

DIREÇÃO-GERAL DE POLÍTICA DO MAR

## Call nr #2 – Business Development, Innovation and SMEs

Call for Proposals

Blue Growth Programme

## Reference Information

### BLUE GROWTH

**Objective** – Increased value creation and sustainable growth

**Expected outcome #1** – Increased competitiveness for Portuguese companies within the focus area of Blue Growth

**Call nr #2** – Business Development, Innovation and SMEs

**Description** – Finance enterprises to develop, apply and commercialize innovative products and technologies, especially SMEs.

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## 1. FRAMEWORK

### 1.1 AREA OF INTERVENTION

The **main objective** of this call is to finance enterprises to develop, apply, and commercialize innovative products and technologies. This call will also promote cooperation between enterprises and research institutions, in order to foster user-driven research-based innovation (TRL 4<sup>1</sup> - 9 in accordance with Horizon 2020 guidelines).

To improve the competitiveness of Portuguese enterprises and value creation, a range of sectors will be supported, such as fisheries/aquaculture (innovative products and technologies in fisheries sector), commercial ports, ocean renewable energy sector, maritime industry, including maritime transports technologies, off-shore and near-shore infrastructures, robotics, technologies for deep sea resources and mapping, shipbuilding (innovative products and technologies) blue biotechnology and environmental monitoring and surveillance activities. The main objective is to increase competitiveness and sustainability for Portuguese companies within the focus area of Blue Growth.

The scope of the call also includes projects that apply innovative blue technologies/processes/solutions, available in the market and which are new-to-the enterprise, through productive investments to increase production capacity (excluding fisheries).

This call also includes carbon-sequestration-based businesses throughout algae reforestation that will increase the production of marine resources per unit of sea area, i.e. increased resource efficiency or other forms of carbon sequestration business including seagrass beds and production.

The Blue Growth Programme also has a bilateral objective, to enhance cooperation between Portuguese entities and entities from the Donor States (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein).

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<sup>11</sup> Technology readiness levels (TRL)

TRL 4 – technology validated in lab

TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment

TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant)

TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment

TRL 8 – system complete and qualified

TRL 9 – actual system proven in operational environment

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECTS:

The projects supported by this call will contribute to increase competitiveness, sustainability and profitability among Portuguese SMEs<sup>2</sup> and bring more innovation in their products, services and processes.

The projects should contribute to the overall targets to be reached under the Programme's Outcome #1 as follows:

- Estimated annual growth in net operational profit of 5%
- 15 innovative technologies/processes / solutions applied (new-to-the-enterprise)
- 10 new products/ technologies commercialized (new-to-the-market)
- 25 new products/ technologies developed
- 45 jobs created
- 10 new intellectual property rights (Copyright, trademarks, patents) applications submitted.

By contributing to one or several of these outcome targets, the projects will contribute to the following Programme' Outputs:

- 15 SMEs supported to develop innovative products/technologies/processes for the Blue Growth sector
- 5 large enterprises supported to develop innovative products/technologies/processes for the Blue Growth sector
- 15 SMEs supported to commercialize innovative products/technologies/processes for the Blue Growth sector
- 3 large enterprises supported to commercialize innovative products/technologies/processes for the Blue Growth sector
- 12 SMEs supported to apply innovative blue technologies/processes/solutions (new-to-the enterprise)
- 3 large enterprises supported to apply innovative blue technologies/processes/solutions (new-to-the enterprise)
- 7 SMEs supported to cooperate with Donor State research institutions
- 15 SMEs supported to cooperate with national research institutions
- 2 large enterprises supported to cooperate with Donor State research institutions
- 3 large enterprises supported to cooperate with national research institutions

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<sup>2</sup> 75% of the funding shall be allocated to SMEs (is an objective for the overall PT-Innovation programme)

Projects will be given additional points if they are dedicated to developing user-driven research-based innovation (TRL<sup>3</sup> 4 - 9 in accordance with Horizon 2020 guidelines) and the development/implementation of green solutions. Also, projects involving partnerships/bilateral cooperation with entities from the Donor States will be given additional points.

### 1.3 TYPES OF PROJECTS:

The scope of projects eligible for funding under this Call are the following:

- Develop innovative products/ technologies/ processes for the Blue Growth sector;
- Commercialize innovative products/ technologies/ processes for the Blue Growth sector;
- Apply innovative blue technologies/ processes/ solutions (new-to-the enterprise) including investments to increase production capacity (excluding fisheries);
- Business development from early innovation stage up to testing of new technologies and supporting their first presentation to the market (piloting and demonstration facilities).

To improve the competitiveness of Portuguese enterprises, value creation and sustainable growth in the Portuguese blue economy, through the development, commercialization and application of innovative products/technologies/processes a range of sectors will be supported, such as:

- Fisheries/aquaculture (development of innovative products, production processes and technologies in fisheries/ fish farming sector)
- Fish and seafood transformation industry
- Commercial ports
- Ocean renewable energy sector
- Maritime industry, including innovative maritime transport technologies
- Maritime digitalization
- Near-shore and off-shore infrastructures
- Robotics related to marine and maritime technologies
- Technologies for deep sea resources and mapping
- Shipbuilding and shipping (development of innovative products, production processes and technologies)
- Blue biotechnology

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<sup>3</sup> Technology readiness levels (TRL)

- Nautical tourism
- Environmental monitoring and surveillance activities
- Carbon-sequestration-based businesses throughout algae reforestation that will increase the production of marine resources per unit of sea area, i.e. increased resource efficiency or other forms of carbon sequestration business including seagrass beds and production

Each application should indicate in which typologies it should be considered.

Cooperation between research institutions and SMEs, in order to facilitate commercialization of innovative ideas, products and processes is encouraged.

The applications shall contain a detailed Communication Plan in line with Annex 3 to the EEA Grants 2014-2021 Regulation. A template is available on the website: [Documentos \(eeagrants.gov.pt\)](http://eeagrants.gov.pt)

The applications shall contain a Business Plan in line with:

“How to draw up a business plan”

[https://www.iapmei.pt/getattachment/PRODUTOS-E-SERVICOS/Empreendedorismo-Inovacao/Empreendedorismo/Guias-e-Manuais-de-Apoio/ComoElaborarPlanodeNegocio-\(5\).pdf.aspx?lang=pt-PT](https://www.iapmei.pt/getattachment/PRODUTOS-E-SERVICOS/Empreendedorismo-Inovacao/Empreendedorismo/Guias-e-Manuais-de-Apoio/ComoElaborarPlanodeNegocio-(5).pdf.aspx?lang=pt-PT)

and a Business Plan Financial Model (template available on the website: [Documentos \(eeagrants.gov.pt\)](http://eeagrants.gov.pt) - Template - Business Plan Financial Model.

## 1.4 AVAILABLE FUND:

The total amount available to the present Call is € 12,840,134

## 1.5 GRANT AMOUNTS FOR EACH PROJECT:

**Min:** € 200,000

**Max:** € 1.000,000

## 1.6 GRANT RATES:

The funding rate will not exceed 70% of total eligible project costs.

The remaining costs shall be provided or obtained by the Project promoter/partners. The project promoter/partners must demonstrate their co-financing ability through a document evidencing the financing capacity.

The project grant rate shall be set at a level that complies with the State Aid rules in force and takes into account any and all other forms of public support granted to projects and/or the Project Promoter or partner, where relevant.

Regarding the State Aids rules, the grant rate of projects to be implemented shall be set in accordance with EU and national legislation, mainly the Commission Regulation (EC) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (General Block Exemption Regulation – GBER), articles 13, 14, 25, 28 and 29. The grant rate may vary from 25% to 70%, depending on the type of the state aid awarded, size of the Applicant and other elements included in the provisions of the Regulation which are relevant for the respective project.

For projects to increase production capacity (excluding fisheries), implementing innovative blue technologies/processes/solutions, available in the market and which are new-to-the enterprise, and do not bring any technological innovation, grant may be awarded under the conditions established on articles 13 and 14 of GBER on regional investment and operating aid.

The aid intensity for each beneficiary depends on the regional aid map which is in force at the time the aid is granted in the area concerned, and shall not exceed:

NUTS Code	NUTS II	Aid intensity (max.)
PT 11	Norte	25%
PT 16	Centro	25%
PT 18	Alentejo	25%
PT 20	Região Autónoma dos Açores	45%
PT 30	Região Autónoma da Madeira	35%
PT 150	Algarve	10%
PT 172	Península de Setúbal	10%
PT 171	<b>Grande Lisboa (parcialmente)</b>	
PT 1109	LAU 1 Mafra	10%
PT 1107	LAU 1 Loures	10%



PT 1114	LAU 1 Vila Franca de Xira	10%
PT 111127	LAU 2 S. João das Lampas e Terrugem	10%

The aid intensities for regional investment and operating aid may be increased by 10% for medium-sized enterprises and by 20% for small enterprises.

According to Article 25 of GBER (research and development projects), the aid intensity for each beneficiary shall not exceed:

- a) 50 % of the eligible costs for industrial research;
- b) 25 % of the eligible costs for experimental development.

The aid intensities for industrial research and experimental development may be increased up to a maximum aid intensity of 70 % of the eligible costs as follows:

- i) by 10 percentage points for medium-sized enterprises and by 20 percentage points for small enterprises;
- ii) by 15 percentage points if one of the following conditions is fulfilled:
  - the project involves effective collaboration between undertakings among which at least one is an SME, or is carried out in at least two Member States, or in a Member State and in a Contracting Party of the EEA Agreement, and no single undertaking bears more than 70 % of the eligible costs, or;
  - the project involves effective collaboration between an undertaking and one or more research and knowledge-dissemination organisations, where the latter bear at least 10 % of the eligible costs and have the right to publish their own research results;
  - the results of the project are widely disseminated through conferences, publication, open access repositories, or free or open source software.

According to Article 28 of GBER, the aid intensity shall not exceed 50 % of the eligible costs. In the particular case of aid for innovation advisory and support services the aid intensity can be increased up to 100 % of the eligible costs provided that the total amount of aid for innovation advisory and support services does not exceed EUR 200 000 per undertaking within any three year period.

According to Article 29 of GBER, aid to large undertakings shall only be compatible if they effectively collaborate with SMEs in the aided activity and the collaborating SMEs incur at least 30 % of the total eligible costs. The aid intensity shall not exceed 15 % of the eligible costs for large undertakings and 50 % of the eligible costs for SMEs.

This Regulation shall not apply to aid granted in the fishery and aquaculture sector, as covered by Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1184/2006 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000 (1), with the exception of training aid, aid for SMEs' access to finance, aid in the field of research and development, innovation aid for SMEs and aid for disadvantaged workers and workers with disabilities.

Certain types of State aid to the fisheries and aquaculture sector are deemed to be compatible with the internal market, and therefore do not have to wait for approval by the Commission before they are put in place. A notification is not needed in case of:

1. types of aid covered by a block exemption regulation (Commission Regulation 1388/2014 - the new block exemption regulation applicable to the sector was adopted on 16.12.2014 and entered into force on 01.01.2015).
2. de minimis aid (Commission Regulation 717/2014).

For Productive investments in aquaculture, according to Articles 46 and 48 of Regulation n.º 508/2014, of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2328/2003, (EC) No 861/2006, (EC) No 1198/2006 and (EC) No 791/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, ex vi article 31 Commission Regulation (EU) No 1388/2014 of 16 December 2014 declaring certain categories of aid to undertakings active in the production, processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, promoters must deliver a feasibility study including an environmental assessment of the operations, and an independent marketing report that clearly demonstrates that good and sustainable market prospects exist for the product.

Support shall not be granted to the farming of genetically modified organisms.

Support shall not be granted to aquaculture operations in marine protected areas, if it has been determined on the basis of an environmental impact assessment that the operation would generate significant negative environmental impact that cannot be adequately mitigated.

Support may be granted for the increase in production and/or modernisation of existing aquaculture enterprises, or for the construction of new ones, provided that the development is consistent with the multiannual national strategic plan for the development of aquaculture referred to in Article 34 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013:

[https://www.dgrm.mm.gov.pt/documents/20143/43770/Plano\\_Estrat%C3%A9gico\\_Aqui\\_cultura\\_2014\\_2020.pdf](https://www.dgrm.mm.gov.pt/documents/20143/43770/Plano_Estrat%C3%A9gico_Aqui_cultura_2014_2020.pdf)

Pursuant to Article 6.4.2 of the Regulation when deciding on the grant rate of the project, the Programme Operator shall take into account the economic benefits that are expected to be generated in the course of the project as a result of receiving a financial contribution.

## 1.7 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

The call is open from **10/02/2021** and remains open **until to 12:00:00 Continental Portugal 30/06/2021**.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

### 2.1 ELIGIBILITY OF PROJECT PROMOTERS AND PROJECT PARTNERS

**Eligible promoters:** SMEs<sup>4</sup> and large enterprises with no more than 25% public ownership, established as legal persons in Portugal are considered eligible applicants of projects.

Natural persons are not eligible.

Each promoter may submit one application only and may participate in up to 2 more as a partner.

**Eligible partners:** Any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as non-governmental organisations established as a legal person either in the Donor States or in Portugal, actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of a project, are considered eligible project partners (in accordance with article 7.2.2 of the EEA Grants 2014-2021 Regulation).

A Partnership Project is defined as cooperation between a Project Promoter in Portugal and at least one partner, implementing a project where all entities are independent of each other and perform substantial and relevant tasks in completion of the project. The partner should be actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of the project, and

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<sup>4</sup> According to Commission Recommendation C(2003) 1422 dated 6 May 2003, SMEs are defined as follows: "The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million."

it should share with the project promoter a common economic or social goal which is to be realized through the implementation of the project. The simple provision of services does not qualify as a project partnership.

A Donor partnership project is a project implemented in close cooperation with a project partner whose primary location is in one of the Donor States.

#### **Additional criteria for applicants and partners**

- a) The Applicant's main activities are closely related to the activities for which an application is made;
- b) The Applicant and Partner(s) and their legal representatives signing the application have clean criminal and tax records;
- c) The Partner(s) main activity is closely related to the activities in which its contribution is proposed;
- d) If the Applicant has one or more Partners, it is mandatory to present letters of Commitment by all partners (Template - Commitment Letter available on the website: [Documentos \(eeagrants.gov.pt\)](http://Documentos (eeagrants.gov.pt)))
- e) a draft Partnership Agreement defining the roles and responsibilities of the different partners, is attached to the application. A template for the Partnership Agreement is available on the website: [Documentos \(eeagrants.gov.pt\)](http://Documentos (eeagrants.gov.pt))

#### **Moreover, applicants are not eligible for funding if:**

- a) They are undertakings in difficulty (the definition of "undertaking in difficulty" is included in Article 2, paragraph 18 of Commission Regulation (EU) No.651/2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty);
- b) They are bankrupt, are entered in judicial administration or are under liquidation, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation;
- c) They have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity of relevance for the application, without evidence of substantial correction measures taken in the past years.

## 2.2 ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES

The assessment of the eligible expenditures for a specific project will be made based on the applicable state aid legal basis, as well as Article 8.2 and 8.3 of the EEA Grants 2014-2021 Regulation, namely:

**Eligible expenditures of projects are those actually incurred within the project, which meet the following criteria:**

- a) Are incurred between the first and final dates of eligibility of a project as specified in the project contract<sup>5</sup>;
- b) Are connected with the subject of the project contract and they are indicated in the detailed budget of the project;
- c) Are proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project;
- d) Must be used for the sole purpose of achieving the objective(s) of the project and its expected outcome(s), in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- e) Are identifiable and verifiable, in particular through being recorded in the accounting records of the Project Promoter and/or project partner and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the Project Promoter and/or project partner is established and according to generally accepted accounting principles; and
- f) Comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.

The inclusion of an expenditure item in a project budget template approved by the PO, cannot be considered as confirmation of eligibility of that expenditure item.

### 2.2.1 ELIGIBLE DIRECT EXPENDITURES IN A PROJECT

- **The cost of staff assigned to the project**, comprising actual salaries plus social security charges and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that this corresponds to the Project Promoter's and project partner's usual policy on remuneration. The corresponding salary costs of staff of national administrations are eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken;

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<sup>5</sup> Expenditures are considered to have been incurred when the cost has been invoiced, paid and the subject matter delivered (in case of goods) or performed (in case of services and works). Exceptionally, costs in respect of which an invoice has been issued in the final month of eligibility are also deemed to be incurred within the dates of eligibility if the costs are paid within 30 days of the final date for eligibility. Overheads and depreciation of equipment are considered to have been incurred when they are recorded on the accounts of the Project Promoter and/or project partner.

- **Travel and subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project**, having regard to the principle of proportionality, travel costs, including subsistence allowance, may be calculated as a lump sum, on the basis of defined rules approved by the Programme Operator;
  
- **Cost of new or secondhand equipment**, only the portion of the depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be considered eligible expenditure. In case the Programme Operator determines that the equipment is an integral and necessary component for achieving the outcomes of the project, the entire purchase price of that equipment may, by way of exception from the rule contained in paragraph 4 of Article 8.2, be eligible; Where the entire purchase price of equipment is eligible in accordance, the Programme Operator shall ensure that the Project Promoter:
  - a) Keeps the equipment in its ownership for a period of at least five years following the completion of the project and continues to use that equipment for the benefit of the overall objectives of the project for the same period;
  - b) Keeps the equipment properly insured against losses such as fire, theft or other normally insurable incidents both during project implementation and for at least five years following the completion of the project;
  - c) Sets aside appropriate resources for the maintenance of the equipment for at least five years following the completion of the project.
  
- **Costs of consumables and supplies**, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the project;
- **Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by a Project Promoter**, for the purposes of carrying out the project, provided that the awarding complies with the applicable rules on public procurement and this Regulation; and;
- **Costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract**, for each project. (publicity, evaluation, interpretation, translation and reproduction, others).

Indirect costs are eligible according to the article 8.5 of the EEA Grants 2014-2021 Regulation.

## 2.2.2. PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES

The maximum period of eligibility will be set in the project contract and shall normally be two years from the date Programme Operator signs the granting decision. Extensions may be authorized, subject to the approval of the Programme Operator. But under no

circumstance shall exceed the date mentioned in art 8.13.3 of the EEA Grants 2014-2021 Regulation (30 April 2024).

### 3. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted, in Portuguese or English (the application must be in English when the project includes a Donor Partner, except the administrative and official documents of Portuguese entities that may be in Portuguese), to the Programme Operator by the deadline stipulated in paragraph 1.7, electronically to <https://www.dgpm.mm.gov.pt/eea-grants-candidaturas>, using the applications forms and having attached all documents (see the Check List of documents to be submitted by applicants and partners in the application form).

In case of any technical problem with the submission of the application, this must be communicated through the email: [eeagrants@dgpm.mm.gov.pt](mailto:eeagrants@dgpm.mm.gov.pt) in advance of the deadline with documented evidence of the problems experienced. Any communication of technical problems after the deadline will not be considered.

The application form and the check list of all documents to be submitted are available on the website [Documentos \(eeagrants.gov.pt\)](http://Documentos (eeagrants.gov.pt))

It is suggested that before submitting your application to read the information on the EEA Grants Fund 2014-2021, available on the website <https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/en/eea-grants/>, namely, the following documents:

- **Regulation of the EEA Grants 2014-2021**  
<https://eeagrants.org/resources/regulation-implementation-eea-grants-2014-2021>
- **Beneficiary Manual and Guide State Aid Rules**  
[Documentos \(eeagrants.gov.pt\)](http://Documentos (eeagrants.gov.pt))

Indicate if there were any external consultants involved in the preparation of the application. If yes, please indicate which external consultant.

### 4. SELECTION AND DECISION PROCEDURES

Only the applications meeting the conditions in accordance with national and Community legislation, the Rules of the EEA Grants 2014-2021, the Guidelines - Description of the Selection Procedures and with this Call are acceptable in this procedure.

The project's selection and approval process is carried out in two sequencing phases, as follows:

### **1st phase – Administrative and eligibility criteria check**

The Programme Operator shall review the applications for compliance with administrative and eligibility criteria of the Programme. Applicants whose applications are rejected at this stage shall be informed and given 10 working days to appeal that decision.

#### **a) Administrative criteria**

Completeness of the proposal, i.e. the presence of all requested administrative forms and the proposal description (N.B. the completeness of the information contained in the proposal will be for the experts to evaluate; the eligibility checks only apply to the presence of the appropriate documents of the proposal).

For entities from Donor States, they must provide a translation of the official documents and a declaration of honor, in English, ensuring that they comply with the respective requirements, namely:

- i) Registration certificate (or similar), issued by the competent authority in the Donor State/Beneficiary State
- ii) Latest approved statutes (or similar), which proves that Partner's main activity is closely related to the activities in which its contribution is proposed
- iii) Declaration proving the VAT regime (if issued by the competent donor authority)

#### **b) Eligibility Criteria**

Proposals must fulfil all the eligibility criteria if they are to be retained for evaluation. The following eligibility criteria apply to all proposals submitted under a call:

- a) The proposal has been received by the Programme Operator up to the deadline date and time established in the Call (paragraph 1.7);
- b) The project must contribute to the objectives and expected outcomes defined in paragraph 1.2, as well as to the typologies identified in paragraph 1.3 (experts also confirm in the quality selection);
- c) Eligibility of promoters and partners in accordance with the paragraph 2.1;
- d) Non-existence of debts to the tax authority and Social Security<sup>6</sup>;
- e) Only complete applications would be accepted.

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<sup>6</sup> Promoter and Partners should present a self declaration they comply with these criteria (Template Statement of responsibility available on the website: [Documentos \(eeagrants.gov.pt\)](https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt))



## 2nd phase – Quality Selection

The final score will be assigned to the project by applying the evaluation criteria approved by the Programme Operator and published in this Call for Proposal.

Each application will be scored on a **scale of 0 to 100 points**, according to the evaluation criteria set out in in paragraph 5.

The evaluation criteria allow assessing the applicant's ability to complete the proposed action, namely the:

- 1) **Contribution to achieving the Programme's objectives and expected outcome(s) and outputs** - Contribution of the project for the overall objectives, outcomes and outputs of the Programme and for strengthen bilateral relations with the Donor States.
- 2) **Technical coherence and understanding** - Identification and understanding of the specific needs the proposal is intended to solve, Professional and/or institutional competencies, qualifications and requirements needed to implement the project and feasibility, clarity, logic and coherence of the proposal.
- 3) **Approach and added value** - Relevance and originality of the application in the scope of this Call, Research incorporation, relevance of expected results and potential impact in terms of stimulation of best-practice, innovation and its potential contribution for the Sustainable Development Objectives (ODS) of the United Nations Agenda 2030 and promotion and dissemination of results.
- 4) **Project financial coherence and Business Economic and financial feasibility** - ensuring this way stable and sufficient financial flows to maintain its activity throughout the period during which the proposal is being carried out and to participate in its funding and the feasibility and sustainability of the project.

Each application that meets the administrative and eligibility criteria shall be reviewed by two impartial experts appointed by the Programme Operator, at least one of which shall be independent of and external to the Programme Operator. The experts shall (separately) score the project in accordance with the selection criteria provided in paragraph 5 of this Call for proposal.

For the purposes of ranking the projects, the average scores awarded by the experts shall be used. In case the difference between the scores given by the two experts is higher than 30% of the highest score, a third expert shall be commissioned by the Programme Operator to score the project independently. In such cases the average score of the two closest scores shall be used to rank the projects.

Their consolidated assessment is considered the final assessment of a given project proposal and forms the basis for establishing the ranking lists of eligible grants applications.

The Programme Operator provides the Selection Committee with the list of ranked projects.

In preparing the ranking list, the PO may recommend reducing the project budget applied for, with an explanatory note for the Selection Committee for the grounds of such decision.

The Selection Committee shall review the ranked list of projects and, may modify the ranking in justified cases. The justification for the modifications shall be detailed in the minutes of the meeting of the Selection Committee. In case a project is rejected as a result of such amendment, the affected applicant shall be informed in writing regarding the justification for the amendment. The Selection Committee shall submit the list of recommended projects to the Programme Operator.

The Programme Operator shall establish whether the selection process has been conducted in accordance with the EEA Grants 2014-2021 Regulation and if the Selection Committee's recommendations comply with the rules and objectives of the programme. Following such verification, the Programme Operator (Decision Body), based on the recommendation of the Selection Committee, shall make a decision regarding which projects shall be supported. In case the Decision Body modifies the decision of the Selection Committee, it shall inform the Selection Committee and provide it with a justification.

Applications scoring lower than 50 points will not be selected for funding.

Applications that have sufficient quality (i.e. more than 50 points) but cannot receive a grant due to the limitations in funding set in paragraph 1.4 of this Call, will be put on a ranked reserve list.

In case funds are uncommitted, a second call may be launched and shall make available any remaining funds for re-granting.

Further details are provided in paragraph 5. of this Call for proposal.

## 5. SELECTION CRITERIA

In the selection of applications relating to the types of projects provided for in paragraph 1.3 of this call will be applied taking into account the assessment criteria and weightings, as the following table:

SelectionCriteria	Weighting (W)	Description	Criteria Classification (CC) (points)*
1. Contribution to achieving the Programme's objectives and expected outcome(s) and outputs	25%	Demonstration of the contribution for the overall objectives, outcomes and outputs of the Programme:	
		a) Increased competitiveness of Portuguese companies within the focus area of Blue Growth and bring more innovation in their products, services and processes.	25%*CC1a
		b) Demonstration of the strengthen bilateral relations with the Donor States through projects with Donor Partners, through partnerships with added value for the project and demonstration of its sustainability.	25%*CC1b
		c) Demonstration of the contribution of the project to the Programme's expected outcomes and outputs.	50%*CC1c
2. Technical coherence and understanding	25%	a) Identification and understanding of the specific needs the proposal is intended to solve.	20%*CC2a
		b) Demonstration of solid knowledge and experience relevant for the development of the project accordingly with the objectives which aims to achieve.	20%*CC2b
		c) Qualification of the team members in the subject matter of the present call for proposals and of the proposed project, as demonstrated by relevant academic qualifications and sufficient (for senior members this would mean several years) relevant professional experience.	20%*CC2c
		d) Identification of distinct, relevant and realistic deliverables.	20%*CC2d
		e) Feasibility, clarity, logic and coherence of the proposal.	20%*CC2e
3. Approach and added value	25%	a) Relevance and originality of the application in the scope of this Call (degree of innovation of products or services based on the state of the art and previous work carried out by the proponent team and the development/implementation of green solutions).	25%*CC3a
		b) Development user driver research base innovation (TRL <sup>7</sup> 4 - 9 in accordance with Horizon 2020 guidelines). Research incorporation into development of new products, services or production processes, results of scientific work previously developed by the promoters alone or in partnership with institutions of the scientific and technological system (Universities, Research Centres, etc.);(25%).	25%*CC3b
		c) Demonstration within the scope of the project that it is foreseeable the results of the solution will give rise to Intellectual, Industrial and / or Patents Rights; (20%)	20%*CC3c
		d) Relevance of expected results and potential impact in terms of stimulation of best-practice, innovation and its potential contribution for the Sustainable Development Objectives (ODS) of the United Nations Agenda 2030. (15%)	15%*CC3d
		e) Contribution to the promotion and dissemination of results within the strategic priorities defined in this Call (degree and quality of the	15%*CC3e

<sup>7</sup> Technology readiness levels (TRL)

		proposal for dissemination and dissemination of the products and / or services developed) (15%)	
4. Project financial coherence and Business Economic and financial feasibility	25%	a) Feasibility of proposed project in terms of coherence of resources and timetables.	20%*CC4a
		b) Demonstration that the project is implemented with the aim of achieving economic efficiency.	20%*CC4b
		c) Budget: consistency of the expenditures with the foreseen activities.	20%*CC4c
		d) Business Plan: feasibility and sustainability.	40%*CC4d

* Score CC	Explanation
0	The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
1 – 20 (poor)	The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
21 - 40 (fair)	While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.
41 - 60 (good)	The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.
61 - 80 (very good)	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible
81 - 100 (excellent)	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

## 5.1 CLASSIFICATION OF EACH SELECTION CRITERIA

Accepted applications will be classified according to each criterion on a scale of **0 to 100 points**.

## 5.2 FINAL CLASSIFICATION

The Final Classification (FC) of each application is based on the scale of 0 to 100 points for rating criteria aggregation, using the following formula:

$$FC = W_1 * (25% * CC_{1a} + 25% * CC_{1b} + 50% * CC_{1c}) + W_2 * (20% * CC_{2a} + 20% * CC_{2b} + 20% * CC_{2c} + 20% * CC_{2d} + 20% * CC_{2e}) + W_3 * (25% * CC_{3a} + 25% * CC_{3b} + 20% * CC_{3c} + 15% * CC_{3d} + 15% * CC_{3d}) + W_4 * (20% * CC_{4a} + 20% * CC_{4b} + 20% * CC_{4c} + 40% * CC_{4d})$$

- W1... W4 = Weighting Criteria
- CC1a... CC4c = Criteria Classification

(The classification will be established to 2 decimal places without rounding)

The application to be submitted under this call may be subject of an approval only if its final classification is **higher or equal than 50 points**, resulting from the application of the selection criteria and methodology presented.

The application who obtains a final score **lower than 50 points** will be excluded for the purpose of granting financial support.

Funding of applications also depends on the total available amount previously established in the paragraph 1.4 of this call.

Applications that meet a final score **higher or equal than 50 points** are ranked in descending order according to the scores from the assessment of selection criteria within the financial allocation available.

## 6. NOTICE OF DECISION TO BENEFICIARY

The communication on the final decision of the applications will be made to the beneficiary within 120 working days after the deadline for submission of applications specified in paragraph 1.7 of this Call.

The Programme Operator shall notify applicants regarding the results of the selection process within 10 working days from the selection preliminary decision.

All applicants will be notified thereof and have the right to complain during a maximum period of 10 working days, from the date of the notification, in accordance with articles 121 et seq. of the Portuguese Code of Administrative Procedure, approved by the Decree-Law No. 4/2015, of January 7.

Once the prior hearing period has been completed, the PO will analyze the complaints and prepare a final selection decision, which will be submitted to the Selection Committee.

The Selection Committee shall submit the final list of recommended projects to the Programme Operator (Decision Body).

All applicants will be notified of the final decision and the results will be publicize on websites where the advertisement was released.

## 7. PAYMENT FLOWS

The Programme Operator may make payments to beneficiaries in the following ways:

- The first advance instalment shall be paid following the signature of the Project Contract. Subsequent advance instalments shall be paid after the approval of Project Interim Reports (Financial and Progress).
- The frequency of interim reporting to the Programme Operator shall be based on an agreed timetable but will take place at least two times a year.
- Advance instalments are offset against incurred expenditure reported in the Project Interim Reports.
- The Project Promoters will receive subsequent advance instalment under conditions established on the Project Contract.
- If an irregularity leading to financial corrections is detected, all payments to the promoters and partners may be canceled, including payments to other projects within the Programme.
- The level of advance instalments to be provided to Project Promoters shall be linked to the project implementation duration according to the overview below:

Project Implementation Duration	First Advance Payment	Second Advance Payment	Third Advance Payment	Fourth Advance Payment	Final Payment (reimbursement)
	M1-M6	M7-M12	M13-M18	M19-M24	90 days after the Final Report Approval
<12 Months	50%	40%			10%
12-18 Months	40%	30%	20%		10%
18- 24 Months	15%	25%	25%	25%	10%

**Final Payment:** The sum of the advance and interim payments cannot exceed 90% of the total project grant at any time during project. The payment of the final balance will be disbursed within 30 calendar days after the approval of the final report.

## 8. ADITIONAL INFORMATION

**E-mail contact for additional information:** [eeagrants@dgpm.mam.gov.pt](mailto:eeagrants@dgpm.mam.gov.pt)

An answer will be given by email within 3 working days.

A Frequently Asked Questions section (FAQ) will be published on the PO's Programme website [Documentos \(eeagrants.gov.pt\)](http://Documentos (eeagrants.gov.pt)) based on questions received from potential applicants and partners. The FAQ will be updated on a regular basis.

**Phone number contact:** (+351) 218 291 000 - available **Mondays to Thursdays, from 10:00 to 12:30.**

**Address:**

Directorate General for Maritime Policy

Av. Dr. Alfredo Magalhães Ramalho, n.º 6 – 1495-006 ALGÉS - PORTUGAL

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