

GUIDE

RTI INITIATIVE FOR

TRANSFORMING INDUSTRY

2026 Annual Programme

A programme of the Climate and Energy Fund
of the Austrian Federal Government



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INTRODUCTION

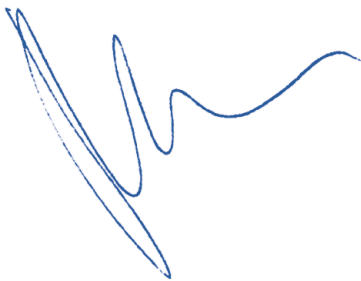
Reducing CO₂ emissions while simultaneously strengthening competitiveness on the global market is the enormous challenge facing Austria's industrial sector. The industry is rising to this challenge, as demonstrated by the positive results of the previous call for proposals: Austrian companies have demonstrated strong innovative capacity even in economically challenging times.

Industrial enterprises, technology providers, and research institutions from all Austrian federal states and across a wide range of industrial sectors are already developing and demonstrating future-ready solutions for the transformation of industry. In doing so, they are making a direct contribution to implementing the Industrial Strategy 2035.

The stated objective of this year's RTI initiative is to further strengthen this innovative capacity and accelerate the transition of research results into practical implementation. Within the framework of the call, projects combine research and development activities with pilot and demonstration plants, enabling innovations to be scaled up more rapidly.

Through our funding programme, we support flagship projects that significantly reduce CO₂ emissions in Austrian industry, improve the energy efficiency of industrial processes, and replace fossil energy sources with sustainable alternatives. Particular emphasis is placed on strengthening domestic production of net-zero technologies. Strategic key technologies, such as renewable energy and hydrogen-based solutions, should be manufactured in Austria for global markets. Therefore, the RTI initiative supports innovative projects that develop and test domestic manufacturing capabilities for future energy technologies.

We would like to thank you for your contribution to the transformation of Austria's industry and look forward to receiving many innovative project proposals.



Bernd Vogl
Managing Director of the Climate and Energy Fund

1. THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS AT A GLANCE

The Climate and Energy Fund is making a maximum of **EUR 19.5 million** available for the 2026 call for proposals.

Table 1: Key details of this call for proposals

Topic	Information
Objectives	The call for proposals aims to contribute to climate neutrality in industry while safeguarding the attractiveness of the location at the same time. The objective is to increase the innovation capacity of Austrian companies and research institutions as well as their competitiveness in international value chains for sustainable net-zero technologies.
Target group	- Companies, particularly those in industry and construction according to Statistics Austria's classification of economic activities (sections B to F of Austrian Statistical Classification of Economic Activities ÖNACE 2025); including energy supply companies - Technology providers and suppliers along the value chain - Institutions for research and knowledge dissemination
Submission deadline	10 March 2027, 12:00 p.m. (noon)
Compulsory preliminary discussion	A compulsory preliminary discussion is required for the following types of projects prior to submission. Combined projects, i.e. projects consisting of a Research and Development (R&D) project together with one or more pilot and demonstration (P&D) plants: Registration deadline: 9 February 2027 via www.umweltfoerderung.at/anmeldung-verpflichtende-vorgespraech-fti-tdi Individual online consultations on Tuesday afternoons between 13 October 2026 and 16 February 2027. Flagship projects: Registration deadline: 9 February 2027 Make an appointment with the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) contacts listed below.
Funding processing and submission advice	Standalone R&D projects and R&D projects as part of combined projects: Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) Sarah-Salome Sidra, MSc, sarah-salome.sidra@ffg.at, Tel.: +43 577 55-5050 Dr.-Ing. Andreas Maier, andreas.maier@ffg.at, Tel.: +43 577 55-5082 DI Paul Strasser, BSc, paul.strasser@ffg.at, Tel.: +43 577 55-5059 Dlin Gertrud Aichberger, gertrud.aichberger@ffg.at, Tel.: +43 577 55-5043 Project and demonstration plants as part of combined projects: Kommunalkredit Public Consulting (KPC) GmbH Renewable Resources team: Tel.: +43 1 316 31-719, fti-tdi@kommunalkredit.at DI Christof Horvath, c.horvath@kommunalkredit.at, +43 1 316 31-238 DI Benedikt Preschern, b.preschern@kommunalkredit.at, +43 1 316 31-632
Call for proposals website	Standalone R&D projects or as part of a combined project: www.ffg.at/FTI-TdI_Ausschreibung_2026 Pilot and demonstration as part of a combined project: www.umweltfoerderung.at/fti-2026
Proposal language	English

Table 2: Overview of Project Formats

Project format	Funding instruments or legal basis	Technology Readiness Level (TRL)	Indicative budget	Compulsory preliminary discussion	Hearing	Funding body
Standalone R&D project Research activities preparing the subsequent implementation or demonstration of the innovation	Cooperative R&D project	Experimental development (TRL 5-8)	EUR 5 million	No, but recommended	No	FFG
	Flagship project	Experimental development (TRL 5-8) Part of industrial research (TRL 2-4) ≤ 50 % of the entire costs of the project		Yes	Yes	
Combined project: R&D project and P&D plants Combined project demonstrates innovation in a real-world environment, supported by accompanying research as a basis for large-scale application.	See Standalone R&D project Pilot and demonstration plant: InvestFRL UFI 2022	See Standalone R&D project Pilot and demonstration plants: Experimental development (TRL 5-8)	EUR 14.5 million	Yes	No	FFG and KPC

Table 3: Overview of the available instruments

Funding instrument	Minimum/maximum funding per project in Euro	Funding rate	Term in months	Cooperation requirement (consortium)
Cooperative R&D project Experimental development	Max. 2 million	Max. 60 %	Max. 36	Yes
Flagship project Predominantly experimental development (proportion of industrial research permitted)	Min. 2 million Max. 4.5 million	Max. 60 % (experimental development) or max. 85 % (industrial research)	Max. 48	Yes
Pilot and demonstration plant InvestFRL UFI 2022, experimental development	Max. 4.5 million	Max. 45 %	Max. 48	No

2. RTI INITIATIVE FOR TRANSFORMING INDUSTRY

2.1 THE FUNDING PROGRAMME

The RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry makes an important contribution to national and European efforts to position Austria and Europe as successful, climate-neutral and competitive industrial locations internationally. The RTI Initiative also supports the objectives and fields of action of [Austria's RTI policy](#) and the [RTI Pact 2027–2029](#).

Within the framework of [Austria's Industrial Strategy 2035](#), the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry corresponds to Measure 10 “Transformation of Industry” and plays a central role in implementing “Strength Area and Key Technology 7: Energy and Environmental Technologies”.

Support is provided through the funding of research and demonstration projects to accelerate the transition from research to market application.

The RTI Initiative supports innovative, future-oriented technologies and system solutions for:

- The transformation of industrial processes towards climate neutrality
- The transformation of industry towards strengthening domestic production of net-zero technologies

Aside from technological aspects, there is also scope for investigating and validating socio-economic issues, legal and societal considerations, as well as future market and business models. However, this is only permitted within the framework of R&D projects aimed at advancing technological development.

The services provided by the NEFI innovation laboratory are available to support project development and networking activities. Prior to submitting a project application, applicants are encouraged to contact the innovation hubs of the NEFI innovation laboratory ([see Chapter 4](#)).

2.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry has set itself the following strategic objectives:

- **Objective 1: Demonstrate climate-neutral industrial production in Austria**
The programme supports Austria's manufacturing industry in its research and demonstration projects on the path towards climate-neutral industrial production. Innovative solutions should serve to scale up large-scale industrial transformation within the framework of showcase projects and significantly and permanently help to reduce energy-related greenhouse gas emissions and process-related greenhouse gas emissions that can only be prevented with significant expense.
- **Objective 2: Improve the competitiveness of the Austrian manufacturing industry in the global market**
The programme supports Austrian companies with the development, production preparation and testing of innovative future-oriented net-zero technologies and system solutions in order to increase their market opportunities in the international environment. The innovative technologies and solutions developed should help accelerate investments in sustainable production “Made in Austria” and unlock international export potential.

- **Objective 3: Diversify Austria's positioning in international value chains and strengthen Austria's resilience as an industrial location**

The solutions developed within the framework of the RTI Initiative should support the diversification of the technology and product portfolio of Austrian industry and thereby strengthen its position in global value chains for key technologies. Furthermore, the further development and scaling of net-zero technologies in domestic industry should contribute to reducing Austria's dependence on fossil energy and raw material imports.

2.3 OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Four operational objectives have been defined for this call for proposals in order to achieve the strategic objectives:

Projects must contribute to at least three operational objectives in order for the funding application to receive a positive evaluation.

- **Objective 1: Accelerate and improve the application of future-oriented net-zero technologies and innovative climate-neutral system solutions**

The increased use and systemic integration of innovative climate-neutral solutions in industry should contribute to climate protection effects across locations and sectors while taking the circular economy into account.

- **Objective 2: Strengthen portfolio and product diversification as well as the strategic orientation of Austrian manufacturing companies – including technology providers – towards future-oriented net-zero technologies**

Product innovations and the testing of production steps should open up new market segments in the field of future-oriented net-zero technologies and systems.

- **Objective 3: Develop and demonstrate scalable innovations in a real-world environment prior to market launch**

Highly innovative approaches and net-zero technologies will be developed further and demonstrated with regard to large-scale industrial application (TRL 6–8) in order to lay the foundations for commercial production.

- **Objective 4: Establish research and technical expertise in future-oriented net-zero technologies or climate-neutral industrial solutions in Austrian companies**

Research, technology, development, innovation and digital (RTDI+D) competencies within industry, including the involvement of underrepresented groups in RTI, will be enhanced by joint innovative collaborative projects between industry and research stakeholders.

2.4 TARGET GROUPS OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

This call for proposals is aimed at the following target groups:

- Companies with any legal form, particularly those in industry and construction according to Statistics Austria's classification of economic activities (sections B to F of Austrian Statistical Classification of Economic Activities ÖNACE 2025; this also includes energy supply companies)
- Technology providers and suppliers along the value chain
- Other not-for-profit institutions
- Institutions for research and knowledge dissemination

SMEs and start-ups are encouraged to participate in consortia together with large companies from manufacturing industries.

2.5 ASPECTS OF GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The call for proposals takes particular account of gender and diversity aspects in order to strengthen the participation of women¹ and other underrepresented groups in innovation projects. This contributes to increasing the innovation potential and supports the development of solutions that better meet the diverse needs of different target groups.

The following aspects must be addressed when submitting funding applications in relation to underrepresented groups in RTI, especially women in technology:

- a) The composition of the project team
- b) The activities in the project (e.g. proportion of female speakers at events, consideration of the diversity of the target group when communicating the results)
- c) The impact of the project on stakeholders who are directly affected by or benefit from it (e.g. people who work in the company or who use the technology/system)

All projects must specify in the application how they take gender and diversity aspects into account in these three areas. Where aspects b) and/or c) are not relevant to a project, this must be further explained in the application.

For further information on taking into account aspects of gender in the research projects and evaluation criteria, see:

- [Gender in research projects | FFG](#)
- [Gender and evaluation criteria | FFG](#)

¹ "Women" here refers to all female-socialised people, as gender is relevant in RTI as a social construct. Non-binary perspectives are also important and can additionally be addressed.

3. CONTENTS OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS & PROJECT FORMATS

The call for proposals is aligned with the [Austrian Industrial Strategy 2035](#) and the [Clean Industrial Deal of the EU](#), both of which aim, on the one hand, to accelerate the transition towards climate neutrality in industrial processes in Austria and Europe over the coming years, and on the other hand to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of Austrian and European industry through the production of net-zero technologies:

Transformation of industrial processes towards climate neutrality:

The RTI initiative supports innovative projects along those technology pathways that have high potential for the permanent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Austria's manufacturing industry ([see Annex I](#)), in particular:

Electrification & energy efficiency, circular economy, industrial symbiosis, CO₂-neutral gases & hydrogen, carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS), and flexibilisation.

Transformation of industry towards strengthening domestic production of net-zero technologies:

In order to strengthen the competitiveness of the Austrian manufacturing industry and to position Austria in international value chains, innovative projects for the development and testing of production steps for the manufacture of net-zero technologies (production preparation) are sought.

The following fields of technology are considered particularly relevant due to their contribution towards industrial transformation, their connection to Austria's existing industrial strengths, and their export potential:²

Electricity grids and electric power transmission, renewable electricity generation (photovoltaics, wind power and hydropower), electrical energy storage, battery-electric mobility, heat pumps, hydrogen technologies (electrolysis and hydrogen-based direct reduction), and industrial biomass plants.

Additional net-zero technologies in accordance with **Article 4 of the [EU Net-Zero Industry Act](#)**³ are also eligible for funding.

The **following project formats** may be submitted under this call for proposals:

- Standalone R&D project: Cooperative R&D project or flagship project
- Combined project: Cooperative R&D project or flagship project with pilot & demonstration plant(s)

Funding instruments for which proposals are invited ([see Table 3](#)):

- Cooperative R&D project in experimental development
- Flagship project in experimental development (industrial development: maximum of 50 % of the total project costs)
- Pilot and demonstration plant according to KPC detailed information and technical data sheet

² Based on the interim results of the [„R&D Service 2: Technology Scenarios for the Energy Transition“](#) from the first call for proposals in 2024 of the [energy research program](#).

³ See the list of net-zero technologies pursuant to Article 4 of the EU Net-Zero Industry Act (Regulation [EU] 2024/1735 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on establishing a framework of measures for strengthening Europe's net-zero technology manufacturing ecosystem and amending Regulation [EU] 2018/1724). In accordance with Article 3 of the EU Net-Zero Industry Act, the term "net-zero technologies" refers to the technologies listed in Article 4 where these constitute end products or specific components primarily used for the manufacture of such products, or specific machinery primarily used for their production.

3.1 STANDALONE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Cooperative R&D projects with high technology readiness levels (TRLs) are being sought that provide important innovation steps for subsequent implementation projects.

The cooperative projects should enable a close collaboration between one or more partners from industry and research institutions.

Within the framework of this call for proposals, the projects may be combined with pilot and demonstration projects funded under other programmes (e.g. the EU Innovation Fund, Transforming Industry under the Environmental Support Act (UFG), Environmental Funding in Austria, etc.; [see Chapter 8.3](#)). In such cases, this must be described in the R&D project's proposal or documented in an appendix to the project proposal.

Technology readiness levels (TRLs) for which proposals are invited:

Multiple TRLs may be addressed and achieved within a single project.

- Cooperative R&D project in experimental development (TRL 5–8)
 - TRL 5: Functional evidence of the technology in simulated industrial use
 - TRL 6: Demonstration of the technology in simulated industrial use
 - TRL 7: Demonstration of the prototype (system) in simulated industrial use
 - TRL 8: System fully technically developed, approved or certified
- Flagship project in experimental development
 - In flagship projects, work packages from the category of industrial research activities (TRL < 5) can be funded. However, the proportion of industrial research must not exceed 50 % of the total project costs.

3.2 COMBINED PROJECT: RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT PROJECT WITH PILOT & DEMONSTRATION PLANT(S)

The combined project provides the basis for the next scaling steps towards large-scale technological application in industrial use. Cooperative R&D projects or flagship projects may be combined with one or more pilot and demonstration plants.

To enable this, funding instruments administered by the two funding agencies, FFG and KPC, are used. This is based on different funding guidelines (the FFG Challenge Guidelines and KPC's UFI Guideline on Eco-Innovations). Consequently, the application must be submitted separately to the respective funding agency for each funding instrument. In such cases, the respective applications must refer to one another. However, the projects are largely regarded as an integrated whole throughout the consultation and selection process as well as during subsequent project implementation.

Pilot and demonstration plants within a combined project:

Pilot and demonstration plants are sought that go beyond standard technologies and serve to test or introduce new or significantly improved technologies, advanced processes or innovative system components. Demonstration of the innovative nature of the pilot and demonstration plant and of the expected future emission reduction effects is a prerequisite for funding to be granted ([see also the selection criteria in Chapter 7.1](#)). As pilot and demonstration plants involve an increased development risk, failure of the pilot and demonstration plant will be accepted in justified cases. Pilot and demonstration plants with technology readiness levels 5 to 8 are supported.

4. COLLABORATION WITH THE NEFI INNOVATION LABORATORY

The [NEFI – New Energy for Industry](#) innovation laboratory, which is funded as part of the 2023 call for proposals under the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry, serves as a national point of contact and international gateway that aims to help innovations “Made in Austria” in the field of industrial climate neutrality achieve a more rapid breakthrough.

The associated innovation laboratory will inject significant momentum into the transformation of Austria’s manufacturing industry towards climate neutrality and sustainable net-zero technologies and serve as a catalyst supporting the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry.

Here, the innovation laboratory fulfils the following tasks:

- Innovation ecosystem for the development of specific projects for the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry.
- Collaboration between Austrian solution providers and manufacturing companies (as the actual users of the technologies) in partnership with research institutes.
- Establishing links in the field of climate-neutral industrial production on a global and, in particular, European level.
- Monitoring global trends and carrying out regular needs analyses to deliver solutions with high innovation potential.
- Deliver communication, networking and knowledge transfer in a way that takes account of the users’ needs and harnesses existing results, success stories and networks.
- Provide easy access to a development and testing environment to facilitate innovation projects that span sector or technology boundaries
- Impact assessment, particularly estimation of the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions that can be achieved, the potential offered by solutions in terms of added value and property rights, and the potential for these solutions to be replicated, scaled up and transferred to other applications.
- Data management and monitoring for projects funded as part of the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry.

It is recommended, though not mandatory, to contact the innovation laboratory and especially its [thematic innovation hubs](#) prior to submitting an application. See also the offers and services of NEFI to support projects with submission and development: [Submit with NEFI - NEFI](#).

The six innovation hubs are led by leading experts in their respective fields and support projects throughout the entire innovation process. They are organised in accordance with the following topics:

- Electrification and energy efficiency
- Circular economy
- Industrial symbioses
- CO₂-neutral gases & hydrogen
- Carbon capture, utilisation and storage
- Flexibilisation

Contacts at the NEFI New Energy for Industry innovation laboratory:

Mag.^a DIⁱⁿ Dr.ⁱⁿ Kerstin Pflieger-Schopf – Coordination NEFI

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DI Dr. Bernhard Gahleitner – Coordination NEFI

Tel.: +43 505 50-3614, E-Mail: bernhard.gahleitner@ait.ac.at, www.nefi.at/en/contact

5. MONITORING AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An accompanying project monitoring and a project impact assessment serve to ensure quality and support the Climate and Energy Fund with programme management and development. The scientific support, which includes the development of indicators, ongoing scientific project monitoring and project impact assessment, are essential components in the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry. The methods developed as part of the [RTI initiative for the Flagship Region Energy](#) are also being applied in the present programme and are undergoing continuous development and being adapted to the needs of the various projects and topics. The innovation laboratory of the NEFI innovation network is the body responsible for the monitoring and the impact assessment for the projects as part of the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry.

The collaboration with the innovation laboratory within the scope of the monitoring and the impact assessment therefore is a mandatory component of the projects.

The NEFI innovation laboratory supports the RTI initiative with techno-economic impact assessments for the technological and non-technological solutions that are developed. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are recorded here along the three dimensions of climate, macroeconomy and resilience.

The innovation laboratory monitors the projects under the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry with respect to their scientific output and their activities in public relations and dissemination of results.

Participation in the monitoring programme takes place in addition to the reporting obligations to the FFG and KPC processing agencies as defined in the instrument guidelines and funding agreements (see the Reporting Guidelines on the FFG website: www.ffg.at/FTI-TdI/berichtslegung).

The monitoring takes place primarily at the start and the end of the project in order to save time. Corresponding staff resources must be calculated and made available in the project application. Providing resources in the amount of about 0.5 person months per year is recommended, although this amount may be higher or lower depending on the complexity of the projects. The alignment with the NEFI monitoring system can take place as early as the application phase in order to ensure maximum efficiency and seamless integration of the monitoring processes. The results of the monitoring activities and of the impact assessment are available to the projects so that they can put their solutions to use.

6. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS AND SUBMISSION PROCESS

6.1 REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

All documents relevant to the call for proposals can be found here:

- FFG website: www.ffg.at/FTI-Tdl_Ausschreibung_2026
- KPC website: www.umweltfoerderung.at/fti-2026

Table 4: Documents for the call for proposals

Funding instrument or other information	Available proposal documents
Cooperative R&D project (FFG)	Instrument guide for cooperative R&D projects (German, Version 5.2) Instrument guide for cooperative R&D projects (English, Version 5.2)
Flagship project (FFG)	Instrument guide for flagship projects (German, Version 5.2) Instrument guide for flagship projects (English, Version 5.2)
Pilot and demonstration plant (KPC)	Detailed information, technical data sheet (in English) www.umweltfoerderung.at/fti-2026
General regulations on costs (FFG)	Cost guidelines (Version 3.2): www.ffg.at/recht-finanzen/kostenleitfaden

6.2 SUBMISSION PROCESS AND DEADLINE

R&D projects (combined or standalone):

The application documents must be submitted exclusively online via eCall to FFG as the processing agency responsible. The proposal submitted must comprise the following **online** elements, which must be entered under the following menu items in eCall:

- Content description comprises an outline of the project's content.
- Work plan comprises an outline of the work packages and other project management elements such as the time management plan (Gantt chart), tasks, milestones and results.
- Consortium describes the expertise of the individual consortium members.
- Costs and financing describes all cost categories for each consortium member. The totals for each work package will be displayed automatically in the online work plan.

Any attachments to the electronic proposal must be uploaded as necessary. When combining with a pilot and demonstration plant, reference must be made to this in the FFG application (with the project title).

Pilot and demonstration plant (combined):

Separate applications must be submitted to KPC for each pilot and demonstration plant: www.umweltfoerderung.at/fti-2026. The R&D project's eCall-number must be stated in the submission for the pilot and demonstration plant.

Only funding applications submitted to the processing agencies in full and on time will be considered. Incomplete funding applications cannot be considered when awarding the funds.

The **call for proposals ends** on **10 March 2027** at 12:00 p.m. (noon).

6.3 COMPULSORY PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

Before the submission, a mandatory consultation with FFG and KPC contact persons must be held for the following project types to clarify the requirements and targets:

- for flagship projects (with FFG)
- for combined projects (with FFG and KPC)

An optional preliminary discussion can be held with FFG for cooperative R&D projects.

The compulsory preliminary discussions must be arranged by 9 February 2027 at the latest via the online tool at www.umweltfoerderung.at/anmeldung-verpflichtende-vorgespraech-fti-tdi (for combined projects) or via e-mail to the respective FFG contact (for flagship projects). Optional preliminary discussions may be arranged individually with the respective FFG contact.

Online appointments for the compulsory preliminary discussion are available on Tuesday afternoons from 13 October 2026 until 16 February 2027. For flag-ship projects, appointments are arranged directly with the FFG.

At least two working days before a preliminary meeting, the completed project outline (template available at: www.umweltfoerderung.at/fti-2026 and www.ffg.at/FTI-TdI_Ausschreibung_2026) must be returned to the processing agencies responsible (FFG: Sarah-Salome Sidra, MSc, sarah-salome.sidra@ffg.at, Dr.-Ing. Andreas Maier, andreas.maier@ffg.at and KPC: fti-tdi@publicconsulting.at) via E-Mail.

For voluntary preliminary discussions for standalone R&D projects, a project outline is not required.

7. FROM PROJECT SELECTION TO PAYMENT OF THE FUNDING

7.1 PROJECT SELECTION AND FUNDING DECISION

FORMAL REVIEW

During the formal review, the funding application is checked for formal correctness and completeness. If the formal requirements are not met and the deficiencies cannot be rectified, the funding application will be excluded from the further procedure without exception and formally rejected during the formal review due to the required equal treatment of all funding applications. For an overview, [see Annex II](#).

SELECTION CRITERIA

All projects must contribute to the operational objectives ([see chapter 2.3](#)).

Standalone R&D Projects

The assessment criteria defined in the FFG instrument guides are decisive in the selection of projects ([see Table 5](#)).

Combined projects

Combined projects are assessed based on the criteria for the R&D project (flagship project or cooperative R&D project) and the criteria for the pilot and demonstration plant. Both the R&D project and at least one pilot and demonstration plant must receive a positive evaluation according to the respective criteria in order for the combined project to be recommended for funding. The innovative content of the pilot and demonstration plant is assessed in combination with the R&D project.

The final score of the combined project is calculated as the weighted average of the R&D project and the pilot and demonstration plant(s), based on the investment costs of the respective project components.

If the pilot and demonstration plant component is rejected, the R&D project may still be funded as a standalone project (see “Risk and Contingency Plan for Combined Projects” below).

- R&D project

Table 5: Selection criteria for R&D projects

Criterion	Weighting
1. Quality of the project	maximum 30 points
2. Suitability of the project participants	maximum 20 points
3. Benefit and exploitation	maximum 30 points
4. Relevance of the project to the call for proposals	maximum 20 points

(Details on the selection criteria can be found in the instrument guidelines flagship project or cooperative R&D project.)

See also the Gender & Diversity criteria ([Chapter 2.5](#)) and the explanations of selected evaluation criteria (www.ffg.at/FTI-TdI_Ausschreibung_2026).

- **Pilot and demonstration plant**

The selection criteria for the pilot and demonstration plant are based on the EU Innovation Fund criteria in order to facilitate any future scaling at EU level.

Table 6: Selection criteria for the pilot and demonstration plant

Criterion	Weighting
1. Quantitative criterion	40%
a) Environmental impact⁴ • Improvement of the environmental impact compared to an existing or reference plant • Scalability of the environmental impact • Plausibility of the calculation of the environmental impact • Plausibility of the selected reference model	40%
2. Qualitative criteria	60%
b) Relevance for the call for proposals⁵ • Relevance of the project in achieving the objectives of the call for proposals	10%
c) Appropriate nature of the costs of the measures • Cost/benefit ratio • Quality of the cost accounting	10%
d) Innovation content • The extent to which the innovation in the project goes beyond the state of the art measured in the EU (existing products, procedures, etc.). A project or product is considered innovative if, compared to the state of the art: • it differs significantly in terms of quality, carbon footprint or use of resources, • and/or it is not widely available on the EU market, • and/or it promises significantly better results, • and/or it has been technologically or systemically developed (higher TRL/SRL), • and/or it ideally outperforms existing innovations, whereby the state of the art encompasses both the state currently available commercially (comparable products/processes) and the most developed proprietary technological solution. The following points are also important for the assessment of the innovation content: • the research questions being examined within the framework of the project • the project's existing development risks	30%

⁴ The environmental impact may be shown through the direct or indirect reduction of greenhouse gases, e.g. the substitution or reduction of natural gas, cement, steel or other energy-intensive products.

⁵ Zero points for the relevance criterion will result in the project being rejected.

Criterion	Weighting
e) Benefit and utilisation • Technical maturity: - Technical feasibility of GHG avoidance in the project environment - Understanding of the technology and technical risks as well as proposed measures for risk mitigation - Quality, transparency and consistency of the application information • Financial maturity: - Transparency of the business model, business plan and financial model - Understanding of the business and financial project risks as well as proposed measures for risk mitigation • Operational maturity: - Transparency and level of detail of the project implementation plan, including relevant milestones - Status and transparency of the approval plan (if required) - Understanding of implementation risks, including risks arising from external dependencies as well as proposed measures for risk mitigation • Scalability: - Scalability in terms of efficiency gains and various environmental impacts - Replicability and contribution toward strengthening Europe's industrial competitiveness	10%

Examples of innovative projects:

- New products/services requiring comprehensive adjustments in production and/or the supply chain
- Replacement of existing products, processes or business models
- New or combined technologies
- Transition of production to renewable energy sources
- Application of existing technologies in new fields
- Integration of existing technologies despite their currently low level of maturity

The CO₂ factors used to calculate greenhouse gas emission reductions can be found in the [Funding Calculation Information Sheet](#) (Chapter 6.2 Calculation of CO₂ Emission Reductions, page 13). Appropriate references must be provided in the application for the calculation of indirect greenhouse gas emission reductions.

RISK & CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR COMBINED PROJECTS

An R&D project can also be continued as a standalone project if the associated P&D plant is rejected during the evaluation process. If a project component (R&D project or P&D plant) fails during implementation, it may be possible to continue the other component (R&D project or P&D plant) as a standalone project. However, this always requires approval from the processing agencies and the program owner based on a revised project plan; in particular, those work packages that focus on the P&D plant or the R&D project must be adjusted accordingly.

The timetable of the combined project must present a realistic schedule for implementing the planned scope of both project components (R&D project and pilot and demonstration plant) within the proposed project duration. The prerequisites for successful implementation (e.g. regulatory approvals) must be described in the project proposal. Implementation risks and risks of delays must be included in the "Risk & contingency plan". The application must explain how risks relating to the R&D project or the pilot and demonstration plant will be managed if the pilot and demonstration plant or the R&D project is funded in a modified form, or—regarding the R&D project—if the pilot and demonstration plant is rejected during the evaluation process (e.g. by means of appropriate stop-and-go decisions or milestones). During the project implementation period, any delays or changes affecting the project components approved in the funding agreement (R&D project or pilot and demonstration plant) must be communicated immediately to both funding agencies, which will carry out a coordinated assessment of the appropriate further course of action.

EXPLOITATION STRATEGY

A convincing exploitation strategy is of particular importance for a successful project proposal. To substantiate the credibility of the exploitation perspective, applicants are explicitly encouraged to quantify the expected benefits for the target group (e.g. greenhouse gas reduction potential) and for the project partners (e.g. the development of new business opportunities).

Projects are also encouraged to consider already at the application stage which competencies will be required for the subsequent scaling of the innovation (within the project team) and for its practical deployment (e.g. customers who will operate the new plant or implement the new process).

PANEL OF JUDGES

The ranking of projects on the shortlist is determined based on the recommendation of the external committee of experts.

FUNDING DECISION

The Presidium of the Climate and Energy Fund decides on the funding based on the funding recommendation of the committee of experts.

7.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FUNDING AGREEMENT

On the FFG funding agreement:

- Details on establishing an FFG funding agreement can be found in the respective instrument guide.

On the KPC funding agreement:

- In the event that the funding decision by the Presidium of the Climate and Energy Fund is positive, KPC will send the consortium a funding agreement. The parties applying for the funding must accept the agreement within six months of it being sent by returning the signed declaration of acceptance.

7.3 REPORTING OBLIGATIONS AND PAYMENT OF THE FUNDING

All projects must fill out the NEFI innovation laboratory's onboarding factsheet www.klimafonds.gv.at/foerderungen/richtlinien-vorlagen upon signing the agreement, and transmit it to the relevant agency.

All projects must compile a publishable final report, which will be published on the Climate and Energy Fund's website.

Templates for the publishable final report can be found on the Climate and Energy Fund website under Guidelines & Templates: www.klimafonds.gv.at/foerderungen/richtlinien-vorlagen.

The publishable final report must be submitted in an accessible version in accordance with the requirements of the PDF/UA standard (DIN ISO 14289) and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Conformance Level AA. In particular, applicants must ensure that a structured, screen reader-compatible PDF document featuring correctly tagged text, sufficient colour contrast and descriptive alternative text for graphical elements is created and submitted. Further information can be found in the Guide to Accessible Documents and in the Reporting Guidelines: www.klimafonds.gv.at/foerderungen/richtlinien-vorlagen.

For **R&D projects** (combined and standalone), activity reports must be prepared in addition to the publishable final report. Information on reporting requirements and public relations activities can be found in the Reporting Guidelines on the FFG website (www.ffg.at/FTI-Tdl/berichtslegung).

For **pilot and demonstration plants** within a combined project, a final statement of account must also be submitted to KPC in addition to the publishable final report. The funding can only be paid out following successful implementation of the measure that has been applied for.

PROJECT ACCOUNTING FOR PILOT AND DEMONSTRATION PLANTS

The funding agreement contains all relevant information on the final statement of account and the subsequent payment of the funding. The required documents and forms are also available on the website of the funding processing agency, Kommunalkredit Public Consulting GmbH: www.umweltfoerderung.at/fti_2026. Following the implementation of the measures, the required final statement of account documents for the pilot and demonstration plants must be submitted to KPC.

The following requirements must already be observed during the project implementation phase:

- Written proof of the order date must be provided for all major plant components.
- To demonstrate the appropriateness of the costs, one comparative quotation (i.e. a total of two price quotations) must be submitted for all major plant components and cost items.
- These requirements apply to all major plant components and cost items as well as to services with costs exceeding EUR 10,000 and, at the same time, more than 5% of the approved project costs.
- Where affiliated companies or partner companies act as suppliers, and where there are overlapping management bodies or shareholders between the clients and suppliers, or other possibilities of influencing the contracting authority's business decisions, three comparative quotations (i.e. a total of four price quotations) from suppliers independent of the funding recipient must be submitted. Exceptions may be made in justified cases.
- Where the funded measure is financed through leasing, hire purchase, contracting or a comparable financing model, funding may be paid out only up to the amount actually paid by the funding recipient by the time the final statement of account is submitted. A copy of the leasing agreement and proof of all payments made up to the date of the final statement of account must be submitted together with the final statement of account. The final statement of account must also disclose all other funding applied for, approved or received for the contractual measure.
- The funding recipient must comply with the applicable public procurement legislation in any case of recovery, suspension or reduction of the funding. Should deficiencies in the procurement procedure become apparent at the time of the final statement of account or at a later stage, appropriate legal consequences may be initiated, which may affect the amount of funding awarded or the project's eligibility for funding.
- All decisions and official permits required for the funded project, in particular building and trade licences, must be submitted together with the final statement of account.
- The funding recipient must acknowledge the funding provided by the Climate and Energy Fund and/or the BMIMI in a prominent location. A template for the required information sign is available on the Climate and Energy Fund's website (www.klimafonds.gv.at/foerderungen/richtlinien-vorlagen/). As part of the final statement of account, a convincing photograph showing the installed information sign must be submitted as evidence.
- Where applicants are subject to the provisions of the Austrian Federal Procurement Act (Bundesvergabegesetz), these provisions must be complied with. The relevant evidence and documentation must be submitted together with the final statement of account. Please note that even in the case of direct awards, the fundamental principles of public procurement law must be observed, and that prior to payment of the funding, the applicants' transparent information, including on the estimation of the contract value, the quotations obtained and the assessment of the bidders' suitability (Section 41(1) in conjunction with Section 19(1)–(4) of the Austrian Federal Procurement Act 2018) must be submitted.

8. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

8.1 LEGAL BASIS

The following applies to **flagship projects and cooperative R&D projects**: The call for proposals is based on the Guidelines for Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH on the promotion of research, technology, development and innovation to tackle societal challenges (the FFG Challenge Guidelines 2024–2026).

The following applies to **pilot and demonstration plants**: The legal basis for the award of this funding is Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (General Block Exemption Regulation), OJ L 187 of 26.06.2014, p. 1, as last amended by Regulation (EU) No 2023/1315, OJ L 167 of 30.06.2023, p. 1, and, in implementation of this Regulation, the respective provisions of the Investment Subsidy Guidelines 2022 for Environmental Funding in Austria (InvestFRL UFI 2022), as amended, as well as the Climate and Energy Fund Act (Klima- und Energiefondsgesetz – KLI.EN-FondsG), Federal Law Gazette I No. 40/2007, as amended.

Where the General Block Exemption Regulation applies, the following provisions apply:

- For cooperative R&D projects and flagship projects: Article 25 – Aid for research and development projects.
- For pilot and demonstration plants: Article 36 – Investment aid enabling undertakings to go beyond Union standards for environmental protection or to increase the level of environmental protection in the absence of Union standards; Article 38 – Investment aid for energy efficiency measures; Article 41 – Investment aid for the promotion of energy from renewable sources, renewable hydrogen and high-efficiency cogeneration; Article 46 – Investment aid for energy-efficient district heating and district cooling; and Article 47 – Investment aid for resource efficiency and for supporting the transition towards a circular economy.

The relevant definition of an SME under EU competition law applies with regard to company size. A guide on classification can be found on [FFG's SME page](#).

The relevant versions of all EU rules and regulations are to be applied.

8.2 DATA PROTECTION AND PUBLICATION OF THE PLEDGED FUNDING

Personal data is processed in accordance with Art 6 et seq of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation [EU] 2016/679 – GDPR)

1. to comply with legal obligations applicable to FFG, KPC and the Climate and Energy Fund (Art 6(1)c GDPR);
2. where there is no legal obligation, in order to safeguard legitimate interests of FFG, KPC and the Climate and Energy Fund (Art 6(1)f GDPR), specifically the conclusion and processing of the funding agreement and for monitoring purposes.

This use may require data to be transmitted or disclosed in particular to executive bodies and authorised representatives of the Court of Audit Austria, to the Federal Ministry of Finance or to the EU. There is also the possibility of submitting a request to the transparency portal in accordance with Section 32(5) of the Transparency Database Act 2012 (TDBG 2012).

All project proposals submitted will only be presented for review to the individuals tasked with processing this research programme and to the programme owner. All individuals involved are obliged to maintain confidentiality.

The following applies in addition for FFG: FFG is obliged by law not to disclose information on companies or projects – in accordance with Section 9(4) of the Act Establishing Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH (Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH-Errichtungsgesetz), Federal Law Gazette I no. 73/2004. This confidentiality obligation also covers external experts who evaluate the projects.

The following additionally applies to projects funded by KPC: In the event of a positive decision on funding, the information from the funding application may be used to create funding reports and for statistical analyses. KPC also reserves the right to publish data on applicants and the funded project after approval of the funding in accordance with Section 12 (2) no. 10 of the Investment Funding Guidelines 2022 for Environmental Funding in Austria – provided that this is required for performing the tasks assigned by statute. Details on use of the data are governed in the funding agreement.

PUBLICATION OF THE FUNDING DECISION

Should it decide to award funding, the Climate and Energy Fund reserves the right to publish the name of the applicants for the funding, the fact that funding has been awarded, the funding rate, the amount of funding, the title of the project and a short description of the project in order to take account of the Climate and Energy Fund's legitimate interest in ensuring transparency in funding matters (Art. 6(1)f GDPR).

TRANSFER OF DATA TO NEFI INNOVATION LABORATORY

Please note that certain data will be passed on to the NEFI innovation laboratory for the purposes of grant administration, in particular for project monitoring and impact assessment. This data must be specified in the fact sheet; [see Section 7.3](#).

The contact information for the project management and the project partners' contact persons (e.g., name, location, email address, optional LinkedIn link) will be transmitted, quotes from the project management, and key information about the funded project (e.g., full project title and acronym, project start date, planned project end date, Technology Readiness Level (TRL), Market Readiness Level (MRL), System Readiness Level (SRL), total project budget, keywords, teaser texts, description of the initial situation, project timeline, milestones, results, and assignment to the NEFI hubs).

8.3 COMBINING WITH, OR DIFFERENTIATING FROM, OTHER FUNDINGS

RTI INITIATIVES

The programme involves a higher level of implementation compared with other RTI initiatives (e.g. [energy research](#)).

RTI programmes (e.g. [FFG basic programme](#), energy research) supporting R&D projects with lower TRLs provide the chance of preparing important research steps for a follow-up-project within the framework of the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry.

The funding programme "energy research" especially supports the development of innovations within the field of energy and technical as well as societal solutions for green transformation serving the domestic as well as the export market.

By taking part in EU initiatives such as the [Clean Energy Transition Partnership](#), projects may also gain important insights in the context of international consortia.

FUNDINGS FOR IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

Standalone R&D projects under the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry may be combined with implementation projects from other funding programmes (e.g. [Transforming Industry under the Environmental Support Act \[UFG\]](#) or [Environmental Funding in Austria](#)).

Pilot and demonstration plants funded under the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry deliver important results that provide the basis for scaling innovation towards “first of a kind” concepts and for preparing a submission to funding programmes supporting market launch (e.g. Transforming Industry under the UFG, [AWS funding programmes](#), [EU Innovation Fund](#)).

The RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry differs from the Transforming Industry funding programme under the UFG in terms of restrictions on the target group and the project's required innovative content. Under the Transforming Industry programme pursuant to the UFG, funding is provided for investment costs incurred by energy-intensive industries in climate-friendly technologies (CAPEX – capital expenditure), and operating costs (OPEX – operational expenditure), respectively, the additional costs of renewable energy carriers compared with fossil energy carriers. The Transforming Industry programme under the UFG is tendered as investment grants (CAPEX only) and transformation grants (CAPEX and OPEX).

With regard to flexibilisation, the funding programme “[Joint Energy Use and Innovations for Optimised System Integration](#)” (launch planned for autumn 2026) also supports innovative approaches that are relevant to industry: The integration and use of smart applications (energy management), strengthening of forecasting capabilities, implementing system-supportive measures and the intelligent integration of energy storage as well as (controllable) mobility and/or heating applications, and the (further) development of community-oriented and socio-economic models.

RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

Austria is a member of ECCSEL ([European Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage Laboratory](#)), the European research infrastructure for carbon capture, utilisation, transport and storage (CCUS), carbon dioxide removal (CDR), geothermal energy research, and subsurface energy storage. Applicants whose projects address these topics are encouraged to make use of the ECCSEL network and its research facilities. For further information and support, please contact the Climate and Energy Fund, which acts as the Austrian National ECCSEL Node: sandra.braumann@klimafonds.gv.at.

STATUS OF STRATEGIC PROJECT ACCORDING TO NET ZERO INDUSTRY ACT (NZIA)

Projects funded under the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry that plan to scale up towards the production of net-zero technologies, may enquire about their status as a strategic project: The European Union's Net-Zero Industry Act (NZIA) provides that construction projects for manufacturing facilities producing net-zero technologies or components required for net-zero technologies are granted the status of a strategic project under the NZIA (net-zero technologies as defined in Article 4 of the NZIA). The status of strategic project offers several advantages during the permitting process, as these projects must be treated as a matter of priority and processed as quickly as possible. In addition, strategic projects are considered to be of overriding public interest for the purposes of the permitting process (analogous to the status provided under the Austrian Renewable Energy Expansion Acceleration Act). Furthermore, strategic projects have access to financial advisory services provided by the European Commission. For further information on the NZIA and the requirements for obtaining strategic project status, please contact nzia@bmwet.gv.at by e-mail.

QUALIFICATION FUNDING

Qualification projects aimed at building competencies within companies in the key technologies of the Austrian Industrial Strategy 2035 including advanced production technologies and robotics as well as energy and environmental technologies may be funded under the programme [Qualification projects 2026 | FFG](#).

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any links with other support programmes must be described in the documents submitted. Double funding is not permitted.

9. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

9.1 THE FFG PROJECT DATABASE SERVICE

FFG provides a service that involves publishing brief pieces of information about funded projects and an overview of the parties involved in projects in a publicly accessible [FFG Project Database](#). Thus, funded projects and their project partners can position themselves better for the interested public. The database can furthermore be used to search for partners to cooperate with.

Once a decision has been made to award funding, applicants will be told via the eCall system about the possibility of publishing brief, defined pieces of information on their project in the FFG Project Database. Nothing will be published without an applicant actively giving their consent in the eCall system.

More details are available on [FFG's page on its Project Database](#).

9.2 THE BMIMI OPEN4INNOVATION SERVICE

In addition, the BMIMI's [open4innovation](#) platform provides a knowledge database for companies, researchers, etc. (community support, more detailed information, success stories, etc.).

9.3 OPEN-ACCESS-PUBLICATIONS

The research results obtained using public funding must be put to the best possible use for science, industry and society. With this in mind, open access should be sought as far as possible for peer-reviewed publications produced with the support of funding awarded by the FFG. As with European funding, the applicable principle here is "as open as possible, as closed as necessary"

Publication costs count as eligible project costs.

In line with the Climate and Energy Fund's general objectives and duties as set out in Sections 1 and 3 of the Climate and Energy Fund Act (Klima- und Energiefondsgesetz), with the specific nature of this support programme, which aims in particular to publish project and contact details to disseminate project results, and in accordance with the recommendation of the European Commission (2012/417/EU) regarding open access, the projects funded under this call for proposals and their results are to be made available to the general public. This does not apply to confidential content (e.g. in connection with patent applications). The funding recipient is obliged to ensure that the reports submitted to the Climate and Energy Fund for publication do not contain sensitive data of any kind (Art. 9 GDPR) or personal data relating to criminal convictions or offences (Art. 10 GDPR).

Furthermore, the funding recipient is obliged to ensure that all other agreements and approvals of third parties (in particular image rights) that are required for the publication by the Climate and Energy Fund to be permissible have been obtained and to indemnify and hold the Climate and Energy Fund harmless in this respect. As one of the key promotion objectives of this support programme is to disseminate project results, the Climate and Energy Fund will publish these project results and project information in order to take account of its legitimate interest in the transparency of funding matters and to achieve its objectives (Sections 1 and 3 of the Climate and Energy Fund Act; Art. 6(1)f GDPR).

The visibility and easy accessibility of innovative results are important factors in increasing the impact of the programme. In line with the open-access principle, the Climate and Energy Fund will therefore publish as many project results from this RTI initiative as possible and make them accessible online at www.klimafonds.gv.at.

In order to present the project results effectively and comprehensibly, notes on public relations work for projects funded and carried out as part of the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry are to be made available in a "[Guide to reporting and project-related public relations work](#)", which shall form an integral part of the agreement.

9.4 HANDLING PROJECT DATA – DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

A data management plan (DMP) is a management tool that helps users manage the data generated in their projects in an efficient and systematic way.

A DMP can be created using the free tool [DMP Online](#), for example. The European Commission also offers support via its "[Guidelines on FAIR Data Management](#)".

A data management plan describes:

- which data are collected, compiled or generated in the project,
- how these data are handled in the project,
- what methods and standards are applied in this process,
- how the data are secured, backed up and managed over the long term,
- whether there are plans to make data records accessible to and usable by third parties ("open access to research data").

It makes sense for research data to be openly available if they form the basis for peer-reviewed publications and must be published in the interests of the reproducibility and verifiability of the published results.

If data are published, they are expected to be "findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable". It is advisable to store data in established, internationally recognised repositories (see also the [re3data-website](#)) in order to make the data as easy as possible to find.

10. ANNEXES

10.1 ANNEX I – TECHNOLOGY PATHWAYS FOR THE “TRANSFORMATION OF INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES TOWARDS CLIMATE NEUTRALITY”

List of technology pathways towards a climate-neutral industry, together with the associated development, advancement and demonstration of technical and non-technical solutions addressed under this call for proposals⁶ ([see Chapter 3](#)).

The technology pathways were identified as part of NEFI innovation network's climate neutrality scenarios. Based on these pathways, six NEFI Innovation Hubs were established. The Innovation Hubs are led by leading experts in their respective fields and support projects throughout the entire innovation process. Further details on the technology pathways for achieving a climate-neutral industry in Austria are provided in the Hub Scoping Papers, which are available on the NEFI website.

- Electrification & energy efficiency
 - Electrification through the use of heat pumps for processes up to approx. 200°C
 - Electricity-based and CO₂-neutral process heat generation for high-temperature applications (from approx. 200°C)
 - Integration of thermal and electrical energy storage systems to increase efficiency and grid-supportive, storage-coupled power-to-heat systems
 - Efficient energy distribution and utilisation at industrial sites
 - Increased efficiency through process intensification, process adaptations and modified reaction environments
 - Development and application of open digital methods and tools for the systematic analysis, optimisation and integration of industrial heat, cooling and energy flows, including waste heat, renewable heat sources, energy storage systems and electrified energy supply technologies
- Circular economy
 - Smart object sorting and the development of innovative energy-efficient recycling processes
 - New sorting processes for separating critical products or substances (identification, detection and removal of critical substances)
 - Development of recycling value chains for future waste energy system components (e.g. PV modules, rotor blades, electronics, batteries, fuel cells and electrolyzers), taking into account opportunities for implementing extended producer responsibility schemes and digital product passports
 - Processing complex suspensions using novel reactor technologies to increase the recovery of valuable materials from residual material streams
 - Energy-efficient recovery of valuable materials using membrane technologies and selective separation, including residual material streams from biorefineries as well as municipal and industrial wastewater and sludge
 - Development of cascading utilisation pathways for organic residual materials through innovative carbon and nutrient cycles
 - Scenario-based optimisation of cascading plastics recycling (utilisation of primary and residual material streams) through the combination of mechanical and chemical plastics recycling, taking into account ecological and (socio-)economic aspects

⁶ The list is not exhaustive. Additional research topics may be proposed, provided that they contribute to the objectives of the call for proposals.

- Industrial symbiosis
 - Methods, digital tools, AI-based approaches and safe data rooms to identify, assess and implement industrial-industrial (IIS) or industrial-urban (IUS) symbiosis for cascading utilisation of raw materials and integrated energy supply
 - Simulation methods and decision support tools for designing technological implementation pathways
 - Innovative business models and operator, investment, contractual, risk and governance models to overcome key implementation barriers for cross-company and cross-site symbioses
 - Demonstration of concrete symbioses for energy, water, CO₂, secondary raw materials, organic waste materials and shared infrastructure
 - Infrastructure development and optimisation
 - AI for identifying, leveraging and optimising industrial symbioses
- CO₂-neutral gases and hydrogen
 - Green hydrogen through electrolysis
 - Direct production of CO₂-neutral gases and hydrogen using alternative, electro- and photochemical or chemical-catalytic methods
 - Power-to-X technologies, conversion chains and efficient integration concepts
 - Feeding of biomethane into the gas grid
 - Storage technologies for hydrogen
- Carbon capture, utilisation and storage
 - Efficient integration into production processes and sites
 - Synergies between precombustion technologies and hydrogen production
 - Further development of chemical-catalytic, electro- and photochemical processes
 - (Further) development of efficient carbon capture technologies
 - Mineral carbonation as a CCS option
 - Development of new value chains
 - Should be capable of being combined with H₂ topics where appropriate
- Flexibilisation
 - Simulation, optimisation and design methods, as well as digital tools for achieving flexibility in industrial environments
 - Development of industrial demand forecasting models for the flexible operation of industrial processes and energy systems, taking into account energy demand, production, renewable generation, energy prices and grid requirements
 - Technologies and methods for collecting, processing and analysing data
 - Business models and technology integration
 - Infrastructure development to unlock flexibility potentials
 - Development and demonstration of standardised flexibilisation measures and tools for commercial enterprises
 - Market-, price-, system- and grid-oriented flexibilisation concepts, including demand-side management, grid services and the avoidance of grid congestion
 - Development, integration and interfacing of interoperable digital tools for flexibilisation with existing SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) systems
 - Climate-neutral technologies as drivers of flexibility

The industry-specific future technologies identified in the "[transform.industry](#)" study must also be taken into account.

The list of technology fields addressed in this call for proposals with a view to the "Transformation of industry towards strengthening domestic production of net-zero technologies" can be found in [Chapter 3](#).

10.2 ANNEX II: CHECKLIST FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

During the formal review, the funding application is checked for formal correctness and completeness. Please note the following:

If the formal requirements are not met and the deficiencies cannot be remedied, the funding application will, without exception, be excluded from the further procedure during the formal review and formally rejected in order to ensure the equal treatment of all funding applications.

Table 7: Formal review checklist of the FFG for funding applications for R&D projects

Criterion	Review content	Deficiency can be remedied	Consequence
The project description has been filled-in sufficiently and the correct language has been used.	The online project description must be completed in full. Language: English.	No	Rejection on formal grounds
Uploads to the master data section in eCall (PDF upload)	Annual financial statements (balance sheet and profit and loss statement) for the last two financial years have been provided. Start-ups must submit a business plan.	Yes	Correction via eCall after submission
The applicant is eligible to submit a proposal.	See the Instrument Guide and the Guide for Proposals.	No	Rejection on formal grounds
For consortia: The project participants are eligible to take part.	See the Instrument Guide and the Guide for Proposals.	No	Rejection on formal grounds
Minimum requirements to the consortium	See the Instrument Guide.	No	Rejection on formal grounds
For flagship projects and combined projects: The mandatory preliminary discussion was held before the specified deadline.	See Table 1 .	No	Rejection on formal grounds

Table 8: Formal review checklist of the KPC for funding applications for P&D plants

Criterion	Review content	Deficiency can be remedied	Consequence
The technical data sheet has been completed in full and in the correct language.	The technical data sheet has been completed in full in English. The costs have been broken down in a transparent and comprehensible manner.	No	Rejection on formal grounds
The required template has been submitted and completed in full in the correct language.	The required template has been completed in full and in a comprehensible manner in English.	No	Rejection on formal grounds
The applicant is eligible to submit a proposal.	See the Guide for proposals and the Target Group Information Sheet .	No	Rejection on formal grounds
The mandatory preliminary discussion was held before the specified deadline.	See Table 1 .	No	Rejection on formal grounds
The project demonstrates an environmental benefit.	Plausibility check of the submitted calculation of the environmental benefit.	No	Rejection on formal grounds
The report issued by the financial institution has been submitted.	Verification of the completeness and correctness of the report issued by the financial institution.	Yes	May be submitted subsequently by 15 May 2027 at the latest.
The required official decisions and permits have been submitted.	Verification that the required official decisions and permits for the project have been provided.	Yes	May be submitted subsequently until the final settlement.
FFG application number.	Verification that the FFG application number has been provided.	Yes	Submitted without request by 12 March 2027 at the latest.

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