

# European Social Innovation Forum #2 – Pitching Competition Guidelines



## European Social Innovation Forum #2 – Pitching Competition Guidelines

In the framework of the second annual European Social Innovation Forum (ESIF) organized by the Network of European Social Entrepreneurs and Innovators (NESEI), a pitching competition will be held. During this event, four (4) selected social enterprises and innovators will have the opportunity to present their social enterprises or ideas to the Forum's participants. Participants for the competition are chosen through an open call for submissions, available on the NESEI website. The winning team will earn participation for up to two (2) members in the online Fundraising Training "Transforming NGO Activities into Financial Resources" by the Brussels Academy, scheduled for June 27-28, 2025. Winners will be determined by the votes of ESIF participants.

This document details the eligibility criteria for entering the competition, the process for selecting pitching contestants, the voting system, the prize, and practical arrangements for the pitching competition. These guidelines are designed to ensure fairness, transparency, and efficiency as participants present their social innovation enterprises or ideas. By adhering to these procedures, we aim to create an environment that encourages and rewards initiatives at the forefront of social change.

### I. ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

Eligible participants in the competition must be actively involved in social innovation and entrepreneurship and be registered members of the NESEI Group within the [EIC Community Platform](#). Those who are not yet members can complete the onboarding form available at this link: <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/NESEIONboarding>.

Additionally, to submit a valid application, interested individuals or entities must provide a one-minute video or an engaging pitching deck showcasing their social business idea or enterprise.

### II. COMPETITION DESCRIPTION

At the interactive pitching session, participants will have the opportunity to present their social innovation ideas or social enterprises. Each presenter will share their enterprise/idea, whether it's tackling important societal issues or supporting communities in any way.

It is worth highlighting that the pitching session will feature a carefully curated selection of the most promising social enterprises, with the top four (4) initiatives being meticulously chosen from a pool of applicants. This selection process ensures that the session

showcases innovative ideas that demonstrate exceptional potential for creating positive impact and addressing pressing societal challenges.

### III. SELECTION OF CONTESTANTS

The selection of contestants will be conducted by a panel comprising representatives from PwC Cyprus, the CSI Center for Social Innovation, and DG GROW. Each panel member will independently evaluate and score each business idea using a standardized grading system based on the criteria outlined below. After all scores are submitted, they will be aggregated to determine the final score for each entry. In the event of a tie, the DG GROW officer will make the final decision on the ranking.

VOTING GRID		
CRITERION	SUB-CRITERION	GRADE
<b>Criterion 1:</b> Creativity and Social Innovation	<b>Outstanding:</b> The enterprise/idea demonstrates exceptional creativity and innovative thinking, presenting highly original and groundbreaking solutions.	5
	<b>Exemplary:</b> The enterprise/idea showcases a high level of creativity and innovative ideas, offering unique approaches to address the societal challenges.	4
	<b>Satisfactory:</b> The enterprise/idea demonstrates a satisfactory level of creativity and presents innovative ideas that contribute to addressing the challenges.	3
	<b>Needs Improvement:</b> The enterprise/idea lacks creativity and innovative thinking, with limited originality in addressing challenges.	2
	<b>Insufficient:</b> The enterprise/idea lacks creativity and innovative thinking, without originality in addressing the challenges.	1
<b>Criterion 2:</b> Feasibility and Impact	<b>Outstanding:</b> The enterprise/idea offers highly feasible solutions with exceptional potential for impact. It clearly outlines actionable steps for implementation, considering available resources and constraints, and demonstrates a strong potential for significant positive change.	5

VOTING GRID		
CRITERION	SUB-CRITERION	GRADE
	<p><b>Exemplary:</b></p> <p>The enterprise/idea presents feasible solutions with substantial impact potential. It provides clear, actionable steps for implementation, considering resource limitations, and demonstrates a promising potential for positive change.</p>	4
	<p><b>Satisfactory:</b></p> <p>The enterprise/idea proposes moderately feasible solutions with a fair consideration of potential impact. It outlines some implementation steps and considers available resources, indicating potential for positive change.</p>	3
	<p><b>Needs Improvement:</b></p> <p>The enterprise/idea lacks feasibility and offers insufficient details or unrealistic proposals for implementation, raising concerns about its overall potential impact.</p>	2
	<p><b>Insufficient:</b></p> <p>The enterprise/idea lacks feasibility and a clear implementation strategy, raising significant concerns about its potential for positive impact.</p>	1
<p><b>Criterion 3:</b> Addresses the Green and Digital Transitions (Twin Transition) and at least one following priorities of NESEI: diversity and inclusion, environment and sustainability, public policy and citizenship, rural and urban development, education and skills development, justice, and public safety.</p>	<p><b>Outstanding:</b></p> <p>The enterprise/idea effectively addresses and integrates the Twin Transition, and at least one of NESEI's Priorities, demonstrating innovative approaches and significant impact.</p>	5
	<p><b>Exemplary:</b></p> <p>The enterprise/idea showcases strong efforts to address and incorporate the Twin Transition, and at least one of NESEI's priorities, aligning well with the respective priority and generating positive outcomes.</p>	4
	<p><b>Satisfactory:</b></p> <p>The enterprise/idea demonstrates satisfactory efforts to address and consider the Twin Transition, and at least one of NESEI's priorities, although some aspects may require further development.</p>	3
	<p><b>Needs Improvement:</b></p> <p>The enterprise/idea lacks effective addressing or integration of the Twin Transition, and the priorities of NESEI, not adequately incorporating the respective priority into the enterprise/idea.</p>	2



VOTING GRID		
CRITERION	SUB-CRITERION	GRADE
	<b>Insufficient:</b> The enterprise/idea does not address or integrate the Twin Transition, and the priorities of NESEI.	1

#### IV. VOTING SYSTEM

The winners will be determined by a live voting system accessible to all participants of the ESIF on the day of the event. Each participant will have an equal vote, and voting will be permitted only once, following the conclusion of all pitching presentations. The voting window will remain open for 15 minutes. In the event of a tie, the final decision will be made by the DG GROW officer.

#### V. PRIZE

The winning team will earn a spot for up to two (2) members in the online [Fundraising Training "Transforming NGO Activities into Financial Resources"](#) hosted by the Brussels Academy, scheduled for June 27-28, 2025.

#### VI. REGISTRATIONS DEADLINE AND RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT

NESEI will accept registrations until the end of the day on February 28, 2025. After evaluating the submitted applications, the selected contestants will be notified of their participation in the pitching competition by March 3, 2025.

#### VII. RULES & PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE PITCHING COMPETITION

- I. **Equipment:** Organizers will provide essential materials, including paper, flipcharts, and presentation equipment like projectors, speakers, and microphones. If participants have specific equipment needs, they should specify them on the registration form.
- II. **Attendance:** Participants must attend the entire pitching session as outlined in the agenda.
- III. **Submission Limit:** Each team is allowed to submit only one (1) social innovation idea or project proposal.
- IV. **Presentation Format:** Teams should present their innovative ideas in an experiential format, allowing for direct audience engagement with their products and solutions. Presentations must be in English. Teams can choose to have one or multiple members present. Those using a slide deck to accompany their pitch are encouraged to employ innovative formats. *Slide decks must be submitted to the organizers by*

*Monday, March 10, 2025, at 14:00 CET.*

- V. **Time Allocation:** Each team will have seven (7) minutes for their presentation, followed by a three (3) minute Q&A session.
- VI. **Originality Clause:** Organizers reserve the right to disqualify any idea that is deemed to be copied or lacking originality.

