



# EIC Accelerator GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

Version 6.0  
19 November  
2025

[eic.ec.europa.eu](http://eic.ec.europa.eu)

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## **EIC Accelerator – Guide for applicants**

European Innovation Council

Manuscript completed in November 2025

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2025

ISBN 978-92-9412-316-9

doi 10.2826/9888380

EA-01-25-174-EN-N

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# History of changes



| Version | Publication Date | Change   |
|---------|------------------|--|
| 1.0     | 18.03.2021       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial version</li> </ul>  |
| 1.1     | 08.04.2021       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarifications and footnotes regarding several issues: TRL, type of funding, etc.</li> <li>Updates of links</li> </ul>  |
| 1.2     | 26.04.2021       | <p>Updates on main recurrent questions received since the opening of the Call; More details have been added to the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>updated cut off dates</li> <li>diagnostic results</li> <li>registration of applicants</li> <li>short application: pitch deck and video</li> <li>withdraw vs resubmission</li> <li>coaching support</li> <li>language of face-to-face interviews</li> </ul> |
| 1.3     | 07.05.2021       | Step 2 – Full application questions  |
| 1.4     | 26.05.2021       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Step 2 – Full application – extra documents to be provided</li> <li>Financial Template</li> </ul>   |
| 1.5     | 06.09.2021       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Types of funding offered</li> <li>Composition of interview panel &amp; interview timing</li> <li>Step 2 pitch deck</li> <li>Information regarding Step 2 questions</li> </ul>   |
| 1.6     | 09.02.2022       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rebuttal and complaints</li> <li>Grant vs Investment components explained</li> <li>Criteria of the new EIC work programme 2022 updated</li> <li>Cut-off dates 2022</li> <li>Challenge driven calls 2022</li> </ul>  |
| 1.7     | 25.02.2022       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type of funding components applicable - Blended finance clarification</li> </ul>  |

| Version | Publication Date | Change  |
|---------|------------------|---|
| 1.8     | 21.12.2022       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Programme 2023 update</li> <li>Cut-off dates 2023</li> <li>Challenge driven calls 2023</li> <li>Clarification on investment only component option</li> <li>Resubmission rules update</li> </ul>   |
| 2.0     | 02.06.2023       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates on submission platform</li> <li>Added slides on short proposal and annex 1</li> </ul>  |
| 3.0     | 03.08.2023       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cut-off date of October postponed to 19 October</li> <li>Clarified that full proposal length in 2023 is a target, not a limitation</li> </ul>  |
| 4.0     | 03.01.2024       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short proposal in SEP- new template (12 page max)</li> <li>Short proposal thresholds</li> <li>Full proposal templates (50 page max, video, cap table, lump sums)</li> <li>Submission limits</li> <li>No more rebuttal or access to previous evaluations</li> <li>Redress procedure</li> <li>Funding types (no more grant first)</li> <li>Cut-off dates</li> <li>Consensus meetings</li> <li>Evaluation criteria updates</li> <li>Jury outcome: no change to amounts by jury, SoE</li> <li>New Challenges</li> <li>Lump sums</li> </ul> |
| 5.0     | 26.11.2024       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update with 2025 EIC Work Programme</li> </ul>   |
| 6.0     | 19.11.2025       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update with 2026 EIC Work Programme</li> </ul>   |

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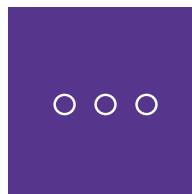
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# 1

# **The EIC Accelerator, why should you apply?**





**The EIC Accelerator supports companies (principally start-ups and SMEs) to scale up high impact innovations with the potential to create new markets or disrupt existing ones.**

**The EIC Accelerator can support your company to scale up if you:**

- ✓ Develop **high risk/high impact innovations**;
- ✓ Have the potential to **create new markets, transform** existing ones and **contribute to societal innovation**;
- ✓ Build on scientific discovery, radical thinking or technological breakthroughs ('**deep tech**');
- ✓ Your innovation activities are currently at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6 or above;
- ✓ Require significant **funding** over a long timeframe before returns can be generated ('patient capital').



If you are invited to submit the full application, you will have to choose between:



## OPEN CALL

This call is for innovations in **any field of technology** and innovations that cut across different scientific, technological, sectoral and application fields or represent **novel combinations**.



## CHALLENGE DRIVEN CALLS

These topics have been identified in areas where breakthrough technologies or game-changing innovations developed by start-ups or SMEs can have a major impact on EU objectives.

In 2026, these challenges relate to:

- Advanced Materials for Renewable Energy and Energy Storage Systems
- Alternative Concepts and Key Enabling Technologies for Fusion Power Plants
- Biotech for Regenerating Agricultural Soils
- Boosting the European Critical Raw Materials value chain
- Deep Tech for Climate Adaptation



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## Can you apply?





You can apply if you meet one of the following **eligibility conditions**:

- You are a **single start-up or SME** (including spin-outs) established in an EU Member State or [Horizon Europe \(HE\) Associated Country](#).
- You are a '**Small mid-cap**' (up to 499 employees) established in an EU Member State or HE Associated Country.

*You need funding for rapid scale up and your activities are at TRL 9 (e.g.: commercialisation and market deployment).*

*You can only apply for blended finance or investment only.*
- You are **one or more natural persons or legal entities\*** willing to set up a SME.



## \*Natural persons or legal entities:

- From **EU Member State or HE Associated Country** intending to establish an SME or small mid-cap in a Member State or Associated Country. Your company will have to be established prior to signing the Accelerator contract.
- Intending to invest in an SME or small mid-cap in a Member State or a HE Associated Country. As agreed with the company, **you will be submitting the proposal on behalf of the SME/small mid-cap** while the contract will be signed with the beneficiary company only.
- From a **non-associated third country** and you are ready to establish a SME (including start-ups) or to relocate an existing SME to an EU Member State or HE Associated Country, then you must have done so by the time of submitting a full application. Your company must prove its effective establishment in an EU Member State or HE Associated Country. The Commission may set specific conditions and milestones in the contract to ensure that the interest of the Union is met.



Applicants from the **United Kingdom** can apply for the Accelerator, but can only request and receive funding in the form of **"grant only"**.



Your application is **admissible** if it is **not a concurrent submission or concurrent implementation**.

**Concurrent submission:** You can submit only one proposal for evaluation to the Accelerator or STEP Scale up call. You cannot submit another proposal until you have received the evaluation result for the first submission. In case a concurrent submission is identified, only the proposal submitted last before the deadline will be deemed admissible.

**Concurrent implementation:** You cannot submit a new proposal if you are a beneficiary of an ongoing EIC Accelerator/EIC Accelerator Pilot/SME instrument project.

Exceptionally, ongoing grant-only projects selected under a Horizon 2020 EIC pilot Accelerator or under Horizon Europe EIC Accelerator call may be eligible to submit a proposal for a blended finance or an investment only support under an EIC Accelerator call. Ongoing blended finance projects selected under a Horizon 2020 EIC pilot Accelerator call may be eligible to submit a proposal for a related investment component

*Please note that a project is considered finalised when the final report is submitted. .*



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## Which types of funding can you get?



# Which types of funding can you get?



The EIC Accelerator provides blended finance to support:



**DEVELOPMENT**  
(TRL 6 to 8)



**DEPLOYMENT**



**SCALE-UP**  
(TRL 9)

The blended finance consists of an investment and grant component:

| Grant component  | Investment component   |
|--|--|
| Maximum of less than EUR 2.5 million (equal to a maximum of 70 % of total eligible costs). | Minimum EUR 1 million and maximum EUR 10* million <i>*investments from 10-30 million available under the STEP Scale up call.</i> |
| Innovation activities supported should be completed within 24 months.                      | Usually in the form of direct equity or quasi-equity.  |
| Small mid-caps are not eligible for grant only.  | Maximum 25% of the voting shares of the company.<br>"Patient capital" principle (indicatively 7-10 years perspective).           |

# Which types of funding can you get?



You may choose to apply to one of the following types of funding:

- **Grant Only**
- **Blended Finance**
- **Investment Only**

The application profile and corresponding activities should be well justified for the type of funding chosen.

# Which types of funding can you get?



You may choose to apply to one of the following types of funding: **Grant Only, Blended Finance, Investment only**. The application profile and corresponding activities should be well justified for the type of funding chosen.

## 1. GRANT ONLY



### Type of activities

Innovation Activities only (TRL 6 to 8)



### Funding components

EIC Grant component to cover a maximum of 70% of your total eligible costs of TRL 6-8 activities. It will take the form of a lump sum contribution.



### Conditions

You provide evidence that you have sufficient financial means (e.g. revenue flow, existing investors or shareholders) to finance the deployment and scaling up of your innovation.



### Remarks

Small mid-caps are not eligible for grant only support. UK companies are only eligible for grant only support.

# Which types of funding can you get?



You may choose to apply to one of the following types of funding: **Grant Only, Blended Finance, Investment only**. The application profile and corresponding activities should be well justified for the type of funding chosen.

## 2. BLENDED FINANCE

|                    |
|--------------------|
| Type of activities |
|--------------------|

|                    |
|--------------------|
| Funding components |
|--------------------|

Innovation Activities (TRL 6-8) and Market Deployment Action (TRL 9 and onwards)

EIC Grant component to cover a maximum of 70% of your total eligible costs of TRL 6-8 activities (flagged as to be co-financed by the grant component in your proposal) in the form of lump sum contribution. EIC Investment component to cover remaining expenditures, including TRL 9 activities onwards and TRL 6-8 activities (flagged as to be co-financed by the investment component in your proposal).

NOTE: An individual Work Package **cannot** be funded by a mixture of grant and investment (e.g.: 70% of costs funded by the grant and 30% by the investment component)

# Which types of funding can you get?



You may choose to apply to one of the following types of funding: **Grant Only, Blended Finance, Investment only.**  
The application profile and corresponding activities should be well justified for the type of funding chosen.

## 3. INVESTMENT ONLY

|   |  |
|---|--|
|  Type of activities | Market deployment and scale up (TRL 9) and can be used to co-finance innovation activities (TRL 6-8).  |
|  Funding components | Investment from 1 million to 10* million in the form of direct equity or quasi-equity such as convertible loans via an investment agreement.<br><i>*larger investments between 10-30 million available under the STEP Scale up call.</i> |
|  Conditions       | You are a non-bankable SME, including start-ups, or a small mid-cap.   |



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# What will be assessed?

# What will be assessed?



## For SHORT Proposal

Your proposal will be assessed against the evaluation criteria set out below using a binary system of **GO** or **NO GO** per proposal. A detailed description of the evaluation criteria applied for short proposals is available in the [Work Programme](#).

**In summary, the experts will assess:**

**1**

### EXCELLENCE

Novelty and breakthrough nature of the innovation;  
Technology maturity – TRL;  
Intellectual property (IP)

**2**

### IMPACT

Market opportunity

**3**

### LEVEL OF RISK, IMPLEMENTATION, AND NEED FOR UNION SUPPORT

Team capability;  
Risk level of the investment/leverage effect

# What will be assessed?



## For SHORT Proposal

### Excellence

Is the proposed innovation **deep tech** in nature stemming from cutting-edge scientific or technological advances; does it represent a significant improvement in cost or performance compared to existing or alternative solutions?

Is there sufficient demonstration that the innovation has completed all aspects of **TRL 5\*** (validation in a relevant environment for the application of the technology)?

Does the innovation have adequate **IP protection** and a sound IP strategy to enter the market to be addressed?

### Impact

What and how big is the total **market** addressed? What is the realistic expectation of the share of the total market?

### Level of risk, implementation, and need for Union support

Does the company have the necessary **team** in terms of skills and competences to develop the innovation and scale the company?

Have any skills/ competence gaps been identified, including adequate gender balance, with a credible plan to fill the gaps?

Has the company demonstrated early traction with **investors**?

Is the financing requirement significantly higher than the amount that market actors can finance alone?

\*Applications for the Challenge 2 on Fusion may be at TRL 4-6 at time of application

# What will be assessed?



## For FULL Proposal

Your proposal will be assessed against the evaluation criteria set out below using a scoring system of 0-5 per criterion. The minimum threshold per criterion is 4/5 and the overall minimum threshold is 13/15 to be considered for interview. A number of proposals requesting approximately 2.5 times the available grant budget will be invited to interview.

A detailed description of the evaluation criteria applied for full proposals is available in the [\*\*Work Programme\*\*](#)

**1**

### EXCELLENCE:

Novelty and breakthrough nature of the innovation;  
Technology Maturity – TRL;  
Intellectual property (IP)

**2**

### IMPACT:

Market Opportunity;  
Business and revenue model and growth strategy;  
Broader impact;  
Challenge Alignment & STEP Impact Alignment (ONLY FOR CHALLENGES)

**3**

### LEVEL OF RISK, IMPLEMENTATION, AND NEED FOR UNION SUPPORT:

Team Capability;  
Risk level of the investment/leverage effect;  
Risk Management;  
Implementation Plan

# What will be assessed?



## For FULL Proposal

### Excellence

Is the proposed innovation **deep tech** in nature stemming from cutting-edge scientific or technological advances; does it represent a significant improvement in cost or performance compared to existing or alternative solutions?

Is there sufficient demonstration that the innovation has completed all aspects of **TRL 5** (validation in a relevant environment for the application of the technology)?

Does the innovation have adequate **IP** protection and a sound IP strategy to enter the market to be addressed?

### Impact

What and how big is the total **market** addressed? What is the realistic expectation of the share of the total market?

Are the detailed **business model** and revenue strategy sound? Are the financial projections realistic?

Will the proposed innovation contribute to European **technological leadership** and/or reduce dependencies on other regions? Will the innovation have broader environmental or social impacts?

**FOR CHALLENGES:** Does the innovation contribute to the expected **Challenge** outcomes?

**FOR CHALLENGES:** Does the innovation have a clear and measurable positive impact either by: Bringing to the Union's internal market an innovative, emerging and current-edge innovation with significant economic potential; or Reducing or **preventing strategic dependencies** of the Union

### Level of risk, implementation, and need for Union support

Does the company have the necessary **team** in terms of skills and competences to develop the innovation and scale the company? Does the company have adequate governance and is the team sufficiently **incentivised**? Have any skills/ competence gaps been identified, including adequate gender balance, with a credible plan to fill the gaps?"

Has the company demonstrated early **traction with investors**? Is the financing requirement significantly higher than the amount that market actors can finance alone?

Have the main **risks** (technological, market, financial, regulatory) been comprehensively identified, together with specific measures to mitigate them?

Is there a clear **implementation plan** with defined milestones, work packages and deliverables, together with realistic resources and timings? Are the milestones measurable and appropriate for tracking progress? LUMP-SUM: Are the estimated costs in the work packages reasonable and non-excessive?



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# Who will be assessing your proposals?

# Who will be assessing your proposals?



## Types of experts/evaluators

Under the EIC Accelerator Programme, different types of experts are going to review your proposal:

### **Short proposal:**

- **Remote experts**

### **Full Proposal:**

- **Technology experts**
- **Evaluation Panel experts**
- **Jury members**



## 1. REMOTE EXPERTS

Proposals are evaluated remotely at **short proposal** stage by independent expert-evaluators (remote experts) selected from a proprietary database of the European Commission.

Different profiles are selected in order to ensure a variety of high-level skills, knowledge and experience in different domains and sectors.

For each specific call a "pool" of expert-evaluators is appointed. They are selected based upon their experience and knowledge in project management, technology and innovation, investment and finance and entrepreneurship and business. A balance in terms of geographical diversity, gender, private and public sectors is ensured. A yearly rotation rule guarantees that at least 25% of remote experts included in a 'pool' are renewed every year.



## 2. TECHNOLOGY EXPERTS

**Full proposal** are first evaluated remotely by an independent expert-evaluator (**technology expert**) with strong **technical and research expertise** to assess the innovation's soundness. In addition, the **technology expert** has the necessary **business and investment expertise** to evaluate market potential and co-investment needs.

For each specific call a "pool" of expert-evaluators is appointed. A balance in terms of geographical diversity, gender, private and public sectors is ensured. A yearly rotation rule guarantees that at least 25% of remote experts included in a 'pool' are renewed every year.

The list of technology experts will be published on the EIC website and applicants are able to list up to three reviewers they would like to exclude from the evaluation in order to avoid any potential conflict of interest.



## 3. EVALUATION PANEL EXPERTS

In parallel to the technology expert, a panel of at least 3 experts assesses a set of proposals within a given thematic areas. The experts in the panel have the specific expertise in the areas of the panel.

The evaluation panel experts have a **business and investment** background as well as **technical expertise** in the specific areas of their panel.

For each specific call a "pool" of expert-evaluators is appointed. A balance in terms of geographical diversity, gender, private and public sectors is ensured. A yearly rotation rule guarantees that at least 25% of remote experts included in a 'pool' are renewed every year.

The list of Panel members is published on the EIC website.



## 4. JURY MEMBERS

If you are invited to a **face-to-face interview**, a panel of Jury members are going to assess your **full proposal**.

They have a solid experience in different areas as entrepreneurs who have started and scaled-up innovative enterprises at European or global level, investors (banks, venture capitalists, business angels, crowd-funders, etc.) and experts involved in the innovation ecosystem (business schools, universities, innovation hubs, accelerators, etc.)

They will be allocated to thematic panels of a minimum of 4 and a maximum 6 jury members.

The list of Jury members is available at this [link](#). Their recruitment is a continuously ongoing process, therefore this list is updated regularly.



## Conflict of interest:

EIC experts must perform their work **impartially** and take all measures to prevent any situation that could cast a doubt on their impartiality. The evaluation must **not be influenced by economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests')**. Any expert with a conflict of interest are excluded from the evaluation. All evaluators are bound by confidentiality agreements in their contracts.

Applicants are given the opportunity at the time of submission to list up to three reviewers they would like to exclude from the evaluation in order to avoid any potential conflict of interest.

# Who will be assessing your proposals?



## How will proposals be assigned to the expert-evaluators?

The allocation of short proposals and full proposals to expert-evaluators for the remote evaluation steps will be done based on the affinity between the content of the proposal and the specific profiles of expert-evaluators.

While experts are primarily identified for proposals based on their overall profile, in order to enhance the matching between the proposals and the expert evaluators, during the submission process you will be requested to select up to three keywords.

**Keywords** are grouped under 15 parent level categories of innovation (called “sub-discipline” in SEP). You will be able to select them by picking first a parent

keyword (“sub-discipline”). You will then be able to choose a child keyword called “descriptor” in the SEP evaluation part A.

The list of keywords covers a wide range of innovation fields and driving markets. The full keyword nomenclature can be found using the [\*\*following link\*\*](#).

Similarly, expert-evaluators will also be requested to select three main keywords (sub-discipline) and three descriptors from the same list in order to facilitate the matching of proposals.

# Who will be assessing your proposals?



We strongly advise you to **identify keywords** that best correspond to the innovation, service or product proposed as well as to the specific market or niche market targeted and to select the maximum number of sub-discipline keywords and descriptors, within the limit presented above.

If you believe that the **selected keywords** do not sufficiently cover your proposal, then you will also have the option to provide additional free keywords.

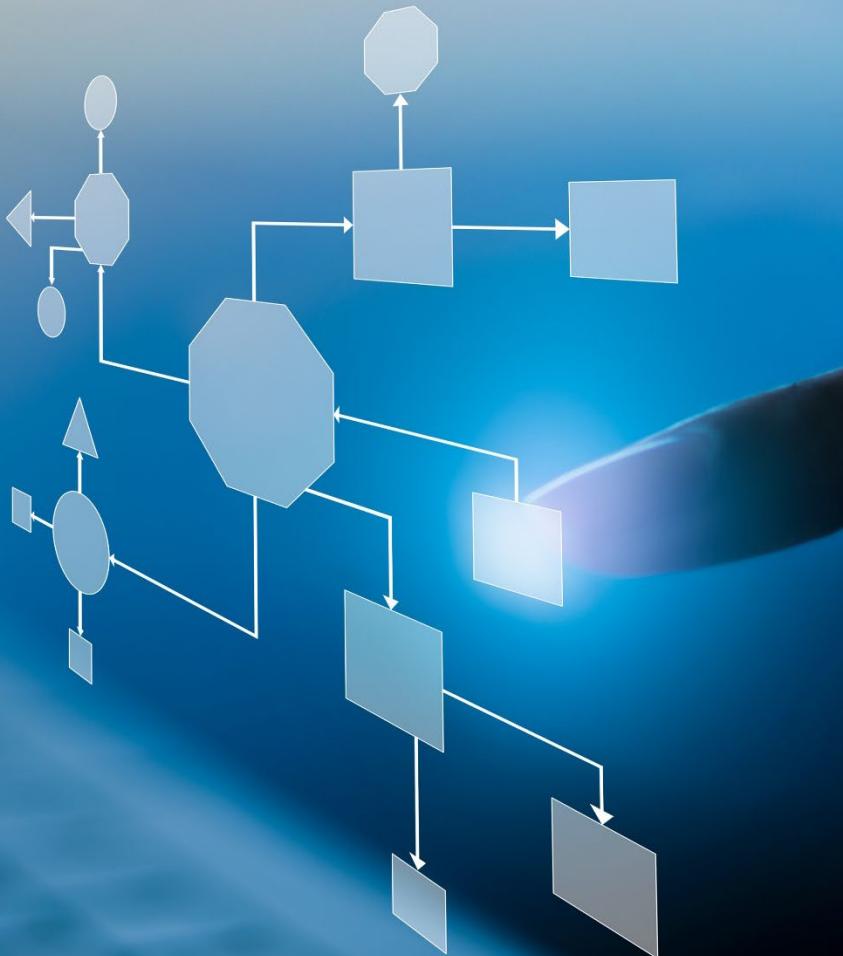
In addition to selection based on their overall expert profile, **the Jury members will be requested to select three main keywords** from the same list available for applicants that best describe their expertise.

The keywords you choose at the full proposal submission stage (as described above) will be factored into the jury allocation process, matching the proposal with the most relevant thematic interview panel.

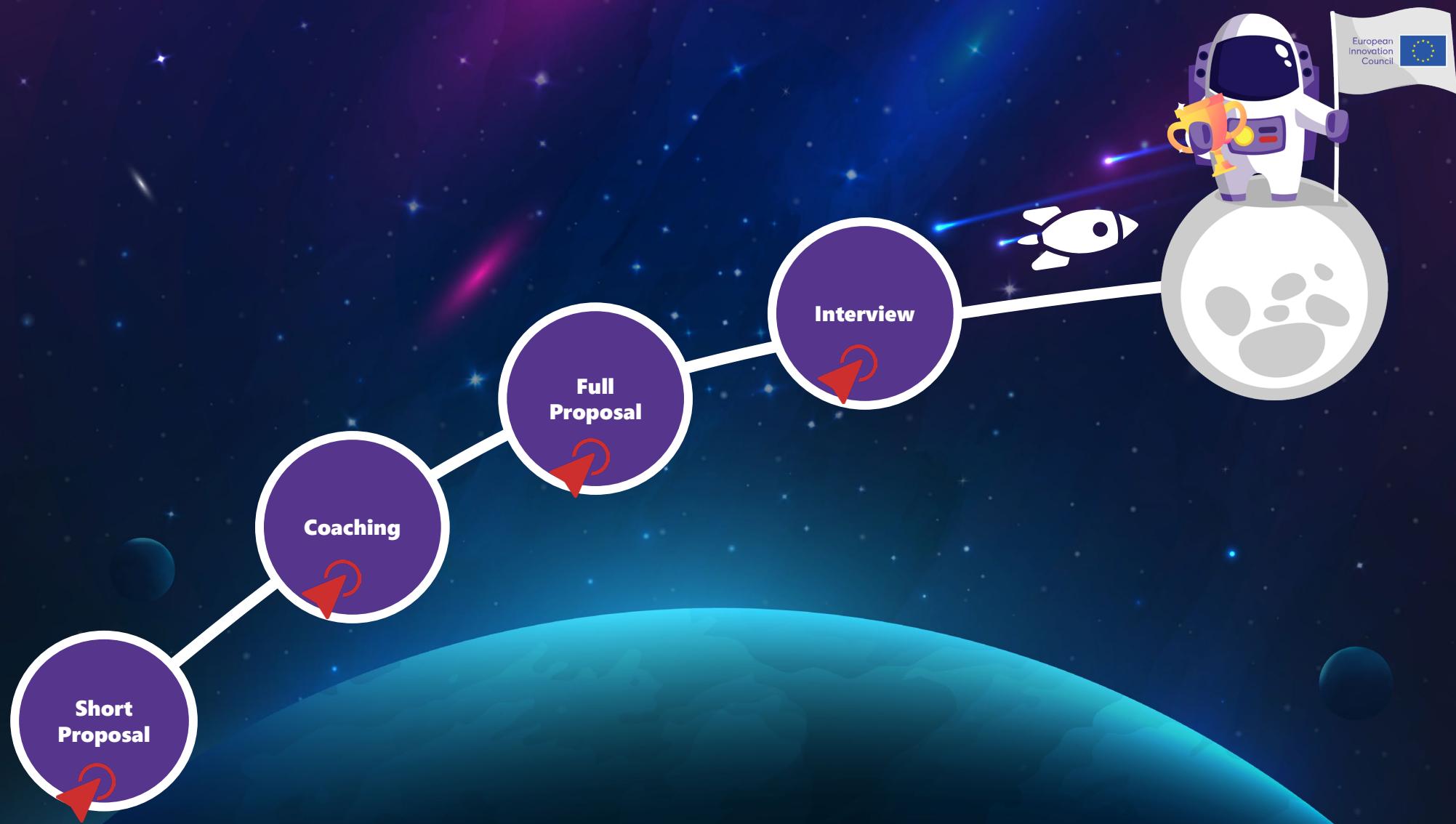


# 6

## How do you apply?



# How do you apply?





## Write your Short Proposal

At this stage of the process, you will be requested to provide an **indicative amount of the EIC Accelerator support you might request**. Should you be invited to submit a full proposal, you will be allowed to revise your request.

The short proposal finishes with **a list of self-declaratory questions**. You may also provide your consent to grant access to your **National Contact Point** (NCP) to view your proposal, evaluation reports and results. By providing your consent, you allow your NCP to follow up your application throughout the selection process, and in case you are not selected for full proposal and the interview phase, to be able to support you by other means, including access to national funding schemes and other sources of financing.

### Submission

Once your application is complete, you can submit. If you realise you made a mistake after submitting your proposal, it is best to contact the EC Tenders Portal helpdesk ([EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu)) and ask to withdraw your proposal immediately. You may then make the necessary changes and submit it again.



## Write your Short Proposal

### How will your proposal be evaluated?

Short proposals will be evaluated by **four experts** and you should receive your results within approximately **4-6 weeks** from the day of the batching – **the first Tuesday of every month at 5pm**.

### Evaluation process

Your short proposal will be evaluated remotely by **four experts** with expertise in the area of technology and market application of your innovation. The evaluators will essentially look at the **innovativeness/disruptiveness of your idea**, its **impact** and **your team** using the [award criteria](#).

### Each evaluator will give a GO or NO GO.

- If **at least three evaluators** give a **GO** to the proposal, then your short proposal will be **successful** and you will be invited to prepare a **full proposal**.
- If **two or more evaluators** give a **NO GO** to the proposal, then your proposal is considered unsuccessful.



## Write your Short Proposal

### Open call

The short proposal is open to submit on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

### Registration

Before starting your application, you must first register on the [\*\*Funding and Tenders Portal\*\*](#) (F&T Portal) and obtain a 9-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC). Should you have already a validated PIC you are able to use it. Natural persons also need to obtain a PIC in order to start the submission.



## Write your Short Proposal

### The application

#### 1. Proposal information – Part A

You must fill in a set of general information essential for the preparation of the proposal: **Acronym, title, abstract and keywords.**

#### 2. Company and CEO information

**You need to insert and confirm your PIC number.** Information about the **CEO of the company** (or the highest managing position of the company) will also be asked. In the case of a natural person, please simply provide your name.

#### 3. A pitch-deck of maximum 10 slides

There is no pre-defined template for the content. The document should be uploaded in **pdf format**. You may use it to show images, data, tables not

included in the questionnaire.

**Please keep in mind that in case your short proposal is a GO, you will be asked to submit another pitch deck at the time of the submission of the full proposal**, which would be used should you be invited to the face-to-face interviews. This can be the same or can be an expanded version of the short proposal pitch deck.

**What to consider?** You should dedicate two to four slides to provide basic but key elements and figures regarding your business model, the targeted market and growth forecast. Applicants are expected to have a clear vision of their market and commercial deployment.



## Write your Short Proposal

### The application

#### 4. A video of maximum 3 minutes

In this video, the core members of your team (up to three people) should illustrate your **innovation** and the **main motivation** behind your application.

Please note the following:

**You should keep the video simple.** The objective is to show the team behind the idea/proposal and your motivation.

**If you are a natural person,** you can include future team members in the video or present your plan to acquire the necessary resources to establish your company and team.

The video does not necessarily have to be in English (it can be in any EU language and may include subtitles). However, bear in mind that experts will assess the video in the context of a Programme which has the objective of supporting companies with the potential to impact markets in an international/European context.

#### 5. A series of questions describing the details of your innovation, your potential market and your team

You will have a limit of **12 pages** to present your application.

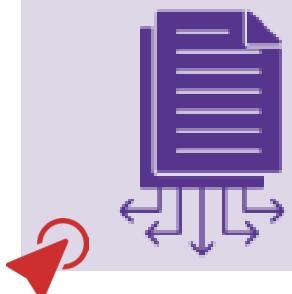


If you receive a GO on a short proposal under the 2025 or 2026 EIC Work Programme, you may submit a full proposal. This concerns all short applications submitted after the adoption of the 2025 Work Programme on 29 October 2024. Proposals which received a GO under the 2024 Work Programme and have already submitted a full proposal will be eligible to submit a full proposal in 2026 as long as they remain within their submission limitations.



**Proposals will be batched at 5pm Brussels time on the follow dates:**

- 7 January 2026
- 4 March 2026
- 6 May 2026
- 8 July 2026
- 2 September 2026
- 4 November 2026



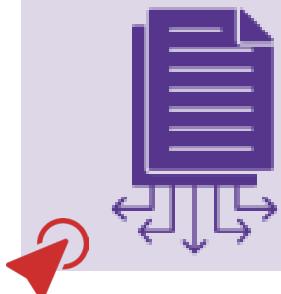
## Write your FULL Proposal

Coaching

If you are successful in your short proposal, you will be entitled to receive three days of remote **[coaching from the EIC Business Acceleration Services](#)** to help you refine your business case. The coaches are independent business experts with entrepreneurial and fundraising backgrounds who will provide you crucial insights and guidance. This service is free of cost.

From our large pool, you can find the best coach for your proposal with ample experience in your specific industry and market context.

**Coaching is there to support you, nonetheless, you remain fully responsible for the content of your proposal** and you are the only one to decide to which cut-off you would like to apply. **This support can be offered only once.**

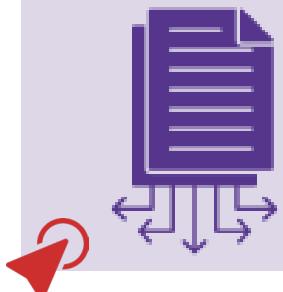


## Write your FULL Proposal

Application

### The full proposal requires the following steps:

- To follow the structure and provide the information detailed in the **templates** available on the F&T Portal.
- Define the type of funding (blended finance, grant only, equity only) you are applying for; see our [\*\*FAQs\*\*](#) for more information.
- A new pitch deck. There is no pre-defined template nor limit of slides, however, please keep in mind that you will be presenting this pitch deck if you are invited to the face-to-face interviews. Therefore, it is your sole responsibility to be able to present it during the 10 minutes allocated time. The pitch deck should be in pdf format.



## Write your FULL Proposal

**Application**



### VIDEO

You may choose to submit the same video as in the short proposal stage or you can upload a new one.



### ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

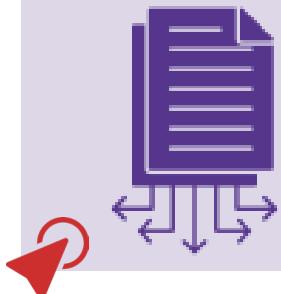
Pitch deck; Financial information; Lump sum budget table; Implementation Plan; Freedom to Operate analysis; Letters of Intent; Links to CVs of key personnel. For applicants applying for grant only in the Challenge 4 or open proposals relating to this area, you will be asked to upload an ownership and control declaration.



## What grant amounts can be requested:

For grant only the maximum grant amount you can request is EUR 2 499 999.

**For blended applications and ONLY in exceptional cases**, you may request EUR 2 500 000 or more as grant support.



## Write your FULL Proposal

### Concepts/issues to stress/tackle when preparing your proposal

#### TRL

Activities above TRL 8 cannot be covered by the grant component. The innovation must have completed all aspects of TRL 5 (validation in relevant environment).

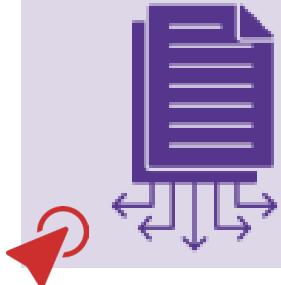
#### Need for EU support

You will be asked to demonstrate the need for EU support. This means that you will have to provide evidence that your company is not investment-ready according to current market risk appetite. The risk relates to the current stage of development of the innovation and the company. It is a combination of the risk related to the early stage of your company as such (team/financing structure/governance/partners), your product development and market entry and the type of product (deep tech, breakthrough). To already have or not have investors is not a decisive element for the EU

support. If an applicant already has investors the applicant should clarify whether the EIC support is needed or if the EIC is playing a catalytic role. Conversely, if there are no interested investors, is the company reaching out to investors? Is this due to the high risk or is there another issue? Is it possible that investors would be willing to invest at a later stage upon key milestones achieved?

#### Security

You will need to answer security questions related to your proposal. Projects involving classified and/or security sensitive information will have to go through the Security Appraisal process to authorise funding and may be made subject to specific security rules.



## Write your FULL Proposal

**Concepts/issues to stress/tackle when preparing your proposal**

### Economic security

For GRANT ONLY applications to the Challenge on *Boosting the European Critical Raw Materials value chain* (or those submitted under the open but which fall within the scope of the challenge), an **ownership and control declaration** is mandatory. Successful applicants in these domains will have to undergo a check to determine whether the company is controlled by a non-associated third country. The outcome of this assessment will determine the eligibility of the proposal.

### Lump sum (mandatory for Grant Only and Blended Finance)

More information on lump sum cost model:

- [How to manage your lump sum grants](#)
- [Lump sum funding in Horizon Europe](#)

### Submission



Once your application is complete, you can submit. If you realise you made a mistake after submitting your proposal, it is best to contact the EC Tenders Portal helpdesk ([EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EC-FUNDING-TENDER-SERVICE-DESK@ec.europa.eu)) and ask to withdraw your proposal immediately. You may then make the necessary changes and submit it again. *NB: Withdrawing the proposal before receiving the evaluation result will not count towards the resubmission limit.*

## Evaluation of full proposal



After the batching date, proposals will be assessed in parallel by a technology expert and an evaluation panel of at least three experts.

Approximately 3-4 weeks after the batching date, you will have an interview with the technology expert online.

After the interview the technology expert will submit a report to the evaluation panel who will review and will propose a final score and adopt a report.

Based on the scoring of the evaluation panel, the top-ranked proposals corresponding to 2.5 times the available grant budget will be invited to interview with an EIC Jury.

## Tech expert

Fact-checks, verifies claims cross checking with third party sources and assesses feasibility of technology as support to evaluation panel

## EISMEA

Moderator to ensure fair and balanced process, equal treatment and ensure quality control



## Applicant

Can have max 3 participants, no consultants allowed

May show prototypes/demo

## Timing

Set interview weeks for each batch – all at the same time - dedicated weeks published on the EIC website

1 hour interview online in Webex in SEP

## Follow-up

Tech expert can do follow up research after the interview

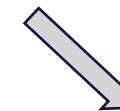


A Panel of at least 3 experts assesses a set of proposals taking into account the tech expert assessment. Evaluation panel will take the **final decision**, score and draft report



## RANKING LIST

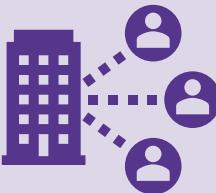
2.5x grant budget  
invitation to interview  
– applicants informed



Rejected – ESR sent to applicants  
(proposals above overall threshold of 13/15 receive SoE/STEP seal)



Information to applicants approx. 8-9 weeks after batching



## Remote evaluation

**Submission limits**

**After three unsuccessful submissions** to the EIC Accelerator, which can be at any stage of the process (Short Proposal, Full Proposal) and for any form of support (Challenge, Open, Grant only, Blended finance, Equity only), an applicant may not apply again to the EIC Accelerator under the Horizon Europe Framework Programme.

## COMPLAINTS

If the result of the evaluation is a rejection, you will receive a rejection letter outlining the means of redress.



## Pitch your Innovation

**Face-to-face interviews  
with the EIC Jury**

If your full application is among the top-ranked, you will be invited to a face-to-face interview.



## Pitch your innovation: Face-to-face interviews with the EIC Jury

### What to consider before the interview

#### When

The face-to-face interviews will be organized after every second batch of proposals). **For 2026, exact interviews dates will be communicated in due time on the [EIC website](#).**

#### Observers

The evaluation process may be **monitored by one or more independent observers** appointed to observe the practical workings of the evaluation process and to give independent advice on the conduct and fairness of the evaluation sessions, the application of the award criteria and the ways in which the procedures could be improved.

#### Who

**Applicant's representatives:** You are allowed to send a maximum of 3 representatives for the interview. More details on the rules for the participation of the applicant's representatives will be communicated in your invitation to interview.

If the appointed representatives fail to appear, or if no one is appointed, the interview will remain scheduled and proceed on the basis of the documents already provided.

**Costs for travel to Brussels will NOT be reimbursed by the EIC.**



## Pitch your innovation: Face-to-face interviews with the EIC Jury

### What to consider before the interview

#### How

**Composition of the panel:** At the interview, you will be assessed by a panel of maximum 6 jury members. In addition, EIC Programme Managers and representatives from EIC Fund may also participate in the interview and ask questions, however they will not be members of the Jury and will not take part in the Jury's decisions (no right to vote). The names of the Jury members of the panel you have been allocated to will be provided to you prior to the interview.

#### Where

The face-to-face interviews will take place in Brussels. An invitation letter will be sent approximately 3 weeks before the interview date and will include:

- date and time of the interview - interview times will not be changeable!
- address and directions where the interview will take place;
- instructions on how to appoint up to three company representatives for the interview and what information must be provided.



## Pitch your innovation: Face to face interviews with the EIC Jury

### What happens during the interview

#### Timing

Duration of the interview: The interview\* will last no longer than 45 minutes, and includes:

- 10 minutes (maximum) of presentation supported by the pitch deck document submitted with your full proposal;
- 35 minutes (maximum) of questions and answers with the EIC Jury to clarify aspects of the proposal. There will be no pre-set questions.

#### Decision making process

After the interview and the departure of the applicant's representatives, the EIC Jury votes. The final decision is a consensus.

Jury members collectively prepare the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) for the proposal which includes: (1) the evaluation outcome and (2) the EIC Jury's comments/recommendations.

The EIC Jury will have access to the remote evaluation results of your full proposal but will not have access to your short proposal or the evaluation results of your short proposal and will also not have access to any previous proposals in cases of resubmissions.

*\*The interviews will take place in English*



## Pitch your innovation: Face to face interviews with the EIC Jury

### What happens during the interview

The EIC Jury may focus the interview on any element of your proposal based on the remote evaluation result and its own assessment.

EIC Jury members will decide based on your interview and their overall assessment whether your proposal should be funded (**GO**) or not (**NO GO**).

### Adjustments to requested funding

If the proposal receives a GO and some activities above TRL 8 have been detected, the EIC Jury may lower the grant amount accordingly.

The EIC Jury will not change the amount requested for the investment component, but may make observations for consideration by the EIC Fund. The

EIC Jury will not change the form of support (blended, grant only, equity only) but may make recommendations to be taken into account when preparing the grant agreement or negotiating the investment component.

Regarding lump-sums: experts will assess the estimated budget during remote evaluation in view of establishing the lump-sum amount. Their recommendations will be added to the ESR and implemented during GAP.



## Pitch your innovation: Face to face interviews with the EIC Jury



### Result / Outcome

#### NO GO

**You will be informed of the result of the interviews approximately 3 weeks after the interview session ends.**

#### GO

If your proposal is recommended for funding, you will be invited to sign the grant agreement, which will include a first pre-financing payment. In parallel, if you requested an investment component, the EIC Fund will start the negotiation process to structure the investment agreement.

If your proposal is not recommended for funding, your proposal will be awarded a Seal of Excellence to facilitate funding from alternative funding sources and access to EIC Business Acceleration Services. For proposals in the Challenges both GO and NO GO will receive a Sovereignty Seal (STEP Seal).



## Pitch your innovation: Face to face interviews with the EIC Jury



**Result / Outcome**



### Seal of Excellence

Following the notification of the outcome of your application, you will receive an official rejection letter (and your Seal of Excellence, if awarded).

***NB: Seal of Excellence can only become operational if you have given consent to share data about your application with other eligible funding bodies. Make sure to select the consent box when submitting your application.***



## Pitch your innovation: Face to face interviews with the EIC Jury

**Result / Outcome**



### Sovereignty Seal (STEP Seal)

If your proposal was submitted to one of the Challenges, you will receive a STEP Seal following the notification of the outcome of your application if awarded.

The STEP Seal is awarded to funded proposals to support access to complementary funding sources and those not selected for funding to support access to alternative funding sources. For proposals not selected for funding, Member States may decide to transfer budget from European Regional Development Fund Programmes to the Agency to fund directly Sovereignty (STEP) Seal proposals.

*NB: As STEP Seal beneficiary, you might be requested to provide additional documentation for the purpose of an Ownership and Control Assessment where there is such requirement.*



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## Extra information





## Other types of applications



The 'Fast Track' scheme is a novelty introduced under Horizon Europe to provide a specific evaluation path for existing Horizon Europe or Horizon 2020 projects to the EIC Accelerator.

### Which projects are eligible for the fast track?

**In 2026, the funding bodies and schemes which are eligible for the Fast Track for EIC Accelerator cut-off dates are:**

- The EIC Pathfinder and EIC Transition projects (including under EIC pilot) managed by the Agency;

### Fast track scheme

- Relevant schemes managed by the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), as identified as relevant by each KIC;
- Eurostars-2 Joint Programme and the Partnership on Innovative SMEs managed by the Eureka secretariat
- Companies awarded a grant only under the Horizon 2020 EIC pilot Accelerator and the Horizon Europe EIC Accelerator managed by the Agency.
- Companies awarded grants under the Pre-accelerator funding scheme;
- Companies awarded grants under the Women Tech.EU scheme.



## Other types of applications



### Fast track scheme

#### How can you apply?

Under the Fast Track scheme, applicants do not apply directly to the EIC Accelerator call. Instead, a project review is carried out by the responsible funding body to assess the innovation or market deployment potential of an existing project, to decide whether the project is suitable for support under the EIC Accelerator. If so, the applicant will be invited to submit a proposal directly to the full proposal stage.



For more information please see:

[WP Annex 3](#)



## Other types of applications



The pilot Plug-in scheme is a novelty under Horizon Europe and a specific process applicable to the EIC Accelerator only. Similarly to the Fast-track scheme, it provides a specific evaluation path for applications coming from existing national or regional programmes to the EIC Accelerator.

The Plug-in scheme is a pilot initiative launched by the European Commission in close cooperation with Member States and Associated Countries.

### Plug in scheme

Under the 'plug-in' scheme, applicants do not apply directly to the EIC Accelerator call. Instead, a project review is carried out to assess the innovation or market deployment potential of an existing project at national or regional level, to decide whether the project is suitable for support under the EIC Accelerator. If so, the applicant will be invited to submit a proposal directly to the full proposal.



For more information please see:

[WP Annex 4](#)



## Useful links



### SUBMISSION TEMPLATES

- [Link to Short Proposal templates](#)
- [Link to Full proposal templates](#)
- [Link to Full proposal annexes](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Work Programme](#)
- [InfoDay](#)



## Additional information

Should you have remaining questions, we recommend you contact your local **National Contact Points**. This service can provide you advice and further information about the Programme.

For any question regarding submission and evaluation of your proposal, you can contact the **IT helpdesk** via the Funding and Tenders Portal.

For enquiries related to the validation process of participants having a Participant Identification Code (PIC), please write via the **Participant Register**.



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