

# USE CASE INITIATIVES 2027

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### Overview

The Hi-Acts Use Case Initiatives Call 2027 is a funding program supporting the translation of accelerator-based research into applied innovations, with a strong focus on industry collaborations.

<b>Funding period:</b>	1 January 2027 until 31 December 2027
<b>Volume of funding:</b>	Up to € 100,000
<b>Application deadline:</b>	Friday, 18 September 2026
<b>Application format:</b>	One PDF including Application Form, LOIs and Annex to <a href="mailto:info@hi-acts.de">info@hi-acts.de</a>

### Objective

The Helmholtz Innovation Platform for Accelerator-based Technologies and Solutions (Hi-Acts) is a sustainable, cross-sector platform for pioneering applications of accelerator-based technologies. The Hi-Acts Use Case Initiatives Call 2027 is part of the ongoing Hi-Acts Use Case program, which features an annual call with a total funding volume of €950,000. Between 2023 and 2026, 36 projects have already been funded.

Use Case Initiative applications should fulfill at least one of the following criteria:

- Actively increase industry participation and co-investment (e.g., through service-based models).
- Foster jointly funded collaborations with industry and healthcare institutions.
- Generate tangible outcomes such as licensing agreements or spin-offs.
- Demonstrable technical progress in translating research into practical applications.

Possible project goals can include:

- Enhancing the technical setup or analytical performance of accelerator-based technologies and methods to improve industrial usability (e.g., in terms of time, reliability, and cost efficiency).
- Targeting high-potential applications within specific industries (e.g., medtech, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, aerospace, or sustainable materials).
- Advancing new or existing accelerator concepts, technologies, or analytical methods for industrial use (e.g., improving maintenance efficiency, developing integrated solutions, or enabling testing in real accelerator environments).
- Expanding or developing service portfolios (e.g., through smart data analysis and evaluation solutions).
- Broadening access to accelerator knowledge for non-specialist users and strengthening industry–science interaction (e.g., through communication, training, exchange formats, standardization, and innovation formats such as hackathons).

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### Requirements

- Eligible for funding are current partners of the Hi-Acts consortium: DESY, HZDR, GSI, Hereon, HZB. Cross-centre initiatives are also welcome.
- Projects must contribute to the overall objectives of Hi-Acts: Technological, analytical or organizational solutions that facilitate the use of accelerators for industry or medicine or technologies with a clear accelerator context (including e.g. the use of synchrotron beamlines or ion beams for analytical or preparative experiments that address a real-world application).
- The official application form must be used, and images can be attached in an annex.
- An attachment of **at least one LOI** (letter of intent) or **written statement** (e.g. e-mail) of a potential customer or user of the intended solution or service is required.
- External partners are welcome but not eligible for funding. They can be engaged through cooperation agreements or subcontracts.
  - The expenditure of external partners can be credited as additional in-kind contributions.
  - Collaboration with external partners must comply with all applicable legal requirements (e.g., state aid regulations).
- Internal own contributions can be included through the involvement of additional staff, beamtime or comparable measures.
- Requested project funds must be invoiced and spent by 31 December 2027 at the latest.
- The proposal must describe the target market environment and convincingly demonstrate its economic exploitation potential, including quantified estimates of expected demand (e.g., number of measurements or customers).
- The transfer offices of the associated Helmholtz partners must approve the project application before submission (contact details below).

### Evaluation Criteria

- Technological Relevance & Level of Innovation
  - Clear accelerator context and high impact
  - Plausible TRL (see annex) increase or convincing economic impact
- Transfer Strategy & Transfer Activities
  - Strong transfer potential with concrete activities
  - Suitable LOIs or external partners with clear contribution
- Market Environment & Follow-up Perspective
  - Convincing market potential and impact
  - Clear follow-up and funding/investment outlook
- Quality of Project Plan & Resource Planning
  - Realistic plan, milestones, risks, and budget

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### Procedure

1. Complete the Use Case Initiatives Application Form (also as download form on [www.hi-acts.de](http://www.hi-acts.de))
2. Send it to your transfer office for cross-checking (formal criteria)
3. Send your complete application as one PDF including Application Form, LOIs and Annex to [info@hi-acts.de](mailto:info@hi-acts.de) (cc your local contact at the transfer office in the mail) by **Friday, 18 September 2026**.
4. The review committee, composed of the heads of the transfer offices and selected industry representatives, will define a short list with the most promising projects.
5. Short-listed initiatives will be invited to present a **3 min online pitch**, probably on **Tuesday, 24 November or Wednesday, 25 November 2026**.  
As part of the preparation, we offer participants the opportunity to take part in a **pitch training**:
  - An online introductory session (approx. 2-hours) will be held on two alternative dates in calendar week 46.
  - Following this, you will have the chance to schedule a 45-minute one-on-one coaching session.
  - Participation is highly recommended, as the pitch will be considered in the final evaluation.
6. You will be informed latest at the beginning of December whether your proposal has been accepted, with a planned **project start in January 2027**.

### Important note:

Your application will be forwarded to selected industry representatives and experts for assessment. All the information provided in the application will be treated in the strictest confidence. The industry representatives and experts will neither forward the application to third parties nor make it accessible to third parties; this applies even after the end of the selection process.

To keep you informed about Hi-Acts activities and opportunities, all applicants of the proposal will be added to the Hi-Acts newsletter. You may unsubscribe at any time.

### Contact Details

DESY: [johannes.blum@desy.de](mailto:johannes.blum@desy.de)

HZDR: [p.jungke@hzdr.de](mailto:p.jungke@hzdr.de) and [t.gruening@hzdr.de](mailto:t.gruening@hzdr.de)

GSI: [s.utermann@gsi.de](mailto:s.utermann@gsi.de)

Hereon: [marc.thiry@hereon.de](mailto:marc.thiry@hereon.de)

HZB: [anna.anochin@helmholtz-berlin.de](mailto:anna.anochin@helmholtz-berlin.de)

Contact for general questions: [info@hi-acts.de](mailto:info@hi-acts.de)

Additional information available on the Hi-Acts website [www.hi-acts.de](http://www.hi-acts.de)

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### Annex

#### Definition of Technology Readiness Level based on Horizon Europe Work Program

TRL 1	Basic principles observed
TRL 2	Technology concept formulated
TRL 3	Experimental proof of concept
TRL 4	Technology validated in a lab
TRL 5	Technology validated in a relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
TRL 6	Technology demonstrated in a relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
TRL 7	System prototype demonstration in an operational environment
TRL 8	System complete and qualified
TRL 9	Actual system proven in an operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies, or in space)