

MANUAL

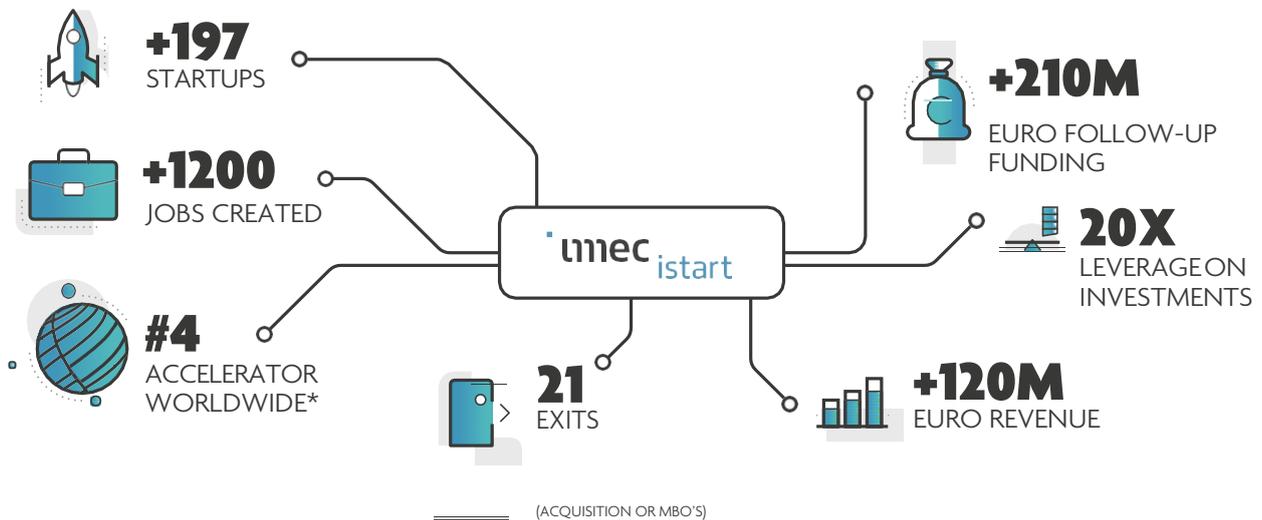


FACTS & FIGURES



“Our top ranking illustrates that research institutions contribute to stimulating entrepreneurship not only within the researcher community but also in providing support to start-ups, witnessed by a startup scene in Flanders that is well recognized internationally. We’re doing well, and this should encourage us to do even better in the future.”

SVEN DE CLEYN
PROGRAM MANAGER IMEC.ISTART



“Imec has an exceptional acceleration program. It performs really well on our global benchmark, especially on access to funds and post-incubation performance indicators. This signifies that imec.istart ventures have better access to funds and a higher survival and growth rate than the global average. Imec pays a lot of attention to its portfolio and engages its ecosystem. It provides exceptional coaching and mentoring services to its clients in a supportive entrepreneurial environment.”

DHRUV BHATLI
CO-FOUNDER UBI GLOBAL

* UBI Global has developed an objective methodology for incubators and accelerators that are linked to universities.

1. ABOUT IMEC

Imec is the world-leading research and innovation hub in nanoelectronics and digital technologies. The combination of our widely acclaimed leadership in microchip technology and profound software and ICT expertise is what makes us unique. By leveraging our world-class infrastructure and local and global ecosystem of partners across a multitude of industries, we create groundbreaking innovation in application domains such as healthcare, smart cities and mobility, logistics & manufacturing, energy and education

As a trusted partner for companies, start-ups and universities we bring together over 4,000 brilliant minds from over 70 nationalities. Imec is headquartered in Leuven, Belgium and has distributed R&D groups at several Flemish universities, in the Netherlands, Taiwan, USA, China, and offices in India and Japan. In 2019, imec's revenue (P&L) totaled over 675 million euro.

Further information on imec can be found at www.imec-int.com

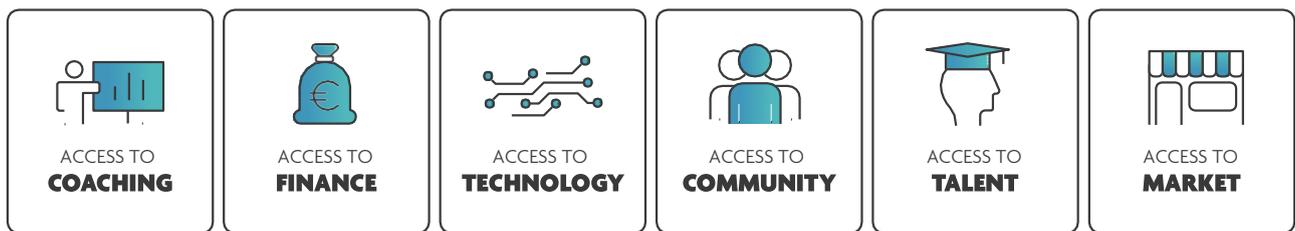


2. ABOUT IMEC.ISTART

2.1 WHAT IS IMEC.ISTART?

Committed to supporting digital innovation and entrepreneurship in Flanders, the imec.istart business acceleration program supports entrepreneurs with the early development of their tech start-ups during minimum 12 months. During this period, we want to assess the feasibility of a business proof-of-concept, prepare the (commercial) launch of the first product(s) and the establishment of a start-up to drive this commercialization.

The imec.istart program offers a combination of pre-seed funding, coaching & mentoring, workshops & guidance by domain experts, and other types of support (e.g. shared workspace, software deals, marketing & communications advice, access to investors, etc.). The coaching & mentoring aspect focuses on six main areas:



Complementing the general imec.istart program, imec has partnered with several industry experts to offer different special imec.istart verticals, such as:



Health



Industry 4.0, Logistics & Transport



Utilities, CleanTech & Smart Buildings



Learn & HRTech



Fintech, Insurtech, & Cybersecurity



SportsTech



Media, Telecom & Entertainment

2.2 MISSION AND GOAL OF IMEC.ISTART

Imec.istart aims to be the first investor and supporting partner to scale your tech start-up.

The imec.istart program has been set up to support tech (hardware and/or software) start-ups, helping them develop into sustainable ventures.

At the end of the imec.istart program, participating start-ups should have reached following milestones:

- They should have found their **product-market** fit (ideally with first paying customers) and be ready to initiate their growth.
- They should have made progress as a team and be **ready** as an organization **to scale up**.
- They should be **'investor-ready'**, i.e. be able to attract additional funding on the private market to fuel their growth (through business angels, venture capitalists, crowdfunding, ...).



3. WHAT CAN IMEC.ISTART DO FOR YOU?

3.1 IMEC.ISTART SERVICES



ACCESS TO **COACHING**

Working together with external experts will be crucial to succeed in your first commercial successes. During the program you have the option to work together with different coaches. Following your admission to the imec.istart program, you will be introduced to your personal coach. This coach will be your day-to-day contact person and sparring partner and will make sure you are invited to all necessary workshops, programs and events.

During the program, you will be asked to attend a number of workshops touching a variety of topics (pitching, sales, regulatory, corporate governance, team dynamics, etc.) presented by external experts. Each workshop is followed by a 1-1 meeting with this expert to have a more in-depth discussion on your specific queries. Complementing the dedicated workshops, start-ups have access to the imec.istart community platform where all training content is provided and which includes a forum to post questions and share experiences.

Supporting even more in-depth coaching in specific domains, imec.istart can also provide access to an Expert-in-Residence (EiR)*. Tailored to (the needs of) your start-up, an expert invests 1 to 2 days per week (typically for a duration of three months) in your project. Additionally, (s)he should be open to (but not obliged to) joining the team, either financially and/or by investing additional time, after the period of the EiR assignment. After this EiR period, the expert and the start-up are free to extend their collaboration on their own terms and conditions.

Driven to take our renowned support to the next level, imec.istart has activated a mentorship-service, with over 100 leading experts in various fields of expertise.



ACCESS TO **FINANCE**

In order to fuel the growth of your start-up, imec.istart provides 50,000 EUR pre-seed funding, with an optional extra 100,000 EUR investment under certain conditions. On top, some of our partners might offer additional funding if you apply for a specific vertical (see Access to Market).

Together with this pre-seed funding, a funding need assessment and financial scenario building will be developed so you can target and address the right investor type during and after the imec.istart program. During the program (as well as for our alumni), the imec.istart Investor Days allow you to present your solution and financial needs to imec's broad investor ecosystem, comprising over 1,000 different investors and financiers in Belgium and abroad.

Our goal is that at the end of the imec.istart program, your start-up should have a financial roadmap for the next five years – with the right investments in mind – and be 'investor-ready'.

 ACCESS TO **TECHNOLOGY***

Imec is the world-leading research and innovation hub in nanoelectronics and digital technologies. We bring together over 4,000 brilliant minds from over 70 nationalities and have numerous research partnerships with local and global players. As part of the imec.start program, we want to give you easier access to this expertise and technology portfolio.

During the program's first few weeks, you are provided with the opportunity to pitch your solution to a jury of imec experts who will advise you on the most relevant imec technology, services and expertise to further strengthen your product.

This can range from designing and engineering prototypes and products to testing your technology in real-life environments, with real end-users. Or even performing an applied research project with one of imec's research groups. As well contacts can be provided with the ESA/CERN technology for specific startups.

 ACCESS TO **COMMUNITY**

Thanks to our massive partner network, you can establish long-term relationships and partnerships.

First, the imec.istart community exists of around 200 start-ups providing you with the chance to share best-practices, experiences and how to tackle specific problems. During the program, dedicated networking events are organized so that you can meet and share knowledge. And even after graduating from the imec.istart program, you'll become part of our alumni network – so that you can continue to participate to specific programs and events.

Secondly, our international partner network will provide you with a number of innovation services at a reduced cost – ranging from workspace (in Brussels, Ghent, Antwerp, Genk, etc.) to partner deals (e.g. software deals, connectivity, legal support), and marketing/communications support. In a more advanced stage of your imec.istart trajectory, imec supports you to expand internationally.

 ACCESS TO **TALENT**

Working at a startup is an adventure where bright people build a bright future. Your startup needs a versatile group of people to help create positive change. To facilitate growth within your company, we will help you to find the right talents (both junior and senior) for internships, Expert-in-Residence roles and vacancies. Together with our partners and recruitment companies, we will help you setting up the right job opportunities and channel the right talents to your start-up. For instance, CVs of talents are placed on our HR Slack channel and training in interview techniques is given. Furthermore, we facilitate Find-your-Co-founder (and other talent) events.

In order to gain access to young talent, exchange programs have been set up with (inter)national educational institutions, such as the 'Blended Mobility' program. Working with international student teams can be an interesting way for your company to try out your innovative ideas. Blended Mobility is a collaboration between 10+ international universities and imec.istart. The project aims to create an engaging international multidisciplinary learning environment in which students (8-10 students per team; IT, Design, Marketing, Project Management, ...) become the R&D lab of a startup. Each year, imec.istart selects two startups that have proposed a business idea / IT challenge they want to have researched / implemented. Participation is free. You can expect a creative, innovative approach and this in consultation with you as a client.

Team is everything. For top teams in startups, performance is reflected in team cohesiveness and quality of decision-making. Therefore, in addition to business support, we strive to create, strengthen and reinforce successful team dynamics. The essential team dynamics factors are shared leadership (vision, norms, cooperated goals), constructive conflict, and psychological safety. By concentrating on the human aspects of entrepreneurship, we put emphasis on the importance of gaining insight into your human capital, individual & team characteristics and interpersonal processes.



ACCESS TO **MARKET**

One of the main challenges you will be confronted with, is how to realize a successful product launch within different markets or regions. Together with the imec.istart coaches, you will follow all the necessary steps to do this properly – including product-market fit-gap analysis, market landscape analysis, barriers to market entry, etc.

To facilitate your growth, the imec.istart team has built an international network – allowing you to connect with international partners and investors, attend the most interesting events, do business in specific target markets and eventually help you attract your first international clients and set up a remote office. Up until today, imec.istart has close contacts with the Silicon Valley and New York-Boston areas (for the U.S. market), Europe (in various countries) and is expanding its network in Asia. As a member of two (invitation-only) international networks of incubators (UBI Global) & accelerators (GAN), we can connect you to almost every region in the world.

Amongst our services, our portfolio companies can make use of a desk at the local BelCham co-working spaces in New York & San Francisco. We also provide specific soft-landing programs to gain relevant market insights and information in order to evaluate what the success rate is when launching your product in a specific country.*

Finally, imec.istart organizes inspirational and deep-dive international missions towards specific markets (typically related to one of the special imec.istart tracks – such as Learn & HRTech, [Health](#) or [Media, Telecom & Entertainment](#)) to enable market entry and provide access to potential investors.

*refers to partly paying services



3.2 INDUSTRY VERTICALS

Complementing the general imec.istart program, imec has partnered with several industry experts to offer the following imec.istart industry verticals. These industry verticals services focus on tackling specific barriers of a given market (i.e. privacy, ethics & security, industry standard etc.) by having access to the best market-specific coaching and mentoring available, which in turn should speed up your commercialization process and increase your chances for successful market entry and growth.

Next to the market-specific services, start-ups applying for a specific vertical will be able to receive an additional investment of 50,000 EUR by the vertical partner(s) with a 3% stake in return.



Also in the Health domain, digital transformation is well under way. Apps & mobile, robotics & automation, cloud technology, artificial intelligence and internet-of-things are just some examples of exciting technological developments currently driving innovation in Healthcare. Furthermore, the Healthcare industry itself is also changing the way it is operating, for example by focusing more on extramural care paths, stronger patient empowerment and the introduction of clinical analytics.

The imec.istart Health vertical has set up a strategic partnership with key national and international organizations. Together, these partners are committed to support HealthTech startups within their field of expertise ranging from clinical research to market entry.



BlueHealth Innovation Center is a consortium with extensive experience and networks in developing new health and care innovations, supported by members across Government (cities of Antwerp, Ghent and Genk), Academic & Healthcare organizations (e.g. Ziekenhuis Oost Limburg (ZOL), Ghent & Antwerp University) and Industry (e.g. Microsoft & UCB). BlueHealth supports new startups in the pre-incubation phase and offers a program, named Health RampUp, which runs twice a year and helps HealthTech entrepreneurs to go from idea to business plan.



UCB is a global biopharma company, focusing on neurology and immunology.



University Hospital Antwerp (UZA) will through its Clinical Research Center Antwerp act as central point of contact to unlock the large potential of its clinical setting as testing facility for new health applications.



Roche Diagnostics focuses on increasing the value of diagnostic techniques within the healthcare sector ranging from medical analysis, diabetes to histopathology.



Cronos Group hosts BlueHealth Innovation Center at StartUp Village, and provides coaching based on state-of-the-art technological knowledge from its group of organizations, as well as through its extensive experience within the industry.



Pfizer is one of the world's premier innovative biopharmaceutical companies and a world leader in different healthcare sectors from generic medicines to consumer healthcare products.



IQVIA (previously IMS Health and Quintiles) is a leading global provider of advanced analytics, technology solutions and contract research services to the life sciences industry.



In4Care is a community of care providers (having direct interactions with care users), partners and companies (start-ups, scale-ups and enterprises) providing products or services linked to the Healthcare community.

Next to getting access to this powerful network of partners, startups within the imec.start program accepted by the Health vertical can apply for an additional investment from the BlueHealth Innovation Fund powered by imec.start. With fund partners UCB, Cronos, UZA and in4Care, this dedicated Health Fund can inject another 50,000 € in your startup in exchange for a 3% equity stake. Since its establishment in 2017, this fund has already invested in more than 10 HealthTech imec.start companies. In order to also pitch for the BlueHealth Innovation Fund, you will need to apply for the imec.start program first. On the pitch day, both imec.start and BlueHealth Innovation Fund take an independent decision and you'll need to present twice.



INDUSTRY 4.0, LOGISTICS & TRANSPORT

Industry 4.0 is the current trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies. It includes cyber-physical systems, Internet of things, Big Data, Virtual Reality, Predictive Maintenance, 3D Printing, Cloud Computing, Smart Logistics, Cybersecurity and much more. Industry 4.0 revolutionizes Production and Logistics primarily, but not only... Lying in the heart of Europe, Belgium is expert in logistics and innovative logistic solutions. These are of great importance to the Belgian economy. Maritime and inland ports, aviation industry as well as logistic and distribution centers are the key parts of an innovative and efficient logistic network. This vertical is all about Industry 4.0 and how to prepare the logistics and distribution workforce for Industry 4.0 and the connected supply network.



Agidens delivers advice, engineering, automation and maintenance. Their fields of expertise are compliance, E&I, control systems, MES, process and mechanical systems. Through their extensive expertise, and their offices throughout Europe and in the US, they develop and market new solutions for different markets (including life sciences, infrastructure, tank terminals, chemicals and food & beverage).



Agoria is Belgium's largest employers' organization and trade association. The companies represented by Agoria are active in different markets and industries. Besides access to their company network, Agoria offers expertise centers on energy, environment, fiscal matters, human resources, innovation and regulations & standardization.



bpost, Belgium's leading postal operator, is well-positioned on the Belgian parcel delivery market thanks to the wide range of delivery options and an outstanding international network.



Brussels Airport, the airport in the Heart of Europe connecting Belgium with the rest of the world, focuses on customer centricity and connectivity.



DP World Antwerp is a leading stevedore in the Port of Antwerp, offering a wide range of high-quality container services.



Flanders Make is the strategic research center for the manufacturing industry. From their sites all over Flanders, they stimulate open innovation through excellent research. Their purpose: realizing a top-level research network in Flanders that delivers full support to the innovation projects of manufacturing companies. This way Flanders Make wants to contribute to new products and production processes that help to realize the vehicles, machines and factories of the future.



The University of Antwerp and specifically their 'Transport and Regional Economics (TPR)' department are expert in transportation research.





ENGIE FAB is the group's hub for Innovation, from very early detection of trends, conception of ideas to realization of new businesses. It creates the best conditions and tools for success by aligning interests and forging collaboration of métiers, ENGIE's BUs, external ecosystems and stakeholders through an approach of co-creation, seeking innovative new businesses to derive future growth in an increasingly disrupted sector.



MEDIA, TELECOM & ENTERTAINMENT

The media, telecom and entertainment industries are under constant change. Digitization causes significant changes in how we consume news, play games, watch programs or behave on the new, mobile environment. The 'Media, Telecom and Entertainment' consortium wishes to support and spur the development of innovative solutions that can help shaping the media, telecom and entertainment products and services of the future. The partnership is a track with specific value-add partners, built on top of the imec.start business incubation program. The unique partnership brings together valuable expertise to support the development of Media, Telecom and Entertainment start-ups.



Mediahuis is a strong printed media group in the BeNeLux, with titles such as De Standaard, Gazet van Antwerpen, NRC and Het Nieuwsblad in portfolio.



DPG Media is one of the strongest audiovisual media groups in the BeNeLux. With brands such as VTM, Q2, Mobile Vikings and Joe, it is active in TV, radio and mobile.



MediaNet Vlaanderen unites over 60 companies active in media content and media innovation.



Roularta Media Group is a strong printed media group in Belgium, with titles such as Knack, Trends, De Zondag and Nest in portfolio.



Telenet is part of the Liberty Global group and has activities in telecommunications, television and telephone services. It provides services to both residential and business customers.



VRT Sandbox is the open innovation initiative of VRT, the Flemish public broadcaster. It supports start-ups and SMEs in testing new media innovations in real-life settings.



SPORTSTECH

Imec.start and its partners launch a specific track on SportsTech called 'SportUp'. Entrepreneurs and startups in the area of Physical Activity Promotion, Performance Training, Talent Identification, Sports Medicine, Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation or Sports Digital Marketing and Multimedia will be supported in the creation of their internationally scale-able venture.



Victoris is a consortium of experts at Ghent University in the field of sports technology and innovation. They facilitate knowledge transfer activities and research collaborations with industrial companies, start-ups, research institutions, clubs, federations, etc.



Sport Vlaanderen is the Flemish sports agency administration center. They serve as a one stop shop for everything related to the Flemish sports policy.



Mediahuis is a strong printed media group in the BeNeLux, with titles such as De Standaard, Gazet van Antwerpen, NRC and Het Nieuwsblad in portfolio.





FINTECH, INSURTECH, & CYBER SECURITY

This partnership aims to support the creation of new solutions and start-ups in the FinTech, InsurTech and Cyber Security markets.

Today's fast-paced technological evolution is opening up unprecedented innovation opportunities in all sectors of our society – and industries such as finance and insurance are particularly susceptible to it. At the same time, as we increasingly rely on computer systems, wireless networks, smart devices and web-based applications, a need has emerged for solutions that address the security issues of these devices and infrastructures, particularly in sectors making use of people's personal (financial) information.

The FinTech, InsurTech and Cyber Security track adds an extra layer to the imec.istart business accelerator program. It offers the unique market expertise, mentoring and exclusive business network of carefully selected partners, providing start-ups and entrepreneurs active in those sectors with a significant advantage to successfully launch their innovative solution.



Agoria is Belgium's largest employers' organization and trade association. The companies represented by Agoria are active in different markets and industries. Besides access to their company network, Agoria offers expertise centers on energy, environment, fiscal matters, human resources, innovation and regulations & standardization.



BNP Paribas Fortis is a structural partner of the imec.istart fund. Within the Fintech Track, BNP Paribas Fortis will provide coaches and a network of experts that can support start-ups every step of the way, thus helping them to achieve success.



ING is also a structural partner of the imec.istart fund. Starters can enjoy attractive advantages for their day-to-day banking, loans and insurance. In addition to its experience and know-how, ING also puts start-ups into contact with its network and in-house subject matter experts.



LEARN & HRTECH

Imec.istart and its partners launch a specific track on Learn & HR Tech. The partnership bundles extensive experience and networks in the domain of education and learning. This consortium aims to support the creation of new solutions and start-ups in these industries.



Syntra Vlaanderen is the agency of the Flemish regional government that ensures and promotes high-quality, innovative and labor market-oriented competence development for youngsters and adults for more and stronger entrepreneurial activities in Flanders.



VRT Sandbox is the open innovation initiative of VRT, the Flemish public broadcaster. It supports start-ups and SMEs in testing new media and education innovations in real-life settings.



VDAB is the Flemish public employment service providing job counseling and (vocational) training for all jobseekers. VDAB is always on the lookout for promising ideas and innovations to tackle current and future challenges in the labour market.



Mediahuis is a strong printed media group in the BeNeLux, with titles such as De Standaard, Gazet van Antwerpen, NRC and Het Nieuwsblad in portfolio.

UTILITIES, CLEANTECH & SMART BUILDINGS



Imec.istart and its partners have launched an industry vertical on 'Utilities, CleanTech & Smart Buildings'. We'll look at how the IoT, smart buildings and smart infrastructure are forming the foundational blocks of tomorrow's greener, cleaner, and healthier smart cities. Smart cities sit at the confluence of major disruptions across multiple industries, including energy, transportation, buildings, and core city services. Utilities around the world are becoming increasingly integrated with smart city deployments. This consortium with extensive experience and networks in this market wishes to support the creation of new solutions and start-ups in these industries



BAM Belgium unites the activities of BAM Contractors (which, until 2014, operated separately as CEI-De Meyer and Betonac), Interbuild, Kairos, Galère and BAM Technics. Interbuild carries out non-residential and apartment projects with its workforce of more than 250 people in Flanders and the Brussels region. The company is responsible for the realization of various projects that are distinctive in terms of size and/or architecturally. The Belgian company BAM Contractors nv was also involved in the establishment of public and residential construction projects. The company is one of the leading construction companies in Belgium and is active in the infrastructure sector in numerous (sizeable) civil architecture and industrial construction projects.



ENGIE FAB is the group's hub for Innovation, from very early detection of trends, conception of ideas to realization of new businesses. It creates the best conditions and tools for success by aligning interests and forging collaboration of métiers, ENGIE's BUs, external ecosystems and stakeholders through an approach of co-creation, seeking innovative new businesses to derive future growth in an increasingly disrupted sector.

4. WHAT DOES IMEC.ISTART



ASK IN RETURN?

The imec.istart acceleration program provides core funding that allows besides the technology (Proof of Technology), also further testing of the market and business component (Proof of Commercial Concept). The used acceleration amount of an imec.istart project is considered as charge out costs to the future business.

At the start of the program, imec.istart takes as a standard a certain percentage of shares in the capital of the new entity, in exchange for incubation risk taken by imec. With the imec.istart funding of EUR 50,000, the applicable rate is 6% pre-money (i.e. before other investors step in), 3% for the EUR 50,000 and 3% for all the coaching, workshops and additional support. In the event imec.istart grants additional funding (e.g. for an Expert-in-Residence or access to technology – see also in 3.), these additional investments are leading to 1% extra shares for each tranche of 20,000 EUR additional investment (on top of the basic offering). In case additional funding through one of imec's vertical partners has been granted, these funds will be converted at an additional 3% per 50,000 EUR.

Imec requests to be represented in the board of directors of the company to ensure a continuous relationship between imec and the company, as well as a sufficient flow of information from the company to imec (enabling imec to continue its support towards the company). Additionally, imec requests to be mentioned as partner on the start-up's website and in all key communications.

In case the imec.istart trajectory clearly shows that the enhancement of technological innovation as well as the idea are not viable (nor through a new spin-off or start-up or through a different marketing route), then the imec.istart incubation budget will be regarded as sunk cost by imec and the entrepreneur is not required to refund the used incubation budget (unless in cases of gross errors).



5. HOW TO APPLY FOR IMEC.ISTART?

5.1 WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR IMEC.ISTART?

An incubation project can be started in different ways, initiated by imec researchers, an industrial partner or other (potential) entrepreneurs. The imec.istart projects focus on entrepreneurs in the tech sector who want to valorize their idea in an (inter)national context, with a strong Flemish presence (headquarters in the Flemish or Brussels Region). Submitted projects developed by employees of a university, university college or public research organization (e.g. IMEC, VITO, VIB), are followed up in consultation with the technology transfer office (TTO) of the respective organizations. Imec.istart projects are submitted by individual entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial teams with as much complementary expertise as possible.

ARE YOU
READY FOR IMEC.ISTART
CHECKLIST

Are you tech product company?

YES

NO

Our imec.istart Business Acceleration program focuses on [product-orientated](#) start-ups.

Does your product integrate technology?

YES

NO

Technologic innovation is not an explicit requirement. However, it is taken into account for the selection procedure. Start-ups that are (technologically) innovative have a better chance to get selected for imec.istart.

Do you have a working proof-of-concept?

YES

NO

This is one of our selection criteria. Once you have your working proof-of-concept ready, you are welcome to participate in our imec.istart call. [If you are in the ideation phase, incubators](#) such as SportUp Boost, Voka Bryo, BlueHealth RampUp might be a better fit for you at this moment in time ...

Do you have a team (minimum 2 complementary profiles)?

YES

NO

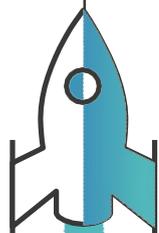
We strongly recommend you to team up with a partner in crime.

Is your company Belgium based?

YES

NO

No worries, you don't have to be. Foreign start-ups can be accepted for the imec.istart program, as long as they can [demonstrate to have a link with our region](#) (e.g. transfer your headquarters to Belgium, set-up a daughter office in Belgium or have a signed collaboration with a local research institute,..), or commit themselves to build such link.



IMEC.ISTART READY!

5.2 INFO FOR NON-BELGIAN STARTUPS

The imec.istart business acceleration program is also open for non-Belgian startups as long as you can demonstrate to have link with our region. This link can be realized on different levels.

Global startups

- **Move your headquarters to Belgium:**
 - imec.istart invests in the Belgian company
 - Preferred solution to get to most out of our imec.istart program

Startups from Europe, USA & Canada

- **Set-up subsidiary office in Belgium**
 - imec.istart invests in the mother company
 - Separate Belgian company with own legal representation power
 - Can apply for grants in Belgium
 - We expect a minimum presence in Belgium during the program (1 week per month)
- **Set-up branch office in Belgium**
 - imec.istart invests in the mother company
 - Not a separate Belgian company (Virtual Office)
 - Can not apply for grants in Belgium
 - We expect a minimum presence in Belgium during the program (1 week per month)
- **Have a research collaboration with a local university / company**
 - imec.istart invests in the mother company
 - Contract for the research collaboration should already be signed with a minimum value of 250k€
 - We expect a minimum presence in Belgium during the program (1 week per month)

This link with Belgium is not needed yet upon application, but once selected imec.istart can advise you on how to create this link.



5.3 HOW LONG DOES IMEC.ISTART SUPPORT YOU?

The imec.istart business acceleration program supports entrepreneurs with the early development of their tech start-ups during minimum 12 months.

After graduating from imec.istart, imec continues to support its start-ups as long as it is shareholder. The support provided after imec.istart is however less substantive.

5.4 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR)

The intellectual property must be cleared to ensure that these are in your own hands (or owner of the idea himself or imec) or can be used for the project by e.g. a license agreement (if another party has the ownership). To achieve this a freedom-to-operate study may be organized within the framework of the project imec.istart. The costs can be paid by the owner of the idea from the imec.istart budget.

imec does not claim any IP rights in imec.istart projects, as far as it was not (co-) owner of these IP rights prior to the imec.istart project. This means that new IP created during an imec.istart project and with the help of the imec.istart means, are still owned by the idea owner(s) (and not by imec, unless it concerns imec researchers).

5.5 HOW TO APPLY FOR IMEC.ISTART?

CALLS

The iStart program typically has 3 calls per year, with (approximate) deadlines for the submission of project proposals on following dates:

- 1st February
- 1st June
- 1st October

This frequency and timeline can be adjusted if necessary by imec and is informative and not binding. Each project can be submitted up to 2 times for an imec.istart call.

APPLICATION

The submission is done via the multimedia online platform developed for the purpose of imec (accessible via imec's website). The teams submit the following info about their project, in English and in common document formats (Word, Powerpoint, PDF):

- A **team presentation** of all the team members (contact details and CVs).
- An **executive summary** of the idea (max. 2 pages).
- A **business pitch** (max. 12 slides), where the project is proposed on the basis of
 - Solution: What is the product (and service) you wish to commercialize?
 - Need: What is the significant customer and market need addressed by your solution?
 - Market & Customer(s): What are the market(s) or market segment(s) you intend to serve? What type of customers do you intend to address?
 - Approach: What is your (preliminary) go-to-market strategy? How / where will your product (and service) be sold?
 - Business model: How do you think you will make money?
 - Competition: Who are your competitors (both current and potential) and how does your project relate to them?
 - Benefits: What are the specific benefits of your product/service compared to existing solutions (i.e. what is/are your differentiator(s) or competitive advantage(s))?
 - Team: Who is part of the team that will turn your start-up into a success?
 - Bonus: What is the one special thing you want to add to convince us?

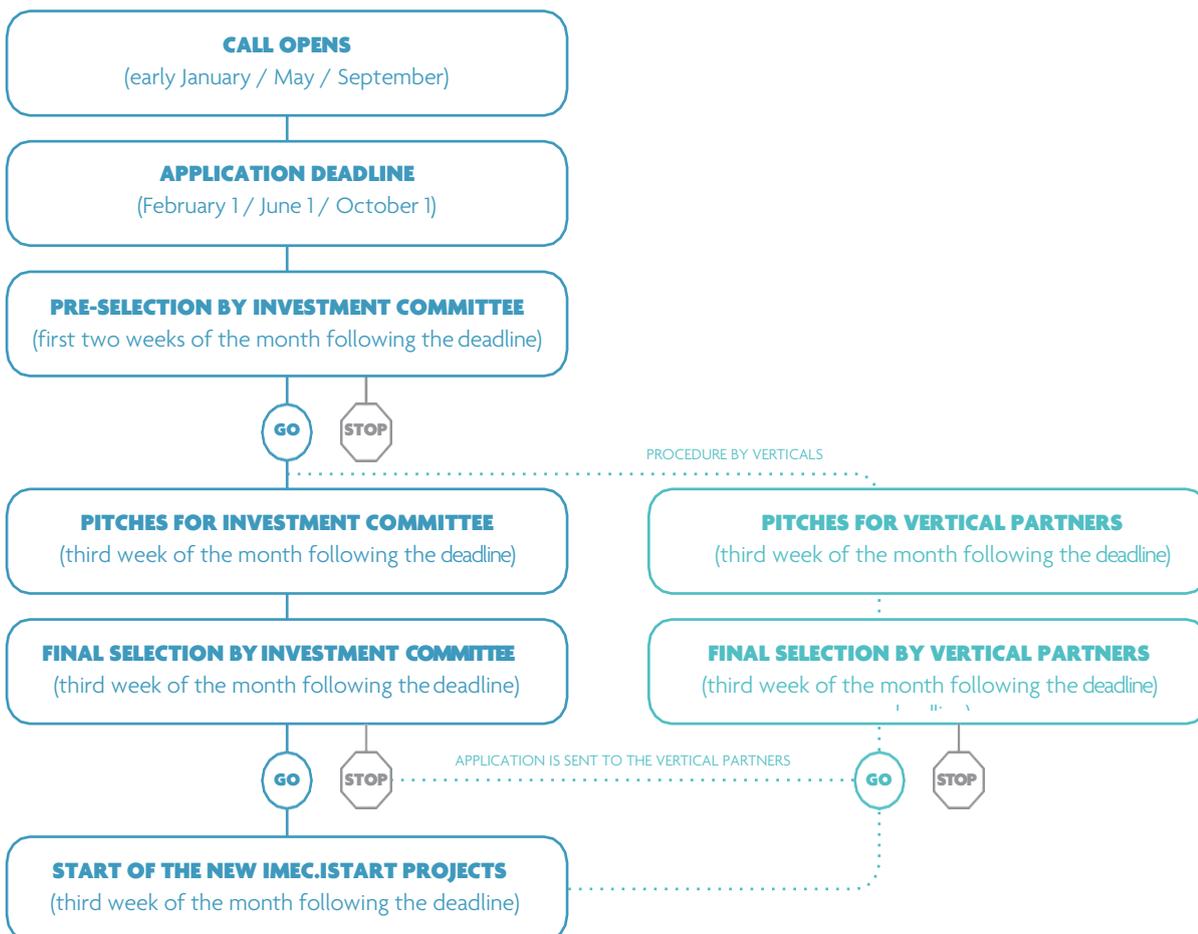
- A document containing **milestones for the project, including budgeting** (to some degree of detail for which the imec.istart budget of up to 50,000 EUR would be used and an estimate of the timeline in which these costs approximately would fall) and a brief description of where the project is located in the development process at the time of submission. In terms of budgeting, it is possibly interesting to also show the 'bigger picture' (if more funding is needed than 50,000 EUR) and how imec.istart funding fits within it.
- **A short video of your prototype or product**, to showcase the current status. This does not have to be professional footage and should not be longer than 1 to 2 minutes.

SELECTION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Submitted project applications will initially be assessed against their admissibility (completeness of the file; incubation stage; proof-of-concept available). The substantive review and award of the imec.istart projects is done in two stages: all entries are critically evaluated by the Investment Committee of the imec.istart Fund (including imec and its Fund partners), (and possibly supplemented by 1 external expert). Based on this evaluation, a pre-selection is made (this means a number of projects will already drop out at this pre-selection stage!).

The best projects are invited for a second phase to present their project proposals to the Investment Committee of the imec.istart Fund (and possibly supplemented by 1 external expert). In it, the idea owner and/or entrepreneurial team will explain the idea, the business proposal, the team composition and motivation in detail. They will be challenged by the Investment Committee of the imec.istart Fund. In both rounds of evaluation, it is possible that projects will not be retained. Thus, the call is competitive.

The entire selection process (from submission deadline to final decision) never takes more than 1 month. Every project, whether selected or not, receives feedback that should be useful to further strengthen its project.



For start-ups applying for a specific vertical, the same application will be used to have two independent decisions: one from the imec.istart Fund (decision taken by the Investment Committee) and one from the respective vertical partners (decision taken by the vertical partners). For the pitching sessions, this also means start-ups in the verticals will need to pitch twice (once for the imec.istart Fund and once for the vertical partners). This will obviously be organized in such way that ideally both pitches happen back-to-back on the same day and location.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Imec uses the following selection and evaluation criteria for imec.istart projects:

IDEA

- The degree of techn(ological) inventiveness
- A clear customer need (Need)
- A business model in development (Approach)
- At least 1 clear and strong differentiator identified (Benefit)
- The initial market is identified and sufficiently large (Competition)

TEAM

- The core team is committed and willing to bear the entrepreneurial risk
- The core team is capable of achieving techn(ological) developments
- The team is willing to accept external coaching
- The team is willing to go global (international business orientation)

STATUS & POTENTIAL

- The proof-of-concept of the technology is already realized
- An idea of the actions required regarding freedom-to-operate & IPR exists
- Break-even possible within 2 to 3 years
- Sales of at least EUR 1 million possible within 3 years
- Sales of at least EUR 10 million possible long term

The last two criteria are less hard than the others. Especially in case of equally strong proposals, imec.istart will support the projects with higher technological inventiveness and international business orientation. Furthermore, projects with more focus on societal impact are also eligible (and thus the last criteria apply less).



6. IMEC.ISTART PARTNERS

Imec.start is supported by a large partner network, which offers additional benefits to the start-ups supported in the program. All combined benefits offered by our partners represent an additional value of over 200,000 EUR. We are proud to be supported by following partners:

GOLD PARTNERS

ING, BNP Paribas Fortis, Telenet, Cronos, Flemish Government (Flemish Minister of Innovation)



The gold partners are part of the imec.start fund where they have committed substantial financial means to enable investments in early stage tech startups. The pre-seed investments from the imec.start fund will cover the 50,000 EUR cash investments in each start-up, as well as the non-cash support by imec's acceleration team.

SILVER PARTNERS

Certibit, Cresco, SD Worx, Vasco Data Security, Xerius, IP Hills, Liedekerke Wolters Waelbroeck Kirkpatrick



BRONZE PARTNERS

Imec.start has negotiated an important number of additional perks for its portfolio companies, with a total value surpassing €200K:

A.o. 8seconds, Amazon, Antwerp Management School, Belamco, Combell, Cumul.io, DSP Valley, Escrow Alliance, Google, IBM, Microsoft, Monster, Nijs Roeckens Bedrijfsrevisoren, Nucleus, SAP, Github, HP, Hubspot, Mailchimp, Mathworks, Nomadesk, Salesflare, Salesforce, SEEQ, Switch, Teamleader, Uservoice, UXprobe, World Escrow, Zendesk



Moreover, as imec.start is member of the GAN Accelerator Network, you are eligible for additional perks and benefits.

7. PARTNER LOCATIONS

Through imec.istart, we can provide start-ups with housing in local communities close to their home base. Following locations are partners of imec.istart, where we can offer office space (typically in a co-working format).

BELGIUM



GHENT



HASSELT



ANTWERP



BRUSSELS



LEUVEN





GEEL/MOL



GENK



KORTRIJK

HANGAR K



UNITED STATES



NEW YORK CITY



SAN FRANCISCO



8. WHERE TO FIND US?

✉ BY EMAIL:

- istart@imec.be

🌐 ON THE WEBSITE:

- www.imec.be
- www.imecistart.com

📍 AT OUR DIFFERENT OFFICE LOCATIONS:

- **Imec Ghent** (De Krook, Miriam Makebaplein, 9000 Ghent)
- **Imec Leuven** (Kapeldreef 75, 3001 Leuven)
- **Imec Antwerp** (The Beacon, Sint-Pietersvliet 7, 2000 Antwerpen)
- **Corda Campus** (Kempische Steenweg 293, 3500 Hasselt)

🐦 ON TWITTER:

- [@imecistart](https://twitter.com/imecistart)

🌐 ON LINKEDIN:

- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/imec-istart/>

📘 ON FACEBOOK:

- <https://www.facebook.com/imecistart/>

