



BLUEACTIONAA

Community led
Action Call
**1st Informational
WEBINAR**

January 22nd, 2026

EMPOWERING
COMMUNITY- LED
ACTION IN THE
ATLANTIC & ARCTIC



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation programme under Grant Agreement number 101215504



EMPOWERING COMMUNITY- LED
ACTION IN THE ATLANTIC & ARCTIC

Webinar organised by:



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Emmanouil Detsis, ESF



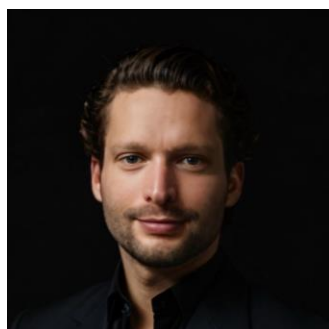
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Niall McDonough, MI



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Alessandro Colombo, AIR Centre





AGENDA

- Introduction to BlueActionAA
- Introduction to the Call
- Technical Support
- Application and evaluation process
- Distribution of the funds and payment milestones
- Timeline
- Q&A





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EU MISSIONS

RESTORE OUR OCEAN & WATERS



Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030

Three Policy objectives and two enablers

PROTECT AND RESTORE MARINE AND FRESHWATERS ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY

- Protect at least 30% and strictly protect 10% EU's sea areas
- Restore 25.000 km free flowing rivers
- Marine nature restoration targets (incl. degraded seabeds, coastal ecosystems)

PREVENT AND ELIMINATE POLLUTION OF OUR OCEANS, SEAS AND WATERS

- Reduce by at least 50% plastic litter
- Reduce by at least 30% microplastics
- Reduce by at least 50% nutrient losses, chemical pesticides

MAKE THE BLUE ECONOMY CARBON- NEUTRAL AND CIRCULAR

- Net zero maritime emissions
- Zero carbon aquaculture,
- Low carbon multipurpose use of marine space

ENABLERS

Digital Ocean and Waters Knowledge system

Public mobilization and engagement



EUROPEAN UNION

Mission lighthouses:

sites to pilot, demonstrate, develop and deploy the Mission activities across EU seas and river basins

Baltic & North sea basin



MAKE THE BLUE ECONOMY CARBON-NEUTRAL AND CIRCULAR

Mediterranean sea basin



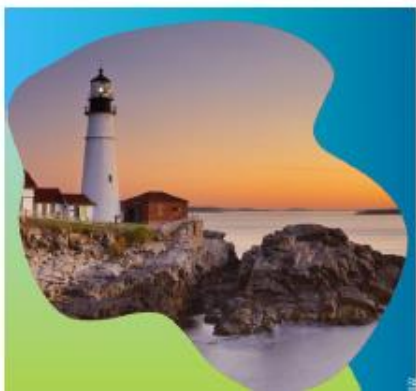
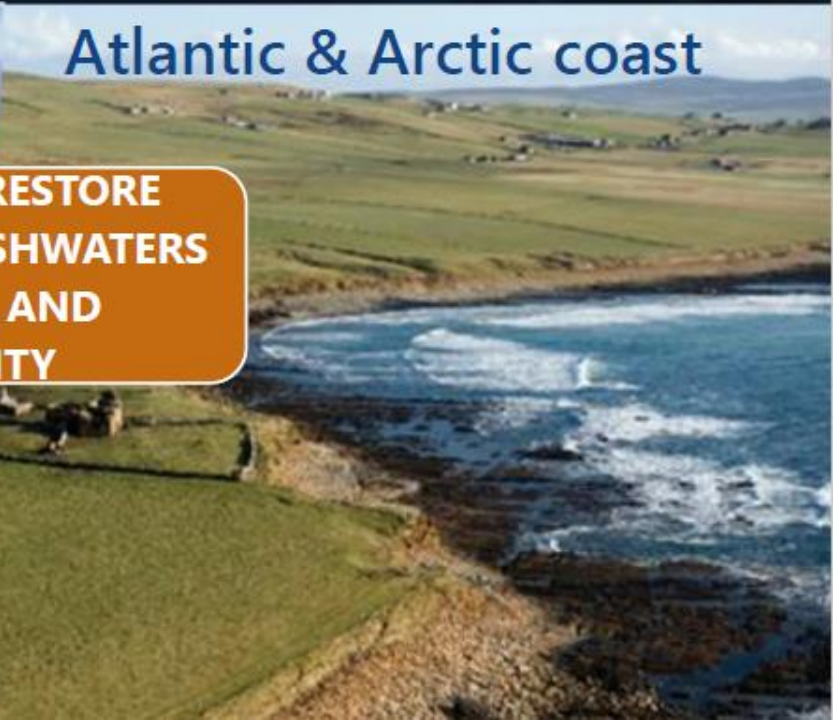
PREVENT AND ELIMINATE POLLUTION OF OUR OCEAN, SEAS AND WATERS

Danube river basin



PROTECT AND RESTORE MARINE AND FRESHWATERS ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY

Atlantic & Arctic coast





Phase 1 – PILOTING

The Mission Ocean and Waters piloting phase (2022-2025) focused on implementing solutions within four lighthouse regions: Atlantic-Arctic, Mediterranean, Baltic-North Sea, and Danube-Black Sea. Each region concentrated on 1 specific objective.

Key components

- **Regional Lighthouses:** These area-based sites act as the central hubs for piloting activities.
- **Research and Innovation (R&I):** The plan relies on R&I projects funded through Horizon Europe to develop the necessary solutions. Over 330 demonstration sites are already operational across various projects.
- **Implementation Platform:** A dedicated platform was established (operational since February 2023) to coordinate and integrate activities across the different Mission lighthouses, acting as a one-stop-shop for project coordination.
- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** The piloting phase involves developing participatory processes and providing direct support (technical assistance, feasibility studies) to key communities, including ports, fisheries, and island communities. This is to ensure broad participation and the eventual social and political acceptance of restoration actions.



Phase 2 – DEPLOYMENT

The Mission Ocean and Waters deployment phase (2026-2030) focuses on scaling up and replicating solutions developed during the initial phase (2022-2025) across all "lighthouse" areas

Key components

Political anchoring: Mission as delivery mechanism for European Ocean Pact, European Water Resilience Strategy

Broad participation and governance: The plan emphasizes enabling broad participation from citizens, stakeholders, and communities, fostering a strong governance element across all lighthouses and at national level

• **Deployment and replication:** Solutions that were developed and piloted in Phase 1 will be deployed, replicated, and scaled up across all sea and river basins.

• **Support for authorities and communities:** Practical and accessible support will be provided to relevant authorities and communities to help facilitate the large-scale implementation of innovative measures.

• **Open calls:** Calls will be launched to support the scale-up of innovative actions that contribute to the Mission's objectives.

• **Shift from thematic focus:** The thematic compartmentalization by geographic area seen in Phase 1 will be reduced, allowing for a more integrated deployment of solutions across all basins.



ATLANTIC - ARCTIC



BALTIC & NORTH SEA



DANUBE-BLACK SEA



MEDITERRANEAN

MISSION LIGHTHOUSES

Mission lighthouses are sites to test, demonstrate, and deploy the Mission activities across EU seas and river basins.

They try out new ideas and involve local businesses and people in the process.



EU MISSIONS

RESTORE OUR OCEAN & WATERS



BLUEACTIONAA

EMPOWERING COMMUNITY-LED ACTION
IN THE ATLANTIC & ARCTIC

BAAA puts local communities at the heart of restoring our ocean and waters. Across the **Atlantic and Arctic regions**, we support people and communities to take ambitious action to protect and revive marine and freshwater ecosystems.

We aim to:



Provide demonstrable, measurable progress towards the **Mission's** objectives through well-managed, community-led actions



Support for EU member states and stakeholders in implementing marine and freshwater ecosystem related legislation



Reach increased engagement and resource mobilization from communities to restore oceans, seas, and waters.



Enhance readiness at the local level to deploy innovative restoration **solutions**.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TEAM



AIRCENTRE



SINTEF



Norwegian Institute for Water Research



universidade
de aveiro



University of
Southern Denmark





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INTRODUCTION TO THE TEAM

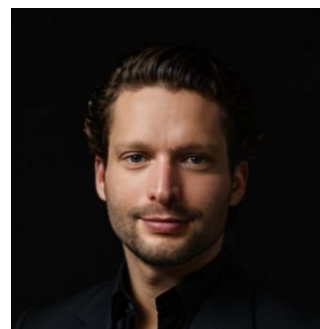
Main contact points for the call

technical.support@blueactionaa.eu for technical questions concerning the submission platform /or the cascade call grant process

info@blueactionaa.eu for any questions you might have related to topic specific questions



Mariette and Emmanuel from ESF



Sebastian from NIVA and Niall from MI



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Introduction of the Call

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INTRODUCTION OF THE CALL



Purpose

Mobilise and engage communities across the **Atlantic and Arctic regions** in ambitious efforts to restore and protect marine and freshwater ecosystems



Funding

7.000.000€ total budget, maximum 2.000.000€ per project



Duration of projects

6-24 months

Eligible Applicants



- **Entities legally established in :**
 - the Member States of the EU, including their outermost regions
 - Overseas Countries and Territories
 - Horizon Europe associated countries in September 2025
- **Be part of the Target Groups (TGs):**
 - Regional and local public authorities.
 - NGOs, foundations (public and private), professional associations, civil society and citizen associations, engaged in local development and nature conservation activities.
 - SMEs and Large Enterprises.
 - Cultural and Educational organisations.
 - Relevant EU Research Infrastructures, research organisations and academia.

Consortium Composition



Consortium Composition

- Minimum 2 entities: it is not possible to apply as a single entity
- Maximum 12 entities
- At least 2 partners from different TGs
- Established link with the **local and regional communities** that the project is associated with

Expected outcome(s)



- Long term impact and Contribution to the Mission Ocean Waters objectives:
 - Protect and restore marine and freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity, in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030
 - Prevent and eliminate pollution of our ocean, seas and waters, in line with the EU Action Plan Towards Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil
 - Make the sustainable blue economy carbon-neutral and circular, in line with the proposed European Climate Law and the comprehensive vision outlined in the Sustainable Blue Economy Strategy

Expected outcome(s)



→ Applications should focus on implementing innovative solutions

Examples:

- Digital innovation,
- Ocean or freshwater observation,
- Monitoring or restoration,
- Data sharing,
- Circular blue economy,
- Cultural heritage and identity,
- Skill development,
- Citizen science and ocean literacy,
- Conservation and environmental protection,
- Tourism,
- Maritime infrastructure and transport,
- Energy production,
- Partnership and network
- ...



Multiple submission & funding limit

Multiple submissions are allowed, BUT each entity can only be funded **ONCE** in the frame of BAAA.

- The funding limit per entity is 500k€
 - If you request 2M€ for your project, you must have at least 4 entities in your consortium, asking for 500k€ maximum



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Expression of Interest (EOI)

The EOI aims to gather preliminary interest from potential applicants for the call.

This information will be used to develop information days during the call period (November 2025 – May 2026).

Please fill it by clicking here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/CYSPXyQn2d>



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Technical Support

info@blueactionaa.eu



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE I



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- **Targeted support for funded projects**
The technical assistance will be provided to successful grant recipients.
- **Tailored to your needs**
The technical assistance is based on what you request and is agreed individually (i.e., per funded project) with the BlueActionAA consortium.
- **Focus: Guidance, advice and connections. The goal is to help you deliver your project objectives in line with BlueActionAA goals.**
- **Examples may include, but are not limited to:**
 - Monitoring methods
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Project design and management
 - Cost-benefit and impact considerations



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE II



info@blueactionaa.eu

- Needs are identified early – by yourself (!)
 - Applicants must explain expected barriers, challenges, and expertise gaps in their proposal. --> The earlier you inform us about your expected needs, the better for you.
- Three ways to address gaps (cf. Call description!)

Applicants can:

 - Work with external experts,
 - Request limited, targeted BlueActionAA assistance,
 - Join the BlueActionAA Technical Assistance Mentoring Programme
- Mentoring option available

Connects projects with experienced experts to strengthen both technical skills and collaboration capacity.
- Agreed upon *before* grant signature
 - Final technical assistance plans are confirmed before the grant agreement is signed and depend on the project scope and complexity.



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Application and Evaluation process

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HOW TO APPLY

- Open Call platform: for a first connection and creation of account: [ESF platform](#) (for the first connection and creation of profile).
- For subsequent connections: <https://esf.smartsimple.ie>
- All the Open Call documents and templates available for download at: <https://blueactionaa.eu/community-led-action-call/>

<https://blueactionaa.eu/community-led-action-call/>



ABOUT THE PROJECT

OUR CALLS

OUR PROJECTS

RESOURCES

NEWS

CONNECT & NETWORK

OUTREACH



APPLY HERE

For a first connection, click https://esf.smartsimple.ie/s_signup.jsp?token=XVtQC1oGYV5ZSxtZXxJXR1JWYU1H3Rt

This link is to create an applicant profile on ESF's platform, which is compulsory to be able to submit an application


For subsequent connections, click <https://esf.smartsimple.ie>

Once you have your profile created, to connect on ESF's platform. There, they will have access to all the Open Calls currently open on ESF's platform, and applicants will have to click on "apply" next to the BAAA call




APPLICATION PLATFORM

First connection on the
application platform

 Platform Registration

Contact Information

 Instructions
Required fields are marked with an asterisk "**".

If you have already logged on to our platform to submit an application in the past with the same email address, please login to our platform
https://esf.smartsimple.ie/s_Login.jsp.
If you need assistance, please write to esf-panels@esf.org

* Title

* First Name

* Surname

* Email

* Country

protected by reCAPTCHA
[Privacy](#) [Terms](#)



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APPLICATION PLATFORM

The Portal



Welcome to European Science Foundation

ESF (European Science Foundation) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation committed to advancing high-quality research across Europe and beyond since 1974. With established records in all disciplines, ESF offers expert, independent management and support throughout the entire research lifecycle—from conception and implementation to evaluation, sustainability, and impact. ESF operates across diverse scientific networks, funding programs, and EU-funded projects, and specialises in research assessment, grant evaluation, and comprehensive support—spanning scientific, operational, communication, administrative, and financial management.

Driven by a dynamic, highly skilled, and international team, ESF is dedicated to catalysing innovative solutions to enhance the impact of research worldwide.

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Warning

We have detected that you are using a pop-up blocker. To use some features, you will need to allow pop-ups or disable your pop-up blocking software. We have detected that you are using an unsupported browser. If you continue to use this browser, the site may not display properly. To view a list of supported browsers, please visit wiki.smartsimple.com/wiki/Browser

Email:

Password:

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Open Calls

Specified times correspond to Paris (France) time.

1-10 of 10  

External Open Calls

Type	Call Name	Deadline Date	Action
AgroServ TNA	AgroServ Transnational/Virtual Access 2025 - Call 4	2025-10-15 at 16:00:00	The call deadline has passed.
King Baudouin Foundation	KBF Lol 2025	2026-01-08 at 17:00:00	The call deadline has passed.
EOSC	EOSC Gravity - Evaluators Call	2026-01-30 at 14:00:00	Apply
Swiss Re Institute – AXA Research Fund	Joint Risk Resilience Partnership: Metabolic Health 2025	2026-02-18 at 12:00:00	Apply
EOSC	EOSC Federation - Second wave of EOSC Nodes enrolment call	2026-02-18 at 17:00:00	Apply
EOSC	EOSC Gravity - Inter Project Grants Open Call 1	2026-02-18 at 17:00:00	Apply
EOSC	EOSC Gravity - Preparatory Grants Open Call	2026-02-18 at 17:00:00	Apply
Fight Kids Cancer	Fight Kids Cancer 2026 - Clinical Trial Full Applications	2026-03-06 at 12:00:00	Apply
Fight Kids Cancer	Fight Kids Cancer 2026 - Translational Research Full Applications	2026-03-06 at 12:00:00	Apply
BAAA	BAAA-Community Led-Pilot Action Call	2026-05-29 at 14:00:00	Apply

EVALUATION PROCESS

- Eligibility Check
- Pre Assessment by External Evaluators, based on 3 criteria: Excellence, Impact, Implementation, scored from 0 to 5.
- Panel Meetings with a final ranking produced by the External Evaluators and a BAAA panel
- Consensus Report
- Results announced on the 30/09/26

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Distribution of the funds and Payment Milestones

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DISTRIBUTION OF THE FUNDS AND PAYMENT MILESTONES

For selected applicants

The grant is awarded to the project coordinator only, as a **lump-sum scheme**:

Grant payments are linked to **completion of milestones and deliverables**, not to actual cost evidence.

There will be **no financial reporting** required from the projects.



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DISTRIBUTION OF THE FUNDS AND PAYMENT MILESTONES

For selected applicants

6 Months Project	Deliverables	When	Funding (% of total)
Milestone 1	Implementation plan & KPIs definition, initiation meeting	M1	20%
Milestone 2	Final review Impact analysis Communication plan delivered	M6	80%

12 Months Project	Deliverables	When	Funding (% of total)
Milestone 1	Implementation plan & KPIs definition, initiation meeting	M1	25%
Milestone 2	Mid-term review	M6	50%
Milestone 3	Final review Impact analysis Communication plan delivered	M12	25%

DISTRIBUTION OF THE FUNDS AND PAYMENT MILESTONES

For selected applicants

18 Months Project	Deliverables	When	Funding (% of total)
Milestone 1	Implementation plan & KPIs definition, initiation meeting	M1	30%
Milestone 2	Mid-term review	M9	40%
Milestone 3	Final review Impact analysis Communication plan delivered	M18	30%

24 Months Project	Deliverables	When	Funding (% of total)
Milestone 1	Implementation plan & KPIs definition, initiation meeting	M1	35%
Milestone 2	First review	M8	20%
Milestone 3	Second review	M16	20%
Milestone 4	Final review Impact analysis Communication plan delivered	M24	25%

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Timeline

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TIMELINE



Call open for Applications

- Opening date for call: **28/11/2025**
- Deadline for submission: **29/05/2026**, 14:00h CET.

Evaluation

- Evaluation period: **01/06/2026 – 29/09/2026**
- Results: The communication of the evaluation's final results will be on **30/09/2026**, marking the beginning of the BAAC-01 sub-agreement signing process. There will not be any prior disclosure of information about the evaluation process before that date.

Onboarding of Successful Applicants

- Sub-grant agreement signature: **01/10/2026 – 30/10/2026**
- Starting date of the projects: **from November 2026**
- Expected winning projects Inception / Kick-off meeting: **from November 2026.**

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• Q&A



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Helpdesk

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**Do not forget to fill our
EOI !**

**[https://forms.office.com/
e/CYSPXyQn2d](https://forms.office.com/e/CYSPXyQn2d)**

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