



D.4.3.1 – Calls for innovative projects for Cycle two

LP1 - POLIMI



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Author(s)	Roberto Viganò (LP-POLIMI); Iryna Pushchak (SINERGIA - LP-POLIMI External Assistance)
Reviewer(s)	Gaetano Cascini (LP-POLIMI)
Approver	Gaetano Cascini (LP-POLIMI)
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Contents

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Mission4Water Project Objectives	5
3. Conditions and requirements.....	7
3.1 Terms and Definitions.....	7
3.2 Participation and eligibility criteria	9
4. II Open call submission, selection, and contracting	16
5. Administrative check and contracting	21
6. Additional considerations	22
7. List of Annexes	24



1. Introduction

The Mission4Water Co-Innovation Labs are designed to address water pollution challenges by fostering sustainable, innovative partnerships within the Adriatic-Ionian region. This initiative emphasizes cross-border and multi-sectoral collaboration to develop scalable, impactful solutions targeting pollutants dispersion in water.

This document has to be intended as a guideline for the management of the Calls for innovative projects for Cycle two foreseen in the framework of the MISSION4WATER project – WP4 “MISSION4WATER Co-innovation labs” - Act. 4.3.

2. Mission4Water Project Objectives

SMEs are the core of economic growth in IPA ADRION regions. However, they lack in benefitting from science – business collaborations and in the framework of the quadruple helix innovation system. On the other hand, SMEs are considered pivotal in the development of innovative solutions and the uptake of those developed in university and research centres.

The **MISSION4WATER multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral strategic partnership** aims to unlock the innovation potential of SMEs all across IPA ADRION countries fostering collaboration among diverse actors in the innovation ecosystem and cross-border and cross value chain collaborations. Doing so, MISSION4WATER contributes to supporting a smarter Adriatic and Ionian Region by strengthening the innovation capacity of the region.

The thematic focus of the project is the development of green innovation and clean technologies, with particular attention to reducing pollutants dispersion in water. In fact, the IPA Adrion region is intrinsically linked to natural waters with its rivers and seas. Although the diverse efforts devoted to study the problem, there is still a huge gap in awareness and know-how related to how to deal with it.

In addition, the solutions available on the market and the current actions are limited to solving specific issues of isolated value chains. Typically, these solutions are effective for a specific problem but have drawbacks if analysed from a wider perspective. Conversely, it is necessary to tackle the problem from different points of view, with a holistic and coordinated approach, where different actors from diverse value chains interact to create new interconnected solutions.

A combination of supporting actions will foster the collaborative approach of the quadruple helix system, towards the joint development of innovative solutions tackling the issue of pollutants dispersion in water. MISSION4WATER aims at radically innovating **4 complementary value chains**: polymers transformation, garments and textiles, household appliances, and water treatment and depuration.



By **fostering cooperation among SMEs** and other organizations, it will be possible to identify new applications for available competencies, as well as the adoption of emerging technologies, thus possibly leading to the emergence of novel industries.

Leveraging on the different planned activities, MISSION4WATER will be a large “co-innovation lab” where **SMEs will receive support to generate and capitalize on all forms of knowledge and relevant emerging technologies on the following topics:**

- Topic 1 - Water Treatment
- Topic 2 - SMEs innovation (including IP protection, freedom to operate searches and technology transfer support)
- Topic 3 - Water pollution reduction in the textile industry
- Topic 4 - Water pollution reduction in household appliances
- Topic 5 Involvement of civil society in freshwater pollution reduction
- Topic 6 - Global best practices for cross-value chain collaboration

MISSION4WATER will accelerate the **innovation led by SMEs through innovation services, multi-sectoral and cross-border collaborations**, peer-learning activities and regional-tailored services to achieve a common goal, steered by a unique overall vision. Furthermore, upon request in the application phase, physical or virtual prototyping services can be activated, possibly with the co-participation of the partners involved in the product IP.

This, in turn, will lead to the following changes to the current situation:

- 1) The adoption of the MISSION4WATER Co-Innovation model, a collaboration model, which will constitute the reference towards the establishment of long-lasting and effective goal- and innovation driven collaboration ecosystem with organizations from the quadruple helix.
- 2) The MISSION4WATER Co-Innovation model is the product of the joined action against pollutants dispersion in water and the best practices learned during the execution of three iterative cycles of use cases involving knowledge sharing, matching expertise and collaborative open innovation. The actors involved will have a shared vision on the impact of water pollutants and on the potential synergies and contributions to tackle such environmental challenge through their businesses or institutional activities, while enhancing their competitiveness.
- 3) The establishment of an Mission4Water co-innovation agreement signed by at least 5 organizations reached within the project, to ensure continuity of the collaboration model after the conclusion of the project.
- 4) The activities of the co-innovation labs will lead to the development of original solutions addressing one of the following areas:
 - a. Awareness and behavioural changes;
 - b. Preventing Microplastics release;
 - c. Preventing other pollutants release;



- d. Mitigating Microplastics release;
- e. Mitigating other pollutants release.

This document is also built on the knowledge, from the stakeholders consultations in the WPI, who emphasized the importance of public-private collaboration, education, and the adoption of circular economy practices. The consultation with stakeholders concludes that fostering innovation, aligning policy and market demands, and building strong stakeholder networks are essential for effective water pollution mitigation.

In total we expect to develop 18 innovative solutions, during 3 Call cycles.

The key innovative aspects of the MISSION4WATER project lie in the following features:

- Shared knowledge and joint vision with representatives of all parties of the quadruple helix on the priorities to tackle the pollutants dispersion challenge;
- Cross-borders and cross-sectoral original solutions boosted by the connection of 4 value chains;
- Joint cooperation among different quadruple-helix players in the perspective of setting up pilot innovation initiatives.

MISSION4WATER will enable the reciprocal knowledge exchange among the 4 value chains and within all the actors developing new forms of cooperation led by a single main purpose.

3. Conditions and requirements

3.1 Terms and Definitions

This section describes the relevant terms that are used in the open call documentation. Unless otherwise stated, the definition of a term is the one stated in this section.

Persons, entities, and committees

Term	Definition
Consortium	Group of legal entities that are cumulatively responsible for implementing the MISSION4WATER project
Applicant	Individual or organisation that intends to submit or has submitted a proposal.
Beneficiary	An organisation that has submitted a use case proposal to the and which has been accepted and has signed or is in the process of signing a Mission4Water co-innovation agreement.
External evaluator	An expert that has been invited by MISSION4WATER to become an external evaluator and assist in the evaluation of the proposals submitted to the programme. Experts cannot have conflicts of interest and are bound by their own confidentiality agreement.



Evaluation phase	Period when the selected use-cases and the consortium complete the administrative procedures to sign the Mission4Water co-innovation agreement and prepare administrative documents.
Contract preparation phase	Period when the selected use-cases and the consortium complete the administrative procedures to sign the a Mission4Water co-innovation agreement and prepare administrative documents.
Implementation phase	Successive period of 9 months when the work is performed by the beneficiary. At the end of each stage, the use case is subject to a formal evaluation made by an internal evaluation team to assess if the use case is meeting its objectives.

Means of Submission

The MISSION4WATER project form will be the entry point for the submission of all proposals to the MISSION4WATER open calls.

Any proposal submitted through other channels will be automatically rejected. Any documentation that is required and requested by the MISSION4WATER consortium should be submitted via a dedicated channel that will be indicated by the consortium during the execution of the selected use case.

Language

English is the official language for the MISSION4WATER open calls. Submissions done in any language other than English will not be eligible or evaluated. MISSION4WATER partners are available to support applicants in the preparation of the submission also in terms of language adaptation and revision.

English is the only official language during the whole implementation of the MISSION4WATER programme. This means that any requested submission of documentation and deliverables will be done in English to be eligible.

Documentation formats

Any documentation requested in any of the phases of the open call and use case' implementation must be submitted electronically through the application form without restrictions for printing.



3.2 Participation and eligibility criteria

Applicants' and consortium eligibility

All applying entities and consortia members must meet the requirements described in this section to be eligible for the MISSION4WATER – Open Call.

Types of applicants

The call will support use cases developed by consortium of min. 2 entities, led by a SME¹. The MISSION4WATER Consortium is pleased to support interested applicants in identifying and connecting with potential partners, including through tailored matchmaking events, to facilitate the creation of strong and effective consortia. Natural persons applying alone are not eligible.

The following types of entities (legally established) may apply as part of a consortium:

- Start-ups, SMEs and Mid-Caps proposing an innovative solution connected with water pollution reduction;
- Universities and research centres with competencies relevant for the development of the proposed innovative solutions water pollution reduction;
- Vocational and educational training (VET) organisations, working in the areas addressed by the Open Call, and capable of working on Co-Innovation Labs;
- NGOs and organizations representative of the civil society willing to contribute to the definition and promotion of the proposed innovative solutions for water pollution reduction.
- Local/regional authorities working on the topics connected to the Mission4Water thematic areas and interested in bringing an innovative solution to their context.

The following eligibility criteria, related to the applicants, funding, and proposals apply:

- Submissions will only be accepted through the Mission4Water submission form and respective page dedicated to the MISSION4WATER – Open Call;
- Fit within the target applicant as indicated above;
- Are legally based in an eligible country as indicated below;
- Have provided their application and all requested documents only in the English language;
- Have provided the proposal description using the MISSION4WATER – Open Call Use Case Description Template (Annex 1) and followed all mandatory guidelines.

Consortia Requirements

- The consortium must be led by a start-up/SME (who will act as the consortium Coordinator).
- Other members of the consortium should be classified among one of the eligible types of applicants (see above).

¹ A SME is considered as such if it complies with the European Commission's Recommendation 2003/361/EC.



The specific roles of each partner must be described in the use case technical proposal.

Eligible countries

All entities, including those participating in a consortium, must be established in any of the following countries to be eligible to participate in the MISSION4WATER – Open Call:

- The Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU) and other Countries, part of the Interreg VI-B IPA Adrion Programme.

Conflict of interest

Applications will not be accepted from entities who are partners (beneficiaries) or affiliated entities/ linked-third parties in the MISSION4WATER consortium or who are formally linked in any way to them.

Any entity with a previous formal and legal connection to a MISSION4WATER beneficiary (e.g., spin-off), will not be accepted, unless a minimum of 3 years (as of 1st January 2025) has passed since the termination of the link.

Applicants must not have any current and/or potential conflict of interest with the MISSION4WATER – Open Call selection process and during the whole programme.

Applicants must formally and immediately notify the MISSION4WATER Coordinator of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. All cases of conflict of interest will be assessed case by case.

Applicants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective evaluation and implementation of the use case is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests'). If a conflict of interest is discovered and confirmed at the time of the evaluation process, the proposal will be considered as non-eligible and will not be evaluated.

Number of proposal submissions

The total number of supported use cases within the Cycle two: **6**.

Services to be provided to Applicants

Selected applicant's organizations will have the opportunity to engage in a broad range of high-value services designed to accelerate innovation and commercial success. They will be able to explore emerging technologies through hands-on prototyping, utilizing advanced methods such as additive manufacturing, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR). Alongside prototyping, applicants with the support of Mission4Water project partners will benefit from comprehensive testing and validation processes to ensure that their solutions are both reliable and scalable. In-depth feasibility studies will help assess the economic, technical, and operational viability of projects, while freedom-to-operate analyses will identify potential intellectual property barriers early on.



Beyond these applicant organisations might receive specialized support in protecting their intellectual property and developing profitable business models that generate sustainable revenue streams for all involved parties. Assistance with proof of concept, investment readiness, and technology transfer will further prepare projects for market success. Project partners will assist applicants with tailored guidance to navigate industry standards, environmental regulations, and design management challenges, ensuring that all developments are both innovative and compliant.

Mission4Water consortium emphasizes capacity building by offering skills development opportunities and facilitating connections with key partners and stakeholders. Each project partner brings a unique set of expertise and knowledge, described in the Table 1 below, to support use case development, ensuring that applicants receive comprehensive, expert guidance throughout every stage of their innovation journey.

Table 1 – Partners expertise and competence for each specific thematic area

Thematic Area	Specific expertise and knowledge	Key Services Offered
Topic 1 - Water Treatment	Technology mapping	Support the selection of water treatment technologies. State of the art analysis from patents and scientific literature
	Support to policy-makers	Identification of government support services
	Water treatment policy and technology, Engineering Design for water supply and wastewater, Education	Communication and work with local communities implementing waste water collection and treatment design projects; Capacity building in integrated pollution prevention and control - Work with industries related Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) Training Programme on water and wastewater management for local governments and water utility companies (related M4W project: water pollution and treatment related micro plastic)
	Needs analysis and assessment, Design thinking	Conduct stakeholder analyses to gather input from relevant parties. Assist in formulating different aspects of the design problem



<p>Topic 2 - SMEs innovation (including IP protection, freedom to operate searches and technology transfer support)</p>	<p>Engineering Design, Collaborative Innovation, Virtual and Physical Prototyping, Intellectual Property</p>	<p>Design problem framing; Brainstorming facilitation. TRIZ-based coaching of design and problem-solving sessions. Patent priority searches; Technology landscape analyses; Support to virtual and physical prototyping; LifeCycle Assessment</p>
	<p>Engineering Design, Multi-disciplinary approach, design for prototyping, Call for proposal search/writing of proposals</p>	<p>Feasibility evaluation Support to PoC prototyping From mock-up to prototype transition Rapid Prototyping and Additive manufacturing</p>
	<p>Engineering for Rapid Prototyping and Additive manufacturing</p>	<p>Search for grants for further implementing the ideas Sharing experiences</p>
	<p>Research, networking, capacity building</p>	<p>State of the art analysis of the apparel production industry, capacity building activities, cooperation with Universities and networking.</p>
	<p>Environmental and Water protection; Climate change</p>	<p>Education of SMEs related good water management praxis and climate challenges</p>
	<p>Sustainable practices, circular economy models</p>	<p>Knowledge – sharing on eco-design and sustainable practices, circular economy models</p>
	<p>Virtual prototyping, Design thinking, Engineering design, Product development methodologies, Collaboration methods and techniques</p>	<p>Visualise and test solutions using 3D modelling and virtual reality tools; Define problem and apply user-centred design; Apply established engineering design methodologies; Design for X</p>
	<p>Education and training services for the SME's; Information and consultation services SME's.</p>	<p>IDA's primary role lies in the stimulation of the development of small and medium-sized entrepreneurship in the Region of Istria through securing financial support for SMEs, developing entrepreneurial infrastructure (business incubators and business zones, coworking spaces, cluster initiatives), providing training courses for SMEs and public institutions, providing information and</p>



		consultations services to entrepreneurs, offering services to prospective foreign and domestic investors and implementing different interregional and international projects aimed at creating favourable entrepreneurial conditions in the region.
	Helping SMEs develop project proposals for water innovation funding	Partnering with SMEs, universities, and research institutions for water innovation projects
Topic 3 - Water pollution reduction in the textile industry	Technology mapping	State of the art analysis from patents and scientific literature Sharing experiences
	Research, networking, capacity building	State of the art analysis of the apparel production industry, capacity building activities, cooperation with Universities and networking.
	Pollution of water in the textile industry; Prevention and reduction of emissions to water involve techniques used in the textiles sector to prevent, reduce or control water emissions	Education of textile industries on: - water pollution, - good water management practices, - wastewater treatment technologies, and - eco-friendly alternatives in the manufacturing process.
	Sustainable fashion and reduction of microplastic pollution from textiles	The environmental impact of fast fashion, collaboration with stakeholders to promote responsible consumption
	Needs analysis and assessment, Design thinking	Conduct stakeholder analyses to gather input from relevant parties; Assist in formulating different aspects of the design problem
	Encouraging sustainable practices	- Providing training on best practices for reducing water pollution - Organizing workshops on water-efficient technologies and eco-friendly dyeing
Topic 4 - Water pollution reduction in household appliances	Technology mapping	State of the art analysis from patents and scientific literature
	Knowledge on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Household appliances work • Market mapping 	Support and consulting on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Household appliances work • Market mapping



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible sources of pollution due to appliances • Regulations mapping Design of testing rig and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible sources of pollution due to appliances • Regulations mapping Design of testing rig and procedures
	Technology mapping, laboratory testing, prototyping, engineering design, market conditions	Overview of technology state-of-art and market situation, Co-innovation of novel technology concepts, problem framing, brainstorming, prototyping and testing.
	Rational water consumption in households to save water and to prevent water pollution	Education of citizens related: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rational water consumption, - Water pollution reduction especially from textile. Education of manufacturers of household appliances related to water protection and climate change.
	Waste prevention strategies, consumer education on sustainable appliance use	Awareness on responsible appliance disposal and repair, mapping BEST practices of extended producer responsibility (EPR) policies for textile
	Needs analysis and assessment, Design thinking	Conduct stakeholder analyses to gather input from relevant parties; Assist in formulating different aspects of the design problem
	Encouraging sustainable practices	Providing training on best practices for reducing water pollution - Organizing workshops on water-efficient technologies and eco-friendly dyeing
Topic 5 - Involvement of civil society in freshwater pollution reduction	Design of training activities for young and civil society Design of stakeholder engagement activities	State of the art analysis from scientific literature Support for designing and delivering training activities Support for designing and delivering stakeholder engagement activities
	Networking and dissemination	Cooperation with NGOs with green activities, exchange best practices and experience, dissemination of activities.
	The main sources of water pollution (Industrial Discharges, Agricultural Runoff; Sewage	Capacity building projects for civil society; Public awareness campaign related water pollution reduction



	and Wastewater; Urban Runoff, plastic waste...)	
	Community-driven environmental initiatives, public engagement in pollution monitoring, citizen science	Developing educational materials on water pollution, mobilizing volunteers and stakeholders
	Co-design, Needs analysis and assessment	Conduct design sessions with community stakeholders, NGOs, and end-users to generate and test solutions; Conduct stakeholder analyses to gather input from relevant parties;
	Public education campaigns on the causes and consequences of freshwater pollution - Organizing workshops, seminars, and educational sessions for schools, and the public about water pollution prevention. - Using social media platforms to share information	Offering technical workshops on water conservation, wastewater treatment,
Topic 6 - Global best practices for cross-value chain collaboration	The improvement of the environment and the strengthening of partnerships for joint actions at the local/municipality level	Presentation and promotion of cross-value chain collaboration best praxis to protect water especially from micro plastic
	Waste Reduction	Knowledge sharing on best practices in waste reduction
	Stakeholder mapping, Knowledge transfer, Design sprints	Utilise design research methods to map diverse stakeholders across the value chain; Implement structured approaches to collect and share best practices; Facilitate structured design sprints and workshops that bring together diverse stakeholders
	Share case studies of successful cross-value chain collaborations from various industries and regions.	Organize policy roundtables

Other conditions Each applicant must confirm:



- The proposed use case is based on original research/ ideas and, going forward, any foreseen developments are not limited by third party rights, or are clearly stated if they are limited.
- It is not under liquidation or is not an enterprise under difficulty according to the European Commission Regulation No 651/2014, art. 2.18.
- The participating organisations should not have been declared bankrupt or have initiated bankruptcy procedures.
- The organisations should not have convictions for fraudulent behaviour, other financial irregularities, and unethical or illegal business practices.

4. II Open call submission, selection, and contracting

Proposals submitted to the MISSION4WATER – II Open Call should be submitted in a single stage and evaluated in multiple steps, as presented in the figure below.

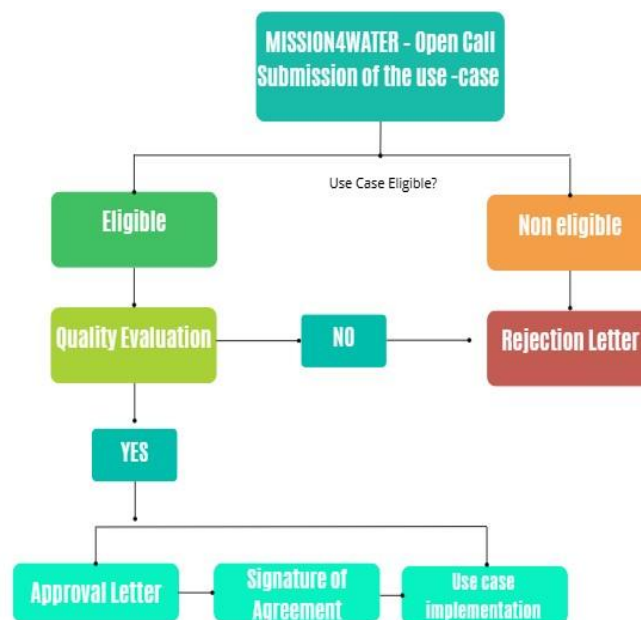


Figure 1 - M4W Open Call Use cases submission process

Proposal preparation and submission process

The MISSION4WATER II Call for Proposals introduces a refined and user-oriented submission framework to enhance accessibility, transparency, and alignment with consortium goals. The process is structured to support applicants through a streamlined pathway, from initial preparation to project launch.

The submission of proposals to the MISSION4WATER - Open Call must follow the steps listed in this section. **The open call launches on 15 September 2025.** The call operates on a rolling



submission model combined with four predetermined cut-off dates. Proposals can be submitted at any time during the open period and are grouped and evaluated based on the cut-off schedule. Submissions remain open until the available number of project slots is filled. **A maximum of 6 projects will be selected** during the second cycle.

The image below outlines the full timeline of the submission and evaluation process:

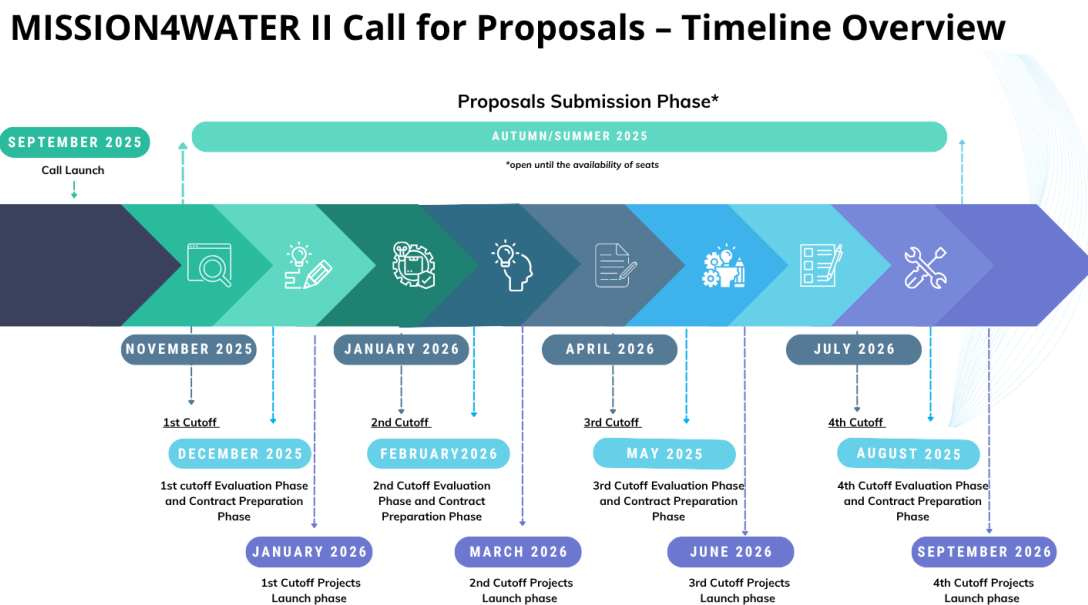


Figure 2 - M4W Submission Process

Submitted proposals are evaluated in batches following each cutoff date. The evaluation process includes:

- Assessment of project relevance, feasibility, and alignment with MISSION4WATER objectives
- Verification of the requested support and its coherence with consortium capacities
- **Contract preparation** for selected proposals, leading to the project launch phase in the subsequent month(s).

Each selected project will formally launch shortly after the conclusion of its respective evaluation and contracting phase.

Proposal preparation and submission

Applicants must consider the following when preparing their proposal:

- Applicants must apply online and answer all mandatory questions (with no exception) at: <https://forms.office.com/e/Jc1tz7pH3k>



Any submission provided by any means other than Mission4Water Project Platform will not be accepted.

The information and documentation to be provided/ submitted are:

- Application form: includes the administrative questions
- Selection of the thematic area the proposal addresses:
 - o Awareness and Behavioural Changes.
 - o Preventing Microplastics Release;
 - o Preventing Other Pollutants Release;
 - o Mitigating Microplastics Release;
 - o Mitigating Other Pollutants Release
- Technical description of the use case
- Tick boxes for the applicants to confirm that they have read and agree with the conditions defined in this Guidelines for Applicants and the open call.
- It is strongly recommended that applicants submit their proposal well before the deadline. If the applicant discovers an error in the proposal, and if the call deadline has not passed, the applicant may request the MISSION4WATER team to re-submit the proposal (for this purpose please contact prof. Gaetano Cascini gaetano.cascini@polimi.it or your national contact person, see Annex 1). However, MISSION4WATER does not guarantee that a resubmission will be feasible in due time in case the request for resubmission is not received by the MISSION4WATER team at least 48 hours before the open call deadline.
- The failure to submit a proposal on time, for any reason, including network delays or working from multiple browsers or multiple browser windows, is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. The time of receipt of the application as recorded by the submission system will be definitive.

Selection of the open call and challenge area

The MISSION4WATER – Open Call welcomes use cases that address 5 thematic areas, as shown in the figure below. There are specific requirements to be addressed in the application form and Annex 1 - Use Case Description Template depending on the track and challenge selected.



Figure 3 - M4W Challenge area



In the case there are thematic areas without proposals that guarantee this distribution, primacy will be given to the proposals with the highest score. For thematic areas where more than one use case proposal was submitted, a geographical coverage will also be prioritised, based on the country of the coordinator.

Proposal evaluation and selection

The evaluation of proposals is carried out by the MISSION4WATER consortium with the support of the Scientific Committee. The MISSION4WATER consortium ensures that the process is fair and in line with the principles outlined in the European Commission's rules on proposal submission and evaluation.

Step 1: Eligibility verification

An initial eligibility verification will be carried out to discard non-eligible proposals. **Proposals must meet ALL the following eligibility criteria, which will check the following:**

- Submissions have been made ONLY through the Mission4Water submission form and by the defined deadline.
- The proposing entities are legal entities established in the Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU) and other Countries, part of the Interreg VI-B IPA Adrion Programme.
- The proposing consortia meets the consortium formation requirements.
- The proposal, including the Mission4Water application form and all requested and mandatory information and documents, are fully completed (this includes a full technical proposal with all sections completed).
- The proposal is written in the English Language.

A proposal is only considered eligible if its content corresponds to the objectives of the MISSION4WATER – Open Call, including the specific eligibility conditions defined in the relevant sections of this Guidelines for Applicants. The eligibility check enables the creation of a shortlist of proposals to be evaluated in the next step of the evaluation process. Proposals marked as non-eligible will receive a rejection letter with a justification.

Step 2: External remote evaluation

Eligible proposals will advance to the external evaluation phase, which will be done remotely by expert evaluators. The evaluators will be selected from a scientific Committee of the Mission4Water project proposal.

Evaluators are required to be independent, impartial, and objective. All evaluators will sign a contract, which includes a declaration of confidentiality and the absence of conflicts of interest. Any known conflict of interest will be immediately communicated to the MISSION4WATER team. Evaluators will also be bound by strict confidentiality throughout the full evaluation process. Two external evaluators appointed by the scientific committee of the MISSION4WATER project, will evaluate each proposal and will be distributed considering their domains of expertise and,



whenever possible, country of origin. The proposals will be scored based on the criteria in the table below.

Criteria	Specific criteria evaluated
1 - Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of the proposal with the MISSION4WATER project, and thematic area being addressed. Use case objectives (general and specific), following the SMART criteria. Challenges that the proposed use case will solve. Ethical or legal issues associated with the proposed use case.
2 - Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall impact of the use case and socio-economic benefits. Contribution to the MISSION4WATER project Quality and effectiveness of the proposed promotion and dissemination activities, and exploitation measures
3 - Replicability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of the materials and other support mechanisms to ensure the replicability and uptake of the solution in other contexts.
4 - Implementation and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality, relevance and achievability of the use case Quality and logic of the work plan

For each criterion under examination, score values represent the rationale detailed in the table below.

Score	Rationale
1 - Poor	The use case addresses the criterion in an inadequate manner or there are significant weaknesses.
2 - Fair	The use case addresses the criterion broadly, but there are still several weaknesses.
3 - Good	The use case addresses the criterion well, but improvements are necessary.
4 - Very Good	The use case addresses the criterion very well, but some improvements are still possible.
5 - Excellent	The use case successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Each criterion will be scored between 1 and 5. Half point scores are not given. The final score (including for each criterion) is calculated based on the average of the scores provided by the evaluators. Therefore, final scores may be a decimal. **The threshold for each criterion is three (3)**, therefore any criterion with a score less than three will disqualify the proposal.

Each evaluator will record their individual assessment of each proposal using an Individual Evaluation Report (ISR). A single Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) will be prepared by the Evaluation Panel, representing opinions and scores on which the evaluators agree.



Step 3: Ranking of proposals and selection

After the external remote evaluation process, all proposals will be ranked in a single list. The primary rule for ranking proposals will be their overall score, based on the average scores of the evaluators. In the case there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to the proposals with the highest score in specific criteria, considering the following order: 1. Criterion 2 - Impact 2. Criterion 1 – Innovation; Criterion 3 - Replicability 3. 4. Criterion 4 - Implementation and capacity.

The ranking of proposals will also respect the conditions regarding the distribution per thematic area and geographical coverage. **Six** proposals will be selected in total for all thematic area. (assuming they have met the threshold). All applicants at all stages of the evaluation will be informed about the result of their evaluation along with an evaluation report, sent to them individually by the email together with evaluation letter. In case of not eligibility of the project proposal, participants will also receive an ad hoc email, with all clarifications.

Redress process

Within three (3) working days of receiving either (1) a rejection letter informing the use-case proposal as non-eligible or (2) an ESR of non-acceptance, an applicant may submit a request for redress if they believe the results of the eligibility checks have not been correctly applied, or if they feel that there has been a shortcoming in the way their proposal has been evaluated. In such a case, an internal review committee from MISSION4WATER will examine the applicant's request for a redress. The committee's role is to ensure a coherent interpretation of such requests, and equal treatment of applicants. Requests for redress must:

- Only be related to the evaluation process or eligibility checks.
- Clearly describe the complaint (in English).
- Sent by the entity's legal representative that has also submitted the proposal.

The committee will review the complaint and will recommend an appropriate course of action. If there is clear evidence of a shortcoming that could affect the eventual selection decision, it is possible that all or part of the proposal will be re-evaluated.

All requests for redress will be treated in confidence and must be sent to the MISSION4WATER team coordinator prof. Gaetano Cascini at: gaetano.cascini@polimi.it

5. Administrative check and contracting

After concluding the evaluation phase, representatives of the selected proposals will be invited to the contracting phase.

Contract preparation will run through an administrative and financial check (and potentially into technical or ethical/security negotiations) based on evaluators' comments. On a case-by-case basis, a phone call or teleconference may be required with a selected use case to clarify specific questions.



The objective of the contract preparation is to fulfil the legal requirements between the MISSION4WATER consortium and applicant of the open call. The items covered are presented in the table below.

It should be emphasised that each participating entity should provide at contract preparation time a valid VAT. Failure to provide a valid VAT number will automatically result in exclusion from the contract preparation.

Requirement	Description
Proof of Legal Existence	Company registers, official journal or other official document per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
Declaration of Honour	One document per entity of the consortium, or for the whole consortium signed by the legal representative of the entity. The agreement will also include the comments (if any) of the proposal's ESR to the work plan

All documentation that requires a signature (e.g., Declaration of Honour, (if applicable), must be signed using a valid electronic digital signature. The request of the above-listed documentation will be sent to the use case representatives, including deadlines by which information and documentation should be sent. In general, the negotiation should be concluded **within 2 weeks**. An additional period may be provided by the MISSION4WATER coordinator in case of a relevant reasoning. In case negotiations have not been concluded within the above period, the proposal is automatically rejected and the next proposal in the reserve list is invited to initiate the contract preparation.

6. Additional considerations

Conflict of interest

Beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the sub-use use case is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interest'). They must formally notify the MISSION4WATER Coordinator without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interest and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation. The MISSION4WATER Coordinator would verify if the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specific deadline.

Checks and reviews



The Interreg Managing Authorities may, at any time during the implementation of the use case and up to five years after the end of the use case delivery, arrange for a check and review to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the Interreg Managing Authorities services themselves, including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the Interreg Managing Authorities. There will be no financial checks, reviews, or audits to check costs, since beneficiaries have no obligation to document the costs incurred for the action. Checks, reviews, and audits will focus on the technical implementation of the action.

Promoting the action and giving visibility to the Interreg funding

The beneficiary must promote the use case, the MISSION4WATER project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to highlight the support of the IPA ADRION Programme.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

During the implementation of Mission4Water open call activities and for **five years** after the end of the programme activities, the beneficiary(ies) must keep confidential any data, documents, or other material (in any form) that is identified as confidential at sub-contract signature ('confidential information'). This will be explicitly stated in the Mission4Water co-innovation agreement. If the information has been identified as confidential during the MISSION4WATER programme or only orally, it will be confidential only if this is accepted by the MISSION4WATER coordinator and confirmed in writing within 15 days of the oral disclosure. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, they may use confidential information only to implement the use case. The selected beneficiary(ies) may disclose confidential information to the MISSION4WATER Consortium and to the selected reviewers, who will be bounded by a specific non-disclosure agreement. The final list of the awarded use cases and beneficiaries will be made public, including the name of the use cases, abstract, legal name of the entity, type of entity, country of origin, and use cases' results, duration, and budget.

Intellectual property rights

The results and Intellectual Property Rights developed during the sub-granted use case implementation will be the exclusive property of the corresponding partner/consortium. The applicants are advised to include IPR issues and results dissemination generated from the use case teams through MISSION4WATER in their internal Consortium Agreement.

While the MISSION4WATER project will support its beneficiaries in creating conditions for their solution to reach the market and have a commercial potential, it is also expected that the beneficiaries contribute with open results. Therefore, while the results and IPR remain the property of the beneficiaries, these should make available in open source all or parts of the technology behind the solution.



7. List of Annexes

Annex 1 – Use Case Description Template

Annex 2 - Consortium Declaration of Honour



Annex 1 – Use Case Description Template (Cover Page)

TEMPLATE - INSTRUCTIONS

Read carefully before preparing your proposal:

You must use this template to prepare your proposal and respect the structure. It has been organised to ensure that the important aspects of your planned work are measurable with respect to the evaluation criteria. Sections 1 to 4 of this template each correspond to an evaluation criterion (see Annex 1). In case of any doubts or questions do not hesitate to contact partner of the project in your country or reach out the project coordinator:

Organisation	Country	Contact person	Email
Politecnico di Milano	Italy	Prof. Massimo Panarotto	massimo.panarotto@polimi.it
Foundation Milieukontakt Albania	Albania	Albana Joxhe	albana.joxhe@milieukontakt.org
Business Company Hydro-Engineering Institute shareholding company Sarajevo	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Sabina Hadžiahmetović	sabina.hadziahmetovic@heis.ba
Istrian Development Agency	Croatia	Andi Kalčić	Andi.Kalcic@ida.hr
Zero Waste Montenegro	Montenegro	Vanja Cicmil	v.cicmil@zerowastemontenegro.me
Textile Trade Association –Textile Cluster	North Macedonia	Natasha Sivevska	nsivevska@yahoo.com
PlanetCare Ltd.	Slovenia	Tamara Kiršić	tamara.kirsic@ida.hr

Applicants using another template/ document structure will be automatically disqualified. Only those proposals that successfully address all the required aspects included in the template will have the opportunity to be funded.

Please complete the Proposal cover page thoroughly.

The proposal must be uploaded through the application form. Failure to do so may result in exclusion. If you attempt to upload a proposal longer than the specified limit, pages beyond the



limit will not be taken into consideration by the experts and could result in parts of the proposal not being evaluated.

Use CASE INFORMATION	
Use case acronym	
Use case title	
Selected open call challenge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness and Behavioural Changes. 2. Preventing Microplastics Release. 3. Preventing Other Pollutants Release. 4. Mitigating Microplastics Release. 5. Mitigating Other Pollutants Release.

APPLICANT INFORMATION (Full legal names)	COUNTRY
Lead beneficiary	
Beneficiary 2	
Beneficiary 3	
(other partners, if applicable)	

SUMMARY OF THE USE CASE

NOTE: MAXIMUM 250 words

Provide a full public summary of the use case that can be published if the use case is funded. Please provide info on the challenge your proposal is addressing, the main objectives, key activities and expected results. You can then remove this text.

1. INNOVATION

NOTE: Suggested maximum of 1500 words.

ALL PROPOSALS:

- *Alignment of the proposal with the MISSION4WATER project, specific track, and challenge area being addressed.*
- *Use case objectives (general and specific), following the SMART criteria.*
- *Challenges that the proposed use case will solve.*
- *Ethical or legal issues associated with the proposed use case.*

2. IMPACT

NOTE: Suggested maximum of 1500 words.

Guidance text: Describe the overall impact of your use case, which must specifically address:



ALL PROPOSALS:

- Overall impact of the use case and socio-economic benefits
- Contribution to the MISSION4WATER platform and the MISSION4WATER technological and business objectives (see here).
- Quality and effectiveness of the proposed promotion and dissemination activities, and exploitation measures.
- Ethical or legal issues associated with the proposed use case

3. REPLICABILITY

NOTE: Suggested maximum of 1000 words.

Guidance text: Describe the replicability your project, which must specifically address:

ALL PROPOSALS:

- Quality of the materials and other support mechanisms to ensure the replicability and uptake of the solution in other contexts.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY

NOTE: Suggested maximum of 1000 words.

Guidance text: Describe the work plan and the team will implement the use case, which must specifically address:

- ALL PROPOSALS:
 - Quality and logic of the work plan, including proposed activities and outputs.
 - Quality, relevance, and achievability of proposed milestones and KPIs (MISSION4WATER specific and use case defined)
 - Description of risks that might affect the work plan.
 - Quality of the project team and capacity to deliver the use case; specific roles of the partners (in the case of a consortium); quality of the gender balance.
 - Rationale of the use case costs and other resources.

Suggested table for description of activities

Activity name	Description	Planned outputs	Planned duration	Topic reference and competences needed?	Do you need a support with prototype development? (Yes/No)
Activity 1					
Activity 2					
Activity x					

NOTE: Add lines (for activities) as required



4.1 Please describe which specific competencies within the M4W consortium you are most interested in and explain why?

Suggested table for description of KPIs

KPI number and name	Description	Value(s)	Timing
KPI 1 – Title			
KPI 2 – Title			
KPI x – Title			

NOTE: Add lines (for KPIs) as required



Annex II - Consortium Declaration of Honour

Project title:

Project acronym:

BETWEEN

On behalf of [Name of Organization] established in [Legal address] VAT number [xxxxx] , acting as the consortium leader and represented for the purposes of signing the Consortium Declaration of Honour [name of the legal representative].

AND

On behalf of [Name of Organization] established in [Legal address] VAT number [xxxxx] , represented for the purposes of signing the Consortium Declaration of Honour by [name of the legal representative].

AND

On behalf of [Name of Organization] established in [Legal address] VAT number [xxxxx] , represented for the purposes of signing the Consortium Declaration of Honour by [name of the legal representative].



It is hereby agreed that:

1. All information provided is true and legally binding.
 - Partner [Name of Organization] is acting on behalf the following partner(s) as the consortium leader:
 - Partner 2: [Name of Organization]
 - Partner 3: [Name of Organization]
2. The MISSION4WATER consortium bears no responsibility in case a partner of this project consortium violates the mutual agreement set in this Consortium Declaration of Honour.
3. The MISSION4WATER consortium bears no responsibility in the case of dispute among consortium partners regarding intellectual property rights.
4. By signing this Consortium Declaration of Honour, all consortium partners declare that they are not members of any other consortium in the MISSION4WATER - Open Call. In case any entity, consortium leader or partner, participates in more than one consortium, both consortia will be excluded.
5. By signing and submitting this Consortium Declaration of Honour, the consortium partners accept all the rules explained in Annex 1: MISSION4WATER Guidelines for Open Call.
6. All partners declare not being in one of the following situations:
 - a. Is bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into an arrangement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations.
 - b. It or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over it have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata.
 - c. It has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify, including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations.
 - d. It is not in compliance with its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed.
 - e. It or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over



- it have been the subject of a judgement which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity, where such illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests.
- f. Is subject to an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresenting the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in a grant award procedure or another procurement procedure or failing to supply this information or having been declared to be in serious breach of its obligations under contracts or grants covered by the Union's budget.
7. Each partner declares that:
 - a. It is not subject to a conflict of interest.
 - b. Has not made false declarations in supplying the information required as a condition of participation in the MISSION4WATER - Open Call or does not fail to supply this information.
 - c. It is not in one of the situations of exclusion, referred to in the above-mentioned points a) to f).
 - d. Is aware and fully accepts all MISSION4WATER conditions and rules as expressed in all MISSION4WATER - Open Call open call documents.
 8. Each partner certifies that:
 - a. It is committed to participating in the above-mentioned project.
 - b. Has stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain its activity throughout its participation in the above-mentioned project and to provide any counterpart funding necessary.
 - c. Has or will have the necessary resources as and when needed to carry out its involvement in the above- mentioned project



Consortium Leader (Lead Beneficiary):

Organisation full name	
Organisation short name	
Full address	
Country	
Title (Mr., Ms., Dr.)	
Name of legal representative	
Surname	
Position in the organisation	

Representative's full name	Signature and stamp <i>(if applicable)</i>
Done at (place) _____, on the _____ (day) (month) _____ (year)	



Consortium partner no. 2:

Organisation full name	
Organisation short name	
Full address	
Country	
Title (Mr., Ms., Dr.)	
Name of legal representative	
Surname	
Position in the organisation	

Representative's full name	Signature and stamp <i>(if applicable)</i>

Done at (place) _____, on the _____ (day) (month) _____ (year)

Consortium partner no. 3:

Organisation full name	
Organisation short name	
Full address	
Country	
Title (Mr., Ms., Dr.)	
Name of legal representative	
Surname	
Position in the organisation	

Representative's full name	Signature and stamp <i>(if applicable)</i>
Done at (place) _____, on the _____ (day) (month) _____ (year)	