D3.2

TRACK 1:
OPEN CALL PLATFORM AND DOCUMENTATION

HiSeedTech

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Work package	WP3
Task	T3.2
Due date	Month 6 (31-12-2022)
Submission date	26-12-2022
Deliverable lead	HiSeedTech
Version	v.04
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Abstract

This deliverable reports on the activities performed to prepare the S3E Start 1st Call for applications, which started on the 7th of November 2022. The deliverable also gathers some of the documents issued by the S3E consortium for the researchers', technology transfer officer's applicants and experts. The official documents for the open call are published on Zenodo and are available on the website of the project https://south3e.eu/.

Keywords

S3E, deep tech, science-based, entrepreneurship, technology commercialization, innovation ecosystem, southern Europe, open innovation, open call, innovation project, research, technology transfer officer, experts.

Document revision history

Version	Date	Description of change	Contributor(s)
v0.1	09-09-2022	1st version of deliverable template	AUS
v0.2	29-11-2022	Document creation	HST
v0.3	11-12-2022	Content contribution	EPLO
v0.4	15-12-2022	Content contribution	HST
v0.4	19-12-2022	Final revision	ALL Partners

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Project co-funded by the European Commission in the H2020 Programme

Nature of the deliverable: R

Dissemination level:

PU	**Public, fully open. e.g., website**	✓
CL	Classified information as referred to in Commission Decision 2001/844/EC	
SEN	Confidential to S3E project and Commission Services	

S3E Partners:

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Abbreviations

AUS	Australo Interinnov Marketing Lab SL
D	Deliverable
DoA	Description of Action
EIS	European innovation scoreboard
EPLO	The Institute for Sustainable Development is an initiative of the European Public Law Organization
HST	HiSeedTech
IDI	International Development Ireland Limited
S3E	Southern European Entrepreneurship Engine
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
WP	Work Package
TTO	Technology Transfer Officer
VC	Venture capital

1 Introduction

Deliverable 3.2. reports on the work performed by the S3E consortium in the **preparation of the S3E 1st Call for applications**, which opened on the 7th of November 2022. During the reporting period of the corresponding task, the **consortium has been engaged in the following activities**:

- Definition of the stakeholder framework for the open call – that was defined on D5.1.
- Identification of the assets provided by the consortium to the applicants.
- Definition of the science fields and topics of the calls.
- Select the platform for application submission.
- Definition of the criteria to select the applicants and experts.
- Preparation of the documents to give support to the applicants and experts.

The first dissemination actions for the 1st Call for applications are defined on the deliverable D5.2" Dissemination, Communication & Exploitation Plan" with the support of D2.1" Ecosystem map". The preparation of the open call started in July 2022 and the present report covers the work done until the end of the year.

2 Report on the S3E Start open call

2.1. The rationale behind S3E project

Before introducing the reporting on the S3E open call, **we must clarify the concept of deep tech, which is one of the pillars of it.** In this context, 'Deep Tech' refers to technologies that are grounded on a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation. Deep tech supports the development of disruptive solutions built around unique, protected, or hard-to-reproduce technological or scientific advances. These solutions embody products, processes, or services that will fulfill unmet (or ill-met) market needs that can have a significant social and economic impact and contribute to the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[1]. Deep tech start-ups are fostered by research that, in most cases, is developed within the scientific ecosystem (e.g., universities).

Over the past two decades innovation was, essentially, based on novel (and sometimes disruptive) business models anchored on digital platforms and web and mobile-based apps and, thus, became synonymous with the so-called tech industry. Investors, companies, and governments are now looking more attentively to deep technological innovations (deep tech) that will drive the next (sustainable) industrial revolution.

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

European Startups[2] is a project created by Dealroom and Sifted, supported by the European Commission and European Parliament, "aimed at facilitating informed conversation and collaboration among European tech ecosystem stakeholders to take Europe's startup economy to the next level". Its study "2021: the year of Deep Tech"[3] clearly provides evidence of the unbalance in Deep Tech VC investment (see Figure 1) between the group of countries with advanced innovation ecosystems ("Innovation Leaders" and "Strong Innovators") and the group of countries with developing innovation ecosystems ("Moderate Innovators" and "Emerging Innovators"), the only exceptions being Spain and Italy (Moderate Innovators) and Poland (Emerging Innovator).

Company	Category	University	Grants	VC funding
BIONTECH	Biotech	Mainz	European H2020 programs	€1.3b
onfido	Identity verification	Oxford	Eurostars SME Programme, Tech Nation	€192m
Aledia	Light-emitting diodes	CEA	European Innovation Council (EIC)	€171m
ICEYE	Satellites	Aalto	European Commission, Eurostars SME Programme	€123m
climeworks	Carbon sequestration	ETH Zurich	Eurostars SME Programme	€114m
XMOS	Edge AI chips	Bristol	EIC	€102m
Exscientia	AI-based drug discovery	Dundee	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	€96m
IQM	Quantum computing	Aalto	EIC	€68m
MAGAZINO	Intralogistics robots	TUM	EXIST	€41m
KALRAY	Intelligent microprocessors	CEA	Eurostars SME Programme	€34m
oxbotica	Autonomous vehicle software	Oxford	Innovate UK	€70m
wingtra	Professional drones	ETH Zurich	EIC	€27mp
ULTROMICS	AI-based diagnostics	Oxford	Government of the UK, NIHR	€24m
paragraf	Graphene-based electronics	Cambridge	ERDF	€23m
Recycling Technologies	Plastic recycling	Warwick	EIC, UKRI	€20m
river lane	Quantum computing	Cambridge	Government of the UK	€4m
vaccitech	Biotech (Oxford's Covid vaccine)	Oxford	UKRI	€43m
ONI	Super resolution microscopes	Oxford	n/a	€27m

Figure 1. Deep Tech VC Investment in Europe (Source: "2021: the year of Deep Tech"; European Startups; dealroom.co and Sifted; 2021)

[2] https://europeanstartups.co (accessed on the 14th of December 2022)
[3] European Startups dealroom.co & Sifted (2021). "2021: the year of Deep Tech", available from https://europeanstartups.co/reports/2021-the-year-of-deep-tech (accessed on the 14th of December 2022)

An analysis of the Deep Tech clusters that contribute to these VC investments (right column of Figure 1) allows one to conclude that most of **Europe's top Deep Tech companies have their roots in Research and Development activities carried out in academia**. Analyzing the European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) indicators related to each national research system; one can conclude that this **unbalance is partially justified by the lag in research intensity in the countries with developing innovation ecosystems.** However, in these countries there are pockets of outstanding research that have potential commercialization value and **what is missing is the support to uncover this potentially valuable bench research and help bring it to the market.** Also, from the analysis of the EIS, one can see that investment in start-ups in developing innovation ecosystems is feeble and, thus, after uncovering the research and help the research teams develop a business case supported by the ensuing deep tech products (or services), it will be necessary to showcase the resulting start-ups to investors in countries with a more advanced VC investment panorama.

For this reason, we have designed S3E – Southern European Entrepreneurship Engine. This project aims to revolutionize the southern European deep tech ecosystem.

2.2. S3E project

S3E is a project funded by the European Commission that focuses on **accelerating deep tech projects, start-ups, and SMEs** that aim at providing solutions towards a more sustainable society and economy in line with the SDGs. The S3E project mission is to develop an engine of growth that contributes to improve the connectedness and efficiency of the entrepreneurship ecosystems in Southern European countries (all of them Moderate or Emerging innovators).

Considering this, we have designed a program built around three tracks (see figure 2) of bespoke services tailored to researchers and innovators' varying levels of maturity (i.e., early, growth, and scaling stages):

- **S3E Start:** For research teams and technology transfer officers, 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.
- **S3E Reverse:** For scaling start-ups and SMEs, S3E will set up an Open Innovation ecosystem to broker, connect and match corporates to scaling start-ups through a challenge-solution duality.

Figure 2. S3E Tracks

Research teams, technology transfer officers, growth startups and scale startups will be selected through an open call. This open call targets science and technology excellence in these fields: agricultural sciences, engineering and technology, life sciences, and natural sciences. **This document focuses on the S3E Start and its open call and documentation.**

2.3. S3E Start

S3E Start is designed for **research teams with deep tech projects**, grounded in a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation that want to explore the path from the lab to the market. S3E Start is also for **technology transfer officers** that want to learn a thoroughly tested methodology to foster science-based entrepreneurship and technology commercialization.

The starting point of the S3E Start is a technology proposed (in the application form) by each participating research team. Over a period of 18-weeks teams will receive **online training** that will help them understand the process that will lead to the develop of a business case for a product (or service or process)[4] grounded on the proposed technology (hour and a half every week) that will be the outcome of the program. Additionally, participants will be offered **webinars** on topics relevant to the development of the business case (one hour every two weeks) and **mentoring** (hour and a half every two weeks).

In each class a set of deliverables will be given to the teams. Those deliverables provide the building blocks to assemble the business case. So, overall, S3E Start is a hands-on experience that aims to provide skills to **researchers** in knowledge commercialization to enable them to:

- link Science & Technology to product and market needs,
- better communicate science to a non-scientific audience,
- evaluate the different paths to move the technology to the market.

[4] From now on product, service and process will be referred indistinctively as product.

Technology transfer officers will participate by joining a team and will learn the Program methodology through the same hands-on approach.

S3E Start is driven by an internationally proven process for technology commercialization that was specifically developed for deep-tech projects. The hands-on approach of the process guides the research teams in the development of a business case for a product grounded on the scientific discovery or engineering innovation with which the team applied to the Program. So, the participating teams will acquire skills in technology commercialization and science-based entrepreneurship using their own project and a set of deliverables.

The outcome of S3E Start will also better position the participants to apply for public or private funding, because it will help them link their science to market needs and validate the assumptions that support the arguments to justify the creation of social and economic value.

2.4. Approach to S3E Start Open Call

During the reported period, the S3E consortium has been involved in the preparatory work needed for the open call process to take place. First, the conceptual framework of the open call was designed to reach the global goals of the project. As mentioned, the Stakeholder framework for the open call was defined in D5.1. There we have defined the outlines of the overall stakeholder engagement strategy of the S3E project. Having a clear standard how the southern European deep tech ecosystem work (D2.1), what is our target, how to approach them (D5.2 - Dissemination, Communication & Exploitation Plan), and what we want from them, S3E consortium has planned two open calls, **the first S3E open call was launched on 7th of November (12:00 CET)** and is opened until the 10th of February 2023 at 17:00 CET.

Considering time efficiency, transparency and accountability, the **consortium opted to have the open call for the three tracks (Start, Charge and Reverse) on roughly the same dates** so that the impact of the project will be stronger, the roadshows, publicity and other media activities will coincide, and that all consortium partners be involved.

The S3E Open Call #1 targets research teams and technology transfer officers (**Start**), growth startups (**Charge**) and scale startups (**Reverse**) in the following science fields: agricultural sciences, engineering and technology, life sciences, and natural sciences. Their projects must envisage one of the following SDGs:

- **No Poverty** (SDG 1): End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- **Zero Hunger** (SDG 2): End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- **Good Health and Well-Being** (SDG 3): Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

- **Quality Education** (SDG 4): Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- **Gender Equality** (SDG 5): Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- **Clean Water and Sanitation** (SDG 6): Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- **Affordable and Clean Energy** (SDG 7): Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.
- **Decent Work and Economic Growth (**SDG 8): Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- **Industry Innovation and Infrastructure** (SDG 9): Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- **Reduced Inequalities** (SDG 10): Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- **Sustainable Cities and Communities** (SDG 11): Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- **Responsible consumption and production** (SDG 12): Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- **Climate Action** (SDG 13): Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- **Life below water** (SDG 14): Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.
- **Life on land** (SDG 15): Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- **Peace, justice, and strong Institutions** (SDG 16): Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- **Partnership for the goals** (SDG 17): Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

In the beginning, the consortium planed two thematic open calls addressing different SGD:

1st Open Call: Economic and social impact

Targeting: No Poverty (SDG 1); Zero Hunger (SDG 2); Good Health and Well Being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5); Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8); Industry Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9) and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10).

2nd Open Call: Environmental and social impact

Targeting: Zero Hunger (SDG 2); Good Health and Well Being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6); Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7); Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11); Responsible Production and Consumption (SDG 12); Life Bellow Water (SDG 14); Life on Land (SDG 15).

However, after we published the 1st Open Call on the 7th of November, we started to ~~have~~ feedback from applicants. It was thought more efficient to have all United Nations SDGs in both open calls to attract the maximum number of applicants. Effectively the applicants' deep-tech solutions and technologies should be aligned to at least one SDG.

The first open call of the S3E project commenced on November 7th with the launch of the S3E Roadshow in Greece where meetings with stakeholders, research centers, academia and start-ups took place along with the Open Call Launch Event at the Greek National Research Center (see figure 3).

Figure 3. S3E Roadshow in Greece

2.5. Preparation of the S3E Start Open Call

In parallel with the framework of the open call, the consortium has dealt with the selection of the platform for the open call submission, defined the criteria for the selection of the applicants, experts and all the aspects related to the dissemination of the open call.

In order to foster inclusiveness and transparency as well as attract the maximum number of suitable candidates, **the consortium opted to use the F6S platform** (https://www.f6s.com/) as regards all S3E Open Calls. The F6S platform is the world's largest platform for founders and enables them to interact with Investors, Accelerators/Incubators, Products/tools, Talent on the platform to grow together. Additionally, the F6S platform is user-friendly and sends out emails and alerts to potential participants to our Calls. Although they do not have researchers and TTOs on the platform, we reinforce this communication through digital communication channels. The application to the S3E Start form for research teams and TTOs is available on section 6.

A call for external experts was opened in parallel with the open call process, with the aim of creating a large pool of experts for the evaluation process and mentoring the deep tech projects. **The S3E call for experts opened on December 1st and will close at the end of January 2023**. In order to attract the best talent and the most suitable to our project experts, the project social media are widely used along with the consortium partners' channels of communications that include social media, newsletters, and emails to contacts. The requirements for the experts are the following:

- 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.

Our goal with the call for experts is to get a gender-balanced pool and have as many Members States represented as needed to avoid the “country bios”. Regarding the 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. The application form for experts is available in section 8.

Finally, we have prepared support documentation for the applicants and experts:

- **S3E Start Open Call #1 Text,** that provides detailed information regarding the S3E Start program and its first Open Call for Proposals (section 4).
- **S3E Start Guidelines for Applicants**, which sets out the guidelines for participation in the first open call for proposals of the S3E Start project (section 5).
- **S3E Experts Expression of Interest text,** that provides the details of their roles, tasks, obligations, and benefits (section 7).

These three documents, as mentioned, are reported in section 4, 5 and 7. All are published on Zenodo (https://zenodo.org) - part of European Open Science Cloud, as defined in the data Management Plan (D1.1).

Regardless of the number of applications for S3E Start, a maximum of 25 research teams and 20 technology transfer officers will be selected. The selected projects will be announced on the 7th of March 2023 and the program will start on the 21st of March 2023 lasting until the 20th of July 2023.

3 Conclusions and next steps

Since the reported period the consortium has carried out the technical and operational activities needed to ensure the open call takes place correctly and according to the recommendation of the European Commission. On the 7th of November the call opened for the reception of proposals until February 10th.

Before and after the opening, several dissemination actions -were and will- be carried out thoroughly (see D5.2 - Dissemination, Communication & Exploitation Plan). At the same time, also the call for experts is open, with the aim to create a large pool of experts on the topics for the open call. The open call for experts is open from the 10th of December until the end of January.

The evaluation process will be carried out from the 13th of February until the 27th of February 2023. The selected projects will be announced on the 7th of March and the program will start on the 21st of March 2023 lasting until the 20th of July 2023 with the Open Day.

The next report, due in February 2022, will detail the “Implementation & Deployment of the S3E framework”.

4 S3E Start Open Call #1 Text

The document is published on https://zenodo.org/record/7457990#.Y6SDui8qLfI

S3E Start

Open Call #1 Text

v.3.

19 Dec 2022

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Document revision history

Version	Date	Description of change
v.1	26/10/2022	1st version of Open Call Text
v.2	14/11/2022	Changes in the targeting of 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals
v.3	19/12/2022	Update the eligible countries, namely Kosovo, and figure 2.

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1 Introduction

S3E – Southern European Entrepreneurship Engine is a project, funded by the European Commission, focused on accelerating **deep tech projects, start-ups, and SMEs** that aim at providing solutions towards a more sustainable society and economy in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)[1].

The S3E program is built around **three tracks** of carefully designed services tailored to support researchers, research teams, start-ups, scaleups and SMEs in advancing their technologies, products, processes, or services towards the market. Participants in the programs will be selected through open calls.

This document provides a full set of information useful for interested applicants who are willing to participate in **S3E Track 1**: **S3E Start,** that is directed towards research teams from research and development organizations (e.g., universities, research institutions, start-ups, or companies), and technology transfer officers. This document provides detailed information regarding the S3E Start program and its **first Open Call for Proposals** (also referred to as Open Call #1), as well as a general overview on the S3E project.

2 S3E overview

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.

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

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, in line with the EU Green Deal, the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the NextGenerationEU fund.

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

The program is built around **three tracks** of bespoke services tailored to start-ups' 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
- **S3E Reverse:** For scaling start-ups and SMEs, S3E will set up an Open Innovation ecosystem to broker, connect and match corporates to scaling start-ups through a challenge-solution duality.

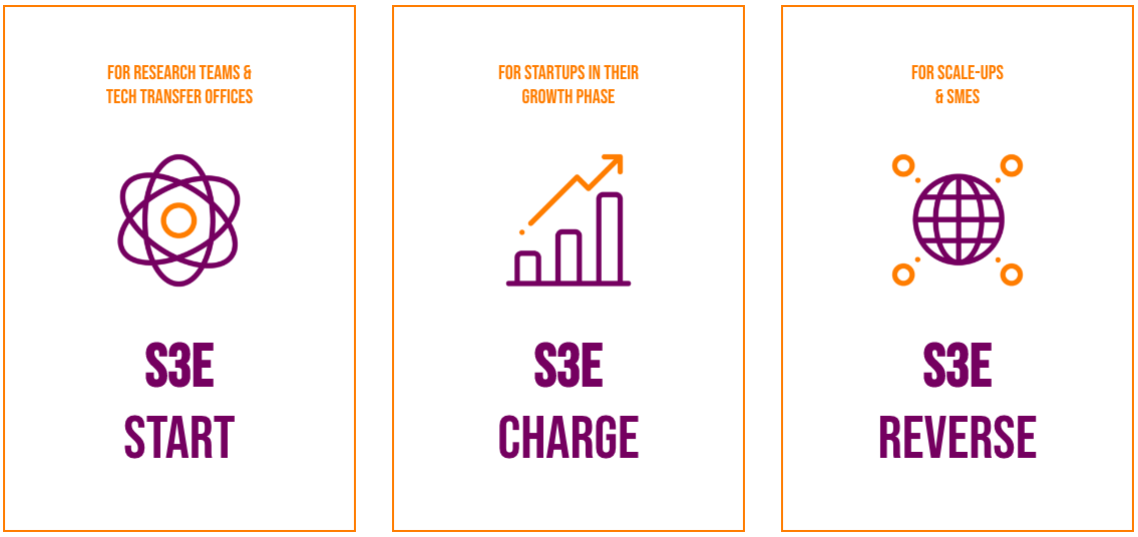

Figure 1. S3E Tracks

3 S3E Start at glance

3.1 Who is this program for?

S3E Start is designed for **research teams with deep tech projects,** grounded in a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation, that want to explore the path from the lab to the market.

S3E Start is also for **technology transfer officers** that want to learn a thoroughly tested methodology to foster science-based entrepreneurship and technology commercialization.

3.2 What will you get from the program?

S3E Start is driven by an internationally proven process for technology commercialization that was specifically developed for deep-tech projects. The hands-on approach of the process guides the **research teams** in the development of a business case for a product, service or process grounded on the scientific discovery or engineering innovation with which the team applied to the Program. So, you will acquire skills in technology commercialisation and science-based entrepreneurship using your own project and the set of deliverables that, in each class, will be provided to the teams to guide you through the process. When you finish the Program, you will have developed a business case for a product, service or process developed from your research outcomes and you will have acquired skills to:

- link Science & Technology to product and market needs,
- better communicate science to a non-scientific audience,
- evaluate the different paths to move the technology to the market.

The outcome of S3E Start will also better position you to apply for public or private funding, because it will help you link your science to market needs and validate the assumptions that support the arguments to justify why you will be creating social and / or economic value.

Technology transfer officers will participate by joining a team and will learn the Program methodology through the same hands-on approach.

3.3 How is the program structured?

The starting point of the Program is a technology proposed (in the application form) by each participating research team. Over a **period of 18-weeks** research teams will receive **online training** that will help them understand the process required to develop a business case for a product (or service) grounded on the proposed technology (hour and a half every week), **webinars** on topics relevant to the development of the business case (one hour every two weeks) and **mentoring** (hour and a half every two weeks).

So, S3E Start offers you an 18-weeks hands-on experience that involves:

- **In-class tutorials**, mainly on the topics related to the process used to guide the participating teams in the development of a business case for a product, service, or process grounded on the proposed technology. Note: classes are held every week for one hour and a half.
- **Webinars,** on diverse topics pertinent to the development of the relevant skills (e.g. intellectual property, financials, business development, venture funding.). Note: a total of seven webinars (one hour long) will be held.
- **Mentoring (**industry experts) that will guide the teams on validation of the project and in the development of the business case. The mentors supporting the S3E Start edition are individuals who are somehow connected to the area of deep tech and entrepreneurship, and who are prepared to help teams solve problems that arise throughout the program. You can see an updated list of mentors on the S3E website (https://south3e.eu). Note: meetings with mentors last an hour and a half and are held every two weeks.
- **Networking** with industry leaders and showcase opportunities at the S3E Open day.

It is also important to mention that:

- The teams will undergo a training program that will have as the visible outcome a business case for a product/service or process concept sustained by the technology proposed.
- The teams will pitch their project, at S3E Open day, to pre-seed stage investors and corporate ventures.

The diagram below provides a more detailed look into the three phases of the S3E Start process:

Figure 2. S3E Start program approach

The approach used in the **S3E Start 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. At the end of the program there will be an **Open Day on the 20th of July 2023.**

In the table below, further details are provided about each step of the S3E Start program:

IDEATION PHASE	In this phase a set of clearly defined product concepts will be developed and prioritized considering the linkages between the unique capabilities of the technologies and customer/market needs (**Technology-Product-Market linkages**). Each team is required to generate multiple product concepts that can be enabled by each technology. Then research teams will have to identify diverse market opportunities for each product concept to further specify product attributes.
DEVELOPMENT PHASE	In this phase teams will refine, improve, validate, and select among the product concepts devised in the 'ideation' phase using a guided approach that will force them to **contact the 'market' to challenge and sustain each of the T-P-M linkages** proposed in the ideation phase. In the early stages of this phase, teams will be looking for 'fatal flaws' (product or market) that will justify 'dumping' one (or more) T-P-M linkage(s). With the information gathered from the market teams will develop **"value propositions"** for their products using a standard format that will force them to (i) clearly define the product, (ii) tie customer needs to the benefits of using the product in economic terms and (iii) differentiate the product from competitors based on unique product features. Additionally, they will **build a business model** that, for the product moving forward, describes the rationale of how the company will create, deliver, and capture value. Throughout this phase participants will have to use **a set of management tools** (e.g., 5 Forces Analysis, SWOT Analysis, Industry Mapping, "Voice of the Customer", etc.) to **gain a much better understanding of the way the market works** and will be supported by the tools embedded in the approach, thus fine-tuning their product concept choices.
COMMERCIALIZATION PHASE	In this phase teams put the pieces of the puzzle together by building **a strategy to bring the product to market.** This phase begins with the definitions of the **pricing point and the sales plan** answering strategic questions such as market traction and market entry point(s). Additionally, drawing on the business model previously designed teams will define their **development roadmap** that will allow them to build the **financial projections and risk analysis**. At this stage teams will have all the elements needed to produce a business case and a final pitch that will be the final deliverables for the Program.

Table 1. S3E Start stages

4 Open Call #1

S3E Start is launching its first open call for applications.

S3E Start call is open to research teams from Southern European countries[2] with deep tech projects, grounded in a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation, that want to explore the path from the lab to the market. Projects in the following scientific fields will be considered: agricultural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, and natural sciences.

The projects must envisage an economic and social impact, targeting the following Sustainable Development Goals:

- **No Poverty (SDG 1):** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- **Zero Hunger (SDG 2):** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- **Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3):** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- **Quality Education (SDG 4):** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- **Gender Equality (SDG 5):** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- **Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6):** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- **Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7):** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.
- **Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8):** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- **Industry Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9):** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- **Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10):** Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- **Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11):** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- **Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12):** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- **Climate Action (SDG 13):** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- **Life below water (SDG 14):** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

[2] For the scope of S3E, Southern European countries include the following European countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Cyprus, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain. And the following Associated countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, and Turkey.

- **Life on land (SDG 15):** Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- **Peace, justice, and strong Institutions (SDG 16):** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- **Partnership for the goals (SDG 17):** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

S3E Start call is also open to technology transfer officers from Southern European countries that want to learn a thoroughly tested methodology to foster science-based entrepreneurship and technology commercialization.

The S3E Start Open Call #1 was launched on the **7th of November 2022 (12:00 CET)** and will last until the **10th of February 2023** at **17:00 CET**. Regardless of the number of applications, a maximum of **25 research teams** and **20 technology transfer officers** will be selected.

Selected projects will be announced on the 7th of March 2023 and the program will start on the 21st of March 2023 lasting until the 20th of July 2023.

The F6S platform will be the entry point for all proposals' submissions to S3E Open Calls, which is directly linked from S3E website (https://south3e.eu/). Submissions received by any other channel and after the open call deadline will be automatically discarded.

To support applicants, **S3E Start will organize four Q&A Webinars** on the following dates:

- 24th of November 2022 at 9:30 CET
- 7th of December 2022 at 14:00 CET
- 17th of January 2023 at 9:30 CET
- 7th of February 2023 at 14:00 CET

Save your place at https://south3e.eu/

For the application form and detailed guidance for applicants, please download the files available at the https://south3e.eu website.

5 Support material

For updated information on S3E, in general, and S3E Start, in particular, please check out our website (https://south3e.eu/), follow our social media accounts[3] or subscribe to our Newsletter.

[3] Follow us on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/south3e/mycompany/ and Twitter: https://twitter.com/south3e

Privacy Policy available at: https://south3e.eu/privacy-policy/

Open call #1 support material:

- **S33 Start - Open Call #1 Text**, this document.
- **S3E Start Guidelines for Applicants**, which sets out the guidelines for participation in the first open call for proposals of the S3E Start project.

For other needs, please contact the Help Desk.

5 S3E Start Guidelines for Applicants

The document is published on https://zenodo.org/record/7457990#.Y6SEii8qK2t

S3E Start

Guidelines for Applicants

v.3.

19 Nov 2022

Disclaimer

Copyright notice

Document revision history

Version	Date	Description of change
v.1	26/10/2022	1st version of Open Call Text
v.2	14/11/2022	Changes in the targeting of 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (eligibility criteria)
v.3	19/12/2022	Update the eligible countries, namely Kosovo, and figure 2.

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1 Introduction

S3E – Southern European Entrepreneurship Engine is a project, funded by the European Commission, focused on accelerating **deep tech projects, start-ups, and SMEs** that aim at providing solutions towards a more sustainable society and economy in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)[1].

The program is built around **three tracks** of carefully designed services tailored to support the stakeholders of each track in advancing their technologies, products, processes, or services towards the market. Participants in the programs will be selected through open calls.

This document provides a full set of information regarding the S3E Start program, namely the **guidelines for applications**.

2 S3E overview

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

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

Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in line with the EU Green Deal, the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the NextGenerationEU fund.

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

The program is built around **three tracks** of bespoke services tailored to start-ups' 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
- **S3E Reverse:** For scaling start-ups and SMEs, S3E will set up an Open Innovation ecosystem to broker, connect and match corporates to scaling start-ups through a challenge-solution duality.

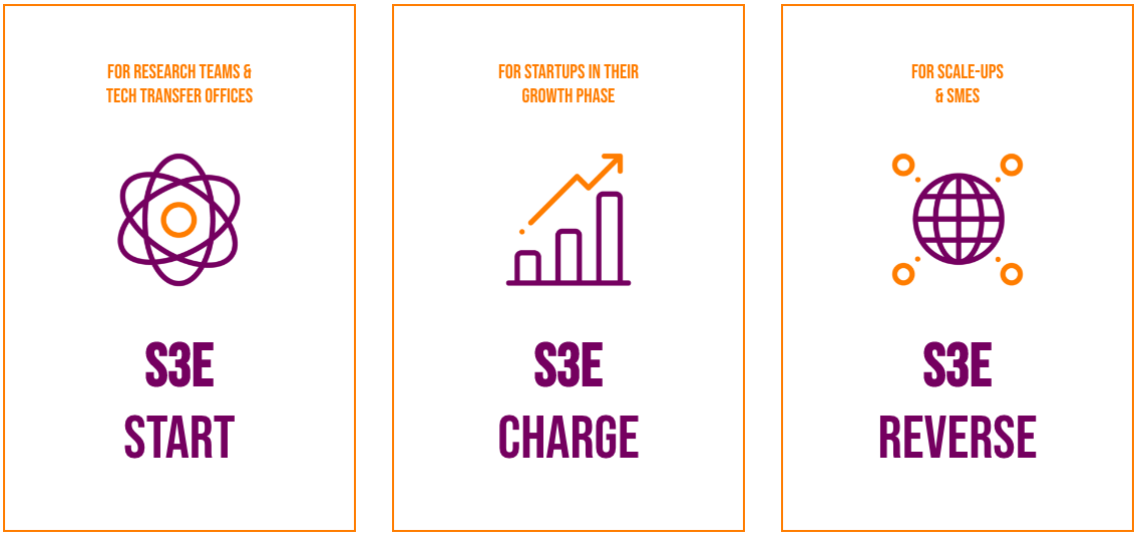

Figure 1. S3E Tracks

3 S3E Start at a glance

3.1 Who is this program for?

S3E Start is designed for **research teams with deep tech projects,** grounded in a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation, that want to explore the path from the lab to the market.

S3E Start is also for **technology transfer officers** that want to learn a thoroughly tested methodology to foster science-based entrepreneurship and technology commercialization.

3.2 What will you get from the program?

S3E Start is driven by an internationally proven process for technology commercialization that was specifically developed for deep-tech projects. The hands-on approach of the process guides the **research teams** in the development of a business case for a product, service or process grounded on the scientific discovery or engineering innovation with which the team applied to the Program. So, you will acquire skills in technology commercialisation and science-based entrepreneurship using your own project and the set of deliverables that, in each class, will be provided to the teams to guide you through the process. When you finish the Program, you will have developed a business case for a product, service or process developed from your research outcomes and you will have acquired skills to:

- link Science & Technology to product and market needs,
- better communicate science to a non-scientific audience,
- evaluate the different paths to move the technology to the market.

The outcome of S3E Start will also better position you to apply for public or private funding, because it will help you link your science to market needs and validate the assumptions that support the arguments to justify why you will be creating social and / or economic value.

Technology transfer officers will participate by joining a team and will learn the Program methodology through the same hands-on approach.

3.3 How is the program structured?

The starting point of the Program is a technology proposed (in the application form) by each participating research team. Over a **period of 18-weeks** research teams will receive **online training** that will help them understand the process required to develop a business case for a product (or service) grounded on the proposed technology (hour and a half every week), **webinars** on topics relevant to the development of the business case (one hour every two weeks) and **mentoring** (hour and a half every two weeks).

So, S3E Start offers you an 18-weeks hands-on experience that involves:

- **In-class tutorials**, mainly on the topics related to the process used to guide the participating teams in the development of a business case for a product, service, or process grounded on the proposed technology. Note: classes are held every week for one hour and a half.
- **Webinars,** on diverse topics pertinent to the development of the relevant skills (e.g. intellectual property, financials, business development, venture funding.). Note: a total of seven webinars (one hour long) will be held.
- **Mentoring (**industry experts) that will guide the teams on validation of the project and in the development of the business case. The mentors supporting the S3E Start edition are individuals who are somehow connected to the area of deep tech and entrepreneurship, and who are prepared to help teams solve problems that arise throughout the program. You can see an updated list of mentors on the S3E website (https://south3e.eu). Note: meetings with mentors last an hour and a half and are held every two weeks.
- **Networking** with industry leaders and showcase opportunities at the S3E Open day.

It is also important to mention that:

- The teams will undergo a training program that will have as the visible outcome a business case for a product/service or process concept sustained by the technology proposed.
- The teams will pitch their project, at S3E Open day, to pre-seed stage investors and corporate ventures.

The diagram below provides a more detailed look into the three phases of the S3E Start process:

Figure 2. S3E Start program approach

The approach used in the **S3E Start 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. At the end of the program there will be an **Open Day on the 20th of July 2023.**

In the table below, further details are provided about each step of the S3E Start program:

IDEATION PHASE	In this phase a set of clearly defined product concepts will be developed and prioritized considering the linkages between the unique capabilities of the technologies and customer/market needs (**Technology-Product-Market linkages**). Each team is required to generate multiple product concepts that can be enabled by each technology. Then research teams will have to identify diverse market opportunities for each product concept to further specify product attributes.
DEVELOPMENT PHASE	In this phase teams will refine, improve, validate and select among the product concepts devised in the 'ideation' phase using a guided approach that will force them to **contact the 'market' to challenge and sustain each of the T-P-M linkages** proposed in the ideation phase. In the early stages of this phase, teams will be looking for 'fatal flaws' (product or market) that will justify 'dumping' one (or more) T-P-M linkage(s). With the information gathered from the market teams will develop **"value propositions"** for their products using a standard format that will force them to (i) clearly define the product, (ii) tie customer needs to the benefits of using the product in economic terms and (iii) differentiate the product from competitors based on unique product features. Additionally, they will **build a business model** that, for the product moving forward, describes the rationale of how the company will create, deliver, and capture value. Throughout this phase participants will have to use **a set of management tools** (e.g., 5 Forces Analysis, SWOT Analysis, Industry Mapping, "Voice of the Customer", etc.) to **gain a much better understanding of the way the market works** and will be supported by the tools embedded in the approach, thus fine-tuning their product concept choices.
COMMERCIALIZATION PHASE	In this phase teams put the pieces of the puzzle together by building **a strategy to bring the product to market.** This phase begins with the definitions of the **pricing point and the sales plan** answering strategic questions such as market traction and market entry point(s). Additionally, drawing on the business model previously designed teams will define their **development roadmap** that will allow them to build the **financial projections and risk analysis**. At this stage teams will have all the elements needed to produce a business case and a final pitch that will be the final deliverables for the Program.

Table 1. S3E Start stages

3. Open Call #1

S3E Start is launching its first open call for applications.

S3E Start call is open to research teams from Southern European countries[2] with deep tech projects, grounded in a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation, that want to explore the path from the lab to the market. Projects in the following scientific fields will be considered: agricultural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, and natural sciences.

The projects must envisage an economic and social impact, targeting the following Sustainable Development Goals:

- **No Poverty (SDG 1):** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- **Zero Hunger (SDG 2):** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- **Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3):** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- **Quality Education (SDG 4):** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- **Gender Equality (SDG 5):** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- **Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6):** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- **Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7):** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.
- **Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8):** Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- **Industry Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9):** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- **Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10):** Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- **Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11):** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- **Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12):** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- **Climate Action (SDG 13):** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- **Life below water (SDG 14):** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

[2] For the scope of S3E, Southern European countries include the following European countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Cyprus, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain. And the following Associated countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, and Turkey.

- **Life on land (SDG 15):** Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- **Peace, justice, and strong Institutions (SDG 16):** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- **Partnership for the goals (SDG 17):** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

S3E Start call is also open to technology transfer officers from Southern European countries that want to learn a thoroughly tested methodology to foster science-based entrepreneurship and technology commercialization.

The S3E Start Open Call #1 will be launched on the **7th of November 2022 (12:00 CET)** and will last until the **10th of February 2023** at **17:00 CET**. Regardless of the number of applications, a maximum of **25 research teams** and **20 technology transfer officers** will be selected.

Selected projects will be announced on the 7th of March 2023 and the program will start on the 21st of March 2023 lasting until the 20th of July 2023.

The F6S platform will be the entry point for all proposals' submissions to S3E Open Calls, which is directly linked from S3E website (https://south3e.eu/). Submissions received by any other channel and after the open call deadline will be automatically discarded.

To support applicants, **S3E Start will organize four Q&A Webinars** on the following dates:

- 24th of November 2022 at 9:30 CET
- 7th of December 2022 at 14:00 CET
- 17th of January 2023 at 9:30 CET
- 7th of February 2023 at 14:00 CET

Save your place at https://south3e.eu/

4 Timeline

Submission to the Open Call #1 Economic and Social impact for researchers and technology transfer officers will be launched on the **7th of November 2022 (12:00 CET)** and the deadline for applications is on the **10th of February 2023** at **17:00 CET**.

Below are presented the expected dates for the different stages. The opening and closing dates of each stage can be subject to change in case of any modifications in the project's schedule.

Figure 3. S3E Start timeline

The evaluation process will be composed by two stages:

- First, the application will be assessed by S3E project partners to validate if it conforms to the eligibility criteria.
- Second, the application will be assessed by a board of remote peer reviewers that, if required, will select the top ones for an interview.

The selected projects will be announced on the 7th of March and the program will start on the 21st of March 2023 lasting until the 20th of July 2023 with the Open Day.

5 Eligibility criteria

5.1 Research teams

Research teams are considered eligible for S3E Start Open Call #1 if complying with **ALL** the following rules:

- Must be organized as a research team (2 to 5 team members), whereby one team member is designated as the Principal Applicant and the others as Co-Applicants. (Note: applications from individual researchers are not eligible).
- Have a deep tech project from the following science fields: agricultural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, and natural sciences. Please check the full categories here.
- The proposed project must envisage to provide an impact in one (or more) SDGs: No Poverty (SDG 1); Zero Hunger (SDG 2); Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5); Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6); Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7); Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8); Industry Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9): Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10); Sustainable Cities and Communities

(SDG 11); Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12); Climate Action (SDG 13); Life below water (SDG 14); Life on land (SDG 15); Peace, justice and strong Institutions (SDG 16) and Partnership for the goals (SDG 17).

- Belonging to R&D organizations from one (or more) of these countries: Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Cyprus, Slovenia, Spain, Bulgaria, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, and Albania.

5.2 Technology transfer officers

Technology transfer officers are considered eligible for S3E Start Open Call #1 if complying with **ALL** the following rules:

- Must be an individual application supported by a R&D organisation.
- Belong to a technology transfer office of a R&D organizations from one of these countries: Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Cyprus, Slovenia, Spain, Bulgaria, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, and Albania.

6 Open call submission

On the open call #1, S3E Start will **select 25 research teams** and **20 technology transfer officers.** All research teams and technology transfer officers should fulfil the eligibility criteria as expressed in section 5 and submit the application form on F6S.

The application form for **research teams** is available at:
https://www.f6s.com/south3e-start-for-researchers/apply

The application form for **technology transfer officers** is available at:
https://www.f6s.com/south3e-start-for-tech-transfer-offices/apply

6.1 Application form questions

Research teams:

- Identification of the team members and R&D organizations
- Description of the proposed technology and / or scientific discovery (in terms of what it does rather than the technical details on how it works),
- Description of what is the uniqueness and / or innovativeness of the proposed technology,
- The status of development and an outline of the main tasks required for the next stage of development,
- The scientific field of the project.
- The SDGs the project aims to address
- IP status and

- A statement of the motivation of the team to participate.

Technology transfer officers:

- Identification of the individual and the R&D organization
- CV of the individual
- Letter of R&D organisation supporting the application
- Motivation letter to participate in the program

6.2 Criteria rank

The criteria to rank the applications from **research teams** will include the:

- 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

The criteria to rank the applications from **technology transfer officers** will include the:

- 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.

Selected **research teams** and **technology transfer officers** will be announced on the 7th of March and the kick-off of the program will start on the 21st of March 2023 and end on the 20th of July 2023.

6.3 Open Call #1 publication

The Open Call #1 was published on the **7th of November 2022 (12:00 CET)**. It is supported by:

- **S3E Start Open Call #1 Text**, which provides a full set of information regarding the Open Call for Proposals for the S3E Start.
- **S3E Start Guidelines for Applicants**, this document.

Interested applicants should register at the F6S (www.f6s.com). This will be the central interface for managing the proposal applications for the remainder of the open calls.

6.4 Proposal preparation

Please follow the steps:

1. For the proposal preparation, the applicants are requested to apply online and answer all mandatory questions.
2. Be concrete and concise. Please examine all the Open Call documents and attend the various events promoted by the S3E Start project, that will be made available at https://south3e.eu/ .
3. It is highly recommended to submit your proposal well before the deadline. If the applicant discovers an error in the proposal, and provided the call deadline has not passed, the applicant may request the S3E Start team to resubmit the proposal (for this purpose please contact us at info@south3e.eu). However, S3E Start is not committed that resubmission in time will be feasible in case the request for resubmission is not received by the S3E Start team at least 48 hours before the call deadline.

It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the proposal. Failure of the proposal to arrive in time for any reason, including network communications delays or working from multiple browsers or multiple browser windows, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the application as recorded by the F6S submission system will be definitive.

6.5 Proposals reception

Submissions will be done ONLY via the F6S platform. A full list of proposers will be drafted containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity (which will be also shared with the European Commission for transparency).

The application reception for S3E Start will close as indicated in section 4 “Timeline” on 10th **of February 2023** at **17:00 CET.**

The application form for **research teams** is available at:
https://www.f6s.com/south3e-start-for-researchers/apply

The application form for **technology transfer officers** is available at:
https://www.f6s.com/south3e-start-for-tech-transfer-offices/apply

7 General Information

7.1 Means of submission

The F6S platform will be the entry point for all proposals' submission to S3E Open Calls, which is directly linked from S3E' website: https://south3e.eu. Submissions received by any other channel and after the open call duration will be automatically discarded.

7.2 Language

English is the official language for S3E Open Calls. Submissions done in any other language will not be eligible and, thus, will not be evaluated. English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the S3E Start program.

7.3 Data protection

The proposals are confidential, and each person involved in the program will sign a non-disclosure agreement, namely the reviewers of the proposals.

To process and evaluate applications, S3E will need to collect Data. 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 applicant 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 Start Privacy Policy.

8 Information and support

For the application form and detailed guidance for applicants, please download the files available at the https://south3e.eu website. The S3E consortium will organise, at least, 4 Q&A Webinars (see section 3) and be present at events from November 2022 until February 2023, to connect with interested applicants. Please check our website, follow our social media accounts[3] or subscribe to our Newsletter if you want to stay tuned with this program.

More info at https://south3e.eu/apply-now/.
For other needs, please contact the Help Desk.

[3] Follow us on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/south3e/mycompany/ and Twitter: https://twitter.com/south3e

Open call #1 support material:

- **S3E Start Open Call #1 Text**, that provides detailed information regarding the S3E Start program and its first Open Call for Proposals
- **S3E Start Guidelines for Applicants**, this document.

6 S3E Start Application form

The applications forms are available on F6S Platform.

6.1. For researchers

The link to the application form research teams is available at: https://www.f6s.com/south3e-start-for-researchers/apply

PRINCIPAL APPLICANT

E-mail:
Applicant name:
Project name:
Affiliation:
Contact:
Country:
Will you participate in the S3E Start program and sessions?
☐Yes / ☐ No

TEAM MEMBERS/ CO-APPLICANTS

Please identify the (other) team members that will actively participate in the S3E Start and, as so, will attend the sessions/meetings of the Program.

Member 1
Name:
Affiliation:
E-mail address:
Affiliation Country:

Member 2
Name:
Affiliation:
E-mail address:
Affiliation Country:

Member 3
Name:
Affiliation:
E-mail address:
Affiliation Country:

Member 4
Name:
Affiliation:
E-mail address:
Affiliation Country:

Member 5
Name:
Affiliation:
E-mail address:
Affiliation Country:

TECHNOLOGY AND / OR SCIENCE

Technology and / or science field:
☐ Agricultural sciences
☐ Engineering and technology
☐ Medical and health sciences
☐ Natural sciences
☐ Other

The SDGs the project aims to address:
☐ No Poverty (SDG 1)
☐ Zero Hunger (SDG 2)
☐ Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3)
☐ Quality Education (SDG 4)
☐ Gender Equality (SDG 5)
☐ Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6)
☐ Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7)
☐ Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)
☐ Industry Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9)
☐ Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10)
☐ Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11)
☐ Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12)
☐ Climate Action (SDG 13)
☐ Life below water (SDG 14)
☐ Life on land (SDG 15)
☐ Peace, justice, and strong Institutions (SDG 16)
☐ Partnership for the goals (SDG 17)

Describe the technology and/or scientific discoveries, in terms of what it does rather than the technical details on how it works (maximum 7,500 characters, including spaces). *

Describe what is the uniqueness and / or innovativeness of what you are proposing (maximum 7,500 characters, including spaces). *

Describe the current status of development and outline the main tasks required for the next stage of development (maximum 5,000 characters, including spaces). *

Describe a potential application that can be enabled by the proposed technology / scientific discovery (maximum 5,000 characters, including spaces). *

What is the team motivation to attend the Program? (Maximum 3,000 characters, including spaces). *

Would you like to subscribe to our newsletter?
☐Yes ☐No

How did you hear about S3E Start Program?

6.2. For TTOs

The link to the application form for TTOs is available at: https://www.f6s.com/south3e-start-for-tech-transfer-offices/apply

APPLICANT

E-mail:
Applicant name:
Host Institution:
Job Title:
Contact:
LinkedIn:
Host Institution Country:

What is your motivation to attend the S3E Start Program?
(Maximum 5,000 characters, including spaces). *

Brief biography:
(Maximum 5,000 characters, including spaces). *

The Host Institution must confirm its support to the technology transfer officer. The complete wording should be printed on paper with the official letterhead of the HI, blue-inked signed, stamped and dated by the institution's legal representative. In case it is digitally signed, there is no need to stamp it. Proposals that do not include this institutional statement may be declared inadmissible. Please upload it here.

Would you like to subscribe to our newsletter?
☐Yes ☐No

How did you hear about S3E Start Program?

7 S3E Experts Expression of Interest text

The document is published on https://zenodo.org/record/7377769#.Y5xQQC8qLfI

S3E Experts

Call for Expression of Interest

November 2022

Disclaimer

Copyright notice

Document revision history

Version	Date	Description of change	Contributor(s)
v0.1	19-10-2022	Document creation	HST
v0.2	26-10-2022	Contribution to content	HST
v0.3	08-11-2022	6.3.5. Benefits	All partners
v0.4	18-11-2022	Contribution to content	All partners
v0.5	29-11-2022	Final revision	HST

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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.

[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.

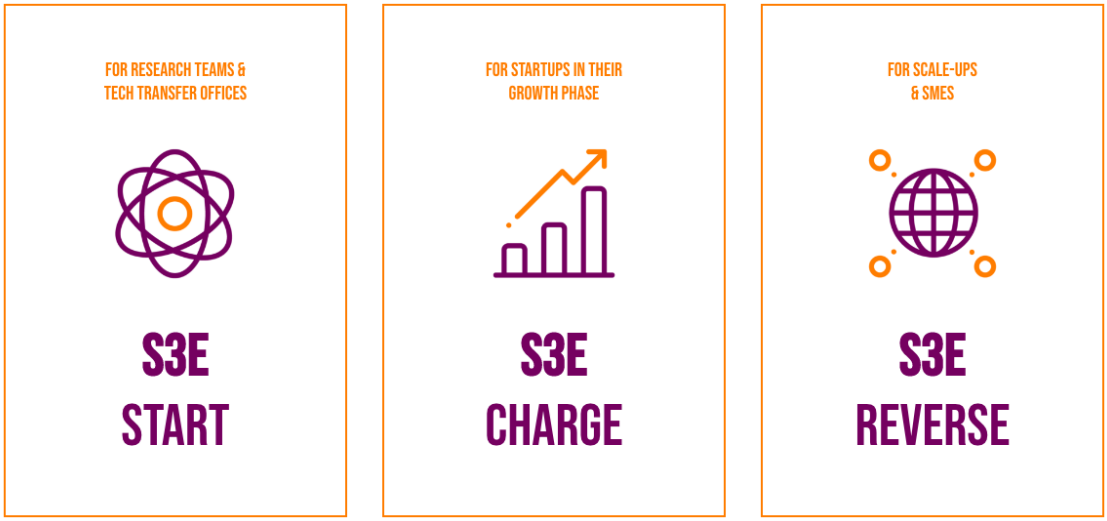

Figure 1. S3E Tracks

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.

8 S3E Experts Application form

The link to the application form for experts is available at: https://www.f6s.com/s3e-call-for-experts/

APPLICANT

Title:
First name:
Last name:
Place of birth:
Country that you are currently living:
Mobile number:
Email:

LANGUAGES

Mother Tongue:
English level:
☐ basic ☐intermediate ☐proficient

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Year:
Area:
Name of Institution:
Country:

EXPERIENCE

Your Job Title:
Company:
LinkedIn Profile:

Do you allow us to use your LinkedIn profile picture and job title on our website in the section "Ecosystem"?
☐Yes ☐No

In what area(s) are you an expert?

Please upload your CV.

S3E EXPERT

Which role do you want to perform?

☐ **Evaluators** are responsible for evaluating proposals submitted by research teams and growth start-ups in response to the call for proposals (S3E Start, S3E Charge).

☐ **Mentors for deep tech projects** that will guide research teams on developing a business case for a product, service, or process grounded in a technology proposed to S3E Start.

☐ **Mentors for deep tech growth startups** that will help to develop an investment ready business plan (S3E Charge).

☐ **Deep tech brokers** that will match corporate challenges with scaling startups (S3E Reverse).

Experience (max 500 characters): (jobs performed, successes, mentorship assignments, projects or jobs related with deep tech technologies, involvement with startups during funding processes e.g.: making assessments and/or dully diligence, if yes, with how many startups, any participation as an investor, any engagement with acceleration programs, etc).

Which science field you would prefer to work with:

☐ agricultural sciences
☐ engineering and technology
☐ medical and health sciences
☐ natural sciences
☐ anyone, I like to be challenged.

S3E Expert Commitment

This is a volunteer program. By participating you indicate your understanding that experts are not paid for their time, and that you do not expect anything in return (no equity, no cash, no future contact, etc.), other than the satisfaction of helping those research teams or start-ups with whom you are matched to assist in developing talents and skills or to evaluate.

Each role is different, you may find that you need to give more, or less time to the commitment. As this arrangement is voluntary, if you find that the needed time commitment exceeds what you are able to give, please let us know so we can work with you and the team or individual to assign adequate resources.

Relationships may unfold leading to business transactions after the S3E program or even after the expert's relationship ends (for example. teams could use the legal services of a law firm over time). However, by agreeing to be an Expert, you are acknowledging and agreeing that the teams shall have no obligation to engage in any compensation-based relationship with experts now or in the future.

Funded by the European Union

Expert Confidentiality, Trust, & Openness

You will deal with confidential information. Every selected expert will have to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement to keep all information confidential.

Notwithstanding the obligation of confidentiality, the relationship between the Research teams /Startups and the Experts should be as open as possible so the expert can provide the best support.

All information shared with the expert by the research team or Startup must be treated as confidential and cannot be disclosed by the Expert without previous permission.

☐ By participating as an Expert, you agree to abide by the terms of this Agreement.
☐ I read the Call for experts document that explains everything about being an S3E Expert.

I agree that the data provided can be only used for S3E purposes and will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the European Union General Data Protection Regulation.