

# Venture Incubation Programme 2026

Join us in building what's next



# 28DIGITAL Venture Incubation Programme 2026

## 1. Introduction

28DIGITAL is looking for Partners to support the development and deployment of the Venture Incubation Programme edition. The duration of project support is until the end of 2026. 28DIGITAL is seeking for entrepreneurial education providers like incubators, accelerators, university entrepreneurship centers, university TTOs, venture builders, industry associations, science and tech parks, VC funds or similar organizations with capacity and expertise to support the programme delivery.

To this end, 28DIGITAL launches an open call with a submission deadline of **16 March 2026**. The call is aligned with 28DIGITAL's renewed strategic direction, centered on three strategic domains: **Deep Tech, Strategic Tech, and Green & Social Tech**, and aims to further activate the Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) by mobilising local, regional, and national actors. Proposals are expected to demonstrate clear relevance to these Domains and contribute to Europe's innovation and venture-building capacity.

## 2. The Venture Incubation Programme

The **Venture Incubation Programme (VIP)** is 28DIGITAL's initiative which reaffirms its commitment to seed, establish, scale, and grow deep-tech ventures across Europe, in alignment with the European Union's agenda to turn the EU into a cradle of world-leading startups and scaleups. This call contributes directly to the objectives articulated in the EU Startup & Scaleup Strategy and echoes the recommendations of the Draghi competitiveness report on fostering innovation and removing barriers to scale in Europe.

The 28DIGITAL Venture Incubation Programme is a two-stage competition whose mission is to support, through a 12-week-long structured programme, the establishment of digital and deep technology-based ventures, thus complying to EIT core KPIs of venture support and venture creation, by helping innovators to:

- Develop and validate a Minimum Viable Product (MVP),
- Incorporate and grow the company in one of the EU Member States,
- Position the company for further growth, access to finance, and expansion.

The 28DIGITAL Venture Incubation Programme is supporting a competitive, knowledge-based economy capable of sustainable growth by connecting two sides of the so-called Knowledge Triangle: education and innovation achieved by industry.

The Venture Incubation Programme is delivered in collaboration with 28DIGITAL Innovation Partners and is designed to connect founders with 28DIGITAL's ecosystem. The programme provides access to expert mentors, investors, and partners across Europe, ensuring that individuals from less innovative regions can fully benefit from 28DIGITAL's reach and range of activities.

28DIGITAL reserves the right to choose at its entire discretion and without any further liability on 28DIGITAL's part, to not execute this edition of the programme if the number of applications does not reach the required amount for the delivery of the programme. 28DIGITAL shall communicate said circumstance to the applicants of the cancelled edition as soon as reasonably possible. In addition, the programme will be run under the Funding Condition: this collaboration is contingent upon receiving funding from the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). If the necessary funding is not secured, 28DIGITAL reserves the right to delay, modify, or cancel any collaboration agreements. Furthermore, 28DIGITAL may adjust agreements based on changes in circumstances or the availability of funding.

For more details on the Venture Incubation Programme 2026, please refer to the Annex A.

### 3. Who can participate

28DIGITAL is a partnership-based organization. Both 28DIGITAL Partner and non-Partner organizations are encouraged to apply. However, the organizations that are not yet a Partner are expected to initiate their application to join the partnership before the submission of the proposal. If the proposal is selected, the application must then be completed before the start of the activity.

It is highly recommended for activity partners that are not 28DIGITAL Partners yet, to get in contact with 28DIGITAL staff early on to ensure a clear understanding of the partnership requirements, as well as to gain access to the intranet, where the submission system can be found.

More information including details on how to become a partner are available at: <https://28digital.eu/our-community/become-a-partner/>

Applicants may participate in **only one proposal** submitted under this call.

Please refer to Section 6 for a more detailed description of the Call Criteria.

The Venture Incubation Programme [website](#) also contains further information about this call. The Q&A containing all questions (in anonymised form) submitted by applicants during the submission period can be found [here](#).

## 4. How to participate

Proposals need to be filled and submitted via the 28DIGITAL submission system **before the deadline on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2026, 5pm CEST (Brussels time)**.

Should the quality or number of proposals be insufficient, 28DIGITAL reserves the right to open a second submission after the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2026 to receive new proposals.

For general enquiries regarding 28DIGITAL, applicants are invited to contact the relevant [regional office](#). For questions specifically related to the Venture Incubation Programme 2026, please contact [venture\\_program@28digital.eu](mailto:venture_program@28digital.eu).

## 5. Funding requirements

The maximum EIT funding per application is €35,000. The initial budget allocated for this call is €105,000, which is intended to support three incubators (3 × €35,000). If additional budget becomes available and the proposals meet the required quality standards, 28DIGITAL may fund additional proposals.

In accordance with the 28DIGITAL financial sustainability strategy, Partners will be required to provide co-funding at Activity level amounting to **at least 50% of the total KIC Added Value Activity (KAVA) budget**.

The following are examples of an Activity budget split:

- Total Activity budget: 70,000 €
- EIT funding amount requested: 35,000 €
- Partners must provide minimally 50% in co-funding, i.e., at least 35,000 €.

**Type of Financial Support:** The financial support provided by 28DIGITAL is granted in the form of **reimbursement of eligible actual costs**, as declared in the approved activity proposal budget. Funds are disbursed in several tranches over a period of **9-12 months**.

A **pre-financing tranche of 25%** is payable upon completion of the Grant Agreement and Partnership Agreements signatures (expected between **July and September 2026**).

The **remaining amount (up to 75%)**, subject to approval of the final evaluation report, is payable between **April and June 2027**.

## 6. Call criteria

Following the deadline for submission, the admissibility, eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria checks will be performed for each proposal in line with the following criteria.

### 6.1 Admissibility

Proposals shall be considered admissible only if they:

- are submitted electronically via the 28DIGITAL submission system;
- are submitted before the deadline specified in the call;
- are complete, using the required templates and including all mandatory information;
- are submitted in English;
- include a valid Participant Identification Code (PIC) for the applicant organisation at the time of submission.

Any proposals submitted after the deadline will be inadmissible. Only proposals satisfying all the admissibility criteria shall pass on to the eligibility criteria assessment stage.

### 6.2 Eligibility

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

1. In accordance with the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2025<sup>1</sup>, in order to be eligible for funding, the applicant must be a legal entity established in one of the eligible countries, i.e.:

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-14-general-annexes\\_horizon-2025\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2025/wp-14-general-annexes_horizon-2025_en.pdf)

- the Member States of the European Union<sup>2</sup>, including their outermost regions;
  - the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) linked to the Member States<sup>3</sup>;
  - countries associated to Horizon Europe<sup>4</sup>
2. The proposal requests a maximum of €35,000 of EIT funding.
  3. The activity partner's own contribution (co-funding) must be at least 50% of the activity's budget.

Only proposals satisfying all the eligibility criteria shall pass on to the selection and evaluation stages.

### 6.3 Exclusion

Applicants will be excluded from participation in the Call and from the award if they are in one of the situations referred to in Article 138(1) of the EU Financial Regulation. Applicants that are subject to EU administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion) or are in one of the following exclusion situations that bar them from receiving EU grants can NOT participate:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts);
- they are in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts);
- they are guilty of grave professional misconduct (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant);
- they are guilty of fraud, corruption, having links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant);
- they have shown significant deficiencies in complying with their main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-

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<sup>2</sup> For partners from Hungary: the Council Implementing Decision 2022/2506 might directly impact the implementation of the Venture Incubation Programme grant. This Decision stipulates that legal commitments must not be entered into with any public interest trusts established on the basis of the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity maintained by such a public interest trust. This applies as of 16 December 2022 for as long as the measures are in place. We advise partners from these countries to connect with the relevant Regional Directors to confirm under which conditions they can participate.

<sup>3</sup> Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked. See the Horizon Europe Programme Guide on the portal for a complete list of OCTs.

<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation\\_horizon-euratome\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratome_en.pdf)

making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant);

- they are guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/9534 (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant); or
- they have created under a different jurisdiction an entity with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).
- have misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or have failed to supply that information; or
- were previously involved in the preparation of documents used in the award procedure where this entails a breach of the principle of equality of treatment, including distortion of competition, that cannot be remedied otherwise.

#### 6.4 Selection criteria

- Applicants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share.
- Applicants must have the experience, the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement their tasks in the project and contribute their share, including demonstrated capacity to deliver a local edition of Venture Incubation Programme, and show the stronger potential for successful implementation. The operational capacity assessment is based on the competence and experience of the applicants and their project teams, including their operational resources (human, technical and other).

## 7. Award criteria

Each eligible application will be evaluated by three (3) independent external experts during the first evaluation gate.

The assessment conducted by 28DIGITAL experts will be based on the evaluation questions set out below. Reviewers will be required to provide an assessment for each individual question, as well as an overall assessment and qualitative comments on the proposal as a whole.

## 7.1 Evaluation stages

- **Expert Review:** A detailed assessment of each eligible proposal is carried out by independent experts against the defined evaluation criteria.
- **Review Gate:** Experts convene to discuss each proposal on the basis of their individual assessments, in accordance with the requirements and guidelines set out in this document. The outcome is a **consensus evaluation** for each proposal, which integrates and supersedes individual assessments and includes recommendations for consideration at the MC Gate.
- **MC Gate:** The **Management Committee of 28DIGITAL** reviews the outcomes and recommendations of the Review Gate in order to support the development of a strong innovation and startup support ecosystem aligned with the 28DIGITAL Business Plan.

## 7.2 Scoring methodology

Proposals are evaluated on a scale from **0 to 5**, as follows:

**0 – Insufficient:** The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.

**1 – Poor:** The criterion is inadequately addressed, or the proposal presents serious inherent weaknesses.

**2 – Fair:** The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but significant weaknesses are present.

**3 – Good:** The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings remain.

**4 – Very good:** The proposal addresses the criterion very well, with only minor shortcomings.

**5 – Excellent:** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are negligible.

## 7.3 Award criteria, subcriteria and maximum scores

### **External experts' evaluation criteria**

Applicants' proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria, each scored on a scale from **0 to 5**.



## **a) Excellence**

### **Outreach Approach**

To what extent does the proposal describe a clear and structured outreach approach that is integrated into the programme design, including provisions addressing gender balance and participation from RIS countries, and that is consistent with the overall objectives and target groups of the programme?

*(Score range: 0-5)*

### **Programme concept and methodology**

To what extent does the proposal present a coherent programme concept and methodology for the delivery of the Venture Incubation Programme, including clarity of structure, internal consistency between activities, and appropriateness of the proposed approach to the programme objectives?

*(Score range: 0-5)*

## **b) Impact**

### **Impact on supported ventures**

To what extent does the proposal define expected outcomes for supported entrepreneurs and startups, including venture creation, commercial progress, and access to finance, and indicate how these outcomes are expected to be achieved through the proposed activities?

*(Score range: 0-5)*

### **Impact on the entrepreneurial ecosystem**

To what extent does the proposal indicate expected effects on the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem beyond the programme duration, including contribution to networking, collaboration, and follow-on activities?

*(Score range: 0–5)*

## **c) Quality and efficiency of the implementation**

### **Programme Delivery Capacity**

How convincingly does the proposal demonstrate the capacity to plan, organize, and deliver a local edition of the relevant components of Venture Incubation Programme?

*(Score range: 0-5)*

### **Track record and execution**

To what extent does the proposal provide evidence of previous experience and performance in supporting entrepreneurs and startups, including documented outcomes, success indicators where available, and demonstrated execution of outreach and ecosystem engagement activities?

*(Score range: 0-5)*

## **Management Committee evaluation criteria**

The Management Committee evaluates proposals against the following strategic criteria:

### **Alignment with 28DIGITAL strategy**

To what extent does the proposal align with 28DIGITAL's strategic objectives and priority domains, and support the achievement of the KIC's long-term goals as set out in its strategic and business planning documents?

*(Score range: 0–5)*

### **Portfolio balance and complementarity**

To what extent does the proposal, when considered together with other selected proposals, contribute to a balanced, diverse, and complementary portfolio across sectors, regions, and ecosystems?

*(Score range: 0–5)*

### **European and RIS Dimension**

To what extent does the proposal demonstrate relevance at European level, including its contribution to cross-border collaboration, support for less-innovative regions, and alignment with European innovation and competitiveness priorities?

*(Score range: 0–5)*

## 7.4 Minimum threshold

The evaluation and scoring process is structured as follows:

- External experts assess technical and qualitative criteria and contribute up to 30 points to the overall score.
- The 28DIGITAL Management Committee evaluates strategic criteria and contributes up to 15 points to the overall score.
- The final score for each proposal is obtained by summing the external expert points and the Management Committee points, yielding a maximum total score of 45 points.

Each evaluation criterion must receive a **minimum score of 3 out of 5**. In addition, proposals must achieve an **overall minimum score of 27 out of 45** to be considered for funding.

Eligible proposals are ranked based on their **total score**. In the event of a tie, ranking priority will be determined according to the following order:

1. Higher average score for the **Impact criteria**;
2. Higher average score for the **Excellence criteria**;

If proposals remain tied after applying the criteria above, the **Management Committee of 28DIGITAL** will determine the final ranking at its discretion.

Final selection will be based on each proposal's performance against the evaluation criteria, while also taking into account its strategic alignment with 28DIGITAL's objectives.

The scoring framework is designed to emphasise the key factors critical to the successful delivery of local editions of the Venture Incubation Programme, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of applicants' capacity to contribute meaningfully to the programme's objectives.

## 8. Communication of evaluation results

Following the award decision, all applicants will be informed of the result in writing by email. All applicants will receive their assessment, including their score.

28DIGITAL reserves the right to establish a reserve list comprising proposals that meet all minimum thresholds but cannot be funded due to budgetary constraints. The reserve list

will remain valid for 75 days from the start of the Activity Execution. Its validity may be extended by decision of the Management Committee of 28DIGITAL.

Should any selected partner fail to sign the Grant Agreement within 60 days from the start of the Activity Execution, 28DIGITAL may, at its discretion, select the next highest-ranking proposal from the reserve list without launching an additional call.

In the event that budget becomes available at a later stage – for example, if a funded proposal is unable to complete the project – proposals on the reserve list may become eligible for funding.

Applicants are informed that inclusion on the reserve list does not confer any entitlement to participate in the Venture Incubation Programme.

## 9. Appeal process

28DIGITAL will address, in good faith and in a timely manner, any appeal relating to the outcome of the selection process described in this document.

Appeals must be submitted by the proposers to the attention of the relevant Regional Director and must be supported by a factual justification identifying the alleged shortcomings in the evaluation process and/or the feedback provided by 28DIGITAL. Contact details for Regional Directors will be available on the [website](#).

To ensure adherence to the programme timeline, the following procedure shall apply:

1. Publication of results and feedback to selected and rejected proposals: approximately one week after the submission deadline.
2. Submission of appeals: proposers must submit any appeal within five (5) business days from the publication of the results to the attention of the relevant Regional Director.
3. Appeal Review: the relevant Regional Director will examine the appeal. Where the appeal is deemed to have merit, it will be referred to the Management Committee of 28DIGITAL for further review. The Management Committee will assess the appeal and issue a final decision.

## 9. Timeline

28DIGITAL launches on 16 of January 2026 an open call with submission deadline on 16 of March 2026.

Action	Date
Submission system opens	January 16, 2026
Application closing	March 16, 2026
Individual review by Experts	March 16 – March 20, 2026
Review Gate	March 21, 2026
MC Gate	March 21 – 23, 2026
Feedback to selected/rejected activities	March 23, 2026
Appeal window (5 days)	March 28, 2026
Proposal adjustments window (5 business days)	March 28, 2026
Standstill period	March 28 - April 28, 2026
Activities start	May 1, 2026

In the event of any updates to the call, all proposers with an open proposal will be directly informed. Additionally, a public notice will be prominently displayed at the top of the website to ensure visibility for all potential applicants.

## Annex A: the Venture Incubation Programme

The 12-week 28DIGITAL Venture Incubation Programme is a two-stage competitive programme designed to support the creation of digital and deep technology-based ventures. The programme contributes to **EIT core KPIs** on venture support and venture creation by enabling innovators to:

- **Develop and validate a Minimum Viable Product (MVP)**, defined as a functional and market-tested version of their solution;
- **Incorporate and grow their company** in one of the EU Member States;
- **Position their venture for further growth**, including access to finance, and market expansion.

The programme is executed and delivered by **28DIGITAL Innovation Partners**. By supporting early-stage innovators, 28DIGITAL and its partners aim to:

- Establish new digital and deep-tech ventures within the EU Member States;

- Enable them to scale and grow sustainably;
- Bridge the so-called "valley of death" between prototype and commercial viability;
- Contribute to European strategic autonomy, innovation capacity, and employment.

28DIGITAL reserves the right, at its sole discretion and without incurring any liability, not to proceed with this edition of the programme should the number of applications received be insufficient to ensure its effective implementation. In such a case, 28DIGITAL will inform all applicants of the cancelled edition as soon as reasonably practicable.

The call for startup founders will be open to **residents of the countries listed below**.

**EU Member States:** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

**Horizon Europe Associated Countries:** Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Switzerland, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

## A.1 Structure of the Venture Incubation Programme

By applying to the Venture Incubation Programme, teams participate in a two-stage competition.

In the first stage, teams may be awarded a "*Growth Package*" consisting of a cash prize and participation in the **pre-Acceleration Phase**.

Admission to the second stage is subject to the successful completion of the first stage and the incorporation of the venture. Teams admitted to the second stage may be awarded a "*Final Prize*", consisting of a cash prize of €10,000, or €20,000 based on their performance.

Venture teams that have incorporated their company will be required to provide **equity to 28DIGITAL**, in accordance with the applicable programme terms and conditions.

### A.1.1 Growth Package

The Growth Package consists of:

1. A 12-week pre-Acceleration Phase, delivered by qualified experts; and
2. A cash prize of €5,000.

The pre-Acceleration Phase supports selected teams in the development and validation of their Minimum Viable Product (MVP) and in the establishment of their venture. It provides structured training in entrepreneurial skills through:

- A two-day bootcamp;
- An eight-week virtual (online) mentoring programme; and
- A Pitch Day, as defined within the Venture Incubation Programme.

For this call, the pre-Acceleration Phase will be executed by the 28DIGITAL Venture Incubation Programme Partner and overseen by the Venture Incubation Programme Committee, composed of two representatives from 28DIGITAL and two representatives of the Partner.

The pre-Acceleration Phase is designed to:

- Help selected teams sharpen their **market vertical focus and value proposition**, shifting from a product-driven to a market-driven perspective;
- **De-risk ventures in the three strategic domains of 28DIGITAL** (see A.2) through structured product and market validation, including testing hypotheses with real potential customers;
- Foster **peer-to-peer learning** and a strong entrepreneurial community that extends beyond the end of the programme;
- Enable teams to maximize **product-market fit** through exposure to relevant market actors in their target sectors;
- Prepare teams for **future fundraising**, particularly seed investments from Business Angels and Venture Capital firms.

By the end of the pre-Acceleration Phase, successful teams are expected to have:

- Developed, tested, and validated their **MVP**; and
- Incorporated **one (and only one) venture** in one of the **27 EU member states**.

#### A.1.2 Final Prize

Teams that a) have been awarded the Growth Package and b) have successfully completed their MVP and incorporated their venture in one of the EU 27 countries, will be **eligible** to

apply for a prize of either 10,000 Euro or 20,000 Euro **depending on their performance**, payable to the venture.

## A.2 Venture Incubation Programme's Focus

The 28DIGITAL Venture Incubation Programme supports **early-stage innovation**, enabling founders to validate, build, and position technology that can reshape strategic European industries. The programme targets teams with a prototype, PoC, or near-MVP and helps them accelerate toward market readiness and venture creation. The programme is aligned with **28DIGITAL's three strategic domains**:

### 1. Deep Tech

**Deep Tech** covers breakthrough science-driven technologies that redefine what is possible across health, mobility, manufacturing, computing, and advanced digital infrastructures. We are looking for ventures developing novel materials, next-generation computing, AI-powered systems, robotics, sensing, advanced simulation, and enabling technologies backed by strong R&D foundations and significant scalability potential.

**Keywords:** Deep Tech: advanced computing, AI/ML, robotics, sensors, materials, quantum-inspired, edge/cloud, data systems.

### 2. Strategic Tech

**Strategic Tech** includes critical technologies that strengthen Europe's security, autonomy, and geopolitical resilience. This spans cybersecurity, secure digital identity, privacy-preserving data infrastructures, resilient mobility systems, dual-use technologies, trusted AI, edge/cloud sovereign architectures, and solutions supporting national or regional strategic infrastructure.

**Keywords:** cybersecurity, digital identity, secure data, dual-use tech, mobility systems, situational awareness.

### 3. Green & Social Tech



**Green & Social Tech** supports technologies that accelerate Europe's digital-green transition and strengthen societal well-being. This includes sustainable manufacturing, circular economy models, low-carbon mobility, energy-efficient systems, environmental monitoring, and climate-resilient infrastructure, as well as digital solutions that address social challenges, improve inclusion, enhance public-sector innovation, and modernise essential services through GovTech. We are looking for ventures that combine digital excellence with measurable environmental and/or social impact.

**Keywords:** circularity, decarbonisation, energy efficiency, sustainable production, climate technologies, GovTech, social impact, community resilience, inclusion-driven innovation.

## Annex B: Activity Monitoring

All activities selected for funding undergo **continuous monitoring by 28DIGITAL** to ensure effective progress and implementation and to trigger payments according to the achievement of milestone, deliverables and KPIs.

The **mid-term monitoring** at the end of the third month (M3) will cover several aspects relating to the activity implementation including, but not limited to: achievement of outputs, milestones, deliverables and KPIs; risk management; financial management; quality assurance; progress against KPI achievement and impact delivery; communication and dissemination; co-branding; and progress towards commercialization and exploitation of results. 28DIGITAL will request mid-term reporting of actual costs incurred with the subgrant, as well as regular reporting of KPIs and deliverables.

In the case of under-performance, significant delay of implementation, misconduct of the consortium, or any other reason jeopardizing the timely implementation of the activity identified during the monitoring process, 28DIGITAL reserves the right to discontinue or restructure the funding of the activity at any point during its implementation. In addition, a final report covering financials, KPIs, deliverables, and overall activity results will be required upon activity completion for final assessment and payment.

## Annex C: Gender Equality

28DIGITAL is committed to promoting gender equality and diversity across all its activities, as outlined in its Gender Mainstreaming Policy. Applicants are encouraged to integrate gender considerations into the design of their proposed activities, ensuring inclusivity and equal opportunities. Additionally, during the contract performance, applicants should share their measures and strategies that promote gender equality, contributing to a more equitable digital innovation ecosystem.

## Annex D: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Each Activity edition contributes towards relevant KPIs, consisting of:

**EIT-Level KPIs (EIT KPIs):** defined by the EIT for the entire EIT community (KICs). These are the most important KPIs and require supporting formal evidence of achievement:

<b>EITHE02.4</b>	Innovations launched on the market with a sales revenue of least EUR 10,000 documented
<b>EITHE03.1</b>	Supported startups
<b>EITHE06.1</b>	Investment raised by supported startups
<b>EITHE03.2</b>	Supported startups (RIS)
<b>EITHE06.2</b>	Investment raised by supported startups (RIS)

As valuable KPI achievements may also materialise during subsequent years, partners will be asked to support the reporting of KPI results related to their Activity even after its official end. 28DIGITAL follows-up the selected activities up to 5 years after activity completion to track long-term impact and to ensure the achievement of KPIs after the activity ends.

## Annex E: Avoidance of conflict of Interest

Beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation that could compromise the **impartial and objective implementation** of the Agreement for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest (“conflict of interest”).

Beneficiaries must formally notify the granting authority **without delay** of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The granting authority **may verify** that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.

### E.1. Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced.

## Annex F: Communication, Dissemination and Visibility

### F.1. Communication, Dissemination and Promotion

**Dissemination plan** including communications and outreach is required for each activity in line with HE Guidance. Unless otherwise agreed with 28DIGITAL, the partners of the

selected Innovation Activities must promote the activity and its results by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public).

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the partners must inform 28DIGITAL.

## F.2. Visibility: The European Flag and Funding Statement

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the partners must inform 28DIGITAL.

**Visibility:** Unless otherwise agreed with 28DIGITAL, communication activities of the partners related to the Activity (including media relations, conferences, seminars, information material, such as brochures, leaflets, posters, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), dissemination activities and any infrastructure, equipment, vehicles, supplies or major result funded by 28DIGITAL **must acknowledge the EU support** and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement (translated into local languages where appropriate). Other allowed layouts/backgrounds can be found in the 28DIGITAL Intranet.



Initiated by the European Institute  
of Innovation and Technology (EIT)



The emblem must remain **distinct and separate** and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text. Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support. When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. logos of partners), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos. For the purposes of their obligations under this section, the partners may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from 28DIGITAL. This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means.

## F.3. Quality of Information: Disclaimer

Any communication or dissemination activity related to the Innovation Activity must use factually accurate information.



Moreover, it must indicate the following **disclaimer** (translated into local languages where appropriate):

*“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or 28DIGITAL. Neither the European Union nor 28DIGITAL can be held responsible for them.”*

#### F.4. Specific Communication, Dissemination and Visibility Rules

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced.

#### F.5. Dissemination, communication, and exploitation of the results of the activities

Applicants need to respect the provisions of **Article 16** regarding the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) — Background And Results — Access Rights And Rights and Article 17 regarding Communication, dissemination and visibility of the (Model) Grant Agreement . Applicants should engage in dissemination, communication and exploitation of the results of the activities.

#### F.6. Intellectual Property

Participating entities agree to respect IPR Rules (Article 16) of the (Model) Grant Agreement.

#### F.7. Data Management Plan

The selected activities will be required to create a **Data Management Plan** and ensure compliance with GDPR (if applicable). The plan will need to describe the data management life cycle for the data to be collected, processed, and/or generated by a project in accordance with FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) principles. More information can be found in the [HE MGA - Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement](#) (also available on the intranet).