EXCHANGE SCHEMES
ENFIELD SECOND CALL FOR PROPOSALS
OC2-2024-TES-02

OPEN CALL REPORT
ANA SOLANGE LEAL, MARIANA FERREIRA, MARIANA MALTA (INOVA+)

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE OPEN CALL

ENFIELD project has **1.1M€** to provide support to a total of **76 researchers** to answer specific ENFIELD challenges through four rounds of exchange open calls. This was the second out of four open calls for individual researchers to exchange under the ENFIELD[1] (European Lighthouse to Manifest Trustworthy and Green AI) project, co-funded by the European Union. Through the ENFIELD Exchange Scheme open calls and the Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) mechanism, the project aims to attract top-level researchers to conduct foundational research activities related to specific scientific/technological challenges in artificial intelligence, contributing to the ENFIELD network creation and expansion to European AI labs.

ENFIELD Exchange Schemes Open Calls grants employed researchers (PhDs, postdocs, senior researchers) with a **mobility allowance of 2.400€/month** (up to 14.400€ in total) for them to carry out research activities in ENFIELD partner organizations for **3-6 months**.

2. OPEN CALL PUBLICATION

All the documents that provided information to the potential applicants or templates that must be provided as part of the application process for oc2-2024-TES-02 can be found in "D5.1 – Open Call Documents".

The ENFIELD website, as one of the key tools of the project, was the main point of information for future applicants for the oc2-2024-TES-02 (https://www.enfield-project.eu/oc2_TES_2024) including relevant documents and links for the submission process (**Figure 1**). Also, following the requirements of the European Commission, the ENFIELD Open Call has been published on the Cascade Funding page of the Funding & Tenders Portal (link here).

Figure 1. oc1-2024-TES-02 dedicated tab in ENFIELD webpage.

The ENFIELD Open Call oc2-2024-TES-02 was launched using the platform EU Survey on the **15th of August 2024** and the deadline for submission of applications was the **14th of October 2024**. However, due to the low number of applications by the deadline, ENFIELD decided to extend it until the **31st of October 2024**. To promote the open call, several posts were published in the ENFIELD LinkedIn page (**Figure 2**).
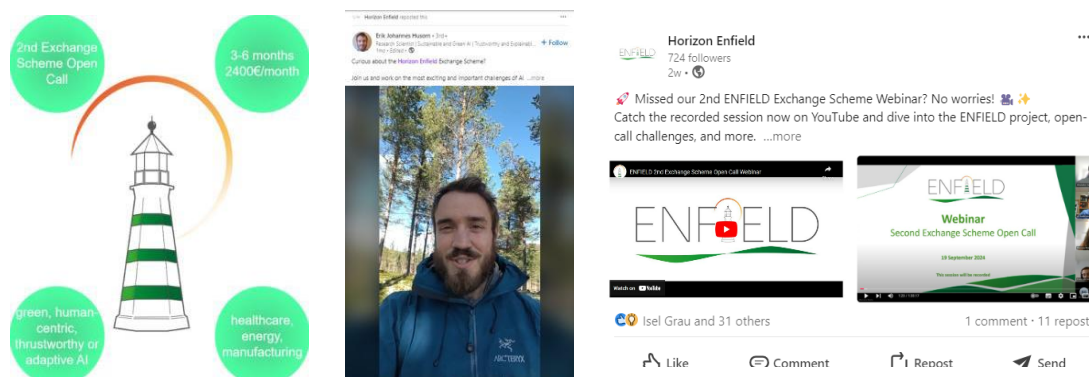

Figure 2. Examples of posts published on social media to advertise oc1-2024-TES-02.

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[1] Grant Agreement nº 101120657, funded by the European Union.

Also, INOVA+ advertised the open call in the Google groups "Women in Machine Learning" and "Reinforcement Learning Mailing List", as well as on EURAXESS to maximize the call promotion (**Figure 3**).
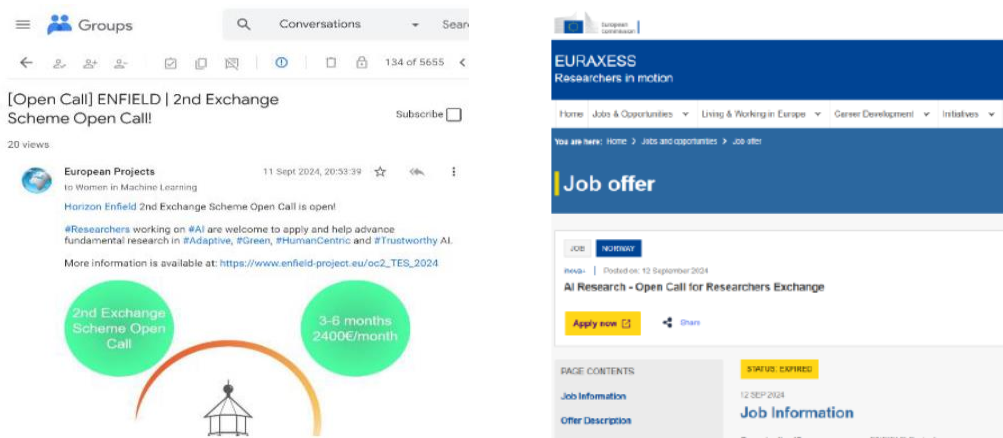
Figure 3. Promotion of the oc2-2024-TES-02 at Women in Machine Learning group (left) and EURAXESS (right).

To generate more interest in the open call, clarify doubts and provide useful information to potential applicants, particularly those with limited experience in applying for funding, INOVA+ organized a dedicated webinar on the **19th of September 2024 at 14H30 CET**. The webinar had **50 participants** and was later made available on the project's website for wider access (https://www.enfield-project.eu/oc2_TES_2024) (**Figure 4**). Also, applicants were encouraged to contact the ENFIELD support team for additional information and guidance via enfield.opencall@inova.business.

Figure 4. ENFIELD 2nd Exchange Scheme Webinar available at the website.

3. OPEN CALL RESULTS AND STATISTICS

ENFIELD Open Call oc2-2024-TES-02 received a total of 30 applications. The distribution of applications received across the challenges proposed by the various pillars/verticals is presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – Distribution of applications received.

PILLARS			
Challenge	Pillar	Title	Applications
G-AI.1		Green Generative Language Models	0
G-AI.2	Green-AI	Green AI in the Edge-to-Cloud Continuum	1
G-AI.3		Green AI Metrics	0
A-AI.1	Adaptative-AI	Adaptive AI on the Edge – Hardware Aware Differentiable Architecture Search	0
A-AI.2		Adaptive AI on the Edge – Resources-constrained Training	0

A-AI.3		Adaptative Robustness and Trustworthiness	2
A-AI.4		Brain-inspired AI - Developing intelligent systems that are effective and efficient continual learners	4
A-AI.5		Brain-inspired AI – developing intelligent systems that are better in generalization and robustness	1
HC-AI.1	Human-Centric AI	Evolving Symbolic Models for Decision-Making	1
HC-AI.2		User Perspectives on Explainable AI	2
HC-AI.3		Child-Centric AI for Personalized and Safe Educational Voice Assistants	0
HC-AI.4		Novel Explainable AI Methods for Decision Making	3
T-AI.1	Trustworthy AI	Secure Voice Biometrics with Fake Voice Detection	1
T-AI.2		Non-linear models for multivariate time series (vertical federated learning)	2
T-AI.3		Security and Robustness of AI systems	1
T-AI.4		Privacy and Compliance of AI systems	2
T-AI.5		AI in Distributed systems	1
VERTICALS			
Challenge	**Vertical**	**Title**	**Applications**
VH.1	Healthcare	ICU readmission analysis and support	3
VE.1	Energy	Systemic and Local explainer of the system dynamic behavior	5
VM.1	Manufacturing	Context-agnostic human detection in robotic cell	0
VM.2		Self-X Integration in manufacturing domain	1

The majority of applications were received for the pillars Adaptative AI and Trustworthy AI, with 7 applications each. Additionally, 6 applications were submitted under Pillar Human- Centric AI. Only 1 application was received for both Pillar Green AI and Vertical Manufacturing. Of the 30 applications, 22 were from single applicants while 8 came from a group of researchers (3 groups of 2 researchers and 5 groups of 3 researchers).

The career stage distribution among the received applications shows that the majority of applicants were PhD students (20) (**Figure 5**). When broken down by the type of application, individual applicants were primarily PhD students (12) and post-docs (7). Group applications were more prevalent between senior researchers (11), and PhD students (8).
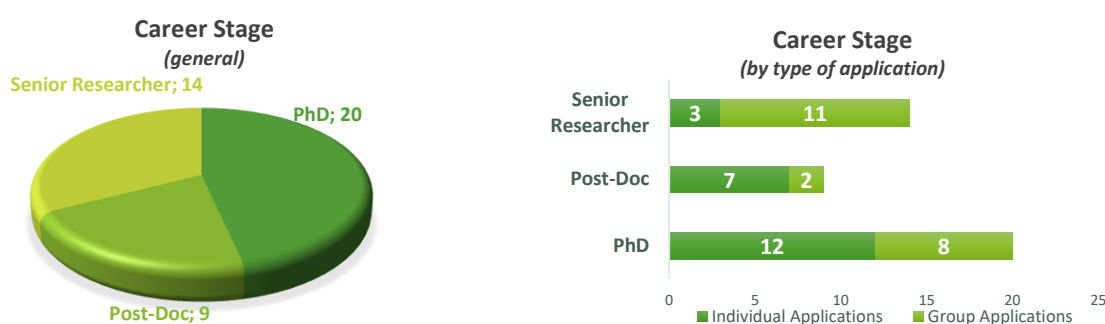

Figure 5. Career Stage Distribution among all the received applications. Left panel in the overall open call. Right panel depending on the type of application (individual or group).

Regarding gender, most applicants identified as men (30), with women making up ten (10) of the applicants, and three (3) individuals preferred not to disclose their gender (**Figure 6**). Applications from men were also more preponderant both in individual (16) and group (14) applications. Furthermore, when broken down by pillar/vertical, applications from men were more preponderant in all Pillars and Verticals (**Figure 7**). While ENFIELD does not specifically encourage applications from women, the selection process prioritizes gender balance when proposals are tied, with preference given to those led by women or with teams closer to a 50/50 gender distribution, as outlined in the ranking rules.
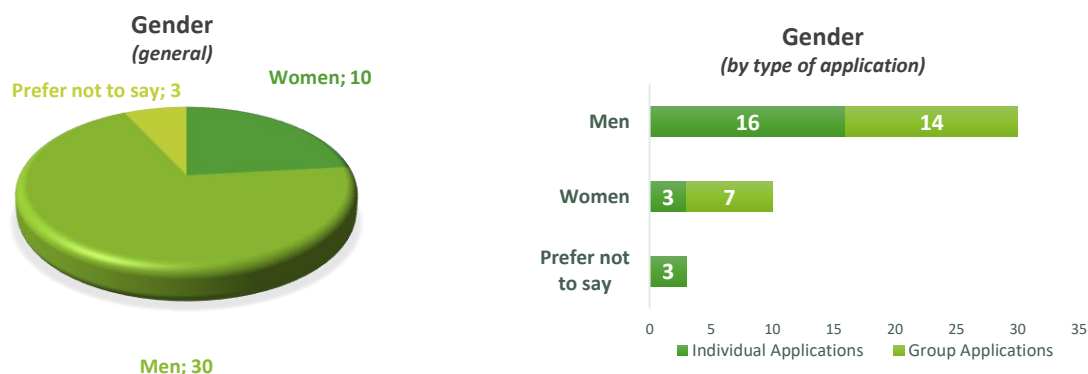
Figure 6. Gender Distribution among all the received applications. Left panel in the overall open call. Right panel depending on the type of application (individual or group).
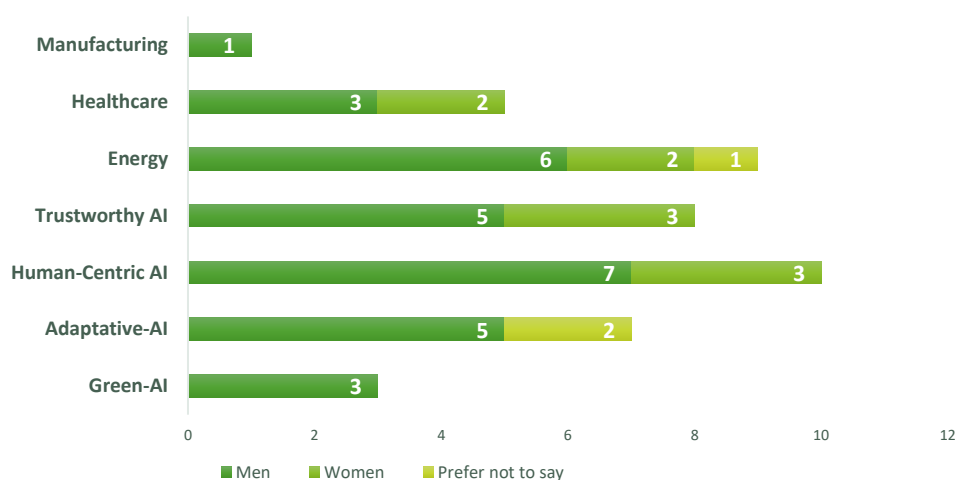
Figure 7. Gender Distribution among the received applications across pillars and verticals.

The applicants' age distribution reveals a concentration in the [30-39] age group (20), followed by the [20-29] group (14), [40-49] group (8), and only 1 applicant over 50 years old (**Figure 8**).

Geographically, the applicants come from a diverse range of 11 different countries (**Figure 8**), with Italy brining in the highest number of applications (10), followed by Spain and France, with five (5) applications each.

Figure 8. *Age distribution of the applicants among all the received applications (left panel). Applicants' country of living among all the received applications (right panel).*

4. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

4.1. ELIGIBILITY CHECK

INOVA+ conducted the eligibility check for all 30 proposals, verifying them based on the following criteria:

- Researcher is a PhD, Postdoc, or Senior;
- Researcher is based in an EU or EU-associated country;
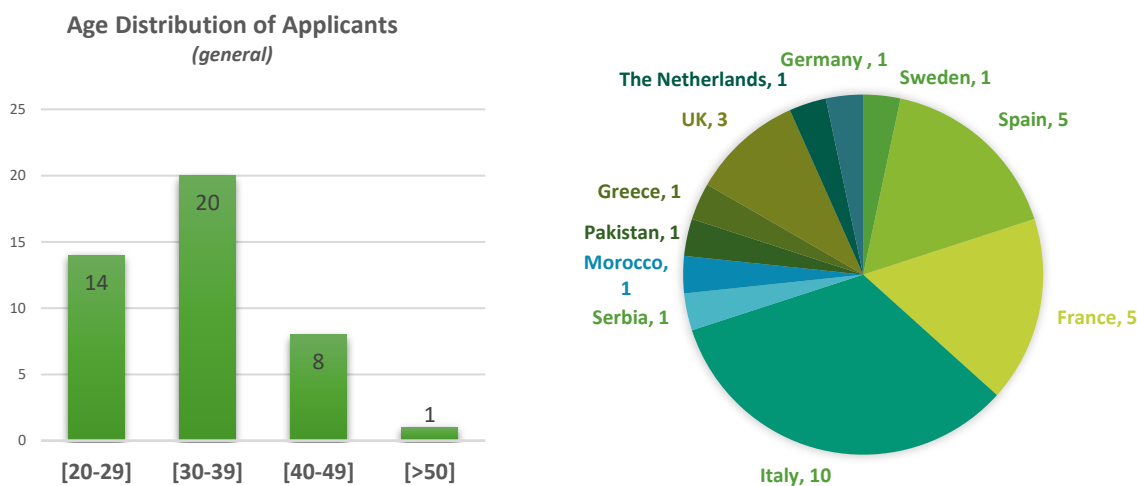- No conflict of interest;
- Technical Annex included in the proposal form;
- Presentation video link is provided in the proposal form.

Based on the above-mentioned criteria, 8 applications were automatically rejected:

- oc2-2024-TES-02-01, -02, -18, -19, -21: missing the technical annex and/or the presentation video.
- *oc2-2024-TES-02-08, -09*: repeated application (-08, -09, -10 are the same applicants); therefore, only the latest was considered.
- oc2-2024-TES-02-17: duplicate of application -29; therefore, only the latest was considered.

From the 30 received applications, 22 applications were validated to move for the evaluation process.

4.2. ALLOCATION OF EVALUATORS

Evaluators from the following entities were selected for the evaluation of each application:

Table 2 – Allocated Evaluators to each proposal.

Pillar/Vertical	Applicant ID	Entity		
		Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2	Evaluator 3
A-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-03	IMT	TU/e	UPB
T-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-04	TELENOR	NTNU	BME
T-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-05	TUC	NTNU	INESC TEC

T-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-06	INESC TEC	BME	NTNU
G-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-07	KNOW	SINTEF	UCM
HC-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-10	TU/e	INESC TEC	UPB
VH	oc2-2024-TES-02-11	NTUA	KNOW	IMT
HC-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-12	TU/e	INESC TEC	TELENOR
T-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-13	TUC	NTNU	BME
HC-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-14	TU/e	INESC TEC	UPB
T-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-15	BME	INESC TEC	TUC
T-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-16	TUC	NTNU	INESC TEC
A-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-20	IMT	TU/e	UPB
VH	oc2-2024-TES-02-22	NTUA	KNOW	IMT
VE	oc2-2024-TES-02-23	INESC TEC	POLIMI	SINTEF
A-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-24	IMT	TU/e	TELENOR
VM	oc2-2024-TES-02-25	POLIMI	BME	SINTEF
A-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-26	IMT	TU/e	UPB
HC-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-27	TU/e	INESC TEC	TELENOR
VE	oc2-2024-TES-02-28	INESC TEC	POLIMI	SINTEF
A-AI	oc2-2024-TES-02-29	IMT	TU/e	TELENOR
VH	oc2-2024-TES-02-30	NTUA	KNOW	IMT

All the selected evaluators were proposed by each ENFIELD partner entity involved in the evaluation process. When analysing the gender distribution of evaluators most of them identified as **men (12)**, with women making up 5 of the evaluators pool (**Figure 9**).
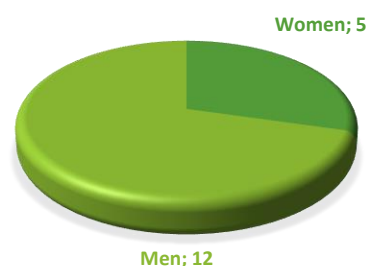

Figure 9. Gender Distribution among evaluators.

4.3. EVALUATION PERIOD AND CONSENSUS MEETING

Each evaluator, upon signing the NDA, was granted access to the folder containing all documents related to the application for evaluation. The individual evaluation phase took place from the 5th to the 19th of November of 2024.

After receiving all individual evaluation reports, INOVA+ calculated the average score for each application from the three evaluators' individual scores. These averages were then used to create the final ranking of applications. Following this process, INOVA+ organized a Consensus Meeting with all evaluators to discuss the final scores and proceed with the selection of applicants. The details about the consensus meetings (including which applications they were related to, which criteria and the outcome regarding the marks in question) will be made available to the European Commission upon request.

Following the Consensus Meeting held on the 22nd of November 2024, all evaluators successfully aligned their scores. Subsequently, the process advanced to generating the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESR), which were sent to the applicants on the 26th of November 2024. No request for redress was received.

The average of the three individual evaluations gave us the final evaluation.

- Three (3) applications were automatically rejected because they ranked below the threshold (three (3) for each criterion and/or twelve (12) for the overall score): oc2-2024-TES-02-05, oc2-2024-TES-02-12 and oc2-2024-TES-02-30.
- *Five (5) applications were rejected given the budgetary resources available for the call: oc2-2024-TES-02-10, oc2-2024-TES-02-16, oc2-2024-TES-02-22, oc2-2024-TES-02-24 and oc2-2024-TES-02-28.*

4.4. SELECTED APPLICATIONS

All other fourteen (14) applications were selected with the following ranking:

Table 3 – List of selected applications.

Final Score	Proposal Identifier	Application	Challenge	Exchange duration	Total Grant Amount
20	oc2-2024-TES-02-06	Individual	T-AI.2	4M	€9,600
19	oc2-2024-TES-02-26	Individual	A-AI.3	6M	€14,400
18	oc2-2024-TES-02-04	Individual	T-AI.3	6M	€14,400
18	oc2-2024-TES-02-03	Individual	A-AI.3	5M	€12,000
18	oc2-2024-TES-02-07	Group	G-AI.2	4M	€28,800
18	oc2-2024-TES-02-29	Individual	A-AI.4	6M	€14,400
18	oc2-2024-TES-02-13	Individual	T-AI.5	6M	€14,400
18	oc2-2024-TES-02-20*	Individual	A-AI.4	6M	€14,400
18	oc2-2024-TES-02-11	Group	VH.1	6M	€43,200
17	oc2-2024-TES-02-25	Individual	VM.2	6M	€14,400
17	oc2-2024-TES-02-23	Individual	VE.1	6M	€14,400
16	oc2-2024-TES-02-15	Individual	T-AI.1	5M	€12,000
16	oc2-2024-TES-02-14	Individual	HC-AI.4	5M	€12,000
13	oc2-2024-TES-02-27	Individual	HC-AI.2	6M	€14,400

* oc2-2024-TES-02-20 declined the invitation for the exchange due to conflicting PhD contractual clauses.

4.5. STATISTICS OF THE SELECTED APPLICATIONS

Of the 13 selected applications, 11 were from single applicants while 2 came from a group of researchers (2 groups of 3 researchers). The majority of selected applications were under the pillar Trustworthy-AI (4), followed by Adaptative-AI (3) (**Figure 10**). Additionally, 2 applications were selected under pillar Human-Centric AI. One application was selected under pillar Green-AI, and verticals Healthcare, Energy and Manufacturing each.
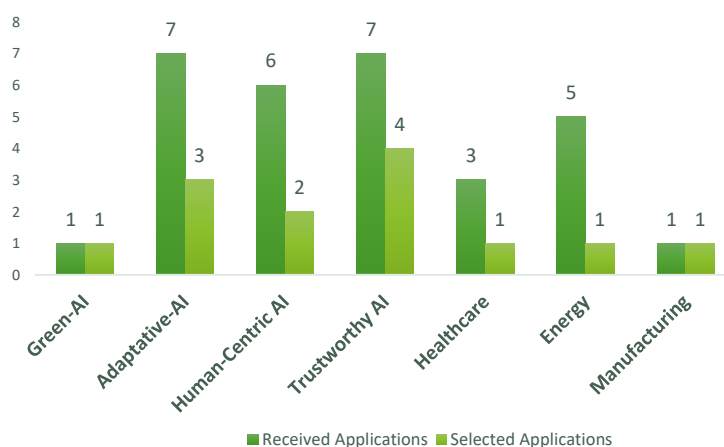

Figure 10. Distribution of received and selected applications across pillars and verticals.

The career stage distribution among the selected applications shows that the majority of applicants are PhD students (8),

followed by Senior researchers (5) and post-doc researchers (4) (**Figure 11**). Regarding gender, most selected applicants identified as men (12), with women making up 4 of the selected applicants, and 1 individual preferred not to disclose their gender (**Figure 12**).
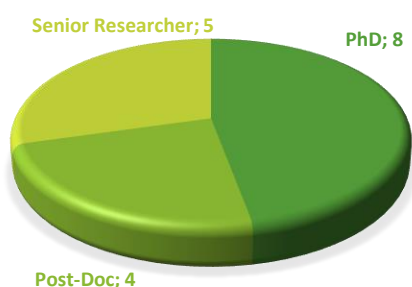

Figure 11. Career Stage Distribution among all the selected applicants.
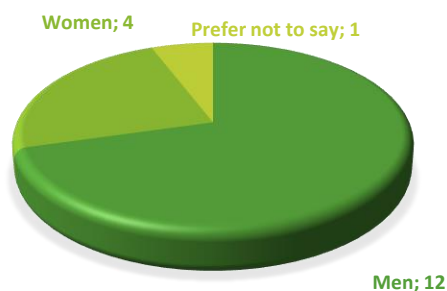

Figure 12. Gender Distribution among all the selected applicants.

The selected applicants' age distribution reveals a concentration in the [20-29] age group (7), followed by the [30-39] group (5), [40-49] group (4), and 1 applicant over 50 years old (**Figure 13**). Geographically, the selected applicants come from **6** different countries (**Figure 14**). France accounts for 4 applicants each, while 3 live in Spain and Italy. Additionally, there is 1 selected applicant living in Morocco, The Netherlands, and the UK each. Regarding nationality, from the 17 selected applicants, 5 are from Spain and Italy each, followed by 2 from Germany (**Figure 14**). Also, there is 1 selected applicant with nationality from the following countries each: Belgium, Morocco, Greece, France, and Iran.
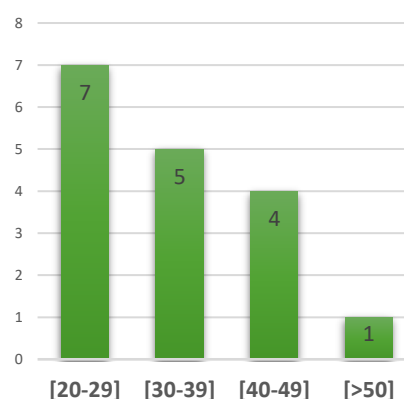

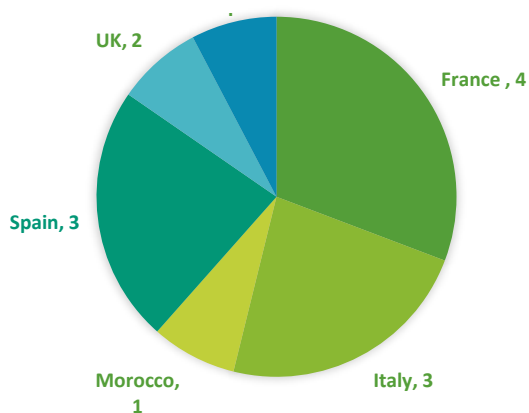**Figure 13.** Age distribution of the selected applicants.

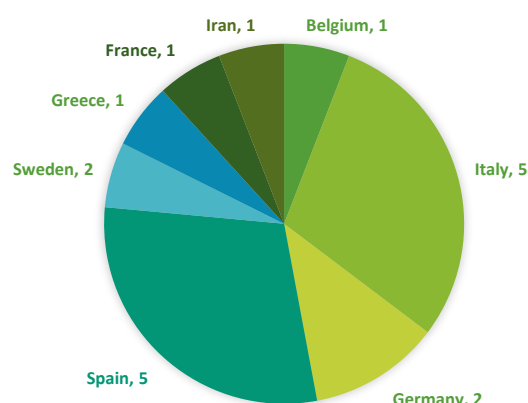**Figure 14.** Selected applicants' country of living.

Figure 15. Selected applicants' nationality.

A total of **thirteen (13) projects** were selected out of thirty (30) in the second ENFIELD Exchange Open Call. The average duration of exchange is 5.5 months. Out of the €1.1M allocated by the ENFIELD project to support a total of 76 researchers, **€218,400[2]** is allocated to the oc2-2024-TES-02 round to support **seventeen (17) selected researchers.**

5. ETHICS DIMENSION

All the selected applications signed a sub-grant agreement ensuring that the projects will be carried out in line with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles (article 7 SGA). Naturally, all unforeseen ethical issues that may rise during project implementation will be monitored by ENFIELD consortium on the one side, and the projects have a duty to report any issues on the other. Furthermore, the work carried out in this Open Call oc2-2024-TES-02 followed the ethical standards set by the ENFIELD Grant Agreement article 14 (Ethics and Values), specific ethics rules are set out in Annex 5.

6. GENDER EQUALITY DIMENSION

Gender considerations were thoroughly incorporated throughout the development and selection processes of this Open Call oc2-2024-TES-02, aligning with best practices for promoting diversity in AI research. While ENFIELD does not specifically encourage applications from women, the selection process prioritizes gender balance when proposals are tied, with preference given to those led by women or with teams closer to a 50/50 gender distribution, as outlined in the ranking rules. This approach ensured that gender equality standards were upheld consistently, guiding decision-making, and aligning with best practices.

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[2] This is an estimated number, as some projects may request an extension of the implementation period, which could result in an increase in the funding allocated to this second open call.