

4th KOREAN-SPANISH JOINT CALL FOR STRATEGIC R&D&I PROJECTS 2026 - 2027

KIAT-CDTI CALL FOR PROPOSALS UNDER THE KOREA SPAIN STRATEGIC PROGRAMME (KSSP)

1

Korea Institute for Advancement of Technology (KIAT) and the Centre for the Development of Technology and Innovation E.P.E. (CDTI) have been designated as funding agencies to manage a new joint top-down R&D Bilateral Programme, the Korea Spain Strategic Programme (KSSP), to select and fund singular projects in mutually agreed topics.

This call for proposals under the KSSP aims to launch ambitious strategic joint R&D projects of a high international standard between Korean and Spanish organizations. The selected projects will be funded by KIAT in Korea and CDTI in Spain.

CALL GUIDELINES:

1) IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

The Korea Institute for Advancement of Technology (KIAT) under Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources of the Republic of Korea (MOTIR) Government of Republic of Korea and the Centre for the Development of Technology and Innovation E.P.E. (CDTI), under the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities (MICIU) of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, are the nodal implementing agencies from the Korean and Spanish sides, respectively.

KIAT is a public R&D funding and promoting agency under MOTIR. The mission is to realize a technologically leading nation through related industrial technology policy, promoting innovation, and infrastructure strengthening in Korea.

CDTI is a public entity under MICIU, which fosters the technological development and innovation of Spanish Companies.

KIAT and CDTI have allocated to this Joint Call the Korean Government and CDTI budget respectively. Its contribution to partners in singular projects will be in the form of grants:

- KIAT, with a maximum of 1,000 million won a year per project.
- CDTI, with a maximum of 2 million euro per project.

2) THEMATIC AREAS

This Call for proposals is open to collaborative R&D projects in the following areas/sectors:

Advanced materials

3) TYPE OF PROJECTS

KSSP is aimed at encouraging collaborative cross-border innovative civil joint R&D projects between Korean and Spanish industrial partners, consisting in the development or substantial improvement of new products, processes, or services.

None of the countries' budget (namely the budget of its entities participating in the proposal) can have more than 60% of the global budget of the project.

Duration of projects: from 12 months up to 36 months

Starting date of projects: on August 1, 2027.

4) WHO CAN APPLY?

KSSP projects will be developed by consortia composed of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Middle-standing Enterprises (MEs) and Large Enterprises and Universities or Research Centers in Korea, and SMEs and Large companies in Spain.

Each consortium leaders are a large or medium size company from Spain and a SME or ME from Korea. Consortia are composed by a minimum of at least one SME or ME in Korea and at least two independent industrial partners (SMEs and large companies) in Spain.

Spanish part of the consortia shall include at least two companies with a minimum SME budget contribution of 10% to the overall Spanish part budget. Participation of research institutes/universities and other organizations are welcome as subcontractors.

The Korean side shall include at least one SME or ME as consortium leader.

5) TIMETABLE

- Launch of Joint Call for Proposals: Sep 21, 2026
- Deadline for Submission (International): January 28, 2027
- Eligibility feedback to applicants: February 18, 2027
- Label concession: May 17, 2027
- Deadline for Submission of Signed Consortium Agreement: June 28, 2027

6) HOW TO APPLY?

Common International procedure:

Project proposals (KSSP Application form) must be submitted to CDTI and to KIAT, by January 28, 2027 in order to consider the eligibility. Unilaterally submitted proposals shall not be considered.

Applications will be submitted to the online process system to both funding agencies:

- In Korea, <https://www.k-pass.kr>
- In Spain, <https://sede.cdti.gob.es>

Documents:

- Korean and Spanish co-applicants must elaborate a single project proposal application (Annex 1 – **KSSP Application Form**). The KSSP Application Form must emphasize how the proposed collaboration adds value, main technology highlights and innovations, activities to be developed by the Parties involved underlining the collaborative work being carried out on each side, their expertise, etc.

Please note that this Application Form must be sealed and signed by all co-applicants, expressly indicating name and designation of the authorized signatory in the organization. Any other relevant information not expressly mentioned on the form and that the applicants consider relevant may be included as Annexes.

Additional specific documents required by KIAT

In addition to the common documents, it is necessary to submit Korean documents required through MOTIR and KIAT announcements: the Main Korean partners should submit additional documents to <https://www.k-pass.kr> with the common documents until call deadline.

Additional specific documents required by CDTI

The Funding Application in Spanish required by CDTI: all Spanish partners, individually, must submit the funding application and other required documents through the electronic platform at <https://sede.cdti.gob.es>. Funding application must be submitted after receiving the communication of label concession until June 28, 2027.

The complete details of the Joint Call will be available on KIAT's and CDTI's websites: <https://www.kiat.or.kr> and <http://www.cdti.es>

Applicants are recommended to contact the nodal representatives at their national funding organizations whose contact details are given below:

Korean side (KIAT)

Ms. Jeehyun WOO (Korea)

Phone: +82 2 6009 3767. E-mail: jeehyun.woo@kiat.or.kr

Spanish side (CDTI)

Ms. Merced Pérez (Spain)

Phone: +34 91 581 0489. E-mail: merced.perez@cdti.es

Mr. Jordi Espluga (Korea)

Phone: +82 (0)70 4117 0888. E-mail: jordi.espluga@cdti.es

7) ELIGIBLE COSTS AND FUNDING

The project must clearly specify the costs of each of the activities pertaining to the project and specify the costs to be respectively borne by the Spanish and Korean partners. The cost of the Korean and Spanish partners must be eligible under the laws applying to each country and under internal regulations of CDTI and KIAT, respectively.

The funding conditions of the Korean participants are set in Won and the Spanish in Euro. Budgets must be expressed in the local currency of each applicant (Won and Euro). All figures and budgetary conditions in this Call refer to the value of both currencies on the date of the launch of the Call.

It is mandatory to include expenses for the project execution during 2027.

Funding related specifics for each country are:

- Concerning Spain, according to Spanish regulations which shall be defined in the Spanish Call.

Eligible costs for each of the Spanish participants must be linked to Industrial Research or Experimental Development tasks.

The aid shall have incentive effect, i.e., the project can only start after the date of submission of the funding request to CDTI.

It is mandatory that each Spanish participant requests funding to CDTI. The minimum eligible budget amount for each Spanish partner is 175,000 €. The overall budget of the Spanish participants in a project will be between 2.5 million euro and 6 million euro.

- Concerning Korea, according to Korean Regulations which are defined in Korean Call Text.

Korean companies should be in operation for at least one year since their establishment, and the companies are required to have 'corporate R&D center certification' issued by the KOITA (Korea Industrial Technology Association).

Project funding consists of government contributions and civilian dues (cash and in-kind). The amount of government contributions will vary depending on the type of executing organizations and project. The funding ratio is as follows: up to 67% for SMEs, 50% for MEs, 33% for large companies, and 100% for universities and research organizations.

8) REVIEW PROCESS AND EVALUATION

The KIAT-CDTI Partnership Steering Committee, integrated by representatives of the parties as defined in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by KIAT and CDTI on 24th of June 2022, shall coordinate this call and shall manage the review and selection process.

A company can only participate in one consortium, in other words, cannot participate in two or more KSSP proposals of the same call.

All eligible proposals will be peer reviewed by a panel of independent experts and scored after the assessment according to international practices.

Only the proposals with a score exceeding the pre-defined threshold in the total score will be in the Ranking List submitted to the KIAT-CDTI Partnership Steering Committee for endorsement. A minimum of 2 projects from this Ranking List will be endorsed by the Steering Committee. The total number of projects selected will depend on the budget allocated by KIAT and CDTI for KSSP Call 2026-2027 and the size of the selected projects.

The endorsed proposals will receive the KSSP Approval Letter (Label concession) that confirms the availability of funding. The allocation of national funding to selected applications shall follow the score of the Ranking List.

Participants receiving the KSSP Approval Letter are requested to contact each national funding agency, CDTI or KIAT.

9) EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation criteria are the following:

- Innovation and R&D (50 points), relates to requirement that the project must involve research and development and yield a specific advance. Aspects to be considered include:
 - Degree of Innovation
 - Level of technical challenge

- Technical achievability
- Quality and efficiency of the R&D implementation (25 points), relates to the partnership, participants and project structure. It deals with the project plan and the capabilities of the participants in relation to their tasks in the project. Aspects to be considered include:
 - Quality of the consortium
 - Added value through co-operation
 - Project management and planning
 - Reasonable cost structure
- Market and Commercialization (25 points), relates to the market targeted, the competitive advantages for the participants involved and the impact of the project results. Aspects to be considered include:
 - Market size, access, and risk
 - Competitive advantage
 - Clear and realistic commercialization plans
 - Economic, Environmental, and Societal impact

The threshold for the total score of the proposal is 70/100.

Projects that fail to score above 70 points from either country will be excluded from funding.

10) FUNDING DECISIONS

After receiving Steering Committee's endorsement decision, KIAT and CDTI will make their funding decisions according to their normal procedures and rules and on a non-exchange of funds basis. CDTI and KIAT will inform the beneficiaries about the funding decisions.

11) REPORTING AND PROJECT OUTPUT

Funding granted by KIAT and CDTI will be governed by the general terms, calls and conditions of each funding agency, respectively. Both parties will carry out an international follow-up until the completion of the projects considering the progress reports of the KSSP Project prepared by project participants. Both parties will inform the counterpart about the success or failure of the international cooperation.

If required, each participant should submit financial and technical reports to their national funding organisations, according to national regulations. The progress and final results of each individual contract/grant will be monitored by the respective national funding organisations under their own regulation