



BACKING **VISIONARY** ENTREPRENEURS



What's holding back EUROPEAN INNOVATION?



PERFORMANCE

- Strong research performance not translated into innovation
- Lack of breakthrough / disruptive innovations that create new markets



FUNDING & INVESTMENT

- Financing gaps “valleys of death” in Transition from lab to enterprise and scaling up for high-risk innovative start-ups

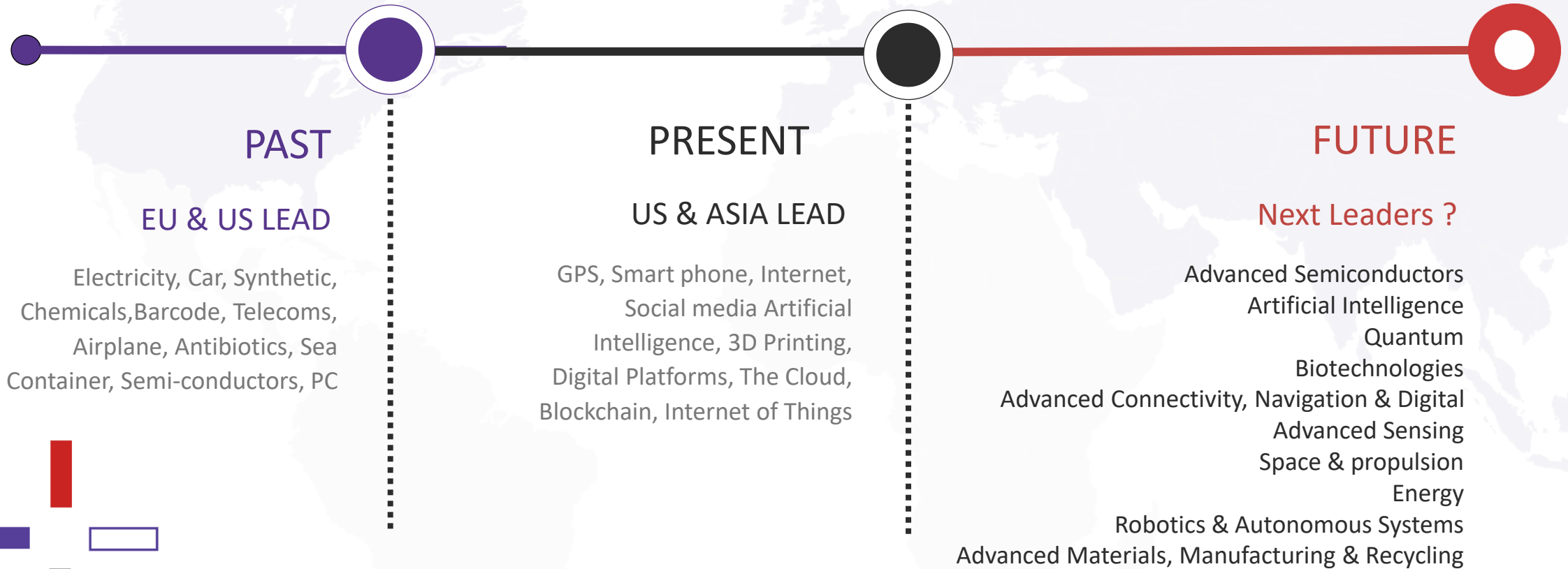


ECOSYSTEM

- Many national & local ecosystems, but fragmented at European level
- Need to include all regions and all talent (especially female)



Who will lead the next STRATEGIC INNOVATIONS?





What makes ***EIC UNIQUE?***

European
Innovation
Council



- **€10 billion budget** under Horizon Europe to identify, develop and scale up breakthrough technologies and disruptive innovations ;
- **One-stop-shop for all TRLs**: early-stage research ideas to tech transfer/commercialisation to scaling finance for startups and SMEs
- **Bottom up (open) and top downs (challenges)** funding approach;
- Strategy steered by independent **EIC Board** involving entrepreneurs, investors, researchers etc.
- Portfolio overseen by Programme Managers to identify new and emerging opportunities and **pro-active management of portfolios**;
- **Partnerships** to enhance the European innovation ecosystem (Business Acceleration Services, Plug in from national programmes, from EIT, ERC, Seal of Excellence, etc.)
- **Dedicated EIC Fund** to invest in EIC selected companies, and syndicate and crowd in private VC



DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES OF INNOVATORS

- Entrepreneurs, investors, researchers, innovation ecosystem, innovation experts
- Diversity of geography (17 nationalities), technologies/ sectors (Green, Health, Digital), Gender



EIC Proactive Management

- Strategic **assessment** and **clustering** of projects
- Building of **portfolios** based on strategic intelligence
- Portfolio management (**scientific and business advice**)
- **IP management** advice (in collaboration with the technology transfer offices)





Orsolya Symmons

Health and Biotechnology

Hedi Karray

Artificial Intelligence

Federica Zanca

Medical imaging and AI in healthcare

Isabel Obieta

Sustainable Semiconductors

Stella Tkatchova

Space systems & technologies

Samira Nik

Quantum tech & electronics

Franc Mouwen

Architecture engineering construction technologies

Ivan Stefanic

Food chain technologies, novel & sustainable food

Paolo Bondavalli

Advanced materials for energy

Carina Faber

Renewable energy conversion & alternative resource exploitation

EIC PROGRAMME MANAGERS

Former PMs

**Iordanis
Arzimanoglou**
*Biotechnology &
Health*

**Enric Claverol-
Tinturé**
*MedTech & Medical
Devices*

Francesco Matteucci
*Materials for Energy &
Environment*

**Antonio Marco
Pantaleo**
Energy Systems

Programme Managers

Main achievements in 2024



Challenge identification for the EIC Work Programme and portfolio selection from calls



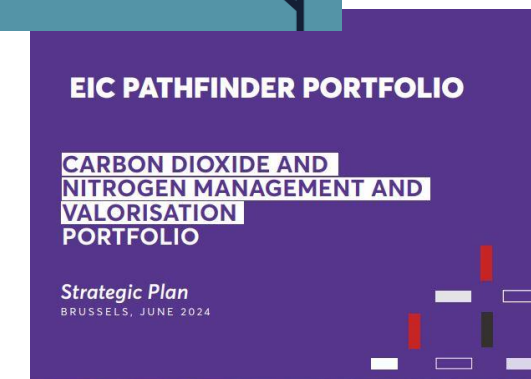
Proactive management of 16 Pathfinder challenge-based portfolios



Organisation of specific community building events, investor dinners for EIC beneficiaries



Publications **EIC Pathfinder portfolio strategic plans**
EIC Tech report
Scientific papers & studies



EIC IMPACT (2024)

INVESTING IN DEEP TECH STARTUPS

- €2.5bn of investment mobilised with a leverage effect of €3 of additional investment for every € of EIC investment
- Invested alongside over 600 VCs, corporates and strategic investors, including the 25 largest VCs in Europe
- €1.2bn of total investment into EIC supported companies since 2018

ADDRESSING STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

- €850m for quantum and semiconductors
- €725m for developing or applying AI;
- €700m for energy generation and storage solutions;
- €625m for biotechnology and biomanufacturing
- €500m for advanced materials

SCALING START-UPS & SMEs ACROSS EUROPE

- EIC companies averaging **50%** employment growth and **55%** revenue growth
- EIC supported startups and SMEs in **30 countries**
- **70** 'centaur' valuations including six above €500 m
- **30% women led** companies supported in 2024 (female CEO/CTO/CSO).

A PIPELINE OF BREAKTHROUGH TECHNOLOGIES AND COMPANIES

- **680** research projects
- ~50% of Transition projects from ERC PoC and ~ 45% from Pathfinder.
- **1350** unique innovations with **>75%** market creating or targeting emerging markets
- **>100** startups





EIC PRIZES

- Women innovators
- Capital of innovation



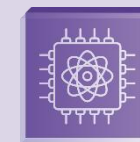
SEAL OF EXCELLENCE

Fast track to other funding



EIC BUSINESS ACCELERATION SERVICES

- Mentors, coaches
- Global partners
- Innovation ecosystems
- EIC Community Platform

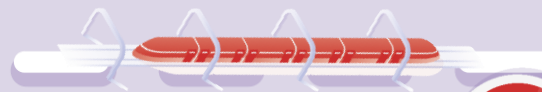


EIC STEP *Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform*

- Co-investments up to **€30 million**
- Digital, deep tech, biotech, clean tech

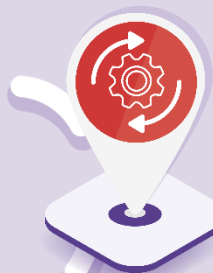
EIC ACCELERATOR

- For single companies
- Grants up to **€2.5 million**
- Equity up to **€10 million**
- To enter the market & scale-up (TRL 6-9)



EIC PRE-ACCELERATOR

- For companies from widening countries
- Grants between **€300k - €500k**
- To boost deep-tech startup readiness



EIC TRANSITION

- For consortia & single companies
- Grants up to **€2.5 million**
- To develop business cases (TRL 4-6)



EIC PROGRAMME MANAGERS

- In-house leading experts
- Identifying potential challenges in **emerging deep tech areas**
- Pro-actively managing EIC Pathfinder, Transition and Accelerator portfolios



EIC PATHFINDER

- For consortia
- Grants up to **€4 million**
- To research technology breakthroughs (TRL 1-4)

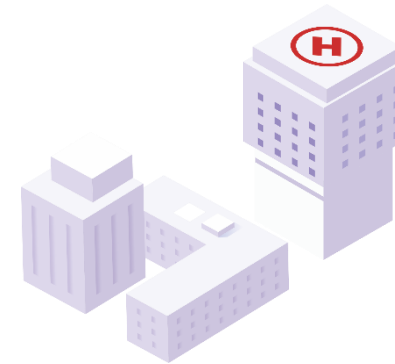


EIC

WHO CAN APPLY & WHAT FOR?

PATHFINDER

Consortia of at least 3 different independent legal entities established in at least 3 different eligible countries. *Additionally, single applicants or small consortia (2 partners) for EIC Pathfinder Challenges only.*



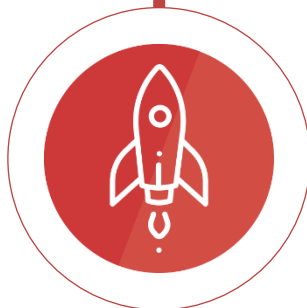
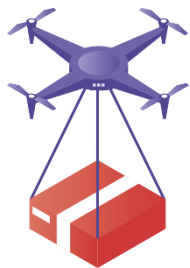
Grants of up to €3 million (open) or €4 million (challenges), or more if duly justified, to achieve the proof of principle and validate the scientific basis of breakthrough technology (Technology Readiness Levels 1-4)



TRANSITION

Single applicants (SMEs, spin-offs, start-ups, research organisations, universities) or small consortia (2 partners) or consortia of 3 to 5 different independent legal entities established in at least 3 different eligible countries. *Proposals must build on eligible EU-funded project results.*

Grants of up to €2.5 million to *validate and demonstrate technology in application-relevant environment (Technology Readiness Levels 4 to 5/6) and develop market readiness.*



EIC ACCELERATOR

Grants for up to €2.5 million for developing your innovation (TRL 6 to 8). Investments of €0.5 up to €10 million in the form of direct equity or convertible loans for scaling up your innovation and attracting co-investors.

Single start-ups and SMEs (including spin-outs), individuals (intending to launch a start-up/SME) and in exceptional cases small mid-caps (fewer than 499 employees)



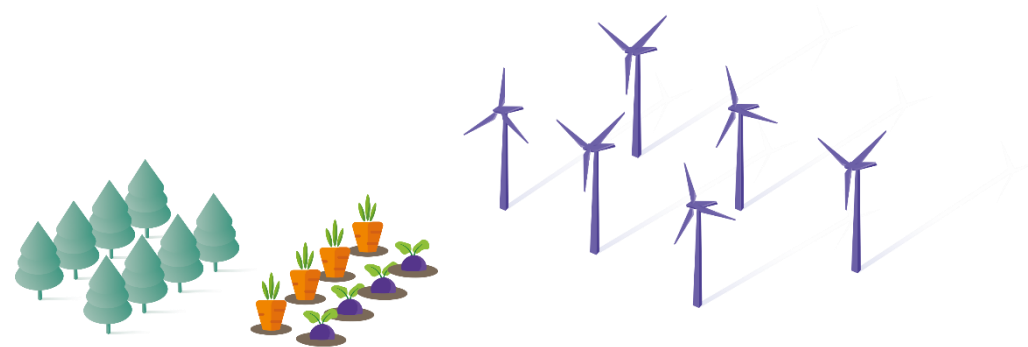
Co-investments from €10 to €30 million
to catalyse major funding rounds



EIC STEP

EIC Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform

For scale up companies
(SMEs and small mid-caps)
with game-changing
innovations in Europe's
critical technology areas.



EIC CALLS OVERVIEW 2025



EIC PATHFINDER



EIC TRANSITION



EIC ACCELERATOR



EIC STEP SCALE-UP

OPEN

DEADLINES

- 21 May 2025
- 17 September 2025
- Short Applications: **Continuous**
- Applications: **Continuous**

INDICATIVE BUDGET

- **€ 142 MILLION**
- **€ 98 MILLION**
- Full Applications: 12 March; 1 October 2025
- **€ 384 MILLION**
- **€ 300 MILLION**

CHALLENGES

DEADLINES/CUT-OFFS

- 29 October 2025
- Short Applications: Continuous
- Full Applications: 12 March; 1 October 2025

INDICATIVE BUDGET

- **€ 120 MILLION**
- **€ 250 MILLION**

CHALLENGES

- Biotech for Climate Resilient Crops and Plant-Based Biomanufacturing
- Generative-AI based Agents to Revolutionize Medical Diagnosis and Treatment of Cancer
- Towards autonomous robot collectives delivering collaborative tasks in dynamic unstructured construction environments
- Waste-to-value devices - circular production of renewable fuels, chemicals and materials
- Acceleration of advanced materials development and upscaling along the value chain
- Biotechnology driven low emission food production systems
- GenAI4EU: Creating European Champions in Generative AI
- Innovative in-space servicing, operations, space-based robotics and technologies for resilient EU space infrastructure
- Breakthrough innovations for future mobility

Backing visionary entrepreneurs

EIC Pre-Accelerator pilot call 2025

European
Innovation
Council



EIC Pre-accelerator call in 2025

Pilot Action under WIDERA Work Programme

European
Innovation
Council



[Call website](#)

Overall goal: Support to early-stage deep tech startups in **widening countries** to develop the technology, business and investment readiness from TRL 4 to TRL 6.

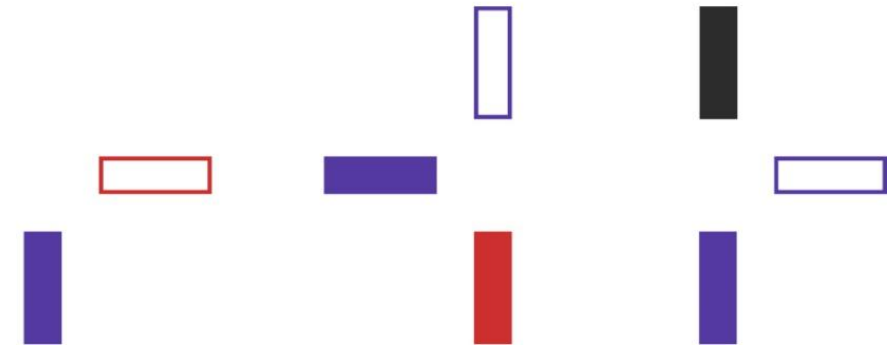
Call opening / closing: **12 June 2025 / 18 November 2025**

Budget: **EUR 20 million**

Indicative number of projects: **50**

Funding targeted at:

- actions addressing the **investor and market readiness** towards commercialization and deployment;
- maturation and validation of the novel technology **from TRL 4 to 6.**



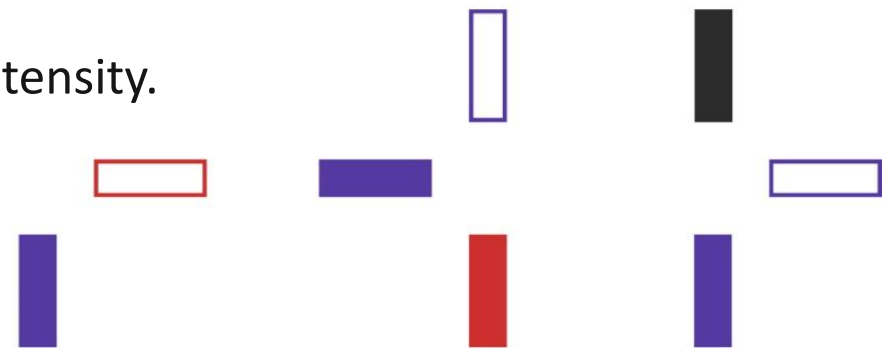
EIC Pre-accelerator – context and scope



Deep tech is technology that is:

- based on cutting-edge **scientific advances and discoveries**,
- characterised by the need to stay at the **technological forefront** by constant interaction with new ideas and results from the lab,
- having the potential to deliver **transformative solutions**,
- rooted in **cutting-edge science, technology, and engineering**, including innovation that combines advances in the physical, biological and digital spheres.

Deep-tech is distinct from 'high-tech' which tends to refer only to R&D intensity.



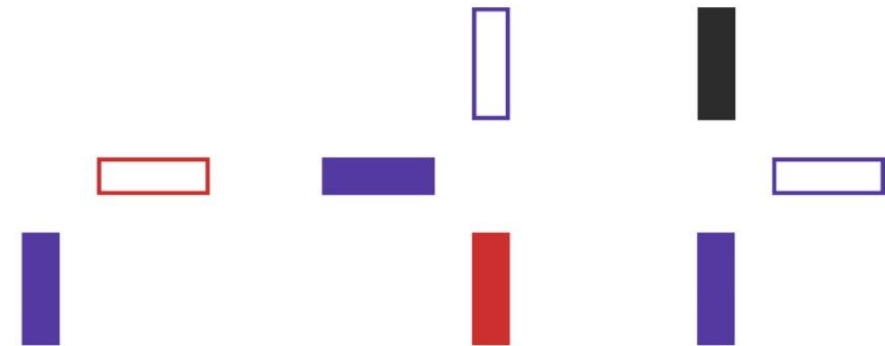
EIC Pre-accelerator – context and scope



Scope:

Early-stage deep tech startups which:

- have high-impact innovation that could create **new markets or disrupt existing ones** (technology validated in the lab – at least TRL 4);
- possess the necessary Intellectual Property Rights to ensure **freedom to operate** and adequate protection of the idea;
- have a clear vision on the intended **pathway to market** (milestones together with concrete and verifiable KPIs to assess progress towards the market);
- have the ambition and commitments **to scale up**.



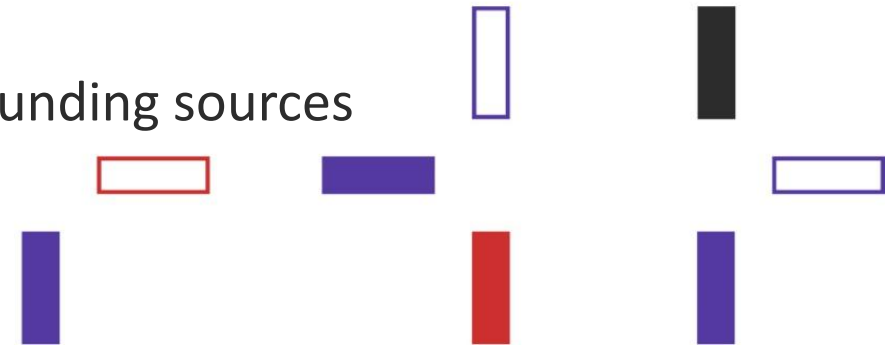
EIC Pre-accelerator – expected outcomes



Boost the innovation potential of early-stage deep-tech startups in widening countries by enhancing their business, investor, and technology readiness to secure funding from the EIC Accelerator or other sources.

Increased business, investor, and technology readiness (at least all aspects of TRL 5 completed) **of high potential deep-tech startups** in widening countries to a level where they will:

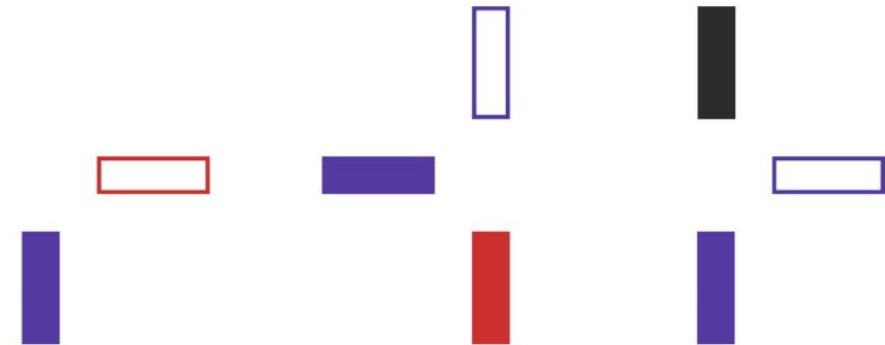
- be successful in applying and attracting the **EIC Accelerator** funding and/or;
- manage to secure other **private investment** and/or;
- attract successfully **national or regional funding** as alternative funding sources (e.g. through Seal of Excellence programmes).



EIC Pre-accelerator – specific conditions



- Eligibility: **mono-beneficiary projects** with legal entities as **SMEs** established in the widening countries.
- Proposal template: **Coordination and Support Action adapted to the Pre-Accelerator** evaluation criteria
- Evaluation: single stage, based on the EIC Transition open criteria (first step) – included in the Pre-Accelerator call text
- Form of support: - grant for **max 2 years**
 - **70%** reimbursement (**lump-sum**)
 - between **300K-500K EUR**

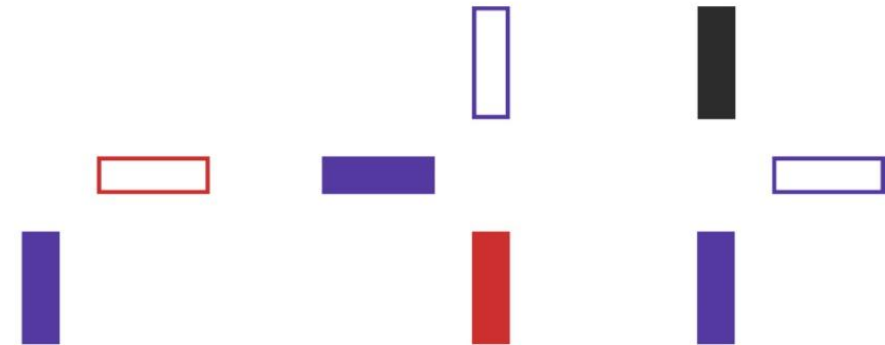


EIC Pre-accelerator – additional features



In addition:

- Free access to tailored **EIC Business Acceleration Services** to improve investor readiness
- **Fast Track** to the EIC Accelerator;
- **Seals of Excellence** to be awarded, accompanied by free access to BAS.



Support in the EIC participation



EIC 2026 Work Programme online Info Days:

- 13 November 2025 (General Info Day)
- 14 November 2025 (EIC Accelerator Challenges)
- 17 November 2025 (EIC Advanced Innovation Challenges – ARPA-like)

EIC website with guidance documents, recordings from Info Days and FAQ:

<https://eic.ec.europa.eu>

Additional support:

- NCPs & Access2EIC: <https://access2eic.eu/>
- EEN2EIC: <https://een2eic.eu/>

Thank You

*FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT US:*

eic.ec.europa.eu



@EUeic



#Eueic

