

# **Regulation for incubation and acceleration of LX Circular**

## **Preamble**

The LX Circular program is an initiative resulting from a partnership between Impact Hub Lisbon, Unicorn Factory Lisboa, and the Institute of Social Entrepreneurship (IES), funded by Portugal Social Innovation. It aims to provide an innovative and integrated response to the social and environmental challenges faced by contemporary society, especially in Portugal and the Lisbon region, by fostering ideas and social entrepreneurship ventures - specifically circular economy initiatives - as promising solutions that aim to maximize the value of natural resources and address deep-rooted sociodemographic issues.

LX Circular consists of two main phases - ideation, and incubation and acceleration - and uses an innovative methodology that combines training, mentoring and collaboration to enable entrepreneurs and startups to develop circular economy solutions.

This document refers to the regulations for the incubation and acceleration phase developed by Unicorn Factory Lisboa in partnership with Impact Hub Lisbon. The ideation phase will be developed by IES and will have a separate regulation document.

## **Article 1: Objectives**

The objectives of this initiative are to:

- 1) Support the development of innovative startups in circularity: supporting startups with innovative solutions to circular economy challenges;
- 2) Promote Impact Entrepreneurship: encouraging entrepreneurship as a response to circular economy and local social challenges, particularly in the Lisbon region;

- 3) Promote the Circular Economy: raise awareness and build capacity around the circular economy;
- 4) Encourage reflection on the main challenges of the circular economy;

## **Article 2: Target**

Startups may apply to this initiative if they meet the following criteria:

- 1) Have been formally established for up to 10 years (formal establishment is defined as the date of legal incorporation);
- 2) Offer a solution that is:
  - a) Innovative within the scope of the Circular Economy;
  - b) At a minimum stage of MVP (minimum viable product);
  - c) Aligned with the program's objectives;
  - d) Capable of creating an impact in the Lisbon region;
- 3) Operating in or intending to operate in the Lisbon Region (understood as any municipality within the Lisbon Metropolitan Area).

## **Article 3: Application Process**

1. Applications must be submitted via the form available on the program website: [www.lxcircular.pt](http://www.lxcircular.pt)
2. The application period runs from April 16 to May 25, 2025 (until 11:59 PM GMT).
3. The organization reserves the right to unilaterally extend the deadline, with notice posted on the program's website;
4. The organization is not responsible for lost or unreceived applications due to network or website failures;
5. Each promoter/company may submit only one application;
6. The promoter or promoting team must own the idea submitted in the program;

7. In the case of teams, an interlocutor must be appointed who will represent their team before the organization and serve as a point of contact and spokesperson throughout the process. The contact details on the application form must be active and up-to-date throughout the duration of the Initiative;

#### **Article 4: Application Evaluation**

- 1) Applications will be subject to a preliminary analysis to verify the formal eligibility conditions of the project promoters;
- 2) Applications will be subject to a preliminary evaluation based on the objectives of the program in order to pre-select them;
- 3) Promoters / projects that do not meet the conditions referred to in point 1) of this article, or whose projects have not been pre-selected or do not have sufficient information will be informed by email that they will not proceed to the next evaluation phase;
- 4) The evaluation is based solely on the information contained in the application form;
- 5) Once the prior analysis has been completed, the projects will have the opportunity to present their project to a jury, with a view to selecting the projects to be included in the program, with the aim of selecting up to 12 startups;
- 6) The jury session will consist of a presentation that should be supported by digital means or other means that the promoters consider appropriate for this purpose and that allows the jury to understand the project, solution, objectives and intention to be part of the program;
- 7) The jury's assessment will take into account the following criteria:
  - a) Project / company with an innovative and differentiating solution in the field of the Circular Economy;
  - b) Quality of the team and its ability to implement the project;

- c) Feasibility of the solution presented;
  - d) Potential impact of the solution presented in the Lisbon region;
  - e) Potential for growth and/or scalability;
- 8) The jury will include representatives from Unicorn Factory Lisboa, Impact Hub Lisbon, and invited partners;
  - 9) The decision to select the finalist projects will be communicated by e-mail to the promoters;
  - 10) The organization will make every effort to ensure the selection of at least 12 startups, however, it cannot be held responsible if it is not possible to select this number of projects;

## **Article 5: Methodology**

- 1) An incubation and acceleration program is understood to be a structured path to support the development of entrepreneurial projects, which includes, on the one hand, incubation - focused on capacity building, business model development and integration into a community of practice - and, on the other, acceleration - focused on validating the business model in a market context, implementing the solution and defining sustainable growth strategies;
- 2) Participating projects will be offered an incubation and acceleration program, participation in which is mandatory for at least one of the project's founders;
- 3) The program will preferably be conducted in English;
- 4) The program will be composed by different activities, as described below:
  - a) A face-to-face Bootcamp on June 26 and 27 in Lisbon, with the aim of deepening the Circular Economy theme, fostering a community spirit in order to strengthen the projects' business models, aligning impact strategies and supporting growth in a sustainable and differentiating way.

- b) Mentoring sessions with leading experts and mentors in the field of sustainability and the circular economy between July and September, mostly remote, as well as direct integration into a Unicorn Factory acceleration program taking place in the last quarter of the year.
  - c) Peer mentoring sessions throughout the 12 months of incubation, which will take place once every two months in person at the Impact Hub Lisbon facilities.
  - d) Meetings with investors: 5 meetings over the 12 months of incubation, which may be institutional investors (VCs, sustainability funds, foundations, etc.) or individual investors (such as angel investors).
  - e) Final session, in person, to be held in Lisbon, on a date to be announced, for the final presentation of all the projects participating in the LXCircular initiative.
- 5) The projects will have access to a free workspace at Impact Hub Lisbon - Penha de França, which they can use for a period of 12 months, starting from the date of the Bootcamp, and with a face-to-face presence for at least one week every two months.

### **Article 6: Final Session**

- 1) The final session of the program will consist, among other things, of the final public presentation of the projects in person, in Lisbon, on a date to be announced;
- 2) Winning projects will be selected during this event.
- 3) The presentation of each project should be made with the support of digital or other media that the promoters deem appropriate for a better understanding of the project, the solution and the main differentiating factors in the market, as well as noting the evolution and main developments that have taken place during the program.
- 4) The winning project will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:
  - a) Project / company with an innovative and differentiating solution in the field of the Circular Economy;
  - b) Quality of the team and its ability to implement the project;

- c) Feasibility of the solution presented;
- d) Potential impact of the solution presented in the Lisbon region;
- e) Potential for growth and/or scalability;
- f) Level of commitment to the program, the activities developed and the program community;
- 5) Performance and evolution of the project during the course of the program;
- 6) The jury will be composed of Unicorn Factory Lisboa, Impact Hub Lisbon, and invited guests.

### **Article 7: General Participation Conditions**

- 1) Participants are responsible for all the information and content of the project they present;
- 2) Participation in this program is free of charge for startups;
- 3) The costs of any travel and accommodation required to participate in the program's face-to-face activities are the responsibility of the startup;
- 4) Participants must always act cordially and with respect, in particular for the rules and procedures of operation, programming and security of the organization and partners;
- 5) Inappropriate or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated, including the use of obscene or inappropriate language;
- 6) The organization reserves the right to exclude any participant who, during the Initiative, does not respect the rules set out in these regulations or who does not participate in the initiatives planned for the programme.

### **Article 8: Prizes**

- 1) This initiative will award three prizes in the following amounts:

- a) **1st place:** €10,000 (ten thousand euros)
  - b) **2nd place:** €6,000 (six thousand euros)
  - c) **3rd place:** €4,000 (four thousand euros)
- 2) All participants will benefit from:
- a) Possibility to explore collaboration opportunities with potential clients / partners and in a market context;
  - b) Access to a vast network of mentors (founders, investors, industry experts, among others);
  - c) Access to the networking network of Unicorn Factory Lisboa and Impact Hub Lisbon;
  - d) Access to a free workspace during the program, providing access to a vibrant community of entrepreneurs and professionals from various fields, as well as opportunities for networking, collaboration and growth in a co-creation environment.
- 3) The prize money to be paid to the winners must have a tax document, in accordance with Portuguese legislation;
- 4) For the payment of the prizes indicated, the IBAN to which the bank transfer should be made must be sent.

### **Article 9: Confidentiality**

The parties undertake to keep confidential the content of all information to which they have access under this initiative, including intellectual property and industrial property, even after the end of this initiative, except to the extent strictly necessary for the implementation of this initiative and what is strictly necessary for the dissemination and promotion of the program.

## **Article 10: Intellectual Property**

- 1) The industrial property and intellectual rights of the candidate ideas / projects belong to the promoter(s);
- 2) The promoters grant the organization permission to use non-confidential information in its promotion and marketing activity;
- 3) The organization of this initiative cannot be held responsible for any intellectual property infringement, misuse or plagiarism by another candidate promoter or by another external member.

## **Article 11: Data Protection**

Protecting the privacy and personal data of our users is of great importance to Unicorn Factory Lisboa and Impact Hub Lisboa. By registering for the program, by filling in the application form, you are accepting the Privacy Policy of the entities indicated, which can be consulted here:

- [Unicorn Factory Lisboa Privacy Policy](#)
- [Impact Hub Lisbon Privacy Policy](#)

## **Article 12: Final Provisions**

- 1) The organization reserves the right to amend these regulations, informing promoters who apply/participate in any of the categories of the changes;
- 2) Situations not covered by these regulations will be duly analyzed and defined by the organization;
- 3) Participation in the program implies the promoters' express acceptance of the terms and conditions of these regulations.



