

NATO SCIENCE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2025-2

The NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme promotes dialogue and practical cooperation between NATO member states and NATO partner countries based on scientific research, technological innovation and knowledge exchange. It enables scientists, experts and officials from Allied nations and NATO partner countries to work together to address emerging security challenges and their impact.

Through the SPS Programme, NATO has demonstrated its longstanding commitment to science, innovation and practical cooperation with NATO partners. The SPS Programme offers funding, expert advice and support to tailor-made, civil security-relevant activities that respond to NATO's strategic objectives. Participation in the SPS Programme enables experts and scientists to develop innovative solutions to today's security challenges, and to build partnerships with their peers in Allied nations and NATO partner countries.

For more information on the SPS Programme and its activities, please visit the NATO SPS website at www.nato.int/science.

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ELIGIBILITY

Only applications meeting all of the following criteria will be taken into consideration.

General eligibility criteria

Applications submitted to the SPS Programme must:

1. Contribute toward NATO's strategic objectives and have a clear link to security;
2. Address at least one of the SPS Key Priorities;
3. Be developed jointly by scientists or experts from at least one NATO member nation and one eligible NATO partner country.
 - All participants in the proposed activity must be nationals of a NATO member nation or one eligible NATO partner country;
 - Each activity must include a scientist or expert taking on the role of NATO country Project Director (NPD). This person must be resident and employed in a NATO member country;
 - Each activity must include a scientist or expert taking on the role of Partner country Project Director (PPD). This person must be resident and employed in an eligible NATO partner country (see list below);
 - Additional co-directors from either NATO or eligible NATO partner countries may be included in proposals for Multi-Year Projects.
4. Be developed and implemented by co-directors employed by government, academic, or other non-profit institutions. For-profit private companies are not eligible for SPS funding;
5. Include realistic plans and budgets;
6. Be developed and managed in alignment with rules and regulations outlined in the SPS handbooks available on the SPS website at the following link: <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/88007.htm>.

Individual applicants should note that they may not hold more than one SPS grant at a time. Prospective co-directors should ensure that any other SPS activity directed by either of them is formally closed before applying.

Eligible countries

Individuals from the following countries are eligible to participate in activities supported by the SPS Programme:

NATO member countries: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, the Republic of North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, United Kingdom, United States of America.

Eligible NATO partner countries: Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Egypt, Georgia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Malta, Mauritania, the Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Qatar, Serbia, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan.

BOUNDARIES OF THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

- **Topics of interest:** This call for proposals welcomes applications aligned with any of the SPS Programme's Key Priorities (outlined at the end of this document).
- **Available grants:** This call for proposals welcomes applications for Multi-Year Projects and Events (Advanced Research Workshops, Advanced Training Courses and Advanced Study Institutes).
- **Please note:**
 - **Proposals for Events** should focus on objectives beyond the execution of the event itself. They should clearly elaborate on how events and their results are relevant to NATO, and explain how organisers will ensure that the results will have an impact on relevant stakeholders and communities of interest.
 - **Proposals for Multi-Year Projects** should research and develop innovative solutions and demonstrators. They should also demonstrate a solid and long-term approach, indicating clearly the expected maturity (Technology Readiness Level) to be reached, and how additional actors (e.g. industrial partners, programmes, national funding, end users, etc.) will be involved in further developing and exploiting the results of the SPS-supported activity after its conclusion. Proposals should also include plans for the demonstration of the achieved results (prototypes, simulators, demonstrators, etc.) to key stakeholders. Proposed activities that rely on data should outline a data exploitation plan for the collection of existing data, the creation of new datasets and their management during and after the project. Data exploitation plans should also highlight risks related to the data to be used for the activity (e.g. in terms of access, privacy, security, ethical aspects, etc.), as well as valid mitigation strategies.

HOW TO APPLY

➤ **For all grant mechanisms:**

- To familiarize themselves with information required to submit a complete proposal, potential applicants may find templates of the application forms for each SPS grant mechanism on the SPS website under the heading “Managing SPS grants”.
- However, proposals must be drafted and submitted via the SPS grant platform (<https://natosps.grantplatform.com/>). Proposals submitted in any other format or means (e.g. via email) will not be taken into consideration.
- Therefore, interested applicants must:
 - Register an account on the SPS grant platform.
 - Identify available opportunities on the SPS grant platform homepage.
 - Click on “Start application” to access the application form, select the grant mechanism they are interested in, and submit their proposal.
 - All documents required to submit a complete application are accessible via the application form on the SPS grant platform. They are also available for download on the SPS website under the heading “Managing SPS grants”.
 - Especially for applicants who are not familiar with the SPS grant platform, the SPS Programme strongly advises against last minute submissions.

➤ **For Events only:** The application process for Events will follow **a single-phase approach**.

- Applicants are invited to submit their full proposal by 6 July 2025 (23:59 CET).
- The proposal will undergo evaluation by the SPS Office and the Independent Scientific Evaluation Group (ISEG). Proposals recommended by the ISEG for award will be shared with the NATO Partnerships and Cooperative Security Committee (PCSC) for approval.

➤ **For Multi-year Projects only:** The application process for Multi-Year Projects will follow **a two-phase approach**.

In phase 1:

- Applicants are invited to submit a short-form proposal by 6 July 2025 (23:59 CET).
- The proposal will undergo evaluation by the SPS Office and the ISEG.
- Only applicant whose proposals have been recommended by the ISEG will be invited to participate in phase 2 of the application process.

In phase 2:

- Applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal via the SPS grant platform.
- Phase 2 proposals will need to be coherent with the phase 1 submission, and increase the level of detail on the execution of the project, should it be approved.
- The deadline to submit the full proposal will be announced only to those invited to participate in phase 2 of the application process.
- Once submitted, phase 2 proposals will be evaluated again by the SPS Office and the ISEG.
- Proposals recommended for award by the ISEG will be shared with the PCSC for final approval.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

Full proposals for Events and phase 1 proposals for Multi-Year Projects must be submitted **before 6 July 2025 (23:59 CET)** via the SPS grant platform. Data pertaining to incomplete applications will be lost after the deadline.

All relevant enquiries prior to application submission should be addressed to sps.info@hq.nato.int. The SPS Programme will inform all applicants about the result of the evaluation of their proposals in due course, regardless of the outcome.

The NATO SPS Programme is committed to diversity and inclusion, and welcomes eligible applicants from all NATO and eligible NATO partner countries, independent of gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, religion or belief, cultural background, sexual orientation, and disability.

SPS KEY PRIORITIES

All activities funded by the SPS Programme must address at least one of the SPS Key Priorities.

In 2024, NATO Allies agreed on a revised list of thematic priorities for the SPS Programme, to maintain its focus on current and emerging security challenges that define NATO's strategic environment. These new SPS Key Priorities are listed below, without any indication of priority.

1. Environment, Climate Change and Security

- a. Understanding, mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change on security, including military operations and missions;
- b. Increased awareness on security issues arising from key environmental and climate change challenges, including health risks, scarcity of resources, increasing energy needs, and space weather events;
- c. Approaches to reduce the environmental impact of military activities;
- d. Disaster forecast and prevention of climate-related natural catastrophes.

2. Energy Security

- a. Dual-use innovative energy solutions; battlefield energy solutions; renewable energy solutions with dual-use applications;
- b. Energy infrastructure security, including technological aspects of energy security;
- c. Energy transition by design, i.e. transition from fossil fuels to innovative and more sustainable energy sources;
- d. Energy supply chain.

3. Innovation and Emerging Disruptive Technologies (EDTs)

- a. Emerging technologies with the potential of having a profound impact on security, including:
 - i. artificial intelligence (AI);
 - ii. autonomy;
 - iii. quantum;
 - iv. biotechnologies and human enhancement;
 - v. space;
 - vi. novel materials and manufacturing;
 - vii. energy and propulsion;
 - viii. next-generation communications networks;
- b. Defence against adversarial use of EDTs;
- c. Advanced and novel technologies in the field of security.

4. Counter-terrorism

- a. Detection technologies against the terrorist threat of explosive devices and other illicit activities;
- b. Solutions to Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED);
- c. Defence against terrorism misuse of technology, for example Countering Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-UAS);
- d. Human factors in the defence against terrorism, including Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE);
- e. Risk management, best practices and technologies in response to terrorism, including Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence.

5. Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) and Explosive Hazards Management

- a. Mine and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) detection;
- b. Methods and technology regarding the protection against, diagnosing effects, detection, decontamination, destruction, disposal and containment of CBRN Agents;
- c. Risk management and recovery strategies and technologies;
- d. Medical countermeasures against CBRN Agents.

6. Defence against Hybrid Threats

- a. Technological solutions and approaches to prepare, deter and defend against the coercive use of political, energy, information and other hybrid tactics by states and non-state actors;
- b. Solutions and approaches to prepare, deter and defend against hybrid tactics, both directly and through proxies, as authoritarian actors challenge our interests, values and democratic way of life;
- c. Practical tools to monitor, analyse, raise awareness on, and counter disinformation, including through cooperation with technological industries and social media platforms, such as generative artificial intelligence and deep fakes;
- d. AI tools, including reverse image technology, to detect malicious information activities;
- e. Early warning tools to detect potential hybrid activities, including in the information space.

7. Resilience

- a. Solutions to strengthen national preparedness;
- b. Crisis management and civil preparedness, including inter-agency coordination mechanisms;
- c. Digital resilience, including methods, procedures and technologies to ensure continuity of digital services during crises;
- d. Protection of critical infrastructure, supplies and personnel;
- e. Border and port security technologies.

8. Critical Underwater Infrastructure

- a. Monitoring and protection of critical underwater infrastructure;
- b. Technology for the detection of threats on surface and underwater;
- c. Protection of harbours and infrastructures in shallow waters.

9. Cyber Defence

- a. Technologies to ensure confidentiality, integrity and availability of communication networks;
- b. Support in developing cyber defence technologies and infrastructure;
- c. Best practices and information sharing;
- d. Cyber defence situational awareness;
- e. Cyber support to operations and missions.

10. Assessing and addressing threats posed by the Russian Federation

- a. Approaches and tools to counter hostile information activities (including disinformation) against Allies and Partners;
- b. Identification of trends and lessons learned for hybrid threats emanating from the Russian Federation.

11. Strategic Foresight

- a. Main trends in international security and associated implications;
- b. Regional strategies in the field of defence and security;
- c. Understanding of the future security environment;

- d. Early warning systems and indicators.

12. Human and Social Aspects of Security

- a. Women, Peace and Security (WPS);
- b. Human Security;
- c. Cultural and social aspects in operations and missions.

13. Operational Support

- d. Identifying and sharing best practices in operations and missions;
- e. Civilian support to operations and missions.

14. Other

- a. Any other proposal clearly linked to the implementation of NATO's core tasks may also be considered for funding under the SPS Programme.