

EIC STEP Scale Up

EIC - European Innovation Council

CODICE	AMBITO
HORIZON-EIC-2026-STEP	Internazionale
LOCALITÀ	STATO
Europa	Aperto
PROGRAMMA	CURATO DA
EIC - European Innovation Council	Maria Macedo
GENERATO IL	
28 aprile 2026	

Descrizione

Objectives

The EIC STEP Scale Up call is designed to support ambitious scale-up companies, specifically SMEs and small mid-caps with up to 499 employees, established in an EU Member State or an Associated Country. The main objective is to catalyze the growth and deployment of game-changing innovations in Europe's critical technology areas. Eligible applicants may also include investors applying on behalf of these companies under a prior agreement. The target is to fill significant financing gaps for high-risk innovations, enabling their rapid market expansion and strategic value creation within the EU. Supported innovations must fall within the priority areas established by the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP), such as digital and deep tech, clean and resource-efficient technologies, and biotechnologies. Applicants must demonstrate significant market interest by securing a pre-commitment for at least 20% of the intended funding round from a qualified investor.

Project Types

Projects must focus on the scale-up of critical technologies identified as strategic for the European Union. These include advanced semiconductor and quantum technologies, artificial intelligence, robotics, clean energy solutions (e.g., renewable energy, sustainable fuels, energy storage, decarbonisation), circular economy technologies, and biotechnologies including medicinal products for critical medicines. Eligible expenses typically relate to expanding manufacturing capacity, advancing market entry, accelerating the development and commercialization of innovative technologies, and reinforcing European value chains. The EIC's investments are equity-only and are meant to co-invest alongside a lead qualified investor.

Funding

The 2026 EIC STEP Scale Up call offers a total budget of €300 million. Applicants can request equity investments from a minimum of €10 million up to a maximum of €30 million, to be used as part of a total funding round between €50 and €150 million (the EIC share being three to five times smaller than the total round). No grant component is available; support is exclusively through equity investments, managed by the EIC Fund. Each investment is negotiated

on a case-by-case basis, in line with the EIC Fund Investment Guidelines. Projects are selected with the intent that the EIC contribution catalyzes significantly larger funding rounds involving private market investors.

Key Aspects

Supported companies are expected to retain most of their value and intellectual property within Europe or Associated Countries. The investment may be subject to safeguard measures protecting European strategic interests. Applicants must show financial and operational solidity, including a pre-commitment from a single qualified investor. Evaluation processes and award criteria are detailed in the EIC Work Programme 2026. Applicants meeting evaluation thresholds but not selected for funding may receive a 'Sovereignty (STEP) Seal' to facilitate further access to EU and other funding opportunities. No explicit project duration limit is set, but strategic scaling objectives and alignment with investment guidelines are critical. Key performance indicators focus on innovation impact, market potential, and contribution to strategic EU interests.

Date e Scadenze

DATA DI PUBBLICAZIONE

Non definita

DATA DI APERTURA

6 novembre 2025

Fasi di Candidatura

- Deadline: 25 novembre 2026 alle ore 16:00 (211 giorni rimanenti)

Dettagli Finanziari

TIPO DI SUPPORTO

Equity

BUDGET

300M€

VALORE DI PROGETTO AMMISSIBILE

10M€ - 30M€

Criteri e Documenti

Spese Ammissibili

- Equity investment in scale-up activities
- Development and commercialization of innovations
- Expand operational capacity

Condizioni di Accesso

- Legal entities from EU Member States and Associated Countries
- Compliance with general and specific admissibility and eligibility criteria
- Applicant must be a single SME or small mid-cap (up to 499 employees) established in an EU Member State or Associated Country
- Applicant must demonstrate a pre-commitment for at least 20% of the total funding round from a single qualified investor
- Project must address a critical technology area listed in the STEP regulation
- Applicants must comply with EIC Fund Investment Guidelines

Criteri di Selezione

- Excellence (scientific and technical merit)
- Impact (contribution to policy and partnership KPIs)
- Quality and efficiency of implementation
- Market impact and scalability
- Contribution to EU strategic interests
- Financial and operational capacity
- Pre-commitment from qualified investor

Informazioni Obbligatorie

- Application form (Part A and Part B)
- Budget
- Evidence of investor pre-commitment
- Company registration documentation
- Financial statements
- Annexes as required in EIC Work Programme 2026

Indicatori di Risultato

- Scale-up of strategic technology in the EU
- Retention of IP and company value within EU/Associated Countries
- Catalyzed large private funding rounds

Dettagli Programma UE

ID BANDO

HORIZON-EIC-2026-STEP

CONTRIBUTO UE

€10,000,000.00 to €30,000,000.00

REGOLA DEL TASSO DI FINANZIAMENTO

Equity-only investments; EIC investment must be one quarter to one fifth of the total funding round, with the remainder from external investors. No grant component. Maximum EIC investment per project is €30 million.

MODALITÀ DI PRESENTAZIONE

Continuous

PROGETTI PREVISTI

10

Idoneità

Settori Idonei

- ICT e Software
- Energia e Ambiente
- Industria
- Salute e Life Sciences
- Altro

Dimensioni Aziendali

- PMI

- Small Mid-Cap

Modalità di Candidatura

- Individuale

Tipi di Azione

- Scale-up of critical technologies
- Commercialization of high-risk innovations
- Expansion of manufacturing capacity
- Deployment of strategic technologies
- Acceleration of market entry

Link Ufficiali

Regolamento Ufficiale:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/HORI-ZON-EIC-2026-STEP?order=DESC&pageNumber=1&pageSize=50&sortBy=startDate&isExactMatch=true&status=31094502&programmePart=43121666&frameworkProgramme=43108390&deadlineDate=1780182000000,1798675200000>

Pagina Grantavia: <https://grantavia.com/it/incentives/eic-step-scale-up>

Prenota un incontro: <https://calendly.com/ines-carreira-fi-group/reuniao>