OPEN CALL ANALYSIS

EIT STEM TECH TALENT INDUCTION CALL 2026

STEM induction training by education and business consortia: up to EUR 80,000 per project

EUnita strategic translation

This is a small project grant for training, not a research grant. The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) pays, through its digital KIC 28DIGITAL, up to EUR 80,000 per project, EUR 2,000,000 for up to 25 projects. A consortium of at least one education provider and one business or industry partner designs STEM induction courses of at least ten hours, has them checked against a nine-stage quality standard, and delivers them between a tentative start of 1 April 2027 and 31 December 2027; each project is expected to reach a minimum of 1,200 participants. The money reimburses actual costs, with a 25% flat rate for indirect costs, and arrives in four instalments, the first without a linked deliverable (indicatively May 2027) and the others tied to deliverables and reports. Scoring rewards a clear learner group, industry co-design, reach into groups underrepresented in STEM and a plan that can scale; three minimum scores decide who is ranked.

EIT STEM TALENT ANALYSIS

Fit assessment | Sources | What it funds | Boundaries | Budget & competition | Eligibility | Money | Evaluation | Timeline | Risks

Deadline: 14 December 2026, 17:00 CET (18:00 in Romania)

Call budget: EUR 2,000,000 | Up to 25 projects | Up to EUR 80,000 of EIT funding per project | 1 April to 31 December 2027 (tentative start)

Prepared by

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Analysis date: 22 November 2026

*This analysis interprets the official call documentation for applicants. It is not legal advice. The official texts are the Call for Proposals 2026 (call text dated October 2026, no version number printed), the Call FAQ and the EIT STEM Competence Framework, as published on the call page of 28DIGITAL and checked on 22 November 2026 (documents unchanged since the 20 November download); where this analysis and an official text differ, the official text prevails. Labels used: **Confirmed** (stated in an official source), **EUnita interpretation** (a reading or recommendation by EUnita), **Derived estimate** (arithmetic by EUnita on official figures).*

1. Decision summary: is this call for you?

The EIT STEM Tech Talent Induction Call for Proposals 2026 (“Building Future-Ready STEM Talent”) funds consortia that run STEM induction training: structured courses that introduce learners to STEM subjects, technologies or careers and help them move on to further study or work. It offers up to EUR 80,000 of EIT funding per project, from up to EUR 2,000,000 for up to 25 projects, for work between a tentative start of 1 April 2027 and 31 December 2027. Applications close on 14 December 2026, 17:00 CET (18:00 in Romania).

Item	Confirmed position	Source
Call	EIT STEM Tech Talent Induction 2026 Call. No call number, topic ID or grant agreement number is published	Call text p. 6
Run by, funded by	28DIGITAL IVZW (the EIT KIC for digital innovation, Brussels) has “operational management and implementation” of the call. The funder is the EIT, through its 2026-2027 grant to 28DIGITAL	Call text pp. 4, 6
Type of funding	Financial support to third parties (subgrants) under a Financial Support Agreement; reimbursement of actual costs	Call text pp. 4, 19
Amounts	Up to EUR 2,000,000; up to 25 projects; up to EUR 80,000 per project	Call text pp. 6, 18
Who	A consortium with at least one education provider and at least one business or industry partner	Call text p. 22
Where	Funded beneficiaries in an EU Member State, an Overseas Country or Territory, a Horizon Europe associated country or a certain low- or middle-income country. Romania is eligible	Call text pp. 21-22
Deadline	14 December 2026, 17:00 CET, through the call’s online platform; proposals in English	Call text pp. 6, 12, 39

Good fit

- ✓ VET providers, schools, universities and training organisations with a STEM course that can reach at least 1,200 learners
- ✓ Companies, start-ups, clusters and innovation hubs ready to co-design a course with an education partner
- ✓ Consortia with a PIC for each partner and time to finish a proposal before 14 December 2026
- ✓ Teams that can reach rural learners, women and girls and learners from RIS countries such as Romania
- ✓ Courses on AI, space-related or other strategic technologies, mainly at ISCED levels 3 to 5 (levels 6 to 7 and adult learning are also accepted)

Not a fit

- ✗ A single organisation: the call accepts consortia only
- ✗ One-off events or showcases with no assessed course of at least ten hours
- ✗ Basic digital literacy training (office software, everyday devices)
- ✗ Entities in Russia, Belarus or non-government-controlled Ukraine, or under EU restrictive measures
- ✗ Projects needing much more than EUR 80,000 or running past 31 December 2027

EUnita verdict (interpretation)

EUnita interpretation: pursue this call if an education provider and a business or industry partner already work together, or can commit before the deadline, and a course of at least ten hours can reach the expected minimum of 1,200 participants within nine months. The grant is small and the project short (nine months of activity); the effort lies in the learner plan, the quality standard and the participant target. The call text gives no funding rate and no application form, so budget and effort must be checked once the form is open.

2. Source verification and document status

Confirmed: all facts come from documents on the call pages of 28DIGITAL and the initiative, and from EIT pages, read on 20 November 2026 and checked again on 22 November 2026 (documents unchanged since the 20 November download). The three call PDFs are identical to the copies taken from the call page on 20 October 2026.

Document	Version and date	Used for
Call for Proposals 2026	"Brussels | October 2026"; 47 pages; no version number	Rules, dates, money, criteria
Call FAQ	No date; 3 pages	Short answers
EIT STEM Competence Framework	No date; 7 pages	Course design
Call page of 28DIGITAL and of the initiative	Read 20 November 2026	Opening hour; info sessions; amendments

Confirmed: no document says which text prevails. The call text is the fullest and is followed; it names the call page of 28DIGITAL as "the official source of information for the Call" for amendments (p. 33).

Where the official documents differ

- **Learner levels.** The call text sets the "primary focus" at ISCED levels 3 to 5 and VET (p. 11); the FAQ and the initiative page add ISCED 6 and 7 and adult learning as "also accepted".
- **STEM domains.** The initiative page says proposals "must specifically target" one of three ISCED fields; the call text also allows interdisciplinary activities with a clear STEM component (p. 9).
- **30% and 40% targets.** The call text states 30% of learners from RIS countries and 40% women and girls as ambitions of the Initiative, "combined … across both Calls" (pp. 11, 41), with no per-project quota; the initiative page reads them as a project aim.
- **EUR 80,000.** The call text table says "annual" funding per project; the FAQ says up to EUR 80,000 each. Projects run within one calendar year, so the cap reads the same.

3. What the call funds

Confirmed: the call funds "induction activities": structured learning or engagement activities that introduce learners to STEM subjects, technologies, applications, skills or career pathways and support progression towards further STEM learning, training or employment (p. 8). Policy anchors are the Commission's STEM Education Strategic Plan, the Union of Skills, the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027 and the EIT Impact Framework 2022-2027 (pp. 4-6).

- **Fields (ISCED):** natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (05); ICT (06); engineering, manufacturing and construction (07); interdisciplinary work, health included, with a clear STEM component (p. 9). Space-related applications and AI get particular attention (pp. 9-10).

- **Delivery:** online, offline or blended. Formats include short introductory modules, STEM content inside VET or university curricula, industry challenge-based learning (hackathons, design sprints), light regional labs (lab-in-a-box, robotics kits, virtual labs), bridge and re-induction programmes, and platform-based training (pp. 10-11).
- **Learners:** primary focus ISCED levels 3 to 5 and VET (the FAQ and the initiative page also accept ISCED levels 6 and 7 and adult and lifelong learning); groups underrepresented in STEM are expected to be reached: rural learners, disadvantaged backgrounds, women and girls, adults leaving declining sectors (p. 11). The Initiative aims at 30% of learners from RIS countries and 40% women and girls (p. 11).
- **Course rules:** at least 10 hours of structured learning; a summative assessment; a verifiable certificate; co-design with industry, since “merely naming” a business partner is not enough; the three dimensions of the EIT STEM Competence Framework (conceptual foundations, procedural application, innovation mindset). Annex 2 sets a nine-stage quality standard, and proposals are judged on the version published with the call (pp. 12, 40-46).

Confirmed: phase 1, design and development, takes three months and ends with a quality check of the final education programme overview, “indicatively 30 June 2027”; phase 2, deployment and validation, takes six months (pp. 13-14). The check can find a programme compliant, compliant subject to minor adjustments, or in need of revision and resubmission (p. 14). Deliverables: a Final Education Programme and Implementation Package and a Programme Evaluation (pp. 14-15). The KPI with a stated target is EITHE08.1, “Number of successful participants” in non-labelled education and training: the call text gives a “minimum target expected” of 1,200 and says each project “is expected to reach a minimum of 1,200 participants”; applicants “should propose a realistic, evidence-based target at or above this minimum” (p. 15). The call text does not define “successful participants”. Participant data, including country of citizenship and residence and gender, are collected for EIT reporting (p. 15).

4. Boundaries: avoid the wrong door

- **Not funded as such:** unstructured events or showcases (Annex 2, p. 43); courses without an assessment, where attendance alone counts (p. 44); basic digital literacy (p. 42); activities without a clear and substantive STEM component (p. 9).
- **No single-organisation applications:** only consortia with an education provider and a business or industry partner are eligible (p. 22).
- **Excluded in any role:** entities under EU restrictive measures, entities in Russia, Belarus or non-government-controlled territories of Ukraine, and entities more than 50% owned by a Russian legal person (pp. 23-24).

Confirmed: the call text names two sister initiatives, Girls Go STEM and the EIT Higher Education Initiative (p. 5); their calls have their own documents. A second call of this initiative is “planned for 2027” under a separate competitive selection (p. 17); no date is published.

5. Budget, competition and expected number of grants

Item	Confirmed position	Source
Call budget	Up to EUR 2,000,000 of EIT funding	Call text p. 6
Projects; grant	“Up to 25” projects (indicative); up to EUR 80,000 each	Call text p. 18; FAQ
Derived estimate	25 x EUR 80,000 = EUR 2,000,000: the budget fits exactly 25 projects at the cap	Arithmetic on p. 18

Item	Confirmed position	Source
Applications	Not published	Not found in the sources read
Reserve list	Valid three months after the award decision; used if higher-ranked proposals decline, fail contracting or extra budget appears	Call text p. 31

Confirmed: awards follow the ranking “subject to the available budget” (p. 31). No success rate or number of expected applications is published, so none is estimated. Applicants “have no legal entitlement to funding” (p. 33).

6. What has been funded before

Confirmed: the EIT describes EIT STEM Tech Talent Induction as a new initiative launched on 14 October 2026 (EIT news item), and the call text plans a second call for 2027 (p. 17). EUnita interpretation: this is therefore the first call. No documents on earlier awards, projects or applications were found. “Both Calls” in the quality annex means the 2026 call and the planned 2027 call (call text pp. 17, 41).

7. Who should apply, and with which ideas

EUnita interpretation: the consortium rule decides who applies. The education provider brings learners and pedagogy; the business partner brings the real-world challenge and the skills need. The call lists both groups widely (p. 22): a Romanian VET school network, technical university, NGO running coding or robotics clubs, bootcamp or EdTech company can be the first; a company, start-up, cluster, innovation hub or sectoral association the second. Membership of the 28DIGITAL partnership is not a condition (p. 21).

- **Industry challenge courses:** a company supplies a real problem or data set; learners work in teams; a summative task is assessed (pp. 10, 43).
- **STEM modules inside VET or university curricula,** adapted to a regional or sectoral need (p. 10).
- **Light regional labs and bridge programmes:** lab-in-a-box or mobile labs for rural learners; re-induction for adults leaving declining sectors (p. 10).
- **AI or space-related courses** at ISCED levels 3 to 5, which score under strategic fit; learners from RIS countries, Romania among them, also score there (p. 29).

8. Eligibility checklist

✓	A consortium with at least one education provider and one business or industry partner, both as beneficiaries (p. 22).
✓	Each funded beneficiary established in an EU Member State (outermost regions included), an Overseas Country or Territory, a Horizon Europe associated country or a certain low- or middle-income country (pp. 21-22). Romania qualifies.
✓	A nine-digit PIC for each organisation (p. 6).
✓	Submission before 14 December 2026, 17:00 CET, complete with all mandatory annexes, in English (pp. 12, 20).
✓	Courses of at least 10 hours, assessed and certified, following the Annex 2 quality standard (pp. 12, 40-46); a participant target at or above the expected minimum of 1,200 (p. 15).

✓	Declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and conflict of interest from the coordinator and each partner (p. 25); the call text gives no timing for it, and p. 32 says it is requested at onboarding “if not yet provided”. An EU AI Act declaration is submitted where AI tools are used (p. 20).
✗	Not eligible in any role: entities under EU restrictive measures; entities in Russia, Belarus or non-government-controlled Ukraine (case-by-case exceptions); entities more than 50% owned by a Russian legal person (pp. 23-24). Hungarian public interest trusts cannot be funded; they may take part only as associated partners (p. 24).
?	Entities in other countries can be funded only “if their participation is considered essential for implementing the action by the EIT”, or join as associated partners without funding (p. 22); no further test is given.

Confirmed: financial capacity is checked for the coordinator when requested funding reaches EUR 500,000, or in case of doubt (p. 26); the EUR 80,000 cap is far below that.

9. How the money works

Confirmed: “the financial support offered by 28DIGITAL is structured in the form of reimbursement of actual costs declared in the activity proposal budget. The funds are released in several tranches” (p. 19). The budget is planned by task, but reporting uses actual costs, which cannot exceed the approved budget (p. 19). The call text gives no funding rate and no co-funding rule.

- **Cost categories:** personnel; sub-contracting; travel and subsistence; equipment; other goods, works and services; indirect costs at a flat rate of 25% of eligible direct costs, excluding volunteers’ costs, subcontracting and financial support to third parties (p. 19).
- **Advice in the call text:** use financial support to third parties sparingly; at least 0.2 FTE per partner and task leader (pp. 19-20).

Derived estimate: if every eligible cost falls in the base of the flat rate (no subcontracting, for example), a project at the EUR 80,000 cap carries about EUR 64,000 of direct and EUR 16,000 of indirect costs (80,000 / 1.25). The Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement and the Financial Support Agreement decide the real split.

Instalment	Timing (indicative)	Share	Linked to
Pre-financing	May 2027	30%	No linked deliverable
Pre-financing	August 2027	20%	Final Education Programme and Implementation Package; Monitoring Report
Pre-financing	March 2028	20%	Programme Evaluation
Balance	August or September 2028	30%	Final Report; Financial Report

Confirmed: each payment is released once the linked items are submitted and approved by 28DIGITAL; the final payment “may be adjusted, withheld, or recovered” if the project was not implemented as agreed (p. 18). Derived estimate: at the cap, the instalments are EUR 24,000, 16,000, 16,000 and 24,000. Reports: Monitoring Report (indicatively July 2027), Final Report (December 2027 to January 2028), Financial Report (December 2027 to February 2028) (p. 17). Cost evidence is kept at least five years after the final payment; the EIT, the Commission, OLAF, EPPO and the Court of Auditors may audit (pp. 20, 37). Support must be acknowledged using the initiative’s communication framework (p. 37). Funding can be withdrawn and recovered after errors, fraud, serious breaches or ineligibility (pp. 36-37).

10. Evaluation

Confirmed: 28DIGITAL checks admissibility, eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria. Independent external experts then score each proposal; the experts of a proposal agree a consensus report in a Review Gate; a Selection Committee of 28DIGITAL staff ranks the proposals that reach every threshold; the Management Committee of 28DIGITAL decides in ranking order, subject to budget, and may ask for changes (pp. 30-31).

Criterion	Sub-criteria (each 0 to 5)	Weight	Minimum
a) Excellence	Alignment with the initiative and the ISCED 3-5 and VET priority; learning design; diversity, inclusion and gender	30%	6 of 15
b) Impact	Interest in STEM and progression; replication and scale	30%	4 of 10
c) Implementation	Work plan, KPIs and budget; outreach and recruitment; consortium and team	30%	6 of 15
d) Strategic fit	RIS objectives and geographical coverage; space and AI	10%	None stated

Confirmed: final score (maximum 100) = (Excellence / 15 x 30) + (Impact / 10 x 30) + (Implementation / 15 x 30) + (Strategic fit / 10 x 10). A proposal must reach the minimum in each of a, b and c to pass; minimums apply to unweighted scores (p. 30). No overall pass mark and no tie-break rule are stated. Applicants receive their assessment and score (p. 31); clarifications are answered within fifteen days (p. 32); complaints go to proposal_support@28digital.eu within ten business days and cover procedure only (p. 33); a standstill of at least twenty-one days precedes signature (p. 32).

11. Application package and timeline

1. Register each organisation in the EU Funding & Tenders Portal to obtain the PIC (p. 6).
2. Create an account in the call's online platform and submit there (p. 7). The form holds the narrative, the task-based work plan and the budget (pp. 19-20).
3. Prepare the declaration of honour from the coordinator and each partner (p. 25; the call text gives no timing for it, and p. 32 says it is requested at onboarding "if not yet provided"). With the proposal come the coordinator's confirmation of the financial self-check (p. 26) and, where AI tools are used, the AI Act declaration (p. 20).
4. Submit before the deadline. A submitted proposal cannot be modified (FAQ).

Confirmed: the form's questions, page limits and attachments are not published outside the platform. Contact: proposal_support@28digital.eu, or Oana Neagu, Education Lead (p. 7); whether the contact advises on eligibility is not stated.

Date	Step	Status
14 October 2026, 08:00 CET	Call and platform open	Fixed
26 October and 19 November 2026	Two online info sessions	Held
14 December 2026, 17:00 CET (18:00 in Romania)	Submission closes	Fixed
18 December 2026 to 11 February 2027	Evaluation	Indicative

Date	Step	Status
12 February 2027	Results; standstill to 12 March; appeals 12 to 25 February; adjustments 12 to 18 February	Indicative
1 April 2027	Projects start	Tentative
About 30 June 2027	Quality check of the programme overview	Indicative
31 December 2027	Projects concluded	Required by the call text (p. 13); its section 2 calls it tentative

Who can still use this deadline: any consortium with an education provider and a business or industry partner, each established in an eligible country and holding a PIC, can submit until 14 December 2026, 17:00 CET. Both info sessions are over. Next come results on 12 February 2027 and the project start on 1 April 2027 (both planned). A second call is planned for 2027 without a date.

12. Risks and red flags

1. **A consortium is mandatory:** both partner types must be found and hold a PIC before 14 December 2026, and the coordinator and every partner must give a declaration of honour; the call text gives no timing for it (section 11).
2. **Minimum scores:** below 6 of 15 on Excellence, 4 of 10 on Impact or 6 of 15 on Implementation a proposal does not pass, whatever its total.
3. **The participant target:** each project is expected to reach a minimum of 1,200 participants in about nine months, with recruitment left to the funded organisation; “successful participants” is not defined in the call text.
4. **The quality check:** a programme can be sent back for revision about three months after the start.
5. **Unpublished terms:** no funding rate or co-funding rule in the documents read; the call text says the model Financial Support Agreement is available on the 28DIGITAL website (p. 38), but it was not linked from the call pages on 22 November 2026; the form is visible only inside the platform.
6. **Late and conditional money:** the last 30% arrives in August or September 2028 and can be adjusted, withheld or recovered.

13. EUnita recommendations

1. Settle the consortium first: an education provider, a business or industry partner doing real work in the course design, a PIC for each, everyone in an eligible country.
2. Name the learner group exactly: ISCED level, entry route, and the channels that recruit the expected minimum of 1,200 participants, including women, rural learners and learners from RIS countries.
3. Design the course against Annex 2: at least ten hours, three competence dimensions, a summative assessment, a verifiable certificate and a progression step.
4. Budget bottom-up with the 25% flat rate and at least 0.2 FTE per partner and task leader; check the cost per participant at the EUR 80,000 cap.
5. Write to the three minimum scores and show how the course can be reused or scaled.
6. Submit at least a day before 14 December 2026, 17:00 CET.

Unresolved points

- The funding rate and any co-funding requirement are not published on the pages read. The call text (p. 38) says the model Financial Support Agreement is available on the 28DIGITAL website; it was not linked from the call pages on 22 November 2026. An applicant should ask proposal_support@28digital.eu where it is published.
- The application form, its page limits and attachments are visible only inside the call's online platform.
- The call text gives no timing for the declaration of honour (p. 25); p. 32 says it is requested at onboarding "if not yet provided". The call text does not define "successful participants" for the KPI. An applicant should ask proposal_support@28digital.eu.
- No overall pass mark, tie-break rule, number of applications or date for the 2027 call is published.

Sources

- EIT STEM Tech Talent Induction, Call for Proposals 2026 (call text, October 2026): https://28digital.eu/fileadmin/2026/calls-tenders/eit-stem/Call_for_Proposals_2026.pdf (downloaded 20 Nov 2026)
- Call for Proposals FAQs: https://28digital.eu/fileadmin/2026/calls-tenders/eit-stem/Call_for_Proposals_FAQ.pdf (downloaded 20 Nov 2026)
- EIT STEM Competence Framework: https://28digital.eu/fileadmin/2026/calls-tenders/eit-stem/EIT_STEM_Competence_Framework.pdf (downloaded 20 Nov 2026)
- Call page, 28DIGITAL: https://28digital.eu/our-messages/calls-tenders/eit-stem-tech-talent-induction-building-future-ready-stem-talent/ (read 20 Nov 2026)
- Call page, EIT STEM Talent initiative: https://eitstemtalent.eu/calls-and-opportunities/now-open-eit-stem-talent-call-for-proposals-2026/ (read 20 Nov 2026)
- EIT news: EIT launches STEM Tech Talent Induction: https://www.eit.europa.eu/news-events/news/eit-launches-stem-tech-talent-induction-open-new-career-pathways (dated 14 Oct 2026; read 20 Nov 2026)
- EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) countries: https://www.eit.europa.eu/activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris-closing-innovation-divide-europe (read 20 Nov 2026)
- 28DIGITAL legal notice: https://28digital.eu/legal-notice (read 20 Nov 2026)

Checked 22 November 2026. Official updates prevail.