S3E Experts

Call for Expression of Interest

November 2022

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1. S3E Project

The **S3E – Southern European Entrepreneurship Engine** project mission is to develop an **engine of growth** that will contribute to improve the connectedness and efficiency of the **entrepreneurship ecosystems in southern European countries.**

S3E consortium partners are:
- **HiSeedTech** - A not-for-profit association founded by private companies that came together with the purpose of enabling the creation of value from knowledge through technology entrepreneurship and open innovation.
- **EPLO Institute for Sustainable Development** – part of an international organization dedicated to mainstreaming the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the EU Green Deal, providing capacity building, policy work and educational programs.
- **IDI** (International Development Ireland) specialises in practical day-to-day implementation for Government agencies in economies which are growing and changing rapidly
- **Australo** Interinnov Marketing Lab Sl - is a marketing agency specializing in growth hacking for research and innovation.

The S3E project is co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 European innovation ecosystems under the grant agreement ID: 101072135 (see here the Cordis fact sheet).

S3E will focus on accelerating **deep tech projects, start-ups, and SMEs** that, by providing solutions towards a more sustainable society and economy, can impact social development and economic growth in these countries and contribute to the timely achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)[1] in line with the EU Green Deal, the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the NextGenerationEU fund.

S3E will (i) provide skills to researchers and technology transfer actors in science-based entrepreneurship and technology commercialization, (ii) support growth stage start-ups in business development and in procuring investment, and (iii) provide technology brokerage for corporates and scale-up stage start-ups and SMEs.

The program is built around **three tracks** of bespoke services tailored to researchers and start-ups' of varying levels of maturity (i.e., early, growth, and scaling stages):
- **S3E Start:** For research teams and technology transfer offices, S3E offers a hands-on training program to hone their commercial skills and secure early funding for development.
- **S3E Charge:** For growth start-ups, S3E provides mentoring and networking to develop an investment-ready business plan and facilitate access to non-dilutable and dilutable funding.

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[1] https://sdgs.un.org/goals

S3E Reverse: For scaling start-ups, S3E will set up an Open Innovation ecosystem to broker, connect and match corporates to scaling start-ups through a challenge-solution duality.
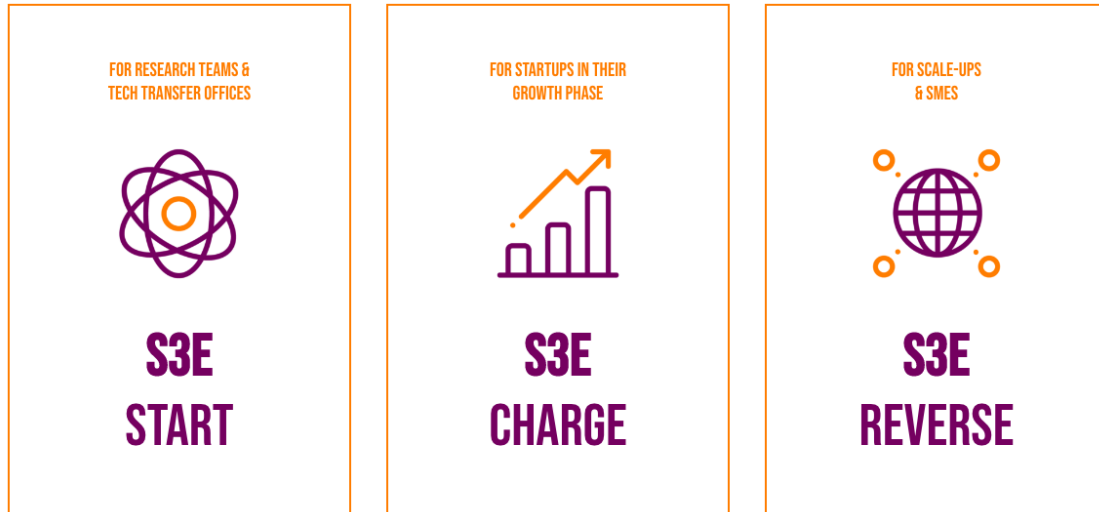

Figure 1. S3E Tracks

2. Open call for experts

During the implementation of the project, S3E will run two open calls to select participants in the above-mentioned tracks. In order to support the implementation of the three innovation programs (Start, Charge, and Reverse), S3E will rely on the support of external experts that, based on their experience, will complement the diverse activities envisioned by the project, namely: evaluation of proposals, mentorship, business advice, matching and brokering.

The current document is meant to set up the **call for expression of interest for experts to support the S3E program** on its first open call for the three tracks (**Start, Charge, Reverse**). As an expert, you can perform a variety of roles and tasks:

- **Evaluators** are responsible for evaluating proposals submitted by research teams, technology transfer officers, and growth start-ups in response to the call for proposals under the **S3E Start** and **S3E Charge** Programs.
- **Mentors for deep tech projects** that will guide research teams on developing a business case for a product, service, or process grounded on a technology proposed to the **S3E Start** Program.
- **Mentors for deep tech growth startups** that will help develop an investment-ready business plan in the frame of the **S3E Charge** Program.
- **Deep tech brokers** will match identified corporate challenges with the portfolio of solutions offered by scaling startups in the frame of the **S3E Reverse** Program.

Experts will have to perform this work and provide services as independent individuals and **NOT** represent a company or organization.

Application is a mandatory prerequisite to work as an expert in the S3E program. Application does not automatically mean that the experts will be joining the program. This will depend on the project needs and fulfillment of certain formal requirements. When experts are assigned to any of the described roles, they will need to sign a contract and a non-disclosure agreement.

3.   Timetable and deadlines

This **call for expression of interest** is open from 01/12/2022 to 15/01/2023.
The **evaluation of the results** will take place from 16/01/2023 to 30/01/2023.
The **announcement of the results** will be 31/01/2023.

Depending on the type of experts, your tasks will have a specific duration.
- Evaluators (**S3E Start** and **S3E Charge**): 13/2/2023 until 27/2/2023.
- Mentors for deep tech projects (**S3E Start**): 23/03/2023 until 7/7/2023.
- Mentors for deep tech growth startups (**S3E Charge**): 17/04/2023 until 13/7/2023.
- Deep tech brokers (**S3E Reverse**): around July 2023 and will last till Dec 2023.

4.   Eligible profiles

We are looking for experts with a high level of expertise and professional experience in supporting deep tech projects, growth, and scaling startups.

Experts are considered eligible for S3E Call for experts if complying with **ALL** the following rules:
- High-level of expertise and professional experience in supporting technological innovation projects, growth and scaling startups.
- Experience in the following science fields: agricultural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, and natural sciences.
- A very good level of English is required because it is the official language of the program.
- Knowledge of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Experience in innovation support, evaluation, mentoring, and /or coaching.

5.   Exclusion

Persons who are subject to EU administrative sanctions (i.e., exclusion or financial penalty decision) or in one of the following exclusion situations that bar them from receiving EU funds can **NOT** work as S3E experts:

- bankruptcy, winding up, court-ordered administration, arrangement with creditors, suspension of business activities or similar procedures
- in breach of social security or tax obligations – guilty of grave professional misconduct
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organization, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labor or human trafficking
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 – have created an entity under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin. Experts will also be refused if it turns out that during the contract procedure, they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information – they are in a conflict of interest.

6.   S3E Expert

6.1. Tasks of each role

S3E involves different types of independent experts to assist in the implementation, evaluation, and monitoring of the program. These include:

- **S3E Evaluators**
- **S3E Start Mentors for deep tech projects**
- **S3E Charge Mentors for deep tech growth startups**
- **S3E Deep tech brokers**

6.1.1. S3E Evaluators

The S3E Evaluators will select the research teams, technology transfer officers, and the growth startups that will join the **S3E Start** and **S3E Charge**, respectively.

On the S3E Start the evaluators will receive the applications forms from **research teams** and rank them according to the following criteria:
- perceived "breadth" of the technology, i.e., the platform potential of the technology, and
- perceived "depth" of the technology, i.e., the unique features of the technology.
- motivation to participate in the training program and the entrepreneurial spirit of the team, perceived from the interview, will also contribute to the applications ranking.

Also, will receive the applications forms from **technology transfer officers** and rank them according to the following criteria:

- motivation to participate in the training program, namely how could S3E Start help their TTO to succeed in getting their discoveries into the market.
- geographic dispersion – meaning that S3E Start will try to cover all the southern European Countries so it's not expected to have more than two participants from the same country.

On the S3E Charge, the evaluators will receive the application forms and need to rank them according to a set of detailed criteria related: to the sustainability of the economic opportunity resulting from the match between the technology and the market and the perception of the motivation of the team to participate in the program. The pitch and the written business case along with the alignment to the UN SDGs will also carry significant value during the evaluation process.

A guideline to evaluate the proposals and an evaluation grid will be provided to all the S3E evaluators to complete the evaluation process.

6.1.2. Start Mentors for deep tech projects

The **S3E Mentors for deep tech projects** will guide research teams on developing a business case for a product, service or process and a pitch-deck of the project, both grounded on the technology proposed to S3E Start. It is important to note that the approach used in the program will be highly iterative in the sense that as the teams amass information from the market, they may be required to iterate back to improve previous decisions and findings. The role of the mentors is crucial in this iterative process in forcing the teams to iterate back and select the best opportunities.

6.1.3. S3E Mentors for deep tech growth startups

The **S3E Mentors for deep tech growth startups** will guide the startups on developing an investment ready business plan, to be delivered as the outcome of the program. The business plan will build upon the business case provided by the participating teams on the application form and shall include detailed sections on: (i) opportunity description, (ii) product concept, (iii) technology, IP and pipeline, (iv) market analysis, (v) strategic framework, (vi) sales plan and marketing, (vii) development roadmap, (viii) financials and (ix) team. Exchanging experiences and network of contacts are expected.

The mentors for deep tech projects (6.1.2) and deep tech growth startups (6.1.3) will have a mentoring handbook outlining the main pillars of the mentoring process, to ensure that each participating research team and start-up receive high-quality mentoring and in accordance with the vision of S3E project.

6.1.4. S3E Deep tech brokers

The role of S3E deep tech brokers is to analyze the challenges posed by corporates that require relevant field of expertise, interview the liaison element of the corporate for a better understanding of the challenge and fine-tune its specification, analyze and interview scale start-ups that match their field(s) of expertise, choose the adequate solution provider and broker the contacts between the corporate and the start-up(s) that may have a solution to solve the challenge.

6.2. Experts Assignment

S3E experts will be assigned to the relevant targets based on several key factors:
*   The right fit between project/startup and evaluators/mentors/brokers' expertise.
*   The geographic proximity – mentors/brokers are assigned to projects/startups within their Regional/National Hub.
*   Other factors include language skills, track record, sectoral expertise, and so on.

6.3. Working as an S3E expert

Working as an expert in short.

6.3.1. Place of work

All tasks may be carried out online or in the startup premises (if proximity allows) – note that in-person mentoring/matching is not a requirement and travel expenses are not covered by S3E project.

6.3.2. Conflict of interest

Experts shall **NOT** be appointed for proposals, projects, startups, or corporates if they have a vested interest that could influence their evaluation or mentoring process.

6.3.3. Confidentiality

Experts are going to be handling classified information, so they shall need to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement.

6.3.4. Remuneration

This is a volunteer program carried out on a pro-bono basis. By participating experts indicate their understanding that they are not paid for their time, and that they do not expect anything in return

(no equity, no cash, no future contract, etc.), other than the satisfaction of helping research teams or start-ups with whom they are assigned to evaluate/mentoring/match.

6.3.5. Benefits for all experts

As well as benefiting from the opportunity to draw on your own experience and knowledge to help another colleague grow and develop, as an expert, you also benefit from the chance to:

- Play an active role in the southern European deep tech ecosystem.
- Access to the S3E Network and expand your professional network.
- Training on "Sustainable Development and Investments" with a certificate by the Institute for Sustainable Development at EPLO.
- Connect with relevant EU institutions and stakeholders.
- Have the opportunity to "give something back":
  - Give insights into processes and practices that you are familiar with.
  - Share good practices from your own experience.
  - Offer perspectives and insights into new or different ways of doing things.
  - Enable new colleagues to hit the ground running and be as effective as possible in their roles.
- Learn by gaining exposure to new ideas, approaches, and perspectives.
- Gain recognition for your skills and experience and for your contribution as an expert, raising your professional profile.
- Develop valuable interpersonal and communication skills such as listening and questioning.
- **Be at the forefront of the revolution of deep tech.**

6.3.6. Amount of work and schedule

The amount of work and schedule depends on the role to be performed:

S3E Evaluators (S3E Start, S3E Charge)
On the evaluation of deep tech projects and growth startups proposals applying, it is expected that evaluators be available to do the selection from 13/2/2023 until 27/2/2023. The evaluation process will be composed of two stages:
- First, the application will be assessed by S3E project partners to validate if it conforms to the eligibility criteria of S3E Start and S3E Charge.
- Second, the application will be assessed by the evaluators, that, if required, will select teams to an interview.

We will provide a guideline to evaluate the proposals and an evaluation grid. Each evaluator will be signed with a maximum of five applications that will correspond to an amount of work of eight hours, approximately.

S3E Mentors for deep tech projects (S3E Start)
On mentoring deep tech projects, mentors are expected to meet with the research teams 8 times in a 1,5-hour meeting in a period of 3 months. The S3E team will try to assign each mentor to a team from the same country to avoid major time differences. Besides that, it is expected that mentors are available for a briefing and debriefing meeting with the S3E team and to assist with the open day of the program that will be held on the 20th of July. The meetings will be held online and the first will be on the 23rd of March.

The remaining meetings will be scheduled by the mentors and the teams between the following days:

March	April	May	June	July
23	5-7	4-5	9-10	3-7
	19-21	17-19	21-23	

Table 1. Schedule of S3E Start mentors

Mentors for deep tech growth startups (S3E Charge)
Mentors for deep tech growth projects (S3E Charge) are expected to have seven 1,5 hour long meetings during a 14-week period with the start-up they have been designated to assist in developing an investment ready business plan. Each mentor is assigned one start-up team for the S3E Charge program. It is expected that mentors are available for a briefing and debriefing meeting with the S3E team and to assist the open day of the program that will be held on the 19th of July 2023. The meetings will be held online on the following dates (there is flexibility on the date as long as it takes place within that specific week).

April	May	June	July
17	2	12	13
	15	26	
	29		

Table 2. Schedule of S3E Charge mentors

Deep tech brokers (S3E Reverse)

Technology Broker are professionals that can bridge the gap between research and industry. They are intermediaries and mediators between science and industry. They have a deep understanding of the R&I process and can understand the challenges that today's organisations, public and private face. They have product and/or project management experience and the technical background to break down problems and ask the right questions. They are experienced experts and specialists in their scientific fields but at the same time they have a broad understanding of innovation processes.

Their job will be to help the Challenge Organisations better define their challenge and develop a set of solid technical specifications that will help the scale-ups design the best solutions for them. Through our technology brokerage process the organisations will be able to better define their problems and needs and find potential solutions through their collaboration with a smaller innovative company.

Deep Tech Brokers selected for our program are expected to dedicate around 10 hours in private consultations and meetings with the Challenge Organisations and/or the scale-ups to help them define their needs and agree on a common action plan that will be described in an MoU document.

This document will provide the basic requirements that will be needed by the scaleups to adapt or customize their solutions and products and will outline their future collaboration options: direct sale, common R&I project, pre-commercial procurements (PCPs) and public procurements of innovative solutions (PPIs) opportunities, further work etc. The work of the Tech Brokers will start at around July 2023 and will last till Dec 2023.

7. Procedure

To work as an expert assisting the S3E project, you must declare your interest by applying to the "S3E Call for Experts". The selection results will be communicated directly to you on 31 of January 2023.

7.1. Applications

Applications must be submitted via our F6S Page at https://www.f6s.com/s3e-call-for-experts/apply.

7.2. Selection

Selection of experts will be made from F6S applications by the S3E team, based on selection criteria such as professional expertise and experience, language skills, geographical and business-sector balance, gender balance, regular rotation, and absence of conflict of interest. The procedure will be objective and follow the principles of non-discrimination and equal treatment.

7.3. Contracting

Selected experts will sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding with the details regarding their role.

8. Other conditions

8.1. Ownership and use of the results

The results produced in every interaction of each role (Evaluators, Mentors for deed tech projects, Mentors for deep tech growth startups, Deep tech brokers) will belong to the S3E project.

8.2. Data protection

Personal data of experts are confidential. S3E partners will act as Data Controllers of data submitted through the F6S platform for these purposes. The F6S platform's system design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). Each expert will accept the F6S terms to ensure coverage.

Please refer to https://www.f6s.com/privacy-policy to check F6S platform data privacy policy and security measures and to https://south3e.eu/privacy-policy/ to get informed about the S3E Privacy Policy.