EIE applications under the evaluator lens

Proposal writing and consortium design for EIE CSA and PCP actions

19 August 2026

SECTION 01 / 04

01

EIE review

EIE: Excellent Ideas Are Not Enough

EIE funds credible mechanisms for ecosystem change, not isolated innovation activities.

What the proposal must prove

1 What is broken?

Fragmented transfer, weak scale-up pathways, slow adoption, underused procurement.

2 Who must behave differently?

TTOs, startups, public buyers, investors, universities, experimentation spaces, philanthropy.

3 What mechanism will change that?

Tools, pilots, services, procurement models, agreements, cross-border support structures.

4 What remains after the project?

Adopted practices, functioning partnerships, validated models, procurement pipelines, repeatable services.

Four EIE Opportunities Remain Open

€39 M across four open topics; one Co-fund pilot is already closed.

HORIZON-EIE-2026-03-CONNECT-01:
TTOs: From lab to market

CSA	€5 M	€1 M	5
TYPE	BUDGET	PER PROJECT	WINNERS

Lump sum
FUNDING MODEL

22 SEP 26
DEADLINE

HORIZON-EIE-2027-01-CONNECT-01:
Startup Europe

CSA	€18 M	€2 M	9
TYPE	BUDGET	PER PROJECT	WINNERS

Lump sum
FUNDING MODEL

15 SEP 27
DEADLINE

HORIZON-EIE-2027-01-CONNECT-02:
Experimentation + Procurement

PCP	€10 M	€10 M	1
TYPE	BUDGET	PER PROJECT	WINNERS

Real costs / PCP costs
FUNDING MODEL

15 SEP 27
DEADLINE

HORIZON-EIE-2027-01-CONNECT-03:
Philanthropy in ecosystems

CSA	€6 M	€1 M	6
TYPE	BUDGET	PER PROJECT	WINNERS

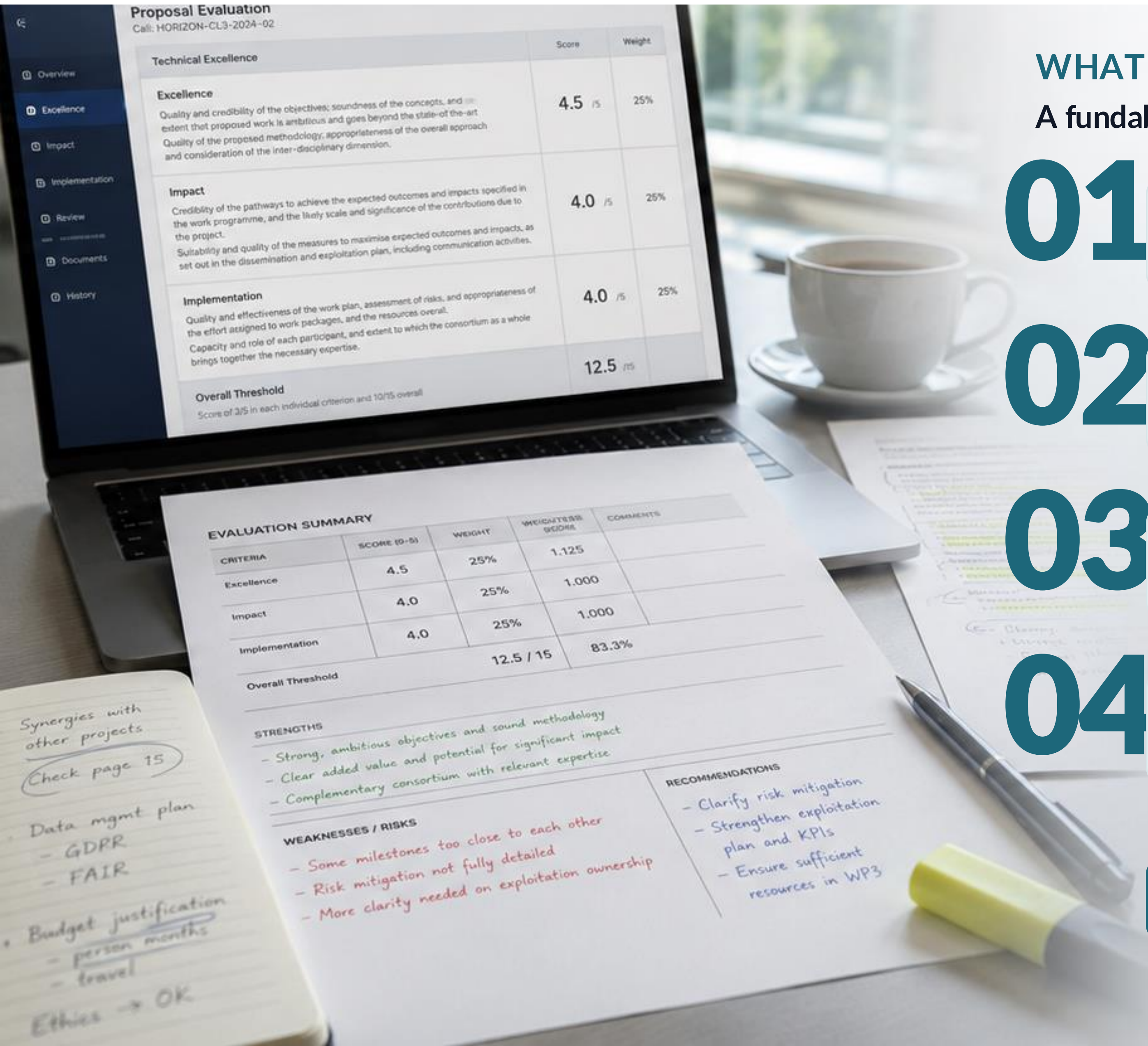
Lump sum
FUNDING MODEL

15 SEP 27
DEADLINE

CLOSED ~~HORIZON-EIE-2026-02-CONNECT-01:~~ Startup & Scaleup Hubs pilot

~~CO-FUND €20 M TOTAL €20 M / PROJECT 1 WINNER~~
NO LUMP SUM 10 MAR 2026

Evaluators Do Not Buy Activities. They Buy Confidence



WHAT THE EVALUATOR MUST BELIEVE

A fundable EIE proposal must make the evaluator believe:

01

The problem is real
Not generic, not assumed, not copied from the topic.

02

The mechanism can work
Activities clearly explain how behaviour will change.

03

The consortium can deliver it
Every partner has a necessary function.

04

The results will be adopted
Someone will use the models, services, practices or solutions after the project.

The proposal is not a brochure. It is an evidence-based argument for funding

SECTION 02 / 04

02

Consortium tips

A consortium is a Pit Crew, Not a Logo Wall

BEFORE ADDING ANY BENEFICIARY, ASK:

01 What would fail without them?
A pilot, a buyer group, startup access, TTO adoption, market validation, procurement execution.

02 What do they uniquely control?
Users, data, facilities, procurement authority, startups, investors, TTO cases, policy access.

03 Are they in the right role?
Beneficiary, associated partner, subcontractor, advisory board, pilot site, dissemination channel.

04 What evidence proves delivery capacity?
Past projects, committed cases, buyer mandate, startup pipeline, signed access, operational resources.

What would fail without them?

Do Not Start from Partners

WRONG ORDER

START WITH NAMES

- **Partner** — choose names
- **Activity** — invent tasks
- **Work Plan** — work packages
- **Hopefully impact** — assume the result

REVERSE ENGINEERING / STARTUP EUROPE

01 EXPECTED OUTCOME
Baltic startups enter new European markets

02 BEHAVIOUR CHANGE
They engage customers, investors and buyers outside their home country

03 INTERVENTION
Cross-border acceleration + market landing support

04 CAPABILITIES NEEDED
Startup pipeline · internationalisation · scale-up delivery · founder trust · destination-market access

05 PARTNERS COME LAST
WHO FITS THE CAPABILITIES?
? ? ? ? ?

BOTTOM LINE
If you cannot explain the capability, you cannot justify the partner.

Pick only 5 partners. No passengers allowed.

A LIAA (Latvia)
Latvia national agency for investment, innovation, exports and business internationalisation.

B TechChill (Latvia)
One of the best-known Baltic startup conferences, connecting founders, investors and the tech ecosystem.

C Fraunhofer (Germany)
Leading applied-research organisations, turning science and technology into industrial innovation.

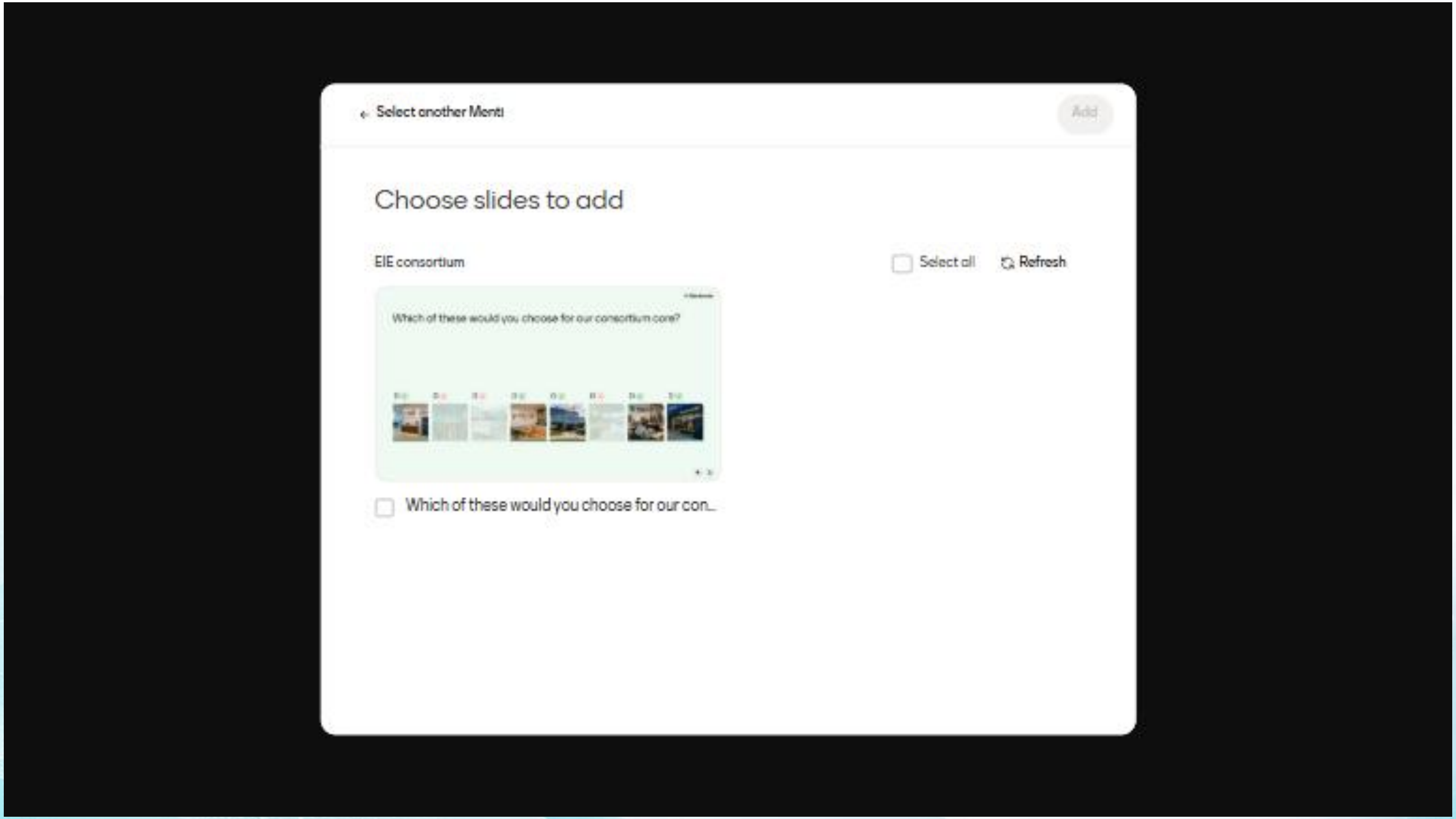
D Startup Lithuania (Lithuania)
Lithuania national startup ecosystem facilitator, connecting startups, investors, accelerators, companies and government.

E Tehnopol (Estonia)
Estonian technology hub and accelerator helping technology companies grow, scale and enter new markets.

F Bolt (Estonia)
Estonian-born technology scaleup that expanded its mobility platform internationally.

G Startin.LV (Latvia)
Latvian Startup Association representing and connecting the national startup community.

H UnternehmerTUM (Germany)
Leading Munich innovation and startup hub connecting technology companies with customers, corporates and investors.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Add
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EIE consortium
Select all
Refresh
Which of these would you choose for our consortium core?
Which of these would you choose for our con...

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More Partners, More Problems

A new beneficiary must reduce risk, not add noise.

THE EXTRA PARTNER TEST

Add a beneficiary only if it brings at least one of these:

- **01** Missing capability
- **02** Missing market access
- **03** Missing geography
- **04** Critical users or buyers
- **05** Testing infrastructure
- **06** Missing evidence
- **07** Adoption / exploitation capacity

IF NOT, USE ANOTHER ROLE

Associated partner · subcontractor · advisory board · event channel

BOTTOM LINE

Do not maximise consortium size.
Minimise unexplained complexity.

Know Who You Need. Then Find Them

01 **Funding & Tenders Partner Search**
Who is actively looking for this topic?
Funding & Tenders Portal → Partner Search

02 **CORDIS / EU-funded projects**
Who has already delivered similar work?
cordis.europa.eu/projects

03 **NCPs + Brokerage Events**
Who can introduce us to credible candidates?
horizoneuropencpportal.eu

04 **Specialist Networks**
Where does this capability already live?
TTO: astp4kt.eu | Startups: ebn.eu | Regions: errin.eu | RTOs: earto.eu | Philanthropy: philea.eu | PCP: public-buyers-community.ec.europa.eu

05 **Warm Referrals**
Who do strong partners recommend?

06 **Cold Calling**
Why not?

Also useful: een.ec.europa.eu/partnering-opportunities

SECTION 03 / 04

03

Writing tips

The Document Everyone Reads Too Late

WORK PROGRAMME
What must the project achieve?

APPLICATION TEMPLATE
Where must each answer go?

EVALUATION FORM
How will the evaluator score it?

TARGET MINDSET
Build for 5/5, not just “good enough”.

WARNING
Evaluators assess what is actually written, not what was intended.

Turn the Topic Into a Treasure Map

	REQUIREMENT	OUR ANSWER	EVIDENCE	KPI	SECTION	OWNER
01	Test ≥3 pilot cases for licensing / transfer tools	3 live TTO commercialisation cases in LV, LT, EE	Letters from TTOs + pipeline of candidate cases	**3 pilots completed**	1.2, 3.1	TTO partners
02	Create startup-friendly licensing tools	Deferred fees, step-up royalties, equity option	Existing templates + legal review	**4 model clauses tested**	1.2, 2.1	IP/legal lead
03	Develop benefit-sharing model	Researcher/student incentive model	University policy baseline	**Model approved by 3 institutions**	1.2, 2.2	Universities
04	Produce EU blueprint	Final blueprint based on pilot evidence	Pilot reports + stakeholder feedback	**Blueprint published + adopted by 5 TTOs**	2.1, 2.2, 3.1	Coordinator
05	Consult startups and SMEs	Founder review panel + investor feedback	Signed participation commitments	**20 startup/SMEs consulted**	1.2, 2.2	Startup partner

Methodology Is Not a To-Do List (Subsection 1.2)

✕ WEAK 1.2

ACTIVITY INVENTORY

- **WP2** selects startups
- **WP3** runs workshops
- **WP4** organises matchmaking
- **WP5** writes reports

✓ STRONG 1.2

A TESTABLE MECHANISM

01 Problem → 02 Assumption → 03 Intervention → 04 Test → 05 Measurement → 06 Adaptation

EXAMPLE

If startups fail to scale because they lack **trusted buyer access**, the proposal must show:

- 01 how buyers are selected
- 02 how startups are matched
- 03 how meetings become pilots
- 04 how conversion is tracked
- 05 how the model improves after each cohort

BOTTOM LINE

Tasks belong in Implementation. Logic belongs in Methodology.

Impact Pathway ≠ Project Outcome (Subsection 2.1)

Section 2.1 must explain how TTO outputs become adopted practice.

WEAK 2.1

“3 pilot cases + 4 licensing clauses + final blueprint.”

That is a delivery list, not an impact pathway.

STRONG 2.1

Show what changes because the pilots work:

01	02	03	04	05
Pilot cases generate evidence	**Licensing clauses** tested in real deals	**TTOs** approve or adopt the model	**Startups** face lower upfront barriers	**Blueprint** is reused beyond the consortium

More spin-offs and deep-tech startups bringing technologies to market

Stronger innovation ecosystem

Greater European competitiveness

Write Tasks Like Mini-Contracts (Work Plan)

HORIZON-EIE-2027-01-CONNECT-01 • Startup Europe

A		B
Our methodology is based on one assumption: **Baltic startups** with traction do not mainly fail to scale because they lack generic training. They **fail because they lack trusted access to customers**, investors and buyers in target markets. We will therefore **segment** selected startups **by market-readiness**, **match** them with **relevant buyer** and **investor** profiles, **test market-entry interest** through structured introductions, and use **cohort feedback** to adapt the support model after each cycle.	VS	WP2 will select **promising startups** based on clear criteria. WP3 will organise practical **training workshops**. WP4 will provide **tailored mentoring sessions**. WP5 will organise **matchmaking events** with investors and buyers to facilitate commercial and investment opportunities. WP6 will **prepare reports**, **communication materials** and **practical recommendations**.

A

Baltic deep-tech startups face a clear market-access gap. **64% struggle to secure first international customers**, while **48% cite fragmented procurement as a barrier** to cross-border growth (European Commission, European Innovation Scoreboard 2025, pp. 46-48).

In Moderate and Emerging Innovator ecosystems, technology startups are **1.7 times less likely to build relationships with foreign corporate buyers** (JRC, European Deep-Tech Scale-up Monitor 2025, p. 73).

Baltic2Markets will address this gap by supporting **80 traction-stage startups with market validation**, qualified buyer introductions and **landing support in Germany**.

VS

B

Baltic2Markets addresses a **cross-border scale-up challenge**: digital and deep-tech startups that have already demonstrated traction **still need effective connections to new European markets**, investors and public or corporate buyers.

The project will select **80 traction-stage startups** and provide structured **market validation**, **qualified buyer introductions** and landing support, **starting with Germany**. Support will focus on converting existing traction into **concrete cross-border growth opportunities** rather than providing generic incubation services.

Watch out for AI-generated references. Always double-check them

A

Baltic2Markets will support **250 startups**, **from early validation-stage ventures to early scaleups**, through bootcamps, mentoring, incubation and investor events.

The programme will build a strong pipeline of companies **progressing from business validation to investment readiness and international growth**, culminating in a **European Demo Day** in Berlin with curated introductions to **leading investors, including VCs such as Atomico, Balderton Capital and HV Capital**.

VS

B

Baltic2Markets will support **80 digital and deep-tech startups and scaleups demonstrating traction**, defined as product-market fit or at least a seed round raised.

Support will focus on **cross-border acceleration**, **market validation** and **connections with customers**, **investors** and **public or corporate buyers** in target European markets.

A

LIAA, as project coordinator, **will manage and monitor the financial support** provided to selected startups, including grant administration, payment records and reporting.

UnternehmerTUM will **lead German market-entry support**, while **Tehnopol** and **Startup Lithuania** will contribute to **startup selection**, **acceleration** and **follow-up**.

VS

B

UnternehmerTUM will manage the financial support scheme for selected startups, including grant administration, payments, compliance checks and monitoring, building on **its extensive experience** in running startup acceleration programmes.

LIAA, as project coordinator, **will oversee overall project reporting**, while **Tehnopol** and **Startup Lithuania** will support **company selection** and **programme delivery**.

A

Each participating TTO will create a **technology deal room where individual research assets are assessed**, professionally **packaged and matched** with suitable startups and investors.

For each asset, the TTO will prepare a **dedicated commercialisation profile** covering IP status, market opportunity, licensing conditions and investor readiness, enabling **tailored one-to-one negotiations with potential licensees**.

VS

B

Participating TTOs will **identify complementary intellectual assets** across research groups and organise them into thematic portfolios that can be **commercialised through package deals**.

Each portfolio will combine technologies, know-how and IP with a common market application, **allowing startups and investors to evaluate and negotiate access to a more complete commercial opportunity**.

SECTION 04 / 04

04

General tips

Our Style: Less Fluff. More Proof.

01 THE BROCHURE VERSION

Ambitious. Positive. Impossible to score.

> *"Baltic2Markets will unlock the full potential of the Baltic innovation ecosystem by empowering ambitious startups to scale beyond national borders. Through a unique European acceleration experience, the project will create meaningful connections with leading investors, corporates and innovation actors, opening new pathways for sustainable international growth and positioning Baltic ventures at the forefront of European innovation.*

THE EVALUATOR STILL HAS TO ASK:

How many? · Which companies? · What support?
What evidence? · What measurable result?

02 THE FUNDABLE VERSION

CREDIBLE.

> *"Baltic2Markets will support 80 Baltic digital and deep-tech startups and scaleups that have already demonstrated traction. The need for cross-border support is measurable: 70% of EU SMEs still operate only in their domestic market, while only 26% are active in other EU Member States[1]. Each selected company will receive 3-5 qualified introductions to customers, corporate or public buyers and investors in target markets, starting with Germany. We will track conversion into follow-up meetings, pilots, investment discussions and market-entry decisions.*

*[1] European Commission, Flash Eurobarometer 559, Start-up, Scale-up and Entrepreneurship**, 2025.** The Commission survey covered more than 17,000 companies and reports that 70% of EU SMEs operate domestically while around a quarter are active elsewhere in the Single Market.*

Specific target → quantified need → defined intervention → tracked conversion

Fresh Eyes Find Expensive Mistakes

01 INTERNAL CROSS-CHECK

Inside the organisation, outside the writing team

Someone who did not draft the proposal checks:

- Topic fit and compliance
- Contradictions and unsupported claims
- Budget and partner logic
- Overall consistency

02 EXTERNAL EVALUATION

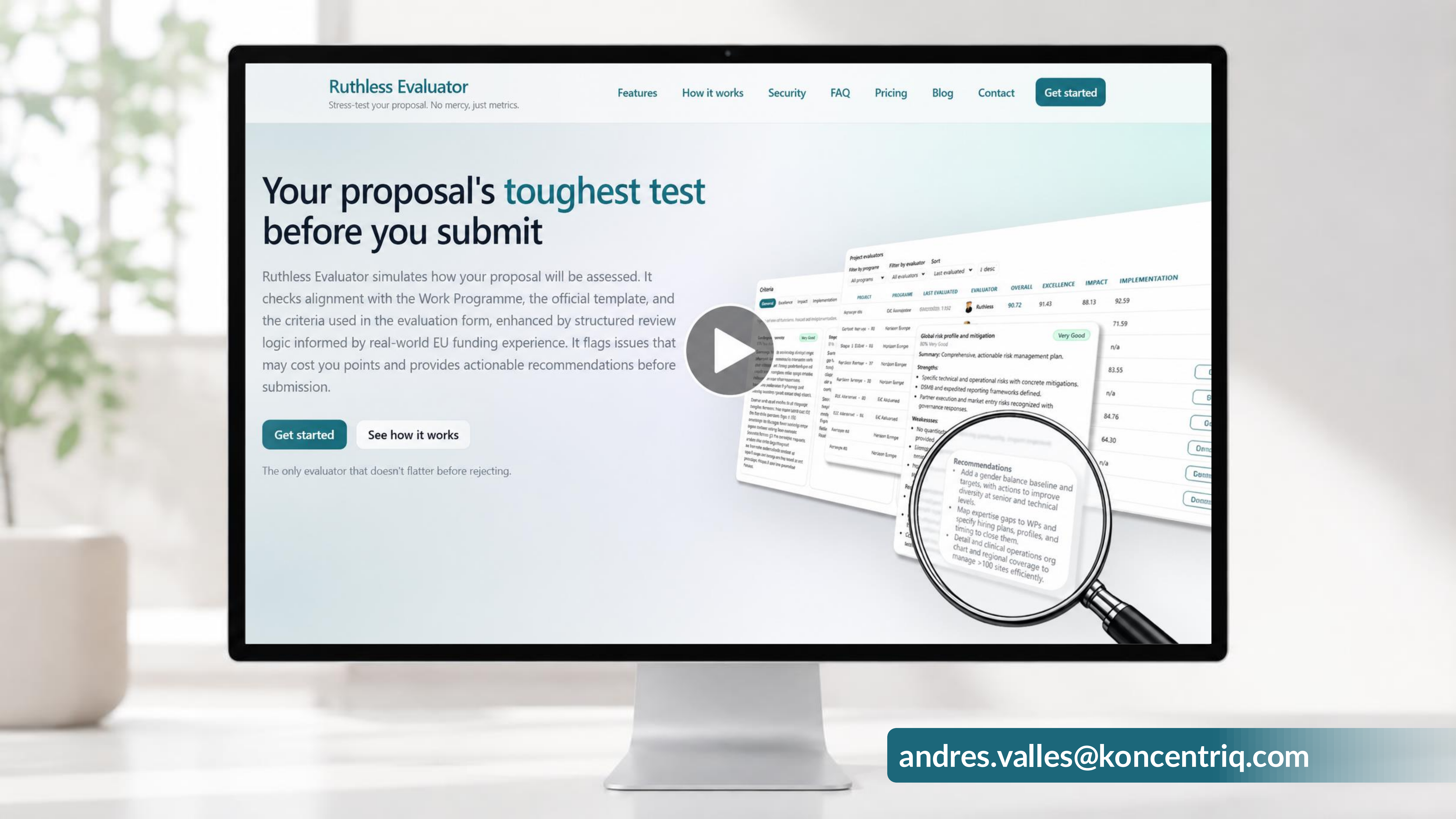
Independent from the project and its assumptions

*No bias from knowing what the project **meant** to say. Ask for:*

- Evaluation-style score
- Main weaknesses and red flags
- Missing evidence
- Priority fixes

BOTTOM LINE

The first unbiased reader should not be the EC evaluator.



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