

EIC STEP

Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) Scale Up call



European
Innovation
Council



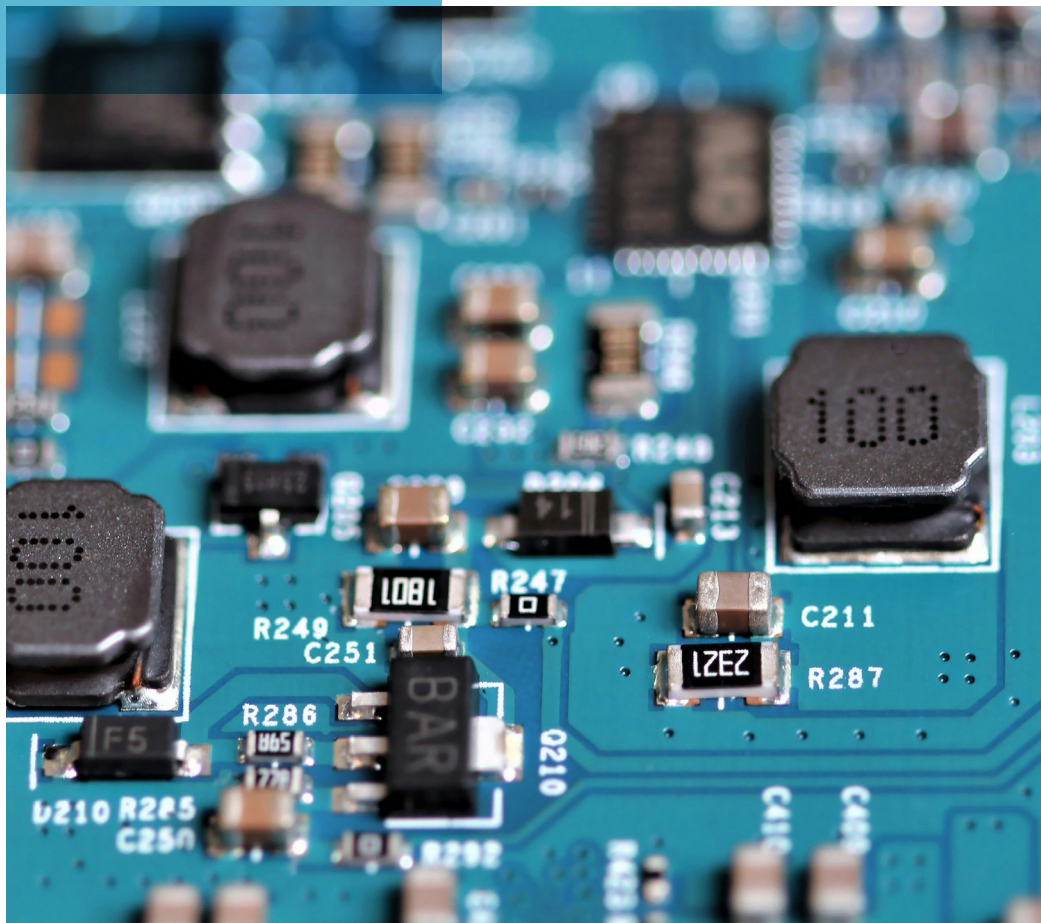
The Scale Up call is the European Union's dedicated instrument for turning breakthrough prototypes in the continent's most critical technology fields - above all quantum technologies, advanced semiconductors and other deep-tech enablers - into globally competitive industrial champions. It does so by offering sizeable, late-stage funding that multiplies earlier EIC or private investments and by pairing that capital with tailored strategic support (access to corporates, public buyers and international partners).

The call targets fast-growing SMEs and small mid-caps whose innovations can reinforce Europe's technological sovereignty, secure key value chains and generate high-quality jobs. By catalysing larger follow-on rounds, the STEP Scale Up scheme aims to accelerate market deployment, anchor scale-up activities in the EU and, ultimately, strengthen the Union's economic, industrial and geopolitical competitiveness in the decades to come.

Who Can Apply

- Single SME or small mid-cap (up to 499 employees) from a member state/associated country
- An investor may submit a proposal on behalf of an eligible SME or small mid-cap as defined above
- Public Limited Companies (PLCs) are not excluded from applying to the STEP call as long as they meet the eligibility conditions laid down for this call

Note: This scheme targets companies seeking major funding rounds, requiring proof of initial market interest from a qualified investor covering at least 20% of the total target funding round



Funding Rate

- Total 2025 budget of EUR 300 million
- Minimum investment EUR 10 million, maximum EUR 30 million in 2025
- Catalyse rounds of EUR 50-150 million

Scope of Innovation

- **Digital and Deep Tech:** Includes semiconductor, AI, quantum, advanced connectivity, sensing, robotics, and autonomous systems.
- **Clean Technologies:** Focus on net-zero solutions like solar, wind, battery storage, geothermal, hydrogen, biogas, carbon capture, nuclear, and circular economy.
- **Biotechnologies:** Includes critical medicines, DNA/RNA, proteins, cell engineering, gene vectors, bioinformatics, and nanobiotechnology.
- [For details see the Guidance Note on STEP](#)

Equity Only Investments

Managed by the EIC Fund, the STEP Scale Up scheme aims to bridge the funding gap for high-risk innovations that cannot be fully financed by other investors.

Technology Level Requirements

There is no explicit TRL requirement for the STEP Scale-Up call. However, the scheme targets companies in strategic technology domains that are preparing a substantial funding round - typically €50-150 million. Eligible applicants should already have completed earlier funding rounds and must secure at least one investor pre-commitment before submitting their proposal.

Application Process

Application

You can apply anytime via the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#).
Submit your proposal:

- a **full business plan**, including information on the company's ownership and financial structure, STEP related objectives (maximum 50 pages)
- a **pitch-deck** in PDF (15 pages maximum)
- a **pre-commitment** from a qualified investor
- an **ownership** control declaration

If your application meets the eligibility requirements, you will be invited to attend a jury interview.

You will be informed about the interview in 4-6 weeks from the start of the evaluation process.

EIC Jury interview

- At the interview, you will be assessed by a Jury of maximum six members
- You will be informed about the result of the interview in 2 weeks from the date of the interview

Companies, irrespective of whether they are retained for funding or not, that meet all evaluation criteria will be awarded the Sovereignty Seal and gain access to Business Acceleration Services.

Furthermore, if your proposal does not meet the criteria, you will receive feedback to help improve future applications.

Deadlines

Submit an application at any time. The evaluations of applications submitted will be organised at regular intervals depending on the number of applications - at least one per quarter or more frequently in urgent cases.

