



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – HOUSKA PRIZE

The following section provides an overview of the most frequently asked questions about the Houska Prize. This information is for general guidance and is updated regularly. If you have further questions, please contact us at houskaprei@bcholding.at.

- **What are the benefits of entering the Houska Prize?**

The Houska Prize is Austria's largest private award for applied research and has enjoyed an excellent reputation for over 20 years. Its aim is to highlight and raise the visibility of outstanding research results with practical application potential and to recognize them with substantial prize money.

- **What types of projects are the Houska Prize aimed at across the three categories?**

The Houska Prize honors outstanding Austrian research, processes, services, products, and discoveries, as well as completed research projects with clear practical applications. Submissions are assessed against standard evaluation criteria. Previous winners of the Houska Prize can be viewed at www.houskapreis.at.

- **Is the prize based on economic potential or actual commercial implementation?**

Commercial progress is weighted differently depending on the category. Higher Education Research focuses on early-stage knowledge transfer and market potential. Non-University Research requires one or more existing commercial partners. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) must have already implemented a clearly defined project. Details can be found in the evaluation criteria and dossier questions for each category.

- **Is it about products, processes, services, or results?**

Specific projects can be submitted that address either research findings in Higher Education Research or specific products, processes, or services in Non-University Research and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs). All of them are based on research results but must sufficiently demonstrate commercial viability in accordance with the requirements of the respective category.

- **Is preference given to broad commercial reach (mass market) or depth (niche markets)?**

B&C does not impose any restrictions in this regard. The evaluation committees assess each submission on its merits against the published criteria to select the strongest entries.

- **Can previous entries be resubmitted?**

Yes. However, you must clearly highlight any significant updates since your last application. (Note: Since 2013, the submission year precedes the award year. For example, entries for the 2025 Houska Prize were submitted in 2024.)

- **Does the submission need to come directly from executive level at the institution?**



No, B&C does not require formal executive nomination. However, we strongly recommend informing your senior management and keeping them involved.

- **Is there a limit on how old the underlying research can be?**

There is no fixed limit on when the research was conducted. However, the application must prove that the findings remain state of the art and current.

- **How much evidence do we need to provide regarding commercial implementation?**

Required proof and supporting documentation vary from category to category, as outlined in the application forms and questions.

- **How extensive does the impact of the project need to be?**

The assessment is the responsibility of the evaluation committees and is based on the criteria.

- **Can spin-offs and start-ups also be listed as business partners (in the Higher Education Research and Non-University Research categories)? Can they submit in the SME category directly?**

Yes. Spin-offs and start-ups can be listed as partners in the Higher Education and Non-University categories, or apply directly under the SME category if they meet the criteria. Note that projects can only be submitted to one category per award year.

- **How is confidential data handled, and what can be withheld?**

Your full application will be viewed by B&C Private Foundation employees and the evaluation committees, all of whom are bound by strict confidentiality obligations. Public relations content is always agreed with your designated project spokesperson in advance. However, all requested sections in the application form must be completed with the requested level of detail so the panel can assess the project properly.

- **Are non-technical business innovations eligible alongside technical ones (for SMEs)?**

Yes, the prize is intentionally open to non-technical innovation, provided the project meets the overall entry criteria.

- **What should be included in the abstract?**

The abstract serves as the submission's 'calling card' and is the first section the evaluation panels will see. It is also used to approach potential reviewers. For this reason, the abstract must include all key elements of your submission. Within the application form itself, there is an additional field for a brief project description; this is used for external communications and must be easily understandable to a non-specialist audience.

- **What should be included in the dossier, and who is it aimed at?**

To assist with your submission dossier, guiding questions are provided for each category and must be answered. Submissions undergo a two-stage evaluation process: first, specialist advisory committees



review the entries that fall within their specific categories. A final expert jury spanning all categories then selects the winners. While members of the advisory committees specialize in their specific categories, they bring a broad range of expertise to reflect the open-topic nature of the Houska Prize. They may also consult additional experts through external reviews.

- **What additional evidence/supporting documentation must be provided?**

In the Higher Education Research category, at least one letter of intent from a business partner must be uploaded. The Non-University Research category requires proof of cooperation from a business, application, or implementation partner. In the R&D in SMEs category, projects have the option of uploading a letter of intent from a research partner.