

2026 SELECTION CRITERIA AND SCORING RUBRIC

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	SCORING
1. Technological innovation - 20%	<p>We are looking for new and realistic deep tech solutions. We consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disruption: is the solution built around unique, patented or hard to reproduce technological or scientific advances? Uniqueness: is the solution fully based on the development of a new technology, complex engineering process or scientific discovery, and not only a disruptive business model or an accumulation of existing technologies? Sophistication: does the business leverage a solid research base that requires a mix of advanced skills, knowledge, and infrastructure? Industry impact: does the solution effectively address key challenges within the targeted industry and/or create new markets to solve major social and environmental issues? 	0. Solution is not developed by the team or technology is unrealistic and with no real impact on solving industrial challenges
		1. Solution builds onto existing technologies without adding innovation, resulting in limited product or service improvement
		2. Solution builds onto existing technology with innovation, resulting in incremental product or service improvements, with limited impact on solving industrial challenges
		3. Solution transforms existing technology with unique innovation and helps technology leap forward, resulting in product or service improvements and addressing industrial challenges
		4. Solution is a disruptive and realistic technology, resulting in major improvements and/or a new market to address key industrial, social and environmental challenges
2. Embedded positive impact - 15%	<p>We are looking for impact businesses that will create more impact as they scale. We consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentionality: was the business created to solve a social or environmental problem? Embeddedness: is positive impact locked into the business model? Magnitude: is there significant <u>breadth</u> (number of people: local to global) and/or <u>depth</u> (degree of change: marginal to transformational) of impact? Measurement: is the business tracking and managing to optimize impact? Impact potential: is the impact potential and/or already realized? 	0. Unclear intentionality, little or no impact potential
		1. Unclear intentionality, has positive impact potential but not sufficiently embedded
		2. Clear intentionality and positive impact potential but not sufficiently embedded
		3. Clear intentionality and positive impact is embedded, preliminary measurement but impact not realized yet
		4. Clear intentionality, positive impact is embedded and early signs of impact being realized, but no clear path to realize more impact
3. Market access strategy - 15%	<p>We are looking for businesses with a clear competitive advantage and a defined market access strategy. We consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unmet need: has the business identified a large, unmet need in a growing industry (requiring a reasonable level of behavior change)? Competitive advantage: does the business have a clear, long-term, defensible competitive advantage? Market share: could the business secure a big share in the market (#1 or #2)? Validation and product-market fit: does the business have evidence of (potential) customer validation and (potential) product-market fit? 	0. Limited growth potential or unclear competitive advantage
		1. Growth potential, but business has not achieved product-market fit or unclear competitive advantage
		2. Growth potential, with either some evidence of product-market fit or clear competitive advantage
		3. Growth potential, some evidence of product-market fit and clear competitive advantage
		4. Growth potential, evidence of customer validation and product-market fit and clear defensible competitive advantage
5. Growth potential, evidence of customer validation and product-market fit, clear defensible competitive advantage, early adoption with a path to scale		

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4. Business model sustainability and development plan - 15%	<p>We are looking for businesses that have the potential to be profitable. We consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial sustainability: does the business have sufficient financial return potential to allow for strategic growth? • Well thought-out model: are expectations (sales cycles, price setting, etc) and models well thought-out and defensible? • Growth strategy: does the business have an expansion plan with clear business and impact goals and resource requirements (people, capital, etc)? • Risk assessment: has the business thoroughly evaluated risks and capabilities? • Monitoring systems: is the business working to set up dynamic mechanisms to monitor execution? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0. Business model is not identified or not sustainable 1. Unclear business model and development plan that has not been tested or validated 2. Business and development plan are somewhat clear but need validation / de-risking 3. Clear business model and development plan, has potential to be validated: low risk of failure 4. Well thought-out, validated business model and clear development plan but needs additional proof of scalability 5. Well thought-out, validated business model and clear development plan that started scaling and monitoring KPIs
5. Team - 15%	<p>We are looking for a capable team to build the business. We consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complementarity: is the team diverse, with 2-4 members who complement each other? • Technical skill: does the team have relevant technical/leadership skills and experience? • Track record: does the team have track record of execution and/or significant achievement? • Network: does the team have relevant networks and advisors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0. The team lacks balance, experience and skills to run the business 1. The team has limited relevant professional experience and no networks or advisors 2. Complementary team with relevant professional experience but critical gaps and limited networks 3. Complementary team with relevant professional experience, recruitment plans in place to fill existing gaps, but lacking networks or advisors 4. Complementary team with relevant professional experience, recruitment plans in place to fill existing gaps, with networks and advisors 5. Complementary and well-resourced team with extensive professional experience, far-reaching networks, and outstanding advisors
6. Leadership character of the applicant - 20%	<p>We are looking for bold impact leaders, who can attract talent and foster purpose-driven team culture. We consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurial spirit: does the applicant display integrity, motivation and high energy, entrepreneurial approach? • Cartier values: does the applicant display the following character traits: Curiosity, Open-mindedness, Generosity, Sharing, Respect, Rigor, Independence? • Commitment to CWI vision: is the applicant committed to the Cartier Women's Initiative vision? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0. Limited entrepreneurial and inclusive leadership capacity, little to no character alignment 1. Some entrepreneurial and inclusive leadership capacity, limited character alignment 2. Some entrepreneurial and inclusive leadership capacity, aligned on several character traits 3. Demonstrated entrepreneurial and inclusive leadership capacity, aligned on most character traits 4. Demonstrated entrepreneurial and inclusive leadership capacity, aligned on all character traits 5. Exemplary entrepreneurial and inclusive leader, strong demonstration of all character traits in founder actions (internal and external)