



CALL FOR ENTRIES

Background

The B&C Private Foundation's Houska Prize is awarded in recognition of outstanding research projects that combine research excellence with real-world commercial applications.

Objective of the Houska Prize

The Houska Prize highlights application-oriented R&D results and showcases outstanding innovation performance and research excellence with a clear market focus in Austria. Through the Houska Prize, the B&C Private Foundation honors Austrian researchers at universities, non-university research institutions and SMEs who combine innovative findings with a clear perspective for practical application and commercial exploitation. Depending on the category, these include products, processes, methods or services, as well as research and development results with high commercialization potential.

Key Dates

Submission Period

Sep. 1, 2026 - Oct. 28, 2026

Online information session

Sep. 16, 2026, 10:00 am CEST

Online information session

Oct. 5, 2026, 2:00 pm CEST

Project evaluation by Advisory Committee and
Expert Jury

Nov. 2, 2026 - Feb. 10, 2027

Announcement of nominees

February 2027

2027 Houska Prize award ceremony

Tuesday, Apr. 20, 2027

The Houska Prize

The Houska Prize is awarded in three categories: Higher Education Research, Non-University Research and Research & Development in SMEs.

A total of EUR 760,000 in prize money will be awarded. EUR 250,000 is allocated to each category and distributed as follows:

1st Prize: EUR 150,000

2nd Prize: EUR 70,000

3rd Prize: EUR 30,000

In addition, one nominated project per category will receive the Mariella Schurz Prize, which is endowed with EUR 10,000. Students select the winning project, and the prize is presented at the award ceremony.

Evaluation Process

Once the B&C Private Foundation has confirmed that submissions meet the submission requirements, applications are evaluated by expert panels in a two-stage process: by category-specific advisory committees and a jury. Three projects are nominated in each category and ranked by the panels.



Submission

Applications must be entered online at www.houskapreis.at using an online application form consisting of specific queries and additional mandatory and optional uploads. All uploads must be submitted in PDF format (A4, font size at least 11 pt, line spacing 1.25).

One person must be designated as the project's spokesperson. This person will serve as the main contact for the B&C Private Foundation throughout the entire process.

Submissions from individual institutions as well as joint submissions involving multiple institutions are welcome and encouraged. A project may be submitted in only one category, multiple submissions of the same project are not permitted.

Applications must address the following aspects in particular:

- Description of the underlying (scientific) research results, including an explanation of the research methodology and the TRL level, where applicable
- Description of innovative content/potential and USP
- Description of the planned economic implementation and identification of the existing or intended business partner with operations in Austria or evidence of actual or anticipated commercial success or economic benefits
- Description of contribution to Austria as a location for business and innovation
- Description of impact (output, outcome and impact), including its contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In the case of a repeat submission, a description of the key project advances made since the previous submission must be provided. Applicants may request that up to two reviewers be excluded due to potential competitive conflicts. A brief justification must be provided.

General Information

The money prize must be used for further research activities. Prize money is paid exclusively to the submitting institution and not to private individuals. Where Austrian capital gains tax (KESt) applies, it will be withheld by the B&C Private Foundation and remitted to the tax authorities. Beyond the payment of the Houska Prize money, winners are not entitled to any further benefits, grants or beneficiary rights from the B&C Private Foundation.

The personal data provided will be disclosed solely to the members of the advisory committees and the jury for the purpose of project evaluation, to the B&C Private Foundation's PR agency for communications purposes and to legal and tax advisors for the review and assessment of legal and tax requirements.

By submitting an application, the submitting institution grants the B&C Private Foundation the non-exclusive, royalty-free right to use the submitted abstracts, images, project titles and other content provided in the course of the submission, without territorial and time limitations, for communication about the competition and the award-winning projects. This particularly includes publication on websites, social media, press materials, publications and other communication channels of the B&C Private Foundation, as well as use as the basis for the creation of original editorial content, including photo, film and video content. The submitting institution confirms that it holds all rights necessary for this purpose and that the described use does not infringe any third-party rights.

The B&C Private Foundation's Data Privacy Statement applies: <https://bcgruppe.at/en/private-foundation/data-privacy-statement/>. The jury's decision is final and not subject to legal appeal.



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Details by Category	Higher Education Research	Non-University Research	Research & Development in SMEs
Project Maturity	Commercial implementation is imminent (with high potential clearly evident) or has already taken place	Commercial implementation must have already taken place	Commercial implementation must have already taken place, and the project must be completed
Quality of Research/Science	Scientific research of the highest quality and at the international state of the art	High-quality, state-of-the-art (scientific) research	Specific project based on high-quality state-of-the-art research
Eligible Applicants	23 public universities (incl. CD Laboratories) and Josef Ressel Centres 19 private universities 21 universities of applied sciences - Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW) - Institute of Science and Technology Austria List of eligible higher education institutions: Link	Austrian non-university research institutions List of eligible research institutions: Link	Companies - whose registered office and main research activities are in Austria - which are not B&C Group investments - which meet the EU and FFG definitions of an SME - which have up to 249 employees - which have an annual turnover of EUR 50 million or less - which were established at least 2 years ago (commercial registration before Dec. 31, 2024) - which are already generating market revenue from their innovation
Uploads	Abstract (1 page, German) Abstract (1 page, English) Dossier (max. 10 pages, English) excl. annexes (funding, awards, patents)	Abstract (1 page, German) Abstract (1 page, English) Dossier (max. 10 pages, English) excl. annexes (funding, awards, patents)	Abstract (1 page, German) Abstract (1 page, English) Dossier (max. 10 pages, German or English) excl. annexes (funding, awards, patents)
Supporting Documentation (online upload)	At least 1 letter of intent (LOI) from a business partner (German or English)	At least 1 proof of cooperation from a business partner/application partner/implementation partner (German or English)	Optional: letter of recommendation from a scientific partner (German or English)



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Evaluation Criteria	Higher Education Research	Non-University Research	Research & Development in SMEs
Quality of Science/Research	40%	30%	20%
Innovation Content and USP	10%	10%	10%
Commercial Feasibility	20%	20%	
Commercial Success/Benefit		10%	40%
Commercial Significance for Austria	20%	20%	20%
Impact	10%	10%	10%