

# Call for the 4<sup>th</sup> EELISA Prototype Contest:

**Win the EELISA Co-Creation Workshop, your EELISA Test Space, and the EELISA Prototype Contest at JOSEPHS – The Open Innovation Lab in Nuremberg, Germany**

To encourage customer-centric innovation and to support the startups, researchers, and innovators within its excellent European innovation ecosystem, EELISA calls for participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> EELISA prototype contest. Applications from all EELISA institutions and incubators connected to EELISA institutions (see the full list below) are welcome!

## What you can get!

Up to 25 applicants with the best prototypes (or prototype ideas) will qualify to participate in the **four-day EELISA Co-Creation Workshop at JOSEPHS** – The Open Innovation Lab in Nuremberg, Germany that will take place **from 8 to 11 December 2025**. The co-creation workshop will be run by JOSEPHS' open innovation experts and will greatly help the participating startups, researchers, and innovators to create more successful ideas, products, and services. The first three days of the workshop are an open innovation methods training: You will learn how to innovate in a customer-centric way, how to best position your prototype in the market, and how to get valuable feedback from potential customers. In addition, you will receive pitch training, and all of this will prepare you for the final day of the workshop, when you will set up **your own test space** and have the opportunity to get real feedback from potential customers in a public event: The EELISA Prototype Contest at JOSEPHS. The invited public and experts from JOSEPHS and FAU will test your prototypes, give valuable feedback, and vote the **winner of the EELISA prototype contest 2025**. Expand your innovation skills and network! Let's innovate together!

## About JOSEPHS – The Open Innovation Lab

JOSEPHS is part of FAU's excellent innovation ecosystem and is unique in its kind in Germany as well as in the EELISA innovation ecosystem. For over ten years, companies and public institutions have been researching and developing new products, services, and business models at JOSEPHS with real users and potential (end) customers. Ideas have been generated, new solutions tested, and further developed in over 180 innovation projects with

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more than 90,000 visitors. Here are some key facts about JOSEPHS – The Open Innovation Lab:

- Unique methodology and infrastructure for the inclusion of real users and the potential (end) customers in the entire innovation process (researching, developing, testing, marketing)
- Integration of a heterogeneous, unbiased user and (end-)customer group for immediate market feedback
- High-frequency and attractive city center location with over 450 square meters for co-creation and a strong publicity effect
- On-site presentation of innovation projects by specially trained JOSEPHS Innovation Guides during retail opening hours
- Scientifically based, systematic, data-supported development and testing process in a real store environment
- Use of cutting-edge and capital-intensive technologies and service prototyping tools (emotion recognition, virtual reality, 3D design, etc.)
- Inspiring creative and event spaces for co-creative workshops and events (also in hybrid format)
- Competent team of experts and experienced partner network from science and practice
- For more information about JOSEPHS, see <https://josephs-innovation.de/wp/>.
- For more information about the first EELISA test space at JOSEPHS, watch this short [video on the EELISA YouTube channel](#).
- For interviews with the winners of the second and the third EELISA prototype contest, see [here](#) and [here](#).

## Eligibility

The call is open to startups, researchers, and innovators from **all EELISA member and associate partner institutions** (including startups founded by alumni of these institutions) and startups from the following **incubators** connected to EELISA institutions: **actúaupm** in Madrid (UPM), **BME U[S]3** in Budapest (BME), **Chimie Paris Innov** in Paris (PSL), **Incubateur Descartes** in Paris (ENPC), **Incubateur Paris-Dauphine** in Paris (PSL), **Innovation Labs** in Bucharest (UNSTPB), **ITU Cekirdek** in Istanbul (ITU), **ITU Ginova** in Istanbul (ITU), **1773 ITU Teknopark** in Istanbul (ITU), **Medical Valley** in Erlangen (FAU), **NKubator** in Nuremberg (FAU), **PC Up** in Paris (PSL), **Polo Tecnologico di Navacchio** near Pisa (SNS), **RUNWAY Incubator** in Winterthur (ZHAW), **Station F** in Paris (ENPC), and **ZOLLHOF Tech Incubator** in Nuremberg (FAU). Applicants should have a clear intention to develop their prototype (or

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prototype idea) into a high-quality product or service ready for successful market entry in Europe. Applications from all disciplines are welcome!

## Eligible Prototypes

Eligible prototypes must fulfill the following criteria:

- Prototypes can be consumer goods, tangible ideas, concepts, or apps. These prototypes may be physical, digital, or hybrid.
- Prototypes should be of interest to the general public.
- The prototypes must be suitable to be tested in English (or German).
- The prototypes must be suitable to be brought or sent to JOSEPHS by the workshop participants.
- Prototypes should not be heavier than 100 kg, not need more than approximately four square meters of test space, and not be higher than 2 meters.
- Prototypes should be operational with regular technical infrastructure (Wi-Fi, electricity, etc.).
- Hazardous goods are not eligible.

## Funding

The costs for the EELISA Co-Creation Workshop at JOSEPHS from 8 to 11 December 2025 will be covered by EELISA at FAU with the support of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Travel costs to Nuremberg and subsistence costs outside the workshop have to be covered either by the participants or by the EELISA local office at each EELISA institution. In case of being selected as a participant, please contact your EELISA local office to ask about the possibility of receiving travel and subsistence support to attend the event if you have to travel from outside the Nuremberg Metropolitan Region.

## Timeline

- **Application deadline:** 2 November 2025
- **Notification about admission:** No later than 7 November 2025
- **EELISA Co-Creation Workshop at JOSEPHS** in Nuremberg, Germany (including the EELISA Test Spaces and public final of the EELISA Prototype Contest on the last day of the workshop): From 8 to 11 December 2025

## Evaluation Criteria

We welcome short and concise proposals written in English that correspond to the following evaluation criteria:

1. **Motivation of the applicants to participate in the 4<sup>th</sup> EELISA prototype contest** (Why do you want to participate in the 4<sup>th</sup> EELISA prototype contest?)
2. **Suitability of the prototype to be successfully tested at JOSEPHS** (value proposition of the prototype, expected level of interest of the prototype to potential customers or the general public, attractiveness of the prototype, degree of innovation of the prototype, etc.)
3. **Prospects for success of the prototype** (likelihood of successful market entry of the prototype, scalability of the prototype, maturity level of the startup or project behind the prototype, etc.)

If prototypes are eligible up to 10 points can be awarded for each of the three evaluation criteria. The selection committee will be composed of experts from EELISA and JOSEPHS. Please see below for the application form.

## Application Process

Please use [this application form](#) to apply for the call and send the completed document as one PDF to [david.schkade@fau.de](mailto:david.schkade@fau.de) no later than **2 November 2025**.



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