EKIN 2027 PROGRAMME

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE CALL

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1. ABOUT US

BBK has been contributing to Bizkaia's **economic development and social cohesion** for more than a century now. Our Social Work division has resources to foster talent and entrepreneurship; each year, thousands of people take part in and benefit from the BBK training and start-up programmes.

BBK seeks to lead the setting up of an **impact investing and social entrepreneurship ecosystem** in Bizkaia in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and its 2030 Agenda.

According to the United Nations, developing countries are currently facing a funding gap of around **4.2 billion dollars a year** to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A daring response has emerged around the world to address this need; it applies innovative tools to solve our society's environmental and social problems, as social innovation and impact investors, companies and entrepreneurs strive to transform the economic system towards a more sustainable economy. Investments have so far been made under the risk-return trade-off.

However, the impact investment includes a third dimension: generating a **measurable and positive environmental and social impact,** so that investment decisions are governed by the risk-return-impact trade-off.

This approach is increasingly growing in relevance on a global scale and the global impact investing market already exceed **1.57 billion dollars in assets under management,** according to the latest estimates of the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN).

At BBK, we are actively working to focus on being investors with that risk-return-impact trade-off, which are those aspects that reflect the business model we want to promote. We have therefore designed a broad strategy that ranges from Social Innovation and citizen awareness-raising to the rolling out of social entrepreneurship programmes.

We only have one planet and our goal as a global community is to address those challenges through the Global Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda. BBK wants to help to achieve those goals through our programmes, our global network and our investments. Accordingly, we consider supporting social entrepreneurs to be a process entailing four well-defined phases – **inspire, drive, accelerate and invest** – in which we include programmes that manage to maximise the impact and to generate business models based on sustainable competitiveness.

- **Inspire:** We aim to inspire with ideas, trends and solutions that have a positive social impact on the territory. We empower citizens and we envision futures with a positive social impact.
- **Drive:** We help to create the conditions to provide a business model to the ideas that foster social change. Starting up businesses, building strong foundations of their business model and sustainability for their future scalability.
- **Accelerate:** We accelerate enterprises and social ventures with development potential both in the territory and internationally. We connect with other key stakeholders to scale the business model.

- **Invest:** We help secure financial resources and partner with established, scalable companies driving significant social impact.

Ekin is an incubation programme for social entrepreneurs who are developing a business with a positive social impact, where, at the end of the programme, the three best projects will receive the financial awards established in Section Eight of these terms and conditions.

BBK wishes to scale the Ekin impact in its 6th edition; the programme supports 25 social entrepreneurship projects that generate economic growth opportunities and foster the development of social innovation in Bizkaia.

The projects selected to take part in Ekin will form part of a comprehensive incubation programme where they will be able to structure and validate their social enterprise with the aim of creating an impact on the business climate. They will benefit from in-person networking sessions and workshops with experts to define and grow the culture of the enterprise and get ready to face investors. Furthermore, if they are one of the three best projects, they will be in the run for an award of up to €10.000.

2. PROGRAMME GOALS

This initiative supports startups with **projects with social impact in the initial phases;** it seeks to scale the impact by creating constant opportunities to develop social innovation in Bizkaia, by helping entrepreneurs to **validate their business model and to ensure funding readiness.**

Our goals are ambitious, namely to:

- Further strengthen BBK's commitment to entrepreneurship in Bizkaia.
- Make Bizkaia a European benchmark in providing comprehensive support to entrepreneurship.
- Help build companies that generate development and employment with a social commitment.
- Support social entrepreneurs to embark on sustainable projects that provide solutions for the challenges faced by Bizkaia and the world and to have a lasting impact.
- Provide entrepreneurs in early stages with advanced tools free of charge.
- Create a broad and inclusive community of social entrepreneurs around BBK
- Provide social entrepreneurs of Bizkaia access to a global community of entrepreneurs.
- Bring the entrepreneurship ecosystem to BBK workers and associates by their participating as programme mentors.

- Help to highlight the social entrepreneurs' contribution to accomplishing the 2030 Agenda.

3. TARGET AUDIENCE

We are seeking entrepreneurs with initiative and social commitment who want to implement their business projects and to receive the necessary support to embark on their projects and to turn them into reality. The projects will have to comply with the following requirements:

- **Feasibility and growth potential.** Business projects in any sector, which are feasible and have potential for success.
- **Initial phase of development.** Projects in pre-growth phase (idea, concept, project, SME or startup), which are not already up and running or which are incorporated but dormant.
- **Rootedness.** Projects located in Bizkaia, capable of driving impact in the territory and with local and global reach
- **Social commitment.** Projects with a high social component, aligned with the BBK commitment to the wellbeing and the sustainable development of Bizkaia.
- **Positive impact on the territory and society.** Initiatives with specific goals for job creation, innovation and generating prosperity in Bizkaia, or which help to address social and environmental challenges, such as population ageing, supporting youth, caring for the environment, sustainability, education and accessing information.

All the members of the promoter team must be aged 18 or over.

4. HOW TO TAKE PART IN THE PROGRAMME

Anybody interested in taking part in Ekin programme must apply through the BBK website, where they can access the registration form. The application will contain information about the applicant and their educational and professional background, as well as about the business project: mission, main milestones, value proposition and key differentiators, business model, social impact and composition of the promoter team.

Throughout the programme, promoters must have stable and regular online access in a computer fitted with one of these browsers: Google Chrome, Firefox or Safari.

The call to submit applications will be open between 9.00 a.m. on 5 November and 11.59 p.m. on 15 December 2026.

Applications submitted outside this time period will not be accepted.

5. INITIAL PROJECT SELECTION

The Ekin Selection Committee, consisting of a multidisciplinary team made up of BBK and Bridge for Billions staff, will assess the projects and make the initial selection.

After the deadline for submitting applications, the Committee will assess the applications received and select the 25 projects to pass to the following phase of the programme. All the applicants will be informed of the decision by email, whether or not their projects have been selected, **before 21 December 2026.**

Selection criteria:

1) **Potential Social Impact**
   Projects with a positive impact by addressing environmental and/or social challenges in Bizkaia will be prioritised.
2) **Business Model**

   The projects must be economically feasible and their economic and financial perspectives viable and logical.

3) **Innovation**
   The originality and degree of innovation will be taken into account, along with the level of specificity of the project idea.
4) **Scalability/Replicability**
   The projects must have potential for growth and market opportunity, along with potential to create employment in the medium term.
5) **Team**
   The members will have to form a well-knit team and have, on the one hand, implementation capacity, and on the other, communication skills.

6. PROGRAMME PHASES AND CONTENT

The Ekin programme will consist of an annual call with 25 participating projects. It will run for six months from the launch of the call to the incubation process and closing events.

-**Launch of the call and selection (2 months)**

-**Ekin Incubation Programme (4 months)**

-Access to the incubation platform

-Mentoring (online)

-Training sessions and workshops with experts (online)

-Community activities (in-person and online)

-Demo Day and Awards (in-person)

Content of the incubation programme:

The programme comprises eight modules that follow innovative entrepreneurial methodologies and are designed to guide entrepreneurs step-by-step and in a streamlined manner to structure their ideas and to clearly define an action plan for their business. The modules contain key definitions, examples, tutorials and additional resources to help to challenge ideas and assess their opportunities.

We also provide eight sessions with each lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes for the entrepreneurs to delve further into each of the eight incubation modules given by expert professionals.

The eight modules are the following:

1. **Value proposition.** Entrepreneurs grasp the problem that they are solving, the market opportunities, customers' needs and the benefits of their product.
2. **Competitor mapping.** Entrepreneurs identify the strengths and weaknesses of their offering, how they stand out from the competition and find their true competitive advantage.
3. **Strategic partner mapping.** Entrepreneurs identify the different partners that they need to launch their business and map their partner and distribution channel networks.
4. **Marketing & business model.** Entrepreneurs have a clear idea of the essential activities for their business to grow and they learn how to attract customers and make sure they return.
5. **Project feasibility and price.** Entrepreneurs understand the costs of attracting their customers and discover the optimum price that will make their business financially feasible.
6. **Financial projections** Entrepreneurs learn to identify their costs and revenue; they run multiple financial scenarios and determine when they will reach the break-even point.
7. **Impact plan.** Entrepreneurs see how they fit into the general context of their market; they define their mission and vision; they determine the desired social impact and learn to measure it precisely.
8. **Growth plan.** Entrepreneurs produce a viable growth plan; set goals for the coming 3 years; anticipate risks and define mitigation strategies to always be prepared.

During the four incubation months, they will be involved in – parallel to the platform content – the following events and activities:

Launch Event

Entrepreneurs will be welcomed to the programme. They will be given a recap of what they will learn and an overview of the phases of the programme; will be taken over its details, to ensure that everybody is on the same page and know what is at their disposal and what is expected of them.

Networking Sessions

In these sessions, the entrepreneurs and/or mentors will be invited to take part in 3-4 in-person (and/or hybrid) sessions during the programme so that the participants can meet in person, explore possible synergies and share lessons learnt.

Checkpoint Sessions

We provide eight sessions with each lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes for the entrepreneurs to delve further into each of the incubation modules given by one of our experts. This provides entrepreneurs with an extra layer of support when they will get a sound grasp of each model and have the opportunity to get to know their peers.

Expert workshops

We will round off the programme with expert speakers on a variety of themes and areas to provide additional value to the experiences of the entrepreneurs.

Demo Day and Awards

Final event when a maximum of 12 of the selected entrepreneurs will be invited to present their projects to a jury. Three winning projects will be selected and the prizes awarded.

7. SHORTLISTING FINALIST PROJECTS FOR DEMO DAY

The Ekin Selection Committee will monitor and assess the participating projects, taking into account their degree of progress, commitment to and leverage of the programme. According to this assessment, the committee will shortlist a maximum of 12 finalist projects to present their projects to a **jury** during Demo Day, the event to close the programme, and where they can vie for one of the three prizes.

8. PRIZES FOR THE BEST PROJECTS

Demo Day will be held on the last day. It is the closing event when the shortlisted projects will present their projects to the Ekin Selection Committee, which may include the participation of or input from the stakeholders of the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

During the event, the presentations will be assessed and the three winning projects chosen, based on the following criteria:

- **Potential social impact:** Capacity of the project to contribute to addressing environmental or social challenges, particularly in Bizkaia.
- **Business model:** Economic feasibility and soundness of the business proposal.

- **Innovation:** Originality and degree of differentiation of the initiative.
- **Scalability and replicability:** Potential for growth, expansion and create jobs.
- **Promoter team:** Capabilities, commitment and implementation potential of the team.
- **Project presentation:** Clarity, communication skills and quality of the presentation.
- **Entrepreneurial profile:** Initiative, motivation and ability of the promoters to drive the project.

Three prizes will be awarded for the three highest-rated projects:

-1st prize: €10,000

-2nd prize: €5,000

-3rd prize: €2,500

The prizes will be granted to legal entities. Therefore, if the winning project were not the work of an incorporated legal entity, the promoters will have to incorporate to be able to receive the prize.

The amount of the prize must be fully used to develop the winning project and will be paid into a Kutxabank account number, whose holder is the entity whose project has won a prize.

The awarding of the prize will be subject to a document being signed between BBK and the winning entity, which will establish the specific terms and conditions regarding the award, payment and use of the funds.

In addition to the three main prizes, **runner-up awards or honourable mentions** will be granted to other participating projects that stand out for their excellence in areas such as innovation, social impact, sustainability or other particularly relevant aspects for the programme goals.

These honourable mentions will seek to highlight and showcase the effort, creativity and commitment of the participating entrepreneurs.

The participants will accept the decisions of the Selection Commitment as regards the choice of winners.

All participants will be given a certificate of having completed the programme.

9. UNDERTAKINGS OF THE SELECTED APPLICANTS TO THE PROGRAMME

The very fact of taking part in the Ekin programme and of obtaining all rights to collaboration and mentoring implies a strict undertaking by the selected applicants. The expected undertakings are as follows:

1. **Time dedicated to the project: Participants will need to dedicate between six and eight hours a week during the four months to working on the project. Furthermore, they will need to sign the mentoring agreement and the initial commitment to start the programme.**
2. **Attendance undertaking:** Attendance at 100% of the virtual workshops and sessions run within the programme (unless justified, due to a problem of force majeure) and at the monitoring activities organised; at least, the presence of one person has to be guaranteed throughout the process.
3. Implementing the agreed **action plan** and prioritising achieving the key metrics identified.
4. **Information on the evolution and on the milestones achieve** (jobs created, revenue, investments, prizes received…) to the Ekin team for the following two years, every six months after the end of the programme, to measure the true scope of the impact generated with their programme.

10. UNDERTAKINGS OF THE PROGRAMME TO THE SELECTED APPLICANTS

The Ekin programme undertakes to:

1. Allocate **an incubation manager** to each of the selected projects.
2. Provide eight sessions, each lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes, to go further into each of the eight incubation modules run by one of our experts, which will provide an extra layer of support, in which they will receive in-depth knowledge about each module and an opportunity to get to know their peers.
3. Connect the entrepreneurs with mentors of the Ekin network.
4. Invite the project members to the entrepreneurship ecosystem events and other acts organised within the Ekin programme.
5. Disseminate the participating projects.
6. Provide lifetime access to a community of thousands of entrepreneurs and mentors worldwide. In the global community, the entrepreneurs have weekly access to relevant news, investment opportunities, coaching circles, experts, mentors, etc.
7. Help entrepreneurs to produce an executive summary at the end of the programme that they can use to present their project to investors and other stakeholders.
8. Entrepreneurs will be able to download all the information of each worked module.

9. Post-programme alumni monitoring to measure the true scope of the impact generated with their programme.

If any project is not achieving the expected goals due to a lack of dedication by the participants and/or failing to comply with the acquired undertakings, the Selection Committee may decide to expel the project from the incubation process.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The content of the projects that are submitted to the Ekin Programme, along with all the documentation and information of any type that is supplied, will be confidential, secret and restricted. They will be treated as such by Ekin and by the members of the Selection Committee. In general, the participant projects agree to the Selection Committee using the basic data of the project during the assessment and selection processes envisaged in these terms and conditions.

The participating projects will guarantee that the work and their contents voluntarily handed over to the programme (including the different summaries or presentations) do not infringe the rights of parties or they have, as applicable, with all the necessary authorisations to take part in this programme; that they are not offensive, or degrading, or incite to violence, racism, or breach fundamental rights or public freedoms recognised by the applicable legislation, and regarding the protection of children and young people, or do not constitute or amount to an invasion of personal or family privacy of individuals, or are a breach of the right to reputation of third parties or of the confidentiality of communications, or are contrary to current law. Furthermore, the submitted projects will guarantee a non-sexist use of language and the processing of images.

In turn, each participating project authorises BBK to use its name in the publicity material related to the programme, including online, without receiving any compensation in return.

The company set up by the promoter team will hold the intellectual property of the innovation, patents or technological developments produced as part of the programme.

12. LEGAL ASPECTS

Acceptance of the Legal Terms and Conditions. The aim of these terms and conditions is to establish the rules to participate in the Ekin Programme. Participating in the Programme call means acceptance of these terms and conditions, without provisos or reservations, as well as of any interpretative ruling that BBK and/or the Selection Committee of this Programme would be issued in that regard.

Personal Data Protection.

The personal data provided, as well as those contained in the documentation submitted with the application to be included in the Ekin initiative and generated during its processing will be processed by Bilbao Bizkaia Kutxa Fundación Bancaria - Bilbao Bizkaia Kutxa Banku Fundazioa with tax number G-48412720 and registered office at Gran Vía 19-21, 48001 Bilbao (Bizkaia) and by Bridge for Billions with tax number B-87982351 and registered office at Calle Huerta 11 Planta 1 Pta. 2 28014, Madrid, as the joint data controllers, in order to analyse, assess and process your application, along with, as applicable, to perform the necessary steps to ensure effective inclusion in the programme and perform its monitoring and evaluation. The legal basis for the processing is its need to apply the contractual measures established in these terms and conditions.

To obtain further information about the processing of your personal data or the exercising of your right of access, rectification, deletion, restriction, portability and objection, you should send an email to protecciondedatos@bbk.eus. For further information about the processing of your data, you should consult the specific privacy policies in the application form.

Liability waiver. The promoter team is solely liable for the management and administration of the business project and, in particular, for any infringements and damages caused or which it may cause to the rights of third parties with its projects; it will compensate the third parties affected and BBK for any damages and losses incurred due to the defaulting on obligations and/or the lack of truthfulness or accuracy of the statements and obligations established and assumed in these legal terms and conditions. BBK will not be liable for delays or any other circumstance attributable to third parties that may affect the participation in or development of the programme. BBK will not be liable for any damage or loss of any type that may be due to the temporary lack of availability or continuity of the functioning of the system used to participate in the programme. BBK will not accept any liability due to delays in the postal services or in telecommunication networks regarding logs, sending data or other. BBK reserves the right to cancel, modify or suspend the programme. BBK is not liable for any inaccuracies in the data provided by the promoter teams, or if the data is not current or being able to contact them for reasons beyond the control of BBK.

Legislation and jurisdiction. The BBK decision is commercial in nature, and jurisdiction belongs to the civil courts. The representatives of the business projects formally waive any jurisdiction to any which they may be entitled and expressly agree to submit any dispute, discrepancy, issue or claim that may directly or indirectly arise regarding the interpretation or fulfilment of this Programme for the ruling of the Bilbao Courts of Justice, with jurisdiction for that purpose.

Code of Ethics. Submitting the application for this call implies knowledge and acceptance of and undertaking to comply with the BBK Code of Ethics. The participating entities and individuals undertake to act in accordance with principles, values and code of conduct set out in that Code during the implementation of the projects. Failure to comply with those principles may lead to exclusion from the call or, as applicable, to the withdrawal of the support granted.

13. CONTACT

In the case of any query, or to obtain more information on the programme, please visit the Ekin programme website (www.bbk.eus/bbkekin) or email bbkekin@bbk.eus.

Potential complaints regarding the programme will only be taken into account if submitted in writing to BBK through the 'CONTACT US' section on the https://www.bbk.eus website.