

EIT Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership Program Startup Stairway – Call for students and recent graduates

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1. General information about the program

The EIT was set up to power Europe's ability to innovate, to tackle major societal challenges with world-class solutions, create jobs and increase competitiveness. We will only achieve our mission if we mobilize women and men equally. Not only because it reflects the EU's core values - ensuring equality between women and men, but also because it delivers more ideas as women have different backgrounds, needs and experiences which bring new perspectives. Technology is changing the way we live, and we need our whole population engaged and contributing.

Women-led startups amount to 30% at best within EU countries, their presence is lower in deep-tech startups, and it can be considered rare in certain economic sectors, such as manufacturing industries. Also, it is known that start-up experience as employee is a trigger to start-up creation. It is important to promote entrepreneurship and startup founding as a career path for women and not only the traditional and safe professional opportunities. Moreover, nowadays women presence across professional roles is unbalanced. Specially, they are under-represented in STEAM roles and historically predominant in, for example, marketing or office administration. The Startup Stairway will identify startups and scaleups seeking to hire more women and will match them with women students and/or recent graduates and (when appropriate) will co-fund the internship placement.

This activity is designed to foster female activity as entrepreneurs by exposing them to a start-up experience early in their careers. The program is an initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) under the SUPERNOVAS - EIT Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership Program.

2. Activity description

We are looking for young women from science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) careers to support their first (or second) job in a start-up. At least 60 applications (a minimum of 50 % from RIS countries or regions) will be selected to apply for an internship. It will have at least 3 months of duration and it will be conducted in a high or deep tech startup around The European Union or a Horizon Europe associated country. This will focus in increasing their presence in startups deemed as deep tech where women's presence is lower.

3. Target audience

We are targeting undergraduate students and recent women graduates with European citizenship in STEAM careers:

- Last year STEAM careers students.
- **MSc students from EIT labelled and non-labelled programs.**
- **PhD students from EIT labelled and non-labelled programs.**
- Up to 5 years after completing their studies.
- Recent PhD graduates in any STEAM discipline.
- With genuine interest in start-ups and entrepreneurship.

We welcome participants:

- From outside the main entrepreneurial hubs and big cities.
- Located in RIS countries; (Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) was introduced in 2014 to advance the innovation performance of more countries and their regions across Europe, especially countries with moderate or modest innovation scores as defined by the European Innovation Scoreboard).
- From underrepresented minorities.

4. Important dates

The program will be organized around the following dates:

Stage of the call	Date
Call opening	June
Call closure	July
Selection process	End of July and August 2022
Internship	Starting from September 2022

5. Eligibility criteria for applicants

- Studies and academic performance.
- Resumé.
- Participation in labelled and non-labelled EIT education program.
- Letter of motivation.

- Geographical location.
- Ready to work in an international environment.
- Very fluent in English.
- Available min. 3 months from August until December 2022.
- Aware of having cross-country mobility allowances and health insurance.

6. Selection procedure and criteria

The evaluation and selection process are designed to be open, accountable, multi-step and based solely on the merit of the submitted applications. All eligible participants will have the same opportunities. Each eligible submitted application will be evaluated by a team composed by the EIT WELP staff, collaborators, and members from selected start-ups and scaleups.

The evaluation process is planned to take place in July and August 2022, and selected applicants are expected to start their internship in September 2022. However, the organizers reserve the right to change this timeline.

The evaluation of candidates and fit with the startups will be conducted in three phases.

1st phase – Online evaluation and preliminary scoring

The application has to be done through the form that will be available in the Startup Stairway Awards Platform link. All the compulsory fields must be completed, and the form has to be sent before the call is closed. Only applications submitted on time will be evaluated.

Applications will first be reviewed online by a panel composed by EIT WELP staff. Each evaluator will have to score each application based on 3 standardized criteria (with different weighting) for a maximum of 15 points. The sum of all scores will give the total score for a given applicant and the minimum score for continuing in the selection process will be 4 points.

Criteria	Scoring
Studies and academic performance	(1 to 5) (40%)
Letter of motivation	(1 to 5) (40%)
Resumé	(1 to 5) (20%)

2nd phase – Online interview

The candidates selected in the previous stage will be interviewed online by a panel composed by EIT WELP staff. From this phase, a minimum of 3 candidates (and a maximum of 5) will be selected for each startup according to the needs of the last one.

3rd phase – Final selection

The candidates selected in the previous phase will be presented to and interviewed by the start-ups and scaleups, in order to choose the more suitable interns for them. At least one member of the EIT WELP staff will be present in the interviews, that will be conducted online.

Communication of results

The results will be communicated by email.

- After the first stage, no notification will be sent to the participants.
- During the second stage, selected candidates will be notified and invited by email for an interview with the EIT WELP staff.
- After the second stage, selected candidates will be notified and invited by email for an interview with the startup or scale up (third stage).
- After the third stage, the candidates selected for conducting the internships and the excluded ones will be notified by email.
- Individual scores and comments made by evaluators will remain confidential. There is no appeal process.

7. Financial support and financial sustainability

Start-ups and scale-ups will cover the costs of an internship (equivalent to the minimum inter-professional salary of the country where the start-up or scale-up is placed) that will be paid to the selected candidates. However, a maximum of 50% co-funding will be offered to those promising start-ups with less financial capacity to recruit.

8. Participant obligations

The participants are obliged to provide truthful information on their studies, academic achievements, resumé, motivation letter and availability to do an internship for a minimum of 3 months.

Once in the internship, the participants will have to:

- Sign the required legal documents before, during and after the internship.
- Be an active, engaged and responsible participant in the start-up/scale-up, engage in professional communications and demeanour in the workplace, perform all duties as directed by employer and respond respectfully and effectively to feedback from employers and co-workers, refrain from additional activities or second jobs that compromise ability to function in internship.
- Be honest. Assistance can only be provided if you are forthcoming about the situation.

After the programme, the participants will have to:

- Be positive ambassadors for the programme and participate in the follow up questionnaires and interviews proposed by EIT, during the year following participation in the programme.

9. Personal data processing

EIT MANUFACTURING ensures that any processing of personal data shall be performed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

You have the right to access, rectify or delete your personal data. You can also object to their processing. To exercise these rights, please contact us at dpo@eitmanufacturing.eu.

The sole purpose of the collection of personal data provided in the application and the questionnaires for Individual applicants or start-ups ("personal data") is to verify the eligibility of the submitted applications and to identify the best candidates among the participants. Individual applicants also accept that their personal information can be shared with the relevant start-ups and that the personal data of contact people in the start-ups with the relevant Individual applicants for the purposes of matching Individual applicants with start-ups for the activity and related internships.

Participants also consent that EIT Manufacturing may grant access to parts of their submission to its subsidiaries or external parties, such as evaluators and may use their personal data for the purposes of disseminating and promoting the activity.

The application submission and evaluation process will be done via Awards Platform, an online submission management tool by Submittable Holdings, Inc.

YOUR CONSENT TO THE USE OF SUBMITTABLE AS SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION TOOL: By submitting

your application within this challenge you implicitly state your consent to the Terms and Conditions as well as the Privacy policy of Submittable.

YOUR CONSENT TO THE USE OF PERSONAL DATA: By submitting your application within this call you consent that EIT Manufacturing will collect, transfer, process, store and delete your data in accordance with the aforementioned conditions.

10. Appeal procedure

Applicants may appeal the selection decision only on grounds of human or technical errors. A request for redress from the applicant and addressed to EIT Manufacturing's CEO may be submitted in writing through the contact email address provided in the call document, within five days of the date on which EIT Manufacturing informs the applicant of the evaluation results.

Please note that redress on the evaluation points contained in the technical judgment of the evaluators is not admissible.

An EIT Manufacturing Appeal Committee will examine the request and provide an opinion on possible technical or human errors in the evaluation process and not on the merits of the proposal. Based on this opinion, a decision will be taken by EIT Manufacturing, and the applicant will be notified in writing.

11. Exclusion criteria

Participants will be excluded from receiving co-funding if they are in any of the situations of exclusion defined in Article 136 of the EU Financial Regulation.

Participants will be excluded from receiving co-funding if, in the course of the award procedure, they fall under any of the situations defined in Article 141 of the EU Financial Regulation.

12. Logos and trademarks

The start-ups participating in the activity grant EIT Manufacturing and its subsidiaries (e.g. CLCs) a free and non-exclusive license to use their brand solely for the promotion, dissemination of information, organization, management and completion of the Activity.

Similarly, EIT Manufacturing grants participating Start-ups a free and non-exclusive license to use their brand solely for the promotion, dissemination of information, organization, management, and completion of the Startup Stairway Activity.

The Participants and EIT Manufacturing mutually acknowledge and accept that the respective trademarks are and remain the exclusive property of their respective owners and that no provision of this Notice is intended to confer any rights on such trademarks, outside the provisions of the previous paragraph. Therefore, the participating Start-ups and EIT Manufacturing will not be able to assign, sublicense or otherwise dispose of the trademarks of others, without prior written consent.

13. Confidentiality

The Selected Start-ups and Individual applicants undertake to use any confidential information shared by the Start-ups or EIT Manufacturing solely for the purposes of the activity. Confidential information shall mean data and/or information that is proprietary to or possessed by the participants and not generally known to the public or that has not yet been revealed whether in tangible or intangible form, whenever and however disclosed and might also be included in the application form.

The Selected start-ups and Individual applicants also agree to (i) not disclose Confidential Information, without prior written authorization of the company concerned; and (ii) not to use it for purposes other than those strictly necessary for participation in the activity.

14. Intellectual property

The intellectual property rights in the works produced during the internship of the individual participants will be property of the start-ups, without prejudice to the moral rights of the Individual participants to be recognized as authors, creators or inventors or to relevant national applicable legislation. For the avoidance of any doubt, all patents, trade secrets, information, know-how, inventions, technology, data and other intellectual property rights owned by the participants prior to the participation in the activity shall remain the sole property of the respective participant.

Participants (be it start-ups, individuals) agree to respect the provisions of Article 16 regarding intellectual property rights, background and results and access rights and rights of use of the grant agreement signed by EIT and EIT Manufacturing. A link to the model grant agreement is provided further below.

15. Communication and dissemination of results

Participants agree to respect the provisions of Article 17 regarding Communication, dissemination and visibility of the Grant Agreement signed by EIT and EIT Manufacturing. A link to the Model Grant Agreement is provided further below.

Participants agree that EIT Manufacturing and its subsidiaries can disseminate, publish and make use of non-confidential information regarding the Startup Stairway in order to promote the activities of EIT Manufacturing or establish reports or other necessary documents for EIT.

16. Applicable law

The present call is governed by the applicable Union law (i.e. the EIT Regulation, the EU Financial Regulation and the Horizon Europe Regulation) and is complemented, where necessary, by the laws of France.

The participants agree to observe the obligations set forth for the recipients of funding in the Grant Agreement signed between the EIT and EIT Manufacturing and more particularly Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping) also apply to the third parties receiving the support (recipients).

The participants must also ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the recipients of funding. The Model Grant Agreement can be found [here](#).

17. Contact details

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