



## Japan officially joins Horizon Europe

Brussels, 30 July 2026

As of today, Japan is officially associated to [Horizon Europe](#). Home to 123 million people, Japan is the most populous country associated to the programme, adding one of the world's most advanced research and innovation ecosystems to Europe's network of scientific cooperation.

The agreement allows Japanese researchers and organisations to take part in Horizon Europe on equal terms with those from EU Member States and other associated countries. They will be able to join and lead international research consortia, receive EU funding, and work alongside top research institutions to help address global challenges.

### Research and Innovation cooperation with Japan

Negotiations on Japan's accession were successfully concluded by the European Commission and the Government of Japan in December 2025. Since January 2026, transitional arrangements have already enabled Japanese entities to apply to Horizon Europe Pillar II calls and to be evaluated as prospective beneficiaries.

Japan's association marks an important step in the [EU–Japan Strategic Partnership](#) and underlines a shared commitment to scientific excellence, innovation, open and rules-based international research cooperation.

The EU and Japan will now further expand cooperation to address shared global challenges, notably in the digital transition, health, and technologies that support climate neutrality.

**Japan's association covers Horizon Europe Pillar II, which has a budget of €52.4 billion** . This pillar funds multinational research and innovation projects addressing major societal challenges related to climate, energy, health and the digital economy. Japan will also contribute financially to the programme's budget covering for the participation of Japanese entities.

In addition, Japanese participants will continue to have access to other parts of Horizon Europe that are open to third countries, including the [Excellent Science pillar](#), the [Innovative Europe pillar](#) and the [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions](#), which support doctoral education, postdoctoral training and international research collaboration.

### Background

With a budget of €93.5 billion for the 2021–2027 period, Horizon Europe is EU's flagship research and innovation programme. It supports cutting-edge research and innovation to address global challenges, accelerate the clean and digital transitions, contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and strengthen Europe's competitiveness and growth.

Japan becomes the 23<sup>rd</sup> country associated to Horizon Europe, joining the other [22 countries already associated](#) - either through the European Economic Area membership, the enlargement process, the European Neighbourhood Policy, or as other third countries and territories that meet the programme's eligibility criteria.

Japan's association builds on a long-standing and increasingly strategic research and innovation partnership with the EU initiated in 2011 with the Science and Technology cooperation agreement. A recent example of the close collaboration between the EU and Japan is the recommendation made by an EU-Japan expert panel which was done under the [enhanced dialogue on advanced materials](#). This recommendation explores complementarities and synergies in the areas of electronics, mobility, construction, energy and data-driven science which can be both beneficial for EU and Japan citizens.

### For more information

[Horizon Europe](#)

[Research and Innovation cooperation with Japan](#)

[Europe's Global Approach to Research and Innovation](#)

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Quote(s):

*"Science thrives when talent, ideas and innovation cross borders. As Horizon Europe's 23rd associated country, Japan strengthens a growing global community that believes openness, excellence and international cooperation are essential to turning research into innovation and innovation into prosperity."*

Ekaterina Zaharieva, Commissioner for Startups, Research and Innovation

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