

# ANNEX 1 - Guide for Applicants

## AIoD OC1-PrivateSector

*Europe's trusted AI gateway*

Revised Version – May 2026

### Disclaimer

Funded by the European Union, under grant agreement N°.101146490. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

## History of changes

Date	Description of Change	Pages
20/5/2026	Clarification of the direct link to the AIoD Components to be used as reference for AIoD OC1-Private Sector: <a href="https://marketplace.aiodp.ai/search?q=openCall">https://marketplace.aiodp.ai/search?q=openCall</a>	4, 5, 9, 16
20/5/2026	Correction of the reference date in footnote 5.	7
20/5/2026	Addition of footnote regarding registration in Business Navigator.	8
20/5/2026	Detailing General Tasks to be performed in Stage 2 (Table 1), to align with general description of task in 6.1.2.	9
20/5/2026	Adding paragraph regarding the preference to choose diverse AIoD Components for the Program.	14

## Table of Contents

1.	What is DeployAI?	4
2.	What is the AloD OC1-PrivateSector offer?	5
3.	Who can apply and how?	6
3.1.	Types of applicants	6
3.2.	Types of projects	7
3.3.	Funding conditions	8
3.4.	Application process (for Stage 1)	9
3.5.	Other application requirements and considerations	10
3.6.	Technical/ feasibility assessment	10
4.	How will applications be evaluated and selected?	11
4.1.	Eligibility check	12
4.2.	Evaluation no.1 (Selection for Stage 1)	12
4.3.	Evaluation no. 2 (Selection for Stage 2)	14
4.4.	Evaluation no. 3 (Selection for Stage 3)	14
4.5.	Appeals	14
5.	What happens after selection in Evaluation no.1?	15
6.	What is the AloD OC1-PrivateSector and its requirements?	16
6.1.	Programme Stages	16
6.2.	Programme review	18
7.	What else is important to know?	19
7.1.	Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)	19
7.2.	On conflicts of interest	19
7.3.	Ethical issues	19
7.4.	Data protection	20
7.5.	Confidentiality	20
7.6.	Promotion of the action and ensuring visibility of the EU funding	20
7.7.	Checks and reviews	20
8.	Relevant links and contacts	21
9.	Relevant Open Call definitions	22

# 1. What is AI-on-Demand Platform?

The [AI-on-Demand](#) is Europe's collaborative AI homebase. As a trusted gateway to a thriving AI ecosystem, it connects businesses, researchers, and public organizations with reliable resources. By uniting Europe's AI community, the platform actively reduces information fragmentation, making it easier than ever to discover and leverage valuable European AI assets.

To make scalable AI a reality for everyone, AloD operates as a comprehensive ecosystem rather than a static tech catalogue. It offers guidance, matchmaking, and a vibrant marketplace on a single online platform, delivering on four key promises:

- **An Accessible One-Stop Shop:** Designed for organizations of any maturity level, the platform supports the entire AI lifecycle. From assessing initial needs to commercializing fully developed solutions, AloD eliminates tech-savvy gatekeeping and provides clear, low-threshold paths for deploying AI.
- **Operations Under European Values:** As a proud European alternative, the platform ensures all operations are fundamentally secure, open, and transparent. It guarantees strict adherence to ethics and regulatory compliance.
- **Freedom to Innovate:** Built on vendor-independent and open-source principles, the platform protects you from vendor lock-in. It gives you the freedom to build on your own terms, significantly increasing your innovative potential.
- **Pan-European Reach:** AloD intelligently guides users to the solutions that benefit them most, providing the foundation to scale ideas and businesses across all EU member states from within a single, unified ecosystem.

Ultimately, AI-on-Demand ensures that the transformative power of artificial intelligence is within reach for everyone, offering the tools, connections, and ethical framework needed to thrive.

The platform offers an extensive AI resource catalogue and Marketplace, including European large language models (LLMs), alongside open APIs and interfaces that support interoperability across cloud, edge, and high-performance computing environments.<sup>1</sup> By integrating with key European initiatives such as AI Factories, EDIHs, TEFs, Data Spaces, and SIMPL, AloD Platform strengthens collaboration within the European AI ecosystem while ensuring quality, trust, and long-term sustainability through robust governance and qualification processes.

## Project DeployAI

Developing and deploying AI-On-Demand Platform (AloD Platform) is the main objective of the overarching project for this Open Call: DeployAI Project, funded by the European Union Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL) under grant agreement N<sup>o</sup>.101146490 and bringing together a consortium of 27 entities (DeployAI Consortium). The DeployAI Financial Support to Third Parties Programme (DeployAI Funding Programme) seeks to boost the adoption of the AloD Platform and boost the AI innovation across Europe. This Funding Programme is composed of 2 Open Calls, targeting both the Private (OC1) and the Public Sector (OC2). This Guide for Applicants introduces the framework and selection conditions of the first Open Call: AloD OC1-PrivateSector aims to accelerate the integration, market

---

<sup>1</sup> The AloD Components to be considered for OC1 can be found in the MarketPlace at the following link: <https://marketplace.aiodp.ai/search?q=openCall>.

uptake, and real-world deployment of mature European AI solutions within the AloD Platform, strengthening the EU AI ecosystem and driving trustworthy AI adoption across sectors.

The selected AI Providers are called to be showcased in the Marketplace, Business Navigator and specific industry Events, and to be integrated with the core components of the AloD Platform<sup>2</sup>, deploy their products in AI adopters of their choice and serve as beta testers to the AloD Platform.

## 2. What is the AloD OC1-PrivateSector offer?

An Open Call (OC) is a competitive process by which eligible applicants apply to have access to a specific Funding Programme. AloD OC1-PrivateSector is the Competitive Process to access the DeployAI Funding Programme.

Applications to AloD OC1-PrivateSector will be accepted from 8 April 2026 until 8 June 2026. After the selection is completed, selected applicants will be invited to sign the sub-grant agreement and enter the DeployAI Funding Programme.

AloD OC1-PrivateSector will follow a three-stage funnel approach, ensuring that only the most relevant and promising applicants advance to the next phase. Participation is strictly limited to those who apply and are selected to start Stage 1.

In *Stage 1 - Select & Pitch* (from 1 September 2026 to 30 September 2026), up to 50 AI Products (TRL $\geq$ 7) will be selected from the initial pool of eligible applicants based on technical readiness, business potential and relevance of the AI Solution for AloD Platform. AI Providers<sup>3</sup> will receive 5.000€ to: i) refine their business concept and alignment with AloD Platform's Vision and Objectives, ii) refine integration details with AloD Platform; iii) give initial feedback about the AloD Platform; and iv) pitch their solutions at an in-person industry event (September 2026), gaining visibility through AloD Platform channels.

A smaller group of 20 AI Products will be selected during the same pitch event and will progress to *Stage 2 - Integration* (from 1 October 2026 to 31 December 2026). In this stage, they will receive €35,000 in support to fully integrate their solutions into the AloD Platform using the core components of the Platform, with guidance from mentors (DeployAI Consortium partners). They will be expected to implement their business models and bring customers onto the AloD Platform, while serving as their beta-testers and providing active feedback to the Platform and actively helping identify problems and suggest improvements. To proceed to Stage 3, they must submit a sub-project to deploy their solution into one (1) specific AI Adopter<sup>4</sup> of their choosing, who will also receive funding as described below. By the end of Stage 2, a second industry event will be held, during which results of integration will be showcased and sub-projects will be pitched.

Based on the robustness of the business model, the outcomes of the AloD Platform integration (number of customers brought into AloD Platform, etc) and the quality/relevance of the implementation Plan, 10 sub-projects, will be selected to *Stage 3 - Deployment* (from 15 January 2027 to 15 April 2027). Sub-projects must be led by AI providers participating in Stage 2, in consortium with AI adopters, and will receive financial support of up to 35.000€: €20.000 for AI Provider and €15.000 for AI Adopter. The implementation will be closely monitored to ensure impactful deployment and measurable KPIs. These

---

<sup>2</sup> The AloD Components to be considered for OC1 can be found in the MarketPlace at the following link: <https://marketplace.aiodp.ai/search?q=openCall>.

<sup>3</sup> The definition of AI Provider and AI Adopter are included in Table 8.

<sup>4</sup> Idem

results will be showcased in a final public event and transformed into Use cases to promote the Platform.

For all 3 Stages, beneficiaries will have the support of a mentor to monitor project progress and facilitate communication with technical partners involved in the AIoD Platform development.

The maximum contribution for AI Providers is 60.000€, to be paid in form of lump sums, as and if they progress through the Stages: 5.000€ (Stage 1) + 35.000€ (Stage 2) + 20.000€ (Stage 3). The maximum contribution to AI Adopters, to be included in Stage 3, is 15.000€.

**Industry Events** will be organized within the implementation period, structured in two parts: The first part (day 1) follows the F6S initiative “AI Talks” where the AIoD Platform will be promoted and relevant AI topics relevant to the EU context will be discussed. The second part (day 2) will be focused on pitching and selection of proposals for the subsequent phase.

- Event 1 | AI Talks + Pitching session for Stage 1 (to select the AI solutions to start Stage 2).
- Event 2 | AI Talks + Pitching session for Stage 2 (to select the sub-projects to start Stage 3)
- Event 3 | Demo Day, showcase the success of the integration and implementation.

Relevant links and contacts:

- AIoD Platform Homepage: <https://www.aiodp.ai/>
- Open call application form: <https://www.f6s.com/aiod-oc1privatesector/apply>
- Contact us: [aiod.opencalls@f6s.com](mailto:aiod.opencalls@f6s.com)

## 3. Who can apply and how?

### 3.1. Types of applicants

In the framework of the DeployAI project, the AIoD OC1-PrivateSector is looking for AI Products to fully integrate their solutions in the AIoD Platform, by aligning the business models with the AIoD Platform, to providing feedback and to deploying their solutions in relevant AI Adopters.

#### 3.1.1. Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants for the AIoD OC1-PrivateSector are:

- For Stage 1 and Stage 2: Single Legal entities, which can be either startups, SMEs or research organisations (RTOs or academia).
- For Stage 3: Consortia of legal entities, led by the organisation that implemented Stages 1 and 2, in partnership with a legal entity acting as AI Adopter (businesses, institutions, associations, organisations). The leading partner (AI Provider) will be responsible for the technical developments, the other member(s) (AI Adopter) will be the end user(s) responsible to facilitate the deployment of the specific solution and validate the technical developments. Applicants that were not successful in Stage1 or Stage 2 will not be eligible for Stage 3.
- Relevant notes:
  - Please consult the [EU SME Definition](#) for details on what constitutes an SME.

- o *A signed version of the Declaration of Honour and the SME Declaration will be requested during the contract preparation phase.*

### 3.1.2. Eligible countries

Eligible entities for funding under this Open Call must be legal entities established in:

- European Union Member States, with a valid VAT and PIC number.
- [DIGITAL Europe associated countries](#) (those that have signed an agreement with the EU as identified in the DIGITAL Programme Guide) according to the updated list published by the European Commission.<sup>5</sup> Legal entities from countries subject to EU restrictive measures (sanctions) during the application phase will not be considered.

Please note that, under Art 12 (6) of [Digital Europe Regulation 2021/694](#), this Open Call is restricted to legal entities established in and/or controlled by Member States (or in specified eligible third countries).<sup>6</sup>

The AIoD OC1-PrivateSector follows the rules applied by the EC for the [DIGITAL Europe Program](#) in terms of geographical coverage, eligibility, and exclusions, which take precedence.

### 3.1.3. Multiple submissions

The AIoD OC1-PrivateSector will accept a maximum of 1 (one) application per applicant.

In case an applicant submits more than 1 (one) application, only the application submitted last will be considered.

## 3.2. Types of projects

The AIoD OC1-PrivateSector aims to fund companies with innovative and impactful solutions to:

- Be fully integrated AIoD Platform, its Marketplace and Business Navigator (Stage 1-2)
- Bring traction and clients to the AIoD Platform (Stage 2-3)
- Develop Use cases powered by AIoD Platform (Stages 1-3)
- Become beta-testers for AIoD Platform (Stage 2-3)

When applying, the AI Providers, submitting AI Products at TRL 7 or above, will need to demonstrate the technical readiness, business potential and relevance of the AI Solution for AIoD Platform, by submitting a Business Model concept and an integration roadmap.

Proposals that do not demonstrate that the TRL is at level 7 or above, or do not address ethical, privacy and responsible AI concerns, or do not demonstrate clear alignment with AIoD platform will not be considered eligible.

---

<sup>5</sup> The reference date to assess acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates is the date of signature of the DeployAI Consortium Agreement ([January 2024](#)).

<sup>6</sup> Ownership Control Declaration is available in Annex 6 - Ownership Control Declaration.

In addition, applicants must be registered on the [AloD Platform](#) and [Business Navigator](#) before submitting their application. <sup>7</sup>

The most relevant 50 companies to be selected for Stage 1 will refine their business plan and the integration roadmap to align with AloD Platform, to provide feedback to the AloD Platform and pitch their solutions at an industry event. The 20 Products selected to progress to Stage 2 will fully integrate their solutions into the AloD Platform, with guidance from mentors (DeployAI Consortium partners), and become beta-testers to the Platform.

In order to proceed to Stage 3, these 20 companies will need to submit a project to deploy their solution, having a specific AI Adopter as their consortium partners, while being closely monitored to ensure impactful deployment and measurable KPIs. The implementation period will be 3-months and the results will be showcased in a final public event and transformed into Use cases to promote the Platform.

### 3.3. Funding conditions

Any entity, applying individually or as part of a consortium, will only be considered for funding once.

Each application may receive a maximum of up to 60.000€. However, funding is dependent on progression across the different Stages. The total amount requested must represent 100% of the project costs (including indirect costs). All applications will be required to provide a justification of the planned costs and resources of the project, at each Stage.

Funding is foreseen to support the following categories of costs:

- Project management;
- Research and technical development;
- Testing and piloting;
- Communication, promotion, and exploitation;
- Travel (as required).

The type of costs that may be reported include human resources, other direct costs, and indirect costs. Subcontracting is not eligible in this open call.

Funds will be disbursed in lump sums at the end of each Stage and pending the achievement of agreed milestones and deliverables, according to the following table:

Table 1. Application Process and Timeline

Stages	No. of AI Products selected	Funding	General Tasks to be performed:	Duration
<b>Stage 1 - Pitch &amp; Select</b>	50 AI Products	5.000€/ AI Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participate in at least 2 Webinars about AloD Platform</li> <li>● Complete onboarding into AloD Platform/ Marketplace.</li> <li>● Submit revised version of the Technical &amp; Business Proposal</li> </ul>	1 month

<sup>7</sup> Please note that Business Navigator (BN) registration may not be available for all eligible countries. Applicants from eligible countries where BN registration is currently unavailable may still submit their application, if registration in AloD is complete.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in Pitching Session during Event 1</li> <li>Provide full feedback about AIoD Platform</li> </ul>	
<b>Stage 2 - Integration</b>	20 AI Products	35.000€/ AI Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in Mentoring sessions</li> <li>Full integration of AI Product in AIoD Platform (use/exploit of selected AIoD Components<sup>8</sup>, onboard Business Navigator and MarketPlace)</li> <li>Implementation of Business Plan for the developed product when offered in the AIoD Platform</li> <li>Guarantee EU27 market readiness for AI Product</li> <li>Submit sub-Project proposal to implement AI Product in AI Adopter</li> <li>Participate in Pitching Session during Event 2</li> <li>Serve as beta-tester for AIoD Platform</li> </ul>	3 months
<b>Stage 3 - Deployment</b>	10 AI Products + AI Adopter (Consortia)	35.000€ / project AI Provider = 20.000€ AI Adopter = 15.000€	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the AI Product in AI Adopter</li> <li>Participate in Mentoring sessions</li> <li>Participate in the in-person Event 3</li> <li>Serve as beta-tester for AIoD Platform</li> </ul>	3 months

### 3.4. Application process (for Stage 1)

The F6S platform will be the single-entry point for all applications to the AIoD OC1-PrivateSector. Interested applicants should register at the F6S page ([www.f6s.com](http://www.f6s.com)). The relevant links and timings for the application process are provided in Table 2, but are subject to change (Table 8, Open Call and Programme deadlines).

Table 2. Application Process and Timeline<sup>9</sup>

Phase	Description	Timeline
Application	Fill in and submit application including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application form on F6S: <a href="https://www.f6s.com/aiod-oc1privatesector/apply">https://www.f6s.com/aiod-oc1privatesector/apply</a></li> <li>Technical &amp; Business Proposal: <a href="https://www.aiodp.ai/open_calls/">https://www.aiodp.ai/open_calls/</a></li> </ul>	Launch date: 08/04/2026 Submission deadline: 08/06/2026 (17h00 CET)
Eligibility & Technical check	DeployAI Consortium performs internal checks of the eligibility criteria of the applications	08/06/2026 to 30/06/2026
Application evaluation	An evaluation board reviews the received applications, scoring them based on the evaluation criteria. The evaluators rank the applications and select the top-ranked projects in online interviews.	01/07/2026 to 31/07/2026

<sup>8</sup> The AIoD Components to be considered for OC1 can be found in the MarketPlace at the following link: <https://marketplace.aiodp.ai/search?q=openCall>

<sup>9</sup> The submission date for applications is final. All other dates, including those of the programme, may be subject to change. In such case, all beneficiaries will be informed accordingly.

Announcement of the results	All applicants receive a written letter about approval or rejection of their project. The successful projects start the onboarding phase in the DeployAI Programme.	Up to 10/08/2026
-----------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------

The submission date for applications is final. All other dates, including those of the Programme, may be subject to change.

### 3.5. Other application requirements and considerations

- Submission: Applications must be submitted via <https://www.f6s.com/aio-oc1privatesector/apply>.
- Any other submission method will not be accepted.
- Complete application: All mandatory questions must be answered, and all requested documents must be uploaded. Incomplete applications will be disqualified.
- Accept terms: Applicants must agree to the application's terms and conditions.
- English language: All applications and Programme communication must be in English.
- Document format: Unless otherwise agreed, all documents in all phases must be submitted electronically in PDF format without printing restrictions.
- Deadline:
  - Failure to submit the application by the submission deadline, regardless of cause (e.g., network issues, multiple browsers or windows), is not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. It is recommended to apply well before the deadline.
  - Resubmissions are possible provided the call deadline has not passed but are only guaranteed if requested at least 2 business days before the deadline via [support@f6s.com](mailto:support@f6s.com).
  - The deadline may be extended only in case of unforeseen F6S platform technical issues. All applicants will be notified of the new deadline.
- Review future documents: Applicants are encouraged to get familiar with the documents that will be required in the contracting phase (see Section - Contracting Phase)
- Notifications: Applicants are encouraged to enable F6S notifications for the Programme in their profile settings to ensure communications regarding their application are received.
- Applicants list: A full list of applicants containing their basic information will be created for statistical and transparency purposes and shared with the European Commission.

### 3.6. Technical / feasibility assessment

As part of the technical and feasibility assessment, applicants must demonstrate that their AI Product is delivered in a containerized format (e.g. Docker or equivalent<sup>10</sup>), ensuring portability, scalability, and smooth integration within the AIoD Platform infrastructure. Clear documentation of the containerization approach and deployment requirements must be provided as part of the application.

The product must demonstrate generalizability. It must be designed as an adaptable, high-quality product that can be readily configured and utilized by broader end-users. In alignment with European digital sovereignty and values, solutions must promote open innovation and actively avoid vendor lock-in. Their core architecture should demonstrate open standards and interoperable interfaces. The

<sup>10</sup> Docker and Helm charts are the current stack used in the platform.

solution must be highly transferable, modular, and easily adaptable to new clients or infrastructure environments without locking end-users into proprietary, closed ecosystems.

## 4. How will applications be evaluated and selected?

Given its Programme Implementation structure, AloD OC1-PrivateSector will have several evaluation moments.

Figure 1. 3 Stage Approach & Timeline for Evaluation

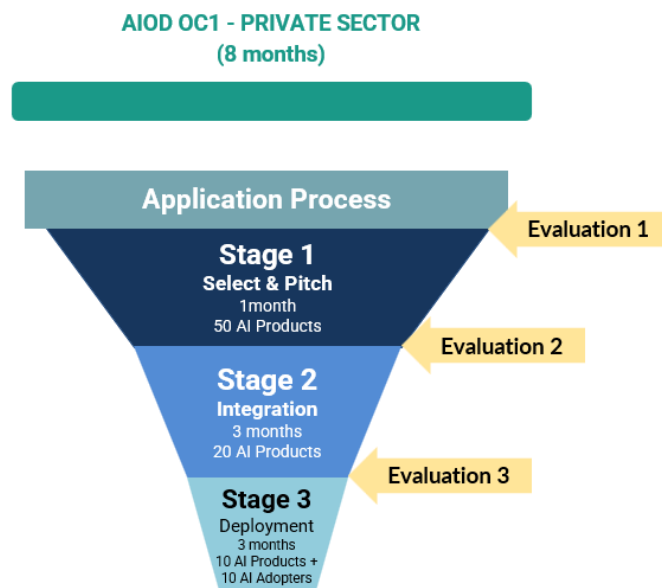


Table 4. Description of evaluation moments

Evaluation	Goal	Types of Evaluators
<b>Evaluation no. 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility check done by Internal Evaluation Committee (IEC).</li> <li>Select best 50 applications for Stage 1 from the pool of eligible applicants done by External Evaluators.</li> </ul>	Internal Evaluators (eligibility) and External Evaluators
<b>Evaluation no. 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select the 20 best AI Products to fully integrate the solution onto AloD Platform (Stage 2).</li> </ul>	Joint effort between IEC and relevant stakeholders
<b>Evaluation no. 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select the best 10 Projects (lead by previously selected AI providers) to be implemented in AI Adopter.</li> </ul>	

Figure 2. Evaluation &amp; Selection for Stage 1

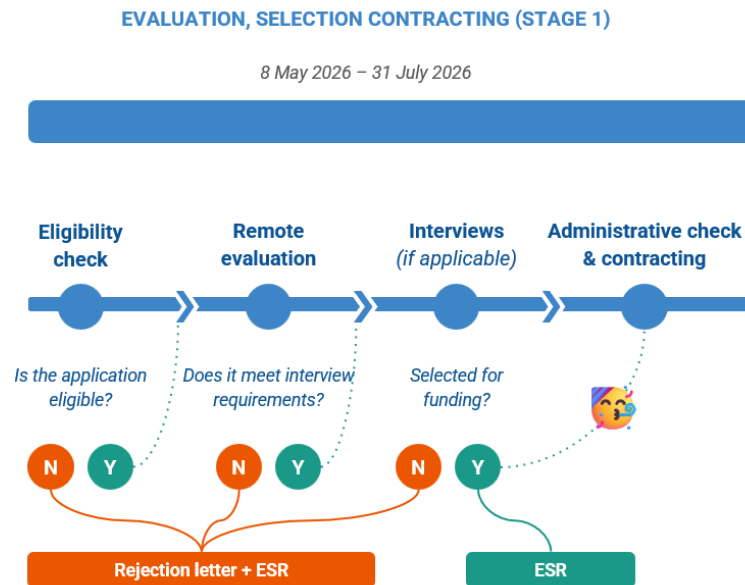


Figure 2 summarises the Evaluation and selection process for Stage 1 (Evaluation no. 1). Evaluation no. 2 and no.3 will be done differently (check section 4.2).

DeployAI Consortium reserves the right, at any stage of the process, to request additional information and/or documentation to clarify any doubts regarding the eligibility of the applicant(s) and/or their application. Interviews with AI Providers may also be requested, if deemed necessary.

#### 4.1. Eligibility check

An initial eligibility verification will be done to filter out and discard non-eligible applications, at Evaluation no.1. An application is only considered eligible if it meets all the eligibility criteria and requirements listed in Section 3, related with: type of applicant(s), TRL level, countries, funding, language, documentation. Eligibility will also be checked for the Projects submitted in Stage 3: type of applicant(s) (AI Adopters), countries, language, documentation.

The eligibility check enables the establishment of a shortlist of applications to be evaluated in the next step of the evaluation process, concerning Stage 1. Applications marked as non-eligible (for not meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria) will receive a rejection letter with a justification.

#### 4.2. Evaluation no.1 (Selection for Stage 1)

The Evaluation no.1 will be done by an expert evaluation board, i.e, a collective body composed of individual members, external to the project consortium, with relevant experience in the AI domains, having signed and duly agreed in advance a written commitment of confidentiality and absence of any conflicts of interest that might influence the impartial and objective analysis and evaluation of all submitted proposals.

### 4.2.1. Evaluation criteria & scoring

In Evaluation no. 1, each application will be reviewed by a minimum of two experts from the expert evaluation board. Applications will be scored against the following criteria:

Table 5. Evaluation Criteria - Evaluation 1

Criteria Name		Description
C1	Tech/solution concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants describe the AI Product and all relevant information about: containerization readiness, interoperability, TRL.</li> <li>Applicants explain of the differentiation, innovation and scalability and EU27 market readiness.</li> <li>Applicants demonstrate the added value of the AI Product in ALoD Platform, describing how it aligns with both the Open Call and the ALoD Platform, and which core components will be used, if any. The concept must be unique and impactful.</li> </ul>
C2	Team skills & expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants demonstrate their capacity, skills, and expertise to deliver according to the proposed plan</li> <li>Applicants demonstrate have the capacity to go beyond the implementation of the use-case/pilot, scaling the concept into a potential sustainable product/service.</li> </ul>
C3	Implementation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals demonstrate how widely the solution will be used, the impact and direct contribution to the reinforcement of the AIOD and the adoption of AI products across various sectors/domains (private &amp; public).</li> <li>Quality of the Business Model, as a win-win concept for the AI providers and the ALoD Platform.</li> </ul>
C4	Ambition & scalability potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicants show clarity and ambition of the long-term vision for the AI product.</li> <li>Applicants demonstrate the scalability of the AI product and business model, including the ability to expand to additional users, markets, or application domains.</li> <li>Applicants explain the potential for growth through the ALoD Platform, including opportunities to reach new adopters, partners, or markets at European or international level.</li> </ul>

Table 8 (*item 'Score, Expert'*) defines how individual criteria will be scored. The minimum threshold for each criterion will be 6 (*six*) out of 10 (*ten*), while the overall score threshold will be 18 (*eighteen*) out of 30 (*thirty*). Applications that do not meet the minimum thresholds (per criteria or overall score) will be excluded from the Programme.

After the individual scoring by the expert evaluation board, the Open Call Management Team will:

- Check for large differences (over 2 points per criterion) between evaluators.
- If differences exist, evaluators meet to discuss and agree on scores.
- If an agreement isn't reached, another expert may be invited to provide a third assessment.

#### 4.2.2. Ranking & selection

All applications will be ranked in a single list based on their overall score, which is calculated from the average scores given by the evaluators. If multiple applications have the same overall score, the following tie-breaking criteria will be applied in this order:

1. Rule 1 - In case there are proposals in the same position after the initial ranking, priority will be given to proposals that have higher impact and market potential (C1)
2. Rule 2 - In case following Rule 1 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals that present better scores for implementation (C3)
3. Rule 3 - In case following Rule 2 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals with better scores for Team skills (C2)
4. Rule 4 - In case following Rule 3 there are proposals in the same position, priority will be given to the projects that have a woman as lead coordinator.

**A maximum of 50 applicants will be selected under AloD OC1 – Private Sector. This Open Call aims to ensure diversity in the use of the AloD components offered. Therefore, proposals may be prioritised to achieve a balanced use of components under this call, provided they meet the required evaluation threshold.**

#### 4.3. Evaluation no. 2 (Selection for Stage 2)

The Internal Evaluation Committee (IEC) and other relevant stakeholders will jointly do the Evaluation no. 2 and no. 3. These evaluations will consist of scoring the same Criteria as Evaluation no.1 and the same score range.

For Evaluation no. 2, evaluators will attribute:

- 50% of scoring based on the revised version of the Technical & Business Proposals for AloD Platform, following the same criteria as in section 4.2.1;
- 50% of scoring based on the Pitching Session (Event 1): Relevance & Quality

#### 4.4. Evaluation no. 3 (Selection for Stage 3)

Following the same reasoning, for Evaluation no. 3, evaluators will attribute:

- 40% of scoring based on the submitted Project to implement the AI Product in the AI Adopter;
- 30% on degree of integration with the Platform (Developed in Stage 2)
- 30% of scoring based on the Pitching Session (Event 2) : Relevance & Quality

Extra criteria may be added for Evaluation no.3. This will be duly communicated to the beneficiaries by the beginning of Stage 2.

#### 4.5. Appeals

The applicant is entitled to appeal in each Evaluation moment. Within (3) three working days of receiving i) a rejection letter informing the application as non-eligible or ii) an ESR of non-acceptance, an applicant may submit a request for an appeal if they believe the results of the eligibility checks have not been

correctly applied, or if they feel that there has been a shortcoming in the way their application has been evaluated.

All requests for appeal must be sent to the OC Management Team to [aiod.opencalls@f6s.com](mailto:aiod.opencalls@f6s.com) and must:

- Focus on aspects concerning the evaluation of the application (e.g. admissibility or eligibility checks, evaluation procedure, etc), not their merits.
- Clearly describe the complaint.
- Be received within the time limit (3 working days) from the reception of a rejection letter considering the application as non-eligible or the ESR information letter delivered.
- Sent by the entities' legal representative that has also submitted the application.

Note that the Evaluation 1 is carried out by highly qualified external experts. DeployAI will neither question nor interfere with their original evaluation. Mere repetitions of the content of the application or disagreements with the result or reasoning of the technical evaluation will not be considered.

## 5. What happens after selection in Evaluation no.1?

Applicants that are selected to proceed to Stage 1 will be invited to the contracting phase, where administrative and financial details and documents are verified and validated.

Furthermore, to carry out mandatory Know Your Customer (KYC) checks, proof of residency and proof of ID from one or more members of the organisation(s) is required.

The steps of this phase are (see Table 8 for complementary information):

1. Inclusion of comments (if any) provided in the Evaluation Summary Report as part of the sub-grant agreement (contract).
2. Validation of the entities based on the provision of the following documentation:
  - Formal proof of the entity's legal existence and tax activity.
  - Proof of the SME status, including the SME Declaration Form).
  - Declaration of Honour, for all participating entities, signed by the legal representative of the entity.
  - Consortium Declaration of Honour, signed by the legal representative of each consortium partner.
  - Bank Account Information.
3. Signing of the sub-grant agreement between DeployAI Consortium, represented by its Treasurer (F6S).

The same verification process will be followed for the selected AI Adopters, prior to the signature of a consortium sub-grant agreement, for the implementation of Stage 3.

Additional considerations:

- A valid VAT is mandatory.
- The sub-grant agreements (contracts) are final and cannot be altered.
- Electronic digital signatures are required for signed documents (unless otherwise agreed).
- Deadlines for document submission will be provided and will normally be concluded within two weeks.

- Failure to complete the negotiation in time will result in rejection.

## 6. What is the AloD OC1-PrivateSector and its requirements?

### 6.1. Programme Stages

The AloD OC1-PrivateSector includes 3 key Stages:

1. Stage 1 - Pitch & Select
2. Stage 2 - Integration
3. Stage 3 - Deployment

#### 6.1.1. Stage 1 - Pitch & Select

After the proposal has been accepted and the sub-grant agreement has been signed, the SME will enter the Pitch & Select phase. 50 AI Products will be selected for Stage 1 and become beneficiaries of the Project, under the DeployAI FSTP Programme.

Stage 1 lasts for one month. During the first week of Stage1, the 50 selected beneficiaries will attend 2 webinars about the AloD Platform, about the core components, specific features and the Business Model AloD Platform. After these webinars, applicants will have the opportunity to fine tune their Technical & Business Proposal, better detailing how the core components of the AloD Platform will be used by the AI Providers and how the AI Product will contribute to the AloD Platform Business Plan. By the end of the second week, they will be able to submit an improved version of the Technical & Business Proposal, to be considered for Stage 2.

They will also be asked to give constructive feedback about the AloD Platform, through a specific survey, and promote it in their networks.

The Technical & Business Proposal will be presented by the applicant in a Pitching Session organized during Event 1. This event will take place in the late September an European member-state, and in-person participation is mandatory. Details regarding the Pitching session will be shared with the selected applicants, upon signature of the Sub-grant Agreement.

20 Projects will be selected to proceed to Stage. The remaining 30 sub-projects will be automatically terminated and these companies will not be eligible to reapply for any other Stage 3 of the process.

#### 6.1.2. Stage 2 - Integration

During a 3-month period, these 20 beneficiaries will be fully integrating their solution into the AloD Platform and implementing their Business Plans. This integration must include the following components:

- Usage of at least one the core components available in AloD Platform<sup>11</sup> to further develop their solution. The full description of these components can be found in [www.aiodp.ai](http://www.aiodp.ai).
- Full integration in Marketplace and Business Navigator
- Guarantee EU27 readiness for their AI Products.

---

<sup>11</sup> The AloD Components to be considered for OC1 can be found in the MarketPlace at the following link: <https://marketplace.aiodp.ai/search?q=openCall>

Plus, during Stage 2, beneficiaries will serve officially as beta-testers for the AIoD Platform, with the support of the mentors and DeployAI project partners.

By the end of Stage 2, participants must submit a report outlining their work and key results, particularly in terms of integration progress, traction growth, and user adoption within the AIoD Platform.

In addition, to be considered for Stage 3, beneficiaries will be required to submit a sub-project proposal detailing how they plan to implement their solution with an AI Adopter. The selection of the AI Adopter is the responsibility of the AI provider. Plus, the template and information about the criteria for evaluating the subprojects will be shared upon selection to Stage 2.

To facilitate all these activities, structured mentoring will be present throughout Stage 2, as it bridges capability gaps by providing strategic guidance, risk mitigation, and tailored feedback throughout the Stage, accelerating progress and improving the quality of results. It also strengthens alignment with Programme objectives and maximises public investment by increasing the likelihood of sustainable, market-ready outcomes.

Both the results of the integration processes and the submitted sub-Projects will be presented by each applicant in Event 2, taking place in a European member-state in November 2026. Same as Event 1, this is a mandatory in-person event and representatives from both the AI Provider and the AI Adopter are expected.

Dates, location and further details regarding the Pitching session will be shared with the applicants upon selection for Stage 2.

### **6.1.3. Stage 3 - Deployment**

From the pool of up to 20 sub-projects submitted by beneficiaries of Stage 2, 10 sub-Projects will be selected for Stage 3.

During a 3-month period, these 10 consortia will be implementing their projects and preparing their use cases, while still serving as beta-testers for the AIoD Platform.

Implementation and KPIs will be monitored by dedicated Mentors throughout the 3 months, to strengthen both implementation capacity and impact.

By the end of Stage 3, participants must submit a report outlining their work as a Consortium and key results, in terms of deployment progress, traction growth, and user adoption within the AIoD Platform. They will also submit a Use Case considering their integration and deployment process, for which they will receive a template

Both Use Case and the outcomes of the 3-Stage process will be presented in Event 3, as to showcase the AIoD Platform adoption. Same as Event 1 and 2, this is a mandatory in-person event, taking place in early 2027, and representatives from both the AI Provider and the AI Adopter are expected.

Specific Dates, location and further details regarding the Pitching session will be shared with the applicants upon selection for Stage 3.

## 6.2. Programme review

### 6.2.1. Review summary

Each beneficiary will go through 3 Stages. Payments 1 and 2 are aligned with the Stages 1 and 2 and are to be processed by the end of the implementation period. Payment for Stage 3 will be divided in 2 parts, according to the implementation phase.

Table 6. Programme review and Payment timeline

Stage	Payment no.	Item	Description	Timeline for submission of requirements	
Stage 1 - Pitch & Select	PAYMENT 1	Requirement	R1.1 - Submission of the updated Technical & Business Proposals R1.2 - Submission of Travel Report for Event 1 R1.3 - Answer to Official Survey regarding ALoD Platform	R1.1 - 5 working days before Event 1 R1.2 - 5 working days after Event 1 R1.3 - End of Stage 1	
		Result	Payment of 5.000€		
		Timeline for payment	End of month 2 / October 2026		
Stage 2 - Integration	PAYMENT 2	Requirement	R2.1 - Submission of Travel Report for Event 2 R2.2 - Report on Stage 2 implementation and expected Deliverables/KPIs (to be defined according to Business Concept) R2.3 - Confirmation of requested actions for beta-testing R2.4 - Submission of a sub-project to be implemented with AI Adopter (optional, if they want to be selected for stage 3)	R2.1 - End of Stage 2 R2.2 - End of Stage 2 R2.3 - End of Stage 2 R2.4 - 5 working days before Event 2.	
		Result	Payment of 35.000€		
		Timeline	End of month 5 / January 2027		
Stage 3 - Deployment	PAYMENT 3	Requirement	R3.1 - Sub-Grant Agreement signature for implementation of sub-project R3.2 - Identification of expected Deliverables/KPIs (to be defined according to the specific sub-project)	R3.1 - Start of Stage 3 R3.2 - 10 working days after start of Stage 3	
		Result	Payment of 30% of Stage 3 expected grant (AI Provider = 6.000€   AI Adopter = 4.500€)		
		Timeline	End of month 6/ February 2026		
	PAYMENT 4	Requirement	R4.1 - Submission of Travel Report for Event 3 R4.2- Report on Stage 3 implementation and expected Deliverables/KPIs (to be defined according to the specific sub-project)	R4.1 - R4.4: End of Stage 3	

			R4.3 - Impact self-assessment Stage 1 - Stage 3 (AI Provider) R4.4 - Confirmation of requested actions for beta-testing	
		Result	Payment of 70% of Stage 3 expected grant (AI Provider = 14.000€   AI Adopter = 10.500€)	
		Timeline	End month 9/ May 2027	

Reports must be submitted at least one week in advance, so that the reviewers will have enough time to prepare. During the review, representatives of the beneficiary should present their work and answer questions.

After each successful review and within 5 working days, the beneficiary should send the relevant payment request document.

## 7. What else is important to know?

### 7.1. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

Solutions developed and results achieved by the third parties belong to the third parties. Applicants will remain the sole owners of their respective IPRs and retain the IPR for their solutions.

Regarding the evaluation, each evaluator will sign an Agreement including confidentiality clauses before receiving access to the applications database to protect the applicants' intellectual property and sensitive non-disclosed information.

### 7.2. On conflicts of interest

Applicants must not have any actual and/or potential conflict of interest with the DeployAI selection process and during the project implementation. All cases of conflict of interest will be assessed case by case.

### 7.3. Ethical issues

DeployAI complies with the fundamental ethical issues, particularly those outlined in the "European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity".

- All applicants must submit a self-assessment ethics questionnaire, available in the Proposal Template.
- If the applicant confirms the existence of potential ethical issues, they must contact the DeployAI Helpdesk for guidance, as required.
- The DeployAI consortium will verify the declaration's consistency with the application contents and may contact applicants to resolve any ethical issues.
- Applications that fail to properly address ethical issues or inadequately deal with privacy aspects will be rejected.

## 7.4. Data protection

In order to process and evaluate applications, and manage project implementation, the DeployAI consortium will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data.

- F6S Network Ireland Limited, will act as Data Controller for data submitted through the F6S platform for these purposes. Please see our privacy policy [here](#).
- A Data Protection Officer (DPO) has been appointed by F6S generally, to ensure compliance with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and that personal data is collected, processed, and stored in a secure manner.
- The F6S platform's system design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR).
- Each applicant will accept the F6S terms to ensure compliance. Please refer to <https://www.f6s.com/privacy-policy> to review the F6S platform's privacy policy and data security policy.
- Apart from the F6S platform, data will also be stored in the F6S Google Drive, and in the project repository on Microsoft Azure managed by the project coordinator FRAUNHOFER GESELLSCHAFT ZUR FORDERUNG DER ANGEWANDTEN FORSCHUNG EV.
- Note that the DeployAI consortium must retain generated data until five years after the balance of the DeployAI project is paid or longer if there are ongoing procedures (such as audits, investigations or litigation). In this case, the data must be kept until their conclusion.

## 7.5. Confidentiality

Confidentiality obligations:

- Selected applicants are required to maintain confidential any project data, documents, invoices and other materials (in any form) during the implementation of the activities and for 5 years after project completion.
- This confidentiality period can be extended by agreement with the EC and the DeployAI consortium.
- Information shared during the project, whether written or spoken, is only considered confidential if the DeployAI agrees and confirms it in writing within 15 days.
- Confidential information must only be used for project implementation, unless otherwise agreed upon.
- Any information shared during the application stage will be treated as confidential.

## 7.6. Promotion of the action and ensuring visibility of the EU funding

The beneficiary must promote the project, the DeployAI project and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public) in a strategic and effective manner and to highlight the financial support of the EC, including on the official third-party website. The DeployAI Communication team will guide and support these communication activities to selected beneficiaries.

## 7.7. Checks and reviews

The EC may, at any time during the implementation of the sub-project and up to five years after the end of the sub-project, arrange for a check and review activity to be carried out, by external auditors, or by

the EC services themselves, including the European Anti-Fraud office (OLAF). The procedure shall be deemed to be initiated on the date of receipt of the relevant letter sent by the EC.

There will be no financial checks, reviews, or audits to check costs, since beneficiaries have no obligation to document the costs incurred for the action. Checks, reviews, and audits will focus on the technical implementation of the action.

## 8. Relevant links and contacts

The DeployAI Consortium will provide information to the applicants via the F6S page, so that all information (questions and answers) is visible to all participants.

- Platform Homepage: <https://www.aiodp.ai/>
- Open call application form: <https://www.f6s.com/aiod-oc1privatesector/apply>
- Contact us: [aiod.opencalls@f6s.com](mailto:aiod.opencalls@f6s.com)
- Online Q&A/ discussion board: <https://www.f6s.com/aiod-oc1privatesector/discuss>
- F6S platform support team: [support@f6s.com](mailto:support@f6s.com)

*(For issues with the submission, resubmission, access to the platform, etc.)*

## 9. Relevant Open Call definitions

Table 7. Acronyms & Definitions

Acronym	Explanation/ Definition
AIoD	AI-on-Demand
AWU	Annual Work Unit
EC	European Commission
IEC	Internal Evaluation Committee
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
ESR	Evaluation Summary Report
KYC	Know Your Customer
OC	Open Call

Table 8. Terms & Definitions

Term	Definition
AI Provider	Organization that develops, supplies, or operates artificial intelligence technologies for others to use. Typically includes Model developers, Cloud AI Platforms and Specialized AI Solution Providers.
AI Adopter	Organization from private sector that uses artificial intelligence systems created by an AI provider to improve/enable/support its operations, products, or services.
Applicant(s)	The legal entity or group of legal entities that intend(s) to submit or that submitted an application to the Open Call.
Application Eligibility Criteria	Criteria used to assess if an application can be considered for the open call. Possible values (Yes/No).
Application Eligible or Non-Eligible	Application that is or is not compliant with eligibility criteria.
Application Timestamp	Timestamp of the final submission of an application. If the application is reopened and resubmitted the last date will be considered.
Bank Account Information	Document(s) where the beneficiary provides information of the bank account to which payments will be made during the project implementation.
Beneficiary or 3rd Party	An entity or a consortium that submitted an application to the open call that was accepted to be funded, and have signed, or are in the process of signing, a sub-grant agreement.
Consortium	Set of legal entities (Lead and partner(s)) that are cumulatively responsible to implement the project as defined in the Grant Agreement signed with the European Commission.
Consortium Declaration of Honour	Declaration where the applicants/ beneficiaries, participating as a consortium, declare they accept all conditions of the open call, acceleration process & Programme; and agree - if applicable - on budget share. One CDoH is required for each sub-granted project.

Term	Definition
Contract Deadline	Date and time until when the selected entities need to provide contractual information.
Declaration of Honour (DoH)	Declaration where the applicant/ beneficiary declares they accept all conditions of the open call, acceleration process & Programme. One DoH is required for each applicant/ beneficiary.
DeployAI Consortium	Set of 27 legal entities responsible to deliver DeployAI Project - funded by the European Union Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL) under grant agreement №.101146490.
External Evaluator	Expert hired by the consortium to assist in the evaluation of the Open Call. External evaluators cannot have conflicts of interest and are bound by a confidentiality agreement.
F6S Application Form	Application form available in F6S Platform.
F6S Platform	Platform provided by F6S.
FSTP	Financial support to third parties. Payments made to entities that are not members of the consortium.
FSTP – Lump Sum	Payment made to the third party based on the achievement of a milestone.
Internal evaluation committee	Group of appropriately qualified persons of the consortium partners that are assigned the responsibility of performing evaluations or reviews at any stage of the open call implementation or Programme.
Mentor	Person from the consortium that works closely with the beneficiary to foster communication with the consortium and assess progress of the project. The mentor may be part of an evaluation committee.
Open Call	Competitive process to access a Programme.
Open Call and Programme deadlines	The project has planned the Programme carefully, but unexpected things can happen. The application deadline is fixed, and will only change if something unforeseen occurs. Other dates, including of the Programme, are flexible and may be adjusted as needed, and communicated to all applicants.
Open Call close date	Date and time when applications close.
Open Call selection prioritisation	Rules used to order applications.
Proof of Legal Existence	Company/ organisation register, official journal or other official document per country showing the name of the organisation, the legal address and registration number and a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent).
Proof of SME Status	Proof of the SME condition is required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the applicant has been fully validated as an SME on the Beneficiary Register of the EC Participant Portal, the PIC number must be provided.</li> <li>• Provision of the signed (with a valid e-signature) SME Declaration (Annex 5): in the event the beneficiary declares being non-autonomous, the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and</li> </ul>

Term	Definition
	<p>downstream organisations is required. A Status Information Form may be requested, which includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit &amp; loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting documents: In cases where either the number of employees or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional, association records, etc.</li> </ul>
Reserve List	Eligible applications that were not selected for funding which can be invited in case selected applications do not provide contractual data.
Schedule for payments to Beneficiaries	<p>All payments to beneficiaries are dependent on the successful review of deliverables/ reports at the end of each Stage, and reception by the consortium of the corresponding payment request.</p> <p>All payments will be made with undue delay preferably no later than 30 calendar days after the reception of the financial statement.</p>
Score, Expert	<p>Unless otherwise stated, experts will rank each criterion with marks between 1 and 10. Half point scores are not given. Score values will indicate the following assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-2: Fail. The application fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.</li> <li>3-4: Very poor. The criterion is addressed in an unsatisfactory manner.</li> <li>5: Poor. There are serious inherent weaknesses.</li> <li>6-7: Good. While the application broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would need correcting.</li> <li>8-9: Very Good. The application addresses the criterion well, although certain improvements are possible.</li> <li>10: Excellent. The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.</li> </ul>
Score, Per Committee	<p>When the evaluation is made by a committee, the average score of each criterion is rounded to the nearest point or half point, before computing the overall score.</p> <p>Overall score is the sum of the scores of each criterion multiplied by the respective weight (if any), rounded to the nearest integer value.</p>
Selected application	Application that was selected to participate in the Open Call Implementation.
SME	An incorporated enterprise that complies with the rules defined by the European Commission to be qualified as an SME <sup>12</sup>
SME – Autonomous Enterprise	An autonomous enterprise is not a partner with or linked to another enterprise

<sup>12</sup> [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-fundamentals/sme-definition\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/smes/sme-fundamentals/sme-definition_en)

Term	Definition
SME – Linked Enterprise	Linked enterprises are those that form a group through the direct or indirect control of the majority of voting rights of an enterprise by another or through the ability to exercise a dominant influence on an enterprise.
SME – Partner Enterprise	The enterprise holds a minimum of 25% (Capital or voting rights in another enterprise, or 25% (Capital or voting rights) are owned by another enterprise.
SME Declaration Form	Declaration where the SME status is assessed.
Sub-grant Agreement	Signed between the Project Consortium, represented by its Coordinator and the beneficiary. The sub-grant agreement will also include the comments (if any) of the application's ESR to the work plan.
Sub-granted Project (sub-project)	The project that has been selected and awarded, implemented according to the approved work plan, and in accordance with the signed Sub-grant Agreement.