



## EIC Board statement on the 2024 work programme of the European Innovation Council

The EIC Board has a central role to advise the European Commission on the EIC work programmes, and our advice has been provided throughout the preparatory process and during each of our plenary meetings. The EIC Board attaches particular importance to attain operation excellence in the third pillar and welcomes the efforts of all to strive to that objective.

The Board welcomes, in particular:

- + The simplification measures introduced, including the lump sum funding (which, if implemented well, will avoid the need for any financial reporting on grants) and the clearer rules on resubmissions to the EIC Accelerator;
- + The improvements to the evaluations of applications to the EIC Accelerator, including in strengthened criteria and the introduction of consensus meetings; The revision of the rules for Intellectual Property for EIC Pathfinder and Transition projects, which implement the [Board's advice on this matter](#).

The Board regrets the reduction in the budget for the EIC in 2024, especially given the high rates of oversubscription and the critical need for EIC support in the light of difficult market conditions for start-ups to raise funding and the relevance of the EIC for core EU policy goals in areas such as Green Deal, digital and economic security. Within these budgetary constraints, the Board welcomes the inclusion of an initial budget for follow on investments in companies selected under previous work programmes. At the same time, the Board calls for a much more ambitious budget for follow on investments, as proposed by the European Commission for the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) and which is critical to ensure that ambitious deep tech companies are able to scale in Europe.

We recognise the high policy relevance of pressing Challenges for targeting start-ups and technologies of strategic importance for Europe within the EIC funding lines. The Board insists on seeing improvements in the process for identifying and defining the Challenges for EIC funding, in particular for the EIC Accelerator. We see the need for a stronger evidence base and methodology for selecting those challenges with highest impact for EIC objectives. In this regard, we welcome the [EIC emerging tech report](#) as a step in this direction and recommend a better use of the knowledge of the programmes managers. A necessary step is implementing the Challenge selection process guidelines already proposed by the Commission earlier this year and applying the selection criteria also in consultation with policy services of the Commission. The Board is dedicated to the strategic excellence objective of the EIC to prioritise innovative and entrepreneurial solutions for the most pressing challenges for Europe.

The EIC Board will continue its work on the Board's recommendations on widening including for the roll out of the recently published [Code of Conduct for consultancies](#). The EIC aims at empowering the innovators' journey everywhere in the EU. To attain geographical excellence, the EIC encourages to improve and connect regional ecosystems, to improve support structures regionally and thematically and to improve materially fair conditions for all applicants.

The EIC Board will continue its role to advise the Commission on future EIC work programmes, ensuring that the voice of the innovator is at the heart of everything the EIC does. We look forward to advising on the implementation of the STEP proposal for the EIC. We will also strengthen our focus on the future strategy for the EIC in the context of the mid-term review of the Horizon programme and preparations for the future Horizon programme, as set out in our [recommendations on the future of the EIC](#).