



communication TOOLKIT

FOR STARTUPS



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Purpose of the Toolkit	2
2. Boilerplates	2
Short Description (50 words)	2
Medium Description (100 words)	2
Boilerplate (for press releases and websites)	3
Participant boilerplates (adapt as needed)	3
3. Communication checklist	3
Main Messages	4
EU Funding Acknowledgement	4
4. Social Media Templates	4
Startup Participation Announcement	5
Innovation Sprint / Open Innovation Workshop	5
Investor Pitch Session	6
5. Press Release Template	6
6. Visual Assets	8
Colour palette	8
Typography	8
Logos	8
Banners	9
Social media visuals	10
Printable flyer & One pager	11
7. Startup & Investor Spotlight Interviews	13
Purpose	13
How the Spotlight Programme Works	13
How Startups Can Submit Their Own Stories	14
Questionnaire for startups	14
8. Contact for Communication Support	15

1. PURPOSE OF THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides **ready-to-use communication materials** enabling HARD2SCALE startups to:

- Announce their participation in the HARD2SCALE acceleration programme
- Communicate milestones and programme activities
- Promote collaboration opportunities
- Increase visibility among investors, industry and innovation ecosystems

It ensures **consistent messaging, brand coherence, and maximum dissemination impact** across partners, startups, investors and industry stakeholders.

The communication strategy aims to **strengthen engagement between startups, investors and hard-to-abate industries, while positioning HARD2SCALE as a leading cross-border accelerator for deep-tech and cleantech innovation in Europe.**

2. BOILERPLATES

SHORT DESCRIPTION (50 WORDS)

HARD2SCALE is a European cross-border accelerator supporting digital and deep-tech startups developing solutions for Energy Intensive Industries and hard-to-abate sectors. Through mentoring, investor matchmaking and industry collaboration, the programme helps innovative startups scale technologies that contribute to industrial decarbonisation and the European green transition.

MEDIUM DESCRIPTION (100 WORDS)

HARD2SCALE is a Horizon Europe initiative designed to accelerate the growth of deep-tech and cleantech startups developing solutions for Europe's most challenging industrial sectors. The programme connects startups with investors, industrial stakeholders, and innovation ecosystems to facilitate market adoption and funding opportunities. Through tailored acceleration activities, open innovation workshops and investor pitching sessions, HARD2SCALE enables startups to refine their business strategies, secure partnerships and scale their innovations across borders. The project contributes to Europe's green transition by supporting technologies that reduce emissions and improve sustainability in energy-intensive industries.

BOILERPLATE (FOR PRESS RELEASES AND WEBSITES)

HARD2SCALE is a cross-border acceleration programme funded by the European Union through Horizon Europe. The project supports digital and deep-tech startups developing innovative solutions for energy-intensive and hard-to-abate sectors such as cement, steel, chemicals and maritime transport.

By connecting startups with investors, industry stakeholders and innovation ecosystems across Europe, HARD2SCALE helps accelerate the development, market uptake and scaling of technologies contributing to industrial decarbonisation and the European Green Deal.

The project aims to support up to 40 startups through tailored acceleration activities, mentoring, investor readiness training and collaboration opportunities with industrial partners.

PARTICIPANT BOILERPLATES (ADAPT AS NEEDED)

[Startup Name] has been selected to join HARD2SCALE, the EU-funded macro-regional accelerator helping digital and deep-tech ventures scale solutions for hard-to-abate and energy-intensive industries. Over the programme, [Startup] will refine market and investment readiness, connect with industry leaders and investors, and explore collaborative pilots.

3. COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

When announcing your participation:

- ✓ **Tag HARD2SCALE LinkedIn page**
- ✓ **Use official hashtags**
- ✓ **Include project logo**
- ✓ **Include EU funding acknowledgement**
- ✓ **Link to the programme website**
- ✓ **Use official colour palette and typography in presentations and visuals**
- ✓ **Mention the sector impact (decarbonisation, deep-tech innovation)**

MAIN MESSAGES

- HARD2SCALE accelerates deep-tech and cleantech startups addressing industrial decarbonisation challenges.
- The programme connects startups with investors, industry and innovation ecosystems across Europe.
- HARD2SCALE supports the green transition by enabling scalable solutions for hard-to-abate sectors.
- The project strengthens collaboration between emerging and leading innovation ecosystems in Europe.

These align with the communication strategy's messaging framework.

EU FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All communication materials must include:

“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.”

and the EU emblem.



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(Download [here](#) or [here](#).)

4. SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES

Tagging

Always include a link to HARD2SCALE website or specific page:

<https://HARD2SCALE.eu/>

On LinkedIn, always tag [@Hard2Scale](#)

You can also tag EISMEA on LinkedIn @[European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency \(EISMEA\)](#) and on X @[EU_EISMEA](#)

Project slogans:


“From Hard-to-Abate to Easy-to-Scale.”

“Scaling Innovation. Powering Transition.”


Hashtags (mix & match):


- Branded: #Hard2Scale #HorizonEU #ScaleUpEurope
- Topical: #DeepTech #Cleantech #DigitalInnovation #GreenTransition #Decarbonisation #IndustrialInnovation #HardToAbate
- Ecosystem: #StartupEurope #EISMEA #EUinnovation

STARTUP PARTICIPATION Announcement

 We are excited to announce that **[Startup Name]** has been selected to join the @HARD2SCALE Cross-Border Acceleration Programme!

Through this programme, we will collaborate with leading European #investors, industry partners and #innovation ecosystems to scale our solution addressing **[sector challenge]**.

Together, we aim to accelerate innovation supporting the #decarbonisation of energy-intensive industries and the green transition. 

Follow our journey and learn more about the programme 

 <https://HARD2SCALE.eu/acceleration-programme>

#Hard2Scale #DeepTech #CleanTech #StartupEurope #IndustrialInnovation

INNOVATION SPRINT / OPEN INNOVATION WORKSHOP

 Excited to participate in the @HARD2SCALE Open Innovation Workshop!

This session brings together #startups, #investors and industry leaders to explore innovative solutions addressing challenges in hard-to-abate sectors.

Collaboration is key to scaling technologies that enable industrial #decarbonisation and sustainable transformation. 🌍

Learn more about the programme 📌

[🔗 https://HARD2SCALE.eu/acceleration-programme](https://HARD2SCALE.eu/acceleration-programme)

#Hard2Scale #OpenInnovation #CleanTech #DeepTech #IndustrialDecarbonisation

INVESTOR PITCH SESSION

🎤 Today we are participating in the @HARD2SCALE Investor Pitch Session!

Innovative #startups are presenting scalable solutions for Europe's most challenging industrial sectors, connecting with #investors supporting breakthrough technologies.



Looking forward to discovering new opportunities driving the #green transition and industrial #innovation.

Explore the HARD2SCALE programme 📌

[🔗 https://HARD2SCALE.eu/acceleration-programme](https://HARD2SCALE.eu/acceleration-programme)

#Hard2Scale #DeepTech #VentureCapital #ClimateTech #StartupInnovation

5. PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

Title

[Startup Name] joins HARD2SCALE Accelerator to scale innovation for energy-intensive industries

Subtitle

The European-funded programme supports deep-tech startups developing solutions for hard-to-abate sectors.

[City], [Date]

[Startup Name], a [country]-based startup developing innovative solutions for the [industry/sector], has been selected to participate in the HARD2SCALE Cross-Border Acceleration Programme.

The programme supports startups developing technologies addressing the challenges of **energy-intensive and hard-to-abate industries**, including sectors such as cement, steel, chemicals, and maritime transport. Through mentoring, investor connections and collaboration with industry stakeholders, the accelerator aims to help startups refine their business strategies and scale their solutions across European markets.

During the programme, [Startup Name] will work alongside innovation experts, investors and industry partners to further develop its technology and explore new market opportunities.

Quote – Startup

“Being selected for the HARD2SCALE programme is an exciting opportunity for our team,” said [Name, position]. “The accelerator will allow us to connect with investors and industry stakeholders while strengthening our strategy for scaling our technology.”

The programme also provides access to workshops, innovation sprints and investor pitching opportunities designed to support startups in reaching investment and market readiness.

By supporting innovative companies such as [Startup Name], HARD2SCALE aims to accelerate the development of solutions that contribute to the **decarbonisation and sustainability of Europe’s industrial sectors**.

About [Startup Name]

[Startup Name] is a [country]-based company developing [short description of technology/product]. The company focuses on [mission, sector and impact].

Website: [link]

About HARD2SCALE

HARD2SCALE is a cross-border acceleration programme funded by the European Union through Horizon Europe. The project supports digital and deep-tech startups developing innovative solutions for energy-intensive and hard-to-abate sectors.

By connecting startups with investors, industry stakeholders and innovation ecosystems across Europe, HARD2SCALE helps accelerate the development, market

uptake and scaling of technologies contributing to industrial decarbonisation and the European green transition.

Website: <https://HARD2SCALE.eu/>

6. VISUAL ASSETS

COLOUR PALETTE



TYPOGRAPHY

- Syncopate – titles
- Rubik – subtitles & normal text

LOGOS



Download [here](#).



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Download [here](#) (or [here](#) for white text).

Banners



Download [here](#).



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SOCIAL MEDIA VISUALS



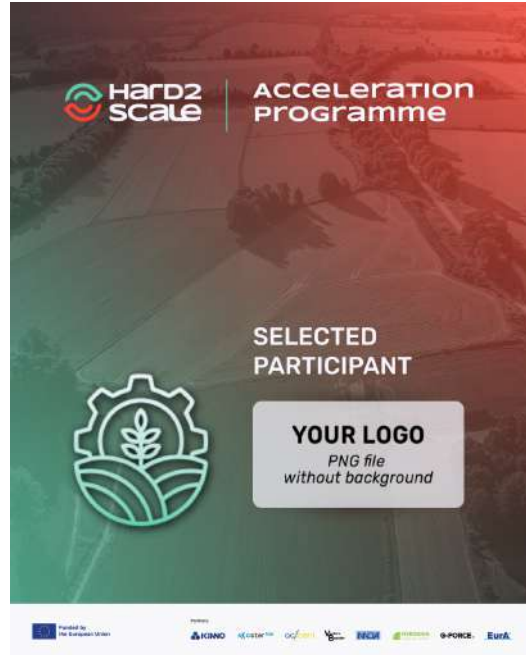
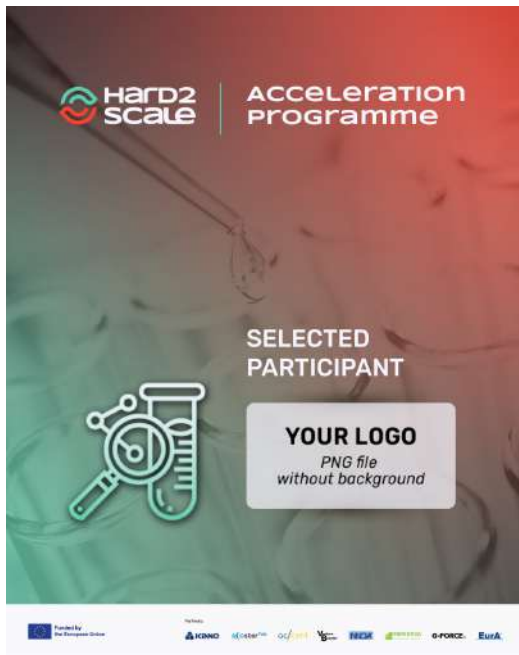
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PRINTABLE FLYER & ONE PAGER



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Running from July 2025 to December 2027, HARD2SCALE connects startups, investors, industry actors, and policymakers working on solutions for Energy-Intensive Industries and Hard-to-Abate sectors across Europe, in close collaboration with EISMEA, Startup Europe, and regional innovation ecosystems.

ACCELERATION PROGRAMME

The Hard2Scale Macro-Regional Accelerator supports 40 startups and SMEs developing first-of-a-kind solutions for hard-to-abate and energy-intensive industries.

Participants benefit from a support package designed to accelerate growth and market entry:

- Tailored business and technical guidance;
- Open Innovation Workshops;
- Matchmaking with investors and corporates;
- Access to public funding opportunities;
- Investor readiness and fundraising support.

Participation is free of charge, no equity is taken, and selected startups may receive travel support for programme-related ecosystem visits.

The programme has a duration of 6 months for each of 4 thematic cohorts:

Transportation, Logistics, Operations, Construction	Molecular Transformation Industries
Materials & Resource Industries	Agriculture & Land Use

TIMELINE



Download [here](#).



7. STARTUP & INVESTOR SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEWS

PURPOSE

The **HARD2SCALE Spotlight Series** highlights the startups, investors and ecosystem actors participating in the acceleration programme.

These articles showcase innovation, investment perspectives and collaboration opportunities emerging from the programme while strengthening the visibility of participating stakeholders.

Spotlight articles will be published on the **HARD2SCALE website and promoted through social media and newsletters.**

The Spotlight Series supports the following objectives:

- Give visibility to **startups participating in the HARD2SCALE Accelerator**, highlighting success stories and innovative technologies
- Highlight the contribution of **venture capital firms and investors** participating in investor matchmaking and pitch sessions
- Generate **engaging content for the website, social media and newsletters**
- Provide insights into innovation in **energy-intensive and hard-to-abate sectors**

HOW THE SPOTLIGHT PROGRAMME WORKS

Spotlight articles can be initiated by:

- HARD2SCALE consortium partners
- participating startups
- participating investors

This collaborative approach ensures that **the most relevant stories from the programme are captured and shared.**

Partners are encouraged to regularly propose new articles during the programme.

HOW STARTUPS can SUBMIT THEIR OWN STORIES

Startups are welcome to **proactively submit articles** about their participation in HARD2SCALE.

To submit a story:

1. Complete the **questionnaire below**
2. Provide 2–3 images
3. Send materials to your contact person in Hard2Scale

The communication team will transform the responses into a **Spotlight article** and publish it on the HARD2SCALE website.

This allows participants to **share their achievements and perspectives with the wider European innovation ecosystem.**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STARTUPS

1. Please introduce yourself, your company, and your product/service in 2–3 sentences.
2. Before joining HARD2SCALE, what were the main challenges your startup faced when approaching Energy Intensive Industries or Hard-to-Abate sectors?
3. What motivated you to apply to the HARD2SCALE programme, and what were your initial expectations?
4. Which activities or components of the programme were most relevant to your startup, and why?
5. What concrete progress or results have your startup achieved during the programme so far?
6. How has HARD2SCALE influenced your technology, business model, or go-to-market strategy for EII and HtA sectors?
7. Did the programme help you access new networks, potential partners or investors? If so, can you describe the most valuable connection you

gained?

8. What has been the most significant impact of the project on your startup's development so far?

Mid-programme questions

1. At this stage of the programme, which elements have been the most useful so far, and why?
2. Is there any support, content or connection you feel you still need during the remaining phase of the programme?
3. How has your understanding of the EII and Hard-to-Abate sectors evolved since the programme began?
4. Have you already made any adjustments to your product, pitch, or strategy based on the feedback or insights received so far?

8. CONTACT FOR COMMUNICATION SUPPORT

For any communication support, content validation or media inquiries: sofia.baptista@eura-ag.de / mariana.marques@eura-ag.de