CASCADE FUNDING MECHANISM

Cascade funding is a simple, direct, and administrative-less mechanism the European Commission has brought forward to support smaller players in the innovation arena.

Cascade Funding, also known as Financial Support for Third Parties (FSTP), is a European Commission mechanism to distribute public funding to assist beneficiaries, such as start-ups, scale-ups, SME and/or mid-caps, in the uptake or development of digital innovation. This funding method aims at simplifying the administrative procedures, creating a light, SME-friendly application scheme, by allowing that some EU-funded projects may issue, in turn, open calls for further funding. Then, third parties receiving cascade funding under EU program have a contract with the consortium of the EU-funded project (not with the EC) of which they become a third party. This means that this consortium is liable towards the European Commission for the third parties to which it provides financial support and, hence, no legal and financial validation is necessary for these third parties, which makes quicker/easier for projects to have open calls in their projects.

For the moment, only the Horizon and Digital programmes may foresee the use of FSTP. These open calls from EU-funded projects are usually competitive, have a European dimension and aims at:

- selecting tech start-ups or scale-ups for acceleration or incubation purposes (usually equity free),
- supporting pilots, demonstrations and/or experiments on a specific innovative technology or framework (usually with the participation of start-ups or SME), or
- integrating more participants to the project to extend its scope or to address specific tasks.

Support offered by these open calls, usually consist in funding (typically in the range of €50,000 to €150,000) but it may also be vouchers for support services or free access and support to use testing facilities.

To support you, as EU advisor we have prepared a **summary of the existing international cascade funding initiatives.** Please check and analyse those that better fit your interest so to apply for funding and support, considering that:

- They are ordered by deadline, from those already closed (in red colour, but maybe will open again next year) to those with open calls (those with deadlines in less than one month are in yellow colour and the rest in green colour).
- Even some calls are closed, some of the initiatives provide also other services so it is interesting to subscribe to receive updates and information in those covering your field.
- The description is not exhaustive, so if you are interested to better click on the available link provided in the logo, to read all the information and check if you are eligible.

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION	TECHNOLOGY	DOMAINS	OPEN CALL	SUPPORT
evolved 5G	Turn products and services into scalable businesses by adapting new digital technologies and 5G applications. 20 entrepreneurs and start-ups will be selected to join the 5-month program, starting in January 2023.	5G	5G	Closed	Capacity building, training
AI4media	A Centre of Excellence delivering next generation AI Research and Training at the service of Media, Society and Democracy. Apply today with your innovative project in the AI for media sectors and win up to €50.000 per project.	AI	Media	Closed	50.000€ per project
NGI ASSURE	The goal of NGI Assure is to support projects that design and engineer reusable building blocks for the Next Generation Internet as part of a complete, strong chain of assurances for all stakeholders regarding the source and integrity of identities, identifiers, data, cyberphysical systems, service components and processes.	Data IoT AI	Internet	Closed	50.000€ per project
NGI ZERO ENTRUST	NGI Zero Entrust works toward better technologies to restore and maintain European sovereignty and secure democratic ownership of the digital society. The goal is to provide people with concrete new tools and more reliable infrastructure, which grants them privacy and data portability, provides better overall security, and allows them more agency and choice.	Digital Tools	Internet	Closed	50.000€ per project
SMART4ALL	An extensive network of Digital Innovation Hubs for boosting technology and business development in South, Eastern and Central Europe, supporting knowledge and technology transfer.	IoT Cyber Physical Systems (CPS) Customised Low-Energy Computing (CLEC)	Energy Agriculture Transport	Closed	80.000€ per project
VOJEXT	Next-generation cognitive cobots for smarter industries: Extend the capacity and technology outreach of VOJEXT infrastructure by attracting tech/robot SME suppliers to integrate their units with VOJEXT APIs. Deploy geographic and sector distributed small-scale pilots at DIH living labs and/or SMEs/mid-caps facilities to demonstrate the impact/potential of VOJEXT technologies and approach towards digitising and boosting European industry.	Robotics, AI	Manufacturing	07/12/22	80.000€ per project
i-nergy	Consortiums composed of at least two organisations (1 technology service provider/developer with SME status, including startups + 1 infrastructure provider/data owner willing to implement an energetic solution) will receive support in two stages to develop new services on top of existing technologies (MVPs).	Data, AI	Energy	12/12/22	100.000€ per project
BD4NRG Big Data for Next Generation Energy	BD4NRG Open Call will distribute up to 500.000 EUR among up to 10 SMEs and Start-ups with the initiative to bring new application experiments, by taking up and validating the results gained in the first phase of BD4NRG. The topics that the proposals shall address are: i) Efficiency and reliability of electricity networks operation improvement, ii) Optimisation of grid and distributed assets, iii) Sustainable energy investments, iv) Cross-Cutting Applications.	AI, Data	Energy	15/12/22	60.000€ per project
VENTURE ALLIANCES	Creating Joint Ventures between 100 researchers and businesses. Academic innovators and innovation-focused business can apply to join the matchmaking and collaboration platform to make alliances to commercialise innovation or innovate in businesses.	Innovation to be commercialised Sustainable And Green Solutions, Enhancing Corporate Social Responsibility	Academic Businesses	15/12/22	Training, mentorship and IPR support

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION	TECHNOLOGY	DOMAINS	OPEN CALL	SUPPORT
DIH4AI	The Financial Support to Third Parties is reserved for those AI and/or users SMEs associated in mini consortia with non-profit research institutes and DIHs willing to extend and improve the DIH4AI catalogue of advanced AI components and tools and/or participate in innovative experiments in the domain of Artificial Intelligence. The DIH4AI project will select up to 10 SME-centred experiments focused on developing new AI solutions, to extend the AI4EU platform. The selected consortia will receive up to EUR 100,000. DIHs will provide support to SMEs to test and experiment.	AI	Agriculture Energy Manufacturing	16/12/22	100.000€ per project
IntellioT	IntelIIoT's mission is to enable the execution of semi-autonomous IoT applications for AI-enabled systems. The consortium's projects aim to overcome the limitations of traditional cloud-centric IoT, such as unreliable connectivity, privacy concerns, or high round-trip times. We are looking for 6 European Start-ups and SMEs to integrate the Intelllot framework into their IoT solutions in Energy, Construction, and Smart City, receiving grants of up to 60,000 euros.	IoT	Energy Smart City Construction	09/01/23	50.000€ per project
DigiPrime	DigiPrime aims to expend its ecosystem, including "supply-side participants" that will contribute to enhance the digital platforms and the pilot systems, and "demand-side participants", that will use the services in the federation of platforms. Open Call type B: Pilots in new sectors using the DigiPrime digital platform, services, and basic data transfer functionalities.	Digital	Batteries Textile Mechatronics & Electronics Composites & Techno-Polymers Textile	10/01/23	200.000€ per project
MAGIC MIND Spearheading Artificial Intelligence	A leading European AI accelerator intended to spearhead the development and commercialisation of Artificial Intelligence solutions and start-ups. Start-ups in the pre-seed and seed stages will receive funding and ongoing support from partners of the accelerator, in a process that will help them to establish their business models. The best teams will have access to additional funding directly and through the network of Digital Magics, the program promoters and Partners.	AI	Healthcare Market Transport Cybersecurity Software	09/01/23	90K€-120K€
dRural	dRural Service Marketplace will connect the ecosystem of potential end-users and service providers in rural areas, delivering a broad spectrum of services while boosting economic growth and improving citizens' quality of life. Get from €5.000 up to €50.000 to provide your service in rural areas.	Data Digital tools	Agriculture Healthcare Tourism Transport	15/01/23	50.000€ per project
assist-iot	The ASSIST-IoT project has reserved part of the project budget to fund specific activities to enhance and improve IoT features and applications and boost the NGIoT community across Europe. Third parties are expected to come along and carry out relevant actions during the project's life cycle. This Open Call aims at funding innovative proposals that will enhance ASSIST-IoT's objectives framed (mandatorily) within one (out of its three) pilot(s).	AI IoT Data 5G	Port automation Smart safety Cohesive vehicle monitoring and diagnostics	15/01/23	60.000€ per project
TOURISM4.0	The Tourism4.0 project provides capacity building, technology transfer, support and assistance programme for tourism SMEs (located in Italy, Portugal, Spain, Malta, or Croatia) to help them adopt and leverage emerging digital technologies to improve their productivity, sustainability and business performance.	Digital tools	Tourism	18/01/23	7.000€ per project

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GEN4 OLIVE	The Call for Proposals will fund olive breeding plan design and its validation activities. The proposals must start from previous research results related to GEN4OLIVE project in order to design breeding plan by taking advantage of the existing olive genetic resources in and out of the Germplasm Banks, and by applying short activities to demonstrate the feasibility of breeding plan to be designed.	Genetics	Agriculture	25/01/23	10.000€ per project
S3E	S3E is the Southern European Entrepreneurship Engine funded by the European Commission to improve the market connectedness & efficiency of research teams, start-ups & SMEs working on Deep Tech. We accelerate Deep Tech projects coming from research teams, and deep tech solutions coming from start-ups and SMEs that can impact social development and economic growth for a more sustainable future.	Deep tech	Engineering and technology Agricultural sciences Life Sciences Physical Sciences	10/02/23	Mentoring and networking
WORTH PARTNERSHIP PROJECT	Paving the way for a greener digital transition and more competitive European lifestyle industries and creatives. The objective of the Call is to strengthen the competitiveness of SMEs in lifestyle industries and increase their innovation capacities through cross-sectorial, pan-European collaborations between SMEs, designers and technology providers to foster the integration of creativity, design and new technologies in SMEs with the aim of obtaining high added-value products, processes and services and at the same time enriching them with the exchange of knowledge and skills between the different actors involved. Topics: textile fashion, footwear, leather and fur, jewellery, furniture, interior design and decoration, and accessories.	Digital Energy Efficiency Reduce carbon footprint	Textile Energy Manufacturing	15/02/23	20.000€ per project
REACH	REACH aims to be the main innovation mechanism that supports experimentations on secure and trusted data value chains across several sectors and launching of new data-fuelled products and services to the market, leveraging the capacities of the best data-driven DIHs in Europe. There are open calls for Start-ups/SMEs, Digital Innovation Hubs, Data Providers and Investors.	Data	Healthcare Energy Tourism Manufacturing	21/02/23	120.000€ per project
TAILOR	The connectivity fund is open to all European AI researchers. You should be able to demonstrate that you live in Europe and are active in AI through your publication record or using other proof of involvement in AI research projects. You need a great idea to do excellent AI research and have an invitation letter from your hosting lab. The focus lies on connecting TAILOR and non-TAILOR labs.	AI	-	15/03/23 (new call every 4 months)	15.000€ per project
STAIRWAI	The StairwAI project aims to provide a service for matchmaking for users of the AI-on-demand platform, such as low-tech SMEs to easily find AI assets, experts, knowledge, hardware resource providers and much more.				60.000€ per project
	BonsAPPs and StairwAI projects are looking for EU entities that own HPC computing and data resources capable of providing on-demand access to HPC clouds to third parties.	HPC computing Data	access to HPC clouds	01/03/23	
	BonsAPPs and StairwAI projects are looking for AI Talents to support the tasks of the AI Model training (data science), AI development and integration to low-tech SMEs selected within the EU projects and get a financial contribution	AI	AI Model training (data science) AI development and integration	30/03/23	
DIGI TOUR	Voucher 2 - Boosting the tourism sector in Europe through digital tools and innovation. The Call for Proposals for tourism SMEs aimed for the support of tourism SMEs by improving their digital maturity, skills, and capacities	Digital Tools	Tourism	31/03/23 for Voucher 1	20.000€ per project

OTHER SUPPORTING INITATIVES

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION	TECHNOLOGY	DOMAINS	OPEN CALL	SUPPORT
	Better Factory invites Small and Medium-sized Manufacturers(SMEs) to redesign their current product portfolio together with Business and Arts mentors and Technology experts. Better Factory will support pilot projects by teams composed of one manufacturing company, one artist, and one company supplying technology per Open Call. A total of 2 Open Calls will be launched to select the best 16 pilot projects, the so-called Knowledge Transfer Experiments (KTEs) during the lifetime of the project.	Reducing waste and production resources Optimising factory logistics Robotics to support workers Production preplanning and simulation	Plastic-Rubber Furniture-Wood Food- Agriculture Construction Metal-Machinery Textile-Leather	Closed	Access to DIHs, finance, training and advice
	This is a one-of-a-kind investment readiness training to help you pitch to investors, present your financials, understand the due diligence process and demonstrate your success, practice pitching & close the deal.	Photonics		15/12/22	Coaching & Investor Matchmaking
	We are looking for entrepreneurs with the most innovative ideas, projects, tools and companies whose main mission is to transform the sports industry with a unique technological solution.	Any	Sports	10/01/12	Access to pilot tests, dissemination and investors
	funding cross-border experiments for technology transfer between researchers and industrial actors. SMART4ALL aims to accelerate the development of innovative product-oriented projects and offer guidance towards successful commercialisation.	Customised Low-Energy Computing (CLEC) CyberPhysical Systems (CPS) Internet of Things (IoT)	Transport Agriculture Environment Digitised anything	17/01/23	80.000€ per project
	The goal of the project is to create a sustainable network of DIHs which can support local manufacturing industry especially SMEs in the deployment of latest Robotics and AI technologies. As members of the network, selected applicants will have access to some of the most advanced technologies in the fields of Robotics and AI for the manufacturing industry, plus access to European funding opportunities	Robotics AI	Manufacturing	31/01/23	10.000€ per project
	SecurIT aims to focus on increasing the security of current applications, services and infrastructures by integrating state-of-the-art security solutions or processes, supporting the creation of lead markets & market incentives in Europe. SecurIT will select up to 21 projects per Open Call aiming to develop new prototypes or demonstrators in the security and cybersecurity domain with support from SecurIT consortium. Projects should be submitted by the consortia of 2 at least SMEs and should address one of the SecurIT challenges.	Security	Sensitive infrastructure protection Disaster resilience Public space protection – events	14/03/23	88.000€ per project
	Real Madrid Next and FundingBox sportstech innovation program are scouting for scalable businesses, leading-edge technologies, and resourceful entrepreneurs in the sports-tech industry.	Performance Audivisual context E-health Cybersecurity & technology Fan engagement Social	Sports	Always open	Equity, mentorship, investors
	Fostering alliances between traditional and innovative business owners to exchange experiences, best practices, and know-how to transform their business model and improve its sustainability. The project goal is to match the technology providers, traditional manufacturers and supportive organisations to build meaningful connections and together transition to Industry 5.0.	AI Robotics Cybersecurity IoT	Automotive Machinery Equipment	Always open	Digital transformation consultancy, training on Industry 5.0, matchmaking

	The Acceleration Program provides a one-in-all program that supports beneficiaries boost their technical development, leaving them on the path to commercialization. RobotUnion provides.	Robotics	Agrifood Healthcare Manufacturing Civil engineering Open disruptive innovation	Always open	Tech support, mentoring, fundraising (up to 1million€)