Access2Partnerships Scheme

Empowering Malta's Researchers in Horizon Europe Partnerships

Info Session 2026

2 September 2026 @ 11:00 CET

Internationalisation Unit

Christy Baldacchino
Senior Executive

Kaylen Borg
Executive

Before We Begin

- **This session will be recorded**. Both the presentation and the recording will be made available on the XM website.
- A **dedicated Q&A segment** will follow the presentation.
- During the presentation, we kindly ask that you submit any questions via the chat function.
- To minimize background noise, please keep your microphone muted unless you are invited to speak.

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Xjenza Malta

The national government agency responsible for developing and implementing national policies for Research, Innovation and Space

XJENZA
MALTA

Technical Units

Space Unit

Policy and Strategy Unit

Framework Programme Unit

Internationalisation Unit

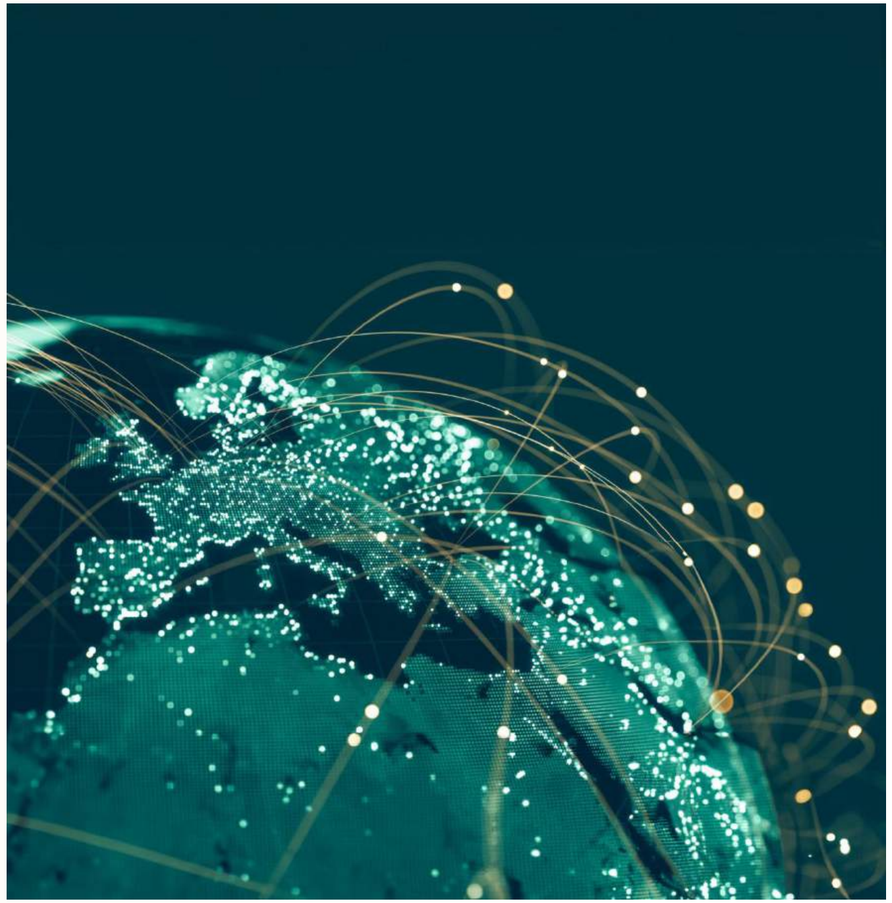
R&I Unit

The Internationalisation Unit

- **Follow international trends** in Research, Development and Innovation through its representation in international and regional science diplomacy forums

- **Strengthen international R&I collaboration** amongst local and foreign researchers and stakeholders

- Implements regional and international funding programmes, **using national funds**, aimed at the local R&I stakeholder community



Internationalisation Funding Portfolio

THCS
Transforming Health and Care Systems

Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership

Cet Partnership

ACCESS2PARTNERSHIPS A2P

spire
SEED GRANTS FOR INTERNATIONAL FUNDING

XJENZA MALTA

TÜBİTAK

JPI OCEANS

PRIMA
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

M-ERA.NET

BrainHealth PARTNERSHIP

OHAMR

SINO MALTA
BILATERAL FUND

ACCESS2GLOBALRESEARCH A2GR

TRANSCAN

Horizon Europe Partnerships - Introduction

European Partnerships

Part of Horizon Europe
(2021-2027)

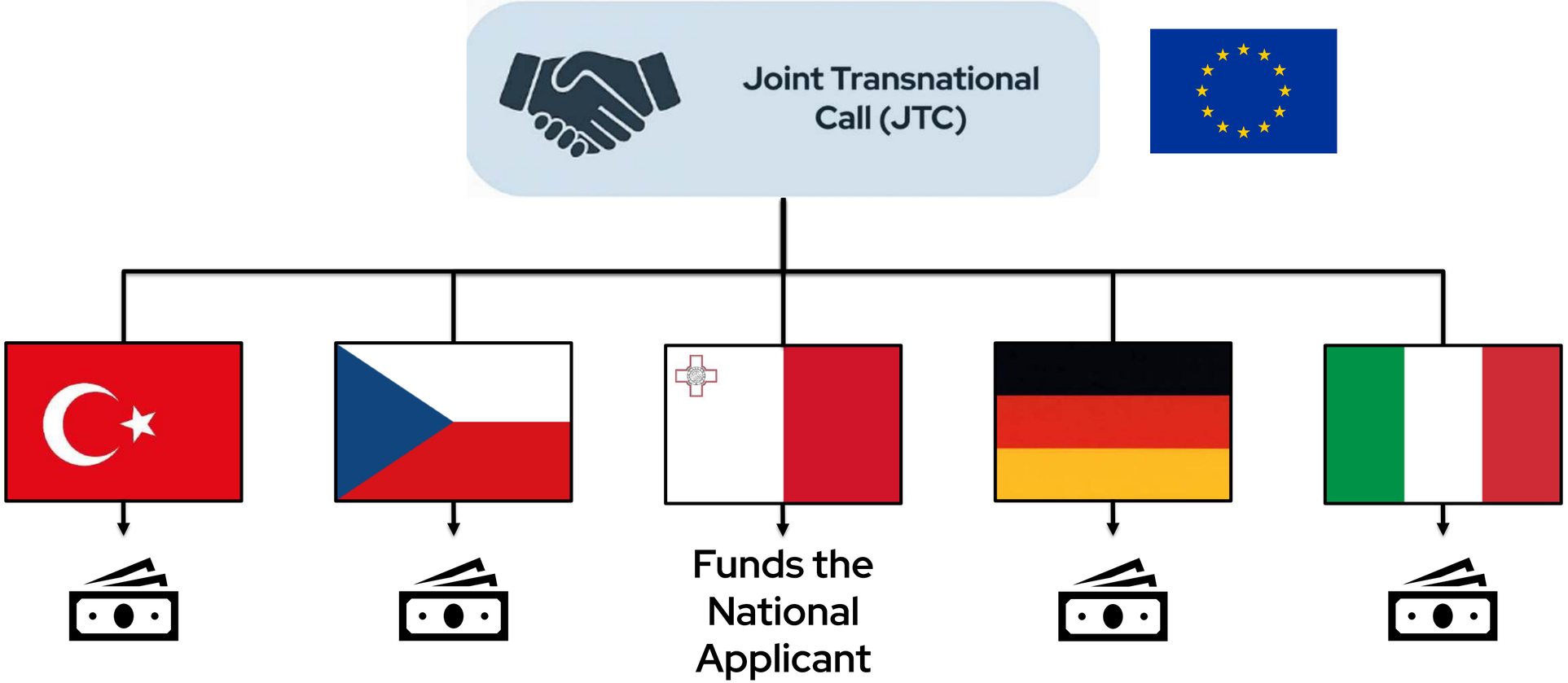
European Commission
+
National & Private partners

Addressing pressing EU challenges

Climate *Energy* *Health* *Innovation*

Implementing Joint Transnational Calls
for R&I Project Proposals

How does it work?



National Partners collaborate through a common call, each beneficiary funded by their own national funding agency

Joint Transnational Projects

General Requirements

- Minimum 3 partners from **at least 3 different countries**
- **One coordinator** (must be a funded partner)
- **Self-funded** partners allowed (cannot coordinate)

Call Overview

- **Call launch/Proposal Submission** → Call Secretariat
- **National rules** apply to each partner
- **National Application** → Xjenza Malta
- **Evaluation** → Call Secretariat

PILLAR II - Global challenges & European industrial competitiveness

CLUSTER 1: Health

- Innovative Health Initiative
- Global Health Partnership
- Transformation of health systems
- Chemicals risk assessment
- ERA for Health
- Rare diseases
- One-Health Anti Microbial Resistance
- Personalised Medicine
- Pandemic Preparedness
- Brain Health*

CLUSTER 2: Culture, Creativity, Inclusive Societies

- Resilient Cultural Heritage*
- Social Transformations and Resilience*

CLUSTER 4: Digital, Industry & Space

- Chips (formerly KDT)
- Smart Networks & Services
- High Performance Computing
- European Metrology (Art. 185)
- AI-Data-Robotics
- Photonics
- Made in Europe
- Clean steel – low-carbon steelmaking
- Processes4Planet
- Global competitive space systems
- Innovative Materials for EU*
- Virtual Worlds*
- Textiles of the Future*
- Raw Materials for the Green and Digital Transition*

CLUSTER 5: Climate, Energy & Mobility

- Clean Hydrogen
- Clean Aviation
- Single European Sky ATM Research 3
- Europe's Rail
- Connected and Automated Mobility
- Batt4EU
- Zero-emission waterborne transport
- Zero-emission road transport
- Built4People
- Solar Photovoltaics*
- Clean Energy Transition
- Driving Urban Transitions

CLUSTER 6: Food, Bio-economy, Agriculture, Env...

- Circular Bio-based Europe
- R&I in the Mediterranean Area (Art. 185)
- Biodiversa+
- Climate Neutral, Sustainable & Productive Blue Economy
- Water4All *
- Animal Health & Welfare
- Accelerating Farming Systems Transitions
- Agriculture of Data
- Safe and Sustainable Food System
- Forests and Forestry for sustainable Future*

PILLAR III - Innovative Europe

EUROPEAN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

- Innovative SMEs *

EIT

- InnoEnergy
- Climate
- Digital
- Food
- Health
- Raw Materials
- Manufacturing
- Urban Mobility
- Cultural and Creative Industries
- Water, Marine and Maritime Sectors and Ecosystem*

CROSS-PILLARS I AND II

- European Open Science Cloud

- Institutionalised partnerships (Art 185/7)
- EIT KICs
- Co-programmed
- Co-funded

* *Under preparation*

European Commission

European Partnerships: Examples Open Calls

Driving Urban Transitions (DUT) Call 2026

Expected Call Launch: 1 September 2026

https://dutpartnership.eu/dut-calls

Biodiversa-plus

Expected Call Launch: 9 September 2026

https://www.biodiversa.eu/research-funding/upcoming-calls/

Access2Partnerships Scheme

What is the A2P Scheme?

A National funding initiative launched by **Xjenza Malta**.

Designed to support Malta-based entities to participate in European Partnerships in which **Malta is not an official funding partner**.

It covers a wide range of **thematic areas**, including:

- Health
- Climate, energy and mobility
- Digital Technologies
- Food and bioeconomy
- Natural resources and environment

What is the A2P Scheme?

Key Features

- **Funding**: Malta-based entities are eligible for up to **€300,000 per project** to participate as **self-funded partners in transnational consortia**

- **Xjenza Malta Administrative assistance:**
  - ❑ Issuing **Letter of Intent** (often required at pre-proposal stage to demonstrate available funding)
  - ❑ Guidance to applicants on National Rules and Submission Forms
  - ❑ Assistance in funding relevant EU Partnerships/partners

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Eligibility Criteria

1. Call Text Compliance

Each European Partnership publishes its **own Call Text (yearly)**.

The Call text typically includes:

- **Research Priorities**: The main scientific and innovation areas the partnership's Call wants to address
- **Targeted Impact**: The expected outputs and benefits the projects should deliver, aligned with the partnership's mission
- Other important Rules for participation (i.e. TRL)

Call Text is usually published on the **respective Partnership's official website** for each year call.

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Technology Readiness Level (TRL)

TRL 1	TRL 2	TRL 3	TRL 4	TRL 5	TRL 6	TRL 7	TRL 8	TLR 9
Basic principles observed	Technology concept formulated	Experimental proof of concept	Technology validated in lab	Technology validated in relevant environment	Technology demonstrated in relevant environment	System prototype demonstration in relevant environment	System complete and qualified	Actual system proven in operational environment

Disruptive Research → Applied Research → Pilot Production or Demonstration → Manufacturing

PRODUCT IDEA → PROTOTYPE → FIRST TEST PRODUCT → COMMERCIAL END PRODUCT

Eligibility Criteria

2. Consortium Rules

At least **3 independent legal entities** from at least **3 different participating countries in the Call**.

Roles Within the Consortium

- One partner must be appointed as the **Consortium Coordinator**, responsible for the overall management and coordination of the project.
- The **Coordinator** is also tasked with **submitting the proposal** through the specific online platform provided by the respective Partnership.
- All other entities involved will act as **Project Partners.**

A valid **Participant Identification Code (PIC)** is required by all consortium members, including **self-funded partners**.

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Eligibility Criteria

2. Consortium Rules

Eligibility for Malta-based applicants:

- be **registered in Malta** and have an **active operational base** within the country.
- Participate as **self-funded partner in the transnational consortium.**

What it means to be a self-funded partner:

- **Bringing own funds. In case of successful A2P Scheme application, funds will be secured via XM.**
- **Cannot take on the role of project coordinator**.
- Do **not count** toward the **minimum required number** of consortium partners.

<u>However, participation adds significant strategic value to the project!</u>

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XJENZA MALTA

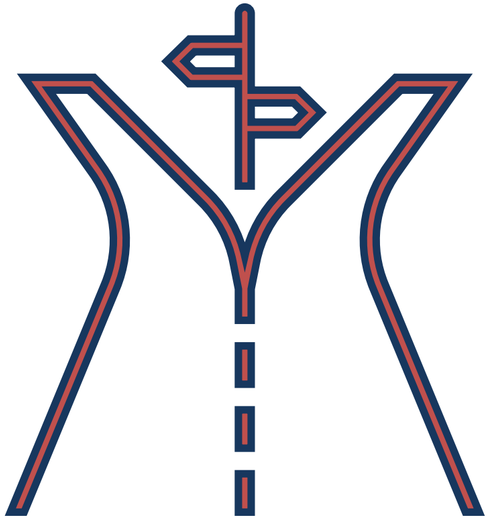
National Requirements

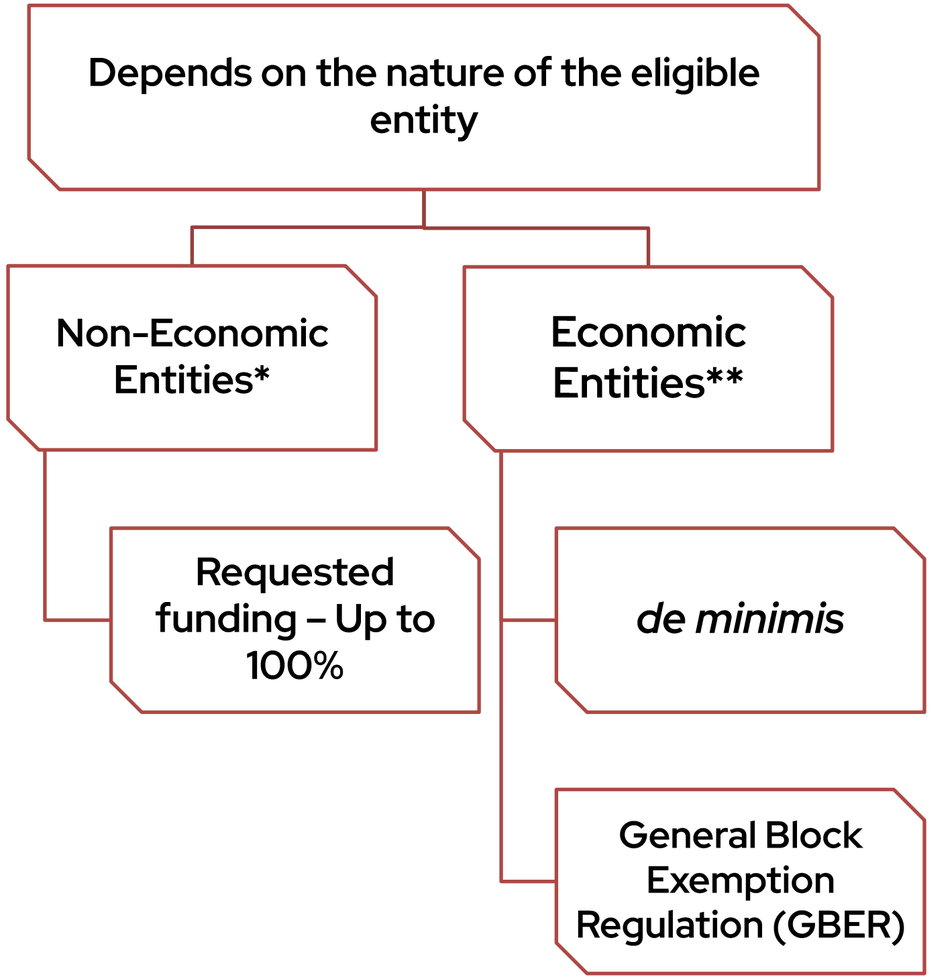
Eligible Entities

Eligible Entities must be registered in Malta or must have an operating base in Malta

- Limited Liability Company
- Partnerships
- Non-profit making Organisations
- Voluntary Organisations
- Professional Bodies
- Cooperatives
- Public entities
- Research & Knowledge-Dissemination Organisations

Funding Modalities





* Public Entities and Public Research and Knowledge-Dissemination Organisations that do not carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU

** Undertakings that carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU.

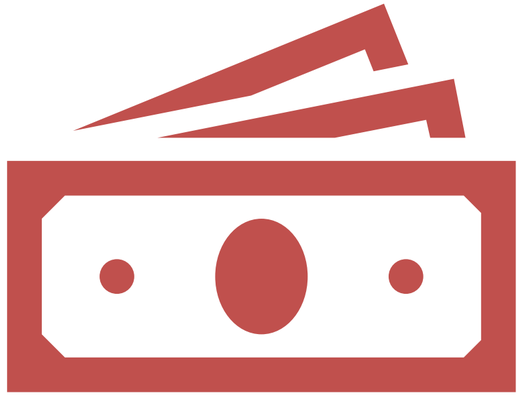
Aid Intensities

Economic entity	de minimis*	GBER
Requested funding	Up to 75%	Up to 70%
Own contribution	Remainder % (not in-kind)	Remainder % (not in-kind)

*Capping of **€ 300,000 over 3 years**

Aid Intensity	Undertaking Size		Extra funding for projects prioritizing Effective Collaboration & Wide Dissemination
25%	Small	+ 20%	+ 25%
	Medium	+ 10%	
	Large	+ 0%	

Eligible Costs

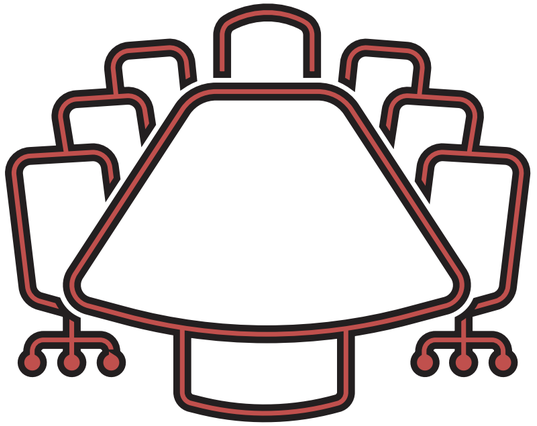


- Personnel
- Specialised Equipment & Consumables
- Subcontracting
- Costs of IP and Knowledge Transfer activities
- Travel & Subsistence
- Overheads and Other Operating Expenses

Personnel Costs

Non-economic/de minimis/GBER

- Project Management – up to 10% of total project value, should be allocated to (and described within) research tasks.
- Students – EUR 6,000-8,000 p.a.
- Maximum of 1720 hours p.a.
- Hourly rates specified in national rules.



€z = (basic salary + allowances) / yearly workable hours of the employee.

Role in Project	Hourly rates in 2025	Hourly rates in 2026	Hourly rates in 2027	Limits per project
Management or equivalent	Up to €57.89/hour	Up to €60.78/hour	Up to €63.82/hour	Max 2 per project
Senior Researcher[1] or equivalent	Up to €40.80/hour	Up to €42.84/hour	Up to €44.98/hour	Max 2 per project
Researcher[2] or equivalent	Up to €29.23/hour	Up to €30.69/hour	Up to € 32.22/hour	No limits
Operational, technician, research support assistant or equivalent	Up to €16.03/hour	Up to €16.83/hour	Up to €17.67/hour	No limits

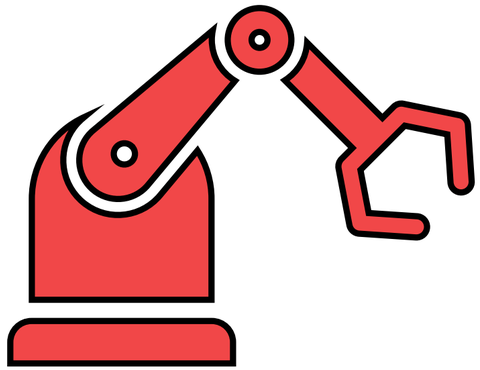
Table 1 Eligible Hourly Rates

The rates stated in the table above are for the years 2025-2027. For subsequent years a 5% increase per year is allowed.

Equipment and Consumables

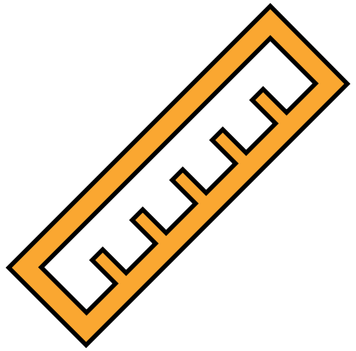
Non-economic /*de minimis*

- Cost to purchase/lease specialised equipment
- Cost of research consumables should not exceed 30% of the project value



GBER

- **Depreciation costs** of specialised equipment for the extent and period used for the project. To be **verified by a certified public accountant**
- The **costs** of **specialised equipment** is only **eligible if the lifetime of the equipment is equal to the lifetime of the project**.
- **Cost of research consumables** should **not exceed 30% of the project value**



Subcontracting

Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER

- Allowed up to 25% of the project value
- Must follow fair procurement procedures

To be discussed with the Call Manager at application stage

IP and Knowledge Transfer Activities

Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER

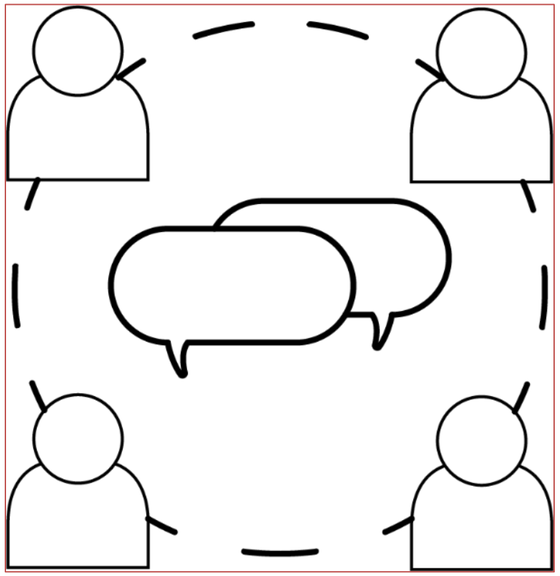
- Costs of knowledge transfer activities and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arm's length conditions.

To be discussed with the Call Manager at the application stage

Overheads and Other Operating Expenses

Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER

- Are costs that are incurred **directly** as a result of the project.
- These will be covered at **20% of direct eligible costs claimed**.



Ineligible Costs

- Expenses related to **loans, interests** etc.
- Expenses which are **recoverable through other funding mechanisms**
- **Re-purchase of the same equipment** originally procured through other funding mechanisms
- **Purchase and/or leasing of equipment** and services **from partners or their subsidiaries**
- **Standard office equipment**
- **Personnel hours for travelling**
- Any other costs that are **not listed as eligible costs** in the National Rules

Application Process

Application Process

1 **Submit the signed National Application Form and relevant annexes** *via* email to eusubmissions.xjenzamalta@gov.mt by the relevant A2P deadline:

The A2P deadline is determined as follows:

- When the letter of intent is **not required** at the pre-proposal stage: **The A2P deadline same as the JTC Pre-proposal deadline set by the relevant Partnership**.

OR

- When the letter of intent is **required** at the pre-proposal stage: **The A2P deadline is exactly 3 weeks prior the JTC pre-proposal deadline.** (This is to allow time for the issue of letter of intent by the deadline)

Application Process

2. Following the **admin check and approval** by Xjenza Malta, a **Letter of Intent** is issued, allowing you to move forward with the pre-proposal submission.

3. Further documents will be requested if your proposal passes to Full Proposal Stage.

Submission Procedure – Stage 1

Pre-Proposal Submission

Documents	Public entities	Public RKDOs	*de minimis*	GBER
Pre-Proposal Stage (1st Stage)				
National Application Form	X	X	X	X
Public entities - Annex	X			
Public RKDOs - Annex		X		
CVs	X	X	X	X
Memorandum & Articles of Association (Or any respective constitutive documents)			X	X

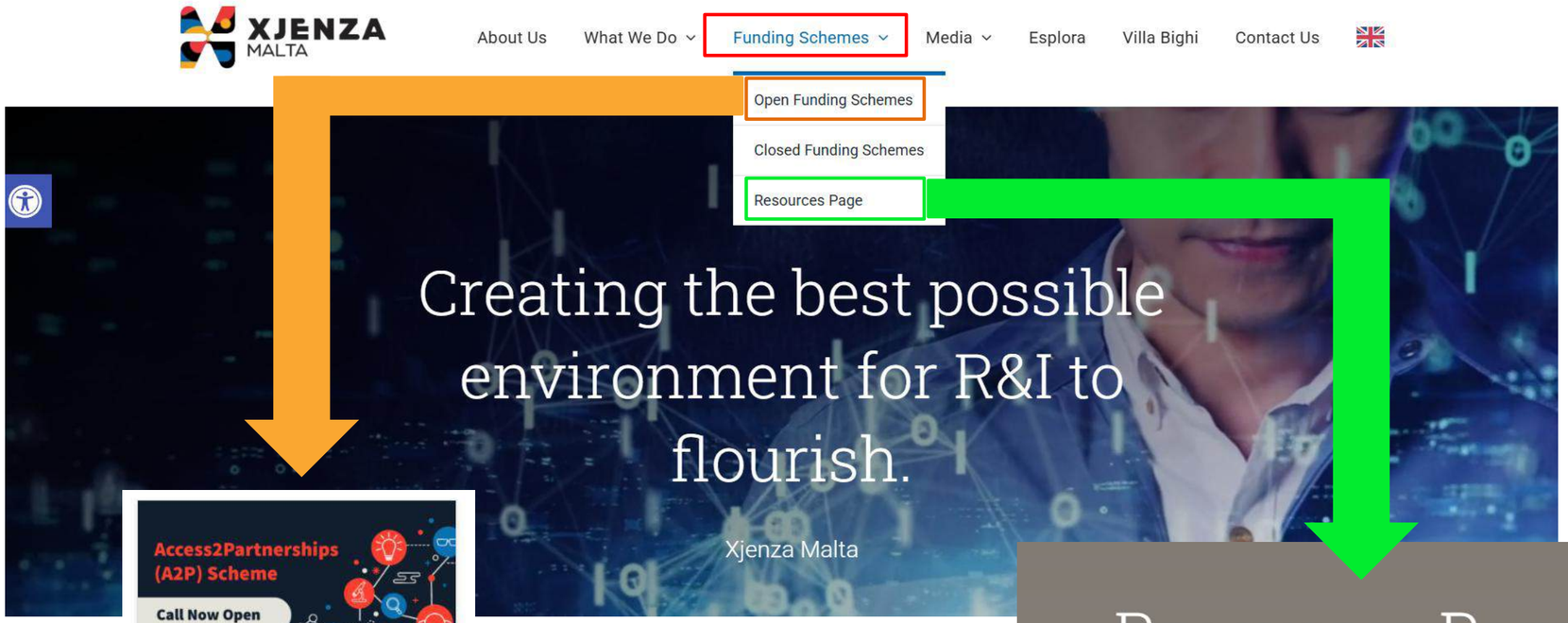
Submission Procedure – Stage 2

Full Proposal Submission (Upon Invitation)

Documents	Public entities	Public RKDOs	*de minimis*	GBER
Full Proposal Stage (2nd Stage)				
Budget Breakdown Form	X	X	X	X
de minimis Form			X	
Enterprise Size Declaration Form & Undertaking in Difficulty				X
Declarations for Augmented Aid Intensity				X
*Audited financial statements (last 3 years)**			X	X

**start-ups that do not have the above documents available, please provide financial projections for three (3) years signed by an auditor*

Submission Documents - Attachments



- National Rules for Participation
- National Application Form

Resources Page

- Relevant Annexes can be found here

Get Connected with Partners

If you are interested in a Partnership and looking for partners, please check the following resources:

1. List of Partnerships
2. Partnership partner search tool
3. HE Funding & Tender Portal
4. ERA Learn Partnering Tool

Alternatively, you can also contact us directly for guidance.

Important Resources

1. ERA-Learn Website – https://www.era-learn.eu/

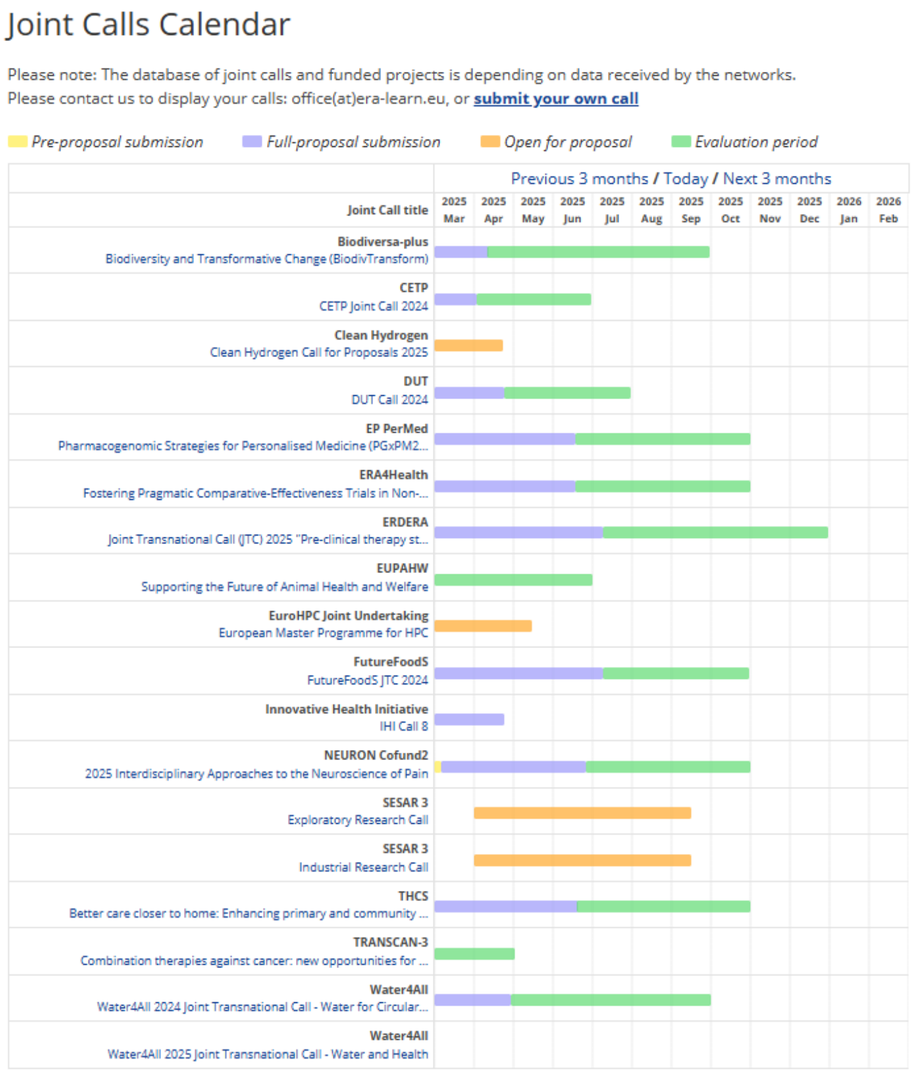
- Calls Calendar
- Partnerships Information

2. Xjenza Malta A2P Page –
https://xjenzamalta.mt/2025/03/24/access2-partnerships-a2p-scheme/

✓ National Application Form & National Rules
✓ List of Partnerships (*non-exhaustive*)

3. Xjenza Malta Resource Page – xjenzamalta.mt/resources-page/

✓ Relevant annexes



A2P Scheme Opportunities

A2P Scheme Opportunities

Driving Urban Transitions (DUT) Call 2026

Expected Call Launch: 1 September 2026

https://dutpartnership.eu/dut-calls

Keywords:

Sustainable urban mobility, energy and circular cities

Water4All – JTC 2026

Expected Call Launch: 8 September 2026

https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/

Keywords:

Water security and sustainable water management

Biodiversa+ Call 2026

Expected Call Launch: 9 September 2026

https://www.biodiversa.eu/

Keywords:

Biodiversity protection, restoration and monitoring

Forest Partnership – JTC 2026

Expected Call Launch: 15 September 2026

https://forestvalue.org/forest-joint-call-2026-pre-announcement/

Keywords:

Sustainable, resilient and biodiverse forests

A2P Scheme Opportunities

ERA4Health – JTC 9 & JTC 10 2027

Expected Calls Launch: November 2026

https://era4health.eu/

Keywords:

Disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment and clinical research

FutureFoodS – 3rd JTC

Expected Call Launch: December 2026

https://www.futurefoodspartnership.eu/funding-opportunities

Keywords:

Sustainable, healthy and resilient food systems

AGROECOLOGY Partnership – 4th JTC

Expected Call Launch: December 2026

https://www.agroecologypartnership.eu/en/

Keywords:

Sustainable farming and agroecological innovation

ERDERA – JTC 2027

Expected Call Launch: December 2026

https://erdera.org/

Keywords:

Rare-disease diagnosis, treatment and research

Conclusion

Summary

Step	Action	Notes / Guidance
1. Check Calls	Visit the relevant Partnership website	Look for latest and upcoming calls
2. Call Launch	Review the Partnership Call Text	Contains specifications, eligibility criteria, and deadlines
3. Partner Search	Use Partnership matchmaking tool (if available)	Helps you connect with project partners
4. National Rules	Review Xjenza Malta's **A2P National Rules for Participation**	Ensure eligibility under national requirements
5. National Application	Submit National Application Form to **eusubmissions.xjenzamalta@gov.mt**	**By the A2P deadline**
6. Administrative Review	Xjenza Malta checks compliance=	You receive a **Letter of Intent** confirming that should the project be awarded, the requested funding will be provided.
7. Writing and Submission of Scientific Pre-Proposal	Project Coordinator submits Pre-Proposal to the Partnership (jointly with the other partners)	Deadline as indicated in Call Text

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Any Questions?

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