

BSBF2026 Call

Call for bids to become host of Big Science Business Forum 2026

Big Science Business Forum 2024

Roma,

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Host Organizers BSBF Trieste 2024



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BSBF2026 – Call for bids to become host of Big Science Business Forum 2026

The Big Science Business Forum (BSBF) is a business-oriented congress that brings together the main European research infrastructures and European industry to present and discuss the prospects of a Big Science common market in terms of future developments, investments, and procurement opportunities. The European Big Science represents a huge market of several hundred million euros per year, with significant potential impact and benefits for national industries across Europe.

On 1 - 4 October 2024, the third edition of the Big Science Business Forum will be held in Trieste, Italy. BSBF Trieste 2024 will be the third edition of the single one-stop-shop for European companies and other stakeholders to learn about European future investments and Research infrastructure procurements in Big Science. In Trieste, over 1000 people from over 500 businesses and organizations are expected to come from 30 countries. BSBF2024 will feature circa 120 speakers and presentations. Moreover, a total of 150 booths in two exhibition areas are expected. Along with the European scientific and business community, there will be relevant participation from policy institutions and a broad media penetration with international media representatives.

The congress is promoted by the following main Big Science Organizations (BSOs) in Europe: the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Southern Observatory (ESO), the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF), the European Spallation Source (ESS), the European X-Ray Free-Electron Laser (European XFEL), Facility for Antiproton and Proton Research in Europe (FAIR), Fusion for Energy (F4E), the Institut Laue-Langevin (ILL) and the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO).

BSBF Trieste 2024 is the host organization selected to ensure the promotion and development of all activities preparatory to establish a common market of Big Science, as well as the organization of the Forum in Trieste, 1-4 October 2024. The Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia is the lead host organization and together with ILO Network Italia (national ILOs – Industrial Liaison Officers from CNR, ENEA, INAF, and INFN), Area Science Park of Trieste and Promoturismo FVG have formed BSBF Trieste 2024. This Italian organization is actively supported by four Ministries (Foreign Affairs and international cooperation, Enterprises and Made in Italy, Environment and Energy Security, University and Research) and national research agencies (CNR, ENEA, INAF, INFN), local authorities (University and City of Trieste) and other international bodies (European Commission, CEI – Central European Initiatives, PERIIA – Pan European Research Infrastructure ILO Association).

Based on the success of past BSBF editions (Copenhagen 2018 and Granada 2022), promoting Big Science organizations have now decided to call for bids from interested parties to become the host of the Big Science Business Forum 2026 (BSBF2026) to be held during the year 2026.

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Introduction to Big Science Business Forum

BSBF represents the most important opportunity for European companies and other stakeholders to learn about the future investments and procurements of Europe's Big Science Organizations, worth approximately €37 billion over the period 2020-2024.

Following the success of the previous editions, the Forum will offer companies the chance to:

- Learn about business opportunities in the coming years across a wide range of technology areas.
- Meet representatives from Europe's Big Science Organizations and their key suppliers.
- Showcase their expertise and potential for the Big Science market by participating in the open exhibition area.
- Gain insights into procurement rules, intellectual property rights (IPR), technology transfer proposals, opportunities for SMEs, and how companies can interact with the Big Science market.
- Finally, it is the perfect occasion to determine whether and in relation to which organizations and projects viable innovation and business opportunities can be found that align with the company's strategy.

More than 1000 participants are expected, the majority from European businesses and Big Science Organizations that want to work together to develop the Big Science common market. Delegates are expected to include CEOs, Heads of R&D and other institutional authorities, Procurement departments, Business Developers, and officers involved in sales and collaborations between research infrastructures and high-tech industry.

BSBF2024 will consist of:

- Plenary sessions with presentations from the Big Science Organizations mentioned above and a roundtable discussion on how to do business with them.
- Parallel sessions focusing on Big Science investment in the coming years: opportunities within 12 technology business areas and 4 cross-cutting topics.
- Parallel sessions focusing on opportunities for companies from Eastern and Central Europe, how to establish a Big Science Common Market, and identifying new ABSOs – Affiliated Big Science Organizations.
- Satellite meetings and sessions, including a focus on job opportunities in collaboration with EURES network and involvement of Women in Big Science.
- 1:1 meetings (B2B and B2C) to enable Big Science Organizations, prime contractors, and subcontractors to meet each other.
- Exhibition spaces to allow participants to showcase their products and services alongside Europe's largest Big Science infrastructures.
- An SME Track, enabling European small and medium-sized enterprises to be highlighted as key interlocutors for business opportunities with European Big Science organizations in the coming years.
- A Technology Transfer Track, open to research organizations and industry.

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Moreover, BSBF2024 visits BSOs, and specific presentations on BSBF activities in international conferences and across Central Europe were carried out to strengthen the BSBF brand in preparation for the Trieste Forum.

For more information, please visit the BSBF2024 website:

<https://www.bsf2024.org/>

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Eligibility and bid requirements

Countries, regions or cities; or local, regional, or national consortia in Europe are invited to submit bids to become the next host.

The bid should include, at a minimum, the following listed elements:

1. Description of program

The bid must include a description of the following elements that will constitute the cornerstones of BSBF2026, allowing a mix of methods for establishing dialogue B2C (business to organization) as well as B2B (business to business):

- Plenary sessions, including high-level level speeches from authorities and DGs of the organizations, and topics of common and general interest.
- Industry-tracked parallel sessions where the upcoming procurements, investments, and industrial engagement actions are presented by the Big Science organizations. These parallel sessions are thematically organized technology-wise, trying to avoid sessions focusing on one specific Big Science organization.
- Exhibition space, allowing both the Big Science organizations, national ILOs, and private companies to exhibit.
- 1-1 meetings, in order to establish B2B and B2C partnerships or strengthen existing ones.

The bid must also include:

- Proposals for a social program and opportunities for satellite meetings/events and site visits (to relevant Research Infrastructure).
- Proposed scope, duration, and exact timing.
- Considerations regarding strategies for promotion to potential participants and potentially a media strategy.
- A list of substantiated success criteria for BSBF2026 that are both realistic and ambitious and against which the performance can be measured.
- An analysis of the dates of other events, such as conferences, Big Science organization committees, or other international meetings. The date for BSBF2026 must be set accordingly to avoid potential date clashes with these major events.
- In addition, the bidder has the flexibility to propose thematic or national flavors to the event, always taking into account the fact that BSBF2026 will be a mainly European event with a mainly European-wide audience.

2. Location and venue

The bid must describe the location and the city environment, and demonstrate that the location can accommodate such an event, including:

- Accessibility from all over Europe by air, rail, and road
- Hotel facilities in a variety of price ranges
- Proposed conference facilities and venues and their fit to the program
- Potential link to a big science infrastructure
- Other relevant informed deemed appropriate by the bidder

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3. Organization

The bid must be supported by a strong national or local organization (e.g. government agency, ILO, or region), and must be backed by key national bodies (government, ministry, agency) in the area if the national body is not the proposed host. The bid must indicate which of these organizations will take the lead. A solid organizing capability must be demonstrated in the bid.

The International Organizing Committee (IOC), with the future host as chair, will be the main strategic decision-making body regarding BSBF2026.

4. Budget and business plan

The financing and resourcing of BSBF2026 rests on three basic sources (with the host invited to identify further sources):

- The selected host's contribution both in terms of human resources and financial resources to partially cover conference expenditure.
- The Big Science organizations' contribution in terms of human resources and coverage of travel and accommodation costs for their staff.
- Income from BSBF2026 in terms of registration and exhibition fees and sponsorships.

The bid must comprise a budget and a business plan, showing the level of local, regional, and national funding sources. The bid must demonstrate that the proposed host allocates the required human resources (in-kind) and cash contribution (incl. outlay).

It is stressed that BSBF2026 must be organized as a non-profit event.

5. Letter of support from the relevant authority

The bid must include documentation from the DG/CEO of the relevant authority(ies) wishing to host BSBF2026, including a confirmation that the proposed host will provide the needed outlay for expenses, commit both sufficient human and financial resources, and that the host will carry the full economic liability of BSBF2026 for any shortfalls.

Deadline

Bids should be sent with the heading "Bid to host BSBF2026" to call@bsbf2024.org no later than 4th June 2024 at 12:00 pm CET.

Evaluation process and criteria

The Big Science organizations will evaluate the expressions of interest based on the following criteria:

1. The quality and content of the proposed program and its fit to the overall vision and purpose of BSBF2026, including the proposed success criteria.
2. The suitability of the proposed dates, location, and venue(s), including a potential connection to a big science infrastructure.
3. The strength and solidity of the proposed host and the local organization.
4. Contributions to pre-Forum strategies for promotion to potential industrial participants, to strengthen BSBF brand and media coverage.
5. The soundness of the budget and financial plan, including the resources made available.

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Bidders may be asked for additional information to support the bid, and possibly be invited for interviews in Rome (IT) on 4th July 2024 or on short notice (at their own expense or via videoconference), after which bidders will be informed of the final decision in July 2024.

BSBF2024 Forum in Trieste will include, during the closing plenary session, a passing of the torch ceremony to the organizer of the 2026 edition.

BSBF Trieste 2024 host organizer will serve as the role of secretariat to the Big Science Organizations until the next host is identified. Hence, it is not involved in the decision-making process.

Calendar:

1. March: the call is open.
2. June 4th: the call is closed.
3. June/July: Discussion, possible interviews, and nomination of BSBF2026 host organizer by BSOs representatives within BSBF IOC - International Organizing Committee.
4. July: BSBF Trieste 2024 will communicate the results to the bidders.
5. October 4th: passing of the torch ceremony during the closing session of BSBF2024 in Trieste (Italy).

Further information

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An introduction webinar to the BSBF2026 host call will be organized by the BSBF Trieste 2024 host organizer and after deadline expiration basic information regarding the number of proposals received and cities interested will be published. Please check www.bsbf2024.org

On request, the BSBF Trieste 2024 host organizer will make available other information about the upcoming third edition of the congress.

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Annex 1: Purpose and background

Big Science Organizations (BSOs) rely on industrial suppliers for the construction, maintenance, operation, and upgrading of their facilities. This role is typically exercised via public procurements and purchasing, and involves scientific and high-tech technologies and products but also more conventional deliverables. Although BSOs have largely different scientific objectives, it was noted that the characteristics of companies actively engaging with them are very similar. This results in large overlaps between the supply chains of different Big Science organizations. It is within this framework that Big Science turns into big business and the so-called Big Science market emerges.

However, the Big Science market is fragmented by different and often time-consuming procurement procedures, technical standards, and quality controls, which create market entry challenges for businesses and suppliers. The consequence is that especially many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), who would otherwise be good business partners for multiple BSOs due to their flexibility and lighter structure, often find the market too difficult to penetrate.

Thus, the vision behind BSBF is to provide an important stepping stone towards establishing a stronger, more transparent, and efficient Big Science common market in Europe, minimizing entry barriers/costs for industrial suppliers and therefore maximizing the competition to secure cost-effectiveness and the positive impact of Big Science spending on European industrial competitiveness. BSBF aspires to be Europe's one-stop-shop on the Big Science common market and an important contribution to the sustainability of Big Science facilities, for the benefit of both Big Science and businesses.

Thus, Big Science Organizations that primarily have an interest in addressing the European industry as end users of the facility are not targeted. The focus of BSBF is industrial supplies to Big Science – not industrial use of Big Science.

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