Applicant guide
Level 2

Subsidy Round 2027
Proof-of-Concept

Contents

Biotech Booster Level 2 (Proof-of-Concept)

Biotech Booster Level 2 (Proof-of-Concept) is open to start-ups, companies, research organizations and knowledge institutes. The program offers milestone-based funding of up to **€1.9 million per project**, including up to €600,000 in personnel costs, with a maximum project duration of **two years**.

Our Level 2 program is designed for projects that have progressed beyond the proof-of-principle stage and are ready to demonstrate their commercial and societal potential. Biotech Booster uses the KTH **Innovation Readiness Level (IRL)** framework to monitor project maturity and expects projects entering Level 2 to be at approximately **IRL 4–5**. See this link and our website for more information. For projects at an earlier stage, our Level 1 (Proof-of-Principle) program is more suitable.

During the application process, applicants must demonstrate to the review panels that their innovation has significant impact, strong commercial potential, and investment potential. We use these criteria from the Biotech Booster grant Scheme to assess Level 2 applications. In short: The application should clearly explain how the proposed biotechnology-related activities will translate research-based knowledge from proof of principle into a practical process or product. It should demonstrate that the proposed activities are realistic, contribute to a clearly defined value-adding milestone or inflection point, and address a relevant societal need. Applicants should also describe the innovative proof of concept, the intellectual property (IP) strategy, evidence of interest from potential customers, partners, or investors, and the team's expertise, experience, and commitment.

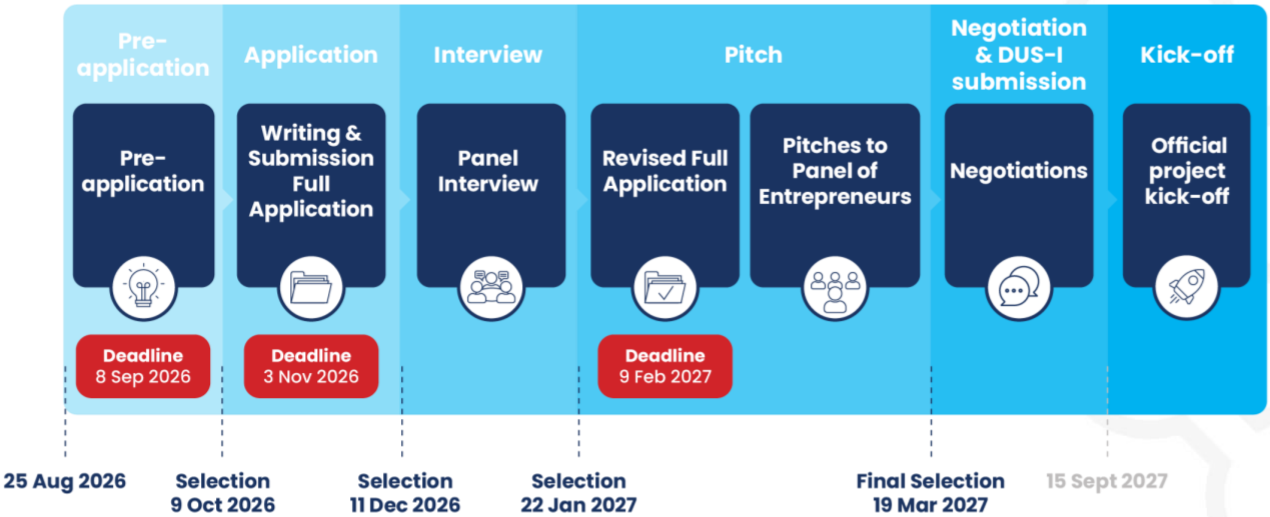
Biotech Booster is responsible for the evaluation and selection process of applications that are eligible for pitching to the Panel of Entrepreneurs. Only Level 2 applicants who receive a positive recommendation from the Panel of Entrepreneurs may proceed. Selected teams will form a consortium with Biotech Booster B.V., based on agreements on milestone payments, success sharing, and project governance. Biotech Booster is the main applicant on behalf of the consortium and will submit the formal subsidy application to DUS-I. On the DUS-I website you can read more on the legal framework of the Biotech Booster grant scheme. DUS-I is the organization that works for the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in executing the subsidy scheme.

Within 6 months after application to DUS-I, the project can start and will receive support from Biotech Booster and a Project Steering Committee. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) consists of five people and is composed of one representative of the project team, three entrepreneurs and one content expert. The PSC will support the Level 2 project during their development and in the scale out phase.

Application process

Background application and selection process

The application process for a Level 2 Proof-of-Concept project consists of five steps. The application is assessed by several selection committees, with the final decision made by a Panel of Entrepreneurs. An overview of the different steps in the process is provided in the visualization below.



Pre-application

Deadline pre-application: September 8, 2026 at 14:00 CEST

For this subsidy call, submitting a pre-application is mandatory. The purpose of the pre-application is to demonstrate to our review teams that the proposed project aligns with the objectives and criteria of the program. The submission portal opens on 25 August 2026 and closes on 8 September 2026 at 14:00 CEST. Based on the assessment of the pre-applications, a selection of applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

How to prepare

- Before completing the submission, ensure that your project meets the DUS-I subsidy requirements, that the project maturity level aligns with Level 2, and that the appropriate Thematic Cluster has been identified. For Thematic cluster descriptions: Thematic Clusters - Biotech Booster
- Join the Info session on August 20, 2026 at 14:00 – 15:00 CEST, register here.
- If you still have questions after reviewing all information above, reach out to applications@biotechbooster.nl and we will connect you with a Biotech Booster Business or Impact Developer.

Submission documents

- Online pre-application form
  Available on the Biotech Booster website from August 25, 2026.
- Pitch deck complementing pre-application form

Guidelines and instructions regarding the pre-application can be found in Annex I Pre-application documents.

All information shared during the application is treated as confidential information. The information will be shared with Biotech Booster, Biotech Booster-affiliated impact/business developers and external advisors. We have confidentiality agreements in place with all parties we work with.

Outcome

You will be informed no later than **Friday, October 9, 2026**, whether your project idea aligns with the objectives of the Biotech Booster subsidy scheme and whether you have been selected to submit a full application for the next stage of the application process.

Full Application

Deadline full application: November 3, 2026 at 14:00 CET

Applicants selected to proceed with the application process will receive an invitation by email, including access to a personal link to submit their full application. On October 15, 2026 at 14:00-15:00 CEST, an online information session regarding the Level 2 requirements will be organized (register here).

Submission documents

- Business plan
- Slide deck
- Video
- Success sharing proposal
- Budget application form
    - Only for applicants who are companies: a financial overview

We use these criteria from the Biotech Booster grant Scheme to assess Level 2 applications. The review and selection of projects for an interview with Biotech Booster will be based solely on the information provided in the documents submitted during this step. Guidelines and instructions regarding the application documents can be found in Annex I Application documents.

All information shared during the application is treated as confidential information. The information will be shared with Biotech Booster, Biotech Booster-affiliated impact/business developers and external advisors. We have confidentiality agreements in place with all parties we work with.

Outcome

You will be informed no later than **Friday, December 11, 2026**, whether your application has been selected to proceed to an interview with a Biotech Booster Panel.

Interview with the Biotech Booster Panel

Interview dates: January 7 - 14, 2027

The interview gives Biotech Booster the opportunity to meet the team and to ask in-depth questions about the documentation submitted with the full application.

The interview with the Biotech Booster Panel will last 30 minutes and consists of the following parts:

- Project team pitch (10 min)
- Q&A with the Biotech Booster panel (20 min)

The Biotech Booster panel will consist of three to four members representing the Biotech Boosters program management team, commercialization leads, Thematic Cluster managers, and business and impact developers.

The interviews will take place in person in Utrecht. You will be informed of your interview date and time slot no later than **Friday, December 18, 2026**. Please note that interview dates and times cannot be rescheduled.

Outcome

By **Friday, January 22, 2027**, you will be notified whether your application has been selected to proceed to the pitch to the Panel of Entrepreneurs.

Pitch to Panel of Entrepreneurs

Pitch dates: March 1-5, 2027

Deadline final application: February 9, 2027 at 14:00 CET

The pitch to the Panel of Entrepreneurs will last 55 minutes and consists of the following parts:

- Project team pitch (10 min)
- Q&A session (±45 min)

The Panel of Entrepreneurs consist of 4-6 entrepreneurs, with expertise relevant to your application. This panel is responsible for the final selection of the projects that will enter the Biotech Booster program.

You will be informed of your pitch time slot not later than **February 12, 2027**. Please note that the pitch date cannot be rescheduled.

To help you prepare, Biotech Booster will organize a pitch workshop on **February 4, 2027**. More details about this will be shared in due time.

Submission documents

Using the personal link provided in the email informing you of the outcome of the previous selection, you must submit an updated version of the following documents no later than **February 9, 2027 at 14:00 CET**:

- Business plan
- Slide deck
- Video
- Success sharing proposal
- Budget application form
- Signed TC agreement (annex 5)

Guidelines and instructions regarding the application documents can be found in Annex I Application documents.

All information shared during the application is treated as confidential information. The information will be shared with Biotech Booster, Biotech Booster-affiliated impact/business developers and external advisors. We have confidentiality agreements in place with all parties we work with.

Outcome:

The outcome of the final selection will be communicated no later than **Friday, March 19, 2027**.

Negotiations and DUS-I submission

Deadline DUS-I submission: September 15, 2027 at 23:59 CEST

Agreements on milestone payments, success sharing, and project governance between Biotech Booster and the project partners must be finalized before Biotech Booster submits the formal subsidy application to DUS-I. Biotech Booster acts as the main applicant on behalf of the consortium and will apply for and receive the Level 2 Proof-of-Concept subsidy on behalf of the consortium. Biotech Booster will guide the project partners through the process of completing the required documentation. Subsidy payments to the project partners will be made only after the agreed milestones have been demonstrably achieved.

In addition to finalizing the application documents, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be formed during this period. The PSC advises the project team, monitors project progress, and evaluates progress against the agreed milestones. The committee consists of five members: three entrepreneurs, a project partner representative, and an expert. The PSC will be formed through consultation between Biotech Booster and the project team.

The formal deadline for submitting projects to DUS-I is expected to be **Wednesday, September 15, 2027 at 23:59.** After submission, DUS-I will perform a formal assessment of your application. This review may take up to **13 weeks**. Once your application has been approved by DUS-I, you may start your project. The project must commence within **six months** of the submission date.

If you still have questions after reviewing all information above, reach out to applications@biotechbooster.nl and we will connect you with a Biotech Booster Business or Impact Developer.

Annex I: Guidelines & Instructions

Pre-application documents

Pre-application form

The pre-application form is an online form in which applicants must answer the questions in a way that enables our review teams to assess whether the proposed project fits the Biotech Booster program. An example of the pre-application form can be found here.

Pre-application slide deck

Requirements:

- Free format, maximum of 10 slides
- Support the information provided in the pre-application form
- Share data and publications from the proof of principle of the underlying technology.
- Show insights gained from users and/or customers
- Outline a viable business model
- Outline the technology roadmap
- Describe the IP strategy

Together, the online form and pitch deck should present a clear and convincing case that the proposed plan meets the points outlined below.

- The proposed solution is based on Biotechnology as described per TC (e.g. not AgTech, MedTech, Software only).
- The activities are aimed at advancing from a solid Proof of Principle (PoP; IRL 4-5) towards an investable value proposition advancing in all six categories of the IRL framework (IRL >5) including a practically executable process or product (TRL), tangible traction by customers (CRL) and investors (FRL), a solid and committed team (TmRL), thorough IP strategy (IP RL), and an integrated business plan and pitch deck (BRL).
- The activities are realistic, structured in milestones and lead to a clear value inflection point (ready for next investment).
- The intended PoC addresses one or more societal issues, is novel and has a clear IP strategy
- Potential clients and investors have demonstrable interest in the subject and the ultimately intended proof
- There is a vision on team expertise and experience and proven commitment.
- The budget and timelines are realistic

Full Application documents

Business plan

Your business plan should take the reader along in your development journey. This includes a technology roadmap, financial milestone-based planning and a success sharing proposal. Below you can find our requirements, which are based on the aforementioned selection criteria from the Biotech Booster grant scheme to assess Level 2 applications.

Your business plan may contain maximum of **20 pages** with standard margins and pleasant readability.

Please ensure that your Business plan covers the following topics:

- Executive summary
- Team
- Problem/Need + Solution
  - *Which societal issue is addressed? Which market need?*
  - *Clearly highlight problem-solution fit and the unique selling point (USP).*
- Technology and product development roadmap
  - *What is the current status of your technological development?*
  - *Please provide data for the proof of principle of your product/service.* (validation, toxicity, animal studies, clinical studies, etc.)
  - *Where do you intend your technology to be at the end of the Biotech Booster project?*
  - *What are the technological development steps that you need to take to get there?*
  - *What does your minimal viable product (MVP) look like?*
  - *When do you expect to reach this MVP?*
- Intellectual property strategy
  - *If patents involved provide title patent, patent owner, patent number, patent status, if not published please specify claim.*
  - *Clearly define background and foreground IP (relevant for success sharing)*
  - *Comment on Freedom-to-Operate (FTO)*
- Market, Competition & Business model
  - What is the size and growth potential of the target market?
  - Which market segment(s) will be targeted first?
  - What are the current solutions or competing technologies?

- How does the proposed innovation compare in terms of performance, cost, usability, or other benefits?
- What is the expected route to market (e.g., licensing, spin-out, direct sales, strategic partnership)?
- What evidence supports market demand (e.g., customer interviews, letters of support, pilot partners, industry collaborations)?
- What are the key commercial, regulatory, or reimbursement milestones?
- What are the main risks, and how will they be addressed?

- Financial planning and milestones (project)
  - *Please provide a Profit & Loss statement at least for the period of the project.*
  - *Please provide a SMART milestone plan for the project (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound). These milestones should be coupled to the work packages as well as the estimated budget needed.*
- Legal (structure) and governance
- Risks and mitigation
- Safety, Regulatory & Ethics
  - What is the regulatory pathway? What are expected hurdles & mitigations?
- Exit strategy
  - *What is the (current) most promising exit strategy?*
  - *What is your preferred valorization route (start-up with investment, licensing, or sale)?*

Slide deck

The slide deck should highlight the key elements of your business plan in a maximum of **20 slides**.

Please ensure that your presentation covers the following topics:

- Team
- Problem/Need + Solution
- Technology and product development roadmap
- Intellectual property
- Market, Competition & Business model
- Financial planning (P&L) and milestones (project)
- Exit strategy & Success sharing proposal
- Legal (structure) and governance

- Risks and mitigation
- Safety, Regulatory & Ethics

Project Video

Please submit a short elevator pitch video of no more than two minutes, introducing your project and team. There are no requirements regarding style, or production quality; a simple single-shot smartphone video is sufficient. The video should be submitted in a standard format, such as MP4, MOV or AVI.

Budget application form

The budget application form template will be made available before October 9, 2026.

NB: For the formal DUS-I submission a more extensive budget format is required, the Biotech booster team will support final selected applications in completing this budget.

Only for companies

Additional to the budget application form, please provide a financial overview including the following:

- *Profit & Loss statement*
- *Balance sheet*
- *Cashflow (the historical period and 3-5 year outlook)*

Please note: In the submission form, the applicants also need to confirm whether they are able to sign a '[Verklaring onderneming niet in moeilijkheden]' before the project is submitted to DUS-I.

Success sharing proposal

By joining the Biotech Booster program with a level 2 project and receiving up to €1.9M in funding, you agree that Biotech Booster will share equally in the project's success upon completion. As part of the application, you must submit a **success sharing proposal**. There is a lot of flexibility in how success can be share so prepare a proposal that best fits your project and is in line with the Biotech Booster TC-agreement. This serves as the starting point for discussions and negotiations with Biotech Booster.

The success sharing proposal of **max 2 pages** should include:

- **Scale out strategy:** What will your scale out strategy look like: licensing out the technology, establishing a NewCo, selling the company, etc.? What timelines do you expect and what capital (in aggregate) is required to reach the exit.
- **Type of success sharing:** What type of success, fitting with the scale out strategy, can be shared? For example convertible loan, royalties, licensing income, shares, etc.

- **Field of the project:** What will be the project and therefore its defined field?
- Elaborate on how your proposal relates to the **equal distribution** of success of the project.

See annex II for more explanation and examples of our success sharing.

TC Agreement

To enter the Biotech Booster program, applicants must sign the Thematic Cluster (TC) Agreement, including the Project Agreement and the Power of Attorney. During the submission of the application documents (deadline November 3, 2026), the applicants should indicate that they are aware of the contents of the TC agreement and confirm that they will sign the TC agreement and its annexes if their project is selected. A copy of the TC agreement can be requested by sending an email to applications@biotechbooster.nl.

When resubmitting the full application, before pitching to the panel of entrepreneurs, the applicant must sign the Thematic Cluster (TC) Agreement (via Annex 5). Furthermore, applicants need to indicate that they are aware of the contents of the Project Agreement (Annex 3) and the Power of Attorney (Annex 4) and will sign these documents when selected for DUS-I submission.

Annex 3 Project agreement

The purpose of the Project Agreement is to specify with respect to the Project the relationship among the Project Partners, in particular concerning the organisation of the work between the Project Partners and the practical implementation of the Project.

Annex 4 Power of Attorney

The Power of attorney allows the project steering committee from Biotech Booster to represent the project in discussions with potential scale-out partners.

Annex 5 Accession document

With this Accession document, the project partners consent to become a Party to the TC Agreement and accepts all the rights and obligations of a Party. Biotech Booster certifies that it has accepted the accession of project partners to the TC Agreement.

Digital signatures, for example via DocuSign, are strongly preferred for signing these documents.

Annex II: Succes Sharing, explanation and examples

General principle: The success-sharing mechanism is based on the principle that only when there is success that benefit will be shared. The success sharing is triggered by measurable commercial outcomes such as licensing, sales, royalties, sublicensing or company value creation. Revenues generated through success sharing are intended to support future Biotech Booster projects and strengthen the program's long-term impact.

The success sharing arrangements can be adjusted during the project when circumstances change or if it is necessary for a successful scale out.

Companies
Examples of success sharing constructions applicable to existing companies are listed below. Other success sharing constructions can also be proposed.

1. Royalties

- IP is owned by a start-up/company, and revenue is foreseen within three years after project completion.
- The success sharing is a royalty arrangement where Biotech Booster will receive X% royalties over net-sales in the field defined in the project.

2. Convertible loan

- IP owned or exclusively licensed by company
- The Biotech Booster grant can be considered as a convertible loan (of max 1.9 M Euro).
- The loan may be converted on variable terms, e.g.
    - Annual compounded interest rate of X%
    - Subject to risk-weighted conversion discount
    - Additional terms as applicable

Knowledge instituties
Examples of success sharing constructions applicable to academic projects are listed below. Other success sharing constructions can also be proposed.

1. Licensing agreement

- IP is owned by a knowledge institute.
- The knowledge institute foresees a scale out strategy of licensing out the technology to third parties.
- Biotech Booster will share in success by receiving 50% of the licensing income. The field of the project is strictly defined, allowing the knowledge institute to use the technology in other fields where Biotech Booster does not profit from.

2. NewCo.

- IP owned by (1 or more) Knowledge institutions, agreement on licensing out to projects
- Biotech Booster and partners can agree on multiple scenarios for success sharing, depending on the project results. For example:
    - Formation of a company: BB will be offered equity in that company
    - Licensing out to a company: equity compensation, royalty fee etc.