

TASC-RestoreMed - Open Call

Annex 1

Guide for Applicants v1.0

This document is for information only.

Submission deadline: 27 May 2026, 17:00 CET

The project TASC-RestoreMed (Technical assistance and support to communities of actors for the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030 for the Mediterranean basin), under grand agreement No 101217661 has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme.

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS TASC-RESTOREMED?

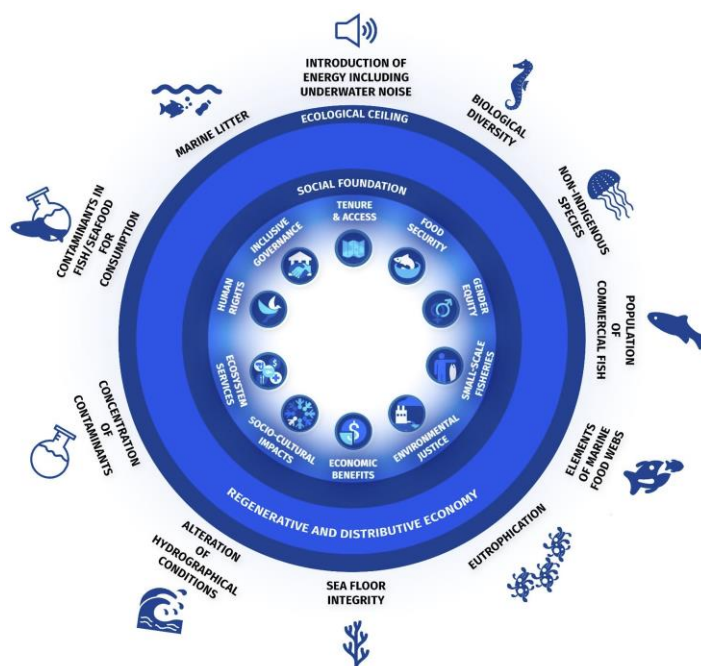
TASC-RestoreMed is a flagship initiative under EU **Mission Ocean**¹, “Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030”². **TASC-RestoreMed** stands for “Technical assistance and support to communities of actors for the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030 for the Mediterranean basin”. The project launched in September 2025 and will run for a duration of four years.

The initiative seeks to catalyse the shift towards a **sustainable blue economy** in the Mediterranean basin, fostering long term environmental and economic resilience.

TASC-RestoreMed provides **financial support, capacity building** and a **dynamic network** to enable community-led projects, technological innovation, policy integration and stakeholder participation, all working together to drive transformative change in marine and freshwater ecosystems.

The current open call will identify and support a high potential cohort of projects to receive comprehensive support spanning design, implementation and impact over 12-24 months.

1.1.1 A Holistic Framework



- At its core, TASC-RestoreMed is built on the Blue Doughnut model, a marine adaptation of the Doughnut Economics framework by Kate Raworth. The programme holistically addresses environmental thresholds (outer ring) and social foundations (inner ring) to ensure balance between ecosystem regeneration and community well-being.
- This approach enables us to integrate environmental, social and economic dimensions into marine restoration efforts, ensuring long-term resilience and sustainability. It is this systemic and

¹ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/restore-our-ocean-and-waters_en#scope-of-the-mission

² <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/06b9b2a8-5ba5-11f0-a9d0-01aa75ed71a1>

inclusive perspective that underpins our selection for this framework and guides all activities under the initiative.

1.1.2 Community building and knowledge exchange

A core pillar of **TASC-RestoreMed** is connecting a vibrant community of innovators, researchers, policy makers and members of the civil society around marine restoration and innovation.

To support this, the initiative will host interactive events such as the Sustainathon, clustering meetings to connect and align funded projects, and an end of project Lighthouse Conference to showcase outcomes, lessons learned and catalyse future collaborations. These activities will strengthen cross-sector networks and accelerate the collective impact of projects aligned with EU Mission Ocean objectives.

1.1.3 Team

The **TASC-RestoreMed** consortium is formed by 10 organizations in 8 countries, which work together for 48 months.

More information about the project can be found on the **project website**:

<https://www.tascrestoremmed.eu>



Figure 1 TASC-RestoreMed Consortium partners

2. OPEN CALL

The TASC-RestoreMed Open Call's programme overall objective is to strongly contribute to the Mission Ocean Phase 2 (*upscaling and deployment*) through transformative change, applying the **Blue Doughnut concept** in the **Mediterranean Basin**.

Programme's Objectives:

1. Demonstrate measurable, verifiable and ambitious progress towards reaching one of several objectives and targets³ of the EU Mission "**Restore our Seas and Waters by 2030**"¹: Focus of this Call - **Mediterranean Basin**:
 - a. *Protect and **restore marine and freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity**, in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030.*

³ Targets are listed in **Annex 1.1A Catalogue_Type A-Community-Led Actions_v1.0** in Table 4 (PILLAR 1: List of WISE KPIs), Table 5 (PILLAR 2: List of WISE KPIs), and Table 6 (PILLAR 3: List of WISE KPIs). This document is **required to be checked** by the applicants for the Community-Led Actions Open Call.

- b. 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.
 - c. 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
2. Mobilise and engage **Communities of actors** through active support designed to accelerate the progress to achieve the Mission objectives and targets.
3. Increase readiness at local level to deploy at a scale innovative solution addressing at least one of the above Mission Ocean three targets through leveraging of resources and investments from communities of relevant actors.

What we offer?

- **Financial Support:** TASC-RestoreMed manages a Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) programme of **€8 million**.
- **Support Model:** The programme offers a wide range of **Technical Assistance** activities, summarized in the **RestoreMedTOOLS**, focusing on business/impact case development, policy/legislation analysis, access to funding, and impact assessment.

What are the types of this Open Call?

This Open Call presents two distinct types, each targeting a different stage of the transformative change required by the Mission.

- **Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA):** projects driving the scale-up and deployment of existing research and innovations solutions in the Mediterranean basin. Total funding: **€7 million**
- **Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TAD):** projects dedicated to creating strategic regional and local Agendas and Governance Roadmaps for the Mediterranean basin that will pave the way for a future deployment of solutions. Total funding: **€1 million**

What we expect?

All selected projects, regardless of type, must contribute to the overarching TASC-RestoreMed and Mission Ocean goals:

- **Blue Doughnut Integration:** Ensure the project concept balances ecological requirements (planetary boundaries) with societal needs (social foundation).
- **Mobilisation and Engagement:** Actively engage Communities of actors through effective support to accelerate progress towards Mission targets.
- **Leveraging Investment:** Position themselves to attract external and follow-up funding, leveraging FSTP grants to drive long-term investment.



Figure 2 Expected contributions from the Open Call Applicants

2.1 TYPE A: COMMUNITY-LED ACTIONS (CLA)

2.1.1 Objective and ambition

The primary objective of the Community-Led Actions type is **scale-up and deployment of innovative solutions** that yield measurable results for ocean and water restoration. These projects are designed to demonstrate effective, on-the-ground interventions through active community engagement and local leadership. The ambition is to move solutions beyond the piloting stage (TRL 5) to become functional and replicable prototypes in an operational environment (targeting **TRL 6-7 or higher**).

Strategic focus of the Mission Implementation Plan:

In the second 'deployment and upscaling' phase (2026-2030), the solutions developed and piloted in the first phase to deliver on the Mission and Green Deal objectives will be further deployed, replicated and scaled up through rounds of open calls for scale up actions. This will enable broad participation in the Mission across the EU. These scale up actions will bring new innovations and technologies developed in the first phase to higher TRL levels, and de-risk their market deployment, and adapt solutions so they can be replicated in new areas. These scale up actions will have a strong citizen, stakeholder and community governance element.

2.1.2 Key objectives for CLA projects

- **Demonstrate Measurable Progress:** Achieve verifiable progress toward Mission Ocean targets with clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will contribute to e.g. a **50% reduction in plastic litter** or a **30% reduction in microplastics** in the active area.
- **Develop Commercial/Impact Viability:** Develop a comprehensive **impact case and business plan** to ensure long-term sustainability and attract follow-up funding.
- **Accelerate Adoption:** Increase readiness at the local level to deploy innovative solutions at scale, actively involving communities and increasing social acceptance

2.1.3 Focus on Action

CLA projects must focus on tangible outcomes and involvement of a local community.

- **Finalize the project plan with community input**, fine-tune all activities, and establish the baseline for measuring the tangible outcome **in collaboration with local stakeholders**

Example: Local fishermen and volunteers successfully installed a number of collected underwater trash bins, resulting in the removal of 5 tons of plastic ghost nets from a priority coastal conservation area, monitored via a community app.

The expected outcomes are clearly listed in Annex 1.1A Catalogue_Type A-Community-Led Actions_v1.0. Studying this mandatory document is essential to build a relevant and aligned application.

2.1.4 Requirement

Each applying Consortium must identify: 1) a leader (Project Manager) that will be responsible for managing the project, submitting required results and documents in due time, and interacting and coordinating effectively with the TASC-RestoreMed Consortium throughout the technical assistance activities, 2) an excellent consortium of partners to perform the actions and 3) a Communication Manager that will be responsible to demonstrate the expected outcome and measurable impact (short and long term) per funded project, disseminate the results and exploit them in collaboration with the TASC-Restore Communication Manager represented by the Impact Hub Athens.

2.1.5 Examples of Target CLA Beneficiaries

Targeted CLA beneficiaries are typically entities focused on implementation and technology adoption: **Ports and marinas** (piloting zero-discharge solutions), **Technology Developers** and **Municipalities** and **Regional Authorities** (demonstrating novel technologies to prevent and eliminate pollution of our seas and waters) **Aquaculture and Aquafeed producers** (developing and testing climate-smart aquafeeds), **Conservation** organisations and **Scientists** (deploying biodiversity monitoring/restoration tools), **Locally based companies** and **startups** developing circular economy solutions, and research and education performing institutions among others.

2.2 TYPE B: TRANSITION AGENDA DEVELOPMENT (TAD)

2.2.1 Objective and Ambition

The core objective of the Transition Agenda Development type is to provide a **concrete contribution to support** national, regional and local authorities in **Member States/ Associated countries** in fulfilling EU legislation and regulatory objectives. This involves identifying governance gaps and creating the political and legal environment necessary for the long-term sustainability and scaling of the solutions to support the achievement of the Mission Ocean objectives and targets including those developed in the CLA track.

2.2.2 Key objectives for TAD projects

- **Roadmap Development:** at least 1 **local or regional roadmap** must be developed per funded project that outline the strategy for supporting scale-up, deployment, and legislative adaptation.
- **Policy Recommendation:** Deliver formal policy recommendations to EU and local authorities for the **adaptation or development of legislation** to streamline the uptake of Mission-aligned solutions.

- **Governance Innovation:** Promote **regulatory innovation** to accommodate emerging technologies and facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration in governance models.

2.2.3 Focus on Strategy

The TAD project will **analyse policy gaps** (including both **restricting legislation and entirely missing frameworks**) that impact marine environment, create a **detailed legislative roadmap** to address these issues, and **develop a governance strategy** for effective, harmonized implementation.

Applicants for TAD **must consult the mandatory** [Annex 1.1B Catalogue_Type B-Transition Agenda_v1.0](#) to ensure their Transition Agenda Development proposals are relevant, clearly identifying and aligning their legislative roadmaps with the final environmental impact targets of the Mission Ocean.

2.2.4 Requirement

An applying Partner(s) must identify: 1) a Consortium leader (Project Manager) that will be responsible for managing the project, submitting required results and documents in due time, and 2) a Communication Manager that will be responsible to demonstrate the expected outcome and measurable impact (short and long term) per funded project, disseminate the results and exploit them in collaboration with the TASC-Restore Communication Manager represented by the Impact Hub Athens.

2.2.5 Examples of Target TAD Beneficiaries

Target TAD beneficiaries are typically entities focused on policy, governance, and stakeholder coordination: **Regional and local authorities**, **NGOs** focused on policy advocacy, **Research Performing Organisations** conducting legal harmonisation studies, and **Associations** developing multi-stakeholder dialogue frameworks among others.

2.3 LIST OF SERVICES

All selected projects, spanning both **Community-Led Actions (CLA)** and **Transition Agenda Development (TAD)**, will be enrolled in a comprehensive support program focused on maximizing success and long-term impact. This **Technical Assistance** includes strategic guidance on developing viable **business plans and impact cases**, alongside expert support for crucial areas like **policy alignment, regulatory compliance**, accessing **follow-up funding and investment**, and undertaking complex **environmental and social impact assessments**. For a definitive and exhaustive list of the specific topics, detailed expectations, and the full catalogue of services available for your chosen track, applicants are **mandatorily required to consult the relevant Annex of Catalogue** ([Annex 1.1A Catalogue_Type A-Community-Led Actions_v1.0](#) and [Annex 1.1B Catalogue_Type B-Transition Agenda_v1.0](#)), as the detailed provisions of support are strictly outlined there.

2.4 OPEN CALL DESIGN

Table 1 Open Call key characteristic - summary

OPEN CALL KEY CHARACTERISTIC		
OFFER	TYPE A: COMMUNITY-LED ACTIONS CALL	TYPE B: TRANSITION AGENDA DEVELOPMENT CALL

Total Funding	€7M	€1M
Maximum Funding per Project	Between €200k to €1.4M	€100k
Maximum Funding per Beneficiary	€500k	€100k
Maximum Project Duration	24 months	12 months
Number of Projects to be funded	Minimum 5	Minimum 10
Number of Required Beneficiaries per Project	Minimum 2 Beneficiaries (no maximum limitation)	1 or 2 Beneficiaries
Key Conditions	<p>Proposed solutions should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be at least at TRL5 (Technology Readiness Level) for scale-up and deployment. • Demonstrate a Business Readiness Level (BRL5) and Societal Readiness Level (SRL5), including citizen science components for awareness and acceptance. 	<p>Proposed local and regional roadmaps for the Mediterranean Basin should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop or adapt legislation(s) to support deployment of solutions that contribute to the Mission Ocean objectives. • Identify gaps and outdated regulations and promote regulatory innovation to accommodate emerging technologies and industries.
Emphasis	Active involvement of society and local communities in the project, ensuring their needs and opinions are respected.	Bottom-up approach involving all stakeholders (local and regional authorities, citizens) in policy and legislation development and adaptation.
Expected Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental: Reducing plastic litter, restoring habitats, and remediating pollution. • Climate: Implementing nature-based solutions and advancing blue carbon sequestration. • Biodiversity: Creating new marine protected areas and deploying biodiversity monitoring tools. • Human Health: Monitoring microplastics and developing water quality warning systems. • Economic Impact: Piloting circular economy and sustainable tourism ventures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing strategic roadmaps that cover processes needed for marine/coastal/inland water protection and restoration, pollution reduction/elimination, and achieving decarbonization/circularity targets. • Reporting on important aspects related to Transition Agendas, such as gaps in regulations, new technology requirements, stakeholder needs and societal issues. • Providing recommendations for short-term, medium-term, and long-term adjustments/improvements of the current policy framework. • Stakeholder engagement in policy and regulation assessment.

3. WHO CAN APPLY?

All applicants must satisfy the General Eligibility Criteria. Specific conditions apply based on the chosen type: Community-Led Actions (CLA) or Transition Agenda Development (TAD).

3.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.1.1 Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for the **TASC-RestoreMed** – Open Call are:

- **Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA):**

Applicant Eligibility and Required Consortium Roles

Eligible applicants must form a **Consortium of minimum two (2) legal entities**, representing a Mission community (See Table 2 for community definition).

Beyond meeting the legal entity requirements below, the consortium **must functionally include both a Technology/Knowledge/Solution Provider and a Technology/Knowledge/Solution Adopter**.

Important Note on Subcontracting: *These mandatory roles may be fulfilled by the two legal entities or secured through **clearly defined subcontracting arrangements**. If subcontracting is used for either role, the commitment and scope of work **must be detailed within the Project Budget and Work Plan sections of the Proposal Template**.*

Mandatory Consortium Structure

The project team must include the following two distinct functional roles to ensure successful deployment and impact:

A) Technology/Knowledge/Solution Provider:

- **Role:** The entity responsible for developing, refining, or supplying the core **technology, innovation, knowledge product, or specialized solution** being tested in the project.
- **Examples:** Start-ups, SMEs, Research Organisations, specialized Consulting Firms, Educational Establishments, etc.

B) Adopter of Technology/Knowledge/Solution:

- **Role:** The entity that will integrate, use, and ultimately benefit from the deployed solution in a real-world setting. This role secures the **tangible outcome** and demonstration effect.
- **Examples:** Regional and Local Authorities, NGOs, Professional Associations, Locally Based Companies (SMEs), or Foundations, etc.

As the Community-Led Action (CLA) Call requires a consortium of at least two legal entities, the partners **must** appoint one partner as the Consortium Leader. The signed [Annex 4A Consortium Declaration of Honour \(template\)_Type A_CLA_v1.0](#) is a **mandatory document** that the selected consortium leader must submit during the **contracting phase** to finalize the Sub-grant Agreement. Actual submission is only required if your proposal is selected for funding.

- **Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TAD):**

- Individual legal entities or consortia of maximum 2 legal entities, representing a Mission community (Table 2)
- Relevant legal entities could include:
 - i. Regional and local authorities focused on policy, governance, stakeholder coordination;
 - ii. NGOs focused on policy advocacy,

- iii. Research Performing Organisations conducting legal harmonisation studies;
- iv. Associations developing multi-stakeholder dialogue frameworks.

Consortium-type applications (Max 2 entities), the partners must appoint one partner as a Consortium Leader (by signing Consortium Declaration of Honour - [Annex 4.1B Consortium Declaration of Honour \(template\)_Type B_TAD_v1.0](#)). Actual submission is only required if your proposal is selected for funding.

Individual applications (One entity): the applicant will sign [Annex 4.2B Beneficiary Declaration of Honour \(template\)_Type B_TDA](#). Actual submission is only required if your proposal is selected for funding.

Table 2 The types of Mission Communities - examples

THE TYPES OF MISSION COMMUNITIES - EXAMPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ports (including inland ports); • islands; • fishing communities, aquaculture producers and other representatives of blue economy; • operators of various vessels; • Local Action Groups described by the Community-Led Local Development strategies • waterfront cities or regions / communities (avoiding overlaps with Cities' Mission); • conservation communities; • representatives of the tourism sector; • maritime infrastructure operators (incl. offshore platforms and their operators).

3.1.1.1 SME eligibility

A SME following the EU definition by the [Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC](#) and in the [SME user guide](#).

Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are considered eligible ONLY if complying with the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC and the SME user guide. In summary, the criteria which define an SME are:

- a. The headcount in the Annual Work Unit (AWU) is less than 250.
- b. Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to €43 million.

Startups that do not have yet annual turnover or balance sheets are also considered eligible given that they fulfil the criteria (a) and (b) at submission time.

In addition, the following conditions apply:

- The applying SMEs should not:
 - have convictions for fraudulent behaviour, other financial irregularities, or unethical or illegal business practices.
 - have been declared bankrupt or have initiated bankruptcy procedures.
 - Be under liquidation or an enterprise under difficulty accordingly to the Commission Regulation No 651/2014, art. 2.18.
 - Be excluded from the possibility of obtaining EU funding under the provisions of both national and EU law, or by a decision of both national or EU authority.
- Proposals must ensure that there is no risk of double funding. The fundamental principle underpinning the rules for public expenditure in the EU states that no costs for the same activity can be funded twice from the EU budget, as defined in Article 111 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation.

3.1.2 Eligible Locations of Applicants

Eligible Applicants that may receive funding through this Open Call must be legal entities with a **valid VAT registered during the submission of the proposal in an eligible Location**:

- European Union Member States or
- Horizon Europe associated countries (those that have signed an agreement with the EU as identified in the HE Programme Guide) according to the updated list published by the European Commission⁴.

For proposals with more than one beneficiary, **at least one (1) applicant** (for both types of projects) should be legally established organisation(s) with registered address in a country belonging to the **Mediterranean Sea basin** (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, France, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Malta, Palestine, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and northern African countries, provided that they are either EU Member State or associated to Horizon Europe at the date of the publication of the call) to guarantee access to a local and regional community.

All activities financed in the framework of the project should be implemented in countries of the Mediterranean Sea basin (in the above-mentioned countries) into marine waters, transitional waters and freshwater bodies.

3.1.3 Type of projects to be funded

Applicants are mandatorily required to consult and align their proposals with the following corresponding Annexes:

- **For Community-Led Actions (CLA):** Refer to [Annex 1.1A Catalogue_Type A-Community-Led Actions_v1.0](#) for the exhaustive list of Topics, detailed Expectations, the full 24-month Programme Activities, and the list of available support services.
- **For Transition Agenda Development (TAD):** Refer and [Annex 1.1B Catalogue_Type B-Transition Agenda_v1.0](#) for the complete list of Focus Areas (Topics), detailed Expectations, the 12-month Programme Activities, and the list of available support services.

The TASC-RestoreMed Open Calls have the following expectations to seek innovative projects that contribute to the environmental restoration of the Mediterranean Sea, aligning with the Mission Ocean objectives and the Blue Doughnut approach. Selected projects are expected to demonstrate:

Alignment with Programme Objectives

- **Mission Ocean Alignment:** Proposals should clearly link to the "**Restore our Seas and Waters by 2030**" mission objectives.
- **Environmental Impact:** Projects must clearly address the environmental challenges of the Mediterranean Sea and demonstrate a **direct contribution to its restoration**.
- **Blue Doughnut Approach:** Projects must demonstrate a **holistic approach**, balancing environmental sustainability with social and economic considerations.
- **Scale-Up and Deployment Readiness:** Proposals for Community-Led Actions must present solutions that are ready for **scale-up and deployment** within the Mediterranean Basin.
- **Roadmap Development:** Proposals for Transition Agenda Development must outline a clear strategy for supporting scale-up, deployment, and **legislative adaptation** through local/regional roadmaps.
- **Legislation Support:** Projects must prove a concrete contribution to support Member States/Associated countries and their authorities/stakeholders in **implementing EU legislation**

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

related to marine and freshwater ecosystems and reaching biodiversity, pollution, and climate targets.

Participation and Collaboration:

- **Consortium Strength:** Applicants are encouraged to form **strong consortia** with relevant expertise and experience.
- **Clustering and Synergies:** Projects should be open to **clustering with relevant projects** and initiatives.
- **Dissemination and Communication:** Applicants must commit to actively participating in dissemination and communication activities.

Quality Implementation:

- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Proposals must demonstrate **strong collaboration** among relevant stakeholders, including local/regional communities and authorities.
- **Feasibility and Viability:** Projects should present a **realistic plan for implementation**, demonstrating technical and financial viability.
- **Impact and Measurable Outcomes:** Proposals must define clear, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (**SMART**) **objectives and expected outcomes**.
- **Post-Program Exploitation Plan:** Projects should outline a clear plan for **long-term sustainability and exploitation** of results, aligned with the **regenerative economy**.

3.1.4 Multiple submissions

The **TASC-RestoreMed** – Open Call will accept a **maximum of one (1) application** per applicant **per open call** (max 1 Type A: CLA project OR max 1 Type B: TAD project).

- An organization can be involved in **one (and only one) CLA proposal** (as a lead or a partner) OR
- An organization can be involved in **one (and only one) TAD proposal** (as a lead or a partner).

The same organisation (Applicant) can not apply for CLA and TAD.

In case an Applicant will appear (including as a member of a consortium) in more than one application in this open call (in Type A: CLA and/or in Type B: TAD), all associated applications will be automatically excluded from the evaluation process.

3.1.5 Conflict of Interest

IMPORTANT: To avoid conflicts of interest, applications will not be accepted from persons or organisations who are partners in the TASC-RestoreMed consortium or who are formally linked in any way to partners of the consortium. Please check the list of partners at <https://tascrestoremmed.eu/>.

Applicants shall not have any actual or/and potential conflict of interest with the TASC-RestoreMed selection process and during the whole project. The applicants will be required to declare that they know of no such potential conflicts of interest by signing [Annex 4.A or 4.1.B or 4.2.B - \(Consortium/Beneficiary\) Declaration of Honour](#) during the contracting phase.

All suspected cases of conflict of interest will be assessed case by case. In particular, Applicants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the project is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

3.1.6 Eligibility checklist

Table 3 General Eligibility Criteria applying for both types of Open Call

#	ELIGIBILITY CRITERION	REQUIREMENT DETAILS for both types of projects in TASC-RestoreMed Open Call (CLA and TAD)	CHECKLIST
1	Submission Platform	Proposals must be submitted ONLY through the designated F6S platform.	YES/NO
2	Submission deadline	The proposal must be submitted before the official deadline 27 May 2026 at 17:00 CET (Brussels time).	YES/NO
3	Language	The entire proposal, including all required documentation, must be submitted ONLY in English.	YES/NO
4	Official Template	The proposal must strictly follow the provided official Proposal Template (Annex 2.1 for type A: CLA and Annex 2.2 for type B: TAD).	YES/NO
5	Page Limitation	The proposal must not exceed the maximum page limits set for the respective type of projects: CLA and TAD, identified in the Annex 2.1 for type A: CLA and Annex 2.2 for type B: TAD respectively.	YES/NO
6	Completeness	The application must be complete, including all requested administrative data and obligatory supporting documents requested in the F6S platform.	YES/NO
7	Thematic Alignment	The proposed project must be clearly aligned with the Mission Ocean goals and directly contribute to one or more of the Mission's Pillars (objectives).	YES/NO
8	Pillar Relevance	The proposal's content must correspond specifically to the requirements of the Open Call objectives outlined in the official documentation for CLA and TAD: Annex 1.1.A Catalogue_Type A-CLA and Annex 1.1.B Catalogue_Type B-TAD respectively.	YES/NO
9	Activity location	All activities financed must be implemented in the Mediterranean Basin.	YES/NO
10	Legal Status	The applicant entity(ies) must be legally established in an EU Member State (MS) or an Associated Country to Horizon Europe (check the list here) with a valid VAT number (where applicable).	YES/NO

11	Exclusion from Funding	The Applicant must not be a Big Corporate (i.e., not qualifying as an SME).	YES/NO
11	Multiple submission	One proposal per involved organisation (Applicant) per open call is envisaged (only one proposal is submitted - in type of project A: CLA or in type of project B: TAD).	YES/NO
12	Conflict of Interest	Applicants must not have any conflict of interest with TASC-RestoreMed Consortium, and the selection process. Please read section 3.1.5. Conflict of Interest.	YES/NO
13	EU Sanctions	Entities subject to EU restrictive measures (sanctions) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) are ineligible to participate as recipients of FSTP funding.	YES/NO

Table 4 Specific Eligibility Criteria applying per type of project in the TASC-RestoreMed Open Call

#	ELIGIBILITY CRITERION	Type A: COMMUNITY-LED ACTIONS (CLA)	Type B: TRANSITION AGENDA DEVELOPMENT (TAD)	CHECKLIST
1	Mediterranean Partner	At least one of the Applicants must be legally registered in at least one of the eligible Mediterranean Sea Basin countries listed in 3.1.2.	The Applicant (or at least one of the Applicants in case of consortium application) must be legally registered in at least one of the eligible Mediterranean Sea Basin countries listed in 3.1.2.	YES/NO
2	Consortium size	Minimum two legal entities, no maximum number of applicants defined	One Individual legal entity or consortia of maximum two legal entities/individuals	YES/NO
3	Budget limit	Max grant is €1,400,000	Max grant is €100,000	YES/NO
4	Individual Partner Limit	Max funding per single beneficiary is €500,000 (unless justified exception is approved)	The maximum total funding per project is €100,000 (for 1 or 2 partners). The maximum request for a single partner is €100,000. If two partners apply, the allocation of the €100,000 cap is flexible (e.g., €60,000	YES/NO

			/ €40,000) and determined by the consortium.	
5	Maturity (TRL)	Must demonstrate a starting TRL of at least TRL 5.	No specific TRL requirement.	YES/NO
6	Max grant duration	Maximum 24 months.	Maximum 12 months.	YES/NO

3.2 FUNDING CONDITIONS

3.2.1 General rules

Any entity, applying individually or as part of a consortium, will only be considered for funding once.

Each application may receive a maximum of up to:

- For Type A: **Community-Led Actions***: €200k – up €1.4M per project
- For Type B: **Transition Agenda Development**: up to €100k per project

(*) For the Type A: CLA projects, the maximum amount to be granted to each applicant is €500,000 but may be higher under justified circumstances, for example:

- When the project demonstrably requires a larger-scale deployment or infrastructure investment to achieve the expected environmental or societal impact;
- When the applicant acts as a coordinator of a multi-actor or cross-border consortium, bearing additional administrative and technical responsibilities;
- When the project significantly advances Mission Ocean goals (e.g. contributes to multiple targets such as marine pollution reduction, biodiversity restoration and carbon neutrality);
- When it includes replication or scaling activities in multiple locations across the Mediterranean basin;
- Or when the applicant is developing innovative technologies with high TRL levels, which require larger upfront costs to reach scale.

All such exceptions must be clearly justified in the application and will be subject to review and approval during the evaluation process by the TASC-RestoreMed Steering Group and the appointed expert evaluators.

The total amount requested must represent 100% of the project costs (including indirect costs). All applications will be required to provide a justification of the planned costs and resources of the project.

However, where specific activities exceed the available budget per project under this Open Call, the Beneficiaries may secure and utilize additional sources of financing, provided that such complementary funding is clearly distinguished from the TASC-RestoreMed FSTP contribution and duly documented. In such cases, the applicants must ensure transparent allocation of costs, explicitly identifying in the proposal which expenses will be covered by ASC-RestoreMed funding Programme and which are to be financed from other sources, thereby avoiding any risk of double financing. The activities proposed to be funded by other sources (although described in the proposal) will not be a subject to evaluation within the TASC-RestoreMed Open Call and the budget planned for them must not be included in the budget requested with the proposal.

3.2.2 Eligible costs

FSTP (Financial Support to Third Parties) costs will be awarded under a **'lump sum model'**. Eligible costs will include:

- Personnel Costs
- Other goods, works and services. Purchases of other goods, works and services must be calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred. Such goods, works and services include, for instance, consumables and supplies, promotion, dissemination, protection of results, translations, publications, certificates and financial guarantees, if required under the Agreement.
- Promotion of services and project
- Travel Costs are eligible for funding only when they are explicitly necessary and justified for the successful execution and required dissemination of the project. These costs must be tied to:
 - Specific project activities defined in the proposal (e.g., travel for community engagement, co-creation workshops, or solution deployment/testing).
 - Mandatory engagement activities, such as attending stakeholder meetings essential for the project's success. Applicants **must consult the specific Annex Catalogue** for their chosen track to identify all [mandatory travel activities](#) and allocate funds accordingly:
 - i. Mandatory Events: The budget must include costs for attendance at the TASC-RestoreMed Final Event and provision for participation in at least one physical event where the funded project's results will be promoted.
 - ii. Sprint-Specific Requirements: Applicants are directed to carefully check the communication and attendance requirements detailed within each Sprint of the specific Annex Catalogue ([Annex 1.1A for CLA](#) or [Annex 1.1B for TAD](#)). Ensure your budget reflects travel expenses for all mandatory events and activities outlined in those Annexes.
- Equipment. Purchases of equipment, infrastructure or other assets used for the action must be declared as depreciation costs, calculated on the basis of the costs actually incurred and written off in accordance with international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices. Only the portion of the costs that corresponds to the rate of actual use for the action during the action duration can be taken into account. Costs for renting or leasing equipment, infrastructure or other assets are also eligible, if they do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment, infrastructure or assets and do not include any financing fees.
- Software, hardware and data justified for the needs of the project implementation
- Access to and use of infrastructure justified for the needs of the project
- Subcontract of services which must be (i) defined in the application; (ii) aligned with the purpose of the project; (iii) not delivered by partnership
- Audio/visual products and other communication activities related to the project
- Indirect costs are limited to a flat-rate of 15% of the total eligible direct costs for the action.

Subcontracting costs (max 20% of the total requested budget) for the action (including related duties, taxes and charges, such as non-deductible or non-refundable value added tax (VAT)) are eligible, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions and are awarded using the beneficiary's usual purchasing practices – provided these ensure subcontracts with best value for money (or if appropriate the lowest price) and that there is no conflict of interests.

Checking the consistency between these costs and the expected work of the third-party project will be part of the evaluation process.

The total grant requested by the third-party consortium will represent up to 100% of the total costs of the project.

3.2.3 Payment arrangements

Third party applicants will receive funding upon the execution of specific activities/deliverables outlined in:

- Community-Led Actions projects: [Annex 1.1A Catalogue_Type A-Community-Led Actions_v1.0](#) and [Annex 2A Proposal Template_Type A-CLA_v1.0](#)
- Transition Agenda Development projects: [Annex 1.1B Catalogue_Type B-Transition Agenda_v1.0](#) and [Annex 2B Proposal Template_Type B-TAD_v1.0](#)

Funding distribution:

- **For the Community-Led Action (CLA) Call:**
 - 40% of the total contribution at the start of the project (pre-financing payment)
 - 45% of the total contribution halfway, connected to an interim report (interim payment(s).
 - 15% of the total contribution at the end of the project and following a final report (payment of the balance).
- **For the Transition Agenda Development (TAD) Call:**
 - 40% of the total contribution at the start of the project (pre-financing payment)
 - 40% of the total contribution halfway, connected to an interim report (interim payment(s).
 - 20% of the total contribution at the end of the project and following a final report (payment of the balance).

3.3 APPLICATION PROCESS

The [F6S platform](#) will be the single-entry point for all applications to the TASC-RestoreMed.

- For Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA) at: <https://www.f6s.com/tasc-restoremed-oc-type-a-cla/apply>
- For Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TAD) at: <https://www.f6s.com/tasc-restoremed-oc-type-b-tad/apply>

3.3.1 Open Call documents

Both links are directly linked to the project website at <https://tascrestoredmed.eu/open-call>. The Applicants are required to register a profile at F6S to submit a proposal. All Open Call documents are available [HERE](#) (Download the respective documents for Type A: CLA or for Type B: TAD). These are:

Table 5 List of OC documents - division of Annexes per type of call

Type A: COMMUNITY-LED ACTIONS (CLA)		Type B: TRANSITION AGENDA DEVELOPMENT (TAD)	
Documents MANDATORY to <u>READ</u> to design a proposal			
Annex 1 Guide for Applicants v1.0			
Annex 1.1A Catalogue_Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA)_v1.0		Annex 1.1B Catalogue_Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TAD)_v1.0	
Documents MANDATORY to <u>SUBMIT</u> during the application phase			
(deadline: 27 May 2026 17:00 CET Brussels time)			

Annex 2A Proposal Template_Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA)_v1.0	Annex 2B Proposal Template_Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TDA)_v1.0
<p>Annex 2.1A Application form at the F6S Platform_Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA)</p> <p><i>(The form is extracted as a document for reference purpose only. The Application form should be directly filled at the F6S platform.)</i></p>	<p>Annex 2.1B Application form at the F6S Platform_Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TDA)</p> <p><i>(The form is extracted as a document for reference purpose only. The Application form should be directly filled at the F6S platform.)</i></p>
Documents REQUIRED for contracting phase with the selected projects	
Annex 3A Sub-grant Agreement_Type A: Community-Led Action (CLA)_v1.0	Annex 3B Sub-grant Agreement_Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TAD)_v1.0
Annex 4A Consortium Declaration of Honour_Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA)_v1.0	<p>Annex 4.1B Consortium Declaration of Honour_Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TDA)_v1.0 <i>(if applicable – two organisations apply)</i></p> <p>Annex 4.2B Beneficiary Declaration of Honour_Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TDA)_v1.0 <i>(if applicable – only one organisation applies)</i></p>
Annex 5A SME Declaration_Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA)_v1.0 <i>(if applicable – SME applies)</i>	Annex 5B SME Declaration_Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TAD)_v1.0 <i>(if applicable – SME applies)</i>
Annex 6.A Bank Account Information_Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA)_v1.0	Annex 6.B Bank Account Information_Type A: Community-Led Actions (CLA)_v1.0

Proposals must strictly follow the F6S application form, which defines the exact sections, and required Annexes; failure to **read and meticulously answer all questions** within the F6S platform will render the submission ineligible.

3.3.2 Timeline

The relevant timings for the application process are provided in [Table 6](#) but are subject to change. While we are committed to adhering to the published schedule, Applicants should be aware that certain timelines and specifications may be subject to necessary revision. Any such change will be handled transparently and formally announced.

Possible reasons for timeline adjustments include, but are not limited to:

- **Volume of Applications Received:** If the number of submitted applications significantly exceeds initial projections, additional time may be required to guarantee a thorough and equitable administrative check and evaluation process.
- **Evaluation Logistics:** Unexpected circumstances that necessitate adjusting the required effort or capacity needed for the evaluation phase, such as the scheduling availability of specialized technical reviewers.

- **Expert Availability:** Unforeseen withdrawal or unavailability of key experts from the evaluation pool, requiring additional time for training, onboarding, or securing suitable replacements.
- **Unforeseen Circumstances:** External events or technical issues.

Applicants are **solely responsible** for staying informed of all official updates. Any changes to deadlines will be communicated through the project official website: <https://tascrestoremmed.eu/>

Table 6 Open Call and Programme deadlines

Phase	Description	Timeline
Application	Fill in and submit application with required Annexes to F6S platform.	Launch date: 27/11/2025 Submission deadline: 27/05/2026 (17h00 CET)
Eligibility & Technical check	TASC-RestoreMed Consortium performs internal checks the eligibility criteria of the applications. Non-eligible applications will be informed by email.	28/05/2026 to 11/06/2026
Application evaluation	An evaluation board (external experts) reviews the eligible applications, scoring them based on the evaluation criteria. The evaluators rank the applications. The shortlisted applications are invited to online interview.	12/06/2026 to 31/07/2026
Online interviews	Shortlisted Applicants pitch the project to the TASC-RestoreMed internal evaluation board following Q&A.	01/09/2026 to 18/09/2026
Announcement of the Results	All eligible applications receive an Evaluation Summary Report about approval or rejection of their project. The successful projects are invited to contracting phase.	30/09/2026

3.3.3 Other application requirements and considerations

- **Submission:** Applications must be submitted via the F6S platform (<https://www.f6s.com>). Any other submission method will not be accepted.
- **Complete application:** All mandatory questions must be answered, and all requested documents must be uploaded. Incomplete applications will be disqualified.
- **Accept terms:** Applicants must agree to the application's terms and conditions.
- **English language:** All applications and programme communication must be in English.
- **Document format:** Unless otherwise agreed, all documents in all phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format without printing restrictions.
- **Deadline:**
 - Be on time: Make sure you submit your proposal through the F6S platform before the deadline of 27 May 2026, 17:00 CET. If you submit the form correctly, the system will send you a confirmation of your submission (please check your SPAM folder as well).
 - Failure to submit the application by the submission deadline, regardless of cause (e.g., network issues, multiple browsers or windows), is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. It is recommended to apply well before the deadline.
 - Resubmissions are possible provided the call deadline has not passed but are only guaranteed if requested at least 2 business days before the deadline. For this purpose,

please contact opencall@tascrestoremmed.eu with a message titled: RESUBMISSION REQUEST.

- The application deadline may be subject to extension due to **unforeseen circumstances or administrative necessity**. All applicants will be notified of the new deadline.
- **Review future documents:** Applicants are encouraged to get familiar with the documents that will be required in the contracting phase (see Section - 5 What happens after selection?)
- **Notifications:** Applicants are encouraged to enable F6S notifications for the programme in their profile settings to ensure communications regarding their application are received.
- **F6S application:** The F6S platform allows you to work flexibly on the content, which is automatically saved once you progress filling out the form. All members of your team can have access to the application form and contribute to the work.
- **Be exhaustive:** Have you answered all the sections of the form and uploaded all required Annexes? It will not be possible to add any information after you submit your application or reach the submission deadline.

4. HOW WILL APPLICATIONS BE EVALUATED AND SELECTED?

4.1 ADMISSIBILITY & ELIGIBILITY CHECK

An initial eligibility verification will be done to filter out and discard non-eligible applications. An application is only considered eligible if it meets **all the eligibility criteria and requirements** for both type of Open Calls CLA and TAD, and specific ones per type of the Call listed in Section 3.

Step 1: Eligibility check

Eligibility to participate in the funding programme is initially verified against several eligibility criteria. This process is carried out by the TASC-RestoreMed team. A proposal may be declared ineligible or inadmissible at any stage. The check will verify:

- Proposals reception: via F6S platform and by the defined deadline.
- Eligibility filter: according to the Table 3 General Eligibility Criteria applying for both types of Open Call and Table 4 Specific Eligibility Criteria applying per type of project in the TASC-RestoreMed Open Call.

The eligibility check enables the establishment of a shortlist of applications to be evaluated in the next step of the evaluation process. For applications marked as non-eligible (for not meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria) the applicants will be informed by email. No additional feedback will be given.

TASC-RestoreMed Open Call team reserves the right to request at any moment of the process additional information and/or documentation to clarify any doubts regarding the eligibility of the applicant(s) and/or the application.

4.2 EXTERNAL REMOTE EVALUATION

Step 2: External review

Proposals considered eligible will move on to the external remote evaluation phase. The external evaluation will be done remotely by expert evaluators. Evaluators will be selected from a pool of experts that will be established through a call for expressions of interest. The evaluators will be identified from European and international organisations that do not belong to the TASC-RestoreMed partners and will be selected to fit the scientific scope of the submitted proposals. Expert profiles will be evaluated, and a pool of experts will be established. The top-ranked experts will be invited to evaluate proposals.

A balance of nationalities, gender and expertise will be sought, making sure that the panel represents an international group of scientists. This will ensure impartiality during the evaluation of the applications.

The evaluators will perform evaluations on an individual basis, not as representatives of their employer, their country, or any other entity. They are required to be independent, impartial, and objective. All evaluators are required to 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 TASC-RestoreMed Open Call team. Evaluators will also be bound by strict confidentiality regarding the evaluation process and during the evaluation process.

All evaluators will be supported with appropriate material (guides, templates, etc.) and will be briefed online on the evaluation process. External evaluators will evaluate each proposal and will be distributed across the proposals based on their expertise and, whenever possible, country of origin.

4.2.1 Evaluation criteria & scoring

Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of three (3) experts for Community-led Actions and two (2) experts for Transition Agenda Development.

Applications will be scored against the following **criteria**:

Table 7 Evaluation criteria for CLA

Criteria Name	Description (Sub-criteria)	Threshold and weight
Criteria 1 - Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quality of the objectives ✓ Justification for scale-up and deployment ✓ Quality of the methodology 	3/5 40%
Criteria 2 - Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Impact on the Mission Ocean objectives ✓ Impact in the Mediterranean Sea ✓ Wider Impacts and sustainability ✓ Quality of the dissemination, exploitation and communication plan 	3/5 40%
Criteria 3 - Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quality of the Work plan, its work packages, deliverables and milestones ✓ Justification of the requested FSTP funding ✓ Quality and completion of the consortium 	3/5 20%

Table 8 Evaluation criteria for TAD

Criteria Name	Description (Sub-criteria)	Threshold and weight
Criteria 1 - Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Relevance and Clarity of the Objectives ✓ Soundness of the Analytical Basis ✓ Innovative and Systemic Approach 	3/5 40%

	✓ Integration of Cross-Cutting Dimensions	
Criteria 2 - Impact	✓ Contribution to Mission Ocean and Waters Objectives ✓ Impact in the Mediterranean Sea ✓ Wider and long-term impacts ✓ Quality of the dissemination, exploitation and communication plan	3/5 40%
Criteria 3 - Implementation	✓ Quality of the Work plan, its work packages, deliverables and milestones ✓ Justification and coherence of the requested FSTP funding ✓ Quality and completion of the consortium	3/5 20%

Scoring for each section must be in the range from 0-5 following the guidelines:

- Below 3.0 - Poor.** The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses. Proposal non-acceptable (major weaknesses or missing parts in the proposal) [score 3.0 and below out of five]
- 3.0 - 3.4 - Fair.** Non-acceptable (one major weakness + possibly other weaknesses). The proposal although broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses. [score between 3.0 and 3.4 out of five]
- 3.5 – 3.9 - Good.** Moderate weakness + possibly minor weaknesses. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present. [score between 3.5 and 3.9 out of five]
- 4.0 – 4.4 - Very Good.** Minor weaknesses. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present. [score between 4.0 and 4.4 out of five]
- 4.5 – 5.0 -Excellent.** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor. [score between 4.5 and 5.0 out of five]

Each evaluator gives a score for each criterion, with explanatory comments, and prepares an Individual Evaluation Report.

4.2.2 Consensus phase

Step 3: Consensus

After the individual evaluation, all evaluators who have evaluated the proposal will get together in a consensus group, to agree on a common position on comments and scores. For consensus groups made up of external Experts, the group will be assisted by a member of the TASC-RestoreMed Steering Group (StG) who will act as moderator to:

- seek a consensus, impartially and
- ensure that each proposal is evaluated fairly, according to the award criteria.

In detail one of the 3 (or 2) expert-evaluators will be asked to prepare a draft Consensus Report, starting from the Individual Evaluation Reports for each proposal, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of the different reports and highlighting contradictory comments for further discussion. Based on the draft, the independent experts will be invited by the StG for a discussion round to go over contradicting opinions and views, and to come to a consensus on the final evaluation. The consensus discussion will be done remotely using, facilitated by the F6S platform if applicable. In case a consensus is difficult to reach, the StG will suggest video conferencing to continue the remote discussion in real-

time mode. One member of the StG will be present to organize the meeting and to observe and support if requested. The StG member is impartial, therefore under no circumstances he/she will give an opinion about the proposal. If consensus still cannot be reached, the StG will invite a 4th (or 3rd) independent expert and eventually can decide on minority views. Once consensus is reached on the final set of comments, the evaluators will provide their final scores matching with the comments in the Report.

Tables 7 & 8 (*item 'Evaluation Criteria'*) defines how individual criteria will be scored. The minimum threshold for each criterion will be **3 (three) out of 5 (five)**, while the overall score threshold will be **9 (nine) out of 15 (fifteen)**. Applications that do not meet the minimum thresholds (per criteria or overall score) will be excluded from the programme.

4.2.3 Ranking

Step 4: Shortlisting

The process begins by calculating the overall scores, followed by a segmented ranking and tie-break procedure to finalize the selection lists.

Overall Score Calculation

The StG will prepare the ranking lists for each project type based on the overall scores as a result of the evaluation. The overall score is a percentage and is calculated by multiplying the scores of Excellence and Impact by 8 (each criterion counts for 40 points of the total 100) and the score of Implementation by 4 (counting for 20 points in the overall score).

Segmented Ranking

The final selection lists will be prepared by applying the ranking and elimination procedure **separately for each segment** defined below:

1. **Segmentation by Call Type:** Projects are initially divided into two panels: **Community-Led Actions (CLA)** and **Transition Agenda Development (TAD)**.
2. **Segmentation by Mission Pillar:** Within the CLA and TAD panels, the final ranking list is prepared separately for **each of the three Mission Ocean Pillars of application**.

This ensures that competitive projects are selected across the entire scope of the Mission, preventing one Pillar from dominating the funding within a specific Call Type.

ex aequo Procedure

If **ex aequo** (equal) scores occur within a segmented ranking list, an elimination procedure is activated following a list of priority criteria.

The list of priority criteria determining the elimination of ex aequo cases looks as follows: (1) Highest consensus score on Impact goes first; (2) Highest consensus score on Excellence goes first; (3) Gender balance within the consortium: closest to 50/50 goes first; (4) lowest requested budget goes first.

Ex-aequo criteria, in the following order of priority:

Priority will be given to the projects that have scored higher in the Impact criterion.

Priority will be given to the projects that have scored higher in the Excellence criterion.

Priority will be given to proposals with gender balance.

Priority will be given to proposals with lowest requested budget.

4.3 INTERVIEW & SELECTION

Interviews will be conducted with the **highest-scoring proposals selected from every Pillar of application** (Pillar 1, Pillar 2, and Pillar 3) within each respective **Type of Call (Community-Led Actions and Transition Agenda Development)**.

A 30 min online interview will be scheduled between the shortlisted applicants and the Consortium experts. The interviews/hearings will be used to get further information to clarify the proposals and help the panel establish its final ranking list and scores. They may not serve to change proposals or add missing information.

Final ranking

The proposals with the highest scores after the ranking and positive pass in the interview phase will be in the final ranked list and the list of applications proposed for funding.

The number of proposals in the list depends on the available budget. If the available budget is too small to fund all above-threshold proposals, some proposals may be put on a reserve list. These will then be offered funding if a higher-scoring project does not go ahead. The below-threshold proposals will be rejected. Proposals will NOT be offered funding if a proposal is in any way manifestly contrary to EU general principles or established EU priorities or policies.

All participants will be informed about their evaluation result, together with the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) and all selected applicants will be invited for contracting,

4.4 APPEALS

Within three (3) working days of receiving (1) a rejection letter informing the application as non-eligible or (2) an ESR of non-acceptance, an applicant may submit a request for an appeal 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 application has been evaluated.

All requests for appeal must be sent to the TASC-RestoreMed Open Call Team to opencall@tascrestoremmed.eu and must:

- Focus on aspects concerning the evaluation of the application (e.g. admissibility or eligibility checks, evaluation procedure, etc.), not their merits.
- Clearly describe the complaint.
- Be received within the time limit (3 working days) from the reception of a rejection letter considering the application as non-eligible or the ESR information letter delivered.
- Sent by the entities' legal representative that has also submitted the application.

Only one request for review per proposal will be considered. Review requests will not always necessarily also lead to a re-evaluation of a proposal (a new technical evaluation with a new group of evaluators). The administrative review procedure will re-examine each case; however, a re-evaluation will only be decided if the submitted complaint demonstrates that there is a procedural irregularity, factual error, manifest error of assessment or abuse of powers affects the decision on whether to fund the proposal. Thus, for example, a problem relating to one of the evaluation criteria will not lead to a re-evaluation if, even by adding with the maximum points awarded under this criterion, the final score of the proposal would still remain below the funding threshold for funding.

Re-evaluations will be conducted based on the proposal as it was originally submitted; no additional information will be admitted. Re-evaluations may be partial (limited to the criterion affected by the error) or full (when the whole entire evaluation has been recognized as flawed).

Applicants should be aware that the score following a re-evaluation is not guaranteed to improve and **may be lower than the original score**. Additionally, all requests for review will be treated as strictly confidential. Note that the evaluation is carried out by highly qualified experts. TASC-RestoreMed will neither question nor interfere with their original evaluation. Mere repetitions of the content of the application or disagreements with the result or reasoning of the technical evaluation will not be considered.

5.WHAT HAPPENS AFTER SELECTION?

Selected applicants will be invited to the contracting phase, where administrative and financial details and documents are verified and validated.

Furthermore, to carry out mandatory Know Your Customer (KYC) checks, proof of residency and proof of ID from one or more members of the organisation(s) is required.

The steps of this phase are:

1. Inclusion of comments (if any) provided in the Evaluation Summary Report as part of the Sub-grant Agreement (SGA).
2. Validation of the entities based on the provision of the following documentation:
 - Formal proof of the entities' legal existence and tax activity.
 - Consortium Declaration of Honour, signed by the legal representative of each consortium partner (Annex 4A Consortium Declaration of Honour_Type A_CLA or Annex 4.1B Consortium Declaration of Honour_Type B_TAD depending on the type of project) or Beneficiary Declaration of Honour for individual entities (applicable only to Type B projects - Annex 4.2B Beneficiary Declaration of Honour_Type B_TDA), signed by the single applicant.
 - SME declaration (Annex 5A SME Declaration_Type A_CLA or Annex 5B SME Declaration_Type B_TAD, depending on the type of project) - signed by the SMEs' applicants (if any).
 - Bank Account Information (Annex 6A Bank account information_Type A_CLA or Annex 6B Bank account information_Type B_TAD depending on the type of project).
3. Signing of the Sub-grant Agreement (Annex 3.A_CLA or 3.B_TAD depending on the type of project) between TASC-RestoreMed Consortium represented by the TASC-RestoreMed partner handling the FSTP budget [F6S] and the Consortium Leader (or the single Beneficiary in case of individual entity application in Type B call).

Additional considerations:

- A valid VAT is mandatory.
- The Sub-grant Agreement shared with the Beneficiary is final and may not be modified, except to incorporate specific elements such as the implementation plan, adjustments or recommendations from Evaluation Summary Reports, and other project-related details mutually negotiated and agreed upon by the third parties and the TASC-RestoreMed consortium.

- Electronic digital signatures are required for signed documents (unless otherwise agreed).
- Deadlines for document submission will be provided and will normally be concluded within two weeks.
- Failure to complete the signatures in time will result in rejection.

Contracting Phase

- Each third-party project will sign the Sub-grant Agreement (SGA) under the 'lump sum model'. This will imply that the Open Call will provide the financial support to the third parties upon delivery of the expected output.
- The SGA will include, as an annex, the Proposal Template submitted by the funded project as Implementation Plan. This document establishes, among others, the KPIs and Deliverables that will be taken into account when evaluating the grantees' performance at the milestones review, as well as the budget for the project.
- A template of the Sub-Grant Agreement is provided in Annex 3.A_CLA and 3.B_TAD per type of project. The document is provided as a template and may be subject to modification during the contracting phase, particularly in sections concerning the implementation plan, adjustments outlined in the Evaluation Summary Report, and other relevant details.

Failure to comply with any of these criteria will lead to automatic ineligibility during the selection process.

6. TASC-RestoreMed PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

6.1 PROGRAMME SPRINTS

The funded projects implementation must adhere to a structured plan consisting of mandatory Sprints for each project type. The detailed requirements, objectives, and anticipated activities for each Sprint per type of OC are exhaustively defined in the respective Catalogues ([Annex 1.1A for CLA](#) and [Annex 1.1B for TAD](#)). These Sprints and their specific requirements constitute a **binding formal part of this Guide for Applicants** and must be strictly consulted during project execution.

Table 9 The 24-month TASC-Restore Programme for Community-Led Action (CLA) projects

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT 24-Months			
Name	SPRINT 1	SPRINT 2	SPRINT 3
Duration (months no.)	M1-M8	M9-M18	M19-M24
Target	Fine-tuning Plan	Deployment	Scale-up
Payment	40% (pre-financing)	45% (after timely submission of contracted results)	15% (after timely submission of contracted results)

Table 10 The 12-month TASC-Restore Programme for Transition Agenda Development (TAD) projects

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT 12-Months			
Name	SPRINT 1	SPRINT 2	SPRINT 3
Duration (months no.)	M1-M4	M5-M8	M9-M12
Target	Policy & Challenge Assessment	Validation & Refinement	Legacy
Payment	40% (pre-financing)	40% (after timely submission of contracted results)	20% (after timely submission of contracted results)

6.2 PROGRAMME REVIEW

Review summary

Each project will go through 3 reviews, each one highlighting the end of a stage called “Sprint” as follows:

- **Type A: Community Led Actions (CLA):**

Table 11 Review of CLA projects by TASC-RestoreMed experts

REVIEW for CLA projects		
Stage	Item	Description
Sprint 1	Requirement	- Signed sub-grant agreement in M1 - Timely Submission of deliverables proposed in the contracted Proposal Template per Sprint 1 in M8 - Reporting all Milestones and activities required per Sprint 1 listed in Annex 1.1A.
	Result	Payment of 40% of the grant
	Timeline	End of M1 (pre-financing payment) End of M8 (Sprint 1 Review)
Sprint 2	Requirement	- Timely Submission of deliverables proposed in the contracted Proposal Template per Sprint 2 - Reporting all Milestones and activities required per Sprint 2 listed in Annex 1.1A.
	Result	Payment of 45% of the grant.
	Timeline	End of M18 (Sprint 2 Review and payment, if applicable)
Sprint 3	Requirement	- Timely Submission of deliverables proposed in the contracted Proposal Template per Sprint 3 - Reporting all Milestones and activities required per Sprint 3 listed in Annex 1.1A.
	Result	Payment of 15% of the grant.
	Timeline	End of M24 (Sprint 3 Review and payment, if applicable)

- **Type B: Transition Agenda Development (TAD):**

Table 12 Review of TAD projects by TASC-RestoreMed experts

REVIEW for TAD projects		
Stage	Item	Description
Sprint 1	Requirement	Signed sub-grant agreement in M1 -Timely Submission of deliverables proposed in the contracted Proposal Template per Sprint. - Reporting all Milestones and activities required per Sprint 1 listed in Annex 1.1B.
	Result	Payment of 40% of the grant
	Timeline	End of M1 (pre-financing) End of M4 (Sprint 1 Review)
Sprint 2	Requirement	- Timely Submission of deliverables proposed in the contracted Proposal Template per Sprint 1 and Sprint 2 - Reporting all Milestones and activities required per Sprint 1 and Sprint 2 listed in Annex 1.1B.
	Result	Payment of 40% of the grant.
	Timeline	End of M8 (Sprint 2 Review and payment, if applicable)
Sprint 3	Requirement	- Timely Submission of deliverables proposed in the contracted Proposal Template per Sprint 3 - Reporting all Milestones and activities required per Sprint 3 listed in Annex 1.1B.
	Result	Payment of 20% of the grant.
	Timeline	End of M12 (Sprint 3 Review and payment, if applicable)

Reports for all required deliverables, milestones, and KPIs must be submitted at the latest by the **last working day of the month** at the end of each Sprint. The comprehensive review process includes two mandatory steps:

1. **Documents Review:** The TASC-RestoreMed assigned experts will thoroughly review the submitted reports of deliverables, milestones, and KPIs.
2. **Videoconference Review:** The document review will be followed by a mandatory videoconference call where project progress and key achievements will be presented and discussed during a dedicated Q&A session (approximately **45 minutes for CLA** projects and **30 minutes for TAD** projects).

Following the successful completion of the review process (acceptance of deliverables), the Beneficiary must submit the relevant payment request document within **10 working days**.

7.WHAT ELSE IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW?

7.1 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR)

Solutions developed and results achieved by the third parties belong to the third parties. Applicants will remain the sole owners of their respective IPRs and retain the IPR for their solutions.

Regarding the evaluation, each evaluator will sign an Agreement including confidentiality clauses before receiving access to the applications database to protect the applicants' intellectual property and sensitive non-disclosed information.

7.2 ETHICAL ISSUES

TASC-RestoreMed complies with the fundamental ethical issues particularly those outlined in the "European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity".

- All applicants must submit a self-assessment ethics questionnaire, available in the Proposal Template.
- If the applicant confirms the existence of potential ethical issues, they must contact the TASC-RestoreMed Helpdesk for guidance, as required.
- The TASC-RestoreMed will verify the declaration's consistency with the application contents and may contact applicants to resolve any ethical issues.
- Applications that fail to properly address ethical issues or inadequately deal with privacy aspects will be rejected.

7.3 DATA PROTECTION

In order to process and evaluate applications, and manage project implementation, the TASC-RestoreMed consortium will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data.

- F6S Network Ireland Limited, will act as Data Controller for data submitted through the F6S platform for these purposes. Please see our privacy policy [here](#).
- A Data Protection Officer (DPO) has been appointed by F6S generally, to ensure compliance with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and that personal data is collected, processed, and stored in a secure manner.
- The F6S platform's system design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR).
- Each applicant will accept the F6S terms to ensure compliance. Please refer to <https://www.f6s.com/privacy-policy> to review the F6S platform's privacy policy and data security policy.
- Apart from the F6S platform, data will also be stored in the F6S Google Drive, and in the project repository on a secure Sharepoint folder managed by the project partner **University of Maribor**.
- Note that the **TASC-RestoreMed** consortium must retain generated data until five years after the balance of the **TASC-RestoreMed** project is paid or longer if there are ongoing procedures (such as audits, investigations or litigation). In this case, the data must be kept until their conclusion.

7.4 CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality obligations:

- Selected applicants are required to maintain confidential any project data, documents, invoices and other materials (in any form) during the implementation of the activities and for 5 years after project completion.
- This confidentiality period can be extended by agreement with the EC and the **TASC-RestoreMed** consortium.

- Information shared during the project, whether written or spoken, is only considered confidential if the **TASC-RestoreMed** agrees and confirms it in writing within 15 days.
- Confidential information must only be used for project implementation, unless otherwise agreed upon.
- Any information shared during the application stage will be treated as confidential.

7.5 PROMOTION OF THE ACTION AND ENSURING VISIBILITY OF THE EU FUNDING

The Beneficiary (ies) must promote the funded project, the **TASC-RestoreMed** 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 financial support of the EC, including on the official third party website. The **TASC-RestoreMed** Communication team (at Impact Hub Athens) will guide and support these communication activities to selected Beneficiaries.

7.6 CHECKS AND REVIEWS

The EC may, at any time during the implementation of the sub-project and up to five years after the end of the sub-project, arrange for a check and review activity to be carried out, by external auditors, or by the EC 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 EC.

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. However, in cases of delays, incomplete implementation, or deviations from the approved project plan, F6S may require a financial report or other justification of costs.

7.7 EU RESTRICTIVE MEASURES

Entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) are ineligible to participate as recipients of FSTP funding.

The Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022 establishes measures to protect the Union budget from breaches of the rule of law in Hungary.

The beneficiaries must ensure that their contractual obligations under Articles 12 (conflict of interest), 13 (confidentiality and security), 14 (ethics), 17.2 (visibility), 18 (specific rules for carrying out action), 19 (information) and 20 (recordkeeping) of the grant agreement also apply to the third parties receiving the support (recipients).

The beneficiaries must also ensure that the bodies mentioned in Article 25 (e.g. granting authority, OLAF, Court of Auditors (ECA), etc.) can exercise their rights also towards the recipients.

8. RELEVANT LINKS AND CONTACTS

The TASC-RestoreMed Consortium will provide information to the applicants via the F6S page, so that all information (questions and answers) are visible to all participants.

- Project website: <https://tascrestoremmed.eu>
- Open call page on the project website: <https://tascrestoremmed.eu/open-call>
- Open call application form for CLA: <https://www.f6s.com/tasc-restoremed-oc-type-a-cla/apply>

- **Open call application form for TAD** at: <https://www.f6s.com/tasc-restoremed-oc-type-b-tad/apply>
- **Contact us:** opencall@tascrestoredmed.eu
- **Online Q&A/ discussion board for CLA:** <https://www.f6s.com/tasc-restoremed-oc-type-a-cla/discuss>
- **Online Q&A/ discussion board for TAD:** <https://www.f6s.com/tasc-restoremed-oc-type-b-tad/discuss>
- **F6S platform support team:** support@f6s.com
(For issues with the submission, resubmission, access to the platform, etc.)

9. RELEVANT OPEN CALL DEFINITIONS

Table 113 Acronyms

Acronym	Explanation/ Definition
AWU	Annual Work Unit
CLA	Community-led Actions
DoH	Declaration of Honour
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
ESR	Evaluation Summary Report
FSTP	Financial Support to Third Parties
ID	Identity (document)
KYC	Know Your Customer (check)
PIC	Participant Identification Code
SGA	Sub-grant Agreement
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
StG	Steering Group of TASC-RestoreMed Consortium
TAD	Transition Agenda Development
TEU	Treaty on the European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
VAT	Value Added Tax (number)

Table 114 Definitions

Term	Definition
Applicant(s)	The legal entity or group of legal entities that intend(s) to submit or that submitted an application to the Open Call.
Application Eligibility Criteria	Criteria used to assess if an application can be considered for the open call. Possible values (Yes/No).
Application Eligible or Non-Eligible	Application that is or is not compliant with eligibility criteria.
Application Timestamp	Timestamp of the final submission of an application. If the application is reopened and resubmitted the last date will be considered.

Term	Definition
Bank Account Information	Form where the beneficiary provides information of the bank account to which payments will be made during the project implementation (as provided in the template Annexes 6.A and 6.B per type of project).
Beneficiary Declaration of Honour (DoH)	Declaration where the selected for funding beneficiary declares it accepts all conditions of the open call & programme. One DoH is required for each beneficiary.
Beneficiary or third (3 rd) Party	An entity or a consortium that submitted an application to the open call that was accepted to be funded, and have signed, or are in the process of signing, a sub-grant agreement.
Consortium	Set of legal entities that are cumulatively responsible to implement the project as defined in the Grant Agreement signed with the European Commission.
Consortium Declaration of Honour	Declaration where the selected for funding beneficiaries, participating as a consortium, declare they accept all conditions of the open call & programme; and agree - if applicable - on budget share. One CDoH is required for each sub-granted project (except in case of individual entity application in Type B projects-TAD).
Coordinator (TASC-RestoreMed Coordinator)	The Lead partner of the TASC-RestoreMed consortium.
Contract Deadline	Date and time until when the selected entities need to provide contractual information.
External Evaluator	Expert hired by the consortium to assist in the evaluation of the Open Call. External evaluators cannot have conflicts of interest and are bound by a confidentiality agreement.
F6S Application Form	Application form available in F6S Platform.
F6S Platform	Platform provided by F6S.
FSTP	Financial support to third parties. Payments made to entities that are not members of the consortium.
FSTP – Lump Sum	Payment made to the third party based on the achievement of a milestone.
Internal evaluation committee	Group of appropriately qualified persons of the consortium partners that are assigned the responsibility of performing evaluations or reviews at any stage of the open call implementation or programme.
Mentor	Person from the consortium that works closely with the beneficiary to foster communication with the consortium and assess progress of the project. The mentor may be part of an evaluation committee.
Open Call	Competitive process to access a Programme.
Open Call and Programme deadlines	The project has planned the programme carefully, but unexpected things can happen. The application deadline is fixed, and will only change if something unforeseen occurs. Other dates, including of the programme, are flexible and may be adjusted as needed, and communicated to all applicants.
Open Call close date	Date and time when applications close.
Open Call selection prioritisation	Rules used to order applications.
Proof of Bank Account Information	The account where the funds will be transferred will be indicated via a specific form signed by the entity, individuals, and the bank owners. The holder of the account will be the entity/ individual. Provided using Annex 6.A or 6.B.
Proof of Legal Existence	Company/ organisation register, 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).
Proof of SME Status	Proof of the SME condition is required:

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the applicant has been fully validated as an SME on the Beneficiary Register of the EC Participant Portal, the PIC number must be provided. • Provision of the signed (with a valid e-signature) SME Declaration (Annex 5.A or 5.B): in the event the beneficiary declares being non-autonomous, the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and downstream organisations is required. A Status Information Form may be requested, which includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company. • Supporting documents: In cases where either the number of employees or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional, association records, etc.
Reserve List	Eligible applications that were not selected for funding which can be invited in case selected applications do not provide contractual data.
Schedule for payments to Beneficiaries	<p>All payments to beneficiaries are dependent on the successful review of deliverables/reports at the end of each sprint, and reception by the consortium of the corresponding payment request.</p> <p>All payments will be made with undue delay preferably no later than 30 calendar days after the reception of the financial statement.</p>
Selected application	Application that was selected to participate in the Open Call Implementation (Programme).
SME	An incorporated enterprise that complies with the rules defined by the European Commission to be qualified as an SME ⁵
SME – Autonomous Enterprise	An autonomous enterprise is not a partner with or linked to another enterprise
SME – Linked Enterprise	Linked enterprises are those that form a group through the direct or indirect control of the majority of voting rights of an enterprise by another or through the ability to exercise a dominant influence on an enterprise.
SME – Partner Enterprise	The enterprise holds a minimum of 25% (Capital or voting rights in another enterprise, or 25% (Capital or voting rights) are owned by another enterprise.
SME Declaration Form	Declaration where the SME status is assessed (provided as template in annexes 5.A and 5.B per type of project).
Sub-grant Agreement	Signed between the Project Consortium, represented by the TASC-RestoreMed partner handling the FSTP budget (F6S IE) and the Beneficiary or Beneficiaries in case of team application, represented by a Consortium Leader. The sub-grant agreement will also include the comments (if any) of the application's ESR to the work plan and the provided model in Annex 3.A and 3.B may be adjusted to the specific details of the winning proposals in agreement with the TASC-RestoreMed partner handling the FSTP budget (F6S IE).
Treasurer / the TASC-RestoreMed partner handling the FSTP budget	The TASC-RestoreMed partner responsible for the Open Call, handling the FSTP budget and the Program management: F6S IE.

⁵ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-fundamentals/sme-definition_en