

Boosting the transformation towards climate-neutral cities, the net-zero economy and open strategic autonomy through Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP)

Call: [Supporting the implementation of the Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission \(HORIZON-MISS-2026-04-PCP\)](#)

Type of action: HORIZON-PCP HORIZON Pre-commercial Procurement

Deadline model: single-stage

Opening date: 06 May 2025

Deadline date: 20 January 2026 17:00:00 Brussels time

Expected outcome:

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Public procurers stimulate from demand side the competitive development of market ready innovative solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that can contribute to the transition of local communities towards climate neutrality, whilst strengthening EU open strategic autonomy;
- Public procurers leverage PCP to bring to the market innovative solutions in sectors relevant for climate change mitigation (such as energy efficiency in buildings, production and use of renewable energy, sustainable and smart mobility, digitalisation etc.) and implement those innovative solutions in the participant cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Public procurers drive innovation and increase resilience in the supply chain by opening up opportunities for innovative companies established in the European Union's Member States and Horizon Europe Associated Countries, in particular SMEs and Startups, to access the public procurement market and scale up their business;
- Increased opportunities for wide market uptake and economies of scale for the supply side through increased demand for innovative solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the local level, wide publication of results and where relevant contribution to standardisation, regulation or certification;
- Present the expected greenhouse gas emission reduction in the participating cities by 2030 and 2050, in comparison to a baseline established at the beginning of the project.

Scope:

Rationale

Pre-commercial procurement (PCP) can help close the gap between supply and demand, strengthen EU strategic autonomy, and support the green and digital transition. Cities play a key role by procuring innovative solutions to cut greenhouse gas emissions, but demand is fragmented. PCP offers a way to pool demand, open markets for SMEs/startups, and accelerate uptake of breakthrough solutions.

Scope & Activities

- PCP consortia of **public procurers (cities/local authorities)** jointly procure R&D for net-zero solutions.
- No direct funding for developers; they compete in tenders launched by procurers.
- Activities: open market consultations, wide tender promotion, continuous dialogue between demand and supply, active involvement of end-users (e.g. city teams, citizens).
- Proposals must show sustainability beyond project life, link to long-term climate-neutral strategies, and include policy-maker engagement to mobilise national budgets for innovation procurement.

Deployment & Adoption

- Procurers must declare how they will adopt successful solutions:
 1. Buy during PCP (budget included).
 2. Launch follow-up procurement.
 3. Adopt open-source solutions.
 4. Provide incentives (via FSTP, max. €200,000).
- Projects should foresee sufficient time for validation and deployment.

Mission Integration

- At least **3 of the 112 Mission Cities** must be included; the lead procurer must be one.
- Work with additional follower cities to prepare and replicate solutions.

- Formal collaboration with the **Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission Platform** via MoU.
- Coordinate with Horizon Europe partnerships and initiatives (e.g. CCAM, 2ZERO, Built4People, CIVITAS) to ensure synergies.

Impact

Projects at the higher end of the budget should show greater ambition in innovation and deployment scope. Expected outcomes include accelerated market uptake, stronger early adoption, job creation, and increased competitiveness of European companies.

General conditions

1. Admissibility Conditions: Proposal page limit and layout

described in [Annex A](#) and [Annex E](#) of the Horizon Europe Work Programme General Annexes.

Proposal page limits and layout: described in Part B of the Application Form available in the Submission System.

2. Eligible Countries

described in [Annex B](#) of the Work Programme General Annexes.

A number of non-EU/non-Associated Countries that are not automatically eligible for funding have made specific provisions for making funding available for their participants in Horizon Europe projects. See the information in the [Horizon Europe Programme Guide](#).

3. Other Eligible Conditions

The specific conditions for actions with PCP/PPI procurements in section H of the General Annexes apply to grants funded under this topic.

described in [Annex B](#) of the Work Programme General Annexes.

4. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

described in [Annex C](#) of the Work Programme General Annexes.

5a. Evaluation and award: Award criteria, scoring and thresholds

are described in [Annex D](#) of the Work Programme General Annexes.

5b. Evaluation and award: Submission and evaluation processes

are described in [Annex F](#) of the Work Programme General Annexes and the [Online Manual](#).

5c. Evaluation and award: Indicative timeline for evaluation and grant agreement

described in [Annex F](#) of the Work Programme General Annexes.

6. Legal and financial set-up of the grants

PCP/PPI procurement costs are eligible.

described in [Annex G](#) of the Work Programme General Annexes.

Specific conditions

described in the [specific topic of the Work Programme](#)