

The startup competition for deep tech scaleups: The EIT Digital Challenge 2019

EIT Digital invites European fast-growing startups in digital technologies to apply for the 2019 edition of its famous scaleup competition to win international growth support

Who will be Europe's next tech giant? The question is asked by EIT Digital, a leading European digital innovation and entrepreneurial education organisation. Fast-growing startups are invited to apply for the sixth edition of the EIT Digital Challenge. The best ten companies will receive prizes totaling €750,000 in cash and in kind. The application deadline is 14 June 2019.

The [EIT Digital Challenge](#), the competition for European digital deep tech companies, is now accepting applications. Fast-growing startups with existing customers – so called scaleups – are invited to apply in one of the following five categories: **Digital Tech**, **Digital Cities**, **Digital Industry**, **Digital Wellbeing** and **Digital Finance**.

“Among all applicants to the competition, we will select 25 companies, that is five per category, and invite them to an exclusive event in Brussels where they will pitch to a jury of high-profile corporates and investors,” says Dolf Wittkamper, Head of the [EIT Digital Accelerator](#). “A total of 10 winners will be announced during this event: in each category, the jury will pick the best two companies; both will receive a full year of tailored support from the EIT Digital Accelerator, valued at €50,000. In addition, the top winner in each category will receive a cash prize of €50,000.”

The competition is focusing on ‘deep tech’ scaleups, with a differentiating product offering that leverages sophisticated, hard-to-reproduce digital technologies. “Europe has a strong opportunity to play a central role in digital by focusing on deep tech, which will impact all industry sectors. With the EIT Digital Challenge, we are determined to identify the best

ambitious European entrepreneurs and support them in building the future dominant companies in digital technologies”, says Chahab Nastar, Chief Innovation Officer of EIT Digital.

“The EIT Digital Challenge is ideal for companies that already have significant traction in their home market and are ready to expand internationally,” says Giuseppe Giordano, CEO of Enerbrain who were awarded in the EIT Digital Challenge 2018 and joined the Accelerator shortly after. “The price brought us a lot of visibility and increased our reputation. Now the EIT Digital Accelerator team is breaking the barriers of the fragmented European market by helping us concretely to acquire customers and to raise funds in other European countries.”

The EIT Digital Accelerator consists of a team of around 40 experienced business developers and fundraising experts operating from 13 cities across Europe, along with a hub in Silicon Valley. Since 2012, the EIT Digital Accelerator has supported over 300 fast-growing startups to sign up customers and raise capital.

Application criteria

To successfully apply for the EIT Digital Challenge, companies must fulfil the following criteria: They must be based in one of the member states of the European Union, they have to be in the growth stage (to be proven by showing annual revenue of over €300,000 or at least €2m in total funding), and they should be in their first ten years of existence. The best entrants will be invited to an exclusive final event in the autumn to pitch in front of an expert jury. Since its launch in 2014, the EIT Digital Challenge has attracted more than 1,800 entries from all 28 EU countries. Most of the winning scaleups have gone on to become internationally successful companies.

The deadline for applications is **14 June 2019**. For further information and an application form, please visit www.challenge.eitdigital.eu or contact challenge@eitdigital.eu.