



# **INCUBATOR CERTIFICATION BY STARTUP PORTUGAL**

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

2024

To be part of RNI – Portugal Incubators, incubators must meet all criteria listed below.

### What has changed since last year

The eligibility criteria to become a member of RNI – Portugal Incubators underwent some changes, namely, three new criteria were included (see 1.c., 1.f. and 2.b.) and three other criteria were amended (see 3.a., 4.a. and 4.b.).

#### 1. Characteristics of the Incubator

Eligibility Criteria	Requirement
<b>a. Physical space with dedicated facilities:</b>	
Coworking space	Need to have a minimum of 1 of these options
Dedicated rooms for startups	
Meeting rooms (in-house or not, for example hired)	Yes
Lounge / Networking area or other physical space used to gather the community	Yes
<b>b. Service channel for the public and incubated people available and public (e.g.: reception and/or service via email or phone number with information published on the website)</b>	Yes
<b>c. Incubator website listing the incubated projects/startups and their correspondent websites (if the project/startup has one) <sup>1</sup></b>	Yes
<b>d. Suitable work space conditions:</b>	
Internet available, at least in shared spaces	Yes
Guaranteed cleaning, at least in shared spaces	Yes
Toilet available	Yes
Mail management	Yes
<b>e. Company with a Portuguese VAT number</b>	Yes
<b>f. Incubator activity has started (incubator activity start date is prior to the application date)</b>	Yes

## 2. Services Provided (in-house or through partners)

Eligibility Criteria	Requirement
<b>a.</b> Support services provided to startups or projects (the support can be delivered by the incubator or through a partner):	
Support in the development of business models	Need to have a minimum of 3 of these options
Support in getting funding	
Support in marketing/communication	
Support in "go-to-market"	
Support in product development or prototyping	
Legal support	
Accounting support	
Support in the integration of the local community	
Other type of support (it needs to be validated by Startup Portugal)	
<b>b.</b> Testimony, from at least 1 incubated project/startup, about the mentoring provided by the incubator (video or text document signed by the startup/project founder) <sup>2</sup>	Yes

## 3. Human Resources and Skills

Eligibility Criteria	Requirement
<b>a.</b> Number of people dedicated to the incubator	Need to have a minimum of 1 person working full-time <sup>3</sup>
<b>b.</b> Startups and projects access to know-how:	
Network of mentors	Yes
Network of business partners	Need to have a minimum of 1 of these options
Network of investors	
Network of researchers / access to innovation from academia	
Other relevant network (it needs to be validated by Startup Portugal)	

#### 4. Community

Eligibility Criteria	Requirement
a. 30% of the physically incubated startup/projects have been in the incubator for less than 5 years	Yes <sup>4</sup>
b. The incubator has a minimum of 5 physically incubated projects or startups	Yes <sup>5</sup>
c. Organization of events and/or programmes:	
Networking events	Need to have a minimum of 2 events per year
Events about entrepreneurship open to the community	
Pitch sessions with incubated startup/projects and investors or partners	
Events on a topic relevant to the incubated startup/projects (for example, about marketing or sales)	
Acceleration program	
Other relevant event for the community (it needs to be validated by Startup Portugal)	
d. Document on incubation regulations	Yes

Startup Portugal may, in exceptional and duly justified cases, accept the membership of incubators that do not meet some of the requirements due to the specific characteristics of their incubated projects (e.g.: focus on research-driven projects with a long time-to-market which makes it impossible for 30% of incubated startups/projects to be in the incubator for less than 5 years). In these cases, the incubator must complete the membership form and, simultaneously, send the exception request and justification to [rni@startupportugal.com](mailto:rni@startupportugal.com).

Note: Incubators working as a network must apply with a single tax entity.

<sup>1</sup> In this criteria, the list of projects/startups published on the incubator's website is compared with the number and name of projects/startups currently incubated and indicated on the application form.

Exemption exception: Project/startup does not want its identity to be published on the incubator website.

As mentioned at the beginning of the RNI – Portugal Incubators application form, for the purposes of the certification process by RNI – Portugal Incubators, incubation requires the existence of incubation contracts between the incubator and the incubated startup/project. Therefore, if the incubator publishes the identity of other projects/startups with which it maintains a non-contractual relationship, this information will not be taken into account in this evaluation criteria.

<sup>2</sup> Existing video of past organized sessions in which the startup/project talks about the mentoring received by the incubator, video created specifically for this purpose, or text document signed by the startup/project founder, with recognition of the support given by the incubator.

Examples of relevant questions to address: Why being in the incubator was important for the project/startup? How did the incubator help you grow during the project/company? Talk about a mentor who has been particularly important in the development of the project/startup.

Maximum video length: 5 minutes.

Maximum text document size: 1 page.

<sup>3</sup> When analyzing this criteria, the number of working hours allocated to the incubator's activity is considered. For example, two people working part-time for the incubator, and if each of these people dedicates 4 hours/day of their working time to the incubator, is equivalent to one person working full-time for the incubator. Thus the mandatory requirement is met.

<sup>4</sup> If the same startup/project is registered by more than one incubator, Startup Portugal may contact the startup/project and assign it to the main incubator.

<sup>5</sup> In the first 2 years of activity, the incubator does not need to meet this requirement.