GovTech Connect

Transforming Government, Together

Application Guidelines

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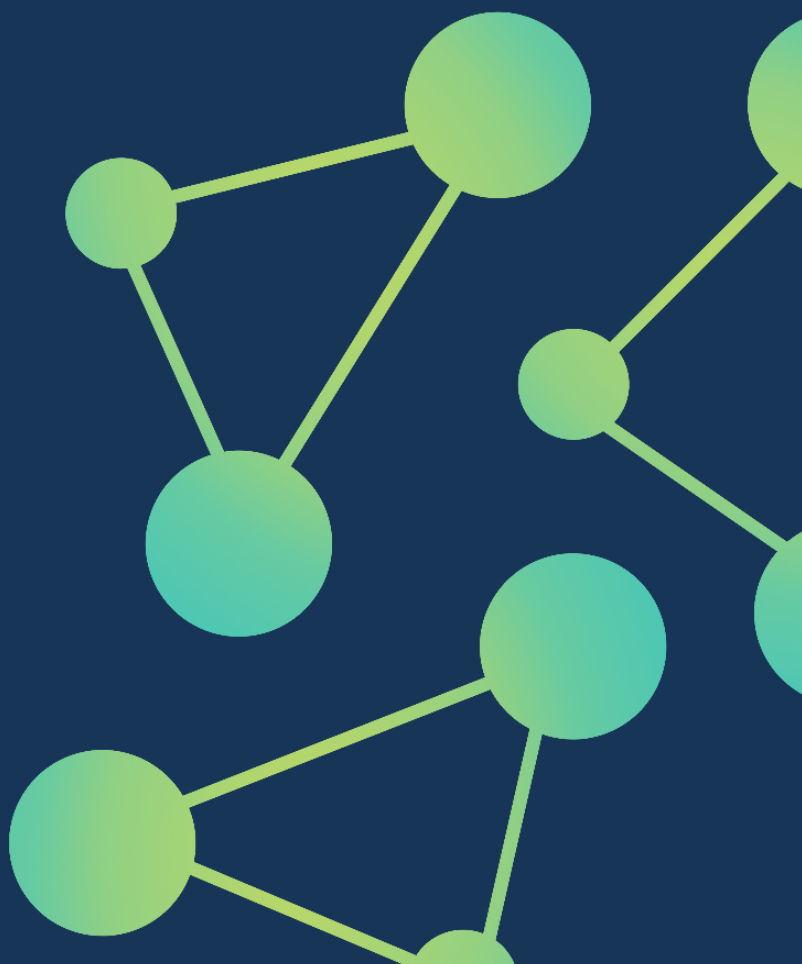# Introduction

The boot camps are delivered as part of the GovTech Connect project, a pilot project funded by the European's Commission to foster the digitisation of the public sector through the use of an innovative European GovTech Platform. GovTech Connect aims to support public administrations in the adoption of cost-effective and flexible digital solutions by articulating the GovTech ecosystem in the European public sector, over the course of two years. It is delivered by a Consortium led by Intellera Consulting, along with partners PUBLIC Deutschland, Lisbon Council, and Politecnico di Milano.

To support an inclusive and sustainable growth of the GovTech ecosystem across Europe, we will implement a series of cross-country boot camps facilitating co-design and knowledge sharing activities, with a particular focus on upskilling GovTech start-ups on how to build citizen-centric, secure solutions and work with Government effectively.

Our trainings aim to support the GovTech ecosystems across Europe by implementing Design Thinking and service design approaches. In particular, Design Thinking and service design provide a framework for innovation development that places the needs of end-users at the centre of the innovation process, codesigning with citizens and stakeholders the public services with which they work and interact on a daily basis. By using Design Thinking approaches, organisations can create solutions that are not only innovative but also tackle real (often unexpressed) needs of their target audience.

What are the benefits to start-ups?

The GovTech Connect boot camps are a new opportunity for European startups to develop and scale their government technology solutions and tackle key public sector challenges. Selected startups addressing key regional challenges receive training on working with government, innovative business models and fundraising strategies, and work with citizens and experts to develop their solution.

The boot camps will run as accelerated and virtual training programmes. Each boot camp will be delivered online over four weeks and will culminate with a final online pitch event.

The boot camps offer a number of unique benefits to startups looking to work with Government:

- Learn how to effectively approach working with governments and hear from a variety of stakeholders with first-hand experience on how to successfully implement a GovTech solution;
- Explore key methods for co-designing user-centred and compliant GovTech products together with citizens;

- Receive expert advice on how to successfully build your B2G (Business to Government) model and pricing strategy;
- Gain knowledge, skills and tools to master the process of accessing funding and raising investments in the GovTech sector;
- Showcase your solution on pitch day and receive buy-in from relevant stakeholders to continue collaborating through future pilot phases.

GovTech Connect will run four boot camps covering all European regions and several industries across 2023 and 2024. In 2023, the project will be focusing on the challenges and regions outlined below.

Timeline and key dates

Application deadline
The deadline for applications is May 5th 2023. Results will be announced in late May 2023.

Live Q&A sessions
The Project team will host a live optional Q&A session per challenge, open to all potential applicants. The session will elaborate on the challenges and application process, as well as answer any questions from attendees.

- [Northern Europe: Achieving Net-Zero - Supporting the green transition of services](#) on **Tuesday 25 April 11am – 12pm CET.**
- [Southern Europe: Digitising Public Services for Enhanced Civic Engagement, Accessibility, and Transparency](#) on **Thursday 20 April 11am – 12pm CET.**

Questions can be submitted before the Live Q&A sessions through this [link](#).

Boot camp dates
- **Northern Europe:** Achieving Net-Zero - Supporting the green transition of services. **5 June to 30 June 2023**. The live pitch event will take place in August
- **Southern Europe:** Digitising Public Services for Enhanced Civic Engagement, Accessibility, and Transparency. **4 September to 29 September 2023**

Eligibility criteria

Requirements: Who can apply?
To be eligible for the boot camps, startup should:
- Have an **office** in the countries indicated as follows: for boot camp 1, startups must have an office in any of these countries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden; for boot camp 2, startups must have an office in any of these countries:

Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia.

Note: *We encourage startups from other regions of Europe to come back to our website at a later point in time. There will be boot camps covering every European region, and different industries.*

- Tackle the **challenge statement** in an innovative way;
- Have developed an **early product** (at least a Prototype/Minimum Viable Product)
- Offer a **digital** solution, leveraging new technology, that can has the potential to be adopted in **public sector settings**;
- Offer a citizen facing solution and/or look to embed citizen engagement into their product development cycle.

Interested startups can apply to one of the bootcamps via the application portal where they will be requested to provide general information on their company and team as well as more detailed information on their proposed solution and how it addresses the relevant challenge.

Application selection process

GovTech Boot Camp applications will be assessed by a jury panel made up of a representative from the GovTech Connect project team, a sectoral expert and a citizen engagement lead. The expected resolution date will occur in the middle of May 2023.

Score guidance overview

Each application will be assessed against the following criteria outlined below:

1. Solution feasibility (Weighted 25%, ranked from 1 to 5)
2. Team (Weighted 25%, ranked from 1 to 5)
3. Company experience (Weighted 25%, ranked from 1 to 5)
4. Plan for working with end-users (Weighted 25%, ranked from 1 to 5)

<u>**Solution feasibility**</u>

<u>Relevant application questions:</u>

- Please provide a description of your solution in 200 words or less.
- Please articulate what problem you are trying to solve and how your solution addresses the specific challenge statement you are applying to.
- Please articulate the potential social and environmental impact of your solution and how you are going to achieve it.
- What is the stage of your solution build?
- Idea
- Wireframes
- Proof of Concept
- Minimum Viable Product
- Working product
- Already on the market

- Based on the stage of your build, what are the key steps you would take to develop it further?
- What are some potential risks in the development or delivery of your solution and how will you mitigate them?

<u>Score guidance</u>

1. The solution is not relevant and/or poorly articulated and does not have a clear impact matching with the challenge. The technology readiness level is low (idea/wireframes) and there is not a clear plan for solution development and risk mitigation;
2. The solution is partly relevant and/or not described with the sufficient level of detail and does not have a clear impact matching with the challenge. The technology readiness level is low (wireframes/proof of concept). The company has outlined some steps needed for solution development and has identified high-level risks with unclear or inadequate mitigations;
3. The solution is articulated at a broad level, is relevant to the challenge and there is a high-level understanding of the impact of their solution. The technology readiness level is adequate (proof of concept/MVP). The company has outlined the key steps needed for solution development and identified some risks for development with acceptable mitigations;
4. The solution is articulated clearly and is relevant to the challenge. There is a clear understanding of the impact of their solution. The technology readiness level is good (MVP/working product). The company has outlined the key steps and resulting action points needed for solution development and identified clear risks for development with well-referenced mitigations;
5. The solution is articulated clearly and provides a strong overview of the company's mission and vision and is highly relevant to the challenge. The technology readiness level is high (working product/already on the market). There is a clear understanding of the impact of their solution. The company has outlined the key steps and resulting action points needed for solution development and identified clear risks for development with strong mitigations.

Team

<u>Relevant application questions</u>

- How many employees does your startup currently have? (select)
  - 0-5
  - 5-10
  - 10-30
  - 30-50
  - 50+
  - Please provide a short bio of the people that you anticipate to be involved in the project.

oooo○ How many people still currently employed in the business have written the code for your technology solution?

Score guidance

1. The team does not have relevant skills and experience and doesn't have in-house technical capabilities;
2. The team has limited relevant skills and experience and no internal technical capabilities;
3. The team has good and relevant skills and experience in adjacent markets, and has in-house technical capabilities;
4. The team has really good and relevant skills and some experience in relevant public sector markets, and has in-house technical capabilities;
5. The team has excellent skills and experience in relevant public sector markets, and have in-house technical capabilities.

Company experience

Relevant application questions

- Please share with us a real example/case study of a time you worked with a local, regional or national government and how you tested or implemented the solution. If you've not yet worked with the government, please provide an example or use case where you imagine you could.
- Please indicate if you have had any public sector clients (including through pilots or other forms of collaboration).
- Please indicate if you have had any private-sector traction.
- What is your current business model?
- What stage of investment does your company best fit? (select)
- Pre-seed
- Seed
- Series A
- Series B
- If you have received any funding before, please specify
- Please specify how much runway your company currently has
- Has your company participated in any European Commission-related activity or program? If so, please indicate which.

Score guidance

1. The solution has not a clear public sector use case. The company has no experience delivering similar products or services, working with clients either in government or private sector, and delivering impact. The business is not commercially viable and/or the company has not sufficient funding;

2. The solution has a potential public sector use case but they have not clearly articulated it. The company has limited experience delivering similar products or services and working with clients in government or private sector but they are unable to articulate the impact they have achieved. Their commercial model is not fully scoped out and/or viable, and the company's runway is limited (less than three months);

3. The solution has one public sector use case that has been described clearly. The company has some experience delivering similar products or services, and they have worked with clients either in government or private sector. Their experience of delivering impact in the relevant sector or industry is moderate, and they can provide some evidence of it. Their commercial model is sound, and the company has runway to sustain the programme (three/six months);

4. The solution has one or more public sector use cases that have been clearly described. The company has comprehensive experience of delivering similar products or services, and they have a proven track record of working with clients in both government and private sector. Their experience of delivering impact in the relevant sector or industry is substantial, and they can provide clear examples of it. Their commercial model is sound, and the company has good runway (six/nine months).

5. The solution has one or more public sector use cases that have been clearly and extensively articulated. The company has strong and innovative experience of delivering similar products or services, and they have a proven track record of working with clients in government and/or private sector. Their experience of delivering impact in the relevant sector or industry is exceptional, and they can provide multiple examples of it. Their commercial model is sound, and the company has good runway (nine/twelve months+).

Working with end users

Relevant application questions

- To what extent can your solution be tested with citizens?
- Do you currently engage with citizens/end users during your product or service design process? If so, please provide an example of citizen groups/end users who engage with your solution.
- Do you have experience engaging with citizens/end-users in the development of their solution?
- At what stage of the design process do you typically engage with citizens/end-users?
- context analysis,
- problem framing,
- envisioning/design solutions,
- testing?
- Is citizen engagement a formalised and structured practice?
- Formalised but unstructured
- Formalised and structured

- Informal and unstructured
- Do you have an existing set of users or potential users that you can test your solution with as part of this programme?
- Please describe how you would run a short pilot with end users.

<u>Score guidance</u>

1. Examples of users provided or user testing deemed not applicable. The solution has no potential to increase citizen engagement and the team has no experience in engaging with users. There is no clear plan to engage with users as part of the boot camp;
2. Limited or unclear explanation of the roles of end-users in solution development. The solution has limited potential to increase citizen engagement and the team has limited experience in engaging with users. There is a plan to engage with users as part of the boot camp but it is not clearly articulated and/or feasible;
3. Basic understanding of potential users and their roles in product development. An example of how the solution can increase citizen engagement in the delivery of public services has been provided and the team has some experience engaging with users at some junctures within the product development cycle. There is a plan to engage with users as part of the boot camp but there are some concerns over the feasibility of it;
4. Good understanding of potential users and their roles in product development. The solution has the potential to increase citizen engagement in the delivery of public services. The team has experience engaging with users throughout the product development cycle. There is a good and realistic plan to engage with users as part of the boot camp;
5. Excellent understanding of potential users and their roles in product development. The solution has proved to increase citizen engagement in the delivery of public services. The team has solid experience regularly engaging with users throughout the product development cycle. There is an excellent plan to engage with users as part of the boot camp.

Boot camp 1 – Challenges

The regional focus for this boot camp is Northern Europe & the Balkans. We are looking for companies that have solutions on "Achieving Net Zero – Supporting the green transition of services".

Specifically, we look for early-stage startups that can address any of the following challenges.

1. Open Sustainability Data

How can we use technologies to promote transparency about sustainability outcomes in government projects?

Public procurement is an important vehicle to drive sustainability outcomes and new technology solutions can play a strong role in streamlining and accelerating the implementation of the EU Green Public Procurement and other sustainable procurement instruments and processes.

We are looking for new digital solutions that can help governments promote transparency about sustainability outcomes in government projects, from identifying suppliers, to monitoring performance, to reporting, and benchmarking.

Relevant solutions include but are not limited to:

- AI and Natural Language Processing to scan, aggregate and assess large volumes of data;
- Supply chain integration, data processing and data visualization;
- Cloud-based procurement tools to analyse spending information and provide visibility throughout the organization;
- Data management, advanced analytics, carbon accounting, and contract management to supplier management.

2. Energy-Efficient Buildings

How can we use technology to improve energy efficiency in public buildings?

The building sector in the EU accounts for 36% of its CO2 emissions. Finding sustainable ways to decarbonise buildings is paramount to achieving Net-Zero emissions by 2050. We are looking for new digital and data solutions to make public buildings better performing, smarter and more energy-efficient.

Relevant solutions include but are not limited to:

- Automatic monitoring and targeting systems to gather and collate energy consumption data, and report/display the findings;
- Computer-based systems that assist with monitoring, controlling, and optimising; the energy consumption of devices;
- Interfaces and data visualisation tools for fault detection and diagnostic;.
- AI and digital twins on automated system optimisation;
- Data encryption and unique certificates on digital platforms.

3. Sustainable Tourism

How can we use technology to enhance sustainable tourism and reduce its environmental impact?

Across the EU, tourist destinations are increasingly encouraged to tackle environmental challenges and improve their sustainability performances. New technology solutions can accelerate the adoption of sustainable habits in tourist destinations, make sustainable travel easier for citizens, and enable more accurate demand planning and decision making for local authorities.

We are looking for solutions that can accelerate the shift to sustainable, responsible and smart tourism, including but not limited to:

- Community platforms to diversify visitors' experience allowing locals to feature locations that synergise with local needs;
- Micro-mobility apps offering car-sharing options with locals or electric alternatives;
- Geographic information systems to display routes with the lowest carbon footprint;
- Sustainably-as-a-Service banking solutions;
- Big data and AI to generate smarter predictions for better decision-making and planning in governments (i.e. in mobility)

Boot camp 2 – Challenges

The regional focus for this boot camp is Southern Europe. We are looking for companies that have solutions for the "Digitisation of Public Services for Enhanced Civic Engagement, Accessibility, and Transparency.

Specifically, we look for early-stage startups that can address any of the following challenges.

1. Inclusive and Accessible Services

How can we use new technologies to make public services more inclusive and accessible for all users and communities?

As per the [Europe's Digital Decade Policy](#) Programme, EU countries should have 100% online accessibility provision of key public services and all citizens should be able to interact with public administrations online. We are looking for new digital solutions that can enable a wider range of citizens – including citizens living with disabilities – to engage with and navigate public services effectively online, alongside new digital solutions that can streamline interoperability between the different layers and departments of government to provide a more coherent and inclusive user experience.

Relevant solutions include but are not limited to:

- Digital platforms aggregating information on public services and enabling easy access to social, tax and other financial benefits;
- Chatbot solutions for citizens to interact with public service providers in their preferred format;

- Voice recognition technologies allowing citizens to engage with digital public services while addressing specific cognitive or learning disabilities;
- Solutions to scan government websites and digital services to find common accessibility errors and flag potential issues.

2. <u>Community Engagement and Collaboration</u>

How can we use new technologies to facilitate more meaningful and productive dialogues between public authorities and the communities they serve?

The [European Digital Strategy](#) promotes innovative digital technologies to improve public services and increase citizen engagement. New technologies can play an important role in facilitating more meaningful and productive dialogues between public authorities and the communities they serve. We are looking for new digital solutions that can facilitate more participatory and data-driven approaches to decision-making and ensure effective resource allocation and planning in local authorities.

Relevant solutions include but are not limited to:

- Mobile apps and platforms designed for civic engagement, allowing users to discuss important issues, share resources, and collaborate on projects with government officials and other citizens.;
- AI/ML powered solutions to analyse sentiment and identify areas of consensus or disagreement among citizens, identifying patterns of public opinion to inform government policy and action;
- Dashboards visualising public opinion data in real time to provide government officials with insights into key concepts and priorities of their constituents.

3. <u>Transparent and Open Government</u>

How can we use new technologies and data to promote greater transparency and openness about public services and government outcomes?

The [Open Data Directive](#) has highlighted the EU open data market as a key building block of the overall EU data economy. The increased use of open data portals by many countries across Southern Europe provides a clear opportunity for new technology to promote greater transparency, accountability and openness about public services and government. We are looking for new digital solutions that enable greater visibility of key metrics across municipalities and departments and allow for verification and increased understanding of government policy, spending, and outcomes.

Relevant solutions include but are not limited to:

- Open data platforms providing citizens insights into government spending and public service delivery;

- Data visualisation tools allowing citizens to easily explore and analyse government data, such as budgets, spending, and performance metrics;
- Digital verification tools enabling citizens to verify the authenticity of government related documents and facts, such as public contracts and budget reports.