

Scale it Forward: Financial Institution Engagement & Venture Debt Mobilisation

Supporting Portfolio Innovation and Venture Debt Adaptation for Financial Institutions in Egypt

Scale It Forward is designed to strengthen Egypt's "missing middle" financing layer by catalysing Venture Debt as a complementary instrument to equity.

We seek partners who:

- Understand the capital gap facing growth-stage innovators
- Recognise the opportunity to diversify financial products
- Are prepared to introduce Venture Debt as a dedicated product in their portfolios and execute lending for high-potential scaleups

Financial Institutions will be invited to join the Scale It Forward cohort if they:

- meet the criteria below, and
- demonstrate a formal commitment to launching Venture Debt within their portfolio and issuing credit to selected scaleups under the programme

1 Programme Overview

Scale it Forward is a catalytic initiative that bridges the financing gap between **financial institutions** and **high-growth, innovative scaleups** by introducing **Venture Debt** as a practical, non-dilutive financing solution within Egypt's investment ecosystem.

The programme is designed to partner with **five financial institutions (FIs)** that seek to innovate their lending portfolios. It actively **de-risks venture debt investments by equipping 30 scaleups with capacity-strengthening training and 5,000 Euros in non-repayable support**, ensuring a pipeline of financially structured, investment-ready opportunities.

Scale It Forward is co-developed by the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in Egypt** and **enpact**, under the patronage of **Invest for Jobs – the Special Initiative "Decent Work for a Just Transition"** of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

2 What's in it for you?

As a **Venture Capital firm, Private Equity fund, or Microfinance Institution** active in Egypt's investment ecosystem, you play a pivotal role in bridging the "missing middle" financing gap for high-potential scaleups. Through **Scale It Forward**, your Financial Institution can:

- **expand its market reach,**
- **strengthen investment decision-making, and**
- **maintain leadership in Egypt's entrepreneurial landscape.**

Combining Venture Debt Deployment with Targeted Scaleup Readiness Support

Scale It Forward enables your institution to unlock new financing opportunities while supporting innovative scaleups in Egypt that are ready to scale, through:

- **Structured engagement & ecosystem positioning**
Participate in a coordinated programme that positions your institution as a pioneer in venture debt and a key contributor to the development of Egypt's investment ecosystem.
- **Access to a vetted scaleup pipeline**
Gain direct access to a curated pool of growth-stage scaleups across high-demand sectors, with a reduced sourcing time and improved deal quality.
- **De-risked investment deployment**
The programme provides each selected scaleup with 5,000 Euros in non-repayable support to strengthen financial governance, cash-flow visibility, and debt readiness, reducing risk ahead of capital deployment.

3 How does it work?

- The **5 Financial Institutions** selected for the programme will join a focus group to:
 - **Align with the Scale It Forward Team** on investment strategies, Venture Debt structures, target sectors, and scale-up profiles that match their portfolios.
 - **Take part in selecting the participating scaleups**; each Financial Institution selects 6 scaleups that meet their pre-set criteria.
 - **Pilot, activate and deploy Venture Debt products** within the framework of the programme.

→ **Each selected scale-up should also be qualified for the programme's readiness support: receiving tailored capacity strengthening and 5,000 Euros in non-repayable support.**

[Get to know the selection criteria for the Scale It Forward Scaleups.](#)

4 Is Scale It Forward the right fit for your Financial Institution?

Before signing up, we invite you to review the eligibility criteria below to assess whether your institution aligns with the objectives and participation requirements of the Scale It Forward programme.

These criteria ensure that participating Financial Institutions have the regulatory standing, operational capacity, and strategic interest necessary to activate and deploy their venture debt instruments for innovative scale-ups in Egypt.

Institutions that meet these conditions will be best positioned to benefit from the programme's exposure, ecosystem access, and collaborative financing opportunities.

1. Legal & Regulatory Eligibility:

To be eligible, the Financial Institution must:

- Be legally registered and operational in Egypt
- Hold valid licensing from the relevant Egyptian regulatory authority, including:
 - Financial Regulatory Authority (FRA)
 - Central Bank of Egypt (CBE), where applicable
- Demonstrate full compliance with Egyptian financial regulations and reporting standards
- Be authorised to deploy capital directly or through managed vehicles

Institutions that cannot demonstrate regulatory compliance will not proceed to technical evaluation.

2. Institutional Type & Market Positioning:

Eligible institutions include:

- Venture Capital (VC) Funds
- Private Equity (PE) Funds
- Microfinance Institutions (MFIs)

Preference will be given to institutions that:

- Already work with growth-stage and post-revenue businesses
- Have experience financing innovation-driven scaleups
- Operate nationally or across major entrepreneurial hubs (Greater Cairo, Alexandria, Delta, Upper Egypt)

3. Financial Capacity & Deployment Readiness

Minimum requirements:

- Assets Under Management (AUM) sufficient to deploy debt instruments sustainably
- Commitment to mobilise a minimum of 5,000 Euros per selected scale-up under the Venture Debt instrument
- Ability to support at least 6 innovative scale-ups within the programme framework
- Clear indication of capital status:

- Already allocated (preferred)
- Pending internal approval
- Exploratory (subject to strong pipeline & readiness)

Selection will prioritise institutions that:

- Have capital readily available or near deployment readiness
- Demonstrate a realistic timeline to deploy the first deal (≤6 months preferred)
- Indicate a credible private capital mobilisation ratio

4. Strategic Alignment with Target Scale-ups

Participating FIs must demonstrate alignment with:

- Growth-stage and scaling businesses
- Post-revenue, innovation-driven scaleups
- Sectors including:
 - Fintech
 - Agritech
 - Health-tech
 - Climate & green solutions
 - SaaS and tech-enabled manufacturing

Institutions must specify:

- Minimum revenue thresholds
- Ideal scale-up profile
- Typical ticket sizes
- Expected tenors and repayment structures

Strong preference will be given to FIs targeting businesses with:

- Clear scalability potential
- Structured governance and financial reporting

5. Venture Debt Experience & Structuring Capacity

Institutions will be assessed based on:

A. Prior Experience

- Number of venture debt deals deployed (if applicable)
- Average deal size
- Portfolio exposure to debt instruments, including tenor and interest rate

B. Institutional Capacity

- In-house legal structuring capability
- Dedicated credit/risk teams
- Ability to structure hybrid instruments
- External legal advisory partnerships (if applicable)

Institutions without prior venture debt experience are still eligible, provided they:

- Demonstrate strong motivation
- Show institutional readiness
- Commit to product structuring workshops under the programme

6. Risk Appetite & Portfolio Management

Interested Financial Institutions must clearly articulate:

- Risk positioning (Conservative / Moderate / High-growth)
- Credit evaluation methodology
- Collateral requirements (if any)
- Portfolio monitoring and reporting systems

Preference will be given to institutions that:

- Can structure venture debt with limited hard collateral
- Demonstrate readiness to issue credit via Venture Debt
- Maintain clear monitoring frameworks for portfolio performance

7. Operational Commitment to Programme Framework

Participation requires formal commitment to:

- Launching or integrating a Venture Debt product within the portfolio and actively deploying capital through Venture Debt to selected scaleups under the programme
- Joint scale-up selection processes
- Product structuring workshops
- Sharing pipeline feedback
- Participation in webinars and program events
- Sharing anonymised deployment and performance data

8. Data Transparency & Reporting Compliance

Participating FIs must:

- Share anonymised data on:
 - Deployed capital
 - Portfolio performance
 - Jobs created or sustained
 - Lessons learned
- Comply with data protection regulations aligned with GDPR principles
- Provide consent through authorised representatives

5 Evaluation Matrix

Applications will be assessed across **five weighted pillars**:

- 1. Regulatory & Legal Compliance: 20%**
- 2. Capital Readiness & Deployment Capacity: 25%**
- 3. Venture Debt Structuring Capability: 20%**
- 4. Strategic Alignment with Target Sectors: 20%**
- 5. Programme Engagement & Data Transparency: 15%**

If you have questions, please reach out to us at shc@enpact.org. Please note that this is the only official channel for receiving a timely response.

[Check out the application form and sign up!](#)

After submitting your application, please keep an eye on your email.

Shortlisted FIs will be invited to:

- A technical due diligence call
- A product structuring discussion
- A pipeline validation session

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