

## **EIC Transition Open – the Basics**

EIC Transition Open is a new funding scheme under the Horizon Europe programme. It is intended to validate early-stage novel technologies. As part of the programme's guidelines, such early-stage novel technologies must build on the results of previous ERC Proof-of-Concept, EIC Pathfinder (including EIC pilot Pathfinder, Horizon 2020 FET-Open, FET-Proactive) and FET Flagship projects (including ERANET calls under the FET work programme). All such schemes share a leading characteristic – their groundbreaking and innovative nature, typically reflected by a low TRL, making them premature for the market environment. Thus, as a leading goal, EIC Transition Open aims to further develop early-stage innovations achieved under H2020/Horizon Europe towards deployment in the market and is therefore designed for technologies with considerable business potential.

Being that it is based on previous findings of the above-mentioned projects, the EIC Transition Open grant is very specific in terms of requirements, participation criteria and options, applications and evaluation process. In this article, we will explore and review EIC Transition Open's properties, eligibility criteria, and funding opportunities. In the follow-up article, we will thoroughly review the evaluation processes. All to better understand this unique scheme.

## **EIC Transition Open – A “bridge” between EIC Pathfinder Open and EIC Accelerator Open**

The [EIC Pathfinder Open](#) and [EIC Accelerator Open](#) grants are oriented respectively towards early-stage ground-breaking technologies and companies with technologies at final phases of development seeking to maximize their market potential. In this context, the EIC Transition Open is designed for technologies at medium maturity level, specifically leveraging on outcomes of previous funded projects under the specific grants mentioned above.

During their implementation, projects should further develop these technologies, while contributing to their commercial potential. This includes testing the technologies in a relevant environment, performance analysis, adjustments and adaptations based on user-experience orientation, validation, certification, and creation of a business plan towards commercialization.

By the end of the project, it is expected that the respective technology will be ready to further advance to the EIC Accelerator scheme (for SME, including start-ups and spin-offs), or to

other commercialization opportunities (such as looking for investments cooperating with third parties), to advance it further towards a final product that is ready for deployment in the market. The application should specify a planned route to the market, with compatible milestones at the time of the project implementation.

Due to the EIC Transition Open's unique characteristics, applications must take into account both market and technological aspects, addressing them in a comprehensive and balanced manner. A competitive application will reflect this complementary process, in which technological activities are designed to support the market potential of the respective innovation.

## **Who can apply to the EIC Transition Open grant?**

The key eligibility criteria when applying to EIC Transition Open is that the application must be based on results of prior Pathfinder / FET / ERC PoC projects. While the applicants themselves do not have to be participants in the previous project, they do need to have access rights and/or a licensing agreement with the owner(s) of the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) to the results of the project they wish to advance. The project must meet one of the following requirements:

1. In case the selected project is currently running – it's funding (via the original grant) must have started at least 12 months before the relevant EIC Transition Open call deadline.
2. In case the selected project has been completed – its end date should be less than 24 months before the date of the EIC Transition Open call deadline.

## **Pathways of participation in the EIC Transition Open grant**

The unique nature of EIC Transition Open is reflected in its flexibility with regards to the composition of the project's members. Simply put – a consortium is not a must in EIC Transition. But, should you opt for one, note that it is limited to no more than 5 members. With this in mind, the EIC Transition Open has two models for project formation:

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1. **'Mono-beneficiary'** – A single applicant seeking to leverage on a relevant proof of principle with the purpose of further developing towards market application. This single applicant can be either a market-oriented entity (investors, SME, start-up, spin-off) or a research-related organization (academia, technological/research institute or an organized group of researchers). In most of the cases under such a scenario, this single applicant should produce a licensing agreement with the owner of the results. Another example of this approach is the establishment of a new spin-off company dedicated to the project's purpose. Companies that are larger than SMEs are not eligible to apply as a single participant but only as a part of a consortium.
2. **'Multi-beneficiary'** – A collaborative project led by a consortium (maximum 5 members) of organizations of any type. In such a consortium, there are no limitations regarding the size and type of the legal entities compounding the group, meaning that large companies can also take part. In addition to academia, research and business actors, other types of actors that can be relevant for these applications are authorization and regulation bodies, NGOs, customer organizations (including umbrella organizations), public institutes and different industries.

## **The expected outcomes of an EIC Transition Open project:**

A central element of an EIC Transition Open application focuses on the potential of the technology at stake to develop into a market product. Applications should further develop such technologies, including their validation in a lab. Following the confirmation of their usability (for a wider public), the proposed projects' activities should build a business strategy that will advance these technologies towards a successful realization of their commercial potential. Therefore, proposals should include the maturation processes of the respective technology and its application in the relevant environment. To demonstrate this, projects should take into account various factors, such as end-users needs and feedbacks, market demands, testing methods, marketing and commercialization activities, learning processes based on trial-and-error practices and, accordingly, adaptation and adjustments to the business environment, to eventually increase the chances of the proposed technology/product to succeed in the market.

Therefore, the first expected outcome of an EIC Transition application is to illustrate how the proposed project activities can advance the technology beyond the proof of a scientific principle to a demonstration simulating a real-life environment (depending on the technology). A typical application is expected to take technologies at TRL 4 and develop them to TRL 5-6 at the end of the project. This means the technology is proven to be effectively implemented under the conditions simulating its potential market application.

The second expected outcome of an EIC Transition Open application is a targeted strategy for further development and deployment in the market. This dimension concerns the business-oriented components of the application. Accordingly, this part of the project is expected to engage suitable experts to carry relevant activities, such as business modeling, market analyses, production, design, marketing, standardization, and commercialization.

## Conclusion

The EIC Transition Open is a unique funding scheme designed for a very specific type of applicant. The main challenge – bounding the technological breakthrough, which is based on scientific excellence, to the market dimension – makes the eligibility criteria relatively strict. Now that you have read through the basics of this grant, head over to our follow up article which is all about [the evaluation process of the EIC Transition Open grant](#). Otherwise – there is a lot to take into consideration when applying for this grant. If you think your proposal is suitable – [contact us](#).