Call Manual

Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst

Open call for Startups

Multi-cut-off

(under KIC Business Plan 2026-2028)

EIT Urban Mobility & Techstars

Barcelona| 29 June 2026

eiturbanmobility.eu

HISTORY OF CHANGES			
Version	Publication Date	Change	Page
1.0	29/06/2026	Initial version	n/a
2.0	17/08/2026	Second version	n/a

Disclaimer

This Call Manual may be subject to updates, including corrections, modifications, or clarifications. Any changes will be published both on EIT Urban Mobility and on Techstars' website. Applicants are therefore encouraged to regularly consult the Call pages to ensure they are informed of the latest updates.

Contents

Abbreviations

EIT	European Institute of Innovation and Technology
HE MGA	Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement
KIC	Knowledge and Innovation Community. EIT Urban Mobility is a KIC
PIC	9-digit Participant Identification Code
SAFE	Simple Agreement for Future Equity
FSA	Financial Support Agreement

Definitions

Knowledge Triangle Integration	The EIT is established to complement existing Union and national policies and initiatives by fostering the integration of the knowledge triangle – higher education, research and innovation, and business creation – across the Union.
Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement	The Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement (HE MGA) sets out the rights and obligations and the terms and conditions applicable to the implementation of the EIT grant.
Milestones	Measurable, time-bound performance targets agreed upon between the startup, Techstars, and EIT Urban Mobility, agreed between weeks 5 and 6 of the programme. Milestone achievement is a condition for unlocking the second tranche of the grant payment. Examples of qualifying milestones include verified commercial traction (e.g., new clients signed, increased revenue, or a paid pilot), a Letter of Intent (LOI) or term sheet from an accredited investor, or a verified expression of interest from a reputable, qualified investor.
Cohort	A cohort refers to the group of startups selected to participate in the programme within a given calendar year. Each cohort begins and ends within the same calendar year, with one cohort running per year across the programme period 2026–2028.

1. Introduction

1.1. Information on the EIT

The EIT is a European Union body with a legal personality and a wide legal capacity accorded to legal persons under national law. The EIT was created in 2008 by the European Union (EU) to enhance Europe's ability to innovate by nurturing entrepreneurial talent and supporting groundbreaking ideas. Through its "knowledge triangle" model, the EIT connects leading companies, universities, and research centres to form dynamic cross-border partnerships called KICs. These communities work collaboratively to address pressing societal challenges and drive innovation in the agri-food sector, health and well-being, raw materials, mobility and urban living or cultural and creative sectors, to name a few.

EIT Urban Mobility is Europe's leading innovation community with the vision to accelerate the transition towards sustainable urban mobility that improves quality of life in cities, enabling greener, safer, more inclusive and more liveable urban environments across Europe.

EIT Urban Mobility's mission is to bring together Europe's leading actors in mobility, including cities, companies, research institutions and universities, to deliver solutions that are scalable, inclusive and aligned with EU policy priorities. EIT Urban Mobility advances its mission through integrated education, innovation, business creation and ecosystem-building activities, strengthening Europe's competitiveness while contributing to societal and climate objectives. Three overarching societal impact goals guide our ambition:

1. Improving quality of life in cities;
2. Mitigating and adapting to climate change; and
3. Creating jobs and strengthening the European urban mobility sector

Five strategic objectives (SOs), as set out in the Strategic Agenda 2021-2027, steer our activities and ambitions, and will lead us to achieve our mission:

- SO1 - Create liveable urban spaces
- SO2 - Close the knowledge gap
- SO3 - Deploy and scale green, safe, and inclusive mobility solutions for people and goods
- SO4 - Accelerate market opportunities
- SO5 - Promote effective policies and behavioural change.

Within EIT Urban Mobility, the Impact Ventures team leads the organisation's startup support and impact investment activities, acting as the primary interface between the innovation ecosystem and EIT Urban Mobility's investment strategy. Impact Ventures oversees the design and management of EIT Urban Mobility's accelerator programmes, with the dual mandate of supporting early-stage ventures to grow and scale, and generating a pipeline of de-risked, investment-ready companies aligned with EIT Urban Mobility's Strategic Agenda 2021–2027.

The Flagship Accelerator, Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst, is the centrepiece of this approach: a blended finance programme running from 2026 to 2028 that combines tailored business support, grants, and a pathway to institutional investment.

2. Overview of key information on the call

Call reference name and acronym	Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst
Call opening and deadlines for applications (indicative)	**Call publication/opening:** 29 June 2026 **Deadline for applications:** • **First cut-off deadline:** 26 August 2026 at 17:00 CEST • **Second cut-off deadline:** 25 August 2027 at 17:00 CEST • **Third cut-off deadline:** 8 March 2028 at 17:00 CEST
Evaluation and implementation timeline (indicative)	• **First cut-off dates:** 26 August 2026 at 17:00 CEST Evaluation of proposals: from July to September 2026 Communication of results to applicants: September 2026 Signature of the subgrant agreement: September 2026 Tentative start of the projects: September 2026 Tentative end of the projects: December 2026 • **Second cut-off dates:** 25 August 2027 at 17:00 CEST Evaluation of proposals: from July to September 2027 Communication of results to applicants: September 2027 Signature of the subgrant agreement: September 2027 Tentative start of the projects: September 2027 Tentative end of the projects: December 2027 • **Third cut-off dates:** 8 March 2028 at 17:00 CEST Evaluation of proposals: from January to March 2028 Communication of results to applicants: March 2028 Signature of the subgrant agreement: March 2028 Tentative start of the projects: April 2028 Tentative end of the projects: June 2028
Estimated EIT funding allocated to this call	The estimated EIT funding allocated to this Call is **€2,400,000.00.** This amount corresponds exclusively to the financial support to be disbursed directly to the supported startups in the form of cash grants (up to €60,000 per startup, across two tranches). It does not include the costs associated with the delivery of the accelerator programme itself. The €40,000 accelerator support is provided in kind through a separate budget allocation and is not paid directly to startups.
List of call documents	• Call Manual • Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA

List of other reference documents (with links)	• Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement (AGA)
Link to the submission portal	https://apply.techstars.com Follow the instructions on the platform to submit the application from. More details can be found in Section 7
Topics to be addressed	Proposed topics should fall within the following categories: electrification of transport and alternative fuels, AI & mobility data management, urban logistics, shared and public transport and health and mobility.
Contact point	Applicants may contact Techstars directly to answer any questions or address any concerns about the Call: foundercatalyst@techstars.com
Further information for interested applicants	To help applicants prepare and submit their proposals, Techstars will host an information session. Details on the date, time, format, and registration link will be published on https://techstars.com/techstars-eit-urban-mobility-founder-catalyst ahead of the call opening.

3. Description of the call

3.1. Purpose and scope of activities

The Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst is validated and co-financed by EIT Urban Mobility in response to identified European market gaps, as outlined in the impact assessment for Horizon Europe. Its purpose is to enable supported startups to access risk capital and to strengthen the Union's competitiveness and innovation capacity.

In line with Horizon Europe's blended financing framework, the programme creates a unique opportunity for supported startups to partner with EIT Urban Mobility, which may become a shareholder following a Portfolio Assessment clearance phase. This arrangement allows startups to benefit from institutional shareholder support to accelerate their growth, whilst generating a financial return for EIT Urban Mobility in support of its long-term financial sustainability. Any revenue generated through this mechanism is ultimately reinvested into the EIT's Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) ecosystem.

By linking both the in-kind support and cash grant components to structured performance-based and portfolio readiness milestones, the programme effectively de-risks the deal flow and raises the quality and maturity of startups entering the portfolio pipeline. This approach enables EIT Urban Mobility to generate returns on its accelerator investment through financial sustainability instruments — specifically, Simple Agreements for Future Equity (SAFE) — ensuring long-term alignment with the KIC Strategic Agenda, the organisation's financial sustainability objectives, and each startup's growth trajectory, whilst preserving flexibility and transparency for all parties involved.

All startups selected and supported through the programme are required to sign a SAFE agreement with EIT Urban Mobility for a potential total value of up to €100,000, structured in two tranches as explained in Section 4.

3.2. What the programme offers

Selected startups will benefit from a structured, intensive 10-week acceleration programme delivered by Techstars, combining group and individual support tailored to each startup's needs and stage of development. The programme includes:

- One-to-one mentoring and coaching: At least 50% of the support is delivered as individualised sessions covering topics such as pricing, sales, product development, fundraising, and go-to-market strategy.
- Group training sessions: Covering key topics including business development, impact validation, scaling, and investment readiness.
- Investor and stakeholder access: Pitch sessions, Q&As, and networking opportunities with investors, corporates, cities, and ecosystem partners.
- Peer learning: Facilitated cohort discussions, startup-led sessions, and community-building activities.

- Two in-person events: A Kick-off event at the start of the programme and a Demo Day at the end, providing visibility and direct engagement with the wider EIT Urban Mobility ecosystem.
- EIT Urban Mobility network access: Privileged access to Europe's leading urban mobility innovation community, including cities, industry partners, research institutions, and investors.

Following graduation, each startup benefits from up to six months of post-programme follow-up support, during which performance-based milestones are reviewed and portfolio readiness is assessed (see Section 4 for details on Grant 2).

The total value of programme support delivered by Techstars is €40,000 per startup, provided in kind and separate from the cash grants described in Section 4.

3.3. Main requirements for project implementation

This section explains the purpose and scope of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst programme, what it offers selected startups, and what will be expected from the startup throughout its participation.

3.3.1. Project duration

The Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst project runs over a three-year period, from June 2026 to December 2028. Each year, one cohort of selected startups will be supported through a structured **10-week accelerator programme**, delivering intensive, tailored business and technical support. Following graduation, each startup will benefit from up to **six months of post-programme follow-up support**, during which performance-based milestones will be reviewed and portfolio readiness assessed. The programme is therefore designed as a continuous, multi-year initiative, with each annual cohort running its full cycle, from selection to post-graduation follow-up, within the same calendar year.

A minimum of 10 startups in 2026, graduated latest by 31 December 2026

A minimum of 20 startups in 2027, graduated latest by 31 December 2027

A maximum of 10 startups in 2028, graduated latest by 15 June 2028

3.3.2. Project implementation

Selected startups must ensure their active and committed participation throughout the full duration of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst programme, contributing to the achievement of their individual performance-based milestones and to the overall goals of the programme. Programme implementation must follow the principles of transparency, sound financial management, and responsible use of public funds. Selected startups are required to:

- sign the Simple Agreement for Future Equity (SAFE) with EIT Urban Mobility prior to the cohort start date. The SAFE agreement formalises the terms of the financial support and the potential future equity relationship with EIT Urban Mobility. Startups that do not sign the SAFE before the cohort start date will not be formally onboarded onto the programme.

- actively participate in all programme activities, including group training sessions, one-to-one mentoring and coaching, and the mandatory in-person events (Kick-off and Demo Day);
- engage proactively with the Techstars team and EIT Urban Mobility throughout the programme, including responding to information requests, participating in monitoring meetings, and submitting any required documentation within the agreed deadlines;
- comply with visibility and communication obligations by including a clear reference to their participation in the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst programme, along with the EIT Urban Mobility logo, on their organisation's website prior to the cohort start date, and in all relevant public communications throughout the programme.
- participating in a minimum of two monitoring meetings with Techstars and EIT Urban Mobility during the programme and post-graduation follow-up period, to review progress against their agreed performance-based milestones and assess clearance of Grant 2 Trigger 1. Only startups having successfully completed Trigger 1 will be considered for Grant 2 Trigger 2.

Failure to comply with the programme participation requirements may result in the withholding of subsequent grant tranches or termination of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA.

3.3.3. Monitoring and reporting

EIT Urban Mobility, in coordination with Techstars, will monitor the progress and participation of selected startups throughout the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst programme to verify compliance with the call conditions and the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA.

Grant payments are released against the achievement of the following milestones:

- **Grant 1 (€10,000)**: Released upon formal selection and signature of the SAFE agreement.
- **Grant 2 (€50,000)**: Released upon successful completion of both triggers — the agreed performance-based milestone (Trigger 1) and the EIT Urban Mobility Selection Committee portfolio readiness assessment (Trigger 2).

Performance-based milestones are jointly agreed between the startup, Techstars, and EIT Urban Mobility during a structured mid-programme review, taking place between weeks 5 and 6 of the acceleration programme.

To support the monitoring process, selected startups are expected to:

- participate in a minimum of two monitoring meetings with Techstars and EIT Urban Mobility during the post-graduation follow-up period, to review progress against their agreed performance-based milestones;
- respond promptly to any information requests from EIT Urban Mobility or Techstars for verification purposes;
- report any issue or circumstance that may affect their ability to achieve the agreed milestones within the established timeline.

- submit a brief final report at the end of the post-graduation follow-up period. This report, the template for which will be provided by Techstars, serves as the primary supporting document to confirm that the startup has been actively supported throughout the programme. The final report will form part of the programme's reporting obligations towards the EIT.

A formal ex-post impact assessment may be conducted by EIT Urban Mobility within up to five years of the programme's completion.

4. Financial aspects of the call

This section explains the full financial structure of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst programme, how much funding is available, how it is structured, when and how payments are made, what the funding can be used for, and what record-keeping is required.

4.1. Funding overview

The maximum EIT funding allocated to the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst programme for the period 2026–2028 is **€2,400,000**, to be disbursed directly to selected startups across three annual cohorts. This amount covers the cash grant components only, and does not include the cost of the accelerator programme itself, which is valued at **€40,000** per startup.

The funding will be allocated across the three cohorts as follows:

Cohort	MaximumEIT funding per cut-off	Number of selected and supported startups
2026	EUR 600,000.00	A minimum of 10 startups
2027	EUR 1,200,000.00	A minimum of 20 startups
2028	EUR 600,000.00	A maximum of 10 startups

4.2. Lump Sum Funding Model

This call will fund around **40 startups with a maximum amount of €60,000** per selected startup through a **lump sum** funding model. Under this model, grant payments are not based on the individual costs incurred by the startup, but on whether the startup has met the agreed conditions for each payment tranche. Selected startups are therefore not required to submit invoices or detailed cost reports to receive their grant, payment is triggered by the achievement of defined milestones and conditions, as set out in the Financial Support Agreement (FSA).

The lump sum model is designed to reduce administrative burden, minimise financial errors, and make participation in the EIT Urban Mobility ecosystem more accessible and transparent. It is important to note that compliance with the lump sum conditions is mandatory: grants will only be paid upon verification that the relevant milestone or condition has been met, and failure to meet these conditions may result in the grant not being awarded.

4.3. Total value of support

As a selected startup, the total value of support available is up to **€100,000** structured as follows:

Component	Amount	Form
Accelerator programme support	€40,000	Delivered by Techstars (In-kind contribution)
Grant 1	€10,000	Cash, paid upon selection and signature of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA
Grant 2	€50,000	Cash, paid following graduation and milestone achievement (conditional)
TOTAL	**€100,000**	

4.4. Payment arrangements

Cash grants are disbursed directly by EIT Urban Mobility in two tranches:

- **Grant 1 — €10,000**: A fixed lump sum paid upon formal selection and signature of both the Financial Support Agreement (FSA) and the SAFE agreement.

- **Grant 2 — €50,000**: A fixed lump sum paid following graduation, subject to the successful completion of two triggers:
    - **Trigger 1**: **Performance-based milestone**: The startup must achieve its agreed performance-based milestone, as verified and approved by Techstars and EIT Urban Mobility. Triggers must be assessed within a maximum of six months following cohort graduation.
    - **Trigger 2**: **Portfolio readiness assessment**: The startup must receive a positive portfolio readiness assessment from EIT Urban Mobility's Selection Committee.

Only startups having successfully completed Trigger 1 will be considered for Trigger 2. Grant 2 is an **all-or-nothing payment**, the full €50,000 is awarded only upon clearance of both triggers, and no partial payment will be made under any circumstances. Startups that do not achieve Trigger 1 will not be considered for Trigger 2, and Grant 2 will not be disbursed.

4.5. Performance-based milestones

Performance-based milestones are the agreed targets that each startup must achieve to unlock Grant 2 (Trigger 1). Milestones are jointly defined and agreed between the startup, Techstars, and EIT Urban Mobility during a structured mid-programme review, taking place **between weeks 5 and 6** of the acceleration programme, once Techstars and EIT Urban Mobility have had sufficient time to assess each startup's progress and potential. The agreed milestone(s) are formally recorded in the startup's SAFE agreement.

Milestones must be measurable, time-bound, and ambitious yet achievable within the scope of programme support. The achievement end-date is no later than six months after cohort graduation.

By way of example, milestones may include, but are not limited to:

Milestone	Example	Expected timeframe
Commercial traction	New clients signed, increased revenue target, or paid pilot agreement secured	Within 6 months of graduation
Investor engagement	Letter of Intent (LOI) or term sheet from an accredited investor	Within 6 months of graduation
Investor interest	Verified expression of interest from a reputable qualified investor (dated no more than 6 months prior, valid for at least 6 months)	Within 6 months of graduation

The above are illustrative examples only. The final milestone(s) for each startup will be individually agreed during onboarding and must be measurable, time-bound, and ambitious yet achievable within the scope of programme support.

4.6. Financial sustainability and SAFE Agreement

All startups selected and supported through the programme are required to sign a **Simple Agreement for Future Equity (SAFE)** with EIT Urban Mobility. Each startup will enter into a single SAFE agreement for a potential total value of up to **€100,000**, structured in two tranches:

1. **First tranche — €50,000**: Covers the in-kind accelerator programme support delivered by Techstars (valued at €40,000) and Grant 1, a cash payment of €10,000 paid directly to the startup upon selection.
2. **Second tranche — €50,000**: A cash grant subject to the successful completion of Trigger 1 (performance-based milestone) and Trigger 2 (EIT Urban Mobility Selection Committee portfolio readiness assessment), as described in Section 4.4 above.

5. Call criteria

Following each cut-off date, the admissibility, eligibility and exclusion criteria checks will be performed for each proposal in line with the following criteria.

These checks are carried out by Techstars' staff in line with the principles of transparency, equal treatment, non-discrimination and guaranteeing the absence of conflict of interest.

5.1. Admissibility

Application must be:

- **Submitted before the appropriate cut-off deadline** (see Section 2 above).
- **Submitted using the forms provided** inside Techstar's electronic submission system (see Section 2 above).
- **Written in English**
- **Complete and contain all mandatory supporting documents:**
  - **A valid company registration certificate** confirming that the startup is legally incorporated in an EU Member State or a third country associated with Horizon Europe.
  - **A pitch deck**
- **Cannot include external links (except those specifically required)**; any other links will be disregarded by evaluators.

Applications missing any mandatory information or supporting documents, or containing blank or incorrect documents, will be automatically rejected at the admissibility stage. Any additional documents not specifically listed as optional will not be considered during the evaluation process.

Only applications satisfying all admissibility criteria will proceed to the eligibility assessment stage.

5.2 Eligibility

Following the admissibility check, only proposals complying with the following conditions will be considered eligible for further evaluation.

5.2.1 Eligible participants

For this call, and in line with the specific nature of the programme, **applications are submitted by a legal entity** (startup).

Startups must comply with the following minimum eligibility criteria:

- The startup must have a **team of at least 2 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)**. FTEs are individuals dedicated a minimum of 30 hours per week to the startup. These roles do not require a salary—stock options or pro bono contributions are also acceptable.
- The startup must be **legally incorporated** in an EU Member State or a third country associated with Horizon Europe, as per the **official list** published by the European Commission. A valid company registration certificate will be required.
- The startup must have been **incorporated less than 3 years** before the programme start date.
- Only **one application per startup** is allowed per cohort. In case of additional applications, only the latest submitted application will be evaluated.
- The startup must **not have previously participated** in any EIT Urban Mobility accelerator or programme addressing startups in the period 2020 - 2025, including:

- EIT Urban Mobility Accelerator programmes (e.g. Market Readiness Accelerators, Smart Mobility Accelerator, Better Mobility Accelerator, Accelerate2Move, Sustainable City Logistics, Energy & Public Realm, E+ Mobility, 5G TURBO, Urban Air Mobility Accelerator)
- EIT Urban Mobility Scale-up programmes
- Investment Readiness Accelerator/Programme
- EIT Community New European Bauhaus Catalyser programme
- EIT Community Supernovas Rocket Up programme

5.2.4 EU restrictions on participation

- **EU restrictive measures** — Entities subject to EU restrictive measures (i.e. sanctions imposed by the European Union against certain countries, regimes, organisations, or individuals in response to serious violations of international law, human rights abuses, or threats to international peace and security) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)[1] as well as Article 75 TFEU[2], are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

  Special rules also apply to entities covered by Commission Guidelines No 2013/C 205/0522[3].

  To verify whether your organisation is subject to EU sanctions, please consult the EU Sanctions Map. Please note that in case of conflict, the EU Official Journal prevails over the Sanctions Map.

- **Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine** — Given the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the involvement of Belarus, there is currently no appropriate context allowing the implementation of the actions foreseen in this programme with legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government controlled territories of Ukraine. Therefore, even where such entities are not subject to EU restrictive measures, such legal entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This includes participation as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, third parties giving in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis for justified reasons.

  With specific regard to measures addressed to Russia, following the adoption of the Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1745 of 24 June 2024[4] (amending Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014) concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the

[1] Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the EU Sanctions Map

[2] Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the EU Sanctions Map

[3] Commission guidelines No 2013/C 205/05 on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards (OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp. 9-11)

[4] OJ L 229, 31.7.2014, p. 1–11

situation in Ukraine, legal entities established outside Russia but whose proprietary rights are directly or indirectly owned for more than 50% by a legal person, entity or body established in Russia are also not eligible to participate in any capacity.

- **Restrictions for the protection of European communication networks —** The protection of European communication networks has been identified as an important security interest of the Union and its Member States[5]. Certain restrictions apply to entities involved in the supply, deployment, or operation of communication network equipment or services that have been identified as posing a risk to the security of European communication networks (for example, entities linked to suppliers flagged under EU 5G security guidelines). If your startup operates in this space, please refer to the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025, General Annexes, B – Eligibility, page 14 for further details. For most startups applying to this programme, this restriction will not be applicable.[6]

5.3 Exclusion criteria

Entities participating in this Call can be excluded **at any time** (during the evaluation, the onboarding and contracting phase, or the implementation phase) if they:[7]

- Are in one of the following situations:
    a. Bankrupt, being wound up, having their affairs administered by the courts, entered an arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or subject to any other similar proceedings or procedures under national law (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts).
    b. Declared in breach of social security or tax obligations by a final judgment or decision (including persons with unlimited liability for the participant's debts).
- Are found guilty of grave professional misconduct by a final judgment or decision (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making, or control).
- Are subject to an administrative sanction (i.e., exclusion).
- Are convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making, or control).
- Show significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under a procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision financed by the EU or Euratom budget (including persons having powers of representation, decision-making, or control).

[5] European Council conclusions of 1 and 2 October 2020 (EUCO 13/20), point 11; Council Conclusions on the significance of 5G to the European Economy and the need to mitigate security risks linked to 5G, 14517/19.
[6]https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-14-general-annexes_horizon-2025_en.pdf
[7] See article 57 of Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC and article 80 of Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC (referral to article 57 of Directive 2014/24/EU).

- Have misrepresented information required for participating in the EIT Urban Mobility funding scheme or fail to submit such information.
- Were involved in the preparation of any documentation regarding this call or are involved in the evaluation process of this call, and this entails a distortion of competition.
- Are found to be attempting to influence the decision-making process of the call during the process.
- Attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon its undue advantages in the call process.

If any startup is excluded at any stage (e.g. evaluation, contracting, implementation), EIT Urban Mobility reserves the right to take appropriate action, which may include rejecting or discontinuing their participation in the programme.

6. Evaluation procedure

The evaluation process is conducted in accordance with the principles of transparency, equal treatment, confidentiality, and the absence of conflicts of interest. All evaluators are required to complete and sign a declaration of confidentiality and non-conflict of interest prior to participating in the process.

6.1 Evaluation phases and scoring scale

Only applications that have passed all admissibility, eligibility, and exclusion checks set out in Section 5 will proceed to the quality evaluation described in this section.

The quality evaluation is conducted across two consecutive phases:

- **Phase 1 — Proposal Evaluation** (written assessment): Each application is evaluated by a panel of at least two evaluators, one internal and one external. The external evaluator's score accounts for 55%, and the internal evaluator's score for 45%, of the total Phase 1 score.

- **Phase 2 — Live Pitch** (presentation to a jury panel): Top-scoring applications from Phase 1 are invited to a live pitch, evaluated by a jury of at least two members, one internal and one external, with the same 55/45 weighting. At least one member of EIT Urban Mobility will participate as an internal evaluator.

Each criterion is assessed according to the following scoring scale:

Score	Description	
0	**None**	The information requested is missing or incomplete
1	**Very poor**	The information provided is considered irrelevant or inadequate compared to the specific information required for the block and/or call provisions
2	**Poor**	The information provided lacks relevant quality and contains significant weaknesses, compared to the specific block required information and/or call provisions
3	**Fair**	The overall information provided is adequate, however, some aspects are unclearly or insufficiently detailed, compared to the specific block required information and/or call provisions
4	**Good**	The information provided is adequate with sufficiently outlined details, compared to the specific block required information and/or call provisions
5	**Excellent**	The information provided is outstanding in its details, clarity and coherence, compared to the specific block required information and/or call provisions

6.2 Award criteria and scoring criteria

The final application score is the sum of the Phase 1 score (maximum 20 points) and the Phase 2 score (maximum 20 points), for a **maximum total score of 40 points**. The criteria and scoring for each phase are described in detail below.

6.2.1. Phase 1 — Proposal Evaluation

Each application is scored against four criteria for a maximum of 20 points:

	1. Excellence / Innovation	2. Team / Structure	3. Impact	4. Implementation and overall merit	TOTAL
Evaluation criteria	Degree of innovativeness and technological advancement of the proposed solution. Novelty compared to existing market offerings and potential to address current urban mobility challenges.	Quality and experience of the founding and management team (C-levels). Demonstrated execution capability, coachability, and clarity of the hiring plan. Strength of relationships with key stakeholders, investors, and partners.	Potential of the product or service to deliver measurable improvements in urban mobility, including sustainability, accessibility, safety, efficiency, or emissions reduction.	Overall merit of the applicant and application fit for the accelerator programme. Achievements and pilot experience.	**20**
Score	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	

The Phase 1 score is determined by the weighted average of all evaluators' scores. Applications are then ranked from highest to lowest score.

To ensure a competitive and fair selection process, the number of startups invited to Phase 2 will be at least 150% and a maximum of 200% of the available cohort spots. For example, for a cohort of 10 startups, between 15 and 20 startups will advance to Phase 2.

All applicants will be notified by email of the outcome of Phase 1.

6.2.2. Advancing to Phase 2 — Requirement

In addition to achieving a sufficiently high Phase 1 score, startups invited to the Live Pitch must fulfil the following two requirements within **5 calendar days** of being notified of their Phase 1 outcome:

1. **Registration Certificate**
   Startups must submit a valid registration certificate for their company, confirming its legal incorporation and current active status.

2. **Participant Identification Code (PIC number)**
   Startups must provide a valid PIC number — a nine-digit code that uniquely identifies your organisation in the EU funding and tender system, required for contracting purposes.

   To obtain your PIC number:
   1. Access the EU Funding & Tenders Opportunities Portal.
   2. Register your startup or verify whether it is already registered by searching for your organisation's name or VAT number (no need to wait until the validation).
   3. Once registered, your PIC number will be displayed in your organisation's profile.

1. **Confirmation of SAFE and FSA Agreement**
   Startups must confirm their acceptance of the terms of the SAFE and FSA to be signed with EIT Urban Mobility upon formal selection. A SAFEand FSA agreement template will be provided by EIT Urban Mobility at the time of notification of Phase 1 results.

Failure to fulfil either requirement within the 5-day deadline will result in the startup being unable to proceed to Phase 2, regardless of their Phase 1 score. In such cases, the next highest-ranked startup on the Phase 1 ranking list will be invited to proceed.

6.2.3. Phase 2 — Live Pitch

Shortlisted startups will pitch their candidacy to a jury panel of at least two members. A maximum of two representatives per startup may attend the live pitch. Each application is scored against two criteria for a maximum of 20 points:

	1. Pitch	2. Overall fit to the accelerator	TOTAL
Evaluation criteria	Clarity of the pitch deck on: - Founding team - Problem – solution fit - Innovativeness - Market validation - Business model, pricing and go-to-market strategy	Merits and readiness of the applicant. Quality and feasibility of proposed performance-based milestones (measurable, time-bound, ambitious yet achievable with programme support).	**20**

	- Partners and traction - Competition and USP - Financial projections (3-5 years) - Funding needs - Impact, SDG and KPIs	Strategic fit of the startup to the accelerator call and investability potential.	
Score	**10**	**10**	

Following the live pitches, a Consensus Meeting will be organised at which jury members agree on a final averaged score for each application. A final evaluation report will be produced.

6.2.4. Final application score and award

The final application score is the sum of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 scores. Following the Consensus Meeting, applications are ranked from highest to lowest score. The highest-ranked startups that fall within the number of available cohort spots will be conditionally accepted onto the programme and invited to proceed.

The remaining startups ranked in scoring order which do not fall within the number of available cohort spots will be included in the reserve list. This reserve list will only be valid for the cut-off under which the application was submitted and evaluated.

In the event of a tie, preference will be given to the application with the highest Phase 2 score. If a tie remains, preference will be given to the application with the highest Phase 1 score.

6.3 Communication of evaluation results to applicants

6.3.1 Communication of Results

Following the award decision, all applicants will be informed of the outcome in writing via email, including their individual scores and assessment feedback.

Applicants seeking further clarification on their evaluation result may contact Techstars by email. Such requests will be responded to within 15 calendar days, subject to extension by Techstars with due justification.

6.3.2 Requirements for selected proposals

Formally selected startups are reminded of the participation requirements set out in Section 3.3.2, which become binding upon formal selection.

6.4 Standstill period

A mandatory standstill period of up to 30 calendar days shall apply between the communication of the evaluation results to applicants and the signature of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSAs. This period is counted from the day after the dispatch of the communication of results.

6.5 Publication of recipients of funds

The EIT Urban Mobility shall make available (on a dedicated page on its website) information on recipients of funds (only legal persons or entities without a legal personality) financed from the EIT budget, no later than 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the funds were legally committed.

The following information shall be published, having due regard for the requirements of confidentiality and security, in particular the protection of personal data:

(a) the recipient's full legal name and the country where it is established;

(b) the amount committed and, in case of a commitment with multiple recipients, the breakdown of this amount per recipient where available;

(c) subject of grant or contract.

6.6 Appeal process

Applicants who wish to contest the outcome of the admissibility, eligibility, evaluation, or selection process may submit a formal appeal to Techstars within **7 calendar days** of receiving written notification of the decision they wish to contest.

Appeals are only admissible on the following grounds:

- A procedural error occurred during the admissibility, eligibility, or evaluation process that materially affected the outcome.
- The evaluation result contains a factual inaccuracy or clearly contradicts information provided in the application.

Appeals based solely on disagreement with the evaluators' judgement or scores will not be considered admissible.

To submit an appeal, applicants must send an email to foundercatalystmobility@techstars.com with the subject line "Appeal — [Startup name] — [Cohort year]", including:

- a clear description of the grounds for the appeal;
- reference to the specific decision or evaluation outcome being contested;
- any supporting evidence the applicant wishes to submit.

All admissible appeals will be reviewed by an **Appeal Panel composed of a minimum of two people** who were not involved in the original evaluation or selection process. The Appeal Panel will assess whether the grounds for appeal are substantiated and communicate a final decision to the applicant.

Techstars will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 calendar days and communicate the outcome of the appeal review within **15 calendar days** of receipt. This deadline may be extended with due justification, in which case the applicant will be informed accordingly.

Appeal decisions are final. The submission of an appeal does not suspend the programme timeline or delay the onboarding of other selected startups.

7. Proposal submission process

Applications must be submitted exclusively through the online application portal managed by Techstars, accessible at https://apply.techstars.com from the call opening date.

To apply, please follow these steps:

1. Access the application portal at https://apply.techstars.com.
2. Create an account or log in if you already have one.
3. Complete all mandatory sections of the application form in full and in English.
4. Upload all required supporting documents as specified in the application form.
5. Review your application carefully before submitting.
6. Submit before the relevant cut-off deadline (see Section 2).

Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances. For technical support with the submission platform, please contact Techstars at foundercatalystmobility@techstars.com. Applicants are strongly advised to submit well ahead of the deadline, as last-minute technical issues cannot be guaranteed to be resolved in time.

8. Other terms and conditions

8.1 Acceptance of the call conditions

EIT Urban Mobility reserves the right to make reasonable amendments and additions to the call conditions. Amendments and additions to the call conditions shall be valid only before the submission deadline, and if made available to all potential applicants at the same time on the call page.

EIT Urban Mobility may declare the call unsuccessful in case no applications are received, if the applications do not meet the admissibility, eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria, or if none of the applications reach the thresholds laid down in this call text.

By submitting the application form, the applicant agrees to the present call conditions. Applicants agree that they have no legal entitlement to funding.

8.2 Cancellation of the call

EIT Urban Mobility reserves the right to cancel the call at any time before the signature of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSAs without the obligation to compensate applicants and potential applicants, in particular where its objectives can no longer be met, provided that the applicants are informed in a transparent manner in writing as follows:

- if the cancellation takes place before that award: on the call page of EIT Urban Mobility,
- if the cancellation takes place following the communication of the results to the applicants, during the standstill period, or anytime before the signature of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA: in writing directly to the selected applicants.

8.3 Data protection

PBTS Europe Limited, operating as Techstars (“Techstars”), and EIT Urban Mobility act as joint controllers of the personal data processed within the scope of this programme, pursuant to the Joint Controllership Agreement between them. Techstars Central LLC, an affiliate of PBTS Europe Limited, may process personal data on Techstars’ behalf as an authorised sub-processor. Any processing of personal data shall be performed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation), the UK GDPR where applicable, and other applicable data protection laws. For personal data collected and processed in connection with this call, PBTS Europe Limited and EIT Urban Mobility act as co-funder. Any processing of personal data shall be performed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation), the UK GDPR where applicable, and other applicable data protection laws.

The personal data collected through the application and the Techstars platform will be used to evaluate applications and to conduct the call and programme. Subject to your consent, it may also be used to send newsletters, updates, and information about related initiatives, opportunities, or upcoming programmes. Application data may be shared internally among Techstars and its affiliated entities and, where necessary, with EIT Urban Mobility and with authorised evaluators, mentors, and partners involved in the assessment and delivery of the programme, subject to confidentiality obligations. Where personal data is transferred outside the EEA/UK, Techstars relies on appropriate safeguards, including the EU Standard Contractual Clauses and the EU–U.S. Data Privacy Framework and its UK Extension.

As a data subject, you have the right of access, rectification, erasure, restriction of processing, data portability, the right to object, and the right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing. To exercise these rights or for any question about the processing of your personal data, contact Techstars at privacy@techstars.com, or write to Techstars, 228 Park Ave S, PMB 99696, New York, NY 10003-1502. Techstars' representative in the European Union for the purposes of Article 27 GDPR is Techstars Berlin GmbH, Friedrichstr. 114A, 10117 Berlin (EURepresentative@techstars.com, subject line "Article 27 Correspondence").

Personal data will be retained only for as long as necessary for the purposes for which it was collected and to meet legal, accounting, and reporting requirements; for this call, data will be deleted five years after the announcement of the results in the case of unsuccessful applications and seven years for successful applicants. By submitting your application, you consent to Techstars and EIT Urban Mobility collecting, transferring, processing, storing, and deleting your data in accordance with these conditions. For more information, please consult the Techstars Privacy Policy at https://www.techstars.com/privacy-policy and the EIT Urban Mobility privacy statement. The Techstars Terms of Use apply to this section as applicable, unless otherwise provided in this Call Manual.

8.4 Confidentiality

Techstars undertakes to use any confidential information shared by applicants solely for the purposes of the evaluation and delivery of this programme. Confidential information means data and/or information (in any form) that is proprietary to, or possessed by, the applicants, not generally known to the public, and that is identified as confidential in writing or, when disclosed orally, identified as confidential at the time of disclosure.

Confidential information included in the application must be expressly labelled as such by the applicant in the application form. With respect to information expressly labelled confidential, Techstars undertakes (i) not to disclose it in any way or form without the prior written authorisation of the applicant, and (ii) not to use it for purposes other than those strictly necessary for participation in the call. Confidential information may be shared among Techstars and its affiliated entities, and with EIT Urban Mobility as co-funder, solely for the purposes of the call. Techstars undertakes to impose this confidentiality obligation on its employees, its affiliated entities and their employees, its collaborators, and on independent experts and all persons who, by virtue of participating in the conduct of the call (including as members of the Evaluation Committee), may have access to such confidential information.

Data and information regarding the implementation of selected projects (e.g., success stories) may be disclosed by Techstars and EIT Urban Mobility in connection with their activities unless electronic written notice is provided to foundercatalystmobility@techstars.com indicating such data and information regarding the implementation of selected projects are confidential and may not be disclosed by Techstars and EIT Urban Mobility. The Techstars Terms of Use apply to this section as applicable, unless otherwise provided in this Call Manual.

8.5 Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

Techstars is committed to avoiding conflicts of interest among all actors involved in the call and to complying with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, and sound financial management. Measures to avoid potential conflicts of interest or unequal treatment of applicants are in place, including conflict-of-interest declaration and the independent appeal/redress procedure described in this manual. If an applicant becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest affecting the conduct of the call, it shall notify Techstars without any delay. The Techstars Terms of Use apply to this section as applicable, unless otherwise provided in this Call Manual.

8.6 Ethics and values

Applicants and their proposals must comply with (i) ethical principles, including the highest standards of research integrity where applicable, and (ii) applicable EU, international, and national law, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Supplementary Protocols.

In using Techstars' services and participating in the programme, applicants also agree to abide by the Techstars Code of Conduct. In particular, applicants must not submit or promote content that is unlawful, defamatory, or intentionally misleading; that constitutes hate speech, harassment, or discrimination; that exploits or harms minors; or that otherwise violates or advocates the violation of any applicable law.

No funding may be granted, within or outside the EU, for activities that are prohibited in all Member States, and no funding may be granted in a Member State for an activity that is forbidden in that Member State. Please refer to the Techstars Terms of Use as applicable, and the call requirements for further details.

8.7 Intellectual Property Strategy

Applicants retain full and exclusive ownership of their prior information and intellectual property rights. By submitting an application, applicants affirm that they own, or have legally secured the right to use, all elements of the innovative product or service included in their application, or that they will take appropriate measures to secure and protect such rights during the project. The IP strategy checklist published on the call webpage provides guidance on measures to protect innovations. Any proposal must clearly demonstrate the planned measures to protect the innovations and to exploit the core IP rights.

Protecting intellectual property is a prerequisite for successful commercialisation. Given the scope of this call, any proposal should already have an associated IP strategy in place, and should demonstrate that it is commercially safe to make or sell the proposed solution without infringing existing third-party IP rights.

Applicants agree to indemnify and hold harmless Techstars and its affiliated entities, EIT Urban Mobility, the EIT, and any assignee or affiliate, from any direct third-party allegations or claims of intellectual property infringement arising from the applicant's product or service. Applicants retain the right to further develop, use, and license their intellectual property rights for creating, making, marketing, and distributing their products, services, and technology. Applicants agree to respect the IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) Rules (Article 16) of the Model Grant Agreement. The Techstars Terms of Use apply to this section as applicable, unless otherwise provided in this Call Manual.

8.8 Withdrawal of the funding – Recovery of undue amounts

EIT Urban Mobility may withdraw the funding after its award and recover all payments made in line with the provisions of the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA, including in the following cases:

- in case the applicant committed substantial errors, irregularities or fraud in the application form;

- in case the applicant committed serious breach of obligations under the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA or during its award (including non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, etc.)

- it is established that the awarded applicants were not eligible or should have been excluded.

8.9 Checks, reviews, audits and investigations

EIT Urban Mobility retains the right to initiate checks, reviews and audit on an applicant that has been awarded funding, in order to verify compliance with the requirements of the call conditions and of the legal and contractual framework referred to above.

EIT Urban Mobility may request any information and data from applicants that have been awarded funding for 5 years after completion for these purposes, as well as in relation to monitoring by the EIT.

In accordance with the Grant Agreement between the EIT and the KIC as well as the Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA, the EIT and/or the Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the Court of Auditors may carry out checks, reviews, audits and investigations in relation to the call and the implementation of the projects.

8.10 Applicable law

The present call is governed by the applicable European Union legal framework (i.e. in particular the EIT Regulation,[8] the EU Financial Regulation,[9] the Horizon Europe Regulation)[10], supplemented if necessary by the national law of Belgium.

The applicants agree to observe the obligations outlined in the Partnership Agreement and the Grant Agreement signed between the EIT and EIT Urban Mobility. Applicants agree to comply with the terms of the Model Techstars x EIT Urban Mobility Founder Catalyst FSA between successful applicants and EIT Urban Mobility, available at the Call webpage.

8.11 Settlement of disputes

All disputes arising out of or in connection with this Agreement, which cannot be solved amicably, shall be finally settled before the courts of Brussels.

[8] Regulation (EU) 2021/819
[9] Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509
[10] Regulation (EU) 2021/695