



Call 2

Open Call for Local Nodes Guide for Applicants

24.01.2023

Programme : Horizon Europe Framework Programme

Call : Cooperation with EEN

(SoE, Applicants in widening countries and from women-led companies)

(HORIZON-EIC-2021-EEN-01)

Type of Action : CSA

Project : Support to EIC Accelerator by the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN2EIC)

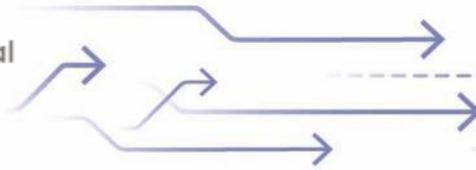
Grant Agreement No. : 101075818

www.een2eic.eu

@EEN2EIC

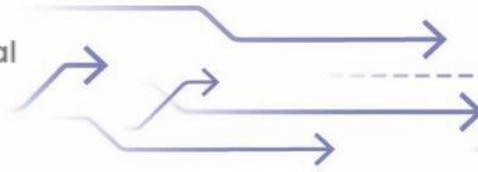


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INDEX OF CONTENTS

1. ABOUT THE PROJECT	4
1.1. ABOUT THIS CALL	4
2. OPEN CALL FOR LOCAL NODES	5
2.1. SCOPE OF THE CALL AND LOCAL NODE DEFINITION	5
2.2. ROLE OF THE LOCAL NODE	5
2.3. WHO CAN PARTICIPATE	5
2.3.1. ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS	6
2.4. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES	6
2.4.1. SMEs ELIGIBLE FOR LOCAL NODES SUPPORT	7
2.5. VOUCHER SCHEME FOR LOCAL NODES	7
2.5.1. GROUP A VOUCHER – SUPPORT FOR PHASE 1 EIC APPLICATION	7
2.5.2. GROUP B VOUCHER – SUPPORT TO FUNDED APPLICATIONS AND SoE LAUREATE	8
2.5.2.1. APPLY DIRECTLY FOR GROUP B VOUCHER	8
3. APPLICATION PROCESS AND VOUCHER PAYMENT	8
3.1. LOCAL NODES APPLICATION PROCESS – GROUP A VOUCHER	9
3.2. LOCAL NODES APPLICATION PROCESS –GROUP B VOUCHERS	9
3.3. VOUCHER PAYMENT	10
3.4. APPLICATION DOCUMENT	10
3.5. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR APPLICANTS	10
3.6. EXCLUSION CONDITIONS AND LOSS OF ELIGIBILITY	10
4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND IPR	11
4.1. IPR	11
4.2. CONFIDENTIALITY	11



4.3. PRIVACY

12

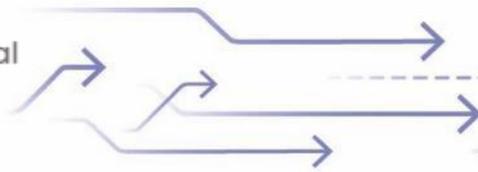
ANNEX I – LIST OF ELIGIBLE WIDENING COUNTRIES AND ASSOCIATED COUNTRIES

13

ANNEX II – DEFINITION OF WOMEN-LED ENTERPRISES

14

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1. ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project aims to establish a stronger cooperation mechanism between the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) and the European Innovation Council (EIC), supporting innovation and business scaling-up through financial support. The objective is to empower EEN network offices to support potential EIC applicants with the overall goal of increasing the number of high-quality proposals to the EIC.

A special focus will be put on the promotion of female innovators and on Widening and Associated Countries that have submitted only a few applications. Furthermore, the support of Seal of Excellence holders in accessing alternative sources of funding and ensuring a strong and profitable exchange of best practices within the EEN will be strengthened. EEN2EIC will make EU innovation support more efficient by improving the capacity of SMEs and avoiding overlapping with NCP activities.

EEN2EIC project is funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe programme under grant agreement No. 101075818.

1.1. ABOUT THIS CALL

The present Call aims at providing support Vouchers to EEN Local Nodes to support submission of proposal under the EIC Accelerator programme from the project's target groups, namely SMEs established in Widening and Associated Countries and Women-Led SMEs established in all countries eligible under EIC programme.

The call for Local Nodes is published on [EEN2EIC Website](#) and on the [Funding & Tender Portal](#) of the European Commission, and it is disseminated using EEN Intranet and Social Media channels. Always refer to the EEN2EIC website to make sure that you are referring to the latest version of the document.

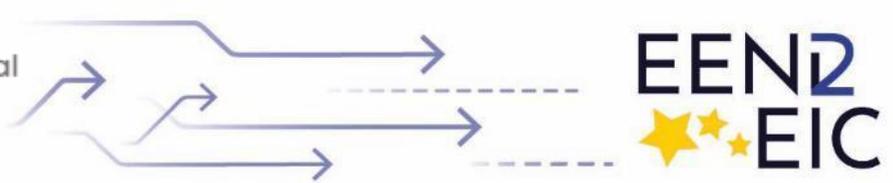
This Call will be open for two years, starting from 24.01.2023 until 31.03.2025 (17:00 Brussels Time). Applications received after this time frame are not going to be further considered for this Call.

The total budget available for FSTP in EEN2EIC is € 5.135.646,40. All the Vouchers will be paid up to the full capacity of this budget.

2. OPEN CALL FOR LOCAL NODES

2.1. SCOPE OF THE CALL AND LOCAL NODE DEFINITION

The present Call aims at providing support Vouchers to EEN Local Nodes to support submission of proposal under the EIC Accelerator programme from the project's target groups, namely SMEs established in Widening and Associated Countries and Women-Led SMEs established in all Countries eligible under EIC programme.



The Local Node is defined as every partner organization of an established EEN Consortium at the time of submitting a request for voucher under the present Open Call. A detailed list of eligibility conditions for Local Nodes is provided in Section 2.3.1

2.2. ROLE OF THE LOCAL NODE

The Local Node is responsible for providing direct support for EIC Accelerator applications to SMEs falling under the EEN2EIC priorities. The Local Nodes shall be in the position to provide qualified support to eligible SMEs and to contribute to toward the increasing of quality proposals, particularly number of funded projects led by women innovators and from widening countries, for the EIC Accelerator. Furthermore, the Local Node should contribute in their function to support the innovation and scale up of companies in their networks, by identifying and selecting potential applicants in cooperation with the respective Consortium Innovation Leader (CIL). Each Local Node is therefore key to execute on the EEN2EIC proposition of providing qualified support to excellent SMEs established in Widening and Associated Countries and Women-Led SMEs throughout Europe.

The Local Node should leverage on the expertise of its advisor(s) to help to identify the ideal EIC candidate and provided customized support toward successful EIC Applications, also in terms of Technology and Innovation assessment, Commercialization strategy, Partnerships, Risk assessment, and Market projections etc. The EEN2EIC consortium will complement on such existing expertise by providing guidance and support services for successful project development under the EIC Accelerator.

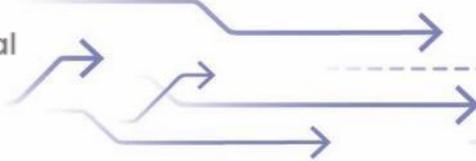
2.3. WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

This Call exclusively addresses Local Nodes of the EEN and partners of an established EEN Consortium at the time of the present application. Further eligibility conditions can be found in section 2.3.1 below.

2.3.1. ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS

The EEN2EIC Voucher for Local Nodes is available to all the EEN member organizations that fulfill the following criteria:

- The applicant organization is full member of existing Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Consortium at the time of application;
- The applicant organization in the position to support the target SMEs with qualified and trained personnel, operating within the framework of the present support programme;
- The applicant organization fulfills all the operation, financial and legal capacity requirements as indicated in the Declaration of Honor agreed upon presenting each proposal;



- A proven track-record of direct support to SMEs, preferably under the European Innovation Council framework;
- Ensure appropriate track record for the identification and mapping of innovative SME in your country that meet the priorities of EEN2EIC

2.4. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The Local Node is responsible to provide direct support to selected and eligible SMEs under the EEN2EIC support scheme. The Local Node role is therefore key for a successful implementation of the Project, as well as to ensure a satisfactory participation and involvement of EEN in the support of excellent applicants for European Innovation Council funding framework. The Local Node can provide support to SMEs located in the area of coverage of its EEN Consortium as well as outside it, provided that all the conditions listed in Section 2.4.1 are fulfilled.

The following activities are eligible under the present Call for Local Nodes:

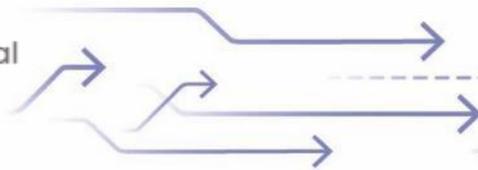
1. Provide following supporting services to the eligible companies, namely
 - a. Direct, 1-to-1 advice and support to develop and submit **EIC Accelerator proposal (short proposal)**, also leveraging on the service package prepared by EEN2EIC and available on the project's website.
 - i. Support to this short proposal will grant the Local Node the access to € 1.300 Group A Voucher as defined in Section 2.5.1
 - b. Direct, 1-to-1 advice and support to develop and submit **EIC Accelerator proposal (full proposal)** which are awarded with funding or granted with the Seal of Excellence
 - i. Support to this full proposal will grant the Local Node the access to € 2.400 Group B Voucher as defined in Section 2.5.2

2.4.1. SMEs ELIGIBLE FOR LOCAL NODES SUPPORT

In order to qualify for the Local Node Voucher Scheme (both Group A and Group B), each Local Node can provide support for EEN Accelerator for innovative SME that falls under the priorities of EEN2EIC project, namely:

- **Widening and Associated Countries Companies:** SMEs registered in one of the Widening or Associated Countries as defined in the Annex 1 List of eligible Widening Countries and Associated Countries (so-called Widening and Associated Countries SMEs)
- **Women-Led Companies:** SME registered in one of the EIC Eligible Countries¹ falling under the definition of Women-Led company, as defined in Annex 2 – Definition of Women-led enterprises

Only support services to SMEs belonging to one or both of the categories above are eligible under the present support scheme.



The activities above shall be duly registered in the EEN2EIC IT Tool using the online forms. Such activities should be also communicated to the respective Consortium Innovation Leader to help maximize the EEN2EIC impact and visibility.

2.5. VOUCHER SCHEME FOR LOCAL NODES

The EEN2EIC project will support Local Nodes in providing dedicated guidance and support to eligible SMEs also through a dedicated Voucher Scheme aimed at partly covering the services of the Local Nodes. The EEN2EIC Voucher for Local Nodes consists of up to € 3,700,00 for each SME Supported.

The Voucher consists of two parts:

- EEN2EIC Voucher for Local Nodes – Group A (Section 2.5.1)
- EEN2EIC Voucher for Local Nodes – Group B (Section 2.5.2)

2.5.1. GROUP A VOUCHER – SUPPORT FOR PHASE 1 EIC APPLICATION

The Group A Voucher consists of €1.300,00 (Euro one thousand three hundred) payment to eligible Local Nodes that supports eligible SMEs in applying for EIC Accelerator (Short Proposal or Full proposal **only in case of Fast track and Pilot Plug-in schemes²**). The Voucher will be granted to the eligible Local Nodes provided that the following conditions are met:

- The Request for Voucher is submitted by the Local Node using the EEN2EIC IT Tool as defined in Section 3
- The supported application for EIC Accelerator Short Proposal is correctly submitted by the supported SME using the EIC Platform

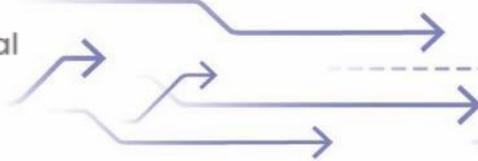
Both successful (applications supported by EEN Local Nodes invited to prepare a full proposal) and non-successful EIC applications (e.g. applications supported by EEN Local Nodes receiving more than two NO GO in the Short Proposal Evaluation process) are eligible for the Group A Voucher.

Only one Group A Voucher can be redeemed for each proposal. Resubmission of a proposal already supported in Group A is not considered eligible for additional funding under the present support scheme.

2.5.2. GROUP B VOUCHER – SUPPORT TO FUNDED APPLICATIONS AND SoE LAUREATE

The Group B Voucher consists of € 2.400,00 (Euro two thousand four hundred) payment to eligible Local Nodes that supports eligible SMEs in applying for EIC Accelerator (Full Proposal). The voucher will be granted to the eligible Local Nodes provided that the following conditions are met:

- The Request for Voucher is submitted by the Local Node using the EEN2EIC IT Tool as defined in Section 3



- The supported application for EIC Accelerator Full Proposal is either successfully evaluated and recommended for funding under EIC Accelerator or has received a Seal of Excellence

Rejected proposals and/or resubmissions of the same proposals are not considered to be eligible under the present support scheme.

2.5.2.1. APPLY DIRECTLY FOR GROUP B VOUCHER

Local Nodes have the possibility to apply directly for Group B Voucher (i.e., without having filed a linked Group A application earlier). In this case, the Local Nodes that provides support to full EIC applications that results in funding or SoE is eligible to apply for the complete budget of Group A and Group B (€ 3.700,00)

3. APPLICATION PROCESS AND VOUCHER PAYMENT

Applicants shall submit their cases using the online IT Tool available [here](#). The application can be submitted during the Project lifetime but at the latest on the 31.03.2025 (17:00 Brussels time).

Only applications submitted using the process described in the present Section will be considered eligible.

Only applications submitted by Local Nodes fulfilling the eligibility conditions as defined in [2.3.1](#) will be considered under the present support scheme.

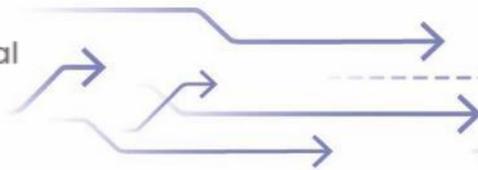
3.1. LOCAL NODES APPLICATION PROCESS – GROUP A VOUCHER

The whole Local Nodes Voucher lifecycle will be managed using the EEN2EIC IT Platform available at the following [link](#)

A detailed guide on how to use the IT Tool and how to manage the process on it is available on EEN2EIC website. Please check the [IT Tool Guide](#) for detailed support or contact the project using the following [link](#).

To apply for the Group A Voucher, Local Nodes need to register to the EEN2EIC Tool and enter basic information about the case as show below:

- Step 1 Registration or log-in to EEN2EIC IT Tool
 - The EEN partner applying for Local Node Voucher registers on the EEN2EIC Tool and provides basic information about its organization.
- Step 2 – Case Registration
 - The EEN Local Node will provide basic information about the SME that will be supported through the EEN2EIC Voucher Scheme. This basic information will help the IT Tool to determine which EEN2EIC priority support area (Widening and Associated Countries, Women-led Enterprise) the case covers



- o To ensure that the case falls under the EIC priority areas, the EEN Local Node will upload results and screenshot of EIC AI Diagnostic results for it
- Step 3 Implementation and Reporting
 - o Provided that Step 1 and Step 2 resulted into an eligible application, the Local Node, after having finalized the support action described in Section 2.4.1 2.4, can submit the request for the corresponding Group A and/or Group B Voucher.
 - o This request will be validated by EEN2EIC IT Platform, and the Local Node will be contacted by the responsible partner APRE for the finalization of the process (see Section 3.3)

3.2. LOCAL NODES APPLICATION PROCESS - GROUP B VOUCHERS

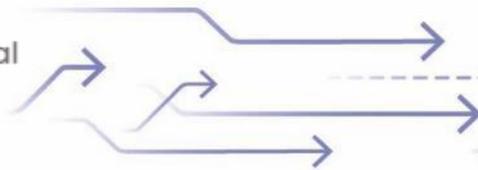
To apply for Group B Vouchers (Vouchers for the support to funded applications and SoE laureate) please follow the steps below.

- Step 1 Registration or log-in to EEN2EIC IT Tool
 - o The EEN partner applying for Local Node Voucher registers on the EEN2EIC Tool and provides basic information about its organization.
- Step 2 – Case Registration
 - o The EEN Local Node will provide basic information about the SME that will be supported through the EEN2EIC Voucher Scheme. This basic information will help the IT Tool to determine which EEN2EIC priority support area (Widening and Associated Countries, Women-led Enterprise) the case covers
 - o To ensure that the case falls under the EIC priority areas, the EEN Local Node will upload results and screenshot of EIC AI Diagnostic results for it
- Step 3 Support and Reporting
 - o Provided that Step 1 and Step 2 resulted into an eligible application, the Local Node, after having finalized the support action described in Section 2.4.1, can submit the request for the corresponding Group A and/or Group B Voucher.
 - o The request will be validated by EEN2EIC Platform, and the Local Node will be contacted by the responsible partner APRE for the finalization of the process (see Section 3.3)

3.3. VOUCHER PAYMENT

The payments of the Voucher(s) will be released following a predetermined schedule that will be communicated via the IT Tool. At this stage, three cut off dates are foreseen for 2023, three cut off dates for 2024 and two cut off dates for 2025.

The cut off dates for the voucher payment will be communicated to the participants in due course.



3.4. APPLICATION DOCUMENT

All the applications will be performed online using the EEN2EIC IT Tool. No additional documents will be required from the applicant.

3.5. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR APPLICANTS

The selection criteria for the present Call for Local Nodes are the same as the eligibility conditions as stated in Section 2.3.1.

3.6. EXCLUSION CONDITIONS AND LOSS OF ELIGIBILITY

In case the awarded applicants cannot fulfill the role of a local node anymore due to objective and documented reasons (e.g. the organization withdraws from the related EEN Consortium or one of the conditions listed in Section 2.3.1 is not met anymore) the applicant should immediately contact the EEN2EIC project coordinator.

The following steps are foreseen if a local node cannot fulfill their role anymore:

- The local node should immediately contact the EEN2EIC project coordinator that the conditions as set out in 2.3.1 have ceased to exist.
 - In case that more than one application was submitted, the EEN2EIC coordination will appoint a new local node by selecting the second highest scored proposal that was submitted to the present call.
 - If only one proposal was submitted, the EEN2EIC coordinator will organize an internal call with the relevant stakeholders to appoint a new local node.

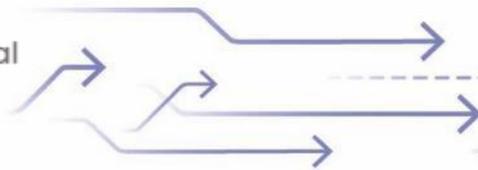
4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND IPR

EEN2EIC project is funded by the European Commission under the Horizon Europe (Grant agreement ID: 101075818) and is coordinated by APRE.

APRE is responsible for the management and the administration of the present call, including the disbursing of the vouchers as defined in Section 3.

4.1. IPR

No information about the supported applications under Group A and Group B Vouchers will be shared with the EEN2EIC consortium or its partners at any time. The EEN2EIC consortium has neither access to the EIC Application process (AI Tool) nor has access to any of the information shared by the applicant SME. The only information shared with EEN2EIC consortium are the ones necessary to process and monitor the support activities provided to the EIC applicants by the Local Nodes, as defined in Section 3.



4.2. CONFIDENTIALITY

Applicants shall be aware that the information submitted under the present Call will be used by the EEN2EIC consortium and other entities directly involved in the project. Specifically, selected applicants must be aware that the EEN2EIC will keep internal records of, among others:

- A list of applications received, identifying the name and address of applicants
- All communications with applicants before call closure
- For each application, a copy of the filled forms used in the evaluation
- A record of all incidents which occurred prior, during and after the implementation of the measure and any deviation from standard procedure
- Copy of requests for payment and attached documents

Subject to the conditions established in the implementing agreements, decisions or contracts, any data, knowledge, and information communicated as confidential in the framework of an action shall be kept confidential, taking due account of European Union law regarding the protection of and access to classified information.

The selected applicants shall comply with national legislation, regulations and ethical rules in the countries where the present action will be carried out, as well as any other requirements as defined by the participation to EEN consortia.

4.3. PRIVACY

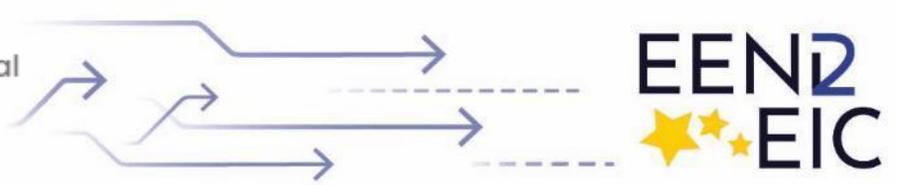
Data processing by the selected applicant

The selected applicants must process personal data in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/67 (GDPR)).

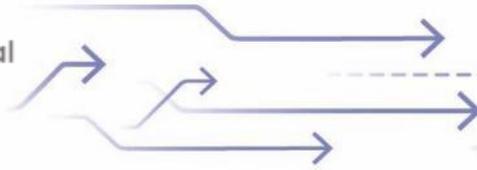
They must ensure that personal data is:

- processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subjects
- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed and - processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the data.

The selected applicant may grant their personnel access to personal data only if it is strictly necessary for implementing, managing, and monitoring the Agreement. The beneficiaries must ensure that the personnel is under a confidentiality obligation.



The applicants must inform the persons whose data are transferred to the EEN2EIC consortium and other entities directly involved in the project and provide them with the Portal Privacy Statement.



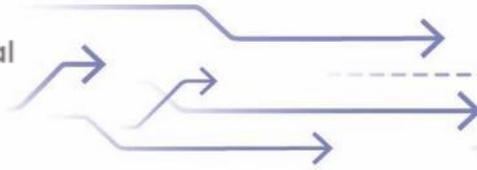
ANNEX I – List of eligible Widening Countries and Associated Countries

The following Widening countries are eligible under EEN2EIC

- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Greece
- Hungary
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia

The Associated Countries with equivalent characteristics in terms of R&I performance are:

- Albania
- Armenia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Faroe Islands
- Georgia
- Iceland
- Israel
- Kosovo
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Serbia
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Ukraine



ANNEX II – Definition of Women- led enterprises

The operational definition for Women-Led company under EEN2EIC is the following:

Women-Led company under EEN2EIC is the following:

- Companies in which at least one woman is present in CxO level or equivalent (CEO, CTO, CFO, CSO etc)