Accelerator Program for Agricultural Start-ups from China and the CEE countries

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

PREAMBLE

The Accelerator Programme for Agricultural Start-ups is organized by Association for the Promotion of Agricultural Cooperation Between China and the Central and Eastern European countries" (APACCCEEC).

Taking into account the growing role of start-ups worldwide in addressing current challenges of public importance, their role in creating innovative products and technological services for the benefit of modern agriculture, their ability to offer solutions to reduce the crisis from the spread of the COVID-19 virus through new technologies, and driven by their desire to alleviate the affected sectors of the economy, the Association for the Promotion of Agricultural Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries propose the establishment of an Accelerator Programme for Start-ups from China and CEE Countries in the Field of Agriculture.

The initiative shall help creating entrepreneurial and business skills among young entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector, will contribute to the development of a vibrant entrepreneurial environment in CEEC, the implementation of innovative processes and new technologies in agriculture, and will provide training and incentives to participants to develop an entrepreneurial mindset, thus contributing to the convergence and promotion of agricultural cooperation in the CEE countries and China.

The need for such an initiative, especially in the context of COVID-19 is obvious, as it will strengthen the relations and the good cooperation between the CEE countries and China and will contribute to creating preconditions for the development of the real sector and supporting entrepreneurship in the field of agriculture.

These General Rules and Regulations apply to the first edition of the Accelerator Programme for Agricultural Start-ups Based in China and the CEE Countries, which will be held in 2023.

I.OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

The main objectives of the program are supporting projects that develop innovative products, services or processes in agriculture, encouraging entrepreneurship and support the implementation of innovative projects of start-ups in the field of agriculture, contributing to the competitiveness in this sector in the CEE countries and China, promoting and giving identity to the entrepreneurial ecosystem for agricultural technologies among the CEE countries and China and promoting youth entrepreneurship in agriculture among the target audience of CEE countries and China.

II.PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROGRAM

The participation in the program is open for start-up companies registered in one of the Member-States participating in the Initiative for cooperation between China and CEE countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia), who can apply for participation in the program with a project proposal;

The participation in the program is open start-up companies that have already formed a team and developed a good project idea, where these companies can apply with a project proposal provided that the date of the legal establishment of the company does not exceed 5 years at the time of application for participation in the Accelerator Program;

Only project proposals of start-up companies, whose projects are focused only in the field of agriculture and related activities, will be considered.

Only one project proposal from a company will be allowed in the program, and projects of franchise companies will not be considered.

Participants are responsible for all information and content of the project they present. Participants must be kind and respectful to the rules of the program, as well as the organizers and partners. Inappropriate or offensive behavior, including the use of obscene language, will not be tolerated. APACCCEEC reserves its right to exclude from the program any participant who violates these rules.

The participants in the program sign an agreement with the APACCCEEC for participation in the Accelerator Program for Agricultural Start-ups between China and the CEE countries, which describes in detail the rights and obligations of the parties.

III.APPLICATION PROCESS

Start-up companies will apply with a project proposal through an application form via a specially developed subdomain to the APACCCEEC website (www.startups.china2ceec.org).

APACCCEEC announces on its website or in another chosen way the conditions for application, as well as the deadline within which applicants can submit their project proposals.

APACCCEEC reserves the right to unilaterally and by publishing a notice on the website of the program to make changes in the rules of the program, the rules for evaluation of participants, as well as to change the deadline for applications;

APACCCEEC is not responsible if, for technical reasons, no application has been received by an applicant/participant.

Each participant can participate with only one project proposal.

IV.EVALUATION OF PROJECTS

After a selection, based on a pre-written Methodology for Evaluation of Candidates and in accordance with the General Rules and Regulations of the Accelerator Program, an external jury will allow 20 start-up companies from CEEC and China to participate in the Program. After the conducting of the Accelerator Programme and its accompanying events (trainings and workshops within 1 week - in Sofia, Bulgaria) will be carried out, a final event will be held where the 20 finalists will present their projects to the jury, invited diplomats from China and CEEC, the public and media. Each participant will have 15 minutes for presentation of their project.

The best three projects among the finalists will be awarded with awards, which will be announced in advance by APACCCEEC.

V. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Parties agree to keep confidential the content of all information to which they have access under the Accelerator Program, including intellectual and industrial property, even after the completion of the program, unless disclosure is necessary for the implementation of the program and its promotion.

VI. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The industrial property and intellectual property rights of the submitted ideas/projects belong to the respective participants.

Participants give the organizer a permission to use non-confidential information about their projects in the implementation of marketing goals and promotions.

The program organizer will not be held liable for any intellectual property infringement, misuse or plagiarism by another participant or any third party.

VII. PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

The protection of the confidentiality and personal data of the participants is of particular importance for APACCCEEC. During the implementation of the program APACCCEEC will comply with all requirements of Bulgarian and European legislation regarding the protection of personal data.

VIII. FINAL PROVISIONS

APACCCEEC reserves the right to amend these General Rules and Regulations by notification of changes, which will be made available to all participants in the program.

By participating in the program, all participants expressly agree to these General Rules and Regulations, declaring that they will comply with them.

The current General Rules and Regulations were adopted on December 1st, 2022 and take effect immediately.