



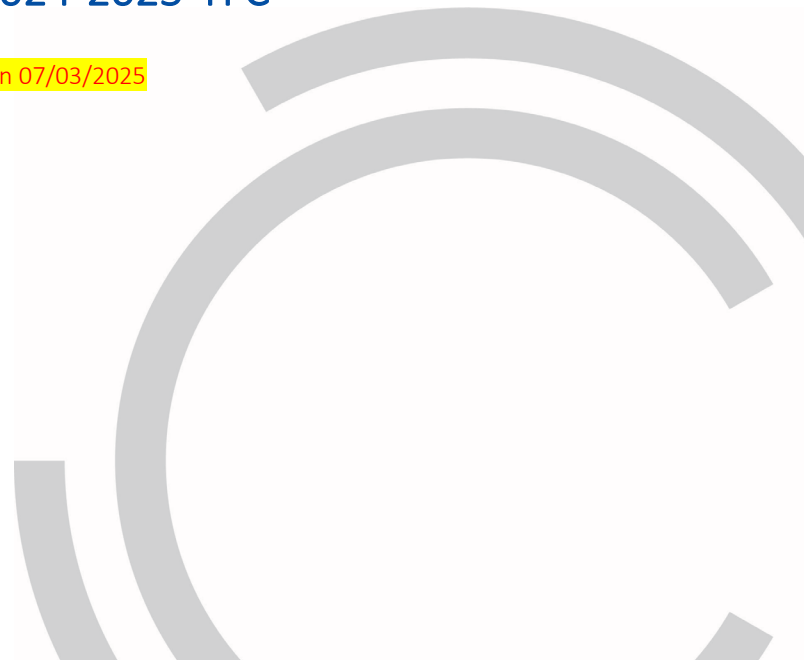
**Teaching  
Factories**

Call for a prize — Rules of Contest  
Business Plan 2023 – 2025

Education & Training – Teaching Factories  
Competition (TFC) 2025

EITM-EDU-2024-2025-TFC

Updated on 07/03/2025



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## History of changes

Version	Publication date	Changes
1.0	16/12/2024	Initial version
1.1	07/03/2025	Additional cut-off date for challenges application added. Removed the 2025 European Entrepreneurship Festival and adjusted the budget accordingly. Challenge owners profile revised and detailed Extended evaluation of applications and competition phase for students in the 1st cohort

# 1. Contest summary

**Disclaimer:** The information given in this document is subject to revision, according to new potential rules or requirements provided by EIT and/or by the EC.

Rules of the contest -summary	
Dates	<p><b>Application phase for Industrial challenge owners*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Call opening:</b> 16 December 2024, 12:00 CET</li> <li>▪ <b>Call closing 1<sup>st</sup> Cut-off:</b> 26 February 2025, 17:00 CET</li> <li>▪ <b>Eligibility &amp; admissibility check 1<sup>st</sup> Cut-off:</b> 28 February 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Feedback 1<sup>st</sup> Cut-off:</b> by 6 March 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Publication of challenges 1<sup>st</sup> Cut-off:</b> 7 March 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Call closing 2<sup>nd</sup> Cut-off:</b> 7 April 2025, 17:00 CET</li> <li>▪ <b>Eligibility &amp; admissibility check 2<sup>nd</sup> Cut-off:</b> 8 April 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Feedback 2<sup>nd</sup> Cut-off:</b> by 15 April 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Publication of challenges 2<sup>nd</sup> Cut-off:</b> 18 April 2025</li> </ul> <p><b>First Cut-off date - Application phase for Solver Teams**</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Call opening:</b> 7 March 2025, 12:00 CET</li> <li>▪ <b>Call closing:</b> 15 April 2025, 17.00 CET</li> <li>▪ <b>Eligibility &amp; admissibility check:</b> 22 April 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Evaluation of applications:</b> 23-29 April 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Communication of results:</b> 30 April 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Feedback time (acceptance/rejection):</b> by 07 May 2025</li> </ul> <p><b>First Cut-off dates - Competition phase</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Implementation phase:</b> from 09 May 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Kick-off event:</b> 09 May 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Submission of solutions by solver teams:</b> 3 July 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Submission of feedback:</b> 5 July 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Online pitching session:</b> 30 July 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Communication of results:</b> 1 August 2025</li> <li>▪ <i>Awarding ceremony: (tbc)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Second Cut-off date - Application phase for Solver Teams***</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Call opening:</b> 18 April 2025, 12:00 CEST</li> <li>▪ <b>Call closing:</b> 1 September 2025, 17:00 CEST</li> <li>▪ <b>Eligibility &amp; admissibility check:</b> 2 September 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Evaluation of applications:</b> 3 - 9 September 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Communication of results:</b> 10 September 2025</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Feedback time (acceptance/rejection):</b> by 16 September 2025</li> </ul> <p><b>Second Cut-off date - Competition phase</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Implementation phase:</b> 18 September 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Kick-off event:</b> 19 September 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Submission of deliverables by the Solver Teams:</b> 5 December 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Submission of feedback:</b> 9 December</li> <li>▪ <b>Online pitching session:</b> 12 December 2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Communication of results:</b> 16 December 2025</li> <li>▪ <i>Awarding ceremony: (tbc)</i></li> </ul> <p><i>*Challenges submitted after February 26, 2025, 17:00 CET will be automatically proposed to solver teams for the Second Cut-off date competition and implementation phases.</i></p> <p><i>**The First Cut-off is open for applications from two types of solver teams: higher education students (Bachelor's and master's only) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) students.<sup>1</sup></i></p> <p><i>*** The Second Cut-off date is open for applications only from higher education students (Bachelor's and Master's). Check the eligibility criteria for solver teams in the 'Eligibility' section of this document.</i></p>
<p><b>Introduction</b></p>	<p><b>The Teaching Factories Competition (TFC)</b> is a collaborative initiative bringing together corporates and academia across Europe through business challenges. EIT Manufacturing invites organizations to propose relevant industrial challenges and higher education and VET students to form solver teams (4-6 members) to ideate solutions to those challenges.</p> <p>By fostering academia-industry partnerships, the TFC aims to stimulate the development of dynamic solutions to industrial challenges.</p> <p><b>Duration:</b> The competition will span for approximately three months</p> <p><b>Coaching &amp; Training:</b> Solver Teams will have coaching and training sessions to guide them during the competition phase and support them in implementing the solutions.</p> <p><b>Evaluation:</b> At the end of the competition solver teams will be evaluated by an independent jury during the online pitch session.</p>

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<sup>1</sup> VET students – are individuals enrolled in Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs, which focus on developing practical skills and knowledge tailored for specific careers or individuals, for more information, see <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/vocational-education-and-training/about-vocational-education-and-training>

<p><b>The total budget allocated to this call</b></p>	<p>The total budget assigned to this call is 79 200 EUR distributed between the 2 cut-off dates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a total of 9 prizes will be assigned – 6 per 1st cut-off date and 3 per 2nd cut-off date</li> <li>• prizes will be provided to Solver Teams</li> <li>• Industrial challenge owners will receive courtesy tickets to an EIT Manufacturing event or the possibility to join a training course from the EIT Manufacturing catalogue</li> </ul>
<p><b>Eligibility</b></p>	<p>The following applicants are eligible to apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Higher Education Students Solver Teams:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Solver Teams should consist of 4 to 6 members.</li> <li>✓ Teams can include higher education students starting from 2nd year of Bachelor's or enrolled Master's studies.</li> <li>✓ Each team must include students from <b>at least two disciplines</b> (e.g., engineering and business).</li> <li>✓ Eligible students are those enrolled at a Higher Education Institution located in Europe or in a Horizon Europe-affiliated country at the end of the application phase.</li> <li>✓ Students who graduate, and/or unenroll, during the competition phase are allowed and expected to continue their participation in the competition until its conclusion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>VET Students Solver Teams:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Solver Teams should consist of 4 to 6 members.</li> <li>✓ VET students must be enrolled in at least the 2nd year of their vocational course.</li> <li>✓ Each team must include students from <b>at least two disciplines</b> (e.g., engineering and business).</li> <li>✓ VET students must be enrolled in a VET institution located in Europe or in a Horizon Europe-affiliated country by the end of the application phase. Similarly, students who graduate or unenroll during the competition phase are allowed and expected to continue their participation until the competition's conclusion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Industrial challenge owners:</b> Any private organization in the manufacturing sector that proposes an industrial innovation challenge within the thematic scope of this call</li> </ul>
<p><b>Link to the submission portal</b></p>	<p>Interested parties should submit applications at the submission platform SUBMITTABLE.</p>
<p><b>List of documents to be submitted</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application Form available on the submission platform (all applicants) and in addition:</li> <li>• For solver teams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Declaration of honour authorising a team member to submit the application on behalf of the Solver Team</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Proof of enrolment from the university</li> <li>• For Industrial challenge owners : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Declaration of honour</li> <li>✓ Organization logo</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
List of documents to take into consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EIT Manufacturing Strategic Agenda</li> <li>• Appeal and redress procedure</li> </ul>
Evaluation criteria	<p><i>Evaluation criteria assessed by the independent experts for the selection of applicants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellence</li> <li>• Implementation</li> <li>• Impact</li> <li>• Strategic Fit</li> </ul>



## 2. Background and context

EIT Manufacturing's *Teaching Factories Competition 2025* is designed to strengthen the partnership between academia and industry by fostering innovation that addresses real-world challenges towards a more sustainable and competitive manufacturing sector in Europe.

### 2.1 EIT Manufacturing mission and strategic objectives

#### Mission

EIT Manufacturing is a Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC)<sup>2</sup> of the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) that places Europe at the centre of a global revolution and boost manufacturing innovation by connecting people with skills, technologies with markets, and innovators with investors. Technological progress is now exponential, and it is changing the industrial, social and competitive landscape faster than ever before. EIT Manufacturing aims not only to adapt to this revolution but to lead it, by overcoming value network fragmentation and bringing stakeholders together. We need to make better use of our knowledge and our strengths to create value and deploy agile mechanisms to accelerate and steer innovation, shaping the future role of manufacturing in our society. With the needs, concerns and ideas of the economy and society at its core, the mission of EIT Manufacturing is to empower its partners and stakeholders to fundamentally transform the manufacturing system and meet the global demands of present and future generations.

#### Strategic objectives

EIT Manufacturing's Strategic Objectives (SOs), as set out in the Strategic Agenda 2021-2027, are ambitious and steer its activities to help responding to major challenges shared by the manufacturing industry and society:

- Put people at the centre of manufacturing
- Accelerate green manufacturing
- Foster sovereignty and competitiveness.

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/819 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (recast), Article 2 Definitions p. 2: A large-scale Institutionalised European Partnership, as referred to in Regulation (EU) 2021/695, of higher education institutions, research organisations, companies and other stakeholders in the innovation process in the form of a strategic network, regardless of its legal form, based on joint mid- to long-term innovation planning to meet the EIT challenges and contribute to attaining the objectives established under Regulation (EU) 2021/695

# 3. Call specific conditions

Teaching Factories Competition (hereinafter, "Competition") is an initiative of advanced training to boost innovations in manufacturing. It aims to bridge the gap between industry needs and academic research, while also helping corporations identify and nurture young talents.

The Teaching Factories Competition serves as a collaboration platform where industry practitioners and academic participants (Bachelor's, Master's) and VET students exchange knowledge and experience. This initiative supports our mission to equip learners with technical and transversal skills associated with cutting-edge technologies and to promote innovation in the manufacturing sector.

## 3.1 Topics description

The key topics and related subtopics of the **Teaching Factories Competition 2025** are the following:

### 1. Advanced Manufacturing:

- 1.1. Additive Manufacturing
- 1.2. Advanced Materials and Manufacturing
- 1.3. Human-Machine Interface
- 1.4. Robotics & Automation

### 2. Green & Sustainable Manufacturing:

- 2.1. Circular Economy
- 2.2. Sustainable Supply Chain Management
- 2.3. Zero Defect Manufacturing

### 3. Digital Transformation in Manufacturing:

- 3.1. Artificial Intelligence
- 3.2. Smart & intelligent Manufacturing
- 3.3. Advanced Simulation & Digital Twin Technology
- 3.4. Internet of things (IoT)
- 3.5. Blockchain Technology
- 3.6. Big Data Analytics
- 3.7. Web 3.0 & Metaverse

Industrial challenge owners may submit up to 3 challenges in different subtopics categories and state their interest in having their challenge included for the first cut-off stage or for the second cut-off

**Please note that EIT Manufacturing will contact the challenge owner in case adaptations of the challenges are needed before publishing the catalogue.**

Solver Teams will be able to scroll the catalogue and select multiple challenges. **Please, note that solver teams must submit a single application per selected challenge.**

## 3.2 Applicants' profile

### Eligibility requirements for Industrial challenge owners

To be eligible for the call the **Industrial challenge owners** should meet the following criteria:

- Must be a private organization in the manufacturing sector that proposes an industrial innovation challenge within the thematic scope of this call. Industrial challenge owners must be recognised as legal entities under national, EU, or international law, with the ability to exercise rights and obligations in their name.
- must be established in one of the Member States (including overseas countries and territories, (OCTs)) or [Associated Countries to Horizon Europe](#)
- the challenge shall align with the selected topic and the EIT Manufacturing Strategic Agenda promoting innovative developments in the manufacturing industry.

**All EIT Manufacturing partners are eligible to apply, nevertheless, an entity does not need to be nor become an EIT Manufacturing partner to apply for and participate in the competition.**

### Eligibility requirements for Solver Teams

To be eligible for the call the **Solver Teams** should meet the following criteria:

#### Higher Education Students

- Must consist of 4 to 6 members, with women and underrepresented groups actively participating in the implementation.
- Must be students officially enrolled in Bachelor's or Master's program at the end of the application phase in a Higher Education Institution in one of the Member States (including overseas countries and territories, (OCTs)) or Associated Countries to Horizon Europe.
- Must students in at least their 2nd year of a Bachelor's degree or enrolled in a Master's studies.
- Should include members from at least two different disciplines, such as informatics, engineering, business, or natural and technological sciences.
- Participants who graduate, and/or unenroll, during the competition phase are expected to stay in the competition until the end of it.

#### VET Students

To be eligible for the call, the Solver Teams should meet the following criteria:

- Must consist of 4 to 6 members, with women and underrepresented groups actively participating in the implementation.

- Must be students officially enrolled in a VET (Vocational Education and Training) program at the end of the application phase in a VET institution in one of the Member States (including overseas countries and territories, (OCTs)) or Associated Countries to Horizon Europe.
- Must be students in at least their 2nd year of a VET program.
- Should include members from at least two different disciplines, such as technical, engineering, business, or other relevant fields.
- Participants who graduate, and/or unenroll, during the competition phase are expected to stay in the competition until the end of it.

### 3.3 Integration of RIS aspects

EIT Manufacturing fosters the participation of organizations from countries with moderate or emerging innovation scores, as defined by the [European Innovation Scoreboard](#), in its activities. Applicants from countries under the [Regional Innovation Scheme \(RIS\)](#) are strongly encouraged to apply.

### 3.4 Expected activities

Industrial challenge owners will undertake the following activities:

Activities	First Cut-off	Second Cut-off
Assign Mentors to provide guidance to the Solver Team(s) during the three-month solving phase, with an emphasis on ensuring active participation from women and underrepresented groups in the implementation.	April –June 2025	September-December 2025
Participate in the online kick-off meeting (ca. 2h).	April 2025	September 2025
Participate in 2 workshops at the beginning and in the middle of the project dedicated to mentors aiming at aligning expectations and define process to provide support for solver teams.	April, May 2025	September- October 2025
Industrial challenge owners are expected to provide at least 60-minute bi-weekly online interactive sessions with the Solver Teams for feedback. The sessions will take place on AGORA (EIT Manufacturing online community platform). Private groups will be created,	April –June 2025	September-December 2025

Solver Teams and mentors are responsible to organise their bi-weekly online meetings as convenient.		
Provide feedback after completion of the execution period.	June 2025	December 2025
Depending on the quality of the collaboration, the organization may engage with the Solving Team(s) to support their roadmap to further develop the solution post TFC.	July 2025	January 2026

Selected Solver Teams will undertake the following activities:

Activities	First Cut-off	Second Cut-off
Appoint a team leader	April 2025	September 2025
Join AGORA groups of the competition and the private group associated with the assigned challenge.	April 2025	September 2025
Participate in the online kick-off meeting (ca. 2h).	April 2025	September 2025
Participate in 4 Mandatory online training sessions: training sessions (circa 90min) will be organised for all teams on the following days.	April-June 2025	May- August 2025
Participate in coaching sessions: each team will have 3 sessions per solver team	April-June 2025	May- August 2025
Work collaboratively in teams to tackle the challenges presented by participating Industrial challenge owners .	April-June 2025	September-December 2025

Submit an online survey provided by EIT Manufacturing.	June2025	December 2025
Provide their solutions in Word/PDF and PPT formats (please, see 3.5 submission of solutions)	June 2025	December 2025
Present their solutions and pitch online in front of a jury to reveal the winners.	June2025	December 2025
Participate in the award ceremony in case it is organised (tentative) (Winning teams only).	July 2025	December 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Optional: Solver Teams have an opportunity to take up to 2 EIT Manufacturing Academy online courses relevant to the selected topics free of charge.</i></li> <li>• <i>Optional: depending on the solving team's roadmap for implementation and the solution assessment, teams may benefit from additional EIT Manufacturing and Industrial challenge owner support post-TFC, if seen fit by the organizations (e.g. additional coaching and/or scholarship to participate in the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summer or Winter School 2025 to accelerate development).</i></li> </ul>		

### 3.5 Expected impact and main outcomes

The results are expected to contribute to the following:

- **Advancement of Sustainable Manufacturing:** Activities will contribute to the widespread adoption of sustainable and innovative manufacturing practices across Europe, supporting the objectives of the European Green Deal and the transition to a low-carbon economy.
- **Strengthening of Industry-Academia Collaboration:** Activities will enhance synergies between academia and industry, fostering knowledge transfer and the development of technologies that address key challenges in the manufacturing sector.
- **Empowerment of Innovation and Commercialization:** Participants will be equipped to translate research and innovative ideas into market-ready solutions, contributing to the growth of Europe's innovation ecosystem and the creation of new economic opportunities.
- **Cultivation of a Skilled and Future-Ready Workforce:** Activities will support a new generation of highly skilled professionals, capable of driving innovation and addressing complex challenges in the manufacturing sector, thus ensuring the long-term competitiveness of European industry.
- **Promotion of a Culture of Continuous Innovation:** Activities will promote a culture of continuous improvement and innovation within participating organizations, leading to sustained industrial transformation and alignment with broader EU policy goals.

### 3.6 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Competition will contribute to the following impacts

KPI	Short title	Target
EITHE08.1	Number of successful participants in EIT professional development courses, online training courses and other education/training activities delivered or in a process of delivery (by country and type of programme), including data on country of citizenship and gender. Only participants, who successfully finished the programme, will be counted.	140
EITHE01.1	Number of innovative products, processes and methods & Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) applications resulting from KIC activities	N/A

### 3.7 Submission of solutions from the Solver Teams:

At the end of the competition phase (First Cut-off date: June 2025, Second Cut-off date December 2025), the Solver Teams will submit:

**1- Solution Documentation (in PowerPoint and Word/PDF formats), including:**

- Description of the challenge
- Market analysis to identify the magnitude of the problem in the manufacturing sector
- Description of the solution, demonstrating how and to which extent it addresses the challenge and detailing its technical aspects
- Description of how gender and diversity are considered in the design/development of the solution.
- Market potential for the solution implementation (recommended method: TAM, SAM, SOM)
- Competitive Landscape Analysis (recommended methods: SWOT analysis and Porter's Five Forces)
- Business Model Canvas, and
- Implementation roadmap post competition, detailing milestones and requirements/needed support

**2- Presentation Materials (add format PPT/PDF), including:**

Pitch deck summarizing the results (recommended method: Guy Kawasaki's 10-slide template) Additionally, the expert-trainers will give feedback on each solver team that will be taken into consideration by the jury during the online pitching session. The solver teams will pitch their solutions online in front of a jury consisting of three external experts. The jury will then select three best-

performing Solver Teams. All solver teams are requested to send their pitch presentations 3 days before the online pitch.

### 3.8 Available Budget and Funding

The total maximum EIT funding allocated to this call is 66 000 EUR in the form of prizes and 13 200 EUR allowances in the form of a lump sum, distributed between two cut-offs dates.

#### Prizes

##### First cut-off – higher education students:

1<sup>st</sup> place: 10 000 EUR.

2<sup>nd</sup> place: 7 000 EUR.

3<sup>rd</sup> place: 5 000 EUR.

##### First cut-off – VET students:

1<sup>st</sup> place: 10 000 EUR.

2<sup>nd</sup> place: 7 000 EUR.

3<sup>rd</sup> place: 5 000 EUR.

##### Second cut-off – higher education students:

1<sup>st</sup> place: 10 000 EUR.

2<sup>nd</sup> place: 7 000 EUR.

3<sup>rd</sup> place: 5 000 EUR.

#### Allowances

The remaining budget will be dedicated to allowances for Industrial challenge owner representatives at the EITM events.

The reimbursement of incurred expenses for accommodation, meals, and travel is paid as one lump-sum amount known as a daily allowance. The allowance is capped at 600 EUR per representative.

Finally, all the solver teams participating in the Teaching Factories Competition will be invited to become members of EIT Manufacturing Alumni Community.

### 3.9 Payment arrangements

The prize money will be paid to the prize winners after the end of the Competition, when all the requested documents are provided (see also point 5.6). The payment will be made to the **team leaders assigned by the solver teams** and then distributed among team members. All members of the winner solver teams shall sign the [Awardee's Declaration and Release agreement](#).



The leader of the winning solver team must provide banking and fiscal documentation to facilitate prize payments, including necessary administrative documents, such as bank account details and signed Prize Agreements provided by EIT Manufacturing.

If an issue is identified, EIT Manufacturing reserves the right to withdraw the award of the prizes and lump sum funds.

### 3.10 Prize monitoring

Prize Winners and participant Industrial challenge owners must report 1 month after receiving support from EIT Manufacturing confirming a receipt of TFC prizes.

### 3.11 Gender equality and inclusiveness

EIT Manufacturing aims to support diversity and gender equality. To this end, the proposed solutions should present how gender and diversity are considered in its design/development.

Additionally, the solver teams are expected to promote a mixed team with women and underrepresented groups actively participating in the implementation.

### 3.12 Ethics and values<sup>3</sup>

Activities must comply with the highest ethical standards and the applicable EU, international and national law on ethical principles. Moreover, they must respect basic EU values (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities). The activities must comply with:

- ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity) and
- applicable international, EU and national law

Applications involving ethics issues will have to undergo an ethics review to authorise funding. Applications that did not respect the above ethical principles and standards cannot be awarded a prize.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/how-to-complete-your-ethics-self-assessment\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/how-to-complete-your-ethics-self-assessment_en.pdf)

# 4. Application preparation and submission

## 4.1 Guidance and support on application preparation

To guarantee the maximum support from EIT Manufacturing, two different support offers will be provided during the application preparation process: the call information events and the EIT Manufacturing contest contact points.

### Call information event

EIT Manufacturing will carry out an Info session at the publication of the call to ensure open, free, and fair access to the wider manufacturing community. Interested Higher Education Students and lecturers are invited to participate the Info Day session.

Information about date and time of Info Day sessions will be published on the official EIT Manufacturing website.

The events will be conducted online on AGORA. For further information, please contact [tfcompetition@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:tfcompetition@eitmanufacturing.eu).

### Call Contacts

All applicants may contact EIT Manufacturing to ask questions and clarify any points on general/technical aspects and call content by contacting [tfcompetition@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:tfcompetition@eitmanufacturing.eu).

With a view to equal treatment, EIT Manufacturing staff cannot give prior opinion on the admissibility, eligibility, quality or any other relevant element of a specific application. Applicants are strongly discouraged from approaching any member of the Selection Committee to seek for specific advice or support regarding their application.

## 4.2 Application process and submission

To ensure efficient processing and evaluation, please note the following guidelines for submitting your application to the Teaching Factories Competition:

**Language and Submission:** All applications must be submitted in **English** using the designated application forms available on the competition website. Please be informed that paper submissions will not be considered.

**Account Registration:** Applicants must register and validate their accounts if it is their first time accessing the submission platform **SUBMITTABLE**. If the applicant has already created an account, they can proceed to log in. Once logged in, they can initiate a new application. Ensure that all compulsory fields are completed during the application process.

**Official Language:** English is the official language of the competition. Therefore, all required documentation must be submitted in English, and all communication with the organisers must be conducted in English.

**Required Documentation:**

**Industrial challenge owners** must submit the following documentation through the submission tool no later than the call deadline 26 February 2025, 17:00 CET.

- Online Application Form
- Declaration of honour
- Organization logo in a high-quality graphic format

**Solver Teams:** must submit the following documentation through the submission tool no later than the call deadline for the First Cut-off date: 7 April 2025, 17:00 CET, Second Cut-off date: 1 September 2025, 17:00 CET.

- Online Application Form
- Declaration of honour authorising a team member to apply on behalf of the Solver Team
- Proof of enrolment from the university

Note: Only complete applications submitted through SUBMITTABLE before the deadline, as specified above, will be accepted, and considered. The organizers reserve the right to extend the submission deadline, and any extensions will be communicated on the competition website. Incomplete or missing documentation may result in application rejection.

Selected applicants may be required to provide additional documentation regarding their legal and financial status.

# 5. Application evaluation and selection process

## 5.1 Admissibility check

Applications must be

- submitted before the **call deadline** (*see Call Summary*).
- submitted in **English**;
- submitted **electronically** via the submission tool. Paper submissions are NOT possible; and
- **complete** and contain all the mandatory information in the online application form and all mandatory documentation listed in chapter 4.

Applications containing one or more inadmissible elements will be **rejected** and will receive an official communication from EIT Manufacturing setting out the outcome of the admissibility check.

## 5.2 Eligibility check and evaluation overview

The eligibility check and evaluation of applications will be conducted in 2 phases:

### 1. Application phase:

Industrial challenge owners: EIT Manufacturing will perform an eligibility check on to check their alignment with the conditions presented under chapter 3.2.

EIT Manufacturing will decide which challenge to allocate for the first cut-off stage and which for the second cut-off and publish the catalogue of challenges accordingly.

Solver Teams will be able to scroll through the catalogue of challenges and submit applications to multiple challenges (one application/challenge). EIT Manufacturing will perform an eligibility check and an evaluation of the Solver Teams applications.

The evaluation of Solver Teams will be run by one EIT Manufacturing internal expert and one independent external expert and up to four Solver Teams might be selected per challenge.

The exact number of challenges and Solver Teams will depend on the number and quality of the received challenges and applications.

### 2. Competition phase: Solver Teams will implement their proposed solutions. After the implementation phase, a jury of three independent external experts will evaluate each team's performance during the online pitch session: The jury will select the top three winning teams in each category

- a) Higher Education Solver Teams and
- b) VET (Vocational Education and Training) Solver Teams.

The top three winning Solver Teams in each category will receive financial prizes. Additionally, representatives of the challenge owners will receive two courtesy tickets to EIT Manufacturing networking events and/or access to online training of their choice.

### 5.3 1st Phase: Application phase

#### Challenges eligibility check

A challenge is considered eligible if it respects the following Eligibility Criteria:

<i>Eligibility Criteria</i>	The challenge aligns with the conditions presented under the chapter 3.2 Applicants' profile -Eligibility Requirements for Industrial challenge owners
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Challenges containing one or more ineligible elements will receive an official communication from EIT Manufacturing setting out the outcome of the eligibility check and explaining why the proposal failed to meet the criteria.

The applicant of any challenge deemed ineligible who disputes the ineligibility decision, may appeal. This appeal must be made within five days from the official EIT Manufacturing notification of ineligibility by sending an email to [support@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:support@eitmanufacturing.eu) according to the Appeal procedure document linked to the Call (see paragraph 5.6).

**Please note that EIT Manufacturing will contact the challenge owner in case adaptations of the challenges are needed before publishing the catalogue.**

#### Solver teams' eligibility check and evaluation

An application is considered eligible if it respects the following Eligibility Criteria:

<i>Eligibility Criteria</i>	The application aligns with the conditions presented under the chapter 3.2 Applicants' profile -Eligibility requirements for Solvers team
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Application containing one or more ineligible elements will receive an official communication from EIT Manufacturing setting out the outcome of the eligibility check and explaining why the proposal failed to meet the criteria.

Applications deemed ineligible who dispute the ineligibility decision, may appeal. This appeal must be made within fivedays from the official EIT Manufacturing notification of ineligibility by sending an email to [support@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:support@eitmanufacturing.eu) according to the Appeal procedure document linked to the Call (see paragraph 5.6).

**The proposals that successfully pass the eligibility check are evaluated and scored against 4 criteria:**

**Excellence, Impact, Implementation, Strategic Fit.**

The evaluation process will be carried out by one EIT Manufacturing internal and one independent external expert supported by one independent external rapporteur.

External evaluators will assess each evaluation sub-criteria will be assessed according to the following scores on a scale **from 1 to 5**.

Score	Description	
1	<i>Extremely poor or None</i>	The information provided is considered irrelevant or inadequate compared to the specific call provisions.
2	<i>Bad</i>	The information provided lacks relevant quality and contains significant weaknesses, compared to the specific call provisions.
3	<i>Average</i>	The overall information provided is adequate, however, some aspects are unclearly or insufficiently detailed, compared to the specific call provisions.
4	<i>Good</i>	The information provided is adequate with sufficiently outlined details, compared to the specific call provisions.
5	<i>Excellent</i>	The information provided is outstanding in its details, clarity, and coherence, compared to the specific call provisions.

**Scoring System:** Each criterion is scored individually, and these scores are then summed to produce a final overall score for the application.

**Thresholds:**

- *Criterion-Level Threshold:* Each criterion has a maximum score of 5 points, with a threshold of 3/5 points. Any criterion scoring below 3 points will not meet the threshold requirements.
- *Overall Threshold:* The maximum total score for a proposal is 20 points. To pass, an application must achieve a minimum total score of 12 points.

**Continuation to Next Phase:** Only applications that meet or exceed both the criterion-level threshold and the overall threshold will be considered for the next phase.

The detailed evaluation grid for Solvers teams is provided here below:

Excellence	Max. scoring 5
	(Threshold: 3/5)
The application showcases clear objectives aligned with the selected challenge(s). The application demonstrates innovative approaches aiming to advance existing technologies and promote progression and innovation in the specific topic.	

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Max. scoring 5</b>
	<b>(Threshold: 3/5)</b>
Application shows that expected results are aligned with the selected challenge contributing to societal and environmental impact. Application identifies potential obstacles that could impede the intended results and impacts and offers corresponding mitigation strategies. The application supports gender equality and promotes wider diversity and inclusiveness in the manufacturing sector.	
<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Max scoring 5</b>
	<b>(Threshold: 3/5)</b>
The applicants possess the essential resources, qualifications, and experience. The applicants showcase their motivation, commitment, and experience in challenge-based learning, demonstrating preparedness to actively participate in the activities.	
<b>Strategic fit</b>	<b>Max. scoring 5</b>
	<b>(Threshold: 3/5)</b>
The application demonstrates an alignment with the chosen topic and proposed challenge (problem-solution fit) and emphasizes the economic and/or business relevance of the proposed approach (solution-market fit).	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><i>20 POINTS</i></b> <b><i>THRESHOLD 12/20</i></b>

The 1 EIT MANUFACTURING internal and 1 independent external expert will evaluate each proposal and produce an Individual Evaluation Report (IER). Each proposal is evaluated 2 times. They will meet in a consensus meeting chaired by an external rapporteur to discuss and build an agreement. The rapporteur will address any notable divergences between them and will develop the final Summary Evaluation Reports (ESRs).

## 5.4 2nd Phase: Competition phase

The Solver Teams which successfully pass the 1<sup>st</sup> phase will implement their solutions and, at the end of the implementation period, pitch them in front of a jury of 3 independent external experts.

The online pitch session is evaluated and scored against 4 criteria: Excellence, Impact, Implementation, Strategic Fit.

External evaluators will assess each evaluation criteria using the same scale (1-5 points) used in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase.

The detailed evaluation grid for the pitch session is provided here below:

<b>Excellence</b>	Max. scoring 5
	(Threshold: 3/5)
The proposed solution demonstrates creativity and significant potential to drive innovation and technological advancements and effectively address challenges in the topic	
<b>Impact</b>	Max. scoring 5
	(Threshold: 3/5)
The proposed solution shows short and long-term social and environmental impact, including improvements in efficiency, productivity, and quality. The solution has potential for scalability, adaptability, and sustainable industry benefits.	
<b>Implementation</b>	Max scoring 5
	(Threshold: 3/5)
The solver team demonstrates strong teamwork and cohesion, showcasing effective collaboration. The team's cooperative efforts with the Industrial challenge owner in developing and implementing solutions are clearly evident.	
<b>Strategic fit</b>	Max. scoring 5
	(Threshold: 3/5)
The proposed solution is aligned with EIT Manufacturing's strategic objectives and shows to be relevant to real market needs in the manufacturing sector	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20 POINTS</b> <b>THRESHOLD 12/20</b>



**Scoring System:** Each criterion is scored individually, and these scores are then summed to produce a final overall score for the application.

#### Thresholds:

- *Criterion-Level Threshold:* Each criterion has a maximum score of 5 points, with a threshold of 3/5 points. Any criterion scoring below 3 points will not meet the threshold requirements.
- *Overall Threshold:* The maximum total score for a proposal is 20 points. To pass, an application must achieve a minimum total score of 12 points.

**Winners' selection:** Only applications that meet or exceed both the criterion-level threshold and the overall threshold will be considered for winner selection.

## 5.5 Communication of results

### Application Phase

After the evaluation process, the results will be communicated via email to the applicant representative who is registered on the submission platform. The communication will include the ESR (Evaluation Summary Report).

Within 5 days of receiving this communication, applicants whose applications have been selected have the option to decline the participation in the execution period. They can do so by notifying EIT Manufacturing via email at [tfcompetition@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:tfcompetition@eitmanufacturing.eu). In such cases, EIT Manufacturing will extend an invitation to participate in the initiative to the following application in the ranking.

### Competition Phase

The independent jury will evaluate the Solver Teams and select the winners during the online pitch session. The results of the evaluation will be communicated via email to the applicant representative registered on the submission platform. This communication will include the results report.

The Solver Teams and supporting mentors who emerge as winners will receive an invitation to the award ceremony, scheduled to take place at the end of the competition. During this ceremony, the winners will have the opportunity of additional visibility to showcase their solutions.

## 5.6 Procedure for Complaints and Appeal

The applicant of a rejected application who disagrees with the decision may request an evaluation review. **Only procedural aspects of an evaluation may be the subject of a request for an evaluation review**, for example, process errors or technical problems. The evaluation of the merits of an application shall not be the subject of an evaluation review. In this case, the Industrial challenge owner will have **five days** after receipt of the final evaluation results to submit an appeal to the Evaluation (see document Appeal procedure).

## 5.7 Financial Support and Financial Prize follow-up

Financial prize winners will have to diligently collaborate in the following steps that will be taken after closing the Competition:

- Providing EIT Manufacturing with required banking and fiscal details;
- Signature of the Awardee's Declaration and Release agreement.
- Collaborate with the Teaching Factories Competition team of EIT Manufacturing during the delivery of support services.

# 6. Other Terms and Conditions

## 6.1 Communication, Dissemination, Visibility of Funding

Prize winners must promote the prize and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner.

Communication activities related to the funding (including media interviews, press statements, presentations, etc., in electronic form, via traditional or social media, etc.), must acknowledge EU support and display the EIT Manufacturing logo (emblem) and text. The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands, or text. Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EIT Manufacturing support. When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. sponsors), the emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos.

For the purposes of these obligations, the applicants that have been awarded funding may use the emblem without first obtaining approval from EIT Manufacturing. This does not, however, give them the right to exclusive use. Moreover, they may not appropriate the emblem or any similar trademark or logo, either by registration or by any other means. Any communication or dissemination activity related to the funding must use factually accurate information.

The EIT Manufacturing may use, for their communication and publicising activities, information relating to the funding, as well as photos or audio-visual material that they receive from the applicants (including in electronic form), and photos and videos taken either in preparation for the dedicated EIT Manufacturing event or during the dedicated EIT Manufacturing event. The EIT Manufacturing will publish the name of both the shortlisted/s and the selected applicants, their origin, the amount of the funding, and their nature and purpose.

## 6.2 Intellectual Property Rights

The intellectual property rights in the Results of the Challenges will be **property of the participating SOLVER TEAMS**, without prejudice to the moral rights of the Industrial challenge owners to be recognized as authors, creators, or inventors. Nothing in this Notice shall operate to assign or transfer any other Intellectual Property Rights from the Solver teams to Industrial challenge owners or vice-versa. For the avoidance of any doubt, all patents, trade secrets, information, know-how, inventions, technology, data, and other intellectual property rights owned by the participants prior to the participation in the Teaching Factories competition shall remain the sole property of the respective participant.

Participants (Solver teams and Industrial challenge owners ) agree to respect the IPR Rules (Article 16) of the Model Grant Agreement<sup>4</sup>.

Participants also agree to respect the EIT Manufacturing IP Policy.

### 6.3 Right to activate audits

EIT Manufacturing retains the right to perform an audit on the Competition applicants that have been awarded financial support/prizes, in case of alerts and/or to confirm governance and proper usage of the financial support.

EIT Manufacturing keeps the right to request any data related to the “the competition’s” applicants that have been awarded funding for 5 years after completion to ensure transparency and allow monitoring from EIT.

### 6.4 Withdrawal of the funding — Recovery of undue amounts

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that ban them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate<sup>5</sup>:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant’s debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant’s debts)
- guilty of grave professional misconduct<sup>6</sup> (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize)

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<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga\\_horizon-euratom\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> See Articles 136 and 141 EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046.

<sup>6</sup> Professional misconduct includes violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain advantage.

- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the prize).
- Applicants will also be refused if it turns out that<sup>7</sup>:
- during the award procedure they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information
- they were previously involved in the preparation of the call, and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

Applicants shall sign a Declaration of Honour to confirm that they respect the above-mentioned criteria at the application stage. All shortlisted applicants participating in the Competition phase may be requested to provide relevant recent documentation substantiating the Declaration of Honour. Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in the exclusion of the applicants concerned.

## 6.5 Data protection

EIT Manufacturing ensures that any processing of personal data shall be performed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 (General Data Protection Regulation), on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, As a data subject, you have the right of access, the right to rectification, the right to erasure, the right to restrict processing, the right to data portability, the right to object, and the right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing. If you have a question about personal data processing or want to exercise your data subject rights, you can contact our Data Protection Officer at [dpo@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:dpo@eitmanufacturing.eu). In the case of complaints, you can address them to the French regulator CNIL.

The collected personal data will be used solely for the procedure and assessment of the applications and the management, completion, organization, dissemination of information, and publicity of the Call. The data controller is EIT Manufacturing and/or its subsidiaries.

Personal data shall be deleted 5 years after the announcement of the call awarded to applicants.

Applicants have the possibility to indicate that EIT Manufacturing may grant access to parts of their submission to trusted investors and partners.

The application submission and evaluation process will be done via Submittable (<http://www.submittable.com>), an online submission management tool by Submittable Holdings, Inc.

YOUR CONSENT TO THE USE OF SUBMITTABLE AS SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION TOOL: By submitting your application within this challenge you implicitly state your consent to the Terms and Conditions as well as the Privacy policy of Submittable, available under <http://www.submittable.com/terms> and <http://www.submittable.com/privacy>.

YOUR CONSENT TO THE USE OF PERSONAL DATA: By submitting your application within this call you consent that EIT Manufacturing will collect, transfer, process, store, and delete your data in accordance with the aforementioned conditions.

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<sup>7</sup> See Article 141(1) EU Financial Regulation 2018/1046

## 6.6 Acceptance of the Guidelines

By submitting the application form, the applicant agrees to these Guidelines and their Annexes, which form part of the submission. Applicants agree that they have no legal entitlement to funding.

EIT Manufacturing reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these Guidelines. Amendments and additions to these Guidelines shall be valid only if communicated in writing or otherwise made available to the applicants on the call page of the EIT Manufacturing website.

EIT Manufacturing also reserves the right to cancel or declare the Call unsuccessful provided all applicants are informed and sufficient justification is given (for example no applications received, or all applications do not pass the default thresholds).

## 6.7 Confidentiality

EIT Manufacturing undertakes to use any Confidential Information shared by the applicants solely for the Competition. Confidential information shall mean data and/or information that is proprietary to, or possessed by, the applicants and not generally known to the public, or that has not yet been revealed whether in tangible or intangible form, whenever and however disclosed and might also be included in the application form. Confidential information must be expressly labelled as such in the application form. Applicants agree that EIT Manufacturing and its subsidiaries can disseminate, publish, and make use of non-confidential information regarding the call, to promote the activities of EIT Manufacturing or establish reports or other necessary documents for EIT.

The applicants agree that data and information in the application form not labelled as confidential may be disclosed in connection with the activities of EIT Manufacturing.

Considering the confidential nature of the data and information referred to above, EIT Manufacturing also undertakes to (i) not disclose them in any way and any form, without the prior written authorization of the Industrial challenge owner concerned; and (ii) not to use them for purposes other than those strictly necessary for participation in the Competition.

Confidential Information may be shared among EIT Manufacturing and its subsidiaries (e.g. Impact Centers) solely for the Competition Activity. EIT Manufacturing undertakes to impose this confidentiality obligation on its employees and the employees of its subsidiaries and its collaborators, as well as on Rapporteurs and independent experts and all subjects who, by virtue of participating in the call for application as members of the Selection Committees or Jury, will take knowledge of or may have access to such confidential data and information.

## 6.8 Applicable Law

The present guidelines are governed by the applicable European Union laws (i.e. the EIT Regulation, the EU Financial Regulation, and the Horizon Europe Regulation) and are complemented, where necessary, by the law of France. The applicants agree to observe the obligations outlined in the [\(Model\) Grant Agreement](#) signed between the EIT and EIT Manufacturing and particularly Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (record-keeping). These obligations will also be mentioned in the contracts to be signed if the application is successful.

