

For immediate release

InnoMatch Launches Open Call 2 for EIC Awardees Offering €60,000 Grants for Pilot Deployment

February 2026

InnoMatch, a key project of the European Innovation Council (EIC) Innovation Procurement Programme, has officially launched Open Call 2 for EIC Awardees.

This call, open from 16 February 2026 until 17 April 2026 (17:00 CET), aims to fund the pilot testing or proof-of-concept (PoC) demonstration of innovative solutions addressing four predefined Innovation Challenges identified by committed InnoMatch Buyers.

The call will support four (4) pilot projects, each receiving up to €60,000 in funding, enabling Horizon Europe EIC Awardees to validate their solutions directly within the Buyers' operational environments.

Targeted Innovation for Real Market Needs.

The InnoMatch programme is a collaborative bridge between EIC Awardees and procurement customers (Buyers). Open Call 2 focuses on four specific Innovation Challenges defined by selected Buyers following a dedicated scouting and preparation phase.

These challenges cover the following thematic areas:

- Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence
- Energy, Environment and Sustainability
- Agriculture, Food and Beverages
- Health and Life Sciences



The objective is clear: match cutting-edge EIC innovations with concrete procurement needs, accelerating validation and paving the way for post-pilot commercial adoption.

Virtual Matchmaking Sessions

Each Innovation Challenge includes a dedicated InnoMatch Virtual Matchmaking Session, offering EIC Awardees the opportunity to engage directly with Buyers before submitting their proposals.

Challenge 1: Ai4PP | Buyer: The City of Ghent

- **Date & Time:** 13 March, 10:00 CET
- **Challenge:** Automating and accelerating the drafting of procurement documents to reduce manual workload, inconsistencies, and legal risks.
- **Registration:** <https://www.f6s.com/matchmaking-session-city-of-ghent/about>

Challenge 2: CHEF | Buyer: EH Group

- **Date & Time:** 12 March, 11:30 CET
- **Challenge:** Reducing platinum content in Catalyst-Coated Membranes (CCMs) while maintaining fuel cell performance and durability.
- **Registration:** <https://www.f6s.com/profile/6582257/about>

Challenge 3: SoilPulse | Buyer: DeepSoil

- **Date & Time:** 13 March, 11:30 CET
- **Challenge:** Enabling real-time nitrogen monitoring and soil health assessment to improve carbon credit accuracy and verification.
- **Registration:** <https://www.f6s.com/matchmaking-session-deepsoil-group/about>

Challenge 4: PrediHeart | Buyer: Medtronic Iberica

- **Date & Time:** 12 March, 10:00 CET

- **Challenge:** Enhancing its Remote Patient Monitoring platform with clinically validated, AI-powered analytics for personalised cardiovascular care.
- **Registration:**
<https://www.f6s.com/matchmaking-session-medtronic-iberica/about>

How the Programme Works

Selected EIC Awardees will join the 12-month InnoMatch Programme, structured in three phases:

- Prepare (up to 2 months): Development of a Sub-Grant Agreement and a jointly designed Action Plan with the committed Buyer.
- Deploy (up to 6 months): Implementation of the pilot at the Buyer's premises, with direct operational support from the Buyer's team.
- Assess (up to 4 months): Evaluation of pilot results and KPI fulfilment through a Validation Report, developed in collaboration with the Buyer.

In addition to financial support, participants will benefit from mentoring, coaching, training sessions and access to the EIC Innovation Procurement Community and Toolkit.

Who Can Apply?

Open Call 2 is exclusively open to **single legal entities that are Horizon Europe EIC Awardees**, including:

- Beneficiaries of the EIC Pathfinder
- Beneficiaries of EIC Transition
- Beneficiaries with an EIC Accelerator contract or investment agreement
- Winners of EIC Prizes

Applicants must demonstrate their capacity to commercially exploit their innovation and bring it to market if the pilot proves successful.

The deadline for applications is 17 April 2026 at 17:00 CET.

About InnoMatch:

InnoMatch is powered by the EIC Innovation Procurement Programme, an initiative of the European Innovation Council (EIC), that aims to facilitate access to procurement markets in Europe and at the global level, ensuring increased market opportunities for innovative SMEs and start-ups and contributing, at the same time, to their scaling up.

Finding first customers is one of the main barriers that is hampering access to market and commercialisation of innovative solutions developed by innovative SMEs.

To facilitate the uptake of innovation procurement, InnoMatch will support the pilot testing of innovative solutions provided by the EIC Awardees for public and private procurement customers (Buyers). In total, €2.28M will be offered in the context of the InnoMatch to support at least 38 pilots, covering up to €60,000 per pilot.

Contact:

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