

PROJEKTO „MĒLYNOSIOS EKONOMIKOS STARTUOLIŲ LABORATORIJA“ SANTRAUKA

Projekto „Mėlynosios ekonomikos startuolių laboratorija“ („BLUEgrowth Initiative LABS (Blue iLabs))“ partnerio teisėmis pagal Europos Ekonominės Erdvės ir Norvegijos finansinio mechanizmo Regioninio bendradarbiavimo fondo projektų finansavimo tvarkos aprašą, prioritetą „Inovacijos, tyrimai, švietimas ir konkurencingumas“ finansinei paramai gauti paraiškos pateikimo terminas yra iki 2018 m. liepos 1 d.

Preliminarūs Projekto partneriai – Burgo miesto savivaldybė (Bulgarija), Ščesino miesto savivaldybė (Lenkija), Vloro miesto savivaldybė (Albanija), Matozinjoso miesto savivaldybė (Portugalija) ir Pireus miesto savivaldybė (Graikija).

Projekto tikslas – išvystyti platų, Projekto partnerių teritoriją apimančią inkubatorių tinklą (toliau – LABS), kuris startuoliams siūlytų standartizuotas ir aukštos kokybės paslaugas verslo idėjų išvystymo į paslaugas ar produktus mėlynosios ekonomikos kryptyse, tuo pačiu skatinant vidinį startuolių bendradarbiavimą bei jų idėjų viešinimą, siekiant pritraukti investuotojus.

Projekto uždaviniai:

- skatinti novatoriškas verslo idėjas mėlynosios ekonomikos kryptyse, pagreitinant žinių perdavimą regionams;

- įgyvendinti inovatyvias, produktyvias ir technologines įmonių idėjas, pasitelkiant LABS startuolius;

- stiprinti mokslinių tyrimų ir švietimo institucijų bei vietos verslo bendradarbiavimą;

- tobulinti žinias, kompetencijas bei praktinius įgūdžius, vystant mėlynosios ekonomikos kryptis;

- sukurti naujas darbo vietas;

- stiprinti vietos verslo ir inovacijų ekosistemų gebėjimus ir nuolat juos vystyti.

Vienas iš pagrindinių Projekto iššūkių yra užtikrinti, kad jauni startuoliai, dirbantys mėlynosios ekonomikos srityje, gautų pagalbą verslo pradžioje, siektų asmeninės karjeros ir taip didintų savo verslumo lygį. Numatomas projekto rezultatas – parengtas modelis / mokymo programa, kuri jauniems verslininkams / startuoliams, turintiems inovatyvią verslo idėją mėlynosios ekonomikos srityje, padėtų paversti paslauga ar produktu. Projektu siekiama suburti kritinį mėlynosios ekonomikos startuolių skaičių bendradarbiavimui bei investuotojų pritraukimui.

Įvertinus, kad kaip ir daugelyje kitų Europos regionų, pakrančių regionai susiduria su problemomis nedarbo, švietimo, socialinės atskirties ir aplinkosaugos srityse, Projektas skatins poreikį įvairinti ekonomiką remiant inovacijas visais lygmenimis, sudarant palankią verslo aplinką, tuo pat metu sprendžiant užimtumo, švietimo ir socialinius klausimus, kad būtų išvengta regionų išsiskyrimo ir ekonomikos nuosmukio. Vertinant, kad pagrindinis pakrančių regionų iššūkis yra jų gamybos sistemos pertvarkymas ir įvairinimas, stipresnių ryšių tarp vietos ir pasaulio ekonomikos kūrimo ir patrauklumo kvalifikuotam ir aktyviam darbui, išnaudojant jų paveldėtus išteklius, Projekto įgyvendinimo laikotarpiu, vykdant numatytas Projekto veiklas yra siekiama užtikrinti, kad jauni pradėdantys darbuotojai mėlynosios ekonomikos srityje vystytų savo karjerą nuo pradžių jiems suteikiant patyrusių verslo atstovų mentorių konsultacijas. Projektas suteiks tvirtą pagrindą jauniems verslininkams, turintiems novatorišką verslo idėją paversti ją paslauga ar produktais ir sudarys sąlygas įmonių, veikiančių mėlynosios ekonomikos sektoriuje steigimo pradžią, taip skatinant sąveiką tarp verslo, viešojo bei švietimo sektorių ir pritraukiant investuotojus.

Numatomos šios pagrindinės Projekto veiklos:

- mokymo programos mentoriams, dirbantiems su startuoliais, sukūrimas;

- mokymo programos startuoliams, dirbantiems Mėlynosios ekonomikos srityje, parengimas;

- mentorių konkurso organizavimas;

- pilotinio inkubatoriaus organizavimas ir įgyvendinimas Pireus (Graikija) mieste;
- mėlynosios ekonomikos inkubatorių įsteigimas Projekto partnerių mieste;
- inovatyvių verslo idėjų Projekto partnerių miestuose konkurso organizavimas ir atrinkimas;
- inkubatorių veikla (2 metais);
- investuotojų savaitės organizavimas.

Tiksli bendra Projekto vertė bus paskaičiuota parengus paraišką, nes tai priklauso nuo įsitraukusių partnerių skaičiaus. Maksimali galima vieno Projekto partnerio finansavimo suma – 250.000,00 Eur (maksimali galima bendra Projekto vertė – 1.000.000,00 Eur). Didžiausias galimas finansavimo intensyvumas yra 85 proc. nuo visos tinkamų finansuoti išlaidų sumos. Visi partneriai padengia iki 15 % Projekto tinkamų išlaidų, vadovaujantis šalies bendrojo vidaus produkto vienam gyventojui kiekvienoje partnerio šalyje dydžiui.

BLUEgrowth Initiative LABS (Blue iLabs)
Suggestion for proposal in EEA and Norway Grants
OUTLINE

Moving away from an era of continuous economic and demographic growth, the negative effects of the economic and financial crisis, especially the reduced public budgets, the decline of competitiveness and the rising need for social expenditure are setting in question the resilience of many regions. Like many other European regions, coastal regions are facing problems in the fields of unemployment, education, poverty, social exclusion, and environmental degradation. Coastal regions, traditionally have been exposed to global interaction more than the average, and have enjoyed the benefits and experienced all the negative impacts that are linked to this dominant function. Currently, as the industrial sector (traditionally linked with the coastal areas and ports) is declining and once location-bound companies are becoming more footloose, the benefits of employment and the economy are minimising and the value added from maritime activities is balanced by the accumulation of negative impacts deriving from port's operation, traffic congestion, waste management and other environmental pressures. Those feed the need to diversify the economy by supporting innovation at all levels, creating a favourable entrepreneurial environment, while at the same time addressing employment, education and social issues to avoid marginalisation of regions and decay. Therefore, the main challenge for coastal regions has been that of redeveloping and diversifying their production system, of creating stronger links between the local and global economy and of becoming more attractive for a skilled and active workforce, by exploiting their inherited resources and potential.

For coastal regions, this process can rely on the sea and be linked to the prominent concept of Blue Growth. According to European Commission (EC) [EC, SWD (2017) 128 final, 31.03.2017], Blue Growth is the long-term strategy to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole. The Blue Economy in the European Union (EU) represents roughly 5.4 million jobs and generates a gross added value of almost €500 billion a year (EC, COM 2012 494, 13.09.2012). However, further growth is possible in sectors and a number of areas which are highlighted within the Report on the Blue Growth Strategy [EC, SWD (2017) 128 final, 31.03.2017]. The latter has three main pillars: i) Sectors that have a high potential for sustainable jobs and growth, ii) Essential components to provide knowledge, legal certainty and security in the blue economy, and iii) Sea basin strategies to ensure tailor-made measures and to foster cooperation between regions/ countries.

“Blue iLabs” is a project largely based on BlueGrowth Initiative (BGI) (please, see <http://www.bluegrowth.gr/>), an innovation competition to strengthen traditional economic activities related to the maritime sector with innovative business ideas implemented in Piraeus (Greece). The competition has been identified as a best practice by URBACT Programme and has received wide recognition. The core of the project regards the transfer of this success story to other coastal cities abroad.

The project aims to promote innovative business ideas related to the sea and aquatic resources, taken into consideration environmental, social and economic dimensions. Among other, “Blue iLabs” encourages the application of innovative business ideas regarding Blue Economy, accelerates knowledge transfer to regions, promotes new productive and technological ideas to companies, strengthens the cooperation between research and education institutes and the local industry, improves the skills and knowledge in Blue Economy, creates new sustainable jobs, and enhances the capacity and continuous evolution of the local entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems.

EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation Fund support area:
Innovation, Research, Education and Competitiveness

Project summary

Give a short overview of the project:

- the main challenge of the support area you are jointly addressing in your project:

The main challenge of the support area with respect to this specific project is to ensure that young startups in the field of Blue Economy get an early start to their career and start strong from the beginning. The project provides a solid framework to young entrepreneurs that have an innovative business idea to turn it into a service or a product and helps create a critical mass of blue start-ups thus promoting synergies and attracting investors (business angels, etc.).

- the main objective and expected results of the project and the expected change your project will make to the current situation

The main objective is to intrigue the development of a large-scale, EEA-wide network of incubators in the field of Blue Economy offering standardised and high-quality services in the transformation of business ideas to services and products, therefore, promoting synergies in their value-chains and stimulating the interest of potential investors.

- the outputs of the project and how these will lead to the desired outcomes

The main activities and outputs of the project will be the following:

Inception Phase

WP1. Inception Phase

Activity 1.1. Kick-off meeting

Summary: Kick-off meeting takes place in Piraeus

Output: i) Kick-off agenda ii) Kick-off minutes

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All project partners

Activity 1.2. Project management structure set-up

Summary: Verification of projects management structure of each partner and contact details.

Output: i) Updated contact list; ii) Updated organisation structure and operations manual

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All project partners

Activity 1.3. Delivery of project publicity plan

Summary: Preparation of a publicity plan so that to enhance overall project's visibility

Output: Publicity plan

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: Expertise partner provides insight. All partners provide media list for their country

Activity 1.4. Inception meeting

Summary: Conduction of an inception meeting in Piraeus at the end of the inception phase, with the participation of the officials of partner entities

Output: i) Inception meeting agenda; ii) Approved organisation structure and operations manual; iii) Approved work plan for the next semester

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All project partners

Implementation Phase

WP2. Training development and delivery

Activity 2.1. Standardisation of start-up package/ curriculum for start-up consulting

Summary: A standardised start-up package/curriculum for start-up consulting that young entrepreneurs will have to follow during the incubation process will be created. Start-up materials (Global standards, local ecosystem development guidance, etc.) will be developed and will have to be provided in the language of each participant

Output: Start-up package/ curriculum for start-up consulting in English and partners' languages

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: Expertise partner providing technical expertise, e.g. by preparing the tender specifications and providing input during elaboration

[Activity 2.2. Training-of-trainers curriculum](#)

Summary: Preparation of a standardised curriculum (in English) that trainers and mentors in Blue Entrepreneurship will have to attend and that may lead to certification.

Output: Standardised curriculum for trainers and mentors in Blue Entrepreneurship (in English)

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: Expertise partner providing technical expertise, e.g. by preparing the tender specifications and providing input during elaboration

[Activity 2.3. Call for trainers](#)

Summary: A call will be launched in each country, providing the opportunity to create a database for trainers and mentors that will participate in the incubation process.

Output: Database for trainers and mentors in each country

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: All partner cities launch a similar call. The expertise partner selects the trainers"

[Activity 2.4. Training-of-Trainers in each country](#)

Summary: The trainers and mentors from each city will receive training through a Global Virtual Collaboration Platform (see below). Lectures will be available in English and the trainee will be able to attend classes on demand. Each trainee will have to conclude the lectures within a period of 3 months

Output: at least 30 trainers will be trained (5 trainers in each country) before the initiation of the incubation stage in 2021 and 2022

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: All partner cities will be involved by motivating trainers and mentors to participate and by checking their progress

WP3. Networking

[Activity 3.1. Creation of collaboration infrastructures](#)

Summary: Delivery of a Global Virtual Collaboration (Crowdsourcing) Platform connecting members of the ecosystem globally and facilitating advertising, crowdsourced feedback for competitors, training, ecosystem communications, success stories, etc. This should also incorporate existing businesses providing the opportunity both to them and to those start-ups emerging from bluegrowth competitions to interact closely to each other, as well as learn about new projects, business opportunities, events and trends in the industry.

Output: Global Virtual Collaboration (Crowdsourcing) Platform

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: Expertise partner will provide input to Aephoria.net on the architecture and content of the platform

[Activity 3.2. Operation of collaboration infrastructures](#)

Summary: Populating the Global Virtual Collaboration (Crowdsourcing) Platform with data concerning blue businesses, success stories, events, projects, business opportunities, etc. and keeping it up-to-date.

Output: Updated Global Virtual Collaboration (Crowdsourcing) Platform

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net is responsible for the operation of the platform and its maintenance

Involved partners: All partners are responsible to provide significant input in the first 3 months of this activity so that to populate the respective databases with firms, success stories, events, projects, business opportunities, etc. Then, they need to provide input on a bi-monthly basis with respect to their countries. The expertise partner will be responsible for providing similar input for Donor States and international arena.

WP4. Research and consulting

Activity 4.1. Identification of project ambassadors and peer reviewers

Summary: Identification of project ambassadors and peer reviewers by the partners under the supervision of the expertise partner. Project ambassadors will be acquainted to the project, especially, during the competition and the incubation process, while peer reviewers will be used for peer reviewing blue growth potentials of participant cities.

Output: List of project ambassadors and peer reviewers

Responsible partner: Expertise partner sets the minimum requirements (profile) for the potential ambassadors and peer reviewers and supervises the selection of candidates

Involved partners: All partners (including the expertise partner) identify experts that could operate as project ambassadors and peer reviewers

Activity 4.2. Peer reviewing

Summary: Conduction of peer reviewing on the trends, opportunities and threats for blue economy in each partner city. One visit will take place in each city to collect data and discuss with the local support group and one report will be produced for each city with findings and recommendations for blue industry

Output: 6 Peer reviewing reports

Responsible partner: Expertise partner will be responsible for managing this activity, i.e. for the selection and mobilisation of the most adequate experts, the organisation of the delivery of the report, quality assurance, etc. Expertise partner will provide 1 expert in each study visit, who will work with local and other peer reviewers

Involved partners: Each partner is expected to facilitate the team of peer reviewers during their study visit and provide relevant material to the team

WP5. Carrying out competition and incubation

Activity 5.1. Model competition running in Piraeus

Summary: Carrying out the process of Bluegrowth competition in Piraeus for 2020, with participation of young entrepreneurs that have submitted their proposals.

Output: 1 Bluegrowth competition in Piraeus

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: Piraeus Municipality, while expertise partner mobilises relevant experts for the jury

Activity 5.2. Model incubation running in Piraeus

Summary: Carrying out the “incubation” programme of Bluegrowth, building a strong foundation for the proposals selected in the competition to entry the business world.

Output: 1 Bluegrowth "incubation" in Piraeus (6 start-ups incubated on a yearly basis)

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: Piraeus Municipality, while expertise partner sends 2 mentors for a short-term visit

Activity 5.3. Office space set-up and staffing to run the competition and the incubation

Summary: Set-up the office that will operate as the headquarters for the competition in each city (except Piraeus) and where the incubation process will take place including providing the office and the staff with adequate equipment. Moreover, it will be ensured that there is sufficient administrative and scientific support, to enable startups to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. To this end, a dedicated office manager will be recruited with a specialisation in mentoring. S/he will work closely with the project manager of each city.

Output: i) 6 office spaces; ii) Furniture, equipment (pcs and printer) for all 6 office spaces; iii) 6 posts

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: Each partner city

Activity 5.4. Competition running in full mode in all participant cities

Summary: Carrying out the process of Bluegrowth competition in all 6 cities for 2021 and 2022, with participation of teams that have submitted their proposals.

Output: 12 Bluegrowth competitions

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: All partners, while expertise partner mobilises relevant experts for the jury

[Activity 5.5. Incubation running in full mode in all participants cities](#)

Summary: Carrying out the “incubation” programme of Bluegrowth, in all 6 cities for 2021 and 2022)

Output: 12 Bluegrowth "incubations" in partner cities (4 start-ups incubated on average on a yearly basis or 4x6x2=48 start-ups incubated overall)

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: All partners, while expertise partner mobilises relevant experts to attend pitching and other events

[Activity 5.6. Carrying out business angels weeks](#)

Summary: Organisation and carrying out 2 Business Angels Weeks, 1 in 2021 and 1 in 2022, in Norway and Piraeus, respectively. It will be a transnational angel investment awareness campaign featuring Business Angels and Entrepreneurs mainly from Europe, while promoting matchmaking between entrepreneurs and investors by raising awareness and interest.

Output: 2 Business Angels Weeks

Responsible partner: Expertise partner

Involved partners: All partners take the responsibility to promote their incubated start-ups and to mobilise investors in their countries, while Piraeus is involved in the event that will take place in 2022. Expertise partner organises the event for 2021 in Norway

WP6. Communication and dissemination

[Activity 6.1. Local dissemination events](#)

Summary: Organisation and carrying out local dissemination events in the partner cities (at least 1 prior to the competition that will take place in 2021 and 1 prior to the competition that will take place in 2022), with the aim to inform about the initiative and intrigue young entrepreneurs and scientists to compete.

Output: 12 local dissemination events

Responsible partner: ~~Aephoria.net~~ Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All partners take the responsibility to organise local dissemination events in their countries/ cities

[Activity 6.2. Participation in national and international events](#)

Summary: All partners participate in 1 national or international event on a yearly basis to promote the project and its concept to the academia, business community and policy makers. Early engagement is foreseen to make the project well-known and to intrigue potential investors to participate in the business angels weeks, too.

Output: 24 national and international events

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All partners take the responsibility to participate in 1 event on an annual basis

[Activity 6.3. Study visits](#)

Summary: Study visits will take place, such as deep dives and staff exchanges between the partners. The 1st study visit will take place in Norway, during the 2nd semester of 2019 and will coincide with the supra-local advisory board meeting. Overall, study visits will be combined with supra-local advisory board meetings that will take place in a different city each year. All cities will have to visit Piraeus during the Model Competition and Incubation period (2020). Additional study visits will take place during 2021 and 2022 to success stories of the partner cities.

Output: 7 study visits during 2019 - 2022 (study visits conducted back-to-back to supra-local advisory board meetings)

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: For the 2nd semester of 2019 the expertise partner will be responsible for organising the meetings in Norway and each partner will declare its availability and the participants. For 2020 the same will be done for Piraeus twice (once in each semester). For 2021 and 2022 an itinerary will be fixed so that study visits coincide supra-local advisory board meetings. Aephoria.net will manage, while each partner will be responsible for making necessary arrangements for its city

[Activity 6.4. Publicity material](#)

Summary: At the very beginning a website of the project will be created and updated ever since. Hosting and display of the project at social media will be available. A roll up banner will be created to be placed in readily visible places, even from the 1st local stakeholder event. Templates for presentations and deliverables will be designed, ensuring the uniformity of the project's presentation. In addition, a newsletter will be drafted each semester and distributed to the partners, who will have to translate it and forward it to local media

Outputs: BlueGrowth Initiative website (<http://www.bluegrowth.gr/>) expanded and updated; 6 Roll up banners (1 for each city plus the expertise partner; 8 newsletters in English that will then be translated to 6 languages

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: All partners

WP7. Project Management and Monitoring

[Activity 7.1. Establishment of supra local and local governance structures](#)

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All partners

[Activity 7.2. Semestrial meetings of local advisory groups](#)

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All partners

[Activity 7.3. Semestrial meetings of supra-local advisory board](#)

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All partners

[Activity 7.4. Project management](#)

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All partners

[Activity 7.5. Monitoring and evaluation](#)

Responsible partner: Piraeus Municipality

Involved partners: All partners

Closing Phase

WP8. Closing Phase

[Activity 8.1. Organisation of international closing event](#)

Summary: A closing international event will be organised in Brussels to discuss the project achievements with policy makers at EU level and high-level executives of target groups and stakeholders as a means for ensuring the sustainability of project results

Outputs: Closing Event Report

Responsible partner: Expertise partner

Involved partners: All partners

[Activity 8.2. Sustainability plan](#)

Summary: During the Closing Phase, a Sustainability Plan will be delivered. On the basis of the preparation of the proposal and the initiatives already delivered in Piraeus, actions included in this plan could comprise: franchising of blue growth, with a franchise license to be paid by Port Authorities/ cities and/or other entities interested in joining the initiative, the provision of on-demand

consulting to Port Authorities/cities etc. interested in Blue Economy, etc. Overall the purpose of the project will be not-for-profit even after termination of the EEA funding. All revenues will be used for the operation of BlueGrowth Initiative and the delivery of services to Port Authorities/ cities and/or other entities and the members (start-ups) of the ecosystem.

Output: Sustainability Plan

Responsible partner: Aephoria.net

Involved partners: Sustainability plan will be drafted in cooperation with the expertise partner and other partners

Partners:

6 port Municipalities from eligible countries, with an interest in Blue Economy.

The partners of our consortium are the following:

- From eligible EU Member States:

1. Municipality of Matosinhos (Portugal)
2. Municipality of Burgas (Bulgaria)
3. Municipality of Klaipeda (Lithuania)
4. Municipality of Szczecin (Poland)

- From eligible Non-EU Member States:

5. Municipality of Vlore (Albania)

- Greek partners:

6. Piraeus Municipality
7. Aephoria.net

In addition, for the benefit of the proposal, an expertise partner will be designated from a Donor State.

Estimated total project budget (in EUR): The minimum budget according to ToR should be 1M euros. Each partner should be allocated an amount between 150.000 and 250.000 euros, depending on the structure of the consortium, local costs and level of participation.

Deadline:

The deadline for submission is on 1/7/2018.