



REGULATION

DEFENSE ACCELERATOR: ACCELERATION PROGRAM

ARTICLE 1

SCOPE

1. The Defense Accelerator, promoted by Startup Leiria, aims to foster collaboration between **startups, SMEs, entrepreneurs, researchers, and public and private entities** in developing innovative solutions for the Defense sector.
2. The program is open to all startups and SMEs that wish to develop innovative solutions in the Defense field or already have technologies and products with potential application in this sector and want to further develop and mature them technologically.
3. It will be held over five weeks, starting on November 24th.
4. Participation is limited to 30 entities, ideally 15 startups and 15 SMEs.

ARTICLE 2

APPLICATIONS

1. Only applications from the following will be accepted:
 - Legally constituted entities based in the European Union and NATO member countries, and all business associates must be citizens of NATO member countries.
2. Applicants must fit into one of the following categories:
 - Startups: Innovative companies with less than 10 years old, with technological solutions in development, MVP, or launch phase.
 - SME's: Small and medium-sized enterprises (as legally defined) with potential for pivoting to the defense area or dual-use.
3. All team members of participating companies must be adults.
4. Only one application per entity will be accepted.
5. Applications must show alignment with the needs of the Defense sector, such as dual-use technology, disruptive innovation, cybersecurity, robotics, autonomous systems, and other relevant areas.

ARTICLE 3

DEADLINES

Phase	Period	Information
1st Phase – Applications	Until the 20 th November	Applications must be submitted through the page www.startupleiria.com
2nd Phase – Selection	Until the 23 rd November	After selection, all chosen entities will be contacted
3rd Phase – Acceleration Program	26 th November	Selected entities will have access to training sessions, specialized mentoring, strategic networking, and opportunities to connect to the Defense ecosystem
4th Phase – Closing Session	14 th January	Final presentation of projects developed during the program

ARTICLE 4

APPLICATION EVALUATION

1. Applications will be evaluated by a panel of experts and entities selected by the executive board of Startup Leiria, that can include representatives from the Defense sector and industry.
2. For evaluation, Startup Leiria may request additional information beyond the application form – RCBE, corporate structure, management team.
3. Selection criteria include:
 - Degree of innovation and applicability to Defense sector;
 - Technological maturity and development status;
 - Potential for scalability and impact;
 - Experience and competencies of the team;
 - Technical and commercial viability;
 - Alignment with identified sector needs.

4. Selection will consider, as possible, the balance between startups (15 positions) and SMEs (15 positions), ensuring diversity of solutions and verticals.

ARTICLE 5

PROGRAM CONTENT

The Defense Accelerator will provide participants with:

1. **Specialized training** in topics relevant to the Defense sector, including:
 - Overview and opportunities in the Defense industry;
 - Development of business strategies for the sector;
 - Access to specific funding and support programs;
 - Technical and regulatory sector requirements;
 - Internationalization strategies and partnerships.
2. **Specialized mentoring** with professionals and entities from the Defense sector.
3. **Networking** with strategic partners, potential clients, and investors from the Defense ecosystem.
4. **Opportunities to connect** to national and European funding programs specific to the sector.

ARTICLE 6

BENEFITS AND SUPPORTS

1. All participating entities will have free access to the program's training, mentoring, and networking actions.
2. Additional support will be provided to finalist participants, including:
 - Hours of specialized consulting in relevant areas;
 - Access to partner network infrastructures and resources;
 - Connections to funding and investment opportunities;
 - Support in preparing applications to support programs.
3. Specific support and conditions will be communicated to the participants at the start of the program.

ARTICLE 7

PARTICIPANTS' OBLIGATIONS

1. Selected entities promise to actively participate in program activities, except in properly justified cases.
2. After two unjustified absences, participants will be excluded from the program and lose associated benefits.
3. Participants authorize the disclosure of general information about their participation for Defense Accelerator promotion and ecosystem connection purposes.
4. Participants commit to providing feedback for program assessment and continuous improvement.

ARTICLE 8

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Intellectual property developed by participating entities remains their property.
2. Startup Leiria undertakes to safeguard the confidentiality of candidate and participant data and information.
3. Sensitive information shared during the program by mentors, partners, or other entities must be treated confidentially by participants.

ARTICLE 9

FINAL PROVISIONS

1. Candidates accept all clauses of this Regulation upon submitting their application.
2. Any doubts arising from the application of this regulation will be resolved by the executive board of Startup Leiria.
3. Startup Leiria may introduce changes to this Regulation at any time, for duly justified reasons, timely communicating these to participants.
4. Participation in the Defense Accelerator does not imply any commitment to investment, acquisition of equity holdings, or establishment of mandatory contractual relations.

CONTACTS

For more information, contact the Program's organization at geral@startupleiria.com or through the website www.startupleiria.com