

Suppliers' Open call: Guidelines for applicants

Annex 0 – Guidelines for applicants

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1. Overview of InnoHSupport

InnoHSupport is a project funded by the European Union, having as main goal to bridge the gaps that hamper the progress in the definition, implementation, and adoption of innovative solutions in the healthcare ecosystem.

The project, which started in September 2024 and will last until August 2026, offers a portfolio of advisory services for procurers, state-owned enterprises, SMEs and start-ups, research and technological organisations, innovation agencies and other organizations, like investors, responsible for promoting innovation procurement.

These advisory services include, among others, provision of training materials, executive trainings delivered by experts in innovation procurement, dedicated coaching sessions, innovation showcases, scanning of relevant bidding opportunities, matchmaking with potential partners, acceleration services, etc.

The Project methodology is based on three pillars:

Pillar I. Capacity building focused on building capacities and skills to the innovation procurement ecosystem.

Pillar II. Inventory of innovation procurement advisory services oriented towards the design and testing of a comprehensive set of advisory services covering the whole innovation process cycle.

Pillar III. Collaboration and Matchmaking to foster the innovation ecosystem building by developing spaces for co-design and matchmaking.

InnoHSupport is made by and for innovation actors, with a consortium bringing together 7 partners and 2 affiliated entities from 6 EU countries (ES, NL, IE, BU, BE, UK), including a consultancy firm, a university, a public buyer and several associations with high expertise within the public procurement of innovation in the healthcare systems. The list and description of InnoHSupport partners can be found [here](#).

2. Collaborative and Matchmaking Programme for Suppliers

As one of the main pillars of the project, showcase and matchmaking is to be considered a crucial aspect of the innovation procurement ecosystem. Beyond providing specific and individual focused services, an ecosystem linked collaborative approach is indeed needed to catalyse, reinforce and address ambitious innovation procurement initiatives in healthcare.

The main gaps identified in the healthcare sector relate to three key stakeholders: first, the difficulties faced by SMEs and startups in predicting demand and effectively participating in procurement processes; second, the challenges for procurers in identifying and aligning with the needs of similar organizations, leading to infrequent collaborative procurement; and third, the absence of adequate channels for investors to discover investment opportunities and communicate their priorities and interests in the healthcare sector.

2.1 Aim and objective of the call

This open call for suppliers aims to prepare the selected participants to understand and challenge their procurement processes, as well as their investment and partnering needs. They will receive coaching on effectively presenting their business goals to potential funding organizations, investors, and partners. Moreover, these services will connect the supported suppliers with the broader procurement ecosystem, encompassing public and private procurers, investors, and strategic partners.

2.2 Benefits and offered services to selected suppliers

- 1 online individual challenge session with experts in procurement and partnering to refine their procurement needs and strategies.
- 1 online group pitch training session to dry run their investors and partnering pitch, receiving feedback from seasoned coaches and peers.
- 1 online matchmaking event to present in front of investors, corporates, procurers and industrial leaders, and to network with relevant stakeholders.

- Online One2One meetings.
- Access to the Agora community, offering wide visibility opportunities to showcase technological innovations to relevant actors.
- Raise awareness about identified procurement opportunities

2.3 Open call dates

The open call has 3 cut off dates, listed here below, and for each cut-off date 10 suppliers will be selected and offered the project services:

- **1st Cohort : 10 February – 18 April 2025**
- **2nd Cohort : 23 June – 21 September 2025**
- **3rd Cohort : 7 January 26 – 15 March 2026**

3. Open Call Process and Timeline

The suppliers selected through the open call will undergo through the InnoHSupport programme organised in three phases with specific outputs and outcomes at the end of each phase:

Phase 1 – Company application (about 10/12 weeks):

The open call – first cohort will launch on 10 February 2025, aiming to select 10 innovative Healthcare suppliers interested in public procurement. The Open Call will be published on the InnoHSupport project website and promoted via the project's social media channels and those of consortium partners to maximise outreach to relevant suppliers. Applicants must submit their application forms, along with any required annexes, via the application@iinohsupport.eu email address by the specified deadline for each cohort to ensure validity.

Phase 2 – Company selection (around 3 weeks):

Eligible applications submitted by the Open Call deadline will undergo evaluation by a Selection Panel comprising experts in public procurement, business and financing. The results of the selection will be communicated to each applicant. The 10 highest-ranking suppliers from each cohort will be selected and invited to participate in the matchmaking and training session, for a total of 30 suppliers across all cohorts. Applicants may be contacted for additional information if

necessary to finalise the selection process. The names of the selected companies will be published on the project website approximately one week after the decision is communicated to the applicants, to allow them sufficient time to confirm their participation and commit to the offered services.

Phase 3 – InnoHSupport training sessions and matchmaking event (4/5 months)

The selected companies of each cohort will be invited to participate in the InnoHSupport training sessions and matchmaking event.

Below you will find the timelines detailing the application periods and associated activities for all three cohorts. These timelines are indicative and may be subject to adjust. Any minor deviations will be updated accordingly on the project website.

Suppliers call - 1st Cohort



Suppliers Call - 2nd Cohort



Suppliers Call - 3rd Cohort



3.1 Who can apply?

All suppliers applying must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. **Company HQ location** (geographical eligibility). The application must be submitted by a representative of a company that is a legal entity (a single organisation, not a consortium) and classified as an SME, start-up, or scale-up, according to the EU definition of SMEs (https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-definition_en)
 - **The company must be based in one of the EU-27 countries** (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden)
 - **Alternatively, the company may be based in one of the following eligible countries:** Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Kosovo¹, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Tunisia, Türkiye, United Kingdom, Ukraine².

¹This 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

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

Applicants must ensure that less than 25% of their (voting) shares are held by Russian shareholders subject to the [EU Restrictive Measures in response to the crisis in the Ukraine](#).

2. Innovative Product Requirements:

Applicants must present an **innovative product relevant to the Healthcare sector**, including sectors such as biotech, medtech, life sciences, digital health, and related fields.

3. Relevance to Public Procurement:

Applicants must offer products and services that bring innovation and added value to healthcare public procurement. For each call, a list of active and/or potential future procurement opportunities may be provided to facilitate a potential matchmaking with applicants.

The Selection Committee will review and evaluate applications from all companies that meet the eligibility criteria. The eligibility check will be conducted by the consortium partners.

3.2 Applications Submission

There is a single-entry point for all Open Call proposals, the submission link will be made available on the Open Call webpage at www.innohsupport.eu. The application process will close after each deadline:

- **1st cut-off date: 18/4/24**
- **2nd cut-off date: 21/9/24**
- **3rd cut-off date: 15/3/26**

Additional documentation, including the Application Form will be accessible on www.innohsupport.eu. Please ensure you review the eligibility criterion outlined in section 3.1 before submitting your proposal.

3.3 Documentation Formats & Language

The submission set consists of a PDF application form, which must be completed by the applicant and sent via email to application@innohsupport.eu. Supporting

documents (pitch deck and others relevant materials) may also be included as annexes to the proposal template. Any document required in electronic format during any phase must be submitted in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, PDF format without printing restrictions.

If selected, additional supporting documents may be required during the InnoHSupport service preparation phase for showcase and clarification purposes. Please note that English is the official language for InnoHSupport Open Call. Submissions in any other language will not be evaluated.

3.4 Number of applications per supplier

Generally, only one application per supplier may be selected for InnoHSupport services. However, this does not limit applicants to submit only one proposal. A supplier may submit an application for each one of the three cohorts calls if they are not selected in the previous rounds, i.e. if a supplier is selected following the first open call, they will not be eligible for selection in the second or third open calls.

3.5 Submit your application

The following instructions and steps shall be considered when submitting your application:

1. For the application preparation, the applicants are required to download and complete the application form available on www.innohsupport.eu.

2. General instructions are provided in this Guidelines for Applicants, which should be reviewed before completing the application. If the submitted application documents do not meet the formatting requirements, you may be asked to resubmit them.

3. Be specific and concise. As the slide deck is a key element in the evaluation process, ensure that all 6 evaluation components are clearly addressed:

- Relevance to the call,
- Leadership Competence/Potential,
- Product/Technology Merit,
- Market Potential,
- Go to Market/Strategy,
- Presentation Quality,

- Business Clarity/Credibility.

4. Complete the following components of the application:

- a. Download and complete all mandatory fields in the application form. Filling in the non-mandatory fields may provide additional helpful context.
- b. Include in the email your slide deck in PDF or PPT.
- c. Agree with terms and conditions of privacy policy and use of personal data available in the application form.

5. If selected, you agree and give consent, for good and valuable dissemination purposes within the InnoHSupport project, to enable the usage of your company logo, name, and other materials (e.g., profile photo or LinkedIn profile) on the project website and social media channels. Therefore, you acknowledge to give access to and/or a copy of the mentioned materials above for marketing purposes.

6. By submitting your application, you consent to allow InnoHSupport to store and process the personal information in it.

7. Submit your application before the deadline. An incomplete application will not be considered. You will receive an automatic email confirming your application was submitted. The proposal can still be improved before the deadline, the applicant can submit a new version of their application. Only the latest version received before the call deadline will be considered for evaluation. If an applicant would like to make small changes to their application, they can write to info@innohsupport.eu. No information regarding the quality of the application will be given during this exchange.

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the application. Failure of the proposal to be submitted on time for any reason, including network communications delays, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance.

4. Evaluation of Applications

4.1 Eligibility checking

Before the evaluation process begins, the consortium will verify the eligibility of all the submitted proposals. The following criteria will be checked for each application:

- The application is submitted by a representative of a company which is a legal entity (a single organisation, not a consortium) - an SME, start-up, or scale-up, according to the EU definition of SMEs https://singlemarket-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-definition_en.
- The company headquarters (HQ) are located in one of the eligible countries outlined in Section 3.1 of the current Guidelines.
- The application is submitted before the specific Open Call deadline.
- The application was sent via e-mail to the following address:
application@innohsupport.eu
- The application is written and submitted in English language.
- Failure to meet one or more of these criteria, will result in the application being deemed ineligible and excluded from the evaluation process.

4.2 Evaluation process

Each eligible application will be assessed by a Selection Panel of evaluators (at least two evaluators assigned to each applicant). Evaluators will receive a list of applications to review and will only access the applications after they sign an Absence-of-Conflict-of-Interest Declaration (ACID), confirming in writing that no conflict of interest exist with the assigned proposals..

The evaluation process will be done remotely. Each application will be evaluated based on six criteria (1-10 scale). The scores provided by the evaluators will be averaged for each application. The companies will then be ranked according to their total average score. The top 10 scoring companies will be selected.

Criteria	Rating 1-3	Rating 4-6	Rating 7-9	Rating 10
Eligibility Criteria: Yes or no, checked by the Consortium upon application.				
Relevance to the call	The supplier does not seem to offer products/services relevant to public procurement, but it is nevertheless interested in learning about procurement.	The presented products/services seem to be adequately relevant for public procurement in healthcare.	The presented products/services are very relevant for public procurement in healthcare.	The presented products/services add a great value to public procurement in healthcare.
Leadership competence/potential	The supplier team lacks enough skills and experience to grow the business. More manpower is needed and willingness to work with industry and research needs to be improved.	The supplier team has average skills and experience to grow the business. The management team is involved and there is potential.	The supplier team has the necessary skills and experience to grow the business and is able/willing to work with industry and research. Credible and consistent sector expertise.	The supplier team has all the skills and experience to grow the business and is able/willing to work with industry and research. Great potential to take the business to the next level.
Product/Technology Merit	Technology or product solutions are developed with no or very limited track record/commercial deployment. No clear indication of how the product/technology need is addressed	Technology or product solutions are developed, but with unknown/some track record. Address the product/technology need, but not sufficiently	Technology or product solutions are developed with a demonstrable track record of delivery. Address the product/technology	Technology or product solutions developed are state-of-the-art and well advanced compared to the

	nor how it compares to competitors.	differentiated from the competitors.	need and has high potential.	competitors. Address the product/technology need and is produced in operationally meaningful quantities.
Market Potential	The potential market of customers for the presented product is very niche and the business model is weak.	The potential market of customers for the presented product has potential and/or the business model needs to be improved.	The potential market of customers for the presented product is attractive and the business model has high potential.	The potential market of customers for the presented product is attractive and the business model is strong.
Go to Market/ Strategy	The company has a poor go-to-market strategy and no clear distinction in position in comparison to its direct and indirect competitors.	The company has a good go-to-market strategy and must work to improve its position in the market compared to its direct and indirect competitors.	The company has a distinct go-to-market strategy and has potential to improve its position in the market in comparison to its direct and indirect competitors.	The company has a clear go to market strategy and is well positioned in the market in comparison with its direct and indirect competitors.
Presentation Quality	The presentation and/or Video is not complete, lacks clear articulation and provides little information.	The presentation and/or Video has a good and clear message. Has potential for improvement in	The Presentation and/or Video is poised, clear, with proper volume and executed with confidence. High	The Presentation and/or Video is complete, clear, balanced, with

	Messages need to be more convincing and well executed.	execution and delivering a convincing idea.	potential to be convincing.	proper volume and convincing.
Business Clarity/Credibility	The revenue streams on customer acquisition model are poor and have no credibility.	The revenue streams on customer acquisition model are good, but with unknown/some credibility.	The revenue streams on customer acquisition model are well developed and credible.	The revenue streams on customer acquisition model are clear and credible, with proven track record.

4.3 Evaluation Summary Reports

The top 10 companies will comprise the list of suppliers invited to participate in InnoHSupport services for that specific cohort. A reserve list will also be prepared, consisting of the next highest-ranked proposals, to be used if a company is unable to complete the process or sign the commitment document for any reason.

The procedure for prioritising applications with the same evaluation score (ex aequo) within the ranking list is as follows:

- Proposals will first be prioritised based on the score for the criterion **Relevance to the Call**.
- If these scores are equal, priority will be determined by the scores for the criterion **Product/Technology Merit** and **Business Clarity/Credibility**.
- If further prioritization is needed, the combined scores for **Product/Technology Merit**, **Business Clarity/Credibility** and **Leadership Competence/Potential** will be used.

4.4 Communication of results

For each application, the applicant will receive one of the three possible communications via e-mail:

- A notice of selection for InnoHSupport. If the application is amongst the selected, the email will include an invitation to join InnoHSupport, a commitment document template, and a list of next steps to follow.
- A notice of placement in the reserve list. In this case your application may still qualify for InnoHSupport, subject to the availability of places.
- A notice of rejection of the application, that will include a justification for the decision.

The results are expected to be communicated within 3 to 4 weeks after the application deadline.

If selected for InnoHSupport, the confirmation of engagement should be completed within one week of the results being communicated. Should the required documents not be submitted within one week, an additional one week may be granted. If the documents are still not submitted after the extra week, InnoHSupport reserves the right to invite the next supplier ranked in the list.

5. Legal Framework

This Call is launched under the InnoHSupport project (Grant Agreement No. 101157552). Applicants should be aware that their information and documents will be used by the InnoHSupport consortium, European Commission (EC) and other entities involved in processing this call --from application to selection and through the provision of services.

Specifically, selected suppliers must be aware that InnoHSupport project partners will maintain internal records, including but not limited to:

- A list of applications received, identifying the name and e-mail address of applicants.
- All communications with applicants prior to the call's closure and during the evaluation process.
- The names and affiliations of the members of the Selection Panel.
- Copies of the completed forms used in the evaluation process for each application.
- A record of all incidents occurring during the evaluation (e.g. the handling of conflict of interests) and any deviation from standard procedure (e.g. if the highest-scoring application was not selected, documenting the objective reasons for the decision).
- Copies of all signed and attached documents.

In accordance with the conditions established in the implementing agreements, decisions, or contracts, any data, knowledge or information designated as confidential within the framework of an action shall be treated as such. Confidentiality will be maintained in compliance with the European Union law regarding the protection of and access to classified information.

6. Privacy

Personal data will be collected, processed, and published in compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679, commonly referred as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation). Further information on the GDPR can be found [here](#).

We are looking forward to receiving your application!