



# OPEN CALL

## Guidelines for applicants Open Call 1

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## Guidelines for Applicants for D2XCEL Open Call 1

Open date: 2 April 2024, 14:00 CET

Application deadline: 14 June 2024, 17:00 CET

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# 1 Overview

The current *Guidelines for Applicants* summarises the main characteristics of the 1<sup>st</sup> Open Call for applications under the D2XCEL project. It gives exhaustive information on the scaling programme, its application process, eligibility criteria, submission requirements, and evaluation procedures. It gives details on the Open Call timelines and what are the benefits of the scaling programme.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> call which will be launched in November 2024 will have its own guidelines. If you are an interested applicant, it is your responsibility to read the current guidelines and its supporting documents available on the D2XCEL website and prepare your application in compliance with the requirements.

## 1.1 Who we are

D2XCEL is a collaborative pan-European scaling programme, bringing together a top-tier industry network of 300+ investors, public and private lead customers, and innovation hubs to support deep tech and digital ventures. We holistically mentor the selected ventures and connect them with investors, lead customers and other growth opportunities to strengthen Europe's leadership and sustainable growth in key sectors such as Transport, Logistics, Trade, and Smart Cities.

D2XCEL supports the existing startup ecosystem actors with state-of-the-art methodologies, best practices, tools, and especially pan-European networks. These will be developed and deployed in a program with 100 selected high-potential ventures, assuring both a direct impact on the success of those ventures as well as hands-on experience of the ecosystem actors.

D2XCEL first builds a network of 300 active key stakeholders and identifies market opportunities holding significant demand and growth potential and builds the needed knowledge to scale related companies. It then launches 2 open calls to attract the top 100 companies (50 companies in each Open Call and 10 companies in each market opportunity) and provides them holistic and time-efficient mentoring to help them address their individual challenges and build strategic plans. It then connects them with active investors, corporate partners, lead customers (private and public) and talent.

Raising visibility on the supported companies is also delivered to the portfolio companies as service. D2XCEL brings together a wide consortium of 13 partners from 8 countries, widening countries well represented. The D2XCEL consortium possesses the expertise to understand and analyse the challenges of the supported ventures, can deliver customised mentoring to build their competences and help them address their challenges, attract and motivate investors, partners, customers, talent and innovation ecosystem actors to take part

actively in the platform and connect them with the supported companies through a series of events across Europe furthermore creating awareness about the supported ventures to increase their visibility towards potential investors and partners.

## 1.2 D2XCEL Scaling Programme

D2XCEL's primary goal is to create and implement a sustainable scaling platform, enhancing the existing European startup ecosystem's effectiveness and efficiency. This platform aims to support deep tech and digital ventures in developing market-ready applications, fostering significant growth and impact, particularly in key sectors like Transport, Logistics, Trade, and Smart Cities. By providing state-of-the-art methodologies, best practices, tools, and extensive pan-European networks, D2XCEL aids startup ecosystem actors and support organizations. The program focuses on 100 selected high-potential ventures (startups and scale-ups), ensuring a direct impact on their success and offering ecosystem actors practical experience with new methodologies, networks, and synergies by:

### ➤ **Tailored support and collaborative services**

The D2XCEL Scaling programme offers tailored support and collaborative mentoring. The programme will provide holistic and time-efficient mentoring to identify and advise on both the specific challenges of each and every venture but also the industry ones.

Companies will receive coaching and support from top experts and industry-specific stakeholders on:

- access to pan-European growth funding, both dilutive and non-dilutive, public and private
- access to pan-European markets and internationalization (incl. legal/tax issues, setting up local subsidiaries, etc.)
- access to lead customers, across borders
- strengthening your founder team and boards and attract the best talent (pan-EU and global)
- building and managing strong IPR portfolios

### ➤ **Access to network of investors, customers, and partners**

D2XCEL Scaling Programme will foster the development of contacts, opportunities, and networks. The selected companies in the programme will receive support in attracting investments of Series A, series A+ or equivalent and unlock access to potential customers and Europe-wide markets.

The programme’s curated roadshow of in-person and online events is a pivotal element in facilitating these opportunities by bringing together the portfolio companies with investors engaged in the programme, corporates, lead customers, corporations, as well as potential talent and leaders. Selected companies can leverage these events to showcase their potential, build strategic relationships, and drive business success.

➤ **Raising international awareness and visibility**

The D2XCEL Scaling programme is dedicated to promoting the portfolio companies within and outside its networks. By joining our scaling programme, you gain access to prominent expert investors, network partners, leading customers, corporations, and fellow entrepreneurs. Engaging with these stakeholders within the D2XCEL network will enhance the visibility of your venture within relevant industry circles.

We offer comprehensive communication services, including the publication of high-quality news articles, success stories, recorded pitches, promotional videos, and insightful podcasts. These materials will be disseminated through the D2XCEL website and across our social media channels.

The D2XCEL network is founded on the shared goal of fostering the growth and success of companies, and we are committed to collaborating to showcase your company not only in Europe but also on a global scale, expanding your market presence.

## Value proposition for portfolio companies

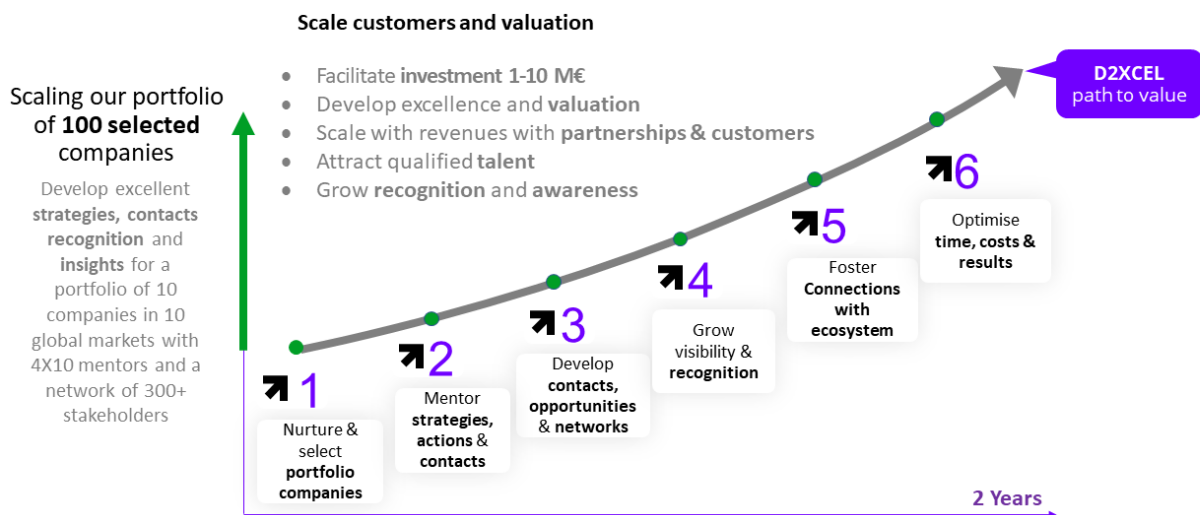


Figure 1 Value proposition for companies

## 2 Open Call Objectives and Scope

D2XCEL 1<sup>st</sup> open call focuses on 5 market opportunities. It will attract minimum 125 applications (25 in each defined market opportunity) and will select 50 (10 in each market opportunity) companies that will benefit from the D2XCEL services delivered by the consortium partners, top-class expert mentors in 5 market groups and from network partners delivering additional horizontal services.

The open call aims to discover and select promising ventures for involvement in a tailored scaling program. The primary objective is to provide support that fosters the growth and investment opportunities of these companies, ultimately aiming to empower them as prominent leaders in deep tech innovation across Europe.

*Please note that D2XCEL does not provide financial support to third parties (FSTP) but delivers highly relevant value through services: mentoring services, connections with business contacts (investors, corporates, customers & procurers, talent) as well as visibility. The total costs of activities and services directly supporting the portfolio of companies (Mentoring, roadshow events, Company visibility) or contribute directly to their support (Engaging active network, gathering insights for the groups) represents 68,69% of the project total budget.*

### 2.1 Open Call Process

The companies selected through the open call will undergo through the D2XCEL Scaling programme organised in three phases with specific outputs and outcomes at the end of each phase:

#### **1. Phase 1 – company application (about 3 months):**

The 1<sup>st</sup> open call be launched on 2 April 2024, 14:00 CET and will address 5 market opportunities. It aims to attract minimum 25 companies in each of the market opportunities. Open Call is published on D2XCEL project website and will be promoted on the project social media channels as well as the ones of the consortium partners to secure more outreach to relevant ventures. All terms for applications and timelines are published in the Open Call text and guidelines. All applicants will use [online application form](#) available on the D2XCEL webpage.

#### **2. Phase 2 – company selection (2 months<sup>1</sup>):**

The eligible applications submitted by the Open Call deadline will be subject to assessment by a Selection Panel. Of the minimum 125 applicants will be selected 50 top-ranking companies, or 10 for each of the 5 market opportunities. The Selection Panel will be composed of investors and experts from the D2XCEL stakeholder network for each market opportunity. The 10 highest ranking companies in each market opportunity will be selected and invited to receive scaling support. This way of proceeding ensures a market driven approach, and the selected companies represent a real interest for the market that will potentially create impact.

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<sup>1</sup> Evaluation process will be long as it will happen over the Summer months.

### Phase 3 – D2XCEL Scaling Programme (6-8 months)

The selected 50 companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> Open Call will be invited to participate in D2XCEL scaling programme in their respective market group free of charge. Each market group will include 10 companies and will be managed by a consortium partner (Group Leader) and supported by 4 experienced mentors with relevant experience at company board level.

## 2.2 Open Call Timeline

The D2XCEL First Open Call will launch on 2 April 2024 and will accept company applications for approximately 3 months or until 14 June 2024, 17:00 CET. Over the summer months from mid-June to mid-August, a Selection Panel composed of prominent experts will assess the applications and the selection results will be announced to each applicant. The applicants may be contacted if further information is required to reach a final decision. The selected companies will be announced on the project website at the beginning of September. The D2XCEL Services will start after the company commits to the suggested D2XCEL Scaling Programme. The timeline is indicative. It may be adjusted, and small deviations may occur which will be updated on the project website.

### D2XCEL Open Call 1 timeline

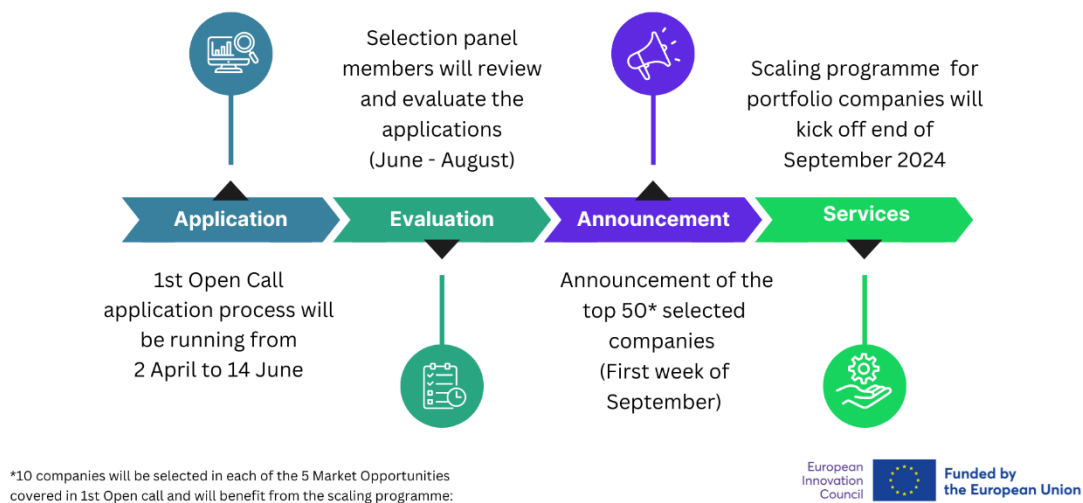


Figure 2 D2XCEL First Open Call timeline

## 2.3 Who can apply?

Applicants for the D2XCEL open call for proposals should be representatives of an entity legally established in one of the eligible countries. All companies that apply should comply with the following eligibility criteria:



1. **Company HQ location (geographical eligibility).** The application is submitted by a representative of a company which is a legal entity (a single organisation, not a consortium) - an SME, start-up, or scale-up, according to the EU definition of SMEs ([https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-definition\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-definition_en)).
  - in EU-27 (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden)
  - or EIC funding eligible countries at the time of project proposal writing: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Kosovo<sup>2</sup>, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine<sup>3</sup>. *Applicants should have less than 25% of (voting) shares held by Russian shareholders concerned by the [EU Restrictive Measures in response to the crisis in Ukraine](#).*
  
2. **Company maturity (development stage eligibility)** – deep tech and digital companies that have achieved market-product fit within one of the market opportunities in the scope of the open calls and looking for Series A to Series A+ funding, or to expand their market and have already received at least one of the following types of funding or support:
  - Support from the European Innovation Council (EIC) (Grant or Equity funding or Seal of Excellence)
  - Grant from other EU/National/Regional funding programmes
  - Raised at least a round of financing (seed or later). The latest round of funding should have been raised after 1 January 2019.
  
3. **Company technology (sectorial eligibility)** – digital and deeptech solutions in one of the five listed market opportunities and their related technologies. The solutions shall have high exploitation and market potential (TRL5-8), that can contribute to the competitiveness and strategic sovereignty and sustainability of EU industry in key technology areas and value chains, operating in one of the five listed for each call market opportunities and their related technologies:
  - **AI Powered Digital Services for Sustainable and Smart Cities**
  - **Large-scale Stationary Energy Storage**
  - **Logistics (Freight Tech, Warehouse Tech, Last Mile Delivery)**
  - **Sustainable freight Transportation**
  - **Sustainable and Circular Construction**

<sup>2</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation\\_horizon- Euratom\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon- Euratom_en.pdf), retrieved on 07.03.2024

Deep tech, as defined in the EU regulation “is technology that is based on cutting-edge scientific advances and discoveries and is characterised by the need to stay at the technological forefront by constant interaction with new ideas and results from the lab. Deep tech innovation aims to provide concrete solutions to our societal problems by finding its source in a deep interaction with the most recent scientific and technological advances and by seeking to produce a profound impact in the targeted application technologies”<sup>4</sup>. The Selection Panel will consider and evaluate the applications of all companies that comply with the eligibility criteria. No exceptions can be made related to geographical eligibility criteria.

## 2.4 Applications Submission

There is a unique entry point for all proposals for the Open Call and the link will be made available on the open call web page on [www.d2xcel.eu](http://www.d2xcel.eu). After the deadline set for the open call, 14 June 2024, 17:00 CET, the application process will close.

Additional documentation, including the Application Form, current Guideline for Applicants, etc. will be available on the D2XCEL project web site [www.d2xcel.eu](http://www.d2xcel.eu).

**Please check the eligibility conditions laid out in section 2.3 before submitting your proposal.**

## 2.5 Documentation Formats & Language

The submission set is composed of an online application form to be filled in directly on the D2XCEL application webpage that may require document upload in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, or PDF document. Additional supporting documents may also be provided as annexes to the proposal template.

Any document requested in electronic format in any of the phases must be submitted in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, PDF format without restrictions for printing. Regarding uploading images (for example, company logo), additional instructions will be provided on the upload spot.

If selected, during the D2XCEL service preparation phase, supporting documents might be requested for clarification purposes.

**English** is the official language for D2XCEL open call. Submissions done in any other language will not be assessed.

## 2.6 Number of applications per company

Generally, only one application per company may be selected for D2XCEL services. This does not mean only one proposal can be submitted per applicant, but only the proposal that has achieved the highest ranking during the

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<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023/wp\\_horizon-eic-2023\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023/wp_horizon-eic-2023_en.pdf), retrieved on 07.03.2024.

evaluation process may be selected for D2XCEL services, should the criteria for selection be met. The same organisation may submit more than one proposal but can be selected for receiving D2XCEL services only once.

In case an organisation was selected after the first open call, the same organisation cannot be selected for the second open call.

## 3 Submission of your Application

If you are a good fit for the programme and match with the requirements above, then do not hesitate and submit your application. The next section describes the submission process. The eligibility criteria in Sections 2.3 and 4 Assessment requirements of this documents must be considered when applying.

### 3.1 Application Preparation

The following instructions and steps shall be considered:

1. For the application preparation, the applicants are requested to use the online application form published on the D2XCEL web site [www.d2xcel.eu](http://www.d2xcel.eu).
2. The applicants are supplied with general instructions included in the Guidelines for Applicants before filling in the application. You may be asked to provide again some documents if the provided application documents do not meet the minimum formatting specifications (size and format of the uploaded files).
3. Be concrete and concise. As the slide deck is central to the assessment of your application, please make sure that all 6 assessment components are reflected and well explained: Leadership Competence/Potential, Product/Technology Merit, Market Potential, Go to Market/Strategy, Presentation Quality, Business Clarity/Credibility)
4. Please examine the resources available on the D2XCEL website [www.d2xcel.eu](http://www.d2xcel.eu) before submitting your application.
5. Complete the 4 components (a. to d. inclusive) of the application template:
  - a. Fill in your profile in the **online form** providing the information requested in all mandatory fields. Filling in the non-mandatory fields may help your application further understanding.
  - b. **Choose the market opportunity you apply for**, and check the relevant technology listed in the supporting documents. If your technology is not on the list, choose the one that is closest to describe your technology.
  - c. Upload your slide deck in **PDF or PPT not exceeding the size of 100 MB**.

- d. Agree with terms and conditions of privacy policy and use of personal data available [here](#).

*Please note that at the selection phase, you may be required to provide additional information. In this case you will be contacted by a D2XCEL team member.*

6. If selected, you agree and give consent, for good and valuable dissemination purposes within the D2XCEL project, to enable the usage of your company logo, name, and other materials (e.g., profile photo or LinkedIn profile) on the project website and social media channels. Therefore, you acknowledge to give access to and/or a copy of the mentioned materials above for marketing purposes.
7. By submitting your application, you consent to allow D2XCEL to store and process the personal information in it.
8. Submit your application before the deadline. An incomplete application will not be saved on the platform for later editing. You will receive an automatic email confirming your application was submitted. The proposal can still be improved before the deadline, the applicant can submit a new version of their application. There is no option of editing an already submitted application. Only the latest version received before the call deadline will be considered for evaluation.

If an applicant would like to make small changes to their application, they can write to, [info@d2xcel.eu](mailto:info@d2xcel.eu) and the admin team will make the changes for them. No information regarding the quality of the application will be given during this exchange.

*It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the application. Failure of the proposal to be submitted on time for any reason, including network communications delays, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance.*

## 3.2 Questions

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section will be published on the D2XCEL website and updated regularly in accordance with the ongoing questions and matters raised by the applicants. Please make sure you visit [www.d2xcel.eu](http://www.d2xcel.eu) regularly as all latest updates will be available there.

Any questions related to the preparation of application can be sent by email to [info@d2xcel.eu](mailto:info@d2xcel.eu). These questions can only be clarifications about the open call text and its annexes or about the eligibility of a proposal. We will not in any circumstances provide advice on the content of the applications. Furthermore, the answers provided may be relevant to other applicants and may be added to the FAQ published on our website.

All questions received at least 1 week before the Open Call deadline will be answered before the upcoming deadline.

All useful documents and templates, including the current Guide for Applicants, to prepare and apply are publicly available on the D2XCEL website.

## 4 Assessment of Applications

### 4.1 Eligibility checking

Before the evaluation, the consortium will check that the submitted proposals are eligible. For each proposal, the following will be checked:

- The application is submitted by a representative of a company which is a legal entity (a single organisation, not a consortium) - an SME, start-up, or scale-up, according to the EU definition of SMEs [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-definition\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-definition_en).
- The company headquarter (HQ) should be based in one of the eligible countries as detailed in Section 2.3 of the current Guidelines.
- The application is digital and deep tech solution related to one of the 5 market opportunities.
- Company that has achieved market-product fit within one of the market opportunities in the scope of the first open call and looking for Series A to Series A+ funding, or to expand their market and have already received at least one of the following types of funding or support:
  - Support from the European Innovation Council (EIC) (Grant or Equity funding or Seal of Excellence)
  - Grant from other EU/National/Regional funding programmes
  - Raised at least a round of financing (seed or later). The latest round of funding should have been raised after 1 January 2019.
- The application is submitted before the specific Open Call deadline. The 1st Open Call Deadline for application submission is 14 June 2024 at 17:00 (CET).
- The application was submitted online through D2XCEL unique entry point in the D2XCEL website.
- The application is written and submitted in English language.

Failing in meeting one or more of the above criteria, the application will be categorised as **not eligible** and will not be evaluated.

### 4.2 Assessment process

Each eligible application will be assessed by a Selection Panel of evaluators which will assess the applications in the relevant market opportunity. Evaluators will receive a list of applications to be reviewed and will receive the applications only after they confirm in writing by signing an Absence-of-Conflict-of-Interest Declaration (ACID) that there is no conflict of interest with the proposals they have been assigned to review. The evaluators will assess each application along 6 criteria (1-10 scale).

Criteria	Rating 1-3	Rating 4-6	Rating 7-9	Rating 10
<b>Eligibility</b>	Yes or no, checked by the Group Manager upon application			
<b>Leadership Competence/Potential</b>	The company team lacks enough skills and experience to grow the business. More manpower is needed and willingness to work with industry and research needs to be improved.	The company team has average skills and experience to grow the business. The management team is involved and there is potential.	The company team has the necessary skills and experience to grow the business and is able/willing to work with industry and research. Credible and consistent sector expertise.	The company team has all the skills and experience to grow the business and is able/willing to work with industry and research. Great potential to take the business to the next level.
<b>Product/Technology Merit</b>	Technology or product solutions are developed with no or very limited track record/commercial deployment. No clear indication of how the product/technology need is addressed nor how it compares to competitors. The product/technology brings no impact on Sustainability or sovereignty in Europe in the Market Opportunity.	Technology or product solutions are developed, but with unknown/some track record. Address the product/technology need, but not sufficiently differentiated from the competitors. The product/technology brings little impact on Sustainability or sovereignty in Europe in the Market Opportunity.	Technology or product solutions are developed with a demonstrable track record of delivery. Address the product/technology need and has high potential. The product/technology brings relevant impact on Sustainability or sovereignty in Europe in the Market Opportunity.	Technology or product solutions developed are state-of-the-art and well advanced compared to the competitors. Address the product/technology need and is produced in operationally meaningful quantities. The product/technology brings significant impact on Sustainability or sovereignty in Europe in the Market Opportunity.

Criteria	Rating 1-3	Rating 4-6	Rating 7-9	Rating 10
<b>Market Potential</b>	The potential market of customers for the presented product is very niche and the business model is weak.	The potential market of customers for the presented product has potential and/or the business model needs to be improved.	The potential market of customers for the presented product is attractive and the business model has high potential.	The potential market of customers for the presented product is attractive and the business model is strong.
<b>Go to Market/ Strategy</b>	The company has a poor go-to-market strategy and no clear distinction in position in comparison to its direct and indirect competitors.	The company has a good go-to-market strategy and must work to improve its position in the market compared to its direct and indirect competitors.	The company has a distinct go-to-market strategy and has potential to improve its position in the market in comparison to its direct and indirect competitors.	The company has a clear go to market strategy and is well positioned in the market in comparison with its direct and indirect competitors.
<b>Presentation Quality</b>	The presentation and/or Video is not complete, lacks clear articulation and provides little information. Messages need to be more convincing and well executed.	The presentation and/or Video has a good and clear message. Has potential for improvement in execution and delivering a convincing idea.	The Presentation and/or Video is poised, clear, with proper volume and executed with confidence. High potential to be convincing.	The Presentation and/or Video is complete, clear, balanced, with proper volume and convincing.
<b>Business Clarity/Credibility</b>	The revenue streams on customer acquisition model are poor or have no credibility.	The revenue streams on customer acquisition model are good, but with unknown/some credibility.	The revenue streams on customer acquisition model are well developed and credible.	The revenue streams on customer acquisition model are clear and credible, with proven track record.

### 4.3 Thresholds

A simple average is made from the scores given by the evaluators for each company application. Then the company ranking is done based on total average to form a list of top 10 scoring companies in each market opportunity. The applications are considered qualified for D2XCEL Scaling Programme if their total average score is 6,00 and above (the required threshold).

### 4.4 Evaluation Summary Reports – List of Selected Companies

The assessment process will be done remotely with a Final Selection meeting for each market opportunity selection panel chaired by a group manager (a D2XCEL consortium partner who leads the relevant market opportunity).

The procedure for prioritising applications which have same evaluation score (ex aequo) within the rank list is described below:

- Proposals will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion Product/Technology Merit.
- When these scores are equal, priority will be based on the scores for the criterion Product/Technology Merit and Business Clarity/Credibility.
- When these scores are equal, any further prioritisation will be based on the criterion Product/Technology Merit and Business Clarity/Credibility and Leadership Competence/Potential.

The top 10 companies of the rank list for each market opportunity will form the list of proposals to invite for D2XCEL Scaling Programme. A reserve list will also be compiled with the next ranked proposals to select from it in the case a company is unable to complete the process and sign a commitment document for D2XCEL Scaling Programme for any reason.

The expected number of proposals to be selected after each open call is 50 (10 for each market opportunity). This is only an indicative number and D2XCEL can deviate from these numbers for multiple reasons. A company from the First Open Call may be forwarded to the second one if its technology fits better in the next 5 market opportunities that are to be addressed by it.

In case the highest ranked proposals are deemed of inadequate quality (cover threshold of 5.99 and lower) we may not make any selection.

### 4.5 Communication of results

For each application, the applicant will receive via e-mail one of the three possible communications:

- A notice of qualifying for D2XCEL Scaling Programme. In case the application was amongst the selected, an invitation to join D2XCEL Scaling Programme, a commitment document template and a list of next steps to be implemented.



- A notice of being part of the reserve list. In this case your application may still be qualified for D2XCEL Scaling Programme, upon availability of slots in the relevant market opportunity.
- A notice of rejection of the application with justification of the decision.

An applicant may receive a request for clarification from D2XCEL team by e-mail after application submission and before evaluation. The results are expected to be communicated within 4 weeks after the application deadline.

If selected for D2XCEL Scaling Programme and after the notice of selection, the confirmation of engagement in for D2XCEL Scaling Programme should be completed within 2 weeks from the date when the results are communicated to the selected projects. In case of failure to achieve outcome in 2 weeks, 1 additional week may be granted to complete the negotiation process. If the negotiations have not finished successfully after the extra week, D2XCEL reserves the right to stop the negotiations process and invite the next application in the company selection rank list.

After successful application, a commitment document will be signed between the D2XCEL consortium and the legal representative of the selected organisation. The projects selected after the D2XCEL open call are expected to start the D2XCEL Scaling Programme 4 to 6 weeks after the selection announcement, unless otherwise agreed between the consortium and the selected company. In any case, the starting date will be clearly mentioned in the company commitment document.

## 5 Legal Framework

This Call is launched under the project D2XCEL (Grant Agreement No. 101121100) and the D2XCEL Scaling Programme is funded under the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme.

Applicants must be aware that their information and documents will be used by the D2XCEL consortium, EC and other entities involved in processing this competition from application to selection and to providing support procedures. Specifically, selected proposers must be aware that, following the Horizon Europe guidelines, D2XCEL project partners will keep internal records of, among others:

- A list of applications received, identifying the name and address of applicants. All communications with applicants before call closure and during the evaluation.
- The names and affiliations of the members of the Selection Panel.
- For each application, a copy of the filled forms used in the evaluation.
- A record of all incidents, if any, which occurred during the evaluation (e.g. how conflict of interests was handled if they were detected during the evaluation process) and any deviation from standard procedure (e.g. if an applicant selection was not the highest scoring application, to document the objective reasons why the highest scoring one was passed over).

- Copy of signed and attached documents.

Subject to the conditions established in the implementing agreements, decisions or contracts, any data, knowledge and information communicated as confidential in the framework of an action shall be kept confidential, taking due account of European Union law regarding the protection of and access to classified information.

The selected proposals shall comply with national legislation, regulations and ethical rules in the countries where the program will be carried out.

## 6 Privacy and IPR

Personal data shall be collected, processed, and published in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679, also known as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation). Please refer to the Privacy Statement in the online application form for full details.

The following Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) conditions will be followed in the framework of this open call:

- The proposals submitted should be solely based on original works by the applicants and their foreseen developments are free from third party rights, or they are clearly stated.
- All IPR created by the applicants in result of the services they received from D2XCEL will remain to the applicants, who will be the unique owners of the solutions created within the framework of their proposed projects.