



PARTNERSHIP MODEL FUNDING CALL

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Update 11.11.2021: Commission exclusion list added (Chapter 2, page 2). RRF application identifiers (chapters 4.1 and 4.2)

Update 4.4.2022: New Leading Companies and contact persons added

Update 11.11.2022: Call dates 2023 added and EU Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) descriptions and references removed (incl. DNSH instructions)

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Innovation Funding Agency Business Finland

1. Background information

Business Finland launched the first challenge competition for leading companies at the beginning of 2020. Six projects from seven companies were selected as the winners. These projects aim to provide solutions for significant future challenges. The leading companies are ABB, Fortum and Metsä Group, Kone, Neste, Nokia and Sandvik.

In June 2021, Business Finland launched a new challenge competition for leading companies. The selected leading companies are Borealis Polymers, Meyer Turku, Nokia, TietoEvry, Valmet, Wärtsilä.

The companies are committed to increasing their RDI investments in Finland and building cooperation with SMEs and research organizations.

Further information:

<https://www.businessfinland.fi/en/for-finnish-customers/services/funding/funding-for-leading-companies-and-ecosystems>

2. Leading companies' partnership projects

2.1. Funding principles and the role of the leading company

The leading companies are required to have measurable and significant cooperation with research organizations and/or SMEs. The leading companies should support and encourage research organizations and/or SMEs to participate in resolving the mission through their own projects.

The leading company will prepare a roadmap for collaboration and update the roadmap based on identified needs. Partnership projects must follow the roadmap prepared by the leading company and support the implementation of the leading company's mission. Based on the leading company's roadmap, Business Finland is prepared to provide funding to the other members in the leading company's ecosystem on the basis of separate applications. A maximum of EUR 50 million in funding can be provided over five years. Business Finland provides funding to individual organizations or joint projects in accordance with its normal funding criteria (grants for companies 40–50%, loans for companies 50%, research funding 70%): <https://www.businessfinland.fi/en/for-finnish-customers/services/funding>.

Organizations applying for partnership model funding must contact the leading company's and Business Finland's contact persons before submitting the application. The leading company's role is to provide Business Finland with their views on the project in relation to the roadmap and its significance in resolving the mission.

The leading company must actively participate in sparring and the preparation of the partnership project. In this way, the leading company can give its views on the project from the roadmap's perspective and define their commitment to the cooperation.

Acceptance criteria for the partnership model:

- How well does the applicant consortium's proposal address the competence and technology gaps identified in the roadmap?
- How committed is the consortium to the objectives defined in the subject area's ecosystem roadmap and to building cooperation?
- How relevant is the role of the consortium in the development and renewal of the subject area's ecosystem?
- The leading company's commitment to cooperation

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Business Finland can provide funding for a project that meets Business Finland's funding criteria even if the project is not accepted as a partnership project in the leading company's ecosystem. If the project is closely linked to the roadmap but does not meet Business Finland's funding criteria, Business Finland can also decide not to fund the project.

Further information on partnership model funding:

<https://www.businessfinland.fi/en/whats-new/calls/2021/partnership-model-funding-call-for-companies-and-research-organizations>

2.2. Business Finland's partnership model funding for research organizations

In accordance with the leading company's roadmap, research organizations can apply for funding for the following:

- Co-Innovation projects involving several companies or research organizations:
 - Minimum: Three companies and one research institute. One of the companies can be a leading company. In principle, leading companies participate in Co-Innovation projects with some part of their own project. The leading company has already received funding for the subject area, and therefore funding it again is not possible.
- An individual research project or a research project involving several research institutes:
 - The project must focus on a topic related to the themes of the leading company's roadmap. The project must be based on an identified, research-based need for new knowledge and competence.
 - Several companies must be involved in steering the research.
 - Business Finland does not require companies to fund the research, but it is an excellent way to measure commitment.

Research organizations applying for the partnership model must contact the leading company's and Business Finland's contact persons before submitting the application. In Co-Innovation projects, the coordinator is primarily responsible for liaising with the above.

2.3. Business Finland's partnership model funding for companies

In accordance with the leading company's roadmap, companies can apply for funding for the following:

- their own individual RDI project or
- Co-Innovation projects involving several companies or
- Co-Innovation projects involving companies and research organization

The nature of the cooperation and implementation method of the project must be described in the application. The project is often a joint project with the leading company, but not always.

When applying for funding for an individual RDI project, the company must contact the leading company's and Business Finland's contact persons before submitting the application. In Co-Innovation projects, the coordinator is primarily responsible for liaising with the above.

Business Finland will provide funding for corporate parties based on its normal funding criteria. The size of the company, as well as how challenging the project is, affect the level of funding and whether the funding is a grant or a loan.

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3. Applying

3.1. Funding applications by companies

Basic applicant and application information is normally completed in Business Finland's electronic application system.

- In the case of an individual company's application, companies should select "Research, development, and piloting".
- Company as a part of a Co-Innovation project: If you are a participant in a joint project, please select "Co-Innovation participant" (the coordinator of the joint project will choose "Co-Innovation main application" and completes the "Co-Innovation participant" application).
- The project name must be given in the following format: "Kumppanuusmalli – [*project name*]."
- On the final page of the application ("Confirmation and submission") in the field for an open cover note, please mention which leading company's roadmap the project relates to and with whom (the leading company, Business Finland) you have discussed the project.

3.2. Funding applications by research organizations

Basic applicant and application information is normally completed in Business Finland's online service.

- Research organizations participating alone, should select "Research networked with economic life" as their project type.
- Co-Innovation joint action:
 - If you are a participant in the joint project, please select "Co-Innovation participant".
 - If you are a coordinator of the joint project, please select "Co-Innovation main application". If you also intend to apply for funding for your own project, you must also complete the "Co-Innovation participant" application in addition to the main application. The main application is not an application for funding but a summary of the component projects.
- The research parties must attach a "NOTIFICATION OF PARTICIPATION IN A PROJECT" form, completed by the leading company, to their application. In this notification, the leading company gives their view on the significance of the research project. The applicants are required to be able to discuss the project and how it relates to the roadmap with the leading company.
- The project name must be given in the following format: "Kumppanuusmalli – [*project name*]."
- On the final page of the application ("Confirmation and submission") in the field for an open cover note, please mention the leading company your project relates to and with whom (the leading company, Business Finland) you have discussed the project.

4. Schedule and info session

Cut-off dates 2023 (all project types)

- **13.1.2023, 13.4.2023 ja 13.9.2023**

Recorded webinar on partnership call **3.9.2021** (watch it on Business Finland's leading company website:

<https://www.businessfinland.fi/en/whats-new/calls/2021/partnership-model-funding-call-for-companies-and-research-organizations>