EU · GRANT + EQUITY · DEEP-TECH

EIC European Innovation Council

Grant + equity for deep-tech and dual-use scale-ups

EIC Accelerator: blended finance (grant + equity), rolling submissions. EIC STEP Scale Up Defence: new call, equity-only €10–30 M for critical defence technologies, deadline 28 Oct 2026.

GRANT + EQUITY | DEEP-TECH | SCALE-UP

WHAT IT IS

1. EIC Accelerator: grant up to €2.5 M + equity investment (blended finance)
2. EIC STEP Scale Up Defence: equity-only €10–30 M for critical defence technologies
3. Part of Horizon Europe — breakthrough innovation with global potential

WHO IT IS FOR

SMEs and startups from the EU or associated countries. EIC Accelerator: civilian or dual-use with a civilian dimension (purely defence is not eligible). STEP Scale Up Defence: targets critical defence technologies; requires an investor pre-commitment.

WHAT STAGE

Scale-up, TRL 5–8, a company with a product and global growth ambition. Willingness to accept equity (EIC Fund as investor) required.

EIC ACCELERATOR
€2.5 M
grant + equity · STEP Defence: equity €10–30 M

HOW AND WHEN TO APPLY

1. Short application: written proposal + pitch deck + 3-min video (batched every 1st Tuesday)
2. Full application (if you pass): 20-page form, financials, FTO analysis, Letters of Intent
3. Online interview with a technical expert
4. Pitch to the evaluation jury → decision

TIMING

Accelerator: short application any time, full — cut-offs 2026: 7 Jan, 4 Mar, 6 May, 8 Jul, 2 Sep, 4 Nov. STEP Defence: apply by 28 Oct 2026.

NOTE / TIP

Low success rate — a specialised advisor is recommended. Equity = EIC Fund entry; not for every founder.

FREE CONSULTATION · INDEPENDENT

Is this programme right for you?

Defence Hub CzechInvest will help you — free and independently — pick the right programme and get through the whole application.

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Book a consultation