



**Edge – De Nora Innovation Hub**  
**Call for Startups 2026**  
Regulation



## **Regulation**

1. Introduction to Edge
2. 2026 Call for Startups: Focus & Goals
3. Application Timeline & Eligibility
4. Application and Selection Process
5. Program Structure
6. Data Protection and Privacy Notice
7. Selected startups participation to the Edge program
8. Representation and Warranties
9. Indemnity
10. Intellectual Property / Confidentiality
11. Exclusion of Warranties and Liability
12. Other terms and Exclusion of Applicants
13. Applicable Law and exclusive jurisdiction
14. Contacts



## 1. Introduction to Edge

[De Nora](#) is an Italian multinational company specializing in electrochemistry and a leader in sustainable technologies for the Green Economy. It is the world's largest supplier of high-performance catalytic coatings and insoluble electrodes for electrochemical and industrial applications, and a leading provider of equipment, systems, and solutions for the disinfection, filtration, and treatment of water and wastewater.

**Edge** is De Nora's Innovation Hub dedicated to accelerating early-stage industrial technologies.

Its mission is to help startups validate, industrialize and scale solutions that can generate operational, technological and sustainability-driven impact within real industrial environments.

Edge supports selected startups by combining:

1. Hands-on industrial expertise and access to De Nora's global facilities;
2. Business and entrepreneurial guidance;
3. Exposure to a global industrial and innovation ecosystem;
4. Up to €50.000 financing.

## 2. 2026 Call for Startups: Focus & Goals

The **2026 Call for Startups – Re-Designing Industrial Operations** (the "Call") targets solutions that improve manufacturing, operations, safety and resource efficiency across industrial processes.

The Call focuses on four strategic areas:

- Manufacturing & Operations Optimization
- Automation & Digitalization in manufacturing and quality control
- Health & Safety
- Resource use optimization

A detailed breakdown of the 2026 focus areas, together with the related technologies of interest and non-exhaustive examples, is included in **Annex A - Focus Areas & Technologies of Interest**.

## 3. Application Timeline & Eligibility

### 3.1. Timeline

The Call follows a two-step selection flow: an online application followed by a pitching session with the startup finalists selected by De Nora.

The Call for Startup will be scheduled as follows, please note that the timeline may be subject to change at the discretion of De Nora:



- **Call opening:** May 4th, 2026
- **Call closing:** June 20th, 2026
- **Screening & Evaluation:** end by July 15th, 2026
- **Pitching Session:** July 20th, 2026

All dates and deadlines indicated above refer to Central European Time (CET/CEST). Each person, startup or other entity submitting an application to the Call (herein also referred to as “**Applicant**”) is responsible for verifying time differences and ensuring timely submissions according to their local time zone.

### 3.2. Who can apply

The Call is open to:

- **Early-stage technology startups** (ideally Seed to Series A) and companies developing solutions aligned with the program’s industrial focus;
- **Legally incorporated entities**, including startups and innovative SMEs, capable of participating in validation and pilot activities;
- **Companies incorporated in any country**, provided they comply with the laws and regulations applicable in their jurisdiction and in Italy.

### 3.3. Eligibility requirements:

To ensure a coherent and effective evaluation process, Applicants should meet the following requirements:

- Act with integrity and transparency**, conducting business activities in good faith and in compliance with applicable laws and generally accepted ethical standards;
- A working prototype, MVP or maturing technology**, demonstrating readiness for PoC or pilot activities within an industrial context;
- Ability to participate in program activities**, both remotely and onsite at De Nora facilities when required for validation or pilot-execution;
- Ownership of all rights necessary** to submit the application, including any intellectual property rights;
- Accuracy and truthfulness** of all submitted information, including technical information, company data and team details.

Startups that may not satisfy the requirement under letter b) above are **still invited to apply**. Edge values promising technologies and strong industrial potential, even when maturity levels vary.

## 4. Application and Selection Process

To participate, startups must apply through the official Edge platform, available at the following link: [Edge - Innovation Hub by De Nora](#).

All applications must include the required documentation. Providing clear and complete information increases the likelihood of a successful evaluation. Even if



some materials are still evolving, Applicants are encouraged to submit their best available version, Edge values potential and vision just as much as maturity.

The selection process is designed to identify the startups that are best positioned to create real industrial value through a Proof of Concept (PoC) and, subsequently, an industrial pilot. The process follows a progressive evaluation structure, starting from essential preliminary information and gradually moving toward deeper technical and business validation.

#### **4.1. Application Submission**

The application process starts with the submission of a **concise set of preliminary information**. This initial step allows Edge to understand the fundamentals of the startup: its technology, the problem it addresses and the value it aims to bring to an industrial environment.

Based on this first set of materials, Edge conducts a **preliminary assessment** focused on:

- **Strategic fit** with the Call's focus areas and with De Nora's industrial roadmap;
- **Industrial relevance** of the problem and proposed solution;
- **Technological potential** and readiness for validation activities;
- **Prospects for meaningful impact** within De Nora's operational context.

Startups that demonstrate strong alignment and potential at this stage are **invited to complete the application** by providing **more detailed documentation**. This may include deeper technical insights, evidence of feasibility, an IP overview, market information and a more articulated proposal for collaboration.

#### **4.2. Evaluation Criteria**

Throughout the evaluation phase, the applications' assessment is guided by the following criteria:

- **Team & Execution Capacity:** The team demonstrates solid technical expertise, relevant industrial know-how, and the ability to effectively execute PoC and pilot activities.
- **Technology:** The solution shows an adequate level of technological maturity, clear differentiation, and a coherent approach to intellectual property protection.
- **Industrial Fit:** The proposed solution addresses concrete operational needs within De Nora and can be realistically tested or integrated in an industrial environment.
- **Market & Business Potential:** The project presents a credible market opportunity, scalability of the business model, and early signs of competitive advantage or traction.



- **Impact Potential:** The solution can generate measurable improvements in efficiency, quality, safety, sustainability, or cost performance, with potential for long-term industrial adoption.

All evaluations will be carried out by a jury designated by De Nora. The selection of the Applicants admitted to the pitching session (the “**Finalists**”) will be made at the sole and unquestionable discretion of the jury, whose decisions are final and not subject to appeal by Applicants.

### **4.3. Pitching Session and Batch Selection**

De Nora will invite two or more Finalists to present their solution in the pitching session. The jury will include technical experts, business and market specialists and senior innovation stakeholders from De Nora. The jury will evaluate the Finalists based on the following criteria:

- **Pitch quality**
- Overall **application quality and coherence**
- **Impact on the market**
- **Strategic fit** for De Nora
- **Industrial scalability** for De Nora

Following this final assessment De Nora may, at its sole discretion, decide to select **up to five startups** to join Edge program or decide not to select any startup if none of them satisfies the technical, quality, industrial or strategic requirements of the Call.

## **5. Program Structure**

The Edge program is organized into two consecutive phases designed to progressively validate, integrate and scale the selected technologies within De Nora’s industrial context. Each phase has a distinct objective and form of support, enabling startups to develop both their technical solution and their business proposition through real industrial exposure.

- **Incubation Phase** (approx. 6 months): This phase focuses on validating the feasibility, performance and expected industrial value of the technology through a structured **Proof of Concept (PoC)**. Startups work with a dedicated mentor, receive technical guidance from De Nora experts, and participate in capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening product development and business readiness. The outcome of this phase includes a PoC demonstration and a proposal for the subsequent pilot, which will be reviewed by a panel of De Nora senior leadership and domain experts to determine whether or not the startup will be admitted to the next phase.
- **Acceleration Phase** (up to 12 months): Startups admitted to this phase develop and execute an **industrial pilot** aimed at integrating their technology into real manufacturing or operational processes. They receive technical support, access



to De Nora's facilities and partner networks, and business mentoring to prepare a long-term collaboration plan. The phase concludes with the creation of a Scalability Roadmap and an Acceleration Report summarizing pilot results and potential next steps.

The program concludes with an **Impact Review**, during which each startup presents the pilot outcomes and its scalability roadmap to De Nora's key stakeholders. This final evaluation determines potential collaboration pathways beyond the Edge program, including industrial partnerships, co-development or other forms of long-term engagement.

### **5.1. Financing**

Startups selected for the Edge program may receive up to **€50,000** in financial support, delivered in **two stages: €20,000 at the end of the Incubation Phase**, upon successful completion of the PoC, and **€30,000 upon admission to the Acceleration Phase**. The financial contribution is structured through a **SAFE-based mechanism**, ensuring flexibility for the startup and long-term alignment with De Nora

## **6. Data Protection & Privacy Notice**

All personal data submitted during the application process will be processed in accordance with the Privacy Notice available on the Edge application platform. Before submitting the application, Applicants are required to acknowledge the Privacy Notice.

Personal data is used solely to evaluate the application and manage the Call. Access may be granted to De Nora personnel and external evaluators strictly for these purposes.

## **7. Selected startups participation to the Edge program**

The financing of the selected startup and its participation to the Edge program will be subject to dedicated written agreements between De Nora and the selected startup.

The agreements between De Nora and the selected startup will outline, *inter alia*, the conditions under which the Incubation and Acceleration phases are carried out, including the terms governing the SAFE-based financial contribution, the support and services provided by De Nora, and the obligations of the startup throughout the Edge program. It will also describe the principles that regulate the management of intellectual property, the implementation of the PoC and the industrial pilot, as well as the procedures through which progress, deliverables and results are evaluated during both phases. Each agreement aims to ensure transparency and to create the foundations for a long-term and mutually beneficial collaboration.

## **8. Representations and Warranties**

Each Applicant represents and warrants that:



- (a) it is duly organized, validly existing and in good standing under the laws of the state or jurisdiction of its organization;
- (b) the application, data, information, trademarks and any other contents submitted or provided by such Applicant to De Nora or its affiliates or partners in connection with the Call (herein also the "**Submitted Contents**") do not infringe any rights of third parties or applicable laws;
- (c) the use, reproduction or dissemination of the Submitted Contents in connection with the Call does not infringe any rights of third parties or applicable laws;
- (d) it has the full right, power, and authority to participate to the Call and to grant the license under paragraph 10 below; and
- (e) the data and information included in the Submitted Contents is true, accurate and complete.

## 9. Indemnity

Each Applicant shall indemnify and hold harmless De Nora, its affiliates, representatives and partners from any liability, damage, cost and other losses or expenses, including legal fees and other professional fees, incurred and arising from:

- (a) any action threatened or brought by third parties on the grounds that the Submitted Contents or their use, reproduction or dissemination in connection with the Call infringe any rights of third parties;
- (b) any breach of the representations and warranties set out in paragraph 8 above;
- (c) whatever illegal behaviour, act or activity committed by such Applicant or its personnel;
- (d) any fines or sanctions of whatever nature inflicted by the competent authorities to De Nora or its affiliates, representatives or partners and caused by such Applicant or its personnel.

## 10. Intellectual Property / Confidentiality

Each Applicant remains the owner of any intellectual property rights acquired by such Applicant independently from De Nora or its affiliates or partners or the Call.

De Nora retains and reserves all intellectual property rights related to the Call, including but not limited to any rights to the names, trademarks, graphics, texts, materials or other works of De Nora used or displayed in connection with the Call (herein also "**De Nora Contents**"). Applicants may use De Nora Contents solely to the extent necessary for participating to the Call in accordance with this Regulation and De Nora's instructions. Any other use of De Nora Contents is expressly prohibited.

By participating to the Call, each Applicant grants De Nora a non-exclusive, royalty-free, worldwide and sublicensable license under such Applicant's intellectual property rights to: (a) use, reproduce, disseminate, modify, disclose, publicly display and create derivative works from the Submitted Contents; and (b) use, reproduce, disclose and publicly display such Applicant's name, trademarks and other distinctive signs; in each case in whatever form, by any means (e.g. via De Nora's websites or other communication channels) and solely for the purpose of the Call (e.g. Call



management or advertising, applications assessment, Applicants selection, drafting analyses and reports, etc.).

Unless otherwise agreed in writing between De Nora and an Applicant, De Nora will not be obliged to treat confidentially any Submitted Content which De Nora receives from such Applicant.

### **11. Exclusion of Warranties and Liability**

By participating to the Call, each Applicant acknowledges and agrees that: (a) De Nora Contents are made available “as is”, without warranties or liabilities of any kind; (b) De Nora does not represent or warrant that De Nora Contents are accurate, complete, suitable to any purpose or current; (c) the Call does not create any commitment, liability or obligation whatsoever upon De Nora, nor any expectation of contribution, participation or success, in relation to the Call; and (d) to the maximum extent permitted under applicable law, in no event will De Nora have any liability to Applicants in connection with the Call.

### **12. Other terms and Exclusion of Applicants**

De Nora reserves the right to:

- exclude Applicants who provide false, incomplete or misleading information;
- exclude Applicants who do not comply with this Regulation or the eligibility requirements, timelines, program rules or instructions provided by De Nora;
- modify, suspend or cancel the Call or any phase thereof at its discretion.

### **13. Applicable Law and exclusive jurisdiction**

This Regulation shall be governed by Italian law, excluding its international private law provisions. For any dispute in relation to this Regulation, the Call or the Edge program, the Court of Milan shall have exclusive jurisdiction.

### **14. Contacts**

For questions or clarifications, Applicants may contact the Edge team at: [OpenInnovationTeam@denora.com](mailto:OpenInnovationTeam@denora.com).



## **Annex A - Focus Areas & Technologies of Interest.**

### **1. Advanced Manufacturing & Operations Optimization**

- Liquid deposition and application
- Advanced physical and chemical deposition technologies
- Thermal treatment technologies and next-generation industrial ovens
- Innovative welding techniques
- Surface treatment approaches for roughness optimization and passive layer removal
- Internal logistics optimization (e.g. autonomous material flow, smart fleet coordination, collision-avoidance)
- Handling and lifting technologies
- Innovative metalworking techniques
- Advanced surface cleaning technologies
- Roll-to-roll and continuous processing
- Modular assembly architectures
- Protective technologies and coatings for harsh environments (e.g. corrosion-resistant, chemically robust, high-durability paint and coating systems)
- Advanced in-line sensing resistant to harsh environments

### **2. Automation & Digitalization in Manufacturing and Quality Control**

- Industrial robotics and cobots
- Industrial vision and sensing systems
- Manufacturing Execution Systems for hybrid process/discrete production
- Digital Twin technologies
- Advanced control systems
- Predictive maintenance, OEE tracking and energy consumption technologies
- Smart material tracking and tracing along production processes
- Innovative sensing for metal assays of substrates and solutions

### **3. Health & Safety**

- Next-generation H&S technologies, services and methodologies
- Intelligent, operator-centric work guidance
- Advanced personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Ergonomic assistance & exoskeletons
- Next-generation solutions for behavior-based safety audits and training
- Immersive training for H&S (AR/VR/XR site-specific simulations for skills transfer, rare event practice and procedural readiness)

### **4. Resource Use Optimization**

- Innovative technologies for material use optimization
- Circular manufacturing technologies and platforms for material recovery and reuse
- Energy efficiency & decarbonization solutions
- Innovative warehouse solutions

