

7th REINFORCING Open Call on “Responsible Security” (Booster Call)

Introduction

REINFORCING supports organizations and institutions in Europe in transitioning to a new paradigm where responsibility and openness drive research and innovation (R&I) processes. Green and digital transitions have become of paramount importance to address the societal challenges that European societies currently face. The twin transition will bring enormous benefits but also undesired externalities and implications. In this regard, EU institutions and territories need to shift to more open and transparent R&I practices in which all actors share responsibility to develop services and products that are acceptable, sustainable, and bring social satisfaction.

The Open and Responsible Research and Innovation (ORRI) approach promotes collaborative efforts, sharing research outputs as early as possible for engaging citizens in co-creation processes and opening R&I to the whole society. Implementing Open and Responsible Research and Innovation (ORRI) can seem a daunting task. Over the past decade, many resources and tools have been created, but an effort to systematize, curate, and create a single-entry point was still missing. REINFORCING is this much-needed European central hub for ORRI. The [REINFORCING platform](#) is the entry point to knowledge, training, ORRI skills matchmaking, and capacity building for organizations interested in starting or continuing their journey to creating an inclusive R&I ecosystem.

Furthermore, the project brokers unique networking opportunities for organizations, institutions, and territories interested in becoming part of the European ecosystem that is transforming the R&I system by bringing it closer to society and societal needs. To support this change, REINFORCING has ring-fenced funding to invite institutions from around Europe to develop projects aiming at implementing new modes of doing R&I that drive more just transitions. All the Calls have supported and will support territories and organizations experimenting with ORRI for the first time (ORRI Incubator Open Calls) as well as those scaling up their ORRI activities (ORRI Booster Open Calls).

Responsible Security Open Call Description

Europe is facing a rapidly evolving security landscape shaped by geopolitical tensions, technological disruptions, and societal transformations. In this context, the role of R&I in safeguarding security, democratic values, ethical standards, and societal resilience is more critical than ever.

This open call supports organizations and institutions across Europe in exploring and implementing new modes of conducting R&I that respond to security-related challenges with responsibility, openness, and societal alignment. The call promotes the ORRI framework as the guiding approach to addressing the transformative security challenges facing Europe. It invites applicants to develop projects that foster collaboration between researchers, policymakers, civil society, and citizens to co-create solutions to enhance European security through innovative projects that explore and address the evolving landscape of European security with a particular emphasis on the principles of ORRI. This call seeks to support ORRI practices and related social and organizational innovations that address, or are inspired by, the following questions:

- **Securitization of science and technology:** *How are scientific practices and innovations being developed within national and European security emphasizing policies and practices? How can we, in practice, balance securitization with openness, collaboration, and ethical standards?*
- **Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI):** *How can RRI frameworks be practically applied or adapted to security-related research and innovation domains? What mechanisms could help ensure acceptability and societal engagement in security-driven innovation?*
- **Policy, governance and organizational models:** *What new governance and organizational approaches are needed to simultaneously support security, research, innovation, and ethics?*

Applicants should tackle one or more of these challenges, or propose other relevant topics related to ORRI and EU securitization, providing justification for their selection in the application process. All projects should aim to contribute to a more inclusive, transparent, and ethically grounded European security R&I ecosystem.

Potential Activities

Projects applying to this call may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Designing and implementing co-creation processes with citizens, civil society, or vulnerable groups to explore the societal impacts of dual-use technology (e.g., surveillance, AI, biotechnology).
- Developing training and dialogue workshops for researchers and innovators working in security or domains to embed RRI principles in their work.
- Establishing participatory foresight or scenario workshops to anticipate ethical and societal risks of emerging security-related research and innovation as well as dual-use technology.
- Start creating institutionally stable mechanisms (e.g., ethical review boards, socially responsible licensing) to manage the development and deployment of security research and/or dual-use technology in research institutions.
- Piloting citizen engagement models (e.g., citizen juries, deliberative panels) to inform national or regional security research agendas and policies.
- Applying the Societal Readiness Thinking Tool to align innovation trajectories with societal values and mitigate unintended consequences of security-focused research.

Interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaboration is strongly encouraged.

Projects must be based in or have relevance to the European context.

Call requirements and details

Eligible applicants should demonstrate proven experience with ORRI practices and a strong commitment to institutionalizing these approaches within their organization or territory.

Exceptionally and only for this Call, although this is a Booster Call with all the standard features of a Booster Call (maximum grant of €20,000, a project duration of 8 months, no requirement for a mandatory small consortium of two applicants, no ORRI training or mentoring services provided by the REINFORCING consortium, and only a final report required), applications from ORRI newcomers are also welcome.

However, please note that in the event of an ex aequo ranking, applicants with prior ORRI experience will be prioritized.

The REINFORCING Seventh Open Call, as a Booster Call, has specific and mandatory requirements to comply with:

- Release an ORRI resource (or ORRI Tool) to be inserted into the REINFORCING online platform. The resource should be included in the proposal text as one of the results to be delivered and its development in the list of activities to be performed.
- Attend the online internal 7th REINFORCING Open Call Kick-off meeting and online monthly meetings with the 7th REINFORCING Open Call Coordinator and REINFORCING consortium representatives.
- Take part in the online 7th Open Call mid-term review meeting.
- Join the online internal 7th REINFORCING Open Call Final Event.
- Participate in the public 7th REINFORCING Open Call Webinar at the end of the project.
- Contribute to the online communication and update of the REINFORCING project channels (e.g., website, social media, etc.) with grantees' achievements and information.
- Engage in peer learning activities.

While designing your proposal, please bear in mind that REINFORCING does not fund:

- Training or consulting activities for institutions, organizations, and territories that are not part of the consortium, since institutional changes are requested to be visible and measurable in the funded entities (grantees).
- Activities related to technological developments and/or proof of concepts, while REINFORCING could support co-creation and/or visioning workshops linked to those activities - if coherent with the scope and the requirements of the Call.
- Activities of any kind in which artificial intelligence-based systems or techniques are used or developed. Reflection on AI ethics and responsibility can instead be part of the funded actions - if coherent with the scope and the requirements of the Call.
- Projects just exploring Responsible Security, RRI, or ORRI theory.

Applications proposing such activities as listed above will be rejected in the initial phases of the evaluation process, as they will be considered ineligible.

For the 7th REINFORCING Open Call, no more than 6 projects lasting 8 months will be supported with grants of up to 20,000 euros each. Please note that different durations of the projects (less or more than 8 months) are not possible and will not be considered eligible.

Furthermore, please consider that all the funded projects will start on 1st May 2026 and end on 31st December 2026. No change to these dates can be negotiated.

Information on application procedures is available on the REINFORCING website, where the Guide for applicants, the Frequently Asked Questions, and the Checklist for Applicants can be downloaded: <https://reinforcing.eu/open-calls/current-calls>.

The Call Coordinator of the REINFORCING 7th Open Call is VTT Ltd.