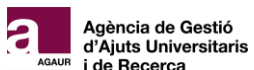




RULES FOR PARTICIPATION

OPEN CALL FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP) STUDIES, 2026

Amb el suport de



1. About the X4HPC Network

The X4HPC Network is a project led by the Barcelona Supercomputing Center (BSC-CNS), whose mission is to drive the valorisation and technology transfer of research results in the field of supercomputing, fostering collaboration between the scientific community and industry, and promoting engagement with the European open source ecosystem. The Network brings together research groups from leading Catalan institutions working in the field of High-Performance Computing (HPC), including Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), Universitat de Barcelona (UB), Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC), Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF), Vall Hebron Research Institute (VHIR), Fundació Institut de Recerca Biomèdica (IRB Barcelona), Institut Josep Carreras (IJC), Centre Nacional de Microelectrònica (CNM-CSIC), Institut Català de Nanociència i Nanotecnologia (ICN2), Institut de Bioenginyeria de Catalunya (IBEC), and Centre Internacional de Mètodes Numèrics en Enginyeria (CIMNE).

The X4HPC Network's mission is to accelerate the valorisation and technology transfer of scientific projects that use HPC tools, supporting disruptive technologies that generate a positive social and economic impact, fostering entrepreneurship and the creation of spin-offs, and promoting the interaction between research and industry through open innovation initiatives. The Network's vision is to consolidate Catalonia as an international reference hub for high-performance computing technologies.

The project, in its new period 2026–2028, is funded by the Departament de Recerca i Universitats of the Generalitat de Catalunya, through the Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca (AGAUR).

2. Scope of the Call

The protection of intellectual property (IP) plays a crucial role in facilitating the transfer and commercialisation of HPC technologies. Developing a suitable IP strategy during the initial stages of asset creation is a critical aspect of maximising its value. Unfortunately, research groups often encounter resource constraints that prevent them from accessing IP support during these early stages of development. This limitation frequently results in diminished potential value for the asset and even jeopardises the entire technology transfer process.

Therefore, to provide assistance to X4HPC's research groups and foster their adoption of IP strategies for early-stage assets with commercialisation potential, we are launching the **OPEN CALL FOR IP STUDIES 2026**.

This call will execute a budget of 25.000€, provided by the allocated budget in the Valorisation Calls from “Actuació 4 de la Memòria 2026-2028”.

3. Eligible IP Studies

The objective of the X4HPC Network through this call is to offer comprehensive intellectual asset protection studies conducted by specialised providers in the respective domain. In the context of this initiative, we interpret “IP strategy” in its widest sense to encompass all assets within the HPC sector, including hardware, software, and other relevant components. It is important to note that our intention extends beyond solely addressing patent-related strategies. We also intend to cover various other forms of IP, such as copyrights, designs, trade secrets, utility models, software and hardware licences, and more.

The studies that can be covered within this Call, with a ticket of maximum ticket of 5.000€ each are:

- Patentability studies
- Expert assessment in Open-Source Software and Open Hardware protection
- Freedom to Operate studies
- IP strategic roadmaps
- International IP strategies
- Other IP strategic studies whenever justified

There are explicitly excluded costs related to the application, registration, process, drafting, translation, maintenance, legal proceedings, litigation, and opposition.

4. Application Process

To apply for the Call, interested parties are required to complete and submit the designated form to x4hpc@bsc.es. It is essential to include the subject line “*Application to 2026 IP Call – Name of the research group*” in the email. The application form can be accessed on the official webpage of X4HPC (www.x4hpc.cat). Please note that applications lacking the necessary information will not be considered eligible. However, it is understood that projects may not possess extensive documentation at this stage, and it is acceptable to provide limited estimates or preliminary information within the form.

The application form should contain the following information:

- Current IP protection and strategy or initiated procedures to the moment, indicating the urgency of the protection (if any)
- Strategic IP study required and its impact on the project
- Stage of development of the asset
- Ownership of the asset(s)

- Potential market and competitive advantages
- Benefits of the technology, main value proposition and impact

Applications must be submitted in **English**.

5. Evaluation criteria and selection process

The X4HPC Network aims to provide assistance to early-stage assets where the incorporation of an IP strategy is deemed vital for their prosperity. In addition, X4HPC acknowledges the significance of innovation and the potential impact that these projects may have upon market transfer.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored attending the following criteria and weights:

- 25% Need for developing the Strategic IP Study
- 25% Market potential & competitive advantage of the technology
- 15% Disruptive innovation potential and degree of novelty
- 15% Potential social and economic impact of the project
- 20% Maturity of the technology based on TRL

The evaluation process will be conducted with the support of specialists in the field and the **Valorisation Committee** of the X4HPC Network, with a resolution available 1 month after the closing date of this call.

The call is structured as an **Open Call**, allowing X4HPC members to submit proposals between 1 and 30 of June 2026 (inclusive).

Projects that are not chosen during a specific cut-off period will be retained in the backlog, along with their respective scores, and will be eligible for consideration in subsequent cut-off evaluations. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to ensure the accuracy and completeness of your application, as we expect it to be a competitive call.

6. Eligibility

X4HPC's OPEN CALL FOR IP STUDIES 2026 is available for assets **owned and co-owned** by members of the X4HPC Network.

The assets presented must meet the following criteria:

1. The assets developed must be based on or related to **HPC technologies**.
2. The leader of the research group or the principal investigator must **grant authorisation** for the submission of the asset to this particular call.

3. There is no restriction on the quantity of assets that can be submitted by the research group. However, we recommend **only a maximum of two studies** per research group per funding round or evaluation period.

7. Confidentiality

All the information disclosed by the research groups within the context of this project call will be handled with utmost confidentiality, in accordance with what is stated in the Agreement signed by the participating entities of the Network (“Acord de Xarxa”).