**Collaborative Project Implementation Rules**

Implementation program NRP 2024 – 2027
of the canton of Fribourg

# Introduction

In implementing the NPR 2024-2027 program, the Canton of Fribourg supports the development of collaborative projects specifically focused on companies in the industrial sector, with the aim of increasing their added value.

The first collaborative projects were financed by the NPR grant in 2008. In total, 74 collaborative projects were completed between 2008 and 2023 with the participation of more than 390 companies. These projects enhance relationships between companies and higher education institutions in the field of innovation, ensuring a gain in competitiveness for the companies.

# Collaborative project definition

A collaborative project (CP) aims to address, with the assistance of a public research organization, either a pre-competitive and innovative technological challenge expressed by several independent companies, or to create a value chain with multiple companies to deliver an innovative service or product.

# Objectives

The implementation of collaborative projects aligned with the strategic axes of the NPR 2024-2027 program (Bioeconomy and Agro-Food Industry, Industry 4.0, Smart Territory), while contributing to the climate plan measures of the Canton of Fribourg 2021-2026, promotes the achievement of the following objectives:

**Support for Business Innovation**

* Promote and support innovative collaborative projects of companies
* Encourage the adoption of new technologies and practices by companies
* Accelerate the transfer of technologies and knowledge
* Strengthening Collaborations

**Strengthen collaborations between companies and higher education institutions**

* Develop synergies between various actors in the canton (companies, research institutes, and public institutions)
* Highlight the skills of academic and industrial sectors
* Economic Development Enhancement
* Contribute to the improvement of the competitiveness of Fribourg companies nationally and internationally by maintaining and creating jobs
* Support companies in their digital and sustainable transformations
* Enhance the attractiveness of the Canton of Fribourg for talent.

# Operational Rules

Requests for collaborative project funding and the portfolio of completed collaborative projects are managed by INNOSQUARE under a mandate given by PromFR with the assistance of external experts.

The evaluation of funding requests for the granting of NPR subsidies for collaborative projects is entrusted to the Commission for Economic Promotion Aid Measures (CAPE) of the Canton of Fribourg as the evaluation committee. The conditions and operational rules for granting NPR funding are as follows:

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| a) | Project consortium | Any Fribourg-based company can collaborate with other companies to form a collaborative project consortium, provided that the project's theme aligns with one of the strategic axes of the Canton of Fribourg's NPR 2024-2027 Program. |
| b) | Project consortium composition | The consortium must include at least three companies, with at least two based in Fribourg, as well as a public research organization. It is recommended that non-Fribourg-based companies seek financial support from their own canton to increase the overall project budget. |
| d) | Project financing | The project funding must cover self-financing contributions from the companies, costs of public research organizations including personnel costs, equipment costs (up to 10%), and other project expenses. |
| d) | Amount of the NPR Grant | The requested NPR grant is capped at CHF 150,000, not exceeding 65% of the total budgeted project cost. |
| e) | Co-financing by Companies | Partner companies must co-finance the project to at least 35% of the total budgeted cost, with a minimum of 30% of the NPR grant amount in cash and the remainder through self-financing contributions. |
| f) | Support in the Preparation of the Funding Request | Collaborative project leaders can benefit from free support from INNOSQUARE for the preparation of their funding application. |
| g) | Funding request submission | Funding applications for collaborative projects can be submitted throughout the year. |
| h) | Evaluationof funding request | The project funding application, validated by two independent experts, is presented by invitation during a session of the project evaluation committee. In cases of divergent opinions, a third expert's opinion will be sought. |
| i) | Procedures | To obtain an NPR grant for a collaborative project, a project funding application must be submitted following the Procedure for Submission and Evaluation of a Collaborative Project Funding Request.Once the NPR funding commitment is granted, the implementation of a collaborative project must adhere to the Collaborative Project Implementation Procedure. |
| j) | Administrative management | INNOSQUARE handles the administrative management of funding applications and the portfolio of collaborative projects during their implementation phase. |
| k) | Project closure | At the project closure, the achieved results are presented to a valorization commission (COVAL) to assess the collaboration experience and provide recommendations for leveraging the outcomes. |

Fribourg, 23 February 2024 Alain Lunghi
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Annexes :

* **Procedure for Submission and Evaluation of a Collaborative Project Funding Request**

PC - Procedure for submission and evaluation.pdf

* **Procedure for Implementation of a Collaborative Project**
PC – Procedure for realization and innovation support.pdf