

Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership

ONLINE INFORMATION SESSION
22ND FEBRUARY 2024



A Few Housekeeping Notes

- ✓ This session will be recorded. The presentation and recording will be uploaded on the MCST website.
- ✓ Q&A time will follow the presentation
- ✓ During the presentation, use the chat box to ask questions. We will get to them following the presentation.
- ✓ Please remain muted unless you need to speak.

The Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST)

The governmental body responsible for Research and Innovation (R&I), space, science, and technology in Malta.

MCST was established in 1988 to advise the government on science and technology policy. Today its remit has expanded to include responsibilities associated with R&I policy, internationalisation, public engagement in STEM, and the implementation of various R&I programmes, at the national and transnational levels.

MCST also houses the NCP Network for the EU's Framework Programme, currently Horizon Europe.





**INTERNATIONALISATION
UNIT**



Aims and Objectives

- The main aim of the internationalisation unit is to **strengthen international R&I collaboration amongst local and foreign researchers and stakeholders**
- The Unit implements regional and international funding programmes, using national funds, aimed at the local R&I stakeholder community

Internationalisation Programmes

Multilateral Programmes:

- Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)



Bilateral Programmes:

- SINO-MALTA Fund
- MCST-TÜBİTAK

MCST TÜBİTAK 2022
JOINT CALL FOR R&I PROPOSALS



Horizon Europe Partnerships:

- Clean Energy Transition Partnership (CETP)
- Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP)
- Transforming Health and Care Systems Partnership (THCS)



Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership

INTRODUCING THE SBEP PARTNERSHIP
CHRISTY BALDACCHINO



A Co-Funded Partnership

The new generation of EU Partnerships **brings together the European Commission and public and/or private partners** to address Europe's most pressing challenges.

CO-FUNDED

Commitments by national partners for financial and in-kind contributions and co-funded up to 30% by the European Union



Aim

The Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership aims to boost the transformation needed towards a climate-neutral, sustainable, productive and competitive blue economy by 2030, while creating and supporting the conditions for healthy oceans for the people by 2050.

Vision

The Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership will design, steer and support a just and inclusive transition to a regenerative, resilient and sustainable blue economy.



Policy Context

The Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership will deliver solutions to enable the European Green Deal and Digital Europe strategies and ultimately the UN Sustainable Development Goals.





Co-Funded Calls



2024 Co-Funded Call

- ▶ The 2024 Joint Call is the 2nd SBEP Call
- ▶ Brings together financial resources at both national and regional levels from 26 countries with additional financial backing from the European Commission.
- ▶ The intervention areas of this SBEP call provide actionable routes and concrete steps to approach the range of challenges and opportunities that the Blue Economy is facing.



Priority Areas

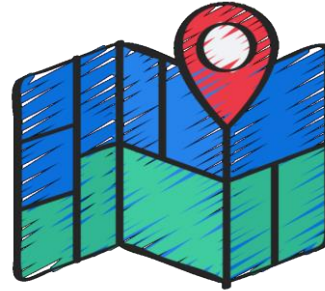
The 4 Priority Areas below will be the basis for this call:



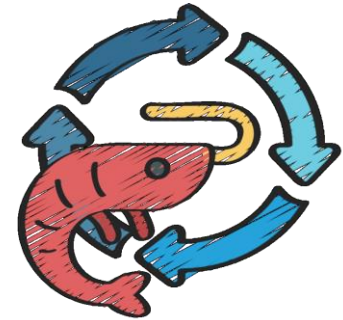
Digital Twins of the Ocean (DTO) at regional sub-basin scale



Blue Economy Sectors, development of marine multi-use infrastructures



Planning and managing sea-uses at the regional level



Blue BioResources



UN Ocean Decade

- ▶ This call is co-branded as part of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, coordinated by IOC/UNESCO with the aim that the selected for funding Research and Innovation projects are endorsed as Ocean Decade Projects.
- ▶ Evaluation of applications to this call will include the Decade Coordination Unit as an observer, which is the UN agency leading the implementation of the Decade. This will allow us to estimate if the selected projects align with the endorsement criteria for Decade Actions.
- ▶ Projects will be able to use the Ocean Decade branding in their communication.



UN Ocean Decade

- ▶ Some of the endorsement criteria include:
 - ▶ Contribute to one or more Decade challenges and accelerate the generation or use of knowledge and understanding of the ocean
 - ▶ Co-designed and/or co-delivered by knowledge generators or users hence facilitating the uptake of science
 - ▶ Open Access
 - ▶ Strengthens existing or creates new partnerships across nations
 - ▶ Overcomes barriers to diversity and equity
 - ▶ Collaborate with and engage local and indigenous knowledge holders

More details can be found on pages 7 and 8 of the call text



Sustainable Blue
Economy Partnership



Co-funded by
the European Union

***“Unified Paths to a Climate-Neutral,
Sustainable, and Resilient Blue Economy:
Engaging Civil Society, Academia, Policy &
Industry”***



What is the Call about?

- ▶ Aims to support transnational research and innovation projects of 36 months addressing one of the four priority areas.
- ▶ Projects must be impact-driven contributions to the transformation into a blue economy for a more resilient future and towards carbon neutrality targets.
- ▶ Includes 38 funding organisations from 26 countries; 20 MS, 5 AC and Brazil
- ▶ Total Estimated Budget: EUR 40 million
- ▶ Total Budget for Maltese partners: EUR 500K





Intervention Areas



1. Digital Twins of the Ocean (DTO) at regional sub-basin scale



- ▶ Aim at assessing the short to long-term consequences of current decisions with the help of 30/50 years of forecasting models.
- ▶ Build realistic digital representations which include the main processes of the targeted marine ecosystems.
- ▶ Study areas in the regional sea basins must be selected based on the accuracy and availability of information for the proposed coastal areas.



2. Blue Economy Sectors, Development of Marine multi-use Infrastructures

- ▶ Transition of the Blue Economy:
 - ▶ Emphasise technology and process development, solution orientation and integrated approaches promoting minimising pollution and circularity to develop a sustainable Blue Economy taking into consideration climate change, natural hazard challenges and biodiversity crisis.
- ▶ Improve co-existence and multi-use infrastructures
 - ▶ In view of the increasing demand for space, activities and functions at sea, multi-use spatial concepts, including multi-use infrastructures, bring a potential for synergistic benefits for associated sectors.





3. Planning and managing sea uses at the regional level

A project needs, at a minimum, to address one or more of the following, including a multi-actor approach:



- ▶ Fostering the full use of scientific knowledge for effective management and conservation
- ▶ Changing Environmental Scenarios
- ▶ Biodiversity conservation and restoration
- ▶ All marine activities in the regional sea-basins
- ▶ Space-based remote sensing
- ▶ Development of innovative Decision Support Tools (DSTs)



4. Blue BioResources

- ▶ The Blue Bioresources represent an important component of the broader blue economy, delivering food, feed and bio-based products for Europe and export markets. To achieve sustainability, it is important to consider all stages of the bioresources value chain, from production (fisheries and aquaculture) to seafood processing including biotechnology products.
- ▶ Proposals should address one of the following:
 - ▶ Sustainable Fisheries and Harvesting
 - ▶ Sustainability in aquaculture
 - ▶ Blue Biotechnology



Call Process, Eligibility Criteria and Submission Process



Project Consortia

- ▶ Consortium composition: partners from a minimum of three independent legal entities from three different countries participating in the call
- ▶ Strongly encouraged to involve stakeholders (SMEs, industries, authorities, public administrations, associations, civil society organisations).
- ▶ Expected to consider a minimum of two European sea basins and to assess the project proposal's impact on various basins.





Project Consortia



LOOKING FOR A PARTNER OR A PROJECT TO JOIN?

USE THE SBEP PARTNER SEARCH TOOL AVAILABLE HERE:

<https://proposals.etag.ee/sustainable-blue/2024/partner-search>



Participating Countries

38 Funding Organisations from 26 Countries:

20 Member States, 5 Associated Countries and 1 Third Country as follows:

Belgium, Brazil, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, **Malta**, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, Tunisia, and Türkiye.



Forming a Consortium



- ▶ One partner must assume the role of **Coordinator**:
 - ▶ Ensure eligibility of own entity and partner entities within the consortium according to national/regional regulations
 - ▶ Submits (pre-)proposal on behalf of consortium on the EPSS by the stipulated deadlines
- ▶ All consortium partners must have a **Participant Identification Code (PIC)**



Provisional timeline





Call Requirements

- ▶ Proposals must meet:
 - ▶ General Criteria (on the whole)
 - ▶ National Criteria (per partner)





General Criteria

- ▶ Projects must address **one priority area**
- ▶ Projects must be developed at **Pan-European level**
- ▶ Maximum project duration: **36 months**
- ▶ The requested funding by partners in any one country **cannot exceed 60% of the total requested funding** of a proposal.
- ▶ Proposals are to be complete, written in English, submitted to the EPSS and respect page limits.





Recommendations



- ▶ Proposals should go **beyond the state-of-the-art**
- ▶ **Relevance to policies framed under Blue Economy** and consider synergies with research activities funded by other EU missions, instruments, programmes or projects.
- ▶ Cover **broad geographic scale** or **considers impact on other EU sea basins**
- ▶ Contribute to **cross-cutting themes** (SRIA enablers) including, gender dimension in research, ocean literacy, development of capacity-building activities, open data policy, knowledge transfer, young people etc.



Recommendations

- ▶ Participation of legal entities from countries that are not participating in the Call as **self-funded partners**
- ▶ Strongly encouraged to cover a broad geographic scale by covering at least 2 sea basins and assess the impact of the projects on several EU sea basins.
- ▶ Integrate the gender dimension of R&I activities
- ▶ Involve stakeholders from the quadruple helix
- ▶ Every partner should have a PIC Code





Submission Procedure

- ▶ Step 1: Pre-Proposal Submission
 - ▶ Annex D – (Pre-)proposal forms on SBEP Website
 - ▶ The coordinator **creates an account on EPSS** (Online Submission Tool).
 - ▶ The coordinator **adds partners** to the consortium. Partners can input their own data and need to **validate** their participation.
 - ▶ Coordinator **uploads project description** (5 pages), including the **required budget for each partner and other details**.



Submission Procedure

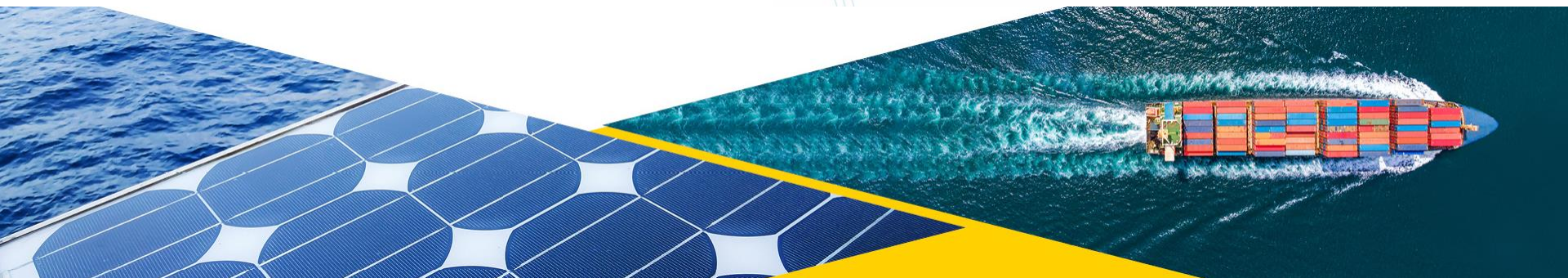
- ▶ Step 2: Full Proposal Submission (Upon Invitation)
 - ▶ Annex E: Full Proposal Form
 - ▶ 16-page project description
 - ▶ Required detailed budget for each partner
 - ▶ **Information given in pre-proposals is binding**
 - ▶ Further national documentation and annexes as per national Rules



Website Documentation

- ▶ Call Text
- ▶ Annex A: Theory of Change
 - ▶ *A plan needs to be included which describes what impact the research is expected to achieve. One way to establish such plan is to establish a methodology of Theory of Change with related Impact Pathway.*
- ▶ Annex B: National Contact Points
- ▶ Annex D: Pre-Proposal Form
- ▶ Annex E: Full-Proposal Form
- ▶ Annex F: Open Access and Fair Data

National Call Considerations



Eligible for National Funding

Eligible Entities must be registered in Malta or must have an operating base in Malta

Limited Liability
Company

Partnerships

Non-profit
making
Organisations

Voluntary
Organisations

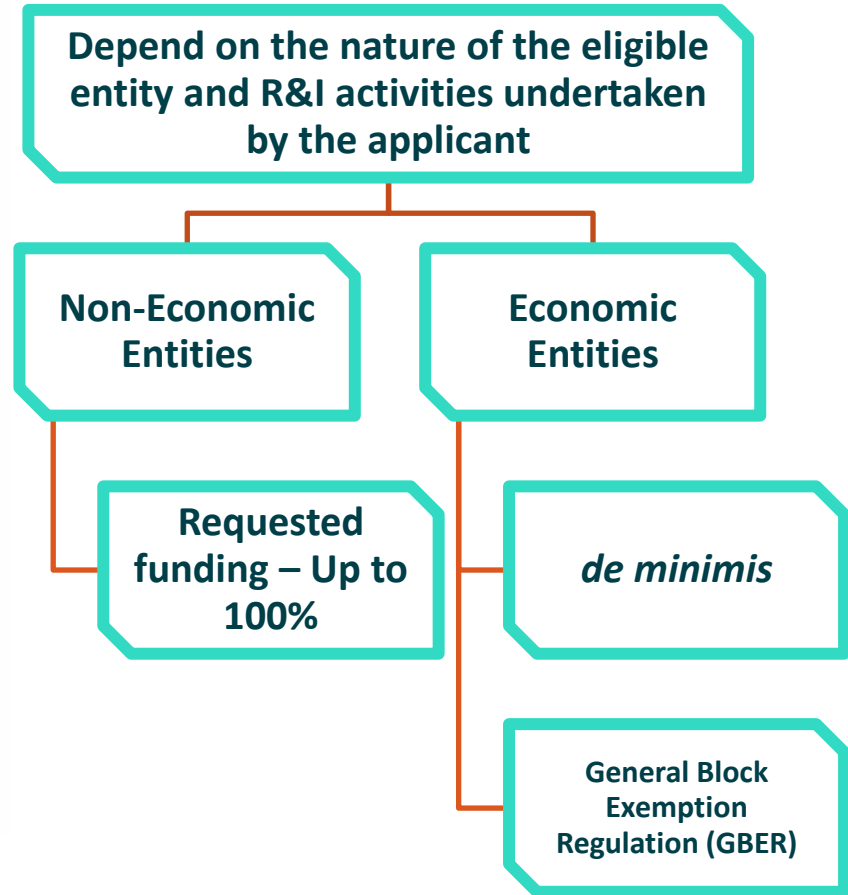
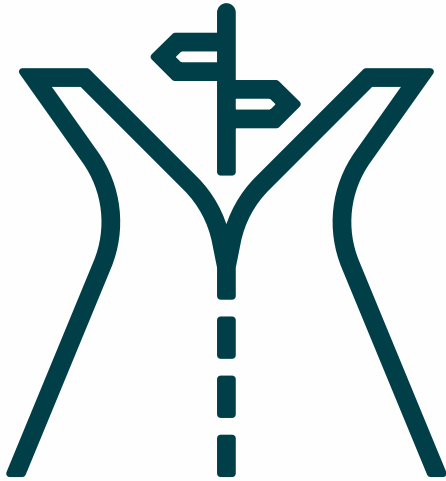
Professional
Bodies

Cooperatives

Public entities

Research &
Knowledge-
Dissemination
Organisations

Funding Modalities

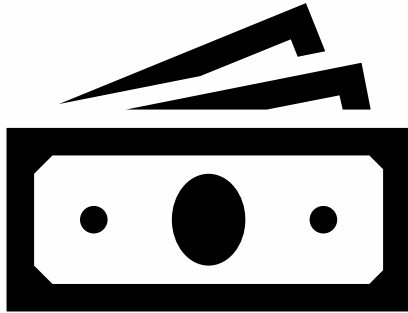


Aid Intensity

Economic entity	<i>de minimis</i>	GBER
Requested funding	Up to 75%	Up to 70%
Own contribution	Remainder %	Remainder %

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

Eligible Costs



Personnel

**Specialised
Equipment &
Consumables**

Subcontracting

**Costs of IP and
Knowledge
Transfer activities**

**Travel &
Subsistence**

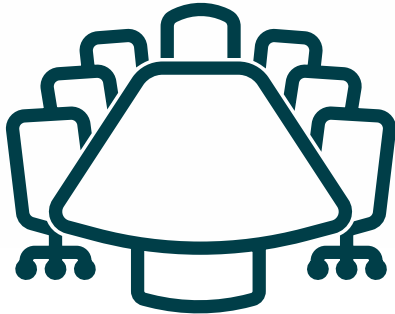
**Overheads and
Other Operating
Expenses**

Personnel Costs

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

Non-economic/de minimis/GBER

- ▶ Project Management – up to 10% of the project value
- ▶ Students – EUR 6,000-8,000 p.a.
- ▶ Maximum of 1720 hours p.a.
- ▶ Hourly rates specified in national rules.



Role in Project	Hourly rates in 2025	Hourly rates in 2026	Hourly rates in 2027	Limits per project
Management or equivalent	Up to €57.89/hour	Up to €60.78/hour	Up to €63.82/hour	Max 2 per project
Senior Researcher ³ or equivalent	Up to €40.80/hour	Up to €42.84/hour	Up to €44.98/hour	Max 2 per project
Researcher ⁴ or equivalent	Up to €29.23/hour	Up to €30.69/hour	Up to €32.22/hour	No limits

³ The term 'senior researcher' is to be used for a postdoctoral researcher with a specialist and high level of local and international experience in the field. Individuals possessing a high level of experience in industry can still be considered.

⁴ The term 'researcher' is to be used for a Bachelor's, Master's or a Ph.D. degree holder and hence the hourly rate should be equivalent to the degree held by the relevant individual.

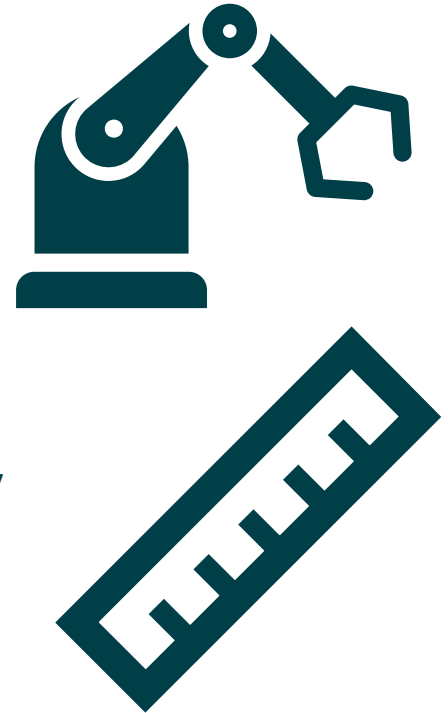
Instruments, Specialised Equipment and Consumables

Non-economic /de minimis

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

GBER

- ▶ Depreciation costs of specialised equipment for the extent and period used for the project. To be verified by a certified public accountant.
- ▶ The costs and/or leasing of specialised equipment, are eligible only to the extent and for the period used for the project. The depreciation costs corresponding to the life of the project are eligible.
- ▶ Cost of research consumables should not exceed 30% of the project value



Travel and Subsistence



Non-economic/*de minimis*

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

GBER

- Travel costs are not eligible

Subcontracted Activities

Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER

- ▶ Allowed up to 25% of the project value
- ▶ Must follow fair procurement procedures
- ▶ *To be discussed with the Call Manager at application stage*

IP and Knowledge Transfer Activities

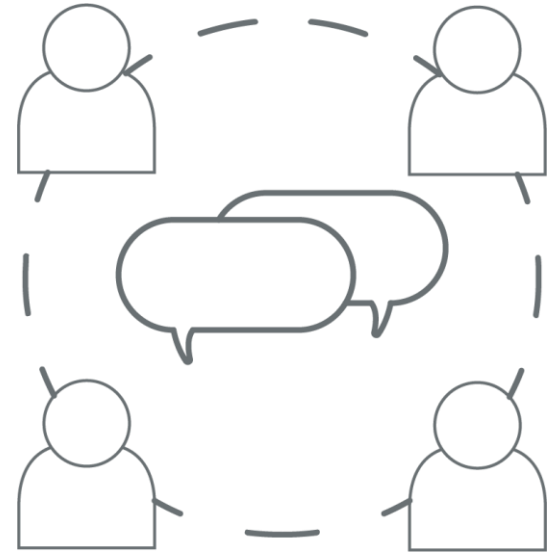
Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER

- ▶ Costs of knowledge transfer activities and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arm's length conditions.
- ▶ *To be discussed with the Call Manager at the application stage*

Overheads and Other Operating Expenses

Non-economic/*de minimis*/GBER

- ▶ **Are costs that are incurred directly as a result of the project.**
- ▶ **These will be covered at 20% of direct eligible costs claimed.**
- ▶ *To be discussed with the Call Manager at the application stage*



Ineligible Costs

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



Submission Process

Find and connect with prospective partners



Jointly draft the pre-proposal application form



Coordinator submits pre-proposal application form online by CETP Deadline



Malta based partners submit the National Application Form by MCST Deadline

Deadline:
10th April 2024;
14:00 CET

Deadline:
10th April 2024;
23:59 CET

Important Links and Documents

SBEP Website

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

National Documentation

<http://mcst.gov.mt/funding-opportunities/sustainable-blue-economy-partnership-call-2023/>

Social Media Channels

@BlueEconomyEU on #Twitter, #Facebook, #LinkedIn and #Instagram



[Malta Council for Science and Technology](https://www.maltacouncilforsciencetechnology.gov.mt/)

Pre-Proposal Deadline
10th April 2024,
23:59CET

Get Connected

One-stop shop for National and Mediterranean researchers

- ✓ Latest News and Events
- ✓ Funding and Work Opportunities in R&I
- ✓ Facilitate networking amongst Mediterranean R&I community
- ✓ Partner Search Facility
- ✓ **Matchmaking Tool**



Welcome to plumtri

A platform for Research & Innovation



Find a Local Contact Point in your Country

Going forward...



Sustainable Blue
Economy Partnership

BROKERAGE EVENT

Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership – 2nd Call

- ▶ Ten sessions of two hours will be organised from 26 February to 8 March
- ▶ Sessions are scheduled between 10:00 AM and 12:00 PM or 02:00 PM and 04:00 PM CET



Co-funded by
the European Union

EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP

<https://www.b2match.com/e/sustainable-blue-economy-partnership>



Thank you for your attention

Contact us on:

- ▶ christy.baldacchino.2@gov.mt
- ▶ maria.azzopardi.2@gov.mt
- ▶ eusubmissions.mcst@gov.mt



Organise Information Sessions



**Organise One-to-One sessions
for tailor-made advice**



**Facilitate search for partners -
plumtri**



**Networking opportunities –
brokerage events**