

Call for Participation in EUTOPIA Innovation Challenges for Researchers 2026 - International TUD|Excite Summer School

“Patents in Search of New Business”

Hosted by Dresden & Lusatia, 24-28 August 2026

Organised by TUD Dresden University of Technology



Co-funded by
the European Union

1. Overview: Description and Objectives

The EUTOPIA Innovation Challenge for Researchers 2026 - International TUD|Excite Summer School “Patents in Search of New Business” is designed to strengthen the link between academic research and practical application by focusing on knowledge and technology transfer. It offers participants the opportunity to explore how research results can be further developed into application-oriented solutions and potential business ideas.

At the core of the programme is the work on existing patents and technologies, which serve as a starting point for interdisciplinary collaboration. Participants will work in international teams to analyse the potential of these innovations, develop use cases, and explore pathways towards implementation and possible commercialisation.

By the end of the programme, participants will have developed and presented their ideas in a final pitch format. The overall objective is to enable early-career researchers to better understand and engage with innovation ecosystems, and to reflect on the societal and economic relevance of their work.

The initiative will gather up to **20** participants from the full partner universities of the EUTOPIA Alliance, namely: Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain), Universitatea Babeş-Bolyai (Cluj-Napoca, Romania), Vrije Universiteit Brussels (Bruxelles, Belgium), Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Venice, Italy), CY Cergy Université Paris (Paris, France), TUD Technische Universität Dresden (Dresden, Germany), Göteborgs Universitet (Gothenburg, Sweden), Universidade NOVA de Lisboa (Lisbon, Portugal), Univerza v Ljubljani (Ljubljana, Slovenia).

The Summer School will be hosted by Dresden & Lusatia (Germany) from the **24 to the 28 August 2026**.



Participants from EU institutions are supported through EUTOPIA MORE Erasmus+ Funds. The University of Warwick (UW) is an associate partner and, together with participating members from the Global Partners of the EUTOPIA Alliance, provides institutionally-based funds to support participation.

2. Admission Requirements

- 2.1 This call aims to pre-select a total of **4** candidates from Ca' Foscari University of Venice, of which 2 will be selected by TUD to take part in the programme, as described in “4.. Selection Process”.
- 2.2 Applicants must be **Postdoctoral researchers / early-career researchers** (“Ricercatori/trici a tempo indeterminato”, “Ricercatori/trici a tempo determinato B”, “Ricercatori/trici a tempo determinato A”, or “Ricercatori/trici a tempo determinato in tenure track”) with a valid contract with Ca' Foscari University of Venice or **PhD candidates** regularly enrolled at Ca' Foscari University of Venice.
- 2.3 The selected candidates must hold the above-mentioned status at the moment of application and when the “Summer School” session takes place. The EUTOPIA Unit at Ca' Foscari University of Venice must be informed timely of any possible change in their status.
- 2.4 Applicants must demonstrate a strong interest in innovation, research transfer and entrepreneurship and willingness to work in interdisciplinary and international teams and have research competencies in at least one of the following topics:
 - Environmental Protection
 - MedTech / BioTech / Life Sciences
 - Agriculture/ Farming/ Natural Materials
 - Electronics/ Power Engineering
 - Material Science
 - EngineeringSensortech/ Communication
 - Systems
 - Photophysics

2.5 Ineligibility

If, at any stage in the application procedure, it is established that the information provided by the applicant has been knowingly falsified, the candidate will be disqualified from the selection process.

Applicants already in a mobility abroad financed by any EU-funded programme at the moment of the implementation of the activity, and candidates not regularly enrolled / without a valid contract, cannot be considered eligible.

3. Application Procedure

- 3.1. Applicants must log in using their institutional account (*account@unive.it*) and submit their application using the following Google Form: <https://forms.gle/P575bW8emZwaz1aeA>. The entire application **must be written in English**: applications in other languages will be rejected.
- 3.2. Applicants must submit their application form, including the mandatory information (Incomplete applications will not be considered)
 - CV (ENG) possibly no longer than two (2) pages
 - Information on professional or entrepreneurial experience
 - Motivation Letter
 - Optional: Information on: (i) patents owned by the applicant (as an individual), and (ii) patents owned by Ca' Foscari University of Venice in which the applicant is listed as an inventor.
- 3.3 Personal data collected through the Google Form will be processed by Ca' Foscari University of Venice as described below in the data protection section.
- 3.4 **Application Deadline: May 17th 2026, at 11:59 PM (CEST)**. Applications received after this deadline will be rejected.



4. Selection Process

4.1 Selection Procedure

Stage 1 – Local pre-selection at EUTOPIA universities

Each partner university conducts its own internal selection process based on given criteria and pre-selects **up to 4 candidates**. Candidates selected at this stage can be considered as having successfully passed the first round of the selection process.

Stage 2 – Final selection and matching at TUD

From the pool of pre-selected candidates, **2 participants per university** will be selected for participation by the hosting and organising institutions (TUD). This second stage is not solely a ranking-based selection, but includes a matching process, in which the TUD|excite team aligns participants with specific patents, topics, and team compositions. The aim is to ensure a balanced distribution of expertise and the best possible fit for collaborative work within the programme.

4.2 Selection criteria

Valid applications will be assessed based on:

- **Academic background and research profile (max. 20 points)**. Assessed based on documented academic and research achievements, including relevance of the candidate’s field to the programme topics, quality of research outputs (e.g. publications, projects), and any experience related to applied research or collaboration with non-academic stakeholders.
- **Motivation and interest in innovation, knowledge transfer, and entrepreneurship (max. 20 points)**. Assessed based on the clarity and specificity of the motivation statement, demonstrated understanding of innovation and research valorisation processes, and any relevant experiences (e.g. courses, projects, initiatives, or entrepreneurial activities).
- **Potential to contribute to interdisciplinary and international teamwork (max. 10 points)**. Assessed based on prior experience in interdisciplinary and/or international contexts, evidence of teamwork and communication skills, and ability to effectively collaborate in diverse teams.

4.3 Selection committees

Stage 1 – Local pre-selection at EUTOPIA universities

A Selection Committee will be established at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice to assess candidates’ applications. As part of the selection process, the Selection Committee may decide to conduct online interviews of a shortlist of eligible candidates. In such a case, further information regarding the schedule, procedure, scoring and final ranking will be published on the EUTOPIA page of Ca’ Foscari website.

Stage 2 – Final selection and matching at TUD

Applications in the second stage will be evaluated by a designated selection committee formed by members of TUD Excite, TUD Eutopia Team and Boost.

4.4 Publication of Results

Stage 1 – Local pre-selection at EUTOPIA universities

The results of the selection will be published on Ca’ Foscari website. Pre-selected candidates will be contacted via email by eutopia@unive.it to confirm their availability for the Final selection process. Candidates who fail to confirm according to the deadlines and procedures forfeit the right to participate. A repechage procedure shall be scheduled for any places still available.

Stage 2 – Final selection and matching at TUD

Applications in the second stage will be evaluated by TUD. All nominated candidates will be informed about the outcome of the second stage. Final decisions will be communicated by the end of June 2026.

5. Rights and Obligations of Selected Researchers

Selected participants are expected to:

- actively participate in all programme activities
- contribute to team-based work on innovation concepts
- take part in the final presentation / pitch

Selected participants will have the right to:

- attend all academic and practical programme elements
- have room, board and travel expenses to participate in the event covered by the EUTOPIA MORE Project, in compliance with Ca' Foscari University's internal regulations.

6. Calendar

Stage 1 – Local pre-selection at EUTOPIA universities

- Deadline for applications: **May 17th 2026, at 11:59 PM (CEST).**
- Publication of the final ranking of selected candidates or, if interviews are held, of the shortlist of eligible candidates invited to the interview (including schedule, procedures, and evaluation criteria): within 15 working days after the application deadline.
- Deadline for appeals: 5 working days after the publication of the selected candidates.
- Deadline for acceptance and confirmation of participation: 5 working days after the appeal deadline

Stage 2 – Final selection and matching at TUD

- Publication of selected candidates : 1 July 2026
- Deadline for appeals: 10 July 2026
- Deadline for acceptance and confirmation of participation : 15 July 2026.

7. Data Protection

Information relating to individuals (personal data) is collected and used in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) n. 2016/679 of the European Commission, with regard to the processing of personal data by European institutions and organizations and the unrestricted circulation of such data.

Ca' Foscari University of Venice (protocollo@pec.unive.it, Dorsoduro n. 3246, 30123 Venice), in its capacity as data controller, provides the applicants with information on the processing of their personal data collected to carry out the selection procedures for the *EUTOPIA Innovation Challenge for Researchers 2026 – International TUD|Excite Summer School “Patents in Search of New Business”* (“Event”). The event will be hosted by Dresden & Lusatia and organised by TUD Dresden University of Technology (“TUD”), from 24 to 28 August 2026. The University collects applicants' personal data, such as name, surname, contact details, academic experiences and other relevant information.

Applicants' data will be stored for 5 years from the time of collection.

Personal data is collected and processed to select the students who apply to take part in the Event. **Only personal data of pre-selected candidates will be shared with TUD, as it is necessary for the organisation of the event:** once the students have been selected, UPF will be responsible for managing both the data and image rights of all participants in the activity.



8. Contact Information

Responsible for the procedure

Dr. Mauro Cannone, Manager of Educational Programmes and Student Services Area (ADiSS), is responsible for the procedure, according to Law n. 241/1990.

For any inquiries or additional information on this call please contact:

- Stage 1 – Local pre-selection at EUTOPIA universities

EUTOPIA Unit at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice: eutopia@unive.it

- Stage 2 – Final selection and matching at TUD

Franziska Friebel-Viebach, email: Franziska.Friebel-Viebach@tu-dresden.de, Phone: +49 351 463 33041

Signature

Venice, April 2026

The Manager of the Educational Programmes and Student Services Area

Dr. Mauro Cannone

