

# EU4Innovation Challenge Fund 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Proposals

## Application Instructions

**IPA Annual Action Plan in favour of Albania for 2021**

**IPA III window and thematic priority 4: Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth**

Deadline for submission of online Application form: 22 December 2023, 18:00



## **Application Instructions**

This document relates to the “Challenge Fund - 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Proposals”, accessible to Albanian start-ups created around innovative business concepts, and provides information on the content and format of the “Challenge Fund 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Proposals” online application form.

This document is for information purposes only and serves as a helpful tool for the applicants when filling out the online application form.

In case of a discrepancy between this document and the online application form, the online application form prevails.

## General Tips to Help You with Your Application

Before filling out the online application form, the following relevant aspects should be taken into account:

1. Applicants should have read through the Guidelines for Applicants document before applying to the “Challenge Fund-1<sup>st</sup> Call for Proposals” in order to ensure an adherence to the rules and criteria.
2. We advise all potential applicants not to wait until the deadline for submission to fill out their application.
3. It is only possible to submit one project proposal via the online form. All applications submitted by other means (mail, e-mail, hand delivery, etc.) will be rejected.
4. The application can only be performed through a laptop or PC, NOT on mobile.

## Specific Tips to Help You with Your Application

1. As a first step you should register and create an individual account in the online platform. You should enter all requested data for the registration to take place. Once the registration is complete, you will receive an automatic email to confirm and activate your registration.
  - Before you press register, agree to the Privacy Policy.
  - Carefully check the junk/spam folder
2. Once the activation of the email is confirmed by your side, you will be requested to provide your log in details in order to access your online account.
  - Ensure that the e-mail address you wish to link your application to, is valid and will be active and accessible for the complete duration of the selection procedure!
3. Once you log in you will be directed to the dashboard of the online application. The dashboard consists of 2 sections:
  - (i) **Home.** In the “Home” section you may find the Guidelines for Applicants document and all relevant annexes/documents concerning the 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Proposals. The documentation should be downloaded by your side, as per below instructions:
    1. Guidelines for Applicants document –*for information only*
    2. Application Instructions –*for information only*
    3. Application forms – only for information
    4. Financial Form, including Budget (sheet 1), Key metrics (sheet 2), Cash Flow (sheet 3), Financial Data in the first three years after the Challenge Fund grant (sheet 4) – *to be completed in English and uploaded in excel format.*
    5. Canvas business model – *to be completed in English and uploaded in PDF format.*
    6. Declaration on Honor – *to be completed, signed and uploaded in scanned PDF format, ONLY by applicants that will be selected for Stage 2 of the evaluation process, upon request by the Contracting Authority.*
    7. Power Point Presentation form for the Pitching Event – *to be completed and uploaded in the online platform by applicants that will be selected for Stage 3 of the evaluation process: Pitching event, upon request by the Contracting Authority.*
  - (ii) **Apply.** In the “Apply” section, information on the three LOTs of the call will appear. You have to select the LOT which is applicable to your case as follows:
    - **Lot 1: Idea and Validation stage start-ups**, maximum 10,000 Euro (A founder or a team in the early stages of developing an innovative business idea (no registered entity);
    - **Lot 2: Growth stage start-ups**, maximum 20,000 Euro (A registered business

entity within the first 12 months of operation (from the official registration of the business entity at QKB to the date of publishing the Call for Proposals)

- **Lot 3: Scale-up stage start-ups**, maximum 30,000 Euro (A registered business entity within the first 13 months to 5 years of operation (from the official registration of the business entity at QKB to the date of publishing the Call for Proposals))
4. Once you select the applicable LOT, you will start entering the requested data and fill in the online application form.
- The application must be filled out in English.
  - Every field of the application form contains help text to indicate the correct way to complete it. Hover the mouse over it to see the help text.
  - It is possible for the application to be saved and accessed back and submitted in a second moment.
  - The online platform offers the opportunity to go back, change and check all the information completed, before submission.
  - In the moment that the applicant presses SUBMIT, the application is considered completed and from this moment it cannot be edited.

The online application form is composed of the following sections:

**(i) Information about the Start-Up.**

This section requires the applicants to enter the applicant data, such as: start-up name, registration type, location, address, date of registration, NUIS, duration of implementation, number of key staff, number of registered employees, size of the start-up, total budget for the implementation of business idea, funds requested from Challenge Fund, Applicant's own contribution, data on the Legal owner or administrator, Contact person data, etc. Note that the data requested is different for each specific LOT.

**(ii) Business Proposal.**

This section is composed of 3 categories: Start-up Idea, Feasibility and Cross-cutting issues.

- All fields have character limitations. A character might be a letter, a space, a number or a symbol. The maximum number of characters allowed is stated in each field. Be aware that characters in excess will not be allowed by the online platform.
- When answering longer sections, please remember to regularly save your data, in order to avoid data loss in case of interruptions of the internet connection or other technical issues.

**(iii) Uploading of documents**

This section requires the applicants to upload all requested documentation as per Guidelines for Applicants document, Section 6.1 "The Application Process". The documentation to be

uploaded is the same for LOT 2 and LOT 3, meanwhile it differs for LOT 1.

- Prior to uploading documents, it is recommended to save the document with the name as requested exactly in the Guideline Document.
- Please ensure that your file is properly optimized, the maximum size of one uploaded pdf. file is 5 MB.
- Financial Form should be uploaded in excel format. Meanwhile all other documentation should be saved and uploaded in pdf format.
- Make sure to upload the filled document and not the template version.

#### (iv) **Review and Submission**

This section offers an overview of the completed application form.

- The mandatory sections/fields that are not completed yet are identified in red color.
- You cannot submit your application, if any of the mandatory fields is not completed. When mandatory fields are not completed, when you press the SUBMIT button, the following message will appear “*You haven’t completed all the fields...*”.
- Once all mandatory fields are completed, you can press SUBMIT.
- Once you press SUBMIT, a window appears where you have to accept the terms and conditions and Privacy Policy of the “Challenge Fund-1<sup>st</sup> Call for Proposals”.
- After the submission of the application, the applicant will receive an automatic email confirmation and attached the application submitted in pdf format.
- Once submitted no modifications to the application will be possible.
- Any questions related to the application process should be sent in writing via the e-mail address: [challengefund@euforinnovation.al](mailto:challengefund@euforinnovation.al) no later than 15 days before the application submission deadline.