

## Q&A from Business Finland's webinar "Renewal of funding services for research organizations" / "Tutkimusrahoitusuudistuksen info", 11.1.2023

### **In Co-Research project: How do you evaluate the "high economic and business potential"?**

The applicant is supposed to describe the expected economical impact qualitatively/quantitatively. I.e. what is the business potential, why and in which business the new knowledge and competences are expected to be utilized. The funding companies may provide info, background and credibility for the estimates. Please, do not forget that BF would also like to see your broader dissemination plans for the results.

### **How would you describe the relevance to industry and business - how clear the path to export or active business has to be? Is competitiveness, like taking into account "luontokato", which will need research in research organization and in company, but relevance is non direct and possibly not build completely NEW business?**

Business Finland's goal is to enable creation of new knowledge and competences which would be utilized by Finnish industry in R&D to increase its international competitiveness. If that path is present (Co-Innovation) or credible (Co-Research) and the business potential is high, you should have a strong case.

### **In Co-Innovation projects, are any of the costs of international research partners funded? For example, travel costs, meetings, or even a short-term salary?**

Business Finland can only fund Finnish organizations and accept only the costs that belong to that organization.

### **Are there "early indicators" on the topics concerning the becoming calls for Co-Research?**

**The Co-Research will be topic driven - when shall the topics published into which areas/business fields projects can be assembled?**

### **Is the info on BF programs in preparation public and somewhere available?**

There is a plan to open 1-3 calls for Co-Research this year. Topics are based on ongoing Business Finland's missions and Business Finland's programs. The schedule of the calls will be published Q1/2023.

### **Has Business Finland set a limitation for the maximum duration of projects?**

No. Typical duration of Co-Research and Co-Innovation projects is 2-3 years, Research to Business 1-2 years and Co-creation less than 6 months.

### **What would you say is the relationship between Research to Business and Co-Research, if any?**

There is no direct relationship. Research to Business assumes that the research has already been completed and there are research results that need now only to be trimmed or tuned to increase their commercialization possibilities. It does not matter what is the prior research path. Co-Research assumes that relevant and competent industries exist and is ready get involved although not yet by its own R&D activity.

### **I was wondering if the increased funding for Research to Business services would apply to projects applying in March 2023?**

The limits for the Research to Business projects are in effect for projects applying this spring. Please note that 700k/800k is the total max cost for the project, so Business Finland will fund 70% of that. Quite often this max cost would be regarded as too large project for the case. Max cost should not be regarded as typical size nor proper size of the project.

**How many companies are expected in Co-Research project? And research units as well?**

Minimum is one research organization and three companies. When planning the project proposal, it is better to aim to larger number of committed companies and to more funding than 10%.

**Can European companies participate to Co-Innovation projects by giving financial or in-kind support? Is this something that would count as a form of intense international co-operation?**

Foreign companies are welcome to participate and to contribute to the funding of the public research project. Mere funding is not intense international co-operation, but true joint R&D action would be intense international co-operation. The best Co-Innovation proposals are international and clearly industry driven joint activities. Taking note of the innovation systems need to boost private R&D investments the Co-Innovation activities should have the companies' activities in larger role than the public research.

**Are the changes based on some collected feedback from customers?**

We have listened carefully our customers. For example, we share the views of The Rectors' Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences, Arene, and the Rectors' Council of Finnish Universities, UNIFI, on the need for RDI cooperation between universities and companies and for increasing its effectiveness. We have had also discussions with leading companies.

**Will Co-Research have its own application form, so that multiple research organizations can apply for that? (Currently, EVET only allows one partner, otherwise its Co-Innovation)**

Co-Research has its own application form. EVET form does not exist anymore. Joint Co-Research projects would each use Co-Research form with same project name in every application. Business Finland would then bind them together once the applications have been submitted. Only Co-Innovation has a specific application form for joint activities.

**What is the biggest difference of Co-Research when comparing to EVET funding or is there any?**

Basically, they are the same. The requirement of companies' commitment is stronger and in practice indicated by funding.

**You mention the industrial relevance: 1) companies in steering group, 2) companies directly funding the research project (10%), 3) company's own parallel R&D activity. 3) means in-kind?**

In addition to or instead of funding the companies can provide an in-kind contribution to the research project. This contribution must be something that the research organization would otherwise need to buy. It might be equipment, materials, access rights or data. Companies must remember that the ownership of the in-kind contribution is transferred to the research organization. Work is no more in the list of in-kind contributions as it created several problematic situations. In many cases this can be replaced by data i.e. the result of the work.

**Could we talk in dividually about the project idea with Business Finland officers?**

Definitely. But before applying for funding, discuss the planned project and application with the research support services of your own organization. If discussions with your organization's research support services lead to further preparation of the idea, the research support services will direct your idea to Business Finland, which will appoint a contact person for your project.

**Mitä tarkoittaa "laadukas tulosten levittämissuunnitelma"?**

Business Finland haluaa tutkimustulosten olevan laajasti käytettävissä yritysten hyödyksi. Siksi erityisesti Co-Research-rahoituksessa on hyvä, jos potentiaalisten hyödyntäjäyritysten osallistujajoukko on laaja, mutta tutkimustulosten olisi syytä tavoittaa myös tämän joukon ulkopuolelle jäävät. Tähän tarvitsemme tulosten levittämistä. Siksi pyydämme suunnitelman niistä toimenpiteistä, mitä levittämiseen liittyy.

Suunnitelman laadukkuudella on merkitystä, jotta voimme arvioida, kuinka laajasti tuloksia tullaan ylipäättään julkistamaan ja missä muodossa, sekä miten hyvin tieto saavuttaa yritystoimijat eli tulee elinkeinoelämän käyttöön. Business Finland voi hyväksyä projektin kustannuksiin vain projektin aikana rahoituksen saajan kirjanpitoon syntyneitä projektin tulosten levittämiseen välittömästi liittyviä kohtuullisia kustannuksia. Tutkijoiden koulutukseen tai opinnäytteisiin liittyvät kustannukset eivät ole Business Finlandille hyväksyttäviä kustannuksia.

**Co-Research-hankeesta on todettu, että siihen pitää osallistua vähintään kaksi tutkimusorganisaatiota. Tarkoittaako tämä sitä, että tutkimusorganisaatio ei voi yksin yritysten kanssa muodostaa Co-Research-hanketta?**

Co-Research-projektin voi muodostaa yksi tutkimusorganisaatio, Co-Research-hankkeen vähintään kaksi. Käyttämässämme määritelmässä sana ”hanke” kuvaa laajempaa joukkoa, joskus myös sisältäen yritysosallistajat. Se, mitä on yleisesti todettu hankeesta, yleensä koskee myös yksittäistä Co-Research-projektiakin ja toisinpäin. Eli: Co-Researchiin riittää yksi tutkimusorganisaatio + yritykset. Yleisesti toivomme, että tutkimusongelmaa lähestytään monitieteellisesti, jos se on sen luonteelle ja ratkaisulle eduksi. Monitieteisyys voi tuki löytyä saman tutkimusorganisaation eri tiedekunnista / jaoksista tms.