



Booster Call for Innovative Raw Materials Solutions 2024-2025

25 March 2024

DISCLAIMER

These guidelines might be subject to further development and modifications, depending on instructions that will be provided to EIT RawMaterials in the coming months. Applicants are encouraged to regularly check the call pages of the EIT RawMaterials website for the latest version of the guidelines.

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"Booster Call" for Innovative Raw Materials Solutions 2024-2025

About the call

Minerals, metals, and advanced materials are the foundation of the global energy revolution and the realisation 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 transitioning to a circular economy, spotlighting innovation in recycling, substitution, and all aspects of raw material lifecycle management. The Critical Raw Materials Act is a bold initiative, designed to strengthen and sustain our 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. As the demand for cutting-edge raw materials solutions grows, EIT RawMaterials leads by example, identifying and empowering companies that are revolutionising the sector with breakthrough technologies and sustainable practices.

Through our Booster Call, we invite visionary founders to join our movement. We're propelling early-stage startups to market breakthroughs and aiding more advanced enterprises in reaching vital milestones.

The present call is open throughout 2024 and 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 and provide comprehensive value-added services, all aimed at delivering a lasting, sustainable impact on the raw materials value chain.

Objectives

EIT RawMaterials' mission is to secure Europe's raw materials supply, close materials loops and design product solutions.

We have the building blocks in place to support deep tech startups and talent, to attract investment and to connect industry with research and education.

As 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 400 startups, we are continuously elevating the most innovative raw materials solutions globally.

EIT RawMaterials is an impact investor and a unique global raw materials ecosystem, offering full-spectrum support from the earliest stages to Series A funding. Partnering with EIT RawMaterials presents an exceptional opportunity for start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs to scale their company towards global success. We pledge tailored support to the most promising ventures, combining funding and expert services to enhance business growth and scalability. Selected companies will tap into a unique set of services, tailored-made to their needs through the dedicated EIT RawMaterials team:

- **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 Financing:** EIT RawMaterials invests with its own capital, builds the conditions for raw materials financing instruments and appetite in the market, and will support you on securing capital through your journey to exit.
- **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 in our community experts will support on your specific needs to scale and grow your business (e.g. coaching, mentoring, Advisory Board, market, sales, financial strategy etc.).

EIT RawMaterials is opting for long lasting relations, builds on the services-against-equity framework, ensuring our dedication to your company's growth aligns with your own vision. EIT RawMaterials seeks for impact-oriented companies that have a scalable product/service and/or business model to achieve:

- Savings of costs in raw materials value chain
- Carbon savings in the RM sector
- Creation of jobs in RM 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 RM produced in EU (%), Increase recovery and recycling of CRMs and Strategic Raw Materials (%), New advanced materials developed.

Application Process

Who can apply

EIT RawMaterials is inviting **start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs**¹ that:

1. Are a registered legal entity in one of the EU member countries or Countries Associated to Horizon Europe² (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 equity partner.
10. Propose **projects with duration between 6-18 months** (exceptions may apply upon rational milestone and budget planning).

Innovation Themes

EIT RawMaterials vision is to develop raw materials into a major strength for Europe and in line to this, 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**

EIT RawMaterials is particularly seeking companies developing solutions (products and services) supporting the 3 guiding strategic frameworks, called EIT RawMaterials Lighthouse programmes, which reflect the most pressing needs of the raw materials value chain.

¹ See for SME definition: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=O:L:2003:124:0036:0041:EN:PDF>

² See https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-eura-tom_en.pdf

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.

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 contributing to at least on one or more EIT RawMaterials relevant UN SDGs³. 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 2021-2027⁴ and to JRC "Mapping the role of raw materials to SDGs"⁵ for more detailed information on raw materials value chain contribution to SDGs.

Application

Applicants must present by one of the cut-off dates an online application form in which they should 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:

<https://eitrawmaterials.mantisbi.io/call/6685b312a4194/>

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: <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/booster-call/>

³ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

⁴ https://eitrawmaterials.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/EIT-RawMaterials_Strategic-Agenda_2021-2027.pdf

⁵ https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC112892/sustainable_development_goals_report_jrc112892.pdf

Selection Process

Key dates

The present call is **open throughout 2024 and 2025**. For the sake of clarity and to ensure a smooth selection and operational progress of the selected start-ups, four cut-off dates for proposal submission will be organized. An additional cut-off may be organized 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.



Procedure

The application and selection procedure 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. *2 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. *4 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. *4 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. *5-6 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. *6 – 8 weeks after cut off deadline*
7. **Results communication:** All applicants (pre-approved and rejected) will be informed by EIT RawMaterials through an email. *6 – 8 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 4 months after cut off deadline*

Evaluation Criteria

Across all evaluation steps applications will be scored on the criteria listed below and under the specified weighting percentage (for detailed analysis per criterion refer to Annex part 3)

| 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 |
| TOTAL | 15 | 25 |

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 (minimum 3 per case) to be part of the **Evaluation Committee**. The Evaluation Committee will evaluate each application against the **Selection Criteria**. 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.

Talk to us

The **“Booster Call” for Innovative Raw Materials Solutions** is organised by EIT RawMaterials and “Access to Finance” function that coordinates the program 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.

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Call web page: <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/booster-call/>

Online Application link: <https://eitrawmaterials.mantisbi.io/call/6685b312a4194/>

Partners of EIT RawMaterials: <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/about-us/partners/>

EIT RawMaterials Alumni: <https://alumni.eitrawmaterials.eu>

ANNEXES

1. Funding Conditions

Funding amount

The support scheme will be as follows:

1. Financial **support with a maximum amount of EUR 500,000**. We invite applicants to align their budget request with the project 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 ventures for investments **above EUR 60,000 and up to EUR 500,000**.
3. The maximum amount of EUR 500,000 corresponds to the total cumulative amount that a single beneficiary (start-up, scale-up or SME) can receive during Business Plans 2023-2025 for any activity supported by EIT RawMaterials.
4. Participants who are partners of EIT RawMaterials will have to respect obligations as per legal statutes of EIT RawMaterials.
5. 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.
6. EIT RawMaterials 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.
7. Please note that final recipients of funding will be obligated to comply with the IPR rules under Article 16 of the MGA⁶.
8. Participants established in third countries not associated to HE may only receive a maximum amount of EUR 60,000⁷.
9. EIT RawMaterials will deploy a **total amount of 10,000,000 – 18,000,000 €** for the **“Booster Call” for Innovative Raw Materials Solutions**, conditional to selected and signed quality applications. Additional amount might be deployed upon 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.

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

⁷ See https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

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

Payment and arrangements

The amount of funding (up to EUR 500,000) will be paid to the selected applicants in two instalments by bank transfer, provided all requested documents including prove of actual costs incurred have been submitted.

1. Advance payment of the first instalment (75% of total approved amount) within 2 months of the date of signature of the Project Agreement and equity related documentation.
2. Payment of 25% balance on approval of the final report or on achievement of milestones.

Participants established in third countries not associated to HE may only receive a maximum amount of EUR 60,000⁸.

General Cost conditions

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.

EIT RawMaterials, 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 grant.

2. Topics of Interest

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.

⁸ See https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-eura-tom_en.pdf

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, we identified the following areas: the future of exploration, mining and processing sector; Industrial Symbiosis and 3D Printing.

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

Table 1. 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 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 CO2-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 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 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)

3. Evaluation Criteria

Each application will be scored on the criteria listed in the following table, and the scoring in relation to each criterion will be based on the guidelines shown:

| CRITERIA | EXPLANATIONS |
|--|--|
| 1. EXCELLENCE (20%) | <p><i>Product / service, Innovation, technology excellence and feasibility, Technology Readiness Level (TRL), IP Status, competition & 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> |
| 2. MARKET & FINANCE (30%) | <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> |
| 3. TEAM (30%) | <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> |
| 4. IMPACT (10%) | <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> |
| 5. PROJECT & IMPLEMENTATION (10%) | <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> |

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 perfect and has no open elements or reservations, no brainer 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 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 Technology 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 the start-up, SME and other 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 "Booster 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, we encourage applicants 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 startups

The selected companies must promote the EIT RawMaterials Booster Call grant and its results, by providing tar-

geted 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 brandmark 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 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 the EIT RawMaterials Booster 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 policy⁹.

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 GDPR¹⁰ 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.

⁹ <https://eitrawmaterials.eu/privacy-policy/>

¹⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection_en

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

Participants must ensure that the activities have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

The participants must respect the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity¹¹.

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').

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 grant, 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 Grant – Recovery of the undue amounts

EIT RawMaterials may withdraw the grant 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 winner was not eligible or should have been excluded, or
- c. a winner is in serious breach of its obligations under these Terms & Conditions.

¹¹ 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>.

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 grant, without any obligation to compensate participants, if:

- a. no applications are received
- b. the jury does not find a winner
- c. the winner 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 German. 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 the 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 ex-

pert-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. 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.

8. TRL and CRL

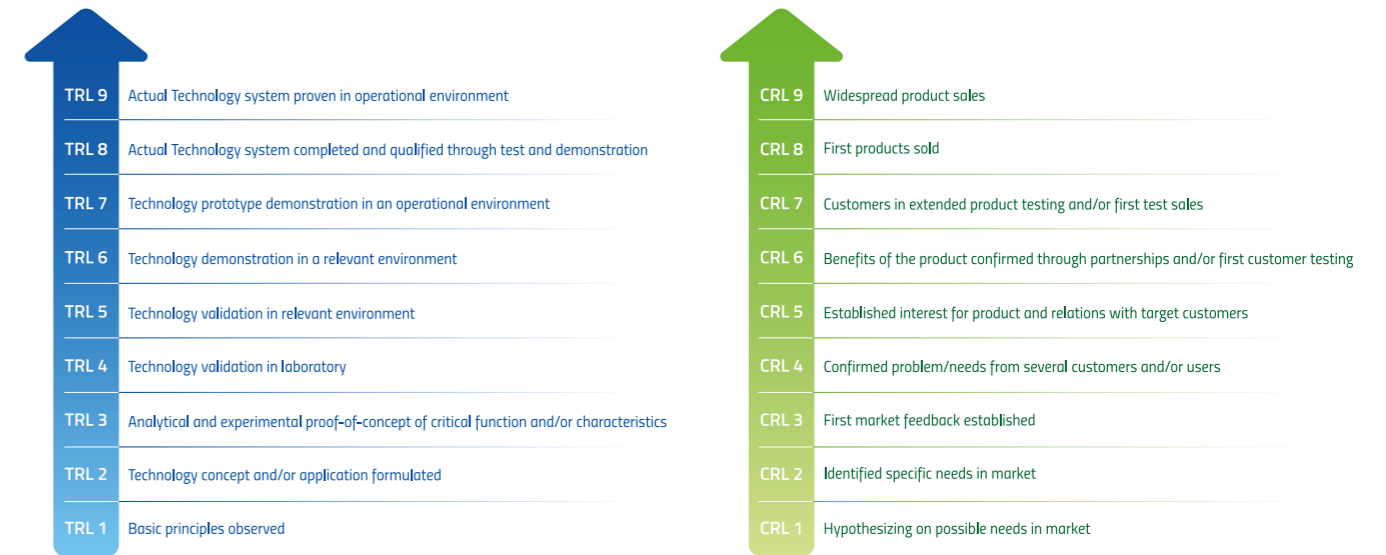


Table 2. Technology Readiness Level (TRL) and Customer Readiness Level (CRL)