

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For more details, please consult the Open Call Documentation, the [WE-RISE website](#) or contact the WE-RISE project team: info@we-rise.eu.

1. APPLICANT

Who can apply to the WE-RISE program?

To apply you must be a:

- Women-led startup
- Leading a DeepTech Startups
- In GreenTech, AgriTech & Climate Tech
- Legally established in EU Member States or Associated Countries to Horizon Europe – *Preference will be given to moderate and emerging innovator countries*
- Founded before January 1st, 2025
- Must have validated product-market-fit (TRL 6-8 – More info [here](#)) **or** raised at least 300.000€ in public or private funding.

Applicants shall meet eligibility requirements for the entire program duration.

Under what conditions can I lose eligibility or to be excluded from the program?

Specific exclusion conditions and criteria for loss of eligibility are established:

- Applicants must be a women-led company. A company compliant with the SME definition provided by the EU, where one of the co-founders, or the position of either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Technology Officer (CTO) or Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) is held by a woman at the time of application for the support program implemented by the WE-RISE Consortium.
- Ineligibility arises if an applicant has previously received funding for the same services requested or fails to comply with the established eligibility criteria, including the submission of accurate documentation.
- Any applicant must demonstrate the link with the project and clearly specify its role and activities carried out.
- Any applicant receiving double funding for the same activities from other sources will be disqualified.
- Misrepresentation or fraudulent activities during the application process will also lead to immediate disqualification.



- Applicants must prepare their SAP and reporting documents and provide required updates during the Support Program – Phase 1.
- Applicants must prepare reporting documents and provide required updates during the Support Program – Phase 2.
- Applicants under OLAF investigation will be disqualified.
- Non-compliance with the terms outlined in the Sub-Grant Agreement, including the proper use of funds and adherence to service delivery standards, can also jeopardise future opportunities in EIC funding schemes.

2. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Which kind of financial support may I receive?

Selected applicants will sign a dedicated Sub-grant Agreement with the WE-RISE Consortium. The funds attached to the Sub-grant Agreement, that the startups will sign when accepted, comes directly from the funds of the European project WE-RISE and therefore remain property of the EU until the payment of the balance, whose management rights have been transferred to the project partners in WE-RISE via European Commission Grant Agreement No 101193381.

When will the financial support be paid?

For the **Phase 1**, the financial contribution of €5,000 will be paid 100% upon the signature of the Sub-Grant Agreement.

For the **Phase 2**, the financial contribution of € 50.000 will be distributed according to the following payments' distribution:

- 50% of the financial contribution upon the Sub-grant Agreement signature.
- 40% of the financial contribution following a positive evaluation after the mid-term checkpoint, as described in the Open Call document.
- 10% after attending the showcase event, which represents the end of the WE-RISE's Support Program.

Is there a limit on the amount of financial support a beneficiary can receive?

In total, the maximum amount of financial support a beneficiary can receive is €55,000 if selected for both phases. The first 20 selected startups will receive €5,000 each for Phase 1, and then 10 of these startups selected for Phase 2 will receive up to €50,000 each.



What type of activities and services can be financed by the WE-RISE program?

The types of activities and services that qualify for financial support are for **Phase 1**:

1. Participation to international events, conferences, exhibitions, and fairs
2. Travel expenses for events, meeting with investors and other stakeholders

For Phase 2:

1. Further development of their product leading to achieving higher TRL level
2. Technology improvement to meet market needs
3. Demonstration/tech scale-up activities
4. Access to infrastructures
5. Involving end-users/testers in product/service development process
6. Growth hacking experiments, such as experimenting with new products and services as new revenue streams
7. Developing of new business models and/or business plans
8. Marketing and branding costs
9. Sales efficiency enhancement
10. Pricing model improvement
11. Feasibility and Market studies
12. Marketing and sales-enhancing services
13. Business development & ecosystem building
14. Participation to international events, conferences, exhibitions, and fairs
15. Travel expenses for events, meeting with investors and other stakeholders
16. Personnel costs related with the implementation of the support program activities

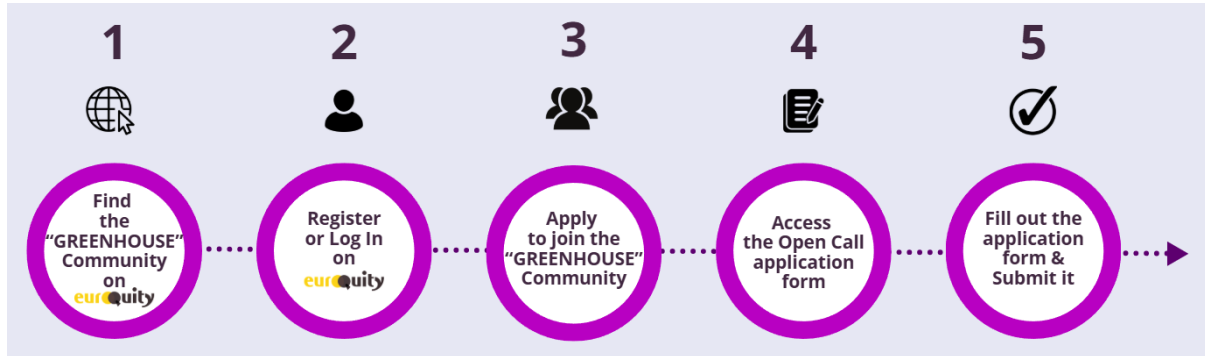
Can the financial support be used for activities and services not listed in the We-Rise Grant Agreement?

The financial support can only be used for types of activities and services listed in the Sub-Grant Agreement.



3. APPLICATION PROCESS

What is the application process for accessing the WE-RISE program?



The application process for accessing the WE-RISE program involves the following steps:

1. [Create a Profile on the EuroQuity Platform](#)
2. [Join the WE-RISE Greenhouse Community](#) - A first eligibility check will be done by the EuroQuity team before accepting you on the community. This process may take up to **one business day**.
3. Access the Community and access the Application Form for Phase 1:
 - Once part of the Community, startups can access the online application form for the WE-RISE Open Call – Phase 1.
 - The application form requires detailed information about the organization, project summary, goals, current stage, finance, market opportunity, innovation, market/competition analysis, impact, team, and a pitch deck.
 - Conduct an Investment Readiness Level (IRL): Applicants will be asked to complete a structured online questionnaire, where they will provide short open-ended information for each question based on their startup's level of development in key areas.
4. Submit the Application

The 10 startups selected for Phase 2 will be chosen from the 20 startups that participated in Phase 1.

For a better comprehension, consult the “**How to Apply**” presentation, which includes images and screenshots of the process.

Are there any specific deadlines for submitting applications?

The closing date for the Open Call is set **for February 12th, 2026 at 17h CET**, unless the deadline is extended. Extension of the deadline will be communicated on the project website and the social media channels of the project. No further submissions will be accepted for this second open call after the deadline.

What information is required in the application?

Applicants must provide information about their organization, project summary and goals, current stage, funding details, market opportunity, and innovation description. They should also include an analysis of market and competition, the impact of their project, team composition, and upload a pitch deck.

Additionally, they need to complete an Investment Readiness Level (IRL) assessment – a structured online questionnaire, where they will provide short open-ended information for each question based on their startup's level of development in key areas, and submit a Declaration of Honour and a SME Declaration.

Optional information includes detailed team backgrounds, market analysis, support needs, and supplementary documents. The template for the application form is also available for guidance.

4. SELECTION PROCESS

What is the selection process?

The selection process comprises two steps the Eligibility Check and the Selection of Eligible Applications. The same process will be applied to both Phases of the WE-RISE Open Call. The evaluation process will be conducted in the following stages:



Step 1: Submission and Initial Review

- Applications are submitted through the EuroQuity platform.
- The Eligibility Check Team reviews all submissions for compliance with eligibility criteria.

Step 2: Assignment of Evaluators

- Applications are distributed among Evaluation Committee members. Each application is assigned to two evaluators for an independent review.

Step 3: Scoring of Applications

- Evaluators assess the proposals based on pre-defined evaluation criteria outlined in the Open Call documentation. A detailed scoring framework is used to ensure consistency and transparency.
- Scores and justifications are recorded in a standardized template.

Step 4: Consensus Meeting

- If discrepancies between evaluator scores exceed a pre-defined threshold, the evaluators and the Evaluation Committee Chair meet to discuss and resolve the differences. The final score is determined through consensus.

Step 5: Final Selection

- Applications are ranked based on their final scores. The top-ranked proposals, meeting the required quotas (i.e., 100% women-led startups, 60% from moderate/emerging innovator countries), are selected for the program.

Step 6: Feedback and Results Communication

- Feedback is prepared for all applicants, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.
- Selected applicants are notified, and the list of successful proposals is published.

What criteria will be used to select beneficiaries for phase 1?

After the first eligibility check, the selection for phase 1 will be based on:

1. Alignment to WE-RISE Objectives: Clear objectives aligned with WE-RISE goals (scores from 1 to 5).
2. Review of the Application Form: Team composition, innovation, and impact (scores from 1 to 5).
3. Review of the IRL Assessment: startup's current maturity, alignment and consistency with the application, growth potential and overall readiness for investment (scores from 1 to 5).

Each criterion is weighted equally, with a maximum score of 15. Applications are evaluated by two evaluators. Additionally, startups must be 100% women-led, and at least 60% must be from emerging/moderate innovator countries.

What is the Investment Readiness Level (IRL) used to select beneficiaries for phase 1?

The Investment Readiness Level (IRL) assessment is a structured online questionnaire, where they will provide short open-ended information for each question based on their startup's level of development in key areas.

This streamlined approach allows startups to **assess their own readiness**, while ensuring that the information provided here is aligned with the qualitative information provided in the application form.

The IRL Assessment will cover **six key areas** that are critical for understanding the startup's maturity and support needs:

- **Innovative Idea** – Uniqueness and technological edge of the solution
- **Team** – Skills, experience, and commitment of the founding team
- **Product/Service** – Development stage, validation, and scalability
- **Market** – Target audience, competitive landscape, and go-to-market strategy
- **Impact** – Social, environmental, or economic impact of the startup
- **Finance** – Business model, revenue strategy, and financial sustainability

This IRL Assessment will allow evaluators to gain a clear understanding of the applicant's readiness and potential.

What criteria will be used to select beneficiaries for Phase 2?

Beneficiaries for Phase 2 are selected based on:

1. Alignment to WE-RISE Objectives: Clear objectives aligned with WE-RISE goals.
2. Comprehensiveness and Coherence of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP): A coherent roadmap with clear, realistic goals and significant KPIs, such as investment deals, partnerships, and business development targets.

Each criterion is weighted equally, and applications are scored from 0 to 5 by two evaluators.

What is the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) used to select beneficiaries for phase 2?

The SAP is a document that clearly communicates short-medium and long-term business plans of the participating startups. The SAP will be collaboratively developed within the Phase 1 of the Support Program. Besides, the SAP will represent the application form for the Phase 2 of the Support Program and, to this end, it will be used to select the 10 startups entering this Phase.

It includes:

1. Goals: Clear, measurable goals.



2. Strategy Development: Pathway to achieve goals.
3. Action Plan: Detailed plan with steps, responsible parties, and timelines.
4. Performance Indicators: KPIs to measure progress.
5. Timeline: Realistic implementation timeline with milestones.

Also includes a table outlining eligible cost categories for the sub-grant support.

Who oversees the eligibility check?

The eligibility check will be carried out by the Eligibility Check Team. This team will be responsible for verifying that the submitted applications meet the essential eligibility criteria as defined in the WE-RISE Open Call document. The team will be composed of experts appointed by the consortium partners, who will not be part of the Selection Committee to ensure impartiality and avoid conflicts of interest.

Who is responsible for the selection of startups?

A Selection Committee will evaluate applications that have successfully passed the eligibility check. It will comprise of at least five experts, each appointed by a different consortium partner. The committee members will bring diverse expertise relevant to the project's scope, including deep tech innovation, startup acceleration, and gender inclusivity.

How long does the selection process take?

The selection process duration can vary, but applicants are typically informed of the outcome within a few weeks after the application deadline.

Can I edit my application after submission?

Once submitted, applications cannot be edited. It is important to review all information carefully before submission. If applicants wish to make changes to their submission, they will need to submit a new application and complete all fields again, provided that the Open Call is still open.

5.SUB-GRANT AGREEMENT

What documentation is required to finalize the Sub-Grant Agreement Phase 1?

The following documents will be annexed to the sub-grant agreement:

- 1) Application Form (pdf document generated by the online application form)
- 2) Declaration of Honour (template provided by the WE-RISE Consortium and submitted with the online application form)
- 3) Declaration on Information on the SME Qualification (template provided by the WE-RISE Consortium and submitted with the online application form)
- 4) Bank Account information

What happens if the applicant does not meet the requirements of the Sub-Grant Agreement?

If it fails to meet the requirements, it may lead to the termination of the grant. Applicants are expected to comply with all obligations outlined in the Sub-Grant Agreement to avoid such consequences.

Can the applicant appeal against the application rejection?

The applicant can appeal the selection decision by submitting a formal request to the WE-RISE project at info@we-rise.eu. The appeal must be based on perceived shortcomings in the evaluation process or incorrect eligibility checks and should be submitted within five calendar days of receiving the evaluation results. The WE-RISE Open Call Team will investigate and respond within twenty days, although this period may be extended if necessary.

Formal appeals must be sent to info@we-rise.eu and only appeals submitted to this email address will be considered.

6.PROGRAM / SERVICES OFFERED

What are the benefits for me and my startup?

Joining WE-RISE offers much more than funding; it unlocks sustainable growth opportunities for GreenTech, AgriTech, and ClimateTech startups led by women.

The benefits include:

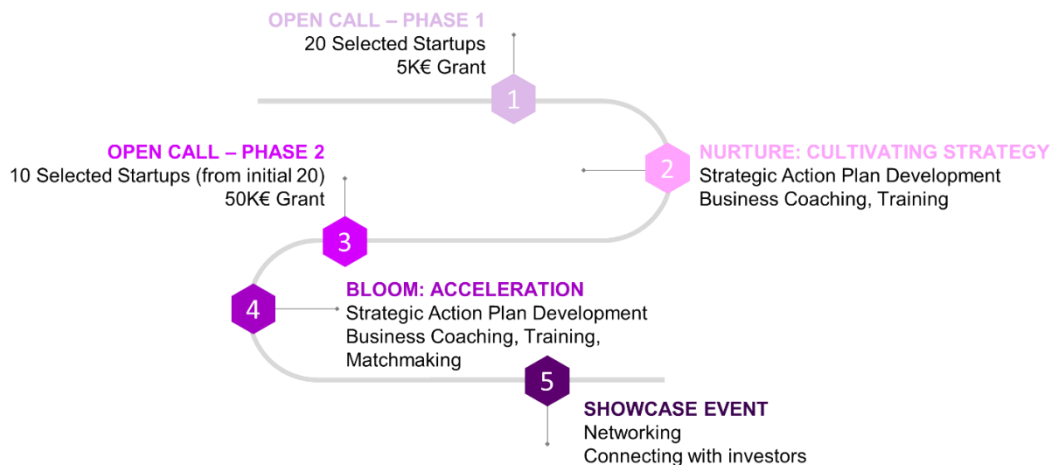
- Financial Support – Up to €55,000 in grants for key activities like investor meetings, market expansion, and product development.
- Tailored Coaching & Mentorship – Guidance from industry experts to refine your strategy, strengthen your business model, and prepare for the next growth stage.

- Access to Investors & Corporates – Direct connections with a curated network of investors, corporates, and public sector stakeholders.
- Specialized Training – Hands-on workshops on fundraising, market positioning, revenue models, and regulatory compliance.
- Visibility & Market Access – Opportunities to showcase your startup at high-impact networking and investor demo days.
- Supportive Community – Join the WE-RISE Greenhouse, a thriving ecosystem of founders, investors, and industry leaders, fostering collaboration and long-term success.

What are the main goals of the WE-RISE program two phases?

Main goals for each phase are:

1. Phase 1 – Nurture: Cultivating Strategy & Empowerment: Strengthen business strategy and accelerate growth for 20 selected startups through a 3-month intensive support program. This includes the development of a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) - a roadmap tailored to each startup's growth objectives.
2. Phase 2 – Bloom: From Strategy to Acceleration: Implement Strategic Action Plans (SAPs) and fuel growth for 10 of the most promising startups from Phase 1 over a 4-month acceleration period. This phase will cover essential activities such as product development, market expansion, and investor engagement. Startups will move from planning to execution, with a strong focus on investor matchmaking, stakeholder engagement, and strategic business development.



This program is designed to equip startups with the essential tools, insights, networks, connections, and capital needed to navigate their growth journey with confidence and strategic clarity, enabling them to scale successfully within the European GreenTech, AgriTech, and ClimateTech sectors.

What type of activities are provided in the program to beneficiaries?

The WE-RISE program provides a variety of activities to beneficiaries, divided into two phases:

1. Phase 1 – Nurture: Cultivating Strategy & Empowerment

- Specialized training workshops on investment readiness, market expansion, product development, and regulatory frameworks.
- A curated Learning Nuggets library for on-demand insights.
- Dedicated business coaching with personal coaches.
- Collaborative peer learning through thematic roundtables and peer review sessions.

2. Phase 2 – Bloom: From Strategy to Acceleration

- Targeted 1:1 business coaching to support SAP implementation.
- Advanced workshops with industry experts, including fireside chats and Q&A sessions.
- Investor matchmaking service with preparation and introductions to suitable investors.
- Networking and market exposure through structured matchmaking sessions and Showcase & Investor Demo Day for pitching to a high-profile audience.

How are the activities delivered to beneficiaries?

Activities are delivered through WE-RISE consortium partners, who will provide women entrepreneurs with tailored mentorship, business development support, coaching, matchmaking, and access to a network of industry experts and like-minded entrepreneurs to thrive in green innovation as outlined in the agreements.

How long does the program last?

The duration of the activities supported by the FSTP mechanism is seven (7) months for each cohort: 3 months for the first phase of the Support Program, and 4 months for the second phase of the Support Program.



7. MONITORING & REPORTING

What kind of feedback is expected from beneficiaries?

Regular feedback will be requested from participating startups in order to adjust the content if there is any discrepancy in meeting the startup's expectations. The feedback process is based on a dual approach: an initial comprehensive needs assessment of participating startups and the establishment of a dynamic, iterative feedback mechanism for real-time feedback. Additionally, a contact email address is available for providing instant feedback: info@we-rise.eu. This ensures that the program remains responsive and aligned with the needs of the startups.

What happens if a beneficiary does not comply with reporting requirements?

Non-compliance with reporting requirements may result in the suspension of financial support or other penalties as outlined in the Sub-Grant Agreement.

Will beneficiaries receive support in preparing reports?

Beneficiaries will receive guidance and templates to assist them in preparing their reports and ensuring compliance with monitoring requirements.

What will be asked to the startups at the end of the different phases?

At end of the Phase 1 of the WE-RISE Support Program, startups will be asked to prepare a report on incurred expenses which will also include both supporting documents and a description of implemented activities and their outcomes.

The Sub-grant agreement for Phase 2 will establish the KPIs and deliverables that will be considered when evaluating the selected startups' performance at the checkpoint review. The WE-RISE Consortium will review the performance at the mid-term checkpoint at month 2 of the Phase 2 – Bloom: from Strategy to Acceleration.

The review will be carried out according to the following criteria and their weights in the final score:

- Deliverable quality (Points: 4; Weight: 35%)
- Progress towards set KPIs (Points: 4; Weight: 50%)
- Deadline Compliance (Points: 2; Weight: 15%)

The threshold of the mid-term checkpoint is 7 points.

Based on this final score, sub-grantees who meet or exceed the threshold of 7 points will receive the next payment and continue in the program. Sub-grantees scoring below the threshold will undergo a review by the WE-RISE Consortium, which will make a final decision by considering any objective reasons for underperformance (e.g., external factors that may have affected results). Those who do not pass this review will not receive the next payment immediately but will have the opportunity to



demonstrate progress within the following month. If, after re-evaluation, the sub-grantee still fails to reach the threshold, they will be required to exit the program.

The beneficiary must certify that all information provided in the request is complete, accurate, and truthful. The beneficiary must also certify that the costs incurred are eligible and that the request for payment is substantiated by adequate supporting documents.

8.ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Where can I find more information about the WE-RISE program?

More information can be found on the official WE-RISE project website (<https://www.we-rise.eu/>), the [Greenhouse Community](#) on Euroquity platform or by contacting the project team using the info@we-rise.eu email.

Who can I contact for support during the application process?

Applicants can contact the WE-RISE project team at info@we-rise.eu.

Are there any workshops or information sessions available for potential applicants?

The project organizes info days to support applicants and provide information about the services offered. The dates for the upcoming info days are:

- 1st Info Day: December 16th, 2025, 11:00 am CET
- 2nd Info Day: January 15th, 2026, 3:00 pm CET
- 3rd Info Day: February 3rd, Time TBD

These events will be promoted on the WE-RISE social media channels, the Greenhouse Community of Euroquity platform, and the WE-RISE website.

Greenhouse Community : <https://www.euroquity.com/en/community/greenhouse>

WE-RISE websire: www.we-rise.eu

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/we-rise-project>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/we_rise_project/

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/weriseprojectpage>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@WE-RISE-Project>

When are the opening and closing Open Call dates?

The opening date of the Open Call is December 4th, 2025, and the closing date is February 12th, 2026 at 17:00h CET. No submissions will be accepted after the closing date.

