

<i>Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements</i>	The rules are described in General Annex G.
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Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

HORIZON-EIE-2024-CONNECT-01-01: The African Union-European Union Innovation Platform

Specific conditions	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 2.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 2.50 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions
<i>Eligibility conditions</i>	<p>The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>The following additional eligibility criteria apply:</p> <p>Legal entities established in all African Union member states⁵⁵ may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and Support Action as a beneficiary (or affiliated entity). Due to the scope of this topic, all African Union member states are exceptionally eligible for Union funding.</p> <p>Consortia must have at least three (3) independent legal entities from different African Union member states.</p>
<i>Procedure</i>	<p>The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:</p> <p>The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.</p>

Expected Outcome: Strengthening Research and Innovation (R&I) cooperation between the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) is a key priority of the EU Communication Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa⁵⁶, in which the role of R&I is recognised as a driver for sustainable and inclusive economic growth and job generation, thereby reducing poverty and inequalities. The first R&I Ministerial meeting of the AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology and Innovation (HLPD on STI) agreed to focus cooperation in four priority areas: Public Health, Green Transition, Innovation & Technology, and

⁵⁵ In the context of the conditions for this call topic, "African Union member states" includes countries whose membership has been temporarily suspended.

⁵⁶ [Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa JOIN\(2020\) 4 final.](#)

Capacities for Science, and also agreed to the development of a joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda, which is currently under preparation, and expected to be adopted at the second AU-EU R&I Ministerial in early 2023.

This topic contributes to the priority areas of action (number 9) listed in the Council Conclusions on the Future Governance European Research Area⁵⁷ with regard to launching a pilot initiative on the Team Europe approach for a specific world region and/or topic.

This topic is also in support of the key actions mentioned in the Council Conclusions on the Global approach to Research and Innovation - the EU's strategy for international cooperation in changing world⁵⁸, in particular at point twenty-nine related to the AU-EU Partnership, aiming at developing a joint EU-AU Research and Innovation Agenda in support of building research capacities and translating research outputs, including those from the 'Africa Initiative' under the Horizon Europe Work Programmes 2021-2022, into socio-economic and environmental benefits, in line with the agreement reached at the 2020 EU-AU R&I Ministerial meeting.

The action funded under this topic will have the objective of supporting the implementation of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda. The action is expected to bring together a mix of EU and AU innovation stakeholders, from academia and business, including higher education establishments, public and private research entities, non-governmental organisations, international finance institutions, incubators and accelerators, technology transfer and capacity building and higher learning organisations.

The aim of the topic will be to foster the links and networks between innovation stakeholders from the AU and EU innovation ecosystems, also including the social innovation dimension.

Proposals addressing this topic should in particular contribute to the following outcomes:

- Support the implementation of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda by providing for a convening platform enabling the elaboration and proposal of implementation modalities of specific actions already included in the current AU-EU Innovation Agenda. In particular and in practice, this action would enable the attainment of several short-term actions foreseen in the working document of the Innovation Agenda for two thematic areas (e.g. "Cross-cutting issues" and "Capacities for science"), aiming to:
 - o Foster the establishment of links and networks among stakeholders across the innovation value chains, from the generation of ideas to development and implementation of innovations, including private and public sectors, higher education and research organisations, financial institutions, and civil society organisations;

⁵⁷ More information under ["New Pact and governance structure for the European Research Area \(ERA\)."](#)

⁵⁸ More information under ["Council agrees on a global approach to research and innovation."](#)

- o Involve citizens in the innovation ecosystems, to improve societal uptake of innovation outputs, and valorise creative and collective intelligence, ensuring also gender equality and active participation of youths;
- o Strengthen coordination and cooperation between AU and EU innovation programmes and various implementing institutions, ensuring knowledge transfer, capacity building and mobility opportunities, consistent with the socio-economic needs of the concerned AU and EU countries or regions.
- Facilitate, conceptually and logistically, the organisation of annual or bi-annual meetings with key innovation stakeholders from the EU and the AU. By doing so, provide a forum for discussion and planning of the implementation of other short-, medium- and long-term actions of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda;
- Provide further de-risking support to Eureka-funded small and medium sized-enterprises (SMEs), that have previously benefitted from Viability Assessment Projects (VAPs) under Eureka’s Innowide, by shortening the time-to-market of their innovative solutions and enhancing the uptake of innovations in European and African countries.

Scope: *Target group(s): Networks of start-ups, innovators, incubators, accelerators, academia, research and technology organisations (public and private sector), think tanks, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations, private and financial actors.*

With the objective of guaranteeing a multidisciplinary approach, the selected consortium should be composed of diverse stakeholders (e.g. networks of start-ups, innovators, incubators, accelerators, academia, research and technology organisations, think tanks, NGOs, private and financial sectors, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology's (EIT) Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), etc.).

Following the end of the project, this platform is expected to continue operations without funding from Horizon Europe. Therefore, the development of a sustainability plan is requested.

HORIZON-EIE-2024-CONNECT-01-02: Startup Europe

Specific conditions	
<i>Expected EU contribution per project</i>	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 1.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
<i>Indicative budget</i>	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 12.00 million.
<i>Type of Action</i>	Coordination and Support Actions