APPROVED

By the Evaluation Commission of the Startup Ecosystem Support Programme Minutes No 1 of 15.02.2024

# Regulations of the Riga State City Local Government Entrepreneurship Support Programme "Riga Startup Ecosystem Support Programme" Competition identification number – JEAP2024.

1. **General matters**
2. The Regulations determine the procedure for granting co-financing within the framework of the Riga State City Local Government Entrepreneurship Support Programme "Riga Startup Ecosystem Support Programme" Competition (hereinafter – the Competition).
3. The competition is organised by the Riga Investment and Tourism Agency (hereinafter – the Agency). All communication with the participants will be by email.
4. Terms used in the Regulations:
	1. Applicant – a legal entity registered in the Commercial Register or an institution included in the single list of public persons and institutions, or an association or foundation registered in the Register of Associations and Foundations, or an association of listed legal entities that has submitted a Competition Application;
	2. Measure – an individual activity or set of activities;
	3. Activities – Activities (conferences, trainings, consultations and various networking events) offered by the Applicant to promote the development of the startup ecosystem in Riga, excluding the transfer of direct financial support to specific companies;
	4. Beneficiary – The Applicant who will receive co-financing for the implementation of its proposed Activities.
5. The target audience of the Competition are Applicants whose daily work is related to start-ups and their development and who would implement their planned activities regardless of the Agency's co-financing.
6. The aim of the programme is to promote the growth of the start-up ecosystem in Riga through co-financing, by supporting the activities of organisations whose daily work is related to the development of start-ups, thus encouraging the emergence of new start-ups and promoting Riga as a start-up-friendly city.
7. The winners will receive the co-financing within 20 (twenty) days of the notification of the decision in the application form (Annex No. 1) to the account specified. The moment of notification of the decision shall be deemed to be the moment of sending the decision from the e-mail address of the Agency.
8. The maximum amount of co-financing available per Measure is up to EUR 20,000.00 (twenty thousand *euro*, 00 cents).
9. The budget available for the 2024 support programme is EUR 120,000.00 (one hundred and twenty thousand *euro*, 00 cents). The overall budget may be increased if the Agency receives additional funds for this purpose in the current year's budget.
10. **Rules on *de minimis* aid**
11. The co-financing is subject to the application of the conditions for granting *de minimis* aid laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of the European Commission of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid (Official Journal of the European Union L 352/1 of 24 December 2013) (hereinafter the Regulation).
12. Subject to Article 5(1) of the Regulation, *de minimis* aid granted under this Competition may be cumulated with other *de minimis* aid up to the threshold laid down in Article 3(2) of the Regulation.
13. Co-financing for the same eligible costs granted under this Competition may not be cumulated with other public aid granted under other aid programmes or ad-hoc aid projects, irrespective of the source of funding.
14. The *de minimis* aid will be granted from the date of the decision on the outcome of the competition. Before taking a decision, the Agency shall carry out an assessment of the co-financing to be granted to the Applicant in accordance with the Regulation.
15. In order to receive co-financing, the Applicant must indicate on the application form the identification number of the form prepared and validated in the *de minimis* aid accounting system. If this number is not provided, the Commission reserves the right to exclude the application from further evaluation.
16. Before deciding whether to grant co-financing, the Agency shall respect the following conditions:
	1. The Applicant is evaluated at the level of a single undertaking. A single undertaking fulfils the definition of 'single undertaking' set out in Article 2(2) of the Regulation;
	2. The Agency shall verify that the *de minimis* aid planned for the Applicant at the level of a single undertaking does not increase the total amount of *de minimis* aid received in the fiscal year concerned, as well as in the previous two fiscal years, to a level exceeding the maximum amount of *de minimis* aid laid down in Article 3(2) of the Regulation;
	3. where the Applicant is active in several sectors at the same time, including
		1. in the sectors referred to in Article 1(1) of the Regulation, or carries out the activities referred to therein (in accordance with the provisions of [20.3.6](#_bookmark0) and [20.3.8](#_bookmark1) in accordance with Article 1(2) of the Regulation.
17. The Agency shall ensure that the co-financing is accounted for in accordance with the Cabinet Regulation No. 715 of 21.11.2018 "Regulations on the procedure for accounting for and granting *de minimis* aid and model forms for *de minimis* aid accounting".
18. The Agency shall keep information on *de minimis* aid for 10 years from the date on which the last co-financing under this support programme was granted, and the beneficiary of the co-financing for 10 years from the date on which the co-financing was granted.
19. In the event of a breach of the rules on operating aid laid down in these Regulations, which derive from European Commission Regulation No 1407/2013, the co-financing beneficiary shall be obliged to reimburse to the Agency all *de minimis* aid received under the project from funds free of State aid, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter IV or V of the Law on the Control of Operating Aid.

# Call for tender

1. The Competition Organiser shall publish a notice of the launch of the Competition on its website [www.liveriga.com.](http://www.liveriga.com/) The notification shall contain the following information:
	1. Organiser of the Competition;
	2. Title of the Competition;
	3. Place for submission of applications;
	4. Deadline for submission of applications;
	5. Contact details in case of questions or concerns.

# Requirements for the Applicant

1. The application may be submitted by a legal entity registered in the Commercial Register or an institution included in the unified list of public persons and institutions, or an association or foundation registered in the Register of Associations and Foundations, or an association of listed legal entities that undertakes to organise its activities in the administrative territory of Riga City.
2. An application cannot be submitted by an Applicant:
	1. which has been declared insolvent by a judgement of a court, is the subject of an administration order or an out-of-court order, has been declared bankrupt, has been reorganised or entered into an arrangement procedure or has had its economic activities wound up, or fulfils the criteria laid down by national law for being subject to insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors;
	2. who has not paid in full and within the time limits established by the laws and regulations taxes and other compulsory state or local government payments (debts up to EUR 150.00 - (one hundred and fifty euros, 00 cents) are not taken into account);
	3. planning their business activities:
		1. in the alcoholic beverages production industry;
		2. in the tobacco production sector;
		3. in the gambling or betting sector;
		4. in the intimate entertainment sector;
		5. in the financial and insurance services related sector;
		6. fisheries and aquaculture, primary production of agricultural products and processing and marketing of agricultural products (subject to conditions) in the sectors referred to in Article 1(1)(a)-(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013;
		7. in the forestry sector;
		8. in the case of activities linked to exports to third countries or Member States, that is to say, aid directly linked to the quantities exported, the establishment and operation of a distribution network or other current expenditure linked to the export activity and where domestic goods referred to in Article 1(1)(d) to (e) of Regulation No 1407/2013 are used instead of imported goods.
	4. whose owner, board members, beneficial owners, persons entitled to represent, parent or subsidiary undertakings, etc., are subject to international or national sanctions or significant financial; and

sanctions imposed by the European Union or a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation member state affecting capital market interests;

* 1. who has infringed any clause of these Regulations.
1. Co-financing will not be granted to Applicants whose shareholders and/or signatories include persons who are in an employment relationship with the Riga State City Local Government and its structural units (with the exception of heads of cultural collectives and employees of educational institutions).
2. Any Applicant who, during the evaluation of a call for applications, has sought to obtain confidential information or has attempted to influence the decision-making process shall be immediately excluded from further evaluation of the applications.
3. The Applicant must have at least 3 (three) years' experience in organising measures related to start-up development (the last event indicated must have taken place at least 3 (three) full years prior to the submission of the application). Relevant experience will be considered to be a list of measures on the subject of start-ups organised by the Applicant during the previous three years at least, two of which have taken place in different calendar years. Information on the Applicant's experience of more than 3 (three) years will be used to assess the applicant's qualifications.

# Presentation of applications

1. The application and annexes must be in computer type, in the official language.
2. The application must be in \*.doc or \*.docx format.
3. The annexes to the application (if any) must be in \*.xls, \*.pdf or \*.jpg format.
4. The total size of the application must not exceed 20 MB. The application may contain links to large attachments that can be downloaded from the Internet.
5. If the application is signed by a person without signatory powers within the organisation, a power of attorney must be attached.
6. The application must consist of the following components:
	1. application form (Annex 1);
	2. the application may also be accompanied by other attachments not mentioned in these Regulations - photographs, diagrams, etc;
	3. the evaluation tables (Annexes 2 and 3) and the declaration of the members of the Evaluation Commission (Annex 4) need not be attached to the application.
7. If any part of the application is incomplete or not completed at all, the application will be excluded from further evaluation.
8. The application must be signed with a secure electronic signature.
9. If the application consists of several files, all the files in the application must be archived (zipped) into one common \*.zip file and the \*.zip file must be signed with a secure electronic signature, not each file individually.

# Submitting an application for competition

1. Applications must be submitted to the Agency by electronic means to the following email address invest@riga.lv.
2. The subject of the email must read – "Application for the Startup Ecosystem Support Programme (Id. No.: JEAP2023)".
3. The application must be submitted by 23:59:59 (Latvian time) on 10 March 2024. An application is deemed to have been lodged when it is received, not when it is sent.
4. Completion or correction of the application after the deadline referred to in Clause [35](#_bookmark3) shall not apply.
5. Applications received after the deadline referred to in Clause [35](#_bookmark3) or in a manner other than that specified in Clause [33](#_bookmark2)will be excluded from further evaluation.
6. By submitting an Application, the Applicant agrees to all the provisions of the Regulations and is responsible for the truthfulness of the information and representations provided in the Application, as well as for compliance with the requirements of the laws and regulations in force in the Republic of Latvia, including the payment of taxes.

# Evaluation of the submitted Measures and announcement of the results

1. There are three rounds of evaluation:
	1. in the first round, the compliance of the applications with the Administrative Evaluation Criteria (Annex 2) is determined. Any application that receives at least one "No" will be rejected and will not be considered in the second round. The determination of the compliance of the applications shall be carried out by the Secretary of the Competition Commission or by a member of the Commission acting as Secretary for the relevant competition (hereinafter referred to as the Secretary of the Commission) and the results of the compliance of the applications shall be summarised in the minutes of the meeting of the Commission;
	2. the second round assesses the compliance of the application with the qualitative evaluation criteria (Annex 3). The evaluation will be carried out using the points method and only applications that pass the first round will be evaluated. The evaluation of the applications is carried out by the Evaluation Commission;
	3. the evaluation is carried out by agreement between the members of the Commission on the number of points to be awarded for each criterion for each activity. The marks awarded are rounded to the nearest decimal place. In the course of the evaluation of the applications in accordance with this evaluation, the Secretary of the Commission shall complete and at the end of the evaluation prepare an evaluation summary, which shall be signed by all the members of the Commission;
	4. in the third round, the results are ranked in a summary table with the highest-scoring activity first and the lowest-scoring activity last. In the event of a tie, the Applicant whose application, in accordance with the provisions of the Clause [33](#_bookmark2)of the Regulations, was submitted earlier. The evaluation process allocates co-financing to each activity (starting with the first, highest-scoring one) and continues until all funding is spent;
	5. in the event that the full amount of funding cannot be allocated to the final activity, the panel will offer partial funding to the Applicant, within the available budget;
	6. if the Applicant declines the funding, it is offered to the next highest-scoring Applicant;
	7. if the Applicant obtains 0 (zero) points in any of the evaluation criteria, it shall be excluded from further evaluation.
2. If the exact order of the applications for the Competition cannot be determined even according to

the order prescribed in Clause [39](#_bookmark4), the order of the winners shall be decided by the Competition Evaluation Commission by vote.

1. The Commission shall take a decision on the results of the Competition no later than by

10 May 2024.

1. The notification of the results of the Competition shall:
	1. be published on www.liveriga.com;
	2. notified in writing to all successful Applicants by email to the email address provided in the Competition Application Form.
2. The Agency reserves the right to request further clarification from the Applicant on the information contained in the Competition Application before taking a decision.

# Applicant's rights and obligations

1. The Applicant is entitled to withdraw its Competition Application before the deadline for submission of Applications.
2. The Applicant is responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in the Competition Application.
3. The Applicant is obliged to comply with the requirements of these Regulations and the Annexes hereto.
4. The Applicant is responsible for the payment of taxes related to the co-financing.
5. The Applicant has the right to ask the Commission questions about these Regulations and the Competition Procedure by sending an e-mail to martins.pakalnins@riga.lv.
6. The Applicant has the right to appeal the decision of the Competition Commission in accordance with the Riga City Council Binding Regulations No 130 of 30.03.2022 on the Riga State City Local Government Entrepreneurship Support Programme "Riga Start-up Ecosystem Support Programme".

# Payment of co-financing

1. The co-financing shall be paid in a single instalment into the bank account indicated in the Application.
2. The Agency reserves the right not to co-finance if the Applicant:
	1. has misled the Competition organiser in any way;
	2. has not complied with the deadlines set out in these Regulations.

# Control mechanism

1. The beneficiary is obliged to submit to the Agency, within 1 month of the last implemented activity and no later than by 1 February 2025, a report (including invoices and payment orders) on the use of the co-financing to achieve the objectives stated in the application and an evaluation of the objectives achieved. Including:
	1. a description of the overall activities and the overall assessment of the Beneficiary;
	2. the number and structure of participants during the activities;
	3. an assessment of the audience reached;
	4. involved international experts;
	5. the results of the advertising campaign;
	6. key feedback from the target audience;
	7. recommendations for improving the future of the programme, etc.
2. The Agency has the right to order reimbursement of the co-financing paid if the Beneficiary:
	1. used the co-financing granted to it for purposes other than those indicated in the Application without prior agreement;
	2. used the co-funding for personal gain rather than to develop the start-up ecosystem;
	3. has not implemented the activities listed in the Competition Application by 31 December 2024.

# Organisation of the Commission's work

1. Before opening the applications, the members of the Commission shall sign a declaration of non-disclosure of data to third parties and of non-interest in the selection of a particular Applicant (Annex 4).
2. The Commission shall be chaired and organised by its Chairperson.
3. The Commission shall meet at the initiative of the Chairperson, the members of the Commission or the Secretary of the Commission.
4. The Commission's remit includes:
	1. drawing up and approval of the Competition Regulations;
	2. answering questions about the Competition;
	3. assessment of the applications submitted;
	4. in accordance with these Regulations and on the basis of the content of the applications submitted, deciding on the results of the Competition and determine the winners of the Competition;
	5. the right to call in independent experts to give an opinion on the information contained in the applications;
	6. the right to request additional explanatory information or documents if it considers this necessary for the assessment of the applications submitted.
	7. to take other decisions related to the successful operation of the Riga State City Local Government Entrepreneurship Support Programme "Riga Start-up Ecosystem Support Programme".

Chairman of the Commission M. Pakalniņš