

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE OF THE FRAUNHOFER-GESELLSCHAFT

European Defence Fund Interim Evaluation

April 2024

Summary

Fraunhofer hereby presents its feedback on the implementation of the European Defence Fund (EDF).

As Europe's largest organization for applied research, Fraunhofer is actively involved in the EDF and its counterpart in civil research, Horizon Europe.

This document reflects inputs from Fraunhofer staff members with direct experience with the technical, administrative, and political framework conditions of the EDF.

Our key messages are:

1. The EDF offers valuable opportunities for cross-border cooperation and the establishment of a stronger EU Defense Community.
2. It is important to strengthen synergies with other programs such as Horizon Europe and its successor, and with international organizations such as the EDA.
3. There is a general need for simplification of the EDF. Simplifying templates and processes can further enhance cross-border cooperation and unlock additional synergies between civil and defense research and innovation (R&I).
4. Further efforts should be made to provide additional opportunities for early and more equitable access to the work program.
5. EDF's budget, particularly for research, should be increased from 2028 onwards. It is crucial that any increase does not come at the expense of the budget for the future EU Framework Program for Research and Innovation (FP10).

Point of Contact

Tina Stefanova
Senior Policy Advisor for Research and Industry
Fraunhofer EU Office
Rue Royale 94, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
tina.stefanova@zv.fraunhofer.de

About Fraunhofer

The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, based in Germany, is the world's leading organization for applied research. With its focus on future-relevant key technologies and the exploitation of results in business and industry, it plays a central role in the innovation process. As a guide and catalyst for innovative developments and scientific excellence, it contributes to shaping our society and our future. Founded in 1949, the organization currently operates 76 institutes and research institutions in Germany. Approximately 30,800 staff members, mostly with a background in natural or engineering sciences, work on an annual research volume of around €3.0 billion. Of this amount, €2.6 billion is allocated to contract research.