APERTURE

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APERTURE PropTech Business Incubator

Turn your PropTech idea into a business opportunity

A Practical Guide for Teams

September 2026

Prepared by	**SYNTHESIS Center for Research and Education** *(Lead partner for APERTURE Business Incubator)* **With the contribution & support of all partners**

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1. Few words about APERTURE project

APERTURE is a three-year (2024-2027) Alliances for Innovation project, funded by the Erasmus+ programme, bringing together a consortium of 8 partners from 7 European countries (Finland, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, Ireland, Spain, France) and connecting expertise from higher education, vocational education and training (VET), research and industry.

APERTURE responds to the growing gap between technological developments and the skills needed in the construction and property sectors. The project brings education and industry closer together, equipping students and professionals with skills in PropTech, sustainable construction and emerging green and digital technologies, while encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation in the built environment.
Through its educational and entrepreneurial activities, APERTURE provides opportunities to learn, experiment and turn knowledge into practice. Two key opportunities available to learners are the **APERTURE Online Course (MOOC)** and the **PropTech Business Incubator.**

Explore more about APERTURE project on its website: https://aperture-innovation.eu/

🎓 ***Learn with the APERTURE Online Course***

The APERTURE Online Course is a free, self-paced learning programme designed for students, graduates and professionals interested in PropTech and the future of the built environment. It provides practical and industry-relevant learning materials organised into 6 modules, complemented by interactive resources such as ppt slides, infographics and quizzes.

Key topics explored in the online course include:

- Introduction to PropTech
- Sustainable Design & Construction
- Technology in Urban Environments & Smart Cities
- Human-Centred Urban Futures
- Finance & Sustainable Business Models in Real Estate
- Real-Life Industry–Academia Collaboration & Case Studies

Register to the MOOC and explore its resources: https://aperture-innovation.eu/online-course/

Important note: While the **APERTURE Business Incubator requires team-based registration**, **access to the MOOC requires individual registration**. Each team member should register separately to access the course and its resources.

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2. Introduction to APERTURE Business Incubator

The APERTURE PropTech Business Incubator is a free virtual entrepreneurial programme designed to support students and graduates from Higher Education Institutions and vocational schools to work in teams with the goal to develop innovative business ideas related to PropTech, sustainable construction and the built environment. The Incubator brings together teams from the 7 countries of APERTURE consortium – *Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Malta and Spain* –with mentors and industry experts from different fields. Through dedicated mentoring, practical support and teamwork spirit, participating teams will have the opportunity to further develop their initial idea and progressively transform it into a viable, structured Business Plan.

Throughout the Incubation process, teams can receive support covering both the technical development of their ideas and their entrepreneurial and business dimensions, drawing on expertise in areas such as PropTech, sustainability, digital innovation, entrepreneurship, finance and clean energy/circular economy. English is the main working language of the Incubator, enabling collaboration between teams and mentors across countries.

Take Your Idea to Malta! 🏆

The Incubator journey culminates in the **APERTURE Business Plan Competition** in Malta in September 2027, where 7 finalist teams – 1 per APERTURE country – will pitch their business ideas.

7 finalist teams • 7 countries • 3 winning teams (5,000 EUR prize for each)



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3. Who can participate in APERTURE Incubator?



The APERTURE Business Incubator is open to **undergraduate and postgraduate students, graduates, and students from vocational schools** who are based in one of the 7 APERTURE countries: Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Malta and Spain. Participants from fields related to architecture, construction, engineering, building management, smart buildings and sustainability are particularly encouraged to participate, while those from other disciplines or fields with an interest in PropTech, sustainable construction or the built environment are equally welcome.

Participants join the Incubator as part of a team. Each team represents one APERTURE country, but team members do not need to hold the nationality of that country (*for example: an international student studying in Greece may participate as part of a team representing Greece*).

Participation of Minors (Under 18): Participants under 18 are welcome to join the APERTURE Business Incubator, subject to parental/legal guardian authorisation. Teams including minors must contact their national APERTURE partner to obtain the required participation and separate media consent forms before participation begins. Completed forms will be managed by the national partner outside the Incubator Platform.

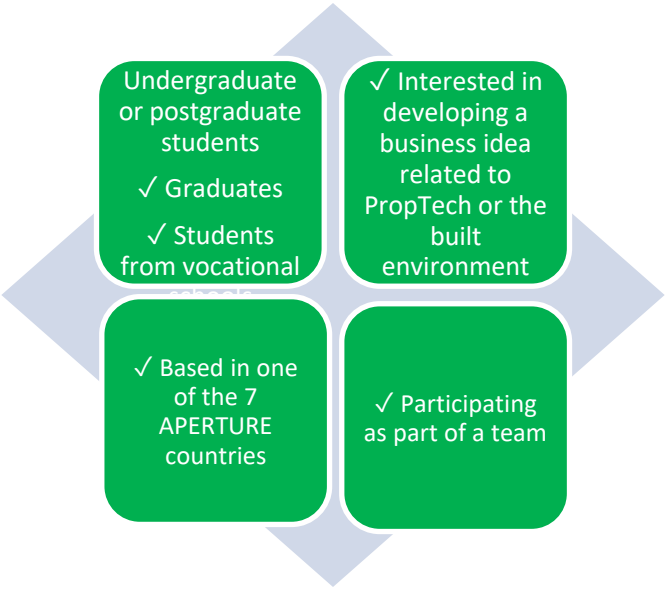


Figure 1. Eligibility criteria for joining the Business Incubator (at a glance)

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4. Why join the Incubator? Key benefits of participation

By joining the APERTURE Business Incubator, your team will have the opportunity to **develop your idea, strengthen your entrepreneurial skills and connect with experts from across Europe**. Throughout the Incubator journey, you will be able to:

- **Develop and refine your business idea** – turn an initial concept into a more structured and viable business opportunity.

- **Receive tailored mentoring and expert guidance** – access practical feedback from mentors with expertise relevant to your team's needs.

- **Build entrepreneurial, green and digital skills** – strengthen competences that can support both the development of your idea and your future professional journey.

- **Develop a structured Business Plan** – use the APERTURE Business Plan Template, learning resources and mentoring support to progressively build your Business Plan.

- **Connect with a European network** – engage with mentors, industry professionals and experts from different fields and countries.

- **Gain visibility and showcase your idea** – communicate and further develop your concept within the APERTURE innovation community.

- **Compete for a place in the final Business Plan Competition in Malta** (September 2027). Following the evaluation of all submitted Business Plans, 7 finalist teams – one per APERTURE country – will be selected to pitch their business ideas in front of investors, business angels, industry and academic experts at the APERTURE Business Plan Competition in Malta in September 2027, with 3 winning teams each receiving a €5,000 prize.

5. Your Role & Responsibilities as an Incubator Team

Joining the APERTURE Business Incubator means committing to a **multi-stage entrepreneurial journey**. From developing your initial idea and working with mentors, to preparing and submitting your Business Plan and, if selected as a finalist, preparing your pitch for the final Business Plan Competition, your team will need to remain engaged,

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organised and collaborative throughout the process. Mentors and the APERTURE team will provide guidance and support, but your team remains responsible for driving its idea forward and managing its progress through each stage.

As an Incubator team, you are expected to:

✓ **Stay engaged and organised throughout the Incubator journey** – plan your team's work, maintain momentum during the mentoring and Business Plan development period, and be prepared to participate in the subsequent evaluation and finalist stages, where applicable.

✓ **Work collaboratively as a team**, sharing responsibilities, coordinating tasks and maintaining effective communication among team members.

✓ **Take ownership of your business idea and Business Plan** – mentors will guide, challenge and provide expert feedback, but the development of the idea and preparation of the Business Plan remain your team's responsibility.

✓ **Make effective use of mentoring opportunities** by selecting mentors according to your team's needs, preparing for meetings and actively engaging in mentoring sessions.



✓ **Respect agreed mentoring appointments** and follow the appropriate process if a meeting needs to be changed, cancelled or rescheduled (see Section 7 for further guidance).

✓ **Act professionally and respectfully when interacting with mentors, other teams, APERTURE partners and experts**, and follow the Incubator Code of Conduct, including its safeguarding principles and communication rules.

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✓ **Respect confidentiality regarding information shared by mentors**, other participants or stakeholders during mentoring sessions and other Incubator activities.

✓ **Use the available tools and resources to support your progress**, including the Business Plan Template, Teams Guide, APERTURE Online Course (MOOC) and other materials available through the Incubator Platform (e.g. the Business Model canvas tool, list of recommended material, see *Section 8*)

✓ **Keep track of key Incubator milestones and deadlines**, including the final submission of your Business Plan in May 2027 and, if selected as a finalist, the preparation of your pitch and presentation for the Malta Competition.

6. Your Incubation Journey: From Mentoring to Malta Business Plan Competition

The APERTURE Business Incubator follows a step-by-step journey designed to support your team in developing and refining its initial business idea, preparing a structured Business Plan and, potentially, progressing to the APERTURE Business Plan Competition in Malta. The journey consists of five main phases, from mentoring and business development to the final Competition, as follows:

1. Phase 1 – Mentoring & Business Idea Development (November 2026 – April 2027)

Following your team's registration and activation on the Incubator Platform, the first phase of your Incubator journey begins with mentoring and the development of your business idea. Your team will progressively develop and refine its idea and build its Business Plan, supported by APERTURE mentors and industry experts, along with learning resources and business-development tools.

Through the Incubator Platform, your team will be able to explore mentor profiles and areas of expertise and request mentoring sessions according to the support needed at different stages of your development. Mentors will provide expert guidance, practical feedback and specialist knowledge on specific aspects of your business idea and Business Plan.

During this phase, your team is encouraged to test and refine its idea, identify areas where additional expertise is needed, and progressively work through the APERTURE common Business Plan Template (see Section 8). You can also make use of the APERTURE Online Course and additional resources available through the Platform.

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Your team can engage with different mentors according to the expertise and support needed, with a maximum of two mentoring sessions with the same mentor (see Section 7 for guidance on selecting mentors and booking sessions).

By the end of this phase:

Your team should have a well-developed business idea and a substantially developed Business Plan, ready for finalisation and submission in May 2027.

2. Phase 2 – Business Plan Finalisation & Submission (May 2027)

Following the mentoring and business development period, your team will consolidate the work completed during the previous months and finalise its Business Plan. This is the opportunity to review the guidance and feedback received from mentors, refine the different sections and ensure that your business idea is presented in a clear, coherent and structured way.

All teams will prepare their final submission using the common APERTURE Business Plan Template. Before submitting, make sure that all required sections have been completed and carry out any final revisions needed.

The completed Business Plan will be submitted in May 2027 on the Incubator Platform, according to the deadline and submission instructions communicated by the APERTURE team. This will be communicated at a later stage through the Incubator Platform and in the mail you will sue as team for your account.

By the end of this phase: your team's final Business Plan should be completed and submitted for evaluation.

3. Phase 3 – Business Plan Evaluation & Finalist Selection (June 2027)

Following submission, all teams' Business Plans will be evaluated through national-level evaluation boards. The evaluation process will lead to the selection of one finalist team from each of the 7 APERTURE countries – 7 finalist teams in total.

Once the evaluation process is completed, teams will be informed of the results. The selected finalists will then receive further information about the next steps and preparations for the final Competition in Malta.

By the end of this phase: 7 finalist teams – one per APERTURE country – are selected and announced.

4. Phase 4 – Finalist support & Pitch Preparation (Summer 2027)

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This phase applies to the **7 selected finalist teams**. During the summer, finalists will prepare to transform the key elements of their Business Plans into a clear and engaging pitch and presentation for the final Competition.
Teams will refine how they communicate their business idea, value proposition and business opportunity, while receiving relevant guidance for their preparation. During this period, the APERTURE team will also coordinate the necessary practical arrangements for participation in Malta, including relevant travel and accommodation information.
By the end of this phase: finalist teams will have a competition-ready pitch and presentation and be prepared for their participation in Malta.

5. Phase 5 – APERTURE Business Plan Competition in Malta (September 2027)

The Incubator journey culminates in the APERTURE Business Plan Competition in Malta, bringing together the 7 finalist teams – one representing each APERTURE country.
Finalists will pitch their business ideas in front of investors, business angels, industry and academic experts, showcasing the work developed throughout their Incubator journey and connecting with actors from the wider entrepreneurial and industry ecosystem. Following the Competition, 3 winning teams will each receive a €5,000 prize.

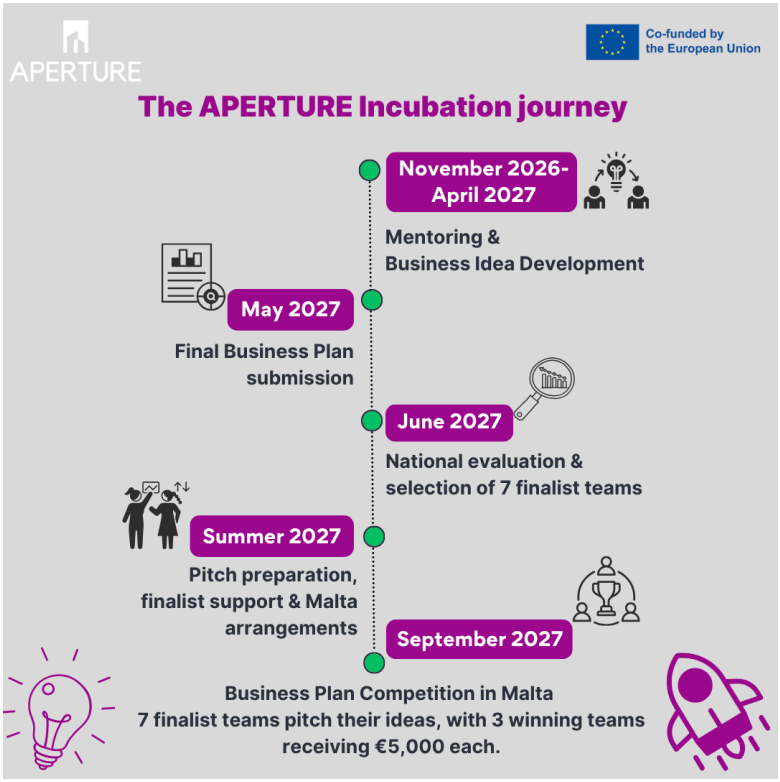


Figure 2.The APERTURE Incubator Journey at a glance

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7. How to Use the Incubator Platform – Practical Steps

The APERTURE Incubator Platform will be your team's main space for accessing the mentoring process. **Once your account is activated, you can sign in using your registered team email and credentials** and access the available mentor profiles, mentoring opportunities and relevant Incubator information.

7.1 How to Access Your Team Account

Each team has **one Incubator account**, created during registration using the team's registered email address and password. This account represents the whole team throughout the Incubator.

After registration, a verification email will be sent to your team's registered email address. Follow the instructions in the email to verify and activate your account before signing in to the Incubator Platform. If you do not receive the email, please also check your spam/junk folder. **Once your account is activated, use the same team email and password to sign in throughout the Incubator**. Make sure your team regularly checks this email address, as it will be used for Platform notifications, mentoring-related communication and important Incubator updates.

Important – Teams Including Minors: If your team includes participants under 18, contact your national APERTURE partner to complete the required parental/legal guardian authorisation and separate media consent procedures before participation begins. Do not upload consent forms to the Incubator Platform.

Remember:

Before registering, we recommend appointing a Team Leader as the main Incubator contact. The Team Leader can manage registration, monitor the team's email, coordinate mentoring requests and appointments, and share important updates. All team members should remain actively involved throughout the Incubator journey.



Your Incubator account is a team account. Make sure all team members know who is responsible for regularly checking the registered email and keeping the rest of the team informed.

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7.2 How to Explore and Select Mentors

Once signed in, your team can explore the available mentor profiles and learn more about their professional background, expertise and the areas in which they can provide support. Mentor expertise covers areas such as PropTech & Smart Buildings, Environmental Engineering & Sustainability, Digital Innovation, Business/Marketing & Entrepreneurship, Finance, and Clean Energy & Circular Economy. You can browse mentos' profiles per expertise area on the Platform by selecting the **tab *'Our Mentors'***, at the top of the homepage or through the category '***Available Mentors & Sessions***' in the middle of your dashboard page.

As your idea develops, your needs may change, so your team can engage with different mentors and areas of expertise throughout the mentoring period.

Before selecting a mentor, consider the specific question, challenge or area of your Business Plan where your team currently needs guidance. This will help you identify the mentor whose expertise is most relevant at that stage.

When selecting a mentor:

- **Consider your current needs**: Identify the specific question, challenge or Business Plan element where your team would benefit from guidance.
- **Match expertise to your Business Plan**: Consider which areas of expertise could help you develop or strengthen specific elements of your Business Plan.
- **Explore different expertise**: Your team can engage with mentors from different areas, depending on the support needed at each stage.
- **Adapt as your idea develops**: Your needs may evolve throughout the Incubator, so your choice of mentors can also change as you progress with your idea and Business Plan.

7.3 How to Request a Mentoring Meeting

Once you have identified a mentor whose expertise matches your needs, check their available dates and time slots on the Platform and submit a meeting request. Your Team Leader or designated team contact should coordinate the booking and keep the rest of the team informed.

When requesting a meeting:

- **Choose the right timing**: Select an available slot that works for the team members who need to participate.
- **Be clear about your needs**: Briefly indicate the topic, question or Business Plan area you would like to discuss, so the mentor can prepare accordingly.
- **Wait for confirmation**: The mentor will review and approve your meeting request through the Platform. Once approved, the mentor will contact your team via the email

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address linked to your team account to arrange the practical details of the session, including the online meeting tool (e.g. Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams) and meeting link.

- **Explore different expertise**: You can request meetings with different mentors according to the support needed as your idea and Business Plan develop.
- **Maximum two sessions with the same mentor**: Your team may meet with the same mentor up to two times during the mentoring period. As each mentor offers 10 mentoring sessions in total, this limit helps ensure fair and balanced access to mentoring opportunities across teams.

7.4 How to Reschedule or Cancel a Mentoring Meeting

Sometimes an agreed mentoring meeting may need to be changed or rescheduled by either your team or the mentor. Any changes should be managed through the Incubator Platform so that the updated meeting arrangements are properly recorded.

If a meeting needs to change/ be cancelled:

If a mentor or student needs to reschedule a meeting, they **must first request to cancel the current meeting**. **Next, a person from admin team must approve this cancellation from the backend and then teams can select and book a new slot to schedule again a new meeting**. Teams can send a request for cancellation through the area "My Meeting Requests" in their dashboard.

Additional tips for rescheduling a meeting:

- **Keep your team informed**: The Team Leader or designated contact person should ensure that all participating team members are aware of any changes.
- **Communicate early**: Request any changes as early as possible and avoid last-minute rescheduling or cancellations whenever possible.

7.5 How to Prepare for a Mentoring Session

Good preparation will help your team make the most of each mentoring session and receive focused guidance that responds to your current needs.

Before each mentoring session:

- **Prepare a short summary**: Be ready to briefly present your business idea, current progress and what your team has developed so far.
- **Set a clear focus**: Identify the main questions, challenges or Business Plan elements for which you would like the mentor's guidance.
- **Prepare relevant materials**: Have any useful drafts, information, data or supporting materials ready to share with the mentor, where relevant.

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- **Coordinate within your team:** Agree in advance which team members will attend and who will introduce the idea or lead specific parts of the discussion.
- **Use your time effectively**: Focus on the areas where the mentor's specific expertise can add the most value at that stage of your development.
- **Follow up after the session**: Take note of the mentor's feedback, recommendations and suggested next steps, discuss them with your team and consider how they can be incorporated into the further development of your idea and Business Plan.

Important – Mentoring Sessions Involving Minors

Before attending a mentoring session, if your team includes participants under 18, you must ensure that the required parental/legal guardian authorisation and separate media consent forms have been provided by your national APERTURE partner, signed by the parents/legal guardians and returned to the responsible partner.

Sessions involving minors must not be recorded or transcribed, including through automated tools or AI meeting assistants. Screenshots and photographs are also prohibited.



You do not need to cover every aspect of your business idea in one mentoring session. **Use each meeting to focus on the most relevant needs and priorities** at that stage of your Incubator journey.

7.6 Technical Support for the Platform

If you experience any technical difficulties with accessing your account, exploring mentor profiles, submitting or managing meeting requests, or using other Platform functions, please contact the AcrossLimits technical support team.

For contact details, see ***Section 10 – Incubator Support & Contacts***.

8. Business Development Tools and useful resources

This section brings together practical tools and optional learning resources that teams can use throughout their Incubator journey. The resources are intended to **support, not restrict, the development of your business idea**; teams can explore those most relevant to their needs and project area.

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8.1 Business Plan Development Tools

- ***APERTURE Business Plan Template & Guide for Template***

  The common template provided to all teams to support the **progressive development of their Business Plan during the mentoring period**. Teams will work on and refine the different sections with support from their selected mentors before submitting their final Business Plan in May 2027.

  - **Link of Business Plan Template** (the common structure to be used for preparing your final Business Plan for submission in May 2027):
    https://hub.aperture-innovation.eu/resources/APERTURE_Incubator_Business_Plan_template.pdf
    https://hub.aperture-innovation.eu/resources/APERTURE_Incubator_Business_Plan_template.docx
  - **Link of the Business Plan Guide** (practical guidance on how to progressively develop each section of your Business Plan, including guiding questions, useful tools and recommendations):
    https://hub.aperture-innovation.eu/resources/Business_Plan_Guide_Final.pdf
    https://hub.aperture-innovation.eu/resources/Business_Plan_Guide_Final.docx

- ***Business Model Canvas (BMC)***

  A practical one-page tool that your team can use early in your business idea development to explore and structure the nine key elements of your business model: Key Partners, Key Activities, Key Resources, Value Propositions, Customer Relationships, Channels, Customer Segments, Cost Structure and Revenue Streams. You can revisit and refine your Canvas as your idea develops and use it as a useful foundation for preparing your Business Plan.

  Downloadable BMC Template:

  1st source available **here**

  2nd source available **here**

- ***SWOT Analysis***

  A simple strategic tool that your team can use to identify the Strengths and Weaknesses of your business idea, as well as external Opportunities and Threats that may affect its development. It can help you identify areas that need further consideration and support the development and refinement of your Business Plan.

  Available source for SWOT analysis **here**

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- ***Value Proposition Canvas (VPC)***

A practical tool that helps your team better understand your target customers/users and their needs, challenges and expected benefits, and examine how well your proposed product or service responds to them. It complements the Business Model Canvas by exploring the Value Proposition and Customer Segment in greater detail.
Available source for VPC analysis **here**

8.2 Explore the APERTURE MOOC

Teams are also strongly encouraged to register to the APERTURE MOOC as an additional learning resource. The MOOC provides access to relevant learning modules and further materials that can complement the mentoring and Business Plan development process.
The MOOC is a recommended additional resource and is not a prerequisite for participation in the Business Incubator. Link of MOOC: https://aperture-innovation.eu/online-course/

8.3 Recommended Readings- Exploring PropTech[1]

To further explore the PropTech landscape, emerging technologies, applications and market developments, the following resources provide useful introductory, professional and research-based perspectives. Select the readings that are most relevant to your business idea and interests.

A. Understanding PropTech & Its Applications:

- A Guide to PropTech (and How It's Shaking Up Real Estate) – University of the Built Environment: https://www.ube.ac.uk/whats-happening/articles/what-is-proptech/
- The Power of PropTech: What Do PropTech Solutions Bring to the Real Estate Industry? – Valcon: https://valcon.com/insights/proptech-solutions/
- What Is PropTech? AI Technology for Next-generation Property Management – Visitt: https://visitt.io/glossary/proptech

B. Technology, AI, IoT & Business Model Innovation:

- The Impact of AI in the PropTech Industry – Main Capital Partners: https://main.nl/article/the-impact-of-ai-in-the-proptech-industry/

[1] Note: These areas are indicative rather than restrictive, and teams are encouraged to explore resources across different categories where relevant to their idea.

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- Technology "Like a Fork": How PropTech Shapes Real Estate Innovation – Journal of European Real Estate Research: https://www.emerald.com/jerer/article/18/1/4/1247057/Technology-like-a-fork-How-PropTech-shapes-real
- Unpacking PropTechs and IoT Ecosystems: European Insights with a Novel Business Model Taxonomy – Journal of Property Investment & Finance: https://www.emerald.com/jpif/article/44/4/236/1317818/Unpacking-PropTechs-and-IoT-ecosystems-European

C. PropTech Market & Industry Trends:

- PropTech in Europe: 4 Trends and the Quest for the Elusive Unicorn – PriceHubble: https://www.pricehubble.com/blog/proptech-europe-trends
- PropTech Global Trends 2024 – Annual Barometer – ESCP Business School: https://www.fortlane.com/en/resources/insights/brochure/proptech-market-overview-and-m-a-activity.html

9. Code of Conduct: Safe & Responsible Participation

The APERTURE Business Incubator aims to provide a safe, respectful, inclusive and professional environment in which teams and mentors can collaborate, exchange knowledge and develop innovative business ideas. This Code of Conduct sets out common principles for everyone participating in the Incubator and applies to mentoring sessions, use of the Incubator Platform, online and face-to-face interactions, and other APERTURE Incubator activities.

All participants—teams and mentors alike—are expected to contribute to a positive learning and mentoring environment and to act responsibly throughout the Incubator journey.

Respectful & Inclusive Participation

Treat everyone involved in the Incubator with respect, fairness and professionalism, regardless of their background, identity, experience or level of expertise.

Participants should:

- communicate respectfully and constructively, including when opinions or approaches differ;
- support an inclusive and non-discriminatory environment;
- avoid harassment, intimidation, offensive behaviour or inappropriate language;
- respect different perspectives, experiences and levels of business or technical knowledge;

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- contribute to an environment where participants feel comfortable asking questions, sharing ideas and providing feedback.

Professional Behaviour & Boundaries

Mentoring is a professional relationship intended to support the development of participating teams and their business ideas. Both teams and mentors should maintain appropriate professional boundaries and communicate through the agreed APERTURE processes and channels.

Teams should respect agreed appointments and mentors' time, while mentors should provide guidance in a constructive, impartial and professional manner. Participants should avoid behaviour that could create inappropriate pressure, dependency or expectations beyond the scope of the Incubator.

The guidance provided by mentors should support teams in making their own informed decisions. Teams remain responsible for the development of their business idea, Business Plan and decisions taken throughout the Incubator.

Confidentiality & Responsible Information Sharing

Mentoring discussions may involve business ideas, early-stage concepts, technical information, market insights or other information that teams may consider sensitive. Participants should therefore exercise appropriate care when sharing, using or discussing information obtained through the Incubator.

Teams and mentors should:

- respect information identified as confidential or sensitive;
- not share another participant's non-public information outside the Incubator without appropriate permission;
- avoid requesting or sharing personal, commercially sensitive or confidential information unless it is necessary for the mentoring activity; and
- use information received through mentoring only for appropriate Incubator-related purposes.

Where particularly sensitive information is involved, teams should consider carefully what level of detail needs to be shared during mentoring.

Respect for Ideas & Intellectual Property

Participation in mentoring does not transfer ownership of a team's business idea or intellectual outputs to a mentor or another participant. Everyone should respect the ideas, materials and intellectual contributions of others.

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Teams should also avoid presenting third-party content, designs, data or ideas as their own and should acknowledge relevant sources and existing intellectual property where appropriate.
Remember: Mentoring provides guidance and feedback; it does not transfer ownership of your business idea.

Responsible Use of Digital Tools & AI

Digital and AI-based tools may support research, idea development and Business Plan preparation, but they should be used responsibly and critically.
Participants should verify important information, respect copyright and intellectual property, and avoid entering confidential, personal or commercially sensitive information into digital or AI tools where this could create privacy or confidentiality risks. Teams remain responsible for the accuracy, originality and quality of the content they submit.

Responsible Online Interaction & Privacy

Teams must respect the privacy and confidentiality of all participants during online mentoring sessions. Recording or transcription is not required as part of the APERTURE mentoring process.

Mentoring sessions involving participants under 18 must not be recorded or transcribed, including through automated tools or AI meeting assistants. Screenshots and photographs of these sessions are also prohibited.

For adult-only sessions, any proposed recording, transcription or screenshot requires prior agreement from all participants and compliance with applicable APERTURE privacy and data protection procedures
Remember: If your team includes participants under 18, ensure that automatic recording, transcription and AI meeting assistant features are disabled before the mentoring session begins.

Safeguarding & Wellbeing

APERTURE is committed to creating an environment in which participants can engage safely and without harassment, discrimination, exploitation or inappropriate behaviour.
Both mentors and teams should:

- respect personal and professional boundaries;
- avoid discriminatory, harassing, coercive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour;
- communicate through appropriate professional channels;

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- never misuse a mentoring or participant relationship for personal or commercial advantage; and
- raise concerns if they experience or observe behaviour that may compromise the safety, dignity or wellbeing of another participant.

Participation of Minors – Parental Authorisation & Consent

If your team includes participants under 18, you must contact your national APERTURE partner to obtain the required parental/legal guardian authorisation and separate media consent forms. These must be signed by the parents/legal guardians and returned to the responsible partner before participation begins.

Completed forms will be securely managed by the responsible national APERTURE partner outside the Incubator Platform, in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.

Where participating teams include minors or other persons requiring additional safeguarding measures, the applicable organisational and national safeguarding procedures should always be followed.

Conflicts of Interest & Impartiality

Participants should be transparent about any situation that could create a real or perceived conflict of interest. This may include, for example, a mentor having a professional, financial or commercial connection to a team, competing business, technology or organisation relevant to the mentoring relationship.

Any potential conflict should be communicated promptly to the APERTURE Incubator team (SYNTHESIS team – see section 10), so that appropriate arrangements can be considered.

Reporting a Concern

If you experience or observe behaviour that you believe breaches this Code of Conduct, compromises confidentiality, creates a safeguarding concern or makes participation feel unsafe, do not hesitate to raise it.

Concerns should be communicated confidentially to the designated APERTURE Incubator contact/team through the contact channel provided on the Incubator Platform. Concerns will be handled sensitively and appropriately, in accordance with the applicable project and organisational procedures.

Contact persons for concerns: see *Section 10*

A Shared Responsibility

A safe and constructive Incubator depends on everyone involved. By participating in APERTURE, teams and mentors share responsibility for maintaining a respectful, inclusive,

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confidential and professional environment that supports learning, collaboration and responsible business development.

10. Incubator Support & Contacts

Throughout your Incubator journey, the APERTURE team is available to support you. For questions related to the Incubation programme, mentoring process, Business Plan development, participation requirements or other programme-related matters, please contact the SYNTHESIS team, WP5 Lead and coordinator of the APERTURE Business Incubator.

Questions about the APERTURE Business Incubator:

- SYNTHESIS Center for Research and Education team:

andri.k@synthesis-center.com , pm8@synthesis-center.org

Questions related to the account registration, log in access or other technical issues:

- AcrossLimits team: emanuele@acrosslimits.com , leonardo@acrosslimits.com

Annexes

i) Glossary

Term	Definition -meaning
PropTech (Property Technology)	The use of digital technologies, innovative tools and new business models to improve how buildings, properties and the wider built environment are designed, constructed, managed and experienced.
Built Environment	The human-made spaces in which people live, work and interact, including buildings, infrastructure, public spaces and their surrounding environments.
Smart Building	A building that uses digital technologies, connected systems and data to improve its operation, efficiency, comfort and user experience.
Sustainable Construction	The design and construction of buildings in ways that aim to reduce environmental impacts and use resources more responsibly throughout their lifecycle.

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Resource-Efficient Construction	Construction approaches that seek to use materials, energy and other resources more efficiently, while reducing waste and unnecessary consumption.
Circular Economy	An approach that aims to reduce waste and keep materials and products in use for as long as possible through reuse, repair, refurbishment, recycling and other circular practices.
Energy Efficiency	Using less energy to achieve the same or improved level of performance, for example in heating, cooling, lighting or building operations.
Climate-Smart Solutions	Solutions designed to help buildings and communities reduce their climate impact and/or better respond to climate-related challenges.
Accessibility & Inclusion	Designing buildings, services and spaces so they can be accessed, used and experienced by people with different needs and abilities.
Business Incubator More info *here*	A programme or organisation that supports early-stage or developing business ideas and ventures over a period of time by providing a range of services and resources, such as mentoring, expert guidance, training, business-development support and networking opportunities. Its purpose is to help participants progressively develop and strengthen their ideas and move towards more structured and viable business concepts.
APERTURE Business Incubator	A free, virtual entrepreneurial programme supporting teams from the 7 APERTURE countries in developing innovative ideas related to PropTech, sustainable construction and the built environment. Through mentoring, expert guidance and practical resources, teams progressively develop their ideas into structured business concepts and Business Plans. The Incubator journey culminates in the APERTURE Business Plan Competition in Malta, where 7 finalist teams – one per APERTURE country – pitch their business ideas, with 3 winning teams receiving €5,000 each.
Mentor	An expert or professional who provides guidance, practical feedback and specialist knowledge to teams according to their business-development

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	needs. Mentors guide and challenge teams but do not develop the Business Plan on their behalf.
Business Idea	The initial concept proposed by a team to address an identified problem, challenge or opportunity related to PropTech, sustainable construction or the built environment.
Business Model	An explanation of how an idea creates and delivers value, including who its customers/users are and how the proposed solution can operate sustainably.
Business Model Canvas	A practical tool for exploring key elements of a business model, such as customers, value proposition, activities, resources, partners, costs and revenues.
Business Plan	The common structured document progressively developed by each team during the Incubator, presenting its business idea, market, value proposition, business model, financial aspects and other key elements.
Pitch	A concise presentation through which a team communicates its business idea, value proposition, market potential and business opportunity to an audience or evaluation panel.

ii) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Registration & Account:

How does our team sign up for the Incubator Platform?

Team registration will be open during October 2026. Each team should complete one team registration through the APERTURE Incubator Platform in the following link: Team Registration – APERTURE Incubator Platform (registration deadline: 30th of October 2026)

Your team will use one common Incubator account. After registration, a verification email will be sent to the email address provided for your team account. Follow the instructions in the email to verify and activate your account before signing in. Remember to check your spam/junk folder if you do not receive the verification email.

Which email address should our team use?

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Use an email address that your team regularly checks. This will be the main email associated with your Incubator account and will be used for important notifications and communications related to mentoring and Incubator activities.

Does every team member need a separate account?

No. Registration and participation on the Platform are team-based, so your team operates through one main account.

Can our team include participants under 18?

Yes. Students and other eligible participants under 18 are welcome to join the APERTURE Business Incubator, provided that the required parental/legal guardian authorisation and safeguarding arrangements are completed. Teams including minors must contact their national APERTURE partner before participation begins.

How do we obtain and submit parental authorisation and media consent forms?

Your national APERTURE partner will provide the required parental/legal guardian authorisation and separate media consent forms. These must be signed by the parents/legal guardians and returned to the responsible partner before participation begins. Do not upload these forms to the Incubator Platform.

Mentoring:

How do we find a mentor?

Once signed in, your team can browse the profiles and areas of expertise of registered APERTURE mentors and identify mentors whose expertise matches your current business-development needs.

You can explore mentors on the Incubator Platform in two ways:

- **Through the "Our Mentors" tab at the top of the homepage**, where you can browse mentor profiles according to their areas of expertise and learn more about their professional background and the support they can provide.

or

- **Through "Available Mentors & Sessions" in the middle of your dashboard**, where you can view mentors with available mentoring slots and proceed with requesting a mentoring session.

How do we request a mentoring meeting?

First, browse the profiles and areas of expertise of the available APERTURE mentors on the Incubator Platform and identify a mentor whose expertise matches your team's current needs.

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Once you have selected a mentor, go to “Available Mentors & Sessions” on your dashboard. From the mentor's available time slots, select the date and time that works best for your team and click the “Request” button to submit your meeting request.
The mentor will receive your request and can accept or decline it. Once the request has been accepted, the mentoring session is confirmed.

What happens if we need to reschedule a mentoring meeting?

If your team needs to reschedule a confirmed mentoring meeting, you must first submit a cancellation request through the “My Meeting Requests” area of your Incubator Platform dashboard. The cancellation request will be reviewed by the APERTURE Incubator administration team. Once the cancellation has been approved, your team can return to the Platform, check the mentor's available time slots and book a new mentoring session.

Can we work with more than one mentor?

Yes. Teams are encouraged to seek support from different mentors and areas of expertise according to the evolving needs of their business idea and Business Plan. Your team may meet with the same mentor for a maximum of two mentoring sessions. If, after these two sessions, you still require mentoring support in the same or another area, you should explore the Platform and book a session with another mentor whose expertise matches your needs.

How long does the mentoring period last?

The active mentoring period runs from November 2026 to the end of April 2027. During this period, teams will progressively develop and refine their business ideas and Business Plans and can book mentoring sessions according to their needs and mentors' indicated availability.

How many times can we meet the same mentor?

A team may book the same mentor for a maximum of two mentoring sessions.

How long does a mentoring session last?

Approximately, a total duration of 1–1.5 hours is recommended per mentoring session, although the exact duration can be agreed between the mentor and team according to the topic and needs of the session.

What can we ask mentors to help us with?

Mentors can provide guidance in areas such as PropTech/Smart Buildings, environmental engineering and sustainability, digital innovation, business marketing and entrepreneurship, finance, and clean energy/circular economy, depending on their expertise.

Will our mentor prepare our Business Plan for us?

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No. Mentors provide guidance, challenge assumptions and offer practical feedback, but responsibility for developing the business idea and preparing the Business Plan remains with the team.

Can we record, transcribe or take screenshots during mentoring sessions?

Recording and transcription are not required as part of the APERTURE mentoring process. **Sessions involving participants under 18 must not be recorded, transcribed or captured** through screenshots or photographs, including through automated tools or AI meeting assistants.

For adult-only sessions, any recording, transcription or screenshot requires prior agreement from all participants and compliance with applicable APERTURE privacy and data protection procedures.

Business Plan & Incubator Journey:

Do we need to have a fully developed business idea when we join?

No. Your initial idea can be further developed, tested and refined throughout the mentoring and incubation process.

Do all teams use the same Business Plan format?

Yes. Teams will receive a common APERTURE Business Plan Template, which they can progressively work on during the Incubation period.

When do we submit our Business Plan?

Final Business Plans will be submitted in May 2027 and evaluated in June 2027.

What happens after Business Plan submission?

Business Plans will be evaluated, leading to the selection of 7 finalist teams – one representing each APERTURE country – to progress to the final APERTURE Business Plan Competition.

What happens at the final Business Plan Competition?

The 7 finalist teams will travel to Malta in September 2027 and pitch their business ideas during the APERTURE Business Plan Competition. Three winning teams will each receive €5,000.

Resources & Support:

Where can we find the Teams Guide and supporting resources?

Once your team signs in to the Incubator Platform, you will have access to the Teams Guide and supporting documents like a Business Plan template and a Business Model Canvas template.

Do we need to complete the APERTURE Online Course before joining the Incubator?

No. The APERTURE Online Course is a recommended additional learning resource, not a

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prerequisite for Incubator participation. Teams are encouraged to explore the modules and resources of the MOOC that are most relevant to their business ideas.

What language will we use in the APERTURE Incubator?

English is the main working language of the Incubator, including cross-country mentoring and common Incubator activities.

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