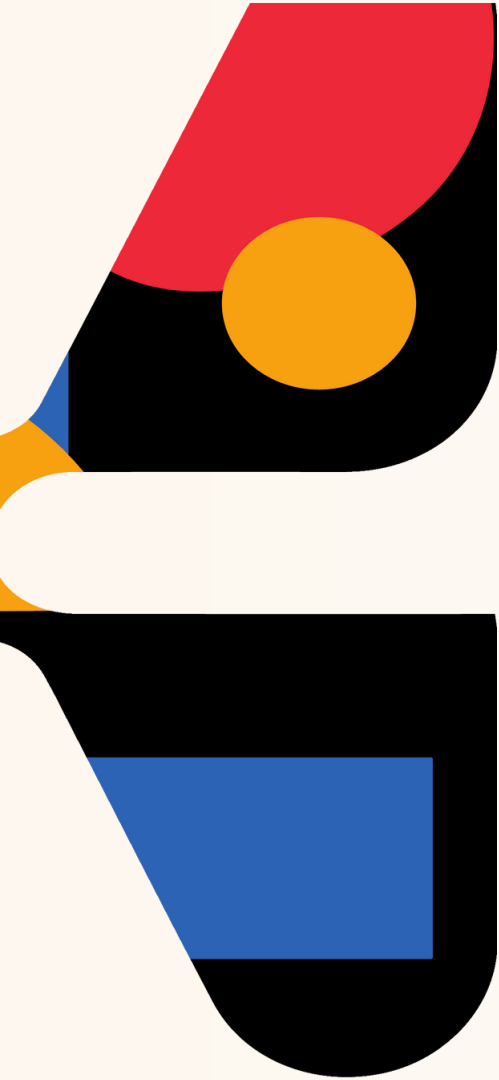




Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership Webinar

Joint Transnational Call 2025

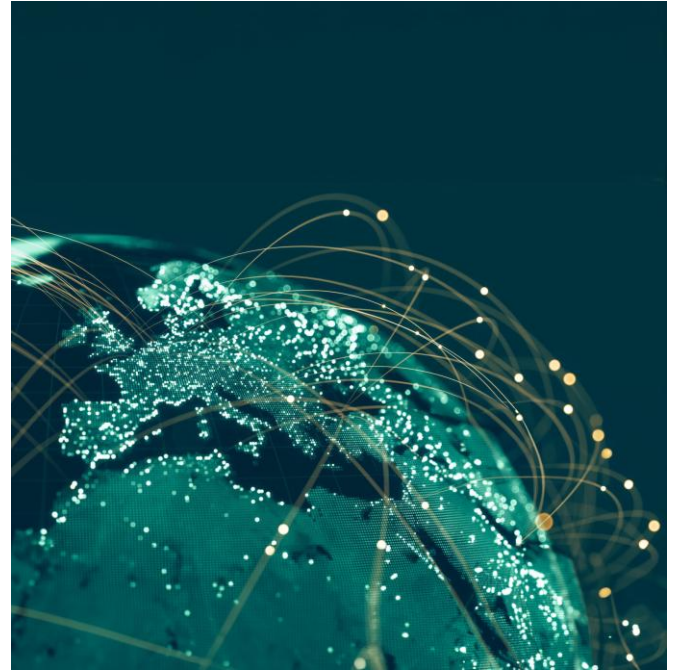
Christy Baldacchino & Oksana Pachomcik
Internationalisation Unit

Before We Begin

- This session will be recorded. Both the presentation and the recording will be made available on the XM website.
- A dedicated Q&A segment will follow the presentation.
- During the presentation, we kindly ask that you submit any questions via the chat function.
- To minimize background noise, please keep your microphone muted unless you are invited to speak.

The Internationalisation Unit

- Follow international trends in Research, Development and Innovation through its representation in international and regional science diplomacy forums
- Strengthen international R&I collaboration amongst local and foreign researchers and stakeholders
- Implements regional and international funding programmes, using national funds, aimed at the local R&I stakeholder community



The Internationalisation Unit



- Budget Commitment 2025: Approx. €5M in local funds
- The Unit manages various funding schemes supporting projects across all RDI levels, from networking and capacity building to basic and applied research (TRL 1-8). Project funding requests range from €8,000 to €500,000.
- The majority of these schemes are pre-finance grant schemes.

Current Portfolio for Bilateral Initiatives



Current Portfolio for Multilateral Initiatives



PILLAR II - Global challenges & European industrial competitiveness

PILLAR III - Innovative Europe

CLUSTER 1: Health	CLUSTER 2: Culture, Creativity, Inclusive Societies	CLUSTER 4: Digital, Industry & Space	CLUSTER 5: Climate, Energy & Mobility	CLUSTER 6: Food, Bio-economy, Agriculture, Env...	EUROPEAN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS
Innovative Health Initiative	Resilient Cultural Heritage*	Chips (formerly KDT)	Clean Hydrogen	Circular Bio-based Europe	Innovative SMEs *
Global Health Partnership	Social Transformations and Resilience*	Smart Networks & Services	Clean Aviation	R&I in the Mediterranean Area (Art. 185)	
Transformation of health systems		High Performance Computing	Single European Sky ATM Research 3	Biodiversa+	EIT
Chemicals risk assessment		European Metrology (Art. 185)	Europe's Rail	Climate Neutral, Sustainable & Productive Blue Economy	InnoEnergy
ERA for Health		AI-Data-Robotics	Connected and Automated Mobility	Water4All *	Climate
Rare diseases		Photonics	Batt4EU	Animal Health & Welfare	Digital
One-Health Anti Microbial Resistance		Made in Europe	Zero-emission waterborne transport	Accelerating Farming Systems Transitions	Food
Personalised Medicine		Clean steel – low-carbon steelmaking	Zero-emission road transport	Agriculture of Data	Health
Pandemic Preparedness		Processes4Planet	Built4People	Safe and Sustainable Food System	Raw Materials
Brain Health*		Global competitive space systems	Solar Photovoltaics*	Forests and Forestry for sustainable Future*	Manufacturing
		Innovative Materials for EU*	Clean Energy Transition		Urban Mobility
		Virtual Worlds*	Driving Urban Transitions		Cultural and Creative Industries
		Textiles of the Future*			Water, Marine and Maritime Sectors and Ecosystem*
		Raw Materials for the Green and Digital Transition*			

■ Institutionalised partnerships (Art 185/7)

■ EIT KICs

■ Co-programmed

■ Co-funded

* Under preparation

CROSS-PILLARS I AND II

European Open Science Cloud

Horizon Europe Partnerships

- Horizon Europe Partnerships are collaborative initiatives between the European Commission and EU Member States under Pillar 2 of Horizon Europe. They aim to address major global challenges—such as climate change, health, digitalisation, and industrial competitiveness—by aligning national and EU-level research and innovation efforts.
- By pooling EU funding with dedicated national funding, these partnerships mobilise greater resources and create synergies across borders. For beneficiaries, the aim is to have a lower barrier to entry, especially for organisations new to Horizon Europe.



The Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership

Strategic Framework

- Drive a just, inclusive transition to a regenerative and resilient blue economy.
- Deliver solutions aligned with the European Green Deal, Digital Europe, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Accelerate the shift to a climate-neutral, sustainable, and competitive blue economy by 2030, supporting healthy oceans by 2050.

SBEP – A Horizon Europe Partnership



Implemented via Annual Joint Transnational Calls



EU & National Funding Agencies Join Forces

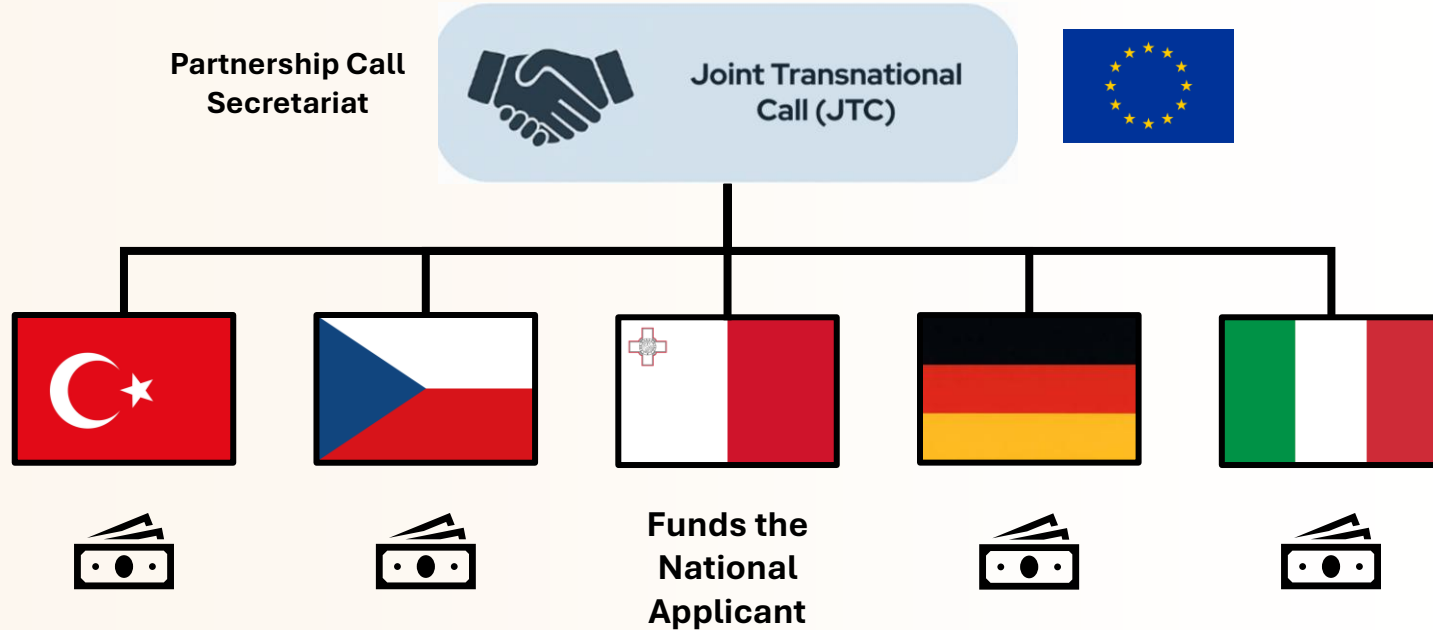


Pooling Resources To Fund International R&I Projects



HORIZON EUROPE

Joint Transnational Calls



National Partners collaborate through a common call, each beneficiary funded by their own national funding agency



2025 SBEP Joint Transnational Call

*"Digitalisation and Innovation for Resilient Marine Ecosystems
Businesses, and Communities to Strengthen the EU Blue
Economy's Competitiveness"*

SBEP Website

<https://www.bluepartnership.eu/>

What is the Call about?

- Includes 38 funding organisations from 28 countries that you can collaborate with.
- Maximum Budget for each Malta-Based applicant: EUR 500K
- Research Priorities: The main scientific and innovation areas the partnership's Call wants to address
- Targeted Impact: The expected outputs and benefits the projects should deliver, aligned with the partnership's mission

Priority Areas

The 5 Priority Areas below will be the basis for this call:

1. Digital Twins of the Ocean (DTO) at sub-basin scale
2. Transitioning the blue economy sectors, and the development of the coexistence and the marine multi-use infrastructures
3. Climate-Smart Planning and managing sea-uses at the regional level
4. Blue Bioresources: sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, and new bio-based products
5. Resilient Coastal Communities and Businesses



1. Digital Twins of the Ocean at sub-basin scale

Projects will **create and test Digital Twins of the Ocean for specific EU sea areas**. These interactive, data-driven tools model ocean systems to **support local decision-making**, planning, and climate action. They must be user-friendly, co-designed with stakeholders, and **based on reliable, high-quality ocean data**.

2. Transitioning the blue economy sectors and the development of the marine multi-use infrastructures

Projects should develop sustainable, cross-disciplinary innovations—like **digital tools, new materials, and business models—that enable multi-use marine infrastructures**, reduce environmental harm, boost ecosystem resilience, and support the blue economy's green and digital transition, in line with EU ocean restoration goals.



3. Climate-Smart Planning and managing sea-uses at the regional scale

Projects should target ecosystem-based maritime spatial planning (MSP) that integrates climate action, biodiversity protection, and sustainable blue economy growth. They must **develop science-based tools for decision-making, address knowledge gaps, support cross-border cooperation in EU sea basins**, and align with key EU policies like the MSP Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030.

4. Blue Bioresources: Sustainable fisheries & aquaculture, and new bio-based products

Projects will **support sustainable use of blue bioresources across the value chain** — from harvesting and aquaculture to waste reuse, new biomasses, and innovative products.

They must involve industry and stakeholders, use multidisciplinary approaches

5. Resilient Coastal Communities and Businesses

Projects should focus on **enhancing resilience of coastal infrastructures—like harbours, piers, and marinas—facing climate risks** (e.g., sea-level rise, erosion, storms). They must improve risk understanding and **advance innovative, nature-based solutions (NbS)** that reduce carbon footprints, restore ecosystems, combat biodiversity loss, and **support sustainable coastal economies while safeguarding marine environmental quality.**

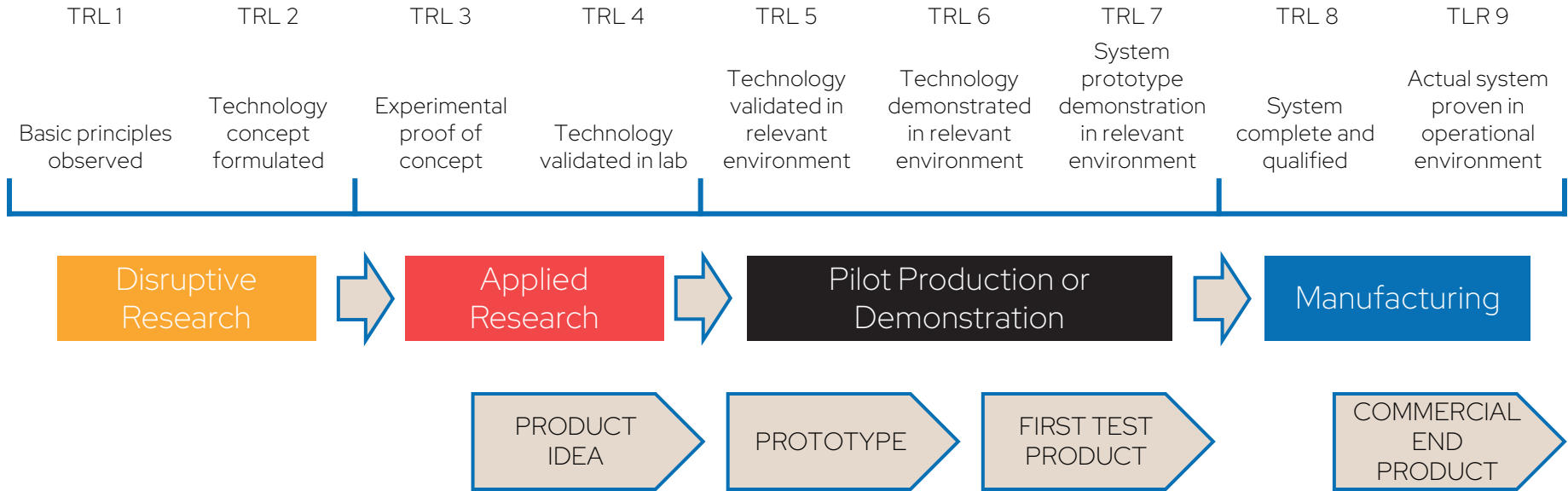
Participating Countries

38 Funding Organisations from 28 Countries:

Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, **Malta**, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine and Slovakia.



Technology Readiness Level (TRL)





National Specifications

General Call Specifications

- All Consortium Partners need a Participant Identification Code (PIC) and NACE code
- Eligible entities must be registered and have an operating base in Malta
- Projects can last up to 36 months
- Funding of up to €500,000 per project is available for Malta-based applicants
- Projects must involve at least 3 independent legal entities from at least 3 different countries. The proposals are expected to consider a minimum of 2 European sea basins and to assess the project proposal impact on various basins

General Call Specifications

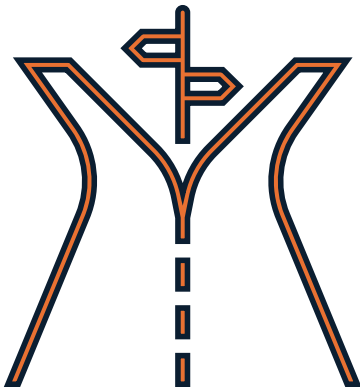
- Each project consortium must have a Coordinator to oversee the project, with other members serving as Partners.
- The Consortium Coordinator must submit the full application via the [SBEP EPSS](#) online tool.
- The call follows a 2-stage process, involving both national and transnational applications.
- Projects must be impact-driven contributions to the transformation into a blue economy for a more resilient future and towards carbon neutrality targets.

Eligible for National Funding



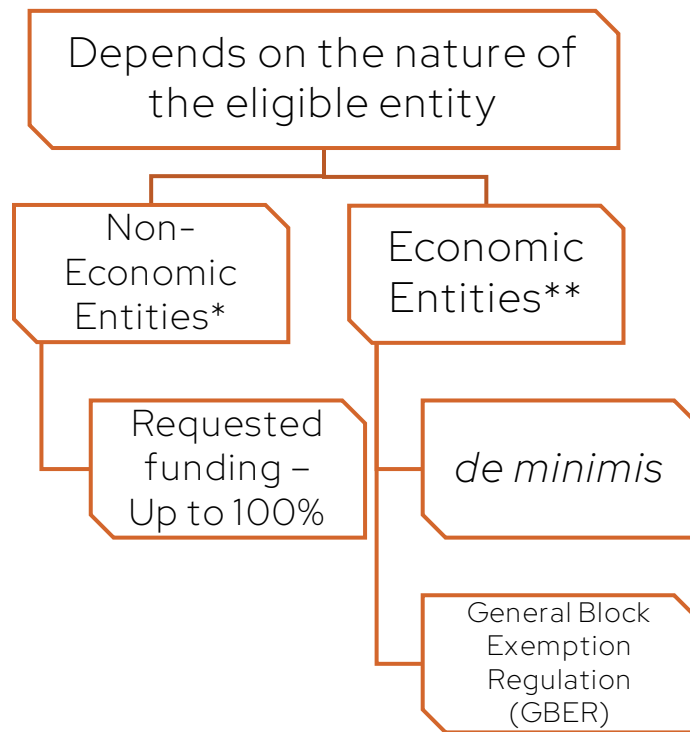
All Malta-based applicants must comply with the National Rules for Participation

Funding Modalities



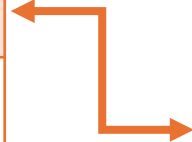
* Public Entities and Public Research and Knowledge-Dissemination Organisations that do not carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU

** Undertakings that carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU.



Aid Intensities

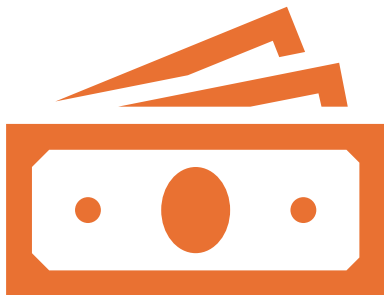
Economic entity	de minimis*	GBER
Requested funding	Up to 75%	Up to 70%
Own contribution	Remainder % (not in-kind)	Remainder % (not in-kind)



Aid Intensity	Undertaking Size		Extra funding for projects prioritizing Effective Collaboration & Wide Dissemination
25%	Small	+ 20%	+ 20%
	Medium	+ 10%	
	Large	+ 0%	

*Capping of € 300,000 over 3 years

Eligible Costs



Personnel

Specialised
Equipment &
Consumables

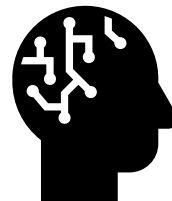
Subcontracting

Costs of IP and
Knowledge
Transfer
activities

Travel &
Subsistence

Overheads and
Other Operating
Expenses

Personnel Costs



Non-economic/de
minimis/GBER

- Project Management – up to 10% of total project value, should be allocated to (and described within) research tasks.
- Students – EUR 6,000-8,000 p.a.
- Maximum of 1720 hours p.a.
- Hourly rates specified in national rules.

€z = (basic salary + allowances) / yearly workable hours of the employee.

Role in Project	Hourly rates in 2026	Hourly rates in 2027	Hourly rates in 2028	Limits per project
Management or equivalent	Up to €60.78/hour	Up to €63.82/hour	Up to €67.01/hour	Max 2 per project
Senior Researcher ¹ or equivalent	Up to €42.84/hour	Up to €44.98/hour	Up to €47.23/hour	Max 2 per project
Researcher ² or equivalent	Up to €30.69/hour	Up to € 32.22/hour	Up to € 33.83/hour	No limits
Operational, technician, research support assistant or equivalent	Up to €16.83/hour	Up to €17.67/hour	Up to €18.55/hour	No limits

Table 1 Eligible Hourly Rates

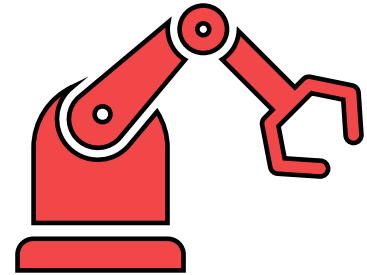
Equipment and Consumables

Non-economic / *de minimis*

- Cost to purchase/lease specialised equipment
- Cost of research consumables should not exceed 30% of the project value

GBER

- Depreciation costs of specialised equipment for the extent and period used for the project. To be verified by a certified public accountant
- The costs of specialised equipment is only eligible if the lifetime of the equipment is equal to the lifetime of the project.
- Cost of research consumables should not exceed 30% of the project value



Subcontracting

Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER



- Allowed up to 25% of the project value
- Must follow fair procurement procedures

To be discussed with the Call Manager at the application stage

IP and Knowledge Transfer Activities

Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER

- Costs of knowledge transfer activities and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arm's length conditions.



To be discussed with the Call Manager at the application stage

Travel and Subsistence

Non-economic /de minimis

- Economy flights, and public transport (most economic solutions) and per diems for up to 14 days in a row
- For the attendance of consortium meetings, up to two persons will be eligible to attend the meeting.
- For the attendance of international conferences, up to two persons will be eligible to attend per six months.

GBER

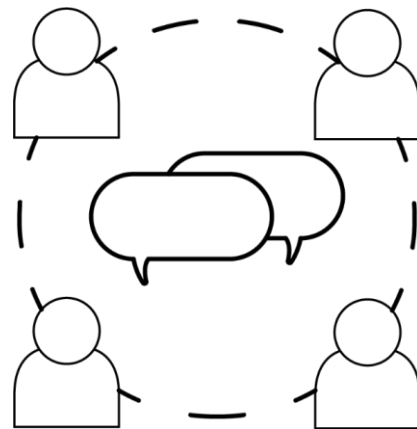
- Travel costs are not eligible



Overheads and Other Operating Expenses

Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER

- Are costs that are incurred directly as a result of the project.
- These will be covered at 20% of direct eligible costs claimed.



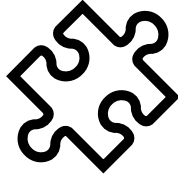
Ineligible Costs

- Expenses related to loans, interests etc.
- Expenses which are recoverable through other funding mechanisms
- Re-purchase of the same equipment originally procured through other funding mechanisms
- Purchase and/or leasing of equipment and services from partners or their subsidiaries
- Standard office equipment
- Personnel hours for travelling
- Any other costs that are not listed as eligible costs in the National Rules



Get Connected with Partners

1



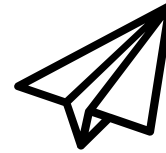
Get in Contact
With Us

2



SBEP Partnership
[Partner Search
Tool](#)

3



Submit the
Required
Applications



Application Process

Application Process

1

Submit the National Application Form and relevant annexes *via* email to eusubmissions.xjenzamalta@gov.mt by 17th November 2025 23:59 CET

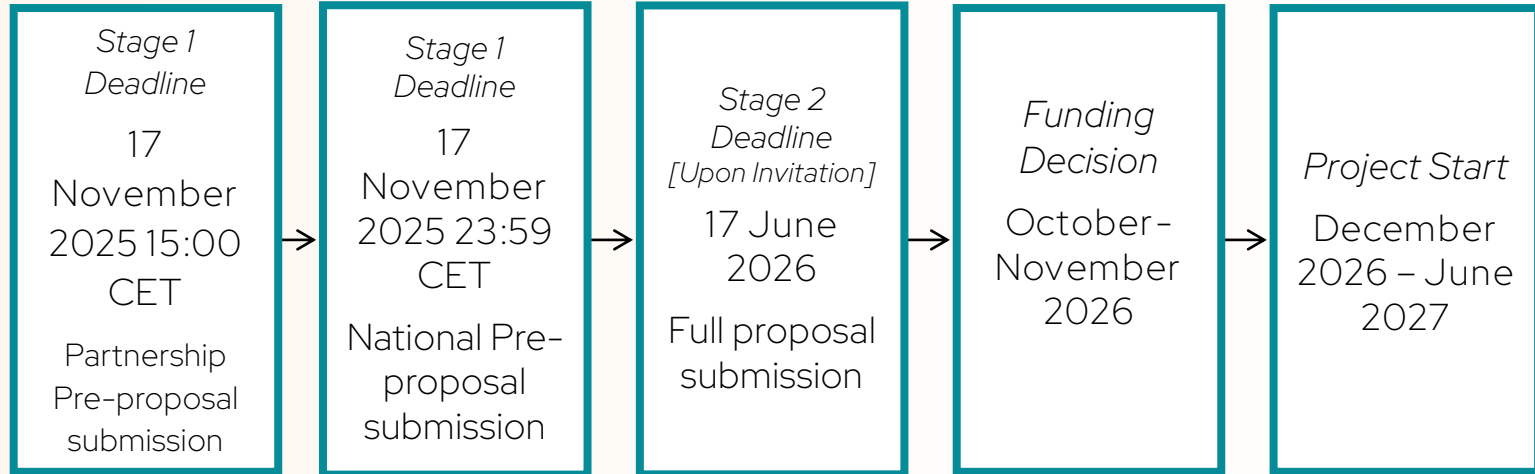
2

The National Application Form will be evaluated administratively, while the project pre-proposal submitted by the Project Coordinator to the SBEP Joint Call Secretariat undergoes an eligibility check and external technical evaluation.

3

Further documents will need to be provided at the full proposal stage.

Call Timeline



Submission Procedure – Stage 1

- Stage 1: Pre-Proposal Submission
 - The coordinator creates an account on [EPSS](#) Online Submission Tool.
 - The coordinator adds partners to the consortium. Partners can input their own data and need to validate their participation.
 - Required indicative budget for each partner. Category budgets can be indicative, but the total cannot increase.
 - National documentation and annexes as per National Rules

Documents	Public entities	Public RKDOs	de minimis Applicants	GBER Applicants
Pre-Proposal Stage (1st Stage)				
<i>National Application Form</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Public entities</i>	X			
<i>Public RKDOs</i>		X		
<i>CVs</i>	X	X	X	X

Submission Procedure – Stage 2

- Stage 2: Full Proposal Submission (Upon Invitation)
 - The coordinator submits a 16-page project description on the [EPSS](#) Online Submission Tool.
 - Required detailed budget for each partner
 - Information given in pre-proposals is binding. It is not possible to change the content of the project between Stage 1 and 2.
 - Further national documentation and annexes as per national Rules

Documents	Public entities	Public RKDOs	de minimis Applicants	GBER Applicants
Full Proposal Stage (2nd Stage)				
<i>Budget Breakdown Form</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>de minimis Form</i>			X	
<i>Enterprise Size Declaration Form & Undertaking in Difficulty</i>				X
<i>Declarations for Augmented Aid Intensity</i>				X
<i>Audited financial statements (last 3 years)* & MoA</i>			X	X

Submission Documents -

The image shows a screenshot of the XJENZA MALTA website. The navigation bar at the top includes links for 'About Us', 'What We Do', 'Funding Schemes' (highlighted with a red box), 'Media', 'Esplora', 'Villa Bighi', 'Contact Us', and a UK flag. A dropdown menu from 'Funding Schemes' shows 'Open Funding Schemes', 'Closed Funding Schemes', and 'Resources Page' (highlighted with a green box). A large orange arrow points from the 'Funding Schemes' dropdown to a document titled 'Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership 2025'. A large green arrow points from the 'Resources Page' dropdown to a grey box labeled 'Resources Page'. Below the 'Resources Page' box, a green box contains the text: '• Relevant Annexes can be found here'. At the bottom left, an orange box contains the text: '• National Rules for Participation' and '• National Application Form'.

XJENZA MALTA

About Us What We Do **Funding Schemes** Media Esplora Villa Bighi Contact Us

Open Funding Schemes
Closed Funding Schemes
Resources Page

Creating the best possible environment for R&I to flourish.

Xjenza Malta

Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership
CALL NOW OPEN

Published On: September 16th, 2025
Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership 2025

Resources Page

- Relevant Annexes can be found here

- National Rules for Participation
- National Application Form



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XJENZA MALTA
VILLA BIGHI, DAWRET FRA GIOVANNI BICHI
KALKARA, KKR 1320



Additional Note: Access to Gaia Blue Research Vessel

Apply to CNR – CNR Principal Investigator to submit [proposal documents](#) to CNR.

Apply to Xjenza Malta – Malta-based entity to submit [application form](#) for additional financial support to Xjenza Malta.

Key Deadlines:

- 📅 **15th October 2025**: Proposal submission to CNR by the Principal Investigator
- 📅 **22nd October 2025**: Application for Xjenza Malta financial support

Funding Details:

- Up to **€6,000** per researcher, **€30,000** cap per entity
- Covers travel & other operating costs not funded by CNR



Second Call for Access to the Research Vessel Gaia Blu

Additional financial support for Malta-based researchers by Xjenza Malta

DEADLINES

- CNR: 15 October 2025
- Xjenza Malta: 22 October 2025

APPLY NOW

The poster features a circular inset image of the research vessel Gaia Blu, a white ship with a blue hull and various scientific instruments on deck.



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
PARLAMENTARY SECRETARIAT
FOR YOUTH, RESEARCH
AND INNOVATION



Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche