

2026 Early-Stage Startup Package (General Type)

The Ministry of SMEs and Startups is recruiting startups to participate in the **2026 Early-Stage Startup Package (General Type)**, a program designed to support the stabilization and growth of early-stage startups with promising business items and technologies.

January 23, 2026

Minister of SMEs and Startups of the Republic of Korea

※ If real-name verification does not work when you sign up on the K-Startup website, you must complete prior real-name registration through Seoul Credit Rating & Information (SCI).

Please make sure to complete this registration before submitting your online application.

① Who needs real-name registration: Real-name registration is required for people whose real name cannot be verified online, such as those who have changed their legal name, **foreigners**, and minors

② How to register : www.siren24.com (☎1577-1006)

* Real-name registration may take up to 3 days to be completed.

* For details, please refer to: K-Startup Website → Customer Center → Online Manual → General Manual → “K-Startup Startup Company Real-Name Registration Manual”

※ If your startup is selected, you must submit the “Early-Stage Startup Package (General Type) Contract Agreement” within 3 days after you get the selection notice.

※ If you agree to provide your information through the “Public Mydata” service, some of the required documents will be automatically linked and submitted, you do not need to obtain upload them separately.

In 2026, the Early-Stage Startup Package is announced in three separate types:

① General Type, ② Deep Tech Specialized Type, and ③ Investment-Linked Type.

You may apply to more than one type, but you can only participate in one type in the end (you cannot run multiple types at the same time)

< For the 2026 Early-Stage Startup Package (General Type) >

Type	① General type	② Deep tech	③ Investment-linked
T a r g e t startups	Early-stage startups in any sector within 3 years of founding	Early-stage startups within 3 years of founding in 5 key deep-tech fields	Early-stage startups (under 3 years old) outside the Seoul metro area that already received investment.
Number of companies	400	100	68
Grant	up to KRW 100 million	up to KRW 150 million	up to KRW 100 million
Open	'26.1.23.	'26.1.6	'26.5 (TBD)

The number of beneficiaries and the announcement schedule for each type may change

This announcement is for the General Type.

The **Deep-Tech Specialized Type** was announced on January 6, 2026, and the **Investment-Linked Type** will be announced separately.

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

□ **Goal** : To support the stabilization and growth of early-stage startups with promising business items by providing commercialization funding and startup support programs.

□ **Eligible startups** : Early-stage startups within 3 years of founding.*

*For detailed eligibility conditions, see "3. Eligibility and Requirements" in the full announcement.

□ **Period** : Up to 10 months from the contract start date (expected: April 2026 January 2027).

□ **Support details** : **commercialization funding** (max 100 million, average 50 million), Startup program etc

commercialization funding
prototype development, marketing, and intellectual property (IP) application and registration.



Startup programs
market entry support, investment attraction support, and proof-of-concept (PoC) or pilot projects, depending on each host organization's program.

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DETAILED SUPPORT

□ **Detail Support** : Commercialization funding and startup programs

Type	Detail										
commercialization funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Average commercialization funding of KRW 50 million (up to KRW 100 million) per company to cover costs such as:										
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* The exact funding amount is decided based on the evaluation results.										
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">** Government funding is provided within the amount requested by the applicant (startup)										
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Total project budget = Government funding + Required self-funding (company's own contribution)										
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* The self-funding ratio depends on where your startup's main business location (head office) is registered.										
	<table><tr><td>Local-priority regions (167 non-capital districts)</td><td>They are divided into three types, based on population decline and regional underdevelopment.</td></tr><tr><td>Special Support Areas (40 districts)</td><td>Rural population-decline areas that are also in the lowest group for balanced development and underdevelopment evaluations.</td></tr><tr><td>Preferential Support Areas (44 districts)</td><td>Rural population-decline areas that are not classified as Special Support.</td></tr><tr><td>General Areas (83 districts)</td><td>Other non-capital regions that are not Special or Preferential Support Areas.</td></tr><tr><td>Non local-priority regions</td><td>Regions that are not classified as local-priority regions</td></tr></table>	Local-priority regions (167 non-capital districts)	They are divided into three types, based on population decline and regional underdevelopment.	Special Support Areas (40 districts)	Rural population-decline areas that are also in the lowest group for balanced development and underdevelopment evaluations.	Preferential Support Areas (44 districts)	Rural population-decline areas that are not classified as Special Support.	General Areas (83 districts)	Other non-capital regions that are not Special or Preferential Support Areas.	Non local-priority regions	Regions that are not classified as local-priority regions
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General Areas (83 districts)	Other non-capital regions that are not Special or Preferential Support Areas.										
Non local-priority regions	Regions that are not classified as local-priority regions										
	< Self-funding ratio by startup business location >										

type	Special Support Areas	Preferential Support Areas	General Areas	Non local-priority regions
Self-funding (company contribution)	more than 10%	more than 20%	more than 25%	more than 30%
Government funding	less than 90%	less than 80%	less than 75%	less than 70%

- Self-funding consists of both cash and in-kind contributions (the ratio depends on the location of the business site).

* In-kind contributions can include the representative's and participating employees' labor costs, office rent, and the use of existing equipment directly used for the project.

< Self-funding (company contribution)>

Category	Self-funding (company contribution)	Government funding	S e l f - f u n d i n g	
			Cash	In Kind
Special Support Areas	100%	Up to 90%	At least 10% Cash or In kind	
Preferential Support Areas	100%	Up to 80%	At least 10%	Up to 10%
General Areas	100%	Up to 75%	At least 10%	Up to 15%
Non local-priority regions	100%	Up to 70%	At least 10%	Up to 20%

< Example of project budget structure (when government funding is KRW 100 million) **>**

Category	Total Project Budget (A=B+C)	Gov Funding (B)	S e l f - f u n d i n g (C)	
			Cash	In Kind
Special Support Areas	KRW 111.2M	KRW 100 M	KRW 11.1M	
	(100%)	(90%)	(10%)	
Preferential Support Areas	KRW 125M	KRW 100M	KRW 125M	KRW 125M
	(100%)	(80%)	(10%)	(10%)
General Areas	KRW133.34 M	KRW 100M	KRW133.34 M	KRW 200M
	(100%)	(75%)	(10%)	(15%)
Non local-priority regions	KRW 142.8M	KRW 100M	KRW 142.29 M	KRW 285.7 M
	(100%)	(70%)	(10%)	(20%)

* Government funding cannot exceed the project budget amount requested by the startup.

** If the "project budget" written in the business plan and the "project budget" entered in the online K-Startup system are different, the amount entered in the K-Startup system will be used for evaluation.

*** Your self-funding amount and percentage can change later, based on the final funding you get and whether your office is in a local-priority region.

Startup Program	Programs are provided that support early-stage startups based on each host organization's strengths and unique characteristics.
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		Type	Program Example
		① Market Entry	Market access, networking, private-sector partnerships, and global partnerships
		② Investment	Investment education, mock IR sessions, and real investor IR sessions
		③ PoC	Mentoring and technology validation (PoC and similar activities)
		④ Customized program	A customized program is provided by each host organization
Follow up Support Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Linked technology guarantee product with KIBO) After the agreement ends, startups that receive a final performance evaluation grade of “Excellent” or higher and meet the guarantee conditions of the Korea Technology Finance Corporation (KIBO) may be recommended for a linked guarantee product. 		

3 ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

□ Eligibility

- ° Is the representative (CEO) of a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) as defined in Article 2(1) of the Framework Act on Small and Medium Enterprises, and the representative of a “startup company” as defined in each item of Article 2(2) to Article 2(3-2) of the Support for Small and Medium Enterprise Establishment Act, and as of the announcement date, is within 3 years from the date of establishment (founding) of the company.

< Detailed Eligibility Conditions >

▶ Eligible founding period : From January 23, 2023 to January 22, 2026

- **Individual businesses** : The 3-year startup period is calculated based on the “Business Opening Date” on the business registration certificate.
- **Corporate businesses** : The 3-year startup period is calculated based on the “Date of Incorporation Registration” on the corporate registry.

** Both individual and corporate applicants must have actually started business activities and completed business registration.*

- If the company has joint representatives or co-representatives with individual authority, all representatives must meet the eligibility criteria and must not fall under any disqualification (exclusion) criteria.
- If the applicant holds multiple business registrations (individual and/or corporate), eligibility will be decided according to the “Startup Status Criteria Table” (see Attachment 2), so you must check this carefully before applying.
You must confirm the startup status in relation to any earlier businesses (individual or corporate) compared to the business that is applying for this program.

- * If your company has both a head office and branch offices, you can apply only as the head office entity. If there are duplicate applications, the eligibility review will be based on the head office.

★ For applicants who pass the document screening, supporting documents such as the “Startup Company Confirmation” and other evidence will be requested to verify startup age and startup-company status.

- The date you meet the “startup company” criteria in the confirmation form must later than the announcement date(the announcement date counts as valid).

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APPLICATION PERIOD AND METHOD

- **Application period** : From January 23, 2026 (Fri) to February 13, 2026 (Fri).

< Notice >

- ① Because inquiries and access may be difficult on the last day, we strongly recommend that you create your K-Startup account and submit your application 2–3 days before the deadline.
 - * Applications close exactly at 16:00 (4:00 pm)
- ② Only companies that click “Submit” and complete submission by 16:00 can be evaluated
- ③ **You can apply only online.**
After the deadline (February 13, 2026, 16:00), you **cannot edit or delete** your business plan or any part of the application.

□ **Method**

- **Online Application via K-Startup** (www.k-startup.go.kr)

- When applying, you must complete both ① real-name verification and ② company verification through the K-Startup website, and you need to sign up and finish real-name verification in advance.

- * **Conducted via Seoul Credit Rating & Information (SCI).**

If your real-name information is not registered (e.g., foreigners, people who changed their name, minors), you must first complete SCI real-name registration and have it applied to the system before applying.

- ** Company verification**

Individual businesses:

Choose one of the following four methods

- ◆ Corporate/Business Joint Certificate,
- ◆ Corporate-use Financial Certificate,
- ◆ SCI Corporate Real-Name Verification,
- ◆ National Tax Service (NTS) Business Verification.

Corporations:

Choose one of the following two methods

- ◆ Corporate/Business Joint Certificate,
- ◆ Corporate-use Financial Certificate.

□ **Required Documents**

- One copy of the business plan (use the form in Annex 1).

- * *You must use the business plan template attached to this announcement. If you submit any other format, your application will not be evaluated.*

Documents to submit	Submission method	note
① Business Application form	online	-
② Business plan	attach file	file size less than 30MB
③ ID cards and consent forms of all joint representatives or co-representatives (if applicable)		
④ Identity verification document	If you agree to use Public Mydata, the system will submit the required documents for you automatically.	If you do not agree to use Public MyData, you must upload the document files separately.
⑤ Business registration certificate		

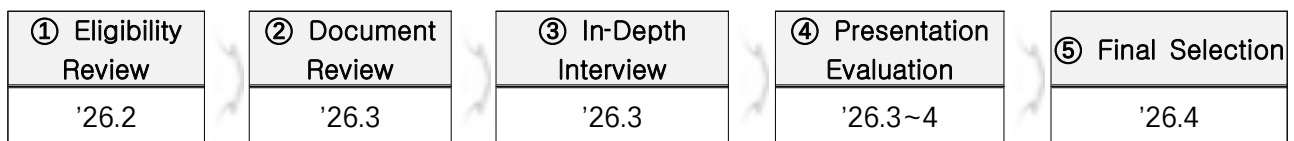
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EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

□ **Evaluation Process** : Final selection is made through a 3-step process (Document Review → In-Depth Interview → Presentation).

* The detailed operation of the evaluation, schedule, and individual results will be notified by the host organization you apply to.

< Early-Stage Startup Selection Steps >



They will keep checking eligibility and whether business plans are similar or duplicated. If they later find you are not eligible, your selection and contract can be cancelled.