/ What is the process?

The UEFA Start-Up Challenge has 4 stages:
1. Apply, click here for your online registration
2. Pitch Day
3. Three-months programme
4. Demo Day

Please refer to our timeline section within the invitation document for the relevant dates.

/ When is the UEFA Start-Up Challenge?

The UEFA Start-Up Challenge will run from 18 February 2019 to 15 May 2019.

/ When is the deadline for applying?

11 January 2019.

/ What information do I need to provide in my application?

You will need to complete an application dossier, which includes the following sections:
1. Company name
2. Company owner(s)
3. Company profile (150 words)
4. Founder profile (100 words)
5. Product/service description and what makes it stand out (250 words)
6. Website
7. A 2–3 minute video presenting your start-up, recorded in horizontal format with a mobile device or accessible via YouTube or a demo URL. The video must comply with our eligibility criteria: problem, solution, achievements, examples
8. Company stage of development (launch, revenue, investment, etc.)
9. How your company would like to work with UEFA
10. Send a one-pager or pitch deck to: innovation@thinksport.org
   Optional: send a presentation (maximum 10-page Word document or 20 PowerPoint slides) developing more in-depth your concept and business model

We want to know about your product or service, your team and your company. Don’t hold back. The more we know the better equipped we are to make a decision.
Where is the UEFA Start-Up Challenge?

The UEFA Start-Up Challenge will be hosted on the campus of the University of Lausanne, in a community hub which is dedicated to sport, science and research.

Is the UEFA Start-Up Challenge like other accelerators? What are the benefits for the winners?

Unlike an accelerator, the UEFA Start-Up Challenge is not about investment. UEFA is a not-for-profit organisation and will, therefore, not be looking to make equity investments within your start-up. Instead, UEFA and ThinkSport want to work with a few carefully selected start-up applicants with an interesting product or idea, and leverage their industry related knowledge and expertise in order to drive innovation into the football industry. In this way, it has more in common with an incubator, giving you potential opportunities to:

- Work in the heart of a unique Sports Ecosystem in close proximity to leading international sports organisations: an inspiring environment, with access to cutting-edge research, and a large network of dynamic entrepreneurs and academics
- Pilot your product with UEFA
- Receive business industry insights from football experts at UEFA
- Receive mentorship from coaches, mentors and experts from various European incubators (who form part of ThinkSport's network)
- Test your product/service in a UEFA competition environment
- Pitch your refined product or service on ‘Demo Day’ to UEFA and its wider stakeholders (at the end of the programme); increasing the profile of your start-up within the football world, and offering you the opportunity to propose a model for continued cooperation.
- Participate in “THE SPOT” event organised by ThinkSport – please visit www.thespot2019.org

Is my business right for the UEFA Start-Up Challenge?

We are interested in all start-ups in one or more of the categories described in the invitation document. Your business need not be at the very beginning of its journey. Maybe you have a product already, maybe you even have paying customers. If you feel that your start-up could benefit from working with UEFA and ThinkSport then we’d love to receive your application.

Is there a minimum age?

You must be at least 18 years old to apply.

I don’t live in the Switzerland – Can I apply?

Of course, we welcome applications from all over the world. However, we encourage all start-up applicants to consider that they will need to take responsibility to cover the travel and accommodation expenses relevant to their participation in the challenge (and may, to the extent necessary, need to arrange a visa to participate).
Are there any eligibility criteria to participate in the UEFA Start-Up Challenge?
A start-up or scale-up in any country in the world with a relevant proof of concept (product or service) can apply. The start-up should be able to:
- identify the market gap (WHY?)
- define the concept as a solution (WHAT?)
- illustrate with achievements and examples (HOW?)
- present potential future developments of the product or service (WHEN?)

Where will the mentors come from?
Mentors will include experts coming from ThinkSport’s network of incubators within Europe as well as academics which are part of the Smart Move academic network. It will therefore include coach, mentors, entrepreneurs and external subject matter experts in addition to the football experts from UEFA.

Will my application be treated confidentially?
Yes – Only the employees and jury of ThinkSport and UEFA (that need it) shall have access to your application information, and any information you submit as part of your application – documents or presentation – shall be treated confidentially. To the extent, following the “Pitch Day”, ThinkSport and UEFA are interested in inviting you to join the three month programme they will ask that you come to an agreement with them before the start of the programme.

Question? Problem?
Please do not hesitate to contact us at innovation@thinksport.org or +41 21 692 63 77