

1. Application Period

Applications can be submitted until July 31, 2026, 11:59 PM.

2. What is funded?

Research projects with a clear connection to the built environment: from design to construction, from material development to questions of sustainable building, from construction technology to energy-related topics.

Practice

- Craft and craft-related fields in cooperation with a university

Planning, Research, and Teaching

- Building physics, building chemistry, building biology, civil engineering
- Engineering physics, chemical engineering, and bioengineering
- Institutes for building materials and material research
- Architecture and interior architecture

Projects without scientific or practice-based supervision are not eligible for funding. For purely construction projects or theoretical discourse formats, please apply to our programs *DesignBuild Project* or *DesignBuild Reflect*.

Funding Requirements

The project must be based on a clearly defined research question related to the development and transformation of the built environment. The project must be accompanied by scientific supervision. The results of the research must be made publicly accessible through publication.

3. Who can apply?

Eligible applicants are working groups from non-profit organizations or public/non-profit institutions in Europe with a connection to construction-related disciplines.

This includes in particular:

- Research associates, postdoctoral researchers, and other individuals in academic qualification phases
- Trainees and scholarship holders in professional education and training, e.g., (prospective) technicians, master craftspeople, or individuals with comparable qualifications
- Faculties, chairs, institutes, and research institutions
- Non-profit, craft-related organizations cooperating with a university

A clear disciplinary connection to the built environment is required, for example in architecture, engineering, building materials research, building physics, sustainability, building culture, or crafts. The research must be based at a non-profit institution and be accompanied by scientific supervision.

4. What is the expected project duration?

The project duration depends on the individual project and can generally run for longer than one year. However, the start of funding (September 2026) must strictly fall within the current calendar year.

5. How much funding is available, and from what date?

A total funding amount of up to EUR 80,000 is available for the EXPLORATION 2026 call, which is to be awarded on a pro-rata basis.

6. What is the application process?

Applications must be submitted via the online form:

https://myconvento.com/public/event_register/do_register/7054492

Once submitted to the foundation, applications can no longer be modified.

Practical Information

To successfully complete the online application, please note:

- All sections should be completed.
- Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory and must be filled in.

7. What should the application include?

- Project description including background, objectives, methodology, implementation, stakeholders (especially to ensure scientific supervision), and additional information (maximum two A4 pages of text; images may be included on one additional page)
- Budget overview
- Timeline
- **Proof of non-profit status (for non-public institutions)**

8. How is the project financially documented to the Sto Foundation?

The funding recipient must issue a donation receipt / proof of use of funds to the Sto Foundation, thereby confirming receipt of the funds as well as their non-profit and tax-compliant use. Details are governed by the terms of the grant agreement.

9. Must the project's progress or results be documented for the foundation?

Yes, in the form of a report including text and images.

10. What happens to the project submitted to the Sto Foundation?

All copyrights and usage rights remain with the authors. The Sto Foundation does not pursue any commercial exploitation of the research; rather, it aims to "share knowledge" by making it available as open source to a broader knowledge community, allowing it to flow back into society for the benefit of all.

11. Usage Rights / Patents in Funded Projects

The funding Sto Foundation does not acquire any usage or exploitation rights.

It acts solely as a sponsor of an external project and has no exclusive access to the research results achieved. This also applies if the project leads to a patent. Any such rights remain exclusively with the project sponsor.

12. How and when are projects selected and applicants notified?

The jury will decide on the submitted projects in August/September 2026. Applicants will be notified subsequently.

13. Public Relations

The Sto Foundation actively engages in public relations and regularly reports on the projects it funds. The proactive participation of funded institutions and projects is expressly encouraged and forms an important part of the collaboration with the Sto Foundation. The foundation's communications department will contact project leads to request materials. At the latest upon completion of the project, a report including images must be submitted to the Sto Foundation. Responsibility for image rights (including consent from any persons depicted) lies with the authors or the respective universities/institutions