



Call for Companies

INDUSAC OPEN CALL FOR COMPANIES

Programme: Horizon Europe Framework Programme

Call: A HUMAN-CENTRED AND ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL AND INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGIES 2021 (HORIZON-CL4-2021-HUMAN-01)

The call is managed by EU project INDUSAC under Horizon Europe programme. The Horizon Europe project INDUSAC, aims to financially support short-term (4-8 weeks) research collaborations between academia (students and researchers) and industry (companies), in solving company Challenges. Financial support in the form of financial support to third parties (FSTP) is given solely to student members of the co-creation teams.

Expected outcome: 300 successful collaborations between industry and academia.

Companies are invited to provide Challenges to receive Solutions from the co-creation teams (students and researchers) within four to eight weeks after the selection process of teams is finished.

Opening date: October 2023

Deadline model: single-stage, four cut-off dates

Deadline for submitting a Challenge: Companies issue Challenges continuously from the call opening date up to one of four cut-off dates:

- 15.12.2023, 23:59 CET
- 15.04.2024, 23:59 CET
- 15.11.2024, 23:59 CET
- 15.03.2025, 23:59 CET

Eligibility

Country: Companies established in the EU as well as companies established in associated countries will be eligible to issue Challenges: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands,



Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Morocco, UK. Companies with headquarters outside of listed countries but with branch offices and subsidiaries established in countries listed above, are also eligible.

Company type: entities considered as companies according to the Wikipedia source (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_legal_entity_types_by_country) are eligible to submit Challenges. There are no restrictions on the sector, or size of a company to issue a Challenge (startups and large enterprises may apply as well as SMEs).

Language: English is the official language of all INDUSAC documents using the Latin alphabet.

Application and implementation process

Step 1 - Registration on the INDUSAC Platform

The registration process (Appendix 1) allows a company to create a profile and publish a Challenge on the INDUSAC platform. During the registration, the company is invited to provide certain information about the company, and verify that a company accepts the terms and conditions of this Call.

Step 2 - Issuing a Challenge on the INDUSAC Platform

On the INDUSAC platform, the company selects from nine different Challenge templates (Appendix 2): (1) Customer needs (and product properties) of tomorrow, (2) Finding white spots in the product portfolio, (3) Marketing campaign of the future, (4) Feel the future platform - developing a digital platform based on a market analysis, (5) Service and product ideas of the future (Basis Persona), (6) Service and product ideas of the future (Basis Scenarios), (7) Business plan - reduce your risk and optimise your planning, (8) Innovative product ideas that solve the customer pain, and (9) Business model: Adding a service to my product - Building a PSS (product service system). The Challenge templates - among other information - ask for the following:

- title of the Challenge,
- description of the problem with additional explanations of key terms,
- expectations - what does the company expect in terms of solution, impact and type of collaboration with the co-creation team,



- desired co-creation team profile - which skills are desired in solving the Challenge,
- the maximum number of co-creation teams that the company can work with.

Challenges, together with the company's name, country and website will be publicly available and have to include only non-confidential information.

Once Challenges are published, students and researchers can apply, until the corresponding cut-off dates for submitting Motivation Letters (see Call for Students and Researchers), to solve them. Companies will be eligible for receiving possible solutions to their Challenges within 4-8 weeks after they approve the submitted Motivation Letters.

Step 3 - Selection of co-creation teams

Within this step the company selects the most suitable co-creation teams through selection of their Motivation Letter (Appendix 3). Motivation Letters will be evaluated based on Team's motivation, Excellence score, Impact score, Team and resources, and Transversal criteria.

Evaluation criteria for evaluating the Motivation Letters (from co-creation teams; see also Appendix 4):

(1). TEAM'S MOTIVATION (5%)

- Personal motivation: reflection of a team's enthusiasm for taking on the challenge.
- Did the team introduce the team members? (yes/no)
- Do their strengths and abilities adequately explain the reason why they are suitable? (yes/ no)
- Will they be able to work together as a team? Do they already have team cohesion?

(2). EXCELLENCE (30%):

- Soundness of the approach and credibility of the proposed methodology, according to the expectations of companies.
- Are the efficiency and quality of work related to the challenge well explained?

(3). IMPACT (30%):

- Do you believe the co-creation team will find a solution that can be successful on the market?
- To what level will the potential solution be innovative in regards to the existing solutions on the market (incremental improvement, radical improvement, breakthrough innovation, ...)? Focus on the creativity of how the team predicted their future success and not on a potential solution they might have proposed.
- Has a co-creation team already found out about the companies' competition and how they will try to get to a differentiated solution?
- How important will the project be for the company and how well did the team foresee the impact?

(4). TEAM AND RESOURCES (30%):

- Transversal, entrepreneurial and leadership skills, technical expertise, co-creation teams' ability to take a concept from ideas to market, and their capacity to carry through their ideas and understand the dynamics of the market they are trying to tap into.
- Does the team have specific resources that qualify them as a team specifically to find an excellent solution?
- Is the foreseen time consumption (hours/team member) for the co-creation project sensibly aligned with the project structure, and fitting within the four to eight weeks time frame?

(5). TRANSVERSAL CRITERIA (5%):

- Does a co-creation team have ideas how to include 'Environment and low carbon economy contribution', 'Equal Opportunities, Gender balance & Diversity', 'Inclusiveness' or 'Social Impact' within their way to a solution for the challenge?

Evaluation criteria	Weighting	Max scoring in points	Max scoring with weighting
Motivation	5 %	5	0,25
Excellence	30 %	5	1,5
Impact	30 %	5	1,5
Team and resources	30 %	5	1,5
Transversal criteria	5 %	5	0,25



Motivation Letters that receive a score 0 in one or more criteria (1 Excellence, 2 Impact, 3 Team and Resources, 4 Transversal criteria) will be automatically rejected. Accepted Motivation Letters need to receive all together at least 50% of available scores. A ranking list will be prepared. INDUSAC will provide companies with pre-defined justifications for rejecting Motivation Letters.

If the company, for any reason (including non-responsiveness or inability to support co-creation projects), does not provide a decision on a submitted Motivation Letter within three weeks after the cut-off date for submitting Motivation Letters, the Motivation Letter is nullified (and it therefore does not count into the quota of maximum of three Motivation Letters per student) and the Challenge manager from the INDUSAC consortium informs the co-creation team that each team member has the option to participate in another Motivation Letter for a different Challenge. Challenges of companies that did not review submitted Motivation Letters on time are closed for further applications.

Step 4 - Implementation of co-creation projects

INDUSAC will provide the co-creation teams with a list of deliverables, methods and tools for the Challenge. In addition, the co-creation teams will be provided with a planned timeline / mentoring plan (to-do list) to complete the Challenge. These instructions will be customised for each Challenge type.

Throughout the process, the company should have a kick-off meeting, at least one (highly recommended between one and three) milestone meeting and a final meeting with each co-creation team. In addition to the meetings, the company will be available, within reasonable limits, to answer students / researchers' questions (through agreed-upon channels, eg. phone, email, Zoom, the INDUSAC platform chat, etc.) regarding their tasks, and to supply further information needed to solve the task. If the students have multiple ideas, the company will assist in steering the co-creation team in the most promising direction; the company will also give insight into ideas that have already been tried in the past and failed. The company's availability for additional assistance (beyond the milestone meetings) is not mandatory but it is recommended as it is in the interest of obtaining an optimal solution.



Monitoring of the Co-creation Projects by INDUSAC

Throughout the process, the company and the co-creation teams may be approached by the INDUSAC Mentoring Committee to discuss if they are progressing as planned and if they need any additional guidance.

On a more general level, a Monitoring Committee will be monitoring performance of the co-creation projects on the INDUSAC platform and bring to the attention of the INDUSAC consortium any major irregularities or digressions from the work plan, so as to find rapid solutions.

Step 5 - Reporting

The company provides feedback on the INDUSAC process (Appendix 6) that will include:

- Deliverable quality assessment of the Solution submitted by the co-creation team

The company evaluates the deliverable quality of the submitted Solution (30% of the overall score), Business performance indicators and Technical performance indicators (60% of the overall score), Deadline Compliance (10% of the overall score, which is given automatically if the Solution is submitted on time) of the submitted Solution. The deliverable quality assessment (Evaluation of Solutions) will be submitted via the platform.

- Questionnaire “after” (Appendix 7)
 - Questionnaire
 - Testimonial

The questionnaire “after” will be provided by a third party provider (<https://1ka.arnes.si>) and questionnaire data will be collected and analyzed by INDUSAC partners outside of the platform.

Timeline

For receiving Motivation Letters in February 2024 and Solutions in May 2024, companies need to submit Challenges by 15.12.2023, 23:59 CET (first cut-off date) so as to have them published by 31.12.2023.



For receiving Motivation Letters in June 2024 and Solutions in September 2024, companies need to submit Challenges by 15.04.2024, 23:59 CET (second cut-off date) so as to have them published by 30.04.2024.

For receiving Motivation Letters in November 2024 and Solutions in February 2024, companies need to submit Challenges by 15.11.2024, 23:59 CET (third cut-off date) so as to have them published by 30.11.2024.

For receiving Motivation Letters in January 2025 or later, and Solutions in April 2025 or later (but not later than July 2025), companies need to submit Challenges by 15.03.2025, 23:59 CET (third cut-off date) so as to have them published by 30.03.2025.

Terms and Conditions for companies

Number of Challenges issued

A company may issue more than one Challenge.

Compliance with European Council Implementing Decision (on Hungarian entities)

The company confirms that it is not in conflict with the European Council Implementing Decision 2022/2506 in regards to funding Hungarian entities, which stipulates that legal commitments must not be entered into with any public interest trusts established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity maintained by such a public interest trust. This applies as of 16.12.2022 for as long as the measures are in place. The company confirms that it is not associated with any of the affected entities listed on the Hungarian national legislation website (<https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/2021-9-00-00>).

Confidentiality

The company confirms that the text, data and other content of the Challenges is non-confidential.

For cases where companies wish to share with the selected co-creation teams its confidential information, they are advised to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement with the co-creation team before the start of the co-creation project.



INDUSAC partners who have access to the co-creation projects and co-creation results, have signed the Statement on Non-Disclosure of Information and Impartiality (Appendix 8) and all non-public and personal data will be treated in confidence.

Intellectual Property

The company confirms that the material shared by the company representatives is owned by the company they represent and / or they have acquired the rights for their usage.

Should the cooperation between students/researchers and the company give rise to any form of intellectual property (for example, a patent application), division of ownership of intellectual property rights (based on individual parties' contributions), the type of intellectual property, and management of said intellectual property, shall be defined in a separate agreement on joint inventions. The parties (company, co-creation team) agree to the following provisions:

- On the basis of the undisputed fact that an invention presents a result of joint collaboration of student/researcher and the company and that student/researcher and the company were involved in the process of creation and development of the invention, the invention shall be considered as a joint invention of student/researcher and the company.
- Any intellectual property developed prior to the solving of a Challenge belongs to the party that developed it.
- Procedures such as registration and maintenance of the intellectual property shall be coordinated by the company.
- Students must follow the guidelines set by the company in regards to intellectual property disclosure and ownership; they may sign a statement waiving their economic intellectual property rights, by which they are exempt from any financial obligations towards protection of said intellectual property rights (such as, for example, preparation, registration / filing, processing, expansion, and maintenance fees); they may opt to retain authorship rights only, in which case they remain co-authors on the invention but receive no material benefits.



- Researchers must follow appropriate invention disclosure legislation, which may include disclosing the invention to their employer and subsequently transferring intellectual property rights to the employer.
- Regardless of status and intellectual property rights transfers, student/researcher retains the right to be listed as co-author on the invention.

The parties (company, student, researcher) agree that each party, individually or together with the remaining party, may use the invention for the purpose of its own research, without restrictions and without any obligation to remunerate the other party in any form or manner. The parties agree that the results of the co-creation project, except the INDUSAC requirements, will not be published, commercialised or otherwise allowed to be used by third parties without written agreement by all parties.

Long-term relevance of Challenges

For all issued Challenges, the companies acknowledge that Motivation Letters will be evaluated at nine cut-off dates and that their Challenge, regardless of how soon it was issued, must still be relevant for the first upcoming cut-off date.

Ethics

The action must be carried out in line with:

- the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity).
- applicable EU, international and national law, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols.

Based on the Horizon Europe Ethic Self-Assessment guidance (https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/how-to-complete-your-ethics-self-assessment_en.pdf) the company must ensure that the activities under the action do not include the following:

- human embryonic stem cells
- human embryos
- human fetal tissues/cells



- cause harm to the environment, animals, or plants
- military applications
- malevolent / criminal / terrorist abuse

The company may decide to reject a proposed Motivation Letter. The company assures that any rejections of Motivation Letters will be based solely on the quality of the Motivation Letters (following the INDUSAC evaluation criteria) and not be affected by the co-creation teams' gender or citizenship/residency.

If a co-creation team has provided draft Solutions or Solution proposals in applying to a Challenge, but ends up rejected, the company commits to discarding the rejected proposal without any further use of the solutions proposed therein.

Values

All parties must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).

Conflict of interests

The company must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the co-creation project could be compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest ('conflict of interests').

The company confirms that it is not giving preferential treatment in regards to Motivation Letters / Solutions based on the applicant's professional or personal connections with the company and that approval is based solely on the quality of the Motivation Letters / Solutions.

Disputes and exits

The parties (companies, students and researchers) agree that they will conclude in writing any amendments to any existing arrangements, and will endeavour to resolve any disputes regarding this arrangement in a peaceful manner. In the event that the



parties cannot resolve the dispute individually, the INDUSAC coordinator shall mediate over the dispute.

In the co-creation process exit points of companies, students and researchers are foreseen only in case of Force Majeure.

Keeping records and supporting documents

The company acknowledges that it can substantiate the proper implementation of the action by records and other supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations.

The company can provide written proof, if required from INDUSAC partners, European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HADEA), European Commission, European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), Court of Auditors (ECA) or other competent EU institutions.

Communication, Dissemination And Visibility

Visibility — European flag and funding statement

Unless otherwise agreed with the INDUSAC, communication activities of the parties (company, students, researcher) related to the action (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities or major results implemented under the INDUSAC must acknowledge INDUSAC and EU support and display the INDUSAC logo, European flag (emblem) and include the following text:

“This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon Europe Programme under grant agreement No 101070297”.

When displayed together with another logo, the EU emblem must have appropriate prominence. Graphic guide to use EU logo is available here: <http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000100.htm>

Any dissemination of results must indicate that it reflects only the author's view and that the Agency (European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HADEA)) is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains:

“The content of this [insert appropriate description, e.g. report, publication, conference, infrastructure, equipment, insert type of result, etc.] represents the author’s view only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission and



the Agency (European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HADEA)) do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.”.

Supporting documentation:

Appendix 1 - Registration Form for Companies

Appendix 2 - Challenge Types

Appendix 3 - Motivation Letter Template

Appendix 4 - Template for Evaluation of Motivation Letters

Appendix 5 - Template for Co-Creation Implementation Report

Appendix 6 - Template for Evaluation of Solutions

Appendix 7 - Questionnaire for Companies after completion of the Co-creation Project

Appendix 8 - Statement on Non-disclosure of Information and Impartiality for INDUSAC Partners

