




STARTUP³

Annex 2: Guidelines for Applicants

February 2020



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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	
CVC	Corporate Venture Capital
KPA	Key Performance Area
MVP	Minimum Viable Product
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
VC	Venture Capital

1 Introduction

This document provides a full set of information regarding the Open Call for Proposals for the STARTUP3 Project. The Sub-Grantee Agreement model (Annex 4) must be additionally considered for the submission of a Proposal.

STARTUP3 will launch an Open Call aiming to support (in 3-stages) the most promising and near-to-market fast growing product concepts throughout the innovation cycle, in view of facilitating synergies with “market-makers”. The 3-stage growth support programme is a mixture of cross-sectoral/-border business and technology specialised services/activities with funding and access to network.

1.1 STARTUP3 Project Background Information

Deep-tech innovations are defined as disruptive solutions built around unique, protected or hard-to-reproduce technological or scientific advances. Deep-tech innovations lie at the crossroads of massive shifts in demand led by megatrends (such as global climate change, demographic shifts, resource scarcity, and an aging population) and scientific progress (such as the discovery of the CRISPR-Cas microbial adaptive immune system) and are impacting all industries.

In a survey conducted by Hello Tomorrow and BCG, and answered by more than 400 deep-tech startups, the challenges that respondents identified most frequently included lengthy time-to-market (27%), high capital intensity (25%), technology risk and complexity (17%), and yet-to-be-developed commercial applications (14%)² To address the challenges, deep-tech startups need go beyond funding (which 80% of the startups surveyed ranked among the top three challenges they faced) to such issues as market access (61%), technical expertise (39%), and business expertise (26%)

To access the resources that they don't have internally, startups rely on several stakeholders, each of which addresses specific needs. Such collaborations are especially important for deep tech since it lies at the crossroads of fundamental research and industrial application.

Universities, the public sector, business angels, and venture capitalists may have crucial roles to play in the development of deep-tech startups, **but corporates**—whether midsize, large, or enterprise-size companies— **are the only potential partners that can meet all of the startup's needs, combining technical, industrial, and commercial visions and skills.** That fact explains more than 95% of startups in the survey wish to develop a long-term partnership with a corporate, and 57% of them have successfully established one.

The first step is to define a clear mandate for collaborating with startups, which is in line with corporate strategy. This mandate focuses on venture objectives and R&D fields. In terms of STARTUP3, corporates need to communicate their needs and requirements, (Key Performance Areas - KPAs).

² <http://media-publications.bcg.com/from-tech-to-deep-tech.pdf>

It is our vision to build smart spaces ecosystem, a reef-like deep-tech hub-of-hubs that fosters deep tech startups/ SMEs to scale and capture new opportunities for funding and business expansion. As a first step, STARTUP 3 will scout for top founding teams to identify (uptake) breakthrough innovations from deep tech verticals (i.e. built on tangible scientific discoveries or engineering/ technical advances). Then STARTUP3 will help them fine tune (upgrade) their technologies/ business models and align their value proposition to the actual market demand (the so-called Key Performance Areas – KPAs). Finally, STARTUP3 will bring together top deep tech startups/SMEs and the most prominent corporate innovators – CVC arms, incubators and accelerators, and innovation labs (facilitated by clusters and digital innovations hubs – DIHs) with the aim of catalysing productive interaction (upscale). This catalysation is rooted towards networking of deep-tech focused players (collaborative ecosystems and open innovation), raising understanding of the benefits of head spinning deep-tech innovation, smart take off and soft-landing support. STARTUP3 will support innovators (deep tech startups/ SMEs) all the way from product-market-fit to a healthy, sustainable business, offering them tailored business and technical support as well as access to capital and markets through a novel business and growth programme. As such, the project will directly support high potential deep tech innovators to achieve market success on a pan-European and international level.

Through an open/collaborative hub-of-hubs, STARTUP3 will create a pan-European startup/corporate matching platform where high potential innovators (startups, SMEs from deep tech verticals- ‘innovation suppliers’) are challenged by Corporates (‘market makers’) to fine-tune their deep-tech innovative and disruptive solutions to meet an actual market need.

Throughout the project, we will unlock the innovation potential within deep-tech-focused startups/SMEs and uncover opportunities to build relationships and partnerships across the corporate landscape. To bridge the best of two worlds, STARTUP3 will provide access to a personalised business and growth program that includes: immersion into thriving deep-tech scenes across Europe and internationally, technical & business mentors, scale up supporting activities, access to funding opportunities and exposure to global markets.

STARTUP3 will launch an Open Call aiming to support (in 3-stages) the most promising and near-to market fast growing product concepts throughout the innovation cycle, in view of facilitating synergies with “market-makers”. The 3-stage growth support programme is a mixture of cross-sectoral/-border business and technology specialised services/activities with funding and access to network.

1.2 STARTUP3 Project Approach

STARTUP3 is unique because it i) helps deep-tech startups/SMEs from smaller, less mature ecosystems to co-create strategic growth opportunities across more mature markets (STARTUP3 Discovery Missions), ii) builds bridges between deep-tech innovators and top-tier corporates, VCs and private equity firms for synergy, industry guidance/support, funding, and the likes (STARTUP3 Innovation Hub) iii) offers unique technology support, community, and go-to-market benefits to help them grow.

In order to navigate investment risks and opportunities in the high-risk, high-reward deep-tech sector, European SMEs need simultaneous access to market and technical & industrial expertise and

capability unique to deep-tech commercialisation. STARTUP3 aims to offer exactly this type of access to startups/SMEs by harnessing the potential of ‘corporate open innovation’ and through a systemic approach geared towards viable commercialisation of high-potential deep-tech products and services.

In our overall concept, the following main dimensions play a major role (see Figure 1):

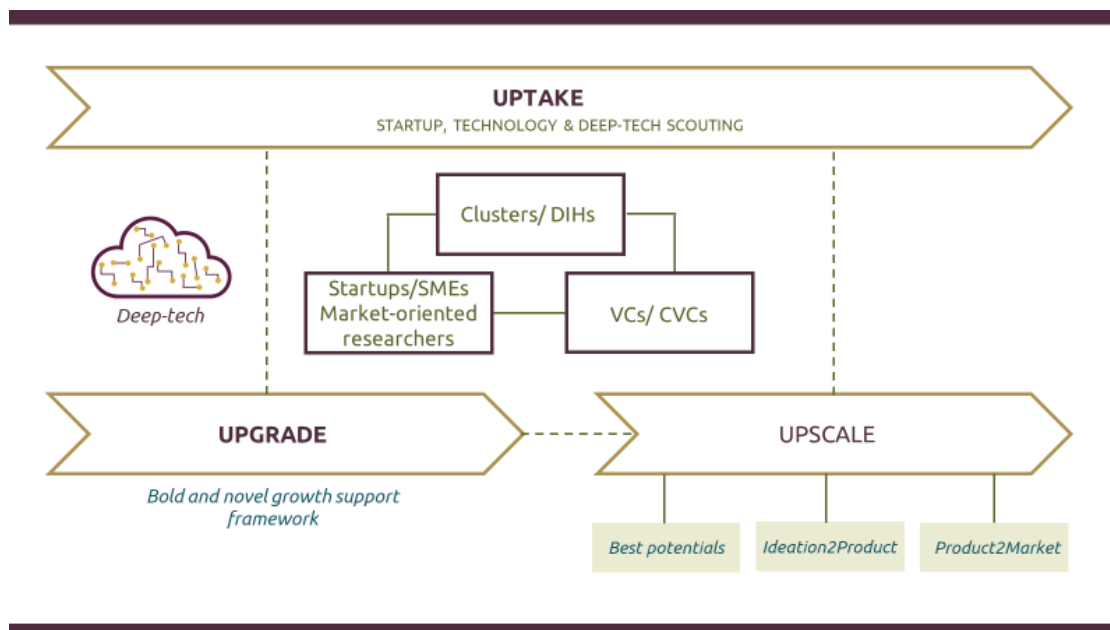


Figure 1: STARTUP3 Overall Concept

- I. **UPTAKE** is about finding and engaging innovation, i.e. high-potential startups/SMEs from deep-tech fields; through our ‘hub of hubs’ we leverage cluster/DIH-built synergies to foster the sharing of obstacles and best practices in startup-corporate collaboration and exchange of knowledge on ecosystem specific conditions/challenges (via Ecosystem Discovery Missions);
- II. **UPGRADE** here we unveil a dedicated growth support framework called ‘Ideation2Market’; the goal is to fine-tune and polish innovations with excellent growth potential and make them more attractive for commercialization in Europe and beyond;
- III. **UPSCALE** is designed to bring growth-stage startups/SMEs right into the VCs/CVCs community to showcase/ pilot their products, get feedback and gain access to capital, new customers and future partners; with the common goal being to enhance deep-tech innovators’ access to real market demands and providing them with an opportunity refine their products accordingly.

STARTUP3 will allow innovative deep-tech startups and scaleups to explore different incentives, tools/platforms and resources along its intensive growth support programme. The underlying aim is to facilitate deeper understanding of the latest trends and dynamics behind deep-tech commercialisation, and how startups and corporates can (soft) land successful business partnerships.

Along the UPSCALE Pillar, we leverage the community built in the UPTAKE Stage and launch an open call through which startups/SMEs are selected to go through the Ideation2Market programme exploiting all the services prepared/fine-tuned under the UPGRADE Pillar. We have designed the UPSCALE pillar keeping in mind that the key roadblocks for deep-tech startups/SMEs are the lack of funding, market access and business knowledge. We offer a full suite of services where participants can benefit and understand their potential early enough to make any necessary adjustments or pivots.

For the successful Innovators, STARTUP3 offers the three-stage growth support programme described in the table below. Clearly, we begin from measuring the disruption potential, proceed with MVP development/optimisation and finally with market penetration, i.e. piloting.

Stage	Overview
Stage 1. Best Potentials	This the first stage following the peer-to-peer evaluation process. It is expected that around 25 projects will enter this stage. The goal here is to significantly increase the disruption potential. Along this phase, we will support innovators to challenge their concepts and ideas, identify market problems, estimate the MVP and overall product effort, and to identify their competitors from the deep-tech sphere. Clearly, all input/feedback gathered will be used to feed the 360° Strengths and Weaknesses Radar. At the end of this phase, we will organise Cluster-Corporate Assembly; based on the tangible scores from the Radar, the Assembly will identify Best Potentials for the participation in the Ideation2Product Stage (10 SMEs).
Stage 2. Mentoring – Ideation2Product	For the proper execution of the Ideation2Product stage, an MVP (Minimum Viable Product) needs to be built and tested; this MVP will be launched together with a digital marketing plan aimed at measuring traction. Teams will be prepared to enter the last stage – Product2Market by submitting a valid and strong Executive Summary and through soft skills necessary for a successful business meeting. After this phase, another Cluster-Corporate Assembly will be organised; the projects holding a major market potential – again, according to tangible scores, will be invited to enter the last stage of the funnel.
Stage 3. Product2Market	3-5 SMEs with a solid MVP and market potential will enter the final stage. This stage is dedicated to building solid partnerships and detecting real investment opportunities for the top projects in the STARTUP3 business and growth program. They will have access to targeted investors, clients, corporate partners and international accelerator representatives. Participation in major events (cluster or sector oriented; startups) for promotion will be a must. The projects will be encouraged to gain enough traction for next investment phase in terms of sales, prospects, users, markets and customers.

The selection will follow a funnel approach; this is to help the STARTUP3 consortium to focus on the top performing projects along the business and growth program. At first, the selected 25 (expected) startups/SMEs are challenged to increase their disruption potential and convert it into value. Their performance is assessed by the Clusters-Innovators Assembly – at the end of the Best Potentials phase. These are filtered and Top-10 move on to the Ideation2Product phase where they receive all technical and business support. In the end, they end up with a validated prototype and a business plan which are used to evaluate/select the Top 3-5 applications to support towards Product2Market phase.

The overall process is shown below (Figure 2).

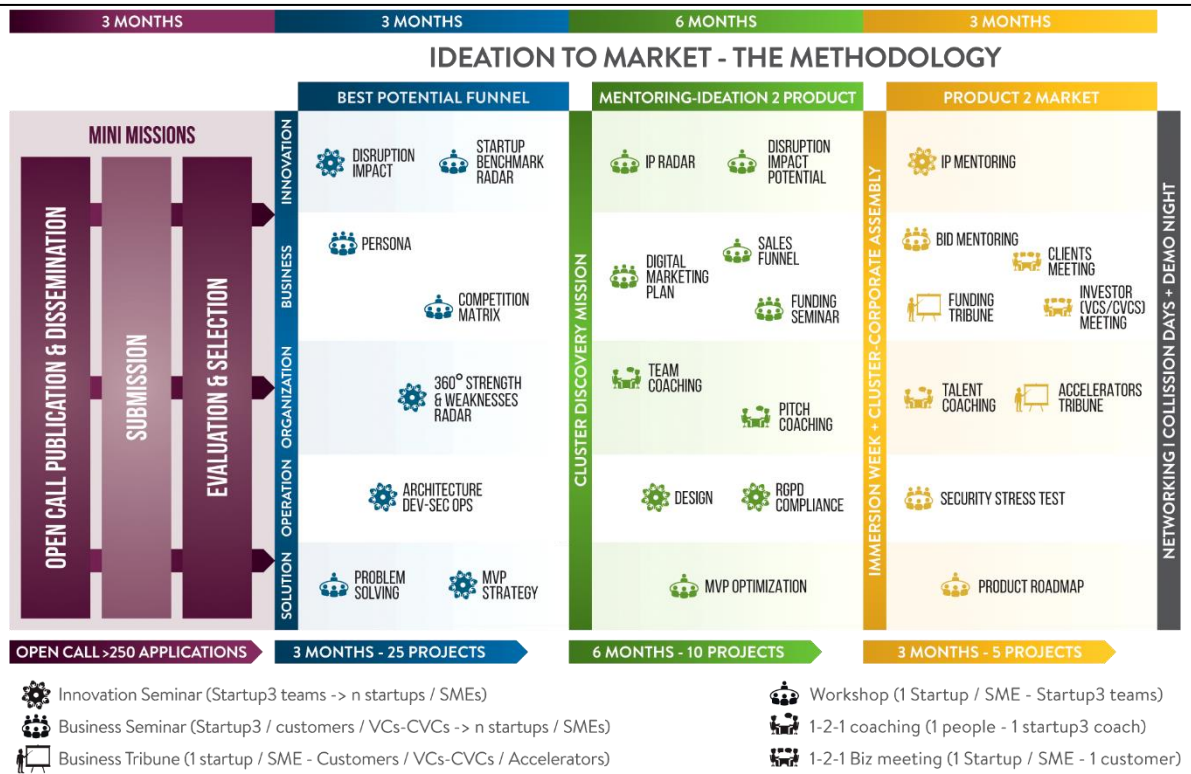


Figure 2: STARTUP3 Timeline

It is worth stressing that STARTUP3 relies on the 360° Strengths and Weaknesses Radar assessment of the SMEs/innovators to enter the three-phase programme and for passing from the ‘Best Potentials’ to ‘Ideation2Product’ to ‘Product2Market’ phases towards ensuring not only fair and transparent but also market-driven evaluation.

2 General Information

2.1 Important Dates

- **February 20th, 2020:** Launch of STARTUP3 Open Call.
- **April 20th, 2020 at 17:00 CET** (Central European Time – Brussels Time): Submission deadline for Open Call.

Any proposal submitted after **April 20th, 2020 at 17:00 CET** will be automatically rejected from the Call.

2.2 Means of Submission

STARTUP3 Evaluation Platform – <https://evaluation.startup3.eu/> – a software platform intended to enable pitches submission and evaluation performed by the teams/applicants – will be the entry point for all proposals/pitches in the Open Call.

Documents required in subsequent phases will be submitted via dedicated channel, which will be indicated by STARTUP3 Consortium during the project's execution.

2.2.1 Documentation Formats

Any document requested in any of the phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format – in case if not requested differently – without restrictions for printing.

2.3 Language

English is the official language of the STARTUP3 Open Calls. **Submissions done in any other language will not be evaluated.** English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the STARTUP3 programme. This means any requested submission of deliverable will be done in English in order to be eligible.

2.4 Application Type

Each applicant can submit only one application in the form of a up-to 2-minute video pitch. The video must be submitted electronically in a format of a valid YouTube link (**public or unlisted**) for video without restrictions for reviewing. In addition to this, **embedding** to external sites must be allowed. The video should be a presentation of the applicants' **competencies** – such as previous experience and current activities, their **understanding of the dynamics across verticals and markets** and their **vision for new products/services and collaborative business models** to be developed. Please bear in mind that it is in the applicants' interest that the videos are of high quality, **minimum required resolution is VGA video quality (640x480). Total video duration cannot exceed 2 minutes.**

2.5 Legal Issues

As it will be defined in the Contract template, this relation between the beneficiaries and the European Commission through the STARTUP3 Project carries a set of obligations to the sub-projects with the EC. In addition, in the contract beneficiaries' obligations will be defined, such as attending events organised by STARTUP3, active participation, etc.

In case any of the STARTUP3 Open Call beneficiaries use STARTUP3 Social Media channels, STARTUP3 Evaluation platform or other means provided to STARTUP3 beneficiaries by STARTUP3 Project, to intentionally damage the STARTUP3 Project reputation or for other reasons not related to STARTUP3 project, STARTUP3 Project Consortium reserves the right to exclude this Open Call beneficiary and to protect its legitimate interest through legal actions.

2.6 Number of Applications per Applicant

Each Applicant may submit only one (1) proposal at STARTUP3 Open Call. Multiple submissions per Call is a disqualify factor. In case an Applicant submits more than one proposal within the Open Call, all proposals that they have submitted will be automatically excluded from entering the evaluation process.

3 Applicants Eligibility Criteria

- The eligible applicants for STARTUP3 Open Call have to:
- Hold one of the following legal statuses:
 - a Company that complies with the Commission Recommendation for Small OR Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) 2003/361/EC³ (see section 3.1.1);
 - a Single entrepreneur
 - a Natural person who will, at the time of signing the contract, be registered as a single entrepreneur or company that complies with the Commission Recommendation for Small OR Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) 2003/361/EC⁴ (see section 3.1)
- be located in an eligible country (see section 3.3);
- Innovate deep-tech solutions applied across all industry sectors.

Important notice 1: Selected beneficiaries for the STARTUP3 Business and Growth Programme will have to prove their registration as a legal entity in order to sign the Contract and enter the Stage 1. Natural persons are eligible only in the application phase. When entering the Stage 1 of STARTUP3, natural persons will have to be registered as a single entrepreneur or company. During the contracting phase, the documents proving the legal status will be requested – Legal existence documents such as a Company Register, Official Gazette or other official document per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and a copy of a Tax Identification Number or a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).

3.1 Definition of SMEs

An SME will be considered as such if complying with the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC⁵ and the SME user guide⁶. As a summary, the criteria that define an SME are:

- Independent, partner or linked enterprises, with financial and staff figures calculated in accordance with instructions given by Recommendation 2003/361/EC to fulfil SMEs criterion.
- Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250.
- Annual turnover less or equal to 50 million € OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to 43 million €.

3.2 SME Eligibility Criteria

An SME is considered eligible for STARTUP3 Open Call if it complies with ALL the following rules:

- i. It is a legal entity established and based in one of the EU Member States or an H2020 Associated country as defined in H2020 rules for participation⁶:

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:en:PDF>

⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:en:PDF>

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/conferences/state-aid/sme/smedefinitionguide_en.pdf

⁶ Association to Horizon 2020 is governed by Article 7 of the Horizon 2020 Regulation. The list of associated countries is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cp/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf

- ii. Start-ups that do not have yet annual turnover or balance sheets are also considered eligible given that they fulfil the criteria (a) and (b) of section §3.1 at submission time.
- iii. In case an SME is awarded a sub-project, it will remain eligible even if, at a certain point during the sub-project execution, it does not fulfil criteria (b) or (c) of section 3.1.
- iv. Perform the compulsory evaluation of other applications within the defined time slots (after April 24th and before)

Please note that a signed version of **Annex 3: Honour Declaration** and **Annex 4: Open Call Beneficiary Agreement** are mandatory for a proposal submission.

3.3 Eligible countries

- Participants, either SMEs, Start-ups established in the following countries and territories or natural persons that are residents of the following countries will be eligible to receive funding through Horizon 2020 grants:
 - a. **The Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions;**
 - b. **The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to the Member States:** Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, French Polynesia, French Southern and Antarctic Territories, Greenland, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles (Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten), New Caledonia and Dependencies, Pitcairn, Saint Barthélemy, Saint Helena, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Wallis and Futuna Islands.
 - c. **The H2020 associated countries (AC):** Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia and Armenia.

4 STARTUP3 Open Call

Submission to the Open Call will be enabled on the **20th of February 2020** and will end on the **20th of April 2020** at 17:00 CET (Brussels Time).

4.1 Open Call Additional Material

Open Call supported material:

- **Annex 1: Open Call Text**, which provides a full set of information regarding the Open Call for Proposals for the STARTUP3 Project,
- **Annex 2: Guidelines for Applicants**, this document,
- **Annex 2.1: Data Privacy Policy and GDPR Compliance**, describes the personal data collected or processed when using STARTUP3 website and Evaluation Platform. It also explains how personal data is used, shared and protected,
- **Annex 3: Honour Declaration**, which declares that all conditions of the Open Call are accepted by an Innovator legal representative and
- **Annex 4: Open Call Beneficiary Agreement Template**, which provides a template of the sub-grant agreement that the successful applicants will be requested to sign.

4.2 Open Call Submission and Evaluation Process

4.2.1 Open Call Publication

STARTUP3 Open Call will be launched on February 20th, 2020 and will be supported by:

- Guide for Applicants, this document as the main source of information
- Declaration of Honour on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest
- Data Privacy Policy

Please, download the relevant files and read them carefully before you submit your application video.

4.2.2 Applicants Registration

Interested applicants should register at the STARTUP3 Evaluation Platform – <https://evaluation.startup3.eu/apply> – a software platform that enables video submission and evaluation performed by the teams/applicants. The platform will be the entry point for all pitch videos in the Open Call.

4.2.3 Application Process

All applicants should prepare a short video with duration of **maximum 2 minutes**. For Open Call it is not requested to apply with a concrete idea, the applicants rather have to present their **skills and competencies**, their **understanding** of the dynamics across verticals and markets, and their **vision for new products/services** and collaborative business models to be developed. The more concrete these applications are, the easier will it be for the fellow applicants to evaluate the entity.

Important notice 2: Inappropriate submissions or submissions in any language other than English will be automatically rejected. In case of technical issues e.g. invalid or private video links, the applicants will receive notification to adjust the error **before the submission deadline with no time extensions**.

4.2.4 Evaluation Criteria and Process

STARTUP3 Project proposes an innovative and agile evaluation method for its Open Call that is tailor-made to the needs of SMEs. The method has already been successfully applied and has now been upgraded for the purpose of STARTUP3. The Project brings the platform-based evaluation system for its Open Call that includes **Peer-to-Peer (p2p) Evaluation**, where applicants evaluate other teams and their applications. The novelty of this system is that the Applicant and the Evaluator roles are shared by the same set of people. Namely, the Applicants are at the same time Evaluators for other applications at the same Call. The ranking algorithm considers not only the evaluations received by the others, but the competence in evaluating other applicants as well, because it is not only the application, but much more **the competencies of the applicants that guarantee future success on the market**. This will allow STARTUP3 to offer its Stage 1 supporting services to the most promising teams, i.e. the teams that market players themselves define as the ones with the most potential for future commercialization.

Important notice 3: Within the **peer-to-peer evaluation** method, there is a specific mechanism in the algorithm that prevents skewed evaluation. Applicants will rank other applicants by being presented two of them. They will have to state which of the two they find better, but they will not give marks that could result in skewed results. Additionally, applicants will be evaluated on the quality of their ranking in relation to other applicants. According to that, if they try to skew the evaluation by ranking good applications worse than bad ones, they will be downgraded by the algorithm automatically.

This evaluation methodology is based on the platforms and algorithms that have proved as very reliable, bias-free and agile tools for the evaluation of applications submitted by SMEs at open calls. The algorithm used has an objective to form a ranking according to different criteria. In order to suppress deliberate distortions in the evaluation process intended to boost one's own application, two rankings are produced: one of the applications and the other of the applicants/evaluators and their expertise. The final ranking is a linear combination of the two.

In the case of STARTUP3, the evaluation of the applications will be based upon three concrete criteria. All of them will be weighted as follows:

#	Criterion	Weight
1	Previous experience and current activities	18.997%
2	Perception of the developments across verticals and markets	38.0003%
3	Ideas for new value creation and collaborative business models	43.0027%

Table 1: STARTUP3 Evaluation Criteria

Each self-evaluator (SE) is given to compare two applications (A and B) (preferably not from its country), chosen by algorithm. Each SE has to visualise the two videos and then according to the three criteria described previously, has to compare them "I prefer A" or "I prefer B". The comparison process is repeated 6 to 10 times.

The number of evaluation comparisons required by each team depends on the total number of applications but is not expected to exceed 6. Consider that the required time for one evaluation to be made is not more than 10 minutes per evaluation, so that the total time allocated to the evaluation procedure at this stage should not exceed 17 hours in total dispersed through one month.

Important notice 4: The Applicants to STARTUP3 accept that their applications processes will include evaluating other applications competing for the same business growth programme. To provide the evaluations, the applicants agree to receive other applicants' video presentations, to watch them carefully, and to submit their feedback according to the instructions that will be provided by STARTUP3

management team. **By entering the process, applicants also understand and accept that failing to provide their evaluations of other applications within the deadline set by the project management team, will automatically exclude their application from the STARTUP3 Project.** The evaluation process will start on April 24th 2020, lasting for approximately one month, while the amount of evaluations expected to be performed by the applicants will depend on total amount of applications received in the project.

Important notice 5: It is the **applicants' sole responsibility to check the e-mail regularly and thoroughly** (to include all possible sub-inboxes such as promotions, social, spam, etc.), and to make sure that the firewalls, anti-spam filters and the mail servers on the mail recipient side (or by the recipient's internet service provider and/or mail server hosting provider) are configured properly, so that the e-mail messages received either from STARTUP3 team members or the auto-generated messages sent by the software platform are not blocked, deleted or bounced.

In addition to the auto-generated email reminders and the personalised email messages sent by STARTUP3 team, if necessary, the STARTUP3 team may undertake reasonable efforts to contact the applicants via WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram or Signal messages, if they consider this necessary, providing that the applicants can be easily found on these platforms, and that they are available online. The applicants will never be contacted via SMS messages. The applicants are aware that getting in touch with them using the **instant messaging platforms will be considered only as an act of good will** (it is not an obligation of any kind). By applying to STARTUP3 Open Call, applicants automatically agree to the rules set above. This by no means implies commitment of STARTUP3 team to individually send reminders to each applicant via WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram or Signal messages. This also doesn't release applicants from their obligation to check their emails regularly.

4.2.5 Entering Stage 1: Best Potentials

Award criteria will be based on the ranking list as a result of the p2p community evaluation. The first best 25 projects on the ranking lists will be awarded, **meaning they will enter the STARTUP3 Stage 1 – BEST POTENTIAL.**

In addition, 5 others will remain in a reserve list, in case a selected proposal fails to enter the Best Potential Stage.

The 25 awarded startups/SMEs will engage in the three phase's funnel. The objective is to improve their project and gain access to the next phases. When entering the funnel, the projects are now evaluated by professionals: Innovators, entrepreneurs, potential clients, partners and investors. At the end of the process, the founders get the opportunity to enter discussions with those corporates and investors to engage them in contracts and funding deals with the support of their mentors.

When entering the Stage 1, the 25 selected startups initiate their context on the **FOUNDER STUDIO** online platform in order to manage and improve their project. As soon as they are selected, the project holder is granted to initiate his account. An online tutorial assists the team to get familiar with the environment and interfaces.

4.2.5.1 Fonders Studio

FOUNDER STUDIO is the digital representation of the "Ideation2Sales" methodology. It is a digital dedicated **platform containing added value contents** that facilitate the startups project management. The dashboard illustrates all the specific key indicators, which are necessary to have an overview of the startup and make it easy to evaluate its potential through several aspects and points of view. All

the granted Innovation & Business ecosystem such as Mentors, BAs, VCs, CVCs, Customers, Support Orgs, Clusters, Corporates and Talents get access to the projects.

FOUNDER STUDIO rely on a step-by-step process that helps the project holder to populate and refine all the essential contents thru basic topic oriented questions. By doing so, it progressively puts lights on strengths and weaknesses that the team have to work on and to optimize.

Along the different phases and events, each team is invited to improve its file using the benefit of the seminars, workshops, coaching and mentoring that the STARTUP3 teams deliver. The founders continuously publish the platform with their improved contents taking profit from what they have learned in each domain. It enables them to reinforce their video pitch and investor-deck.

As it is designed for online interactions, the solution is perfectly adapted for a pan European project were actors can collaborate anytime, from anywhere.

Along each phase, dedicated **actors from different colleges** are asked to give mentoring, advices and intermediate valuations on different domains. Those domains are the pillars of any tech-venture.

The Domains are:

- Problem solving
- Innovation
- Organization
- Operations
- Business

The different colleges are:

- STARTUP3 teams composed by clusters and innovators representatives
- Mentors and Experts
- Investor's representatives – Bas, VCs, CVCs, Public Investor organization
- Corporates' innovation representatives
- Public (any people with a valid account on the platform).

4.2.6 Redress Procedure

All the applicants will receive an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR).

The evaluation results will be final. Due to the nature of the evaluation process, no redress procedure is foreseen. By submitting their application for the Open Call, applicants accept these conditions.

4.3 Sub-project Execution

4.3.1 Obligatory Activities

Selected beneficiaries are obligated to take part in the events organised by STARTUP3 Accelerator, either onsite or online, to actively participate and connect with other STARTUP3 beneficiaries and stakeholders.

4.3 Stage 2: Mentoring-Ideation2Product – Evaluation Criteria and Process

The selection of the projects from Stage 1 to Stage 2, were **10 out of 25 candidates are selected** rely on scores given by the different Stakeholder members as professional judges.

The scores scale is: NO SCORE or a 0 to 10 integer value.

The authorized judges set their personal scores for each topic according to the FOUNDER STUDIO Dashboard and the two main deliverables that are regularly improved and always available on the platform:

- 5 minutes (max) video pitch with more in depth analysis than the one of the Stage 1.
- Pitch deck (PPT/PDF)

The startups will have to provide data on the FOUNDER STUDIO Dashboard on five major categories as reported in the Table 2: Detailed Evaluation Criteria for SMEs selection that follows, along with the 5-min video pitch and their pitch deck. All data collected will be available to the stakeholders (large corporates, venture capital, etc.) registered in the platform.

The judges can set and adjust their scores along the process, as long as the rating window is open, according to each new inputs applied by the candidates onto the platform. More than a score, the colleges' members also act as mentors and may add some recommendations to help the candidates in understanding the score and to improve its content.

Afterwards, the judges will evaluate the startups in which they are interested to co-operate or fund based on the same criteria, emphasising on the startups they match their needs. In case a startup does not match the needs of a stakeholder, the stakeholder will not be obliged to evaluate this startup.

Each phase rely on appropriate rules to take into account the maturity of the project and the profile of the judges. Those criteria are materialised by specific weights depending on three factors: The phase, the topic and the profile of the valuator.

The FOUNDER STUDIO algorithm makes calculations using the scores and the dedicated weights in order to produce an average value and to create a ranking list. **The 10 best ranked projects are selected.**

At the end of the needs-matching process, the average of the total scores will be computed by the platform. The 10 best-performing startups with the major interest of the stakeholders will be selected. Based on the scores shown in the Table 3: Detailed Evaluation Criteria of Stakeholders for needs-matching.

In case of a selected project doesn't want to enter the next phase, then the next ranked project become eligible.

4.3.1 Stage 2 – Important Dates

Start of Stage 2: June 1st, 2020

End of Stage 2: September 10th, 2020

End of rating window for Stage 2: August 31st, 2020

Table 2: Detailed Evaluation Criteria for SMEs Selection

Category	Key Performance Areas	Description
IDEA/CONCEPT	Idea and Concept Value Proposition Market Environment	<p>The main purpose is the evaluation of the IDEA/CONCEPT, based on criteria such as the problem identification and its importance, frequency, and the capacity of the solution to solve the problem.</p> <p>The evaluation is mainly based on the declaration filled onto the platform adjusted by the perception and experience of the judge. The scale goes between 0 and 10.</p>
INNOVATION	Technology Area Innovation Management Security	<p>The main purpose is the evaluation of the INNOVATION, with five criteria on the nature of innovation (Technology; Society; Reglementation; Organization) the impact and maturity of the innovation, the level of mastery of the innovation, its disruption nature and intensity.</p> <p>The evaluation is mainly based on the declaration filled onto the platform adjusted by the perception and experience of the judge. The scale goes between 0 and 10".</p>
BUSINESS MODEL /PRODUCT	Competition Productivity Process improvement and Quality	<p>The main purpose is the evaluation of the BUSINESS MODEL/PRODUCT Domain relies mainly on four criteria.</p> <p>The Company productivity, the Product, the Competition and the Production</p> <p>The evaluation is mainly based on the declaration filled onto the platform adjusted by the perception and experience of the judge. The scale goes between 0 and 10".</p>
MARKET ACCESS	Financials Cost Efficiency Market Perception Market/Customer Satisfaction Strategy/Business model	<p>The main purpose is the evaluation of the MARKET ACCESS Domain relies mainly on three criteria.</p> <p>Business model, Traction and Development stage of the business</p> <p>The evaluation is mainly based on the declaration filled onto the platform adjusted by the perception and experience of the judge. The scale goes between 0 and 10".</p>
TEAM /TALENT	Management team quality Expertize/Experience Resource Utilization	<p>The main purpose is the evaluation of the TEAM / TALENT Domain relies mainly on five criteria.</p> <p>Members characteristics, their Experience, the Team, any Advisors and Professional Investors</p> <p>The evaluation is mainly based on the declaration filled onto the platform adjusted by the perception and experience of the judge. The scale goes between 0 and 10".</p>

Table 3: Detailed Evaluation Criteria of Stakeholders for needs-matching for Stage 2

Stage 2: Ideation2Product	
DOMAIN	WEIGHT
PROBLEM SOLVING	5
INNOVATION	5
OPERATIONS	3
BUSINESS	4
ORGANISATION	2
STAKEHOLDERS	WEIGHT
STARTUP3 ORGANISATION TEAM	3
EXPERTS & MENTORS	3
INVESTORS	5
CORPORATES	5
PUBLIC	1

4.4 Stage 3: Product2Market – Evaluation Criteria and Process

The selection of the projects from Stage 2 to Stage 3, were **5 out of 10 candidates are selected** rely on scores given by the different colleges' members as professional judges. The process is equivalent as the Stage 2 unless the weights.

The scores scale is: NO SCORE or a 0 to 10 integer value.

The authorised judges set their personal scores for each topic according to the FOUNDER STUDIO Dashboard and the two main deliverables that are regularly improved and always available on the platform:

- 5 minutes (max) video pitch with more in depth analysis than the one of the Stage 2.
- Pitch deck (PPT/PDF)

The FOUNDER STUDIO algorithm makes calculations using the scores and the dedicated weights in order to produce an average value and to create a ranking list. **The 5 best ranked projects are selected.**

In case of a selected project doesn't want to enter the final phase, then the next ranked project become eligible.

4.4.1 Stage 3 – Important Dates

Start of Stage 3: September 11th, 2020

End of Stage 3: February 29th, 2021

End of rating window for Stage 3: February 15th, 2020

Table 4: Detailed Evaluation Criteria of Stakeholders for needs-matching for Stage 3

Stage 3: Product2Market	
DOMAIN	WEIGHT
PROBLEM SOLVING	5
INNOVATION	5
OPERATIONS	5
BUSINESS	5
ORGANISATION	5
STAKEHOLDERS	
WEIGHT	
STARTUP3 ORGANISATION TEAMS	2
EXPERTS & MENTORS	3
INVESTORS	5
CORPORATES	5
PUBLIC	1

4.5 Selection Process: Rules Of The Game At A Glance

RULE #1: The valuation rates on each topic varies from NO SCORE or 0 to 10 – no decimal.

RULE #2: Investors and Corporates get more and more involved in the projects at each Stage. Even they are less concentrated in the first selection Stage than the next ones, it is important to consider their valuation with a biggest weight because it is corresponding to a potential deal. Keeping in mind that it is the main objective of the programme.

RULE #3: In addition, the programme gets more attention to some topics during each Stage. For instance, STARTUP3 programme is considering that the Problem Solving and Innovation domains are key during the Stage 1, then Operations and Business that are of biggest interests during the Stage 2. In the same manner, Organisation become crucial during Stage 3. For that reasons, the algorithm takes special weights into account depending on the topics and the Stages.

RULE #4: The valuation do not have to be a major constraint for some college as it represents a huge work. The approach is to make the valuation process optional and mandatory depending on the profile of the valuator. Investors and corporates make valuation only on those for which they are interested in, according to their core businesses.

RULE #5: STARTUP3 teams make valuation on all the startups.

RULE #6: The weights vary from 1 to 5 for each domain.

RULE #7: The weights vary from 1 to 5 for each college.

RULE #8: The rating windows are open from day one of each Stage and up to two weeks before the selection event.

5 Responsibilities of Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the Open Call have obligations towards European Commission. They are responsible to ensure that the recipients comply with obligations under H2020 specific requirements as described in Horizon 2020 - the Framework Program for Research and Innovation (2014-2020). The obligations that are applicable to the recipients include:

5.1 Conflict of Interest

The 3rd parties (Open Call participants) must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the sub-project is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

They must formally notify to the Commission (via the STARTUP3 Coordinator) without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The STARTUP3 Coordinator may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

If the Open Call participants breaches any of its obligations, the Contract may be automatically terminated.

5.2 Maintaining Confidentiality and Traceability

During implementation of the sub-project and for five years after the end of the sub-project, the parties must keep confidential any data, documents or other material (in any form) that is identified as confidential at Contract signing time ('confidential information'). Beneficiaries are in charge of the management of personal data they collected during the project.

If a 3rd party requests, the Commission and the STARTUP3 consortium may agree to keep such information confidential for an additional period. This will be explicitly stated at the Contract.

If information has been identified as confidential during the sub-project execution or only orally, it will be considered as confidential only if this is accepted by the STARTUP3 coordinator and confirmed in writing within 15 days of the oral disclosure. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use confidential information only to implement the Agreement.

All parties are obliged to keep record of their activities for five years after the end of the project.

5.3 Promoting the Action and Giving Visibility to the EU Funding

The 3rd parties must promote the sub-project, STARTUP3 project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to highlight the financial support of the EC.

Unless the European Commission or the STARTUP3 coordinator requests or agrees otherwise or unless it is impossible, any communication activity related to the action (including in electronic form, via social media, etc.), any publicity, including at a conference or seminar or any type of information or promotional material (brochure, leaflet, poster, presentation etc.), and any infrastructure, equipment and major results funded by the grant must:

- display the EU emblem

- display the STARTUP3 logo and
- include the following text:

For communication activities: “This project has indirectly received support from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program, via an Open Call issued and executed under project STARTUP3 (grant agreement No 871709)”.

When displayed in association with a logo, the European emblem should be given appropriate prominence. This obligation to use the European emblem in respect of projects to which the EC contributes implies no right of exclusive use. It is subject to general third-party use restrictions which do not permit the appropriation of the emblem, or of any similar trademark or logo, whether by registration or by any other means. Under these conditions, the Beneficiary is exempted from the obligation to obtain prior permission from the EC to use the emblem. Further detailed information on the EU emblem can be found on the Europa web page.

Any publicity made by the Beneficiary in respect of the project, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, must specify that it reflects only the author’s views and that the EC or STARTUP3 project is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

The EC and the STARTUP3 consortium shall be authorised to publish, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, the following information:

- the name of the sub-project coordinator and all consortium members
- contact address of the sub-project coordinator and all consortium members
- the general purpose of the project
- the geographic location of the activities carried out;
- the list of dissemination activities and/or of patent (applications) relating to foreground;
- the details/references and the abstracts of scientific publications relating to foreground and, if funded within the sub-project, the published version or the final manuscript accepted for publication;
- the publishable reports submitted to STARTUP3;
- any picture or any audiovisual or web material provided to the EC and STARTUP3 in the framework of the project.

The Beneficiary shall ensure that all necessary authorisations for such publication have been obtained and that the publication of the information by the EC and STARTUP3 does not infringe any rights of third parties.

Upon a duly substantiated request by the Beneficiary, the STARTUP3 consortium, if such permission is provided by the EC, may agree to forego such publicity if disclosure of the information indicated above would risk compromising the beneficiary’s security, academic or commercial interests.

6 Checklist

- **Does your planned work fit with the call for proposals?**
- **Does your proposal address requested topics – deep-tech innovative idea?** Check that your proposed work does indeed address requested topics.
- **Is your proposal eligible?** The eligibility criteria are given in chapter 3.1. Make sure that you satisfy the minimum participation requirements.
- **Have you submitted your pitch before the deadline?** It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the pitch. Failure of the application to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the message as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.
- **Open Call – Have you checked that the link for your pitch is valid?** The pitch must be submitted electronically in a format of a valid YouTube link for video without restrictions for reviewing and with minimum required resolution of VGA video quality (640x480).
- **Has the legal representative signed the Declaration of Honor** on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest?
- **Have you virus-checked your computer?** Any file containing a virus will be automatically blocked.
- **Entering the Programme – Have you maximised your chances?** There will be strong competition. Therefore, edit your pitch tightly, strengthen or eliminate weak points.

7 Contacts

The STARTUP3 Consortium will provide information to the applicants **only via the official STARTUP3 Support email address – support@startup3.eu** or queries asked via the STARTUP3 Website Contact Form – <https://startup3.eu/contact/>.

If you have comments or questions, any concerns or a complaint regarding the collection and use of your personal data, please feel free to contact the STARTUP3 Project by sending an email to STARTUP3 Support, as well.

Furthermore, no binding information will be provided via any other means (e.g. telephone).

Contact List & Links Summary	
Project Website	https://startup3.eu/
Application & Evaluation Platform	https://evaluation.startup3.eu/
STARTUP3 Support	support@startup3.eu
STARTUP3 Website Contact Form	https://startup3.eu/contact/
Online Q&A	https://startup3.eu/FAQ