

DRIVING GROWTH 

## RIF INNOVATION PROGRAMMES

**New Call for Proposals:  
«Creation and Initial Development of  
STARTUPS with International Orientation  
(PRE-SEED)» Programme  
*PRE-SEED/0526***

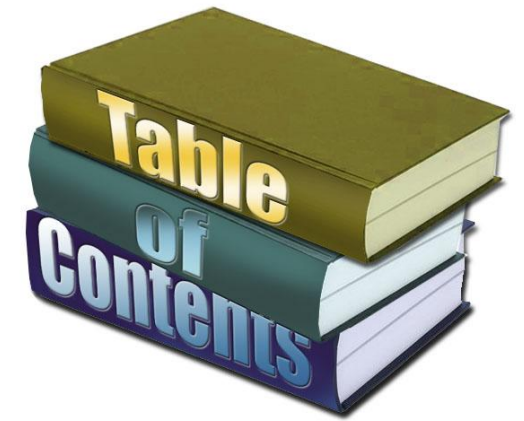
**June 2026**



ΙΔΡΥΜΑ  
ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ  
ΚΑΙΝΟΤΟΜΙΑΣ

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## ▶ Objectives and Basic Principles

- ✓ **Creation and initial development of innovative startups\*** which aim to develop innovative products and services with global market penetration prospects.
- ✓ Supporting startups which are in the **stage of developing their business idea** and/or at the **early stages of their product or service development**
- ✓ **Products/services** are expected to have a **high level of innovation and differentiation**, in comparison to existing or competitive solutions and will **address certain needs and/or improve the experience and quality of life of users**.
- ✓ Team members of the startups are expected to have the appropriate and complementary **technical, scientific and business knowledge and skills** and to **demonstrate their commitment to the operation and development of the company**.

*\* Startups, are considered companies with a technological orientation and potential for high growth, which are established with the aim of developing a product/service that the founders of the company seek to make available to the international market.*

## ► Testimonials



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2P-jtbE\\_Kc&t=60s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2P-jtbE_Kc&t=60s)

## ► General Call Information



**DEADLINE**

- Call Announcement: **20 May 2026**
- Proposal Submission Deadline: **11 September 2026, 13:00 local time**
- Evaluation Timeline: **September 2026 – March 2027**
- Contracts Signing (est.): **June 2027**
- Call Budget: **€ 1.000.000**
- Maximum Funding per Project: **€ 119.999**
- Funding Instalments:
  - *Pre-Financing: 70% of the Requested Funding paid upon Contract signature*
  - *Final Funding Payment paid upon approval of the Final Progress Report*
- Project Duration: **Up to 18 Months**
- Funding Intensity (*Funding Percentage on Eligible Expenses*): **85%**



## ► Beneficiaries (1)

### ❑ Host Organisation (HO): Startup Company

*A proposal can be submitted by a group of natural persons (Enterprise Under Establishment) however the registration of the company should be completed until the Contract Signing.*

❑ According to the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programmes, a **startup**, is considered as any small enterprise not listed in the stock exchange, **up to five (5) years after its registration**, which:

*a) has not taken over the activity of another enterprise,*

*b) has still not distributed profits, and*

*c) has not been incorporated through a merger.*



## ► Beneficiaries (2)

- ❑ **Partner Organisations (PA): Research Organisations, Enterprises, Other Private Organisations (PA Participation is not mandatory).**
- ❑ Participating Organisations should be **legally established and active\***, or **will be established and active** (in case of under establishment enterprises) in territories under the control of the Republic of **Cyprus**.

*\* The activity of the entities is documented by the existence of facilities and other equipment in territories under the control of the Republic of Cyprus and, indicatively and not restrictively, by audited financial statements, the tax return of the entity in the Republic of Cyprus, etc. For the participating startups the activity must be confirmed during the implementation of the project, with the existence of facilities and other equipment in territories under the control of the Republic of Cyprus.*



## ► Beneficiaries (3)

### Additional Conditions for Participation:

- ✓ An enterprise may receive funding as Host Organisation (HO), **only in one (1) Project**.
- ✓ Funding of startups as HOs, which were funded by the RIF as HOs in the frame of previous Calls for Proposals under the PRE-SEED and SEED Programmes, is **not allowed**.
- ✓ If the startup **exploits research results of third parties** (including PAs) should, within **two (2) months** from Contract signing date at the latest, to ensure (at a minimum) the **licencing** of Intellectual Property Rights.
- ✓ **The Project Coordinator (PC) must be employed\* by the HO starting from the Project start date and throughout the Project implementation period!**
- ✓ All individuals participating in the Project must be employed by the participating organisations **during their participation period in the Project**.

\* (i) the employee-employer relationship can be proven (e.g. employment contract), (ii) included in the organisation's official payroll on a regular basis, and (iii) all the employer's obligations pursuant to the law are fulfilled.



## ► Beneficiaries (4)

### Additional Conditions for Participation:

- ✓ At least one person participating in the project team from the HO, prior to Contract signing should obligatorily attend in **two training seminars organised by RIF** in the following subjects: (i) **Regulations and financial monitoring of the project**, and (ii) **Project Management**.
- ✓ During the Project implementation the **Project Coordinator (PC)**, should obligatorily attend **two training seminars to be organised by RIF** in: (i) **New Product Development**, and (ii) **Entrepreneurial Finance**.
- ✓ For Projects that fall within the **ICT and manufacturing sectors**, and/or Projects which include the development of **digital applications and/or software**, a **Product/Service Wireframe** must be submitted as Annex at the Proposal Submission.

## ▶ Eligible Activities

For the Host Organisation, **Startups Activities** are allowed which indicatively can be the following:

- Prototype** Development
- Market Research**
- Identification of the appropriate **Business Model**
- Business Plan**
- Obtaining, validating and defending **patents and other intangible assets**
- Obtaining **consulting, legal or accounting** services
- Marketing/branding** activities
- Seeking of **partners and investors**

*For Partner Organisations, only Experimental Research activities are allowed!*



## ► Eligible Costs (1)

**For the HO: Personnel Cost, Costs for Instruments and Equipment, Costs for External Services, Costs for Travelling Abroad, Consumables, Other specific costs (related to the project activities), Overheads**

The calculation of the Proposal Budget will be based on the simplified cost method «Personnel Costs» plus 40% on Personnel Costs for covering the rest of the Project costs.



## ▶ Eligible Costs (2)

### Clarifications:

- ✓ For Cost Category **«Instruments and Equipment»**, purchase cost for instruments and specialised equipment, and computers and software (including standard office computer and software), is eligible. Purchase of basic office equipment, furniture etc, is not eligible.
  
- ✓ **Indicative** eligible costs for **Cost Category «External Services»**:
  - **Market Research**
  - **Technical consulting services** and **training relating to the prototype development** (incl. Testing and certification, quality labelling, access to research infrastructures, libraries and databases)
  - **Advisory services**, assistance and training in the fields relating to the use of **standards and regulations** embedding them



## ▶ Eligible Costs (3)

- ✓ **Indicative** eligible costs for **Cost Category «External Services» (cont.):**
  - **Purchase of patents**, as well as **licensing patent rights** from external sources.
  - Design and preparation of **Communication Material** (publications, audio-visual material, graphic design services, website, logo design) to be used for attracting investors/customers.
  - **Consulting services** related to payroll and tax issues, bookkeeping and office automation (costs for auditing are excluded – Covered under «Overheads»).
  - **Legal services** in issues related to registration of business name / logo, shareholders capital structure (incl. employees' stock ownership plan, shareholders agreements etc), mergers and acquisition contracts, bank transactions, data protection and privacy, employment conditions.



## ► Eligible Costs (4)

**For PAs: Personnel Cost, Costs for Instruments and Equipment (depreciation), Costs for External Services, Costs for Travelling Abroad, Consumables, Other specific costs (related to the project activities), Overheads**

The calculation of the Proposal Budget will be based on the simplified cost method «Personnel Costs» plus 40% on Personnel Costs for covering the rest of the Project costs.

***The total costs of the Partner Organisations, should not exceed 20% of the total project budget.***



## ► Important Note (1)

*In Funded Projects where the simplified cost method «'Personnel Costs' plus 40% on Personnel Costs for covering the rest of the Project costs» is used, only the expenses under «Personnel Costs» Category, are declared.*

*However, beneficiaries should still comply to the RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme regarding the eligibility of costs, the basic principles for project management, the preservation of evidence, and the compliance with National and EU Legislation.*



## ► Important Note (2)

*Due to technical reasons, applicants should use the «Overheads» Budget category to include the rest of the Project costs amounting to 40% of the Personnel Cost.*

Budget Table

Organisation	Activity	Direct Costs					Indirect Costs		Other Simplified Costs		Subcontracting	
		Personnel	Equipment	Travel	Consumables	Other Specific (Direct) Costs	Overhead Rate	Overheads	Other Simplified Rate	Other Simplified Amount	External Services	Foreign Research Organisations (FRO)
HO. Org-TypeB1 (1)		90.000,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €		36.000,00 €		0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
HO. Org-TypeB1	Aid for Start-Ups	90.000,00 €					40,00 %	36.000,00 €				
PA1. ORG-Type-A1 (1)		12.000,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €		4.800,00 €		0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
PA1. ORG-Type-A1	Experimental Development	12.000,00 €					40,00 %	4.800,00 €				
PA2. Org-TypeB3 (1)		8.000,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €		3.200,00 €		0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
PA2. Org-TypeB3	Experimental Development	8.000,00 €					40,00 %	3.200,00 €				
<b>Totals</b>		<b>110.000,00 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>					<b>0,00 €</b>	<b>0,00 €</b>

## ▶ SERVICES OF THE CENTRAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER OFFICE



- ✓ Beneficiaries will automatically become Beneficiaries of the services and tools for knowledge transfer offered by RIF, in the framework of the **Central Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO)** → Beneficiaries are **obliged** to contact the KTO, **within two (2) months** at the latest from the Contract signing date, for the preparation of a specialised Service Delivery Plan.

Due to the availability of Services/Funding by the KTO and the RIF's Innovation Factory initiative, the following Costs for External Services are **not eligible**:

- (a) Acquisition, validation and protection of patents / industrial designs and other intangible assets,
- (b) Consulting Services for technology transfer activities, and
- (c) Consulting Services for the preparation of Feasibility Study / Business Plan.

## ► Proposal Submission (1)

- ❑ **Proposals are submitted** through the Research and Innovation Foundation's IRIS Portal (<https://iris.research.org.cy>).



RESTART 2016-2020: CREATION AND INITIAL DEVELOPMENT OF STARTUPs WITH INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION / ΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΧΙΚΗ ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗ STARTUPs ΜΕ ΔΙΕΘΝΗ ΠΡΟΣΑΝΑΤΟΛΙΣΜΟ  
PRE-SEED/0526

### Short Description / Σύντομη Περιγραφή

Supporting the creation and initial development of innovative Start-ups that aim to develop innovative products and services with the prospect of penetrating into the international market.

Υποστήριξη της δημιουργίας και της αρχικής ανάπτυξης νεοφυών επιχειρήσεων οι οποίες στοχεύουν στην ανάπτυξη καινοτόμων προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών με προοπτική διεξόδου στη διεθνή αγορά.

Announcement Date:  
20/05/2026

Deadline:  
11/09/2026 13:00

Call Documents:

[Call for Proposals \(EL\)](#) 📄

[Call for Proposals \(EN\)](#) 📄

[Part B – Technical Annex](#) 📄

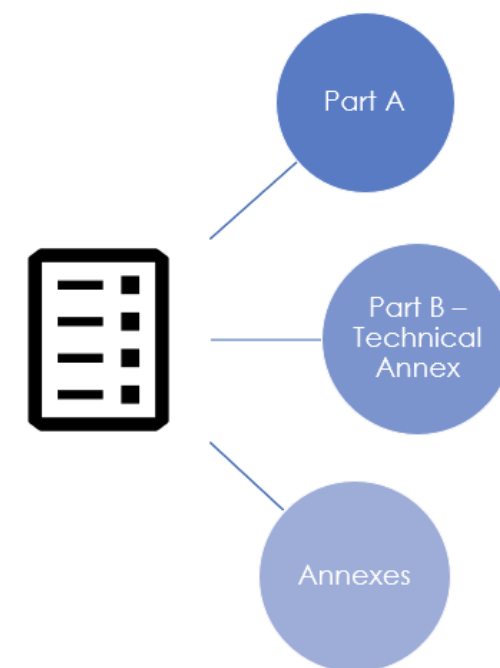
[Guide for Evaluators](#) 📄

Submit to this Call

Proposal Writing Workshop  
26 June 2026  
10:30 – 12:30  
@RIF

## ▶ Proposal Submission (2)

- ❑ The Project Proposal consists of the following parts:
  - **Part A** – General Information & Budget (*electronic form (fields) to be completed **online** through the IRIS Portal*).
  - **Part B** – Technical Annex (*document in PDF format*)  
**Maximum number of pages 20** – Template available in Call Documents.
  - **ANNEX I** – Curricula Vitae - **Mandatory Submission** (*document in PDF format which includes the **CVs of the Coordinator and the key personnel** of the project team*). It is recommended that, CVs are created according to the **EUROPASS format** and do not exceed 5 pages per person.
  - **ANNEX II** – Call Specific Information to be Disclosed to the Evaluators (*document to be uploaded as an Annex on the IRIS Portal in PDF format and includes the **Product/Service Wireframe***) – Requested **only for Projects that fall within the ICT and manufacturing sectors, and/or Projects which include the **development of digital applications and/or software.****



## ▶ Proposal Submission (3)

PRE-SEED/0526 - PART B – TECHNICAL ANNEX



THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOUNDATION  
PROGRAMMES  
FOR RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION  
“RESTART 2016 – 2020”

PROPOSAL DETAILS	
PILLAR	II. SUSTAINABLE RTDI SYSTEM
PROGRAMME	Creation and Initial Development of Startups with International Orientation
RIF PROPOSAL NUMBER	PRE-SEED/0526/XXXX
PROPOSAL TITLE	
PROPOSAL ACRONYM	



PRE-SEED/0526 - PART B – TECHNICAL ANNEX

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION

[This page does not count towards the page limit.](#)

- Participants must use the current template for the preparation of Part B – Technical Annex, for the respective Call for Proposals. The structure of this template must be followed when preparing your proposal. It has been designed to ensure that the important aspects of your planned work are presented in a way that will enable the experts to make an effective assessment against the evaluation criteria.
- The Cover Page, section headings and tables in this Part B template must not be removed. Only guidelines in blue colour may be removed.
- Page Limit: A page limit of 20 pages will be applied. Any excess pages will be disregarded by evaluators. The Cover Page, the Instructions Page, the Checklist, and the S3Cy Table do not count towards this page limit. All tables, figures, references and any other element pertaining to this proposal must be included as an integral part of it and are thus counted against this page limit. The recommended number of pages included in each section of this template is only indicative.
- Text format recommendations:
  - Recommended font types are Arial (used in this template), Calibri and Times New Roman. The choice of any other font type should ensure that the text is clearly legible.
  - The recommended minimum font size is 11 points, with standard character spacing and single line spacing.
- Any hyperlinks that direct to information beyond what is provided in the proposal, will not be considered by the evaluators for the evaluation of the proposal.

#### IMPORTANT NOTE

Early submission of proposals is recommended to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties and delays/inconvenience before the deadline. Please note that once submitted, proposals may be modified and resubmitted up to the deadline. The last valid submission will be taken into account in the evaluation. The IRIS Call will be automatically closed at the deadline and late submissions will NOT be accepted. RIF's Partner Support Center can assist you BEFORE the closing date and time if you encounter problems with the submission of your proposal. If you experience difficulties in submitting your proposal, you must contact the Partner Support Centre at [callsupport@research.org.cy](mailto:callsupport@research.org.cy) or by phone at 22205000 in good time, providing all necessary information, so that RIF can provide you with the necessary assistance to allow your issue to be resolved before the deadline. The Host Organization and the Proposal Coordinator are responsible both for the timely validation of the proposal, which ensures the successful submission of the proposal before the deadline, and for ensuring that all required information and documents have been submitted as described in the Call.

## ► Evaluation (1)

**Stage I: Remote Evaluation** by **two Independent Evaluators** specializing in the proposal topic

- ❑ **Evaluation Criteria:** (1) **Excellence 30%**, (2) **Added Value and Benefit 35%**, (3) **Implementation 35%**
- ❑ The best ranked applications according to their Final Evaluation Score, starting with the highest scoring proposal and in descending order requesting an aggregated financial support equal to the double of the available Call budget, and provided that they secure a Final Evaluation Score of at least **12.00/15.00**, **qualify to Stage II** of the Evaluation
- ❑ *Priority will be given to the **first five (5)** ranked **Proposals with Women Project Coordinators***



## ► Evaluation (2)

Prior to the evaluation of each Proposal according to the evaluation criteria, the evaluators will check the **compatibility of the Proposal** with:

- the Objectives of the Programme and the Call,
- the proposed type(s) of activities with those allowed by the Programme/Call, and
- the «Do No Significant Harm» principle - the proposed methodology must not include or support activities that could cause significant harm to environment.

If the Proposal is incompatible the Evaluator **rejects the Proposal** and does not proceed with the examination of the evaluation criteria.



## ► Evaluation (3)

**Stage II:** Those Proposals that have qualified from Stage I, present their Proposals to an **Independent Evaluation Committee** (5-7 members), consisted by experts with business background.

- ❑ **Same Evaluation Criteria apply for Stage II.**
- ❑ **Selection for Funding:** Proposals that have been deemed eligible for funding by the Committee, will be selected for funding.
- ❑ Total funding of approved projects, **will not exceed** the total Call budget.

*Applicants are strongly advised to read thoroughly the Guide for Evaluators!*





## ► Useful Documents

- ❑ **RESTART 2016-2020 Work Programme Document**  
<https://iris.research.org.cy/#!/index>
- ❑ **Calls for Proposals / Part B- Technical Annex / Guide for Evaluators**  
<https://iris.research.org.cy/#!/calls>
- ❑ **IRIS Guidelines (Registration, Proposal Preparation/Submission)**  
<https://iris.research.org.cy/#!/documentlibrary>

## ► Contact / Support



For More Information

**RIF Website:** [www.research.org.cy](http://www.research.org.cy)

**IRIS Portal:** <https://iris.research.org.cy/>



Supporting RIF's Clients

**RIF Support Service:**

[support@research.org.cy](mailto:support@research.org.cy) | Tel. 22-205000

# ▶ Thank you!

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