

Guide

RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry

2024 call for proposals

Part of the transformation campaign launched by the
Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy,
Mobility, Innovation and Technology



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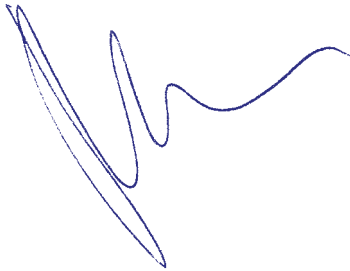
Introduction

Switching fossil fuel-based production processes to climate-friendly alternatives and minimising greenhouse gas emissions in Austria as far as possible with innovative, Austrian-made solutions – this is a major challenge facing the manufacturing industry in this country, and we are lending our support through the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry.

In this second call for proposals, the RTI initiative is offering integrated funding for research and trial projects, thus helping to accelerate the process from research to market. Under the umbrella of the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK)'s "Transforming Industry" campaign (part of its Climate and Transformation Initiative), our funding paves the way for trialling key technologies and system solutions that focus heavily on innovation and experimentation. Innovations are developed through ventures with significant industry involvement, with a view to rolling them out on a widespread scale.

There is a particularly strong emphasis on building up RTI expertise and skills development schemes that can also enhance Austria's appeal as a location for industry. This year, the innovation laboratory, which received funding from the 2023 call for proposals, will be acting as a catalyst to support the RTI initiative and help innovations break through quickly.

We would like to invite you to be part of this, and do your bit to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen Austrian industry to make it fit for the future.



Bernd Vogl
Managing Director of the Climate and Energy Fund

1.0 Key facts

The objective by 2030 is to develop and trial models designed to decarbonise industry while taking account of the requirements of a circular economy.

The focus here is on industry as an integral part of the energy and raw materials system.

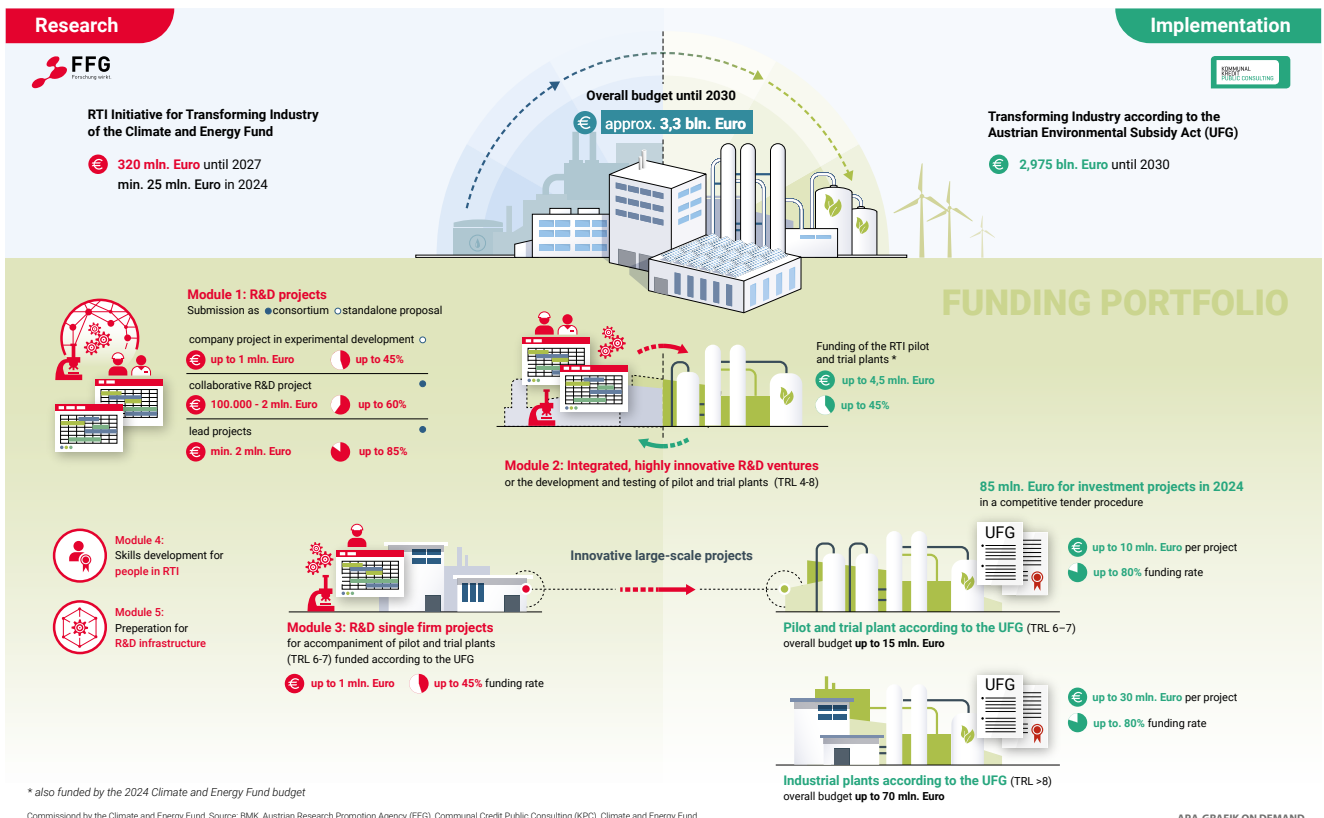
The *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry* is geared towards developing new technological solutions for the manufacturing industry¹ and using innovative climate protection technologies to bring about a lasting and widespread reduction in both energy-related greenhouse gas emissions and process-related emissions that can only be avoided with considerable effort and expense. Crucial to this are projects that can improve the optimisation and system integration of key technologies for industrial decarbonisation. The aim is to exploit synergy effects in terms of sector coupling with other sectors/energy carriers and the manufacturing industry.

The intention is to use showcase projects to help demonstrate how Austrian-made innovations can make climate-neutral industrial production both technically and commercially viable. The solutions identified are to serve as models for a roll-out across the board.

The target group for this RTI initiative comprises the manufacturing industry, energy supply companies and technology providers throughout the value chain along with research institutions and universities.

This RTI initiative forms part of the comprehensive *“Transforming Industry” climate and transformation campaign* launched by the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK). The initiative has a total budget of around EUR 320 million up to 2027.

Figure 1: Overview of measures taken by the BMK and the Climate and Energy Fund in 2024 as part of the “Transforming Industry” RTI initiative



1 The manufacturing industry as defined by Eurostat comprises 13 sectors (Austrian Statistical Classification of Economic Activities (ÖNACE) sections B, C and F): Construction; mining and quarrying; chemicals and petrochemicals; iron- and steelmaking; vehicle construction; wood processing; mechanical engineering; food and beverages/tobacco; non-ferrous metals; paper and printing; quarrying and glassmaking; textiles and leather; and other manufacturing.

A budget of at least EUR 25 million is available for the current 2024 call for proposals. In addition, there is the option increase the funding volume to up to EUR 50

million by drawing on funds from the 2025 budget. The following complementary modules in five priority areas are being offered:

Table 1: Overview of modules

Modules	Research and development: Funding from the Climate and Energy Fund	Pilot and trial plant: Funding from the Climate and Energy Fund or Ministry for Climate Action
Module I R&D projects	<p>Collaborative R&D project Funding: between EUR 100,000 and EUR 2 million, up to 60%</p> <p>or</p> <p>lead project Funding: at least EUR 2 million, up to 85%</p> <p>or</p> <p>company project in experimental development Funding: up to EUR 1 million, up to 45% Submission to and consultation with FFG</p>	
Module II Integrative, highly innovative R&D ventures for the development and testing of pilot and trial plants	<p>Collaborative R&D project Funding: between EUR 100,000 and EUR 2 million, up to 60%</p> <p>or</p> <p>lead project Funding: at least EUR 2 million, up to 85% Joint consultation with FFG and KPC Submission to FFG</p>	<p>RTI pilot and trial plants Funding from the Climate and Energy Fund: Funding rate of up to 45% of the basic funding² The funding rate and funding award claims are limited to the maximum threshold for state aid. Max. funding: EUR 4.5 million³ Only in combination with R&D project (detailed information) Joint consultation with FFG and KPC Submission to KPC</p>
Module III R&D single firm projects for accompaniment of pilot and trial plants funded within the transformation of industry programme	<p>Company project in experimental development Funding: up to EUR 1 million, up to 45% Submission to and consultation with FFG</p>	<p>Pilot and trial plant under the Austrian Environmental Subsidy Act (UFG), in accordance with the General Block Exemption Regulation (AGVO) Funding from the Ministry for Climate Action: up to EUR 10 million, up to 80% Competitive tender procedure Prerequisite for single firm R&D project No consultation, submission to KPC Link (in German): www.umweltfoerderung.at/transformationindustrie1_2024</p>
Module IV Qualifikation von Menschen in Forschung, Technologie und Innovation (FTI) [Skills development for people in research, technology and innovation (RTI)]	<p>Qualification network Funding: up to EUR 200,000, up to 100% Submission to and consultation with FFG</p>	
Module V Preparation for R&D infrastructure	<p>Exploratory study Funding: up to EUR 80,000, up to 80% Submission to and consultation with FFG</p>	

² The basic funding and funding rate are dependent on the applicable article of the General Block Exemption Regulation (AGVO).

³ EUR 6.0 million for measures (heating and cooling supply systems) that are eligible for funding under Article 46 of the General Block Exemption Regulation (AGVO).

The Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) and Kommunalkredit Public Consulting (KPC) have been

tasked with running this call for proposals (see Figure 1 for their areas of responsibility).

Table 2: Budget – deadlines – contact details

Key data	Details
Total budget	At least EUR 25 million from the 2024 budget, with the option to supplement this with up to EUR 25 million from the 2025 budget (up to EUR 50 million in total)
Compulsory preliminary discussion	A compulsory preliminary discussion with advisors from the handling organisations (FFG or FFG and KPC) must be held for submitting lead projects under Module I and for all submissions of integrative, highly innovative pilot and trial projects from Module II (discussions are to be arranged with the FFG and KPC contacts below by no later than 13 September; the last possible date for discussions is 27 September).
Submission deadline 1 ⁴	Thursday, 31 October 2024, 12:00 pm (Modules I, II, IV, V)
Submission deadline 2 ⁴	Ongoing until Friday, 28 March 2025, 12:00 p.m. (Module III)
Proposal language	English (priority areas I, II, III, V) German (priority area IV)
Contacts for the RTI initiative	<p>FFG: Sabine Dworak E: sabine.dworak@ffg.at, T: +43 (0) 57755 5050 Karolina Schwendtner E: karolina.schwendtner@ffg.at, T: +43 (0) 57755 5085</p> <p>KPC: Christof Horvath E: fti-tdi@kommunalkredit.at Constantin Vallery E: fti-tdi@kommunalkredit.at, T: +43 (0) 1/31 6 31-719</p> <p>Consultations on Modules I, III, IV and V are held with the FFG contacts.</p> <p>For Module II, both FFG and KPC contacts are available for a joint consultation.</p> <p>Joint consultations are to be arranged via the FFG contacts.</p> <p>For Module III, consultations on single firm R&D projects are held with the FFG. Any queries about pilot and trial plants funded within the transformation of industry programme should be sent in writing to KPC at: tdi@kommunalkredit.at</p>
Information available online	Climate and Energy Fund: www.klimafonds.gv.at [in German] FFG: www.ffg.at/FTI-Tdl-Ausschreibung-2024 [in German] KPC: www.umweltfoerderung.at/fti [in German]
FFG submission portal KPC submission portal	FFG: ecall.ffg.at KPC: www.meinefoerderung.at/webforms/forsch

⁴ Submissions of company projects in experimental development can be made on an ongoing basis within the periods set for Module I and Module III.

2.0 Objectives of the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry

2.1 Strategic objectives

Between now and 2030, the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry* aims to help Austria's manufacturing industry roll out research, development and investment measures geared towards achieving climate neutrality. Its focus is on **applications and system solutions that demonstrate a high level of innovation, are well suited to trial projects**, and are to be developed further and piloted through project ventures. The purpose of this is to demonstrate how Austrian-made innovations can make climate-neutral industrial production both technically and commercially viable. The solutions identified are to undergo large-scale validation and serve as models for a roll-out across the board.

2.2 Operational objectives

The three objectives below have been set in line with the programme's strategy in order to achieve the Climate and Energy Fund's overarching aims. A funding application will only be viewed positively if it goes a long way towards achieving the programme's objectives.

Objective 1: To trial and demonstrate technical and non-technical innovations for decarbonising the manufacturing industry in a real-life setting

Highly innovative and technologically advanced approaches designed in Austria are to be developed further to a stage where they can serve as references (TRL [technology readiness level] 6–8) and are to be trialled systematically on a relevant industrial scale.

Objective 2: To achieve a climate protection impact across sector boundaries while taking account of the requirements of a circular economy

A significant and sustainable reduction in process- and energy-related greenhouse gas emissions, other harmful emissions and resource consumption is to be achieved by running pilot and trial plants on a daily basis over several consecutive years.

Objective 3: To support Austrian industry as it undergoes a structural transformation

RTI expertise is to be developed, skilled jobs are to be created and Austria is to be made more attractive as a location to encourage companies and research institutions to base themselves there.

3.0 Priority areas in the call for proposals

The aim is to accelerate the required technology development by providing targeted support to particularly innovative companies with a high risk appetite – accompanied by outstanding research. With this in mind, this call for proposals is looking for projects that speed up the system integration of key technologies against the backdrop of sector coupling and thus play a part in decarbonising industry. One crucial requirement in this regard is that the developed solutions must be transferable to and/or scalable for national and international markets. For instance, they may demonstrate strong commercial prospects in terms of marketing innovations (e.g. patents) and show high potential for growth.

The focus is on promoting innovations from Austria for the benefit of Austrian industry and the global market.

Technology pathways

Various technology pathways are being explored, based on different priorities, combinations and time scales depending on the sector, including the following:

- Boosting process and resource efficiency
- Electrification of industrial processes and production
- Integration of heat pumps for generating process heat and heat recovery
- Control and demand-side management
- Alternative fuels and raw materials, bio-based resources, integration of renewable energy sources
- Alternative materials and energy-efficient processes
- Carbon capture, utilisation and (if applicable) storage
- Material efficiency, use of secondary raw materials (including recycling), industrial symbiosis, life cycle management
- Use of green hydrogen

Aside from technical aspects, there is also scope for investigating and validating socio-economic issues, legal and social considerations, and future market and business models. However, this is only allowed within the framework of technological research and development projects in the context of the specified technology pathways.

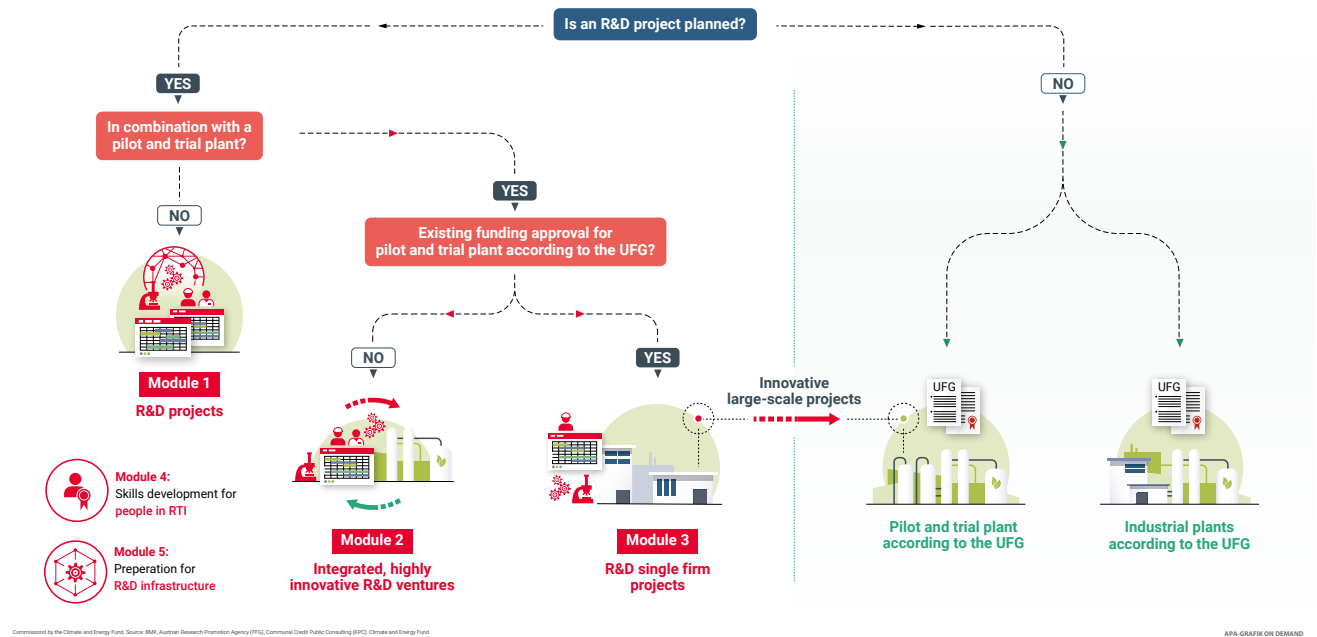
Priority areas

The current **call for proposals** encompasses five complementary modules in five priority areas:

1. Module I: R&D projects
2. Module II: Integrative, highly innovative R&D ventures for the development and testing of pilot and trial plants
3. Module III: R&D single firm projects for accompaniment of pilot and trial plants funded within the transformation of industry programme
4. Module IV: Qualifikation von Menschen in Forschung, Technologie und Innovation (FTI) [Skills development for people in research, technology and innovation (RTI)]
5. Module V: Preparation for R&D infrastructure

The chart below provides an overview and is intended as tool to help decide between Modules I, II and III.

Figure 2: Decision-making structure



Expected results

Below are the results expected in Modules I to III:

- Model solutions to technologically and scientifically complex and economically and socially significant problems and challenges relating to the transformation of industry, with high potential for reducing greenhouse emissions;
- Amalgamation of elements that have already been developed (individual technologies, system architectures, business processes, pilot projects, existing assets, etc.) into complete system solutions that are trialled and validated in practice;
- Development of integrated and scalable complete solutions, particularly for process-related emissions;
- National and international visibility for developed and trialled solutions for specific industries and society as a whole

Application strategy

To be successful, a project proposal therefore has to include a convincing application strategy. To demonstrate the plausibility of the prospective application, a quantification of the benefits for the target group (e.g. potential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and the project participants (e.g. opening up new business opportunities) is explicitly recommended.

Gender dimension

Aside from the technical content requirements, the call for proposals also aims to reinforce equal opportunities and diversity within the project teams and improve the way projects are handled in terms of content.

If the research or research results have an impact on individuals, groups of people or social aspects, the needs of all genders must be taken into account when carrying out the project. Gender expertise must be clearly demonstrated in relation to relevant topics and integrated throughout the course of the project.

Submitted proposals are also expected to ensure a gender balance within the project team and make sure relevant diversity aspects are taken into consideration.

3.1 Module I – R&D projects

Module I is designed, on the one hand, to support necessary innovation steps as part of measures relating to the specified technology pathways, and on the other hand to facilitate explicitly industry-specific innovation projects.⁵

Module I projects do not need to be combined with a pilot and trial project. However, the proposed projects must contribute either directly or indirectly to the strategic and operational objectives of the initiative by laying the groundwork required for subsequent trials or prototypical applications. Projects in Module I must carry out important preparatory work for subsequent implementation projects, or they can be combined with pilot and trial projects funded by other means (e.g. EU Innovation Fund, Renewable Energies Expansion Act (EAG), environmental support schemes within Austria, etc.) within the scope of this call for proposals. In that case, this must be specified in the R&D project proposal or documented in an appendix to the project proposal.

Funding instruments for which proposals are invited:
Collaborative R&D project in *experimental development* (FFG), lead project⁶ (FFG), company project in *experimental development* with key topic (FFG).

For submitting proposals for a **lead project**, a **compulsory preliminary discussion with FFG employees** must be arranged by no later than 13 September 2024 to clarifying the requirements and specifications.

Proposal language: English

3.2 Module II – Integrative, highly innovative R&D ventures for the development and testing of pilot and trial plants

In Module II, collaborative R&D projects or lead projects are combined with one or more RTI pilot or trial projects. The project consortium provides the basis for the next steps in scaling up towards industrial-scale application with corresponding submission volumes for measures relating to the specified technology pathways.

Integrative, highly innovative R&D ventures use two funding instrument groups based on different guidelines (the FFG's "Challenge" guidelines and KPC's UFI guideline on "eco-innovations"), but are largely regarded as an integrated whole in the context of the consultation and selection process and in the further project process. The focus here is on innovation and future savings. A plausible presentation of the application concept in terms of strategic overall coordination is particularly important in this module.

RTI pilot and trial plants are distinctive in that they go beyond standard technologies and are used to trial and/or launch new or significantly improved technologies, advanced processes or innovation system components. RTI pilot and trial plants funded under Module II can have a higher development risk. The risk of failure of such plants is also accepted, and it is also possible to obtain funding to set up new plants. The funding available for these RTI pilot and trial plants is up to 45% of the eligible costs and is capped at EUR 4.5 million. In the case of measures in accordance with Article 46 of the General Block Exemption Regulation (AGVO) (heating and cooling supply systems), the funding cap is EUR 6.0 million. Proposals may be submitted for the target group specified for this call for proposals, thus including companies that do not fall within the groups listed in Appendix 1 of the Austrian Environmental Subsidy Act (UFG) (as opposed to the target group for pilot and trial plants according to the UFG).

Project selection:

Integrative, highly innovative R&D ventures are selected on the basis of the FFG's established assessment criteria (see FFG instrument guidelines). The shortlist is decided based on the recommendation of an external committee of experts, with KPC responsible for assessing the formal criteria and the environmental impact of

⁵ See also the industry action plans from the [transform.industry](#) study [in German].

⁶ Industrial research may not make up more than 50% of the total project costs.

the RTI pilot and trial plant in accordance with standard procedures. Both the R&D project and the RTI pilot and trial project(s) must achieve a positive assessment outcome to be eligible for funding as a project consortium in Module II.

Standalone RTI pilot and trial projects are not funded under the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*. If the pilot and trial plant associated with an R&D project submitted under this module is not approved following KPC's detailed assessment, the project can continue as a standalone R&D project under Module I. This would require approval from the FFG based on a revised project plan; in particular, the work packages focusing on the RTI pilot and trial plant would need to be adapted accordingly.

Project implementation:

The timetable must present a realistic schedule for implementing the planned scope of both parts of the project (R&D project and RTI pilot and trial plant) within the term proposed. The prerequisites to successful delivery (e.g. licences from the authorities) must be described in the project proposal. Risks to implementation and risks of delays must be included in the risk and contingency plan. The proposal must set out how the risk of the pilot and trial plant only being approved subject to modifications or being rejected by KPC following the detailed assessment is to be handled within the R&D project (e.g. with appropriate stop/go decisions, milestones). During the course of the project, any delays or changes to the project parts approved in the funding contract (R&D project or RTI pilot and trial plant) must be reported to both handling agencies without delay; they will then carry out a coordinated audit of the rest of the project process.

Technical description of the RTI pilot and trial plant:

The proposal submitted to KPC must contain a description of the RTI pilot and trial plant (approximately 2,000 words in English).

The environmental impact must be presented based on a comparison, including details of the fossil and renewable energy requirements in kWh before and after implementation of the proposed measure.

The following details and information must be included:

- Depiction of the current situation, in particular with regard to energy consumption and energy carriers
- Description of the measures envisaged, including an estimate of the change in consumption and type of energy carrier
- Greenhouse gas emissions from the plant and reductions and costs expected from the measure

A template for the technical description of the RTI pilot and trial plant can be found here:

www.umweltfoerderung.at/betriebe/fti

IMPORTANT:

The technical project description of the RTI pilot and trial plant for proposals under Module II must be uploaded (in English) to the FFG's online portal (eCall) as mandatory additional information to the online project description of the R&D project. If the R&D project is linked to several pilot and trial plants, the technical project description for all RTI pilot and trial plants being lined up for proposal must be submitted. The technical project description will be provided to the evaluation committee as information for the current call for proposals.

Funding instruments for which proposals are invited:

Collaborative R&D project in *experimental development* (FFG), lead project⁷ (FFG), RTI pilot and trial plants (KPC).

Compulsory preliminary discussion:

A preliminary discussion with **FFG and KPC employees** to clarify requirements and specifications is compulsory for all proposals submitted for priority area II and must be arranged by no later than 13 September 2024 via the FFG contacts.

As part of the mandatory preliminary discussion in Module II, no advice is provided for with respect to submitting a pilot and trial plant as part of an open call for tenders within the transformation of industry programme (see Table 1: Overview of available funding instruments.)

Proposal language: English

⁷ Industrial research may not make up more than 50% of the total project costs.

3.3 Module III – R&D single firm projects for accompaniment of pilot and trial plants funded within the transformation of industry programme

R&D company projects in the field of *experimental development* that lead to an improvement in a pilot and trial plant through the development of new processes, procedures, components and methods are funded within the scope of Module III. This associated pilot and trial plant must have been funded as part of the call for tenders within the transformation of industry programme. The combination of an R&D single firm project with a pilot and trial plant funded within the transformation of industry programme gives rise to *innovative large-scale projects*. The pilot and trial plant fulfils the defined requirements through this, including the promised greenhouse gas reduction targets, and the R&D project results in even more efficient use of energy and more efficient use of technology and accordingly an even greater reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Research and development activities in this module can only be carried out in connection with a funded plant and must result in an improvement over the existing latest technology and knowledge.

It is expected that the results obtained from running these plants will enable new technologies to be scaled up more effectively and/or validation to be done on a larger scale and the transfer into commercial practice to be accelerated.

Project selection:

An R&D company project in *experimental development* in Module III can only be submitted if funding has already been approved for a pilot and trial plant, funded as part of the call for proposals within the transformation of industry programme.

The Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) assesses the R&D company project according to the assessment criteria specified in the [Instrument Guidelines](#). A technical description of the pilot and trial plant in English must be submitted as a mandatory attachment together with the application for the individual R&D project via the FFG online portal (eCall).

Technical description of the pilot and trial plant:

There must be a description of the pilot and trial plant in the application to KPC (approximately 2,000 words in English).

Presentation of the environmental impact based on a comparison, including details of the fossil and renewable energy requirements in kWh before and after implementation of the requested measure.

The following details and information must be included:

- Depiction of the current situation, in particular with regard to energy consumption and energy carriers
- Description of the measures envisaged, including an estimate of the change in consumption and type of energy carrier
- Greenhouse gas emissions from the plant and reductions and costs expected from the measure

Funding instrument for which proposals are invited:

Company projects in *experimental development* with a key topic (FFG).

The Climate and Energy Fund is funding the R&D company project in Module III as part of this call for proposals. The pilot and trial plants are being funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Action within the transformation of industry programme.

Proposal language: English

Submission deadline: ongoing until 28 March 2025, 12:00 noon

3.4 Module IV – Qualification networks

Qualification networks are being funded by the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK), the Climate and Energy Fund and the FFG aimed at addressing the common priority area of people in RTI. The announced qualification networks will provide training in customised, application- and implementation-oriented content that will lead to an increase in research, technology, development, innovation and digital (RTEI+D) skills in Austrian companies along the industrial value chain.

The objective is to build up innovation and implementation expertise in Austrian industrial companies in the medium to long term in the areas covered by the *RTI initiative for Transforming Industry* through forward-looking and targeted qualification measures based around demand.

The transfer of knowledge between scientific partners and business facilitates, for example, the development of knowledge for the composition of multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary development teams or the dissemination of current scientific findings in order to implement these accordingly.

The qualification networks can focus, for instance, on developing skills in the following areas:

- Increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of processes and their electrification
- Electrification of process heat, in particular through heat recovery and the integration of heat pumps
- Integration concepts for digitalisation and adaptive control, as well as data security and security standards in the exchange of data
- Circular supply chains and new systems that enable the separation and recycling of waste and raw materials
- Use of renewable gases (hydrogen and renewable methane) in industrial processes: technology options, infrastructure requirements, legal frameworks (excluding training measures aimed at complying with mandatory training standards in the EU Member States)
- Handling carbon in the climate-neutral industry of the future: processes, process chains, CO₂ infrastructures, legal frameworks (excluding training measures aimed at complying with mandatory training standards in the EU Member States)

Prerequisites:

- A cooperation between at least four independent partners. In all cases, the consortium must include:
 - One institution for research and knowledge dissemination as part of its scientific activity as consortium leader.
 - Three independent companies with a branch in Austria.Training participants may only be sent by the organisations represented in the consortium.
- The preparation, implementation and follow-up of the training measures must be part of the project.
- The content of the qualification networks must be clearly differentiated from existing qualification measures.
- The final report must provide evidence of the intention to utilise the material on the basis of feasible, concrete utilisation measures.
- Third-party costs: In total, third-party costs shall not exceed 30% of the approved total costs of the project

Gender and diversity:

Evidence must be provided of gender expertise in the qualification networks. Gender and diversity aspects must be taken into account in the project application and throughout the entire project. This also affects the efforts and activities that are specifically aimed at people with a migrant background, people with disabilities, women and non-binary people, addressing these in networks and as multipliers.

Funding instrument for which proposals are invited:

Qualification network (FFG)

Provisional budget: EUR 1 million

Proposal language: German

3.5 Module V – Preparation for an R&D infrastructure

This module is designed to offer applicants the opportunity to prepare the implementation of an R&D infrastructure from 2025 onwards by means of *exploratory studies*.

The R&D infrastructure funding programme supports projects for the acquisition and development of high-quality R&D infrastructure for basic research and application-oriented research. The “[R&D infrastructure](#)” funding instrument will be available in future calls for proposals under the *RTI initiative for Transforming Industry*, subject to demand.

The aim of the *exploratory studies* is to identify suitable priorities and topics for a specific R&D infrastructure in line with the objectives of the *RTI initiative for Transforming Industry* and taking into account the technology paths mentioned, and to develop a corresponding concept that can be used as the basis for a subsequent project submission. The potential, the required resources and the prospects of success of a subsequent project to establish and operate a funded R&D infrastructure should be clarified with this. The objective is to enable a potential future operating organisation to carry out an analysis and risk assessment for the operation of an R&D infrastructure. There are no plans to fund exploratory studies in preparation for project types other than R&D infrastructures within the scope of this call for proposals.

Funding instrument for which proposals are invited:
Exploratory study (FFG)

Provisional budget: EUR 1 million

Proposal language: English

Overview of relevant funding instruments

Table 3: Overview of funding streams – target groups – handling organisations – funding criteria

Funding / financing instrument	Brief description	Target group	maximum funding / financing in EUR	Funding rate	Term in months	Cooperation requirement	Compulsory preliminary discussion	Module	Handled by	Submission deadlines
Collaborative R&D project	Collaborative R&D project – <i>experimental development</i>	Manufacturing companies, energy supply companies and technology providers throughout the value chain as well as research institutions and universities	Min. 100,000 to max. 2 million	Max. 60%	Max. 36	Yes	No ⁸	1, 2	FFG	31 October 2024, 12:00 noon
Lead project	Lead project <i>Experimental development</i> with industrial research components		Min. 2 million	Max. 85%	Max. 48	Yes	Yes ⁹	1, 2	FFG	31 October 2024, 12:00 noon
Company project in <i>Experimental development</i>	Individual project – <i>Experimental development</i>		Max. 1 million per project; provisional budget for company projects in <i>experimental development</i> : EUR 2 million	Max. 45%	Max. 24	No	No ⁸	1, 3	FFG	For Module I: 31 October 2024, 12:00 noon; for Module III: ongoing until 28 March 2025, 12:00 noon
Exploratory study	Exploratory study Preliminary study for R&D project		Max. 80,000	Max. 80%	Max. 6	No	No ⁸	5	FFG	31 October 2024, 12:00 noon

⁸ Individual preliminary discussion possible with FFG

⁹ Must be agreed with the FFG by 13 September 2024

Funding / financing instrument	Brief description	Target group	maximum funding / financing in EUR	Funding rate	Term in months	Cooperation requirement	Compulsory preliminary discussion	Module	Handled by	Submission deadlines
Qualification networks	Qualification projects to increase research, technology, development, innovation and digital competence	Research institutions & universities	Max. 200,000	Max. 100%	12 – max. 24	Yes	No ⁸	4	FFG	31 October 2024, 12:00 noon
RTI pilot and trial plants	New plant/switch of existing plant, funding from the Climate and Energy Fund	Manufacturing companies, energy supply companies and technology providers throughout the value chain	Max. 4.5 million	Max. 45%	Max. 48	Yes	Yes ⁹	2	KPC	31 October 2024, 2:00 p.m.
Pilot and trial plant under the Austrian Environmental Subsidy Act (UFG), in accordance with the General Block Exemption Regulation (AGVO)	Switch of existing plant, (funding by the Ministry for Climate Action as part of the “Transforming Industry under the UFG” call for proposals)	Industrial companies by sectors in Annex 1 to the UFG (link)	Max. 10 million	Max. 80%	Min. 36	No, possibility of collaboration through accompanying research within the scope of Module III	No individual preliminary discussion possible, information through events and FAQs	Possibility of applying for an individual R&D project at the FFG within the scope of Module III if funding has already been approved	KPC	19 September 2024, 2:00 p.m.

8 Individual preliminary discussion possible with FFG

9 Must be agreed with the FFG by 13 September 2024

4.0 Collaboration with the innovation laboratory of the RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry

The NEFI+ New Energy for Industry innovation laboratory, which is funded as part of the 2023 call for proposals under the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*, serves as a national point of contact and international gateway aimed at helping innovations that are “Made in Austria” in the field of industrial decarbonisation achieve a breakthrough more rapidly.

The innovation laboratory will inject significant momentum into the transformation of Austria’s manufacturing industry towards climate neutrality and serve as a catalyst supporting the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*.

The innovation laboratory fulfils the following tasks with this:

- Innovation ecosystem for the development of specific projects for the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*
- Collaboration between Austrian solution providers and manufacturing companies (as the actual users of the technologies) in partnership with research institutes.
- Establishing links in the field of climate-neutral industrial production at the global and in particular the European level.
- Monitoring global trends and carrying out regular needs analyses to deliver solutions with significant innovation potential.
- Delivering communication, networking and knowledge transfer in a way that takes account of the needs of users and harnesses existing results, success stories and networks.
- Providing easy access to a development and testing environment to facilitate innovation projects that span sector or technology boundaries.
- Forecasting the impact of actions, particularly estimating the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that can be achieved, the potential offered by solutions in terms of added value and property rights, and the potential for these solutions to be replicated, scaled up and transferred to other applications.
- Monitoring and managing data for projects funded as part of the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*.

Participation in the monitoring and impact analysis (see Chapter 5 Monitoring and Impact Analysis for details) is mandatory for all projects in the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*.

Cooperation and coordination with the innovation laboratory is recommended before submitting an application but is not mandatory.

Contact at the NEFI+ New Energy for Industry innovation laboratory:

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5.0 Monitoring and impact analysis

Accompanying monitoring and an accompanying impact analysis serve to ensure quality and support the Climate and Energy Fund with programme management and development. The scientific support, which includes the development of indicators, ongoing scientific monitoring and impact analysis, is an essential component in the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*. The methods developed as part of the [RTI initiative for the Flagship Region Energy](#) are also being applied in the present programme and are undergoing continuous development and being adapted to the needs of the various projects and topics.

The innovation laboratory is the body responsible for monitoring and analysing the impact of the projects as part of the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*. The collaboration with the innovation laboratory within the scope of the monitoring and impact analysis is therefore a necessary component in the projects funded under Modules I, II and III of the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry*.

The NEFI+ innovation laboratory supports the RTI initiative with a proven monitoring system for techno-economic impact assessments of the technological and non-technological solutions that are developed. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are recorded here along the three dimensions of climate, macroeconomy and resilience. The monitoring of scientific output takes place via a centralised survey of dissemination activities. Participation in the monitoring programme takes place in addition to the reporting obligations to the FFG and KPC processing agencies as defined in the instrument guidelines and funding agreements (see the [Reporting Guidelines](#)).

The monitoring takes place primarily at the start and the end of the project in order to save time. Corresponding staff resources must be calculated and made available in the project application. Providing resources in the amount of about 0.5 person months per year is recommended, although this amount may be higher or lower depending on the complexity of the projects. The alignment with the NEFI+ monitoring system can take place as early as the application phase in order to ensure maximum efficiency and seamless integration of the monitoring processes. The results of the monitoring activities are available to the projects so that they can put their solutions to use.

6.0 Administrative matters

Documents for the call for proposals and overview of the submission process

The application documents for all modules are submitted electronically to the FFG via eCall. Any attachments to the electronic application (the technical project descriptions of the pilot and trial plants required in any case for Modules II and III) must be uploaded as applicable.

Separate applications for the respective pilot and development project must be submitted to KPC for Modules II and III.

All documents relevant to the call for proposals can be found at:

www.ffg.at/FTI-TdI-Ausschreibung-2024 and
www.umweltfoerderung.at/fti.

Compulsory preliminary discussion

Please note the regulations regarding compulsory consultations with the FFG or the FFG and KPC in Modules I and II.

A preliminary discussion is intended to provide optimum support for applicants in preparing their project application for the current call for proposals.

Preliminary discussions are also generally recommended for project formats in other modules that do not provide for a mandatory preliminary discussion.

Legal aspects

Privacy, data protection and confidentiality

The FFG is obliged by law not to disclose information on companies or projects – in accordance with Section 9(4) of the Act Establishing Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH (Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH-Errichtungsgesetz), Federal Law Gazette I no. 73/2004. This confidentiality obligation also covers external experts who evaluate the projects.

Personal data are processed in accordance with Art. 6 et seq. of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679 – GDPR)

1. To comply with legal obligations applicable to FFG, KPC and the Climate and Energy Fund (Art. 6(1)c GDPR);
2. Where there is no legal obligation, in order to safeguard legitimate interests of FFG, KPC and the Climate and Energy Fund (Art. 6(1)f GDPR), specifically the conclusion and processing of the funding contract and for monitoring purposes.

This use may require data to be transmitted or disclosed in particular to executive bodies and authorised representatives of the Court of Audit Austria, to the Federal Ministry of Finance or to the EU. There is also the possibility of submitting a request to the transparency portal in accordance with Section 32(5) of the Transparency Database Act 2012 (TDBG 2012).

All project proposals submitted will only be presented for review to the individuals tasked with processing this research programme and to the programme owner. All individuals involved are obliged to maintain confidentiality.

The following also applies to projects funded by KPC:

In the event of a positive decision on funding, the information from the funding application may be used to create funding reports and for statistical analyses. KPC also reserves the right to publish data on applicants and the funded project after approval of the funding in accordance with Section 12 (2) no. 10 of the Investment Funding Guidelines 2022 for Environmental Funding in Austria – provided that this is required for performing the tasks assigned by statute. Details on use of the data are governed in the funding agreement.

Decision on funding and underlying law

The executive board of the Climate and Energy Fund decides on the funding based on the funding recommendation from the evaluation committee.

The call for proposals is based on the Guidelines for Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH on the promotion of research, technology, development and innovation to tackle societal challenges (the [FFG Challenge Guidelines 2024-2026](#)).

The following applies to the RTI pilot and trial plants:

The legal basis for the award of this funding is Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (General Block Exemption Regulation) OJ L 187 of 26.06.2014 p. 1 as amended by Regulation (EU) No 2023/1315 OJ L 167 of 30.06.2023 p. 1 of this Regulation and in implementation of this Regulation, the respective provisions of the Investment Subsidy Guidelines 2022 for Environmental Funding in Austria (InvestFRL UFI 2022) as amended.

The relevant definition of an SME under EU competition law applies with regard to company size. An aid to classification can be found on [FFG's SME page](#).

The relevant versions of all EU rules and regulations are to be applied.

Publication of the funding decision

Should it decide to award funding, the Climate and Energy Fund reserves the right to publish the name of the applicants for the funding, the fact that funding has been awarded, the funding rate, the amount of funding, the title of the project and a short description of it in order to take account of the Climate and Energy Fund's legitimate interest in ensuring transparency in funding matters (Art. 6(1)f GDPR).

Open access – notes on publication

In line with the Climate and Energy Fund's general objectives and duties as set out in Sections 1 and 3 of the Climate and Energy Fund Act (Klima- und Energiefondsgesetz), with the specific nature of this support programme, which aims in particular to publish project and contact details to disseminate project results, and with the recommendation of the European Commission (2012/417/EU) regarding open access, the projects funded under this call for proposals and their results are to be made available to the general public. This does not apply to confidential content (e.g. in connection with patent applications). The funding recipient is obliged to ensure that the reports submitted to the Climate and Energy Fund for publication do not contain sensitive data of any kind (Art. 9 GDPR) or personal data relating to criminal convictions or offences (Art. 10 GDPR).

Furthermore, the funding recipient is obliged to ensure that all other agreements and approvals of third parties (in particular image rights) that are required for the publication by the Climate and Energy Fund to be permissible have been obtained and to indemnify and hold the Climate and Energy Fund harmless in this respect. As one of the key objectives of this support programme is to disseminate project results, the Climate and Energy Fund will publish these project results and project information in order to take account of its legitimate interest in the transparency of funding matters and to achieve its objectives (Sections 1 and 3 of the Climate and Energy Fund Act; Art. 6(1)f GDPR).

The visibility and ready availability of innovative results are important factors in increasing the impact of the programme. In line with the open-access principle, therefore, the Climate and Energy Fund will publish as many project results from this RTI initiative as possible and make them accessible online at www.klimafonds.gv.at.

In order to prepare the project results effectively and comprehensibly, notes on public relations work for projects funded and carried out as part of the *RTI Initiative for Transforming Industry* are to be made available in a "Guide to reporting and project-related public relations work", which shall form an integral part of the agreement.

Additional information

This part contains details of other funding opportunities and services that may be useful in conjunction with funding applications and/or funded projects.

The FFG Project Database service

FFG provides a service that involves publishing brief information pieces about funded projects and an overview of the parties involved in projects in a publicly accessible [FFG Project Database](#), allowing you to showcase your project and its partners more effectively to your audience. The database can also be used to find partners to collaborate with.

Once a decision has been made to award funding, applicants will be told via the eCall system about the possibility of publishing brief, defined information pieces on their project in the FFG Project Database. Nothing will be published without an applicant actively giving their consent in the eCall system.

More details are available on [FFG's page on its Project Database](#).

Handling project data – data management plan

A data management plan (DMP) is a management tool that helps users handle the information generated in their projects in an efficient and systematic way. A DMP must be created as mandatory for projects in Modules I, II and III.

A DMP can be created using the free tool [DMP Online](#), for example. The European Commission also offers support via its "[Guidelines on FAIR Data Management](#)".

The contacts at NEFI+ are available to provide support with coordination of the DMP as part of the cooperation with the NEFI+ innovation laboratory for monitoring and the impact analysis.

A DMP describes:

- What data is to be collected, compiled or generated in the project;
- How this data is to be handled;
- What methods and standards are to be applied in this process;
- How the data is to be secured, backed up and managed over the long term;
- Whether there are plans to make data records accessible to and usable by third parties ("open access to research data").

If data is to be published, it is expected to be "findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable". It is a good idea to store data in established, internationally recognised repositories (see service.re3data.org/search) in order to make it as easy as possible to find.

Other funding opportunities

Research funding

FFG offers a wide range of funding opportunities and support with participation in national and international programmes. Below is an overview of relevant funding opportunities connected with the current call for proposals. Your contacts at FFG will be happy to provide more information.

FFG's Funding Service is your first port of call for any queries about the funding and advice that it provides.

Contact:

FFG Funding Service,

T: +43 (0)57755-0. E: foerderservice@ffg.at

Web: www.ffg.at/foerderservice

Environmental funding

All funding opportunities can be found on [KPC's environmental funding page](#).

Applications for suitable investment projects can be made directly in the respective funding area. The respective expert teams are available for any queries.

Additional funding and financing

Applicants should check the extent to which additional funding and financing (EU, federal, state, municipal) can be obtained for the intended project in the context of the RTI initiative Transforming Industry, including in their own interests.

This applies in particular to infrastructure components and similar items that are not eligible for funding under the legal basis relevant to this call for proposals.

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