



This document is part of the ELBE EUROCLUSTER project (GA– 101074230), which has received funding from EISMEA’s COSME Programme (call SMP-COSME-2021-CLUSTER)



**CALL FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO
INNOVATION**

SUBMISSION TOOLKIT

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1. About ELBE Eurocluster

1.1. THE ELBE ALLIANCE: EUROPEAN LEADERS OF OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY

The ELBE Alliance aims at positioning Europe as the world technological and industrial leader in Offshore Renewable Energy. It gathers seven European clusters with top expert companies and R&D organizations in Offshore Renewable Energy to tackle the expansion of this sector beyond Europe.

This Alliance offers new opportunities to SMEs in offshore energy to share technology, establish alliances and create new business models across different sectors.

1.2. ELBE EUROCLUSTER: SUPPORTING THE OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY (ORE) SECTOR

This project is the continuation of the ELBE and ELBE+ projects led by the ELBE Alliance and is funded by SMP COSME under the Joint Cluster Initiative (JCI). This European Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Joint Cluster Initiative will intensify collaboration across seven key EU regions in this field. This partnership – which is built on the ELBE Alliance – will support European offshore renewable energy SMEs in the development of their resilience capacity and boost their ecological and digital transition.

The ELBE Eurocluster partnership gathers the following organisations:








<p style="text-align: center;">Cluster Energía del País Vasco</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">CEPV Spain www.clusterenergia.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Energy Cluster Denmark</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">ECD Denmark www.energycluster.dk</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Pôle Mer Méditerranée</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">PMM France www.polemermediterrane.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">De Blauwe Cluster, Belgium</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">DBC Belgium www.blauwecluster.be/</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Research Institutes of Sweden</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">RISE Sweden https://www.ri.se/en</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Pomeranian Platform for OW</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">The Pomeranian Platform for the Development of Offshore Wind Energy in the Baltic Sea</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pomorskie Voivodeship Poland www.pomorskie.eu</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">GCE NODE, Norway</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">GCE NODE Norway https://gcenode.no/</p>	

Table 1 - ELBE Eurocluster partnership

1.3. CONTACT POINTS

For any enquiries about the ELBE Eurocluster project, please contact the Project Coordinator, Cluster Energía del País Vasco (CEPV). For any enquiries regarding information and/ or clarification on the Innovation Support Scheme (whether it is about financial support or services), please contact your national contact point:

Country	Partner	Contact	E-mail address
Spain	CEPV	Marcos Suarez Ander González	msuarez@clusterenergia.com agonzalez@clusterenergia.com
Belgium	DBC	Hanne Deprez Ann Overmeire	hanne.deprez@blauwecluster.be ann.overmeire@blauwecluster.be
France	PMM	Colin Ruel	ruel@polemermediterranee.com
Sweden	RISE	Nermina Saracevic	nermina.saracevic@ri.se
Norway	GCE NODE	Tom Fidjeland	tom@gcenode.no
Poland	PV	Dąbrowski Łukasz	L.Dabrowski@pomorskie.eu
Denmark	ECD	Gustavo F. de Luna	gfl@energycluster.dk

Table 2 - Contact points

Should you be from another country, please choose one of the partners listed above as your contact point.

2. ELBE Eurocluster Innovation support scheme

2.1. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1.1. Target

The target audience of the ELBE Eurocluster call for Financial Support To Innovation is European innovative SMEs from the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) sectors and/or developing projects/services on the ORE sectors presented hereinafter as part of 2.1.2 – ORE domains and challenges. Applicants shall be established in one of the following eligible countries: EU-27, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway.

Proposal applications from cross-border consortia (SMEs from different EU Member states) are favoured by additional points in the evaluation of the applications (for more details please see section 3.1.2 – Selection criteria and scoring system).

2.1.2. ORE domains and challenges

ELBE Eurocluster project identifies 8 Challenges distributed under Offshore Renewable Energy domains and tackles 3 horizontal dimensions corresponding to EU priorities.

- Horizontal dimensions:
 - Digital transition: digitalisation transforms the economy and provides many new opportunities to enhance the productivity, efficiency and sustainability of the ORE

domains. The development of modern information technologies makes it easier for stakeholders to work together and promote the efficiency of the overall system. Digital transition includes the use of cloud-based services, mobile devices and apps, sensors and other IoT technologies, Augmented Reality (AR), 5G network, digital twins, autonomous transportation, artificial intelligence, cyber security, block-chain technology and big data driven innovation, robotics, ...

- Ecological transition: regarding the EU2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, which focuses on climate change and energy sustainability, the ORE sector is focused on preserving biodiversity and reducing its ecological footprint.
- Resiliency: resiliency, as the ability not only to withstand and cope with challenges but also to undergo transitions, in sustainable, fair and democratic manner, has become a new compass for EU policies. ORE domains are fully integrated in the objective of a resilient Europe, and more particularly towards an energy independence and carbon neutral.

Each challenge has been defined together with a Challenge owner (CO), that is a large company positioned on the ORE sectors.

ELBE Eurocluster challenges and corresponding challenge owners are presented in the following table:

Challenge description	Challenge owner
<p>1. - Transfer to sea methodologies</p> <p><u>Installation:</u> Transfer to sea is a key operation when setting large project execution plans. The process is constrained by floating wind structures weight and shape in combination with port facilities conditions. Transfer to sea can create a bottleneck when executing a large-scale project. This shall be performed in a safe and smooth manner. The solution to this challenge needs to improve the load out methodologies for large and heavy structures, minimize the cost of load out operation, increase safety and mitigate risks.</p>	<p>Iberdrola (Spain)</p>
<p>2. Support and Monitoring of Commissioning and Maintenance Activity</p> <p><u>Commissioning and Maintenance Activities for Offshore Substations:</u> Commissioning and Maintenance activities for offshore wind farms consume excessively high time and costs and have a significant impact both for the acceptance and delivery of offshore substations and for the management of these wind farms in their service phase. The companies responsible for the "Commissioning" of the offshore substations (previous to substation delivery), as well as the companies responsible for the "Maintenance" (after substation delivery) of offshore wind farms, are interested in finding solutions to minimize the performance duration of those activities and its cost. It is required to provide solutions that, considering the advantages of the use of digital technologies, can have a significant impact on the development of offshore substation commissioning and maintenance activities, improving time and cost.</p>	<p>Navantia (Spain)</p>

<p>3. Multi-task versatile UAV system to support underwater offshore O&M activities within an Offshore Wind Farm</p> <p><u>Operation & Maintenance:</u> Offshore Wind Farms require inspection, security surveillance, rescue support and corrective and preventive maintenance for Wind Turbines, Wind Turbines Substructure, Offshore Substation, Inter Array and Export Cables. The maintenance program for an Offshore Wind Farm is complex and requires many visits and actions from the O&M team during the entire duration of the project, being underwater activities specially challenging. A solution is required to improve and optimize all these offshore underwater activities by minimizing the technician and manned vessels engagement needs, thus reducing the human intervention risks, and minimizing the overall carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Ocean Winds (Poland)</p>
<p>4. Offshore Wind Planning Optimizer considering RT production forecasting</p> <p><u>Offshore digitalisation:</u> In relation to the development of next generation digital methodologies to enhance performance, increase grid stability and security of supply through real-time data-supported decision making, internal tools to forecast the production of the CO's individual turbines more accurately has been developed. A need to transfer this knowledge to the asset management and operations teams has been identified to turn production forecasts into actionable results in the form of an optimized planning of the operation and maintenance activities. The solution needed is the development of an Offshore Wind Planning Optimization tool considering real-time production forecasting inputs and continuous environmental condition inputs.</p>	<p>Otary (Belgium)</p>
<p>5. Birds anti-rest effect solution</p> <p><u>Environment:</u> Main concerns regarding Offshore Wind Turbines projects are their impact on biodiversity. The capacity of wind farms developers to answer and bring guarantees to certify the control of the collision risk is crucial. Facilities are likely to generate attractivity for some species who could rest on floats and could represent an additional collision risk with the wind turbine blades increasing the species mortality. The need would be to limit the float attractivity for birds as rest effect. Today, some solutions have been developed (anti-rest cables...) but do not present effective results. A slow and easily applicable solution with the floats structures would enable the support of the sector virtuously. The objective is to develop an anti-rest solution to integrate or add to the floats to limit their attractivity for the species.</p>	<p>Qair (France)</p>
<p>6. Cargo drone approach to the nacelle</p> <p><u>Drone approach to nacelle:</u> Delivery of spare parts to offshore wind turbines using unmanned aircraft (drones) is an emerging technology with many challenges. The benefits are faster delivery, more flexible delivery, higher safety and lower cost. Of the many challenges, one that remains largely unsolved is the actual delivery of packages from the aircraft to the heli hoist on the nacelle. Ideally, there should be no custom changes to the heli hoist to facilitate the delivery, and therefore the drone cannot land. Instead, the package must be</p>	<p>Vattenfall (Denmark)</p>

<p>hoisted down. This requires fairly good navigation and guidance on the part of the drone relative to the heli hoist. The challenge is to find the best approach for delivering larger packages (5 to 50 kg) from the aircraft to the heli hoist using a winch on the drone. This would include some dedicated test flight with existing equipment and commercially available sensors to determine the approach. CO proposes use of scanning lidars for this.</p>	
<p>7. Control system development for floating Vertical Axis Wind Turbine (VAWT)</p> <p><u>Control system</u>: Controlling a floating wind turbine poses significant challenges, as the foundation is moving and the environment (wind, waves, sea current, tide) will influence the measurements used for control of the turbine. A well-designed control system is not only a safety issue, but directly influences the unit cost and LCOE of the produced electricity. For a vertical-axis floating turbine the challenge is enhanced, as little prior research and development has been performed. The challenge is to develop a controller for a floating VAWT. The controller should be able to control the turbine at windspeeds from 1 to 25 m/s. At higher wind speeds the turbine closes down. The controller is to be implemented as a function in the software “DeepLines Wind”, which is being used to simulate the complete behaviour of the wind turbine.</p>	<p>SeaTwirl (Sweden)</p>
<p>8. Improved data collection for the purpose of customs reporting</p> <p><u>Data collection</u>: During continuous execution of wind turbine main component exchange campaigns, it has been discovered through data collection process and invoice creation, how manual and slow the collection of data for customs reporting purposes is. The challenge lies within the very time-consuming and manual process taking place, to correctly report to customs authorities when goods are being shipped across borders. The solution to this need is to address how to collect the required data for customs import/export purposes, of the goods which are returning from an offshore wind farm back to the CO’s warehouses in a quicker and smarter way.</p>	<p>Ørsted (Denmark)</p>

Table 3 – Description of challenges

The challenges have been defined together with large companies called challenge owners. They commit to collaborate with the SMEs selected to answer to their challenge. They will be involved in the selection process and participate to at least three meetings with the selected SMEs. On top of that, they will have the possibility to contribute further (in-kind contributions such as access to testing facilities, access to skills, or other type of support). A Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) will be signed to ensure property rights.

2.2. FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THIRD PARTIES SPECIFICATIONS

2.2.1. Scope for the ELBE financial support to third parties

The scope and the indicative supported activities funded under the ELBE Eurocluster innovation support scheme are described below:

The scope of the ELBE financial support to third parties is broad. It aims to address the gaps and challenges within the ORE industry and support innovation within the ORE industrial ecosystem. It aims to build capacity in the most critical supplies and technologies of the ORE industrial ecosystem by supporting SMEs which are able to answer to the challenges. There is a focus on identifying product innovations to reduce dependency on critical inputs and technologies in the ORE value chain with a view to introducing new-to-firm products or services.

The support scheme will finance a limited number of SMEs which will support innovative projects addressing one of the 8 challenges within the ORE domains mentioned in section 2.1.2. The scheme aims to fund projects that test and demonstrates technologies and products to demonstrate the feasibility of a proposed solution.

The support scheme will finance activities, such as:

- **Testing/demonstrating one or more methodologies** that support and/or optimizes processes in ORE sectors,
- **Adapting/testing/demonstrating a digital solution** that is able to conduct forecasts, allows for automation of O&M activities, digital infrastructure, ...
- **Testing/demonstrating an innovative product** that strengthens weak spots in the ORE value-chain,
- **Testing/demonstrating product prototypes** in an ORE operational environment.

The support scheme aims to fund projects that are relatively close to commercialisation. The expected TRLs for projects funded under the support scheme is: **TRL 6-8**.

2.2.2. Financial support offered

ELBE Eurocluster innovation mechanism will **support 8 projects, at least 8 SMEs** for a total amount of **€480 000** as a whole and **up to €60 000 euros per project**.

	Financial support
Maximum financial contribution (per project)	€60 000
Maximum project duration (months)	12
Estimated number of projects	8
Estimated number of SMEs supported	8-16

FUNDING CONDITIONS

The financial support is provided under the following conditions:

- SMEs will benefit from financial support up to €60 000 per project.
- SMEs can apply by themselves or in a consortium of maximum two partners.
- **The budget does not have to be equally divided between the partners but must be coherent.** The minimum budget for an SME in the consortium should be not less than 20% of the global budget.
- Each interested SME must submit only one proposal per challenge.

- In case applicants wish to benefit from ELBE Eurocluster other Financial Support to Third Parties calls (training, internationalisation, and individual services), please consider that the total maximum amount to be awarded per SME as part of ELBE Eurocluster opportunities is €60 000.

You will find below the approximate value for each service (per SME):

Individual services	22 SMEs supported	Up to €10 000
Training	20 SMEs supported	Up to €13 500
Internationalisation	45 SMEs supported	Up to €2 000

For example, one SME can benefit from a financial support to innovation (€30 000), an individual service (€10 000), one training session (€13 500) and participate to 3 missions (total €6 000). However, if one SME benefits from €50 000 as part of the financial support to innovation, it can only apply for one individual service or participate to the missions but will not benefit from the training.

Please note that a specific toolkit is available for each type of support. Shall you be interested by the above services, please refer to your contact point.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Successful proposals shall receive the requested financial contribution in the form of a lump sum. Lump sums are payments against deliverables, they do not foresee the delivery of a detailed financial reporting with timesheets. However, applications must explain how the lump sum will be used including a clear budget proposal and costs (personnel, subcontracting, travel, equipment, and consumables). Instead of a detailed financial reporting, the project technical advancements will be monitored by the technical reviewers (called “ELBE Sherpa”). The final technical evaluation will assess the coherence of the money spent with the achieved results. Beneficiaries will have to keep the original documents of their expenses (timesheets, invoices, contracts) in case of an audit (see section 4.1). Thus, the following rules and limitations per financial support type must be respected. Under ELBE Eurocluster, each SME can receive a financial support up to €60 000.

Only costs generated during the lifetime of the project (from the contract signature to the end of the project) can be eligible. Costs described in the submitted budget must be determined in accordance with the usual accounting and management principles and practices of the beneficiary. Eligible costs are:

- **Direct personnel costs:** costs related to hours of the staff of the beneficiary dedicated to actual work under the project;
- **External services:** work carried out by a provider which has entered into an agreement on business conditions with the beneficiary;
- **Other direct costs:** travel costs, further direct incurred costs can be claimed for equipment (only depreciation costs), consumables, etc.

Purchases or provision of paid services between consortium partners are not eligible.

2.2.3. General payment terms and beneficiaries' obligations

Applicants shall be aware that the following obligations will apply to the beneficiaries:

- All payments will be made in Euros (€);
- Payments will be made to each successful SME of the consortium;
- Expenditures incurred before the Contract signature date, or after the project duration period are ineligible for remuneration;
- Costs incurred for the implementation of the project must be used for the sole and close purpose of achieving the objectives of the project and its expected results, in a transparent manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- Beneficiaries must set up internal consortium agreements regulating their cooperation, including Property Rights and use and dissemination of the results generated by the project teams through the funding obtained via ELBE Eurocluster innovation support scheme;
- ELBE Eurocluster will not be responsible for paying any costs applied for and incurred by the beneficiaries in case of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the ELBE Eurocluster innovation support scheme;
- Submission of an application does not constitute an entitlement for funding;
- The recipients of the financial support from ELBE Eurocluster (“the beneficiaries”) must ensure that the European Commission, the European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF) and the Court of Auditors (ECA) can exercise their powers of control on documents, information, even stored on electronic media, or on the final recipient’s premises.

Beneficiaries’ obligations are the following:

- The SME must keep records and other supporting documentation to prove the proper implementation of the action for a period of five years after the payment of the balance;
- They must be available upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits, or investigations;
- If there are on-going checks, reviews, audits, investigations, litigation or other pursuits of claims under the contract (including the extension of funding), the SME must keep the records and other supporting documents until the end of these procedures. The SME must keep the original documents. Digital and digitalised documents are considered originals if they are authorised by the applicable national law. Non-original documents may be accepted if they offer a comparable level of assurance.

Contracts can be signed:

- With a certified electronic signature (this option refers to encrypted digital signatures such as those produced using e-signature software);
- With a handwritten signature.

In the first option, the Contract can be sent by e-mail while in the second option, the Contract must be sent by post. In all cases mentioned above, a signature indicates acceptance of the agreement.

3. Application

3.1. ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

3.1.1. Eligibility conditions

Proposals will be eligible only if all the following conditions are met:

- Applicants must be established in one of the following eligible countries: EU-27, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway.
- Applicants must be SMEs according to the European Union definition of SMEs: the formal definition is available [here](#) and the SME self-assessment questionnaire is available [here](#);
- Applications should address partially or totally one of the 8 ELBE Eurocluster challenges (section 2.1.2);
- Applications must be written in English (applications partially written in another language are not eligible) and must not exceed the maximum number of characters stated in each text box of the pre-defined template available on the submission platform;
- Applications must be submitted through [EUSurvey](#);
- Each interested SME must submit only one proposal for the call for financial support to innovation for each challenge; In case of multiple submissions by the same SME, all submissions will be automatically rejected;
- No annexes can be submitted.

3.1.2. Selection criteria and scoring system

The evaluation and ranking of applications are based on a set of criteria in addition to the above-mentioned eligibility conditions.

Evaluation criteria	Sub-criteria	Score	Weighted score
1. Excellence	1.1 Scientific and technical quality	5	20
	1.2 Innovation potential	5	20
Total excellence			40
2. Impact	2.1 Exploitation of results/ market potential	5	30
	2.2 Adequacy to at least one of the horizontal dimensions (resiliency, green, digital)	5	5
Total potential impact			35
3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation	3.1 Quality, complementarity and appropriateness of work allocation	5	10
	3.2 Risk management	5	5
	3.3 Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan	5	10
Total quality and efficiency of the implementation			25

TOTAL (without bonus)		100
4. Consortium of 2 SMEs	4.1 Involvement of 2 SMEs	+10
5. Cross-border consortium	5.1 Involvement of 2 SMEs from 2 different eligible countries	+5
TOTAL (with bonus)		115

Table 4 – FSTI scoring system

3.2. SUBMISSION

To apply, please complete the submission form on EUSurvey at the following link: <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ELBEFSI2023>

Applications may be modified as long as the deadline is respected: you will be able to save and come back later on EU Survey. The platform will be automatically closed at the date and time announced, that is September 30th, 2023, at 5:00 pm CET. Applicants will receive an e-mail confirming that their application has been well uploaded on the platform. Shall you not receive the confirmation e-mail, please contact Nerea Guinea at ngueina@clusterenergia.com and copy your local contact point. SMEs applying as a consortium should fill in one proposal. One of the involved SMEs will act as a “coordinator” and will be responsible for the submission of the application.

4. Evaluation and selection process

A three-step assessment procedure will be followed safeguarding the principles of transparency and equal treatment as described below:

- Eligibility check of the application form;
- Evaluation of each application by 2 partners of ELBE EUROCLUSTER, one of them being the contact point of the leader project and the second one from a country that is not represented by the applicants;
- Challenge Owners will be invited to evaluate the three proposals getting the highest grade for their challenge. The Challenge Owner will evaluate the applications with the scoring system. The final grade will be the average of the 3 total grades (2 total grades from the ELBE partners evaluation, 1 grade coming from the Challenge Owner).

If there is a major difference between the grades given by the two partners, a third partner will be invited to evaluate the application and a consensus meeting will be organised, ensuring a coherent, fair, and transparent evaluation. When possible, this third ELBE partner will not be from the applicants' country.

4.1. SCORING SYSTEM

Evaluation scores will be awarded based on the criteria presented in the table above (section 3.1.2.). The total score is comprised by adding the scores of the three criteria and will be of maximum 100 points (without bonus). The overall threshold will be 70% (that is 70 points without bonus).

Each sub-criterion is rated between 1 and 5 points. No half points are allowed (decimal points may arise during normalisation, but not as an individual evaluation grade).

In case of proposals with equal scores, the prevailing one is the one with the higher score in “Impact”, then “Excellence” and then “Implementation”, in this order.

The meaning of the scores for the sub-criteria are as follows:

- **1 – Poor:** the sub-criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses;
- **2 – Fair:** while the proposal broadly addresses the sub-criterion, there are significant weaknesses;
- **3 – Good:** the proposal addresses the sub-criterion well, but with at least one moderate weakness;
- **4 – Very good:** the proposal addresses the sub-criterion very well, although with minor weaknesses;
- **5 – Excellent:** the proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the sub criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

Applications including a consortium of two SMEs will be favoured in the evaluation. Cross-border consortia will be even more favoured.

4.2. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Submitted financial support to innovation applications will be assessed by the representatives of the ELBE Eurocluster partners (2 ELBE reviewers per application) and by the Challenge Owner (1 reviewer per application). The assessment period shall take max. 40 days, starting from the closing date of the call and will be complete with the development of a ranking list. The applicants will receive an e-mail about the outcome of the assessment directly after the assessment is finalised along with instructions for the next steps in the case the applicant is awarded. The successful applicants will be requested to sign a formal Contract with ELBE partners within 30 days from the notification of the project approval.

4.3. ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

For any complaints against the financial support to innovation selection process, these have to be submitted by the applicant on behalf of the project to msuarez@clusterenergia.com or your local contact point (Cf. 1.3 - Contact points) within 5 calendar days after the announcement of the Open Call results. Your email should include the following information:

- Lead contact name and details;
- Object of your complaint;
- Information and evidence of the alleged breach.

The Evaluation Committee (Cluster Energia del Pais Vasco with the support of Pôle Mer Méditerranée) will examine the complaint based on the information brought forward by the applicant, will assess the case, and decide whether the complaint is justified or not and will inform the applicant and the consortium on the decision taken. If the complaint is considered justified, the Evaluation Committee will notify the evaluators to re-evaluate the project application and the related assessment part, subject to the complaint. The evaluators will then provide the Evaluation Committee with an updated assessment. The final decision on the complaint will be communicated by the Evaluation Committee to the applicant in writing within 20 working days from the date of submitting the complaint. This decision will be final, binding to all parties and not subject to any further complaint proceedings within the programme if the

complaint is based on the same grounds. For technical issues concerning the submission procedure, please contact Nerea Guinea at ng Guinea@clusterenergia.com and copy your contact point.

5. Monitoring and reporting process

5.1. ELBE TECHNICAL FOLLOW-UP: THE ELBE SHERPA

One ELBE Sherpa will be assigned to each beneficiary. This Sherpa will be a member of the ELBE consortium and will answer the questions of the beneficiary and monitor the project implementation monitoring (technical monitoring, budget consumption). Beneficiaries will be assigned to their Sherpa after the selection of the project. When possible, the Sherpa will be the contact point of the coordinator to facilitate follow-up.

5.2. MONITORING AND PAYMENTS

The projects selected for ELBE Eurocluster financial support to innovation will be monitored throughout the project implementation period. Payments will depend on the results of the monitoring.



Figure 1 - Monitoring process and deadlines for payments

The first payment (40% of the total amount) will be sent to the beneficiary after signature of the contract.

The second payment (30%) will be made in the middle of the project implementation period and after the first monitoring. The first monitoring will consist in a meeting gathering the beneficiaries and their Sherpa. This meeting will assess the following elements (at least):

- Technical monitoring
- Budget consumption
- Potential issues to overcome

After this first meeting, the Sherpa will send the meeting minutes and power point presentation used to the Evaluation Committee (Cluster Energia del Pais Vasco with the support of Pôle Mer Méditerranée) to confirm that the project is going as planned and thus unlock the second payment.

The last payment (30%) will be made at the end of the project implementation period and after validation of the final report. Maximum 1 (one) month after the end of the reporting period (that is one month after the end of the project), as it will be defined in the contract, the ELBE Eurocluster beneficiaries shall provide:

- An overall performance progress report for their project along with the respective deliverables validating the work;
- A brief financial statement with the expenses for the period.

The purpose of the above is to evaluate:

- The degree of fulfilment of the project work plan for the relevant period and of the related deliverable(s);
- The continued relevance of the objectives and breakthrough potential with respect to the scientific and industrial state of the art;
- The expected potential impact in economic, competition and social terms, and the ELBE Eurocluster beneficiary's cooperation to elaborate a dissemination of foreground plan.

6. Legal aspects

6.1. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

GDPR compliance: The General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679/EU) guarantees that the processing of data is carried out in compliance with the fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as the dignity of the data subject with reference to confidentiality, personal identity and the right to data protection.

By applying, the applicant agrees on the storage and use of its personal data for the execution of the ELBE Eurocluster objectives and work plan. The ELBE Eurocluster consortium commits to handling personal data and company data confidentially except for the call results, which may contain information about successful ELBE Eurocluster Services' applications (service title, names of project partners and scope description (as provided by the project partner).

The processing of data that ELBE Eurocluster intends to carry out will be based on lawfulness and correctness in the full protection of its rights and its confidentiality pursuant to the general principles of the GDPR and its art. 24. Therefore, the competitors are informed of the procedure that the data provided by the applicants will be treated exclusively with reference to the procedure for which they submitted the documentation.

The applicants can exercise their rights towards the data controller, pursuant to article 12 of the GDPR. For any inquiries regarding the processing your personal data, please contact Marcos Suarez: msuarez@clusterenergja.com. Application, selection and evaluation will be performed under the appropriate ethical conduct and will respect the confidentiality of the information received.

6.2. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DISSEMINATION

The applicants shall arrange for internal contracts regarding Intellectual Property Rights. For details on rights and obligations related to results, the project teams can refer to Chapter 4 – Section 2 – Article 16 of the Horizon Europe Annotated Grant Agreement: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf.

For dissemination and use of results generated through the financial support from ELBE Eurocluster, the recipients must credit the ELBE Eurocluster project through proper citation and appearance of the ELBE Eurocluster logo and EU Logo, including the proper citation " This project has received funding from the European Union's Joint Cluster Initiatives programme under grant agreement No 101074230".

6.3. GENDER EQUALITY

ELBE Eurocluster seeks gender balance. Therefore, applicants are invited to take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action. They must aim for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including supervisory and managerial levels to the extent possible.

7. Disclaimer

Purpose: This text is explaining the ELBE Eurocluster Innovation Support Scheme for information purposes only. No rights can be claimed based on this document. This document does not reflect the views of the European Commission nor EISMEA.

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Consequential damages: In no event shall either party be liable to the other or any of its affiliates for any consequential, incidental, indirect, special, punitive, or exemplary damages (including, without limitation, lost profits, business, or goodwill) suffered or incurred by such other party or its affiliates in connection with this innovation support mechanism, even if advised of the possibility of such damages.