2nd Press Release

The FUTURAL project is launching a single OPEN CALL!

Applications open on June 28th 2024, for Smart Solutions development with funding available for 10 innovative ideas!

What is FUTURAL about?

FUTURAL is a project launched in June 2023 and funded by Horizon Europe aiming to empower rural communities through prototyping, testing, piloting, and demonstrating community-led social, technological and business innovations, through co-creation in **six (6) Multi-Actor Pilots (MAPs)** across the EU, varying in geographical and socio-cultural contexts. For this, a set of **eight (8) digital Smart Solutions (SS)** will be developed and deployed, addressing key societal and environmental rural challenges relating to **five (5) Smart Solution domains**, namely: **1. Circular Bioeconomy, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management, 2. Resilience to Shocks, 3. Citizen Engagement and Quality of Life, 4. Lifelong Education and Training, and 5. Climate Adaptation and Mitigation,** covering a wide range of relevant challenges faced by rural communities across the EU.

What is the Open Call about?

FUTURAL will fund **at least ten (10) projects (min €60k and max €120k per project / min €30k euro and max €60k per each third party, i.e. partner of the consortium submitting a proposal)** that will develop their own SS (different from the eight smart solutions developed by the FUTURAL partners), based on the five FUTURAL SS domains, to be applied in other rural areas (in at least ten European rural areas other than the areas covered by the six MAP areas) and be available on the project's Metasearch platform, providing Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) as a mechanism to increase the number of SS available to rural communities and accelerate network expansion.

Who can apply?

FUTURAL will accept applications from **small consortia** consisting of two (2) to four (4) parties, involving ≥1 (at least one) **technical party** (e.g., SMEs, startups, research organisations) and ≥1 (at least one) **rural community** (e.g., Municipalities, Regional authorities, Development agencies, NGOs etc.) and proposed solutions must fall within one of the five (5) domains.

Timeline

The applications open on **June 28, 2024**, and close on **September 30, 2024**. Successful applications will be notified in January 2025. Sub-projects implementation will be divided into three phases: **Design**, **Development** and **Validation**, lasting a total of **12 months**, beginning **June 2025** and ending **May 2026.**

How to apply?

FUTURAL's Open Call for proposals will be submitted digitally through the https://opencallhub.eu portal. Submissions received through any other channel will be automatically discarded.

Interested Applicants should visit FUTURAL website (https://futural-project.eu/futural-open-call/) to find all of the details for the Open Call and the FAQ section available in the Open Call Hub.

Evaluation will be conducted by independent evaluators who will assess the quality of each application including the concept and feasibility, technology readiness and innovation development, impact and exploitation, as well as organisational capacity and sufficiency in the team's background. Full evaluation criteria are available in the Open Call Kit documents.

English is the official language for the FUTURAL Open Call. Applications submitted in any other language will not be evaluated. English is also the only official language throughout the whole execution of the FUTURAL project. This means all requested contributions (documents of the OC kit) must be submitted in English to be eligible.

Points of contact

All questions concerning the Call must be in writing and be stated on the FAQ section on the https://opencallhub.eu/ or sent by e-mail to futural@opencallhub.eu. The deadline for asking clarification questions or requesting additional information is 48 hours before the deadline of the present Open Call.

Note to editors:

At a glance - Key facts and figures

- Instrument: Horizon Europe - Financial support to third parties
- Single Open Call budget: 1,200,000 €
- Funding for each third party: min 30,000 € and max 60,000 €

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