

RENEW-BOOSTER Eurocluster

Financial Support to Innovation



Co-funded by
the European Union



Call text

Background and policy context

The European Union is facing increasing challenges related to the resilience and competitiveness of its clean energy supply chains. Recent disruptions and geopolitical developments have shown that Europe is highly exposed to critical material dependencies and supply chain bottlenecks, particularly in technologies essential for the green transition such as wind and solar, photovoltaics, grids and energy storage. The RENEW-BOOSTER project aims to address these challenges by supporting European SMEs in developing and deploying innovations that contribute to:

- Reducing dependency on critical materials and key supply chain vulnerabilities
- Strengthening EU industrial capacities in renewable energy value chains
- Accelerating the green and digital transition
- Supporting the objectives of the Net-Zero Industry Act (NZIA) and the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA)

The initiative provides financial support to SMEs working on innovations linked to renewable energy supply chain resilience and diversification

Scope and objectives of the call

This call supports SMEs that develop innovations contributing to resilient and diversified clean energy supply chains. Funded projects should lead to tangible results within a short implementation period and contribute to the following areas:



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OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY, IN PARTICULAR FLOATING OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY

Eligible projects include:

- Development of offshore wind technologies and components, including generators, blades, floating platforms and related systems, with improved sustainability, circularity and reduced use of critical raw materials.
- Electrical, transmission and power system solutions for offshore wind, including cables, substations and offshore grid technologies, that reduce dependency on critical raw materials or contribute to the green and digital transition.
- Innovations in materials, design, manufacturing or processes for offshore wind technologies that reduce dependency on critical or strategic raw materials through substitution, material efficiency, reuse or recycling.
- Integrated offshore wind solutions enabling deployment, operation and maintenance of offshore wind installations, particularly in deep-water and floating offshore wind applications.

PHOTOVOLTAICS

Eligible projects include:

- Development of new high-efficiency PV cells, modules, and materials (e.g. replacement of aluminium with composite materials; reduction of tin and lead in interconnections; substitution of glass).
- Advancements in PV power plant architectures and hybrid electricity/heat technologies.
- Improvement of PV module recyclability and innovation in power electronics for PV systems.
- Cross-sectoral synergies with other industries (e.g. microelectronics), where EU manufacturing capacities and processes can be leveraged for the PV sector.

ENERGY NETWORKS

Eligible projects include:

- Development of SF6-free equipment, advanced power cables made from recycled materials, and tools for optimizing energy infrastructure.
- Deployment of systems to model, monitor, and forecast the health of cables, increasing lifespan and reducing maintenance costs.
- Smart grid solutions such as dynamic line rating and predictive maintenance.

CROSS-SECTORAL INNOVATIONS, APPLICABLE TO EACH ABOVEMENTIONED SECTOR

Eligible projects include:

- Advanced digital solutions like artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing, blockchain, and digital twins to optimize energy and environmental performance including biodiversity considerations.
- Development of technologies that can improve business processes, such as energy management systems, predictive analytics, and tools for assessing environmental impacts.

Examples of eligible innovations include:

- New or improved products/services enabling substitution of critical materials
- New suppliers and diversified supply chains validated through pilot testing
- Process innovations improving manufacturing efficiency, quality, and resilience
- Digital solutions enabling supply chain monitoring, optimisation, traceability, and performance
- Technologies reducing environmental impacts in production and sourcing

Projects should be clearly linked to the call's objectives and demonstrate relevance to EU priorities on



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competitiveness, resilience, green transition, and digitalisation.

The **Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA)** and the **Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA)** are foundational to the RENEW-BOOSTER strategy. These two European frameworks will be of peak importance for each project evaluation. Each project must prove their contribution to these two pillars which are directly related to the Green Deal and European competitiveness.

The CRMA, [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1252](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials and amending Regulations (EU). **Projects innovation related to extraction, processing and recycling within the EU territory will be carefully considered.**

- Among the three RENEW-BOOSTER value chains, an example could be improving the supply chain of materials like silica, neodymium (LREE) or copper are crucial. Innovation projects applying for a grant in RENEW-BOOSTER **must build their application by taking into account the European strategy regarding Critical Raw materials.**

The NZIA, [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1735](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 establishing a framework of measures for strengthening Europe's net-zero technology manufacturing ecosystem and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1724. The EU aims for at least 40% of net-zero technology manufacturing—such as photovoltaics (PV), offshore wind, electricity grid technologies (including digital grid solutions), and electric charging infrastructure for transport—to take place within its territory. These key technologies are essential for achieving the 2050 Net-Zero objectives while also strengthening the development of the EU industry.

- Among the three RENEW-BOOSTER value chains, an example could be relocating part of the manufacturing process or technological components within the EU ground will be highly considered in the evaluation. Innovation projects applying for a grant in RENEW-BOOSTER **must build their application by taking into account the European strategy regarding Net Zero Industry.**

Project proposals must explicitly reference their alignment with CRMA and/or NZIA objectives and provide relevant information (potential reduction of CO2 and resources, relocation of a part of the value chain...)

Eligibility criteria

To be considered eligible, applicants must meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. Applicant type and SME status

- Applicants must comply with the **EU definition of SMEs** ([EU recommendation 2003/361](#)) and demonstrate sufficient operational capacity to implement the project:
 - Staff headcount: fewer than 250 persons
 - Annual turnover: ≤ EUR 50 million OR Annual balance sheet total: ≤ EUR 43 million*Note:* These ceilings apply to the figures for individual firms only. A firm that is part of a larger group may need to include staff headcount/turnover/balance sheet data from the group (partner and/or linked enterprises), in accordance with EU SME rules.

2. Scope and value chain relevance

- The proposed activities must fall under the value chain of:
 - **Photovoltaics (PV)**
 - **Offshore wind**



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- **Energy grids**

3. Compliance with EU fundamental values

- Proposals must respect **EU fundamental values**, notably with regard to:
 - Racism and incitement to violence
 - Discrimination based on religion, gender, or sexual orientation

4. Eligibility requirements and deadline

- Applicants must comply with all submission requirements, deadlines, and any RENEW-BOOSTER call requirements.
- The project proposal must be submitted **before the call deadline (28 April 2026 at 17:00 CET)** via the dedicated platform:
 - **EU Funding & Tender platform: [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)**

General EU funding principles

Applicants must also comply with general EU funding principles, including:

- **No double funding** from other EU or public sources
- **Transparency and accuracy** of declarations and submitted information
- Ability to sign and comply with a **third-party funding agreement**

Ineligible proposals

Ineligible proposals include those that:

- fall outside the scope of the call (PV, offshore wind, energy grids),
- do not match the objectives of **Strand A / Strand B**, or
- breach environmental and compliance principles, including DNSH (see below).

Consortia

- SMEs applying as part of a **consortium** are eligible for RENEW-BOOSTER funding.
- Each SME in a consortium may be eligible for a maximum of **EUR 60,000** funding.
- When applying as a consortium, candidates are **jointly responsible** for ensuring the proper use of funds. Consortium members may be considered jointly liable with respect to obligations under the funding agreement.

Call structure and funding strands

To ensure clarity for applicants, this call is implemented through two distinct support strands reflecting different innovation pathways and implementation logics. Applicants should select the most suitable strand when applying.

Strand A – Challenge-driven projects

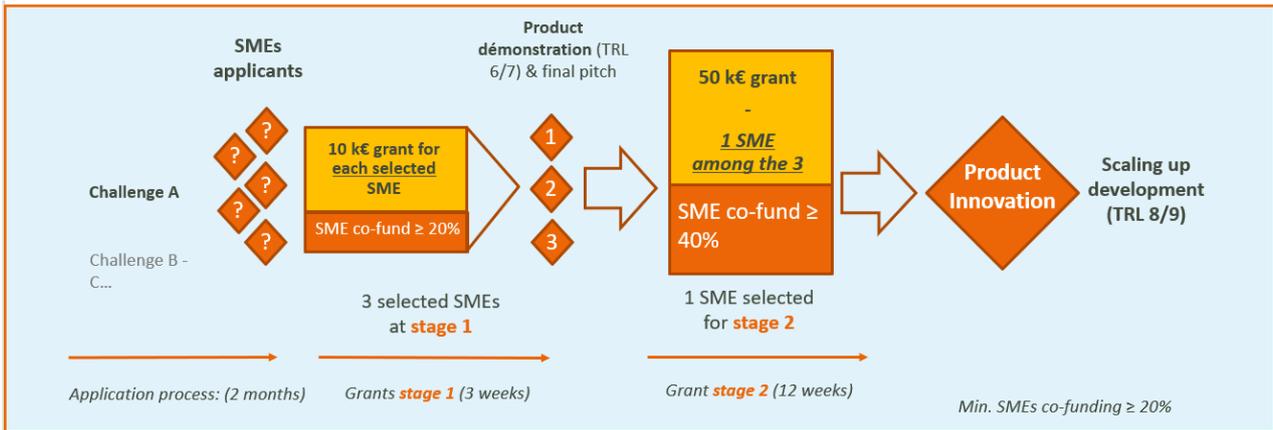
Strand A supports SMEs responding to specific “challenges” defined by relevant energy or industrial leaders (challenge owners). These challenges are linked to product innovation and supply chain diversification and are implemented through a two-step process:

- Step 1 (Feasibility / Proof-of-concept): rapid development and validation of the proposed approach. In **Stage 1**, several SMEs apply to a specific challenge (A, B, C, etc.). **Three SMEs are selected for each challenge** and each receives a **€10k grant** with at least **20% of private co-funding** to carry out a **product demonstration (TRL 6–7)** over about **3 weeks**.

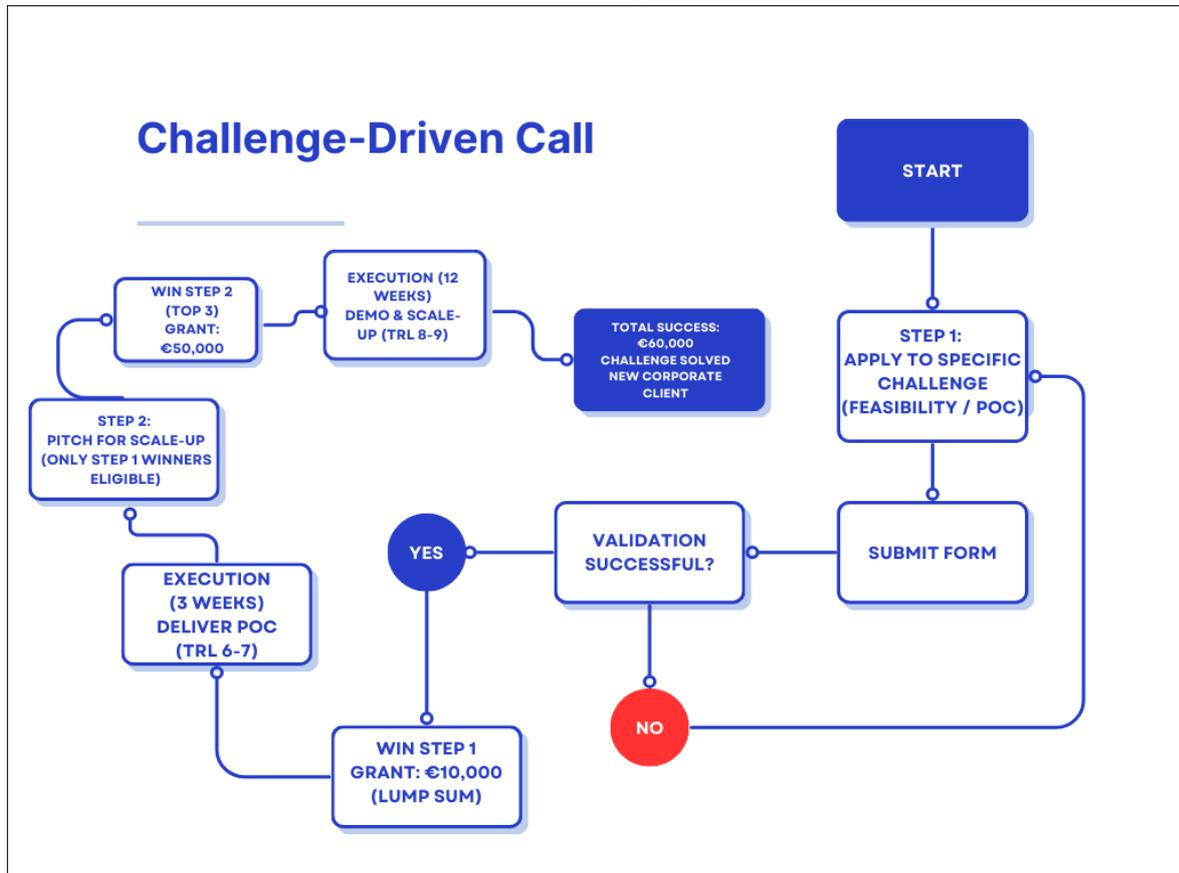


- Step 2 (Demonstration / Scale-up): further development and implementation of the solution to reach demonstrator's readiness. Based on a final pitch and results, From the **three SME which passed stage 1, only one is selected for stage 2** and receives a **€50k grant with ≥40% private co-funding** to further develop its solution over **12 weeks**, leading to **product innovation and scaling up (TRL 8–9)**.

Challenge owners may be involved in the assessment of applications and in monitoring progress, ensuring strong market relevance and uptake potential.



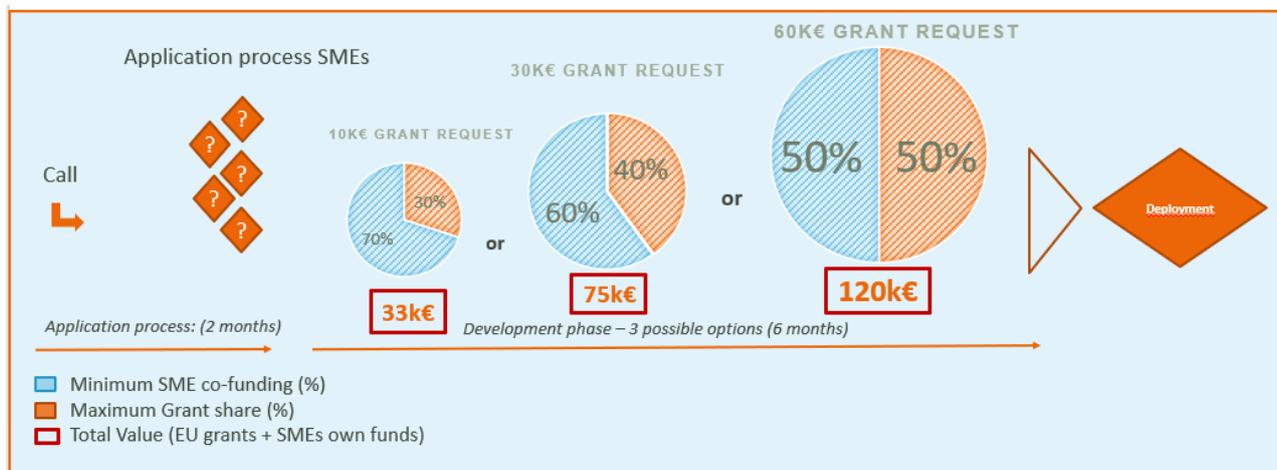
Graph 1. RENEW-BOOSTER funding set up for Challenges - Strand A.



Strand B – Open calls

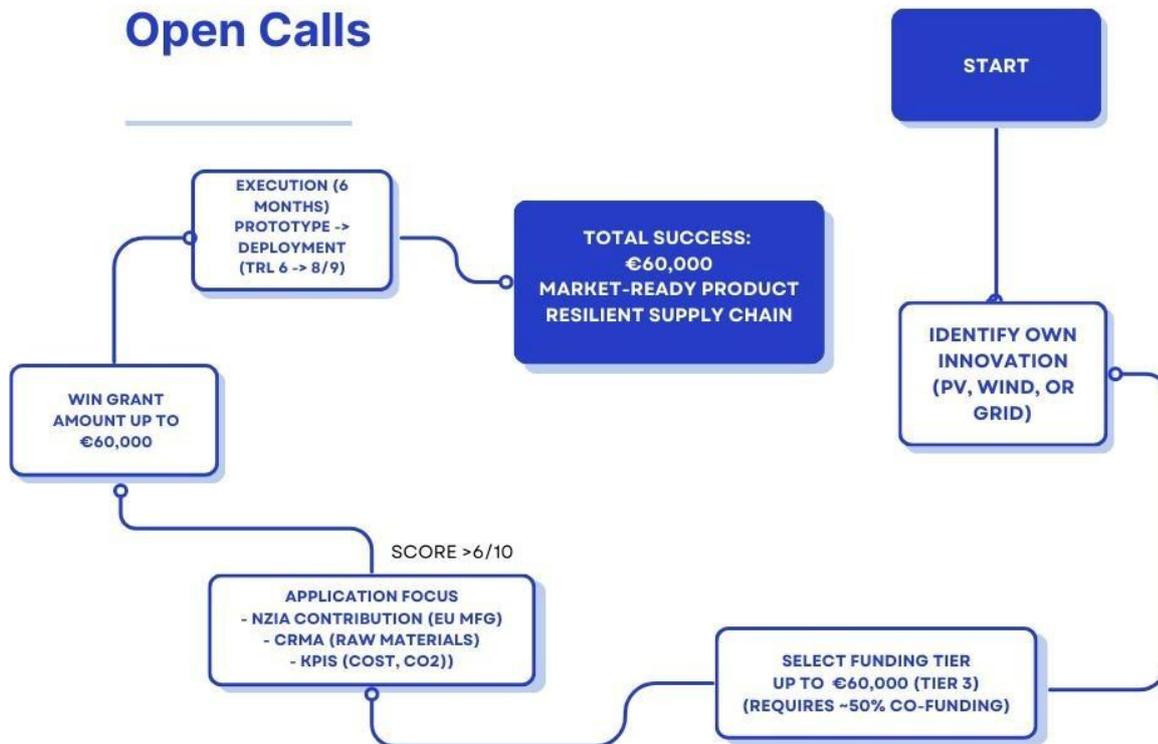
Strand B supports SMEs applying through a single-stage open call mechanism. It includes an open call (bottom-up) for product innovation and supply chain diversification. The call is set up as a **cascade funding grant where around 12-72 SMEs are selected**. During a **2-month application process**, SMEs can request **grant amounts**—up to **€10k, €30k, and €60k**—corresponding to increasing levels of project maturity during a **development phase of up to 6 months**. Each funding level requires **minimum SME co-funding** (from about **50% to 70%** inversely proportionalized as the grant size increases), ensuring strong private commitment. These funding options can be **combined sequentially** (e.g. prototype → demonstration → deployment), leading ultimately to a **POC (Proof of Concept) or deployment phase**, with a total mobilised budget per POC from **33 000 euros to 120 000 euros**.

Strand B uses a one-stage selection process and applies co-funding requirements depending on the requested grant amount.



Graph 2. RENEW-BOOSTER funding set up for Open Calls - Strand B

Open Calls



Timetable and deadlines

Projects must have a duration between **3 and 6 months**, starting from the date of signature of the sub-grant agreement with the RENEW BOOSTER consortium.

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call publication	27 February 2026
Deadline	28 April 2026 (17:00 CET)
Evaluation process	May-June 2026
Communication of results	End June 2026
Contract signature	Mid-July 2026

Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) – mandatory principle

All funded actions must respect the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) principle. Proposals that involve activities which cause significant harm to environmental objectives may be excluded. Applicants must confirm DNSH compliance through self-check and must not propose actions that contradict EU environmental protection objectives.



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Funding conditions and grant allocation

Funding approach

Funding is provided as financial support to third parties. The funding logic depends on the strand:

- Strand A (Challenges): **two-step approach**, potentially with staged funding aligned to step 1 (feasibility/proof-of-concept) and step 2 (demonstration/scale-up) implementation
- Strand B (Open calls): **single-step approach** with co-funding requirements based on requested amount

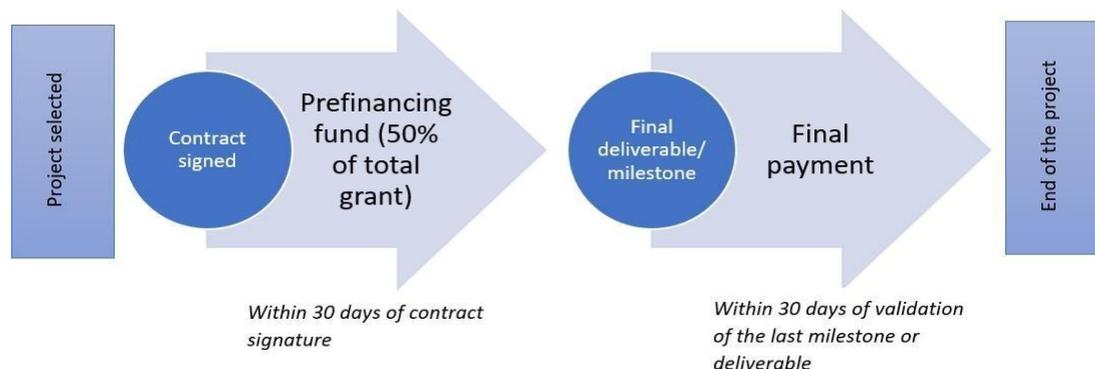
Co-funding and grant amounts (indicative)

Applicants should plan budgets in line with the **co-funding rate** applicable to the requested grant amount.

The financial support that the RENEW-BOOSTER grant beneficiaries of this call will obtain **must be matched** by the recipient SMEs with a certain percentage of **other private financial sources** (in form of debt or own financial resources, and not as in-kind contributions/staff costs/etc), thus crowding in private capital into the projects.

The final call text and the sub-grant agreement remain the authoritative sources for grant ceilings, co-funding rates, and eligible cost rules.

Payment schedule (when will the grant be paid to SMEs?)



Graph 3. RENEW-BOOSTER funding schedule for selected projects - ONLY for Open Calls

Final deliverable / milestone requirements

The **final milestone** must include an **impact assessment**. Each SME must submit a final deliverable (e.g., slides, technical report, KPI summary).

As a minimum, it must include:

- **First results:** measured results and/or well-justified estimated results
- **Earnings and/or savings** related to the targeted KPIs (e.g., cost reduction, efficiency gains, reduced dependency, time-to-market improvements)

This final deliverable template will be provided to SMEs by the RENEW-BOOSTER project partners. SMEs contribution through this deliverable is mandatory and will be one of the conditions to be fulfilled by SMEs to receive the final payment. The final deliverable must also contain the duly completed feedback questionnaire on satisfaction with the project support, mandatory for the beneficiary SMEs: https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/Single_Market_Programme_Feedback_Survey (to be printed in pdf and annexed to the final report).

Suspension of payments

Please note that **payment suspension may occur** in case of **non-compliance with contractual obligations**, including failure to deliver agreed milestones, insufficient reporting, or breach of eligibility/compliance conditions.

Suspension of payments

In accordance with the Euroclusters [Call text](#), at least 10% of the SMEs funded under this call must come from countries other than those of the consortium partners.

In other words, at least 10% of the selected SMEs must be established outside Denmark, Norway, Poland, France or Bulgaria.

Evaluation criteria and selection process

Evaluation criteria

All eligible proposals will be evaluated based on three criteria: **Excellence, Impact, and Quality & efficiency of the implementation**. Each criterion is scored on a scale from **0 to 10**. To be considered for funding, proposals must reach the **minimum threshold of 6/10 for each criterion**.

Section evaluated within the application form	Highest score	Threshold	Evaluation criteria
Excellence	10	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of innovation and ambition, including the novelty and added value of the proposed solution • Soundness and feasibility of the technical approach, including evidence that the project can be delivered within the planned timeframe • Relevance to the call scope and the selected strand objectives (Strand A or Strand B) • Clarity and credibility of the proposed solution and expected outputs



Impact	10	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected contribution to supply chain resilience and/or diversification within the PV, offshore wind, and/or energy grids value chains • Contribution to the green and/or digital transition, with clear expected benefits • Market relevance and uptake potential, including a credible plan for commercialisation or deployment • Expected measurable outcomes, supported by clear KPIs/indicators and how they will be assessed
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Quality & efficiency of the implementation	10	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and realism of the workplan and timeline, including clear tasks and deliverables • Capacity and expertise of the team, including appropriate allocation of roles and resources, where applicable • Budget adequacy and cost-effectiveness, demonstrating alignment between activities and requested resources • Quality of risk identification and mitigation measures, ensuring robust project delivery
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Maximum total score: 30 points

Funding decision basis: ranking by total score, subject to thresholds and available budget.

Tie-breaking procedure

In case of equal total scores, the ranking will be determined according to the following priority order:

1. **Higher score on Impact**
2. **Higher score on Excellence**
3. **Higher score on Quality & efficiency of the implementation**
4. **Geographical balance** If proposals are still tied after applying points 1–3, priority may be given to proposals that contribute to a broader geographical coverage of funded SMEs across eligible countries and regions, in line with the objective of ensuring balanced participation.
5. **Final decision by the Evaluation Committee** If proposals remain tied after applying all the above criteria, the final decision will be taken by **consensus of the Evaluation Committee**, based on the overall programme objectives and portfolio coherence.

Evaluation workflow (transparency addition)

The evaluation follows a structured and transparent process to ensure fairness and consistency:

1. **Eligibility check** (administrative completeness, SME status, country eligibility, scope fit)



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2. **Quality evaluation by two independent evaluators**
3. **If needed, a third evaluator is involved** in resolving divergent scoring
4. **For Strand A challenge-driven proposals, challenge owners may contribute input on relevance and feasibility**
5. **Final ranking is established based on evaluation scores and call budget availability**

What applicants must submit

1. **Administrative and eligibility information:** Project title, value chain (PV/Offshore wind/Energy grids), country of establishment, SME data (employees, turnover, balance sheet), proposal type (Open Call or Challenge-driven), duration (max. 6 months), requested grant.
2. **Project summary:** Short description of the project, objectives and expected results (used for eligibility and communication purposes if funded).
3. **Excellence:** Innovation maturity/readiness (e.g., TRL evidence), innovation potential, expected outputs/results, and market need/value proposition. *For challenge-driven proposals only:* compatibility/integration and deployment requirements.
4. **Impact:** Commercialisation/scale-up plan expected economic impact, contribution to resilience/green/digital transition, and at least two KPIs/indicators. *For challenge-driven proposals only:* scalability beyond the challenge owner.
5. **Quality & efficiency of implementation:** Work allocation and roles, risk management, work plan (up to 5 tasks), and budget allocation.
6. **Declarations (mandatory):** Acceptance of GDPR/confidentiality, ethics, SME-self declaration, DNSH compliance, financial and operational capacity, and call terms and conditions.
7. **Consortium annex (if applicable):** Partner details, roles, profiles, and confirmation that all partners are established in eligible countries.

Applicants are encouraged to provide measurable KPIs and clear evidence of feasibility (e.g., TRL, pilots, test plan, customer validation).

Support, helpdesk and FAQs

A helpdesk will be available to support applicants during the call period, including questions on eligibility and submission procedures.

Support channels include:

- **Call website and submission platform**
 - EU Funding & Tender platform: [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)
- **Helpdesk email**
 - **If you have any general questions about RENEW-BOOSTER, or any financial/eligibility specific questions, please contact;** bes@energycluster.dk
 - **For any specific questions about Challenge, please contact;** ge@norwegianoffshorewind.no
 - **For specific questions about Open Calls, please contact;** nicolas.lemonnier@capenergies.fr



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- **Applicant webinar(s) and Q&A sessions**
 - A webinar on “How to Apply? Support and FAQ” will take place on March 23, 2026.
 - [RENEW-BOOSTER: Information webinar – Norwegian Offshore Wind](#)
- **FAQ document:** profile.clustercollaboration.eu/profile/cluster-partnership-initiative/587afc8c-51fd-4c98-a88f-630ddd5161c5

How to apply

How to apply

Applications must be submitted via the official platform within the call deadline announced in the call publication.

Applicants are encouraged to:

- Select the correct strand (Strand A or Strand B)
- Ensure alignment with the call objectives and eligible scope
- Provide measurable outcomes and realistic milestones
- Demonstrate clear value for European clean energy supply chain resilience

Complaints procedure

For any complaints regarding the call results, please submit your complaint to the email address bes@energycluster.dk within 14 days after communication of the results. Your email should include the following information:

- SME name / application name
- Applicants contact name and details
- Object of your complaint
- Information and evidence of the alleged breach

The evaluation committee will examine the complaint based on the information brought forward by the applicant, will assess the case and decide whether the complaint is justified or not. The applicant will be informed on the decision taken. If the complaint is considered justified, the evaluation committee will notify the evaluators that the application should be re-evaluated based on their assessment.

The final decision on the complaint will be communicated by the evaluation committee to the applicant in writing within 14 working days from the date of submitting the complaint. This decision will be final, binding to all parties and not subject to any further complaint proceedings if the complaint is based on the same grounds.



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