



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

Department A - COSME, H2020 SME and EMFF

**Unit A3 - EMFF**

**Call for Proposals**  
For EU Grants  
under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund  
**Blue Careers in Europe**

EMFF Work Programme 2016  
Call for Proposals EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.2

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## **1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND**

The Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, hereafter referred to as "EASME", acting under the powers delegated by the European Commission (also referred to as "the Commission"), is launching a call for proposals with a view to concluding grant agreements, for projects in the field of skills' development for the blue economy.

This call is launched in accordance with the 2016 Work Programme for the Implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)<sup>1</sup> (section 1.2.1.2 of the annex) on the basis of the objectives set out in the Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund<sup>2</sup>, and in particular Article 82(c).

### **1.1. General information concerning the call for proposals**

The action covered by this call for proposals forms part of the EMFF Work Programme, whose implementation is delegated to EASME.

According to the Act of Delegation, grant agreements will be signed by EASME.

### **1.2. Background**

Our seas and coasts are key drivers for economic development. In the EU, it is estimated that about 5 million people work for the blue economy with about half of these in the coastal tourism sector<sup>3</sup>. In addition to coastal and maritime tourism which is the largest activity at EU level, the blue economy comprises well-established sectors (such as shipbuilding & ship repair, transport, offshore oil and gas), as well as emerging sectors with a high potential for growth and jobs (such as blue biotechnology, aquaculture, renewable energy)<sup>4</sup>. These sectors were identified in the Blue Growth Strategy launched by the European Commission in 2012<sup>5</sup>, which aims at strengthening the potential for jobs and growth of Europe's coasts, seas and oceans. However, this requires investing in an appropriately skilled workforce that can meet the labour market needs.

Existing skills gaps in the blue economy have been identified in various policy documents in recent years. The 2014 Communication "Innovation in the Blue Economy: realising the potential of our seas and oceans for jobs and growth" pointed out that the shortage of a skilled workforce, able to apply the latest technologies, notably in engineering is one of the main obstacles to the further development of the blue economy<sup>6</sup>. Several reports from the industry (e.g. shipbuilding, wind energy) highlight

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<sup>1</sup> Annex to the Commission Implementing Decision concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2016 and the financing for the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (C(2015)8729 final), of 11 December 2015, section 1.2.1.2

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2328/2003, (EC) No 861/2006, (EC) No 1198/2006 and (EC) No 791/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Official Journal of the European Union, L 149/1 of 20.5.2014.

<sup>3</sup> "Blue Growth: Scenarios and drivers for Sustainable Growth from the Oceans, Seas and Coasts" ("Blue Growth Study" MARE/2010/01)

<sup>4</sup> See: [http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/blue\\_growth/infographics](http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/blue_growth/infographics)

<sup>5</sup> Communication from the Commission: 'Blue Growth opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth' COM(2012) 494 final (13.09.2012)

<sup>6</sup> Communication from the Commission: 'Innovation in the Blue Economy: realising the potential of our seas and oceans for jobs and growth' - COM(2014) 254/2 (13/05/2014)

the current scarcity of skilled personnel, especially technicians, as a key limitation to the growth of their industry<sup>7</sup>. This shortage of skilled staff is likely to increase in the coming years unless the offer of vocational training and education is improved<sup>8</sup>. Although most collaborative research projects do include high quality training activities<sup>9</sup>, there is insufficient effort to address the mismatch between graduates' knowledge and businesses' expectations in a structured way, e.g. as part of a wider strategy for growth and competitiveness.

Therefore, there is a need to bring industry and education/training providers together to promote and support the development of career opportunities in the blue economy, to train a new generation of students, scientists, professionals, technicians and entrepreneurs equipped with the appropriate skills to match the needs of the industry and to provide people already working in the field with the new skills required.

Such cooperation should address a broad range of jobs, i.e. from fishermen<sup>10</sup> and technicians to highly skilled engineers, scientists or lawyers. Working in the blue economy requires not only sector-specific knowledge and skills<sup>11</sup> but also interdisciplinary skills such as data management, statistics and modelling.<sup>12</sup> Working in the blue economy also requires familiarity with aspects such as environmental issues, standards, safety and security requirements. Finally, industry-relevant skills such as entrepreneurship, financial and project management and the ability to work in an international environment also have to be better addressed in the education and training offer.

The shortage of people ready to work in the blue economy is also linked to other factors such as the ageing workforce or the perceived lack of career attractiveness<sup>13</sup>. The fact that some maritime careers (in sectors such as fisheries, shipbuilding or maritime transport) are traditionally seen as male-oriented may also be preventing women from embarking on such careers.

In addition, the lack of information on career opportunities, or more generally, a lack of awareness on seas and oceans matters<sup>14</sup> also has an impact on public perception and on the appeal of maritime careers<sup>15</sup>. Raising students' awareness, from secondary school to

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<sup>7</sup>According to the LeaderSHIP 2020 report, the increased complexity of the products has created additional demand for highly skilled staff: the existing scarcity of skilled personnel limits growth in part of the industry.

[http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/maritime/shipbuilding/ec-support/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/maritime/shipbuilding/ec-support/index_en.htm) (p7)

<sup>8</sup> Findings from the wind industry also show that the sector currently faces a shortage of 7,000 engineers and other highly skilled workers. This shortage could double by 2030 without the necessary vocational training and education offer at EU level. See: Workers wanted: The EU wind energy skills gap (2013):

[http://www.ewea.org/fileadmin/files/library/publications/reports/Workers\\_Wanted\\_TPwind.pdf](http://www.ewea.org/fileadmin/files/library/publications/reports/Workers_Wanted_TPwind.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> See: EuroMarine training plan, EMBRC European Marine Training portal (<http://www.marinetraining.eu/>) / BONUS Young scientist Club (<http://www.bonusportal.org/>), PERSEUS (<http://www.perseus-net.eu/>) on environmental monitoring, MICROB3 (marine biotechnology) – KNOWME project on maritime transport (<http://www.know-me.org>). See also COFASP (<http://www.cofasp.eu>) on fisheries, aquaculture, and seafood processing and JPI Oceans mapping exercise on human capacity and training needs: <http://www.jpi-oceans.eu/library?refid=241647>

<sup>10</sup> According to analysis conducted in the COFASP project (<http://www.cofasp.eu>) the issue of quality (on-board preservation), dealing with discards or energy efficiency for ship officers are areas where training would be relevant for the fisheries industry.

<sup>11</sup> Such as laboratory skills, marine biology, seafood processing. See for example the list of competencies developed by the Wave project (<http://www.waveproject.com/>)

<sup>12</sup> See MICROB3 project: <https://www.microb3.eu/work-packages/wp9> and COFASP project

<sup>13</sup> For example in the shipbuilding industry (see: LeaderSHIP report) [http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/maritime/shipbuilding/ec-support/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/maritime/shipbuilding/ec-support/index_en.htm) (p8)

<sup>14</sup> The European Commission, especially under the Horizon 2020 programme has launched a number of initiatives to increase ocean literacy: ResponSEable (<http://www.responseable.eu>) and SEA CHANGE (<http://www.seachangeproject.eu>) projects

<sup>15</sup> According to a survey carried out in Canada in 2014, students aged 12 to 18 years old were more likely to be interested in learning about sea-related jobs and careers if they had greater knowledge of ocean issues or considered the ocean to be of high importance in their lives *Youth and the sea: ocean literacy in Nova Scotia, Canada, Haley Guest et. Al, December 2014,*

higher education, about the wide variety of education and training opportunities leading to maritime jobs is therefore key to enhancing the visibility and attractiveness of the blue economy for the younger generation.

At EU level a number of initiatives have been launched in recent years to address the mismatch between available skills<sup>16</sup> and the needs of the labour market<sup>17</sup>. While they can all partly contribute to tackling the challenges of the blue economy, none of them targets this area specifically<sup>18</sup>. Hence, the specific action "Blue Careers in Europe", subject of this call for proposals, has been included in the EMFF work programme 2016.

## **2. OBJECTIVES – PRIORITIES – ACTIVITIES – OUTPUTS/IMPACTS**

### **2.1. Objectives**

Based on the needs set out above, this action aims at contributing to fill existing skills' gaps by supporting activities that will increase the employability of various target groups in blue economy sectors (e.g. students, workers, unemployed people etc.). The applicant's choice of sector and target group has to be based on an analysis of the needs of the local or regional labour market and of the industry, including at cross-border level if relevant.

In order to ensure that supported activities take due account of clearly identified needs, projects should bring together stakeholders from both the industry and education and training providers, as well as public authorities.

Where relevant, projects should address the gender imbalance in the blue economy and encourage women to step into traditionally male-dominated work areas and vice-versa.

Furthermore, projects should enhance the visibility and attractiveness of the different career opportunities in the blue economy, especially for young people.

In the context of the above general objectives, proposals submitted under this action must provide concrete and effective responses to at least one of the following challenges:

- Attract higher education graduates or persons with a vocational/technical qualification to maritime professions through targeted and innovative education and/or training initiatives (including career guidance);
- Retrain and upskill workers employed in other sectors and/or people currently unemployed for a job in the blue economy;
- Diversify and expand the skills of people currently employed in the blue economy to progress in their career and/or to facilitate their mobility to other maritime jobs.

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<sup>16</sup> including for low or medium skilled jobs

<sup>17</sup> An Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment, COM/2010/0682 final; European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAFA): <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147&langId=en>; Youth Employment Initiative (YEI): <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1176&langId=en>, Erasmus + programme: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus\\_plus/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus_plus/index_en.htm), European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) portal : <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>, etc.

<sup>18</sup> A number of projects deal or have dealt with the improvement of skills but they are mainly the result of a bottom-up approach. See projects from the LifeLong Learning Programme : AQUATNET: <http://www.aquatnet.com/>, Vocational AQUALABS: <http://www.aqualabs.eu/>, AQUARET projects: [www.aquaret.com](http://www.aquaret.com) ) etc.

## 2.2. Activities

### **Core activities**

In order to realise one or more of the above objectives, projects must implement targeted activities resulting in concrete and measurable results within the project's duration of maximum two years.

In line with the above objectives, projects must implement core activities related to initial and/or continuous education and/or training of current or future workers in blue economy sectors in need of specific professional profiles/skills/qualifications in the local, regional or cross-border context if relevant.

Examples of such "core activities" related to education and training are:

- Design or adaptation of training courses, modules<sup>19</sup> and/or curricula for initial Vocational Education and Training (VET) or higher education with strong elements of work-based learning such as traineeship schemes<sup>20</sup>;
- Develop training schemes, provide training courses and career guidance to experienced workers with technical qualifications, such as electricians, metal workers and mechanical engineers to (re)train/upskill for jobs in marine or maritime sectors;
- Provide courses/training such as specialised courses or bachelor/masters courses providing specific knowledge and skills (including career guidance) for jobs in the blue economy to highly qualified professionals such as lawyers, logisticians, biologists, chemists, civil engineers etc.
- Develop (re)training and upskilling opportunities for blue professionals to upgrade their knowledge and competences (e.g.. to acquire IT skills or environmental management skills, learn new technologies, entrepreneurship or languages, etc.) allowing them to progress in their career or move to other promising job opportunities in the blue economy.

This list is **not exhaustive** and aims at providing guidance to applicants. Applicants may propose other activities they deem necessary to achieve the objectives of this action as long as the choice is justified and establishes a clear and direct link between the proposed activities and the project objectives.

### **Complementary activities**

In addition to implementing the core activities related directly to the Blue careers' action, every project must also address the following aspects, which will also be assessed against the award criteria:

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<sup>19</sup> Including e-learning courses, digital content and material, digital teaching and learning etc.

<sup>20</sup> Including quality traineeships or work placements for students according to the Council Recommendation of 10 March 2014 on a Quality Framework for Traineeships: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1411116781313&uri=CELEX:32014H0327%2801%29>. Please note that remuneration for traineeships should be funded from others sources.

- Awareness raising and dissemination activities<sup>21</sup> on relevant ocean-related issues and the maritime economy with a view to increase the visibility and attractiveness of blue careers' opportunities for their target group, including, where relevant, also for school students;
- Measures to facilitate the transferability of the project activities and results to other sea-basins or regions of the EU facing similar challenges;
- Measures to ensure the sustainability of the project activities/results after the end of the EU support (e.g. other funding sources, accreditation, recognition aspects etc.)
- Measures to seek complementarity and synergies with relevant projects funded under other EU programmes<sup>22</sup> as well as with other relevant initiatives

### **Networking with other projects**

During the lifetime of the projects financed under this action, a number of meetings will be organised at EU level for the grant beneficiaries to facilitate exchange of experience and good practices across sea-basins, to foster mutual learning and to enhance the European dimension of blue careers. Project beneficiaries are expected to participate in these meetings, which will be held in Brussels or other relevant locations.

### **2.3. Expected outputs/impacts**

Projects under this action must achieve concrete outputs within the project's duration. Projects must identify at application stage the relevant outputs from the list below:

- New synergies and concrete links between the sectors of education and training on the one hand and maritime industry on the other hand;
- New high quality and multidisciplinary education and training offers (including career guidance), clearly matching the local or regional needs of the blue economy;
- Improved employability for the target group selected;
- New and accessible pathways facilitating career advancement and job mobility within the blue economy;
- New and highly visible training opportunities (including career guidance) allowing professionals to acquire the right skills to find a job in the blue economy;
- Increased awareness of ocean issues and increased visibility and attractiveness of blue career opportunities for students from secondary and higher education in general.

A list of relevant indicators (qualitative/quantitative) to measure the expected outputs/impacts of the project must be included in the proposal.

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<sup>21</sup> Including a project's website with an English version

<sup>22</sup> Such as Erasmus + programme, Horizon 2020 projects (i.e. Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions but also Blue Growth projects if relevant) or projects funded under the European Structural and Investment Funds (ERDF, ESF etc.) or Vasco da Gama (<http://www.vasco-da-gama.eu/>)



### **3. TIMETABLE**

#### **3.1. Indicative timetable**

The indicative timetable for this call for proposals is:

	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
a)	Publication of the call	29/02/2016
b)	Deadline for submitting applications	31/05/2016 (in case of hand-delivery by 16:00 Brussels time)
c)	Evaluation period	June-September 2016
d)	Information to applicants	October 2016
e)	Preparation and signature of the grant agreement	November-December 2016
f)	Starting date of the project	January 2017
g)	Progress reports	To be provided at month 6 and month 18 of the project
h)	Interim report	After 12 months after the starting date of the project
i)	Final report	Within 60 days of the end of the project

#### **3.2. Implementation period**

The project duration shall start on the first day of the month following when the last of both parties signs the related grant agreement or at the fixed starting date specified in the grant agreement.

Projects shall not exceed the duration of 24 months.

### **4. BUDGET AVAILABLE**

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects is EUR 3.452.000.

This budget might be increased by maximum 20%.

It is estimated that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of between EUR 500.000 and EUR 700.000 would allow the objectives of this call for proposals to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

EASME expects to fund up to seven proposals.

EASME reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

## **5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3.
- Applications must be submitted in writing (see section 15), using the application form provided as annex to this Call for Proposals.
- Applications must be drafted in one of the EU official languages. Submission in English is strongly encouraged and will facilitate the evaluation process.

Failure to comply with these requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

## **6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA<sup>23</sup>**

### **6.1. Geographical eligibility**

Only applicants from EU Member States are eligible. Applicants established in third countries are not eligible.

### **6.2. Eligible applicants**

1. Applicants must be legal entities. They can be public or private bodies. In the event of private bodies, they must be properly constituted and registered under national law.

Natural persons are not eligible as applicant for the purpose of the present call.

To be considered a public entity, the body in question must fulfil all of the following criteria:

- The body has been created by a public authority or is governed by private law with a public service mission;
- The public interest of the body must be explicitly mentioned in the relevant legal or administrative act(s);
- The body is financed totally or to a large extent (more than 50%) by public sources;
- In the event that the entity stops its activities, all rights and obligations including financial rights and obligations will be transferred to a public authority.

For bodies to be considered as public entity, proof of compliance with all above criteria should be provided together with the proposal.

2. Applicants must be active in the fields of education, training, labour or blue economy and related sectors (such as marine renewable energies, blue biotechnology, coastal tourism, aquaculture, maritime transport, shipbuilding and ship repair, shipping, offshore oil and gas, fisheries or aquaculture).

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<sup>23</sup> Art. 131 FR, 201 RAP

3. Examples of potential applicants are (non-exhaustive list):

- educational and training institutions;
- higher education institutions<sup>24</sup>;
- secondary school/institute/educational centre<sup>25</sup>;
- public or private, small, medium or large enterprises;
- chambers of commerce, of industry, of skilled crafts or of labour, and other intermediary bodies;
- maritime clusters<sup>26</sup> having their own legal personality;
- social partners or other representatives of the world of work;
- research centres;
- bodies providing career guidance, professional counselling and information services;
- professional associations;
- non-profit organisations (private or public);
- public authorities (national, regional, local);
- federations and associations;
- foundations.

4. Legal entities having a legal or capital link with applicants, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, may take part in the action as affiliated entities, and may declare eligible costs as specified in section 11.2.

For that purpose, applicants shall identify such affiliated entities in the application form. The affiliated entities will have to comply with the eligibility and exclusion criteria.

5. Supporting documents: In order to assess the applicants' eligibility, the following supporting documents are requested from the coordinator and each of the partners:

- Public entity: copy of the resolution/law/decreed/decision establishing the entity OR if not available, any other official document proving the establishment of the entity by the national authorities;
- Private entity: extract from the official journal, copy of articles of association, extract of trade or association register, VAT registration document)
- Affiliated entities: shall demonstrate their legal/capital link with the applicant.

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<sup>24</sup> i.e. any type of higher education institution which, in accordance with national law or practice, offers recognised degrees or other recognised tertiary level qualifications, whatever such establishment may be called, or any institution which, in accordance with national law or practice, offers vocational education or training at tertiary level.

<sup>25</sup> i.e. an institution providing general, vocation or technical education, on any level of secondary education

<sup>26</sup> In the context of this call for proposals, maritime clusters are defined as follows "*geographically proximate group of interconnected companies and associated institutions in the maritime field, linked by commonalities and complementarities (external economies)*" in the Study on maritime clusters in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, chapter 1.2 found at:

### 6.3. Eligibility conditions

#### **Consortium**

1. Proposals must be submitted by a consortium (partnership) of minimum two legal entities. One of these must act as the consortium coordinator, while the others will act as partners.
2. The consortium must comprise at least:
  - one educational/training organisation such as a higher education institution<sup>27</sup>, a secondary school/institute/educational centre<sup>28</sup>, a public or private VET provider and
  - one company or chamber of commerce, of industry, of skilled crafts or of labour, or other intermediary bodies.

Additional partners may participate if they comply with the provisions laid under section 6.2.2 and if their relevance for the project is duly justified in the proposal.

In addition to the supporting documents referring to their legal status, all members of the consortium, will provide the coordinator with a power of attorney in writing through a mandate signed for that purpose<sup>29</sup>. The mandate shall fully empower the coordinator to act on the partners' behalf in the context of the grant agreement.

#### **Observers**

It is possible for other relevant parties from non EU Member States, regional, or international organisations active in the field of the blue economy and related sectors (blue biotechnology, maritime transport, shipbuilding and ship repair, shipping, marine renewable energies, offshore oil and gas, fisheries, aquaculture, coastal tourism etc...) to participate with an observer status.

Observer status means that the entity will not receive any European co-financing. Thus participation in any project's activity will be at the observer's own expenses.

### 6.4. Eligible activities

Eligible activities shall be those necessary to carry out the project and realise the intended outputs/results, in accordance with the objectives listed in section 2.1.

Typical examples of eligible activities under this call for proposals are listed in section 2.2.

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[https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/sites/maritimeforum/files/Maritime%20Clusters%20in%20MED-BS%20def\\_0.pdf](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/sites/maritimeforum/files/Maritime%20Clusters%20in%20MED-BS%20def_0.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> i.e. any type of higher education institution which, in accordance with national law or practice, offers recognised degrees or other recognised tertiary level qualifications, whatever such establishment may be called, or any institution which, in accordance with national law or practice, offers vocational education or training at tertiary level.

<sup>28</sup> i.e. an institution providing general, vocation or technical education, on any level of secondary education

<sup>29</sup> A template for this mandate is included as Annex IV to the grant agreement published together with this call.

## 7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

### 7.1. Exclusion from participation:

An applicant will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals procedure if it is in any of the following situations:

- (a) - it is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, OR
  - its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, OR
  - it is in an arrangement with creditors, OR
  - its business activities are suspended, OR
  - it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations.

- (b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the entity is **in breach** of its obligations relating to the **payment of taxes or social security contributions** in accordance with the law of the country in which it is established, with those of the country in which the contracting authority is located or those of the country of the performance of the contract;

An entity shall also be excluded where a **natural or legal person** that assumes unlimited liability for the debts of that entity is in a situation listed in point (a) or (b) above;

- (c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the entity is guilty of **grave professional misconduct** by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the applicant belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:

- (i) fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of the contract;
- (ii) entering into agreement with another entity with the aim of distorting competition;
- (iii) violating intellectual property rights;
- (iv) attempting to influence the decision-making process of the contracting authority during the procurement procedure;
- (v) attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the procurement procedure;

- (d) it has been established by a final judgment that the entity is guilty of any of the following<sup>132</sup>:

- (i) **fraud**, within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995<sup>30</sup>;

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<sup>30</sup> OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

- (ii) **corruption**, as defined in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union<sup>31</sup>, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997 and Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA<sup>32</sup>, as well as corruption as defined in the legal provisions of the country where the contracting authority is located or the country in which the applicant is established or the country of performance of the contract;
  - (iii) **participation in a criminal organisation**, as defined in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA<sup>33</sup>;
  - (iv) **money laundering or terrorist financing**, as defined in Article 1 of Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>34</sup>;
  - (v) **terrorist-related offences or offences linked to terrorist activities**, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA<sup>35</sup> respectively, or inciting or aiding or abetting or attempting to commit such offences, as referred to in Article 4 of that Framework Decision;
  - (vi) **child labour or other forms of trafficking in human beings** as defined in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>36</sup>;
- (e) the entity has shown significant **deficiencies** in complying with main obligations in the **performance of the contract** financed by the budget, which has led to its early termination or to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties, or which has been discovered following checks, audits or investigations by an authorising officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors;
- (f) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that the entity has committed an **irregularity** within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95<sup>37</sup>.

The contracting authority shall exclude the entity where a person who is a member of the administrative, management or supervisory body of that entity or has powers of representation, decision or control is in a situation listed in points (c) to (f) above.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

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<sup>31</sup> OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA of 22 July 2003 on combating corruption in the private sector (OJ L 192, 31.7.2003, p. 54).

<sup>33</sup> Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA of 24 October 2008 on the fight against organised crime (OJ L 300, 11.11.2008, p. 42).

<sup>34</sup> Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2005 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing (OJ L 309, 25.11.2005, p. 15).

<sup>35</sup> Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism (OJ L 164, 22.6.2002, p. 3).

<sup>36</sup> Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA (OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1).

<sup>37</sup> Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.1995, p. 1).

## 7.2. **Exclusion from award:**

An applicant will not be granted financial assistance if, in course of the grant award procedure, it:

- (a) is in a situation of exclusion established in accordance with Article 106 FR;
- (b) has misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procurement procedure or has failed to supply that information;
- (c) was previously involved in the preparation of *grant documents* where this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

## 7.3. **Supporting documents**<sup>38</sup>

Applicants must declare on their honour that they are not in one of the situations triggering exclusion or rejection from a given grant award procedure according to Article 106(1) and 107(1) of the Financial Regulation, filling in the relevant form included as part of the application form accompanying the call for proposals. The EASME reserves the right to request evidence of the above.

## 8. **SELECTION CRITERIA**<sup>39</sup>

### 8.1. **Financial capacity**<sup>40</sup>

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out or the year for which the grant is awarded and to participate in its funding.

The applicants' financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

A) Grant value is  $\leq$  EUR 60 000:

- a declaration of honour (to be provided by each of the applicants)

B) Grant value is  $>$  EUR 60 000:

- a declaration of honour (to be provided by each of the applicants), AND

For all applicants except for public bodies<sup>41</sup>, the following additional supporting documents:

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<sup>38</sup> Art. 197 RAP

<sup>39</sup> Art. 132 FR, 202 RAP

<sup>40</sup> Art. 131, 132 FR, 202 RAP.

<sup>41</sup> On the basis of article 131(3) FR and given the eligibility criteria set for applicants under section 6 of this call for proposals, such applicants are considered to have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and to participate in its funding. Therefore no additional supporting documents are necessary.

- the profit and loss accounts and the balance sheets for the past 2 years for which the accounts were closed;
- the financial capacity table provided for in the application form, filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures, in order to calculate the ratios as detailed in the form.

For newly created entities, the business plan might replace the above documents.

C) Grant value is  $\geq$  EUR 750 000.

In addition to the supporting documents required under B) above, applicants shall provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available. In the event of an application grouping several applicants (consortium), the above threshold applies by applicant.

If on the basis of the documents submitted, the financial capacity is not considered satisfactory, the EASME may:

- request further information;
- propose a grant agreement with a pre-financing covered by a bank guarantee (see section 11.4 below);
- where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the co-beneficiaries;
- or reject the application.

## 8.2. **Operational capacity**<sup>42</sup>

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications to complete the proposed project. In this respect, applicants have to submit a declaration of honour, and the following supporting documents:

- Curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the project. This profile should include for each person at minimum: educational background, work experience, language and other relevant skills (maximum 1 page per person)<sup>43</sup>;
- Where appropriate, a description of the technical equipment, tools or facilities and patents at the disposal of the applicants<sup>44</sup>;
- For each applicant, a list of up to 3 activities (i.e. projects, publications, products, services and/or other achievements) relevant to the call content<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> Art. 131 FR, 202 Rules of Application (RAP)

<sup>43</sup> To be completed in section II.1 of the application form

<sup>44</sup> To be completed in section II 1 of the application form

<sup>45</sup> To be completed in section II 1 of the application form



EASME may request further supporting documents to confirm the operational capacity.

## 9. AWARD CRITERIA<sup>46</sup>

The application will be assessed on the basis of the following award criteria.

A maximum of 100 points will be awarded for the quality of the proposal. The required minimum overall score is 60 points and a minimum score of 50% is required for each criterion (see below).

Proposals will be ranked according to their total score.

<p><b>Relevance of the project</b></p> <p><b>Max. score – 25 points (minimum required 12,5)</b></p>	<p><i>The relevance of the proposal to the objectives and the priorities of the action</i></p> <p>The relevance of the proposal will be assessed on the following basis:</p> <p>Sub-criterion 1: Relevance to the objectives (maximum 10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which it meets the call's objectives and challenges defined in section 2.1;</li> <li>– the extent to which it addresses the existing skills gaps and clearly describes the measures to overcome them;</li> <li>– the extent to which the project is based on and presents a genuine and adequate skills' needs analysis for the selected geographical area (i.e. local, regional, or cross-border level);</li> <li>– the extent to which it provides clear, measurable and realistic objectives that are achievable within the duration of the project.</li> </ul> <p>Sub-criterion 2 : Relevance of the activities and expected results (maximum 15 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which it demonstrates how it will address challenges relevant to the participating organisations and target groups;</li> <li>– the extent to which there is a clear link between the project objectives, the activities proposed and their expected results;</li> <li>– the extent to which it provides justification for the chosen activities as proposed in the project proposal;</li> <li>– the extent to which it will produce tangible outcomes for the chosen target group and sector;</li> <li>– the extent to which it explains how it will realise synergies</li> </ul>
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<sup>46</sup> Art. 132 FR, 203 RAP

	between different fields of industry/labour, training and education.
<p><b>Added value</b></p> <p><b>Max. score – 20 points (minimum required 10)</b></p>	<p><i>Added value with regards to providing concrete and effective answers to established needs in terms of education/training and in view of increasing the attractiveness of maritime professions</i></p> <p>The added value of the proposal will be assessed on the following basis:</p> <p>Sub-criterion 1: added value of the proposed actions (maximum 10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which it demonstrates the added value of the proposed activities to tackle the existing skills' gap;</li> <li>– the extent to which it proposes concrete and effective education/training solutions for the target group and chosen sector.</li> </ul> <p>Sub-criterion 2 : added value in view of increasing the attractiveness of maritime careers (maximum 10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which the project will increase the visibility and attractiveness of "blue careers" in the selected geographical area;</li> <li>– the extent to which the project will enhance complementarities and synergies with relevant projects funded under other EU programmes as well as with other relevant initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Methodology and implementation</b></p> <p><b>Max. score – 20 points (minimum required 10)</b></p>	<p><i>Appropriate and clear methodology ensuring that the project implementation is coherent, realistic and feasible in terms of actions and timetable. Effectiveness of the proposed project organisation and management of resources</i></p> <p>The methodology and implementation of the proposal will be assessed on the following basis :</p> <p>Subcriterion 1 – methodology (maximum 8 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which relevant methods and techniques are proposed which will lead to project-specific outputs and solutions;</li> <li>– the extent to which expected results and outputs of the project are clearly identified;</li> <li>– the extent to which appropriate qualitative and/or quantitative indicators have been provided to assess the expected outputs</li> </ul>

	<p>and impacts (short and long-term) of the project.</p> <p>Sub-criterion 2 – implementation (maximum 12 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which there is a clear description of planned activities and appropriate allocation of tasks and resources to be committed to the project;</li> <li>– the extent to which the proposed budget is consistent with the actions proposed, sufficiently detailed and that the project is cost-efficient and represents value for money;</li> <li>– the extent to which the project has a coherent and effective work plan, providing a timetable (Gantt Chart or equivalent) clearly showing the progress of each work package including a timetable of deliverables;</li> <li>– the extent to which appropriate management structures and procedures within the consortium (e.g. clear description of management responsibilities, decision-making mechanisms and communication arrangements) are proposed;</li> <li>– the extent to which there is a risk management plan identifying potential risks and providing risk prevention and mitigation measures for each work package.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Complementarity of partners</b></p> <p><b>Max. score – 15 points (minimum required 7,5)</b></p>	<p><i>Involvement of an appropriate mix of complementary participating organisations with the necessary profile, experience and expertise to successfully deliver all aspects of the project</i></p> <p>The complementarity of the partners will be assessed on the following basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which there is an appropriate balance between participating organisations;</li> <li>– the extent to which the partners complement each other in view of delivering the expected results and impacts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dissemination, sustainability and transferability</b></p> <p><b>Max. score – 20 points (minimum required 10)</b></p>	<p><i>Dissemination, sustainability and transferability of the expected results</i></p> <p>The dissemination, sustainability and transferability of the proposal will be assessed on the following basis:</p> <p>Sub-criterion– Dissemination and transferability (15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which the proposed plan for dissemination of</li> </ul>

	<p>project results and activities (with a description of appropriate activities, tools and channels) is clear and comprehensive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which the project has the capacity to effectively reach out to the chosen target group</li> <li>– the extent to which the project has the capacity to achieve a long-lasting impact;</li> <li>– the extent to which the steps that the applicant will take to effectively spread the results and benefits of the project to the stakeholders and non-participating audience are clearly identified and elaborated;</li> <li>– the extent to which the proposal provides appropriate measures to facilitate the transferability of the project activities, results and outputs to other parts of the EU facing similar challenges ;</li> </ul> <p>Sub-criterion: Sustainability (5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the extent to which the proposal provides appropriate measures to ensure the sustainability of project activities, results and impacts after the end of the project lifetime.</li> </ul>
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The EASME may call upon external experts in support of the evaluation of the proposal.

## **10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS<sup>47</sup>**

In the event of a grant awarded by the EASME, a grant agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, as well as the procedure in view to formalise the obligations of the parties, will be sent to the coordinator.

The 2 copies of the original agreement must be signed first by the beneficiary/ coordinator and returned to the EASME immediately. The EASME will sign it last.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish an entitlement for further support after the end of the project.

## **11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

### **11.1. General principles**

#### a) Non-cumulative award<sup>48</sup>

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

<sup>47</sup> Art. 121 FR, 174 RAP.

<sup>48</sup> Art. 129 Financial Regulation.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or for its functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.<sup>49</sup>

b) Non-retroactivity<sup>50</sup>

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed or the grant decision is notified. In such cases, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

c) Co-financing<sup>51</sup>

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action may not be entirely provided by the EU grant.

Co-financing of the action or of the work programme may take the form of:

- the beneficiary's and affiliated entities' own resources,
- income generated by the action,
- financial contributions from third parties.

Co-financing may also take the form of in kind contributions from third parties, i.e. non-financial resources made available free of charge or against payment by third parties to the beneficiary<sup>52</sup>.

d) Balanced budget<sup>53</sup>

The estimated budget of the action is to be attached to the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance. A model of a budget overview can be found in Annex of the application form.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

Applicants who foresee that costs will not be incurred in euros, shall use the exchange rate published on the Infor-euro website available at [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm).

e) Implementation contracts/sub-contracting<sup>54</sup>

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering

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<sup>49</sup> Art. 196.4 Rules of Application.

<sup>50</sup> Art. 130 Financial Regulation.

<sup>51</sup> Art. 125 Financial Regulation, 183 Rules of Application.

<sup>52</sup> Art. 127 Financial Regulation.

<sup>53</sup> Art. 196.2 RAP.

<sup>54</sup> Art. 137 Financial Regulation, 209 RAP

best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retain the documentation for the event of an audit.

Entities acting in their capacity of contracting authorities in the meaning of Directive 2004/18/EC<sup>55</sup> or contracting entities in the meaning of Directive 2004/17/EC<sup>56</sup> shall abide by the applicable national public procurement rules.

Sub-contracting, i.e. the externalisation of specific tasks or activities which form part of the action as described in the proposal must satisfy the conditions applicable to any implementation contract (as specified above) and in addition to them the following conditions:

- it may only cover the implementation of a limited part of the action;
- it must be justified having regard to the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;
- it must be clearly stated in the proposal.

The beneficiary has the possibility to award contracts to provide services or to assist in the implementation of certain limited activities.

The term “subcontracts” is applied to expenses paid by the beneficiary on the basis of:

- Contracts, and
- Invoices/requests for reimbursement to external service providers who carry out certain tasks or assist in the implementation of certain limited activities for the project because the beneficiary lacks the resources or expertise to carry them out.

Note that the model grant agreement imposes additional requirements where the value of the contracts necessary for the implementation of the action or subcontracting of tasks forming part of the action exceeds EUR 130,000.

f) Financial support to third parties

Financial support to third parties is not an eligible expenditure.

## 11.2. **Form of funding**<sup>57</sup>

Funding takes the form of mixed financing.

Mixed financing grants are calculated on the basis of a detailed estimated budget indicating clearly the costs that are eligible for EU funding. The grant amount may neither exceed the eligible costs nor the amount requested. Amounts are indicated in euros.

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<sup>55</sup>Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public work contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts.

<sup>56</sup>Directive 2004/17/EC coordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors.

<sup>57</sup>Art. 123 Financial Regulation, 181 RAP.

➤ **Maximum amount requested**

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-funding rate of **80 % of eligible costs** actually incurred.

Consequently, part of the total eligible expenses entered in the estimated budget must be financed from sources other than the EU grant (see section 11.1c).

➤ **Contributions in kind<sup>58</sup>**

The external co-financing may be made up of contributions in kind in order to cover other costs necessary to carry out the project. Such contributions must not exceed:

- either the costs actually borne and duly supported by accounting documents;
- or, in the absence of such documents, the costs generally accepted on the market in question.

In kind contributions shall be presented separately in the estimated budget to reflect the total resources allocated to the action. Their unit value is evaluated in the provisional budget and shall not be subject to subsequent changes.

In kind contributions shall comply with national tax and social security rules.

➤ **Eligible costs<sup>59</sup>**

Eligible costs are costs actually incurred by the beneficiary of a grant which meet all the following criteria:

- a) they are incurred during the duration of the action, with the exception of costs relating to final reports;
- b) the period of eligibility of costs will be defined in the grant agreement. If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, expenditure may be authorised before the grant is awarded. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application (see section 11.1b).
- c) they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action;
- d) they are necessary for the implementation of the action ;
- e) they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- f) they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- g) they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

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<sup>58</sup>Art. 127 Financial Regulation.

<sup>59</sup>Art. 126 Financial Regulation.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the action/project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

The same criteria apply to the affiliated entities.

### **Eligible direct costs**

The eligible direct costs for the action are those costs which, **with due regard for the conditions of eligibility set out above**, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action and which can therefore be booked to it directly:

- the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the applicant or equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action, comprising actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that these costs are in line with the applicant's usual policy on remuneration. Those costs may include additional remuneration, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of their nature, provided that it is paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required and independently from the source of funding used. For the calculation of costs of personnel, the calculation sheet is provided in the annex VI of the model grant agreement;
- costs of the personnel of national administrations to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken;
- subsistence allowances (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc.) provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices;
- costs of travel (for meetings, including kick-off meetings where applicable, conferences etc.), provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;
- depreciation cost of equipment (new or second-hand): only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the action/project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account;
- costs entailed by subcontracting awarded by the beneficiaries for the purposes of carrying out the action/project, provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met;
- costs arising directly from requirements linked to the implementation of the action/project (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, translations, reproduction);
- value added tax (VAT) in relation to eligible direct costs where it is not recoverable/deductible by the beneficiary.



- Contributions in-kind: if necessary to implement the action, the beneficiaries may use in-kind contributions provided by third parties whether against payment or free of charge. If the in-kind contribution is provided against payment, the beneficiaries may declare costs related to the payment of in-kind contributions as eligible, up to the third parties' costs for the seconded persons, contributed equipment, infrastructure or other assets or other contributed goods and services. If the in-kind contribution is provided free of charge, the beneficiaries may declare costs incurred by the third parties for the seconded persons, contributed equipment, infrastructure or other assets or other contributed goods and services as eligible. The third parties and their contributions must be set out in Annex 1. The beneficiaries must ensure that the Agency, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) can exercise their rights

N.B. Applicants must foresee in the budget proposal the participation of maximum two representatives of the consortium (including at least one representative of the coordinating organisation) to two project meetings organised at EU level during the project lifetime.

#### **Eligible indirect costs (overheads)**

- A flat-rate amount of 7% of the total eligible direct costs of the action, is eligible under indirect costs, representing the beneficiary's general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the action/project.
- Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget heading.

#### **➤ Ineligible costs**

- return on capital;
- debt and debt service charges;
- provisions for losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- costs of transfers charged by the bank of a beneficiary;
- costs declared by a beneficiary and covered by another action receiving a European Union grant. In particular, indirect costs shall not be eligible under a grant for an action awarded to a beneficiary who already receives an operating grant financed from the Union budget during the period in question;
- excessive or reckless expenditure;
- deductible VAT (N.B. VAT is eligible where provided by the relevant articles of the FR<sup>60</sup>).

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<sup>60</sup> Article 126(3)(c) of the FR

### ➤ Calculation of the final grant amount

The final amount of the grant to be awarded to the beneficiary is established after completion of the action, upon approval of the request for payment containing the following documents<sup>61</sup>, including relevant supporting documents where appropriate:

- a final report providing details of the implementation and results of the action;
- a final financial statement of costs actually incurred;
  - where applicable, a certificate on the financial statements of the action for each beneficiary.

EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action of the beneficiary. **Profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs incurred by the beneficiary**, when the request is made for payment of the balance. In this respect, where a profit is made, the EASME shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually incurred by the beneficiary to carry out the action.

#### 11.3. Payment arrangements<sup>62</sup>

##### 11.3.1. *Pre-financing payment*

A pre-financing payment<sup>63</sup> corresponding to 40% of the maximum grant amount will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30<sup>64</sup> days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the grant agreement.

##### 11.3.2. *Interim payment*

An interim payment<sup>65</sup> of maximum 40% of the grant amount will be made within 60 days of receipt and approval by the EASME of an interim report on the project implementation including a financial statement and payment claim.

##### 11.3.3. *Final payment*

A balance payment will be made within 60 days of receipt and approval by the EASME of the final report on the project implementation including a final technical report, a final financial statement and a payment claim, as well as all other supporting documents that may be requested in accordance with the grant agreement.

The amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary will be established on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments received is higher than the final grant amount, the beneficiary will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess through a recovery order<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup>Art. 135 FR

<sup>62</sup>Art. 90, 135 Financial Regulation, 207 RAP

<sup>63</sup>Art. 109, 110 RAP

<sup>64</sup>Art. 92 FR

<sup>65</sup>Art. 207.1 RAP

<sup>66</sup>Art. 109, 110 RAP

#### 11.4. **Pre-financing guarantee**<sup>67</sup>

In the event that the beneficiary is a private entity and its financial capacity is not sufficient, a pre-financing guarantee for up to the same amount as the pre-financing may be requested in order to limit the financial risks linked to the pre-financing payment. This is not necessary where the amount of the pre-financing is up to EUR 60.000 included.

The guarantee may be replaced by a joint and several guarantee by a third party or by a joint guarantee of the beneficiaries of an action who are parties to the same grant agreement.

The guarantee shall be released as the pre-financing is cleared as the payments of balances to the beneficiary, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement.

#### 11.5. **Reporting requirements**

##### ➤ **Reporting periods**

The coordinator shall submit the following reports to the EASME

- 2 technical progress reports,
- 1 interim technical implementation report and interim financial statement,
- 1 final technical implementation report and financial statement

The first progress report shall cover the period from month 1 to month 6 and the second progress report shall cover the period from month 13 to month 18.

**Progress reports** shall be submitted to the EASME within 15 calendar days of the end of the reporting periods in question.

An **interim report** is due within 60 days of the end of the first year of the project and a **final report** within 60 days of the end of the project duration.

##### ➤ **Reporting format**

Progress reports shall be submitted to the EASME in electronic format. They shall explain the progress made on the milestones provided for by the grant agreement. Progress reports are requested for project monitoring purposes and do not result in any payment. Deliverables due for the corresponding period should be submitted with the progress reports.

The interim and final reports are to be sent to the EASME both electronically as well as in paper form.

The interim report shall detail the work progress and achievements as well as assessment of the budget implementation during the reporting period, the outputs delivered, and provide a forecast for the second year of implementation. Deliverables due for the corresponding period should be submitted with the interim report.

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<sup>67</sup>Art. 134 Financial Regulation, 206 RAP

The final report shall include an executive summary and shall detail all the actions done, the outputs delivered and the final results achieved. All final deliverables should be submitted with the final report.

Reports must be submitted by the coordinator in English, using the available reporting templates.

In case deliverables are not available in English, the applicant should provide a short summary in English (max 2 pages) together with the corresponding deliverable.

## **12. PUBLICITY**

### **12.1. By the beneficiary**

The Beneficiary and its affiliated entities must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, the beneficiary and its affiliated entities are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Commission and EASME on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project.

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

### **12.2. By the EASME**

With the exception of scholarships paid to natural persons and other direct support paid to natural persons in most need, all information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on an internet site of the European Union institutions no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The EASME will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary
- address of the beneficiary when the latter is a legal person, region when the beneficiary is a natural person, as defined on NUTS 2 level<sup>68</sup> if he/she is domiciled within EU or equivalent if domiciled outside EU,
- subject of the grant,
- amount awarded.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

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<sup>68</sup>European Union Official Journal L 39, of 10 February 2007.

### **13. DATA PROTECTION**

The reply to any call involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the EU institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call and will be processed solely for that purpose by EASME. Details concerning the processing of personal data are available on the privacy statement at: <http://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/privacy-statement-calls-EASME.pdf>

Personal data may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES)<sup>69</sup> by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision 2008/969 of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (for more information see the Privacy Statement on: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/legal\\_entities/legal\\_entities\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm) ),

or

- Article 108 of the Financial Regulation establishing the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES)<sup>70</sup> (for more information see the Privacy Statement on [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm))

### **14. PROCEDURE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW**

#### **14.1. Evaluation Review procedure**

Unsuccessful applicants may request the review of the evaluation procedure of their proposals within one month after the dispatch of the communication to the applicants of the evaluation results. In case of proposals submitted on behalf of a consortium of applicants, the request must be raised by the coordinator.

The scope of the review will be limited to procedural aspects of the evaluation which includes procedural errors, factual errors, and manifest errors of assessment of the evaluation.

An internal Review Committee will be convened to examine each case. It is out of the scope of the Committee to review the merits of the proposal. The role of the Committee is neither to call into question the judgement of appropriately qualified experts and therefore it does not cover assessment by these experts with relation to the evaluation criteria.

The Committee provides specialist opinions on the implementation of the evaluation process on the basis of all the available information related to the proposal and its

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<sup>69</sup> Art 108 of Regulation 2015/1929 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation n°966/2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L 286 of 30.10.2015, p.1.

<sup>70</sup> Art 108 of Regulation 2015/1929 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation n°966/2012 on the financial

evaluation in the form of a report with recommendations on line of action for each request. In the light of its review, the Committee will recommend a course of action to the responsible authorising officer. Three recommendations are foreseen: (i) that the complaint is rejected as unfounded; (ii) that the complaint is upheld but the problem concerned did not jeopardise the decision whether or not to fund the proposal; (iii) that the complaint is upheld and a re-evaluation is recommended.

In all cases, a reply will be sent to the applicant within two weeks (ten working days) of the date of reception of the request for review. The Committee shall inform the applicant about the result of the evaluation review at the latest 2 months after the meeting of the Committee.

#### **14.2. Admissibility and Eligibility Review procedure**

Any unsuccessful applicant may request a review within 30 days from the date of the rejection letter by the Agency. The rejection letter shall indicate the means for submission of the request for review.

Complaints on failed submission proposals due to an online submission system fault have to be submitted through the IT Helpdesk within 4 calendar days from the call closure date.

The scope of the review will be limited to assess the fulfilment of either admissibility or eligibility criteria as laid down in the call for proposals.

An internal Admissibility and Eligibility Review Committee will be convened to examine each case. The Committee provides specialist opinions in the form of a report with recommendations on line of action for each request. In the light of its review, the Committee will recommend a course of action to the responsible authorising officer. Three recommendations are foreseen: (i) that the complaint is not eligible for admissibility/eligibility review; (ii) that the complaint is rejected as unfounded; (iii) that the complaint is founded, which may lead to the evaluation of the proposals/the participation in the action.

### **15. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

The proposal must be submitted in accordance with the formal requirements and by the deadline set out under sections 5.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the correction of clerical mistakes, the EASME may contact the applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process<sup>71</sup>.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the result of the selection process<sup>72</sup>.

The application form, annexes and relevant documents can be found at:

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/european-maritime-and-fisheries-fund>

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rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L 286 of 30.10.2015, p.1.

<sup>71</sup>Art. 96 Financial Regulation.

<sup>72</sup>Art. 133 Financial Regulation, 205 RAP

➤ **Submission on paper**

Applicants are requested to send their complete application according to the procedure below.

The application must contain the following documents:

- Grant Application form (including declaration on honour);
- Estimated budget of the action (budget form);
- documents as specified in section 8.1;
- Information on the applicant:
  - a Legal Entity Form and supporting documents (section 6.2.5)
  - a Financial Identification Form (only by the coordinator of the consortium)

The application shall be submitted on the correct form, duly completed, dated, showing a balanced budget (revenue/expenditure), submitted in 2 copies (one original clearly identified as such, plus 1 copy), and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation. Before submission, please make sure to carefully check the last page of the application form, which provides the checklist of all documents to be submitted with the application.

Where applicable, additional information considered necessary by the applicant can be included on separate sheets.

The paper version of the application will legally constitute the application. The envelope of the paper version must clearly state the reference of the Call (EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.2). It must be submitted in a sealed envelope and must be either<sup>73</sup>:

- sent **by registered mail**, posted or dispatched no later than **31<sup>st</sup> of May 2016** to the address indicated below:

Post:

European Commission

EASME

Ref.: EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.2

Unit A3 – EMFF

Madou

Place Madou, 1

B-1210 - Saint-Josse-Ten-Noode, Brussels

In this case, the evidence of the date of dispatch shall be constituted by the postmark.

- **delivered by hand** (by the applicant in person or by an agent), or sent **by courier service**, posted or dispatched no later than **31<sup>st</sup> of May 2016 at 16.00 Brussels time** to the address indicated below:

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<sup>73</sup>Art. 195.3 Rules of Application (RAP)

Hand delivery/Express mail:

European Commission  
EASME  
Mail Service  
Ref. EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.2  
Avenue du Bourget 1  
B-1140 Brussels

In case of submission by courier service, the evidence of the date of dispatch shall be constituted by the date of dispatch on the deposit slip.

In case of hand delivery by the applicant, a receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by the official in the Commission's central mail department who takes delivery. The department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 from Monday to Thursday, and from 8.00 to 16.00 on Fridays. It is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

Applications sent by fax will not be accepted.

➤ **Electronic copy**

In addition to the submission on paper, the applicant is requested to submit an electronic copy of the proposal and all its annexes on a CD-ROM or USB-stick in the same envelope as the paper version.

➤ **Contacts**

Requests for further information shall be sent by e-mail to EASME-EMFF-calls@ec.europa.eu indicating as subject title "2016/1.2.1.2 Blue Careers".

Such questions, together with their answers, if of a general interest, will be published at:

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/european-maritime-and-fisheries-fund>

In addition, important information for the applicants may, if need be, be published on this website. Applicants are thus strongly recommended to consult this website regularly.

➤ **Annexes to this Call for Proposals**

*For multi-beneficiary projects:*

- Application form<sup>74</sup> (with checklist of documents to be provided)
- Financial capacity table
- Model Grant Agreement for multi-beneficiary projects including:
  - Special Conditions

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<sup>74</sup> The application will become Annex I of the Grant Agreement once approved by the contracting authority.



- General Conditions (hereinafter referred to as “the General Conditions”) (Annex II to the GA)
- Mandate (Annex IV to the GA)
- Estimated budget of the action (Annex III to the GA)

➤ **Templates to be downloaded and completed**

- Legal entity form

All applicants (Coordinator and partner(s)) must fill in the "Legal entity form" available at the following address:

[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/legal\\_entities/legal\\_entities\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm)

- Financial identification form

The "Financial identification form" available at the following address shall be completed **only by the coordinator of the consortium**:

[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/financial\\_id/financial\\_id\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm)

➤ **Templates to be downloaded for reporting during project implementation**

- Model technical reports (Annex V to the GA): progress report, interim report and final report
- Model financial statement (Annex VI to the GA) and model terms of reference for the certificate on the financial statements (Annex VII to the GA)
- Model Report on the Distribution of the EU Final Financial Contribution (Annex IX to the GA)
- Template for external audit certificate

These templates can be downloaded by applicants for reference at the following address:

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/european-maritime-and-fisheries-fund>

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