EU · EIC ACCELERATOR · ANNOTATED TEMPLATE + WORKBOOK

The EIC Accelerator Short Proposal: what evaluators expect in each section

The Short Proposal (step 1) decides whether the EIC invites you to the full application. This workbook goes section by section through the official template: for each one you get the template question, the recommendations of the Access2EIC National Contact Points, and a field where you draft your answer right away. Save the PDF and come back to it.

EIC TEMPLATE VERSION 2 · 22 OCT 2025 | EIC ACCELERATOR 2026 CALLS | DUAL-USE ELIGIBLE SINCE 17 JUN 2026 | UPDATED 23 OCT 2026

How to use this workbook

IN ITALICS
Template question
Text from the official EIC template. These are the questions you answer.

PURPLE BOX
NCP recommendation
What the Access2EIC National Contact Points advise, including feedback from evaluators and companies.

DASHED FIELD
Your draft
A fillable field. Write in bullet points; the final text goes into the portal later.

The EIC Accelerator is the Horizon Europe programme for start-ups and SMEs with a breakthrough technology that can create a new market or disrupt an existing one, but is too risky for private investors to fund alone. Since 17 June 2026 companies with dual-use (civilian and defence) applications can apply too: grant up to EUR 2.5m and equity up to EUR 30m. Conditions, deadlines and the submission process are in our guide at defencehub.gov.cz/pruvodce-eic/?lang=en.

Please note: the workbook annotates the Short Proposal template for the EIC Accelerator 2026 calls (version 2 of 22 Oct 2025). The binding rules are those on the EU Funding & Tenders Portal and in the EIC Work Programme 2026. If the template changes for 2027, the new template applies.

Identification

COMPANY NAME — PIC if you already have one

TITLE OF THE PROPOSAL — short and clear

CONTACT PERSON AND E-MAIL

Structure of the technical description (Part B)

#	SECTION	MAIN CRITERION
	Applicant's information, title of the proposal, list of participants	
1	Technology	Excellence
2	Market	Impact
3	Team, Financial Needs, Implementation	Level of risk, implementation and need for Union support

The three criteria the short proposal is scored on

Each part of the technical description (Part B) maps to one criterion. Write so that the evaluator finds a clear yes with evidence for each question.

CRITERION	SUB-QUESTION	WHAT THE EVALUATOR ASKS
Excellence	Innovation: deep tech and breakthrough nature	Is the 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?
Excellence	Technology Readiness Level (TRL)	Is there sufficient demonstration that the innovation has completed all aspects of TRL 5 (validation in a relevant environment)?
Excellence	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 team with the skills and competences to develop the innovation and scale the company? Have any gaps been identified, including adequate gender balance, with a credible plan to fill them?
Level of risk, implementation and need for Union support	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 market actors can finance alone?

NCP RECOMMENDATION

The EIC Accelerator is a mono-beneficiary action: the applicant is one company. Affiliated entities (linked e.g. by capital or a legal link) are listed under participants and must fulfil the same eligibility conditions as the beneficiary.

Work plan for the application

Who owns which part and by when. Evaluators can tell a last-minute proposal.

PART	OWNER	DEADLINE	STATUS
1 · Technology (novelty, TRL, IP)			
2 · Market			
3 · Team, financial needs			
Video (3 min)			
Pitch deck (max. 10 pages)			
NCP consent and NCP check			
Portal registration and submission			

Section 1: Technology · Novelty and breakthrough nature

EXCELLENCE

TEMPLATE QUESTION

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? Describe how your innovation is deep tech, its novelty and disruptive potential vs existing solutions. Provide empirical data.

NCP RECOMMENDATION

- **Deep tech breakthrough:** clearly describe and emphasise the disruptive potential of your technology. This is one of the most critical elements of the proposal. Deep tech is rooted in cutting-edge science, requires constant interaction with new results from the lab and often combines the physical, biological and digital spheres. It is distinct from "high tech" (R&D intensity): deep tech enables fundamentally new capabilities and needs long development timelines to reach the market.
- **Comparison to existing solutions:** show how your solution outperforms current options in key areas (cost, speed, effectiveness). The EIC reads "breakthrough" as surpassing competitors in a key dimension of the USP by a factor of about 10.
- **Empirical data:** back novelty and potential with measurements, tests and pilot results. Claims without data do not count.
- **Novelty:** what is new, original or unique. Either done for the very first time, or better than ever before.
- **Disruptive technology:** a product or service that radically disrupts an industry and eventually replaces the traditional way of doing things.

WHY IT IS DEEP TECH AND WHAT IS NEW — scientific basis, what is done for the first time

COMPARISON WITH COMPETITORS AND EMPIRICAL DATA — parameter, value today, our value, source

Section 1: Technology · Technology Readiness Level (TRL)

EXCELLENCE

TEMPLATE QUESTION

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)? Provide evidence of TRL 5 (or higher) validation.

NCP RECOMMENDATION

State your current TRL. Make sure 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 medical technologies, TRL maps to clinical steps: TRL 5 stands for animal testing and clinical protocols for phase 1, TRL 6 for exploratory phase 1 trials supporting phase 2, TRL 7 for a completed phase 2 trial, and TRL 8 for completed phase 3 trials and regulatory approval.

TRL	DESCRIPTION	EIC INSTRUMENT
1	Basic principle observed	EIC Pathfinder (Open and Challenges): Explore
2	Technology concept formulated	
3	Experimental proof of concept	
4	Technology validated in lab	
5	Technology validated in a relevant environment. **Entry threshold for the EIC Accelerator.**	EIC Transition (Open): Exploit
6	Technology demonstrated in a relevant environment	
7	System prototype demonstration in an operational environment	EIC Accelerator (Open and Challenges, grant), EIC Scale Up, EIC Accelerator equity: Scale up
8	System complete and qualified	
9	Actual system proven in an operational environment, market uptake	

CURRENT TRL — number

HOW TRL 5 WAS VALIDATED AND THE STEPS TO TRL 9 — tests, environment, who validated, milestones

Section 1: Technology · IP protection and strategy

EXCELLENCE

TEMPLATE QUESTION

Does your innovation have adequate IP protection? What is your intellectual property strategy to enter the market to be addressed? Describe your IP strategy in terms of patents (granted or pending), trade secrets and/or other IP elements and FTO status.

NCP RECOMMENDATION

- **IP strategy:** describe how it protects the core innovation and supports market entry. Give a short overview of existing or pending patents: what technical elements they cover and why these filings are essential to secure your competitive position. Indicate which parts of the technology are intentionally kept as trade secrets and how confidentiality is ensured.
- **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 a proactive and credible approach to IP management aligned with your commercialisation roadmap.

Please note: the full FTO analysis is attached only to the Full Proposal (step 2). In the short proposal, status and plan are enough, but "none, not addressed" will not convince an evaluator. For defence and dual-use technologies, some know-how cannot be patented without disclosure; a trade-secret strategy is then a legitimate answer, but it has to be described.

PATENTS, TRADE SECRETS, OTHER IP ELEMENTS — application number, what it covers, status

FTO STATUS AND PLAN — searches, blocking rights, timeline of full analysis

Section 2: Market

IMPACT

TEMPLATE QUESTION

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

NCP RECOMMENDATION

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 TAM, SAM and SOM (Total Addressable, Serviceable Available, Serviceable Obtainable Market), clearly explaining assumptions, segmentation logic and reference geographies.
- Estimate the realistic share you expect to capture over time, considering competitive dynamics, adoption barriers and scale-up capacity. Where useful, add a simple visual.

Go-to-market and commercialisation

- How you enter the market: initial target customers, early adopters, pilot deployments, scaling phases.
- Distribution and sales (direct, partners, licensing, platform) and how it evolves with volume.
- Role of strategic partnerships in accelerating adoption, reducing risk or accessing international markets.

Business model and revenue

- Model (subscription, licensing royalties, unit sales, hybrid) and why it is financially sustainable.
- Be concrete: expected unit volumes, pricing levels, revenue streams. High-level revenue forecast consistent with the model and SOM.

Customer value proposition and willingness to pay

- Target customers (segments, profiles, stakeholders) and their main pain points.
- Why they pay: quantifiable value drivers such as cost reduction, performance, efficiency, risk mitigation.
- Pilot customers, validation, letters of intent (LOIs) or early traction.

Competitive landscape

- Direct and indirect competitors incl. alternative solutions to the same need, their strengths and weaknesses in terms of market positioning.
- Where incumbents or substitutes leave unmet needs.

Competitive advantage

- Performance, lower cost, scalability, innovation potential; what differentiates you, ideally a comparison table.
- Why you are positioned to succeed: market trends, demand, regulatory drivers, gaps in existing solutions.

MARKET: TAM / SAM / SOM AND REALISTIC SHARE

figures, assumptions, geographies

Section 2: Market · Your draft

IMPACT

GO-TO-MARKET, PARTNERSHIPS AND BUSINESS MODEL

first customers, channels, pricing, volumes

CUSTOMER, WILLINGNESS TO PAY AND TRACTION

segments, pain points, LOIs, pilots

COMPETITION AND OUR ADVANTAGE

who, their gaps, our difference

Section 3: Team, financial needs and implementation · Team

RISK AND IMPLEMENTATION

TEMPLATE QUESTION

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 or competence gaps, including adequate gender balance, and which is your plan to fill them? Describe the key team members and their relevant competencies, how the company is governed and how you take decisions.

NCP RECOMMENDATION

Describe your team, the different roles, commitment and achievements (strategic, technical and commercial) in relation to your innovation. Explain the role of the company's owners if not part of the team. For each team member, including management and founders, provide 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 team members incentivised (employee stock option plan, milestone bonuses)? When talking about gender balance, describe how you will achieve it, not just that you want to.

KEY PEOPLE, ROLES, SHAREHOLDING, GOVERNANCE

TEAM GAPS AND THE PLAN TO FILL THEM

including gender balance

Section 3 · Risk level of the investment and leverage effect

NEED FOR UNION SUPPORT

TEMPLATE QUESTION

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? Describe your traction with investors, the timing and size of your future financing round, why you need EIC funding, and why market actors will not commit to fund the full amount you need.

NCP RECOMMENDATION

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.

Please note: for defence and dual-use companies this section is often the weakest. Many European VC funds still exclude or restrict defence, which is a legitimate argument for "the market will not fund this alone". But the argument has to be evidenced: name the funds you have talked to and what they said.

INVESTOR TRACTION, NEXT ROUND (SIZE, TIMING)

WHY THE EIC, AND WHY THE MARKET WILL NOT FUND THE FULL AMOUNT

by name, what investors said

Important: consent for data sharing with the NCP. Please use the template provided by the EIC. By giving consent, you allow your National Contact Point (NCP) to be informed about your application process and to offer you guidance throughout. **This is the only way your NCP can contact you and offer its free services, such as proposal checks or interview training.** The Czech NCP for the EIC is Technologické centrum Praha (Technology Centre Prague), a partner of the Access2EIC network.

Mandatory annexes to the short proposal

Two documents uploaded together with Part B. Evaluators read them; they are not formalities.

VIDEO

3 minutes, up to 3 team members

- Describe your company and project. Show your motivation and that you have the right, dedicated team to take the solution to market.
- Easy to understand for non-experts. If not in English, include subtitles.
- Show the innovation in action and your TRL in practice: the prototype working, the environment, the progress achieved.
- A human element: vision, personalities, the ability to articulate the mission and engage stakeholders.
- Key value: a personal connection and trust in your team and project.

PITCH DECK

PDF, max. 10 pages

- Summarises the proposal, but above all it should engage with your story and persuade evaluators to support you. You upload an updated version with the Full Proposal.
- Graphics and visuals, one message per slide, no unnecessary detail. Must align with the proposal text. Include basic financial projections.
- The step 1 deck is only read by evaluators; the step 2 deck is used at the interview. It must work without your commentary.
- A concise overview: the problem, your unique solution, market opportunity, competitive edge. Helps non-technical evaluators too.

VIDEO SCRIPT (3 MIN): WHO SPEAKS, WHAT WE SHOW, WHERE WE FILM

PITCH DECK OUTLINE (MAX. 10 SLIDES)

Check before you submit

The recommendations in one list. If you have no evidence for an item, the evaluator will not count it.

- ☐ Deep tech: is it clear which scientific or technological breakthrough we build on, and how we differ from "just" high tech?
- ☐ Comparison: do we show an order-of-magnitude (about 10×) improvement in at least one key dimension vs competitors, with data?
- ☐ TRL: current TRL stated, evidence of completed TRL 5, steps to TRL 9?
- ☐ IP: patents (granted and pending), trade secrets, FTO status and timeline for the full FTO analysis?
- ☐ Market: TAM, SAM, SOM with explained assumptions and a realistic share over time?
- ☐ Go-to-market: first customers, channels, partnerships, business model with numbers?
- ☐ Customer: named pain points, quantified willingness to pay, LOIs or pilots?
- ☐ Competition: direct and indirect players, their gaps, our advantage (ideally a table)?
- ☐ Team: roles, shareholding, options, incentives, named gaps including gender balance and a plan to fill them?
- ☐ Investors: who has invested or been approached, size and timing of the next round, why the market will not fund the full amount?
- ☐ Video under 3 minutes, up to 3 people, subtitles, prototype in action?
- ☐ Pitch deck PDF up to 10 pages, consistent with the text, with financial projections?
- ☐ NCP data-sharing consent completed using the EIC template?

Want to go through your short proposal with us?

Defence Hub does not evaluate or submit applications, but helps you navigate the EIC programmes, decide between the Accelerator and STEP Scale Up, and find the right contact including the NCP. Consultation is free.

defencehub.gov.cz/consultation/

SOURCES

1. EIC Accelerator Annotated Template (Short proposal) 2026, Access2EIC, 1st edition, February 2026: access2eic.eu/download/eic-accelerator-short-proposal-annotated-template_2026/ (original document; this workbook builds on it under its reuse-with-credit terms)
2. EIC Accelerator, European Innovation Council: eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-accelerator_en (official templates, Guide for Applicants, FAQ)
3. European Innovation Council opens to defence and dual-use technologies, EIC, 17 June 2026
4. EIC Accelerator and EIC STEP Defence Scale Up guides, Defence Hub: defencehub.gov.cz/pruvodce-eic/?lang=en, defencehub.gov.cz/pruvodce-step/?lang=en

This workbook is an orientation summary of public Access2EIC and EIC documents as of the update date. It is neither a legal interpretation nor an opinion on the eligibility of a specific project. Only the European Commission and EISMEA give a binding interpretation. Filled-in fields stay in your file only; Defence Hub has no access to them.