EuroCDP Call for Chip Design Companies

The European Chips Design Platform (EuroCDP) launched its first open call on 4 November 2026. The call is aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) involved in chip design that want to turn an idea into a functioning chip. Support covers design services, prototype manufacturing, packaging and testing.

The deadline for the first application cut-off is **12 January 2027 at 17:00 Brussels time (CET)**.

Two levels of support

The call is continuously open, with applications assessed at periodic cut-off dates. A maximum of €8.1 million in total may be allocated to a single project across both support levels.

	Level 1	Level 2
Purpose	Proof-of-concept chip project, including MPW fabrication	Prototype, pilot solution and minimum viable product (MVP)
Maximum amount per project	€100,000	€8 million
Share of eligible costs covered	100%	Up to 35% (up to 70% when combined with national funding)
Project stages	One	Multiple
Payment	One fixed lump sum upon acceptance of the result	Fixed lump sums upon acceptance of each stage

A total of up to €1 million in cumulative funding is allocated to Level 1 projects.

Level 2 funding and the company's contribution

EuroCDP covers up to 35% of approved eligible costs. When combined with national, regional or other public funding, the public contribution may not exceed 70%. The company must therefore cover at least 30% of eligible costs from its own non-public funds.

For example, if a project has €1 million in eligible costs, EuroCDP may contribute €350,000. If the company also receives €350,000 in national funding, its own contribution would be €300,000. National co-funding is not automatic; it is subject to a separate decision and the rules applicable in the relevant country. VAT and ineligible costs must be covered by the applicant.

Who can apply?

- The company must meet the EU definition of an SME: fewer than 250 employees, and either annual turnover not exceeding €50 million or a balance sheet total not exceeding €43 million.
- The company must be fabless, meaning that it designs chips but does not operate its own semiconductor manufacturing facilities.
- The company must be established in a country eligible for funding under the Horizon Europe programme.
- The company's in-house team must carry out the critical parts of the chip design in eligible countries. The application must identify the team members and design locations and explain why the specified design elements are critical.

The entire design set-up will be assessed. Merely assigning a formally defined critical part to the in-house team may not be sufficient if most of the design work is carried out outside eligible countries. Outsourcing a substantial share of critical design activities may result in the application failing to meet the eligibility requirements.

What costs does EuroCDP cover?

Only services included in the official EuroCDP platform catalogue are eligible for support. The company's in-house staff salaries, overheads, in-kind contributions and VAT are not eligible.

- **Compute resources** – secure cloud-based design environments suited to EDA workloads.
- **EDA licences** – commercial tools for architecture, netlist, physical design and verification.
- **Silicon IP blocks** – commercial IP blocks and macro libraries.
- **Infrastructure support** – design-flow set-up, PDK installation and platform maintenance.
- **Design expertise** – industrial support for RTL development, verification strategies and project validation.
- **Manufacturing and testing** – masks, MPW and dedicated fabrication runs (shuttles), packaging, assembly, wafer testing and final testing.

EDA and IP licences are subject to the platform catalogue terms and the applicable supplier General Conditions Agreement (GCA). Other services are provided by Design Enablement Team (DET) members included on the official list.

Application evaluation, agreements and payments

Independent experts assess applications against four equally weighted criteria:

- European added value – the project's contribution to the capabilities of the EU semiconductor ecosystem, European competitiveness, autonomy and economic security.
- Excellence – the project's level of innovation and the soundness of its proposed approach.
- Impact – customer demand and market opportunities.
- Implementation – the team, resources and capacity to deliver the project.

Each criterion must receive at least 3 out of 5 points, and the total score must be at least 15 out of 20. Claims relating to European added value must be specific and supported by evidence.

After evaluation, legal, financial, compliance and supplier-offer checks are carried out. Funding is awarded only after the agreement with the third party (GAtTP) has been signed. Any work carried out before the agreement is signed is at the company's own risk. Subsequent Level 2 stages may start only after review and activation; work on stages that have not been activated cannot be funded retroactively.

Payments depend on accepted results: 30% is based on quality and compliance, 60% on achievement of key performance indicators (KPIs), and 10% on adherence to deadlines. A weighted score of at least 7 out of 10 is required for the project to continue. Advance payments may be available for EDA and IP licences, but these are provisional and deducted during settlement. The company pays suppliers directly and must therefore have its own contribution available at the start of each project stage.

How to apply and key deadlines

The first application period runs from 4 November 2026 until 12 January 2027 at 17:00 Brussels time (CET). Evaluation and agreement preparation are expected to take approximately six weeks. At least four application cut-off dates per year are planned thereafter. The final stage review is scheduled for 28 February 2029, and the programme activities will end on 31 August 2029.

The recommended steps when preparing an application are:

- Select the platform services required and define the expected results.
- Check the company's SME status, previous funding and eligibility.
- Obtain final supplier quotations and align the service packages with the project stages.
- Prepare the documentation and formally submit the application through the portal.

The application package must include:

- The application form for the relevant support level and a technical proposal (indicative length: 10 pages for Level 1 and 20 pages for Level 2).
- A business plan and a plan for the exploitation of results.
- A presentation video of up to five minutes.
- A budget and funding spreadsheet, together with final supplier quotations.
- Company documents: company register extract, SME self-assessment, ownership and control declaration, and a declaration of honour signed electronically.

Important points to note:

- Final supplier quotations must be no more than three months old; official documents should generally be no more than six months old.
- The application must be prepared in English. Annexes prepared in other languages must be translated.
- Saving a draft does not constitute submission. The application must be formally submitted through the portal by the company's legal representative.
- The same proposal may be submitted twice: the original application and one resubmission.
- Mandatory information cannot be added after the deadline.
- Each funded service package must result in a deliverable with a measurable acceptance criterion.

Official forms and frequently asked questions are available at https://eurocdp.eu/grant. Questions may be sent to info@eurocdp.eu. Platform consultants can explain the process but do not write or review applications.

Support from Chips Competence Centres (CCCs)

National Chips Competence Centres (CCCs) can help companies prepare for the EuroCDP call. They can explain eligibility and funding conditions, help define the project scope, assess project maturity, budgets and risks, and provide information about national co-funding opportunities.

CCCs do not write applications on behalf of companies, but they can help improve applicants' preparedness and the quality of their submissions. For Level 2 projects in particular, it is important to investigate national co-funding opportunities in advance, as availability, amounts, rules and deadlines may vary from country to country.

Stage	Role of the CCC
Before applying	Identify promising SMEs and start-ups, explain eligibility and funding rules, help define a realistic project scope and connect companies with additional funding.
During application preparation	Review the project rationale and maturity, strengthen the European added-value and impact arguments, and assess stages, risks, the budget and supporting documents.
After funding is awarded	Monitor project implementation and strengthen the company's engagement with, and visibility within, the ecosystem.

What this means for companies in Lithuania

Level 1 may be particularly relevant to Lithuanian chip-design start-ups and SMEs seeking to produce their first silicon prototype through MPW fabrication. Under this level, eligible costs are covered at 100%, up to a maximum of €100,000 per project.

Level 2 is intended for the development of larger-scale prototypes, pilot solutions or MVPs. It requires a clear funding plan and at least a 30% own non-public contribution. Companies should assess national co-funding opportunities in advance and ensure that sufficient funds are available for each project stage.

For both levels, companies must ensure that critical chip-design activities are carried out by their own in-house team in eligible countries. Applications should clearly demonstrate the project's European added value, business prospects and measurable results.