

# JIC Launches a VC Fund for CEE Founders Built on 20+ Years of Ecosystem Building

*JIC Ventures is a new fund for pre-seed and seed-stage technology founders from Central and Eastern Europe.*

BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC, April 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- JIC, the Brno-based innovation agency, has launched [JIC Ventures](#), a new fund for pre-seed and seed-stage technology founders from Central and Eastern Europe. Backed by more than 20 years of ecosystem building, the fund will invest up to €1m per company, support around 20 startups over the next four years, and combine capital with hands-on expertise for companies with global potential.



Official launch of JIC Ventures in the presence of the Czech president Petr Pavel

JIC Ventures focuses on deep tech, SaaS and other advanced technology fields. It draws on long-standing work with founders in the [Brno tech region](#), where the agency has supported more than 1,300 startups since 2003, including companies such as Kiwi.com, Y Soft and Flowmon. In 2026, the Financial Times ranked JIC 50th among Europe's Leading Startup Hubs.

That foundation gives the fund access to proprietary deal flow through JIC's own incubator pipeline, close ties to universities, and a strong position in research-driven innovation.

"In the last five years alone, companies supported by JIC have achieved exits worth €640m. We initiated this fund because we want many more globally successful startups to emerge -companies that can help shape a new economy for the Czech Republic and strengthen Europe's competitiveness," said Petr Chládek, CEO of [JIC innovation agency](#).

The fund is being launched in response to a long-standing gap in early-stage risk capital in the region, especially for ambitious technology startups and deep tech projects. JIC says the ambition is not only to finance promising companies, but also to help accelerate the shift toward

an economy built on innovation, research and technology entrepreneurship - in the Czech Republic and across Europe.

The launch reflects a model that is already well established in western Europe, where private investors, innovation institutions and universities often join forces to build capital tools for startups. In Central and Eastern Europe, however, this kind of ecosystem-based investment structure remains rare. JIC draws inspiration from Dublin and sees Eindhoven as another example of how strong regional innovation ecosystems can help generate globally relevant technology companies.

In that context, JIC Ventures with a total amount of €16,3m is positioned not just as a source of capital, but as a pioneering example of how long-term founder support can be turned into scalable investment infrastructure in the CEE.

#### Private capital from major companies and successful founders

The investor base has around 40 limited partners, including major players on the European market - such as Europe's largest developer and owner of industrial parks CTP, bank with the longest tradition on the Czech market Česká spořitelna and investor Jan Barta, as well as successful entrepreneurs with deep roots in Brno tech region, including the family holding of the owners of IDEA StatiCa, Artin, Kinalisoft, Sewio founder Milan Šimek and NenoVision founder Jan Neuman. One notable addition is also the Diocese of Brno.

For institutional investors, the fund represents a way to support the long-term competitiveness of the region and the wider European innovation economy. "We have long believed that Europe's future rests on innovation, technology, and the ability to translate know-how into actual production and global business. We view our investment in the fund as a concrete step toward strengthening this ecosystem and helping to create more successful companies," said Jakub Kodr, CEO of CTP in the Czech Republic.

At the same time, the fund is also backed by founders who are reinvesting part of their capital and experience into the next generation of startups. JIC sees this as part of a wider "give back" dynamic within the regional innovation ecosystem. "We started years ago at JIC as a technology startup ourselves, and we know how important it is to have the support of experienced mentors in the early stages. We want to contribute not only capital, but also experience," said Juraj Šabatka, CEO of IDEA StatiCa.

#### A strong foundation for startup growth

For founders, JIC Ventures is more than a source of capital. It brings fast decisions, a hands-on partnership model, and direct access to an expert network that includes hundreds of experienced founders and specialists from the wider ecosystem.

This is particularly valuable in sectors where JIC has built long-term experience through both the companies it has supported and the advisors now involved in the fund, including cybersecurity, space tech, precision instruments, HW/SW platforms, defence and dual-use technologies, and semiconductors.

“Thanks to our close partnerships with universities, deep tech is one of our superpowers. At the same time, we have strong direct access to investment opportunities through our own ecosystem. We’ve been working with many startups for years through incubation and acceleration programs,” said Radim Kocourek, Managing Partner of JIC Ventures, who leads the fund together with Miloš Sochor.

Startups backed by the fund also gain access to JIC programs, mentoring and founder-focused events, alongside an investment process designed to move from term sheet to closing in weeks rather than months.

JIC has been developing investment activities since 2015, when it began making smaller co-investments into early-stage startups alongside other funds. JIC Ventures marks the next step in that journey: significantly more capital, a stronger mandate, and a shift into the role of a lead investor that not only finances startups but actively helps them grow into globally successful companies.

The official launch of JIC Ventures took place in Brno on 7 April 2026 in the presence of Czech President Petr Pavel, investors and representatives of innovation centres from across the country. JIC says it hopes the fund will not only support startup growth directly but also inspire other Czech regions and innovation centres to build similar investment tools for technology entrepreneurship.

What makes JIC Ventures stand out in the CEE market is not only its investment focus, but also its structure. The fund was initiated by JIC, a public institution whose founders include the South Moravian Region, the City of Brno, and four universities. Most of the fund’s capital comes from private investors, while the South Moravian Region has also joined as an investor, pioneering this model in the Czech context.

Jana Pokorná  
JIC  
[email us here](#)

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