

# Canada EU STI Opportunities Support Document

## Updates

Canadian researchers are considered “associate country participants” within Pillar II of Horizon Europe (as part of an EC transitional arrangement for Canada) as of December 5, 2023.

Canadians can apply to 2024 project calls within Pillar II of Horizon Europe with a close date on or after December 5, 2023, and be evaluated as beneficiaries, to receive grants DIRECTLY from the EC once provisional application begins, likely Q3 2024.

Canadians are strongly encouraged to **APPLY NOW** to be considered in the review period in 2024.

*For funding for Pillar II project calls with a close date of December 31, 2023 or earlier, and tagged as type RIA, Canadians are encouraged to apply for NFRF. If not an RIA, then consult the STI Funding Guide for Canadians, consolidated by Canada’s Mission to the EU – see details further in this document.*

*If open project calls for 2024 do not have the Canadian participant listed as a beneficiary, but there is now an interest to do so, there is the option for the consortium composition to be revisited and list the Canadian participant as a beneficiary.*

*In November 2023 substantive negotiations on Canada’s association to Pillar II concluded. Both Canada and the EC have begun their respective procedures towards signature and provisional application of the Agreement for Canada’s association.*

For GAC TCs sharing this with their networks please refer to TRIO Lead [LP-230127-BREU-94504](#).

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## Summary

**Cooperation.** The EU is Canada's second most important trading partner, after the US, and a Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) priority partner for Canada. We have a strategic partnership based on a long history of close cooperation. Our STI collaboration started with the 1959 Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, and continues through the 1996 Canada-EU Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation, which aimed to encourage and facilitate joint research and development activities to advance science and/or technology in fields of common interest.

**EU R&D programs.** The EU has a number of programmes that promote and encourage international cooperation, not the least of which are the EU's, and the world's, two largest Research & Development programs: Horizon Europe - addressing global challenges, and Eureka - supporting the industrialization of SMEs. Canada has been, and continues to be, a very active participant in both these programs. Canada became a full member of Eureka in 2022, and will formally be an associate country to Horizon Europe Pillar II in 2024.

**Horizon Europe.** It is the world's largest research and innovation collaboration program, with a budget of €95.5 billion (C\$140 billion) over 2021-2027, with 35% dedicated to climate change mitigation. The EC offered Canada associate membership to Pillar II of Horizon Europe. Substantive negotiations on association concluded in November 2023 and the provisional application will likely be signed in Q3 2024. Until then, Canadian researchers are considered "associate country participants"; Canadians can now apply as beneficiaries and receive grants directly from the EC, once provisional application begins.

**Core Partner.** For most calls for proposals one must apply as a team of at least three partner organisations with at least one partner from an EU country and two partners from different EU or associated countries. As Canada is now considered an "associate country participant", **Canadian researchers will count towards this minimum [eligibility criteria](#) to have a consortium.**

**EU Member States.** The EU countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

**Associated Country.** Horizon Europe's [list of Associated Countries](#) (Canada listed as of Dec 5, 2023)\*.

**Horizon Europe [Pillar I](#):** Researcher Mobility, Research Grants, Research Infrastructures

**Horizon Europe [Pillar II](#):** Project calls for Global Challenges, with six clusters (and five missions)

**Horizon Europe [Pillar III](#):** Supporting Innovation in Europe, see Accelerator and Pathfinder

**Participation.** Canada has actively participated in all past European research and innovation framework programs since the first program, running between 1984 and 1987. For the latest framework program, Horizon 2020, Canada was the third most active non-European partner, behind the US and China (out of 24 non-associated non-EU countries). Canada accounted for close to 10% of applications for grants (2,279) and had a success rate of 18.07% (versus 17.02% average). **Main themes pursued include: Health, Food, Transport and Climate.**

*\* IT glitch. If the file does not show the Dec 5, 2023 update, press **CTRL+F5** to clear cache and refresh.*

## 1. Horizon Europe Pillar I – Researcher Mobility

Researcher Mobility, called the [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions](#) (MSCA), supports doctoral and postdoctoral training through mobility across borders and exposure to different sectors and disciplines. It provides grants for all stages of researchers' careers and encourages transnational, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary mobility, regardless of the research domain. It enables research-focused organizations to host talented foreign researchers and to create strategic partnerships with leading institutions worldwide. Its focus is on excellent research, that is fully bottom-up, open to ANY field of research and innovation from basic research up to market take-up and innovation services. This program is co-funded by [Mitacs](#) to support stronger participation of Canadian institutions with European researchers. Mitacs is a not-for-profit that promotes Canadian innovation through researcher mobility programs. Mitacs has supported over 200 Canadian participants in MSCA projects (eg studying whale genomes to better understand the genetic consequences of harvesting marine mammals, for future protection efforts.)

## 2. Horizon Europe Pillar I – Synergy Grants

Canadians are encouraged to apply to the [European Research Council's](#) (ERC) yearly calls for [Synergy Grants](#) which support bold scientific challenges, in ANY field of research. Research must be carried out in an EU Member State or Associated Country. A group of two to maximum four Principal Investigators working together and bringing different skills and resources to tackle ambitious research problems. Synergy Grants can be up to a maximum of **€ 10 million for a period of 6 years** (pro rata for projects of shorter duration).

## 3. Horizon Europe Pillar I – Research Infrastructure

These are integrated, interconnected world class research infrastructures set up to address major scientific and societal challenges. [Research Infrastructures](#) support the development, upgrading and consolidation of excellent pan-European Research Infrastructures, while optimizing their use to address major scientific and societal challenges. They are open and accessible to the best researchers from Europe and beyond.

## 4. Horizon Europe Pillar III – Innovative Europe – Accelerator

[EIC's Accelerator](#) programme is a mono beneficiary instrument supporting SMEs (including start-ups) to carry out very innovative projects, and ready to scale up from TRL 6 to TRL 9. A Canadian innovator can apply and if selected for funding, will have to relocate his or her company in any eligible country (Member State or Associated country) before the signature of the grant agreement (3 to 4 months after the results are known). EIC Accelerator offers two types of support:

Grant funding of up to **€2.5 million for innovation development costs**, including demonstration of the technology in the relevant environment, prototyping and system level demonstration, R&D and testing required to meet regulatory and standardisation requirements, intellectual property management, and marketing approval (e.g. at least TRL 5/6 to 8).

Investments of up to €15 million managed by the EIC Fund for scale up and other relevant costs.

**Companies working on technologies of strategic European interest can apply for EIC investments of more than €15 million.**

## 5. Horizon Europe Pillar III – Innovative Europe – Pathfinder

[EIC's Pathfinder](#) programme, open to Canadian participation, supports cutting-edge early-stage (TRL levels 1 to 4) research projects up to proof of concept that have the potential to create genuine scientific breakthroughs with **grants of €3 to €4 million**. Canadians can only participate as part of a consortia, in which there are at least three EU or Associated Country partners, with at least one EU partner present. Canadian entities are not eligible for EU funding except if it is specifically stated otherwise in the call conditions, or if their participation is considered essential for implementing the action.

## 6. Horizon Europe Pillar II – Global Challenges

**a. Clusters.** Pillar II accounts for over 53% of the overall Horizon Europe budget with a total of six [clusters](#), see list below. Horizon Europe Pillar II also has five Research and Innovation Missions – same framework as clusters, but focused on a specific issue. They are: Adaptation to Climate change; Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities; Cancer; Soil Deal for Europe; and Restore our Ocean and Waters.

4. Digital, Industry & Space	€15.3 b
5. Climate, Energy & Mobility	€15.1 b
6. Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Ag & Envmt	€ 8.9 b
1. Health	€ 8.2 b
2. Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Societies	€ 2.3 b
3. Civil Security for Society	€ 1.6 b

**b. Search for Calls.** All Horizon Europe calls for 2023-2024 are accessible through the EU Funding & Tender website. Go the main [Horizon Europe website](#), scroll down, then click on “Apply now”, within Apply for funding. To search for, then apply for a [Horizon Europe project call](#), go to the “Search Funding & Tenders” tab, first tab on top. From there one can also search for related project calls, based on themes, and have a snapshot view of each call. To learn more click on each title for full details. Ensure that in the left column, with the drop downs, Programming period is “2021-2027” and Programme is “Horizon Europe”. Click then within ‘Programme part’ and select the elements you are interested in - for example: ‘Digital, Industry and Space’ for space project calls.

To access [all cluster calls](#), with their criteria, in one file, go to the second tab “How to Participate”, then click on “Reference Documents”. Ensure that in the left column, with the drop downs, Programming period is “2021-2027” and Programme is “Horizon Europe”. Click on “Work programme & call documents”, then “2023-2024”, then “HE Main Work Programme 2023-2024”, then the cluster/programme of interest. A large document will appear, with a Table of Contents listing all project calls. Click on the subject/project of interest and see related details.

For detailed instructions on how to search for and/or apply for project calls watch this [video](#).

**c. Support for Canadians - NCPs.** National contact points or NCPs are people nominated by their national authorities to provide assistance to potential Horizon Europe applicants in their countries. NCPs usually support only one area/cluster of Horizon Europe. Canada is actively recruiting NCPs – a list will be shared once available. In the meantime email [northamerica@euraxess.net](mailto:northamerica@euraxess.net) for support on project

calls as they can connect Canadians to Europe-based NCPs as needed.

**d. EC Funding.** Direct funding from the EU will be available to Canadians once provisional application begins which will likely be in the second half of 2024. As an interim measure the EC has confirmed **Canadian researchers will now be considered as associate country participants** within Pillar II of Horizon Europe through a transitional arrangement for Canada as of December 4, 2023.

For past participation to date, Canadians participating in Pillar II project calls received funding directly from the EC if the Canadian entity was considered essential to the project or unique; this was assessed on a case by case basis.

## 7. Canadian STI Funding

Global Affairs Canada's **Trade Commissioner Service** (TCS) has evolved into a now unmatched network of over 1,000 business-savvy experts in 160 cities worldwide who help Canadian businesses trade, grow and succeed, and support their international business interests, including science and innovation. The TCS offers a number of services to Canadian clients, and has funding programs to support their efforts.

**a. STI Funding Guide for Canadians.** Canada's Trade Commissioners in Brussels have consulted and consolidated a federal and provincial **STI Funding Guide for Canadians**, available in English and French. The document details more than 26 federal and provincial funding programs, total close to \$3 billion, that could support STI projects in Canada and internationally, including, but not limited to Horizon Europe. It includes target sectors, eligibility criteria, funding amounts, information regarding application processes, contacts and references. Funding opportunities are available for all kind of sectors and projects, and support both researchers and organizations. For ease of reference, at the start of the document, there is a three-page table that summarizes key points by theme, with a short description and potential amounts. Please email [BREUTD@international.gc.ca](mailto:BREUTD@international.gc.ca) to receive a copy.

*Another funding option available to Canadians is the [NFRF 2022 Horizon Global Platform Competition](#) that provides support for Canadian researchers who are partners on successful projects for Pillar II projects, tagged as type RIA - Research and Innovation Action, with a deadline before December 31, 2023. For questions see [FAQs](#) or email [NFRF-FNFR@chairs-chaire.gc.ca](mailto:NFRF-FNFR@chairs-chaire.gc.ca).*

**b. TCS [CanExport Innovation](#).** This offers up to \$75,000 to Canadian Innovators to assist with research and development (R&D) for a single technology. It can cover up to 75% of costs to pursue and sign collaborative R&D agreements with international partners.

**c. TCS [CanExport SMEs](#).** This offers up to \$50,000 to SMEs to assist with international market development activities. It can cover up to 50% of costs for export marketing of the SME's products and services in international markets where it has little or no sales.

For more information or support on [TCS programs](#) please email: [BREUTD@international.gc.ca](mailto:BREUTD@international.gc.ca).

**Mitacs** is a not-for-profit that promotes Canadian innovation through researcher mobility programs. Mitacs has 49 agreements with international partners, in 25 countries/regions. Mitacs has over 100 business development advisors in Canada's academic institutions to help others connect government and companies with the right talent. Mitacs has supported over 85k academic and R&D internships in the past 5 years. Mitacs has a few programs that supports researchers, academics and industry.

**a. Mitacs [Entrepreneur International](#).** To create a network of international accelerators and incubators this program supports start-ups in their growth and help them explore new opportunities in international markets. It provides travel grants of up to \$5,000 to each start-up, and is renewal up to five times. Note that ALL disciplines, for all EU countries, are eligible.

**b. Mitacs [Accelerate International](#).** To promote industrial research collaboration between Canadians and international organizations, this is a 4-6 month internship. Award amount is \$15,000, co-funded by Mitacs and the industry partner (Canadian or foreign). The idea is to bridge the gap between academia and industry to provide knowledge and talent transfer. It is open to all disciplines, and projects of any size. It is a very flexible model. Success rate to date is 97%. Mitacs has a team of business development officers embedded at Canadian universities to help SMEs and companies to find the right talent and frame their project proposal to improve chances of success. Projects are supervised by a Canadian home academic supervisor, a host academic supervisor and/or a host industry supervisor in one of the Horizon Europe member countries. The host supervisor must be supported by a Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE) grant. Travel duration depends on the level of study.

**c. Mitacs [Globalink Research Award Advanced Research](#).** This supports academic research collaboration supported by bilateral mobility internships of 12-24 weeks with postsecondary partners. Award amount of research grant is \$6,000. Projects are supervised by a Canadian home supervisor and a host supervisor at a university in one of Mitacs's partner countries or regions. For the MSCA RISE - Mitacs arrangement, the host supervisor must be supported by a Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE) grant.

For more information or support on [Mitacs programs](#) please email: [international@mitacs.ca](mailto:international@mitacs.ca).

## 8. STI Networks

**a. Search for EU partners - EEN ECCIR.** The [Enterprise Europe Network \(EEN\)](#) is the world's largest support network for SMEs and innovation stakeholders. Created and owned by the European Commission, it operates a publicly opened online database for business opportunities, information exchange, and matchmaking with over 4000 company profiles, from over 60 countries. The [European-Canadian Centre for Innovation and Research \(ECCIR\)](#) coordinates [Enterprise Europe Network – Canada](#)'s services, and supports companies with expert advice, and strategically designed templates, to help create, upload, and promote their company profiles through the database. Go to [EEN Partnerships Database](#) to search for potential partners, and email [info@eccir.ca](mailto:info@eccir.ca) for support.

**b. Search for host institutions for MSCA and ERC applicants; Connect to EU NCPs - EURAXESS.** [EURAXESS North America](#), an official initiative of the European Commission, promotes transatlantic research collaboration. EURAXESS runs a [hosting portal](#) (see [description](#)) where MSCA and ERC

applicants can search for host institutions. Canadians can go their [homepage](#) for the latest information on Horizon Europe Pillars I & II, as well as upcoming events, news, and funding information. Canadians can also email EURAXESS at [northamerica@euraxess.net](mailto:northamerica@euraxess.net) to connect with Europe-based NCPs.

**c. Join EU research networks – COST Actions.** [COST](#), European Cooperation in Science and Technology, is an EU-funded intergovernmental framework with 40 member countries accessible through an [online PLATFORM](#). Here researchers can submit a proposal for a COST Action for EU funding or can join ongoing COST Actions. The COST Actions are based on the researchers own interests and ideas, and allow one to create a network in which researchers, innovators and industry specialists, based in Europe and beyond, collaborate in any fields of science, from frontier to applied research. Interested Canadians can apply to be a partner for new COST Actions, or can join preparatory teams submitting new proposed project calls for possible collaboration. Canadians can register at [e-COST](#) for consideration.

**d. Host EU researchers - NGI Enrichers.** The [NGI Enrichers](#) (Next Generation Internet) program supports European NGI researchers and innovators to spend 3-6 months in Canada (or the US) to work and collaborate with Canadian hosts to promote knowledge-sharing, and establish long-term collaborations on NGI technologies, services, and standards. The program provides travel funding, allowance, and visas for visiting fellows from Europe, and supports both fellows and their hosts with boot camps, mentors, visibility, and community building.

**e. Support Canadian international trade/partnership interests – TCS.** The Government of Canada's [Trade Commissioners Service \(TCS\)](#) offers help for international trade through networks, funding and support. This includes sharing global opportunities – as is this case with this document – and connecting Canadian clients like SMEs, heads of universities/research institutes with targeted EU counterparts or potential partners. Please email [BREUTD@international.gc.ca](mailto:BREUTD@international.gc.ca) to learn more.

## 9. Eureka

[Eureka](#) is the world's biggest intergovernmental network for supporting international industry-led R&D projects. It takes a bottom-up approach with projects being in any technological area with a civilian purpose. Its network provides an effective mechanism to increase bilateral STI cooperation, particularly for SMEs. It has 45 full member countries including Canada, South Korea and Israel, and Associate countries including Argentina, Chile, Singapore, and South Africa. Combining national financing to generate results, Eureka supports three types of projects: Clusters, Individual and Eurostars that differ in project scope, funding level, composition of partnership and length.

On June 22, 2022, on our 10-year anniversary of participation, Canada became a full member of Eureka. The [National Research Council \(NRC\)](#) serves as the secretariat for Canada and manages the Canadian National Committee for Eureka. To date Canadian SMEs have been supported on 300+ projects, with 600+ foreign partners from 34 countries (total project value € 400m).

Click link to search for [Open Calls](#). For more info see [Eureka | In your country \(eurekanetwork.org\)](#). For support email [Eric.Holdrinet@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca](mailto:Eric.Holdrinet@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca) or [Sonia.nour@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca](mailto:Sonia.nour@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca).

## Σ NETWORK

- Participants from at least 2 Eureka countries
- Ongoing applications + bi/multilateral and thematic Calls
- Wide variation in national funding criteria & budget availability
- Funding ≈350k\$ / IRAP-eligible CDN SME

## e EUROSTARS

- Participants from at least 2 Eureka countries
- Highly competitive Calls for proposals (2 calls/yr)
- Grant-type funding in all participating countries
- Funding ≈350k\$ / IRAP-eligible CDN SME

## Σ CLUSTERS

- Enables collaboration with MNEs and large firms
- Accelerates SME access to global value chains
- Typical consortia of 5 to 20 participants
- Large project value 2-15 M€
- Thematic per Cluster
- IRAP funding ≈1M\$ /IRAP-eligible CDN SME

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## 10. Trade Commissioner Service Products and Tools

[TCS Products & Tools](#) to support Canadian trade in the EU. Please see link for a full list of guides and tools we here at Mission of Canada to the EU in Brussels have created, to support Canadians abroad that includes: Horizon Europe Guide for Canadians, STI Funding Programs for Canadians, How to protect your Intellectual property in Europe, Canadian cybersecurity companies exporting to the EU, and the EU's General Data Protection Regulation.