

Business Plan 2023 – 2025

EIT Manufacturing Competition

LEADERS – Women Innovators in Manufacturing at EIT RIS

EIT MANUFACTURING - FINAL *Corrected on 1/6/2023*

Corrected on 18/07/2023



Version history

Date	Comments
1 st June 2023	Links to list of documents to take into consideration are updated
18 th July 2023	Deadline for call closing and deadline for eligibility and admissibility check are extended

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1. Call summary

Disclaimer: this document provides the applicants with detailed information on the EIT Manufacturing Competition **LEADERS – Women Innovators in Manufacturing at EIT RIS** of EIT Manufacturing Business Plan 2023-2025. The information given is subject to revision, according to new potential rules or requirements provided by the EIT and/or by the EC.

Call for Applications Main Features	
Dates	<p>1st phase</p> <p>Call opening: May 19th, 2023, 10:00 AM CEST</p> <p>Call closing: July 18th, 2023, 23:59 CEST – <i>Deadline extended to July 25th, 2023, 23:59 CEST.</i></p> <p>Call online Info Day: June 9th, 2023, 12:00 PM CEST</p> <p>Eligibility and admissibility check: Until July 24th, 2023 – <i>Deadline extended to July 31st, 2023</i></p> <p>Online pitch training for eligible applicants: early September 2023</p> <p>2nd phase</p> <p>Online pitch submission: mid-September 2023</p> <p>Evaluation of full proposals: until October 9th, 2023</p> <p>Communication of results: Until October 24th, 2023</p> <p>Awarding ceremony: November 2023, in Brussels (in the occasion of the EIT Manufacturing Summit)</p>
Introduction	<p>The <i>LEADERS – Women Innovators in Manufacturing at EIT RIS</i> competition celebrates the women innovators behind solutions addressing manufacturing-related challenges.</p> <p>The Prize is awarded to the women innovators based in the RIS eligible countries who have created a large impact on the innovation ecosystem by transforming ideas into new and</p>

	advanced products and/or services to benefit the people and planet.
Total budget allocated to this call	26.100 EUR
Link to the submission portal	The submission platform will be available as of May 19th, 2023, 10:00 AM CEST
List of documents to be submitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form (first phase) • Recorded video pitch (second phase)
List of documents to take into consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement • EIT Manufacturing Strategic Agenda • Appeal procedure • Participation Agreement • Finalists Agreement
Evaluation criteria	<p><i>Evaluation criteria assessed by the independent experts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellence • Impact • Implementation • Strategic fit

2. General conditions

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) strengthens Europe's ability to innovate by powering solutions to pressing global challenges and by nurturing entrepreneurial talent to create sustainable growth and skilled jobs in Europe. The EIT is a body of the European Union that is an integral part of Horizon Europe, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. EIT supports the development of dynamic pan-European partnerships – EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities – among leading companies, research labs, and universities.

EIT Manufacturing is supported by the EIT and is one of several innovation communities within EIT. EIT Manufacturing's vision is that global manufacturing innovation is led by Europe. EIT Manufacturing's main mission is to bring European stakeholders focused on manufacturing together in innovation ecosystems that add unique value to European products, processes, and services and inspire the creation of globally competitive and sustainable manufacturing. EIT Manufacturing brings together more than 80 organizations (universities, research institutions, and businesses) from several countries.

The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) is designed for EU Member States and Horizon Europe Associated Countries in Europe that are modest and moderate innovators (according to the European Innovation Scoreboard). Strategically, the scheme is an additional offer to these countries to facilitate their engagement with the EIT Innovation Communities and enhance their innovation capacity. The EIT RIS serves the purpose of providing targeted support to individuals and entities from EIT RIS eligible countries to take part in KICs activities and benefit from KIC services and programmes.

The *LEADERS – Women Innovators in Manufacturing at EIT RIS* competition celebrates the women innovators behind the solutions addressing manufacturing-related challenges.

The Prize is awarded to women innovators based in the RIS eligible countries who have significantly impacted the innovation ecosystem by transforming ideas into new and advanced products and/or services to benefit people and the planet. With this prize, EIT Manufacturing seeks to raise awareness of the need for more women innovators in manufacturing and create role models for women and girls everywhere.

The competition consists of 2 submission phases. In the first phase, applicants must submit an online written application form about their solution. The eligible applicants (up to 60 applicants)¹ will receive online pitch training to prepare their video pitches for

¹ If there are more than 60 eligible applications, a pre-selection might be organized to select the best 60 to pass to the next phase. Otherwise, all eligible applications will pass directly to the next phase. The pre-selection panel and the

the second submission phase. The details of the training will be communicated to the eligible applicants.

The training will be offered to the applicants to boost their skills and allow them to practice with the help of experts and peers, with the aim to maximize the likelihood of success of their future pitching paths. This activity will also facilitate the creation of collaborations among the participants.

In the second submission phase, the eligible applicants must submit a recorded video pitch about their solution.

The complete submission (written application and video pitch) will be evaluated, and the results will be communicated to applicants. The 6 top-ranked finalists will be invited to an awarding ceremony to present their solutions and enhance their visibility and international publicity through EIT Manufacturing's communication channels. Among the six finalists, the Top-3 winning applicants will receive prize money during the ceremony.

evaluation panel might have different compositions, but the evaluation panel members may participate in the pre-selection panel. The pre-selection panel will evaluate each application against the evaluation criteria of paragraph 5.2.

3. Call specific conditions

3.1 Call thematic and expected results

Purpose

The *LEADERS – Women Innovators in Manufacturing at EIT RIS* competition celebrates the women innovators behind solutions addressing manufacturing-related challenges.

The prize is awarded to the women innovators based in the RIS eligible countries who have significantly impacted the innovation ecosystem by transforming ideas into new and advanced products and/or services to benefit people and the planet. With this prize, EIT Manufacturing seeks to raise awareness of the need for more women innovators in manufacturing and create role models for women and girls everywhere.

The prize is awarded to the 3 most talented women innovators in the RIS eligible Countries who have successfully developed/brought novel and innovative solutions to the market. The prize winners are chosen by an independent panel of experts.

Topic description

“**LEADERS – Women Innovators in Manufacturing at EIT RIS**” is open to applications from women innovators in the RIS eligible countries that have a solution **fitting one of the following EIT Manufacturing flagship areas²**:

- **Flexible Production Systems for Competitive Manufacturing.** Emerging technologies enable almost limitless flexibility in product design and production, allowing full customisation.
- **Low Environmental Footprint Systems & Circular Economy for Green Manufacturing.** Using new technology to minimise the use of resources, energy, and material in production systems enables new circular business models.
- **Digital & Collaborative Solutions for Innovative Manufacturing Ecosystems.** Collaboration and business on digital platforms and value networks enable companies to create new and highly efficient value chains.
- **Human-machine co-working for socially sustainable manufacturing.** Smart use of automation and robots enables great workplaces, flexible production, and sustainable human work.

Applicants profile

All applicants must comply with the following eligibility criteria to participate:

² For more information about EIT Manufacturing’s focus areas please visit: Focus areas (Flagships) – EIT Manufacturing: <https://www.eitmanufacturing.eu/what-we-do/focus-areas-flagships/>

- **must be a woman³**
- must hold citizenship in the following EIT RIS eligible countries:
 - **EU Member States:** Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia
 - **Horizon Europe Associated Countries:** Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Ukraine
 - **Outermost Regions:** Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain).
- In case of a team invention, the applicant must be the leader or co-leader within the team that invented the innovative solution.

Applicants that have already received a LEADERS – Women Innovators in Manufacturing at EIT RIS prize cannot receive a second prize for the same activities.

3.2 Budget and funding

The total maximum EIT funding allocated to this call is **22.500 EUR⁴** in the form of prizes and **3.600 EUR** daily allowance in the form of a lump sum.

Applicants compete for the following:

- **Up to 60⁵ eligible applicants** will receive online pitch training.
- **The 6 top-ranked finalists** will have access to the in-person awarding ceremony and will receive visibility and international publicity through EIT Manufacturing's communication channels.
- **The 3 top-ranked finalists** in addition to the visibility, will receive also prize money. The Prizes for the 3 top-ranked finalists are the following:

1st 10,000 EUR

2nd 7,500 EUR

3rd 5,000 EUR

³ This competition celebrates women in all their diversity. The word 'woman' equates to a cis woman or a transgender woman who is legally defined as a woman.

⁴ EIT Manufacturing reserves the right to add prizes funded by additional co-organizers. In this case, this document will be updated accordingly.

⁵ If there are more than 60 eligible applications, a pre-selection might be organized to select the best 60 to pass to the next phase. Otherwise, all eligible applications will pass directly to the next phase. The pre-selection panel and the evaluation panel might have different compositions, but the evaluation panel members may participate in the pre-selection panel. The pre-selection panel will evaluate each application against the evaluation criteria of paragraph 5.2.

The six finalists invited to the in-person awarding ceremony and, if they accept the invitation, are entitled to the reimbursement of incurred expenses for accommodation, meals, and **travel. This is paid as one lump-sum amount known as a daily allowance. The allowance is capped at 600 EUR per finalist.**

3.3 Monitoring and Control related to the “RIS LEADERS Competition” Financial Prize

Before EIT Manufacturing awards the prize money, the winning applicants must provide their *bank account validation* and *regularity of social security payments* documentation.

In case of applicants subjected to EU administrative sanctions⁶ or in one of the exclusion situations listed in the “[Declaration of Honour](#)” that ban them from receiving European funding, **EIT Manufacturing reserves the right to withdraw the award of the prize at any step of the Competition.**

Please note that all shortlisted applicants participating in the awarding ceremony must sign the “Declaration of Honour” (see also section 6.8 of this document).

In order to receive the daily allowance, the 6 top-ranked finalists **MUST:**

- Have received the invitation to the awarding ceremony and accepted it within 1-week of receiving it.
- Sign the attendance list on the day of the ceremony.
- Submit a completed travel reimbursement request as soon as possible and not later than 15 calendar days after the end of the ceremony, including copies of all invoices/receipts.

For audit purposes, following national and/or institutional regulations the finalists may be requested to provide original documents.

3.4 Reporting

The 6 top-ranked finalists must report within one (1) month after the completion of support from EIT Manufacturing. This reporting must contain a manufacturing-related motivational story about their leading role in the manufacturing sector based on guiding questions that will be provided by EIT Manufacturing.

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02018R1046-20221214>

4. Application preparation and submission

All applications and supporting documents must be submitted in English using the application forms linked on the competition website – no paper submissions will be considered.

Applicants must register and validate their account if this is their first time accessing the platform. If applicants have already created an account, they can proceed to log in. Once logged in, start a new application. During the application, all compulsory fields must be filled.

The official language of the competition is English (i.e., all required documentation must be submitted in English and the applicants must pitch in English if they will be selected for participation in the awarding ceremony).

First phase: The application form must be submitted by the applicants through the submission tool **no later than the call deadline of July 25th, 2023.**

NB: Only applications submitted through the online link (as noted above) before the deadline will be accepted and considered. The organizers reserve the right to extend the submission deadline; any extension of the deadline will be communicated to the public on the competition website.

Any documentation missing or considered incomplete may be a reason for application rejection.

Second phase: after completing the online pitch training, a recording of a video pitch in English must be submitted by the eligible applicants in line with procedures that will be detailed by EIT Manufacturing.

Only the eligible applicants that will submit both the written application and the recorded video pitch will be considered for the evaluation.

Call information event

The EIT Manufacturing will carry out an Info-day – online event on June 9th, 2023, at 12:00 PM CEST.

Call Contact email

All applicants may contact EIT Manufacturing to ask questions and clarify any points on general or technical procedures and call content by sending an email message to ris@eitmanufacturing.eu.

5. Application evaluation and selection process

5.1 Eligibility and admissibility check

A submission will be considered admissible if:

Completeness	The submitted application is completed, and submitted in time via the submission tool, in English with all its mandatory sections and information included.
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Admissible submissions will be considered eligible if:

Applicant profile	The applicant's profile is in line with the requirements presented under point 3.1 "Applicants profile".
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Applications containing one or more inadmissible or ineligible elements will receive an official communication from EIT Manufacturing setting out the outcome of the admissibility and eligibility check and explaining why the application failed to meet the criteria.

The applicant deemed ineligible who disputes the ineligibility decision may appeal. This appeal must be made within 5 working days from the official EIT Manufacturing notification of ineligibility (see paragraph 5.4 and the document Appeal procedure linked to the call).

5.2 Evaluation of applications

Applicants' complete submission (written application and recorded video pitch) will be reviewed online by a panel composed of 3 (three) external evaluators with the same weighting of scores.

Each evaluator will have to score each application based on four standardised criteria: Excellence, Impact, Implementation, and Strategic fit.

External evaluators will assess each evaluation sub-criteria will be assessed according to the following scores on a scale **from 1 to 5**.

Score	Description
1	<i>Extremely poor or None</i> The information provided is considered irrelevant or inadequate compared to the specific call provisions.

2	<i>Bad</i>	The information provided lacks relevant quality and contains significant weaknesses, compared to the specific call provisions.
3	<i>Average</i>	The overall information provided is adequate, however, some aspects are unclearly or insufficiently detailed, compared to the specific call provisions.
4	<i>Good</i>	The information provided is adequate with sufficiently outlined details, compared to the specific call provisions.
5	<i>Excellent</i>	The information provided is outstanding in its details, clarity, and coherence, compared to the specific call provisions.

The scores shall be given at the criteria level are then summed together to come with a final score per criteria.

Thresholds apply to individual criteria and the total score. The maximum score for an application is 20. The default threshold for each criterion is 3/5 and the default overall threshold is 12/20.

Evaluation criteria	Excellence	Impact	Implementation	Strategic fit	TOTAL
	The application clearly describes a novel and innovative solution with the potential to improve manufacturing. In presenting their innovation, the applicant demonstrates what makes this product unique, in relation to other existing solutions.	The application addresses a specific need with significant benefits for people and/or the planet. The market traction/validation of the solution is clearly described.	The applicant has personally played a pivotal role in the development of the solution and has the power to lead and inspire other women and girls. The applicant should explain why they consider themselves a strong role model with the power to lead and inspire other women and girls. The recorded video pitch was easy to follow with a clear storyline.	The solution contributes to the competition focus areas.	20
Score	1 to 5	1 to 5	1 to 5	1 to 5	
Thresholds	3/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	12/20

The Submission Management System will create an average score per application based on the individual evaluators' scorings and produce an Individual Evaluation Report (IER) per application (each application is evaluated 3 times). A rapporteur will prepare a Summary Evaluation Report for each application, based on the evaluations of the (3) evaluators provided through the Individual Evaluation Reports. Only in case of notable divergencies between their evaluations, the evaluators will meet in a consensus meeting to discuss and build an agreement. The rapporteur will address any notable divergences between their evaluations and will develop the final Evaluation Summary Reports of the evaluation of applications.

The 6 top-ranked finalists will be shortlisted, and the 3 top-ranked applicants will be the winners of the monetary prizes.

The 6 top-ranked finalists will be invited to the awarding ceremony in Brussels. The agenda for this in-person ceremony will be announced on the competition website. It is the participants' responsibility to keep track of announcements and information on the EIT Manufacturing webpage. All shortlisted finalists will also receive an invitation email that they shall RSVP.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Finalists who, for whatever reason, fail to confirm their attendance/attend the in-person final ceremony at the given time and venue will be disqualified and will not be entitled to any award/ daily allowance.

5.3 Communication of results

The results will be communicated to the email of the applicant representative registered at the submission platform (Note: Please, check your spam folder). Results will be communicated with a rejection letter or email to non-qualified applicants or an invitation letter or email to awarding ceremony. Results will include the evaluations.

Awarding ceremony: The 3 winners will be publicly announced during the awarding ceremony.

5.4 Procedure for complaints and appeal

The applicant (the representative of the legal entity or the team) of a rejected application who disagree with the decision may request an evaluation review. **Only procedural aspects of an evaluation may be the subject of a request for an evaluation review**, for example, process errors or technical problems. The evaluation of the merits of an application shall not be the subject of an evaluation review. In this case, the applicant will have 5 working days after the receipt of the final evaluation results to submit an appeal to the Evaluation (see document Appeal procedure).

5.5 Selected applicants and follow-up

Eligible applicants will have to diligently collaborate to:

- Sign a participation agreement for attending the pitch training.
- Collaborate with the RIS Team of EIT Manufacturing during the delivery of the pitch training.
- Submit a recorded video pitch to complete the full application and be eligible for the selection process.

The 6 top-ranked finalists will have to diligently collaborate to:

- Sign a Declaration of Honour (see point 6.8) which can be downloaded from the Competition website.
- Provide EIT Manufacturing with the required banking and fiscal details.
- Signature of the Financial Prize agreement (applicable to the 3 winners only).

Within one month from the end of the Competition, or by no later than January 10th, 2024, whichever date comes first: finalists must submit a manufacturing-related motivational story.

6. Other terms and Conditions

6.1 Communication, Dissemination, Visibility of funding

The six finalists must promote the prize and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner. Communication activities related to the prize (including media interviews, press statements, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), must acknowledge EU support and display the EIT Manufacturing logo (emblem) and text. The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands, or text. Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EIT Manufacturing support. When displayed in association with other logos (e.g., of winners or sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

For the purposes of these obligations, the winners may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from EIT Manufacturing. This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means. Any communication or dissemination activity related to the prize must use factually accurate information.

The EIT Manufacturing may use, for their communication and publicising activities, information relating to the prize, as well as photos or audio-visual material that they receive from the applicants (including in electronic form), and photos and videos taken either in preparation for the award ceremony or during the award ceremony. The EIT Manufacturing will publish the name of both the finalist/s and the selected applicants their origin, the amount of the prize, and its nature and purpose.

6.2 Intellectual Property Rights

Participants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. By submitting their application, participants affirm that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service. Participants agree to indemnify and hold harmless EIT Manufacturing and/or any assignee or affiliate from any third-party allegations or claims of intellectual property rights infringement by the product or service of participants.

Participants shall have the right to further develop, use and license their intellectual property rights for creating, making, marketing, and distributing products, services, and technology.

Participants agree to respect the IPR Rules (Article 16) of the Model Grant Agreement.

Participants also agree to respect the EIT Manufacturing IP Policy.

6.3 Right to activate audits

EIT Manufacturing retains the right to activate an audit on LEADERS Competition prize winners, in case of alerts and/or to confirm governance and proper usage of the financial prize.

EIT Manufacturing keeps the right to request any data related to the LEADERS Competition for 5 years after completion to ensure transparency and allow monitoring from EIT.

6.4 Withdrawal of the prize — Recovery of undue amounts

EIT Manufacturing may withdraw the prize after its award and recover all payments made if it finds out that:

- false information, fraud, or corruption was used to obtain it;
- the prize winners were not eligible or should have been excluded or – the prize winners are in serious breach of their obligations under these Guidelines.

6.5 Data protection

EIT Manufacturing ensures that any processing of personal data shall be performed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016, on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and in accordance with Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation). As a data subject, you have the right of access, the right to rectification, the right to erasure, the right to restrict processing, the right to data portability, the right to object, and the right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing. If you have a question about personal data processing or want to exercise your data subject rights, you can contact our Data Protection Officer at dpo@eitmanufacturing.eu. In the case of complaints, you can address them to the French regulator CNIL.

The collected personal data will be used solely for the procedure and assessment of the applications and the management, completion, organisation, dissemination of information, and publicity of the Competition. The data controller is EIT Manufacturing and/or its subsidiaries.

Personal data shall be deleted 5 years after the announcement of the competition winners.

Participants can indicate that EIT Manufacturing may grant access to parts of their submission to trusted investors and partners.

6.6 Acceptance of the Guidelines

By submitting the application form, the participant agrees to these Guidelines and its Annexes, which form part of the submission. Participants agree that they have no legal entitlement to a prize.

EIT Manufacturing reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these Guidelines. Amendments and additions to these Guidelines shall be valid only if communicated in writing or otherwise made available to the participants on the call page of the EIT Manufacturing website.

EIT Manufacturing also reserves the right to cancel or declare the Competition unsuccessful provided all applicants are informed and sufficient justification is given (for example no applications received, or all applications do not pass the default thresholds).

6.7 Confidentiality

EIT Manufacturing undertakes to use any Confidential Information shared by the applicants solely for the purposes of the LEADERS Competition. Confidential information shall mean data and/or information that is proprietary to, or possessed by, the applicants and not generally known to the public, or that has not yet been revealed whether in tangible or intangible form, whenever and however disclosed and might also be included in the application form. Confidential information must be expressly labelled as such in the application form.

Applicants agree that EIT Manufacturing and its subsidiaries can disseminate, publish, and make use of non-confidential information regarding the call, to promote the activities of EIT Manufacturing or establish reports or other necessary documents for EIT.

The applicants agree that data and information in the application form not labelled as confidential may be disclosed in connection with the activities of EIT Manufacturing.

Considering the confidential nature of the data and information referred to above, EIT Manufacturing also undertakes to (i) not disclose them in any way and any form, without prior written authorization of the company concerned; and (ii) not to use them for purposes other than those strictly necessary for participation in the LEADERS Competition.

Confidential Information may be shared among EIT Manufacturing and its subsidiaries (e.g., CLCs) solely for the purposes of the LEADERS Competitions. EIT Manufacturing undertakes to impose this confidentiality obligation on its employees and the employees of its subsidiaries and its collaborators, as well as on Rapporteurs and independent experts and all subjects who, by virtue of participating in the call for application as members of the Selection Committees or Jury, will take knowledge of or may have access to such confidential data and information.

6.8 Exclusion Criteria

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the call if they are in any of the situations of exclusion defined in Article 136 of the EU Financial Regulation⁷. All 6 top-ranked finalists shall sign a Declaration of Honour to confirm that they respect the above-mentioned criteria at the application stage. The 6 top-ranked finalists may be requested to provide relevant recent documentation substantiating the Declaration of Honour. Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in the exclusion of the applicants concerned.

6.9 Applicable Law

The present guidelines are governed by the applicable European Union laws (i.e. the EIT Regulation, the EU Financial Regulation, and the Horizon Europe Regulation) and are complemented, where necessary, by the law of France. The applicants agree to observe the obligations set forth in the (Model) Grant Agreement⁸ signed between the EIT and EIT Manufacturing and particularly Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out an action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping). These obligations will also be mentioned in the contracts to be signed if the application is successful.

⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32018R1046&rid=6#d1e13757-1-1>