



GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

ACTIONS FOR SUPPORTING DEVELOPING QUANTUM CHIP TECHNOLOGY

Ref. Chips JU Work Programme 2023-2027 – Appendix 6



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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:

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

The Chips JU Multiannual Work Programme 2023-2027 described 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 included 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.

This document aims to serve as a guideline for the submission of proposals to the actions **for selecting Specific Grant Agreements** that **implement** the above-mentioned **FPAs**, funded under the **Horizon Europe Programme**.

The actions for Specific Grant Agreements for Quantum Chip Technology are included in Appendix 6 of the Chips JU Multiannual Work Programme 2023-2027.

The following actions are meant to implement the first phase of the roadmap proposed in the selected FPAs of **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2024-FPA-QAC-1**:

1. **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2025-SGA-QAC1-1:** Supporting developing Quantum Chip Technology for superconducting stability Pilot.
2. **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2025-SGA-QAC1-2:** Supporting developing Quantum Chip Technology for photonic stability Pilot.
3. **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2025-SGA-QAC1-3:** Supporting developing Quantum Chip Technology for semiconducting stability Pilot.
4. **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2025-SGA-QAC1-4:** Supporting developing Quantum Chip Technology for diamond-based stability Pilot.
5. **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2025-SGA-QAC1-5:** Supporting developing Quantum Chip Technology for neutral atoms stability Pilot.

For **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2024-FPA-QAC-2**, the first phase of the roadmap is expected to be implemented in the project under the action:

6. **HORIZON-JU-Chips-2025-SGA-QAC2:** Supporting developing Quantum Chip Technology for high-quality Trapped Ions Pilot Line.

Before starting your application, please carefully read the compelling subsection for your target action in the above-mentioned Appendix 6, under section 2.3.[ACTION NUMBER] as in the listing above.



2. INTRODUCTION

We invite you to read this **guide for applicants and all related action 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 should comply with when implementing the grant (including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc).

3. CONTEXT, EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND SCOPE

The context, expected outcomes, and scope for the SGA actions are described in Appendix 6 of the Chips JU Work Programme in sections 2.3.[ACTION NUMBER].1, 2.3.[ACTION NUMBER].2 and 2.3.[ACTION NUMBER].3.

4. AVAILABLE BUDGET

The indicative EU budget for each SGA action is 25 M€, in a co-funded model with the National Funding Authorities. Maximum reimbursement rates for the EU contribution are set at 50%, as described in sections 2.3.[ACTION NUMBER].10 of the Appendix 6 of the Chips JU Work Programme.

Applicants should carefully consider the available European and national budgets for each action. The applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their National Funding Authorities at their earlier convenience and check for potential issues related to the eligibility for getting national/regional funding.



Proposals may provide proof of the specific co-financing of their Participating States through *commitment letters*. The action documents include an example template of such a letter. However, please mind that this is **not** a mandatory requirement.

In a preliminary version of the commitment letters template, there was a reference to Article 129(4) SBA regarding the retroactivity of equipment. However, please note that the reference has been removed in the latest version of the templates, as retroactivity does not apply to these actions.

Equipment with full-cost option

Purchase of equipment or other assets used for the action must be declared as depreciation costs. However, costs may exceptionally be declared as **full capitalised costs** (see sections 2.3.[ACTION NUMBER].10 of the Appendix 6 of the Chips JU Work Programme). The following guidelines try to clarify the exceptions that can be accepted as full-cost:

- a) 'Capitalised' costs means recorded as assets in the beneficiary's balance sheet. They may relate to: a) the full purchase costs and/or b) the full development costs and must be recorded under a fixed asset account in the beneficiary's accounting records in compliance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual cost accounting practices.
- b) The purchased full-cost equipment must be directly linked to developing scalable production processes for quantum chips, with the goal of establishing industrial-level manufacturing methods.
- c) It also should contribute to the development of an EU ecosystem of equipment providers and users, and ultimately to European technological autonomy, whenever possible.
- d) The equipment must be purchased during the project duration. Specifically, the equipment's acceptance report must be signed with the vendor before the start of the second half of the SGA. The duration of the project considered in this case is the one determined at the time of the Grant Agreement signature, before any amendment that may extend the action duration.
- e) The sum of the estimated costs of all the equipment listed with full-cost option cannot surpass 55% of the total eligible costs.
- f) Cost-efficiency must be a guiding principle, therefore the time of use of the equipment during the project must be considered; a full cost purchase must be always more cost-efficient compared to renting/leasing the equipment. The proposal must provide a clear justification in this regard.
- g) By all means, equipment purchased as full cost must be used only for the purpose of the project.

Equipment with full-cost option (if any) should be listed separately in the application, using the provided template of the action documents. For each equipment item with full-cost option, the following details should be provided:

- Equipment Name: provide equipment ID and type
- Description (including Work Package, task number and beneficiary to which it is linked)
- Estimated Costs (EUR)
- Justification (consider points b), c), d) above)
- Best-Value-for-Money: how do you intend to ensure it? (also consider point f) above)



5. TIMETABLE AND DEADLINES

Proposals must be submitted before the **deadline 17th of September, 2025 at 17:00 CET**.

6. ADMISSIBILITY AND DOCUMENTS

Successful FPA consortia will receive an “Invitation to submit a proposal” for the SGA action linked to the specific FPA-QAC action.

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

Proposals must be submitted electronically following the link to the submission system indicated in the “Invitation to submit a proposal” letter. 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:

- **Application Form Part A** — mandatory, contains administrative information about the participants (coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities).
- **Application Form Part B** — mandatory, contains the technical description of the project (template to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed and then assembled and re-uploaded).
- **National Budgets Table** — mandatory, contains information on the national budgets. The template for the National Budgets Table can be downloaded by the proposal coordinator from the submission tool after the draft proposal has been created in the portal.
- **Full-cost equipment table** — optional, provides a list of the equipment to be funded as full capitalised costs, as described in section 4 of this document.
- **National commitment letters** — optional, contains the letters of commitment from the National Funding Authorities, if provided, as described in section 4 of this document.

Further admissibility requirements are described in the Chips JU Work Programme General Annexes in section “Annex I: HORIZON Europe conditions applicable to Chips JU”.

Page limits to be considered per section:

- Excellence: 60 pages
- Impact: 100 pages
- Quality and efficiency of the Implementation: 100 pages

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 Actions for Quantum Chip Technology are described in Appendix 6 of the Chips JU Work Programme in sections 2.3.[ACTION NUMBER].5. “Eligibility”, and the Chips JU Work Programme General Annexes “Annex 1: HORIZON Europe conditions applicable to Chips JU”.

Eligibility criteria are also described in Annex B of the Horizon Europe Work Programme General Annexes¹.

As an important reminder, the applicants are advised to check the eligibility conditions not only at EU level, but also at national/regional level (for national/regional funding). The applicants are invited to contact at their earliest convenience the respective National Funding Authorities to check compliance at national/regional level.

8. FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL CAPACITY AND EXCLUSION

The financial and operational capacity and exclusion conditions are described in Annex 1 “HORIZON Europe conditions applicable to Chips JU” of the WP General Annexes.

Criteria related to financial and operational capacity and exclusion are also described in Annex C of the Horizon Europe Work Programme General Annexes¹.

9. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The evaluation and selection procedure for the Actions 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 these actions, proposals exceeding evaluation thresholds will be awarded a Sovereignty Seal as described in Appendix 6 of the Chips JU Work Programme in sections 2.3.[ACTION NUMBER].11.

¹ 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

Award criteria are described in Annex 1 “HORIZON Europe conditions applicable to Chips JU” of the WP General Annexes.

For more details, please refer to the Governing Board Decision on the evaluation and selection procedures related to the calls launched by the Chips JU (GB 2024.71).

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

Once your proposal has been selected for funding by the Chips JU PAB, your project will be invited for grant preparation, where you will be asked to prepare the Grant Agreement together with the Chips JU Project Officer.

This Grant Agreement will set the framework for your grant and its terms and conditions, in particular concerning deliverables, reporting and payments.

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

National Grant Agreements (National Contracts). Because of the Chips JU tripartite funding, the participants in Chips JU projects are in general requested to conclude also Grants/Contracts with the funding authorities in their respective countries in order to receive the National/Regional funding. The procedures for these grants/contracts are specific for each country and in the case of countries with various funding sources, there may be differences depending on these sources (for example for a country where both National and regional Funding are available, the funds may be managed by different organizations). Because the National/Regional Grants (Contracts) are handled exclusively by the National Funding Authorities in the respective countries, the applicants are advised to contact them directly. Ideally this should be done as soon as they receive the invitation for the Grant Agreement Preparation from Chips JU in order to have both processes (at EU level and at the national level) run in parallel in order to align/synchronize the requirements at both levels. In some countries, the National Funding may depend on the amount of EU Funding received and changes of one imply adjustments of the other. The Chips JU office and the National Funding Authorities work together to align and synchronize the procedures, but this is only possible with the full cooperation of the applicants. Applicants must also be aware of the specific conditions at their national level: for example, in case the costs are only eligible from the date the National Grant/Contract is signed even if the project starts at an earlier date.

As soon as the Chips JU PAB takes the funding decision, the coordinators of the proposals selected for funding are invited to start the GAP process using the electronic exchange system. The indicative date



for the signature of the GA is 8 months from the final date of submission (in case of the two stage Calls the final date of submission of the second stage: FPP submission).

Please note that Chips JU does not foresee negotiations for the proposals selected for funding. Under the Chips JU during the Grant Agreement Preparation phase (GAP) there will however be a request-for-change procedure to align the national and EU sides of the proposals. The process will be concluded with the PAB decision for funding based on which the Grant Agreements are signed.

12. HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

All proposals must be submitted directly online via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System following the link in your invitation letter. Paper applications are NOT accepted.

Submit the proposal

Access the Electronic Submission System through the link provided in the invitation letter.

Submit your proposal in at least 3 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.
- **National Budgets Table** — contains information on the national budgets. The template for the National Budgets Table can be downloaded by the proposal coordinator from the submission tool after the draft proposal has been created in the portal. A PDF file - not editable is also provided for applicants' convenience with the call documents. The editable template is provided under the tab "Download Part B templates" – as an Excel file. It must be filled in as described below and then uploaded as an Excel file in the dedicated place holder.
- **Full-cost equipment table** (optional), provides a list of the equipment to be funded as full capitalised costs, as described in section 4 of this document. The Word template of the table can be found as part of the action documents or downloaded from the Submission System, and must be completed adding the required information for each piece of equipment under the full capitalised cost model (if any), cf. 4. After completion, a PDF version of the file should be uploaded.
- **National commitment letters** (optional), contains the letters of commitment from the National Funding Authorities as described in section 4 of this document. Please upload them as a ZIP 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 action 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 action page regularly, since we will use it to publish action 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. Please indicate clearly the reference of the action to which your question relates (see cover page).

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. Action 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 action (action 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 action 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. They do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any).

Consortium agreement — For practical and legal reasons, it is mandatory under the Grant Agreement to set up internal arrangements that allow you to deal with exceptional or unforeseen circumstances. 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 — Organisations may participate in several proposals.

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 action. In this case, you will be informed via an action 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 action documentation in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after action 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 action 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](#).



15. APPENDIX: Clarifying note regarding the exploitation of results and usage conditions of equipment in SGA-QAC1 and SGA-QAC2

What does exploitation of results mean in the context of SGA-QAC1 and SGA-QAC2?

Exploitation of the foreground generated by the project. It should be commensurate and linked to the objectives of the project. For instance, small batches for validation purposes of generated knowledge regarding materials, processes, design...

This type of income is not considered revenues and will not be deduced, but it must be properly accounted for.

If using **equipment funded by the grant** for the **exploitation of results**, the following conditions apply:

- If using the depreciated model, the part of the equipment used for exploitation purposes cannot be claimed as eligible costs.
- In the full-cost model:
 - In principle, it must be used for the sole purpose of the project.
 - Any generated revenue will be subject to grant deductions (even after the completion of the project, until it is fully depreciated).

In both cases, the beneficiaries must keep a clear **accounting** of equipment usage.

Usage of **full-cost model equipment in SGA 2** will follow the rules above (subject to grant deductions, until it is fully depreciated).

Regarding the costs of **procurement** in the full costs model:

- Starting the procurement process for full-cost equipment is possible before the project starts.
- The earliest date it can be started is **the proposal submission date**.
- However, the costs incurred from the procurement process until the project starts are **not** considered eligible.
- Please note that the beneficiary bears the risks for whether the proposed full-cost equipment would be accepted or not during Grant Agreement Preparation.