biotech booster

Applicant guide Level 1

Subsidy Round 2027
Proof-of-Principle



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Biotech Booster Level 1 (Proof-of-Principle)

The Biotech Booster Level 1 (Proof-of-Principle) program supports early-stage biotechnology innovation projects that are ready **to move from scientific discovery towards practical application**.

During the Level 1 program, you focus on early-stage business development and innovation validation and tech validation to move beyond your fundamental research. Selected projects will enter a full valorization program with intensive coaching and peer-to-peer learning, including set in person meetings and a tailor-made education and development track. This ensures that you have access to relevant expertise and networks to strengthen your route to valorization. This support and the Biotech Booster Level 1 funding should be used to test the practical feasibility of your idea, validate key assumptions, and build the foundation for a viable business case and future commercialization route. Activities can include collecting market and user feedback, validating critical technical functions in the lab, outlining a business model, and developing an initial technology roadmap and intellectual property strategy.

The Level 1 subsidy is a **valorization grant**, providing activity-based funding of up to **€200,000** for a maximum project duration of **two years**. The subsidy does **not cover the costs of IP protection or permanent personnel**.

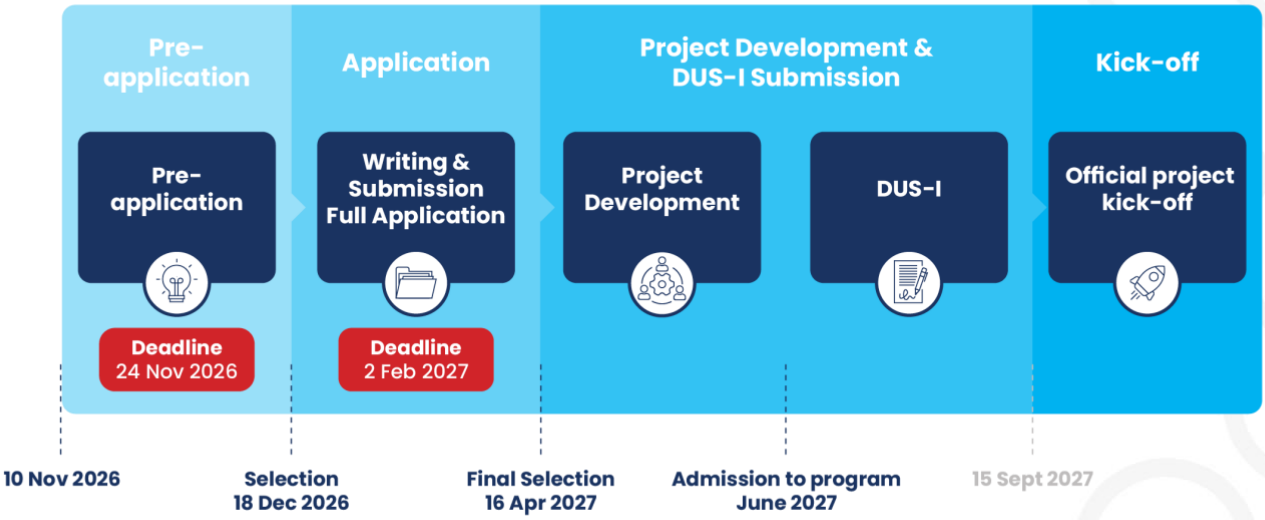
To guide projects effectively according to their needs and maturity, Biotech Booster uses the Innovation Readiness Level model developed by KTH Innovation (link). For Level 1, your project is expected to be at an early stage of innovation development, corresponding broadly to IRL 2–3. You should demonstrate that the team has formulated the technology concept, identified potential markets and business opportunities, and developed an initial understanding of intellectual property. Basic competencies should be available within the project team.

By the end of Level 1, you should have validated your technology in the lab, gained insight into users and/or customers, and outlined a viable business model, technology roadmap and IP strategy. A committed project leader should be in place, key competencies should be secured, and preparations for next-stage funding should be underway.

Application process

Background application and selection process

The application process for a Level 1 Proof-of-Principle project starts with the mandatory pre-application. If your project aligns with the objectives and criteria of the Level 1 program, you will be invited to work towards a full application. During this period, Biotech Booster will organize working sessions and Q&A sessions with Business and Impact Developers to help you strengthen your application. After submission, the full application will be assessed by the relevant Thematic Cluster. The final selection will be made by the Thematic Cluster, taking into account the advice of an Impact Assessment Panel consisting of entrepreneurs and experts from the Biotech Booster Pool of Entrepreneurs. Selected projects will then continue to the Project Development phase and, upon successful completion, submit their grant application to DUS-I.



Pre-application

Deadline pre-application: November 24, 2026 at 14:00 CET

For the Biotech Booster Level 1 subsidy call, submitting a pre-application is mandatory. The purpose of the pre-application is to demonstrate to our reviewing teams that the proposed project aligns with the objectives and criteria of the program. Based on the assessment of the pre-applications, a selection of applicants will be invited to submit a full application. The submission portal for the pre-application opens on November 10, 2026 and closes on November 24, 2026 at 14:00 CET.

How to prepare

- **We strongly advice you to contact your local business development contact, such as a business or impact developer from the Knowledge Transfer Office or Biotech Booster for support during the application.**
- Ensure that your project meets the DUS-I subsidy requirements, fit the project maturity of a Level 1 project, and a fit with appropriate Thematic Cluster has been identified.
- Join the information session on:
    a. September 29, 2026 at14:00 – 15:00
    b. November 5, 2026 at 14:00-15:00
    The recordings of the information sessions are available via our website.
- 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 pre-application

- Online pre-application form
  Available on the Biotech Booster website from November 10, 2026. An indication on the pre-application content can be found here.

Guidelines and instruction on the pre-application can be found in Annex 1: Guidelines & Instructions | Pre-application.

Outcome

You will be informed no later than **Friday, 18 December 2026**, whether your project idea is selected to submit a full application.

Full application

Deadline full application: February 2, 2027 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. During the preparation period, Biotech Booster will organize working sessions and Q&A sessions with Business and Impact Developers to help you strengthen your application. The review and selection of projects will be based solely on the information provided in the documents submitted. We use these criteria from the Biotech Booster grant Scheme to assess Level 1 applications.

How to prepare

- **Work sessions | January 4 - 8, 2027**
  To help you prepare your full application, an in-person workings session for all applicants, scheduled per Thematic Cluster, will be organized between January 4 – 8, 2027 at the Biotech Booster office in Utrecht. During these sessions, our Business and Impact Developers will be present to guide you preparing your application. These sessions are not mandatory, although attending is highly recommended. The exact dates and time will be communicated before December 2026.
- **30-minute Q&A call | January 18 – 29, 2027**
  A 30-minute call with a Biotech Booster Business or Impact Developer can be scheduled between January 18 – 29, 2027. Please note that you as an applicant are responsible to request this call via applications@biotechbooster.nl.

Submission documents

- Level 1 Application form
- Budget application form
- Video
- *Only for innovative start-up as main applicant:*
  - *Knowledge transfer agreement*
  - *Intent to sign the TC agreement, declared in submission portal of full application*

Guidelines, templates and instructions regarding the application documents can be found in Annex I: Application documents and Annex 2: Innovative start-up.

Outcome

You will be informed no later than **Friday, 16 April 2027**, whether your application has been selected to proceed to the Project Development phase.

Project Development

During the Project Development phase, you will work with Biotech Booster Business and Impact Developers to further develop and finalize your project plan. The goal of this phase is to help you create a clear and feasible plan with commercial and impact objectives, key results, milestones, a refined budget, the involvement of entrepreneurs, and a tailor-made education and development track.

DUS-I submission

The application must be formally submitted to DUS-I to receive the Biotech Booster subsidy. We recommend preparing the submission as early as possible after the project development phase. After submission, DUS-I will perform a final check of the full application, which can take up to 13 weeks. Project activities may start, and eligible costs may be incurred, from the date the application is submitted to DUS-I at the earliest.

Kick-off

To start the Biotech Booster program, you are required to participate in a mandatory two-day in-person kick-off. This kick-off is designed to help you connect with other project teams, build trust as peers, and start developing your plan in a structured setting. After the kick-off, teams will be continuously guided by Biotech Booster Business & Impact developers. The two-year program combines peer-to-peer learning, masterclasses and working sessions. Masterclasses may cover topics such as customer validation and business modelling, while dedicated working sessions with Business and Impact Developers help you translate these insights into concrete actions for your project plan.

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

1. Pre-application

Example pre-application form: link

The pre-application of the Biotech Booster round 2027 for Level 1 consists of an online questionnaire, available on the Biotech Booster website between November 10, 2026 and November 24, 2026 at 14:00 CET. Please answer the questions in a way that enables our review teams to assess whether the proposed project fits the Biotech Booster program. It 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 Thematic Cluster (e.g. not AgTech, MedTech, Software only).
- The Innovation Readiness Levels (IRL) at the start of Level 1 should be level 2 - 3. Find information about the Innovation Readiness Levels by KTH Innovation here, and the regulatory maturity by EIT Health framework here.
- In the pre-application, applicants should make this clear by briefly addressing:
    - The technology, including the technology concept, the problem it addresses, and the first evidence supporting its feasibility.
    - The team, including details about the dedicated project leader and members, their relevant expertise and competencies available to develop the project further.
    - The intellectual property (IP), by explaining the current understanding of the IP position, including ownership, freedom to operate considerations or potential protection routes where known.
    - The commercial potential, indicating the intended application area, potential market or user need, and the first assumptions about business opportunities or impact.

2. Full application

Each Level 1 subsidy application is assessed based on the full application form using the assessment criteria of article 11, Appendix 1 of the subsidy scheme.

Level 1 application form

Example of the Level 1 application form is available here, editable version will be published before December 2026

This Level 1 application form contains sections on the team, technology and business case, as well as a project plan and budget. Each section includes explanatory guidance and questions to help you describe your project.

Budget application form

Budget application form will be published before December 2026

The budget application form should include a rough estimate of costs for temporary staff, expertise, material/resources, co-funding (permanent staff, IP-costs, housing). Please note that a maximum of 1/3 of the total project budget can be allocated to personal costs (for non-permanent staff). Costs for IP protection cannot be covered by the subsidy.

We recommend running this budget past your local KTO, grant office and/or financial controller. If available, the team is encouraged to attach quotes from service providers for the outsourced activities. If you provide in-kind contributions, this will have an effect on the total project budget.

Please make sure to consider the following:

- Biotech Booster promotes valorization of research activities. Therefore, the activities funded by this program should primarily focus on valorization and business development, such as business plan development, market analysis, customer validation and competitor analysis. Research or technical activities may be included, but only where they directly support these valorization activities and are necessary to achieve the Level 1 deliverables.
- **For all Level 1 projects, there is a mandatory work package focused on developing the project plan in collaboration with an entrepreneur, creating a business plan, and preparing a pitch deck for future funding opportunities. This work package may be expanded to include other valorization or business-development activities that support the project's pathway to impact.**
- We recommend to run this budget past your local financial controller, KTO , and/or grant office.

- If available, you are encouraged to attach quotes from service providers for the outsourced activities.

Please be aware to fill out the budget according the steps, it is recommended to read the "notes" tab in the budget form carefully before you start completing this form.

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.

Video

As part of your application for Biotech Booster Level 1, you must submit a short video introducing your project team. The main purpose of the video is for us to get to know the team behind the project. The video may not exceed 2 minutes, and can follow any format or style you choose. The quality of the video will not be assessed, please ensure that the audio is clear and audible. Submit the video in a standard file format, such as MP4, MOV or AVI.

Topics

To guide you, we are interested to learn more about the following topics in your video:

- **Short project description**: a short project description. What problem are you solving and what is your solution? This can be a general introduction; more detailed information needs to be shared in the application form.
- **Project team introduction**: briefly introduce the members of the project team. Who is part of the team, and what will each team member's role and level of commitment be during the project?

Annex 2: Innovative start-up

As an innovative start-up, you may apply as main applicant for the Biotech Booster Level 1 program. A company is defined as innovative start-up when the following conditions are met:

- The company was registered no more than five years ago; and
- The company has not yet made profit; and
- The company was not established as the result of a merger; and
- The economic activities for which a subsidy is requested arise directly from knowledge and/or research of a Dutch knowledge institution (article 10.4 of the Biotech Booster subsidy ruling).

Therefore, the following extra documents need to be submitted with the full application by an innovative start-up (deadline February 2, 2027 at 14:00):

- Knowledge Transfer Agreement
- Intent to sign the TC agreement, declared in submission portal of full application

Knowledge transfer agreement

As part of the full application, the innovative start-ups must submit an agreement between the company and a knowledge institute. This agreement must demonstrate that the activities for which funding is requested directly build on knowledge generated through research conducted at that knowledge institution.

The agreement should describe at least the following:

- The knowledge or intellectual property transferred to the innovative start-up, or for which the start-up has been granted a right of use;
- The way the knowledge or intellectual property is transferred, or the *right of use* is granted;
- The conditions governing the transfer/license or the granting of usage rights, demonstrating that the innovative start-up is adequately enabled to use the knowledge or IP and to exploit it commercially;
- The names, titles, positions and contact details of the authorized signatories of the knowledge institution that is party to the agreement.
- Biotech Booster needs to provide an advice performed by an independent lawyer, regarding this agreement, stating that the additional conditions for innovative start-up are met, and therefore can act as main applicant (article 23 of the Biotech Booster subsidy ruling).

TC agreement

To enter the Biotech Booster program, it is mandatory to become a Party to the TC agreement. Therefore, we ask all applicants to confirm in the submission portal of the full application that they are aware of the contents of the TC agreement and 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.

Annex 5 Accession document

With this Accession document, the project partners consent to become a Party to the TC Agreement and accept 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.