

European  
Innovation  
Council



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# OPEN CALL 2

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

APPLY AT - [WWW.D2XCEL.EU](http://WWW.D2XCEL.EU)



## Frequently asked questions<sup>1</sup> for D2XCEL Open Call 2 (OC2)

- Opening Date: 1 October 2024, 10:00 CET
- Closing date: 16 December 2024, 17:00 CET

### General project questions

#### 1. What is the D2XCEL project?

D2XCEL falls under the call designation HORIZON-EIC-2022-STARTUPEU-01. It is a project funded by the European Commission under grant agreement number 101121100.

#### 2. What is the duration of the project?

The D2XCEL has a duration of 30 months, starting on 1 November 2023 and ending on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

#### 3. What is the goal of the project?

The project will establish a scaling programme with a focus on deep tech and digital ventures in 10 market opportunities. D2XCEL empowers startups and scaleups to provide market-ready applications, foster growth, and contribute significantly to the sustainability and European sovereignty of these crucial industries while serving as a catalyst to enhance the European startup ecosystems.

#### 4. Who will be part of the D2XCEL Scaling Programme?

200+ investors, public and private lead customers, and innovation hubs who will support 100 startups and scaleups in 10 high-potential market opportunities. The companies will be selected through 2 open calls.

#### 5. How long a selected company participates in the programme?

For each selected company the programme runs for 6-8 months (on average).

#### 6. What are the benefits of the programme?

All selected ventures will benefit from tailored and collaborative mentoring provided by the D2XCEL consortium partners, top-class expert mentors and relevant network partners.

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<sup>1</sup> This document will be regularly updated during the application process and will be available on [www.D2XCEL.eu](http://www.D2XCEL.eu)

**7. Do I need to pay to benefit from the scaling programme? // Is there a participation fee for being part of the D2Xcel Programme? What do I need to provide?**

No, participation is free of charge but you will need to commit to participate in the services provided by the programme.

There is no participation fee and we don't take any equity in your company. The participation is free (upon selection)! You need, however, to be committed and participate in the activities D2XCEL recommends you. You have also to cover your own traveling costs for those activities that require traveling.

**8. What is the language of the programme?**

The official language of the programme is English. All activities are run in English.

**9. Can D2XCEL fund my company? / Do I receive any financial support?**

No, the programme does not provide direct financial support.

## General questions about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call

**1. Geographical criteria: Which countries are eligible to take part in the programme?**

All [EU member states](#) and [EIC funding eligible countries](#) are eligible to take part in the programme.

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. What are the eligibility criteria?**

Applicants for the D2XCEL open call should be representatives of an entity legally complying with the eligibility criterion listed below:

- be based in an eligible country (see above);
- deep tech and digital companies in specific sectors that have achieved market-product fit within one of the market opportunities in the scope of the open calls of the project;
- must 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.
- looking for Series A to Series A+ funding, or to expand their market

- commitment (if selected must take active part in the programme)

More information is to find in the Guidelines for applicants available on [www.d2xcel.eu](http://www.d2xcel.eu).

### **3. Technological criteria: What are the sectors of technology eligible for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call:**

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:

- **Supply Chain Management & Trade Finance**
- **Sustainable Mobility**
- **Renewable Energy Production**
- **Circular Models for Cities/Regions**
- **AI Powered Utility Management for Sustainable & Smart Cities.**

### **4. What is deeptech? Is my core business activity suitable for joining the D2XCEL Programme?**

A field in deeptech entails any technology-based company with a long innovation cycle, having high go-to-market risks and costs, and requiring patient capital.

### **5. Am I eligible if my funding round was own investment?**

Own investment by founder or bootstrapping is not considered as eligible investment for D2XCEL Programme.

### **6. When can I apply?**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call will be launched on 1 October 2024. The deadline for submission of applications is 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 17:00 CET.

### **7. How can I apply?**

The application form for the D2XCEL scaling programme is on the website of the project. You can directly access the application form [here](#).

### **8. Do I need to prepare anything in advance when applying?**

The application form will require from you general information based on the eligibility criteria as well as uploading a pitch deck in .pdf or PowerPoint format not larger than 100MB.

### **9. Can I update my application after submission?**

Yes, applicants can submit a new form until the application process is open. The system will automatically recognize the latest version of your application. If you experience problems, you can reach out our team at [info@D2XCEL.eu](mailto:info@D2XCEL.eu)

### **10. What fields of technology does the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call cover?**

The first open call focus on 5 market opportunities as listed below:

- **Supply Chain Management & Trade Finance**
- **Sustainable Mobility**
- **Renewable Energy Production**
- **Circular Models for Cities/Regions**
- **AI Powered Utility Management for Sustainable & Smart Cities.**

### **11. How many companies will benefit from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call?**

We will select 50 ventures, 10 in each of the 5 markets opportunities. (see above)

### **12. What does the Scaling Programme include?**

The D2XCEL Scaling programme offers tailored support and collaborative mentoring. The programme will provide holistic mentoring to identify both the specific challenges of each 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 internationalisation (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

### **13. Can I withdraw my participation after selection?**

If you do not confirm your participation within the required deadline, we will invite another company.

### **14. Do I need to sign any documents if I am selected?**

Yes, if you are selected company, you will sign Non-disclosure agreement.

## Evaluation process

### **1. Who will review my application?**

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.

### **2. What are the evaluation criteria?**

The evaluators will assess each application along 6 criteria (1-10 scale). A simple average is made from the scores given by the evaluators for each company application. The applications are considered qualified for D2XCEL Scaling Programme if their total average score is 6,00 and above (the required threshold) from the following criterion:

- Leadership Competence/Potential
- Product / Technology Merit
- Market Potential
- Go to Market / Strategy
- Presentation Quality
- Business Clarity / Credibility

### **3. When will the evaluation happen?**

It will start mid-January 2025 and will be complete by the end of February 2025. The results will be communicated in March 2025.