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The InnoNext Scheme

Deliverable D3.1

Due date of the deliverable: 28/02/2025

Actual submission date: 05/03/2025



Document Information

Deliverable	D3.1	Title	The InnoNext Scheme
Work Package	WP3	Title	Iterative InnoNext Scheme Implementation

Dissemination level ¹	PU	Nature ²	R — Document, report
Copyright	© INNONEXT Consortium		

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Deliverable abstract	<p>The present deliverable describes the description of the of the InnoNext methodology (OA1). It includes the methodology, the service design, the mentorship and evaluation tools, and the templates of all documents (e.g., agreements). It will be iteratively delivered until the final release, with releases every six months, at M6, M12, M18, M24. It contains OA3, the replication and upscaling toolkit (from T3.3).</p> <p>It gives an overview of the whole implemented activities foreseen throughout the project and the Cooperation and CO-Design with the EU Programmes.</p>
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Version History

Version no.	Date	Modified by	Actions ³
V0	13/01/2025	Maria Elisabetta Migoni [RES]	Creation and outline
V1	03/02/2025	Negar Mokarram Dorri [RES]	Hosting Companies Process
V2	03/02/2025	Simone Foglia [RES]	Visiting Talents Process

¹ Dissemination level: **PU** = Public, **PP** = Restricted to other programme participants (including the JU), **RE** = Restricted to a group specified by the consortium, **CO** = Confidential, only for members of the consortium

² Nature of the deliverable: **R** = Report, **P** = Prototype, **D** = Demonstrator, **O** = Other

³ Creation, modification, final version for evaluation, revised version following evaluation, final.





V3	25/02/2025	Maria Elisabetta Migoni [RES]	Document Update
V4	28/02/2025	Maria Elisabetta Migoni [RES]	Final Adjustment
V5	05/03/2025	Benedetta Matcovich, Antonella Frisiello [LKS]	Revision and quality assurance

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Acronym List

EIC	European Innovation Council
EIT	European Institute of Innovation & Technology
ERC	European Research Council
EU PP	European Partner Programme
FSTP	Financial Support for Third Parties
HC	Hosting Company
HE	Horizon Europe
IN	InnoNext
MSCA	Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
PO	Project Officer
VT	Visiting Talent





Executive summary

The document *D3.1 – The InnoNext Scheme* outlines the operational framework and structure of the *InnoNext* scheme, detailing its phases, participation mechanisms, and support tools. The program follows an iterative process, with periodical updates aimed at refining the model based on participant feedback.

The scheme is structured into different operational phases that engage *Visiting Talents (VT)* and *Hosting Companies (HC)* in a structured pathway designed to foster collaboration between researchers/master graduates and companies. Participation is facilitated through two *Open Calls*, one for talents and one for hosting companies, creating a dynamic and continuously evolving environment.

The sign-up process includes a verification of eligibility:

- *Hosting Companies* must sign a *Letter of Commitment (LoC)*, certifying their eligibility and formalizing their commitment to actively participate in the initiative.
- *Visiting Talents* are required to complete a *Declaration of Honour (DoH)* to confirm their eligibility and ensure their participation aligns with their other research commitments.

Once this phase is completed, companies can post internship positions on the dedicated platform, while talents can apply and initiate the selection process. The selection is conducted through a *matchmaking* system that combines an AI-driven algorithm with expert supervision to ensure that proposed opportunities align with candidates' skills and interests.

The collaboration process between companies and talents is supported by various tools and resources, including:

- **A digital platform** for managing applications and internship postings.
- **A continuous support** to guide participants in the process.

Moreover, the InnoNext Initiative provides Financial Support to a specific target of talents, particularly those from *ERC* and *EIC Pathfinder*, who may receive funding for mobility and reimbursement.

The initiative includes continuous monitoring of activities, collecting data and feedback from participants. This allows for the progressive refinement of the model and optimisation of the user experience. Communication is carried out through multiple channels, including the website, social media platforms, the EU Programmes network, and dedicated events promoting *InnoNext* opportunities.

The document also provides a detailed overview of application trends, highlighting statistics on company and talent participation. It describes the strategies implemented to enhance engagement and improve the selection and matching process.



1. Introduction

1.1. InnoNext overview

InnoNext is an initiative funded under the call HORIZON-EIC-2023-TALENTS-01-01 "Next Generation Innovation Talents", aiming to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset by creating collaboration opportunities for talented researchers and innovators to work with startups operating in their areas of expertise, across the EU with the support of the extensive network of EIC and various European Partner Programmes.

InnoNext scheme includes 2 open calls dedicated to aspiring Visiting Talents and Hosting Companies to collaborate through an Innovation internship. The calls for interests, which will remain open for the whole duration of the project until 2026, facilitate a tailored matching process. Moreover, InnoNext offers different resources to connect beneficiaries and support them during the internship, including a comprehensive mentoring and acceleration plan. InnoNext aims to activate 600 internships involving multiple beneficiaries (Table 1).

Table 1 - InnoNext beneficiaries

Visiting Talents	Hosting Companies
<p>Including PhD candidates, and postdoctoral researchers participating in projects funded by the following EU Partner Programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIC Pathfinder • ERC • MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships • MSCA Doctoral Networks, • MSCA COFUND • Research Infrastructures • EIT Label Masters and Doctoral programmes, Alumni, EIT KIC Postdoctoral training programmes 	<p>Including startups and startups and SMEs supported by the following EU Partner Programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIC Accelerator • EIC awarded Seal of Excellence • EIC Transition • EIT KIC Innovation and business creation services • Scaleups with at least one EIT Alumni member co-founder.

The InnoNext scheme is structured in six sequential phases (Figure 1) and the following distinctive pillars:

- The **collaboration with the EU Partner Programmes**, which has been involved since the beginning in the call design and during the process through the integrated communication and dissemination of the calls to the potential beneficiaries, as well as the eligibility and monitoring criteria.
- Two **Application calls** dedicated to Visiting Talents and Hosting Companies. The calls, largely disseminated thanks to Research and Innovation European Programmes support, will remain open for 18 months. During this period, the continuous monitoring of the process and feedback of beneficiaries and stakeholders might result in the call updates, handled in 5 releases.
- A **dedicated platform** that facilitates the Hosting Companies in creating internship vacancies and allows Visiting Researchers to apply for them throughout a well-driven and easy process,



supported by dedicated guides and indications. The service includes mechanisms to keep the registered users informed about all the opportunities and suggestions resulting from the matchmaking, the internship activation steps and the mentoring activities, making the whole process understandable and transparent.

- A **hybrid matchmaking process** based on an AI-based algorithm processing the needs and ambitions of the applicants will propose ranked shortlists of opportunities. Shaped and supervised by experts, the whole process will guarantee equal access⁴ to opportunities for the applicants.

A comprehensive mentorship plan to offer and share knowledge and tailored support to nurture the entrepreneurship potential of participants. Background and skills such as innovation management, teamwork, and internal communication will be deepened in experiential workshops for Talent and Enterprises. These activities will be planned based on direct feedback collected from the beneficiaries, allowing to improve and refine the InnoNext initiative schema continuously.

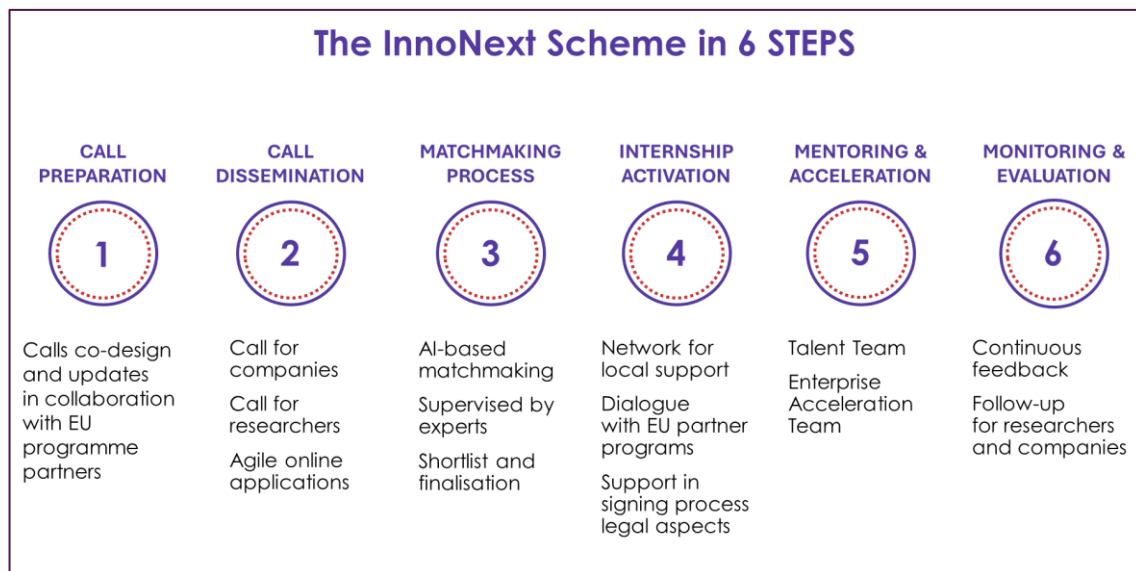


Figure 1 – The InnoNext schema

1.2. Purpose of the Document

This document provides a comprehensive overview of the InnoNext methodology (OA1), including its framework, service design, mentorship and evaluation tools, and templates for all relevant documents (e.g., agreements). It will be iteratively refined until its final release.

The objective of this document is to present the InnoNext scheme by highlighting key elements derived both from the InnoNext team’s approach and from feedback received from beneficiary users. This continuous input allows the Team to refine the process iteratively, ensuring optimal outcomes and continuous improvement of the Scheme. The iterative nature of the document

⁴ Criteria of fairness and impartiality will be consistently and transparently applied uniformly to the whole process. Every application will have the same opportunities, resources, and consideration without favouritism, discrimination, or any barriers that could disadvantage individuals or groups,



enables tracking of improvements and complexities, with the goal of identifying a roadmap to support the potential future continuation of the Initiative.

2. The InnoNext operational scheme

2.1. The main stakeholders

InnoNext considers three main categories of beneficiaries, encompassing both direct and indirect stakeholders:

1. Direct beneficiaries:

- **Visiting Talents:** PhD, postdoctoral candidates, and graduates from the InnoNext Partner Programmes are invited to apply to participate in the innovation internships promoted by the project.
- **Hosting Companies:** Startups and SMEs willing to offer internship opportunities to visiting talent.

2. Partners:

- **EU Programmes:** EU Programmes supporting the Visiting Talents and Hosting Companies eligible for InnoNext, including EIC Pathfinder, EIC Accelerator, EIC Transition, EIC Seal of Excellence, ERC, Research Infrastructure, EIT, EIT KICs, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, HE Research Infrastructure. The role of the EU programmes is crucial for InnoNext, for different reasons; participants will in fact come from these programmes and many of them will be financed by the grant from the programme they come from. EU Programmes participation also allows the initiative to be disseminated through their official channels, expanding the possibilities of reaching many beneficiaries. Given their high participation in this project, they are also interested in the operations and results of the project, so in order to keep them constantly updated on the progress of the project, regular reports will be shared with them.

2.2. The InnoNext scheme

The InnoNext scheme is a dynamic process designed to facilitate the interplay among the beneficiaries and to reach the general goal of nurturing an entrepreneurial mindset through collaboration between talented researchers, innovators and startups across the EU.

The scheme becomes operative for the beneficiaries after the first phase of the co-design and the first launch of the Call for application. The scheme underlies **five phases and iterations**.

The phases have been designed to guarantee the proper and essential information exchange and interaction among the involved actors. Curated from each beneficiary's perspective, the scheme is **described as a journey** accompanying them from the status of **Applicants to becoming Visiting Talents and Hosting Companies**, facilitated by the EU PPs communication, InnoNext platform and experts, supporting each action in every phase. Figure 2 is the visual representation of the Journey from the point of view of the different beneficiaries. The Deliverable is dedicated to the description of each step of the Journey.



Journey in InnoNext

Legend

- Path
- - - Waiting for other stakeholder's action
- Movements of documents and data

- Dot: General actions
- Square: Actions with documents
- ◆ Diamond: Feedbacks

- Filled: active action
- Empty: passive action (receive)
- 📄 InnoNext matchmaking platform

Acronym

- @ E-mail
- LoC: Letter of Commitment
- DoH: Declaration of Honor
- VT: Visiting Talent
- HC: Hosting Company

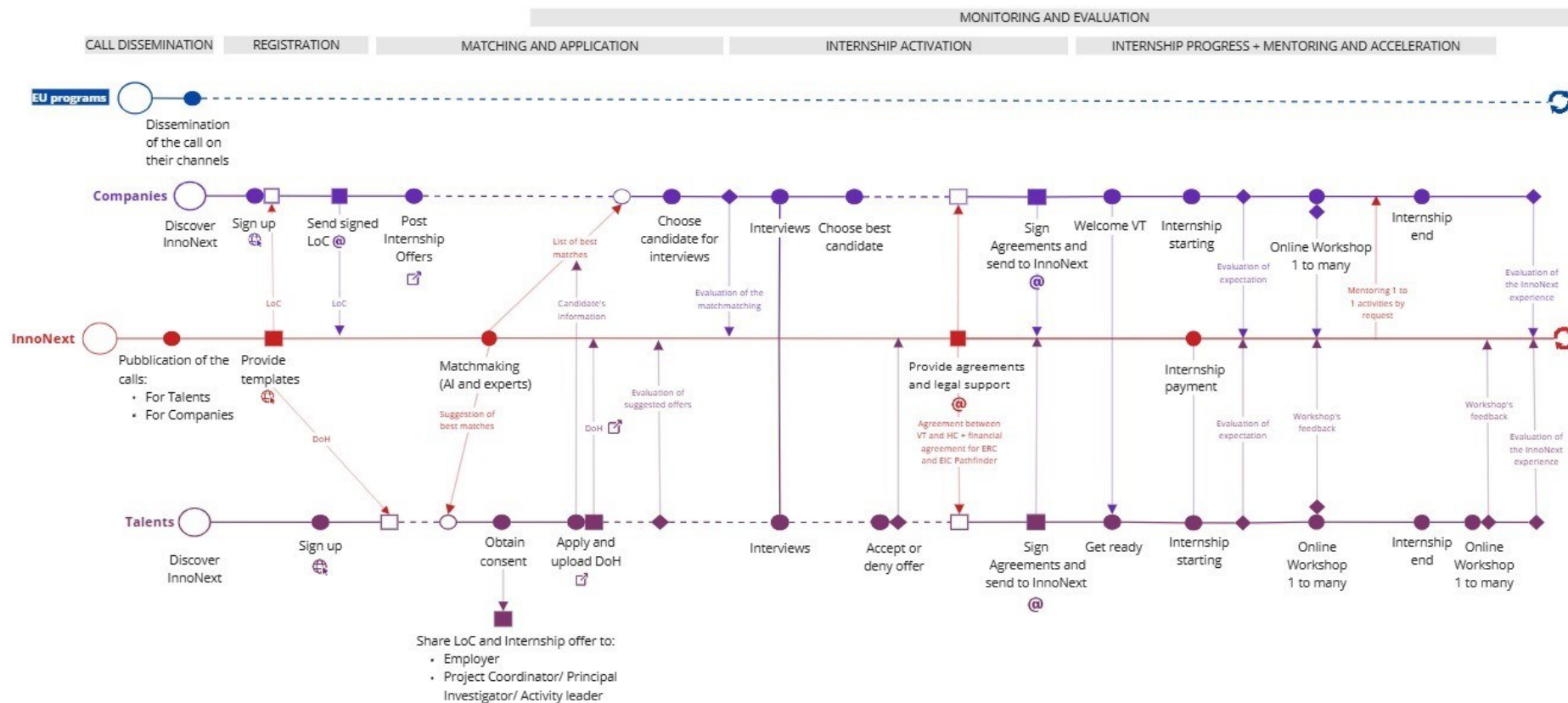


Figure 2 - InnoNext main actors' journey



3. InnoNext Methodology

The methodology applied in the InnoNext Initiative follows an **iterative approach** aimed at testing and improving the proposed model.

The initial phase focused on launching a call to assess the model's effectiveness and identify areas for enhancement. Based on the feedback collected, improvements have been implemented to optimize its impact and user experience.

This approach emphasizes **continuous learning and adaptation**, ensuring that each phase of the project builds upon validated insights. Early testing with a minimal version of the model allowed for the collection of crucial data, guiding refinements before scaling further. By integrating user feedback at multiple stages, aware and smart adjustments have been made to better align with stakeholders' needs.

It's possible to identify specific key steps to the model definition:

1. **Preliminary activities:** define the model's content and supporting materials.
2. **Online publication:** release and initial refinement of the model.
3. **Model refinement:** ongoing adjustments based on feedback.
4. **Model validation:** validation driven by feedback from users and stakeholders.

Month	Activity
M1 - M4	Preliminary activity dedicated to the definition of the toolkit needed to launch InnoNext Initiative, with a specific focus on the co-design activity with EU Programmes.
M5	Launch of the Calls and Online Publication
M5-M7	Model refinement and continuous adjustment thanks to the feedback gathered
M6-M7	First release of the Model validated

The process of **InnoNext** model validation includes a **co-design phase for the definition of the requirements and needs** and a **structuring phase**, which must then be tested. The meetings with EU Partner Programmes were a key and strategic component of the designing phase, which played a fundamental role in shaping the next steps. These interactions contributed to refining strategic directions and choices and aligning objectives (D1.1 – Initial Scheme). Furthermore, discussions with the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) are still ongoing, as its involvement remains under definition.

Moreover, to ensure a comprehensive assessment, experts with specific competencies, including an Internal Legal Advisor and a Social Media Advisor, have been engaged to provide specialized insights.

From the moment the call is published (M5 – Dec 2024), the model is continuously updated based on users feedback and other aspects gathered thanks to direct contact with stakeholders. Immediately after the call, a refinement phase took place, covering the platform, the website, and



all related documents. **The goal is to operationalize the methodology and validate the model, with continuous improvement in the following months.**

In M5 a data recap was conducted following the call's publication, marking a crucial step in structuring the project's development. The website went online, providing a centralized platform for information and engagement.

4. Discovery InnoNext: Communication and Engagement Activity

4.1. InnoNext Journey

InnoNext Journey begins with the initial phase dedicated to the Discovery of the Scheme by the beneficiaries, and it focused on the communication activity, the dissemination of opportunities through the official channels provided by the EU Programmes and the launch of the Call for Application. This phase was dedicated to the content creation on the InnoNext website (website) and Social Media channels (LinkedIn; X), as well as producing informational material to be shared with EU Programmes to facilitate dissemination through official channels.

As anticipated in D1.1, the first call launched was the one dedicated to the Hosting Companies, with the aim of starting to populate the website with internship offers. The Call has been officially published on **December 2, 2024**. In the days leading up to and following the official launch, targeted communications have been released for companies, primarily using the official channels provided by EU programmes and, secondly, the InnoNext channels.

The call dedicated to Visiting Talents has been launched on **December 13, 2024**, and the opportunity was promoted through the official channels of EU Programmes and the official channels of the InnoNext Initiative.

Hosting Companies 1st Call for Application	December 2, 2024
Visiting Talents 1st Call for Application	December 13, 2024

After the first launch, **the call will remain open for 18 months**, until July 2026. During this period, five relaunches of the call are scheduled (Figure 3) to sustain the audience engagement, continue to promote the initiative and – if required – refine possible issues in the scheme to improve the overall experience till the end of the project.

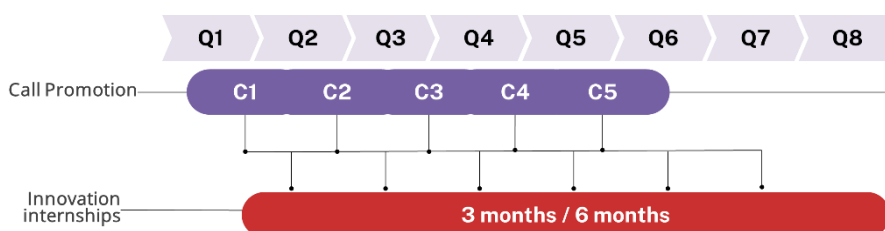


Figure 3 - InnoNext cycle

The Call for both beneficiaries consists of **Two Single-Page Calls** dedicated to Visiting Talents and Hosting Companies. Every call is an InnoNext website page and includes the essential information



on the initiative, the application form and links to additional resources. Applying from these pages, Companies and Talents register to InnoNext Platform and will be enabled to enter the matchmaking platform. The Calls were described in detail in the Deliverable 1.2 – Starter Kit. To support the beneficiaries understanding of the call, a **starter toolkit was created**. The kit includes briefly:

- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**: a dedicated website section with detailed information organised in step-by-step and programme-specific answers, divided per beneficiary type.
- **InnoNext Guides**: two tailored guides for applicants, one for Visiting Talents and one for Hosting Companies, describing in detail the InnoNext process, step by step, from the specific beneficiary perspective (see Deliverable D1.2 - Starter kit).
- **InnoNext Agreement Kit**: the collection of essential legal documents and agreements for internships (see Annex 1; 2; 3) and the guide to the administrative steps (see Annex 5).
- **Guide to Creating a Vacancy** (see Annex 4).

These documents are available on the [Resource](#) page and in the [FAQ page](#) of the InnoNext website and the Starter Kit is fully described in the D1.2.

The documents were periodically updated according to the continuous process of iteration, to match the emerging needs of the Initiative itself and of the beneficiaries reached through the communication activity.

4.2. Main Communication channels

The InnoNext Consortium from the M4, before the launch of the calls, implemented specific communicative channels dedicated to engaging and reaching a wide range of potential beneficiaries.

Below is an overview of the **main communication channels and early actions** undertaken by the InnoNext Team:

- **EU Programmes Official Channels:**
 - n.2 Articles published on EIC Community Platform;
 - n.2 Posts on EISMEA channels (LinkedIn & X);
- **InnoNext Official Social Networks**
 - 11 LinkedIn Post (6 natives, 5 repost);
 - n.3 X Posts.
- **Other Activities Performed**
 - Creation of email templates for programs
 - Creation of a dedicated media kit
 - Participation in Events And Meetings with the aim to promote InnoNext Initiative in the EU ecosystem;
 - Creation of digital flyer with QR code



A key component of the communication strategy is the dissemination through the official channels of EU Programmes, leveraging the Communication Toolkit that has been shared. These actions include the use of broadcast emails targeted at specific networks, effectively driving traffic to the InnoNext channels—particularly through direct links to the website and tags that resonate within official social networks.

A notable example is the recent dissemination managed by the ERC Program via its mailing list, **which generated traffic from a highly relevant target audience**. Thanks to this outreach, the platform registered a high number of applications and, through the mail, numerous inquiries from potential ERC beneficiaries, allowing us to refine the process and integrate additional FAQs where needed.

The Section 11 provides a visualization of the performance of the main tools used directly by the InnoNext Team, which helps in the understanding of the effects of the methodology applied. The InnoNext Communication Channels, extensively presented in D4.1, are presented briefly in this document with the aim to highlight the relevant moments for the Beneficiaries' Journey.

5. InnoNext Agreement Kit

The InnoNext Consortium, in agreement with EU Programmes, has defined a **toolkit** that gathers all the elements necessary to ensure a smooth and smart participant activation process. This toolkit includes:

- **Letter of Commitment (LoC)**, a document useful to validate the eligibility of the company and guarantee a high level of commitment (see Annex 1);
- **Declaration of Honour (DoH)**, a document which helps the InnoNext Team to validate the eligibility of the Talent and obtain the permission for the activation of the internship by the Talent's project manager/supervisor/project coordinator (see Annex 2);
- **Innovative Internship Agreement Template** (the document is included in the LoC);
- **Financial Agreement** directly related to the FSTP procedure.

The Legal documents were developed with the support of **Internal Legal Advisor** who identified the best strategies to ensure both security for all parties involved and efficiency in the process. The Legal Advisor is a part of the Team and will support the evolution and development of the Scheme, considering the agreement signing, emerging internship legal situation, and the finalisation of the Agreement Toolkit.

The InnoNext Agreement Kit is available online in the [Resources](#) section to ensure the candidates are aware of the legal limitations and requirements imposed on participants. The FAQ for both Hosting Companies and Visiting Talent further describes the content and exchange of the required documents between both parties, which are defined according to the EU Programmes guidelines.

In parallel with the Agreement Kit, the Privacy Policy has been defined involving the DPOs of the three different Consortium Partners to identify the best document for InnoNext Initiative's needs. The privacy policy is described in Deliverable D5.1.

Below, the aforementioned documents are outlined, highlighting their key components and the stage of the process in which they are used.

5.1.1 Letter of Commitment

Legal Ratio: acceptance of the initiative - eligibility

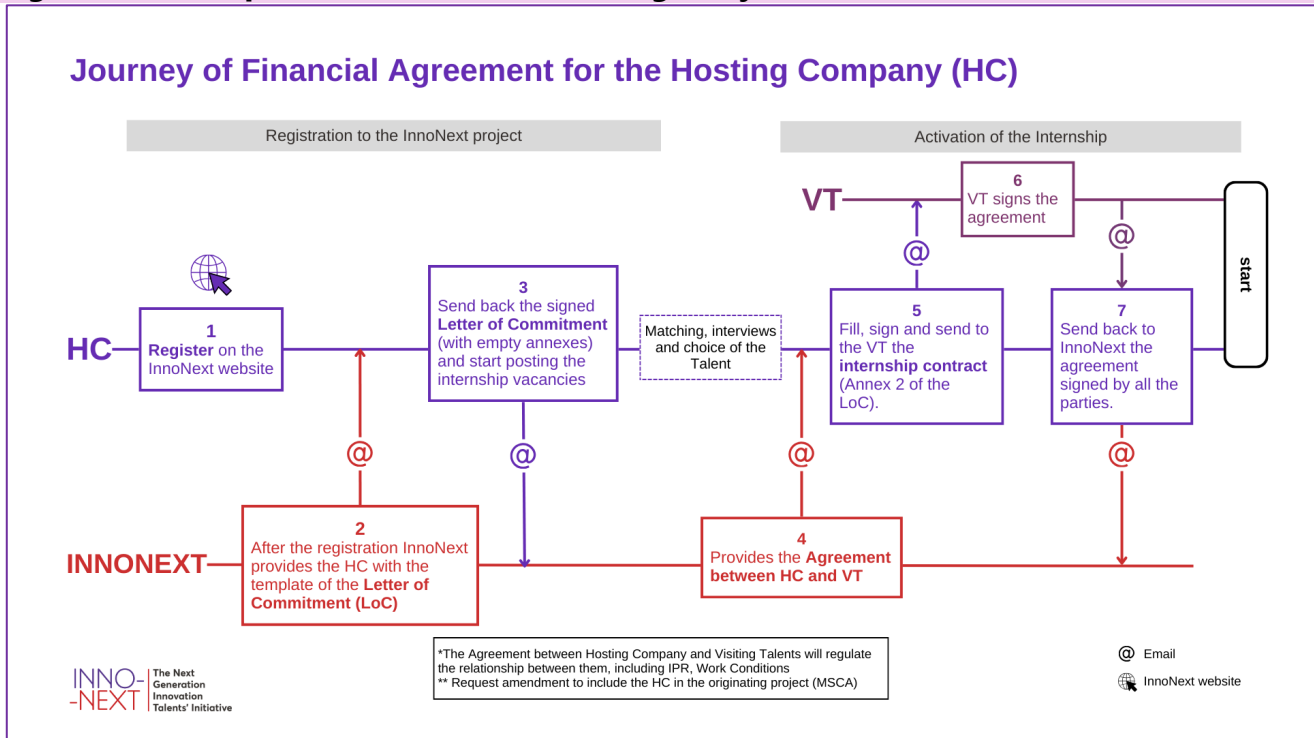


Figure 4 – Financial agreement: the Hosting company perspective

The Letter of Commitment (see Annex 1) is **the document required to the Hosting company** during the platform registration process. Its purpose is to validate and confirm the company's involvement in the initiative and ensure it operates in compliance with the project's objectives and vision.

The LoC has been shared with the EU Programmes and **validated** in the codesign activity, including the customisation needs that emerged. It includes the Annexes that have to be defined during the interview with the Talent and have the role of informing the HC and guaranteeing total acceptance of the InnoNext Initiative. Each specific case is allowed to introduce specific legal needs related to the specific country's regulation.

The document includes elements agreed upon with EU programmes. Specifically, it's useful to highlight the request of MSCA for its fellows, which requires the following:

The HOSTING COMPANY is aware of the fact that, if the VISITING TALENT with whom it will sign an internship contract belongs to the MSCA Program, it has to become an Associated Partner entering into the MSCA Grant Agreement, subject to the requirements and conditions set out in such MSCA



Grant Agreement, which the HOSTING COMPANY declares to know (comma D) of the Letter of Commitment).

The document is structured as follows:

- **“General Conditions of Participation”**: this section outlines the description of the internship, the hosting company's obligations, the methods of talent remuneration (which do not involve the Hosting Company), term constraints, applicable law and jurisdiction, and other miscellaneous provisions.
- **“Annex 1 – Training Program”**: this section must be filled after the matching between Visiting Talent and Hosting Company. It will contain the description of the job position posted on the platform by the Hosting Company and other specific agreements defined during the interview with the Talent. The section aims to facilitate the understanding of the role and responsibility of the Visiting Talents and allows the Project Coordinator/Supervisor to understand the activity in which the Talent will be involved. The Project Coordinator/Supervisor has to approve the internship before its start;
- **“Annex 2 – Internship Contract Template”**: this section includes a template of the internship contract, which must be signed by both parties, who must agree on the training plan of the internship outlined in Annex 1. Annex 2 specifies agreements regarding the workplace location, working hours, talent insurance, and working conditions. This document is essential as it includes a section entirely dedicated to **intellectual property**, a crucial aspect for the proper functioning of the initiative and the establishment of functional and effective relationships, fostering the growth of both parties involved. Moreover, the provided LoC is a template designed to protect intellectual property. However, **if the company requires additional protection**, such as signing an NDA, it is not prohibited. After the match, during the interview with the identified talent, both parties can agree on any additional documents to be signed, in compliance with the regulations of the company's country.
- **“Annex 3 – Financial Agreement”**: this section will be included in case of the involvement of a VT from ERC or EIC Pathfinder mobility; these two categories will be able to access to a financial support provided through the Financial Support for Third Parties (FSTP) procedure by the InnoNext Consortium (see 5.1.3 - Financial Support for Third Parties (FSTP)). The ERC will be entirely paid for the three-month internship; the EIC Pathfinder will be reimbursed in case of the need to move to a different country (at a distance greater than 150km). In this specific case, the Internship Agreement will contain the Financial Agreement between the Talent and the InnoNext Consortium.

The document must be signed at the beginning of the Hosting Company registration process with the aim to make the company aware of the complete process. Moreover, the LoC has the value of a self-declaration to guarantee the check on the eligibility of the candidate. More information on the process is available in section 6.1.

5.1.2 Declaration of Honour

Legal Ratio: eligibility check (considering also FSTP procedure)

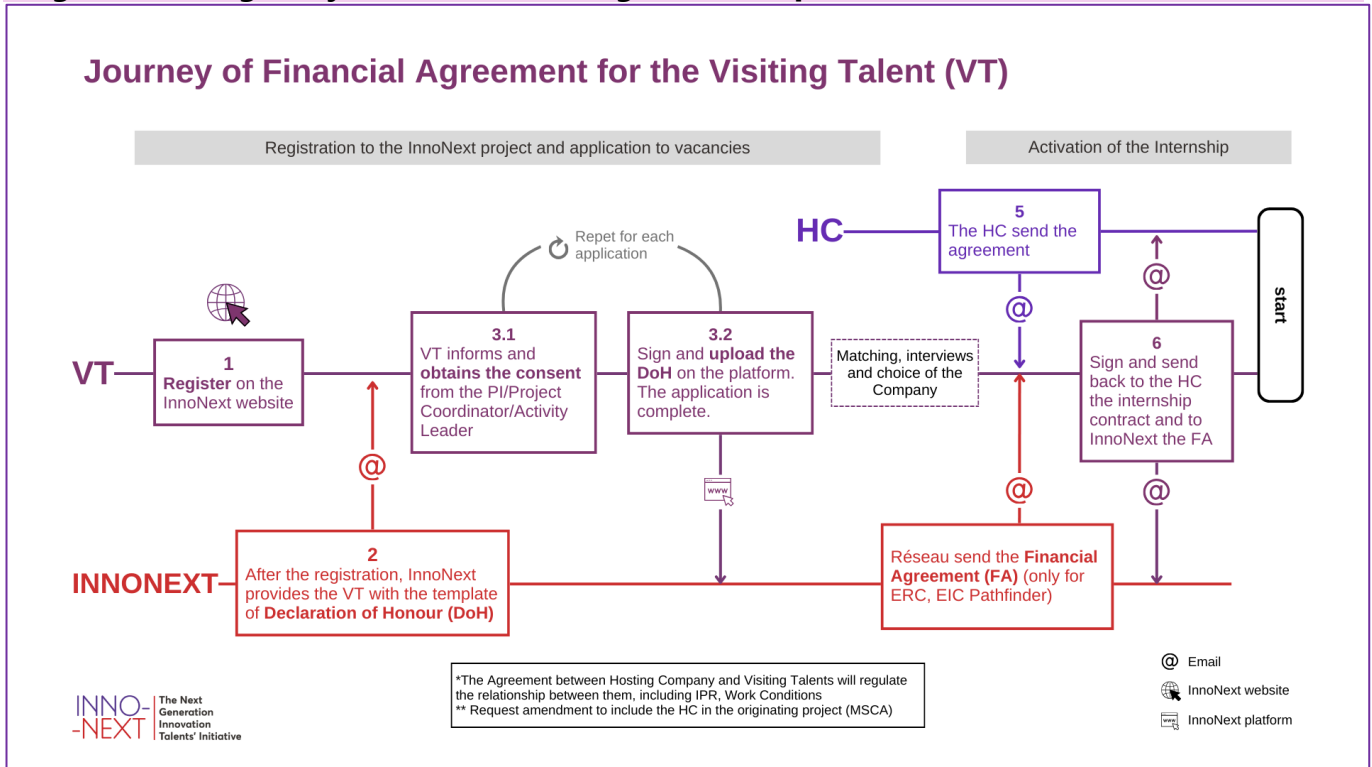


Figure 5 - Financial agreement: the Visiting talent perspective

The **Declaration of Honour** (see Annex 2) is a formal document that the Talent involved must complete and sign. The document has multiple purposes: firstly, it dissuades possible non-eligible participants and simplifies the process of eligibility check; on the other hand, the document will help the process of acceptance of the Internship from the EU Programmes part, in particular from the project coordinator/investigator/supervisor who has to allow the talents to stop it's activity in the main project.

Below is a summary of its main contents:

1. **Personal Information:**

- Name and surname of the Talent.
- ID or passport number.

2. **Project Details:** a series of information related to the main project of the talents, which helps with the eligibility check.

3. **Statements:**

The document includes confirmation that the potential beneficiary is eligible to participate in the InnoNext initiative. It also contains a declaration stating that the talent has informed their employer, project coordinator, or project supervisor about their participation without receiving any objections. Additionally, it confirms that the talent will not receive double remuneration for being involved in both EU-funded research and the InnoNext initiative. For those who are eligible for the FSTP procedure, it is requested **to confirm the commitment to comply with specific additional requirements related directly to the Horizon EU Grant Agreement** signed by the InnoNext Consortium. The FSTP considers



the Third Parties as beneficiaries of the same Horizon EU Grant, and the Talents must be aware of this specific requirement. The obligations are the following:

"Researchers receiving the financial support must and apply to the obligations under 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) of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement."

For greater clarity, the DoH includes a **direct link to the Grant Agreement Template**, the same model signed by the InnoNext Consortium, which is publicly available online and can be downloaded. This allows Talents who need a clearer understanding to access the document whenever necessary.

4. Signature:

- The document has to be signed by the Talent.

5.1.3 Financial Support for Third Parties (FSTP)

The InnoNext Team conducted a deep study to define the most suitable implementation methods for the FSTP procedures. The process involves meeting and co-definition with the POs. The proposal has been shared and validated through meetings with the goal to enhance user experience and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the process while ensuring full compliance with European regulations and cascade funding procedures.

The Consortium designs an **integrated approach** with the aim to simplify the process for both VT and HC, that consists of **a single call integrated with the Call for Application** to the Initiative, which is published on the InnoNext website and the Official [EU Funding&Tenders Portal](#), and does not require the participation and compilation of a double call.

Validation of integrated process for internship and FSTP calls

(only for EIC Pathfinder Mobility and ERC)

Integrated Open Call for EIC Pathfinder and ERC Talents

An integrated call will merge the Talent Application process (already provided on the website) with the FSTP Application for the two categories, ensuring compliance with the Cascade funding procedures. This approach simplifies the process for talents while aligning with the financial instrument.

The call will be open on the Funding & Tenders portal, with a direct link to the InnoNext project website for applications.

The process will include:

- **eligibility verification** by the InnoNext Consortium with **absence of conflicts of interest** in the award process;
- **financial agreement containing mandatory articles** that comply with the obligations of the signed Grant Agreement (see slide 19).

The presentation provides the inspiring examples and reasons that guided us through the definition of this approach.

Figure 6 – FSTP validation process



Application Procedure

The application process for both the internship and the financial support (FSTP) is centralised on the official InnoNext website, aligning with cascade funding procedures. **Talents are required to submit the Declaration of Honour**, confirming their affiliation with one of the specific Partner Programmes (ERC or EIC Pathfinder) and providing relevant details, such as the distance from their usual workplace in the case of EIC Pathfinder. A FSTP dedicated FAQ section on the website will provide clear instructions on how to apply for internships and financial benefits.

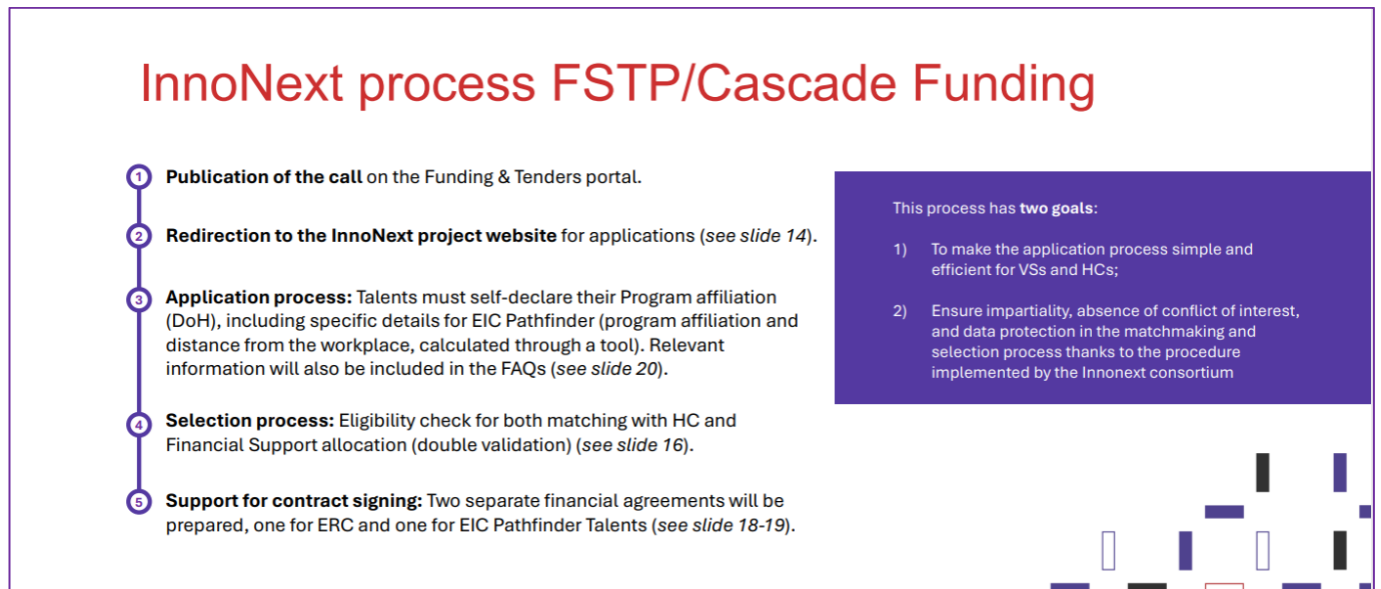


Figure 7 – FSTP/Cascade funding process

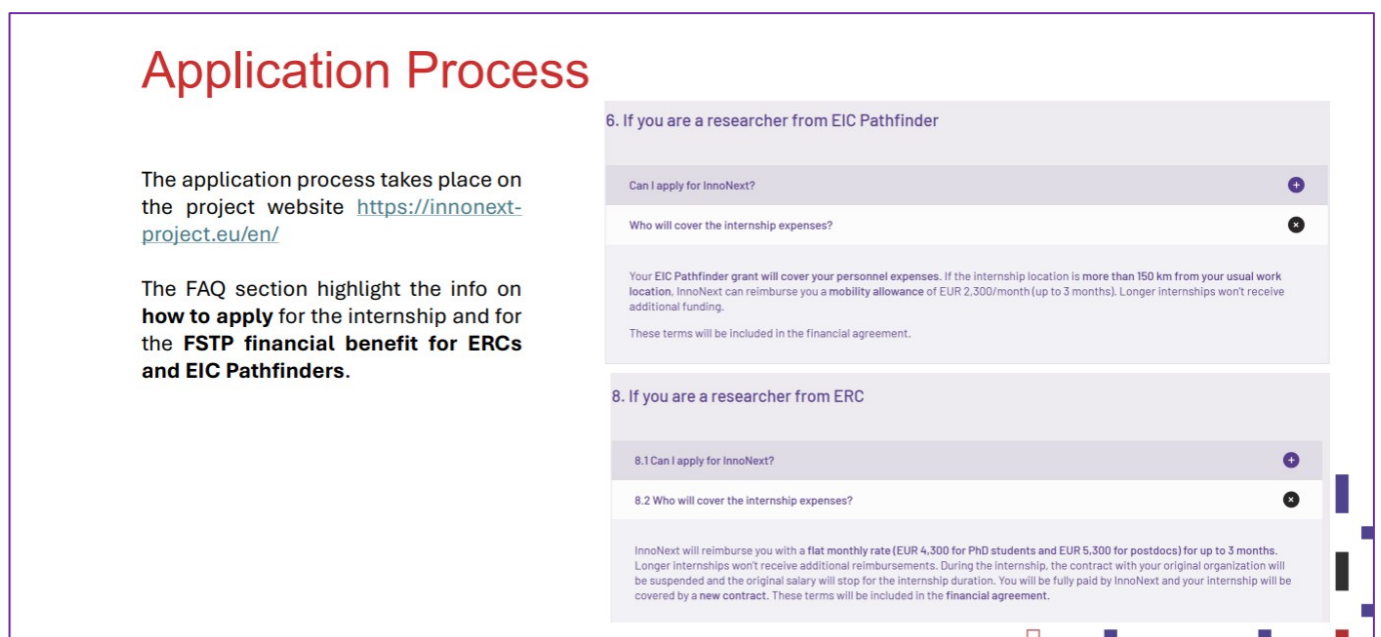


Figure 8 – Application process



Selection Process

The eligibility of talents is verified by the InnoNext Consortium. The case of EIC Pathfinder beneficiaries is reviewed in parallel with the information indicated on the InnoNext platform, where the candidate's regular workplace address is requested, to verify the 150 km distance eligibility criteria. Once eligibility is confirmed, the Consortium finalises the matching process between VT and HC for specific positions. Talents are then admitted to FSTP, with ERC candidates receiving reimbursement for internships and EIC Pathfinder candidates receiving a mobility allowance monthly.

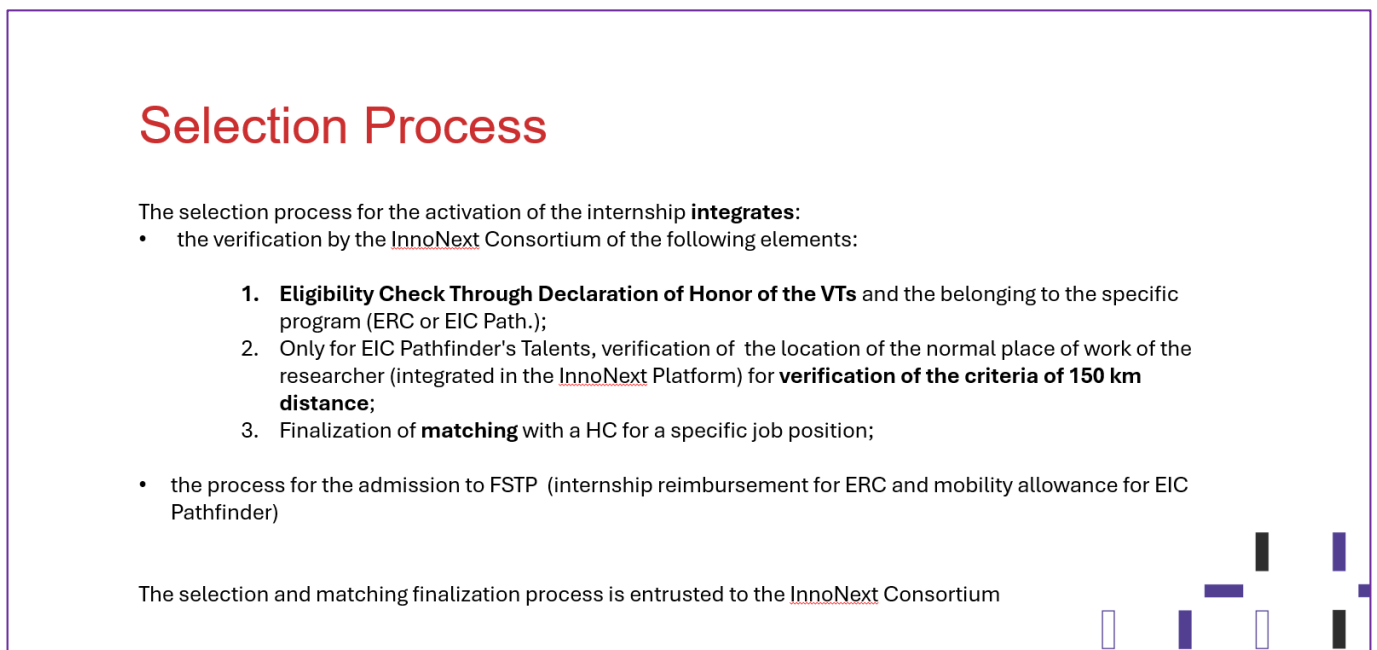


Figure 9 – Admission to FSTP process

Agreements

The process involves **two types of agreements**. The first is the same Innovative Internship Agreement presented above and signed between the talent and the hosting company. The second is a Financial Agreement managed by the InnoNext Consortium. The financial agreements specify the contracting parties, selection and award criteria, types of financial benefits granted, and conditions and deadlines for disbursement. They also outline the obligations under the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, such as conflict of interest, confidentiality, ethics, and data protection.

Financial Agreement For ERC and EIC Pathfinder

This agreement contains the following points:

- Indication of the Contracting Parties;
- Selection procedure and Award criteria for granting the FSTP;
- Type of financial benefit granted (traineeship reimbursement for ERC and mobility allowance for EIC Pathfinder);
- Conditions and deadlines for the disbursement of the financial benefit.

Talents receiving the financial support must and apply to the obligations under 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) of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.

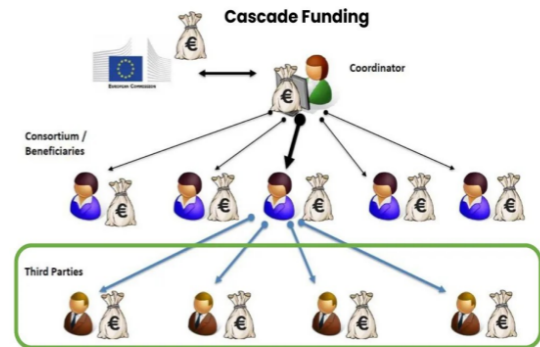


Figure 10 – Financial agreement for EIC pathfinder and ERC

Resources Section on the Website

Beneficiaries will be supported at every stage of the process through easily accessible resources, a simplified procedure, and detailed guides, all available on the website to ensure a smooth and seamless experience.

The Template for ERC and EIC Pathfinder are provided in the **Resources** section of the InnoNEXT website.



Figure 11 – Online resources page

Payment

The payment is made monthly, following the delivery by the talent of a **progress report**, which may correspond with a timesheet signed by both parties.

The integrated approach not only simplifies the application and selection processes but also strengthens the operational framework, ensuring a high level of compliance and efficiency.

Monitoring

A control section is also provided: the consortium's operational structure has implemented a system for monitoring FSTP financial flows, with a dedicated data archiving and database



management process. Additionally, a system has been adopted to conduct random checks on the accuracy of self-declared statements related to eligibility, such as the LoC and the DoH.

Reporting and Archiving Procedures

- **Tracking and Payments:**

We will ensure accurate tracking and monthly execution of payments to the Talents:

 - Reimbursements for the ERC's Talents;
 - Mobility Allowance for the EIC Pathfinder's Talents.

Payment is made upon receipt of the monthly timesheet from the Visiting Talent.
- **Documentation Archiving:**

All related documentation will be systematically archived, including:

 - Internship contracts
 - Payment records
 - Timesheets
 - Any additional supporting documents

These procedures aim to maintain transparency, accountability, and efficient record management.

Figure 12 – Reporting and archiving procedures

6. Hosting Companies Journey

As mentioned before, to participate, the company should fall into one of the following categories:

- Startups and SMEs supported by the EIC Accelerator (including H2020 SME instrument).
- EIC awarded Seal of Excellence companies.
- SMEs/startups supported by EIC Transition.
- Startups/SMEs supported by EIT Community and business creation services.
- Startups/SMEs created as a result of receiving support from KICs.
- Startups/scaleups/SMEs that have been partners of KICs for innovation activities.
- Startups/scaleups with at least one co-founder who is an EIT Alumni member.

If companies meet the eligibility criteria and they're interested in participating, they can apply through the InnoNext platform and post their vacancies.

The situation of EIT at M6 is still on hold and awaiting a definition with the Programmes Coordinators.

Benefits for Hosting Companies:

- **Access to Research Talent:** Collaborate with researchers at the forefront of scientific and deep-tech R&D.
- **Accelerated Development:** Leverage new ideas and insights to speed up the creation of innovative solutions.



- **Knowledge Transfer:** Benefit from the practical experience and understanding that researchers bring, enhancing your company's processes and strategies.

Below, the journey of the companies is explained:

6.1. Sign-Up Process

- Companies access the platform via the InnoNext website and fill in the required information as prompted by the system.
 - In the initial phase, general information is requested, such as the company's name, legal representative, company size, and website (Figure 13).

Figure 13 – Company's registration form: general information

- In the next phase, the necessary information to approve the **eligibility of the companies** is collected (Figure 14). This information is divided into: Affiliate Program, Project Acronym, Project ID, and PIC Number.

Figure 14 – Company's registration form: eligibility data



- The second-to-last part is dedicated to requesting the **contact information** of the reference person, which is divided into: First Name, Surname, Email, and Telephone Number (Figure 22).

Figure 15 – Company's registration form: contact information

- The final part involves accepting the **Privacy Policy of InnoNext** (fully described in D5.1).

Figure 16 - Company's registration form: privacy policy acceptance

Step 1: Submission of Requests

- Once the information is provided, the company will receive an **automatic email** with the subject 'InnoNext Registration Confirmation,'

Below, you can find the automatic mail:

→ *Dear [NAME], This is an automated e-mail to confirm your registration to In-recruiting, the InnoNext matching platform. To activate your account and choose your password, click the following link:[ACTIVATION_URL]. Regards. InnoNext*

Step 2: Verification and Approval

- After submission, the companies will receive an email stating that they are not yet registered as a client, as it is necessary to **upload the LoC** (Letter of Commitment) (see [Annex 1](#)). This email contains all the instructions needed to download and return the LoC. Below you can find the automatic mail:



→ Dear [NAME] [SURNAME],

thank you for taking the time to complete the registration form. We have successfully received your submission. Your participation is crucial to the success of InnoNext, and we're excited to collaborate with you. To upload your internship, please complete the **Letter of Commitment**, which you can download from this link: <https://innonext-project.eu/en/resources>. Review the document carefully, sign it, and send the signed version to us at companies@innonext-project.eu. Once the terms are agreed upon, you will receive an email to activate your account and create the internship vacancies.

Best regards, InnoNext

Step 3: Access Granted

- From this point onwards, companies will need to sign the LoC. The InnoNext Team, via the email addresses info@innonext-project.eu or companies@innonext-project.eu, is available to answer any questions. Once the companies return the signed copy, the InnoNext team, after verifying the signed copy, **will convert the prospects** (companies that have made the request) **into beneficiaries** (companies that have returned the signed LoC). From that moment on, they will receive the next email with all the instructions.

Additionally, this automatic email also includes the **link to the guidelines on how to create and publish internship positions on the matchmaking platform**.

The InnoNext team, in order to standardise the position description, has decided to provide a set of guidelines to help the companies structure their proposal (see [Annex 4](#)).

There is also additional information for the next phase, including which document they need to sign to formalise the relationship with Talents and the email address where the signed copy should be returned. Additionally, companies are asked to **upload the status of the vacant positions based on the progress of the talents**.

Below, you can find the automatic mail:

→ Dear [NAME] [SURNAME],

This is an automated e-mail to confirm your registration to InnoNext. Your login has not been activated yet. Please click on the following link to activate the account and to choose your password:[ACTIVATION_URL]. From now on, you can upload your internship positions. We recommend providing a clear description of your company and the tasks interns will be expected to perform. Be specific about the skills you are looking for. The clearer your description, the better the chance of finding the right candidate for your internship. Please also carefully read the **Guide to Creating an InnoNext position** that you will find at the same link: <https://innonext-project.eu/en/resources>. Feel free to organise interviews based on your needs. Please update the "Application status" on the platform to reflect the progress. Once you've approved a candidate, you'll need to have **the agreement signed by both you and the intern**. You can download it from [this link](#). The signed copy must be returned to companies@innonext-project.eu.

Best regards, InnoNext

Step 4: Post Internship position

Once companies are approved on the system, they can set their offer by filling out the following forms. The InnoNext team has prepared a guideline, included in [Annex 4](#), which also explains to companies what information is advisable to include in these fields.

In the following, the screens of the vacancy creation on the matchmaking platform are presented.

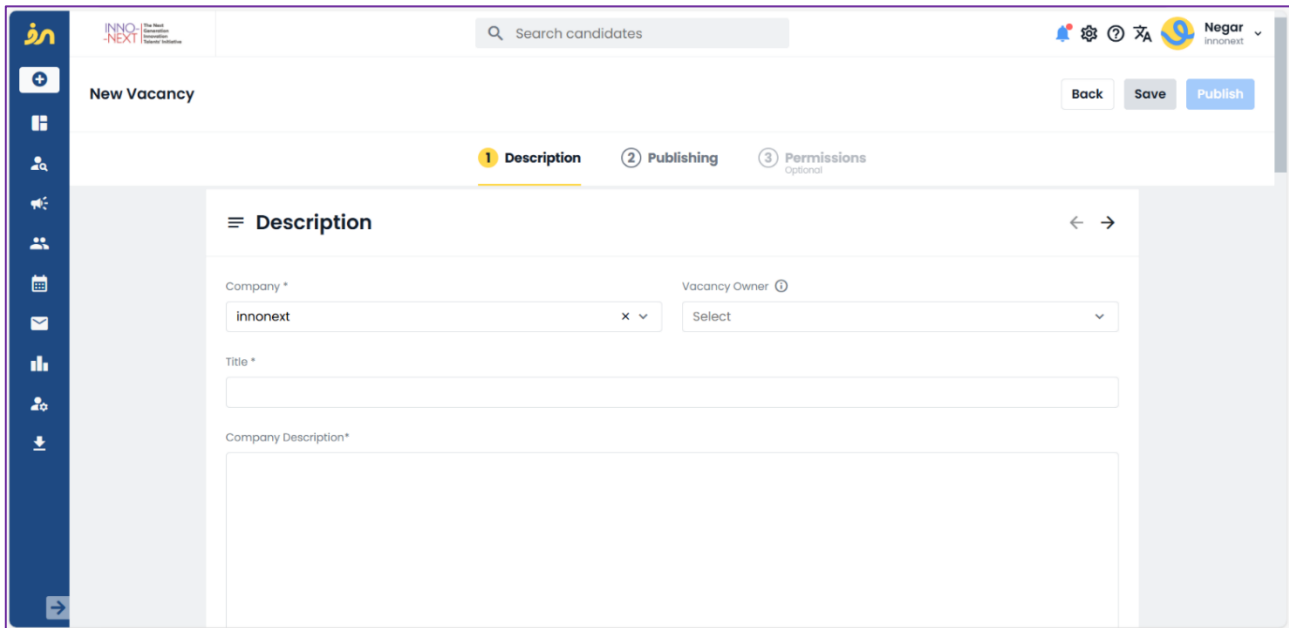


Figure 17 – Matchmaking platform: new vacancy, company description

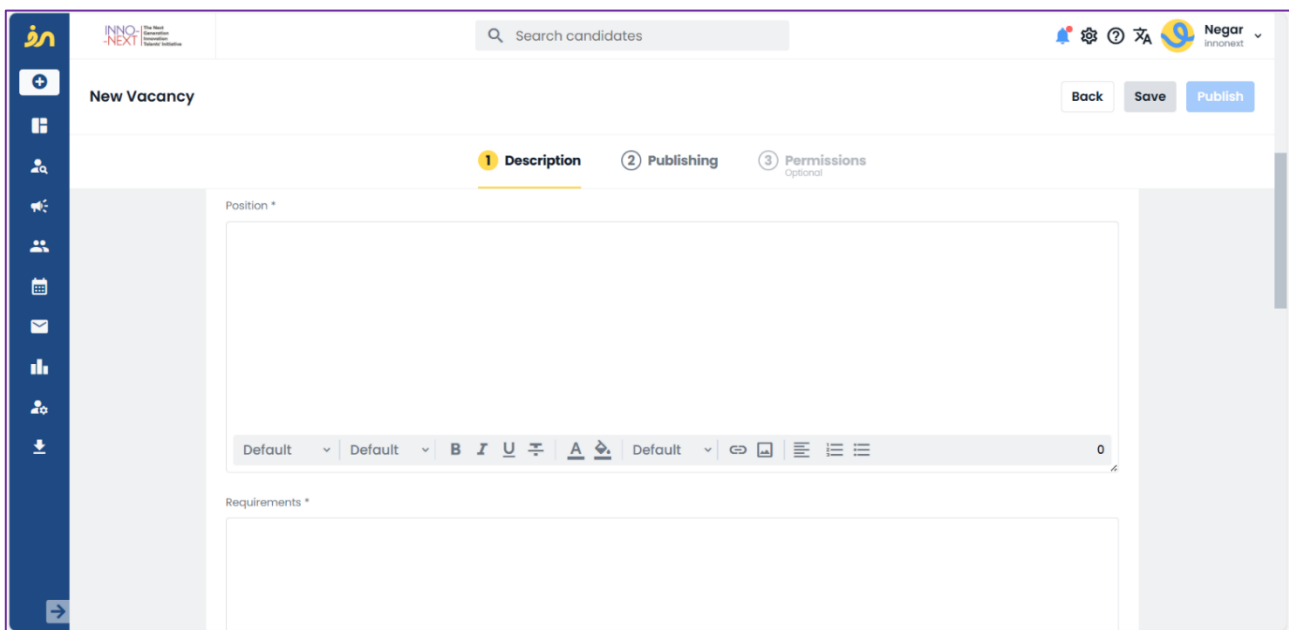


Figure 18 - Matchmaking platform: new vacancy, position description

The screenshot shows the 'New Vacancy' form in the Matchmaking platform. The form is titled 'New Vacancy' and has three tabs: '1 Description', '2 Publishing', and '3 Permissions (Optional)'. The 'Description' tab is active. The form contains a large text area for 'Other information' with a rich text editor toolbar below it. The toolbar includes options for text color, background color, bold, italic, underline, strikethrough, text color, link, unlink, list, and list. Below the text area, there are 'Tags extracted by Inda' and 'No skills found'. At the bottom, there are dropdown menus for 'Workplace *' and 'Functional Area *', each with an 'Add new' button.

Figure 19 - Matchmaking platform: new vacancy, other information

The screenshot shows the 'New Vacancy' form in the Matchmaking platform, focusing on the 'Workplace and details' section. The form is titled 'New Vacancy' and has three tabs: '1 Description', '2 Publishing', and '3 Permissions (Optional)'. The 'Description' tab is active. The form contains several dropdown menus and text input fields. The 'Workplace *' dropdown has a 'Click to insert location' button and an 'Add new' button. The 'Functional Area *' dropdown has a 'Select' button and an 'Add new' button. The 'Industry or Sector' dropdown has a 'Select' button and an 'Add new' button. The 'Education Level Required' dropdown has a 'Select' button and an 'Add new' button. The 'Employment Contract Type' dropdown has a 'Select' button and an 'Add new' button. The 'Workplace type' dropdown has a 'Select' button. At the bottom, there is a 'Video URL' field with a placeholder 'https://www.youtube.com/embed/xxxxxxxxxx'.

Figure 20 - Matchmaking platform: new vacancy, workplace and details

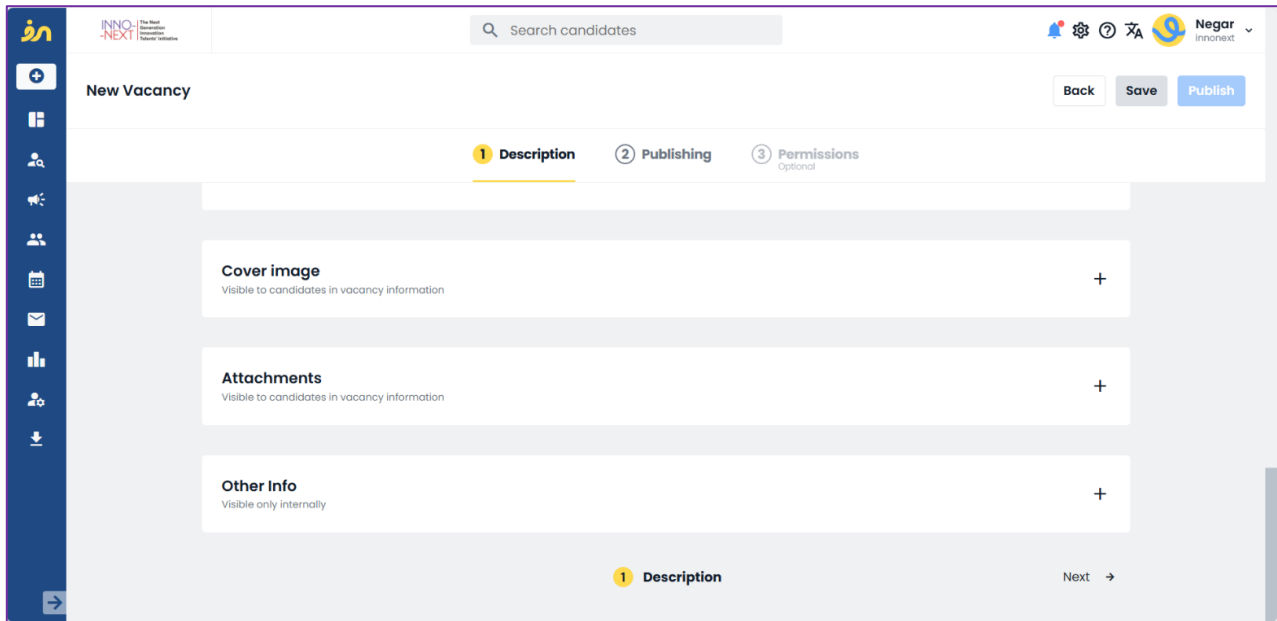


Figure 21 - Matchmaking platform: new vacancy, attachments

6.2. The InnoNext Role

The team, with different accounts, has access to the matchmaking platform. The 'Companies' team receives the following email **whenever a company registers on the platform.**

→ *We are pleased to inform you that a new Hosting Company has successfully submitted the form through the InnoNext website and has been inserted as a "Prospect" into Inrecruiting. Please review the submission and, after having checked the eligibility, take the necessary follow-up actions. Below are the details of the submission:*

Prospect name: [PROSPECT_NAME]

Eligibility

Affiliate EU Program: [AFFILIATE_EU_PROGRAM]

Project acronym: [PROJECT_ACRONYM]

Project ID: [PROJECT_ID]

PIC Number: [PIC_NUMBER]

Contact

Name: [CONTACT_NAME]

Surname: [CONTACT_SURNAME]

Email: [CONTACT_EMAIL]

Telephone: [CONTACT_TELEPHONE]

All these data are recorded in an internal Excel file to monitor the progress status. In addition to general details, the registration date is also noted, along with whether the LoC (Letter of Commitment) has been received. **If a company sends the LoC within a few days, the team updates the company's status from "prospect" to "client."**



However, if no signed document is received, a **follow-up email** is sent to the company asking if they need any support. All LoCs are saved on OneDrive, which is managed by Reseau Entrepreneurs Piemonte and connected to the network of the Federation Reseau in France.

The screenshot below shows the Beneficiaries (called "Clients" in the matchmaking platform) and **Prospects** (that are the **registered companies whose eligibility is still to be confirmed**). At the moment, this pending status is caused by companies that have not yet sent the LoC and all the companies in the EIT network, as the necessary authorizations to proceed are still missing.

The screenshot shows the 'Clients' section of the InnoNext platform. The interface includes a search bar at the top with the text 'Search candidates'. Below the search bar, there are tabs for 'Clients' and 'Prospect', with 'Clients' currently selected. A 'Search Filters' button is visible. The main content area displays a table with the following columns: 'COMPANY NAME', 'INDUSTRY', 'JOB ORDERS', 'MANAGES THE CLIENT', and an eye icon. The table lists five companies, all with a status of 'Authorized' in a green box. The data is as follows:

COMPANY NAME	INDUSTRY	JOB ORDERS	MANAGES THE CLIENT	Eye Icon
AGUA DE SOL SAS Authorized #31	-	0	-	<input type="checkbox"/>
ARSLAN FARM GIDA SAN TIC. LTD. ŞTİ. Authorized #47	-	0	-	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beeodiversity Authorized #38	-	0	-	<input type="checkbox"/>
CinSOIL GmbH Authorized #51	-	0	-	<input type="checkbox"/>

The screenshot shows the 'Clients' section of the InnoNext platform, displaying a different set of companies. The interface is identical to the previous screenshot, but the table lists four companies with a status of 'Active' in a green box. The data is as follows:

COMPANY NAME	INDUSTRY	JOB ORDERS	MANAGES THE CLIENT	Eye Icon
BioCoS Active #41	-	0	-	<input type="checkbox"/>
EYE4NIR Active #34	-	0	-	<input type="checkbox"/>
FreezeM Active #27	-	0	-	<input type="checkbox"/>
iLoF - Intelligent Lab on Fiber Active #53	-	0	-	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 22 - Client Section on the Platform, visible only by the InnoNext Team



In this section, the InnoNext team can find all the companies that meet the eligibility requirements, have submitted their Letters of Commitment (LoC), and have been classified as 'Clients', thus authorising them to post their offers on the platform.



7. Visiting Talents Journey

7.1. Sign-Up process

To participate, Talents should fall into one of the following categories:

- EIC Pathfinder PhD candidates
- EIC Pathfinder Postdoctoral researchers
- PhD and/or postdoctoral researchers participating in projects funded by the European Research Council (ERC)
- Fellows participating in Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships
- Fellows participating Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Doctoral Networks
- Fellows participating Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) COFUND
- PHD and/or postdoctoral researcher participating as a consortium member in a project funded by the Research Infrastructures part of Horizon Europe
- Students in (and graduates from) EIT Label Masters and Doctoral programmes
- EIT Alumni member
- Participants from other postdoctoral training programmes supported by the EIT Community.

As is the case for companies, talents participating in the EIT program must also wait before proceeding with registration and participation in the initiative.

The InnoNext website clarifies this point by stating the following sentence in the beneficiaries' section:

EIT registration is opening soon. Stay tuned!

The Visiting Talents Journey outlines the structured process by which talents engage with the InnoNext platform to participate in innovation-focused internship opportunities.

Talents have two flexible options for starting their journey with the InnoNext platform:

1. **Create Profile First:** The talent can choose to create their profile first, filling in personal information and professional qualifications and uploading their CV. Once the profile is set up, the talent will gain access to the curated list of Innovation Internship vacancies, where they can explore opportunities based on their qualifications and interests.
2. **Explore Internships First:** Alternatively, the talent may begin by directly exploring the available internship positions. They can browse through the listings and see which internships align with their interests. If they find a suitable opportunity, they will then be prompted to create their profile in order to submit their application.

Both approaches ensure that talents can engage with the platform in a way that best suits their preferences, providing a streamlined process for discovering and applying for internships.



While following we describe the first approach, it's important to note that both **approaches are interchangeable**, and talents can choose whichever sequence suits them best in their journey on the platform.

Step 1: Profile Creation

The first phase involves the VTs creating their profile on the InnoNext platform. This step requires the completion of an online form where all mandatory fields must be accurately filled. The profile includes personal information, professional qualifications, and any other relevant details.

The screenshot shows a web form titled 'Demographics'. It contains the following fields:

- FIRST NAME * (text input)
- SURNAME * (text input)
- E-MAIL * (text input)
- CONFIRM E-MAIL * (text input)
- Demographics** (Section Header)
- GENDER * (dropdown menu with 'Select' selected)
- DATE OF BIRTH * (text input with placeholder 'Date of Birth* (dd-mm-yyyy)')
- RESIDENCE * (text input)
- MOBILE PHONE NUMBER (text input with a country code dropdown showing '+39' and the number '312 345 6789')

Figure 23 – Talent's application form on the Website: demographics

In addition to the basic personal and professional information, the talent is also required to provide the following additional details during the profile creation process:

- **Country of Employer / Research Institution:** This information helps to understand the geographic context of the talent's current work environment and supports the matchmaking process by considering regional factors.
- **University or Research Organisation:** This helps to clarify the academic or research background of the talent, contributing to a better understanding of their training and potential areas of expertise.
- **Affiliate Programme:** Talents must specify which EU Programme they are affiliated with. This data is crucial for statistical tracking and allows the platform to tailor internship opportunities in accordance with the specific requirements of each EU Program.
- **Project Acronym:** This information helps to identify the project within the EU framework under which the talent has been supported. It aids in understanding the context and objectives of their prior work and can be useful in aligning internships with relevant project goals.
- **Project ID:** Similar to the project acronym, this identifier enables the platform to track and correlate the talent's background with EU-supported initiatives. It provides insight into the talent's contributions to specific projects.



- **ORC ID:** The ORC ID is used to track the publications and research output of the talent. This is particularly important for the matchmaking algorithm, which utilizes this data to assess the talent's expertise and match them with internship opportunities that align with their research interests and skills.

Figure 24 - Talent's application form on the Website: work experience

In addition to reviewing the curated internship opportunities, the talents' **Internship Desiderata** (preferred internship locations) are also taken into account. During the application process, talents are asked to indicate their preferred geographical areas for internship placements. This information helps the platform to **match the talents with available opportunities that align not only with their qualifications and interests but also with their desired geographic locations**. By considering these preferences, the platform ensures that talents are more likely to find an internship that suits both their professional aspirations and personal preferences regarding the location of the Hosting Company.

Figure 25 - Talent's application form on the Website: internship desiderata

Additionally, the talent is required to upload their current CV. This profile serves as the foundational element for the subsequent matchmaking and application processes, enabling Hosting Companies to assess the talent's suitability for available internships.



Figure 26 - Talent's application form on the Website: CV attachment

Step 2: Exploration of Innovation Internship positions

After the profile is set up, the talent gains access to a curated list of Innovation Internship positions. These opportunities are posted by Hosting Companies participating in the program. The algorithm implemented in the matchmaking platform provides tailored recommendations to the talent, highlighting roles that align with their qualifications and interests. The exploration phase allows talents to review job descriptions and **identify opportunities** corresponding to their professional aspirations. Here you have some real examples:

Optical Engineer (Photonics/Physicist)

📍 Porto, Portugal 🏠 Other Apply

What You'll Do Help us to develop our technology by combining an advanced photonics platform, data science, and ML algorithms to extract biological fingerprints from optical signals. Design, fabricate, implement and validate optical sensing...

Plant molecular biologist

📍 Chania, Greece 🏠 Research and Innovation Apply

We are seeking a dedicated and detail-oriented Molecular Biologist to join our research team. The successful candidate will focus on cutting-edge techniques for DNA isolation from fatty matrices, with a primary emphasis on plant tissue samples. A...

Signal Processing Specialist (Medical Devices)

📍 Barcelona, Spain 🏠 Research and Innovation Apply

Position Overview We are looking for a software engineer (PhD candidate or postdoctoral researcher in a related field) to join our highly skilled R&D team. In this role, you will lead the design and implementation of signal post-processing...

Figure 27 - Internship Overview on the Website

7.2. Application

Step 3: Application Submission

Talents who identify suitable internship opportunities proceed to the application phase. At this stage, the key action concerns the **Declaration of Honor**: the talent must complete and upload the Declaration of Honor (.pdf), which confirms that they have notified and obtained consent from their employer, Project Coordinator, Principal Investigator, or Activity Leader regarding their participation.



The application process ensures that all necessary documents are submitted and stakeholders are informed and involved appropriately.

Step 4: Interview Participation

Once applications are reviewed, shortlisted talents are invited to participate in interviews conducted by the Hosting Companies. These interviews serve as a critical touchpoint to:

- Provide the Hosting Company with an opportunity to assess the talent's suitability for the role.
- Allow the talent to better understand the company's objectives, working culture, and specific internship activities.

The interview phase facilitates mutual alignment between the Hosting Company and the talent.

Step 5: Internship Preparation

Following a successful interview, the details of the internship are finalised. To formalise the agreement, the talent is required to coordinate with the Hosting Company to finalise logistical arrangements, such as start dates and any necessary travel or accommodation plans as well as to coordinate with the InnoNext team for any administrative issues that might arise.

This step ensures that all prerequisites are addressed, paving the way for a smooth transition into the internship.

Step 6: Internship Commencement

The final phase marks the beginning of the Innovation Internship. Upon joining the Hosting Company, the talent is introduced to the organisation and its operations. During the internship period, the talent is encouraged to leverage available resources, including:

- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Enabling talents to share their experiences and contribute to the continuous improvement of the program.

This structured approach ensures that the talent's integration into the Hosting Company is effective and that they derive maximum value from the internship experience.

7.3. InnoNext Role

The Visiting Talents Journey is a structured process designed to guide researchers through their engagement with the InnoNext platform, from profile creation to internship completion. While talents navigate the platform to explore and apply for innovation-focused internships, a substantial back-office effort is carried out by the InnoNext team to ensure a smooth and efficient experience for both talents and hosting companies.

Platform Management and Document Handling

InnoNext is responsible for managing the application platform, ensuring it remains functional, updated, and user-friendly. A crucial aspect of this work is the verification and processing of documents, particularly the Declaration of Honor (DoH). The team carefully reviews each submission, checking for completeness and consistency to confirm the applicant's eligibility. Talents who fail to upload the required documentation receive reminders and support to complete their applications correctly.



Communication and Follow-Up

Throughout the application journey, the InnoNext team maintains constant communication with talents, providing guidance on profile creation, document submission, and eligibility requirements. **Automated and manual reminders are sent to ensure that applicants stay on track with deadlines.** Additionally, direct follow-ups via email, phone, and messaging platforms help address any issues talents may encounter during the process.

Internship Activation and Coordination

Once a talent submits a complete application and is deemed eligible, InnoNext facilitates the next steps, ensuring a seamless transition into the selection process. It includes:

- Informing the Hosting Companies about the talent's application.
- Coordinating the interview phase and providing updates to both parties.
- Supporting the activation of the internship by assisting with any administrative requirements that may arise.

Ongoing Support and Process Optimization

Even after a talent has successfully joined a company, InnoNext continues to monitor the internship experience, collecting feedback from both talents and host organisations. This continuous oversight helps improve the matchmaking process, platform functionality, and overall program effectiveness.

Through its comprehensive back-office operations, InnoNext ensures that the Visiting Talents Journey remains efficient, transparent, and well-supported, ultimately maximising the initiative's impact for all participants.

8. Matchmaking (AI&Experts)

The InnoNext team is actively working on the development and refinement of the matchmaking algorithm that powers the platform. Given the limited historical data available, the current phase focuses on defining optimal feedback mechanisms to improve the algorithm's accuracy and efficiency. At this stage, the team is evaluating the alignment between high-scoring matches—**comparing candidates' CVs with internship vacancies**—to ensure that the algorithm correctly identifies relevant opportunities. To enhance this process, InnoNext Consortium is designing and testing efficient **feedback loops** that allow those manually reviewing the CV-to-vacancy matches to provide structured input to the algorithm development team.

By integrating these feedback mechanisms, InnoNext aims to accelerate the algorithm's training process, improve its ability to recognise relevant patterns, and ultimately deliver more precise and meaningful recommendations for both talents and hosting companies.

The AI algorithms and the ICT platform description is available in the InnoNext D2.1.



9. Feedback collection and Survey

During the project implementation phase, evaluation and feedback surveys will be distributed to participants to collect insights about their experience with the InnoNext Initiative under the oversight and responsibility of RES. These surveys, designed using Google Forms, include sections for gathering personal information such as first name, last name, gender, level of education, origin, and affiliation program. Additionally, they collect data on participants' experiences before and during their involvement in InnoNext.

The InnoNext team has developed the following forms to be sent to both talents and companies at different stages of the internship. These forms aim to gather feedback and input for the continuous improvement of the program. Below is a summary of the forms and their contents:

- **Visiting Talents - Pre-Internship:** This survey collects opinions and experiences of the VT career as a researcher, offering a *'snapshot of the present'* of your journey ([link](#) to the work-in-progress draft).
- **Hosting Companies - Pre-Internship:** a short survey designed to gather impressions before joining INNONEXT ([link](#) to the work-in-progress draft).
- **Visiting Talents – Post-Internship:** some questions about the VT experience, including some of the same ones answered at the beginning. This will help the InnoNext Team to understand the **changes** over time and reflect on the **professional growth** ([link](#) to the work-in-progress draft).
- **Hosting Companies – Post Internship:** Collection of feedback to improve the internship program and enhance its value for future participants ([link](#) to the work-in-progress draft).

The surveys will be sent out as soon as the first internship cycle begins and the first match between a talent and a company is completed.

10. Updates on the communication actions

4.2.1 InnoNext Website

The **InnoNext Website** ([link](#)) is the key touchpoint for the Initiative, providing all the essential information about the project and guiding beneficiaries in discovering the eligibility criteria and the opportunities offered. It acts as the landing platform for all communication carried out by the InnoNext Team, EU Programmes, and other interested stakeholders.

Below, an overview of some results achieved between M5 and M7 of InnoNext's activity is presented.

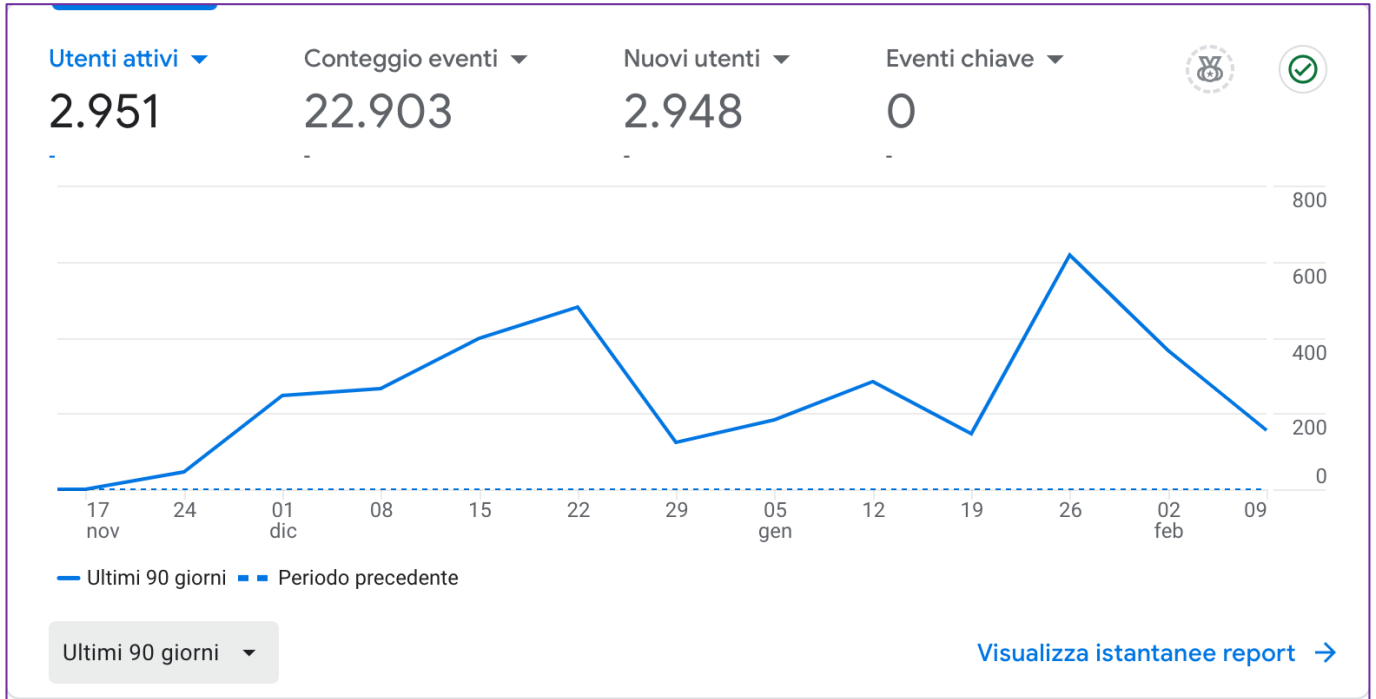


Figure 28 - Users Activity in the InnoNext Website

Figure 28 represents the user activity inside the website and, in particular, highlights a positive curve in terms of dynamism during the period following the launch of the call, which coincides with the highest level of stakeholder engagement. The highest peak is followed by a decline over the Christmas period, then a growth phase with the start of the new year and the intensification of communication activity. Considerably, **surpassing 2500 visits in less than three months** since the website launch—entirely through **organic traffic**, without any paid advertising or SEO optimisation—**demonstrates that the dissemination efforts through internal channels have had a strong resonance**. The numbers achieved represent a positive trend when compared to the KPIs identified in the Communication Plan (see D4.1).

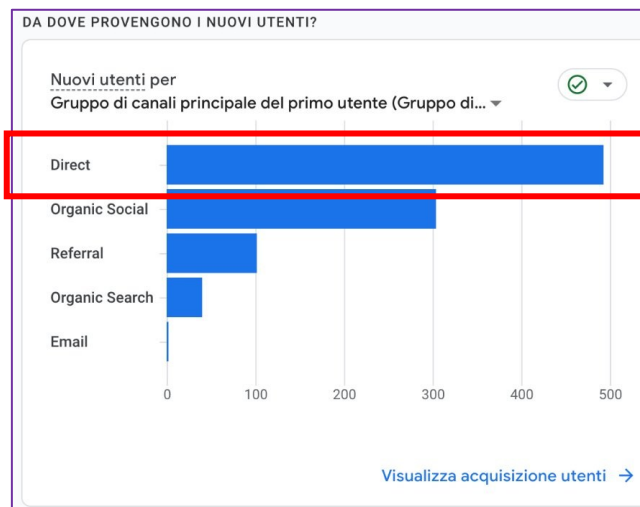


Figure 29 - Where the user comes from



Figure 29 shows the main access methods users use to reach the InnoNext website. The most influential is **direct access**, which occurs by searching directly for the InnoNext Initiative in the search bar or clicking on the direct link. This makes it possible to imagine that the bulk of website traffic comes from **communication that has a direct reference to the website itself**.

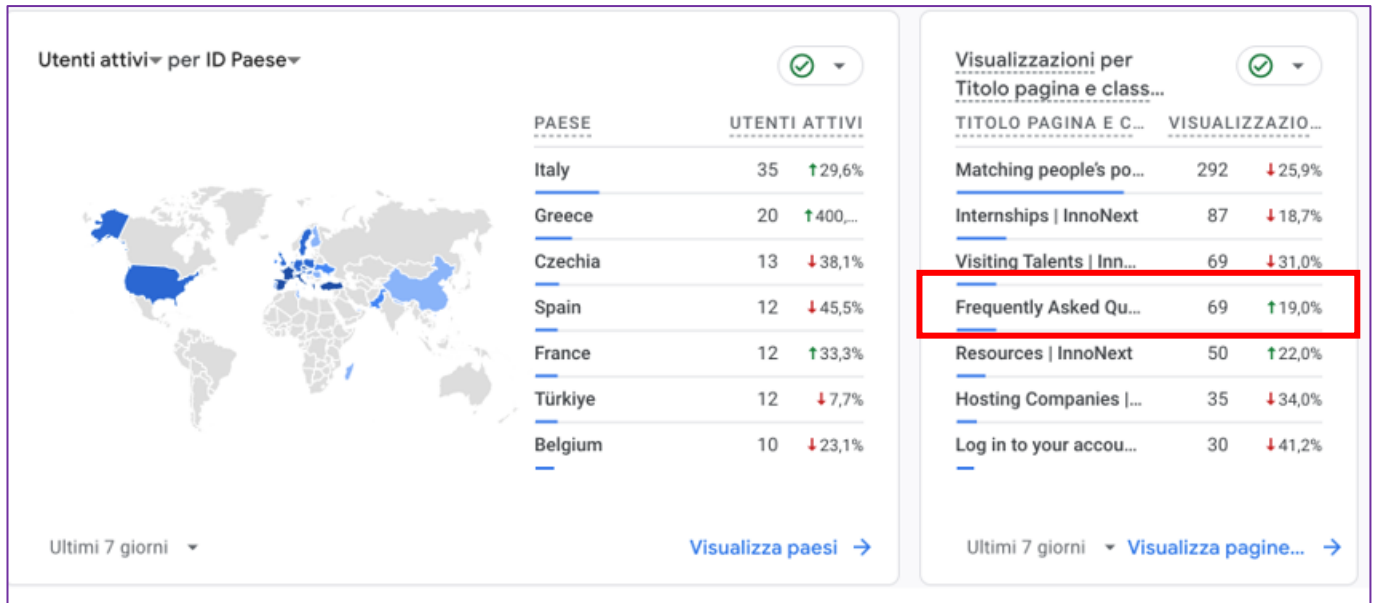


Figure 30 - Active Users and Most Visited Pages

Figure 30 interestingly highlights that the page with the most visits is the **FAQ page**, the website section where it is possible to resolve any doubts or consider requesting further information directly from the InnoNext Team.

4.2.2 EIC Community Platform

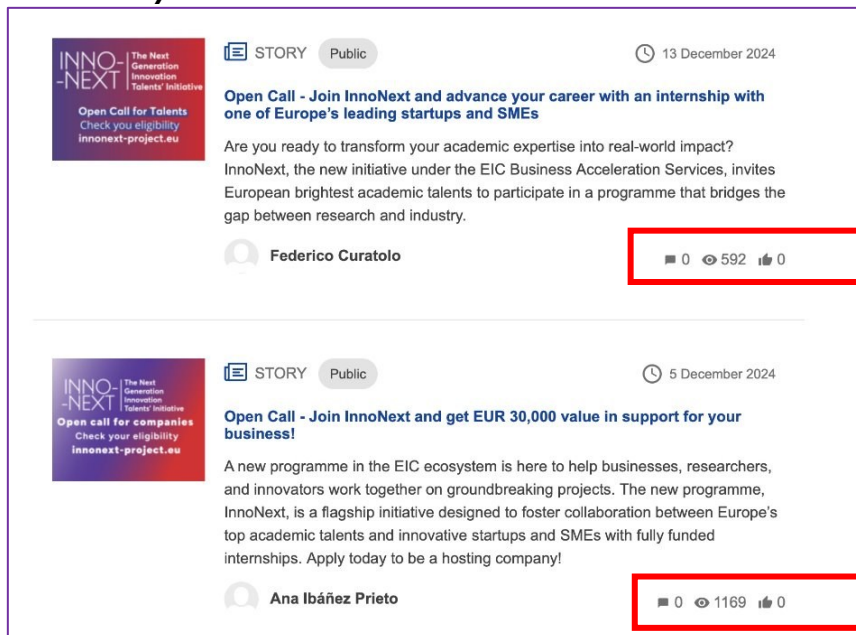


Figure 31 - InnoNext Posts in the EIC Community Platform



Another important channel is **the EIC Community Platform**, which is made available by the EIC Communication Team and in which it's possible to publish the content inherent to the initiative. Figure 31 highlights a good level of visibility on the platform, in particular considering the first post dedicated to the launch of the call to the Companies, which reached almost 1200 views. Moreover, the EU Programmes were provided with a Communication Kit, which includes email templates to be sent through their main channels of communication and contacts lists.

4.2.3 InnoNext Social Network

The communication activities were carried out in parallel through the use of social networking platforms, [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#), in accordance with the Communication and Dissemination Plan established during the early stages of the project in D4.1. Specifically, at least 2 posts per week were published on selected topics to keep the official channels active and reach a broad range of potential beneficiaries. Below is a synthesis of the main themes explored in the different posts:

- Post 1: Welcome to InnoNext*
- Post 2: What Is InnoNext?*
- Post 3: Who can participate?*
- Post 4: How InnoNext Works*
- Post 5: What Sets InnoNext Apart?*
- Post 6: The Benefits for Companies*
- Post 7: Attracting Expertise from Europe's Top Programs*
- Post 8: How to Leverage InnoNext for Your Business*
- Post 7: Call for Companies to Register CTA*
- Post 8: The Benefits for Talents*
- Post 9: Exploring Opportunities with Europe's Top Companies*
- Post 10: How to Make the Most of InnoNext*

One particularly valuable aspect of using social media is that Hosting Companies can share InnoNext opportunities on their channels, helping to generate engagement within the platform. To maximise this opportunity, the Guide to Creating an InnoNext Vacancy (see Annex 4) includes a **recommendation to repost** their internship offers. This increases the chances of reaching beneficiaries who are both interested in the company's specific field and eligible to participate in the InnoNext project. Figure 39 shows an example of a Company that shares a vacancy in its official channel, creating a high amount of traffic on the specific vacancy.



Figure 32 - Views Number on the Vacancy shared on SocialMedia by the HC

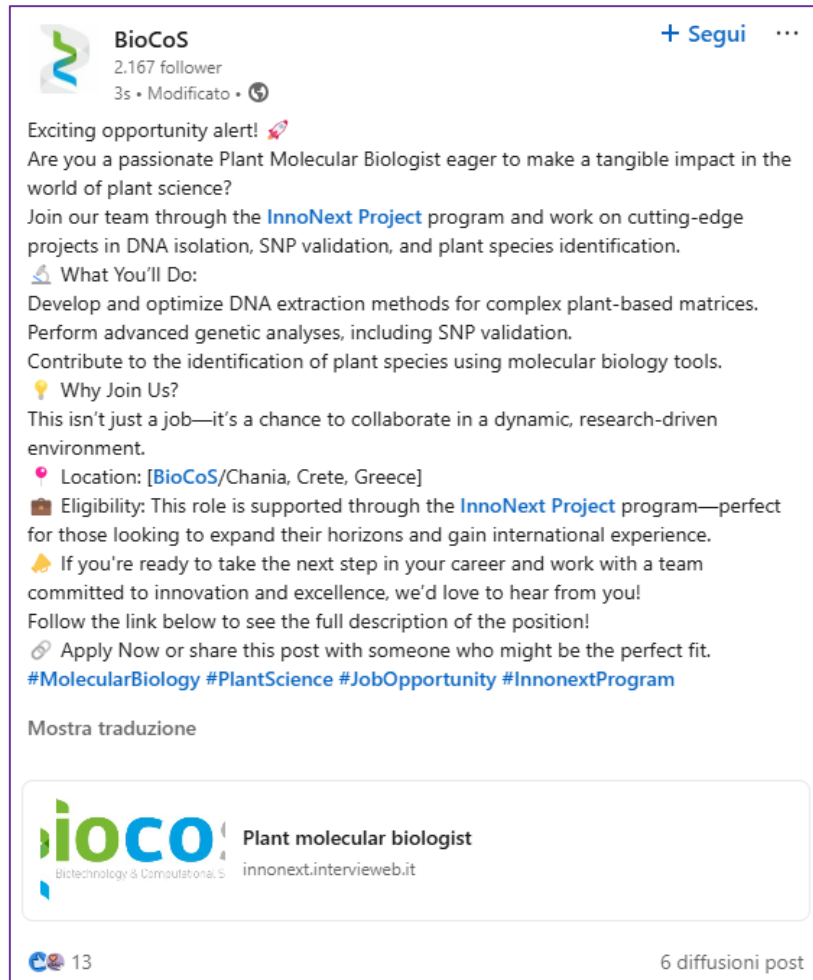


Figure 33 - LinkedIn Post of one of the Signed HC

4.2.4 InnoNext e-mails

Three different **contact e-mails** were also created to better direct requests and manage the distribution of information vertically for the various types of beneficiaries, ensuring the presence of a physical person always ready to respond and support through the process.

The emails are as follows:

- info@innonext-project.eu, dedicated to general requests, collects emerging questions from beneficiaries sent through the website contact form.
- talents@innonext-project.eu dedicated to the request related to the talent's journey and to help the talents through the whole process;
- companies@innonext-project.eu dedicated to the request related to the company's journey. Through the mail, the main information was sent after the first step of signing in.

For those who have not found answers in the FAQ section and have specific or case-related questions, it is possible to submit a request through a **form available on the website** (Figure 34). The form requires general contact information (to allow follow-up communication) and includes a section where users can enter their inquiries.



These requests are collected in the **info@innonext-project.eu** email inbox and are then categorised based on their nature: they are either directed to the **talents@** or **companies@** emails or, if they are general inquiries, they receive a direct response from the **info@** Team.

All questions are gathered into a shared .doc accessible to the entire InnoNext Consortium. This document tracks recurring inquiries, assesses their potential integration into the FAQ section, and identifies possible improvements to the overall process.

Figure 34 - Contact Form in the InnoNext Website

4.2.5 InnoNext Events and In-Presence Activity

In order to reach a more significant number of users and initiate a direct scouting activity, the InnoNext team also initiated a series of direct actions based on activating the partners' existing networks to generate a "word of mouth" effect and participated in a series of vertical events aimed at presenting the project to a broader audience.

The word-of-mouth strategy was specifically targeted towards the RES network and the direct involvement of the French Federation, which includes 84 locations in France, Belgium, Spain and Portugal.

RES attended an annual event organised by the French Federation called "*Forum des Présidents et Directeurs Réseau Entreprendre*" on November 14th-15th, 2024, dedicated to all the chef head of the network. During the meeting RES had the opportunity to present the InnoNext Initiative and activate the network of mentors and local representatives to identify potential participants eligible as beneficiaries.

To facilitate this engagement, **an online form to identify the potential beneficiaries was created** and disseminated through the RES ecosystem, thanks to the support of all the Presidents and Directors.



The aim is to identify which start-ups and companies in the RE ecosystem are also targeted for participation in the initiative and eligible as beneficiaries. This approach will be applied also in other vertical networks.

Moreover, the form allows the Consortium to organise follow-up and establish direct 1-to-1 contact with the one who are eligible. This approach aimed at providing detailed information about the opportunities offered by the initiative and guiding the potential beneficiaries through the participation process via the platform.

Active participation in events provided by various identified stakeholders directly connected to the Partner Programmes has been initiated. These events, held in both **in-person and webinar formats**, have facilitated the dissemination and presentation of the initiative in an open manner. By leveraging these opportunities, moments of open dialogue have been created, allowing for meaningful interactions with potential interested participants.

EU PP involved	Event Name	Date	Type of participation
MSCA	MSCA DN 2023 Coordinators Info event on	12/11/2024	Indirect
MSCA	Meeting with national contact points	27/11/2024	Remote
EIC	EIC BAS (business Acceleration Service) Contractors Day	30/02/2025	In person
EIC	Quantum Technologies Portfolio	05/02/2025	In person
MSCA	Cafè Curie	12/02/2025	In person

Table 2 - Events and Meetings

11. Overview of the beneficiaries activities

11.1. Overview of the Hosting Companies movement trends on the platform

The number of HC had a boost at the beginning, thanks to the EU Programmes Dissemination of the Initiative, and remained relatively low during the holiday season (Figure 35). Starting in January, a slight increase was followed by a significant peak due to the Dissemination on the different communication channels.

The following figures are taken from the InnoNext Platform and show the trend focused on the Companies activity. The time frame considered starts from the launch of the InnoNext call of application in M5 until the delivery of Deliverable 3.1 in M7.

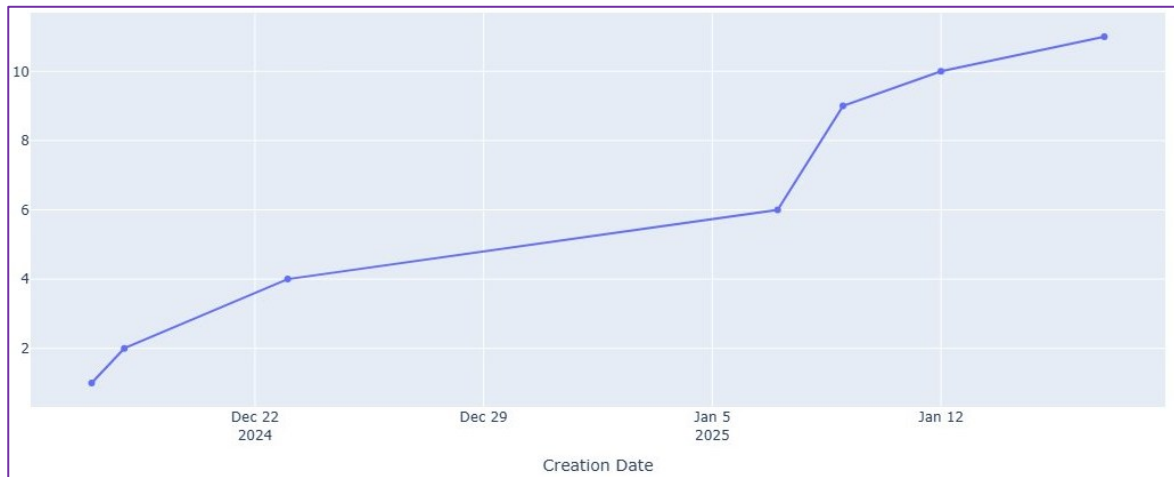


Figure 35 - Cumulative Number of Positions Over Time

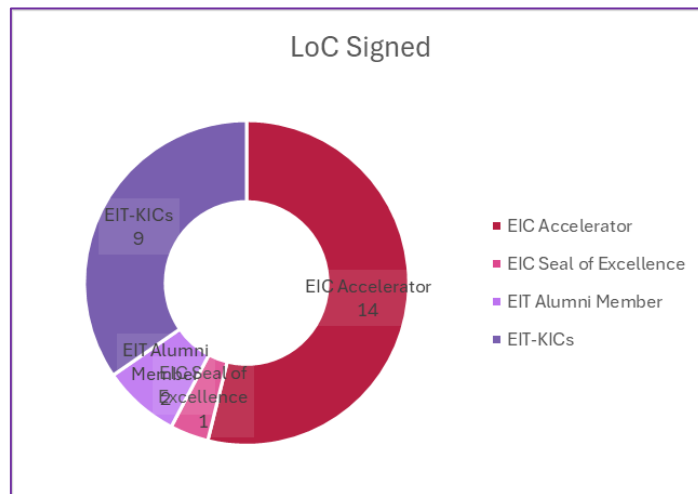


Figure 36 - LOC signed

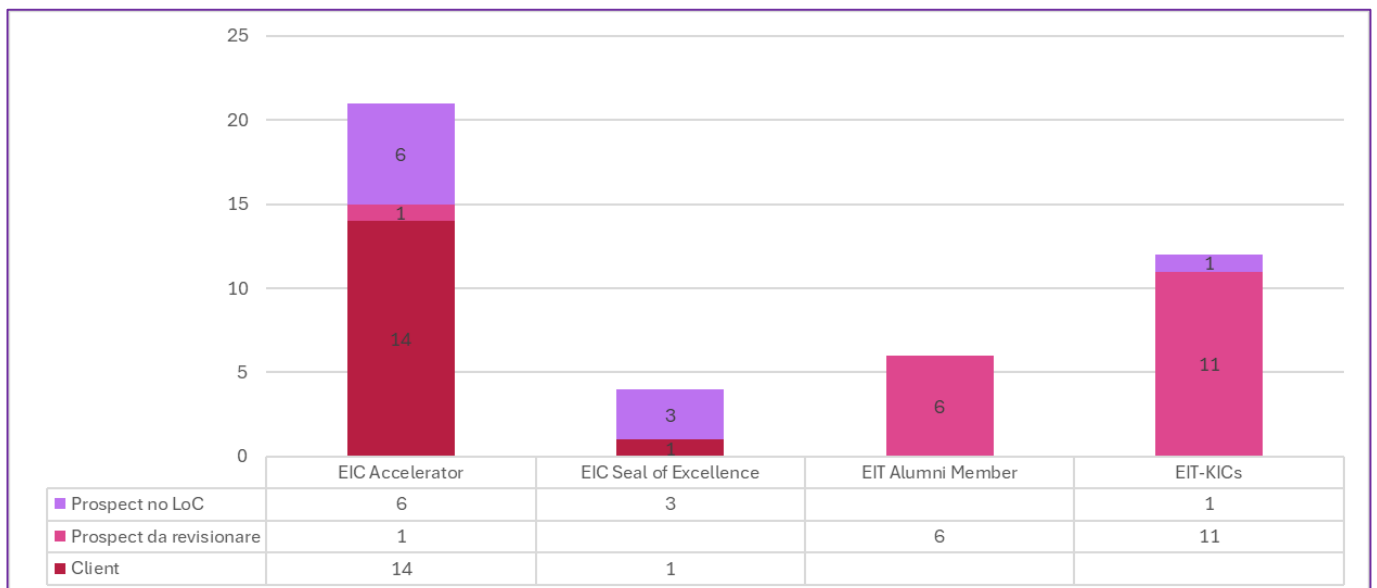


Figure 37 - HC status



Table 3 – Synthesis per reference Programme (*Data up to 26th February 2025)

Company Program	Beneficiaries	Awaiting Review By InnoNext	Awaiting LoC	Total
EIC Accelerator	14	1	6	21
EIC Seal of Excellence	1		3	4
EIT Alumni Member		6		6
EIT-KICs		11	1	12
Total	15	18	10	43

The images above provide an overview of the current situation regarding the companies registered on the InnoNext platform. It is evident that most of these companies come from the EIC Program, with a particular focus on the EIC Accelerator. This is likely linked to the communication strategies and channels used to promote the initiative.

It is also clear that the majority of companies have submitted the Letter of Commitment (LoC) without significant issues, suggesting that the document does not represent a barrier or constraint to participation.

Additionally, a large portion of the companies currently on the platform originates from the EIT ecosystem, which, as of M6, remains in a state of suspension while awaiting a clearer definition of its role within the InnoNext Initiative. This situation concerns both companies and talents, highlighting how a significant share of participants comes from this specific ecosystem, which is currently experiencing a slowdown due to external factors unrelated to InnoNext’s direct activities.

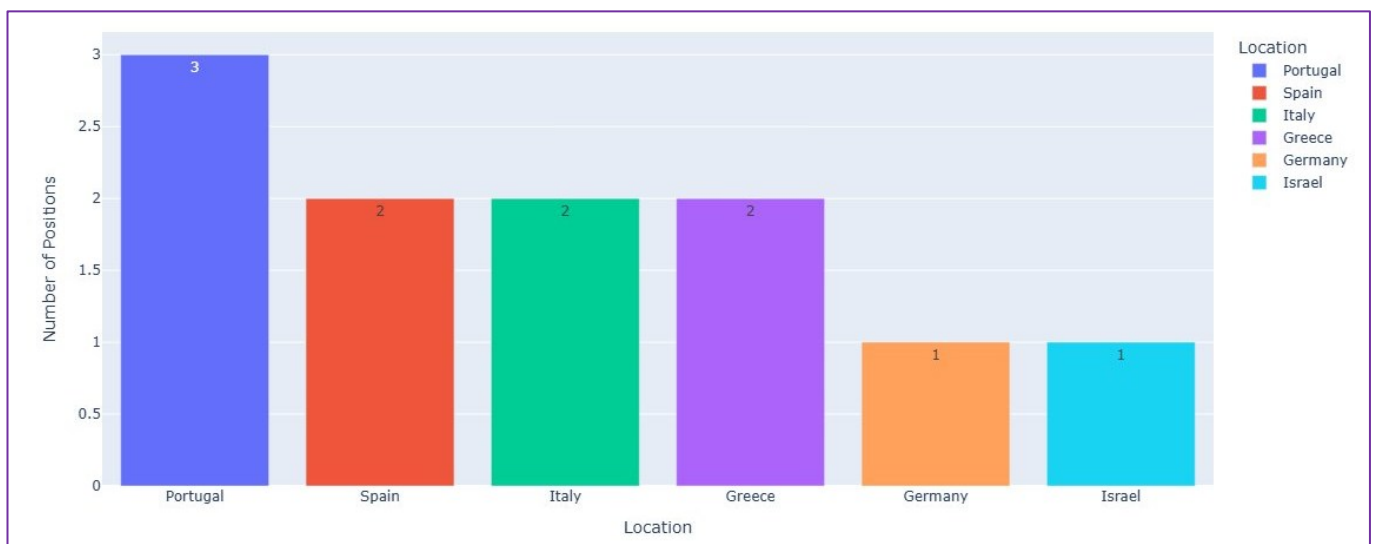


Figure 38 - Number of Positions per Location



11.2. Overview of the Visiting Talents movement trends on the platform

In the period immediately following the call on December 13, the number of applications remained relatively low, likely due to the proximity to the holiday season. Starting in January, there was a slight increase, followed by a significant peak due to the dissemination of the call by one of the EU Partner Programmes to its ecosystem (ERC).

The following figures are taken from the InnoNext Platform and show the trend focused on the Talents activity.

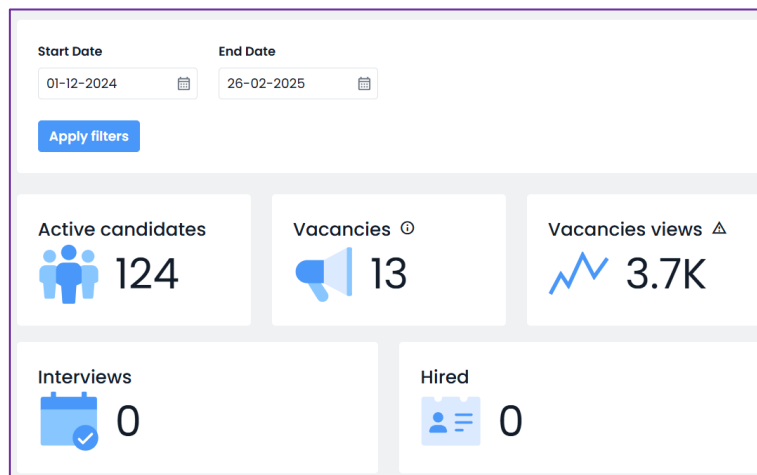


Figure 39 - Visual on the Talents Activity on the Platform

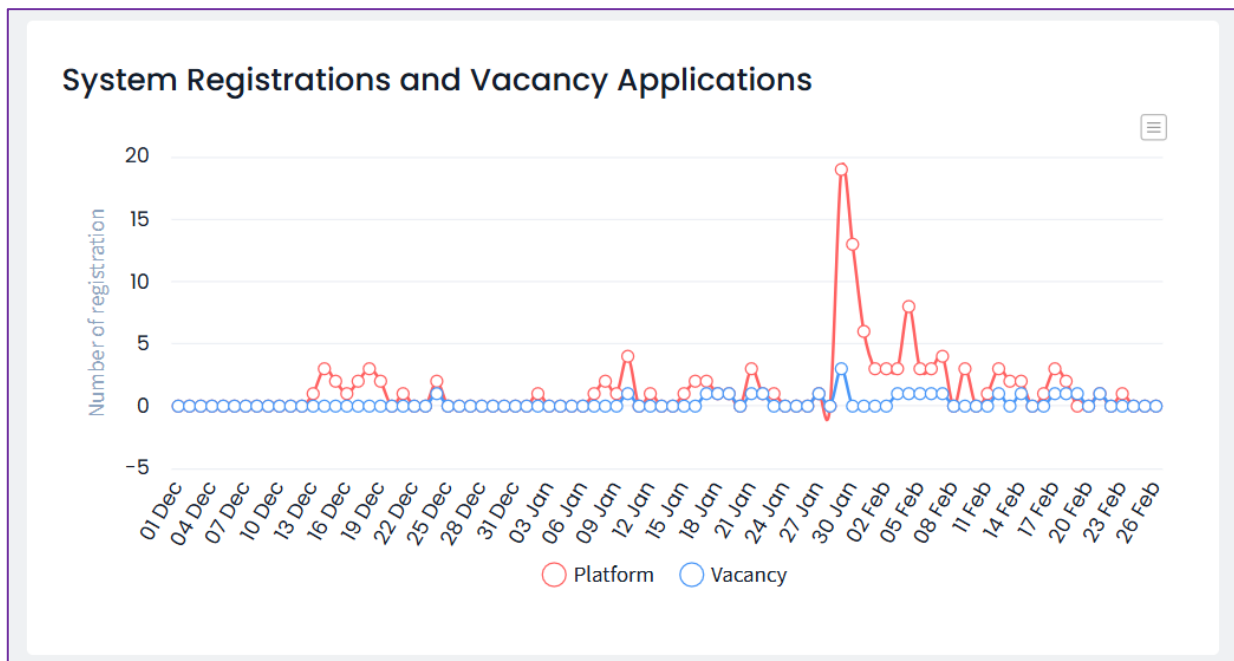


Figure 40 – Registrations and Applications Comparison

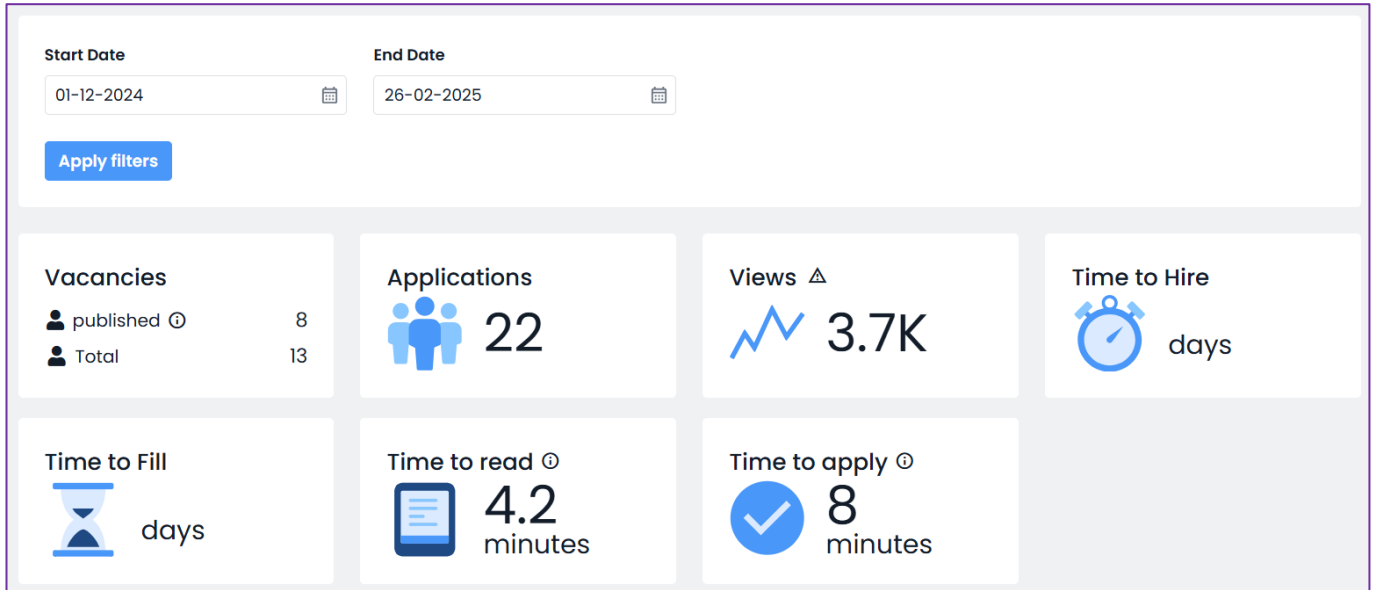


Figure 41 -Overview of application from the matchmaking platform

A total of **22 applications** were received and distributed across **13 vacancies**. Among these:

- Only **5 talents (22.7%)** successfully uploaded the **Declaration of Honor (DoH)** and was therefore assigned **“Eligible”** status.
- **13 talents (59.1%)** were reminded to upload the DoH and are currently marked as **“DoH Request.”**
- The remaining **4 talents (18.2%)** are currently in **“Applied”** status, meaning they are on hold. This is either because they are not part of an eligible program or because they have only recently applied, and the **3-day period** before sending the DoH upload reminder has not yet elapsed.

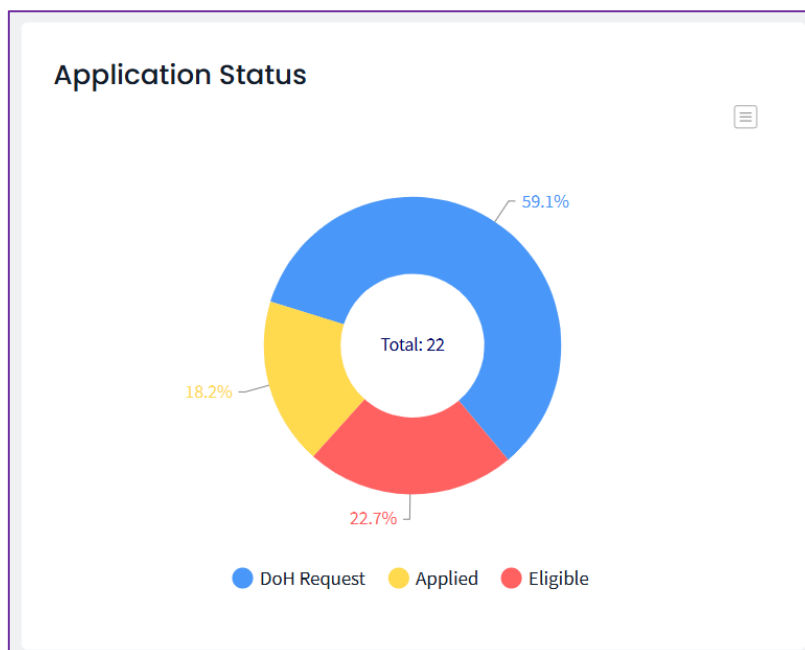


Figure 42 – Talents' Application Status



Due to the high percentage of applicants who have not yet uploaded the DoH, follow-up reminders were sent via email, phone and WhatsApp **to identify any potential issues**. Unfortunately, the only response received was from a candidate who, despite indicating eligibility in the registration form, is actually not part of any eligible program and, therefore, **cannot provide the DoH**.

12. Internship Activation Status

The activation of internships has been progressing more slowly than anticipated. The process involves multiple steps designed to meet the requirements of both EU programmes and InnoNext beneficiaries. It is worth noting that the InnoNext process is being built from scratch. The co-design approach implemented since the very beginning allowed us to receive essential indications from EU Partner Programmes. The first launch of the call is the pilot phase, which we are carefully monitoring to identify criticisms and improvements. In this first phase, several aspects of the process have been redesigned and implemented in-itinere—for instance, the matchmaking platform, the IPR terms, and the process to access funding. The interactions with beneficiaries highlighted the need to support them, especially the companies, to rethink the internship in the innovative light that InnoNext proposes. InnoNext introduces a measure that rather than a conventional internship, proposes a sort of partnership, not finalised to hiring resources but promoting the knowledge transfer and expertise exchange. This requires reframing the usual structures and formulating challenging opportunities or demands.

Considering this purpose, the InnoNext resources and channels are continuously improved. In addition to this, the one-to-one interaction is facilitated to reinforce every message and support every subject. On the other hand, the direct feedback from both Visiting Talents and Hosting Companies we are collecting provides us a better understanding of the factors contributing to these delays.

- A recurring theme in the feedback received relates to the EIT involvement process. While the temporary suspension of EIT participation is indicated on the website, some stakeholders remain unaware of this, and others who have seen the notice seek further clarity on when they will be able to engage with the InnoNext initiative. This topic is generating the most part of the questions InnoNext is receiving from Talents and Companies.
- From the Talent perspective, some concerns have been raised regarding the limited number of available positions on the platform, which narrows their options. Some feedback from the Talents' side concerns the payment procedure, particularly regarding the specific conditions for ERC beneficiaries. Additionally, during 1-to-1 meetings, two Hosting Companies inquired about the payment conditions managed by InnoNext and EU Programmes. Furthermore, they are considering the possibility of retaining the Talent within the team after the Internship ends.
- Meanwhile, Hosting Companies have expressed challenges related to the inability to view candidate details and initiate contact and limitations due to delays in the processing of the



Declaration of Honour (DOH), a required document for application approval. To address this, the consortium has reached out to talents to identify any issues they may be facing with understanding or submitting the DOH, with the aim of clarifying and streamlining this step.

Based on the feedback collected so far, it appears that the slow activation process is largely due to the limited number of opportunities currently available for both companies and talents. We are working in multiple directions. From one side, we are strengthening communication and dissemination efforts to expanding outreach, attracting more participants, and broadening the range of opportunities on the InnoNext platform. Additionally, ongoing collaboration with EIT is going to clarify their participation and define the requirements to facilitate and increase the registrations from both talents and companies.

In addition, we are releasing dedicated content and UI changes on the matchmaking platform to facilitate the Companies to create relevant opportunities. Finally, the InnoNext consortium will continuously gathering feedback from stakeholders to identify any obstacles in the process and enhance each stage to better support beneficiaries.



13. Annexes

13.1. Annex 1 – Letter of Commitment

LETTER OF COMMITMENT

of

_____ [name of the company], _____ [VAT number or other identification number],
_____ [registered office], in the person of its legal representative Mr./Ms. _____,
(in the following "HOSTING COMPANY"),

in the initiative for companies and researchers called **InnoNext** promoted by the European Innovation Council, more specifically Next Generation Innovation Talents, HORIZON-EIC-2023-TALENTS-01-01, Grant Agreement n. 101160467 signed with The European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) and subsequent Consortium Agreement.

WHEREAS

- A)** The objective of the InnoNext scheme is to enable researchers and aspiring innovators to better understand and gain direct experience of the complex process of taking innovation beyond invention and help them develop their entrepreneurial mind set. At the same time, this scheme aims to provide innovative start-ups with access to new ideas and insights from the cutting edge of research, thus accelerating the development of their breakthrough products and services. This project having as a goal to create internship for researchers (in the following "VISITING TALENT") in certain type of companies (hereinafter "HOSTING COMPANY").
- B)** The HOSTING COMPANY is interested in participating to InnoNext according to the program specified in **Annex 1**, in order to carry out an internship with a VISITING TALENT for the purposes InnoNext.
- C)** The HOSTING COMPANY is aware of the fact that the general conditions of participation set out in this document are binding and constitute the framework in which the internship shall be regulated.
- D)** The HOSTING COMPANY is aware of the fact that, if the VISITING TALENT with whom it will sign an internship contract belongs to the MSCA Program, it has to become an Associated Partner entering into the MSCA Grant Agreement, subject to the requirements and conditions set out in such MSCA Grant Agreement, which the HOSTING COMPANY declares to know.

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

1) DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERNSHIP

1.1 The HOSTING COMPANY is aware of the fact the name and curricula of the VISITING TALENT will be communicated to the same HOSTING COMPANY only after the matchmaking process carried out by the Consortium InnoNext.



1.2 The HOSTING COMPANY undertakes to sign with the VISITING TALENT a contract, according to the template herewith attached (**Annex 2**), that, if necessary, shall be adapted and amended according to the mandatory rules of the law applicable in its jurisdiction, in order to regulate the internship. The contract shall abide all clauses contained in these general conditions of participation, whereas included.

1.3 The HOSTING COMPANY undertakes to comply with the principles and labour rules developed by the European Commission to ensure strong social protection to the workers. In particular the HOSTING COMPANY undertakes, subject to the applicable law, to respect the rules concerning minimum requirements on working conditions - such as wages, working time, part-time work, workers' rights (such as, for example, insurance for the workers) - and obligations of information about important aspects of their employment and the posting of workers.

2) OBLIGATIONS

2.1 The HOSTING COMPANY, once signed the internship contract with the VISITING TALENT (**Annex 2**), undertakes to send a copy of it as attachment to an e-mail to the Consortium InnoNext, at the following e-mail address companies@innonext-project.eu.

2.2 The HOSTING COMPANY undertakes to give all the information, required by the Consortium InnoNext, about the progress of the internship.

3) REMUNERATION

3.1 The VISITING TALENT shall be paid for this internship according to the terms and conditions specified in a financial agreement (**Annex 3**), which do not involve the HOSTING COMPANY.

4) TERM

4.1 These general conditions of participation become valid with their signature by the HOSTING COMPANY and will remain in force as long as the internship contract (**Annex 2**), to be signed between the HOSTING COMPANY and the VISITING TALENT, will be in force.

5) APPLICABLE LAW AND JURISDICTION

5.1 These general conditions of participations are governed by Belgian law.

5.2 Any dispute arising from these general conditions of participations shall be the exclusive competence of the Courts of Brussels (Belgium).

6) MISCELLANEA

6.1 The whereas and the annexes are an integral part of these general conditions of participations.

_____ [place], _____ [date]



HOSTING COMPANY

For acknowledgement of Annex 1, Annex 2, Annex 3.

HOSTING COMPANY



ANNEX I

TRAINING PROGRAM

A thorough description must be provided for each job position posted on the platform. This will allow interns to gain a clear understanding of their roles and seek approval from their supervisors.



ANNEX 2

INTERNSHIP CONTRACT TEMPLATE

[only if necessary, according to mandatory rules of applicable law, the present template can be amended accordingly]

between

_____ [name of the company], _____ [VAT number or other identification number],
_____ [registered office], in the person of its legal representative Mr./Ms. _____, (in the following "HOSTING COMPANY")

and

_____ [name of the trainee], _____ [fiscal code], residing in _____ [place of residence], (in the following "VISITING TALENT")

In the following also indicated singularly as "Party" and together as "Parties"

WHEREAS

A) The European Commission published a new project for companies and researchers called "Next Generation Innovation Talent" (in the following "InnoNext") promoted by the European Innovation Council, more specifically HORIZON-EIC-2023-TALENTS-01-01, Grant Agreement n. 101160467, signed with The European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) and subsequent Consortium Agreement. The objective of the InnoNext scheme is to enable researchers and aspiring innovators to better understand and gain direct experience of the complex process of taking innovation beyond invention and help them develop their entrepreneurial mind set. At the same time, this scheme aims to provide innovative start-ups with access to new ideas and insights from the cutting edge of research, thus accelerating the development of their breakthrough products and services. This project having as a goal to create internship for researchers in certain type of companies.

B) The HOSTING COMPANY and the VISITING TALENT want to sign this internship agreement, since the the Internship Task Program developed by InnoNext, of which they are both aware, is interesting for both of them.

In the light of the above, the Parties

AGREE AS FOLLOWS

1) DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERNSHIP

1.1 The VISITING TALENT will carry out the following activities relating to the project concerning _____: [description of the activities].



-
- 1.2 The VISITING TALENT will work at the premises of the HOSTING COMPANY from Monday to Friday, from ___ AM to ___ PM. The VISITING TALENT has the right to ask for 2 days in smart working each week, if the activities to be carried out could be conducted not at the premises of the HOSTING COMPANY.
 - 1.3 The VISITING TALENT may have to travel on behalf of the HOSTING COMPANY as part of the project he/she is following; in such case the relevant travel expenses shall be borne by the HOSTING COMPANY.
 - 1.4 The VISITING TALENT has the same performance obligation of the employees of the HOSTING COMPANY.
 - 1.5 The HOSTING COMPANY undertakes to comply with the principle and labour rules developed by the European Commission to ensure strong social protection to the workers. In particular the HOSTING COMPANY undertakes, subject to the applicable law, to respect the rules concerning minimum requirements on working conditions - such as wages, working time, part-time work, workers' rights (such as, for example, insurance for the workers) - and obligations of information about important aspects of their employment and the posting of workers.

2) REMUNERATION

- 2.1 The VISITING TALENT declares that the HOSTING COMPANY shall not have any obligation of payment for this internship, except for the costs as per clause 1.3 above, since he/she receives a remuneration by a third party, according to the rules of the InnoNext project.

3) TERM

- 3.1 The internship starts from the signature of this contract and shall have a duration of [*3/6 to be specified*] months.
- 3.2 If the VISITING TALENT belongs to the MSCA Program, the duration of this internship shall not be more than 1/3 of the duration of the fellowship in the MSCA Program.

4) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- 4.1 If, during the internship, the VISITING TALENT and the HOSTING COMPANY give each other access to their respective background knowledge, which are covered by intellectual property rights, such background knowledge remains the property of the original owner and no rights are recognised to the other.
- 4.2 If, during the internship, it will be created something new, which can be protected with intellectual property rights, the property will be of the HOSTING COMPANY and the VISITING TALENT declares that the remuneration as per clause 3 above satisfies also this aspect concerning the intellectual property rights.



4.3 The HOSTING COMPANY recognizes to the VISITING TALENT the right to use, previous authorisation in writing of the HOSTING COMPANY which will not be unreasonably withheld, the results realized during the internship working, for the project in which he/she has been involved, for research scope. Furthermore, the VISITING TALENT will be entitled to publish scientific papers related to the project of the internship in order to give information about the results reached, but such publications need previous authorization in writing by the HOSTING COMPANY which will not be unreasonably withheld, in order to allow the latter to take the necessary measures to protect confidential information before obtaining the relevant protection (for example a patent).

4.4 Should the HOSTING COMPANY file a patent or other intellectual property right (e.g. trademark, design, etc.), the VISITING TALENT will give all useful support also once the internship ended and, if asked, will sign all relevant documents.

5) CONFIDENTIALITY

5.1 The VISITING TALENT agrees that all information, documents and materials to which the VISITING TALENT has access, related to the project in which the VISITING TALENT will be involved in execution of this INTERNSHIP CONTRACT, are to be considered as confidential, unless they are in public domain.

5.2 The VISITING TALENT engages itself for the whole duration of this INTERNSHIP CONTRACT and until they fall into public domain, not to use and/or disclose on its behalf or on third parties' behalf any confidential information.

6) MISCELLANEA

6.1 The whereas are an integral part of this INTERNSHIP CONTRACT.

_____ [place], _____ [date]

The HOSTING COMPANY

_____ [place], _____ [date]

The VISITING TALENT



ANNEX 3

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

The hosting companies will not provide any direct payment to the visiting talents because the costs of the internships will be covered by either InnoNext or the EU partner programme in which the researcher is a consortium member.*

**In the first case, the Visiting Talent, belonging to the ERC Program or to EIC Pathfinder Program and being eligible as a beneficiary of the Financial Support for Third Parties provided by the InnoNext Project, will sign this Annex 3 (Financial Agreement) to be compiled.*

The Letter of Commitment is provided with the Templates of the two Financial Agreements (Annex 3).



13.2. Annex 2 – Declaration of Honour

Draft

DECLARATION OF HONOUR

_____ [Name] and _____ [Surname] of the signatory of this form (hereinafter "Talent"), with ID or passport number _____.

Name and Unique Identification Number of the Project in which the Talent is involved: _____.

The Funding scheme: _____.

Name and identification data of the Project Coordinator/Activity Leader of the Project, in which the Talent is involved: _____.

Name and identification data of the Employer, by which the Talent is employed: _____.

Aware of the civil and criminal liability under the law arising from untrue information, I, the undersigned,

DECLARE THAT

- 1) The above-mentioned entities are among those already accredited for participation in the InnoNext initiative, more specifically Next Generation Innovation Talents, HORIZON-EIC-2023-TALENTS-01-01, Grant Agreement n. 101160467, as part of certain research initiatives funded by the European Union, that the latter has selected to form the pool from which to draw talents for the abovementioned initiative.
- 2) On _____, I sent written information through e-mail about my participation to InnoNext initiative to my Employer, who had no objections.
- 3) On _____, I sent also written information through e-mail about my participation to InnoNext initiative to my Project Coordinator/Activity Leader of the project, who had no objections.
- 4) I do not receive double remuneration for being involved both in a previous research initiative funded by the European Union and for the participation in the InnoNext initiative.
- 5) I undertake to respect the 'further requirements' requested by the InnoNext initiative (undertaking only for ERC and EIC Pathfinder researchers): "*Researchers receiving the financial support must and apply to the obligations under 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) of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement.*" included in the General Model Grant Agreement (GA), to which the InnoNext GA refers. Due to confidentiality requirements, the full agreement cannot be published. However, the aforementioned articles are the same of those included in the InnoNext GA. Therefore, you can read them in the General Model Grant Agreement, at the following link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf.

Place, date and signature of the Talent



13.3. Annex 3 – Financial Agreement Template

Template

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT ONLY FOR EIC PATHFINDER TALENTS

Between

RESEAU ENTREPRENDRE PIEMONTE, Ente del Terzo Settore, legal representative Mr. Christian Zegna, C.F. 97730200017, with seat in Via Maria Vittoria 38 by Rinascimenti Sociali, Torino, in its quality of member of the Consortium InnoNext together with Fondazione LINKS e Zucchetti S.p.A. (the “**BENEFICIARY**”)

and

Mr./Ms. _____, with ID or passport number _____, with residence in _____ (the “**VISITING TALENT**”)

Together also called the “Parties”

WHEREAS

- A) The European Innovation Council promoted a project for companies and researchers called InnoNext, more specifically Next Generation Innovation Talents, HORIZON-EIC-2023-TALENTS-01-01, Grant Agreement n. 101160467 signed with The European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) and subsequent Consortium Agreement.
- B) The objective of the InnoNext scheme is to enable researchers and aspiring innovators to better understand and gain direct experience of the complex process of taking innovation beyond invention and help them develop their entrepreneurial mind set. At the same time, this scheme aims to provide innovative start-ups with access to new ideas and insights from the cutting edge of research, thus accelerating the development of their breakthrough products and services. This project having as a goal to create internship for researchers in certain type of companies (hereinafter “**HOSTING COMPANY**”).
- C) The VISITING TALENT is a researcher, who belongs to an entity which is part of certain research initiatives funded by the European Union, that the latter has selected to form the pool from which to draw talents for the abovementioned initiative; in particular, the VISITING TALENT is currently working on EIC Pathfinder actions.
- D) According to the rules of the InnoNext, visiting talents working on EIC Pathfinder actions will receive a mobility allowance for their internship with the mechanism of “cascade funding” (or “financial support to third parties” FSTP) not by their employer but by another subject.



Template

- E)** The Beneficiary is the entity which will provide for such payment in its quality of financial executor InnoNext's cascade funding.
- F)** The VISITING TALENT participated to the initiative InnoNext filing its application and he/she has been selected for an internship.
- G)** During the application process, the VISITING TALENT gave evidence of the fact that he/she meets the conditions of eligibility in order to be paid for the internship through the mechanism of FSTP, in particular that the distance between the location of his normal place of work and the location of the HOSTING COMPANY is of more than 150 Km.
- H)** Therefore, the Parties want, with this agreement, to fix the rules and the steps of the procedure for the payment of the mobility allowance, according to the criteria established in the Grant Agreement n. 101160467.

THE PARTIES AGREE AS FOLLOWS

1) OBJECT

- 1.1 The scope of this financial agreement is to regulate the payment of the VISITING TALENT for the internship he/she will do according to the agreement signed with the HOSTING COMPANY (Annex 2).
- 1.2 For the internship, according to the criteria established in the Grant Agreement n. 101160467, the VISITING TALENT shall receive a monthly mobility allowance of Euros 2.300,00, for the entire duration of the internship.
- 1.3 If the internship lasts longer than three months, there will not be additional mobility allowance through this action.
- 1.4 The internship will take place at a HOSTING COMPANY, whose location is more than 150 km from the VISITING TALENT's current workplace.

2) OBLIGATION OF THE VISITING TALENT

- 2.1 Monthly, within the 1st week of each month of the internship starting from the second one, the VISITING TALENT shall send to the BENEFICIARY a report, signed by the HOSTING COMPANY, about the progress of the internship. Should the report not be sent by the VISITING TALENT within the term mentioned above, the BENEFICIARY will be entitled to interrupt the relevant payment due as per clause 3 below. In the meantime, all the obligations of the VISITING TALENT arising out from the internship contract remain in force and the VISITING TALENT shall not have any right to ask for any disbursement, at any title, to the HOSTING COMPANY in relation to the internship.



Template

2.2 The VISITING TALENT shall send to the BENEFICIARY all the information necessary to provide the payments, such as bank data.

2.3 The VISITING TALENT shall comply with the obligations under 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 (recordkeeping) of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, which he/she confirms to know.

3) OBLIGATION OF THE BENEFICIARY

3.1 Monthly, within the 15 of each month, the BENEFICIARY shall pay the amount due to the VISITING TALENT, upon receipt of the report relating to the activities carried out during the previous month as per clause 2.1 above.

3.2 If the VISITING TALENT fails to send the monthly report in time, before interrupting the payments, the BENEFICIARY shall ask for it also to the HOSTING COMPANY, according to the clause 2.2 of the letter of commitment signed by the latter, warning the HOSTING COMPANY that, in the absence of the report, the BENEFICIARY will interrupt the payment to the VISITING TALENT.

4) TERM

4.1 This financial agreement becomes valid with its signature by the VISITING TALENT and the BENEFICIARY and will remain in force as long as the internship contract (Annex 2), signed between the HOSTING COMPANY and the VISITING TALENT, will be in force.

4.2 If the internship contract (Annex 2) will be terminated before its natural term, by a decision of the HOSTING COMPANY based on a breach of the obligations arising out of the internship contract by the VISITING TALENT, all the payment obligations of the BENEFICIARY towards the VISITING TALENT, based on this financial agreement, shall be considered as terminated.

4.3 If the VISITING TALENT will be in material breach of the obligations arising out from this financial agreement, the payment obligations of the BENEFICIARY shall be considered as terminated. Should this be the case, the VISITING TALENT shall not have any right to ask for any disbursement, at any title, to the HOSTING COMPANY in relation to his internship.

4.4 The Parties are not liable for a failure to perform any of their obligations in so far as they prove that the failure was due to an impediment beyond their control. In such a case, the payment obligations of the BENEFICIARY shall be considered as suspended. Should the impediment last for more than 15 days, this financial agreement, including the payment



Template

obligations of the BENEFICIARY towards the VISITING TALENT, shall be considered as terminated.

5) APPLICABLE LAW AND JURISDICTION

5.1 This financial agreement is governed by Belgian law.

5.2 Any dispute arising from this financial agreement shall be the exclusive competence of the Courts of Brussels (Belgium).

6) MISCELLANEA

6.1 The whereas are an integral part of this financial agreement.

Place and date _____

Place and date _____

The BENEFICIARY

The VISITING TALENT



Template

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT ONLY FOR ERC TALENTS

Between

RESEAU ENTREPRENDRE PIEMONTE, Ente del Terzo Settore, legal representative Mr. Christian Zegna, C.F. 97730200017, with seat in Via Maria Vittoria 38 by Rinascimenti Sociali, Torino, in its quality of member of the Consortium InnoNext together with Fondazione LINKS e Zucchetti S.p.A. (the "**BENEFICIARY**")

and

Mr./Ms. _____, with ID or passport number _____, with residence in _____ (the "**VISITING TALENT**")

Together also called the "Parties"

WHEREAS

- A)** The European Innovation Council promoted a project for companies and researchers called InnoNext, more specifically Next Generation Innovation Talents, HORIZON-EIC-2023-TALENTS-01-01, Grant Agreement n. 101160467 signed with The European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) and subsequent Consortium Agreement.
- B)** The objective of the InnoNext scheme is to enable researchers and aspiring innovators to better understand and gain direct experience of the complex process of taking innovation beyond invention and help them develop their entrepreneurial mind set. At the same time, this scheme aims to provide innovative start-ups with access to new ideas and insights from the cutting edge of research, thus accelerating the development of their breakthrough products and services. This project having as a goal to create internship for researchers in certain type of companies (hereinafter "**HOSTING COMPANY**").
- C)** The **VISITING TALENT** is a researcher, who belongs to an entity which is part of certain research initiatives funded by the European Union, that the latter has selected to form the pool from which to draw talents for the abovementioned initiative; in particular, the **VISITING TALENT** is currently working on ERC actions.
- D)** According to the rules of the InnoNext, visiting talents working on ERC actions will receive a reimbursement for their internship with the mechanism of "cascade funding" (or "financial support to third parties" FSTP) not by their employer but by another subject.
- E)** The Beneficiary is the entity which will provide for such payment in its quality of financial executor InnoNext's cascade funding.



Template

- F)** The VISITING TALENT participated to the initiative InnoNext filing its application and he has been selected for an internship.
- G)** During the application process, the VISITING TALENT gave evidence of the fact that he/she meets the conditions of eligibility in order to be paid for the internship through the mechanism of FSTP.
- H)** Therefore, the Parties want, with this agreement, to fix the rules and the steps of the procedure for the correct payment of the internship, according to the criteria established in the Grant Agreement n. 101160467.

THE PARTIES AGREE AS FOLLOWS

1) OBJECT

- 1.1 The scope of this financial agreement is to regulate the payment of the VISITING TALENT for the internship he/she will do according to the agreement signed with the HOSTING COMPANY (Annex 2).
- 1.2 For the internship, according to the criteria established in the Grant Agreement n. 101160467, the VISITING TALENT shall receive a monthly reimbursement, for the entire duration of the internship.
- 1.3 If the internship lasts longer than three months, there will not be additional reimbursement through this action.
- 1.4 If the VISITING TALENT is a Postdoctoral researcher, he/she will receive the flat monthly rate of Euros 5.300,00; if the VISITING TALENT is a PhD candidate, he/she will receive the flat monthly rate of Euros 4.300,00.

2) OBLIGATION OF THE VISITING TALENT

- 2.1 Monthly, within the 1st week of each month of the internship starting from the second one, the VISITING TALENT shall send to the BENEFICIARY a report, signed by the HOSTING COMPANY, about the progress of the internship. Should the report not be sent by the VISITING TALENT within the term mentioned above, the BENEFICIARY will be entitled to interrupt the relevant payment due as per clause 3 below. In the meantime, all the obligations of the VISITING TALENT arising out from the internship contract remain in force and the VISITING TALENT shall not have any right to ask for any disbursement, at any title, to the HOSTING COMPANY in relation to the internship.
- 2.2 The VISITING TALENT shall send to the BENEFICIARY all the information necessary to provide the payments, such as bank data.



Template

2.3 The VISITING TALENT shall comply with the obligations under 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 (recordkeeping) of the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement, which he/she confirms to know.

3) OBLIGATION OF THE BENEFICIARY

3.1 Monthly, within the 15 of each month, the BENEFICIARY shall pay the amount due to the VISITING TALENT, upon receipt of the report relating to the activities carried out during the previous month as per clause 2.1 above.

3.2 If the VISITING TALENT fails to send the monthly report in time, before interrupting the payments, the BENEFICIARY shall ask for it also to the HOSTING COMPANY, according to the clause 2.2 of the letter of commitment signed by the latter, warning the HOSTING COMPANY that, in the absence of the report, the BENEFICIARY will interrupt the payment to the VISITING TALENT.

4) TERM

4.1 This financial agreement becomes valid with its signature by the VISITING TALENT and the BENEFICIARY and will remain in force as long as the internship contract (Annex 2), signed between the HOSTING COMPANY and the VISITING TALENT, will be in force.

4.2 If the internship contract (Annex 2) will be terminated before its natural term, by a decision of the HOSTING COMPANY based on a breach of the obligations arising out of the internship contract by the VISITING TALENT, all the payment obligations of the BENEFICIARY towards the VISITING TALENT, based on this financial agreement, shall be considered as terminated.

4.3 If the VISITING TALENT will be in material breach of the obligations arising out from this financial agreement, the payment obligations of the BENEFICIARY shall be considered as terminated. Should this be the case, the VISITING TALENT shall not have any right to ask for any disbursement, at any title, to the HOSTING COMPANY in relation to his internship.

4.4 The Parties are not liable for a failure to perform any of their obligations in so far as they prove that the failure was due to an impediment beyond their control. In such a case, the payment obligations of the BENEFICIARY shall be considered as suspended. Should the impediment last for more than 15 days, this financial agreement, including the payment obligations of the BENEFICIARY towards the VISITING TALENT, shall be considered as terminated.



Template

5) APPLICABLE LAW AND JURISDICTION

5.1 This financial agreement is governed by Belgian law.

5.2 Any dispute arising from this financial agreement shall be the exclusive competence of the Courts of Brussels (Belgium).

6) MISCELLANEA

6.1 The whereas are an integral part of this financial agreement.

Place and date _____

Place and date _____

The BENEFICIARY

The VISITING TALENT

13.4. Annex 4 – Guide to Creating a Vacancy for an InnoNext Internship

Guide to Creating a Vacancy for an InnoNext Internship

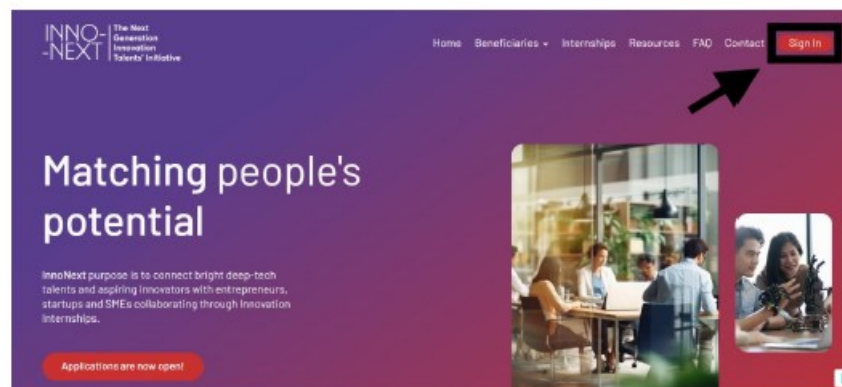
This document is designed to assist companies in creating an innovation internship vacancy for InnoNext.

The introduction provides a guide on how to access the InnoNext recruiting platform.

As the main focus, the document includes a [detailed guide on structuring the content for the vacancy fields](#).

Introduction: Accessing the InnoNext recruiting Platform

- a. On the InnoNext website (<https://innonext-project.eu/>) click on the **Sign In** button



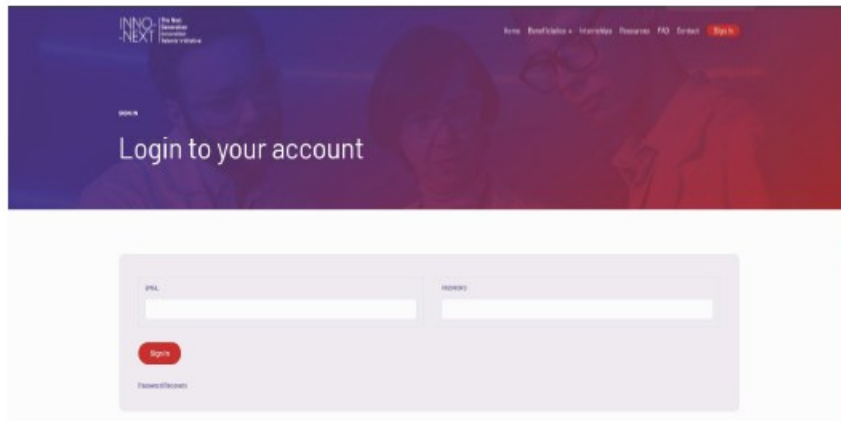
info@innonext-project.eu

www.innonext-project.eu

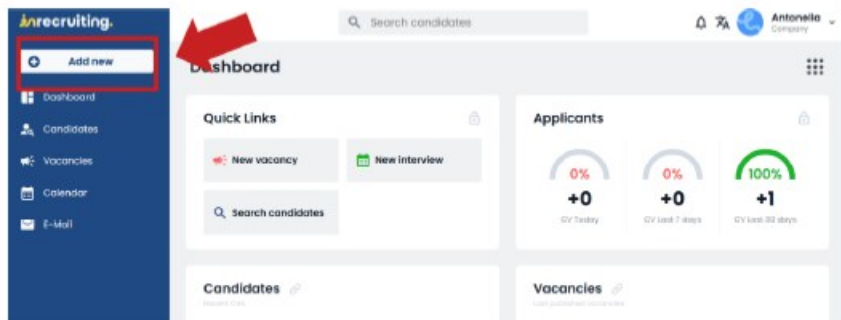




b. Insert email and password, you will be redirected to the platform



c. In the platform click on Add New.



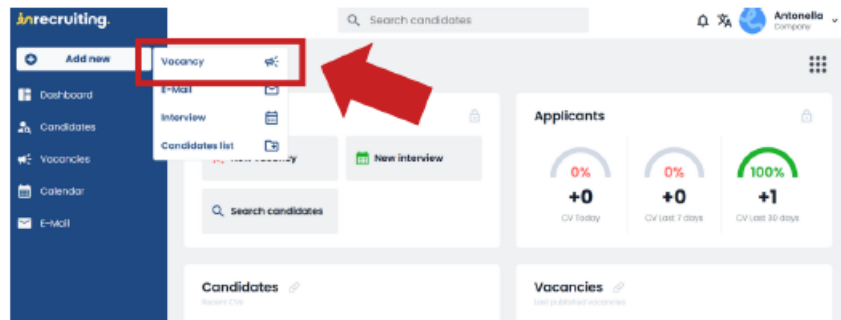
info@innonext-project.eu

www.innonext-project.eu





d. Select Vacancy.



1. Company Information and Title

≡ Description

Company * Vacancy Owner

Title *

- **Company:** Complete name of your company
- **Title:**
 - Must be concise, specific, and aligned with the core activity of the project supported by the EU program for which the company is eligible.
 - Avoid generic terms and refrain from using "internship," "vacancy," "job position," etc., in the title.
 - Do not include "Deep Tech Talents" or "Aspiring Innovators" in the title.

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2. Company Description

In case your company received support from your affiliated EU program for a specific project, please describe the project and refer the vacancy to it.

Company Description*

Default | Default | B I U | A | Default | | | | 0

Content structure:

- Start describing the innovation project to which the internship will refer. Specify the thematic area of the ongoing innovation project (e.g., biotechnology, sustainable energy, artificial intelligence). The internship must be directly related to this thematic area.
- Describe the company: include a summary of the company's history, activities, team, and work environment. Highlight the company's Mission and Vision.
- Link the website of your company.

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3. Position

Position *

Default | Default | B I U | A | Default | | | | | 0

Content structure:

- **Position Overview**
 - Provide a detailed description of the goals of the internship.
 - Highlight tasks and responsibilities directly related to the innovation project being supported.
 - Explain why the candidate's expertise is crucial for the role.
 - Emphasize the connection between the internship and the project's objectives.
- **Key Outcomes**
 - Clearly outline the value that the candidate will gain from the internship experience.
 - List the competencies and output that the internship will aim to develop. Provide a detailed description of the responsibilities and activities the intern will undertake.
 - Clearly link the activities to the expected outcomes of the innovation project.
- **Type of Stream**
You can indicate the type of internship you will offer:
 - **Deep-Tech Talents** (research focused internship)
 - **Aspiring Innovators** (entrepreneur focused internship)

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4. Requirements

Requirements *

Content structure:

1. **Required Qualifications**
Include, but are not limited to:
 - o Degree Level
 - o Specific Technical Skills
2. **Soft Skills**
 - o Highlight interpersonal or organizational skills required for the role.
3. **Preferred Qualifications (Optional)**

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5. Other Information

Other Information

In this section it's possible to include additional important details, such as:

- Duration of the internship (e.g., 3 or 6 months, to be defined with the candidate, ...).
- Additional details about the internship organization
- Additional relevant information.

6. Suggestions

Promote the internship through your company's communication channels.

Good luck!

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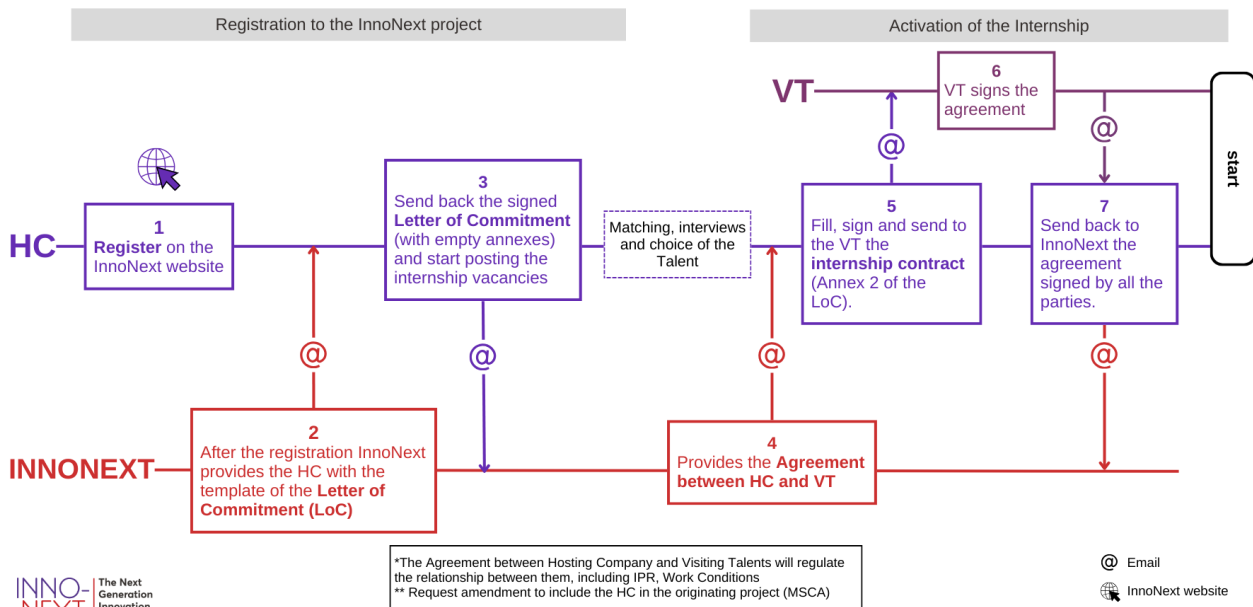


13.5. Annex 5 – InnoNext Agreement Guide



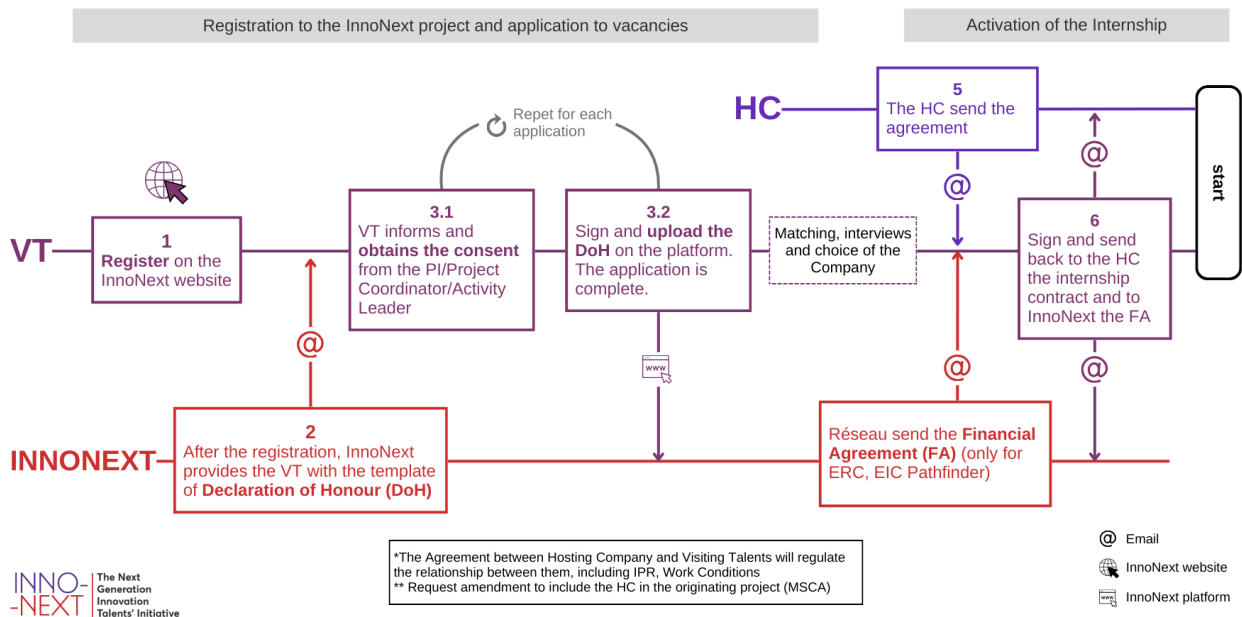
INNONEXT AGREEMENT GUIDE

Journey of Financial Agreement for the Hosting Company (HC)





Journey of Financial Agreement for the Visiting Talent (VT)



Resources

You can find more information consulting:



FAQ

Dedicated section of questions and answers, covering every phase of the InnoNext journey and EU Partner Programmes specific requirements.
<https://www.innonext-project.eu/en/faq>



Resources

Templates of the needed document, to get prepared in any phase.
<https://www.innonext-project.eu/en/resources>



Contacts

For any other issue, please contact InnoNext:
<https://www.innonext-project.eu/en/contact>



European
Innovation
Council



*InnoNext is an initiative funded by the European Union
(call HORIZON-EIC-2023-TALENTS-01-01) under grant agreement n. 101160467.*

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InnoNext Consortium:

