European Circular Innovation Valley

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Call text and evaluation criteria

Open Call 2

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This document outlines ECIV second 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.

Building on the experience gained from the implementation of Open Call 1, several improvements and updates have been introduced in Open Call 2 to broaden participation, simplify project development and strengthen the overall impact of funded projects.

Key changes include:

- Reformulation of ECIV sub-missions, description of priorities
- Increased available budget to €10,28 million.
- Maximum project duration set at 18 months.
- Expansion of eligible funding territories, with the addition of Lithuania and the Province of Antwerp.
- Updated regional specificities, including revisions for Normandy, Scotland, Navarra and the newly participating territories.
- Lower maximum grant amount, decreased to €500,000 per applicant and application.
- Simplified consortium requirements, reducing the minimum partnership composition from 3 partners from 3 Member States and/or the United Kingdom to 3 partners from at least 2 Member States and/or the United Kingdom
- Compulsory participation of 1 SME instead of 1 company.
- Conditions for start after the notification of a positive evaluation result, on a date determined by the project partners instead of after signature of Grant agreement.
- Optimised evaluation and selection process, including the introduction of a rapporteur-based assessment and a negotiation phase with selected consortia.
- Revised application form, with new sections covering:
    - Partner identification (including legal status and gender-related information where applicable);
    - Regional added value;
    - Innovation dimension;
    - European added value;
    - Dissemination and communication activities.

- Additional mandatory supporting documents, including:
    - Declaration of Honour;
    - Detailed project budget;
    - Ethics review documentation (where applicable).
- Updated Interregional Grant Agreement model.
- Expanded Questions & Answers (Q&A) package providing further guidance and clarification for applicants.

These changes aim to improve accessibility, strengthen project quality and impact, streamline the evaluation process, and facilitate participation across the ECIV ecosystem.

Participation in Open Call 1, whether successful or unsuccessful, does not preclude an organisation from applying to this Open Call. Applicants must, however, comply with all eligibility and funding provisions defined in the present Call.

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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 develop common knowledge, innovative policies and new market opportunities** that support systemic change towards interconnected and circular European value chains.

1.3 Partners

ECIV project brings together 20partners 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
Province of Antwerp	Belgium
Circular Flanders	Belgium
Innovation Agency Lithuania	Lithuania
Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council	Finland
Scottish Enterprise	United Kingdom (Scotland)
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 & Sub-missions

The open calls are guided by ECIV's mission and sub-mission 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 second open call

ECIV 2nd Open Call (OC2) for interregional circular innovation projects mobilises € 10,284,233.85 co-funded by ECIV funding partners and Horizon Europe.

Call information can be found on the page dedicated to the second Open call on the ECIV website.

2.1 General objective of the call

The general objective of ECIV second open call 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.

For Open Call 2, this overarching mission is translated into 5 sub-missions, whose priorities are further described in next chapter and in **Annex 1: ECIV mission and sub-missions and Annex 2: Sub-missions priorities:**

- **Circular and biobased packaging**: By 2029, develop innovative solutions that accelerate packaging circularity to significantly reduce the use of fossil and virgin oil-based raw materials.
- **Circular agrifood:** Accelerate the transition towards circular agrifood systems by preventing waste and losses, closing nutrient and resource loops, valorising by-products, and strengthening regional resilience and value creation.
- **Circular and biobased construction:** Accelerate the use of sustainable, circular and biobased materials in construction, to show how circular principles create more sustainable, healthy, and regenerative built environments.
- **Circular and biobased textiles:** By the end of 2029 the role of wool and other natural fibres and recycled synthetic fibres is increased in clothing and other regional value chains.
- **Circular metals and critical raw materials:** Accelerate the use of circular steel and other base metals, and increase circular use of materials covered by the Critical Raw Materials Act.

While these sub-missions and their respective priorities provide the primary framework for Open Call 2, applicants are also encouraged to submit innovative proposals that contribute to the overall mission of the call, even if they do not directly address the listed priorities.

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.

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

Therefore, ECIV second 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.

In the ECIV Project these overall mission, objectives and dimensions of value chains 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.

ECIV Open Calls are open to every actor who wants to cooperate with other participants to unlock additional benefits across value chains and ecosystems linked to the mission 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 Sub-mission priorities

Each sub-mission addresses specific circular economy challenges and opportunities identified through the work of the ECIV Sub-mission Groups. The priorities presented below are intended to guide applicants towards areas where interregional cooperation and innovation are expected to deliver the highest impact.

Table 2: Sub-mission priorities

Sub-mission topic	Sub-mission priority
Circular and biobased packaging	Develop and demonstrate interoperable reuse, refill and reverse-logistics systems
	Scale high-quality recycling and recycled-content integration in packaging
	Develop and validate sustainable bio-based packaging materials and applications
Circular agrifood	Circular and resource-efficient food systems
	Bioresources and by-product valorisation
	High-value ingredients, nutrient recovery and bio-based products
	Circular processing, demonstration and Industrial scale-up
	Circular markets, demand creation and value chain development
Circular and biobased construction	Scale trusted circular and biobased construction solutions through viable business models and market demand
	Demonstrate quality assurance, standards and traceability approaches that increase market confidence
	Build distributed circular value chains, logistics and marketplaces for construction materials
	Accelerate implementation through interregional demonstrators, skills and professional practice
Circular and biobased textiles	Scaling interregional circular fibre value chains
	Unlocking demand and new business models for circular fibres
	Building interregional knowledge and skills for circular textiles
Circular metals and critical raw materials	Mapping CRM resources in waste streams and deposits
	Recovery of critical raw materials from end-of-life products
	Recovery of critical raw materials from mining waste and industrial residues
	Circular steel
	Industrial wastewater recovery and reuse

These priorities provide the main framework for Open Call 2 and will be taken into account during project evaluation if properly addressed. However, Open Call 2 remains open to innovative circular economy projects beyond these priority areas. Applicants are therefore

encouraged to submit proposals that clearly contribute to the overall objectives of ECIV, even when their project does not directly address one of the listed priorities.

2.3 Call overview

Table 3: Call overview

Call Objective	Support Interregional innovation projects in circular economy (TRL over 6-8) focusing on: 1. Improve knowledge and territorial cooperation to **develop local - European value loops.** 2. **Reduce the extraction and import of virgin raw materials** through sustainable resource management in production systems. 3. Prevent, treat, and recover waste to turn it into **new resources.** 4. **Change behaviours and economic models** to accelerate the circular transition.
Total Budget Available	€ 10,284,233.85 (50% Horizon Europe; 50% ECIV funding organisations)
Number of projects expected	Up to 175 applicants, 20 applications and 15 innovations projects are expected, depending on the final project sizes.
Eligible Applicants	Companies, research institutes, universities, technological centers, local authorities, public administration, associations, NGOs (non-exhaustive list).
Open Call 2 funding territories	1. Comunidad Foral de Navarra (Spain) 2. Noord Nederland comprising Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe (Netherlands) 3. Norra Mellansverige comprising regions of Värmland, Dalarna and Gävleborg (Sweden) 4. Normandie (France) 5. Scotland (United Kingdom) 6. Central and Western Lithuania Region (CWLR) (*Lietuvos Vidurio ir Vakarų regionas (VVL)* 7. Province of Antwerp (Belgium)
Eligibility conditions	• Min. 3 partners from 2 different eligible countries (EU Member States and the United Kingdom).

	• Min. 2 partners from 2 different ECIV funding territories (see above) • Consortium must include at least one SME. • Applicants from other EU territories (not included as ECIV funding territories above) are eligible for participation, but **not for ECIV funding.** • Only applicants from ECIV funding territories can lead a consortium and benefit from ECIV funding.
Budget per Project	Max. € 3M - Min. €500K total per project
Funding per Beneficiary	Max €600K per beneficiary across all ECIV calls Max €500K per beneficiary for Open Call 2.
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	• Call opening 26 November 2026 • Call closure: 26 February 2027, 17:00 CET. • Funding proposal: 30 June 2027. • Grant Agreement signed: September 2027.
Projects timeline	Duration up to 1,5 year • start **no sooner than 1st of July** 2027 and after the funding commitments have been signed by parties. • end no later than 31st of December 2028
Sub-missions topics	• Circular and biobased packaging • Circular agrifood • Circular and biobased construction • Circular and biobased textiles • Circular metals and critical raw materials

Other Notable Aspects	➢ ECIV project proposal submission platform (Tchooz) ➢ ECIV matchmaking platform (B2Match) ➢ Matchmaking acceleration meetings ➢ Regional alignment ➢ Independent experts' evaluation ➢ ERDF 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[1].

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 2nd Open Call relate to the following ECIV funding territories:

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

[1] 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

- Scotland (United Kingdom),
- Central and Western Lithuania Region (CWLR) (*Lietuvos Vidurio ir Vakarų regionas (VVL)* (Lithuania)
- Province of Antwerp (province of Antwerp, Belgium).

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, and at €500,000 per applicant and per project for Open Call 2. 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) or are in one of the following exclusion situations banning them from receiving EU grants can NOT participate[2]:

- 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).

[2] 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 2 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 SME**.

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

***Example*:**

A consortium can include:

- *1 organisation from Scotland;*
- *1 organisation from Navarra (Spain);*
- *1 organisation from Slovakia.*

The organisation from Slovakia can participate in the project if it meets the conditions described in 3.1.1.

However, it will not receive ECIV funding.

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 2014, declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty GBER 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 1.5 years.

Projects will have incentive effect[3] and will start **no sooner than the 1st of July 2027**, after the notification of a positive evaluation result to the projects proposed for funding by the CSC and on a date determined by the project partners. Projects end date will be **no later than 31st of December 2028**.

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:** 19 November 2026 (1 day after publication on European Commission platform)
- **Call closure:** 19 February 2027, 17:00 CET (3 months later)
- **Evaluation period:** from Februrary to June 2027 (5 months)
- **Announcement of results:** from June 2027
- **Projects end date:** until December 31st, 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 maximum grant amount per applicant within the project is €500,000 for Open Call 2. The minimum budget per applicant within the project is €50,000.

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

[3] 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).

The same applicant cannot participate in more than one application as coordinator in the 2nd 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

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

- Navarra
- Normandy
- North Middle Sweden
- Northern Netherlands
- Scotland

- Central and Western Lithuania Region (CWLR) (*Lietuvos Vidurio ir Vakarų regionas (VVL)*
- Province of Antwerp

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 2 different eligible countries (EU Member States and the United Kingdom)..

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

The project leader must be from an ECIV funding territory.

The consortium must include at least one SME.

Each applicant budget per project 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 funding per project in ECIV Open Call 2 is capped to €500,000 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. One rapporteur will be designated to review and report the evaluations.

Scores provided by the Call Secretariat will carry a weight of 40%, whereas the evaluations of two external experts will collectively represent the remaining 60%.

The rapporteurs 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. Negotiation will follow depending on the available regional fundings. The composition of the PRP will be 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:

- **Impact**: Project's potential to create measurable benefits (KPI).
- **Excellence:** Alignment with ECIV's 2nd Open Call objectives, sub-missions and priorities.
- **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.

While strong projects addressing the overarching mission will be considered highly relevant, additional value will be given to proposals that also demonstrate a clear contribution to the priorities of the sub-missions, thereby strengthening their alignment with the broader objectives of the program. Key criteria, questions of evaluation and respective weights and threshold are the following:

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?

5.2.1.1 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, SRL, MRL, ORL or LRL 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 sub-missions? To what extent does it enhance the level of circularity?
- To what extent does the project address the challenges, expected outcomes, and priorities identified by the sub-mission groups?
- 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?

5.2.1.3 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?[4]
- Are there any other ethical issues that should be taken into consideration?

In an additional document to the 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.

[4] 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[5] and are subject to regional specifications.

Table 4: Funding rates by size of enterprise

R&D&I Category	Size of enterprise		
	Small	**Medium**	**Large**
Experimental development	Up to 70%	Up to 60%	Up to 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 second Open Call budget

Funding partners of ECIV 2nd Open Call (OC2) for interregional circular innovation projects mobilises € 10,284,233.85 co-funded from Horizon Europe (HE), European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) and own funds.

Table 5: ECIV funding partners' budgets and sources

ECIV funding partner	OC2 budget	Co-funding
Government of Navarra (Spain)	€1,613,755.78	HE; Regional funds
Northern Netherlands Region Alliance (Netherlands)	€400,000.0	HE; ERDF
Region of Dalarna (Sweden)	€586,666.00	HE; Regional funds
Region of Värmland (Sweden)	€400,560.25	HE; Regional funds
Region of Gävleborg (Sweden)	€458,919.24	HE; Regional funds
Region of Normandy (France)	€2,146,491.17	HE; Regional funds

[5] 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

Scottish Enterprise (United Kingdom)	€1,739,191.11	HE; Own funds
Innovation Agency of Lithuania Central and Western Lithuania Region (CWLR) (***Lietuvos Vidurio ir Vakarų regionas (VVL)***)	€2,000,000.00	HE; ERDF
Province of Antwerp (Belgium)	€938,650.30	HE; Own funds
Total	**€ 10,284,233.85**	

6.3 Funding limits

The expected budgets figures shall be comprised between:

- Above **€50,000** budget amount per applicant within project.
- Cumulative funding across all ECIV calls is capped to **€600,000** per applicant.
- Funding in ECIV Open Call 2 is capped to **€500,000** per applicant within project.
- Budget amount must be 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[6] 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.

[6] 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

- 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.

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.

Due to the decentralised funding model and the different regional budgets available, highly ranked proposals may not always be funded as originally submitted. While funding organisations are expected to follow the ranking established through the independent evaluation process, final funding decisions remain subject to regional budget availability, eligibility conditions and funding constraints.

In cases of oversubscription, additional considerations will be applied to optimise the allocation of funds, including maximising the number of high-quality projects funded, ensuring efficient use of regional budgets, and promoting the participation of underrepresented or undersubscribed regions. Where funding gaps arise, possible solutions may include budget adjustments, consortium adaptations or the involvement of partners from regions with available funding, provided that the project objectives, quality and implementation capacity are preserved.

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,** the **Interregional Grant 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 granted project coordinator and its partners.
3. The **Interregional Grant Agreement** will be signed between the consortium members and ECIV project coordinator.
4. 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)

The list of the members of the Peer Review Panel will be communicated through the ECIV website at the end of the entire review process.

An evaluation report will be sent to the project coordinators. The right to make a complaint may be exercised in accordance with section 16.3 of this guide.

The observer's assessment will be presented in a report to the European Commission, and a public version will be disseminated via ECIV website.

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 next 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[7], 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.

All funded projects are expected to comply with Horizon Europe and regional requirements regarding communication, dissemination, exploitation, visibility and use of the European Union emblem and the ECIV funding partners logos. Applicants should demonstrate their capacity to implement appropriate communication and dissemination activities and ensure compliance with the provisions set out in the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.

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

[7] 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 2nd 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[8]) 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 Clearence 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.

Deliverables which contain classified information will be submitted according to special procedures agreed with the granting authority. Unless agreed otherwise in writing by the

[8] 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/

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

16.2 Regional Contact Points

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

Table 6: Regional contact points

ECIV territory	Mail
Navarra (Spain)	saie@navarra.es
Normandy (France)	eciv@normandie.fr
Värmland (Sweden)	eciv@regionvarmland.se
Dalarna (Sweden)	eciv.dalarna@regiondalarna.se
Gävleborg (Sweden)	eciv@regiongavleborg.se
Northern Netherlands (Netherlands)	eciv@snn.nl
Scotland (United Kingdom)	enquiries@scotent.co.uk
Central and Western Lithuania Region (CWLR) (*Lietuvos Vidurio ir Vakarų regionas (VVL)* (Lithuania)	v.simanauskiene@inovacijuagentura.lt
Province of Antwerp (Belgium)	eciv@provincieantwerpen.be

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 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 mission and sub-missions

ECIV overarching mission is described below.



In Open Call 2, it is declined into the following sub-missions.

Code	Sub-mission topic	Sub-mission
PACK	Circular and biobased packaging	By 2029, develop innovative solutions that accelerate packaging circularity to significantly reduce the use of fossil and virgin oil-based raw materials.
AGRI	Circular agrifood	Accelerate the transition towards circular agrifood systems by preventing waste and losses, closing nutrient and resource loops, valorising by-products, and strengthening regional resilience and value creation.
CONS	Circular and biobased construction	Accelerate the use of sustainable, circular and biobased materials in construction, to show how circular principles create more sustainable, healthy, and regenerative built environments.
TEXT	Circular and biobased textiles	By the end of 2029 the role of wool and other natural fibres and recycled synthetic fibres is increased in clothing and other regional value chains.
META	Circular metals and critical raw materials	Accelerate the use of circular steel and other base metals, and increase circular use of materials covered by the Critical Raw Materials Act.

Annex 2: Sub-missions priorities

Sub-mission topic		Priority	
PACK	Circular and biobased packaging	PACK 1	Develop and demonstrate interoperable reuse, refill and reverse-logistics systems
		PACK 2	Scale high-quality recycling and recycled-content integration in packaging
		PACK 3	Develop and validate sustainable bio-based packaging materials and applications
AGRI	Circular agrifood	AGRI 1	Circular and resource-efficient food systems
		AGRI 2	Bioresources and by-product valorisation
		AGRI 3	High-value ingredients, nutrient recovery and bio-based products
		AGRI 4	Circular processing, demonstration and industrial scale-up
		AGRI 5	Circular markets, demand creation and value chain development
CONS	Circular and biobased construction	CONS 1	Scale trusted circular and biobased construction solutions through viable business models and market demand
		CONS 2	Demonstrate quality assurance, standards and traceability approaches that increase market confidence
		CONS 3	Build distributed circular value chains, logistics and marketplaces for construction materials
		CONS 4	Accelerate implementation through interregional demonstrators, skills and professional practice
TEXT	Circular and biobased textiles	TEXT 1	Scaling interregional circular fibre value chains
		TEXT 2	Unlocking demand and new business models for circular fibres
		TEXT 3	Building interregional knowledge and skills for circular textiles
META	Circular metals and critical raw materials	META 1	Mapping critical raw materials resources in waste streams and deposits
		META 2	Recovery of critical raw materials from end-of-life products
		META 3	Recovery of critical raw materials from mining waste and industrial residues
		META 4	Circular steel
		META 5	Industrial wastewater recovery and reuse

The priorities have emerged from a collaborative process involving ECIV partner regions, including:

- Regional Action Plans (RAPs) and Theories of Change.
- Interregional analysis of challenges, synergies and complementarities.
- ECIV workshop in Glasgow, 22 September 2026.
- Subsequent Sub-mission Group discussions,
- Stakeholder and expert consultation, 29 October 2026.

Together, these activities informed the proposed priorities for ECIV Open Call 2 and provide a basis for further interregional collaboration.

PACK 1: Develop and demonstrate interoperable reuse, refill and reverse-logistics systems

Develop and demonstrate integrated, interoperable reuse and refill systems that connect packaging producers, retailers, logistics operators, washing facilities and end users. Projects should combine innovative packaging design, infrastructure, reverse logistics, digital solutions and viable business models to enable reuse at industrial scale. Projects should also test approaches that make reuse convenient and attractive to consumers and professional users.

Rationale

Reuse is a major lever for reducing single-use packaging and virgin material consumption. However, its development is constrained by fragmented collection and return systems, insufficient washing infrastructure, high logistical costs, lack of standardisation and uncertain economic viability.

The PPWR creates an important regulatory driver for reuse in certain packaging categories, but achieving the necessary scale requires practical, economically viable solutions.

Interregional cooperation can help develop common approaches to packaging standardisation, interoperable systems and shared technical solutions while adapting them to different regional markets.

Projects could include:

- Standardised, interoperable packaging formats and compatible technical specifications that facilitate reuse across European markets.
- Innovative washing, sanitisation, inspection and quality-control technologies, including energy- and water-efficient installations.
- Wash-off labels, removable adhesives, durable or washable printing inks, and other design innovations enabling repeated reuse.

- Innovative collection and reverse-logistics systems, with consumer-centred trials on return convenience and incentives.
- Digital identification, tracking and deposit-return solutions.
- Reuse and refill demonstrators involving retailers, industrial packaging users and logistics operators.
- Shared infrastructure and packaging-as-a-service business models.
- Industrial pilots demonstrating the technical environmental and economic performance of reuse over multiple cycles.
- Replication of successful reuse systems across ECIV regions.

Expected outcome

Reusable packaging systems become technically reliable, economically viable and scalable across European markets, supported by common formats, interoperable infrastructure and proven multi-cycle performance.

PACK 2: Scale high-quality recycling and recycled-content integration in packaging

Develop, demonstrate and industrialise innovative solutions that improve packaging recyclability, sorting, recycling quality and the integration of recycled materials into new packaging applications.

Projects should connect eco-design, collection and sorting technologies, recycling processes, material quality assurance and industrial end users to create viable circular material loops.

Rationale

Despite existing recycling capacities, many packaging materials remain difficult to recycle effectively, particularly complex, multilayer or contaminated packaging.

The competitiveness of virgin materials, inconsistent recycled-material quality, technical limitations and restrictions on certain applications continue to hinder the uptake of recycled content.

The PPWR strengthens requirements concerning packaging recyclability and recycled content in plastic packaging, creating a need for industrial solutions capable of meeting these requirements.

ECIV regions have complementary expertise in packaging design, plastics processing, recycling technologies, industrial applications and demonstration facilities.

2.1 : Design for recyclability and increase recycled-material incorporation

Challenge: Many packaging formats are poorly suited to existing recycling systems, while variable quality, safety requirements, price and uncertain demand hinder recycled-material uptake.

- Eco-design, mono-material structures and recyclable-compatible labels, adhesives, inks, barriers and coatings.
- Packaging incorporating verified post-consumer recycled materials without compromising functional and safety requirements.
- Industrial testing and qualification of recycled materials, including food-contact uses where legally authorised.
- Common quality specifications, recycled-content traceability, buyer confidence-building and purchasing commitments.
- Demonstrators progressing from prototype to repeatable production and commercial adoption.

2.2 — Develop and scale innovative sorting and recycling technologies

Challenge: Complex, multilayer and contaminated packaging streams are insufficiently recovered or cannot consistently yield high-quality recycled material.

- Improved collection, identification, sorting, separation, cleaning and decontamination technologies.
- High-quality mechanical recycling and, where mechanical recycling is not feasible, complementary processes for challenging streams, subject to technical and environmental justification.
- Industrial demonstrations linking sorting operators, recyclers, converters and packaging users.
- Pilot-to-scale plans addressing feedstock volumes, investment, operating costs, environmental performance and offtake agreements.

Expected outcome

High-quality recycled materials are increasingly integrated into packaging production, reducing dependence on virgin raw materials while improving recyclability, industrial competitiveness and market confidence.

PACK 3: Develop and validate sustainable bio-based packaging materials and applications

Develop, test and demonstrate innovative bio-based packaging materials and products using sustainably sourced biological resources, agricultural and industrial by-products, and renewable feedstocks, only where they provide demonstrable advantages over feasible prevention, reuse or recycled-material options.

Projects should focus on high-performance applications, industrial scalability and demonstrated environmental benefits, ensuring that bio-based solutions are compatible with circular economy principles and relevant PPWR requirements.

Rationale

Bio-based materials offer opportunities to diversify packaging feedstocks, reduce dependence on fossil-based resources and create additional value from regional biomass and industrial side streams.

ECIV regions have complementary capabilities: North Middle Sweden in forestry and fibre-based materials, Scotland in bioeconomy and biorefinery, Northern Netherlands in bio-based polymers, Normandy in agricultural resources, bio-based polymers and industrial applications, and Navarra in packaging innovation and eco-design.

However, promising bio-based solutions often face barriers related to technical performance, moisture and oxygen barriers, food-contact requirements, processing compatibility, production costs, feedstock availability and limited industrial-scale validation.

Importantly, bio-based does not automatically mean recyclable, reusable, biodegradable or environmentally preferable. Projects should demonstrate the environmental performance and appropriate end-of-life pathways of proposed solutions.

Projects could include:

- Fibre-based packaging solutions using wood, flax, hemp or agricultural residues.
- Innovative bio-based polymers, films, coatings and composites.
- Valorisation of agro-industrial by-products into packaging materials.
- Development of recyclable barrier coatings and functional packaging components.
- Industrial testing of bio-based materials for food, cosmetics and other applications.
- Innovative processing technologies to improve material performance and production scalability.
- Solutions combining bio-based materials with reuse or established recycling systems.
- Industrial demonstrators connecting biomass suppliers, material developers, packaging manufacturers and end users.
- Viable business models and first-market applications for sustainable bio-based packaging.
- Testing of sorting compatibility and industrial recycling routes for bio-based polymers, including PLA, with evidence on contamination risks.

Expected outcome

Sustainable bio-based packaging solutions progress from technical innovation to validated industrial applications, contributing to fossil-resource substitution and the development of resilient European bio-based value chains.

PACK Cross-cutting challenges and conditions for all three priorities

The following enabling conditions apply to reuse and refill, high-quality recycling and recycled-content integration, and sustainable bio-based packaging. They should be addressed within projects rather than treated as separate thematic priorities.

1. Connected interregional value chains, data and industrial symbiosis

Projects should connect complementary ECIV capabilities through operational partnerships and verifiable physical material flows, rather than stand-alone mapping or networking activities. Where relevant, this includes interoperable digital traceability of material composition, origin and quality; digital matching of secondary-material supply, processing capacity and industrial demand; and shared specifications and verification systems. Industrial symbiosis may valorise packaging-production residues and other secondary resources, supported by suitable logistics, material preparation and interregional demonstrators.

2. Market adoption, user behaviour and viable business models

End users, purchasers and relevant value-chain actors should be engaged from the outset. Projects should test actual use, return and purchasing behaviour, create credible demand through first-customer agreements or coordinated purchasing, and consider circular public-procurement pilots and shared criteria. Robust commercial arrangements, credible economics and clear evidence on safety, quality and environmental claims should build trust without greenwashing.

3. Comparable environmental evidence, regulatory compliance and quality

Demonstrate measurable reductions in virgin fossil-based resource use and other environmental impacts against the best feasible alternatives, beginning with prevention and reuse. Apply transparent, comparable life-cycle assessment and, where appropriate, life-cycle costing, with consistent functional units, assumptions about reuse cycles, collection scenarios and end-of-life boundaries. Address PPWR, relevant chemical and food-contact rules and provide evidence of technical performance, material quality and compliance. Assess trade-offs and avoid shifting impacts between materials or life-cycle stages.

4. Chemical safety and circular-compatible components

Projects should reduce or eliminate PFAS and other substances of concern where relevant, in line with applicable chemical and food-contact requirements, while maintaining essential packaging functions. Distinct innovation opportunities include industrially validated PFAS-free barriers and safer additives; removable or washable adhesives, labels, inks and coatings; and bonding or sealing technologies that use fewer chemicals and facilitate cleaning, separation, reuse or recycling. Chemical safety assessments should prevent regrettable substitution. Detection, identification and traceability of substances of concern, together with measures preventing contamination of recycled streams, should be integrated where relevant.

5. Industrial scale-up, skills and interregional replication

Move beyond prototypes through industrial demonstrations in relevant operational settings (consistent with the call's TRL 6–8 orientation). Define milestones, feedstock and infrastructure needs, investment and operating costs, skills and knowledge transfer, business viability, and routes to replication across ECIV regions. Demonstrations should test the functioning value chain and establish credible conditions for industrial adoption.

AGRI 1 Circular and resource-efficient food systems

Transform food production, processing, public food services and consumption systems so that they use less water, energy, materials and external inputs while preventing food waste. The challenge combines operational efficiency with regenerative production, nutrient-loop approaches, better logistics and the redesign of procurement and local food systems. Interregional cooperation should connect regional hotspots and proven solutions, allowing approaches developed in one ECIV region to be tested and replicated in others.

Rationale

Across the participating regions, food and resource losses remain linked to fragmented value chains, insufficient coordination, behavioural resistance, limited incentives and gaps in data, skills, infrastructure and investment. Water reuse, nutrient cycling and changes in production or consumption practices can also be constrained by regulation and cultural norms. Working interregionally creates value because the regions bring complementary experience in municipal food services, regenerative agriculture, industrial water reuse, digitalisation, processing efficiency and local food-system development.

Projects could include:

- Mapping regional hotspots for food waste, water, energy, nutrients, materials and logistics, using comparable indicators and identifying replication opportunities.
- Pilots for water recirculation, energy efficiency, process optimisation and material reuse in agrifood production and processing.

- Regenerative production and nutrient-loop demonstrations that reduce dependence on external inputs and improve soil health.
- Circular public procurement and municipal food-service pilots focused on food-waste prevention, attractive plant-based meals and lower-resource menus.
- Digital tools, data-sharing approaches and decision-support systems for resource monitoring, prevention and operational optimisation.
- Behavioural and social-innovation actions that support adoption by producers, companies, public organisations and consumers.

Expected outcome

Reduced food and resource waste; lower water, energy and external-input dependency; stronger uptake of regenerative and circular practices; and more resilient regional food systems. The expected result is a portfolio of transferable solutions, supported by evidence, procurement approaches and implementation partnerships across ECIV regions.

AGRI 2 Bioresources and By-product Valorisation

Transform agrifood by-products and side streams into strategic regional bioresources, moving from fragmented residual flows towards valuable circular applications. The challenge covers the identification and characterisation of available side streams, their aggregation and preparation, reverse logistics, storage, stabilisation, homogenisation and quality control, followed by connections to suitable technologies, processors and end users. Potential applications include food, feed, fertilisers, materials, packaging, cosmetics, construction and bioenergy.

Rationale

Side-stream valorisation is often limited by incomplete or non-comparable information on volumes, composition, seasonality, quality and current uses. Individual streams may be too seasonal, heterogeneous or small to support viable projects, while unclear by-product, waste and end-of-waste classifications can delay applications. Logistics and coordination are also weak, and feedstock owners, technology providers, processors and users are not always connected. Interregional cooperation can create critical mass by combining different resources, specialised capabilities and market demand across regions.

Projects could include:

- A shared interregional inventory of priority bioresources, including volumes, seasonality, composition, quality, current uses and potential applications.
- Regional and cross-regional mapping of vegetable, cereal, brewery, whisky, seafood, potato, coffee and other relevant agrifood side streams.
- Digital or practical matchmaking mechanisms linking side-stream owners with technology providers, processors, industrial users and buyers.

- Logistics, aggregation, storage, stabilisation, homogenisation and quality-control solutions for seasonal or heterogeneous materials.
- Joint feasibility studies and pilot value chains that combine sufficient feedstock, processing capacity and demand across several regions.
- Comparison of regulatory pathways and collaborative work on by-product classification, end-of-waste requirements, safety and traceability.

Expected outcome

More agrifood side streams redirected from disposal or low-value uses towards productive circular applications; improved visibility and accessibility of regional bioresources; and a stronger pipeline of interregional pilots and investable value chains. The work should also reveal concrete cross-mission opportunities with circular packaging, construction, cosmetics and other bio-based sectors.

AGRI 3 High-Value Ingredients, Nutrient Recovery and Bio-based Products

Move beyond generic by-product use by identifying, recovering and applying valuable compounds from agrifood side streams. The focus includes proteins, oils, collagen, bioactive molecules, macro- and micronutrients and other functional fractions that can become food or feed ingredients, nutraceutical or cosmetic inputs, biofertilisers, soil improvers, biomaterials, bio-based packaging and other advanced products. Projects should apply cascading-use principles, selecting the highest-value technically, environmentally and economically feasible pathway before lower-value recovery options.

Rationale

Promising resources do not automatically become marketable products. Technology and know-how gaps remain in extraction, separation, purification, stabilisation, monitoring and quality assurance. Novel Food, safety, traceability, REACH and product-specific requirements can create complex regulatory pathways, while uncertain demand and consumer acceptance increase commercial risk. Interregional cooperation can connect analytical and processing expertise, technology centres, product developers, demonstrators, regulators and buyers, reducing duplication and accelerating application-oriented development.

Projects could include:

- Extraction and purification of proteins, oils, collagen, bioactives, fibres and other functional compounds from agrifood side streams.
- Recovery of nutrients from manure, wastewater and processing residues for biofertilisers, soil improvers and other circular agricultural inputs.
- Development of biomaterials, biopolymers, coatings, composites and bio-based packaging from suitable biological resources.

- Application-focused working groups and demonstrators for food ingredients, nutrients, cosmetics, biomaterials and agricultural products.
- Shared regulatory readiness tools covering Novel Food, safety, quality, traceability, REACH, by-product status and relevant product requirements.
- Techno-economic, environmental and market assessments that compare alternative cascading-use pathways and validate identified buyer needs.

Expected outcome

More high-value circular ingredients, nutrients and bio-based products validated for industrial and market application; greater nutrient circularity; reduced dependence on virgin and fossil-based resources; and stronger cross-sector cooperation among agrifood, biotechnology, agriculture, materials, packaging and cosmetics actors.

AGRI 4 Circular Processing, Demonstration and Industrial Scale-up

Bridge the gap between promising circular solutions and industrial deployment. The challenge focuses on the progression from laboratory or pilot work to demonstration, industrial validation and market-ready operation by connecting processing technologies, flexible and shared infrastructure, technical expertise, industrial partners and investment. Relevant capabilities include stabilisation, homogenisation, separation, filtration, extraction, purification and modular or flexible biorefinery approaches.

Rationale

Many circular agrifood solutions remain at small scale because capital requirements are high, innovation cycles are long and revenue models are uncertain. SMEs may lack access to pilot and demonstration facilities, while research results are not always validated under industrial conditions. Feedstock security and buyer demand may be insufficient to justify investment, and useful capabilities are distributed across regions. Interregional cooperation can provide access to specialised facilities, complementary expertise, larger case portfolios and cross-regional industrial partners.

Projects could include:

- Mapping pilot, demonstration and industrial facilities across ECIV regions, including their technical capabilities and access conditions.
- Cross-regional demonstration projects for stabilisation, separation, filtration, extraction, purification and efficient processing of selected side streams.
- Modular and flexible biorefineries or shared processing infrastructure that can serve multiple feedstocks, SMEs or regions.
- Industrial validation of products and processes, including quality, performance, yield, reproducibility, environmental performance and techno-economic viability.
- Scale-up portfolios that clearly identify feedstock, technology, infrastructure, buyer, regulatory and investment requirements.

- Technical matchmaking, demonstration visits and investment-readiness support connecting technology providers, facilities, companies and finance.

Expected outcome

Faster deployment of circular agrifood technologies; more solutions validated under industrial conditions; stronger research-to-industry transfer; and a portfolio of credible, investable scale-up projects. Shared access to infrastructure and expertise should reduce duplication, lower scale-up barriers and increase cooperation among ECIV regions.

AGRI 5 Circular Markets, Demand Creation and Value Chain Development

Accelerate market adoption of circular agrifood and bio-based solutions by creating real demand, viable business models and stronger connections between suppliers, buyers and end users. The challenge gives a central role to circular public procurement, purchasing commitments and other demand-side instruments that can create lead markets and demonstrate solutions. It also includes buyer-supplier matchmaking, fair value distribution, social innovation, consumer acceptance, investment and cross-sector value-chain development.

Rationale

Technically feasible circular products often remain in pilot stages because demand is weak or uncertain, value chains are fragmented and stakeholders lack incentives to collaborate beyond individual projects or funding calls. Negative perceptions and resistance to new ingredients, materials or practices can limit adoption. Public organisations and municipalities can reduce market risk by acting as lead customers, while companies can use purchasing commitments and long-term partnerships to support scale. Interregional cooperation widens the buyer base and connects applications across agrifood, packaging, construction and other sectors.

Projects could include:

- Challenge-based matchmaking around specific supply, demand and application needs, with identified resource owners, solution providers and buyers.
- Circular public procurement pilots for sustainable food services, upcycled ingredients, bio-based products, packaging and other validated applications.
- Pre-commercial procurement, innovation procurement, purchasing commitments or buyer clubs that create credible early demand where appropriate.
- Circular business models and value-chain agreements covering quality, volumes, logistics, risk, revenue and fair value distribution.
- Social-innovation and behavioural-change activities addressing acceptance by consumers, companies and public organisations.

- Cross-mission projects with Circular Packaging and Circular Construction, where agrifood bioresources become inputs for coatings, packaging, insulation, composites or other material applications.
- Investment and market-readiness support that helps successful pilots progress towards durable and bankable interregional value chains.

Expected outcome

New and stronger markets for circular agrifood and bio-based solutions; higher trust, acceptance and adoption; viable business models with clearer buyer demand; and longer-lasting interregional partnerships. The expected result is a set of market-facing value chains able to move beyond isolated pilots and attract follow-on procurement, customers and investment.

CONS 1 Scale trusted circular and biobased construction solutions through viable business models and market demand

Projects should demonstrate how circular and biobased solutions create value for actors across the construction value chain, including material suppliers, manufacturers, designers, contractors, building owners and end users. They should connect technical innovation with business-model and social innovation, including behavioural change, and translate these into first-market applications and concrete commitments from public or private clients.

Rationale

ECIV regions already have promising circular and biobased materials, products and practices. However, technical feasibility alone does not guarantee market uptake. Solutions often remain confined to pilots because their value proposition is unclear, demand is uncertain or production volumes remain limited. They may also struggle to replace established ways of working, as behavioural change comes with transaction costs for users / organisations. At the same time, value and risk are not always distributed effectively across the supply chain.

Interregional cooperation can help address these barriers by bringing together complementary regional strengths. These may include biological resources, secondary materials, processing technologies, construction applications, procurement experience and potential customers. Projects can use these combinations to validate not only whether a solution works, but also whether it is attractive enough to be produced, purchased and applied at scale, addressing the behavioural barriers and transaction costs that can make it difficult to shift established habits and practices.

Projects could include:

- Circular or biobased construction products ready for demonstration in real building or renovation projects;

- New processing techniques for secondary and biobased materials;
- Product-service systems, take-back models and other circular business models;
- First-market applications involving public or private clients;
- Solutions for integrating circular and bio-based materials into renovation;
- Partnerships between material producers, manufacturers, contractors, building owners;
- Assessment and demonstration of technical, environmental and economic performance;
- Replication of successful solutions in different ECIV regions.

Expected outcome

Circular and biobased construction solutions progress from promising regional innovations towards trusted, commercially viable applications with credible pathways to wider European market uptake.

CONS 2 Demonstrate quality assurance, standards and traceability approaches that increase market confidence

Develop and demonstrate practical quality-assurance, testing, traceability and validation approaches that increase confidence in circular and biobased construction materials, products and components across different regional markets.

Projects should apply these approaches to concrete innovations and real construction applications. They should generate the evidence needed by manufacturers, designers, contractors, insurers, regulators and clients to use innovative materials and products with confidence.

Rationale

During our meeting we identified regulation and standards as important conditions for creating trust. However, a TRL 6–8 innovation call should not primarily fund regulatory analysis, generic standard-setting or policy dialogue. It should support projects that show how specific circular solutions can meet relevant technical, quality and performance requirements in practice.

Interregional projects can test materials and products under different climatic, regulatory and market conditions. They can generate comparable evidence, identify barriers to transferability and demonstrate practical approaches to quality assurance and traceability. This can reduce repeated testing and help solutions validated in one region gain acceptance in another.

Projects could include:

- Quality-assurance systems for reclaimed materials and components;

- Testing and validation of circular and biobased construction products;
- Performance assessment in different regional or climatic conditions;
- Pre-certification activities linked to demonstrators;
- Digital material and product passports;
- Traceability systems covering several product lifecycles;
- Interoperable data supporting reuse and procurement decisions;
- Practical protocols for assessing the fitness for reuse of building components;
- Demonstration of how innovative solutions can comply with existing requirements.

Expected outcome

Circular and biobased construction solutions are supported by credible and transferable evidence about their quality, origin, performance and fitness for use, increasing confidence among market actors and facilitating adoption in several ECIV regions.

CONS 3 Build distributed circular value chains, logistics and marketplaces for construction materials

Develop and demonstrate distributed circular value chains that connect suppliers of end-of-life materials and components with recyclers, reuse operators, processors, product manufacturers and construction projects. Projects should improve how materials are identified, collected, sorted, stored, treated, exchanged and reintegrated into construction. Physical infrastructure, digital marketplaces and logistics solutions should be developed as interconnected parts of functioning value chains rather than as stand-alone platforms or networks.

Rationale

During our meeting we discussed several challenges: fragmented material flows, insufficient treatment and storage capacity, weak connections between recyclers and material suppliers, and a lack of efficient marketplaces.

A European-scale approach should not necessarily mean transporting heavy construction materials over long distances. Instead, ECIV can support distributed regional value chains connected through shared approaches, interoperable information and transferable technologies. Materials can be retained and processed as locally as practical, while regions exchange processing expertise, digital solutions, business models and market knowledge.

A network or marketplace on its own is unlikely to deliver the required level of innovation. Projects should therefore demonstrate how connections between supply, processing and demand lead to actual material exchanges, new products or construction applications.

Projects could include:

- Reverse logistics for reusable building products and components;
- Innovative sorting, cleaning, repair and remanufacturing technologies;
- Regional material hubs and shared treatment infrastructure;
- Networks connecting demolition actors, recyclers, reuse operators and manufacturers;
- Distributed marketplaces linked to verified material availability and quality;
- Digital matching of material supply, treatment capacity and construction demand;
- Mobile or decentralised processing facilities;
- Circular value chains for timber, secondary wood, reclaimed components, hemp, flax, straw or other relevant material streams;
- Potential regionally sourced renewal materials: biobased and reusable materials – wood, wool, hemp, other agricultural fibres and other regional resource
- Integration of marketplaces with material passports and logistics systems.
- Changing behavioral norms

Expected outcome

ECIV regions establish connected and operational circular value chains in which materials and components can move efficiently from demolition, renovation or production residues towards treatment, new products and verified construction applications.

CONS 4 Accelerate implementation through interregional demonstrators, skills and professional practice

Replicate, adapt and demonstrate proven circular and biobased construction approaches across ECIV regions while developing the skills, professional practices and stakeholder capabilities required for their sustained application. Projects should combine real construction or renovation demonstrators with practical learning for the professionals who specify, procure, design, produce, install, maintain, dismantle and reuse circular solutions.

Rationale

Skills, professional practice and trust were suggested as priorities by several participants during our meeting. These are essential conditions for scaling circular construction, but training alone does not correspond closely to the TRL 6–8 orientation of the call. Skills development should therefore be connected directly to the implementation of innovative solutions. Demonstrators can become practical learning environments in which architects, engineers, contractors, purchasers, material producers, demolition companies, building owners and investors develop and test new ways of working. Interregional cooperation adds value by allowing a practice demonstrated in one region to be adapted and tested in

another. This helps identify which technical, organisational and professional changes are needed for transfer and replication.

The priority also responds to the proposals for well-structured eco-construction sectors and committed, exemplary stakeholders. Rather than creating a general network of committed actors, projects should mobilise these actors around concrete implementation and replication.

Projects could include:

- Cross-regional demonstrators applying circular or biobased solutions in construction and renovation;
- Replication partnerships between regions with different levels of experience;
- Living labs linked to real building projects;
- On-site training and learning-by-doing for construction professionals;
- New installation, dismantling, repair and reuse practices;
- Train-the-trainer models connected to demonstrated innovations;
- Practical methods for circular design, procurement and project delivery;
- Collaboration between companies, vocational training providers, universities and professional organisations;
- Peer learning between clients, construction companies and regional ecosystems.
- Actively address behavioural barriers and challenge existing norms, habits and practices that may prevent innovative solutions from being adopted and applied at scale.

Expected outcome

Proven circular and biobased construction solutions are implemented in new regional contexts, while professionals and organisations acquire the practical capabilities needed to apply them beyond the funded demonstrators.

META 1 Mapping CRM resources in waste streams and deposits

Improve knowledge of available secondary resources, recovery potential and regional capabilities to identify complementarities, investment opportunities and potential interregional circular value chains.

Projects should improve the identification, characterisation and mapping of potentially recoverable CRMs in waste streams, historical deposits, industrial residues and landfills, as well as the collection, accessibility and exchange of information on secondary material stocks and flows, their composition and recovery potential, available recovery capabilities and industrial demand. This information should provide a basis for investment decisions, circular business models and value-chain development.

Rationale

The regions need a better understanding of where potentially recoverable CRMs are located, in what material streams, and which capabilities exist to recover them. Significant quantities of potentially valuable materials are stored in historical mining waste, industrial residues, slag heaps and landfills, where their composition, quantities and recovery potential may be insufficiently known or documented. Without this knowledge, it is difficult to identify complementarities, assess recovery potential or develop viable interregional value chains.

Information on secondary resources, material flows, recovery capabilities and industrial needs is fragmented or insufficiently accessible. While some industrial actors have detailed knowledge of their own material streams, important information gaps remain across industries, regions and historical deposits. Improving this knowledge can help identify opportunities for cooperation, including where material resources and recovery capabilities are located in different regions.

The Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA) reinforces the strategic importance of improving knowledge of secondary CRM resources and their recovery potential, supporting investment decisions and European raw-material security.

Projects could include:

- Mapping potentially recoverable CRMs in waste streams, industrial residues and historical deposits, and dormant stocks in unused equipment and products.
- Collecting, harmonising and making accessible data on material stocks, flows, composition and recovery potential.
- Tracking secondary material flows and their availability.
- Mapping recovery capabilities, processing capacity and industrial demand.
- Identifying complementarities between regions and potential interregional circular value chains.
- Assessing recovery potential and opportunities for circular business models and investment.
- Developing accessible information-sharing approaches that enable potential partners to identify and pursue recovery opportunities.
- Characterising material stocks and flows, including their composition, quantities and recovery potential.

Expected outcome

Secondary CRM resources and recovery capabilities become more visible and accessible, with improved knowledge of material composition, quantities and recovery potential, enabling regions and industrial actors to identify viable recovery opportunities, make

informed investment decisions and develop circular business models and interregional value chains.

META 2 Recovery of CRMs from end-of-life products

Recover valuable materials from wind turbines, electronic waste and other end-of-life products by combining regional expertise and technologies, reducing material losses and strengthening European secondary material supply.

Projects should connect collection, dismantling, sorting, recovery and refining capabilities with subsequent industrial use, demonstrating how valuable materials can be retained in productive circular value chains and meet the requirements of industrial users.

Rationale

Valuable metals and critical materials contained in end-of-life products are not always recovered or retained in productive use. Insufficient collection, sorting, recovery and integration into industrial value chains limit their circular potential.

The regions have complementary interests and capabilities in recycling, material recovery, industrial processing and manufacturing, particularly concerning decommissioned wind turbines, electronic waste and batteries.

Interregional cooperation can help connect these capabilities and address gaps between the collection of end-of-life products, the recovery of valuable materials and their subsequent industrial use. This is particularly relevant where recovery processes and industrial demand are not located within the same region. Developing solutions that respond to industrial quality requirements and specific applications can help strengthen demand for recovered materials.

The availability and timing of end-of-life material flows can also affect the viability of recovery and processing, particularly where interregional cooperation could help achieve sufficient scale.

The Critical Raw Materials Act, WEEE Directive and Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) support improved recovery of strategic materials, product circularity and reduced dependence on imported raw materials.

Projects could include:

- Recovery of CRMs and valuable metals from electronic waste and batteries.
- Recovery of critical materials from decommissioned wind turbines.
- Improved dismantling, collection, sorting and separation processes.
- Technologies for recovery, refining and purification of valuable materials.

- Connecting recovery processes with subsequent processing and industrial applications.
- Testing the quality and suitability of recovered materials for industrial use.
- Circular business models connecting waste holders, recyclers, processors and industrial customers.
- Production and treatment of black mass[9] from end-of-life batteries, including the recovery and refining of valuable metals and critical raw materials.
- Demonstrating interregional value chains that connect complementary recovery technologies and capabilities with specific industrial applications.

Expected outcome

More valuable materials from end-of-life products are recovered and returned to productive use through connected recovery and processing capabilities, meeting industrial quality and application requirements, strengthening European secondary material supply and creating opportunities for viable circular value chains.

META 3. Recovery of CRMs from mining waste and industrial residues

Unlock valuable materials in mining waste, steel slag and industrial residues through specialised recovery technologies, creating new opportunities for resource efficiency and circular industrial value chains.

Projects should develop and demonstrate recovery, separation and purification processes suited to specific material streams, while assessing their technical performance, environmental benefits and economic viability, including opportunities to valorise remaining materials and minimise residual waste.

Rationale

Mining waste, steel slag and industrial residues may contain valuable materials that are not currently recovered. The challenge is to develop and apply suitable recovery technologies and create economically viable uses for the recovered materials.

The regions have complementary resources and capabilities in metallurgy, separation, purification and industrial processing. Connecting regions with relevant waste streams to specialised recovery capabilities and potential industrial users can create opportunities to transform underutilised residues into valuable secondary resources.

[9] * Black mass is a mixture of electrode materials obtained during the recycling of lithium-ion batteries. It can contain valuable metals and critical raw materials, including lithium, nickel, cobalt and manganese, which can be recovered through further processing.

The suitability of recovery technologies depends on the composition of specific material streams and the technical and economic feasibility of the processes involved. The potential to use remaining material fractions should also be considered to improve overall resource efficiency and the viability of recovery processes.

The Critical Raw Materials Act recognises the potential of recovering critical raw materials from extractive waste. This supports more efficient use of existing resources and contributes to European raw-material security.

Projects could include:

- Recovery of CRMs from mining waste and historical deposits.
- Extraction of valuable materials from steel slag and industrial residues.
- Adaptation of recovery and separation technologies to different material streams.
- Recovery and circular use of metals from industrial residues, including copper and titanium, through complementary recovery and processing capabilities and industrial applications.
- Purification and refining of recovered metals.
- Integration of recovery processes into existing industrial operations.
- Assessment of recovery yields, environmental performance and economic viability.
- Development of circular value chains connecting residue producers, recovery technology providers and industrial users.
- Development and testing of applications for remaining material fractions after CRM recovery.

Expected outcome

Underutilised mining waste and industrial residues become viable secondary resources through suitable recovery technologies and connections to industrial applications, reducing material losses and residual waste and creating new opportunities for circular value chains.

META 4. Circular steel

Improve alloy separation, treatment, traceability and processing capabilities to increase the quality and use of recycled steel, while enabling reuse, remanufacturing and more efficient use of steel, developing viable business models and connecting secondary material supply with industrial demand.

Projects should address technical and organisational barriers to circular steel use, including reuse, remanufacturing and higher-value recycling, and demonstrate solutions based on concrete industrial use cases that connect complementary capabilities across regions.

Rationale

Circular steel involves retaining the value of steel products and components through reuse and remanufacturing, alongside improving the quality and industrial use of recycled steel. Material quality, alloy composition, contamination, traceability and processing capacity affect whether recycled steel can be used reliably in industrial applications.

Product design, material properties and manufacturing processes can limit opportunities for reuse, remanufacturing and the adoption of recycled materials. Access to suitable materials, processing costs, market conditions and fragmented value chains can also affect the commercial viability of circular steel solutions.

The regions have complementary capabilities and needs, including contaminated steel recycling, access to suitable feedstock, collection and sorting, traceability, steel production and circular business models.

Interregional cooperation can help connect available material flows with specialised treatment and processing capabilities and industrial demand. Concrete industrial use cases can help identify where regional expertise and technologies complement each other and support the development of viable circular solutions. Addressing material quality, certification and industrial risk is also important for building confidence in secondary steel.

The EU Steel and Metals Action Plan and Clean Industrial Deal support European steel competitiveness, improved scrap utilisation, industrial decarbonisation and stronger markets for circular materials.

Projects could include:

- Advanced separation of steel scrap and different alloys.
- Treatment and recycling of contaminated steel.
- Improved traceability and material identification.
- Technologies and processes improving the quality and consistency of recycled steel.
- Improved collection, sorting and processing systems.
- Circular business models connecting scrap suppliers, processors and industrial users.
- Testing and validation of recycled steel against industrial quality and performance requirements.
- Connecting secondary steel supply with suitable processing capabilities and industrial demand.

Expected outcome

Reliable and economically viable circular steel value chains enable higher-quality recycling and increased industrial use of secondary steel, supported by improved material traceability, processing capabilities and viable business models.

META 5. Industrial wastewater recovery and reuse

Reduce freshwater dependency and improve industrial resource efficiency through wastewater treatment and recirculation, while exploring opportunities to recover valuable materials from industrial water streams.

Projects should address circular water management in metal production and processing, including steel, copper, aluminium, titanium and other metals, through solutions adapted to specific industrial processes and operating conditions.

Rationale

Industrial water use is an important resource-efficiency challenge. Reducing freshwater consumption, improving wastewater treatment and recirculation, and exploring opportunities to recover valuable materials can contribute to more circular industrial processes.

Metal production and processing rely on water for cooling, cleaning, surface treatment and other industrial operations. Contaminated process water and insufficient recirculation can create environmental pressures, operational costs and vulnerabilities for industrial production.

The regions have complementary industrial capabilities and expertise in water treatment and resource recovery. Interregional cooperation can connect industrial needs with suitable water-treatment capabilities and support the adaptation of solutions to different industrial contexts.

The European Water Resilience Strategy supports improved industrial water efficiency, reduced freshwater pressures and pollution, and stronger industrial resilience.

Projects could include:

- Wastewater treatment and reuse in metal production and processing.
- Recirculation of industrial process water, including contaminated cooling water.
- Integration of circular water management into existing industrial operations.
- Adaptation of water-treatment technologies to different metal production and processing activities.
- Recovery of valuable materials from wastewater where technically and economically feasible.

- Demonstration of combined water-treatment, recovery and reuse processes.
- Assessment of technical, environmental and economic performance under industrial operating conditions.

Expected outcome

Metal production and processing become less dependent on freshwater through improved wastewater treatment and recirculation, reducing environmental pressures and strengthening industrial resource efficiency and resilience. Where feasible, valuable materials are also recovered from industrial water streams.

TEXT 1. Scaling Interregional Circular Fibre Value Chains

Europe possesses significant resources of natural and secondary fibres, including flax, hemp, wool and post-consumer textile materials. However, these resources are often disconnected from the processing, recycling and manufacturing capacities required to transform them into high-value products. As a result, large volumes of fibres are exported, downcycled, landfilled or otherwise underutilised, limiting their contribution to regional economic development and circularity.

At the same time, the capacities needed to establish truly circular fibre systems are unevenly distributed across European regions. Some territories specialise in fibre production, while others host advanced sorting, recycling, manufacturing or end-use industries. Building competitive circular value chains therefore requires stronger interregional cooperation to connect actors across the entire lifecycle, from fibre production and collection to processing, manufacturing and market deployment.

Rationale

The transition towards a circular textile economy cannot be achieved within isolated regional ecosystems. No single ECIV region possesses the complete combination of resources, infrastructure, industrial capabilities and markets necessary to create fully circular fibre value chains. Connecting complementary regional strengths is therefore essential for scaling innovation and accelerating market uptake.

Many promising fibre streams currently remain undervalued due to fragmentation between sectors and territories. Natural fibres such as flax, hemp and wool are frequently exported for processing, while recovered textile materials struggle to find high-value outlets. Better integration between regions can create new opportunities for fibre valorisation and retain more economic value within Europe.

Furthermore, fibres should not be considered exclusively within the textile sector. Circular approaches increasingly rely on cascading models in which fibres are directed towards the highest possible value applications across multiple industries, including construction materials, insulation products, composites, geotextiles, cleaning products, biofertilisers and

new textile products. Such cross-sectoral approaches can significantly increase resource efficiency and business viability.

Strengthening interregional fibre ecosystems will also improve the resilience of European value chains by reducing dependence on imported raw materials, expanding processing capacities, and facilitating the industrial deployment of innovative circular fibre solutions.

Projects could include:

- Development of interregional value chains connecting fibre producers, recyclers, processors, manufacturers and end-users.
- Demonstration projects linking natural fibres such as flax, hemp and wool with high-value industrial applications.
- Pilot actions for the collection, sorting and valorisation of post-consumer textile waste.
- Development of cross-sectoral cascading models enabling fibre flows between textiles, construction, agriculture and other sectors.
- Industrial demonstrations of innovative fibre processing, recycling or regeneration technologies.
- Creation of digital platforms and traceability tools supporting fibre exchange and value chain cooperation.
- Establishment of regional or interregional marketplaces for secondary and natural fibres.
- Collaboration models reducing the gap between available fibre resources and processing capacity.
- Projects strengthening local and European resilience through circular sourcing and material recovery.

Expected Outcomes

Projects are expected to accelerate the creation and scaling of integrated circular fibre value chains across European regions, increasing the valorisation of natural and recovered fibres, strengthening industrial cooperation, reducing material losses, and generating new high-value products and business opportunities based on circular fibre resources.

TEXT 2. Unlocking Demand and New Business Models for Circular Fibres

Despite significant technological progress, circular fibres continue to face major barriers to market deployment. Demand for recycled and bio-based fibres remains limited and fragmented, while conventional linear business models often continue to favour virgin materials and short product lifecycles. These market conditions reduce incentives for investment in circular solutions and limit the scalability of innovative projects.

The challenge is further amplified by the complexity of textile value chains, where producers, recyclers, manufacturers, brands, retailers and consumers often operate independently with limited coordination. Regulatory uncertainty, varying standards and insufficient market signals can also discourage businesses from investing in circular fibre production, reuse and recycling systems.

Rationale

Creating sustainable demand is one of the most critical conditions for the development of circular textile systems. Technological solutions alone will not deliver impact unless markets are willing and able to absorb circular materials at scale. Stronger demand can incentivise investment, stimulate innovation and support the development of new circular business ecosystems.

Public and private procurement can play a strategic role in creating predictable markets for circular fibres. Aligning purchasing criteria across regions can provide stronger market signals for recycled and bio-based content while reducing fragmentation between territories.

In parallel, innovative business models can help decouple economic growth from resource consumption. Circular approaches such as repair, reuse, refurbishment, take-back schemes, leasing, product-as-a-service models and rental systems offer significant opportunities to extend product lifetimes and increase material value retention.

Finally, increasing consumer awareness and confidence is essential. Greater transparency, traceability and harmonised standards can help build trust in circular products and support the large-scale transition towards more sustainable textile consumption patterns.

Projects could include:

- Development and demonstration of innovative business models based on reuse, repair, rental, leasing or take-back systems.
- Cross-regional initiatives connecting circular fibre suppliers with industrial buyers and public procurers.
- Pilot procurement schemes promoting the use of recycled or bio-based fibres.
- Development of traceability solutions and digital product passport approaches.
- Demonstration of circular textile service models for public authorities, businesses or consumers.
- Initiatives supporting market acceptance and consumer awareness of circular fibre products.
- Platforms facilitating industrial symbiosis and fibre exchange between regions.
- Projects supporting compliance with evolving European textile regulations and standards.

- New commercial models improving the economic viability of fibre recycling and reuse activities.

Expected Outcomes

Projects are expected to increase market demand for circular fibres, accelerate the adoption of innovative circular business models, strengthen economic incentives for reuse and recycling, improve market confidence through transparency and traceability, and contribute to the emergence of competitive interregional markets for circular fibre-based products and services.

TEXT 3. Building Interregional Knowledge and Skills for Circular Textiles

The transition towards circular textile systems requires a profound transformation of skills, knowledge and organisational practices throughout the value chain. Many traditional skills related to repair, maintenance and craftsmanship have declined over recent decades, while emerging circular activities such as advanced sorting, fibre recovery, recycling and circular design require new competencies that remain insufficiently available.

At the same time, valuable expertise exists across European regions but is often dispersed and poorly connected. Knowledge generated by research organisations, pilot projects, industries and public authorities does not always reach practitioners and businesses that could deploy innovative solutions. Strengthening knowledge transfer and capacity building is therefore essential to accelerate circular transformation.

Rationale

Skills and knowledge represent critical enabling factors for circular economy implementation. Without an adequately trained workforce, even the most promising technologies risk remaining confined to pilot stages. Targeted actions are therefore needed to equip companies, workers, educators and public authorities with the capabilities required to scale circular textile solutions.

Interregional cooperation creates significant opportunities for mutual learning. ECIV regions have developed complementary expertise in areas such as fibre production, reuse systems, recycling technologies, traceability tools and circular business models. Sharing these experiences can reduce duplication of effort and accelerate innovation adoption across Europe.

Particular attention should be paid to the demonstration and deployment of solutions at Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 6 to 8, where many promising innovations require additional technical validation, industrial testing and market preparation before commercialisation.

Moreover, stronger collaboration between sectors such as textiles, construction, agriculture, waste management and manufacturing can stimulate new applications for fibres and create additional pathways for circular resource utilisation.

Projects could include:

- Development of interregional training programmes focusing on circular textiles, recycling, repair and circular design.
- Capacity-building initiatives for SMEs, clusters, public authorities and innovation intermediaries.
- Demonstration and validation of circular textile technologies at TRL 6-8.
- Knowledge-sharing platforms connecting regional ecosystems and value-chain actors.
- Pilot programmes supporting workforce reskilling and upskilling for circular textile activities.
- Training activities on digital traceability, material passports and circular supply chain management.
- Cross-sector innovation projects linking textile fibres with construction, agrifood or industrial applications.
- Demonstrators showcasing advanced sorting, recycling and processing technologies.
- Peer-learning networks transferring successful practices between ECIV regions.

Expected Outcomes

Projects are expected to strengthen the skills base and innovation capacity of regional ecosystems, facilitate the deployment of circular textile technologies, enhance interregional knowledge exchange, increase collaboration across sectors and value chains, and support the long-term competitiveness and resilience of Europe's circular textile economy.

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

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

PROVINCE OF ANTWERP (BELGIUM)		Indirect costs max 10%	Max 375.460,12	Enterprises: - Small 60% - Medium 50% - Large 40% R&D and knowledge dissemination organisations. Non-economic activity: 100%	Advanced payment (80%) + Reimbursement (20%)
INNOVATION AGENCY LITHUANIA (LITHUANIA)	**Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in the industrial sector in the Central and Western Lithuania Region.** (Vidurio ir vakarų Lietuvos regionas)	Indirect costs – 7 %	Max (50 % HE/ 50% ERDF) up to €500,000	**SMEs operating in the industrial sector in the Central and Western Lithuania Region** (Vidurio ir vakarų Lietuvos regionas) Small: up to 60 % Medium: up to 50 %	Advanced payment (50 % HE/ 50% ERDF) up to 30 %
SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE (UNITED KINGDOM)	Enterprises and research organisations			Companies (up to) - Small 65% - Medium 65% - Large 55%	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 2.2to 2.5 from the Resolution 197E/2026, of 14th July. It can be found in the Official Navarrese Gazette #139, 13th August 2026 https://bon.navarra.es/es/anuncio/-/texto/2026/159/7.
- 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

1. Personnel costs:

a) Personal expenses to the extent and for the duration that they are directly involved in the project. The maximum eligible cost will be 45 euros per hour.

b) Expenditure relating to self-employed workers associated with the beneficiary organisation who are directly involved in the implementation of the project and who invoice the organisation for their services.

This expenditure shall be treated as staff costs and shall be subject to the same maximum eligible cost as set out in point (a); proof must be provided of the actual number of hours spent on the project.

c) The beneficiary's staff costs that are funded through the general budget of Navarre or other public funds shall not be eligible for funding, although they must be included

in the project budget for the purposes of determining the total amount and the required contribution. In such cases, funding will only be provided for the recruitment of new staff to carry out the project.

2) Expenses of the materials used in the project.

Expenses for materials used in the project, such as raw materials, supplies, and other procurement items. When such materials are also used in other activities of the grantee, the allocation criteria applied must be justified.

Any revenue the grantee obtains from the sale or productive use of byproducts, waste, and recovered materials shall be deducted from the eligible material expenses.

3) Depreciation expenses of equipment, patents and utility models, to the extent and during the period in which these assets are used for the project, in accordance with the coefficients and periods set out in Article 3 of the Corporation Tax Regulations approved by Regional Decree 114/2017 of 20 December.

4) Expenses of external collaborations . Expenditure on external contributions must not exceed 30 per cent of the beneficiary's eligible budget

5) Travels and accommodation directly related to activities in the project.

6) Application fees for patents generated by the project. This expense will not be eligible for large companies.

7) Other expenses directly related to the project and effectively applied to its realization.

8) Audit certificates for financial claims

9) 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.

c) The cost of materials used in the manufacture of prototypes that are subsequently marketed or used in production, limited, where applicable, to their replacement value.

d) Costs of electricity, water, heating or waste management.

e) Recoverable or offsetable VAT.

f) Depreciation of general-purpose equipment, devices or infrastructure (computers, mobile phones, printers, general-purpose servers, furniture, vehicles or similar items).

Along with the application, SMEs must submit a responsible declaration regarding their status and company size, in accordance with the provisions of Annex I to Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014.

This declaration must include the identification of the applicant's affiliated and related companies, as well as the information necessary to determine its size.

In addition, they must provide the audited annual financial statements of affiliated and related companies based outside Spain, or indicate the administrative file and the department of the Government of Navarre to which such documentation has previously been submitted.

If access to the data regarding compliance with tax and Social Security obligations has been denied, certificates attesting that the individual is current on such obligations.

The beneficiary will be sent a subsidy Commitment decision of the Regional Council, setting forth the terms and conditions for the grant of the aid

An advance payment of the grant may be requested, up to a maximum of 30 percent, and its award will be contingent upon the availability of funds. Where applicable, a security deposit must be provided in accordance with Article 33.2 of Regional Law 11/2005, of November 9, on Grants.

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
- French applicants need to provide latest 3 financial statements (or 3 "liasses fiscales" when available)

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, Public Research Organisations , Public Authorities, Associations without economic activities and NGOs in Scotland may participate in projects however **are not eligible** to receive FSTP funding.*

Strategic aspects for Scotland participants - The following items do not restrict the participation of organisations from Scotland; however, they will be considered during the evaluation of proposals:

- Projects with Scottish participants must engage with and share their draft submission with Scotland's ECIV Project Team in Scottish Enterprise no later than 2 weeks before the submission deadline **(26/02/27)**
- ***Projects should align with Scottish Enterprise's strategic ambitions 2025-2028 and Scaling Innovation Mission with proposed activities supporting the innovation capacity and economic development of the Scotland region in sectors aligned with****Circular and sustainable new materials, New industrial processes, New business models.*
- ***Proposals must have the potential to deliver benefits to Scotland's economy, and the new product, process or service must be able to compete in a global marketplace. Preference will be given to solutions with high transferability and with potential to be scaled internationally.***
- *Proposals must involve research and development activity in Scotland. However, testing in a demonstration site outside Scotland will be considered.*
- *Businesses ideally should employ a minimum of 10 employees or demonstrate a plan for growth to achieve this by 2028.*

Applicants must also meet the conditions of Fair Work Conditionality form

Applicants must comply with UK government sanctions legislation and Scottish Government guidance in relation to trading with Russia and Belarus, as well as Human Rights & Military Trading guidance.

Net Zero Alignment: applicants must align with the goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions and demonstrate plans to reach this target by 2045

Scottish Enterprise is subject to the UK data protection framework, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation, which is closely aligned to the EU framework. The UK is subject to an adequacy decision by the EU, determining that there is adequate protection for personal data in the UK in respect of the EU framework. Scottish Enterprise is subject to wider UK and Scottish regulations, including on public information management. Scottish Enterprise has data handling policies and safeguards, including a data protection officer and a data protection impact assessment. As the ECIV partner, Scottish Enterprise will follow the ECIV Data Management Plan.

Find the latest information on the challenge closing date on The Scottish Enterprise website.

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	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public Authorities	N/A	N/A	N/A
Associations without economic activities, NGOs	N/A	N/A	N/A

Lithuania (Lithuania)

Eligible third parties

- **Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in the industrial sector in the Central and Western Lithuania Region** (Vidurio ir vakarų Lietuvos regionas).

An industrial enterprise is an enterprise that carries out industrial economic activities in accordance with the Classification of Economic Activities (EVRK, version 2.1), which was approved by the Director-General of the State Data Agency. It is classified under Section B, 'Mining and quarrying' (excluding the following economic activities: Section B, Division 06: 'Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas'; Section B, Class 08.92: 'Extraction of peat'; and Section B, Group 09.1: 'Support activities for the extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas'), and Section C: 'Manufacturing' (excluding the economic activities listed in Section C, Division 19: 'Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products'). An industrial enterprise is defined as an enterprise whose revenue from industrial activities accounts for at least 51 per cent of its total revenue.

Additional eligibility criteria

Special project selection criteria:

- The planned project activities comply with the provisions of the Concept for the Implementation of Priorities for Research, Experimental Development and Innovation (Smart Specialisation), as approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in Resolution No. 835 on 17 August 2022, titled 'Approval of the Concept for Research, Experimental Development and Innovation (Smart Specialisation)' (hereafter referred to as the 'Concept'), and fall within the thematic scope of at least one Research, Experimental Development and Innovation (hereafter referred to as 'R&D&I') priority thematic area (hereafter referred to as the 'R&D&I priority').
- The applicant is a micro-, small- or medium-sized enterprise (hereafter referred to as an 'SME') in the manufacturing sector. It must have been in operation for at least one year and its annual sales revenue from its own manufactured products must account for at least 51 per cent of its total sales. Its average annual sales revenue from its own manufactured products over the last financial year must be no less than 30,000 euros.
- The project was announced as one of the successful entries in the second open call for joint interregional projects by ECIV.

Priority criteria for project selection:

- The level of significance of environmentally friendly technologies, i.e. those that promote the production of sustainable products, increased during the implementation of the project.
- The level of technological readiness of the innovative, environmentally friendly technologies developed during the project's implementation.

Two National Calls (50% HE / 50% ERDF) will published separately on the institutional website.

Eligible costs

Small SME: Maximum funding rates up to 60%

Own contribution	HE	ERDF
40 %	**30 %**	**30%**

Medium SME: Maximum funding rates up to 50 %

Own contribution	HE	ERDF
50 %	**25%**	**25%**

- Eligible costs refer to 6.4.

  Flat rate of 7% of indirect costs

In addition to the application, Lithuanian partners must submit the following documents:

- The financial statements for the last three financial years, if they have not already been submitted to the State Enterprise Centre of Registers. Declaration of small or medium-sized enterprise status: partners classified as large enterprises may submit a free-form declaration. This can be done either electronically via the SME declaration completion programme or by submitting the completed form.
- Completed and signed declaration confirming the absence or termination of commercial obligations and compliance with national security interests.
- A free-form letter must be provided which specifies:
  1. Alignment with the Research, Experimental Development and Innovation (hereinafter referred to as 'R&D&I') (Smart Specialisation) priority.
  2. Alignment with the thematic area(s) of the R&D&I priority;
  3. The name of the applicant's business activity and the EVRK 2.1 edition code, in accordance with the Classification of Economic Activities (EVRK 2.1 edition), as approved by the Director-General of the State Data Agency.

4. Sales revenue in euros for the last year
    4.1. Total revenue in euros (must match the amount stated in the profit and loss account under the heading 'Revenue from sales')
    4.2. Annual revenue from sales of products manufactured in-house (must account for at least 51 per cent of the total sales structure each year).
    4.3. Average annual sales revenue from own-manufactured products over the last financial year (must be no less than €30,000)

Additional information may be requested to ensure compliance with regional or national specifications.

Province of Antwerp (Belgium)

Eligible third parties

- **Businesses** with an establishment in the province of Antwerp
- **Knowledge and educational institutions** in cooperation with at least one business
- **Local authorities** in cooperation with at least one business

Non eligible third parties

- Enterprises in difficulty, as defined in Article 2(18) of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014;
- Natural persons and de facto associations.

Priority will be given to projects involving strong **partnerships** and initiatives within the **priority sectors**:

- Port and logistics
- Chemicals and life sciences
- Construction
- Agri-business complex
- Manufacturing

Additional eligibility criteria

The applicant located in the province of Antwerp must have activities primarily carried out in the province of Antwerp

The applicant:

- must not tolerate any form of discrimination and must ensure equal opportunities for everyone across all policy areas, including organisational development, personnel, communication, services and customers.
- must take sustainability criteria into account when making purchases and organising events, particularly with regard to environmental protection, fair trade, accessibility and the social economy.
- must not be an undertaking in difficulty within the meaning of Article 2(18) of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014.

The applicant must submit a signed declaration on honour, together with the application, confirming that the undertaking complies with all the above-mentioned requirements and commits to ensuring continued compliance throughout the entire duration of the project.

Eligible costs

- Personnel costs
- Operating costs
- Overhead costs up to a maximum of 10%
- Movable investments

Immovable investments are **not eligible** for this project grant.

Maximum funding rates within ECIV:

	Experimental developments for interregional projects
Small-sized company	60%
Mid-sized company	50%
Large company	40%
Universities and research centres	100%
Non - profit organisations	100%

Any grant awarded is paid out in two instalments. At the start of the eligible period, a maximum of 80 % of the awarded grant is paid out as a recoverable advance. The remaining maximum of 20 % is paid out following the submission of accounts for the first instalment and approval of the project evaluation.

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 commitment]

Northern Netherlands (Netherlands)

[Regional bilateral contract]

North middle Sweden (Sweden)

[Regional bilateral contract]

Normandy (France)

[Regional bilateral contract]

Scotland (United Kingdom)

[Regional bilateral contract]

Lithuania (Lithuania)

[Two Regional bilateral contract]

Province of Antwerp (Belgium)

[Regional commitment]

Regional contacts can provide their templates.

Template of ECIV Interregional Grant Agreement

Between: [ECIV FUNDING ORGANISATION NAME] [ADDRESS] [VAT NUMBER]

as the Subgrant Contracting Partners for the ECIV Project (hereinafter "Contractor")

And

[ECIV THIRD PARTIES ORGANISATION NAMES] [ADDRESS] [VAT NUMBER]

as the Beneficiaries of Financial Support to Third Parties (hereinafter "Beneficiaries")

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 A: Description of the action.

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

3. DURATION OF THE ACTION

The duration of the action is 18 months as of 01.07.2027 ('starting date of the action') and finished by 31.12.2028 ('end date of the action').

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the implementation of project activities shall commence on XX.XX.XXXX and shall end on XX.XX.XXXX, as specified in Annex A: Description of the action.

4. SUBGRANT AMOUNT

The maximum financial contribution to be granted to the Beneficiaries shall not exceed the following:

Partner number, role, legal name, country, PIC number, estimated eligible costs and maximum grant amount

N°	Role	Legal name	Country	PIC	Total eligible costs	Maximum grant amount

1	Coordinator	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XX,XXX.XX	XX,XXX.XX
2	Partner	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XX,XXX.XX	XX,XXX.XX
3	Partner	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XX,XXX.XX	XX,XXX.XX
				Total		

Maximum grant amount, total estimated eligible costs and contribution and funding rate.

Total eligible costs (coordinator and partners)	**Funding rate** (%)	**Maximum grant amount** (Annex A)	**Maximum grant amount** (award decision)

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, non-performance of the planned activities or partial implementation of the work, the Contractor and the corresponding regional funding organisations may reduce the grant proportionally, withhold pending payments, or recover unduly paid amounts, in accordance with the applicable regional funding rules and Article 25 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.

7. MONITORING THE WORK PROGRESS

During the project implementation phase, a minimum of four meetings will be held between the Beneficiaries 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. Before each meeting and one month after the end of each 6-month period, contractor will send a technical report containing description of the work and progress done as well as the results until those dates (M6, M12).
- Final review meeting: This meeting will be held during the processing of the final report expected M18. Its primary purpose is to comprehensively review the project's outcomes, achievements, and compliance with the subgrant agreement. For the final evaluation, also a demo/presentation of the final solution built (running). Additional meetings may be scheduled if they are considered necessary based on the project's progress and specific circumstances.

Monitoring will be carried out by a designated group of two reviewers from the ECIV consortium, who will assess the quality of project implementation as well as its achievements. The monitoring process will include the follow-up of objectives, KPIs, milestones, deliverables and any project modifications. The reviewers will also ensure effective liaison between the project and the ECIV governance structures.

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 beneficiaries 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 two reviewers from the ECIV consortium based on the evaluation of quality and the achievement of objectives and milestones of the project. Together with the technical report, the Beneficiaries will submit a financial statement for the final payment. If the report is accepted, the Beneficiaries will be invited to a final review meeting for an online presentation of the project results. If the report is not accepted, the Beneficiaries 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 Beneficiaries to release the payments. Where significant deviations from Annex B (Description of the Action) are identified and are not duly justified or approved, the Contractor and the relevant regional funding organisation may apply corrective measures, including requests for amendments, reduction of the eligible grant amount, suspension of payments, or recovery of unjustified costs, in line with Article 25 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement and applicable regional funding rules.

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.

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 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 Beneficiaries.

In particular, the Beneficiaries 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 Beneficiaries. In addition to the bodies listed under Article 25 of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, the Contractor and the regional funding organisations participating in the financing of the action may carry out checks, reviews and verification activities concerning the implementation of the project and the use of funds, in accordance with their respective legal and regulatory frameworks.

Furthermore, the obligations of the Beneficiaries include the obligations under articles 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, and 20 of the Model Grant Agreement[10].

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

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

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

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

The Beneficiaries 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 Beneficiaries 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 Beneficiaries 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 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: Description of the action (amended project proposal, including estimated budget)

Annex B: ECIV third parties project consortium agreement

For the Beneficiaryies:

[LEGAL NAMES OF CONSORTIUM MEMBERS]

[NAMES SURNAMES]

[SIGNATURE]

For the Contractor:

[Government of Navarra][NAME SURNAME]

[SIGNATURE]

Annex A: Description of the action

[As in Open Call 2 project application forms.]

Annex B: 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

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.

Ownership and corporate structure

Does your organisation have any subsidiaries, branches, affiliated entities, or representative offices?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide details.

Investments and shareholdings

Does your organisation own shares or hold investments in other organisations?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide details, including the name of the organisation and the percentage owned.

Parent company

Is your organisation owned or controlled by another organisation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please identify the parent organisation and describe the ownership structure.

Group structure

Is your organisation part of a corporate group?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe the group structure and your organisation's role within the group.

Main activities location

Are the majority of your organisation's activities carried out in an ECIV funding territory?

☐ Yes ☐ *No If yes, please specify the ECIV funding territory.*

Independence declaration

Please describe any ownership, control, financial, or governance links with other consortium partners. Include parent companies, subsidiaries, common shareholders, investments, voting rights, or other forms of direct or indirect control.

SME status

Is your organisation a Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) according to the European Commission definition (fewer than 250 employees and either an annual turnover of €50 million or less, or a balance sheet total of €43 million or less)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Gender ratio

1000 characters

What is the current gender ratio in your organization?

Regional impact

How will your involvement contribute to regional development and innovation? Please describe the added value of your participation and your potential impact on the relevant sector or ecosystem.

3000 characters

[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.

How did you find your project partners and build your consortium?

This question is for statistical purposes only. Your answer will not affect the evaluation or selection of your project.

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' circularity, please explain how.

State-of-the-art assessment and innovation analysis

What is the highest level of novelty of the solution developed within the project? *(Select one option only)*

☐ New to the company: the solution is already known and used in the market but will be implemented for the first time within your organisation.

☐ New to the market: the solution is not yet available in the target market but already exists in other markets or contexts.

☐ New to the world: the solution represents a globally novel innovation that has not previously been developed or implemented anywhere.

Note: In line with the *Oslo Manual (OECD/Eurostat, 2018)*, each innovation must be assigned to a single novelty category only. Please select the highest level of novelty that applies.

3000 characters

Describe the existing solutions, evaluate the appropriateness of the proposed Innovation Readiness Level, and demonstrate the project's innovative character compared to the current state of the art.

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 clear information about your team members, highlighting their relevant skills, experience, roles, and precise responsibilities within the consortium.

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.

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

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

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

European Added Value

What specific added value do you expect from working with European partners that could not be achieved through a regional funding scheme alone?

3000 characters

Please answer specifically in relation to your project. Describe the concrete benefits you expect from ECIV.

Dissemination and communication

How will project results be shared among the consortium partners, and how will intellectual property and the monetisation of the results be managed?

3000 characters

Compulsory checks

Do you confirm that:

- ☐ Your project helps to bring your technology or solution to a higher TRL level, from TRL6 to TRL8 or its equivalent if it is not based on technology
- ☐ There is at least one small or medium enterprise in your consortium
- ☐ Involved companies passed Russian sanctions checks

Project budget form

 Upload your project budget

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

Total budget

ECIV call	2
Project acronym	
Overall Budget	0,00
Requested funding	0,00

	COUNTRY	Region/Territory		Partner	A-PERSONNEL	B-SUBCONTRACTING	C-PURCHASE GOODS			E-INDIRECT COSTS	TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS	FUNDING RATE	REQUESTED FUNDING	INCOMES GENERATED BY THE PROJECT	OWN RESOURCES	TOTAL INCOMES
							C1-Travel and subsistance	C2-Equipment, infrastructures and other assets	C3-Other goods, works and services							
			1	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			2	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			3	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			4	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			5	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			6	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			7	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			8	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			9	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			10	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			11	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			12	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			13	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			14	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			15	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			16	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			17	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			18	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			19	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
			20	Entity Name	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0%	0,00	0	0	0,00
				TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00		0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00

Staff effort

ECIV call	2
Project acronym	

Cost € / PM		STAFF EFFORT	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP5	WP6	WP7	WP8	WP9	TOTAL
0,00	1	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	2	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	3	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	4	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	5	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	6	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	7	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	8	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	9	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	10	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	11	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	12	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	13	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	14	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	15	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	16	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	17	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	18	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	19	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
0,00	20	Entity name	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
		TOTAL	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
		%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

Individual budget

Entity name:
Region/Territory/Country

WP Definition	TOTAL	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP7	WP8	WP9
PERSONNEL COSTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBCONTRACTING COSTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TRAVEL AND SUBSISTANCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EQUIPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURES AND OTHER ASSETS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OTHER GOODS, WORKS AND SERVICES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
INDIRECT COSTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indirect costs rate										
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Costs description
Personnel: profile, new contracts, type of contracts

Subcontracting explanations

Materials description

Services description

Equipment, infrastructures and other assets description

Communication costs description

Screenshots 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.*

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.

Additional declaration by the project leader

Project name:

Lead Partner Organisation:

I, the undersigned, **[Name, surname]**, acting as **official legal representative** of **[Organisation name]**, hereby declare and confirm the following statements to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. EU administrative sanctions

We confirm that, to the best of our knowledge, **neither the project as a whole nor any part of it** is subject to **EU administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion)**, nor falls under any of the exclusion situations referred to in **Articles 136 and 141 of the EU Financial Regulation**.

2. Conflict of interest

We confirm that, to the best of our knowledge, **neither the project as a whole nor any part of it** is in a situation of **conflict of interest**, nor is **affiliated, filiation-linked or a sister organisation** to any of the **ECIV project partners**.

3. Other EU funding – past

We confirm that, to the best of our knowledge, **neither the project as a whole nor any part of it has benefitted from any other EU grant**, including EU funding managed by authorities in EU Member States or other funding bodies (e.g. EU Regional Funds, EU Agricultural Funds, etc.).

4. Other EU funding – present or future

We confirm that, to the best of our knowledge, **neither the project as a whole nor any part of it is currently submitted, nor will be submitted**, to any other EU grant, including EU funding managed by authorities in EU Member States or other funding bodies (e.g. EU Regional Funds, EU Agricultural Funds, etc.).

Done at: _____
Date: _____

Name of the official representative: _____
Position: _____

Signature:
(signature and organisation stamp)

Ethics self assessment form

Project acronym:
Project title:

Contact information of the coordination contact for the consortium	
Name and surname	
Email address	
Phon *e*	
Contact information for ethics contact point for the consortium	
Name and surname	
Email address	
Phone	

All ethical and legal requirements necessary must be met before the project can begin. To ensure this, is the responsibility of the applicant and cannot be substituted by the ECIV ethical clearance process.

¨ ☒ ***I certify as the coordinator of this proposal that the consortium has all relevant ethical and legal requirements in place for conducting this project. I confirm that the consortium follow the ethical principles and applicable legislation of the European Union and my country, and that the proposed activities do not raise any ethical issues that have not been disclosed in this application.***

Please attach any supporting documents that are already available and, for the documents that are not yet available, indicate when you expect that they will be available. All relevant documents listed in the table and that are not yet available have to be ready to be submitted upon request.

Section 1: Human embryonic stem cells and human embryos		YES/NO	If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table
Does this research involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?			
If YES:	Will they be directly derived from embryos within this project?		
	Are they previously established cells lines?		
	Are the cell lines registered in the European registry for human embryonic stem cell lines?		
Does this research involve the use of human embryos?			
If YES:	Will the research lead to their destruction?		
Does this research involve the use of other human embryonic or foetal tissues / cells?			
Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project; indicate here the country where the research is carried out):			

Section 2: Humans		YES/NO	If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table
Does this research involve human participants?			
If YES:	Are they volunteers?		
	Are they healthy volunteers for medical studies?		
	Are they patients for medical studies?		
	Are they potentially vulnerable individuals or groups?		
	Are they children/minors?		
	Are they persons unable to give informed consent?		
Does this research involve interventions (physical also including imaging technology, behavioural treatments, tracking and tracing, etc.) on the study participants?			
If YES:	Does it involve invasive techniques (e.g. collection of hu-man cells or tissues, surgical or medical interventions, invasive studies on the brain, TMS etc.)?		
	Does it involve collection of biological samples?		
Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):			

Section 3: Humans cells / tissues		YES/NO	If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table
Does this research involve human cells or tissues? (other than from Human Embryos/Foetuses, see section 1)			
If YES:	Are they human embryonic or foetal cells or tissues?		
	Are they available commercially?		
	Are they obtained within this project?		
	Are they obtained from another project, laboratory or institution?		
	Are they obtained from a biobank (if yes, please provide the name of the biobank)?		
Does this research involve interventions (physical also including imaging technology, behavioural treatments, tracking and tracing, etc.) on the study participants?			
Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):			
Section 4: Personal data		YES/NO	If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table
Does this research involve processing of personal data?			
If YES:	Does it involve the processing of special categories of personal data (e.g. sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, genetic, bio-metric and health data, political opinion, religious or philosophical beliefs)?		
	Does it involve processing of genetic, biometric or health data?		
	Does it involve profiling, systematic monitoring of indi-viduals, or processing of large scale of special categories of data or intrusive methods of data processing (such as, surveillance, geolocation tracking etc.)?		
Does this research involve further processing of previously collected personal data (including use of pre-existing data sets or sources, merging existing data sets)?			
Is it planned to export personal data (data transfer) from the EU to non-EU countries?			
Is it planned to import personal data (data transfer) from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non- EU country to another non-EU country?			

Does this research involve the processing of personal data related to criminal convictions or offences?			
Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):			

Section 5: Animals		**YES/NO**	**If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table**
Does this research involve animals?			
If YES:	Are they vertebrates?		
	Are they non-human primates (NHPs)?		
	Are they genetically modified?		
	Are they cloned farm animals?		
	Are they endangered species?		
Please indicate the species involved:			

Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):

Section 6: Non-EU countries		**YES/NO**	**If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table**
In case non-EU countries are involved, do the research related activi-ties undertaken in these countries raise potential ethics issues? Specify the countries involved:			
Is it planned to use local resources (e.g. animal or human tissue sam-ples, genetic material, live animals, human remains, materials of historical value, endangered fauna or flora samples, etc.)?			
Is it planned to import any material (other than data) from non-EU countries into the EU or from a non- EU country to another non-EU country?			
If YES:	Specify material and countries involved:		
Is it planned to export any material (other than data) from the EU to non-EU countries?			
Does your activity involve low or lower-middle income countries?			
Could the situation in the country put the individuals taking part in the research at risk?			

Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):

Section 7: Environment, Health and Safety	YES/NO	If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table
Does this activity involve the use of substances or processes (or tech-nologies) that may cause harm to the environment, to animals or plants (during the implementation of the activity or further to the use of the results, as a possible impact)?		
Does this research deal with endangered fauna and/or flora/pro-tected areas?		
Does this activity involve the use of substances or processes (or tech-nologies) that may cause harm to humans, including those perform-ing the activity (during the implementation of the activity or further to the use of the results, or the deployment of the technology as a possible impact)?		

Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):

Section 8: Artificial Intelligence	YES/NO	If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table
Does this activity involve the development, deployment and/or use of Artificial Intelligence-based systems?		
Could the AI based system/technique potentially stigmatise or dis-criminate against people (e.g. based on sex, race, ethnic or social origin, age, genetic features, disability, sexual orientation, language, religion or belief, membership to a political group, or membership to a national minority)?		
Does the AI system/technique interact, replace or influence human decision-making processes (e.g. issues affecting human life, health, well-being or human rights, or economic, social or political decisions)?		
Does the AI system/technique have the potential to lead to negative social (e.g. on democracy, media, labour market, freedoms, educa-tional choices, mass surveillance) and/or environmental impacts either through intended applications or plausible alternative uses?		
Does the AI to be developed/used in the project raise any other ethi-cal issues not covered by the questions above (e.g., subliminal, cov-ert or deceptive AI, AI that is used to stimulate addictive behaviours, life- like humanoid robots, etc.)?		

Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):

Section 9: Other ethics issues	YES/NO	If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table
Are there any other ethics issues that should be taken into consideration (e.g. process for the return of results)?		
Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):		

Section 10: Crosscutting issues – Potential misuse of results	YES/NO	If yes, Add description in the appropriate section at the end of the table
Does this research have the potential for misuse of research results?		
Description (mandatory if this section is relevant to your project):		

Additional documentation

Please provide:

- the financial statements for the last three completed financial years. (alternatively and preferably, applicants may submit their official tax filings (tax returns / fiscal accounts) covering the same period, if these documents contain the equivalent financial information).
- Gantt chart.

Annex 6: Q&A section

Generic Questions and Answers

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 second Open Call?

Answer:

The general objective of ECIV Open Call 2 (OC2) 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 SME.
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 sub-missions. 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 sub-missions. The call targets specific sectors (agriculture, construction, textiles, etc.) among the 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 2:** € 10,284,233.85
- **Transnational innovation projects:** €500,000 to €3,000,000 per project
- **Maximum funding per beneficiary across all ECIV calls:** €600,000
- **Maximum funding per applicant and project in Open Call 2:** €500,000

- **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:

- **Impact** (40%): Environmental, social, and economic benefits
- **Excellence** (30%): Alignment with ECIV priorities, innovation level
- **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:** 26 November 2026
- **Submission deadline:** 26 February 2027 – 12 :00 CET
- **Evaluation:** February–May 2027
- **Results announcement:** from June 2027
- **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 and at €500 000 for Open Call 2.
- 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 second 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.

Detailed questions and answers

1/ Eligibility of applicants

1.1 Eligible countries and conditions for non-funding territory applicants

Question: Which countries are eligible for ECIV Open Call 1, and what specific conditions apply when applicants are not established in an ECIV funding territory?

Answer:

You can apply to participate as a partner according to the OC conditions: Eligible applicants include legal entities from eligible countries (EU Member States and the United Kingdom). In the case of the United Kingdom, only applicants from Scotland can benefit from ECIV funding.

Applicants from other EU territories (not included as ECIV funding territories) are eligible for participation, but not for ECIV funding.

However, please note that: "the consortium needs to have a minimum of 3 partners that include at least 2 partners located in 2 different territories represented by the ECIV regional funding organisations, only applicants from ECIV funding territories can lead a consortium and benefit from 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.

See the 3.1. Eligible applicants – Who can apply section of the Guide for applicants

In accordance with the ECIV call requirements, the Project must be compulsorily developed and implemented through a dedicated centre or coordinating entity established within an EU Member State or the United Kingdom. The designated centre shall be responsible for the development, coordination, and execution of the project activities, ensuring that all work is effectively carried out within the eligible geographical area throughout the Project's duration. Any funds allocated to a partner shall be exclusively used to finance projects implemented within the geographical territories of the respective funding partners.

1.2 Types of eligible organisations for ECIV consortia

Question: What types of organisations are eligible to form a consortium under ECIV's second Open Call?

Answer:

ECIV consortium requirements are:

- A consortium must consist of at least three partners, including at least two partners located in two different territories represented by ECIV regional funding organisations.
- Only applicants from ECIV funding territories may lead a consortium and benefit from ECIV funding.
- Partners from non-funding territories may participate provided they demonstrate clear added value to the project, their budget exceeds €50,000 and represents less than 20% of the total project budget, and their financial resources are secured at the

application stage and prior to subgrant signature through the required commitments and agreements.

Beneficiaries from the following categories of quadruple helix are 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.).

Regional specificities may apply.

1.3 Eligibility of affiliated entities and subsidiaries with separate PICs

Question: Are affiliated organisations or subsidiaries of ECIV consortium partners eligible to apply for funding, even if they are separate legal entities with their own PIC?

Answer:

Organisations that are affiliated with, owned by, or predominantly controlled by an ECIV consortium partner are not eligible to apply for funding, even if they are separate legal entities with their own PIC (Participant Identification Code). ECIV partners themselves cannot apply for funding, and this ineligibility extends to their subsidiaries or affiliated entities.

1.4 Eligibility of organisations with headquarters outside the funding territory but with local offices within it

Question 1.4 Is an organisation eligible to apply and be funded through an ECIV Open Call if its headquarters are located outside the region, but it has a local office established within the eligible territory where the project activities will take place?

Answer:

Yes, an organisation may apply to an ECIV Open Call as long as it has a legally established office within the eligible territory where the project activities will be carried out. In such cases, ECIV considers the **local establishment** as the reference point for eligibility, provided that the entity can **formally demonstrate** that it is registered and operates in the region concerned. This can typically be supported by documentation such as a **PIC number or equivalent identification**, showing the location of the regional establishment.

However, applicants must also ensure that they comply with any **additional eligibility conditions set by the regional authority**, as these may vary depending on local requirements

1.5 Clarification of territorial borders

Question: In the Open Call 1 funding territories is written for example „Comunidad Foral de Navarra (Spain),“ does it mean that all Spanish companies meet this territory or only the Spanish companies from the Navarra region? Where can we find concrete borders and definition of each territory ?

Answer:

It means only organisations located in the Navarra region.

The official map is located here : Maps - NUTS - Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics - Eurostat

2/ Eligibility of costs

2.1 Funding eligibility for multifunctional equipment and machinery

Question: Can the purchase of new equipment or machinery be funded under the programme if the equipment will be used both for production purposes and for research, experimentation, or testing activities (e.g., a robot used for manufacturing as well as for university-led testing and software experimentation)?

Answer:

Yes, potentially — but only for depreciation, only pro-rated to ECIV-related use (only the depreciated amount corresponding to the months of actual project use can be declared), **only if the equipment is demonstrably necessary for the ECIV project, and within the limits imposed by the beneficiary's applicable depreciation accounting rules** (e.g. capped annual depreciation rates or maximum depreciation periods, such as 15% per year or 10 years for machines, in Navarra's regulations for instance).

OC2 guidelines mentions in 6.4 eligible costs: 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.

Based on how such cases are typically treated in EU funded programmes, and knowing that ECIV doesn't provide funding for investments, the purchase of a machine *can* be eligible under certain conditions — but not the full purchase price -funded programmes, and knowing that ECIV doesn't provide funding for investments, the purchase of a machine

In general, only the depreciation costs of the equipment are eligible, and only prorated to the share of machine time used specifically for the ECIV project. This means that if the robot is used partly for ECIV related experimentation and partly for other activities (production,

university testing, etc.), only the portion directly linked to the ECIV project can be funded.-rated to the share of machine-time used specifically for the ECIV project. This means that if the robot is used partly for ECIV-related experimentation and partly for other activities (production, university testing, etc.), only the portion directly linked to the ECIV project can be funded.

In addition, the equipment must be strictly necessary for the implementation of the funded ECIV project. If the project cannot be carried out without this machine (for example, because the experimentation requires this specific robotic capability), then the depreciated, pro-rated cost could be considered eligible.

It should also be noted that depreciation must comply with the applicable regional and national accounting rules of the beneficiary. This means that the depreciation rate and duration are legally capped depending on the asset type, according to regional regulations. In Navarra for example, for machines, the depreciation rate is limited to 15% per year or a maximum depreciation period of 10 years.

We suggest you also anticipate proofs needed from project bearer: elements of call for tender if subject to public law, invoice, proof of payment, depreciation accounting methodology, proof of machine-time use.

2.2 Eligibility of equipment with mixed production and R&D use

Question: Regarding financing, what if equipment and machinery would not only have one function? It could also be used for testing new production methods and also it should be possible to be re-programmed and tested with new software. Would it be possible to receive funding for such a machine from ECIV?

Answer:

Yes, potentially — but :

- only for depreciation,
- only pro rated to ECIV-related use (only the depreciated amount corresponding to the months of actual project use can be declared),
- only if the equipment is demonstrably necessary for the ECIV project, and within the limits imposed by the beneficiary's applicable depreciation accounting rules (e.g. capped annual depreciation rates or maximum depreciation periods, such as 15% per year or 10 years for machines, in Navarra's regulations for instance).

Depreciation must comply with the applicable regional and national accounting rules of the beneficiary. This means that the depreciation rate and duration are legally capped depending on the asset type, according to Navarra's regulations. For example, for machines, the depreciation rate is limited to 15% per year or a maximum depreciation period of 10 years. Only the depreciated amount calculated according to these legal limits — and only for the

months and proportion of actual use within the ECIV project — can be declared as eligible cost, never the total purchase cost.

2.3 Eligibility of permanent staff costs for public organisations in Normandy

Question: Are the expenses related to permanent staff assigned to a future project under the ECIV scheme eligible, knowing that we are a public organisation in Normandy?

Answer:

The regional regulation of Normandie Innovation, which applies to Normandy-based partners of ECIV projects, states:

Personnel costs: researchers, technicians and other support staff, provided they are employed for the project, excluding PhD students, permanent staff, and employees on permanent contracts (CDI) of public institutions and public or private higher education and research institutions.

Therefore, the expenses related to permanent staff assigned to a future project under the ECIV scheme are not eligible in Normandy for public institutions.

2.4 Indirect cost calculation methods: general rule vs. Normandy specificities

Question: Is the calculation method for indirect costs indeed carried out on all expenses (except subcontracting), whereas in Normandy it is only based on salaries?

Answer:

Indeed, the calculation of indirect costs is not done in the same way in Normandy as in other countries under this scheme.

At ECIV level the indirect costs are calculated on total budget expenses except for subcontracting, following HE rules.

For Normandy, the calculation method is based on salary costs, which is consistent with the RDI framework and the simplified cost options available to us.

2.5 Eligibility of coordination, communication, dissemination and exploitation costs

Question: Are personnel costs dedicated to C&D&E tasks eligible, as well as associated expenses (room rental, dissemination materials, promotional videos, etc.)? Or are these expenses ineligible despite the requirement to include such activities in the project?

Every type of coordination, management, communication, dissemination and exploitation costs are eligible for all partners.

2.6 Possibility for non-funding territory partners as third parties in ECIV projects

Question: If we want to have such non-ECIV region partners do some activities in the project, could we hire them as 3rd parties and have this described in the proposal? Is that allowed? Or do we need to select such 3rd parties only after the project starts?

Answer:

If the consortium wants to involve non-ECIV regional organisations in certain project activities, they cannot be "hired as third parties" in the sense of adding them as affiliated entities or linked third parties — because this is not allowed under the ECIV funding rules.

However, subcontracting is allowed, provided that all of the following conditions are met:

1. The subcontracted organisation is not a project partner.
2. The subcontracting is strictly necessary for carrying out the project ("justified and indispensable").
3. The procurement process follows the beneficiary's internal purchasing and procurement rules (transparency, equal treatment, value for money, etc.).

Alternatively, the consortium may choose to include these organisations as full consortium members and involve them in activities.

→ *But in that case, their activities would not be eligible for funding* (i.e., the costs they incur would not be reimbursed).

Yes, your understanding is correct: both options exist, each with its consequences regarding eligibility of costs.

2.7 Distribution of coordination and management costs across funding territories

Question: Can certain coordination/management costs be allocated across the three envelopes of the three countries (to avoid Normandy covering everything? For example: services from a consulting firm that developed technological building blocks and the valorisation subsidiary).

Answer:
Yes, provided that public procurement rules are respected for partners who are subject to them.

2.8 Cross-charging external financial monitoring costs to European partners

Question: If we use an external service provider for financial monitoring and preparing supporting documents for payment requests, can part of this cost be charged to the other European partners?

Answer:

It is not possible for partners to invoice each other. However, if internal transfers are anticipated to contribute to the payment of an invoice issued to one partner, these must be included in the consortium agreement, which must be established before any contract is signed with the funding authority.

The purchase must also comply with each partner's internal procurement rules (including public procurement obligations, where applicable).

2.9 No support for project development costs

Question: Can project development support costs (consultant) be reintegrated into the project retrospectively?

Answer:

No.

2.10 Impossibility of subcontracting to a partner

Question: 'hiring as 3rd parties' is not allowed is it ?

Answer:

Subcontracting is allowed as soon as :

1. Third party is not a partner,
2. Subcontracting is proved necessary ("justified and indispensable"),
3. Procurement is made legally (following internal purchase policy).

3/ Project Scope

3.1 Eligibility of large-scale production and market launch projects

Question: Would the fund support a project centered on the first large-scale production run and integrated market launch of such a product? The goal is to create a definitive commercial case study for this circular model.

Answer:

The proposed project scope — focusing on the first large-scale production run and integrated market launch — seems not to be aligned with the objectives of the call. *ECIV Open Calls support interregional projects with a TRL between 6 and 8, or its equivalent if it is not based on technology.* Your project seems to be TRL9 – Actual system proven in operational environment

3.2 TRL requirements at submission versus project completion

Question: You indicate that the focus is on Technology Readiness Levels (TRL 6–8). Is this level required at the time of project submission, or is it expected to be reached by the end of the project?

Answer:

The Technology Readiness Level (TRL 6–8) or its equivalent refers to the target maturity range of the project over its duration. Projects are expected to start at or around TRL 6 at the time of submission and to progress towards higher maturity, with the objective of reaching TRL 7 or TRL 8 by the end of the project.

Proposals should therefore clearly demonstrate both the initial TRL at project start and a credible development pathway enabling advancement within the TRL 6–8 range during the project implementation.

3.3 Relevance of sharing-economy-focused projects to ECIV priorities

Question: I'd like to know whether it would be admissible/relevant to propose a project focusing on the sharing economy, and not on all the three steps of the industrial value chains stated in the call description.

Answer:

it is not compulsory to focus on all the three steps of the industrial value chains stated in the call description.

3.4 Distribution of budget across ECIV topics

Question: How is this budget going to be distributed per topic?

Answer:

There is no budget allocation to the different topics. The best projects will be funded according to the interregional project ranking list and the budget availability from the other ECIV funding bodies.

3.5 Readiness level of non-technological innovation

Question: What does stands for 'Technology Readiness Level or equivalent' ?

Answer:

If TRL (Technology Readiness Level) is not the most suitable scale for your type of innovation, applicants may use BRL (Business Readiness Level) or SRL (Societal Readiness Level), MRL (Manufacturing Readiness Level), ORL (Operational Readiness Level), LRL (Logistics Readiness Level) or SIRL (Systemic Innovation Readiness Level) instead, if they better reflect the maturity of their non-technological solution.

4/ Building partnerships

4.1 Matchmaking resources and opportunities to join existing consortia

Question Are there matchmaking platforms or recommended organizations in other ECIV regions that could serve as relevant partners for a supply chain innovation project? Would you also be able to connect us with an existing consortium or a team member interested in our expertise?

Answer:

We do not recommend specific organizations. However, ECIV offers a comprehensive matchmaking platform designed to facilitate consortium building and interregional connections. Here is how it can benefit you:

- **Participant section:** Create and manage your profile to showcase your interests and what you're looking for, connect with other users, and send meeting requests.
- **Marketplace:** Publish your own initiatives or explore those of others, seeking collaboration opportunities.
- **Agenda:** Access a schedule of events designed to promote networking and the formation of new alliances. These events offer valuable opportunities for networking and pitching, fostering the development of interregional collaborative projects.

Several interregional thematic events were held. A general presentation in English, introducing the project, is available at this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eY0nYlH0VaA&t=10s

4.2 Which organisation should submit the proposal: coordinator vs. technology lead

Question: Should the project coordinator or the technology lead organisation submit the application on behalf of the consortium?

Answer

The project coordinator should submit the application on behalf of the consortium.

5/ Funding

5.1 Meaning of “applicant” vs. “beneficiary” and funding limits

Question: Can you please explain to me the meaning of the following in the FSTP call: „Maximum funding per beneficiary: €500,000, maximum funding per beneficiary in all ECIV open calls € 600,000; Budget per applicant and project: min € 50,000“. Are “applicant” and “beneficiary” different?

Answer:

- The Maximum funding per beneficiary of €500,000 refers to the maximum funding that a beneficiary can receive for a project.
- The Maximum funding per beneficiary of €600,000 in all ECIV open calls refers to the maximum funding that a beneficiary can receive across all ECIV calls, including first Open Call, second Open call and Experimentation Fund.
- The minimum budget of €50,000 per applicant and project means that the budget that an applicant can have in a project has to be €50,000 or more.
- Beneficiary refers to the entity that receives financial support under the call. This is the organization that will obtain funding if selected.

Applicant refers to the entity submitting a proposal to participate in the call. An applicant may apply to join a project or consortium even if it does not request or receive funding.

So, while every potential beneficiary is an applicant, not every applicant becomes a beneficiary. The distinction is important because some organizations may participate without financial support.

5.2 Applicable subsidy rates per organisation type

Question: What subsidy rates apply to my type of organisation?

Answer:

The maximum aid intensities for experimental development are from 50% to 100%, on the basis of 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. In ECIV they are subject to regional specifications.

Table: Maximum funding rates by size of enterprise

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

Entreprises from Normandie and of Province of Antwerp will receive a 10% lower subsidy rates due to national specificities. (small: 60%, medium: 50%, large 40%).

Funding rate is maximum 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.

5.3 Interpretation of the €600,000 (€500,000 Normandy) funding ceiling

Question: Is the €600,000 ceiling (€500,000 in Normandy) to be understood as the maximum subsidy that can be allocated per partner, or as a maximum budget per funding territory?

Answer:

€600,000 (or €500,000 in Normandy) cap should be understood as a maximum grant per applicant. The Call secretariat can reduce the total subsidy amount to a beneficiary if its requested subsidy is above that limit.

The €500,000 cap per applicant and per project represents the maximum grant amount that can be requested within a single application by a single applicant.

5.4 Difference between the maximum project budget and the maximum grant amount per beneficiary?

Question: I am confused by the figures €500,000, €600,000, and the project budget limits. What is the difference between budget and grant?

Answer:

There are three different financial concepts in ECIV Open Call 2 that should not be confused:

1. Project Budget: The project budget corresponds to the total costs of the entire consortium.

For Open Call 2:

- Minimum project budget: €500,000
- Maximum project budget: €3,000,000

Example

Partner	Costs
Company A	€600,000
Company B	€400,000
University C	€500,000
SME D	€300,000
Total Project Budget	**€1,800,000**

The project budget is therefore €1.8 million, regardless of the funding rates applied to each partner.

2. Grant amount: The grant amount is the financial contribution provided by ECIV funding partner and Horizon Europe program and depends on the applicable funding rate of each beneficiary.

Example

A medium-sized company with:

- Eligible costs: €800,000
- Funding rate: 50%

would receive:

- €800,000 × 50% = €400,000 grant

The remaining €400,000 must be provided by the beneficiary as co-financing.

3. Maximum Grant per Applicant: In Open Call 2, a single beneficiary cannot receive more than €500,000 of ECIV funding within one project, regardless of its eligible costs.

This is a cap on the grant, not on the budget.

Example

A beneficiary has:

- Eligible costs: €1,000,000
- Funding rate: 70%

Normal grant calculation:

- €1,000,000 × 70% = €700,000

However, because of the ECIV limit:

- ➞ Maximum grant awarded = €500,000

The partner would therefore need to reduce its budget or increase its own contribution.

Question: What is the €600,000 limit?

The €600,000 limit is a cumulative funding ceiling across all ECIV calls for a given beneficiary.

It includes participation in:

- Open Call 1
- Open Call 2
- Experimentation Fund

Example

ECIV Funding Source	Grant Received
Open Call 1	€250,000
Experimentation Fund	€100,000
Open Call 2	€250,000
Total	**€600,000**

This organisation has reached the maximum cumulative ECIV funding and cannot receive additional ECIV grants.

Question: Can a partner have a budget higher than €500,000?

Yes.

The €500,000 limit applies to the grant received, not necessarily to the partner's total eligible costs. However, the requested grant resulting from the funding-rate calculation cannot exceed €500,000 in Open Call 2.

Example

Eligible Costs	Funding Rate	Calculated Grant	
€700,000	60%	€420,000	✅
€900,000	50%	€450,000	✅
€1,000,000	70%	€700,000	❌ (capped at €500,000)

A partner may have eligible costs above €500,000, but the ECIV contribution cannot exceed the applicable funding caps.

5.4 Funding eligibility of local public companies

Question: Could you clarify whether a Local Public Company would be eligible for 100% funding of its activities, in the same way as local authorities?

Answer:
To determine this, we must assess whether the organisation operates within a competitive market—i.e., whether it conducts economic activities.

If the organisation seeks 100% co-funding, it must have no more than 20% of its inputs deriving from economic activity (does it sell services or products?).

If the organisation is mainly funded by public funds, then yes, it may be eligible for 100% funding.

Otherwise, it will be considered an SME under the European definition:

https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-fundamentals/sme-definition_en.

5.5 Determining SME status under EU rules

Question: How can we determine whether our organisation is considered a small, medium, or large enterprise under EU rules?

Answer:
The "SME self assessment tool" guides you step by step to verify whether your organisation meets the criteria defined in Recommendation 2003/361/EC.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/sme/public/organisation-name

It will base its analysis, in particular on:

- number of employees,
- turnover,
- balance sheet total,
- possible inclusion of group-level data.

The ECIV call secretariat reserves the right to verify these elements to determine the nature of your organisation.

6/ Applying to other projects

6.1 Compatibility with other Horizon Europe-funded projects

Question: Can I apply to Open Call 1 if I am already participating in another project funded by another Horizon Europe program?

Answer:

EU rules prohibit double financing, meaning that the same project cannot be co-financed by two EU funds. This principle is laid down in Article 191 of the EU Financial Regulation.

Provided that there is no overlap of activities and no double funding of the same costs, you can participate. Each project must have distinct objectives, tasks, and a separate budget.

7/ ECIV objectives

7.1 Benefits for unfunded partners from outside ECIV funding territories

Question: As an organisation outside of the 5 ECIV funding territories but located in an EU member state or in the UK, I am eligible to participate in an ECIV consortium. What advantages or benefits can I gain from participating in the consortium as an unfunded partner?

Answer:

Even without access to ECIV funding, joining a consortium as an unfunded partner offers strategic value for the organisations. Participation enables greater visibility within European circular innovation ecosystems and provides insights into innovation practices, market developments, and policy approaches across different regions.

Involvement also facilitates connections with complementary partners—such as companies, clusters, public bodies, and research actors—through ECIV matchmaking tools and thematic events. These exchanges can support future collaborations, knowledge transfer, and preparedness for upcoming funded opportunities, strengthening long-term impact and engagement in the circular economy at the European level.

8/ Evaluation of the project proposals

8.1 Eligibility of applicants or ECIV partners to act as evaluators

Question: Is an organisation applying to the ECIV open call eligible to act as an evaluator? Is a staff member of an ECIV partner organisation eligible to participate in the evaluation process?

Answer:

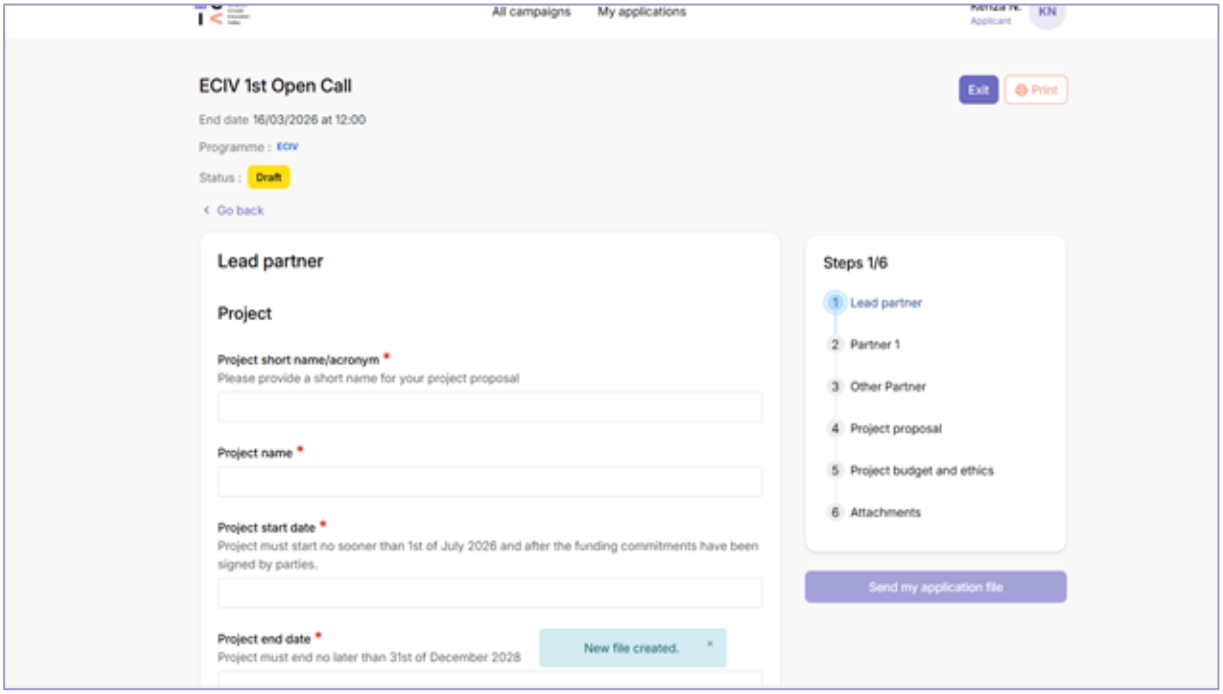
An organisation applying to the call cannot act as an evaluator due to conflicts of interest. However, an ECIV staff member may participate as a member of the Call Secretariat, but not as an external expert.

9/ Online application

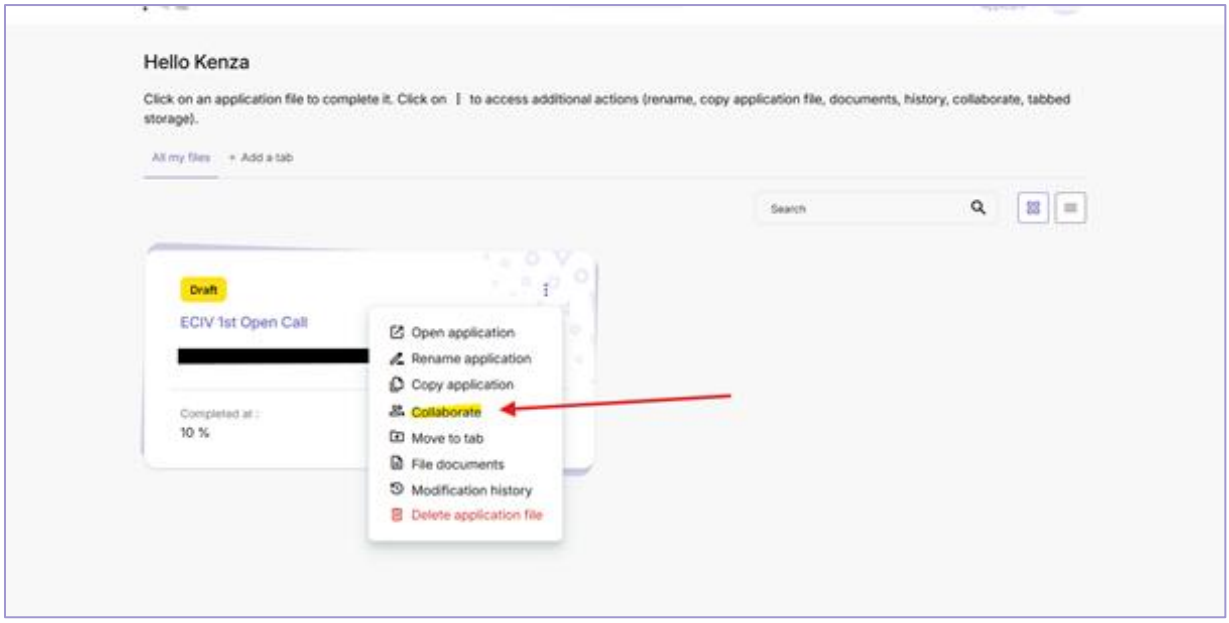
9.1 Collaborative completion of the application form on the platform

Question: How do I collaborate on the platform to complete an Open Call application form?

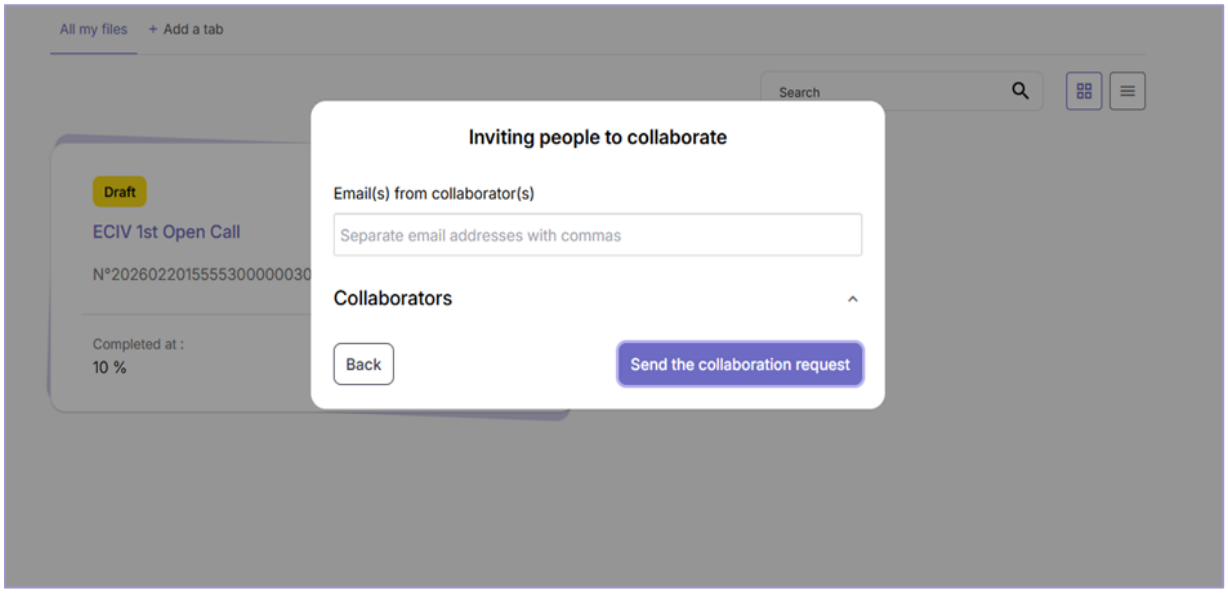
Answer:



1. Open a new ECIV 1rst Open Call file and save it.



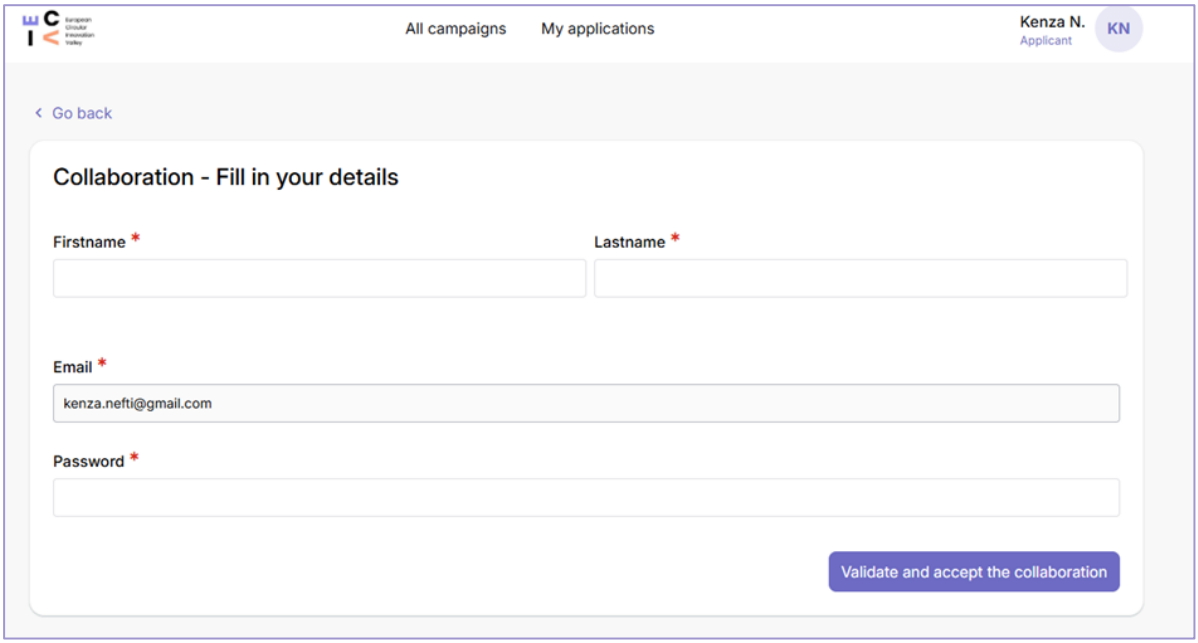
2. You can add a partner by returning to the “My Applications” page. Click on the right corner of your Draft.



3. Click on “Collaborate” and add your collaborators’ email addresses.



4. Your European partner has now received an invitation by email and simply needs to click on it to join you.



5. If you do not have an account, you can create one using the request sent to your email inbox. Otherwise, enter your usual login credentials. You can now complete a form together.

9.2 Inclusion of additional supporting details in attachments

Question: Are we allowed to include additional detail in the Attachments section, e.g. project Gantt chart, more detailed description of partners and their capabilities, technology description, risk register, etc?

Answer

The form has been intentionally simplified to allow easy submission. However, if you have additional elements that could strengthen your application, you may provide them to the evaluators.

Optional supporting documents may be uploaded depending on the maturity of your partnership, such as:

- a PowerPoint presentation of the project,
- explanatory diagrams,
- detailed budget information,
- a draft communication and dissemination plan,
- a draft consortium agreement.

We would also like to remind you that the ECIV call secretariat may request additional documents during the selection process, particularly regarding regional specificities.

Annex 7: Microsite at the project website and platform

1. Microsite at the project website

1.1. Purpose of microsite of 2nd Open Call

The Open Call page on the ECIV website provides detailed information about the current funding opportunities under the ECIV initiative. The 2nd 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

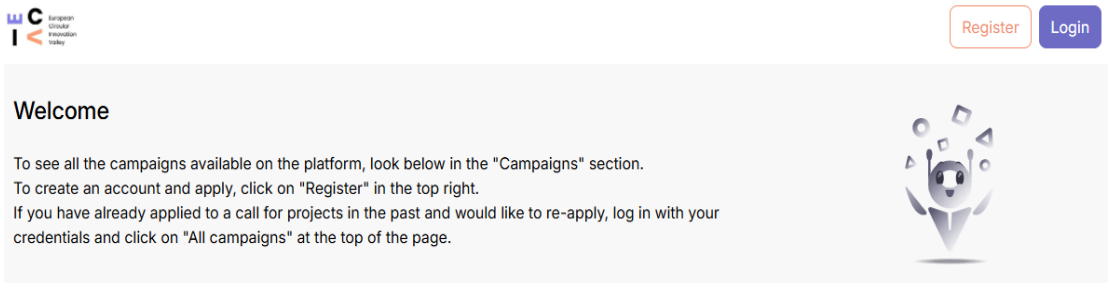
- URL of the general website: https://www.eciv.eu/
- Link to the Open Calls: https://eciv.eu/calls

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.

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.

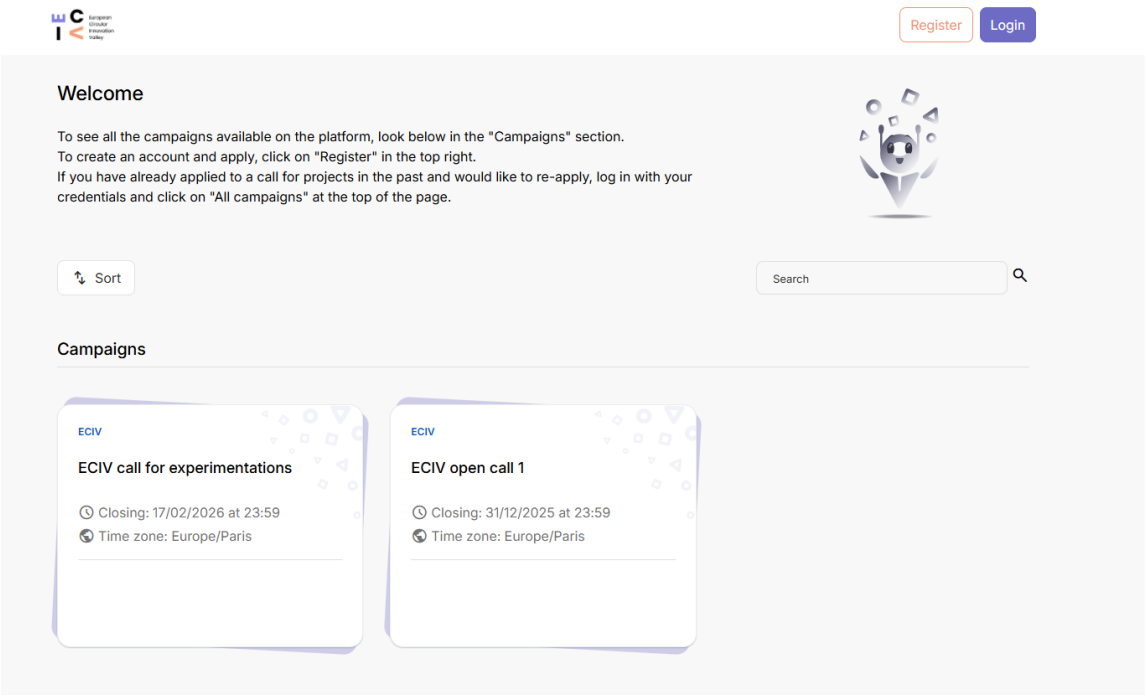


2.2. Website Access

- URL: **https://www.eciv.eu/**
- Link to the 1rst Open call: https://eciv.eu/calls

3. Features

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



- Clicking the second 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.

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: 1. Comunidad Foral de Navarra (Navarra, Spain); 2. Noord Nederland comprising Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe (Northern Netherlands, Netherlands); 3. Norra Mellansverige comprising regions of Värmland, Dalarna and Gävleborg (North midlle Sweden, Sweden); 4. Normandie (Normandy, France); 5. Scotland (United Kingdom); 6. Central and Western Lithuania Region (Vidurio ir vakarų Lietuvos regionas; Lithuania) 7. Provincie Antwerpen (Province of Antwerp; Belgium)
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 Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014)
Experimental development	Experimental development means: • acquiring, combining, shaping and using existing scientific, technological, business and other relevant knowledge and skills, • with the aim of developing new or improved products, processes or services, including digital products, processes or services,

	• 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 chain technologies, artificial intelligence, cyber security, big data and cloud or edge technologies). This may also encompass, for example, activities aiming at the conceptual definition, planning and documentation of new products, processes or services. Experimental development may comprise: • prototyping, demonstrating, piloting, testing and validation of new or improved products, processes or services in environments representative of real-life operating conditions • where the primary objective is to make further technical improvements on products, processes or services that are not substantially set. 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. 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. (see Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014)
Knowledge transfer	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.
Open Call (OC)	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 has been a first open call opening in December 2025 and closing in March 2026 and a second one opening in November 2026 and closing in February 2027,

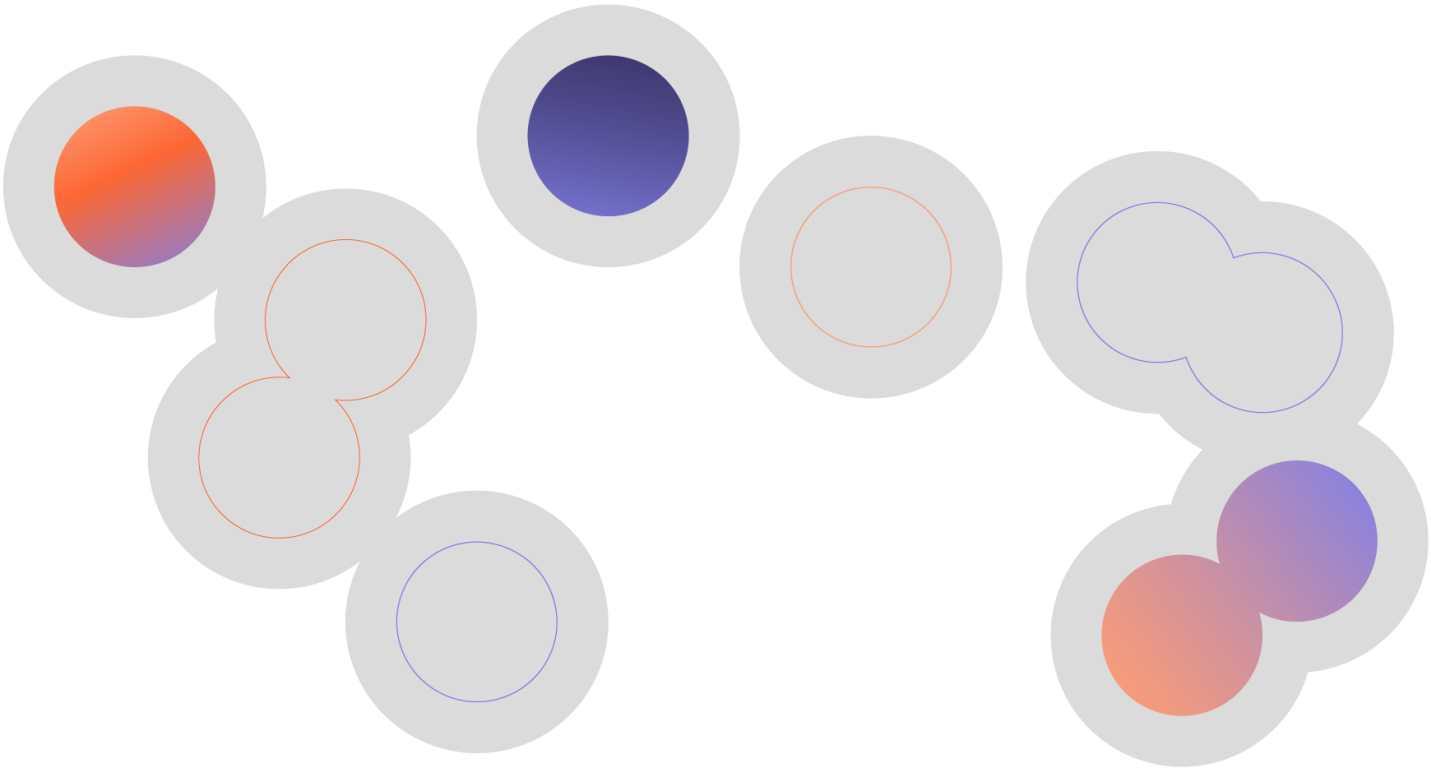
	as well as a continuous open call for experimentation opening in winter 2026. These calls will mobilise €16.3M of funds available.
Call secretariat (CS)	ECIV primary helpdesk for applicants, addressing all aspects of proposal creation and submission, i.e., in supporting the technical follow-up and facilitating 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)	ECIV Open Calls support interregional projects with a TRL between 6 and 8, or its equivalent if it is not based on technology. The following definitions apply, unless otherwise specified (see Communication from the Commission, 'A European strategy for Key Enabling Technologies – A bridge to growth and jobs', COM(2012) 341 final, 26 June 2012): TRL 6 — Technology demonstrated in a relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies) TRL 7 — System prototype demonstration in an operational environment TRL 8 — System complete and qualified
Research and knowledge dissemination organisation	'Research and knowledge dissemination organisation' or 'research organisation' means an entity: • such as universities or research institutes, technology transfer agencies, innovation intermediaries, research-oriented physical or virtual collaborative entities, • irrespective of its legal status (organised under public or private law) or way of financing, • 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. Where such an entity also pursues economic activities, the financing, the costs and the revenues of those economic activities must be accounted for separately. 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.
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	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. (see Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014, Article 6)

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	1st Open Call
OC2	2nd 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



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