

 <p>TRINATIONALE METROPOLREGION OBERRHEIN</p> <p>REGION METROPOLITAINE TRINATIONALE DU RHIN SUPERIEUR</p> <p><b>L'Offensive Sciences</b> Wissenschaftsoffensive</p>	<p><b>The Science Offensive of the Trinational Metropolitan Region Upper Rhine – a unique funding instrument in Europe!</b></p>
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<p><b>Vision and Aims</b></p>	<p>Structural, competitive, societal and technological change processes have massively increased the transfer pressure in recent years, also in the Upper Rhine region. There is the need for closer cooperation between the relevant actors from science, economy, politics and civil society. This pressure will continue to increase in the foreseeable future. In the Upper Rhine region, too, despite its high density of scientific institutions, the knowledge gained there is not transferred comprehensively and quickly enough into economy and the public sector. To strengthen the innovative capacity and performance of the approximately 290,000 regional SMEs in the Upper Rhine region in the next decade, the knowledge and technology transfer of the scientific institutions (universities, universities of applied sciences, non-university research institutions) to companies and society must be intensified.</p> <p>The transfer orientation of the <b>Science Offensive 2021-27</b> thus intends to create the conditions for the further development of research results into innovative products, processes or services and to bridge the so-called “Valley of Death” between scientific research and economic and societal use.</p>
<p><b>Target Audience</b></p>	<p>Primarily academia/research, but also industry/SMEs, the public sector and civil society as transfer recipients</p>
<p><b>Key Features</b></p>	<p>The Science Offensive...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports universities, research and transfer institutions in transferring scientific findings and results into the economy or into the public sector and civil society in the cross-border European region “Upper Rhine”</li> <li>• Promotes excellent bi- or trinational cross-border projects in the field of science and innovation in the Upper Rhine region</li> <li>• Assures the scientific quality and innovation potential of the projects via an additional review by external valorisation experts</li> <li>• Offers substantial support during each phase of the project to assure their success and facilitate cross-border &amp; European cooperation of academic actors for a more efficient transfer of knowledge &amp; technologies for the territory</li> <li>• Is Part of other European strategies such as the European Research Area or the New European Bauhaus</li> <li>• Contributes to achieve the goals of the European Green Deal and the digitisation of Europe in a wide variety of areas, as well as the goals of the Trinational Metropolitan Region Upper Rhine (RMTMO) Strategy 2030 on the regional level.</li> </ul>

The Science Offensive is a joint initiative of the states of Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate, the Région Grand Est and the Interreg Upper Rhine Programme to promote excellent cross-border projects in the field of science and innovation. Following a selection procedure that focuses on the scientific quality and innovation potential of the projects, the laureates are thus co-financed by a total of 75%. Projects can have a financial volume of up to €1 million, of which 50% is funded by the Interreg programme and 25% by the regions or Länder. Though non-EU members, Swiss academic partners and transfer stakeholders in the trinational Upper Rhine Metropolitan Region can also participate and receive financial support from the North-Western Swiss Cantons or from the New Regional Policy (NRP) of the country on federal level.

Within the framework of the Science Offensive, the scientific actors and their partners are also offered support. Through thematic workshops, networking events or even training measures, the coordination office of the Science Pillar provides information about the initiative and offers direct support to the actors from research and innovation in the development of their project idea, the search for partners, the preparation of funding applications and the implementation and exploitation of their projects (by communicating on them).

Funding is available for a broad range of topics in the fields of the regional innovation strategies for smart specialisation as stated in the Interreg Upper Rhine Programme 2021-2027, such as digitisation, cyber security, quantum sciences and technologies, energy transition, sustainable mobility, agriculture and forestry, bioeconomy, innovative therapies and med tech, personalised medicine, materials and processes or social innovation.

The projects must systematically demonstrate the feasibility and practicability as well as the innovation potential of research results. In particular, projects are to be funded whose results can lead to significant innovations (level of innovation) and which have a high potential for economic or social application, especially for the Upper Rhine border region.

The Science Offensive is a tool for supporting the transfer of public academic research results to companies or public stakeholders in the region from a European, in this case cross-border, perspective. French, German and Swiss academics work together with companies and organisations in the Upper Rhine region, strengthening contacts between science, economy, politics and society. The contribution of science to the social, economic and environmental development of the Upper Rhine Region is thus made more systematic.

With more than 160 higher education, research and innovation institutions, the Upper Rhine border region has a dense scientific landscape whose excellence is recognised far beyond the regional borders. Boasting many large international companies and about 290.000 successful SMEs, it is also highly dynamic economically, with a GDP of 250 billion Euros. Each of the partner regions can boast leading-edge expertise in areas with high development potential, playing a major role in solving the regional and European challenges of tomorrow, such as climate change, health, sustainable mobility and digital transformation.

<b>Achievements &amp; Learnings</b>	<p>Since the launch of the “Science Offensive”, 21 project consortia involving 26 scientific institutions have been supported with 11.6 million euros in EU funding and 5 million euros in additional funding from the regional partners within the framework of 3 project calls. In total, more than 21 million euros were invested in research and innovation in the Upper Rhine..</p> <p>Thanks to the funding of the various Science Offensive projects, research results could be further developed for example into the prototype of a long-endurance autonomous drone (ELCOD project), a virtual platform enabling companies to design cyber-physical production systems (VIRTFac project), intelligent management systems to better integrate renewable energy into the electricity grid (ACA-MODES project) or novel resorbable, 3D printable materials for bone repair and bone implants (TriMaBone project).</p> <p>The coordination office of the Science Offensive actively communicates on the projects and thus also helps to disseminate project results. According to a survey led by the office, 12 of 14 projects of the 2016 and 2018 calls have submitted new project proposals or are preparing project proposals, mostly in Interreg Upper Rhine (including the Science Offensive), but also in Horizon Europe and the DFG/ANR programmes, thus enabling to uptake and deploy research results also beyond the Upper Rhine area. If needs be, the coordination office of the Science Offensive also supports the search for (new) scientific and industrial partners. Among the former project partners, a kind of “Interreg/Science Offensive community” has even emerged in the way that they are joining forces in new project ideas. In addition, three start-ups have emerged from the 2016/2018 Science Offensive projects.</p> <p>Moreover, the Science Offensive has enabled academic players and their departments responsible for knowledge valorisation and transfer to get to know each other better, to develop common methodologies and a climate of benevolent collaborative working, including in the management of issues relating to the protection of research results and intellectual property. The Knowledge Transfer Upper-Rhine (Ktur) project was designed to structure the academic players involved in knowledge transfer and ran from 2019 to 2022.</p> <p>Throughout four calls, the Science Offensive evolved on the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) scale from funding more fundamental research via applied research in cooperation with the industry to supporting knowledge and technology transfer projects in the funding period 2021-2027 between partners from Germany, France and Switzerland based in Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, the Grand Est Region and North-West Switzerland.</p>
<b>Launch Date &amp; Duration</b>	Calls in 2011, 2016, 2018, 2023 (05/01 – 24/03), 2024
<b>Partners/Sponsors</b>	Interreg A Upper Rhine, Science Ministry of Baden-Württemberg (Germany), Science Ministry of Rhineland-Palatinate (Germany), Région Grand Est (France), Interreg Upper Rhine Programme
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