# Frequently Asked Questions

The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been compiled following the Information Webinar for the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership's Fourth Joint Transnational Call, held online on 29 September 2026. They reflect questions raised by participants during the webinar and the answers provided by the Call Secretariat and participating funding organisations, complemented by information published on the official 4th Joint Transnational Call webpage.

Applicants should always consult the latest version of the Call documents, in particular the Call Announcement and the national/regional eligibility requirements in Annex B, as these documents may be updated.

Please visit the Call webpage here - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/funding-opportunity/sustainable-blue-economy-partnerships-fourth-joint-transnational-call

## 1. Will the webinar recording and presentation be available?

Yes, the **video recording and the PowerPoint Presentation** are available on the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP) website. Please find the documents here: https://www.bluepartnership.eu/events/information-webinar-4th-joint-transnational-call

## 2. How many countries must be represented in a consortium?

Each consortium must include eligible partners from at least three different countries participating in the Call and must request financial support from at least three different participating funding organisations. Self-funded partners do not count towards the minimum eligible consortium size.

Applicants should also verify the national/regional eligibility requirements applying to each consortium partner. For detailed information regarding the eligibility of partners, please see **Annex B. NCP and regulations**: https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

*IMPORTANT: Please check the SBEP website for any updates and contact the NCPs to verify the eligibility of each partner.

## 3. Does a proposal have to address more than one sea basin?

The Call recommends that proposals consider at least two European sea basins and assess the project's potential impact across these basins.

The webinar did not establish a general requirement for physical deployment or demonstration activities in both basins. Applicants should therefore clearly explain how the selected sea basins are relevant to the project and its expected impacts.

For more information, please see **the text of the Fourth Joint Transnational Call** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-10/sbep_jtc_2026_4th_call_announcement_061026_0.pdf and

**Annex A. Theory of Change** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_a_theory_of_change_vf.pdf

## 4. Can a proposal address more than one Priority Area?

Yes, a secondary Priority Area can be selected in the submission platform. Applicants should select the Priority Area that best reflects the proposal's main objectives and expected impacts as their primary Priority Area.

Please see **Annex D. Pre-proposal form, Chapter 4.2. Priority Areas** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_d_pre_proposal_form_sbep_4th_jts_call_2026_vf.pdf

## 5. Are research centres listed in Annex C eligible to participate?

Yes, the research centres listed in Annex C can participate in the SBEP Call. Applicants should consult the latest version of **Annex C. List of beneficiaries**, as Call documents may be updated - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_c_list_of_beneficiaries_updated_21.09.pdf

## 6. How are project partners funded?

Partners requesting funding are funded through their respective national or regional funding organisations, in accordance with the applicable national/regional eligibility requirements.

Funding conditions, eligible costs and maximum or minimum funding amounts may differ between funding organisations.

For the list of PFOs participating in this call and their respective budgets, see **the text of the Fourth Joint Transnational Call, Section 3.0 Funding, Sub-section 3.1. Participating Countries** – https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-10/sbep_jtc_2026_4th_call_announcement_061026_0.pdf

For national / regional eligibility rules, see **Annex B. NCP and regulations**: https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

For additional information on consortium composition and funding, please see the answer to question 2.

## 7. Can companies, SMEs, and other industry actors participate and receive funding?

Yes, subject to the applicable national/regional eligibility requirements and, where relevant, State Aid rules. Industry actors may receive financial support in accordance with the rules applicable in their country.

The involvement of industry and other relevant stakeholders can also contribute to project implementation, valorisation and impact.

For national / regional eligibility rules, see **Annex B. NCP and regulations**:
https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

## 8. Can self-funded partners participate in a consortium?

Yes. Self-funded partners may participate in a consortium, provided they have a meaningful role in project implementation, valorisation and/or impact. Their inclusion or exclusion from the consortium does not, in itself, influence the evaluation process, as participation by self-funded partners is not mandatory under the Call requirements.

Self-funded partners do not count towards the minimum eligible consortium size.

Please see **Annex D. Pre-proposal form, Chapter 4.2. Priority Areas** -
https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_d_pre_proposal_form_sbep_4th_jts_call_2026_vf.pdf

For national / regional eligibility rules, see **Annex B. NCP and regulations**:
https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

## 9. Can an already funded or ongoing project participate as a self-funded partner?

This depends on the applicable national/regional eligibility requirements. Entities in such a position are strongly advised to consult the relevant national/regional requirements, as the rules may differ between funding organisations.

For national / regional eligibility rules, see **Annex B. NCP and regulations**:
https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

## 10. Can activities be subcontracted?

Partners and self-funded partners may subcontract activities where these are considered minor. Generally speaking, subcontracting is understood as the externalisation of the execution of a (minor) project task that this Partner cannot execute. Applicants should verify the specific rules applying to subcontracting and eligible costs with their respective funding organisation.

These requirements are specified for each country and PFO in **Annex B. NCP and regulations**: https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

## 11. Is the funding provided as a lump sum?

No, funding is not provided as a lump sum. Project budgets may include different categories of costs, such as personnel, equipment, travel, indirect costs and other eligible costs, depending on the rules of the respective funding organisation.

These requirements are specified for each country and PFO in **Annex B. NCP and regulations**, **section "Eligible costs"**: https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

## 12. Can PhD students and postdoctoral researchers be included in the project team?

Yes, PhD students and postdoctoral researchers may be included in project teams. The eligibility of the corresponding personnel costs must be checked against the national/regional rules applicable to the relevant partner.

These requirements are specified for each country and PFO in **Annex B. NCP and regulations**: https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

If you need additional information, please get in touch with the relevant NCP.

## 13. What does the 60% funding rule for partners from the same country mean?

Partners from the same country cannot collectively request more than 60% of the total funding requested by a proposal. National funding ceilings and other country-specific limits may apply in addition to this consortium-level rule.

These requirements are specified for each country and PFO in **Annex B. NCP and regulations**, **sections "Funding commitment"** and **"Eligible costs"**:

https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf

## 14. Can partners be added or removed between the pre-proposal and full-proposal stages?

As a general rule, core proposal data cannot be changed at the full-proposal stage. As the call text and the Full proposal form (Annex E) state, it is important to note that the information provided in the pre-proposals is binding. It is not possible to change the project's content between step 1 and step 2. Information on the core data (including Partners' details, funding requested, and the PFO to which the financial request is made) cannot be changed in full proposals unless explicitly requested by evaluators, a PFO, or the CSC.

Further, any request for changes must be addressed by email to the JCS and the NCPs and will be reviewed by all PFOs involved in the proposal. The change(s) must be declared on the EPSS. Nonetheless, no major changes to the proposals' content will be allowed by the CSC between the pre-proposals and full proposals. Minor changes may be made to improve your proposal if the objectives remain unchanged.

In terms of process, the request for the change must be submitted to the JCS at least one week before the deadline for submitting full proposals. The CSC will discuss it on a case-by-case basis.

Applicants should therefore carefully define their consortium and funding arrangements at the pre-proposal stage.

For more information, please see **the text of the Fourth Joint Transnational Call** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-10/sbep_jtc_2026_4th_call_announcement_061026_0.pdf

## 15. How can I check whether my organisation is eligible to participate?

Eligibility depends on the rules of the relevant national/regional funding organisation. Applicants with questions about the eligibility of particular types of organisations are advised to consult Annex B and/or contact the relevant National Contact Point. Where applicable, applicants should also consult Annex C.

Relevant information at:

**Annex B. NCP and regulations** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_b_ncp_and_regulations_updated_21.09.pdf and

**Annex C. List of beneficiaries** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-09/annex_c_list_of_beneficiaries_updated_21.09.pdf

## 16. How can applicants find partners or projects to join?

Applicants can use the **SBEP Partner Search Tool** to identify potential consortium partners and projects looking for additional partners. Participants are also encouraged to use the **partnering and matchmaking tools** available for the Call.

A matchmaking event takes place from Monday, 14 September to Thursday, 13 November and has the ambition to connect researchers, companies, and stakeholders from marine and maritime communities interested in the Partnership's 4th Joint Transnational Call. To help you find a project to join or partners for your project, you have the possibility to set up 20-minute meetings with other participants during the matchmaking sessions of the event.

To participate in the **matchmaking event**, which takes place between 14 September and 13 November, access the following link: https://www.b2match.com/e/sbep-2026/sign-up/create-account

## 17. What is the deadline for submitting a pre-proposal?

The deadline for submitting pre-proposals is **16 November 2026, 15:00 CET (Brussels time).**

For more information, please see the **Call webpage** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/funding-opportunity/sustainable-blue-economy-partnerships-fourth-joint-transnational-call and

**the text of the Fourth Joint Transnational Call** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/sites/bluepartnership.eu/files/documents/2026-10/sbep_jtc_2026_4th_call_announcement_061026_0.pdf

## 18. How long should projects last?

Projects funded under the 4th Joint Transnational Call are expected to last **36 months**.

For more information, please see the **Call webpage** - https://www.bluepartnership.eu/funding-opportunity/sustainable-blue-economy-partnerships-fourth-joint-transnational-call