



**OHRID BLUE
ECONOMY
ACCELERATOR**

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

**SPECIALIZED ACCELERATION
PROGRAM FOR GREEN-TECH
AND BLUE-TECH STARTUPS**

PARTNERS

PRIMEPOINT
PARTNERS


**ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE
UNIVERSITY**
OF INFORMATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

EU FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH



Implemented by
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

AREA
SCIENCE PARK



**PRIME BLUE
ESG INSTITUTE**

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1.INTRODUCTION

a) PrimeBlue Institute

The PrimeBlue Institute is a sustainability & ESG centre of excellence with special focus on freshwater and blue economy, with three main pillars: research, education (public awareness) and innovation, tackling sustainability challenges related to freshwater resources, which have been impacted by unsustainable human economic practices in tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and municipal governance.

b) Water Innovation Hub

As part of the PrimeBlue Institute, in close cooperation with the University for Information Science and Technology "St. Paul the Apostle" and the Public Scientific Institution Hydrobiological Institute - Ohrid, an innovation hub is established, aiming at supporting innovative startups developing solutions for solving freshwater challenges which derive from human economic activities in the targeted sector: sustainable tourism, sustainable agriculture, sustainable manufacturing and sustainable cities on lakes and rivers. It supports initiatives related to: municipal services, infrastructure, renewables, circular economy, waste treatment, preserving freshwater, pollution and overuse of freshwater, on national, regional and local level.

c) Ohrid Blue Economy Accelerator

The PrimeBlue institute offers acceleration program aiming at assisting the growth of innovative startups and scale-up with upside potential by supporting them with business advisory, access to market, network and finance. More specifically, the participants gain access to:

- A tailor-made training for development of sustainable business models
- Mentoring by leading experts in the fields of financing, internationalization, development of technological solutions, attracting investors, etc.
- Connections with international clients, investors and the international startup ecosystem
- Company promotion and visibility at networking events
- Access to modern co-working space

The primary focus of the selected companies are be the **blue economy sector**, including sustainability and climate change-related blue-tech and green-tech innovations, with the particular focus of freshwater challenges.

The program is implemented by the PrimeBlue Institute in partnership with the PrimePoint Partners, UIST and GIZ.

d) What is Blue Economy?

Water is the world's most precious and exploited resource. Yet it has always been undervalued – along with the rivers, lakes, wetlands and aquifers that store and supply it. This water blindness – the lack of awareness and understanding of the importance of water resources – has come at an immense cost: the world is facing a pervasive and worsening water crisis that is undermining human and planetary health.

The Blue Economy, as a sustainable use of water and coastal resources for economic growth, improved livelihood and jobs creation, is a very significant part of the European Green Deal. It encompasses a number of activities including **coastal renewable energy, maritime transport, waste management, sustainable tourism and agriculture, climate**

change, biodiversity, as well as emerging sectors like aquaculture, bioeconomy, desalination, blue-tech innovation and robotics, etc. As stated by the 2022 EU Blue Economy Report of the European Commission *“The Blue Economy represents one of the greatest drivers of the European business growth, generating around € 750 billion and creating 5.4 million job opportunities per year”*.

e) Targeted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The overall focus of the PrimeBlue Institute is on the following Sustainability Development Goal:

6 CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION



While, water challenges tackle the following SDGs:

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



13 CLIMATE
ACTION



2. WHY OHRID BLUE ECONOMY ACCELERATOR?

Applicants will have the opportunity to receive training, mentoring, and advisory program covering the following topics:

1. Ideation, Business model and Business model testing
2. Technology evaluating and IPR
3. Start-ups/Spin-offs: Strategy, Market identification, Marketing and Sales
4. Sustainability, Circular Economy and ESG standards
5. Financial Management, Access to Finance and Investment planning
6. Pitch development and tips

If needed, the Accelerator may adapt the program and the duration of some of the project phases to best suite the training and advisory needs of the applicants.

Applicants that successfully complete the acceleration program and comply with the EU4EG funding requirements listed below, may qualify for the opportunity to apply for a startup grant scheme and receive a maximum grant amount of 50,000 EUR with a maximum percentage of 80% of the total eligible costs of the action.

Additionally, a set of services and non-monetary benefits will be available to the program participants, such as:

- ✓ office space,
- ✓ meeting room,
- ✓ networking and pitching events,
- ✓ additional mentorship,

- ✓ consultancy,
- ✓ infrastructure,
- ✓ R&D etc.

3. WHO CAN APPLY?

Startups and innovative teams from North Macedonia, working on a technology based freshwater related solution are eligible for admission to the Ohrid Blue Economy Accelerator applicants must constitute an innovative technological solution in any of the areas:

1. Sustainable cities and communities
2. Sustainable innovations for lake transportation and mobility
3. Wastewater treatment, recycling and waste management
4. Electric vehicles and electrification of lake vessels
5. Bettering the water quality of Lake Ohrid

Although all are welcomed to apply, the priority for EU4EG grant funding will be given to the participants who will or already have legal entity established in the following regions: South - West, South - East, Polog, Municipality of Resen and Prespa region.

The founder(s) are owned by and/or employ majority:

- people under 40 years old and/or
- women; and/or
- vulnerable groups.

In a nutshell, the applicants should meet several conditions to comply with EU4EG funding requirements:

- (1) create a benefit for the target groups (youth, women and vulnerable groups);
- (2) to have an impact on the local economic development (creation of new jobs (primarily for the target groups), involvement of local suppliers, increase in income and exports, etc.) and to have a clear contribution to the Green Agreement of the EU and circular economy; and
- (3) envisage measures to reduce the impact on the environment and climate change (leading to zero-pollution and zero-waste).

4. GENERAL INFORMATION

a) How to apply

Startups interested to apply should fill out the Application Form on this [LINK](#).

Applications which are selected will be eligible for admission in the acceleration program will be notified. All graduated startups will be provided with opportunity to access additional financing from private investors and other funding.

Requests for clarification regarding the program and the application process, may be submitted via e-mail only, to renata@theprimepoint.com.

One applicant may submit only one application. A person can only be enrolled in one application.

b) Challenge timeline

Applicants may submit their application till 15.12.2023, COB latest.

Review and selection process: from 15.12.2024 till 10.01.2024

Presentation of ideas: 17.01.2024

Start of the program: 22.01.2024

End of the program: end of March

c) Language

All applications can be submitted in Macedonian or English.

Proposals which are submitted in any other language will not be evaluated.

d) Documentation Formats

Any document requested shall be submitted electronically in PPT, PDF, Word or any other format without restrictions for printing.

e) Origin of the Funds

The funds attached to the Ohrid Blue Economy Accelerator come directly from:

- ✓ EU for Economic Growth (EU4EG) Project in a form of a grant
- ✓ Private Investors (Business Angels, Entrepreneurs, SME's, VC's and Corporations)

**(Startups selected for funding will be subject to compliance with the criteria)*