



EINSTEIN STARS PROGRAM 2025: CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

ABOUT EINSTEIN STARS PROGRAM:

EINSTEIN STARS is a competitive program designed for PhD students, young researchers, and scientists who are developing innovative solutions with potential for industrial application. The program aims to foster the translation of scientific research into sustainable business and technological initiatives by guiding participants toward market-relevant solutions.

Within the program, participants have the opportunity to present the research conducted as part of their doctoral dissertation to a professional jury composed of industry experts, potential investors, and professors. Through this initiative, a unique platform for research evaluation and guidance will be created, enabling researchers and their teams to gain valuable feedback, improve their presentation skills, and shape the further development of their research and innovations in line with market needs.

Selected candidates will have the opportunity to:

- Participate in expertly designed and facilitated preparatory workshops focused on developing presentation skills for pitching to a professional jury, validating the market potential of their research, and shaping strategies for further innovation positioning and commercialization of results;
- Receive individual consultations with experts in innovation and technology transfer, as well as establish contacts with potential partners and investors;
- Gain access to the innovation ecosystem network of the Science and Technology Park Novi Sad.

The program will take place **from October to December 2025**. Applications and presentations must be submitted in **English**.

ORGANIZER: The program is organized by the University of Novi Sad, the Science and Technology Park Novi Sad and the EINSTEIN project consortium (www.einsteineuproject.com).

PROGRAM OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the program is to strengthen the commercialization potential of university research through direct interaction with industry representatives and the innovation ecosystem, to enable the formation of strategic partnerships, and to contribute in the long term to the development of the innovation ecosystem.

Specific objectives of the program:

- Support the translation of scientific research into sustainable technological and business initiatives;
- Promote research with commercial potential;
- Connect young researchers with industry representatives, investors, and mentors;
- Enhance researchers' presentation skills and market orientation;
- Strengthen the innovation ecosystem of the University of Novi Sad.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

The right to participate in the EINSTEIN STARS program is granted to the following categories of candidates:

- PhD students from the University of Novi Sad who are in the process of preparing their doctoral dissertation, and whose research demonstrates strong potential for innovation and practical application;
- Young researchers and scientists who have defended their doctoral dissertation within the past five years (since 2019), and whose work involves the development of advanced scientific solutions with market potential;
- Candidates whose research is carried out in the following fields: green technologies, biotechnology, nanotechnology, sustainable agriculture, medicine, and related interdisciplinary areas.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Applications for participation in the EINSTEIN STARS program must be submitted exclusively via the online form available at the following link: <https://forms.gle/VPJwkjJW9YkqegS66>.

The deadline for submission is **October 10, 2025, at 23:59 (CET)**.

Each candidate may submit only one application. All submitted applications will undergo administrative review. Incomplete, late, or incorrectly filled applications will not be considered in the selection process. Candidates are required to follow the prescribed rules and provide all requested information and documentation for their application to be valid.

Contents of the online application form:

1. Candidate's full name, academic title, and specific research field.
2. Short biography (up to 150 words) including information on education, scientific interests, and/or research experience;
3. Name of the institution;
4. Brief description of the research problem, general and specific objectives, and the most important conclusions of the doctoral dissertation;
5. Description of the innovative aspect of the research;
6. Application potential: Which problems are being solved? Who could be the end users (industry, institutions, general users)? Are there competing solutions, and what makes your approach different?
7. Market potential and market analysis: Does a market exist for this idea? Is there an initial estimate of the market size? Who are the key users and potential partners?
8. Status of technology/solution development (indicate TRL – Technology Readiness Level, e.g., TRL 1–9; more information available [HERE](#));
9. Signed statement by the candidate confirming that all information provided is accurate and agreeing to participate in the selection process under the conditions defined by the organizers, with date indicated.

SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS:

Applications for participation in the EINSTEIN STARS program must be submitted electronically no later than **October 10, 2025**. After the call is closed, all received applications will undergo both administrative and qualitative review. Based on the submitted information, the selection committee, composed of representatives from academia, industry, and the program organizers will conduct a pre-selection of **8 candidates** who meet the eligibility criteria and whose applications have been evaluated as the most suitable for further competition.

During this process, the following evaluation criteria will be applied:

1. **Innovativeness of the idea/results:** assessed based on the description of the innovative aspect of the research;
2. **Market potential of the research results:** evaluated by the extent to which the candidate demonstrates an understanding of the broader application of their research outcomes, identifies target users, analyzes existing competing technologies, and highlights the comparative advantages of their solution;
3. **Impact:** assessed by the degree to which the research has the potential to achieve significant effects beyond the academic sphere, through tangible social, economic, technological, and/or environmental benefits. Special emphasis is placed on contributions to solving real-world problems, improving practices in relevant sectors, and enabling long-term positive effects on society, industry, or the environment.

Selected candidates will be invited to present their research projects live at the final event, which will take place in **December 2025** at the **Science and Technology Park in Novi Sad**.

During the final session, participants will present the innovative aspects of their research, emphasizing its market and innovation potential, in front of a professional jury consisting of industry representatives, investors, university professors, and members of the EINSTEIN project consortium. Each candidate will have up to **10 minutes** for their presentation and an additional **5 minutes** for jury questions.

If any of the selected candidates withdraw, the EINSTEIN STARS program organizing team reserves the right to invite the next highest-ranked candidate.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

To ensure an objective and transparent evaluation process, the final presentations of candidates will be assessed based on clearly defined criteria.

Each criterion contributes a specific weight to the final score, and the evaluation will be conducted according to the following elements:

- **Scientific excellence and methodological soundness (30%)**
Assessment of the quality of the research approach, clarity of hypotheses, relevance of the methods used, and validity of the obtained results.
- **Innovativeness and originality of the approach (25%)**
The extent to which the research introduces new solutions, approaches, or concepts compared to the current state of science and technology.
- **Application potential and market relevance (25%)**

Clear identification of the problem being addressed, tangible benefits for users, and possibilities for implementing results in industry or social practice.

- **Presentation skills and clarity of communication (10%)**

The candidate's ability to professionally, precisely, and convincingly present the essence of the research to different target groups, including both experts and the general public.

- **Existing activities in technology transfer and partnerships (10%)**

Engagement in innovation support programs, collaboration with industry partners, developed prototypes, pilot projects, and other activities aimed at commercialization.

AWARDS:

To further encourage researchers to develop innovative and market-relevant solutions, the EINSTEIN STARS program provides awards for the three highest-ranked candidates. In addition to material prizes, the main awards are focused on enhancing professional development, promoting scientific results, and fostering networking with international academic and industry partners.

The awardees will be selected based on the overall evaluation score given by the professional jury, in accordance with the established evaluation criteria.

- **First Prize:** Fully funded study visit to a foreign university, aimed at professional development, knowledge exchange, and internationalization of research work, with covered costs of travel, accommodation, and participation in research activities at the partner institution
- **Second Prize:** Covered costs of publishing a scientific paper in an international peer-reviewed journal, ensuring visibility and validation of research results within the relevant scientific community, while encouraging further academic advancement and dissemination of research outcomes
- **Third Prize:** Covered participation fees for attending an international scientific conference of the candidate's choice

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

All information about the EINSTEIN project, as well as the EINSTEIN STARS program, can be found on the official project website: www.einsteineuproject.com.

All questions related to the EINSTEIN STARS program may be submitted via email: ivanak@uns.ac.rs.

The organizer reserves the right to modify the program schedule and conditions in case of unforeseen circumstances, with prior notification to participants.

All data provided in the application will be used exclusively for the purposes of evaluation within the competition and will not be shared with third parties.