UNITE

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A borderless European digital health ecosystem

UNITE Joint Interregional Projects

Call Document

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1. Introduction

As healthcare systems across Europe face growing challenges posed by demographic shifts and aging populations, there is an urgent need to accelerate the transformation of the health sector through digital deep-tech innovation. UNITE is a major pan-European programme aiming to advance digital health solutions to effectively address these pressing issues by bringing together key stakeholders across various European regions, including private and public sectors, academia and civil society, to foster entrepreneurship, support local startups to scale, and facilitate the creation of new interregional value chains in the digital health domain.

The UNITE initiative builds a borderless European digital health innovation ecosystem, deeply rooted in the UNITE regions:

- Region of Central Macedonia, Greece;
- Lombardy Region, Italy;
- Extremadura Region, Spain;
- Aragón Region, Spain;
- Scotland, United Kingdom;
- Wales, United Kingdom;
- Region of Northern Netherlands, Netherlands;
- Romania, national scope;

To advance its mission and achieve its objectives, the UNITE initiative launches several open calls for proposals to cascade funding to highly innovative European actors in the digital health sector within the UNITE regions. These calls aim to support startups, scaleups, and other research and innovation organisations in delivering deep-tech solutions that address the four main Innovation Challenges outlined below:

1. Deep-tech innovations to secure equal health for the entire population: Tailored, efficient and effective deep-tech solutions are needed to address autonomy-related problems and lack of personalised care for elderly or disadvantaged population, fragmented healthcare services and technological disparities within the healthcare systems.

2. Digital solutions advancing more personalised and human-centric remote care: A transition to personalised care that emphasises patient empowerment and accessibility is essential. This approach aims to increase access to care for remote and underserved population, ensure continuity of care while reducing in-person visits, and provide patients with tools to manage and understand their health.

3. Advancing European Health Data Spaces: This challenge aims to enhance patient care by improving data accessibility and understanding for both patients and healthcare professionals. It also seeks to advance research and innovation by providing data access to researchers and universities, and to simplify the regulatory environment through data interoperability and harmonised frameworks.

4. Digital innovations to battle the health workforce crisis: This challenge focuses on alleviating staff shortages, enhancing workflow efficiency, reducing administrative burdens to allocate more time for patient care, and addressing skill gaps by providing opportunities for training and education.

Up to five (5) consecutive open calls for Joint Interregional Projects will be launched under the UNITE framework to ensure optimal budget allocation across the UNITE regions and alignment with the identified Innovation Challenges. While the launch of the first three open calls is confirmed, the subsequent calls will be initiated only if sufficient regional budgets remain available and if there are still outstanding Innovation Challenges to be addressed.

2. UNITE Calls for Joint Interregional Projects

Through open calls for Joint Interregional Projects (JIPs), the UNITE programme is looking for high-impact innovation activities aimed at addressing the four Innovation Challenges within the European healthcare systems, as outlined in the introduction. The UNITE JIP open calls target the development of digital deep-tech solutions that can be tested in real-life settings to validate their maturity and readiness (TRL 6-8), enabling rapid scaling for full deployment by user organisations and facilitating entry into international markets.

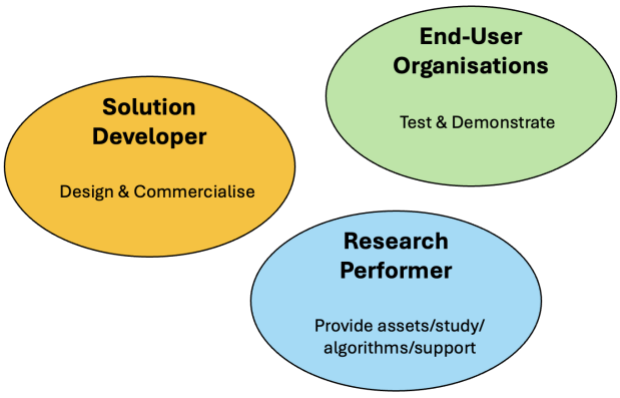
The development and deployment of the innovative digital solutions are expected to be carried out by leading innovators, solution developers, research institutions, and end-user organisations located in the UNITE regions, with particular emphasis on the following aspects:

- the regional gaps in the uptake of digital innovations;
- the European digital health value chain fragmentation;
- the limited European autonomy, resulting from offshoring of key technologies;
- the lack of inspiring examples of European interregional collaboration.

The UNITE JIP open calls launch on 15 October 2025 on the UNITE website and invite compelling proposals, including in the subsequent calls, following the deadlines and details provided in the specific call documents.

The project proposals must be submitted by a consortium comprising **at least 3 organisations from 3 different UNITE partner regions** and representing the full value chain in the digital health sector. This means at least:

- a company (or other close-to-market solution developer);
- a research entity supporting the company (from any perspective);
- an end-user organisation that will use or demonstrate the proposed solution (e.g., public sector entity, living lab, testbed, healthcare service provider).



The maximum total funding allocated to a single organisation is **600.000 EUR**, including all UNITE JIPs in which the organisation participates.

Additionally, one organisation will not be permitted to act as a project coordinator in more than one project.

The partner regions coverage must include, in accordance with the Regional Innovation Scoreboard, [1] at least:

- one (1) Innovation Leader or Strong Innovator, [2]
- one (1) Moderate Innovator or Emerging Innovator. [3]

Applicants legally based outside the UNITE partner regions are not eligible for funding, since the UNITE initiative is co-funded by the Horizon Europe programme as well as by the regional administrations within the UNITE partner regions via their innovation promoting programmes, i.e., the JIP open calls participation is supported in part by the regional or national funds.

The State aid control will be made at those regions where the regional co-funding requires this. The general framework governing funding eligibility is defined by Article 25 of the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) [4], with potential exceptions outlined in Annex G for each respective region.

Applicants must pass **Russian sanctions checks** to ensure full compliance with international and EU regulations.

A strong innovation proposal will demonstrate (see Annex A for additional details):

- **Excellence & Relevance:** The extent to which the objectives of the proposal are consistent with the UNITE JIP call objectives.
- **Quality:** The extent to which the proposal's objectives are expected to be achieved, considering their relative importance.
- **Implementation:** The robustness, coherence, and structure of the work plan to achieve the envisaged outcomes in the most efficient way.

[1] The Regional Innovation Scoreboard provides a comparative assessment of the innovation performance across 241 regions in the EU counties, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.
[2] Northern Netherlands, Scotland, Wales.
[3] Central Macedonia, Romania, Lombardy, Extremadura, Aragón.
[4] The General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) is a European Union regulation that allows Member States to implement certain types of State aid without prior notification to the European Commission.

- **Efficiency:** The extent to which the outputs and/or desired effects are planned with optimised use of resources per partner (e.g., funds, expertise, time, administrative costs).
- **Impact & Sustainability:** The expected change in the market, regarding innovativeness and scope, and the outlook to continue and extend the initial results.

Particular attention must be given to the **gender balance** within the composition of the proposed teams. At the project level, at least 20% of the team members must represent the minority gender in the respective field. Each participating organisation must also make efforts to avoid the formation of single-gender teams, in order to promote gender diversity and ensure balanced representation, while startups interested to participate in the UNITE open calls should aim to include at least one female founder or a female in a top management role. Please note that compliance with these gender balance requirements will be monitored throughout the project's implementation.

For more details on the UNITE JIP open calls process, please refer to Annex B.

3. How to Participate

UNITE is an interregional initiative with strong ties to its partner regions. Therefore, only organisations located in one of the UNITE regions are eligible to apply for the UNITE open calls. Given that different conditions may apply to applicants from each of the UNITE regions, organisations are strongly encouraged to consult Annex G for the region-specific requirements.

To initiate the application process, the **proposal submission system** should be accessed via the **UNITE Cloud** portal, where the corresponding submission form for the UNITE JIP open calls must be completed.

Proposals must be submitted electronically in English through the dedicated proposal submission system prior to the call deadline. Proposals are required to provide all mandatory information within the online application form, along with all necessary documentation. Applications must not contain any sensitive personal data or trade secrets. Please note that the system requires selecting the file before clicking the upload button to submit the necessary documentation. A warning message will only be displayed

if the documentation is mandatory. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the upload is completed successfully. Applicants must be prepared to validate the content of their proposals if requested at a later stage. Proposals exceeding the maximum limit of 35 pages will not be considered for evaluation.

Proposals containing one or more inadmissible elements (e.g., fewer than three regions represented, incomplete role coverage, ineligible organisations from non-qualifying geographies) will be rejected. The UNITE team will provide an official notification detailing the outcome of the admissibility assessment.

It is highly recommended to establish contact with representatives from the UNITE partner regions (see Annex G) well in advance of the submission deadline for each UNITE JIP open call in order to ensure a clear understanding of the call requirements, gain access to the proposal submission system, and address any questions related to the UNITE JIP call documentation.

More information, including detailed instructions for submitting a proposal, is available on the UNITE Cloud and in the call FAQs.

4. Annexes

Annex A. Details of UNITE Calls

Proposals for the UNITE open calls for Joint Interregional Projects must be submitted for one of the **designated Innovation Challenges** defined in the specific call documents. These submissions must be made by consortia comprising **at least three (3) organisations covering the full innovation value chain** in the digital health sector, including solution providers, research entities, and end users.

Additionally, the participating entities must originate from **at least three (3) different UNITE regions**. Representatives from the UNITE partner regions may offer support in identifying potential partners to complete forming consortia, however, successful matches cannot be guaranteed.

Proposals must be clearly aligned with the relevant regional **smart specialisation strategies (RIS3)** across the UNITE partner regions, demonstrating how the planned activities address the regional priority areas, strengthen their respective research and innovation ecosystems, and contribute to achieving smart, sustainable, and inclusive interregional development.

The UNITE calls are open to all entities that fulfil the eligibility criteria outlined in the **specific call documents** which all applicants are strongly advised to review thoroughly before preparing their submissions.

Each proposal must consider the following dimensions:

- **Excellence & Relevance:**
    - The JIP open calls fund further development, co-design, and user testing of solutions at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6 to 8. These are solutions that have progressed beyond laboratory validation and require further development and testing prior to deployment.
    - A key evaluation criterion for the proposed solutions is the use of innovative yet mature emerging technologies. This digital innovation leadership is further assessed through the following sub-criteria:
        - State-of-the-art of the innovations proposed;
        - Use of combinative approach to emerging technologies;
        - The extent to which the solution is qualified as deep-tech;
        - Use of UNITE experimentation spaces, i.e., living labs or testbeds.
- **Quality:**
    - The proposal must demonstrate its future orientation by providing proof of novelty, referencing similar solution development experiences, highlighting how it differs from existing approaches, and explaining how it advances its respective field. Specifically, it should illustrate the extent to which the proposed work is ambitious and goes beyond the current state-of-the-art.
    - The proposal must clearly outline how any proposed technological advances will progress from their initial TRL up to TRL 8, demonstrating a significant improvement in maturity and the capability to address the selected innovation challenge effectively.
    - The proposal must demonstrate relevant experience and the capacity to implement the proposed solution, including whether the team possesses

the necessary skills and complementary competencies to successfully develop the proposed solution.
  - The proposal must provide an accurate and clear description of the objectives, as well as the activities planned to achieve them.

- Implementation:
  - The evaluation will consider the soundness of the proposed methodology, including the foundational concepts, models, assumptions, and interdisciplinary approaches.
  - The proposed timeline and project duration must be in line with the expected outcomes.
  - The definition of work packages, tasks, milestones, and deliverables must be coherent with the project objectives and expected outcomes, including the allocation of responsibilities among partners.
  - The risk management plan must be included to enhance the likelihood of project success by identifying potential challenges early and outlining mitigation strategies to prevent or minimise the risk of adverse events.
  - The budget must be defined in alignment with the proposal ambitions and needs, with an appropriate distribution of funds among partners.

- Efficiency:
  - The proposal must provide a rational analysis and justification of the resources required, specifically in relation to the proposed budget.
  - The proposal must detail the capacity and role of each partner, as well as the extent to which they bring together the necessary expertise.

- Impact & Sustainability:
  - The number of regions engaged in the proposal will be considered.
  - The gender equality is a critical aspect of the proposal, not only in terms of the team composition, but also in addressing and mitigating gender disparities in medical research. It is essential to integrate gender considerations throughout the development of the proposed solution to ensure that the outcome does not inadvertently disadvantage or exclude any gender. For example, if the project involves a medical device, it must be designed and tested to be suitable and effective for both male and female body types, ensuring equitable usability and impact.

- The proposal must clearly define Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to assess both the primary and secondary long-term impacts expected from the project. It should also address the extent to which the benefits generated by the project are likely to be sustained beyond the funding period, including their resilience to potential risks over time.
- The project must demonstrate credible pathways to achieving the expected outcomes and impacts outlined in the work plan, as well as the anticipated scale and significance of its contributions.
- The ethics screening must be conducted to assess the proposal for any potential ethical or safety concerns. The proposal must include an ethical self-assessment form.
- The proposal must detail the suitability and effectiveness of the measures to maximise the visibility of the expected outcomes and impacts in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.
- The proposal must include the means and actions planned to sustain exploitation activities following the end of the funding period and project completion.
- The proposal must outline a clear plan for post-project adoption, including long-term implementation, scale-up potential, and the capacity to integrate the solution into the regional healthcare infrastructures.
- Only solutions involving clearly described IP ownership expected to be generated from the proposal, or clearly definable know-how, will be considered for support.

The detailed process, including the requirements, evaluation criteria, and methodology for the submitted proposals, is outlined in Annex B and Annex C. Formal provisions related to KPIs, financial aspects, and partnerships are presented in Annex D, while guidelines for communication and dissemination are provided in Annex E.

Annex B. Process Overview

Proposal Submission

To ensure that all submission requirements are thoroughly addressed, applicants are strongly encouraged to contact representatives from the UNITE partner regions (see Annex G) during the design and preparation phase of their proposals and well in advance of the specified call deadline.

All proposals must be compiled and submitted through the proposal submission system, accessible via the UNITE Cloud. It is the responsibility of each JIP Coordinator to secure full commitment and consent from all partner organisations involved in the proposal prior to the submission. Proposals must be formally submitted by using the submit button in the UNITE proposal submission system before the specified deadline.

Project proposals may be submitted at any time between the call opening and the specified deadline, with evaluation and review taking place thereafter.

The following are the call deadlines for the confirmed UNITE JIP open calls, while deadlines for the remaining calls will be announced at a later stage.

JIP Call 1 deadline	15 January 2026, 5pm (Brussels time)
JIP Call 2 deadline	10 December 2026, 5pm (Brussels time)
JIP Call 3 deadline	To be confirmed in its specific call document
JIP Call 4 deadline	To be confirmed in its specific call document
JIP Call 5 deadline	To be confirmed in its specific call document

Applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the final moments to submit their proposals, as the submission system may experience a high volume of submission requests near the call deadline, potentially leading to processing delays that cannot be rectified once the specified deadline has passed.

Review Process

Gated Evaluation

Each submitted project proposal must undergo five selection stages to be eligible for the UNITE financial support within the framework of the UNITE JIP open calls.

First, each submitted project proposal must undergo an Eligibility Criteria Check, followed by two evaluation gates: the Review Gate and the Strategic Gate. Project proposals that pass the Eligibility Criteria Check and meet the minimum required scores at both the Review Gate and the Strategic Gate will be invited to participate in the Due Diligence Interviews. Following these interviews, the UNITE General Assembly will convene at the Consensus Meeting to make the final decision. Only project proposals that pass the preceding gate will be evaluated at the subsequent gate. Scoring criteria for each evaluation gate are outlined in the JIP specific call document.

The five selection steps, in order, are as follows:

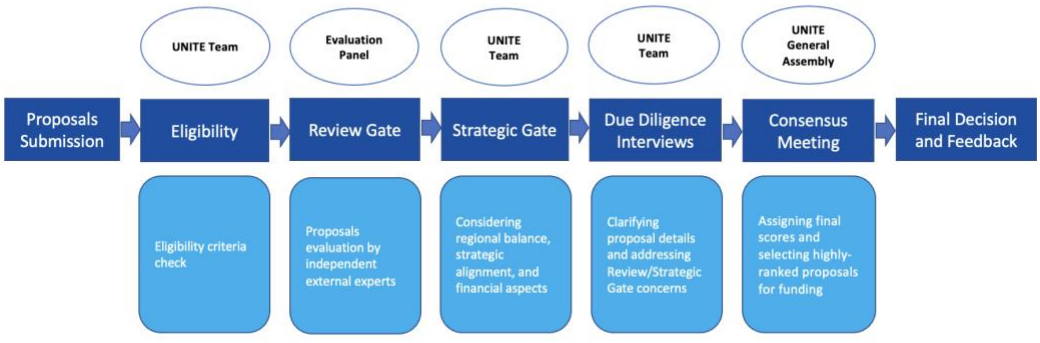
1. Eligibility Criteria Check: The UNITE Team, composed of representatives of the UNITE partner regions and 28DIGITAL, reviews submitted proposals and assesses their alignment with the eligibility criteria outlined in the JIP specific call document. Additionally, the UNITE Team checks the ethics self-assessment included in each proposal. If any potential ethical issues are identified, the concern will be brought to the attention of the UNITE General Assembly, which will decide whether the proposal may proceed or should be rejected on ethical grounds.

2. Review Gate: Each proposal is assessed by an Evaluation Panel composed of independent external experts. The panel evaluating each proposal includes at least three (3) independent experts, selected for their relevant expertise and absence of any conflict of interest to ensure a fair, transparent, and unbiased assessment process. Each expert evaluates the proposals based on the evaluation criteria outlined in Table 1 of the JIP specific call document and provides comments to support their assessment. During the Review Gate, the experts convene to discuss each proposal based on their individual assessments and assign a Review Gate score in consensus. Proposals that achieve the minimum required Review Gate score will advance to the Strategic Gate, ranked accordingly.

3. **Strategic Gate:** The UNITE Team takes into consideration the Review Gate outcome and assigns a Strategic Gate score based on the evaluation criteria outlined in **Table 2 of the JIP specific call document**, including regional balance, strategic alignment goals, and financial constraints. Proposals that meet the minimum required Strategic Gate score will proceed to the Due Diligence Interviews.

4. **Due Diligence Interviews:** Due Diligence Interviews are scheduled shortly after the Strategic Gate, and the corresponding timeline is provided in the JIP specific call document. **All proposal partners are expected to attend.** Failure to do so may result in the proposal being discarded. During these interviews, proposal teams will be asked questions on the information provided in their submissions, as well as on any concerns that emerged during the Review Gate and/or the Strategic Gate. The interviews will have an approximate duration of 45 minutes, allocated as follows: 5 minutes for introductions, 5 minutes for the pitch deck presentation, and up to 35 minutes for a Q&A session led by the UNITE Team. The pitch deck should consist of no more than 5 slides and must be presented by the JIP Coordinator. Based on the quality of responses and validity of arguments presented by the proposal partners during the interviews, the UNITE Team may recommend increasing or decreasing the Strategic Gate score, with the final decision at the discretion of the UNITE General Assembly.

5. **Consensus Meeting:** The UNITE General Assembly convenes for a final Consensus Meeting to review and, if necessary, adjust the Strategic Gate scores based on the responses provided during the Due Diligence Interviews. The highest-scoring proposals that meet the required thresholds will be selected for funding within the limits of the available budget.



The UNITE General Assembly reserves the right to establish a reserve list for proposals that meet all evaluation thresholds but cannot be funded due to budget constraints. This reserve list remains valid for 75 days from the start date of the selected projects' execution. Its validity may be extended at the discretion of the UNITE General Assembly.

If, for any reason, a selected project fails to sign the Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) Agreement within 60 days of its expected execution start date, the next highest-ranked proposal on the reserve list may be selected without initiating a new selection procedure. Also, if an ongoing JIP project is withdrawn, leaving a substantial unused budget, the next proposal on the reserve list may be selected, provided its execution still remains feasible within a reasonable timeframe.

However, it should be noted that the placement on the reserve list does not guarantee a positive outcome, neither in the current open call nor in any subsequent calls.

Feedback and Next Steps

Applicants will find feedback on their proposals, including the “go/no-go” decisions and any requested changes, in the feedback tab of the submission system approximately nine (9) weeks after the call deadline, in accordance with the timeline specified in the JIP specific call document.

Applicants receiving “go” outcomes may be requested to make changes to their project proposal, as specified in the feedback tab of the submission system. These changes may involve adjustments to the project content (e.g., deliverables, tasks, KPIs, descriptions) as well as budget modifications. Once the revisions are completed, the updated proposal must be resubmitted through the UNITE submission system. If the required changes are not implemented within one (1) week of receiving the results, another proposal from the reserve list may be considered.

Proposals with “go” outcomes are expected to start and complete execution according to the dates indicated in the JIP specific call document.

UNITE reserves the right, at the sole discretion of the UNITE General Assembly, to make exceptions to the established procedure on a case-by-case basis if deemed necessary. Additionally, the UNITE General Assembly retains the right to withhold allocation of all or part of the budget for any JIP open calls.

Appeal Procedure

The UNITE Team will, in good faith, address any potential disputes regarding the outcome of the selection process described in this document. Appeals must be submitted by applicants to the attention of the UNITE Team, clearly outlining the factual basis of the alleged errors in the selection process.

If an appeal concerns a formal requirement that is incorrectly assessed during the eligibility criteria check, the affected consortium must provide evidence of the error. The UNITE team will then review the case promptly, and if the re-assessment is positive, the proposal will be admitted to the subsequent stages of the evaluation procedure.

If an appeal is related to one of the subsequent evaluation stages, i.e., the Review Gate or Strategic Gate, the following will apply:

1. Applicants must submit their appeal in writing to the UNITE Team (unitecloud@eitdigital.eu) within 5 business days of the publication date of the results.
2. The UNITE Team will examine the appeal and, if valid grounds are identified, forward it to the UNITE General Assembly for consideration. The UNITE General Assembly will then review the appeal and issue a final decision.

Please note that, since external experts provide independent assessments, their scoring and feedback cannot be reconsidered during the appeal process.

Risk Consideration

To uphold its responsibility in allocating public funds responsibly, the UNITE General Assembly may choose not to support proposals regardless of their scores if the risk profile, including but not limited to financial and reputational risks, is deemed too high at the sole discretion of the UNITE General Assembly.

Annex C. Evaluation Criteria

Following the eligibility check and in line with the evaluation procedure detailed in Annex B, each submitted project proposal will be evaluated against the three core criteria of Excellence, Impact, and Quality and Efficiency of Implementation by external experts during the Review Gate, and additionally assessed for its Strategic Alignment by the UNITE General Assembly at the Strategic Gate.

1. The **Excellence** criterion is used to assess the conceptual clarity and technical feasibility of proposals:
    - Clarity and pertinence of the proposal's objectives
    - Soundness of the proposed methodology and credibility of the underlying concepts
    - Extend to which the proposed solution goes beyond the state-of-the-art

2. The **Impact** criterion evaluates the expected outcomes and impacts as well as their potential for exploitation and scalability:
    - Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes
    - Effectiveness of the proposed measures to maximise the envisaged impacts through communication activities, dissemination, and exploitation of results
    - Long-term sustainability and scalability of results

3. The **Quality and Efficiency of Implementation** criterion assesses the credibility of the work plan, the competence of the consortium, and the resource allocation:
    - Quality and effectiveness of the work plan
    - Appropriateness of the allocation and justification of the requested resources
    - Capacity and role of each consortium partner, and the overall expertise and complementarity of the consortium as a whole

4. The **Strategic Alignment** criterion considers the regional balance, strategic goals, and financial constraints of each participating region:
    - Balance in the regional representation
    - Alignment with the strategic requirements of each participating region
    - Budget availability in each region

A set of specific questions aligned with these criteria, along with the corresponding scoring methodology, is outlined in the JIP specific call document to guide the evaluation procedure.

Annex D. Agreements, Financial Aspects, Project Monitoring, and KPIs

This section provides essential information regarding the formal requirements for KPIs, financial commitments, and partnership arrangements for projects funded under the UNITE initiative, and applicants are strongly encouraged to review this section carefully. All supported projects must comply with the requirements of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (MGA), which governs the EU funding component of UNITE, as well as the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) or other national/regional rules, which may be applicable to the regional funding component. **Applicants must verify in Annex G whether any specific conditions apply to their region of origin.**

These frameworks may be subject to potential updates and changes. Additional information for proposal authors is available on the UNITE Cloud, and will be regularly updated to reflect any new developments. It is recommended to contact the designated representatives of the UNITE partner regions to ensure access to the UNITE Cloud.

Agreements

All JIP beneficiaries are required to sign a **Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) Agreement**, which consists of two parts:

1. **Regional FSTP Agreement**, specifying the regional funding provisions and particular requirements, varying according to the consortium partner's region.
2. **UNITE FSTP Annex**, outlining the provisions related to the joint projects, objectives, and general conditions. This agreement is the same for all partners within the consortium.

In line with Article 9.4 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, the UNITE regions must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out the action), 19 (information), and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the JIP beneficiaries receiving the financial support to third parties. Furthermore, the bodies referred to in Article 25 (e.g. the granting authority, OLAF, the Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also in relation to the JIP beneficiaries.

All JIP beneficiaries are requested to obtain a validated Participant Identification Code (PIC) from the European Commission's Central Validation Service prior to signing the FSTP Agreement. To obtain a unique 9-digit PIC number, all participants must be registered in the European Commission's Participant Register.

Financial Aspects

The criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support follow the principles of actual, reasonable, and necessary expenses directly linked to the project implementation. Applicants are required to include realistic and relevant cost estimates in their proposals and provide detailed budget justifications demonstrating the appropriateness, necessity, and cost-effectiveness of all proposed expenditures.

The precise amount of financial support to be awarded will be calculated during the evaluation procedure, based on the total eligible costs proposed and justified by the applicants, and by applying the corresponding funding rates per region and partner type, in accordance with the specific regional funding conditions set out in Annex G (see example below).

Partner #	Partner type	Region	Funding rate	FSTP funding	Partner co-funding	Total eligible costs
Partner 1	Small enterprise	Scotland	65%	€ 240.000	€ 130.000	€ 370.000
Partner 2	Medium-sized enterprise	Lombardy	50%	€ 200.000	€ 200.000	€ 400.000
Partner 3	Research organisation	Central Macedonia	60%	€ 240.000	€ 160.000	€ 400.000
Partner 4	End-user organisation	Northern Netherlands	50%	€ 250.000	€ 250.000	€ 500.000
Total	-			**€ 930.000**	**€ 740.000**	**€ 1.670.000**

The following cost categories are generally considered eligible, however, applicants must also verify the specific regional funding conditions outlined in Annex G:

- Personnel costs: researchers, technicians and other supporting staff to the extent employed on the project;
- Costs of instruments and equipment to the extent and for the period used for the project (only depreciation);
- Costs of buildings and land to the extent and for the duration period used for the project (only depreciation);
- Costs of contractual research, knowledge and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arm's length conditions, as well as costs of consultancy and equivalent services used exclusively for the project;
- Additional overheads and other operating expenses, including costs of materials, supplies and similar products, incurred directly as a result of the project.

Applicants must be aware of the co-funding requirements they must cover with their own resources, depending on the specific regional funding conditions outlined in Annex G.

When completing the budget section of the proposal submission system, the following aspects should also be taken into consideration:

- Costs must be allocated to one or more tasks, which define how the work is distributed among partners and the associated costs of each task. While the budget for each task can be estimated based on planning assumptions during the proposal preparation, the financial reporting must reflect actual incurred costs and must not exceed the approved budget.
- It is recommended that each proposal partner commits a minimum of 0.2 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) to ensure meaningful involvement and sufficient capacity allocation for the respective tasks.
- Subcontracting is discouraged and may only be used in specific situations. Subcontracting may not be used to carry out significant activities proposed by the applicants.
- Financial Support to Third Parties outside the consortia is not allowed.
- All costs supported within the UNITE framework must not be simultaneously funded by any other source.
- Generating profit from work carried out within the project is not allowed.

Payment Process

The financial support provided by UNITE is structured as a reimbursement mechanism of actual costs included in the project budget.

The payments to each project partner will be disbursed in tranches, with a portion provided in advance, as detailed in the JIP specific call document and in accordance with the provisions of the Regional FSTP Agreements.

While the project monitoring is conducted at the project level, the payments are administered at the regional level. Consequently, the payment process involves the following two sequential steps:

1. The UNITE Team assesses whether the conditions for releasing each payment tranche have been fulfilled.
2. The regional administration evaluates whether any additional conditions applicable to the participating partners in their respective regions have also been satisfied.

Once these sequential steps are completed, the corresponding payments processing can proceed. **Please note that the second step falls outside the responsibilities of the UNITE Team and is exclusively managed by the regional administrations.**

Conflict of Interest

Applicants cannot be affiliated with, nor employed by, any of the UNITE partner regions. All potential conflicts of interest will be carefully assessed in accordance with the European Commission's approach to managing conflict of interest risks and the applicable governing rules[5].

[5] Please see guidelines on avoiding and managing conflicts of interest for effective governance and sound financial management.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Mandatory KPIs

Each project is required to meet the following two mandatory KPIs:

1. The proposed solution must be delivered and accepted within the project's timeframe. The completion of the delivery must be substantiated with relevant supporting documentation, such as acceptance letters or confirmation notes.
2. Since every proposed solution is required to become self-supporting and commercially viable after the project's completion, an exploitation and continuation plan outlining how this will be achieved is mandatory. The UNITE Team will review this plan and may request additional revisions if necessary.

Project-specific KPIs

Each proposal must define target values for a set of relevant KPIs. Proposal authors are required to clearly specify each KPI, including the target achievement dates, values, and the corresponding evaluation methods. **Please note that financial penalties may be imposed in cases of under-delivery, including failure to meet any of the committed targets and KPIs.**

KPIs must be aligned with the nature of the proposal, and their achievement should clearly demonstrate the project's success. Please refrain from including superficial or irrelevant metrics that do not contribute to evaluating the real progress or outcomes.

Since valuable KPI achievements may occur in the subsequent years, partners will be required to continue supporting the reporting of KPI results related to their activities even after the official conclusion of the project.

Project Monitoring

All projects selected for funding undergo continuous monitoring by the UNITE Team to ensure effective progress and implementation, and to trigger the payments according to the achievement of the milestones, deliverables, and KPIs.

The project monitoring will encompass various aspects of project implementation, including, but not limited to, the achievement of outputs, milestones, deliverables, and

KPIs, risk management, financial oversight, quality assurance, progress in meeting KPIs and delivering impact, communication and dissemination efforts, co-branding, and advancement toward commercialisation and exploitation of results. The UNITE Team will request interim reports on actual costs incurred, along with regular updates on KPIs and deliverables.

In cases of under-performance, significant implementation delays, consortium misconduct, or any other issues jeopardising the timely execution of the project identified during monitoring, the UNITE General Assembly reserves the right to discontinue or restructure the project funding at any time during its implementation.

Annex E. Communication, Dissemination, and Visibility

Communication and Dissemination

All partners involved in the selected projects are expected to actively engage in a range of communication and dissemination activities. These efforts should aim to effectively promote the project's objectives, results, and outcomes to relevant stakeholders, ensuring their broad visibility across target audiences.

All communication and dissemination activities related to the project must be grounded in factually accurate and verifiable information to ensure transparency and maintain credibility.

Visibility

All communication activities carried out by project partners, including media relations, participation in conferences and seminars, and the development of informational materials (e.g., brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations), whether in electronic format or shared through traditional or social media, along with dissemination efforts and any infrastructure, equipment, supplies, or major results funded under the UNITE initiative,

must clearly acknowledge the EU support by displaying the EU emblem and the corresponding funding statement provided below.

The emblem must remain distinct and separate, and must not be modified by adding any other visual elements, such as marks, brands, or text. Apart from this emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.

When displayed in association with other logos, such as those of project partners, the EU emblem must appear at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

Disclaimer

Additionally, the following disclaimer must be included in all relevant communication and dissemination materials to clearly acknowledge the source of funding and to clarify responsibility for the content:

"Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them."

Consequences of Non-Compliance

For detailed information on communication, dissemination, and visibility requirements, please consult Article 17 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement. If a project partner violates any obligations under this article, the grant amount may be reduced.

Intellectual Property

All partners involved in the selected projects are required to comply with the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) provisions outlined in Article 16 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.

Data Management Plan

Each selected innovation project must establish a comprehensive Data Management Plan, with particular attention to compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), procedures for managing health-related data, alignment with the FAIR principles (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable), and the promotion of open access to research data. Please consult the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement for more details.

Annex F. Exclusions

If an organisation falls under one of the following cases, it is not eligible for participation in the UNITE JIP open calls:

- Enterprises with outstanding recovery orders following a previous European Commission or national decision on unlawful or misused state aid.
- "Undertakings in difficulty" as defined in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014.
- Enterprises under bankruptcy, liquidation, or compulsory administration.
- Enterprises that have received rescue or restructuring aid (unless they have repaid the loan and terminated the guarantee agreement, or the restructuring aid has concluded).

Annex G. Specific Conditions per Region

This annex outlines the specific eligibility conditions for applicants participating in consortia from each of the UNITE partner regions. The conditions included in this annex apply to all UNITE JIP open calls. Any conditions specific to an individual call, if applicable, will be detailed in the corresponding JIP specific call document.

It is essential that each applicant reviews both the general conditions and those specific to their region to ensure a clear understanding of their eligibility and participation in the UNITE JIP open calls.

Regional Conditions for Central Macedonia (Greece)

Contact

For any specific inquiries from applicants in Central Macedonia, please contact: Kallitsa Pantazi, k.pantazi@pkm.gov.gr.

Mandatory requirements for participants from Central Macedonia

The following mandatory requirements apply exclusively to applicants from Central Macedonia.

The grants constitute subsidies and will be allocated as follows:
a) For enterprises, under GBER Regulation [6],

b) For research organisations, based on Article 2.1.1, point 20 of the European Commission Communication "Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation" (2022/C 7388 final of 19.10.2022).

The aid intensity for a beneficiary's activity is determined by the classification in the table below:

Organisation Type	Experimental Development
Large Enterprise	20%
Medium Size Enterprise	35%
Micro/Small Enterprise	40%
Research Organisation	60%

Eligible costs belong to the following categories: [7]

[6] Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in accordance with Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (General Block Exemption Regulation) (OJ EU L 187/1 of 26.06.2014), as amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/1315 of 23 June 2023 (OJ EU L 167/1 of 30.06.2023), specifically Articles 25 "Aid for research and development projects".
[7] Please check details in Article 25, paragraph 3 of Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014, as applicable, for R&D projects related to a specific R&D category.

- Personnel costs: researchers, technicians and other supporting staff to the extent employed on the project.
- Costs of instruments and equipment to the extent and for the period used for the project (only depreciation).
- Costs of buildings and land to the extent and for the duration period used for the project (only depreciation).
- Costs of contractual research, knowledge and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arm's length conditions, as well as costs of consultancy and equivalent services used exclusively for the project.
- Additional overheads and other operating expenses, including costs of materials, supplies and similar products, incurred directly as a result of the project.

Specific requirement for Enterprises from Central Macedonia participating in proposals:

- At least one (1) completed full fiscal year.
- Intending to implement R&D projects that fall within selected thematic sectors of the economy aligned with the conclusions of the National Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3) and Priority Axis 1 of the “Competitiveness” Programme.
- Enterprise size is checked in accordance with the definition in Annex I of GBER Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014.
- Large enterprises can participate only in collaborative activities, which must include at least one SME.
- Enterprises must be legally established and operate with headquarters in Greece or another EU Member State, either as legal entities regardless of type or as sole proprietorships.
- Entities conducting economic activities, i.e., offering products or services on a market, without falling under commercial law can be potential beneficiaries and must be listed as "Other entities treated as enterprises" in the proposal application.
- At the time of disbursement, potential beneficiaries must have a legally operating installation or branch in the Region of Central Macedonia and possess a VAT number (AFM). Offshore companies are not eligible to apply.

Specific requirements for Research Organisations / Knowledge Dissemination Organisations [8] from Central Macedonia participating in proposals:

- Research Organisations must be legally established in Greece.
- Each Research Organisation participates as a single entity (under one VAT number) and is represented by its Special Account for Research Funds (ELKE), where applicable.
- Separate accounting must be maintained for the project and for non-economic and (if any) economic activities.
- No indirect state aid should be granted to participating enterprises through favorable collaboration terms.

The following entities may also become potential beneficiaries, provided they meet the below criteria:

- Public authorities belonging to Central Government (as defined in Article 14(1)(f) of Law 4270/2014).
- Legal Entities under Public Law.
- Legal Entities under Private Law established by law or presidential decree and state funded.
- Public-benefit foundations governed by Law 4182/2013.

Although they do not fall under the definition of a research organisation, they may qualify as beneficiaries if all the following conditions are met:

- They fall under one of the above categories and their main activities are non-economic, in line with the EC Communication on State Aid for R&D&I 2022/C 7388 (OJC 2022/C 414/01).
- Their statute includes a provision for research activities.
- Their participation in the R&D project pertains to a non-economic activity, and:

[8] An entity (e.g., universities, research centers/institutes, technology transfer organizations, innovation intermediaries, research collaborating institutions with physical and/or virtual presence), regardless of its legal status (public or private law) or funding method, whose primary goal is to independently carry out basic research, industrial research, or experimental development, or to widely disseminate the results of such activities through teaching, publications, or knowledge transfer.

a) Research results will be disseminated broadly on a non-exclusive, non-discriminatory basis (e.g., via teaching, databases, publications, or open-access software).

b) Any profits generated will be reinvested into the entity's non-economic activities.

- Separate accounting must be maintained for the project and for the non-economic and any economic activities of the entity.
- No indirect state aid shall be granted to enterprises participating in collaborative schemes due to favorable terms of the collaboration. During the proposal submission, these entities shall be declared as "Other entities treated as research organisations".
- Entities that do not meet all the above conditions shall be declared as "Other entities treated as enterprises" at the time of the proposal submission and must comply with all the requirements set out in the state aid regulations applicable to enterprises.

Regional Conditions for Lombardy Region (Italy)

Contact

For any specific inquiries from applicants in Lombardy Region, please contact: Pierangelo Pareo, pierangelo_pareo@regione.lombardia.it and Mario Capocefalo, mario_capocefalo@regione.lombardia.it.

Mandatory requirements for participants from Lombardy Region

The following mandatory requirements apply exclusively to applicants from Lombardy Region.

Incentives are granted under the following schemes:

1. Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 (GBER) as amended:
   - Article 18 “Aid for SMEs for consultancy services”
   - Article 25 “Aid for research and development projects”
   - Article 28 “Innovation aid for SMEs”
   - Article 29 “Aid for process and organisational innovation”
2. Regulation (EU) No. 2831/2023 (De Minimis), if enterprises cannot fall under the GBER and for Large Cap as an alternative to the articles of the GBER exclusively dedicated to SMEs.

The aid scheme will be selected based on the nature of the expenditure and the size of the enterprise, even combining several articles of the GBER for separate items within the same project.

If, during the preliminary investigation phase, it is found that one of the requirements of the aid scheme chosen in adhesion by the applicant enterprises is not met, or that the ceiling provided by the chosen scheme is exceeded, the person in charge of the procedure, upon the request of the applicant enterprise, may frame the project's interventions in one of the other schemes provided, following verification that the necessary requirements therein are met.

3. Non-Aid Scheme from Communication C(2022) 7388 final of 19.10.2022 of the European Commission “Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation”

Research organisations can be financed up to 100% as non-aid, if compatible with section 2.1 of the above-mentioned Communication.

In the table below, the **maximum funding percentages** for interventions, qualifying as State aid, are indicated:

Aid Type		Small and Micro Enterprises	Medium-sized Enterprises	Large Enterprises
De Minimis Aid		300.000 EUR	300.000 EUR	300.000 EUR
Aid for consultancy in favour of SMEs (Article 18 GBER)		50%	50%	N/A
Aid for research and development projects (Article 25 GBER par. 1, par. 2 lett. c), par. 4, 5, 6 lett. a) and b)	Experimental Development	60% (of which 20% SME surcharge and 15% ex par. 6 lett. b)	50% (of which 10% SME surcharge and 15% ex par. 6 lett. b)	40% (of which 15% ex par. 6 lett. b)
Innovation aid for SMEs (Article 28 GBER)		50%	50%	N/A
Aid for process and organisational innovation (Article 29 GBER)		50%	50%	15%

Eligible costs:

a) Innovation aid for SMEs (art. 28 GBER / De Minimis):
   - Costs for obtaining, validating and defending patents and other intangible assets;
   - Costs for secondment of highly qualified personnel from a research and knowledge-dissemination organisation or a large enterprise, working on research, development and innovation activities in a newly created function within the beneficiary and not replacing other personnel;
   - Costs for innovation advisory and support services, including services provided by research and knowledge dissemination organisations, research, testing and experimentation infrastructures or innovation hubs.

b) Aid for process and organisational innovation (art. 29 GBER / De Minimis):

- Costs of personnel directly engaged in processes and organisational innovation activities up to 50% of the eligible costs incurred for process and organisational innovation activities, which can be accounted for using the cost simplification options – in accordance with the provisions of Article 55 of Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1060 and Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014, as amended and supplemented – referred to in the Regional Government Resolution No. 4664/2015 of Lombardy Region, as amended and supplemented;
- Costs relating to the depreciation of instruments and equipment to the extent and for the period in which they are used for process and organisational innovation activities functional and related to the project, on the basis of depreciation costs calculated in accordance with the principles of good accounting practice and the relevant tax rules (without prejudice to the possibility of reporting, in the ordinary way, the entire quota of instruments and equipment used when their life cycle corresponds to or is shorter than the duration of the process and organisational innovation activities); in the case of assets acquired through financial leasing (eligible only for product innovation, industrial research and experimental development costs), the lease instalments paid by the lessee to the lessor, net of ancillary expenses (taxes, lessor's margin, interest refinancing costs, overheads, insurance charges), are eligible to the extent and for the period in which the relevant asset is used for the project with reference to the period of eligibility of the costs;
- Costs of contractual research, knowledge and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arm's length conditions, used exclusively for project activities;
- Overheads recognised at a flat rate of 7% of the costs referred to in points a) to c); for overheads the simplified cost options set out in Article 54 (a) of Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1060 will be applicable.

c) Product innovation (De Minimis):

- Costs of personnel directly engaged in product innovation activities up to 50% of the eligible costs incurred for product innovation activities, which can be accounted for using the cost simplification options – in accordance with the provisions of Article 55 of Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1060 and Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014, as amended and supplemented – referred to in the Regional Government Resolution No. 4664/2015 of Lombardy Region, as amended and supplemented;
- Costs relating to the depreciation of instruments and equipment to the extent and for the period in which they are used for product innovation activities functional and related to the project, based on depreciation costs calculated in accordance with the principles of good accounting practice and the relevant tax rules (without prejudice to the possibility of reporting, in the ordinary way, the entire quota of instruments and equipment used when their life cycle corresponds to or is shorter than the duration of the product innovation activities); in the case of assets acquired through financial leasing, the lease instalments paid by the lessee to the lessor, net of ancillary expenses (taxes, lessor's margin, interest refinancing costs, overheads, insurance charges), are eligible to the extent and for the period in which the relevant asset is used for the project with reference to the period of eligibility of the costs;
- Costs of contractual research, knowledge and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arm's length conditions, used exclusively for project activities;
- Overheads recognised at a flat rate of 7% of the costs referred to in points a) to c); for overheads the simplified cost options set out in Article 54 (a) of Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1060 will be applicable.

d) Aid for consultancy in favour of SMEs (art. 18 GBER / De Minimis):

- Consultancy costs for business development and consolidation, including for quality certifications;
- Consultancy costs for corporate environmental sustainability;
- Energy and environmental certification costs.

e) Experimental development (art. 25 GBER / De Minimis):

- Costs related to the depreciation of instrumentation and equipment to the extent and for the period in which they are used for experimental development activities functional and related to the project, based on depreciation costs calculated in accordance with the principles of good accounting practice and the relevant tax rules (without prejudice to the possibility of reporting, in the ordinary way, the entire share of instrumentation and equipment used when their life cycle corresponds to or is shorter than the duration of the experimental development activities); in the case of assets acquired through financial leasing, the lease instalments paid by the lessee to the lessor are eligible, net of incidental expenses (taxes, lessor's margin, interest refinancing costs, overhead, insurance charges), to the extent and for the period in which the relevant asset is used for experimental development activities under the project with reference to the period of eligibility of the costs;
- Costs for contractual research, knowledge and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arm's length conditions, as well as costs for consultancy and equivalent services used exclusively for experimental development activities functional to the project;
- Other operating costs, including costs of materials, supplies and similar products, incurred directly as a result of the experimental development project;
- Costs of personnel directly engaged in experimental development activities within the limit of 50% of the total eligible costs incurred for experimental development activities, reportable through the use of cost simplification options - in accordance with the provisions of Article 55 of Regulation (EU) no. 2021/1060 and Article 7 of the GBER Regulation - approved by Regional Government Resolution No. 1162 of 23/10/2023, which updated the unit costs set forth in Regional Government Resolution No. 4664 of 12/23/2015, as amended and supplemented, based on the respective hours actually worked, valued according to the standard hourly unit cost (equal to 36.42 Euros). The reportable personnel costs must be related to researchers, technicians and other auxiliary personnel, provided that they are employed for the implementation of the experimental development activities; a

maximum of 1,720 hours per year can be charged for each staff member (understanding the annuality as a continuous period of 12 months and not necessarily as a calendar year) in compliance with the maximum number of monthly hours actually worked by each staff member that is reported in the work team; personnel costs for management, secretarial and dissemination activities of the project results will not be allowed. The total of 1,720 hours must also include the hours related to any other project reported with the same standard costs referring to the same employee over the same period;

- Overheads recognised at a flat rate of 7% of the costs referred to in points a) to d); for overheads the simplified cost options set out in Article 54 (a) of Regulation (EU) No. 2021/1060 will be applicable.

Specific requirements for the eligible enterprises and research organisations:

Enterprises and research organisations must be legally established and operate with headquarters in Italy or another EU Member State, either as legal entities regardless of type or as sole proprietorships.

Prior to grant disbursements, the following regulations / procedures must be respected:

- Anti-mafia regulations;
- State aid EU Regulations (GBER, De Minimis, Communication C (2022) 7388 final of 19.10.2022 of the European Commission);
- Regularity of contributions;
- Lombardy location verification.

At the time of disbursement, the potential beneficiaries must have a legally operating installation or branch in Lombardy Region.

Incentives can be cumulated within:

- The limits of 100% of the costs for both De Minimis and Non-Aid;
- The maximum limits set out by Article 18, 25, 28 and 29 of GBER, when applied.

Strategic aspects for Lombardy Region

The following items do not restrict the participation of organisations from Lombardy Region, however, they will be considered during the evaluation of proposals:

Strategic objectives:

- Support the development of high-tech digital solutions that address concrete needs of the Lombardy healthcare system.
- Encourage the active involvement of innovative startups and healthcare incentives (hospitals, living labs, public and private infrastructures) as key actors in JIP proposals.
- Support proposals that are co-designed with local stakeholders, ensuring strong territorial relevance and real benefits for citizens, patients, and healthcare professionals.

Strategic evaluation guidelines:

- Priority is given to solutions with a direct and measurable impact on the quality of healthcare services in Lombardy.
- Proposals with high potential for transferability to other Italian regions and scalability across Europe are considered positively.
- Lombardy's FSTP budget is primarily allocated to support startups and hospitals, with the goal of strengthening the regional life sciences and digital health innovation ecosystem.
- Initiatives must be pre-approved by the Regional Directorate for Economic Development, ensuring alignment with Lombardy's innovation strategies.

Preferred approach:

- Initiatives should demonstrate strong collaboration between the public and private sectors and engage local end-users in testing and validation phases.
- Solutions should leverage advanced digital health technologies such as AI, digital platforms, interoperable health data, and personalised care pathways.

Regional Conditions for Romania

Contact

For any specific inquiries from applicants in Romania (all regions), please contact: Oana Ionescu, contact.unite@uefiscdi.ro.

It is strongly advised to contact Unitatea Executiva pentru Finantarea Invatamantului Superior, a Cercetarii, Dezvoltarii si Inovarii (UEFISCDI) before submission to verify the eligibility conditions and avoid submitting ineligible proposals.

Mandatory requirements for participants from Romania

The following mandatory requirements apply exclusively to applicants from Romania.

Experimental development is the type of activities that are eligible for funding.

The level of funding is determined according to the type of activities and the category of institution, in compliance with the State Aid Scheme [9].

Activities considered ineligible may be financed from the participating institutions' self-contribution.

Maximum funding:

- The maximum FSTP funding that may be requested by Romanian applicants(s) within a single consortium must not exceed EUR 250,000 in total for all Romanian participants.

Eligible organisations:

- Enterprises, which comply with the stipulations of the State Aid Scheme approved by OMCID no. 21.324 of November 2, 2023, as further amended and supplemented, and have as their object of activity the research and development.
- Research organisations (public or private), as defined in the State Aid Scheme and Government Decision no. 57/2002 regarding the scientific research and

[9] State Aid Scheme approved by OMCID 20638/2024 on "Financing of research, development and innovation activities of economic nature within the National Research, Development and Innovation Plan 2022-2027 approved by the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalisation", as later amended.

technological development, approved with amendments and additions by Law no. 324/2003, as subsequently amended and supplemented.

Research organisation is an institution [10], irrespective of its legal status (public or private legal organisation) or mode of financing, whose main objective is to carry out independently basic research, industrial research or experimental development, or to disseminate widely the results of such activities, by teaching, publication, or transfer of knowledge.

If the institution also carries out economic activities, the funding, costs and revenues of those economic activities must be accounted for separately.

Companies that can exercise a decisive influence over such an entity, for example, as shareholders or associates, may not benefit from preferential access to the results generated by it.

Eligibility conditions:

Participating institutions:

- have legal status and operate in Romania;
- are not declared, according to the law, in a state of default;
- do not have their accounts frozen by court order;
- they have not provided inaccurate declarations with regard to the information requested by the UEFISCDI for the selection of contractors;
- is not an "enterprise in difficulty" and does not have among its shareholders any enterprise in difficulty, is not bankrupt or being liquidated, does not have its commercial activities administered by a bankruptcy trustee, does not have its commercial activities suspended, is not the subject of an arrangement with creditors or is not in a situation similar to the foregoing, as regulated by law;

[10] Universities or research institutes, technology transfer agencies, innovation intermediaries, physical or virtual research-driven collaborative entities, including research centres set up within hospitals or museums, which meet the criteria included in the definition of research organization

- have not violated the provisions of another financing contract with a contracting authority previously concluded;
- In accordance with European legislation on state aid for research, enterprises involved in applying for public funding for research and technological development must have research and/or technological development as their object of activity;
- Project leader holds a Ph.D. (for participants representing research organisations), this condition is not mandatory for companies;
- A person, as project leader, regardless of whether the Romanian institution is coordinator or partner, within the competition organised in the framework of European calls, can participate in only one project proposal.

Eligible costs:

According to Government Decision no. 134/2011 - The Methodological Norms regarding the definitions of expenditure categories for research, development and stimulation of innovation activities funded by the State budget, the following categories of expenses are eligible:

- Personnel costs: Researchers, doctoral candidates, post-doctoral researchers, technicians and other similar categories of staff, where these are involved in the implementation of the project. These costs include statutory contributions related to salaries and similar income.
- Logistics costs:

a) The capital expenditure necessary for the implementation of the project may be incurred only for equipment purchased after the starting date of the contract and which:
   - Shall be recorded by the contractor in accordance with the legislation in force;
   - For research organisations, which are not beneficiaries of state aid, the capital expenditure shall be financed 100% of the costs of instruments and equipment purchased during the implementation of the project;
   - For institutions benefiting from state aid, if such equipment has a longer operating life than the duration of the research project, only depreciation costs over the duration of the project, calculated on the basis of regulated accounting practices, are eligible.

b) Costs for materials, consumables and similar products necessary for the research activity in accordance with the legislation in force;
c) Costs of services performed by third parties.

- Travel costs related to domestic or foreign travel for the members of the research teams within the project, for documentation or research stays, for the participation in scientific events related to the field of the project, participation in specialised training courses of short duration; travel costs related to the project implementation shall be paid under the legal conditions established for public institutions; for institutions receiving state aid, travel expenses may be covered only from own funds.
- Indirect costs are calculated up to 25% of direct costs: personnel costs, logistical costs and travel costs. Expenses are eligible if incurred after signature of the contract.
- Costs for subcontracting project activities are not eligible.

Only organisations that have a legal status and operate in Romania are eligible for the costs mentioned above.

Funding rates, which comply with the stipulations of the State Aid Scheme approved by OMCID no. 21.324 of November 2, 2023, as further amended and supplemented, and have experimental development as their object of activity:

Activity Type	Company Type				Public Research Organisations
	Large	Medium	Small	Micro	
Experimental development	25%	35%	45%	45%	100%
Experimental development involving full collaboration or dissemination of results	40%	50%	60%	60%	100%

Strategic aspects for Romania

The following items do not restrict the participation of organisations from Romania, however, they will be considered during the evaluation of proposals:

- Proposals are expected to be focused on the innovation challenges related to Digital Health, their issues and challenges. Where appropriate, they may also consider the effects and impact on other territories.
- Applicants must integrate diversity considerations in submitted proposals, as well as consider underrepresented populations in the planned research. This includes not only diversity distribution and gender balance in the consortium composition, but also the inclusion of diversity perspectives and analysis in the R&I activities where this is relevant.
- The complexity of digital health innovation challenges requires interdisciplinary approaches to analyse challenges and find solutions. Proposals should mobilise the necessary disciplines required to address all aspects of the issues they wish to tackle.

Regional Conditions for Northern Netherlands (Netherlands)

Contact

For any specific inquiries from applicants in the Northern Netherlands, please contact: Lyanne Ausema, ausema@nom.nl.

Mandatory requirements for participants from Northern Netherlands

The following mandatory requirements apply exclusively to applicants from the Northern Netherlands.

Participants located in the Northern Netherlands region are subject to the general eligibility and funding conditions of the UNITE JIP open calls, as well as the applicable European Union legislation, particularly State aid regulations.

Any financial support granted through the UNITE JIP open calls shall comply with the relevant EU frameworks, including:

- General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) – particularly Article 25
- De Minimis regulation, where applicable
- Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (MGA) provisions

Applicants are advised to ensure compliance with the standard requirements set out in the UNITE JIP call documents and consult the regional contact point in case of doubts or questions.

Strategic aspects for Northern Netherlands

Although no binding regional strategic priorities have been formally adopted, proposals involving participants from the Northern Netherlands are encouraged to align with the following guiding principles:

- Proposals are expected to contribute to at least one of the strategic aspects. Alignment with multiple areas will strengthen regional relevance and may positively impact the overall evaluation.
- The proposed activities should support the innovation capacity and economic development of the Northern Netherlands region, particularly in sectors aligned with regional smart specialisation strategies (RIS3), including health technologies, digitalisation, and data-driven innovation.

- Proposals that strengthen public-private collaboration and engage relevant stakeholders from the regional innovation ecosystem—such as universities, startups, hospitals, and healthcare providers—are strongly encouraged. The use of digital testbeds, living labs, or other demonstration infrastructures located in the region is considered a positive aspect for the evaluation. Proposals that can demonstrate a clear potential for cross-regional scalability and value creation across Europe are particularly welcome.

In this context, strategic focus areas for proposals include:

- Digital transformation of healthcare: Priority is given to digital solutions that improve access to high-quality care in rural and underserved areas, support prevention and personalised care, and reduce pressure on healthcare personnel.
- Applied validation in real-world environments: Proposals are encouraged to demonstrate and validate innovations within the region's infrastructure, leveraging practical testbeds, living labs, or hospitals.
- Inclusive and equitable health innovation: Proposals should address health equity and digital inclusion by ensuring that innovations are accessible and usable by diverse and vulnerable populations.
- Strengthening of regional innovation ecosystems: Proposals that foster collaboration across sectors and build structural partnerships between research, industry, and healthcare actors will be considered positively.
- Smart specialisation and sustainable economic impact: Proposals should align with the region's strengths in digital health, AI, and data technologies, and contribute to a resilient, sustainable, and knowledge-driven economy.

Regional Conditions for Scotland (United Kingdom)

Contact

For any specific inquiries from applicants in Scotland, please contact: SEUNITEDigital@scotent.co.uk.

Mandatory requirements for participants from Scotland

The following mandatory requirements apply exclusively to applicants from Scotland.

Scottish Digital Health companies (SMEs, startups, and scale-ups competing and leading in Life Sciences, Human Health and Care technology markets) are welcome and encouraged to participate in the UNITE Open Calls, including proposals led by other UNITE regions, and may be eligible to receive financial support from Scottish Enterprise when participating in projects that demonstrate clear economic benefits within the Scotland regional context. Please note that company applicants located in the Highlands & Islands or South of Scotland areas will be considered in conjunction with Highlands & Islands Enterprise or South of Scotland Enterprise agencies.

Eligible organisations:

- Eligible organisations include companies that are legal entities operating and carrying out research and development activities within Scotland or companies intending to establish a permanent presence within the area to carry out research and development activities. This includes subsidiaries of overseas companies.
- To comply with the UK Government sanctions legislation and Scottish Government guidance in relation to trading with Russia and Belarus, as part of the appraisal, Scottish Enterprise will carry out sanctions checks on companies, shareholders and in some cases directors and may ask about the nature of trading and/or investment links with Russia and Belarus. Depending on the outcome of these checks, Scottish Enterprise may decide that support cannot be provided.
- Grants will be provided under the Scottish Enterprise Research and Development and Innovation Scheme 2022 – 2031 (SC10672) and do not need to be counted towards a company's de minimis / minimal financial assistance allowance.
- Scottish participants in projects approved by the UNITE General Assembly will also go through the Scottish Enterprise Appraisal and Grant Management process. Funding is discretionary, so even if a project proposal meets all the minimum requirements, it does not mean it will be funded. Scottish Enterprise supports projects that, in its view, deliver most strongly against its strategic ambitions.

- Universities, Public Research Organisations, Public Authorities (including NHS), Associations without economic activities and NGOs in Scotland may participate in projects, however, they are not eligible to receive the FSTP funding.

The following aspects will be considered during the selection process:

- Nature of the R&D
- Creation or safeguarding of R&D jobs that pay the Real Living Wage, and the overall economic impact of the project
- Links to other local companies, for example, for materials or specialist knowledge
- Global market opportunity
- Intellectual property

Information, documents and evidence demonstrating that project proposals are suitable for grant funding will be requested. Applicants will need to show that they meet the necessary criteria and make it clear why Scottish Enterprise support is required to enable this activity to happen, along with possible outcomes if support is not available.

Eligible costs:

- Personnel costs
- Materials/consumables
- Consultancy, subcontract and fees for trials and testing
- Preparation of technical manuals
- Intellectual property costs (SMEs only)
- Market assessment
- Training
- Travel and subsistence
- Accountancy fees (for Independent Accountants Report, day-to-day accountancy costs are not eligible)
- Capital equipment
- Overheads

Maximum funding percentages:

Scottish Enterprise will assess activities within project proposals and make an apportionment against these definitions. The support rate for these definitions is provided in the table below, and Scottish Enterprise will set grants against activities, up to the maximum percentage rate as set by the internal policy.

The support rate is also dictated by the need for funding and commensurate economic benefit, however, the maxima are as follows:

Organisation Type	Maximum support rate, collaborative projects
Large Enterprises	55%
Medium Enterprises	65%
Small Enterprises	65%

Strategic aspects for Scotland

The following items do not restrict the participation of organisations from Scotland, however, they will be considered during the evaluation of proposals:

- Proposals with Scottish participants must engage with and share their draft submission with regional representatives in Scottish Enterprise no later than 2 weeks before the submission deadline: SEUNITEDigital@scotent.co.uk.
- Proposals must align with the Scottish Enterprise's strategic ambitions 2025-2028 and the Scaling Innovation Mission with proposed activities supporting the innovation capacity and economic development of Scotland in sectors aligned with human health technologies, digitalisation, AI, and data-driven innovation.
- Proposals must have the potential to deliver benefits to Scotland's economy, and the new product, process or service must be able to compete in a global marketplace. Preference will be given to solutions with high transferability and potential to be scaled internationally.
- The maximum FSTP funding that may be requested by eligible Scottish applicants within a single consortium must not exceed EUR 250,000.

- Proposals must involve research and development activity in Scotland. However, testing in a demonstration site outside Scotland is also eligible.

- Businesses ideally should employ a minimum of 10 employees or demonstrate a plan for growth to achieve this by 2028.
- Fair Work Framework (FWF) Compliance.
- Net Zero Alignment: Businesses must align with the goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions and demonstrate plans to reach this target by 2045.
- Scottish Enterprise is subject to the UK data protection framework, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation, which is closely aligned to the EU framework. The UK is subject to an adequacy decision by the EU, determining that there is adequate protection for personal data in the UK in respect of the EU framework. Scottish Enterprise is subject to wider UK and Scottish regulations, including on public information management. Scottish Enterprise has data handling policies and safeguards, including a data protection officer and a data protection impact assessment. As the UNITE partner, Scottish Enterprise will follow the UNITE Data Management Plan.

Regional Conditions for Wales (United Kingdom)

Contact

For any specific enquiries from applicants in Wales, please contact:

Collaboration Team, Welsh Government Innovation Division, Collaboration@gov.wales.

Mandatory requirements for applicants from Wales

The following mandatory requirements apply exclusively to applicants in Wales.

Eligible organisations:

- Businesses with an active base of operations in Wales and the ability to deliver measurable economic benefits.
- Universities or other research organisations that are legal entities registered and operating in Wales, subject to the following conditions:
    - Research organisations will only be eligible if there is at least one business involved in the project proposal with a base in Wales which is requesting the Welsh Government funding.
    - The work being carried out by the research organisation should be of direct relevance to the Welsh business.
    - The total requested budget of the research organisation should be no greater than the combined total budgets of Welsh companies involved in the project proposal and seeking funding from the Welsh Government.
- Public health and care organisations that are legal entities registered and operating in Wales, subject to the following conditions:
    - Public Health and Care organisations, including NHS organisations, will only be eligible if there is at least one business involved in the project proposal with a base in Wales which is requesting the Welsh Government funding.
    - The work being carried out by the health or care organisation should be of direct relevance to the Welsh business.
    - The total requested budget of the organisation should be no greater than the combined total budgets of Welsh companies involved in the project proposal and seeking funding from the Welsh Government.

Grants will be provided under the Welsh Government SMART Flexible Innovation Support scheme.

Welsh organisations participation in projects approved by the UNITE General Assembly will be subject to the Welsh Government Appraisal and Grant Management processes.

Welsh businesses may be asked to provide up-to-date management or company accounts. Other financial details may be requested by the Welsh Government if required.

The Welsh Government will pay successful Welsh beneficiaries in GBP. For the purposes of the application process, all Wales based applicants are requested to use the following indicative exchange rate: GBP 1 = EUR 1.1565.

Claims will be submitted quarterly in arrears. All claims will need to be accompanied by evidence, i.e. invoices, payslips and bank statements, proving that payments have been made within that claim period. A Monitoring Officer will be allocated to successful beneficiaries and will provide support throughout the project lifetime. An Independent Accountant's Report may be required with the final claim, the cost of which will be borne by the beneficiary.

Eligible costs:

- Staff costs (gross salaries)
- Materials/consumables
- Consultancy, subcontract and fees for trials and testing
- Preparation of technical manuals
- Intellectual property costs
- Market assessment
- International travel and subsistence
- Capital equipment
- Overheads (at 55% of gross staff salaries)

Ineligible costs (not exhaustive):

- Employer's NI/pension costs
- UK travel and subsistence

- Licenses, e.g., standard business software, renewal costs of licences
- Membership of professional bodies
- PPE
- Standard IT equipment
- Recoverable VAT
- Costs incurred outside the project period
- Non-defrayed costs
- Accountancy costs
- General Office supplies, e.g., stationery
- Insurance
- Maintenance and repair of equipment
- Hire purchase costs

Maximum funding percentages:

The Welsh Government does not fund basic research as the selected projects are expected to have a market-oriented application in mind. The Welsh Government will assess the activities within project proposals and make an apportionment against its definitions. The support rates for funding are provided below. The Welsh Government will determine grant support for eligible elements, applying the appropriate intervention rate up to the maximum permitted under the Welsh Government SMART Innovation funding programme guidance.

The support rate is also dictated by the need for funding and commensurate economic benefit, however, the maxima are as follows:

	Large Enterprises	Medium Enterprises	Small Enterprises	Bonus applied to Enterprises in effective collaboration	Universities, Public Research Organisations	Public Health and Care Organisations
Experimental Development	25%	35%	45%	15%	100%	100%

Strategic aspects for Wales

The following items do not restrict the participation of organisations from Wales, however, they will be considered during the evaluation of proposals:

- Proposals must involve research and development activity in Wales. However, testing in a demonstration site outside Wales is also eligible.
- Proposals must have the potential to deliver benefits to the Welsh economy, and the new product, process or service must, in the case of non-SMEs, be able to compete in a global marketplace.
- Proposals must align with the Welsh Government innovation strategy.

Privacy notice

Your privacy is important to the Welsh Government and Business Wales. This notice sets out how we will use your personal data, and your rights. It is made under Articles 13 and/or 14 of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Please take a moment to familiarise yourself with the Welsh Government privacy practices.

Why is data collected and processed?

The Welsh Government will be the Data Controller for the personal and business data you provide in accessing Business Wales support. The legal basis for processing your personal data is section 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR (lawfulness of processing). This processing is necessary for the performance of our public task to identify you and provide the most appropriate business advice and information.

Who will have access to your data?

The Welsh Government will collect and store your data. Your data will be stored on the Welsh Government secure IT system and the secure IT systems of our third-party service contractors delivering the service to you. It is collected and shared with the following organisations for the purposes previously listed:

- Approved social research organisations, to carry out research, analysis or equal opportunities monitoring of the service.
- The Welsh Government support service teams and its system technical administrators who support the IT system. The system technical administrators will not use your details in any way.
- The Wales Audit Office or those acting on their behalf, or other appropriate auditors of the Business Wales Services.

Regional Conditions for Extremadura (Spain)

Contact

For any specific inquiries from applicants in the Extremadura Region, please contact: Anto Recio, anto.recio@fundecyt-pctex.es.

Mandatory requirements for participants from Extremadura Region

The following mandatory requirements apply exclusively to applicants from the Extremadura Region:

- Eligible entities in the Extremadura Region are private and public entities legally established in the region, with the capacity to implement the assigned tasks and receive public grants.
- Funding conditions will be assimilable to those of an Innovation Action under the Horizon Europe programme applicable at the moment of the publication of each specific call: up to 70% of the total eligible project costs for for-profit organisations and 100% for non-profit organisations.
- The tasks assigned to regional entities in the joint UNITE projects will have to demonstrate a clear benefit or validation in the Extremadura Region.
- The regional part of the contract may include additional communication requirements for the partners receiving regional funds and other additional specifications.
- Indirect costs are calculated up to 25% of direct costs: personnel costs, logistical costs and travel costs.
- Expenses are eligible if incurred after signature of the contract.
- Proposals must not exceed 50% of the subcontracting costs.

Strategic aspects for Extremadura Region

The following items do not restrict the participation of organisations from the Extremadura Region, however, they will be considered during the evaluation of proposals:

- Proposals must clearly be aligned with the Smart Specialisation Regional Strategy RIS3, demonstrate direct benefit to citizens, patients, or healthcare professionals in the Extremadura Region and ensure digital business development with a positive impact in the region.

- Proposals may include solution development, testing, validation, or deployment within regional healthcare, the private healthcare sector based in the region, and/or social public and private services.
- Proposals co-designed with relevant regional stakeholders will be positively considered.
- Proposals involving regional end-users, such as healthcare professionals, patients, or caregivers, will be considered favourably.

Regional Conditions for Aragón (Spain)

Contact

For any specific inquiries from applicants in the Aragón Region, please contact: Raquel Ornat Clemente, rornat@aragon.es.

Mandatory requirements for applicants from Aragón Region

In addition to complying with the general eligibility requirements established in this document, applicants seeking funding from the Autonomous Community of Aragón shall fulfil the following specific conditions:

- Establishment in Aragón: The beneficiary entity must be legally established and carry out its activities on a stable and permanent basis within the Autonomous Community of Aragón.
- Appointment of a Project Technical Coordinator: The beneficiary entity shall designate a person responsible for the scientific and technical coordination of the selected project. This person must maintain an employment relationship, statutory appointment, or equivalent legal link with the beneficiary entity throughout the implementation period of the funded project.
- Continuity of Project Management and Technical Coordination: The beneficiary entity shall ensure the continuity of the project's scientific, technical and administrative management throughout the entire project duration. If the designated Project Technical Coordinator is replaced, the beneficiary shall ensure and duly justify that the newly appointed coordinator possesses qualifications, expertise and professional experience equivalent to those of the person being replaced. Any such change shall be promptly notified to the Directorate-General responsible for innovation and may be subject to its validation where applicable.
- Restriction on Coordination Roles: An individual designated as Project Technical Coordinator may act as coordinator for only one proposal submitted under this call.

Compliance with State Aid Rules:

Financial support granted under this call may constitute State aid within the meaning of Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), depending on the nature of the beneficiary and the activities funded.

Where the funding constitutes State aid, it shall comply with the applicable European Union State aid framework, including, where relevant, Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market pursuant to Articles 107 and 108 TFEU (General Block Exemption Regulation – GBER), as amended.

Conversely, in accordance with Section 2.1.1 of the Communication from the Commission – Framework for State aid for Research, Development and Innovation (2022/C 414/01), public funding granted to research organisations or research infrastructures for the performance of their non-economic activities shall not be considered State aid within the meaning of Article 107(1) TFEU.

Maximum funding percentages:

In accordance with the provisions set out above, the maximum funding rates applicable under this call shall be as follows:

a) Entities carrying out non-economic activities:

Funding of up to 100% of the eligible costs incurred and duly justified may be granted to the following entities:

- Universities;
- Public research organisations and public-law entities under the Administration of the Autonomous Community of Aragón;
- Healthcare centres and hospitals belonging to the Aragonese Health Service;
- University-based, mixed and other recognised research institutes;
- Public Research Organisations (Organismos Públicos de Investigación – OPIs) of the General State Administration;
- Foundations belonging to the Aragonese public sector and other foundations engaged in research and innovation activities;
- Technology Centres and Technological Innovation Support Centres (CAITs) registered in accordance with Royal Decree 652/2011 of 9 May, amending Royal Decree 2093/2008 of 19 December, which regulates Technology Centres and Technological Innovation Support Centres and establishes the corresponding national register.

b) Entities carrying out economic activities:

- Undertakings and other entities engaged in economic activities may receive funding of up to 80% of the eligible costs, subject to the conditions, thresholds and aid intensities established in Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014, as amended (General Block Exemption Regulation – GBER).
- In accordance with Article 25(6) of the GBER, the aid intensity may be increased up to a maximum of 80% of the eligible costs

Eligible costs:

The following categories of expenditure shall be eligible for funding:

- Personnel costs directly linked to the implementation of the project;
- External Audit Costs;
- Other direct costs strictly necessary for the implementation of the project shall be eligible;
- Indirect Costs.

Eligible costs are those directly related to and strictly necessary for the implementation of project activities, and incurred within the project period. Projects shall demonstrate a clear contribution to the objectives of the UNITE initiative and generate measurable scientific, technological, healthcare, economic or societal impact.

Non-eligible costs:

The following categories of expenditure shall not be eligible for funding under this call:

- Equipment costs;
- Financial costs and indirect taxes.

Strategic aspects for Aragón

Mandatory aspects:

- Tasks assigned to beneficiaries in joint interregional projects must demonstrate a clear benefit or validation within the Aragón Region. In particular, this means that clinical trials or joint development activities should be carried out in the Aragón Region to ensure the creation of public value.

- The regional part of the contract may include additional communication requirements and own data processing for partners receiving regional funds, as well as other specific provisions.
- Projects must be approved by the Aragón Region's internal steering group before submission or any final funding commitments are made. Therefore, prior to submitting a project proposal, a Territorial Impact Report, with a maximum length of two pages, demonstrating the project's relevance, added value, and expected benefits for Aragón must be submitted. The report shall provide evidence of compliance with the following assessment criteria:
  - The activities undertaken by the Aragón-based partner(s) must generate a clear, tangible, and measurable benefit for Aragón.
  - The role, responsibilities and work packages assigned to the Aragonese partner(s) must justify the regional added value generated.
  - The project must include activities such as validation, demonstration, piloting, deployment or adoption of innovative solutions with a direct impact on the Aragonese healthcare, research or innovation ecosystem.
  - The proposed activities must contribute to strengthening regional capacities for research, innovation, knowledge transfer, and innovation uptake.
  - The expected impact of the project on patients, healthcare professionals, healthcare organisations or other relevant stakeholders in Aragón must be clearly described and substantiated.
  - The proposal must demonstrate its strategic alignment with regional priorities, including:
    - Consistency with the objectives and priority areas of the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of Aragon (RIS3 Aragón);
    - The potential for scaling up, replication, exploitation, and transfer of project results at regional, national or European level.