EEN2EIC

Call 4bis

Open Call for the selection of EEN organisations delivering Investment Readiness Services (IRS)and Follow-up Support – EEN2EIC

Programme : **Horizon Europe Framework Programme**
Call : **Cooperation with EEN**
(SoE, Applicants in widening countries and from women-led companies)
(HORIZON-EIC-2021-EEN-01)
Type of Action : **CSA**
Project : **Support to EIC Accelerator by the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN2EIC)**
Grant Agreement No. : **101075818**

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Funded by the European Union

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1. ABOUT THE PROJECT

The EEN2EIC project aims to strengthen cooperation between the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) and the European Innovation Council (EIC), supporting innovation, investment readiness and business scaling-up.

The project empowers EEN organisations to support highly innovative SMEs and startups, with particular attention to EIC Accelerator Seal of Excellence holders, women-led companies and companies established in Widening Countries.

As part of this approach, EEN2EIC has developed a harmonised Investment Readiness Service (IRS) Toolkit, designed to help innovative companies assess and improve their readiness to engage with investors and access funding.

Following the adoption of Amendment No. AMD-101075818-6, the EEN2EIC project has been extended to 60 months, until 31 August 2027.

The project is funded by the European Union’s Horizon Europe programme under Grant Agreement No. 101075818.

2. ABOUT THE CALL 4BIS

Call 4bis supports the continuation and expansion of the harmonised Investment Readiness Service across the Enterprise Europe Network.

It builds on the implementation of Call 4 and introduces two complementary lump-sum voucher types:

1. IRS Voucher – lump sum of EUR 8,000, supporting structured investment readiness services for at least 20 companies per voucher;
2. T1 Follow-up IRS Voucher – lump sum of EUR 4,000, supporting T1 progress assessments and related follow-up advisory services for at least 10 companies per voucher.

EEN organisations already selected and validated under Call 4 will continue their participation without submitting a new application or undergoing a new eligibility and evaluation procedure.

They may continue delivering T0 activities and may also provide T1 assessments and related follow-up advisory support in accordance with the conditions set out in this Call.

EEN organisations not previously selected under Call 4 may submit an application under Call 4bis.

3. OBJECTIVES

Call 4bis aims to:

- increase the use of the EEN2EIC IRS Toolkit across the Enterprise Europe Network;
- provide highly innovative SMEs and startups with structured investment readiness support;
- help companies identify strengths, gaps and priority actions;
- improve investor-oriented communication, fundraising preparation and engagement with investors;
- support companies in developing or refining investor-oriented materials;
- establish a baseline of companies' investment readiness through the T0 assessment;
- monitor progress through the T1 follow-up assessment;
- provide targeted recommendations and follow-up support;
- collect quantitative and qualitative evidence on the usefulness and impact of the IRS service, including company feedback, impressions and testimonials;
- strengthen the capacity of EEN organisations to deliver consistent investment readiness services.

4. ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS AND PARTICIPATION ARRANGEMENTS

Call 4bis is addressed to organisations that are members of the Enterprise Europe Network.

4.1 Organisations already selected under Call 4

EEN organisations already selected and validated under Call 4 will be invited to sign an extension of their existing sub-grant agreements until 31 July 2027.

These organisations:

- are not required to submit a new application;
- are not subject to a new eligibility or qualitative evaluation;
- may complete activities already authorised under Call 4;
- may continue supporting companies through T0 assessments and related advisory activities;
- may request IRS Vouchers of EUR 8,000;

- may request T1 Follow-up IRS Vouchers of EUR 4,000 for T1 assessments and related advisory support.
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Indicatively, each organisation may deliver up to three IRS sessions in total, including IRS sessions already authorised or implemented under Call 4.
Each IRS session must be communicated in advance and authorised by the EEN2EIC consortium before implementation.

The authorisation will take into account:
- consistency with the objectives and targets of the EEN2EIC project;
- relevance of the proposed target companies;
- satisfactory implementation of previously authorised activities, where applicable;
- capacity to achieve the minimum target of 20 companies per IRS session;
- compliance with the cumulative EUR 60,000 FSTP ceiling;
- availability of the EEN2EIC project budget.
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The indicative limit of three IRS sessions per organisation does not constitute an automatic entitlement to three vouchers.

4.2 Additional EEN organisations

EEN organisations not previously selected under Call 4 will be subject to an evaluation and selection procedure.

These organisations, when applying under this Open Call, must demonstrate:
- experience in supporting innovative SMEs and startups;
- expertise in investment readiness, access to finance, fundraising or scale-up support;
- capacity to support the minimum number of companies required for the requested voucher;

All organisations must comply with the cumulative Financial Support to Third Parties ceiling of EUR 60,000 per legal entity under the EEN2EIC project.

5. VOUCHER SCHEME AND ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The financial support provided under Call 4bis takes the form of lump-sum vouchers. Organisations may receive one or both voucher types, subject to the applicable conditions, the available budget and the cumulative EUR 60,000 FSTP ceiling.

Payment of the lump sum is conditional upon the satisfactory completion of the activities and achievement of the applicable minimum requirements set out in this Call and in the relevant sub-grant agreement.

5.1 IRS Voucher – EUR 8,000

- Each IRS Voucher supports the organisation of one IRS session and the completion of the EEN2EIC IRS assessment by at least 20 companies.
- The assessment represents the entry point of the investment readiness support pathway. Based on the results and needs identified through the assessment, the EEN advisor may provide tailored follow-up support, including:
- review and discussion of the assessment results;
- identification of strengths, gaps and priority actions;
- one-to-one advisory and coaching support;
- support in developing or refining investor-oriented materials;
- support related to pitching, financial preparedness, fundraising, investor outreach and due diligence readiness;
- identification of additional support needs and recommended next steps;
- collection of company feedback;
- reporting of activities and results.
- T0 is the company's initial investment readiness assessment. It covers the main dimensions of investment readiness, including:
- Team and Organisation;
- Product and Technology;
- Market and Traction;
- Customer Development and Validation;
- Business Model Development;
- Financials.
- The T0 assessment generates an overall score, category-level results, strengths, areas for improvement, priority actions and recommended next steps.
- The service must go beyond a stand-alone awareness-raising event and include practical use of the IRS Toolkit and follow-up support.

- Every IRS session must be communicated in advance and authorised by the EEN2EIC consortium before implementation.
- The IRS is designed to support highly innovative SMEs and startups, with a particular focus on:
- EIC Accelerator Seal of Excellence holders;
- women-led companies;
- companies established in Widening Countries.

5.2 T1 Follow-up IRS Voucher – EUR 4,000 .

Each T1 Follow-up IRS Voucher must support at least 10 companies.
The voucher covers the T1 assessment and related follow-up advisory support, normally carried out approximately six months after the company's initial T0 assessment.
T1 is linked to the company's initial IRS assessment and allows the company and the EEN advisor to:

- compare the company's current investment readiness with the T0 baseline;
- assess progress achieved since the initial assessment;
- identify remaining gaps and additional support needs;
- review engagement with investors and fundraising developments;
- collect information on relevant results and outcomes;
- assess the usefulness and contribution of the IRS support.

Approximately six months after T0, the EEN advisor is notified that the company may be invited to complete T1.
The advisor decides whether the follow-up is relevant and meaningful for the company.
Eligible activities may include:

- identifying companies ready for T1;
- inviting companies to start the follow-up assessment;
- supporting companies in completing T1;
- comparing T1 results with the T0 baseline;
- discussing progress and remaining gaps;
- providing targeted feedback and advisory support;
- refining investor-oriented materials or other investment-readiness elements;
- identifying additional support needs and recommended next steps;
- reporting T1 results and follow-up activities.

A dedicated information or training session is not required under the T1 Follow-up IRS Voucher.
Companies supported at T0 may also be supported at T1, as the two assessments represent distinct phases of the IRS service.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND ALLOCATION

6.1 Additional EEN organisations (see Section 4.2)

Applications submitted by EEN organisations not previously selected under Call 4 will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Criterion	Maximum score	Minimum Threshold
Relevance	5	3
Implementation	5	3
Impact	5	3
Minimum Threshold: 9 points Maximum Score: 15 points		

Applications must obtain:

- at least 3 points under each criterion; and
- at least 9 points overall.

The evaluation will consider:

- experience and expertise;
- quality and feasibility of the proposed activities;
- capacity to support the required number of companies;
- capacity to reach and engage the target companies;
- expected impact;
- contribution to EEN2EIC priorities.

Applications will be assessed by the EEN2EIC Evaluation Committee.

6.2 Organisations already selected under Call 4 (see Section 4.1)

EEN organisations already selected and validated under Call 4 will not be subject to a new qualitative evaluation.

They may continue delivering T0 activities and may also provide T1 assessments and related follow-up advisory support during the extended project period.
IRS sessions and related vouchers will be authorised in advance by the EEN2EIC consortium, taking into account:

- consistency with the objectives and targets of the EEN2EIC project;
- relevance of the proposed target companies;
- satisfactory implementation of previous activities, where applicable;
- capacity to achieve the applicable minimum targets;
- compliance with the cumulative EUR 60,000 FSTP ceiling;
- availability of the EEN2EIC project budget.
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The EEN2EIC consortium may authorise all or part of the activities requested.

7 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applications must be submitted only by additional EEN organisations (see Section 4.2) via the online form:

- Application form: Link

Applications must be submitted no later than **30 June 2027 at 17:00 CET (Brussels time).**

This Call is implemented on a rolling basis. Applications may be submitted at any time until **30 June 2027 at 17:00 CET (Brussels time)**, or until the available budget has been fully allocated.

Eligible applications will be evaluated by the EEN2EIC Evaluation Committee, composed of representatives of the EEN2EIC consortium.

8 EVALUATION COMMITTEE

All eligible applications will be evaluated by the EEN2EIC Evaluation Committee, composed of representatives of the project consortium and, where necessary, supplemented by members of the Advisory Board.
The Committee will assess applications based on the criteria set out in this Call.
Selected applicants will be contacted directly by email to sign the sub-grant agreement.

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9 REPORTING AND PAYMENT

Each voucher will be paid as a lump sum upon satisfactory completion of the relevant activities, achievement of the applicable minimum requirements and acceptance of the required reporting.

The lump sum is linked to the completion of the activities and results defined in this Call and in the relevant sub-grant agreement. It is not calculated on the basis of the actual costs incurred by the beneficiary.

The reporting should provide evidence of the activities implemented and the results achieved, including the applicable minimum number of completed T0 or T1 assessments.

The detailed implementation, reporting and payment conditions will be set out in the relevant sub-grant agreement and reporting annexes.

10 BUDGET AND DURATION

The total Financial Support to Third Parties budget of the EEN2EIC project amounts to EUR 3,671,480.00.

The lump-sum voucher amounts are:

- IRS Voucher: EUR 8,000;
- T1 Follow-up IRS Voucher: EUR 4,000.

Financial support is subject to the availability of the EEN2EIC project budget.
The cumulative FSTP amount awarded to the same legal entity under the EEN2EIC project may not exceed EUR 60,000.

The EEN2EIC project will end on 31 August 2027.

For organisations already selected under Call 4, the extension of the implementation period of the existing sub-grant agreements until 31 July 2027 is subject to the signature of the extension.

11 EXLUSION, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Applicants or participating organisations may be excluded where they:

- do not meet the eligibility requirements;
- provide false, incomplete or misleading information;
- exceed the cumulative EUR 60,000 FSTP ceiling;
- fail to comply with the conditions applicable to the voucher;
- are subject to an exclusion situation under applicable EU financial rules.

All information submitted under Call 4bis will be treated in accordance with the applicable confidentiality requirements.

Personal data must be processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679, the EEN2EIC data-protection framework and the instructions provided by the EEN2EIC consortium.

12 CALL SUMMARY

Item	Details
Call title	Call 4bis – Open Call for EEN Organisations Delivering Harmonised Investment Readiness Services and Follow-up Support
Project	Horizon Europe – EEN2EIC (GA No. 101075818)
Deadline	30 June 2027 – 17:00 CET
Type of call	Rolling basis – applications will be evaluated periodically, until the available budget is fully allocated or the final deadline is reached.
Who should apply	EEN organisations not previously selected under Call 4, with proven experience in supporting highly innovative SMEs and startups in access to finance and investment readiness.
Application form	LINK

Item	Details
Avalable lump-sum vouchers	IRS Voucher – EUR 8,000; T1 Follow-up IRS Voucher – EUR 4,000
Minimum targets	At least 20 completed T0 assessments per IRS Voucher; at least 10 completed T1 assessments with related follow-up support per T1 Follow-up IRS Voucher.
IRS Assessment	https://irs.een2eic.eu/
IRS toolkit	https://een2eic.eu/irstoolkit/
Contact	een2eic@apre.it

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