

# FANBEST COACHING NETWORK

## Call for Applicants

24/02/2021



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## 1. Introduction

The FAN-BEST project is aimed to foster the technology transfer to SMEs in blue biotechnology and exploitation of marine resources by creating a network of public and private entities focused on the fund raising that make possible the start and scale-up phase. Access to funds such as venture capitalists, business angels, participatory loan or crowdfunding will be promoted, so that the technologies and innovations “made in Atlantic regions” can reach the market turned into successful business projects.

The Work Package 6 is aimed to support the financing of at least 7 innovation projects in Blue Economy (BE) as demonstration of the technical and economic viability.

All partners will collaborate to select the promoters of innovation und scaling-up projects including the technology offer, the technology request, business offer and necessary funds, with special focus on research projects and SMEs led mainly by women.

The selected projects will have a transnational dimension by linking universities- companies (including SMEs, spinoffs, start-ups, entrepreneurs...) - investors from different regions to foster synergies among regions and a macro-regional market.

The partners will play the role of coach and monitoring of the whole process.

Some of the tools developed by the partners will be tested, like the Set of selected financing instruments for BE (product developed in the framework of FAN-BEST- WP5) to be prioritized by the Network.

Vertigo Lab will be in charge of an environmental and socioeconomic impact evaluation considering the 7 innovative projects supported by FAN-BEST.

## 2. Objectives of the FAN-BEST Coaching Network

By means of the FAN-BEST Project the partners will set up a Network to provide support to SMEs that need financing to carry out innovative projects within the BE sectors. The objective is to increase the opportunities to access financial instruments available for entrepreneurs and small companies within the blue economy, with a special attention to projects led by women.

Thus some of the main tasks to be carried out are to provide information, advice and coaching to the target group so that they can learn more about the key strategic aspects concerning the project, as well as the available financing opportunities, which are the instruments and grants more suitable among all the wide landscape of programs and instruments from local to international level, in order to help them to achieve the appropriate financing (coach service).

According to the philosophy of the European Transnational Cooperation and described in the FAN-BEST Project application form the partners will have as a challenge to promote a “macroregional and cross border market”. This transnational dimension can take the form of collaboration between stakeholders from different regions, transnational partnership to promote a project or investors and funds from outside the region of the promoter. Furthermore the partners network will support the research outputs generated in the R&D centers in the Atlantic European regions reaching the market in the form of new commercial products or innovative services, provided by SMEs.

### 3. Minimum requirements to be beneficiary of the coaching

This service is aimed to give advice and coach to a person or a group of persons with an innovative business idea, marketable innovative solutions or projects to scaling up which will contribute to a European sustainable and competitive Blue Economy. The project has to be in accordance with the principles and objectives of the European Green Deal<sup>1</sup> and connected with one of the BE subsectors (see Annex 2 “Blue Economy Sub-sectors and Related Activities”).

The beneficiary of the service can be a natural person, such as potential entrepreneurs, or a legal entity. In the case of a legal entity can be a company already created such as not start-ups, scale-ups and other existing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs<sup>2</sup>).

The project to be submitted to the FAN-BEST network has to be located in any of the regions of the Atlantic Area Cooperation Programme<sup>3</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> More info: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition_en)

<sup>3</sup> <https://light.ccdr-n.pt/index.php?data=933f4c43a31047c9f9f83dcf6870d3090366f06617e5b0bbaf687393770102621e8fe8a9032e57ee37c106dfe4211dd4>

## 4. Description of the service to be provided

FAN-BEST Project will provide two kind of services to the selected proposals:

- a) Groups sessions: The selected participants will be invited to participate in several group sessions where they can meet all the partners and coaches of the transnational project and the rest of selected participants. At least at foreseen the following:
- Initial pitch elevator session
  - Webinars to complete skills
  - Final pitch elevator session

- b) Individual sessions-contact:

The contacts between the beneficiary and the coach, such interviews and coaching sessions, will be provided on-line, through webinar and e-meeting tools, or by means of face-to-face meetings. In case of the face-to-face meetings the partner or third party in charge of the coaching shall comply with the applicable provisions on preventive measures of the Covid19 and consider replacing them by online sessions for safety reasons.

In addition, a fluid communication between the beneficiary and the coach via email and telephone will be guaranteed.

Once the beneficiary is selected and they accept to be participant in this programme, they will sign a Participation Agreement with the main rights and duties and a work plan adapted to their needs and timing which will be agreed between the beneficiary and the partner responsible of their coaching.

The following list contains the minimum tasks part of this service to be provided for each beneficiary by the partners. Notwithstanding the beneficiary and the partner can agree to make a more customized service adapted to their case and to the concrete funding or financial intermediary to be addressed:

1. An analysis and preliminary assessment of the innovation project searching for finance/advisory services to ensure a minimum return for the investor, including:
  - The evaluation of the economic and financial viability
  - The degree of innovation and readiness level
  - The commercial strategy
  - The degree of maturity of the project
2. Personal interviews with the promoters for the evaluation of their business profile and spirit, including the assessment of their professional and business experience, as well as their personal profile.
3. Training and preparation of the promoters' management team, through a specific training plan to improve their business management skills
4. Supporting and providing advice during the steps necessary to access to funding.

Due to the services provided by FAN-BEST, a declaration on the grants received de minimis might be required to be fulfilled by the beneficiary once has been selected.

In addition, socioeconomical and environmental data will be required to the beneficiaries in order to elaborate the Environmental and Socioeconomic Impact Evaluation by the FAN-BEST partner VertigoLab.

## 5. Evaluation procedure

### Methodology to select the beneficiaries

The proposals are evaluated in two steps. In STEP 1, proposals are received and evaluated by each country coordinator based on the Application Form.

Each country coordinator will pre-select some proposals based on the score assigned.

Companies that pass the initial selection stage, will be invited to pitch their idea, project or service in front of a panel of jury experts, consisting of members of each FANBEST partners. This STEP 2 complements the existing paper-based assessment in order to take full account of the personal qualities and motivations of the applicants.

Finally, [at least] 7 proposals will be selected to be beneficiaries of the coach. Before the start of the coaching, a collective meeting will take place to present all the selected projects in order to make them known.

### Estimated calendar

**1<sup>st</sup> March** – Opening date

**11<sup>th</sup> April** – Deadline date for submitting proposals

**4<sup>th</sup> May** – Communication of STEP 1 results and pre-selected proposals

**From 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>th</sup> May** – Estimated dates for the Pitch Event

**24<sup>st</sup> May** – Communication of the selected proposals

**28<sup>th</sup> May** – Joint Presentation Event

**1<sup>st</sup> June** – Estimated date for the start of the coaching (it will be re-adjusted by each partner-selected applicant)

## Evaluation criteria

As described before, the proposals received will be evaluated based on four award criteria:

- **Innovation (30%)**: focused on the technical part of the idea, product or solution. The country coordinator will evaluate the degree of innovation, the technical achievability and the risks associated to the technology in order to also estimate the feasibility.
  - **Impact (30%)**: this criterion covers the expected and broader impact that your idea, product or solution will have on the market, environment and society.
  - **Implementation (30%)**: focused on the commercial feasibility. The team (actual or potential), the plan towards commercialization and associated risks will be evaluated.
- Other Consideration (10%)**: there are two other relevant aspects to be evaluated in line with the principles of the FAN-BEST project: the transnational dimension of the proposals and the women's contribution to the SME and the Blue Economy sectors.





**PARTNERS**



**ASSOCIATES**



[WWW.FANBEST.EU](http://WWW.FANBEST.EU)

FAN-BEST Project (EAPA\_1022/2018)  
is funded by the Interreg Atlantic Area Programme through the European Regional Development Fund

