



AGÊNCIA ESPACIAL
PORTUGUESA

INCUBED PORTUGAL PROCEDURE

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1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this document is to present the procedure on the way forward to execute the Portuguese subscription to the InCubed programme.

The document presents the InCubed standard procedure and the adjustments to be adopted for the Portuguese funding component.

2. INCUBED STANDARD PROCEDURE

Investing in Industrial Innovation (InCubed) is a Public Private Partnership co-funding programme focused on developing innovative and commercially viable products and services that generate or exploit the value of Earth Observation imagery and datasets. The program has a very wide scope and can be used to co-fund anything from building satellites to ground applications and everything in between or to develop new EO business models.

Entities can apply at any time for different levels of co-funding depending on the type of activity (de-risking or development cycle). Submitted industrial proposals must demonstrate that the product or service to be developed will be commercially viable by the end of the InCubed activity (or at the very least include a very robust roadmap to commercialisation).

The submission process starts with a Pitch (15 min followed by 45 min questions from ESA and national delegation(s)) where the company receives early feedback on the proposal and a Go/No-go decision is already taken.



If the Pitch is successful, the company is invited to submit a more detailed proposal (Part1 submission) that receives comments from ESA for improvement and clarifications. After successful approval and pending letter of support from the national delegation, the company has 6/8 weeks to submit the full proposal (Part2 submission) with a Technical Evaluation Board for final approval decision.

3. PORTUGUESE SUBSCRIPTION AND STATUS

Portugal subscribed 4 Meur to the InCubed+ program in the Space19+ ministerial. The decision taken at the time was to use the budget to support the implementation of the flagship national program for the development of an Atlantic constellation. A dedicated national call was open for feasibility studies and two parallel activities were funded, 200Keur each, to evaluate potential mission concepts, business models and commercial viability of a constellation that could address the Atlantic users' needs. In the meantime, a Space agenda, that took in consideration the outcomes of the feasibility studies, was approved in the frame of the Plan for National Recovery and Resilience, leaving the national InCubed+ budget available for other activities. The remaining industrial budget, ~3 Meur, is now going to be used to support innovative applications and ideas with commercial focus in the field of Earth Observation following the selection scheme proposed hereafter.

4. PROPOSAL PROCEDURE

This chapter outlines the selection procedure proposed for the Portuguese subscription in InCubed.

4.1. SUBMISSION

The ideas can be submitted at any time of the year in the dedicated InCubed OSIP platform, but pitches will only be evaluated twice a year. For 2023, in Jul and Sep; in 2024, in Jan and June, and in 2025, in Jan.

4.2. FUNDING AND SCOPE

Approximately 0.6 Meur will be available per evaluation cycle, but flexible dependent on quality of proposals and total budget still available, to support both de-risking and development activities with the standard co-funded scheme of InCubed (table below) in any area of the value-chain.

Cycle	TRL	ASRL	Funding Level up to % (of total allowable cost)		Funding level for Universities or Research Institutes with no commercial Interest in the Product
			Large Companies	SME	
De-risking	Up to 4-6 ⁽¹⁾	Up to 3	Up to 75%	Up to 80%	Up to 100% of maximum 30% of the cycle costs
Product development	Up to 7 (8 for IOV)	4 Up to 8	Up to 50%	Up to 80%	Up to 100% of maximum 30% of the cycle costs

⁽¹⁾ Depending on the technological or market risks as assessed by the Agency

4.3. TIMELINE AND EVALUATION

The following timeline is proposed:

- OSIP platform open for proposals all year round
- Twice a year, (as described above), submitted pitches will be assessed both by ESA and the national delegation and a first filter with a GO/No GO decision for Proposal Part 1 submission will be taken. Dedicated Idea Pitch Criteria will be used (see section 4.3.1).

- Part 1 proposals will be assessed by ESA using the PP1 criteria (as specified in the PP1 template)
- Letter of support from National delegation and invitation for Full Proposal (Part 2) submission to selected PP1 according to the criteria specified below (see section 4.3.2).
- ESA final evaluation and signing of contract.
- The whole process, from pitch evaluation to signed contracted should not last more than 6 months.

4.3.1. PITCH ASSESSMENT

The InCubed ESA team and the Portuguese Space Agency members will assess and recommend selected ideas to present a Part 1 Proposal.

ESA will assess the following aspects:

- Business case credibility
- Technical feasibility
- Earth Observation Link
- Team Capability

PT Space will assess whether ideas are aligned with the National Space Strategy and ensure a balanced thematic and geographic distribution of selected ideas.

4.3.2. PROPOSAL PART 1 ASSESSMENT

ESA will liaise with pre-selected teams to clarify questions regarding the submission of Part1 Proposals that will be assessed using the Part 1 Criteria:

- a) Understanding of the Programme Objectives:
 - i. improvement of global competitiveness of Europe in EO commercial markets;
 - ii. substantial degree of innovation (new or improved competencies for Economic Operator(s));

- iii. tangible results within the timespan of InCubed,
 - iv. credibility of the business opportunity in the market context including sustainability in the commercial market without further institutional support.
- b) Quality and completeness of the technical proposal:
- i. key requirements and proposed architectures and concepts versus activity objectives;
 - ii. evaluation of technical risks and credibility of the risk mitigation actions.
- c) Adequacy of the management approach, planning and co-funding:
- i. adequacy of the work packages.
 - ii. meeting plan, deliverables and schedule.
 - iii. completeness of the costing, value for money, assessment of financial risk versus company resources,
 - iv. credibility of proposed co-funding scheme.
- d) Experience:
- i. company/ies technical and commercial experience in all areas of the proposed activities,
 - ii. completeness of the team with respect to the value chain,
 - iii. relevant experience

Projects above that will receive an assessment greater or equal than 2 (Marking 1 to 5) in all criteria will be considered by the national delegation for a letter of support. The following criteria will also be considered by the national delegation for issuing a letter of support: i) return on investment for the country (50%); ii) previous funding (25%) and iii) needs for further funding until MVP (25%).

Proposals, with the letter of support, will go through an ESA TEB (Tender Evaluation Board) that will evaluate the proposals (as specified in the InCubed Call for Proposals Tender conditions).

Proposals that do not receive the letter of support from the national delegation can still apply for the following calls with that project idea (improved).

4.4. KPIS

To assess the successful outcome of the proposed procedure, the following KPIs are defined and will be assessed by September 2025:

- Committed InCubed budget: 3M€
- Number of applications received: average 6 per evaluation period.
- Average time between evaluation and signing of contract ~6 months.
- Commercially viable businesses by 2025: at least 3.

This procedure will be valid during the implementing period of CM22, namely from January 2023 to December 2025 including any additional time that funded projects are being carried out after 2025. In 2024 there will be an internal revision of the procedure to assess if and how it should continue until 2025, considering any changes deemed necessary.

The outcomes of the program will be yearly reported to the board of the Portuguese Space Agency by the end of each evaluation period and an overview report will be presented by September 2025 to guide decisions towards CM25.

4.5. PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

To attract applications, generate awareness about the Incubed opportunities and process in the Portuguese space ecosystem, one PT Incubed Industry Day per year may be implemented, via an online webinar (e.g. 1 hour introduction, 2 hours for Q&A and dedicated bilateral with the interested companies).