

Application guide

IPTF and GSTP (Element 2)

Danish space technology call 2024

March 2024 (Revised version)

IPTF and GSTP call 2024

In this document, you will find information about the Danish space technology call 2024 for funding from the European Space Agency, ESA's General Support technology Programme (GSTP) and Industrial Policy Task Forces (IPTF).

Table of Contents

1. What can I apply for?	3
2. Who can apply?	4
3. Category 1 projects - IPTF	4
3.1 Definition.....	4
3.2 How much can I apply for?	5
3.3 How do I apply?	5
Step 1: Submission of applications	6
Step 2: Pitch session and decision from the Agency	7
Step 3: Submit IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA.....	8
Step 4: ESA evaluation and prioritization	9
Step 5: Activities presented to ESA IPC	10
Step 6: Submit Full Proposal to ESA	10
4. Category 2 projects – GSTP (Element 2)	11
4.1 Definition.....	11
4.2 How much can I apply for?	11
4.3 How do I apply?	12
Step 1: Submission of “The Danish Request for Support”.....	12
Step 2: Pitch session and decision from the Agency	13
Step 3: Submit Outline Proposal to ESA	15
Step 4: ESA evaluation and prioritization	16
Step 5: Submit Full Proposal to ESA	17
5. The Agency’s contact information	18

1. What can I apply for?

In 2024, the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science (hereafter: The Agency) has allocated up to 5.950.000€ to support Danish companies' and research institutions' space related projects.

In 2024 the support will come from ESA's General Support Technology Programme (GSTP) (Element 2) and through the Industrial Policy Task Force (IPTF) aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of the Danish space industry and correcting the industrial geo-return for Denmark.

The purpose of the call is to support the implementation of Denmark's National Space Strategy's objectives as well as the overall development of Danish core competencies in upstream space activities.

In 2024, the call is divided into two categories:

Category 1 - IPTF is dedicated towards industry/institution driven innovation projects as well as projects building upon successfully conducted ESA activities at TRL 3-6 to be implemented through the ESA Industrial Policy Task Force for Denmark.

For category 1 projects up to 4.35 million Euros have been allocated.

Read more about category 1 projects in section 3.

Category 2 - GSTP (Element 2) is dedicated towards industry driven co-funded innovation activities at TRL 3-8 enabling the development of technologies and products for market competitiveness and sustainability.

For category 2 projects up to 1.6 million Euros have been allocated.

Read more about category 2 projects in section 4.

➤ [Read more about ESA's GSTP programme here.](#)

Note: On 17 April 2024 a one-day workshop hosted by the Agency and ESA will be held in Copenhagen. The workshop programme will include:

- Information about the call and the two categories
- Guidance to proposal writing
- Bilateral meetings with GSTP Management

2. Who can apply?

To apply for funding from the Danish IPTF and GSTP (Element 2) in 2024, applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- The applicant company or institution must be registered in Denmark.
- The applicant portion of the activity must take place in Denmark.
- The applicant must meet ESA's requirements.

Applicants should be registered in **esa-star** for the last steps of the application process. It is highly encouraged to do this early.

3. Category 1 projects - IPTF

The Industrial Policy Task Force (IPTF) is aimed at correcting the industrial geo-return for Denmark and strengthening the competitiveness of the Danish space industry. IPTF is dedicated to innovation projects within the technology readiness level range TRL 3-6.

The purpose of category 1 projects is to support innovation projects as well as projects building upon successfully conducted ESA activities. Projects developing technology aiming at applications within all ESA programme areas (Earth Observation, Science, Exploration, Navigation, Telecommunication, Space Transportation and Space Safety) are welcome.

For category 1 projects up to 4.35 million Euros have been allocated.

3.1 Definition

Project proposals can target the development of upstream space technologies and products that can:

- be useful for the short- and long-term Danish return in ESA programmes or domains;
- have a long-term effect on the competitiveness of the Danish space industry, including on the non-space or commercial markets;
- support the development of a growing and diversified industrial base;
- increase space technological and strategic competencies for the future;
- support the contribution and priorities of Denmark in future ESA Ministerial Councils.

It is not a requirement that the activity covers all phases of a project. However, additional funding cannot be guaranteed and will be subject to

a new call.

3.2 How much can I apply for?

All Category 1 projects within this 2024 call are supported with the maximum funding amount following ESA rules. Category 1 can be covered 100% by ESA up to 1 million Euros per project. Co-funding of activities is allowed.

Category 1 projects are supported based on the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of the project, i.e. intended start and end TRL must fall in the range from TRL 3 to TRL 6 (inclusive).

3.3 How do I apply?

The application process for an IPTF project is as follows:

- Step 1: The applicant submits to the Agency a proposal in the template: *Danish Request for Support*. The application deadline is **20 May 2024**.
- Step 2: If the proposal is within the scope of the call the applicant will be invited to present the project at a pitch session where the Agency and ESA will provide feedback and make recommendations.
- Step 3: Applicants selected after the pitch session will be invited to submit an IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA before the ESA deadline on **15 August 2024**.
- Step 4: ESA evaluates the received IPTF Outline Proposals and selects projects to be supported.
- Step 5: Selected proposals will need approval by ESA Industrial Policy Committee (IPC) in October 2024 as part of the Industrial Policy Task Force (IPTF) for Denmark Work Plan. This step does not require the intervention of the applicants.
- Step 6: ESA invites selected applicants to submit a Full Proposal to ESA before the ESA deadline to be defined per activity – tentatively in Q4 2024 or Q1 2025

Read more about each step in the sections below.

Important note: By submitting a proposal to the Agency, the applicant confirms that the Agency may publish the activity on its website, newsletter, and LinkedIn, in case the activity is offered a contract by ESA.

Step 1: Submission of applications

Before submission

Before submitting a Danish Request for Support, please read the full application guide. If you have any questions, or wish to receive feedback on a project idea, please contact the Agency. The Agency can also provide references to experts in ESA and/or clarify the process.

Potential applicants who have no previous experience with the application process at ESA are also welcome to contact the Agency for guidance. It is also possible to receive free advice from ESA regarding ideas for new products or services that could potentially lead to an application.

Please contact UFS-FVI-RUM@ufm.dk or Cecilie Tornøe, ct@ufm.dk +45 7231 8284 if you need advice.

Submission

The deadline for submitting proposals to the Agency for category 1 projects in 2024 is 20th May 2024.

Proposals should be no longer than 2-3 pages and must be submitted in PDF in this template:

➤ **[Danish Request for Support \(Word format\)](#)**

The proposal on *Danish Request for Support* must include:

- Project title
- A brief description of the applicant
- Targeted ESA mission if any
- A brief description of the specific project
- A brief overall description of the applicant's business case
- Project cost information

Please describe how the activity fits the strategic interests of the applicant's institution or company. The Agency does not expect the application to contain a long, detailed plan, but a brief and well-considered plan.

Applicants are not required to attach the IPTF Outline Proposal to their Danish Request for Support.

The Agency will conduct a brief evaluation of the proposal to determine whether it contains sufficient information and is within the scope of the call.

Selected applicants will be invited to a pitch session held 2-4 weeks after application deadline. Pitch sessions are targeted to be organized in the period 10th-21st June.

Step 2: Pitch session and decision from the Agency

The pitch session will allow the Agency and ESA to assess the maturity of the project and to provide recommendations to the applicant on how to improve the proposal to enhance the chances of submitting a successful IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA.

Both the Agency and ESA will participate in the pitch session.

The 40 minutes pitch session is conducted online and consists of two parts:

1. Presentation of the project by the applicant. Maximum 20 minutes.
2. Clarification, discussion and feedback for the application. 20 minutes.

The applicant is requested to prepare and submit a presentation in e.g. PowerPoint or pdf to the Agency prior to the start of the pitch session. There are no specific requirements for presentation software, but the Agency must be able to open the presentation.

The pitch-presentation of the project must include:

Project Description

- Project description – including core activities.
- Targeted ESA mission if any.
- Description of the innovative element of the technology/product.
- Achievements/information related to previous ESA activities on the subject (only if the activity is a continuation of previous development).
- Rationale on how the project can support the contribution of the Danish entities in future ESA missions and projects (only to be provided in case the technology targets to contribute in an ESA mission).
- A brief introduction to the background of the applicant (company or research institution), its experience, and the expected project team.

Business/Application Context

- How does the project fit into the applicant's product/service portfolio?
- Clarification of the business model or targeted application/mission:

- Which market/application is the technology/product targeting?
- Who are the competitors?
- What user needs does the product/service aim to fulfill?
- How is this technology/service advantageous compared to existing solutions?
- Clarification of risks associated with the project – include both business risks and technical risks.
- How does the final product/service align with the applicant's long- term business strategy?

Implementation

- What are the expected total project costs?
- What is the cost at completion (including subsequent phases not covered in the current project phase(s))?
- What is the project timeline?

Note: If a consortium applies, it is requested to include all relevant information about each individual company/institution.

The Agency and ESA do not expect the applicant to have final and complete answers to all project related aspects at the pitch session. But it is expected that the presentation addresses all aspects mentioned above.

The aspects which the applicant is requested to address during the pitch session are similar to the aspects required to be addressed in the IPTF Outline Proposal. Thus, the presentation is not expected to include more than what ESA requires in the IPTF Outline Proposal.

If the Agency requests further information, either during or after the pitch session, this must be provided to the Agency in writing as soon as possible.

Once the pitch session is completed, ESA will select proposals based on their presentation. Selected applicants will be invited to submit an IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA.

Step 3: Submit IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA

The deadline for submitting an IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA is 15 August 2024.

When submitting your IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA, please forward a copy to the Agency.

IPTF Outline proposals shall be submitted to the following email account: gstp.management@esa.int.

➤ [IPTF Outline Proposal Template \(Word format\)](#)

ESA evaluates the IPTF Outline Proposal according to ESA requirements, see step 4 below. Proposals falling out of scope will be rejected. ESA may come back to the applicant with questions and may require clarification after the deadline.

Step 4: ESA evaluation and prioritization

Overall, for Category 1 projects, ESA evaluates the following aspects:

- Clear indication of the application and potential users of the technology.
- Clear and credible definition of the technical objectives, key requirements, technical steps and risks to be addressed in this activity.
- Clarity of the management approach and the adequacy of the proposed costs with the work to be performed in activity.
- Credibility and quality of the bidder's background, experience, and facilities.

Following the evaluation process, ESA provides a prioritized list to the Agency, from which the projects to be supported are selected.

The selection is conducted in dialogue between ESA and the Agency. The final decision is made based on the process described in this document. The Agency and ESA inform the applicants of the outcome.

The Agency and ESA provide written notification to applicants who are not selected to proceed.

After communication of the selection to the applicants, the Agency is no longer involved in the application process and contract negotiation.

Special aspects in the evaluation

The final selection depends on the pool of applicants, available budget, and ESA's evaluation. This may potentially also result in ESA proposing a de-scope of one or more activities. The Agency takes ESA's recommendations into account.

The Agency encourages all applicants with relevant projects within all ESA programme areas (Earth Observation, Science, Exploration, Navigation, Telecommunication, Space Transportation and Space Safety) are welcome. No topics will be excluded.

The Agency may not select the applicant in these cases:

- ESA advises against a particular activity based on factors within or outside of ESA. The Agency will take this recommendation into account, possibly resulting in a rejection.

- a consortium applies for funding and a share of the project is carried out by an international partner which is included in the requested amount. In such a case, the Agency may require the international applicant to cover that share of the project through another ESA Member State. Please note that activities carried out in non-ESA Member States may not be possible.

Step 5: Activities presented to ESA IPC

Selected activities will be presented for approval to the ESA Industrial Policy Committee (IPC) as part of the Industrial Policy Task Force (IPTF) for Denmark Work Plan.

This step is done by ESA and does not require the intervention of the applicants.

Step 6: Submit Full Proposal to ESA

Selected projects will be invited by ESA to submit a Full Proposal within a timeframe determined by ESA. All necessary information is going to be provided to the applicant in the invitation e-mail from ESA.

In the event of a successful evaluation of the Full Proposal, ESA and the applicant will engage in contract negotiations.

Appeal Options

The Agency has conducted an analysis of the legal status of the application process within the Danish Administrative Law. The conclusion is that the process related to the issuing of Danish letters of support cannot be considered decisions under Danish administrative law. ESA, an independent international organization, makes the final decision in accordance with ESA's convention and its derived administrative rules. It is, therefore, not possible to appeal ESA's decisions to Danish authorities. However, it is possible to appeal to ESA's (industrial) ombudsman.

To ensure high transparency and quality in this call 2024, the Agency has chosen to adhere to good administrative practices to the extent possible in the part of the application process which the Agency is responsible. This includes rules on hearing parties and providing justifications, which help qualify and legitimize the evaluations. In the dialogue with ESA, the Agency has also emphasized transparency in their part of the process. Therefore, ESA offers Danish applicants both a brief written justification and an oral debriefing following ESA's technical assessment of the proposals.

4. Category 2 projects – GSTP (Element 2)

This category is dedicated towards industry driven co-funded activities enabling the development of technologies and products for market competitiveness and sustainability. Projects developing upstream space technology aiming at applications within the following ESA programme areas are welcome: Earth Observation, Science, Exploration, Navigation, Space Transportation and Space Safety.

This will be implemented through GSTP Element 2 dedicated innovation activities at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3-8, enabling the development of technologies and products for market competitiveness and sustainability.

For category 2 projects up to 1.6 million Euros have been allocated.

4.1 Definition

GSTP Element 2 projects are targeting the development of technologies and products that support market competitiveness.

It is not a requirement that the activity covers all phases of a project. However, additional funding cannot be guaranteed at this time and will be subject to a new call.

4.2 How much can I apply for?

Category 2 projects are supported based on the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of the project, i.e. intended start and end TRL must fall in the range from TRL 3 to TRL 8 (inclusive). As a general guideline, SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) are supported at 80%, while non-SMEs are supported at 50% to 75% depending on the TRL. ESA's support percentages are always applicable (TRLs are defined as per ECSS-E-HB-11A "Technology Readiness Level Guidelines"; <http://www.ecss.nl>).

Note: Universities and research institutions can participate as either SMEs or non-SMEs based on their size and financial interests. Without financial interests, applicants can be covered at 100%, but only for a certain portion of the project.

We strongly recommend that applicants investigate the funding rates on the Open Space Innovation Platform (OSIP) website before submitting their application.

➤ [Open Space Innovation Platform \(OSIP\) website](#)

4.3 How do I apply?

The application process for a GSTP Element 2 project is as follows:

- Step 1: The applicant submits to the Agency a proposal in the template: *Danish Request for Support*. The application must be submitted before **20 May 2024**.
- Step 2: If the proposal is considered within the scope of the call, the applicant will be invited to present the project at a pitch session. The Agency and ESA will provide feedback and make recommendations.
- Applicants selected after the pitch session will be invited to submit an IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA before the ESA deadline on **15 August 2024**.
- Step 4: ESA evaluates the GSTP E2 Outline Proposals and selects projects to be supported.
- Step 5: Successful applicants will receive a Danish Letter of Support for their projects and are invited to submit a Full Proposal to ESA following the ESA Star process

Read more about each step in the sections below.

Important note: By submitting a proposal to the Agency, the applicant confirms that the Agency may publish the activity on its website, newsletter, and LinkedIn, in case the activity is supported from the Danish side and offered a contract by ESA.

Step 1: Submission of “The Danish Request for Support”

Before submission

Before submitting a *Danish Request for Support*, please read the full application guide. If you have any questions, or wish to receive feedback on a project idea, please contact the Agency. The Agency can provide references to ESA experts and/or clarify the process.

Potential applicants who have no previous experience with the application process at ESA are also welcome to contact the Agency for guidance on this. It is also possible to receive free advice from ESA regarding ideas for new products or services that could potentially lead to an application.

Please contact UFS-FVI-RUM@ufm.dk or Cecilie Tornøe, ct@ufm.dk +45 7231 8284 if you need advice.

Submission

The deadline for submitting applications to the Agency for category 2 (GSTP) projects in 2024 is 20th May 2024.

Proposals should be no longer than 2-3 pages and must be submitted in PDF on this template:

➤ [**Danish Request for Support \(Word format\)**](#)

The Danish Request for Support must include:

- Project title
- A brief description of the applicant
- Targeted ESA mission if any
- A brief description of the specific project
- A brief overall description of the applicant's business case
- Project cost information

Please describe how the activity fits the strategic interests of the applicant's institution or company. The Agency does not expect the application to present a long, detailed plan, but a brief and well-considered plan.

Applicants are not required to attach ESA's GSTP E2 Outline Proposal to their *Danish Request for Support*.

Based on the submitted request for support, the Agency will conduct a brief evaluation to determine whether the submitted proposal contains sufficient information on all points and falls within the framework of the call. This is required to be invited to a pitch session.

After the application deadline the Agency will review the received applications and invite to pitch sessions as soon as possible. Selected applicants are invited to pitch sessions held within 2-4 weeks after the application deadline. Pitch sessions are targeted in the period 10th-21st June.

Step 2: Pitch session and decision from the Agency

The purpose of the pitch session is to allow the Agency and ESA to assess the maturity of the project and to provide recommendations to the applicant on improving the material or other focus areas that could potentially enhance the chances of submitting a successful GSTP E2 Outline Proposal to ESA.

Both the Agency and ESA will participate in the pitch session.

The 40 minutes pitch session is conducted online (e.g., via Zoom) and consists of two parts:

1. Presentation of the project by the applicant. Maximum 20 minutes.
2. Clarification, discussion and feedback for the application. 20 minutes.

The applicant is requested to prepare and submit a presentation (e.g., in PowerPoint or pdf) to the Agency prior to the start of the pitch session. There are no specific requirements for presentation software, but the Agency must be able to open the presentation.

The pitch presentation of the project must include:

Project Description

- Project description – including core activities.
- Targeted ESA mission if any.
- Description of the innovative element of the technology/product.
- A brief introduction to the background of the applicant (company or research institution), its experience, and the expected project team.

Business Context

- How does the project fit into the applicant's product/service portfolio?
- Clarification of the business model:
 - Which market is the technology/product targeting?
 - Who are the competitors?
 - What user needs does the product/service aim to fulfill?
 - How is this technology/service advantageous compared to existing solutions?
- Clarification of risks associated with the project – include both business risks and technical risks.
- How does the final product/service align with the applicant's long-term business strategy?

Implementation

- What are the expected total project costs?
- What is the cost at completion (including subsequent phases not covered in the current project phase(s))?
- What is the project timeline?

Note: If a consortium applies, it is requested to include all relevant information about each individual company/institution.

The Agency and ESA do not expect the applicant to have final and completed answers to all project related aspects at the pitch session. But it is expected that the presentation addresses all aspects mentioned.

The aspects which the applicant is requested to address during the pitch session are similar to the aspects required to be addressed in the GSTP E2 Outline Proposal. Thus, the presentation is not expected to include more than what ESA requires in the GSTP E2 Outline Proposal.

If the Agency requests further information, either during or after the pitch session, this must be provided to the Agency in writing as soon as possible.

Once the pitch session is completed, ESA will select proposals based on their presentation. Selected applicants will be invited to submit an IPTF Outline Proposal to ESA.

Selected applicants will be requested to submit an GSTP E2 Outline Proposal to ESA within the deadline of 15th August 2024.

The Agency may not provide an applicant with a Letter of Support if:

- ESA advises against a particular activity based on factors within or outside of ESA. The Agency will take this recommendation into account, possibly resulting in a rejection of a Letter of Support
- a consortium applies for funding and there a share of the project is carried out by a foreign partner which is included in the requested amount. In such a case, the Agency may require the foreign applicant to cover that share of the project through another ESA member state. Please note that activities carried out in non-ESA Member States may not be possible.

Proposals falling out of scope will be rejected.

Step 3: Submit Outline Proposal to ESA

The deadline for submitting an GSTP E2 Outline Proposal to ESA is **15th August 2024**.

When submitting your GSTP E2 Outline Proposal to ESA, please forward a copy to the Agency.

On ESA's GSTP website, you can find descriptions of the program elements, as well as request formats, requirements, and criteria for ESA's own application process.

➤ [**ESA GSTP – Element 2, Innovation projects \(MAKE\)**](#)

Projects must apply through the GSTP Element 2 process, where a company/institution submits its project proposal. The application is called Outline Proposal.

To submit your GSTP E2 Outline Proposal, click “Submit Your Idea” at the top of the Element 2 webpage.

After the deadline ESA evaluates the applications according to its own requirements and criteria of GSTP E2 Outline Proposals and will reject applications that do not fall within the scope of the call.

ESA may potentially have questions to the applicants after the deadline.

Step 4: ESA evaluation and prioritization

After the deadline for submitting the GSTP E2 Outline Proposals, ESA evaluates all proposals based on the Element 2 criteria and the framework of the call. ESA’s criteria can be found on the [procurement website](#). In broad terms, ESA evaluates the following aspects:

- Clarity and credibility of the business/strategic opportunity and market context
- Credibility and quality of the technical requirements, technical solutions versus activity objectives.
- Credibility and quality of the proposed development plan, deliverables and schedule.
- Credibility and quality of the bidder's background, experience and facilities.
- Credibility and quality of the cost breakdown by major cost elements and cost by funding source

The criteria described in ESA's Element 2 website are applicable at all times.

Following the evaluation process, SA provides a prioritized list to the Agency, from which the projects to be supported are selected.

The selection is conducted in dialogue between ESA and the Agency. The final decision is made based on the process described in this document. The Agency and ESA inform the applicants of the outcome.

The Agency and ESA provide written notification to applicants who did not advance in the process. After the provision of Letters of Support, the Agency is no longer involved in the application process and contract negotiation.

Special aspects in the evaluation

The final selection of the GSTP E2 Outline Proposals depends on the pool of applicants and ESA's evaluation. This may potentially also result in ESA proposing a de-scope of one or more activities. The Agency leans on ESA's recommendations.

Step 5: Submit Full Proposal to ESA

GSTP E2 Outline Proposals which have been positively evaluated will receive an invitation from ESA to submit a Full Proposal.

The Letter of Support is valid only for one year from the date of issue with the possibility to extend if ESA deems this necessary.

In the event of a successful evaluation of the Full Proposal, ESA and the applicant engage in negotiations to finalize a contract.

Appeal Options

The Agency has conducted an analysis of the legal status of the application process within the Danish Administrative Law. The conclusion is that the process related to the issuing of Danish letters of support cannot be considered decisions under Danish administrative law. ESA, an independent international organization, makes the final decision in accordance with ESA's convention and its derived administrative rules. It is, therefore, not possible to appeal ESA's decisions to Danish authorities. However, it is possible to appeal to ESA's (industrial) ombudsman.

To ensure high transparency and quality in the GSTP call 2024, the Agency has chosen to adhere to good administrative practices to the extent possible in the part of the application process which the Agency is responsible.

This includes rules on hearing parties and providing justifications, which help qualify and legitimize the evaluations. In the dialogue with ESA, the Agency has also emphasized transparency in their part of the process. Therefore, ESA offers Danish applicants both a brief written justification and an oral debriefing following ESA's technical assessment of the proposals.

5. The Agency's contact information

The Danish IPTF and GSTP 2024 call is managed by the Space Division in the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science.

If you have any questions concerning the call, you are welcome to contact the Agency for clarification. Potential applicants who have no previous experience with the application process at ESA are encouraged to contact the Agency for guidance.

Please contact UFS-FVI-RUM@ufm.dk or Cecilie Tornøe, ct@ufm.dk +45 7231 8284 if you need advice.