



SHIFT-HUB's Best Practice

Access to Finance Services



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Why Access to Finance services?

Access to Finance services focus on **facilitating access to public and private financing** for startups and SMEs in the Smart Health sector, supporting the development and scaling of digital solutions and services.

These services supports startups and SMEs by assessing their company's investment readiness, followed by a tailored scouting process to identify the most suitable private or public financing opportunities. The companies gain clarity on available instruments and how to access them effectively. Furthermore, these services facilitate connections with specialized investors and key public and private organizations to expand funding opportunities. In parallel, it conducts stakeholder matching to foster regional, cross-border, and pan-European collaborations.

The main objectives are:

- to facilitate access to private and public funding,
- to organize tailored pitch and matchmaking sessions,
- to match adequate stakeholders to find funding opportunities to support collaborations,
- to help applicants understand the process and find missing partners across Europe,
- to support the development of technological solutions and services.

Who to target?

The **Key Target Stakeholders** who benefit from participation in the Access to Finance Services are:

- Technology Providers
- Healthcare Organizations & Practitioners
- Investors & Investment Companies
- Public Authorities





Best Practices – How to do it best

1 - Promote a Supportive Investment Ecosystem



Provide tailored investment & funding support

Guide startups on equity, grants & hybrid funding. Introduce them to investors and leverage non-dilutive tools.



Encourage risk-tolerant investment culture

Foster a balanced risk culture through investor training, angel networks & blended finance models to attract private capital.



Enhance product validation & market access support

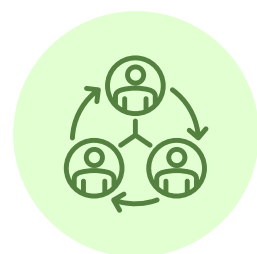
Connect startups early with clients, healthcare institutions & industry partners to validate solutions & accelerate the path from prototype to procurement.

2 - Foster strong Networking & Community Building



Integrate innovation & corporate engagement

Encourage corporates to define innovation challenges, inviting startups to deliver targeted solutions that align with market demand.



Address regional disparities & foster cross-border collaboration

Support less mature ecosystems through cross-border mentoring, shared learning, and partnerships with advanced hubs to equalise opportunities.



Leverage Technology Transfer Offices & Digital Innovation Hub

Use Technology Transfer Offices & Digital Innovation Hubs as bridges from research to commercialisation, providing validation infrastructure & technical expertise to reduce investor risk.

3 - Enhance Access, Capacity & European Innovation Identity



Simplify & unify access to support services

Offer unified entry points or service directories to navigate fragmented European funding, reducing duplication and streamlining applications.



Develop structured mentoring & coaching programs

Deliver stage-specific, hands-on guidance from sector-specialized mentors to tackle financial, technical, and regulatory challenges.



Build a strong European innovation brand

Showcase Europe's innovation strengths through joint branding & communications, attracting global investors and positioning startups for international success.

In short...

Access to Finance services are most effective when **support is timely, targeted, and coordinated with startup needs**.

Early guidance, structured networks, and stage-specific mentoring accelerate growth, while market validation and investor engagement reduce risk. When these elements align, startups gain resilience, scalability, and visibility, **turning innovative ideas into sustainable, market-ready solutions** that strengthen the European innovation ecosystem.



Want to learn more?

Please find more information in the Resources section of the SHIFT-HUB website.



Take a closer look at **SHIFT-HUB's Best Practices Guide**



And explore detailed findings in the **Capacity Building Workshop report**

Ready to apply it yourself?

For specific questions related to the replication of Access to Finance Services, please contact:



Paul Stefanut
paul@booster-labs.com



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SHIFT-HUB's Best Practice Access to Finance Services



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