PHOTON BOOST

Open Call for Solutions, Pilots, Missions, Trainings and Services

OC2-2026

Guidelines for Applicants

Call Summary

- **Project name:** Photonics and Quantum Technologies for Sustainable Industry
- **Project acronym:** PhotonQBoost
- **Project number:** 101177922
- **Project website:** photonqboost.eu/
- **Call ID:** OC2-2026
- **Call name:** Open Call for Solutions, Pilots, Missions, Trainings and Services
- **Opening:** 17/11/2026
- **Closing:** 19/01/2027 17:00 CET
- **Target audience:** SMEs operating in the Photonics or Quantum sectors or integrating these technologies into their business activities.
- **Helpdesk email:** photonqboost@eura-ag.de
- **Funding body:** European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA)
- **Total budget:** €1,438,300
- **Maximum funding per beneficiary:** €50,000 (cumulative across all PhotonQBoost Open Calls)
- **Link for applications:**
  - **Solutions:** https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-solutions
  - **Pilots:** https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-pilots
  - **Mission to Lithuania:** https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-missions-lt
  - **Mission to France:** https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-missions-fr
  - **Trainings and Services:** https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-trainings-and-services

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Acronyms

Table 1. List of acronyms

Abbreviation	Definition
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CET	Central European Time
CAP	Capitalisation
EAS	Evaluator Average Score
EC	European Commission
ESR	Evaluation Summary Report
EU	European Union
FIF	Financial Identification Form
FR	France
FSTP	Financial Support to Third Parties
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
KAM	Key Account Manager
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LED	Light-Emitting Diode
LT	Lithuania
OAS	Overall Average Score
OC	Open Call
OCT	Optical Coherence Tomography
OLAF	European Anti-Fraud Office
OPEX	Operating Expenses
PIC	Participant Identification Code
PoC	Point of Care
QKD	Quantum Key Distribution
RTO	Research and Technology Organisation
SERS	Surface Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy
SGA	Sub-Grant Agreement

SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
VAT	Value Added Tax

1. Introduction

PhotonQBoost is a Horizon Europe project dedicated to helping European small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) become more sustainable, resilient, and competitive by harnessing the power of Photonics and Quantum technologies. Many SMEs struggle to adopt these advanced technologies due to limited awareness, expertise, or resources. At the same time, the potential benefits are significant: smarter resource use, improved productivity, and more robust supply chains to name but a few. PhotonQBoost acts as a gateway, helping SMEs connect their sustainability and resilience needs with practical Photonics and Quantum solutions.

The project provides a thorough pipeline of advisory services, including innovation and technology support, and sustainability transition services. This offer is complemented by funded open calls, making available more than 3.6 million euros to directly support SMEs. PhotonQBoost also encourages cross-border collaboration through matchmaking events and matching missions. These activities will improve market access for SMEs and help close gaps in knowledge, infrastructure, and networks across regions.

The project brings together seven leading Photonics and Quantum clusters, four specialised consultancies, and two research and technology organisations across nine EU Member States. Together, they are working to build a strong European innovation ecosystem in Photonics and Quantum technologies, contributing to Europe's global leadership and strategic autonomy in these critical fields.

This Open Call (OC2-2026) is part of the second open call foreseen under the PhotonQBoost Grant Agreement. A third and final Open Call is foreseen later in the project. More information about the project and its activities is available at:

- Project website: https://photonqboost.eu/
- CORDIS project page: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101177922

2. Open Call for Solutions, Pilots, Missions, Trainings and Services

The PhotonQBoost Open Call OC2-2026 will open on **17 November 2026** and close on **19 January 2027 at 17:00 CET**.

Launched under the Horizon Europe PhotonQBoost project, this Open Call aims to support SMEs in developing, adopting and applying Photonics and Quantum technologies, while strengthening their innovation capacity, competitiveness and resilience.

2.1. Scope & Objectives

This open call is launched under the Horizon Europe PhotonQBoost project and offers four funding opportunities:

- **Solutions**: Up to €40,000 to develop or validate Photonics and/or Quantum technology solutions addressing industrial challenges.
- **Pilots**: Up to €50,000 to deploy and adopt existing Photonics and/or Quantum technologies and solutions in real operational environments.
- **Trainings and Services**: Up to €10,000 to acquire specialised external training(s) or service(s) that enhance SME resilience, sustainability and innovation capacity.
- **Missions**: €560 for the mission in Lithuania and €900 for the mission in France to support participation in matchmaking, networking and cross-sectoral collaboration activities.

General conditions:

- SMEs may apply for one or several grant types, provided they meet the corresponding requirements.
- Each application will be evaluated independently. Applying for multiple grants does not influence the chances of selection.
- The **maximum cumulative financial support per SME across all PhotonQBoost Open Calls is €50,000**, regardless of the number or type of grants awarded.
- Applicants are encouraged to select the funding opportunities that best match their technological and business needs.

2.2. Thematic Priorities of the Open Call

The Open Call addresses technological thematic priorities across five strategic sectors: Advanced Manufacturing, Agrifood and Environment, Life Sciences and Health, Mobility, and Digital Technologies. Proposals submitted under the Solutions and Pilots grants must address at least one of the thematic priorities listed below:

A. Advanced Manufacturing

1. Advanced Manufacturing: Develop, advanced laser systems for precision manufacturing (including lithography and additive manufacturing methods), material processing, surface treatment, and enable methods to go beyond rapid prototyping in industrial environments, specialised equipment for photonics manufacturing, precision optical component processing and for precision laser additive manufacturing directly on components. Development of photonic systems for wireless energy transmission, including laser sources, power conversion and safety systems.

2. Advanced Optical Systems: Design and integrate advanced optical sensing, imaging, and metrology systems enabling real-time process monitoring, precision measurement, defect detection, and quality control in industrial manufacturing. Develop and integrate advanced optical and photonics-based manufacturing systems and technologies, including laser processing, additive manufacturing, lithography, epitaxy, thin-film deposition and coatings, enabling precision fabrication and advanced processing of materials and components.

B. Agrifood and Environment

1. Precision Agriculture: Develop and implement Photonics or Quantum sensing to enable a) targeted precision farming reducing energy needs, fertiliser and pesticide consumption; b) increased yield in fields or in greenhouses; or c) improved plant and soil phenotyping precision. Solutions can apply quantum computing/simulation for optimisation of inputs and processing flows and use quantum communication to secure data from field to cloud with hardware development as a project output.

2. Zero-waste Food Processing: Develop and implement hyperspectral/ multispectral imaging with inline-scan cameras, thermal/UV inspection and laser sorting/marking to deliver real-time composition (i.e. fat/protein/ moisture) and contaminant detection, automating grading and cutting food waste and recalls.

3. Reliable Optical Sensing in Harsh Field Environments: Develop rugged, optical sensors that withstand dust, humidity, and temperature extremes while maintaining calibration and data quality. Develop and integrate modular photonic and complementary sensing technologies, including multispectral imaging, LiDAR, magnetic and gas sensing, into mobile platforms for advanced inspection, geological exploration and environmental monitoring.

C. Life Sciences and Health

1. Advanced Optical Spectroscopy, Imaging and Photonic Components: Develop lab-on-chip and organ-on-chip platforms, OCT, advanced optical spectroscopy, quantitative phase imaging and photoacoustic imaging to improve diagnostic accuracy, allow non-invasive, real-time diagnosis (i.e. tissue discrimination for cancer detection), and reduce invasive procedures, for example high-throughput live cell imaging and analysis.

2. Continuous and Remote Health Monitoring: Deploy continuous and remote health monitoring systems through connected wearables and photonic-based physiological sensors to support preventive care and early intervention.

3. Point-of-Care (PoC) Diagnostics: Developing rapid, portable PoC diagnostic tools integrated with photonic (e.g. surface plasmon resonance, SERS) or quantum sensing technologies for accessible, real-time healthcare delivery.

D. Mobility

1. Sensing in Autonomous Driving: Develop photonic or quantum sensing devices to enhance vehicle navigation.

2. Energy Saving Illumination: Improve on existing laser and LED lighting technologies.

3. Automotive Manufacturing and Fault Detection: a) Demonstrate photonics- or quantum-enhanced processes in manufacturing of automotive elements b) further develop laser metallurgy, or UV-LED supported curing/hardening processes.

4. Battery Technology: Show monitoring, design or production improvements using quantum or photonic technologies in battery technology.

E. Digital Technologies

1. Photonics and Quantum Sensing in Fault Detection: Develop sensing devices to detect faulty components on semiconductor or photonics devices.

2. Resilient Communication Networks: Demonstrate secure quantum communication links, free-space communication networks, improvements on photonic communication technology, QKD-components or post-quantum cryptography applications, the demonstration of laser-based communication protocols and energy-efficient (energy sobriety) approaches, with hardware development as a project output, the with hardware development as a project output.

3. Photonic Computing: Develop hardware components for energy-efficient computation using photonics.

2.3. Grant types and requirements

Table 2. Grant types and requirements

Grant type	Target applicants (in the form of SMEs)	Maximum funding	Objective
Solutions	Technology providers	Up to €40,000	Develop and advance technologies
Pilots	Technology adopters (end-users)	Up to €50,000	Deploy and adopt existing technologies
Trainings and Services	SMEs seeking external expertise	Up to €10,000	Strengthen capacities and competitiveness
Missions	SMEs seeking partnerships	Up to €560/€900	Networking and collaboration

2.3.1. Solutions

The Solutions Grant supports **technology providers** seeking to develop or validate innovative Photonics and/or Quantum solutions addressing industrial challenges. The objective is to advance technological development and bring solutions closer to market readiness.

Selected SMEs may receive a **lump-sum grant of up to €40,000**, together with tailored technical and advisory support from PhotonQBoost partners.

Specific requirements and conditions:

- **Thematic alignment**: Proposals must address at least one of the thematic priorities listed in Section 2.2, explicitly identifying the relevant thematic(s).
- **Technology domain**: Applicants must indicate whether the proposed solution concerns Photonics, Quantum technologies or both.
- **Technology readiness**: Solutions must be within TRL 4–8. Applicants must indicate and justify the starting and expected final TRL.
- **Hardware component**: Proposals must involve hardware development, integration, modification or validation. Projects consisting exclusively or predominantly of software development are not the target of this open call. Software development is only permitted as part of, or alongside, the development of the hardware component.
- **Innovation**: Applicants must clearly distinguish the innovative elements of their solution from existing technologies. Integration of off-the-shelf components alone is not considered sufficient evidence of innovation.
- **Partnerships**: SMEs may collaborate with another SME through a joint application. Up to two SMEs may jointly develop a solution by submitting a single joint application that clearly defines their respective roles and shared objectives. The funding ceiling remains €40,000 per joint application.
- **Project duration**: The standard duration is six months, starting on 1 April 2027.
- **Missions**: Beneficiaries are encouraged to participate in one of the Missions, offering them the opportunity to pitch their solutions to the host ecosystem and other participating organisations, where relevant to their business field. Applications for Missions are submitted separately, and the selection decisions are made independently of the Solutions grant. Participation in a Mission is not a condition for receiving the Solutions grant.

Payment conditions:

Payments will be linked to agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and milestones, subject to verification of results and submission of the corresponding feedback form. The indicative payment schedule is:

- **KPI Definition (Month 1):** Following the approval of the KPI and milestone plan, each SME will receive an initial payment of €5,000.
- **Mid-Term Review (Month 3):** Up to €20,000 per SME will be released after a successful mid-term assessment, subject to satisfactory progress and KPI achievement.

- **Final Review (Month 6):** The remaining balance (up to €15,000 per SME) will be paid following the final evaluation and submission of the corresponding final report, reflecting the fulfilment of the agreed KPIs and milestones, and subject to submission of the feedback form.

2.3.2. Pilots

The Pilots Grant supports **technology adopters (end-users)** seeking to deploy, integrate and adopt existing Photonics and/or Quantum technologies in their own operational environments. The objective is to demonstrate their practical applicability, performance and potential impact under real operating conditions.

Selected SMEs may receive a **lump-sum grant of up to €50,000**, together with tailored technical and advisory support, including access to testing facilities and pilot validation services.

Pilots may use technologies existing solutions available on the market or through technology partners.

Specific requirements and conditions:

- **Thematic alignment:** Proposals must address at least one of the thematic priority listed in Section 2.2, identifying the relevant thematic(s).
- **Technology domain:** Applicants must indicate whether the technology concerns Photonics, Quantum technologies or both.
- **Technology readiness:** Applicants must indicate the TRL of the technology to be deployed.
- **Operational validation:** Proposals must demonstrate the intended deployment and adoption of the technology in a real operational setting, including the expected impact.
- **Hardware component:** Applicants must identify and describe the hardware component involved in the pilot.
- **Technology provider:** The application must clearly identify the technology provider, including the organisation's name, a description of the technology or solution provided, and an explanation of its relevance and suitability for the proposed pilot.
- **Partnerships**: SMEs may collaborate with another SME through a joint application. Up to two SMEs (end-users) may jointly pilot a technology by submitting a single joint application that clearly defines their respective roles

and shared objectives. The funding ceiling remains €50,000 per joint application.

- **Subcontracting restrictions:** SMEs previously funded through a PhotonQBoost Solutions Grant must not be subcontracted by a Pilots beneficiary.
- **Project duration**: The standard duration is six months, starting on 1 April 2027.
- **Missions**: Beneficiaries are encouraged to participate in one of the Missions, offering them the opportunity to pitch their solutions to the host ecosystem and other participating organisations, where relevant to their business field. Applications for Missions are submitted separately, and the selection decisions are made independently of the Pilots grant. Participation in a Mission is not a condition for receiving the Pilots grant.

Payment conditions:

Payments will be linked to agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and milestones, subject to verification of results and submission of the corresponding feedback form. The indicative payment schedule is:

- **KPI Definition (Month 1):** Following the approval of the KPI and milestone plan, each SME will receive an initial payment of €5,000.
- **Mid-Term Review (Month 3):** Up to €20,000 per SME will be released after a successful mid-term assessment, subject to satisfactory progress and KPI achievement.
- **Final Review (Month 6):** The remaining balance (up to €25,000 per SME) will be paid following the final evaluation and submission of the corresponding final report, reflecting the fulfilment of the agreed KPIs and milestones, and subject to submission of the feedback form.

2.3.3. Trainings and Services

The Trainings and Services Grant supports SMEs in acquiring specialised external trainings or services to strengthen their innovation capacity, business resilience and sustainability, and facilitate the adoption or commercialisation of Photonics and Quantum technologies.

Selected SMEs may receive **up to €10,000 to procure services** not already available free of charge through PhotonQBoost's advisory services catalogue[1].

[1] PhotonQBoost, Support Services accessed on 02 October 2026.

Supported activities may include business process adaptation, feasibility studies, software development, specialised consultancy or coaching, standards and certifications, sustainability audits, and professional training.

Specific requirements and conditions:

- **External services only:** Funding is restricted to subcontracted trainings and services. Travel, equipment, consumables and similar expenses are not eligible.
- **Complementarity with PhotonQBoost services:** Applicants must consult the advisory services catalogue before applying. Services already available free of charge through PhotonQBoost are not eligible for funding.
- **Quotations:** Applicants must provide two quotations for each proposed training or service.

  Note: Two quotations allow evaluators to assess best value for money and protect applicants if their preferred supplier becomes unavailable, changes its price or cannot deliver on time. Without a valid alternative, the applicant may be unable to contract the service and receive the grant.

  Quotations must remain valid until at least 30 April 2027. Earlier expiry dates will not be accepted, as quotations must remain valid for contracting after the Sub-Grant Agreement is signed.

  If a second quotation cannot be obtained, applicants must provide a substantiated justification, naming the suppliers contacted and explaining why they could not provide a quotation. Generic claims that a service is bespoke or that a supplier is the only provider are insufficient.
- **Cost justification:** Applicants must demonstrate that the requested price is reasonable and proportionate to the proposed scope of work.
- **Additional costs:** Where the total cost exceeds €10,000, applicants must confirm that the remaining amount will be financed from their own resources.
- **Multiple services:** Applicants may request several trainings or services within the €10,000 limit.
- **Services acquisition:** Services must only be contracted and paid for once the Sub-Grant Agreement (SGA) with the selected beneficiary is in place.

Payment conditions:

The grant will be paid after completion of the approved training(s) or service(s), subject to submission and verification of the corresponding invoice and evidence of delivery and submission of the corresponding feedback form.

Beneficiaries will also have access to PhotonQBoost's free advisory services and Key Account Manager support throughout implementation. Use of the catalogue services is optional.

2.3.4. Missions

The Missions Grant supports SMEs interested in exploring new business opportunities, establishing partnerships and strengthening collaboration within the European Photonics and Quantum innovation ecosystem.

PhotonQBoost will organise two Missions in 2027, bringing together SMEs, technology providers, industrial stakeholders and innovation clusters. Activities will include ecosystem visits, thematic discovery sessions, ideation workshops, matchmaking and networking opportunities.

Table 3. OC2-2026 Missions Grant

Mission	Date	Place	Thematic focus
Lithuania	2027-S1	Vilnius	Semiconductors/Space and Defence
France	2027-S2	Lannion	Life Sciences and Environment

Up to 52 SMEs will be selected across the two missions, with lump-sum funding to contribute to participation costs.

Table 4. Funding and places per SME

Mission	Lump sum per SME	Places
Lithuania	€560	Up to 25
France	€900	Up to 27

Specific requirements and conditions:

- **Separate applications:** SMEs interested in both missions must submit an independent application for each, including the relevant motivation, thematic alignment and attendee details. Selection for one mission does not imply selection for the other.

- **Participants:** Each selected SME may be represented by a maximum of two team members per mission. Participants are expected to be R&D representatives, company leaders, or other professionals with decision-making authority regarding technical collaboration. The participation of commercial or junior staff is not excluded, but it should not be the primary focus.
- **Attendee identification:** Applicants must identify their proposed participants by name and role. Where attendance cannot yet be confirmed, up to three named candidates may be proposed, indicating their roles and decision-making authority.
- **Changes to attendees:** Any changes after selection must be communicated immediately to PhotonQBoost.
- **Host-country participation:** SMEs from the host country are not eligible for financial support but may participate in the mission.
- **Participation without funding:** Organisations not requesting a grant, including other companies, universities or RTOs, may express interest in joining. Expressions of interest should be sent to photonqboost@eura-ag.de.

Payment conditions:

Lump-sum payments will be made after each mission, subject to verification of participation and submission of the corresponding feedback form.

Selected participants will receive information on the programme, host organisations and logistics before the mission, together with follow-up support to facilitate partnership development.

2.4. Timeline

To facilitate appropriate organisation of the applications, the indicative timeline of the call is presented in the table below.

Table 5. OC2-2026 timeline

Phase	Date
Publication of the Open Call	17/11/2026
1st Info Day	24/11/2026 11:00 CET
2nd Info Day	17/12/2026 11:00 CET
Deadline for Applications	19/01/2027 17:00 CET
Evaluation and Selection	From the day after the deadline until the last week of February 2027
Communication of Results to Applicants	Last week of February 2027
Legal Validation and Contracting	March 2027
Project start & Onboarding	Beginning of April 2027

2.5. Financial Support

The present Open Call will provide financial support to third parties in form of grants, with a total budget of €1,438,300, to be distributed as follows:

Table 6. OC2-2026 FSTP

Grant	Number of SMEs	Value per SME	Total
Solutions	Up to 15	Up to €40,000	€600,000
Pilots	Up to 14	Up to €50,000	€700,000
Trainings and Services	Up to 15	Up to €10,000	€100,000
Missions	Up to 52	€560 (LT) or €900 (FR)	€38,300

No beneficiary (selected SME) will receive more than the total of €50,000 under all PhotonQBoost's Open Calls. While the awarded amount may be lower, it will not exceed this limit and will be aligned with the scope of the proposed application.

The grants will be disbursed following a lump sum approach. This means that the funding is distributed gradually, subject to meeting specific outcomes and milestones, rather than administrative justifications of time and/or expenses. It should be noted that the funding, managed by the PhotonQBoost partners, is provided under the Horizon Europe Programme and remains the property of the EU until the final payment has been completed.

2.6. Eligibility Criteria

To participate in the present Open Call, applications must meet specific eligibility criteria to ensure alignment with the project's objectives and the Horizon Europe funding framework. This section outlines the eligibility conditions for applicants.

It should be emphasised that an application will only be considered if it satisfies all eligibility criteria, without exception. Proposals failing to meet any of the eligibility criteria will be automatically rejected.

a) The SME(s) exists as a legal entity.
b) The SME(s) meets the European Union's definition of a Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise[2].
c) The SME(s) was established before or on July 19th, 2026 (at least six months before the submission deadline).
d) The SME(s) is registered in a European Union Member State and their outermost regions, or in a Horizon Europe Associated Countries by the launch of this open call. List of Horizon Europe Associated Countries as published by the European Commission on the launch of the open call:
    - **Member States:** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden.
    - **Horizon Europe Associated Countries:** Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Egypt, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Switzerland, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.
e) All the required fields in the application form are completed in English, and all documentation required in the application form is provided.

[2] European Commission, SME definition, accessed on 07 November 2026.

f) The SME(s) and its representatives have no conflict of interest with PhotonQBoost consortium partners.
g) For the **Solutions and Pilots grants**: The proposed project implementation period falls within the duration permitted by the Open Call.
h) For the **Missions grant**: the SME must not be legally established in the host country of the respective mission.
i) The proposal has not already been partially or fully funded by another EU grant.
j) The proposals do not exceed the funding request upper limit of € 50,000 per SME.

2.7. Data Protection

PhotonQBoost requires access to Personal and Entity Data in order to process and evaluate applications. Sploro will act as the Data Controller for all data submitted through Sploro's platform for the purpose of this Open Call. To ensure the safety and security of this data, Sploro's platform has been designed and operates under strict compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR). Therefore, all applicants are required to accept Sploro's platform terms to ensure full coverage. For more information regarding the data privacy policy and security measures implemented by Sploro, please refer to their website at https://sploro.eu/privacy-policy/.

Essential data may be shared with consortium partners and/or project associates, ensuring confidentiality and integrity, solely for the purpose of fulfilling the evaluation of the proposal and delivery of the programme's services. Additionally, relevant personal and organisational data may be shared with service providers, other selected beneficiaries, and/or mission organisers, strictly to facilitate logistical coordination and participation in PhotonQBoost related activities.

2.8. Language

English is the official language of the PhotonQBoost project. All documentation, deliverables, reports, and communications must be prepared and submitted in English. All project-related meetings, workshops, trainings, and programme activities will be conducted exclusively in English. Participants are responsible for ensuring that any internal documentation, technical specifications, or supporting materials used during the programme are accessible in English when requested.

2.9. Absence of Conflict of Interest

Applicants must not have any real or potential conflicts of interest during the selection process or during the implementation of the project activities. This includes financial ties, personal relationships, or any situation that could affect impartiality. All potential conflicts will be reviewed by the PhotonQBoost selection committee. If a conflict is confirmed, the application may be disqualified. Please note that PhotonQBoost partners, their affiliates, staff, and subcontractors are not eligible to apply or receive funding, in line with European Commission rules.

2.10. Ethical issues

PhotonQBoost adheres to the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity[3]. All applicants are required to accept the privacy policy and declaration of honour during submission. Prior to submission, applicants should carefully review their proposals to ensure they meet high ethical standards. Failure to comply may result in disqualification.

For further guidance, applicants are encouraged to consult the EC document "How to Complete Your Ethics Self-Assessment"[4].

The use of generative AI tools is permitted and does not need to be declared. Applicants may use them to refine, shorten, translate or improve the readability of text they have written. PhotonQBoost reserves the right to exclude applications that show clear signs of having been generated by AI, such as leftover prompts, unedited AI responses, or fabricated or factually inaccurate information. The applicant remains fully responsible for the accuracy, originality and substance of everything submitted, and must be able to substantiate any claim made in the proposal.

[3] ALL European Academies. 2017. European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

[4] European Commission. 2021. How to Complete Your Ethics Self-Assessment

3. Application Submission

3.1. Application Form

Applications for the Open Call should be sent exclusively through the form available in the Open Call Platform. A separate application form is provided for each grant type**.** SMEs applying to more than one grant complete one form per grant:

- Solutions: https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-solutions
- Pilots: https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-pilots
- Mission to Lithuania: https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-missions-lt
- Mission to France: https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-missions-fr
- Trainings and Services: https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/apply/program/photonqboost-open-call-2-2026-for-trainings-and-services

SMEs are invited to apply for any or all the available grants. The application form is divided in four different sections: 1. Contact information; 2. Organisation Information; 3. Grant-specific questions; 4. Eligibility self-declaration and Declaration of Honour. Please note that questions differ for each grant type.

A template of each application form is available at the end of this document as **ANNEX 01**. We strongly recommend reviewing the relevant template before starting to draft, so that the required structure is clear from the outset.

The absence of any answers or documents will automatically disqualify the application. Applicants are required to ensure that all information provided is accurate and truthful. Should any false information be identified, the application will be automatically disqualified and blacklisted from other PhotonQBoost calls.

All required documents and information must be uploaded in English. Submissions made fully or in part in any other language will be considered not eligible.

The form can be edited and saved before submission as many times as needed. The deadline for submission of applications is January 19th, 2027, 17:00 CET.

3.2. Helpdesk

Applicants are requested to review the Guidelines for Applicants and verify the project's website, Frequently Asked Questions, and recorded information sessions before resorting to the Helpdesk. If you still have questions after reviewing these resources, please contact the PhotonQBoost support team at:

- photonqboost@eura-ag.de

The Helpdesk is the **only** official communication channel for this call. Any messages sent through personal emails, social media, or other informal means will not be considered. The Helpdesk will not evaluate proposals or provide advice on the eligibility of applicants.

Requests to the Helpdesk are typically answered within two working days. During peak periods, such as near the submission deadline, the response time may extend to four working days.

Requests submitted less than two working days before the call deadline will not be processed. Lack of receipt of an answer to an inquiry will not constitute grounds for an extension or re-evaluation of an application.

Applicants must maintain professional and respectful communication when engaging with the Helpdesk. Inappropriate behaviour, such as repeated demands, attempts to influence outcomes, or harassment, may result in disqualification.

3.3. Info Days

Info Days are informational webinars in which the current call will be presented in detail to potential applicants. During these sessions, participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and receive direct answers.

Two Info Days are scheduled, taking place on November 24th 2026, 11:00 CET, and December 17th, 2026, 11:00 CET. These events will be widely promoted on the project's website and social media channels, and prior registration will be required. The sessions will be recorded and made available on the PhotonQBoost project website for further consultation.

3.4. Technical Issues

Applicants are strongly advised to submit their applications at least two days before the deadline to avoid potential technical issues that may arise due to high platform activity.

If you experience any technical issues that prevent submission, report them to the Helpdesk before the submission deadline. Applications or reports received after the deadline will not be considered or investigated.

When contacting the Helpdesk, provide a clear description of the problem, including any error messages, unexpected behaviour, and the steps that led to the issue. Attach a screenshot showing the problem, ensuring the system clock or another timestamp is visible. Include relevant details such as your device, operating system, and browser.

Even if you have a timestamped screenshot showing the error occurred before the deadline, the report must reach the Helpdesk email before the submission deadline to be considered. Technical issues will be reviewed and assessed by the project's technical team, following the same deadlines and conditions outlined in Section 3.2.

4. Evaluation and Selection Process

This chapter provides a detailed description of the Open Call's Evaluation and Selection process, including the criteria, procedures, and required documentation.

4.1. Selection Process

The selection process consists of the following steps:

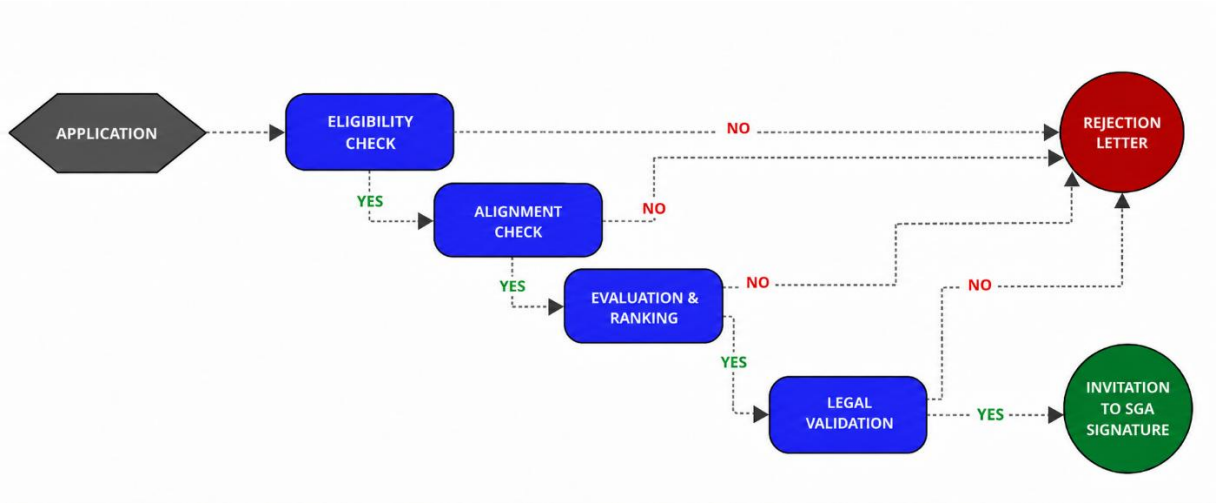


Figure 1 – Open Call Selection Process

4.2. Eligibility Check

During the Eligibility Check, the eligibility criteria of all received applications will be verified by two independent evaluators, each conducting their assessment separately. The results of their respective evaluations will then be cross-checked. Any discrepancies identified will be jointly reviewed to reach a final decision. Proposals that fail to meet any of the eligibility criteria will be automatically rejected. For more information, please see Section 2.6.

4.3. Alignment Check

The Alignment Check is a screening stage carried out by evaluators between the Eligibility Check and the Evaluation & Ranking. Its purpose is to filter out proposals that are formally eligible but clearly outside the scope of the call. At this stage, each proposal is checked against the following:

1. Thematic and technical alignment (Solutions and Pilots)
2. Technology domain (Solutions and Pilots)
3. Photonics/Quantum connection (Trainings and Services, and Missions)
4. TRL: Technology Readiness Level (Solutions)

5. Technology provider (Pilots)
6. Service duplication (Trainings and Services)
7. Quotations (Trainings and Services)

The Alignment Check has two possible outcomes:

- **Aligned** — the proposal proceeds to technical evaluation;
- **Not aligned** — the proposal does not proceed. Applicants receive a written explanation of the reason.

Note: to be considered **Aligned**, a proposal must receive a **GO from both evaluators on the proposal**. A **NO-GO** from either evaluator will result in the proposal being classified as **Not aligned**.

4.4. Evaluation & Ranking

The evaluation of applications approved during the Eligibility Check will be carried out by two independent evaluators with technical and/or scientific expertise in the fields of Photonics and/or Quantum. A Quality Evaluation Manager from Sploro supports and ensures compliance throughout the process.

All evaluators complete a mandatory training session before beginning their assessments, covering the criteria, the scoring scale, calibration examples, conflict of interest rules, and the standard of written feedback expected.

Each criterion is broken down into **sub-criteria**, each scored from 0 to 5. The score for a criterion is the average of its sub-criteria scores. The criteria for each type of proposal are presented in the tables below.

4.4.1. Evaluation Criteria – Solutions

Table 7. Solutions' evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description	Weight
Impact	• I1. Impact on the Photonics and Quantum industries, including transferability to other sectors or use cases. • I2. Economic impact quantified where possible. • I3. Environmental impact, including reductions in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.	30%

	• I4. Social impact. • I5. Productivity and resilience gains for the SME.	
Excellence	• E1. Technical quality of the proposed solution, and degree of innovation relative to the state of the art and competing offerings. Where the proposal is based on off-the-shelf components, the novelty must lie in the application, configuration or integration approach. • E2. Soundness of the objectives and clarity of the identified need. • E3. Relevance and depth of fit to the declared PhotonQBoost thematic(s). • E4. Credibility of the declared TRL progression (start TRL to end TRL).	30%
Implementation	• M1. Quality and feasibility of the work plan, including key activities and resources. • M2. Realism of the proposed duration. • M3. Appropriateness of the planned use of the grant. • M4. Quality and measurability of the proposed KPIs and milestones. • M5. Capacity, composition and track record of the team. For joint applications, complementarity of the two SMEs and clarity of their respective roles.	40%

4.4.2. Evaluation Criteria – Pilots

Table 8. Pilots' evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description	Weight
Impact	• I1. Impact on SME(s) growth and expected outcomes. • I2. Economic impact quantified where possible.	30%

	• I3. Environmental impact, including reductions in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. • I4. Social impact. • I5. Productivity and resilience gains for the SME.	
Excellence	• E1. Technical quality of the proposed pilot and the added value of the application, configuration or integration approach compared with alternatives currently available for the same use case. • E2. Soundness of the objectives and clarity of the identified need. • E3. Relevance and depth of fit to the declared PhotonQBoost thematic(s). • E4. Strength of the evidence that the technology is ready for operational deployment (current TRL), and credibility of the expected step from current maturity to validated operational use (expected TRL at the end of the pilot).	30%
Implementation	• M1. Quality and feasibility of the work plan, including key activities and resources. • M2. Realism of the proposed duration. • M3. Planned use of the grant. • M4. Quality and measurability of the proposed KPIs and milestones. • M5. Capacity, composition and track record of the team, and suitability of the technology provider. For joint applications, complementarity of the two SMEs and clarity of their respective roles.	40%

4.4.3. Evaluation Criteria – Missions

For each Mission, the evaluation will be carried out according to the following criteria:

Table 9. Missions' evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description	Weight
Impact	• I1. Clarity and specificity of the motivation to attend this particular mission. • I2. Relevance of the mission to the SME's growth and expected outcomes.	30%
Excellence	• E1. Technical and scientific expertise of the SME. • E2. Relevance of the SME's value proposition to the mission's thematic focus.	30%
Implementation	• M1. Ability to engage effectively with the host ecosystem and to foster diversification of partnerships and opportunities. • M2. Profile and decision-making capacity of the named individual(s).	40%

4.4.4. Evaluation Criteria – Trainings and Services

Table 10. Trainings and Services' evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description	Weight
Impact	• I1. Expected contribution to the SME's competitiveness, growth and resilience. • I2. Expected improvement in the SME's internal capabilities, knowledge and skills through the Training & Services.	30%
Excellence	• E1. Technical quality and relevance of the proposed training(s) or service(s).	30%

	• E2. Soundness of objectives and demonstrated need, including why the need is not met by the PhotonQBoost catalogue.	
Implementation	• M1. Cost/benefit and justification of the price, including the alternative quotation or, where only one quotation is provided, the substantiation of why a second could not be obtained. • M2. Quality and capacity of the training(s) or service(s) provider. • M3. Feasibility of the implementation plan and timeframe within the maximum execution period, including the personnel who will absorb it.	40%

4.4.5. Scoring System

The evaluators will assign scores for each criterion based on the following scale:

Table 11. Scoring system

Score	Rating	Description
0	Not Addressed	The response does not address the criterion or is entirely inadequate.
1	Inadequately Addressed	The response is unclear or off topic; significant improvement is needed.
2	Partially Addressed	The response touches on the criterion but lacks detail or clarity.
3	Adequately Addressed	The response meets basic expectations but could be strengthened.
4	Well Addressed	The response is clear and relevant, with only minor improvements needed.
5	Exceptionally Addressed	The response fully meets or exceeds expectations; no improvements needed.

4.4.6. Threshold

To be considered for funding, each proposal must achieve a minimum score of 3 points in each of the three evaluation criteria (Impact, Excellence, and

Implementation) and a total score of at least 10 points, calculated on the **normalised** criterion scores and before applying the weighting assigned to each criterion as described previously. Proposals that do not meet these thresholds will be disqualified.

4.4.7. Normalisation

The two evaluators will score the proposal independently without knowing the evaluation of their colleague, thus avoiding one evaluator conditioning the other. Therefore, the same evaluation may receive very different scores. The normalisation step guarantees a more balanced distribution of scores and reduces the possibility of biases and distortions. The normalisation is done as follows:

1. Several anonymised proposals will be evaluated by all evaluators to establish a common baseline and ensure a consistent normalisation procedure.
2. The Evaluator Average Score (EAS) is calculated.
3. The Overall Average Score (OAS) of all proposals is calculated.
4. Each EAS is compared to the OAS using a simple division (EAS / OAS). As a result, the percentage each evaluator represents of the OAS is estimated. This has a double meaning:
    a. Evaluators under 100% have a negative pattern against the average. Their scores will be then increased by a correction factor.
    b. Evaluators above 100% have a positive pattern against the average. Their scores will be then decreased by a correction factor.
5. Correction Factor calculation: Based on this formula 1 + (1 - (EAS/OAS)). This factor is unique for each evaluator.
6. The correction factor is applied to each evaluator respective scores. A normalised score per evaluator is populated.
7. Then the final score of each criterion is calculated as the average of each corrected score of the two evaluators on each proposal. (It may be the case that correction brings scores over a 5 in any criteria. In those cases, the score is capped at 5).

Divergence and consensus. If, after normalisation of the evaluators' scores, a divergence greater than 20% is observed, the original (unnormalised) scores will be looked at. If the original scores show less than 20% divergence, the normalised scores will be taken as final. If the original scores show more than 20% divergence and the normalised scores show more than 20% divergence, a consensus meeting will be organised. **There will be a consensus meeting only if the criteria and overall**

scores are above the thresholds (the threshold for each criterion will be three (3), while the overall score threshold will be ten (10)).

Proposals not bound to a consensus meeting will remain with their originally normalised score.

For each application requiring consensus, the two evaluators will be asked to agree on one final score for each evaluation question. The scores for Excellence, Impact, Implementation and the overall score will then be recalculated from the agreed scores, and normalisation will not be applied again. If the evaluators cannot reach an agreement, a third evaluator may be involved as a last resort, and the final score will be the average of the three evaluators' scores. Where the number of applications requiring consensus is high, evaluators may be asked to agree on their final scores directly and submit them in writing. The original evaluations are kept unchanged, and the consensus outcome is documented to ensure transparency and traceability.

4.4.8. Ranking

The ranking of applications will be established based on the final normalised scores. In the event of a tie, proposals will be prioritised according to the following order: 1. Higher score on the Impact criterion (Solutions, Pilots, Trainings and Services) or Team Visiting criterion (Missions). 2. Higher score on the Implementation criterion (Solutions, Pilots, Trainings and Services) or Interest of the company visiting (Missions). 3. Higher proportion of women in the team, based on the figures declared in the application form (project team for Solutions and Pilots; personnel involved in the implementation for Trainings and Services; named attendees for Missions). Based on the number of available grants, applications will be categorised as follows:

- **Pre-Selected:** Successfully selected for funding (up to 15 Solutions, 14 Pilots, 15 Trainings and Services, 52 Missions).
- **Waiting List:** Shortlisted as backup candidates in case others withdraw (3 for Solutions, 3 for Pilots, 3 for Trainings and Services, 20 for Missions (10 Lithuania and 10 France)).
- **Above threshold not selected**: Met all requirements but not funded due to budget limitations.
- **Below threshold**: Evaluated but did not meet the minimum scoring threshold.
- **Not aligned**: Did not pass the Alignment Check.
- **Non-eligible**: Failed the eligibility check.

An Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) will be prepared for each proposal, compiling the individual evaluators' comments and providing feedback on the proposal's strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations. The initial scores assigned by evaluators will range from 0 to 5 for each evaluation criterion. These scores will then be weighted according to the percentages established for each criterion, meaning that the maximum weighted score per criterion may exceed 5 points. The ESR will reflect the scores resulting from this weighting process.

4.5. Appeals Procedure

The PhotonQBoost consortium has instituted an appeals process to ensure all applicants are treated fairly and transparently throughout the evaluation of their proposals. This process is designed to address concerns applicants may have about procedural errors during the evaluation or issues related to the eligibility check results.

If an applicant believes that there has been a factual error in how their proposal was assessed, which could potentially impact the final funding decision, or if they believe that the results of eligibility checks are incorrect and do not adhere to the Open Call rules, the following procedure is available:

1. Complaints must be submitted within five (5) calendar days from the date of receiving the evaluation results via the photonqboost@eura-ag.de email, including a detailed explanation and clear evidence of the alleged error.
2. The PhotonQBoost Team will thoroughly investigate complaints to determine if a re-evaluation of the proposal is justified. A decision will be communicated within no more than twenty days from the date of receiving the complaint, provided that all required information has been submitted. If this timeline cannot be met, the applicant will be informed of the delay and given a new decision date.
3. In instances where re-evaluation is deemed necessary, the outcome will directly replace the initial score without undergoing normalisation or any other adjustment process. This clause is specifically designed to expedite the appeal resolution and prevent delays in the project's timeline.

Applicants should note that differences of opinion or subjective judgments are not valid grounds for appeal. To maintain process efficiency, each proposal is allowed a single appeal, and the decision reached at the end of the appeal process is final, closing any further discussion regarding the evaluation.

The PhotonQBoost Open Call Team will not comment on or reinterpret the evaluators' opinions or scores unless a factual error is clearly identified.

4.6. Legal Validation

Before confirming the final list of accepted applicants, a detailed validation of the legal entities is performed. Pre-selected participants will be contacted via email and requested to submit the necessary documentation to ensure compliance with PhotonQBoost and the European Commission's cascade funding requirements. SMEs that fail to respond or do not submit the complete documentation within the specified deadline will be considered non-qualified and therefore excluded from the selection process. The documents required for legal validation include:

- **Incorporation documents.** Document that proves the registration (deed, statuses or extract from the official business registry).
- **VAT / Tax registration number.** A copy of a document proving VAT / Tax registration
- For **entities that are already validated by the European Commission's Funding and Tenders Portal** that count with a registered and validated PIC Number, we will request: The PIC Number and a screenshot of the Funding and Tenders portal in which it's evidenced the type of organisation which has been selected as a beneficiary is required.
- For **entities without a validated PIC number OR without a validated status** (like self- declared SMEs), we will request:
  - **Legal entity form.** The Legal Entity form for private companies necessary for the awarding of EU funding.
- **Identification document.** Scanned copy of the signatory's ID or passport.
- **Power of attorney:** Proof of the signatory's authority to represent the SME.
- **Financial Identification Form (FIF).** Form identifying the account to which the funds will be transferred signed by the legal representative of the organisation. This banking details must match the information provided in the Sub-Grant Agreement.
- **Bank statement** showing the ownership of the account.
- **Phone number.** A phone number that can be used for the bank account validation (ideally a WhatsApp number).
- **SME declaration form.** Form based on the European Commission's standard template, allowing PhotonQBoost to verify the SME's ownership structure and financial figures to verify the size of the company.

- **Balance Sheet and P&L accounts:** for the last two closed years (if applicable) and the most recent CAP table (shareholding distribution). In companies with linked or associated entities, additional information (accounts for mother companies, group trees, etc.) will be requested. If the company has not yet closed any financial years, estimates should be provided.

Templates and detailed instructions will be provided to guide applicants in preparing and organising the required documents. SMEs that successfully complete the validation process will be classified as "selected" and subsequently invited to sign the Sub-Grant Agreement.

4.7. Sub-Grant Agreement preparation

To formalise the responsibilities of all parties involved, a contractual Sub-Grant Agreement will be signed between the selected applicants and the PhotonQBoost consortium, represented by the project coordinator, EurA PT.

The Sub-Grant Agreement will address all relevant legal aspects, including the special clauses derived from Horizon Europe cascade funding rules, the payment schedule and associated conditions and milestones, as well as general provisions outlining the rights and obligations of both the PhotonQBoost consortium and each sub-grantee, and Intellectual Property Rights.

Once the Sub-Grant Agreement has been signed, applicants will be formally recognised as beneficiaries and will be eligible to participate in the PhotonQBoost programme.

4.8. Beneficiaries' Responsibilities

Selected organisations receiving support under PhotonQBoost are indirect beneficiaries of Horizon Europe funding and must comply with specific obligations set by the European Commission and the PhotonQBoost consortium, such as (but not limited to):

Conflict of Interest: Beneficiaries must avoid any situation that could compromise impartiality due to personal, financial, or professional interests. Any real or potential conflict must be reported immediately to the PhotonQBoost coordinator, who may request corrective measures. Non-compliance may result in contract termination or reimbursement of funds.

Communication and Dissemination Requirements: Beneficiaries must actively support PhotonQBoost's communication and dissemination activities by providing

the consortium with the necessary communication materials and information about their funded projects. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The organisation's logo in a high-resolution format.
- A short description of the organisation and its project, including its objectives, activities, and expected results.
- Relevant images, visuals, and other communication materials that can be used to showcase the project.
- Updates on project progress, key achievements, results, and relevant dissemination activities, upon request.

Beneficiaries must provide these materials within the deadlines communicated by the consortium and ensure that they have the necessary rights and permissions for their use. The materials may be used by PhotonQBoost and the European Commission for communication, dissemination, and visibility purposes, in accordance with applicable confidentiality, intellectual property, and data protection requirements.

Data Protection and Confidentiality: All personal data will be processed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation. Applicants must consent to data collection for application evaluation, project management, and compliance monitoring. Data may be shared with the EC, consortium partners, evaluators, and audit authorities such as the European Anti-Fraud Office and the European Court of Auditors. Beneficiaries have full GDPR rights (access, rectification, erasure, etc.) and can contact lopd@sploro.eu for any inquiries or to withdraw consent (which may impact participation). Data will be:

- Used only for relevant purposes.
- Retained only as long as necessary.
- Protected with appropriate technical and organisational security measures.
- Handled confidentially during and for five years after project completion.

Promotion and Visibility of EU Funding: Beneficiaries are required to promote their participation in PhotonQBoost and acknowledge EC funding in all related communication, in compliance with the Operational Guidelines for Recipients of EU Funding[5]. Any promotional materials (e.g. websites, social media, presentations, leaflets, deliverables, etc.) must include the EU emblem and the funding statement, both clearly displayed.

[5] European Commission. 2021. Operational Guidelines for Recipients of EU Funding

Information rights: The EC and PhotonQBoost reserve the right to publish the following information about the beneficiaries of the Open Call:

- SME names, country of origin, and project purpose.
- The funding received and final outcomes.
- Project summaries, relevant visuals, and publication references.

Beneficiaries must ensure they have rights to share this information and may request exemptions if disclosure could harm commercial or academic interests.

Financial Monitoring and Audits: The EC may carry out financial audits at any time, directly or through external auditors. Beneficiaries must retain and provide access to all supporting documents and deliverables for up to five years after project completion.

Open Data and Public Disclosure: Funded organisations will be listed on PhotonQBoost's public channels (e.g. website, social media). Funding amounts will be reported under the project's deliverables and published in an open access repository, in line with transparency and open data.

4.9. Onboarding

The programme described in this Open Call is planned to begin in April 2027. Selected participants will be contacted by the PhotonQBoost team after the signing of their respective Sub-Grant Agreements to schedule an onboarding session, during which the activity details will be discussed bilaterally, key performance indicators (KPIs) will be established, and a work plan will be defined.

5. ANNEX01 - Application Form Template

Common sections (all grants)

1. Contact Information

1.1. Main Contact Information

- First name:*
- Last name:*
- E-mail:*
- Phone number & country code:*
- Position / role:*

1.2. Legal Responsible Contact Information

- First name:*
- Last name:*
- E-mail:*
- Phone number & country code:*
- Position / role:*

2. Organisation Information

- Organisation legal name:*
- Organisation short name:*
- Country:*
- Legal address:*
- Website:*
- VAT number / Tax registration number:*
- Registration date:*
- Describe your SME, including its core products, services and activities and explain its connection to the Photonics or Quantum technology fields. Highlight any relevant applications, technology interests, or ongoing initiatives: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Have you previously received funding from a PhotonQBoost Open Call?*
  If yes, specify the call, the grant and the amount received:* (max. 50)*
  Note: Please note that the funding ceiling per SME is €50.000 among all PhotonQBoost calls.

3. Joint application (For Solutions and Pilots only)

Are you applying with a joint application with another SME? If yes, provide the following information:*

- Partner organisation legal name:*
- Partner organisation short name:*
- Country:*
- Legal address:*
- Website:*
- VAT number / Tax registration number:*
- Registration date:*
- Describe your SME, including its core products, services and activities and explain its connection to the Photonics or Quantum technology fields. Highlight any relevant applications, technology interests, or ongoing initiatives: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Have you previously received funding from a PhotonQBoost Open Call?*
  If yes, specify the call, the grant and the amount received: (max. 50 words)*
  Note: Please note that the funding ceiling per SME is €50.000 among all PhotonQBoost calls.

4. Grants

Form A - Solutions

4.1. Solutions

4.1.1. Scope

- Solution title:*
- Solution short description: (max. 250 words)*
- Which thematic priority or priorities of this call does your proposal address?* *(select one or more — at least one selection is mandatory)*: ☐ Advanced Manufacturing ☐ Agrifood and Environment ☐ Life Sciences and Health ☐ Mobility ☐ Digital Technologies
- Explain concretely how your proposal addresses the selected priority or priorities: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Technology domain:* ☐ Photonics ☐ Quantum ☐ Both
- Does your project include a hardware development, integration or validation component?* ☐ Yes ☐ No
- If yes, describe the hardware component and its role in the project, and whether it is developed, modified, integrated or validated: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

- Current TRL of the solution (4–8):* ___ — justify: (min. 50 max. 150 words)*
- Expected TRL at project completion (4–8):* ___ — justify: (min. 50 max. 150 words)*
- Proposed project duration in months (1-6):* ___

  Note: a declared duration above 6 months renders the application ineligible.

4.1.2. Excellence

- What are the objectives of the project? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- If yes in section 3 (only for joint applications): Describe the respective roles of each SME and the shared objectives of the joint application (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- How innovative is your proposed solution compared to the current market, competitors and state of the art? Identify the specific components or approaches that are novel, and those that are based on commercially available off-the-shelf technology: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- What is the specific need or problem this solution addresses, and why is it not solved by existing offerings? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.1.3. Impact

- Expected economic impact, quantified where possible: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Expected environmental impact, including, but not limited to, potential energy efficiency gains and greenhouse gas emission reductions: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Expected social impact: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- How will the solution improve your SME's productivity and resilience? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- What is the expected impact on the Photonics and Quantum industries? Is the result specific to a narrow application, or transferable to other sectors or use cases? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.1.4. Implementation

- Describe your work plan, including key activities, resources, team members and timeline: (min. 50 max. 500 words)*
- Proposed KPIs and milestones: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Planned use of the grant: Please describe how you intend to use the grant to implement your proposed project and achieve its objectives. Explain the main activities, resources or equipment that the grant is expected to support, and why this represents an appropriate and cost-effective use of

the funding. If hardware is involved, briefly specify which equipment or components you intend to acquire or use. (min. 50 – max. 250 words)*
Note: You are not required to provide a detailed budget breakdown, specific amounts or cost categories.

- Describe your team (name and surname), role, track record and previous project experience: (min. 50 – max. 250 words)*
- Number of women in the project team:* ___ / total team size:* ___

4.1.5. Attachments

- PowerPoint presentation of up to 5 slides supporting your application (e.g. schematics, diagrams, workflow, etc.): (optional)

Form B - Pilots

4.2. Pilots

4.2.1. Scope

- Pilot title:*
- Pilot short description:* (max. 250 words)*
- Which thematic priority or priorities of this call does your proposal address? *(select one or more — at least one selection is mandatory):** ☐ Advanced Manufacturing ☐ Agrifood and Environment ☐ Life Sciences and Health ☐ Mobility ☐ Digital Technologies
- Explain concretely how your proposal addresses the selected priority or priorities: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Technology domain:* ☐ Photonics ☐ Quantum ☐ Both
- Technology provider organisation:* Please provide the name and website of the organisation providing the technology. (max. 50 words)*
- TRL of the solution to be deployed:* ___ — justify: (min. 50 max. 150 words)*
- Expected TRL at the end of the pilot: ___ — justify: (min. 50 max. 150 words)*
- Technology description and fit: Describe the technology or solution to be deployed, integrated or adopted, and explain its relevance to the proposed pilot. (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Does your project include a hardware integration, deployment or validation component?* ☐ Yes ☐ No — describe: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Proposed project duration in months:* ___
  Note: a declared duration above 6 months renders the application ineligible.
- I confirm that the technology provider has not been funded through a PhotonQBoost Solutions grant. (Yes/No)*

4.2.2. Excellence

- What are the objectives of the project? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- If yes in section 3 (only for joint applications): Describe the respective roles of each SME and the shared objectives of the joint application (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- What is the specific operational need or problem this pilot addresses? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- How does the technology being piloted, and the way it will be applied, configured or integrated in your environment, compare to alternatives currently available for this use case? Explain what makes this approach more suitable or valuable than those alternatives. (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.2.3. Impact

- Impact on SME(s) growth and expected outcomes: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Expected economic impact, quantified where possible: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Expected environmental impact, including, but not limited to, potential energy efficiency gains and greenhouse gas emission reductions: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Expected social impact: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- How will the pilot improve your SME's productivity and resilience? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.2.4. Implementation

- Describe your work plan, including key activities, resources, team members and timeline: (min. 50 max. 500 words)*
- Proposed KPIs and milestones: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Planned use of the grant: Please describe how you intend to use the grant to implement your proposed project and achieve its objectives. Explain the main activities, resources or equipment that the grant is expected to support, and why this represents an appropriate and cost-effective use of the funding. If hardware is involved, briefly specify which equipment or components you intend to acquire or use. (min. 50 – max. 250 words)*
  Note: You are not required to provide a detailed budget breakdown, specific amounts or cost categories.
- Describe your team (name and surname), role, track record and previous project experience: (min. 50 – max. 250 words)*
- Number of women in the project team:* ___ / total team size:* ___

- Describe the operational setting, the equipment and personnel involved, and how normal operations will accommodate the pilot: (min. 50 max. 300 words)*

4.2.5. Attachments

- Letter of commitment: Letter of commitment from the technology provider, specifying the technology provided.*
- PowerPoint presentation of up to 5 slides supporting your application (e.g. schematics, diagrams, workflow, etc.): (optional)

Form C – Missions

4.3. Mission to Lithuania

4.3.1. Mission selection

- Please note that you're applying to the Mission in Lithuania (2027-S1, Vilnius. Semiconductors/Space and Defence)
- I confirm that my organisation is not legally established in the host country of this mission.* Yes/No

4.3.2. Excellence

- Describe your SME's technical and scientific expertise: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- How do your activities and value proposition align with this mission's thematic focus? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.3.3. Impact

- Describe your motivation to participate in this specific mission: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Relevance of the mission to the SME's growth and expected outcomes: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.3.4. Implementation

- Describe your ability to generate synergies and partnerships within the host ecosystem: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Identify the types of organisation you hope to meet and why: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Attendee(s): name the individuals who will attend. You may list up to three candidates if the final attendee is not yet confirmed; a maximum of two will travel. Each candidate listed is assessed individually:

	Attendee 1*	Attendee 2	Attendee 3
Full name			
Position / role			
Decision-making authority			
Short professional introduction (min. 50 max. 100 words)*			

- Number of women among the named attendees:* ___
- ☐ I understand that the evaluation is based on the profiles of the named individuals, and that any subsequent change of attendee requires prior written approval and may result in revocation of the grant.

4.4. Mission to France

4.4.1. Mission selection

- Please note that you're applying to the Mission in France (2027-S2, Lannion. Life Sciences and Environment)
- I confirm that my organisation is not legally established in the host country of this mission.* Yes/No

4.4.2. Excellence

- Describe your SME's technical and scientific expertise: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- How do your activities and value proposition align with this mission's thematic focus? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.4.3. Impact

- Describe your motivation to participate in this specific mission: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Relevance of the mission to the SME's growth and expected outcomes. (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.4.4. Implementation

- Describe your ability to generate synergies and partnerships within the host ecosystem. (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Identify the types of organisation you hope to meet and why: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Attendee(s): name the individuals who will attend. You may list up to three candidates if the final attendee is not yet confirmed; a maximum of two will travel. Each candidate listed is assessed individually:

	Attendee 1*	Attendee 2	Attendee 3
Full name*			
Position / role*			
Decision-making authority*			
Short professional introduction (min. 50 max. 100 words)*			

- Number of women among the named attendees:* ___
- ☐ I understand that the evaluation is based on the profiles of the named individuals, and that any subsequent change of attendee requires prior written approval and may result in revocation of the grant.

Form C – Trainings and Services

4.5. Trainings and Services

4.5.1. Scope

- Thoroughly describe the requested training(s) or service(s), specifying the scope, price, and provider: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- What is the need or problem these trainings/services address, and what are the objectives? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Are you requesting more than one training or service?* ☐ Yes ☐ No

- If yes, list each one separately and justify each on its own merits (need addressed, provider, price, expected result). (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

- Is the requested training(s) or service(s) available through the PhotonQBoost catalogue?* ☐ No ☐ Partially
  - if partially, explain precisely what the catalogue does not cover: (min. 50 max. 150 words)*

4.5.2. Excellence

- What is the technical quality and relevance of the proposed training(s) or service(s)? (min. 50 max. 250 words)*

4.5.3. Impact

- How will the proposed training(s) and/or service(s) contribute to the competitiveness, growth and resilience of your SME? Please provide measurable indicators where possible (min. 50, max. 250 words).*
- How will the proposed training(s) and/or service(s) strengthen your SME's internal capabilities, knowledge and skills? Please provide specific examples where possible (min. 50, max. 250 words).*

4.5.4. Implementation

- What qualifies the selected provider to deliver the training(s) and/or service(s) requested? Include the name, website and / or references. (min. 50, max. 250 words).*
- How will the training(s) and/or service(s) be implemented in your SME? Specify the personnel impacted, the timeframe, and how the results will be absorbed into your operations: (min. 50 max. 500 words)*
- Justify the requested price in relation to the scope of work (days, rates, deliverables). Do not simply restate the quoted total: (min. 50 max. 250 words)*
- Total cost of the requested training(s)/service(s):* €___
  - If the total exceeds €10,000: ☐ I confirm that my organisation will cover the remaining amount from its own resources.

4.5.5. Attachments

- Quotation 1 (must be valid until at least 30 April 2027):*
- Quotation 2 (must be valid until at least 30 April 2027): (optional)
  - If a second quotation cannot be obtained, a substantiated justification should be provided **or** name the suppliers approached and explain why each was unable to quote. Generic claims of supplier uniqueness are insufficient.

- I understand that if my chosen suppliers become unavailable or their quotation is no longer valid at the time of contracting the service, I will not be able to contract the service and will therefore not receive the grant.* Yes/No

Eligibility self-declarations (Yes or No)

- Is your organisation a small or medium-sized enterprise according to the European Commission SME definition (Recommendation 2003/361/EC)?*
- Is your entity legally established in an EU Member State and their outermost regions or a Horizon Europe Associated Country?*
- Has your organisation been legally registered for at least 6 months prior to the Open Call deadline?*
- Can you confirm that your organisation is not a PhotonQBoost consortium partner or a linked organisation?*
- Can you confirm that your organisation is free from any conflict of interest with the consortium partners?*
- Can you confirm that this proposal is unique, and has not been partially or fully funded by another EU grant?*
- Can you confirm that you understand that the maximum cumulative funding per SME is €50,000 and that, if selected for multiple grants exceeding this limit, you will need to decline one or more grants to remain within the funding cap?*

Declaration of Honour

By submitting this form, I hereby certify that:

1. The information provided for this project is truthful, correct and complete.
2. The information concerning the legal status in the Application for my organisation is correct and complete and concurs with the stipulations outlined in the Guidelines for Applicants.
3. My organisation commits to comply with the eligibility criteria set out in the call for proposals for the entire duration of the action.
4. My organisation:
    a. Is committed to participate in the action;
    b. Has stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the activity throughout the action and to provide any counterpart funding necessary;
    c. Has or will have the necessary resources needed to implement the action;

   d. Is NOT subject to an administrative sanction (i.e., exclusion or financial penalty decision).

5. My organisation is NOT in one of the following exclusion situations:
   a. Bankrupt, being wound up, having the affairs administered by the courts, entered into an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures;
   b. In breach of social security or tax obligations.
6. My organisation (or persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant) is NOT in one of the following exclusion situations:
   a. Guilty of grave professional misconduct;
   b. Committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking;
   c. Shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision;
   d. Guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95;
   e. Created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social, or other legal obligations in the country of origin (including creation of another entity with this purpose).
7. My organisation is NOT subject to a conflict of interest in connection with this grant and will notify - without delay - any situation which could give rise to a conflict of interests.
8. My organisation has NOT and will NOT, neither directly nor indirectly, grant, seek, obtain, or accept any advantage in connection with this grant that would constitute an illegal practice or involve corruption.
9. My organisation has not received any other EU grant for this project and will give notice of any future EU grants related to this project.
10. My organisation is aware that false declarations may lead to rejection, suspension, termination or reduction of the grant and to administrative sanctions (i.e., financial penalties and/or exclusion from all future EU procurement contracts, grants, prizes and expert contracts).

Personal Data Protection basic information

Please read Legal disclaimer and Privacy policy and Terms of services.

As part of the PhotonQBoost Project we are committed to protecting your privacy and secure your personal data. This notice explains how we handle your personal data in accordance with the applicable national and European data protection legislation, including Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (GDPR).

As we determine the purpose and means of processing your personal data in the context of submission of proposal for an Open Call, which is part of the PhotonQBoost activities, we are considered to be the Data Controller with regard to the processing of your personal data.

We are SPLOROTECH SL, address: PARQUE TOMÁS CABALLERO 2, Sexto, Oficina 1, Despacho 6.10, Pamplona, Spain (hereinafter Sploro)

E-mail: lopd@sploro.eu

In the context of conducting this Open Call, which is part of the project PhotonQBoost we collect your personal data necessary for evaluating your

proposal. These data may include:

- Name, contact information, and professional details (provided via form, CV standalone files or any other type of data)
- Information included in your application forms, supporting documents, or other materials.

This data will be used for purposes such as evaluating submissions and complying with our contractual obligations under grant agreements the programme you are applying are part of.

Your personal data may be shared with third parties which may include, but are not limited to:

- Granting Authorities: European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA)Consortium Partners: The information provided may also be shared with the partners in the consortium. These partners are contractually obligated to handle your data in compliance with applicable with national

and European data protection legislation, including GDPR standards, ensuring the confidentiality and security of your personal data. More about the project consortium members you can find at the project website.

- Monitoring and oversight bodies, including internal audits, the European Court of Auditors, and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), as required under Union or national laws.

Such sharing will be conducted in compliance with GDPR, the grant agreements, and other relevant regulations. In particular:

For EC co-funded programme, personal data included in applications will be shared with the EC or its agencies, as required by Articles 15, 19, and 25 of Horizon Europe Grant Agreement.

Accuracy and Completeness of Data

All data provided must be accurate, precise, and complete, as required by Article 19.1 of the Horizon Europe Grant Agreement. Failure to provide such data may result in the inability to process your application or other actions necessary for programme participation.

Security Measures

Sploro implements appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure the security of your personal data. However, the hosting and operation of the platform are managed by AcceleratorApp, and their policies apply to the processing operations they manage. You can view their Privacy Policy for details.

All data processing activities are carried out in a strictly confidential manner, and secured according to the state of the art, and industry best standards using anonymisation techniques where possible.

The processing of your personal data is carried out strictly in accordance with the principles of data protection as laid down in the GDPR Directive. All data processing activities are carried out lawfully by ensuring that the legal ground for the processing is given.

As the processing of your personal data is based on your consent, you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us at lopd@sploro.eu. Please note, however, that once you have withdrawn your consent, we will no longer be able to process your data and will not be able to continue with the evaluation of your proposal.

We will only process your data for the purposes explained in this article and will only retain data for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes explained. After that, your data will be securely deleted or anonymized. We emphasise that we take appropriate technical and organizational measures to protect your data from unauthorized access, disclosure or misuse, in accordance with the requirements of relevant regulations.

Under the GDPR Directive, you have the following rights concerning your personal data:

- Right of Access
- Right to Rectification
- Right to Erasure
- Right to Restrict Processing
- Right to Data Portability
- Right to Object

Data controller: Splorotech, S.L. (ES- B71438956).

Purposes of processing: Offer and manage our products and services for entrepreneurs, startups, companies, industries, corporations and researchers to manage their innovations projects and related activities; providing contact, consultation, and communication tools with interested and related parties, responding to applications, requests and/or queries.

Lawfulness of processing: Execution of a service contract, consent of the interested party, data controller's legitimate interests and/or compliance with a legal obligation.

Disclosure to third parties: Your data may be forwarded to Sploro's collaborators that intervene in any phase of the products or services requested and for legal obligations.

Rights of interested parties: You can exercise your rights on data protection at Parque Tomás Caballero, 2 - Sixth floor, Office 6 - 31006 Pamplona – Navarra (Spain) / lopd@sploro.eu.

More information: More detailed information in the "Privacy Policy" of the company's website.

By submitting this form, the applicant provides their consent for the processing of their personal data for the purpose of evaluating their application, in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).