EU · SMES AND START-UPS · ACCELERATION + GRANTS

EUDIS EU Defence Innovation Scheme

The EU's entry point to defence innovation for start-ups and SMEs

A scheme within the European Defence Fund (EDF) that opens defence to smaller players — including those not previously active in the sector. 2026 budget: **€231 million** (23 % of the EDF budget).

EU · SME · START-UPS · UKRAINE

WHAT IT IS

1. Business Accelerator: 8 months, 5 bootcamps across Europe, €120,000 seed voucher
2. Defence Hackathons: spring and autumn, across the EU — the lowest entry barrier
3. Cascade funding (FSTP): up to €60,000, run by EDF consortia in their own sub-calls
4. Open Call (SME Calls): non-thematic EDF calls for SME consortia
5. Business Coaching: up to 15 days of coaching for SMEs in EDF projects
6. Defence Equity Facility: support for funds investing in defence and dual-use

WHO IT IS FOR

Start-ups, SMEs and non-traditional players from the EU, Norway and Ukraine. Ukrainian entities may also apply for cascade funding and the accelerator.

AT WHAT STAGE

Hackathons and cascade funding have the lowest barrier. Open EDF calls require **at least TRL 4** and a consortium.

EUDIS BUDGET 2026
€231M

€120,000 seed voucher · €60,000 cascade funding · 40 companies in the accelerator

HOW AND WHEN TO APPLY

1. Pick the tool that matches your stage — the earlier you are, the more a hackathon or cascade funding fits
2. Business Accelerator: apply at *eudis-business-accelerator.eu* during the cohort window
3. Open Call: form a consortium (3 companies, 3 states) and submit via *Funding & Tenders*
4. Cascade funding: watch for sub-calls from EDF consortia — you apply to them, not the Commission

TIMING

Accelerator: 2 cohorts a year (spring / autumn). Open Call: EDF 2026 calls close **29 September 2026**. Cascade funding: per sub-call — the next one is expected in autumn 2026.

NOTE / TIP

EUDIS has **no** instrument called STEP — STEP is an EU-wide platform spanning programmes. Do not confuse it with EIC STEP Scale Up Defence.

FREE CONSULTATION · INDEPENDENT

Which EUDIS tool fits you?

Defence Hub CzechInvest will help you pick the right tool and work through the application — free and independent.

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Book a consultation