

# Call for Applications

## 2C FIMH Sprint & Roadshow Series

### Hands-on Growth for Hardware Startups

v. 1.2.

The *Twin City Future Innovation Manufacturing Hub* (2C FIMH) invites applications for its pilot Sprint & Roadshow Series — a cross-border acceleration format for hardware-based startups and entrepreneurial projects from Austria and Slovakia.

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## Overview

Are you developing a hardware prototype and ready to take it to the next level?

The **2C FIMH Sprint & Roadshow Series** helps ambitious startups from Austria and Slovakia move their prototype closer to production.

Over five months, selected teams join a fast-paced programme that combines **hands-on sprint days, expert mentoring, and curated visits to top manufacturing partners** across both countries.

Activities take place in Austria and Slovakia (Tulln an der Donau, Bratislava, Vienna and surrounding regions). Participation is **free of charge** and offered as **in-kind support**.

The series is part of the *Twin City Future Innovation Manufacturing Hub (2C FIMH)* and jointly run by accent Inkubator (AT), EIT Manufacturing (AT), InQb – STU (SK), and SAPIE (SK).

## Objectives

Our goal: to help early-stage hardware innovators turn prototypes into scalable products.

The pilot programme aims to:

- Accelerate hardware ventures with strong manufacturing potential
- Support teams in prototyping, testing, and preparing for market entry
- Strengthen cross-border collaboration between Austria and Slovakia


In short — we help you **build, test, connect, and grow**.

## What is Offered

All support is provided in kind (no fees, no equity).

Selected startups receive

Category	What is included?
<b>Sprints</b>	5 in-person sprint days packed with expert input, rapid prototyping, and feedback loops
<b>Makerspace Access</b>	Full access to prototyping tools and technical infrastructure at the <b>accent Makerspace</b> in Tulln (AT)
<b>Roadshows</b>	5 curated visits to industry partners in Austria / Slovakia
<b>Visibility</b>	Chance to demonstrate at Manufacturing Day 2026 in Vienna, PR via EITM & 2C FIMH project partner channels

 *There is no financial/cash support.* All support is offered as in-kind services and infrastructure access.

## Programme Structure

The **2C FIMH Sprint & Roadshow Series** runs from **January to June 2026**, combining **high-impact sprint days, expert mentoring, and industry roadshows** in both Austria and Slovakia.

Over five months, you'll join **five in-person sprint days** (one per month), alternating between **Tulln (AT)** and **Bratislava (SK)** — depending on the topic and facilities needed.

Between the sprints, you'll:

- Work with mentors online (group sessions)
- Use the **accent Makerspace** in Tulln for hands-on prototyping
- Prepare your product for pilot testing and manufacturing readiness

You'll also have the chance to showcase your results during **Manufacturing Day 2026** in Vienna.

Most activities take place in **Tulln, Bratislava, and Vienna**, with some mentoring sessions held online to keep things flexible.

To remain eligible for roadshows and demo opportunities, teams must participate in at least 80% of all sessions.

## What is a Sprint?

Each Sprint is an **intensive, one-day workshop** designed to accelerate progress **on a real challenge** — from prototype design to manufacturing strategy.

Forget generic workshops: every sprint is **tailored, time-boxed, and practical**, designed to help you make measurable progress each month.

You'll work alongside **technical experts, startup coaches, and peers**, balancing hands-on work, focused input, and actionable next steps.

After each sprint, a follow-up online **group mentoring session** helps you apply what you've learned and plan your next move.

Indicative Sprint Topics:

- Design for Users and Customers  
*Discover real customer needs and align your product to meet them.*
- Prototype – Hands-on experimentation  
*Break, rebuild, and explore bold new approaches to prototyping.*
- Choose the Right Stuff  
*Smart material choices that last.*
- Iterate Like a Pro  
*Apply effective testing methods, refine intelligently.*
- Roadmap to Manufacturing  
*Understand key production processes, understand your path to scalable manufacturing.*

### accent Makerspace access

As a participant you will receive free access to the accent Makerspace in Tulln a fully equipped environment for prototyping and hardware development.

Occasional **free accommodation** at the Makerspace may be available upon request (subject to availability).

For more about accent Makerspace and tools see Annex. 11

⚠ Access to Makerspace requires signing a standard usage agreement covering terms of access, responsibilities, and liability.

## What is a Roadshow?

The Roadshow Series takes you **behind the scenes** of Austria's and Slovakia's manufacturing and R&D ecosystems. Through on-site visits, you'll see how industry partners work, exchange ideas with their teams, and **explore real opportunities for collaboration and growth**.

Each Roadshow is **shaped around the** participating startups' **needs**. Depending on the focus, visits may run from half a day to a full day and can include factory or lab tours, hands-on workshops, and meetings with technical or business experts.

Five sector-specific roadshows will be organised, each spotlighting one participating startup while remaining open to others for networking and visibility.

**Note:** Tailored Roadshow opportunities are reserved for highly active and engaged teams.

## Timeline (Indicative)

Phase	Date
Call opens	3 November 2025
Open Day	13 November 2025
Deadline	9 December 2025 (23:59 CET)
Pre-selection (and notification)	10 December 2025
Jury	12 December 2025
Sprint & Roadshow Series	Feb–June 2026

### Sprint dates:

- **Sprint 1:** 29 Jan 2026 – Tulln (AT)
- **Sprint 2:** 5 Mar 2026 – Tulln (AT)
- **Sprint 3:** 2 Apr 2026 – Bratislava (SK) / Tulln (AT) (TBD)
- **Sprint 4:** 30 Apr 2026 – Tulln (AT)
- **Sprint 5:** 2 Jun 2026 – Bratislava (SK)

Each sprint is followed by an **online 1.5-hour group mentoring session** about three weeks later.

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You'll also have **24/7 access** to the accent Makerspace during the programme.

### *Roadshow dates:*

Roadshows will be tailored to the specific needs of each participating startup, with dates coordinated accordingly. You're required to attend the one tailored to your company, but all others are open for extra networking.

### *Demonstration:*

Manufacturing Day Vienna, 21 May 2026

### *Please note:*

*Organisers reserve the right to adjust the programme structure or timeline as needed to ensure quality and alignment with participants' needs.*

# Participation

## Application

### Target Applicants - Startups & Innovation Teams

We're looking for hardware-driven startups and innovation teams working on mechatronics, electronics, or integrated systems — anything that connects hardware, design, and manufacturing.

You should have

- A working **prototype** or functional mock-up
- A **clear** development **goal** — e.g. manufacturability, materials, or market readiness

### Eligible Legal Forms

- Registered companies
- Entrepreneurial or pre-incorporation teams (eg. university spin-offs, RTO – based projects, independent early-stage innovation teams)

### Geographic Eligibility

- Priority regions:
  - Austria: Lower Austria, Northern Burgenland, Vienna
  - Slovakia: Bratislava Region, Trnava Region
- Teams from other EU or Horizon 27 regions may apply if their project clearly links to these cross-border areas.

### Selection Priorities:

- Clear prototyping & manufacturing goals
- High team commitment (minimum 80% participation)
- Preference for projects demonstrating cross-border value or clear regional relevance
- Sustainability, diversity and circularity are definite pluses

## How to Apply

Apply through the official online portal:

<https://eitmanufacturing.submittable.com/submit/711bf413-ae0c-486a-a495-1d7c231cf1c3/2c-fimh-sprint-roadshows-series>

### Fill in the application form and submit :

- Pitch Deck (10–12 slides)
- Team CVs/short bios

- Registration certificate (for established companies)

*Working language: English*

German/Slovak documents may be submitted as annexes.

## Selection process

### 1. Eligibility check

### 2. Shortlisting:

Each eligible application is assessed by three reviewers. The **8 best-fit applicants** move to the next round.

### 3. Pitch / Jury Evaluation:

Shortlisted teams present at an **online Pitch Day (12 December 2025)**.

The jury will select **up to five startups** for the programme.

## Evaluation Criteria and Selection Factors

We assess applications based on the following core areas:

1. **Strategic Fit** – alignment with programme goals
2. **Practical Fit** – Teams must be compatible with the accent Makerspace — meaning relevant tools and spaces are available to support their development.
3. **Team Capacity** – motivation, commitment, execution potential
4. **Technical Excellence & Innovation** – novelty, TRL, tech maturity
5. **Manufacturability & Scaling** – feasibility and scalability plan
6. **Market Impact** – user/customer validation, business potential

### Advantages:

- Cross-border potential or clear regional relevance
- Female founders / diverse teams
- Sustainability and circularity principles

## Participation Terms

- Free of charge
- No equity taken
- You keep your IP
- Minimum attendance : 80%
- Programme language: English

## Contact

For questions or support during the application phase, contact:

 [reka.dancsecs@accent.at](mailto:reka.dancsecs@accent.at) | for applicants from Austria

 [ludmila.dragulova@stuba.sk](mailto:ludmila.dragulova@stuba.sk) | for applicants from Slovakia

 More information: [Home - Twin City Future Innovation Manufacturing Hub](#)

### Note for Applicants

Please read the **Evaluation Criteria and Selection Framework** for detailed legal, data, and selection provisions. Templates and FAQs are provided in Annex.

## Need more insights? Join us for an Open Day

Join us for an **Open Day** to explore the accent Makerspace, meet the team, and discover how the Sprint & Roadshow Series can boost your hardware journey.

The visit will include a guided tour followed by a Q&A session.

- Time and date: 13:00–15:00, 13 November 2025
- Location: accent Makerspace, Frauentorgasse 72-72 3430 Tulln, Austria
- [Register here by 13:00 on 12 November 2025](#)

## Apply Now

Apply now and join a cross-border community turning prototypes into real-world products.

Apply [here](#) by 30 November 2025

*The 2C FIMH Sprint & Roadshows Series is developed and organised within the framework of the **Twin City Future Innovation Manufacturing Hub** (2C FIMH), a cross-border project supported by the Interreg VI-A Slovakia–Austria Programme and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.*