

StarTAp25 Regulations – 2026 Edition

Art. 1 – Promoter

StarTAp25 is a business competition promoted by Fondazione Taranto 25, an organization committed to innovation, entrepreneurship, and the economic and social development of local communities.

Art. 2 – Purpose of the Initiative

StarTAp25 – 2026 Edition aims to:

- support the creation and growth of innovative startups and entrepreneurial projects;
- attract talent, ideas and businesses at local, national and international level; promote solutions with strong economic, social and environmental impact;
- enhance the territory of Taranto and its province as a place for experimentation, open innovation and development, through a dedicated special category.

The initiative promotes connections between startups, investors, companies, institutions and professionals, contributing to the growth of an open and collaborative entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Art. 3 – Territorial Scope

The competition is open at local, national and international level.

Startups, companies and teams from any country may apply, with no restrictions on registered or operating offices, except as required for the Special Category “Taranto25 Future”.

Art. 4 – Eligible Participants

4.1 Startups and Companies

Startups and companies that meet the following requirements can apply:

- they have been established for no more than five years at the time of application;
- they present an innovative project in terms of technology, organisation, process or business model;
- they show growth potential, economic and financial sustainability, and market interest.

4.2 Teams and Individuals

Teams or individual applicants that meet the following requirements can apply:

- they present a structured entrepreneurial idea;

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- they commit, if selected for the final phase, to incorporating a company within 90 days of official notification.

Art. 5 – Focus Areas

Projects must fall within one of the following areas:

- 1. Climate Tech & Energy Transition**
Renewable energy, circular economy, decarbonisation, sustainable resource management.
- 2. Digital, AI & Data**
Artificial intelligence, digital platforms, SaaS, cybersecurity, data economy.
- 3. Health, Biotech & Wellbeing**
Digital health, medical devices, biotech, prevention, longevity and wellbeing.
- 4. Blue Economy & Marine Innovation**
Marine technologies, smart ports, coastal logistics, ocean sustainability.
- 5. AgriTech & Food Innovation**
Precision agriculture, foodtech, sustainable supply chains, traceability and food safety.
- 6. Social Impact & Future of Work**
Social innovation, education, inclusion, new models of work and welfare.

Art. 6 – Special Category “Taranto25 Future”

The “Taranto25 Future” category is dedicated to projects that:

- develop innovative solutions with an impact on Taranto and the Mediterranean area;
- enhance local assets such as the sea, culture, tourism and manufacturing;
- propose models for economic, urban, environmental or social regeneration;
- include pilot activities, experimentation or an operational presence in the territory.

Non-local startups may also apply, provided the project shows a concrete and measurable impact on Taranto.

Art. 7 – Technical and Scientific Committee

Applications will be evaluated by a Technical and Scientific Committee appointed by Fondazione Taranto 25.

The Committee is composed of professionals and entrepreneurs with proven experience in evaluating business projects.

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The Committee may exclude applications that do not comply with these Regulations. All decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

Art. 8 – Application Procedure

To apply, candidates must send an email to candidature@startup25.it with a brief description of their project and motivations.

Selected applicants will receive an application form to be completed and returned together with:

- a pitch deck (maximum 10 slides);
- an optional video pitch (maximum length: 3 minutes).

Applications must be submitted by **31 July 2026**.

Applications may be submitted in Italian or English.

The final event will take place in **October 2026**. The exact date and venue will be announced later.

Art. 9 – Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be evaluated based on:

- compliance with these Regulations;
- level of innovation and originality;
- market potential and scalability;
- economic and financial sustainability;
- quality and complementarity of the team;
- social and/or environmental impact;
- consistency with the focus areas;
- impact on the territory of Taranto and feasibility of local activities.

Art. 10 – Awards and Opportunities

The total prize pool for the 2026 edition is €30,000, distributed among the top six ranked startups.

Each startup will receive the awarded amount in five instalments.

Winning startups will also receive six months of:

- mentorship and advisory support;
- access to investor and partner networks;
- opportunities for experimentation and pilot projects;
- coworking space and operational support (for projects active in Taranto) at the Taranto 25 Community Hub, Via Pentite 17.

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Selected startups will also benefit from three months of tutoring provided by professionals and members of Fondazione Taranto 25.

Art. 11 – Intellectual Property

All projects remain the exclusive property of their proponents.

Fondazione Taranto 25 does not acquire any rights over the submitted ideas, except for the use of materials for communication and promotional purposes related to the initiative.

Art. 12 – Personal Data Processing

Personal data will be processed in accordance with **EU Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR)** and applicable Italian law, solely for purposes related to the competition.

Art. 13 – Final Provisions

Participation in StarTAp25 implies full acceptance of these Regulations.

Fondazione Taranto 25 reserves the right to make organisational changes where necessary, ensuring timely communication to participants.