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Bundesministerium
Innovation, Mobilität
und Infrastruktur

THIS ENGLISH LANGUAGE CALL GUIDELINE SERVES AS AN ADDITIONAL SERVICE FOR FUNDING RECIPIENTS. THE REGULATIONS IN THE GERMAN VERSION OF THE GUIDELINE ARE LEGALLY BINDING.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 1 JULY 2025 OR 7 OCTOBER 2025 (DEPENDING ON INSTRUMENT)
VIENNA, MAY 2025

AI ECOSYSTEMS 2025
AI FOR TECH & AI FOR GREEN

CALL GUIDELINE

VERSION 1.0

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1 KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE

A total funding of EUR 6.48 million is available under the Call "**AI Ecosystems 2025: AI for Tech & AI for Green"** (excluding Industrial PhD).

Table 1: Overview of funding instruments available

Funding / Financing instrument	Short description	Maximum funding / financing (€)	Funding rate	Duration (months)	Cooperation required
Cooperative R&D Project [Hybrid AI]	Cooperative Research and Development Projects are carried out by several consortium partners working together on a joint project with defined R&D goals.	min. 100,000 to max. 1 million	max. 85 %	max. 36	yes
Flagship Project [AI for Green]	Flagship Projects are large collaborative research and development projects which involve several consortium partners and have a substantial impact on one or several economic sectors.	min. 2 million to max. 2.2 million	max. 85 %	min. 24 to max. 48	yes
Mobilisation and Networking Measures	Mobilisation and Networking Measures support the exchange of knowledge and experiences in the relevant innovation system and contribute to increasing the visibility of the Austrian community, both nationally and internationally.	100,000	max. 85 %	24	no

Funding / Financing instrument	Short description	Maximum funding / financing (€)	Funding rate	Duration (months)	Cooperation required
R&D Service	R&D Services are defined as the provision of services specified in the call in a specified period of time. The service is provided in the form of R&D activities. The service is in the public interest and both the client and the contractor are granted a right to exploit the services. In general, services are considered as R&D Services when they are aimed at obtaining new findings, irrespective of whether they involve basic research, industrial research or experimental development.	90,000 (incl. VAT)	Financing up to 100%	6	no
Industrial PhD[1]	An Industrial PhD project is carried out in cooperation between the doctoral candidate, a company or non-university research institution and a university.	max. 110,000	max. 50 %	min. 24 to max. 36	no

[1] The Industrial PhD 2025 Call supports researchers working on research questions in science and engineering or current topics of applied research relating to the 'triple transition'. Please note that there is a separate Call Guideline for these topics: https://www.ffg.at/ausschreibung/industrienahe-dissertationen-2025

Table 2: Budget – Deadlines – Contact

Further information	Details
Total budget	EUR 6.48 million
Submission deadlines	**Please note: there are two different submission deadlines!** R&D Services and AI Networking Platform 01/07/2025 (12:00 noon) Hybrid AI (Cooperative R&D Projects) and AI for Green (Flagship Project) 07/10/2025 (12:00 noon)
Language	**English**
Contacts for questions regarding content	*Cooperative R&D Projects* Markus Proske, T 057755-5023, E markus.proske@ffg.at Julia Neuschmid, T 057755-5143, E julia.neuschmid@ffg.at Jeremias Püls, T 057755-5148, E jeremias.puels@ffg.at *Flagship Project* Jeremias Püls, T 057755-5148, E jeremias.puels@ffg.at Julia Neuschmid, T 057755-5143, E julia.neuschmid@ffg.at *R&D Services* Markus Proske, T 057755-5023, E markus.proske@ffg.at Jeremias Püls, T 057755-5148, E jeremias.puels@ffg.at *Mobilisation and Networking Measures* Julia Neuschmid, T 057755-5143, E julia.neuschmid@ffg.at
Contacts for questions regarding cost	Erwin Eckhart, T: 057755-6095; E: erwin.eckhart@ffg.at Alexander Glechner, T: 057755-6082; E: alexander.glechner@ffg.at
Matchmaking event	Register at https://www.ffg.at/ai-tech-green-2025
Online information	https://www.ffg.at/ai-tech-green-2025 or https://www.ffg.at/ausschreibung/industrienahe-dissertationen-2025
Submission portal	https://ecall.ffg.at

Diverse teams

Teams which are diverse in composition offer a range of perspectives, encouraging them to be more innovative and productive. A team which is diverse, in terms of gender and background, etc., can raise the quality of projects and consequently their research, products and services. The impacts of project outcomes on people are taken into account by considering the various demands of a product in its use or manufacture. Teams which include a variety of perspectives, experiences, worldviews and skills are key to developing effective solutions for society and the economy. The FFG offers support through funding. Information is available on the website: https://www.ffg.at/gleichstellung#Foerdermoeglichkeiten_Vielfalt

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

This Call addresses issues in the field of "Digital and Key Technologies". A technology campaign for applied research and technology development has been established as part of the RTI Strategy 2030. The aim is to strengthen the research and development of key technologies in the field of digitalisation, and in particular to support the development of new digital products and services.

Digital technologies, in particular artificial intelligence (AI), are key enablers of the digital and green transformation. The Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and Infrastructure (BMIMI) has launched this call to support research and development of digital technologies in the fields of AI for Tech and AI for Green.

The Call addresses the following objectives:

- **Technology sovereignty and open technology solutions**
  Digital and key technologies should be enhanced in order to develop and strengthen European value networks. The aim is to drive the development of cutting-edge technologies and expand existing areas of strength.

- **Achieving technology acceptance**
  The aim is to create acceptance for the application of digital and key technologies, and to encourage the establishment and further development of flexible and collaborative creative ecosystems. These should be designed to support collaboration between different actors and thus promote the development and use of digital and key technologies.

- **Competence and capacity building**
  A strong focus is on developing competencies and capacities, supporting young talent, and promoting diversity and gender equality in the field of digital and key technologies. This provides a multi-perspective view on the project and the resulting products.

- **Tackling societal challenges**
  Promoting digital and key technologies helps tackle societal challenges such as climate and demographic change, and strengthen democracy and social resilience. The focus here lies on the green and digital transformation of specific sectors/industries with a high potential for sustainable development.

- **Strengthening international networking**
  International networking, both within and beyond Europe, should be strengthened. The intention is to generate knowledge and facilitate know-how transfer, and to improve the access of Austrian RTI players to European and international markets.

The Call topics and instruments are designed to achieve different objectives. AI for Tech focuses on hybrid AI and cooperative R&D projects. After four successful years, this year for the first time AI for Green is inviting proposals for a flagship project that addresses the energy transition, circular economy, production technologies, and mobility transition. An AI networking platform and two R&D services on specific issues are also included in the Call.

Industrial PhDs[2] are offered as part of a separate Call and can be submitted for topics including AI and AI for Green.

3 CALL TOPICS

"AI system means a machine-based system that is designed to operate with varying levels of autonomy and that may exhibit adaptiveness after deployment, and that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments."

European Artificial Intelligence Act

In recent years, AI has become one of the most significant technologies of our time. It is being intensively examined in light of its potential range of applications and impact. Although AI methods have been used in research, industry and business for decades, the emergence and rapid dissemination of generative models has squarely positioned this technology within general social discourse. Its easy accessibility and availability have removed almost all limits to the creative applications to which AI can be put.

The current AI Ecosystems 2025 call is designed to exploit this potential and drive the research and application of AI algorithms. Proposals must prioritise one of the call topics listed in section 3.1, or associated research questions. The outcomes required for the R&D services are specified in section 3.2.

[2] https://www.ffg.at/ausschreibung/industrienahe-dissertationen-2025

Table 3: Indicative allocation of funding to individual call topics

Call topic	Maximum funding (€)
AI for Tech: Hybrid AI [Cooperative R&D Projects]	4 million
AI for Green [Flagship Project]	2.2 million
AI Networking Platform [Mobilisation and Networking Measures]	100,000 (incl. VAT)
Brain-Inspired Computing [R&D Service]	90,000 (incl. VAT)
Scientific Preparation of a Federal Large Language Model (LLM) for the Austrian Federal Ministries [R&D Service]	90,000 (incl. VAT)

3.1 Call topics

3.1.1 AI for Tech: Hybrid AI – symbolic and subsymbolic AI

Symbolic AI uses logical, rule-based systems to link facts and events, creating knowledge that can be read and processed by machines. This approach is important for creating semantic representations and improving decision-making processes, including through processes of symbolic machine learning. Subsymbolic (non-symbolic) AI primarily includes methods of subsymbolic machine learning, such as deep learning and neural networks, that identify complex patterns in large amounts of training data to derive statistically sound conclusions and decisions. Hybrid AI means the structured combination of methods of both symbolic and subsymbolic AI.

Possible advantages of hybrid approaches:

- Use of prior knowledge
- Use of causal knowledge in modelling
- AI systems easier to explain and understand
- AI systems more reliable and secure
- AI systems easier to verify
- Certification of AI systems

The focus of this call topic lies in research-intensive technology development within the framework of cooperative R&D projects involving the research, development and testing of platforms, tools and methods for AI systems that combine and exploit the advantages of both symbolic and subsymbolic AI.

In basic research, hybrid AI is addressed in the "Bilateral AI" research project which has been awarded a Cluster of Excellence (CoE) by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF). Hybrid AI is an independent call as part of AI Ecosystems that is designed to address applied research and cooperation with companies and has been launched for the second time in 2025.

The call includes systems for developing, continuously adapting, applying, and testing hybrid AI systems, and developing and researching methods to create hybrid AI systems which comply with the EU AI Act. A key consideration lies in creating human-centred AI systems designed to meet the needs and requirements of users.

Instrument:

- Cooperative Projects of Industrial Research or Experimental Development

3.1.2 AI for Green

Protecting the environment, climate and resources and preserving biodiversity are key sustainable development goals (SDGs). Far-reaching transformation in all areas of life will be necessary to safeguard a liveable world for generations to come. In this context, the Austrian Federal Government has set itself the goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2040. This demands climate and environmental protection measures as well as adapting to the consequences of climate change. AI research can support technology and politics in mitigating climate change as a means of protecting the environment.

Against this background, AI for Green will provide funding for an interdisciplinary R&D Flagship Project aimed at the development or further development of AI technologies that can be used in overcoming ecological challenges. This includes, in particular, projects that help to curb climate change, protect the climate and the environment, and preserve biodiversity, thus making a concrete contribution to achieving sustainable development in Austria in line with the SDGs. Developing new technologies and fostering expertise in these areas is designed to enhance the technological sovereignty of Europe.

Projects can either develop new or enhance existing AI components along the value chain (from data to application), validate and test them on a range of applications, and make them accessible for benchmarks. The focus should extend beyond data (collection, processing, coding, etc.) to consider the different methods used in the different phases of developing AI for Green applications. Retroactive impacts of benchmarks or comparisons of AI methods on science and research are welcomed.

The project must address at least three of the following four focus areas: energy transition; circular economy; production technologies; and mobility transition.

The project must develop or enhance technologies which help to reduce or eliminate the negative impacts of digitalisation. These include, in particular, technologies that significantly improve the energy efficiency of digital solutions, or new services that make these technologies more sustainable.

In general, this call topic is aimed at all scientific and technical sub-disciplines of AI. AI for Green specifically aims to fund projects which address the following two points equally:

- AI technologies are being developed or enhanced AND
- The use of AI technology makes a significant contribution to achieving the environment and climate goals, for example, through:
  - Climate protection
  - Adaptation to climate change
  - Sustainable use and consumption of water or marine resources
  - Transition to a circular economy
  - Pollution prevention or control
  - Protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems

The following **overarching requirements** must be considered:

- Synergy effects should be leveraged both within different AI technologies and across the application areas
- Solutions and new AI technologies should be made widely accessible and reusable (e.g. via an AI for Green online platform)
- Prototypes should be demonstrated on several applications or at several points along the value chain
- Applicants are encouraged to examine previous AI for Green projects (see FFG Project Database) and clearly demonstrate the novelty of their own approach

Projects submitted for funding must demonstrate the impact of AI in achieving the environmental and climate goals. An objective comparison can be conducted using the Austrian Climate Dashboard. In addition, the project must comply with the EU AI Act for trustworthy AI in its design and implementation, and ensure equality and diversity. The project should bring together interdisciplinary competencies from a variety of fields and contribute to the networking of AI and climate/environmental research communities.

A mandatory preliminary discussion must be held with the FFG before 28/08/2025. Please arrange appointments at least one week in advance.

All applications will be reviewed by international experts according to the criteria in the Guidelines for Flagship Projects. The applications awarded the highest total number of points will be invited to the hearing on 10 December 2025. The hearing will take place remotely via Zoom.

Instrument:

- Flagship Project

3.1.3 AI Networking Platform

The aim of this call topic is to mobilise and network Austria's AI (research) community by promoting mobilisation and networking activities in all sub-disciplines of AI. These activities should be implemented via a self-organised national networking platform which is broadly anchored in the innovation system and involves all relevant stakeholders.

The AI Networking Platform has the following objectives:

AI knowledge transfer and exchange between research, industry and government ministries, including:

- Identification and preparation of emerging topics, trends, and current issues in the field of AI
- Development and visualisation of action guides and coordinated positions on current issues in Austrian research policy and AI research trends
- Communication and information, e.g. via website and media
- Events for networking and technology transfer

Strengthening Austria's position and visibility in Europe and internationally, by:

- Integrating the perspectives of Austrian R&D stakeholders in AI at European and international level, for example via strategy input, position papers, and participation in relevant strategic initiatives run as part of European and international programmes
- Bringing together heterogeneous stakeholder groups and sectors at the international level
- Participating in international forums and competitions
- Enhancing contacts with networking platforms in other European countries

Support for education and training in AI

- Support activities targeted at mobilising young researchers and the next generation in general
- Initiatives in the field of education and training

The AI Networking Platform represents all Austrian R&D stakeholders working in industry and research. It enhances the self-organisational capacities of existing communities or – especially in the case of emerging topics – hybrid stakeholder groups and sectors (stakeholder management). Involving a broad, heterogeneous and representative range of stakeholders should allow the platform to ensure its activities are inclusive and do not follow the self-interests of individual organisations. The structure of the networking platform must guarantee that its activities are neutral in their orientation. For example, the platform can be organised as an association, allowing it to reflect the diverse interests within the AI community. Regardless of its organisational form, the networking platform should have a clear and comprehensible organisational structure. It can also be submitted as a consortium.

The objectives should be achieved by non-economic activities (see details on eligible activities in the Guidelines of the funding instrument).

The **eligible costs** are based primarily on the FFG Cost Guidelines and on the eligible activities according to the Guideline for Mobilisation and Networking Measures

(Section 2.1). The following call-specific costs that may be incurred for mobilisation and networking measures are eligible for funding under this Call:

- Costs of creating and operating a website as an information and/or exchange platform
- The costs of organising events for networking, mobilisation, or information transfer must be listed under material or third-party costs (e.g. rent for external venues, catering costs, technical equipment)
- The provision of prize money for competitions to mobilise young talent and researchers (pupils, students, scientists) should be listed under third-party costs

If applicable, attachments to the electronic application via eCall:

- For consortium members listed in the register of associations: Statutes, list of members
- For consortium members listed in the company register: Articles of Association
- For consortium members pursuing economic activities: statement on separate accounting

Instrument:

- Mobilisation and Networking Measures

3.2 R&D Services

3.2.1 R&D Service: Brain-Inspired Computing: Neuromorphic Computing

Current AI technologies are reaching their limits in certain areas, and some have negative effects, especially high levels of energy consumption. New approaches drawn from the field of brain-inspired computing could offer appropriate solutions, with neuromorphic computing considered a particularly promising area of research. This technology is highly (energy or computationally) efficient and opens new opportunities for both edge AI and large AI systems.

Other technologies and subfields also have potential. While hyperdimensional computing is still far from being a concrete application, it offers explainability and transparency benefits that could be crucial for certain use cases. The full potential of these technologies and other subfields cannot yet be determined. A detailed analysis of the Austrian ecosystem is also lacking: what areas of strength already exist, which stakeholders are active, and what measures could provide the ecosystem with targeted support?

The R&D Service is intended to provide answers to the following questions, and to offer recommendations:

- What potentials and application fields arise from brain-inspired computing, especially neuromorphic computing, as well as alternative approaches such as hyperdimensional computing?
- Which technologies and subfields are considered particularly promising with respect to future key technologies?

- What opportunities does neuromorphic computing (and possibly other subfields) offer Austria?
- How does neuromorphic computing influence Europe's technological sovereignty, and what contribution can Austria make here (include analysis of Austria's position within Europe)?
- What challenges arise as a consequence of the implementation and in the (applied) research – globally, at European level, and in Austria?
- What is the status of the Austrian ecosystem in this area (strengths, weaknesses, relevant stakeholders, degree of networking)? A map (especially of neuromorphic computing) should be provided.
- Recommended funding measures (especially within the BMIMI's sphere of action).

The R&D Service should be established in close coordination with the Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and Infrastructure (BMIMI) and include regular meetings. Active involvement of national (and, where applicable, international) experts is required. The R&D Service must include the following:

- International and national comparison
- Potential analysis of brain-inspired computing
- Analysis of the challenges involved in application and (applied) research
- Map of the Austrian ecosystem
- Recommended funding measures (for BMIMI – EU, funding programmes, events etc.)
- The following studies should be taken into account, among others:
  - WIFO: Key Enabling Technologies – Austria's Position and Potential
  - Technopolis study: Developing Criteria for the Definition and Selection of Key Enabling Technologies (in German)

Instrument: R&D Services

- max. project duration: 6 months
- max. project costs: EUR 90,000 (incl. VAT)

3.2.2 R&D Service: Scientific Preparation of a Federal Large Language Model (LLM) for the Austrian Federal Ministries

A variety of potential development scenarios for an LLM for the Austrian federal administration ("Federal language model") were discussed during a broad-based workshop. The event brought together representatives from almost all government ministries, as well as experts from science, administration and business. During this interdisciplinary meeting it became clear that the preferred option was to take the cooperative approach of developing an LLM model together with external partners.

At the same time, it became clear that a systematic process of clarification and preparation is needed to specify the model in more detail. Questions of governance, the organisational and technical framework conditions, as well as the resources needed were all identified as key challenges.

This is where the R&D Service comes in: rather than launching a concrete implementation project, the aim is to create the conditions which allow external processes to be prepared in an informed manner and initiated as necessary.

This R&D Service is designed to create a sustainable knowledge base that provides technical support to public authorities as they make decisions about a potential federal LLM. The service prepares the conceptual design of a potential AI application in the public sector, with a particular focus on the interaction with publicly available data.

The following issues in particular require clarification:

- What are the specific requirements of a federal LLM for Austria's government administration, particularly with respect to meeting data protection, security, ethical and ecological objectives?
- How can these requirements be integrated into a potential implementation strategy? What form of cooperation models with external partners might lead to a balanced solution between technological autonomy and cooperation? What governance models are suitable for operating a federal LLM? What models are available in other European countries?
- What special technical, infrastructural and financial conditions must be met when establishing and operating a comprehensive Austrian federal government LLM to ensure the model is sustainable over the long term? What support can existing initiatives (e.g. AI Factory) and the Austrian Federal Computing Center (BRZ) provide?
- What data could serve as a basis and what legal constraints must be considered? How could protected data (e.g. ELAK) be integrated for specific applications?
- What are the other potential uses for a federal LLM, and how could innovative applications by businesses give it a wider impact?

The R&D Service should be established in close coordination with the Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and Infrastructure (BMIMI) and include regular meetings. Active involvement of national (and, where applicable, international) experts, the AI Factory, the AI Policy Forum (an interministerial working group) and the Austrian Federal Computing Center (BRZ) is essential. Reference should be made to the AI Implementation Plan.

Instrument: R&D Services

- max. project duration: 6 months
- max. project costs: EUR 90,000 (incl. VAT)

3.2.3 Additional requirements for R&D services

Table 4: Additional requirements and provisions for R&D services

Additional requirement	Provision(s)
Documents required as evidence of authorisation and economic capacity – **Upload as an attachment to the eCall project data**	– Extract from the trade register (*Gewerberegister*) or certified copy of the professional register (*Berufsregister*) or the commercial register (*Handelsregister*) of the tenderer's country of origin, or documentary evidence typically issued by these registers, or, where no documentary evidence can be provided in the country of origin, a sworn declaration by the applicant, none of which should be more than 12 months old. Applicants who are resident in another country which is a contracting party to the EEA Agreement (Internal Market) or in Switzerland, and who are required to obtain official recognition of their professional qualifications in Austria in order to provide their services in Austria, must initiate proceedings to this effect as soon as possible, but in any event before the expiry of the tender period. The same applies to subcontractors to whom the tenderer wishes to subcontract services. The tenderer must always provide documentary evidence of their authorisation by submitting the corresponding trade licence together with their tender. The contracting authority reserves the right to examine the authorisation of any subcontractors on a case-by-case basis. – Current extract from the companies register (*Firmenbuchauszug*) (max. 6 months old) – The tenderer must also provide documentary evidence of total revenue and revenue development for the last three years or, for companies founded less than three years ago, the period since the company was founded.
Enquiries	– Enquiries (see section 2.2 of the Guidelines for R&D Services for details) may only be submitted by email to ikt@ffg.at, in German, and by 15 June 2025. The replies will be made available on the call webpage as a PDF by 20 June 2025 at the latest.
Meeting	– Dates – Short explanation, minutes, confidentiality

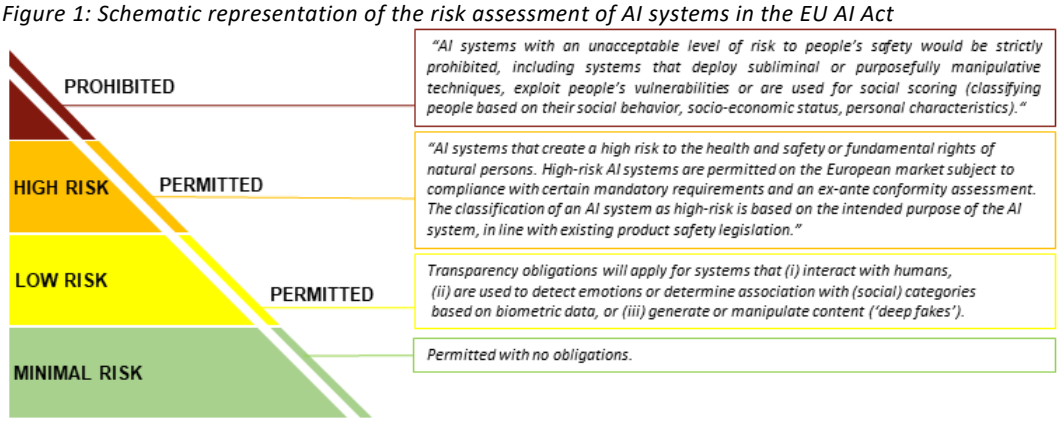
4 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COOPERATIVE R&D PROJECTS AND FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

In section 1.1 (“Motivation”) of the application, applicants are required to demonstrate that their project has been planned in accordance with the EU AI Act, technological sovereignty and resource efficiency, and taking into account equality and (where applicable) existing initiatives and projects.

4.1 European guidelines – the European Union's Artificial Intelligence Act (EU AI Act)

The European Union’s EU AI Act has created a technological, ethical and legal basis which allows people and enterprises not only to use artificial intelligence (AI) without danger, but also to benefit from the advantages it offers. AI development should be designed to uphold the functioning of the markets and the public sector and to protect fundamental human rights. With the gradual entry into force of the AI Act, general rules will apply to all AI systems made available within the European Union. In addition to transparency and reliability obligations, the AI Act defines four categories of AI systems (unacceptable risk, high risk, low risk, minimal risk) in accordance with their potential risk to democratic society and the safety of natural persons.

Figure 1: Schematic representation of the risk assessment of AI systems in the EU AI Act



See also the Guidelines on the responsible use of generative AI in research developed by the European Research Area Forum.

Projects submitted for funding must align with the principles of the EU AI Act and the ethical guidelines for realising trustworthy AI in the design and implementation of the projects.

4.2 Use of synergies

A large number of initiatives and projects already exist within the context of this call. Applicants are encouraged to build on existing knowledge and explore possible collaborations or synergies. Further information and data sources:

- FFG Project Database
- List of funded AI for Green projects
- FAIR-AI flagship project
- Innovation labs (act4energy, GRÜNSTATTGRAU, Digital findet Stadt, Renowave.at)
- ClimateLab

4.3 Technology sovereignty

Research and development in digital technologies must be set in the context of European technological sovereignty. Therefore, European developments must be considered and used where appropriate. By opening up new applications and application fields, technologies can help establish European technological sovereignty. Equally, external project dependencies must be listed in the risk analysis or the description of commercial exploitation. Examples of dependencies would include dependence on available data or components.

4.4 Gender dimension and diversity aspects

Depending on the project content, the human contribution to problem solving must also be considered as a purely technical approach would be insufficient. Therefore, where relevant, the project content must consider diversity aspects (including gender) in order to reflect the diverse nature of humanity. A diverse team is further support in meeting this requirement.

4.5 Exclusion criteria

Projects that research technologies that can be used to restrict European fundamental rights and freedoms, e.g., surveillance of individuals, AI-supported censorship, are not eligible for funding.

5 PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Requirements for costs and personnel

Cooperation with the following BMIMI initiatives for funded cooperative R&D projects should be taken into account in the cost plan by including 2 working days for each initiative (i.e., a total of 4 working days):

- The BMIMI offers a “Data Steward for R&D Projects” service for funded projects, which aims to support the further development of the Data Management Plan (DMP).
- For networking with other funded projects.

The applicable cost and accounting regulations are available in the Cost Guideline. In order to eliminate ambiguity regarding cost items in the programme projects, the key provisions are as follows:

- In the case of funding for travel expenses, the publication or, in justified special cases, research character of the activity must predominate. Costs for travel of a predominantly educational nature (e.g., participation in summer schools) or sales nature (e.g., visits to trade fairs) will not be recognised.
- Costs for marketing and customer acquisition are not eligible for funding in accordance with the Cost Guidelines.

5.2 Events

Depending on the call topic, events/workshops will be held for all the projects in which representatives from each project are required to participate.

For Hybrid AI, there will be networking and training activities, and public events for the transfer of knowledge between the project participants and the public (industry and business).

5.3 Data Management Plan

Applicants for Cooperative R&D Projects and Flagship Projects under this call are required to present a Data Management Plan (DMP) as an annex to the Project Description, which must be updated on a continuous basis as part of reporting.

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

A data management plan describes

- what data are collected, processed or generated within a project
- how these data are handled in 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 or in data circles, see next paragraph)

The option to integrate the data into existing data circles or activities aimed at creating a new data circle should be presented. Examples of data circles can be found on the website of the Data Intelligence Offensive (DIO) initiative. In the event of publication, the data should be "findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable". Storing data in established and internationally recognised repositories is recommended in order to ensure broad access (see re3data or openDoar).

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. openaire also allows you to generate data management plans on a semi-automatic basis.

6 CALL DOCUMENTS

Projects may only submitted electronically via eCall.

The application consists of the following online elements, which must be entered in eCall under the following menu items:

- **Description of content** presents the content of the project.
- **Work plan** includes the work packages and elements of project management, such as time management plan (GANTT diagram), tasks, milestones, results.
- **Consortium** describes the expertise of the individual consortium members.
- **Cost and financing** describes all cost categories for each consortium member. The totals for each work package will be automatically displayed in the online work plan.

Annexes to the electronic application (where required)

All relevant documents for the call can be found in the Download Center:

Table 5: Call documents – Funding

Funding instrument / other information	Call documents
Cooperative R&D Project	– Guideline for Cooperative R&D Projects (5.1) – Declaration of SME Status (if required)
Flagship Project	– Guideline for Flagship Projects (5.1) – Declaration of SME Status (if required)
R&D Service	– Guideline for R&D Services (5.0)
Mobilisation and Networking Measures	– Guideline for Mobilisation and Networking Measures (1.1)
General cost regulations	– Cost Guideline (3.1) (cost recognition in FFG projects)

Please note: A Declaration of SME Status is required for associations, sole traders and foreign companies. In the template provided, applicants must (as far as possible) categorise their business for the last three years according to the SME definition.

7 LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

7.1 Funding/Financing decision and legal basis

The FFG Management makes the funding/financing decision based on the recommendation for funding/financing provided by the evaluation committee.

This Call is based on the Guideline of the Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH for the Funding of Research, Technology, Development and Innovation aimed at promoting digital and industrial key and aerospace technologies and innovations (FFG-Technologie-Richtlinie 2024-2026).

The company size shall be established in accordance with the corresponding SME definition specified in EU competition law. For more information go to the SME page on the FFG website

All EU provisions shall be applicable as amended.

Research and development services shall be subject to the exemption provision of Sec 9 (12) of the Public Procurement Act (BVergG 2018).

7.2 Procurements for the project

If you plan or carry out procurements for your FFG project, the relevant regulations must be strictly observed. Further information can be found on the FFG website – Procurements for funded projects.

8 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

8.1 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 Project Database page of the FFG website.

8.2 BMIMI Open4Innovation

Additionally, the open4innovation platform of the Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and Infrastructure (BMIMI) offers a knowledge base for companies, researchers etc. (community support, detailed information, success stories, etc.).

8.3 Open Access publications

Research results obtained with the aid of public funding are to be put to the best use to provide maximum benefit to science, business and society. The Open Access principle should therefore be followed where possible for peer-reviewed publications produced with the support of FFG funding. The principle is "as open as possible, as closed as necessary", which also applies in European funding schemes.

Publication costs are eligible for funding.

8.4 Additional FFG funding opportunities

You are interested in other funding opportunities provided by the FFG?

The FFG **Funding Service** is the central contact point for your enquiries about FFG funding and advisory services. Please feel free to contact us, we are happy to help.

Contact: FFG Funding Service, T: +43 (0) 57755-0, E: foerderservice@ffg.at

Web: https://www.ffg.at/foerderservice

The following call has a special focus on digital and key technologies:

Key technologies in a production-related environment 2025: National research and development in the fields of robotics, advanced materials, photonics and smart textiles.

Additional FFG funding options can be found here.

9 ANNEX: CHECKLIST FOR SUBMISSION

The formal check serves to examine the funding/financing application for accuracy and completeness. Please note: **If the formal requirements are not met and the deficiencies cannot be corrected, the funding/financing 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.**

Table 6: Checklist for the formal check of funding applications

Criteria	*Items checked*	*Can deficiency be corrected?*	*Consequence*
The Project Description is complete.	The online Project Description must be completed in full.	*no*	Rejection for formal reasons
The correct language has been used.	**Language: English**	*no*	Rejection for formal reasons
The mandatory annexes specified in the call have been attached.	See Call Guidelines	*yes*	Rectification via eCall after submission
Uploads to the master data in eCall (upload as pdf file)	Annual accounts (balance sheet, P&L account) of the past 2 financial years are available. Start-ups must present a business plan.	*yes*	Rectification via eCall after submission
The funding applicant is eligible to submit an application.	See Guidelines of the funding instrument.	*no*	Rejection for formal reasons
For consortia: The project partners are eligible to participate.	See Guidelines of the funding instrument.	*no*	Rejection for formal reasons
For consortia: Minimum requirements for the consortium	See Guidelines of the funding instrument.	*no*	Rejection for formal reasons

Table 7: Checklist for the formal check of financing applications (R&D Services)

Criteria	*Items checked*	*Can deficiency be corrected?*	*Consequence*
The financing application is complete.	The online Project Description must be completed in full.	*no*	Rejection for formal reasons
The correct language has been used.	**Language: English**	*no*	Rejection for formal reasons
The mandatory annexes specified in the call have been attached.	See Guidelines of the funding instrument.	*yes*	Rectification via eCall after submission