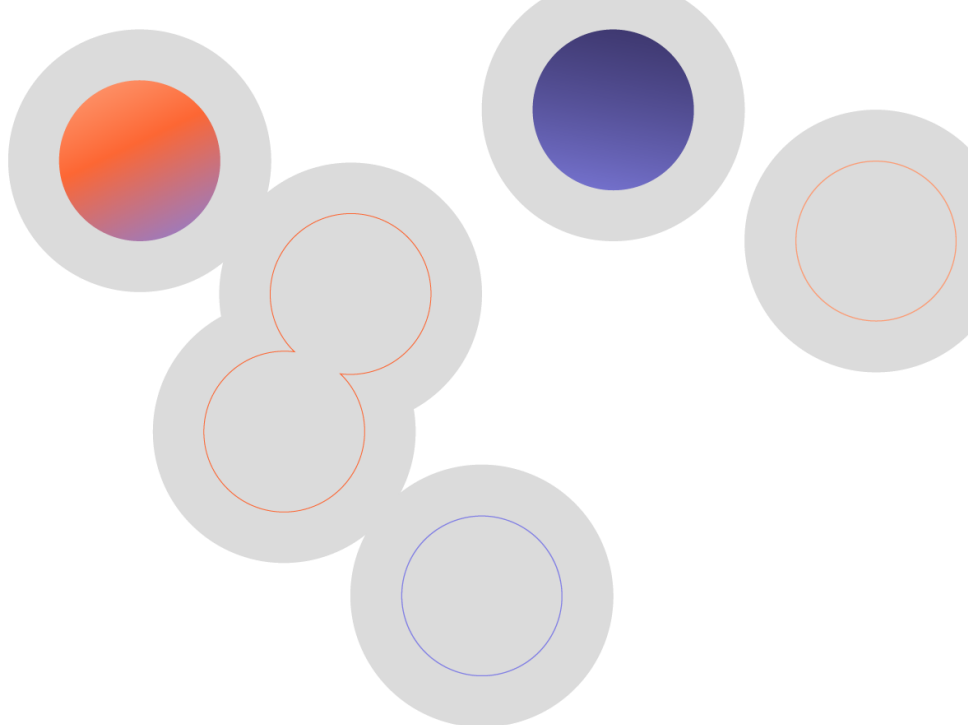




European  
Circular  
Innovation  
Valley



## **GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

### **Call text and evaluation criteria**

#### **Region Normandie (lead)**

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This document outlines ECIV first Open Call's objectives, topics, priorities, application procedures (including deadlines), eligibility criteria, evaluation procedures, as well as financial and legal matters such as intellectual property, GDPR compliance, and open-access publication.

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# 1. About ECIV project

## 1.1 Summary

The ECIV (European Circular Innovation Valley) project **connects innovation ecosystems across Europe to develop and scale sustainable solutions for circular economy**. Funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe programme (European Innovation Ecosystems Work Programme) ECIV responds to the call for Interconnected Innovation Ecosystems.

ECIV mobilizes a budget of €27.16M, with **€16.3M** allocated to local stakeholders in ECIV funding regions through two Open Calls for interregional circular innovation projects and one experimentation open call. ECIV's mission is to drive the creation of a more sustainable and prosperous Europe by **transforming traditional EU value chains into interconnected, innovative, and circular systems**, ultimately establishing a thriving circular economy ecosystem by 2050.

ECIV aims to **encourage innovation in circular economy in Europe and transform industrial value chains**.

## 1.2 Objectives

ECIV General Objective is to **create the European Circular Innovation Valley (ECIV), which will connect different EU territories/regions with two interrelated aims (environmental & economic)**:

1. **Making a significant advance in the transition towards a circular economy** of the participating regions (and of Europe as a whole). The project seeks to make different EU value chains more innovative and circular and will turn these regions and Europe a better place to live.
2. **Generating sustainable growth and development** in the participating regions (and in Europe as a whole). The project will take advantage of the economic opportunities offered by the transition to a circular economy, creating new markets and new businesses.

The specific objectives associated to the project main objective are:

1. **To mobilise, energize and connect 8 regional circular economy innovation ecosystems**, increasing connections and fostering cooperation to work in common challenges and missions related to circularity topics.
2. **To increase the innovation activity and foster innovation and experimentation in circular industrial value chains**. The project has ambitions to generate up to 35 collaborative innovation projects and up to 30 smaller "collaboration experiment" projects in value chains of up to 10 industrial sectors (including energy, automotive, agro-food, machinery, construction, biotech).

3. **To increase innovation knowledge and capabilities** of the regions, facilitating innovators to find the necessary technology and financial elements to bring their ideas to the market and fostering the collaboration among regions (including the interaction and knowledge transfer between more advanced regions with less advanced regions)
4. **To mobilise public funding and private investments for innovation in circularity.** The project will dedicate 60% of its budget to Open calls, and mobilises:
  - €16.3M of funding. 50% is provided by ECIV funding organisations;
  - Up to €7M of private investment, provided by the private entities participating in the open calls for innovation projects' development.
5. **To generate common knowledge assets and regional policies and strategies related to circularity.**

### 1.3 Partners

ECIV project brings together 18 partners from 8 countries.

**Table 1: ECIV partners and countries**

ECIV partner	Country
Government of Navarra	Spain
Development Society of Navarra	Spain
Northern Netherlands Alliance	Netherlands
Province Groningen	Netherlands
Province Fryslan	Netherlands
Province Drenthe	Netherlands
University of Groningen	Netherlands
Fryslan Innovation Foundation	Netherlands
Region Dalarna	Sweden
Region Värmland	Sweden
Region Gävleborg	Sweden
Region Normandie	France
Service Public de Wallonie	Belgium
Association of Cities and Regions for Sustainable Resource Management	Belgium
Innovation Agency Lithuania	Lithuania
Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council	Finland
Scottish Enterprise	United Kingdom
University of Strathclyde	United Kingdom

## 1.4 Cascade funding objectives

### 1.4.1 Cascade Funding & Project Portfolio

ECIV supports third-party innovation through cascade funding, awarding subgrants via two open calls and one call for experimentations. These calls aim to build a diverse portfolio of interregional projects focused on experimentation and innovation in the circular economy. Each selected project contributes to solving concrete challenges across various industrial value chains.

### 1.4.2 Mission-Oriented Approach & Submissions

The open calls are guided by ECIV's mission and submission statements, which reflect urgent, cross-sectoral challenges. Projects are expected to propose innovative circular solutions that respond directly to these missions and contribute to the implementation of circular economy practices in real industrial contexts.

### 1.4.3 Dance Floor & Matchmaking Tool

To encourage collaboration, ECIV partners provide the "dance floor", a space for interaction, trust-building, and co-creation among stakeholders. The [ECIV matchmaking platform](#) is a key tool for connecting participants, fostering partnerships, and helping applicants align their proposals with ECIV's strategic priorities.

***Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the [ECIV matchmaking platform](#) to design their projects collaboratively. This ensures relevance to ECIV's missions and increases the chances of selection and impact within the project portfolio.***

## 2. About ECIV first open call

ECIV 1st Open Call (OC1) for interregional circular innovation projects mobilises €9,129,770, co-funded by ECIV funding partners and Horizon Europe.

Call information can be found on the [page dedicated to the first Open call](#) on the ECIV website.

### 2.1 General objective of the call

The general objective of ECIV first open call (OC1) is to support **interregional innovation projects of circular economy** (Technology Readiness Level or equivalent in the range 6-8), based on the specific objectives, priorities and topics identified in different value chains and industrial sectors of the ECIV regions.

#### **Objectives in a nutshell: Mission oriented value chain and ecosystem development**

ECIV's mission is to drive the creation of a more sustainable and prosperous Europe by **transforming traditional EU value chains into interconnected, innovative, and circular systems**, ultimately establishing a thriving circular economy ecosystem by 2050.

ECIV aims to **encourage innovation in the circular economy in Europe and transform industrial value chains**.

Therefore, ECIV first Open Call will concentrate efforts in promoting innovation all the three steps of industrial value chains: (non-exhaustive)

- **Circular and sustainable new Materials**, including new plastic solutions, green steel, critical raw materials, chemistry and biobased materials, new textile solutions, construction and demolition waste.
- **New Industrial Processes**, including strategies and processes suppering the 9 R's of circularity, like Ecodesign and lifestyle thinking, Product R's, Industrial Symbioses, maximum valorisation of waste and by-products and renewable energy.
- **New Business Models**, including circular supply models, extended product lifecycle models, sharing models and product service models.

ECIV General Objective is to **create the European Circular Innovation Valley (ECIV), which will connect different EU territories/regions with two interrelated purposes (green & economic)**:

1. **Making a significant advancement in the transition towards a circular economy** of the participating regions (and of Europe as a whole). The project will make different EU value chains more innovative and circular and will turn these regions and Europe a better place to live.
2. **Generating sustainable growth and development** in the participating regions (and in Europe as a whole). The project will take advantage of the economic

opportunities offered by the transition to a circular economy, creating new markets and new businesses.

In the ECIV Project these overall Missions, Objectives and dimensions of Value Chains are specialized in **14 Sub-Missions (see Annex 1: ECIV missions and submissions)**, according to the regional assets in participating Regions. We want to stimulate parties to develop common initiatives to find solutions for the Sub-Missions and at the same time develop new business. This is open to every actor who wants to cooperate with other participants to unlock additional benefits across value chains and ecosystems linked to these Sub-Missions to drive sustainable solutions for the economy and society. We call on parties from different sectors to collaborate in cross-sectoral and interregional projects.

## 2.2 Project topics per sector

**ECIV Sub-Missions and regional assets can be thought of activities in the following sectors:**

- **Food and Agro-Food Systems:** minimize food waste, valorise by-product, develop sustainable food products.
- **Textiles and Fashion:** reduce waste and pollution, innovation in sustainable fibers, encourage repair, resale, rental, and recycling.
- **Circular and sustainable bioeconomy:** use renewable biological resources, develop bio-based products.
- **Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE):** innovate in e-waste management (reuse, refurbishment, repair, recycling, and remanufacturing), promote modular and repairable design.
- **Circular and sustainable packaging:** reduce the use of packaging, industrialize sustainable recyclable, compostable, biobased or reusable packaging, increase the use of secondary raw materials, reduce waste, recover materials.
- **Energy Systems:** reuse components (e.g., batteries, solar panels, turbines) and materials, enhance the energy efficiency of industrial processes and buildings, support the development of renewable energy linked to resource loops.
- **Steel, Metals, and Mining:** valorise industrial by-products, promote urban mining recovering metals, increase the use of secondary raw materials in manufacturing.
- **Water and Wastewater management:** reduce freshwater use in industry, implement water recirculation/recharge and closed-loop systems, wastewater treatment and nutrient recovery.



- **Construction and Built Environment:** use circular or sustainably produced bio-based and recycled materials, implement design-for-disassembly and material recovery strategies in architecture and urban planning, reduce construction and demolition waste through reuse, modular building systems, and material passports.

The evaluation of projects will consider their degree of alignment with the objectives and thematic priorities of ECIV. Nevertheless, projects outside these sectors, provided they demonstrate exceptional quality and meet the other evaluation criteria, may also be considered.

Examples of projects and expected results are in Annex 2: Example of expected project and solutions.

## 2.3 Call overview

**Table 2: Call overview**

<b>Call Objective</b>	<p>Support Interregional innovation projects in circular economy (TRL over 6–8) focusing on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve knowledge and territorial cooperation to <b>develop local – European value loops</b>.</li> <li>2. <b>Reduce the extraction and import of virgin raw materials</b> through sustainable resource management in production systems.</li> <li>3. Prevent, treat, and recover waste to turn it into <b>new resources</b>.</li> <li>4. <b>Change behaviours and economic models</b> to accelerate the circular transition.</li> </ol>
<b>Total Budget Available</b>	€9,129,770 (50% Horizon Europe; 50% ECIV funding organisations)
<b>Number of projects expected</b>	Up to 175 applicants, 20 applications and 15 innovations projects are expected, depending on the final project sizes.
<b>Eligible Applicants</b>	Companies, research institutes, universities, technological centers, local authorities, public administration, associations, NGOs (non-exhaustive list).
<b>Open Call 1 funding territories</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Comunidad Foral de Navarra (Spain)</li> <li>2. Noord Nederland comprising Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe (Netherlands)</li> <li>3. Norra Mellansverige comprising regions of Värmland, Dalarna and Gävleborg (Sweden)</li> <li>4. Normandie (France)</li> <li>5. Scotland (United Kingdom)</li> </ol>
<b>Eligibility conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Min. 3 partners from 3 different eligible countries (EU Member States and the United Kingdom).</li> <li>• Min. 2 partners from 2 different ECIV funding territories (see above)</li> <li>• Consortium must include at least one company.</li> <li>• Applicants from other EU territories (not included as ECIV funding territories above) are eligible for participation, but <b>not for ECIV funding</b>.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only applicants from ECIV funding territories can lead a consortium and benefit from ECIV funding.</li> </ul>
Budget per Project	Max. € 3M – Min. €500K total per project
Funding per Beneficiary	Max €600K per beneficiary across all ECIV calls
Budget per applicant and project	Min 50K and max 70% of total budget per applicant per project
Funding Rate	Up to 100% depending on legal status and funding territory. Refer to Annex 3: Regional specificities.
Call Structure	Single-step open call
Call Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call opening December 2025</li> <li>Call closure: March 2026.</li> <li>Funding proposal: May 2026</li> </ul>
Projects timeline	<p>Duration up to 2.5 year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>start <b>no sooner than 1<sup>st</sup> of July</b> 2026 and after the funding commitments have been signed by parties.</li> <li>end <b>no later than 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2028</b></li> </ul>
Projects topics per sector (non-exhaustive list)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Food and Agro-Food Systems:</b> minimize food waste, valorise by-product, develop sustainable food products.</li> <li><b>Textiles and Fashion:</b> reduce waste and pollution, innovation in sustainable fibers, encourage repair, resale, rental, and recycling.</li> <li><b>Circular and sustainable bioeconomy:</b> use renewable biological resources, develop bio-based products.</li> <li><b>Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE):</b> innovate in e-waste management (reuse, refurbishment, repair, recycling, and remanufacturing), promote modular and repairable design.</li> <li><b>Circular and sustainable packaging:</b> reduce the use of packaging, industrialize sustainable recyclable, compostable, biobased or reusable packaging, increase the use of secondary raw materials, reduce waste, recover materials.</li> <li><b>Energy Systems:</b> reuse components (e.g., batteries, solar panels, turbines) and materials, enhance the energy efficiency of industrial processes and buildings, support the development of renewable energy linked to resource loops.</li> </ul>

#### Other Notable Aspects

- **Steel, Metals, and Mining:** valorise industrial by-products, promote urban mining recovering metals, increase the use of secondary raw materials in manufacturing.
  - **Water and Wastewater management:** reduce freshwater use in industry, implement water recirculation/recharge and closed-loop systems, wastewater treatment and nutrient recovery.
  - **Construction and Built Environment:** use circular or sustainably produced bio-based and recycled materials, implement design-for-disassembly and material recovery strategies in architecture and urban planning, reduce construction and demolition waste through reuse, modular building systems, and material passports.
- [ECIV project proposal submission platform](#) (Tchooz)
  - [ECIV matchmaking platform](#) (B2Match)
  - Matchmaking acceleration meetings
  - Regional alignment
  - Independent experts' evaluation
  - ERDF/ESFI cofund (see regional specifications)

## 3. Eligibility criteria

### 3.1 Beneficiaries

#### 3.1.1 Eligible applicants – Who can apply

Beneficiaries must be legal entities (see categories below) from regions in all European Union Member States and United Kingdom and registered in the [EU Funding and Tenders Portal](#), with a validated PIC number at the time of ECIV Subgrantee Agreement or subsidy commitment. The validated profiles serve as a guarantee for acknowledging that the participant is an active legal entity and that it is financially viable in line with the criteria of the European Commission and its Agencies.

Beneficiaries from the following categories of quadruple helix will be eligible, providing they are a legal person:

- Companies (spinoffs, startups, SMEs, large enterprises), business associations and clusters.
- Research institutes and centers, universities, technological centers.
- Regional and local authorities, public administration and public associations (government, public companies, etc.).
- Civil society actors (associations, NGOs, etc.).

Businesses must pass Russian sanctions checks to ensure compliance with international regulations<sup>1</sup>.

Some of the listed territories indicate specific conditions for funding depending on the typology of beneficiary (large enterprises, SMEs, research organisations, etc). See Annex 3: Regional specificities.

Only applicants from ECIV funding territories can lead a consortium **and benefit from ECIV funding**.

ECIV funding partners in this 1<sup>st</sup> Open Call relate to the following ECIV funding territories:

- Comunidad Foral de Navarra (Spain),
- Noord Nederland comprising Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe (Netherlands),
- Norra Mellansverige comprising regions of Värmland, Dalarna and Gävleborg (Sweden),
- Normandie (France),

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<sup>1</sup> Guidance for EU operators: Implementing enhanced due diligence to shield against Russia sanctions circumvention [https://finance.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-12/guidance-eu-operators-russia-sanctions-circumvention\\_en.pdf](https://finance.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-12/guidance-eu-operators-russia-sanctions-circumvention_en.pdf)

- Scotland (United Kingdom).

Applicants from other EU territories (not included as ECIV funding territories above) are eligible for participation, but **not for ECIV funding**. They will be considered eligible if:

- they provide proven added value to the project they are applying for, by increasing the expected impact of the project in the ECIV-territories,
- their budget is above €50 000 and represents less than 20% of the project budget,
- their financial resources have been secured at the application phase by a duly signed and dated commitment letter by the corresponding funding organisation,
- their financial resources were secured by a contract before the signature of the subgrant commitment,
- they have signed a consortium agreement with the project partners.

### **3.1.2 Ineligible applicants – who cannot apply**

Individual applications and applications from natural persons are not eligible.

The ECIV partners are not eligible for funding.

Applicants may participate in different consortia, but total ECIV funding per beneficiary is capped at €600.000 across all calls. The Call secretariat can reduce the total subsidy amount to a beneficiary if its requested subsidy is above that limit.

External evaluators of ECIV incentive scheme, or their affiliates or employees, must announce any conflict of interest relevant to the proposals assigned to them.

Applicants applying or participating in the program can be excluded at any time (during the evaluation, the subgrant commitment process, or the project implementation phase) if they are in one of the situations described in the following exclusion criteria.

### **3.1.3 Exclusion**

Applicants that are subject to EU administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion)<sup>2</sup> or are in one of the following exclusion situations<sup>3</sup> banning them from receiving EU grants can NOT participate:

- Bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangements with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts).

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<sup>2</sup> See Article 136 of [EU Financial Regulation](#)

<sup>3</sup> See Articles 136 and 141 of [EU Financial Regulation](#)

- They are in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts).
- They are guilty of grave professional misconduct (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).
- They are guilty of fraud, corruption, having links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).
- They have shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, subgrant agreement or subgrant decision (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the subgrant).
- They are guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of [Regulation No 2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the subgrant).
- They have created under a different jurisdiction an entity with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).

Applicants will also be refused if, it turns out that during the subgrant agreement process, they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information, or they were previously involved in the preparation of the call, and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

## 3.2 Proposals

### 3.2.1 Consortium

Only interregional projects will be funded.

Legal entities from regions in all **European Union Member States and United Kingdom** are invited to participate in the Open Call to form part of a project involving effective collaboration, with the participation of at least 3 independent partners from 3 eligible countries (EU Member States and the United Kingdom).

Consortium must include at least **2 partners located in 2 different territories** represented by the ECIV regional or national funding organisations.

Consortium must include **at least one company**.

The organisation of the applicant has to be a legal entity and established in a **European Union Member State or in the United Kingdom**.

### 3.2.2 Activities

Innovation actions activities are eligible for funding under ECIV, in the [sense of Horizon Europe program](#) and the article 25 of the [Commission Regulation \(EU\) 651/2014](#), of 17 June, declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty ) related to aid regulated for research and development projects: activities that aim directly to explore the feasibility of a new or improved technology, product, process, service or solution in the domain of circular economy. These activities may include technology development and integration, prototyping, testing, demonstrating, piloting and validation, excluding activities going beyond experimental development activities.

Projects must help bring the technology or solution to a higher TRL level, from TRL6 to TRL8 or its equivalent if it is not based on technology.

The type of activities that qualify for financial support are for example:

- Developing or adopting innovative solutions for the circular economy,
- Implementing new circular business models,
- Integrating circularity into regional and interregional value chains,
- Creating measurable positive impact on the environment, economy, and/or society.

Projects must, moreover, comply with EU policy interests and priorities (environment, social, security, industrial policy, etc.).

### 3.2.3 Projects' duration

The projects duration is limited to a maximum of 2.5 years.

Projects will have incentive effect<sup>4</sup> and will start **no sooner than the 1st of July 2026**, after the notification of a positive evaluation result and after the funding commitments have been signed by parties. Projects end date will be **no later than 31st of December 2028**.

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<sup>4</sup> Aid shall be considered to have an incentive effect if the beneficiary has submitted a written application for the aid to the funding organisation concerned before work on the project or activity starts (As defined in [Art. 6 GBER \(EU\) No. 651/2014](#)).



## 4. Application process

The application process consists of a single stage, with an online application form available on ECIV project proposal submission platform and accessible via the ECIV project website. Guidelines for applicants provide instructions on how to submit ECIV open call applications.

- Call opening: December 2025 (1 day after publication on European Commission platform)
- Call closure: March 2026 (3 months later)
- Evaluation period: from March to May 2026 (3 months)
- Announcement of results: from May 2026
- Projects starting date: from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2026
- Projects end date: until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2028

***Applicants are encouraged to consult the online application form structure and the guide for applicants, and to register on [ECIV matchmaking platform](#) in order to interact with a diversity of partners with complementary competences and interests before starting the application process. They are available on the [ECIV webpage dedicated to the Open Call](#).***

### 4.1 Number of applications

Up to 175 applicants, 20 applications and 15 innovations projects are expected, depending on the final project sizes.

There is no maximum number of applications per organisation, provided that the overall cumulative amount requested by the applicant remains under €600,000 for all ECIV calls and funded projects. The minimum budget per project and applicant is €50,000.

A single applicant can participate in multiple consortia or submit multiple proposals, provided each project is distinct and meets the call criteria.

The same applicant cannot participate in more than one application as coordinator in the 1st open call (in this case, only the last application submitted will be eligible).

### 4.2 Application conditions

Eligible activities must lead to a significant increase in circularity, which should be clearly reflected in measurable impact indicators provided by the applicant.

Only applications in English that use the official budget template and online form published by the ECIV project for the open call will be accepted.

An application that does not use the official budget template and online form, or that fails to meet the length requirements, is declared ineligible.

The application form must have the following characteristics:

- Part A – Consortium partners and project description (to be completed in the platform)
- Part B – Budget (using the official template)

It is necessary to explain in the application form how the budget will be used, including a clear budget breakdown proposal with the different budget categories.

Costs described in the submitted proposal must be determined in accordance with the beneficiary's usual accounting and management principles and practices.

Eligible costs are subject to the basic eligibility rules of Horizon Europe as defined in Art. 6 of the [Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement 2021-2027 \(AGA\)](#) and the regional specificities (Annex 3: Regional specificities).

### 4.3 Regional specificities in application conditions

Additional documents are required on regional / national level depending on the location of the applicant.

ECIV funding territory not requiring additional documents on the platform:

- Northern Netherlands
- North middle Sweden

The following ECIV funding territories will ask for additional documents in a second phase if their project are selected (see Annex 3: Regional specificities):

- Navarra
- Normandy
- Scotland

***Concerned applicants are encouraged to refer to the annex 'regional specificities' to prepare their application in line with the regional specificities that have been identified.***

## 5. Evaluation and selection process

The evaluation process is composed of two phases: eligibility and evaluation.

### 5.1 Eligibility

The Call Secretariat (CS) will check all proposals to ensure that they meet the call's formal criteria (Eligibility Criteria). In parallel, the CS will forward the proposals to the ECIV funding organisations, which will perform a check for compliance with their regional or national specifications.

#### 5.1.1 Eligibility criteria

The proposal must be submitted in English via the ECIV platform before the deadline.

All participating entities must be eligible (according to 3.1.1 Eligible applicants – Who can apply)

The project has to involve effective collaboration.

The consortium must include at least 3 independent partners from 3 different eligible countries (EU Member States and the United Kingdom)..

At least 2 partners must be from two different ECIV funding territories.

The project leader must be from an ECIV funding territory.

The consortium must include at least one company.

Each applicant requests a minimum of €50,000.

Each applicant's budget must not exceed 70% of the total project budget.

The total project budget is comprised between €500,000 and €3,000,000.

The cumulative funding across all ECIV calls is capped to €600,000 per applicant.

The applicant must meet the regional requirements (according to 4.3 Regional specificities in application conditions)

Additional eligibility determination will be conducted at national or regional level and depends on regional specificities, such as funding rates, state aid regime and other regional conditions

Please note that if a proposal includes an ineligible partner, the whole proposal may be rejected, without further review (for the regional definitions of eligible partners see Annex 3: Regional specificities and contact your regional/national contact listed in 16.2 Regional Contact Points Table 5).

## 5.2 Evaluation

After passing the eligibility check, eligible proposals will be sent to at least 3 independent reviewers for the evaluation: 2 external and 1 representative from the Call Secretariat (CS) (see evaluation criteria below). The reviewers, with no conflict of interest (CoI) will assess the proposal and complete a written evaluation form with scores and comments for the evaluation criteria.

Evaluation by Call Secretariat will be weighted at 40%.

The reviewers will meet in a Peer Review Panel (PRP) to discuss all proposals to produce a joint assessment report for each proposal, to be sent by the CS to the project coordinators, and a ranking list of proposals recommended for funding. The composition of the PRP is communicated through the ECIV website at the end of the entire review process.

### 5.2.1 Evaluation criteria

Projects are evaluated and scored following 3 criteria:

- **Excellence:** Alignment with ECIV's 1st Open Call objectives, topics and priorities.
- **Impact:** Project's potential to create measurable benefits (KPI).
- **Quality and efficiency of implementation:** Clarity and feasibility of proposed activities – scientific and technical quality.

Each criterion is scored: 0–5 (decimal steps of: 0.1)

Each criterion is weighted, and each score has a selection threshold. In case one criteria do not reach the minimum threshold, the project will be rejected.

Based on the ranking, projects will be funded until the corresponding ECIV funding organisation budget is fully spent. The Call Steering Committee (CSC) is responsible for making the final decisions on the selected projects, with regards to the ranking and to the available budget.

Key criteria, questions of evaluation and respective weights and threshold are the following:

#### 5.2.1.1 Excellence

Weight: 30%    Threshold: 3/5

Clarity, pertinence, and ambition of the project's objectives, and how well it advances the state of the art.

**Does the project clearly align with the objectives of ECIV? Is this a research and innovation project of TRL 6–8? Does the project provide a significant advance compared with the State of the Art?**

#### Relevance

- Does the project contribute to identified missions and to one or more submissions?  
To what extent does it enhance the level of circularity?
- Are the project objectives clearly defined?

### **Novelty**

- To what extent does the proposed project introduce original and distinctive ideas, methods, or technologies that go beyond the current state-of-the-art, offering clear scientific, technological, or societal advancements?
- Does the project integrate advanced technologies and/or social innovation to increase the Region's and European Union circularity?
- To what extent does this new development imply a novelty on the value chain at the European level?

### **5.2.1.2 Impact**

Weight: 40%

Threshold: 3/5

Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts.

- **Does the project have the potential to significantly contribute to enhancing circularity of the Regions and European Union?**
- **To what extent does the proposed project bring new value and benefits to the Regions' circularity, compared to their current operations? How does the proposed project align with the organisations's strategy?**
- **Does the proposal describe and quantify the impact in terms of future investments, future products and services, jobs creation, market creation or growth, etc.?**
- **Does the proposal describe the positive or negative social, economic, environmental, safety, impacts that the project or the solution may cause?**
- **Does the proposal define and quantify the impact through specific, appropriate, quantifiable and realistic KPIs?**

### **Environmental and social impact**

- How will the project impact on the circularity of organisations?
- How will the project impact circularity in regions and Europe?
- Have the potential environmental and social impacts been quantified using clear and sound Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?

- Are the baseline and target values for the selected KPIs clearly calculated, realistic and justified?
- Are the social aspects of the project sufficiently described, and especially how different groups in society are included and how the project will work towards equality?

#### **Economic and broader impact**

- What is the expected economic impact of the project on the organisations and regions?
- Has the potential economic impact been quantified using clear and sound Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?
- What is the anticipated regional economic impact outside of the regions of the project?
- To what extent will the project lead to impact on the local economy and businesses in the regions, particularly in terms of job creation, income growth, attracting investment, and developing services and infrastructure?

#### **Replicability potential**

- Beyond the environmental, social and economic impact of the project in itself, does the project have the potential and/or adaptability to act as a «multiplier effect» and be replicated in other EU regions?
- Does it have the potential to engage and integrate actors across the entire value chain (ex. from raw material suppliers to end-users) in order to maximise systemic impact?

### **5.2.1.3 Quality and Efficiency of implementation**

Weight: 30%    Threshold: 3/5

The quality and effectiveness of the work plan, risk assessment, and effort.

**Does the applicant have the required resources, expertise and capabilities to successfully implement the project? Is the methodology clearly described? Is it adequate to successfully execute the project and to deliver the expected results? Is the role of each consortium member clearly described? Are the responsibilities clear in each project task? Are the resources allocated adequate and proportional to the expected results and project execution? Is the budget adequately described?**

#### **Workplan and budget**

- Does the work plan provide a clear and achievable timeline with a detailed monthly breakdown of main activities, key milestones, and deliverables?
- Is the work plan sufficiently detailed to ensure effective implementation?
- Are the planned activities aligned with the identified problem and the project's objectives?
- Is the proposed budget appropriate and consistent with the planned activities and expected deliverables?

### **Team and network**

- How does the composition of the team and network demonstrate the necessary expertise and resources to achieve the project objectives?
- If subcontracting is involved, is it sufficiently explained how the internal team and subcontractors will collaborate to execute core project tasks and deliverables?
- How does the applicant plan to address any gaps in the current team's expertise?
- How does the consortium ensure complementarity among its partners, and what strategies are in place for sharing the results of the project? How will each partner contribute to and disseminate the outcomes?
- Does the consortium demonstrate balanced representation of ECIV partner regions and active involvement of regional stakeholders in project activities? (Consortia that ensure meaningful participation and engagement of partners from ECIV regions throughout the project lifecycle will be evaluated more positively.)
- To what extent does the project team promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring balanced representation across gender, background, and expertise to foster a collaborative environment that reflects the values of Horizon Europe and enhances innovation through diverse perspectives.

### **Risk analysis**

- Are the identified technical and business risks relevant to the scale of the project, and are the proposed mitigation strategies appropriate to address these risks and ensure project success?

## **5.3 Evaluators**

Each full proposal will be allocated to at least three independent reviewers. Two reviewers will be external and one representative from the CS.

External evaluators will be selected through a call for experts, based on their active participation in other EU projects with focus on Circular economy, business models,

industrial approach, industrial excellence, and previous experience in the industrial sector. The representative from the CS will be selected from the region of the project coordinator.

All necessary steps will be taken by the CS and the CSC to ensure that there is no conflict of interest concerning the independent reviewers for those proposals assigned to them for review.

Notably, the impartiality and assurance that no conflicts of interest exist will be guaranteed for each proposal and the consortium will assure that the experts in the evaluation will:

- Act in their own capacity (not representing company or country);
- Be external to the beneficiaries and/or third parties.

After receiving the proposals, the independent reviewers are requested to indicate whether there is a conflict of interest with any of the applicants in the proposals for review. Reviewers will be asked to declare that they will not participate in the call, nor have any conflicting interests regarding the applicants participating in the projects that are reviewed.

### **5.3.1 Ethical clearance**

The reviewers will be required to formally declare that no conflict of interest exists at any point in the evaluation process and to declare confidentiality concerning all documents and the entire review process.

The evaluators will adhere to Horizon Europe standards regarding evaluation, conflict of interest and confidentiality and will sign a declaration certifying: (i) that they will perform a confidential, fair and equitable evaluation; (ii) their independence from affiliation; (iii) confidentiality and absence of conflict of interest (disqualifying or potential); (iv) that they will not discuss the proposals with others during the process; (v) strictly, that they will not get in contact with applicants; (vi) compliance with EC rules.

Non-compliance with the terms and conditions on the documentation as well as the criteria of the evaluation defined in the guidelines will immediately terminate the contract with the evaluator, who will be obliged to return the paid amounts for the evaluation process, if any. Projects assigned to that reviewer will be assigned to another reviewer.

A report on the respect of ethical principles will be done to the European Commission.

## **5.4 Ethics assessment**

It is mandatory for applicants to complete an “Ethical self-assessment”:

### **5.4.1 Ethics Self-Assessment**

- ☐ Does your project involve processing of personal data?
- ☐ Does your project involve human participants (with or without consent)?



- ☐ Does your project present a risk to the environment or society?
- ☐ Does your project involve the use of AI-based applications?
- ☐ Does the activity involve the use of animals in any capacity?
- ☐ Does the activity include the use of human or other biological tissues?
- ☐ Does the activity relate to defense or military applications?
- ☐ Does the activity provide instructions designed to facilitate harmful, illegal, or otherwise unethical uses?<sup>5</sup>
- ☐ Are there any other ethical issues that should be taken into consideration?

In their application form, applicants will be asked to indicate how they plan to address an ethical issue if any of the box is ticked.

All the proposals will undergo an ethics check carried out by the CS supported by experts in case it is needed. This includes verification of compliance with EU ethics standards (e.g. Data protection, environmental and safety regulation, permitting requirements, and avoidance of prohibited practices). Where necessary, applicants may be requested to provide additional documentation (e.g. permits, risk assessments, GDPR compliance statements).

After the PRP meeting, an Ethics assessment will take place for the proposals which are recommended for funding by the PRP and selected for funding by the CSC, to verify alignment with ethical norms and regulations. Only those proposals approved by ethical assessment, complying with the central Horizon Europe and regional/national ethical requirements, will be funded.

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<sup>5</sup> In reference of [COUNCIL DECISION \(EU\) 2021/764](#) of 10 May 2021 establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and repealing Decision 2013/743/EU, p. 36 “: Programme will have an exclusive focus on civil application.”

## 6. Funding specifications

### 6.1 Funding rates

The maximum aid intensities for experimental development are from 50% to 100%, on the following basis<sup>6</sup> and are subject to regional specifications.

**Table 3: Funding rates by size of enterprise**

R&D&I Category	Size of enterprise		
	Small	Medium	Large
Experimental development	70%	60%	50%

Funding rate is 100% for research and knowledge transfer and dissemination organisations and for non-profit organisations. The aid is intended for non-economic activities. A separated accounting system is needed for those activities.

The amount of financial support is equal to the amount of eligible costs multiplied by the co-financing rate.

### 6.2 Funding partners and first Open Call budget

Funding partners of ECIV 1st Open Call (OC1) for interregional circular innovation projects mobilises €9,129,770 co-funded from Horizon Europe (HE), European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) and own funds.

**Table 4: ECIV funding partners' budgets and sources**

ECIV funding partner	OC1 budget	Co-funding
Government of Navarra (Spain)	€2 522 500	HE; Regional funds
Northern Netherlands Region Alliance (Netherlands)	€1 200 000	HE; ERDF
Region of Dalarna (Sweden)	€444 444	HE; Regional funds
Region of Värmland (Sweden)	€444 444	HE; Regional funds
Region of Gävleborg (Sweden)	€444 444	HE; Regional funds
Region of Normandy (France)	€2 073 938	HE; Regional funds
Scottish Enterprise (United Kingdom)	€2 000 000	HE; Own funds
<b>Total</b>	<b>€9 129 770</b>	

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<sup>6</sup> Article 25.6.d of [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014](#) declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty Text with EEA relevance

## 6.3 Funding limits

The expected budgets shall be comprised between:

- Above **€50,000** budget per applicant and project.
- Cumulative funding across all ECIV calls is capped to €600,000 per applicant.
- Above **€500,000** and up to **€3,000,000 per project**.

## 6.4 Eligible costs

Only costs generated during the lifetime of the project are eligible.

Eligible costs will comply with the general eligibility conditions of HEU conditions<sup>7</sup> and the Annex 3: Regional specificities.

The costs eligible for funding are as follows:

- Personnel costs directly assign to the project: employees or equivalent, natural persons under direct contract, seconded persons, SME owners and natural person beneficiaries.
- Purchase costs related to necessary equipment, materials, services, travel and accommodation costs, purchases of equipment used for the action must be declared as depreciation costs:
  - travel and subsistence, other goods, works and services.
  - equipment, infrastructures and other assets – only depreciation costs (not the full purchase costs) are eligible, and only the portion that reflects the actual use of the asset during the project's duration can be included.
- Subcontracting costs, if justified and indispensable: based on beneficiary's usual purchasing practices and ensuring best value for money and no conflict of interests. Only limited parts of the action of the project may be subcontracted.
- Indirect costs.

The primary focus of the project funding should not be on purchase of equipment nor external contracting services. In case of subcontracting activities, a collaborative execution of core project tasks and deliverables by the internal staff of the applicants and subcontractors is crucial.

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<sup>7</sup> Horizon Europe Work Program 2023–2025 ([European Commission Decision C\(2025\) 2779 of 14 May 2025](#)) and in particular conditions for 'innovation actions' set in General Annexes

## 6.5 Final decision on funding

Based on the ranking list established by the peer review panel (PRP), the ethical clearance (see 5.3.1 Ethical clearance) and on available funding, the call steering committee (CSC) will recommend those projects to be funded to the ECIV funding organisations.

Based on the ranking list and these recommendations, final decisions will be made by the ECIV funding organisations, subject to budgetary considerations. The ECIV funding organisations will follow the ranking list established by the PRP members.

The project coordinator will be informed by the CS of the decision. The project partners should be informed by their project coordinator.

## 6.6 Commitment of funding

To formalize the financial support and ensure a clear framework for collaboration, selected applicants will be required to enter into specific agreements with the ECIV funding organisations and their consortium partners.

1. Selected applicants will be invited to prepare the **Consortium Agreement** and **Bilateral subgrantee Agreements** (or ask for subsidy commitment documents), based on the standard templates for financial support to third parties.
2. The **Consortium Agreement** will be signed between the project coordinator and all beneficiaries.
3. Each consortium member will sign a **Bilateral subgrantee Agreement** or be sent a **Subgranting Commitment** from the correspondent ECIV funding organisation. (refer to 16.2 Regional Contact Points Annex 3: Regional specificities)

## 6.7 Funding distribution

The distribution of funds will depend on the economic resources within each ECIV funding organisation, the type of organisation of the candidates, and the quality, relevance, and topic of the projects. Each Funding organisation will organize its funding scheme in alignment with its regional strategic priorities.

Possible national or regional strategies include, but are not limited to, the careful selection of supported topics, a commitment to maintaining a reasonable proportion of the national or regional call budget based on the funding contributed by each regional beneficiary, the ability to adjust the initially committed budgets, if necessary, limitations on requested budgets per proposal, restrictions on the number of proposals allowed per applicant, or any other effective measures.

In case of oversubscription regarding to the budget of an ECIV funding organisation, it will decide on a revised funding rate for the organisation from its Region.

## 6.8 Payment

Payment claims will be done by grantee to its corresponding ECIV funding organisation. ECIV funding organisation will assess the reporting and provide the corresponding payments.

All payments will be made by bank transfer from each ECIV funding organisations of the Region of the beneficiaries, who holds its share of third-party funds, in the name of ECIV consortium. Beneficiaries will be informed since the beginning about these conditions which will also be included in the subsidy commitment or Subgrantee Agreement.

## 6.9 Beneficiaries' obligations for funding

### 6.9.1 Reporting and project monitoring

During the implementation phase, **at least three meetings** will be held between the beneficiaries and ECIV funding representatives. Additional meetings may be scheduled depending on project progress and specific needs. **Biannual review meetings** are encouraged to monitor interregional innovation projects. These meetings will be outlined in the Subgrantee Agreement.

- **Kick-off Meeting:** Held after signing the Subgrantee Agreements or funding commitments, focusing on the work plan, timeline, and reporting requirements.
- **6-Month Review Meetings:** Assess progress, discuss adjustments, and address challenges.
- **Final Review Meeting:** Conducted during final reporting to evaluate outcomes, achievements, and compliance.
- **Additional Meetings:** May be arranged if deemed necessary based on project developments.

#### 6.9.1.1 Reporting Requirements

Beneficiaries must submit a report within **30 days** after the reporting period end date. The report must detail progress toward objectives, milestones, deliverables, achievements, impact, and future steps.

Reports must be submitted **in English** and include:

- **Consortium Technical Report:** Overview of activities, results, milestones, and KPIs.
- **Regional Financial Statement:** Total costs incurred and request for interim and final payments.
- **Regions may request additional evidence and reporting**

#### 6.9.1.2 Review Process

Reports will be evaluated by ECIV reviewers based on adequate reporting of activities regarding progress towards objectives and milestones.

- If accepted, beneficiaries will present results in an online review meeting.
- If not accepted, beneficiaries must revise the report based on feedback.
- Formal approval will be granted after the presentation, enabling payment release.
- Reports will be presented during the **Periodic Project Review**.
- Financial statements must be in **EURO**. Beneficiaries using other currencies must convert costs using the average daily exchange rate from the EU Official Journal (C series) for the reporting period.

Beneficiaries must declare that:

- All information is complete, reliable, and accurate.
- Declared costs are eligible and supported by documentation.
- All receipts have been disclosed.

The beneficiaries must keep evidence of the activities implemented and the actual costs incurred, adhering to the Horizon Europe costs eligibility and record-keeping rules (articles 6 and 20 of [Model Grant Agreement](#)).

### 6.9.1.3 Amendments during implementation

Selected projects may request amendments during the implementation phase to address unforeseen circumstances or necessary adjustments. Amendments will only be considered if they do not alter the fundamental objectives of the project and remain within the approved budget and timeline. Requests must be submitted in writing to the corresponding ECIV funding organisations, providing clear justification and updated work plan. Approval will be subject to review by the Call Secretariat and the relevant funding authorities.

### 6.9.2 Communication, dissemination and exploitation

In accordance with Horizon Europe guidelines<sup>8</sup>, all funded projects under the ECIV Open Call must include clear and strategic plans for communication, dissemination and exploitation of results. These activities are essential to ensure that project outcomes generate maximum impact beyond the duration of the funding.

To meet the dissemination and access requirements, applicants must ensure that at least one of the following conditions is fulfilled:

1. Either the project results are expected to be widely communicated and disseminated across at least in EU Member States and States where the project is being developed. This communication and dissemination may take place through

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<sup>8</sup> And in particular articles 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record keeping) of [Model Grant Agreement](#).

publications, conferences, open access repositories, or the release of free or open-source software.

2. Alternatively, the beneficiary must commit to making licenses for research results—protected by intellectual property rights—available in a timely manner. These licenses must be offered at market price, on a non-exclusive and non-discriminatory basis, and be accessible to interested parties within the European Economic Area.

### 6.9.2.1 Communication

Communication refers to informing and engaging with the general public and relevant stakeholders about the project, its objectives, and its progress.

Applicants must outline how they will:

- Define clear communication objectives aligned with project goals
- Identify and engage target audiences (e.g. general public, policymakers, industry, media)
- Use appropriate channels and formats (e.g. website, social media, newsletters, press releases)

Communication activities must be strategically planned and continuous, starting from project launch and evolving as milestones are achieved. Messages must be accessible, inclusive, and consistent with dissemination and exploitation strategies to maximize overall impact.

### 6.9.2.2 Dissemination

Dissemination refers to the public sharing of project results with audiences who can benefit from them.

Applicants must outline how they will:

- Make results accessible (e.g. through publications, conferences, open platforms)
- Identify and engage relevant target audiences
- Use appropriate channels and formats for outreach

Dissemination activities must be strategically planned and objective-driven and should begin as soon as results are available. Open access to scientific publications is strongly encouraged.

### 6.9.2.3 Exploitation

Exploitation involves the use of project results to create value.

Applicants must describe how they intend to:

- Identify exploitable results
- Protect intellectual property where relevant
- Facilitate uptake by stakeholders (e.g. through licensing, partnerships, or standardisation)

***A preliminary dissemination and exploitation plan should be included in the application. If selected for funding, a more detailed plan must be submitted within 6 months of the project start date.***

## 7. ECIV Open Call regulatory framework

ECIV 1st Call is regulated by:

- [General Block Exemption Regulation](#) (Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty Text with EEA relevance),
  - And in particular its Article 25.
- [Horizon Europe Work Program 2023–2025](#) (European Commission Decision C (2025) 2779 of 14 May 2025),
  - And in particular conditions for 'innovation actions' set in General Annexes.

Some of the listed territories indicate specific conditions for funding depending on the typology of beneficiary (large enterprises, SMEs, research organisations, etc.). See annex 3 for regional specificities.

The bodies mentioned in Article 25 of [Model Grant Agreement](#) (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the applicants and beneficiaries.

## 8. Publication and information

The Member States concerned shall ensure the publication, in the Commission's transparency award module or on a comprehensive State aid website, at national or regional level, in accordance with the indications and in compliance with Article 9 of the [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 651/2014](#).

## 9. Compatibility of aids

Such grants shall be compatible with other aid granted for the same project or action where such aid measures relate to different eligible costs, or where the aid measures correspond in whole or in part to the same eligible costs and their cumulation does not exceed the



highest applicable aid intensity or aid amount as laid down in [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 651/2014](#) and subsequent national regulations (refer to Annex 3: Regional specificities).

## 10. Intellectual property

The results belong to the project partners, in accordance with the agreements concluded within the consortium. However, ECIV and the European Commission reserve certain rights to exploit and disseminate the results, in accordance with article 16 of [Horizon Europe model grant agreement](#).

## 11. GDPR compliance

Any personal data under the Agreement will be processed in accordance with article 15 of [Horizon Europe model grant agreement](#) and corresponding [Regulation \(EU\) No 2018/1725](#).

## 12. Open science and open access

ECIV data management approach is based on the so-called FAIR approach and is thus oriented to ensure research data is Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR data principle<sup>9</sup>) and knowledge is integrated and available for re-use in future projects. Data sharing will be addressed, taking into consideration any ethical and data protection concerns and fully complying with privacy issues. No data transfers to third countries, third parties or personal data treatment are envisaged.

## 13. Do not significant harm principle

In line with the European Green Deal objectives, economic activities should not make a significant harm to any of the six environmental objectives ([EU Taxonomy Regulation](#)).

## 14. Confidentiality and data protection

ECIV partners keep confidential any data, documents, or other material (in any form) that is identified as sensitive in writing ('sensitive information') – during the implementation of the projects and for at least until the time-limit set out in the Subgrantee Agreement.

The parties handle classified information in accordance with the applicable EU, international or national law on classified information (in particular, [Decision 2015/44415](#) and its implementing rules), if owning an adequate industrial and/or Personal Clearance only. ECIV partners consider access controls, bearing in mind the need to define strong passwords to ensure that only authorized people who need access to data can do so, particularly when handling sensitive data.

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<sup>9</sup> FAIR data are data that are curated to satisfy the principles of findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability. For further reading: <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>

Deliverables which contain classified information will be submitted according to special procedures agreed with the granting authority. Unless agreed otherwise in writing by the beneficiaries, access to results and, subject to the restrictions referred to above (if any), background must also be granted – under fair and reasonable conditions – to entities that are established in an EU Member State or Horizon Europe associated country, are under the direct or indirect control of another beneficiary, or under the same direct or indirect control as that beneficiary, or directly or indirectly controlling that beneficiary and need the access to exploit the results of that beneficiary. Unless agreed otherwise in writing, such requests for access must be made by the entity directly to the beneficiary concerned. Requests for access must be made – unless agreed otherwise in writing – up to one year after the end of the action.

No Security classified background information is expected to be used within the projects, but security classified foreground information is expected to be produced, requiring the adherence of the consortium to specific measures.

## **15. Ethics and security**

Activities must focus exclusively on civil applications and must not:

- aim at human cloning for reproductive purposes,
- intend to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (except for research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed),
- intend to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research, or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer,
- lead to the destruction of human embryos,
- provide instructions designed to facilitate harmful, illegal, or otherwise unethical uses.

Where there is a material risk of dual-use, operational details must have been deliberately abstracted or omitted, and access to full materials must be restricted.

## 16. Enquiries and complaints

### 16.1 General Enquiries

For questions related to the call text, eligibility, application procedures, or evaluation criteria, please contact the Call Secretariat at: [info@eciv.eu](mailto:info@eciv.eu)

### 16.2 Regional Contact Points

Applicants may also contact their regional ECIV representative for region-specific guidance or support.

**Table 5: Regional contact points**

ECIV territory	Mail
Navarra (Spain)	<a href="mailto:saie@navarra.es">saie@navarra.es</a>
Normandy (France)	<a href="mailto:eciv@normandie.fr">eciv@normandie.fr</a>
Värmland (Sweden)	<a href="mailto:eciv@regionvarmland.se">eciv@regionvarmland.se</a>
Dalarna (Sweden)	<a href="mailto:eciv.dalarna@regiondalarna.se">eciv.dalarna@regiondalarna.se</a>
Gävleborg (Sweden)	<a href="mailto:eciv@regiongavleborg.se">eciv@regiongavleborg.se</a>
Northern Netherlands (Netherlands)	<a href="mailto:eciv@snn.nl">eciv@snn.nl</a>
Scotland (United Kingdom)	<a href="mailto:enquiries@scotent.co.uk">enquiries@scotent.co.uk</a>

### 16.3 Complaints Procedure

To submit a formal complaint regarding the call process, evaluation, or communication, please send a written statement to [info@eciv.eu](mailto:info@eciv.eu) with the subject line: "Complaint – ECIV Open Call". Include your name and organisation name, application ID (if applicable), and a clear description of the issue.

### 16.4 Resolution process

The following actions will be taken towards complaints:

1. **Acknowledgment of Receipt:** Each complaint will receive an acknowledgment of receipt within **5 working days**.
2. **Initial Review:** The ECIV Call Secretariat will examine the complaint and verify its admissibility (complete information, relevance).
3. **Internal Investigation:** If necessary, the complaint will be forwarded to the Project Coordinator and the relevant responsible parties for analysis.
4. **Formal Response:** A written response will be sent to the complainant within **30 calendar days**, specifying the conclusions and any corrective measures.
5. **Escalation:** If the response is not considered satisfactory, the complainant may request a review by the **Call Steering Committee**.

6. **Traceability:** All complaints and responses will be documented and archived to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

All resolutions are governed by Belgian law, as stated in ECIV Consortium Agreement.

## Annex 1: ECIV missions and submissions

ECIV missions/submissions are based on concrete and urgent challenges that require cross-sectoral solutions.

### Mission 1. Industrial Symbiosis & Resource Efficiency

- **Enhancing industrial symbiosis** by identifying and expanding opportunities for resource-sharing across regions.
- **Reducing reliance on virgin raw materials** while increasing the use of secondary materials.
- **Improving valorisation of by-products** from industries such as steel production.
- **Minimizing freshwater use** in industrial processes.

### Mission 2. Waste Reduction & Circular Design

- **Integrating waste reduction into policy** to ensure sustainability is embedded in regional action plans.
- **Cutting food system waste** through innovative agro-food practices.
- **Developing circular strategies** for textiles and electronics waste.
- **Boosting circular packaging** to achieve full sustainability in food production and consumption.

### Mission 3. Business Models & Market Innovation

- **Expanding product-as-a-service models** to promote circular business innovations.
- **Increasing revenues from circular economy** to ensure profitability and long-term success.
- **Encouraging the use of biobased materials** in construction for sustainable building solutions.

### Mission 4. Circular Materials & Strategic Sectors

- **Advancing circular metals and minerals** to boost reuse of critical resources.
- **Promoting efficient recycling and reuse** processes for electronics and other waste streams.
- **Strengthening synergies with industry transformation** through funding and collaboration.

Projects must demonstrate their relevance to at least one of the priority missions or submissions defined by ECIV.

## Annex 2: Example of expected project and solutions

**Table 6: Example of expected project and solutions**

Example of cross sectoral challenges	Examples of solutions (TRL 6–8)
Develop industrial symbiosis and territorial cooperation between economic stakeholders	Flow exchange platforms, resource pooling hubs, local marketplaces, inter-company traceability tools
Structure flow knowledge to identify circular opportunities at the territorial scale	Observation tools, territorial metabolism modelling, material-energy flow diagnostics, predictive models for circular economy scenarios, Data collection and analysis solution
Substitute virgin raw materials with secondary materials from recycling or reuse	Processes for integrating recycled materials, improving recycling quality, compatibility of secondary materials in production processes
Recover industrial by-products as new resources	Material/energy recovery or transformation processes, technological or biological innovations applied to residues
Substitute fossil or non-renewable resources with bio-based or renewable materials	Development and demonstration of ready-to-use bio-based materials, validated technically, economically, and regulatory
Improve eco-design, material efficiency, and move toward zero waste in production	Eco-designed products and processes, circular design tools, resource optimization software, environmental decision-support platforms, Logistics solutions, smart sensors, processing techniques, valorisation of unsold goods or by-products
Develop efficient, and replicable solutions for waste management	Territorial repair centers, advanced sorting systems, reverse logistics, digital solutions for decentralized flow management
Demonstrate effective and scalable solutions for reuse, repair, and recycling	Separation and recovery technologies, high-performance re-extraction and revalorization processes, smart deposit systems, circular traceability systems, Automated sorting solutions, take-back models, repair, upcycling, or local reuse initiatives, On-site reuse processes, mineral material recycling, traceability tools for reusable materials
Structure innovative profitable and replicable circular business models	Viable business model demonstrations, develop product-as-a-service models,
Accelerate behaviour change in favour of the circular economy	Incentive-based services and mechanisms, digital campaigns with measurable feedback, behavioural decision-support tools, digital or physical nudges, social researches

### Annex 3: Regional specificities

Below is the table outlining the regional specificities, which are further detailed in the following sections, along with their corresponding legal references. Please refer to specific regional specifications If there is no specificity in a cell of the table below, general call rules apply.

**Table 7: Summary of regional specificities by funding organisation**

	GOVERNMENT OF NAVARRA (SPAIN)	NORMANDIE (FRANCE)	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS REGION ALLIANCE (NETHERLANDS)	VÄRMLAND (SWEDEN)	DALARNA (SWEDEN)	GÄVLEBORG (SWEDEN)	SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE (UNITED KINGDOM)
<b>Eligible organisations</b>							Enterprises and research organisations
<b>Eligible costs</b>	Indirect costs 15%	Indirect costs 15%	Indirect costs max 23%	Indirect costs 15% (research organisations 25%)			Indirect costs 20%
<b>Limits of funding per beneficiary</b>		Max €500,000		Max 444 000€	Max 444 000€	Max 444 000€	
<b>Maximum funding rates</b>		Enterprises: - Small 60% - Medium 50% - Large 40% R&D and knowledge dissemination organisations. Non-economic activity: 100%					Companies - Small 65% - Medium 65% - Large 55% Research organisations 100%
<b>Payments to beneficiary</b>	Reimbursement	Advance payment	Advance payment	Reimbursement	Reimbursement	Reimbursement	Reimbursement

## Navarra (Spain)

### Eligible third parties

- Companies (SME, large companies, business associations, clusters, startups),
- Universities, research institutes and centers, technological centers,
- Local authorities, public administration, public associations and public companies,
- Civil society (associations, NGOs, etc.).

Independent entities based in Navarra and carrying out the project in Navarra.

### Additional eligibility criteria

- Entities must comply with Points 2.2 and 2.5 from the Resolution 466E/2024, of 30th December. It can be found in the Official Navarrese Gazette #30, 13th February 2025 <https://bon.navarra.es/es/anuncio/-/texto/2025/30/7>.
- Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2020 on a framework to facilitate sustainable investments.
- Foral Law 11/2019, of March 11 on Subsidies.
- Foral Law 5/2018, of May 17, on transparency, access to public information and good governance.
- State Law 3/2004, Of 29th December Which Establish Measures of Combating Late Payment in Commercial Operations.
- The compliance of these requirements has to be assured during the whole project. A document with a declaration of responsibility regarding these requirements has to be signed before the subsidy commitment is submitted to the beneficiary.

### Eligible costs

- a) Personnel costs
- b) Expenses of the materials used in the project.
- c) Depreciation expenses of equipment, patents and utility models, to the extent and during the period in which these assets are used for the project.
- d) Expenses of external collaborations
- e) Travels and accommodation related to activities in the project
- f) Application fees for patents generated by the project. This expense will not be eligible for large companies.
- g) Other expenses directly related to the project and effectively applied to its realization



h) Audit certificates for financial claims

j) Indirect costs. Flat rate of 15%

The following expenses will not be eligible, even if they are related to the activities of the project:

a) Personnel training expenses.

b) Administrative expenses and office supplies.

The beneficiary will be sent a subsidy Commitment decision of the Regional Council.

## Normandy (France)

### Eligible third parties

- Companies (SME, large companies, business associations, clusters, startups)
- Universities, research institutes and centers, technological centers,
- Local authorities, public administration, public associations and public companies
- Civil society (associations, NGOs, etc.).

Funded partner must be based in Normandy

### Additional eligibility criteria

- Project must be based on effective collaboration
- The cumulative funding across all ECIV calls is capped to €500,000 per applicant
- The partner must not be in financial difficulty
- Equity of the applicant organisation must be at least equal to the grant request

### Eligible costs

- Personnel costs (researchers, technicians, and other support staff if employed for the project)
- Consumables, depreciation costs of equipment used during the project
- External services (technical and intellectual) directly related to the project
- Flat rate of 15% of indirect costs
- Not eligible: Buildings and land (even in the form of depreciation)

### Further guidance

Rules of collaborative innovation project: « Dispositif d'aide pris en application du régime cadre exempté d'aides à la recherche, au développement et à l'innovation n° SA.11723, pris sur la base du règlement général d'exemption par catégorie n°651/2014 adopté par la Commission européenne le 17 juin 2014 et publié au Journal Officiel de l'Union Européenne le 26 juin 2014, tel que modifié par les Règlements (UE) 2017/1084 de la Commission du 14 juin 2017, publié au Journal Officiel de l'Union Européenne du 20 juin 2017 et 2020/972 du 2 juillet 2020 publié au JOUE du 7 juillet 2020. »

## Scotland (United Kingdom)

### Eligible third parties

- **Companies** that are legal entities operating and carrying out research and development activities within Scotland. This includes subsidiaries of overseas companies.
- **Universities or other research organisations** (ROs) that are legal entities registered and operating in Scotland, subject to the following conditions:
  - ROs will only be eligible if there are at least one company involved in the collaborative project, one of which must be located in Scotland and be eligible for and requesting Scottish Enterprise funding,
  - The work being carried out by the research organisation should be of direct relevance to at least one of the participating Scottish companies,
  - The total budget of the research organisation should be no greater than the 50% of total budgets of the Scottish companies involved in the collaborative project and seeking funding from SE.

### Additional eligibility criteria

The project / activity must be strategically important to the Scottish company(ies) and linked to at least one of the Scottish Enterprise Missions:

- Economic Transformation
- High growth opportunities
- Innovation, investment and international markets

Applicants must also meet the conditions of [Fair Work Conditionality form](#)

Find the latest information on the challenge closing date on The Scottish Enterprise [website](#).

In order to comply with UK government sanctions legislation and Scottish Government guidance in relation to trading with Russia and Belarus,

The project must involve research and development activity in Scotland. However, testing in a demonstration site outside Scotland is also eligible.

Projects must have the potential to deliver benefits to Scotland's economy and the new product, process or service must, in the case of non-SMEs, be able to compete in a global marketplace.

## Eligible costs

Specific costs including salaries, overheads, equipment, subcontracting, consultancy, training, materials, trials, IP management (SMEs only), travel and subsistence, and audit certificates for financial claims (SMEs only). Detailed guidance available on request.

	Basic Research	Industrial/ Applied Research	Experimental Development/Innovation
Large Enterprise	Up to 55%	Up to 55%	Up to 55%
Medium Enterprise	Up to 65%	Up to 65%	Up to 65%
Small Enterprise	Up to 65%	Up to 65%	Up to 65%
Universities, public research organisations	Up to 100% (equivalent to 80% FEC)	Up to 100% (equivalent to 80% FEC)	Up to 100% (equivalent to 80% FEC)
Public Authorities	N/A	N/A	N/A
Associations without economic activities, NGOs	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Annex 4: Subgrantee Agreement Template

### Legal framework for selected applicants

#### Subgrantee agreement between third party and ECIV funding partner

Each ECIV funding partner will provide third parties with subgrantee agreement or regional commitment.

#### **Navarra (Spain)**

[Regional comitment]

#### **Northern Netherlands (Netherlands)**

[Regional bilateral contract]

#### **North middle Sweden (Sweden)**

[Regional bilateral contract]

#### **Normandy (France)**

[Regional bilateral contract]

#### **Scotland (United Kingdom)**

[Regional bilateral contract]

Regional contacts can provide their templates:

ECIV territory	Mail
Navarra	saie@navarra.es
Normandy	eciv@normandie.fr
Värmland	eciv@regionvarmland.se
Dalarna	eciv.dalarna@regiondalarna.se
Gävleborg	eciv@regiongavleborg.se
Northern Netherlands	eciv@snn.nl
Scotland	enquiries@scotent.co.uk

## Template of ECIV generic bilateral agreement

Between: [PARTNER NAME] [ADDRESS]

as the Subgrant Contracting Partner for the ECIV Project (hereinafter “Contractor”)

And [ECIV FUNDING ORGANISATION NAME] [ADDRESS] [VAT NUMBER]

as the Beneficiary of Financial Support to Third Parties (hereinafter “Beneficiary”)

Together referred to as the “Parties”, individually as a “Party”

The Parties agree as follows:

### 1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

The Contractor is the partner of Horizon Europe project ‘European Circular Innovation Valley’ (ECIV) Grant Agreement number 101161155, which is funded by the European Union. This Agreement sets out the rights and obligations and the terms and conditions applicable to the subgrant awarded to the Beneficiary for implementing the action set out in Chapter 2.

### 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

The Subgrant is awarded for the action [PROJECT\_ACRONYM], [PROJECT\_FULL\_NAME], as described in Annex B: Description of the action.

The obligations and responsibilities are defined in detail in the First Open Call documents, namely in the ECIV First Open Call Guidelines for Applicants.

### 3. DURATION OF THE ACTION

The duration of the action is X months as of XX.XX.XXXX (‘starting date of the action’) and finished by XX.XX.XXXX (‘end date of the action’).

### 4. SUBGRANT AMOUNT

The maximum financial contribution to be granted to the Beneficiary shall not exceed the amount XX.XXX,XX EURO.

The subgrant reimburses XX% of the eligible costs of the project costs.

### 5. ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible costs must be declared under the following budget categories:

- Personnel costs: employees or equivalent, natural persons under direct contract, seconded persons, SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
- Subcontracting costs (based on beneficiary’s usual purchasing practices and ensuring best value for money and no conflict of interests)
- Purchase costs: travel and subsistence

- Purchase costs: equipment, infrastructures and other assets (calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and written off in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices)
- Purchase costs: other goods, works and services

Indirect costs are added by applying the regional flat rate to the direct costs that qualify for indirect costs, these are all cost categories listed above except for subcontracting.

Only costs generated within the duration of the action are eligible.

Eligible costs are subject to the basic eligibility rules of Horizon Europe as defined in Art. 6 of the [Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement](#).

All the costs must be determined in accordance with the Beneficiary's usual accounting and management principles and practices.

## **6. SUBGRANT PAYMENT**

The financial support will be paid in phases, depending on the ECIV funding partner organisation specificities.

All payments will be made by bank transfer from each ECIV funding partner of the Region of the beneficiaries, who holds its share of third-party funds, in the name of ECIV consortium, to the corresponding beneficiaries.

Breaching the provisions of this Agreement and/or failure to implement the activities described in the Description of the action may lead to the reduction of the grant and recovery of any paid amount. In the case of breach, partial approval or disapproval of the work as per the following Chapter 6, the Beneficiary undertakes to return any payment or prepayment received for this work within 30 days.

## **7. MONITORING THE WORK PROGRESS**

During the project implementation phase, a minimum of three meetings will be held between the Beneficiary and representatives of the ECIV consortium.

- Kick-off meeting: This meeting will be scheduled after signing the subgrant agreement. The primary focus will be on work plan, time schedule and reporting requirements.
- 6-month review meetings: These meetings will focus on assessing the progress made, discussing plans or adjustments and addressing any problems or challenges encountered.
- Final review meeting: This meeting will be held during the processing of the final report. Its primary purpose is to comprehensively review the project's outcomes, achievements, and compliance with the subgrant agreement.

Additional meetings may be scheduled if they are considered necessary based on the project's progress and specific circumstances.

## **8. REPORTING**

The Final Report must be submitted by the Beneficiary within 30 days after the end day of the action, detailing the work progress towards the project objectives, defined milestones and deliverables set in the Agreement, major achievements and impact and next steps.

The Final Report must include the following:

- Technical report – an overview of the activities implemented, and results of the action linked to identified milestones and KPIs
- Financial statement – the total costs spent and request for balance payment

The beneficiary must declare that:

- The information provided is full, reliable and true
- The costs declared are eligible
- The costs can be justified by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations
- All the receipts have been declared

The submitted technical report will be assessed by a designated group of 2 reviewers from the ECIV consortium based on the achievement of objectives and milestones of the project. Together with the technical report, the Beneficiary will submit a financial statement for the final payment. If the report is accepted, the Beneficiary will be invited to a final review meeting for an online presentation of the project results. If the report is not accepted, the Beneficiary will be requested to amend it based on identified shortcomings. Formal approval will be signed by the reviewers after the online presentation of the results by the Beneficiary to release the payments.

All reports must be submitted in English.

Financial statements must be drafted in EURO. A Beneficiary with accounting established in a currency other than the euro must convert the costs recorded in their account into euro, at the average of the daily exchange rates published in the C series of the Official Journal of the European Union, calculated over the corresponding reporting period.

Apart from the financial statement there is no detailed financial report to be delivered by the Beneficiary. The beneficiary must keep evidence of the activities implemented and the actual costs incurred, adhering to the Horizon Europe costs eligibility and record-keeping rules (articles 6 and 20 of the Model Grant Agreement).



## 9. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

In addition to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the terms and conditions of the project 'European Circular Innovation Valley' (ECIV) Grant Agreement number 101161155 under which the work is performed also apply, however only correspondingly for the legal relationship between the Contractor and the Beneficiary.

In particular, the Beneficiary agrees that the following articles of the Grant Agreement are explicitly part of this Agreement ensuring that the European Commission (EC) the European Court of Auditors (ECA), the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) can exercise their rights under Articles 25 of the Model Grant Agreement towards the Beneficiary.

Furthermore, the obligations of the Beneficiary include the obligations under articles 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, and 20 of the Model Grant Agreement<sup>10</sup>.

The referenced articles cover:

- Article 12 – Conflict of interest
- Article 13 – Confidentiality and security
- Article 14 – Ethics and values
- Article 17. Communication, dissemination and visibility
- Article 18. Specific rules for carrying out the action (Annex 5)
- Article 19. General information obligations
- Article 20. Record-keeping

The bodies mentioned in Article 25 of the Model Grant Agreement (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the parties.

## 10. PERFORMANCE

The Beneficiary shall perform its work under this Agreement in accordance with the requirements of the open call and the Annex B: Description of the action of this Agreement.

The Beneficiary shall endeavour to ensure that all work is performed to the highest professional standards and in accordance with the state of the art.

The Beneficiary shall be entitled to a continuous mentoring process, including an assigned group of consortium members to monitor the technical work, and to support the Beneficiary to perform their tasks in the project, thus ensuring their full integration in the overall project work.

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<sup>10</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)

The Beneficiary will notify the Contractor as soon as possible of any changes affecting the implementation of the work.

## **11. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The results belong to the project partners, in accordance with the agreements concluded in the Consortium agreement. However, ECIV and the European Commission reserve certain rights to exploit and disseminate the results, in accordance with article 16 of Horizon Europe model grant agreement.

The Beneficiary warrants full compliance with all IPR provisions on agreement on background, results free from restrictions, ownership of results, protection of results, exploitation of results, transfer, and licensing of results, and access rights to results and background.

The Beneficiary shall take all reasonable precautions to avoid the use of any third party IPR in the work. If other third parties may claim rights to the results, the Beneficiary must ensure that those rights can be exercised in a manner compatible with its obligations under this Agreement.

## **12. SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION**

The Parties may terminate this Agreement on reasonable and justified grounds prior written notification and agreement.

Termination shall not affect any rights or obligations of the Agreement Parties incurred prior to the date of termination unless otherwise agreed in writing between them.

The termination can be made at any time during the project implementation phase if the Beneficiary is in one of the situations declared by Annex C: Declaration of honour.

In the case that the ECIV project Grant Agreement terminated earlier than planned, this Agreement will also be terminated, and work items and payments will be finalised in line with the conditions of the Grant Agreement termination.

If either Party breaches any conditions of this Agreement and fails to remedy such breach within 30 days after receipt of a written notice from the other Party, the Party giving notice may, at its option and in addition to any other remedies which it may have, terminate this Agreement by sending notice of termination in writing to the other Party and such termination shall be effective as the date of the receipt of such notice, and any benefits of the Agreement in respect of the other Party shall cease.

## **13. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA**

Any personal data under the Agreement will be processed in accordance with article 15 of Horizon Europe model grant agreement and corresponding Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725.

#### **14. ENTRY INTO FORCE**

The Agreement shall enter into force on the date on which the last Party signs it.

#### **15. APPLICABLE LAW**

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed by the laws of [CONTRACTOR COUNTRY].

#### **16. ANNEXES**

Annex A: ECIV third parties project consortium agreement

Annex B: Description of the action (amended project proposal, including estimated budget)

For the Beneficiary:

[NAME SURNAME]

[SIGNATURE]

For the Contractor:

[PARTNER NAME]

[NAME SURNAME]

[SIGNATURE]

## Annex A: ECIV third parties project consortium agreement

ECIV third parties project consortium agreement is mandatory, to be sent/uploaded to the platform by the project leader for instance one month after funding commitment and based on:

[https://www.desca-agreement.eu/assets/helmholtz\\_gemeinschaft/user\\_upload/Brussels\\_Office/DESCA/20240206\\_DESCA\\_HorizonEurope\\_2.0\\_Wordversion\\_final.docx](https://www.desca-agreement.eu/assets/helmholtz_gemeinschaft/user_upload/Brussels_Office/DESCA/20240206_DESCA_HorizonEurope_2.0_Wordversion_final.docx)

## **Annex 5: Application form for applicants**

This form is a sample form, do not use it for offline completion.

Visit <https://platform.eciv.eu/> to apply.

ECIV open call application form structure is composed of:

1. Partner identification form
2. Project proposal form
3. Project budget form

## Partner identification form

Project name

Project short name/acronym

20 characters

*Please provide a short name for your project proposal.*

Lead partner organisation name

*Please provide the legal name of the company associated with the user account on the platform.*

Website

*Please provide the URL of your organisation's official website.*

VAT number

*Please enter the VAT number associated with your organisation.*

PIC number

*Please enter the PIC number associated with your organisation.*

*A Participant Identification Code (PIC) is a 9-digit number that serves as a unique identifier for legal entities participating in European funding programs. In case your organisation does not have one, please register here: [Participant register](#), following the step-by-step [guide](#).*

Street

*Please provide the street address of your organisation.*

Street number

*Please provide the street number of your organisation's address.*

City

*Please provide the city where your organisation is located.*

County/State/Region (optional)

*Please provide the county/state/region where your organisation is located.*

ZIP/Postal Code

*Please provide the ZIP/postal code of your organisation's location.*

Country

*Please select the country where your company is located from the dropdown menu.*

Contact person

*Please provide the full name (first name and surname) of the contact person.*

Email address

*Please provide the email address of the contact person.*

Phone number

*Please provide the phone number of the contact person.*

My organisation has not been involved in any conflict of interest situations with ECIV partners.

Confirm that your company has no conflicts of interest with ECIV partners.

*[previous form is repeated for each partner]*



## Project proposal form

### Project summary

1000 characters

*Provide a brief summary of your ECIV project, highlighting its focus and how it aligns with the eligible activities.*

*This summary may be used for communication and dissemination purposes if your project is selected for funding. Please ensure that it is suitable for publication.*

### Relevance

3000 characters

*Summarize your organisation's core activities, focusing on the key sustainability challenges you face and the specific problem your project aims to solve.*

*Describe the objective of your ECIV project, the steps already taken, and how the project will address these challenges with specific measures.*

*Explain how the project aligns with your organisation's goals and supports its transition to a circular economy, highlighting the tangible and measurable changes it will achieve.*

### Novelty

3000 characters

*Describe the value and benefits the project will bring to EU Regions compared to its current state.*

*If the project incorporates advanced technologies and/or social innovation to increase Regions's circularity, please explain how.*

### Work plan for piloting and demonstration

3000 characters

*Present a monthly breakdown of the main activities, key milestones, and deliverables for the entire duration of the project.*

## Team and network

3000 characters

*Provide details about your team members, emphasizing their relevant skills and experience.*

*Outline internal and external resources that will support the achievement of your project objectives.*

*Describe your professional network, including any external partners or collaborators involved in the project.*

*Include the number of full-time employees in your team and your total sales for the last financial year.*

*Identify any gaps in your team's expertise and explain your plan to address them.*

- ☐ Does the project help bring the technology or solution to a higher TRL level, from TRL6 to TRL8 or its equivalent if it is not based on technology?
- ☐ Is there a company in your consortium?

Please mention name(s) of corresponding organisation(s)

Due diligence to shield against Russia sanctions

- ☐ Did involved companies pass Russian sanctions checks to ensure compliance with international regulations?

## Risk analysis

3000 characters

*Identify the key technical and business risks that could impact the project's success and describe the mitigation strategies you will implement to address them.*

## Environmental impact

3000 characters

*Quantify the potential impact by establishing baseline and target values for at least one recommended Key Performance Indicator (KPI) will contribute to making your region more circular. Describe the methodology used to calculate these values.*

## Social impact

2000 characters

3000 characters

*How does the project contribute to sustainable growth from the perspective of Equality and Inclusion? Describe the social aspects of the project, especially how different groups in society are included. Describe how the project will work towards equality and inclusion.*

Business and broader impact

2000 characters

3000 characters

*Describe the expected economic impact of the project on your EU regions. Explain how your project is expected to influence the relevant industrial sector.*

*You can e.g., compare the decrease in consumption of primary materials with the number of jobs created and preserved or with increased turnover*

Ethics Self-Assessment

- ☐ Does your project involve processing of personal data?
- ☐ Does your project involve human participants (with or without consent)?
- ☐ Does your project present a risk to the environment or society?
- ☐ Does your project involve the use of AI-based applications?
- ☐ Does the activity involve the use of animals in any capacity?
- ☐ Does the activity include the use of human or other biological tissues?
- ☐ Does the activity provide instructions designed to facilitate harmful, illegal, or otherwise unethical uses?
- ☐ Are there any other ethical issues that should be taken into consideration?

Please tick the appropriate box(es) if relevant for your project. If you tick any of the boxes, please detail and indicate how you plan to address this ethical issue.

3000 characters

## Project budget form

☒ Upload your project budget

Please upload your budget table in euros, using the ECIV budget template,

	Total consortium	Lead partner	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8
Personnel costs	0,00								
Subcontracting costs	0,00								
Travel and subsistence	0,00								
Equipment, infrastructures and other assets	0,00								
Other goods, works and services	0,00								
Indirect costs	0,00								
TOTAL	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00

	Total consortium	Lead partner	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8
Requested funding	0,00								
Matchfunding	0,00								
TOTAL	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00

### Screenshot of project budget form

Detail and justify the need for each cost item included in the project for each partner.

- *Personnel costs: employees or equivalent, natural persons under direct contract, seconded persons, SME owners and natural person beneficiaries.*
- *Subcontracting costs: based on beneficiary's usual purchasing practices and ensuring best value for money and no conflict of interests.*
- *Purchase costs: travel and subsistence.*
- *Purchase costs: equipment, infrastructures and other assets – only depreciation costs (not the full purchase costs) are eligible, and only the portion that reflects the actual use of the asset during the project's duration can be included.*
- *Purchase costs: other goods, works and services.*
- *Indirect costs (overheads): calculated as a flat rate of direct costs, excluding subcontracting, depending on the regional conditions.*

Requested funding

The requested funding must correspond to the amount in the excel template.

Plan for covering additional costs

3000 characters

Explain how any additional costs exceeding the requested funding will be covered to ensure the project's feasibility. If no additional costs are expected, clearly state this.

## Annex 6: Q&A section

### 1. What is ECIV and what are its objectives?

**Answer:**

The European Circular Innovation Valley (ECIV) is a Horizon Europe project that connects innovation ecosystems across Europe to develop and scale circular economy solutions. ECIV mobilizes €27.16 million, including €16.3 million for third-party funding through open calls. Its objectives are:

- Mobilise, dynamize and connect 8 regional circular economy innovation ecosystems
- Increase the innovation activity and foster innovation and experimentation in circular industrial value chains
- Increase innovation knowledge and capabilities of the regions
- Mobilise public funding and private investments for innovation in circularity
- Generate common knowledge assets and regional policies and strategies related to circularity

### 2. What is the objective of ECIV first Open Call?

**Answer:**

The general objective of ECIV Open Call 1 (OC1) is to support interregional innovation projects in the circular economy, with a focus on Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 6–8. These projects must align with ECIV's missions and thematic priorities across various industrial sectors and value chains.

### 3. What are ECIV missions?

**Answer:**

The ECIV missions are strategic thematic areas that guide the selection and funding of projects under the ECIV Open Calls. They reflect urgent, cross-sectoral challenges in the circular economy and are designed to foster innovation across European regions.

### 4. Who can apply for ECIV Open Calls?

**Answer:**

Consortium of minimum 3 partners that include at least 2 partners located in 2 different territories represented by the ECIV regional funding organisations can apply.

Consortiums must have at least one company.

Eligible applicants include legal entities from eligible countries (EU Member States and the United Kingdom), such as:

- Companies (spinoffs, startups, SMEs, large enterprises and business associations),
- Research institutes and centers, universities, technological centers, clusters,
- Local authorities, public administration and public associations (government, public companies...),
- Civil society (associations, NGOs, etc.).

Individual applications and natural persons are not eligible.

## 5. What types of projects are supported?

### **Answer:**

Projects must focus on circular economy innovation (TRL6–8) and address one or more ECIV missions or submissions. Eligible activities include (non exhaustive):

- Developing or adopting innovative solutions for the circular economy,
- Implementing new circular business models,
- Integrating circularity into regional and interregional value chains,
- Creating measurable positive impact on the environment, economy, and/or society.

## 6. Which sectors are prioritized?

### **Answer:**

Sectoral priorities are described under the form of submissions. The call targets specific sectors (agriculture, construction, textiles, etc.) among the 9 ECIV partner regions.

Details are provided in annex.

## 7. What results are expected from funded projects?

### **Answer:**

Projects must deliver:

- Technological or social innovations
- Measurable impact indicators (KPIs)
- Dissemination and exploitation plans
- Contributions to ECIV missions and circular economy goals

## 8. What is the available funding?

### **Answer:**

- **Available budget for Open Call 1: €9 129 770**

- **Transnational innovation projects:** €500,000 to €3,000,000 per project
- **Maximum funding per beneficiary across all ECIV calls:** €600,000
- **Minimum budget per applicant and project:** €50,000

## 9. How do I submit an application?

### Answer:

Applications must be submitted online via the ECIV platform: <https://platform.eciv.eu>

Steps:

1. Register and create a profile
2. Complete the application form
3. Upload required documents (budget, declarations, etc.)
4. Submit before the deadline

## 10. What are the evaluation criteria?

### Answer:

Applications are evaluated based on:

- **Excellence** (30%): Alignment with ECIV priorities, innovation level
- **Impact** (40%): Environmental, social, and economic benefits
- **Quality & Efficiency** of implementation (30%): Feasibility, team capacity, budget clarity

Each criterion has a threshold of 3/5.

## 11. Do projects need to meet specific sustainability criteria?

### Answer:

Yes, sustainability is at the heart of ECIV. Projects must integrate environmentally friendly practices, reduce their carbon footprint, and promote circular solutions. This must be clearly explained in the proposal.

## 12. What are the obligations after receiving funding?

### Answer:

Funded applicants must:

- Sign a consortium agreement
- Depending on Region, sign a subgrant agreement with their regional ECIV funding partner or receive subsidy commitment documents

- Participate in project review meetings (kick-off, mid-term, final)
- Submit technical and financial reports
- Disseminate results according to ECIV and Horizon Europe guidelines

### 13. What are the key deadlines?

**Answer:**

- Call opens: December 2025
- Submission deadline: March 2026
- Evaluation: March–May 2026
- Results announcement: from May 2026
- Project end date: December 2028

### 14. Can I submit multiple applications?

**Answer:**

Yes. An organisation may participate in multiple consortia or submit multiple proposals, provided:

- Each project is distinct and there is no double funding of same activities
- The total funding requested does not exceed €600,000 per organisation across all ECIV calls
- The same person cannot participate in more than one application as coordinator

### 15. What costs are eligible for funding?

**Answer:**

Eligible costs include:

- Personnel costs
- Equipment (depreciation only)
- Travel and accommodation
- Subcontracting (if justified and indispensable)
- Indirect costs (flat rate, depending on the Regions)

Costs must comply with Horizon Europe and regional rules.



## 16. Do partners need to co-finance the project?

### **Answer:**

Yes.

Participants must provide co-financing if their funding rate is not 100%.

## 17. Can I modify my application after submission?

### **Answer:**

Yes, but only before the submission deadline. No changes are allowed after the deadline.

## 18. What happens if a consortium partner withdraws?

### **Answer:**

The consortium must notify ECIV immediately. A replacement or project adaptation must be proposed. Substantial changes require ECIV approval.

## 19. What are the rules regarding intellectual property?

### **Answer:**

Project results belong to the consortium partners. ECIV and the European Commission retain rights to disseminate results under Horizon Europe rules.

## 20. Are there tools or resources to help applicants?

### **Answer:**

Yes. ECIV provides:

- A detailed call guide
- Interregional and regionals webinars on the first open call
- Matchmaking platform <https://www.b2match.com/e/eciv-matchmaking>
- Submission, evaluation, selection and monitoring platform <http://platform.eciv.eu>
- Regional contact points at your availability for personalised advice
- A general helpdesk: **info@eciv.eu**

## 21. Where to find more information and who to contact if you have questions?

### **Answer:**

All information is available on the official ECIV website, including:

- Detailed call documents,
- Call leaflet with important dates and conditions,

- Contacts of call secretariat representatives.

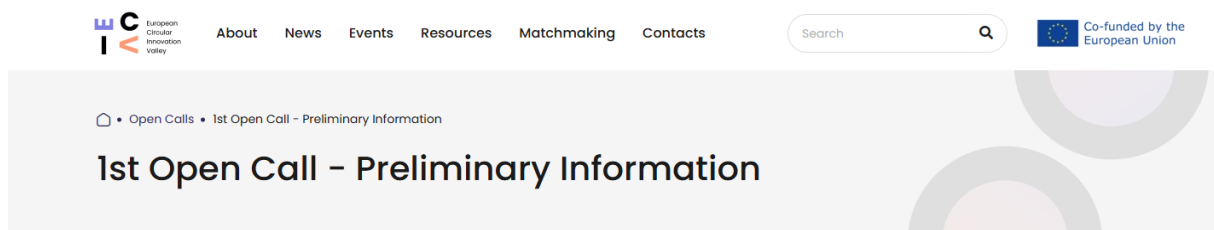
For any questions, you can write to our team at the following address: [info@eciv.eu](mailto:info@eciv.eu).

## Annex 7: Microsite at the project website and platform

### 1. Microsite at the project website

#### 1.1. Purpose of microsite of 1<sup>st</sup> Open Call

The Open Call page on the ECIV website provides detailed information about the current funding opportunities under the ECIV initiative. The 1st Open Call microsite is designed to connect stakeholders to collaborate on circular economy solutions. It serves as a digital “dance floor” where users can share expertise and build partnerships.



#### 1.2. Microsite Access

- URL of the general website: <https://www.eciv.eu/>
- Link to the 1st Open call: <https://eciv.eu/calls>

Participants are invited to visit the Open Call section of the ECIV website and proceed with registration. By selecting “Register,” a user profile can be created, enabling access to matchmaking tools and facilitating connections with potential partners.

## 1.3 Features

- **The 1st Open Call microsite page provides access to the detailed conditions of the Call.**

The first ECIV Open Call invites companies, research organizations, public authorities, and civil society to join forces in developing interregional circular economy projects. With a budget of over €9 million, the call supports large-scale innovation initiatives (TRL 6-8) that strengthen European value loops, reduce dependence on virgin raw materials, turn waste into new resources, and foster behavioral and business model change. By connecting diverse partners through the ECIV matchmaking platform, applicants can co-create impactful projects that address urgent circularity missions and accelerate Europe's transition towards a sustainable and resilient economy.

Call Objective

Eligible Applicants

Budget

Consortium Requirements

ECIV missions and submissions

Call starts: 2025-12-01 00:00 (GMT +0)

Time left to apply:

More

- **It allows to participate in the submission and thematic groups by registering for an event.**

to a circular economy, fostering sustainable growth and development across Europe through collaboration between public bodies, industries, and RTOs

ECIV project website

### ECIV CIRCULAR PACKAGING- BUILDING INTERREGIONAL PROJECTS

Interregional event to boost the circular packaging submission

**ECIV** European Circular Innovation Valley

**23-24 Oct 2025**  
Short AGENDA

- Presentation and validation of the ECIV circular packaging submission. (Mathilde Yver-Normandie region)
- Pitching session of participants
- B2B online virtual meetings

Registration

- It permits to view participant profiles from the 1st Open Call with options to browse by individual or organization, and filter by country.

ECIV Matchmaking  
1 May 2025 - 31 Aug 2029

Home Participants Marketplace Agenda ECIV partners

ALL

Participants Organisations Relevance

You can request 29 more meetings until 31 August 2029, 23:59. [Edit availability](#)

**Government of Navarre** >  
Government - Pamplona, Spain

**AR** Amaia Redin

**Deia Sola**  
ECIV Coordinator

**Pilar Pérez**  
COMMUNICATIONS

**Sergio Pérez García**  
General Director External Action

**MM** Maite Martin

**Région Normandie** >  
Public organization - Caen, France

116 RESULTS [Reset](#)

Search participants

☐ Bookmarked

☐ Signed up for matchmaking

TYPES

☐ Participants (89)

☐ ECIV Partner (23)

☐ EEN member (4)

COUNTRIES

☐ Spain (59)

☐ France (21)

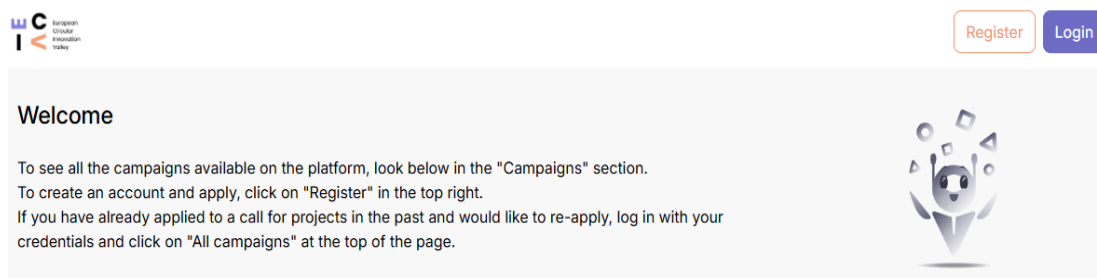
☐ Sweden (13)

☐ Lithuania (10)

## 2. Application, evaluation and monitoring platform

### 2.1. Purpose of the platform

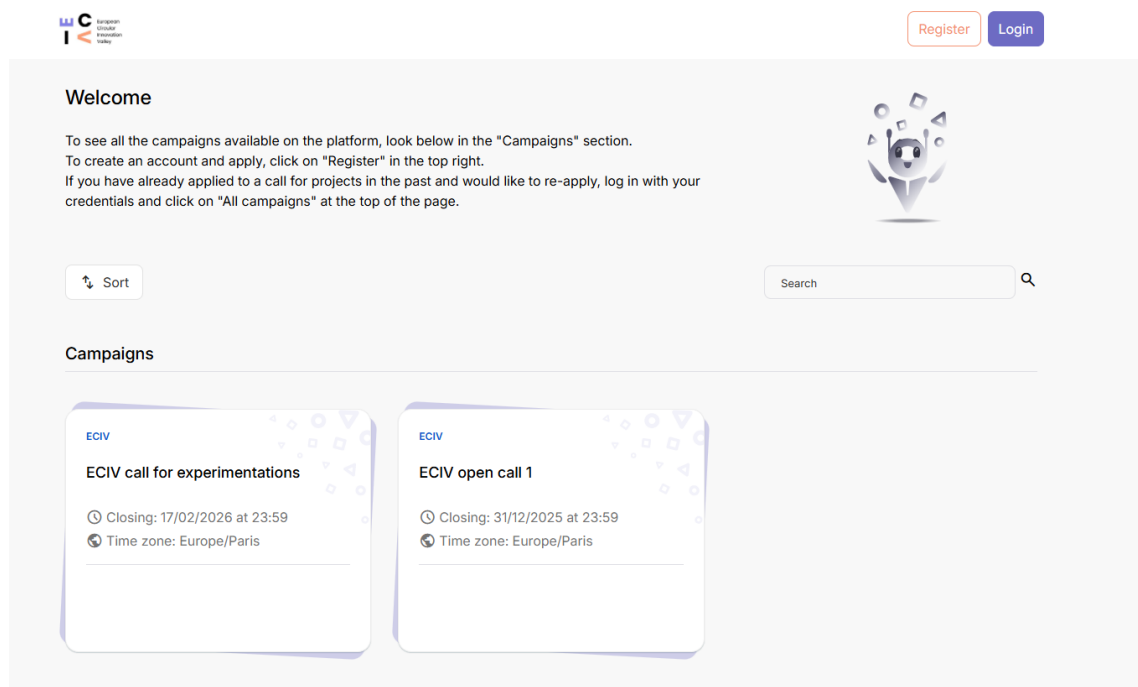
The ECIV platform is designed to submit the open calls related to circular economy projects. It enables users to enter company details, upload necessary documents, and submit proposals. Depending on the coordinating region, additional documents may be needed. Regional contact points are available to provide guidance and technical support throughout the process.



### 2.2. Website Access

- URL: <https://www.eciv.eu/>
- Link to the 1st Open call: <https://eciv.eu/calls>

- **Users can browse and select the call for projects they wish to apply for.**



- **Clicking the first Open Call opens a multi-step form where users can fill in details and save progress anytime.**

- **Users can manage, track, edit, and share their applications within their My Applications space.**

## **Annex 8: Call leaflet**



### How to Apply?

- Call opens: **December 2025**
- Deadline: **March 2026**
- Results: **May 2026**
- Projects end: **December 2028**

### Support Tools

Application Platform:  
<https://platform.eciv.eu>

All key information:  
[www.eciv.eu](http://www.eciv.eu)

Find your project partner:  
<https://www.b2match.com/e/eciv-matchmaking>

### ECIV funding territories

Navarre  
Normandie  
Northern Netherlands  
North Middle Sweden  
Scotland

Contact us at  
[call-secretariat@eciv.eu](mailto:call-secretariat@eciv.eu)

Follow us



## ECIV Open Call – Join Europe's Largest Circular Economy Ecosystem

Connecting regions –  
building circular solutions



Apply between

**December 2025  
& March 2026**

At

<http://platform.eciv.eu>



Funded by  
the European Union

## What is ECIV?

The European Circular Innovation Valley (ECIV) is a Horizon Europe project that connects innovation ecosystems across Europe to develop and scale circular solutions.

ECIV's aims to drive the creation of a more sustainable and prosperous Europe by transforming traditional EU value chains into interconnected, innovative, and circular systems, ultimately establishing a thriving circular economy ecosystem by 2050.

Funded by  
Horizon Europe

€27.16M

total  
budget

€16.3M

for  
third-party  
funding

## 1st Open Call

### Purpose

Fund interregional circular innovation projects (TRL 6–8)

### Budget

Total — €9.13M

Budget per project: — €500K–€3M

Max per beneficiary for all ECIV calls: — €600K

### Eligible Applicants

- SMEs, startups, large enterprises
- Universities, research institutes
- NGOs, local authorities

### Consortium Requirements

- 3 partners from 3 countries
- 2 from 2 ECIV funding territories including 1 company

## Challenges & Topics

### ECIV Challenges

- 1 Industrial Symbiosis & Resource Efficiency
- 2 Waste Reduction & Circular Design
- 3 Business Models & Market Innovation
- 4 Circular Materials & Strategic Sectors

### Priority Sectors



Agro-food, textiles, packaging



Electronics, construction, energy



Water, metals, bioeconomy

## RELEVANT TERMINOLOGY

Term	Definition
Funding organisation	Funding Organisation is a national or regional organisation responsible for providing the relevant share of funding for the Interregional Projects.
ECIV funding organisation	ECIV consortium partner that dedicates a budget for the funding of third parties after the process of selection in the Open Calls.
ECIV funding territory	ECIV funding territories for Open Call 1 are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Comunidad Foral de Navarra (Spain);</li> <li>2. Noord Nederland comprising Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe (Netherlands);</li> <li>3. Norra Mellansverige comprising regions of Värmland, Dalarna and Gävleborg (Sweden);</li> <li>4. Normandie (France);</li> <li>5. Scotland (United Kingdom)</li> </ol>
Expert Panel	Expert Panel is the board of independent experts evaluating proposals of the Joint Calls.
Granting Authority	Granting Authority means the body awarding the grant for ECIV.
Effective collaboration	Effective collaboration means collaboration between at least two independent parties to exchange knowledge or technology, or to achieve a common objective based on the division of labour where the parties jointly define the scope of the collaborative project, contribute to its implementation and share its risks, as well as its results. Contract research and provision of research services are not considered forms of collaboration. (see <a href="#">Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014</a> )
Experimental development	Experimental development means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquiring, combining, shaping and using existing scientific, technological, business and other relevant knowledge and skills,</li> <li>• with the aim of developing new or improved products, processes or services, including digital products, processes or services,</li> <li>• in any area, technology, industry or sector (including, but not limited to, digital industries and technologies, such as for example super-computing, quantum technologies, block</li> </ul>

	<p>chain technologies, artificial intelligence, cyber security, big data and cloud or edge technologies).</p> <p>This may also encompass, for example, activities aiming at the conceptual definition, planning and documentation of new products, processes or services.</p> <p>Experimental development may comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prototyping, demonstrating, piloting, testing and validation of new or improved products, processes or services in environments representative of real-life operating conditions</li> <li>• where the primary objective is to make further technical improvements on products, processes or services that are not substantially set.</li> </ul> <p>This may include the development of a commercially usable prototype or pilot which is NOT necessarily the final commercial product. Such a prototype/pilot may be too expensive to be produced and as such be used only for demonstration and validation purposes.</p> <p>Experimental development does not include routine or periodic changes made to existing products, production lines, manufacturing processes, services and other operations in progress, even if those changes may represent improvements.</p> <p>(see <a href="#">Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014</a>)</p>
Knowledge transfer	<p>Knowledge transfer means any process which has the aim of acquiring, collecting and sharing explicit and tacit knowledge, including skills and competence in both economic and non-economic activities such as research collaborations, consultancy, licensing, spin-off creation, publication and mobility of researchers and other personnel involved in those activities. Besides scientific and technological knowledge, it includes other kinds of knowledge such as knowledge on the use of standards and regulations embedding them and on conditions of real-life operating environments and methods for organisational innovation, as well as management of knowledge related to identifying, acquiring, protecting, defending and exploiting intangible assets.</p>
Open Call (OC)	<p>Open Call means each of the two co-funded calls for collaborative innovation projects (TRL over 6-8) around circular areas which are organised by participating Funding Organisations in ECIV, based on the thematic areas and topics identified in different value chains and industrial sectors of the respective regions. There will be a first open call opening in December 2025 and closing in March 2026 and another one opening in September 2026 and closing in December 2026, as well as a continuous open call for experimentation opening in March 2026. These calls will mobilise €16.3M of funds available.</p>



Call secretariat (CS)	ECIV primary helpdesk for applicants, addressing all aspects of proposal creation and submission, i.e., in supporting the technical follow-up and facilitating communication related to the calls.
Call Steering Committee (CSC)	ECIV Call Steering Committee monitors all actions taken by the Call Secretariat, as well as makes decisions regarding the design of the calls.
Technology Readiness Level (TRL)	<p>ECIV Open Calls support interregional projects with a TRL between 6 and 8, or its equivalent if it is not based on technology.</p> <p>The following definitions apply, unless otherwise specified (see Communication from the Commission, '<a href="#">A European strategy for Key Enabling Technologies – A bridge to growth and jobs</a>', COM(2012) 341 final, 26 June 2012):</p> <p>TRL 6 – Technology demonstrated in a relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)</p> <p>TRL 7 – System prototype demonstration in an operational environment</p> <p>TRL 8 – System complete and qualified</p>
Research and knowledge dissemination organisation	<p>'Research and knowledge dissemination organisation' or 'research organisation' means an entity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. such as universities or research institutes, technology transfer agencies, innovation intermediaries, research-oriented physical or virtual collaborative entities,</li> <li>2. irrespective of its legal status (organised under public or private law) or way of financing,</li> <li>3. whose primary goal is to independently conduct fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development or to widely disseminate the results of such activities by way of teaching, publication or knowledge transfer.</li> </ol> <p>Where such an entity also pursues economic activities, the financing, the costs and the revenues of those economic activities must be accounted for separately.</p> <p>Undertakings that can exert a decisive influence upon such an entity, for example in the quality of shareholders or members, may not enjoy a preferential access to the results generated by it.</p>
Consortium Agreement	Legal contract through which multiple entities – whether businesses, research organizations, or public institutions – agree to collaborate on a joint project.

Bilateral subgrantee Agreements	Bilateral Subgrantee Agreement means an agreement between the ECIV funding organisation and a Beneficiary, providing for a Subgrant to the Beneficiary for the purpose of financing a collaborative project.
Subgrant Commitment	Subgrant Commitment means a binding agreement to pay grant funds to an eligible applicant at some future time.
Incentive effect	<p>Aids shall be considered to have an incentive effect if the beneficiary has submitted a written application for the aid to the funding organisation concerned before work on the project or activity starts.</p> <p>(see <a href="#">Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014, Article 6</a>)</p>

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation	Description
CE	Circular economy
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
MS	Member State
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OC	Open Call
RIV	Regional Innovation Valleys
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized enterprises
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
WP	Work Package
ECIV	European Circular Innovation Valley
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
OC1	1 <sup>st</sup> Open Call
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
9R's	9Rs stands for Refuse, Rethink, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Refurbish, Remanufacture, Repurpose, Recycle and Recover
EEE	Electrical and Electronic Equipment
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESFI	European Structural and Investment Funds
PIC	Participant Identification Code
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
GBER	General Block Exemption Regulation
EEA	European Economic Area
HE	Horizon Europe
PRP	Peer Review Pannel
CS	Call Secretariat
CSC	Call Steering Committee



European  
Circular  
Innovation  
Valley

