# S3E Charge: Open call text #1

## Annex 1

October 25, 2022

v.2 November 12, 2022

## Document revision history

| ion | Date | Description of change |
|---|---|---|
| **v.1** | 25/10/2022 | 1st version of Open Call Text |
| **v.2** | 12/11/2022 | Changes in the targeting of 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (eligibility criteria) |

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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.

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

This document is focused on S3E Track 2, named **S3E Charge,** that is directed towards **growth start-ups** that will be provided with mentoring and networking to support them in the development of an investment ready business plan and facilitate access to non-dilutable and dilutable funding. The document provides detailed information regarding the S3E Charge 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 Charge at a glance

S3E Charge is for **growth start-ups** with deep tech products, services or process concept, grounded in a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation and at a growth development stage, that are already in the market and aims at fostering science-based entrepreneurship and technology commercialization. It aims at (i) engaging growth start-ups, (ii) providing them with mentoring and networking to develop an investment ready business plan and (iii) facilitating access to non-dilutable and dilutable funding (Charge).

The starting point must be a written business case characterizing the product concept and the opportunity (market need), the technology and the development plan, intellectual   and strategy, the market and the first customer, the competitive advantage and the funding needs. The selected start-ups will participate in a program that provides mentoring and networking. Regular mentor meetings will be held throughout the program to exchange experiences and the network of contacts to provide to the participating start-ups. Each participating start-up will receive high-quality mentoring through a quality assurance process of the program.

So, overall, S3E Charge is a **mentoring** experience that aims to provide skills to **growth start-ups** in knowledge commercialization and the business world to enable them to:

- link their product/service/process product with market needs,

- better communicate their offerings to potential clients and investors,
- become market ready to pitch, persuade and readapt their business offerings to different audiences, depending on market needs
- connect to 'Innovation Leaders' and 'Strong Innovators' Ecosystems
- better understand to protect IP
- prepare an investment ready business plan
- get access to funds and funding

# 3. S3E Charge Open Call #1

**S3E Charge is launching its first open call for applications**.

**S3E Charge call is open to growth start-ups** from Southern European countries[1] with deep tech products, services or process concepts, grounded in a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation and in a growth development stage. 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 one or more Sustainable Development Goals.

The S3E Charge Open Call #1 will be launched on the **31st of October 2022 (12:00 CEST)** and will close on the **10th of February 2023** at **17:00 CEST**. Regardless of the number of applications, a maximum of **30 start-ups from Southern European Countries** will be selected. Selected projects will be announced on the 24th of March 2023 and the programme will start on the 10th of April 2023 and end on the 19th 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.

**Growth start-ups** should apply via: https://www.f6s.com/s3e-charge/apply

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

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[1] 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 and Turkey.

# 4. S3E Charge in depth

## 4.1. Who is this programme for?

S3E Charge is for **growth start-ups with deep tech products, services or process concepts,** grounded in a scientific discovery or meaningful engineering innovation and at a **growth** development stage that want to take their business offerings to investors and leverage the mentoring and networking opportunities of the S3E programme, all aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). For this program, a growth start-up is a business that aims to grow and scale quickly to serve a global market and needs support to develop an investment ready business plan to access to non-dilutable and/or dilutable funding, that is, it does not have funding or have pre seed and its TRL is up to 6-7.

**Growth start-ups** are considered eligible for S3E Charge Open Call #1 if complying with **ALL** the following rules:

- Must be established as a start-up in the following science fields: agricultural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, and natural sciences. Please check the full categories here.
- The deep tech solution project must envisage to provide an impact on one (or more) UN SDGs for this call.
- Must submit a short description of the start-up and activities; a video presentation of a pitch deck focused on sustaining the value proposition for the proposed product, service or process concept; a written business case characterizing the product concept and the opportunity (market need), the technology and the development plan, intellectual property status and strategy, the market and the first customer, the competitive advantage and the funding needs, and a statement of the motivation of the team to participate in the call.
- Must be established in 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.

## 4.2. What will you get from the Programme?

S3E Charge is driven by an internationally proven mentorship program that was specifically developed for growth start-ups. The mentoring and coaching of the process guides the growth start-up teams in the development of a business plan for a product, service or process that makes them investment ready and takes their validated business case to an investor attractive level. So,

you will acquire skills in technology commercialisation, science-based entrepreneurship, business development and intellectual property protection using your own business offerings through tailor-made mentorship.

When you finish the Programme, you will have developed a business plan for a product, service or process and you will have acquired skills and be investment ready to:

- link your product/service/process product with market needs,
- better communicate your offerings to potential clients and investors,
- become market ready to pitch, persuade and readapt your business offerings to different audiences, depending on market needs
- connect to 'Innovation Leaders' and 'Strong Innovators' Ecosystems
- better understand to protect IP
- prepare an investment ready business plan
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The outcome of S3E Charge will better position you to apply for public or private funding and programs, because it will help you link your business offerings to market needs and become market ready to pitch and attract investments whilst having validated and honed your business plan and your value proposition.

## 4.3. How is the programme structured?

S3E Charge offers you a 14-week tailor-made program that involves:
- **Mentoring** (by pan-European industry experts) that will guide each growth start-up through the validation of the project, the development of the investment-ready business plan and the investment process. The mentors supporting the S3E Charge edition are individuals who are connected to deep tech and entrepreneurship, and who are prepared to help start-ups 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 1,5 hours and are held every two weeks (7 meetings in total).
- **Networking** with industry leaders and investors and showcase opportunities at the S3E Open day in which the teams will give a 7-minute pitch followed by a 10-minute Q&A period to investors. **Post Open Day** the project will have a mechanism to facilitate one-on-one meetings between investors and start-ups.

**It is also important to mention that t**he investment ready business plan, to be delivered as the outcome of the program, will build upon the business case provided by the participating teams, 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. The validation of the assumptions supporting the different sections of the business plan (using external primary sources) is a key point that the mentors will need to provide support through their personal networks and enforce.

Non-dilutable funding opportunities (both national and / or European) will be permanently scouted and posted on the project web site and mentors will also provide support for the start-ups to apply to these opportunities.

It is important to note that the approach used in the **programme 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 programme there will be an **Open Day on the 19th of July 2023.**

# 5. 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 Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 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).
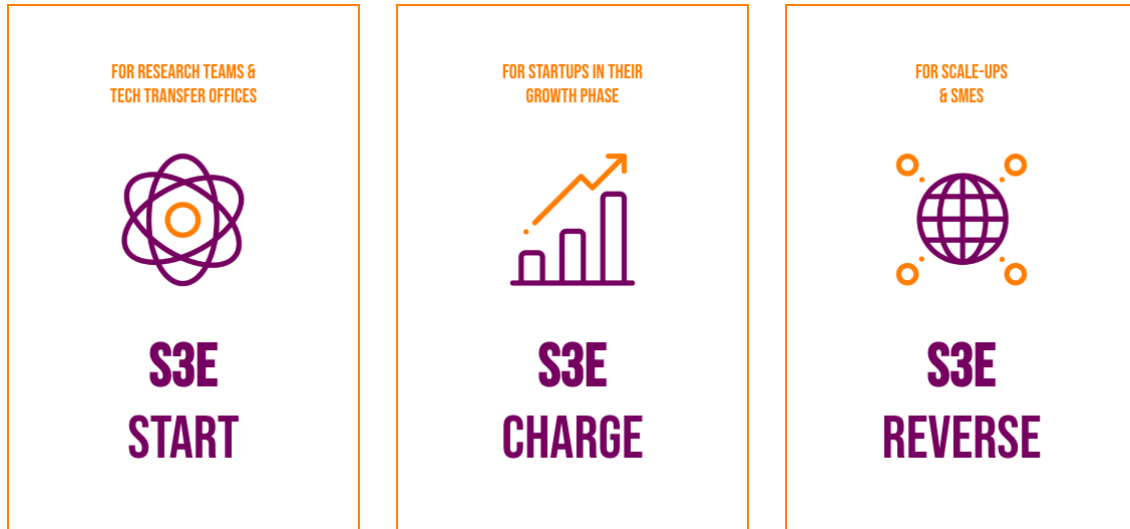
**Figure 1.** S3E Tracks

- **S3E Start:** For research teams and technology transfer offices, S3E offers a hands-on training programme 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

# 6. Support material

For updated information on S3E, in general, and S3E Charge, in particular, please check out our website (https://south3e.eu/), follow our social media accounts[2] or subscribe to our Newsletter.

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

Open call #1 support material:
- Annex 1: Open Call #1 Text, this document.
- Annex 2: Guidelines for Applicants, which sets out the guidelines for participation in the first open call for proposals of the S3E Charge project.

For other needs, please contact the Help Desk.

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