

# Pro FIT – project financing

Programme to promote research, innovation and technologies

## Implementing innovative ideas with grants and loans

### Who is eligible for support?

Applications can be submitted by businesses and research institutes with their place of business or an independently organised facility in Berlin.

#### Companies:

- SMEs: alone or together with companies or research institutes
- Non-SMEs: **only** in conjunction with SMEs and research institutes

#### Research facilities:

- **only** in conjunction with at least one company

### What is supported?

**Pro FIT** aims to boost the intensity of research, development and innovation in Berlin's economy – especially in the innovation clusters. A special focus is on **co-operation between academia and business** and the related transfer of technology so that the economic exploitation of research and development results in Berlin can be strengthened and accelerated.

Support is available for single and combined projects in the phases of **industrial research, experimental** and **production development, market preparation** and **market launch**.

Funding is available for:

- Project-related personnel expenditure
- Third-party services
- Material expenditure
- Registration of intellectual property rights
- Expenditure related to market launch and market preparation
- Indirect project expenditure

### What kind of support is available?

Support is granted, depending on the **innovation phase**, in the form of non-repayable **grants** and/or **low-interest loans**.



## Terms and conditions

Non-repayable **grants** of up to 400,000 (per project or, in the case of collaboration projects, per project partner) can be made available for **research and development projects** by businesses and research institutions.

Maximum support percentages for project expenditure eligible for support total up to:

### Industrial research phase:

- 80% (including the SME and collaboration bonus)

### Experimental development phase:

- 40% only in the case of research institutes collaborating with other parties
- 25% only in the case of large enterprises collaborating with other parties

In the case of **allowance-free** financing and support programmes for research and development projects by research institutes, the support rate totals up to 75% or up to 100%, respectively, of the project-related expenditure. Applicants must contribute their own share of at least 25%.

In order to finance projects during the phase of **experimental development** as well as **production development, market preparation** and **market introduction** undertaken by small and medium-sized enterprises, support is granted in the form of low-interest loans of up to EUR 1m or a maximum of 80% of the costs eligible for support per project.

The following terms and conditions apply to low-interest loans:

- The loans have a term of up to eight years.
- The interest rates on loans are below market conditions. Small enterprises additionally benefit from a 0.25% reduction in interest.
- The loan is normally secured by pro-rata absolute guarantees by the relevant shareholders. Guarantees can be waived if the shareholders contribute a reasonable share towards project and/or company financing.
- Loans for establishing production, market preparation and market launch are granted as de-minimis assistance. The subsidy value is calculated on the basis of the interest reduction for the approved loan. This may result in a limit to the loan amount.

## How can you apply?

The planned project must be clearly described in the documents prepared and submitted together with the online “Project application” form, the **Pro FIT** finance planner and documents related to the applicant’s legal situation.

As soon as the application has been received by IBB, the project can commence at the applicant’s own financial risk. The main risk in this case is that the project may not qualify for support or may not be seen to be worthy of support. Furthermore, the **Pro FIT** financing offered may differ in terms of type and amount from what was stated in the application.



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Based on the documents submitted, a technical and market-related evaluation is carried out by two external experts. Given a positive outcome of the examination, the possible project financing (type and amount) is determined, and the applicant is requested to submit further documents for the commercial assessment to be carried out by IBB.

The approval committee decides whether to grant allowances, as well as on the terms and conditions to which such allowances are subject from case to case.

IBB also provides an advisory service for applications. IBB commissions external experts and specialist project sponsors for the purpose of confidential evaluation, qualification and supervision. The completeness and quality of the documents submitted strongly influence the time it takes to process and decide on the application.

In the case of group projects, application documents must be completed by each project partner. The project description must be drawn up jointly by all of the project partners.

Please contact us at the earliest possible date. Our customer centre will be pleased to answer detailed questions regarding the programme and assist you with your application.

Application documents can be found at: [www.ibb.de/profit](http://www.ibb.de/profit). Alternatively, you can submit your project application online using the electronic application available at: [www.ibb.de/kundenportal](http://www.ibb.de/kundenportal).

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EUROPEAN UNION

European Regional  
Development Fund

## FAQs regarding the ProFIT project financing programme

### 1. Which requirements apply with a view to the innovative character of a project to be supported?

The requirements that apply to the innovative character of a project in **Pro FIT** differ depending on how the project is allocated to an innovation phase. In the case of research projects, the state of the art must be surpassed. In the case of projects related to experimental development and production setup, market preparation and market launch, the USPs of the products, processes or services are very important.

### 2. Are all applications decided by the approval committee?

Decisions regarding project financing under the **Pro FIT** programme are generally made in a closed committee meeting chaired by the representative of the senate department responsible for business. These committee meetings are held on a monthly basis. In special cases, the decision can also be made in a written circulation procedure.

### 3. Can I combine the programme with other support programmes?

It is possible and makes sense to combine the project financed with business development funds from other programmes. However, the maximum support and assistance defined by the EU may not be exceeded.

### 4. Which criteria apply when the type of support is being determined?

From the idea to the product, the project passes through various innovation phases, each of which has its own risks and is financed as needed. That's why grants are provided for research projects; projects in experimental (i.e. product-near) development, production setup, market preparation and market launch are usually supported with loans.

### 5. Which terms and conditions does Pro FIT offer for loans?

The interest rates are based on KfW's terms for innovation financing and take into account project and company-related risks as well as collateral. An additional interest reduction of 0.25% is also available to small companies.

### 6. Is the support of a business consultant required for a Pro FIT application?

No. We believe that the procedure is sufficiently self-explanatory and is very well supported by the application documents provided by us. That being said, however, customers can of course rely on the support of an external consultant when submitting an application. Such external consultancy service is not relevant for our support decision. We recommend that you contact our IBB customer support and **Pro FIT** staff in order to make use of this free service. We will be pleased to assist you should you have any questions regarding the application and support decision procedures.

### 7. What do the technical experts do?

Independent, external technical experts perform a technical examination and evaluation of the projects submitted to Investitionsbank Berlin also with a view to their implementation. As part of this technical assessment, the experts assign the work contents to the different innovation phases which form the basis for determining the type of financing (grant and/or loan). The approval committee can determine that the technical experts are to accompany the implementation of the project.

More FAQs can be found at: [www.ibb.de/profit](http://www.ibb.de/profit).