

# EDF

## European Defence Fund



The European Defence Fund (EDF) is the European Union's flagship funding instrument aimed at fostering an innovative, competitive, and collaborative European defence industrial base. Launched under the EU's 2021–2027 Multiannual Financial Framework, the EDF provides €8 billion in co-financing to support research and development (R&D) activities in defence technologies and capabilities across the EU.



### Objectives

The EDF aims to:

- Enhance the strategic autonomy of the EU in the defence sector.
- Promote cross-border cooperation among EU-based companies, research organisations, and SMEs.
- Encourage the development of cutting-edge defence technologies and interoperable systems.
- Support disruptive technologies and dual-use innovations relevant to both civilian and military applications.

### Total Budget

€1.065 billion for 2025

### Who Can Apply

Consortia of at least 3 legal entities from 3 different EU Member States or Norway (standard eligibility).

Exceptions:

- Disruptive Technologies Call (LS-RA-DIS): Minimum 2 entities from 2 Member States or Norway.
- SME-focused Calls (LS-RA-SMERO & LS-DA-SME): Exclusively for SMEs (and RTOs in LS-RA-SMERO).
- Spin-in Calls: Must build upon results from civil EU-funded R&D.
- Ukrainian entities eligible under specific EUD-IS & FSTP measures.

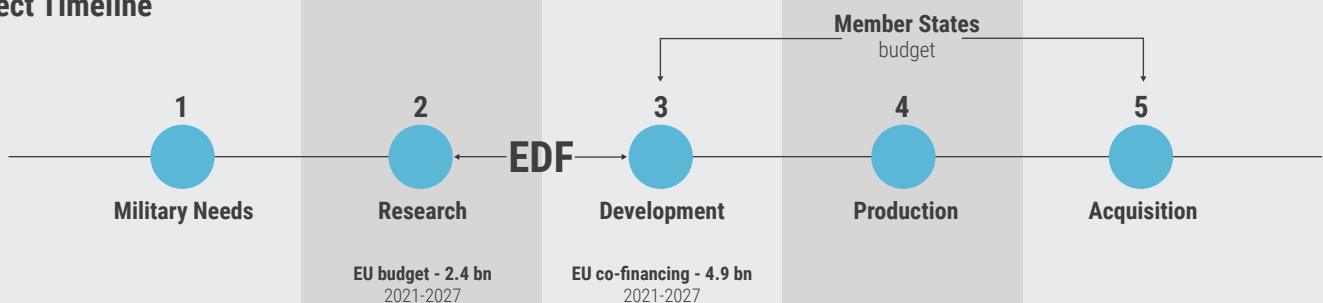
### Funding Rate

- Up to 100% funding for collaborative research projects (non-profit).
- Up to 80% co-funding for development projects, including prototypes, testing, and certification.

### Other

- Bonus incentives for involving SMEs and cross-border consortia.
- Cascade Funding: Available via FSTP (~€60k per third-party) for startups, SMEs, and Ukrainian entities.

### Project Timeline



### Key Dates

- Call Opening: 18 February 2025
- Submission Deadline: 16 October 2025, 17:00 CET
- Grant Agreement Signing: Expected by Nov/Dec 2026

### Duration

The typical duration of a European Defence Fund (EDF) project is: 36 to 48 months (3 to 4 years)

However, the exact duration depends on the type of action and technology maturity level (TRL) targeted:

- **Research Actions (low TRL, e.g. TRL 2–4):** Typically 36 months  
Focus: Early-stage research, proof of concept, feasibility.
- **Development Actions (higher TRL, e.g. TRL 5–7):** Can last up to 48 months  
Focus: System prototyping, testing, validation, or pre-certification.

### Eligible Countries

All 27 EU member states and Norway. Ukraine (specific eligibility under EUDIS and FSTP schemes)

### Eligible Areas

EDF supports a wide range of domains, including:

- Cyber defence
- Artificial Intelligence and autonomous systems
- Next-generation weapon systems
- Space and surveillance technologies
- Unmanned systems (UAVs, UGVs, USVs)
- Energy and environmental resilience in defence

### Key Features

- Mandatory collaboration between at least three entities from three different EU Member States or EDF-associated countries. Calls for disruptive technologies allow smaller consortia (at least two entities from two Member States or associated countries).
- Recipients and subcontractors must be EU-based, with their executive management structure in the EU. They should not be controlled by a non-associated third country, with exceptions possible through approved guarantees. Entities from non-associated third countries can participate, but under conditions ensuring the EU security and defence interests, without receiving EDF funding.
- Emphasis on industrial competitiveness, supply chain integration, and technological sovereignty.
- Strong alignment with EU Capability Development Priorities and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO).

