

Eastern Cape **INNOVATION CHALLENGE** 2025

Turn Your **Ideas into Impact**

Call for Applications

Closing date for Submission of Proposals: 25 September 2025

Are you an Eastern Cape innovator with a solution for one of the Eastern Cape Province's pressing challenges in the areas of Agriculture (Agro-processing and Aquaculture), Automotive, ICT and Electronics, Renewable Energy and Manufacturing?

This is an opportunity for your solution to receive support from an idea towards commercialisation!

1. General Information

The EC Innovation Challenge seeks to combat unemployment and drive socio-economic growth by empowering participants to create innovative solutions to pressing societal issues. It promotes a dynamic entrepreneurial network focused on job creation, especially among unemployed youth, university students, and the wider community. Participants are encouraged to develop impactful products, processes, or services that address urgent challenges such as poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, and limited access to healthcare, education, energy, and clean water, particularly those affecting the Eastern Cape province.

Proposals that address societal challenges within the five identified sectors are invited. The most promising solution in each sector will be awarded prize money of up to R100,000, which will be used to support the development and commercialisation of the idea.

2. Who is Eligible to Apply

The programme is open to all Eastern Cape participants, including individuals, teams, and entrepreneurs residing in or committed to positively impacting the province. Proposals must focus on innovative solutions targeting the innovation competition themes below:

- **Agriculture (Agro-processing and Aquaculture):** Sustainable Value-Addition for Locally Grown Crops and Aquatic Resources.
- **Automotive:** Eco-Friendly Mobility for Urban and Rural Integration.
- **ICT and Electronics:** Digital Inclusion for Economic Empowerment.
- **Renewable Energy:** Decentralised Clean Energy Solutions for Rural Communities.
- **Manufacturing:** Driving Innovation and Sustainability in Industrial Production.

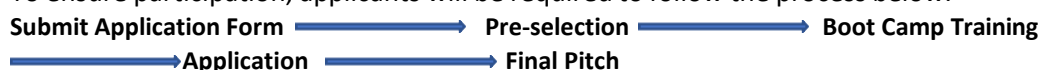
An idea is considered innovative if it is new and has not been implemented before to solve the identified challenge or is a considerable improvement over existing solutions wherein the improvement provides a significant benefit to the target audience or market.

3. How to Apply

- Complete the Application Form which can be downloaded at www.elidzstp.co.za
- All sections of the application must be completed.
- The Team Leader any team members must also sign the form.
- All accompanying documents must be submitted together with the application form

4. Participation and Assessment Process

To ensure participation, applicants will be required to follow the process below:



5. Assessment Criteria for Preselection Stage

Problem definition (20%):	The extent to which the challenge being resolved has been clearly identified and defined.
Innovativeness of the proposed solution (50%):	The extent to which the solution is new or is a significant improvement over the existing solution.
Feasibility of the proposed solution (20%):	the extent to which the proposed solution is feasible, having regard to the technical aspects of the project, timelines, team, partnerships, financial resources, etc.
Potential Impact of the proposed solution (10%):	The extent to which the proposed solution will impact positively on the identified challenge.

6. Assessment Criteria for Shortlisting and Final Pitch Stages

Problem definition (5%):	The extent to which the applicant has a clear understanding of the challenge identified.
Customer/user definition (5%):	The extent to which the applicant has identified the appropriate customers and users. The extent to which the applicant has undertaken customer discovery.
Innovation (35%):	The extent to which the proposed solution is innovative and differs from existing solutions.
Feasibility (15%):	The extent to which the proposed solution is feasible having regard to the technical aspects of the project, timelines, partnerships, financial resources, etc
Capabilities (15%):	The extent to which the team has the requisite expertise to develop and/or implement the proposed solution. In the case of an individual applicant, this refers to the extent to which the individual has the requisite expertise to develop and/or implement the proposed solution.
Sustainability (10%):	The extent to which the team has developed a sustainability plan for their proposed solution.
Potential impact (10%):	The extent to which the proposed solution will make an impact on society.
Quality of the submission/presentation (5%)	Clarity, coherence, and professionalism.

7. What's in it for me?

Each winning application will receive prize money (R100 000), that will go towards:

- Access to a dedicated mentor to assist with development and implementation of the idea/concept.
- Access to pre-incubation services where available.
- Access to a commercialisation specialist, IP specialist and product design professional where applicable.
- Prototyping.
- Assistance with marketing the idea/concept.

Final Date for Application Submission: **25 September 2025**

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