

NOTA DE PRENSA

PRESS RELEASE

Supported by Bizkaia Open Future , the initiative from the Biscayan Provincial Council and Telefónica to advance companies' digital transformation

SIDENOR SETS THE TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGE OF IMPLEMENTING NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN ITS PRODUCTION PROCESS

- Any entrepreneur, startup, SME, university or technological centre with a solution that makes it possible to improve the company's productive process can participate in the challenge
- The winner will create a real pilot test of the winning project funded by Sidenor and earn the opportunity to win a €15,000 prize and access to support from the Biscayan Provincial Council, provided the relevant conditions are met

Bilbao, 28 May.- The technological challenge set by Sidenor through Bizkaia Open Future_ is to optimise its productive processes by implementing new technologies, on its path to digital transformation. Sidenor, a leading European steel company, has adopted the initiative promoted by the Biscayan Provincial Council and Telefónica to seek inside its ecosystem of entrepreneurship, startups, SMEs, universities and technological centres a solution based on new technologies that will optimise its production process.

The winners of this challenge, set through the global Telefónica Open Future_ platform, will be able to carry out real pilot testing – funded by Sidenor – of the winning project, obtain a prize of €15,000 and access grants from the Biscayan Provincial Council, provided that they meet the relevant conditions. The period for submission of entries for the Sidenor challenge through Bizkaia Open Future_, launched in conjunction with the steel company with a view to transforming it at a technological level in order to optimise Sidenor's productive processes, begins today and will end on 28 June, at <https://www.openfuture.org/en/calls>.

About Bizkaia Open Future_

Bizkaia Open Future_ is an initiative from the Biscayan Provincial Council and Telefónica which was created three years ago to support the industrial sector of Biscay through its digital transformation. This programme is aimed at industry in general and has become the link between new local and international entrepreneurial talent and the industrial firms in the region.

As part of the updated scheme, Bizkaia Open Future_ has launched the first challenge of the five which are planned. In the first edition, through this open innovation programme 155 proposals from the Basque Country, the rest of Spain and international locations were received by five leading companies in the region (Velatia, OSI Ezkerraldea Enkarterri Cruces-Hospital Universitario Cruces, Dibal, Ingeteam and Tecuni). It also resulted in the acceleration of five startups and support for 10 SMEs selected for the new business model innovation process, as well as various awareness-raising and training programmes.

As well as the five open innovation challenges set by leading Biscay companies, a new feature in this edition consists of the launch of a commercial acceleration programme for technological startups and SMEs with an advanced level of maturity. As they progress, Telefónica will contribute to enable them to evolve and consolidate their business projects, in order to become part of the multinational's technological portfolio.

About Sidenor

The steel company Sidenor specialises in producing special steel for the automotive, machinery and equipment, naval and civil construction, defence, energy, mining and petrochemical sectors. In addition, it is one of the main suppliers of large forged and cast pieces in Europe.

Founded one hundred years ago, it is a benchmark in the market with high added-value, great quality, innovative products. It has one of the largest centres of excellence for R&D in the steel sector in Europe for optimising its processes and products.

Sidenor has production centres in the Basque Country, Cantabria and Catalonia, where it has a total production capacity of over one million tonnes of special steel per year. It also has commercial branches in Germany, France, the UK and Italy. At the current time, 2,300 people work at Sidenor.

About Telefónica Open Future_

Telefónica Open Future_ is a global platform designed to connect entrepreneurs, startups, investors and public and private partners around the world to capture innovation and business opportunities. Its goal is to support talent at all stages of growth through a comprehensive model for acceleration that is designed to connect talent with organisations, investors and companies. The programme incorporates all the Telefónica Group's open innovation, entrepreneurship and investment initiatives (Think Big, Talentum Startups, crowdworking, Wayra and investment funds) through a global network that is open to participation by external partners that wish to develop their own entrepreneurial and investment strategies and connect them with large companies. Telefónica Open Future_ is present in 16 countries.

Further information: <https://www.openfuture.org>