

EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian region /EUSAIR/ POPRI youth 2024

Contest rules

1. DESCRIPTION

Young students coming from 10 EUSAIR countries will meet at the competition and present their BEST national ENTREPRENEURIAL IDEAS. The event, organized by Primorski tehnološki park, Slovenia, together with ZICER – Zagreb Innovation Centre (Croatia), will take place back-to-back to the EUSAIR Forum 2024, with the support of the European Commission and governmental institution of Slovenia and Croatia.

EUSAIR POPRI youth 2024 is also organized in close cooperation with other technology parks, incubators and schools of EUSAIR countries, namely Local Economic Development Agency Auleda Vlore, Albania, ICBL – Innovation Centre Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Science & Technology Park of Crete (STEP-C) (Greece), CONF COOPERATIVE FVG (Italy), Studentski Biznis Centar Univerziteta Donja Gorica (Montenegro), CKM – Center for Knowledge Management (North Macedonia), Republic of San Marino Innovation Institute (San Marino) and Business Incubator Novi Sad (Serbia).

The EUSAIR POPRI youth event consists of:

- a/a competition for the best business idea,
- b/an event where young people meet business representatives, and
- c/the Award ceremony.

2. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are young students who:

- Will compete in **two different categories**:
 - a) High-school students or young people aged between 14 and 18 years old
 - b) University students or young people who are between 18 and 29 years old on the day of the EUSAIR POPRI Youth Event. Participants who have met the requirements and have reached the age of 29 during the national qualifications can also take part in the international competition, as this is a continuation of the process.
Participants **do not have an established business** for the entrepreneurial idea they are competing with.
- Are **citizens of one of the 10 Adriatic-Ionian countries**, namely Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, North Macedonia, San Marino, Serbia and Slovenia; The competition is open also to the permanent residents of the countries mentioned above.
- Members of the Slovene minority in neighboring countries can compete only as Slovene citizens (included in national POPRI competition).
- Apply as an **individual or a group (up to 5 members)** with the business plan (prescribed form), respecting the deadline (**6 May 2024**). As a group they have to **nominate at maximum 2 (two) team members to present the business idea**.
- Each EUSAIR country is represented by **one team of high-school students and one team of university students**. The team of high-school students is led by an adult/mentor/teacher¹ (obligatory in case of minors). There will be 2 teams per country, 20 teams or 40 young active participants (2 team members presenting the business idea).

Any applicant not fulfilling the eligibility criteria will not be able to participate in the application process and will not be taken into consideration in any further procedure connected to the event. Technology parks/incubators/schools will ensure that teams meet eligibility criteria

¹ **Mentors/teachers can guide** students in designing a business model, prototyping and giving an oral presentation, but they are not team members. Students are autonomous and independent of mentors. Responsibility for the safety of participants in case of journey and during the competition rests with the companions/mentors and participants themselves.

prior and Primorski tehnološki park will check compliance after the submission of the application.

3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Primorski tehnološki park and ZICER – Zagreb Innovation Centre inform institutions of other EUSAIR countries (identified technology parks/incubators/schools and EUSAIR national coordinators) about the course of the competition and all key steps, including the information about the opening of the application procedure.

The application to the contest is open from 22 April until 6 May 2024 12:00 (CET). Any application after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

The candidates apply as individuals or as a group composed of maximum 5 members. Two (2) team members of the group shall be identified to present the business idea and will be present at the EUSAIR Forum events.

The application and all the requested documents shall be submitted via **e-platform** (available for all technology parks/incubators/schools as they will be the only channel for official communication) in English language.

The on-line application consists of:

- a) general application e-form with information of the individual/team/mentor, school, country, consent of parents regarding the publication of personal data and photos, ownership and publication of business ideas – all for the purposes of the competition, nomination of two members of the team for presenting the business idea;
- b) business plan (template) containing analysis of the existing market, analysing potential buyers, suppliers, current competition, the culture of the market regarding the product, potential future competitors, and potential substitute technologies. It should describe the product or service, its target market, expected price, promotional plans, and how it will be delivered to the customers. It should also include staffing and facilities plans, as well as ultimate profit goals and
- c) ppt presentation (template) to be used while pitching.

Applications that cannot be accepted:

- Submitted by persons working for the European institutions or within the framework of EUSAIR;

- Scientific theses and publications;
- Business ideas already supported and financed by EU funds or those that have already been awarded by a European institution;
- Business ideas already existed and implemented by any company;
- Submitted manually or by post, incomplete or in multiple parts;
- Not submitted via e-from by EUSAIR technology parks/incubators;
- Not submitted in English language.

Individual or/and team can apply only once (one single application).

The applicants will receive a confirmation email once they have successfully submitted the application.

4. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The applicants will first have to pass the **eligibility criteria** as mentioned under point 2.

Next steps are focused on the review of the **quality criteria** divided in two steps; at **step 1** the jury reviews written applications and all prescribed documents in advance, prior to the competition. **Step 2** is verbal presentation/pitch that takes place in front of the jury on the day of competition.

Primorski tehnološki park, Slovenia will, together with ZICER – Zagreb Innovation Centre, Croatia, choose together members for the international jury, separately for each category. The jury is composed of at least three (3) experts from the Startup community.

The jury will review **written applications together with all requested documents (filled templates)** in advance, prior to the competition and listen to the **pitches** at the event as such.

The jury's decision is based on the criteria: the potential of the business idea; understanding the problem and matching the solution with the problem; knowledge about typical customers; coherence between business model segments/chapters; originality and logical, entrepreneurial thinking; the production and use of Minimum Viable Product (MVP); research on customers and other stakeholders, performance, team and general impression.

The business model and the oral presentation are evaluated with points according to pre-prepared criteria. In case two or more teams have the same number of points, the team with the highest total points of the business model segment wins, then the sum of points from the MVP - Minimum Viable Product segment and then the sum of points for the oral presentation.

THE PITCH DAY

The pitch session of **up to 5 minutes**, on which PowerPoint presentation shall be used, is performed in English language. **Q&A (5 minutes)** follows the formal presentation of the business idea.

- Students will present their projects as a business pitch to the members of the jury, using a PowerPoint presentation (pdf format). Each team will have 5 minutes, no more!
- Do NOT use videos, animations or links in order not to affect the course of the presentation!
- It is HIGHLY recommended to bring/show models or prototypes of any product or technology you may be offering as a part of presentation.
- A computer (operating with Windows) with a projector and a screen will be available for students to use.
- Mentors are allowed to be present at the judging area during judging sessions.

5. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

The jury will take into consideration written documents (send prior to the contest), as well as verbal presentation. Best business ideas of each category or candidates for the winners will be announced during the EUSAIR Forum in May 2024.

6. TIMETABLE

- ❖ Opening date of registration and submission of business ideas by using the platform of Primorski tehnološki park – from **22th April 2024**
- ❖ Closing date of registration and submission of business ideas by using the platform of Primorski tehnološki park - till **6th May 2024 (12:00 CET)**
- ❖ Eligibility criteria will be checked by Primorski tehnološki park and ZICER – Zagreb Innovation Centre (in cooperation with identified technology parks) on 6th May, 2024
- ❖ Business ideas will be submitted to the jury (evaluation of the written presentation) – 6th May 2024
- ❖ EUSAIR young entrepreneurs' contest (EUSAIR Forum) – 15 and 16 May 2024, Croatia