



# **ERMA Booster Call** for Start-ups, Scale-ups, and Advanced Projects in Mining, Materials Processing & Recycling

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# ERMA Booster Call for Start-ups, Scale-ups, and Advanced Projects in Mining, Materials Processing & Recycling

## Executive Summary

EIT RawMaterials is a networking organisation committed to supporting Europe's transition to a green, circular and digital economy. EIT RawMaterials is the world's largest knowledge and innovation community in the raw materials sector and manages the European Raw Materials Alliance (ERMA) on behalf of the European Commission. EIT RawMaterials provides and attracts investment, connects to European industries, and facilitates the creation of impact across the EU raw materials value chain.

**With this call, EIT RawMaterials supports:**

- Innovative start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs
- Developing or active miners, processors and recyclers

**Raw Materials Innovators:** EIT RawMaterials is looking for raw materials and advanced materials innovation start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs to support. Investments of up to **€1,500,000** in funding are offered. EIT RawMaterials provide comprehensive value-added services, all aimed at delivering a lasting, sustainable impact on the EU raw materials value chain.

**Mine Developers, Miners, Processors and Recyclers:** Eligible companies with advanced, innovative, extraction, processing and recycling projects with EU impact are invited to apply for funding and collaborate with EIT RawMaterials to reach key milestones in their project's development. Each project may receive up to **€2,500,000** in funding through this call.

**The purpose of this document is to invite eligible companies to apply for this financial support and other support services.** Funding is provided through an open application process with multiple cut offs throughout 2025.

- **Cut off 1 – 24 March 2025**
- **Cut off 2 – 26 May 2025**
- **Cut off 3 – 8 September 2025**

Should your application be eligible, you will be given the opportunity to present your company or project to EIT RawMaterials staff and external evaluators, who will rate your application using the following criteria:

**Raw Materials Innovators:** Excellence, market & finance, team, impact, project implementation.

**Mine Developers, Miners, Processors and Recyclers:** Excellence, quality and efficiency of implementation (operational feasibility, financeability), impact, management.

Upon conditional acceptance of your application for funding, final documentation, including valuation for funding purposes, nature of support services EIT RawMaterials can provide, and any other matters shall be negotiated.

**All funding paid out will be subject to Horizon Europe cost eligibility rules.**

**Should you be interested in applying for funding, you are encouraged to read this document in full. If you require further information about the application, contact details are provided in this document.**

## About the call

Minerals, metals, and advanced materials are the foundation of the global energy revolution and the realization of the European Green Deal's ambitious objectives. But Europe's limited domestic supply of critical raw materials and heavy reliance on imports from only a few supplier countries poses significant risks amid escalating geopolitical tensions.

To address this, Europe is proactively developing a more circular economy, with EU support spotlighting innovation in recycling, substitution, and all aspects of raw material lifecycle management. EIT RawMaterials now manages the European Raw Materials Alliance (ERMA) on behalf of the European Commission, and is the world's largest knowledge and innovation community in the raw materials sector. The Critical Raw Materials Act, enacted in May 2024, is a bold initiative, designed to strengthen and sustain our access to raw material reserves, securing prosperity for today and generations to come. EIT RawMaterials is dedicated to ensuring this sustainable supply by sparking innovation, advancing education, and fostering entrepreneurship.

In light of the EU's September 2024 publication "The Future of European Competitiveness" <sup>1</sup>, EIT RawMaterials broadens the scope of its innovation, education and entrepreneurship by developing financial solutions supporting the critical raw materials value chain through access to finance for extraction, processing and recycling projects which will result in increased supply of raw materials for Europe. As the demand for raw materials grows, EIT RawMaterials will identify, finance and provide key services to those companies that can best materially impact the EU critical raw materials supply chain.

As an impact investor, EIT RawMaterials is committed to mobilizing its extensive pool of institutional, public and private investors and funds to execute the project with the support of its partners and to the benefit of the wide EIT RawMaterials community. This call addresses EIT RawMaterials Partners' demand for support with the execution of projects that are in an advanced stage of development and that are seeking direct investment by EIT RawMaterials.

EIT RawMaterials ERMA Booster call invites applications from **two Groups** that impact the EU Raw Materials supply chain:

### Group 1. Start-ups, Scale-ups and SMEs ("Booster Projects")

As the demand for cutting-edge raw materials solutions grows, EIT RawMaterials leads by example, identifying and empowering companies that are revolutionizing the sector with breakthrough technologies and sustainable practices. Through our ERMA Booster Call, we invite visionary founders to join our movement. **The present call is open for Group 1 throughout 2025 and EIT RawMaterials is looking for start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs to grow jointly until exit. We're offering investments of up to €500,000 in funding for seed stage start-ups and up to €1,500,000 in funding for late seed to Series A stage Scale-ups and SMEs. We provide comprehensive value-added services, all aimed at delivering a lasting, sustainable impact on the raw materials value chain.**

*[Group 1 companies are invited to apply in the following link by one of the Cut off dates](#)*

### Group 2. Raw Materials Large Projects ("ERMA Projects")

Through this call, eligible companies with advanced, innovative extraction, processing and recycling projects are invited to apply for funding and collaborate with EIT RawMaterials to reach key milestones in their project's development. **The present call is open for Group 2 throughout 2025 and EIT RawMaterials is looking for Developers, Producers and Recyclers whose projects are in scope either for the ERMA or EU Strategic Project. Partners of EIT RawMaterials that have projects in this Group are strongly encouraged to apply. Investments are offered of up to €2,500,000 to fund eligible costs of project operators. Comprehensive value-added services, all aimed at delivering a lasting, sustainable impact on the EU raw materials supply, are provided.**

Group 2 companies are invited to apply in the following link by one of the Cut off dates:

*[Listed Companies](#) | [Not Listed Companies](#)*

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<sup>1</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/topics/strengthening-european-competitiveness/eu-competitiveness-looking-ahead\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/topics/strengthening-european-competitiveness/eu-competitiveness-looking-ahead_en)

# Objectives

EIT RawMaterials' mission is to secure Europe's raw materials supply, close materials loops and design product solutions. As manager of the European Raw Materials Alliance (ERMA), the world's largest innovation community in the raw materials sector and a recognised impact investor, EIT RawMaterials provides an unparalleled platform to expedite and expand new businesses. Having supported over 800 startups, we are continuously elevating the most innovative raw materials solutions globally.

The EU Critical Raw Materials Act ("CRMA"), enacted in May 2024 targets to extract 10%, process and refine 40%, and derive from recycled materials 25% of the EU's annual consumption of Strategic Raw Materials by 2030. In principle, the EU should not be dependent on any single third country for more than 65% of imports of Strategic Raw Materials at any relevant stage in the supply chain.

EIT RawMaterials has the building blocks in place to support both **Group 1 startups-scale-ups and SMEs, and Group 2 advanced extraction, processing and recycling projects and companies**, to provide and attract investment and to connect industries across the raw materials value chain.

EIT RawMaterials is an impact investor and a unique global raw materials ecosystem, offering full-spectrum support. Partnering with EIT RawMaterials presents an exceptional opportunity for Group 1 and Group 2 companies to scale their company towards global success. Tailored support is on offer to the most promising companies and projects, combining funding and expert services to enhance business growth and scalability. Selected companies will tap into a unique set of services, tailor-made to their needs through the dedicated EIT RawMaterials team:

- **Access to Finance:** EIT RawMaterials invests with its own capital, builds the conditions for raw materials financing instruments and appetite in the market, and will support you securing capital through your journey to exit.
- **Access to Network:** Expand your enabling network by tapping into our global ecosystem of partners and grow your business.
- **Access to Customers / off-takers:** Increase your sales and secure your feedstock and/or off-take agreements with our network by implementing the value chain approach.
- **Access to Knowledge:** Our deep expertise in the raw materials sector and the creation of a collaborative environment support growing businesses to our value chain and beyond.
- **Access to Talents:** Fuel your company with the talents coming out of EIT RawMaterials Academy with entrepreneurial skills and relevant raw materials technical expertise.
- **Access to Experts:** EIT RawMaterials staff experts, and experts in our community, will support you with your specific needs to scale and grow your business (e.g. coaching, mentoring, Advisory Board, market, sales, corporate strategy).

EIT RawMaterials is opting for long-lasting relations, and builds on the services-against-equity framework, ensuring our dedication to your company's growth aligns with your own vision. EIT RawMaterials seeks impact-oriented companies that contribute to one or more of the below impact categories:

- Increased supply of CRMs/SRMs for Europe
- Savings of costs in raw materials value chain
- Carbon savings in the raw materials sector
- Creation of jobs in raw materials sector
- Improved industrial competitiveness
- Enhanced sustainability (sustainability standards)
- Securing raw materials supply
- Increased recycling rates
- CRM substitution/reduction
- Advanced materials development/produced
- Raw materials concentrate produced

EIT RawMaterials as an impact investor is committed to generate positive societal and environmental impact through its portfolio, while the economic impact will be re-directed to new ventures for additional impact generation. Impact metrics that we continuously monitor in our portfolio are:

- 1. Economic Impact:** Company revenues, company profits, jobs created/maintained/re-skilled, investment attracted.
- 2. Social Impact:** Female entrepreneurs, European companies using sustainability standards.
- 3. Environmental Impact:** CO2 emitted savings (CO2e), Increase of strategic and critical raw Materials extracted in EU (%), Increase of strategic and critical Raw Materials processed in EU (%), Increase of strategic and critical Raw Materials recycled in EU (%), New advanced materials developed.

Successful applicants must achieve one mandatory Key Performance Indicator (EIT Core KPI) within the framework of their proposed funded activities. In the case of Group 1, start-ups created or innovations launched on the market; and in the case of Group 2, business creation through investment attracted subsequent to EIT Raw Materials funding support. Further details are available in the application form. This will be part of the defined Project Plan and signed Project Agreement obligations.

## Application Process

### Who can apply

**Group 1 Eligibility Criteria. EIT RawMaterials is inviting Group 1. Start-ups, Scale-ups and SMEs<sup>2</sup> that:**

1. Are a registered legal entity in one of the EU Member Countries or Participating Countries in Horizon Europe<sup>3</sup> (at least at the time of application).
2. Have an innovation relevant to the market of one of the raw materials' Innovation Themes (as analysed below and in **Annex part 2**).
3. Have a strong founding/management team and 100% devoted time to the company for the next 5+ years.
4. Have a customer validated product/service at minimum TRL4 with a proven market need.
5. Have an average time to market and to revenues of 2-3 years.
6. Address a sizable/scalable market with high growth potential.
7. Demonstrate ease in collaboration and are enthusiastic about developing a stable, long-lasting relation with EIT RawMaterials.
8. Are in search of additional value-added services and financing advisory services support (indicative services value is minimum 20% to the funding request).
9. Are looking for an equity partner.
10. Confirm they can clearly demonstrate that any use of provided investment is compatible with Horizon Europe's eligibility criteria.
11. Can confidently execute expenditure of such funds in line with the eligibility rules.
12. Seed start-ups are eligible to apply up to € 500,000 and need to minimum meet the above eligibility criteria.
13. Scale-ups are eligible to apply up to € 1,500,000, only if they are at TRL8 and CRL8 minimum and have commercial revenues of € 200,000 minimum.
14. Propose **projects with duration** between **6-18 months** (exceptions may apply upon rational milestone and budget planning).

<sup>2</sup> See for SME definition: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-fundamentals/sme-definition\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-fundamentals/sme-definition_en)

<sup>3</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation\\_horizon-euratom\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf) & [https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/invitation\\_for\\_2023-25\\_business\\_plans\\_xkic\\_hei.docx.pdf](https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/invitation_for_2023-25_business_plans_xkic_hei.docx.pdf)

## Group 2 Eligibility Criteria. EIT RawMaterials is inviting companies in Group 2. Raw Materials Large Projects that:

1. Have projects that have been formally recognised by the EU Commission as a 'Strategic Project' (through the calls launched by DG Grow) and/or have been approved as an ERMA supported project at the time of the beginning of the proposed funded activity funding (please refer to 'Other Information Sources'). For clarity, applicant need not be an ERMA supported project or a Strategic Project at the time of application.
2. Are a registered legal entity in one of the EU member countries or Participating Countries in Horizon Europe<sup>4</sup> (at least at the time of application).
3. Have an active, advanced extraction, processing or recycling project relevant to the EU industry and supported by a techno-economic model. Extraction related projects must be at PFS stage or later by recognized international standards and norms. Recycling projects must have legally secured recyclable material in sufficient and reliable quantities and meet the quality standards required for the process and permits for waste recycling and handling must be in place for the entire duration of the proposed projects.
4. Have a strong management team with relevant experience.
5. Are technically feasible, realistic, economically viable, have potential to attract investment, and have a time to production of less than four years.
6. Confirm they can clearly demonstrate that any use of provided investment is compatible with Horizon Europe's eligibility criteria<sup>5</sup>, with an emphasis on innovation at TRL4 or higher.
7. Can confidently execute expenditure of such funds in line with the eligibility rules<sup>6</sup>.
8. Wish to secure additional mandated EIT RawMaterials support services including capital raising, marketing, and end user/ off-taker support.
9. Have the firm intention to supply a substantial amount of their Critical or Strategic Raw Material product<sup>7</sup> to one or several EU member states.
10. Are looking for equity investment.
11. Have a proposed funded activity with duration between 6-18 months (exceptions may apply upon rational milestone and budget planning).

Existing EIT RawMaterials Partners that have projects and proposed funding activities that fit the eligibility criteria listed above are strongly encouraged to apply.

## Group 1. Innovation Themes

The vision of EIT RawMaterials is to develop raw materials into a major strength for Europe and in line to this, **Group 1: Start-ups, Scale-ups and SMEs** applicants must fit to one of the innovation themes of raw materials value chain and one of the EIT RawMaterials Lighthouses (full analysis in **Annex part 2**):

- **Exploration** and raw materials resource assessment
- **Mining** in challenging environments
- Increased resource efficiency in **mineral and metallurgical processes**
- **Recycling** and material chain optimisation for End-of-Life products
- **Substitution** of critical and toxic materials in products and for optimised performance
- Design of products and services for the **circular economy**

<sup>4</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation\\_horizon-euratom\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf) & [https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/invitation\\_for\\_2023-25\\_business\\_plans\\_xkic\\_hei.docx.pdf](https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/invitation_for_2023-25_business_plans_xkic_hei.docx.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Eligible expense criteria guidelines are set out in [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> While EIT RawMaterials will provide guidance on eligibility, independent auditors dictate final eligibility. Ineligible expenses will not be reimbursed.

<sup>7</sup> [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials\\_en#critical-raw-materials-act](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials_en#critical-raw-materials-act)

EIT RawMaterials is particularly seeking companies developing solutions (products and services) supporting the three guiding strategic frameworks, called EIT RawMaterials Lighthouse programmes, which reflect the most pressing needs of the raw materials value chain.

1. **Responsible Sourcing Lighthouse:** leads the innovation in mineral exploration, responsible sourcing and processing of raw materials for Europe's green future.
2. **Sustainable Materials Lighthouse:** guides innovation in the making, using, and recycling of sustainable and cost-efficient raw materials for future green mobility and energy.
3. **Circular Societies Lighthouse:** fosters innovation in the radical shift to a circular economy and society enabling economic growth and carbon-neutrality.

## Group 2: Strategic Project Themes

EIT RawMaterials' vision is to develop raw materials into a major strength for Europe, and in line with this, use of funding by Group 2 applicants must fit into one or more of the innovative strategic project themes:

- **Extraction of critical and strategic raw materials**
- **Processing of critical and strategic raw materials**
- **Recycling of critical and strategic raw materials**

Innovation includes, but is not limited to, how the project contributes to:

1. The 2030 benchmarks for extraction, processing and recycling set out in Article 5(2), point (a) of the Critical Raw Materials Act;
2. Strengthening EU capacity to extract, process and recycle raw materials using innovative technologies;
3. Developing innovative exploration and geological models, processing, refining and remediation technologies to boost EU's competitiveness and sustainability

For this Call, EIT RawMaterials is particularly seeking companies which, or which seek to, apply innovation during their extraction, processing and recycling of critical and strategic raw materials to supply the EU ecosystem and therefore limit its dependency in line with the EU Critical Raw Materials Act<sup>8</sup>.

## UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

At global scale, EIT RawMaterials is committed to contribute to and fully comply with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and is dedicated to invest on innovations and projects contributing to at least on one or more EIT RawMaterials relevant UN SDGs<sup>9</sup>. Major relevant UN SDGs EIT RawMaterials contributes to already are:

- SDG #5 - Gender Equality
- SDG #6 - Clean Water and Sanitation
- SDG #7 - Affordable and Clean Energy
- SDG #8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG #9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- SDG #11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG #12 - Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG #13 - Climate Action
- SDG #15 - Life on Land

Please refer to EIT RawMaterials Strategic Agenda 2021-2027<sup>10</sup> and to JRC "Mapping the role of raw materials to SDGs"<sup>11</sup> for more detailed information on raw materials value chain contribution to SDGs.

<sup>8</sup> [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials\\_en#critical-raw-materials-act](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials_en#critical-raw-materials-act)

<sup>9</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

<sup>10</sup> [https://eitrawmaterials.eu/sites/default/files/2024-11/EIT\\_RM\\_Strategic\\_Agenda\\_2021-2027.pdf](https://eitrawmaterials.eu/sites/default/files/2024-11/EIT_RM_Strategic_Agenda_2021-2027.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC112892/sustainable\\_development\\_goals\\_report\\_jrc112892.pdf](https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC112892/sustainable_development_goals_report_jrc112892.pdf)



## Application

Applicants must **first clearly define their stage as company**, and in which Group they fall into as defined in the Call Guidelines, and follow the rules set for the respective Group. Companies applying for the wrong Group and/or on higher funding request against their stage will be considered as ineligible and will be eliminated from the evaluation process. Align with EIT RawMaterials staff in case of doubt as per the provided contacts (see “Talk to Us”).

**Group 1. Start-ups, Scale-ups and SMEs.** Applicants of Group 1 must present, by one of the Booster cut-off dates, an online application form in which they need to illustrate: company profile, problem/need addressed, technology, IP, customer needs, market and competition, business model, financial projections, team composition and expertise, workplan-budget for the booster project, and interest in partnering with EIT RawMaterials. Applications must be submitted by the contact person of the company via the registration link:

[Group 1 companies](#)

**Group 2: Raw Materials Large Projects.** Applicants must present, by one of the cut-off dates, an online application form in which they need to illustrate where possible/ applicable: company profile; main shareholders/ ultimate beneficiaries; project profile; project stakeholders and shareholders; industrial partners; financial advisors; relevance for the EU; main processing inputs/ outputs/ costs and materials; buyers/ offtakers; co-investors, business model; financial projections; project valuation for investment purposes; project NPV; recent company accounts; investor presentation, recent/ relevant news releases, research reports as applicable; management team composition and expertise; workplan-budget for the project funding; timeline and further funding requirements to reach production; permitting status, existing infrastructure; ESG credentials; job creation; community/ political/ social issues; and nature of interest in partnering with EIT RawMaterials. Applications must be submitted by the contact person of the company via the registration link:

Group 2: [Listed Companies](#) | [Not Listed Companies](#)

For both Groups, incomplete applications may be considered ineligible if essential elements are missing. The mandatory supporting documents are set out in the application form, downloadable from the [website](#).

## Selection Process

### Key dates

The present call is open throughout 2025. For the sake of clarity and to ensure a smooth selection and operational progress of the selected companies and projects, three cut-off dates for proposal submission will be organised. An additional cut-off may be organised subject to budget availability and upon discretion of EIT RawMaterials. EIT RawMaterials, in exceptional cases may invite for evaluation applicants prior the closure of a cut-off date.

- **Launch of call** – 24 January 2025
- **Cut off 1** – 24 March 2025
- **Cut off 2** – 26 May 2025
- **Cut off 3** – 8 September 2025

## Procedure

The application and selection procedure for both Groups 1 and 2 are as follows:

- 1. Online application:** EIT RawMaterials receives applications in each cut off date.
- 2. Eligibility evaluation:** first screening phase is performed by EIT RawMaterials staff to assess the degree of alignment of the application to the underlying conditions set in the call. – *two weeks after cut off deadline*
- 3. Short-list:** Investment committee will analyse all the eligible cases and short-list the best companies through a reality check and light due diligence in terms of investment and growth potential against the selection criteria and advance them to the further evaluation steps. – *four weeks after cut off deadline*
- 4. Online pitching session:** The eligible and short-listed applications will be invited to pitch their company in the evaluation committee comprised of EIT RawMaterials staff and external evaluators in an online session. – *four weeks after cut off deadline*
- 5. Application and pitch evaluation:** The evaluation committee will evaluate the applications and pitch according to the evaluation criteria described. A list of pre-selected projects to receive support along with the proposed feedback and mandatory changes (e.g. budget reduction) will be communicated to EIT RawMaterials Managing Board. – *five-six weeks after cut off deadline*
- 6. Managing Board approval:** Based on the evaluation and the overall available funding, the EIT RawMaterials Managing Board will propose a portfolio of projects to be funded in each cut off, conditional to a successful deal structure and signed Project Agreement. – *six-eight weeks after cut off deadline*
- 7. Results communication:** All applicants (pre-approved and rejected) will be informed by EIT RawMaterials through an email. – *six-eight weeks after cut off deadline*
- 8. Pre-Selected informed and signed:** The pre-approved applicants will be informed and enter into discussions with EIT RawMaterials for an equity engagement and deal structuring, concluding with a signed Project Agreement. – *up to four months after cut off deadline*

## Evaluation Criteria

Across all evaluation steps applications will be scored on the criteria listed below respectively for Group 1 and Group 2 and under the specified weighting percentage (for detailed analysis per criterion refer to [Annex part 3](#)).

### Group 1. Start-ups, Scale-ups and SMEs

CRITERIA	THRESHOLD	MAXIMUM POINTS
1. Excellence (20%)	2.5	5
2. Market & Finance (30%)	2.5	5
3. Team (30%)	2.5	5
4. Impact (10%)	2.5	5
5. Project & Implementation (10%)	2.5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15 (minimum required)</b>	<b>25</b>

### Group 2: Raw Materials Large Projects

CRITERIA	THRESHOLD	MAXIMUM POINTS
1. Excellence (20%)	2.5	5
2. Quality & Efficiency Of Implementation I: Operational Feasibility (20%)	2.5	5
3. Quality & Efficiency Of Implementation II: Financeability (20%)	2.5	5
4. Impact (20%)	2.5	5
5. Project & Implementation (20%)	2.5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15 (minimum required)</b>	<b>25</b>

The average of the evaluation committee scores will be used to produce the ranking and score them as follows:

**0: Non-existent, 1: Very poor, 2: Poor, 3: Fair, 4: Strong, 5: Excellent**

## Evaluation & Investment Committees

An **Investment Committee** per application is formulated from EIT RawMaterials to evaluate on the eligibility and on the short-list steps, while on the further steps evaluation takes place with the support of external evaluators (1 for start-up and scale-up cases up to €500,000 and €1,500,000 respectively; 2 for larger project cases up to €2,500,000) to be part of the **Evaluation Committee**. The Evaluation Committee will evaluate each application against the **Selection Criteria** in a balanced 50/50 average scoring between external and EITRM internal evaluators. On the basis of the evaluation and recommendation by the Evaluation Committee, EIT RawMaterials will decide on the final selected investments and reserves the right to offer selected candidates lower amounts than initially requested when, for example, the initial project submission appears over-optimistic, or the total allowable budget is too low to satisfy all the selected candidates/projects. EIT RawMaterials reserves the right not to choose any applications for final selection.

## Talk to us

The “ERMA Booster Call” for Start-ups & Scale-ups; and advanced Development, Mining & Recycling Projects is organised by EIT RawMaterials and “Access to Finance” function that coordinates the programme from selection until exit of invested companies. For more information, please refer to the website for FAQ or directly contact our team and talk to one of our key team members from Access to Finance function.

[contact.a2f@eitrawmaterials.eu](mailto:contact.a2f@eitrawmaterials.eu)

## Other information sources

Call web page: [eitrawmaterials.eu/erma-booster-call](https://eitrawmaterials.eu/erma-booster-call)

Group 1 Application link: [eitrawmaterials.mantisbi.io/call/6791703ec97ec](https://eitrawmaterials.mantisbi.io/call/6791703ec97ec)

Group 2 Application link (LISTED COMPANIES): [eitrawmaterials.mantisbi.io/call/679171e86c4d8](https://eitrawmaterials.mantisbi.io/call/679171e86c4d8)

Group 2 Application link (NOT LISTED COMPANIES): [eitrawmaterials.mantisbi.io/call/67917961c268b](https://eitrawmaterials.mantisbi.io/call/67917961c268b)

Partners of EIT RawMaterials: [eitrawmaterials.eu/about-us/partners/](https://eitrawmaterials.eu/about-us/partners/)

EIT RawMaterials Alumni: [alumni.eitrawmaterials.eu](https://alumni.eitrawmaterials.eu)

ERMA Application: [erma.eu/investment-proposal-template/](https://erma.eu/investment-proposal-template/)

CRMA Application: [single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials/strategic-projects-under-crma/guide-applicants\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials/strategic-projects-under-crma/guide-applicants_en)

# ANNEXES

## 1. Funding Conditions

### Funding amount

The support scheme will be as follows:

1. Financial support **with a maximum amount of up to €500,000 for Group 1 seed stage start-ups; maximum amount of € 1,500,000 for Group 1 late seed to Series A stage Scale-ups; and a maximum amount of up to €2,500,000 for Group 2 projects**. EIT RawMaterials invites applicants to align their budget request with the proposed funding activity expectations and impact, the maturity level, the customer traction, their valuation and investment attracted record.
2. As a general principle, the financial support is granted to selected beneficiaries based on a realistic cost estimate and is paid as **lump sum of up to EUR 60,000** and on the basis of **actual costs** incurred by the company for investments **above EUR 60,000 and up to EUR 2,500,000 in line with Horizon Europe eligibility rules**.
3. Participants who are partners of EIT RawMaterials will have to respect obligations as per legal statutes of EIT RawMaterials.
4. Funding will be attributed based on the proposed activities and budget submitted by the applicant and checked during the evaluation process. The final allocated amount will depend on the convincing justification of the costs and on the available budget with the amount allocated might differ from the amount initially requested by the applicant.
5. EIT RawMaterials reserves the right to offer selected candidates lower or higher amounts than initially requested when, for example, the initial project submission appears over-optimistic, or the total allowable budget is too low to satisfy all the selected candidates/projects.
6. Please note that final recipients of funding will be obligated to comply with the IPR rules under Article 16 of the MGA<sup>12</sup>.
7. Participants established in third countries not associated to HE may only receive a maximum amount of EUR 60,000<sup>13</sup>.
8. EIT RawMaterials intends to deploy a **total amount of €16,000,000 to €30,000,000 for the “ERMA Booster Call” for Start-ups, Scale-ups and Raw Materials Large Projects**, conditional to selected and signed quality applications. Additional amounts might be deployed upon at EIT RawMaterials discretion.

There is no formal minimum requirement of co-funding; however, projects that will show some co-funding and other sources of funding and ask for support for non-recurring costs (not for shareholder or personnel costs) will be positively evaluated, as an indication of the commitment of the company – or possible customers etc. – to the initiative.

All grants payed out will be subject to Horizon Europe cost eligibility rules as detailed in the Horizon Europe Annotated Model Grant Agreement.

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<sup>12</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga\\_horizon-euratom\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation\\_horizon-euratom\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf)

## Payment and arrangements

The amount of funding (up to EUR 2,500,000) will be paid to the selected applicants **in two instalments** by bank transfer.

1. Advance payment of the first instalment (80% of total approved amount) within 2 months of the date of signature of the Project Agreement and equity related documentation.
2. Payment of 20% balance on approval of the final report or on achievement of milestones and provision of cost reporting and associated evidence as requested for Horizon Europe cost eligibility.

Participants established in third countries not associated to HE may only receive a maximum amount of EUR 60,000.

## General Cost conditions

**IMPORTANT! All funding paid out will be subject to Horizon Europe cost eligibility rules as detailed in the Horizon Europe Annotated Model Grant Agreement.** Whilst EIT RawMaterials will provide guidance on eligibility of costs on a best-efforts basis, it is the full responsibility of the applicant to satisfy itself that its costs are eligible. The European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors may carry out checks, audits and investigations in relation to the funding, **and the right is reserved to take measures to recover funding, in the event of an unresolvable breach of eligibility rules, whether intentional or not.**

The following is a basic summary of eligible costs for general guidance only. An outline of the budget should be submitted together with the application, taking into account the below categories and clearly demonstrating that the requested grant is necessary for the successful implementation of the project activities.

1. **Personnel costs** are eligible. The weight and relevance given to personnel costs in the overall proposed budget will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the nature of the start-up, its stage of development and business activities.
2. **Travel costs** for dissemination are eligible, e.g. participating in events to recruit piloting customers or getting market feedback; demonstration activities.
3. **Equipment and depreciation costs** such as computers and phones are not supported. However, equipment rent or lease fees can be eligible during the usage period of the project.
4. **Subcontracting** for services can be eligible (e.g. technical support, access to infrastructures, market/IP studies, business acceleration services, internationalisation support, soft landing).
5. **Other goods & services** (please specify), e.g. consumables/components for the implementation of prototypes or running a pilot test.

## 2. Topics of Interest

### Group 1. Innovation Themes

The supply of a **range of ores, metals and critical minerals** is the main focus of the EIT RawMaterials innovation community. Bio-based and polymer materials will be considered only in view of their substitution potential of critical and toxic materials and for optimised performance or for multi-material product recycling. **Petrochemical raw materials, food/agricultural raw materials and construction materials are excluded.**

Some detailed examples per thematic topic of the raw materials are provided below.

## 1. Exploration.

Technologies and solutions for improved and new mineral exploration. As an example, solutions could include:

- a. New and improved geological models, better exploration model understanding and techniques for going 3D/4D, drones, etc.
- b. New instrumentation, methods and technologies for more reliable, cheaper, faster and safer mineral exploration, including technologies and services for innovative data acquisition, big data analysis/handling and utilising existing/historical data sets for exploration and mining.
- c. Application of new innovations, new geological models and rethinking/re-evaluation of geological settings/prospects to provide new exploration prospects and mining targets.

## 2. Intelligent Mining.

Technologies and solutions for more efficient, safer and sustainable modern mining. As an example, solutions could include:

- a. Application of new technologies/services for more efficient production, better safety, better utilization of equipment and personnel for mining. Autonomous mining equipment, Internet of Things, virtual reality, UAVs/robotics, automation, real-time data that will improve planning, scheduling of operations and delivering better efficiencies and cost savings. Self-aware and safe machines that are capable of ordering their own spare parts and service engineers, and are connected to each other, control centres and back offices far away.
- b. Innovative services, approaches and products which increase public understanding and awareness of the need for raw materials, exploration and mining, ensure corporate social responsibility and social license to operate as well as added values of mining including remediation.

## 3. Mineral and metallurgical processes.

Technologies and solutions for mineral and metal processing and for improved materials production. As an example, solutions could include:

- a. Optimised extraction and production processes for metals and alloys, improving the efficiency of the process, using less energy and water, reducing cost and the production of waste.
- b. Technology that address equipment-damage problems such as wall thinning, creep or corrosion.

## 4. Recycling.

Technologies and solutions for materials supply from secondary sources and recycling. As an example, solutions could include:

- a. Solutions for recycling of end-of-life products, extraction from industrial residues, tailings, urban and landfill mining (e.g. WEEE, batteries, magnets, solar cells etc.)
- b. Cost-efficient and clever collection, dismantling and sorting of waste.

## 5. Substitution of critical and toxic materials and for optimized performance

New technologies or services that make it possible to substitute or use lower quantities of critical or toxic materials in key industries. For example:

- a. Substitution of critical and toxic metals in specific energy materials, such as platinum in fuel cells, cobalt in lithium ion batteries, or Nd and Dy in Nd-Fe-B permanent magnets.

- b. Substitution of critical and toxic metals like Co and W in carbides, speciality metals in high strength steels and super alloys, including in design and manufacturing.
- c. New material systems that contain less or no critical and toxic materials, for instance, for use in batteries, permanent magnets, solar cells, and thermoelectric and magneto caloric applications.
- d. New or optimized materials for additive manufacturing, e.g. in printable electronics.
- e. New lightweight composites and designs as substitutes for critical materials containing high strength steels and for optimized performance.
- f. Solutions that integrate new materials into a circular economy, e.g. technology and business that enables and builds upon the reuse and recycling of newly developed, high performance materials.
- g. New products, systems and services for optimized raw materials use, particularly with respect to mobility and energy technologies.

## 6. Circular economy.

Solutions and business models implementing circular economy concepts, e.g. *new business models for resource recovery, product life extension (repairing, re-manufacturing, etc.), product as a service, sharing platforms.*

## EIT RawMaterials Lighthouses

Lighthouses (hereafter ‘LH’) are large-scale and long-term coordinated innovation initiatives that address critical and specific raw materials challenges for Europe. They are mission approaches to innovation challenges, directly steering EIT RawMaterials activities towards the achievement of its strategic objectives and impact KPIs. LHs will generate tangible solutions for societal challenges that have raw materials at their core. In doing so, they will raise awareness about the role and importance of raw materials and create a positive perception about raw materials and their associated industries.

By integrating high-level innovation and education and by promoting our three approaches of responsible, sustainable, and circular raw materials value chains, EIT RawMaterials can significantly contribute to building a European industry that is strategically more autonomous, less exposed to supply chain risks, and is expanding value creation and job creation in emerging industrial sectors. These include the following value chains: batteries, fuel cells and electrolysis, magnets and motors (e.g., wind turbines and traction motors), photovoltaics, electronics (incl. digital technologies), and lightweight design (see JRC 2021; Table 1). In addition, the following areas: the future of exploration, mining and processing sector; Industrial Symbiosis and 3D Printing were identified.

	Responsible Sourcing	Sustainable Materials	Circular Societies
<b>Strategic Technologies and Value Chains</b>	Batteries, fuel cells, magnets and motors, photovoltaics, electronics, lightweight design		
<b>Thematic Focus Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smart, data-driven targeting of ore deposits</li> <li>Mining and ore processing of the highest safety and environmental standards</li> <li>Social licence to operate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substitution of critical, toxic, and low-performance materials</li> <li>Resource-efficient materials design and processing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Industrial symbiosis</li> <li>End-of-life product recycling</li> <li>Design for recycling and lifetime extension</li> <li>Traceability, sustainability, supply chain transparency</li> </ul>
<b>EIT RawMaterials Strategic Objectives</b>	Securing raw materials supply	Design materials solutions	Closing material loops

*The EIT RawMaterials Lighthouses drive innovation and education initiatives for every element of the value chain to secure supply, create jobs, reduce carbon emission, maximise circularity and minimize harm to our environment. Several strategic value chains are considered.*



## Lighthouse Responsible Sourcing

**Challenge:** Boosting European exploration and mining efforts (from greenfield to post-closure) and strengthening processing capabilities for critical strategic raw materials are vital steps toward a more sustainable future. In this context, three approaches are at the core of the Lighthouse Responsible Sourcing:

- achieving a more targeted and cost-effective exploration and quicker transition to mining operation;
- reducing the environmental footprint of mining and processing; and
- improving the efficiency of mineral and metallurgical processing

In alignment with the above-mentioned mission, the ERMA Booster Call is looking for innovations on the following topics:

**1. Exploration:** data-driven decision making in the extractive sector related to at least one of the identified, strategic EU industrial value chains

**2. Mining and processing:** responsible sourcing of materials related to at least one of the identified, strategic EU industrial value chains

**3. Future exploration, mining, and processing technologies:**

- a. Advanced and fully integrated exploration – smart targeting of ore deposits
- b. Future mining – Increase safety and reduce the environmental footprint of mining operations (from early operation to post-closure)
- c. Mineral and metallurgical processing – improve efficiency and reduce emissions and CO<sub>2</sub>-footprint

## Lighthouse Sustainable Materials

**Challenge:** The choice and design of pre-cursor materials, intermediates, and advanced materials have a significant impact on the overall resource efficiency, footprint, performance, and cost of a product. At the same time, substitution is a disruptive intervention into an industrial ecosystem that comes with potentials and risks.

**Approach:** This Lighthouse focusses on the substitution of critical, toxic, and low-performance materials, i.e., at the elemental, materials, and processing levels. Key technological approaches include the modelling of materials and processes, alloy development, microstructure engineering, and resource efficient materials design and processing, including near-net-shape processing, e.g., 3D printing.

In this context and in alignment with the above-mentioned mission, the ERMA Booster Call is looking for innovations on the following topics; that is, with reference to at least one of the identified, strategic EU industrial value chains:

1. Innovation in the substitution of critical, toxic, and low-performance materials
2. Advanced materials' processing, incl. additive manufacturing, including, for example, powder development and microstructure engineering
3. Resource efficient design of materials

## Lighthouse Circular Societies

**Challenge:** The concept of a Circular Economy has recently gained traction in Europe as a positive, solutions-based perspective for achieving economic development within increasing environmental constraints. Raw, processed, and advanced materials, from primary and secondary sources, are the backbone of the economy. A radical shift is required from linear to circular thinking. End-of-life products, so-called "waste" must be considered as a resource for new product cycles, while

losses and stocks of unused materials must be minimized and valorized along the entire raw materials' value chains. In addition, business opportunities in strategically linking the processing of different materials' value chains must be considered to define the best circular solution from a systems point of view. This is defined as Industrial Symbiosis. Awareness of the benefits of closing material loops must be raised in society.

**Approach:** The Circular Societies Lighthouse focusses on innovation and education related to industrial symbiosis, design for recycling and life-time extension, end-of-life product recycling, as well as in the chain of custody (traceability, sustainability, transparency).

In this context and aligning with the above-mentioned mission, the ERMA Booster Call is looking for innovations on the following topics, that is, with reference to at least one of the identified, strategic EU industrial value chains:

1. Industrial symbiosis: turning waste resources into a valuable raw materials feedstock for EU industries.
2. Optimise the design of products to create a so-called design for recycling and lifetime extension, to create significant impact in raw materials and energy efficiency.
3. Innovation in end-of-life product recycling
4. Innovation to improve traceability, sustainability, and transparency across raw materials value chains (so called Chain of custody)

## Group 2: Strategic Project Themes

A secure and diversified supply and resource-efficient use of Strategic and Critical Raw Materials are crucial for the success of the Green and Digital Transitions as well as the resilience of key industrial sectors of the EU such as defence and aerospace. The EIT RawMaterials innovation community is instrumental in this success and therefore will support innovative companies which aim to:

- **Extract Critical and Strategic raw materials**
- **Process Critical and Strategic raw materials**
- **Recycle Critical and Strategic raw materials**

The supported projects need to be innovative, technically feasible within a reasonable timeframe, show expected production volumes and impact on EU supply, and be implemented with high ESG standards.

### 3. Evaluation Criteria

Each application will be scored on the criteria listed in the following tables, respectively for Group 1 and Group 2, and the scoring in relation to each criterion will be based on the guidelines shown:

#### Group 1. Start-ups, Scale-ups and SMEs.

CRITERION (WEIGHT)	EXPLANATION
<b>1. EXCELLENCE (20%)</b>	<p><i>Product / service, Innovation, technology excellence and feasibility, Technology Readiness Level (TRL), IP Status, competition &amp; competitive advantage.</i></p> <p>The innovation should be relevant to the raw materials value chain. Strong IP protection/potential protection and freedom to operate, unique-proven-feasible technology, competitive advantage and clear competition knowledge etc.</p>
<b>2. MARKET &amp; FINANCE (30%)</b>	<p><i>Market size, beachhead market, business model, business relevance, growth potential, value proposition, customer and offtakers, Customer Readiness Level (CRL), financials (revenue vs. costs), customer pipeline, active sales, time to market, equity model.</i></p> <p>A clear market opportunity, economic feasibility, addressing a large market size, customer’s engagement, solid scalable vision and plan etc.</p>
<b>3. TEAM (30%)</b>	<p><i>Founders, expertise, engagement, cap table, entrepreneurial/business skills.</i></p> <p>Team capability is of the utmost importance since execution is key. Team members should demonstrate relevant expertise, full engagement, versatile and complimentary skills, personality and track records. Clear and investable cap table is essential.</p>
<b>4. IMPACT (10%)</b>	<p><i>EIT RawMaterials relevant impact, KPIs, SDGs, output, Rol potential.</i></p> <p>Relevant impact metrics as mentioned in the call text will be evaluated and constantly be reported. Impact for the EIT RawMaterials value chain and Strategic Agenda, to relevant SDGs and to EIT RawMaterials KPIs.</p>
<b>5. PROJECT &amp; IMPLEMENTATION (10%)</b>	<p><i>Project plan, milestones, budget, output, solid execution.</i></p> <p>A clear roadmap with careful planning of tasks and milestones and the existence of a sound budget will be considered carefully, since they will become a contractual commitment laid out in the project agreement.</p>

#### Group 2. Raw Materials Large Projects Evaluation Grading

CRITERION (WEIGHT)	EXPLANATION
<b>1. EXCELLENCE (20%)</b>	<p><i>Where applicable to each of extraction, processing and recycling projects: Project intrinsic factors, including but not limited to jurisdiction, climate, resource/reserve, security of supply, license status, locality to other successful projects, infrastructure (such as road, rail, water, power labour force), environmental factors, social factors, development stage, amount of supporting data. Gender equality is also a cross cutting criteria and gender balance is promoted throughout this call.</i></p> <p><i>Proposals for recycling projects, and in relation with material flow and composition, should include assessment of whether sufficient quantities of recyclable materials are available, determining if there are contracts or reliable sources for a steady material supply, and verifying if the waste stream meets the quality standards required for processing.</i></p> <p><i>Innovation, which includes, but is not limited to, development and/or application and/or optimization of new extraction and processing technologies, investigation of new regions, and creation of new processes, are an important component of the evaluation.and should be emphasised in the application.</i></p> <p><i>The funding use should demonstrate a clear progression on the pathway to production, or production optimization.</i></p>

CRITERION (WEIGHT)	EXPLANATION
<b>2. QUALITY &amp; EFFICIENCY OF IMPLEMENTATION</b> <b>I: OPERATIONAL FEASIBILITY (20%)</b>	<p>Where applicable to each of extraction, processing and recycling projects: Project operational factors, including but not limited to multi-year technical model/ economic model, timeline milestones and budget to production, PEA, PFS, FS, DFS, BFS studies as available produced to internationally recognized standards. Expansion/ exploration/ growth potential, value proposition, customers and off-takers, project development stage. How strongly are ESG principles embedded in the project.</p> <p>The evaluation for recycling projects involves but are not limited to assessment of whether there are proven and efficient technologies available for the target materials, determining whether the facility can handle the expected waste volume, also in relation to permits, and verifying if the operational costs fall within a feasible range. Other criteria include but are not limited to assessing proximity of the proposed site to material sources or distribution channels, availability of infrastructure, transport links, and utilities, as well as the reasonableness of logistics costs and carbon footprint.</p>
<b>3. QUALITY &amp; EFFICIENCY OF IMPLEMENTATION</b> <b>II: FINANCEABILITY (20%)</b>	<p>The probability that the project will be able to attract further financing with the support of EIT RawMaterials, after any EIT RawMaterials financing has been deployed. The valuation of the project and realism of management in the vision and mission to finance the project and bring it to fruition.</p>
<b>4. IMPACT (20%)</b>	<p>EIT RawMaterials relevant impact, KPIs, SDGs, output, RoI potential. Ability to make a meaningful contribution to the security of the Union's supply of strategic and/or critical raw materials; diversify EU supplies from third party countries; increase EU capacity to extract, process and recycle.</p>
<b>5. MANAGEMENT (20%)</b>	<p>To what extent is the application led by a reputable, strong, committed, experienced, invested management team who present well and can answer all reasonable questions.</p>

## Evaluation Grading

**(0-2) Non-existent / Poor** | The application information is poor to make an accurate evaluation and investment decision.

**(3) Fair** | The application has merits, but is lacking details and/or justified information to a proper investment decision.

**(4) Strong** | The application is full with solid data, evidence and justifications in place. High potential to be a scalable and impactful investment case.

**(5) Excellent** | An application that is virtually perfect with very few open elements or reservations, obvious and straightforward investment case.

## Exclusion Criteria

Consulting service companies without a tangible product will be excluded, including one-person companies.

Participants will be excluded if they, or any one of them:

- is subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion)
- is in one of the following situations:
  - bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
  - declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
  - found guilty of grave professional misconduct by a final judgment or decision (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)

- convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- found guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EC Regulation No. 2988/95 (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- has misrepresented information required for participating in the call or fails to submit such information
- was involved in the preparation of the grant documents and this entails a distortion of competition.

## Diversity and gender

At EIT RawMaterials, we embrace the transformative power of diversity and advocate for gender equality. As Europe's premier innovation network, we celebrate the variety of nationalities, ages, abilities, and genders that make up our community. Each day, we cultivate a culture of inclusivity, actively engaging with diverse communities across Europe. We firmly believe that to propel European innovation forward, we must champion the involvement of women as innovators, entrepreneurs, and leaders in decision-making processes.

Diversity is our driving force, enabling us to craft optimal solutions to the world's most pressing challenges and catalyse innovation. Collaboration with organisations that share our commitment to diversity and gender equality is paramount to us. Therefore, we welcome applicants who share their diversity policies and initiatives, particularly those addressing the gender pay gap, promoting work-life balance, and fostering gender-balanced teams, especially at managerial levels.

We view mutual learning as integral to our partnership, recognising that true innovation excellence can only be achieved by considering both women's and men's diverse perspectives and needs. Hence, in our innovation, education, and business creation calls, we prioritize proposals that integrate a gender dimension into their design, encompassing intended impacts, outputs, outcomes, and beneficiaries as a critical ranking criterion in case of equal scoring.

## 4. Reporting Conditions

Participants must adhere to the following reporting requirements:

1. 6-month / Mid-term / year end reporting of the ongoing activities and milestones achieved, as well as financial reporting on actual costs incurred.
2. A comprehensive final report on the project activities and actual costs will be requested at the latest one month from the end of the project. **This report is a requirement to receive the final balance payment.**
3. All projects will be tracked and their progress will be assessed for 5 years after the end of the funding period.
4. Participants in the selected ERMA Booster projects shall allow and support any checks, reviews, audits and investigations by EIT RawMaterials, the EIT and/or any other competent EU body deemed necessary.

All applications, pitching and reporting shall be done in English.

## 5. EIT RawMaterials Financial Sustainability

As part of our mandate by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) to foster technological research and development on a long-term, financially sustainable basis, we are interested to hear how you are willing to contribute to the EIT RawMaterials and its community's Financial Sustainability scheme in order to re-fuel EIT RawMaterials support programmes.

EIT RawMaterials is committed to supporting the best ideas and the projects with the highest potential to generate an impact in the raw materials value chain, as well as to developing its financial sustainability strategy, as mandated by the EIT.

As a result, selected participants in this call will be required to contribute to the financial sustainability strategy of EIT RawMaterials and its community with EIT RawMaterials Equity participation: EIT RawMaterials shall be entitled to acquire interest in the equity of the venture ("Equity Participation"). The price of the Equity Participation shares to be issued to EIT RawMaterials shall be either determined on a fixed price/percentage basis. The valuation of the venture shall be made on a pre-money basis with the funding and services issued under the Booster programme to constitute the EIT RawMaterials capital contribution.

The EIT RawMaterials Financial Sustainability scheme ("FS-Scheme" or "Financial Sustainability Scheme") shall reasonably take into account the amount of the funding allocated, the impact generated or to be generated by it and, if applicable, additional opportunities and services provided by EIT RawMaterials such as successful access to investors and customers. Details of the Financial Sustainability Scheme shall be agreed upon as part of the Project Agreement (PA). Nevertheless, applicants are asked to indicate their proposals for key elements of their FS Scheme when applying under this Call.

## 6. Dissemination, Communication and Visibility

### Publicity by the selected companies

The selected companies must promote the EIT RawMaterials ERMA Booster Call and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner. A communications package including guidelines will be provided to all selected companies.

Unless EIT RawMaterials requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.) must:

- a. display 'Supported by' text and the EIT RawMaterials logo with the EU emblem (equal width for the EIT RawMaterials landmark and the EU flag),
- b. which includes the following text: "Co-funded by the European Union"

When displayed together with another logo, the EIT RawMaterials logo and EU emblem must have appropriate prominence.

For the purposes of their obligations, the selected companies may use the EIT RawMaterials logo and the EU emblem without first obtaining separate approval from EIT RawMaterials.

This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use.

Moreover, they may not appropriate the EU emblem or any similar trademark or logo, or seek any other intellectual property rights in relation thereto, whether by registration or by any other means. EIT RawMaterials reserves the right to revoke the above right of use at any time in its sole and unfettered discretion.

## Publicity by EIT RawMaterials

EIT RawMaterials may use, for its communication and publicizing activities, information relating to the action, documents (notably summaries) for publication as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material that it receives from the participants (including in electronic format).

EIT RawMaterials will publish the names of the funded companies, their origin, the amount of the grant and its nature and purpose — unless they have requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threatening their security and safety or harms their commercial interests).

Photos and videos taken by EIT RawMaterials during EIT RawMaterials events where the selected companies will feature are the sole property of EIT RawMaterials.

## Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. By submitting their application, applicants warrant that they hold ownership or have legally secured the right to use all elements of the innovative product or service and that the provided materials and information do not infringe any intellectual or other property rights, including patents, of any other persons, companies or other entities. Elements of the submission that are based on rights held by others, such as patents, shall be marked as such in the submission.

EIT RawMaterials and their authorized representatives in the programme undertake to ensure the confidentiality of the projects presented and developed throughout the ERMA Booster projects.

By submitting their application to the programme, applicants consent that EIT RawMaterials will collect, transfer, process, store and delete their data under the above-mentioned conditions.

The selected companies agree that their data, the receipt of grants, and non-confidential information about their project, may be used by EIT RawMaterials and their authorized representatives for promotion of their activities, without compensation. Non-confidential information related to the project will be only provided after authorization of the applicants or the one marked with “public summary”.

By submitting the application for this EIT RawMaterials Programme, applicants agree to the EIT RawMaterials Privacy Policy.

The EIT RawMaterials’ Code of Conduct will be followed throughout the evaluation process. External evaluators will receive specific instructions on the evaluation process, and access to the proposals will be granted to each Evaluator only after the upload of her/his ‘Evaluator Agreement’ with provisions on confidentiality, conflict of interest and code of conduct.

## 7. Legal Conditions

### Processing of personal data

Any personal data will be processed by EIT RawMaterials in accordance with the EIT RawMaterials privacy policy<sup>14</sup>.

All selected applicants consent that EIT RawMaterials publishes, in whatever form or medium, the following information:

- Company Name
- Member country of origin (address or NUTS 2 region)
- Their activities in relation to the award of the Grant (via the summary for publication they provided)
- Grant amount

The participants must process personal data in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements, if any); see the GDPR<sup>15</sup> guidelines.

### Ethics

The recipient company's activities must be carried out in compliance with:

- a. ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity), and
- b. applicable international, EU and national law.

No funding will be awarded for activities carried out outside the EU, if they are prohibited in all member countries.

The participants must respect the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity<sup>16</sup>.

### Security

The activities must be carried out in compliance with Commission Decision 2015/444, i.e. security-sensitive information must be EU-classified, if its unauthorized disclosure could adversely impact the interests of the EU or of one (or more) of its member countries. Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be awarded a grant.

### Conflict of Interest

**Selected beneficiaries must avoid any conflict of interest and comply with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and sound financial management.**

The participants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective award of the grant is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest').

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<sup>14</sup> <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/privacy-policy/>

<sup>15</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection_en)

<sup>16</sup> European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA (All European Academies) and ESF (European Science Foundation) of March 2017 <https://www.allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ALLEA-European-Code-of-Conduct-for-Research-Integrity-2017.pdf>.



They must inform EIT RawMaterials without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interest, and immediately take all necessary steps to rectify this situation.

EIT RawMaterials may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

## Liability for damages

EIT RawMaterials cannot be held liable for any damages caused to the participants or to third parties as a consequence of the funding, including for gross negligence.

EIT RawMaterials cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the funding received.

## Withdrawal of the Funding – Recovery of the undue amounts

EIT RawMaterials may withdraw the funding after its award and recover all payments made, if it discovers that:

- a. false information, fraud or corruption was used to obtain it, or
- b. a successful applicant was not eligible or should have been excluded, or
- c. a successful applicant is in serious breach of its obligations under these Terms & Conditions.

## Administrative sanctions

If a participant has committed irregularities or fraud or has made false declarations, EIT RawMaterials may also:

- a. exclude the participant from all future contracts, grants and contests financed from the EU or Euratom budget for a maximum of five years (or ten years in case of repetition), and/or
- b. impose a financial penalty of between 2% and 10% of the value of the grant (or between 4% and 20% in case of repetition).

## Cancellation of the call

EIT RawMaterials may cancel the contest or decide not to award the funding, without any obligation to compensate participants, if:

- a. no applications are received
- b. the investment committee does not find a successful applicant
- c. the successful applicant is not eligible or must be excluded (cf. sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this call)
- d. the objective of the contest has already been achieved

## Terms and Conditions

By submitting their application form, applicants agree to the Terms and Conditions, which form part of their submission. EIT RawMaterials reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these Terms and Conditions. Amendments and additions to these Terms and Conditions shall be valid if communicated in writing on the EIT RawMaterials website or otherwise made available to the applicants.

These Terms and Conditions are governed by the laws of Germany. Any disagreement or dispute which may arise in connection with these Terms and Conditions which cannot be settled amicably will be brought before the courts of Berlin, Germany.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, under no circumstances and under no legal theory whether in tort (including negligence) contract or otherwise shall EIT RawMaterials be liable for any special indirect, punitive, incidental or consequential damages, including loss of profit.

You may withdraw your application at any time by informing us by email or by withdrawing your registration at any time.

Beneficiaries might be subject to a formal ex-post impact assessment within at least five years after the end of the activity. This is to determine the impact of the activities outputs.

## Appeal and redress procedure

Upon receipt of the feedback, the applicant may wish to lodge a request for redress, if there is a concern that there might have been a shortcoming in the way a proposal was evaluated, or if the results of the eligibility checks are incorrect. The redress procedure is not meant to call into question the judgement made by the expert-evaluators. It will consider only procedural shortcomings and factual errors.

Requests for redress should be raised within one month of the receipt of the evaluation feedback sent by EIT RawMaterials, and should be sent to [compliance@eitrawmaterials.eu](mailto:compliance@eitrawmaterials.eu). Requests must:

- be related to the evaluation process, or eligibility checks;
- include a clear description of the grounds for the complaint;
- be received within the time limit specified above.

An initial reply will be sent to complainants no later than two weeks after the deadline for redress requests. This initial reply will indicate when a definitive reply will be provided. A redress committee of EIT RawMaterials may be convened to examine the evaluation process for the case under consideration. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of requests, and equal treatment of applicants. The redress committee itself, however, does not re-evaluate the proposal. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the committee may review the evaluation report and individual comments, and examine the CVs of the evaluation experts. Following its review, the committee will recommend a course of action to the EIT RawMaterials OMT. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could have affected the funding decision, all or part of the proposal may be re-evaluated. Unless there is clear evidence of a shortcoming there will be no follow-up or re-evaluation. The Executive Board of EIT RawMaterials will be informed of any redress procedures in due course.

Please note:

- This procedure is concerned with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process.
- The committee will not call into question the judgment of the individual expert-evaluators, whose qualifications have already been assessed and validated.
- A re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming that affects the quality assessment of a proposal. This means, for example, that a problem relating to one evaluation criterion will not lead to a re-evaluation if a proposal has failed anyway on any other criterion.

- The evaluation score following any re-evaluation will be regarded as definitive. It may be lower than the original score.
- Only one request for redress per proposal will be considered by the committee.
- All requests for redress will be treated confidentially.

## Technology Readiness Level (TRL) and Customer Readiness Level (CRL)

