



## The call for collective action of the EU4Ocean 2024 Challenge of the year

### A challenge of the year, what for?

The EU4Ocean coalition selects each year a **Challenge of the Year** to steer collective action for Ocean Literacy within the European Union. The challenge of the year is translated in particular into a specific **Call for collective action** with financial support by the EU4Ocean coalition to the best collective proposals submitted and duly selected on the basis of a set of key principles and criteria. Ocean literacy projects supported financially by the EU4Ocean coalition will: demonstrate scientific qualities; be innovative; have a clear leverage effect; promote collaboration with partners within and outside the EU4Ocean Coalition; and, target disadvantaged populations.

### What is the EU4Ocean 2024 “Challenge of the year”?

This year's challenge is entitled:

#### **Be a Blue citizen: Ocean, citizenship and democracy**

It aims at connecting the responsibility and action-oriented component of Ocean Literacy with our citizens' roles and responsibilities within the democratic process which delivers the policy and regulatory framework the ocean requires to deliver a healthy, resilient and sustainable ocean.

- The 2024 challenge of the year provides a specific (citizenship) flavour to the wider #MakeEUBlue slogan of the EU4Ocean coalition. Similar to citizenship and democracy, ocean literacy is about us getting mobilized and empowered within a long-term and political perspective that can deliver the role the EU needs to take for protecting and managing the ocean sustainably.
- It is of extreme relevance to 2024 with upcoming elections (at the EU and in several Member States), conferences, and negotiations. Citizenship being central to the 2025 UN Ocean Conference (UNOC), addressing this topic in 2024/early 2025 will provide input to conversations on ocean literacy and citizenship taking place at UNOC June 2025;
- It is highly relevant to young citizens and professionals, one of the key target groups of the EU4Ocean coalition. It can be connected to social justice and inclusiveness that are central to the EU4Ocean coalition philosophy;
- Operationally, it can build on a wide range of civic empowerment skills and competencies (including from the art, culture and media domains) to develop approaches targeting a wide diversity of individuals and organisations relevant to the ocean's health, resilience and sustainability.



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## The “Call for Collective Action”

The 2024 **call for collective action** aims at selecting and supporting (with financial resources, expertise and visibility), a (limited) number of ocean literacy projects that address the connections between the ocean, citizenship and democracy and support the application of the key principles that are central to the coalition’s philosophy and process. Projects can approach these connections with very different mechanisms, (innovative) tools, target groups or (thematic) focus.

## Eligibility

The Call for Collective Actions is accessible to all members (individuals and organizations) of the different EU4Ocean communities (the EU4Ocean platform, the Youth4Ocean Forum and the EU network of Blue Schools). Individuals and organizations that wish to join the coalition can participate as partners of proposals.

- The proposal must **focus on the challenge of the Year** with a clear **European focus** and **measurable impact(s) on the ground**;
- The proposed project must be implemented within a 12-month period maximum (between the confirmation of the winning projects at the beginning of **October Year 1 to the end of the project implementation at the latest by the end of September Year 2**) with shorter implementation periods being possible;
- The application (the application form is available on the EU4Ocean coalition/European Maritime Forum web page). as well as all supporting documents (proposal, budget) must be written **in English**;
- The application must be complete (all mandatory fields of the application form filled, and technical and financial proposals submitted).

## Selection criteria

Proposals will be evaluated in light of their relevance to the 2024 challenge of the year. In addition, particular attention will be given to the key principles guiding EU4Ocean and its challenge of the year, including:

- Social learning and the development of critical thinking as central objective – contributing to changes in knowledge, perception, attitude and ultimately practice/behaviour delivering more sustainable management of marine ecosystems;
- High sustainability and replication potential, so as to reach larger stakeholder groups and regions of Europe as compared to the ones mobilised and targeted in the initiative;
- An EU focus with clear societal and policy relevance, addressing EU marine challenges and contributing to the achievements of the European Green Deal objectives and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- A strong collective dimension and a catalytic role – associating organisations and individuals with complementary roles and expertise for increasing impact. Initiatives mobilising organisations and members of the three communities (the EU4Ocean Platform, the Youth4Ocean Forum and the Network of European Blue Schools), as well as organisations from different sectors (e.g. research, marine sector, media, art, education...), countries and regions (including non-EU sharing sea-basins with EU countries) will be specifically valued. A high degree of inclusiveness and co-building will be appreciated;
- An innovative character – in terms of the vehicle or tool developed to enhance ocean literacy or bring a citizenship component in it, the process proposed for implementing the project, the target audience(s) or the mechanisms set for assessing impacts and benefits once the project is implemented.
- The scientific quality and coherence supporting mutual learning – building in particular on interactions and exchanges with scientists, professionals, youth, educators...



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Beyond these 6 key principles, the operational feasibility of each proposal will be assessed (adequacy between proposed activities and requested financial resources, certainty of proposed co-financing, coherence between activities-results-expected outcomes, planning of activities/timeline, partnership and expertise mobilised, communication and contribution to high visibility events...).

## EU4Ocean financial support

The requested financial support by the EU4Ocean coalition is 40 000 € maximum. Overall, it is expected that a maximum of 3 projects are funded every year. Secured co-financing will need to be demonstrated/confirmed for ambitious proposals.

*Eligible costs are those related to the implementation of the project and its actions (e.g. staff costs, travel and accommodation, research implementation, printing, social medias, venues for expositions, etc.).*

## Submission

A complete application must present the following documents (available on the EMD website):

- The application **form** duly filled, highlighting in particular how the proposal responds to the 2024 challenge of the year and addresses the main principles highlighted above;
- Including: (1) **a 6 pages pdf document** presenting the project's objectives, activities and partnership; (2) **an excel file presenting the project budget.**

**The deadline for submitting the proposal will be on 15th June 2024, 18.00 (CET).**

## Selection process

The selection process will be carried out by an expert group of the EU4Ocean coalition to promote projects that meet the values of the EU4Ocean community.

1. **All proposals are screened to** check eligibility and feasibility. Proposals that are not eligible nor feasible will not be further considered in the selection process, the coordinator who submitted the proposal being informed of the reasons explaining why the proposal is not considered for further evaluation.
2. Eligible/feasible proposals are then **evaluated individually** according to their relevance to the challenge of the year and how they have integrated the different criteria highlighted above. This first evaluation is carried out in two steps, with evaluation results of all eligible/feasible proposals being summarised in a pre-established evaluation grid and reviewed and complemented by the EU4ocean secretariat then the EU4Ocean Advisory Board.
3. The **final selection of winning projects** takes place **in September 2024**. All coordinators of eligible/feasible proposals are contacted by emails to inform them of the results of the selection process. The results (winning projects) are announced via the European Maritime Forum website and social media.



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## Implementation

An agreement will be signed between the project coordinator and ACTeon, on behalf of the consortium managing the EU4Ocean coalition. The funding schedule will be as follows: payment of 30% of total (eligible) EU4Ocean financial support after the signature of the agreement at the start of the project's implementation; payment of an additional 40% of the financial support upon reception of a project mid-term report presenting progress and first results; the remaining 30% upon due implementation of all activities and reception and approval by ACTeon of the final report. Payments will be made to the coordinating institution which will distribute funding among its partners.

The project coordinator will produce a one page summary (format provided by the EU4ocean coalition) presenting the project at the start of implementation so the project can be presented on the EU4Ocaen coalition/European Maritime Forum web site.

Implementation will include regular exchanges with ACTeon and relevant EU4Ocean secretariat members. This will help: assessing progress; identifying bottlenecks and proposing solutions for addressing these; identifying new opportunities for presenting the project's activities and results. It is expected that three meetings are organised between ACTeon and the project coordinator and partners during the project implementation phase: a kick-off meeting at the start of the project after signature of the agreement; a (mid-term) progress meeting; and, a final meeting for presenting final results, and discussing in particular the possibility to duplicate and/or upscale project' activities and results.

Once implementation ends, the project coordinator will submit a report presenting: the activities carried out; challenges faced and solutions proposed for addressing these; key results and products; a summary of financial resource uses. A one-pager presenting key findings and (visible or forthcoming) impact (format provided by the EU4ocean coalition) will also be produced and shared on the EU4Ocean coalition/European Maritime Forum web site.

## Tentative planning

Call for collective action	Implementation of winning projects	Date
Announcement of the 2024 challenge of the year		8 March 2024, 18.00 CET
Dedicated web page for the call for collective action published on the web		March 2024 (exact date to be confirmed)
Deadline for the submission of proposals to the call for collective action		15 June 2024, 18.00 (CET)
Evaluation process		Between June 15 and the first week of September, 2024
Results notification		3 <sup>rd</sup> week of September 2024
	Expected start of the Project	October 2024
	Mid-term report	30 April 2025
	Expected end of the project	30 September 2025
	Final report	31 October 2025



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