

Women TechEU

Frequently Asked Questions

1. APPLICATION

1.1 Who can apply for the Women TechEU?

Women TechEU targets early-stage deep tech start-ups founded, or co-founded, by women holding a top management position (CEO, CTO or equivalent) in the company at the time of submission. The company must be registered and established in an EU Member State or a Horizon Europe Associated Country for at least six months at the time of the submission.

1.2 What countries are associated to the Horizon Europe?

Association agreements are currently under negotiation with a number of third countries. Until these have been signed, the transitional arrangement set out in the General Annexes to the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022 is applicable with regard to the [following countries and legal entities established in these countries](#), with which association negotiations are being processed or where association is imminent.

Applicants established in Horizon 2020 associated countries or in other third countries negotiating association to Horizon Europe are treated as entities established in an associated country, provided that the Horizon Europe association agreement with the third country concerned applies at the time of the signature of the grant agreement.

1.3 My company is registered in the UK – can I apply for Women TechEU?

Yes. Until the UK's 'associated country' status enters into force, UK applicants are treated as if the UK were an associated country. However, grant agreements can only be signed once the association has formally entered into force. The same applies to all other associated countries currently negotiating the terms of their association.

In practice, this means that UK residents can apply for Women TechEU. However, the Commission cannot sign the grant agreement and issue the payment to a UK applicant until the process for the UK to become an associated country has been completed.

1.4 My company is not yet registered. Can I still apply for this call?

To apply, your company must have been officially registered and established at least six months before the submission deadline, so on or before 04 April 2022. You must meet all eligibility criteria, including the registration date of the company. No exceptions will be made.

1.5 What do you mean by a start-up?

Under Horizon Europe, a 'start-up' should be understood as an SME in the early stage of its life cycle, including those that are created as spin-offs from university research activities, which aims to find innovative solutions and scalable business models, and which is autonomous within the meaning of Article 3 of the Annex to Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC(9).

1.6 What do you mean by an early-stage start-up?

Early-stage refers to the phase of start-up development generally preceding the rapid growth phase. On an indicative basis, for the purpose of the Women TechEU topic, we would consider - amongst others – the following criteria to define an early-stage start-up:

- start-ups that have been established and operating for not more than 6 years,
- start-ups that have raised limited funding (up to 1 million EUR),
- before reaching a high fidelity MVP (Minimum Viable Product).

Our definition of an 'early stage' start-up is indicative, which means that these criteria are not grounds for exclusion as such. The independent experts evaluating the proposal will consider several different factors when deciding whether the company qualifies as an 'early stage' company.

1.7 My company raised more than 1 million EUR. Am I eligible to apply for the Women TechEU?

Yes, you are eligible to apply regardless of the amount of funds raised. The amount of funds raised is not considered grounds for exclusion, however the independent evaluators will give priority to those they feel most stand to benefit from the support provided under the Women TechEU scheme

1.8 What is understood by CEO, CTO or equivalent?

For the purpose of this call, we accept female founders holding a CEO, CTO, CFO or COO positions.

1.9 Could you please define requirements for female founders or co-founders?

If you are legally recognised as the founder or co-founder of the company in a Member State or Associated Country, you are eligible to apply for Women TechEU.

You should be able to provide proof of your status as founder or co-founder. Please upload this as an annex with your application form.

1.10 Does the founder of the company have to currently hold a top management position in the company?

In order to apply to Women TechEU, the founder of the company must also currently hold a top management position (CEO, CTO, CFO or COO) within that same company.

1.11 We are two female co-founders and we both hold top management positions in the company – can we apply jointly?

There can be only one application per company, however, two or more women co-founders can apply together. For administrative reasons you must nominate one person to be the 'lead applicant', representing your company towards the Commission.

In the application form please describe both of you, please submit CVs of both of you (and preferably also the rest of the team) and please record the video together.

1.12 Is it necessary to hold a majority or significant equity participation as a female co-founder?

Owning company's shares is not an eligibility condition. In practice, however, we expect most founders and co-founders to own shares of their company. Independent experts will assess the overall distribution of shares, with a particular focus on the position held by women in the start-up.

1.13 What is your definition of a woman?

Women TechEU supports women in all their diversity. The word 'woman' equates to a cis woman, or a transgender woman who is legally defined as a woman.

1.14 How do you define deep-tech?

Deep tech is technology that is based on cutting-edge scientific advances and discoveries and is characterised by the need to stay at the technological forefront by constant interaction with new ideas and results from the lab. Deep tech is distinct from 'high tech' which tends to refer only to Research & Development intensity.

Sectors, which are most fertile for deep-tech applications are life-science, computing, food and agri-tech, aerospace, energy and clean-tech, industrial technologies, telecom, new materials, chemistry. However deep-tech also includes, among other things, artificial intelligence, deep learning and machine learning.

We welcome applications from all deep tech fields of activity.

1.15 What are the minimum requirements concerning TRL levels in this program? What TRL level should be completed at the time of submitting the proposal?

Women TechEU does not require the minimum TRL to apply for this call.

However, this call is targeting early-stage start-ups, which are in their formative stage, therefore by definition we target rather lower TRL innovations.

1.16 Which documents should I provide to prove I am the founder or co-founder of the company?

We accept the company registration act, extracts from the national chambers of commerce, a capitalisation table.

1.17 Which other documents must I submit?

You must submit the CV of the woman founder, Corporate and financial information table, an executive summary of your company's business plan, as well as proof that you founded or co-founded the company and a proof of registration of the company (with the date shown).

In addition, we strongly encourage the applicants to submit also the CVs of the core team members. While the evaluators will focus primarily on the woman founder, they will also assess the ability of the team to manage the project.

1.18 There is a mandatory annex called "Documents supporting eligibility" to upload before submitting a Women TechEU proposal on the F&T portal. What documents should I upload in this section?

Under the annex "Documents supporting eligibility" you should upload proof that 1) you founded or co-founded the company, as well as 2) proof of registration of the company (with the date shown). Submitting this document (or these documents) is compulsory, and should be submitted together with the completed application form.

1.19 What information should be included in the summary business plan? What are the expected sections?

Please note that in the 'Executive summary of the business plan template' we included some questions, which might help you to draft this annex. In particular, we advise to describe:

- Your business,
- Your product (what is the current stage of development of your innovation/business? Do you have an MVP?),
- Market/competitive analysis,
- Market size (please explain how you reached this estimate),
- Customers analysis (please describe whether you have any proven interest from the market, customers or letters of intent),
- Sales strategy,
- Financial projections.

Please note that this list is a non-exhaustive and you can address any other business-related topic.

1.20 In the application form there is a table for a work package – could you please clarify whether we should include only one work package or whether we can add more work packages?

Yes, there should be only one work package; however, this work package can include several activities. Please specify which activities/tasks you are planning on implementing with this grant. All the guidelines are included in the proposal template that you can access through the [Funding & tenders Portal](#).

1.21 Should we fill in and upload the lump sum table foreseen on the F&T Portal?

The lump sum budget table does not concern the HORIZON-EIE-2022-SCALEUP-02Women TechEU call.

Women TechEU does not use lump sum, but financing not linked to costs. Thus, this call does not require a detailed cost estimation. For each call/topic, applicants should only refer to the templates available in the submission system.

1.22 Must the video be professionally made?

No, we are not expecting high-resolution videos. These can be recorded on any device, even a phone camera. We simply want to find out more about you and your company.

1.23 In the application form, you mention questions to be addressed in the video. Should we answer all these questions in a total of three minutes?

The list of questions provided is a non-exhaustive list to help structure your pitch, but it is not mandatory to answer all of them comprehensively. The video should be a short teaser pitch, to introduce yourself and tell us why you are applying. You can develop your answers in the written part of the application.

Note: The video pitch cannot exceed three minutes. This is a strict condition to apply.

1.24 Where should I upload the video pitch?

Firstly, you should upload the video on a file-sharing platform or website, e.g., YouTube, Google Drive, Dropbox, etc. Secondly, include the link on the second page of the application form (part B of the proposal), i.e., paste your link in the indicated box.

1.25 Can I change the layout of Part B?

You should not change the template layout – every applicant should have equal chances and equal number of pages to present their project and company. Please use the indicated template space.

1.26 What language may I submit my application in?

Whilst the preferred language is English, you may submit your written application in any official EU language. The video message must be recorded in English.

1.27 I obtained previously an EU grant. Can I apply for the Women TechEU?

If you have previously benefitted from the EU funding, you can apply for Women TechEU. However, the application and any ensuing grant can cover only activities that are not / have not been funded by other EU grants.

1.28 I'm planning to apply / I applied for another EU funding. Can I still apply for the Women TechEU?

You can apply in parallel to various EU calls by submitting similar proposals. However, if you are selected for funding by more than one EU scheme/EU programme for the same or similar proposals, then at the moment of the grant agreement preparation, you will have to choose one of the funding schemes to move forward with.

If proposals submitted under various EU funding schemes are sufficiently different, then the various proposals may be selected and move forward under the separate funding streams (subject to the specific eligibility conditions under each call).

Please indicate clearly in the 'double funding' table (first page of the application form), whether you applied to another EU scheme/EU programme.

1.29 Could you comment whether our project / company is eligible for the Women TechEU call?

To ensure fair and equal treatment of all the applicants, we have to remain impartial. Therefore, we are not allowed to give any comments or guidance on your application/idea, nor to give individual assessments or piece of advice to potential applicants. Evaluation of all proposals will be done by independent evaluators.

2. EVALUATION

2.1 Who will assess my application?

Your application will be assessed by a group of external and independent evaluators with an entrepreneurial, investment or innovation background.

2.2 Which are the evaluation criteria?

There are three evaluation criteria: Excellence, Impact and Implementation. Each criterion comprises several sub-questions, which mirror the application form.

In the criterion Excellence, experts will assess:

- alignment of the application with the call;
- degree of deep-tech innovation (i.e., going beyond the state-of-the-art, chances to succeed, its feasibility);
- current traction/implementation/achievements of the project.

In the criterion Impact, experts will assess:

- the quality of the future implementation plan;
- business plan (i.e., whether it is realistic and convincing, whether the applicant demonstrated market need and willingness to pay, as well as commercialisation plan and market entry plan);
- the growth potential of the proposed innovation/solution in terms of turnover, profit and jobs, as well as its broader economic impact;
- How critical is this grant for the company, whether it will make a difference and add value to the company.
- IPR aspects.

In the criterion Implementation, experts will assess:

- relevance of the female (co-)founder role in the company (i.e., whether the woman (co-)founder has a leading role in the company, whether she is the decision-maker, whether she has a management capacity and whether she can bring the company to the next level);
- an overall gender balance and the position held by women in the start-up;
- team's skills, motivation, and commitment to execute the project;
- quality and efficiency of the work plan (i.e., whether the proposed work package and activities are sound and well explained, as well as whether these the activities are most needed at this stage).

2.3 When will I receive the results of my application?

The results of the Women TechEU call will be communicated in Q1 2023.

3. PROGRAMME

3.1 Which activities can we fund with the EU grant of EUR 75 000?

You are free to decide and indicate which activities needed to grow-up your business you see as the most appropriate for the development and sustainability of your company, taking into account your particular needs and requirements. You can spend this grant on business model upgrade, update and consolidation of business plan and growth strategy, business model validation, update of financial plan, certifications, IP strategy and freedom to operate, commercial plan, market analysis, customer validation and technical/clinical assessment, finding partners and investors, etc. Independent expert will assess whether the proposed activities are well-justified and most needed for your company's growth and development.

3.2 Are the grants awarded to the woman-founder or to the company?

Grants will be awarded to the companies.

3.3 What type of support will I receive through the Women Leadership Programme (WLP)?

The Women Leadership Programme (WLP) provided by the EIC Business Acceleration Services will offer a catalogue of profile-based and tailored training sessions for participants to select from and to learn, for example, how to set-up and grow a business, scout and negotiate with partners, pitch in front of investors etc. The skills will be further developed during the exchanges with personal mentors and coaches. Each participant will have the opportunity to work with mentors – experienced entrepreneurs, innovators, investors and senior managers who will share their extensive managerial experience and provide access to their diverse professional networks.

3.4 What will I gain during the mentorship and coaching programme?

Mentoring and coaching provided under the Women Leadership Programme (WLP) will give you the necessary tools to solve specific challenges you are currently facing. Mentors will help participants define their career path, overcome the existing challenges and set the next steps. Each participant will also work with a business coach, who will help improve your business plan, implementation strategies and the market entry. The WLP also includes dedicated networking and pitching events, as well as the possibility to participate in dedicated activities organised by InvestEU and the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN).

3.5 Is there a minimum and maximum duration for a "Women TechEU" project?

There is no minimum or maximum duration; however, we expect that projects should last between 6 and 12 months. This period should cover activities funded by the grant, as well as mentoring and coaching in the framework of the Women Leadership Programme.

3.6 Will this programme exist next year/in the future?

Considering the success of this call, Women TechEU will be most likely next year. While it may be renewed in the future, we are not yet in a position to confirm this.

3.7 Does the De Minimis rule apply for Women TechEU?

In the case of the EU contribution funded under Women TechEU, the De Minimis rule does not apply. Union funding, i.e., centrally managed by the institutions, agencies, joint undertakings, or other bodies of the Union that is not directly or indirectly under the control of Member States, does not constitute State aid. It should not be considered in determining whether the relevant ceiling is complied with.