



# Access2EIC

National Contact Points for Innovation



## EIC ACCELERATOR ANNOTATED TEMPLATE (Short proposal)

# 2026

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#### AUTHORS

AGENZIA PER LA PROMOZIONE DELLA RICERCA EUROPEA

Alessia Rotolo, Valentina Fioroni

CENTRO PARA EL DESARROLLO TECNOLÓGICO Y LA INNOVACION E.P.E. (CDTI)

Esther Casado Moya, Luis Jesus Guerra Casanova, Lucia Iñigo Paarmann

OSTERREICHISCHE FORSCHUNGSFORDERUNGSGESELLSCHAFT MBH (FFG)

Giorgio Cataldo Mutinati, Iraklis Agiovlasis

DEUTSCHES ZENTRUM FUER LUFT- UND RAUMFAHRT EV (DLR)

Vanessa Sooth, Daniel Stuerzebecher

GIS-TRANSFERCENTER FOUNDATION (GIS-TC)

Tsvetelina Yorgova, Kostadin Kostadinov

ENTERPRISE IRELAND (EI)

James Walsh, Daniela Angione

CENTRUM VEDECKO-TECHNICKÝCH INFORMÁCIÍ SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY (CVTI SR)

Peter Szuttor

NARODOWE CENTRUM BADAN I ROZWOJU (NCBR)

Aleksandra Ihnatowicz, Piotr Olszowski, Kamila Chmielewska

NATIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AUTHORITY (IIA)

Nir Shaked, Shelly Bachar, Ahalela Talmor

INNOVASJON NORGE (IN)

Eva Langlet, Kathleen Myklatun Skarbøvig, Maria Erdal Askim

#### DISCLAIMER

This report was produced within the framework of Access2EIC, the official network of Horizon Europe National Contact Points (NCPs) for the European Innovation Council (EIC) and European Innovation Ecosystems (EIE). Access2EIC's main objective is to provide support and specialised services to the network of EIC and EIE NCPs. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this document is accurate and up to date, Access2EIC does not assume any liability or responsibility for the completeness, accuracy, or usefulness of the information included in this document. Information is provided strictly "as is".



## Table of Content

Aim and content	4
How to read this guide	5
Project short proposal - Technical description (Part B)	6
Annexes to short proposal	13





## AIM AND CONTENT

The EIC Accelerator is a funding programme under Horizon Europe that offers support to start-ups and SMEs with innovative, game-changing products, services, or business models capable of creating new markets or disrupting existing ones in Europe and globally. It is designed for those with the ambition and commitment to scale up their businesses, but who face challenges in securing significant funding due to the high risks involved, which may be too daunting for private investors alone.

Moreover, the applicants should demonstrate their ability to create new markets or disrupt existing ones, demonstrate a strong ambition for a rapid growth at scale in Europe & beyond, and reflect high levels of technological, regulatory, market acceptance and other types of risks to fail that prevent or withhold private investment.

The three main criteria used to evaluate the innovative aspects of an EIC Accelerator short proposal for Horizon Europe are:

Excellence	
Innovation - Deep tech and breakthrough nature	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?
Technology Readiness - TRL	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)?
Intellectual Property	Does the innovation have adequate IP protection and a sound IP strategy to enter the market to be addressed?
Impact	
Market opportunity	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	
Team capability	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?
Risk level of the investment and leverage effect	Has the company demonstrated early traction with investors? Is the financing requirement to be internationally competitive significantly higher than the amount that market actors can finance alone?



## HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE

The text of the original EIC Accelerator Short proposal template appears in **Black**.

The recommendations of the Access2EIC NCPs appear in **Blue**.

These recommendations also include the feedback collected from evaluators and companies involved in relevant proposals.



*Please note:* the comments in this box are general and are intended to draw the reader's attention to specific elements

This guide is limited to annotations to the templates of the EIC Accelerator 2026 calls. It is based on the EIC Accelerator short proposal template Version 2 of 22 October 2025. For a more general overview of how the Horizon Europe grants work, see the [Online Manual](#) provided by the European Commission. Regarding the EIC Accelerator submission, see the [Guide for Applicants](#) and the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

A comprehensive list of all Horizon Europe reference documents (including legislation, work programme and templates) can be found on the Reference documents page of the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#) and the [European Innovation Council portal](#).

Horizon Europe terms are explained in the [Glossary](#) part of the Funding and Tenders Portal.

If you need help, you can also contact the [Horizon Europe National Contacts Points in your country](#)



# PROJECT SHORT PROPOSAL - TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION (PART B)

The structure of the part B is shown below in the left-hand column below, with the associated evaluation criteria in the right-hand column.

Table of content		Main evaluation criteria addressed
APPLICANT'S INFORMATION		
SHORT PROPOSAL		
1	Technology	Excellence
2	Market	Impact
3	Team, Financial Needs, Implementation	Level of risk, implementation and need of union support

### TITLE OF THE PROPOSAL

 Fill in the title of your proposal below.

### List of participants

Participant	Participant organisation name	Country
1 (Coordinator)		
2 Affiliated entity(ies), if any.		

Please be aware: The EIC Accelerator is a mono beneficiary action. Affiliated entities, in the context of Horizon Europe, means having a link (e.g. capital or legal link) with a beneficiary and fulfilling the same eligibility conditions.



## 1 - Technology

### Novelty and breakthrough nature:

Is your 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?

*Please describe how your innovation is deep-tech. Please describe the novelty and disruptive potential of your technology vs existing solutions. Please provide empirical data that demonstrate the novelty of your technology and its potential to disrupt current markets.*

**Deep tech breakthrough:** clearly describe and emphasize the disruptive potential and innovation of your technology - this is one of the most critical elements of the proposal. It's technology that is based on cutting-edge scientific advances and discoveries and is characterised by the need to stay at the technological forefront by constant interaction with new ideas and results from the lab. Deep tech innovations are understood to be those that have 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, whereas deep tech is characterised by scientific breakthroughs that enable fundamentally new capabilities and require long development timelines to reach market.

**Comparison to existing solutions:** show how your solution outperforms current options in key areas (e.g., cost, speed, effectiveness). Consider that breakthrough is characterised by surpassing competitors in any key dimension of the USP by a factor of 10.

**Empirical data:** please provide empirical data that demonstrate the novelty of your technology and its potential to disrupt current markets.

**Novelty:** can be conveyed in terms of what is new, original, or unique - whether it is something done for the very first time or better than ever before. For example, the airplane represents a new, original, and unique milestone in history, as it allowed humans to fly for the very first time and travel faster than ever before.

**Disruptive technology:** it describes a product or service that radically disrupts an industry and eventually replaces the traditional way of doing things. For example, Netflix was disruptive because it replaced physical video stores with digital streaming.



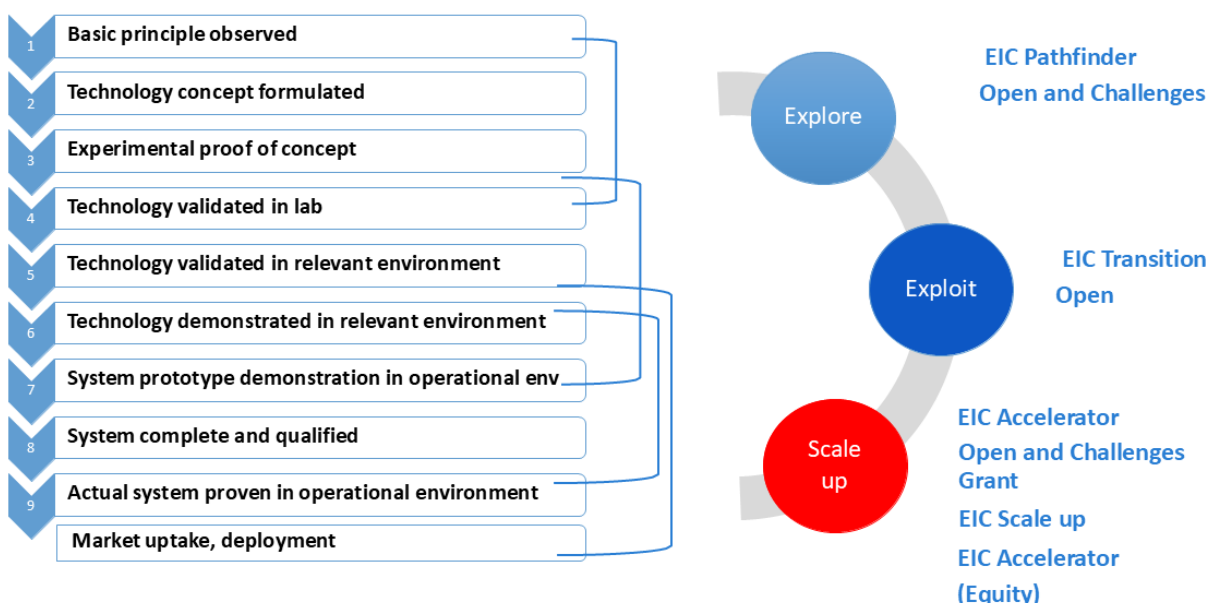
## Technology Readiness Level (TRL):

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

*Please provide evidence of TRL 5 (or higher) validation.*

**State your current TRL.** Make sure that you have at least finalised TRL 5. Outline the key steps you have taken to reach your current TRL and briefly explain how it was validated. What are the next steps for taking your solution to market at TRL 9? For the correspondence between TRLs and clinical trials steps, the following considerations are made: TRL5 stands for animal testing and clinical protocols for phase 1 clinical testing, TRL 6 for exploratory phase 1 trials support proceeding to phase 2, TRL 7 for phase 2 clinical trial completed, and TRL8 stands for completed phase 3 clinical trials and regulatory approval. (See also this link)

Figure 1: Technology Readiness Level (TRL)





## Protection and strategy:

Does your innovation have adequate IP protection? What is your intellectual property strategy to enter the market to be addressed?

*Please describe your IP strategy in terms of patents (granted or pending), trade secrets and/or other IP elements and FTO status.*

**IP strategy:** Describe how your IP strategy protects the core innovation and supports your market entry. Provide a short overview of existing or pending patents, explaining what technical elements they cover and why these filings are essential to secure your competitive position. Indicate which parts of your technology are intentionally kept as trade secrets and how confidentiality is ensured.

**FTO:** Include a brief statement on your Freedom to Operate (FTO): summarise any preliminary searches and whether they show potential blocking rights in key markets. If a full FTO analysis is ongoing or planned, note the expected timeline. The goal is to demonstrate a proactive and credible approach to IP management aligned with your commercialization roadmap

**Note:** A full FTO has to be attached to the full proposal.

## 2 - Market

What and how big is the total market to be addressed by your innovation? What is the realistic expectation of the share of the total market you plan to achieve?

*Please describe your go-to-market and commercialisation strategy to scale-up your innovation. Please describe your customer value proposition, your partnerships, who your customers are and why they will adopt your solution.*

**Market size and opportunity:** Explain how your solution addresses a substantial and global market need, either by creating a new market or transforming an existing one.

Define the Total Addressable Market (TAM), Serviceable Available Market (SAM) and Serviceable Obtainable Market (SOM), clearly explaining assumptions, segmentation logic and reference geographies.



Estimate the realistic market share you expect to capture over time, considering competitive dynamics, adoption barriers and scale-up capacity.

Where useful, consider adding simple visual illustrations (e.g. funnel, segmentation chart) to support market potential claims.

### **Go-to-Market and Commercialisation Strategy**

Describe how you plan to enter the market, including initial target customers, early adopters, pilot deployments and scaling phases.

Explain your distribution and sales strategy (direct sales, partners, licensing, platform-based, etc.) and how it evolves as volumes increase.

Clarify the role of strategic partnerships in accelerating adoption, reducing risks or enabling access to international markets.

### **Business Model and Revenue Generation**

Clearly outline your business model (e.g. subscription, licensing royalties, unit sales, hybrid models) and explain why it is financially sustainable.

Be as concrete as possible by estimating expected unit volumes, pricing levels, and revenue streams.

Provide high-level revenue forecasts consistent with the proposed business model and the expected SOM capture.

### **Customer Value Proposition and Willingness to Pay**

Define who your target customers are (customer segments, profiles, key stakeholders) and clearly articulate their main pain points.

Explain why customers are willing to pay, focusing on quantifiable value drivers such as cost reduction, performance improvement, efficiency gains or risk mitigation.



Mention pilot customers, validation activities, letters of intent (Lois) or early traction, showing alignment between customer needs and business model.

### **Competitive Landscape**

Identify key direct and indirect competitors, including alternative solutions currently addressing the same customer needs.

Briefly describe competitors' strengths and weaknesses, focusing on market positioning rather than technical detail alone.

Emphasize how incumbents or substitutes leave unmet needs or inefficiencies in the market.

### **Competitive Advantage and Market Success**

Highlight your competitive advantages (e.g. superior performance, lower cost, scalability, innovation potential).

Clearly explain what differentiates your solution compared with competitors; a comparison table may be used where appropriate.

Justify why your innovation is well positioned to succeed, based on market trends, customer demand, regulatory drivers, and clear gaps in existing solutions.

## **3 - Team, financial needs and implementation**

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

Which are your company's current skills/competence gaps, including adequate gender balance? Which is your plan to fill the gaps?

*Please describe who are the key team members and what are their relevant competencies. Please describe how the company is governed and how you take decisions.*

*Please include any critical gaps (including gender balance) and how they will be filled.*



**Team:** Describe your team, the different roles, commitment and achievements/experience (strategic, technical and commercial) in relation to your innovation. Explain the role of the company's owner(s) if not part of the team. For each team member (including management and company founders where relevant) please provide relevant information, including shareholding and stock options in the company.

What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the team, and what is the plan to acquire currently missing competencies? How are the team members incentivised? (For example, employee stock option plan, bonuses in milestones). When talking about gender balance, describe how you will achieve it.

### **Risk level of the investment and leverage effect:**

Has your company demonstrated early traction with investors? Is the financing requirement to be internationally competitive significantly higher than the amount that market actors can finance alone?

*Please describe your traction with investors and detail the timing and size of your future financing round. Please explain why you need EIC funding. And why market actors will not commit to fund the full amount of the funding you need.*

Reference existing investors (a form of validation) - especially if they have key sectoral experience.

It is a fine line: while you must highlight the previous interest shown by investors, you must also clarify that private backers are waiting for further de-risking before committing the full amount required.

## **IMPORTANT!!! Read with attention**

Consent for data sharing with NCP. Please use the template provided. By giving consent, you allow your National Contact Point to be informed about your application process and to offer you guidance and assistance throughout the process. **This is the only way your National Contact Point can contact you and offer you its free services, such as proposal checks or interview training.**



## ANNEXES TO SHORT PROPOSAL

Please upload the following mandatory documents.



### Video

- Describe your company and your project in a 3 minutes video with up to 3 team members. Show your motivation for this project and that you have the correct and dedicated team to take your solution to market. Highlight your expertise and show that you are passionate. The video should be easy to understand for everyone, not only experts. This is also a chance to show your innovation in action. If the video is in another language than English, please include subtitles.
- The video can also show your TRL in practice. Consider how to incorporate this into the video setting by demonstrating the prototype in action, the environment in which it operates, and the progress achieved so far.
- Bring a human element to your application, allowing evaluators to see the passion, vision, and personalities of the team behind the innovation.
- Communicate your ability to articulate your mission and engage stakeholders – key qualities of successful innovators and leaders.
- Clarify complex ideas through visuals or demonstrations, making your innovation more tangible and relatable.
- Help evaluators gauge your team's credibility and motivation, essential for assessing whether the company can deliver on its vision.

**Key Value:** It creates a personal connection and reinforces trust in your team and project.



### Pitch deck

- Make sure your pitch summarises your proposal, but more importantly, engage us with your story! Convey your message in a compelling manner and persuade us to support your innovative idea. (It should be provided in PDF and not exceed 10 pages) Be assured you will have the opportunity to upload the latest version of your pitch as part of the full proposal.
- Use graphics, visuals and images to tell your story efficiently. Have a clear message on every slide and avoid unnecessary details. Ensure that the pitch deck aligns with your proposal. You should include basic information about your financial projections. Remember that the step 1 pitch deck will only be read by evaluators, while the step 2 pitch deck is used during the interview stage.



- Offer a concise overview of the most critical aspects of your proposal, such as the problem you're solving, your unique solution, market opportunity, and your competitive edge.
- Help evaluators quickly grasp your value proposition, making it easier to compare your application against others.
- The visual format aids understanding, particularly for non-technical evaluators, and emphasizes the strengths of your project.
- Key Value: It facilitates quick comprehension and highlights the aspects of your project that make it stand out and ensures evaluators have all the necessary information to judge the feasibility, scalability, and impact of your project. Read this document for further guidance.

## Notes

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# Access2EIC

National Contact Points for Innovation

## Access2EIC

**ACCESS2EIC** is a 84-months coordination and support action aimed to empower and facilitate transnational cooperation within the network of National Contact Points - NCPs focused on the Horizon Europe European Innovation Council - EIC and the European Innovation Ecosystems - EIE. It involves a consortium made of formally appointed NCPs.

ACCESS2EIC comprise a network of 16 partners:

1. AGENZIA PER LA PROMOZIONE DELLA RICERCA EUROPEA (APRE), Italy
2. CENTRO PARA EL DESARROLLO TECNOLOGICO INDUSTRIAL (CDTI), Spain
3. OSTERREICHISCHE FORSCHUNGSFORDERUNGSGESELLSCHAFT MBH (FFG), Austria
4. INSTYTUT PODSTAWOWYCH PROBLEMOW TECHNIKI POLSKIEJ AKADEMII NAUK (IPPT PAN), Poland
5. NATIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AUTHORITY (IIA), Israel
6. DEUTSCHES ZENTRUM FUER LUFT - UND RAUMFAHRT EV (DLR), Germany
7. INNOVASJON NORGE (IN), Norway
8. BPIFRANCE FINANCEMENT SA (BPIFRANCE), France
9. IDRYMA TECHNOLOGIAS KAI EREVNAS (FORTH), Greece
10. ENTERPRISE IRELAND (EI), Ireland
11. ANI - AGENCIA NACIONAL DE INOVACAO, SA (ANI), Portugal
12. GIS-TRANSFERCENTER FOUNDATION (GIS-TC), Bulgaria
13. CENTRUM VEDECKO TECHNICKYCH INFORMACII SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY (CVTISR), Slovakia
14. NEMZETI KUTATASI FEJLESZTESI ES INNOVACIOS HIVATAL (NKFIH), Hungary
15. TECHNOLOGICKE CENTRUM AKADEMIE VED CESKE REPUBLIKY (TC CAS), Czechia
16. MINISTÈRE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR, DE LA RECHERCHE ET DE L'INNOVATION (MESRI), France

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