



ELIIT
Call for Expressions of Interest
Guide for Applicants



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1. Introduction

TCLF industries, comprising textiles and clothing, leather and footwear, are part of complex and interlinked value chains of fashion, high-end industries and relevant innovative technologies.

These sectors are among the most promising and most creative in Europe. According to Eurostat, the TCLF industries represent about 6% of the EU manufacturing employment and generate a turnover of about €210 billion.¹ Textiles, clothing, leather and footwear provide an important contribution to the EU economy with 5 million people employed in the fashion value chain and over 1 million in high-end industries.²

Compared to automotive, chemicals or electronics, for instance, the TCLF industries comprise a large proportion of SMEs, primarily due to the relatively low start-up costs associated with entering the industry.³ The trend towards customisation of TCLF, as opposed to standardised mass production, and the increased use of new technologies and materials could provide new opportunities for SMEs in the industries to become more profitable, productive, inclusive and sustainable. SMEs may be able to adopt smaller-scale robotics like 3D printers and digital technologies at a relatively low cost compared to traditional industrial automation technology with high barriers to entry.⁴ The promotion and up-take of novel and innovative technologies by SMEs constitutes a key element to guarantee their competitiveness. That's the reason why ELIIT aims at helping the implementation of such technologies, fruit of the excellent research results achieved in many technological areas into the European SMEs active in the TCLF industries.

Therefore, the ELIIT project will provide direct financial support for 25 partnerships between SMEs and technology providers/owners to

- Enhance competitiveness
- Integrate technologies in SMEs
- Foster new, innovative or high-added value products, processes or services developed in collaboration.

In total, two Calls will be open over the course of the project. For each of the Calls, 12 - 13 partnerships will be selected.

ELIIT will support the partnerships through the following:

¹ <https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/cft/cft-document.html?docId=42727>

² <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16962&langId=en>

³ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/publication/wcms_669355.pdf

⁴ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/publication/wcms_669355.pdf



- A tailor-made coaching programme on either technical or soft skills to elevate the relevance of projects and increase their capabilities.
- Facilitating market-positioning and professional links between members of partnerships and other key players by organising networking activities and attendance at relevant workshops/conferences and exhibitions.
- Intellectual property rights organisation and guidance.
- Financial support to develop products or prototypes with high-added value and profitability.

2. Objectives of the Call

The objective of the Call is to support the **implementation of technology transfer partnership projects** between **SMEs active in the TCLF industries** and **technology providers/owners**. In particular, ELIIT will support partnership projects that propose the implementation, application and use of disruptive and innovative technological solutions that can enable new and advanced technical capabilities for the performance of the beneficiary SMEs. ELIIT will support European cooperation for the use of technology-ready solutions (TRL 7 or higher) to improve productivity, value chain integration, resource efficiency and to create new high added-value products and services.

Technology providers/owners include a variety of organizations such as Technology and Innovation Centres, Universities, Research Centres and Corporates, SMEs and start-ups.

3. General Conditions of the Call

Applicants applying for funding under the ELIIT project should fulfil each and every criterion specified in **Section 4: Eligibility Criteria** of this guide. Furthermore, SMEs and technology providers/owners interested in submitting their Expression of Interests need to follow guidelines outlined in **Section 7: Preparation and Submission of Partnership Applications**.

Applications which are submitted on time and fulfil the requirements presented in this Guide do not necessarily entitle the applicant to be granted any of the support actions sought. All applications are subject to further review and to the overall availability of funds.



It is also important to highlight that those applicants which have met the eligibility requirements but not received the support actions sought are not precluded from applying for the same or other support actions in subsequent cut-off dates of ELIIT Call.

3.1. Target group of the Call

Target group of this Call is formed partnerships between (1) SMEs active in the TCLF industries in the EU or COSME associated country and (2) technology provider/owner in the EU or COSME associated country. It is a key requirement for the application process.

3.2. Available Funding

The ELIIT project makes available a total amount of EUR 70,000 for each selected partnership.

3.3. Key dates

The second call for proposals will open January 25th 2021 and will **close (deadline) on 14th April 2021 (5 PM CET)**. The opening of the call will also be announced in social networks, ELIIT website and [ELIIT newsletter](#).

4. Eligibility Criteria

Only SMEs and technology owners/providers that fulfil the following criteria can submit the application form.

Common Eligibility Criteria
<p>(1) <i>To be eligible, the organisation must be legally and operationally established in any of the EU or COSME associated country.</i></p> <p>EU Member State: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden</p> <p>COSME Associated Country: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Kosovo*, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine</p> <p><i>*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.</i></p> <p>United Kingdom. **</p>



<p><i>**ELIIT project was launched under the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) of the European Union, 2014 – 2020. UK contributed financially to it; thus, the UK is part of COSME programme for this MFF period. Therefore, UK SMEs are eligible to apply to ELIIT Project.</i></p> <p>(2) Not in process of receivership or bankruptcy.</p>
<p>Specific for SMEs</p>
<p>(1) The company is qualified as an SME:</p> <p>“SME” stands for small and medium-sized enterprises – as defined in EU law: EU recommendation 2003/361. The main factors determining whether a company is an SME are:</p> <p>1/ Economic activity</p> <p>2/ number of employees and</p> <p>3/ either turnover or balance sheet total.</p> <p>To qualify as an SME, an organisation must conform to the EC definition of an SME. (http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition/)”</p> <p>(2) Active in the TCLF sector and willing to integrate innovative technology-based solutions into its products, services or process.</p>
<p>Specific for Technology Providers/Owners</p>
<p><i>The technology provider/owner must own or have the right to use freely the relevant technologies to be applied</i></p>

5. Registration

All SMEs and technology providers/owners will need to register on the ELIIT project submission system (EMS platform - <https://eliit.ems-carsa.com>) in order to further proceed with the application form. The registration form will consist of 3 parts: General Information, Confirmation of Eligibility Criteria and Selection of relevant keywords to describe activities, interests of organisation/company.



6. Matchmaking

Having built a partnership between an SME and a technology provider/owner is a key requirement to submit an application and to receive funding under the ELIIT programme. Therefore, a matchmaking option will be available on the ELIIT project submission system (EMS platform) upon registration.

During registration, SMEs and technology providers will be asked to fill in all necessary information about their profiles followed by the selection of keywords. This information will be used during the matchmaking process on the EMS platform in order to form partnerships. If you can't find a partner on the EMS platform please contact info@eliitproject.eu, we will be happy to assist you.

7. Preparation and submission of partnership applications

7.1. Template of the application

Partnerships will have to prepare a Technical description of the project they propose to put forward. This technical proposal will consist of 3 main parts: technical description of the project and its impact, excellence and innovation level and implementation, plus a fourth section devoted to collect relevant data to configure the ELIIT's mentoring and training program for the selected partnerships. Evaluation will be done for those 3 main sections (award criteria):

1. Technical Description of the Project and its Impact
The applicant must describe the proposed project. The following points need to be included: objectives of the projects taking into account technological and business perspectives, market potential, impact on partnership members and IPR strategy
2. Excellence and Innovation Level
The applicant must describe the innovation capacity of the proposed project and explain the maturity level of the technology to be applied or used.
3. Implementation
The applicant must describe how the project will be implemented. The following points need to be included: detailed technical methodology, budgeting, description of the partnership as well as the added value of the cooperation.
4. Identification of Needs and Obstacles
Although this section is not part of the award criteria and therefore it will not be evaluated, its fulfilment is compulsory in order to consider the application complete.



An Annex section (not mandatory) has been put at the disposal of proposers to be used only if needed to clarify or provide detail of concepts or assumptions via pictures, charts or tables. This part should not be longer than 3 pages.

7.2. Language of the applications

All applications must be submitted only in English.

7.3. Submission of the application

The application can be submitted only by one of the partners: either an SME or a technology provider/owner. The organisation who creates the application proposal in the EMS platform will act from that moment on as the coordinator (leader) and will be the only one allowed to edit and submit the application. Its counterpart will have access to the application content (and proposal) but will not be able to edit nor submit it.

All applications must be submitted only through the ELIIT electronic submission system (EMS platform) within the given timeframe of the Call. Late applications will not be accepted.

7.4. The ELIIT project submission system (EMS platform)

The ELIIT electronic submission system ([EMS platform](#)) is a platform used for the registration of applicants, for matchmaking and for the reception and evaluation of applications.

8. Evaluation and selection of applications

8.1. Evaluation process

All submitted application will be evaluated first, against an admission criteria and then against an award criteria. These criteria are described below:

Admission criteria

Admission Criteria
(1) Submission using the EMS platform before the established deadline.
(2) Readable, printable and using the language (English) stated in the call.
(3) The partnership proposal must be completed including all the documents (Technical and Administrative) stated in the CEI.



- (4) Proposal should not exceed the page and fields limits stated in the CEI.
- (5) The partnership proposal is composed by two partners, one SME and one technology provider/owner

Award criteria

CRITERIA	SUB-CRITERIA	SCORING	WEIGHT (%)
Impact	<p>(1) The definition of the challenges addressed and proposed technological solutions - 2 points</p> <p>(2) Potential Market. The criterion will assess whether the proposal addresses properly the market targeted, and whether the description provided by the partners is realistic etc. The defined business use case and expected market growth potential for the application of the technology/ies. Moreover, it is important to assess if the proposal has identified in a proper way the risks under the market point of view. -2 points</p> <p>(3) Strength and impact on the competitiveness and growth of the SME and technology provider involved. The criterion will assess the impact of the project in the SME and technology provider involved. The proposal should quantify and demonstrate in a convincing way the impact of the project in all the partners. In particular, the impact on their business in terms of turnover, employment, market increments, access to new markets, economic performance etc. - 3 points</p> <p>(4) Efficiency of the measures proposed to maximise the impacts. This criterion will assess the business and commercialisation plan proposed by the partnership. The</p>	0-10	40%



	<p>commercialisation strategy, including marketing, estimation of the revenues, investment needed etc. will be also assessed.</p> <p>- 1 point</p> <p>(5) IPR strategy. The criterion will assess the IPR strategy, in particular, whether the technology provider and the SME have the “freedom to operate” and the suitability of the technology to be used in the proposal. Also, the IPR protection strategy proposed by the partnership will be evaluated.</p> <p>- 2 points</p>		
Excellence	<p>(1) Innovation potential. This criterion will assess innovation capacity. The partnership must demonstrate where the value added of their concept/idea/proposal lies and its integration/application in the production process, final product or service of the manufacturing TCLF SME: e.g. to which extend the technology is innovative and disruptive for the development of the product, process, etc. The proposal must demonstrate how SMEs and Technology providers/owners are going to implement it. The uniqueness of the idea must be assessed through this criterion.</p> <p>- 5 points</p> <p>(2) Demonstrate the maturity of the Technology. This criterion will assess whether the proposal demonstrates in a convincing way the appropriate maturity, TRL. The projects must rely a technology that is ready or almost ready to be commercialised.</p> <p>- 5 points</p>	0-10	30%
Implementation	<p>(1) Quality of the Work Plan. This criterion will assess the quality of the proposed work plan, technology transfer process and project management.</p> <p>- 4 points</p>	0-10	20%



	<p>(2) Value for money. This criterion will evaluate if the cost breakdown corresponding to the tasks and activities to be implemented. The proposals that overestimate the budget will be penalised. A convincing explanation of the costs should be provided showing the feasibility of the budget and its consistency with the project's proposal activities.</p> <p>- 2 points</p> <p>(3) Quality of the partnership. The criterion will assess whether both the technology provider and the SME have enough experience to carry out the tasks proposed.</p> <p>- 2 points</p> <p>(4) Added value of the cooperation. The criterion will assess the added value of doing the work in cooperation. Especially, the partners should demonstrate the complementarities between them.</p> <p>- 2 points</p>		
Transnationality	This criterion will assess whether the project is transnational or not, 0 points will be allocated to the non-transnational partnership and 10 for the transnational partnerships.	0-10	10%

The evaluation reports delivered to each partnership proposal will summarise the comments made by the evaluators. The interpretation of scores will be as follows:

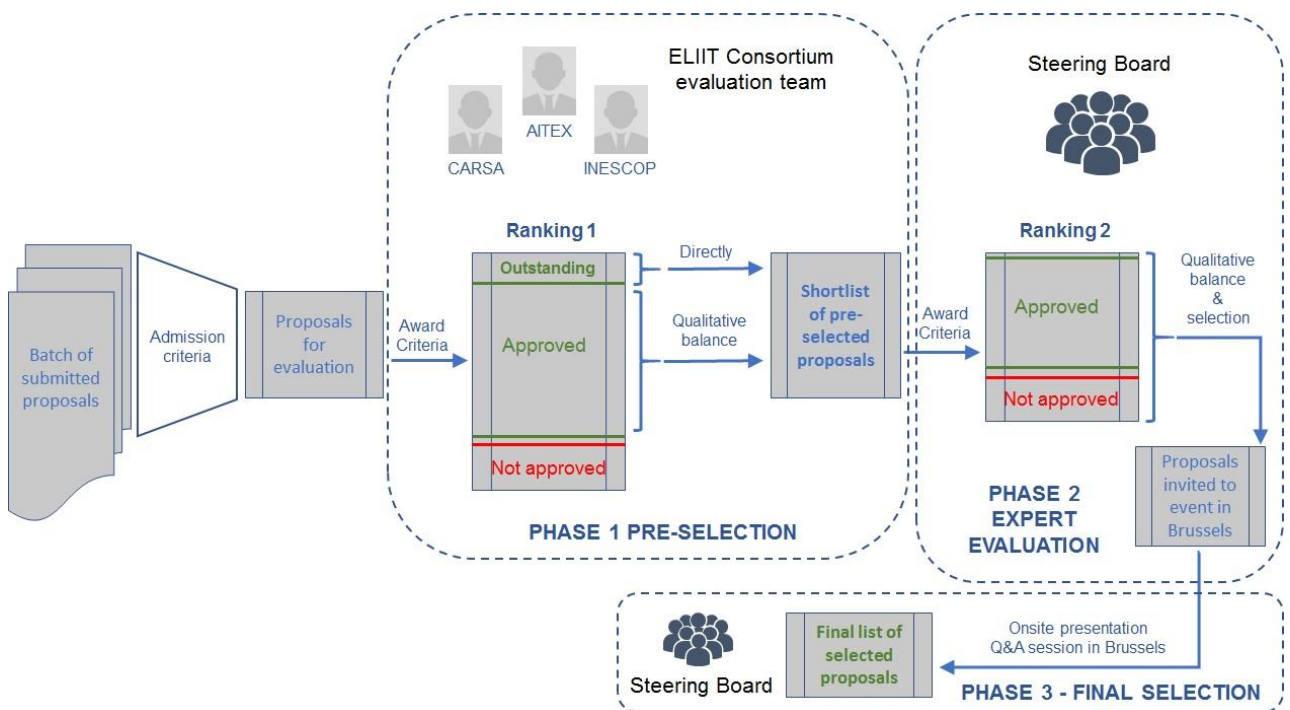
SCORE	DESCRIPTION
1-2 Inadequate	The proposal does not adequately address the criterion. There are serious deficiencies that impede the success of the proposal.
3-4 Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses. There are significant deficiencies that would hinder the project implementation



5-6 Fair	The proposal addresses the aspects expected well, although additional details would be necessary to facilitate the project implementation and there are some shortcomings.
7-8 Good	The proposal addresses the aspects expected very well – with just a few shortcomings - although additional details would benefit the project implementation.
9-10 Excellent	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion.

8.4. Selection process

The selection will be performed following the 3 phases depicted in the figure below:



Source: CARSA

Phase 1: Pre-selection, the ELIIT Consortium will evaluate the project proposals according to the award criteria (technical assessment). As a result, the Consortium will have a shortlist of



pre-selected proposals which will be handed over to the Steering Board (SB) for further evaluation.

Phase 2: Expert Evaluation, a Steering Board (SB) of experts will evaluate the pre-selected projects according to the award criteria once again. Each partnership project will now be evaluated by two experts from the SB. This phase's outcome will be a ranking of proposals based on the final scores obtained.

Phase 3: Final selection in Brussels, during a dedicated event, SB members will be able to discuss with each other the ranking as well as to clarify doubts and make questions to the project representatives via interviews. In case of travel restrictions, the final selection meeting will be organised online.

In case of travel restrictions due to COVID 19 pandemic or other , the final selection with the SB members (Phase 3) will be done online through Microsoft Teams, Zoom or another virtual platform.

8.5. What is the threshold to enter a shortlist of pre-selected proposals?

In order to be pre-selected, a proposal should score above the threshold level. The following threshold will be applied to manage technical evaluations:

An overall threshold: Different weights (%) will be applied to each criterion when calculating the final score. 10 points would be the maximum final score obtainable and **6 points** the minimum final score (threshold).

Hence, only project proposals scoring equal or above the overall threshold will have the option of being proposed for final selection within the Open Call. The table below summarises the approach:

Criterion	Max. Score (points)	Weights
Impact	10	40%
Excellence	10	30%
Implementation	10	20%
Transnationality	10	10%



9. Administrative Duties

Selected applicants will become the ELIIT beneficiaries. The agreements/contracts with the beneficiaries will be managed by the ELIIT Project Consortium. The lead partner of the selected partnerships will be requested to sign a Grant Agreement with the Consortium Leader (AITECH).

The main objective of this agreement is to validate financial and technical operational capacity from the partners and establish rules for receiving support for the ELIIT project.

Partnerships will have to submit the following documents:

- Legal Entity Form accompanied with the supporting documents (e.g. registration, tax certificates)
- Financial Identification Form
- Proof of Identity
- Consortium Agreement between the participants

All the administrative tasks required to perform from the beneficiaries throughout the project will be provided during the partnership agreement formalisation. Partnerships who fail in providing these documentation on time will be excluded.

10. Funding Scheme

The following payment scheme will apply:

The first 20% will be provided 30 days after the invoice submission resulting from the formalisation of the partnership and grant agreements.

Based on the positive evaluation of the midterm report, another 40% will be paid 30 days after issuing the second invoice.

A payment equals to 20% will be carried out following the formal approval of the final report and corresponding work validation by the consortium and 30 days after issuing the third invoice.

The balance 20% payment will be effective upon the full attendance at all the international events and networking activities as stated in the contract. Funds will be disbursed to the lead partner.



11. Results and Deliverables

The partnership work plan will be defined alongside the assigned mentor during the kick-off meeting.

Reporting to be delivered through the platform is: Periodic report (including progress and problems encountered). Mid-term report (including technical sketches with specifications and drawings of the product). Final report (including the final prototype and related documentation).

Reports scheme:

The mid-term report will be submitted in the month 6 (for 12-months project) and month 9 (for 18-month projects).

The final report will be submitted at the end of the project.

12. Support to applicants

In addition to the present Guide for Applicants, the following tools are available to support applicants:

Frequently Asked Questions

A Frequently Asked Questions section is available on the website. The section is constantly updated to reflect the questions received.

Helpdesk

Applicants may contact the ELIIT helpdesk should they wish to receive further information on the Call for Expression of Interest content and conditions.

 Email address: helpdesk@eliitproject.eu

13. Data privacy policy

The ELIIT project is fully compliant with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. The ELIIT Consortium is responsible for the personal data processing, under automated and analogical means, since its collection, through its

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organisation and storage, up to its deletion. The ELIIT Consortium keeps a continuous and thorough registry of all its personal data processing activities. The applicants' data will be retained in the ELIIT archives until the end of the project activities for which the applicants submitted their applications. No transfer of the personal information will take place to an organisation or a country unless there are adequate controls in place including security of the data and other personal information.

The ELIIT Consortium welcomes any inquiries and comments regarding Data Privacy Policy (privacy@eliitproject.eu). The applicant has the right to receive information regarding how personal data is stored and managed by the Consortium. The applicant has also the right to erase any personal data.

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