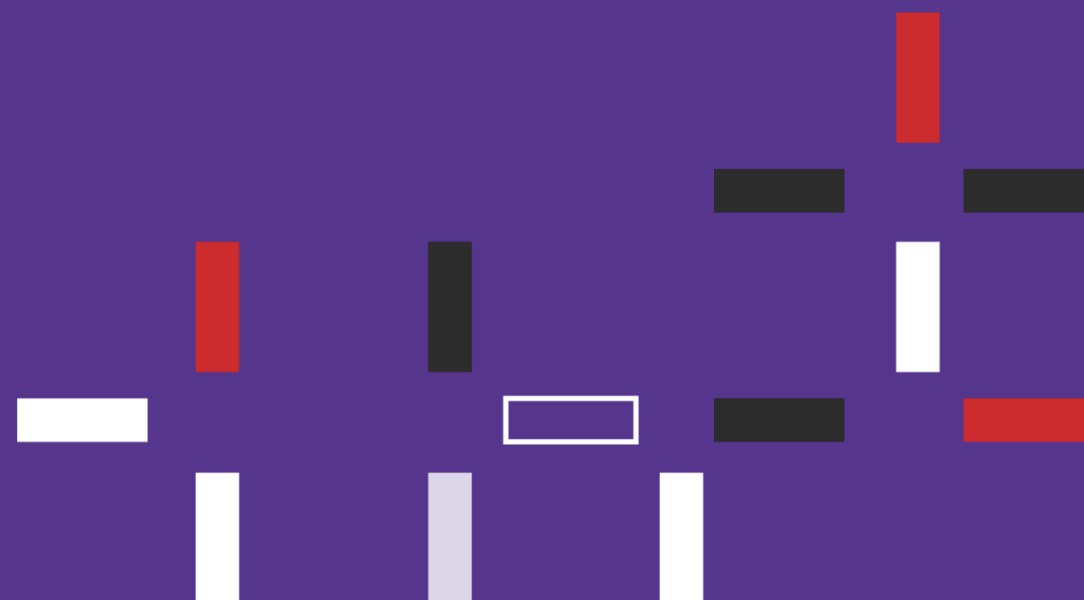




# THE EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL

Work Programme 2023  
Info Day

13 December 2022



# Agenda

## 9.30 Welcome & Introduction

Main EIC achievements, policy context & novelties of WP 2023

## 10.00 EIC Pathfinder

## 11.15 EIC Transition

## 12.15 Lunch break

## 13.00 EIC Accelerator

## 15.00 Business Acceleration Services

## 15.45 Access2EIC & Closure



# EIC Pathfinder

## Novelties in processes and calls in 2023

Timo Hallantie

Head of Unit EIC Pathfinder

1

# What is the EIC Pathfinder?

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Council



# What is the EIC Pathfinder?



## The **EIC Pathfinder**

- funds **research** to develop the **scientific basis** to underpin breakthrough technologies
- supports the **earliest stages** of scientific, technological or deep-tech R&D
- aims to build on new, **cutting-edge directions in science and technology** to disrupt a field and a market or create new opportunities
- realises innovative technological solutions to identify, develop and scale up **breakthrough technologies** and **disruptive innovations** in Europe



## EIC Pathfinder **Open**



to support **projects in any field** of science, technology or application without predefined thematic priorities ('bottom-up')

## EIC Pathfinder **Challenges**



to support **coherent portfolios** of projects within predefined thematic areas with the aim to achieve specific objectives for each Challenge

2

# Statistics from 2021 & 2022 Pathfinder calls



# EIC Pathfinder Open cut-off 4 May 2022

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**858**

PROPOSALS EVALUATED



**57**

PROJECTS CHOSEN



**183 million**

TOTAL EU CONTRIBUTION



**3.2 million**

AVERAGE EU GRANT



**29**

COUNTRIES



**352**

PARTICIPANTS

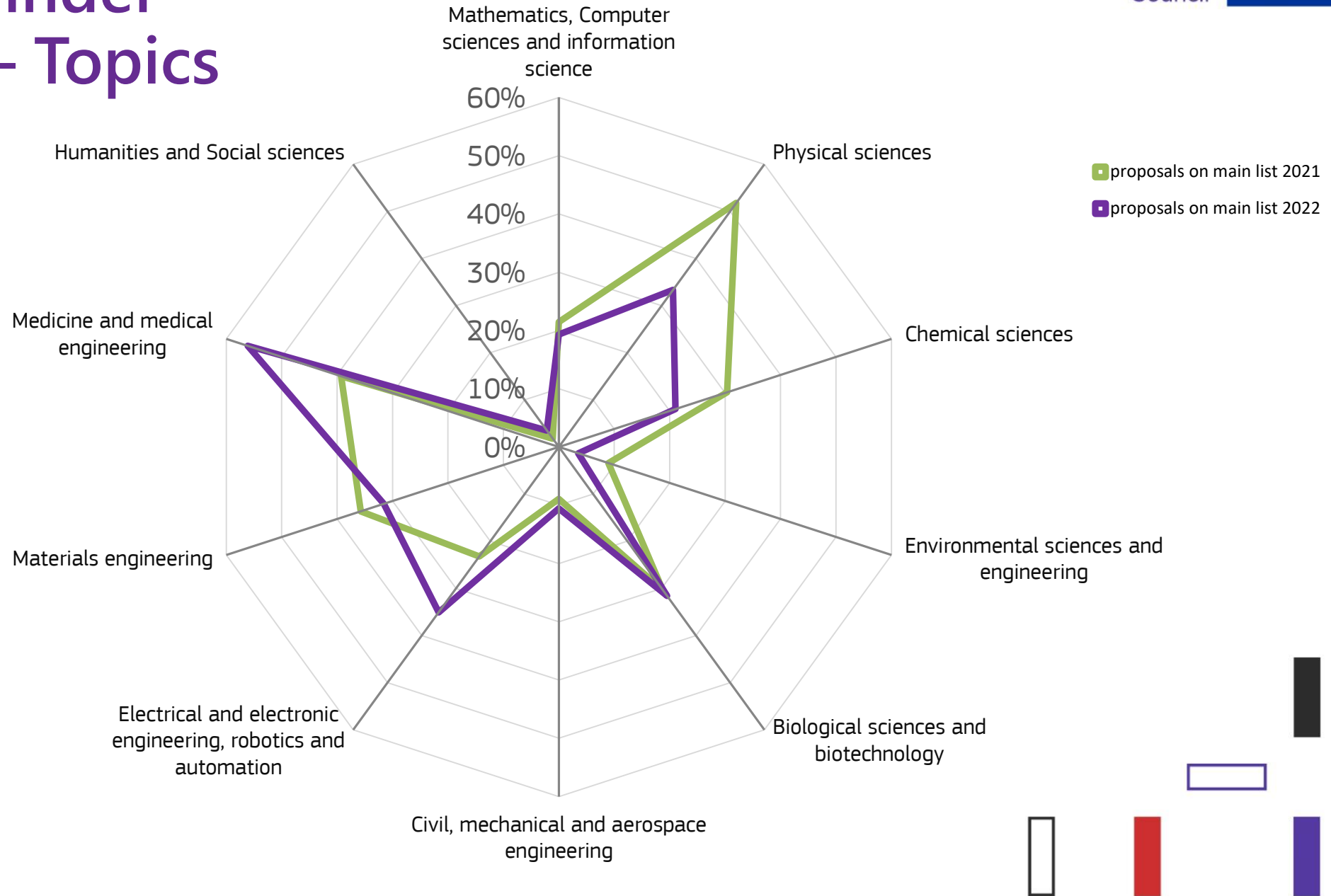
45% HIGHER EDUCATION,  
26% RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS,  
22% PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS,  
8% OTHER

European  
Innovation  
Council





# 2022 Pathfinder Open call – Topics



# EIC Pathfinder Challenges – 27 October 2021



**403**

PROPOSALS EVALUATED



**39**

PROJECTS CHOSEN



**€145 million**

TOTAL EU CONTRIBUTION



**€3.7 million**

AVERAGE EU GRANT



**27**

COUNTRIES

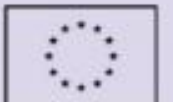


**214**

PARTICIPANTS

50.5% HIGHER EDUCATION,  
25.2% PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS,  
20.1% RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS,  
3.7% OTHER  
0.5% PUBLIC BODIES

1. Awareness inside
2. Tools to measure & stimulate activity in brain tissue
3. Emerging Technologies in Cell & Gene Therapy
4. Novel routes to green hydrogen production
5. Engineered living materials



3

2023 EIC  
Pathfinder  
Open call &  
its main  
novelties

A wooden clothespin is positioned vertically on a wooden surface, holding a light green sticky note. The sticky note has the text "What's new?" written on it in a bold, brown, sans-serif font. The background is a dark, blurred wooden surface.

**What's  
new?**

# Why should you apply?



- You should apply if you are looking for support from EIC Pathfinder Open to realise **an ambitious vision for radically new technology**, with potential to create new markets and/or to address global challenges.
- EIC Pathfinder Open supports **early stage development of such future technologies** (e.g. various activities at low **Technology Readiness Levels 1-4**), based on high-risk/high-gain science-towards-technology breakthrough research (including 'deep-tech').
- This research must provide the **foundations of the technology** you are envisioning.



- Collaborative, interdisciplinary research, meeting the following Gatekeepers:
- **convincing, long-term vision of a radically new technology** that has the potential to have a transformative positive effect to our economy and society;
- **concrete, novel and ambitious science-towards-technology breakthrough**, providing advancement towards the envisioned technology;
- **high-risk & high-gain research approach & methodology**, with concrete and plausible objectives.

# Expected output of EIC Pathfinder Open projects



- Expected output is the **proof of principle** that the **main ideas of the envisioned future technology are feasible**, thus validating its scientific and technological basis
- Project results should include **top-level scientific publications** in open access
- Projects are expected to take the necessary measures to **allow future uptake to take place**, for instance through an **adequate formal protection of the generated Intellectual Property (IP)**
- Projects are encouraged to involve and empower in their teams **key actors** that have the potential to **become future leaders** in their field such as excellent early-career researchers or promising high-tech SMEs, including start-ups
- Project are also encouraged to **empower female researchers** and to achieve gender balance among the work package leaders

# Can you apply? Consortium composition



- Proposals must be **submitted by the coordinator**, on behalf of a consortium including as beneficiaries at least three legal entities, independent from each other and each established in a different country as follows:
  - at least **1 legal entity established in a Member State**; and
  - at least **2 other independent legal entities**, each established in different Member States or Associated Countries.
- The legal entities may be for example be universities, research organisations, SMEs, start-ups, industrial partners or natural persons.

**NEW**

# What support will you receive if your proposal is funded?



- You will receive a grant for a **Research and Innovation Action** to cover the **eligible costs**, necessary for the implementation of your project.
- For this call, the EIC considers proposals with a requested EU contribution of **up to EUR 3 million** as appropriate. Nonetheless, this does not preclude you to request larger amounts, if properly justified.
- The funding rate of this grant will be 100% of the eligible costs.
- The total indicative budget for this call is EUR **179.5 million**.
- Successful applicants will receive tailor-made access to a wide range of **Business Acceleration Services** and interactions with **EIC Programme Managers**



# Additional opportunities for Pathfinder selected projects



- **Projects** funded through EIC Pathfinder are eligible:
- to receive additional **EIC Booster grants** (up to 3 per project or more if duly justified) of up to EUR 50 000 to undertake complementary activities:
  - to explore potential pathways to commercialization
  - for portfolio activities
- to submit an **EIC Transition** proposal
- to submit an **EIC Accelerator** proposal via the **Fast Track** scheme
- to participate in '**Next Generation Innovation Talents**' scheme (personnel costs of participating researchers are eligible under Pathfinder grants)

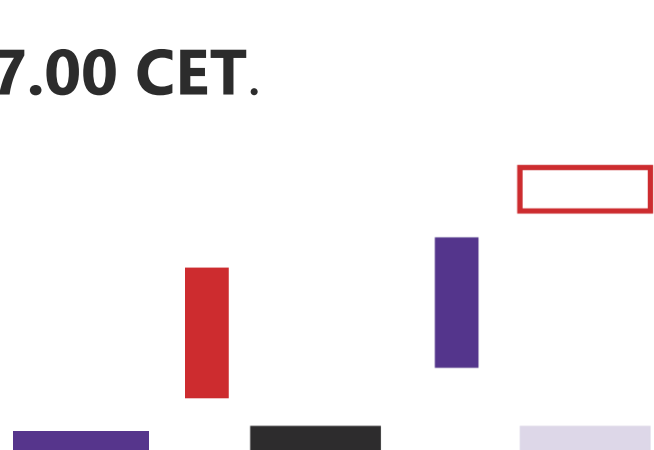
**NEW**

# How do you apply: how long does it take?

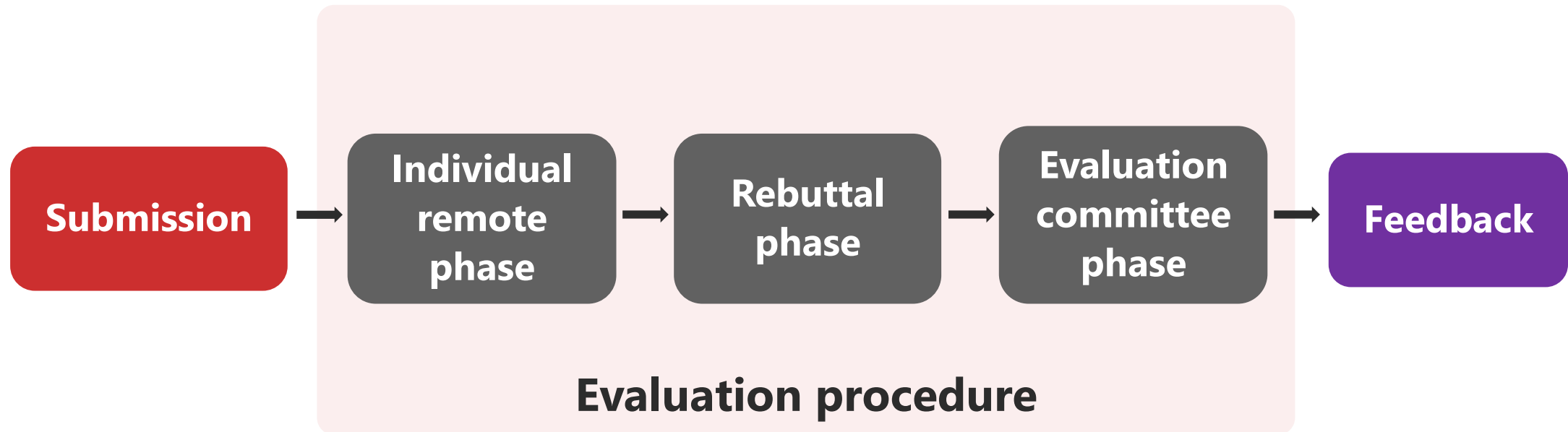


- You must submit your application via the **Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal** before the given deadline.
- You will be informed about the outcome of the evaluation within **5 months from the call deadline** (indicative).
- If your proposal is selected for funding, you can expect your grant agreement to be signed by **8 months after the call deadline**.
- The deadline to submit the proposal is **7 March 2023 at 17.00 CET**.

**NEW**



# How does the EIC decide if your proposal will be funded?





- The Proposal Application Form is composed of **two parts**:
  - **Part A:** to be filled online (no page limit). It contains administrative details, the summarised budget and call specific questions.
  - **Part B:** to be uploaded as a single document (page limit: maximum of 17 A4 pages – Section 1 to 3). It contains the technical description of the project.
- Modified to reflect the award criteria as indicated in the EIC Work Programme 2023.
- Template available on the [Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal](#)





- At least four EIC expert evaluators evaluate the proposals with respect to the **award criteria**:
  - Excellence
  - Impact
  - Quality and efficiency of the implementation
- The **remote score** for each evaluation criterion will be the **median of the evaluators' scores**.
- The **overall remote score** will be the **weighted sum** of the three median scores from the three evaluation criteria.



# Award criterion “Excellence”

Threshold  
4/5

Weight  
60%

- **Long-term vision:** How convincing is the vision , which the project would contribute in the long term?
- **Science-towards-technology breakthrough:** How concrete, novel and ambitious is the proposed science-towards-technology breakthrough with respect to the state-of-the-art? What advancement does it provide towards realising the envisioned technology?
- **Objectives:** How concrete and plausible are the proposed objectives? To what extent is the high-risk/high-gain research approach appropriate for achieving them? How sound is the proposed methodology, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, **alternative directions and options**, appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research content, and the quality of open science practices?
- **Interdisciplinarity:** How relevant is the interdisciplinary approach from traditionally distant disciplines for achieving the proposed breakthrough?

**NEW**





# Award criterion “Impact”

Threshold  
3.5/5

Weight  
20%

- **Long-term impact:** How significant are the potential transformative positive effects that the envisioned new technology would have to our economy, environment and society?
- **Innovation potential:** How adequate are the proposed measures for protection of results and any other exploitation measures to facilitate future translation of research results into innovations? How suitable are the proposed measures for involving and empowering key actors that have the potential to take the lead in translating research into innovations in the future?
- **Communication and Dissemination:** How suitable are the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, including communication activities, for raising awareness about the project results’ potential to establish new markets and/or address global challenges?





# Award criterion “Quality and efficiency of the implementation”

Threshold  
3/5

Weight  
20%

- **Work plan:** How coherent and effective are the work plan (work packages, tasks, deliverables, milestones, time-line, etc.) and risk mitigation measures in order to achieve the project objectives?
- **Allocation of resources:** How appropriate and effective is the allocation of resources (comprising person-months and other cost items) to work packages and consortium members?
- **Quality of the consortium:** To what extent do the consortium members have all the necessary high quality expertise for performing the project tasks?







# Rebuttal phase - “Right-to-react”

- Approximately 1.5-2.5 months after the call deadline, you will have the opportunity to **reply within 8 calendar days** (at 17h00 Brussels local time) with a strict page limit (**maximum two A4 pages**) to the evaluators' comments;
- your **replies cannot be used to alter or add to the content** of the proposals, but must strictly focus on responding to potential misunderstandings or errors by the evaluators;
- the replies will be **made available to the evaluation committee**;
- the evaluation committee will **take into consideration** the comments from the rebuttal procedure, if any, in order to arrive at their final scores for the proposals that underwent this procedure.



# Evaluation committee phase

- The evaluation committee will be composed of **EIC expert evaluators different** than those who evaluated the proposals remotely;
- the **final score** will be decided based on the remote score and the outcome of the consensus discussions, taking into consideration the comments from the rebuttal procedure, if any;
- these discussions will **focus on proposals with diverging evaluators' opinions that have a realistic chance of getting funded** (i.e. proposals from an appropriately chosen range above and below the funding threshold);
- **EIC expert evaluators** who evaluated and scored the proposals remotely may be **invited to the consensus discussions**, in particular for proposals with diverging evaluators' opinions;
- the evaluation committee will confirm the **ranking list**.

# Ranking list – Equal score resolution



**Proposals with the same scoring** will be untied based on the following factors, in order:

- higher score under the criterion Excellence
- higher score under the criterion Impact
- gender balance among the work package leaders as identified in the proposal
- number of applicants that are SMEs
- number of Member States and Associated Countries represented in the consortium
- If needed, other factors determined by the evaluation committee.

# Feedback to applicants



- Applicants will receive an **Evaluation Summary Report** that will comprise of:
  - the **final score**;
  - a **comment that summarises** the assessment by the evaluation committee;
  - **additional comments**, possibly including advice not to resubmit proposal.
- It will also specify if and how the evaluation committee took into account your reply received via the rebuttal.

**NEW**



**4** 2023 EIC  
Pathfinder  
Challenges call &  
its main novelties



**What's  
new?**

# Pathfinder Challenges for 2023



1. Clean and efficient cooling
2. Architecture, Engineering and Construction digitalisation for a novel triad of design, fabrication, and materials
3. Precision nutrition
4. Responsible electronics
5. In-space solar energy harvesting for innovative space applications

# EIC Pathfinder Challenges - introduction



- Build on **new, cutting-edge directions in science and technology**
- Disrupt a market or to create new opportunities **by realising innovative technological solutions** grounded in high-risk/high-gain research and development;
- Establish **a portfolio of projects** for each Challenge that explore different perspectives, competing approaches or complementary aspects;
- Proactively steered by **EIC Programme Managers**

# Expected project outcomes



- Expected outcomes defined in the respective Challenge
- Project results should include **top-level scientific publications** as well as an **adequate formal protection of the generated Intellectual Property**
- Projects are encouraged to involve and empower in their teams **key actors** that have the potential to **become future leaders** in their fields such as excellent early-career researchers or promising high-tech SMEs, including start-ups
- Project particularly encouraged to **empower female researchers** and to achieve gender balance among the work package leaders



# Pathfinder Challenge Guides



- Challenge Guides will provide more information about:
  - **Objectives** of the Challenges
  - **Technical information** underpinning the objectives
  - **Portfolio considerations** used for the final selection of proposals to be funded
- Challenge Guides will be published on the [EIC website](#) in early 2023

# Can you apply? (1)



- **Single legal entities** established in a Member State or an Associated Country (mid-caps and larger companies will not be permitted)
- **Consortia of two entities** must be two independent legal entities from two different Member States or Associated Countries
- **Consortia of three or more entities** must include as beneficiaries at least three legal entities, independent from each other and each established in a different country as follows:
  - at least one legal entity established in a Member State; and
  - at least two other independent legal entities, each established in different Member States or Associated Countries.
- The legal entities may for example be universities, research organisations, SMEs, start-ups, industrial partners or natural persons.

# Can you apply? (2)



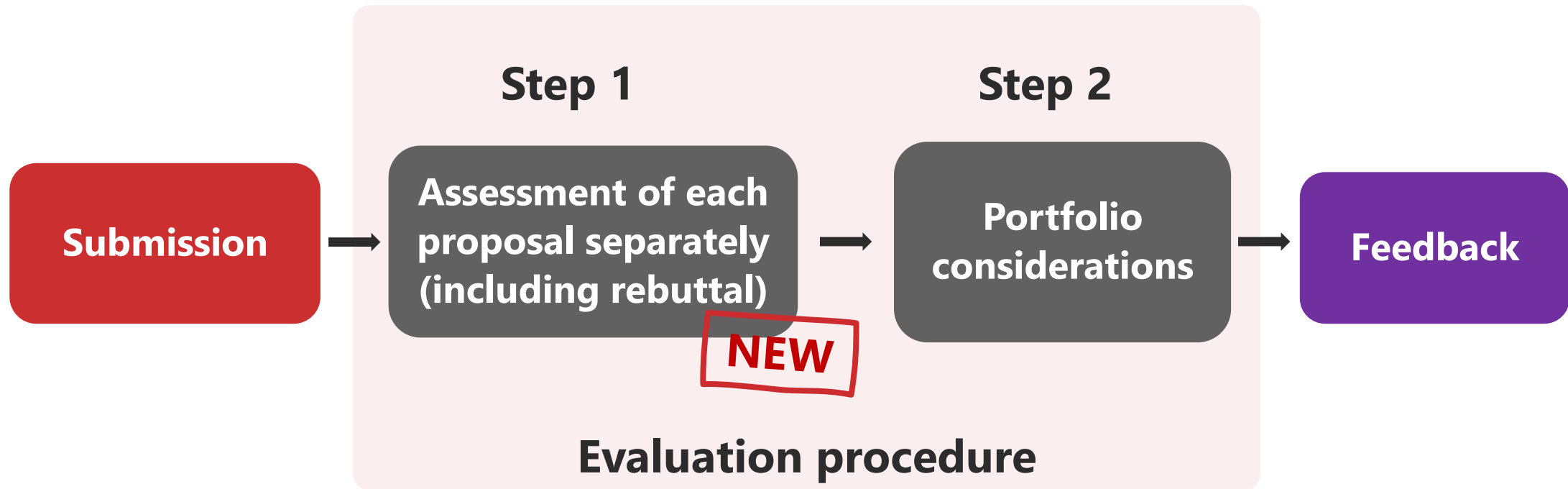
- **Important: associated partners** are not taken into account for eligibility rules!
- Examples of **ineligible** consortia:
  - 2 organisations from FR & 1 organisation from DE
  - 2 organisations from PL & 2 organisations from IT
  - 2 organisations from FR, 1 organisation from DE & 1 organisation from CA
- Examples of **eligible** consortia:
  - 1 organisation from MT & 1 organisation from CZ
  - 1 organisation from ES & 1 organisation from CH
  - 1 organisation from GR, 1 organisation from SE & 1 organization from US

# What support will you receive if your proposal is funded?



- A **grant** for a **Research and Innovation Action** to cover eligible costs
- EIC considers proposals with an EU contribution of **up to € 4 million** as appropriate (larger amounts possible, if duly justified)
- Funding rate **100% of the eligible costs.**
- Total indicative budget for this call: **€ 163.5 million** (expected to be allocated in approximately equal shares across the Challenges)
- Successful applicants will receive tailor-made access to a wide range of **Business Acceleration Services** and interactions with **EIC Programme Managers** and other actions in the portfolio of projects selected

# How does the EIC decide if your proposal will be funded?

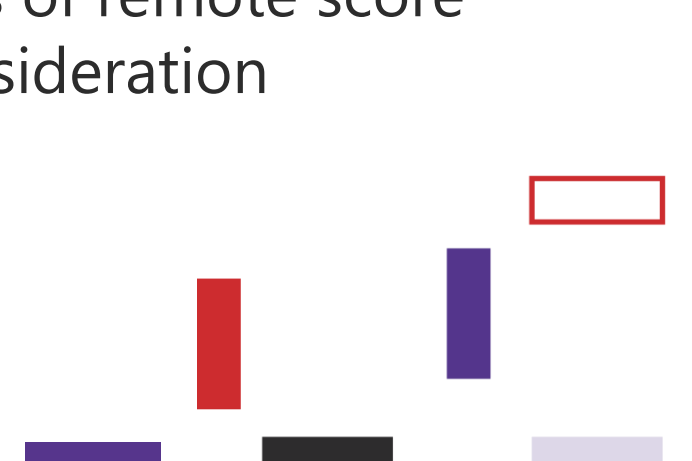


# Step 1: Assessment of each proposal separately



- EIC expert evaluators to assess **each application separately** against the defined award criteria
- **Remote score** for each award criterion is the median of the evaluators' scores.
- **Overall remote score** is weighted sum of three median scores from three award criteria.
- The **evaluation committee** (composed of EIC expert evaluators and EIC Programme Managers) will **decide on final score** on basis of remote score and outcome of its consensus discussions, taking into consideration comments from **rebuttal procedure**, if any

**NEW**



# Award criterion “Excellence”

Threshold  
4/5

Weight  
60%

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- **Objectives and relevance to the Challenge:** How clear are the project’s objectives? How relevant are they in contributing to the overall goal and the specific objectives of the Challenge?
- **Novelty:** To what extent is the proposed work ambitious and goes beyond the state-of-the-art?
- **Plausibility of the methodology:** How sound is the proposed methodology, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research content, and the quality of open science practices?



# Award criterion "Impact"

Threshold  
3.5/5

Weight  
20%

European  
Innovation  
Council



- **Potential Impact:** How credible are the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts of the Challenge? To what extent would the successful completion of the project contribute to this?
- **Innovation potential:** How adequate are the proposed measures for protection of results and any other exploitation measures to facilitate future translation of research results into innovations with positive societal, economic or environmental impact? How suitable are the proposed measures for involving and empowering key actors that have the potential to take the lead in translating research into innovations in the future?
- **Communication and Dissemination:** How suitable are the proposed measures, including communication activities, to maximise expected outcomes and impacts for raising awareness about the project results' potential to establish new markets and/or address global challenges?





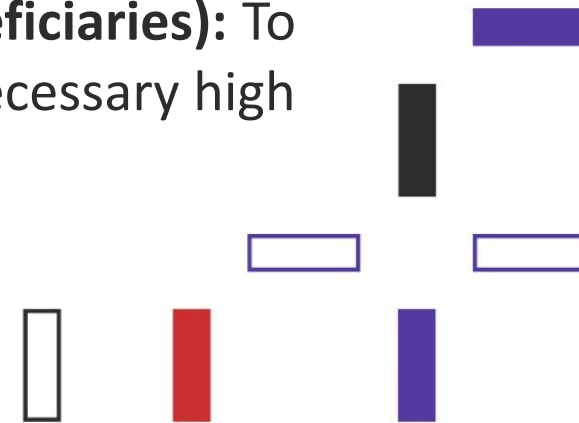
# Award criterion “Quality and efficiency of the implementation”

Threshold  
3/5

Weight  
20%

- **Work plan:** How coherent and effective are the work plan (work packages, tasks, deliverables, milestones, timeline, etc.) and risk mitigation measures in order to achieve the project objectives?
- **Allocation of resources:** How appropriate and effective is the allocation of resources (comprising person-months and other cost items) to work packages and consortium members?
- **Quality of the applicant/consortium (depends if mono or multi-beneficiaries):** To what extent do(es) the applicant/consortium members have all the necessary high quality expertise for performing the project tasks?

**NEW**



# Rebuttal - “Right-to-react”

**NEW**

European  
Innovation  
Council



- Approximately 1.5-2.5 months after the call deadline, you will have the opportunity to **reply within 8 calendar days** (at 17h00 Brussels local time) with a strict page limit (**maximum two A4 pages**) to the evaluators' comments;
- your **replies cannot be used to alter or add to the content** of the proposals, but must strictly focus on responding to potential misunderstandings or errors by the evaluators;
- the replies will be **made available to the evaluation committee**;
- the evaluation committee will **take into consideration** the comments from the rebuttal procedure, if any, in order to arrive at their final scores for the proposals that underwent this procedure.

# Step 2: Portfolio considerations



- All proposals that meet the thresholds defined in the award criteria will be considered in step 2
- **Mapping of proposals in categories** stemming from overall goal and specific objectives of the Challenge (e.g., building blocks or subsystems, technical areas and/or competing technologies, platforms, applications areas, risk level and stage of technology readiness level, size)
- A **suitable portfolio of proposals** to be selected by evaluation committee by applying **portfolio considerations** in order to propose for funding a coherent set of projects to achieve expected outcomes and impacts of Challenge (in all cases the overall balance and composition of the portfolio will be taken into consideration)
- Further information and details about categories and portfolio considerations to be detailed in **EIC Pathfinder Challenge Guides**, which will be topic and domain specific



- Applicants will receive an **Evaluation Summary Report** that will comprise of:
  - the **final score**;
  - a **comment that summarises** the assessment by the evaluation committee;
  - **additional comments**.
- It will also specify if and how the evaluation committee took into account your reply received via the rebuttal.
- Applicants will also be informed about the **underlying portfolio considerations** in case their proposal was not retained for funding while it received a score that was higher than other proposals retained for funding under the same Challenge.



# What happens after a proposal is evaluated and retained for funding?



- Successful applicants will be contacted and supported by **Project Officer** and relevant **EIC Programme Manager** during grant preparation
- Planning of **portfolio activities** - all projects in the Challenge Portfolio are expected to collaborate with each other
- Start of preparation of **Challenge roadmap**, which will define collective deliverables, activities and objectives of the portfolio of projects
- During the execution of the project: **continuous interaction** with Project Officer assigned to your project and the EIC Programme Manager assigned to the Challenge Portfolio of your project, who will oversee all the portfolio projects

5

# Main changes and call summary table



# Main changes – Pathfinder Open



- Overall, the general call text of the EIC Pathfinder Open call 2023 remained relatively stable compared to 2022, with only minor changes
- Main novelties for **Pathfinder Open**:
  - **Eligibility criteria**: clearer definition of **consortium composition rules**
  - **Award criterion 3 – Implementation**: reordering of sub-elements, small improvement under “allocation of resources”
  - Reference to ‘**Next Generation Innovation Talents**’ scheme
  - ESRs will specify if and how evaluation committee took into account the replies received via the **rebuttal**

# Main changes – Pathfinder Challenges



- Clearer description of **two-step approach** during evaluation
- Introduction of **rebuttal process** in step 1 (assessment of each proposal separately), now harmonised with Open evaluation
- Revised description how **portfolio considerations** are applied in step 2
- **Eligibility criteria:** clearer definition of **consortium composition rules**
- **Award criterion 3 – Implementation:** reordering of sub-elements, small improvement under “allocation of resources”
- Reference to **‘Next Generation Innovation Talents’ scheme**
- ESRs will specify if and how evaluation committee took into account the replies received via the **rebuttal**





# Pathfinder calls 2023 – Summary table

	Pathfinder Open	Pathfinder Challenges
Total budget	<b>€179.5 million</b>	<b>€163.5 million</b>
Proposals (indicative)	Up to €3 million	Up to €4 million
Funding rate	100% of eligible costs	100% of eligible costs
Opening	10 January 2023	20 June 2023
Deadline	7 March 2023 at 17.00 CET	18 October 2023 at 17.00 CET
Length of proposal	17-page proposal (part B)	25-page proposal (part B)
Applicants	<p><b>Consortia</b> min. 3 partners from 3 different Member States /Associated Countries (of which at least 1 partner in a Member State)</p>	<p><b>Consortia:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If 2 partners: from different MS/AC,</li> <li>• Min 3 partners from 3 different MS/AC (of which at least 1 partner in a MS)</li> </ul> <p><b>Single legal entities</b> in a MS/AC</p>



# Thank you !

@EUeic

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