

Orion Ecosystem Day

Why is Business Finland supporting ecosystem initiatives

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Leading company (“Veturi”) concept

Background

- According to studies there is a competition going on between innovation systems. RDI-investments of big companies are not growing in Finland but abroad. Large companies are crucial for economical success.
- Government target: Increase of RDI investments to 4% of GDP. This cannot be achieved without big players.

Workshops and discussions with big RDI investors

Solution to tackle the challenges

- Mission based challenge competition. Four competition rounds 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.
- Competition/selection criteria: 1) commitment to increase RDI spenditure in Finland, 2) ecosystem impact

Leading company ("Veturi") ecosystems

Leading company

- Takes up the challenge by significantly increasing its R&D activities or investments in Finland
- Uses R&D as a tool to tackle a bold and inspirational mission
- Tackles the mission together with its ecosystem partners

Business Finland

- Grant for a leading/challenger company max 20 M€ or 10 M€ / company, 40 %, 3-5 years
- Payments and continuation of the project according to the goals achieved

Leading company's ecosystem

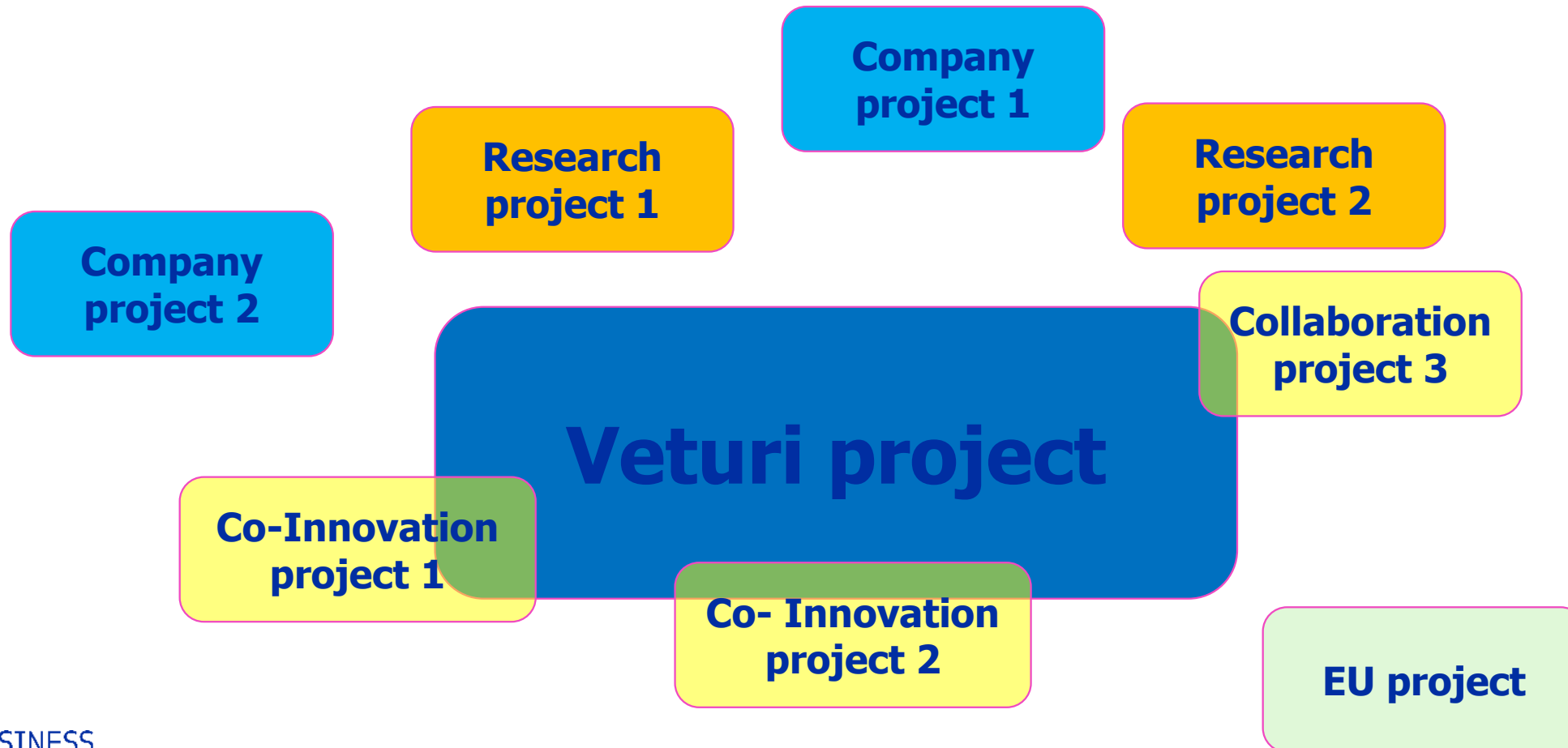
- Research organizations, companies and other partners developing partial solutions for the mission
- Broad impact on R&D investments, new knowledge and growth of the ecosystem partners

Business Finland

- Funding for projects of the ecosystem partners, BF normal funding criteria.
- Maximum funding for leading/challenger company ecosystem 50 M€/20 M€, 5 years



The ecosystem of a Leading company consists of several projects and partners, based on a joint roadmap



Partnership model

- Targeting:
 - The call will be targeted at those themes that have won the challenge competition for leading companies.
 - The aim is to create an open ecosystem with a critical mass for themes where the best conditions for creating new business and jobs have been identified.
 - Key competence and technology gaps needed to achieve the ecosystem objectives have been identified during the challenge competition.
- Who can apply
 - Consortia of companies and/or research organizations (co-innovation).
 - Research organizations without parallel business projects, where the competence or technology to be developed is still at the research stage and has been identified as a key element in achieving the objectives of the roadmaps (the participation of companies in the monitoring and steering of research is required).
 - Individual business projects that clearly implement the roadmap of leading companies.
 - Leading company has already received funding for this subject area, so it is no longer possible to receive funding in this case.
- Criteria for inclusion in the partnership model:
 - How well does the applicant consortium's proposal address the competence and technology gaps identified in this theme?
 - How is the applicant consortium committed to the objectives of the subject area's ecosystem roadmap and to building cooperation?
 - How relevant is the role of the applicant consortium in the development of the ecosystem in the theme?
 - The commitment of the leading company

Partnership project preparation

- A necessary prerequisite for the Partnership model projects is that they clearly implement one of the roadmaps published by the leading companies. Projects may also be related to one of Business Finland's programs.
- Research projects must include international collaboration.
- Partnership applicants should be in contact with the contact persons from both the leading company and Business Finland. In order to be able to make a decision based on as much information as possible, Business Finland requires the leading company to have a view on the significance of the proposed projects from the perspective of promoting the roadmap. Business Finland has to be able to discuss the relation of the project to the roadmap with the leading company.
- The leading company does not decide who gets the funding. This will be at the discretion of Business Finland. Belonging to or not belonging to a leading company's roadmap does not affect the funding of the project. It only has an effect on whether a project will be connected to the leading company's ecosystem as a Partnership model project.
- The Partnership model projects must start during the leading company's own project. They do not necessarily have to end at the same time as the leading company's project. In the Co-innovation project, the leading company's parallel subproject may continue self-financed by the leading company after the leading company's project has been completed.
- The projects in the partnership model comply with the normal terms and conditions for Business Finland's financing.

Projects in the Partnership model

- The leading company uses the roadmap to activate the ecosystem in a certain direction and theme.
- Co-innovation project
 - In general, these projects entail the leading company participating in some part of the project. The co-innovation project does not need to be paralleled to a leading company's own project, but it is necessary for the project to be related to the leading company's roadmap.
- Research project
 - Research funding without parallel business projects is possible. However, the subject must be one of the themes for which, based on the roadmap, there is a need for new knowledge and competence based on research.
 - Several companies must be involved in steering the research. Business Finland does not require companies to fund the research, but it is an excellent way to measure true commitment. Research organizations often require a financial contribution from companies.
- Individual corporate projects
 - The subject of these projects must be related to the themes of the roadmap. Often this is a joint project with the leading company, but not always.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND PILOTING – for companies

Loans for development and piloting

Grants for reasearch projects



Funding for research organizations

- The funding level of public research projects is typically 70 %.
- Majority of the funding to the co-innovation projects
- Minimum: one research organization and three companies (at least two of these with an own funding application)
- All research projects are expected to have international collaboration to be eligible for funding. Only in exceptional cases we may fund projects without international collaboration.
- Research organizations are requested to provide equal rights of the first refusal on utilization of the research results also to those companies whose projects have participated in the same joint action (co-innovation).
- Leading company competition roadmaps may enable research funding without parallel company projects, as co-research projects. However, several companies need to express their interest in and commitment to the research project.



Applications for partnership model funding

- Funding:

- Funding is granted to the best projects (i.e. not evenly across different subject areas).
- Normal Business Finland funding levels (grants to companies 40–50%, loans to companies 50%, research funding typically 70%).
- Normal Business Finland funding criteria: Funding decisions are taken independently by Business Finland. The partnership cooperation does not guarantee funding. Business Finland can also grant funding to a project even though it is not accepted as a partner model project.

- Schedule:

- The leading companies can constantly activate consortia.
- Several deadlines for partnership calls annually. Next cutoffs **30.1.2024, 30.4.2024 and 30.8.2024 (all project types)**

A close-up photograph of a person in a blue lab coat holding a clear petri dish. The background is a blurred laboratory environment with various pieces of equipment and other petri dishes on a surface. The lighting is soft and focused on the hand and the dish.

Let's grab the 4%
RDI-challenge!

and

Multi-billion €
global business!