EIC Funding Opportunities in 2025
for Researchers and Entrepreneurs – Baltic Info Session

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Investment and Development Agency of Latvia

innovate Latvia
Latvian Office for Innovation and Technology in Brussels

Latvijas Zinātnes padome

APVĀRSNIS EIROPA #NKP

RCL Research Council of Lithuania

NCP Research Council of Lithuania

Estonian Research Council

Six Strategic Goals for the EIC – European Innovation Council

- To be the investor of choice for those with visionary ideas
- To crowd in €30-50 billion investment into European deep tech
- To pull through high-risk technologies in critical areas for society and open strategic autonomy
- To increase the number of European unicorns and scale ups
- To catalyse innovation impacts from European public research and innovation
- To achieve operational excellence

Europe's most ambitious innovation initiative

Budget

€10 billion for 7 years

Unique

combines research & accelerator for SMEs, startups, scaleups

Largest deep-tech innovator in Europe

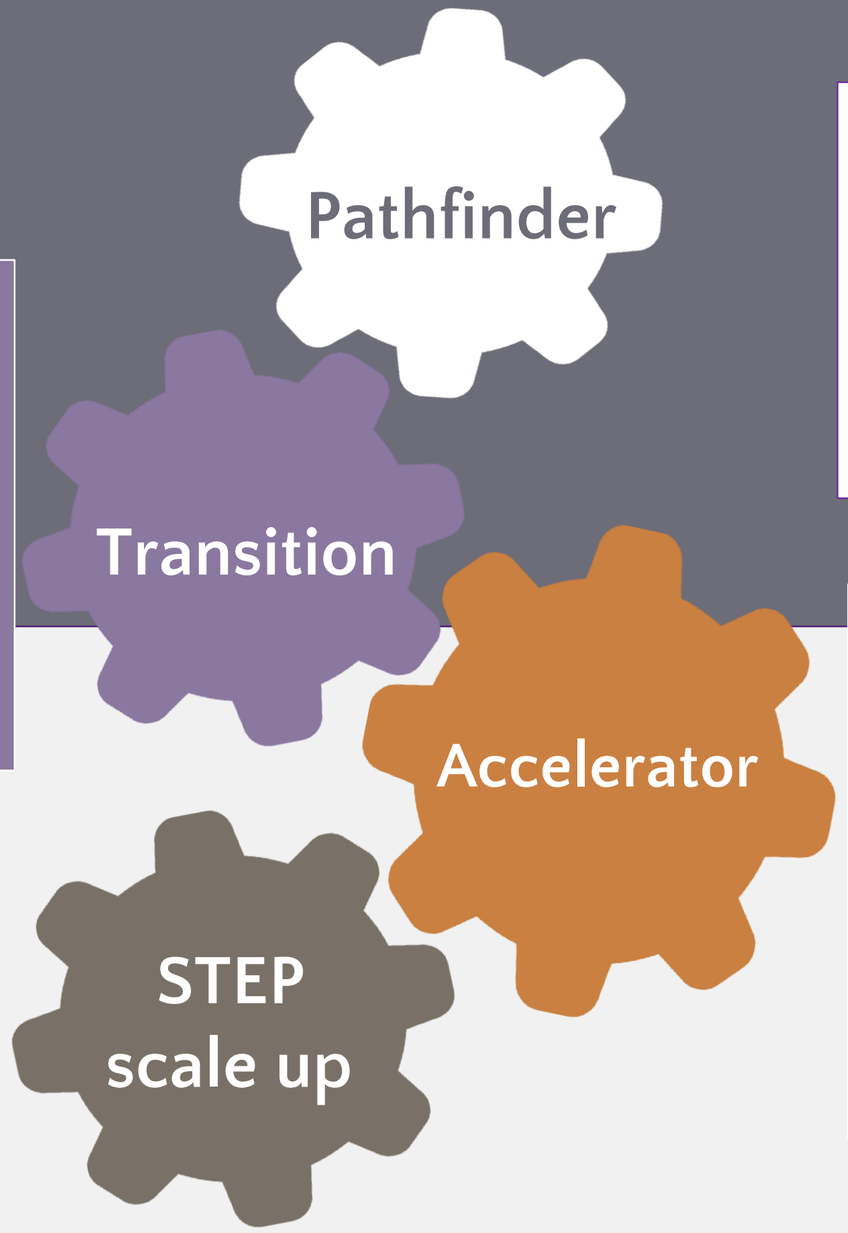
Over €3 billion

Enhances the European Innovation Ecosystems

Partnerships with ERC, EIT regions…

Annual Work Programmes (separate from Horizon Europe main WP)

- 2021 Work Programme adopted 18 March 2021, €1.5 billion, 2022 WP adopted 7 Feb 2022, €1.7 billion
- 2023 WP adopted 7 Dec 2022, €1.7 billion, 2024 WP adopted 12 Dec 2023, €1.2 billion
- **2025 WP adopted 29 Oct 2024, €1,4 billion**



- For **consortia & single** researchers /companies
- **TRL 3-6** (proof of concept to validation and develop business and market readiness)
- Grants up to €**2.5 million**

- For **consortia**
- **TRL 1-4** (early stage research on breakthrough technologies)
- Grants up to **€3 to € 4 million**

- For **individual companies**
- **TRL 6-9** (development & scale up)
- **Blended** finance
  - grants up to €2.5 million
  - equity up to €10 million

- For startups, SMEs, small mid-caps, and investors
- **Investment component of € 10 to €30 million** for scaling up strategic technologies for Europe
- **Continuous submission**

EIC PATHFINDER

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What is the EIC Pathfinder?

- *funds **research** to develop the **scientific basis** to underpin breakthrough technologies*
- *supports the **earliest stages** of scientific, technological or deep-tech R&D*
- *aims to build on new, **cutting-edge directions in science and technology** to disrupt a field and a market or create new opportunities*
- *realises innovative technological solutions to identify, develop and scale up **breakthrough technologies** and **disruptive innovations** in Europe*

Why should you apply?

- if you are looking for support from EIC Pathfinder to realise **an ambitious vision for radically new technology**, with potential to create new markets and/or to address global challenges.
- EIC Pathfinder supports **early stage development of such future technologies** (e.g. various activities at low **Technology Readiness Levels 1-4**), based on high-risk/high-gain science-towards-technology breakthrough research (including ‘deep-tech’).
- This research must provide the **foundations of the technology** you are envisioning.

EIC PATHFINDER FUNDING SCHEMES

OPEN

to support projects in any field of science, technology or application without predefined thematic priorities.

CHALLENGES

to support coherent portfolios of projects within predefined thematic areas with the aim to achieve specific objectives for each Challenge.

Biotech for Climate Resilient Crops and Plant-Based Biomanufacturing p. 34-37

Generative-AI based Agents to Revolutionize Medical Diagnosis and Treatment of Cancer p. 37-41

Towards autonomous robot collectives delivering collaborative tasks in dynamic unstructured construction environments p. 41-46

Waste-to-value devices: Circular production of renewable fuels, chemicals and materials p. 46-50

PATHFINDER CALLS 2025 – SUMMARY TABLE (1)

	Pathfinder Open	Pathfinder Challenges
Total budget	**€140 million in 2025**	**€120 million in 2025**
Proposals (indicative)	Up to €3 million.	Up to €4 million. Higher amounts if duly justified.
Funding rate	100% of eligible costs	100% of eligible costs. Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum and the amount will be determined during the evaluation process.
Opening	20 February 2025	28 July 2025
Deadline	21 May 2025	29 October 2025
Length of proposal	**20-page proposal (part B)**	**30-page proposal (part B)**
Applicants	**Consortia** • at least 3 legal entities, independent from each other and each established in a different country	**Consortia** • at least 2 eligible entities or single applicants as well as larger consortia
	The legal entities may for example be universities, research organisations, SMEs, start-ups, natural persons. In the case of single beneficiary projects, mid-caps and larger companies will not be permitted.	

PATHFINDER CALLS 2025 – SUMMARY TABLE (2)

	Pathfinder Open	Pathfinder Challenges
Results	The expected output of your project is the proof of principle that the main ideas of the envisioned future technology are feasible, thus validating its scientific and technological basis. Project results should include top-level scientific publications in open access.	Your proposed project must aim to deliver by its end the expected outcomes defined in the respective Challenge. Project results should also include top-level scientific publications, adequate formal protection of the generated intellectual property (IP) as well as an assessment of relevant aspects related to regulation, certification and standardisation.
Other important information		You should read an EIC Pathfinder Challenge Guide that will be published on the EIC website and the Funding & Tenders Portal after the call opening.
Proposal evaluation	You will be informed about the outcome of the evaluation within 5 months from the call deadline (indicative) and, if your proposal is selected for funding, you can expect your grant agreement to be signed by 8 months after the call deadline (indicative).	

Success Stories

- **Lithuania** – 6 consortia (as partners or third party)
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101115442
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101161573
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101047120
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101098813
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101098972
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101115389
- **Latvia** – 2 consortia (as partners)
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101130883
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101071188
- **Estonia** – 6 consortia (as partners)
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101046961
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101070856
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101161484
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101099092
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101130954
  - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101115442

The main changes in 2025 WP compared to the 2024 WP

EIC Pathfinder:

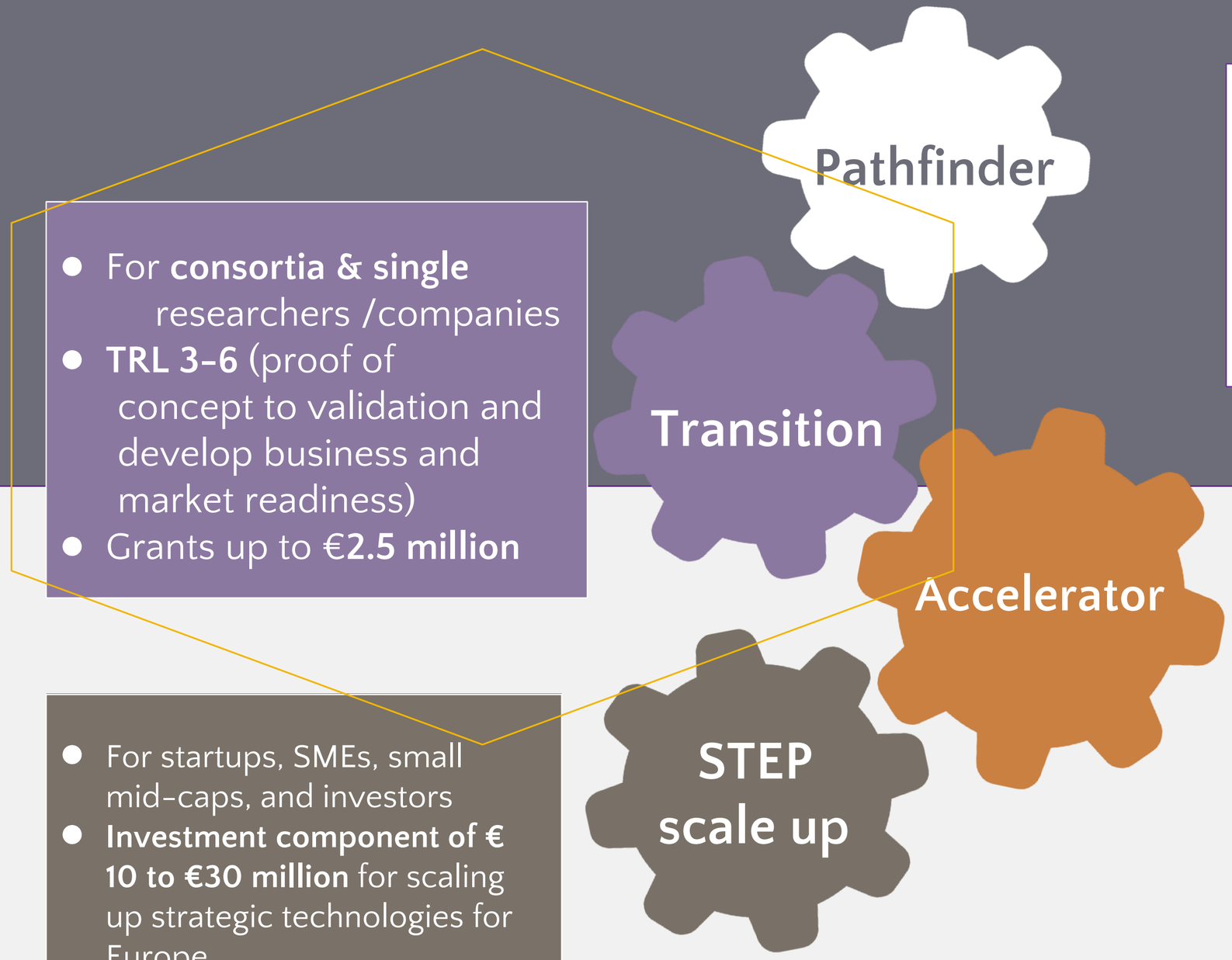
Additional emphasis on the potential solutions to be provided in applicants proposals for technology visions.

EIC TRANSITION

Estonian Research Council

DARJA MATT, EIC, EIE & EIT NCP

Estonian Research Council



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- **Investment component of € 10 to €30 million** for scaling up strategic technologies for Europe
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EIC TRANSITION

Who can apply?

* **Single applicants** (SMEs, spin-offs, start-ups, research organisations, universities)
* or **small consortia** (min 2, max 5 eligible entities)

What for?

To **validate and demonstrate technology** in application-relevant environment and to **develop business and market readiness** (TRL 3-5/6)

For further development of project results stemming from:

- **EIC Pathfinder** projects
- **ERC Proof of Concept projects** funded by Horizon 2020 or Horizon Europe
- **Horizon Europe Pillar II projects** fulfilling the eligibility criteria (TRL)
- European Defence Fund (EDF) projects
- Horizon 2020 Societal challenges
- Leadership in Industrial Technologies

Eligible projects for EIC Transition

EIC Transition

List of eligible projects (not the final list): https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-transition_en
and Innovation Radar Discovery tool https://innovation-radar.ec.europa.eu/eic-transition

Applicants can be **part** or **not part** of the eligible project

If applicant(s) were:

- ✓ **part of the eligible project -> need to** confirm in the proposal that you are the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) owner/holder
- ✓ **not part of the eligible project ->** the coordinator need to include in the proposal a **commitment letter** from the relevant owner(s) of the result(s)
- ✓ In all cases it is necessary to **specify in the application the grant project which generated the result**

What is the EIC Transition?

EIC Transition

- funds innovation activities that **go beyond the experimental proof of principle in laboratory**
- supports **both** the **maturation and validation of novel technology (**from the lab to the relevant application environments) as well as explorations and **development of a sustainable business case and business model** towards commercialisation into high potential markets
- Expected outcomes: **effective technology** and **potential market readiness**

Technological readiness levels

EIC Transition

TRL1 – basic principles observed

TRL2 – technology concept formulated

TRL3 – experimental proof of concept

TRL4 – technology validated in lab

TRL5 – technology validated in relevant environment

TRL6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment

EIC Transition

TRL7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment

TRL8 – system complete and qualified

TRL9 – actual system proven in operational environment

Submission of the proposal, evaluation and results

EIC Transition

- **Submission** via **Funding and Tenders portal (B part max 22 pages).**
  Submission link will be available at latest on the opening day of the call.
- **1. Application** evaluation by EIC expert evaluators (results indicatively within 9 weeks after the deadline)

  If successful -> invited for an interview (organised appr. betw. 12-14 weeks)
- **2. Interview** - assessed by a panel of maximum 6 EIC Jury members (result within 4 weeks)

The main changes in 2025 WP compared to the 2024 WP

EIC Transition:

- **Seal of Excellence** will be awarded to all proposals that meet the evaluation thresholds but are not funded due to lack of available budget. If the proposal is submitted by consortia, the Seal of Excellence will be awarded to the coordinator of the proposal, listing the other participating legal entities.

TRANSITION CALL 2025 – SUMMARY TABLE

	Transition Open
Total budget in 2025	**€ 98 million**
Proposals (indicative)	From € 0.5 to € 2.5 million
Duration of the project	1–3 years
Funding rate and form	100% of eligible costs, lump sum
Opening	**April 2025**
Deadline	**17 September 2025**
Length of proposal	**Max 22-page proposal (part B)**
Applicants	• **Single applicants** (SMEs, spin-offs, start-ups, research organisations, universities) • or **small consortia** (min 2, max 5 eligible entities)

EIC PRE-ACCELERATOR

Information is not confirmed yet!

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Estonian Research Council

EIC PRE-ACCELERATOR - funded under WIDERA programme (not from EIC programme)

EIC Pre-accelerator: Why and What?

- **High potential for deep tech startups in widening countries** (>900 startups passing EIC Step 1)
- **Gaps to be addressed:**
  - **Technology readiness**: from TRL 3-4 to 5-6 (testing, demonstration, validations in application environments),
  - **Business readiness**: build team, market & competitor analysis, IP strategy etc
  - **Investor readiness**: pitching, investor outreach, financial plan
- **Difficulties in attracting public/private investments** due to the high level of risk both at technology and investment level.

EIC Pre-accelerator in a nutshell

Scope: Early-stage deep tech startups which 1) have high-impact innovation that could create new markets or disrupt existing ones and 2) have the ambition and commitments to scale up.

Eligibility: mono-beneficiary projects with legal entities as SMEs established in an eligible country.

Evaluation: single stage, EIC Transition open criteria (first step)

Funding targeted at:

- Actions addressing the investor and market readiness towards commersialisation and deployment;
- Maturation and validation of the novel technology from TRL 4 to 6

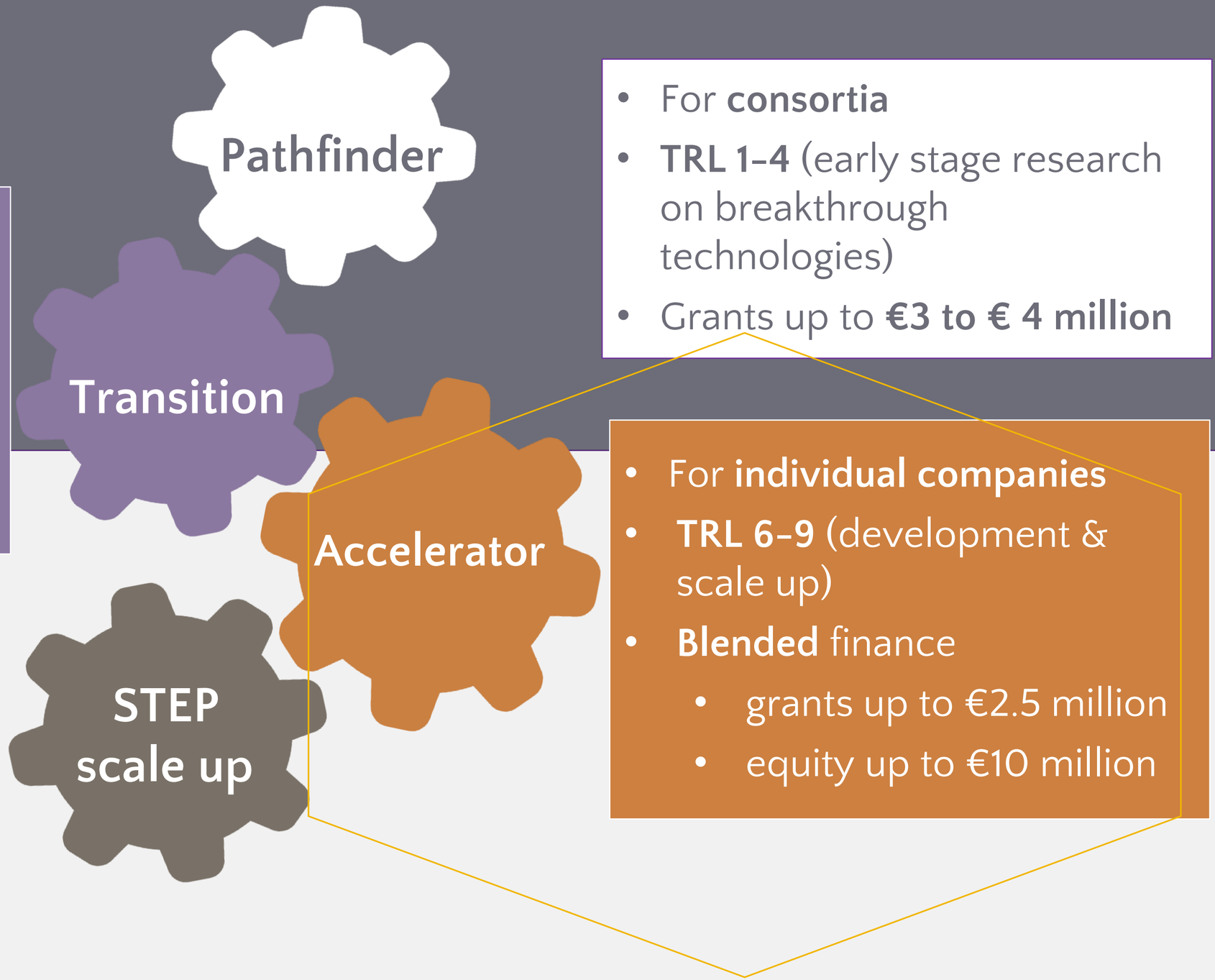
Form of support:

- Grant (RIA, 70% reimbursement) between 300-500 000 EUR for max 2 years

In addition, EIC WP25 provides:

- Free Access to tailored EIC BUSINESS Acceleration Services to improve investor readiness
- Access to the EIC Accelerator via Fast Track scheme

Application round will be open: **6 May 2025 – 16 Sept 2025** (not confirmed)



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EIC ACCELERATOR

APVĀRSNIS
EIROPA
#NKP

MARIJA PLOTNIECE, EIC, EIE & EIT NCP

Latvian Council of Science

EIC ACCELERATOR

Who can apply?

* **Single applicants** (SMEs, spin-offs, start-ups)
* **Natural persons** or **legal entities** willing to set up an SMEs or a mid-cap
* **Small mid-caps** (fewer than 499 employees) in need of rapid scale up of the TRL 9 activity.

Mid-caps can apply for investment only.

What for?

Develop and **scaleup i**nnovations with the potential to create new markets or disrupt existing ones **(TRL 6-9)**

- Applicants may submit **only one application to the EIC Accelerator.** Additional applications can be submitted after receiving the results of the original submission.

The EIC welcomes applications from innovators in all EU Member States and countries associated to the Horizon Europe programme.

It particularly welcomes applications from startups and SMEs with female CEOs.

What is the EIC Accelerator?

EIC Accelerator

- **Innovation Support:** Aids SMEs and startups in scaling up 'deep tech' innovations that can disrupt or create new markets.
- **Funding and Services:** Provides financial support up to €2.5 million in grants and up to €10 million in equity (investment component) for scaling up high-risk, high-impact innovations. It also includes Business Acceleration Services to assist with market entry and growth.
- **Focus on Advanced Development:** Supports technologies from TRL 6-8 for grants, aiming for TRL 9 with the investment component, helping companies achieve business and market readiness.

Technological readiness levels

EIC Accelerator

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EIC Accelerator

Submission of the proposal, evaluation and results

EIC Accelerator

- **Step 1 – write your Short Proposal**
  - Submit a proposal, a pitch-deck (up to 10 slides), and a 3-minute video pitch.
  - **No deadlines**, **submit any time**. Application form template.
  - Evaluations are on a monthly basis, with feedback usually **within 4-6weeks**. *Successful applicants are invited to prepare a full proposal* (at least 3 out of 4 Go`s)

- **Step 2 – prepare your Full Proposal**
  - If short proposal is successful, prepare **a detailed full proposal on the Funding and Tenders portal**, following specific templates and guidelines. This includes defining the type of funding, a pitch-deck, and additional documents.
  - If you succeeded with short application in 2025, your full proposal can be submitted to any of the following cut-offs during 2025, and any of the cut-offs for 2026.
  - Evaluation within 8-9 weeks.
  - **Next Cut-Offs: 12 March 2025 & 1 October 2025**

Submission of the proposal, evaluation and results

EIC Accelerator

- **Step 3 – pitch your Innovation**
  - Successful full proposals are invited for **face-to-face interviews** with the EIC jury, composed of investors, entrepreneurs, and field experts.. This is the final step in the selection process.

- **Seal of Excellence:**
  - Applications that meet all evaluation criteria but are not funded due to budget constraints will receive a **Seal of Excellence**. This seal serves as a quality label, facilitating access to alternative funding sources and includes eligibility for *Business Acceleration Services*.

- **Sovereignty (STEP) Seal**:
  - Proposals that align with the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP), whether funded or not, will receive the Sovereignty (STEP) Seal. This seal supports access to complementary funding sources and includes access to Business Acceleration Services.

The main changes in 2025 WP compared to the 2024 WP

STEP Scale-up call intro:

- This call aims to **provide larger investments (up to €30 million)** specifically for scaling up strategic technologies in Europe, targeting SMEs, startups, and small mid-caps. This investment component is higher than the regular EIC Accelerator, designed for impactful strategic growth.

Investment Component Reduction:

- The **maximum investment amount for the EIC Accelerator has been reduced** from €15 million to €10 million.

The main changes in 2025 WP compared to the 2024 WP

Monthly Batching for Short Proposals:

✦ Short proposals (Step 1) are now evaluated **monthly** (batching on first Tueaday of the month), with feedback provided within 4-6 weeks.

Inclusion of Nuclear Applications:

✦ The 2025 programme clarifies that **nuclear applications are eligible for funding under the EIC Accelerator**. This inclusion addresses applications that were previously uncertain about eligibility.

The main changes in 2025 WP compared to the 2024 WP

New Sovereignty (STEP) Seal:

✦ For projects aligned with strategic EU objectives (e.g., digital and clean technologies). This seal is awarded to proposals**, both funded and unfunded**, and supports access to complementary funding from national and regional sources.

Clarification on TRL Requirements:

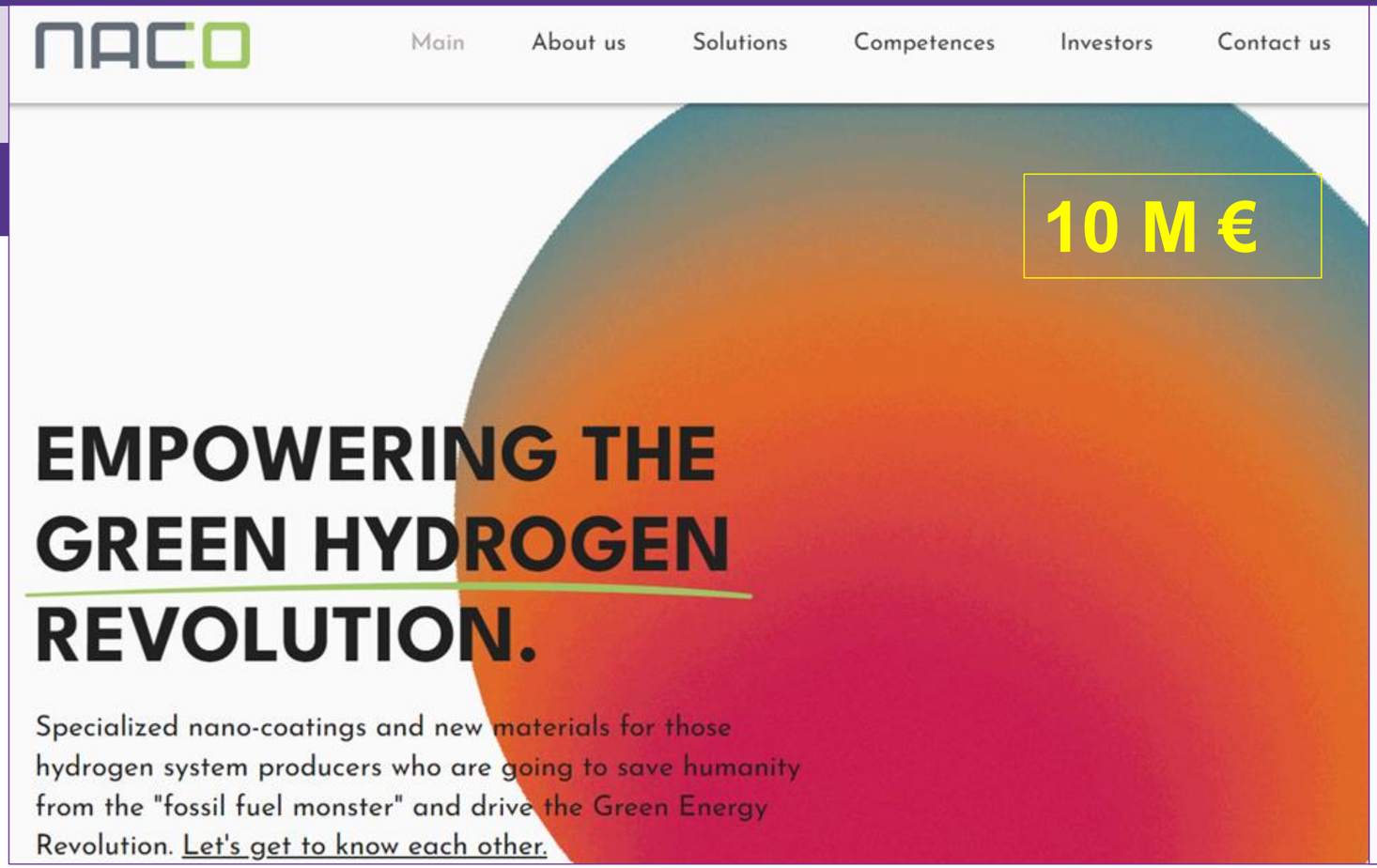
✦ Applications to the EIC Accelerator are now required to have completed **all elements of Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 5** before submission. The funding will support projects from **TRL 6 to 9**.

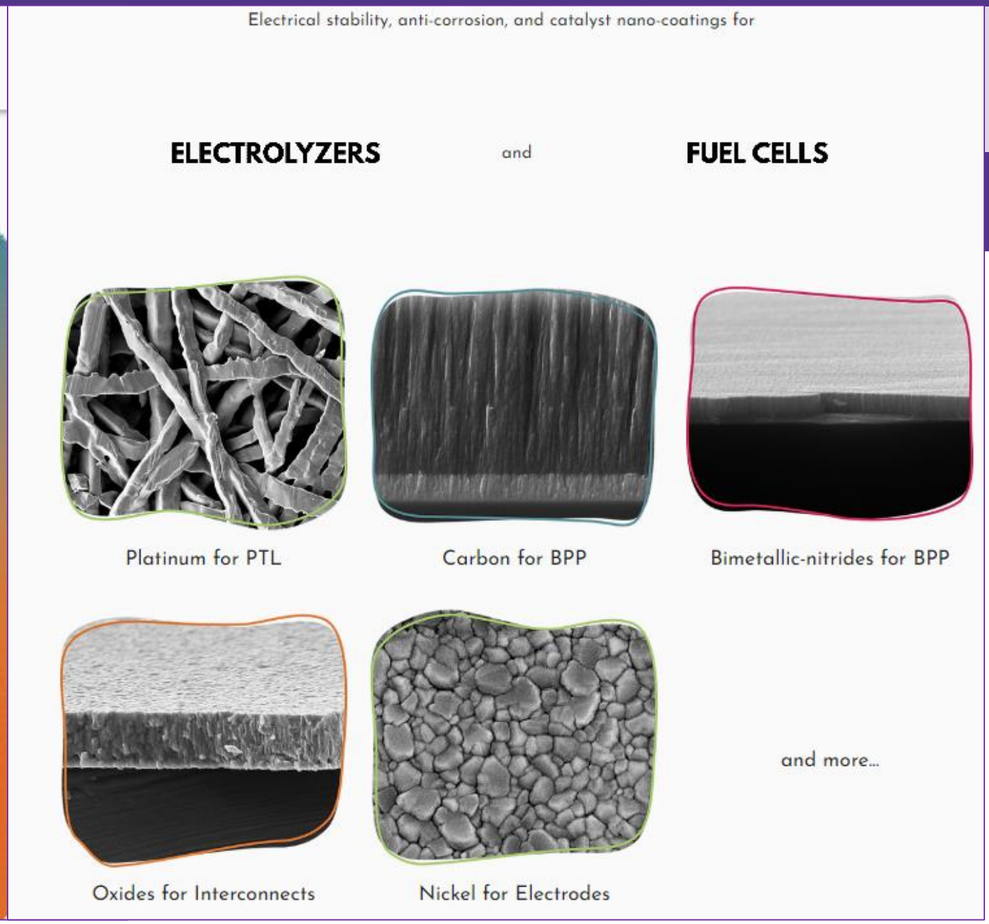
EIC ACCELERATOR CALLS 2025 – SUMMARY TABLE

	Accelerator Open	Acceleratorr Challenges
Total budget	€384 million in 2025	€250 million in 2025
Proposals (indicative)	grant (2.5M (70% eligible costs) + investment (min. 0.5M and up to 10M)	
Opening of the short proposal call	29 Oct 2024	29 Oct 2024
Full application deadline	12 March 2025 1 October 2025	12 March 2025 1 October 2025
Topics	Open topics	1. Acceleration of advanced materials development and upscaling along the value chain 2. Biotechnology driven low emission food and feed production systems 3. GenAI4EU: Creating European Champions in Generative AI 4. Innovative in-space servicing, operations, robotics and technologies for resilient EU space infrastructure 5. Breakthrough innovations for future mobility
Applicants	Single legal entities	

Examples of Baltic success stories – EIC Accelerator

LATVIA

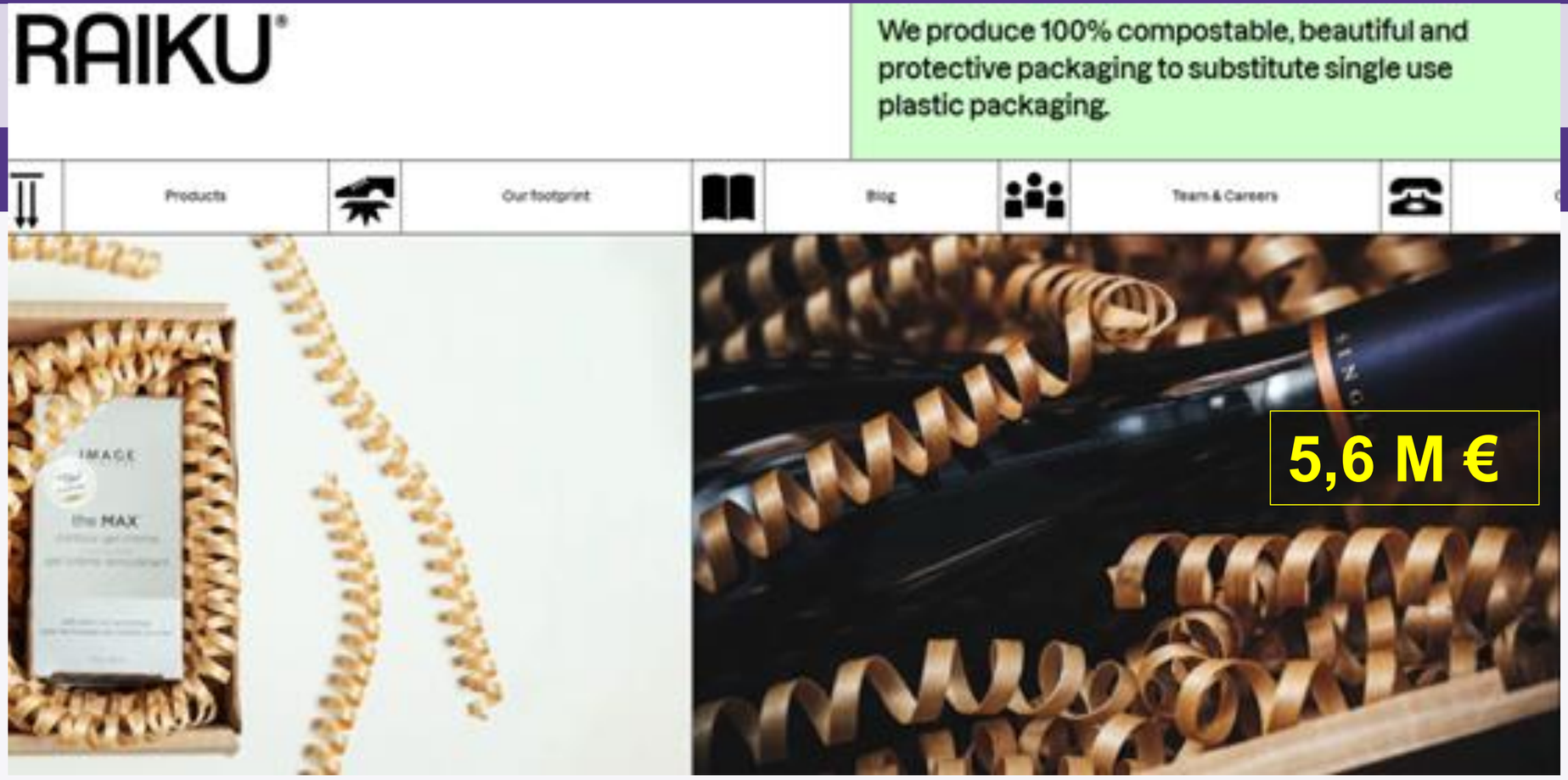




Novel nano coating process to empower the green hydrogen revolution: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/190103720

European Innovation Council

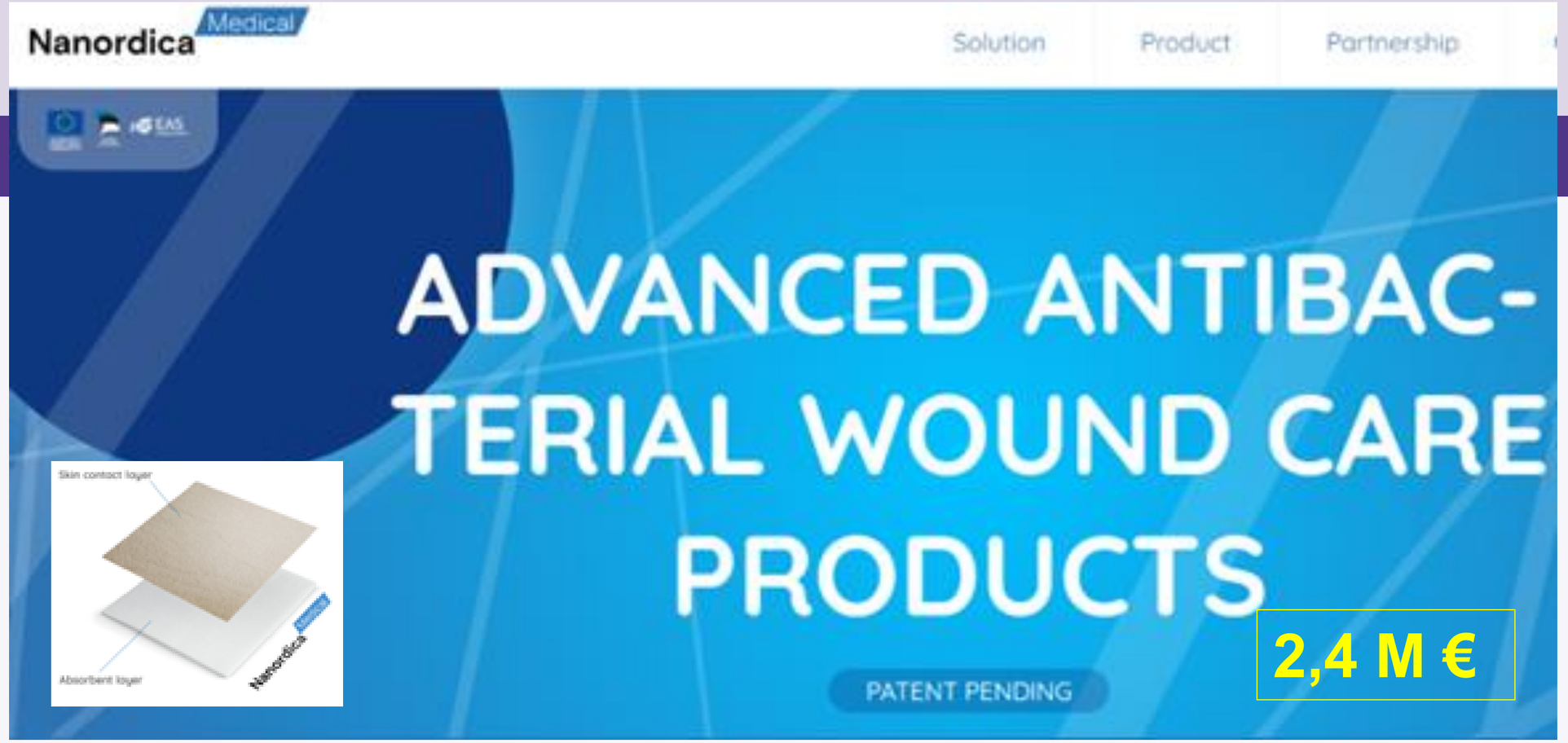
ESTONIA



Optimization, demonstration of natural, biodegradable packaging from wood: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101145196

European Innovation Council

ESTONIA

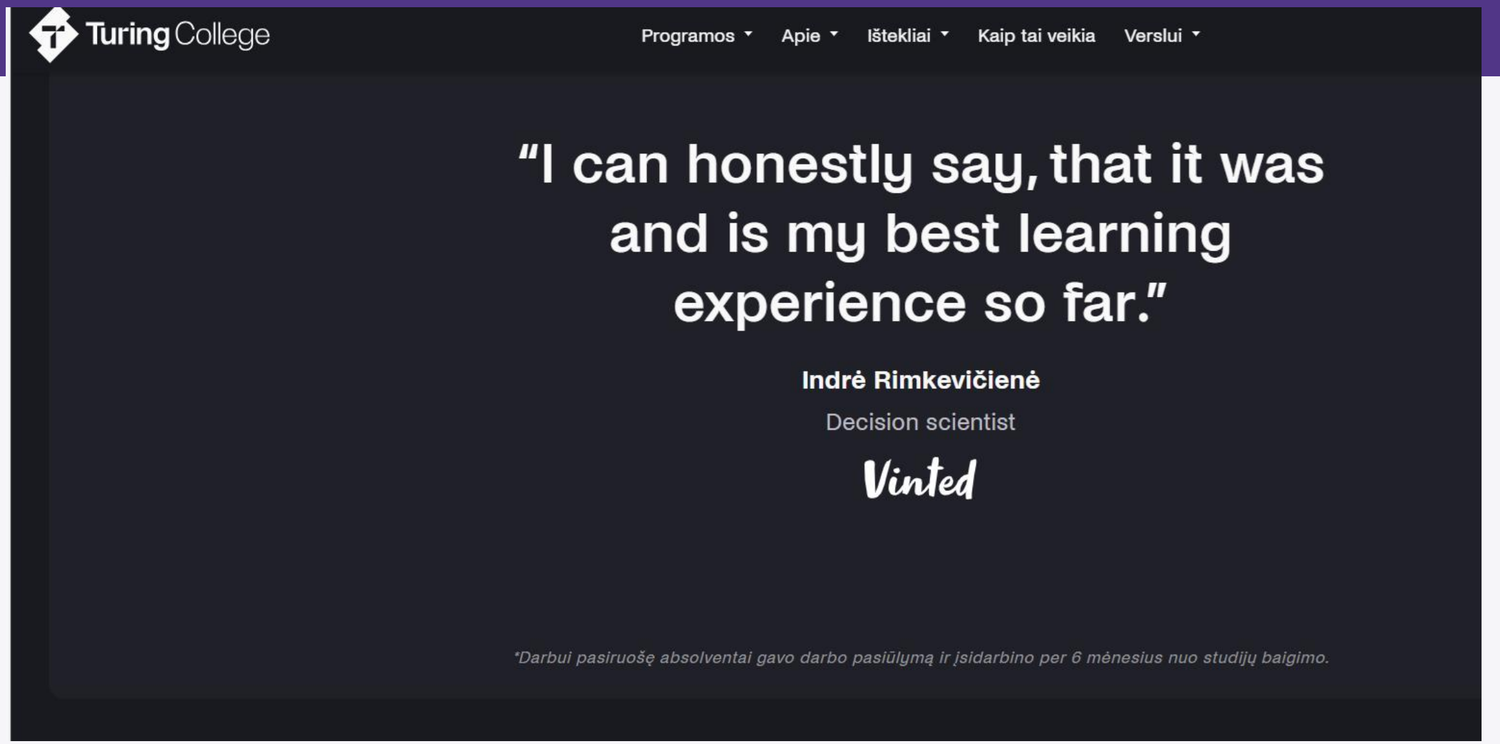


Antibacterial wound dressing based on advanced nanotechnology to improve the efficiency of wound care:
https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/190199469

European Innovation Council

LITHUANIA

Turing College, 2024 EIC Accelerator (funded from Transfer Fund) **2,5 M €**



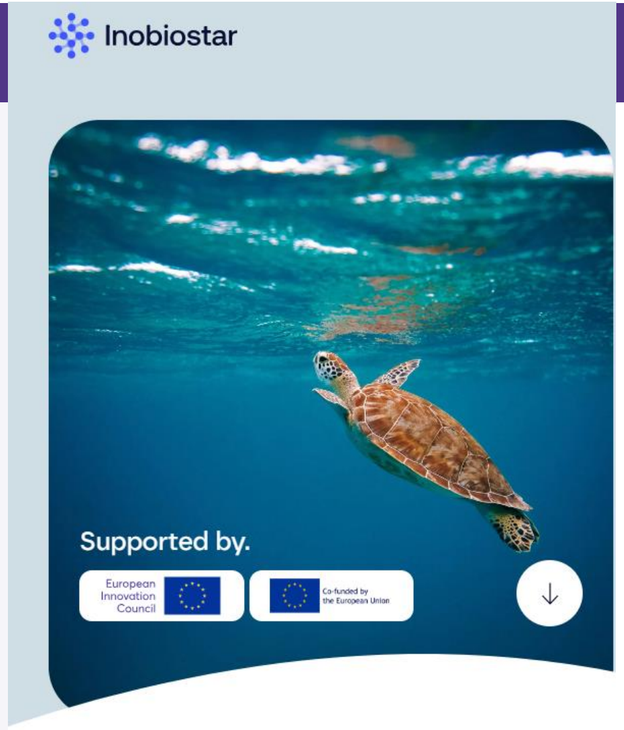
Tertiary Education Redefined: AI-Driven Upskilling & Reskilling Platform for Industry-Relevant Digital Skills: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101161973

European Innovation Council

LITHUANIA

Inobiostar, 2024 EIC Accelerator (funded from Transfer Fund)

2,4 M €



2020 — 2021

The beginning

Originally the company Inobiostar, MB was established as a spin-off company of Klaipeda university (Lithuania) in 2020 in order to develop deep tech innovations towards clean seas, while the idea arised from the joint collaboration of two scientists Tatjana Paulauskiene and Marija Katarzyte few years earlier.
Shortly after the establishment we applied for our first EU patent.

Our mission – responsible R&D toward a sustainable future for all.
Our vision – Inobiostar is an Innovation hub significantly contributing to the global challenges of society.

European Innovation Council

What is STEP?

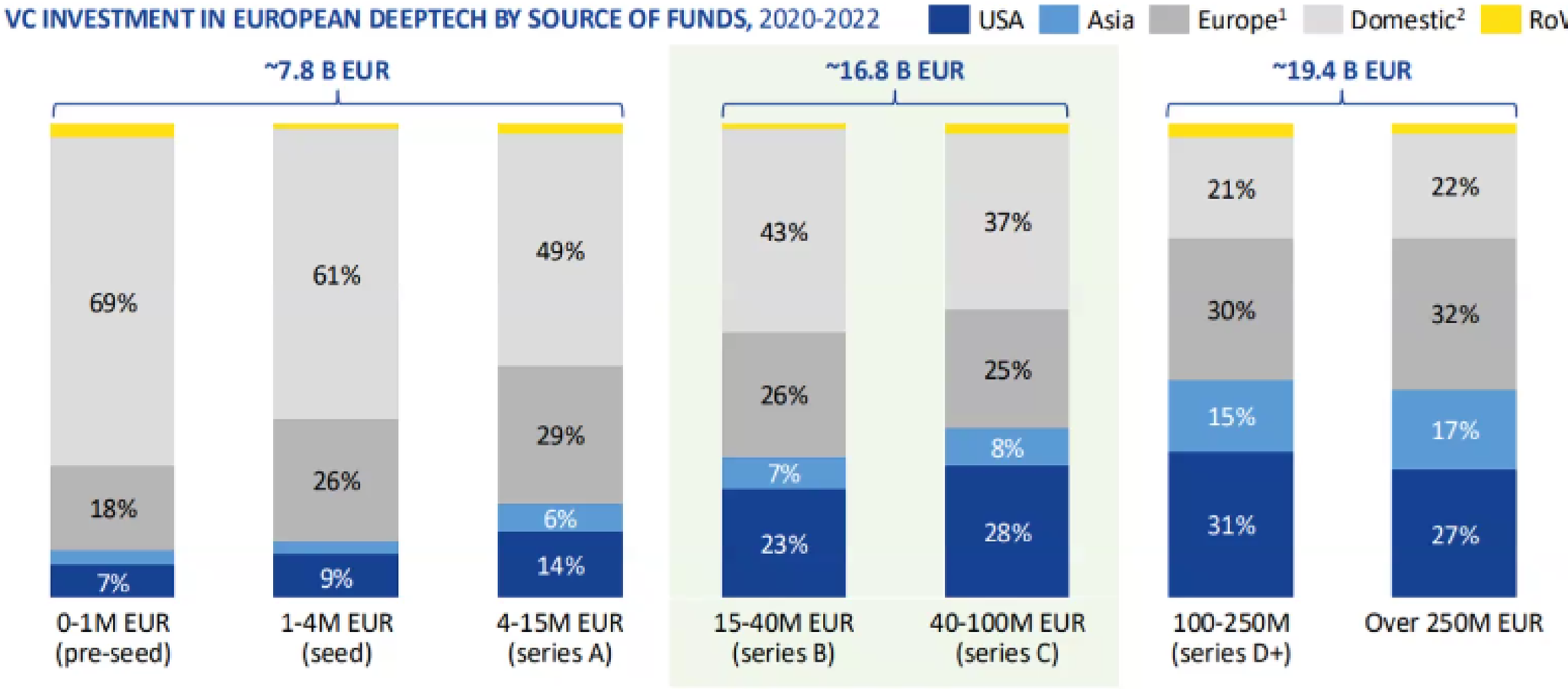
European Innovation Council

- The Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) Regulation was adopted in February 2024
- It identifies three main strategic technology areas:
  - **Digital and deep tech**
  - **Clean tech**
  - **Biotech**
- It aims to bring major new technologies to Single Market and avoid technology dependencies on other regions
- It is implemented in a coordinated way across 11 EU programmes (including Horizon Europe/ EIC) and through Structural Funds (ERDF)

Why STEP in the EIC?

European Innovation Council

- Europe faces major funding gap in scaling up deep tech companies
- Scale up funding heavily reliant on overseas investor
- Risks of companies relocating



1 – Investors in **any European country**, regardless of the specific country where the startup is based.
2 – Investors in **the same country** as the startups receiving the funding.

Sources: The European Deep Tech Report 2023, <link>, Deep Tech: Europe, Dealroom.co, <link>; VC at the heart of European life sciences, Invest Europe, <link>, Beyond Borders: EY Biotechnology Report 2023, EY, <link>, EU cleantech financial year 2023 briefing, Cleantech for Europe, <link>

Summary main elements for EIC STEP Scale up

European Innovation Council

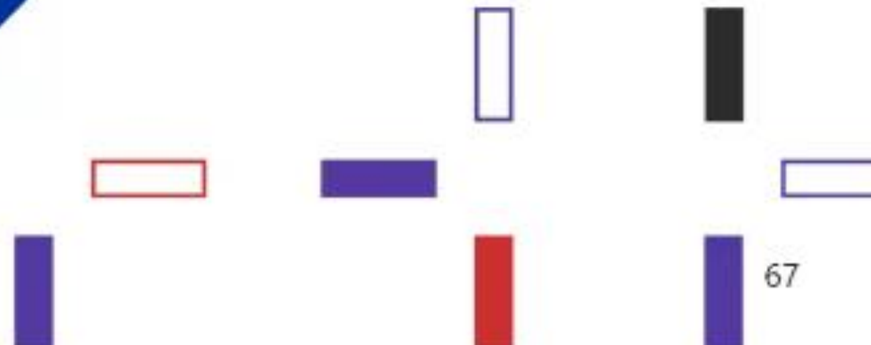
- **Budget €300m** (2025), expected to be €900m (2025-27)
- **Equity only** support
- **Larger tickets** (EUR 10m-30m)
- Catalyze **rounds of €50-150m**

Pre-commitment from investors required (min 20-30%)
Facilitated **access to Invest EU Venture Debt**

EIC STEP Scale up Call

STEP Sovereignty Seal (if fulfill necessary conditions)

Evaluation/ award criteria include specific STEP conditions

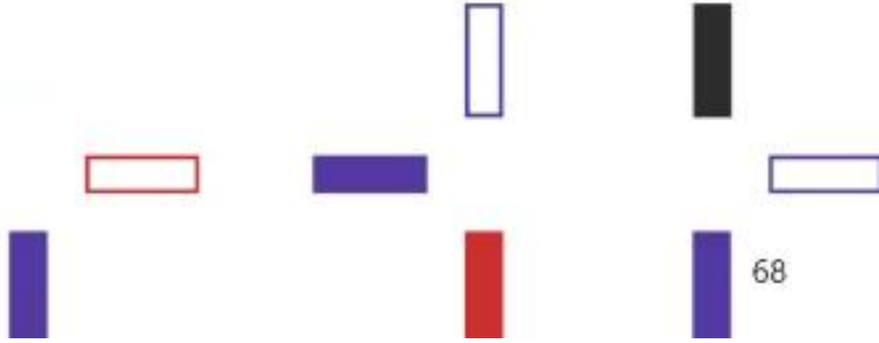


EIC STEP Scale-up Call

European Innovation Council

Target companies/ applicants:

- **Developing strategic technologies** within scope of
- Already secured initial funding rounds and **aiming to raise major funding round** (e.g., EUR 50-150 million) to scale up and become a global leader
- Commercialising and scaling the technology/ innovation **represents significant risks** which cannot be financed from market investors along (no change in evaluation criteria on risk)
- Incl. companies with **existing EIC support**/ already in the EIC Fund portfolio and companies with **no previous EIC Support**



Upcoming events in 2024 – EIC Pathfinder, Transition and Accelerator 2025

More info and web stream link

innovation | EU financing

Tuesday 5 November 2024, 09:30 - 16:45 (CET)

Live streaming available

More info and web stream link

EU financing | innovation

Wednesday 6 November 2024, 09:00 - 13:15 (CET)

Baltic Innovators Hub: EIC Opportunities & Events in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Private Listed

Join EIC Baltic Innovators Hub in LinkedIn

If you have any further questions about the EIC programme, please contact us based on your country:

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EIC Funding Opportunities in 2025
for Researchers and Entrepreneurs – Baltic Info Session

thank you!

BALTIC INNOVATORS HUB
EIC Opportunities & Events

Investment and Development Agency of Latvia

innovate Latvia
Latvian Office for Innovation and Technology in Brussels

Latvijas Zinātnes padome

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