

FIT4HORIZON2020 - FACTSHEET

How to apply for a financial contribution for the submission of a project proposal for European projects

Fit4Horizon2020 is a national financial aid scheme initiated by the Ministry of the Economy and managed by Luxinnovation, the National Agency for Innovation and Research. Luxinnovation is National Contact Point (NCP) for Horizon 2020. This document gives an overview of eligibility conditions and procedures to potential applicants.

Version June 2015 – Simplification of terms and document structure

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Making companies fit for Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020, the new framework programme for research and innovation, offers Luxembourg SMEs international development opportunities by fostering cooperation with the best Europe companies and research laboratories.

Fit4Horizon2020 wants to encourage Luxembourg SMEs to participate in Horizon 2020 by covering part or all of the costs of a research and innovation project proposal¹ submission. The sums to be allocated represent 5% of the requested co-financing, with EUR 15 000 being the maximum amount for project *coordinators* and EUR 5 000 for project *participants*.

In order to increase the success rate of the submitted proposals, companies that wish to coordinate a project proposal submission will cooperate with an external expert specialising in the drafting of proposals for EU-funded projects.

General eligibility conditions

In order to benefit from the Fit4Horizon2020 scheme, the following conditions should be fulfilled. The company should

- be constituted under Luxembourg law and engage in an effective economic activity on the Luxembourg territory
- employ a minimum of five people (full-time equivalent) in Luxembourg
- be well managed
- have the necessary financial resources to manage the part of the project that will not be covered by EU co-funding
- carry out research and innovation activities described in the project proposal in Luxembourg
- have knowledge in the fields that are covered by the submitted project proposal
- having benefitted from less than 200,000 EUR in *de minimis* aid in the past three years
- not apply for the Fit4Horizon2020 aid more than once for the submission of an identical project. The resubmission of a project proposal will thus not be eligible.

In order to benefit from the Fit4Horizon2020 scheme as project *participant*, the company should, furthermore:

- employ less than 250 people in the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg at the date of the call publication
- have benefitted from less than 40,000 EUR aid in the framework of the Fit4Europe scheme, added to the aid granted within the Fit4Horizon2020 scheme launched in 2014

Eligible Types of Action

Horizon 2020 offers a great variety of funding instruments, so called “Types of Action”.

The objective of the Fit4Horizon2020 aid is to stimulate **research and innovation** – therefore, only projects replying to calls for proposals **with a focus on these activities** are eligible. Under Horizon 2020, these include, typically, “Research and Innovation Actions”, “Innovation Actions”, “Fast Track to Innovation”, “Future and Emerging Technologies (FET)”, SME Instrument phase 2, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, as well as Eurostars and Active and the Assisted Living Joint Programme (AAL).

¹ Eligible programmes are Horizon 2020, Eurostars, and AAL.

Funding instruments such as Coordination and Support Actions (CSA), SME Instrument phase 1, or any other instrument under Horizon 2020 that does not involve research and innovation activities **are not** eligible for the Fit4Horizon2020 aid scheme.

Application process

The process differs in detail depending on whether the company plans to submit a proposal as a project *coordinator* or as a project *participant*.

The procedure to request and obtain Fit4Horizon2020 consists of **four simple steps**.

1. Declaration of intention

Not later than two months before the call deadline (for coordinators) or one month before the call deadline (for participants), the company shall inform Luxinnovation of its intention to coordinate, or to participate in, a project proposal by handing in the declaration of intention (see document), including all required information and attachments (previously received aids, last consolidated financial statements, certificate issued by the Centre Commun de la Sécurité Sociale (CCSS) on the number of employees).

NB – A proposal under SME instrument phase 2 can be submitted by one single SME, without a consortium. In this case, the applicant SME will be considered “coordinator”.

2. Acknowledgement of receipt

Luxinnovation will acknowledge receipt of the application by e-mail, or request missing information. A request can only be considered valid once all relevant documentation has been submitted.

3. Request for financial contribution

After having submitted the project proposal, the company can hand in the **Application for financial contribution**, enclosing the acknowledgement of receipt of the proposal submission (so-called **eReceipt**), including the complete proposal.

4. Payment

Luxinnovation will proceed to payment of the aid (5% of the project's requested financial contribution, with a maximum of EUR 15,000 for coordinators, and EUR 5,000 for participants) as soon as possible.

NB - The payment of the Fit4Horizon2020 financial contribution for a **coordinating** company is limited to three project proposals per year, corresponding to a maximum of EUR 45 000.

Cooperation with a consultant for coordinators

The support of an external consultant is part and parcel of the Fit4Horizon2020 aid scheme for project coordinators.

Luxinnovation will suggest a selection of two or three private consultancy firms specialising in the set-up, drafting and management of EU-funded research projects². The company and the consultant shall formalise their cooperation by signing a contract.

The selected consultant will be in charge of the set-up and drafting of the project proposal. In this context, he or she might make various suggestions that could enhance the proposal's chances of success (such as selecting and contacting European partners, managing the partners' contributions, or supporting the consortium in the budget set-up).

Exception. If a company has coordinated three successful projects during the previous or the current framework programmes, the support of an external consultant is not mandatory in order to benefit from the Fit4Horizon2020 scheme.

Application process – one or two-step submissions

Calls under Horizon 2020 may have a one-step or a two-step submission procedure.

The **one-step submission** is the default mode. Procedures described above apply here: The company hands in its **application for financial contribution** (see document) after having submitted the project proposal, by including the acknowledgement of receipt of the project submission (**eReceipt**), and other relevant documents if specified in the application form.

In a **two-step submission** procedure, the company may either pass the first step and be invited to submit a full proposal for the second step, or it may not pass on to the second step.

In both cases, the company shall hand in its **application for financial contribution after the first step**, by including the acknowledgement of receipt of the project submission (**eReceipt**), and other relevant documents if specified in the application form. Luxinnovation will proceed to payment of the aid as soon as possible.

² The company may choose another consultant if the latter can demonstrate extensive experience in EU research project set-up

Restrictions in the granting of the Fit4Horizon 2020 aid

Certain restrictions apply to the grant of the Fit4Horizon2020 aid

- The Fit4Horizon2020 aid scheme cannot be granted to more than three projects coordinated by the same company within one year.
- The amount granted under Fit4Horizon2020 is 5% of the requested financial contribution of the respective project proposal.
- The maximum amount granted to all project proposals in which the company acts as *participant* is EUR 40,000 (grants under Fit4Europe³ and Fit4Horizon2020).
- The cumulative *de minimis aid* cannot exceed 200,000 EUR in the past three years

NB - The attribution of the Fit4Horizon2020 aid is subject to budget availability.

Reimbursement of unduly received amounts

Fit4Horizon 2020 aims at supporting promising companies that take up the challenge to submit a European project. Therefore, Luxinnovation reserves the right to request reimbursement of aid granted under the Fit4Horizon2020 scheme in the following cases:

- Bad faith on the part of the applicant is proven
- The company leaves the consortium before the signing of the Grant Agreement, for whatever reason
- The eligibility conditions are no longer fulfilled

De minimis aid regime

The Fit4Horizon2020 aid scheme is granted in the context of the *de minimis* aid regime⁴, which can amount to a maximum of EUR 200,000 per company for a period of three years. The company shall commit to not go beyond this amount by providing a list of all *de minimis* aids granted during the past three years.

³ Fit4Europe is the predecessor scheme of Fit4Horizon2020

⁴ The *de minimis* regime is a set of rules to exempt small subsidies from the general European rules on state aid and competition. The reference is Commission Regulation (EU) No 360/2012 of 25 April 2012.

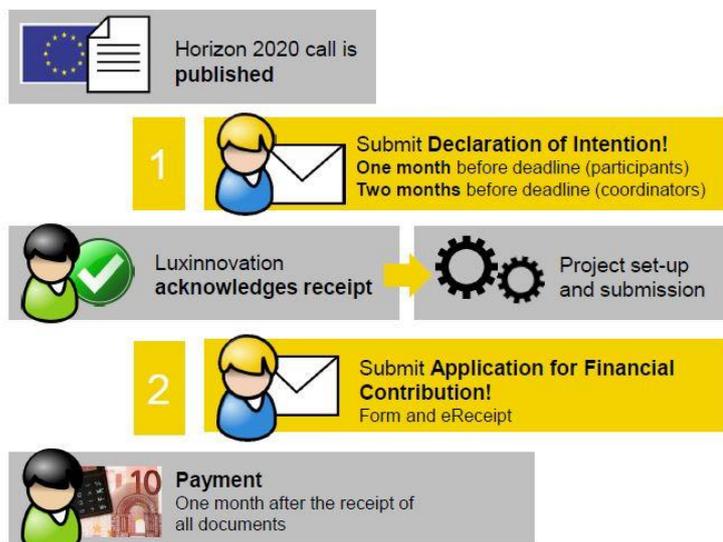
Summary and workflow

The procedure below describes the workflow from project idea to aid request and payment.

1. **Call publication** – the call is published on the Horizon 2020 participant portal or another relevant site
2. **Declaration of intention sent to Luxinnovation, not later than**
 - two months before the call deadline (coordinators)
 - one month before the call deadline (participants)
3. **Acknowledgement of receipt (Luxinnovation)**
4. **Project set-up and submission**
 - Choice of consultant and contract signature (for coordinators)
 - Drafting and project set-up within a consortium or alone (for coordinators: with the consultant's support)
 - Project submission – eReceipt is generated by the submission system
5. **Application for financial contribution**
 - The actual form
 - The eReceipt (acknowledgement of receipt of the project submission)
6. **Payment (by the Ministry of the Economy)**
 - Payment proceeded as soon as possible after having received all the requested documents

Fit4Horizon2020 workflow

The company submits documents at two stages, declaring its intention to participate in a call (1) and making an application to receive the financial aid (2)



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Ready?

If Horizon 2020 funding can be a good fit for your company, consider these next steps:

1. Browse the [Horizon 2020 participant portal](#) to find relevant calls for proposals, or get in touch with your [National Contact Point](#) to get advice on what funding type fits your situation best.
2. Download the [application documents](#) and hand in your Declaration of Intention one or two months before the call deadline to benefit from the Fit4Horizon2020 aid for SMEs.
3. Develop your project and craft a convincing proposal, bearing in mind excellence, impact, and implementation, and ensuring a good fit between your idea and the call.
4. Submit your proposal. In parallel, submit the Application for financial contribution to obtain the Fit4H2020 aid.

Contact

Please contact us for further questions!

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