

FAQ for EuroHPC JU Call:  
Supporting competitiveness and innovation potential of SMEs  
(DIGITAL-EUROHPC-JU-2023-SME-01)

**Q1: Topic 1 - Uptake of HPC by SMEs to address specific business challenges refers to SMEs as recipients of grants.**

**Will the call allow consortia to apply for Financial Support to Third Parties?**

A1: Yes, small consortia may apply if support from additional partners is necessary to achieve the objectives.

**Q2: Will it be possible to use unit costs for travel and personnel costs for grants provided as Financial Support to Third Parties?**

A2: Yes. The consortium should apply unit costs for travel according to Commission Decision C(2021)35 authorizing the use of unit costs for the reimbursement of eligible travel costs. Regarding personnel costs, the consortium should apply the rules set out in Commission Decision of 20 October 2020 authorizing the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work program (C(2020)7115). Additional unit costs may be used according to the DECISION authorizing the use of unit costs based on usual cost accounting practices for actions under the Digital Europe Program. The relevant documents are published on the Funding & Tenders Portal.

**Q3: The Call states the action will implement at least three open calls with two topics: 1. Uptake of HPC by SMEs to address specific business challenges and 2. Adoption of large scale HPC resources (e. g. pre-exascale and exascale supercomputers) for the development of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) models such as foundation models and Large Language Models (LLMs). Doe this mean that there is currently NO open call for the topics 1. and 2., but there will be in the future?**

A3: Correct. There are NO open calls currently either for Topic 1 or for Topic 2. But there will be such calls in the future. The call at hand (THIS call) will select a consortium that will in the future execute calls on Topic 1 and Topic 2 to which SMEs can apply and request support in the range of EUR 50 000 – 200 000 per SME. This is what we call a cascade structure.

**Q4: Is THIS call Is the call intended for a) SMEs seeking to acquire financial support under Topic 1 and 2, or for b) SMEs with expertise in the subject who can participate in a consortium to coordinate and support SMEs falling into the first category?**

A4: THIS call will select a consortium that will manage the cascaded grants (execute LATER calls on Topic 1 and Topic 2). This consortium should include public and private organizations in the eligible countries and with relevant expertise in HPC and generative AI. Hence, an SMEs can indeed be a part of consortia submitting proposals in reaction to this call that will later coordinate and support SMEs requesting financial support under Topic 1 and 2.

**Q5. Under subsequent Topic 1 and 2 calls, are SMEs looking to secure financial support for research activities eligible?**

A5: That depends on the case. In principle, SMEs with an academic focus, for example with business models around R&D services on the basis of HPC software, or activities with a potential impact only in the long term, such as fundamental research, are not within the scope of the call.