# FRONTIER AI GRAND CHALLENGE

## GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

### (Final version)

**AI-BOOST**

Delivering the next level of European
**AI Open competitions**

**Grant Agreement No**: 101135737
**Call:** HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-CNECT
**Topic:** HORIZON-CL4-2023-HUMAN-01-04
**Type of action:** HORIZON-CSA

## DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union under GA No 101135737. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them

## COPYRIGHT NOTICE

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# 1    AI-BOOST AT A GLANCE

## 1.1    WHAT IS AI-BOOST?

AI-BOOST is an **EU-funded prominent open challenge prize programme** that will serve as a benchmark for the European artificial intelligence (AI) community.

The overall objective of the project is to create and run highly replicable **AI open innovation competitions** that attracts the outstanding talent **to drive scientific progress in the major AI Areas**. The project will foster collaboration between the key stakeholders in AI community to define attractive AI challenges with the potential to lead trustworthy and human-centric real-world solutions.

- A **unique sound methodology** capable of defining high social impact AI challenges.

- A highly **replicable and attractive AI open innovation competitions** capable of leading breakthroughs technologies and solutions with substantial scientific progress.

- Provide **access to infrastructure and expert knowledge** and promote its adoption through effective training and troubleshooting during the challenges implementation.

- **Attract outstanding talent** and the best research teams to tackle AI challenges.

- **Engage private and public sponsors** capable of providing funding, attractive rewards, and expertise.

- An **AI community** to foster interaction among all relevant stakeholders.

## 2    THE EUROPEAN HIGH PERFORMANCE COMPUTING JOINT UNDERTAKING

### 2.1    ABOUT EUROHPC JU

EuroHPC JU is a joint initiative between the EU, European countries and private partners to develop a World Class Supercomputing Ecosystem in Europe. The European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking (EuroHPC JU) aims to improve quality of life of European citizens, advance science, boost industrial competitiveness, and ensure Europe's technological autonomy. It is a legal and funding entity, created in 2018 and located in Luxembourg.

The EuroHPC Joint Undertaking is composed of public and private members:

- Public members:
    - the European Union (represented by the Commission),
        - Member States and Associated Countries that have chosen to become members of the Joint Undertaking: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Türkiye.

- Private members: representatives from the three participating private partners, the European Technology Platform for High Performance Computing (ETP4HPC), the Big Data Value association (BDVA) and the European Quantum Industry Consortium (QuIC).



*FIGURE 1: THE EUROHPC JOINT UNDERTAKING IS COMPOSED OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MEMBERS*

Other Member States and Associated States to Horizon 2020 Europe or Digital Europe Programme can also join the Joint Undertaking, subject to approval of the EuroHPC JU Governing Board.

The EuroHPC Joint Undertaking (JU) enables the coordination of efforts and the sharing of EuroHPC resources with the objective of deploying a world-class High-Performance Computing (HPC) infrastructure and a competitive innovation ecosystem in supercomputing technologies, applications, and skills in Europe.

The EuroHPC JU is acquiring a large range of supercomputers (the EuroHPC supercomputers) which are located at and operated by supercomputing centres (Hosting Entities) in the Union. The supercomputing infrastructure deployed by EuroHPC, comprises a significant investment of the JU members (European Union and Participating States).

# 3 SCOPE OF THE FRONTIER AI GRAND CHALLENGE

## 3.1 CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

General context

In the context of this challenge, Frontier AI models are understood as the most advanced general-purpose AI systems capable of adapting across domains with minimal modification. While current large language models include examples like OpenAI's GPT-5, Anthropic's Claude Opus, or Google's Gemini, the frontier is evolving toward multimodal world models that understand and interact with their environments. While several promising European initiatives are emerging, no frontier-level models are currently being operated at a scale comparable to the leading global actors. This strategic gap must be addressed, as Frontier AI holds transformative potential across manufacturing, healthcare, autonomous systems, and other key EU strategic sectors. Mastering these advanced models is therefore strategically critical for the EU to reduce dependencies on non-EU companies, foster innovation, and ensure technological sovereignty and industrial competitiveness.

To address this challenge, the European Commission with the overall steering, support and control of the EuroHPC Joint Undertaking (EuroHPC), will launch the Frontier AI Initiative announced in the EU's Apply AI strategy. This is an EU-wide competition to develop open frontier AI models that are major drivers of innovation. By providing access to EuroHPC supercomputers and making open models widely available to public authorities, scientific communities and businesses across Europe, this initiative aims to deliver concrete, targeted outcomes that enhance a sovereign European AI ecosystem.

Scope

The purpose of the Frontier AI Grand Challenge is to further enhance and enable the development of frontier AI models in Europe, i.e., large-scale AI Models with equivalent to at least 400 billion parameters, using modular architectures capable of maximising performance and efficiency such as mixture-of-expert approaches, to substantially increase Europe's competitiveness in this field. The **challenge** will reward **innovative European leading AI actors** for devising **ambitious strategies** and making **commitments** to **develop large-scale AI models** that will provide a **competitive edge** for **Europe.**

The **expected outcome** of the **Frontier AI Grand Challenge** is the selection of **one proposal** to **train** a **frontier AI model** that will **outperform state-of-the-art models** in a number of **relevant tasks.** The **development** of these models **should require the use of high-performance computing resources.**

Overview

Legal entities with their principal place of business in an eligible country (see section 3.3) are invited to participate in the Frontier AI Grand Challenge by submitting a proposal for the development of an AI model capable of delivering frontier-level AI capabilities. The delivery of such a model should allow positioning the EU competitively against leading global models, thereby reducing dependencies on non-EU frontier AI systems. The model must deliver frontier-level capabilities, equivalent to at least 400 billion parameters and use a modular architecture capable of maximising performance and

efficiency such as mixture-of-expert approaches and trained following state-of-the-art optimal scaling laws for computing and training data size.

Applicants are required to provide a detailed project scope and plan for the development of the frontier AI model. They must also offer solid justification for the planned model's relevance, the justification for the use of HPC at the leading edge and demonstrate their team's expertise in training very large foundation models using large HPC systems, as well as the efficient use of the targeted EuroHPC supercomputers), along with an appropriate plan of the use of the computing time.

Proposals must include substantial differentiating factors such as innovative enhancements or novel approaches addressing current model limitations. Given the scarcity of top-tier EuroHPC computing resources, applicants must justify: (1) why their approach requires access to Europe's fastest supercomputers; (2) the specific GPU hour allocation needed to achieve frontier-scale capabilities competitive with industrial benchmarks; and (3) efficient execution plans that maximize the value of this limited, strategic resource.

<u>Frontier AI Grand Challenge – Specific Conditions</u>

- The selected proposal will receive computing allocations on one or more of Europe's currently operational or upcoming AI-optimised EuroHPC supercomputers and associated AI Factory services. Its selection will be based on availability, technical requirements, and optimal fit between project needs and facility capabilities. Soon after its selection, it will be granted EuroHPC Strategic access of up to 2.5% of the overall EuroHPC computing resources for a period of **one year** (which could be further extended by the EuroHPC Governing Board).

- Proposers must justify computing requirements, specifying: (1) target parameter scale and model architecture; (2) estimated GPU hours needed across all phases; (3) why top-tier supercomputing capacity is essential for competitive results; and (4) flexibility to adapt to the assigned facility's specific architecture.

- It is envisaged that proposers must demonstrate secured complementary HPC computing resources (e.g., national or private) sufficient to meet the overall necessary computing requirements for training their targeted AI frontier model. State-of-the-art benchmarking shall be one of the criteria to evaluate the success for the selected project.

- The open models developed as a result of the Frontier AI Grand Challenge will be made widely available to public authorities across Europe, as well as to the European scientific and business communities.

## 3.2    TIMELINE

- The Challenge will be launched 13th February 2026 with results published in May 2026.

- Proposals must be submitted through the AI-BOOST Challenge website (or "Website") by 13th April 2026 at 17:00 (i.e., Submission deadline). No proposal will be admitted after the submission deadline.

- After the closure of the submission period, the eligibility assessment will be conducted by the Panel following the submission deadline.

- An award ceremony may be organized to present the winner, with details to be announced separately.

- <u>Change in the timelines.</u> The Challenge duration and any of the above-mentioned timelines may be modified by the AI-BOOST in agreement with the EuroHPC JU, in case it is necessary to better fulfil the Specific Objectives of the Challenge. The potential change(s) will be notified in advance to all Participants and communicated to all the interested parties, including the Representatives of the EuroHPC Governing Board.

## 3.3    ELEGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to apply to the Frontier AI Grand Challenge, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

**Eligible Applicants:**

<u>Eligible countries:</u>

Eligible participants shall consist of one or more industrial players that are both established in the EU and under EU control[1]. They may be accompanied by one or more academic institutions and/or research entities from Member States.

All participants must demonstrate technical capacity and a proven track record in developing and commercially deploying large-scale AI models capable of delivering frontier-level capabilities. The coordinating entity must be a private sector entity responsible for undertaking the overall coordination and steering of the project throughout its duration.

The Consortium should provide, to the extent possible, complementary computing commitments sourced from national compute resources. Public or private entities from EuroHPC Participating States are also eligible to join a Consortium as additional partners, provided that their participation includes the provision of sufficient compute time necessary to complement the EU-provided computing access time.

**Required Evidence of Expertise:**

All applicants must demonstrate frontier AI model development expertise by providing:

- Curriculum vitae of key personnel involved in the project, highlighting relevant experience in large-scale AI models (100Bn+ parameters) and modular architectures (e.g. mixture-of-expert approaches), in-depth experience in AI solutions covering all EU languages, and relevant access to underlying data resources.

- Portfolio of previous work demonstrating substantial contributions to frontier AI development (publications, deployed models, patents, or significant technical achievements), and experience

---

[1] Not directly majority-owned (more than 50% of the capital) by entities established in non-EU Member States.

deploying applications at scale across Europe, covering all EU languages, with relevant access to underlying data resources.

- Partners must demonstrate that they have the capacities and capabilities to contribute effectively to frontier AI (model) development contributing to Europe's competitiveness.

- For consortia specifically, partners need to provide evidence that their organisations bring complementary expertise necessary for frontier AI advancement.

## 3.4    SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligible activities are the ones described in the challenge conditions. Proposals will only be considered eligible if their content corresponds, wholly or in part, to the challenge description for which it is submitted.

The following additional Eligibility Criteria apply:

- Projects are required to commit to transparency and community usability in accordance with Horizon Europe open science principles, emphasizing open access to publications, FAIR data management, and where applicable, the release of open weights, architecture details, usage guidelines, or comprehensive technical documentation.

- Demonstration that the proposed model design and development process will be conducted with due consideration of compliance with the EU AI Act, including risk classification, transparency requirements and technical documentation.

- Demonstration that the frontier model exhibits general-purpose capabilities, enabling adaptation to new tasks through retraining or fine-tuning.

- Actions must be aligned with EU policy priorities as defined in the AI Continent Action Plan and ApplyAI Strategy, including contributing to the Union's economic security and industrial competitiveness.

- The selected proposal must commit to ensuring that the developed model benefits the EU and its research and innovation community, while minimising strategic dependencies on non-EU actors. This commitment is crucial for safeguarding the Union's autonomy, security, and technological sovereignty within a geopolitical landscape that demands leveraging Europe's strengths and addressing vulnerabilities.

## 3.5    DECLARATION OF HONOUR – EXCLUSION

To be eligible for the Large AI challenge, prize winner must sign a Declaration of Honour –DoH (Declaration of EU Policy and Law) about the compliance with EU Norms and Regulations. The Declaration of Honour can be downloaded from the AI-BOOST website: Frontier AI Grand Challenge – AI-BOOST

Overall, applicants which are subject to an EU exclusion decision OR exclusion grounds under the EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046 or in one of the following exclusion situations that bar them from receiving EU funding/prize can NOT participate:

- bankrupt, being wound up, having the affairs administered by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures.

- in breach of social security or tax obligations

- guilty of grave professional misconduct[2]

- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking

- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision

- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95

- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin (including creation of another entity with this purpose).

## 3.6    AWARD

Subject to conditions describer below, only **one winner** will be awarded by the panel of the Frontier AI Grand Challenge as follows:

The award consists of free access to EuroHPC infrastructure essential for training and developing frontier AI models. It includes the secured allocation of up to 2.5% of EuroHPC computing capacity. The allocation is granted for a period of one (1) year and must be used to develop the Frontier AI model described in the proposals. Access to EuroHPC systems implies adherence to the rules and conditions set in the EuroHPC Access Policy.

The winner will be announced on the official Challenge website and promoted by AI-BOOST. In case of termination of the Challenge or if the requirements are not met, the award may not be awarded upon decision of the Panel.

## 3.7    GENERAL PRIZE TERMS – DELAYS OR CANCELLATION

The Participants acknowledge and accept that all or part of the prizes:

- might not be granted in case of termination of the Challenge;
- might be granted with delays in case of extension of the Challenge;
- might not be granted or granted with delays if the requirements are not fulfilled.

---

[2] Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain an advantage.

In case the Challenge is terminated for any reason, no further prize(s) shall be awarded. AI–BOOST may cancel the contest or decide not to award the prizes without any obligation to compensate participants, in particular where its objectives cannot be fulfilled.

# 4 APPLICATION PROCESS

## 4.1 HOW TO APPLY?

Applicants are invited to register, create a user profile, complete the full application form, prepare the required supporting documents and submit them via the F6S platform and accessible through AI-BOOST website. All proposals must be fully completed and submitted via F6S platform before the deadline.

Main steps required:

- Registration via F6S platform

- Dully complete the application from (all mandatory fields must be completed)

- Attach the Declaration of Honour (see section 3.5) dully filled in and signed by the legal representative.

- Attach the Attachment 2 – Tables and Images

- Submit the application form before the deadline (see section 4.5)

## 4.2 WHERE CAN I FIND THE APPLICATION FORM?

The applications must be built and submitted through the online F6S application form, available via AI-BOOST website: Frontier AI Grand Challenge – AI-BOOST

However, an indicative template (word document) can be downloaded from AI-BOOST website to assist applicants in preparing the application form. It is just an example; the actual online application form might differ from this example.

We recommend that applicants submit their proposals well in advance of the specified deadline to ensure that all required fields are completed and that their submissions are accepted.

## 4.3 WHICH INFORMATION MUST BE PROVIDED IN THE APPLICATION FORM?

European Dimension: Proposals must demonstrate how the proposed AI model will primarily enhance the Union's AI ecosystem, and in particular its AI industry by: (a) reducing dependencies on non-EU frontier AI solutions and strengthening technological sovereignty; (b) fostering innovation within the EU AI ecosystem; and (c) advancing strategic European objectives for technological leadership and competitiveness as outlined in the AI Continent Action Plan and ApplyAI Strategy.

The information to be provided in the application is summarized below. However, please see the online application form and the template of the application form for further information.

- **Excellence**
  - Objectives and ambition:
    - What are the main expected outcomes from the proposal?

- What are the main objectives of the proposal?

- Describe the main problem this proposal tries to solve.

- State of the Art:

  - What are the state-of-the-art advances of the proposal, taking into account the EU AI ecosystem?

- Methodology:

  - Describe and justify the choice of computational methods.

  - What are the main requirements, including access to compute, for executing the proposal?

- Data: Management Plan, Storage, Analysis and Visualization:

  - Provide a general description of the types and sources of datasets used to train and test the model(s), including broad characteristics such as data domain, volume, and origin (e.g., public, licensed, proprietary), respecting confidentiality and IP considerations

  - Provide details of your data management plan.

- **Innovation and Impact**

  - Expected results:

    - Impact on the EU AI ecosystem and EU Competitiveness

    - What are the expected achievements in product development?

    - What are the expected technical results?

  - Requirements and potential barriers:

    - Determine the main risk and potential barriers for developing your proposal.

    - What are the measures to tackle the main risks to your proposal (including access needs to complementary computing resources)?

    - What open-model principles and practices (open science, open data, open weights, transparent methodologies, reproducibility, etc.) are integrated into your project plans to foster transparency and collaboration?

    - Communication and dissemination activities foreseen to ensure that the developed open models are widely available for uptake by public authorities across Europe and by the European scientific and business communities

- **Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation**

  - Workplan and resources:

    - Define the project workplan.

    - Define the milestones to be achieved during the execution of the project.

    - Gantt Chart.

- Capacity of the applicant:
  - Demonstrated achievements in developing AI models with frontier AI capabilities
  - Expertise of the technical staff involved
  - Availability of infrastructure for model deployment and inference at scale
  - Proven track record in developing and commercially deploying large AI models at scale within the EU, including current market position and relevant outcomes

The F6S platform contains all functionalities to upload attachments. Please provide the following mandatory documents dully completed.

- **Attachment 1 – Declaration of Honour** (see 4.4) – **Mandatory.**

- **Attachment 2 – Tables and Images:** Please download the available word template (Attachment – Tables and Images), complete the document with the following information and upload the file:
  - Gantt Chart – **Mandatory**
  - What are the developmental objectives for the proposal? – Complete and attach the Table **– Mandatory**
  - Others – **Optional.** We invite applicants to submit any relevant image (i.e., photos, diagrams, graphs) to help understand better the project and information provided. Those types of information are not systematically read during the evaluation. Avoid sending extensive information.

## 4.4 DOES THE APPLICATION REQUIRE A DECLARATION OF HONOUR?

Yes, the Participants will be required to provide a Declaration of Honour with the Application, including confirmation that the Participant fulfils all the eligibility conditions specified in the Large Grand Challenge Call (see section 3.5 for further information).

The Declaration of Honour can be downloaded from the AI-BOOST website: https://aiboost-project.eu/.

## 4.5 WHEN TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION FORM?

All sections of the Application Form must be submitted electronically via F6S Platform (accessible via Apply to The Frontier AI Grand Challenge | F6S) **before 13th of April 2026, 17:00.00 Brussels time**.

We recommend that applicants submit their proposals **well in advance** of the specified deadline to ensure that all required fields are completed and that their submissions are accepted.

## 4.6 IS THERE A CONFIRMATION FOR THE SUBMISSION PROCESS?

All submitted proposals will receive an automatic acknowledgement of receipt of the application from info@aiboost-project.eu , including the number of the proposal, date and hour of the submission. If this mail is not received after submitting a proposal, check the spam box. This e-mail should not be taken as an indication that the proposal is admissible, only that it was submitted.

# 5 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICANTS

## 5.1 SELECTION CRITERIA (AWARD CRITERIA)

- **Excellence**

  - Scientific quality and merit of the project concept.
  - Clear objectives and ambition, including scientific and innovative expertise, intellectual property background, and the conceptual strength underpinning the project.

- **Innovation and Impact**

  - Originality and novelty of the proposed project beyond the state of the art
  - Model capabilities reflecting European values (multilingualism, explainability, bias mitigation, robustness, etc.)
  - Potential innovation and impact across strategic sectors and domains
  - Business impact and exploitation strategy for ecosystem adoption
  - Addressing Europe's strategic dependencies on non-EU models

- **Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation**

  - Feasibility and quality of the work plan aligned with call objectives.
  - Efficient use of requested EuroHPC and other resources.
  - Appropriateness of workplan to successfully complete the project
  - Practical technical capability and demonstrated experience in deploying frontier AI models at scale within the EU, including operational skills, resource management, and execution proficiency.

## 5.2 EVALUATION PANEL

Role of the Panel:

- Review applications for compliance with the eligibility criteria
- Evaluate eligible applications based on the established selection criteria
- Propose the final ranking list of proposals

Composition

The evaluation Panel will be composed of an uneven number of experts, ranging from a minimum of three (3) to a maximum of five (5) members, each having voting rights. The experts will be appointed by AI-BOOST and EuroHPC. A representative from AI-BOOST and EuroHPC will chair the panel without voting rights.

The panel shall consist exclusively of natural persons who are independent of the contest participants, with no conflicts of interest. At least one-third of the panel members shall have extensive expertise in leading-class HPC systems, while the remaining members shall be experts in large AI systems

Decisions

All decisions made by the Panel shall be considered binding and final on the Participant, in all Phases of the Challenge.

## 5.3    SELECTION PROCEDURE – WHAT IS THE OVERALL PROCEDURE TO DELIVER THE AWARD?

### PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

a)  Administrative Check: All submitted applications through the F6S Platform (accessible through AI-BOOTS website) within the deadline (see section 4.5) will be collected and pass through a first screening and eligibility. The proposals are assessed for any administrative inconsistency and for compliance with the eligibility criteria. This first macroscopic screening will be conducted by appointed members of the AI-BOOST Grand Challenge office.

The proposals must pass the administrative check to proceed to next evaluation steps. Proposals that have been administratively rejected will not proceed further.

b)  Pre-screening process: **If more than 10 proposals are received**, an administrative check may be included. For this purpose, a panel composed by representatives from EuroHPC and AI-BOOST will rank the proposals according to the specific objectives of the challenge. The pre-screening will consist of scoring specifically technical aspects and the coherence of the proposal:

- European Dimension (15 points)
- Company capacities and experience (20 points)
- Soundness of the proposal (15 points)
- Potential of adoption and scalability of the solution (10 points)

In total a project can receive 60 points. The top 10 ranked proposals will continue with the technical validation and the selection process. This process **shall take approximately between two and four working weeks**.

### TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT.

Proposals will be technically reviewed by technical experts of EuroHPC JU, who will assess the suitability of the application to run in the indicated system. This process shall take a**pproximately one working week**.

## SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT

The Panel Chair assigns proposals to 3-5 panel members (evaluators) to evaluate the proposals according to the selection criteria: Excellence, Innovation and Impact, Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation. Each evaluator will receive the whole proposal package and carry out the assessment. This process shall take **approximately two working weeks**.

Individual Assessment – The first step is the independent assessment by single evaluators. The scoring process will be the same as with Horizon Europe.

- **Poor** – the criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

- **Fair** – the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.

- **Good** – the proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.

- **Very good** – the proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.

- **Excellent** – the proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Each evaluator will score the proposal with a mark from 0 to 5 (with 0.5 resolution) on each of the three award criteria (or areas of evaluation):

- Excellence.

- Innovation and Impact.

- Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation

The threshold for each individual criteria is 3. The overall threshold, applying to the sum of the 3 individual scores, is 10 points – not including bonuses.

In addition to the scores, each evaluator could assign each proposal **one or more "bonuses"**, whose presence will be considered in the elaboration of the final ranking. These bonuses are related to the following topics:

- Open-source approach, including open weights (1 point)

- Multimodal models demonstrating strong multilingual capabilities across a significant number of official EU languages (2 points)

- European dimension (2 points)

Each evaluator will insert the outcomes of his/her evaluation (mark from 1 to 5 with 0.5 resolution) for each of the four areas of evaluation (total mark out of 15 resulting from the sum of the four marks) into an evaluation tool and the bonuses. The score given by other evaluators will not be visible until the evaluation is completed by all evaluators.

## EXPERTS EVALUATION MEETINGS

The evaluation system will compare scores assigned by different reviewers for each proposal. If the scores for more than one award criterion differ by more than 1 point from the average score, the proposal will be flagged for further discussion.

For each flagged proposal, a consensus meeting will be organised, lasting up to 30 minutes, conducted via a suitable online platform. All assigned evaluators will participate.

During the meeting, each evaluator will explain the rationale behind their scores. The discussion aims to reach a consolidated score for each evaluation criterion and agree on a final ranking for the proposal.

Minutes documenting the discussion and decisions will be recorded.

## EVALUATION SUMMARY REPORT

An Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) with the consolidated results and final score will be elaborated by the Evaluator Manager (rapporteur), which will be one representative of the evaluation panel assigned for a given proposal. The Evaluator Manager will be appointed by AI-BOOST Grand Challenge office.

Average marks will be calculated with two decimals and rounding will be applied according to the following rules:

- values with decimals up to 0.24 will be rounded to the lower integer number;
- values with decimals from 0.25 to 0.74 will be rounded to 0.5;
- values with decimals between 0.75 and 0.99 will be rounded to the higher integer number.

## PANEL MEETING AND FINAL RANKING

After the completion of the evaluation process, a final panel meeting, **chaired by the Director of the EuroHPC or his representative**, will be conducted online with all the evaluation experts. The average marks will be used to define the final ranking.

For projects having the same total score, precedence in the ranking will be given according to:

- Impact and Innovation in the European market
- Efficiency in its implementation
- Originality of the proposal

One award will be delivered to the top-ranked proposal, with the selected winner being the only recipient of the award.

COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS

The Grand Challenge office will communicate the results to all applicants. They will receive an email with the final decision regarding their proposal; the same outcome can also be seen in the AI-BOOST website with the award-winner. Moreover, the rejected applicants will also receive an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) with the reasons for exclusion.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to check the Spam inbox.

## 5.4 HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO RECEIVE THE RESULT?

The evaluation process shall take approximately **one (1) month** starting from the closing date of the call. After this period, applicants will be informed about the result.

# 6 COMMUNICATION FLOW WITH APPLICANTS

## 6.1 IS THERE ANY SUPPORT FOR THE APPLICANTS?

For more information about the Large AI Grand Challenge Open Call, please check the AI-BOOST website: The Frontier AI Grand Challenge | Brussels, Belgium | F6S

For additional details concerning the Large AI Grand Challenge, any inquiries regarding eligibility criteria, questions about the required information in the Application Form, or if you encounter technical difficulties or issues with the Application Form, please reach out to the AI-BOOST Technical Helpdesk via email at: info@aiboost-project.eu

We also recommend following us on LinkedIn to stay updated on the latest news and events: https://www.linkedin.com/company/aiboost-project/.

## 6.2 HOW ARE THE RESULTS COMMUNICATED TO APPLICANTS?

After the evaluation process is concluded, applicants are informed via e-mail about the results, although AI-BOOST website will also publish the list of prize-winners. Moreover, the rejected applicants will also receive an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) with the reasons for exclusion.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to check Spam inbox.

## 6.3 CAN APPLICANTS APPEAL A REJECTION?

If, at any stage of the evaluation process, the applicant considers that a mistake has been made or that the evaluators have acted unfairly or have failed to comply with the rules of AI-BOOST first open call, and that her/his interests have been prejudiced as a result; the following appeal procedures are available.

A complaint should be drawn up in English and submitted by email to: info@aiboost-project.eu

Any complaint made should include:

- contact details,
- the subject of the complaint,
- Reference or code of the application form
- information and evidence regarding the alleged breach.

Complaints should also be made within **five (calendar) days** since the evaluation results are presented to the applicants.

As a standard procedure, the AI-BOOST Grand Challenge office will thoroughly investigate any complaints with the aim of reaching a decision to either issue a formal notice or close the case. This process will typically be completed within twenty days from the date of receiving the complaint, assuming that all necessary information has been provided by the complainant. In the event that this

time frame is exceeded, the AI-BOOST Grand Challenge office will promptly notify the complainant via email.

# 7    AWARD, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

No commitment for prize: Invitation to this stage does NOT constitute a formal commitment for prize award. The AI-BOOST Grand Challenge office will still need to make various legal checks before prize award: legal entity validation, financial capacity, etc.

Moreover, the selected applicants should, if awarded a prize, accept the award in the Grand Challenge Websitea. This action will trigger a notification to the Hosting Entities to officially contact the applicants regarding the access to their systems.

## 7.1    ARE THERE ANY OTHER DOCUMENTS TO BE SENT AT THIS STAGE?

Yes, selected beneficiaries will be requested to provide the following documentation:

- **Legal Entity Form:** All selected beneficiaries need to provide the Legal Entity Form dully filled and signed by the legal representative. In addition, the beneficiary must attach copies of official supporting documents to proof the data provided in the form. The editable form can be downloaded in all EU languages from the following website[3].

- **Acceptable Use Policy:** Successful applicants sign an Acceptable Use Policy with the EURO HPC JU in which defines their limits and obligations when accessing the systems as End Users**.**

## 7.2    ARE THERE ANY ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS OF AWARD WINNERS?

Yes, the obligations and responsibilities of the winner (selected beneficiaries)

- The SMEs receiving awards must utilise the allotted HPC time for the development of the foundation model outlined in their proposals.

- Upon completion of the allocation period, the award winner is required to submit a comprehensive Final Report within three months.

- Acknowledge the role of the HPC Centre and EuroHPC JU in all publications which include the results above mentioned. Users shall use the following wording in such acknowledgement in all such papers and other publications: "We acknowledge EuroHPC JU for awarding this project access to [resource-name hosted by at site]"

## 7.3    IS THERE ANY OBLIGATION ABOUT COMMUNICATION?

The prize-winners must **actively promote the action and its results** by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public).

---

[3] https://commission.europa.eu/publications/legal-entities_en

Unless otherwise agreed with the AI-BOOST and EuroHPC, communication activities of the winners related to the action (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded by the grant must acknowledge EU support and display the **European flag** (emblem) and **funding statement** (translated into local languages, where appropriate)[4].

The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text.

Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.

When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. of beneficiaries or sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

For the purposes of their obligations under this Article, the beneficiaries may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from the granting authority. This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

Any communication or dissemination activity related to the action must use factually accurate information.

Moreover, it must indicate the following **disclaimer** (translated into local languages where appropriate):

*"Supported by the European Union under GA No 101135737. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them."*

## 7.4    WHAT IS THE IPR OWNERSHIP OF RESULTS?

The awarding entity does not acquire ownership of the outcomes generated within the framework of the award.

The granting authority has the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the action and materials and documents received from the award-winner (notably summaries for publication deliverables, as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material, in paper or electronic form) for policy, information, communication, dissemination and publicity purposes — during the action or afterwards.

The right to use the beneficiaries' materials, documents and information is granted in the form of a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable license.

---

[4] https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/logo-download-center_en

Photos and videos taken by the awarding authority either in preparation of the award ceremony or during the award ceremony are the sole property of the awarding authority.