



# TechBridge call for Proposals for Joint R&D Projects between Germany and the Netherlands

## Innovating Aerospace Business with Quantum Technology

### Time Schedule

Opening of the Call	2 March 2026
Deadline for application	23 June 2026
Funding decision communicated	Mid-October 2026
Project Start	December 2026 – first quarter of 2027

### 1. Introduction

Amid rising geopolitical tensions worldwide, there is increasing attention across Europe on the strategic importance of disruptive technologies, including quantum technology. Several European countries are leading the way with national initiatives and substantial investments in the quantum field, with Germany and the Netherlands at the forefront.

To address the challenge of achieving European (open) strategic autonomy in this technology area and to lay the foundation for future European leadership in quantum technology, the Netherlands is launching this call to stimulate R&D collaboration between the Netherlands and Germany. In particular, French project partners are also warmly invited to participate, provided they can secure their own funding in time.

This initiative, initiated in close collaboration with Airbus Tech Hub Netherlands and Quantum Delta NL, aims to engage the European aviation industry as a critical sector, focusing on the assessment, development, and implementation of quantum technology in close collaboration with leading European manufacturers of aviation and aerospace products. This effort directly supports the strategic autonomy and security of the European Union, while also strengthening and further positioning the Dutch quantum technology ecosystem within this domain.

This will be done by identifying and funding selected R&D collaboration projects in the field of quantum computing, sensing and communication that are relevant for the aerospace industry in the short- medium- and long term.

### 2. Call overview

This call aims to foster collaboration between the Netherlands and Germany. Dutch participants are invited to submit collaborative project proposals focused on the development of innovative products and applications with strong market potential. Projects must bring added value through international cooperation, leveraging complementary expertise and resources from partner country Germany.

### 3. Scope

This call invites industry-led consortia to submit high-quality R&D proposals in the field of quantum technology, with a particular focus on their deployment in real-life aerospace applications relevant for the sector in the short- medium- and long term, in close collaboration with Airbus Tech Hub Netherlands. The selected projects should contribute to the advancement of quantum technologies that can be effectively integrated into the aerospace industry, enhancing European strategic autonomy and security. Projects should aim for scalable and reliable outcomes, ensuring the smooth integration of quantum technologies into existing aerospace infrastructures. Projects should fall within Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 4–7 and must address at least one of the following thematic areas:

- **Quantum-based Sensing and Navigation**  
Projects should focus on the development of quantum sensors for improving the accuracy of navigation, positioning, navigation in a GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) denied surrounding and timing in aerospace applications. Special attention should be given to ensuring these technologies are deployable in real-life aerospace environments, enhancing the performance and reliability of avionics and navigation systems.
- **Quantum Cryptography for Secure Communication**  
Research into quantum cryptographic methods is essential to secure communication channels within aerospace operations, particularly in mission-critical settings, including quantum repeaters and quantum memories for scalable networks. Projects should aim to apply these methods in real-world scenarios, enhancing the security of communication between aerospace platforms and ensuring robust data protection.
- **Quantum Computing for Optimization and Simulation**  
Projects should explore the use of quantum computing for solving complex optimization challenges in aircraft design, flight operations, and air traffic management. Additionally, quantum-enhanced simulations should be developed to improve operational efficiency in areas such as fuel consumption, route optimization, and system performance. This could also include composite optimization (stacking sequence design) and quantum solvers for nonlinear flow. These solutions must be tested for real-life applicability within the aerospace sector.

### 4. Qualification Criteria

To ensure the quality and impact of the R&D projects, consortia must meet the following qualification criteria:

#### **Consortium composition**

- The consortium must be (co)led by two legal entities that are independent from each other. At least one (for profit) company from the Netherlands, and one (for profit) company from Germany.
- The project must benefit all involved partners in a well-balanced consortium.
- Consortia are encouraged to include partners with diverse backgrounds, expertise, and gender balance, fostering multidisciplinary collaboration and inclusive innovation.
- The consortium must clearly demonstrate the added value of international cooperation, such as access to unique infrastructure, complementary expertise, or new market opportunities.

### **Innovation and impact**

- The project must fit the scope of the call.
- The project must be directed at researching or developing an innovative product, process, or service with the goal of commercialization.
- The product, process or service must be innovative, and there must be a technological risk involved for all involved partners.
- Applicants should clearly outline the expected time frame for industrial application, with a preference for innovations that can be implemented within a reasonable time after the project's completion.
- The expected impact of the innovation must be quantified in terms of economic and societal value.

### **Project duration, structure and Funding**

- The maximum duration of a project may not exceed 36 months.
- Only projects with a civilian purpose are eligible for funding.
- No individual organization or participating country may claim more than 70% of the total eligible project costs of the joint project, ensuring balanced participation.
- Eligible costs and any restrictions (e.g., personnel, equipment, overhead, subcontracting) must be specified according to the rules of the respective funding organizations.

### **Application and submission**

- Project partners must submit national applications to their respective funding organizations, using the exact same project title to ensure clear linkage between applications.
- Project partners must include an international consortium form as an annex to their national application.
- All partners are strongly advised to contact their respective funding agencies in the Netherlands or Germany for a pre-check of eligibility before submitting their national application.

### **Consortium agreement (CA)**

- A signed consortium agreement on the execution and commercialisation of the projects results is mandatory for selected projects upon approval, and must be sent to the funding agencies before the actual start of the project. It ought to include clear provisions on the scope of the collaboration and the expected output, IP contributions of the parties, foreground IP ownership and dispute settlement.
- The signed CA must be submitted to the funding agencies no later than three months after the results of the evaluation have been communicated and before the start of the project.

### **Third-Country Participation**

- Specifically, French project partners are also warmly invited to participate, provided they can secure their own funding in time.
- Partners from countries other than the Netherlands and Germany may participate, provided they secure their own funding before the respective national application deadlines of the Dutch and German funding bodies, and meet all eligibility and submission requirements. A (self-)funding declaration is mandatory.
- Any restrictions on the number of third-country partners should be clarified with the respective funding agencies in the Netherlands or Germany.

Any partner whose cooperative R&D project is consistent with the aforesaid criteria can apply to the present call in accordance with their own laws, rules, regulations and procedures in effect, on a non-exchange of funds basis, and subject to budgetary availability. The amount of funding available per project partner is subject to the respective rules and regulations of the participating funding organizations.

## 5. Application

All project partners are required to submit a related funding application to their respective funding bodies, taking into account all relevant procedures and submission rules. To ensure clear linkage between applications, all consortium partners must use the exact same project title when submitting their national applications. Project partners must also include an international consortium form as an annex to their national application.

All applications are assessed based on the qualification criteria of their respective national call before being forwarded for evaluation according to the eligibility and evaluation criteria of the respective funding bodies.

All partners are strongly advised to contact their respective funding agencies for a pre-check of eligibility before submitting their national application. Participation in the information session is also encouraged to facilitate strong consortia and high-quality proposals.

Incomplete or late applications may not be considered for evaluation. Applicants are therefore encouraged to start preparing their application and required documents well in advance of the deadline.

### 5.1 National application in the Netherlands

Applicants in the Netherlands must submit their national application to RVO via the e-loket (<https://mijn.rvo.nl/eloket/login-start.html>). The national application must include detailed project plan and budget. The application must be submitted by a for-profit Netherlands company. Dutch research organisations can join as project partner to the Netherlands application. The deadline for national submission is 23 June 2026, 17:00 hours CEST.

RVO invites partners for a pre-check of their project ideas. More info: <https://www.rvo.nl/techbridge>

Enterprises and research institutes can apply for grant funding of up to 50%, depending on the type of organization and the activities involved. Only direct R&D costs are eligible for funding.

- Large companies: 35% for research activities, 25% for development activities;
- SMEs: 45% for research activities, 35% for development activities;
- Universities / research organisations: 50% for research activities, 25% for development activities.

The maximum grant per project is €1,000,000 for the Dutch project partners, with a total budget of €2,000,000 for this pilot call. Eligible costs and restrictions (e.g., personnel, equipment, overhead, subcontracting) must follow RVO guidelines.

## 5.2 National application in Germany

Applicants in Germany are referred to one of the following funding agencies to apply for national funding:

- **VDI Technologiezentrum (VDI) – Quantum international**

Internationale Kooperationen in den Quantentechnologien (module A “Advancing Technologies”)

*A program of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMFTR)*

Based on its quantum technology strategy, Germany is striving to position itself among the international leaders in this field – building on an excellent national and European ecosystem. To master the challenges this poses, Germany aims to intensify international cooperation with value partners – as equal partners – in Europe and beyond. Therefore, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research has published a recurring, open call for international project proposals in quantum technologies.

Please note!

- Deadline for mandatory project outline is 15 May 2026.
- Quantum communication is not included within the scope of Quantum International.

More information: [Quantum International - Internationale Kooperationen in den Quantentechnologien](#)

- **Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt (DLR) – LuFo Klima**

Das Luftfahrtforschungsprogramm des Bundes LuFo Klima (LuFo VII-2)

*A program of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE)*

Funding for future-oriented aviation. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE) supports numerous research and technology development projects for use in civil aviation in Germany with the civil aviation research programme LuFo Klima.

Please note!

- Deadline for mandatory pre-proposal is 23 June 2026.

More information: [Das Luftfahrtforschungsprogramm des Bundes LuFo Klima](#)

## **6. Evaluation**

Applications will be evaluated by the respective national funding bodies. The evaluation will be based on the national qualification criteria, applicable eligibility and evaluation criteria of the participating funding bodies, and the information provided in the national application forms.

The national funding bodies will conduct a full evaluation in accordance with their national rules. This process will be carried out by independent experts and/or panels appointed by the funding bodies.

The results of the national evaluations will be discussed in a consensus meeting. Based on the national evaluation results and the consensus meeting, the involved funding agencies will decide which projects to approve and recommend for funding. Once a common list of approved and non-approved projects has been agreed upon, the funding organizations will notify the applicants of the results. Only projects for which funding is available in both participating countries are eligible for funding. If no budget is available in one or more of the participating countries, no subsidy will be provided to Dutch applicants.

Applicants can expect to be informed of the evaluation results by mid-October 2026.

## **7. Funding Conditions**

Funding will only be provided to projects that are positively evaluated and ranked by the participating funding organizations, subject to budgetary availability and funding conditions stipulated by each funding organization.

Each partner will receive support from its respective funding body in accordance with national laws, rules, and procedures. Funding is provided on a non-exchange of funds or soft loan basis, as applicable, and is subject to the specific modalities of each funding organization. Disbursement of funds will follow the procedures of the respective funding bodies.

Any intellectual property rights (IPR) arising from cooperative project activities under this call will be regulated by a consortium agreement, in accordance with the relevant laws applicable to the project partners.

A signed consortium agreement on the execution and commercialisation of the projects results is mandatory for selected projects upon approval, and must be sent to the funding agencies before the actual start of the project. It ought to include clear provisions on the scope of the collaboration and the expected output, IP contributions of the parties, foreground IP ownership and dispute settlement.

## 8. Contact Points:

### **Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO)**

International Innovation & Cooperation department

Mr. Arnold Meijer  
Email: [Arnold.Meijer@rvo.nl](mailto:Arnold.Meijer@rvo.nl)  
Phone: +31 6 4627 3471

Mr. Niels van Leeuwen  
Email: [Niels.vanLeeuwen@rvo.nl](mailto:Niels.vanLeeuwen@rvo.nl)  
Phone: +31 6 5256 3310

### **VDI**

Quantum International

Mr. Bastian Hiltcher  
Email: [Hiltcher@vdi.de](mailto:Hiltcher@vdi.de)  
Phone: +49 211 6214 441

Mr. Claudius Klein  
Email: [Klein\\_C@vdi.de](mailto:Klein_C@vdi.de)  
Phone: +49 211 6214 903

### **DLR**

LuFo International

Mr. Hartwig Hagen  
Email: [hartwig.hagena@dlr.de](mailto:hartwig.hagena@dlr.de) Phone :  
+49 228 447 199