

# Mentorship guidelines



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No101073781



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# 1. About the Program

X2.0 is a deeptech growth programme that seeks to ensure the scaling up of EU deeptech startups by providing custom, industry-focused, growth programme that will act as a catalyst in delivering market-ready applications and technology solutions in 5 key impact areas: Manufacturing & Circular Economy, AgriTech, HealthTech & BioTech, Smart Cities and Sustainability, and Data & A.I.).

The project will distribute €1.5M in innovation and scaling up services to 50 deep-tech startups and will contribute to the offering of the EIC program. From November 2022 to November 2024 X2.0 will launch five open calls.

It will promote the growth and strengthening of relationships between moderately innovative and highly innovative regions by providing needs-based, custom, industry-focused, growth programs to deep-tech startups.

The X2.0 is a sustainable legacy project of X-Europe and aims to leverage its predecessors' established ecosystem, network, proven innovation action/Startup Europe methodology, and learnings, to generate a next-gen coordination action mechanism.

X2.0 will set up a custom and needs-based 5-month deeptech program. The program will tailor its services to the needs of each startup, ensuring growth, scaling, long-term impact and cross border connections. Each selected startup will be screened by Venture Capital and Innovation experts and based on their insights, validated industry experts and their services will be proposed.

X2.0 has categorized the most typical needs that a deeptech startup might need. Leveraging this Innovation Matrix methodology (see table below), the established on-demand and custom services may arrive from the 6 categories. The subcategories listed below each pillar are the examples of the individual needs/services that may be tackled. Additional needs/services may be considered, as long as they fit under the 6 categories.

## X2.0 Innovation Matrix

Financing / Investment seeking	Deeptech / scientific aspects	Biz dev. & scaling up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1on1 mentorship w/ investor</li> <li>• Consultancy Services for proposal writing, innovation structuring, investment readiness, consortium building</li> <li>• Investment readiness trainings, &amp; coaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1on1 Mentorship w/ tech expert from the relevant deeptech field</li> <li>• Access to DIHs, R&amp;D centers, test laboratories and promo in their regions</li> <li>• Tech consulting;</li> <li>• Knowledge and innovation transfer</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1on1 mentorship w/ business expert</li> <li>• Acceleration/incubation programme</li> <li>• Group training on specific topics (tech transfer, Scaling up processes, Sales, Data Legislation...)</li> </ul>
Promotion & Communication	Internationalization / Soft-landing	Commercialization & Legal aspects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1on1 mentorship w/ Digital Marketing Expert</li> <li>• Growth Hacking Training</li> <li>• Paid Promotional Campaigns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1on1 mentorship w/internationalization expert</li> <li>• Soft-landing missions or boot camps</li> <li>• Support on finding local partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1on1 mentorship w/Lawyer or commercialization expert</li> <li>• Certification consultancy</li> <li>• Patent consultancy</li> <li>• Training on Market, IPR, Tech surveillance</li> </ul>

Table 1: Innovation Matrix

## 2. Role and Importance of Mentor

Mentorship can be described as a partnership between two parties with different levels of experience. A mentor provides support to the mentored team, exposes them to problems and challenges through a positive and developmental approach.

The quality and dedication of mentors and participating startups are the key drivers of success in the X2.0 program for deeptech startups in Europe. Excellent mentors actively listen, ask insightful questions, push teams beyond their comfort zones, and provide suggestions and advice that add value. Striking the right balance between constructive criticism and encouragement is a characteristic of experienced mentors.

At the beginning of the Growth program, mentors will work with startups to set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) specific to each individual startup during the program's duration (5 months). Through the mentoring should be allocated approximately 15 hours for 1 on 1 mentoring sessions. In the scenario where two mentors are involved, a combined total of 25 hours should be dedicated to mentoring sessions.

Setting KPIs involves assessing and prioritizing the startup's needs and establishing expectations from the program based on the startup's development stage. After setting KPIs, mentorship activities will focus on helping startups maximize the value offered by the program and achieve notable progress.



A mentor is someone with practical experience in one of the 6 categories from the Innovation Matrix, willing to build partnerships and connections, who understand the technology in terms of business and development and have capacities to guide in the process of scaling up. Mentors will help overcome serious bottlenecks in one of the 6 categories from the Innovation Matrix, according to the Needs assessment performed.

### 3. Recommendations for Mentors

We encourage Mentors to achieve the following objectives during mentorship sessions:

- Assess the progress from previous meetings and set short-term goals.
- Agree on regular weekly meetings, or recurring meetings as necessary.
- Periodically review overall priorities, objectives, and activities.
- Review upcoming short-term KPIs and identify the resources and responsibilities that will help the startup achieve them.
- Provide expertise and guidance in a specific domain from the 6 categories of services.
- Agree on a communication plan that both parties are comfortable with, e.g. preferred time and mode of contact for questions and meeting requests.
- Determine supportive measures to be taken if a startup is struggling to achieve a particular KPI.

Some questions to be addressed during mentorship sessions, which will assist both the team and the mentor in establishing a framework for work after each session, may include:

- What will provide you with the greatest value from today's session?
- What results/information do you want to take away from this meeting?
- What aspects of your growth do you want to focus on at this moment?
- What challenges are you facing in your work for which you are unable to find a solution?
- Describe in detail the current situation your team is in.
- What is currently functioning well?
- Which processes do you lack control over?

Taking the above into account, mentors are not expected to:

- Undertake specific tasks, deliver strategies, and tactics on behalf of the startup.
  - Perform short-term tasks related to specific activities.
  - Always initiate scheduling of mentorship sessions.
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## 4. Expectations from Startups

Preparation for mentorship sessions:

- Initiate mentorship sessions at least biweekly.
- Prepare specific questions for your mentor.
- Research your mentor's experience and expertise.
- Be prepared to provide all relevant business details, including strengths and weaknesses.
- Identify the areas of your business where you need the greatest support.
- Prepare ideas and preliminary action plans for achieving KPIs.

During and after mentorship sessions:

- Share your expectations of mentorship, foster an open relationship, and be open to asking questions.
- Be receptive to listening (later discuss advice with your team; mentorship sessions are not for making decisions but rather for gathering information).
- Discuss how to track progress and establish a good relationship with your mentor.
- Agree with your mentor on communication channels and schedule the date and time for the next meeting.
- Share with your mentor the activities you have completed and the KPIs achieved before the next session.

## 5. Reporting

Kindly be aware that the mentoring program encompasses a reporting component as well. For comprehensive information regarding the submission of reports and key emphases to include within them, we invite you to refer to the document titled "[Guideline for Establishing the Work Plan, KPIs & Reporting](#)". This resource provides detailed insights into the reporting process, elucidating essential aspects to highlight and ensuring a seamless and informed reporting experience.

## 6. Contacts

For any additional information feel free to contact the X2.0 team.  
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