



# The Innovation Fund

## Introduction and calls for proposals

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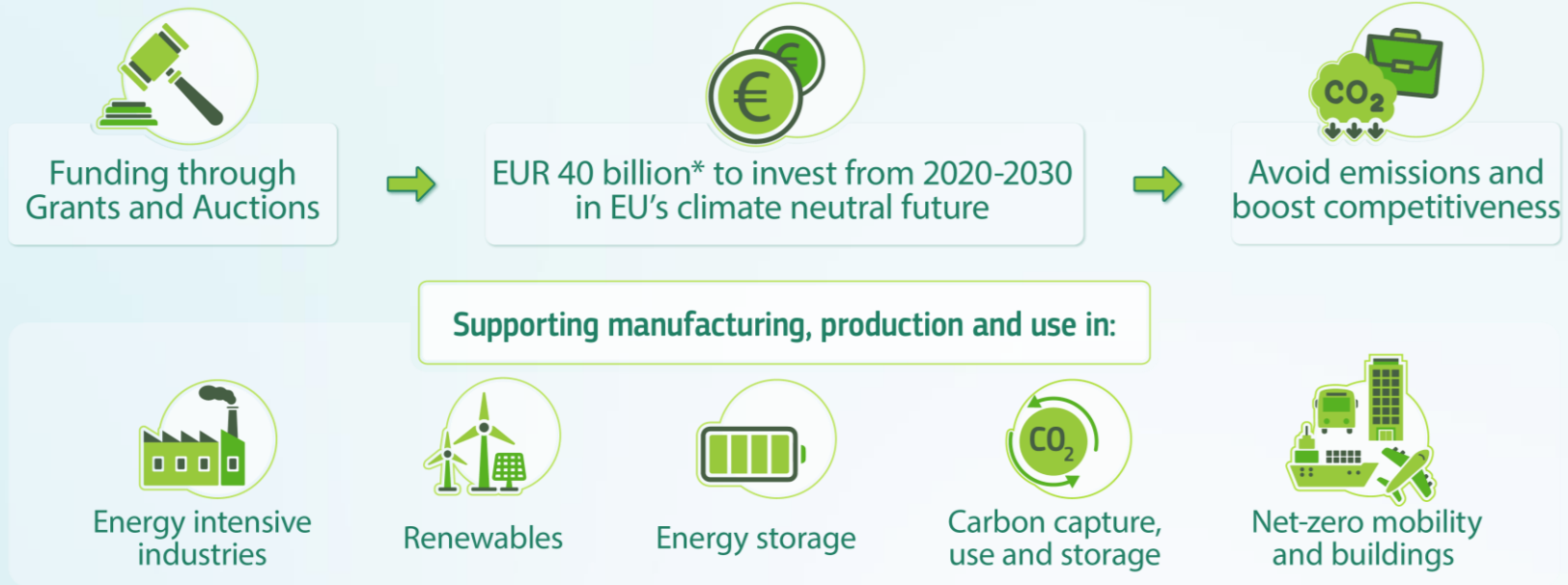
*17 January 2024*

*Vienna*

# Introduction & policy updates

## Innovation Fund

### *Deploying innovative net-zero technologies for climate neutrality*



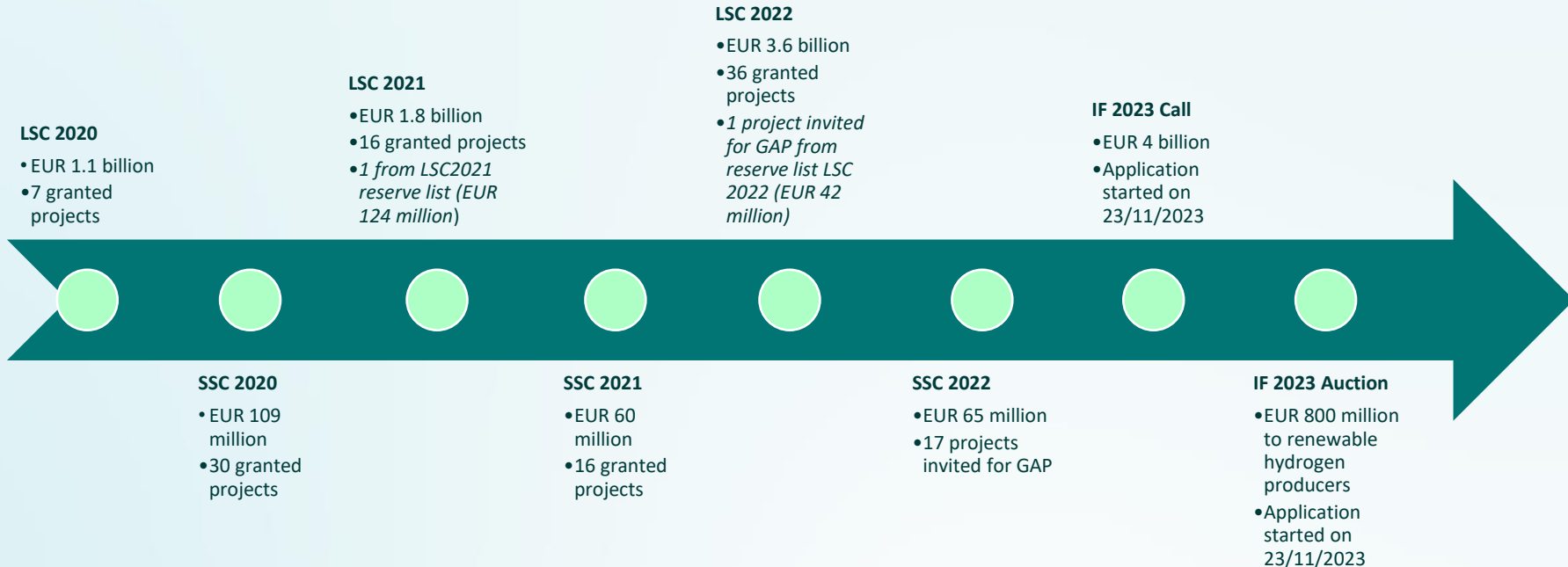
\*based on a carbon price of 75 EUR/tonne

# The Innovation Fund can support urgent policy priorities, but holds a long-term line of bottom-up support across sectors



- **RePowerEU** objective of 10Mt of renewable H2 domestic production.
- **Net-Zero Industry Act:** clean tech manufacturing topic (€700 million in 2022, €1.4 billion in 2023).
- **European Hydrogen Bank:** first pilot auction under the Innovation Fund
- **Wind package:** Priority in project development assistance

# Evolution of the Innovation Fund



GAP – Grant Agreement Preparation



Over EUR 3 bn already provided for low-carbon innovation projects

# Innovation Fund project status

104 Ongoing Projects

20 under Grant Agreement  
Preparation\*

21 reached  
Financial Close\*

5 Entered into  
Operation

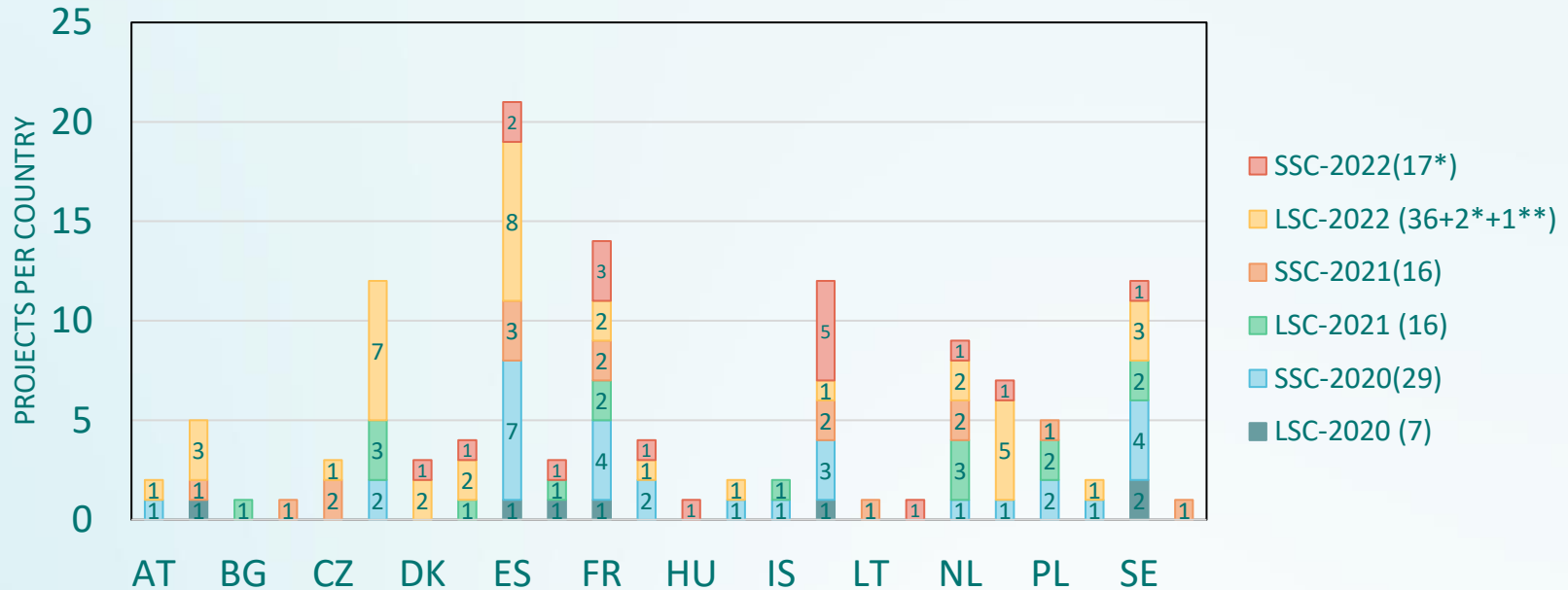
2 from  
LSC-2022  
+1 LSC 2022  
reserve list

17 from  
SSC-2022

\*updated 09/01/2024

# Geographical Distribution - Project Portfolio

Innovation Fund's Project portfolio per country \*\*\*



\* Projects pre-selected / invited to GAP (17 SSC-2022\* +2 LSC-2022\* + 1 from LSC-2022 reserve list\*\*)

\*\*\*Projects with locations in more than one MS have been represented for each MS where they are implemented

# Austria

## Ongoing projects



2  
Projects



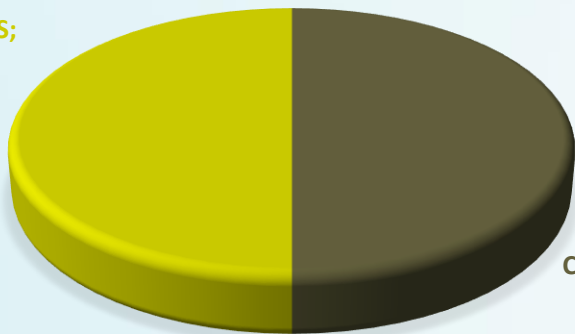
50.9 million € EU  
contribution



966 ktCO<sub>2</sub> eq  
first 10 years

### Sectoral distribution

Intra-day ES;  
1



Chemicals; 1

Austria





# Innovation Fund 2023 Call

# Innovation Fund 2023 call in a nutshell

## Timeline

- Launch: [23 November 2023](#)
- Deadline for application: 9 April 2024
- Results to be announced: Q4 2024

## Grant distribution

- LUMP-SUM contribution grant up to 60% of relevant costs
- Up to 40% of grant at financial close
- Remaining amount of at least 60% after financial close
- Generally, at least 10% after Entry into operation.

## Links

- [Link to the information day and recording](#)
- [Link to Funding and Tenders portal](#)

Topic	Topic budget
Large-scale projects	EUR 1 700 million
Medium-scale projects	EUR 500 million
Small-scale projects	EUR 200 million
Clean-tech manufacturing	EUR 1 400 million
Pilot projects	EUR 200 million
<b>IF23 Call Total Budget +PDA</b>	<b>EUR 4 billion + 20% flexibility reserve</b>

# Eligible activities scope

## Large, medium, and small-scale projects

- **Innovation in low-carbon technologies and processes** in sectors listed in Annex I and Annex III to the EU ETS Directive 2003/87, including CCU
- Construction and operation of projects for **CCS**
- Construction and operation of innovative **renewable energy and energy storage technologies**
- **Maritime and aviation** transport sectors: energy efficiency, sustainable alternative fuels, electrification, zero-emission propulsion technologies, wind technologies, innovative infrastructure in the maritime sector for EU container transshipment ports

New

## Cleantech components manufacturing

- **Renewable energy installations** (in photovoltaics, concentrated solar power, on-shore and offshore wind power, ocean energy, geothermal, solar thermal, and others), including their connection to the electricity/heat grid
- **Electrolysers and fuel cells**
- **Energy storage solutions** covering batteries and other storage solutions for stationary and mobile use for intra-day and long duration storage
- **Heat pumps**

## Pilot projects

- Construction and operation of projects **validating, testing and optimising highly innovative, deep decarbonisation solutions in all sectors** eligible for Innovation Fund support

# Eligibility

- Participants have to be **legal entities**; can be established anywhere in the world
- Projects must be located in the **EEA** (EU Member States and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway)
- The project must:
  - Reach **financial close within 4 years** after grant signature (maximum time to financial close)
  - **Operate at least** (minimum GHG emission avoidance monitoring period) **5 years** after entry into operation
    - Except SSP and PILOTS – at least 3 years after entry into operation
- Project budget: the maximum grant amount **must not exceed 60 % of the relevant costs**

Topic	Project eligibility CAPEX
Large-scale projects	CAPEX > EUR 100 million
Medium-scale projects	EUR 100 million > CAPEX > EUR 20 million
Small-scale projects	EUR 20 million > CAPEX > EUR 2.5 million
Clean-tech manufacturing	CAPEX > EUR 2.5 million
Pilot projects	CAPEX > EUR 2.5 million

# Admissibility and eligibility criteria

## Admissibility

- Submitted **before** call **deadline**, electronically and using forms in the Submission System
- Complete all the application forms and include mandatory annexes

## Eligibility

- Participants have to be **legal entities**; can be established anywhere in the world.
- Projects must be located in the **EEA** (EU Member States and Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway)
- The project must:
  - Reach **financial close within four years** after grant signature (maximum time to financial close)
  - **Operate at least** (minimum GHG emission avoidance monitoring period) **five years** after entry into operation
    - Except Small Scale Projects and PILOTS – at least **three years** after entry into operation
- Maximum grant amount **must not exceed 60% of the relevant costs**
- Eligible activities

# Geographical location for new sectors

## Maritime sector projects

- When the projects concern **investments in ships**, those ships must call ports under the jurisdiction of an EEA country\* on a regular basis (at least **30% of their annual calls** on ports) or perform service or support activities in such ports
- When the projects concern **investments in ports infrastructure** the ports must be under the jurisdiction an EEA country.
  - Some examples: renewable alternative fuel bunkering infrastructures in ports, including container transshipment ports

*\*(see the list in the call text)*

## Maritime, buildings, and road

For new activities introduced by the revised ETS Directive (meaning maritime, buildings and road transport) the eligibility of projects located in **Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein** is dependent on the incorporation of the **revised ETS Directive into the EEA Agreement and its entry into force before the deadline for submission of proposals.**

# Award Criteria

## Degree of innovation

- Innovation beyond state of the art (see Annex 1 of call text) at European level (except SSP – European or national)
- Consider the ongoing Innovation Fund [projects](#)

## GHG emission avoidance potential

- Absolute
- Relative
- Quality of the GHG emission avoidance calculation and minimum requirements

## Project maturity

- Technical
- Financial
- Operational

## Replicability

- Efficiency gains
- Further deployment
- Resilience of EU industrial system
- Multiple environmental impacts
- Knowledge sharing

New

## Cost efficiency

- Cost efficiency ratio (different formula for Pilot projects)
- Quality of the cost calculation and minimum requirements

New

# Bonus points

Bonus	Scoring
1. The potential to deliver <b>net carbon removals</b>	1 point (half point 0.5 possible)
2. <b>Other GHG savings</b> from emissions sources that go beyond the boundaries established in the Innovation Fund methodology for the given sector	1 point (half point 0.5 possible)
3. Commitment to use <b>electricity from additional renewable sources</b> or to use <b>RFNBO hydrogen</b>	1 point (half point 0.5 possible)
4. For <b>Maritime sector</b> projects <u>only</u> : demonstrated potential to decarbonising the maritime sector and reducing its climate impacts	1 point (half point 0.5 possible)

New



# Degree of Innovation

## Innovation in relation to the state of the art:

- State of the art
- Innovation beyond the state of the art

## Quality, soundness, and reliability of the information provided

- **Application form, Part B:**
  - Section 1: Degree of innovation
- Feasibility study (mandatory annex)
- Any existing technical due diligence report (optional)

# Degree of Innovation

- Innovation Fund aims at supporting projects beyond incremental innovation on a scale from intermediate to breakthrough, including scaling-up, considering the European level as reference point (for SSP topic the European or national level)

Very low / incremental innovation

Intermediate or strong

Very strong or breakthrough

**Incremental innovation:** minor changes or improvements to existing products, processes or business models; implies limited new knowledge / technology; such projects **will not be retained.**

**Intermediate or strong:** new or considerably changed technologies or processes or business models; novel combinations of mature technologies; scale-up of innovative technologies

**Very strong or breakthrough:** completely new technologies or processes or business models; innovations leading to significant changes that transforms entire markets or industries or creates new ones

# GHG emission avoidance potential (1)

- ❖ Quality of the GHG emission avoidance calculation and minimum requirements:
  - external experts will assess the quality and credibility of your calculation of GHG emission avoidance potential;
  - in case of issues in the quality of the calculation (including reliability and margin of uncertainty of key parameters and/or key assumptions), points may be reduced;
  - in case the calculation methodology is incorrectly applied or in case the Application documents have not been filled correctly, the score for this sub-criterion will be below the minimum threshold and the proposal will be rejected.

# GHG emission avoidance potential (2)

- ❖ Quality of the GHG emission avoidance calculation and **minimum requirements**

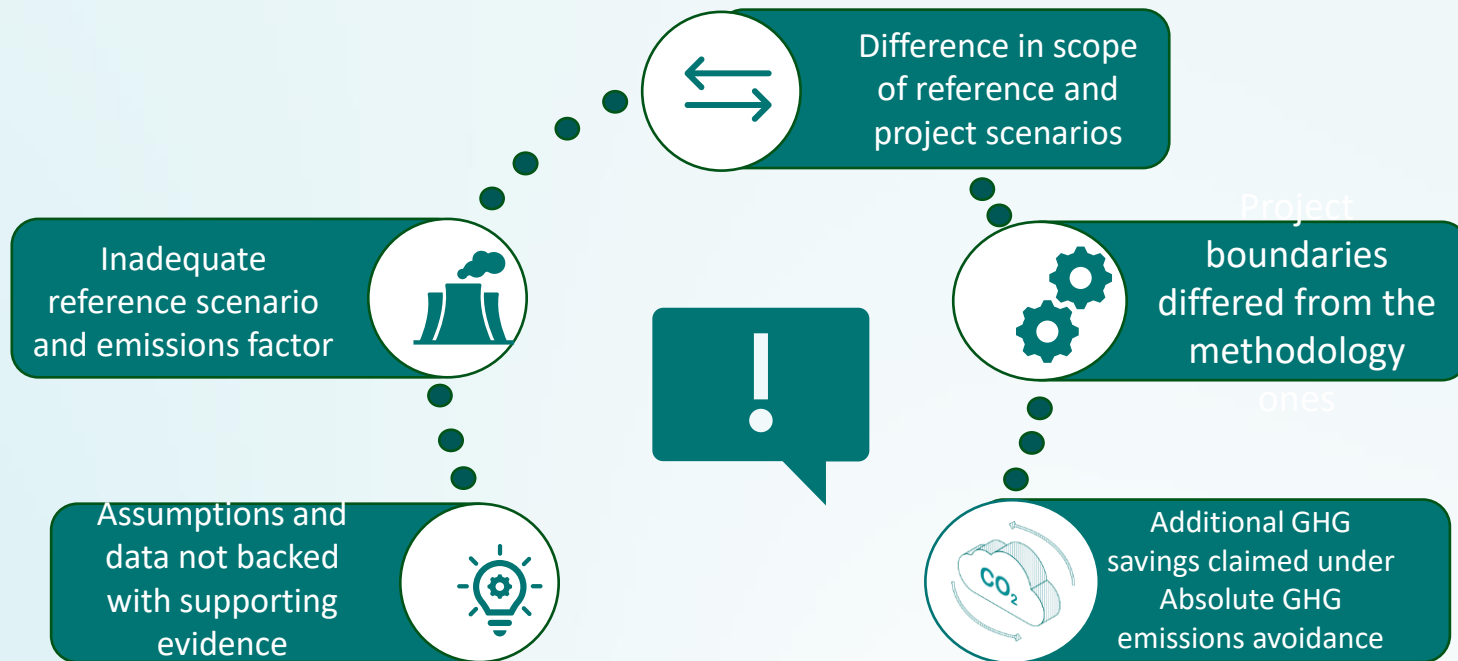
Where relevant, the proposal should demonstrate whether the proposed project meets or not the **minimum requirements**:

- For projects producing products with an EU ETS benchmark: the process emissions of the project per unit of product must be below the **EU ETS benchmark(s)** applicable at the call deadline;
- For projects using biomass feedstocks: the biomass used will at least meet the **sustainability requirements** of the Renewable Energy Directive;
- For all projects: the **relative GHG emission** avoidance must be:
  - for **all topics** except INNOVFUND-2023-NZT-PILOTS: **at least 50%**
  - for INNOVFUND-2023-NZT-**PILOTS** topic: **at least 75%**.



**Proposals not meeting minimum requirements will be rejected!**

# Main mistakes on GHG emissions avoidance



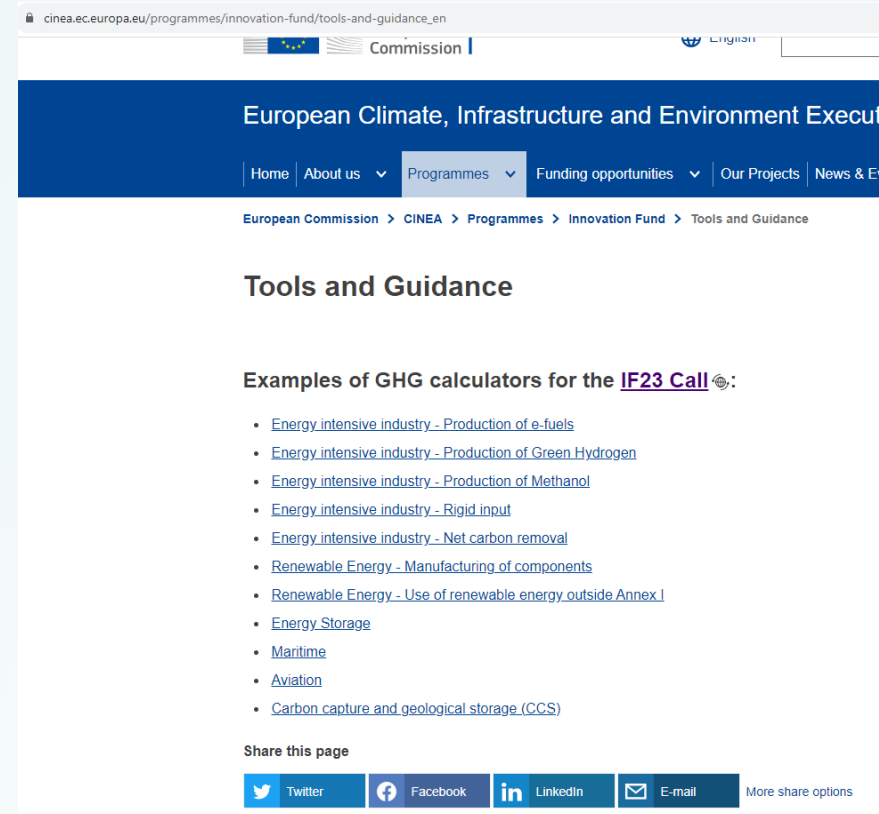
# New features of the GHG Calculation criterion

Two new sections in the GHG calculation methodology and GHG calculators

- Maritime
- Aviation

[A new set of filled examples in the templates](#)

[Tutorial on how to fill in the GHG Calculators](#)



The screenshot shows the website [cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/innovation-fund/tools-and-guidance\\_en](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/innovation-fund/tools-and-guidance_en). The page is titled "Tools and Guidance" and is part of the "European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Plan". The navigation menu includes "Home", "About us", "Programmes", "Funding opportunities", "Our Projects", and "News & Events". The breadcrumb trail is "European Commission > CINEA > Programmes > Innovation Fund > Tools and Guidance".

**Examples of GHG calculators for the [IF23 Call](#):**

- [Energy intensive industry - Production of e-fuels](#)
- [Energy intensive industry - Production of Green Hydrogen](#)
- [Energy intensive industry - Production of Methanol](#)
- [Energy intensive industry - Rigid input](#)
- [Energy intensive industry - Net carbon removal](#)
- [Renewable Energy - Manufacturing of components](#)
- [Renewable Energy - Use of renewable energy outside Annex I](#)
- [Energy Storage](#)
- [Maritime](#)
- [Aviation](#)
- [Carbon capture and geological storage \(CCS\)](#)

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# Technical Maturity

Technical feasibility to deliver the expected output and GHG emissions avoidance

Technology risks and proposed mitigation measures

- **Application form, Part B, sections:**
  - Section 0: technical characteristics and scope / technology scope
  - 3.1 (technical maturity)
  - 3.4 (risk management)
- Feasibility study (mandatory annex)
- Any existing technical due diligence report (optional)

# Financial Maturity – key points

**Objective: assess the project capacity to reach Financial Close within 4 years or faster**

**Project business plan and profitability**

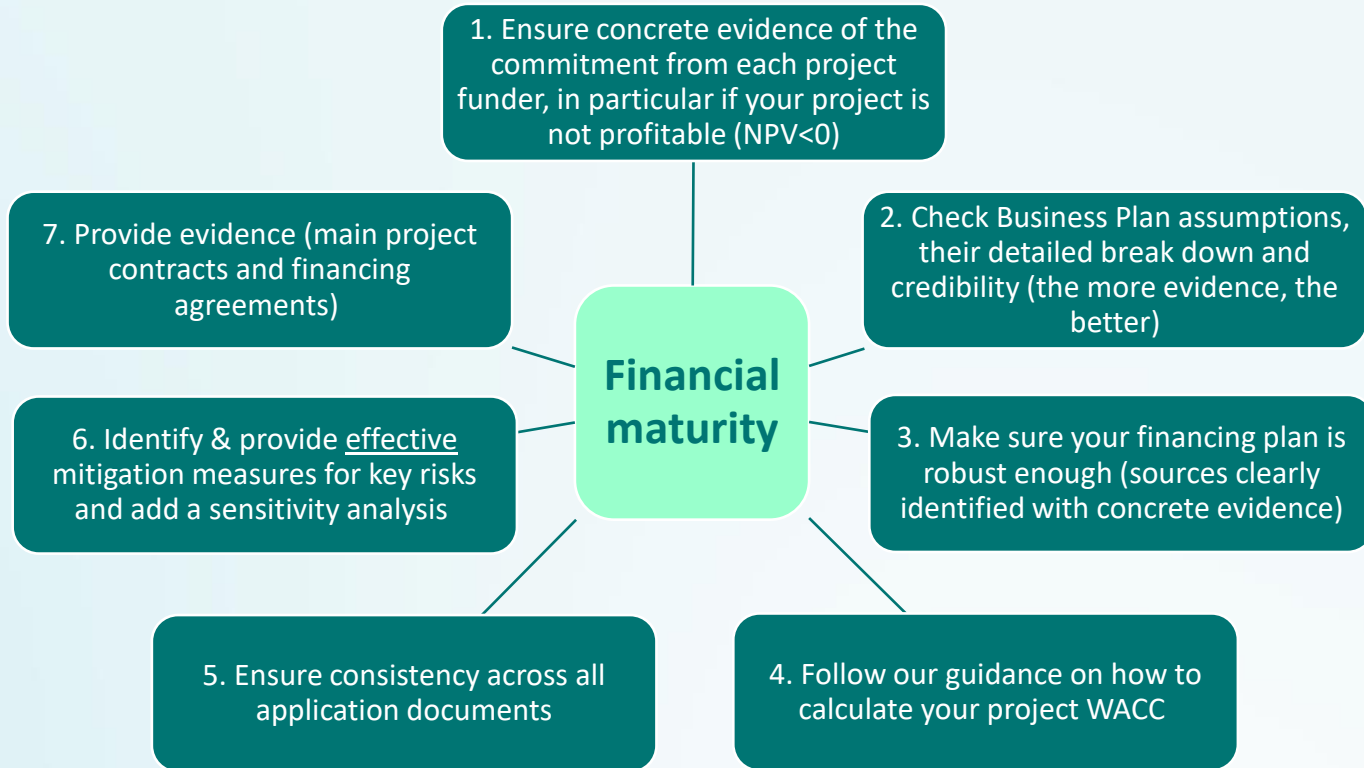
**Soundness of the financing plan**

**Commitment of project funders**

**Understanding of project business and financial risks**



# 7 golden rules of Financial Maturity



# Cost efficiency

Requested Innovation Fund  
grant + other public support \*

Absolute GHG emission  
avoidance

During 10 years after entry into operation

Maximum requested IF grant is  
60% of total relevant costs

Applicants choosing not to  
apply for the maximum grant  
will be more competitive when  
ranked against other applicants  
in 'cost per unit performance'  
metric.

*(\*) Other public support must impact the same project (i.e. the case of cumulation) and include State aid or funding from the EU funding programmes*

*For public support received during operation, the rule is to add the undiscounted amount during the first ten years of operation*

# Cost efficiency– key points

- **Cost efficiency is split in two parts :**

- One automatic
- One “qualitative” on how the computation of Cost Efficiency ratio was made

- **Cost efficiency ratio level has minimum requirement (except for Pilots) :**

(a) for all topics except Pilots:

- If cost efficiency ratio is *lower than or equal to* €200/tCO<sub>2</sub>eq, score will be based on formula **12 – (12 x (cost efficiency ratio/200))**
- If cost efficiency ratio is *higher than* €200/tCO<sub>2</sub>eq, **proposal will be rejected (i.e. not considered for funding)**

(b) for Pilots

- If cost efficiency ratio is *lower than or equal to* €2000/tCO<sub>2</sub>eq, score will be based on formula **12 – (12 x (cost efficiency ratio/2000))**
- If cost efficiency ratio is *higher than* €2000/tCO<sub>2</sub>eq, proposal gets zero score but is **NOT rejected**

# Project Maturity : Operational Maturity

Credible project implementation plan covering financial close, entry into operation and annual reporting after the entry into operation and related deliverables

Relevance and track record of the project management team and soundness of the project organisation

State of play and credibility of the plan for obtaining required permits, intellectual property rights or licences and other regulatory procedures

Soundness of the strategy for ensuring public acceptance

Address project's implementation risks (e.g. dependencies on other projects) and credible risk mitigation measures

## Application form, Part B, sections:

- 3.3 - Operational maturity
- 3.4 - Risks and mitigation measures
- 7.1 - Work Plan
- 7.2 – Work Packages, activities, resources and timing

## Timetable-Gantt chart (mandatory document)

## Participant information (including CVs and previous projects, if any)

- Any existing due diligence report (optional)

# Project maturity

## Timeline

### Define project timeline

- Comprehensive, realistic and consistent with technical and financial elements of your project

## Risks

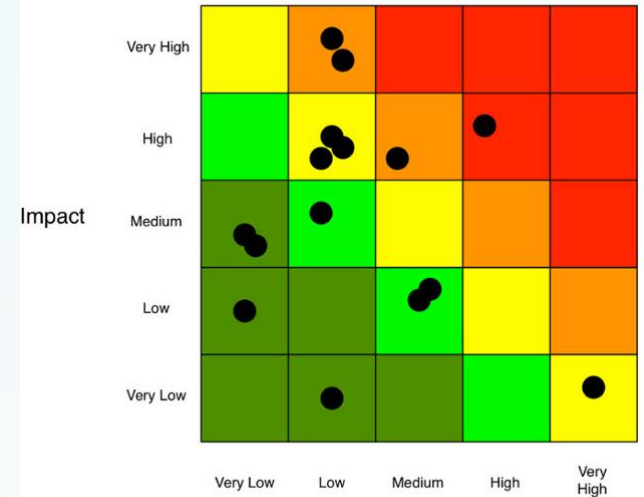
### Identify Technical, financial and operational risks

- Provide a **comprehensive risk assessment**
- Ensure convincing **mitigation strategies** across all major risks

## Evidence

- **Provide contractual evidence**
- E.g., letters of support, MoUs, indicative terms of agreement for off-take agreements, key suppliers, quotes from vendors, EPC parties

Sample Risk Heat Map



Source: RiskLens

Likelihood

# Replicability



Replicability in terms of efficiency gains

Replicability in terms of further deployment

Resilience of EU industrial system

Potential in terms of multiple environmental impacts

Quality and extent of the knowledge sharing

- **Application form, Part B, sections:**
  - 4.1 - Replicability
  - 4.2 - Knowledge sharing — Communication, dissemination and visibility
- **Knowledge sharing plan**
  - Mandatory document for all topics except INNOVFUND-2023-NZT-GENERAL-SSP (Small-scale projects)

# How to apply

## Check all relevant information to apply

- [Funding and Tenders Portal link](#)
- [Application process tutorial](#)
- [Financial Information Sheet tutorial](#)
- [GHG Methodology tutorials](#)
- [Legal validation and financial capacity assessment process tutorial](#)
- [Info Day recording and slides](#)
- [Where to find useful information](#)
- [Innovation Fund dashboard](#)
- [FAQ](#)

The screenshot shows the website for the Innovation Fund 2023 Call. The header includes the agency name and navigation links. The main content area is titled 'Innovation Fund 2023 Call' and includes a 'Details' section with a table of key information, a 'Description' section, and an 'Events' section. A prominent yellow 'APPLY NOW' button is visible. At the bottom, there are links for 'Where to find useful information', 'GHG Methodology', and 'Financial Information File'.

European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency

Home | About us | Programmes | Funding opportunities | Our Projects | News & Events | Publications

European Commission > CINEA > Funding opportunities > Calls for proposals > Innovation Fund 2023 Call

CALL FOR PROPOSALS | Open

### Innovation Fund 2023 Call

PAGE CONTENTS

- Details
- Description
- Events
- Tutorials
- Supporting documents

#### Details

Status	OPEN
Publication date	23 November 2023
Opening date	23 November 2023
Deadline model	Single-stage
Deadline date	9 April 2024, 17:00 (CEST)

#### Description

On 23 November 2023, the European Commission launched the [Innovation Fund 2023 Call](#), with a total budget of €4 billion.

You can already find all information and documentation related to the call on the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#), including the call text and application forms.

**APPLY NOW**

The deadline is 9 April 2024, 17:00 Brussels time.

#### Events

To provide better guidance to applicants during the submission process, CINEA and DG CLIMA have organised an [online Info Day](#) on 7 December, to learn more about the new call, the award criteria allowing questions and answers from participants.

**Registration**

#### Tutorials

CINEA has also produced a series of [tutorials](#) to help you throughout the application process:

- [Where to find useful information](#) (Application Process)
- [GHG Methodology](#)
- [Financial Information File](#) (soon available)

# Some Recommendations

- Read carefully the call documents and understand well the requirements (including the admissibility and eligibility ones)
- Get familiar with and follow the call methodologies and guidance (GHG and relevant costs)
- Before submitting, please check consistency between different parts and documents of your application
- Help is available:
  - Lessons learned and info-day recordings
  - Tutorial on the application procedure
  - FAQ
  - Innovation Fund helpdesk
  - IT helpdesk
  - The existing Innovation Fund projects – dashboard

\*Recording, the presentation and extra slides on lessons learned from LSC 2022 will be available on CINEA website



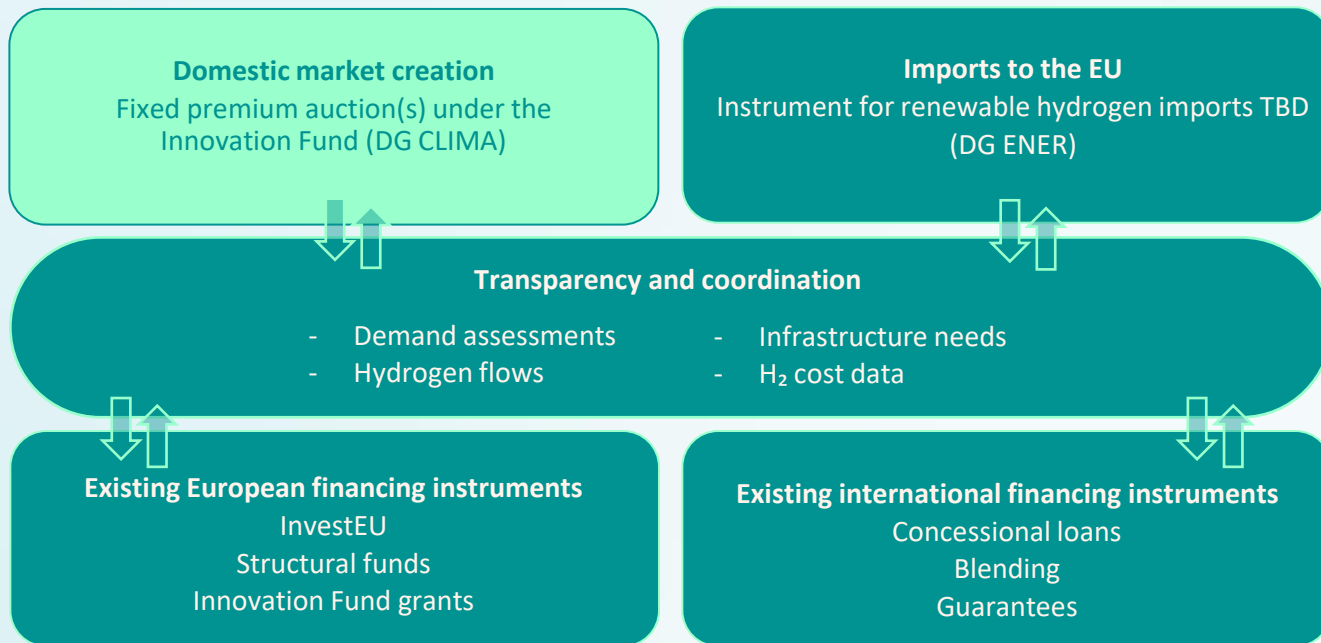
# Innovation Fund 2023 Auction

# The European Hydrogen Bank

- Announced in the State of the Energy Union 2022 – linked to **REPowerEU** objectives
- Communication adopted on 16 March 2023
- **Pilot auction** opened on 23 November 2023
- **Auctions-as-a-service** offered to MS looking to move towards their hydrogen targets



# European Hydrogen Bank proposed activities



# IF23 Auction objectives

Putting Europe's net-zero industry in the lead:



**Reducing the cost gap** between renewable and fossil hydrogen in the EU



Allowing for **price discovery** and renewable hydrogen **market formation**



**De-risking** European hydrogen projects

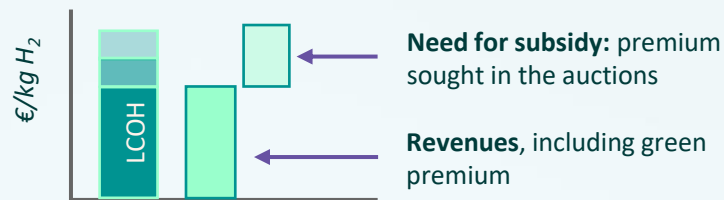


**Reducing administrative burdens**

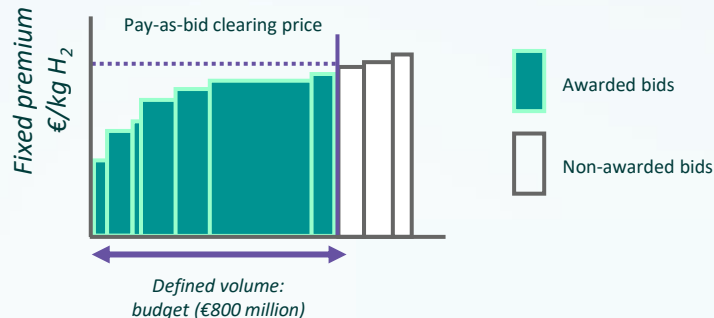
# The auction design was chosen with simplicity and implementation speed in mind...

- Budget: **€800 million**
- Auctioned good: **RFNBO hydrogen**
- Support in form of a **fixed premium** in €/kg of renewable hydrogen **produced** over **10 years**
- Bids **ranked on price** – budget allocated to projects with the lowest specific support requirements
- Other award criteria assessed **Pass/Fail**
- **Pay-as-bid** (no indexation to inflation)
- **Output based support**, upon verified and certified production of RFNBO volumes (no payments before entry into operation)
- **Semi-annual** payments

### Fixed-premium auction



### Bids ranked on price only



# Germany - first country to join 'auctions as a service' with a EUR 350 million national window

**Easy:** Germany notified State aid scheme based on Commission-provided pre-notification template

**Fast:** Fast State aid approval (Auction T&Cs CEEAG compatible)

## **Low administrative burden:**

Following the evaluation and ranking by CINEA, MS with a national support window receive a list of projects wanting to be passed on to national funding.

MS signs grant agreements and manages payments of successful projects, respecting the price ranking of the overall EU-wide auction.

- **Great option for allocating national funds such as RRF or Modernisation Fund resources with streamlined State aid process & reduced administrative effort through an existing scheme**

# Auctions for RFNBO hydrogen production

- A second round of auctions for the European Hydrogen Bank was announced at the European Hydrogen Week in Brussels in November 2023 to deliver on the Commission's intention for **a total of EUR 3 billion support for the sector**.
- Staged approach:
  1. The Commission will evaluate the results and lessons learned from the first pilot auction **after the call closure on 8 February**.
  2. **Draft Terms & Conditions** for the second round of auctions are planned to be published for consultation with stakeholders in **spring 2024**.
  3. The **budget of a next round** will have to be calibrated with the next call for proposals for grants **in the light of the overall resources available** under the Innovation Fund.

# Requirements for participating projects

## Minimum electrolyser capacity

### 5MWe per bid

- one location in EEA, no virtual capacity pooling
- new capacity only (no “start of works” prior to application)

## Maximum requested grant per project (=price\*volume) capped

**1/3 of total auction budget (€800m)** to avoid “winner takes all”

## Maximum bid price (“ceiling price”)

**4.5 €/kg** of RFNBO hydrogen produced

## Planned entry into operation

**less than 5 years from grant signature**

## No restriction on off-take sectors or origin of electrolysers

## Termination for severe under-production over 3 consecutive years

**Below 30%** on average of planned yearly average volume

## Completion guarantee (“deposit”)

### 4% of maximum grant amount

- To enter the auction, you need to provide an Lol for the guarantee from a financial institution
- To sign GA, you need the financial institution to issue the guarantee

## Reporting at the end of the support period

### Certification of 70% GHG savings on overall production

- Independent third-party certificate or audited report



# General cumulation rules with other support



Electrolyser  
manufacturer

✓ Other public  
support is allowed



RE electricity  
producer

Rules for public  
support spelled out  
in RFNBO Delegated  
Act



Electrolyser

✗ Cumulation is in  
general not allowed

✓ Some exceptions  
to this rule



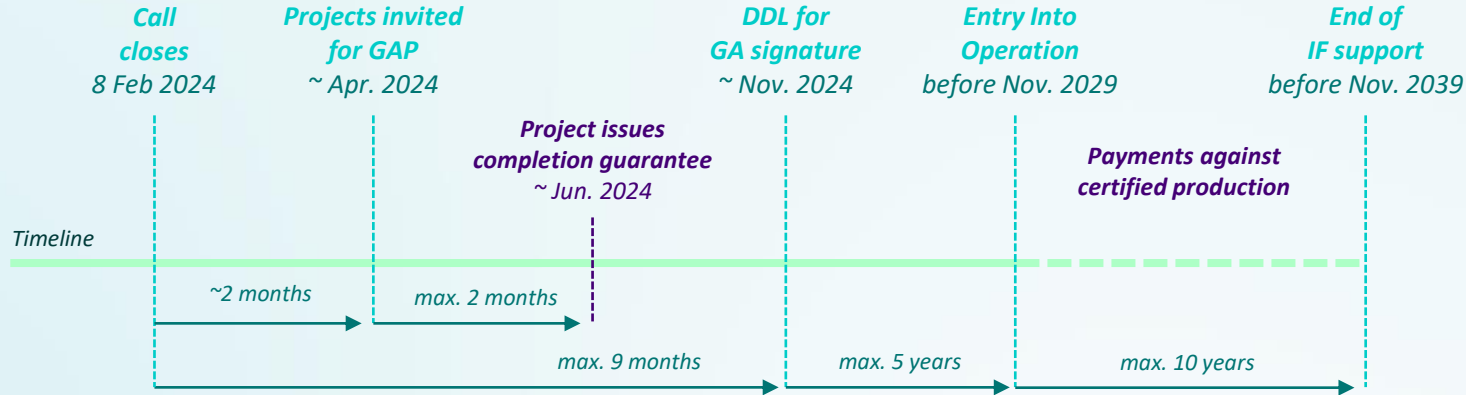
Hydrogen  
offtaker

✓ For CAPEX or non-dedicated  
infrastructure other public  
support is allowed

✗ For OPEX related to  
consumption of hydrogen from  
auction winner other public  
support is not allowed

# IF23 Auction implementation timeline

indicative



- Evaluation is simplified (compared to regular grants) and much faster: approx. 2 months
- If the completion guarantee is well prepared, winners could sign grants well before the deadline for GA Signature
- Maximum time to Entry into Operation (EiO) of 5 years to allow projects to manage delays, but normally EiO can be achieved earlier

# Assessment criteria

## Relevance and Quality

### **Relevance**

#### **Pass/Fail**

Contribution to the objectives of this call  
(i.e. production of RFNBO hydrogen  
based on the sourcing strategy)



### **Quality**

#### **Pass/Fail**

Technical maturity  
Financial maturity  
Operational maturity



### **Ranking**

- According to the bid price  
(in € per kg, with two digits after the comma)
- Within the limits of the available budget



# Assessment criteria

## Relevance and Quality



**Credibility & consistency** of the documents

Renewable electricity sourcing strategy

Hydrogen off-take and price hedging strategy

Electrolyser procurement strategy

Plan to receive environmental permits on time

Plan to receive grid connection permits on time

Completion guarantee letter of intent

## Key Information

- Auction opened on **23 November** and **close on 8 February**
- Available application information through in [EU Funding & Tender Portal](#)
- Frequently asked questions document on the [IF website](#) and in the EU Funding and Tender Portal
- Any questions? Ask us at [EU Funding & Tenders InnovFund HelpDesk](#)

# Project Development Assistance

## IF Project Development Ass(PDA) – key highlights

The EIB has been supporting the European Commission and CINEA, with the implementation of the Innovation Fund through a dedicated **Project Development Assistance (PDA)** to improve the maturity of projects for subsequent applications

The bank has been reviewing **87 projects** from **20 countries** in the first 6 calls (LSC and SSC 2020, LSC and SSC 2021, LSC and SSC 2022)

Overall promoters have expressed **high satisfaction about the PDA service** provided

# PDA process



*Budget  
Time, Quality*

*Project  
Summary Note*



# Important to know

# Forthcoming events

## IF23 Auction

- [Application period 23 November 2023 - 8 February 2024](#)
- [Link to application](#)

## IF23 Call

- [23 November 2023 - 9 April 2024](#)
- [Link to application](#)

## Innovative Clean Tech Conference 2024

- SAVE THE DATE - 11 April 2024
- Hybrid event

# Sign up as an EU expert

## for the INNOVATION FUND

Deploying innovative net-zero technologies for climate neutrality



## Join as project evaluator for Innovation Fund

- Technical expert
- Financial expert
- GHG expert
- Rapporteur

[Sign up as an Expert \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

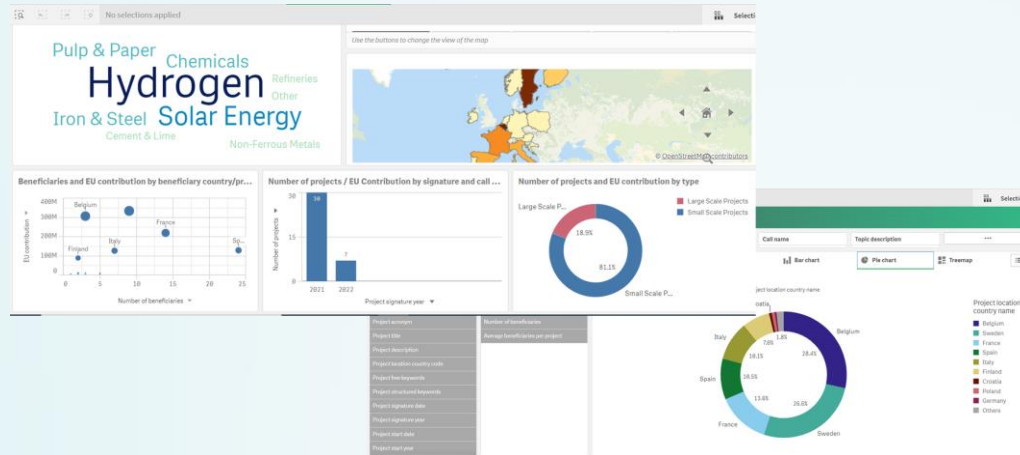
More information here:



<https://europa.eu/IRInFw>



# IF dashboard



Available on [CINEA's website](#)

# More information



All (past) call documents available on the Funding and Tenders Portal including:

- ✓ Guidance and calculation tools on GHG emissions and relevant costs
- ✓ Frequently asked questions

<https://europa.eu/!QB67by>

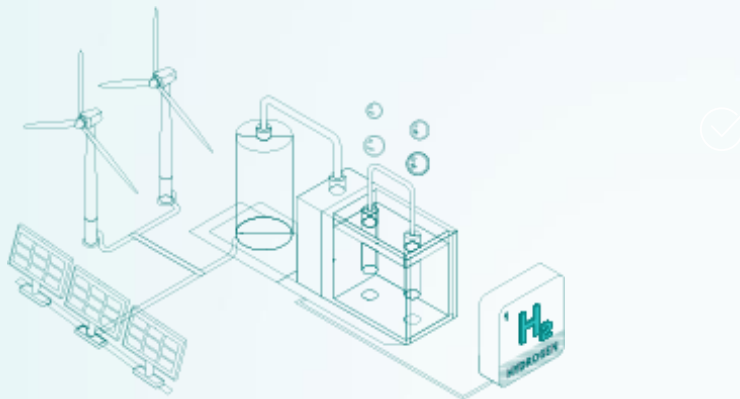


Further info, planning of new calls, recorded webinars and videos available on the IF Website:

<https://europa.eu/!rx34Dt>

And more videos available on YouTube:

<https://bit.ly/2WxK8w7>



# Let's keep in touch



[climate.ec.europa.eu](https://climate.ec.europa.eu)

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# Thank you



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