

# Eurostars Train-the-Trainer Workshop for Consultants

Zagreb, 5 December 2025

Fabian Käser, Innovation Mentor @ Innosuisse



# Workshop Agenda



09:00 – 09:15	<b>Registration &amp; Welcome Tea/Coffee</b>
09:15 – 09:30	<b>Welcoming speeches &amp; Workshop Overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome and introductions by Swiss Embassy in Croatia</li><li>• Welcome and introductions by MRFFEUE</li><li>• Welcome and introductions by HAMAG-BICRO</li></ul> Eurostars in Croatia and the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Swiss contribution programme with EEN partnership accompanied <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overview of the day's agenda, WS goals and expected outcomes by Mr Fabian Käser, Swiss mentor</li></ul>
09:30 – 11:00	<b>Session 1: Innovation system in Switzerland, Innousuisse perspective and mentoring, moderated by Mr Fabian Käser, Swiss mentor</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fostering Swiss Croatian collaboration</li><li>• Funding instruments</li><li>• Icebreaker on experiences in terms of collaboration</li><li>• Evaluation criteria and the project process</li><li>• Practical tips &amp; tricks, key learnings</li></ul>
11:00 – 11:15	<b>Tea/Coffee Break</b>
11:15 – 13:00	<b>Session 2: Train-the-Trainer and Practice Sessions, group activity moderated by Mr Fabian Käser, Swiss mentor</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examples of Eurostars applications: successful vs unsuccessful</li><li>• Action planning: How will you apply this?</li><li>• Q&amp;A and open discussion</li><li>• Conclusions and key takeaways from the day</li></ul>
13:00 – 14:30	<b>Lunch Break &amp; Networking</b>

WHO is Fabian ?

WS Goals

Swiss Innovation - Mentoring

Eurostars Essentials

Train-the-Trainer Methodology

Best Practise Session

Key Takeaways

# WHO is Fabian ?

Mentor, Coach, Facilitator



WHO

- Curiosity
- Empathy
- Creativity

WHY

- Empowerment
- Mutual Benefit
- Collaboration

WHAT

- Diversification
- Factfinding
- Matchmaking





*«As a traditional SME, we see innovation as a real opportunity. Not only does this allow us to diversify our activities and explore new horizons, it also opens doors to new markets.»*

Albert Enste, CEO, Federnfabrik Schmid AG

➔ <https://www.innosuisse.admin.ch/en/new-horizons-for-springs>

# Goals of the Workshop

## Eurostars Train-the-Trainer Workshop

### Overview, Inputs on Eurostars

- on Swiss innovation system
- what is announced for 2026 (drafts)
- what information you can access?
- where you can get help & answers?
- (soft) success factors
- ...
- increase the amount of Croatian submissions
- increase the amount of funded projects (↑ success rate)
- foster Swiss-Croatian cooperations (only one in the past)

**SWISS – CROATIAN**  
Cooperation Programme



### P2P Practise Session, Tips & Tricks

- principles and overall logic of the assessment
- successful application
- all 13 criteria...
- key learnings
- mentor's blueprint, soft factors & toolbox





# INNOSUISSE

## SWISS INNOVATION AGENCY

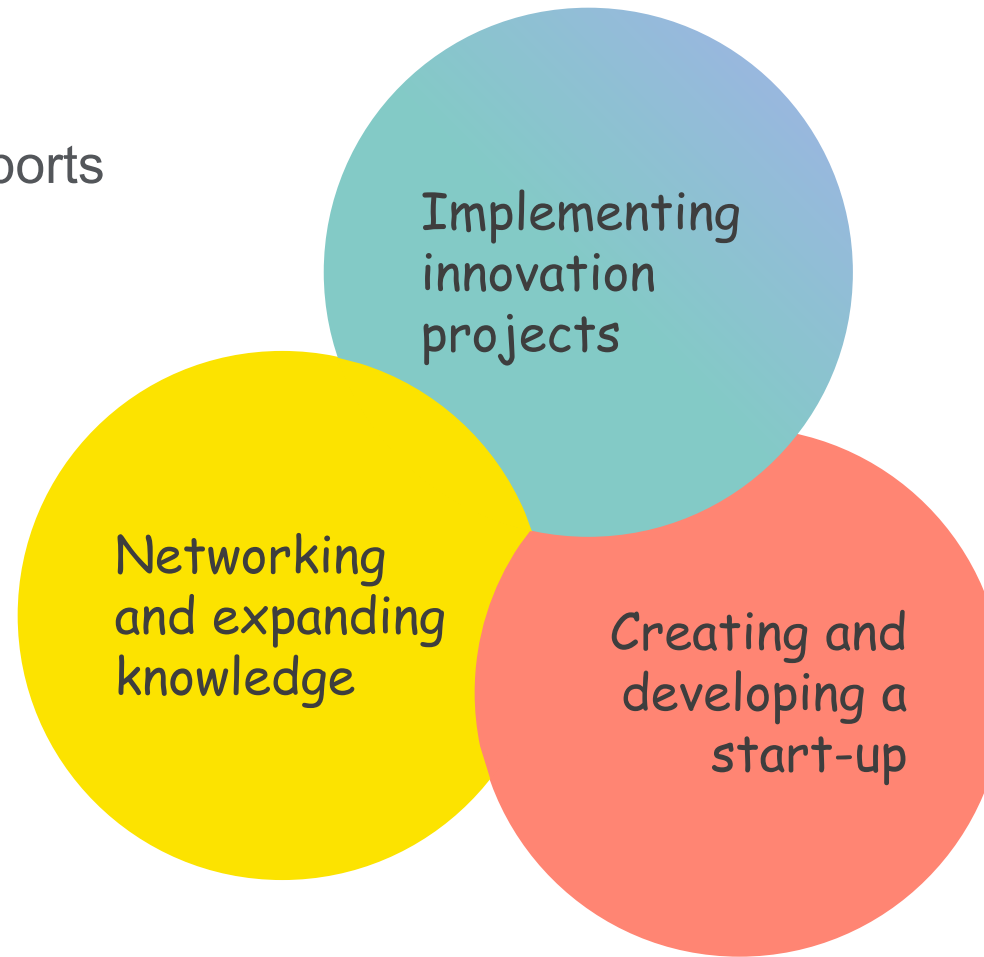
Innosuisse is the Swiss Confederation's agency for promoting innovation.

### OUR MANDATE

Innosuisse promotes **science-based innovation in the interest of the economy and society** in Switzerland – in all disciplines.

# INNOSUISSE – YOUR PARTNER FOR INNOVATION

How Innosuisse supports  
your science-based  
innovation:



# Innosuisse (in a Nutshell)

Swiss Innovation Agency



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

**Innosuisse – Swiss Innovation Agency**



## PROJECT FUNDING LEADS TO ADDITIONAL VALUE CREATION IN COMPANIES

21% MORE REVENUE

18% MORE EMPLOYMENT

KOF study: Companies that engage in innovation projects create significantly more jobs. And their revenue also grows more quickly than that of companies without support from Innosuisse.

CHF 1  
FUNDING



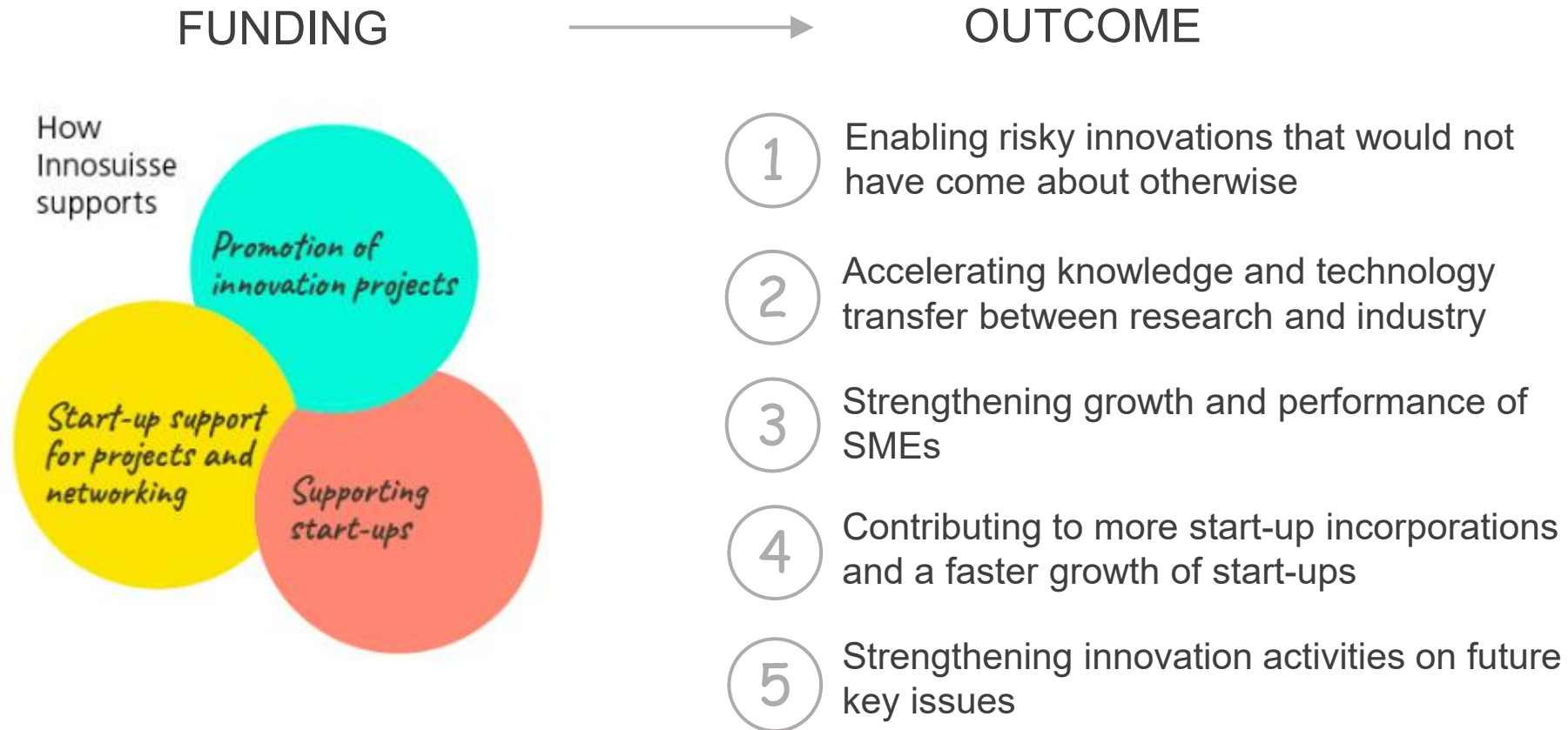
CHF 4  
VALUE CREATION



Impact monitoring: the jobs created lead to additional value creation in the companies. Every Swiss franc of funding leads to more than four francs of value creation in the economy (measured over three years).



# THE IMPACT OF INNOSUISSE FUNDING



~800 applications per year, approval rate 40-50%, overall funding of ~CHF 150 Mio.

# Innovation Mentors @ Innosuisse

## Mission & Activities



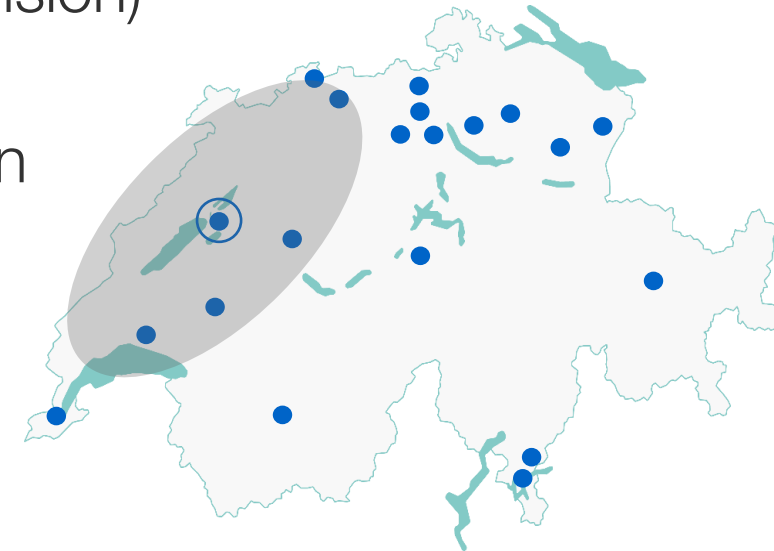
Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

**Innosuisse – Swiss Innovation Agency**



- facilitation the submission of science-based R&D applications
- external view (initial assessment, project initiation or revision)
- factfinding on funding instruments
- finding the right partners (R&D, value chain), moderation
- guidance on how to structure the application, tactics
  - ➔ alignment of motivation, goals (consortium)
  - ➔ sparring on value creation, innovation degree, mix of competences and quality of plan



**Beneficiaries** : all Swiss SMEs and organisations less than 250 FTEs.

➔ <https://www.innosuisse.admin.ch/en/innovation-mentoring>

# FOR AN INNOVATION PROJECT A GOOD APPLICATION IS...

## CONCRETE:

- Market interest exists
- Access to the market has been described
- Product or service has been defined (process, business model)

## CLEAR:

- Innovative content is clearly indicated
- Project plan is comprehensible
- Tasks are clearly defined and meaningful
- Milestones are set reasonably and goals are described quantitatively

## CONSISTENT:

- Research and implementation partners work together, not side by side or against each other
- Project planning and financial planning are consistent
- Timetable and resource allocation are realistic

# KEY POINTS EXPERTS PAY ATTENTION TO

## DRAFTED BY ACTUAL EXPERTS

### Value creation for Swiss economy

:

- Do amounts, costs, revenues, etc. come in **real numbers**?
- Will there be a **return on investment**?
- How does the net present value compare with the requested Innosuisse funding?
- Will the project flowing back to Switzerland? **lead to job creation and taxes**
- Has the market been analysed? Is the **market access** and **implementation plan** described?
- Would I invest in the project?

### Quality of project set-up :

- Is a **comprehensible path** to reach the goals outlined? Is it broken down into reasonable work packages (WP)?
- Are the **objectives and the WP deliverables measurable**? Are they expressed in real numbers, e.g. allowing a performance level to be quantified?
- Are the proposed work packages, human resources, hours, and finances **consistent** (quality is seen here)?
- Are there reasonable milestones that allow **progress to be tracked**?
- Do the partners have the required competences? Are they **complementary**? Is the required infrastructure available?
- Are **risks analysed** and preventive/corrective measures defined?

### Innovation degree :

- Is the “**solution**” clearly described?
- How does it compare with the **state-of-the-art**?
- Is it sufficiently **novel**?
- Has the freedom to operate been analysed?
- Have the partners agreed on **intellectual property rights**?

# OVERVIEW OF PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS



## FOR EUROSTARS PROJECTS AND EU THEMATIC PARTNERSHIPS

Direct project funding:

- Start-ups and SMEs up to 50%
- Large companies up to 25%
- Swiss research partners up to 50%
- Specified in each call



## FOR EUREKA AND BILATERAL PROJECTS

Innosuisse covers a **maximum of 70% of the project costs** of the Swiss participants.

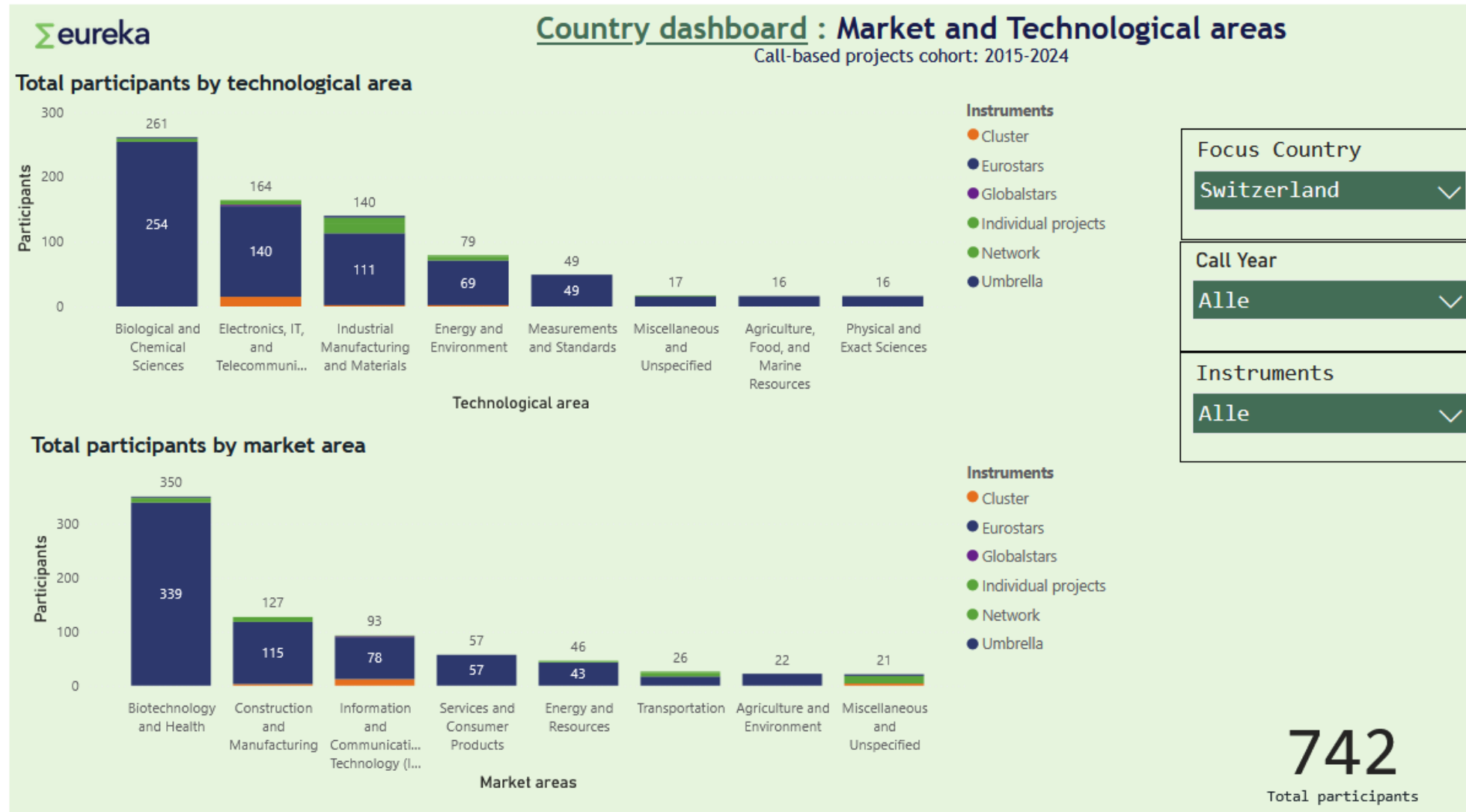
Direct project funding:

- Start-ups\* & SMEs up to 50%
- Large companies up to 25%
- Swiss research partners up to 100%

\*Swiss start-ups which have not yet entered the market (same criteria as for Start-up Innovation Projects) and which only cooperate with foreign companies can receive contributions of up to 70% of the eligible project costs.



# Swiss Contributions 2015 -2024



→ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/data/> (page 4)

# Swiss-Croatia Collaboration

## Research, Innovation and Development Cooperation

- The Framework Agreement on the implementation of the second Swiss Contribution for the period 2019-2029 (CHF 45.7 M)
- The Swiss Contribution will ensure co-financing of approved projects and support activities to increase the SMEs' success rate at applying to Eurostars (CHF 8 M).

- ➔ <https://swiss-cro.hr/en/2025/>
- ➔ <https://swiss-cro.hr/en/2024/07/open-call-for-eurostars-programme/>
- ➔ <https://swiss-cro.hr/en/the-second-swiss-contribution/>
- ➔ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/croatia/en/home/schweizer-beitrag/second-swiss-contribution/projekte.html>

**Research Programme, with  
two programme  
components: Multilateral  
Joint Research Projects  
and EUROSTARS**

**8**  
million CHF

**Water and Waste-water  
management in Gorski  
Kotar**

**23**  
million CHF

**Palliative care program**

**5.5**  
million CHF

**Civil society**

**7.6**  
million CHF

# WHY is Eureka Eurostars interesting for SMEs ?

## Eurostars Overview



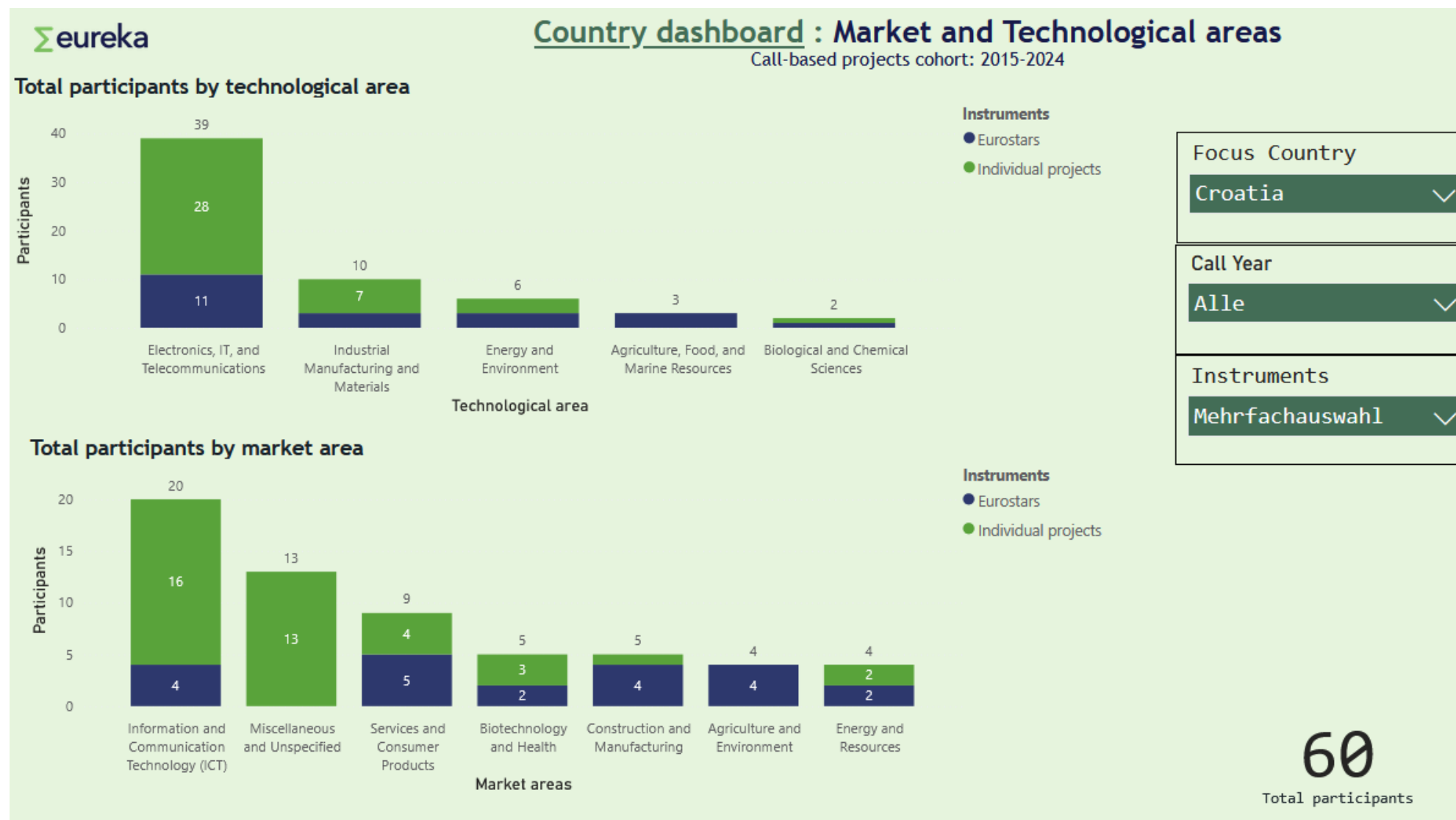
- direct funding (national agencies)
- market-oriented
- bottom-up
- 2 partners / countries
- specific thematic calls for proposals in the Danube Region (Interreg)
- continuous submission possible (Eureka)
- assessment by local experts (Eureka)

Call	count CHE projects	count HRV projects
7	25	1
6	18	1
5	22	0
4	24	1
3	25	3

➔ numbers from the last few Eurostars calls (2022 – 2024, CHE, HRV)

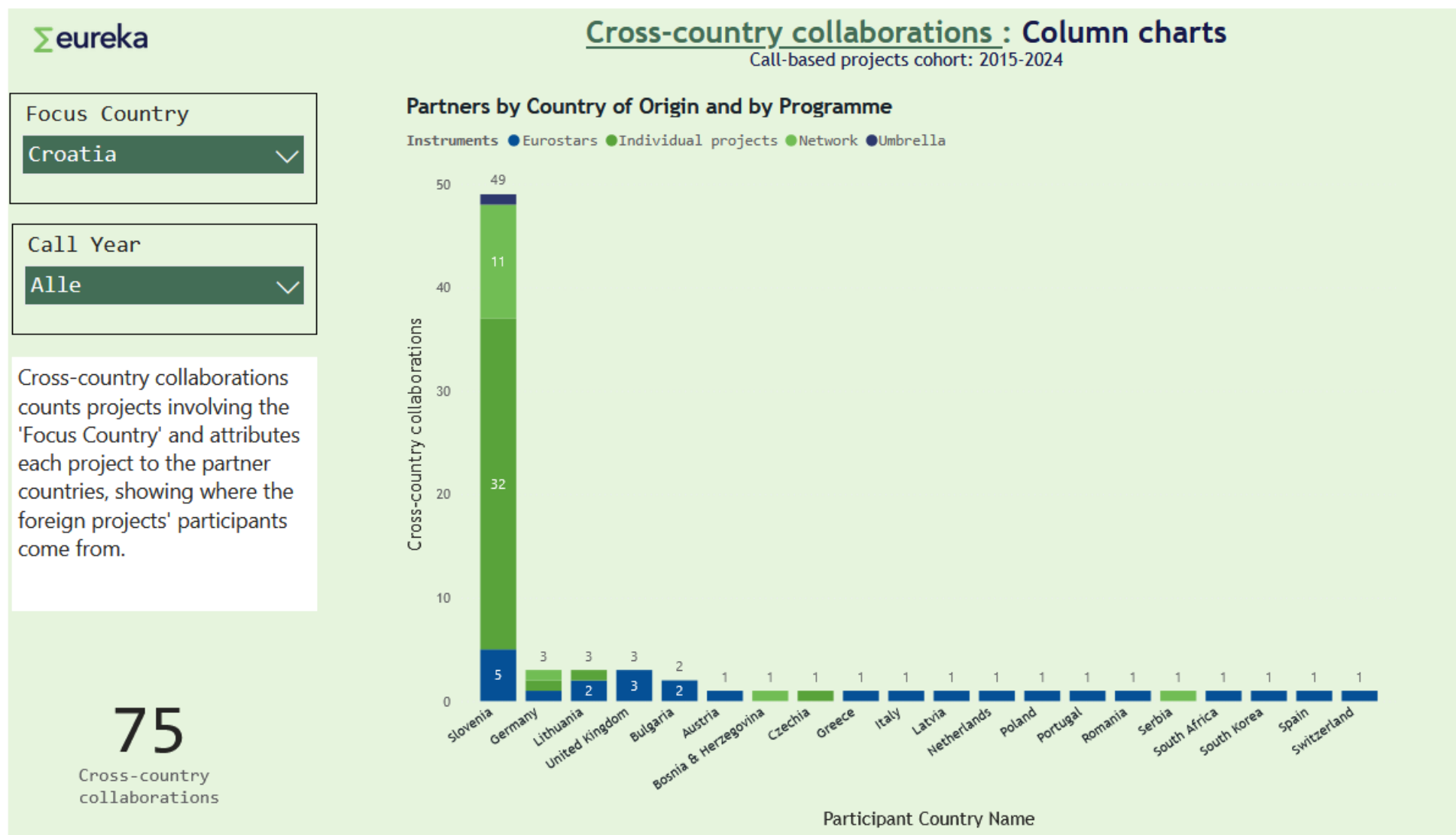
- ➔ <https://www.finnosee.eu/open-calls-for-eureka-network-projects-and-danube-region-projects/>
- ➔ [https://interreg.eu/calls-for-projects/danube-programme-launches-its-third-call-for-proposals/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://interreg.eu/calls-for-projects/danube-programme-launches-its-third-call-for-proposals/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

# Croatian Contributions 2015 -2024



→ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/data/> (page 4)

# Croatian Contributions 2015 -2024



→ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/data/> (page 1)



# Eurostars Applications

Icebreaker, Short Intro, Who is Who, Background

Best Experience ?

■ ...

Worst Experience ?

■ ...

# Eligibility for Applications

## Eurostars Overview

Be aware on

- drafts are accessible for the upcoming call (not yet endorsed)
- country-specific funding rules
- evaluation criteria
- process

 check the resource library

- register in the Eurostars website
- key points to be eligible
  - ✓ led by an innovative SME
  - ✓ participating countries (37!)
  - ✓ consortium of minimum 2 entities from 2 countries
  - ✓ participation of SMEs must be >50% of total costs (in Croatia it is <60% micro / <50% medium / max. EUR200k)
  - ✓ no single participant or country >70% of budget
  - ✓ max. duration of 36 months
  - ✓ civil applications only (be aware of dual-use)

- ➔ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/programmes-and-calls/eurostars/>
- ➔ open calls : <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/programmes-and-calls/>
- ➔ upcoming call : <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/programmes-and-calls/eurostars/eurostars-march-2026/>
- ➔ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/programmes-and-calls/eurostars/eurostars-resource-library/>

# Draft Work Programmes 2026-2027

## Draft Work Programmes 2026-2027



Research Infrastructures	<a href="#">RI_14-11-2025</a>
Cluster 1 - Health	<a href="#">CL1 V5 10-11-2025</a>
Cluster 2 - Culture & Creativity	<a href="#">CL2 V2 07-07-2025</a>
Cluster 3 - Civil Security for Society	<a href="#">CL3 V5 10-11-2025</a>
Cluster 4 - Digital, Industry, Space	<a href="#">CL4_V4 30-09-2025</a>
Cluster 5 - Climate, Energy, Mobility	<a href="#">CL5_V4_10-10-2025</a>
Cluster 6 - Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment	<a href="#">CL6 V4 30-09-2025</a>

**NEW** - Drafts of the 2026–2027 work programme are available on the **European Commission's Transparent Comitology Register**, allowing early preparation for upcoming calls.

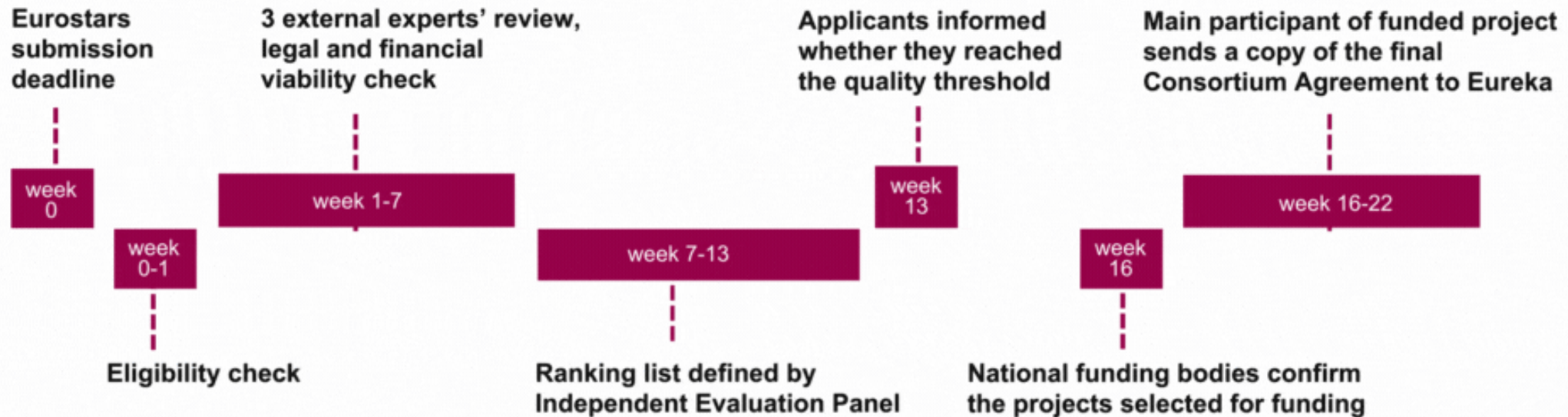
Official publication of the 2026–2027 work programme is scheduled for the end of 2025, with most **calls expected to open in early 2026**.

Note the statement: *“These drafts have not been adopted or endorsed by the European Commission. Any views expressed are the preliminary views of the Commission services and may not in any circumstances be regarded as stating an official position of the Commission.”*

↳ [Draft Work Programmes 2026-2027](#)

# Evaluation Process

## Eurostars Overview



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# Eurostars Applications

## Eurostars Overview



- call #10 expected to open in JAN 2026 (16th), submission deadline in MAR 2026 (19th, 14:00CET)
- one single application to be submitted via the Eurostars platform
- submission deadline (cut-off date is set in stone)
- the application is evaluated centrally by experts with the adequate area of expertise and ranked by the Independent Evaluation Panel (IEP)
- 3 months of evaluation, results are communicated (ranking, expert evaluations)
- projects are funded by the national funding bodies following the order of the ranking list
- 4 months after cut-off date, the funding decision is communicated
- project start normally after 5-6 months after submission date

➔ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/programmes-and-calls/eurostars/>



# Eureka Eurostars Call #

## Eurostars Overview



calls in 2026

call #10 opens on JAN 16

Drafts are not yet endorsed by EU Commission

Pillar 1 and 2

- Research infrastructures M47EUR
- EIC, DARPA style pilot M27M

AI in Science

- Networks of excellence M58EUR

Approx. 31 calls in AI (approx. M600EUR), adoption through 5 directions, RAISE pilot networks (M58EUR),

Cluster preview

- Cluster 1 : Health / Cancer M115EUR
- Cluster 2 : Culture, Creativity, Inclusive Societies M27EUR
- Cluster 3 : Civil Security M41EUR
- Cluster 4 : Industry, Space, Digital M194M
- Cluster 5 : Climate, Energy, Mobility M33EUR
- Cluster 6 : Food, Agriculture M71EUR

# What Makes a Good Application ?

## Eurostars Overview



### MARKET VALUE

- Access to the market has been described
- Product or service has been defined
- Plausible market and implementation idea has been presented
- Broad market interest exists

### CLEAR & CONSISTENT

- Research and implementation partners work together, not side by side or against each other
- Project and financial planning are consistent and comprehensible
- Timetable and resource allocation are realistic
- Tasks are clearly defined and meaningful
- Milestones are set reasonably and goals are described quantitatively

### INNOVATION CONTENT

- Innovative content is clearly indicated
- Science-based innovation beyond international state of the art

**+ added-value of international cooperation**

# Evaluation Logic (13 Criteria)

## Eurostars Overview



Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation (Q)	Impact (I)	Excellence (E)
Quality of the consortium	Market size	Degree of innovation
Added value through cooperation	Market access and risk	New applied knowledge
Realistic and clearly defined project management and planning	Competitive advantage	Level of technical challenge
Reasonable cost structure	Clear and realistic commercialisation plans	Technical achievability and risk
	Economic, environmental and societal impact	

Applications are assessed against three evaluation criteria and sub-criteria, all of which have equal weighting.

➔ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/programme-resources/how-we-assess-and-rank-eurostars-applications/>

# Evaluation & Ranking Mechanism, Guidelines

## Eurostars Overview

Ex.

**Passed**

	Q	I	E
Expert A	5	4	4
Expert B	3	4	5
Expert C	6	5	5
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.6</b>

(> 3.6)   (> 3.6)   (> 3.6)

For applications that score at least 3.6 in every criterion, the nine expert scores are combined to give the application's total score.

Ex.

	Q	I	E
Expert A	5	4	4
Expert B	3	4	5
Expert C	6	5	5

**= 41**

**Rejected**

	Q	I	E
Expert A	3	4	4
Expert B	3	4	5
Expert C	4	4	5
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4.6</b>

(< 3.6)   (> 3.6)   (> 3.6)

- 3 experts x 3 evaluation criteria = 9 values
- then, the average values for each criterion are calculated. These values must be greater than or equal to 3.6 for every criterion or the project is rejected.
- for applications that score at least 3.6 in every criterion, the nine expert scores are combined to give the application's total score. e.g. total score = 41
- => ranking list with all passed applications ordered according to their total score in descending order.

- ➔ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/programme-resources/how-we-assess-and-rank-eurostars-applications/>
- ➔ <https://www.eurekanetwork.org/programme-resources/eurostars-remote-expert-guidelines/>

# Need a Break ?





# Principles & Unité de Doctrine (overall logic)

## Intro Workshop



Eurostars experts follow a consistent assessment philosophy

### 1 Holistic evaluation

Each sub-criterion is rated individually, but the *overall coherence and credibility* of the project is decisive.

### 2 Three pillars of Eurostars

- Can it work technically? (**Excellence**)
- Are the consortium and project execution credible? (**Quality**)
- Will it create meaningful market and societal impact? (**Impact**)

### 3 Coherence is key

Any contradiction or inconsistency reduces credibility and the chance of success (e.g., high risks but no mitigation strategy).

### 4 Professional realism over marketing BlaBla

Reviewers reward factual, well-demonstrated statements rather than marketing language.

### 5 Evidence beats claims

- market data with references
- TRL statements
- references to past work, IP, prototypes

### 6 Applied R&D logic

In the Eurostars environment, implementation-oriented research and innovation are expected—not pure basic research or pure market launch projects.

# Principles & Unité de Doctrine (overall logic)

## Discussion Notes



### Q1 - Quality of the Consortium

#### Experts assess:

- Expertise and track record of each partner
- Complementarity and necessity of each partner, governance
- Ability to execute (team, infrastructure, competencies, organisation)
- SME leadership (key Eurostars requirement)

#### Experts want to see:

- Every partner has a *clear, essential* role
- No artificial roles or decorative partners
- Skills proven through examples, past projects, IP, or publications

### Q2 - Added Value Through Cooperation

#### Experts assess:

- Why international cooperation is essential
- Synergies between partners
- Value created by cross-border collaboration

#### Experts want to see:

- Complementary value chain positions
- More than a subcontracting chain
- A clear statement of *why this project cannot be done nationally* (and not by one single partner)

# Principles & Unité de Doctrine (overall logic)

## Discussion Notes



### Q3 - Project Management & Planning

#### Experts assess:

- Logical structure (work packages, milestones, deliverables)
- Risk management (technical and commercial)
- Governance and communication structure

#### Experts want to see:

- Realistic timeline and workload distribution
- Measurable deliverables and milestones
- Real and specific risks, with mitigation strategies (preventive & proactive)

### Q4 - Reasonable Cost Structure

#### Experts assess:

- Cost-benefit relationship
- Realistic personnel resources and R&D costs
- Balance across work packages

#### Experts want to see:

- Transparent and justified budgets
- Clear linkage between activities and cost items
- No “inflated” or unexplained budget items

# Principles & Unité de Doctrine (overall logic)

## Discussion Notes



### I1 - Market Size

#### Experts assess:

- Total and addressable market size
- Segmentation
- Growth potential

#### Experts want to see:

- Quantified markets with *referenced data sources*
- Clear customer definition (segmentation)

### I2 - Market Access & Risk

#### Experts assess:

- Go-to-market pathway (implementation)
- Regulatory or technical barriers
- Distribution channels
- Competitor landscape

#### Experts want to see:

- A credible, realistic route to market
- Clear identification of risks + mitigation measures

# Principles & Unité de Doctrine (overall logic)

## Discussion Notes



### I3 - Competitive Advantage

#### **Experts assess:**

- Differentiation from competitors
- Technological and business advantages

#### **Experts want to see:**

- Concrete, measurable advantages (USPs, performance, cost, time, precision)
- Evidence that the innovation is superior

### I4 - Commercialisation Plans

#### **Experts assess:**

- Business model
- Revenue strategy
- Partnerships, licensing, scaling
- Sales forecasts

#### **Experts want to see:**

- Realistic hypotheses, data-driven forecasts
- A timeline from prototype → pilot → market
- Clear readiness for market entry, MRL

# Principles & Unité de Doctrine (overall logic)

## Discussion Notes



### I5 - Economic, Environmental & Societal Impact

#### **Experts assess:**

- Job creation, revenue potential
- Environmental sustainability
- Broader societal benefits

#### **Experts want to see:**

- Quantified impacts whenever possible
- A credible link between the innovation and long-term benefits

# Principles & Unité de Doctrine (overall logic)

## Discussion Notes



### E1 - Degree of Innovation

#### Experts assess:

- State-of-the-art analysis
- Novelty compared to competitors
- radical / systemic change, not incremental changes only

#### Experts want to see:

- A clear description of the innovation leap
- Evidence of novelty and differentiation

### E2 - New Applied Knowledge

#### Experts assess:

- Knowledge generated by the project
- Technological advancements
- Potential for future innovation

#### Experts want to see:

- What exactly is new ? technology, service, process, business model
- Description of IP generation (patents, know-how, data)



# Principles & Unité de Doctrine (overall logic)

## Discussion Notes



### E3 - Level of Technical Challenge

#### Experts assess:

- Complexity
- Degree of uncertainty
- Technical bottlenecks

#### Experts want to see:

- Challenging but solvable problems
- Evidence that the consortium has the capability to handle the challenges

### E4 - Technical Feasibility & Risk

#### Experts assess:

- TRL levels
- Technological approach
- Validation status
- Realistic feasibility

#### Experts want to see:

- Clear methodology and F&E activities
- Honest risk assessment
- Mitigation plans aligned with actual challenges

# Summary of the Evaluation Doctrine

## Summary of the Workshop



Eurostars rewards projects that demonstrate:

1. strong, complementary partnership
2. technically ambitious but feasible innovation
3. clear path to significant market & societal impact
4. convincing justification of cross-border collaboration
5. realistic planning and credible budgets

coherence between all parts of the proposal is the critical success factor.

The 'magic sauce'

- clearly quantified USP (not adjectives).
- binary milestones with measurable success criteria.
- market data with citations (no assumptions).
- TRL progression clearly mapped (Start TRL → Target TRL).
- complementary, indispensable partners (each fills a unique gap).
- cooperation reduces time-to-market or risk.
- a credible, realistic GTM plan with early adopters.
- a strong risk matrix separated into technical & commercial risks.
- state-of-the-art analysis that proves novelty (tables, benchmarks).
- consistent story across all sections (no contradictions).

# Successful vs. Unsuccessful Applications

## Mentor's comment

### Passed

	Q	I	E	Total
Expert A	6	5	6	17
Expert B	5	5	5	15
Expert C	6	5	5	16
Average	5.7	5.0	5.3	

all 3 experts recommended funding

=> ranking at 48 points

outstandingly good quality

### Rejected

	Q	I	E	Total
Expert A	2	1	2	5
Expert B	3	2	3	8
Expert C	3	3	3	9
Average	2.7	2.0	2.7	

only 1 expert recommended funding (score 9)

averages of all 3 pillars are below 3.6 (!)

=> no ranking

outstandingly poor quality

# Successful Applications

## Key Strengths & Lessons Learned

- relevant area of expertise & complementary of partners
- clear technical innovation & solid methodology
- well-structured, realistic project plan (WP, milestones, KPIs)
- detailed market analysis + competitive benchmark
- realistic, data-based commercialisation strategy
- risks are clear, numerical, with measures
- costs are logical and proportional
- the application reads professionally and is well-founded

- alignment / culture
- clear roles / governance
- early adopters / market proximity
- $1 + 1 = 3$  (why partners achieve better results together)
- project plan must be technically sound, comprehensible, realistic
- tangible over vision: market size & potential, risks, implementation plan
- outperforms state of the art
-

# Unsuccessful Applications

## What Went Wrong and WHY ?

- no expertise in the core technological area
- scientifically flawed basic assumptions
- methodology incomplete/incorrect
- WPs, milestones, deliverables not defined
- no market logic, no business plan
- no competitive analysis
- costs appear artificial/unjustified
- proposal of very poor quality

- just an idea? wrong assumptions?
- missing / ignored state-of-the-art
- unrealistic budgets
- claims, but no evidence / references
- weak collaboration
- random partners, no synergies
- no metrics to measure success
- missing or trivial risks
- no implementation plan
- no value proposition, pricing
- the proposal appears sloppy, hasty, and lacking in structure

# Tips & Tricks for Eurostars Call 10



prepare yourself (partners)  
before the call opens

- get to know the frame conditions & modalities, topics
- talk to your (potential) partner
- align (real) interests & ambitions => stress test
- you need leadership on both sides

starting from zero in JAN will be  
(too) late for march (1S submissions)

- experts are clueless (!)

the applicants are the experts in their field

=> popularise the context if the  
mentor understands, a big step is taken

- the mentor is the moderator & facilitator and provides an external view (psy of the partners)

# Key Learnings in Mentoring (1)

## Swiss Mentor's Perspective (might be biased)

Mentoring is important for companies with

- less experience in innovation
- no previous collaboration
- limited resources to prepare and execute the project
- good ideas

The mentor brings companies down to earth (reality check).

Collaborate with your local agency.

The devil is in the detail (encounter enough time to iterate and do a retro planning).

Making the context comprehensible.



# Key Learnings in Mentoring (2)

## Swiss Mentor's Perspective (might be biased)



- «no-wrong-door»
  - neutral moderation
  - advice on submission process
  - finding the right partner(s)
  - design tips (objectives, timeline, plan, budget etc.)
  - tactics (do's & don'ts)
  - sparring partner
- be aware of 'toxic' partnerships
- if you never met your partner
  - if you are the only party to write the proposal
  - if 'chemistry' is not matching
  - if one merely follows the lure of money

# Bonus

## Mentor's Blueprint, Soft Factors & Toolbox



1. discovery and challenge
2. alignment
3. drafting & iterate
4. review & submission

+ intrinsic motivation

+ trust

+ openness, communication

- co-creation (onboarding, alignment, agreement)
- golden circle
- project plan canvas
- gantt chart
- risk matrix
- NPV calculation
- RASCI matrix (governance)
- think value chain
- TRL / MRL
- IP agreement

➔ start early, plan retroactively and use tools, iterate

# Action Ahead

## Specific Questions on Specific Contexts



→ Contact Fabian Käser

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