

STEP: a testing ground for EU funding for strategic technologies

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STEP The pitch

The needs and challenges

- **Competitiveness** and **resilience** of EU industry at risk
- **Global race** for critical technologies
- Investment needs for transition
- Outward forces in the **Single Market**
- **Private capital** not at scale
- Constraints on **EU budget**
- Fragmented/complex offer of EU funding
- Need for a European response

An innovation in EU funding (under current MFF)

- Not a new fund
- **A collective journey** STEP across 11 EU programmes (14 DGs involved, 27 MS + implementing partners)
- **Efficient:** use of existing networks/ processes
- **Articulation** direct/indirect/shared managed funds
- Taskforce
- User-centric

A testing ground for the future MFF

- New Commission in 2024
- New MFF proposals by mid-2025
- Success & experience of STEP to feed into ambition
- EU value-added in the investment journey





STEP The scope



*Including **associated services** critical for and specific to the development or manufacturing of those final products

STEP The tools





Reprogramming EU funding towards STEP

- Dedicated calls under directly managed funds
- Revision of RRPs and cohesion policy funds' programmes to include STEP (uptake by cohesion policy funds/RRF)
- STEP embedded in existing funds, follows existing processes and governance (e.g. for project selection)
- Top-up of the European Defence Fund of 1.5bn€ for STEP

STEP Sovereignty Seal

- Awarded under directly managed funds
- Valid unless the project has not started within 5 years of award; and project relocated outside EU.
- Easier access to (cumulative/combined) funding under other EU funds
- Visibility for other public investors, and for private investors
- First seals expected H2 2024

STEP Portal

- Consolidating all EU funding opportunities for STEP sectors
- Giving visibility to projects awarded a STEP Sovereignty Seal
- User-centric
- Gradual development, v1 in Q2
- Link to existing online resources (assistance, other portal, etc.)

One-Stop-Shop

- Hub managing a COM internal network, a MS/Partners network
- Entry point on STEP for the industry
- Support to identify funding opportunity matching need
- Working closely with all DGs, including DG REGIO/DG EMPL to provide adequate support

STEP The EU programmes covered



European Commission



* Including the possibility to use equity-only support in the EIC

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STEP The STEP Sovereignty Seal





STEP First calls in direct management: detail

Programme	Call topic name	Budget (in M€)	STEP sector	Opening date	Submission date
Innovation Fund	General decarbonisation - Large-Scale Projects	1,700	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
	General decarbonisation - Medium-Scale Projects	500	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
	General decarbonisation - Small-Scale Projects	200	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
	Clean-tech manufacturing	1,400	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
	Pilot projects	200	clean tech	23-Nov-23	09-Apr-24
European Defence Fund	Unmanned collaborative combat aircraft (U-CCA) systems	15	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Secured and adaptive underwater communications for UUSs	24	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Methods for bridging reality gaps	15	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Electronic components	25	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Quantum technologies	24	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	AI-based multifunctional aperture and transceiver	45	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Defence multi-dimensional communication standard	25	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Small enhanced European UAS	11	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Next-Generation Cooperative Cyber Range	48	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Secure waveform for satellite communications	25	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Energy-independent and energy-efficient systems for military camps	40	clean tech	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Multipurpose unmanned ground systems	50	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Simulation and training for medical emergencies	10	deep/digital	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Defence medical countermeasures Alliance – Research actions	15	biotech	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24
	Defence medical countermeasures Alliance – Development actions	10	biotech	20-Jun-24	05-Nov-24





STEP Upcoming calls in direct management

Publication of calls - tentative timeline										
	2024			2025						
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
EDF										
DEP										
IF										
EU4Health										
HE (EIC)										



STEP The Portal for stakeholders







STEP Projects displayed in the STEP Portal



- List of projects awarded the STEP Sovereignty Seal published in STEP Portal after end of evaluation process (aprox. 6 months after submission deadline)
- Information about projects will include:
 - Title
 - Project abstract
 - Name and address of beneficiary/ies
 - Programme that awarded the Sovereignty Seal
 - Funding requested/funding received
- Information **publicly** accessible by managing authorities (and other investors) but Commission will **actively push relevant lists of projects** to member states → in principle through NCPs
- Beneficiaries will also receive a **document** proving that they have been awarded the STEP Sovereignty Seal





STEP The National Contact Points

- To be nominated within **3 months from the adoption of STEP** (1 June 2024); 5 MS already nominated their NCPs; NCPs to be published in the Portal;
- **Main purpose**: To act as the main point of contact for the implementation of the STEP initiative at national level.
- Responsibilities: receive general updates on information relevant for the implementation of STEP (guidance on scope); engage bilaterally with the Commission taskforce for STEP to tackle specific questions/issues; coordinate strategically STEP in the MS.



Thank you!

Get in touch with us at EC-STEP-PARTNERS@ec.europa.eu

More information on STEP available on the dedicated Webpage.

STEP Regulation available <u>here</u>.

Webinar on STEP in cohesion policy (25 April 2024):

- Webstreaming
- Recording and presentation

