## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide proposal guidelines for applicants to the I.FAST Internal Innovation Funding (IIF).

I.FAST is a collaborative project on accelerator technologies. WP4 in I.FAST is engaged in promoting innovation by structuring and implementing the IIF for financing cutting-edge innovations explored within IFAST. WP4 will monitor the advancement of the funded projects assessing results and properly allocation of funds according to established workplans.

## Aims

The IIF projects are fast-tracked, competitive and innovative projects sponsored by WP4 in I.FAST. The objective of the IIF is to encourage I.FAST beneficiaries to identify, describe, propose and/or pitch novel innovations, emerging technologies, processes, research, business models and other innovative solutions with viable commercial potential which can at the same time influence or address the general technical platform of I.FAST (accelerator technologies) and also the climate change and environmental degradation.

A special competitive advantage is allowed to proposals able to attract interests, and resources, from different industrial partners and that have a development plan in place (i.e. participation to EU competition grants).

## Area of interest

Sustainability of future accelerators is an important pillar of the I.FAST. Here sustainability refers to the ability in I.FAST of developing technology that does not compromise the commitments taken by European Commission ([EU Green Deal](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)) and by its Member States. Therefore IIF seeks all technologies capable of advance the status-of-art of the related I.FAST thematic areas and at the same time able to address the challenge of environmental protection which is top of all technological agenda in these days. The I.FAST thematic areas potentially of interests include:

1. Novel particle accelerators concepts and technologies
2. High brightness accelerators for light sources
3. Innovative superconducting magnets
4. Innovative superconducting thin film coated cavities
5. Advanced accelerator technologies and materials
6. Sustainable concepts and technologies
7. Societal applications
8. Technology Infrastructure

The IIF foresees to work on an idea that will make the innovation and technology transfer potential evident to the market and so secure, for example, a spin-out (seed or venture finance) or licensing opportunity or provide the necessary information to bid for other support. This often takes small amounts of funds to enable activities essential for preparing a robust business plan.

We are most interested in deployment-ready technologies, but we will consider promising approaches of technical maturities till TL4 (validated in laboratory). We will facilitate contact and interactions between IFAST partners and active researchers or technology developers in the community network.

We are interested in submissions and novel concepts from all individuals in academia and research, provided they are I.FAST beneficiaries or can team with at least one I.FAST beneficiary.

The idea or concept must have a clear potential for commercial application and sometimes a background patent will have been filed, although this is not a requirement and may not always be applicable. Applicants should include an explanation of how they plan to manage IP in the project.

**The IIF funding can be used for:**

* Undertaking further scientific and technical development of an idea.
* Improving an intellectual property (IP) position, through for example, supporting further work to exemplify or broaden patent claims. All intellectual property arising from a project award will rest with the institution to which the grant is awarded. Therefore, the cost for filing patents is not reimbursed by the IIF.
* Gaining further information about the market for the new products or process.
* Identifying potential licensees or opportunities for joint ventures.
* Whilst other funding\* is not a prerequisite, IIF applications which have secured funding from elsewhere e.g. host institution, will be looked upon favorably.
* N.B. \*Funding from third parties must be additional to the funds requested.

**IIF funding will specifically not support:**

* ‘Blue sky’ research.
* Associated intellectual property costs e.g. patent costs.
* The purchase of larger equipment and capital (larger fraction of 25% of the requested funds).

## Rules

Participating to the IIF competition involves accepting all the deadlines and rules as they are described into this document and into the other documents that are referenced here. I.FAST, in accordance with general principles of fairness, impartiality and transparency, reserves the right to add, change or modify, cancel or amend all or any part of the rules as it deems fit and without notice. It is responsibility of the submitting party to remain informed. In case of any dispute it will be the I.FAST Governing Board to emit the final decision.

The IIF projects are eligible only if at least one industrial partner is present in the consortia, and the consortia is led by a I.FAST beneficiary. To facilitate the funding transaction from I.FAST to the selected projects, it is requested that the members of Consortium participating to IIF proposals to sign the I.FAST Consortium Agreement (link here).

The awarded projects duration cannot extend over the duration of IFAST project, which is scheduled to end in May 2024.

## Proposal template

Each proposal must include information under the headings below, to be submitted before the deadline of August 31, 2022 otherwise the applications will be rejected for non-compliance.

The documents to be completed are:

* **A web page submission form,** which is accessible via the link [here](https://ifast-project.eu/form/internal-innovation-funding-subm) provided. A downloadable template can be used to work offline and to upload the complete form, and this can be downloaded [here](https://ifast.web.cern.ch/sites/default/files/2022-05/IIF_Form.docx). The words limit for each section of the document must be respected, as any word exceeding the max count will be disregarded, with possibility of rejection of the full submission. Incomplete submission of the form leads to rejection of the proposal.
* **A document in pitch form** (ppt presentation), that will present the innovation, its field of application, the TRL, the future development foreseen, the IP status, the team working on it and the schematic work plan with deliverables, milestones, schedule of payments. A template is provided [here](https://ifast.web.cern.ch/sites/default/files/2022-03/IFF/I.FAST-IFF-pitch-Mlos.pptx) but it is not mandatory to use it: any original slide can be used for this pitch, according to the best need and wishes of the proposer, but nevertheless it must to be respected the following:

the total number of slides is 10, including 1 title slide, and 1 contact slide. Any slides exceeding this number will be disregarded.

The only format admitted for the document is pdf, with no embedded video, hyperlinks or links to external content.

The pitch document relative to the submitted project shall report on:

• Background and Aim

What is the funded research that will form the basis of this project? What is the aim of this application? Who will benefit from this project and subsequent commercialisation?

• Technical Summary

Provide an account of the current status of the technology you are proposing and the plan for development. The summary should provide sufficient detail for the Evaluation Panel to assess fully the technical aspects of the proposed project.

• Work Plan and Risk analysis

Detail specific work packages, assigning responsibility between partners if appropriate. Applicants should show that they have identified risks and developed alternative strategies to mitigate these. The applicants should consider both technical, programmatic and, where relevant, commercial risks.

• Application and impact

Detail which sector, in addition to the accelerator domain, will be impacted by the research. What are the potential target audience and applications in different markets. Report on market data, the current and projected ones.

• Business and Industrialization Plan

Describe how you will investigate the development of a business plan, which will include a route to market. Describe the commercial opportunity, supported by market data. Include a summary of the current IP position. Describe the predicted investment, business relationship and other mechanisms required post-project to take forward industrialization.

• Resources (budget)

State the resources requested by the applicants and provide justification for them. The Panel can reduce resource requests if they feel there is insufficient justification.

• Project Deliverables and Milestones to verify implementation

Identify what the direct outputs will be at the end of this grant (please be specific).

**Letters of Support**

Letters of support can be included from other relevant parties not directly involved in the project but who support the objectives and future development, for example, potential end users. Letters will not count towards the page limit. Letters should:

Be on headed paper and signed by a senior member of staff or director (the capacity in which the supporter is signing the letter should be stated) or an email with full contact details.

Be dated within six months of submission

Detail their interest and involvement in the project in terms of specific objectives and desired outcomes together

Provide some evidence (making reference to the Business Plan) of the projected market size, customers and sales (for industries)

Describe (making reference to the Business Plan) how the consortia could commercialise the technology beyond the project (for industries).

The above described pitch document must be uploaded after the completion of the web page submission form.

At the deadline of the call, the Evaluator panel will evaluate the submitted proposals. The evaluation will include 2 rounds: a first round, digital, based on the eligible pitch received, which will be scored according to criteria of innovations, impact and quality, as reported in the excel table [here](https://ifast.web.cern.ch/sites/default/files/2022-05/IFAST-IIF-EvCo-EvaluationCriteria.xlsx). A second round with in-person presentation from the Projects admitted will score as well, and with the same criteria as above, the added information that will be communicated in a 45-minute presentation.

To the second round of evaluation will be admitted only the first 10 submitted projects.

In both rounds, all the pitches will be competitively scored according to the same criteria reported in the excel table reported. In the second round will be awarded for funding a definite number of projects till the maximum fund capacity of 1.000.000 Euro will be reached.

Indeed, each project can request a maximum contribution of 200.000 Euro, therefore the number of selected projects will be regulated by the relative score and by the total requested fund.

The awarded projects will be notified by the IFAST Governing Board, and all the 10 projects admitted to the second round of evaluation will be publicly announced on the IFAST webpage, representing a unique opportunity for a show-case of the technology to the large IFAST community, facilitating possibilities of development and exploitation also off the IIF context.

## Dates

The IIF precise schedule will be reported in the IFAST webpage. Tentative dates (subjected to possible changes) so far are:

Deadline for submission of proposals: September 15, 2022

Deadline for first round of evaluation: October 17, 2022

Deadline for second round of evaluations: November 30, 2022.

Please, check the [IFAST IIF webpage](https://ifast-project.eu/iif) constantly to verify any change in the dates reported above.

Except where specified otherwise, the Deadline for submitting a proposal shall be 11:59 PM Geneva time, on date of Submission Close or Deadline ("Deadline") reported on the IFAST webpage.

## Collaboration Agreements

After the project is selected for funding, the leading organization will be asked to sign a Collaboration Agreement with CERN. The Collaboration Agreement will be prepared by the IFAST Coordination Office keeping into account the presented project/deliverable schedule and the IFAST payment calendar of all approved projects.

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