

Bilateral Call between Austria and the Chinese Academy of Sciences

Research & Development Projects in the field of Energy
Technology

Call Guideline 12th call

Cooperative R&D Projects between Austria, FFG and China, CAS

Deadline for submission to FFG via eCall and to CAS:

FFG: September 8, 2026; 12:00 (noon) Central European Summer Time
(C.E.S.T.)

CAS: September 8, 2026; 18:00 China Standard Time (C.S.T.)

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0 Key Facts at a Glance

The present Call Guidelines provide information about the international call organised by **Austria and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, CAS, China**. The call promotes the bilateral collaboration in application-oriented research and development projects. A total of **EUR 1.000.000** in funding is available for Austrian partners. The call is carried out jointly by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

Table 1: Overview

Organisation	FFG, Research Promotion Agency	CAS, Chinese Academy of Sciences
Instrument	Cooperative R&D project	Cooperative R&D project
Research category	Industrial research	Basic research, industrial research, experimental development
Topic	Energy Technologies	Energy Technologies
Funding amount	min. EUR 100.000 to max. EUR 330.000	CNY 300.000 p.a. (approx. EUR 38.000 per year). Total: max. CNY 900.000 for 3 years
Funding rate	max. 85%	approx. 50% (see Call Fiche)
Duration	max. 36 months	max. 36 months
Cooperation required	Yes, is required, see present guidelines	Yes
Total budget	EUR 1.000.000	open
Funding provider	Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and Infrastructure (BMIMI)	Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)
Submission deadlines transnational	Joint Proposal via FFG eCall: September 8, 2026; 12:00 C.E.S.T. (noon)	Joint Proposal via CAS: September 8, 2026; 18:00 C.S.T
Submission deadlines national	Austrian Annex and Cost Plan via FFG eCall: September 8, 2026; 12:00 C.E.S.T. (noon)	CAS additional documents: September 8, 2026; 18:00 C.S.T
Language	FFG eCall Joint Proposal: English FFG eCall Austrian Annex: English or German	CAS Joint Proposal: English CAS national proposal: Chinese
Contact	DI Manuel Binder T: +43 (0)57755-5041 E: manuel.binder@ffg.at	Ning Liu T: +86-10-68597582 E: nliu@cashq.ac.cn
Information on the Web	http://www.ffg.at/key-enabling-technologies-china2026/	http://www.bic.cas.cn/tzgg/

Diversity in Team Composition

Diverse teams can be more innovative and productive due to their diversity and diverse perspectives. A team composition that takes gender and diversity dimensions into account can ensure a higher quality of their project and the resulting research results, products and services. The effects of the project results on people are thus taken into account, e.g. by considering different needs in the use or manufacture of products. Different perspectives, experiences, world views and skills can contribute to the development of convincing solutions for society and the economy.

The FFG supports you in this with funding! Information can be found on this [website](#).

The present Call Guidelines apply to the Austrian partners. They summarise information about the bilateral call on the research topic “Energy Technologies” and refer to the related call documents (in particular Technical Guidelines, application forms, Cost Guideline).

The call documents are available on the [website](#).

The full set of application documents must be submitted via FFG [eCall](#) until submission deadline.

Please note:

If the application does not meet the formal requirements for project submission in accordance with the conditions and criteria of the respective funding instrument and if the deficiencies cannot be corrected the application will be excluded from the further procedure and will be formally rejected without exception in accordance with the principle of equal treatment of applications.

1 Motivation

The projects under this call for proposals are intended to provide a decisive stimulus for the ecological transformation of the economy and the development of energy innovations, particularly with regard to climate and environmental protection. Through the bilateral call for proposals in cooperation with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), the aim is to connect with China's innovation and knowledge systems, facilitate market access for companies, and strengthen Chinese cooperation in the field of energy technologies.

The Call 2026 will focus on the bilateral collaboration between Austria and China with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, CAS, in application-oriented research. The strategic aim of 'strengthening European and international collaborations and networks' will be addressed in particular. The call topic is designed to leverage common fields of expertise of Austria and the Chinese Academy of Sciences in China.

1.1 Strategic objectives

The following **strategic objectives** are essential for this call:

- Foster and support outstanding researchers and R&D&I institutions.
- Develop technology and stakeholder ecosystems for the digital and green transformation.
- In particular, improve Austrian stakeholders' access to international R&D&I collaborations and global target markets (increase exports).
- Increase expertise in dealing with and utilizing internationally available technology ecosystems.
- Identify global trends and developments in a timely manner.
- Contribute to building and ensuring the availability of experts and workforce in relevant and emerging fields.
- Strengthen international networking

1.2 Operative objectives

The following **operative objectives** are essential for the **specific call topic**– at least one of these must be addressed in the national application.

- **Objective 1:** Development of energy technologies with high potential for the Austrian industry and for the integration into international value chains.
- **Objective 2:** Strengthening the visibility of Austrian energy technologies in the European and international environment and facilitating participation in international networks.

1.3 Sustainability

Future-oriented research and development seeks to achieve the current global, european, national and regional goals that are designed to put us on a path to a sustainable future. The integration of sustainability aspects in research and development projects generates new knowledge, which is essential for supporting ecological, social and economic transformation processes. Responsible research funding therefore supports social adaptation, learning and decision-making processes that are of relevance for industry and science and promote their sustainable development.

This call requires applicants to address the key sustainability goals to which the proposed project makes a concrete positive contribution. The planned sustainability effects must be described in the application and taken into account in the research design.

What are the underlying sustainability initiatives and measures?

The call refers to the global Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (SDGs. This is supplemented by additional national goals specified in the Government Programme 2025, including climate neutrality, efficient use of resources and implementation of a clean circular economy.

More detailed information can be found in the Annex.

Please note: Applicants should cite only those sustainability goals and aspects to which the project makes a substantial contribution and which are relevant for the content, implementation and exploitation of the project. Citing a large number of sustainability goals will not necessarily lead to a better assessment of the project.

2 Call Topic

The project must have its key focus on the call topic listed below:

- **Energy Technology**

In this topic Cooperative R&D Projects are expected for example in the areas of storage technologies, smart and flexible energy systems, hydrogen technologies, CCUS solutions, the utilization of biogenic residues and CO₂ and exhaust gas streams, as well as solutions to increase the climate resilience of energy infrastructures and energy systems.

Cooperative R&D Projects in other fields of energy technologies may also be funded, if they meet the objectives of the call for proposals.

3 Requirements

3.1 General requirements for the Chinese-Austrian consortium

The requirements and procedures described in the 'Call Fiche' apply to the consortium. The following criteria must be met:

- The consortium shall consist of at least one Institute from CAS Chinese Academy of Sciences and at least one Austrian partner.
- The consortium shall include at least one Austrian industrial partner.
- **Individual enterprises** account for a maximum of 70% of the eligible project costs with shares of affiliated companies counting as one enterprise.
- **Companies share** is a minimum of 20% and a maximum of 90%.
- The **research institution(s) bear(s) at least 10% and a maximum of 80% of the costs** (relates to the total share of Austrian research institutions and CAS research groups). This applies to the entire bilateral consortium in deviation from the Austrian Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D Projects at a Transnational Level. Therefore, as a matter of fact, Chapter 2.2 in the Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D Projects is not valid for this call.
- The research institution(s) shall be entitled to publish the **results of the research** carried out by the respective institution(s).
- All Austrian and Chinese partners involved in the project have to conclude a Consortium Agreement on a fair basis on principles such as research security, scientific integrity, academic freedom, ethical principles, confidentiality, protection of IPR (intellectual property rights) and data protection. Specifically the following must be included:
 - The applicant must ensure that the submitted bilateral project is not aimed at developing weapons or violence-promoting products.
 - The applicant must ensure that the bilateral projects submitted are not aimed at gambling of any kind (i.e. games in which the outcome is determined exclusively or predominantly by chance).
 - The applicant must ensure that the bilateral project submitted respects the guiding principles mentioned in the call fiche and is in accordance with the Horizon Europe Ethics Guidelines. It must be ensured that the consortium is aware of the control regulations ("Exportkontrolle") and is aware of the legal and criminal consequences of non-compliance. The payment of funding depends on compliance with these requirements.

- This Consortium Agreement, signed by all partners, has to be provided to FFG before the respective national funding contract is signed.
- Any other commercial and/or export restrictions currently in place must be observed, including provisions concerning the export of dual-use technology.
- The consortium shall avoid any form of discrimination (age, gender, religion, physical features etc.) in accordance with national laws.
- The applicant must guarantee the protection of intellectual property rights.
- The Joint Proposal must be submitted via **FFG** by **September 8, 2026; 12:00 (noon) C.E.S.T. Central European Summer Time** at the latest.
- The Joint Proposal must be submitted to CAS Chinese Academy of Sciences by **September 8, 2026; 18:00 C.S.T. China Standard Time** at the latest.
- The **Joint Proposal** submitted to FFG and CAS Chinese Academy of Sciences **must be identical**. In the event of deviations, FFG reserves the right to reject the proposal for formal reasons.

3.2 National requirements

Bilateral cooperative research and development projects between Austria and China falling into **the research category 'Industrial Research' may only be submitted under this call**.

The following requirements shall apply to submissions by Austrian participants to FFG" **in addition to** the general requirements specified in Chapter 3.1 above:

- the provisions of the **Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D Projects at Transnational Level**
- In addition to the Joint Proposal the **Austrian national Annex** must be uploaded via eCall. **The application documents must be submitted via eCall** by **September 8, 2026; 12:00 (noon) C.E.S.T.** at the latest.

The following provisions apply in deviation from the Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D Projects at Transnational Level:

- The amount of funding requested by the Austrian partners must be between **EUR 100.000 and EUR 330.000**.
- The following requirements shall apply to the entire Austrian-Chinese consortium instead of the requirements specified in Chapter 2.2 of the Technical Guidelines:
 - the research institution(s) bear(s) at least 10% and a maximum of 80% of the costs. All costs, including all planned personnel costs for CAS, are the basis for the calculation of the cooperation criterion. Please be aware that also in-kind contributions for personal cost must be mentioned in the application.
 - Companies share is a minimum of 20% and a maximum of 90%
 - the research institution(s) shall be entitled to **publish the results of the research** carried out by the respective institution(s)
 - A Consortium Agreement signed by all partners must be forwarded to FFG via eCall prior to the preparation of the national funding agreement.
- The requirements specified in Chapter 2.2 of the Technical Guidelines shall be replaced by the requirement that at least **one Austrian company** must participate in the Austrian-Chinese consortium.
- The Chinese applicant and partners must be from one or more CAS research groups.
- **Companies are eligible to apply if they have a permanent establishment or branch** (according to Council Directive 2011/96/EU of 30 November 2011, in conjunction with Art. 11 (5) a GBER, No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014) in Austria **at the time of submission of the application and payment of funding**.
 - Art. 2 (b): ‘Permanent establishment’ means a fixed place of business situated in a Member State through which the business of a company of another Member State is wholly or partly carried on in so far as the profits of that place of business are subject to tax in the Member State in which it is situated by virtue of the relevant bilateral tax treaty or, in the absence of such a treaty, by virtue of national law;
 - Art. 3 (1) Definition of parent company and subsidiary
- Companies from Austria are eligible to apply if their main focus is on research and the exploitation of results in Austria. Subsidiaries based in China may act as sub-contractors in the consortium, if required.
- The EUR-CNY conversion rate of the European Central Bank ECB at the date of submission shall apply. This can either be the reference date specified in the Joint Proposal or the conversion rate provided by the ECB on a monthly basis. The rate must be specified in the

Joint Proposal. The conversion rate shall apply for the duration of the project and for all reports related thereto.

- The participation and financing of additional international partners in the consortium shall be excluded in this 12th bilateral call in deviation from the provisions of the Technical Guidelines.

Austrian partners and institutes of CAS may cover their costs by own funds and/or grants provided by Austria or China. Partners from other countries shall be excluded from participating in the consortium. Organisations from outside Austria or China may be involved as sub-contractors of Austrian partners.

FFG will check whether the Austrian project part is properly allocated to the research category of 'Industrial Research' based on the Joint Proposal. This could result in the project being rejected. BMIMI will take the funding decision for the Austrian project partners. CAS shall be responsible for the funding decision for the Chinese partners.

3.3 Research Security

Safeguarding Research has gained increasing relevance and importance in recent years. In this context, research security is understood according to the definition from the European Recommendation on Enhancing Research Security. This means to implement within proposals research security relevant measures to prevent potential risks that range from unintentional/unwanted knowledge- and technology transfer, restrictions on academic freedom and research integrity, to misuse and violations of ethical principles or integrity.

Increased consideration of research security measures and principles of research ethics and integrity are an important concern of BMIMI and FFG in bilateral RTDI cooperations. Funding applicants are obliged to pay necessary attention to the areas of research security and foreign interference as well as ethical aspects of research cooperation when applying for this call.

Even before entering into a research cooperation with an international partner or partner institution, awareness of certain security aspects, threats and risks of such cooperation should exist within the participating organizations.

Concerning foreign interference, the threats and risks of bilateral cooperation could be diverse and range from unintentional/unwanted knowledge and technology transfer, espionage, dual-use, foreign propaganda and disinformation, to violations of ethics and integrity, such as discrimination in any way, threats to personal safety, the reputation of the individual or the institution, human rights violations and reprisals against researchers.

The following resources can serve as useful for applicants concerning research security:

- [COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on enhancing research security](#)
- [Toolkit to help mitigate foreign interference in research and innovation](#)
- [Risk Appraisal](#)

3.4 Intellectual property services

Austrian Technology Providers can get support to identify, protect and exploit their intellectual property.

The Austrian national contact point for intellectual property in open knowledge transfer (in brief: NCP-IP) was arranged by decision of federal government on 02 March 2010 on the basis of the EU IP-Recommendation in BMBWF together with the BMAW and with the BMK. The contact point coordinates knowledge transfer activities at a national level, maintains contact with other comparable facilities in the Member States and represents Austria within the corresponding European bodies.

In the operative implementation, the NCP is supported by the professional expertise of the Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH (aws) and the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG). The support includes (free of charge) sample contracts ([Intellectual Property Agreement Guide](#)) from the NCP-IP as well as [consulting packages from aws \(especially for “green SME”\)](#).

4 Call Documents

4.1 Joint call documents Austria – CAS Chinese Academy of Sciences

Table 2: Joint transnational call documents

Joint transnational call documents	Documents in detail
Call Fiche	Call Fiche Joint call guidelines FFG and CAS
Application form	Joint Proposal Joint project description Austria – CAS
Download	www.ffg.at/key-enabling-technologies-china2026/

4.2 National call documents for Austrian Partners

The following Austrian national call documents shall apply in addition to the joint call documents:

Table 3: Additional documents for Austrian participants

Additional documents for Austrian participants	Documents in detail
Call Guideline (present document)	Call Guideline Bilateral Call between Austria and the Chinese Academy of Sciences
Application forms: for transnational cooperative R&D projects Industrial Research	GUIDELINES FOR COOPERATIVE R&D PROJECTS – TRANSNATIONAL CALLS (Version 4.2.) Project Description - Austrian Annex Declaration of SME Status (if required) ¹
General cost regulations	<u>COST GUIDELINE VERSION 3.2 (eligibility of costs in FFG projects)</u>
Legal basis	FFG-Technologie-Richtlinie 2024-2026 (Richtlinie für die Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH zur Förderung digitaler wie industrieller Schlüssel- und Raumfahrttechnologien und -innovationen)
Download	www.ffg.at/key-enabling-technologies-china2026/

National applications must be submitted electronically **via eCall**. The **Joint Proposal, the Austrian Annex** and all other relevant documents must be uploaded via eCall as part of the electronic application.

Applicants are requested must use the specific templates provided for the submission of their projects. The funding conditions, application procedure and funding criteria are described in the corresponding Technical Guidelines and in the transnational call documents.

The call documents are available on the [webpage](#).

The cost plan has to be filled in via the eCall. It must show the project costs broken down to **work package level**. This also applies to accounts rendered as part of the reporting process.

¹ If there is no information available in the Austrian Business Compass (e.g. for associations and start-ups), a Declaration of SME Status must be provided upon submission of the proposal. In the template provided by the FFG, applicants must (as far as possible) categorise their business for the last three years according to the SME definition.

More detailed information on the call and the relevant call documents can be found at:

- **National website**
- **eCall submission**
- **National contact at FFG:**
DI Manuel Binder MSc, E: manuel.binder@ffg.at
T: +43 (0)57755-5041
Programme manager

4.3 National call documents for CAS Chinese Academy of Sciences

For the Chinese partners, further national call documents of CAS shall apply in addition to the joint call documents.

The Chinese partners will find more detailed information on the call and the relevant call documents at:

- **National website of CAS**
- **National contact at CAS:**
Mr. Ning Liu, Bureau of International Cooperation
E: nliu@cashq.ac.cn | +86-10-68597582

5 Legal Basis

The final funding decision is made by the Management Board of FFG on the basis of the funding recommendations of the evaluation panel.

FFG-Technologie-Richtlinie 2024-2026

(Richtlinie für die Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH zur Förderung digitaler wie industrieller Schlüssel- und Raumfahrttechnologien und -innovationen)

For a definition of SME – small and medium sized enterprises – see the applicable SME definition under EU competition law. Further information is available [here](#).

All EU regulations are to be applied as amended.

6 Additional Information

This section contains information about additional funding options and services which you may find useful in connection with funding applications or funded projects.

6.1 FFG Project Database

The public access **FFG Project Database** (provides the opportunity to publish brief information about funded projects and an overview of the project partners involved. This enables you to present your project and your project partners to the interested public. The database can also be used to search for cooperation partners.

Once funding is granted, the applicants are informed via eCall that they can publish brief defined information about their project in the FFG Project Database. The information will only be published if active consent is given in the eCall system.

For more information see the [FAQs to the Project Database](#).

6.2 Open4Innovation

The [open4innovation](#) platform offers an additional knowledge base for companies and researchers (community support, detailed information, success stories, etc.).

6.3 Handling project data – data management plan

A data management plan (DMP) is a tool that supports the efficient and systematic management of all data generated throughout the duration of a project.

DMPs can be created, e.g., using the free tool [DMP Online](#). The "[Guidelines on FAIR Data Management](#)" of the European Commission also provide assistance in this respect.

A data management plan describes

- which data are collected, processed or generated within a project
- how these data are handled within the project
- what methods and standards are applied
- how the data are stored and updated over the long term and
- whether it is planned to make datasets available to third parties for reuse (i.e., open access to research data)

In the event of publication, the data should be "findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable". Storing data in established and internationally recognised repositories (see the [re3data website](#)) is recommended to ensure broad access.

7 Further Funding Options

FFG offers a broad range of funding options and support for the participation in international programmes. For further information please contact the [FFG Funding Service](#).

8 Annex: Sustainability

Responsible and future-oriented research and development seeks to achieve the current global, european, national and regional goals that are designed to put us on a path to a sustainable future. The transformation processes in industry and science are expected to make a major contribution to climate neutrality, a more efficient use of resources and a clean circular economy. Research funding must therefore be in line with the objectives of the two underlying initiatives, i.e. the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (SDGs) and the eight elements of the EU Green Deal.

General information

The Austrian Federal Government has made the fight against climate change one of its top priorities in its [Government Programme 2025](#).

This national goal is based on the [2030 Agenda](#) adopted by the United Nations in 2015. It contains a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) which UN member states, including Austria, have pledged to achieve.

The specific sub-goals of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) which are of relevance for Austria and can be practically implemented at the national level can be found on the website of the [Federal Chancellery](#).

In 2019 the European Commission published the [EU Green Deal](#), a strategy comprising eight elements with the aim to make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050.

The topic of sustainability was therefore integrated into the assessment criteria of the present funding instrument. Both funding applicants and funding recipients are required to describe and report on how their project contributes to achieving the ecological, social and economic sustainability goals and how sustainability aspects are taken into account in project planning, implementation and exploitation.

This general information is also available on the [FFG website](#).

Please note that sustainability will be considered with a focus on the ecological, social and economic effects of the project.