

Pre-announcement of ERA4Health 2026 Call for proposals:

Understanding and Preventing Overweight and Obesity (PREVENT-OO) - Mechanisms of their onset and progression, neglected determinants and novel strategies for critical transitional periods in life

Aim of the call

Project proposals should address multidisciplinary and translational research. The applications must cover only one of the two following topics and address at least one of the two specified subtopics (subtopic 1a and/or 1b for topic 1 and subtopic 2a and/or 2b for topic 2); both topics and subtopics are of equal relevance for this call.

The aim of this call is to support research that:

1. Improves the understanding of the causes for obesity, overweight and its complications by using a mechanistic approach

And more specifically:

1a. Investigates the biological mechanisms, including the chronobiological, genetic and epigenetic ones, underlying the onset and progression of overweight and obesity and related diseases considering parameters as the living environment, lifestyle and psychological status

1b. Investigates how overweight and obesity contribute to the development of related clinical complications and/or affect the mechanism of action of therapeutics against other diseases/disorders

2. Develops public health strategies for the prevention of obesity and overweight by focusing on critical transitional periods of life, which are due to biological changes (e.g. postpartum, menopause, andropause), or socio-environmental changes (e.g. period in between pregnancies, diagnosis of a chronic disease, recovering from disease, retirement etc.)

And more specifically:

2a. Understands and addresses neglected determinants, including their interdependency, in the onset and the progression of overweight and obesity in transitional periods of life

2b. Develops novel tools or preventive strategies that can be implemented against the onset and the progression of overweight and obesity in transitional periods of life, taking into consideration physiological, pathophysiological, psychological behavioural influences and/or socioeconomic status of the citizens/patients. Importantly, the proposal should present the assessment of the economic impact of the proposed tools or strategies on the healthcare system and issue orientations that will help policymakers to define new regulations and guidelines to prevent overweight and obesity.

Exclusion:

- Except for small-scale clinical studies up to phase 2, all other clinical studies are excluded in this call.
- Studies solely addressing target groups aged from 12 to 25 years are excluded in this call

The proposals should focus on expanding knowledge and contribute to:

- reducing the burden of overweight and obesity in Europe by a better understanding of yet understudied mechanisms underlying overweight and obesity which will allow to tailor new preventive and therapeutic strategies
- shifting the paradigm of overweight and obesity from management to prevention, which would be achieved by improving the accuracy of early detection through the identification of key determinants and ultimately, the development of effective public policies and health initiatives that support targeted interventions

Participating countries and respective funding organisations

The following participating funding organisations have agreed to fund this call for transnational research projects:

- **Belgium** - Fund for Scientific Research-FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS) and The Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO)
- **Egypt** - Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT)
- **Estonia** - The Estonian Research Council (ETAG)
- **France** - French Research Funding Agency (ANR)
- **Germany** - Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space represented by DLR Project Management Agency (BMFTR/DLR)
- **Greece** - General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI)
- **Hungary** - National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH)
- **Israel** - Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH)
- **Italy** - Ministry of Health (IT-MOH)
- **Latvia** – Latvian Council of Science (LCS)
- **Lithuania** - Research Council of Lithuania (LMT)
- **Norway** - Research Council Research (RCN)
- **Poland** - National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR)
- **Romania** - Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)
- **Slovakia** - Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS) and Centrum vedecko technických informácií slovenskej republiky cvtisr (SCSTI)
- **Spain** - State Research Agency (AEI), Regional Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs of Andalusia (CSCJA), Fundación Para El Fomento En Asturias De La Investigación Científica Y Tecnología (FICYT) and Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII)
- **Taiwan** - National Science and Technology Council (NSTC)
- **Türkiye** - The scientific and technological research council of Türkiye (TUBITAK)

The participations of Portugal - Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) – and of The Netherlands - Dutch Research Council (NWO) - are still pending.

General conditions for application

The duration of the projects will be 36 months.

Joint research proposals may be submitted by applicants belonging to one of the following categories (eligibility of project partners may vary according to national/regional regulations):

- **A. Academia**
- **B. Clinical/public health sector**
- **C. Enterprises**
- **D. Operational stakeholders**

Only transnational projects will be funded. The following conditions apply to the composition of consortia:

- A minimum of three and a maximum of five eligible partners from at least three different countries participating in the call. In addition, at least two eligible partners must be from different EU Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries participating in the call. The maximum number of eligible partners can be increased up to six or seven if they include one or two eligible partners, respectively, from the following participating countries: Slovakia, Estonia and Taiwan.
- No more than two eligible partners from the same country.
- A maximum of 2 collaborators (self-funded partner not applying for funding).

The Funding Agency Xjenza Malta may support the involvement of Maltese collaborators

Project partners will be funded by their relevant national/regional funding organisation. Eligible costs and funding rules vary between the respective funding organisations.

Please note: *The content of the call described in this pre-announcement is indicative and may be subject to changes and is not legally binding. Interested applicants are encouraged to initiate scientific contacts with potential project consortium partners for applications*