

VIENNA, JULY 2026
VERSION 1.0

**CHIPS JU –SKILLS DEVELOPMENT:
NATIONAL GUIDELINES AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
FOR AUSTRIAN PARTICIPANTS IN THE CALLS
PILOT FEDERATION AND HUBS OF EXCELLENCE**

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1 PREFACE

A highly skilled workforce in semiconductors is essential for a resilient and competitive European ecosystem. However, a structural gap—driven by an ageing workforce and an insufficient inflow of new graduates into semiconductor-related fields—threatens this position. At the same time, the sector faces rapid changes in how work is organized: continuous upskilling and reskilling, and the rapid updating of university curricula to cover emerging technologies, are critical for meeting current job needs.

The European Chips Act directly targets this skills shortage by aiming to attract, mobilize and retain talent across research, design and production, and by supporting training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics up to the postdoctoral level.

The objective of the Skills Development 2026 is to support initiatives to bridge the talent gap in semiconductors, to empower youth and young adults in this field and to provide qualified and updated education for students and re- and up-skilling of the current workforce.

This document refers to the national implementation of the Chips JU Skills Development Calls 2026, namely “Pilot Federation” (DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-SKILLS-PF-SG) and Skills Hubs of Excellence (DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-SKILLS-HoE-SG).

These calls are co-funded by the Chips Joint Undertaking (on behalf of the European Commission) and the Participating States. Therefore, applications for funding must be submitted both at the European and the national level. Relevant information on the Chips JU transnational call (rules and conditions, budget, publication date and deadlines, ...) are published on the [websites of the Chips JU](#) and the [Funding & tender opportunities portal of the EU](#) and in particular in the [Appendix 8 of Work Programme: Chips for Europe Initiative part](#), which can be obtained from these websites. In addition to the general rules and conditions, country specific eligibility rules apply nationally. This document describes the **National Eligibility Criteria for Austrian participants** - it is designed to describe the conditions for Austrian partners and to support Austrian partners with the necessary information **for the national submission**.

In addition to that, all relevant information for Austrian participants can be obtained from the [Chips Call Website](#) at FFG, which is the National Funding Agency (NFA) for the Chips JU in Austria. The national contact person for the Chips JU Programme is Dr. Olaf Hartmann, T +43 (0)57755 49 02; olaf.hartmann@ffg.at.

2 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 What is the procedure for national submission?

In addition to the submission at the European Commission's "Funding & Tender opportunities Portal", the respective national applications must be electronically submitted via the [FFG-eCall](#) before the deadline, otherwise a national co-funding is not possible.

Prerequisite for a participation and a national funding in the present calls is the participation in the transnational consortium, that has been selected for funding under the call **DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-SKILLS-PF-SG** (Pilot Federation) or **DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-SKILLS-HoE-SG** (Skills Hubs of Excellence).

How does it work?

- Register at the eCall (please note: **do not register as consortium – each partner has to submit a separate national application**)
- Fill in the online forms and the budget calculation – the system verifies whether the funding requirements are met (e.g. max. funding, etc.)
- Upload the required documents
- Finalise the application in eCall and click "Submit application" ("Einreichung abschicken")
- Upon successful submission, an acknowledgement is automatically sent by email

Further information on how the electronic submission platform works is available in the [online eCall tutorial](#).

Please note: As the total length of Chips proposals is restricted, many proposals do not contain sufficient information for the national eligibility check. Therefore, national applicants must complete the national annex "Chips Skills Description of Project Contribution for Austrian partners 2026" in which the organisation's own project contribution has to be described in detail.

2.2 What is the formal check after Project Proposal submission?

In the formal check FFG verifies the national application for formal correctness and completeness.

You will be notified of the result of the formal check within 2 weeks after the submission deadline via an eCall message.

- If the formal criteria are not met and the deficiencies cannot be corrected, the application for funding will not enter the subsequent steps of the procedure.
- If the deficiencies can be corrected, you may revise these problems within a reasonable period of time.

Should it transpire after the formal check that incorrect information has been given, the funding application may also be removed from consideration at a subsequent point in the procedure.

The following criteria are checked and deficiencies can be corrected:

- Consistency between data submitted in FFG eCall and EC Participant Portal

The following criteria are checked and deficiencies cannot be corrected:

- The applicant is eligible for submission of a proposal. See chapter 3.1.1
- Project duration (max. 60 Months)
- Completeness of the application (complete application in FFG eCall and application in the EC Funding and Tenders Portal)
- Language: English or German
- Attachment to eCall project data: “Chips 2026 Project Contribution for Austrian partners”

2.3 What is the eligibility check after Full Project Proposal submission?

In the eligibility check we combine the results of the following checks:

- Formal check
- Check of the eligibility of costs with respect to the guidelines for costs
- Check of the financial viability of the participating enterprises by FFG experts (credit rating and liquidity). It is not possible to provide funding to undertakings in difficulty.
- Compliance with the national eligibility criteria (see chapter 3)

The results of the eligibility check (eligible/not eligible/conditional) are communicated to the Chips Joint Undertaking.

2.4 What is the legal background for the funding?

Legal background for funding: [FFG-Strukturen-Richtlinie](#).

2.5 How is the funding contract concluded?

In case of a positive funding decision, the FFG will provide each partner with a view in the eCall System of the most important basic parameters of the funding contract (e.g. amount of national funding granted, amount of eligible costs, start and ending date of the funding period, reporting obligations and possible binding requirements). If the full eligible funding cannot be awarded for budgetary constraints, FFG can make an offer for funding with reduced eligible costs.

Upon agreement with the presented offer, the legal representative of the applicant organization confirms the terms by accepting the project data view on the eCall Portal.

After acceptance of the data view within the given deadline, the FFG prepares the funding contract and delivers it to each partner. The project participant signs the

contract electronically in the eCall System. Thereby the funding contract is valid in law. Until then, there is no title for being funded.

3 NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR AUSTRIAN PARTICIPANTS

3.1 Legal requirements for the eligibility of a partner or a project

3.1.1 Type or nature of participants (Who is eligible to receive funding?)

Only Austrian participants who are listed as partners in the transnational consortium(s), that has(have) been selected for funding from the Chips Joint Undertaking and who are beneficiaries in the respective Simple Grant Agreement(s) with the Chips JU are eligible for national funding.

The following participants are eligible for funding:

- Institutions of research and knowledge dissemination
 - Universities ¹
 - Universities of applied sciences

3.1.2 Legal, administrative and financial conditions (Submission Procedure)

The national application of Austrian partners has to be submitted electronically via [eCall](#) before the deadline of the project submission.

Formal correctness and completeness of the application are examined in a formal check.

3.1.3 Other conditions

For national funding 1 Mio EUR from BMIMI is available. The planned distribution of the national budget to the different topics is outlined below:

Table 1: Budget distribution Chips Skills Development Calls 2026)

Call Skills Development 2026	National Budget
“Pilot Federation” (DIGITAL-JU-CHIPS-2026-SKILLS-PF-SG)	400.000 EUR
Skills Hubs of Excellence	600.000 EUR

¹ The smallest possible unit of a university is an institute of the university or an organisation comparable to a UOG 2002/§20 organisation unit. It is a precondition that the participating organisation unit (institute or comparable unit) is authorised with corresponding mandate according to UOG 2002/§ 27. Units below this size (for example working groups) cannot act as project partners.

Projects receiving national co-funding within this call comprise the design and development of education programmes as specified in the call document of the Chips JU. During the funding period, the content or services developed under these co-funded projects may not be marketed commercially.

3.2 Eligibility of costs and funding

3.2.1 Eligibility of costs

The eligibility of costs is in accordance with the national rules on eligible costs. For details on the eligibility of costs, see the [Cost Guidelines Version 3.2](#). Eligible costs must be allocable directly to the project. This means that:

- they are incurred additionally to the normal operating costs during the funding period
- they are in accordance with the Funding Contract
- they can be evidenced by receipts or other type of valid documentation (e.g. timesheets, equipment use records, etc.)

Non-deductible value added tax paid by the beneficiary which is not refunded according to national legislation is eligible.

The earliest possible date for the start of the project is after submission of the application for funding.

3.2.2 Funding rates

The maximum national funding rate is 50%.

In addition, the following needs to be considered:

The instalment plan for the payment of the funding and the respective reporting periods are aligned with the specifications in the European Grant Agreement, as long as they are not contradicting national regulations.

3.3 Additional information to be provided at submission and other conditions

- Registration (national submission) at the [eCall](#) System
- Completion of all relevant forms
- Upload of relevant documents in the eCall: “**Chips Skills Project Contribution for Austrian partners 2026**”, etc.