

**Call Text: Xjenza Malta-TÜBİTAK 2026 Joint Call for
R&I Proposals**

1. Introduction

In 2020, Xjenza Malta and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) (*referred to as the Managing Authorities*), signed a collaborative agreement to bilaterally support cooperation in Science, Technology, and Innovation between Malta and Türkiye. Following the successful cooperation between the two Managing Authorities in launching five Joint Calls for R&I Proposals between 2021 and 2025, the Managing Authorities will be launching the 6th Joint Call, in accordance with the framework established under the collaborative agreement.

2. Aim and Scope

The **6th Joint Call** aims to assist researchers and innovators from from Malta and Türkiye in strengthening their scientific expertise and networks, fostering collaboration for future research funding opportunities, including the annual Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) Section 1 and Section 2 Calls.

The Call is structured around **two distinct pillars**, each addressing specific thematic priorities:

- **Pillar 1:** PRIMA Thematic Areas, aligned with the priorities of the PRIMA Programme.
- **Pillar 2:** Focused on Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) Thematic Areas, which extend beyond the PRIMA thematic fields to include broader topics of mutual interest, reflecting shared national priorities of Malta and Türkiye.

Separate ranking lists will be established for each pillar. Funding will be awarded to high-ranking proposals within each pillar, subject to the availability of national budgets. The overarching goal of this initiative is to enhance the research and innovation capacities of both countries across the following two distinct pillars.

Pillar 1: PRIMA Thematic Areas:

1. **Management of Water**
2. **Farming Systems**
3. **Agro-Food Value Chain**

Pillar 2: Shared National Priority Areas:

1. **Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning**
2. **Smart Manufacturing**
3. **Health**

PRIMA Programme thematic fields will encompass environmental dimensions, including climate change, biodiversity, and water treatment technologies, aligning closely with the objectives outlined in the [PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda](#).

- **Procedural and Eligibility Provisions:** Within the scope of this Joint Call, **two types of joint projects** will be supported
 1. R&D Projects
 2. R&D&I Projects.
- The Call operates through a **one-stage submission process**.
- **One joint application form** is available, and each Managing Authority will need to receive a copy of the submitted application by the designated deadline.
- **Each Managing Authority has its own National Rules & Regulations.** Thus, apart from adhering to the said requirements in this Call Text, applicants will also need to ensure that they abide by their own respective National Rules & Regulations. Failure to meet national eligibility requirements on either side will render the entire proposal ineligible.

Malta-based Applicants:

The Rules and Regulations for the Malta-based participants can be found in the funding section of the Xjenza Malta website: [Open Funding Schemes – Xjenza Malta](#). Any additional annexes are available on the [Resources Page – Xjenza Malta](#)

It is important that each applicant consults with the Xjenza Malta Programme Manager if they are unsure about the required annexes or submission requirements. Incorrect or incomplete submissions may result in the proposal being deemed ineligible and excluded from further evaluation. Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring compliance with all requirements and must allow sufficient time to seek clarification before the submission deadline.

Türkiye-based Applicants

TÜBİTAK will fund the Türkiye-based applicants under the financial principles of TÜBİTAK 1071 Program:

- Please [click](#) to see National Rules for R&D Projects
- Please [click](#) to see National Rules for R&D&I Projects.

Consultation with the national funding agencies is highly recommended at an early stage.

3. Further Eligibility Conditions

Further to the respective National Rules & Regulations, each project proposal shall need to be in accordance with the following requirements:

- Each proposal for a joint research project must be submitted by researchers/innovators from at least one eligible legal entity based in Türkiye and at least one eligible legal

entity based in Malta. These entities shall be considered and referred to as ‘project partners’ for the duration of the project.

- The Türkiye-based and Malta-based partners shall form a joint project consortium and prepare a single joint scientific project proposal.
- Unilateral project applications shall not be accepted. Applications that are not submitted to and received by both Managing Authorities will not be considered for evaluation. Therefore, Türkiye-based and Malta-based project leaders should make sure that their counterpart submits a matching application.
- Proposals must directly address the aim of the Call and clearly align with at **least one thematic field under one of the two pillars of this Call**.
- Each national consortium (Maltese and Turkish) must designate **one Principal Investigator (PI)**¹, who will represent the respective national consortium.
- The PI of each country shall be responsible for submitting the application form to their respective Managing Authority in accordance with national procedures.
- In accordance with the collaborative agreement between TÜBİTAK and Xjenza Malta, each party shall cover the costs of its own national team.
- While submitting the project proposal, all costs requested within the scope of the project must be clearly detailed and duly justified. The eligible and ineligible costs are defined in the National Rules & Regulations of each participating country.
- In the case of researcher exchanges carried out within the scope of the projects, the sending party shall cover all travel expenses.
- Applications deemed ineligible by one of the Managing Authorities will automatically render the entire proposal ineligible.
- Only proposals that have a signed **Cooperation and IP agreement** amongst the consortium partners will be eligible to apply. Project partners are required to establish and sign an agreement on the ownership and management of intellectual property rights arising from the joint research and development activities. This agreement must specify the distribution of rights, rules for exploitation, IP management procedures, and the competent court and applicable law for dispute resolution. The drafting, negotiation, and finalization of this agreement are the sole responsibility of the project partners. The participating funding agencies do not provide or endorse any model agreement. Funding for awarded projects must only be requested and initiated after the agreement has entered into force. The terms agreed by the partners must not conflict with national laws, regulations, terms and conditions of TÜBİTAK and Xjenza Malta. The signed agreement must be submitted to TÜBİTAK and Xjenza Malta upon request.
- Proposals should strive to be **balanced** between the two countries with respect to the **volume of work and activities** and also in terms of **funding**.
- Applicants are eligible to submit **more than one proposal** under the Call.
- Proposals need to be written in **English**.

¹ Principal Investigator (PI) refers to the Lead Researcher within the applying eligible entity.

4. Call Snapshot

Scope	Under the Xjenza Malta-TÜBİTAK 2026 Joint Call for R&I Proposals the following will be supported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R&D Projects • R&D&I Projects 	
Pillars & Thematic Fields & subfields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pillar 1: PRIMA Thematic Areas <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management of Water 2. Farming Systems 3. Agro-food Value Chain • Pillar 2: Shared National Priority areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning 2. Smart Manufacturing 3. Health 	
Launch of the Call	25 March 2026	
Final date for online proposal submission	For TÜBİTAK: 5 June 2026, 23:59	Xjenza Malta: 5 June 2026, 23:59
Final date for electronic signatures' completion	For TÜBİTAK: 9 June 2026, 23:59	For Xjenza Malta: N/A (*N. B: Applications for Malta-based applicants must be submitted fully signed by the given deadline above)
Eligibility check	For TÜBİTAK: June 2026	For Xjenza Malta: June 2026
Scientific Evaluation	July-September 2026	
Issuing of results	October-November 2026	
Project Duration	Up to 24 months	
Eligible applicant	For TÜBİTAK: Detailed information about eligibility rules can be found below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Rules For R&D Projects • National Rules For R&D&I Projects. 	For Xjenza Malta: Detailed information about the eligibility rules can be found at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Funding Schemes – Xjenza Malta
Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scientific/Technological Excellence ○ Methodology ○ Project Management ○ Structure and Contribution of International Collaboration 	

	○ Impact	
Award parameters	For TÜBİTAK: Funds up to 3,750,000 TL (excluding overhead and Project Incentive Premium - PIP) per project.	For Xjenza Malta: Up to €100,000 per project for high-ranking proposals.
Daily Allowance	For TÜBİTAK: It will be provided within the scope of the provisions of per diem Law numbered 6245.	For Xjenza Malta: As per National Rules and Regulations of the Call
Duration of Travel	For each project, the total duration of scientific visits from one side to another (from Malta to Türkiye or from Türkiye to Malta) will not exceed 60 days/year.	
Coverage of Expenses	The funding agency is obliged to cover all expenses (including health insurance) for travel and accommodation of its own researchers in accordance with its own rules. No money crossing borders.	
How to apply	For TÜBİTAK: Proposal submission is made through the TÜBİTAK's online submission system .	For Xjenza Malta: The application forms can be downloaded from: Open Funding Schemes – Xjenza Malta In addition to the joint application form, a complete national administrative form along with relevant annexes should be received by the submission deadline at: prima.xjenzamalta@gov.mt
Program Contact	TÜBİTAK Dr. Ayda KARA PEKTAS Scientific Programmes Chief Expert International Cooperation Department Bilateral and Multilateral Relations Division TÜBİTAK Tunus Cad. No:80 Kavaklıdere Cankaya ANKARA TÜRKİYE T +90 312 298 1729 www.tubitak.gov.tr ayda.pektas@tubitak.gov.tr uidb@tubitak.gov.tr TÜBİTAK	Xjenza Malta Mr Nathan Aquilina Program Manager Internationalisation Unit Villa Bighi, Dawret Fra Giovanni Bichi, Kalkara, KKR 1320 +356 23602183 prima.xjenzamalta@gov.mt keeping nathan.aquilina.3@gov.mt in cc. Xjenza Malta Ms Sandrine Borg Senior Executive

	<p>Dr. Kamil Öncü ŞEN Scientific Programs Chief Expert International Cooperation Projects Research Grant Committee (UPAG) TÜBİTAK (Ek Hizmet Binası) İşçi Blokları Mahallesi Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu Cad. No: 51/C 06520 Çankaya, ANKARA TÜRKİYE T +90 312 298 1809 www.tubitak.gov.tr oncu.sen@tubitak.gov.tr</p>	<p>Internationalisation Unit Villa Bighi, Dawret Fra Giovanni Bichi, Kalkara, KKR 1320 +356 23602126 prima.xjenzamalta@gov.mt</p>
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5. Eligibility Check

Each proposal received by the designated submission deadline shall be subject to an **administrative and eligibility check** conducted by both Managing Authorities. The administrative and eligibility verification procedures are defined in the respective **National Rules and Regulations** established by each Managing Authority. To proceed to the scientific evaluation stage, proposals must **fulfil the eligibility criteria of both Managing Authorities**.

6. Scientific Evaluation

Proposals deemed administratively and eligibility-compliant shall undergo **scientific evaluation** by a panel of external reviewers, comprising **three reviewers nominated by TÜBİTAK and three reviewers nominated by Xjenza Malta**

Funding decisions shall be taken by TÜBİTAK and Xjenza Malta based on the **combined evaluations provided by the external reviewers from both countries**. The final selection of proposals to be funded shall be made during a **joint committee meeting** of the Managing Authorities. Only those project proposals **jointly approved by both TÜBİTAK and Xjenza Malta**, subject to the availability of funds, shall be supported.

7. Post-award

For successful projects, the beneficiary from each country shall sign a Grant Agreement directly with the respective Managing Authority. The National Rules & Regulations shall form an integral part of each respective Grant Agreement, and shall further define the terms and conditions, including the funding disbursement schedule for both parties.

Projects must start and end on the same date for all partners within the project consortium and should ideally start within 3 months from the date of publication of the Call results.

Any additional requirements imposed by the Managing Authorities shall be complied with by the concerned beneficiaries.

Xjenza Malta-TÜBİTAK Joint Call for R&I Proposals is part of the PRIMA Programme supported by the European Union.

