



## GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

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# **CALLS FOR ESTABLISHING FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS FOR DEVELOPING QUANTUM CHIP TECHNOLOGY**

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**Ref. Chips JU Work Programme 2023-2027 – Appendix 4**



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## 1. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

Framework partnerships are long-term collaborations involving several or recurring grants, based on agreed action plans and agreements. There are two types of agreements:

1. Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) sets out the conditions governing potential grants based on jointly agreed action plan and objectives, without a budget.
2. Specific Grant Agreement (SGA) sets out the specific obligations and conditions to implement the specific action, including budget and funding rules.

This document aims to serve as guideline for the submission of proposals to the call **for establishing Framework Partnership Agreements**, with subsequent SGAs funded under the **Horizon Europe Programme**.

The Chips JU Multiannual Work Programme 2023-2027 describes in its Appendix 4, related to the Chips for Europe initiative part of the JU's activities for 2024, the launch of the Call for Quantum Chip Technology, which includes two different calls:

- **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2024-FPA-QAC-1:** Call for establishing Framework Partnership Agreements for developing Quantum Chip Technology for stability Pilots.
- **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2024-FPA-QAC-2:** Call for establishing Framework Partnership Agreement(s) for developing Quantum Chip Technology for high- quality Trapped Ions Pilot.

Before starting your application, please carefully read the compelling section for your target call in the above-mentioned Appendix 4:

- Section 2.5. *Chips-QAC-1: Call for establishing Framework Partnership Agreements for developing Quantum Chip Technology for stability Pilots* for **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2024-FPA-QAC-1**.
- Section 2.6. *Chips-QAC-2: Call for establishing Framework Partnership Agreement(s) for developing Quantum Chip Technology for high- quality Trapped Ions Pilot* for **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2024-FPA-QAC-2**.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

We invite you to read this **guide for applicants and all related call documentation carefully**, in particular the Chips JU Work Programme, the [General Framework Partnership Agreement](#) and the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual](#). The EU Grants [AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement](#) provides some additional guidance on conditions related to SGAs.

The guide for applicants outlines the:



- background, objectives, scope and activities that can be funded as well as the expected results (section 3)
- timetable and available budget (sections 4 and 5)
- admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 6 and 7)
- criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 8)
- evaluation and award procedure (section 9)
- award criteria (section 10)
- legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 11)
- how to submit an application (section 12)

The Online Manual outlines the:

- procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal')
- recommendations for the preparation of the application

The AGA — Annotated Grant Agreement contains:

- detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign to obtain the grant (including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc) — note: for SGA stage.

### 3. CONTEXT, EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND SCOPE

The pilot lines should focus on achieving higher Technology Readiness Level (TRL) / Manufacturing Readiness Level (MRL) by advancing manufacturing and integration techniques tailored to meet the needs of the quantum industry over the next decade. The testing and experimentation facilities should be fully integrated in the pilot lines, providing seamless production and testing services.

The **Expected Outcomes** listed below describe important aspects that the proposals should address, and will therefore be taken into account during the evaluation of proposals.

#### Expected Outcomes for HORIZON-JU-Chips-2024-FPA-QAC-1

- At least two pilot lines for quantum chips, resulting in enhanced infrastructure capable of high-yield production of quantum chips, integrating various technologies.
- Sustainable pilot lines open to European stakeholders, including SMEs and start-ups, across the whole value chain, from materials to applications, enabling technologies, and thereby creating a community of interest for those technologies.
- Advanced manufacturing techniques and integration processes tailored to the needs of the quantum industry, aiming for significant improvements in production stability and yield rates, contributing to a more reliable supply chain for quantum chips in Europe.



- A sustainable and open-access pilot line framework, significantly boosting the innovation capacity in quantum chip technologies and providing a competitive advantage to the European ecosystem.
- Enhanced collaboration and innovation within the European quantum ecosystem, fostering long-term growth and development in the sector.
- Demonstrated ability to transition from pilot production to industrial-scale manufacturing, ensuring the commercial viability of new quantum technologies.

#### Expected Outcomes for HORIZON-JU-Chips-2024-FPA-QAC-2

- Scalable, efficient, and integrated production capacities for Europe, enhancing the availability of quantum technologies for computing, communication, and sensing.
- Sustainable pilot line open to European stakeholders (especially for SMEs and start-ups) across the whole value chain, from materials to applications, enabling technologies, and thereby creating a community of interest for those technologies, boosting the use of those technologies in Europe. The pilot line should significantly boost the innovation capacity on trapped-ion chips resulting in a competitive advantage for the European ecosystem.
- Development of a European supply chain for quantum technologies, fostering innovation capacities in SMEs and ensuring critical intellectual property remains within the EU.
- Demonstration of high-quality production with a focus on maturing the production towards scalability, efficiency, and integration of Quantum PDKs.

**For both calls**, the pilot lines can be physically located at one or distributed over several hosting sites. A hosting site is the physical facility at which a hosting entity will host a pilot line and which is established in a Participating State that is a Member State. Proposals shall include the members that will host and develop the pilot lines for the whole duration of the SGAs.

For more details about the context, expected outcomes, and scope for the calls, please refer to Appendix 4 of the Chips JU Work Programme, sections “2.5. Chips-QAC-1: Call for establishing Framework Partnership Agreements for developing Quantum Chip Technology for stability Pilots” and “2.6. Chips-QAC-2: Call for establishing Framework Partnership Agreement(s) for developing Quantum Chip Technology for high- quality Trapped Ions Pilot”.

## 4. AVAILABLE BUDGET

#### HORIZON-JU-CHIPS-2024-FPA-QAC-1

Proposals are expected to indicate an overall budget for the implementation of a full FPA via multiple SGAs. In case of sufficient high-quality proposals submitted and evaluated, **at least 2 FPA proposals** are expected to be selected. The JU estimates that an **EU contribution of between EUR 20 and 25 million for a first SGA**, per selected FPA, would allow starting the expected outcomes



to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of an FPA proposal indicating different amounts for a first SGA.

#### HORIZON-JU-CHIPS-2024-FPA-QAC-2

Proposals are expected to indicate an overall budget for the implementation of a full FPA via multiple SGAs. **At most 1 FPA proposal** is expected to be selected. The JU estimates that an **EU contribution of up to EUR 15 million for a first SGA** would allow starting the expected outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of an FPA proposal indicating different amounts for a first SGA.

## 5. TIMETABLE AND DEADLINES

Proposals must be submitted before the call **deadline 21<sup>st</sup> of January, 2025 at 17:00 CET**.

## 6. ADMISSIBILITY AND DOCUMENTS

Proposals must be submitted before the call deadline (see section 5).

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible in the Search Funding & Tenders section). Paper submissions are NOT possible.

Proposals (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided inside the Submission System.

Proposals must be complete and contain all the requested information and supporting documents. All below mentioned parts are mandatory.

- **Application Form Part A** — contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities).
- **Application Form Part B** — contains the technical description of the project (template to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded).

Further admissibility requirements are described in Appendix 4 of the Chips JU Work Programme in section “Annex III: General Horizon Europe conditions”.

There are **no page limits** for the application, but the consortia are **encouraged** to limit the narrative part of the application to **150 pages** excluding the tables that are expected in the template.



## 7. ELIGIBILITY

In order to achieve the expected outcomes, and safeguard the Union's strategic assets, interests, autonomy, and security, it is important to avoid a situation of technological dependency on a non-EU source. For this reason, participation is limited to legal entities established in Member States, Iceland, Norway and the associated country: Israel.

More information about the eligibility conditions for the Call for Quantum Chip Technology are described in Appendix 4 of the Chips JU Work Programme in sections 2.5.4. and 2.6.5. "Eligibility", and "Annex III: General Horizon Europe".

Eligibility criteria are also described in Annex B of the Horizon Europe Work Programme General Annexes<sup>1</sup>.

## 8. FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL CAPACITY AND EXCLUSION

The financial and operational capacity and exclusion conditions for the Call for Quantum Chip Technology are described in Appendix 4 of the Chips JU Work Programme in section 2.5.7. "Other general provisions".

Criteria related to financial and operational capacity and exclusion are also described in Annex C of the Horizon Europe Work Programme General Annexes<sup>1</sup>.

## 9. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The evaluation and selection procedure for the Call for Quantum Chip Technology follows the conditions established in the Chips JU Governing Board decision 2024.71: "Amending the decision on the evaluation and selection procedures related to the calls launched by the Chips JU". This document can be consulted in the [Documents section of the Chips JU website](#), under reference "**Decision GB 2024.71**".

Additionally, for this call, proposals exceeding evaluation thresholds will be awarded a Sovereignty Seal as described in Appendix 4 of the Chips JU Work Programme in sections 2.5.5 and 2.6.6. "STEP and Sovereignty Seal".

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-13-general-annexes\\_horizon-2023-2024\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf)



## 10. AWARD CRITERIA

The general award criteria for the Call for Quantum Chip Technology can be consulted in the evaluation form that is provided with the Call Documents. Additionally, we encourage you to carefully read the specific subcriteria for the calls as described in the application form template (Part B), as well as the expected outcomes of the calls (see Section 3 above); these will be taken into consideration as specific aspects of the call during evaluation.

## 11. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL SET-UP OF THE GRANT AGREEMENTS

If your proposal passes the evaluation, your project will be invited for Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) preparation, where you will be asked to prepare the FPA together with the Chips JU Project Officer.

This FPA will set the framework for your partnership and its terms and conditions.

The Framework Partnership Agreement model that will be used (and all other relevant templates and guidance documents) can be found on the [Portal Reference Documents](#).

## 12. HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

All proposals must be submitted directly online via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System. Paper applications are NOT accepted.

Submission is a **2-step process**:

### a) **create a user account and register your organisation**

To use the Submission System (the only way to apply), all participants need to [create an EU Login user account](#).

Once you have an EU Login account, you can [register your organisation](#) in the Participant Register. When your registration is finalised, you will receive a 9-digit participant identification code (PIC).

### b) **submit the proposal**

Access the Electronic Submission System via the Topic page in the [Search Funding & Tenders](#) section (or, for calls sent by invitation to submit a proposal, through the link provided in the invitation letter).





Submit your proposal in 2 parts, as follows:

- **Part A** includes administrative information about the applicant organisations (future coordinator, beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners). To be filled in directly online.
- **Part B** (description of the action) covers the technical content of the proposal to be performed by the partnership. Download the mandatory Word template from the Submission System, fill it in and upload it as a PDF file.

Documents must be uploaded to the **right category** in the Submission System otherwise the proposal might be considered incomplete and thus inadmissible.

The proposal must be submitted **before the call deadline** (see section 5). After this deadline, the system is closed, and proposals can no longer be submitted.

Once the proposal is submitted, you will receive a **confirmation e-mail** (with date and time of your application). If you do not receive this confirmation e-mail, it means your proposal has NOT been submitted. If you believe this is due to a fault in the Submission System, you should immediately file a complaint via the [IT Helpdesk webform](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal (and, if possible, screenshots to show what happened).

Details on processes and procedures are described in the [Online Manual](#). The Online Manual also contains the links to FAQs and detailed instructions regarding the Portal Electronic Exchange System.

## 13. HELP

As far as possible, **please try to find the answers you need yourself**, in this and the other documentation (we have limited resources for handling direct enquiries):

- [Online Manual](#)
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).

Please also consult the call page regularly, since we will use it to publish call updates.

### Contact

For questions concerning the Portal Submission System, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#).

For non-IT related questions, please write us to [Calls@chips-ju.europa.eu](mailto:Calls@chips-ju.europa.eu). Please indicate clearly the reference of the call to which your question relates (see cover page). Alternatively, consult the FAQ of the calls or send your question directly from the Chips JU website: [QAC-1](#), [QAC-2](#).



## 14. IMPORTANT

**Don't wait until the end** — Complete your application sufficiently in advance of the deadline to avoid any last minute **technical problems**. Problems due to last minute submissions (e.g. congestion, etc) will be entirely at your risk. Call deadlines can NOT be extended. Therefore, we recommend you to submit an early version of your application well in advance the deadline, and submit further updates as needed.

**Consult** the Portal Topic page regularly. We will use it to publish updates and additional information on the call (call and topic updates).

**Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Exchange System** — By submitting the application, all participants accept to use the electronic exchange system in accordance with the [Portal Terms & Conditions](#).

**Registration** — Before submitting the application, all beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners must be registered in the [Participant Register](#). The participant identification code (PIC) (one per participant) is mandatory for the Application Form.

**Consortium roles** — When setting up your consortium, you should think of organisations that help you reach objectives and solve problems.

The roles should be attributed according to the level of participation in the project. Main participants should participate as **beneficiaries** or **affiliated entities**; other entities can participate as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions. **Associated partners** and third parties giving in-kind contributions should bear their own costs (they will not become formal recipients of EU funding). **Subcontracting** should normally constitute a limited part and must be performed by third parties (not by one of the beneficiaries/affiliated entities). Subcontracting going beyond 30% of the total eligible costs must be justified in the application.

**Coordinator** — In multi-beneficiary grants, the beneficiaries participate as consortium (group of beneficiaries). They will have to choose a coordinator, who will take care of the project management and coordination and will represent the consortium towards the granting authority. In mono-beneficiary grants, the single beneficiary will automatically be coordinator.

**Affiliated entities** — Applicants may participate with affiliated entities (i.e. entities linked to a beneficiary which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries, but do not sign the grant and therefore do not become beneficiaries themselves). They will get a part of the grant money and must therefore comply with all the call conditions and be validated (just like beneficiaries); but they do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any).



**Associated partners** — Applicants may participate with associated partners (i.e. partner organisations which participate in the action but without the right to get grant money). They participate without funding and therefore do not need to be validated.

**Consortium agreement** — For practical and legal reasons, it is recommended to set up internal arrangements that allow you to deal with exceptional or unforeseen circumstances (in all cases, even if not mandatory under the Grant Agreement). The consortium agreement also gives you the possibility to redistribute the grant money according to your own consortium-internal principles and parameters (for instance, one beneficiary can reattribute its grant money to another beneficiary). The consortium agreement thus allows you to customise the EU grant to the needs inside your consortium and can also help to protect you in case of disputes.

**Completed/ongoing projects** — Proposals for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; proposals for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).

**Combination with EU operating grants** — Combination with EU operating grants is possible, if the project remains outside the operating grant work programme and you make sure that cost items are clearly separated in your accounting and NOT declared twice (see AGA — Annotated Model Grant Agreement, art 6.2.E).

**Multiple proposals** — Applicants may submit more than one proposal for different projects under the same call (and be awarded for them).

Organisations may participate in several proposals.

BUT: if there are several proposals for very similar projects, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw the others (or they will be rejected).

**Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.

**Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this guide for applicants (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be **rejected**. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.

**Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.

**Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application. If you need the call documentation in another official EU



language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, see section 12).

**Transparency** — In accordance with Article 38 of the [EU Financial Regulation](#), information about EU grants awarded is published each year on the [Europa website](#).

This includes:

- beneficiary names
- beneficiary addresses
- the purpose for which the grant was awarded
- the maximum amount awarded.

The publication can exceptionally be waived (on reasoned and duly substantiated request), if there is a risk that the disclosure could jeopardise your rights and freedoms under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights or harm your commercial interests.

**Data protection** — The submission of a proposal under this call involves the collection, use and processing of personal data. This data will be processed in accordance with the applicable legal framework. It will be processed solely for the purpose of evaluating your proposal, subsequent management of your grant and, if needed, programme monitoring, evaluation and communication. Details are explained in the [Funding & Tenders Portal Privacy Statement](#).