

FAQ for EuroHPC JU Call: Quantum Grand Challenge (QGC) (HORIZON-JU-EUROHPC-2026-QGC-02)

1.) Call Eligibility and Policy:

Q1: I would be grateful if you could confirm if UK companies are eligible to take part in Phase 1 of the Quantum Grand Challenge Call as we've received some enquiries.

The eligibility criteria states that '*As Phase 2 is implemented by the EIB under InvestEU, participation is limited to legal entities established in Member States and the InvestEU associated countries Norway and Iceland.*' Does this therefore mean that UK companies can participate in Phase 1 but not Phase 2? Or does this sentence refer to both phases?

A1: While UK applicants might participate in Phase 1, our current understanding is that UK applicants will, in any case, not be eligible for Phase 2 and the support services offered by the EIB under the InvestEU programme.

Q2: Quantum computing is recognized as a dual-use technology. The Horizon Europe Programme Guide requires all applicants to complete a security issues table, with a more detailed security section required for topics flagged as "security sensitive."

Could you confirm if this topic is officially flagged as "security sensitive"? What level of detail is expected in the security self-assessment regarding the dual-use nature of the proposed quantum computing solution?

A2: Please observe that the decision was taken NOT to flag this topic as sensitive for following reasons:

- 1.) The action will be implemented as a coordination and support action (CSA) and consequently no R&I developments will be involved
- 2.) This will in any case have no effect on Phase 2 which is entirely under Invest EU and its Regulation

Q3: US taking equity stakes, will the EU augment QGC funds or add a new call?

A3: We recognise the recent press reports suggesting U.S. government equity talks with several quantum firms; however, the U.S. Commerce Department has denied that there are current negotiations with quantum firms. The European Commission is monitoring developments, but we avoid reacting to unconfirmed or subsequently corrected stories.

2.) Phase 1 – Administration, Submission and Scope

Q4: We are currently helping a QPU vendor to prepare for the Quantum Grand Challenge call. While discussing the format of the stage 1 proposal, we downloaded the template from the EU Funding & Tender portal in the submission section of the call, which is the standard 33-page [CSA template](#). However, we also noted that proposals should have an indicative length of 10 pages, which does not match with the provided template (the [CSA stage 1 template](#) would have seemed more appropriate, but it's not the one made available in the submission section of the call). Would it be possible to clarify with someone from your team which is the correct template to use?

A4: Please observe that Phase 1, which is under the mandate of the EuroHPC JU, is a single-stage CSA action. Hence, the appropriate template to be used can be found under [Standard Application Form \(HE CSA\)](#). Please also observe that the indicated page limit of 10 pages refers to the provided input (or narrative text) to Part B 'Technical Description'.

Q5: The EU Portal indicates a 10-page limit for the proposal, but the Part B template is already 9 pages long before any content is added. This leaves little space for the technical description. Could you please clarify if the 10-page limit applies to the narrative text in addition to the template's length, suggesting a total submission of around 19 pages?

A5: Please observe that Phase 1, which is under the mandate of the EuroHPC JU, is a single-stage CSA action. Hence, the appropriate template to be used can be found under [Standard Application Form \(HE CSA\)](#). Please also observe that the indicated page limit of 10 pages refers to the provided input (or narrative text) to Part B 'Technical Description'.

Q6: Regarding the proposal template: the downloaded version is the standard CSA template (up to 30 pages), while the call for proposals and guidelines specify that proposals should have an indicative length of 10 pages and suggest a different structure. Should we adapt the CSA template to include only what is indicated in the call for proposals, or will the evaluation be based on the standard structure and content of the CSA template? Also, is there any information on the weighting percentage for each evaluation criterion (Excellence, Impact, Implementation) in Phase 1?

A6: Please observe that Phase 1, which is under the mandate of the EuroHPC JU, is a single-stage CSA action. Hence, the appropriate template to be used can be found under [Standard Application Form \(HE CSA\)](#). Please also observe that the indicated page limit of 10 pages refers to the provided input (or narrative text) to Part B 'Technical Description'.

Lastly, please observe that modifications to the general Horizon Europe award criteria, as described in the General [Annex D](#) of the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, have been have been applied. The applied modifications can be found in the call text (5b. Evaluation and award: Submission and evaluation processes [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)), however, the standard 'Scores and weighting', as outlined in [Annex D](#), still apply.

Q7: Applicants are specifically looking for information about:

1. **Action type:** the portal seems to describe it as a "budget-based action grant" but the budget template is actually related to a "lump sum grant" so there seems to be an inconsistency there
2. **Part B:** should we use an adaptation of the 33-page CSA template, or is there a more specific 10-page template guideline?
3. **additional document:** what is expected/allowed?
4. **Part B ethics section:** what is expected, is there a specific template?
5. **Part B security section:** what is expected, is there a specific template?

A7:

1. **Action Type:** Please observe that [Detailed budget table \(HE LSII\)](#) does indeed apply to lump sum actions and hence is not required for this action.
2. **Part B:** Please observe that Phase 1, which is under the mandate of the EuroHPC JU, is a single-stage CSA action. Hence, the appropriate template to be used can be found under [Standard Application Form \(HE CSA\)](#). Please also observe that the indicated page limit of 10 pages refers to the provided input (or narrative text) to Part B 'Technical Description'.
3. **Additional documents:** Please complete and provide the ownership control declaration [Ownership control declaration](#)
4. **Ethics:** Please complete and provide the ethics self-assessment ([how-to-complete-your-ethics-self-assessment en.pdf](#))
5. **Security:** Please take notice of [classification-of-information-in-he-projects he en.pdf](#) and if applicable complete and provide the self-assessment [Tpl Information on security issues \(Part B security section\) \(HE\)](#)

Q8: Before making a decision to proceed with the application for this action, a few things need to be clarified first:

A.) What is the required outcomes of Phase 1: specifically, are applicants expected to deliver a proof-of-principle demonstration or already a full-stack prototype by the end of Phase 1?

B.) What is the expected starting point at proposal stage: can applicants start with a single key hardware component (supported by a credible plan to complete the remaining elements), or shall an integrated quantum system be already in place including a functioning software stack?

C.) What type of engagement or support from end-users is expected at this stage?

A8:

A.) The required outcomes of Phase 1 are a technical roadmap and a financial roadmap. Since this is a CSA, costs for research activities are not eligible, and the company should have already a prototype / demonstrator that can be fully developed under phase 2.

B.) At the proposal stage for Phase 1 applicants may begin with a single key hardware component as long as they provide a credible plan to complete the remaining elements. This means that, while starting with key hardware is acceptable, applicants are expected to present convincing evidence, for instance preliminary prototypes or results, that demonstrate the potential and feasibility of integrating and operating a complete system, including both hardware and software components. In Phase 2, applicants are expected to advance their Phase 1 prototypes towards a more complete and scalable quantum computing platform, demonstrating clear progress in hardware, software, and overall system integration.

C.) Applicants are encouraged to include in their proposal *Expressions of Interest* from those user representatives. Notice, however, that this is not an eligibility condition.

Q9: The Scope states that “Standalone software-only or hardware-only approaches will not be considered,” but later mentions that “Priority will be given to entities integrating their solutions into existing EU supercomputing centres (HPCs) to facilitate testing and deployment in high-performance computing environments.” Could you confirm whether, with “integrated solution,” participating entities are expected to develop and contribute their own hardware along with the software, or if the idea is for them to demonstrate the integration and validation of their software solutions on the existing infrastructure of European supercomputers?

A9: Please observe that the call text’s objectives stipulate that ‘eligible companies should deliver physical proofs of principle or preliminary prototypes that demonstrate the feasibility of their integrated hardware and software quantum computing systems’ and further that ‘Standalone software-only or hardware-only approaches will not be considered’. Consequently, a software-only solution is not in scope of this action.

Q10: We would be interested in submitting a proposal to the HORIZON-JU-EUROHPC-2026-QGC-02 call. We focus on the development of quantum algorithms and provide a software platform for enabling hardware agnostic access to quantum computers. Is it sufficient to simply have access to quantum computers instead of developing one ourselves for participating in this call?

A10: Please note that the call text’s objectives stipulate that ‘eligible companies should deliver physical proofs of principle or preliminary prototypes that demonstrate the feasibility of their integrated hardware and software quantum computing systems’ and further that ‘Standalone software-only or hardware-only approaches will not be considered’.

Q11: Can you please answer us the following questions concerning the Quantum Grand Challenge:

- 1) Timeline: how long do phases 1 and 2 last?**
- 2) Is the €200k–€300k per project in phase 1 a grant or an investment?**
- 3) Are subcontractors permitted and eligible in phase 1?**
- 4) Is a consortium possible in phase 2?**
- 5) Is phase 2 planned as a pure investment or is there also a grant component?**
- 6) Are subcontractors permitted and eligible in phase 2?**

A11:

- 1.) As stipulated in the all text, Phase 1 will have a duration of 4 months. Phase 2 is further segmented into two tranches, the first with a duration of 5- and the second with a duration of 3 years.
- 2.) Please note that the call text stipulates that *‘The action will be implemented as a mono-beneficiary grant’*.
- 3.) Subcontracts are not foreseen during Phase 1, as the activity is implemented as a coordination and support action (CSA) focussing on technical and financial roadmaps.

3.) Phase 2 – Modalities and Timeline

Q12: Why not make Phase 2 fully grant/procurement? Can it be changed later?

A12: Phase 2 is designed as an InvestEU/EIB instrument (EIB own resources) complementing the Horizon Europe grant in Phase 1. Moving Phase 2 to 100% grant or procurement would require a formal Work Programme amendment, budget availability within the current MFF, and checks on legal/financial compatibility (including State-aid and mandate constraints). Practically, such a change cannot be made ad hoc once the call is open; if services consider adjustments, these would be assessed for a later Work Programme window. In parallel, we will explain at the info day how the current design aims to crowd-in private capital while keeping public support predictable

Q13: Loans are risky, what conditions make them low-risk for firms?

A13: It is our understanding that the EIB/InvestEU window used here is tailored for innovation and can include features such as long tenors, grace periods, revenue-linked repayment profiles, and subordinated/venture-debt-like structures, always subject to standard EIB due diligence and project risk. Illustrative term ranges and eligibility will be presented at the info day together with the EIB team, including how public guarantees and quasi-equity can de-risk cash-flow during scale-up.