



**EU PRIZE** for  
**WOMEN INNOVATORS**  
2020



**RULES OF CONTEST**

Version 1.0  
11 February 2020

Research and  
Innovation

## 1. THEME:

### 1.1 OBJECTIVES PURSUED

Women are underrepresented in terms of creating innovative enterprises. This is an untapped potential for Europe, which needs to optimise all available resources to remain competitive and find solutions to our societal challenges.

This award scheme recognises the role of women in bringing about game-changing innovations to market honouring the outstanding achievements of women running innovative companies. The "EU Prize for Women Innovators" will be awarded to up to four women innovators in total (including one young woman innovator, so-called 'rising innovator') who have created the largest impact on the innovation ecosystem by transforming ideas into new and advanced products and/or services for the benefit and wealth of the European citizens.

Three prizes of EUR 100,000 each and one prize of EUR 50,000 in the 'rising innovator' category will be awarded.

### 1.2 EXPECTED RESULTS

The prizes will boost public awareness of the potential, importance and contribution of women to the innovation ecosystem and create strong role models inspiring other women to become innovators themselves.

## 2. PRIZE AMOUNTS

Three prizes of EUR 100,000 each for the Women Innovators category and EUR 50,000 for the Rising Innovator category.

## 3. DEADLINES & ADMISSIBILITY

Deadlines	
Opening of the submission:	11 February 2020
Closing date for submission:	21 April 2020, 17:00 CET <sup>1</sup>

Applications must be submitted by the participants via the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#).

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 (Part B) is 10 pages.

Participants must support their applications with an inspiring video message lasting up to 90 seconds with their application. **The submission consists of a complete application, including a link to the video.**

Participants must be able to provide proof of eligibility (see 4.1 Eligibility Criteria)<sup>2</sup>.

Two or more female co-founders of a single company may submit a joint application. In this case, the

---

<sup>1</sup> Central European Time = Brussels time

<sup>2</sup> Participants may be asked at a later stage to provide documents to support the eligibility declaration in Part A of the proposal, in accordance with section 6.

participants must appoint a 'lead participant' to represent them towards the Commission. The participants will be jointly responsible and must all fulfil and respect the conditions set out in these Rules of Contest.

## 4. ELIGIBILITY

### 4.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Participants<sup>3</sup> for the "EU Prize for Women Innovators 2020" must comply with the following eligibility criteria to participate:

1. The participant must be a woman.

For the Rising Innovator Award, the contestant must be a woman on or after 1 January 1985.

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 innovative company registered before 1 January 2018.

Please note, however, that special rules may apply for entities from certain countries and that an application will only be considered eligible if its content corresponds, wholly or in part, to the contest description for which it is submitted. (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

- a) Participants will be excluded if they are subject to an administrative sanction (i.e. exclusion or financial penalty decision)<sup>4</sup>
- b) are in one of the following situations<sup>5</sup>:
  - 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 (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
  - in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts)
  - guilty of grave professional misconduct<sup>6</sup> (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award of the prize)

---

<sup>3</sup> Please note that 'participant', 'applicants' and 'contestant' are used as synonymous in this document.

<sup>4</sup> See Articles 136(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> See Articles 136(1) and 141(1) EU Financial Regulation

- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including if done by terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award of the prize)
  - shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award of the prize)
  - guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award of the prize)
  - created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award of the prize).
- c) have misrepresented information required for participating in the contest or fail to submit such information<sup>7</sup>
- d) were involved in the preparation of the prize documents and this entails a distortion of competition<sup>8</sup>.

## 5. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications will be evaluated by an independent jury of experts. The prize will be awarded, after closure of the contest, to the contestants who in the opinion of the jury best address the following cumulative criteria:

1. **Breakthrough Innovation** – the company founded or co-founded by the contestant provides a cutting edge product or service. In presenting her innovation, the contestant will clearly demonstrate what makes this product or service innovative, describing its added value and viability, particularly in relation to other existing solutions.
2. **Impact** – the cutting edge product or service brings major benefits to citizens and society and the economy. The contestant should describe the specific need addressed, and demonstrate the benefit of their product or service for society (mentioning, if relevant, the fight against climate change, gender equality, and other societal challenges). The contestant will also demonstrate that the product or service contributes to the creation of jobs and growth in Europe. The applicant should also demonstrate her company's positive contribution to the broader innovation ecosystem.

The contestant will support her reply with quantifiable information on the economic impact in particular, including countries where the product or service is commercialised, turnover (in EUR), jobs created, and any other direct or indirect impact. The contestant should also detail the medium- and long-term development strategy for the company.

3. **Inspiration** – the contestant has shown active leadership and her role has influenced the success of the company. The contestant has the potential to inspire others, within her company and beyond. The

---

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> See article 141(1) [EU Financial Regulation](#)

<sup>8</sup> See article 141(1) [EU Financial Regulation](#)

contestant is a strong role model who can inspire other women to become innovators/leaders in innovation.

## 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, final eligibility checks, declaration of honour on exclusion grounds, etc).

## 7. PROCEDURE

If there are more than 200 applications, there will be a pre-selection phase to select the best 100 applications to pass to jury review. Otherwise, all eligible 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 evaluation is planned to take place between April 2020 and June 2020.

The jury will evaluate each application against the 3 award criteria and score them as follows (half marks are possible, decimals are not):

Criteria	Maximum points	Threshold
1. Breakthrough Innovation	7	4
2. Impact	7	4
3. Inspiration	7	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>

For applications with the same score, the jury will determine a ranking 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 3 will be given a weight of 2.

A hearing with the jury will take place in June 2020. According to the overall number of applications received, a minimum of 12 and maximum of 20 candidates will be invited to the hearing. On the basis of the evaluation by the jury (and after the mandatory checks: ethics review, security scrutiny, legal entity validation, non-exclusion, double funding and plagiarism, etc), the Commission will decide on the award of the prize. All participants will be informed in the third quarter of 2020 about the outcome of the contest.

## 8. OTHER CONDITIONS

### 8.1 PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The prize money (EUR 100,000, EUR 100,000, EUR 100,000 and EUR 50,000) will be paid to the participant 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 1290/2013<sup>9</sup>.

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

---

<sup>9</sup> 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).

Any personal data will be processed by the Commission under Regulation No 2018/1725 and in accordance with the Funding and Tenders Portal privacy notice(s)<sup>10</sup>. The winner(s) consent(s) that the Commission publishes (in whatever form and medium) the following information:

- (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 Integrity<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>10</sup> Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725 of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295 21.11.2018, p.39).

<sup>11</sup> 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](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf).

For more information and best practice, see the [Funding and Tenders 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 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 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 damages.

## 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 is in one of the situations specified in section 4.2, the Commission may also impose administrative sanctions (i.e. exclude it from future EU contracts, grants and prizes and/or impose a financial penalty)<sup>12</sup>.

### 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:

- (a) no applications are received
- (b) the jury does not find a winner, or
- (c) 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](mailto:rtd-women-innovators@ec.europa.eu)

---

<sup>12</sup> See Articles 136(1) and 138 [EU Financial Regulation](#)

