



EU PRIZE for

WOMEN INNOVATORS

2018



H2020 Programme

RULES OF CONTEST



1. THEME:

1.1 OBJECTIVES PURSUED

Europe urgently needs more innovators to stay competitive in the coming decades and to spur economic growth. The large number of well-educated women who, for various reasons, including lack of awareness or obstacles to maintain a work-life balance, do not consider entrepreneurship as an option, represents a tremendous untapped pool of innovation.

Awards have a strong potential to drive innovation through the recognition of achievements and the promotion of role models. Therefore, the European Commission through this prize would like to encourage women, currently underrepresented among entrepreneurs and innovators, to better exploit the commercial and business opportunities. After the success of the forerunners of the contest in 2011, 2014, 2016 and 2017, the Commission intends to continue its drive to increase public awareness of this issue, address the gender gap in entrepreneurship and spotlight women entrepreneurs who have brought outstanding innovations to the market. The Commission plans to award up to three "EU Prize for Women Innovators" and one "Rising Innovator Award" following a European-wide contest. The prizes are addressed to women who have founded or co-founded a company and who themselves or their company have benefitted from funding related to research and/or innovation. The prizes will not reward innovation proposed for the future, but outstanding achievements that have been already accomplished by the participant.

1.2 EXPECTED RESULTS

Although women are more and more active in research, there are still too few women creating innovative enterprises. This represents an untapped potential for Europe which needs all resources to remain competitive and find solutions to our societal challenges. The prizes will boost the public awareness of the, potential, importance and contribution of women researchers to entrepreneurship and will encourage entrepreneurial women to become innovators. This will help to achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.

2. PRIZE AMOUNTS

The first prize is EUR 100,000, the second prize EUR 50,000, the third prize EUR 30,000 and the Rising Innovator prize is EUR 20,000.

3. DEADLINES & ADMISSIBILITY

Deadlines	
Opening of contest	05 September 2017
Deadline for submissions	15 November 2017

Applications must be submitted by the participants via the Participant Portal 'Submission Service', accessible via the call page.

Applications must be readable, accessible and printable. Incomplete applications may be considered inadmissible if essential elements are missing (see [General Annex B to the Main Work Programme](#)).

The page-limit for this prize application is: 10 pages

Sample application forms are available as reference documents on the [Participant Portal](#).

4. ELIGIBILITY

4.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Participants¹ for the "EU Prize for Women Innovators 2018" have to comply with the following eligibility criteria to participate:

1. The participant must be a woman. For Rising Innovator Award following applies: The participant must be a woman born as of 1 January 1987.
2. The participant must be an ordinary resident in an EU Member State or a country associated to Horizon 2020.
3. The participant must be the founder or co-founder of an existing and active company which was registered before 1 January 2016.
4. The annual turnover of the company was at least EUR 100,000 in 2015 or 2016 (EUR 50,000 for the category Rising Innovator).
5. Either the participant as a natural person or the company founded/co-founded by the candidate have received or is receiving European or national funding for Research and Innovation or bank funding or alternative sources of financing such as private equity, venture capital, crowd funding through platforms or business angels

Please note, however, that special rules may apply for entities from certain countries (see [General Annex C to the Main Work Programme](#)).

Please also be aware that participants that have already received an EU or Euratom prize cannot receive a second prize for the same activities.

4.2 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Participants will be excluded if they (or one of them):

- are subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion)²
- are in one of the following situations³:
 - bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
 - declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
 - found guilty of grave professional misconduct⁴ by a final judgment or decision (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)

¹ Please note that 'participant' and 'contestant' are used as synonymous in this document.

² See Articles 131(4) and 106(1) Financial Regulation.

³ See Articles 138(2) and 106(1), 107 of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 (OJ L 218, 26.10.2012, p.1).

- convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- found guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control)
- have misrepresented information required for participating in the contest or fail to submit such information
- were involved in the preparation of the prize documents and this entails a distortion of competition.

5. AWARD CRITERIA

All eligible applications will be evaluated by a High level jury. The prize will be awarded, after closure of the contest, to the contestant(s) who in the opinion of the jury best addresses the following cumulative criteria:

1. The originality and marketability of the developed product or service provided by the company of the contestant. Applications will be compared according to e.g. the number of patents/co-patents and trademarks.
2. The economic impact - The economic impact of a product or service of the company for Europe is measured by the number of countries (inside and outside the EU) where the product or service is sold, and by the size of the turnover achieved with this service or product in 2015 and 2016.
3. The societal impact - the societal impact of a product or service of the company for Europe. It will be measured by the number of jobs created and the potential of the service or product to help Europe in addressing societal challenges e.g. the ageing of the European population, global warming, clean water, renewable energy and resource efficiency.
4. The impact and leadership role of the contestant. Contestants must explain how their role in the company influenced the success of the company and contestants should outline their potential to empower other women to be leaders and entrepreneurs.

6. DOCUMENTS

The mandatory supporting documents are set out in the application form.

Participants may be asked at a later stage for further documents (for legal entity validation, bank account validation, ethics review, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, etc).

⁴ Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain an advantage.

7. PROCEDURE

Applications will be evaluated by an independent expert jury between November 2017 and March 2018, first individually (by each expert separately) and then as a group (by the whole jury together).

If there are more than 60 applications, there will be a pre-selection phase, carried out by a pre-selection panel, to select the best 60 applications to pass to jury review. Otherwise, all applications will pass directly to jury review.

The pre-selection panel and jury usually have a different composition, but jury members may participate in the pre-selection panel.

The jury will evaluate each application against the 4 award criteria and score them as follows.

Criteria	Maximum points
1. Originality and Marketability	5
2. Economic Impact	5
3. Societal Impact	5
4. Leadership role of the contestant	5
Total	20

The 12 best applications will be invited in January 2018 for a hearing with the jury.

For applications with the same score, the jury will determine a priority order according to the following approach: the score for criterion No 1 will be given a weight of 1.5 and the score for criterion No 4 will be given a weight of 2.

On the basis of the evaluation by the jury, the Commission will decide on the award of the prize. All participants will be informed in the 1st quarter of 2018 about the outcome of the contest.

8. OTHER CONDITIONS

8.1 PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The prize's money (EUR 100,000, EUR 50,000, EUR 30,000 and EUR 20,000) will be paid in one instalment after the award ceremony by bank transfer, provided all the requested documents have been submitted.

8.2 PUBLICITY — PROMOTING THE PRIZE — VISIBILITY OF EU FUNDING

8.2.1 PUBLICITY BY THE WINNER(S)

The winner(s) must promote the award, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner.

Unless the Commission requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.) must:

- (a) display the EU emblem and
- (b) include the following text:

“has been awarded the EU Prize for Women Innovators from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme”.

When displayed together with another logo, the EU emblem must have appropriate prominence.

For the purposes of their obligations, the winner(s) may use the EU emblem without first obtaining approval from the Commission.

This does not, however, give it the right to exclusive use.

Moreover, the winner(s) may not appropriate the EU emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

8.2.2 PUBLICITY BY THE COMMISSION

The Commission may use, for its communication and publicising activities, information relating to the action, documents notably summaries for publication and deliverables as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material that it receives from the winner(s) (including in electronic form).

The Commission will publish the name of the winner(s), their origin, the amount of the prize and its nature and purpose — unless the winner has requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threatening its security and safety or harm its commercial interest).

Photos and videos taken by the Commission either in preparation of the award ceremony or during the award ceremony are the sole property of the Commission.

8.3 DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS

The winner(s) must comply with the obligations set out in Title III of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation - Regulation No 1290/2013⁵.

For more information and best practice, see Articles 23a-31 of the [H2020 AGA — Annotated grant agreement](#).

8.4 PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

8.4.1 PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA BY THE COMMISSION

Any personal data will be processed by the Commission under Regulation No 45/2001⁶ and in accordance with the [Participant Portal privacy notice\(s\)](#).

The winner(s) consent(s) that the Commission publishes (in whatever form and medium) the following information:

5 Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 laying down the rules for participation and dissemination in “Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)” (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013 p.81).

6 Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8, 12.01.2001, p. 1).

- (a) name
- (b) Member State of origin (address or NUTS 2 region)
- (c) their activities in relation to the award of the prize (via the summary for publication they provided)
- (d) prize amount

8.4.2. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA BY THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants must process personal data in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection (including authorisations or notification requirements, if any).

8.5 ETHICS

The activities must be carried out in compliance with:

- (a) ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and
- (b) applicable international, EU and national law.

No prize will be awarded for activities carried out outside the EU, if they are prohibited in all Member States.

The contestants must ensure that the activities have an exclusive focus on civil applications.

The contestants must ensure that the activities do not:

- aim at human cloning for reproductive purposes
- intend to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads) or
- intend to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

Research activities involving human embryonic stem cells (hESC) are moreover subject to the conditions set out in the [Statement of the Commission related to research activities involving human embryonic stem cells](#).

The participants must respect the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity⁷

For more information and best practice, see the Participant Portal Online Manual, the Guidance — How to complete your ethics self-assessment and the Guidance note — Research focusing exclusively on civil applications.

8.6 SECURITY

The activities must be carried out in compliance with Commission Decision [2015/444](#), i.e. security-sensitive information must be **EU-classified**, if its unauthorised disclosure could adversely impact the interests of the

⁷ European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of ALLEA (All European Academies) and ESF (European Science Foundation) of March 2017 http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf.

EU or of one (or more) of its Member States. Applications that are too security-sensitive cannot be awarded a prize.

For more information and best practice, see the [Guidance — Guidelines for the classification of information in research projects](#), the [Guidance — Guidelines for the handling of classified information in EU research projects](#), the [Guidance note — Potential misuse of research results](#) and the [Guidance note — Research involving dual use items](#).

8.7 CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The participants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective award of the prize is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('**conflict of interests**').

They must inform the Commission without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The Commission may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

8.8 LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES

The Commission cannot be held liable for any damage caused to the participants or to third parties as a consequence of the prize, including for gross negligence.

The Commission cannot be held liable for any damage caused by any of the participants in the context of the prize.

8.9 CHECKS, AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS

The Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the Court of Auditors may carry out checks, audits and investigations in relation to the prize.

8.10 WITHDRAWAL OF THE PRIZE — RECOVERY OF UNDUE AMOUNTS

The Commission may withdraw the prize and recover all payments made, if it finds out that:

- (a) false information or fraud or corruption was used to obtain the prize
- (b) a winner was not eligible or should have been excluded
- (c) a winner is in serious breach of its obligations under these Rules of Contest.

8.11 ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

If a participant has committed irregularities or fraud or has made false declarations, the Commission may

also:

- (a) exclude the participant from all future contracts, grants and contests financed from the EU or Euratom budget for a maximum of five years (or 10 years in case of repetition) and/or
- (b) impose a financial penalty between 2% and 10% of the value of the prize (or between 4% and 20% in case of repetition).

8.12 CANCELLATION OF THE CONTEST

The Commission may cancel the contest or decide not to award the prize — without any obligation to compensate participants —, if:

- (c) no applications are received
- (d) the jury does not find a winner, or
- (e) the winner is not eligible or must be excluded.

8.13 COMPLAINTS

Complaints against decisions negatively affecting the rights of a participant or winner can be brought before the General Court — or, on appeal, the Court of Justice of the European Union — under Article 263 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

9. CONTACTS

For more information, please see the prize website.

In case of questions, please contact the [Research Enquiry Service](#) or contact us via email to rtd-women-innovators@ec.europa.eu

