

Launchpad Program for Selected Spin-Outs and Start-Ups



PhotonHub™

Are you an entrepreneurially minded researcher or early-stage venture with ambitions to build a business through photonics-driven innovation?

The PhotonHub Launchpad program is designed to support the acceleration of both the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) and Investment Readiness Level (IRL) of emerging ventures like yours. You will be guided from the conceptual stage through to the development of a full demonstrator and industrially compatible prototype, in parallel with the formulation of a clear business plan aimed at maximising your potential for raising initial venture capital.

OVERVIEW

Launchpad is a dedicated program aimed at innovation acceleration through **combined TRL and IRL supports** to boost market readiness. It has been developed by PhotonHub, the EU-funded full-service one-stop-shop digital innovation hub for photonics.

With **over 30 renowned photonics technology support providers**, the PhotonHub partner network spans a wide range of cutting-edge technology platforms, facilitating open access and guided orientation to the broadest possible range of photonics expertise, equipment and technologies available from the best facilities throughout Europe. It also covers the entire value chain from early-stage concept (TRL2) and prototyping (TRL3-4) to upscaling (TRL5-7). IRL supports are aligned to TRL support activities and run parallel with but independently of the deep innovation projects. Launchpad's unique support offering makes innovating through photonics faster, easier, and more accessible than ever.

Technology Readiness Level (TRL) Supports

TRL supports for a deep innovation project are delivered by one or more PhotonHub partners who provide guidance on commercial and technical development through photonics-led innovation.

Investment Readiness Level (IRL) Supports

IRL supports are delivered by renowned funding specialists Tech Tour in partnership with the Business Coaching Team at VUB B-PHOT Brussels Photonics and intellectual property (IP) specialists Sonnenberg Harrison.

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Technology Readiness Level (TRL) Supports

Benefits

- **EU subsidies** of up to 85% of the cost of your deep innovation project
- **Expert assessment** on the technical viability of your planned innovation
- **Involvement** of one or more partners with the relevant expertise and experience to support your needs through every step of your project
- **Access** to PhotonHub's Demo & Experience Centers for hands-on training in your targeted photonics technology domain
- **Guidance** on photonics manufacturing and the EU supply chain

Investment Readiness Level (IRL) Supports

Benefits

- **Fully** subsidised support to help you reach your funding goals
- **Specialised workshops** for investment-readiness coaching
- **Mentoring sessions** with industry experts to refine your business models and strategies
- **Investor pitch** training*
- **Expert advice** and support with the protection of your innovations while navigating the pathway to commercialization
- **Guidance** on licensing and on protecting company and brand names

*If you are ready to look for investors, Launchpad participants can participate in the annual European Photonics Venture Forum, providing a unique opportunity to pitch to potential investors and have one-to-one investor meetings, while also networking with other successful entrepreneurs. However, please note that for those attending the European Photonics Venture Forum, participants must cover their own travel and accommodation costs.

WHO CAN BENEFIT

The Launchpad program has been designed to support selected entrepreneurially minded researchers and early-stage ventures exhibiting a strong potential for breakthroughs in photonics-driven innovation, starting from a scientific breakthrough concept at TRL2.

If you are looking to participate in training activities to accelerate your TRL, develop your business models and strategies, and prepare for early-stage investment rounds, then this program would be ideally suited to you. Eligible candidates are required to formally apply and be selected before participation can be confirmed. Don't delay – **[apply online](#)** today.

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FORMAT AND TIMING

All support activities for participants are delivered online, with the exception of the European Photonics Venture Forum which takes place as an onsite event in Valencia, Spain on Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 February 2027.

The Launchpad program will typically be organised in cohorts of 10-12 selected participants. Please note: The next cohort will run from September 2026 to February 2027. To be considered for that cohort, **the application deadline is 26 August 2026.**

WHAT PREVIOUS LAUNCHPAD PARTICIPANTS HAVE SAID:

"Well prepared program. Well organized sessions with very qualified experts that help in commercialisation." – Tibor Hianik, Comenius University Bratislava

"The PhotonHub Launchpad Program provided outstanding support and practical guidance for turning a strong technical project into a clearer business opportunity. The mentors feedback was actionable, and the program helped us define a more disciplined roadmap for validation and next steps. We would strongly recommend it to deep-tech teams aiming to accelerate commercialization in the photonics field, specially when preparing an european leap." – Victor Rodriguez, SureVision Tech

HOW TO APPLY

Express your interest in Launchpad by completing the **[online application form](#)**.



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PHOTONICS PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP



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